

Preserving a PA Dutch Barn

By: Elsa Kerschner from The Times News

Photos by: Julie Lubinsky

View the original article on The Times News.



Restored Bank Barn

A dedication program for the restored barn was held at Ontelaunee Park on July 13, 2012. People looked at a sleigh outside the barn at Ontelaunee Park, New Tripoli, and asked each other why the shafts were offset. Willard Snyder suggested the possibility that it gave the horse better traction and several suggested it would allow the driver a better view ahead.

The sleigh, a farm wagon, and huckster and mail wagons as well as other farm equipment to be stored in the new-old bank barn were being admired by the many people who turned out for the dedication of the barn. It had been donated to the Lynn-Heidelberg Historical Society by Rebecca Phillips and Sally Smith, daughters of the late Carl Snyder, who had accumulated a large collection of historical equipment.

It was moved from its location along Route 309 and joined the Zeisloff House and Fort Everett in the Pioneer Village of the park with the dedication held July 13th. Sally Smith said moving and repairing it was a labor of love. Willard Snyder, president of the Society when the project began and now co-president, spearheaded the project.

She said many people donated to the project and it is now in a truly great park. Co-president Neil Oswald said it took three years but this historic barn has gotten a new home. It looks pretty good. He said if he had to stand and read the list of people who helped they'd be there all. Contractors helped and there were grants.



Willard A. Snyder- Spearheaded the project.

It was said that Willard Snyder (pictured on left) is the reason this barn stands here today. It was truly a community effort, another jewel in Ontelaunee Park. Oswald said the storage space was needed but it is a symbol of people moving forward and a symbol of the past.

"Many of us have toiled in a bank barn with a forebay. We dedicate it to the hard work and community. It will be enjoyed for the future," he said.

Bill Mantz, with a history book under his arm, said his grandfather owned the barn before Carl Snyder bought it. It was built for James German. There was a house across the road. Uncle Francis lived there. There was a machine shed next to the barn. There was a buggy his grandfather took to Lancaster to have fixed and in the late 1970s it was sold and Snyder bought it. We are glad the barn was brought to a place close by, said Mantz.

Willard Snyder said the Society is not done. A stone fascia will be added around the concrete foundation. Artist Jon Bond will add a cow and a horse painting on the front and there will be hex signs.

Through this project we hope to provide another unique opportunity to educate and inform future generations about the PA Dutch heritage. Along with the restored Fort Everett and Zeisloff Log Cabin, reviving this barn at Ontelaunee Park's Pioneer Village will go a long way toward the continuation of local historical preservation.

Your faithful support of the Lynn-Heidelberg Historical Society is making possible the acquisition and care of these priceless reminders of our past.

Plan Your Trip

The Bank Barn is available to view from the outside anytime the park is open; however you'll only have a few chances during the year to see the inside, so plan your trip accordingly. Every October the Lynn-Heidelberg Historical Society holds its annual Pioneer Festival and in addition to other fun filled family activities and entertainment, they host tours of the inside of the cabin.

Ontelaunee Park

7911 Kings Highway

New Tripoli, PA 18066-4519

[Click here for Mapquest.com directions.](#)

The park is located on Route 143 (Across from Ebenezer United Church-Christ) off of Route 309 in New Tripoli.

Pavilion reservations within Ontelaunee Park are handled through Lynn Township, visit their website or call 610-298-2645.

Group tours of the Pioneer Village in Ontelaunee Park are handled through the Lynn-Heidelberg Historical Society, email us.