

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (May 8, 2009):

CAPTAIN SCOTT HOUSE EFFORT IN LEADERSHIP CRISIS

The committee that formed just over two years ago to save the Captain Scott House from demolition during the widening of State Route 161 is foundering.

If you have an interest in seeing the house restored, the next meeting of the Friends of Captain Scott Committee will be a critical one to attend, Wednesday, May 13, at 7:00 p.m. at the Alexandria Public Library, 10 Maple Street, Alexandria. More volunteers are needed for jobs like helping arrange for or to do actual repairs and fundraising, as well as for taking leadership in tasks like planning individual events and recordkeeping.

"Several of us who put in the huge number of hours needed to make the move of the house happen have had to cut back," said Donna Herring, outgoing chair of the Friends of Captain Scott Committee of the Alexandria Community Council. "Some had to get back to their paying work. My family has moved to a new home with all the work that entails, and last fall I started having medical problems that have reached a point where I now need to usefully hand off most of what needs to be done, and continue to help out in a much smaller way."

The house has been sitting on its new foundation, largely paid for by donations of cash or in kind from the Licking County Foundation, Brookside Materials, Foundations Plus, Hutchinson Materials, and North Central Insulation for about eight months. The basement foundation was backfilled and the ground graded by Endsley Grading and Drainage and left to settle for the winter, and some minor repairs have been made. Thompson Building Associates is lined up to replace some short sections of rotted sill, and All Aspects Coatings is ready to paint the house if only a carpenter can be found to replace several small missing window moldings, replace some rotted siding, and repair the eaves.

"We have the painter on board, he's been very generous and enthusiastic, but he can't work until we have it ready," said Herring. "The landowners are unhappy, as are the township trustees, that the house has not been painted. If we can find a carpenter who can volunteer some time or a donor to pay a carpenter, we'll be past the bottleneck and a lot can happen fast. The roof and gutters need attention very soon as well."

"Frankly," said Herring with tears in her eyes, "if we cannot muster the volunteers to pick up the slack now, we will lose the house -- after all the money, all the sweat, all

the ingenuity and anxiety that was invested by hundreds of businesses and hundreds more individuals."

Pausing to continue Herring said, "I would especially regret not delivering to the expectations of the Licking County Foundation, but even more I wanted to live up to the challenge given by the anonymous family who gave the \$10,000 gift that jump-started the effort to save the house. The Foundation and that family are living examples of the idea that we should each in our own way invest in our community to make it better for all of us. Park National Bank and AEP stepped up to invest, too, and I expected that our community could step up to match in effort what we could not easily match in funding; I hope I have not been proven wrong."

The Captain Scott House was built circa 1870 for Joseph M. Scott, who was an outspoken abolitionist and Civil War captain who raised Company B of the 76th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. Captain Scott was a prominent and successful farmer and early local historian. The house is a classic example of the Victorian Italianate architectural style and includes a carved spiral staircase among other handcrafted details. It had to be moved from the intersection of state routes 37 and 161 to accommodate the widening of 161, and it is now a mile northwest of its original site.

Current plans are for the first floor to be a community center, and for the second floor to be a museum focused on the Abolitionist movement and the Civil War and how each affected local families and the regional economy.

The Friends of Captain Scott Committee is part of the Alexandria Community Council, a nonprofit group active for over 75 years in support of community events and projects in the village and St. Albans township. To support this historic preservation project, send your tax-deductible donations or send a note about your willingness to volunteer, to the Alexandria Community Council, Friends of Captain Scott Committee, P.O. Box 234, Alexandria OH 43001, or contact Donna Herring (740-587-2569), email CaptainScott@AlexandriaOH.org. For further information see the website www.CaptainScottHouse.org.

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