

LA GAZETTE HELVETIQUE

THE NEWSLETTER OF MUSEE DE VENOGÉ, INC.

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No.2



a Country Christmas

Have a simple Country Christmas at 1820's Venoge...
then enjoy a more modern Christmas at
the 1860's Thiebaud Farmstead

**Saturday
December 14
10am - 4pm**

**Amusements
&
Treats**

Free Admission
Donations Appreciated

Switzerland County Museum

Again This Year... A Country Christmas

Celebrate the holiday season with "A Country Christmas" visit to Musee de Venoge and the Thiebaud home in beautiful Switzerland County, Indiana on Saturday, December 14th from 10am to 4pm. Harken back to the early and mid-19th century as you enjoy the Christmas holiday as it could have been celebrated on the rural farms in southern Indiana.

Enjoy a simple country Christmas at 1820's Venoge and experience the beginnings of our modern Christmas celebrations at the 1860's Thiebaud farmstead.

At Venoge you can sample traditional Swiss Christmas cookies, including the very special Springerle cookies, made with wooden molds. Sample doughnuts and fritters made on the hearth and enjoy other period holiday treats.

Listen to music of the period played by Michael Thompson and tunes sung by Lance Minnis. Then if you choose, play a few indoor games.

Musee de Venoge is one of the few remaining examples of the French colonial architecture that once characterized the first settlement of Switzerland County. Visit the new shop area in the recreated barn for stocking stuffers.

The Thiebaud home will be welcoming Christmas with later traditions such as a decorated tree and holiday crafts, as well as small dramatizations of "A Visit from St. Nicholas" and other tales.

Join the Thiebaud's in the family parlor for holiday treats and spiced cider while enjoying Christmas tunes played by West of Dublin. A few holiday gift items will be offered for sale, including old-fashioned toys and cookbooks.

Musee de Venoge is located at 4085 State Route 129, which is one mile up 129 off of SR 56.

The Thiebaud Farmstead is located at 5147 East State Road 56, which is about three miles west of Vevay.

For further information about the two sites, visit www.switzcomuseums.org or call 812-427-3560 and www.venoge.org or call 812-593-5726.



Some found it hard to make a decision on which Christmas delicacy to start with.

Bringing the Past Forward at Venoge

Venoge will be doing something new this year at the 4th of July Celebration. We will be filmed activities on Friday through Sunday with the idea of making a video.

Videos will be created of differing lengths for use on our website, social media and our You Tube channel. When completed they to visiting school groups as an introduction to architecture, restoration and local history.

Steve Abolt has created a script from the original 16 letters plus the newly discovered 22 letters (Indiana Historical Society Library) of Jacob Weaver. He has distilled the Weaver's story pulled bits from the letters to create a story of the Weaver's 34 years in Indiana. The story as shown in the letters is the fascinating story of Jacob Weaver and Charlotte Golay and life in Indiana Territory then the new state of Indiana.

Our videographer, Joe Erdmann, was on site Friday and Saturday during the 4th of July Celebration recording the event and Sunday to film house construction details. He has access to photos of the restoration process for his final videos.



Amy Liebert and Brian Cushing as Jacob and Charlotte Weaver. The Thiebaud Farmstead was the set of several scenes of their later home in nearby Jacksonville.



Brian Cushing in the Thiebaud Farmstead Hay Press barn. A wonderful backdrop to a very dramatic scene.



Steve Thomas takes aim as a supposed adversary. This also was shot at the Thiebaud Farmstead

We have filmed in June, August and November. We hope the final filming will be completed this December during **A Country Christmas**. There are just a few snippets that we need to get. Plus, we will be using that time to film bits to use in future advertising.



The Mexican War even gets into the story. Here Jan Dubbeld as Julia Dumont wishes good fortune to the troops. Happy Smith and Andrea Logsdon with Nathan Logsdon look on.

We are fortunate to have the help of many fine people, both professional and amateur to help us tell the story, too many to mention here. Amy Liebert and Brian Cushing are Jacob and Charlotte Weaver. Ryan Vallo is reading Jacob's letters and Michael Thompson will write the musical score.

Since we are all are volunteer, the final video may not be complete until summer. Remember 'dreams do not have deadlines'.

Thirty four years of letters.

We became aware of the letters of Jacob Weaver, written to his father in Ulster County, New York some years ago. We published them about 4 years ago. At the same time we read of Jacob Weaver in James and John Butler's book "Indiana Wine". The Butlers mentioned facts not in the letters we had. Something was not adding up.



The Butlers got their information from the same source, the library of the Indiana Historical Society in Indianapolis. On a chance that I missed something, I went back to the libraries' website and searched again...briefly a reference to more letters showed up, and then was gone! I called the library and got a librarian who took it from there. She found another 22 letters that were uncatalogued! She emailed summaries and we were so excited to finally have found the missing letters. This was after we have begun our video featuring the letters.

Steve Abolt, the script writer and director, incorporated much of the new information to make the final script we are now using. Perseverance pays off!

The letters represent 34 years of Jacob's life; first in Indiana Territory in 1813 and then in the new state of Indiana. We are missing his father's and brother's return letters. What chance is there that they exist still? The letters are the only tangible, personal link which remain to tell the story of the first resident of the Venoge Cottage. We are so grateful that they are preserved.

Coming up

The Venoge board is thinking again about a Spring Frolic, an immersive weekend. Cooking, history, decorative arts and whatever else strikes our interest.

We hope to premiere our Video in the summer along with a small event at Venoge.

It looks like we will also be offering period dining to the public! An intimate dinner of early 19th century treats served in a delightful setting. Stay tuned for that one!

THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS!

Happy Smith, Susan Ash, Lily Richter, Mike McHugh, Aimee Graves, Betsy Lyman, Geri Emmelman, Walt & Jan Dubbeld and Sonny Ash.

Extraordinary volunteers. Without their help we could never even attempt the things we do.

WANT TO VOLUNTEER?

Email www.venoge.org or call 812-593-5726 for more information on opportunities.

Thank you Switzerland County Tourism

Thanks to local tourism office, we are able to offer all events with no entrance cost! They also let us explore new ways to bring the story of Venoge to the public.

CONTACT VENOGÉ

Contact Venoge with comments or questions or to volunteer. We are open by appointment for you or your group to visit.

Call 812-593-5726 or email info@venoge.org

IN EXPLANATION

LA GAZETTE HELVETIQUE (the Helvetian or Swiss Newspaper), is the official newsletter of Musee de Venoge (Museum of Venoge). The French adjective 'helvetique' refers to the Latin name for Switzerland (Helvetia) in use for more than 2000 years. Rhyming with "antique" it is easier for English speakers to pronounce than its synonym "Suisse". In 1802 the settlers of New Switzerland in the south eastern corner of Indiana territory, renamed Indian Creek "Venoge" after a small river in the grape growing region of European Switzerland.