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# Town Crier

Located at the Gateway to Beautiful Bruce County



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## News story turning into a "Ripley's Believe It Or Not"

By John H. Hafermehl  
Founder/Publisher  
Town Crier

To introduce our readers to "a very interesting Cross Border incident", we have to step back a week Friday when our neighbour businessman, Pete Liesemer dropped us a little bit of news happenings after receiving his weekly (Thursday) delivery from Home Hardware.

(Pete is a Fourth Generation owner of Liesemer's Home Hardware, the Oldest Family-Owned Home Hardware in Canada. The Liesemer store has been operating "in the exact same building" all those years. Pete will be celebrating 140 years on May, 2nd, 2013.)

A Home Hardware driver told Pete about an interesting visit he made to "Lehman's in Kidron, Ohio". He remarked he was speechless to see a full-sized Lobsinger Threshing Machine hanging from the ceiling. He also knew that those machines were originally manufactured here in Mildmay.

Pete took me to his office and we found out details about the store. With that info, I returned to the Crier office and sent off an e-mail asking a series of questions.

Founder Jay E. Lehman quickly returned this reply. "We do have a Lobsinger threshing machine on display. However I don't know anything about it except that we bought it from an Amishman who had been using it until the year we bought it... five years ago. It looks very good."

He sent a couple of photos and like the Home Hardware driver said, "the entire threshing machine was just above the checkout counter above the floor on a large shelf". (Look at the accompanying photo to see how The Lehmans managed that outstanding feat).

From past dealings with "the last living Lobsinger connection" (John E. Schmidt who is married for over sixty years to Dolores Lobsinger Schmidt) the Crier Publisher knew that each and every threshing machine manufactured here had a large four-digit number placed on the axle board between the two front wheels.

Carrick Township some two miles north of Mildmay). Tony was also a Lobsinger employee from 1950 to 1972 along with his brothers Thomas, James and Leonard.

Tony tells us he eventually sold the machine to Lorne Wilfang who unfortunately was killed in an accident and the machine was sold by auction. It's not known the list of owners from that point on, but we do know now in the year 2013 that same machine adorns Lehman's in Kidron (Ohio).

### About the owners

Jay E. Lehman founded the business in 1955 to serve the local Amish and others without electricity.

His vision was to preserve the past for future generations. "I was concerned that some day the Amish would not be able to maintain their simple ways of life because those products would no longer be available," he said. His goal was, and still is, to provide authentic, historical products to those seeking a simpler life.

Because Jay had the foresight to look to the past for his business, he turned a one-room country hardware store into a low tech superstore.

It was in this climate that Jay decided to carry products that the Amish customers needed to preserve their way of life. He thought that maybe one day no one would be making butter churns, apple peelers and drying racks.

When you now step into Lehman's 1840's era barn, you'll feel like you have just stepped back one hundred years!!

At Lehman's, being old-fash-

ioned is always in fashion. That's why their massive 32,000 square foot retail store contains four pre-Civil War era buildings, including a Buggy Barn cinema where you can relax on Amish-made hickory church pews while learning about organic gardening, oil-lamp restoration or wood stove maintenance.

Museum-quality antiques line the walls and thousands of products you thought were no longer being made fill the shelves at Lehman's.

You'll fall in love with the many oil lamps, handmade pottery and copper cookie cutters, wood-burning cook stoves and retro refrigerators, wooden and tin toys, cast-iron cookware, hand tools and water pumps.

### Family operated

Jay Lehman and family have now operated Lehman's Retail Store located on the square in Kidron for more than a half century.

Besides being The Town Crier's first contact, Jay likes being referred to as "The Founder" and his daughter, Glenda Lehman Ervin has also been helping us to get the Lobsinger Threshing story. She has the title of being the Vice President of Marketing and lives in Dalton (Ohio).

Jay's son, Galen Lehman, has been appointed President of the company and is responsible for the day-to-day operations. He began his career at Lehman's as a teenager and now leads the growing business in using high tech to sell their products all over the world.

On that point, Lehman's ship old-fashioned non-electric mer-

chandise via a new catalogue and website. Their customer base includes missionaries and doctors working in developing countries; homesteaders and environmentalists living in remote areas; people with unreliable electricity living on islands and mountains; second home owners, hunters, fishers and cabin dwellers; the "chronically nostalgic" and even to some Hollywood set designers who require some historically accurate period pieces.

### Kidron, Ohio

The Crier Publisher also asked Jay Lehman to tell us more about his hometown, such topics as the population of Kidron and any other interesting facts about the community.

His daughter, Glenda filed this reply which will also be very interesting reading for our subscribers.

Although there are cities, villages and townships in the State of Ohio, KIDRON is an unincorporated community in southwestern Sugar Creek Township in Wayne County, Ohio, United States of America.

Kidron was originally settled in 1819 by a group of Swiss Mennonites wishing to escape religious persecution and poor farming conditions in their homeland in the Sonnenberg area of Switzerland near the Jura Mountains.

In Switzerland, the Swiss Mennonites were referred to as "Die Stillen im Lande" which meant "the quiet people in the country".

They originally named their new home Sonnenberg but than later gave way to the present day name of Kidron.

With regards to education, a small public elementary school is located in Kidron for students in the first three grades and is part of the Dalton school system. There is also a Central Christian School which is a private Kindergarten to Grade 12 school that is owned and operated by the Ohio Conference of the Mennonite Church.

Kidron is home to an outdoor flea market held on Thursdays and Saturdays (weather permitting) and since 1929 a retail store called "Kidron Town and States of America".

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**Glenda Erwin**  
Vice President

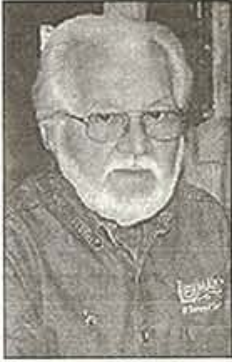


**Galen Lehman**  
President



Jay Lehman then told us that the number was "6128" which we passed along to John Schmidt. It took a lot of searching but by Thursday evening (April 18th) he said he was successful.

First owner of 6128 was Tony Berberich (who farms in



**Jay E. Lehman**  
*The Founder*



Shoppers and tourists visiting the Leyman Hardware store in Kidron (Ohio) point and gasp at this full sized Lobsinger Bros Threshing Machine that is specially shelved at the store's checkout. The Lobsinger "Lion" Threshing Machines were manufactured here in Mildmay, Ontario, Canada. It was "just by chance" that the Crier Publisher found out about it when chatting with neighbour businessman, Pete Liesemer and a quick e-mail to the present owner in Ohio gave us the above news story.