



Proposed Swiss American Historical Society Centennial Traveling Exhibit

Rationale

2027 is the centennial of the Swiss American Historical Society (SAHS). To celebrate this milestone, the Centennial Committee would like to create a traveling exhibit where people can learn more about our history and the Society's impact on Swiss-Americans, and their communities throughout the United States. This exhibit will increase awareness for the organization, and should grow Swiss American Historical Society membership and bring in new contributing authors. SAHS was involved with a traveling exhibition "Helvetica Americana – Name Settlements in America" that went to Wisconsin, Oregon and Georgia in 1991. It is also very timely to showcase and discuss historical immigration to the United States, as recent and present-day immigration is creating division and debate.

Audience

The targeted audience is the general public. We are contacting community centers, museums, historical societies and Swiss Consulates across the United States to ascertain their interest in hosting the exhibit. We have received some positive responses through our outreach. This will appeal to Swiss-Americans, but also hopefully spark interest by those who like history or Switzerland (or both) and want to learn more. We believe it will especially generate interest in younger audiences who will then ask their parents or grandparents about their upbringing, Swiss traditions and culture. The Swiss in America have a deep, rich history and we want to share that with others.

Exhibit Locations

- Swiss Center of North America, New Glarus, Wisconsin
- Switzerland County Historical Museum, Vevay, Indiana
- Tell City Historical Society & Museum, Tell City, Indiana
- Swiss Community Historical Society, Bluffton, Ohio
- Germanic-American Institute, St. Paul, Minnesota
- Aelpler Gruppe Swiss Clubhouse, Newark, California
- Laurel County Historical Society, London, Kentucky
- Helvetia Community Hall, Helvetia, West Virginia
- Embassy of Switzerland, Washington, DC

We will have the banners on view during our annual meeting at the Chicago History Museum on October 2, 2027.

The exhibit displays will feature 8 retractable banners (see example below). They are easy to transport and assemble. We are working with a graphic designer to use our content and images to create them.



**DONORS
(As of August 2025):**

JEANNE GONZENBACH
In Memory of her husband, Max Gonzenbach,
SAHS member since 1992, who died in 2024

THE NORTHLANDS FOUNDATION

RICHARD HACKEN

Proposed Content for Each Banner

1. Swiss Immigration to and Impact on the United States
2. Founding of SAHS
3. Notable Swiss Americans
4. SAHS 1930s – 1950s
5. SAHS Reactivation – 1960s & 1970s
6. Leo Schelbert and SAHS – 1980s & 1990s
7. Publications & Annual Meetings
8. SAHS in the 21st Century

If you are interested in donating to the traveling exhibit, or being a sponsor, please contact SAHS President Thomas Quinn Marabello at thomas.marabello@gmail.com.

For more information about the Swiss American Historical Society, visit our website:

<https://www.swiss-american-historical-society.org/>

The Swiss American Historical Society was founded in Chicago, Illinois in 1927. It was established to promote the study of the Swiss in North America, Swiss-American relations, and Swiss immigration to the United States.

We are a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.