

# Peter Jones Homestead In Limbo

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**AMITY TWP., Pa.** -- Pieces of one of Berks County's oldest homes have been sitting in an old barn for years, waiting to be put back together.

But time is running out.

You could find the home of settlers in Berks County since 1772. It sat off Route 422 in Amity Township for more than 230 years.

But in 2005, the Peter Jones homestead was dismantled to make way for development, and piece by piece, carefully taken down.

The original woodwork and trim was found underneath the remodeled walls.

Very few of these buildings still remain, said Charles Miller.

And the hope has always been to rebuild it.

We just lack one piece of the puzzle, said Miller, a piece of land.

With the help of state legislators, the Amity Heritage Society was able to secure \$60,000 in grants for the reconstruction.

Miller said there were a few prospects over the years, but they've all fallen through. And time is not on the society's side.

After your shelf life is up, said Miller, you have to return the money and for us, that's pretty soon.

Time runs out at the end of June.

Ideally, the society needs about a half-acre of land and it doesn't have to be in Amity Township.

The homestead would be used as a historical and environmental education center, a place to learn about conservation and preservation.

The building would serve as an example.

It's not necessarily the location as it is the purpose, said Miller.

Once the land comes through, it wouldn't take long for the boards to be put back up.

Miller said in just a couple months, we could have a building. They would first work on the structure and the stone on the outside and then part of the education would happen on the inside.

They had to utilize everything that they had to live their lives, said Miller.

It's the same spirit of survival the society is now holding onto, hoping to find a new home for one of Berks County's oldest.

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