



# MI BARN

PROMOTING APPRECIATION, PRESERVATION, AND REHABILITATION OF MICHIGAN BARNs, FARMSTEADs, AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

## “Keeping it Local”: MBPN celebrates 20 years with annual Spring Conference

It's our 20th anniversary and time for changes! Our 2015 conference goes back to the beginning, when we only had one day with a meeting and workshops. This year, we will start with time for refreshments and visiting in the exhibit room. This room will be closing at 4:00pm, so we have built in time early in the day to make connections with exhibitors.

We hope you will end your day by joining us for dinner and award presentations.

Please note that the annual membership meeting will be Saturday afternoon this year. If you have ideas to share with the group, this is your opportunity.

Your support at the conference and barn tours have kept the Network moving forward while educating and assisting barn owners in various ways.

The latest agenda for the conference is on page 2. Please join us for this special celebration of two decades of preservation!

—Vera Wiltse, MBPN Program Committee Chair

### Announcing the 2015 Spring Barn tour

This tour will be held as part of the Michigan Historic Preservation Network conference in Midland on May 13-16, 2015. The tour bus will take you to Gladwin County to visit Stone Cottage Gardens and their rehabilitated barn. You will visit two barns that have been highlighted by speakers at our conference, and the tour will end in Isabella County visiting with Frank Graham at two rehabilitated, curved rafter barns. The tour begins on May 13th and will include an Amish lunch. On May 14th, speakers will be presenting at the MHPN conference site in Midland on barn related topics. More information will be available on March 14th at the Spring Conference! Be the first to receive it!

—Vera Wiltse, MBPN Program Committee Chair

## 2015 MBPN Workshop at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore

Interested in “hands on” experience in restoration? This year's Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore barn workshop will take place at the John Burfiend Barn in the Port Oneida Rural Historic District on June 18-20, 2015.

Barn workshops at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore have been offered continuously since 1997. This year's workshop will be the latest in a long line of productive and informative events held at the SBDNL.

Members of the Network are invited to attend the workshop, which will include the use of traditional tools along with modern techniques so that the training is relevant to the times and the needs of those who are restoring historic agricultural structures. Workshop participants are typically MBPN members, park carpenters, students or owners of barns and are interested in developing the restoration techniques and skills needed to restore such structures. Membership information in the MBPN is provided to all attendees, and new members do emerge from these workshops.

The John Burfiend Barn is located on Port Oneida Road, four (4) miles north of Glen Arbor, Michigan on M-22. The barn was the site of the first park and Michigan Barn Preservation Network workshop in 1997. This year's workshop will address “Barn Floor, Siding, Post, Ramp, Window and Door Repair and Construction. The course will include 1) basics about structural and load analysis for post placement and repair, 2) repair of floors and walkways, 3) wood ramp installations, 4) large and pedestrian door repair, con-



Photo by Kimberly Mann

*Volunteers at last year's Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Workshop.*

struction and installation, 5) wood window repair, 6) exterior siding repair and installations, and 7) tool safety while completing the task presented. The workshop is presented at no charge to the public. For more information, interested parties should contact Park Historical Architect Kimberly Mann at 231-326-5135, ext. 501 or by email at [Kimberly\\_mann@nps.gov](mailto:Kimberly_mann@nps.gov).

—Keith Kehlbeck, MBPN Newsletter Editor

# Keeping it Local – Itinerary

## Michigan Barn Preservation Network Annual Conference and Membership Meeting

### Saturday, March 14, 2015

9:00-4:00	Exhibits will be Open in Lincoln Room
9:00-6:00	Exhibits open in 106 Silent Auction (ends at 4:30pm)
8:45-10:00	Refreshments in Lincoln Room – visit with exhibitors, contractors, and fellow barn enthusiasts

### 9:30-11:00 Breakout sessions

#### 1. Silos (part 2) – Ina Hanel

Ina has continued her research on silo construction during the past year. Her research focuses on the history and business of silos in Michigan. If you are interested in presentation or want to hear about the additional information from her research, plan to attend this session!

**Session Cancelled  
Looking for Replacement**

#### 2. Preservation Stories – The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly – Chuck Bultman

We all know that preservation is a compromise... or is it? In this session we will explore the real, and sometimes hard, lessons learned while preserving and adapting barns. We will use case studies to look at the actual decisions, struggles and compromises that were made to complete a number of barn projects. The pros and cons of the decisions made will be laid out and discussed.

This 'behind the scenes' discussion will include conversion projects where barns are adapted to be homes, as well as commercial buildings. This conversation will range from decisions about material choices, to techniques and tactics, and will include codes and legal ramifications.

Come and be challenged about what you think about barn preservation, and preservation in general. Come and see what others think constitutes preservation and participate in a lively discussion.

### 11:30-1:00 Lunch and live auction in Red Cedar

### 1:15-2:30 Breakout sessions

3. Converting living history to living space – Ric Beck, Lexington, Ohio  
Ric will share the journey he and his wife took to convert a unique English ground barn into their residence. He will discuss the restoration, design and green build features of this 1st growth virgin timber barn he proudly calls home.

#### 4. Open Mic – Tammis Donaldson, Laurie Sisco, Melissa Jaskiewicz, Ed Roth

Listen to other barn enthusiasts reminisce about the exciting and often hilarious stories their barns would tell. If you have a story to share, please put it in writing and bring it with you. You may have the opportunity to share it with the audience, and we would definitely like to publish it in the MBPN newsletter.

### 3:00-4:20 Breakout sessions

#### 5. Contractor panel – Steve Stier, moderator.

Three contractors will share slides and information about recent barn repair projects:

RJs Complete Barn Service: Roger Bateson  
K & L Construction and Improvements LLC: Joe Churches  
Great Lakes Barn Preservation: Mark Stitt

#### 6. Split Barns – Charles Leik and Fred Will

This session will describe the "Split" Barns of Somerset County, PA. Fred Will, an authority on Pennsylvania barn stars, has identified 40 massive bank barns in Somerset County that were enlarged by severing them down the middle, moving one section outward and "stitching" the sections back together. Charles Leik, a native of Portland, was so fascinated by this process that he had a one-twelfth model of a "split barn" created. Fred and Charles authored a recent article in *Timber Framing* magazine and will discuss sleuthing the "Why" and "How" of this puzzling phenomenon.

### 4:30-5:30 Annual membership meeting

### 6:00-8:00 Awards banquet (cash bar starting at 5:30) in Red Cedar

Registration \$50 for the day with lunch

(\$80 for non members)

\$25 for the awards dinner (members & non-members)

## MBPN Cupola Lifetime Members

No organization such as ours could survive without monetary support from its members. And those who step up over time—and with generous levels of funding—are at the top of our list for thanks and praise.

During the last decade 14 individuals and couples have joined the MBPN as lifetime members (\$1000), making a strong statement of commitment to the goals and principles of our Network.

The MBPN Board created a restricted fund to hold this level of donation towards the possibility of establishing an endowment with the designated priorities of education, operations and barn stabilization. In 2008, an Endowment Committee researched and investigated an endowment as an avenue to direct future interest income to specific priorities for the organization. When we reach the \$20,000 - \$30,000 level, we can move towards formally establishing this endowment. The principal amount would be held in perpetuity, and annual interest income would come to the MBPN for operational and programmatic funding.

Consider becoming a Cupola/lifetime member at \$1000 and help to move the MBPN forward!

—Julie Avery, Communications Chair

*A very special thanks to our Cupola Lifetime Members:*

Jan Corey & Doyle Arnett  
Brad & Linda Brogren  
Michael & Diane Dalton  
Leo Fitzpatrick & Judy Grant  
Robert & Debra Foti  
Jim & Ann Freiburger  
Charleen & Royal Heins  
Tom Irrer  
Ron Kuhl  
Wm. Kimball & Alice Robinson  
Linda Mueller  
Steve Stier & Julie Avery  
Rex & Ginny Tefertiller  
Vera Wiltse

# President's Message

Just a brief note as we embark on a new year of promoting the appreciation, preservation, and rehabilitation of Michigan barns, farmsteads and rural communities.

The upcoming Spring Conference will again provide an opportunity for barn enthusiasts to network and to learn from an exceptional lineup of presenters on topics of interest to all. Exhibitors will display their wares and materials. And the annual awards banquet will recognize Barn of the Year nominees and awardees for 2015. This year, we were pleased to see that four Pride of Ownership submissions have been presented and that seven new Barn of the Year applications—across four categories—joined other worthy re-submitted barns to form a great class of nominees. Please join us to salute these excellent symbols of Michigan's agricultural heritage. The schedule and contact information elsewhere in this newsletter will tell you how to register for the conference and the banquet.



Tim Wiles

In this issue of the newsletter, we also are continuing our recent series of Board commentary on items of interest to the Network. Included is a column by Past President Steve Stier on the much-discussed issue of event barns and their regulation. Please let us hear from you if you have information or opinions to share on this topic...or any other that impacts Michigan barns.

I hope to see you in March!

God bless,  
Tim

## Rob Foti to retire as MBPN Treasurer

After serving 10 years as the Network's Treasurer, Rob Foti is retiring from the MBPN Board. Describing himself as "just a mechanical engineer" who applied common sense accounting to MBPN finances, Rob has served the organization faithfully by providing clear and concise reports to the Board for the past decade. Over the course of his stewardship, the organization's deposits have grown, while funding a wide variety of activities and events. He will be missed on the Board, but we wish him well and expect to see him at future MBPN events. Thanks, Rob!



Outgoing Treasurer  
Rob Foti.

—Keith Kehlbeck, MBPN Newsletter Editor

# Keeping it Local

## Michigan Barn Preservation Network Annual Conference – March 14, 2014

### Kellogg Conference Center, East Lansing

Individual Name (for nametag) \_\_\_\_\_

Individual Name (for nametag) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( \_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

#### MBPN member registration for:

\_\_\_ Conference (includes lunch) \$50 per person

#### Non-member registration for:

\_\_\_ Conference (includes lunch) \$80 per person

\_\_\_ Awards Dinner (member or non-member) \$25 per person

Total amount paid: \_\_\_\_\_ Cash: \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_

Please note if you have any special dietary needs \_\_\_\_\_

To register please send this form with payment to:

**MBPN**

**P.O. Box 614**

**Mt. Pleasant, MI 48804-0614**

Participants may also register on the MIBARN website using PayPal.

# Event Barns in Michigan

Since their very beginning, traditional barns have been used in social settings. Barn Raisings were events where rural families came together to do cooperative work, but also to socialize and to reinforce the social connections that make a community. Husking bees, threshing bees and barn dances were events that continued a tradition of social interaction in barns. How far away from that tradition are today's popular family reunions, weddings and other social gatherings?

The rub today is the necessity of having building codes and other rules to govern buildings for "assembly" use. While protecting the health and safety of the public is paramount, might there be ways that traditional barns could be used for assembly without complying with all of the sometimes nonsensical and burdensome codes and other regulations?

House Bill 5642 was introduced in 2014, and, if passed, it would exempt traditional barns from complying with building codes when used for "assembly" or events. The two-year legislative session ended in December of 2014 without the bill getting past the Agriculture Committee, but the bill will be reintroduced during the current session. Over the past year, the board of directors of the MBPN has spent a great deal of time discussing the issues associated with event barns and building codes. The position that the board has taken is that public health and safety represent the highest priority, however we also feel that there may be ways for traditional barns to be used for events without complying with overly restrictive codes and regulations. We are hopeful that the legislative process will find an appropriate way to reconcile these disparate goals. If you have any questions or comments to add to this discussion, please let them be known. Email me at stephenstier@gmail.com or Jennifer Smeltzer, the Legislative Director for Rep. Ray A. Franz at jsmeltzer@house.mi.gov.

Thanks for your interest in this important barn-related topic!

—Steve Stier, MBPN Past President





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**Preconference 2015 - No. 73**

[www.mibarn.net](http://www.mibarn.net)

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Scan our QR code with your smart  
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