

FIRE DESTROYS ALBANY COUNTY BARN

On Wednesday, March 28, just after noon, a dramatic fire destroyed the Dutch barn, stable, workshop, milk house, and open barn with corn crib on Bob and Amelia Anderson's farm at Waterloo. The initial cause of the fire is not known but a severe wind spread the flames and engulfed the five buildings destroying most of Bob Anderson's farming, welding, and wood working equipment. Aside from a pig and probably some cats the Anderson's livestock was saved and no one was injured.

When contacted by phone two weeks after the fire Amelia recalled that the fire started in the "hay barn" (18th century Dutch barn) but in 15 minutes everything was in flames. Four fire companies responded but they could save nothing. The fire burned off half a mile of open pasture to the south of the buildings. If the wind had come from the other direction it would probably have taken the house.

The loss has been devastating to the Andersons and the recovery will be a long hard process. Bob and Amelia are founding members of the Dutch barn society and have been active trustees. We share their losses.

LARGER WEMP BARN MOVED

Among the most historic and best preserved barns in America, the larger Wemp barn of Montgomery County, New York was recently dismantled and moved. Built by Johannes Wemp who came to the area in 1711. Johannes bought the land in 1736 on the Mohawk River near Fort Hunter, and probably built the barn at that time. The Wemp barn will be rebuilt at New Scotland in Albany County. John Fitchen in his book The New World Dutch Barn described the Wemp barn as, "...an exceptionally fine barn with the most careful and finished workmanship."

A year ago when the owner of the Wemp barn, David Hewitt decided to sell the barn, Vincent Schaefer, a trustee from Schenectady, tried to interest New York State and the U.S. Parks Department in saving the two Wemp barns as important examples of traditional architecture. They were not interested.

Later Vince learned that the larger barn might be sold and moved to the state of Montana by a wealthy California person who had a second home there. Vince contacted Carl Touhey who then bought and removed the building. Touhey plans to have the barn erected on a field of his farm in New Scotland. Touhey is planning that the barn raising will be done before the 4th of July, 1990. The barn will complement his Dutch stone house and Touhey plans to make the Wemp barn available to interested people.

The larger Wemp barn was taken down and will be erected by two sons of a well known barn mover from Hancock, Massachusetts. The family had planned to use a crane to dismantle the barn but April showers made the land too wet to support the equipment. They used a gin pole instead.

Jack Sobon and Dave Carlon measured and documented the Wemp barn and Clarke Blair photographed the dismantling of its frame. Vincent Schaefer will devote the next issue of his Dutch Barn Research Miscellany, Volume 3. Number 2., to the history and architecture of the larger Wemp barn.

Vince has published six issues of Miscellany, and has been distributing them free to trustees and to members who pay dues of \$25 or more. At the April trustees meeting the society agreed to support future issues.

BARN TOURS POSTPONED

Two barn tours which were being planned for the spring have been put on hold until the society can obtain liability insurance. Clarke Blair was organizing a tour of Montgomery County for May and Greg Huber and Ursula Brecknell are planning a later tour of New Jersey Dutch Barns.

GROUP NEEDED TO MEASURE AND STUDY GREENE COUNTY BARN

Contact Shirley Dunn (518-477-9132) if you are interested in joining a small group which will meet at the Greene County Historical Society, Bronck House in Coxsackie in June to measure their Dutch barn and develop an interpretation guide.

FUND RAISING COMMITTEE

Michael Bathrick, Alicia Jettner, and Shirley Dunn have applied for three grants from the New York State Council for the Arts. They would welcome assistance from members on additional grant applications and suggestions on other funding sources. They are planning to approach IBM, New York Council on the Humanities, J.M.Kaplan Fund, and McCann Foundation of Dutchess County.

The committee requests that trustees and officers of the society submit short biographies which are required by most grant-making groups. The Committee also needs a list of Dutch barns which have been destroyed in the past ten years, their location and when and why they came down. They need this to prove the need for preservation.

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In searching his records of Ulster County Dutch barns the editor of The Reporter found that of the nine barns identified by Fitchen in Ulster county between 1963 and 1966 only three are still standing.

DBPS TRUSTEE MEETING APRIL 17,1990 at the FREDERICK HOUSE

The need for resumes of all society trustees was stressed. These and regional reports on Dutch barns destroyed in the past ten years can be sent to Greg Huber, P.O. Box 344, Wyckoff, N.J., 04481.

The need for a strategic plan was discussed. Four committees were suggested to implement a plan; 1. Policy making, 2. Business (to set up budgets), 3. Publicity, and 4. Fact-finding. Greg Huber volunteered for the last. He will be distributing barn documentation forms to members and gathering our collective information. Mark Hesler is working on a Dutch barn brochure, as a result of the discussions at the Publications Committee meeting held in April.

Harold Zoch, president of the Dutch Barn Society, brought up the idea of a trustee meeting every two months with the alternate monthly meetings used as a more informal gathering where information can be exchanged. He is bothered that the society is not involved in more documentation and dicussion of barns. Meetings will continue to be held on the third Tuesday of each month. Time and place to be announced.

BARN RESTORATION IN UPPER SADDLE RIVER, NEW JERSEY

George Turell, a DBPS member from Bergen County, New Jersey, is completing the restoration of the Van Riper-Tice barn there and recently informed the society membership of two Dutch barns, one in Bergen County and the other in southern Rockland County, that were in danger of destruction. George said by phone that a DPW in Bergen County was considering building a Dutch frame barn to store highway equipment.

THE REPORTER

Our barn society is young, four years old, and small, about 200 members, but we are a group of people who recognize the importance of preserving, documenting, and studying this endangered and neglected New World architecture. To do this we must stay in touch with each other and with Dutch barn events. Therefore.... The Reporter is planned as a quarterly publication. Please send items of interest and dates of upcoming events to the editor....

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or call
between 5 & 10 pm
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