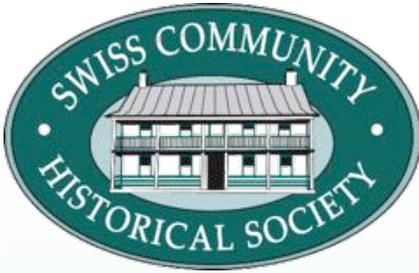


Fall 2018



of Bluffton & Pandora
P.O. Box 5
Bluffton, OH 45817

Schumacher Homestead
8350 Bixel Rd.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT
Judith Kingsley

VICE PRESIDENT
Gary Wetherill

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Rachael Hermiller
Ron Lora
Joanne Niswander
Paula Scott
Samantha Shrider

MEMBERSHIP

Annual Household - \$30
Annual Sustaining - \$100
Life - \$1,000

Mailing labels show your current standing. Mail checks for dues and donations to Marvin Diller at P.O. Box 5, Bluffton, OH 45817.

EDITOR: Paula Scott



newsletter

In June 2018, the SCHS made dramatic progress in realizing the second phase of their Capital Campaign, the creation of a Heritage Center. The society signed an agreement to purchase a nearby 50x80-foot timber frame barn that was built by Swiss settlers in the 1850s.

Historic Swiss Barn as Heritage Center

The barn will be dismantled and then rebuilt and repurposed at the homestead to provide facilities for SCHS events and rentals, K-12 class visits, and artifact displays.

With the purchase, the SCHS has a new timeline with a barn move-by date of June 2019. The board is updating cost estimates and construction plans for the Heritage Center. With some \$350,000 raised in pledges and contributions, another \$650,000 is sought for the Heritage Center, which could open as early as 2020.

Individuals, groups, and organizations are invited to partner with SCHS in the creation of the Heritage Center. Eight giving categories—up to \$200,000—have been established for the recognition of donors. Naming privileges for parts of the building and the Heritage Center are also available to donors.

Contribution and inquiry contact:

Samantha Shrider
(419) 204-1926, swisshistoricalcampaign@gmail.com
PO Box 5, Bluffton, OH 45817

summer visitors from....

Our guest book reveals that the summer of 2018 brought visitors from across the country and around the globe.

Most visited during the 13 Summer Saturday open houses—five groups scheduled other visits.

how do we do it?

With volunteer power! They have kept the homestead spick and span as well as served as hosts and hostesses.

Our 22 faithful docents, no matter how hot or rainy the weather, dressed in their 1850s costumes each weekend, interpreting the Homestead for our Summer Saturday visitors.

Our special thanks go to docents Jeff Althaus, Jan Emmert, Cheryl Fortman, Ivan and Rachel Friesen, Susie Gratz, Rachael Hermiller, Sallie Jordan Jones, Ron Lora, Chris Moser, Mary Anne Moser, Todd Rainey, Pat Sheidler, Samantha Shrider, Cheryl Slotter, Keith Sommer, Gary Wetherill, and Ed and Nancy Yeager.

Special thanks also go to: Pat Flinn for his work in planting and tending the kitchen garden ♦ Arman Habegger and Ray Moening for lawn and barnyard mowing ♦ Diane Huber, Elizabeth Kelly, Joyce Suter, and the Columbus Grove 4-H-ers for making sure the Homestead was clean and ready for summer visitors ♦ Seth Bixel for always being there with a helping hand and cold drinks.

We welcome new and returning volunteers, whether you'd like to wash windows, chase cobwebs, help in the garden, or learn to be a docent/interpreter. The Homestead needs a lot of TLC (tender, loving care), but with other volunteers it's more fun than chores at home.

Call 419-358-0186 and we'll find a place for you!



Cheryl Slotter and Susie Gratz ready to greet June visitors

flax harvested for linen project

In August 2018 volunteers pulled flax growing in the kitchen garden and prepared it for further processing by bundling and hanging it to dry.

The flax harvest is part of a project coordinated by Keith Sommer and Rachel Friesen that will study the use of textiles in the Swiss Settlement in the first three decades (1833-1860s).

What textiles did the Swiss settlers bring with them?
What did they do when their clothing and household linens began to wear out?

How did they produce the needed raw materials?
How were the raw materials processed? Who were the spinners and weavers within the community?
When did commercially-produced cloth become available? When and how did the Swiss settlers use silk?

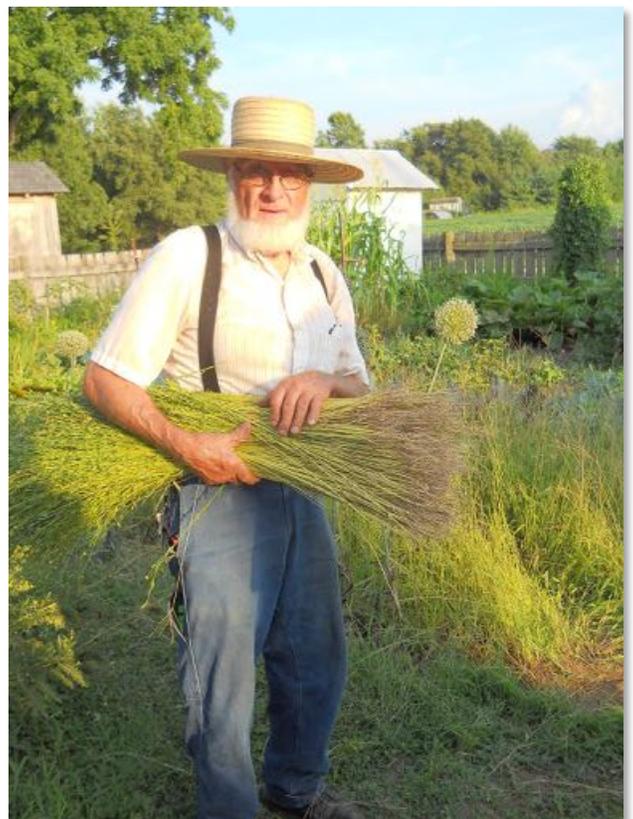
The project will culminate in a program presented to the public in Spring 2019. Progress is also being posted on Facebook.



Flax bundles drying on the back porch



Volunteering on a beautiful summer evening



Keith Sommer pulling flax in the kitchen garden

old-fashioned detective work



[SCHS Facebook](#) follower Christine Assmann Sezon used an old newspaper article to identify the men in this photograph commemorating the planting of a beech tree at Beech Tree School. The 1905 photograph by Sam Amstutz is in the society archives.

Back row left to right- Reuben Neuenschwander, Hiram Wenger, Lewis Neuenschwander, Phillip Amstutz and Adam Suter. Front row- Ezra Amstutz, Tillman Geiger, Pete Steiner, Hiram Suter, Wilbert Wenger and Eli Schumacher.

Thank you, Christine!

board member update

At Swiss Day in June, the SCHS membership elected three new board members: John Burkhart, associate professor of accounting at Bluffton university, who now serves as our treasurer; Paula Scott, CEO of the Bluffton Area Chamber of Commerce, who serves on the publicity committee; and Samantha Shrider, admissions counselor at Bluffton University, who serves on the interpretation and inventory committees.

Our warmest thanks go to Kaye Phillips, who stepped down from the board in May and will continue to assist with Facebook content and genealogy inquiries. Kaye has done great work as the chair of our inventory committee.

Bluffton in Bloom

In June, the Schumacher Homestead was a tour stop for America in Bloom judges who were assessing the community on criteria that include historical preservation.



The judges and guides from "Bluffton in Bloom" were served lunch of sandwiches, pickles, slaw, and homemade pie—including a fresh loaf of bread baked in our outdoor oven. Ivan Friesen baked the bread and Pat Flinn prepared the kitchen garden.

Gary Wetherill organized the lunch and hosted with Pat Sheidler. Gary notes, "One of the judges is a living history participant in her home community and spent a good deal of time with me. She plans to follow our progress with the Heritage Center and continued progress with the society."

50th anniversary celebration

The Schumacher Homestead was acquired in 1968 by the Swiss Community Historical Society, making this our 50th anniversary of stewardship of the buildings and property. So much has been accomplished over these years—in preserving, collecting, and sharing the history of the Swiss Settlement.

A celebration will be held for members and Capital Campaign donors. Watch for an announcement of date and location.

e-mail option

The society is compiling a list of member emails for distribution of time-sensitive information and an electronic version of the newsletter. Members will still receive the newsletter and other communication by USPS mail.

Communication should still be directed to individual board members and to Swiss Community Historical Society, PO Box 5, Bluffton, OH 45817.

To join our list, email swisshistorical@gmail.com.

painting at the homestead



A paint crew led by Seth Bixel cleaning, priming, and painting the farmhouse, summer kitchen, and workshop this summer.

Bluffton Fall Festival at the Schumacher Homestead 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., Saturday, September 22



Photo: Bluffton Icon 2015

Children's games ♦ Brick oven bread baking ♦ Woodworking tool demonstrations
Scrap Artist Quilters display ♦ Animal displays ♦ Horse-drawn plowing
Lunch by donation — From 11 a.m. until it's all gone!

Visit SCHS at www.swissmennonite.wordpress.com and on [Facebook](#)

P.O. Box 5
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