



# *The Old* BARN POST

*A publication of Friends of Ohio Barns • November, 2019 • Vol. XVIII, Issue 3*



Images: by Dave and JoAnne Hamblin

The barn complex at Creek Bend Park, Lindsey, Ohio, the venue for the 2019 FOB fall barn picnic. The Wagner barn is on the left.

## **B is for Beautiful Barns . . . Sandusky County has them!**

Saturday September 28 was the date for the annual Friends of Ohio Barns fall picnic. Eighteen members of the organization met at Creek Bend Farm, Lindsey, Ohio, northwest of Fremont, and enjoyed a potluck lunch after which six folks from the area joined us for a talk about the construction and usage of the three barns on this park property and one at White Star Park, a barn converted into an event center.

After discovering a trap door at White Star, Ric Beck went to the top of the barn and discovered an 1850s barn that had a second story hidden by a lowered floor that hid all of the original framing except the uprights. While exploring this barn, we were surprised by the arrival of a small covered wagon train making stop on the property. The wagons, pulled by a two-horse team, were Tiffin wagons manufactured in Tiffin Ohio in the mid-1800s, complete with 'outdoor kitchen'.

Please See PICNIC, Page 3



Friends of Ohio Barns members and six guests enjoyed barnstorming in Sandusky County for the annual FOB Fall picnic on September 28. They are posing in front of the Wagner Barn at the Creek Bend Farm in Lindsey, Ohio.



# Malabar Farm, 25th Anniversary

There was a tragic fire on April 4th of 1993. It completely consumed the large dairy barn at the Malabar Farm State Park where Pulitzer prize-winning author Louis Bromfield had created a model for sustainable agriculture that gained national attention. After his success as an author and Hollywood screen writer he chose to return to his roots in the rolling hills of Pleasant Valley where he bought the farm in 1939 and expanded the existing home over the next 18 months into the Big House, known by many as the heart of the farm. He continued to write novels and entertain Hollywood elites such as his friends Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall, who were married there in 1945. Sustainable farming increasingly became his primary focus and he became recognized as a pioneering conservationist. And while the Big House was seen as the heart of the farm, the Big Barn, built in 1890 and vital to the farm's operations, was its soul.

Following Bromfield's death in 1956 his children gave the farm to a conservation foundation which in 1972 deeded the land to the state. Subsequently, Malabar Farm became a state park in 1976 where she received thousands of visitors every year. Shortly after the barn fire of '93, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, knowing that a new barn needed to be built, was made aware of the need to build a historically accurate structure, one employing traditional mortice and tenon joinery held together with wooden pegs: a timber frame. The call was made to Rudy Christian, founding member of the Timber Framers Guild of North America, and an active builder of timber frames in Burbank, Ohio, or 'the center of the universe,' as he and his wife Laura Saeger know it.

After convincing the good people at the ODNR of the right way to build this new barn they granted Rudy the job. Well aware that this monumental task would require a bit of help he put the call out to the Guild. They responded with enthusiasm and workers from all over the country began work on newly cut timbers to help restore the soul of the farm. R.G. Beer worked as the general contractor to build the barn's new foundation and its decks in preparation for the barn raising which took place over the Labor Day weekend 25 years ago. Governor George Voinovich and his wife, Janet, flew in for the dedication ceremony. Louis Bromfield's daughter, Ellen, well-known barn historian Chuck Whitney, and well over 50,000 folks from all over Ohio stopped by to watch nearly 200 Guild members and volunteers erect the new barn, a truly lasting labor of love. Beloved Canadian Guild member Doug Lukian gave the command "Un, deux, trois, VOLEZ!" to commence the hand-raising of the barn's bents. All went well, no one was injured and the public was invited for a traditional barn dance on Sunday evening. From the Big House, looking over to see the barn frame all lit up with lights, listening

to the live square dance music as it led the crowd to the stomping of feet, and the rhythm of the warm night one might think that this is how it once was and how it should always be.

Now, on this 25th anniversary, a recognition of that historic weekend was in order so Rudy got together with Malabar Farm officials and decided to build another traditional timber frame, albeit a bit smaller. The need for a Sugar Camp Shed, where traditional maple sugaring would be demonstrated to the public each spring sounded like a good idea. A workshop was put together and sponsored by Friends of Ohio Barns and the Timber Framers Guild and supported with donations from Christian & Son, Inc., JCM Timber Works, Hochstetler Timbers, McKay Gross, and Yoder Family Roofing. Lunch was provided by volunteers with the Malabar Foundation. The new timber frame, signed by all who participated, was raised by noon and its siding and roofing was completed just a couple of hours later.

Out of the ashes something good has arisen. The Malabar Farm barn, and its soul, was reborn. Beyond this singular achievement it is important to recognize what the barn and the farm represent to all of us in Ohio. Our past is agrarian and surely Louis Bromfield recognized that. (He would have been proud of the community that gathered together to rebuild his barn.) The collective contribution of our farmers to our national fabric should be celebrated for we stand on their shoulders.

Barns are an iconic representation of our roots and have even been recognized just this past December when Governor Kasich signed into law Senate Bill 86 which designates Ohio's barns as the official historical architectural symbol of the state. They help tell our story and it's a legacy that we should all cherish for generations to come.

By: Dan Troth, Vice President

## Upcoming Events

**Ohio Barn Conference XXI — Preble County**  
April 23th, 24th and 25th, 2020

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# Ohio barns featured in Depression era paintings in historic Stan Hywet Hall in Akron

Stan Hywet Hall is one of the largest homes in the United States. A National Historic Landmark, it is nationally significant as the home of F. A. Seiberling, co-founder of the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company and his wife Gertrude Pennfield Seiberling, in Akron, Ohio.

In a recent visit to this remarkable Ohio treasure for a meeting of the Ohio Museums Association, guests were afforded a tour of the many roomed mansion built in 1914 and 1915. The Tudor Revival style home has 65 rooms including 25 bathrooms. 'Stan Hywet' comes from the Old English meaning 'hewn stone' or 'stone quarry' after the site on which it was built. The crest and motto of Stan Hywet above the front door of the Manor House is "Non Nobis Solumor" — Not for Us Alone. They built it for the public to enjoy.

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**Red Barns in Winter**, by GFP Seiberling 1935 depicts a collection of farm buildings, the upper left appearing to be a three bay New England barn with attached silos.

## PICNIC, Continued from Page 1

The group caravans each fall and camps along the way with their favorite destination being Holmes County.

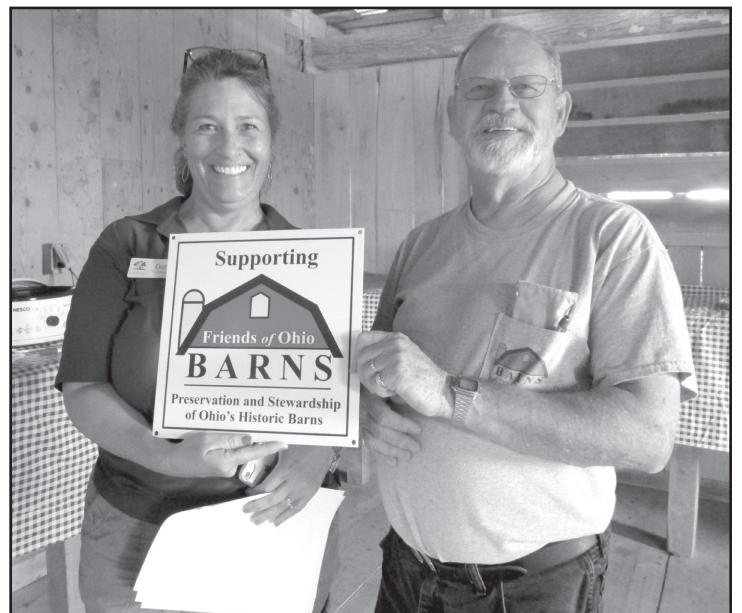
We then travelled to the Sandusky County Fairgrounds and explored a show barn that was constructed in 1913 on the fairgrounds as a show place. It had an interesting truss system, but was built to be a show place not a barn. Few barns are plastered on the inside.



A 'show' barn at the Sandusky County Fairgrounds, Fremont, Ohio admired by the attendees of the FOB fall picnic, September 28.

Deb Nofzinger, program director of the Sandusky County Park District was instrumental in helping JoAnne and I put together this endeavor. We would like to thank Deb and her staff for their support and for helping make it a fun barn-filled day.

By: Dave Hamblin, FOB Fall Event Coordinator  
419.947.1360 or [daveh2949@centurylink.net](mailto:daveh2949@centurylink.net)



Deb Nofzinger, Sandusky County Park District program coordinator, receiving the Friends of Ohio Barns appreciation gift from fall event coordinator Dave Hamblin.



**Who says a motley crew can't do fine work. The finished frame of the Malabar Sugarshack.**  
 Images: by Mary Speer and Sarah Woodall



# Sugar Shack Workshop at Malabar Farm, August 31-September 2, 2019

In 1993 the Big Barn at Malabar Farm State Park was lost to fire. For the 25th anniversary of the rebuilding of the Big Barn in 1994 the Malabar Foundation, headed up by Virginia Cochran, decided that a timber frame sugar shack would make a nice addition to the farm. The new building will be the backdrop for Mark Sommer to explain the art of making maple syrup! So, Friends of Ohio Barns and the Timber Framers Guild got together and sponsored a rendezvous type of workshop to get a frame cut and raised. Jenny Roar, Park Manager of Malabar Farm and Laura Saeger organized the workshop. Rudy Christian drew up an 8' by 12' frame and with the help of Laura Saeger, Ric Beck, Todd Herzog, Mary Speer, Mark Schaefer,

Caleb Miller, Caleb "Junior" Raber, Dave Hamblin, John & Sarah Woodall and Ian Schwartz we made it happen.

The following donations were made: Christian & Son, Inc — design, educational instruction and logistics. JCM Timber Works — educational instruction, trucking and equipment. Hochstetler Timbers — timber for frame. McKay/Gross — poplar siding and strapping. Yoder Family Roofing — metal roofing. And the Malabar Foundation provided the wonderful lunches for all the volunteers!

There were some off handed comments about how this frame could be cut and raised by one or two people in a weekend after seeing the small stack of timbers

**Please See SUGAR SHACK, Page 5**

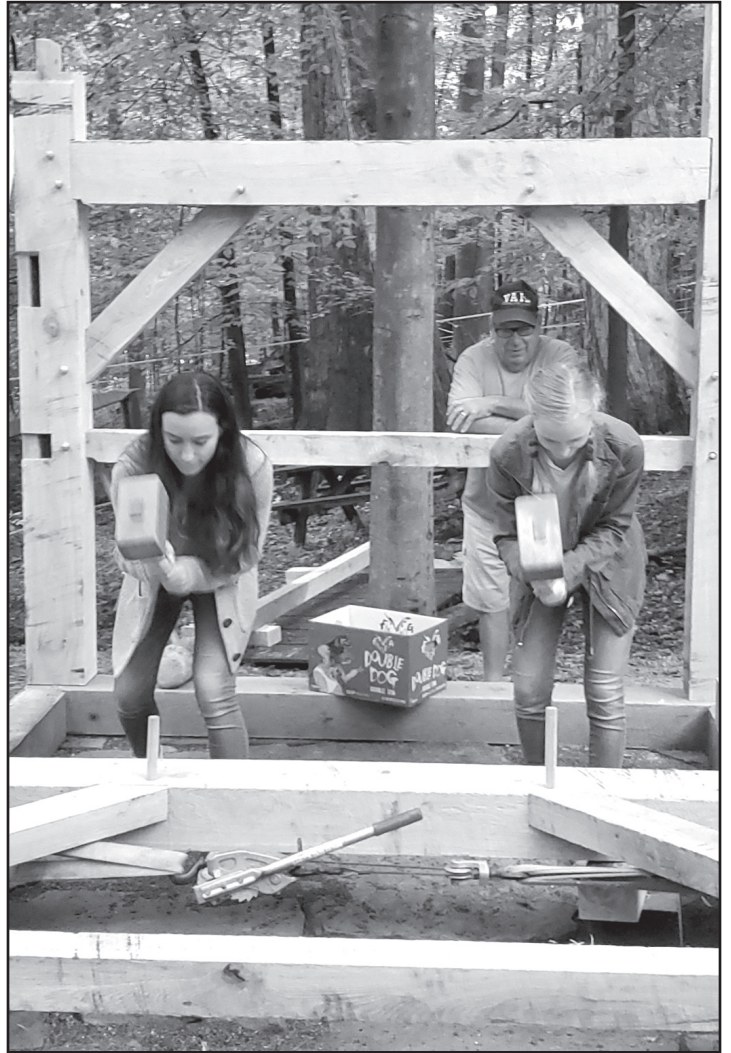


**Bent raising.**





**Rudy Christian and Ric Beck supervise the mallet action of Jenny Roar as she pins the girt and brace in one of the bents of the new syrup making structure.**

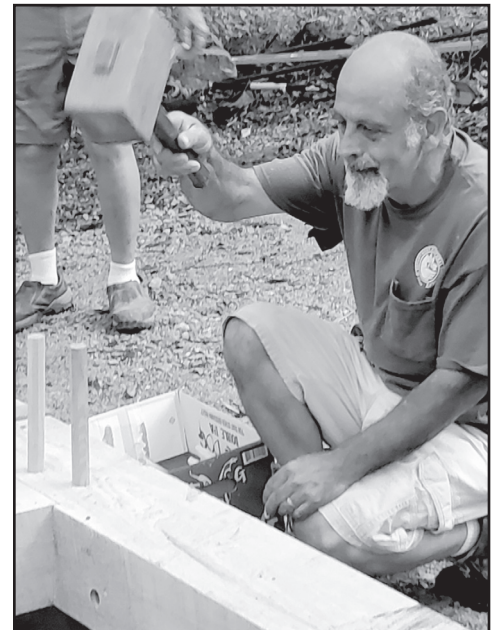


**A couple of young lasses step up for some pin setting of the timber-frame.**

on Friday compared to some of the larger timber frame jobs some of us have been on. But smaller is not necessarily easier and faster and of course we had some mistakes along the way and did some fixing on raising day, but it all went well and it truly took all the people listed above to make it happen. Malabar provided workshop space in the working farm barn, so we were on the regular tourist loop of the farm wagons. Lots of our member brochures were handed out, our banner was prominently displayed and lots of new folks were exposed to Friends of Ohio Barns.

By: Sarah Woodall and Laura Saeger

**FOB President, Caleb Miller inspecting the joinery done by volunteers on the Sugarshack being built for Malabar Farm.**



**John Eggerton pounding trunnels fastening the post and beams of the Sugarshack being raised.**



## PAINTINGS, Continued from Page 3



**Cuyahoga Valley Summer by GFP Seiberling, July 1933 illustrates a small hill farm with a Pennsylvania bank barn with an overhanging forebay accompanied by a small community of outbuildings.**



**Detail from a larger painting entitled Red Barn with Golden Willows in the Spring, Ghent Road, April 21, 1932 portrays a New England three bay bank barn across a bend in the road from the farmhouse.**



**A New England three bay bank barn with silo with a house and other farm buildings by GFP Seiberling.**



**Large oak trees line the drive up to the 1915 Stan Hywet mansion. The numerous chimneys give an indication of the large number of fireplaces throughout the Tudor Revival home in Akron. Image from [www.tripsavvy.com](http://www.tripsavvy.com)**

On a tour of the home a few paintings were spotted hanging on the wall in the hallway outside of the art room. Painted by Mrs. Gertrude Pennfield Seiberling, a number of them portrayed barns of the region. The images are signed GFP Seiberling and dated between 1932 and 1935. The paintings depict barns in Summit County in the Cuyahoga Valley and in the region along the border of the Connecticut Western Reserve and the Congress Lands. Consequently, some of the barns depicted appear to be New

England three-bay bank barns. However, one painting portrays what looks to be a German bank barn with an overhanging forebay. This type of structure would likely have been located in the southern portion of Summit County, in the Congress Lands, an area known for its many Pennsylvania-German settlers who used such barns. While the Connecticut Western Reserve butts up against the state of Pennsylvania for many miles, the Pennsylvania Germans did not migrate into those lands set aside for the New Eng-

landers from Connecticut. Nearly all barns in the Connecticut Western Reserve are some version of the New England three bay barn. One will not see a Pennsylvania German Bank barn with a forebay in northeast Ohio until south of Akron where the Congress Lands begin.

Gertrude Seiberling appears to have captured a relatively accurate representation of the rural cultural landscape in Summit County during the Great Depression.

By: Tom O'Grady



# *After the Malabar Farm Sugar Shack Workshop all I want for Christmas is.....*

A new marking gauge or an antique one. It really doesn't matter as long as I show up with one to the next timber frame workshop or Rudy will cut off my hands! Well, Rudy didn't say actually say that but.....

I definitely want a ProCarpenter Timber Frame Tape measure. It is flat, it is flexible and it has the option to "burn" a foot. I am thinking the guys in Vicksburg would have loved to have one of those instead of having to run back to the shop after they "burned" a foot right off the end of a 17' timber by mistake! Rudy still loves his folding rule but I am not sold on that yet. Although it does bring back memories of my Dad who used his, but not for timber framing, can't quite remember what he used it for.

An aluminum tenon checker as I was constantly having issues with my "tenon checker" that was two combination squares put together in such a way as to check the 2 inch width of the tenon but it kept slipping and I had to redo some work. A look from Rudy was all I needed to borrow Laura's aluminum tenon checker to check my tenons. Plus the tool has a 1.5 inch slot as well. No need for anything else!

A "timber framing friend". At least that is what Laura called it. Really slick to have one of those when checking mortise depths. However testing an actual brace in the pocket before assembly really is the better way, as Laura and I found out.

Speaking of slick what I really want is Caleb's scarf slick. Wow! That tool brought a whole new meaning to the word "slick"! It has a curved edge and with some finesse and twisting motions of the wrist one can finely tune a tenon in no time with one hand, even with a bottle of water in the other!

Or maybe I might be holding in my other hand my new Fiskar's hatchet! Caleb showed me some tricks and one of them was removing excess material from the tenons with this hatchet. I decided that I now want two hatchets with quick draw holsters or maybe holsters that attach to my back that I can simultaneously draw them while crossing my arms like some ninja warrior! But alas, Rudy suggested I get back to using my mallet



Image by: Mary Speer

**Sarah Woodall, armed without a tapemeasure, tenon checker, scarf slick, Fiskar hatchet, combination square, flat ruler, or leather necklace, appears to be doing a fine job anchoring the end of a bent as it is raised at the Sugarshack Workshop at Malabar Farm in Richland County. Rudy Christian monitors the alignment.**

and 2" Barr chisel and get the job done. Apparently my skill level is nowhere near Caleb's so I guess I had better practice on my own time at home. But I will be ready the next time!

I also now need a 6" combination square and a flat ruler as both wound up in other people's tool boxes and went home with them. Not sure where our flat ruler went but that is okay as we wound up with Ric's! So I guess I really don't need one if I choose not to return Ric's. Hmmm. I will think about that. Mark offered to return my square but I told him to keep it as he really should have one in his tool box. John's homemade dogwood mallet that he turned on a lathe somehow disappeared

but I will get it back from Laura. She said that Rudy took it and hid it in her tool box. Hmmm. Laura, is that really true?

Finally, I want an Arkansas stone leather necklace like the one that my brother sported which came in real handy when our cutting tools needed a little tweak and there wasn't enough time or need to bring out all the sharpening stones. Plus how cool is that to have hanging around your neck? Carl says it is great for touching up fishing hooks as well, that is if you are so inclined to fish.

My list is long, I know. Thank goodness my husband, John, likes to timber frame as well!

By: Sarah Woodall





# Paul and Friends are still at it — Algonquin Fall Festival

Although it was a little rainy and cold on Saturday the 49th Annual Algonquin Mill Fall Festival in Carroll County was alive with people. Friday and Sunday were beautiful fall days and plenty of people stopped by to check out Paul Knoebel's table top barn and handle some old timber framing tools. Specifically, the kids made "swiss cheese" out of a timber with an antique boring machine! FOB would like to thank Paul for continuing to showcase Friends of Ohio Barns at the fall festival. And we would also like to thank Alan Walter, Jim Howard, Doug & Carole Tackett, Bruce and Bev Riddle, Gary Clower and Sarah & John Woodall for stepping up and helping out. We all got a chance to walk around and enjoy the festival as well because we had so much help!

**Boring! Not! Youngsters at the Algonquin Mill Fall Festival are guided in their boring work by veteran barnbuilder instructor of youth, Paul Knoebel, looking on in stocking hat.**

Image by Sarah Woodall

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