

# Ohio Barn Conference III

March 15 and 16

Sauder Village, Archbold, Ohio

Once again the annual Ohio Barn Conference offers barn owners and enthusiasts an opportunity to celebrate Ohio's wonderful agricultural heritage. This year's event will feature valuable and educational presentations by specialists from the New York State Barn Alliance, the Michigan Barn Preservation Network and of course our own home state. This year's conference is also the first to be organized and sponsored by the newly-formed Friends of Ohio Barns. (Are you a member yet?)

Ohio Barn Conference III will once again offer a full slate of great presenters, a barn tour and a trade fair featuring barn repair specialists and suppliers from Ohio and nearby states. But this year's conference has a few surprises in store too! It will be held at historic Sauder Village ([www.saudervillage.com](http://www.saudervillage.com)) in Fulton County. If you've never been there, you are in for a treat. The village is full of historic buildings including a beautiful barn that is still in use and a fantastic scribe rule timber frame barn that was moved to the village over frozen ground by founder Erie Sauder and now houses the famous Barn Restaurant.

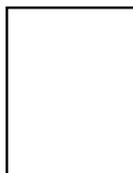
Day one of the conference will be held in the Founders Hall and will include a continental breakfast and buffet-style hot lunch prepared by the highly-qualified Sauder staff. Day two we will move into the village for hands-on demonstrations of barn repair work and historic building trades, then on to tour several beautiful area barns including the famous "Jetty Barn" at Goll Woods Preserve. Check inside your newsletter for ways to get more information and plan on meeting old friends in March at Sauder Village.

*Double barns such as the one in this picture will be seen on the Northwest Ohio barn tour by conference attendees.*



FRIENDS OF OHIO BARNs

P.O. Box 203  
Burbank, Ohio 44214



# The Old BARN POST

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## *The Endangered Barn of Ohio's Hill Country*

For more than a century, barns were the most important structures in the American landscape. When more than 90 percent of the population lived on farms, the barn was the largest structure standing amid a community of outbuildings, each serving a special need that supported the farmstead. The barn was the most visible symbol of the economic health and well-being of the family and the nation.

The hewn timbers were shaped from the primeval trees that once towered over the land. The stone foundations were quarried from the exposed bedrock nearby. Put together with ingenuity and skill and representing the hopes and dreams of the farmer and his family, the barn rose out of the land and sheltered their harvest, livestock, tools, equipment and all that was important to their survival.

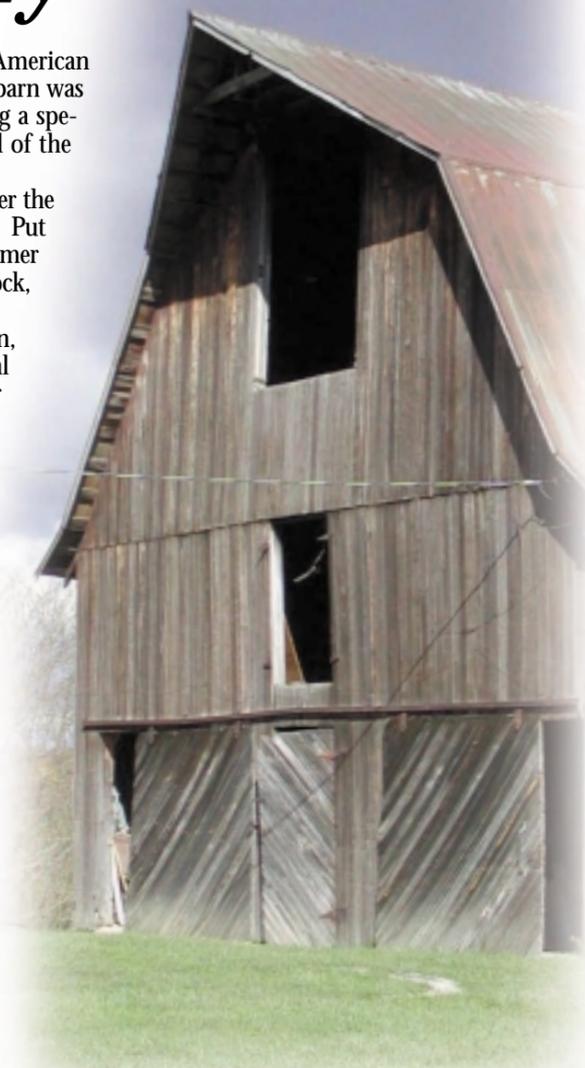
After serving the needs of several generations of farmers and the nation, changing tools and trends in agriculture resulted in the neglect and eventual decay of this once familiar shape. Sadly, many of these barns, built to last for centuries, have not benefited from the maintenance and upkeep their original owners anticipated they would receive. The qualities of thrift and frugality inherent in the builders of America's barns have largely been lost.

A missing piece of slate or the wind bent corner of a metal roof was expected to be repaired. However, a ride along the main highways or back roads of southeastern Ohio reveals many a barn with a roof in need of repair. Short of receiving this remedial attention, the barn begins to decline. When the roof no longer protects the posts and beams of the frame and foundation from rain and snowmelt, the fate of the barn is sealed. At length we will witness that barn returning to the land as a decaying pile of sticks and stones. With it will go more stories and more knowledge and more links to history and heritage than we can appreciate.

The silent killers of neglect and dereliction in the marginally farmable Ohio hill country are supplemented by the growing number of highways, subdivisions, shopping centers and parking lots that result in the bulldozing of farms and barns in other parts of the state. The community ritual and festivity of barn raising in the last century has given way to the unattended and disheartening barn razing of today.

To preserve the barn is to preserve a tangible part of the American heritage. To preserve the barn is to preserve our sense of place and a sense of who we are, where we came from, and how we got here. The barn represents the people who built it and the way of life it supported. It represents the frugality, stewardship, and ingenuity of its former owners. Such a link to the past might yet be a guidepost along the road to economic stability as it was in days gone by.

— Tom O'Grady



# Come join your 'friends'

Interest and growing concern for Ohio's barns first entered the public spotlight in 1996 when Jim Papritan of Ohio State University decided to bring the national Barn Again! program to our state. Since then nearly 20 Barn Again! workshops have been held across Ohio, organized and produced by county extension agents. With the support of the Ohio Historic Preservation Office, the Barn Again! program has also developed a list of contractors that can assist barn owners in the conservation of their barns. These efforts went a long way to help save Ohio's barns, but in 1999 Chuck Whitney, with the full support of timber framer Rudy Christian and county extension agents Jim Skeeles, Jeff Lehman and Howard Seigrist, decided more could be done.

The first Ohio Barn Conference was planned and held at the Delaware Church in February 2000. Over 250 people attended the conference, and it was clear the need was there for more information and assistance for barn owners. It also became clear that barn owners weren't the only people with an interest. Many in attendance didn't even own a barn, but felt it was important to become involved

in saving them.

This "grass roots" interest supported the need for continuing to hold these conferences. Ohio Barn Conference II was held at Fisher Auditorium in Wooster Ohio in spring 2001 and again over 250 people attended. In response to public interest, a meeting was held at the end of the conference to see whether it was time to form an organization focused on barn conservation.

Over 100 conference attendees stayed for the planning meeting and an interim volunteer board of directors was created. A new group to be called "Friends of Ohio Barns" was formed and accepted by the State as a 501c3 non-profit.

A lot has happened since that planning meeting, including acceptance into the National Barn Alliance and partnering with the Ohio State University county extension program, the Barn Again! in Ohio program and the Ohio Historic Preservation Office. We are developing connections to the Michigan Barn Preservation Network and the New York State Barn Alliance and working on development of a program to assist in the distribution of federal grant funding in the

event the National Historic Barn Preservation Act is passed. It has been a very busy year!

Friends of Ohio Barns is the first organization of its type in the State of Ohio. Although we can learn by example from other state programs, our success depends on you. This organization enables you to contribute directly by helping guarantee the secure future of our valuable agricultural resource. With your membership and support we can assist local historical societies as well as individuals in finding ways to save our barns. Some ideas in the works include a community action program to enable contractors and volunteers to work together at barn workshops for barn owners with special needs. There is also a program developing to provide county extension agents with local contacts from FOB to help barn owners find solutions.

These types of programs, as well as our annual conferences and barn tours, will only work with your help and support, so join your "Friends" today and help us save our heritage.

— Rudy R. Christian

## County-level volunteers needed

Some people are naturals at creating famous quotes, while others are really good at borrowing those quotes. I fall into the latter category, but am having a difficult time finding the perfect quote to describe volunteers. Not that there is a lack of quotes where volunteers are concerned, it's just that this article would be lost in the writing of all of them. And so I will just put out this invitation, and allow you to put your favorite quote with your desire to volunteer.

Friends of Ohio Barns is a non-profit organization that, at this point, relies entirely on volunteers. Members of the interim board, who have worked so hard to get this organization up and running, have donated countless hours in meetings, phone calls, road trips, and anything else because they believe in the mission of Friends of Ohio Barns. But to make this mission a reality we need the assistance of people like you.

Your talents are in great demand and the success of Friends of Ohio Barns is in the hands of you, its membership. By sharing this newsletter with a friend and extending an invitation to become a member and supporter of Friends of Ohio Barns you have become a valuable volunteer. We need to get the word out, not only to barn owners, but also to all barn enthusiasts throughout Ohio.

We also need volunteers to assist at the county level. As a part of the Friends of Ohio Barns volunteer team, you would become a local contact person the county Extension agent could call upon for information about upcoming Friends of Ohio Barns events and activities. The Extension Agent would also have a valuable contact person to assist with promoting The Ohio State University's "Barn Again" programs.

Maybe your talents lie in public speaking and education. If so, we are in need of

qualified public speakers to help us get the word out and present programs throughout Ohio.

Friends of Ohio Barns may call upon you to forward press releases and information found in your local newspaper so that the historian can archive them.

These are but a few opportunities available to you, our newest and most treasured member. Kimberly Rinehart wrote, "Your time is a gift in itself." Thank you for giving of your time to the present and the future of Ohio's barns.

— Tim Mason

*If you are interested in volunteering for Friends of Ohio Barns, please contact Tim Mason, 6500 Horns Hill Road, St. Louisville, Ohio, 43071, or e-mail ptmason@core.com for information on how you can become more active in conserving Ohio's barns.*

## Goll Woods barn to be focus of barn conference



This rare "triple jetty outshot" barn at Goll Woods Preserve will be one of the barns on Saturday's Barn Tour at this year's Ohio Barn Conference. The barn was almost destroyed by ODNR, but will be saved by a new organization called Friends of Goll Homestead, which will assume stewardship of the barn soon.

Photo by Maura Johnson

## Friends of Ohio Barns

### Interim Board

<b>Chairman</b> Rudy Christian	(330) 624-7282	Wayne County
<b>Vice Chairman</b> Tim Mason	(740) 745-2938	Licking County
<b>Secretary</b> Karen Burkhardt	(937) 866-6826	Montgomery County
<b>Treasurer</b> Laura Saeger	(330) 624-7282	Wayne County
<b>Membership</b> Dan Troth	(740) 549-1774	Delaware County
<b>Newsletter</b> Tom O'Grady	(740) 593-7552	Athens County
<b>Board Members</b> Fred Cannon	(330) 264-8415	Wayne County
John Johnson	(740) 427-9001	Knox County
Lena and Fred Meyer	(419) 299-3323	Hancock County
Larry Sulzer	(330) 657-2135	Summit County
Gary Wechter	(330) 499-8522	Stark County

## Call for officers

The first official Board of Directors for Friends of Ohio Barn will be elected at Ohio Barn Conference III.

Anyone wishing to serve must be a member of the organization and submit a photograph and a maximum of 300 words expressing why they want to be a member of the board. The deadline for submittals is Feb. 15. Send your bios to Tim Mason, 6500 Horns Hill Road, St. Louisville, Ohio 43021, or e-mail Tim at ptmason@core.com.

## Federal bill could help preserve barns

In November, the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry reported a bill, S.1628, the Agriculture, Conservation, and Rural Enhancement Act of 2001, which included a provision (section 639) authorizing a new historic barn preservation program.

This five-year, \$25 million program is aimed at protecting historic barns that are at least 50 years old for continued agricultural use. The program will assist states in developing a listing of historic barns and fostering educational programs relating to their history, construction techniques, and rehabilitation.

Support of the federal barn bill is timely, since just this year Governor Taft and the Ohio Legislature authorized \$25 million toward farmland preservation.

Senator Jeffords' bill for the establishment of a National Historic Barn Preservation Program deserves our attention and certainly our support.

Please contact Senator John Boehner at the address below and urge him to support the bill.

— Laura Saeger

US Rep. John Boehner  
1011 Longworth House Office building  
Washington, DC 20515  
202-225-6205

"When we build, let us think that we build forever. Let it not be for present delight or present use only. Let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for ... and that men will say as they look upon the labor and wrought substance of them: 'See! This our fathers did for us!'"

— John Ruskin