

## **Corunna Historical Village of Shiawassee County “The Beginnings”**

In early 1991 the Corunna Historical Commission and the Shiawassee County Historical Society formed a committee to see to the formation of a county historical village. 7.9 acres just west of McCurdy Park were purchased from the Shiawassee County Fair Board for \$24,000. A State grant for \$18,000 was obtained with the remaining money coming from the city of Corunna.

That first year 4 buildings were moved into the village.

- (1) **June 1991** saw the Spencer-Gould-Storrer home, circa 1840's, moved in. This Greek architectural house came from Owosso where the present day McDonalds now sits. Through the efforts of Jim and Faye Storrer the building was donated by McDonalds.
- (2) The second structure to be moved was the Grand Trunk Railroad caboos, circa 1894. This caboos was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Don Price of Corunna and was brought to the village in **July of 1991**.
- (3) In **August of 1991** the Lemon School, circa 1870, was moved from the corner of Scribner and Garrison Roads. The school was donated to the village by the Shiawassee County Historical Society to be used as a school museum. The society did most of the restoration of the building and still operates it today.
- (4) The last building to be moved that year, **November 1991**, came from outside Shiawassee County. This was the Christ Evangelical German Lutheran Church, circa 1888, which came from the corner of Hemlock Road and M-57. The church was moved to McCurdy Park and sat there through the winter. It was moved to its present location the following June. The first wedding in the village church took place in November of 1992. There have been over 600 weddings since.
- (5) In **1992** the Glenn Williams family of Fairfield Township donated the circa 1870's carriage barn which sits behind the Spencer-Gould-Storrer house. The family dismantled the barn, which is of a post and beam construction, and it was rebuilt at its present site in **1994**.
- (6) In **1995** the Pine Tree Cemetery building, circa 1865, was moved to the village. It was restored by the Orville Seward family in memory of Mr. Seward, a WWII veteran.
- (7) The **spring of 1997** saw the Hopson-Hornak log home, circa 1862, moved from the corner of Juddville and Geeck roads to the village. This home was donated by the Martin Hornak Jr. family. They were unaware that the home was of a log construction until they were preparing to demolish it.
- (8) The following **spring 1998** the Webster Davis-Kribs home (1904), which was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Sam Smith, was moved to the village. Because of the attached log home (1905) the building was moved in two parts. This was the most expensive of our moves at a cost of about \$40,000 including the cost of a new foundation.
- (9) In the **spring of 2002** a corn crib, donated by Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Aldrich of Oakley was moved next to the Hopson-Hornak cabin.
- (10) In **November 2002**, the New Haven Township Hall, circa 1880's was moved. It came from the corner of Henderson and State Roads and was donated by Mr. and Mrs. LaVerne Luft of Owosso. Including the foundation, this move cost \$28,000 most of which were utility costs for moving lines. Charter Communications was the only utility company that donated their services.

- (11) We also have five outhouses in the village. Two are behind the Lemon School, one behind the Spencer-Gould Storrer home, one behind the New Haven Township Hall which came from behind the old Antrim Township Hall. It was donated to the village the **spring of 2003**. The last outhouse was donated in **2010** and was put in the apple orchard behind the Hopson-Hornak log house.
- (12) In **June of 2003** we moved in the first ‘replica’ building. It is a Tinsmith Shop built and donated by Mr. Don Darling of Perry. He designed it to look like a late 1800’s shop. It comes complete with authentic vintage tinsmithing tools of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- (13) Also in **June of 2003** we brought in the church yard archway which was donated by Owosso Floral. This is not a historic structure but does add to the setting for wedding pictures.
- (14) In **June of 2007** the belfry off the old Octagon School located on Bennington Road was donated by Douglas and Pauline Reynolds. It was put in the North yard of the Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church. This 8 sided structure was built in 1850. It was designed by the Rev. George Reynolds who also served as the first teacher in the school. The bell that was in the belfry was removed in the 1960s when the school was annexed into the Corunna School District. The bell now serves as the “touchdown” bell at the Corunna High School football game.
- (15) In the **summer of 2007** a windmill was put in the yard by the Hopson-Hornak 1862 log home. It was donated by William and Charlene Vaneeckhoutte of New Lothrop. It is an unusual windmill because it is a combination of two different companies. The base or tower portion was made by Aermotor with the date unknown. The top portion was made by Flint and Walling, Kendallville, Indiana. It is a 1924 Star Model. The base is 30’ high while the wheel with 15 vanes measures 8’ across.
- (16) In **2009**, Kevin Davis coordinated the construction of a pavilion on the church circle as his Eagle Scout project.
- (17) In the **summer of 2011** the second replica building was constructed. This is a blacksmith/machine shop. It was constructed by volunteers out of old barn beams and barn siding. Work continues on the interior of the shop.
- (18) The **summer of 2013** saw the construction of the wrap around porch on the Webster Davis-Kribs home. The porch was built by volunteers who used a picture taken of the house in 1905 to replicate the porch. Railings were added to the porch to bring it up to current codes. A handicap ramp was also added on the north side of the building.

We have two outbuildings that are used for storage.

A great deal has been accomplished through volunteer help in the last 15 years. We have a twelve tree apple orchard and several gardens that were/are projects of Master Gardeners. The gardens and several trees to the south of, in front of, and to the north of the church were put in by the Owosso Garden Club. The Corunna Rotary and the Owosso Garden Club have donated money to have an irrigation system installed using water from the river to help water them. The Corunna Woman’s Club continues to help with funds for the village through their annual geranium sales. There have been hundreds of people who have donated artifacts to put into the buildings. Monies received through membership in our Friends of the Village organization help us to further develop the village.

We thank you all for your support.

The Corunna Historical Commission