



**The Althoff Tobacco Barn is the first response to the call for historic photos of Ohio Barns in our last issue of the Old Barn Post. Thank you, David! (David A. Simmons is editor for *Timeline*, Ohio Historical Society's magazine.)**

*I saw your notice in the latest Old Barn Post. Attached is a historic photo of a Darke County tobacco barn from the turn of the twentieth century. It comes from the Althoff family collection that came from my father-in-law, Ralph Stiefel (now deceased). I'm guessing that one of the people in the photo was Dan Althoff, and I'm assuming the location was in Patterson Township, but I don't know that for a fact. It could have been in Shelby County too, but I think Darke was more known for its tobacco. I have become the Stiefel family archivist, so the original is at my home in Galena. — David A. Simmons*



**FRIENDS OF OHIO BARNs**  
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# The Old BARN POST

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## Carlisle building's fate still uncertain

On the Friday evening of the 2003 Ohio Barn Conference in Chillicothe, some attendees were in town having dinner at the Cross Keys Tavern on Main Street when flames began shooting out of the third-story windows of the historic Carlisle Building across the street. For the next three hours we watched firefighters from Chillicothe and surrounding volunteer departments struggle to keep the building standing. Streams of water were directed from several teams of firefighters into different windows while smoke poured out of others. Pressure from the water hoses knocked stone crosses loose from above the third-floor gabled dormers. The stone crosses tumbled to the sidewalk and broke.

The blaze was extinguished at last and was found to have been started that evening by teens in the building's upstairs. An experienced fireman on the scene said that the building was saved in part by its very construction. The fire was contained in certain areas by strong walls dividing the

building into sections. The walls and halls and stairways worked much the same as the principal of keeping fire doors closed in school buildings today.

The Carlisle Building remains standing on the main square in Chillicothe eight years later. A report from Kevin Coleman of Intrepid Historical Services in Ross County says the building is caught in the doldrums of inaction. That is not to say there is no interest. Some want it demolished and replaced with a parking lot (to which Coleman responded, "That would be beautiful on the downtown square.") while others are trying to get the city to take over the effort to rehabilitate it. There is apparently the possibility of a tax increase on an upcoming ballot to pay for

the Carlisle Building work. Some think that's a bad idea and can only hurt the building's cause.

"Plan A" for some folks is to get the city government to move to the building based on the success of the tax increase. According to Coleman, if the ballot initiative goes down in flames like the building nearly did, then "Plan B" would be a "downtown conference center plus." It appears that there is some struggle between politics and preservation regarding the issue.

The good news is that, while it remains standing, options remain viable for this fine building. In the very short term it was a centerpiece on Chillicothe's Ghost Walk October 25.

— Tom O'Grady

**The burned-out Carlisle Building in downtown Chillicothe, Summer 2009.**

Photo by Tom O'Grady



## Advancing the cause

The cool fall breezes are upon us, after a beautiful summer. And what a summer it has been! Members and volunteers have devoted time and energy advancing the cause of awareness and stewardship for our beloved barns across the state and beyond.

Some examples ...

Paul Knoebel and his mini-barn exhibit have been all over Ohio as well as Kentucky and New York. It is certainly this organization's best exhibit for young people, the future stewards for Ohio Barns. The mini-barn concept is being reviewed by the National Barn Alliance and the Timber Framers Guild as a possible addition to their programs—high praise indeed for Paul and his efforts! After a recent visit to the Malabar Heritage Festival, Paul and his volunteers will wind down the touring season with a stop at the Algonquin Mill Fall festival. Many thanks for all you do, Paul!

Members Rudy Christian, Brian Beals, and recent Barn of the Year award recipient Ed Martinek participated in a video segment for Our Ohio Magazine discussing Ohio's Historic Barns. Much time, effort, and video footage went into the final seven-minute product, and while it was a very nice piece about Ohio's barns, it was unfortunate that no information was given to the viewer about barn organizations for stewardship help. Special thanks to Brian for driving the videographer around to some beautiful examples of Ohio's best!

Work continues on the barn survey program, thanks to the efforts of Rudy, Carson Christian, and Laura Saeger. The survey form is being field-tested and the descriptive booklet is nearing completion. Some digital cameras are being purchased for volunteers to use during their fall surveys in Wayne County. All the above aids will greatly enhance our abilities to provide reliable, standardized data to input for future researchers. This is a very important project for not only our organization but hopefully for other barn associations as well.

Another update note: The Upper Arlington barn project is rapidly picking up steam and looking to become a reality! Parks director Tim Moloney and FOB members Dan Troth, Rudy Christian, and myself have been discussing the layout and best use of the original 20-by-30 barn frame, dismantled and stored for restoration. The barn will be part of a beautiful new park on the north end of Upper Arlington, complete with a small amphitheater, reflecting pond, and four-season meeting facility, also to be timber framed. We are hoping to get the Timber Framers Guild involved in the restoration of the original frame and well as the raising of both frames. If things progress as we hope, we may even begin the restoration project next year sometime. I will be sure and keep you all posted!

Finally, I would like to again express my gratitude for the effort of our board members and volunteers. You are what makes Friends of Ohio Barns one of the most active barn groups in the country and a model that other organizations look at. Not bad for a ten-year-old non-profit!

### Random Thoughts

Ric Beck  
Friends of Ohio Barns president

## Barn endowment

During our spring barn conference member meeting, we talked about establishing an endowment fund to raise money to support our barn programs. We talked about using our own money to finance these projects, in part because of a lack of funding available from state and national government initiatives.

At our annual meeting on March 29, 2008 the membership agreed to set aside \$5,000 from the Friends bank account and dedicate that amount toward building the Friends of Ohio Barns Endowment Fund. It takes \$10,000 to establish this fund with Communities Inc. (part of the Columbus Foundation). They will manage the initial investment and future donations while allowing us to withdraw funds for our various projects as needed. Once the fund is established, donations can also be made directly through the Columbus Foundation website, which will help create a greater awareness of our efforts and grow the return on the investment.

To kick off the fall campaign, let's work to build a barn endowment fund. We will have different donation levels:

Brace donation - \$10

Girts & siding donation - \$20

Sills & summer beams donation - \$40

Post donation - \$60

Plates & purlins donation - \$80

Queen post donation - \$100

King post donation - \$250

Cupola donation - \$500 and above

Of course, Friends of Ohio Barns will gladly accept any donation to the fund. Simply write a check to the Friends of Ohio Barns "Build a Barn Endowment Fund," P.O. Box 203, Burbank, Ohio 44214. Or donate online through our secure Friends website: <http://ohiobarns.osu.edu>

Thanks for all your help!

## Save the date

2010 Ohio Barn Conference; April 23-24,  
Arden Shisler Conference Center, Wooster Ohio.

### Friends of Ohio Barns Board of Directors

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## Fling farm hosts fall picnic

Saturday, September 19 was a beautiful early fall day to spend with some great friends at a spectacular place for this year's Friends of Ohio Barns picnic. Bill Fling, barn of the year winner for adaptive re-use, provided the site for the picnic, and what a site it was! Gorgeous rolling hills greeted us as we traveled Ohio's scenic rural byways through Highland County south of Hillsboro to the Fling Family Farm.

Bill and Linda warmly greeted us and provided chairs, tables, grill, and table servings for the thirty-plus visitors to this fourth-generation farm. After a delicious potluck lunch with pork and chicken provided by the local meat market, we were treated to a wagon ride tour of the Fling grounds. Bill showed us the beautiful outdoor setups for wedding ceremonies and their bed and breakfast, where guests can enjoy a view of some ten miles across Highland County.

The highlight of the tour was of course the early 1900s barn, where our festivities began. We had our usual discussions regarding its construction style, add-ons, repairs, and the like while completely enjoying the farm memorabilia adorning the inside. It was easy to see that Bill and his family enjoyed entertaining, and they did a marvelous job of adapting their barn for its new life.

After lunch, Bill and Raymond Friend provided us with a mini barn tour of the area, starting with a stop to Jay Jones's timber frame home. Jay had dismantled a few barns and a schoolhouse to salvage timbers and build this 1,500-square-foot home.



Above: Members take time to review the Fling barn's joinery details. Below: Bill Fling gives a wagon tour of his beautiful farmstead.

We discovered and relayed to Jay that he had quite a collection of interesting pieces for his handsome home, including a swing beam and several scribed rafters and beams.

Next we walked around a crazy trussed four-bay barn with joinery that is easier seen than described. One of the king posts was split at the bottom of the post approximately five feet vertically. The post was then spread to fit over a diminished housing on the tie beam, then pegged and bolted. Through tenons in the tie beams were wedged at the posts, and some repair pieces had come from an old covered bridge.

Our final stop was a barn typical to the area, a double cribbed log barn, but this was a working barn that housed pigs. It was in terrific shape with cantilever beams running perpendicular at the ends to support the hip roof and shed additions, something not usually seen. The late afternoon light coming through the barn presented us with beautiful colors and yet another opportunity to reflect and appreciate the beauty of Ohio's barns.

Bill hosts many events at his farm, not limited to weddings. Please check out his website at [www.FlingBarn.com](http://www.FlingBarn.com) for everything they have to offer, including some terrific live music by local and regional bands. Many thanks to Bill for allowing us to visit and learn more about this beautiful part of the state.

—Ric Beck



# Reflections on a life lived well



As most of you reading this now know, our friend Chuck Whitney passed away this past summer. We all know he loved barns and traveled throughout Ohio consulting with barn owners over the years as to how they might best preserve their barns. Several of us had the opportunity to meet Chuck and experience his warmth and enthusiasm as he spoke of his barn adventures and discoveries. But most of us know little more than that.

How does one begin to summarize a man's life, his work, his passion, and his legacy? How did Chuck develop his passion for barns? What is his story? It is not within my poor powers to encapsulate his ninety years into two pages of our newsletter, but let me here attempt to point out some of the noteworthy events that came to pass along the way. I wish he were here to answer my questions and edit this, and I ask his and his loved ones' forgiveness for all the inaccuracies and omissions that are certain to occur as I attempt to summarize his life in two pages and a few photos.

Chuck liked to say he missed being born in a barn by about 180 feet on his family farm in Washtenaw County, Michigan, in 1918. It was the end of WWI, and Woodrow Wilson was our president. Farming methods were evolving rapidly, with many companies competing for bigger and better ways to build your barn, raise your livestock, and grow your crops. There were 186 different tractor manufacturers. But as a young boy in the 1920s he remembers the "good old days" of "drawing hay" on hot summer days, which he recounted in his publication "The Barn Consultant." Percheron horses, not a tractor, pulled the hay wagon to the field where the hay had been mowed with a horse-drawn mower and raked into windrows with a horse-drawn dump rake. Using three-tined hayforks, Chuck helped load the "doodles or cocks of hay" up onto the wagon. Horses pulled the wagon from the fields to the barn, where the driver guided the team onto the barn floor and centered the wagon beneath the hay track and its hay carrier, whose forks were carefully dropped over the load, which was pulled by ropes and pulleys and a well-mannered horse up toward the ridge of the barn and then over to the lofts, where it was released into the mows.

How many men are alive today who experienced the heat, sights, sounds, smells, and good hard work of those days? At the ripe old

age of six, Chuck even helped his relatives build a log cabin from trees felled on the property on Higgins Lake in the center of Michigan.

The barn was the center of activity on a farm, and Chuck recalled his experiences in "Behind the Barn," a column he wrote for Farm and Dairy. He wrote of shearing, delivering lambs, mating the ewes, foot trimming, drenching, tagging, and docking lambs (removing tails for sanitary reasons and castrating the males). He spoke fondly of his father's big gray geldings, King, Billy, and Old Jen, who did much of the work on the farm, and he told of milking cows and delivering calves.

Farm life was hard but rewarding, and it got into your blood and defined you, so it was understandably difficult for Chuck to recall the tragedy of their barn burning and the fight to save it and the animals when he was just eleven years old. "The devastation and heartbreak of a burning barn is known only to those who have experienced such tragedy. For days, the smoldering hay left a reminder of what had happened. That dreadful stench will remain in my unconscious mind forever," he wrote.

Once in high school, he became the Michigan State president of FFA, traveling the state speaking on behalf of the Farm Bureau. He went on to graduate from Michigan State University. He married Edith in 1942, and they soon had a daughter, Pam.

Chuck left the family farm and moved his family to Kentucky, where he organized the Kentucky Farm Equipment Dealers Association. From there, in 1950, they moved to Columbus to work for the Ohio

Farm Equipment Association, which evolved into the Ohio Farm and Power Equipment Association, where he helped design and pass into law our slow moving vehicle symbol. Their second daughter, Lottie, was born in



Charles W. Whitney

Columbus in 1954. Finally, in 1960, Chuck settled his family in Mount Vernon, where he became a gentleman farmer with ninety-five acres, raising sheep and cattle and growing corn and hay. He began a newsletter for the Charolais breeders which evolved into a national beef breed magazine, *The Charolais Way*.

Around 1963 Chuck happened to meet a neighbor and former barn builder, Marion Kyle, who had built many of the barns in the area. He demonstrated timber frame joinery and layout, and afterward Chuck made his own notes and drawings from memory. We can only hope that Chuck and Marion had more meetings, but that meeting certainly laid the groundwork for Chuck's understanding of traditional timber framing used in barns.

Chuck retired from the Ohio Farm and Power Equipment Association in 1968 and traveled the next eight years all over the U.S. on behalf of the magazine. After selling *The Charolais Way*, he entered real estate and appraisal work in 1978, specializing in farms and land, where he undoubtedly discovered many barns. In the 1980s he was instrumental in getting the Knox County Agricultural Museum off the ground and helping to round up the horse-drawn and motor-driven agricultural machinery and memorabilia displayed there.

Chuck began helping folks understand the history of their barns and giving them tips for repairing and preserving their barns

in 1998, when he became "The Barn Consultant." In 2000 he helped organize the first Ohio Barn Conference, which was held at Liberty Presbyterian Church in Powell, Ohio. Nearly 200 people showed up to see the recently completed timber frame church and share knowledge with barn experts. He worked hard to keep that enthusiasm going and helped with Ohio Barn Conference II in April of 2001, held at the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center in Wooster. At that conference an open meeting was held to discuss the possibility of forming an Ohio barn organization. This led to the creation of Friends of Ohio Barns.

In addition to his Farm and Dairy column, Chuck was featured in Progressive Farmer and Ohio Farmer and wrote and published his own newsletter, "The Barn Consultant," for five years for over 350 subscribers. He was well known for his consulting work and had explored nearly 700 barns and driven over 300,000 miles in ten states over the years. He was passionate about passing on his love of barns and concern for their preservation to all who would listen.

Chuck often quoted a line from John Ruskin that he felt represented a wonderful philosophy: "Therefore when we build, let us think that we build forever. Let it not be for present delight, nor for the present use alone; let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for."

Chuck's daughter Pam Whitney Gray now wears Chuck's familiar red "Barn Consultant" jacket and black cap. After having the privilege of being her father's "chauffeur, gofer, and right-hand man" for five years, Pam now continues his barn consulting work. She is about to publish a small book titled *Americanization of the Family Barn* and is working to publish Chuck's more in-depth book in the near future. In 2004, when Chuck was eighty-six, he told Charles Leik, "I am going for one hundred, then I plan to retire and write my book, *A Walk Through the Woods of Time*. Stick around and I will sell you a copy in 2019, okay?"

Chuck had a wonderful curiosity that drove him to explore barns. It was born from all that he saw and heard and remembered from his earliest days on his family farm and continued to be nurtured throughout his life. The knowledge he acquired was woven together to create meaning and value, and we are fortunate that he chose to share it with us.

— Dan Troth



Top: Gentleman farmer Chuck in 1976 during his Charolais Way days.

Above: Chuck got an early start enjoying farm life. Here he is at six at Higgins Lake, where the family summer cabin was built.

Left: Chuck graced the covers of a number of farm-related magazines over the years in his efforts as The Barn Consultant to help people keep their barns standing.



For many years this barn stood along historic US 50 in Athens County near Guysville. The barn was painted in 1936 by a man and his son who lived in Washington County and had a one of the largest natural stone bridges in



Ohio on their property. Reminiscent of the many barns strewn across the south with "See Rock City" or "See Ruby Falls" painted on them, this little three-bay English barn said "See the natural bridge near Little Hocking." The barn (top right) was demolished in the late 1980s with many other historic barns and homes when the road was widened to a four-lane expressway. A skylight defines the arch of Ladd Natural Bridge (top left), now part of the state nature preserve system, as seen from below.

Photos from: *Rainbows of Rock, Tables of Stone: Natural Arches and Pillars of Ohio* by Timothy A. Snyder



Photos by Joy Alcalde

The neglected Sego barn is located along the route of the old Zane's Trace, now US 22, between Somerset and Zanesville. The slate roof alone is a masterpiece. Faded Mail Pouch tobacco signs still show on at least two sides. The shed addition, probably added later and with a bit less skilled workmanship, is not surviving as well as the original timber-framed barn. However, the addition received the same fine slate roof as the main barn and with the cupolas. The flower pattern includes a single red slate surrounded by lighter gray petals. Each cupola is a single flower (see inset).



Photo by Kevin Coleman, Intrepid Historical Services

Looking Back: This Pennsylvania German Barn with ramp and overhanging forebay on SR 207 in Ross County was being considered for a move to the Ross County Fairgrounds around the time of the 2003 Ohio Barn Conference. An addition had collapsed or had been previously removed. The barn was demolished in late 2008.

# The Covered Bridge

— Samuel Harden Sille, 1960, *At Warner, Ohio, in the Buckeye Hills*

Image by Tom O'Grady

Come with me  
And I will show you  
A living, breathing poem.  
We leave  
The city's  
Stony streets  
The great highways  
With speed and recklessness.

Great poems and beauty  
Are not born  
On crowded streets,  
Or on the speed ways  
Of the world.

I will take you  
Down a lonely  
Dirt road,  
Bordered by  
An ancient  
Stake and rider  
Rail fence  
Where the wild rose  
Blooms in all her glory—  
Where the sunac  
And the paw-paw grows,  
Where the wild berry vine  
Clings to stumps  
And fallen trees.  
Down by fields  
Of goldenrod,  
Bordered by rows  
Of red blossomed  
Iron weeds  
Guarded by long rows  
Of black-eyed Susans.

Here it is  
At last  
The Old Covered Bridge—  
Long hidden, hushed and still,  
Spanning a river  
Where once the red men  
Lived and fished.  
Come, let us enter this  
Tunnel of Twilight  
And explore  
Its rare treasures.

This is more than a bridge  
Spanning a river.  
It is a  
Museum of Antiquity,  
The hand of time  
Has covered the walls  
With posters  
Recording the events  
Of a hundred years  
Or more.

Here is a poster  
Which reads,  
"Barnum's Greatest Show  
On Earth."  
Where children  
Of a forgotten age  
Gathered and in wonderment,  
Stood silent  
Before the paintings  
Of tigers, elephants,  
Giraffes, bears, gilded cages,  
Prancing horses,  
And oddities  
From all quarters  
Of the earth.  
Perhaps some Stanley  
Or Livingston was born  
Before this simple shrine.

Another poster announces  
The sale of  
"Old Bill Smith's farm."  
Bill's children had left  
The old homestead—  
Then Bill died,  
His widow now old and tired  
Was offering the sacred place  
To some stranger.  
It was a sale of more  
Than godgets and things—  
A dream and sacred memories  
Were offered to  
The highest bidder—  
Closing another chapter  
In the book of life.  
How many farms  
Have gone that way  
Since then?

Another notice reads,  
"A Church Supper to be  
Held at the local church,  
Proceeds to be given  
To a missionary  
In far off Africa."  
Here perhaps a boy  
Or a girl dedicated  
A life to the service  
Of mankind.  
In such places  
Great dreams are born—  
Dreams that shape a life,  
A nation or perhaps  
The world  
Or the destiny of the race.

Here is a notice  
Asking bids  
On the construction  
Of a new brick schoolhouse.  
An institution where  
Children would be taught  
The rudiments of life,  
Character and responsibility  
That they might grow  
To manhood, strong and sturdy  
As the timbers  
Of the old covered bridge.

Remnants of an old  
Hornet's nest  
Dangle from the gable end—  
Here many a battle  
Was fought  
Between youth and the hornets  
Which taught another  
Fact of life.  
Hornets follow the path  
Of a stone or stick  
And strike a deadly sting—  
He who hurts a hurt  
In life's broad way  
Is the recipient  
Of a twofold hurt.

Two boards are missing;  
The sills worn smooth—  
This is where the youngsters  
Dove into the  
Old swimming hole.

The abutments  
Are made of cut stone  
Quarried from a nearby hill,  
They are built as sturdy  
As the foundation stone  
Of the Republic—  
Both resting on bedrock.  
The timbers were hewn  
From great oaks  
Of a virgin forest  
And pinned together  
By wooden pins  
That made the old bridge  
Strong as the men who built it.

There are high water marks  
On the wooden sides,  
A record of the floods  
For many years—  
A reminder that into  
All lives  
Some floods must come—  
Each leaving their mark.

It is not strange  
That sweethearts lingered here  
And tangled their dreams  
In a carving of  
A human heart  
When love  
Was being born.

This old bridge  
Is immune to time—  
It cannot die a natural death,  
It must be torn apart  
By hasty hands  
Of a new age.

Build great highways  
If you will,  
Span the rivers with steel  
And concrete,  
But make a bend I the road  
And save the  
Old Covered Bridge.  
Let it stand,  
A monument  
To an age

That has passed.  
It is a breathing,  
Living poem.  
It is an institution.  
It is Americana,  
A symbol  
Of the strength  
That built  
The American Way.