

# BARN LIGHTS

Quarterly Newsletter

APPALACHIAN BARN ALLIANCE

VOL. 6 No. 2 Summer 2019

## A Venerable Barn and the Artists that Hear its Whisperings



Bryan Koontz

Oil on linen

Among the many Madison County barns that were painted *en plein air* by our Saints of Paint partner artists, for the Pastoral Palette event, one barn evoked the creative muse more than others: the Ernest English barn in Upper Laurel. Thanks to the hospitality of owner Scott Carswell, seven artists enjoyed this beautiful high elevation farm with its iconic 19<sup>th</sup> century barn. Oral tradition holds that it was built by Ernest English, a member of a large family that once owned much of Upper Laurel and Ebbs Chapel.

The barn is a classic log-crib livestock barn, and is also a bank barn, built into the hill to allow a wagon or sled access to the upper hayloft floor. Instead of square-hewn logs forming the stalls, these are built of massive round logs. The upper level is framed with large hewn white oak beams, many over twenty-two feet long. One beam is likely a Madison County record for size at fifteen inches square.

An old ox yoke recently hung on the wall of the loft, near the unique wooden feed chute for ears of corn. The draft horse that lived here was called an Iron Gray, a color of Percheron, and along with the oxen and mules, was used for many jobs including logging. A worn-out farm sled still rests in the shadows of the loft, its runners made of an atypical sled wood:

cucumber magnolia instead of sassafras. Also carved from a cucumber tree is a feed scoop. The barn's many doors have iron hinges that were hand-forged on the English farm, adding to the sense of century-old, whispered memories.



Mohamed Sabaawi

Oil on Linen



John Mac Kah

Oil on Canvas



Deborah Squier

Oil on Canvas



Susan Kokora

Oil on Panel





## *The President's Letter*

What an exciting few months this has been! The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Barn Day in May and a jam-packed June with Bluff Festival with the Quilt Raffle Drawing, the inaugural Pastoral Palette Gala, and our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Farm to Table dinner. The best part of these busy months was all the new friends and supporters we met. We are reaching out beyond Madison County to spread the word about what we do and the importance of preserving the heritage of the Appalachian barns and farmsteads. Working with the artists from the Saints of Paint group plus the business sponsors, individual sponsors, and the restaurants who donated was such a gratifying experience for all of us. The press coverage in the area reflected our mission. The Gala evening was filled with energy for what we do and that positive energy carried through the weekend as almost as many as attended the Friday event came by to see the art on Saturday and on Sunday. That energy translated to a rewarding experience as this was the largest financial success for the ABA in our seven years. A huge thank you to all who sponsored, attended, and purchased art. And, welcome to the family to all of our new friends!

*Sandy Stevenson*

---

ABA will be featured in September's  
*Our State* magazine



Writer from *Our State* interviewing  
James & Geneva Roberts

Farm to Table Dinner



**Mike & Nancy Driscoll chose the ABA  
Farm to Table dinner to celebrate  
their 55th Anniversary with friends**



# A PASTORAL PALETTE ART GALA



A chocolate barn by Good Cheer  
Chocolates of Mars Hill

French  
Broad  
Vigneron  
label  
created  
for the  
occasion



The Friday evening crowd



Artist Tony Biddix with Becky & Gary Webb



Ann Thomason with Artists  
Deborah Squier & Bryan Koontz

# A PASTORAL PALETTE

## BUSINESS SPONSORS

Madison County Tourism  
The Depot in Marshall  
East Fork Pottery  
French Broad Adventures  
French Broad Realty  
MHU Rural Heritage Museum  
The Lodge at Bear River  
Lenoir- Rhyne University  
Mountain Magnolia Inn  
Mountain Meadows Community  
Sandy Bottom Trail Rides

## CONTRIBUTORS TO THE EVENT (FOOD)

Chupacabra Latin Café  
Fig Bistro  
Green Sage Café  
Home Grown Café  
Stackhouse American Eatery  
Sweet Monkey Bakery & Café  
Three Graces Dairy  
Whole Foods

## INDIVIDUAL SPONSORS

Joy Anders for Joy, Allison & Andrea Anders  
Linda & Jim Barber  
Bobbi Darling  
Diane Delafield  
Darryl Duffé  
Barbara Fant  
Robin & Gordon Gaiser  
Patti & Elliott Grosh  
Patty & Jack Keeran  
Anne Rawson  
Susan & Bill Sewell  
Sandy & Mike Stevenson  
Maria & Jack Thomson  
Diane Van Helden  
Carolyn Vinson & Joe McGann  
Becky & Gary Webb

## CONTRIBUTORS TO THE EVENT (Drinks & Sweets)

French Broad Vigerons  
5 Walnut Wine Bar  
Wedge Brewing Company  
Good Cheer Chocolates  
Papa Nick's Restaurant  
Venus Baking Company  
Zuma Coffee & Cookies

*Board of Directors:*

Sandy Stevenson (President), Jeannie Blethen, Janet Foster, Mike Foster, Rob Kraft, Sara Nichols, Matthew Pierce, and David Wyatt.

*Advisory Council:*

Joy Anders, Chad Ayers, Christopher Brown, Dedrick Cody, Ryan Cody, Jemima Cook, Bonnie Cooper, Pat Franklin, Sidney Harrison, Jerry Jacover, Ethel Kirkpatrick, Maurice McAllister, Paula Shelton McAllister, Susan McChesney, Don McGowan, Karen Paar, Ryan Phillips, Robin Reeves, O'Neal Shelton, Steve Tweed, and Ross Young.

*We gratefully acknowledge our generous patrons:*

**Business Patrons:**

Bonnie & Clyde's Restaurant  
Buffalo Ridge Beef  
The Depot  
Donovan Electric  
Earthsong Photography  
East Fork Pottery  
French Broad Adventures  
French Broad Realty  
Griffin Insurance Agency  
The Lodge at Bear River  
McChesney Art  
MHU Rural Heritage Museum  
Mountain Meadows  
*Murdoch's Curse* Novel  
Papa Nick's Restaurant  
RiverDance  
Sandy Bottom Trail Rides  
Stackhouse Restaurant  
Steen & Snyder Dentistry  
WNC Wood Stock, LLC

**President's Circle:**

Madison County Tourism Development

**In-Kind Business Supporter Level:**

Lunsford Festival  
Madison County Arts Council  
Mars Hill Retirement Center  
NC Agritourism Network  
NC Cooperative Extension  
The News Record & Sentinel

**Personal Supporters (\$100 level):**

Joy Anders  
Nancy Anders  
Larry & Genevieve Burda  
David & Sylvia Bell  
Bobbi Darling  
Diane Delafield  
Pam & Tem Fitch  
Rick Franck  
Robin & Gordon Gaiser  
John & Kathryn Graeter  
Patti & Elliott Grosh  
Larry & Liz Gullum  
Lesley King  
Mike & Kari Morton  
Ray & Dorothy Rapp  
Anne Rawson  
Ann Shanklin  
Bobbi & Mike Tousey

**Benefactors (\$200 + level):**

Taylor Barnhill  
Pamela Dupuis & Bill Saupe  
Barbara Fant  
Mike & Janet Foster  
Rob & Melanie Kraft  
Gail Meadows & Bill Robertson  
Susan McChesney  
Rob Pulleyn  
Bill & Susan Sewell  
Mike & Sandy Stevenson  
Maria & Jack Thomson  
Diane Van Helden  
David & Willa Wyatt