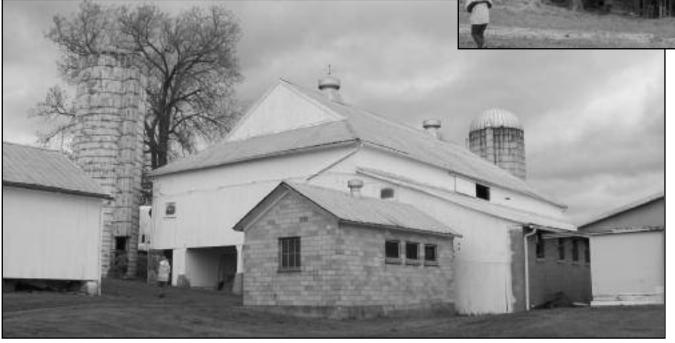
2011 Barn Tour: Just when you thought you knew Ohio barns ...



Tour members examine the construction of the Kohler barn, an American barn incorporating building techniques of English and German ancestry common to the Fairfield County region. Below: The Fun Bus and tour members at the Kohler barn.





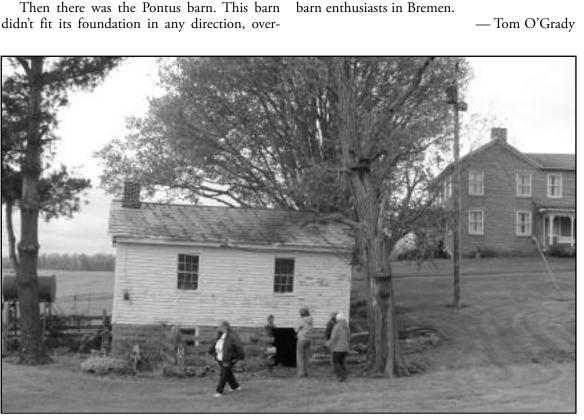
Barns that do not fit on their foundations hanging on all four sides. This unique seemed to be the theme of this year's Ohio Barn Pennsylvania barn is not obvious from the out-Tour. Three of the barns visited had floors reach- side, as it has had a number of additions over the ing well out over the end walls of the basement. years. But get a busload of junior barn detectives However, two barns fit their foundations just crawling around its basement and it gives up its fine. The Gall barn was turned into a fine home secrets. This barn had a fine stone foundation and the Kohler barn was our first example of with overhanging timbers on all sides. In its early what Rudy Christian defined as an American days it must have looked much like one of the old barn. It had some examples of joinery and construction found in English barns and in German barns, but it wasn't a New England barn or a Pennsylvania German Barn, and it wasn't a southern barn. The overall style added up to an Built in 1829, the Rock Mill served the region's American barn.

Miller barn and the Mertz barn, had a forebay times two. The barns had overhangs on two sides. total neglect for nearly a century. Enlightened This kind of barn is not common in Ohio. It individuals saw the wealth of heritage and culture appears, according to an article by Ohio geographer Hubert Wilhelm, that a number of them were built in northern Fairfield and Perry counties. The Miller barn appears to have been built of County landscape. materials salvaged from an earlier barn, most likely a crib log barn, a type very common along 2011 tour are grateful to the Fairfield County stretches of the old Zane's Trace.

defensive blockhouses once built on the Ohio frontier to protect settlers from angry Native Ohioans being displaced from their homelands. The last stop on the tour was a pure delight.

agricultural community for seven decades. Two of the Pennsylvania German barns, the Abandoned around 1900, it stood on the cliff over the Upper Falls of the Hockhocking River in in this structure and have now restored the Rock Mill. It is seen now not merely from a utilitarian perspective but as a treasure in the Fairfield

> Friends of Ohio Barns and members of the folks who hosted the tour and those who fed the







Left: Miller barn with double overhang and ramp up to the threshing floor. Above: Interesting joinery in the Miller barn basement.



Above: The overhanging forebay on the upper side of the Mertz barn has recently been closed in with a cement block foundation.

Right: Stanley Mertz, born on the farm some time ago, chats with FOB member Keith Sommers

Below: The Mertz barn with a double overhang hidden by the white sliding doors. The center section with windows is the foundation of the old barn.

Left:Tour members explore the summer kitchen and the springhouse beneath. The Mertz family homestead is seen in the rear.







The Junior Barn Detective (JBD) arm of FOB participated in Friday's Barn Tour as well as in a well-attended breakout session during the Saturday afternoon presentations. This has been the third annual barn tour in which participants have had the opportunity to scrutinize a needy barn and identify areas in need of some TLC. The small groups were accompanied throughout the unique double forebay barn by experienced Junior Barn Detectives. Saturday's JBD afternoon breakout session was highlighted by an active discussion led by Kendall Taylor. She explained how she and her husband Jim have been very successful in using her PowerPoint barn presentation to interest groups in the FOB message. The historical societies, churches, and civic organizations in and about Stow, Ohio, have been very receptive to her top-quality program. She has graciously offered to help other folks learn how to put together their own programs. The design and construction characteristics of the newly completed 1/16th scale model traditional Pennsylvania forebay bank barn were explained and discussed. The completely interactive structure was then disassembled and re-raised during and after the breakout session. It was designed and constructed primarily for the purpose of determining a practical and economical method by which to produce numerous models as educational tools for use by JBDs across Ohio. The most appropriate model to produce is most likely going to be the traditional American ground thrashing barn that Randy Nash explained in his interesting presentation earlier in the day. A sturdy model of that relatively simple but quite common Ohio barn should be able to withstand the rigors of numerous raisings by children and adults alike.

The overhang on all four sides of the Pontus barn is hidden from the outside with many later additions. One must enter the basement to discover its secrets.

Barn Conference highlights

The 2011 Ohio Barn Conference in Fairfield County fea- informed the group tured Randy Nash from the New York State Barns grants program. He talked about identifying the oldest barns in your for rehabilitating hiscommunity. Ric Beck, FOB president, gave a recap of the toric buildings. Those



Photo by Tom O'Grady

Carroll Neidhardt of Marion County talks about the symbols farmers incorporated into their barns to protect the barn and livestock from the misfortunes of weather, lightning, and other natural threats faced on Ohio's early frontier farms.

Sulzer, and Gary Clower, conducted a breakout session with a tabletop model of a barn to be used as an educational tool. (See related article on this page.)

County.

Rachel

about federal tax credits exciting Barn

barn raising at the Sunny 95 community Detectives, Rudy center in Upper Christian and Larry Sulzer (FOB board Arlington last autumn. Attendees members), gave a recap got some local history of the barns visited of from board member the previous day's tour. Tom O'Grady and Bruce Babcock, rep-Joe Steiger, a retired resenting the Fairfield Extension agent who County Historic Parks spent his career work-District, gave a very ing in Fairfield informative talk about the history, operation, and restoration of the

The Junior Barn Detectives, Paul 1829 Rock Mill. Knoebel, Larry The conference

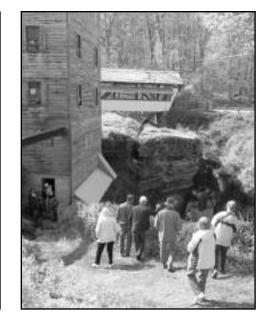
wound up with a presentation by return speaker Carroll Neidhardt, who spoke



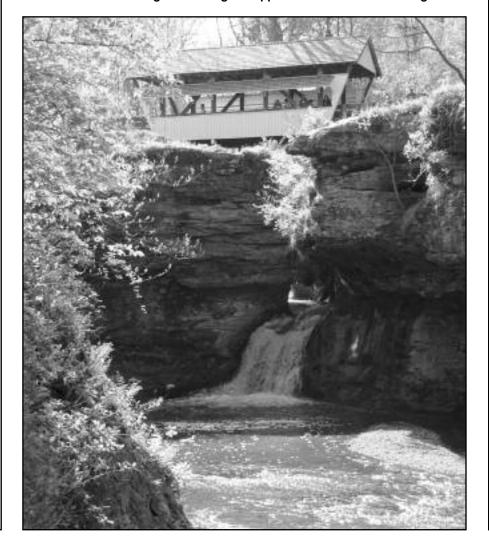
Photo by Tom O'Grady

Joe Steiger, agricultural Extension agent with a long history in Fairfield County, talks about the agricultural heritage found in old barns of the region.

about some of the meaning and heritage behind symbols found on barns. His "Moon and Star on the Barn Door" helps one realize that such art is more than mere decoration and that by studying such glyphs we can learn more about Krause the history and culture of the barn builders and their times.



Above left: The restored Rock Mill high on the cliff above the falls. Above right: Exploring the Rock Mill, mill race, and covered bridge on the cliff. Below: The Rock Mill covered bridge straddling the upper falls of the Hockhocking.



— The JBD crew



Model Pennsylvania bank barn with forebay used in the JBD session at the Ohio Barn Conference.