
Message from the Chairman

As spring rapidly approaches, there is optimism in the air! There seems to be real progress being made into getting the COVID Virus under control with widespread vaccinations, use of masks, social distancing, and gathering recommendations.

At the FoMB Board Meeting on March 9th, it was decided to wait until the next meeting on May 17th to make decisions regarding resuming activities. The board is aware that most members are ready to get out and we are anxious to do the same! We would like to welcome all new members to FoMB! We have gained 15 new members in the past year and are eager to get to know you when our activities resume!

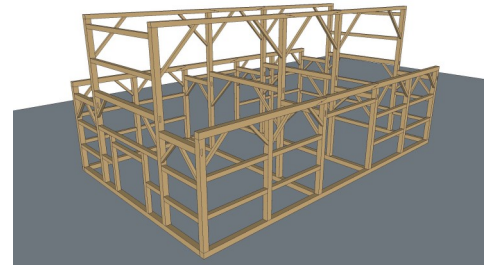
Another thing on our agenda is to update the FoMB website. There is a committee being formed to work on the updates. If you have recommendations or concerns, please let us know.

Please check out all the contents of the newsletter! We have so many interesting articles inside!

One article is about Gerald David. Gerald is a very interesting member that I met several years ago at a barn workshop hosted by Mark Johnson. About a year after the workshop, Gerald called and asked if there had been any thought of building a scale model timber frame barn, which interestingly, I had been thinking of a model for a few years.

Gerald is a very talented craftsman. We met and it was decided that the barn at the

Bruentrup Heritage Farm was a typical Midwest dairy barn measuring 36' X 60'. Gerald measured it and then did a complete layout of all the framing members with a sketch up program, showing all dimensions and notches.



It is a 1:5 scale so it is quite large. He was very patient with me showing me how to properly cut notches and scarf joints, (though not to his precise craftsmanship) and I cut and notched ½ the members in my shop in Stillwater and he did the other ½ in his shop in Duluth. A couple of trips to Duluth and it fit together pretty much flawlessly. It has been used as a demonstration model at several functions. The first use was at The North House School in the spring of 2018.

Gerald has written his story of his journey to becoming a timber framer and moving to the US from Germany. It is a very interesting story and I hope you enjoy reading it!

Bill Bruentrup
Chairman
(612) 581-1620

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Annual Membership

A friendly reminder!!

**Thank you for your membership. I think we all see a better year ahead!
It's time to renew and it can be done online at www.mnbarns.org or by mail.**

**Mailing Address:
FoMB
10605 Joliet Ave. North
Stillwater, MN 55082**

**\$25 Individual \$35 Household
\$50 Contractor (includes listing on the website)**

Benefits of Membership

- Subscription to the quarterly *Barn Door* newsletter with interesting articles, barn photos, and news of upcoming events. Delivered by email, unless a request is made to send it by regular mail.
- Discounted rates on events, workshops, Fall Barn Tour and other events. These discounts will be determined on a per event basis.
- Free “Coffee Chats” that offer networking gatherings at a particular property. These gatherings provide opportunities to learn more the property history, current use, construction ideas and how others have solved similar barn problems. FoMB furnishes light refreshments.

Membership Levels

- **Individual Membership: \$25** (discounts for the member only)
- **Household Membership: \$35** (discounts for the member and immediate family)
- **Corporate / Organizational Membership: \$50** (Includes a listing and business description on the “Resources” page of FoMB website as well as discounts for member and immediate family)
- **Gift Membership: \$35**
- **In Honor of Membership: \$35**



The Solar Powered Barn

By: Novel Energy Solutions (www.novelenenergy.biz)

There are many reasons why homeowners go solar but improving the environment and cutting energy costs are the most common. Many people are aware that solar is a great home efficiency upgrade and are eager to reduce their carbon footprint while also improving property value.

Solar 101

Thanks to solar panels, we have access to an inexhaustible source of power – the sun. Throughout the day, the cells on your solar panels absorb the energy from sunlight. Circuits within the cells collect that energy and turn it into direct current (DC) electricity. The DC electricity is passed through a device called an inverter to convert it to the alternating current (AC) electricity used by most homes and businesses. You can use that electricity in your home, store it with a solar battery, or send it back to the grid.

Benefits to Solar Energy

Solar energy has many environmental, health and financial benefits. Going solar reduces greenhouse gas emissions, which contribute to climate change, and also results in fewer air pollutants like sulfur dioxide and particulate matter, which can cause health problems. In addition, you can own your solar array up front and be immediately cash-flow positive. Working with the Novel team, we will walk you through the federal and state incentives that make owning your solar array profitable.

A Solar Powered Barn



Project Size – 29.7 kW DC/ 23 kW AC

Project Type – Roof Mount

Estimate kWh/year – ~40,175

Fun Fact –

Average home uses 11,496 kWh/year.

Baking in an oven uses 3.2 kW/hour.

Central air conditioning uses 1.2 kWh for each hour of use.

Old Barn Resort, Preston, MN

Barn History

The fame of the old barn began when Edward Allis, founder of the Allis Chalmers Machinery Co. (Modern day AGCO) purchased the farmland where the old barn resort now rests.

The farm sat on a hill above the decaying milling town of Clear Grit, which had thrived for a few years in the late 1860's and 1870's. The mill at Clear Grit was an expansion site for Preston founder and miller John Kaercher. The town had a barrel factory that made containers for the flour and a narrow gauge railway connecting it to the Southern Minnesota line.



By the end of the 1870's, however, a grain disease called "wheat smut" damaged much of the crop, and many farmers began to move farther west. John Kaercher found himself overextended financially, and Edward Allis, who had a mechanic's lien against the mill, became the sole proprietor of the mill in January 1882.

Edward's son, Jere, came to manage the mill and stayed to farm, raising Poland China hogs and purebred Holstein cattle. When Jere decided to milk Holsteins, he built a barn 50 by 100 feet, four stories high with stall room for 75 cattle and all the modern improvements



Later Jere became interested in race horses and is supposed to have had 20 trotters in his stable that he entered in competition at county and state fairs. In fact, the farm had two private race tracks. The barn was then fitted with a tack room and living quarters for stable hands.

Emma Allis, Jere's wife, cultivated a variety of flowers, and the farm became a center for social activities, drawing people from miles around for dances, basket socials, ball games and ice skating and skiing in the winter.

Jere and Emma were divorced in 1889, the same year Jere's father died. Edward left the farm in trust for Jere and his offspring.

Later, Jere and a second wife, Gladys, eventually gained control of the farm but were forced to sell it in 1906 to a local land speculator for a mere \$15,000, making it one of the biggest land bargains in Fillmore County history.



Old Barn Resort, continued

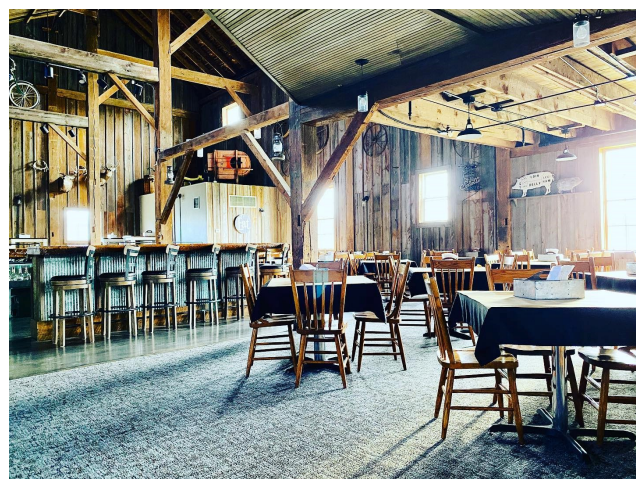
Resort History

Vernon Michel eventually purchased the farm in 1988, just before the official opening of the Root River State Trail. Vernon's intentions were to restore the barn to its former glory and develop a campground.

In 1990, following extensive remodeling, repairs and new construction, the barn and farm were transformed into the Old Barn Resort.

Doug Brenna and Shirley Endres purchased the property from Vernon in late 1996, and for 20 years successfully took the business to a more complete Resort feel. They added the 18-hole golf course, remodeled the restaurant and bar, made changes to the pool and patio area and even added numerous campsites.

In May, 2016 Eric Brenna and Travis Dundore, son and son-in-law to Doug Brenna, purchased the Resort aiming to continue the wonderful family owned Resort. Eric and Travis only look to enhance the property making sure all guests continue to enjoy what was originally created.



*Information and pictures taken from the
Old Barn Resort website:
www.barnresort.com*

Story of a Timber Framer



My name is Gerald David. I am a timber framer in Duluth Minnesota. 43 years ago I was born in Aachen, Germany, where I lived more or less until the age of 28. This article is a heavily abridged story of my journey in the trade and inextricably of my paths through life.

For so many of us, our occupation, our work, is the defining aspect of our identity. For me, it is no different. My path is not as straightforward as it can seem but I wish to tell an honest story of how my work got me to where I am today without getting too long winded. The formal beginning to my career as a timber framer was at the age of 22 when I signed a two year apprenticeship contract with a timber framing company in my hometown of Aachen.

In thinking about this article, I've reflected back, remembering conversations, encounters and choices that have steered me towards what I feel is a profession ideally suited to my being.

There is a picture of 11 year old Gerry nailing together scrap wood in my grandparent's basement for a chipmunk house. It might be too early to say that I was on track to join wood for a living at this point.

As a young teenager, I remember riding back home from a family wedding together with my mother. We're on the Autobahn heading west towards Aachen, Germany. We talked about one of the cousins who had just returned home from his Wanderschaft, a centuries old traditional journey that is still practiced in Germany, but that most only know of it from folklore. I have this memory of my mother saying "I can see you doing that one day." That sentence clearly got stored away as some kind of implicit permission, yet still far from the beginning of a career.

My mother, who grew up south of Buffalo, NY, crossed the ocean as a young woman to live with a German family for a year and to return to study German at university in Germany. There she met my father and they later married. She further encouraged our family to live abroad in Switzerland for a year, of course, in the part where French is spoken, which lead to everybody learning another language. For each of our junior years in high school, my sisters and I lived in the United States with her brothers and sisters.

My mother set a strong example for me to not be bound to one place or to be of many places. I'm never quite sure which one applies. This uncertainty, in part, is what contributed to my dropping out of architecture studies after two years. With some very interesting classes under my belt and despite good grades, I still felt that a degree in architecture wouldn't 'travel' as well as a trade. Previous to starting studies, the required three months of internship in the construction field had me experience the workman culture and end-of-day-satisfaction from (most) days on the job. I liked being 'out there' in the physical world shaping materials.

This decision was a very difficult one, and not one that happened overnight, but over several seasons. As my father told me years afterward, I shocked him twice: once when I told him that rather than returning to the spring semester I would travel to the States and do a sink-or-swim experience. Though privately fearing for my education, he did not stand in my way and gently encouraged me. The encounters I made during what turned into a continent crossing spring and summer built my self-confidence and marked a big turning point. Upon my return I delivered the second shock to my father, when I told him about my decision to pursue the trade over academics.

It could have been the disaster my father was afraid of were it not for what I still consider to be some of the best luck I've had. While on the job with a roofer, I met timber framers who told me to write an application to the boss. Seven days and an interview later, I was hired into the running apprenticeship school year by the young owner of a three generation timber framing company. A couple weeks in, I found myself on a chilly, early morning job site. I was sipping coffee and looking up at illuminated yellow timbers before a deep blue morning sky, with a sense that I was right where I was supposed to be.

Story of a Timber Framer, continued

An apprenticeship is an age old and standard way into the trade in Germany. The progression being: apprentice, journeyman, master. An apprenticeship most commonly takes three years, graduating to journeyman status after final exams. At the earliest, after three years as a journeyman, one can stand for the exams to become a master.

Because of my prior education and age, I qualified to shorten the apprenticeship if I delivered on the grades. Two really good years later I graduated with straight A's, and my father solemnly opened a bottle of champagne and old me about the shocks he had felt upon my decisions. As of the summer of 2002, I am a Zimmermannsgeselle, a journeyman level timber framer.

This is when the memory of that young teenager comes into play and I reached out to the distant cousin to find out how I could follow 'in his footsteps' as a traditional traveling craftsman, a Wandergeselle.

The Wanderschaft is what I believe to be the tradition that the term 'Journeyman' goes back to: For 'three years and one day' a young Geselle (graduate in the building trades) travels in his or



her trade, not returning home, but seeking out work and adventure throughout Germany and the world. As a Zimmermann, one wears a traditional outfit of black corduroy and carries a spiral walking cane and a traditional bundle called a Charlottenburger. This bundle contains some choice hand tools, work clothes and a minimum of toiletries. 'Wandern' translates to hiking or wandering, which is the only mode of transportation one possesses. Much distance is covered hitchhiking often alone or with another journeyman. When I left on the journey the battle against the cellphone was not yet lost, so one is very much untethered. The idea is to turn towards the open road, the unknown and new people, seeking knowledge and lived experience.



Gerald wearing the "Kluft"
More details on this in next newsletter

My three years took me to regions of Germany I would otherwise have never traveled and experienced from the southwest Schwäbian mountains to the northeast baltic coast. I traveled through the Scandinavian countries, worked six months in southwest France and three months in Switzerland. I worked two summers on the East coast of the United States building on the connections I had made in the summer before my apprenticeship. A popular question from drivers while hitchhiking was, "So what have you learned?". This is a difficult question to answer on the spot, because the lessons encountered are numerous and subtle. They run the gamut from technical expertise and experience in the trade to people skills and cultural norms and language. So much language! Accents heard from Boston to the Occitane region of France and the Jura region of Switzerland and the Schwäbian mountains of Germany. The latter of which made me feel just like being in a foreign country. In March of 2006 I returned to Aachen from my journey.

I did not stay long before heading back over the Atlantic. I wanted to do more of the kind of work that I had



North House 'German style timber framing' class

done in Plymouth, Massachusetts. A group of incredibly knowledgeable timber framers that all had a connection to the local open air museum, the Plimoth Plantation, worked on historic houses and churches doing wonderful preservation work. What I thought might be a year quickly turned into five and I enjoyed doing some of the most traditional work of my career. This group introduced me to the Timber Framers Guild (tfguild.org), an organization that holds conferences and workshops throughout North America. I participated in many of their community building projects and was thrilled to become an instructor in 2011, another pivotal year in my career.

Story of a Timber Framer, continued

The TFG led the reconstruction of a synagogue roof in Poland. It was a 7 week-long, complex workshop that anchored a summer of European projects for me. I went on to build a Fachwerk shelter with a 3rd grade Waldorf class and put a roof on a ruin in France. Finding work to be slow upon my return to Massachusetts, I followed an invitation to Vermont to help a log builder with a project. When in Vermont, it is easy to be invited to a night of traditional music and a square-dance. This is how I met the Minnesotan, who influenced my decision to keep working with the log builder, and who would two years later become my wife!



I was introduced to the fabulous world of full scribe log buildings with giant white pine logs and brought in timber framing joinery for some of the framing. In addition to learning to do amazing things with a chainsaw and building beautiful full scribe log homes, I created plans for and built a few new timber frames. When living in Vermont it is also easy to be invited to restore a barn, which was a great way to apply many of the lessons I learned 'down south'. Further teaching experiences with the Guild, as well as putting on a series of classes of my own, gave me additional rewards.

My wife and I decided to move to Duluth in order to be closer to at least one side of the family. She is a UMD graduate and very fond of the city. Lake Superior has been an anchor for this last big transition. It is ever so distantly still connected to the shores of Lake Erie, where my mother is from and where I spent many a summer growing up. Also on the shores of this great lake is North House Folk School, a place my wife made sure to point out to me on our first visit. I pitched a timber framing course to the school that draws on my German heritage and trade education, and have been teaching 'German Style Timber Framing' since 2015 along with other classes.

That same year I started GFD Woodworking and have been piecing together timber framing work and teaching. I had been hoping to be able to do more of the barn restoration work I had done in Vermont. I joined the Friends of Minnesota Barns with that thought and quickly learned how big a midwestern state truly is. Duluth is all but on the fringes of farm country and most of my work has been local, necessarily focused on new timber framing. In the last years, I have found myself in front of the computer more - despite my early escape from architecture school. I use SketchUp to design frames and create drawings for other timber framers, North House classes and former students.



Local work by Gerald at the Scenic Cafe

My most recent interest is in the history and forms of traditional German Fachwerk buildings. Thanks to eBay and other online bookstore platforms, I have been able to find some books I consider treasures. I hope to find a way to make some like them a reality around here. Few things give me as much joy as cutting joinery, making shavings and raising frames into the sky. The sight of yellow timbers with a bright blue background is as pleasurable to my eyes now as they were in those first days of my apprenticeship!



First assembly of the FoMB 1:5 scale model barn at North House School in 2018

Sleep in a Converted Grain Silo

By: Betsy Rathburn, Article in www.onlyinyourstate.com (December 20, 2020)



Here in Minnesota, the largest cities get all of the attention. But small-town Minnesota has plenty of interesting attractions as well. In the small town of Clear Lake, just outside of St. Cloud, there's a beautiful Airbnb that will help you relax in a peaceful rural environment. Next time you're looking for a great overnight stay, head to the Silo. Here's what you need to know about this lovely spot:

The Silo is a beautiful farm Airbnb stay in Clear Lake, Minnesota. It's on a 600-acre farm that is filled with everything you need for a wonderful stay. The property is absolutely beautiful, surrounded by forests and complete with a sparkling lake. It is a working farm that has been around for many decades. The barn was built in 1909 and still serves as a barn today. The silo was converted to contain a beautiful Airbnb.

From inside, you can see the beautiful grounds, with the lake just below the window. You're likely to see horses, which you can feed with carrots. Beyond, you can see into four different counties!

The Airbnb room is cozy and comfortable. a sitting area has plenty of room for two guests, with big windows overlooking the farm. The



Airbnb is outfitted with a comfy queen-sized bed with cozy bedding. You'll love opening your curtains every morning to the spectacular farm view! There's even a small kitchen area in this Airbnb. There's a mini fridge, a sink, and a microwave, so you can prepare basic meals and coffee. This Airbnb has everything you need for a weekend stay!

Per the owners and hosts:

"You ain't gonna find horses, goats, and an ol' swimmin' hole at most reputable Holiday Inns. But in Clear Lake, a "prairie retreat" an hour northwest of the metro, you'll discover all those barnyard amenities and more. That's because the place is a legit farm, one that the family has been working since the '50s. As farming profits dipped, the family reconfigured the unused silo as a rustic living space with endless views of their pastoral grounds.

The barn was built in 1909 and still serves as a barn; the silo went into disuse, and just bit by bit they built two living units into it. As one guest stated, "The views are jaw-dropping."



Photo Contest Winners - 2022 Calendar

Thank you to everyone who submitted a photo for the calendar contest!

For the contest this year, we received 33 adult and 3 youth entries. Typically we announce the photo winners at the Annual Meeting but this year we will share them here!

2022 calendars will be created with the winning photos below and be available later this year. Winners will receive their calendar prize by mail.



Denise Molgaard



Ajay Ristau



Kathleen McCann



Wayne Zuelch



Bill Shrankler



Joni Mehus



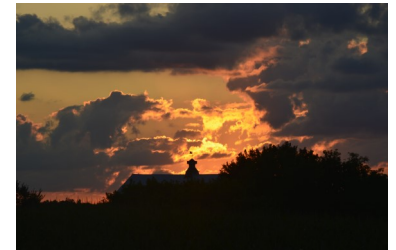
Karen Christensen



Wayne Zuelch



Clare Hoelderle



Rilee Klaers



Karalee Christensen



Karalee Christensen



Clare Hoelderle

2022 Photo Calendar Contest

FRIENDS OF



MINNESOTA BARNs

Annual Barn Photography Contest

- Contest categories: Adult Open and Youth/Student Open. Photographs must include an identifiable part of a barn (inside or out). **Barns must be located in Minnesota.**
- Photos may be taken with any type of camera, phone, tablet, etc. Filters and other camera accessories may be used. **Photos need to be high resolution AND horizontal format.**
- Photographs can be enhanced using computer software.
- By entering the contest, you allow the Friends of Minnesota Barns (FoMB) to use your photograph in the barn calendar as well as in other promotions, advertisements, products, websites, social media sites, and any other way the group sees fit. The photographer will be credited if the photograph is used.
- A photographer may enter three (3) unique photographs into the Adult Open category. Youth/students may enter one (1) unique photograph into Youth/student category. Youth/students may submit photos to the “Adult” category. The same photograph may not be entered into multiple categories.
- A total of 12 winners will be selected and will receive a 2023 calendar.
- Winners will be announced in spring 2022 at the FoMB Annual Meeting.
- Judges will have the final decision on if a photograph meets the criteria.

Updates about the contest will be posted to our website and Facebook page.

Barn Photography Contest

2022 Contest Categories

1. Adult Open (up to 3 entries per person)
2. Youth/Student Open (16 years old and under. One entry per person)

Entry Deadline: Monday, February 7, 2022

Entry Fee: FREE for youth/students and members of FoMB **or** \$25 yearly membership for adults. Yearly membership includes a quarterly newsletter, discounts on tours and barn coffee chat gatherings, great group of people to get to know and so much more!

Submission Information to Include:

1. Name
2. Email Address
3. Home Address
4. Phone Number
5. Category Entering

Email: .jpg digital image (high resolution) and horizontal format to: redbenchvintage@hotmail.com

Mail: 8 x 10 printed photograph to: Clare Hoelderle, 19685 Oak Grove Avenue, Prior Lake, MN 55372. Must be postmarked by entry deadline.

YouTube Barn Videos

By: Jon Nelson

During the pandemic, many members have missed FoMB's typical barn events, such as Coffee Chats and the annual Fall Barn Tour. These are great ways to experience the stories of regional barns and their owner's efforts to preserve, restore or re-purpose these historic structures.

There are many videos on YouTube about barn preservation, restoration and re-purposing, with some very well done. I know these are no replacement for local barn stories experienced in person but felt that members may be interested in having a look at a couple.

If you are reading this newsletter on your computer, click on the images below to watch. They are approx. 6 minutes and 5-1/2 minutes long. Keep in mind that you need to be connected to the internet and may need to adjust your volume once they start playing.

If you would like to find others on your own, go to the YouTube website and search with keywords such as "barn preservation and restoration":



Barn Yarns Column

By: Jay Schmidt

I remember restoring and repairing a barn for a farmer in the late 1980's on his farm in Luck, Wisconsin (and had worked for him on a number of other occasions, too).

Two or three times a week, the farmer's wife would invite the barn crew into the house for lunch.

We'd get about thirty minutes to have lunch, and then we'd all go into the antique-furnished living room of their early 1900's house.

The farmer's wife would draw the curtains, cover us with blankets, start up a vintage record on an old hand-cranked phonograph, and we'd have a nap...

Old-time hospitality for the working crew!

A History of Painting Barns

By: Bob Jensen

For the past five years, the historic Bruentrup barn has been undergoing refinishing with a red stain. We chose stain instead of paint because it has smaller pigments that penetrate deeply into wood and thus would be less subject to peeling.

But why was red chosen? The following article provides an answer and is reprinted from: "Painting Your Historic Barn", Washington State, Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation (January 10, 2016) "There are several theories as to why barns are painted red. One belief is that barns are red so a farmer's cows can find their way home. But if so, that is a failed strategy since cattle are colorblind to the colors red and green. Others believe the popularity of red barns came from copying Scandinavian farmers, who painted their properties in rusty hues so that they would appear to be made of brick, a material they considered to be a sign of wealth.

The truth is barns were not originally red, in fact, they were not painted at all. The early farmers that settled in New England did not have much extra money to spend on paint, so most of their barns remained unpainted. By the late 1700's, farmers began looking for ways to shield their barns' wood from the elements and began experimenting with ways to make their own protective paint.

Reportedly Virginia farmers were the first to become paint conscious. In Pennsylvania, the Dutch settlements latched on to the custom of red bricks, red barns, red geraniums, even reddish-brown cows. Painting your barn a red color caught on. Inasmuch as ready-made paint was not available, a farmer mixed his own paint. He discovered that skimmed milk, lime, and red iron oxide made a plastic-like coating that hardened quickly and lasted for years. Linseed oil was subsequently added to the recipe to provide the necessary soaking quality. Thus American "barn red" was born. It came into being through function and utility, rather than decor or superstition.



The left side of the Bruentrup barn wall has the old paint, the middle section has one coat of new red stain and the right side has two coats of red stain.

So where does the red come from? In historically accurate terms, "barn red" is not the bright, fire-engine red that we often see today, but more of a burnt-orange red. As to how the oil mixture became traditionally red, there are two predominant theories:

1. Wealthy farmers added blood from a recent slaughter to the oil mixture. As the paint dried, it turned from a bright red to a darker, burnt red.
2. Farmers added ferrous oxide, otherwise known as rust, to the oil mixture. Rust was plentiful on farms and was known to kill many fungi, including mold and moss, which were known to grow on barns. By mixing oxide into paint, it not only protected the wood, but gave it its deep dark red coloring.

A History of Painting Barns, continued

Regardless, farmers also noticed that painting their barns with the homemade paint kept the buildings warmer during the wintertime, since the darker color absorbs the sun's rays more than plain, unpainted wood. Red paint spread in popularity due to its functionality and convenience, becoming an American tradition that continues to this day.

In the mid to late 1800s, as paints began to be produced with chemical pigments, the demand for a special paint for barns, fences and outbuildings occurred. Many paint manufacturers prepared a special paint compound from metallic oxides which offered a limited range of colors, red being the most popular. These paints sold at a much lower price per gallon than house paint, hence attracting the every-so-thrifty farmer. Red was the color of favor until whitewash became cheaper, at which point white barns began to spring up.”

The exterior of the historic Bruentrup barn was always red within the memory of Bill Bruentrup. But what about the interior of the barn? Bill recalled that the milk house and barn basement (where the cows were milked) was whitewashed. Whitewash is made from slaked lime (calcium hydroxide) or chalk and was one method of ensuring these areas “shall be maintained clean at all times” as required by the state health department to maintain a Grade A rating to ship milk. It also is claimed to have anti-bacterial properties and it reflects light in the dimly lit basement to make it easier to see as they milked the cows.

Bill describes the process:

“Dad would whitewash the barn walls on a yearly basis and the barn ceiling as needed. He would also whitewash the fieldstone wall on the ramp leading up to the milk house (the ramp had a dirt floor). The walls needed to be cleaned in places before spraying. The west wall of the milk house was vertical barn boards and they were whitewashed. The rest of the milk house, including the ceiling, was cement board and was left the natural grey color. All the whitewash was sprayed from a barrel that was mounted to a set of wheelbarrow handles and the wheel was steel. It had a pump that was mounted in the barrel. It operated like an old well pump where it took one person to keep the pressure pumped up (me) and dad would do the spraying. There was a length of hose 8'-10' long so quite an area could be sprayed before the pump needed to be moved and of course dad was white with overspray when we were done.”



Whitewash on the fieldstone walls in the basement of the Bruentrup barn at the old location on White Bear Avenue during construction of a new wall.

The Barn

By: Bill Bruentrup



The barn is a special place! Everyone has their own memories - maybe you remember the smells like freshly made hay, the sweet smell of chopped corn as the silo is being filled or freshly ground feed or the smell of fresh milk at milking time. In winter there are many smells when you opened the barn door and how that changed after cleaning the barn with fresh straw bedding and lime spread on the floor to prevent slipping when the cows were let out briefly on nice winter days for some exercise. For some, it may be the sounds like the constant chugging of the vacuum pump that ran the milking machines, the intermittent sound of the pulsators on the Surge Milkers, the occasional belerling of a cow, the radio in the background tuned to WCCO with Maynard Speece, and Boone and Erickson or the hungry calves letting you know they wanted to be fed.

Then there were the experiences like going up in the hayloft and finding a new litter of kittens nestled in the hay with their eyes not yet open, swinging from a rope in the hay loft, making a fort with hay bales, the miracle of birth along with the sad experience of death, hustling to clean the gutters, shaking fresh straw into the cow stalls or watching the cows file into their individual stanchions.

For first time barn owners it may be a special place for their animals or a place that has been turned into a man cave, a house or even a workshop, The possibilities are endless and this adaptive reuse is a great way to save a barn or building.

Saving the barn can be a challenge as many factors can enter into the picture: leaving the farm for college or work, moving to a city which may be far away or retirement and a decision to sell the farm. Maybe you would love to buy it but are established in a city far away and can't afford to buy it. Maybe there are multiple heirs in an estate and it is hard to come to an agreement about who gets the barn. Maybe it is close to development and the land values have increased to the point where it isn't affordable. In rural areas, many family farms are being bought and incorporated into larger farms and the buildings are neglected, as they are no longer used. These are just a few of the many issues that can come in play.



Recently there has been a barn and farm in the news in the Stillwater area. It is 197 acres and has been in the Cahanes family since 1943. As the land values and taxes increase and the family members get older, it is hard to justify continuing to farm the land. The family hoped to sell the land to the DNR and the Trust for Public Land but the property proved to be too valuable. It is now in the planning stages for upscale housing and the buildings will likely be torn down. Financially it is hard to justify preserving these properties. Many times the majority of the land is sold off creating the opportunity to save the farmstead with enough acreage to have horses or other animals on a hobby farm.

Property on Osgood Avenue,
about .5 miles south of the Oak Park Heights Correctional Facility

Mayowood Stone Barn, Rochester, MN



The original expansion of the property was initiated by Dr. Charles H. Mayo (a.k.a. Dr. Charlie) in the early 1900's. The historic grounds are a parcel of the 3,000 acres of the original Mayowood Farm.

The grounds at the Mayowood Stone Barn were a menagerie of types. Dr. Charlie balanced his compassion for his patients with his great interest and attention to animals. Aside from horses and cows, this place was home to rare Japanese deer, buffalo, elk and birds.

There was also a dairy barn on the south side of the barn between the still-existing stone "Milk House" and the cement silo.

The Mayowood Stone Barn we use for events today was designed by Charles William Mayo (Dr. Chuck) and his wife Alice Mayo. They based the stunning design off of European equestrian-style barns.

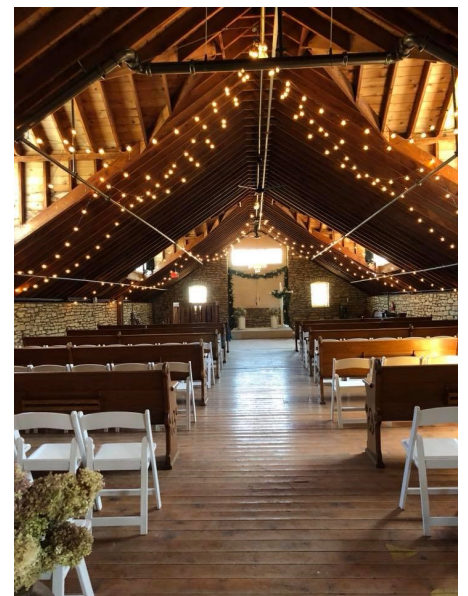
The stables housed ponies and thoroughbred horses which the generations of Mayo family rode throughout the farm. Aerial views to this day show the oval imprint of the many laps made around the track behind the barn.



The Mayos hosted carnivals and barn dances on the property, leaving some evidence in the form of painted games on the floors. They also occasionally allowed weddings on site.

The Mayowood Stone Barn and the surrounding property was purchased from the Mayo family by a private group in 2007. It is now a privately owned residence and rental venue to continue the upkeep and enjoyment of the property.

Powers Ventures took over operations at Mayowood Stone Barn in January 2016.



History and pictures used from: www.mayowoodstonebarn.com

Barn Adventure of a Lifetime: The Creamer's Fields Dairy Barn Restoration Project, Fairbanks, Alaska

By: Jay Schmidt (as told to Kim Halek)

Some back history: Creamer's Dairy was started at the turn of the century by the Hinckley family who brought a small herd of cows from Nome to the outskirts of Fairbanks, Alaska with the intention of operating a dairy. The Creamer family purchased the dairy from the Hinckleys in 1928 and continued to grow the dairy farm operation until 1966, when it was the largest and most successful dairy in Alaska's interior. The farm supplied all of the dairy products—such as milk, cheese, and ice cream—to the city of Fairbanks.

With its large open grain fields and pastures, the Creamer dairy farm became a congregating spot for migratory birds and when the farm went up for sale in 1966, the local community purchased the farm fields on behalf of the birds.

The farm is now managed by the State of Alaska as an 1,800-acre migratory waterfowl refuge; the farm's buildings were restored and now serve as an Interpretive Center. The farm structures are the only surviving pioneer dairy buildings in the Alaska interior and have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1977.

Now Jay's story: Back in 1997, I got a call from a friend, Lee, in Fairbanks who told me of a local barn that was going to be repaired and restored, and he thought I'd be interested in becoming involved.

Herb Melchior was the Alaska Department of Fish and Game complex manager at the time and he was seeking someone to restore the Creamer's Field dairy barn. A Denver, Colorado-based barn preservation network called *Barn Again* had donated funds for a barn expert's evaluation, so I wrote up a proposal. A proposal was also written by a guy associated with *Barn Again*.

I had a friend, Bob, an airline pilot who lived in Anchorage. Bob recommended letting the *Barn Again* guy pitch his proposal first and then told me to call Herb a month later, tell him I was coming up to visit Bob, and tell him I was interested in seeing the barn. When I got to Fairbanks, I met Herb and saw the barn.

Herb took a liking to me and wanted to hire me for the job. But to get hired for a federal job in Alaska, the opportunity is first offered to an Inuit Alaskan native, then to an Alaskan resident, then thirdly to somebody else. After a lot of hoops and paperwork, I got the contract, but a holding period went into effect until I could actually start the work.

In the meantime, I went to Big Sky, Montana to work with my brother. I was in Montana when I got a call from Herb, telling me that the funding had gone through and asking me if I could be in Alaska within the week!

I asked my childhood friend, Collin, to drive from Minnesota to Alaska with me. I picked up my work truck, equipment and Collin from Minnesota and we hit the road. We took turns driving straight through on the Alaskan Highway, alternating between sleeping and driving, but Collin wanted to stop and take photos of every moose and bear we saw on the highway.



Picture from 2000. Jay and Don Creamer, the last Creamer to operate the dairy complex

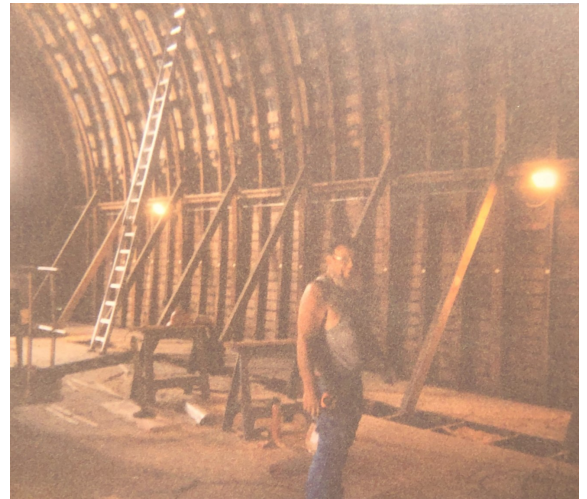
Barn Adventure of a Lifetime, continued

We had too much weight in the truck, and when we went onto a highway shoulder to photograph yet another bear, the truck's wheel sheared off and we crashed to a stop on the side of the AlCon. I hitched a ride to the nearest town, which was a few hundred miles away, to fetch a tow truck. Collin stayed with the truck. When I returned, I found Collin under the truck trying to avoid a bear who had been swiping at him.

The truck was a 1995 Ford F-350, 7.3 diesel crew cab long box. Its pay load was about 5,000 pounds of Simplex jacks, hydraulic jacks, jack posts, chain ratchet pullers, steel cables and an assortment of specialized barn restoration equipment. It should be noted that the friendly Canadian on the border made me unload all my gear as they deemed it a 'suspicious load' and did not believe it was barn straightening equipment. Collin has not liked Canadian authorities ever since!

We got towed 380 miles to Watson Lake in the Yukon. We bought cases of beer for the local mechanics and were told to come back in the morning. The Ford dealer in Yukon found truck parts, but the cost would have been \$3,800 and taken two days to ship. We only had two days left to get to Fairbanks on time! But the local junk yard owner had parts that he'd sell me for \$100. I offered him \$300, but he said, "Nope, only \$100. We like you guys, you brought us beer, and you're the only guys we've met who dress worse than us!" On the road again...

We got to Creamer's Field two and a half days late. I chose to work with an Alaskan native, Cary Bliss, who owned a local construction company. The barn restoration was a team effort between me, Cary, and the State of Alaska. I worked with a local engineering firm too, who had approved the plans I'd submitted.



After sending Collin home on a plane, I spent over three months—from the beginning of May through August—working on the barn. The barn itself was Gothic style, about 100 feet by 34 feet, with a roof that sagged a couple of feet and the sides bowing out. We were allowed to add structural integrity, as long as it wasn't visible.



The work (without any blueprints!) entailed the following:

- Straightening and replacing plates and wooden components
- Adding stability by screwing the laminated rafters (I rusted the screws in the rain to add character and authenticity)
- Adding steel fabrication hidden behind framing
- Refastening the existing steel roof to the boards
- Painting the barn's boards
- Removing lead paint from the boards: this was a problem, and I was told we had to ship the removed paint to Seattle in 50-gallon containers, but I hadn't included biohazard waste from the boards in

my initial estimate. The State and the local contractor firm helped us address the problem with the use of dirt and layered burial

After wrapping up the job, Collin flew up to Fairbanks to drive home with me again. I bought containers to ship home all of my equipment back to Minnesota so I didn't have to haul them back. That left room for the snowmobile Collin bought! We drove back via Banff, but that was 640 miles of gravel roads. We went through three spare tires on that trip and put 6,000 miles on the truck.

On that trip I made some money, went salmon fishing, stood on a glacier, saw the northern lights, got to spend the summer in Alaska, made some strong friendships, and helped restore a historic barn. All in all, a great adventure!

Reference source: Alaska Department of Fish and Game website: adfg.alaska.gov/creamersfield

Found on Facebook - "Friends of Minnesota Barns"



Photo by Sam Klocksien
Old horse drawn planter at his
farm in Isanti County

Each newsletter
we will feature some barns
posted on our
Facebook page that caught
our attention!



Photo by Mike Mistler
His 101 year old barn in Jacob's
Prairie near Cold Spring



Photo by Joan Edmonson
Barn north of Park Rapids in
Hubbard County



Photo by Ann Erickson Kramer
Her barn in Alexandria



Photo by Katie Sherva Carsi
Barn in Hennepin County

Hey! Look at that Barn

The steps lead up and down
The stubble of the straw is on the steps

The barn door is weathered and worn
A small handle still keeps the weather out

The window panes are full of cobwebs
But you can still see the sun rise

The weeds grow tall around the barn
The rocks stand still to hold it up

The feed boxes are now empty
Many days ago we kept them full

The farm cats are still on patrol
Keeping their kittens safe

The pitch fork stands in the corner
The handle is worn and cracked

The roof has provided safety from storms
Many birds can be found sitting above

The barn wood is getting weathered
Guessing it has added more character

The barn is very quiet these days
You hear the wind and the creaking sounds

Each barn is unique in its own way
Take a look or take a picture

The memories will last a long time
Hey! Are they talking about my barn...

By Sharla Bentson - Wood Lake, MN
Thank you so much for sharing your poem!

Friends of Minnesota Barns

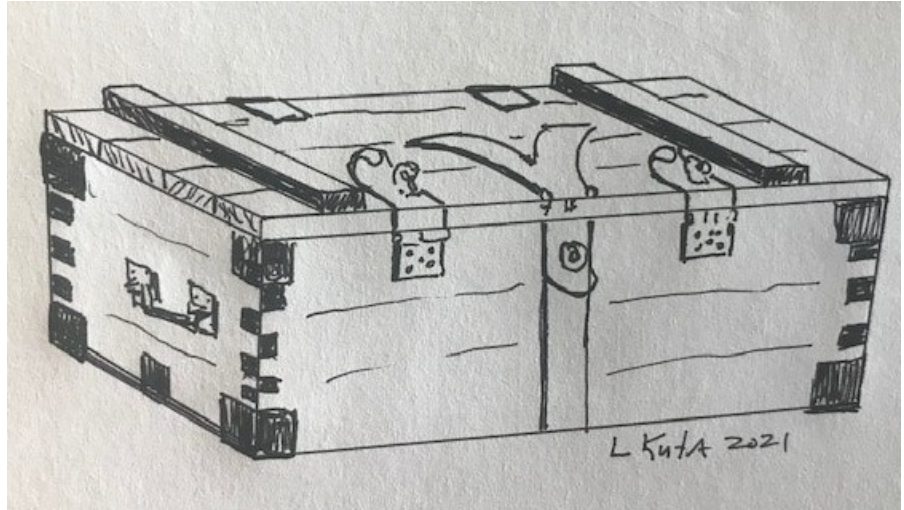
10605 Joliet Avenue North
Stillwater, MN 55082

Telephone:
612-338-BARN (2276)

E-mail:
friendsofmnbarns@gmail.com

Website:
www.mnbarns.org

Our mission is to educate the public and raise awareness to the importance of historic barns and farmsteads in Minnesota, and to help advocate for barn preservation. We offer educational workshops and assist others in finding resources for preservation and/or restoration of historic barns and farmsteads.



Drawing by LeRoy Kuta
You might remember in the last newsletter, there was a close-up drawing of the handle. We can enjoy the full drawing this time!

General Announcements

Next Board Meeting:

Monday, May 17 at 6:30 p.m. at Davanni's Pizza (8061 Flying Cloud Drive, Eden Prairie).
Come early to order food and enjoy dinner before the meeting.

*** We are always looking for barn articles, pictures, renovation projects, personal stories and interesting facts to be used in upcoming newsletters.**

If you would like to contribute, please contact newsletter editor and board member, Clare Hoelderle at redbenchvintage@hotmail.com.

Barn Door Editor: Clare Hoelderle
Contact me at: redbenchvintage@hotmail.com
(952) 210-9965



Photo by Jeff Wallager