



The Old BARN POST

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Seeds of Rebellion Stored in Western Reserve Barn

Barns have been known to shelter a good deal more than gathered crops and livestock. In the first half of the 19th century many an Ohio barn provided brief asylum to fugitives fleeing a life of bondage south of the Mason-Dixon Line. In the summer of 1859 one barn in northeastern Ohio sheltered a gathering of a very different sort.

It may not still be standing but local history claims that an old barn up in Ashtabula County had a story to tell. That year couple of wagonloads of implements were brought into the barn and stored temporarily, awaiting shipment across the state line into Pennsylvania for a longer journey south. The contents of the wagons stored in this Western Reserve barn were a secret.

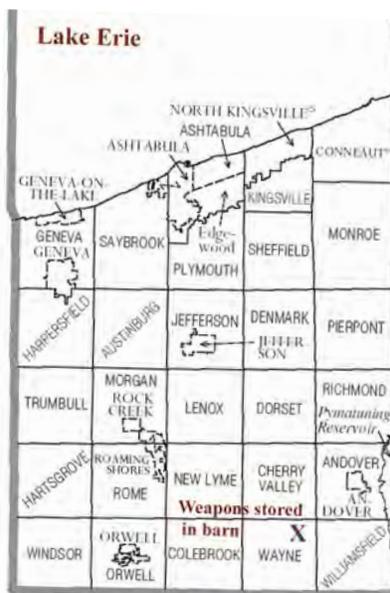
Toward the end of her life, a 95 year old woman, who died in 1942, told a story of a discovery she made in that northeastern Ohio barn when she was 12 years of age. Playing with other children in the barn they were digging a cave in the hay in which to hide from Indians, should they come. In their digging they found a stash of firearms concealed in the hay.

Running frightened to the house and reporting the stockpile of weapons in the haymow, she and the others were instructed not to go near them again lest they might get shot. Nor should they utter any mention of these firearms to anyone or something awful would happen to them.

Ashtabula County, in the first half of the 19th century, was a veritable hotbed of abolitionists. Ashtabula harbor, on Lake Erie, was a shoving off point for many a boatload of fugitives headed for freedom in Canada. Ashtabula County was home to two leading American opponents to slavery, U.S. Representative Joshua Giddings and U.S. Senator Benjamin Wade. And some reports indicate that 13 of John Brown's 19 recruits, aiding in the raid on the arsenal at Harpers Ferry in October of 1859, were living or working in Ashtabula County.

John Brown acquired an arsenal of weapons for use in his plan to provoke a slave uprising in the south. Some of the arms were gathered locally and others were shipped into Ashtabula County by rail. Having made a circuitous trip from New England to Chicago and back to Ashtabula County the munitions were apparently unloaded in Conneaut and then moved by bobsled to Cherry Valley near Andover, a few miles above the Trumbull County line.

Some of the arms were secreted in the Fobes family barn. Other weapons including 200 Sharps rifles and an equal number of revolvers were hidden in the cabinet shop of King & Brothers. To further conceal the nature of this delivery they were stored in



The Fobes barn and King & Brothers cabinet shop were located near Wick and Cherry Valley southwest of Andover, Ohio in southern Ashtabula County. At left, the pike had a 10 inch blade on a six foot ash handle.

hailed by canal boat from Hartstown to Johnstown where the canal boat was hoisted over the mountains on the Allegheny Portage Railroad. The boat was lowered to the east side of the mountain and then continued along the canal to a point near Harrisburg. Carted by horse and wagon again to Chambersburg, they were stored until moved to the Kennedy farm in Maryland. On the evening of the 16th of October, John Brown and his Ashtabula County weapons and armed recruits headed into Harper's Ferry. The rest is history.

A little New England barn in a quiet and remote agricultural community in southeastern Ashtabula County in Ohio's Western Reserve played an integral role in the episodes leading up to the nation's most costly struggle.



Sharp's Rifle

— Tom O'Grady

Random Thoughts

I met the man, but never really knew him. Yet, I knew what he meant for barn preservation in Michigan and Ohio. In some excerpts from his obituary, and news articles; William J. Kimball PhD, or Bill as we knew him, recently departed this life at the age of 87 in Lansing, Michigan on May 24, 2013. He was born on October 6, 1925 to Elmer and Gladys Kimball in Seymour, Wisconsin.

Bill worked for 39 years as a professor at Michigan State University and as an Extension Specialist in community and organizational development. He authored numerous studies on the value of citizen input and action in our communities. He was a tireless advocate for historic barn preservation and facilitated the creation and growth of many state and local barn groups as well as the National Barn Alliance. Bill was one of just a few Cornerstone members of the NBA. Kimball was honored with the 2011 President's Award for his long and dedicated contributions to barn preservation in Michigan and the nation.

Bill retired from MSU Extension as a re-



William J. Kimball

formed as a nonprofit organization.

Bill was a founding member and has continued as a mentor to MBPN since that time. He authored a National Trust for Historic Preservation publication on starting barn preservation organizations at the state level and in 2006 he was involved in establishing the National Barn Alliance.

Bill was instrumental in helping Friends of Ohio Barns become established as a 501c3 organization, and always willing to assist with whatever questions the new board asked.

Rest in peace Bill.

source development specialist where he assisted in the development of a state-wide series of barn rehabilitation workshops in 1992 and 1993. These workshops demonstrated a strong interest and in 1995 the Michigan Barn Preservation Network was

— Ric Beck

Upcoming Events

SEPTEMBER 7

Friends of Ohio Barns Fall Picnic
Bear's Mill
Greenville, Oh

SEPTEMBER 28

Ohio Heritage Days
Malabar Farms
Mansfield, Oh.
www.malabarfarm.org

OCTOBER 12-14

Fall Festival
Algonquin Mill Park
Carrollton, Oh.
www.carrollcountyohio.com

APRIL 25-26, 2014

Friends of Ohio Barns
Annual Conference XV
Knox, County

Special Thank You

Every year an amazing amount of time goes into the planning and execution of our annual event. Hours of travel and boots on the ground go into pulling together the Barn Tour. Yes, of course it is fun to search the country roads looking for candidates, and to meet the barn owners too but first, the crew must commit to take the time, be flexible with schedules and coordinate the drives. Unlike the good weather we have enjoyed on the tour for several years now, it is not always a beautiful day! More hours go into re connecting with the owners to confirm that we are welcome and provide guidance for their preparation. Someone has to sit down, get all the addresses and map the itinerary, make arrangements with the motor coach folks, confirm there is room for registration and bus loading at the hotel, get the donuts and coffee, locate a destination & caterer for lunch. The same applies for the conference itself. Finding good presenters, connecting with local venues, caterers, searching for sponsors, making countless decisions and hoping that everyone is happy with the results is a process that begins to repeat itself for the next year within a month of the current conference ending. After 14 years we feel we are getting pretty good at networking to make it all work.

Truth is none of it could work if we did not have the strong support of you our members. Your willingness to support the organization thru membership and conference fees has enabled these efforts. And your enthusiastic, hands on help makes a huge difference. The success of our barn tour and conference hinges on your participation. So, thank you for attending this year, for bringing auction donations and for buying them, for clearing your own lunch dishes, helping to set up and take down and sharing your comments and smiles. And in particular, thanks to the Auction crew Beryl, Judy & Kendal who also plan ahead to spend the entire day making that part of the organization a success!

— Laura Saeger

The events of human life, whether public or private, are so intimately linked to architecture that most observers can reconstruct nations or individuals in all the truth of their habits from the remains of their monuments or from their domestic relics.

— *Honore de Balzac*

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Wilhelm Award Presented

Friends of Ohio Barns established and presented the Wilhelm Award at the Ohio Barn Conference 2013 in Athens County. Named for Dr. Hubert G.H. Wilhelm for his lifetime achievement in researching, writing and teaching about the migrants and immigrants who settled the Ohio country and built the farms and barns and towns that make up Ohio's landscape today. It is the work of Dr. Wilhelm and others like him that we build upon as we continue to research and conserve the legacy of the barnbuilders that left such a wealth of structures that make up the built heritage of Ohio.

Friends of Ohio Barns will present the Wilhelm Award when an individual is nominated whose body of work in scholarship, craftsmanship, stewardship, or leadership achieves a high level of contribution that furthers the understanding of the history and significance regarding the heritage of Ohio's barns and barnbuilders and related aspects of the culture and traditions of the settlers associated with the built legacy of Ohio's agricultural landscape.

The body of work associated with the presentation of the Wilhelm Award shall have contributed significantly toward telling the story, carrying it forward, and fostering the conservation of Ohio's barns and their tradition.

Congratulations, Dr. Hubert Wilhelm and thank you for your work.



Above: Dr. Wilhelm receives the Wilhelm Award at 2013 Ohio Barn Conference. From left to right: Mr. Vice President, Dan Troth, Tom O'Grady, Suzanne Robinson (daughter of Dr. Wilhelm), Dr. Hubert Wilhelm, Rudy Christian, Diana Wilhelm Pollock (daughter of Dr. Wilhelm), and FOB President, Ric Beck.

Photo by Pam Gray



Left: Dr. Hubert Wilhelm receives award for his lifetime contributions to our understanding of the importance and significance of the heritage of Ohio's barns.

Photo by Tim Traxler

Many thanks to retiring board member Paul Knoebel

The mini barn is at 129 raisings and counting...the tabletop barn model has shown its handsome face around too. These brain-children of their master, Paul Knoebel will continue to make the rounds at various events for the foreseeable future, but alas, Paul won't be doing this as a Friends of Ohio Barns board member. After ten plus years of faithful service, Paul has chosen to step down.

As a board member, Paul has been instrumental in teaching our youth the value of barns, how they are made and raised, and what fun it is to build something with your hands! Fashioning a barn model that encompasses many aspects of timber framing, and a simple barn design that could easily be assembled and disassembled over a hundred times with no damage or replacements is quite a feat!! This barn has been so successful, that the National Barn Alliance contacted Paul to get his ideas for copying the model for their use. In fact, the NBA now has two models, thanks to Paul's idea! If any 6-10 year old kid one day chooses to join Friends of Ohio Barns, it may well be because of Paul.

Paul has also been one of the archi-



Photo by Dan Troth

Paul is so commonly seen surrounded by a batch of young barn raisers as here at a local festival.

ects of an educational program for adults as well...the Junior Barn Detectives. He, Larry Sulzer and Gary Clower were tasked with the idea of developing a workshop program where members could learn more about barn stewardship, and perhaps preservation. What they designed was a way for members across the state to feel more comfortable going into their neighbor's barn and telling them whether it was

worth doing something with, if it was safe to be in, and if it was possibly unique. The booklet they designed has helped several FOB members to do just that. It even got a few members to feel so confident they volunteered to host a conference!

Paul is going out on a high note with the JBD program...the recent unique workshop in Athens County with owners Kate Kelley, Wilhelm Roosenburg, and barn repairman Steve Skellett proved to be a great success. It brought FOB members, barn owners and trades folks together for a terrific discussion on barn stewardship, repair, budgets, and adaptive reuse for the first time. Needless to say, everyone came away with new knowledge and appreciation.

Paul Knoebel works tirelessly for this organization. He has contributed regularly to the newsletter, has been willing to speak his mind at board meetings, to listen to various points of view with an open mind, and volunteer his time without question...he will be sorely missed. Thank you Paul for all you've contributed to Friends of Ohio Barns! We will happily join you in raising those barns of yours at the next event!

— Ric Beck

Ohio Barn Conference and *A Good Time Had By All*



Photos by Tom O'Grady

Looking over the before and after images of the May Bonnaud barn.



Dr. Timothy Anderson, Ohio University geographer, compares notes with Geography department predecessor and award recipient, Dr. Hubert Wilhelm.



Approaching the May Bonnaud barn, which recently been repurposed as a community center. "Born in a barn?" Well, I was born in this barn this past year.



Two and a half year old Wyatt Blower presents tour member with zinnia seeds 'from our garden to yours.'

Left: Barn tourists descend upon White's Mill on the Hocking River in Athens. Three stories up and two down to the turbine, this mill, moved from Meigs County to its present location is hand hewn and in excellent condition. The mill is in the good hands of Mike and Meg Toomey and is well cared for.



Rudy Christian on ladder at left and Mr. Vice President, Dan Troth on loft at right discuss the type of wood and the age of this early barn, once part of a stagecoach stop on the Marietta-Chillicothe Road. The barn dates from approximately the 1820-30's.



Mr. Vice President, Dan Troth, is not instructing on how to burn a barn. He shared many of his vintage photos of barn raisings and other early rural images at the Saturday conference.



Barn repairman, Steve Skellett, speaks at JBD workshop about the repairs and conditions associated with the Kelley/Rosenbush barn on Thursday afternoon before the conference.

nd Barn Tour Highlights



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barn tour.



Buses await crowd to return from one of several timber frame structures on the Lochary Farm. The hand hewn horse barn in the foreground has a double curved hay track beneath the gambrel roof which had been raised up from the earlier gable roof. A hewn corn crib, carriage shed, sheep barn and other buildings surround the cow barn with perpendicular hay tracks mounted inside. The frame was most likely raised around 1817, give or take a couple of years. Like other barns on the tour and throughout the state, timbers from Ohio's virgin forest hold the roofs up on these magnificent structures.



Above: Crowd migrating from one barn to the next on the Arbuthnot farm. The farm presents two early barns framed with hewn primeval logs. Siding grooves and a few other unique features were present in one barn while the one pictured had a raised threshing floor in the second story.

Left: 14 George Eberts, local astronomy instructor and mental health professional, gives an outdoor walking tour of the magnificent old Athens Asylum buildings.



Rudy Christian describes construction techniques employed in the Blower barn where timber dimensions vary greatly and some pieces appear to have served time in an earlier structure.



A crowd gathers around what was originally the gable end of a small, very early, hand hewn frame barn on the Bonnaud farm. Two more bays were added much later and the original barn became one of the bays, its upper floor supported by at least twenty large hand hewn floor joists.



Bob Eichenberg, local planner, offers ideas on how GIS (geographical information systems) might be useful in barn surveys and inventories as well as other barn conservation strategies.

Ohio Barn Conference XIV – A weekend of firsts!

Well, we did it! The barn gods once again smiled on Friends of Ohio Barns as we enjoyed some fantastic spring days in beautiful Athens County for our 14th annual conference. Sunny skies, wildflowers in bloom, great barns, great people, great food...we couldn't have asked for more; yet we managed to exceed even those goals with a conference of many "firsts".

Let's start with Athens County. It was our first foray this far southeast in the state, and boy, it did not disappoint! Tom O'Grady, our local hero, board member and chief newsletter editor, put together fantastic locales for the barn tour as well as the conference setting at the old Athens Asylum grounds on the campus of Ohio University. The ecologically minded and healthy choice caterers for our weekend meals were a first of that kind, recruited by Tom. The campus of the old Asylum was something to tour; for what it was and what it has become. To see such magnificent structures decaying was very disheartening, but hope remains that local organizations can change the OU Regents' minds about their long-term use.

On Thursday afternoon Friends attempted our first pre-conference work shop. During one of our "barn storming" trips to the area with Tom, (to scout for possible barns for the tour), we discovered a unique opportunity. One of the very enthusiastic barn owners, Kate Kelley and Willem Roosenburg own an interesting barn that they had recently repaired. It was discovered that most all the repairs were done by one company; Royal Barn Restoration. Our JBD crew took the opportunity to have barn owners and repair specialist, Steve Skellett, come together to discuss this project with members and guests. The dialogue included scope of work, budget, unforeseen issues and the inevitable compromise needed to make the project a reality. It was great fun, and a terrific learning experience...I think Steve, Kate & Willem got a lot out of it as well! It was also the first time that a barn owner put together a picture book of the project for all participants to review. It was also very helpful in the discussion!

Friday brought us more "firsts". Sunny skies accompanied us around Athens County for another lively barn tour. Our lead "barn professor", Rudy Christian, once again did a marvelous job of pointing out the value of these icons of agriculture. I think we were witness to one of the oldest barns in the area at Jim Lochary's farm. Rudy pointed out that the barn frame was cut from virgin forests there...it was a handsome barn in great shape because the owner understood the value of keeping it up long after its agricultural use ended. Most of the other barns on the tour were also constructed of primeval timber from Ohio's original forests.

I don't think we've seen as much enthusiastic involvement from the barn owners as we had on this tour. The tour stooped for lunch in the village of Amesville. After dishing out lunches to the crowd Mayor Gary Goosman read his official Proclamation declaring it Friends of Ohio Barns Day in Amesville for our efforts to bring barn preservation to the attention of Ohioans. We ended the day being greeted by two adorable kids, at the Cathe & Mitch Blower barn, who had packets of Zinnia seeds for every member of the tour. Each package was labeled Friends of Ohio Barns – from our garden to yours.

We finished our weekend of "firsts" at the Ridges Auditorium for our Saturday sessions on the old Asylum grounds. Some students from the OU geography class assisted in setting up the auditorium. Dr Timothy Anderson, a geography professor at OU, started us off with a terrific keynote presentation about the



Mitch & Cathe Blower's daughter Laura hands out Zinnia seeds to all members of the 2013 barn tour at their farm.
Photo by Ric Beck



Dr Hubert G.H. Wilhelm, first recipient of the Wilhelm Award



Photo by Ric Beck
Mr Vice President (Dan Troth) and Mayor Gary Goosman help serve food at the Amesville Grange during the barn tour lunch stop.

settlement patterns of the Pennsylvania Bank Barn in the Ohio region. Dan Troth shared some amazing barn raising photos from his growing collection. Tom O'Grady followed with a talk about Levi Scofield, the architect of the Asylum buildings. Rudy & Larry shared barns and laughs with their barn detective shtick, and Bob Eichenberg talked to us about GIS (Geographical Information Systems) and their potential use in barn surveys and inventories.

The member meeting and awards portion of the conference was very special. It was the first time we actually showed the barn of the year recipient's barns on the big screen as they were getting their plaques. They are going to be featured on our brand new Facebook page too!

Perhaps the biggest and best moment came when Friends unveiled the first ever recipient of the "Wilhelm Award". This accolade goes to a person who has devoted many years of study and work in barn related preservation endeavors. Dr. Hubert G.H. Wilhelm was the first to accept this honor, and we were all very grateful and excited to see Mr. Wilhelm in person. He graciously autographed several copies of his co-authored book, "Barns of the Midwest", which we auctioned off at the normally silent auction. The book auction brought in over \$500 and will be donated in Dr. Wilhelm's name to the Friends of Ohio Barns Endowment Fund.

Our day was complete with an interesting tour of the Asylum grounds by George Eberts. Another "first".

Every year, the board of directors works very hard to bring a quality conference to members and guests. It's anything but routine as each setting offers unique opportunities and challenges. It is all worth it when a conference comes off as good as this one did! By the time you are reading this article, we will be back to researching places, people, and barns for next year!

— Ric Beck

2013 Barn of the Year Winners

Thanks to all the proud barn stewards who submitted their barns for consideration for the Barn of the Year. We chose three great barns, which are well representative of their respective categories and presented plaques to the owners at Saturday's conference at Ohio University.

The BOY for Agricultural Use went to the Terry Randall barn, which came under the stewardship of Terry's father in 1954 when he moved his milk herd there. In 1975 Terry and Diane began milking and farming operations there on the Fredericktown farm. Thirty-five short years later Terry stopped milking but continues to store hay and equipment in the barn and shelter calves and beef steers. This large bank barn was originally built in the 1850's and the back addition to it was moved from an old farmstead and joined to the original in 1926. It was repainted in 2012 and is well maintained by its current owners.

Our BOY for Stewardship was awarded to the Gish Barn in Rittman, a large Pennsylvania or forebay barn with double outshot granaries and double threshing floors. Hats off to its current owners Denise and Richard Weis for not only realizing what a gem of a barn they originally found but for the huge restoration they chose to undertake to bring it back to its original glory. Thankfully, our past president, Rudy Christian, was chosen by them to visit and give a thorough evaluation of all that was needed to save the barn and properly preserve it for future generations. His passion was contagious and spread to Denise and Richard, resulting in a truly noble effort for which all can be proud.

Our final award was presented to Wayne Emerick for the Brookside Farm located in Louisville, near Akron and Canton. Wayne, who had worked on the farm for decades and fallen in love with the 120 acre property, joined forces with two of his friends and purchased the farm when the opportunity arose. When one of those friend's daughter was looking for a place to be married, she chose the barn, still filled with hay. They scratched their heads quizzically but said ok, sprucing it up as best as they could before the big day. Word quickly spread and one wedding led to another and today they are pretty much booked year round, to their surprise and delight. It looks like they might be able to not only pay off their investment but also pay off America's 16 trillion dollar debt within a few short years! The power of Ohio's historic barns is not to be underestimated. Clearly, the Brookside Farm represents an outstanding example of Adaptive Re-Use.

Our Barn of the Year awards are just one of the many ways Friends of Ohio Barns tries to recognize and celebrate Ohioans' efforts to preserve our remaining historic barns and raise the public consciousness. Congratulations and our gratitude to all of you who have taken up this fight.

Now that summer is officially upon us and in closing (and by the enormous power invested in me by our board of directors which allows me to say whatever I choose) I hope you'll take the time to read one of my favorite poems. Enjoy your summer. See you soon.

— Dan Troth



Photos by Dan Troth

The Gish barn after restoration



Terry Randall barn exterior



Brookside Barn set up for next event

Summer Morning

Charles Simic

I love to stay in bed
All morning,
Covers thrown off, naked,
Eyes closed, listening.

Outside they are opening
Their primers
In the school
Of the cornfield.

There's a smell of damp hay,
Of horses, laziness,
Summer sky and eternal life.

I know all the dark places
Where the sun hasn't reached
yet,
Where the last cricket
Has just hushed; anthills
Where it sounds like it's raining;
Slumbering spiders spinning
wedding dresses.

I pass over the farmhouses
Where the little mouths open to
suck,
Barnyards where a man, naked
to the waist,
Washes his face and shoulders
with a hose,
Where the dishes begin to rattle
in the kitchen.

The good tree with its voice
Of a mountain stream
Knows my steps.
It, too, hushes.

I stop and listen:
Somewhere close by
A stone cracks a knuckle,
Another turns over in its sleep.

I hear a butterfly stirring
Inside a caterpillar.
I hear the dust talking
Of last night's storm.
Farther ahead, someone
Even more silent
Passes over the grass
Without bending it.

And all of a sudden:
In the midst of that quiet,
It seems possible
To live simply on this earth.

Darke County Site of FOB 2013 Annual Picnic

Darke County has been selected for the Friends of Ohio Barns Annual Picnic, Saturday, September 7, 2013 from 10 am to 4 pm. Please bring a covered dish, your beverage of choice, your own chair, and place setting. And don't forget the camera. FOB will provide the meat, buns, and fixin's. After getting re-acquainted with old friends and meeting new friends from around the area we will enjoy lunch and then be treated to a tour of the mill and adjacent barn home by the owners Terry and Julie Clark. And they have quite a story to tell. There is a nominal fee of \$5 per person for the tour.

Darke County is located on the western side of the state. It claims to have legends as rich as its soil. Bear's Mill is just one of these stories. Built in 1849 by Gabriel Baer, Bear's Mill (the name became Americanized some time back) is one of the last operating water-powered mills in Ohio. Its gears, belts, and turbines began to turn in the year 1850, grinding gifts from nature into sustenance for man. The interesting history of Bear's Mill continues into the new millennium as the mill still functions to stone-grind cornmeal, whole wheat flour, and rye flour for new people in a new age, in traditional Old World style.

This huge four-story timber-frame structure was construct-

ed with natural resources harvested within a two mile radius of the mill site. The frame is Hickory and the siding is Black Walnut.

It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977.

There is one more surprise in store for the afternoon. We will be visiting the beautiful Lavy Round Barn. Kent and Cindy Lavy have a great barn story everyone will enjoy, as well as, the lovely garden and setting.

Directions to Bear's Mill: 6450 Arcanum-Bear's Mill Road. Take State Route 36 to between Gettysburg and Greenville, Turn south on Arcanum-Bear's Mill Road, Mill is on the right.

Directions to the Lavy Barn will be given at the picnic.

For more information call Pam Gray at 740-263-1369



Photos by Pam Gray
Bears Mill in Darke County will be the site of the FOB 2013 annual picnic.

Background photo: Picnic goers will also be treated with a visit to the Lavy round barn in Darke County.



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