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January Newsletter 2015

Ice Harvesting — Sunday, February 15, 2015

At this time of year when many of us are wishing that winter was snow and ice-free, many Pennsylvania German settlers were preparing to make use of the ice. This valuable commodity would be harvested from frozen waterways and carefully stored in thick-walled stone ice houses, where it would last into the summer months. Having ice on hand allowed our ancestors to preserve a variety of foods and provided the luxury of serving guests a cool drink in warmer weather. At the Dreibelbis Farm, a pond located on the property is frozen with thick ice after many days of freezing temperatures. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the residents of the farm would carve blocks of ice from this pond and cart them to the nearby ice house on the property to be the hardest work they did all year.

On Sunday, February 15th at 2:30 p.m., the Dreibelbis Farm Historical Society will host our second annual ice harvesting at the historic farm outside Virginville. Last year's demonstration of cutting and harvesting ice blocks from the ice pond, hauling the ice to the ice house, loading the ice house, and hands-on use of antique tools brought out a crowd of 80 folks on a snowy, cold day. Help us cut and haul some ice. Warm yourself at the bonfire and enjoy a cup of hot chocolate. The farm grounds and nature trail will be open to the public.



The event is free to the public and will be held rain or shine, with only blizzard conditions cancelling. Attendees are encouraged to dress for the weather and be prepared to walk on an unpaved, farm lane.

The Historic Dreibelbis Farm is located on Route 143 south of the village of Virginville. GPS Address: 356 Hard Hill Road, Hamburg, PA. Parking is available on-site.

This is the first of several events to be hosted in 2015 by the DFHS, to fulfill their mission to preserve and protect the historic Dreibelbis farm and to make it available to the public for educational, historical, and environmental purposes. Look for our annual Wetlands and Wildflowers Walk, a Spring Peeper Walk, and the fourth annual Historic Farm Festival incoming months.

Glimpses of last Winter's Ice Harvest



Mark Dreibelbis wielding an ice chisel while the first saw cut is made on the ice pond.



Children harnessed to the ice plow that was used to mark the pond before cutting.

For more information visit www.Dreibelbisfarm.org, "Historic Dreibelbis Farm" on **Facebook** or contact Mark Dreibelbis at (610) 488-7896.