

HOOSIER BARN

C H R O N I C L E

Preserving Indiana's Heritage, One Barn at a Time

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**INDIANA BARN
FOUNDATION**

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Agritourism and Alpacas at Heritage Farm

As visitors approach from the west on Howard County Road 400, they have no doubt that they have arrived at Heritage Farm Alpacas & Events. The big red English style gambrel-roofed barn with a brown alpaca designed into the shingles beckons them to investigate the real alpaca treasures inside. The barn is one of three historic structures on the farm, the others being a federal style brick farmhouse and a 1850's hand-hewn log cabin.

The main barn at Heritage Farm was built in 1911 by a local barn builder named Otho Rodkey. The 40' x 60' barn is primarily constructed of 10 x 10 hand-hewn poplar timbers that were recycled from an even older dismantled barn which was most likely the original barn on the property. One of the massive timbers that supports the rafters spans the entire 60' length of the barn without a splice!

The farm is currently owned by Tim and Beth Sheets of rural Flora, Indiana. Tim has always had a fondness for barns. He grew up on a farm in northern Indiana and had great memories of playing in the old barn on his parents' farm at an early age. Many hay forts and elaborate tunnel systems were constructed in that barn. The love of barns never left him into his adult years and when he and Beth had an

continued

Agritourism and Alpacas at Heritage Farm *continued*

opportunity to buy her parents' farm they didn't hesitate.

When Beth's parents, Bob and Nelda Lovelace, bought the farm nearly 60 years ago, the old brick house was the last structure Bob inspected. According to Beth, "My dad was much more interested in the condition of the barn for housing his prized Hereford cattle than the roof over his own head." The barn was perfect for his needs and for many years it housed the cattle and stored the hay for winter feeding in the massive loft.

Sadly, many legacy barns today are not deemed suitable for modern agriculture. Most livestock are now housed in modern facilities customized for the breed and today's farm equipment is too large to store in most of these structures without major modifications. Thus, barn owners may find it difficult to justify maintaining and paying taxes on a barn they cannot use. But the barn at Heritage Farm serves as the center of their alpaca business. The relatively open interior allows the owners to use temporary panels to divide off areas for alpacas that are grouped by age, gestational status and sex. Because of the alpaca's small stature, they can house up to 70 animals in the barn. One of the features that the alpacas really appreciate are the large wagon doors on the east and west sides of the barn which are opened in the summer allowing a cooling breeze to flow through the nave. The nave is the open center area or aisle of the barn between the wagon doors. The area derives its name from the Latin word "navis," meaning "ship" as in the English word "navy." The reason for this is that when you stand in the nave and



Tim and Beth Sheets, owners of Heritage Farm

look upward to the underside of the barn roof, it looks like the interior of a wooden boat with its frames (roof rafters) and planks (roof purlin boards). The 16' wide nave once was where wagon loads of harvested hay were pulled into the barn to be unloaded by the hay forks on the overhead trolley system. It now serves as a shearing "room" where we harvest the fleece from the alpacas each spring.

Moisture is the main enemy of legacy barns and in 2003 the Sheets invested in a new roof to protect the structure from the elements. They opted for an interlocking diamond-shaped, asphalt shingle. The shape of this shingle allows designs to be incorporated into the installation. They hired an Indiana roofer that has done many of the art-roof barns around the Midwest. Tim designed the roof on diamond-shaped graph paper and created a stylized suri alpaca using

the diamond-shaped shingles to give the impression of twisted suri locks. The other side of the roof is an "H" superimposed on top of an "F" for Heritage Farm. Tim states, "It was fun designing the roof and the artsy shingles definitely add a unique element to the barn and make it stand out among others in the area."

Indiana celebrated its 200th anniversary as the 19th state in 2016. A contest was launched by the Bicentennial Committee to honor Indiana's rural heritage and its future by recognizing barns. Any Indiana barn that was built prior to 1950 was eligible. The Sheets' submitted an entry along with over 200 others. The entries that best celebrated Indiana's classic barns and their impact on the economy and history were considered. From those entries, 10 were selected as examples possessing architectural and historic features,



aesthetics, character and condition, geographic distribution and construction demonstrating Indiana's best. The Sheets' barn was selected among the top ten. Beth reflects, "We were really quite surprised that our barn was selected as a top-ten barn. I know my dad would be quite proud that the barn he so deeply loved not only survives but is being used for livestock today."

Their farm was honored again in 2017 as the recipient of the John Arnold Award for Rural Preservation given by the Indiana Landmarks Foundation. Criteria for this award dictate that farm buildings be utilized in an active farming operation and all buildings, including the house, possess a high level of historic integrity and retain character-defining features. The Sheets farm certainly meets these criteria.

Tim discovered the Indiana Barn Foundation about six years ago and knew it was an organization he wanted to be involved with. He identified with its mission of preserving Indiana's heritage barns and he wanted to contribute to that mission. He currently serves as treasurer on the board of directors and also uses his website development and computer skills to help the organization accomplish its mission. He gets great satisfaction in creating public awareness of the historical significance of these rural landmarks and in helping preserve them for future generations.

Because of the curiosity of seeing and interacting with alpacas and interest in the historic structures of the farm, Heritage Farm has become an agritourism destination. Several years ago, the Sheets opened the farm to the public. They began hosting weddings and allowing overnight stays in the vintage log cabin. Their accommodations soon expanded to tent camping, overnight stays in a modern farmhouse and RV parking on the property. According to Tim, "We want to share what we have so richly been blessed with. God has given us a wonderful opportunity to be caretakers of a very special place that represents our heritage of faith, family, and working the land. We want others to experience the same thing."

BOOK AN OVERNIGHT STAY

For more information about Heritage Farm and to book an overnight stay, view their website at ourheritagefarm.com

VIDEO TOUR

For more information about the barn, you can view Tim giving a video tour of the barn here: <https://youtu.be/QZtfXJOEIN8>



Crib Barns on the Indiana Landscape

Crib barns are some of the earliest agricultural outbuildings built in the United States and became the basis for the development of other barn types. These barns were commonly built in the Upland South by settlers of German and British descent taking advantage of the plentiful timber in the region. The simplest and earliest crib barns were rectangular "pens" built of horizontal hewn logs, joined with v-notches and without chinking, covered by a simple gable roof, with a single door in the gable end. These buildings were small, usually between eight and twelve feet, with the shorter ends under the gables. Single crib barns were most commonly used to store ear corn but could also be used as granaries or stables.

The single crib barn, with its square plan and gable roof was easily enlarged with shed roof lean-tos. Double-crib barns were created by building two cribs of similar or different sizes, separated by a breezeway under a single roof. Even larger examples connected three or more cribs of the same or different sizes under a single roof with breezeways and aisles. Shed roof additions were commonly added for more storage, and were often frame, not log, construction. In some examples, there is a second level above the pens. When a loft or second level is present, the siding of these spaces is often more weathertight than the construction of the cribs.

An even larger variation of the crib barn is the four-crib barn which satisfied storage needs for growing farms. These barns feature four log cribs, one at each corner of a single roof, separated by aisles. The type continued to evolve and eventually the open side aisles were closed off, creating a solid row of cribs on either side of a central aisle. This version of the crib barn is known as a transverse crib barn.

Crib barns are rarely found today. They were often expanded or replaced as farms grew, however in areas where agriculture remained on a subsistence scale and larger buildings were either not needed or not feasible, they are more likely to remain. The migration patterns into Indiana from the Upland South mean most remaining crib barns are now found in the southern half of the state.



The above text is excerpted from the newly published *Indiana Heritage Barns: Their History, Uses, and Preservation*. Visit www.indianabarns.org for a PDF version or a list of locations with hard copies available.

LETTER FROM THE

President of the Indiana Barn Foundation

As we close out 2022, I want to **THANK YOU** for being a member of the Indiana Barn Foundation. It has been a great year for IBF membership, we have increased our membership by nearly 40% this year. It is critical that we continue to grow so that we can do more to fulfill our mission to "Support the preservation of historic Indiana barns." We are the only organization in Indiana with this goal.

We have continued distribution of the popular Indiana's Heritage Barns booklets that we introduced last year. As concerns related to the pandemic have begun to subside, we have been able to participate in a few more meetings. Requests for technical assistance visits to evaluate barns and help owners consider alternatives have grown dramatically. Applications for IBF barn repair grants also shot way up this year. Duncan Campbell continues to lead our technical assistance committee and he now has a team to help with barn evaluations and recommendations. The large number of grant requests did make the work very difficult for the grants committee, but it showed increasing awareness of IBF and historic barns. Due to the number of grant requests, the board decided to award four grants

instead of the usual two. Our limited funds make this decision hard but we hope to have the funds to be able to consider that again for 2023.

Our annual meeting was July 16 in Morgan County. Dr. Darrin Rubino was our speaker and explained dendrochronology, the study of tree rings. Dr. Rubino is an expert in using tree rings to date wood. After lunch we visited Robyn and Jason Thompson's farm to learn about their barns and watch Dr. Rubino take wood samples.

Another very successful IBF Barn Tour was held on September 24 in Daviess County. The tour featured the Singleton Round Barn, but we also got to visit several other beautiful barns in the area. To make the weekend even more special, we had our first ever IBF Barn Dinner Fundraiser in the Singleton Round Barn, on September 23. The wonderful dinner was highlighted by John Hanou, author of two books about round barns, speaking about this unique type of structure. Special thanks to Cindy and Tony Barber, as well as Tommy Kleckner, for doing so much work to make that a fantastic weekend.

I want to give thanks to the entire IBF Board; everyone works hard to



KENT YEAGER
FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER AND
PRESIDENT OF THE INDIANA BARN FOUNDATION

support barn preservation. It takes a lot of volunteer work to keep IBF moving forward. We need more people actively involved. In an effort to facilitate more involvement, we hope to establish an active county representative program in the coming year. If you are interested in being more actively involved in barn preservation, please contact me through the IBF website or kentyeager@gmail.com.

Supporting the preservation of historic Indiana barns is a huge task. You are essential to the success of IBF. Your time, talent and treasure are critical to our ability to preserve barns. Please help by telling others about IBF, encourage family and friends to join, volunteer and donate.

Thank you,
Kent

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

Indiana Barn Foundation's Preservation Grant

The Indiana Barn Foundation understands that one of the most challenging aspects about owning a historic barn can be the cost of repairs and maintenance, especially for major restoration projects. Since 2018, IBF has been helping owners with these challenges through our Preservation Grant Fund. The fund and its grant program are intended to give owners financial assistance to start a project, keep up their momentum as they tackle complex restoration problems, or approach the finish line of a project in order to preserve Indiana's remaining historic barns.

IBF is happy to announce that we are now accepting applications for the 2023 Barn Preservation Grant. Indiana barn owners can apply for a matching grant

up to \$2,500 to complete repairs on their historic barns. Qualifying barns must be located in Indiana, have been originally constructed for agricultural use, be at least 50 years old, retain their historic character and materials, and be in need of substantial repairs. The grant award amount must be matched by the owner's own funds, additional grants or loans, or in-kind value. This is a competitive grant program, and the applications are evaluated by a committee and the final grant awards are voted on by the board of directors. A total of \$5,000 is awarded each grant cycle.

More information about eligible projects, the application and instructions, and past grant winners can be found on the IBF website at <https://www.indianabarns.org/grants>. The

application can be completed entirely online, or copies of the form can be downloaded and submitted via regular mail. If you are interested in applying for the 2023 grant cycle, completed applications are due by January 31, 2023. If you have questions about the grant program or the application after reading the instructions online, please contact IBF.

2023

GRANT APPLICATION

DEADLINE

JANUARY 31, 2023

Apply at indianabarns.org

Preservation Standards

One of the most frequent questions barn owners ask, either via our website or in person at a site visit, pertains to the standard of repair required by the Indiana Barn Foundation. Often the question comes from a grant applicant who wants to convey construction guidance to a contractor or estimator, but it also arises in response to our repair recommendations as we investigate a barn's condition.

Let me say first that the Barn Foundation does not endorse a specific repair treatment when approaching the repair/maintenance of heritage barns. That doesn't mean that we don't care about the quality of repairs, or that we won't assist owners in making appropriate decisions. But making those decisions can be complex, and one approach does not always satisfy an owner's goals or the barn's needs.

The National Park Service, the primary federal agency for historic preservation guidance, has established several standards to guide work on historic buildings, standards that address distinct treatment methods (nps.gov). The most widespread treatments are preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction, and each has its own set of standards. Of these, preservation and rehabilitation are the most common treatments, but it is helpful to understand the distinctions.

PRESERVATION

Preservation is the process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, focuses on the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction.

Preservation is the appropriate treatment when the objective is to retain the building as it currently exists — its form, features, and materials. Both the original historic materials and features will be preserved, as well as later changes and additions. The emphasis is to protect, maintain, and repair the

building and its parts, while replacement is minimized. This process recognizes the significance of the building's passage through time, and works to preserve both form and materials.

REHABILITATION

Rehabilitation refers to the process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features that convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

In Rehabilitation, historic building materials and character-defining features are protected and maintained as they are in the treatment Preservation. However, greater latitude is given to replace extensively deteriorated, damaged, or missing features using either the same material or compatible substitute materials.

RESTORATION

Restoration refers to the process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the chosen restoration period.

Restoration addresses the goal to make the building appear as it did at a particular — and at its most significant — time in its history. This requires identifying the materials and features from the restoration period. Once identified, they should be maintained, protected, repaired, and replaced, when necessary. Restoration usually includes the removal of features from other periods. Missing features from the restoration period should be recreated with either the same or compatible substitute materials, but only when documented, and never from conjecture.

RECONSTRUCTION

Reconstruction is the process of depicting, with new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.



DUNCAN CAMPBELL
FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER OF
INDIANA BARN FOUNDATION

Reconstruction is undertaken when the goal is to recreate a non-surviving building using new materials when few or no visible historic materials remain. Like restoration, reconstruction involves recreating a historic building which appears as it did at a particular — and at its most significant — time in its history. Reconstructing a historic building should only be considered when there is accurate documentation on which to base it.

Upcoming ASK IBF articles will further consider the four treatment standards as they apply to barn repairs and maintenance.



**FOLLOW-UP
QUESTIONS?**

Submit to
info@indianabarns.org



INDIANA BARN FOUNDATION

INDIANA BARN FOUNDATION

1201 Central Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46202

EMAIL: info@indianabarns.org

WEB: www.indianabarns.org

PROUD AFFILIATE OF



INDIANA LANDMARKS

**GET
INVOLVED**
WITH IBF

Seeking County Representatives

If you are interested in historic barns and want to help sustain them in your area, we are actively seeking county representatives and board members to support Indiana Barn Foundation's mission of supporting the preservation of historic Indiana barns.

Email info@indianabarns.org, if interested in this volunteer opportunity.

HOW TO SUPPORT IBF FINANCIALLY

IBF DONATIONS

- Accepted on our website at www.indianabarns.org/donate, or
- Send a check to: Indiana Barn Foundation
1201 Central Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46202

MAURI WILLIAMSON LEGACY ENDOWMENT

- www.indianabarns.org/endowment, or
- Send a check to: CICF, Attn: Operations
615 Alabama St., Suite 300
Indianapolis, IN 46204-1498

Please note IBF#4558 in check memo

**CONNECT
WITH US**



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www.indianabarns.org