

The Barn Door

A publication of Friends of Minnesota Barns

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Don't Miss this Annual Meeting!

March 13th 8:30am

Oliver Kelley Farm, Elk River

On Saturday, March 13 the Friends of Minnesota Barns organization will hold its Annual Meeting at the Oliver Kelley Farm located in Elk River. This Meeting is an important opportunity for members to gather and to conduct the business of the organization. It is also an opportunity to view an interesting and fun program featuring barns, their agricultural context, and value to society. The program will be presented in two parts.

Part One: Kelley Farm Tour and Revitalized Farm Plan Although the 1860's Oliver Kelley homestead is a National Historic Landmark and as such represents an important era both in the history of Minnesota and rural America, plans are underway to greatly expand both the mission and facilities of the site.

According to Bob Quist, Farm Manager, the new vision of the Kelley Farm will encompass every aspect of farming, agricultural business and food, rather than focusing exclusively on being a living history farm replicating agriculture in the 1860s.

The Minnesota Historical Society is requesting \$9.87 million in bonding authority this year from the Governor and the Minnesota Legislature. Quist will share the details on how the site will be impacted once the requested funds have been authorized.

Kelley Farm staff will then lead FoMB members on a tour of the current site, a tour that will emphasize the historic importance of Oliver Kelley, who in 2007 was enshrined in the National Agricultural Hall of Fame for his work in organizing the National Grange.

Part Two: Don Houseman: Barn Artist and Children's Book Author

Artist, author and FoMB member Don Houseman will discuss and illustrate his great passion for old barns during the second part of the program. Houseman grew up in Mantorville, MN and draws inspiration for his work from his early rural life. His work includes a series of acrylic paintings entitled "Barns are Noble" works that explore his fascination with the landscapes, architecture and stories of old barns. In his own words, Houseman describes his passion as "I just can't seem to exhaust the infinite surfaces, textures and atmospheres that I discover in each barn that I paint. I guess that it must be a latent rural desire to record my past."

Houseman has also written and illustrated a children's book entitled How Harvey and His Friends Saved the Barn, a charming story about how a group of farm animals conspire to draw the attention of their farmer owner to the deterioration of his barn. The animals of course are successful in getting the farmer to make the necessary repairs.

Houseman graduated from Concordia College in Morehead in 1972 and taught Art for thirty- four years at Black Duck, MN. He retired from teaching in 2006 and has exhibited his work at art galleries and businesses throughout Minnesota. His barn paintings and books will be available for purchase at the Annual Meeting.

In addition to this outstanding program, Annual Meeting business will include filling through election three Director positions, receiving updates on the organization's finances and activity plans for 2010.

Registration will begin at 8:30 with the agenda commencing at 9:15 am. The Oliver Kelley Farm is located on US Highway 10 in Elk River.

A Letter from the Chair

Dear FoMB Members,

Your Board of Directors recently held a strategic planning meeting and I wanted to share one thought about it. During the strength analysis, I thought of how popular our mission (preserving MN's barns) is with so many. It's what gives me reason for so much hope for the future of Friends of Minnesota Barns (FoMB) as an organization and for the future of the many endangered MN barns. The love of barns is widespread and is very passionate.

At every FoMB event, I hear the members and our guests expressing their love of barns. During the BarnY Awards, I have opportunities to speak with media and the public many of whom are just learning of FoMB. They are encouraged by our mission to save barns and eagerly want to hear more about us. The year we had a 2-day booth at the MN State Fair it seemed like everyone wanted to talk about a barn that they knew about and expressed a strong connection to barns. This is a major strength that FoMB can grow on.

Like many, I grew up without a direct connection to a barn living in suburbia but a love and respect for barns still found roots in me. It may have been that rare visit to a family member with a barn or a childhood field trip that provided a hayloft playground that could not be forgotten. Or possibly it was the understanding that these barns were often a result of neighbors working together and helping each other succeed. An attitude that is nearly extinct in today's society. Maybe it is knowing that these barns were the heart of rural farms not filled with machinery but filled with human activity and passion. Whether it was the daily milking cows, helping an animal through a difficult birth, or sweating in the dusty hot summer hayloft to store the materials that were needed for winter survival, these barns were active. Finally, it could be partly because these large barns became icons of the landscape standing strong and seemingly unchanged for years and years.

Like me, memories and knowledge have created many barn lovers out of others. FoMB is a young organization and we still need to develop many more activities that will preserve barns. Our mission is worthy, though not easy. But knowing that there is a large pool of barn lovers, I feel that FoMB can reach our goals and preserve MN's barns. Please continue to aid us in this endeavor.

Hope to see you at our Annual Meeting or some other upcoming event.

Curt Richter

boardchairman@friendsofminnesotabarns.org

Calendar at a Glance



March 13th Annual Meeting
Oliver Kelley Farm, Elk River

The calendar of events will be published online and in future newsletters after the annual meeting. The number of volunteers that step forward to assist with events such as coffee chats, tours and meetings will determine how full of a calendar we can pursue this year. If you are interested in helping to plan and work at events please contact us!

How to contact FoMB

Phone: 612-338-BARN (2276)

Please keep in mind that our phone number does not go to a physical location it goes to a voicemail box that is checked at least twice weekly.

The quickest way to receive a reply is to email us at _____

info@friendsofminnesotabarns.org

Incoming emails go to multiple board members and are answered as quickly as possible.

The Board of Directors

Curt Richter, Chair

John Kuester, Secretary

Tawnya Hoffmann, Treasurer & Membership Chair

Bo Olson, Coffee chats

Ron Black

Christina Harrison

Sarah Bowman, Events Committee Chair

Board Spends Saturday Planning 2010 Work Plan

On Saturday, January 16, the FoMB board gathered near Stillwater at the home of former board member Bruce Goldstrand to make plans for the organizations activities for 2010 and beyond. With the full board in attendance the meeting was a productive session ably facilitated by the skills of Bonnie McDonald, Executive Director of the Preservation Alliance of MN. McDonald led a strategic analysis that focused on what the organization had accomplished to this point as well as what it hoped to accomplish in future years.



Board of Directors Shown left to right: Curt Richter, Bo Olson, Sarah Bowman, Christina Harrison, Tawnya Hoffmann, John Kuester, Ron Black Jay Schmidt

Of particular utility to retreat members was a breakdown of the number of volunteer hours that the organization currently accumulates over a year. This breakdown was then linked to a specific number of hours the organization would use to conduct normal board business, organize the annual meeting, publish and distribute the newsletter, maintain a credible web-site, organize barn tours, recruit and evaluate barn of the year nominations, organize coffee chats, and other desired activities.

With this information the Board was able to identify what a reasonable work plan for 2010 should be given the volunteer hours available paired with the hours required to successfully conduct specific organizational activities/necessary board business.

The specific 2010 work plan will be presented at the Annual Meeting.

Barn of the Year Award Winners

Farm Use Division

Winner - David & Marlyce Logan Barn of Pipestone

Runner-up - LeRoy Grewe Barn of Gaylord

Runner-up - Mike & Jean Kauffmann of Arlington

Non-Farm Use Division

Winner - Carl & Wanda Erickson Barn of Hawley

Runner-up - Gary & Marjory Becker Barn of Marshall

Runner-up - Ruth Miller Barn of Buffalo

Community Award

Bruentrup Barn of Maplewood

Family Award

Thompson Barns of Sabin



Carl & Wanda Erickson of Hawley winner non-farm use

This was the second year for the FoMB awards program. Sixty-one barns were entered from all regions of the state, representing 36 counties. We would again like to thank our panel of judges: Marvel Anderson, Volunteer Coordinator of the Preservation Alliance of MN; Doug Ohman, Historical Photographer; Richard Jefferies of Oak Haven; Sherry Stirling, Executive Director of Chisago County Historical Society; and Ruth Tremblay, Artist & Photographer. Preservation examples from the entries will be posted on the website in the near future.

Details for the 2010 contest will be announced in July.