

Mark your calendars for the annual FOB picnic

*September 19, noon to 5 p.m.
at the Fling family farm,
Hillsboro, Ohio*

**Background photo: The Fling barn, winner of this year's Barn of the Year award
for adaptive reuse and the site for this year's Friends of Ohio Barns picnic.
Look inside this issue for more information.**

Photo by Tom O'Grady



FRIENDS OF OHIO BARNs

P.O. Box 203
Burbank, Ohio 44214



The Old BARN POST

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Ohio Barn Conference X

Well, after ten years of barn conferences we ran out of things to talk about and just ate cake. Not!

We did have some cake, but the conference was full of meat. We had good breakout demonstrations and good presenters.

Bill Kimball came down from Michigan and gave us some good guidance as we embark on our next decade with FOB. Bill assisted in organizing the Michigan Barn Preservation Network and was instrumental in helping Friends of Ohio Barns get off the ground. Bill is an adjunct curator at Michigan State University's museum. Bill retired from MSU as a professor and extension specialist in community and organizational development. He encouraged FOB to involve institutions in the barn conservation movement. Bill updated the group on Michigan's efforts, with 239 dues-paying members and 165 attendees at the 2009 conference. He recommended a strategic plan—speaking to Ohio's township government association, getting out more technical publications to barn owners, and trying to get our hands on matching funding or outright grants.

Breakout sessions before lunch included demonstrations in the use of a broad axe

and adze by Brian Beals and Tom Kumbusky. Paul Knoebel set up his mini barn and discussed its usefulness in education and outreach efforts. Phyllis Knoebel made certain that the young-

sters on hand had ample opportunity to pound wooden pegs into a plank. Others took the time to study wood samples and look at tree rings, grain, and other characteristics of some old pieces of timber. Ric Beck demonstrated some timber frame repairs.

Conference attendees also heard "Making Timber Talk" from Professor Darrin Rubino from Hanover College in Indiana. He gave an interesting introduction to dating old timbers from tree ring studies. He notified the group of the International Tree Ring Database of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association. We all had opportunity to handle a variety of wood types and to inspect the different grains and tree ring patterns.

The Barn Detectives gave their usual lively presentation, taking a look back at some of the unique characteristics of the barns observed on the Friday tour. The afternoon concluded with folks asking questions regarding their own barns to a seven-member barn repair panel before the silent auction.

— Ric Beck



Photo by Dan Troth

**Barn detectives Larry Sulzer and Rudy Christian hold court
from the loft of one of the barns on Friday's barn tour
while Gary Wechter referees.**



Please recycle this newsletter. Share it with a friend.
Printed on recycled paper, of course.

Looking to the next decade

Summertime is here! Time to enjoy the outdoors, friends and family, iced tea and grilled food ... all things summer!

If you missed our tenth annual spring fling, you missed another great one! Being around for ten years takes a lot of hard work, support, and dedication from people like you. I would especially like to thank the board members for another outstanding job and Keith Sommer, our local contact in Bluffton, for his fantastic effort. You all are pretty terrific people!

I would also like to again thank our barn hosts for opening up their wonderful buildings to us: David Moser, Pete Myer, Dennis Eddinger, Lynn Miller, David Voth, Tim Schumacher, and the Swiss Community Historical Society. It was a beautiful day to tour some special places, and the lunch stop catered by Ginny Moser and the First Mennonite Church was terrific.

Thanks also to Mark Boussara, Elaine Adams, and Bluffton University for being such wonderful hosts. It was a wonderful venue for our conference. Thank you to our presenters: keynote speaker Bill Kimball; the Junior Barn Detective program with Paul Knoebel, Larry Sulzer, and Gary Clower; Darrin Rubino and his wood dendrochronology; Tim and Christine Barnes with barn painting; our barn repair panel of Brian Beals, Dr. Ann Christy, Rudy Christian, Paul Knoebel, Gary Clower, and Tim Barnes; and last but not least the Barn Detectives, Rudy and Larry.

As I said, being around for ten years is no easy feat. It takes constant work, development, and planning to keep this organization moving forward. Be sure and thank a board member. We introduced some new ideas this past conference and revised some older ones. All this is done to continue educating Ohioans about the importance of barn stewardship and preservation now and in the future.

So take time to enjoy your barn and your summer! Gaze out at your barn as the sun is setting, or better yet sip some of that cold tea in the doorway in the evening and think not only of the builders of these barns, but also of the preservers of them, and please continue to support us as we work together to preserve Ohio's heritage. Thanks!

Random Thoughts

Ric Beck
Friends of Ohio Barns president

FOB fall picnic

Please plan to join us for the Friends of Ohio Barns fall picnic September 19 from noon to 5 p.m. at the Fling family farm in beautiful Hillsboro, Ohio. We will provide the meats and drinks if you can bring a side dish.

Bill Fling, our 2009 recipient of the Barn of the Year award for adaptive re-use, will host the event. He offers beautiful and unique weddings in the country at his farmstead, and the barn is one of the focal points to the experience. Part of the fun for the day will be a tour of the grounds and the barn. Bring your barn detective hat with you!

The address is 8205 Berrysville Road, Hillsboro, 45133. Call toll free (877) 248-3456 for directions and check out their website, www.flingbarn.com, for pictures and more information. This will be a rain or shine event, so come out and see us!

— Ric Beck

News flashes

FOB President Ric Beck was recently voted in to fill a vacancy on the board of the National Barn Alliance (NBA). Ric will represent Ohio on the NBA and says he looks forward to advancing the barn cause nationally and statewide.

FOB has a new board member. Sarah Woodall, from Vienna, Ohio, has been a regular conference attendee over the past decade. She has agreed to serve as secretary for the organization. Welcome aboard, Sarah.

My reflections of FOB

When I look back on ten years of association with Friends of Ohio Barns, I instantly reflect on the people I've met. Whether it's the fantastic board members I've been privileged to work with, the members and volunteers that have helped me, or the barn owners who have let me into their lives (and barns), I am constantly amazed at their affability, generosity, and compassion for Ohio's barns. It is truly what keeps me coming back! — Ric Beck

Friends of Ohio Barns Board of Directors

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Paul Knoebel	Stark County	(330) 882-5027
Larry Sulzer	Summit County	(330) 657-2135



Glandorf Photo History

The Gerdeman family engaged a photographer to photograph them in their farmyard. In addition to a couple of large barns visible in the background, one can see the double crib log barn to the left with a large haystack behind. The smokehouse to the right of the log barn has bars on the windows. This was a common sight on the farm and in town to ward off would-be thieves, especially the gypsy bands which moved through the county in the summer.

'Historic'

(Continued from Page 10)

Maybe your library or historical society has old stories and photos of barn raisings or barn fires or the introduction of a round barn or a Sears barn in the community. Maybe someone was born in a barn or baptized or buried there.

Your research may turn up images of old timber frame mills, livery stables, or agricultural buildings on fairgrounds, convents, county homes, or society and state institutions.

Help us put together a comprehensive

archive of photographs, articles, and local histories of Ohio's barn heritage. It is a much richer heritage than we think. Maybe more than half of Ohio's barns are gone. With the impressive barns that still grace the landscape, we can only imagine what has been lost. We can keep some of that heritage alive with an archive made up of material currently sitting idle in cabinets, family photo collections, and local history centers.

Send pictures and stories to Friends of Ohio Barns by mail or e-mail. If by mail, send either printed photos and articles or submit materials on a disc. If you scan photos, make certain they have a mini-

mum resolution of 300 pixels per inch and a minimum photo size of six inches by four inches so they can be printed. Send information to FOB's e-mail address or the mailing address on this newsletter. Try to provide as much information about the photos and articles as possible, including names, dates, and locations and sources of information.

To keep barns in good repair and to keep the barn building trade alive in the future, we need good and more complete records of what and how things were done in the past. The more we know, the more we can tell you. Let's dig it out and share it.

— Tom O'Grady

A barn door outlook ...

I have a barn door outlook because I have a hay barn study, and I chose a hay barn study because I wanted a barn door outlook—a wide, near view into fields and woods and orchards where I could be on intimate terms with the wildlife about me and with free, open-air nature.

Usually there is nothing small or stingy about a barn door, and a farmer's hay barn puts only a very thin partition between you and the outside world. Therefore, what could be a more fit place to thresh out dry philosophical subjects

than a barn floor? I have a few such subjects to thresh out, and I thresh them here, turning them over as many times as we used to turn over the oat and rye sheaves in the old days when I wielded the hickory flail with my brothers on this same barn floor.

What a pleasure it is to look back to those autumn days, generally in September or early October, when we used to thresh out a few bushels of the new crop of rye to be taken to the gristmill for a fresh supply of flour! How often

we paused in our work to munch apples that had been mellowing in the haymow by our side and to look out through the big doorway upon the sunlit meadows and slopes! The sound of the flail is heard in the old barn no more, but in its stead the scratching of a pen and the uneasy stirring of a man seated there behind a big box, threshing out a harvest for a loaf of much less general value.

— John Burroughs, naturalist
From *The Summit of the Years*, 1913

Highlights of the tenth annual barn tour

Time steadily changes things. Barns used to be commonly seen with horse and horse-drawn equipment parked outside. Then barns were seen with early tractors and the implements they pulled behind them. Soon combines and other large equipment started being parked alongside the barn. Nowadays one may see large tour buses working their way around a farmyard looking for a place to park.

Hand-hewn timbers were abundant in the barns of this year's barn tour. Massive hewn timbers supporting barn walls and framing doors, windows, and a very sturdy forebay were common in the Swiss Mennonite barns chosen by Keith Sommers and his planning committee.

To passers-by, it must have seemed that assault teams poured off the busses, moved in on the barns, and surrounded them. After a quick look at the exterior everyone was disappearing inside. Within moments the usual suspects were up the ladders, measuring timbers and looking for subtle details that would tell the story of the barn and its builders and its changing uses over time.

After exploring the first couple of barns on the tour, the rest of the group was hired on as registered Junior Barn Detectives. Paul Knoebel and his committee gave all members of the tour checklists with which to inspect the barns. Broken up into groups, the junior detectives went in and assessed the conditions of the foundations;

After checking all of these items, Rudy Christian brought our attention to some serious oversights such as termite trails in plain sight, stone walls about to give, and poor drainage causing severe structural rot. Rudy pulled out his ice pick and with a slight push sank it to the hilt in a solid-looking eight-by-ten timber. It looked solid all right, but it happened to be hollow and was threatening the entire end of the barn. Rudy showed us how the runoff from the barn's siding was being directed to the interior and causing damage that was of the highest priority. (That's why the rest of us are junior detectives.)

The tour stopped at a barn converted to a home and then to an 1843 Swiss Mennonite homestead that is being restored. The Swiss Mennonite barn was a veritable museum of preserved artifacts, including a Conestoga and other wagons, log sleds, old milling equipment, wooden barrels, a cider press, farm implements, grindstone, windmill parts, hand-powered lawn mowers, and such like. It was a great last stop on the tour of farms at the edge of Ohio's Great Black Swamp.

— Tom O'Grady



Photos by Tom O'Grady

Within moments of the tour buses' arrival, the barn is under assault.

the locations of shrubs, trees, and vegetation that may be impinging on the barn; the status of the roof, gutters, posts, tie beams, girts, rafter plates, purlin posts, and braces. We were to look for bowing and leaning, bottom rot and crumbling walls, missing pieces, dangerous wiring, and past repairs.

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Above: This buckboard is stored in one of the barns on the tour.



Left: As was this antique wagon.

Below: Tour members investigate a Conestoga wagon.

Bottom: Rusty remnants of a windmill stored in a historic Swiss Mennonite barn.



Below: Barn tour participants pause for a photo under a shed roof of a Swiss Mennonite barn.



Barn tours aren't all hard work!



Above: Basement wall with hefty supports and floor joists. Right: A bow string truss.

Below: Dan Troth counts the rings of an old barn timber.

Bottom: Four well-framed ladders, but no loft.



Wanted: Historic photographs and articles

To help preserve the heritage of Ohio barns, FOB is working with groups to develop county inventories of existing barns. Ashland County was the leader in this endeavor, and a number of counties are getting on that bandwagon.

In addition to county inventories of Ohio's barns, we would like to establish an archive of historic photographs of Ohio's barns and agricultural buildings. Look in old county histories and county atlases, visit the local library or historical society or local newspaper, and see what they might have in their files. Ohio was a world leader in agriculture, and that included its infrastructure as well as its commodity output.

You might stumble upon written descriptions of barns or drawings or sketches. These are all part of Ohio's agricultural and barn heritage.

We are also interested in photos of barns that have interesting features or barns associated with historic events. Some barns have very unique cupolas, owl holes, hayhoods, or weather vanes. Some barns have names or dates etched in stone, written in slate, or carved into the wood in the gable end. Other barns are decorated with symbols, hex signs, or (as in northwestern Ohio) with red and white doorways connected with local lore or superstition. A barn in Fairfield County had an image of a horse worked into the slate roof; another in Vinton County had a metal plate silhouette of a horse on the door.

Send in photos of barns with moons and stars carved in them. Marriage marks come in a variety of forms. We saw a barn in Clark County with drawings etched into the walls and campaign slogans about Henry Clay and an election in the early 1800s. A barn in Perry County bears a fading message to "Vote for Kennedy."

Advertisements were common. Mail Pouch is well known. What else was out there? Other tobacco brands, Royal Crown Cola, local furniture store, etc. Travelers headed southeast from Ohio used to see a lot of barns with "See Rock City" or "See Ruby Falls." A barn in Athens County advertised a natural bridge on the Little Hocking.

In northwestern Ohio travelers were encouraged to visit Olentangy Caverns.

Some barns are built into a slope with a slight ramp up to the threshing floor. Some barns are built on flat ground with a very large earthen ramp built up to the threshing floor. Some have a bridge between the ramp and the barn door, and some of these bridges are covered. Some barns have amazingly large pieces of trees built into them. We've seen 60-foot long timbers that were ten inches square in diameter. Some barns have forebays, some have pent roofs. They are rarely the same, and we want to know about the variety.

We've visited many barns on FOB barn tours, and one thing we know: there are no exact copies. Foundations may be made of stacked field stone, large granite boulders from Canada, or blocks cut from limestone or sandstone set only beneath corners and the center of the sill plate. Brick or clay tile blocks of varying composition were also used for foundations, and of course concrete block or poured concrete walls. Maybe there are other unique foundations, and we want to know.

The same goes for additions such as milking parlors, loafing sheds, granaries, milk houses, and whatnot. A barn in Morgan County has a hanging outhouse built off the side of the barn. That's not common.

What about ventilation? Louvered windows, ventilators, and cupolas come in lots of shapes and styles. Some barns have a tilted window beneath the gable. Lots of doors of all shapes and sizes and opening mechanisms.

What odd or unique features were built into the old barns? We've heard of a hay press built into a barn near the Ohio River in southern Indiana. We saw a hanging tram system in a barn in western Ohio on the 2008 barn tour. And we saw swing beams. They are impressive. What can you find out about them?

What kind of wood were the barns made of? Chestnut, oak, poplar, beech ... Often bark remains on some of the timbers, usually the sleepers (those logs that lie in the dark beneath the floorboards). Hewing marks from broad axes are different from adze marks. Curved cutting marks from the circular saw mills stand apart from the parallel marks on the older pit-sawn timbers. The more we know about barns, the more we learn about Ohio's primeval forests. What about the bracing which keeps these barns strong? Corner braces, floor to ceiling wind braces, double pegged bracing, and so on. Wall staves help keep the winter winds at bay for livestock in the under barn. Like fingerprints, no two are alike.

"Historic" continued on Page 11



Glandorf Photo History

Once slate, rather than shake shingle roofs, came into use for farm buildings in the Glandorf, Ohio, area, it became popular to have inscribed the owner's name and date, perhaps as a symbol of that individual's patriotism or success in America. It is interesting to note that though people maintained German tradition in almost all areas of their lives, they very quickly adorned their homes, wagons, and barns with patriotic emblems of their adopted country. Here the John Kleman family stands before their superb barn around 1894. Note the American flag above the barn door.

Paul Knoebel and his traveling barn

An efficient and valuable man does what he can, whether the community pay him for it or not.

Henry David Thoreau, from *Life Without Principle*

Now there's Paul Knoebel, a slender, fit fellow of medium height and seemingly unbounded energy for the cause of Ohio's barns. He writes articles, he visits barns in need and offers guidance to owners regarding their care and repair options, and he helps put together barn tours and conference activities for Friends of Ohio Barns. But a tremendous amount of his enthusiasm is directed toward educating young folks about barn construction. He appears to be employed nearly full time as a volunteer teaching kids the building trade of the master craftsmen that built the vast majority of the large, majestic structures dotting Ohio's landscape.

With his homemade mini timber frame barn in tow, Paul has traveled untold miles to festivals and heritage events with the goal of rounding up a crew of youngsters for a barn raising. He arrives at an event and unloads the elements of the timber frame, including small braces and tiny wooden pegs. He also sets up a bench with several holes into which kids can pound wooden pegs.

Inevitably his little pile of timbers draws the attention of little builders, and under his direction they assemble the bents and raise the frame. After the rafters are finally installed, the symbolic bough is attached to the gable on one end.

He seems to get a regular amount of support and assistance from his spouse in this endeavor. She keeps kids pounding pegs into the bench as others participate in the raising. Every child can get a taste of the process, although some of the shy ones watch from behind a parental skirt or pant leg.

On the back of his makeshift cardboard display sign, one can see tally marks like many of those seen etched onto wall planks or doorposts in barns along Ohio's roadsides, where farmers kept track of some repeating theme or commodity of concern in the sheltering structure. At the end of a long day of barn raising and educating at Malabar Farm or the Algonquin Mill or some other heritage event, Paul disassembles his diminutive timber frame and throws the wooden pins into a bucket, adds a tally mark, and loads the frame into his trailer and heads home.

Looking at the back of the display sign it appears that Paul has done this routine voluntarily, at

some considerable expense to himself, more than sixty times. Paul Knoebel and his traveling barn. Neither business or government could afford his services and his art. He's a teacher/builder trying to preserve the heritage of the craftsmen of past generations by inspiring children to be the builders of the next generations. Now there's a valuable Ohioan.

— Tom O'Grady



Photos by Tom O'Grady

Top: Paul Knoebel discusses barn raising techniques with observers.

Left: Paul gets help from John and Sarah Woodall and Gary Clower.

Below: Future timber framer at work.

Bottom left: Phyllis Knoebel prepares pegs for pounding.



The boys from Yellow Springs

The annual FOB Conference and Barn Tour have had considerable support for the last several years from two fellows from Yellow Springs, Ohio. Brian Beals and Tom Kumbusky have been regular fixtures with flashlights and tape measures cat-walking on tie beams and edging along top plates looking for clues in string lines, vacant mortises, and saw marks to help date barns and interpret their history on the annual barn tours. They appear every bit as much at home in a barn as a cat. Their vast experience working with barns in the southwestern part of the state has supplemented the efforts of the Barn Detectives each year. They helped organize the tour a number of years ago when the barn conference was held at the Greene County Fairgrounds.

This year Brian led a breakout session demonstrating the use of a broad axe and an adze. In addition to busting his knuckles, he showed observers the technique of wielding the tools that pioneer barn builders used as they carved farm structures out of the Ohio wilderness. He acknowledged that he had not yet perfected the art. Tom demonstrated his role as ballast and comic relief, which clearly made for a balanced team.

Tom presented a good deal of information on the structure of wood, the nature of the grain, the response of tools, and technique. Between the two they made it clear that the level of skill and knowledge of materials employed by the early barn builders was very high. It became that much more obvious how valuable Ohio's remaining timber framed

structures really are.

Tom always adds much to the tour with his knowledge of local history, lore, and geography. There's always something we should know about the Mound Builders, the Shawnee, or the early settlers that we'd inevitably miss if he wasn't along for the ride.

Besides their expert contributions on the tour and at this year's conference, they always donate something unique to the silent auction—a three-foot-long hand-carved wooden peg, a sizeable piece of black walnut timber, homemade maple syrup, local history books, and more. They spend considerable effort upping the bids on the auction as well. The results are always a bit better because of their support on both ends.

No doubt they are becoming part of the history and lore of rural southwest Ohio as they go about their business. Good thing they do what they do.

— Tom O'Grady



Top: Brian explains wood characteristics. Note his wood-working bandage. Above: Tom makes a big point.

Photos by Tom O'Grady



Left: Brian demonstrates the technique of using an adze. Above: Tom inspects the seaming of a rafter plate. Right: Brian demonstrates use of a broadaxe.



2009 Barn of the Year awards

At the recent Ohio Barn Conference in Bluffton, Friends of Ohio Barns board member Dan Troth presented the Barn of the Year awards for agricultural use and adaptive re-use.

The award for agricultural use went to Dr. Ed Martinek. Mr. Martinek purchased the farm and German style bank barn in 2007 and set out to restore the 1851 structure to use in some sort of agri-business or agri-tourism. The original owner was Michael Swigart, who it is believed farmed there as early as 1812. The family cleared and broke the virgin soil, then lived and farmed there for several generations.

Ed Martinek saw the value in the old barn and understood the significance the barn had for the community. In 2008 Ed hired Architectural Reclamation Inc. to begin the restoration process. They preserved the corncrib, granary, and stone foundation while adding some modern amenities such as upgraded electrical service, stairs, and additional framing to withstand heavier loads. The barn features gunstock style posts and has two intact 60-foot summer beams.

The crew of Architectural Reclamation nominated Mr. Martinek for the award in part because they were justifiably proud of their work, but also because they were happy that someone had the foresight to take a once-prominent part of the community and restore it for another 150 years of service. It is currently serving as storage for hay and farm equipment.

Bill Fling was the recipient of the adaptive re-use award for his barn on the Fling family farm. Bill's great grandfather, Albert J. Fling, bought the farmstead around 1900 and began building the barn in 1902. The two-story ground barn was utilized for storage and horses on this 200-acre working horse farm until five years ago, when the thought came to Bill to remake the barn into a place for gatherings.

The Flings worked with local carpenters to repair and modernize the barn so it could become a facility that hosts weddings, reunions, and private parties. The old milled timber structure has 3,000 square feet of floor space with wet bars, a performance stage, dance hall, and an outdoor deck for relaxing. Early Americana items decorate the barn, many, no doubt, from the barn's previous life.

The Flings have taken it a step further by providing for



The Fling family barn.

horse-drawn carriage rides to enhance the bridal experience. They also provide in-house catering and hire a local band to provide entertainment. It looks like a lively way to adapt an old barn into a new use! Members and guests will get a first-hand look at the Fling Farm this fall when Bill hosts our fall picnic, so come join us!

— Ric Beck



Dan Troth (left) presents the Barn of the Year award for adaptive re-use to Bill Fling.

Photo by Tom O'Grady



Ed Martinek (right) and the Stewarts of Agricultural Reclamation, Inc., accept the award for agricultural use.

Photo by Tom O'Grady

Happy anniversary, Friends!



Friends of Ohio Barns has reached its tenth year advocating for the conservation and wise use of Ohio's barns, farmsteads and farm heritage. Board members and OBC X attendees took a few moments to celebrate. Here the board members paused to pose with the tenth anniversary cake. From left: Rudy Christian, Laura Saeger, Tom O'Grady, Ric Beck, Dan Troth, Larry Sulzer, Paul Knoebel, Gary Clower.

Barn needed

The Junior Barn Detective (JBD) team is seeking a timber framed barn for use as its pilot JBD training workshop. We would like to find a barn with some repair and maintenance issues that need to be addressed. The barn should be fairly accessible, allowing trainees to move about the interior and exterior to inspect all areas. We are hoping to find a barn in the northeast portion of the state, but will look at candidates from other areas.

Silent auction

Many thanks to all of our members who contributed wonderful items for the conference auction. Our intrepid auction volunteers—Beryl Becket, Judy Hendershot, and Kendall Taylor—worked to display and catalog all the donations and track the bids. Their volunteer work, like a lot of the behind-the-scenes efforts for conference planning, is very important to making us a solid and successful organization. Their noses were so pressed to the grindstone that they

The workshop will be a one-day event and is targeted for a late fall date. It will focus on teaching potential JBDs procedures for providing barn owners a starting point for saving their barns.

If you have a barn or know someone who has a barn and would be willing to host this event, please e-mail a description, photos (exterior/interior), and any information you have about the barn and site to gclower@neo.rr.com.

missed the final session and the "thank you" from our president. So I would like to extend that "thank you" again here. I am so very grateful for their help and the delight they seemed to derive from the task. Further, thanks to everyone who kept track of the bidding to the high bidder who were able to take home that very special item. Your generosity and the clever and tempting items donated brought in \$1,040 for Friends!

— Laura Saeger



One of Ohio's most beloved barn enthusiasts, Chuck Whitney, passed away recently. We are very saddened by this great loss and express our sincere condolences to the Whitney family. A full article celebrating the life and times of this Ohio icon will be a part of our fall newsletter.

Wayne County Barn Survey under way

The barn survey committees and members have been meeting once a month to plan for and organize the countywide survey. Following the first trial run of the updated survey form with 20 volunteers in Baughman Township, the forms were reviewed. A few changes were made based on the information submitted on them that revealed items that caused confusion or required more options. The updated format of the survey will allow for interactive searches of our barns and provide photos of them through our website.

The group will not be meeting in June or July due to summer schedule challenges, but the survey handbook team will be working over the summer to develop the Ohio Historic Barn Survey Handbook, which will also be available online. Friends of Ohio Barns was the recipient of a grant from the Gordon Chandler Memorial Fund to help fund this development and to support the documentation of Ohio's historic barns.

Junior Barn Detectives in training

The new FOB Junior Barn Detective (JBD) concept was reviewed Saturday during the recent Conference at Bluffton, as well as at one of the barns visited on the previous day's barn tour. Tour participants were warned that they were about to become guinea pigs for testing the barn visitation portion of the JBD concept.

The Denny Eddinger barn was chosen to be the site of a conditional assessment by the entire barn tour group. Mr. Eddinger had only owned the barn for a year and was thrilled at the idea of having this group help him see and understand its workings. The large group was divided into seven teams led by Ric Beck, Larry Sulzer, Tom O'Grady, Keith Sommer, Laura Saeger, Dan Troth, and Brian Beals, all very qualified barn scrutinizers and timber frame craftspeople. Using a prepared evaluation form, the teams carefully went through the barn and looked at and discussed the possible areas of concern. The last few minutes were spent trying to prioritize the particular items most in need of attention.

While the teams were doing their thing, Rudy Christian of Christian and Son Timberframes went through the barn and pro-

vided a brief professional review of the three areas he found most in need of repair. The good news was that he located a major structural failure that most everyone else skimmed by. The bad news for Mr. Eddinger was that it needed addressed immediately before it would inevitably cause significant damage to other portions of the structure. As it turned out, everyone

benefited. The barn owner got a thorough review of his structure and the teams got an important lesson on what JBDs

should be looking for during a barn visit. It also vividly pointed out that the JBD's job is to familiarize the owner with areas most commonly in need of observation and maintenance and not to pretend to have professional barn repair and consultant experience like Rudy, Larry, and Brian do. They have experience gained through many years of tearing into old barns and other timber framed structures. These are the guys to call in when things start to look a bit shaky or a more in-depth analysis is appropriate or desired.

A review of the JBD concept and further discussion was done the following day at the Saturday portion of the conference. Larry Sulzer gave a Powerpoint presentation outlining the program. This was followed by an energetic discussion guided by Sulzer and Paul Knoebel. The many suggestions and comments made there and on the JBD evaluation forms are being reviewed and considered for inclusion in the final plan.

The three FOB Board members presently making up the JBD team are Larry Sulzer, Gary Clower, and Paul Knoebel. Plans are to hold our first JBD training workshop late this fall. Meanwhile, we would appreciate any further comments or suggestions that would further the cause. We can be best contacted via e-mail at the addresses listed for FOB board member elsewhere in this newsletter.



Photo by Tom O'Grady

Brian Beals guides junior barn detectives down the checklist in the basement of the Eddinger barn.



Photo by Tom O'Grady

Junior barn detectives at work in the Denny Eddinger barn.

— Paul Knoebel for the JBD team