

Clark County workshop, barn raising

Friend of Ohio Barns members are teaming up with the Timber Framers Guild to present a workshop at the George Rogers Clark Historic Park July 7 to 21. Rudy Christian, past FOB president and current board member for both Friends and the Guild, is spearheading the effort.

The Timber Framers Guild and volunteers will help the Clark County Park District restore, reassemble, and raise a historic barn at the George Rogers Clark Historic Park in Springfield, Ohio. There will be a Barn Repair and Reassembly Workshop July 7 to 21, capped off with an old-fashioned barn raising Saturday, July 21. Tuition for the two-week workshop is \$250 per person.

The original 40-by-60-foot Hertzler Barn was built in 1854, about the same time as the Daniel Hertzler House, a Pennsylvania-style bank house built for a wealthy Mennonite farmer. The house still stands and is open for tours in the George Rogers Clark Park. The barn was dismantled in 1951, leaving just a foundation and roof.

In 2005, the Clark County Park District found a Montgomery County barn of similar size and scale to the old Hertzler Barn. This Chamberlin barn was scheduled for demolition, but the district rescued it in 2006. Rudy Christian and his company, Christian & Son, were instrumental in the detailed documentation of the barn. It is this Chamberlin barn that will be repaired and resized in the workshop to rest upon the upgraded Hertzler Barn foundation.

The Hertzler Barn project is sponsored by the Clark County Park District and the National Trail Parks and Recreation District.

Other Friends of Ohio Barns board members will be on hand during the workshop and raising.

Check out the FOB website or the Guild website at www.TFGuid.org for more information and workshop registration. This will be a great opportunity to learn more about barns and repairs, plus take part in the great old tradition of a barn raising! We hope to see you there!

Background photo: The old Hertzler barn awaiting renovation.



FRIENDS OF OHIO BARNS

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The Old BARN POST

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Fifty-year-old forest hides 150-year-old treasure

Exploring old barns is definitely on my list of "Top Ten Things I Like to Do." I venture out on about 90 percent of my barn adventures on my own, but when I'm offered the chance to head out with other barn enthusiasts, I can't say no.

Board member Tom O'Grady contacted Ric Beck and me about a barn south of Lancaster owned by the Clear Creek Metro Park system. A couple of weeks worth of e-mails later, we all were heading south to examine it.

The folks at Clear Creek wanted to know about the barn's history and get some idea of what shape it was in and what could be done to keep it standing.

Our guide was park manager Ken Browne, who led us by truck past an old log blacksmith shop and deep into the woods along a well-kept, grass-covered road. We drove for approximately a mile before we stopped at the side of the barn.

This barn was smack in the middle of these woods, and it sure seemed odd to all of us. But as Ken informed us, this farm had not been used for farming for at least 50 years. Judging by the girth of the trees, we had to agree. In that time the forest around it had flourished.

The barn has suffered from neglect, but has at least benefited from a new roof and some minimal repairs that kept it from falling in. It is a Pennsylvania forebay barn with a full basement, a six-foot cantilevered forebay extension on one side, and an earthen bank on the opposite western side where the wheat was carried into its main level for thrashing. Waste walls flank either side of this center thrashing bay. With the doors open on the western bank side and on the eastern side over the forebay extension, the

chaff would have easily blown away.

Its four bents have dropped tie beams and canted queen posts supporting purlins at the roof's midspan and pole rafters butted at the ridge. We were all surprised to find that it was composed primarily of pine timbers. The most commonly used woods in Ohio are oak, beech, and poplar. None of us had ever seen a pine barn in Ohio. Ohio had the greatest diversity of settlement of any of the states, so everyone entered Ohio in the early 1800's with different timber framing traditions and ideas for the best way to build a barn.

This barn was definitely a good candidate for our Ohio Barn Conference "detectives" to investigate and incorporate into a slide show for all to learn from.

As Ken's history of the land showed, Edmund Williams purchased the land in 1837. It is hard to say the barn was built then, but judging from what we saw with

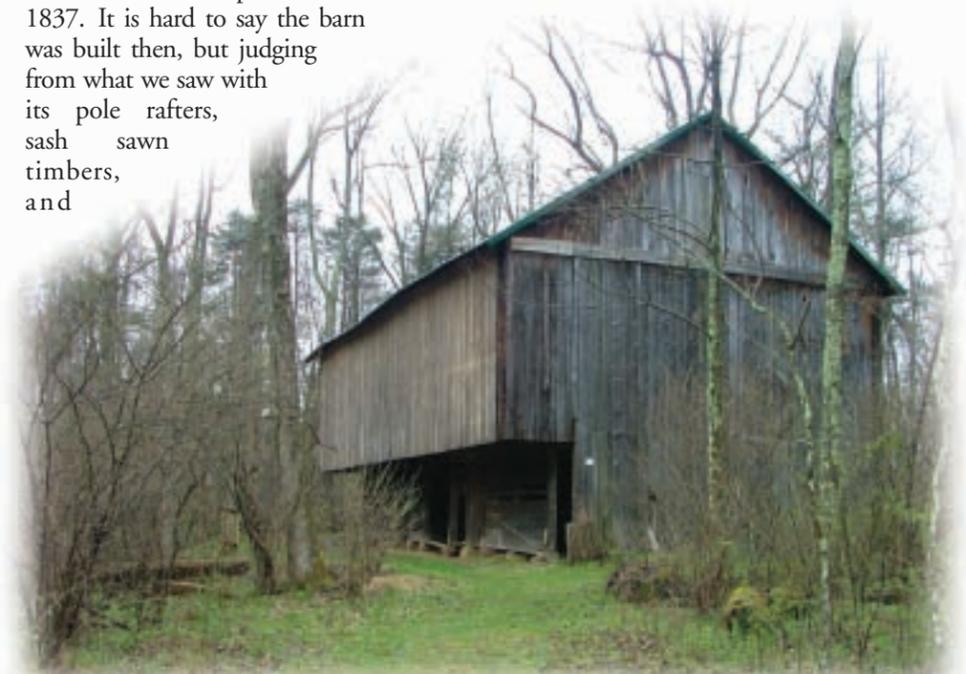
its pole rafters,
sash sawn
timbers,
and

T-augered mortises, it is probably safe to assume it was built before the Civil War.

As the sun was setting and the mosquitoes started biting, we took our last photos, thanked Ken, and headed back out of the woods. We stopped to take photos of the local cemetery, where a hewn timber framed church had once stood. We took note of a few headstones of people who had been born in the late 1700s. Cemeteries are always a place to look for clues to an area's settlement.

It was the first warm night to bring out the bugs, and as we drove home, a few hundred of them called my truck's windshield their final resting place. As we headed north, our eyes scanned the fields, and we took note of about a half dozen more good barns we need to check out someday.

— Dan Troth



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

Friends' annual picnic scheduled for September 15

This year's Friends of Ohio Barns picnic will be at the home of board member Dan Troth. He lives in a barn that he moved and converted.

He believes it was built around 1493, the year after Christopher Columbus discovered America and then settled Columbus, Ohio. He also believes it may have been built by Columbus himself. He believes the joinery is Spanish. We believe he is delusional.

Please check MapQuest for directions to his home, which is just on the west side of US 23 about a mile north of Polaris Parkway on the north side of Columbus (just west of Spain). His address is:

7591 Perry Road
Delaware, OH 43015

Please bring filet mignon or a covered dish or dessert of your choice. As for the date—September 15 is an away game for the Ohio State Buckeyes, so we plan to gather at noon that day.

— Dan Troth

"It's good to know that the barn's been repaired. My people worked hard here. So did I. That's what these barns represent—hard work ... long days, but good ones. I think that's why barns are so important to people. Each one has a story to tell."

— John Smith, South Newbury, Vermont

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Planning for FOB's future

Now that spring has arrived, we look to the future and what the summer will bring. We look forward to being outdoors ... gardening, plowing the fields, grilling out, and the like. I also look forward to continuing my barn projects and to serving as your president.

The future of our organization, as with any organization, depends on our membership. That, to me, is one of the bigger issues Friends of Ohio Barns faces. There has been a steady drop in attendance from past conferences despite improvements in venues and presenters. As president, I want to address this problem. I also want to find more ways to better serve the members we do have ... you all are a hearty bunch of dedicated barn stewards! We think we have improved our advertising concerning the conference via magazines, newspapers, and the website, but we can do more. A suggestion was made to send out posters and extra newsletters for our members to post for our next conference ... great idea!

The board is planning an all day face-to-face meeting this summer, with the focus on the future. We will be talking about workshops to train members to look at barns in their area and developing a (ballpark) cost sheet for people interested in barn preservation. I am inviting several other Friends members to join us for these and other topics of discussion. In July, Rudy Christian will be leading a workshop at the Hertzler House Barn in Springfield (see article), and this will be a great opportunity to witness repairs and help in a barn raising too!

As always, your input is of great value to us ... it's how we grow. But we can't help you if you don't talk to us. So, I am including my e-mail address: rbw7215@hotmail.com. Please send me suggestions and comments about how we can improve. Please title your e-mail with FOB then the subject so I will know it's not spam. Enjoy your summer!

New board members

Well, actually there are no new board members ... they are the same ones who have enjoyed serving you. So welcome back Dan Troth, Laura Saeger, Tom O'Grady, and Bob Rowland! I know they are pleased to once again represent Friends of Ohio Barns!

Random Thoughts

Ric Beck
Friends of Ohio Barns president

— Ric Beck

Mini barn raising at Wolf Creek Grist Mill



FOB board member Paul Knoebel took his mini barn raising kit to the historic Wolf Creek Grist Mill last month.

Paul has this dog and pony show of his down pat. He shows up at a well-attended event with an entire barn outfit—all the timbers, braces, pins, and tools—and seems to have great success drawing youngsters and getting them involved in the assembly and raising. He has done this many a time and in many locations.

Paul Knoebel (far right in photo) organizes one of many groups of children to put together his mini timber frame barn.

Barn safety: A case study

We recently received the following request from a new barn owner:

I recently purchased a mini-farm on which there is an old house and a large typical three-bay bank barn. The house is in great condition, but the barn has been neglected and looks rather shaky. I have carpentry experience and have recently installed some bracing. I need some input on whether or not the barn is worth saving.

I met with the new barn owner and we carefully went through his barn. Its condition can best be described as be "scary." Most barns of this type tend to deteriorate and ultimately collapse from the top downward due to water leakage and rot.

Not this one. Its heavy slate roof and upper structure were in fairly good condition. The bank wall had pushed in and collapsed and one end of the barn had pivoted and was trying to fall into the lower level. That end of the structure was racked and had moved over three feet toward the barnyard. The internal lower support posts were leaning at about a 25 degree angle. It appeared that the only things restraining further movement were two well-positioned long 3-by-10 braces that the new owner had secured from the

ground up to the forebay. These, however, had begun to bow.

Unfortunately this barn did not have stone or refractory lower end walls. The failed wooden end wall was poorly constructed and could not resist the pushing forces created by the earthen ramp against the stone rear wall. End walls do not normally fail as a result of ramp forces. It is much more common to see bank barns in which the stone rear wall and the barn itself are both bowed inward from this tremendous force. Birds flying overhead have become accustomed to seeing banana shaped bank barns.

Can it be saved? Since the upper part of the barn is still intact and in fairly good condition and has not yet fallen into the lower level, it probably could be saved. However, this is not to be attempted by the owner, his well-intentioned buddies, or the local construction company. An experienced barn repair company with lots of savvy and the proper equipment could most likely safely push and pull the barn back into position, repair the broken post in the racked end wall, and put it back down onto a new foundation.

The cost may very well be beyond the means of the new young owner. If so, he will probably dismantle the barn and use

the timbers to make a smaller, ground level structure. Again, to attempt to dismantle this barn in its present condition would be very dangerous. It needs to be first stabilized and the tremendous stresses relieved. This again should only be done by professionals knowledgeable in cribbing, jacking, and shoring up procedures. Dismantling of barns is dangerous work even under normal conditions.

Some suggestions. The first priority is that no one gets hurt. Cordon off the area to keep everyone (especially curious children) out of the barn, away from sliding slate and possible collapse. Next, get an experienced barn repair contractor to visit the site to give advice and quotes on various levels of work that might be done to stabilize, repair, or dismantle the building. The relatively small fee he might charge for the visit should provide the owner with the information he needs to decide the fate of the barn. Meanwhile he can carefully stiffen the two existing braces and keep children away from it.

For a list of some barn contractors throughout Ohio, go to the www.ohiohistory.org website and type in "barn contractors" in the search area.

— Paul Knoebel

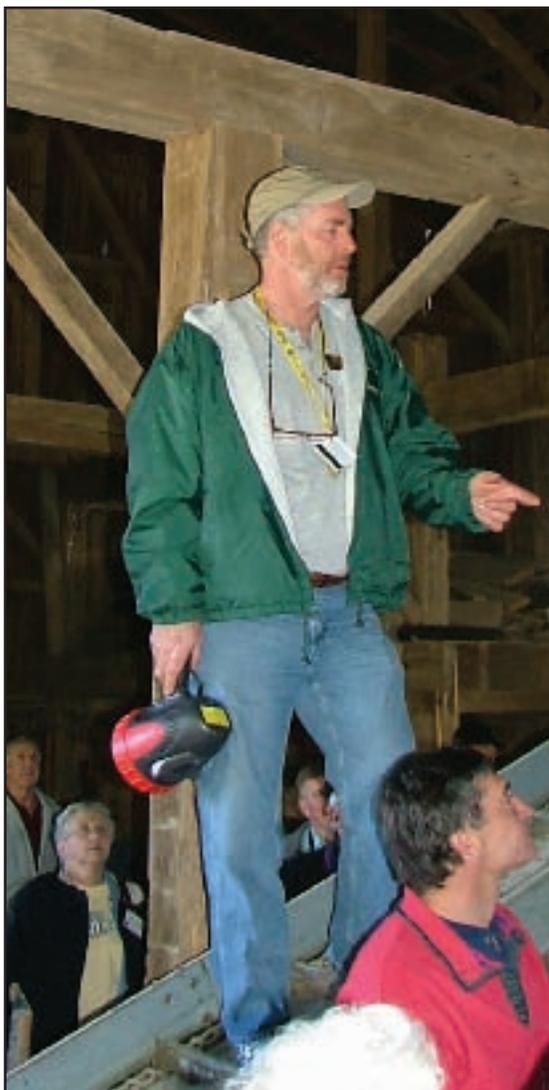
Scenes from Barn Conference VIII



Above: Lloyd Funk receives the Ohio Barn of the Year award for agricultural use. (Shepherd's Corner at Dominican Acres received the award for adaptive use.)



Top: Tom Kumbusky and Brian Beals help interpret details in one of the barns on Friday's barn tour. Right: Conference attendees strive to identify ten different types of wood in a contest at the conference. Below: Tour participants take a wagon ride to the Taylor Barn, about a half mile from the road. Right: Dan Troth makes an interesting point.



Post-conference thoughts

We hope everyone had a great time at this year's conference. Those of us who helped with it had a great time meeting all the new people and renewing old friendships.

But do you know what it takes to put on a conference? I'm sure most of you have some idea, but just in case ... Planning starts a full year before, so we can announce it at this year's conference. One of the first things we do is choose a county and find a place there to hold the conference. We look for a place that is not expensive and can hold our group. The last three years we have been able to have the conference and our sleeping rooms at the same place. It is a big advantage to all of us to have a room close so we can run back and pick up something we forgot or take a quick nap.

The next step is to pick out the barns we will be seeing on the barn tour. In previous years, two or three board members went out into the county where the event was being held and drove around, stopping and inquiring about barns in the area. This year Bob and I were lucky because we knew the county and the barns, so it was fairly easy (also because he had painted three of them).

Then we call each barn owner and ask if they are willing to open their barns for the tour. Most of the time they are very receptive to the idea, though most have not heard of Friends of Ohio Barns. The next step is to take the other board members to see what they think of the barns.

Last October Laura, Ric, Bob, and I went out to visit the barns. Then in January Paul, Dan, Larry, Bob, and I went to visit each barn so more board members would have ideas about each barn. We also looked for any safety issues the barn owners needed to take care of. (Dan always wants to stop at every barn, so I got him a jacket that said FOB on the back so he could act like the FBI.)

I also contacted each barn owner for a history of the barn. We contacted each barn owner every time we went to the barn and a week before the tour. The bus company was contacted nine months before the conference to make sure we had buses.

The board of directors started think-

ing of speakers for the Saturday part of the conference in early July. Once there was a theme picked—Ohio Barns Built by the Trades—we had an idea about what kind of direction we wanted to go.

In early December the Board of Directors called a meeting to see how all the planning was going. In February we held another meeting to go over last minutes details.

The first of March the food vendors wanted to finalize the menu and have a number count. I guess we are a last minute crowd, because I first told them we would only have around 60 for the bus tour and we ended up with 99. At the Holiday Inn for meals we said 80 and ended up with 75. We estimated 50 for breakfast at Malabar, and we had 47.

The week before the conference Laura and I were working hard on late registrations, last minutes details, checking with our volunteers, and getting the programs printed. Bob and I came to the conference in two vehicles just to get everything there, and it took three guys to unload Rudy and Laura's car.

One of the funniest things that happened to me was at our church, which was serving the lunch for the barn tour. The Sunday before the barn tour, the lady in charge of the meal stood up and asked for food donations for the meal to be served on Saturday, March 31. I sing in the choir and just yelled out, "No, Marge, the lunch is Friday, March 30!" Thanks goodness I was at church that day and got that straightened out, or my face would have been bright red Friday when no food was available.

So, as you can read, all of your directors work very hard to put on a conference that you will enjoy. We need your input on what you would like to see added or changed. We are always looking for ways to make a worthwhile conference.

Bob and I really enjoyed helping put this past conference together and having the Ashland County Barn Group and the Ashland Yesteryear Tractor Club help with the barn tour. The barn owners were wonderful hosts, and God answered my prayer by providing a beautiful day.

I hope you all enjoyed it as much as we did.

— Nancy Rowland

Many thanks ...

I would like to take some news space to thank all who helped make Ohio Barn Conference VIII a great success.

First, thanks to board members Nancy and Bob Rowland for their tireless work in organizing the event ... it was fabulous! To the rest of the board—Laura Saeger, Tom O'Grady, Dan Troth, Paul Knoebel, Larry Sulzer, Gary Clower, and Rudy Christian—a big thanks for stepping in where needed and doing a great job as always.

A special thanks also to Ann Christy and Kristy Wadsworth for their help through Barn Again! and OSU, and the publication of the newsletter and programs, respectively. Finally thanks to Beryl Beckett, Judy and Denny Hendershot, Tony and Debbie Hamilton, and Kendall and Jim Taylor for helping out with registration, the silent auction, and whatever else we threw at them.

I think this conference was one of the best yet in terms of the quality of presentations. From Rudy's keynote address to the hands-on demonstrations to the tour of Malabar, this year was special. A big thanks to Dan Troth and Larry Sulzer, Tom Ambrose, Katie Myers, Bob Gibbs, Mariangela Pfister, Jim Scott, Keith Sommer, Tim Anderson, and Louie Andres from Malabar Farms.

Thanks also go out to the Ashland County Barn Group and the Ashland Yesteryear Tractor Club for their help with the barn tour.

Finally, thank you barn owners for graciously showing us your magnificent barns ... Rod Stober, Tom and Diane Reed, Ann and Phil Myers, Jon and Jeff Byers, Tom and Lorie Ambrose, Lloyd Funk, and Ed Taylor. Thanks also to the Ashland County Barn Society for coffee and donuts, the Jeromesville Methodist Church for lunch, and the Loudonville FFA for the pancake breakfast.

Now, on to the next conference!

— Ric Beck

New life for an old granary

A timber frame granary is getting a new lease on life. It is one of several buildings in disrepair on an old farm recently purchased by the Friends of the Lower Muskingum River in Morgan County.

In an effort to protect riparian zones, water quality, and the overall character and beauty of the Muskingum River and the tributaries in its watershed, the group sought out and obtained a grant from the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund.

The old 277-acre dairy farm, sitting on a high bank overlooking the floodplain and the river, was part of an even larger tract that has been broken up over the years. The farmhouse and several buildings have seen long-term neglect.

When a fairly recent owner of the farm died, one of his sons kept it going for a while, but then he and his siblings decided to sell to a development company. Members of the watershed protection group FLMR approached the family to see if they could purchase at least part of the acreage, but were turned away.

At this point the group applied for the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund grant and began the ordeal of negotiating with sales agents of the land development company for the 31 acres between the highway and the river. Finally, the group's treasurer was able to come to an agreement with the company's owner which included only the land and farm buildings across the road from the farmhouse and several other outbuildings. The Friends of the Lower Muskingum were required to come up with a 25 percent match for the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund grant. One of the members owned property adjacent to the land being purchased and put a conservation easement on it to keep it from being developed, then donated that easement to the FLMR, who were then able to

use the appraised value of the easement for the match.

After jumping through all the hoops to obtain the land to protect the Muskingum River and its watershed, one of their first challenges was dealing with a threatened timber frame structure. Thankfully the group recognized the value of this small building and didn't have it pushed over, as so often happens. Instead they contacted a member of Friends of Ohio Barns for an assessment and guidance.

A large dairy barn next to the old granary is a modern replacement for the old timber frame barn that burned some twenty years ago. The nearby granary was missing roof slates, which allowed rainwater to soak heaps of eared corn piled along both sides of the first floor. Some of the girts and corner posts have sustained some long-term water damage, but remain very strong. The mounds of oats stored upstairs remained dry. The sill plates on the front end of the granary had soil piled up against them, keeping them moist.

A short visit and tour of the granary revealed a very nice timber frame specimen that would clearly benefit from a thorough cleaning. On a cool morning in late September members of the FLMR met with a plan to clean the old corn, oats and artifacts out of the granary and remove some of the soil from the underside to allow airflow beneath the building so it could dry.

Volunteers started at the top and spent about half the day shoveling oats down a wooden shaft to a wooden bin on the lower floor where a small electrical conveyor lifted them out of the building into a wagon that would haul them to a steaming compost heap. Meanwhile, others went about removing the piles of ear corn and assorted metal and wood objects. Some began to rake out between the stone supports and beneath the granary. Several small furry inhabitants were evicted and relocated that forenoon. Also relocated were several large old brown bottles that may have once contained chemicals of a sort, blades from an old windmill, rusty chains, metal fence posts, segments of tile, a short roll of fencing, chards of plate glass, sheets of metal roofing, various metal artifacts of undetermined use, wheel parts, a corroded feed trough, old license plates, and several lengths and thicknesses of old lumber.

A fifty-five gallon drum of a suspect dark liquid was found just inside the doorway. After some deliberation on how to get rid of what looked suspiciously like used motor oil, one of the more farm seasoned of the bunch suggested that we check it a bit more closely, maybe by smell or taste, and see if it wasn't a barrel of molasses used to mix with the oats before feeding to livestock. And so it was.

As the interior of the building emerged from beneath the heaps of corn and clutter, we were able to more easily move through the granary and explore its unique timber frame construction and assess the water damage and maintenance issues facing the organization.

The main timbers were all hand hewn, with the scoring marks of a broad-axe clearly visible along their lengths. Several short timbers were used overhead along both sides of the granary above the narrow corn storage areas. The outside walls were slatted with boards the width of lath with spacing between them for airflow. These boards were fastened with square topped nails.

The upstairs, accessible only by ladder from the outside ends, consisted of two large storage bins with a floor sloping toward the center where a hole fed grains down a wooden shoot to another wooden bin below. All of this construction remained in dry and good condition.

The volunteers broke for a short lunch consisting of paw paws, pears, and paw paw butter sandwiches and other snacks, largely the produce of some of the FLMR membership. The "Muskingum White" paw paw was a variety worth writing home about.

After lunch we hiked along the bird and flower trails recently developed by FLMR volunteers. We walked along stands of large trees and through tall bunches of ironweed and goldenrod on the terrace above the river, where we saw some of the group's other undertakings.

The FLMR was able to arrange to have American Electric Power plant the newly acquired land (which they call the Luke Chute Project) to hardwoods typical of the river floodplain as part of their carbon sequestration program. They planted approximately 9,000 trees, which appear to be doing well. Also through member's contacts, the American Chestnut Foundation donated 50 nuts for them to plant in April, 2006. These are a part of TACF's project of back-crossing American with Chinese chestnuts, hoping to produce trees with the characteristics of American, plus the blight resistance of Chinese.

The Luke Chute project takes its name from the surrounding area. During Ohio's canal building era in the early 1800s, a series of locks and dams were built on the Muskingum River to make it possible to navigate from Marietta on the Ohio River north through Zanesville and Dresden, where it linked up with the Ohio-Erie Canal. The canal lock at Luke Chute was named out of spite for Luke Emerson, who built a dam for one of his mills which created rapids on the far side of the river, making it difficult for the rivermen to push their boats. In retaliation, they named the site "Luke Chute."

After the lunch break ended, drops of rain falling through the roof got the group's attention as they tidied up the piles of debris and swept the last remnants of dust from the floor. It became very evident which pieces of slate needed to be adjusted and where a few pieces needed to be added. Using some slate recovered in the cleanup, one of the FLMR members demonstrated his handiwork by fashioning some metal hooks and sliding slates into place, providing a much-needed repair to abate the water damage until the next phase of work.

As for the future of this building, FLMR member Doug Albaugh said, "We haven't worked out specific plans for the granary, beyond the fact that we want to preserve it and make it available for people to enjoy."

The Friends of the Lower Muskingum River work together to promote water quality, tree planting, cleanup, land reclamation, historic preservation, and public education.

The day ended with a steadily increasing rain falling on a much drier granary on a terrace high above the Muskingum River.

—Tom O'Grady



Left: A sample of the granary's joinery and ventilation slats. Top: Ventilation slats still holding tight with hand-cut square nails. Right: Hand hewn joinery.

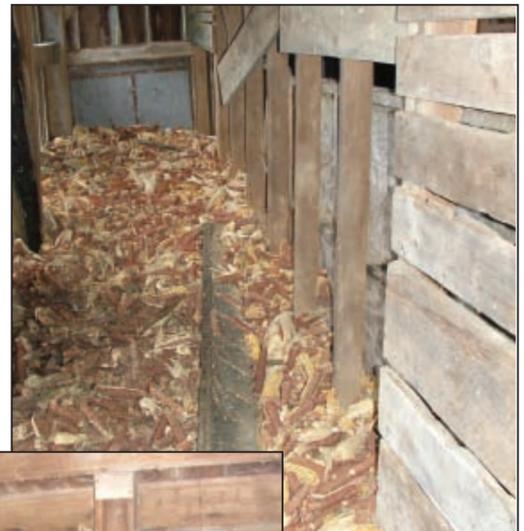


Photos by Tom O'Grady

Several volunteers put in a hard day's work, giving a dramatic facelift to this long-neglected Morgan County granary. This newly-clean interior shows their efforts were worthwhile.



A cleaner, drier granary awaits further repairs as the Friends of the Lower Muskingum River decide the best use for their recent acquisition. The group received a grant and raised matching funds to purchase the farm and its several buildings to protect it from development.



Volunteers cleared away mountains of ancient corn and oats from the inside of the granary. They also found this 55-gallon barrel of molasses.



Above left: Missing slates caused this water damage to the barn's timbers and joinery. Volunteers replaced the slates using extras found in the structure so no further damage would occur before repairs can be made. Above right: Soil and debris had been holding in moisture and rotting the barn's sill plate.



Volunteers from Friends of the Lower Muskingum River dig out debris and work to repair this pre-Civil War granary. Left: Doug Albaugh clears oats from the upper story of the old granary. Right: Dave Blount tightens some loose slates and replaces a few that were missing. Above left: Doug Albaugh and John Lee scoop grain and dirt away from the barn's bottom timbers. Above right: Marilyn Orr and Kristyn Robinson also dig away the excess grain, which was holding moisture against the barn's timbers.

