

# BARN LIGHTS

Quarterly Newsletter

APPALACHIAN BARN ALLIANCE

VOL. 6 No. 1 Spring 2019

## The "New" 19th Century Barn

The search for the elusive Madison County flue-cured tobacco barn continues, with increasing success. Flue-cured bright leaf tobacco, unlike its air-cured cousin, burley tobacco, was heat cured in a log barn, sealed with mud chinking, and heated with two wood-fired rock furnaces inside on the dirt floor. Flue-cured tobacco was the primary tobacco cash crop in Madison County from 1872 until the early 1920s. Recently, a friend from Big Laurel, Emory Joe Wallin, called to report the existence of an old flue-cured barn near Marshall. This barn had not only survived in fair condition, but retained the openings in the rock foundation wall through which the rock furnace fires were fed. While several dozen flue-cured tobacco barns have been documented, none have survived with the rock furnace openings. One of these rare barns, the Jervis/Ray barn, has been donated to the Appalachian Barn Alliance's future Heritage Farmstead.



Century-old flue-cured log tobacco barn

The flue-cured tobacco barn was the first, distinctly new barn type to appear in the southern Appalachians, joining the ever-present, log-crib livestock barn. These barns usually were later modified for air-cured burley tobacco. Mud chinking between the logs was removed, doors were enlarged, and most of the rocks in the foundations and furnaces were repurposed for other buildings. Finally, the horizontal tier poles for hanging the tobacco, spaced at 24" apart, were repositioned at 34" to 48" to accommodate the long stems of burley tobacco. This rare barn, found on the outskirts of Marshall, is missing its rock furnaces, but otherwise retains its original form, including an opening in the gable end for the original flue pipe. Granted, this is barn-nerdism of the highest form, but it does excite the Indiana Jones in many of us, including our older tobacco farmers who love to tell the stories, passed down from their grandfathers, of these once-commonplace barns.



Surviving rock furnace opening in rock foundation



Mud chinking survives, with finger prints



24" tier pole spacing, unique to flue-cured tobacco

*Thanks to Emory Joe Wallin for bringing this barn to our attention*



## *The President's Letter*

With this change of season welcoming Spring, I am already looking toward the solstice date which is the first day of Summer. On that date, the Appalachian Barn Alliance will partner with an Asheville organization to help us in our fundraising efforts—The Saints of Paint. We were so pleased when they approached us last year to offer to co-sponsor an art gala weekend as they have been doing in the past in partnership with other non-profits in the area. So, please read about the event in our story on this page and plan to join us. Take advantage of your membership in our organization for a discounted ticket to the Friday night gala. And,

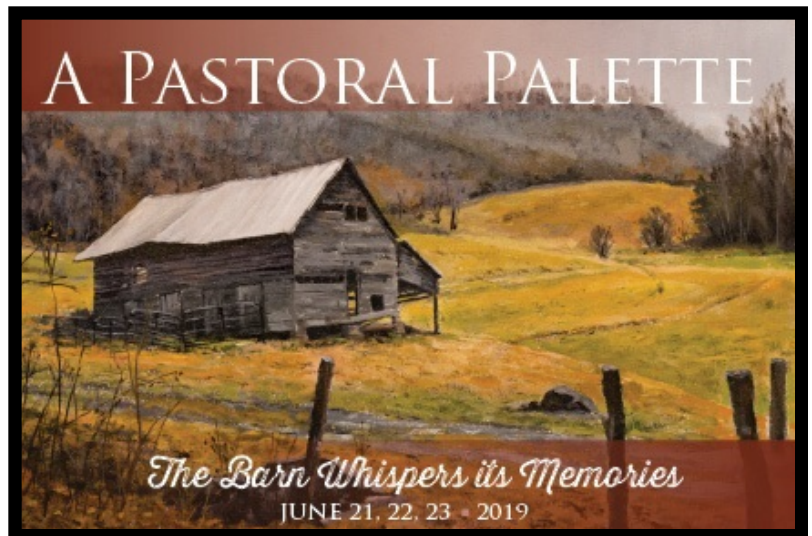
remember that your membership will also entitle you to discounts at Barn Day in May and at the Farm to Table Dinner in late June. This gala event will fulfill two of our goals for this year: engaging new partnerships and expanding our reach beyond Madison County. A great start to a busy year.

*Sandy Stevenson*

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## A Pastoral Palette—The Barn Whispers its Memories

A roomful of paintings of Madison County barns and farms, great food sampling from area restaurants, free wine & beer, yummy sweets: A perfect way to celebrate the Summer Solstice! Join us for a gala art event co-sponsored with 20 of Asheville's Saints of Paint artists and guest artist Polly Gott as they present their paintings honoring the barns and farms of Madison County's rural landscape. Friday evening, June 21, from 5pm to 8pm, the second floor of the Asheville Visitor Center mezzanine and conference room will be transformed into a celebration of our historic barns and their stories of our heritage. Finger foods from Fig Bistro, HomeGrown, Green Sage Cafe, Chupacabra Latin Cafe and others, as well as Madison County restaurants Sweet Monkey Bakery & Cafe and Stackhouse Restaurant, have been donated to make this event a very special one. You can mingle with the artists and hear their stories of creating the paintings. Half of the money from the sales of paintings will benefit the Barn Alliance, and the ticket price will also help us continue our work in documenting the barns and the history that goes with them. Reservations for the event are just \$45 and can be made through the ABA website or email [info@appalachianbarns.org](mailto:info@appalachianbarns.org) or call Sandy at (828) 380-9146. For your \$5 member discount, you will need to contact us for the process.





## Sixth Annual Barn Day and Barn Month Activities



It's our favorite month of the year—May! Come join us for the popular annual Barn Day bus tour on Saturday, May 18. Once again, our barn historian Taylor Barnhill will lead the bus tour and share historical information and stories about Madison County and the barns that are included. He always receives rave reviews for this chance to get up close and personal with several barns. The tour begins at 1:30pm and, when it concludes around 4pm, the party begins in the beautiful setting at Steen's barn in Mars Hill.

The Appalachian Barn Alliance welcomes the legendary fiddler Roger Howell and his friend Jerry Sutton to provide background music for entertainment at the party which follows the tour. Chupacabra Latin Café based in Woodfin will provide the food as you browse the offerings in the silent auction. For details on the day, go to <https://www.appalachianbarns.org/barn-day/>

Enjoy this great Appalachian heritage experience while supporting the organization that works to preserve that heritage. Advance purchase of tickets is required. The price is just \$45 for members and \$50 for non-members. A free drink ticket is included. For information and to purchase tickets, email [info@appalachianbarns.org](mailto:info@appalachianbarns.org) or call Sandy at 828 380-9146.

Other Barn Month events include restaurants donating a portion of their profits at various days during the month. Thanks to Dave's on 209, Papa Nick's, and Bonnie & Clyde's for their support. The Arts Council will again sponsor "The Barns of Madison County" exhibit during May. The opening reception will be from 5:30 to 7pm on Friday, May 10. Don't forget to stop by Zuma's Coffee for the 200 Years of Barn Evolution photo exhibit which is always well-received. Learn a bit about our barn heritage while sipping your coffee. We added a van tour in May for those who have a conflict with signing up for the bus tour on Barn Day.

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## Win a Hand-crafted Quilt

With all the excitement created last spring for our first quilt raffle, we were convinced that we should repeat the contest again this spring. Susan Christian donated a beautiful 60" x 78" Bear Paws with Coneflowers pattern to make this a possibility. Raffle tickets are on sale from board members and you can find all the details on our Facebook page or our webpage (<https://appalachianbarns.org/quilt-affle/>). The drawing will be at our booth at the Bluff Mountain Festival on Saturday, June 15. Good Luck!



### CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR BARN MONTH

All month – 200 Years of Barn Evolution display at Zuma  
Saturday, May 4—Eat at Dave's on 209 Restaurant  
Friday, May 10: 5:30 to 7pm – Opening reception at the Arts Council  
for "Barns of Madison County" (tentative)  
Friday, May 10 – Eat at Papa Nick's Restaurant  
Saturday, May 18 – 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Barn Day Tour & Party  
Friday, May 24 – 12-passenger Van Tour of Barns



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