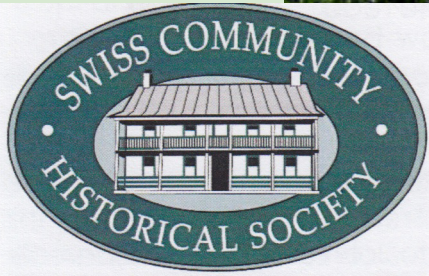


Swiss Community Historical Society heritage center will reflect life on the farm



Barn again

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“We feel it is important to save and preserve and this local barn fits into that plan.”

Piece by piece.

That’s how a rural Bluffton Swiss bank barn will be removed and reassembled on the Swiss Community Historical Society’s property on Bixel Road.

When completed, the structure will become the society’s heritage building. There it will be renovated to properly house antiques, artifacts and archives from the Swiss community. It will also serve as a meeting place for the society.

Since the 1850s the barn has been located at 9745 North Phillips Road, on the property of Backyard Perennials and More. The barn has been in the Basinger family for several generations.

The announcement to incorporate the barn as the society’s heritage center was made during Swiss Day in June.

The society has raised funds and pledges for a much-needed building over the past few years for space to house its expanding collection.

Jeff Althaus and Seth Bixel, society board members, provided several details of the project and a walk-through with the Icon.

The Swiss bank barn was built in the 1850s and measures 50 by 80 feet. When reassembled it will

be slightly enlarged and will include a full basement. The completed project with its basement will provide approximately 8,000 square feet.

When the reassembling is completed visitors will see the hand-hewn beams and ladders currently inside the barn. Portions of the original floor will also be used.

“We are contracting with a barn moving company to do the project,” said Bixel. “Each piece of the barn will be tagged and reassembled.”

He added that William Hohenbrink is the general contractor for the project.

Several pieces of the project are still in planning stages. The society hopes to move into the reassembled barn building in early 2020.

Bixel pointed out that much of the barn includes beech, oak and butternut wood. Many Swiss barns in the Bluffton-Pandora community were 60 by 40 feet, making this one larger than most.

Althaus explained that at one time, the barn probably served from 20 to 30 head of cattle. It included a horse stall of two teams.

“We feel it is important to save and preserve and this local barn fits into that plan,” said Althaus and Bixel.

