

## FOB picnic to be held October 2

The Ashland County Barns and Rural Heritage Society will be hosting the Friends of Ohio Barns picnic this year at the Doug and Dee Hefner farm at 2039 Township Road 405, Jeromesville, Ohio. The event will be held Sunday, Oct. 2 beginning at 12:30 p.m.

A box lunch will be served. RSVP by Sept. 28 to Nancy Rowland. E-mail 3oaks@bright.net, or call 419-368-3803.

The Ashland County Barns and Rural Heritage Society has their own barn on the Ashland County Drive-It-Yourself Tour. Picnickers will have the opportunity to go on as much or as little of the tour as they like. Within three miles of the Hefner farm there are three more stops. One is a dairy farm with lots of cows, a greenhouse with a barn that is on the National Historical Register, and a fruit farm which uses the bank barn for the retail part of their business. You can pick apples, buy cider or pumpkins at this stop.

Bring a lawn chair or blanket. Hope to see you there.

### Directions to Doug and Dee Hefner Farm

Coming east or west on SR 30:

Turn south on SR 89 at the Jeromesville exit.

Go to the first crossroads, which is County Road 2000.

Turn west on County Road 2000.

In less than a mile is Township Road 405.

Turn south on 405 and less than a mile is the Doug and Dee Hefner farm.

**Background photo: This raised basement barn is an excellent example of good stewardship by Ashland resident Ed Taylor.**



### FRIENDS OF OHIO BARNs

P.O. Box 203  
Burbank, Ohio 44214



# The Old BARN POST

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## Better days ahead for octagonal barn

Never underestimate the power of one person to make a big difference.

Richard Moore of Harrison County recently called to see if there were any funds available through Friends of Ohio Barns to help save an octagonal barn that desperately needed repair. Although funds are not available from us at this time, we discussed the idea that concerned, local citizens could possibly champion the structure and Mr. Moore felt some money was available through a benefactor.

The very next day an e-mail to FOB arrived from the Ohio Preservation Alliance. Scott Crider was asking for nominations for Ohio's Most Endangered Sites and was seeking information on structures or barns that would fall into a more rural category. A firm believer in serendipity, I forwarded the information on the octagon barn and Richard Moore's contact information to OPA. In the meantime, Richard had gathered enough interest to hold a public meeting. Local trustees, an attorney, the county auditor and local citizens were invited.

As it turned out the barn owner was willing to donate the barn and some property to a nonprofit, so the meeting focus was on whether there was enough interest to create an organization and then a plan for the future uses for the barn.

That meeting was a success! A grass roots society was born. Trustees were chosen, bylaws are being drawn up and a general meeting is planned to occur in spring of 2006. Stabilization work on the octagon will begin before winter.

The barn was built in 1886 by Johnson Moore and his wife, Emily

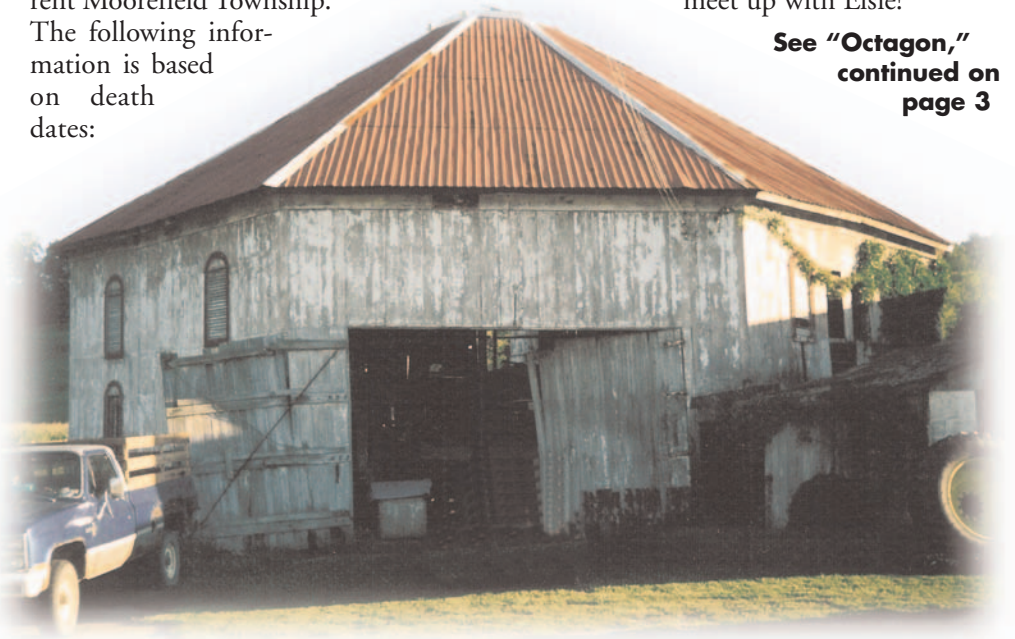
Slater Moore. Legend tells us that its roof was built on the ground and raised in one day with one hundred men. No one knows the number of horses necessary. The roof was originally split shingles. The color was originally white. The earliest picture located so far is a picture postcard mailed in 1919. It has had three roofs. The second roof was of green tin. It was put on in 1927. The current one of tin was put on in 1979. From sometime around 1927 until 1979 the barn was red. Today the foundation is bad and there is a large hole in the center of the roof causing some rot in the timbers.

The land was taken as a land grant in 1810 by William Johnson (Johnson Moore's grandfather) and the deed was signed by James Madison. It was the fourth land patent in the current Moorefield Township. The following information is based on death dates:

Johnson Moore owned the barn from 1886 to 1911; John Moore Dunlap, his grandson, from 1911 to 1951; Donald Dunlap, his great-grandson, from 1951 to about 1980; Thomas Mizer, 1980 to present. Thomas Mizer bought it and is not a descendant.

General Morgan's soldiers took a horse from the field beside the barn when Morgan's Raiders swept into Indiana and across Ohio in July 1863. Johnson's mother, Elsie, was then living with her brother on the adjoining farm. He raised fancy driving horses and took them to the woods to keep them from Morgan's men. Elsie, who was very small (under five feet), refused to go, saying that they "would not enter her house." Fortunately for Morgan, they went up what is now Ohio 22 and 519 to New Athens and did not meet up with Elsie!

See "Octagon,"  
continued on  
page 3



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# Ashland County barn dates to 1820s

The Ashland County Barns and Rural Heritage Society recently sponsored a barn dating and assessment by Rudy Christian and Laura Saeger. Bob and Nancy Rowland organized the invitation-only event for 18 guests.

The tour of the nearly 100-foot-long bank barn started in the lower level with Rudy pointing out the floor joist being hand hewn on top and bottom but rounded with the bark remaining on the sides. The barn owner pointed out the new back wall and posts. Rudy commented on the proper repair for the new portion of the barn bank wall that was poured concrete. Laura briefly discussed the correct technique of not putting any of the joists and support beams in direct contact with the cement. The repairs had been done in 1973 by the Hootman family, a three-generation family of barn builders and repair artists from Polk. Tom Hootman, who had helped with the repairs, was in attendance and added to the discussion.

The original barn had been added to, but some of the old hand split, boulder foundation was still "doing its job." One of the boulders measured at least three feet by five feet.

After gathering on the main floor, Rudy pointed to evidence that the barn roof had been raised. The original eave plates were now being used as the principle purlins, explaining many open mortises. It was easy to see the circular saw marks in the addi-

tion's framing as opposed to the hand hewn original timbers. Rudy noted the open slot in the bottom of the end tie beam where the "new" addition has been added. He explained these were siding slots for the lower siding boards to fit into. Also, after analyzing the changes in the framing along the back wall area of the original barn and evidence from the lower lever, Rudy concluded that the barn at one time had been a forebay, Sweitzer barn. Finally, the original floor planks on what was originally a thrashing floor had splines between the planks to keep the grain from falling through.

The barn owner stated President Monroe had conveyed the property to private ownership in 1820. Rudy commented this original barn was probably built at that time or the early 1820s.

Some of the comments from the people attending: "This was most interesting evening I had in a long time," "This was great," "Makes you look at barns in a whole different way," and Rudy made the comment "This is a big bank barn now, and the original bank barn was a big barn for the time." The barn owner said, "After owning the barn for more than 35 years I really appreciated Rudy and Laura for explaining the transformation of the barn over almost two centuries."

After the barn assessment, the group traveled to Dan Kamburoff's home for a roast pork and potluck supper.

## Miami County takes on bicentennial barn survey

The Miami County Barn Survey group had their first real organizational meeting on June 8, when Nancy and Bob Rowland came to present information on how a barn survey could successfully be accomplished. It was a very good gathering and was attended by mostly township leaders, city and county officials, and three "barn lovers."

The survey effort was met with enthusiasm and it is now being thought of as a Miami County Bicentennial project since that celebration will be in 2007.

Nancy and Bob are extremely dedicated to barn preservation and awareness. Listeners can feel the excitement when Nancy speaks about barns and Bob puts everyone at ease with his easy-going style. They are a great resource to the barn survey initiative. Thanks also to Friends of Ohio Barns for your support as we begin our Miami County Barn Survey.

— Brenda and Fred Copeland

Go to [www.barnsurvey.com](http://www.barnsurvey.com) to see the Miami County Barn Survey project. Brenda Copeland is having a meeting at her barn Sept. 25 to promote the survey.

## Mark your calendar

**Ohio Heritage Days**  
September 24, 25, Malabar Farm  
[www.malabarfarm.org](http://www.malabarfarm.org)

**Friends of Ohio Barns Member Picnic and Ashland County Drive Tour**  
October 2, 12:30 p.m., Hefner Farm, Jeromesville, Ohio  
Please see the article on the back of this newsletter for more information.

*"The barns in Europe were small, just big enough to house a few horses or cattle, but when they built an American barn, it became the symbol of a new life. From the beginning the American barn was big, like the hopes and plans for life in the New World. It was unlike anything built anywhere else. It was entirely American.*

— Eric Sloane

## Friends of Ohio Barns Board of Directors

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## Historic barns may get support from national ag program

Last month, the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), a program of the United States Department of Agriculture, announced the reallocation of nearly \$12 million to help farmers protect unique working land through the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP). The funds will be used to help purchase conservation easements on unique agricultural land in 22 states, including Ohio. The NRCS program provides up to 50 percent of the fair market value of the conservation easement and requires that the remainder of the required funds come from state and local sources.

The funds will be distributed based on need, demonstrated commitment of matching funds, and the state's ability to provide financial support to the applicant.

Program fund eligibility requires that qualified farms and ranches be privately owned and contain "prime, unique, statewide or locally important soil, or historical or archaeological resources." To be eligible for program funds, historic and archaeological resources must be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, or be formally determined eligible for listing, or be formally listed on the state or tribal historic register.

— Jim Draeger  
Architectural Historian,  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer,  
Wisconsin Historical Society

## Octagon

(Continued from page 1)

A not-for profit organization is being formed to own and operate the barn. At this time the planned name is The Johnson Moore Octagonal Barn Society. Thomas Mizer, the current owner, will donate the barn and enough land to maintain it to the society. Membership is open to anyone who pays the one-time membership fee. If you would like to join or help in anyway please contact Richard Moore by phone at 740-658-3158 or e-mail [elcid@eohio.net](mailto:elcid@eohio.net).

Friends of Ohio Barns is very pleased to have been instrumental in forming the affiliation between Ohio Preservation Alliance and The Johnson Moore Octagonal Barn Society and we will keep our members posted on the progress of saving the octagonal barn.

— Laura Saeger

For information about the Ohio Preservation Alliance, go to: [www.ohiopreservation.org](http://www.ohiopreservation.org).

# Ask the BARN DETECTIVES

By Rudy Christian

**Q.** Is it true I can get a lot of money for my old barn?

**A.** It depends on what you call "a lot of money." It is unfortunate that in so many places today you can find want ads saying "Cash Paid for Your Barn!" or "We Pay You AND Take Down Your Barn!" Most of the folks who run these ads are looking for barns to tear down for the timbers which are then reprocessed into salvaged wood siding, flooring and trim. Few of them are looking to reuse the barn as a structure or preserve the historic integrity of the barn and its framework. Often these "barn sharks" will promise to clean up your site and remove the unwanted debris; but too many ex barn owners will tell you that they ended up with a real mess to clean up, or worse, lost their barn's siding or timbers and were never paid for them.

That said, it is true that reputable barn salvage companies will pay hundreds and sometimes thousands of dollars to dismantle your barn, particularly if it hasn't been left with missing siding or a leaking roof for an extended period of time. But is that your barn's value? The truth is most of Ohio's century barns would cost \$250,000 or more to build the way they were originally — far more than the pole buildings they are often replaced with. In 30 years your old barn will probably be worth more than it is today while the pole barn will be worn out. The real value in your barn is in properly maintaining it and finding new ways to make it useful. Someday you may find that it greatly increases the resale value of your property, but there is a better chance that if

your barn ends up handed down to the next generation your children or grandchildren will appreciate it for the century or more old piece of history that it is.

**Q.** What's on your slate?

**A.** Without question one of the most beautiful sights in Ohio's countryside is a colorful and proud slate roof protecting what is inside from decade after decade of Ohio weather. But how old are these slate roofs?

Slate roofs have been in use for centuries in the old country and slate began to be harvested and turned into roofs in the "new world" in the early 1700s, but slate didn't make it into rural Ohio until the late 19th century. The simple explanation for this is slate is too heavy to ship by oxcart from the quarries of Vermont, New York or eastern Pennsylvania, or even any distance inland from Lake Erie or the Ohio River. The railroad made it possible to ship slate to the heartland and by the late 1800s it was the roofing material of choice for Ohio's great barns.

Often the date the barn was built was printed out in darker slate on the barn's roof. In some cases the date is the year the old barn was "spruced up" with a new slate roof. These "slate dates" seem to all range from the 1880s to the early 1900s. If you have a "slate date" on your roof that is before 1880 or after 1910 please send a digital photograph to [FriendsOhioBarns@aol.com](mailto:FriendsOhioBarns@aol.com) or mail a regular photo to the Friends post office box and we will start showing pictures of the oldest and newest slate roofs in future Old Barn Posts.

## Goll Woods Barn hopes for historic recognition

Our State Historic Preservation Officer Steve Gordon reports that the application for National Registry of Historic Places status for the Goll Woods Barn has been submitted and is in Washington, DC being reviewed. He feels the Friends of Goll Homestead have a very strong case and that the homestead will be recognized as historically significant and placed on the registry.

Our donation to the Fulton County Historical Society of all remaining merchandise, Goll Woods T-shirts and mugs after the 2003 Ohio Barn Conference and the positive press generated by our support for the barn contributed to the success of the Friends of Goll Homestead. We congratulate them on their efforts and have our fingers crossed for the well-deserved recognition!