



Spring 2016 - No. 76

MI BARN

PROMOTING APPRECIATION, PRESERVATION, AND REHABILITATION OF MICHIGAN BARN, FARMSTEADS, AND RURAL COMMUNITIES



Photo by Tom Nehil

2015 BoY winner, Schumaker Barn, Fenton, Michigan, owned by Carl and Kim Schumaker



Photo by Keith Kehlbeck

Conference attendees enjoy last year's Awards Banquet at MSU's Kellogg Center.

Breaking New Ground

MBPN's 2016 Annual Meeting and Conference

Conference 2016: New format, new location, same excellent barn tour on Friday!

Jim Mulvany will present a slide presentation on barns in and around Ingham County that were inspired by George Fogle.

In a change of pace, this year's MBPN Annual Meeting and Conference will be held on May 6-7, 2016 at the Coopersville Farm Museum, Coopersville, Michigan. On Friday, the popular annual barn tour will begin at 8:30am and will conclude at 5:00pm in time for a dinner and annual meeting of the membership, which will start at 6:00pm. The awards program—with Barn of the Year announcements—will follow lunch on Saturday. Ms. Piggies BBQ will cater this year's meals.

The full agenda for Saturday is as follows:

- 8:00 Registration
- 9:00-10:00 Speaker: Curtis TerHaar from the Ottawa County Planning and Development
- 10:30-11:30 Speaker: Barns in and around Ingham County inspired by George Fogle - Jim Mulvany
- 12:00 lunch
 - Door prizes and Live auction
 - Barn of the Year Award presentations
- 2:00-3:00 Silos: past, present and future – Speaker: Ina Hanel
- 3:00 end silent auction
- 3:30-4:00 Dutch Barns in Western Michigan – Speaker: Steve Stier

An important part of every annual conference is sharing pertinent information and trends. Although there will be no breakout sessions this year, four speakers will address the attendees on Saturday.

In the morning, Curtis TerHaar, Coordinator of Park Planning and Development for Ottawa County, will present restoration challenges and successes from several renovated barns owned by the county. The title of his presentation is "The Barns of Ottawa County Parks."

As Ottawa County has acquired properties for their park system, some came with traditional barns. Learn how and why the county has worked to preserve and repurpose these barns.

Jim Mulvany will present a slide presentation on barns in and around Ingham County that were inspired by George Fogle.

Following lunch—which will include door prizes, a live auction, and the Barn of the Year presentations—Ina Hanel will present an expanded silo presentation. Ina has continued her research on silos and will include information from a well-known researcher and presenter on silos who has retired and deposited his collection with Central Michigan University's Clarke Historical Library.

Concluding the day's festivities, Past President Steve Stier will talk about Dutch barns. Steve has researched the barns in Western Michigan built in the Dutch style and will share that research in photos.

Registration costs for the conference are as follows:

Barn Tour: \$45 (members) and \$75 (non-members)

Friday dinner: \$18 per person

Saturday (including lunch): \$50 (members) and \$80 (non-members)

The conference hotel is the Holiday Inn North, 358 River Ridge Drive NW, in Grand Rapids.

To make reservations call 1-888-Holiday, and use "MBPN" as the group, with reservation confirmation EG1.

We hope to see you at the conference!

—Vera Wiltse, Program Chair



Scan our QR code with your smart phone and visit the MBPN website!

President's Message

With winter nearly past (we hope), our thoughts turn to the annual events for which the MBPN has become known. This year, we do have a few changes, however. The Annual Meeting and Conference—along with a Barn Tour, of course—has been moved to early May and will be held at a new location, the Coopersville Farm Museum. With many of the same popular elements, such as the tour, awards luncheon and auction, as well as a number of informative presentations by experts in the field, we expect that the event will be as



Tim Wiles

popular as ever. Please mark your calendars and register to attend.

I want to take a moment to thank our volunteers, and in particular our board and committee members, who give of their valuable time to help make the MBPN successful. Whether it is helping guide and improve our online presence or manning a table at a regional event, their selfless contributions to our mission are appreciated and worthy of our collective thanks.

Many exciting developments are headed our way in the coming months, including the debut of the "Barn Raisers" documentary, which, thanks to the MBPN, will prominently include Michigan barns. Exposure like this is essential as we seek to raise public awareness concerning Michigan's historic rural legacy—our barns.

Until our next conversation, I hope to see you at an upcoming Michigan Barn event!



Calling All "Barn of the Year" Nominations

The Awards Committee has been working to get submissions for the 2016 "Barn of the Year Award." Press releases went to 10 newspapers around the state, to three farm-related news publications, and to four farm-related radio stations. On-air interviews were done with all four of those stations. Our goal is to steadily increase the number of submissions from year to year.

Our members always provide the most important source of nominations, however, and Constant Contact messages have been sent out to all MBPN members. In addition, we sent letters and Nomination Forms to the past three year's awardees, asking for their assistance in getting the word out. Information on the Barn of the Year Award is on the website under resources. If you know of a deserving barn, please point them in the direction of the website. Applications must be postmarked on or before April 1, 2016. And do join us at the Annual Meeting and Conference to celebrate the recipients of our flagship award!

—Jerry Damon

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Board Musings

I am the perfect example of a MBPN member who does not own a barn or a farm.

However, one does not need to own a barn to be an advocate of agricultural buildings. On the personal side, I was the kid that ran to the barn first thing when visiting family friends. Was it the animals, or was it the building that was not at all like a house or school building that drew me in? Probably both.

On the professional side of my life, I practice architecture. Practice is a funny word for a profession in which I have become proficient, but that is the "industry standard" term. I have a general practice, and I like the diversity it provides. From house additions to barn renovations, to new houses and historical rehabilitation—those form the base of my firm.

Architects follow a certain rigor when working on a project. There is the creative side that is inspired by working with the lay of the land, the sun orientation, precedent of design, and the needs and dreams of the owner. There is also the technical side of architecture. Architects work with zoning ordinances, building codes, health codes, and the ADA (American with Disability Act). Pulled together, the creative and technical sides of the business make for an exciting profession.

During the recession, I thought that it would be a good time to do volunteer work. I joined the local historic study committee and eventually became a board member of the MBPN. Even though the recession is (thankfully) over, I have continued to participate as a committee and board member. Through my practice and as a working member of the organization, I feel that I can be a true advocate of barns and historical buildings.

—Tammis Donaldson

This column is the latest in a series of thoughtful observations about the MBPN and its mission by our Board members.



Breaking New Ground

**MBPN's 2016 Annual Meeting and
Conference – May 6 – 7, 2016**
Coopersville Farm Museum, Coopersville, Michigan

Individual Name (for nametag) _____

Individual Name (for nametag) _____

Phone (____) _____ Email _____

MBPN member registration for:

___ Barn Tour: \$45 (member) per person

___ \$75 (non-members) per person

Friday dinner:

___ \$18 per person

Saturday (including lunch):

___ \$50 (members)

___ \$80 (non-members)

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.



Insurance & Barn Awareness



MBPN and Insurance Companies Collaborate

Over the last year Barrett Insurance (Jonesville) and Lighthouse Insurance Group (Grand Rapids) have become MBPN members, business/contractors, donors, and partners.

Doug Jones, marketing communications director at Barrett Insurance, contacted us to explore opportunities, joined as a business member and donated to the 2015 Leelanau Fall Barn & Color Tour. Conversations during the tour resulted a shared project throughout their service area: Branch, Calhoun, Hillsdale, Jackson, and Lenawee Counties. Barrett Insurance will coordinate a South Central Michigan Barn & Farmstead Survey in memory of founder Clint Barrett. Owner Cyndi Barrett stated that this will "increase awareness across South Central Michigan of the heritage and culture embodied in traditional barns and farmsteads." Goals of the project include increasing youth and community awareness of agricultural heritage and preservation and adding to the inventory of traditional barns and farmsteads, thereby contributing to an ongoing statewide project. This effort seeks involvement from youth, history, and preservation groups. The project gives MBPN an opportunity to explore

a regional approach and to revitalize the survey project across the state. Interested in getting involved? Contact Doug Jones at Doug@baarrettins.com.

Jason Sailor, Lighthouse Insurance Group (Grand Rapids) also contacted MBPN to discuss his interest in barns and to see what he could do to raise awareness of our organization in his work with barn owners. Jason works with a number of carriers and is sharing MBPN's brochure in his travels. He is dedicated to exploring approaches to insuring barns that are not a part of a working farm on a case-by-case basis. Lighthouse Insurance joined MBPN as a business member and has made a donation in sponsorship of our Annual Conference in Coopersville on May 6th and 7th.

Both Lighthouse and Barrett are independent insurance agencies representing many companies and programs. More information about them can be found at the MBPN website on our contractors list.

—Julie Avery, Communications Chair

“Barn Raisers” Filming Update

As previously reported, Michigan has been included in the upcoming documentary project entitled “Barn Raisers,” and a production shoot in Michigan last fall was facilitated by a number of MBPN stalwarts. Producers Tammy and Kelly Rundle recently acknowledged the MBPN’s assistance in a message.

The Rundles report that they are in the editing phase of the project and anticipate completion of the film by the end of July this year. As part of the filming, they were able to participate in the fall Barn Tour in Leelanau County. We look forward to the completed documentary and the exposure that it will bring to Michigan’s iconic barns and farmsteads.

—Julie Avery, Communications Chair



The Rundles with Lu Ann and Russ Mawby.



Interviewing MBPN Program Director Vera Wiltse.

FOURTH WALL FILMS

Hello again, everyone!

We are attaching several more images from our production shoot for THE BARN RAISERS in Michigan last fall. Thanks to each of you, it was a fantastic and productive trip!

Once again, we want to extend our deep appreciation to everyone who helped us along the way. Our key barn and interview organizers—Steve Stier, Julie Avery, Vera Wiltse, Chuck Bultman and Jan Corey Arnett—made our action-packed production work go very smoothly. Your time, effort and leg-work provided us with the unforgettable and exceptional experience of seeing and filming so many magnificent barns. The people you connected us with were wonderful.

Also, our gratitude to Jan for arranging for us to meet Russ and Lu Ann Mawby at the Gilmore Auto Museum, so we could share in person our sincere appreciation for their support on the documentary project.

Thank you Michigan Barn Preservation Network, the National Barn Alliance, Russ and Lu Ann Mawby for making filming in Michigan for The Barn Raisers happen!

Tammy & Kelly Rundle
Fourth Wall Films
THE BARN RAISERS



Director Kelly Rundle and barn owner Don Staebler (105 years young!)

Photos by Tammy and Kelly Rundle

MBPN Present at Midwest Agritourism Expo and Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference

The Midwest Agritourism Expo was held at the Van Buren Conference Center located at 490 South Paw Paw Street in Lawrence, Michigan on March 10th. Lawrence is located about 25 miles west of Kalamazoo, and the conference center is a part of the Van Buren Intermediate School District. Board members Clare Koenigsknecht and Tom Irrer made the trip to represent the MBPN at the Expo, which attracted approximately 100 attendees. Our presentation included the same exhibit materials that were used at the Northern Michigan Small Farmers Conference At the Grand Traverse Resort. The MBPN's presence at the Expo also helped promote the upcoming barn tour and Annual meeting in Coopersville.

Earlier, in January, the MBPN also participated for the fourth time in the Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference at the Grand Traverse Resort. Board members Tom Irrer and Steve Stier talked with conference participants. Many small and organic farms fit right into traditional farmsteads because of their diversified crops and animals. As a result, the MBPN has a lot of affinity with this group. The MBPN has presented and exhibited at the Conference for a number of years.

Thanks to Clare, Tom, Steve, Julie and Vera for showing the MBPN flag!
—Keith Kehlbeck



Photo by Julie Avery

Tom Irrer and Steve Stier greeting conference participants. Julie Avery and Vera Wiltse also staffed the MBPN booth.

Wright Barn Featured in McDonald's

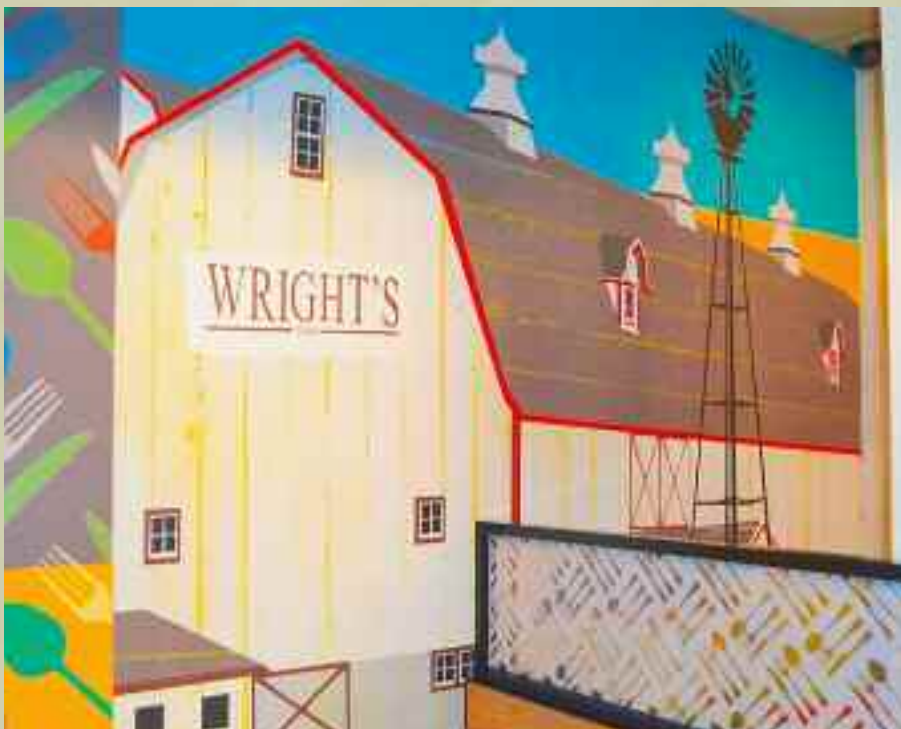


Photo by Jerry Damon

As you travel southwest of Lansing on I-69 and approach the small town of Pottersville and you look to the right, two icons come into view.

One icon is known worldwide, and you will recognize it as soon as you see the "Golden Arches." The McDonalds restaurant is owned by Renee and Chris Draves, who also own and operate other restaurants in the Lansing and Grand Ledge area. The second icon is the Wright barn, which was built in 1924 and that has become an area landmark in its own time. (Coincidentally, it also was the model for the MBPN logo.)

These two icons now have something in common. When the Draveses remodeled their business last year, they gave the restaurant a barn theme and décor. On the east wall, just inside the entrance, is a mural of the Wright barn, done by a talented local artist. The next time you pass that way and feel the urge for a Big Mac or a cup of coffee, stop in and have a look, and say thank you to the owners or their staff for keeping our rural heritage before the public.

—Dan Creyts

Granary Finds a New Home

In our last issue, we reported that the MBPN had a barn in Oakland Township, Oakland County that was disassembled and was being offered for sale. In October, barnwrights Tim Wiles and Steve Stier had supervised an MBPN crew in dismantling the timber frame barn, which was estimated to be over 100 years old and which had been used as a granary.

The MBPN wants to insure that the barns they remove and sell are definitely reconstructed and used by new owners who will take care of them into the future. We are pleased to report that Thomas and Lorelda Brubaker purchased the granary and are relocating the barn to a site approximately 45 minutes from the Brubaker home in Oakland Township. Lori Brubaker recently wrote, "We are excited about this project! Thank you for allowing us to give the granary a new home!"

Proceeds more than covered the costs related to the disassembly and added to the MBPN treasury for other special projects like this. Much of the thanks go to Janine and Chuck Saputo, who were the champions of this challenging and successful MBPN project from the start. This is, however, only the first part of the project, as the Brubakers have indicated that they want the MBPN to be involved in the reassembly and raising of the frame. Stay tuned for other special projects like this.

—Keith Kehlbeck and Janine Saputo



Photo by Janine Saputo



Proposed Legislation Threatens Michigan's Historic Districts

As reported in the Detroit Free Press and elsewhere, recent proposed legislation would threaten local historic districts in the state. The twin legislation, HB 5232 and SB 720, would sunset, or end, any historic districts in the state after 10 years, forcing residents and preservationists to apply anew every decade.

Renewing a district's standing would become much more difficult under the legislation; it would require not only a two-thirds approval of property owners in the district, but also a majority vote of the entire city in the next general election. Other restrictions would apply, as well. The goal of these bills is to make it harder to make, have and maintain historic districts across the state. Many believe that this will undermine efforts to save older buildings.

As participants in Michigan's historic preservation community, a number of MBPN activists have raised their voices in opposition to this legislation. The American Institute of

Architects of Michigan (AIAMI) has written in opposition to the bills, joining the Michigan Historic Preservation Network (MHPN). Other information about the legislation can be found on the MHPN's website Advocacy Alerts section, found online at: http://www.mhpn.org/?page_id=2914

We urge you to examine the issue and weigh in if you feel it appropriate. We recommend that you make your voice be heard by sending your thoughts to your state legislators as well as the Local Government Committee.

As the AIAMI notes, our history is precious, and much of that history is embodied by our architecture. Preservation efforts need to be supported, not weakened. Please take time to participate in this important dialogue.





Barn-raising inside the National Building Museum, circa 1984.

Photo by Gregory Dreicer

Throwback Thoughts: A Michigan Barn Comes to Washington (DC)

Janine Saputo recently found and forwarded a National Trust Preservation magazine article from 1994 that brought to mind a landmark occasion from that year.

Dave Ciolek—a Michigan barnwright at the time—dismantled, prepared and took a mid-Michigan barn off to Washington, DC to be a part of a major promotion for the “Barn Again!” program of the National Trust. The National Building Museum, historically known as the Pension Building, is a museum of “architecture, design, engineering, construction, and urban planning.” It was created as an act of Congress in 1980, and the museum hosts various temporary exhibits in galleries around its spacious Great Hall. A continuous series of temporary exhibitions—close to fifty have been mounted since the museum opened—have explored how buildings influence our lives and have invited visitors to think about how and why we build. In 1994, the “Barn Again!” exhibit explored the barn as an agriculture structure, a symbol of community and country life, and a monument in the American landscape.

As one might expect from the National Building Museum, the exhibition focused on the process of building rather than on the building as an object. So, naturally, a real barn raising in the Great Hall kicked off the exhibition. Participants gained an unforgettable understanding of the expertise, planning and teamwork in collaborative work.

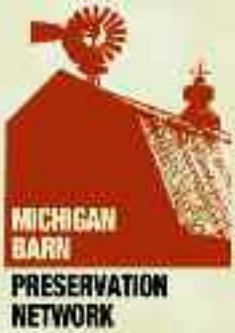
The barn itself had served the Spragg family in rural Michigan for 160 years. It was first used as a place to thrash

grain and store feed on the Spragg farm near Lansing, and was originally a three-bay, 44-foot long structure later extended by 16 feet to house mechanical threshers and reapers. The barn came into the possession of the museum courtesy of its last private owner, Caroline Spragg.

Through the Barn Again! program (sponsored by the National Trust and Successful Farming magazine), Spragg learned about the museum’s desire to obtain a barn. After it was dismantled on the Spragg farm, the barn arrived in Washington in pieces labeled for reassembly. Approximately 100 volunteers paid for the privilege of re-raising the barn on the carpeted floor of the museum. The chief barn-raiser was David Ciolek, a barn preservation specialist from Michigan. A contemporary article in the Washington Post noted that he “walked among the beams and ropes of the work in progress like a master builder. He had a wireless microphone attached to his lapel through which he coached the barn-raisers.” The 24-foot high “piece of raw Americana” was dwarfed by the gold pillars and the 159-foot ceiling of the Renaissance-style hall, but a Michigan barn had come to the nation’s capital.

The Midwest is, of course, very familiar with this community ritual, but Washington hadn’t seen its like since the early 1900s. Perhaps it was most appropriate that, after the barn-raising, there was a barn dance...East truly met Midwest in a way that celebrated a unique part of our collective history!

—Keith Kehlbeck



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www.mibarn.net

Share, reuse, recycle this newsletter

Communications Committee Continues Website Review

Several Communications Committee members recently met in East Lansing for a committee-level website review. As part of the discussion, we listened to a preliminary analysis by an MSU professor who uses real-life problems for his digital communications class and who might be interested in using our site as a graduate-level “digital design” assignment. We are also talking with a second professor.

The website review—intended to organize and refine our website—is an ongoing process, with the goal of making the website the best that it can be as an essential tool in the current “age of information.” Some positive changes and navigational improvements have already been made, and we welcome your comments as you go online and take a look:

- Is it easy to use/navigate?
- Can you find what you need?
- What is missing?
- How does it look?

Your observations and comments are very useful as we move forward to make this a key resource of MBPN. Stay tuned for future developments!

—Chuck Saputo

