



Brown County Journal

March 15, 2015

Events:

Brown County Historical
Society Dinner
April 6

Brown County
Genealogical Society
April 14

New History Center
Dedication - April 26

Art Alliance Art Show
Reception - Zimmerman
Room, April 3

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Rhonda A. Dunn

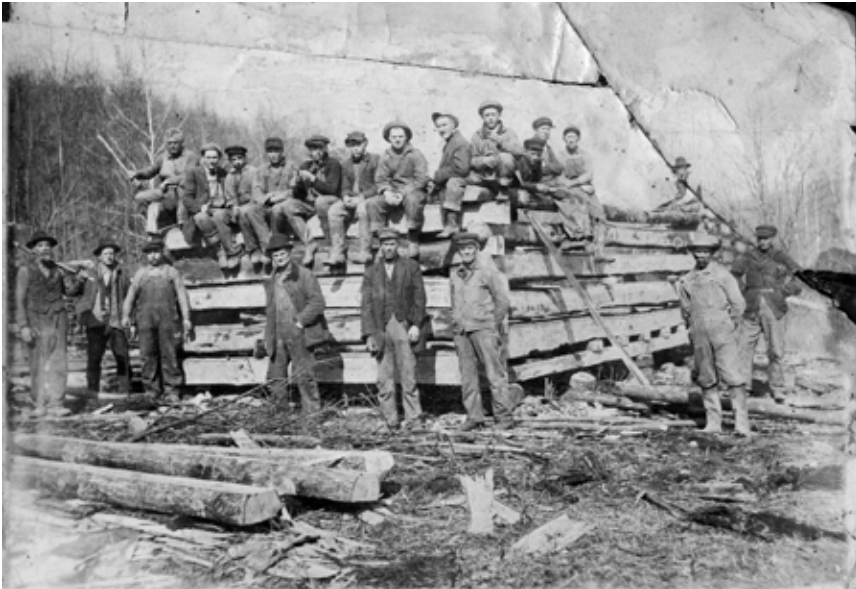
The Amazing World of Barns

Barns, barns, barns, everywhere there's a barn! At least they were the most plentiful and the largest structures in the country for hundreds of years in our early history. First, one must remember that our early pioneers for the most part were farmers. Brown County being mostly an agrarian community that's why one can see so many here. When our ancestors came over from the old country to settle in a new land they had to feed and clothe themselves and their families. One had to raise your own crops, livestock, make your own clothes, and store away food for the winter. To keep all these items from the forces of nature the farmer had to build a barn. Oftentimes that was the first building that was built on their land even before a house. As soon as the land was cleared and crops were put in the ground then the building began.

There could be many types of sheds for livestock and crops, or they could have built one large storage building for everything, a barn. Other types of buildings that a farmer might have was a chicken coop, a hog barn, a root cellar, a tobacco barn, a milking shed, a smokehouse, an ice house, a corn crib, a grain silo/granary, the canning kitchen, and the blacksmith shed. Each and every one was built for a particular purpose, but all were meant to sustain, feed, and clothe the farm family.

The barn wasn't always just used for farming. Barns were also used in the past for church revivals, social gatherings, and barn dances. What other large structure could hold a lot of people. Homes and churches were never built to house a huge group of people.

They have also been the subject of many a painting and photograph. Barns can seem so majestic. Why else wouldn't Frank Hohenberger photograph or the artists want to paint them or the



A Barn Raising on Jackson Creek 1905 - Standing L to R: Frank and Archie Campbell, Joe Collins, Jim Pogue, Andrew & Johnnie White, unknown person. Seated: Fred Erton, Ray Griffin, Sam Brown, unknown, Merrill Griffin, Martin Westbrooks, Ben Poling, unknown, unknown, Mark

casual tourist want to pull over to the side of the road to take a picture. Barn art is also big and you'll find many a barn with painted barn quilts. Before this though one would often see the Dutch good luck signs on the front of the barn over the door to fend off bad luck. In the past barns were used for advertising. How many of us remember seeing the big sides of barns or their roofs with painted signs such as "See Rock City" or "Chew Mail Pouch Tobacco." Brown County was known to have at least two of these at one time.

Historic Barn Research

Barns over the years have come into their own as historic structures. Many new owners are looking for information on how to find the age of their old barns. You tackle the job the same as you would an historic house. 1. Get your properties legal description - such as Section Number, Township Number, & Range Number. 2. Go to the Assessor's office to get a copy of your Property Card, or go to their website: <http://www.browncounty-in.gov/index.html> and look for the GIS Map. 3. If you still have your original Abstract for your property read it. 4. Look in the book Brown County Interim Report by the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, 1976, at the library if you suspect your farm



Grover Brown Farm - Landmarks Farm

has been considered an historic property. Their **website is www.historiclandmarks.org**. 5. Check the Deed Records in the Recorder's office - most times the buildings on the property are mentioned in the deed. Below is a list of historic farms of Brown County that are in the Brown County Interim Report.

Jackson Township

Zupancic
Leo & Velma Richards
Kelso
Orville Miller
Allen Anderson
Clarence & Oma Zody
Bind
Blanche Hauser Cochran
Ed Worford
Ray & Anna Fleener
Rogers
Mart & Pearl Brown
Bond
Nicholson
Yoder

Hamblen Township

Rolls
Ford
Jim Zook
Murphy-Ray Hartman
Eliza Stillabower
Sutton
Stevenson-Winchester
Jasper Parsley

Columbus Parsley
Joe Wayman
Buck Stewart
Albert Johnson
Emmett Brown
Dewey Fox
Virgil Condon

Washington Township

Roberts
Taggart
Oscar & Annie Smith
Walter "Toots" Parker
Elias Pittman
Gale David
Grover Brown
Louis Snyder
Linke
William Weddle
Taylor
Sam McLary-Mathis
Wrightsman
Floyd
Hatchett-Wilkerson
Floyd (#2)
Joseph & Mary Woods
William Helms
Otha Roberts

Dogtrot-Pioneer Village
Chief Eaglefeather

Van Buren Township

Anderson Robertson
Thompson
Johnnie Brand
Hurley
Shepard-Joshua Tipton
Clark-Brand
Brunell Hedrick
Kritzer
Preston-Guth-Schwab
Taylor Wilson
Truax
McQuery
James Roush
Virgil Greathouse
William T. Carmichael
Noblitt-Robertson
Oden Carmichael
Burt Carmichael
Hedrick
Anthony
Mort Browning
Cash Waggoner

There is a new organization, the Indiana Barn Foundation, that you may want to check out on Facebook. A group has gotten together to promote the idea that barns are also important historical structures. This could be a good source to share questions and get good advice on your old barn. One thing you should do is to get a good look at your barn. Determine the period or architectural style of your barn; most libraries have books on this subject.

Barn Types in Brown County

The barn is the most prominent and recognizable structure in the farm complex. Early barn types were constructed according to traditional building methods, both in form and craftsmanship. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, traditional barn building gave way to those designs promoted by the Dept. of Agriculture. After the Great Depression and World War II barn building changed again. Old barns in Brown County usually fall into three distinct types of designs.



Tobacco Barn on lower Salt Creek Road, transverse-frame

The **English** barn style was

brought to the New England area by English settlers. It became the dominant barn type and came to Brown County with very few changes. It was timber framed and rectangular in shape. The main entry is located on the long side of the barn, not on the gabled end as most of us are used to seeing. It also had a double hung door that was centered along the side. The barn was divided into three bays, the



A Working Farm, the Flesher Farm, on upper Salt Creek Road

center space being used for threshing grain. The outside bays were used for storage. The barn on the Sam McLary Farm in Washington township is a typical example.

The **Transverse-frame** barn was the final design that evolved from the basic single-crib structure. The single crib barn was just one square or rectangular crib with a gabled roof. It was usually constructed of logs and used to store grain as well as livestock. The single crib barn on the Thompson farm in Van Buren township is one of the few examples left. As the barn grew



Thompson Farm on Valley Branch Road, single-crib structure: a Landmarks farm

larger frame construction became more practical. The entry was located on either end of the barn under the gabled ends so the farmer could drive his tractor all the way through. Stables and storage bins were located along the sides. The Grover Brown barn - Mail Pouch Barn - on old S.R. 46 was a good example. It has since been torn down.

The **Midwest Three-portal** barn was derived from the transverse-frame barn. This is the most predominate barn type found in the Midwest. The barn took the conventional square or rectangular shape and added extensions on the sides which were connecting sheds. You can tell by their roof line which may have a broken slope on each side. These extension were used to house additional farm equipment, livestock, or hay. The barn on the James Roush Farm in Van Buren township is one of the county's few examples. (Information came from the Brown County Interim Report)

Dogtrot Barns

There are certainly other barn types in Brown County. These older barn types are rare. Our Dogtrot building in the Pioneer Village is the best example of this style. It is an old traditional English building plan, a log double-crib with a walk through in the middle. The two cribs are joined on top with a second floor or roof line that spans the entire length. Animals or farm



James Roush Farm on Christiansburg Road, transverse-frame barn: a Landmarks Farm

equipment were probably housed in the individual cribs or “dogtrot” area. The upper level might have been used to store grain or hay. The farm family may have even use the upper level as a living space.

The story of how our Dogtrot building came to Nashville bears telling. In 1930 James Voland was rabbit hunting on property in Jackson County when he came across an old log barn that was abandoned. He bought the barn and



Ed Voland

along with his kin, Ed and Ora Voland, marked the logs and disassembled it to move to Brown County. The Community Club of Brown County bought the logs and went to work to get it reassembled on the two town lots where it now sits. The Works Progress Administration was put to work putting the barn back together in 1936. The chimney and fireplaces were added at this time. It was used for many years as a meeting place for the Community Club and other organizations. After they disbanded the property's ownership went to the County Commissioners. The management of the building was eventually handed over to the Historical Society, to keep it repaired and to start a museum.

Looking at an Historic Brown County Farm

In researching the David Farm on Salt Creek Road we spent some time trying to find out who actually built the house and barns. The last living David member that had been running the farm was Gale David, an acquaintance from years past. Gale passed away a couple of years ago



and many of us wonder what will eventually happen to the Landmark farm. The old house had been torn down recently and was in back condition from a lack of upkeep. The only thing that still stands is the big barn and a couple of sheds. Unfortunately, that's what happens when the farmer passes and his family doesn't care to go on in the age old occupation.

David Farm on Salt Creek Road: a Landmarks farm

Gale David was the son of Charley David. Charley was the last farm's owner that actively farmed the land there. After his parents' passing Gale took over, but on a smaller scale. With farm families getting smaller the old farms are left without work hands. Not many wish to go on as their grandfathers did. Charley David's father was William David who was a son of the old Edward David of whom so many stories are told. According to the Interim Report the house and farm were built in the 1880s. Most likely it was built during William David's lifetime and possibly by him. One would have to follow deed records back to when William first owned it. The land wasn't originally patented in the David family. The descendents of the David family may have some records also, possibly even the original abstract.

If you have an old barn and want to find out more about it there are many avenues you can try. At least you can get a better appreciation of their historic significance and a better understanding of why so many admire them. They are huge magnificent structures that deserve some appreciation, after all we built them to last and last they do.

(Photos from the Brown County Historical Society Archives, Lilly Library Hohenberger Collection, and Rhonda A. Dunn)

Art Alliance Brown County is exhibiting an Art Show by its members during April and May. The show is in the Zimmerman room at the Brown County History Center and will be available whenever the Center is staffed. The show opens with a public reception on Friday April 3, from 5-8:00 p.m. All work is for sale with the History Center receiving commissions on sales. Your local artists appreciate your support!