



# The Old BARN POST

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## Barn Conservation Grant Program Established

**F**riends of Ohio Barns is excited to formally introduce the Barn Conservation Grant program. The concept has been in the works for several months, and an initial test launch is being conducted this year with the Lauren and Nathan Etler barn near Jenera, Ohio.

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, the Pepple family (Lauren) were on the 2015 barn tour, and a part of The Barn Raisers documentary. They are using the \$1500 to install gutters to their magnificent barn. They seek to fulfill their mission to preserve the past and inspire the future to educate a new generation on the importance of local history and instill an appreciation with the stories the barn can tell. The Etler barn will be featured in the upcoming Hancock County Historical Museum fall barn tour as the host for "Breakfast in the Barn".

Here are some excerpts from the grant program to get a sense of what it is all about, who can qualify, how and when to apply, and where to pick up the funds!

Friends of Ohio Barns is accepting grant proposals that will be awarded funding from the Friends of Ohio Barns Endowment Fund. Grants of up to \$1500 will be awarded to approved organizations, communities, and individual barn owners from Ohio to aid in the conservation and stewardship efforts of their historic Ohio barns. The Barn Conservation Grant (BCG) is administered by Friends of Ohio Barns board of directors and the BCG committee (BCGC). The grant derives its funding from contributions made to the FOB endowment fund. It is anticipated that a grant of up to \$1500 will be made available annually to one grant recipient.

**Eligible Applicants:** Only Ohio-based entities may receive grant funding from the BCG.

**Eligible recipients include:**

- Historic farm parks, outdoor education facilities, nature centers, historic museums
- Communities, park districts, land conservancies
- State agencies
- 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations
- Private companies
- Individual barn owners

**Selection Criteria:** It is the goal of Friends of Ohio Barns to address the concerns threatening Ohio's farms and rural landscapes



by providing barn owners, barn lovers and the folks who believe in the importance of Ohio's historic barns, opportunities to connect and work toward stewardship of our agricultural heritage.

The BCGC prefers to consider projects that use the grant funds to focus on educating the public and raising awareness of the importance of Ohio barns. Projects with these goals will score significantly higher in the review process and receive more favorable consideration.

**Application Deadlines/Review Dates:** The grant cycle will open May 1st, following the annual Ohio Barn Conference. Deadlines for accepting grant proposals must be postmarked by July 31st of that calendar year. Mail proposals to Friends of Ohio Barns, P.O. Box 203, Burbank OH. 44214. The review/vetting process will take place over the next 90 days, and the recipient will be notified by mail or email on or before November 1st of that year.

**Educational / Promotional Component of Project:** Upon completion of the BCG project, the entity / individual owner will be required to submit a news article with pictures to the committee. The article may go in any or all of the following: The Friends of Ohio Barns newsletter, our Facebook page, our website and local or state newspapers. Friends of Ohio Barns reserves the right to edit copy for length and clarity. The entity or individual owner may also be asked to present at an Ohio Barn Conference.

We will begin accepting grant proposals in 2018 after the Ohio Barn Conference in Carroll County. For the complete Barn Conservation Grant information packet, please contact us at [friendsohiobarns@gmail.com](mailto:friendsohiobarns@gmail.com). Good Luck!

# It's All Relevant, Right?

While visiting with my friend, Jan Corey Arnett, in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, she talked about the western side of the U.P. being settled by emigrants from Finland and the Finnish barns constructed of logs.

Ok, so now we know we are on the hunt for Finnish log barns as we drive through the countryside. And lo and behold driving down the road we see a nice old log barn sitting out in the middle of a large field all by its lonesome. Eureka! We found one! U-turn, click, picture taken, U-turn and we are on our way.

Well, maybe not. Logs, as we know them, do not a Finnish barn make, as we discovered

later while doing on-line research to find other pictures of these elusive Finnish barns. At the time, we did not realize we were already past the greatest concentration of the Finnish settlement. Or that the logs referred to were only 16 inches long, not 16', and stacked perpendicular to the wall, like cordwood. The blocks, as the short logs are called, are held together with a lime mortar, and the ends of the blocks are seen from the exterior, as well as, the interior of the structure. Therefore, this building type is called stove-wood, cordwood, or stacked-wood construction. Built mostly in the Great Depression the cedar swamps in the U.P. provided materials for the taking, resulting in a very economical and less labor-intensive means of construction for a barn. Cedar was most commonly used for its insulating and rot resistant properties. Tamarack, oak, and poplar are other woods that were used.

The logs from the swamps were cut in 16' to 20' lengths and seasoned for 2 years before used in construction. An average size barn could be built in approximately three weeks and last 30 to 40 years if good stewardship was followed. The sides of the blocks were the most vulnerable to moisture. The ends of the blocks could withstand the weather but not the sides. Roof maintenance was most important to the longevity of the barn. Having been built in the first part of the 19th century they have well stood the test of time. It is said there are stove-wood structures in Siberia and Greece that are 1,000 years old.

The beauty of the barns comes from the pattern the blocks produce and the more uniform the size of the circumference of the logs the more pleasing the pattern.

By: Pamela Whitney Gray



Photo by Pam Gray

**Finish stove-wood barn in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Split wood is used with the ends facing outward making the walls of these barns between a foot and a half and two feet thick. Seasoned for two years and having only the end of the stove-wood exposed offered some longevity to these barns.**



My recent trip has really brought home the fact one must leave one's comfort zone and return home to really appreciate what we have right in our own backyard. Having traveled for four weeks, over 4,200 miles, through six states, and two Canadian providences, it is very evident that Ohio does have the best barns. And we really must do all we can to preserve them. I wish I had counted all the barns that are in terrible, falling-down condition. There were hundreds. The more miles we put under the wheels I became more appalled by the condition of the infrastructure of our agricultural communities. I know we preach this all the time in Ohio but the problem is not ours alone.

As for the variety of barns we truly have a treasure trove right here in our own state. After leaving Ohio and traveling many of the roads less traveled; two-lane, state, county, and township (one lane with grass growing in the center) roads, there was an awareness of the absents of Sweitzer or, for that matter, standard forebay barns. Even as we kept an eye out for them the first one greeted us as we once again crossed the Ohio/Michigan state line on the home stretch.

All that being said, barns are like deer, for every one you see there are thirty you don't. Every community has its gems but it takes more than a casual drive through an area to search them out. So, let's search out Ohio's gems. Send me pictures of three barns from your county you would consider gem material. Whether they are still standing, in good condition or poor, are memories of the past, or have been repurposed. And we will build a catalog of Ohio's Greatest Barns: past, present, and future to share with the world. Send pictures to barnconsultant@yahoo.com.

Happy hunting while DUIB and remember "Keep the Barn Doors Closed"!

— Pamela Whitney Gray, President

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# Indiana Barn Conference Draws a Big Crowd

Laura and I were honored to be invited to be “Barn Detectives”, along with Chuck Bultman and Duncan Campbell, on the Indian Barn Foundation’s first barn tour and to present at their 4th annual meeting held July 21 & 22 of this year. The conference itself was held at the relocated Normandy Barn at the Indiana State Fairgrounds, but the barn tour the day before was staged in Hancock and Madison counties east of Indianapolis, a part of Indiana with some truly beautiful barns.

The day of the barn tour started off with a line of severe thunderstorms which passed before we reached our first stop. Unfortunately, the heavy rains had softened the ground enough at our first stop that the tour bus sank into the barnyard up to the floorboards. Luckily there were two very interesting barns at the stop so everybody enjoyed the wait for a replacement bus.

The new tour bus driver took us to the Littleton-Kingen Round Barn which is considered to be the largest round barn ever built in the state. It is truly impressive and clearly pushes the limits of how much space can be enclosed with a timber framed structure. The center of the barn was originally used as the base of a very large windmill that brought up water for the cows housed in the barn. Unfortunately, the fan blades and top of the tower blew off in a severe storm within a decade of the barn’s construction and was never replaced.

After lunch, we were treated to two “end drive” barns, which are much more common in Indiana than here in Ohio. The first one was quite a bit older and had been modified over the years in ways that were interesting to try to understand. Eventually, we came to the conclusion that some of the secrets in the barn would have to stay in the barn. The tour ended at the ten-sided Kreger barn which was originally built as a horse barn and is still being used as one. It is a wonderful barn with a cupola that works to both let in light and ventilate the barn.

The next day the conference in the Normandy Barn was a full house and included several Friends of Ohio Barns members including Charles Leik, Chuck Bultman, Charles Bauer and Pam Pfrang. The attendees were treated to presentations about Hay Press Barns, Indiana Agriculture During the Civil War, and a review of the barn tour the day before. I was asked to close the conference as the keynote speaker and asked the audience to consider “The Value of Stewardship”. Everyone in attendance seemed to really enjoy the fourth annual conference of a neighboring grass roots barn organization that deserves our support. Plan on attending next year!

By: Rudy Christian



**Above: The Littleton-Kingen Round Barn is considered to be the largest round barn ever built in Indiana.**



**Left: Chuck Bultman and Rudy Christian studying the center of the Littleton-Kingen Round Barn where a massive wooden tower once supported a wind driven system that provided water for the cows.**

**Below: The barn at the Walnut Leaf Farm is one of Indiana’s best examples of a well-cared-for “end drive” hay barn.**

Photos by: Laura Saeger



# Centenarian Repairs Old Bank Barn

The New England three bay bank barn was 40 years old when Fred Colburn was born in the farmhouse on Slab Road in Pratts Fork in April of 1917. World War I was underway. The handsomely chiseled numerals, '1877', in the siding beneath the gable on the end of the barn imply its age. Of course, it could have been built some years earlier and merely re-sided in 1877. Other details in the timber frame barn and Fred's family history, indicate that it was constructed after the Civil War.

Fred turned 100 this year and is still living in the same old farmhouse which he has kept up with continued maintenance over those many years. Slab Road runs through the farmstead. Across the road from the farmhouse, smokehouse, brooder house, chicken house, outhouse, and sheep barn, are the main barn, milk-house, granary, an old tool shed and workshop, and a large chicken coop. Down the road a piece is the barn Fred grew up calling the 'new barn.' Built before he was born, it was used to store hay out closer to the animals kept in some of the more distant fields. That barn was made by nailing two-by-eight planks together for posts and cross ties.

Many of the buildings had earned a severe lean over the years. In some cases, the edge of the roof was only a few feet from the ground. Fred has worked with his handyman, Tim, over the last fifteen years straightening all these buildings up, repairing the roofs, replacing siding, and stabilizing the foundations.

All the buildings appear to be in great condition today but Fred knew several of the large sandstone blocks in the bank wall of the big barn had begun to move out of place over the past several decades. Recognizing the long-term threat to the survival of barn, Fred decided to make that repair too. Not a small undertaking.

Still in use, it was necessary to remove the hay from the loft and relocate the cattle being fed in the basement. The barn was in generally good repair. But a concrete driveway on the ramp entering the threshing floor had added extra weight and compromised the integrity of the sandstone blocks in basement wall and the sill plate and the ends of the floor joists beneath the barn entry.

Fred built the milk-house and the large shed addition to the barn to house a milk-



Photos by: Tom O'Grady

**Fred Colburn (right) with father Charlie, sister Florence, and Jack and Buzz, the furrier members of the family, in front of the old farmhouse in 1942. The farmhouse, with the same standing seam roof, remains in good repair and looks much the same today. The tree at left shades the entire front yard today.**



**Fred (right) with Cyrus Moore takes in the expanded shade of the same maple tree 75 years later in front of the same old farmhouse where he has lived for a bit more than a century.**



**Fred Colburn, sitting on the stairs of the old granary, reminisces about some of the earlier times on the farm on Slab Road in Athens County.**

ing parlor in the late 1940's. He began to replace the wooden roof shingles in 1946. He put metal roofing on the end with the greatest need the first year. He replaced the rest of the shingles on the upper side of the barn the following year and finished off the roof repairs the next. He still recalls installing the lightning rods and reflecting on the height of the roof and the distance to the ground. Nevertheless, he added the milking parlor with extra hay storage above a year later.

While the main barn and other older buildings all have sandstone foundations, Fred used clay tile block for the milkhouse and to underlie the new addition. Clay products were a large part of the local economy in Southeast Ohio for more than a century. Paver bricks made in that region underlay many streets in the Midwest. In addition to paver bricks and building block, products such as chimney pots, sewer tile,

**Please See COLBURN, Page 5**



Some of the outbuildings on the Fred Colburn farm. The 1877 New England bank barn at the rear underwent a major repair on the sandstone bank and ramp at the far left of the image. Note the date chiseled into the gable end of the barn. And — how much stuff could one store beneath that corncrib?



The new bridge built to the threshing floor takes the pressure of the earthen ramp off the restored sandstone bank wall below. Doors were replaced at the entry to the threshing floor and to the hay storage above the milking parlor with the clay block foundation at the far-right end of the barn. Fred installed the metal roof and lightning rods in the late 1940's and built the milking parlor and hay storage addition in 1948. Note the recently planted tree between the milkhouse and milking parlor.

### COLBURN, Continued from Page 4

pottery, and other forms of clay manufacture were shipped out of Southeast Ohio by canal boat, railroad, and highway.

Fred raised lots of chickens on the farm along with cattle, sheep, and the usual field crops and orchards on the rolling hillsides. It is a beautiful place. The finest in Fred's opinion. Doesn't know why anyone wouldn't agree. His sense of stewardship shows in all directions with the well-kept buildings and fields.

When it was observed that the farm was one of the tidiest and well-kept farms one might see anywhere in Ohio, Fred remarked with a slight grin, "Well it took me a hundred years to get it that way."

Fred recalls sitting in the yard one day in his early years, the 1920's, and watched as several older fellows with very long beards came walking down the road between the house and the barn. They were Union veterans of the Civil War, coming to visit their brother, Fred's grandfather, at the farm around the corner a half mile away.

Fred's mom died when he was three and his grandma died when he was eleven. With a father often distracted by spirits, of the liquid form, Fred was left to care for much of the farm and started 'fixing breakfast and packing buckets every morning' before he was twelve. This began on the eve of the Great Depression. Fred remembers electricity coming to the farm in the 1940's. Using electricity sparingly he has no outside light and after dark one can see a sky filled with stars.

Fred is a well-traveled individual. He is fond of recalling the time he hitchhiked

to the 1939 New York World's Fair and its' displays of the 'World of Tomorrow.' Leaving little Pratts Fork, Ohio, staying an evening in the historic Hollenden House Hotel in downtown Cleveland, he and a friend lit out by thumb for the Big Apple. Aside from his feet telling him he wore the wrong pair of shoes, the trip was a long series of adventures, not the least of which was a suspicious driver who, after picking them up and spending several days with them, asked a thousand questions about the lads yet never revealed an iota about himself, his family, or his origins, even when asked. On the brink of World War II, with some of the anxieties accompanying the period, this led to some apprehension on the part of the hitchhikers and thoughts about spies. All ended well when Fred returned to another half century of farming in Southeast Ohio.

Fred did well as a farmer, despite the challenges put before him. He has long shared his success. He has been a benefactor to his community, establishing scholarships for students at Ohio University, supporting the nearby Community Center that is repurposing an abandoned historic school building, and the local county historical society that is adapting a 100-year-old church building as a new home for history in southeast Ohio. Fred is a generous and thoughtful member of his community.

But Fred also keeps giving on the farm as well. In addition to providing stewardship to his old farm buildings and old trees, including a very large, very hollow, pear tree that still bears abundantly in the front yard, Fred continues to invest in the farm's

future. He has recently planted more fruit trees and a shade tree along the road and he is now repairing the large sandstone bank wall that will give the barn another lease on life.

Fred hired Steve Skellet and his crew to do the barn repair. Many FOB members may recall Steve Skellet from the pre-conference workshop at an Athens County barn a few years ago. Steve's work is keeping many a barn standing in the tri-state area of Ohio, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

Steve's crew got the bank stones back in place. He replaced and added some posts in the basement, put in a new sill plate, and several very large floor joists beneath the threshing floor. Skellet also removed the concrete ramp and replaced it with a bridge entry to the newly straightened stone bank so that it will not have the weight of the earth pressing on the bank wall. And a new set of doors was in order after all of that.

Fred's New England bank barn will be around for a good while longer now. The mockingbird nested in the hollow pear tree this summer. The newly planted trees will produce fruit and cast their shade on the milking parlor on the south side of the old barn for many seasons to come.

An old proverb suggests that a society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they know they shall never sit. The same can be said of a society whose elderly men restore old barns and historic buildings that will be used by others long after they have finished with them.

Thanks for caring, Fred.

By: Tom O'Grady

# The Round Barns of Fulton County

England had the gin-gan, a roof over horses as they walked in a circle to provide power for mills. The New Country produced its first polygonal barn in 1792 designed and built by George Washington on Dogue Run Farm. In 1824 the Shakers constructed the first true round stone-barn in Massachusetts.

1874 saw the first round-barn built in Indiana. This led up to the building boom of 1910 when the most round-barns were built in one year.

Indiana once proudly boasted of over 225 round barns in the state and Fulton County had over 20, claiming to be the county with the most round barns in the world and adopting the title Round Barn Capital of the World. Today there are less than 100 round barns in the state, and Fulton County has only 8 left, soon to be 7. Fulton County is unique in that all of the roofs in their round barns were unsupported. Although it became advisable to put a silo in the middle to help support the roof.

A trip to Fulton County makes a nice weekend trip. The eight round barns are all within a 10 mile radius. Start at the Fulton County Barn Museum on County Road



Images by: Pamela Whitney Gray

**Utler Gerig round barn, Pasture Brook Farm, was built by Courtney and Sumner Rhodes in 1915 and is 69 feet in diameter.**

14 off Interstate 65. There you will find the round barn museum and information on how to find the rest. For more information on the round barn trail call Rochester & Lake Manitou Chamber of Commerce or

visit [www.rochestertourism.org](http://www.rochestertourism.org). Be sure to take your camera and a pair of binoculars to catch all the details from the road as 7 of the barns are on private property.

— Pamela Whitney Gray



**Jerry Calloway barn was built by C. V. Kindig & Sons in 1915. It is 80' in diameter and has a 14' X 50' silo in the middle. It has recently been restored and is decorated with animals in the roof shingles.**



**Bob Jones round barn was built by Tom Jones and is 55' in diameter. It has a cupola over a silo in the middle.**



Larry Paxton round barn was built in 1924 by C. V. Kindig & Sons. It was the last round barn built in Fulton County and is 60' in diameter. It was damaged by a tornado and was donated to the Fulton County Historical Society in 1991. It was moved and restored and now serves on the grounds of the Fulton County Round Barn Historical Museum.



Allen Wade Barn is 40' in diameter and was built in 1915 by C. V. Kindig & Sons.



John Haimbaugh was the original owner of the farm and had the round barn by C. V. Kindig & Sons in 1914. It is 72 feet in diameter with a 20' half-moon shed around the back half of the barn. Restored with new cupola and roof in 1996.

## FOB President Accused of DUIB

It came to light that while driving the byways of the U.P. of Michigan Pam Gray was accused of "Driving Under the Influence of BARNS". Sudden stops, U-turns, paparazzi type activities, are but a few of the DUIB reports. Passenger Beryl Beckett declined to comment for fear of self-incrimination. Be on the lookout for other DUIBers.

By: Pamela Whitney Gray

## Upcoming Events 2017

Malabar Farm Heritage Days,  
Saturday & Sunday September  
23rd and 24th

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The Big Give through the  
Columbus Foundation  
starting 10am on October 10th  
through 12pm on October 11th  
— make your donations to  
Friends of Ohio Barns!

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Algonquin Fall Festival,  
Friday, Saturday, Sunday,  
October 13th through the 15th

~~~~~  
FOB Fall Picnic,  
Saturday, October 21st,  
11:30-4:00pm, Rus-Men Grain  
Farms, Galion, Ohio



# 2017 FOB Fall Picnic Scheduled!



This fall FOB Board Members Dave and JoAnne Hamblin have organized the picnic to be held at the Rus-Men Grain Farms located in Galion, Ohio on Saturday, October 21st. That is the Crawford County area for those of you who do not know where Galion is located!

Russ and Mendy Sellman are a seventh generation farm family. They produce row crops on the land that their ancestors settled in the 1830's. They grow beans, corn and wheat plus plenty of hay for their cattle. They also sell naturally raised beef through their wholesale market and we will be able to enjoy burgers made from their operation. Mendy helped her Grandfather build one of the barns on the property without plans of any kind! There will be two barns plus the 'original' barn for us to look through.

Mark your calendar for Saturday, October 21st, 2017 for another Friends of Ohio Barns Picnic! More information will be sent through email and posted on our website as the summer rolls on.

Please recycle this newsletter. Share it with a friend.  
Printed on recycled paper, of course.



FRIENDS OF OHIO BARNs  
P.O. Box 203  
Burbank, Ohio 44214

