

HOOSIER BARN

C H R O N I C L E

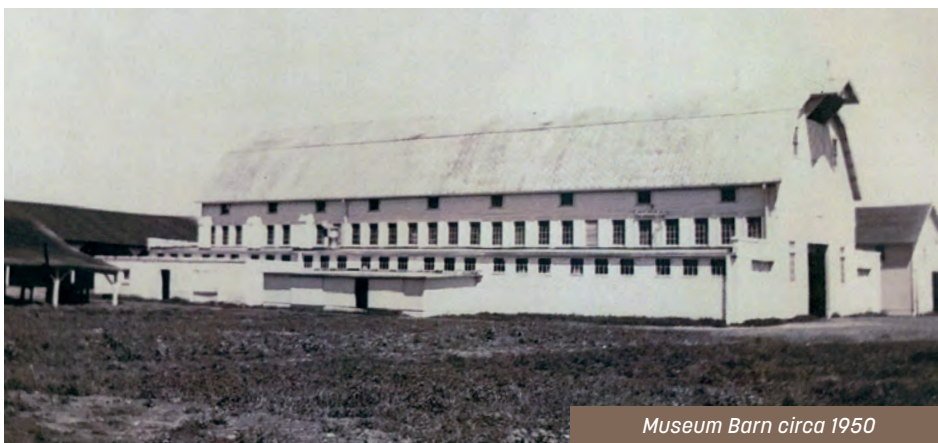
Preserving Indiana's Heritage, One Barn at a Time

A PUBLICATION OF



**INDIANA BARN
FOUNDATION**

**VOLUME 9, NO. 1
SPRING 2022**



Museum Barn circa 1950

MUSEUM BARN THEN & NOW

The Museum Barn built in 1922 is one of the original barns remaining at Peru's Historic Circus Winter Quarters in Peru, Indiana. The Museum Barn houses the International Hall of Fame Museum and circus memorabilia.



Museum Barn in 1992

Peru's Circus Winter Quarter Barns

BY BOB CLINE AND CHRISTI PERRY

The Peru Circus Winter Quarters are the longest operating circus winter quarters in America. They were established in 1892 when Peru businessman and new circus owner, Benjamin Wallace, bought the site. The site's intended use was for a winter circus headquarters where his menagerie and performers could rest, refine their acts, and repair equipment when they were not performing.

Located east of downtown Peru, stand two identical Wisconsin Dairy style barns; however, in 1922 there were four identical barns. The barns housed elephants, lions, tigers, and multiple other animals in addition to circus tents, and wagons. The barns were designed in 1922 by the architectural firm of Graham,

continued

CIRCUS HALL OF FAME

100TH
ANNIVERSARY EVENTS

JULY 17-18, 2022

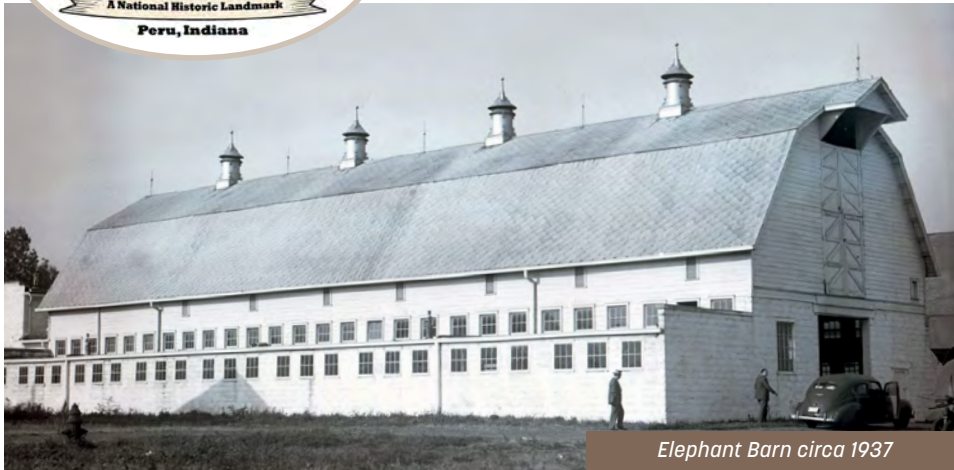
**CIRCUS CALLIOPE AND
MECHANICAL MUSIC FESTIVAL**

JULY 18-23, 2022

**THE CIRCUS CITY FESTIVAL
CIRCUS PARADE: SAT. JULY 23, 10 A.M.**



Peru's Circus Winter Quarter Barns *continued*



Elephant Barn circa 1937

ELEPHANT BARN THEN & NOW

The Elephant Barn built in 1922 is one of the original barns remaining at Peru's Historic Circus Winter Quarters in Peru, Indiana. Elephants were housed in this barn with a training ring in the center of the barn.



Elephant Barn in 2019

Alexander, Probst and White. The impressive structures are 150 ft. long, have a main frame width of 40 ft., and have a 15 ft. wing on each side of the barn. Each barn stood 40 ft. tall all with complete lofts, three of which held hay for the animals being housed there. Unfortunately, two of the barns burned in 1936 when green hay spontaneously combusted. The two barns that remain today are referred to as the Museum and Elephant Barns. They are registered as National Historic Landmarks and are owned by the Circus Hall of Fame Inc. The circus heritage is highlighted in the barns where you'll see brightly colored posters, ornately carved wagons, costumes, and other memorabilia that trace the rise of the circus.

The International Circus Hall of Fame is working hard to save these one hundred year old heritage barns. The deteriorating condition of the barns landed them on the Indiana Landmarks' 10 Most Endangered list in 2019. In 2020, removal of the asbestos shingles and other roof improvements cost over \$100,000, helping to protect the Circus Museum and Gift Shop. Unfortunately, in December 2021, it was discovered that the Museum Barn's main beam



INTERNATIONAL CIRCUS HALL OF FAME

3076 EAST CIRCUS LANE ★ PERU, IN



MUSEUM AND GIFT SHOP

HOURS:

Open June 1 – Labor Day on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 12-4 p.m.

ADULTS: \$5.00

CHILDREN: \$2.50

DONATIONS

The Circus Hall of Fame is a 501c3 non-profit organization dedicated to helping preserve the circus and its rich history.

Donations to support barn rehabilitation can be mailed:
Circus Hall of Fame,
3076 East Circus Lane, Peru, IN 46970

MEMBERSHIP

Become a member of the International Circus Hall of Fame.

<https://circushalloffame.com/membership-support/>



The red wagon cage was built in the Wagon Shop in 1924. The red wagon was used to house circus animals on display in the menagerie tent for visitors.



The Sig Sautelle Band Chariot was built by Sullivan and Eagle Company in Peru in 1887. The Band Chariot carried the band in the parades where they played music.

supporting the upper wall had completely rotted out and given way. Since then, a temporary wall has been built to support the wall and prevent the roof from collapsing. A recent estimate to repair another wing on the Museum Barn to replace the rafters, sill plates, decking, and remaining roofing was \$70,000. The Elephant Barn has had to forgo some necessary updates due to the Circus Hall of Fame focusing on the Museum Barn repairs, which it needs a new roof, rotting wood replaced, and

other structural upgrades. Preserving the circus barns is a huge priority to the Circus Hall of Fame.

The Circus Hall of Fame, Inc. was established as a 501c3 Non-Profit in March of 1982. Doing business as the International Circus Hall of Fame, they are open to the public every summer, participate in traveling exhibits to festivals, parades, other museum displays and the Indiana State Fair. The Circus Hall of Fame, Inc. is

a proud member of the Indiana Barn Foundation.

The Circus Hall of Fame is overwhelmed with the amount of repairs needed on their historic circus barns but are grateful for all the work they have already done and will continue pursuing to preserve a piece of Indiana's agricultural history along with circus heritage. These barns have made Peru, "The Circus Capitol of the World," says Bob Cline.

FUN FACT

Gibson County, Princeton, Indiana is home to

INDIANA'S LARGEST BARN QUILT TRAIL

with over 225 hand-painted barn quilts adorned on barns.

Visit <https://www.gibsoncountyin.org/barn-quilt-trail>

for a trail map and to learn more.



Q&A

INDIANA LANDMARKS

Q&A with **TODD ZEIGER**, Director of the Northern Field Office

IBF: What are your favorite public barns to visit in Northern Indiana?

Todd: The Red Barn at Saint Patrick's Park, in South Bend, Indiana, and Sylvan Cellars, in Rome City, Indiana.

IBF: Why are these heritage public barns your favorites?

Todd: Both show good examples of how barns can be repurposed for new uses. While keeping them active in agriculture is preferred, reuses such as these are more likely the way historic barns will be saved. Both are great historic barns that provide visitors an interesting architectural experience.

THE RED BARN AT SAINT PATRICK'S PARK was a dairy barn before becoming an event barn. The inside has been renovated, the exterior has the original barn doors, windows and silos. The Red Barn is the largest barn in St. Joseph County. It's listed on the Indiana Registry of Historic Places.

SYLVAN CELLARS EVENTS CENTER & TASTING ROOM is a family owned and operated events center and tasting room. Prior to Rachel and Nathan Schermerhorn purchasing the barn, it was listed as one of the top 10 most endangered historical landmarks in Indiana. The barn has been transformed into an event center while maintaining its rustic style with the barn's 30-foot high gabled ceilings and original wood floors.



THE RED BARN AT SAINT PATRICK'S PARK

50651 LAUREL ROAD • SOUTH BEND, INDIANA • www.sjcparks.org



SYLVAN CELLARS EVENTS CENTER & TASTING ROOM

2725 E NORTHPORT ROAD • ROME CITY, INDIANA • www.sylvancellars.net

**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.

DID YOU KNOW?

Heritage barns are

TAX EXEMPT


in the state of Indiana.


Visit indianabarns.org.


At the bottom of our home page is a link to the tax incentive form. Print, complete and bring to your county assessor's office.




CONNECT WITH US

 Indiana Barn Foundation

 Indiana Barn Foundation

 @indianabarnfoundation

 @IndianaBarnFND

 info@indianabarns.org

 www.indianabarns.org

ASK INDIANA BARN FOUNDATION

Barn Roof Assessment

EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR

To assess a barn roof's condition, inspect the exterior and interior of the roof system as a structural unit — consider it the barn's hat. Then inspect the individual components that comprise the whole: top plates, purlin beams, rafters, collar ties, sheathing, and the exterior surface, which may include several layers: sheet metal over asphalt shingles over the original wood shingles.

ROOF SURFACE

Inspect the integrity of the roof surface as well as its shape. Roof styles vary from simple gables — two flat surfaces meeting at a ridge — to complex gables that change direction (cross gables) creating valleys between slopes or foreshortened triangular hips that terminate the gable ends. Gambrel roofs with two pitches per side provide more loft space in hay barns, as do helmet roofs that peak at the ridge, and semicircular or segmentally arched configurations. Dormers, cupolas, and ventilators bring light and ventilation but also add complexity and vulnerability to wind and water, and require close inspection. Generally, the more complex barn roofs offer the most opportunity for failure.

A LONG VIEW

Take a slow walk around the exterior from enough distance to take in the entire structure. See if the long lower eave aligns with the ridge. They should run parallel, and neither should sag or bow. From the end, look for balance. Is the triangular gable end distorted or misshapen? Are the gambrel pitches uneven or bulging? Are the roof slopes flat? This long view will detect distortions that could originate in the foundation (differential settlement), or in the timber frame (structural deformation). Refer to earlier ASK IBF articles for clarification on these issues.

FOUNDATION AND FRAME

If the causes of roof failures are not in the roof system, identify and repair the foundation or frame problems before undertaking the roof. However, ancillary failures may have exacerbated leaks that need immediate attention. Even when other causes are present, weathering eventually wears out roof surfaces, and once they start to leak, the water entrainment leads to structural failures in the frame as well as foundation settlement, so accurate analysis is a bit chicken-and-egg, but reroofing a structure should wait until structural remedies are in place.

SOURCE OF LEAKS

That said, when a roof is leaking, locate the leaks on the interior and assess the damage the water has caused. This is the quickest way to identify problem areas in the roof surface and support structure, because leaking will stain and eventually rot the sheathing under the roof cover, followed by damage to the adjacent rafter(s), purlin beams, top plates, tie beams, and loft floor where water is collecting. If leaking has progressed, the effects can be seen all the way to the ground, but caught in time, the damage will be minimal and may not require significant repair. Always take whatever measures necessary to keep water out of the building. There is no reward in waiting. Maintenance is the key once repairs have been accomplished, but it may be necessary to temporarily stop the leaking while more substantial repairs are undertaken.

ROOF STRUCTURE

Inspecting the roof structure will help evaluate the integrity of the whole. Over time, the weight of the roof combined with stresses caused by overloading, weathering, rusting nails, and assorted connection failures can weaken the structure. The exterior inspection will provide clues. Have the rafters pushed the walls out of plumb? Is the sagging ridge a sign of rafters settling or bending? Have cross ties or structural



DUNCAN CAMPBELL
FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER OF
INDIANA BARN FOUNDATION

members been removed at some point? (This was common when hay tracks were installed.) Look for separation where rafters join at the peak, as well as cracking or bowing and twisting in the rafters. Check the connection of the rafters to the top plates on the exterior walls. All connections will exhibit some movement, because shrinkage and distortion occurs as green wood assemblages dry, but if connections have failed, they will need to be renewed. Remember, no one has figured out how to keep water out of a building that is not maintained.



FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS?

Submit to
info@indianabarns.org

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Replacing the roof



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

English Barns on the Indiana Landscape

English barns, derived from design ideas brought to America by English colonists, are one of the oldest and most widespread barn types in America. Early and basic examples are simple, open structures built with timber-frame post-and-beam framing and are not usually more than 30 x 40 feet in size. They are also often called a Yankee, 3-bay threshing or 30 x 40 barn.

English barns were common in New England and New York State and migrated from there to Northern Pennsylvania and Southeastern Pennsylvania and eventually to the Midwest.

The traditional English barn is small, one-story, rectangular with a gable roof. It is typically located on level ground and not banked. The hinged wagon doors located on opposite sides of the eaves enter a central floor used for the threshing (thrashing) and winnowing of grain. The floorboards were fitted tightly to prevent the loss of grain. The doors provided cross ventilation that blew away the chaff during hand threshing, a process which lasted until about 1820. A high sill



— the threshold — prevented the grain from blowing out of the barn. The central threshing aisle is flanked by a bay on each side, a tie-up for livestock on one side and storage of grain, hay, straw, or sheaves, and often a stable, on the other side. Lofts for hay were located over the side bays. A small lean-to shed was sometimes added to the side of the barn. The first barns were without windows but after the early 1800's small windows were often added.

The English Barn type exemplifies very small-scale, low-mechanization, diversified agriculture. Harvesting and storing of grain was the main purpose. While it remains common on the American landscape, it was not designed originally for large-scale agriculture and after

1830 gradually became too small for commercial farming activities. However, the basic form continued to be built well into the 20th century in Indiana and elsewhere as a larger, more complex structure with additional bays and often as a banked or basement barn, or large hay barn with a gambrel roof. The telltale side-entry doors on many 20th century barns speak to its long-standing influence on American agricultural architecture.

[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.]