



The Old BARN POST

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Barns of Carroll County to Highlight 2018 Ohio Barn Conference

As you focus on finishing late fall / early winter chores to prepare for the holidays and the cold of the season, we at Friends of Ohio Barns would like to give you a little sneak peek into next spring's 2018 barn conference.

We travel east next year to Carroll County that once was a rural area, not quite as much as in the past with all the gas fracking that has taken place in the recent years. The topography, lack of major road systems and major industries (see last sentence) will set the stage for a slightly different mindset of agriculture and of the barns that were built here. That's not to say we won't see some very interesting timber buildings...quite the contrary!

Alan Walter, the local hero for next year's

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English joinery with a principal rafter atop the eave plate.



Crib log barn.

All photos by Ric Beck



Sweitzer barn being moved on the farm.



Finished Sweitzer barn.



Yes, another year has come and is almost gone. I can't for the life of me find where it went. But all said and done it was a great year for Friends of Ohio Barns.

This year's 18th Annual Ohio Barn Conference and Tour pushed the bar a little higher. Our great success in Holmes County was due in part to our wonderful Local Hero, Barb Lang, and the deep history of Holmes County.

It started off with a packed house for the Thursday Workshop at the historic Stutzman Farm. The subject for the afternoon discussion was on surveying barns. Each attendee received a copy of the Barn Survey booklet. A lively discussion on the topic was led by Rudy Christian.

Barb Lang and I spent several enjoyable days together during the previous fall barnstorming the county in search of interesting barns for the Friday tour. When the barnstorming committee was done picking the best of the best we had a tour that was filled with very unique barns, some rarely seen in Ohio. It was a great day filled with barn edification and entertainment by our resident timber frame experts; Rudy, Dan, and Ric.

The Saturday conference was also filled with lots of new information in-

cluding two breakout sessions. The first was a hewing demonstration by the Miller brothers, John and Caleb. And second a presentation on quilt block barns and the trails that have been developed in many of the counties in Ohio as well as states across the country. A unique and beautiful display of hand-quilted quilts and wall hangings was brought in by Loretta Colblenz for all of us to enjoy.

The very first Barn Stewardship Grant was presented to Lauren & Nate Etlar for their barn in Hancock County. We will be hearing from them at the 2018 conference in Carroll County as they report on how things went with their project.

The summer brought a well-attended workshop at Slate Run Farm. Offering a choice of hands on or observation only of a repair to the frame and driveway-doors. This was led by the very capable and patient, Ric Beck.

We always look forward to fall and the annual FOB picnic. This year Dave and JoAnne Hamblin, once again, outdid themselves with the venue of the Rus-Men Farms. The original farm was settled in the 1830s. Mendy and Russ Sellman are the seventh generation to manage this grain and cattle operation. A good time

was had by all as they chowed down on Rus-Men Farm's fresh burgers. With full tummies we took off to tour the four barns on the farm.

With a very successful year behind us, we now look ahead to 2018. Much of the advance planning has been done by your trusty board members along with Local Hero Alan Walter. The barns have been chosen and the route established. The speakers are confirmed and caterers arranged. The 2018 Ohio Barn Conference is almost here and we are ready. HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL IN CARROLL COUNTY, APRIL 26, 27, & 28, 2018!

Starting in January of 2018 there will be an article each month in Ohio Farmer featuring one Ohio barn. This article is titled the Mystery Barn Series and will be authored by your humble president and Barn Consultant. The first Mystery Barn will be one of those special barns that disappeared from the landscape in the mid 1980s. Any suggestions for barns with interesting history or stories are welcome, especially when they are out of my home territory. Let me hear from you if you enjoy the Mystery Barn Series in the Ohio Farmer.

Keep the Barn Doors Closed,
Pamela Whitney Gray, President

Panel Discussion set for Carroll County Ohio Barn Conference!

Do you have questions on barn repair? Or maybe you want to know what kind of barn you have on your property? Or possibly interested in finding out what kind of barn is down the road from you? Maybe you just have questions on barn history or just want to know what Vice President Dan is up to these days. Whatever your questions are we might be able to answer a few of them at the 2018 Ohio Barn Conference that will be held in Carroll County in April on Saturday the 28th. The Board is putting together a panel of qualified barn experts that will answer your pre submitted questions with the usual flair that we have all come to expect. So, if you have a question please submit it to Ric Beck before March 31st by emailing Ric at rbeck7736@gmail.com or sending him a cd or thumb drive to Ric at 7736 SR 42 S, Lexington, OH 44904. Please include your specific questions, all the information that you already have on the barn and several pictures that we can use on the big screen to help show your issues. If you have any questions please email Ric at the above address.

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Old Barns in History

Since the beginning of time barns have been the bellwether of agriculture. There are barns in Europe and England a thousand years old. The structure of barns, being basic to culture and locality, are a historical record of places and peoples. We can identify various regions throughout Ohio settled by different cultures as we observe barns while traveling.

In one area you find immaculate barns all painted and dressed with fancy work, large in size and monuments to the people who built and worked in them. From the aspect of location these barns are great because they were located in areas of rich soils and productive forests. Because of the productivity provided by the soil the farming units had the luxury of a fine barn and all that went with it.

In many ways barns are unwritten records of history. Each barn in the neighborhood reflected the prosperity of the farm, pride of ownership, and the family's standing in the community. Features added throughout the years continued to tell the story. Names over the big barn doors proclaimed the owner. Later an addition might be made, "and Son", announcing the coming of age of a new generation. The notation of dates could be for the establishment of the farm, the building of

the barn or other momentous events. The spread between dates establishes a time line as to how fast the farm production grew and finances were available to build a barn.

In contrast, areas are found where the barns and buildings are shambles. They are indications of a less productive soil and, therefore, less financial strength from the farming operation. Subsistence was more important than fancy buildings. Food, shelter, and essentials of life came first. By watching these trends an area can be roughly mapped without walking the ground or testing the soil.

An added dimension of the design and location of the farm buildings is the ethnic input. Various building types were statements of traditions from different nationalities coming from the Old Country. As succeeding generations built new barns using "Grandpa's Barn" as a blueprint the building practices and styles continued for hundreds of years. So, each barn has its own cultural character; Dutch, German, Swiss, and English. All of this helps to trace our backgrounds to the beginnings of our country.

After the barns were built the task of maintaining them was a continuing obligation, even to the present day. Some

families were adept at maintaining or even improving their barns as time went on. Others felt that tomorrow was the time to do repair work and their lack of stewardship is sadly reflected in the dilapidated appearance of the farm as a whole.

With all of this in mind let's enjoy all the old barns and encourage their protection for the use and enjoyment of coming generations.

This article was edited for reprinting from the Barn Consultant Newsletter by Charles W. Whitney, with permission of Pamela Whitney Gray.

Quotable quote

"Any jackass can kick down a barn, but it takes a good carpenter to build one."

~ Sam Rayburn, an American politician who served as the 43rd Speaker of the United States House of Representatives. He represented Texas's 4th congressional district as a Democrat from 1913 to 1961. He holds the record for the longest tenure as Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, serving for over seventeen years.

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conference, found a Sweitzer barn with scribe rule framing, a crib log barn, some roof conversion barns, and a nice repurposed barn we will use for registration the day of the tour. Alan has helped with hotels, food, catering, and speakers among other chores we gave him and has done a splendid job!

Doug Reed is back and will be our featured speaker on Saturday. We are scheduled to have a local history presentation, as well as our first report from the inaugural Barn Conservation Grant with Lauren and Nate Etlar. We are also trying to secure a Thursday workshop at the Algonquin Mill with Paul Knoebel and friends to talk about the mill and the preservation work that's been done there. Overall, it should be another terrific conference, with plenty to see, great people to listen to, learn from and network with, so mark your calendars for April 26th - 28th!

—Ric Beck



Repurposed barn that will be registration stop for the Friday barn tour.

Carroll County Steeped in History

Carroll County, Ohio lies at the northern boundary of the unglaciated portion of the state. Counties to its north are part of the glaciated Allegheny Plateau. Through this region ran the Great Trail, a Native American footpath that connected Fort Pitt at the forks of the Ohio with Coshoc-ton and Chillicothe to the south and Fort Detroit to the northwest.

After the American Revolution lands west of the Ohio River were subdivided into several major districts. The area that makes up today's Carroll County straddles two of these subdivisions, the Seven Ranges, and the Congress Lands. The Land Ordinance of 1785 created a formal means of surveying, selling, and settling the land and raising revenue. The Seven Ranges was the first tract to be surveyed in what was to become the Public Land Survey System based on the now well-known township and range survey.

Land was to be systematically surveyed into — square “townships”, six miles on a side created by lines running north-south intersected by east-west lines. Townships were to be arranged in north-south rows called ranges. These townships were subdivided into thirty-six “sections” of one square mile or 640 acres. Section 16 of each township was set aside for school lands — demonstrating support for public education in the United States even before the constitution — the first of its kind in the world.

Because the survey was instructed to begin where the Pennsylvania boundary touched the north bank of the Ohio River it conflicted with Connecticut's claim of land north of the 41st parallel. The Congress Lands were created between the Seven Ranges and the Connecticut Western Reserve. Carroll County straddled the Seven Ranges and the Congress Lands when it was created in 1833. The County was named for Charles Carroll; the longest-lived and last surviving signatory of the Declaration of Independence, dying 56 years after the document was signed.

Carroll County was settled by Pennsylvanians, primarily. The next largest groups settling the region were Irish and Virginians. One would expect to find mostly Pennsylvania German barns and some southern barns in Carroll County — but no Irish barns to speak of.

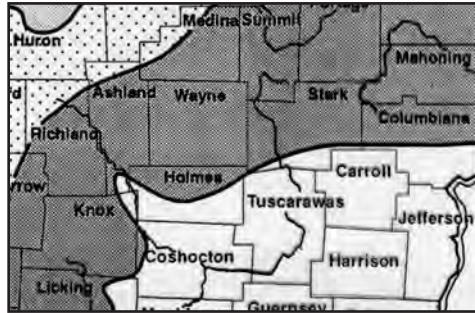


Image: Author's collection

Carroll County at the northern limit of the unglaciated Allegheny Plateau (white). North of Carroll County in the Glaciated Allegheny Plateau of Ohio (dark). To the west is the Glacial Till Plain (dotted) and to its north Huron County extends into the Lake Plain.



Image: ODNR Div of Geological Survey

Carroll County straddles the Seven Ranges and Congress Lands subdivisions having some influence on settlement patterns after the American Revolution.



The Magnolia Flouring Mill is also known as the Elson's Flouring Mill. This mill was built in 1834 by Richard Elson. The original hand-hewn beams are visible today.

It seems that the large influx of Irish may have been in the neighborhood to help dig the Sandy and Beaver Canal. Beginning on the Ohio River at Glasgow, Pa. it followed Beaver Creek to its headwaters and crossed the ten mile watershed divide through two tunnels of 1000 and 3000 feet before dropping into the Sandy Creek Valley passing through the towns of Minerva, Malvern, and Magnolia before it went through the Separatist settlement of Zoar on its way to its intersection with the Ohio and Erie Canal at Bolivar on the banks of the Tuscarawas where the famed Treaty Of Greenville line turns north toward Lake Erie.

The privately financed 73-mile long canal included a 400-foot long aqueduct

crossing the Tuscarawas River, 90 locks, and 20 dams to help it negotiate a rise and fall of nearly 700 feet. After 20 years in construction it was completed in 1848 and ceased to operate in 1852 after the dam on a feeder lake failed and large sections of the canal were severely damaged. Aside from the reservoir failure in 1852, the Cleveland and Pittsburgh Railroad was built that year, taking business away. The canal supported mills along its stretches including the Elson Mill at Magnolia.

The Algonquin Mill, at Petersburg in Carroll County, dates from the 1820's and ran on water power until it was converted to steam in the 1880's. The mill ceased operation on 1938 and was obtained by the

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Carroll County Historical Society in 1963 and was restored with volunteer labor. To raise money for restoration and operation a Fall Festival was started in 1971 and has grown to a three-day affair drawing thousands of people.

Carroll County had a significant relationship with the American Civil War. Two tribes of the famed Fighting McCooks of Carrollton sent an army of their family members to support the Union. Two brothers, Daniel and John McCook, and thirteen of their sons were involved in the army, making the family one of the most prolific in American military history. Six of the McCook men reached the rank of brigadier general or higher. Several family members were killed in action or died from their wounds. Major Daniel McCook Sr. was killed in Meigs County, Ohio at the Battle of Buffington Island in July 1863 in an engagement with Confederate John Hunt Morgan and his cavalry of more than 2,000. His son Brigadier General Robert Latimer McCook was killed by one of John Hunt Morgan's cavalymen near Salem, Alabama, as he lay in an ambulance after a previous injury.

The Battle of Buffington Island was devastating to Morgan's raiders. With more than 59 killed, 100 wounded and more than 700 captured Morgan and a few hundred of his men escaped and worked their way north and east across Ohio to be confronted east of Carrollton near Salineville. Badly outnumbered, Morgan attempted to escape from the estimated 3,000 Federals. He lost 364 men (including 23 dead, several wounded, and nearly 300 captured) in a firefight that lasted an hour or so. Morgan and his men were taken to the state penitentiary in Columbus where he shortly escaped and returned to Kentucky.

The area around Minerva, Magnolia, Waynesburg, and Alliance was home to many brick plants. Pavers were made for many streets in Ohio and beyond. The Robinson Clay Products Company from Malvern manufactured a 'Blue Granite Block' a clay paver brick which was awarded a medal for its quality in the paving brick competition at the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition. The paver from Malvern, was awarded the medal for its quality of hardness. Shortly thereafter they began to produce the Chicago World's Fair 1893 paver block, an oversize paving brick of the blue granite composition. In the adjoining picture, the left side of the brick depicts Christopher Columbus stepping off into the New World, and the right side depicts the manufacturing company of this brick receiving a medal at the fair. The Chicago Columbian Exposition is the fair where the Ferris Wheel made its debut along with the telescope of Yerkes Observatory, the largest telescope in the world and designed by Warner and Swasey of Cleveland in conjunction with master lens-crafter Alvan Clark. This same fair is where Pabst got its Blue Ribbon and where Levi Scofield of Cleveland, architect of the Athens Asylum and the Mansfield Reformatory installed "These Are My Jewels," the outdoor monument depicting Ohio's contribution to the Civil War with larger than life sculptures of generals Grant, Sherman and Sheridan, Lincoln's Secretary of War — Edwin Stanton, his Secretary of the Treasury — Salmon P. Chase, and generals and future presidents James A. Garfield and Rutherford B. Hayes. The monument stands today on the Ohio Statehouse grounds in Columbus.

Carroll County has made its mark in the world regardless of how often, or seldom, we hear about it in the news today.



Image: Carroll County Historical Society website
Algonquin Mill, built 1826 an operated by Carroll County Historical Society. FOB has had a presence there with board members under the leadership of Paul Knoebel who has raised the famed mini barn a time or two dozen for public education about early timber frame construction.



Image: Carroll County Historical Society website
Mc Cook House in Carrollton, built in 1837 in the Federal Style. An I-House with chimneys built inside the end-walls and a large addition at the rear. Now a historic house museum operated by the Carroll County Historical Society.



Image: <https://www.worthpoint.com>
Winning Paver Brick at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago made in Malvern by the Robinson Clay Products Company (RCPC).

Friends of Ohio Barns Annual Picnic

On October 21, 2017 members of the Friends of Ohio Barns met at Rus-Men farms for our annual fall picnic. Our event was hosted by Mendy Sellman and attended by 36 members of our association.

We had the opportunity to tour 4 barns that are, or were, owned by the Sellman family including a barn built by Mendy and her grandfather.

The other barns were a variety of early and mid-19th century construction including two ground barns and a Sweitzer barn built in the 1830s.

The barn on the main farm appeared to be built in the late 18th century, and was a great example of a well maintained, and for the most part, unmodified barn.

The Sellman's farming operation pro-

vided the hamburgers, hotdogs, and brats which were grilled by our former president Ric Beck, with a fair amount of advice from other members.

The Sweitzer barn, owned by Dr. James Goudy, is on ground that was once owned by the Sellman family. That ground also contained a Sellman family cemetery.



All images by JoAnne Hamblin

Picnic attendees admiring the hand-hewn framework in the Goudy barn.



Mendy Sellman sharing stories of her ancestors at the family cemetery near the Goudy 19th century barn.



Fall picnic attendees at the Goudy Sweitzer barn.



Dave Hamblin and Mendy Sellman in front of her 19th century barn.

2017 Barn Tour Film is Now on the Website!

Go to www.friendsofohiobarns.org to view the film that Ryan Shultz put together for our organization. It is a "Members Only" feature but Chris Clower made it simple to find on the main page with a click of your mouse. So check it out!

A Rural Phoenix Rising from the Ruins

One might have thought that a match would be the solution to the collapsing pile of timbers that used to be a barn not too far from Caldwell, Ohio in Noble County. But the owner, Milton Lisak had a different notion. He called Steve Skellet of Athens County. Steve saw a collapsing pile of timbers as well. But Milton still saw a barn.

Milton's dad bought the 109-acre farm in 1948 with the barn and corn crib, old house, and other outbuildings. Milton's father was one of the first recipients of the Goodyear Soil Conservation Award in Ohio in 1956 for his work on the farm in the years before.

Part of the land had been mined and not reclaimed. Another 50 acres were sold to the coal company in the 1960's. On the remainder they grew hay and they used to raise 15-20 head of beef cattle. Milton's folks never threw anything away. The summer kitchen, corn crib and barn were used for storage of antiques and other miscellaneous items.

Years went by without upkeep and maintenance of the farm buildings. But Milton has the farm now. He called Steve Skellet about fixing the barn. Steve has worked on hundreds of barns in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky. This was the worst one he has tackled. The barn was in such bad shape his crew wouldn't go in. Steve said he had to work on the structure four days by himself before his crew would set foot in it.

The building has been stabilized and is now back in use. While working on the project Skellet said it was the first time he'd seen a wooden gutter. The 24 foot-long 4-inch gutter was handmade by one of the earlier owners of the farm. The same were found on the house. Skellet put the gutter back on the barn.

Now that the barn is back in shape Milton plans to work on the basement of the barn and then the summer kitchen. This farm building has a fireplace and chimney. The old iron kettle and swing arm to move it over the fire are still in place.

Milton uses the summer kitchen for parties and small get togethers. He plans to replace the floor joists and put in new flooring. He used the old flooring for shelving. He added a new porch with a roof on the south and east side where he can read the paper and watch the wildlife



Remnants of what appears to be a three-bay ground barn or Yankee barn in June 2014.
All photos by Milton Lisak



It took and inspired view of this tangle of timber and a real commitment to 'pick up sticks' to see and old barn getting put back into use.



The 'Skellet effect.' The loft and walls repaired.



Canted queenposts with struts supporting purlins and the roof system.



Old barn made new. Many years of use remain for this old structure with new siding.

in Noble County. It is interesting to know in the digital age that some people still read newspapers and watch wildlife from the porch.

Milton said he paid a pretty good chunk of change to have the work done on the barn. Skellet says he could have built a new one cheaper. But both know that much would be lost with a wholly new

structure. The history of the Ohio forests and all the stories of the barn's heritage are locked in the old timbers. Most new structures do not get a roof supported by canted queenposts with struts. There are no memories that come with a new building. One might say that Milton Lisak got his money's worth, and maybe more.

By: Tom O'Grady



Looking Back

This barn was featured on a Friends of Ohio Barns annual Barn Tour sometime in the past 15 years. Can you identify the location of this beautiful octagonal stone barn? Send your octagonal barn ID response to ogrady@ohio.edu.

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



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