

BARN LIGHTS

Quarterly Newsletter

APPALACHIAN BARN ALLIANCE

VOL. 6 No. 5 Autumn 2020

A Great and Quiet Absence

The current season of stillness in our lives, due to the pandemic, might remind us of the stillness that we find on the quiet, and often inactive, farmsteads that we visit to learn the ways of 19th and 20th century farms and barns. When we visit those farms, usually as part of a barn tour, it's fascinating to imagine the barnyard when the farm was in its heyday (or hay day!). What would we find in that place of humming activity? For

those of you who grew up on a farm, or maybe visited your grandparent's farm, you might remember the ornery rooster that you had to protect yourself from. Now imagine the rest of the soundtrack of that place, and the smells that let you know of lives lived, of all kinds. The rooster's brood of hens come to mind, with their constant "burro brokking," pecking the ground for anything digestible. A cow's call to be milked might briefly fill the air, or the whinny and snort of a huge Percheron draft horse. Many of our farms used mules because of their sure-footedness on hillsides, and the blended whinny and bray of a mule would get anyone's attention. Most farms had intruder alert animals, and those were usually *not* dogs. Farm dogs were often hunting

dogs trained to bark only when the serious job of hunting was underway, at night on a mountainside. The intruder alert animals were usually Guinea fowl and/or geese. The Guinea hens made a loud, screeching "potTRACK potTrack" call, while the geese of course, honked and hissed and flapped their huge wings. The

had a new batch of kit- their tiny mewling sounds, skittering of barn swallows farm were busy, talking how a tool might need to done by hand or draft an- husband would stand on whatever animal needed had their own distinct yell tion and often inspired the while, the pre-pesticide lines of song flowing from

Bobwhite quail, meadow larks and the night calls of whippoorwills and owls. Today is a different time and when we visit, we are thankful to hear crickets, a few barn swallows, or the sound of beef cows chewing their cud in the rented pasture. And thankful for the barns and outbuildings that have survived to tell their stories.

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—Taylor Barnhill



Feral cat, courtesy Taylor Barnhill



Lonesome beef cow, courtesy Taylor Barnhill



Resident screech owl, courtesy Taylor Barnhill

The President's Letter



When a door slams shut, a window opens.... and we at ABA have been looking out "windows" for the last several months as we evaluate what we can do to adjust. Sometimes it is good to be challenged to create a way to do what we have been doing for the last 8 years. This newsletter is filled with stories about what ideas our creative board members have presented and initiated. First, having to cancel our signature Barn Day led to a discussion about making a video and offering a "Virtual Tour." Next, our tour guide for the van tours - Taylor - suggested that he could offer safe tours by having folks follow his car in their own vehicles and connect by cell phone. And, last, the Saints of Paint approached us with an idea of having an art exhibit in the River Arts studio space for the entire month of October with sales also offered online. Well, whew!! I have to admit that it has been a pretty exciting few months as we plan, work on, and initiate these new ideas. We hope that you will also be excited about these new ways to experience the beauty of the barns and our rural heritage.

Sandy Stevenson

Resized Pastoral Palette

Our inaugural Art Gala last June was met with such excitement and success that we were wishing that we would just have to postpone it to later in the year. No such luck! So, we were delighted to agree to a suggestion by the founder of the Saints of Paint that we should partner with them for a month-long free and smaller exhibit combined with an online sale of that art in the month of October. We are keeping the name—Pastoral Palette—but adding the words "Resized—Rural Spaces for the Soul." You may have already seen our announcements in our eblast and on our Facebook. Many of last year's artists will return, joined by a few new ones, bringing not only paintings of barns, but also paintings of rural scenes. You can visit the exhibit at Studio #234 in Asheville (masked and only 4 to 6 people in the room at a time) or you can go to our website and view the art there. There will be more eblasts and Facebook postings as we get closer to the opening on October 4 to give you some sneak peeks at the works. Mark your calendars and plan to support the ABA through the purchase of a beautiful painting (our organization receives 50% of each painting sold).

A PASTORAL PALETTE
Rural Spaces for the Soul

A FUNDRAISING ART EXHIBIT AND SALE
WORKS BY 15 SAINTS OF PAINT ARTISTS

OCT 4 – 31, 2020

RIVER ARTS DISTRICT, 191 LYMAN STREET, ASHEVILLE
JMK STUDIO 234 • UPSTAIRS

EXHIBIT BENEFITS THE APPALACHIAN BARN ALLIANCE

Sales available online and more information at appalachianbarns.org
PAINTING BY MARK HEINEY

ADJUSTMENTS OFFER NEW & EXCITING POSSIBILITIES

Virtual Tours on the Horizon

If you have been on one of the barn tours with Taylor, you know how fascinating they can be. As we were faced with canceling our Annual Barn Day, we began to examine how to adjust. The lively discussion brought us to the idea of developing a series of virtual tours. Just think of the improvements on a regular tour—drone footage, interviews with the descendants, historic photos, the house & outbuildings, footage of gravestones of ancestors. Wow! But, the greatest aspect of this brainstorming was the idea to check with

our current grant organization (National Trust for Historic Preservation) to see if we could amend our project product from all 2-minute audio recordings to half that number and include producing a virtual tour. They agreed, so Taylor and Susan Patrice, a local photographer, are filming the Anderson Farmstead in Beech Glen and we will use it to test out the idea of a series. So, watch for a notice to sign up for this virtual tour, for a small donation.



Reinvented Barn Tours for Safety during the Pandemic

A way to get out of the house, enjoy the rural roads & the barns, and be safe? Yes, we can offer that! We have suspended the van tours and replaced them with a tour version where you follow the tour guide's car in your vehicle. He describes the scenery and recounts the history of the area using his cell phone to your cell phone. When you make stops, he uses his microphone while you stand socially distant wearing your mask. But, the best part is that you can choose a date and time that is convenient to both your group and to our tour guide, Taylor Barnhill. It's everything that was offered in the van tours without worrying about sitting in a small van with others during this time of restrictions. Of course, if you have 4 or more people and want a van, we can do that. Contact Taylor directly (828 380-9336) to discuss a date.



Annual Meeting via Zoom

Ah, Zoom! What would we have done without it for meetings over the past several months? Anybody else wish they had bought stock in the company in February? Our ABA Board and Executive Committee has been using the Zoom format to meet and have decided that we will hold our Annual Meeting in that manner, too. We continue to be very conscious of the health and safety of all of you (and all of us). We are hoping that you will have the time to join us—beginning at 9am on Tuesday, November 17 using the Zoom link which we will provide once you RSVP. We will be able to share our successes with new ideas that were tested in the month of October, and Taylor will regale you with stories about filming the virtual tour. We wish we could feed you and see you in person. But, at least we can see your faces on the computer screen. Mark your calendars!



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