

Ohio Barn Conference V

April 2 and 3, 2004

Greene County Fairgrounds, Xenia, Ohio

Continuing a tradition of moving the annual gathering of barn enthusiasts around the state, the fifth Ohio Barn Conference takes us to southwest Ohio so we can get a closer look at the legacy of fine craftsmanship that remains in that sector. The conference will start out with the annual barn tour on Friday and be followed up with a day of presentations and a trade fair. A number of barns in the Virginia Military District will be on the tour with a stop at Young's Dairy for a hot lunch and a look at their old barn. Presentations will include a look at the buildings, barns and farm of the old Soldiers and Sailors Orphanage, some local history, a review of the Ashland County Historical Society's efforts at a countywide barn survey, a discussion of barn inventories via satellite technology, a return of the infamous "Barn Detectives" and more.

The Greene County Convention and Visitors Bureau and County Extension have been very generous with their time and have helped FOB representatives put together another fine barn conference. Interested Ohioans will be coming together in an effort to recognize and extend the legacy of Ohio's rich agricultural heritage, most visible in its barns.

For more on Ohio Barn Conference V, or to register for the conference, please see the insert in this newsletter.

Again, Friends of Ohio Barns encourages attendees to bring historic photos of old barns from Ohio's past to help with an ongoing inventory of Ohio's rich heritage of agricultural structures. And, FOB is seeking help from volunteers. We are seeking representation from all 88 Ohio counties. Consider volunteering as a board member, a county barn survey coordinator, or as a local representative of FOB giving presentations or hosting a booth at events in your area. FOB will supply you with information and brochures.



FRIENDS OF OHIO BARNS

P.O. Box 203
Burbank, Ohio 44214



The Old BARN POST

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Barn survey serves as model for other counties

Few of man's creations enhance the natural world as much as a beautiful farm with its well-built barns. We regret the loss of each one as development and decay take their toll. Many of us want to do something to save these structures.

The Ashland County Barn Survey grew out of this desire.

Beginning in September, volunteers from each of Ashland County's 13 townships donated their time and energy to identify and describe the classic barns in their townships with both photographs and descriptive data.

The survey started with extensive

planning. Township plat maps were scanned road by road to identify barns that were obscured from the road. Several "old-timers" were consulted to find any other barns that might be missed or that were already gone. Barn owners were visited ahead of time to explain the project and prepare them for the survey team's upcoming visit.

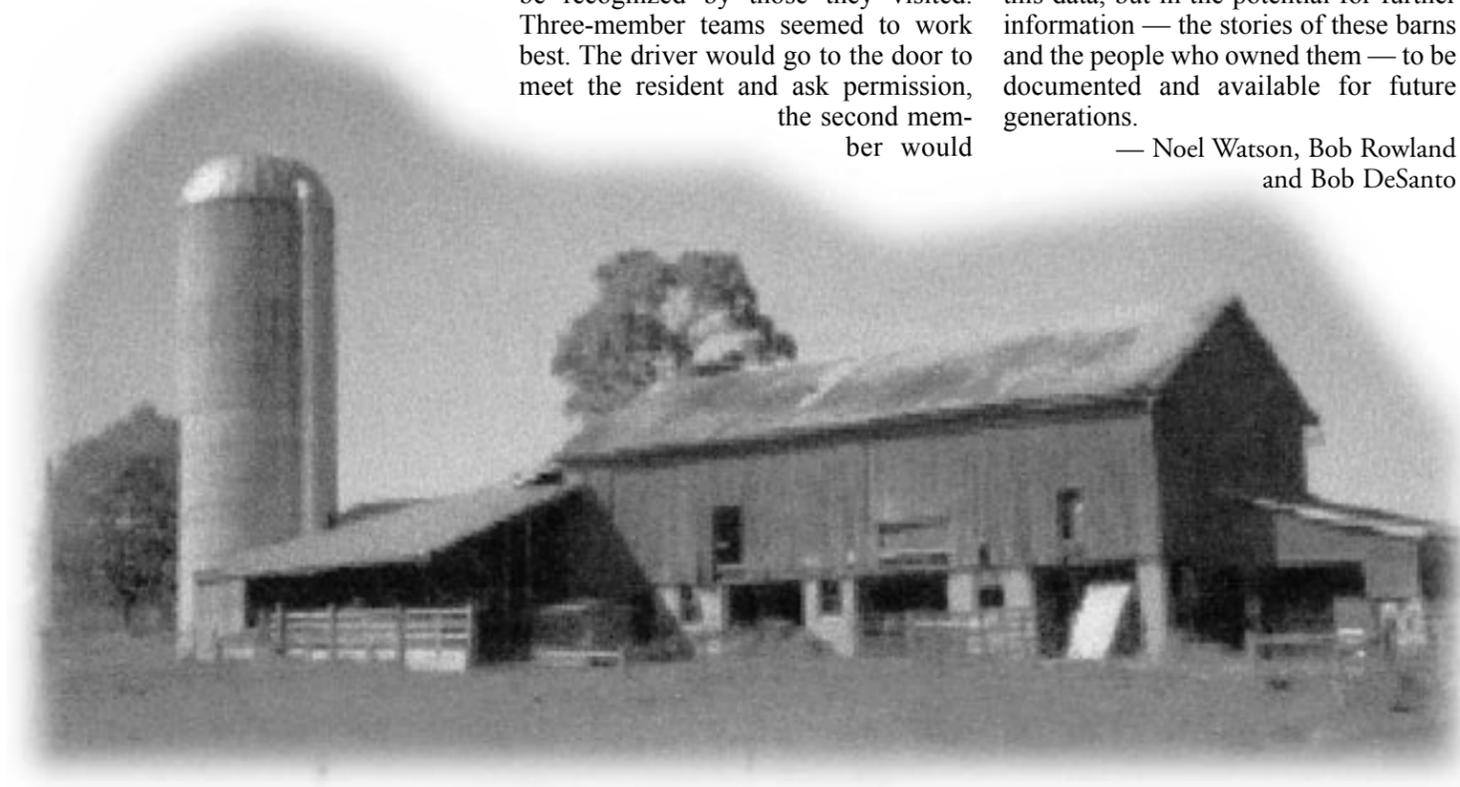
Team members were selected from responses to local newspaper articles asking for volunteers. Townships were divided into areas, and volunteer teams sent out, preferably to the area closest to them so they would know the area and be recognized by those they visited. Three-member teams seemed to work best. The driver would go to the door to meet the resident and ask permission, the second member would

fill out the form, and the third member would take pictures. If residents were not home, a preprinted note explaining the survey team's purpose was signed and left at the door.

Team members then coordinated the photo numbers with the survey forms, which were compiled to form the county's survey. The information was organized by township using the owner's name. A second file has copies of the survey filed by township and road address, as barn ownership can change.

The beauty of the Ashland County Barn Survey is not merely in compiling this data, but in the potential for further information — the stories of these barns and the people who owned them — to be documented and available for future generations.

— Noel Watson, Bob Rowland
and Bob DeSanto



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Barn tour spotlights Ohio's southwest

Tour busses will be rolling off the Greene County Fairgrounds bright and early on Friday morning, April 2 for a day-long meander through parts of the Virginia Military District of southwest Ohio and an up-close and personal look at some of the state's early barns.

These lands were deeded by Congress to veterans of the Revolutionary War as payment for services rendered. As in many parts of Ohio, we will see a variety of barn types along the roadside as we head from one stop to the next. These barns and their architectural style reveal details of the culture and heritage of the builders and early farmers who settled these lands after fighting for independence from the British crown.

Some of the foundations of these barns are indicators of the underlying bedrock in this part of the state. Instead of the sandstone blocks commonly used to support barns in eastern parts of Ohio, there is more evidence of fossil-laden limestone or possibly some granite boulders left behind by the glaciers and scavenged for use as foundations of barns and other farm buildings. The vari-



Photo by Ric Beck

Gable-roofed, three-bay bank barn with forebay, ramped side entry and shed additions near Fairborn in Greene County.

ety of barns and building materials represents the many cultures that pioneered the settlement of Ohio with their diverse traditions and unique building styles and land use patterns.

The first stop on the tour will be the Nutter Barn at Stone Hill Village for cof-

fee. After climbing through a few more barns, the tour will stop for a hot lunch at Young's Dairy, where the owners will do a presentation and tour of their operations.

The afternoon will be filled with more barns and a final stop at the McDonald Stone Quarry, an early homestead established circa 1801. The barn and collection of outbuildings are unique in their survival to the present day. This stop has wider historical significance for Ohioans in that some of the stone from this quarry was hauled to Washington D.C. and used in the construction of the Washington Monument. At this site near Xenia, barn tour participants will also see an original 10-by-15-foot cabin, a blacksmith shop, springhouse, and a couple of old barns, one of 1829 vintage and another from 1916.

There are many other barns in the region, some of which will be seen from the bus and others that can be viewed on self-guided tours during the weekend conference. Not far from Xenia is a stone octagonal barn. Just off the highway near Xenia is an old U-shaped barn with a double-gambrel roof from the old Soldiers and Sailors Orphanage.

At one time, local resident and somewhat eccentric John Bryan boasted the largest barn in the world, second only to a horse barn owned by a Russian Czar.

The conference will be held a few minutes away from John Bryan State park.



Photo by Ric Beck

Four bay with a forebay. A gable-roofed bank barn with gunstock posts, horizontal bracing, double shed overshoot and tie beams with "assembly shelves" near New Carlisle in Clark County.

Start your county's barn survey

Surely the folks in Ashland County aren't going to be the only ones getting out and talking to their neighbors about barns, taking pictures, compiling historical data and having dinners to celebrate all the fun they had doing it.

How about heading up a countywide barn survey in your neck of the woods? Contact Friends of Ohio Barns for survey sheets and help getting started.



Photo by Tom O'Grady

A rectangular, gable-roofed Ashland County four-bay bank barn with side entry, louvered windows, a hayhood and vertical wood siding. A name and date are worked into the slate roof. It appears that cupolas have been removed and the holes covered.

A dinner will be held in celebration of Ohio's first countywide barn survey at 6:30 p.m. March 9 at the Ashland University Convocation Center, Trustees Room. Reservations are required. Tickets are \$15. Contact Noel Watson at (419) 289-0392 for reservations.

Michigan Barn Conference 2004

The Michigan Barn Preservation Network is hosting its Annual Conference at the MSU Kellogg Center in Lansing on March 12 and 13.

The conference will include presentations, the Smithsonian's Barn Again! display, and a barn tour (two days). Registration is \$45 and \$55 full conference. For more information, check mibarn.net or contact Vera Wiltse at (989) 465-1216 evenings or (989) 772-0911, ext 302 days.

Do you like receiving this newsletter?

Friends of Ohio Barns memberships are due on April 1 each year. Membership entitles subscribers to the quarterly newsletter and discounts for the annual Ohio Barn Conference and Friends workshops. Dues can be paid along with your registration to receive the discount for the conference.

Friends of Ohio Barns is an all-volunteer non-profit organization and needs memberships and donations to accomplish its mission. To be responsible to our members and donors, we must evaluate and update our mailing list. The printing and mailing of the newsletter is our organization's largest expense.

If you want to help preserve Ohio's barns and enjoy receiving this newsletter, please take this opportunity to join Friends of Ohio Barns. The newsletter is really only a small benefit. The real bargain is your contribution to the protection of Ohio's agricultural heritage.

A call for FOB board members

Anyone interested in running for a position on the Friends of Ohio Barns Board of Directors should contact Tim Mason by phone, (740) 745-2938, or e-mail, ptmason@core.com, before March 20.

"It might be said that the early barn is the best example of American colonial architecture. Each old barn was born of American soil and fitted to an American landscape for specific American needs."

— Eric Sloane

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