

## Three Barns Become One

A 161-year-old treasure was lost to Calhoun County a year ago September when the enormous old barn at Southern Exposure, a combination plant nursery, gift



*Everything old is new again at Southern Exposure.*

shop, tea room, and restaurant, went up in flames. But new old life has sprung from the ashes.

"When a building is a century and a half old, it is very very dry," said previous owner and friend, Bernard Jones. Owners Curtis Whitaker and Scott Stokes took no time to lick their wounds.

"There's really three barns that went into building one," says Terry Stitts of Terry's Barn Restoration, who headed a project to replace the barn. "We got the old beams from two barns in the Colon area just to have enough old wood for this one. The rest came from a barn nearby. Work began in the cold of mid-winter with a goal of being ready for a wedding in the barn the end of March.

The new barn is about half as large as the barn that was lost, is better insulated and more fire resistant. The old corn crib and hog house, and even a couple of outhouses, remain from the original farm.

Jones, who has 50 years of history with the land and the old farm buildings near Marshall, is wistful. "When I look out there I can still see the old barn."

Employee Jan Lauener adds, "We went from the darkest day of the fire to now. It makes your heart sing."

**Linda Jo Scott, Bellevue**

## Plan to Attend Two-Day March Super Conference!

Mark your calendar now to save March 12 and 13, 2004, for the 9th annual conference of the Michigan Barn Preservation Network. This two-day event will be held at the Kellogg Center on the campus of Michigan State University and plans are now being made to make it one of the best ever.

The Smithsonian traveling exhibit, "Barn Again! Celebrating an American Icon" will be on display both days. Events during the conference will include a barn tour, special reception, workshops on a wide range of topics of value to barn-owners and hopefuls. Sessions may cover financing and insuring, structural potential for adaptive reuse, painting or staining, protecting from fire hazards, replacing beams and sills, locating a suitable barn, and much more.

The MBPN welcomes artists, photographers, barn specialists, and organizations and vendors with compatible interests to participate. Contact Vera Wiltse at (989) 772-0911 ext. 302; Bill Kimball at (517) 484-1226; Charlene Heins at (517) 669-5894; or Jack Worthington at (517) 627-5763.

## Listings Sought for 2004 Barn Contractor & Consultant Directory

The Network's "Contractor & Consultant Rehabilitation Reference," a directory of people working in some aspect of barn restoration throughout Michigan and adjoining states, is being updated in preparation for the 2004 annual conference.

Individuals who wish to be listed are asked to send information to MBPN board member, Jack Worthington, at 228 West Main, Grand Ledge, 48837; call (517) 627-5763; or e-mail to [worthin@msu.edu](mailto:worthin@msu.edu).

The following should be provided:

- Indicate whether you are a consultant, contractor, both, or fulfill another role in the field of barn restoration
- Name (personal and name of business) address, telephone number, email or website address, and contact person.
- A summary of the type of service you or your company provides, e.g., custom sawmill, stonework, roofing, barn moving, silo restoration, design, historic restoration, barn conversion, etc.
- Special achievements, certifications, or references of significance.
- Region within which you work. (County or counties, entire state, Midwest)

The MBPN supplies this information to the public with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement is implied for any listings.

The Directory also includes suggestions for choosing a contractor, planning a project, and understanding various tax issues associated with restoration work.

"There is a tremendous need for competent, committed professionals to move into the field of barn restoration," said Worthington, former president of the MBPN, "As awareness of the value and potential of barns is rapidly increasing, so too is the demand for skilled craftspeople. We welcome professionals to contact us and encourage people to pursue a career in this fascinating and important field."

All information must be submitted to Worthington by Nov. 1, 2003, in order to be listed in the 2004 Directory.

## Windmills Catch their "2<sup>nd</sup> Wind" Barns Making Headlines

### A 2003 Conference Report

Windmill historian Mark Nice, brought the story of windmills to life at the 2003 MBPN conference. Mark buys, sells, trades, restores and installs windmills through his company, "2<sup>nd</sup> Wind Mills," in South Lyon.



Early immigrants brought with them, the technology of harnessing the wind. The basic design had four large blades which powered wooden components. Daniel Halladay was credited, in 1854, with having designed the first commercially-successful windmill in the New World.

Wind power operated grist mills and pumped water. At one time, more than 700 companies were producing windmills, an industry that remained active into the 1930s. Today a handful of companies continue to market water-pumping windmills. The largest windmills are in New Zealand and Australia. Tragically, like barns, windmills are disappearing due to development and a lack of appreciation for their beauty.

Many windmill enthusiasts still get together at a trade fair once a year in different locations. If you are interested in seeing a great collection, you may visit the American Windpower Center in



Mark Nice explains the workings of a windmill to an attentive conference crowd beneath a "Zenith," one of many windmills in his collection.

Lubbock, Texas. There are also collections in Kendallville, Indiana; Etzolz, Alberta, Canada; Shattuck, Oklahoma; Gibbon, Nebraska; and Spearman, Texas. Or, you can travel all the way to South Africa to the Fred Turner Museum in Loeriesfontein. The Kregel Windmill Company Museum in Nebraska City, Nebraska, preserves the last intact historic windmill factory in the United States.

Batavia, Illinois (just west of Chicago) has three windmill-producing factories. This town also has a few windmills on display. Nice told his audience that in Batavia, "The whole town gets into the act," and said a visit is "well worth a trip."

If you are looking for a good book, Mark indicated, *A Field Guide to American Windmills*, by T. Lindsay Baker is considered the "Windmill Bible." It is available from the University of Oklahoma Press.

Rose M. Putnam, Cass City

**MBPN brochures are available to distribute at no cost. Just ask!**



*If you are receiving multiple copies of the MBPN News, please let us know so that we can correct our mailing list. In the meantime, share your extras and bring new readers/members into the Network!*

If what we read in the papers or see on television is an indication of what society deems of interest or importance, then there is hope for America's heritage barns. Here are just a few examples:

- *Traverse*, 9/01, "For the Love of Barns." Northern Michigan barns, some old and some new made to look old, are showcased, as are several barn restorationists.
- *Community Observer*, Sum/02; *Independent*, 6/06/02. Stories on the work of preservationist Ted Micka.
- *Smithsonian*, 11/02, an article celebrating the saving of an 1860s Tennessee barn by architect Maya Ying Lin, to become the Langston Hughes Library. Lin was the architect who designed the Vietnam Wall Memorial.
- *USA Today*, 1/04/03, "American landscape losing its old barns." Relates the plight of restorationists working against time and scavengers.
- *Chicago Tribune*, 1/06/03, "Old-barn fanciers raising the roof." Efforts in the greater Chicago area to save old barns.
- *Battle Creek Enquirer*, 2/23/03, "A passion for barns." The rise from the ashes of Southern Exposure, a 161-year old barn which burned near Battle Creek.
- *The New York Times*, 2/28/03, "Converted Barns: Enjoying the Joists and Beams of Yesteryear." Pointers on saving old barns with photographs of barns either converted to homes or restored for ongoing agricultural use.
- *The Washington Post*, 3/28/03, "Americana, With a Fresh Coat." Examples of barns in Loudoun County that have been saved. One has become a kennel, another a community center, and others are homes.
- *Lansing State Journal*, 3/30/03, "State's barn lovers try to save symbols." Barns in the Lansing area and efforts by their owners and the MBPN to save them.
- *Country*, 2/03, "They Give Old Barns New Life." MBPN members, Peggy and Sam Stitt III featured for their work to save barns.
- *Kalamazoo Gazette*, 4/20/03, "Volunteers survey historic barns." The work being done by 4-H in Allegan County to document that county's heritage barns, part of the statewide initiative led by Cooperative Extension with the MBPN.
- *Battle Creek Enquirer*, 4/06/03, "Businessman finds connection to future in past." Battle Creek architect Larry Rizer's new old office building, the former Sullivan Dairy Barn in downtown Battle Creek.
- *South Bend Tribune*, 5/07/03, "Barn builders" and *Hutchinson Leader*, 7/09/03, "Making barns right again." The work of the Stitt family to save various barns.
- *Community Free Press*, 7/03/03, "Barn raises ruckus on campus." Struggle between Rochester College's desire to destroy designated historic farm buildings versus public sentiment to save them.
- *Northern Express Weekly*, 8/07/03, "The Builder and the Castle." Petoskey's Larry Shawn is restoring Castle Farms, an amazing French chateaux in Charlevoix for owners of RPM Pizza. The barn itself is a mansion!
- *American Profile*, 8/24/03, "New Life for Old Barns." The work of John High, Lancaster, PA. is showcased. Says High, "I want to save every barn I possibly can."

(Send information on barns in the news to MBPN News Editor Jan Corey Arnett)

## Port Oneida Barn Receives More "TLC"

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore again hosted the annual Michigan Barn Preservation Network barn workshop in the Port Oneida Rural Historic District. The June 16-22 workshop was funded through contributions from the National Park Service (NPS) Albright Training Center, Friends of Sleeping Bear, Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear, and the Michigan Barn Preservation Network.

This year's workshop completed work on the Brunson Barn, which was the site for last year's stone masonry workshop. The NPS workshop participants got training on how to use logs, hewn beams, rough sawn lumber, and standard lumber in the construction and repair of their barns.

The log lean-to addition roof was completed during the first couple of days, followed by repairing the log mow (loft) from the main barn. Crews repaired siding, and built and installed sliding doors for the threshing floor bay. A local sawyer was on hand to provide demonstrations in milling your own lumber.

The weekend public workshop allowed participants to help with the installation of a new floor in the front bay of the barn. Repair to the rotted portion of the hewn beam was the first task. Participants learned how to create an in-fill from another hewn beam and a scarf joint to connect to the original. At the same time, other participants were installing joists, cutting deck boards and installing them.

This workshop completed the tasks required to take the structure off the park's deferred



maintenance list. Work between the Michigan Barn Preservation Network and the National Park Service has brought this barn from fair-poor condition back into a useable structure that will now be used to house activities in the Port Oneida Rural Historic District.  
**Kimberly Mann,  
Historical Architect,  
National Park Service**



## Wood is Good

I have been recycled. My life as a piece of wood has had many tasks.

I started as a ten-inch walnut tree about 1840. The pioneer had built a house, but now needed a barn. There were many trees in the forest next to the St. Joe River by Union City. The pioneer was selecting the trees which were straight. I met these requirements so my life as a tree ended. I was cut down and hewed to a small beam, 8" x 8" by 12 feet long. My part of the barn was a cross support for the roof. This task was easy. I watched the farmers put up hay into the barn. The horses and cows enjoyed the shelter.

My barn was in use until 1960. The horses were replaced with a dirty-smelling tractor. The tractor didn't need hay and the farmer didn't need cows anymore. This is when my barn became empty. The farmer hired two men with chain saws to take my barn apart.

Now I had a new task - to support all the pieces of the barn as a stack of wood. Many of the barn beams, I am sad to say, became firewood. Then one day, I was loaded onto a pickup truck and taken to Battle Creek where a woodworker brought me into his shop. He studied me from different ways, enjoying the mortise holes in my sides.

The woodworker gave me a new task. Now I am bookends for a lady who enjoys barns. The woodworker left the axe cut marks where I had been hewn as a beam. I am ready for my new life, supporting books about old barns.

### Al Groothuis, Battle Creek

*Groothuis collects antique woodworking and farm tools. Like other barn lovers, he believes old barns should be saved. When all else fails he tries to preserve a bit of their history by crafting the wood for other functions.*

## We Need a New Home!



© 2000, John A. Rodak

*Barns can enjoy new lives at a fraction of the cost of new construction. When giving new life to an old barn, check the credentials of individuals who call themselves "barn experts."*

### NEW LISTING

36' x 72' straight peak barn on a foundation

**Edward Peterson**

1945 Cleveland  
Coopersville, MI 49404  
(616) 677-1397

F3

28' x 32' granary, 14' eaves, 6' corn cribs  
feed room and drive through

**Ken and Barb Bostwick**

8804 N. 46th St.  
Augusta, MI 49012  
(269) 731-4729 call before 9 p.m.

F3

150' by 40' with large oak beams  
A second large barn, in excellent condition,  
may also be available.

**Diane Palsak**

125 Industrial Ave.  
Paw Paw  
(269) 998-2383

S3

Late 1800s, 36' x 64' hip roof basement barn

**Dennis Orr**

587 E. Nye Hwy.  
Charlotte, MI 48813  
(517) 543-1382

S3

*We will reprint notices as space permits. Please notify News Editor Jan Corey Arnett with additions or deletions.*

*John Rodak is an Ohio-born pointillism artist now living in Texas. This piece is from his collection "Harvest: Twilight of the Barn in Ohio." Used by permission of the artist.*



Barn owners beware. The elderly woman who loved this barn (and farm) was promised by a clever buyer

that he too loved the barn and would restore it. In two years' time the barn has deteriorated rapidly. If you want your barn preserved, it may require a legal agreement.

## Hartland Barn on a Firm Foundation

Excellent weather conditions lead to another successful Barn Workshop in



Hartland, MI. Steve Stier and Rob Foti led a crew of 15 volunteers on the repair of the field stone foundation of the Elisha G. Smith Barn. Steve conducted a short introduction to barn mortar repair, identification, removal, preparation, and tuck-pointing. Everyone took a turn at preparing and mixing the mortar and



tuck-pointing the foundation. Workshop participants were barn owners, owner-hopefuls, owners of historic homes,

or were interested in constructing fieldstone foundations/walls for homes or garden walls. The Barn workshop was co-sponsored by the MBPN and the Hartland Area Historical Society.

The Elisha G. Smith Barn, site for the workshop, is located at 8940 Clyde Road in Hartland, MI. It is a five-bay bank barn with a fieldstone foundation. The barn is of hand-hewn timber frame construction with a random fieldstone foundation. It is very likely that the barn materials (wood, rocks, and mortar sand) were all from the adjoining fields. Construction methods and materials indicate that the barn was raised in the 1870s.

Elisha G. Smith was born in 1826 in Pennsylvania. At age 10, he came to Michigan with his father (William) and settled on 130 acres in Hartland. William



and Elisha were involved in the farming and lumber business. Elisha continued the operation until his death in 1870. After Elisha's death, his wife Cordelia kept the farm until the early 1900s. The Smith's homestead (at the NW corner of Clyde and Cullen road) is marked on the 1859 Hartland Platt map and remains in the same location today. The Smith family is buried in a family cemetery not far from the barn site. On the west side of the barn is a round bent wood silo that was constructed about 1910. Current stewards of the barn are Rob and Deb Foti. Contact Rob Foti at (810) 632-9248 for future seminar information.

**Rob Foti, Fenton**



### The Michigan Barn Preservation Network

P.O. Box 614, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48804-0614  
<http://mibarn.net>

#### 2003-2004 Officers

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Annual membership:  
 830 individual or 840 household

Newsletter subscription only (4 issues): 815

## MSU Museum Special Exhibit

*Michigan's Barn Heritage: Timber-Framed, Plank & Pole Barns*

A special exhibition in the Michigan State University (MSU) Museum's Heritage Hall through 2003 shows a progression of barn types in Michigan over the past three centuries.

The exhibit begins with photos and models of massive timber-framed barns that were designed for general usage including storage of feed crops, housing for livestock and storage of farm machinery. Barn designs then progressed through plank-framed barns, "balloon" framing using two-by-fours, to modern barns using such techniques as pole construction and metal siding. Many of the tools used in barn building are shown along with scale model barns that were made at Michigan State College in the 1930s for the instruction of agricultural engineering students.

Heritage Hall features a continuing series of exhibits centering on agricultural heritage and MSU.

The MSU Museum is Michigan's natural and cultural history museum and an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. The MSU Museum features three floors of special collections and changing exhibits and is open seven days a week free of charge (donations are welcome). The museum is located on West Circle Drive next to Beaumont Tower on the MSU campus and is accessible to persons with disabilities. For more information, contact (517) 355-2370 or [www.museum.msu.edu](http://www.museum.msu.edu).

# Michigan Barns: Histories and Stories

## 1897 Campania Barn

This five-story barn, built in 1897, known as the "Campania Barn," is blessed in that it has had two wonderful lives.

Nominated for the MBPN Barn of the Year in 2002, this barn stands elegantly in Hickory Corners, 45 miles from its original home in Fennville. It is the centerpiece of the Gilmore Car Museum, founded by Donald and Genevieve Gilmore. The late Mr. Gilmore, a past chairman of the former Upjohn Company, fulfilled a lifetime goal to make this site one of the top automobile museums in the country.

But to go back to the beginning... The barn was first part of a mint farm. A.M. Todd

developed a steam-powered method of distilling mint in 1869 in Fennville (Allegan County) and became known as the "Peppermint King," purveyor of spearmint and peppermint to Wrigley's in Chicago for their chewing gum and to other companies for candy and toothpaste.

"Campania Farm," his 1,600-acre mint farm, became the largest in the world for mint production. The barn, built in 1897, was home to horses and equipment on the lower level, with the highest upper level used to store huge quantities of mint hay. Eight residences, a company store and hotel and a bathhouse dotted the Campana property, along with a granary and the distillery.

Mint production was moved to California in the 1930s. The farm was sold to the state of Michigan in 1950, to become its

"farm unit" for the DNR, though most of the buildings were torn down or moved. Mr. Gilmore bought the barn and had it

dismantled, moved, and restored to house his prized automobiles.

Since new life was given to the Campania Barn, other barns have been moved and restored on the 90-acre campus which houses nearly 180 cars. Visitors can find the "Barrett Barn," an 1890s barn used for exhibit space and as a library. There are also barns with curious names like "G Barn," named for Kalamazoo County's G Avenue where it first stood, the "O" barn for Other (vehicles), and the "T" barn for tractors.



Jay Follis, marketing director at the Gilmore Car Museum, points out that when he does tours of the grounds and buildings, people very often ask more questions about the barns than they do the automobiles. Where did they come from? How did they move them?

The Gilmore Car Museum is located at 6865 Hickory Road, Hickory Corners. It is open to the public and features events throughout the year. Check the website at [www.gilmorecarmuseum.org](http://www.gilmorecarmuseum.org) for more information and to see photographs of the barns.

### Keith Bruder, Willis

To contribute to "Michigan Barns: Histories and Stories," send information and photos, to Keith Bruder, 10520 Willis Road, Willis, MI 48191.

## Honor a Beauty

### Nominate it for MBPN Barn of the Year

It is time to give your favorite barn some well-deserved recognition and help spread awareness of the treasure our Michigan barns represent. A barn in good repair is visual food for the soul and a good investment. To nominate a special barn, please complete and clip, or photocopy this form, and send with photographs by Jan. 1, 2004, to Keith Bruder, 10520 Willis Road, Willis, MI 48191 (734) 461-2498.

Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Builder if known \_\_\_\_\_ Date Built \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Location of barn \_\_\_\_\_

Has this barn been nominated for or received other recognition? If yes, please explain \_\_\_\_\_

Why should this barn be named MBPN Barn of the Year? Highlight its history, current use, unique features, work done to restore/preserve it. (Attach additional pages if needed.) \_\_\_\_\_

Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

### Please include photographs.

Selection will be made by a committee of MBPN members. Owners of the barn chosen to be honored will be recognized at the 2004 conference. The barn will be featured on the 2004 conference mug. Questions should be directed to Keith Bruder.

## At Home in a Barn

I have lived in two barns from childhood. My first home was at 333 Greenwich Road in Grand Rapids Township (Kent County), a suburban barn previously owned by the largest bar owner in Grand Rapids and converted to home use by my father in the early '50s. It originally had two large sliding doors and a high pavilion-roofline with stucco all around the exterior walls, covered with a large overhanging roofline. Two wings were added left and right of the center for bedrooms, and family quarters over the garage below. In its first life it was home to all types of farm animals, a carriage house, and a destination for weekend parties at the end of a long "old coach road" at the end of Michigan Street. It is likely that no one knows about this barn/house because it was converted before it became fashionable to do so.

My second barn/home was in Charlevoix County on the north side of Lake Charlevoix about halfway between Boyne City and Charlevoix on a property known locally as Lake Charlevoix Farm. I spent 18 summers there and had some good winters too, with skiing at Boyne Mountain. The farm originated in the 1880s with a storybook stone milkhouse and other outbuildings. The barn was built as an animal show barn by two brothers named D'Ooge who were professors at the University of Michigan and Eastern Michigan University. With a view overlooking Lake Charlevoix, this barn was used as a weekend dance hall attracting even Earnest Hemmingway up from Walloon Lake and Horton's Bay for festivities.

The barn was later remade into a New York-style apartment by a California architect. The owners were fond of horses. The woman held several records including the longest horse jump in Olympic history. She opened the Golden Gate Bridge on horseback as the first official person to cross. Local legend has it that there was a glass floor to look down into the horse stalls and people came around to peek into the windows shaped like triangles made to work with the reinforcement structure of the barn sides and large joists connecting the interior. The place is still a landmark in Charlevoix County.

**Richard Hartger, President/  
Founder, Cycle-Safe, Grand  
Rapids**



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FARM BUREAU**

Proud to provide support  
for the design of the  
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## Barn Jacking and Stabilization Workshop

*Part of the "You can Repair your Barn Series"*

An informative and hands on workshop led by Steve Stier, MSU adjunct educator and barn contractor.

- Learn how to safely jack and level barns for repairs
- Learn how to level structures
- Learn how to repair foundations

**Saturday, October 4  
9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

**Hartland, Mich. (Livingston County)**

Bring gloves and be prepared to work - rain or shine. Bring your own lunch, drinks provided. Registration required - limited to 15 participants.

Call (810)-632-9248 for registration and more information.

This workshop is sponsored by The Michigan Barn Preservation Network and The Hartland Area Historical Society.

## Join the Michigan Barn Preservation Network Today!



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