



HOOSIER BARN CHRONICLE

Vol. 6, No. 2

A Publication of Indiana Barn Foundation

Spring, 2019

One Barn At A Time

by Duncan Campbell

Barn site visits are one of the most useful, and for me, most gratifying services that the Indiana Barn Foundation offers. What could be better for a barn lover like me than driving the back roads of Indiana and visiting with devoted barn owners to discuss the future prospects of their historic barns? And for owners, what could be better than free assistance from sympathetic barn enthusiasts who care about their barn as much as they do? Meeting owners, looking at barns, and talking about maintenance and repair strategies, as well as sharing a mutual interest in barn history and the importance of barn preservation is always enjoyable, and well worth the effort.

If possible, my wife, Cathy, accompanies me on these mini road trips, which makes the travel time that much more enjoyable, and allows us to share the experience of meeting new people and seeing new old barns. We have met young couples who are fresh to rural life, fifth generation farm owners who are considering converting great-granddad's barn into a retirement home, seniors with one foot in their own rural past and another in their grown children's future, working farmers striving to keep the family barn in use, suburban families who just



happen to own a remnant barn in a new subdivision, and middle age folks who inherited an uncle's land and barn, and want to do the right thing to save the barn, even though they haven't a clue where to begin. Their barns tie these owners into a diverse and passionate group of barn protectors, and if they don't always know where to begin, well, that's where we can help.

The Foundation has been making site visits available for the past three years,

but business didn't really get brisk until last year when we conducted approximately 30 visits. I usually cover the southern half of the state, as well as venturing into the Indianapolis region when necessary, and Kurt Garner and Mac Williams cover the northern counties. The best way to arrange a visit is through our

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web site, www.indianabarns.org. Your request will be picked up and directed to one of us, and we are usually able to respond by email within a few days. During that exchange we will ask your location, estimate the mileage, determine who is best able to make the visit, and schedule a time convenient for you. Although we do not charge an inspection fee, we do ask that you pay our mileage costs, which are estimated at a rate of \$.58 per mile.

We can typically schedule a visit within a few weeks of receiving the request, and if possible will try to arrange another visit or two in your area for the same day. This spreads travel costs among owners, and makes the most of our time on the road.

If a visit cannot be arranged for some reason, we are happy to review pictures you send us of your barn. Though not as good as a hands-on visit, we can usually see enough detail in the photos to advise on the barn's condition, and make recommendations for repair. Good shots of each side of the barn, as well as pictures of areas of concern on both the interior and exterior are most helpful.

A typical visit involves a close look at the barn, of course, and a considered discussion with the owners about how they intend to use and preserve the structure. We analyze the barn's physical condition and can usually recommend a prioritized strategy for repair and maintenance. We understand that such repairs can be expensive, so we will usually emphasize preventive maintenance first, and the fact that just about any carpenter worth his/her salt can put a barn back in shape. Keep the water out, above all. We also like to help owners understand the type of barn they own, its style and cultural derivation, and its approximate age. In examining the construction details, and passing them along to the owner—allowing them to appreciate the nuances—we can enable a better understanding of the history and structural purpose of the building, and hopefully engender some additional pride of ownership.

I recently received a note from a man whose barn I had visited a few days earlier. He had held some doubt about whether his family's 100-year-old barn was worth saving. Its condition was pretty good—savable, but there were rough areas, some blameless neglect as one generation passed and another took over, and clearly a lot of work ahead if the barn was to live on. We had a good visit, liked one another, and shared many laughs as we related stories about our respective families and their foibles. When Cathy and I left for home, I thought about his challenge. He and his wife worked full time; he didn't live at the site; the original farmhouse was gone, and most of the land was leased; and he had little real use for the barn itself, although the farmstead was clearly important to him—he had planted fruit trees, some grapevines, and still used a small shop. His situation was common to many barn owners who find themselves with a historic barn in the wake of a fading way of life. It was difficult to know what he could or would choose to do. Here's his note:

"Just wanted to thank you for coming to look at my family barn. Appreciate your experience and the information. We will now move forward to restore the barn. Again, my thanks. Regards, (his name)"

One barn at a time.



The enduring legacy of Rosehill Farm

Story by Danielle Bachant-Bell

Farming isn't as common as it once was nor are the family farms themselves. In comparison to 150 or even 100 years ago, if a family farm still exists likely the acreage has been reduced and

many of the buildings eliminated. That is why Rosehill Farm in Lawrence County near Mitchell is a regional treasure.

Designated a Hoosier Homestead, the 670-acre farm began with the first 160-acre purchase in 1816 by the John and Sarah Connelly family from Wilkes County, North Carolina. Their great granddaughter, Susan Adelia Connelly, married Daniel Webster Sherwood in 1876. After four generations of Connelly ownership the Sherwoods received the property and continued the farming legacy.

Between 1877 and 1892, the Sherwoods had five sons. After childhoods on the farm their sons attended college and four of them went on to careers elsewhere.

Noble became president of

Georgetown College, John Carle served as a state senator, Walter Clarence became a physician in Mitchell, and Benjamin Harrison owned the first car dealership and repair shop in Mitchell.

Their youngest, Hollace Chase, married Dorothy Bryant in 1922, and the couple inherited the majority of the farm. In addition to farming, Hollace was a teacher and the first principal of Burris School in Mitchell. Two of Hollace and Dorothy's four sons later became the farm's owners

and operators. The farming legacy is continued by their grandchildren.

Over the years various family members have called the farm home. The most recent occupant of the house has been Dottie Sherwood, the wife of Hollace and Dorothy's son, Edward. Her son, Brian Sherwood, and his wife, live next door in a 1950s-era home constructed by his uncle and aunt, Hollace Dan and Ila Sherwood. Brian, a retired airline mechanic, is a natural at maintaining the farm equipment.

Shortly after Daniel and Susan Sherwood's marriage, the original farmhouse burned. While



Daniel and Susan Sherwood, their sons, and likely her mother, Charity, in the front yard of their home, c.1898.

using the c.1865 English threshing barn for shelter the couple constructed the current center gable, Queen Anne-style I-house around 1880. In the 1920s, it was expanded slightly with additional second floor bedrooms and a bathroom, and a large second floor sleeping porch.

The front porch was also updated to the fashionable style of the time, regionally known as Free Classic. It blends Classical elements with the Arts and Crafts style. Limestone columns on brick piers replaced the elaborate Queen Anne and

Italianate style wood elements.

Behind the house is the smokehouse, two chicken houses, and a sassafras log play house built for the four Sherwood boys. It sits at the edge of the farm's approximately 150 acres of Classified Forest.

At the driveway is the 1930s-era garage and across the road sits the granary, still with a scale for measuring the grain. Dorothy Sherwood called it the garner, which is an old English word that means 'to gather into storage.'

Farming was obviously a prosperous undertaking for Daniel and Susan Sherwood because in the late 1880s, they constructed a second large barn. The banked English threshing barn with 1950s-era milking parlor and equipment shed additions was named an Indiana Bicentennial



The Sherwood family in front of their newer, larger barn, c.1898.

her series in which she captured the image of two barns from each of Indiana's 92 counties.

Not far from the barns at the top of a rise is the Connelly family cemetery. The oldest burial dates to 1824.

Today the barns provide support for the farm where corn, soybeans, wheat, cattle and timber



Rosehill Farm, c.1898. The wood shed/summer kitchen (no longer standing) is to the left of the house and the newer barn is to the right of the house in the background.

Barn in 2016, the same year it received a new roof following a wind storm. The barn was also painted by IBF board member, Gwen Gutwein, as part of



The Sherwood family home today.



The c.1885 "big barn" as the family calls it. The low 1950s milking parlor is visible on the left below the barn's banked entrance. The 1950s equipment shed addition is the low-pitched gable roof on the right. A concrete stave silo is behind the barn. The c.1885 "big barn" as the family calls it. The low 1950s milking parlor is visible on the left below the barn's banked entrance. The 1950s equipment shed addition is the low-pitched gable roof on the right. A concrete stave silo is behind the barn.

make up the farm products. Over twenty-five years ago the Sherwood family started the Bryantville Hunger Relief Project, using the older barn for the bagging of high protein corn supplied to mission groups at home and abroad. The project continues annually.

Fall Barn Tour Coming this September!

Each year since 2014, IBF has hosted tours of heritage barns, where thousands of people have had the chance to get up close and personal with some of the state's most impressive barns. We have intentionally held the tours in different regions of the state, allowing attendees to learn about the different cultural and geographical influences on the styles of barns in each region.

This year's barn tour will be held in northwest Indiana's LaPorte County on September 28th, 2019. The barns will be within a convenient driving distance to each other, and you'll learn about the histories and architectures from knowledgeable guides, and have the opportunity to meet the owners.

A few of the barns on the tour include the the Door Prairie Barn, a nine-sided barn built in 1876-77

to house Marion Ridgway's race horses. The long-time owner has preserved this LaPorte gateway landmark for decades. The Dinwiddie Barn is an early English barn constructed in 1855 that has been recently restored. Also included will be the LaPorte County Home Barn, an area landmark that was constructed for the county's "poor farm" dairy operation. A citizens' group restored the barn and silo in 2017. Another recently restored barn on the tour is an English barn built in 1917 with a concrete stave silo near the barn. James Forrester, a native of Ireland, built the house in 1858 and his heirs later constructed the barn.

Tell your friends and family to make their calendars now for this exciting fall barn tour.

2019 Annual Barn Forum

Retreat with the Indiana Barn Foundation to beautiful and serene Oakwood Retreat Center in Selma, Delaware County, for our annual meeting and forum on Saturday, July 20, 2019, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Get inspired to help save Indiana's barns through engaging speakers, updates on current programs, and details on upcoming events. We promise it will be an enjoyable day!

Attendees will also enjoy a wonderful lunch prepared onsite, visit the two barns on the property, and can take in the 40 acres of diverse habitats and wildlife while walking through the gardens or hiking the prairie, woodland, and wetland trails. Overnight accommodations with meals are also available at \$50 per night.



Watch your email or visit the Indiana Barn Foundation's website at www.indianabarns.org for Forum program details and to register. For more information about Oakwood Retreat Center and to reserve overnight accommodations, visit www.discoveroakwood.org. If you do not have computer/internet access, please call IBF board member, Danielle

Bachant-Bell, at (812) 336-6141 to receive registration information by mail.



Share Your Passion

Indiana Barn Foundation is Seeking Barn Enthusiasts

- IF you are interested in barn preservation...
- IF you enjoy meeting and working with committed, diverse and interesting people...
- IF you desire to share your talents building a future for our historic barns...

Consider joining the Indiana Barn Foundation board of directors or even participating in one of our planning committees. We all have some degree of passion, talents and gifts. How can your talents best be used to help IBF achieve our mission of saving

Indiana barns? We do best when we have input from all our members. Could you help by writing articles for the IBF newsletter or press releases? Would you like to help plan barn tours or workshops? Or perhaps you have experience fundraising and would like to get involved in raising barn grant money?

We will be taking nominations for new members of the board of directors and would love to hear from you if you or someone you know would like to be considered. Contact Gwen Gutwein at gwengutwein@gmail.com or Mac Williams at mwilliams@inverde.net.

Thank you!

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