

The Barn Post

Winter 2003/2004

Published by the McHenry County Historical Barn Preservation Association

President's Message

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

We 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.

The "featured barn" in each edition will help you get to know some of the historic barns in the county, some of which we will be working to preserve. Please note that there are just 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 is left 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.

Round Barn Update

The McHenry County Historical Barn Preservation Association continues to work with owner's Mr. & Mrs. Thomas O'Hearn to develop a conservation easement that will make it possible for the old relic to be preserved. We are also seeking to have it designated Landmark Status, in order to obtain state grant funding to aid in its preservation.



Very truly yours,
John Hammer



The Tinkler / McConnell Barn

The Featured Barn By Myrna Nelson

The McHenry County Historical Barn Preservation Association's 2003 annual meeting was held near Woodstock in the historic McConnell barn. The McConnell family was among the earliest settlers in McHenry County, arriving in the area now known as Woodstock in the middle of the nineteenth century. Peter Tinkler (a McHenry County Historical Barn Preservation Association board director) and his wife Kathy now own the barn.

The barn was built in 1907 to function as a dairy barn. As one barn preservation expert noted, the McConnell barn was built as a "bragging barn" for its time. Overbuilt by contemporary standards, the barn has the unique feature of a slate roof, the only example known in McHenry County. This barn is a remarkable building, built during the "milled post and beam barn era".

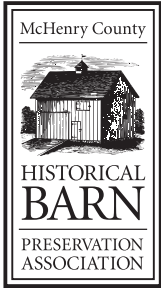
The barn is approximately one hundred feet long and forty feet wide. It is what is

known as a "Bank Barn", built into the bank of a hill with the hand laid stone foundation fully exposed to the north. Many of the original features of the barn remain including the central double-planked floor, the mow track, the granaries and hay chutes, and the summer and winter doors. This preservation is no surprise since the barn remained in use until the early 1990's. Over the years modern upgrades were added, such as the wooden stanchions were replaced with metal ones, a concrete floor was poured to replace the dirt floor, and a plumbing and vacuum systems was installed, but the original character of the barn remains.

This was an active and important center of work for the McConnell family for generations. The Tinkler Family now enjoys sharing this barn, a reminder of our agricultural heritage, with friends and family.

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 - Yarns & Barns - 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.

Barn Tour 2003

On October 4, 2003, the McHenry County Historical Barn Preservation Association in conjunction with the McHenry County College held an all day barn tour of 10 barns on the southeastern part of the county. The tour was a complete success as noted by many of the tour participants. The Association plans to work with McHenry County College again to sponsor another tour this fall. More details will follow in upcoming newsletters.



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



Barn Tour 2003 - Wallace Barn owned by Cary Park District and part of the Sands Nature Preserve

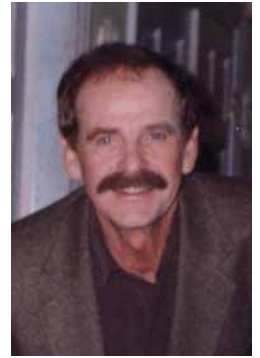


Barn Tour 2003 - Sands Barn - privately owned

Dean Rowe

Know Your Board, By Myrna Nelson

Dean Rowe has been involved in television and video production for many years. During his 15 years with NBC, he directed the 6 and 10 p.m. news at Channel 5 in Chicago. In addition, he directed a daily network news program and specialized in producing major events. He then joined Metromedia in Boston as producer /director of Healthbeat, a nationally syndicated television series.



*Dean formed Front Row Productions after returning to McHenry County. He recently completed several projects including one of great local interest on the 1952 Hebron basketball team, *Becoming Giants*, which features a shot taken inside his own barn.*

Dean grew up in Indianapolis and came to Chicago to attend Columbia College to pursue studies in media production and direction. His interest in farming, barns, and rural preservation has always been a part of his life. His passion grew even more intense as he jogged along the country roads near his home and watched development as it engulfed the McHenry County countryside.

Dean and his wife Joan live in the Hebron area on property that includes a 1920's vintage farmhouse and a large barn.



Book Review

By: Norm Remick

'Loss of an Era' Documents History of Cary Area Barns

Approximately 70 barns are described in the 200-page hard-bound book, with only 23 still standing. Few are actively used in farm work.

"Loss of an Era" is peppered with people profiles, giving the story human interest a plenty. This book traces the history of barns from the Civil War to today.

Shirley Beene, New Jersey native and long time resident of Trout Valley, and Betty Freeman, Cary Village Historian, co-authored the book. Betty, formerly of Chicago, has been collecting material for the book for 20 years. The twosome worked two years putting the book together. Recounting their book writing adventures,

the duo told anecdotes in their presentation before the association's 2003 annual meeting in late June. "Leaving our town a legacy" was the driving force behind the book, emphasized both Betty and Shirley.

The book details the people, types of farms, the buildings, and what animals were raised. Many farms started in the 1840's were acquired through land grants selling for about \$1.25 an acre.

One farm, the John D. Hertz estate, became Trout Valley. The Hertz barn has been home to show and polo ponies and two Kentucky Derby winners.

The book contributed to the itinerary for the tour of Eastern McHenry County barns held this past October. The book may be purchased through MCHBPA for \$40.

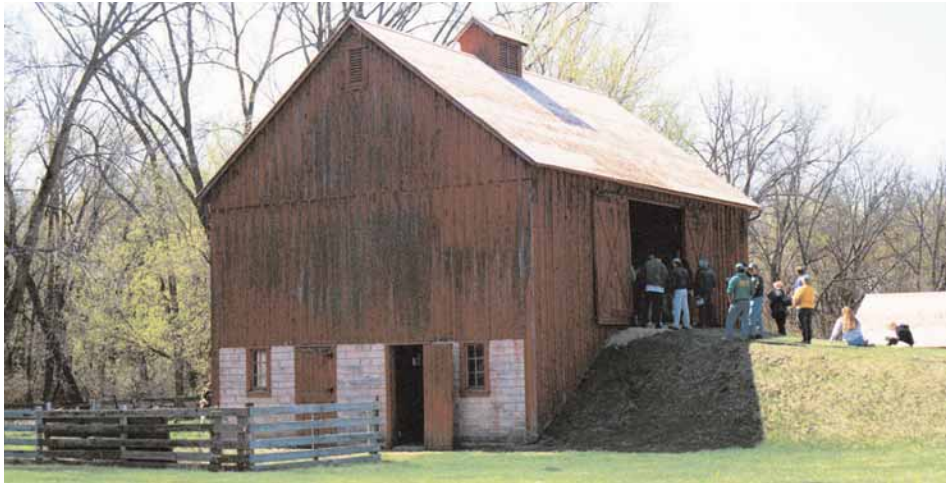
Barns & Yarns Celebration

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.

Further details of the event will follow in our spring edition of "The Barn Post".

Date: Thursday, May 6, 2004

Location: Concorde Centre, Woodstock, Illinois



Wisconsin Workshop 2003 – Stonefield Museum – Cassville, Wisconsin



The Wisconsin Workshop at the Stonefield Museum

Our organization's participation at The Wisconsin Barn Workshop held during April, 2003 at the Stonefield Museum in Cassville, Wisconsin was one of the highlights of the year.

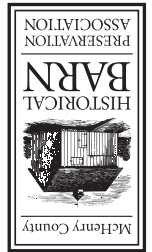
Country Cooking – Chicken With Dumplings



From: *The Household Searchlight Recipe Book*

Select a plump chicken. Dress. Cut in pieces. Place in saucepan. Cover with boiling water. Add 1 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Cover. Simmer slowly until chicken is tender. Prepare dumpling dough.

Dumplings: 2 cups flour, 4 teaspoons baking powder mix, 1 teaspoon salt, 2 tablespoons shortening, milk. Sift flour, measure and sift with salt and baking powder. Cut in shortening with 2 spatulas. Add milk until a thick drop batter is obtained. Drop by teaspoonfuls into boiling broth. Cover. Boil 12 minutes. Serve at once.



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

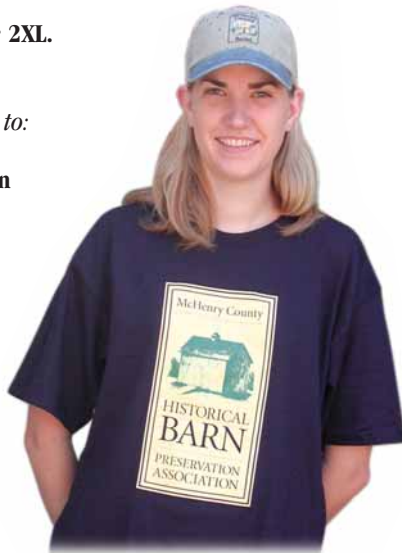
Get Barn Gear Here!

- Navy Blue T-Shirt _____ \$18.00
- Khaki Cap _____ \$12.00
- T-Shirt & Cap _____ \$25.00
- Barn Poster _____ \$5.00
- Book “End of an Era” (Trout Valley/Cary Barns) _____ \$40.00

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:
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