

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

FEB 18 1993

NATIONAL
REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Orr, Robert, Polygonal Barn

other names/site number Oxenrider Barn, 085-473-40006

2. Location

street & number S.R. 13, 1/2 mile north of CR 150N N/ not for publication

city or town North Webster vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Kosciusko code 085 zip code 46562

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Patrick R. Roberts

2/3/93

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Patrick Andrews

4/2/93

Orr Polygonal Barn
Name of Property

Kosciusko Co., IN.
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Round and Polygonal Barns of Indiana

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE: Animal facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE: storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Twelve-sided barn

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
walls WOOD: weatherboard

roof ASPHALT
other EARTH

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1911 - 1936

Significant Dates

1911

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

Makemson, Homer; Orr, Robert;
and Makemson, Bruce

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Historic Landmarks Foundation of
Indiana

Orr Polygonal Barn
Name of Property

Kosciusko Co., IN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	6	6	0	8	6	3	0	4	5	6	8	4	2	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

3

Zone	Easting				Northing									

2

Zone	Easting				Northing									

4

Zone	Easting				Northing									

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jerry McMahan

organization Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana date November 11, 1991

street & number 340 W. Michigan St. telephone 317/639-4534

city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46202

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Willard Oxenrider

street & number Rt. 1 telephone _____

city or town Pierceton state IN zip code 46562

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1Orr Polygonal Barn
Kosciusko Co., IN

In rural Kosciusko County near Pierceton, Indiana, stands the Robert Orr Polygonal Barn. Built from 1909 to 1911 by local carpenter Homer Makemson and Mr. Orr, this unusual structure sits on an old farmstead composed of a house, garage and rectangular barn, the entire compound surrounded by mature trees, rolling hills, open pastures and cultivated fields. Although the farmstead has been abandoned, the current owners, granddaughter of Mr. Orr, still maintain the important structure. The barn, complete with a long, gently sloped ramp to the upper level, maintains its integrity in relation to location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, meeting all of the standards set forth in the registration requirements for multiple property nominations.

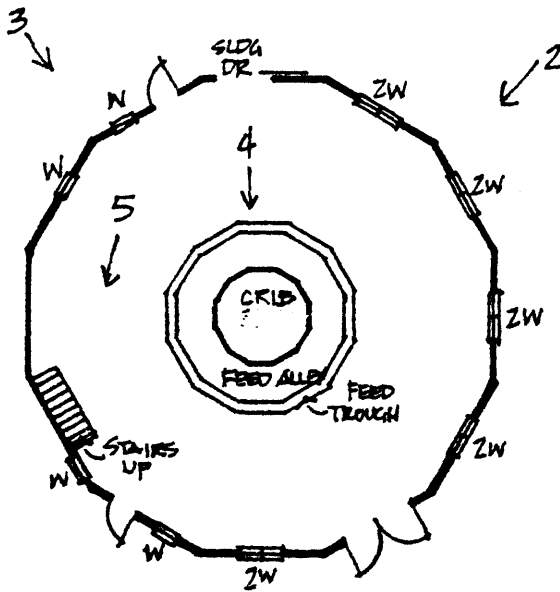
This twelve-sided, two storied barn is capped by a sectional three-pitch gambrel roof and is crowned by a twelve-sided cupola with a sectional cone roof. The cupola contains five six-light windows that provide a great deal of light and ventilation to the upper reaches of the barn. Finally, the balloon framing of the wall system rests securely on the poured concrete foundation.

The roof surfaces of the main barn and cupola are covered in asphalt replacement shingles, a change that minimally affects the historic integrity of the structure. There is a slight overhang to the eaves which exhibit the exposed rafters of the roofing system and the roof decking. The wall surfaces are sheathed in the original vertical wood siding which remains in good condition.

The upper level contains one grade level opening, that of the main doors which are located on the south or main elevation (Photo 1). These main doors, constructed of wood and mounted on overhead tracks that allow the doors to slide inside the barn, are decoratively treated. Frame lumber was used to divide the door surfaces into three regions: one, a tall top section with two boards flaring out at the bottom; two, a short middle section with two boards that meet those in the middle and again flare out. Centered above these main doors is a four light window. The only other upper level opening is a small sliding hay door on the north side that is suspended in the air as a hay loft opening.

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NORTH

LOWER LEVEL
no scale

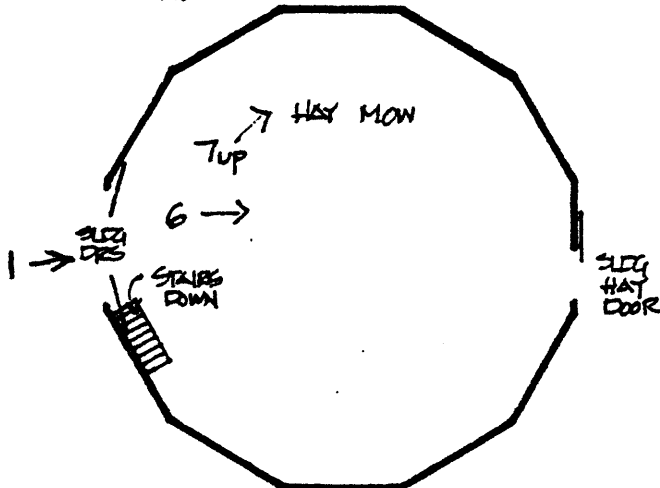
Note: W = window
ZW = double window

ORR (OXENRIDER)
BARN

1909 12-SIDED
KOSCIUSKO COUNTY, INDIANA
WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP

↑_i = Photographic key

UPPER LEVEL
no scale



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Section number 7 Page 3 Orr Polygonal Barn
Kosciusko Co., IN

The lower level openings can best be described by beginning on the lower level on the west side of the ramp and proceeding around the barn in a clockwise manner. In the first side, there is a four light window, side two contain a four light window and a human-sized door, three contains a wide sliding door and sides four, five, six and seven contain pairs of four light windows (Photos 2 and 3). Side eight contains a set of outward swinging doors while side nine contains a pair of four light windows. Side ten houses a four light window and a human-sized door, side eleven has a six light window and finally, side twelve is located behind and under the ramp and has no openings.

The interior of the barn (see floor plan) is very open and well engineered. On the lower level, there is a central twelve-sided corn crib that is made up of posts at each of the wall intersections and 2" X 6" pieces of lumber (Photo 4). Approximately five feet around this central corn crib is a feed alley that is delineated by large square posts. These posts are functional in terms of creating the feed alley and are structural in their support of the laminated beam overhead that intermediately supports the upper level's floor joists (Photo 5). Interestingly, the floor joists inside the laminated beam run straight in a north/south direction while those outside of the laminated beam (between the beam and the exterior walls) run radially inward from the walls to the beam. Finally, there is a staircase to the upper level that is located on the southwest wall next to the six light window. The rest of the area on the lower level has been left open for the handling and housing of animals (the original use) or for today's use (storage).

The upper level of the barn is one large, open space (Photo 6) with the source of light radiating from the cupola above. The roof system is a marvel with each of the twelve roof sections separated from its neighbor by large laminated beams (Photo 7). Within each section are additional laminated beams that provide intermediate support at the changes in roof pitch. Further, the support lent by the outside walls in addition to the cupola framing makes for a strong and durable unit. The cupola framing is composed of a series of interlocking timbers that span the base of the cupola, creating a web of wood at the cupola's juncture to the roof. Finally, an overhead hay track is still present to facilitate the easy handling of hay and straw, the original use of the upper level.

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Section number 7 Page 4 Orr Polygonal Barn
Kosciusko Co., IN

The Robert Orr (Oxenrider) Polygonal Barn, maintained today by the descendents of the original owner and builder, stands as a testament to the hard work pride of its past. Most of the fabric is still intact and well-preserved, making sure that this symbol of agriculture's evolution will live on for years to come.

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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 5Orr Polygonal Barn
Kosciusko Co., IN

The Robert Orr (Oxenrider) Polygonal Barn, located in rural Kosciusko County, Indiana, in Washington Township, is significant under Criteria A and C for its association with the development of round and polygonal barns in Indiana (see historic context, "Round and Polygonal Barns in Indiana."). The Orr Polygonal Barn is a significant example of how local builders adopted the central-plan barn idea to suit their own needs. The barn is an important and direct link to the agricultural development that occurred in the state from 1850 to 1936 (and beyond) and has changed little since its construction from 1909-1911. The period of greatest significance of the barn was from 1909 to 1936 when round and polygonal barns lost their popularity. By 1936, round and polygonal barns were considered obsolete and the last round barn was built in the state to replace a 1915 round barn that had burned (Grant County, Richland Township, extant).

The original owner of the barn was Robert Orr who enlisted the services of a local carpenter and neighbor Horace Makemson. Mrs. Oxenrider, current co-owner, recalls that Horace's son, Bruce, also helped in the construction (Bruce was 16 at the time). Orr and Makemson set out to build the twelve-sided structure with vertical wood siding of Sugar Maple, a twelve-sided cupola atop the three-pitch gambrel roof and a central corn crib on the lower level. The lower level housed farm animals that were fed around the central twelve-sided corn crib in a large feed alley. The upper level was devoted to the storage of hay and straw, an operation that was made more pleasant with the ventilation and light from the cupola windows and more efficient with the hay track mounted to the roof timbers. Both the cupola and hay track mechanism remain today as reminders of past farming practices. 1

The ownership of the farm and barn has always remained in the Orr family. The homestead was comprised of the barn in addition to the nice frame farmhouse, garage and rectangular barn to the south. The farm then passed to one of Orr's sons after his death and eventually to his granddaughter and her husband, Mr. & Mrs. Willard Oxenrider. Although the farmstead is abandoned today, the barn is still maintained by the Oxenriders who live in a modern house some 200 yards north of the barn.2

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Orr Polygonal Barn
Kosciusko Co., IN

In Indiana, there were eighteen twelve-sided barns constructed, making it the third most prominent style of the 219 round and polygonal structures built in Indiana (behind true circles [151] and octagons [33]). The barns were built in Allen County (Adams Township, razed), Clinton County (Michigan Township, extant), Huntington County (Huntington Township, extant), Huntington County (Lancaster Township, extant), Huntington County (Polk Township, razed), the Orr (Oxenrider) barn, LaGrange County (Newbury Township, extant), Marshall County (three in Greene Township, with two being extant and one razed), Miami County (Washington Township, razed), Parke County (Raccoon Township and Greene Township, both razed), Ripley County (Jackson Township, extant), Shelby County (Noble Township, extant), Tippecanoe County (Randolph Township, extant), Wabash County (Lagro Township, razed) and White County (Princeton Township, razed). Of these, only two were constructed before the issuance of the 1905 patent (Clinton and Wabash County examples), thus showing that the vast majority of the twelve-sided structures were most probably built to skirt the patent rights of McNamee, Duncan and Littleton.

The Robert Orr (Oxenrider) barn is an unusual example of a polygonal barn, being one of ten twelve-sided barns remaining in the state. The barn has the essential physical features that it possessed at the time of its period of significance, from 1909 to the mid 1930s. The building has aged gracefully and little has changed since its completion in 1911, thus making the barn a landmark and milestone for the history and development of agriculture in the state of Indiana.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Kosciusko Co., IN

ENDNOTES

1. John Hanou, research compiled on Indiana's round and polygonal barn from 1986 to present. Archived at Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, 340 West Michigan Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202.
2. Mrs. Willard Oxenrider, owner of the Orr (Oxenrider) barn, Pierceton, Indiana. Interviewed by Jerry McMahan, 13 August 1991.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hanou, John. Research compiled on Indiana's round and polygonal barns from 1986 to present. Archived at Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, 340 West Michigan Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202.

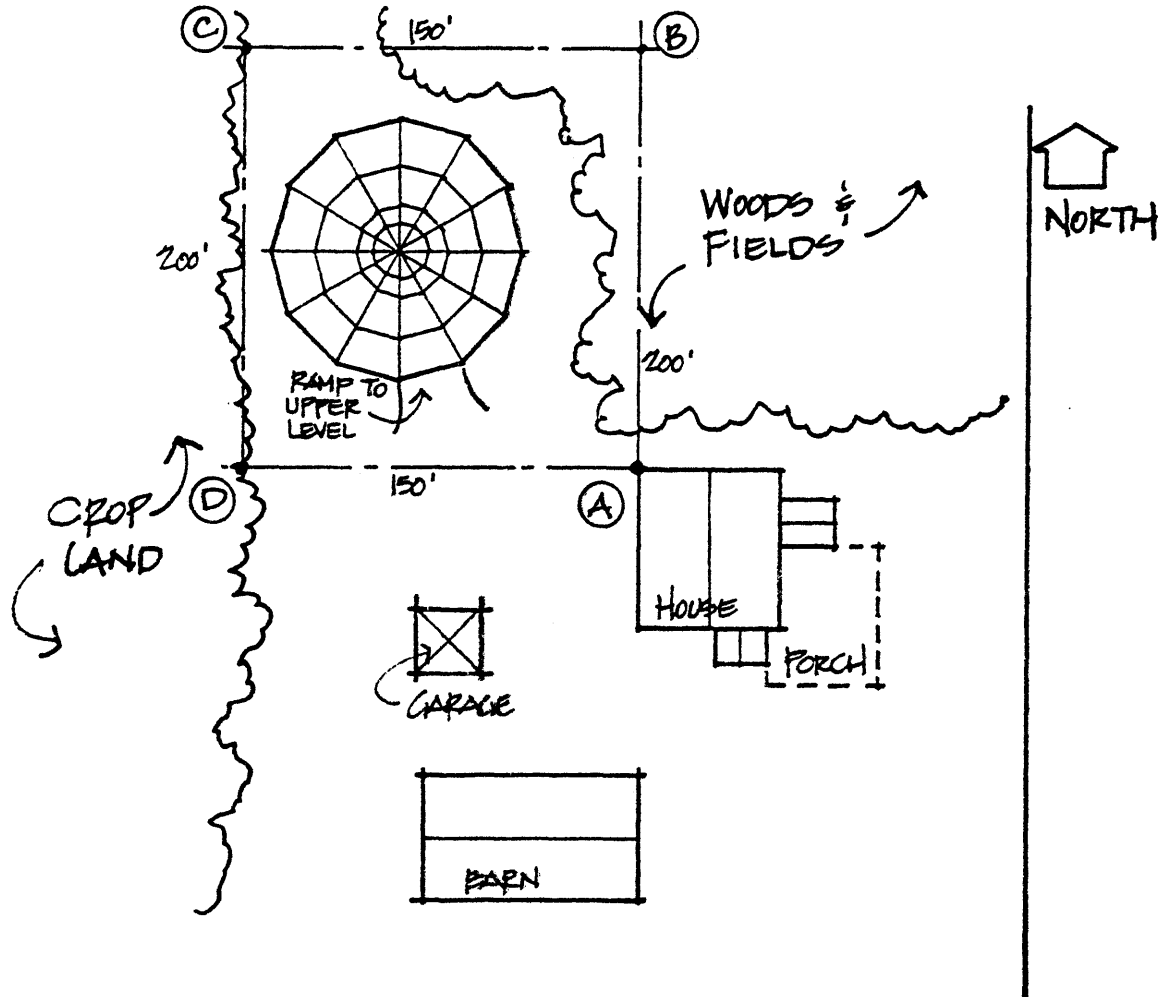
Intensive architectural survey of Indiana's round and polygonal barns. Conducted June to August 1991, conducted by Jerry McMahan, areawide survey of round and polygonal architectural and historical resources.

Oxenrider, Mrs. Willard. Owner of the Orr (Oxenrider) barn, Pierceton, IN. Interviewed by Jerry McMahan, 13 August 1991.

Soike, Lowell J. Without Right Angles, The Round Barns of Iowa. Des Moines, IA: Iowa State Historical Department, Office of Historic Preservation, 1983.

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ORR (OXENRIDER) BARN

SITE PLAN
NO SCALE

1909 12-SIDED
KOSCIUSKO COUNTY, INDIANA
WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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Continuation Sheet**

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Kosciusko Co., IN

Orr Polygonal Barn
Kosciusko County, Indiana

Verbal Boundary Description

The Orr Polygonal Barn is located in the NW of Section 3, T32N-R7E in Washington Township, Kosciusko County, Indiana. Referring to the site plan, beginning at a point one foot west of the northwest corner of the house (Point A), proceed 200 feet north to Point B, then 150 feet west to Point C, then 200 feet south to Point D, then 150 feet east to Point A.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes only the nominated resource and the entry ramp.