

BARN PRESERVATION PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES (OHIO)

Brief History: In the mid 1980's, there was a grass-roots effort to organize a statewide barn preservation network, but without paid staff support the effort languished. Meanwhile, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) continued to receive numerous inquiries about barn preservation concerns and expanded delivery of technical assistance. In 1993, Ray Luce, Ohio's SHPO, and Keith Smith, Director of OSU Extension initiated informal discussions about the possible collaboration of a barn program for Ohio. The first formal meeting in August 1994, included two representatives from the SHPO and four Extension staff. Inspired by Michigan's groundbreaking Barn Rehabilitation Workshop efforts, it was felt Ohio needed to develop a similar program encouraging rural barn rehabilitation and reutilization. Ohio's program was also inspired by the NNTP's successful BARN AGAIN! awards program begun in the late 1980s.

Program Focus: Modeled after Michigan's highly successful program and the Ohio Shop's popular Building Doctor Clinics, BARN AGAIN! in Ohio has as its goals: to 1) provide technical information to rural property owners on the how-to's of barn rehabilitation and reutilization (rather than pure restoration or "remuddling") and 2) develop a series of workshops using lectures and barn tours that will bring rural property owners together with barn experts, contractors, and engineers. Annual winter planning workshops evaluate the successes and weaknesses of the program and chart plans for future Barn Again! programs.

Program Collaborators: Ohio's BARN AGAIN! program has been developed and overseen by the Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Historic Preservation Office, a division of the Ohio Historical Society. Program development also includes district extension specialists, county extension agents, and a growing list of barn experts. The technical and support staff of OSU Extension have been instrumental in developing information packets, workshop materials, and other program materials.

Workshops: Sixteen educational workshops have been held in different locations across the state to date, with three more tentatively scheduled for 2000. The program is expected to extend past the year 2000. The sixteen workshops have attracted nearly 600 registrants and extensive local and statewide media coverage. Most workshops are organized into a full day of presentations followed by a day tour of area barns.

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Publications: A comprehensive packet is provided to all workshop registrants and by mail for a \$25.00 fee. In addition, in April 2000 all 88 county extension offices will receive from Extension a comprehensive barn reference packet. Included in the packet are the NTHP's BARN AGAIN! Guide along with the Barn Aid Series, several Preservation Briefs and National Register Bulletins, Ohio's Guide to Barn Rehabilitation and Reutilization, a contractor's list and other barn related materials. Questionnaires are being sent to all contractors/carpenters doing barn rehabilitation work in Ohio. There is a steady demand for qualified contractors capable of doing barn repairs.

Other Activities: In conjunction with the Ohio's Outstanding Century Farm awards it is hoped a similar program can be developed for successful barn rehabilitation projects in Ohio, where winners can be recognized at the State Fair and Farm Science Review. Case studies of successful Barn Again! Projects are being compiled and will hopefully be shared with the National Barn Alliance database. In addition a barn owner's database will be developed for future program planning and information distribution. Five workshops held in the late 1990s in conjunction with the Smithsonian Institutions BARN AGAIN! exhibit was very well received. The barn workshops held at the Farm Science Review and Power Show - Ohio have been successful and will be continued.

Agricultural Land Issues: Loss of farmland and urban sprawl are among the leading land management issues in Ohio. OSU-Extension is devoting much of its outreach in this area. An Ohio Office of Farmland Preservation has been established in the Ohio Department of Agriculture. Legislation passed in 1999 allows farmers to qualify for a tax break on federal income and estate taxes for qualified easement donations. A series of Managing Change workshops held across the state in 1996-97 attracted huge audiences and have laid the foundation for additional farmland legislation. BARN AGAIN! will continue to be linked to and dovetailed with the farmland preservation audience.

Agricultural Surveys and National Register Designations: An agricultural survey and National Register nomination was prepared for Elizabeth Township in Miami County. At 20,000 acres, it is the largest rural historic district in Ohio. The nomination was the result of a grass roots effort and has energized the preservation efforts and awareness in this rural area. The SHPO has also developed an annotated bibliography of all 250 agricultural related National Register Listings in Ohio. SHPO staff are also in the preliminary stages of developing guidelines for documenting historic barns.