



Historic Montcalm Heritage Village gets upgrades

MCCF matching grant supports repairs

By Lori Hansen

Repairs to preserve the Doctor's House and caboose in Montcalm Heritage Village were recently completed with support of a matching grant from the Montcalm Community College Foundation.

Montcalm Heritage Village, located on MCC's Sidney campus, sits quietly for most of the year. But the buildings and artifacts are alive with stories of history of the Montcalm County area. The historic buildings also require upkeep to maintain and preserve the buildings for future generations.

The Montcalm Heritage Village committee was recently the recipient of a matching grant from the MCC Foundation to be used for projects in the village.

"The project committee determined that work needed to be done to preserve the Doctor's House and the caboose," said Shannon Neumann-Kilduff, Montcalm Heritage Village president and a member of the project committee.

"The Doctor's House received new siding and windows, with a new front door donated by Dale and Judy White. The caboose received a new roof and windows," she said.

According to Lisa Lund, Executive Director for the MCCF, the Heritage Village Committee requested the grant as a 50/50 match to their \$12,000 in funds to complete repairs on the Doctor's House, caboose and coal car.

"The Foundation has funded projects for the village before and recognizes the value that Heritage Village offers our community," Lund said. "Its unique history brings people to the college's Sidney campus and also helps our community connect with a bygone era.

"People see the value of Heritage Village as an extension of the college's mission of transforming lives through quality education," Lund added.

Construction on the Doctor's House was completed in September, according to Neumann-Kilduff.

Tony Brown, of AE Brown Construction LLC, led the project, which aimed to provide upgrades that would offer less maintenance, but that also would give the appearance of a building from the turn of the century.

"We fixed the porch lattice, replaced the wood with siding, and replaced the door with a fiberglass door, but it looks like wood," Brown said.

Brown has a history with the Village committee, first doing work in 2003. In 2012, the company worked on the hat shoppe and jailhouse; in 2014, the township hall; 2015, the general store; and in 2019 redoing the church and putting siding on it.

"Working on these old buildings is a lot harder than most people think," Brown said. "You have to keep trying to make it work, but keep the aesthetics of the original building."

"Also, we have to remember that people are coming to see what's inside the buildings, and not look at the siding on the outside. We try to stay true, within our limits," he said.

Neumann-Kilduff is pleased with the results.

"Tony and his crew do a great job," she said. ■

For more information

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