

The Barn Post

Spring 2004

Published by the McHenry County Historical Barn Preservation Association

President's Message

Welcome to our Spring 2004 issue of "The Barn Post" quarterly newsletter designed to keep you informed on issues dealing with the preservation of historical barns in McHenry County.

We are in urgent need of your support as the barns of McHenry County are quickly disappearing. Please consider helping us spread the word to your neighbors, volunteering on some of our committees, or giving a donation to support the organization's work. We also urge you to participate in the publication of this newsletter by submitting your barn stories and photographs, and by letting us know what we can do to make this newsletter better.

Please join us for our upcoming events:

- Barns & Yarns Kick-off Celebration – May 6
- Annual Meeting – June 26
- Barns & Yarns Fall Celebration – October 9

Please note that there are a small number of historical barns left in McHenry County, and they are disappearing at an alarming rate. We have just a limited amount of time to preserve what remains of these great agricultural cathedrals, before they are gone forever. Let's not miss this opportunity to pass along our agricultural heritage for future generations to witness, understand, and cherish.

Very truly yours,
John Hammer

Round Barn Update

On April 24, 2004 President John Hammer (Architect) and Vice President Nick Chirikov (General Contractor) visited with Mr. and Mrs. Thomas O'Hearn to assess the current condition of the Round Barn. The cupola has fallen in and the structure is taking in unwanted precipitation through the opening in the roof. Temporary measures to stabilize the structure are needed immediately. A list of recommended stabilization measures will be prepared and will be available shortly.



Trout Valley Barn

The Featured Barn By Myrna Nelson

The Trout Valley barn was built in the early 1890's on land that was part of the Government "land grant" program. The barn is what is referred to as a "Plank-Truss" framed structure. The roof is a Dutch Gambrel style. The addition has steel columns and beams, with an English Gambrel roof. The original stone foundation was pargeed with cement in later years. The structure initially served as a dairy barn.

During the 1920's Mr. John D. Hertz, the owner of the Yellow Cab Company, bought this and other farms and called it all "Leona Farms" after his daughter. Show horses and polo ponies called the barn home. Two Kentucky Derby winners – Reigh Count (1928) and Count Fleet (1943) lived in another area of the complex. Most of the original buildings built or remodeled by Hertz, including this barn which was stuccoed to match the other buildings, are still maintained. Curtiss Candy Company, the next owner, named it Curtiss Farm and used it to

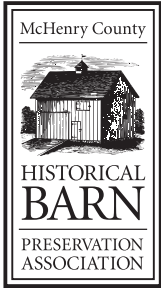
breed prized bulls. In 1953 the farm was sold to developers and became a private community, which was incorporated (1996) as the Village of Trout Valley.

The Trout Valley Barn is a historical barn still in active use today. The ground floor has stalls for horses owned by valley residents while the second floor is used for Trout Valley board meetings and as a community center. The third floor is storage space. The fourth floor, which is now empty, has a hay track on the ceiling. There are 4 cupolas that were in use during the Curtiss years though there were 10 originally. These appendages removed moisture from the barn. Ventilation shoots were built on barns after 1861. This barn was the lunch stop during our fall 2003 Barn Tour.

Additional information on this and other Trout Valley barn buildings is contained in "Loss of an Era", a book about Cary area barns written by Shirley Beene and Betty Freeman. The book is available for purchase (\$30) by contacting shirldon@mc.net and will also be on sale at the MCHBPA Annual Meeting.

Association Highlights

By John Hammer



The association has been very busy so far this year. The following are some past and upcoming projects that we have and will be working on for the year:

Past Activities:

- The Wisconsin Barn Workshop
- Annual meeting June 3, 2003
- Developed fund raising campaign (see back cover)
- Established project committees
- Conducted a successful Barn Tour
- Began publication of "The Barn Post"
- Conducted educational presentations
- Updated www.mchenrycountybarns.org

Ongoing & Upcoming:

- Working to access state grant funding
- Working with the McHenry County Preservation Commission to survey county barns
- Refining an "Activism" procedure for saving and preserving barns
- Developing a conservation easement to save the Round Barn
- Participating in Look at Local History Week celebration - Barns & Yarns - May 6, 2004
- Annual meeting 2004 in June
- Barn tours and workshops

If you are interested in volunteering, please let us know. We could always use the help. Our meetings are held on the last Wednesday of every month at 7:00 pm. For information, visit our site: www.mchenrycountybarns.org.

Look At Local History Week

A special committee was formed by McHenry County Historical Society and other historical preservation groups to encourage the general public to get involved and learn more about the history of McHenry County through activities to be held during national Historical Preservation Week which is May 2-8 this year. A number of organizations "jumped on the band wagon" and began planning events and activities. MCHBPA has been involved from the start and we hope this is just the beginning of an annual "Look at Local History" program that will be beneficial to everyone participating and gain more public awareness of the treasures to be found in all parts of our county. See the enclosed flyer for details of our presentation and how to get information on other planned events.

Ken Fiske

Know Your Board, By Myrna Nelson

Ken Fiske, our Secretary and Treasurer, has a background and life story that could fill the pages of our newsletter. His attorney/farmer father bought a 260 acre farm in McHenry County when Ken was about 13, leaving the south side Chicago farm that had been his parents. He went to college studying Agricultural Engineering.



Ken came up with an idea for a farm related TV show, "Out on the Farm," for NBC. The show ran for 26 weeks, then as segments on other shows. At NBC, Ken also met Darlene Sharp, daughter of long-time family friends. He won her heart. They settled down in a historic (1868) schoolhouse they had remodeled into a comfortable home.

When Ken's dad sold the farm, Ken began working for the National Safety Council in Chicago. His next career move was to a major agricultural chemical company as Director of Field Research, which also took him all over the country. The company developed a research farm in McHenry County in Hartland that is now part of the MCCD. Ken next became Director of the Natural Resource Service Center serving six counties. In 1971, Ken became Executive Director of the MCCD. Ken and his staff of 3 were very busy people indeed and the next 14 years flew by with Ken retiring from MCCD at 60.

Today, Ken operates a consulting practice serving both government and private clients. He is one of the founding members of the McHenry County Historical Barn Preservation Association and brings invaluable expertise to our group.



Concorde Centre – Location of May 6 Barns & Yarns Kick-off Celebration



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Barn Registration

By: Norm Remich

Register your barn and help document its place in the rural landscape of McHenry County.

Action is needed now, urban development fates more and more barns.

Your Barn Preservation Association cooperates with the McHenry County Historical Society in the registration program. We do the leg work, contacting, encouraging, and working with barn owners to help them in the registration process. The activity is free to participants

with an optional \$5 fee for a certificate of registration for framing.

In brief, the registration application covers age, dimensions, style and construction, past and current uses of the barn. Barn Preservation board members are ready to answer questions and help you with completing the application.

For more information, contact: Norm Remich at 815-338-2696 or by email RemichN@aol.com.



Barn Tour 2003 – Ringwood Village Hall formerly part of the Inman Farm.



This issue's featured Barn – Trout Valley Barn

Annual Meeting June 26 – Save the Date

Food, door prizes, and raffle gifts will add “frosting to the cake” at our Annual Meeting to be held in the Tinkler/McConnell barn, 11314 McConnell Road, Woodstock (featured barn – Winter issue) on Saturday, June 26. A speaker on a barn related topic will be part of this event, as will a special tour of the barn itself prior to the meeting activities. Full details and registration materials will be sent out to members several weeks in advance. Anyone wishing to assist on the Annual Meeting Committee can call Myrna Nelson at 847-639-3425.

Barns & Yarns Celebration

The McHenry County Historical Barn Preservation Association will be holding a Barns & Yarns Celebration event that will feature storyteller Jim May at the Concorde Centre barn. This event is part of a county wide “Look at Local History Week” that will run in conjunction with National Historic Preservation Week during May 2-8.

Date: Thursday, May 6, 2004

**Location: Concorde Centre,
Woodstock, Illinois**

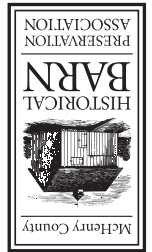
Country
Cooking –
Butterscotch
Apples



From “School and Home Cooking” © 1920.

5 apples
2/3 cup brown sugar
1 cup water
2/3 cup milk
1 tbsp corn starch
1/8 tsp salt
1 tbsp butter
1 tsp vanilla

Wash, core and slice apples. Put sugar and water into pan and heat. When syrup boils, add apples. Cover and boil gently till apples are tender. Remove apples and place in serving dish. In another pan, mix the milk and corn starch thoroughly. Stir and cook till it boils, then add it to the syrup and boil for a few minutes. Add salt, butter and vanilla. Stir and then pour sauce over apples. Serve hot or cold for a dessert.



McHenry County Historical Barn
 Preservation Association
 Post Office Box 1143
 Woodstock, Illinois 60098
 www.mchenrycountybarns.org

“LOOK AT LOCAL HISTORY” WEEK: MAY 2-8 Barns & Yarns Celebration (More details inside)

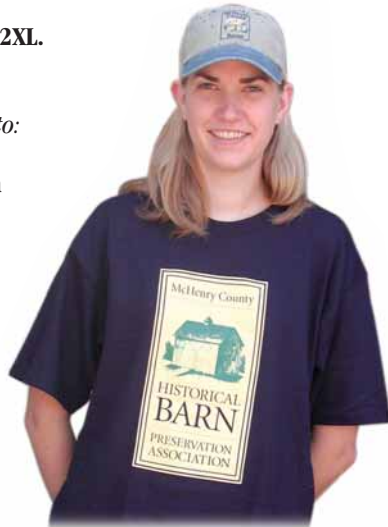
Get Barn Gear Here!

- Navy Blue T-Shirt _____ \$18.00
- Khaki Cap _____ \$12.00
- T-Shirt & Cap _____ \$25.00
- Barn Poster _____ \$10.00
- Book “Loss of an Era” by Shirley Beene & Betty Freeman
 (Trout Valley/Cary Barns) _____ \$35.00

Specify shirt size S, M, L, XL or 2XL.
 Include \$5.00 per item for S & H.

Attach check payable to and mail to:

**McHenry County Historical Barn
 Preservation Association**
 Post Office Box 1143
 Woodstock, Illinois 60098



Editorial Policy

We welcome articles, letters, and pictures that reflect the Association’s commitment to preserving the county’s historical barns. We reserve the right to edit material. Please note submissions will not be returned.

Forward all material to:
jhammer@mchenrycountybarns.org

Or mail to:
**McHenry County Historical Barn
 Preservation Association**
 Post Office Box 1143
 Woodstock, Illinois 60098

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