



FRIENDS OF THE LIMBERLOST
PO BOX 571, GENEVA, IN 46740
FACEBOOK: FRIENDS OF THE LIMBERLOST
PHONE: 260-849-0308
email: randyplehman@comcast.net



FRIENDS OF THE LIMBERLOST ANNUAL MEETING TOOK PLACE APRIL 23, 2022

Like many not-for-profit organizations we cancelled some of our board meetings while the Covid-19 Pandemic was going strong in 2020 and 2021, and the other problem we faced was how to have an annual meeting. Our bylaws state that an “Annual Meeting of Members shall be held in the Fall each year, no later than October 31”.



In 2020, due to COVID-19, we couldn't have a regular in-person annual meeting at Limberlost State Historic Site, as we had been doing every year since FOL got incorporated in August of 1994. So, the Board decided to have an outdoor annual meeting at the Loblolly Pavilion. Some of you attended that meeting that took place on September 26, 2020, a very cold & windy day.

In 2021, due to COVID-19, the Board decided to postpone the 2021 annual meeting until sometime in 2022 when the virus might be less virulent. The pictures to the left were taken at our 2021 annual meeting that took place on April 23, 2022.

The pictures don't show everyone who attended, but 20 Friends members attended, 2 Limberlost staff members attended, and Tiffany Parker attended. Tiffany is the site manager for the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site at Rome City, IN, and the northern regional manager for the Indiana State Museum & Historic Sites.

Our Next Annual Meeting Will Be This Fall

Now that we are back on track, we need to have our next annual meeting no later than October 31.

So, if your membership is up-to-date, and there is no other reason to postpone our 2022 annual meeting, we hope you will make plans to join us for a meal, for entertainment, and for updates and overviews on what the Friends are doing to support both Limberlost State Historic Site and the Limberlost wetland restoration work of the Indiana Division of Nature Preserves.

The fall newsletter, scheduled to come out in September, will have more details on how you can make a reservation to attend this annual meeting.



**ANNUAL ONLINE AUCTION FUNDRAISER
FOR LIMBERLOST SWAMP REMEMBERED
STARTS AUGUST 1 am
ENDS AUGUST 12 at noon**



It's easy to participate! Just go to <https://www.32auctions.com/creekrun2022> and create your account. Check out 129 items that you can bid on. On August 1, you can start your bidding. Keep checking your items to see if anyone has out bid you. You can keep bidding on your favorite items until the bidding is over at noon on August 12. If you are the highest bidder, you are the winner! It's fun. It's exciting, and all the proceeds go to Limberlost Swamp Remembered (LSR), a standing committee of the Friends of the Limberlost.

LSR supports Limberlost wetland restoration. We work closely with the Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources Division of Nature Preserve to bring back portions of the Limberlost Swamp made famous by Indiana author and naturalist, Gene Stratton Porter. We typically purchase flood-prone land from willing sellers and help pay the expenses needed to return that land to its original condition—to wetlands. By participating in this auction organized by Creek Run, you are helping them raise money for Limberlost wetland restoration projects—you are helping the environment. This is the 16th year that Creek Run has conducted an annual Fundraiser for LSR.

**SWIFT NIGHT OUT
Saturday, August 6, 8:00-9:30 pm
at Limberlost State Historic Site**

Starting at 8 pm, Limberlost naturalist, Curt Burnette, does a program all about Chimney Swifts in the Limberlost classroom. Chimney Swifts are often overlooked by people because they fly around all day fairly high in the sky looking for insects, but when it starts to get dark, they look for their roosting places. So after Curt's classroom program is finished, everyone is welcome to go to a local site where Chimney Swifts are known to roost, and we will watch more than 100 Chimney Swifts enter a chimney to roost for the night. It's fun to count them.

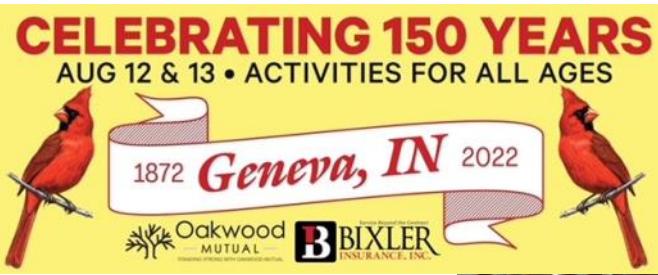
**This program is for all ages. Cost: \$2/person
(25% discount for ISMHS members)**



A yellow and red poster for the Geneva IN Sesquicentennial. It features the text 'Sesquicentennial' at the top, '1872 Geneva IN 2022' in the center, and 'AUGUST 12 & 13, 2022' at the bottom. The poster includes several small historical photographs and illustrations, and the text 'COME CELEBRATE 150 YEARS WITH US!' at the bottom.

**GENEVA'S
SESQUICENTENNIAL
THE TOWN'S 150th BIRTHDAY PARTY
2-DAY CELEBRATION**

- 50 yr. old Time Capsule removed from the ground and contents revealed
- Live Bands
- Fun Activities for children
- Fireworks
- Rockets Baseball Game
- Food Trucks
- Front porch Tea at the Limberlost Cabin
- Carriage Rides
- Covered Bridge Programs
- Lunch on the Covered Bridge
- Soarin' Hawk Live Raptor Show
- Nature/Birding hikes
- Many More Activities to be announced



A SHORT HISTORY OF GENEVA'S "CEYLON COVERED BRIDGE"

It has never been moved or relocated, but the Wabash River, which it was built to span, was channeled, dredged, and straightened in the early 1900s bypassing the Ceylon Bridge. A new supplemental metal truss bridge was built over the new river channel in 1908. Research has not yet confirmed when vehicular traffic stopped using the Ceylon Covered Bridge. Some say it was stopped in the 1970s.

Today it is primarily a pedestrian bridge, a tourist attraction, a haven for graffiti artists, and within the boundaries of Limberlost County Park since 1974. It was put on the National Register of Historic Places in 2007. It is the last covered bridge associated with the Wabash River (Indiana's state river) and is located a couple of miles beyond the city limits of Geneva. Ceylon (which is the community closest to the covered bridge) is a very small unincorporated community in Adams County, connected to the north end of Geneva.

COVERED BRIDGE EVENTS ON FRIDAY, AUGUST 12

- 10:30 AM, at the Geneva Public Library: representatives from the Indiana Covered Bridge Society will talk about the significance, the history and mechanics of Indiana covered bridges in general and the Ceylon covered bridge in particular
- 1:30 PM—there will be a guided walk-through of the Ceylon covered bridge. Guided by representatives of the Indiana Covered Bridge Society
- 2:15 PM—there will be a guided 1.25 mile nature/birding hike with a Limberlost naturalist. The hike will end at the recently restored twin iron railroad bridges over the Wabash River where an expert on iron railroad bridges will give an overview of Indiana iron railroad bridges in general and these two recently restored 1895 railroad bridges in particular.

COVERED BRIDGE EVENTS ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 13

- 10 & 11 AM Guided nature/birding hikes starting at the Ceylon Covered Bridge. Hikes will last approximately 1 hour each
- 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM—Lunch on the Ceylon Covered Bridge until the food runs out. Seating and tableware provided. Lunch is free to the public, but free-will donations are appreciated.
- 2 to 3 PM—Soarin' Hawk Raptor show featuring live birds: hawks, a bald eagle, and more. No charge to the public.
- 10 AM–3 PM—vendors will be available at the Covered Bridge site selling/showing covered bridge memorabilia and presenting educational material about covered bridges and the Wabash River.

Who are Friends of the Limberlost ?

The Friends became a 501(c)3 not-for-profit in August of 1994. Previous to 1994, the Friends were volunteers who were active helping Limberlost State Historic Site with events, programs, and such, but when Ken Brunswick applied for an EPA 319 Grant for the Friends of the Limberlost to improve & protect the surface water quality of local watersheds, IDEM said the Friends needed to have 501(c)3 status, and so the Friends successfully applied for and was awarded that status in 1994-1995. With that 501(c)3 status established and with Ken's efforts to bring back portions of the Limberlost swamp, the mission of the Friends became 2-fold:

The Indiana State Museum & State Historic Sites (ISMHS) operates Limberlost State Historic Site. The Friends assist Limberlost SHS by providing volunteers for events and school outreach and by providing financial support for approved projects that help preserve the legacy of Gene Stratton-Porter.

Limberlost Swamp Remembered, a committee of the Friends, works with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Nature Preserves to promote the acquisition, restoration, and enjoyment of wetlands in the Wabash/Limberlost/Loblolly watersheds associated with the works of Indiana author and naturalist, Gene Stratton-Porter.

The current Board of Directors for Friends of the Limberlost:

| | | |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Willy DeSmet | President | Portland, IN |
| LaDonna Habegger | Vice-President | Berne, IN |
| Randy Lehman | Treasurer | Geneva, IN |
| Terri Lehman | Secretary | Ft. Wayne, IN |
| Melissa Fey | Board Member | Linn Grove, IN |
| Sean Dedert | Board Member | Geneva, IN |
| David Rezits | Board Member | Ft. Wayne, IN |
| Bill Hubbard | Board Member | Geneva, IN |



The Friends of the Limberlost have monthly board meetings that takes place on the 3rd Monday of every month, except there is no meeting in December. The meetings are in the Limberlost Visitor Center classroom at Limberlost State Historic Site. Limberlost Swamp Remembered Committee meets at 6:30 PM immediately followed by the Board Meeting. Both meetings are open to the public. Currently FOL needs to fill 4 board vacancies. The FOL Board of Directors welcomes anyone who is interested in learning more about what we do and why we do it. Old or young, retired or still working, if you are interested in nature, local history, and the environment, or you are just looking to be part of a friendly group of like-minded people interested in sharing what they know about nature and the Limberlost, you should join us. Attend a meeting and stay for a little while or stay for the entire meeting. There's no need to let us know in advance that you are coming. Discover one of the good things that life has to offer by landing in the Limberlost. For more information call or text Randy Lehman at 260-849-0308 or email randylehman50@gmail.com



March 2022 photo by Randy Lehman of a mature bald eagle near the old stone quarry just east of Geneva

Unlikely Summer Residents: Cliff Swallows in Geneva

by Terri Gorney Lehman

Adams County is known for being one of the flattest counties in Indiana. So what are cliff swallows doing in Geneva?

www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Cliff.Swallows/



In the spring of 2016, a small flock of cliff swallows were seen by Randy Lehman and myself around the Loblolly Creek close to the Limberlost Swamp nature Preserve. Some of the birds were perched on electrical wires and others were busy scooping up mud from the creek banks and taking it below the bridge. It appeared that they were building nests under the bridge that goes over the Loblolly Creek on CR 300W—very close to the intersection of the county line road between Adams County & Jay Co.



On May 27, Curt Burnette was able to confirm that there was a colony of cliff swallows nesting here. These insect eating birds have learned to adapt themselves to use man-made structures such as barns, bridges, or culverts for nesting. They build mud nests side by side that cling to vertical walls.

I have observed them in similar locations in the heart of Fort Wayne on bridges over the St. Joe River and St Mary's River in 2019-2022.

Since a colony can eat thousands of insects a day, like mosquitoes, they are a welcome summer resident.

In 2020, on May 15, Randy and I observed a flock of over 30 cliff swallows busily catching insects on the wing over the Limberlost Nature Preserve.

We were pleased to see on May 21 of this year the arrival of the first cliff swallows in the same spot where we first saw them in 2016. The next day, we were able to document that they were nest building.



Cliff swallows gather mud with their beaks and build nests like you see in the picture to the left.

It's wonderful to see cliff swallows in our area. Gene Stratton-Porter did not mention them being in Geneva during her time, but she did mention seeing "swallows" flying around a bridge near Geneva. Perhaps they were cliff swallows and Gene did not realize it.

Maurice McClue (1878-1957) a conservationist, attorney, and state representative from Angola, wrote in his "Natural History Memoranda" that cliff swallows were extirpated from Steuben County around 1920. He was pleased to note that a small colony was using the side of a barn for their nests in Cass County in June of 1955.

Southern Adams County appears to agree with swallows. Barn, tree, bank, rough-winged and cliff swallows have all been documented here. Cliff swallows are sometimes mis-identified as barn swallows. Look for the buff-white forehead patch like a headlamp to help you ID the cliff swallow.

A Hitching Post at the Deacon's Trail Parking Lot

by Randy Lehman

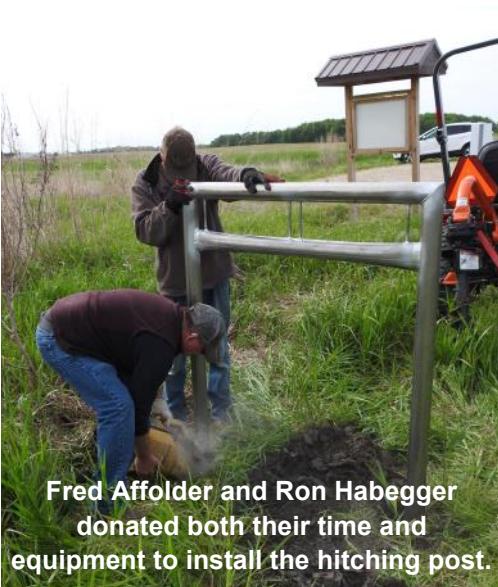
This spring we noticed that the parking lot at the Limberlost Swamp Nature Preserve had a horse and buggy tied to a nearby electric pole. It appeared that the Amish were there to enjoy hiking the nature trails, but the parking lot was not designed to park a horse & buggy since there is nothing to tie a horse to. We could tell the horse was not happy. He kept pulling on his reins, and the parked buggy seemed in a precarious place-half in the roadside weeds and half on the county road. We waited in the area long enough to talk to some Amish boys, who were out birding on the trail. We talked about how much they would appreciate having a place to park their buggy like we have a place to park our cars. So we brought the matter to the attention of the Friends Board of Directors, and the

Board agreed to purchase and install one 4ft. wide stainless steel hitching post at the Deacon's Trail parking lot, and if this went well, they would consider installing other hitching posts where needed.



Terri and I canvassed the county to find the best price for a stainless steel hitching post. We ended up at Schwartz Steel not far outside the city limits of Berne. Ivan Schwartz, the proprietor, agreed with our assessment that a 4 ft. wide stainless steel hitching post was the best long term choice. He quoted us a price, but he soon lowered that price when he found out that the Friends just wanted the Amish to have a good place to park their buggies at one of the nature preserves.

On May 23, the day that Fred Affolder and I picked up the hitching post, Ivan said he really appreciated what we were doing, and he said that the next time we wanted to buy another hitching post to serve the Adams County Amish, he would quote us an even a better price. It was good to hear his interest in what we were doing. I'm also the President of the Adams County Parks Dept., and I know several of the county parks could really use hitching posts. The Amish are one of the biggest users of Adams County Parks. They like to picnic in the parks where their children can enjoy the playground equipment and the men can fish. In the 5-year plan for the county parks, which was just recently updated, it includes the need for more hitching posts in all the county parks.



Did you know that the Lagrange-Elkhart Amish community is the largest in the state of Indiana and the Adams / Jay County Amish are Indiana's 2nd largest community (there are an estimated 10,630 Amish in Adams & Jay Counties—online source.

HERE'S A BOOK WE CAN RECOMMEND

MOTHS OF THE LIMBERLOST



2022 UPDATE BY KENNETH BRUNSWICK

GENE STRATTON-PORTER

The Indiana State Museum gift shop at Limberlost State Historic Site recently added an updated version of Gene Stratton-Porter's *Moths of the Limberlost* to the books it sells at the site.

It's a paperback book that you'll notice states "2022 Update by Kenneth Brunswick". Most of the readers of this newsletter recognize the name Ken Brunswick and need no further explanation, but for those of you who don't know Ken, let me quote directly from the forward of this book...

"...*Moths of the Limberlost* has been out of print for some time, save for some quite awful reproductions that either contained illegible copies of Gene's photographs or omitted them completely. These substandard copies are what led to Ken Brunswick updating and republishing *Moths*. This is the fourth book of her works that Ken has updated, for both Gene and nature lovers everywhere. One may ask, who is Ken to be updating Gene's nature studies? Aside from spending his entire life in the famed shadow of Gene's land of the Limberlost, he is responsible for re-creating the swamps and marshlands that were in Gene's words "shorn, branded and tamed," contributing in part to her leaving Geneva for Rome City in 1913.

In the early 1990s, Ken began to work with state officials and local residents to protect and restore what is now roughly 1700 acres of the original Limberlost footprint. Though officially retired as the East Central Regional Ecologist for the Indiana Division of Nature Preserves, Ken still works tirelessly to not only uphold Gene's legacy, but to continue with his legacy of restoration and renewal, one for which Gene herself would most certainly champion, as the creatures she loves so dearly are returning to a place they once called home, the Limberlost." —Shaun Payne, Limberlost Site Manager

This book is for sale now in both the Limberlost State Historic Site gift shop in Geneva and the Gene Stratton-Porter State Historic Site gift shop in Rome City for \$29.50 + SALES TAX. Members of the Friends of the Limberlost will get a 10% discount when they purchase the book at the Limberlost gift shop in Geneva.

A BRIEF UPDATE ON THE ROYER PROPERTY RESTORATION—At our board meeting on May 16, the Friends Board met with two representatives from the Indiana Natural Resources Foundation (INRF) to see whether or not the Foundation would help us with the restoration costs for the Royer property. Jody Kress, Executive Director of INRF, and Rob Seilheimer, took information about our project back to INRF, but the INRF Board of Directors failed to reach unanimous support for our project, which was needed because our project was outside the range of counties that INRF typically serves. We were disappointed with their decision, but we remain committed to the project. We have informed the US Fish & Wildlife Service, the agency leading the Royer restoration, that they can proceed anytime because we have all the funds needed. The latest communication from our USFWS contact is that groundwork could start in July or August depending on soil and weather conditions.

FRIENDS OF THE LIMBERLOST NEW MEMBERSHIP & MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Friends of the Limberlost is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation. We support Limberlost State Historic Site, which is owned and operated by the Indiana State Museum. We also support the IDNR—Division of Nature Preserves which manages the restoration of wetlands in the Limberlost Swamp Conservation Area. Your membership dues and extra donations are vital to the many projects honoring the memory and legacy of Indiana author, naturalist, and nature photographer, Gene Stratton-Porter.

You decide how your annual dues will be spent. You choose one of the following:

- Choose the Limberlost Historic Site Friends who support projects and help pay expenses associated with the improvement or the betterment of Limberlost State Historic Site
- Choose Limberlost Swamp Remembered, a committee of the Friends of the Limberlost, which is primarily focused on Limberlost Swamp restoration projects
- Or you can support both missions of the Friends of the Limberlost

As a member you receive our quarterly newsletter. You get one free tour of the Limberlost Cabin, a 10% discount on Limberlost Gift Shop purchases, and you get a 15% discount if you purchase a membership in the Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites. As a member of the Friends of the Limberlost you help us preserve the legacy of Gene Stratton-Porter and help us restore the environment by bringing back the Limberlost Swamp.

If you have any questions about your membership, please call or text Randy Lehman, membership chairperson, at 260-849-0308 or email randyplehman@comcast.net

Please make checks payable to: FRIENDS OF THE LIMBERLOST. Mail both your check and completed membership form to: PO BOX 571, GENEVA IN 46740

STEP ONE

Select which mission of the Friends Group you want to support by checking a box to the right

Limberlost Historic Site Friends—dues and any additional donations you make supports Limberlost State Historic Site and associated events, projects, and programs

Limberlost Swamp Remembered Friends—dues and any additional donation you make supports Limberlost wetland restoration projects managed by the Indiana Division of Nature Preserves

Combination Limberlost Historic Site and Swamp Remembered Friends—dues and any additional donation are equally shared by both groups

Older Adults—\$10

Business—\$50 (Please enter the name of a contact-person below)

Other Individuals—\$20

Family—\$35

Lifetime—\$1,000

NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Check the box if you want your newsletter mailed to you via the US Postal Service. We'd like to EMAIL the newsletter to you because it saves us money and time, and the e-newsletter is in color and has more pages. However, we are happy to mail you a "paper copy" of the newsletter, if that is what you prefer—just check the box. If you check the box and give us an email address, we will send you both versions of the newsletter.

AMOUNT ENCLOSED (additional donation appreciated!): \$ _____

ANY COMMENTS?