

THE REPORTER, News of the Dutch Barn Preservation Society
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WEMP BARN DEDICATION AND ANNUAL MEETING

The dedication of the Wemp barn will take place on Saturday, October 13 at New Scotland, Albany County in the early afternoon, and will be followed by the annual meeting of the DBPS. A number of interesting events are planned for that day and members are urged to attend. ~~If you plan to be there contact Everett Rau, Box 327, Lainhart Rd., Altamont, NY 12168.~~

Details will be sent to you.

AUTHOR JOHN FITCHEN DIES

Members of the Dutch Barn Preservation Society were saddened to learn of the June 3, 1990 death of John Fitchen, Emeritus Professor of the Fine Arts at Colgate University and author of the lead article in our Spring, 1990, **Newsletter**. Professor Fitchen was author of **The New World Dutch Barn: A Study of Its Characteristics, Its Structural System, and Its Probable Erection Procedures**, an in-depth look at Dutch barns published by Syracuse University Press in 1968.

Fitchen was the first to survey and analyze this unusual vernacular structure. His book has become the basic reference work on the subject, and the terminology for structural parts introduced in the book has become the standard for Dutch barn description. He was the author, also, of the work **Construction of Gothic Cathedrals** published in England in 1961, and he contributed to various architectural publications. He had expressed his enthusiasm for the Dutch Barn Preservation Society's activities aimed at the study and preservation of the Dutch barn, and was a member of the Society.

DBPS TRUSTEE MEETINGS

MAY 15, 1990 (informal) Guilderland Center, Albany County

The first informal trustees meeting of the society was held at the Frederick House, the home of the Guilderland Historical Society. It had been decided that the monthly meetings will be conducted alternately as an informal exchange of information followed the next month by a formal business meeting. All Society members are encouraged to attend these meetings to share their knowledge and interests. The trustees meet in the evening on the third Tuesday of each month. The location may vary.

There was a general discussion of hay mangers. Shirley Dunn talked of her recent conversations with Fitchen about the article he was doing for the Newsletter. Ev Rau brought up the need for more barn publicity and Harold Zoch pointed out the danger that sometimes comes with publicity and how three barns in Schoharie had been lost to speculators this way.

Trustees gave reports on their recent activities. The barn society's president Harold Zoch spoke recently at The Clinton Corners Historical Society, a guest of DBPS member Dr. Bill McDermott. He told of the Mickel Dutch barn nearby in Warnerville which was sold, taken down, and moved to Westchester county.

Vince Schaefer of Schenectady has been monitoring the moving of the Wemp barn to the Van Zandt house in New Scotland. He said, "the boys from Hancock are doing an outstanding job. Their father came over twice from Massachusetts to check the project out but he has retired from hard work and is writing a book about barns."

Vince, who has a long time interest in dendrochronology, or the dating of wood by the comparison of annual growth rings, showed the group a core sample he had taken from one of the pine anchorbeams of the Wemp barn. The tree from which it was made proved to be only 118 years old. The oak wall posts were from trees over 200 years old.

JUNE 19,1990 (formal) Guilderland Center, Albany County

Mike Bathrick, a trustee from Columbia County, gave the treasurer's report and reported on the succesfull efforts of the Fund Raising Committee. The Society has been awarded a \$4,000 grant from the N.Y. State Council on the Arts to design and build a portable Dutch barn exhibit. The Arts Council is pleased with the Barn Society's work and has asked us to apply again next year.

The trustees voted \$75 for the Society to join the National Trust for Historic Preservation, a group which can help us with grant information and insurance.

Everett Rau of the Wemp Barn Committee described plans for the dedication of that historic barn which was recently bought and moved to New Scotland by Carl Touhey. The dedication will include a barn dance and some good country food.

Ev, a sawyer from Altamont, has recently lengthened the carriage of his saw mill and has cut thirty-four 28½ foot tapered rafters for the reconstruction of the Van Riper-Tice barn in New Jersey. He is next cutting a set of 35 foot rafters.

Ev requested from the Society membership information concerning up-and-down saw mills, especially details of the blade design. This is a type of saw mill which predated the circular saw mill. Although they were once common there are only a few of these mills which still function and there has been little documentation of them. Ev plans to build an up-and-down saw mill.

Vincent Schaefer of Schenectady, who has been instrumental in saving the larger Wemp barn, described Jack Sobon's plans for a joint effort of the DBPS and the Timber Framers Guild to restore the Wemple/Dellamont Dutch barn in the town of Rotterdam, Schenectady County. The Wemple barn "...is one of the oldest and best of the remaining Dutch barns in the Hudson-Mohawk-Schoharie Valleys," Vince said. It is anticipated that the TV station WMHT will prepare a documentary film of the project.

JULY 17, 1990 (informal) Guilderland Center, Albany County

Jack Sobon, a trustee from Windsor, Mass., reported on the plans he has underway for the joint effort of the DBPS and the Timber Framer's Guild of North America (TFG) to repair the Wemple barn. (Jack has just returned from England and told us a bit about his barn visits there and about the greater awareness and care of historic barns in England.)

Insofar as possible, repairs will be made using pitch pine, the wood used to build the original barn. A request is being made for knowledge of good standing pitch pine which could be used for the restoration. Evert Rau will probably be doing the milling.

A five member Wemple barn committee was formed (Hessler, chairman; Albright; Zock; Peckham; and Jettner. Rau will serve as an advisor, and Sobon will interact and represent the Timber Framers Guild). The trustees voted to accept the \$4000 traveling exhibition grant. The exhibition is to be completed by December 31, 1990.

Vince Schaefer reported that a "fine manger" has been installed in the Wemp barn, that the granary is being completed, and the newly dug pond is 3/4's full. The pond has collected the hillside water and the barn is much drier now. A split rail fence is being planned for the surrounding 5 acre field.

Vince and Carl Touhey were interviewed recently about the Wemp barn on public television by Nancy Norman whose program **Arts Panorama** is aired Thursday nights in Albany. Touhey expressed his strong desire to make the barn permanently available to the public.

CORN TO BENEFIT BARNS

Seeds of an eight row sweet corn whose kernals begin white and mature to a deep purple/blue are being sold to benefit DBPS trustee Peter Sinclair's work in documenting and doing minor repairs to local Dutch barns.

For \$5 a starter kit of seeds and instructions will be sent in the fall. This variety of corn has been grown by the Wolven and other related families of Highwoods, Saugerties for over 100 years. Publicity which began in July has had good response. For blue corn starter kit write Peter Sinclair, 407 Spillway Rd., West Hurley, NY 12491.

NOMINATIONS REQUESTED

Nominations for trustees and officers should be sent to Bob and Amelia Andersen, Box 139, RD 1, Westerlo, NY 12193. These should arrive well before the annual meeting which will take place in late September or early October.

ALBANY COUNTY REPORT

Mark He_sler reported on the Guilderland project of the engineering firm of Besha Associates. The firm, which is involved with designing hydro-electric systems, has begun to reconstruct three Dutch barns for its new offices.

Mark also reported that the private sale of the Van Aernam barn in Altamont to an undisclosed party has been completed. It is said that the intention is to continue its use as a farm but that there are no guarantees.

NEW JERSEY BARN TOUR

A tour of seven Somerset County Dutch barns will take place September 22nd followed on the 23rd by a tour of Bergen County barns. If interested contact Greg Huber, P.O.Box 344, Wyckoff, NJ 07481; Telephone 201-891-7605.

A NEW BARN SOCIETY

Adair Vineyards of New Paltz, New York has announced the creation of the Adair Landmark Barn Society. For \$100 members are given the opportunity to aid in the preservation of a late 18th century barn which, "Federal and State authorities have signified is an excellent example of Dutch barn architecture."

"Members are invited to visit the winery and pound a 150 year old nail, taken from the wooden threshing floor, into a chestnut beam in the winery's tasting area. The accumulated nails, by design, will spell out the word LANDMARK." A complimentary bottle of Adair Landmark Red wine individually signed by the wine maker Jim Adair, a member of the DBPS, will be given each member as well as a 20% discount on future cases of Landmark Red purchased. Contact, Adair Vineyards, 75 Allhusen Rd., New Paltz, NY 12561.