

BARN LIGHTS

Quarterly Newsletter

APPALACHIAN BARN ALLIANCE

VOL. 4 No. 4 Winter 2017

Celebrating the life of a barn—and the beginning of our Heritage Farmstead

It was a beautiful fall day in late October when Board President Sandy Stevenson, recognizing the organization's 5th anniversary, announced that the Appalachian Barn Alliance has now officially entered Phase 2 of the mission: to establish a Heritage Farmstead. It was an appropriate setting—county officials gathered with ABA Board Members and the Elaine Ray Thomas and David Thomas family to celebrate their donated barn. The gathering took place in the field where the barn has stood for over 100 years. Elaine and David's daughter Megan Ray Loomis and grandson Caleb Ray Loomis were there as a testament to the importance of the donation to future generations.

There could be no better affirmation of the ABA mission than Elaine Thomas' words during the ceremony. After sharing stories about the life of the barn, she explained why she decided to donate the family barn to the Appalachian Barn Alliance: she "knew without a doubt that Dad would want it to be preserved, and to be used as an educational tool for people to know what we are all about around here, and where we came from. That's what this barn is to me, a testament of where I came from. And so, this is a gift from my Dad, Hughie Ray, and my mother, Lena Ray, to the people of Madison County. People they dearly loved, and that I dearly love. Appalachian Barn Alliance, thank you for taking good care of it for them!"

Although there have been other donations of farm implements and tools over the last year, this marks the first donation of an actual building! The Board Members have begun to take steps to research how to establish a Farmstead. We will be in discussion for awhile determining where it will be and what it will look like (and, of course, raising money to make it happen). But, we are full of pride and excitement that as we take these steps, we have the support of the community that the Farmstead will be representing.

After the short ceremony, volunteers began the work of dismantling the barn, log by log. Ross Young, who is the inspiration for this organization, joined with board members Rob Kraft and Matthew Pierce, spouses of board members (Mike Stevenson and Mike Foster), our researcher Taylor Barnhill, and a loyal member Rick Thomason, and in two days, with the cattle watching, the work was completed. The logs are now stored in another barn awaiting the time when this historic flue-cured tobacco barn can be reconstructed on the new site. Join in the excitement and keep up with our progress during the next few years through our Facebook community and email communications.



L to R: Bill Ricker, O'Neal Shelton, Ross Young, Megan Loomis & Caleb Loomis, Norris Gentry, Elaine Ray Thomas, David Thomas

Please turn to page 3 for more pictures of the event.



The President's Letter

As I look back on this year, I am truly "great-full." Yes, the misspelling is intentional because this year has been **full** of **great** accomplishments. And, those accomplishments were because of the wonderful support of the community of all of you who love our heritage as much as the ABA Board members do. A loyal member Barbara Fant nominated us for a preservation award which we gratefully accepted in September. In October, we celebrated the "life and memories" of a historic flue-cured tobacco barn donated by a community resident's family (Elaine Ray Thomas & David Thomas). Our membership and donations grew 12% this past year and I firmly believe when our grant applications are reviewed, the strength of our support base in the community is a huge factor. We received a grant in November making this a record of five years and five grants. Therefore, a huge thank you to all of you for making this a **great** year.

Sandy Stevenson

\$5,000 Grant from Reynolds Foundation

The Reynolds Foundation (formerly the Richard J. Reynolds, III and Marie M. Reynolds Foundation) makes grants for the accomplishment of charitable works, principally in the State of North Carolina. Reynolds who passed away in 1994 was the grandson of the founder of RJ Reynolds Tobacco Company so it seemed a natural to apply for a grant to document the tobacco history of those historic barns in Madison County. The ABA is delighted that they felt our work is a good fit for their mission. This grant will be used to partially fund the documentation in the Marshall township in 2018—the next geographic area Taylor Barnhill will research.

2017 Gertrude S. Carraway Award of Merit

Board President Sandy Stevenson and Historian Researcher Taylor Barnhill attended the Annual Conference of Preservation North Carolina on September 29 to receive the honor at the Awards Luncheon in Charlotte. The ABA was in good company with 11 other organizations who were recognized for their work in research and preservation in North Carolina. Quite an honor!



It's not enough just to "Like" us. Join our Facebook Community as a member to follow our work. Thanks!

Jervis-Ray Celebration & Deconstruction



Elaine Ray Thomas speaking to the group



Curious uninformed guests



Taking down the roof



Inside logs



Removing the logs one by one



The work crew (l to r): Rob Kraft, Rick Thomason, Taylor Barnhill, Mike Stevenson, Mike Foster (not pictured Matthew Pierce & Ross Young)



Unloading the logs from the trailer



Stacking the logs into the storage area.

APPALACHIAN BARN ALLIANCE

Board of Directors:

Sandy Stevenson (President), Jeannie Blethen, Christopher Brown, Ryan Cody, Janet Foster, Rob Kraft, Nancy Larkin, Matthew Pierce, Judy Ricker, Lynn Steen, and David Wyatt.

Advisory Board:

Chad Ayers, Dedrick Cody, Pat Franklin, Sidney Harrison, Jerry Jacover, Ethel Kirkpatrick, Maurice McAllister, Paula Shelton McAllister, Karen Paar, Jerry Plemmons, Betty Reeves, Steve Tweed, and Ross Young.

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Reynolds Foundation
Madison County TDA

"Remember to renew or begin your membership for 2018. Levels begin at just \$20 per year. Letters have been sent or you may contact us via our website. We appreciate your support!"

