



HOOSIER BARN CHRONICLE

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Kitch Farm in Marshall County Named Centennial Farm

by Carolyn Meyer Rahe

This winter, IBF members Don and Christine Kitch celebrated the 100th anniversary of their family's ownership of their Marshall County farm. The Kitch Farm, located in Bourbon, has been in the family since 1919, and received the Centennial Farm designation by Marshall County Historical Society. On March 20th the Kitches will travel to Indianapolis to receive Centennial Farm designation from the state.

Don Kitch grew up across the road from the farm, and recalls his grandparents living there when he was a child. Don's grandfather Oreal A. Kitch purchased the farm in 1919, and in 1965 the title was transferred to



The Kitches's magnificent barn was originally built so that worshippers could hold church services in the loft



Don and Christine Kitch

his son Arthur. Don and his wife Christine first moved to the farm in 1975 when they "traded houses" with Don's parents and they moved from "across US 30". They raised their three children on the farm which sits right along US 30's north side. The Kitches have discovered that their barn has an interesting history. It was built c. 1859-60 by Jacob and Barbara Lint. After being ostracized by the Lutheran church in Pennsylvania, the Lints searched the scriptures and discovered that their beliefs were more in line with the German Baptist Brethren (Dunkards). They moved from Pennsylvania to

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Centennial Farm (continued from page 1)

Goshen, Indiana, then Bourbon, where they were welcomed by the church. The Lints were so grateful to the church that they lived in a small cabin while they spent the next four years building the massive barn “so that the church people could have their services as long as they wished to use it.”

Tamarack trees were said to have been cut from a swamp for the barn. On Saturdays the threshing floors were cleaned for Sunday services, and planks were put across wooden “nail kegs” to provide seating for church services.

The ‘big’ house was then built to take care of people who came to church by horse and buggy, as many would spend the night since it was too dark to ride home in buggies that didn’t have lights. In 1890 Mount Pleasant Church was built and the barn was no longer needed for services.

The Kitch barn’s appearance has remained largely unchanged since it was built. At one point it had an overhang on the west side, which may have been enclosed c. 1887. The concrete silo was built in the 1930s or 40s by the Bourbon Silo Company, and a feed room was added which has direct access from the silo.

Don and Christine have meticulously cared for the farm and barn, and have made continual improvements. When I first met Don around ten years ago, he joked that he probably could have built three pole barns for the money he has put into his heritage barn. Now he says with a laugh, “it may



A tornado caused support posts to twist and shift, requiring additional support.



be five pole barns now!”

The entire roof has been replaced, half of it after a tornado took the west roof off and “everything twisted”. Posts and beams have been reinforced, sills replaced, the west side has been raised, and the basement floor was all removed and new concrete flooring installed. The entire upper level is supported to hold vehicles, and all of the flooring has been replaced with wood from another old barn. All of the wiring has been updated and all of the windows replaced, and new siding added. All of this has been a labor of love for the Kitches, and today their stately barn is a magnificent sight on the north side of US30 just west of Bourbon.

IBF would like to congratulate

Don and Christine Kitch for this significant recognition of their Centennial Farm. We also thank them for being dedicated stewards of their historic property, and for sharing their story with Indiana Barn Foundation.



This board is believed to mark the year that the west overhang was enclosed

Is Our Barn Worth Saving?

Story by Duncan Campbell and Mike Thompson

On the east side of Indianapolis just inside the 465 loop stands a former dairy barn known as Crystal Spring Dairy. The barn is one of two hundred barns recognized during the Bicentennial Barns of Indiana celebration in 2016. According to present owners Amy and Kirk Friedly, this German bank barn was constructed in 1889, first as a dairy barn, but in later years boarded horses for neighboring



1889 Pennsylvania Dutch/German type fore bay barn

families. Reaching out to the Indiana Barn Foundation, the Friedlys had concerns about the structural integrity, a leaky roof and evidence of powder post beetles.

Duncan Campbell, Indiana Barn Foundation board member and expert on barns, visited the barn to provide some insight. Walking around the barn first, Duncan stated, "evaluating the barn and looking to see how straight it is, is the first step." Looking at the foundation, how water is shed from the roof and the condition of the roof is



Barn owners Amy and Kirk Friedly with Duncan Campbell in the center

critical. With a newer roof and recent gutter work, the roof appeared sound, but the leak was coming from the area of the cupola, which appeared to be inadequately flashed. The hand-hewn beams on the lower level of the interior showed signs of powder post beetle infestation, and the Friedlys were concerned that the structure had been compromised. However, there was no evidence of current activity, and the heavily timbered structure was deemed sound.

The Friedlys are excited to not only care for and protect the barn, but also to use it for a new purpose. Known in the community for having movie night, they have hosted as many as seventy-five friends and neighbors using the side of the barn as a projector screen. They also plan on hosting a wedding in the fall of 2020. Turning their well-recognized barn into a community spot is what they aspire to do.

The final opinion from Duncan is that the barn is in amazing condition for its age. Initially he believed the



Interior picture showing unique purlin beam

construction of the barn was an English Bank Barn and not German, but upon seeing the fore bay construction that was partially hidden by a later addition, he affirmed the Pennsylvania Dutch/German type. Hand hewn beams in the basement structure, as well as the presence of both a circular and reciprocating saw marks on the barn lumber indicated the barn could predate its original 1889 date. Addressing the leaking roof and repairing select floorboards were the first concerns. Overall it is a great barn that with some work will last for generations to come.

A Challenge to all IBF Members

By Kent Yeager, President IBF Board of Directors

Since the beginning of 2020 the IBF Board has met twice, once for a Strategic Planning Session and then for a regular board meeting. Our two immediate goals are to promote awareness of IBF and actively recruit people to become members.

You can play a big part in both of those goals. I challenged each board member to get five new members by our April 4 board meeting. I will challenge you to get at least one new member before April. I know each of you know someone who would like to be a member. Please ask people to join. IBF membership is prorated to July so people can join now for half the normal cost, just \$15 for a family membership and \$10 for an individual. What a deal!

Thanks for your interest in barns and your help.



Members of your IBF board of directors have met several times over the winter to plan events, and for Strategic Planning. We need you to help us spread the word about our mission and grow our membership!

IBF Barn Forum to Feature Round Barn Authority John Hanou on July 17-18

Mark your calendars for the 2020 Indiana Barn Foundation Forum and Annual Meeting! This year we will travel a bit south of center to Martinsville and Morgan County on Friday, July 17th and Saturday, July 18th. Plans for the event are not yet finalized but we can at least announce that our keynote speaker will be John Hanou, author of *A Round Indiana: Round Barns in the Hoosier State*. Watch for registration details in the next newsletter or on the IBF website or Facebook page.



The 1908 Silas Stafford true-circular barn, Delaware County, Indiana. The barn was built in 1908. Photo by John Hanou.

Welcome New Members!

Drake Babcock
Arann Banks
Katherine Beckwith
Don and Anita Biehle Family
John Biggs
Douglas Bird Family
Mikala Brown
Sheila Calhoun
Dawn & Dawn Campbell Family
Andrew & Jennifer Claphan Family
Circus Hall of Fame, Inc.
Josh Clossey
William Drakeford Family
Rick & Susan Edwards Family
Whippoorwill Hill
Anne Fields Lucas
Kirk and Amy Friedly Family
Richard Gumz Farms, LLC
Daniel Gumz
Todd Hill
Steve Jensen Family
Judith Kinder-Smith

Randy & Joyce Kron Family
Teena Ligman Family
Betty Manning Family
Phyllis Marks
Vignette Farms
Christine May
Cameron Mohr
Jodi Parks Family
Robert Peacock
Jane Reynolds
Robert Schickel
Travis Shepherd Family
Mark Sigler
Linda Sirugo Family
Jim & Christine Smith
Scott Smith
Newton County Fair Association
Amy Thompson Family
Richard Wahlman Family
Tony Wolfe Family
Russell Zak

Thank you Donors!

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Janel Rogers
Mark Thompson
Kent Yeager

IBF relies solely on generous donations to continue our mission of protecting Indiana barns. All membership fees and contributions are tax-deductible.

indianabarns.org/donate

Save the Dates:

- **July 17-18, 2020 - Indiana Barn Foundation Forum and Annual Meeting** with Keynote Speaker John Hanou, author of *A Round Indiana: Round Barns in the Hoosier State*
- **October 3rd, 2020 - 7th Annual Fall Barn Tour**, Allen and Dekalb Counties. Note: This date has been changed last newsletter!



The Butler Barn in Southern Dekalb County will be part of the October 3rd Fall Barn Tour

Indiana Barn Foundation
PO Box 1946
Elkhart, Indiana 46516

