

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

MC 10000 18 116



## National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information.

\_\_\_\_ New Submission      X   Amended Submission

## A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Wisconsin Centric Barns

## B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Wisconsin Centric Barns, 1876-1921


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## D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

  
Signature of certifying officialDeputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
Title9/18/2017  
Date

State Historic Preservation Office - Wisconsin  
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

  
Signature of the Keeper11-9-17  
Date of Action

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State

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Provide narrative explanations for each of these sections on continuation sheets. In the header of each section, cite the letter, page number, and name of the multiple property listing. Refer to *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* for additional guidance.

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**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 250 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, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**Statement of Historic Contexts**

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**Wisconsin Centric Barns, 1876-1921**

**Introduction**

Barn raising conjures up a rural image of community spirit, rugged independence and a relationship with the land. The farm can serve as the most basic architectural reflection of rural cultural life in Wisconsin and the nation at large. Barn building practices, in particular, highlight local and ethnic traditions, changing farming practices, and building technologies.<sup>1</sup> Octagonal, multi-sided, and particularly circular barns appeared around the turn of the twentieth century as a Midwestern dairy state phenomenon.<sup>2</sup> While fairly unusual on farms of today, centric forms also were rare during the peak of their construction in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, primarily due to established building traditions which emphasized straight lines and right angles. Round barns are significant in Wisconsin due to their rarity, architectural interest, and as a building form that paralleled the growing influence of professional expertise in agriculture.

Amongst Midwestern states, where the majority of centric barns have been constructed, accounts vary, but as many as 215 round barns have been constructed in Wisconsin. Neighboring states typically have fewer, with estimates of 170 in Minnesota, 170 in Iowa, 155 in Illinois, 56 in Ohio, and 49 in Nebraska. Indiana is the only state in the country that initially possibly had more than Wisconsin, with as many as 225 identified resources.<sup>3</sup> There is evidence that a large number of centric barns have been demolished or have collapsed in the last four decades, roughly a century after their completion. Over 440 centric barns were identified across the United States in the 1970s. By 1980, 180 centric barns were identified in Wisconsin, still a fraction of a percent of all barn buildings in the state.<sup>4</sup> In a recent survey of Wisconsin round barns, 174 total resources were identified; close to the 180 total estimated in 1980. Of these, 111 are known to be extant. Nine of these are County Fairgrounds, Stock Pavilion, Exhibition Building, or Judging Pavilion barns. It is believed that Wisconsin has the most extant centric barns of any state in the nation at this time.

There are early, American examples of centric barns. George Washington built a sixteen-sided barn on his Dogue Run farm in Fairfax County, Virginia. The small outbuilding, likely constructed in 1792, was intended for treading horses and was destroyed by fire. On a grander scale, Shakers built a large, truly round barn in Hancock, Massachusetts, in 1826. Large enough to allow a wagon to enter and turn completely around within its circumference, the unique Hancock barn burned in 1865 only to be rebuilt. It stood 30 feet tall at its center monitor and had a diameter of 90 feet with two and a half foot thick fieldstone walls and attracted considerable public attention.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Auer, Michael J. *The Preservation of Historic Barns*. National Park Service Preservation Briefs website. <[www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/brief20.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/brief20.htm)> Accessed April 3, 2013, Page 1.

<sup>2</sup> Soike, Lowell J. *Without Right Angles: The Round Barns of Iowa*. Des Moines, IA: Penfield Press, 1990, Page 3.

<sup>3</sup> Hanou, John T. *A Round Indiana: Round Barns in the Hoosier State*. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 1993, Page 1.

<sup>4</sup> Soike, Page 3.

<sup>5</sup> Hanou, Page 6.

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Noted Wisconsin scholar, Jerry Apps, has written extensively on rural history and agricultural buildings. Jerry Apps was a professor in the Agriculture and Extension Education Department, and now professor emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In his book *Barns of Wisconsin*, Apps explains the origins of round-shaped barns in this way. “Round and polygonal buildings trace back to ancient Greece and Rome, years before the birth of Christ. Through the years some interest in centric buildings continued in Europe, and the immigrants brought these ideas with them to the New World. In this country, round and polygonal buildings attracted attention in the 1850s, largely due to the work of Orson Fowler, a phrenologist from New York.”<sup>6</sup> Fowler advocated round forms for all types of buildings, including barns.

Despite this attention to the centric form thirty years prior, the first known centric barn in Wisconsin was constructed in 1875 with more appearing in the late 1870s and on, when agricultural colleges, experimental stations, and widely published polemical guidebooks began to teach progressive farming methods based on industrial and scientific efficiency.<sup>7</sup> By the late nineteenth century, centric barns of multiple geometric configurations were built by inventive and experimental dairy farmers.<sup>8</sup>

The Progressive Era in the United States, roughly spanning the period from the 1890 to 1920, was marked by the implementation and advocacy of social reform. While this certainly applied to muckraking journalism, women’s suffrage, and the temperance movement, it also refers to a broad move in favor of scientific approaches and applications to all facets of life, including agriculture. In an effort to eliminate inefficiencies, expertise was touted as a solution for social and economic ills. The development and expansion of dairy farming in Wisconsin, and the adaptation to the circular barn, relates to this application of scientific principles to improve efficient work flow and easing the labor burden for farmers. The form of some farm buildings shifted to a truly circular form around 1900 as the scale increased along with a shift in purpose to dairy farming. Arguably the greatest period of centric barn construction, the first two decades of the twentieth century saw a large majority of such buildings constructed in Wisconsin. Models continued to be sponsored and encouraged by state sponsored agricultural experimental stations through the First World War. As the centric and round barn model failed to gain extensive following amongst the farmers of Wisconsin and the wider Midwest, partially due to the form’s unfamiliarity and difficulty, and partly because of a realization that the promises of increased efficiency were exaggerated, the centric barn type’s popularity faded in the 1920s, becoming nearly unheard of as dairy farming implements and methods became increasingly mechanized and standardized.<sup>9</sup>

Centric barns, whether polygonal or truly circular, developed for a brief time as a consciously scientifically supported form intended to improve the lives of American farmers through the application of efficiency in materials, design, and function. The development of the centric barn type around the turn-of-the-twentieth century was also strongly affected and encouraged by parallel developments in agriculture and dairy practices in Wisconsin.

<sup>6</sup> Apps, Jerry. *Barns of Wisconsin*. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2010, Page 50.

<sup>7</sup> Auer, Page 3.

<sup>8</sup> Triumpho, Richard. *Round Barns of New York*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2004, Page 1.

<sup>9</sup> Auer, Page 4.

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**Wisconsin Octagonal and other Polygonal Barns**

Multi-sided barns and other agricultural buildings have a long history. British precedents include 'gin-gang' building from northern England used to house horses and horse fitting equipment. Hay barracks, which are open-sided structures for storing hay and having a roof above, is another similar eighteenth century example. Both the gin-gang and the hay barrack are usually quite small in scale. Early examples of centric barns in American history include the already mentioned George Washington's Dogue Run sixteen-sided barn destroyed by fire in 1967, and the Shaker's Hancock round barn.<sup>10</sup> A number of Dutch colonial buildings in New York and Pennsylvania have octagonal and hexagonal shapes. Early centric barns in the United States invariably took on octagonal and other polygonal shapes in plan. Most of these were built in New England and the Mid-Atlantic States, especially New York.<sup>11</sup>

The post-Civil War period, especially the 1880s, saw a significant number of smaller, multi-sided agricultural buildings constructed. Most of these were multiple story designs with hay lofts above for fodder grain and room for horses or cows below in stanchions and box stalls, used especially in the colder months of the year. Most of these eastern seaboard examples were not large, usually about forty feet in diameter, and did contain silos. A number of them were decorated with large cupolas and many windows, as they were often built by more successful and ambitious landowners on established farms.<sup>12</sup>

The octagon shape, in particular, was actively promoted. Orson Squire Fowler, a follower of renowned phrenologist J.F. Gall, spent much of the 1850s travelling around the country in support of his popular book *A Home for All; or, the Gravel Wall and Octagon Mode of Building*. In a search for rational and perfect forms, Fowler described construction methods, space planning, house design, and the ideal octagonal barn with a ramp leading to a second floor.<sup>13</sup> As a popular mid-nineteenth century author, he had significant influence on American culture. His goal was the efficiency and improvement of an ideal human existence in all things, including home design. In *A Home for All* he prescribes a specific masonry method of construction and the octagon plan form. While Fowler focuses on the house type, he implies that such a form is appropriate for all building types. Indeed, he believed that the ideal setting for any American would be a yeoman farm of two buildings: a two-story octagonal masonry farm house and a larger octagonal barn, and nothing else since efficiency dictates that all functions should exist under one roof.<sup>14</sup> According to Fowler, the octagon was a superior form in its purity of essence and natural beauty. Curvilinear and spherical shapes are natural forms, and, thus, the best way to imitate nature in all things. His octagonal barns would have two floors, similar to a bank barn, equipped with ventilation and natural light. The second floor supplied with grain and the lower floor with livestock facing the center.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Triumpho, Page 14.

<sup>11</sup> Triumpho, Page 13.

<sup>12</sup> Sanders, J.H. Ed. *Practical Hints about Barn Building*. Chicago, IL: J.H. Sanders Publishing, 1893, Page 53.

<sup>13</sup> Hanou, Page 7.

<sup>14</sup> Fowler, Orson Squire. *A Home for All; or, the Gravel Wall and Octagon Mode of Building*. New York, NY: Fowler and Wells, 1854, Page 3.

<sup>15</sup> Apps, Jerry. *Barns of Wisconsin, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 1995, Page 51.

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In 1850 Orson Squire Fowler toured Wisconsin, travelling to the Milton area and other parts of the southeastern portion of the state, to promote his book and ideas including the octagonal model of building.<sup>16</sup> Polygon homes began to appear in the state, and around the country, in the following decade, serving as local showpieces. Occasionally more than one would be constructed in a community, and it was usually the property of a prominent businessman, politician, or farmer. However, unlike houses, octagonal barns did not appear until decades later. The case of centric barns is the opposite of housing; where there is one, there are usually at least a few more in close proximity as the construction of a 'round' barn often inspired neighbors to do the same in Wisconsin.<sup>17</sup> It is possible that Fowler's book inspired the construction of octagonal barns in Wisconsin and across the United States. His ideas parallel the early development of octagonal forms in housing in the 1850s, especially on the East Coast, but their relationship to barn design is unclear. While often pointed to as the origin of round barn design, there is little evidence to suggest a direct connection between Fowler's ideas and the construction of any specific centric barn. Octagonal agricultural forms began to appear in greater numbers in the 1870s, and by the 1880s centric barns were constructed across the country, especially in Wisconsin and the upper Midwest.<sup>18</sup> The oldest dated extant centric barn in Wisconsin is the Elmo Holt Octagonal Barn, located in Iowa County, and built in 1876.

In 1874, Elliot W. Stewart, a successful farmer and lecturer in the agricultural sciences at Cornell University constructed a large octagonal barn on his property in Erie County, New York. This eighty foot diameter barn replaced a number of smaller rectangular ones already on his farm that he demolished. The following year he published his views and plans on the design of the octagon barn and its advantages. His views were favorably received, especially in application to the increasingly lucrative dairy farm model across the northern states of the United States. In a series of published articles, in both academic and industry circulated journals, Stewart argued for the improvement of octagonal and round-shaped barns over rectangular plans because of the increased enclosed area of the round shaped plans per similar construction material quantities and wall heights.<sup>19</sup> A circle, or sphere, is in many ways the most efficient shape: simple geometry explains that the area of a circle is relatively large compared to the length of the line defining its edges. A round or octagonal barn will have a greater interior area than a rectangular barn for length of wall construction required. Stewart saw the octagon form as superior and practical approach because it was potentially cheaper to build and contained more storage for its size. He argued that while a truly round barn would be best, it was an impractical approach as it was too expensive and difficult to construct; octagons would be satisfactory. These 'round shapes' would not be as affected by wind loads, and had more efficient line of travel and work. In a pre-industrialized era of agriculture, efficiency of movement on the part of farmers and other workers was important to save time and physical effort. The octagon also offered, partly due to its size and height, enough room to combine many functions of the farm, especially a dairy farm, under one roof.<sup>20</sup>

By 1884, about forty octagon barns based on Elliot Stewart's published model, or variations of it, had been constructed around the country. Almost a dozen similar octagon barns were constructed in Ozaukee County,

<sup>16</sup> Jost, Larry T. *The Round and Five-or-More Equal Sided Barns of Wisconsin*. Franklin, WI: L.T. Jost, 1982, Page 1.

<sup>17</sup> Perrin, Richard W.E. "Circle and Polygon in Wisconsin Architecture: Early Structures of Unconventional Design." *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol. 47. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society, 1963.

<sup>18</sup> Soike, Page 6.

<sup>19</sup> Triumpho, Page 28.

<sup>20</sup> Soike, Page 12.

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Wisconsin, in the 1880s and 1890s by builder and designer Ernest Clausung.<sup>21</sup> Clausung consciously followed the expert work published, partly by Stewart, on the construction and use of octagon barns.

The search for increased efficiency, the motivation behind the development of octagonal and other polygonal shaped barns, encouraged the design of increasingly circular forms. The interior concentric formation of cow stanchions or horse stables meant a purely round form, as the extra, and sometimes awkward, spaces created at the obtuse interior angles were not necessarily used.<sup>22</sup> Multi-sided variations of the octagon idea began to appear with 10-, 12-, 14-sided barns appearing in the Midwest, with quite a few in Wisconsin. Most of these barns did not follow prescribed models and little is known about the people, often skilled craftsmen, carpenters, and farmers, who built them. Similarities amongst the octagon and polygon shaped barns indicate that some continuity in craft and personnel likely existed.<sup>23</sup> These multi-sided barns, in general, pre-date the construction of truly round ones.

The octagon and polygon shaped plans also correspond to other markers that indicate their earlier age: octagonal barns usually do not have self-supporting, arched roof constructions. They never have an interior silo of any shape or scale. They are typically less than sixty feet in diameter, and usually close to the small end of the scale with diameters close to forty feet. The multi-sided polygonal plans are not standardized in any way, with each one being unique. The materials used in their construction also indicate early dates in the use of pre-industrial techniques like the use of vertical board siding, timber framing, and stone foundations instead of the cut lumber, stick-built and arched frames, concrete, brick, and tile materials of the true round barns of the twentieth century.<sup>24</sup> In a broad sense, octagonal and polygonal barn plans dominated nineteenth century round-type barn construction, while truly round forms were more common after the turn of the century.<sup>25</sup> The year 1900 can serve as a turning point in development and is, coincidentally, the mean of peak construction for round-type barn construction in Wisconsin.

In this study there are 46 identified octagonal and polygonal shaped barns in Wisconsin. Amongst these 14 are multi-sided, from hexagonal 6-sided shapes in plan to as many as 20-sided forms that appear almost circular. There is also significant variation including, 10-, 12-, 13-, 14-, 15-, 16-, and 18-sided types including the large Nashold 20-Sided Barn located at 1744 County Road E in Columbia County and constructed in 1911. The remaining 32 are extant octagonal barns including the Gilley-Tofslund Octagonal Barn, located on Stebbinsville Road in Rock County, and built by John Almond in 1893. The Gilley-Tofslund Octagonal Barn and the Nashold 20-Sided Barn are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Among the 26 documented non-extant octagonal and polygonal shaped barns in Wisconsin, 10 were multi-sided and the remaining 16 were octagonal.

### **Wisconsin Farmers Apply Scientific Principles to Dairy Farming**

Between 1860 and 1890 the state of Wisconsin experienced an agricultural revolution as the economic basis of production shifted from wheat to dairy. Wheat production peaked statewide in 1870, with declines in

<sup>21</sup> Soike, Page 10.

<sup>22</sup> Triumpho, Page 48.

<sup>23</sup> Soike, Page 23.

<sup>24</sup> Auer, Page 4.

<sup>25</sup> Hanou, Page 2.

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production in some parts of the state as early as the 1850s, largely the result of decreased yields. Later, the railroads opened up the production of more fertile lands in Minnesota and the Dakotas, contributing to a further decline in wheat production in Wisconsin.

As profitability in the production of wheat and other staple crops all but disappeared after the Civil War, farmers searched for alternatives. As experienced dairy farmers from New York and immigrants from central Europe moved into the southern and western portions of the state in the 1860s and 1870s, Wisconsin turned to dairy, encouraging a move to more profitable products such as milk, cheese, and butter.<sup>26</sup> In turn, these products became considerably more predictable in terms of quality and storage in the 1880s and 1890s with the development of specific agricultural technologies and methods including winter feeding, improved breeding, butterfat testing, and refrigeration.<sup>27</sup> By the 1890s the dairy industry in Wisconsin was firmly in place and had reached an industrial and national scale.

A combination of influences from the University of Wisconsin, the Dairyman's Association, and technological advancement led to these changes. Cheese came first for widespread production in the 1870s, but was unpredictable in a pre-refrigeration era. The dairy industry found success as it increasingly became scientific. Farm research, experimentation, and the dissemination of knowledge in the industry through publications such as *Hoard's Dairyman* aided rapid advancements in dairy production and husbandry.<sup>28</sup> Farmers worked to improve milk production through breeding, increasing the quality of hay and feed, and the general welfare of dairy cows. Feed was vitally important to this development; the introduction of the round silo and the process of ensilage, developed by Franklin King, a University of Wisconsin professor, would allow increased winter feeding efficiency, and thus, more milk and more profit.<sup>29</sup> Cheese, butter, cream, and milk have been large components of Wisconsin's economic base since and the state has developed an international reputation for dairy products. Dairy afforded the local agricultural economy less spectacular, but more consistent, gains from the 1880s on. This was especially aided by Professor Stephen Babcock of the University of Wisconsin, and the invention of the accurate butterfat test. The test significantly aided in quality control of dairy products for export and distribution.<sup>30</sup> Dairy became the dominant type of farming suited to diversification in the late nineteenth century; this was especially true for Wisconsin, which had the appropriate climate, available land, and expertise for widespread dairy farming.<sup>31</sup>

The University of Wisconsin established the Agricultural Experiment Station in 1883 and the College of Agriculture in 1889.<sup>32</sup> The presence of the two contributed to the advancement of dairy farming, and to some extent, the prevalence of round barns in the state. Research directly contributed to improvements in the measurement of butterfat, the preservation and testing of milk, agricultural sanitation, ensilage, and comparative breeding, and of specialized dairy cattle.<sup>33</sup> Barns were used to protect the newly popular Holstein and Guernsey

<sup>26</sup> Wyatt, Barbara, Ed. *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin, Vols. I, II and III*. Madison, WI: Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986, Vol. II, Page 10-1.

<sup>27</sup> Wyatt, Vol. II, Page 10-4.

<sup>28</sup> Wyatt, Vol. I, Page 2-11.

<sup>29</sup> Lampard, Eric E. *The Rise of the Dairy Industry in Wisconsin: A Study of Agricultural Change, 1820-1920*. Madison, WI: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1963, Page 147.

<sup>30</sup> Lampard, Page XI.

<sup>31</sup> Apps, Page 45.

<sup>32</sup> Apps, Page 44.

<sup>33</sup> Wyatt, Vol. II, Page 2-12.



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cows, specialized breeds for milking only. Testing programs were also introduced in the late nineteenth century at the behest of *Hoard's Dairyman* and various state agricultural colleges. The round barn was a part of this scientific approach to agriculture. Modern dairy barns, encouraged by the same institutions, consisted of long rows of stanchions and systematic feeding in well ventilated and lit spaces with wide aisles for yearlong use. Threshing floors and hay lofts were maintained in close proximity to the cows for feeding. This arranged function dictated a form that lent itself to large and long bank barns or circular ones.<sup>34</sup>

Centric barns are a physical manifestation of the rise of dairy farming in Wisconsin and across the Midwest as the round design was intended to address the stabling of cattle. Centric barns were strongly supported and promoted by the dairy industry, dairy agricultural professionals, and dairy trade publications. The work of Franklin Hiram King expanded through the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station to focus on farm buildings. His round silo helped to revolutionize farming practices and husbandry in the United States, and he proceeded to make the round silo the central element in the design of round barns. He emphasized such a design as improving movement, work efficiency, ventilation, and sanitation.<sup>35</sup> King's ideas and designs of true round barns with enclosed silos were quickly disseminated through the Agricultural Experiment Station and by J.H. Sanders, the founder of the successful agricultural journal *Breeder's Gazette*. The publication, largely concerned with agricultural technology and methods, demonstrated how new barn designs would work for dairy farming.<sup>36</sup> Sanders compiled a number of examples of farm outbuilding designs, including instructions, framing plans, and sectional construction drawings. Most of these were taken directly from various Midwestern state agricultural experiment stations, including King's drawings and illustrations of a round barn. Franklin King, a native of Wisconsin, served as a professor of agricultural physics from 1888 to 1902, and was notable figure in the development of agricultural sciences and the University of Wisconsin, contributing extensively to the design and ventilation of farm buildings as well as the study of soil nutrients. In 1893 Sanders indicated that the true round barn plan's primary advantages were suited explicitly to dairy farming and include effective ventilation, temperature control, economy of construction, consolidated uses, and efficient movement of grain and cattle.<sup>37</sup> The involvement of the University of Wisconsin in agricultural technology and research, focused on dairy concerns in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, aided the state in becoming the leader in the production of butter, cheese and milk in the nation by 1914.<sup>38</sup>

The *Breeder's Gazette* published extensive manuals and catalogs, in addition to the monthly journal. In one such book from the 1910s, simply titled *Farm Buildings*, an inexhaustible list of dairy cattle barns complete with plans, sections, and renderings included round barns. One example of an octagonal plan mentioned the objection of wasted space caused by the form that balanced out the positive gains from the use of fewer materials. It also mentioned that filling this kind of barn with hay could be difficult, and the lack of an integral silo was also a detriment. In comparison, the true round barns were highlighted as the ideal type for a dairy farm, if the owner could afford the initial cost and find the necessary skilled labor to construct it. The true round barn had the silo, less wasted space than other forms, and an efficiency of use that other types lacked

<sup>34</sup> Wyatt, *Vol. II*, Page 8-6.

<sup>35</sup> White, F.M. and D.I. Griffith. *Barns for Wisconsin Dairy Farms*. Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 266. Madison, WI: 1916, Page 9.

<sup>36</sup> Sanders, Page 100.

<sup>37</sup> Sanders, Page 107.

<sup>38</sup> Wyatt, *Vol. II*, Page 10-4.

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according to the listing.<sup>39</sup> These positive attributes were repeated in literature from the 1890s through the 1910s, claiming that the true round barn type was ideal for maintaining dairy cattle. The barns had large enclosed spaces built with significantly fewer materials with a self-supporting roof and a silo in the center, acting as a column. The round form stood up to lateral wind forces well, and the plan was distinctly efficient. Possible detractors, which were also mentioned, included unfamiliarity, the silos being difficult to use, and the potential waste if the interior space was not planned correctly.<sup>40</sup>

Round barns came to rival the recognized view of the Wisconsin dairy barn: long, tall and rectangular. The round barn was explicitly used for dairy purposes and often built into a hillside similar to a bank barn so that the second level and hay mow could be directly accessed with farm equipment. Like the rectangular plans of the day, foundations and first levels were often of masonry construction with a large cut-lumber frame above, often stick built with 1x4s, 2x4s and 1x6s of various lengths and sheathed in board siding. The round barns were also typically large and came with a high initial cost. They were popular for their efficiency, but remained rare in numbers.<sup>41</sup> While the climate of Wisconsin was deemed ideal for dairy farming, changes in the wider economy, especially the increasing cost of nominal wood lumber and a concern for efficiency in a competitive market, led farmers to be increasingly concerned with new farm buildings. Multiple types and forms of barns were developed for many different situations. Along with the most common Wisconsin dairy barn, the round barn served as the structural ambition of many dairy farmers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>42</sup>

### **Wisconsin True Round Barns**

Franklin King, professor of Agricultural Physics at the University of Wisconsin, was instrumental in the design of the round silo and the science of ensilage. His work on the subject likely inspired the form of a round barn design he developed for use on the dairy farm of his brother, C.E. King.<sup>43</sup> In 1889, Franklin King received a request to design a large and modern dairy barn for his brother's farm near Whitewater. Intended as a model as well as a working barn, King's design maintained warmth and coolness in respective seasons, admitted light, cost less to construct and maintain, and reduced farm labor.<sup>44</sup> The resulting true round barn, 92 feet in diameter and 28 feet from its sills to eaves, consisted of four concentric stone walls and foundations with a stick-built frame of two-inch stock with a sheathing of overlapping boards. The two-story building contained a large cylindrical silo in its center, which aided the efficient and proximate feeding of livestock and helped support the large roof. An 18 foot wide barn floor adjacent to the silo, along with chutes leading to the feeding alley of dairy cows, allowed fodder to be delivered from a wagon in a circular drive and quickly moved into feeding positions.<sup>45</sup> The dairy barn (non-extant) accommodated 80 cows and 10 horses at all times of the year. Such a design, professionally developed by an expert in the field, inspired others to consider the round barn plan for dairy farms. King's scientific design approach and ideal of efficiency in one large integrated building with a

<sup>39</sup> "Farm Buildings." *Breeder's Gazette*. Chicago, IL: Breeder's Gazette, 1916, Page 63.

<sup>40</sup> White, Page 5.

<sup>41</sup> Wyatt, *Vol. II*, Page 5-3.

<sup>42</sup> White, Page 4.

<sup>43</sup> Jost, Page 2.

<sup>44</sup> King, F.H. *Plan of a Barn for a Dairy Farm*. Seventh Annual Report of the Agricultural Experiment Station at the University of Wisconsin. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, 1889, Page 184.

<sup>45</sup> King, Page 186.

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minimum of movement appealed to other experts in the field, and the true round barn design found many receptive minds in department of agriculture, trade magazines, and experiment stations.<sup>46</sup>

The design of C.E. King's dairy barn was re-published and distributed numerous times across the Midwest from 1889 to the twentieth century. Franklin King's design of the circular silo found widespread support, and not just in academic circles.<sup>47</sup> Introduced in 1891 through the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, the round silo, constructed in a similar way to true round barns with a balloon frame structural system, had immediate impact and popularity among farmers for its efficiency, convenience, and ability to preserve feed. The stick-built design of the silo, paired with the obvious shape in plan, encouraged true round types to be designed and built in the 1890s. Once a round silo was introduced, it made sense to simply build a round barn around it, out of the same materials and using similar methods.<sup>48</sup> Self-supporting arched roofs were introduced later, but, in the meantime, the introduction of a silo operated as a large column in the center of the barn which every function would rotate around. This allowed the size of the true round barn to expand to much larger than the octagonal barns of the preceding decade. Widely publicized in *Hoard's Dairyman* and experiment station bulletins, the true round barn and silo was adopted and promoted by H.E. Crouch of the Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station after 1900.

Three unique round barns were constructed as demonstrations and research objects on the University of Illinois campus. These designs were published numerous times and their designs made available to the public.<sup>49</sup> When the Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station and Agricultural College adopted the true round barn form, inherited from Wisconsin, demonstration models were built beginning in 1908 in Champaign under the direction of Wilbur Fraser. Fraser's documentation of the work and the study of the barn's use in *Economy of the Round Dairy Barn* had a significant impact on true round barn design.<sup>50</sup> The main argument made by Fraser on behalf of the round barn was its benefits in proportional expenses of construction and maintenance compared to rectangular designs. He directly compared two barns, one round and the other rectangular, of similar size and area and found that the 60 foot diameter round barn would have a cubical content of 117,669 feet and would cost approximately \$799.76 for lumber to build. In contrast, the rectangular option, with 36 feet by 88 feet dimensions, would have a cubic content of 117,138 feet, but would cost considerably more at \$1,023.27 for lumber.<sup>51</sup> Fraser went on to outline similar benefits of the round barn form as King did before him, stating that the true round barn could incorporate a silo, encouraged efficiency of use, used fewer materials, could span large unobstructed spaces, possessed good ventilation, and was easy to use.<sup>52</sup> Disadvantages included unfamiliarity among farmers with the building type and a difficult process of construction with more angles, more cuts, and more mathematics necessary; the round barn would require more skilled carpentry to construct and a more open-minded farmer to build according to Fraser.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>46</sup> King, Page 192.

<sup>47</sup> Hanou, Page 14.

<sup>48</sup> Soike, Page 26.

<sup>49</sup> Soike, Page 28.

<sup>50</sup> Hanou, Page 26.

<sup>51</sup> "Efficiency of the Round Barn." *Kansas State Board of Agriculture, Eighteenth Biennial Report*. Manhattan, KS: Kansas State Board of Agriculture, 1911-1912, Page 141.

<sup>52</sup> Fraser, Wilbur J. *Economy of the Round Dairy Barn*. University of Illinois Agricultural Expertise Station Bulletin No. 143. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 1912, Page 7.

<sup>53</sup> Fraser, *Economy of the Round Dairy Barn*, Page 3.

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The first example barn on the Illinois campus was a 60 foot diameter true circular barn intended to demonstrate the functional benefits of the building type. All of the latest agricultural technologies of the early twentieth century were included. The barn was built into the side of hill similar to a bank barn so that the second level could be easily accessed. It had a concrete foundation with a brick wall above for the first level. 2"x12" joists were used for the second floor framing with 8 inch shiplap siding to sheath and side it. A large arched balloon frame of 1"x6" studs sat above the masonry wall. The interior silo was made from the same materials. While it was intended as a model barn, the Illinois Agricultural College round barn was actually very similar to many of the round barns built across Wisconsin and the upper Midwest in the first decade of the twentieth century.<sup>54</sup> Two more barns were subsequently built as variations and improvement on the first model. These round barns, the second with a diameter of 80 feet and the third with a diameter of 90 feet, possessed added structural elements, interior supports, greater window area for light and ventilation, added monitors and cupolas, and milking stalls. Otherwise, they were designed along a similar premise.<sup>55</sup> In a later publication Wilbur Fraser states that interest in the true round dairy barn had only increased and that more were being built across dairy states despite the forms' relative unfamiliarity and potential difficulties. Fraser professed admiration for the progressive spirit of American farmers since none of the new owners and users of the building type had recorded a complaint. This view coincided with Fraser's earlier criticism of imitation and tradition as limiting factors on human and agricultural progress.<sup>56</sup>

The round barn form was repeatedly promoted in terms of its radical newness. The language used, whether the source be found in trade magazines or the work of the University of Wisconsin or Illinois, frequently refers to the round barn form's many advantages, its assumed relationship with reformist and scientific ideals, and opposition to its adoption from traditional and conservative farming habits. Much of the existing literature on the topic of round barns stresses the moment at the turn-of-the-twentieth century as one of experimentation and invention in a broad movement actively concerned with farming practices, industrial efficiency, and human betterment.<sup>57</sup> The most common advantages outlined include the argument in favor of circular forms as geometrically efficient. The ratio of volume to surface area was especially large for a spherical object in comparison to a rectilinear one. The amount of materials used to construct a round barn was simply more economical according to promotional materials as rectangular barns typically required 22% more wall length to enclose the same amount of space. This material saving fact combined with a supposed efficiency of use and the consolidation of multiple uses under one roof led to claims of 34-58% cost savings during the life of a round barn compared to an equivalent rectangular dairy barn.<sup>58</sup> Other aspects of the type frequently illustrated was the large, unobstructed hay mow, multiple stables and milking stanchions, the integral silo and granary; all of these contributing to a greater efficiency of use as multiple functions coexisted in a larger space and time and energy was saved on the part of farmers and laborers in their work with less physical movement. The circular plan also promoted an open and directed path of work. In an era without automated machine tools that still largely relied on muscle for many necessary activities on a farm, these improvements promised an increased level of production and a better life.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Fraser, *Economy of the Round Dairy Barn*, Page 8.

<sup>55</sup> Fraser, *Economy of the Round Dairy Barn*, Page 30.

<sup>56</sup> Fraser, Wilbur J. *The Round Barn*. University of Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station Circular 230. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 1918, Page 3.

<sup>57</sup> Soike, Page 2.

<sup>58</sup> "Efficiency of the Round Barn," Page 139.

<sup>59</sup> Auer, Page 3.

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The greater convenience in storing, handling, and distributing feed offered by the round barn was complemented by the greater structural strength of the building type. Despite fewer materials used in their construction, it was assumed that round barns, due to their shape, would handle horizontal wind loads more effectively, a useful attribute in Midwestern and plains states with occasional tornados.<sup>60</sup> The strong construction of the round barn, partly attributable to a self-supporting roof in an arch and domed stick built construction, came from taking advantage of the lineal, rather than the breaking, strength of wood members. The lineal strength in compression could be as much as twenty times greater in a 2x4 or 2x6 than the cross-grain strength in bending. The majority of strain in a round barn came down from the top, directed on to the vertical members like a dome. Rows of board sheathing acted as hoops to hold the structure together.<sup>61</sup> F.H. King, mentioned earlier, argued that the benefits for the round barn were greatest when the building was larger. However, floor planning for dairy cattle and simple wood frame construction methods limited the reasonable size of such barns to about 90 feet in diameter at the high end. Likewise, floor planning and the requirements of dairy barn created a lower limit for true round barns of about 40 feet in diameter. As a result, a happy balance of economy, simple construction, and planning settled on a common size of roughly 60 feet in diameter.<sup>62</sup> A large majority of the true round barns in Wisconsin are close to this diameter.

While a large number of true round barn designs originated from agricultural colleges, experiment stations, and dairy trade magazines at the turn of the century, they were followed by local builders, architects, engineers, and even mail order designs. Endorsement preceded the proliferation of a wide variety of designs within the type. Pattern books (like the ones published by *Breeder's Gazette*) and mail order firms (like Sears, Roebuck and Company), charged a low fee for designs and instructions which they distributed to farmers during the first two decades of the twentieth century.<sup>63</sup> Organized commercial endeavors for the construction of round barns became common with notable contributors including M.L. King's Permanent Building Society, the William Loudon Machinery Company, and architect William Radford's advertised designs.<sup>64</sup> Between 1907 and 1923, Benton Steele, a successful designer and builder of round barns, cultivated a broad readership of articles and advertisements in agricultural newspapers and journals, including *Hoard's Dairyman* and the *Breeder's Gazette*, for his services. Beginning in Indiana, but quickly expanding his range of work across the Midwest, including Wisconsin, Steele was typical of the industry in that his prolific work was conducted by himself personally and a crew of experienced craftsmen. They would travel from site to site, commission to commission, erecting a barn over roughly three months and moving on.<sup>65</sup> This approach became increasingly common in the early twentieth century as new building technologies became more widespread, including the use of concrete for foundations and floors and a familiarity with balloon framing and dimensional lumber. Steele actively promoted these building methods along with the technical advantages to round barn building.<sup>66</sup>

A more vernacular local model of building true round barns developed along with the professional designer/builder model. Some round barns were built in a similar fashion to most agricultural buildings of the

<sup>60</sup> "Efficiency of the Round Barn," Page 140.

<sup>61</sup> Apps, Page 56.

<sup>62</sup> "Farm Buildings," Page 128.

<sup>63</sup> Auer, Page 4.

<sup>64</sup> Soike, Page 44.

<sup>65</sup> Soike, Page 51.

<sup>66</sup> "Farm Buildings," Page 27.

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nineteenth and early twentieth century by farmers themselves with the help of skilled carpenters and neighbors. While it was possible that many of these designs were inspired by, or direct imitations of, the published designs and those of builders, very few of them were exactly alike. Most were of the true round barn variety, while a few others took on complex multi-sided plans and were comparable in scale and scope to the more professional designs. They also appeared slightly later on the scene, perhaps due to the increasing popularity and acceptance of the form, as almost all were built in the twentieth century and most of them after 1910. One such local builder was Alga Shivers, who led the building of as many as fifteen round barns in Vernon County. Shivers' work gained enough prominence to be published in Illinois farm journals as early as 1910, despite only working locally near his family farm. Born in 1889, Shivers went to college, studied carpentry, and assisted in building his family's round barn as a teenager.<sup>67</sup> He would go on to build many more, all of wood construction, over the next two decades with the help of his small crew. Shivers would cut the necessary logs from local wood a year or two in advance, then return and saw it into boards. He would stay on site throughout the process and was aided by locals when the barn was raised. Shivers kept detailed notes and books of calculations for lumber, design specifications, and costs. The construction process usually took about three months.<sup>68</sup> When round barns lost popularity in the 1920s, Shivers continued to build more conventional barns and other building types locally. Alga Shivers' work was, in many ways, comparable to that of a more professionalized builder like Benton Steele, but the work was not published widely, was not the primary means of employment for the designer, and was limited to a specific location.

There are 66 identified extant true round barns in Wisconsin. Included among these are the George and Ida Apfel Round Barn, located at 11314 County Road P in Vernon County, and built by Apfel in 1914; the stone Matthew Annala Round Barn, located on Dupont Road in Iron County, and built by Annala in 1917; and the Carl Risum Round Barn, located at 5600 Risum Road in Rock County, and constructed in 1892. All three barns are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. There were also at least 37 non-extant round barns, either demolished or collapsed, located in Wisconsin.

### **Wisconsin Centric Barns in the Twentieth Century**

After the First World War the agricultural press either actively turned against the proliferation of round barns or simply lost interest in their promotion. In the late 1910s many of the original advocates of the round barn abandoned their support as the type came under extensive criticism.<sup>69</sup> For example, the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, originally one of round barns greatest proponents, published critical studies in 1916. Two researchers at Wisconsin, F.M. White and C.I. Griffith, cited a number of reasons why the round barn was inferior to rectangular designs. These reasons included the central silo leading to difficult use, a lack of saved and utilized space, and a lack of decent ventilation and lighting.<sup>70</sup> As agricultural technology changed, the round barn became increasingly difficult to use in contrast with its earlier appeal along similar lines. Large tractors and farm equipment no longer operated with ease in the narrow, turning driveways inside a round barn. The rarity of the round barn also made it difficult, over time, to maintain because of a lack of familiarity and an increasingly standardized set of building materials and practices. Hay, for instance, was standardized by

<sup>67</sup> Fish, Gail, Wava G. Haney, and June Zalewski. *Round Barns of Vernon County, Wisconsin: A Circle Tour*. Viroqua, WI: Vernon County Historical Society, 1996, Page 36.

<sup>68</sup> "Alga Shivers and His Round Barns." *LaFarge Epitaph*, Nov. 7, 1979.

<sup>69</sup> Triumpho, Page 76.

<sup>70</sup> Soike, Page 59.

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machinery and habit into rectangular bales, ill-suited to the lofted curving spaces of the round barn.<sup>71</sup> Round barns were not adaptable to the changes in technology. Widespread rural electrification and mechanization in the 1920s and 1930s along with standardized dairy machinery like barn cleaners and milk pipelines were more easily applied to rectangular barns.<sup>72</sup>

The claims of economic efficiency of the round barn never materialized with any significant data to support it in practice.<sup>73</sup> Rectangular barns were increasingly favored, partly because of their existing popularity, but also because of their relative versatility and consistency. They, in comparison to round barns, are predictable, easy to adjust regardless of their shape for future configurations, and easy to build.<sup>74</sup> True round barns never found widespread support despite the publicity and apparent technical advantages over traditional rectangular barns. While the increasing cost of lumber initially made the round barn's efficiency more appealing, the limits on its size, frequently settling on a barn with a 60 foot diameter, was a discouraging factor as it was difficult to expand a round barn in a logical way once the needs of a dairy farm outgrew the capacity of the round barn.<sup>75</sup> This may explain the lack of enthusiasm for round barns by the 1920s amongst agricultural professionals, but this assumption doesn't explain their lack of continued success even with the support of publications and university systems. The round barn's efficiencies may have been well suited to a time of intensive physical farm labor; however, the same design features made them difficult to adapt to a world of machines and changing farming practices.<sup>76</sup>

The decline in construction of round barns in the 1920s can also be attributed to the slowing of the agricultural economy in the United States in the same period. Westward expansion had come to an end and most arable land in the country was claimed and farmed extensively by this period. Drought and protectionist policies simultaneously limited supply and eliminated markets. Farmers across the country struggled throughout the 1920s and 1930s compared to the successful decades that preceded them.<sup>77</sup>

Perhaps the biggest obstacle to the round barn's success was a lack of familiarity with the type's design for farmers and builders alike. The round barn, despite its potential structural advantages, was also not familiar to the carpenters and farmers who constructed and raised the majority of dairy barns.<sup>78</sup> This was clearly recognized by many of the round barn's supporters from an early date. A number of early boosters included the presumed conservatism of farmers amongst the challenges facing the adoption of the round barn design. Farmers, it was believed, were inclined to follow custom over the advice of rational expertise.<sup>79</sup> In fairness, the efficiencies of the round barn were functionally fleeting while common rectangular barn designs proved themselves adaptable to change.

<sup>71</sup> Soike, Page 62.

<sup>72</sup> Alderson, Kevin and Patsy. *Barns without Corners: Round Barns of Vernon County, Wisconsin*. Onalaska, WI: Kickapoo Valley Heritage, 2010, Page 4.

<sup>73</sup> Auer, Page 4.

<sup>74</sup> Foster, W.A. and Deane Carter. *Farm Buildings*. New York, NY: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1922, Page 58.

<sup>75</sup> "Efficiency of the Round Barn," Page 140.

<sup>76</sup> Soike, Page 58.

<sup>77</sup> Hanou, Page 28.

<sup>78</sup> Soike, Page 61.

<sup>79</sup> "Efficiency of the Round Barn," Page 139.

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An exception to the rule that round barns fell out of favor in the 1920s is the frequency of very large round barns constructed on county and state fairgrounds across the country, including Wisconsin, during this period. While these buildings drew on the earlier precedent of round barn construction, these barns served a different function from the dairy farm barns; they operated more like auditoriums, with seating facing a central circular arena. Most of them were intended to show cattle and horses in agricultural competitions and as sales arenas.<sup>80</sup> Such centric barns served entertainment and recreation purposes as opposed to strictly agricultural ones, thus this type is distinct from other centric barns and should be treated as such and are outside the scope of this multiple property assessment. Some examples in Wisconsin of the round barn fair building are the Langlade County Fairgrounds Octagonal Barn in Antigo, the Lincoln County Stock Pavilion in Merrill, and the Price, Marquette, Pierce, and Rusk County fairground barns. A notable example is the Central Wisconsin Fairgrounds Barn in Marshfield built in 1915 that has a diameter of 150 feet and is believed to be the largest round barn in the world. All of them were built in the late 1910s or later.<sup>81</sup> In fact, a large number of these fairground structures survive while the agricultural dairy barns have often collapsed or have been demolished. Many round barns, of all forms, were destroyed in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s as their wooden structures began to show wear and tear, and owners could not justify maintaining buildings that no longer served its intended function on large mechanized dairy farms.<sup>82</sup>

Round barns remain an important, but rare, part of the agricultural landscape. In their own time at the turn-of-the-twentieth century, they were considered specialized and unique – their advantages and disadvantages so clear that certain dairy farmers eagerly embraced them while others shunned them altogether. The progressive promise of efficiency they offered was short-lived and possibly illusory, but those that constructed and used them took pride in their round barns and maintained them through the years as they served as unique symbols of experimentation, status, and forward thinking in the rural life of Wisconsin and the Midwest.

### **The Work of a Master**

The study of designers and builders of centric barns in Wisconsin has revealed important characteristics that define the work of a master. A master work exhibits a high level of craftsmanship, is aligned with both the historic period of centric barn building in Wisconsin and the building types (octagonal, polygonal, and true round barns), and must meet at least one of the following criteria: a master introduces a new form of centric barn, of which there is more than one example; a master contributes some sort of technical achievement or innovation to centric barn design; and a master work is one where the design becomes a model for others. It is not necessary for the individual to be an architect, and builders can meet these criteria; however, being a prolific builder isn't enough. The person must have made a recognizable contribution to the design of centric barns.

Many centric barns were designed by skilled carpenters who lived in the local community; sometimes they were conceived by the farmers themselves. The barns, raised by local farmers, were most often constructed with the assistance of neighbors, and under the supervision, of local carpenters. Other barns were designed by builders, skilled carpenters who had a particular specialization in centric barns and who would proceed to work on a number of such projects, one every few years.

<sup>80</sup> Soike, Page 37.

<sup>81</sup> Apps, Page 59.

<sup>82</sup> Hanou, Page 60.



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Within this framework, three individuals have been identified as Masters: Franklin King, Ernst Clausing and Alga Shivers. Both Ernst Clausing and Alga Shivers are builders, recognized as masters because of their specialization in the form, their technical achievements in centric barn construction, and the high level of craftsmanship of their work.

*Franklin King*

Franklin Hiram King, a native of Wisconsin and educated at Cornell University, was a professor of agricultural physics at the University of Wisconsin from 1888 to 1902. He was a notable figure in the development of agricultural sciences at the University of Wisconsin, conducting pioneering research in the areas of soil physics and soil chemistry and fertility. Other facets of his work culminated in his extensive contributions to the design and ventilation of farm buildings and the science of ensilage. King's work through the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station focused on farm buildings. He is credited with the design of the round silo which helped to revolutionize farming practices and husbandry in the United States, and he proceeded to make the round silo the central element in the design of round barns. He emphasized such a design as improving movement, work efficiency, ventilation, and sanitation.<sup>83</sup> King's ideas and designs of true round barns with enclosed silos were quickly disseminated through the Agricultural Experiment Station and by J.H. Sanders, the founder of the successful agricultural journal, *Breeder's Gazette*.

In 1889, Franklin King received a request to design a large and modern dairy barn for his brother's farm near Whitewater. Intended as a model as well as a working barn, King's round barn design maintained warmth and coolness in respective seasons, admitted light, cost less to construct and maintain, and reduced farm labor.<sup>84</sup> The resulting true round barn, 92 feet in diameter and 28 feet from its sills to eaves, consisted of four concentric stone walls and foundations with a stick-built frame of two-inch stock with a sheathing of overlapping boards. The two story building contained a large cylindrical silo in its center, which aided the efficient and proximate feeding of livestock and helped support the large roof. An 18 foot wide barn floor adjacent to the silo, along with chutes leading to the feeding alley of dairy cows, allowed fodder to be delivered from a wagon in a circular drive and quickly moved into feeding positions.<sup>85</sup> The dairy barn accommodated 80 cows and 10 horses at all times of the year. Unfortunately, this barn no longer exists. Such a design, professionally developed by an expert in the field, inspired others to consider the round barn plan for dairy farms. King's scientific design approach and ideal of efficiency in one large integrated building with a minimum of movement appealed to other experts in the field, and the true round barn design found many receptive minds in department of agriculture, trade magazines, and experiment stations.<sup>86</sup>

*Ernst Clausing*

<sup>83</sup> White, F.M. and D.I. Griffith. *Barns for Wisconsin Dairy Farms*. Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 266. Madison, WI: 1916, Page 9.

<sup>84</sup> King, F.H. *Plan of a Barn for a Dairy Farm*. Seventh Annual Report of the Agricultural Experiment Station at the University of Wisconsin. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, 1889, 184.

<sup>85</sup> King, Page 186.

<sup>86</sup> King, Page 192.

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Almost a dozen similar octagon barns were constructed in Ozaukee County in the 1880s and 1890s by builder and designer Ernst Clausing and his brother, Theodore.<sup>87</sup> Frederick Clausing, the father of Ernst and Theodore, came to America with his family from Saxony in 1846 and settled in Ozaukee County; Ernst was born in 1859. Ernst Clausing was a carpenter and got the initial idea for building a centric barn from looking at agricultural magazines in 1885. It is possible that the images and designs he saw could have originated with the work of Orson Squire Fowler or Elliot Stewart. While it is unclear exactly where the inspiration for these octagonal barns came from, they do address the prevalence of horse and dairy farms in Ozaukee County and proximity to Lake Michigan with occasional high winds, for which the circular plan was well-suited.<sup>88</sup> Similar to other centric barns, Clausing's octagonal barns were arranged with cattle stables below and a hay mow and storage above on a second level. They were typically constructed with a fieldstone foundation, poured concrete flooring, and board siding. The Clausing octagon barns are notable for the utilization of a cupola for light and air, and a timber ring near the top of the roof that joined converging rafters and helped make a self-supporting roof free of columns and other obstructions.<sup>89</sup> Ernst Clausing died in 1941.

A number of the Clausing barns were built for the family's relations. One of these barns was built for his cousin, William Clausing, in Mequon in 1897. This barn has subsequently been removed from its original site in 1978, and is now located at Old World Wisconsin in Waukesha County.<sup>90</sup> Construction of the following barns has been attributed to Ernst Clausing:

<i>Historic Name</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Street</i>	<i>T/R/S</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>George Penz Round Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Grafton			10/22/30	1909
<b>William Tetzlaff Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Grafton	364	County Road C	10/22/33	1895
<b>Emily Koopman Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Grafton		Lakefield Road	10/22/31	c.1890
<b>Henry Kiekhaefer Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon		County Road M	9/22/17	1894
<b>Arnold Clausing Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon		County Road W	9/22/8	1898
<b>William Clausing Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon		N. Port Washington Road	9/21/8	1897
<b>Gustav Timpel Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon	13669	N. Port Washington Road	9/21/5	1892
<b>George Hanser Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon	11656	N. Port Washington Road	9/21/8	1896
<b>Frank Vocke Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon	1901	Pioneer Road	9/21/3	1891

<sup>87</sup> Soike, Page 10.

<sup>88</sup> "The Clausing Octagon Barns of Ozaukee County: An In-Depth Study." Ozaukee County Historical Society website. <[www.co.ozaukee.wi.us/ochs/Archives/ClausingOctagonBarnsOzaukeeCountyInDepth](http://www.co.ozaukee.wi.us/ochs/Archives/ClausingOctagonBarnsOzaukeeCountyInDepth)> Accessed September 13, 2013.

<sup>89</sup> "The Clausing Octagon Barns of Ozaukee County: An In-Depth Study."

<sup>90</sup> Perrin, Richard W.E. *The Architecture of Wisconsin*. Madison, WI: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin Press, 1967, Page 38.

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Thomas Shivers was born a slave in Tennessee in 1854 and moved with his family to Vernon County as young man in 1879. There he became one of the most successful farmers in the county and the largest African American land owner in Wisconsin for a time in the late nineteenth century.<sup>91</sup> Thomas' son, Alga Shivers, was born in 1889. He attended George Smith College in Sedalia, Missouri, and trained as a carpenter and studied mathematics. An avid follower of innovation and technology, Thomas Shivers built a round barn, with Alga's help, in the early 1900s. Alga Shivers likely took this experience as a model for the round barns he built during his career.<sup>92</sup> His work gained enough promise and notoriety that it was published in Illinois farm journals as early as 1910.<sup>93</sup> Shivers also served in World War I. He married Flora Revels Waldon in 1945 at the age of 56. While they never had children of their own, the couple raised a number of orphaned and related children in their home. Alga Shivers was an integral part of the local rural community and serves as an interesting historical figure due to the color of skin in the context of turn-of-the-century America. Western Wisconsin had two small African American colonies at the time in the Cheyenne Valley of Vernon County and Pleasant Ridge in Grant County, which had fully and successfully integrated with the white and immigrant majority.<sup>94</sup> The fact that Alga Shivers became something of a local hero in Vernon County and a respected builder lends further proof to his importance. Alga Shivers died in 1978.

The construction of as many as fifteen round barns in Vernon and neighboring Monroe counties by Alga Shivers, with the assistance of his brother Ed and a small crew, stands out in the history of the round barn building type. His barns were almost always built of wood. The necessary logs were cut on a specific farm property a year or two in advance, then they would be sawn and cut into dimensional lumber and boards and constructed as a balloon frame of 2x members on a concrete and rubble foundation.<sup>95</sup> The roof of a round barn would always be built in the same way with a radial pattern of rafters from the central silo acting as a column for the otherwise self-supporting roof structure. These long rafters, built up of dimensional lumber, were braced as a truss, spanning the distance from the lower sill on the exterior wall to either the high point above the central silo (with the roof enveloping the silo), or to a point a number of feet below the top of the silo, allowing the top of the silo to appear as a cupola at the top of the roof. Such trusses were utilized for every single rafter. Vertical boards sheathed the exterior walls, and shingles were overlapped and nailed to sets of boards on the roof. The central silo was typically built of the same materials and in the same manner as the rest of the barn as an integral piece of the round barn structure. Shivers kept detailed notes, calculations, and specifications to assist him in the design of these barns with every piece of lumber documented; however, no drawings of any plans exist.<sup>96</sup> When round barns became unpopular in the 1920s, Shivers continued to build more conventional agricultural buildings and houses as a local carpenter.<sup>97</sup> Through the entire building process, Shivers and his small crew

<sup>91</sup> Alderson, Page 5; Fish, Page 36; and Cooper, Zachery. *Black Settlers in Rural Wisconsin*. Madison, WI: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin Press, 1977, Page 7.

<sup>92</sup> Alderson, Page 38.

<sup>93</sup> Fish, Page 36.

<sup>94</sup> Cooper, Page 5.

<sup>95</sup> "Alga Shivers and His Round Barns."

<sup>96</sup> "Alga Shivers." (Obituary.) *Wisconsin State Journal*, Nov. 29, 1978.

<sup>97</sup> Fish, Page 37.

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would stay on site, and during the final month or two of construction, they would often be assisted by neighboring farmers to raise the structure of a round barn<sup>98</sup>

Alga Shivers is an example of a local builder having a large impact on the design and construction of true round barns. Not only are these barns architectural novelties, but they also demonstrate aspects of agricultural life in the early twentieth century. A number of the barns he was involved with are excellent examples of the type and maintain a good physical condition and integrity.

While several other barns have been unofficially attributed to him, construction of the following barns have been confirmed to have been built by Alga Shivers:

<i>Historic Name</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Street</i>	<i>T/R/S</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>Stoddard Round Barn</b>	Monroe	Wellington	30964	Oregano Road	15/1/33	c.1915
<b>C.J. Miller Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		County Road V	14/1/13	c.1910
<b>George Pepper Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest	1122	County Road V	14/1/13	1910
<b>Adam Mayenschein Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		Fish Hollow Road	14/1/34	1911
<b>George Harris Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		Town Hall Road	14/1/9	1906
<b>Frank Sterba Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Hillsboro		Dank Road	14/1/9	1920
<b>Joseph Dank Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Hillsboro	17517	Dank Lane	14/1/9	1921
<b>Matthew Donahue Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Whitestown	12686	Lower Ridge Road	14/2/9	No date

There may be other master builders of Wisconsin Centric Barns that have not yet been identified or studied. Given that over 200 centric barns have been identified in Wisconsin, this suggests that there were other builders who may have made significant contributions to the design and engineering of centric barns.

<sup>98</sup> "Alga Shivers and His Round Barns."

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**Associated Property Types**

(Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)

**Introduction / General Characteristics**

Centric barns, often referred to as ‘round barns,’ encompass octagonal and other polygon shaped plans as well as the ‘true’ round barn form. Amongst these barn types there is variation in style, building materials, function, period, location, and the origin and inspiration for a specific design. By far the most identifiable characteristic of a centric barn is its basic form. They can be categorized according to the shape of the plan: round, octagonal, or other multi-sided polygons ranging from small hexagonal forms to large 20-sided barns. Most of the multi-sided polygons however are in the 10- to 14-sided variety, close to imitating the ‘true’ round barn form.

**Foundation**

Foundation walls have a wide variety of materials. Rubble, stone, and concrete were common choices at first and were slowly supplemented by clay tile, precast concrete and monolithic concrete forms at the turn of the century. Most centric barns, regardless of form, function as bank barns, with a change in grade level or a bridge leading to a second floor hay mow. For this reason, nearly all forms of barns most often employed masonry walls for the first level, serving as an extension of the foundation, supplying greater structural strength to resist the loads of the bank, and providing insulation for areas of the barn housing dairy cows and other animals through the winter.

**Exterior Walls**

The finished siding or sheathing of a centric barn also serves as a useful defining feature. Early round types like octagon barns usually had vertical wood board siding above the masonry foundation or first floor walls. Board-and-batten and horizontally-curved clapboard and shiplap siding were common through the late nineteenth century. Heavier, masonry materials became increasingly common for large barns for wealthy farmers located near population centers. Brick, concrete block, and vitrified clay tile were common materials after the turn of the century.<sup>99</sup> There are also examples of field stone being used in the construction of centric barns, typically in locations where it was widely available. Many centric barns have been covered with various types of metal siding from the 1920s to the present day. These metal systems are often attached directly to the original siding and require less maintenance.

**Roofs**

Roofs were typically covered with shingles, but many centric barns have had metal roofing added to replace the more expensive and less-durable shingles.<sup>100</sup> Roof types can be divided into three distinct structural systems: the unsupported, the occasionally supported, and the self-supported roof. The unsupported roof types, typically from earlier periods of building and polygon plans, include the monitor, modified hip roof, and flat roof. Occasionally, supported roofs can be found on transitional and larger centric barns and include conical shapes, sectional cone shapes, and the polygon form with wings. The self-supported roof, typical to ‘true’ round barns, functions like a complex arch and include domes, gambrel sectional roofs, and gambrel multiple pitch roofs.<sup>101</sup> Almost all centric ‘round’ barn roof structures were stick built from sawn lumber, often in relatively small sizes

<sup>99</sup> Soike, Page 31.

<sup>100</sup> Triumpho, Page 5.

<sup>101</sup> Soike, Page 42.

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of members and boards. Usually a round barn will have some cupola or monitor, or even the extension of a silo, through the roof indicating ventilation and the presence of a silo.

#### Interior Silo

Another defining characteristic is the interior silo. Round silos, developed by Franklin King congruent with the design of King's round barns, are a common element in centric barns, especially in designs dating from after the turn of the century. Developed after 1891, interior silos became common especially in the true round form. However, it is not always clear from an exterior view if a silo is integral.

#### Windows

Windows on centric barns are simple, typically of wood frame construction, smaller scale, are fixed, single- or double-hung wood sash with divided lights, have wood muntins and single-pane glass. Windows are usually located on the lower level, spaced singly, and placed one per structural bay, all the way around the barn. Exceptions to this window placement includes wood windows at the upper hay mow level although much fewer in number, usually about one per cardinal direction. There are also examples of centric barns having wood windows at the top of the wall and just under the roof eaves, as well as having windows around the perimeter of a central roof monitor. As vernacular buildings, and given the fact that these barns were often designed and constructed by the farmer or local carpenters, windows were added or placed according to the preferences of the barn owner which accounts for why there are examples of windows being placed in non-typical configurations.

#### Doors

Doors on centric barns are scaled and arranged for four purposes: pedestrians, animals, machinery and loading hay. Doors are simple, of wood frame construction and the doors themselves are of wood boards, either horizontally or vertically oriented. Known exceptions to door design include doors having wood, divided light transoms and Dutch-doors, which are split across the middle allowing the top half to open and close independently of the bottom half. Pedestrian doors have an outward swing. Animal and machinery doors are wider and most often slide open to one side, or if there is a pair of doors each door slides to its respective side. Sliding doors are hung from a metal rail mounted on the exterior of the barn wall.

Door number and placement is non-standardized and correspond to the convenience and needs of each farmer. Some barns have doors for animals and very large doors for machinery only on the lower level (animal doors are only on the lower level); other barns have a machinery door at the upper level. Some upper level doors are only for transferring hay to the hay mow and are not accessible from grade; other upper level doors are located at the termination of an earthen ramp, or bank, which allows farmers convenient access to the upper floor while using machinery. Upper level doors either slide open using a rail system or swing open from side hinges.

#### Plan

The typical plan of a Wisconsin Centric Barn follows a basic interior arrangement that includes a lower level of animal pens and an upper level of a hay mow and storage. This is consistent across all known examples of the building type. The primary deviation is the presence or lack of a central interior silo. The lower level is dedicated to housing animals and feeding them. This level is arranged concentrically for dairy cows, often around a central silo, with feeding and cleaning devices planned in rings around the center with interior columns interspersed amongst them. Because work horses were used on the farm, horse stalls could also be accommodated around the ring if there was space at the end of the cow stanchions; a partial wall separated the

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cows from the horse stalls. Larger plans could potentially accommodate two rows of centric rings, but usually there is only one. In the case of centric horse barns, usually in an octagonal plan, the plan has more in common with rectangular barns and is arranged in linear stables with a wide central open section. The upper level, whether there is a central silo or not, is almost always an open hay mow space intended for the storage of feed and hay and occasionally is used for the storage of other farm equipment and material. While this space may be subsequently adapted to other farm uses, its original use was always the hay mow.

This sample plan below demonstrates the interior arrangement for a round dairy barn, the most common type discussed in the multiple property documentation. There is variation in the diameter, building material, floor height, plan shape, interior column placement, and even use in terms of the type of livestock housed within such barns. The greatest variation occurs in earlier examples of Octagonal horse barns, where the lower level is divided in a rectilinear arrangement, lacking a central, interior silo. However, the general form is consistent and most of the elements shown in the plans below can be found in all centric barns.

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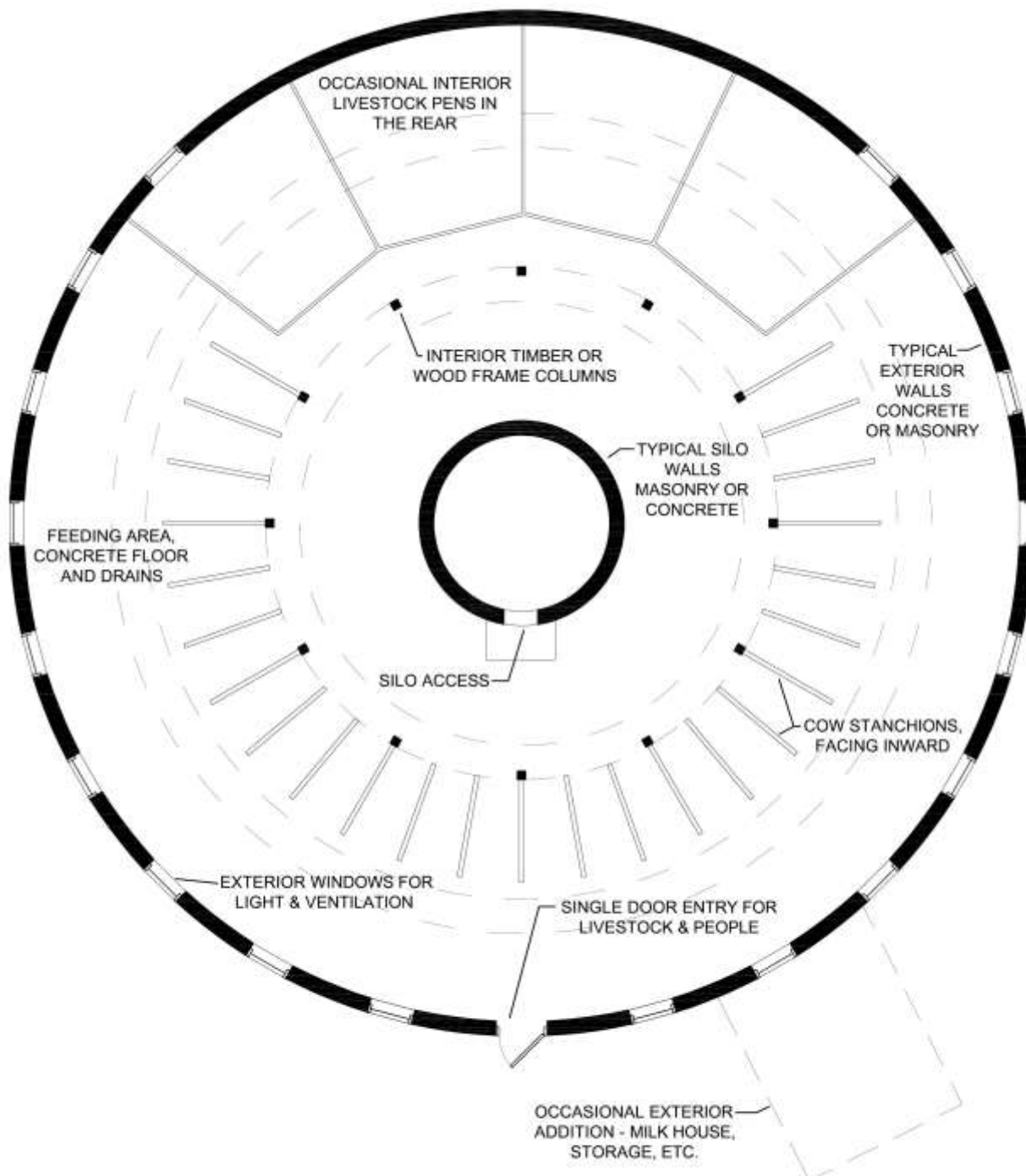
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LOWER LEVEL PLAN

0 1 2 4 FT



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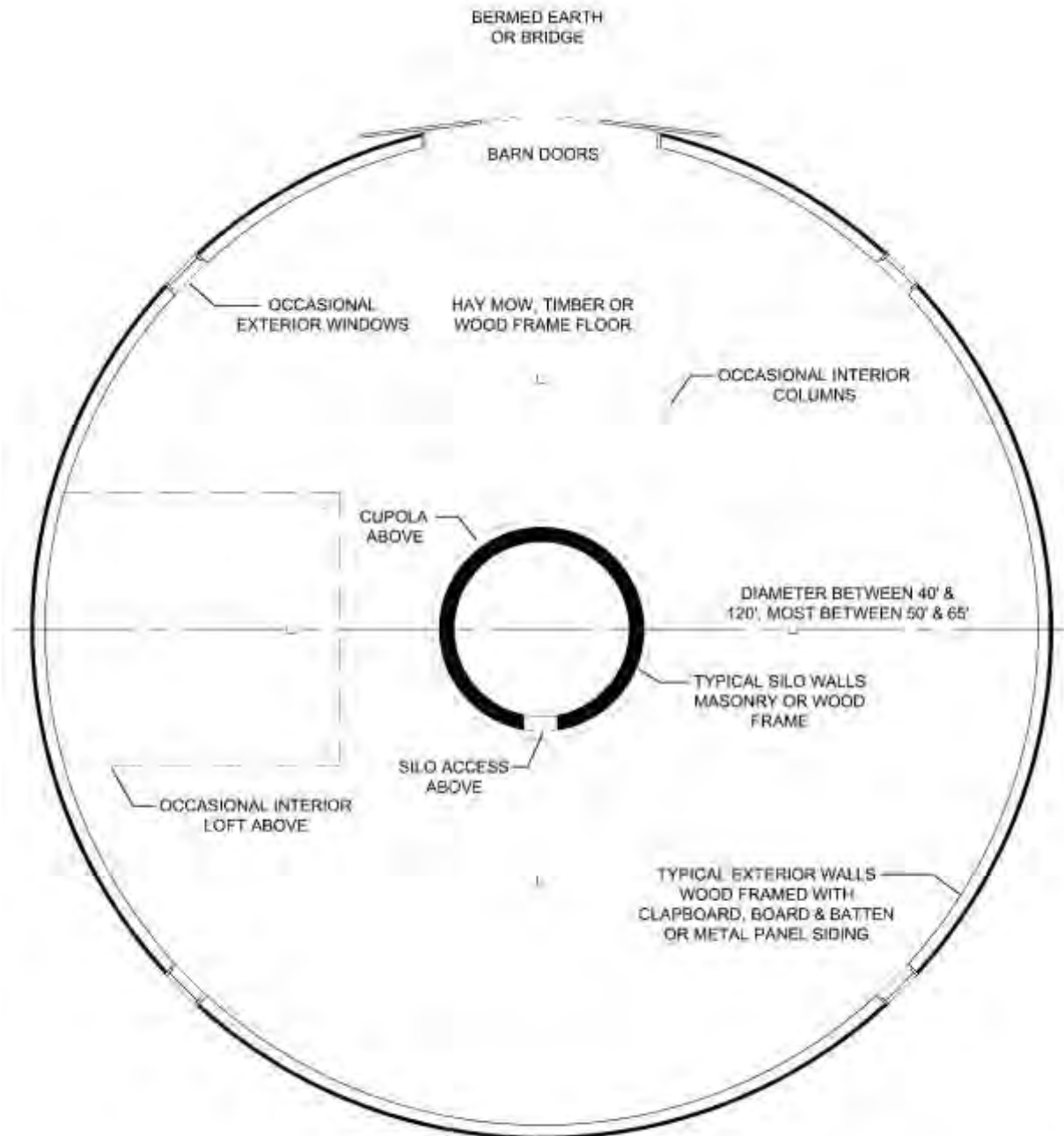
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UPPER LEVEL PLAN

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Section number   F   Page   26  **Additions**

As described in the previous section, the round form became a limiting factor because it was difficult to expand. Unlike square or rectangular buildings which can easily be expanded by building a square or rectangular addition adjacent to it, and sometimes being able to do this so seamlessly that the addition is not noticeable, this wasn't possible with round barn forms. As a result, round barns often have small additions which are milk houses, external silos or animal pens. Silos and milk houses were essential components of a twentieth century dairy farm, so interestingly, while technically additions, many silos and milk houses were constructed concurrently with, or very soon after, the construction of the barn. The milk house is a twentieth century technological progression of dairy farms; therefore, early round barns which were constructed before the adoption of the milk house often had one added as they became the standard on dairy farms. Later additions to centric barns tend to be larger because they were accommodating the growth of farming operations.

**Small additions:** small additions include external silos, milk houses and animal pens. Silos can be either adjacent to the round barn or located slightly away from the barn but close enough to be conveniently accessible to the farmer. Silos will often have the same foundation and wall material as the barn, or if not, will be constructed of materials typically used for silos on farms. Milk houses are always either adjoining to the exterior wall of the barn or placed in very close proximity which allowed quick and convenient transfer of milk from the barn to the storage area. Milk houses are one-story, square or rectangular in plan and often have foundation and wall materials that match the barn. Milk houses that do not have matching construction materials will nonetheless be constructed of materials typically used in the construction of agricultural outbuildings: stone, brick, concrete, structural clay tile, and wood. The exception to this arrangement is the integral milk house which was tucked under the bank leading to the upper level of the barn. The clue that a centric barn has an integral milk house is the presence of a door at grade, at the side of the bank.

**Large additions:** often, large additions to centric barns are functional augmentations in rectangular formations, housing additional dairy cows and milking equipment. With changes in dairying technology, some farmers abandoned the round barns for housing cows and converted the original barn to storage. Other times, large additions were simply necessary to allow for the continued use of the round barn- and by extension, the farm- often pursuing some sort of agriculture distinct from dairy farming.

### **Centric Barn Types, Definitions, and Variations**

In order to better define and describe centric or 'round,' barns categorizing them according to their physical attributes and characteristics is helpful. By doing so clear differences can emerge and help in the study of the history of the building type. Significant centric barn types can be categorized according to form and origin of their plan, and broadly according to their location in Wisconsin and period of construction. A statewide survey of centric barns, and the subsequent analysis of the survey results, indicates that centric barns fall within three categories: octagonal, polygonal, and true round barns.

#### *Octagonal and other Polygonal Barns*

The octagonal barn type is recognizable through its eight sides. Popular from the 1870s into the twentieth century, the octagonal barn has precedents from earlier in the nineteenth century in the work of Orson Squire Fowler, and later Elliot Stewart, in addition to vernacular northern European and colonial agricultural forms. In

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Wisconsin, the barns built by the Clausen family, concentrated in Ozaukee County, serve as good examples of the type. Usually smaller in scale than the later polygonal and true round barn forms, the octagon shape was designed to hold dairy cattle and horses and has overall diameters in the range of 40 feet or slightly more.

Easier to build and more familiar than a truly round shape, the octagon barns were suited in scale and design to manual agricultural labor. The type rarely has a self-supporting roof and thus has interior columns and lacks a silo. The siding is typically a variation on vertical lap boards and the type divides functions, like most centric barns, between hay and feed above, and animals below in a bank barn configuration. Octagon barns, while rare, were largely familiar in the rural landscape of late nineteenth century southeastern Wisconsin as signs of prestige, wealth, and progressive ideals.

The variety of polygonal barn types reveals a period of transition and experimentation. The concept behind these designs was similar to the octagonal barns in that they could approach the efficiency of a round shape while still following common building practices. They range from small, auxiliary 6-sided agricultural buildings to large 14-, 16-, and 20-sided barns that operate in much the same way as later true round dairy barns. Most of the multi-sided centric barns in Wisconsin have between 12 and 15 sides and have diameters similar to true round barns between 55 and 65 feet and are contemporary to both the professional and vernacular phases of true round barn construction. Like their round counterparts polygonal barn plans are divided into two levels, the lower one arranged in open concentric rings and dedicated to housing and feeding livestock and the upper level consisting of a large open space for the storage of feed, hay, and other agricultural supplies. They also share a similar material vocabulary with true round barns in addition to their scale. Some unusual variations exist in the odd-numbered sided types, which are asymmetrical along a line running through the barn door. The barn door side is often slightly larger in this case than all the other sides and can lead to modified hipped roofs. This category largely serves as a transitional one, covering all other centric barns outside of the clearly defined octagonal and round types.

*True Round Barns*

True round barns fall under two distinct categories, those designed and often built by professionals, and those designed and built by local farmers and carpenters. True round barns lack angles altogether. The term 'true' round barn is used to distinguish the type from the variety of polygon plans and shapes that are also frequently referred to as 'round' barns.<sup>102</sup> The professional true round barns are the first examples of the true round barn form, taking their inspiration from the efficient calculations of agricultural colleges, state agricultural experiment stations, and trade magazines and publications concerned with improving dairy farming and agricultural life scientifically. The plan of the true round barn and allocation of spaces is identical to other centric barns: round barn plans are divided into two levels, the lower one arranged in open concentric rings and dedicated to housing and feeding livestock and the upper level consisting of a large open space for the storage of feed, hay, and other agricultural supplies.

The work of Franklin King at the University of Wisconsin in the 1890s and of Wilbur Fraser in the 1900s, along with others, helped to design specific examples of round dairy barns and outline the benefits of such building practices.<sup>103</sup> These plans, numbering in the dozens in the early twentieth century, were willingly disseminated

<sup>102</sup> Auer, Page 12.

<sup>103</sup> "Efficiency of the Round Barn," Page 139.

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through publications like *Hoard's Dairyman* and the *Breeder's Gazette* that had wide circulation and influence, especially in the Midwestern United States.<sup>104</sup> The intention of such plans was to overcome the traditional building practices of dairy farmers and encourage a new and more efficient building type in the true round barn. These professionally designed barns were often constructed, not only as models as on the University of Illinois Agricultural campus, but also as demonstrations of functioning dairy barns. Other similar types come directly from advertised builders and mail-order catalogues. They most often incorporated silos and were large in size, ranging from about 66 feet to over 90 feet in diameter. While there are examples of deviations from such plans, most built examples are faithful to overall design found in published material.

True round barns that are vernacular, those not designed or built by professionals and not finding their source in trade magazines and other published work, began to appear in the early twentieth century. No doubt these types were inspired by the professional models, but they did not clearly follow the recommended designs, and as a result, have a wide range of variation often responding to the specifics of the place where they were built. One such model is that of the roving builder who travelled across Wisconsin and the Midwest finding commissions and settling down for some months on a farm to construct a round barn using their specific carpentry skills and building methods, often distinct from others. A more common approach was the traditional one of farmers joining together to raise a neighbors dairy barn. However, because of the complicated carpentry and framing of round barn roofs, there was often a foreman figure involved that had experience and previous knowledge of the building type. The case of Alga Shivers in Vernon County is one such example. He led in the design and construction of over fifteen true round barns, all similar, but used local farming labor to construct them.

Regional variations appear as locations with plentiful timber built wood barns, rocky land led to fieldstone round barns, and locations with access to population centers used masonry and even metal products. Vernacular true round barn types proliferated in areas that were largely underdeveloped by the turn of the century as new agricultural lands and farms appeared.

### **Centric Barn Periods and Regions**

Aside from being defined based on typology and form, Wisconsin centric barns can also be organized according to period and region. Conveniently, there is some overlap in this process as the first period of development in eastern Wisconsin from the mid-1870s to the 1890s coincides with octagonal forms. The development of true round barns and experimentation matches the widespread construction of round barns in the southern half of the state in the 1890s and 1910s, and the proliferation of round barns across the western and northern portions of Wisconsin in the twentieth century is similar to the spread of local and vernacular variations on the true round barn.

The first centric barns to appear in Wisconsin were built in the already developed counties of the southeastern portion of the state, especially near Lake Michigan. Stretching from the Illinois border to Ozaukee County, a number of octagonal barns were built on established dairy cattle and horse farms. Ozaukee County alone had over a dozen such barns, most built by Ernest Clausing in the 1880s and 1890s.<sup>105</sup> These barns, and certainly their designs, predate the establishment and influence of the Agricultural Research Stations and Colleges in the

<sup>104</sup> "Farm Buildings," Page 13.

<sup>105</sup> Perrin, *The Architecture of Wisconsin*, Page 38.

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Midwest. Many appear to be inspired by architectural developments in New York and the East Coast, despite the fact that many of the owners and builders of such barns were immigrants, albeit successful and established ones.

A number of true round barns and polygon barns were built in Southern Wisconsin from 1890 until World War I. Many of these were actively modelled on the ideas and plans coming out of the University of Wisconsin, the University of Illinois, and other institutions. Almost all were built to replace already existing rectangular barns and agricultural outbuildings for dairy purposes. The preferred concentric formation of cow stanchions combined with the design of self-supporting roofs and interior silos encouraged a move away from the octagonal models of the preceding decade.<sup>106</sup> Beyond the counties along Lake Michigan, Dane, Rock, Walworth, Green, and Sauk counties can all claim a number of round dairy barns from this period of development.

As further agricultural expansion of dairying moved westward, the round barn form followed. By the first decade of the twentieth century a variety of professionally designed and built round barns appeared in the western half of Wisconsin. These were a mix of true round forms and multi-sided polygons imitating the scale and use of true round barns. Added to the published models was the growing frequency of professionally built and mail-order centric barns in Grant, Iowa, and Buffalo counties.

The last phase of growth for centric barns in Wisconsin was a spread to the western and northern portions of the state. Large numbers of true round barn types, usually of a vernacular nature, were constructed in Vernon, Monroe, Pepin, and St. Croix counties. Vernon County alone had as many as twenty at one time.<sup>107</sup> Part of this was due to the continued expansion of dairy farming and agricultural settlement in the state in the wake of new lands becoming available after intensive forestry. Many of these barns were completed in the 1910s and 1920s, even after the round barn fell into disfavor elsewhere. These dairy barns across the western and northern halves of the state also exhibit the greatest variation in building materials and methods.

Centric barns are often vernacular, built by farmers and local carpenters, and thus have a wide variation in details across the state of Wisconsin. Some builders, and their barns, are notable for the distinctive architectural features and influence on the rural landscape. Included in this group are a number of county fairground exhibit barns that fall outside the scope of this context. Very large and meant for an audience, this barn type is typically found in the northern half of Wisconsin, and they were generally built in the 1920s and 1930s.

**Statement of Significance**

<sup>106</sup> Triumpho, Page 48.

<sup>107</sup> Alderson, Page 5.

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In Wisconsin, round and centric barns may be significant under criterion A, B or C. Centric barns are, by definition, large agricultural buildings that housed livestock that have a circular or centric geometric plan. This plan can take the form of true circles, octagons, and other polygon shapes of five or more sides. The number of sides and the plan often corresponds with the period of construction, with octagonal and multi-sided polygons appearing first in the 1870s to the turn of the century, and true round plans appearing from the 1890s to the 1920s. They are usually constructed out of wood, though variations utilize masonry construction in their load bearing walls and foundations. Almost all have at least two floors, one below for livestock and one above for a hay mow and feed, with access via ramp or berm to the second level similar to a bank barn. It is not uncommon for a silo to be integrated in the center of a centric barn. There is a wide variation of roof types, both self-supporting and not and always constructed of wood framing, and of sizes. All of the resources identified in this contextual study fall within these architectural parameters.

Centric or round barns, constructed between 1876 and 1921, represent a period of agricultural experimentation in rural Wisconsin that predates a highly mechanized agricultural world. The efficiencies of the round type, while perhaps not as extensive as originally thought, probably did exist for dairy farming and the round structural shape, with members supporting each other and distributing load, maximizing interior space is a historically commonplace form. It only seems unusual in the face of a preponderance of rectangular farm buildings.<sup>108</sup> Centric barns are noteworthy not only for their rarity, but also because they reflect a certain time and place and its corresponding ideas, people, and agricultural practices. Their form and influence on agricultural practices, dairy farming in particular, is a specific reflection of their period of construction. Some barns follow the prescribed models of agricultural publications and the work of agricultural experiment stations and colleges of agriculture. Others were designed directly by professionals eager to demonstrate the efficiency of the new barn building type. Still other builders were inspired by development of the centric designs as models for their own barns.

In the early 1980s, Larry Jost, in his catalogue of centric barns *The Round and Five-or-More Equal Sided Barns of Wisconsin*, identified 188 centric barns in the state, 122 of which were confirmed to still be standing.<sup>109</sup> In the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, a large number of centric barns disappeared. Thirty years later 175 centric barns were identified across Wisconsin, 111 of which are confirmed as extant. The number of extant centric barns is slowly but steadily decreasing. While it is possible that other centric barns may be found in Wisconsin, the surveyed properties included in this overview of the centric barn type is both exhaustive and comprehensive. Ideally, some of these important agricultural buildings would be preserved for their architectural and cultural significance.

<sup>108</sup> Perrin, *The Architecture of Wisconsin*, Page 33.

<sup>109</sup> Jost, Pages 8 & 107.

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**Criteria for Eligibility**

Wisconsin centric barns should broadly qualify as one of these three types: octagonal, polygonal, or true round barn and possess a level of integrity in its form, materials and setting as described below to be considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Wisconsin centric barns may be nominated individually to the National Register of Historic Places for their significance under Criteria A, B or C. They may also be listed as part of a larger farmstead or part of a historic district. Most centric barns will be significant and eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a building type. Most will be eligible at the local level of significance; however, centric barns are considered iconic agricultural buildings in Wisconsin and given their place in the history of Wisconsin agriculture, potential exists for a centric barn to have statewide significance. Statewide eligibility is possible if it is demonstrated that the particular barn established a design standard that was subsequently widely adopted, or its design was influential beyond its local area, or can demonstrate a design innovation that influenced the design of other centric barns across the state.

**Individual Eligibility – Criterion A**

In Wisconsin, round and centric barns may be significant in the area of agriculture, representing the historical era where farmers moved toward an agricultural economy based on dairy farming and away from wheat farming. Individually, these barns may be significant under Criterion A, if the barn is associated with specific and significant historic events, such as innovative farming or husbandry practices, including the breeding of new lines of cattle.

While individual Wisconsin barns constructed as models to demonstrate scientific agricultural practices would be eligible under criterion A at the state level, it is unlikely that any of these barns are extant. These experimental designs, the first to correlate and demonstrate the relationship of the round form with the theories of economy of labor and efficiency of space, were developed on university campuses. Barns known to be associated with this academic exercise in Wisconsin include the early round barn design of Franklin King, professor of Agricultural Physics at the University of Wisconsin, to demonstrate his theories and be used as a model. His barn was constructed on the dairy farm of his brother, C.E. King near Whitewater, Wisconsin; this barn is no longer extant. Other round barns designed and constructed as demonstration and research objects were located outside of Wisconsin.

**Individual Eligibility –Criterion B**

Centric Barns may be associated with significant historical figures for eligibility under Criterion B. A barn's relationship to notable historic figures, most likely associated with agricultural developments, may make it significant under Criterion B. In most cases, the home, place of business, or a larger farmstead will be the property most closely associated with a person of historic importance. In a rare case, the round barn may be the most closely associated resource. Most of the historic figures associated with centric barns in Wisconsin will likely be farmers and landowners who carry local significance. Under Criterion B for the association with a historically significant person, centric barns should clearly demonstrate the relationship between the centric barn and the person of significance in the state of Wisconsin and the centric barn must be the extant property most closely associated with the individual during his or her period of influence.

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**Individual Eligibility –Criterion C**

Most centric barns will be eligible under Criterion C as an example of a unique agricultural building type. Centric barns, whether octagonal, polygonal (multi-sided), or true round in plan, have unique architectural characteristics. The most obvious being their distinct plan, which is rare and notable in agricultural buildings of the period. Centric barns, by definition, have a round shape intended to save and use interior space more efficiently than their rectilinear counterparts. Almost all centric barns share a similar function of animal husbandry and most also served, when constructed, as the largest and primary agricultural building on a farmstead. Without a known exception all centric barns have at least two floors, a lower floor to house animals, usually dairy cattle or horses, and an upper floor to keep hay and feed. Most centric barns are constructed with a foundation and low wall of masonry with an extended wall of wood framing terminating in a large, convex wood frame roof. Some of the earlier wood frame roofs are supported with interior columns, but many are supported by the exterior perimeter wall and utilize reinforced arches, stick-built with sawn dimensional lumber. An interior silo is also common in the center of the barn. Siding is often wood boards, subsequent metal panel sheathing, or occasional masonry materials such as clay tile, brick, concrete block, and fieldstone, though these are rare. Centric barns, because of their use, are rarely smaller than a diameter of forty feet, and rarely larger than a diameter of ninety feet. The number of sides of a centric barn can vary from six to twenty or more.

Barns designed and built by Ernst Clausing and Alga Shivers may also be listed under Criterion C as works of a master. As barn builders, Clausing and Shivers specialized in the building centric barns. Their barns are notable for their technical achievements during their period of centric barn construction and their high level of craftsmanship. Clausing's octagonal barns, built in the 1880s and 1890s, are notable for the utilization of a cupola for light and air, and a timber ring near the top of the roof that joined converging rafters and helped make a self-supporting roof and an interior free of columns and other obstructions. Shivers' barns, constructed in the early twentieth century, were built from dimensional lumber and boards and constructed as a balloon frame. The roof was framed as a radial pattern of rafters from the central silo acting as a column for the otherwise self-supporting roof structure. These long rafters were braced as a truss, spanning the distance from the lower sill on the exterior wall to either the high point above the central silo (with the roof enveloping the silo), or to a point a number of feet below the top of the silo, allowing the top of the silo to appear as a cupola at the top of the roof. The central silo was an integral piece of the round barn structure.

**Integrity**

To meet the standards for individual eligibility, a centric barn must retain its signature form (round, octagonal or multisided polygon), original height, and interior separation of floors. The interior plan must be intact; the volumes of interior spaces must be present without contemporary dividing walls or other features not historically found in barns (such as fireplaces and chimneys). While the roofing materials may be replacements, the roof should retain its original plan and framing system. The interior structural system should also be intact. If built with an interior silo, the silo must be extant on the interior. Optimally, exterior siding should be of original materials, although barns with later siding replacements, especially those with materials added during the historic period, will be considered if other aspects of the barn's design are highly intact. The building should have its original foundation. Original openings should be discernable, even if the doors and windows have been replaced. Works designated under Criterion C as the work of a master must possess a high level of integrity to their period of construction. While roofing materials, windows and doors may be replacements, other elements of the original design and construction must be present.



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It is recognized that as working agricultural buildings, centric barns underwent alterations and received additions to keep them in use. Milk house additions are the most common. These small extensions were mandated by state law in the mid-twentieth century and should not be considered negative impacts on the overall integrity of a centric barn. In other cases, sheds or extensions were appended to the barn. In these cases, the scale and placement of the additions should be taken into account for their impact on the barn and the form and massing of the centric barn should be clearly visible. Under criteria A and B, these additions may fall within the period of significance and be important in understanding the history and use of the building as it relates to the area of significance.

Satisfying these aspects of integrity contributes to the eligibility of centric barn resources in Wisconsin under criteria A, B and C for the National Register of Historic Places. While a centric barn may not be individually eligible because of a significant loss of historic features or alterations, a barn may contribute to a farmstead. When included in a farmstead, a centric barn, like any other barn structure, may be considered as a contributing resource if it maintains an acceptable level of integrity within the broader context of the farmstead and changes to the barn reflect the farmstead's period of significance.

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The area covered by this Multiple Property Documentation form is limited by the boundaries of the state of Wisconsin.

Because of historical reasons of economy and development, some regions of the state possess a greater density of resources than others. The eastern portion of Wisconsin was the first to have a number of centric barns constructed, followed by the southern portion, and finally the western and northern portions in turn. Each of these regions constructed centric barns in roughly chronological order within a period of significance spanning from 1876 to 1930. Centric barns, in almost all cases, were used to house livestock and specifically dairy cattle. Their development corresponds with the rise to prominence of dairy farming in Wisconsin and across the nation. All of the resources included in this study fall within these temporal and spatial parameters.

This multiple property nomination covers all centrally designed agricultural barns, regardless of form, in the state of Wisconsin. It is estimated that over 200 centric barns were built in Wisconsin from the 1880s to the 1920s; roughly 180 properties were still extant in the 1970s. Of 174 identified properties, 111 still exist and 63 have been demolished or have collapsed. While most of the octagonal, polygonal and true round barns in Wisconsin cluster in certain regions in the southern and western portions of the state, centric barns can be found across Wisconsin.

The following tables list all identified centric barns in the state of Wisconsin, including the nine examples constructed as fair ground and exposition buildings. As noted earlier, these unique buildings are outside the scope of the context established in this documentation form. This list is not meant to be exhaustive, but merely indicates confirmed resources. It is divided by type: octagonal, other polygons, and true round barns, and arranged according to location by county, town, address, and township-range-section. Barns denoted with a \* are previously listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Tables listing all confirmed non-extant centric barns are also included. Where the date of the barn is unknown, the field has been left blank.

Examples of Extant Octagonal Barns in the State of Wisconsin include the following:

<i>Historic Name</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Street</i>	<i>T/R/S</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>James A. Hoglund Octagonal Barn</b>	Bayfield	Mason	62183	US Highway 63	46/6/12	1900
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Buffalo	Modena	1316	Menting Road	23/12/18	
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Buffalo	Nelson	2006	County Road D	23/13/29	1917
<b>Loethar Octagonal Barn</b>	Chippewa	Lake Holcombe	30810	State Highway 27	32/6/4	1911
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Dane	Pleasant Springs	3109	Oak Street	6/11/4	
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Dane	Springdale	8815	County Road G	6/7/33	1889
<b>Brenner Octagonal Barn</b>	Douglas	Bennett	8971	Bennett Road	46/12/14	1905
<b>James Kluesner Octagonal Barn</b>	Grant	Bloomington	11565	Holly Road	5/5/29	
<b>Elmo Holt Octagonal Barn</b>	Iowa	Moscow	7234	State Highway 191	5/5/19	1876
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Kenosha	Pleasant Prairie	12338	Green Bay Road	1/22/34	

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<b>Edwin Albert Octagonal Barn</b>	Kewaunee	Carlton	147	State Highway 42	22/24/35	c.1890
<b>County Fairgrounds Octagonal Barn</b>	Langlade	Antigo	1633	Neva Road	10/25/01	
<b>Stock Pavilion Octagonal Barn</b>	Lincoln	Merrill	2001	2nd Street	31/6/3	1928
<b>Exhibition Building Octagonal Barn</b>	Marathon	Wausau	1201	Stewart Avenue	29/8/18	
<b>Judging Pavilion Octagonal Barn</b>	Marathon	Wausau	1201	Stewart Avenue	29/8/18	
<b>William Tetzlaff Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Grafton	364	County Road C	10/22/33	1895
<b>Gustav Timpel Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon	13669	N. Port Washington Road	9/21/5	1892
<b>George Hanser Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon	11656	N. Port Washington Road	9/21/8	1896
<b>Frank Vocke Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon	1901	Pioneer Road	9/21/3	1891
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Pepin	Albany		County Road D	25/11/5	
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Pepin	Pepin		Balsam Road	23/15/12	1908
<b>County Fairgrounds Octagonal Barn</b>	Price	Worcester	9130	Forest Lane	37/1/8	1918
<b>Gilley-Tofslund Octagonal Barn*</b>	Rock	Porter	8805	Stebbinsville Road	4/11/3	1913
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Rock	Spring Valley	8747	Stebbinsville Road	2/10/7	1913
<b>County Fairgrounds Octagonal Barn</b>	Rusk	Ladysmith		Rusk County Fairgrounds Road	34/8/9	1930
<b>Peter Tommcok Octagonal Barn</b>	Rusk	Stubbs		County Road F	34/8/18	1912
<b>George Trumpf Octagonal Barn</b>	Sauk	Franklin	9692	County Road N	10/4/32	1893
<b>Charles Ott Octagonal Barn</b>	Sauk	Honey Creek	6864	Leland Road	10/4/14	1895
<b>Joseph Feiner Octagonal Barn</b>	Sauk	Spring Green	4350	Horseshoe Road	9/3/26	1898
<b>Bodendein Octagonal Barn</b>	Sauk	La Valle	3575	Minicreek Road	13/3/25	
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	St. Croix	Springfield		Park Road	29/15/26	
<b>Anna Hardy Octagonal Barn</b>	Washington	Jackson	2540	Western Avenue	10/20/30	

Examples of Extant Polygonal Barns (multi-sided, but not octagonal) in the State of Wisconsin include the following:

<i>Historic Name</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Street</i>	<i>T/R/S</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>August Fontaine 14-Sided Barn</b>	Brown	Humboldt	4553	County Road N	24/22/32	1905
<b>10-Sided Barn</b>	Buffalo	Nelson	1788	County Road KK	23/13/16	
<b>Nashold 20-Sided Barn*</b>	Columbia	Fountain Prairie	1744	County Road E	11/12/8	1911
<b>Martin Wagnild 14-Sided Barn</b>	Dunn	Spring Brook	9483	290 <sup>th</sup> Street	27/11/26	c.1910
<b>Gus Hesselman 14-Sided Barn</b>	Grant	Bloomington	9802	Cemetery Road	5/5/36	1912
<b>6-Sided Barn</b>	Iowa	Brigham	8950	Clay Hill Road	5/5/12	

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<b>Wohlrab 12-Sided Barn</b>	Juneau	Lindina	3163	County Road G	15/3/33	c.1920
<b>Irwin Eakins 13-Sided Barn</b>	Juneau	Lyndon	579	US Highway 12	14/5/20	1916
<b>10-Sided Barn</b>	Monroe	Weldon	19291	Mesa Avenue	16/2/28	
<b>12-Sided Barn</b>	Monroe	Clifton		County Road N	16/1/16	
<b>Frank Broetzman 12-Sided Barn</b>	Oconto	Maple Valley	9012	Hickory Cemetery Road	29/18/11	1916
<b>Fuhs 14-Sided Barn</b>	Polk	Beaver	1401	County Road T	34/15/24	
<b>Ivan Eshenbach 10-Sided Barn</b>	Sauk	Greenfield	4680	Rocky Point Road	12/7/32	
<b>Herman Leuder 13-Sided Barn</b>	Sheboygan	Plymouth	4651	County Road J	15/21//2	1916

Examples of Extant True Round Barns in the State of Wisconsin include the following:

<i>Historic Name</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Street</i>	<i>T/R/S</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>William Modersback Round Barn</b>	Barron	Crystal Lake	171	19 1/2 Avenue	35/14/29	1908
<b>Adolph Brommer Round Barn</b>	Buffalo	Modena	864	County Road F	23/12/18	1916
<b>A.O. Albergston Round Farm</b>	Buffalo	Naples		County Road HH	24/10/24	1913
<b>Rudolph Fried Round Barn</b>	Buffalo	Naples	2661	State Highway 95	24/10/29	1898
<b>Round Barn</b>	Crawford	Seneca	56722	Duha Ridge Road	9/5/22	
<b>Gangstad Round Barn</b>	Dane	Deerfield	1326	US Highway 12/18	7/12/30	1903
<b>Melvin Nelson Round Barn</b>	Dunn	Sand Creek			24/11/31	1914
<b>Round Barn</b>	Eau Claire	Washington	4900	Loews Creek Road	26/9/4	
<b>Harry Andrew Round Barn</b>	Grant	Clifton		Rock Church Road & State Highway 80	5/1/26	1915
<b>Hood and Doyle Round Barn</b>	Grant	Waterstown	18491	County Road T	8/2/14	1903
<b>Eisley Round Barn</b>	Grant	Clifton	657	Billings Road	5/1/28	1915
<b>Round Barn</b>	Grant	South Lancaster	7965	County Road N	3/4/25	
<b>A.M. Ten Eyck Round Barn</b>	Green	Spring Grove	961	State Highway 81	1/9/3	1919
<b>Round Barn</b>	Green	Spring Grove		County Road OK	1/9/19	
<b>Llewellyn Jones Round Barn</b>	Iowa	Arena	6105	County Road K	7/5/2	c.1915
<b>John Berkett Round Barn</b>	Iowa	Eden	3287	State Highway 80	6/1/25	
<b>Annala Round Barn*</b>	Iron	Oma	12248	DuPont Road	46/3/31	1917
<b>Annala Round Milkhouse*</b>	Iron	Oma	12248	DuPont Road	46/3/31	1917
<b>Siekman Round Barn</b>	Jackson	Curran	8197	Farness Road	22/6/11	1890
<b>Charles Tisch Round Barn</b>	Marathon	Maine	7125	60th Avenue	30/7/17	1895
<b>Douglas Miles Round Barn</b>	Marinette	Peshtigo	1647	State Highway 64	30/23/3	1900
<b>County Fairgrounds Round Barn</b>	Marquette	Westfield	757	South Main Street	16/8/20	

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<b>Tom Tunks Round Barn</b>	Monroe	Wellington		County Road P	15/1/28	1918
<b>Stoddard Round Barn</b>	Monroe	Wellington	30964	Oregano Road	15/1/33	c.1915
<b>John Kroslman Round Barn</b>	Monroe	Wells	21275	Karlsbad Road	16/3/14	1915
<b>Elmer Blomberg Round Barn</b>	Pepin	Stockholm	3494	State Highway 183	24/15/27	1920
<b>Round Barn</b>	Pierce	Ellsworth		Landfill Road	26/17/35	
<b>County Fairgrounds Round Barn</b>	Pierce	Ellsworth	353	Grant Street	27/17/7	1921
<b>Peter Huppert Round Barn</b>	Pierce	Trimbelle	9298	480th Avenue	26/18/30	1915
<b>Round Barn</b>	Polk	Alden	501	210th Avenue	32/18/ 24	
<b>Peter Nelson Round Barn</b>	Polk	Apple River	1038	175th Avenue	34/16/5	1913
<b>Round Barn</b>	Polk	Balsam Lake	1311	120th Avenue	34/17/13	
<b>Round Barn</b>	Polk	West Sweden	1426	350th Avenue	37/17/11	
<b>Round Barn</b>	Portage	Stockton	3258	County Road J	23/9/16	1898
<b>Round Barn</b>	Richland	Eagle	16131	Round Barn Lane	9/1/7	
<b>Round Barn</b>	Richland	Ithaca		Route 2	10/2/4	1880
<b>Round Barn</b>	Richland	Willow	31390	Dog Hollow Road	11/2/32	
<b>Carl Risum Round Barn*</b>	Rock	Spring Valley	5600	Risum Road	2/10/34	1892
<b>Ewalt Andreas Round Barn</b>	Sauk	Spring Green		State Highway 14/60	8/3/1	1914
<b>Mary Elandt Round Barn</b>	Shawano	Germania	4205	Malueg Road	26/11/12	1913
<b>Round Barn</b>	Shawano	Wittenberg	5399	County Road M	27/11/33	
<b>Nicholas Lundgren Round Barn</b>	St. Croix	Erin Prairie	1645	200th Street	30/17/12	1914
<b>Round Barn</b>	St. Croix	Hammond		County Road TT	29/17/29	
<b>Round Barn</b>	St. Croix	Springfield		Park Drive	29/15/8	
<b>Round Barn</b>	St. Croix	Springfield	2823	110th Avenue	29/15/3	
<b>Round Barn</b>	St. Croix	Warren	1075	100th Avenue	30/18/12	
<b>Round Barn</b>	Trempealeau	Caledonia			18/8/19	
<b>Richard Bibby Round Barn</b>	Trempealeau	Gale	183364	Silver Creek Road	19/7/27	1902
<b>Martin &amp; Mabel Laursen Round Barn</b>	Trempealeau	Pigeon		State Highway 53	23/7/27	
<b>Schultz Round Barn</b>	Trempealeau	Caledonia	21937	Wagner Road	18/8/13	
<b>John Evenstad Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Clinton		Pa's Road	14/3/22	1913
<b>George &amp; Ida Apfel Round Barn*</b>	Vernon	Clinton	11314	County Road P	14/3/25	1914
<b>Ernest DeWitt Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		County Road Z	14/1/5	1912
<b>George Harris Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		Town Hall Road	14/1/9	1906
<b>George Pepper Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest	1122	County Road V	14/1/13	1910
<b>Mittie &amp; Jake B. Markee Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		Burr Ridge	14/1/27	
<b>Frank Lisker Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Greenwood		County Road Q	13/1/35	1910

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<b>Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Hillsboro		County Highway WW	14/1/2	
<b>Joseph Dank Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Hillsboro	17517	Dank Lane	14/1/9	1921
<b>Bert Cunningham Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Viroqua	7702	Upper Maple Dale Road	13/4/33	1915
<b>Matthew Donahue Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Whitestown	12686	Lower Ridge Road	14/2/9	
<b>L.L. Bush Round Barn</b>	Washburn	Bashaw	4048	County Road O	38/13/8	1918
<b>Hans Christianson Round Barn</b>	Waupaca	Mukwa	4789	Otto Road	22/14/28	1900
<b>Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn*</b>	Wood	Marshfield	501	E. 17th Street	25/3/9	1915
<b>Martin Reedle Round Barn</b>	Wood	Sherry	1801	County Road N	24/5/1	1918

Examples of Non-extant Octagonal Barns in the State of Wisconsin include the following:

<i>Historic Name</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Street</i>	<i>T/R/S</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>Octagon Barn</b>	Barron	Rice Lake		County Road O	35/11/31	
<b>W.T. Calkins Octagonal Barn</b>	Dane	Mazomanie	5714	State Highway 78	8/6/15	1915
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Dane	Primrose		County Road A	5/7/9	
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Jackson	Curran		Curran Road		
<b>Powers Octagonal Horse Barn</b>	Kenosha	Randall		County Road F	1/19/17	
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Manitowoc	Centerville		Westview Road	17/23/28	
<b>Emily Koopman Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Grafton		Lakefield Road	10/22/31	c.1890
<b>Arnold Clausing Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon		County Road W	9/22/8	1898
<b>Henry Kiekhaefer Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon		County Road M	9/22/17	1894
<b>William Clausing Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon		N. Port Washington Road	9/21/8	1897
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Racine	Caledonia	7241	Douglas Avenue	4/22/12	1909
<b>Dean-Armstrong-Englund Octagonal Barn</b>	Rock	Lima		County Road N	4/14/2	1893
<b>Truman Stone Octagonal Barn</b>	Sauk	Sumpter		County Road N	10/4/31	
<b>Taylor County Fairgrounds Octagonal Dairy Barn</b>	Taylor	Medford		State Highway 64	31/1/27	
<b>Thomas Mills Octagonal Barn</b>	Vernon	Jefferson		Ostrem Lane	13/5/28	c.1915
<b>Christian Matthews Octagonal Barn</b>	Wood	Siegel			23/5/26	1904

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Examples of Non-extant Polygonal Barns (multi-sided, but not octagonal) in the State of Wisconsin include the following:

<i>Historic Name</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Street</i>	<i>T/R/S</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>Charles Johnson 10-Sided Barn</b>	Burnett	Anderson		County Road Z	37/19/36	1910
<b>10-Sided Barn</b>	Dane	Montrose		Remy Road & Frenchtown Road	5/8/23	
<b>Frank Hiles 10-Sided Barn</b>	Wood	Pittsville	8103	Jackson Street	23/3/28	1912
<b>A.K. Christiansen 12-Sided Barn</b>	Sauk	Freedom		Happy Hill Road	11/5/25	
<b>14-Sided Barn</b>	Crawford	Wauzeka		County Road N	7/5/3	
<b>Chivok 14-Sided Barn</b>	Price	Worcester		Airport Lane & Musser Road	38/2/31	1895
<b>Charlie Sheldon 14-Sided Barn</b>	Taylor	Aurora		State Highway 64	31/4/28	1909
<b>Patrick J. Walsh 15-Sided Barn</b>	Juneau	Lemonweir		County Road K	15/4/31	1914
<b>16-Sided Barn</b>	Rusk	Dewey		Range Line Road	35/5/22	1923
<b>Bradley 18-Sided Barn</b>	Dodge	Westford		County Road C	12/13/8	

Examples of Non-extant True Round Barns in the State of Wisconsin include the following:

<i>Historic Name</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Street</i>	<i>T/R/S</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>Otis Blyton Round Barn</b>	Barron	Dallas	1282	County Road A	32/12/30	1914
<b>Round Barn</b>	Barron	Arland	1847	County Road D	33/13/14	
<b>Herold Round Barn</b>	Buffalo	Belvidere		County Road E	21/12/17	1913
<b>Round Barn</b>	Buffalo	Cross	2661	State Highway 95	20/7/14	1890
<b>Henry Struve Round Barn</b>	Chippewa	Eagle Point		State Highway 178	30/8/36	1906
<b>Frank Mohr Round Barn</b>	Chippewa	Edson	2893	County Road H	28/5/12	1915
<b>William Witte Round Barn</b>	Dane	Blooming Grove		County Road AB	7/10/25	1901
<b>Charles Oakes Round Barn</b>	Douglas	Amnicon			47/12/4	1908
<b>Round Barn</b>	Grant	Fennimore		US Highway 18	6/2/18	
<b>Stephen Miller Round Barn</b>	Grant	Liberty		State Highway 61	5/2/6	
<b>Round Barn</b>	Kenosha	Brighton		224th Avenue	2/20/12	
<b>Round Barn</b>	Monroe	Sheldon		Endicott Court	15/2/28	
<b>John Habheyger Round Barn</b>	Monroe	Wells		State Highway 27	16/3/29	1911
<b>Round Barn</b>	Monroe	Wilton		State Highway 131	16/1/26	
<b>Round Barn</b>	Monroe	Wilton		State Highway 71	16/1/33	
<b>George Penz Round Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Grafton			10/22/30	1909
<b>Round Barn</b>	Pierce	Ellsworth		East View Road	26/17/25	
<b>Round Barn</b>	Pierce	Martell	6650	690th Avenue	27/17/29	
<b>Axel Johnson Round Barn</b>	Polk	Beaver		County Road V	34/15/8	
<b>Trautwein Round Barn</b>	Racine	Mount Pleasant		Newman Road	3/22/1	1919

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<b>Round Barn</b>	Richland	Bloom		Seely Ridge Road	12/1/10	
<b>W.J. Dougan Round Barn*</b>	Rock	Beloit	2605	Colley Road	1/13/28	1911
<b>Christopher Gempler Round Barn*</b>	Rock	Spring Valley		Gempler Road	2/10/4	1912
<b>Townsend Brothers Round Barn</b>	Sauk	Reedsburg			12/4/16	1910
<b>Charles Borgen Round Barn</b>	St. Croix	Emerald	2466	County Road DD	30/16/34	1914
<b>Albert Aldertson Round Barn</b>	Trempealeau	Albion		County Road Y	24/9/17	1909
<b>Round Barn</b>	Trempealeau	Trempealeau	183	County Road F	18/9/4	1896
<b>J.W. Appleman Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Clinton		County Road D & McDaniel Road	14/3/32	c. 1910
<b>Eva &amp; Vern Stelting Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		Stelting Ridge Road	14/1/3	
<b>C.J. Miller Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		County Road V	14/1/13	c.1910
<b>Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		Grim Road	14/1/24	
<b>Adam Mayenschein Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		Fish Hollow Road	14/1/34	1911
<b>Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		County Road P	14/1/35	
<b>Frank Sterba Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Hillsboro		Dank Road	14/1/9	1920
<b>Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Union		Muncie Lane	13/1/35	
<b>C.E. King Round Barn</b>	Walworth	Whitewater			4/15/15	1889
<b>Henry Schreiber Round Barn</b>	Waukesha	New Berlin	4908	S. Calhoun Road	6/20/28	1905



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**Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods**

(Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)

The multiple property listing of centric barns in Wisconsin is based on existing literature on the subject of round barns and a brief survey of extant and recorded non-extant centric barn resources in the state. While it is recognized that other centric barn resources may have been missed and could still be identified, the list of centric barns in the state is thorough and close to complete. Criteria for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places for centric barns are based on historic significance within the state of Wisconsin pertaining to rural and agricultural life and the architectural integrity of a unique building type.

**Acknowledgements**

The Fuldner Heritage Fund paid for the preparation of this nomination. This endowed fund, created through a generous donation by the Jeffris Family Foundation and administered by the Wisconsin Historical Society, supports the nomination of historically and architecturally significant rural and small town properties.

**Methodology**

The Round Barn Multiple Property Documentation originated with the Wisconsin Historical Society in an effort to create a framework for the future nomination of centric and round barn resources in the state of Wisconsin. Legacy Architecture was contracted to conduct research, gather data, and prepare a multiple property nomination for round barn resources in accordance with the National Register of Historic Places program. This study focused on the wide range of centric barn types and their history in the state of Wisconsin.

Primary and secondary research utilized resources obtained from the Wisconsin Historical Society, the University of Wisconsin Library in Madison, Wisconsin Area Research Centers, and the Vernon County History Museum and Historical Society. Valuable resources included the *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin, Volumes I, II, and III* and the National Park Service Brief *The Preservation of Historic Barns*. Excellent books on the subject include Lowell Soike's *Without Right Angles: The Round Barns of Iowa*, John Hanou's *A Round Indiana: Round Barns in the Hoosier State*, and Richard Triumpho's *Round Barns of New York*, among others. Personal interviews, conducted on site, at a number of the centric barns of Vernon County also proved invaluable. In establishing a comprehensive and verified list of centric barn resources in the state Larry Jost's *The Round and Five-or-More Equal Sided Barns of Wisconsin*, Kevin and Patsy Alderson's *Barns without Corners: Round Barns of Vernon County, Wisconsin* and Gail Fish, Wava Haney, and June Zalewski's *Round Barns of Vernon County, Wisconsin* were consulted. The University of Wisconsin Extension Barn Preservation Program was also helpful, as was Dale Travis' excellent internet-based images and information on round barns. While existing academic surveys and research on round barns was used, primary source material drawn from journals and bulletins was also utilized. Data was collected on extant resources in the state from existing surveys corroborated with physical evidence from maps and atlases as well as from amateur architectural historians. This research was supplemented with site-specific field research in Vernon County. Much of the research can be clearly divided into two subcategories; one touching on the broad subject of centric barn development at a state level, and the other focusing on the physical evidence and cataloguing of centric barn resources in the state of Wisconsin. All of these sources aided in the research and writing of this study. Once the research was completed and this document prepared it was submitted for review.

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**Major Bibliographical References**

(List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)

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National Register of Historic Places  
Memo to File

# Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.



**TO:** Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places

**FROM:** Daina Penkiunas

**SUBJECT:** National Register Nomination

The following materials are submitted on this 24th day of June 2014,  
for the Multiple Property Listing of the Wisconsin Centric Barns to the National  
Register of Historic Places:

\_\_\_\_\_ Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form

1 \_\_\_\_\_ Multiple Property Nomination form

\_\_\_\_\_ Photograph(s)

\_\_\_\_\_ CD with electronic images

\_\_\_\_\_ Original USGS map(s)

\_\_\_\_\_ Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)

\_\_\_\_\_ Piece(s) of correspondence

\_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Please insure that this nomination is reviewed

\_\_\_\_\_ This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67

\_\_\_\_\_ The enclosed owner objection(s) do \_\_\_\_\_ do not \_\_\_\_\_  
constitute a majority of property owners.

\_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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

COVER

**National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form**

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information.

  X   New Submission             Amended Submission

**A. Name of Multiple Property Listing**

Wisconsin Centric Barns

**B. Associated Historic Contexts**

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

The Development of Octagonal and Other Polygonal Barns in Wisconsin, 1875-1914  
Agriculture and Dairy Farming during Wisconsin's Progressive Era, 1885-1920  
The Development of True Round Barns in Wisconsin, 1889-1921

**C. Form Prepared by:**

Rowan Davidson, Associate AIA & Jennifer Lemke, AIA, LEED AP, NCARB  
Legacy Architecture, Inc.  
529 Ontario Avenue, Suite FN1  
Sheboygan, Wisconsin 53081  
jlehrke@legacy-architecture.com  
(920) 783-6303

Returned

**D. Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

Rowan Davidson      Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer      6/20/2014  
Signature of certifying official      Title      Date

Wisconsin  
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Wisconsin Centric Barns

Name of Multiple Property Listing

Wisconsin

State

### Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Create a Table of Contents and list the page numbers for each of these sections in the space below.

Provide narrative explanations for each of these sections on continuation sheets. In the header of each section, cite the letter, page number, and name of the multiple property listing. Refer to *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* for additional guidance.

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**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. 460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 250 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, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Section number   E   Page   3  **Statement of Historic Contexts**

(If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)

**Introduction**

Barn raising conjures up a rural image of community spirit, rugged independence and a relationship with the land. The farm can serve as the most basic architectural reflection of rural cultural life in Wisconsin and the nation at large. Barn building practices, in particular, highlight local and ethnic traditions, changing farming practices, and building technologies.<sup>1</sup> While fairly unusual on farms of today, centric forms were rare during the nineteenth and early twentieth century, when the directness and logic of right angles made the most sense given building traditions, materials, and local labor practices. Octagonal, multi-sided, and particularly circular barns appeared around the turn of the twentieth century as a Midwestern dairy state phenomenon.<sup>2</sup> Round barns are significant in Wisconsin due to their rarity, architectural interest, and as a building form that paralleled the reformist spirit and growing influence of professional expertise in agriculture.

Amongst Midwestern states, where the majority of centric barns have been constructed, accounts vary, but as many as 215 round barns have been constructed in Wisconsin. Neighboring states typically have fewer, with estimates of 170 in Minnesota, 170 in Iowa, 155 in Illinois, 56 in Ohio, and 49 in Nebraska. Indiana is the only state in the country that initially possibly had more than Wisconsin, with as many as 225 identified resources.<sup>3</sup> There is evidence that a large number of centric barns have been demolished or have collapsed in the last four decades, roughly a century after their completion. Over 440 centric barns were identified across the United States in the 1970s. By 1980, 180 centric barns were identified in Wisconsin, still a fraction of a percent of all barn buildings in the state.<sup>4</sup> In a recent survey of Wisconsin round barns, 174 total resources were identified; close to the 180 total estimated in 1980. Of these, 111 are known to be extant. Nine of this number are County Fairgrounds, Stock Pavilion, Exhibition Building, or Judging Pavilion barns. It is believed that Wisconsin has the most extant centric barns of any state in the nation at this time.

The origins of round-shaped barns, also known as centric, are not fully understood. However, there are some precedents in American history. For example, George Washington built a sixteen-sided barn on his Dogue Run farm in Fairfax County, Virginia. The small outbuilding, likely constructed in 1792, was intended for treading horses and was destroyed by fire. On a grander scale, Shakers built a large, truly round barn in Hancock, Massachusetts, in 1826. Large enough to allow a wagon to enter and turn completely around within its circumference, the unique Hancock barn burned in 1865 only to be rebuilt. It stood 30 feet tall at its center monitor and had a diameter of 90 feet with two and a half foot thick fieldstone walls and attracted considerable public attention.<sup>5</sup>

The first centric barns in Wisconsin, and across the rest of the country, began to be built in the 1880s, when agricultural colleges, experimental stations, and widely published polemical guidebooks began to teach

<sup>1</sup> Auer, Michael J. *The Preservation of Historic Barns*. National Park Service Preservation Briefs website.

<[www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/brief20.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/brief20.htm)> Accessed April 3, 2013, Page 1.

<sup>2</sup> Soike, Lowell J. *Without Right Angles: The Round Barns of Iowa*. Des Moines, IA: Penfield Press, 1990, Page 3.

<sup>3</sup> Hanou, John T. *A Round Indiana: Round Barns in the Hoosier State*. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 1993, Page 1.

<sup>4</sup> Soike, Page 3.

<sup>5</sup> Hanou, Page 6.



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progressive farming methods based on industrial and scientific efficiency.<sup>6</sup> By the late nineteenth century, centric barns of multiple geometric configurations were built by inventive and experimental dairy farmers.<sup>7</sup>

The progressive era in the United States, roughly spanning the period from the 1890 to 1920, was marked by the implementation and advocacy of social reform. While this certainly applied to muckraking journalism, women's suffrage, and the temperance movement, it also refers to a broad move in favor of scientific approaches and applications to all facets of life, including agriculture. In an effort to eliminate inefficiencies, expertise was touted as a solution for social and economic ills. The development and expansion of dairy farming in Wisconsin can be understood in this context. The form of some farm buildings shifted to a truly circular form around 1900 as the scale increased along with a shift in purpose to dairy farming. Arguably the greatest period of centric barn construction, the first two decades of the twentieth century, saw a large majority of such buildings constructed in Wisconsin. Models continued to be sponsored and encouraged by state sponsored agricultural experimental stations through the First World War. As the centric and round barn model failed to gain extensive following amongst the farmers of Wisconsin and the wider Midwest, partially due to the form's unfamiliarity and difficulty, and partly because of a realization that the promises of increased efficiency were exaggerated, the centric barn type's popularity faded in the 1920s, becoming nearly unheard of as dairy farming implements and methods became increasingly mechanized and standardized.<sup>8</sup>

Centric barns, whether polygonal or truly circular, developed for a brief time as a consciously scientifically supported form intended to improve the lives of American farmers through the application of efficiency in materials, design, and function. The development of the centric barn type around the turn-of-the-twentieth century was also strongly affected and encouraged by parallel developments in agriculture and dairy practices in Wisconsin.

### **The Development of Octagonal and other Polygonal Barns, 1875-1914**

Multi-sided barns and other agricultural buildings have a long history. British precedents include 'gin-gang' building from northern England used to house horses and horse fitting equipment. Hay barracks, which house cattle below and hay above on two floors, is another similar eighteenth century example. Both the gin-gang and the hay barrack are usually quite small in scale. Other early examples in American history include the already mentioned George Washington's Dogue Run sixteen-sided barn destroyed by fire in 1967, and the Shaker's Hancock round barn.<sup>9</sup> A number of Dutch colonial buildings in New York and Pennsylvania have octagonal and hexagonal shapes. Early centric barns in the United States invariably took on octagonal and other polygonal shapes in plan. Most of these were built in New England and the Mid-Atlantic States, especially New York.<sup>10</sup>

The post-Civil War period, especially the 1880s, saw a significant number of smaller, multi-sided agricultural buildings constructed. Most of these were multiple story designs with hay lofts above for fodder grain and room for horses or cows below in stanchions and box stalls, used especially in the colder months of the year.

<sup>6</sup> Auer, Page 3.

<sup>7</sup> Triumpho, Richard. *Round Barns of New York*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2004, Page 1.

<sup>8</sup> Auer, Page 4.

<sup>9</sup> Triumpho, Page 14.

<sup>10</sup> Triumpho, Page 13.

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Most of these eastern seaboard examples were not large, usually about forty feet in diameter, and did contain silos. A number of them were decorated with large cupolas and many windows, as they were often built by more successful and ambitious landowners on established farms.<sup>11</sup>

The octagon shape, in particular, was actively promoted. Orson Squire Fowler, a follower of renowned phrenologist J.F. Gall, spent much of the 1850s travelling around the country in support of his popular book *A Home for All; or, the Gravel Wall and Octagon Mode of Building*. In a search for rational and perfect forms, Fowler described construction methods, space planning, house design, and the ideal octagonal barn with a ramp leading to a second floor.<sup>12</sup> As a popular mid-nineteenth author, he had significant influence on American culture. His goal was the efficiency and improvement of an ideal human existence in all things, including home design. In *A Home for All* he prescribes a specific masonry method of construction and the octagon plan form. While Fowler focuses on the house type, he implies that such a form is appropriate for all building types. Indeed, he believed that the ideal setting for any American would be a yeoman farm of two buildings: a two-story octagonal masonry farm house and a larger octagonal barn, and nothing else since efficiency dictates that all functions should exist under one roof.<sup>13</sup> According to Fowler, the octagon was a superior form in its purity of essence and natural beauty. Curvilinear and spherical shapes are natural forms, and, thus, the best way to imitate nature in all things. His octagonal barns would have two floors, similar to a bank barn, equipped with ventilation and natural light. The second floor supplied with grain and the lower floor with livestock facing the center.<sup>14</sup>

In 1850 Orson Squire Fowler toured Wisconsin, travelling to the Milton area and other parts of the southeastern portion of the state, to promote his book and ideas including the octagonal model of building.<sup>15</sup> Polygon homes began to appear in the state, and around the country, in the following decade, serving as local showpieces. Occasionally more than one would be constructed in a community, and it was usually the property of a prominent businessman, politician, or farmer. However, unlike houses, octagonal barns did not appear until decades later. The case of centric barns is the opposite of housing; where there is one, there are usually at least a few more in close proximity as the construction of a 'round' barn often inspired neighbors to do the same in Wisconsin.<sup>16</sup> It is possible that Fowler's book inspired the construction of octagonal barns in Wisconsin and across the United States. His ideas parallel the early development of octagonal forms in housing in the 1850s, especially on the East Coast, but their relationship to barn design is unclear. Often pointed to as the origin of round barn design, there is little evidence to suggest a direct connection between Fowler's ideas and the construction of a single centric barn. Octagonal agricultural forms began to appear in greater numbers in the 1870s, and by the 1880s centric barns were constructed across the country, especially in Wisconsin and the upper Midwest.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Sanders, J.H. Ed. *Practical Hints about Barn Building*. Chicago, IL: J.H. Sanders Publishing, 1893, Page 53.

<sup>12</sup> Hanou, Page 7.

<sup>13</sup> Fowler, Orson Squire. *A Home for All; or, the Gravel Wall and Octagon Mode of Building*. New York, NY: Fowler and Wells, 1854, Page 3.

<sup>14</sup> Apps, Jerry. *Barns of Wisconsin, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 1995, Page 51.

<sup>15</sup> Jost, Larry T. *The Round and Five-or-More Equal Sided Barns of Wisconsin*. Franklin, WI: L.T. Jost, 1982, Page 1.

<sup>16</sup> Perrin, Richard W.E. "Circle and Polygon in Wisconsin Architecture: Early Structures of Unconventional Design." *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol. 47. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society, 1963.

<sup>17</sup> Soike, Page 6.

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In 1874, Elliot W. Stewart, a successful farmer and lecturer in the agricultural sciences at Cornell University constructed a large octagonal barn on his property in Erie County, New York. This eighty foot diameter barn replaced a number of smaller rectangular ones already on his farm that he demolished. The following year he published his views and plans on the design of the octagon barn and its advantages. His views were favorably received, especially in application to the increasingly lucrative dairy farm model across the northern states of the United States. In a series of published articles, in both academic and industry circulated journals, Stewart argued for the improvement of octagonal and round-shaped barns over rectangular plans because of the increased enclosed area of the round shaped plans per similar construction material quantities and wall heights.<sup>18</sup> A circle, or sphere, is in many ways the most efficient shape: simple geometry explains that the area of a circle is relatively large compared to the length of the line defining its edges. A round or octagonal barn will have a greater interior area than a rectangular barn for length of wall construction required. Stewart saw the octagon form as superior and practical approach because it was potentially cheaper to build and contained more storage for its size. He argued that while a truly round barn would be best, it was an impractical approach as it was too expensive and difficult to construct; octagons would be satisfactory. These 'round shapes' would not be as affected by wind loads, and had more efficient line of travel and work. In a pre-industrialized era of agriculture, efficiency of movement on the part of farmers and other workers was important to save time and physical effort. The octagon also offered, partly due to its size and height, enough room to combine many functions of the farm, especially a dairy farm, under one roof.<sup>19</sup>

By 1884, about forty octagon barns based on Elliot Stewart's published model, or variations of it, had been constructed around the country. Almost a dozen similar octagon barns were constructed in Ozaukee County, Wisconsin, in the 1880s and 1890s by builder and designer Ernest Clausung.<sup>20</sup> Clausung consciously followed the expert work published, partly by Stewart, on the construction and use of octagon barns.

The search for increased efficiency, the motivation behind the development of octagonal and other polygonal shaped barns, encouraged the design of increasingly circular forms. The interior concentric formation of cow stanchions or horse stables meant a purely round form, as the extra, and sometimes awkward, spaces created at the obtuse interior angles were not necessarily used.<sup>21</sup> Multi-sided variations of the octagon idea began to appear with 10-, 12-, 14-sided barns appearing in the Midwest, with quite a few in Wisconsin. Most of these barns did not follow prescribed models and little is known about the people, often skilled craftsmen, carpenters, and farmers, who built them. Similarities amongst the octagon and polygon shaped barns indicate that some continuity in craft and personnel likely existed.<sup>22</sup> These multi-sided barns, in general, pre-date the construction of truly round ones.

The octagon and polygon shaped plans also correspond to other markers that indicate their earlier age: octagonal barns usually do not have self-supporting, arched roof constructions. They never have an interior silo of any shape or scale. They are typically less than sixty feet in diameter, and usually close to the small end of the scale with diameters close to forty feet. The multi-sided polygonal plans are not standardized in any way, with each one being unique. The materials used in their construction also indicate early dates in the use of pre-

<sup>18</sup> Triumpho, Page 28.<sup>19</sup> Soike, Page 12.<sup>20</sup> Soike, Page 10.<sup>21</sup> Triumpho, Page 48.<sup>22</sup> Soike, Page 23.



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industrial techniques like the use of vertical board siding, timber framing, and stone foundations instead of the cut lumber, stick-built and arched frames, concrete, brick, and tile materials of the true round barns of the twentieth century.<sup>23</sup> In a broad sense, octagonal and polygonal barn plans dominated nineteenth century round-type barn construction, while truly round forms were more common after the turn of the century.<sup>24</sup> The year 1900 can serve as a turning point in development and is, coincidentally, the mean of peak construction for round-type barn construction in Wisconsin.

In this study there are 46 identified octagonal and polygonal shaped barns in Wisconsin. Amongst these 14 are multi-sided, from hexagonal 6-sided shapes in plan to as many as 20-sided forms that appear almost circular. There is also significant variation including, 10-, 12-, 13-, 14-, 15-, 16-, and 18-sided types including the large Nashold 20-Sided Barn located at 1744 County Road E in Columbia County and constructed in 1911. The remaining 32 are extant octagonal barns including the Gilley-Tofslund Octagonal Barn, located on Stebbinsville Road in Rock County, and built by John Almond in 1893. The Gilley-Tofslund Octagonal Barn and the Nashold 20-Sided Barn are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Among the 26 documented non-extant octagonal and polygonal shaped barns in Wisconsin, 10 were multi-sided and the remaining 16 were octagonal.

**Agriculture and Dairy Farming during Wisconsin's Progressive Era, 1885-1920**

Between 1860 and 1890 the state of Wisconsin experienced an agricultural revolution as the economic basis of production shifted from wheat to dairy. Wheat production peaked statewide in 1870, with declines in production in some parts of the state as early as the 1850s, largely the result of decreased yields. Later, the railroads opened up the production of more fertile lands in Minnesota and the Dakotas, contributing to a further decline in wheat production in Wisconsin.

As profitability in the production of wheat and other staple crops all but disappeared after the Civil War, farmers searched for alternatives. As experienced dairy farmers from New York and immigrants from central Europe moved into the southern and western portions of the state in the 1860s and 1870s, Wisconsin turned to dairy, encouraging a move to more profitable products such as milk, cheese, and butter.<sup>25</sup> In turn, these products became considerably more predictable in terms of quality and storage in the 1880s and 1890s with the development of specific agricultural technologies and methods including winter feeding, improved breeding, butterfat testing, and refrigeration.<sup>26</sup> By the 1890s the dairy industry in Wisconsin was firmly in place and had reached an industrial and national scale.

A combination of influences from the University of Wisconsin, the Dairyman's Association, and technological advancement led to these changes. Cheese came first for widespread production in the 1870s, but was unpredictable in a pre-refrigeration era. The dairy industry found success as it increasingly became scientific. Farm research, experimentation, and the dissemination of knowledge in the industry through publications such

<sup>23</sup> Auer, Page 4.

<sup>24</sup> Hanou, Page 2.

<sup>25</sup> Wyatt, Barbara, Ed. *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin, Vols. I, II and III*. Madison, WI: Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986, Vol. II, Page 10-1.

<sup>26</sup> Wyatt, Vol. II, Page 10-4.

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as *Hoard's Dairyman* aided rapid advancements in dairy production and husbandry.<sup>27</sup> Farmers worked to improve milk production through breeding, increasing the quality of hay and feed, and the general welfare of dairy cows. Feed was vitally important to this development; the introduction of the round silo and the process of ensilage, developed by Franklin King, a University of Wisconsin professor, would allow increased winter feeding efficiency, and thus, more milk and more profit.<sup>28</sup> Cheese, butter, cream, and milk have been large components of Wisconsin's economic base since and the state has developed an international reputation for dairy products. Dairy afforded the local agricultural economy less spectacular, but more consistent, gains from the 1880s on. This was especially aided by Professor Stephen Babcock of the University of Wisconsin, and the invention of the accurate butterfat test. The test significantly aided in quality control of dairy products for export and distribution.<sup>29</sup> Dairy became the dominant type of farming suited to diversification in the late nineteenth century; this was especially true for Wisconsin, which had the appropriate climate, available land, and expertise for widespread dairy farming.<sup>30</sup>

The University of Wisconsin established the Agricultural Experiment Station in 1883 and the College of Agriculture in 1889.<sup>31</sup> The presence of the two contributed to the advancement of dairy farming, and to some extent, the prevalence of round barns in the state. Research directly contributed to improvements in the measurement of butterfat, the preservation and testing of milk, agricultural sanitation, ensilage, and comparative breeding, and of specialized dairy cattle.<sup>32</sup> Barns were used to protect the newly popular Holstein and Guernsey cows, specialized breeds for milking only. Testing programs were also introduced in the late nineteenth century at the behest of *Hoard's Dairyman* and various state agricultural colleges. The round barn was a part of this scientific approach to agriculture. Modern dairy barns, encouraged by the same institutions, consisted of long rows of stanchions and systematic feeding in well ventilated and lit spaces with wide aisles for yearlong use. Threshing floors and hay lofts were maintained in close proximity to the cows for feeding. This arranged function dictated a form that lent itself to large and long bank barns or circular ones.<sup>33</sup>

Centric barns are a physical manifestation of the rise of dairy farming in Wisconsin and across the Midwest as the round design was intended to address the stabling of cattle. Centric barns were strongly supported and promoted by the dairy industry, dairy agricultural professionals, and dairy trade publications. The work of Franklin Hiram King expanded through the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station to focus on farm buildings. His round silo helped to revolutionize farming practices and husbandry in the United States, and he proceeded to make the round silo the central element in the design of round barns. He emphasized such a design as improving movement, work efficiency, ventilation, and sanitation.<sup>34</sup> King's ideas and designs of true round barns with enclosed silos were quickly disseminated through the Agricultural Experiment Station and by J.H. Sanders, the founder of the successful agricultural journal *Breeder's Gazette*. The publication, largely

<sup>27</sup> Wyatt, Vol. I, Page 2-11.

<sup>28</sup> Lampard, Eric E. *The Rise of the Dairy Industry in Wisconsin: A Study of Agricultural Change, 1820-1920*. Madison, WI: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1963, Page 147.

<sup>29</sup> Lampard, Page XI.

<sup>30</sup> Apps, Page 45.

<sup>31</sup> Apps, Page 44.

<sup>32</sup> Wyatt, Vol. II, Page 2-12.

<sup>33</sup> Wyatt, Vol. II, Page 8-6.

<sup>34</sup> White, F.M. and D.I. Griffith. *Barns for Wisconsin Dairy Farms*. Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 266. Madison, WI: 1916, Page 9.

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concerned with agricultural technology and methods, demonstrated how new barn designs would work for dairy farming.<sup>35</sup> Sanders compiled a number of examples of farm outbuilding designs, including instructions, framing plans, and sectional construction drawings. Most of these were taken directly from various Midwestern state agricultural experiment stations, including King's drawings and illustrations of a round barn. Franklin King, a native of Wisconsin, served as a professor of agricultural physics from 1888 to 1902, and was notable figure in the development of agricultural sciences and the University of Wisconsin, contributing extensively to the design and ventilation of farm buildings as well as the study of soil nutrients. In 1893 Sanders indicated that the true round barn plan's primary advantages were suited explicitly to dairy farming and include effective ventilation, temperature control, economy of construction, consolidated uses, and efficient movement of grain and cattle.<sup>36</sup> The involvement of the University of Wisconsin in agricultural technology and research, focused on dairy concerns in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, aided the state in becoming the leader in the production of butter, cheese and milk in the nation by 1914.<sup>37</sup>

The *Breeder's Gazette* published extensive manuals and catalogs, in addition to the monthly journal. In one such book from the 1910s, simply titled *Farm Buildings*, an inexhaustible list of dairy cattle barns complete with plans, sections, and renderings included round barns. One example of an octagonal plan mentioned the objection of wasted space caused by the form that balanced out the positive gains from the use of fewer materials. It also mentioned that filling this kind of barn with hay could be difficult, and the lack of an integral silo was also a detriment. In comparison, the true round barns were highlighted as the ideal type for a dairy farm, if the owner could afford the initial cost and find the necessary skilled labor to construct it. The true round barn had the silo, less wasted space than other forms, and an efficiency of use that other types lacked according to the listing.<sup>38</sup> These positive attributes were repeated in literature from the 1890s through the 1910s, claiming that the true round barn type was ideal for maintaining dairy cattle. The barns had large enclosed spaces built with significantly fewer materials with a self-supporting roof and a silo in the center, acting as a column. The round form stood up to lateral wind forces well, and the plan was distinctly efficient. Possible detractors, which were also mentioned, included unfamiliarity, the silos being difficult to use, and the potential waste if the interior space was not planned correctly.<sup>39</sup>

Round barns came to rival the recognized view of the Wisconsin dairy barn: long, tall and rectangular. The round barn was explicitly used for dairy purposes and often built into a hillside similar to a bank barn so that the second level and hay mow could be directly accessed with farm equipment. Like the rectangular plans of the day, foundations and first levels were often of masonry construction with a large cut-lumber frame above, often stick built with 1x4s, 2x4s and 1x6s of various lengths and sheathed in board siding. The round barns were also typically large and came with a high initial cost. They were popular for their efficiency, but remained rare in numbers.<sup>40</sup> While the climate of Wisconsin was deemed ideal for dairy farming, changes in the wider economy, especially the increasing cost of nominal wood lumber and a concern for efficiency in a competitive market, led farmers to be increasingly concerned with new farm buildings. Multiple types and forms of barns were

<sup>35</sup> Sanders, Page 100.

<sup>36</sup> Sanders, Page 107.

<sup>37</sup> Wyatt, Vol. II, Page 10-4.

<sup>38</sup> "Farm Buildings." *Breeder's Gazette*. Chicago, IL: Breeder's Gazette, 1916, Page 63.

<sup>39</sup> White, Page 5.

<sup>40</sup> Wyatt, Vol. II, Page 5-3.



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developed for many different situations. Along with the most common Wisconsin dairy barn, the round barn served as the structural ambition of many dairy farmers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>41</sup>

**The Development of True Round Barns, 1889-1921**

Franklin King, professor of Agricultural Physics at the University of Wisconsin, was instrumental in the design of the round silo and the science of ensilage. His work on the subject likely inspired the form of a round barn design he developed for use on the dairy farm of his brother, C.E. King.<sup>42</sup> In 1889, Franklin King received a request to design a large and modern dairy barn for his brother's farm near Whitewater. Intended as a model as well as a working barn, King's design maintained warmth and coolness in respective seasons, admitted light, cost less to construct and maintain, and reduced farm labor.<sup>43</sup> The resulting true round barn, 92 feet in diameter and 28 feet from its sills to eaves, consisted of four concentric stone walls and foundations with a stick-built frame of two-inch stock with a sheathing of overlapping boards. The two story building contained a large cylindrical silo in its center, which aided the efficient and proximate feeding of livestock and helped support the large roof. An 18 foot wide barn floor adjacent to the silo, along with chutes leading to the feeding alley of dairy cows, allowed fodder to be delivered from a wagon in a circular drive and quickly moved into feeding positions.<sup>44</sup> The non-extant dairy barn accommodated 80 cows and 10 horses at all times of the year. Such a design, professionally developed by an expert in the field, inspired others to consider the round barn plan for dairy farms. King's scientific design approach and ideal of efficiency in one large integrated building with a minimum of movement appealed to other experts in the field, and the true round barn design found many receptive minds in department of agriculture, trade magazines, and experiment stations.<sup>45</sup>

The design of C.E. King's dairy barn was re-published and distributed numerous times across the Midwest from 1889 to the twentieth century. Franklin King's design of the circular silo found widespread support, and not just in academic circles.<sup>46</sup> Introduced in 1891 through the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, the round silo, constructed in a similar way to true round barns with a balloon frame structural system, had immediate impact and popularity among farmers for its efficiency, convenience, and ability to preserve feed. The stick-built design of the silo, paired with the obvious shape in plan, encouraged true round types to be designed and built in the 1890s. Once a round silo was introduced, it made sense to simply build a round barn around it, out of the same materials and using similar methods.<sup>47</sup> Self-supporting arched roofs were introduced later, but, in the meantime, the introduction of a silo operated as a large column in the center of the barn which every function would rotate around. This allowed the size of the true round barn to expand to much larger than the octagonal barns of the preceding decade. Widely publicized in *Hoard's Dairyman* and experiment station bulletins, the true round barn and silo was adopted and promoted by H.E. Crouch of the Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station after 1900.

<sup>41</sup> White, Page 4.

<sup>42</sup> Jost, Page 2.

<sup>43</sup> King, F.H. *Plan of a Barn for a Dairy Farm*. Seventh Annual Report of the Agricultural Experiment Station at the University of Wisconsin. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, 1889, Page 184.

<sup>44</sup> King, Page 186.

<sup>45</sup> King, Page 192.

<sup>46</sup> Hanou, Page 14.

<sup>47</sup> Soike, Page 26.

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Three unique round barns were constructed as demonstrations and research objects on the University of Illinois campus. These designs were published numerous times and their designs made available to the public.<sup>48</sup> When the Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station and Agricultural College adopted the true round barn form, inherited from Wisconsin, demonstration models were built beginning in 1908 in Champaign under the direction of Wilbur Fraser. Fraser's documentation of the work and the study of the barn's use in *Economy of the Round Dairy Barn* had a significant impact on true round barn design.<sup>49</sup> The main argument made by Fraser on behalf of the round barn was its benefits in proportional expenses of construction and maintenance compared to rectangular designs. He directly compared two barns, one round and the other rectangular, of similar size and area and found that the 60 foot diameter round barn would have a cubical content of 117,669 feet and would cost approximately \$799.76 for lumber to build. In contrast, the rectangular option, with 36 feet by 88 feet dimensions, would have a cubic content of 117,138 feet, but would cost considerably more at \$1,023.27 for lumber.<sup>50</sup> Fraser went on to outline similar benefits of the round barn form as King did before him, stating that the true round barn could incorporate a silo, encouraged efficiency of use, used fewer materials, could span large unobstructed spaces, possessed good ventilation, and was easy to use.<sup>51</sup> Disadvantages included unfamiliarity among farmers with the building type and a difficult process of construction with more angles, more cuts, and more mathematics necessary; the round barn would require more skilled carpentry to construct and a more open-minded farmer to build according to Fraser.<sup>52</sup>

The first example barn on the Illinois campus was a 60 foot diameter true circular barn intended to demonstrate the functional benefits of the building type. All of the latest agricultural technologies of the early twentieth century were included. The barn was built into the side of hill similar to a bank barn so that the second level could be easily accessed. It had a concrete foundation with a brick wall above for the first level. 2"x12" joists were used for the second floor framing with 8 inch shiplap siding to sheath and side it. A large arched balloon frame of 1"x6" studs sat above the masonry wall. The interior silo was made from the same materials. While it was intended as a model barn, the Illinois Agricultural College round barn was actually very similar to many of the round barns built across Wisconsin and the upper Midwest in the first decade of the twentieth century.<sup>53</sup> Two more barns were subsequently built as variations and improvement on the first model. These round barns, the second with a diameter of 80 feet and the third with a diameter of 90 feet, possessed added structural elements, interior supports, greater window area for light and ventilation, added monitors and cupolas, and milking stalls. Otherwise, they were designed along a similar premise.<sup>54</sup> In a later publication Wilbur Fraser states that interest in the true round dairy barn had only increased and that more were being built across dairy states despite the forms' relative unfamiliarity and potential difficulties. Fraser professed admiration for the progressive spirit of American farmers since none of the new owners and users of the building type had

<sup>48</sup> Soike, Page 28.

<sup>49</sup> Hanou, Page 26.

<sup>50</sup> "Efficiency of the Round Barn." *Kansas State Board of Agriculture, Eighteenth Biennial Report*. Manhattan, KS: Kansas State Board of Agriculture, 1911-1912, Page 141.

<sup>51</sup> Fraser, Wilbur J. *Economy of the Round Dairy Barn*. University of Illinois Agricultural Expertise Station Bulletin No. 143. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 1912, Page 7.

<sup>52</sup> Fraser, *Economy of the Round Dairy Barn*, Page 3.

<sup>53</sup> Fraser, *Economy of the Round Dairy Barn*, Page 8.

<sup>54</sup> Fraser, *Economy of the Round Dairy Barn*, Page 30.



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recorded a complaint. This view coincided with Fraser's earlier criticism of imitation and tradition as limiting factors on human and agricultural progress.<sup>55</sup>

The round barn form was repeatedly promoted in terms of its radical newness. The language used, whether the source be found in trade magazines or the work of the University of Wisconsin or Illinois, frequently refers to the round barn form's many advantages, its assumed relationship with reformist and scientific ideals, and opposition to its adoption from traditional and conservative farming habits. Much of the existing literature on the topic of round barns stresses the moment at the turn-of-the-twentieth century as one of experimentation and invention in a broad movement actively concerned with farming practices, industrial efficiency, and human betterment.<sup>56</sup> The most common advantages outlined include the argument in favor of circular forms as geometrically efficient. The ratio of volume to surface area was especially large for a spherical object in comparison to a rectilinear one. The amount of materials used to construct a round barn was simply more economical according to promotional materials as rectangular barns typically required 22% more wall length to enclose the same amount of space. This material saving fact combined with a supposed efficiency of use and the consolidation of multiple uses under one roof led to claims of 34-58% cost savings during the life of a round barn compared to an equivalent rectangular dairy barn.<sup>57</sup> Other aspects of the type frequently illustrated was the large, unobstructed hay mow, multiple stables and milking stanchions, the integral silo and granary; all of these contributing to a greater efficiency of use as multiple functions coexisted in a larger space and time and energy was saved on the part of farmers and laborers in their work with less physical movement. The circular plan also promoted an open and directed path of work. In an era without automated machine tools that still largely relied on muscle for many necessary activities on a farm, these improvements promised an increased level of production and a better life.<sup>58</sup>

The greater convenience in storing, handling, and distributing feed offered by the round barn was complemented by the greater structural strength of the building type. Despite fewer materials used in their construction, it was assumed that round barns, due to their shape, would handle horizontal wind loads more effectively, a useful attribute in Midwestern and plains states with occasional tornados.<sup>59</sup> The strong construction of the round barn, partly attributable to a self-supporting roof in an arch and domed stick built construction, came from taking advantage of the lineal, rather than the breaking, strength of wood members. The lineal strength in compression could be as much as twenty times greater in a 2x4 or 2x6 than the cross-grain strength in bending. The majority of strain in a round barn came down from the top, directed on to the vertical members like a dome. Rows of board sheathing acted as hoops to hold the structure together.<sup>60</sup> F.H. King, mentioned earlier, argued that the benefits for the round barn were greatest when the building was larger. However, floor planning for dairy cattle and simple wood frame construction methods limited the reasonable size of such barns to about 90 feet in diameter at the high end. Likewise, floor planning and the requirements of dairy barn created a lower limit for true round barns of about 40 feet in diameter. As a result, a happy balance

<sup>55</sup> Fraser, Wilbur J. *The Round Barn*. University of Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station Circular 230. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 1918, Page 3.

<sup>56</sup> Soike, Page 2.

<sup>57</sup> "Efficiency of the Round Barn," Page 139.

<sup>58</sup> Auer, Page 3.

<sup>59</sup> "Efficiency of the Round Barn," Page 140.

<sup>60</sup> Apps, Page 56.

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of economy, simple construction, and planning settled on a common size of roughly 60 feet in diameter.<sup>61</sup> A large majority of the true round barns in Wisconsin are close to this diameter.

While a large number of true round barn designs originated from agricultural colleges, experiment stations, and dairy trade magazines at the turn of the century, they were followed by local builders, architects, engineers, and even mail order designs. Endorsement preceded the proliferation of a wide variety of designs within the type. Pattern books, like the ones published by *Breeder's Gazette*, and mail order firms like Sears, Roebuck and Company distributed designs and instructions for low fees to farmers during the first two decades of the twentieth century.<sup>62</sup> Organized commercial endeavors for the construction of round barns became common with notable contributors including M.L. King's Permanent Building Society, the William Loudon Machinery Company, and architect William Radford's advertised designs.<sup>63</sup> Between 1907 and 1923, Benton Steele, a successful designer and builder of round barns, cultivated a broad readership of articles and advertisements in agricultural newspapers and journals, including *Hoard's Dairyman* and the *Breeder's Gazette*, for his services. Beginning in Indiana, but quickly expanding his range of work across the Midwest, including Wisconsin, Steele was typical of the industry in that his prolific work was conducted by himself personally and a crew of experienced craftsmen. They would travel from site to site, commission to commission, erecting a barn over roughly three months and moving on.<sup>64</sup> This approach became increasingly common in the early twentieth century as new building technologies became more widespread, including the use of concrete for foundations and floors and a familiarity with balloon framing and dimensional lumber. Steele actively promoted these building methods along with the technical advantages to round barn building.<sup>65</sup>

A more vernacular local model of building true round barns developed along with the professional designer/builder model. Some round barns were built in a similar fashion to most agricultural buildings of the nineteenth and early twentieth century by farmers themselves with the help of skilled carpenters and neighbors. While it was possible that many of these designs were inspired by, or direct imitations of, the published designs and those of builders, very few of them were exactly alike. Most were of the true round barn variety, while a few others took on complex multi-sided plans and were comparable in scale and scope to the more professional designs. They also appeared slightly later on the scene, perhaps due to the increasing popularity and acceptance of the form, as almost all were built in the twentieth century and most of them after 1910. One such local builder was Alga Shivers, who led the building of as many as fifteen round barns in Vernon County. Shivers' work gained enough prominence to be published in Illinois farm journals as early as 1910, despite only working locally near his family farm. Born in 1889, Shivers went to college, studied carpentry, and assisted in building his family's round barn as a teenager.<sup>66</sup> He would go on to build many more, all of wood construction, over the next two decades with the help of his small crew. Shivers would cut the necessary logs from local wood a year or two in advance, then return and saw it into boards. He would stay on site throughout the process and was aided by locals when the barn was raised. Shivers kept detailed notes and books of calculations for lumber,

<sup>61</sup> "Farm Buildings," Page 128.

<sup>62</sup> Auer, Page 4.

<sup>63</sup> Soike, Page 44.

<sup>64</sup> Soike, Page 51.

<sup>65</sup> "Farm Buildings," Page 27.

<sup>66</sup> Fish, Gail, Wava G. Haney, and June Zalewski. *Round Barns of Vernon County, Wisconsin: A Circle Tour*. Viroqua, WI: Vernon County Historical Society, 1996, Page 36.

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design specifications, and costs. The construction process usually took about three months.<sup>67</sup> When round barns lost popularity in the 1920s, Shivers continued to build more conventional barns and other building types locally. Alga Shivers' work was, in many ways, comparable to that of a more professionalized builder like Benton Steele, but the work was not published widely, was not the primary means of employment for the designer, and was limited to a specific location.

There are 66 identified extant true round barns in Wisconsin. Included among these are the George and Ida Apfel Round Barn, located at 11314 County Road P in Vernon County, and built by Apfel in 1914; the stone Matthew Annala Round Barn, located on Dupont Road in Iron County, and built by Annala in 1917; and the Carl Risum Round Barn, located at 5600 Risum Road in Rock County, and constructed in 1892. All three barns are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. There were also at least 37 non-extant round barns, either demolished or collapsed, located in Wisconsin.

### Centric Barns in the Twentieth Century

After the First World War the agricultural press either actively turned against the proliferation of round barns or simply lost interest in their promotion. In the late 1910s many of the original supporters of the round barn abandoned their support as the type came under extensive criticism.<sup>68</sup> For example, the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, originally one of round barns greatest proponents, published critical studies in 1916. Two researchers at Wisconsin, F.M. White and C.I. Griffith, cited a number of reasons why the round barn was inferior to rectangular designs. These reasons included the central silo leading to difficult use, a lack of saved and utilized space, and a lack of decent ventilation and lighting.<sup>69</sup> As agricultural technology changed, the round barn became increasingly difficult to use in contrast with its earlier appeal along similar lines. Large tractors and farm equipment no longer operated with ease in the narrow, turning driveways inside a round barn. The rarity of the round barn also made it difficult, over time, to maintain because of a lack of familiarity and an increasingly standardized set of building materials and practices. Hay, for instance, was standardized by machinery and habit into rectangular bales, ill-suited to the lofted curving spaces of the round barn.<sup>70</sup> Round barns were not adaptable to the changes in technology. Widespread rural electrification and mechanization in the 1920s and 1930s along with standardized dairy machinery like barn cleaners and milk pipelines were more easily applied to rectangular barns.<sup>71</sup>

The claims of economic efficiency of the round barn never materialized with any significant data to support it in practice.<sup>72</sup> Rectangular barns were increasingly favored, partly because of their existing popularity, but also because of their relative versatility and consistency. They, in comparison to round barns, are predictable, easy to adjust regardless of their shape for future configurations, and easy to build.<sup>73</sup> True round barns never found widespread support despite the publicity and apparent technical advantages over traditional rectangular barns.

<sup>67</sup> "Alga Shivers and His Round Barns." *LaFarge Epitaph*, Nov. 7, 1979.

<sup>68</sup> Triumpho, Page 76.

<sup>69</sup> Soike, Page 59.

<sup>70</sup> Soike, Page 62.

<sup>71</sup> Alderson, Kevin and Patsy. *Barns without Corners: Round Barns of Vernon County, Wisconsin*. Onalaska, WI: Kickapoo Valley Heritage, 2010, Page 4.

<sup>72</sup> Auer, Page 4.

<sup>73</sup> Foster, W.A. and Deane Carter. *Farm Buildings*. New York, NY: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1922, Page 58.



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While the increasing cost of lumber initially made the round barn's efficiency more appealing, the limits on its size, frequently settling on a barn with a 60 foot diameter, was a discouraging factor as it was difficult to expand a round barn in a logical way once the needs of a dairy farm outgrew the capacity of the round barn.<sup>74</sup> Part of this is possibly attributable to the lack of enthusiasm for them by the 1920s amongst agricultural professionals, but this assumption leaves out the lack of success even with the support of publications and university systems. The round barn's efficiencies may have been well suited to a time of intensive physical farm labor; however, the same design features made them difficult to adapt to a world of machines and changing farming practices.<sup>75</sup>

The decline in construction of round barns in the 1920s can also be attributed to the slowing of the agricultural economy in the United States in the same period. Westward expansion had come to an end and most arable land in the country was claimed and farmed extensively by this period. Drought and protectionist policies simultaneously limited supply and eliminated markets. Farmers across the country struggled throughout the 1920s and 1930s compared to the successful decades that preceded them.<sup>76</sup>

Perhaps the biggest obstacle to the round barn's success was a lack of familiarity with the type's design for farmers and builders alike. The round barn, despite its potential structural advantages, was also not familiar to the carpenters and farmers who constructed and raised the majority of dairy barns.<sup>77</sup> This was clearly recognized by many of the round barn's supporters from an early date. A number of early boosters included the presumed conservatism of farmers amongst the challenges facing the adoption of the round barn design. Farmers, it was believed, were inclined to follow custom over the advice of rational expertise.<sup>78</sup> In fairness, the efficiencies of the round barn were functionally fleeting while common rectangular barn designs proved themselves adaptable to change.

An exception to the rule that round barns fell out of favor in the 1920s is the frequency of very large round barns constructed on county and state fairgrounds across the country, including Wisconsin, during this period. While these buildings drew on the earlier precedent of round barn construction, these barns served a different function from the dairy farm barns; they operated more like auditoriums, with seating facing a central circular arena. Most of them were intended to show cattle and horses in agricultural competitions and as sales arenas.<sup>79</sup> Such centric barns served entertainment and recreation purposes as opposed to strictly agricultural ones, thus this type is distinct from other centric barns and should be treated as such and are outside the scope of this multiple property assessment. Some examples in Wisconsin of the round barn fair building are the Langlade County Fairgrounds Octagonal Barn in Antigo, the Lincoln County Stock Pavilion in Merrill, and the Price, Marquette, Pierce, and Rusk County fairground barns. A notable example is the Central Wisconsin Fairgrounds Barn in Marshfield built in 1915 that has a diameter of 150 feet and is believed to be the largest round barn in the world. All of them were built in the late 1910s or later.<sup>80</sup> In fact, a large number of these fairground structures survive while the agricultural dairy barns have often collapsed or have been demolished. Many round barns, of all forms, were destroyed in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s as their wooden structures began to show wear and tear,

<sup>74</sup> "Efficiency of the Round Barn," Page 140.

<sup>75</sup> Soike, Page 58.

<sup>76</sup> Hanou, Page 28.

<sup>77</sup> Soike, Page 61.

<sup>78</sup> "Efficiency of the Round Barn," Page 139.

<sup>79</sup> Soike, Page 37.

<sup>80</sup> Apps, Page 59.

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and owners could not justify maintaining buildings that no longer served its intended function on large mechanized dairy farms.<sup>81</sup>

Round barns remain an important, but rare, part of the agricultural landscape. In their own time at the turn-of-the-twentieth century, they were considered specialized and unique – their advantages and disadvantages so clear that certain dairy farmers eagerly embraced them while others shunned them altogether. The progressive promise of efficiency they offered was short-lived and possibly illusory, but those that constructed and used them took pride in their round barns and maintained them through the years as they served as unique symbols of experimentation, status, and forward thinking in the rural life of Wisconsin and the Midwest.

**Builders**

Most of these barns were constructed with the assistance and supervision of local carpenters and builders. Raised by local farmers, such barns would be designed and organized by figures who would proceed to work on a number of such projects, one every few years.

Ernst Clausing

Almost a dozen similar octagon barns were constructed in Ozaukee County in the 1880s and 1890s by builder and designer Ernst Clausing and his brother, Theodore.<sup>82</sup> Frederick Clausing, the father of Ernst and Theodore, came to America with his family from Saxony in 1846 and settled in Ozaukee County; Ernst was born in 1859. Ernst Clausing was a carpenter and got the initial idea for building a centric barn from looking at agricultural magazines in 1885. It is possible that the images and designs he saw could have originated with the work of Orson Squire Fowler or Elliot Stewart. While it is unclear exactly where the inspiration for these octagonal barns came from, they do address the prevalence of horse and dairy farms in Ozaukee County and proximity to Lake Michigan with occasional high winds, for which the circular plan was well-suited.<sup>83</sup> Similar to other centric barns, Clausing's octagonal barns were arranged with cattle stables below and a hay mow and storage above on a second level. They were typically constructed with a fieldstone foundation, poured concrete flooring, and board siding. The Clausing octagon barns are notable for the utilization of a cupola for light and air, and a timber ring near the top of the roof that joined converging rafters and helped make a self-supporting roof free of columns and other obstructions.<sup>84</sup> Ernst Clausing died in 1941.

A number of the Clausing barns were built for the family's relations. One of these barns was built for his cousin, William Clausing, in Mequon in 1897. This barn has subsequently been removed from its original site in 1978, and is now located at Old World Wisconsin in Waukesha County.<sup>85</sup> Construction of the following barns has been attributed to Ernst Clausing:

<sup>81</sup> Hanou, Page 60.

<sup>82</sup> Soike, Page 10.

<sup>83</sup> "The Clausing Octagon Barns of Ozaukee County: An In-Depth Study." Ozaukee County Historical Society website. <[www.co.ozaukee.wi.us/ochs/Archives/ClausingOctagonBarnsOzaukeeCountyInDepth](http://www.co.ozaukee.wi.us/ochs/Archives/ClausingOctagonBarnsOzaukeeCountyInDepth)> Accessed September 13, 2013.

<sup>84</sup> "The Clausing Octagon Barns of Ozaukee County: An In-Depth Study."

<sup>85</sup> Perrin, Richard W.E. *The Architecture of Wisconsin*. Madison, WI: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin Press, 1967, Page 38.

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<b>George Penz Round Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Grafton			10/22/30	1909
<b>William Tetzlaff Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Grafton	364	County Road C	10/22/33	1895
<b>Emily Koopman Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Grafton		Lakefield Road	10/22/31	c.1890
<b>Henry Kiekhaefer Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon		County Road M	9/22/17	1894
<b>Arnold Clausing Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon		County Road W	9/22/8	1898
<b>William Clausing Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon		N. Port Washington Road	9/21/8	1897
<b>Gustav Timpel Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon	13669	N. Port Washington Road	9/21/5	1892
<b>George Hanser Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon	11656	N. Port Washington Road	9/21/8	1896
<b>Frank Vocke Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon	1901	Pioneer Road	9/21/3	1891

Alga Shivers

Thomas Shivers was born a slave in Tennessee in 1854 and moved with his family to Vernon County as young man in 1879. There he became one of the most successful farmers in the county and the largest African American land owner in Wisconsin for a time in the late nineteenth century.<sup>86</sup> Thomas' son, Alga Shivers, was born in 1889. He attended George Smith College in Sedalia, Missouri, and trained as a carpenter and studied mathematics. An avid follower of innovation and technology, Thomas Shivers built a round barn, with Alga's help, in the early 1900s. Alga Shivers likely took this experience as a model for the round barns he built during his career.<sup>87</sup> His work gained enough promise and notoriety that it was published in Illinois farm journals as early as 1910.<sup>88</sup> Shivers also served in World War I. He married Flora Revels Waldon in 1945 at the age of 56. While they never had children of their own, the couple raised a number of orphaned and related children in their home. Alga Shivers was an integral part of the local rural community and serves as an interesting historical figure due to the color of skin in the context of turn-of-the-century America. Western Wisconsin had two small African American colonies at the time in the Cheyenne Valley of Vernon County and Pleasant Ridge in Grant County, which had fully and successfully integrated with the white and immigrant majority.<sup>89</sup> The fact that Alga Shivers became something of a local hero in Vernon County and a respected builder lends further proof to his importance. Alga Shivers died in 1978.

The construction of as many as fifteen round barns in Vernon and neighboring Monroe counties by Alga Shivers, with the assistance of his brother Ed and a small crew, stands out in the history of the round barn building type. His barns were almost always built of wood. The necessary logs were cut on a specific farm property a year or two in advance, then they would be sawn and cut into dimensional lumber and boards and

<sup>86</sup> Alderson, Page 5; Fish, Page 36; and Cooper, Zachery. *Black Settlers in Rural Wisconsin*. Madison, WI: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin Press, 1977, Page 7.

<sup>87</sup> Alderson, Page 38.

<sup>88</sup> Fish, Page 36.

<sup>89</sup> Cooper, Page 5.



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constructed as a balloon frame of 2x members on a concrete and rubble foundation.<sup>90</sup> The roof of a round barn would always be built in the same way with a radial pattern of rafters from the central silo acting as a column for the otherwise self-supporting roof structure. These long rafters, built up of dimensional lumber, were braced as a truss, spanning the distance from the lower sill on the exterior wall to the high point above the central silo. Such trusses were utilized for every single rafter. Vertical boards sheathed the exterior walls, and shingles were overlapped and nailed to sets of boards on the roof. The central silo was typically built of the same materials and in the same manner as the rest of the barn as an integral piece of the round barn structure. Shivers kept detailed notes, calculations, and specifications to assist him in the design of these barns with every piece of lumber documented; however, no drawings of any plans exist.<sup>91</sup> When round barns became unpopular in the 1920s, Shivers continued to build more conventional agricultural buildings and houses as a local carpenter.<sup>92</sup> Through the entire building process, Shivers and his small crew would stay on site, and during the final month or two of construction, they would often be assisted by neighboring farmers to raise the structure of a round barn.<sup>93</sup>

Alga Shivers is an example of a local builder having a large impact on the design and construction of true round barns. Not only are these barns architectural novelties, but they also demonstrate aspects of agricultural life in the early twentieth century. A number of the barns he was involved with are excellent examples of the type and maintain a good physical condition and integrity.

While several other barns have been unofficially attributed to him, construction of the following barns have been confirmed to have been built by Alga Shivers:

<i>Historic Name</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Street</i>	<i>T/R/S</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>Stoddard Round Barn</b>	Monroe	Wellington	30964	Oregano Road	15/1/33	c.1915
<b>C.J. Miller Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		County Road V	14/1/13	c.1910
<b>George Pepper Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest	1122	County Road V	14/1/13	1910
<b>Adam Mayenschein Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		Fish Hollow Road	14/1/34	1911
<b>George Harris Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		Town Hall Road	14/1/9	1906
<b>Frank Sterba Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Hillsboro		Dank Road	14/1/9	1920
<b>Joseph Dank Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Hillsboro	17517	Dank Lane	14/1/9	1921
<b>Matthew Donahue Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Whitestown	12686	Lower Ridge Road	14/2/9	No date

<sup>90</sup> "Alga Shivers and His Round Barns."

<sup>91</sup> "Alga Shivers." (Obituary.) *Wisconsin State Journal*, Nov. 29, 1978.

<sup>92</sup> Fish, Page 37.

<sup>93</sup> "Alga Shivers and His Round Barns."

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**Associated Property Types**

(Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)

**Introduction / General Characteristics**

Centric barns, often referred to as 'round barns,' encompass octagonal and other polygon shaped plans as well as the 'true' round barn form. Amongst these barn types there is variation in style, building materials, function, period, location, and the origin and inspiration for a specific design. By far the most identifiable characteristic of a centric barn is its basic form. They can be categorized according to the shape of the plan: octagonal or other multi-sided polygons ranging from small hexagonal forms to large 20-sided barns. Most of the multi-sided polygons however are in the 10- to 14-sided variety, close to imitating the 'true' round barn form.

Foundation walls have a wide variety of materials. Rubble, stone, and concrete were common choices at first and were slowly replaced by precast concrete and monolithic concrete forms at the turn of the century. Most centric barns, regardless of form, function as bank barns, with a change in grade level or a bridge leading to a second floor hay mow. For this reason, nearly all forms of barns most often employed masonry walls for the first level, serving as an extension of the foundation, supplying greater structural strength to resist the loads of the bank, and providing insulation for areas of the barn housing dairy cows and other animals through the winter.

The finished siding or sheathing of a centric barn also served as a useful defining feature. Early round types like octagon barns usually had vertical wood board siding above the masonry foundation or first floor walls, though there are some exceptions. Board and batten and horizontal curved clapboard and shiplap siding were common configurations through the late nineteenth century. Heavier, masonry materials became increasingly common for large barns for wealthy farmers located near population centers. Brick, concrete block, and vitrified clay tile were common materials after the turn of the century.<sup>94</sup> There are also examples of field stone being used in the construction of centric barns, typically in locations where it was widely available. Many centric barns have been covered with a variety of metal siding types from the 1920s to the present day. These metal systems are often attached directly to the original siding and require less maintenance.

Roofs were typically shingles, but many centric barns have had metal roofing added to replace the more expensive and less-durable shingles.<sup>95</sup> Roof types can be divided into three distinct structural systems: the unsupported, the occasionally supported, and the self-supported roof. The unsupported roof types, typically from earlier periods of building and polygon plans, include the monitor, modified hip roof, and flat roof. Occasionally, supported roofs can be found on transitional and larger centric barns and include conical shapes, sectional cone shapes, and the polygon form with wings. The self-supported roof, typical to 'true' round barns, functions like a complex arch and include domes, gambrel sectional roofs, and gambrel multiple pitch roofs.<sup>96</sup> Almost all centric 'round' barn roof structures were stick built from sawn lumber, often in relatively small sizes of members and boards. Usually a round barn will have some cupola or monitor, or even the extension of a silo, through the roof indicating ventilation and the presence of a silo.

<sup>94</sup> Soike, Page 31.

<sup>95</sup> Triumpho, Page 5

<sup>96</sup> Soike, Page 42.



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Another defining characteristic is the presence of an interior silo. Round silos, developed by Franklin King congruent with the design of King's round barns, are a common element in centric barns, especially in designs dating from after the turn of the century. Developed and added after 1891, interior silos became common especially in the true round form. However, it is not always clear from an exterior view if a silo is integral.

Wisconsin Centric Barns should have at least some of the preceding physical components to demonstrate a minimum level of integrity for eligibility. Foundation, wall, and roof construction should broadly fall under the preceding description. In order to better define and describe centric or 'round,' barns categorizing them according to their physical attributes and characteristics is helpful. By doing so clear differences can emerge and help in the study of the history of the building type. Significant centric barn types can be categorized according to form and origin of their plan, and broadly according to their location in Wisconsin and period of construction.

**Centric Barn Types, Definitions, and Variations**

The octagonal barn type is recognizable through its eight sides. Popular from the 1870s into the twentieth century, the octagonal barn has precedents from earlier in the nineteenth century in the work of Orson Squire Fowler, and later Elliot Stewart, in addition to vernacular northern European and colonial agricultural forms. In Wisconsin, the barns built by the Clausing family, concentrated in Ozaukee County, serve as good examples of the type. Usually smaller in scale than the later polygonal and true round barn forms, the octagon shape was designed to hold dairy cattle and horses and has overall diameters in the range of 40 feet or slightly more.

Easier to build and more familiar than a truly round shape, the octagon barns were suited in scale and design to manual agricultural labor. The type rarely has a self-supporting roof and thus has interior columns and lacks a silo. The siding is typically a variation on vertical lap boards and the type divides functions, like most centric barns, between hay and feed above, and animals below in a bank barn configuration. Octagon barns, while rare, were largely familiar in the rural landscape of late nineteenth century southeastern Wisconsin as signs of prestige, wealth, and progressive ideals.

The variety of polygonal barn types reveals a period of transition and experimentation. The concept behind these designs was similar to the octagonal barns in that they could approach the efficiency of a round shape while still following common building practices. They range from small, auxiliary 6-sided agricultural buildings to large 14-, 16-, and 20-sided barns that operate in much the same way as later true round dairy barns. Most of the multi-sided centric barns in Wisconsin have between 12 and 15 sides and have diameters similar to true round barns between 55 and 65 feet and are contemporary to both the professional and vernacular phases of true round barn construction. They also share a similar material vocabulary with true round barns in addition to their scale. Some unusual variations exist in the odd-numbered sided types, which are asymmetrical along a line running through the barn door. The barn door side is often slightly larger in this case than all the other sides and can lead to modified hipped roofs. This category largely serves as a transitional one, covering all other centric barns outside of the clearly defined octagonal and round types.

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True round barns fall under two distinct categories, those designed and often built by professionals, and those designed and built by local farmers and carpenters. The term 'true' round barn is used to distinguish the type from the variety of polygon plans and shapes that are also frequently referred to as 'round' barns.<sup>97</sup> The professional true round barns are the first examples of the true round barn form, taking their inspiration from the efficient calculations of agricultural colleges, state agricultural experiment stations, and trade magazines and publications concerned with improving dairy farming and agricultural life scientifically.

The work of Franklin King at the University of Wisconsin in the 1890s and of Wilbur Fraser in the 1900s, along with others, helped to design specific examples of round dairy barns and outline the benefits of such building practices.<sup>98</sup> These plans, numbering in the dozens in the early twentieth century, were willingly disseminated through publications like *Hoard's Dairyman* and the *Breeder's Gazette* that had wide circulation and influence, especially in the Midwestern United States.<sup>99</sup> The intention of such plans was to overcome the traditional building practices of dairy farmers and encourage a new and more efficient building type in the true round barn. These professionally designed barns were often constructed, not only as models as on the University of Illinois Agricultural campus, but also as demonstrations of functioning dairy barns. Other similar types come directly from advertised builders and mail-order catalogues. They most often incorporated silos and were large in size, ranging from about 66 feet to over 90 feet in diameter. While there are examples of deviations from such plans, most built examples are faithful to overall design found in published material.

True round barns of a more vernacular nature, those not designed or built by professionals and not finding their source in trade magazines and other published work, began to appear in the early twentieth century. No doubt these types were inspired by the professional models, but they did not clearly follow the recommended designs, and as a result, have a wide range of variation often responding to the specifics of the place where they were built. One such model is that of the roving builder who travelled across Wisconsin and the Midwest finding commissions and settling down for some months on a farm to construct a round barn using their specific carpentry skills and building methods, often distinct from others. A more common approach was the traditional one of farmers joining together to raise a neighbors dairy barn. However, because of the complicated carpentry and framing of round barn roofs, there was often a foreman figure involved that had experience and previous knowledge of the building type. The case of Alga Shivers in Vernon County is one such example. He led in the design and construction of over fifteen true round barns, all similar, but used local farming labor to construct them.

Regional variations appear as locations with plentiful timber built wood barns, rocky land led to fieldstone round barns, and locations with access to population centers used masonry and even metal products. Vernacular true round barn types proliferated in areas that were largely underdeveloped by the turn of the century as new agricultural lands and farms appeared.

<sup>97</sup> Auer, Page 12.

<sup>98</sup> "Efficiency of the Round Barn," Page 139.

<sup>99</sup> "Farm Buildings," Page 13.

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Besides definitions based on typology and form, Wisconsin centric barns can also be organized according to period and region. Conveniently, there is some overlap in this process as the first period of development in eastern Wisconsin from the mid-1870s to the 1890s coincides with octagonal forms. The development of true round barns and experimentation matches the widespread construction of round barns in the southern half of the state in the 1890s and 1910s, and the proliferation of round barns across the western and northern portions of Wisconsin in the twentieth century is similar to the spread of local and vernacular variations on the true round barn.

The first centric barns to appear in Wisconsin were built in the already developed counties of the southeastern portion of the state, especially near Lake Michigan. Stretching from the Illinois border to Ozaukee County, a number of octagonal barns were built on established dairy cattle and horse farms. Ozaukee County alone had over a dozen such barns, most built by Ernest Clausen in the 1880s and 1890s.<sup>100</sup> These barns, and certainly their designs, predate the establishment and influence of the Agricultural Research Stations and Colleges in the Midwest. Many appear to be inspired by architectural developments in New York and the East Coast, despite the fact that many of the owners and builders of such barns were immigrants, albeit successful and established ones.

A number of true round barns and polygon barns were built in Southern Wisconsin from 1890 until World War I. Many of these were actively modelled on the ideas and plans coming out of the University of Wisconsin, the University of Illinois, and other institutions. Almost all were built to replace already existing rectangular barns and agricultural outbuildings for dairy purposes. The preferred concentric formation of cow stanchions combined with the design of self-supporting roofs and interior silos encouraged a move away from the octagonal models of the preceding decade.<sup>101</sup> Beyond the counties along Lake Michigan, Dane, Rock, Walworth, Green, and Sauk counties can all claim a number of round dairy barns from this period of development.

As further agricultural expansion of dairying moved westward, the round barn form followed. By the first decade of the twentieth century a variety of professionally designed and built round barns appeared in the western half of Wisconsin. These were a mix of true round forms and multi-sided polygons imitating the scale and use of true round barns. Added to the published models was the growing frequency of professionally built and mail-order centric barns in Grant, Iowa, and Buffalo counties.

The last phase of growth for centric barns in Wisconsin was a spread to the western and northern portions of the state. Large numbers of true round barn types, usually of a vernacular nature, were constructed in Vernon, Monroe, Pepin, and St. Croix counties. Vernon County alone had as many as twenty at one time.<sup>102</sup> Part of this was due to the continued expansion of dairy farming and agricultural settlement in the state in the wake of new

<sup>100</sup> Perrin, *The Architecture of Wisconsin*, Page 38.

<sup>101</sup> Triumpho, Page 48.

<sup>102</sup> Alderson, Page 5.



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lands becoming available after intensive forestry. Many of these barns were completed in the 1910s and 1920s, even after the round barn fell into disfavor elsewhere. These dairy barns across the western and northern halves of the state also exhibit the greatest variation in building materials and methods.

True round barns lack angles altogether. Centric barns are often vernacular in nature, built by farmers and local carpenters, and thus have a wide variation in details across the state of Wisconsin. Some builders, and their barns, are notable for the distinctive architectural features and influence on the rural landscape. Included in this group are a number of county fairground exhibit barns that fall outside the scope of this context. Very large and meant for an audience, this barn type is typically found in the northern half of Wisconsin, and they were generally built in the 1920s and 1930s.

### Statement of Significance

Centric barns are, by definition, large agricultural buildings that housed livestock that have a circular or centric geometric plan. This plan can take the form of true circles, octagons, and other polygon shapes of five or more sides. The number of sides and the plan often corresponds with the period of construction, with octagonal and multi-sided polygons appearing first in the 1870s in the turn of the century, and true round plans appearing from the 1890s to the 1920s. They are usually constructed out of wood, though variations utilize masonry construction in their load bearing walls and foundations. Almost all have at least two floors, one below for livestock and one above for a hay mow and feed, with access via ramp or berm to the second level similar to a bank barn. It is not uncommon for a silo to be integrated in the center of a centric barn. There is a wide variation of roof types, both self-supporting and not and always constructed of wood framing, and of sizes. All of the resources identified in this contextual study fall within these architectural parameters.

Centric or round barns represent a time and place that predates a highly mechanized agricultural world. The efficiencies of the round type, while perhaps not as extensive as originally thought, probably did exist for dairy farming and the round structural shape, with members supporting each other and distributing load, maximizing interior space is a historically commonplace form. It only seems unusual in the face of a preponderance of rectangular farm buildings.<sup>103</sup> Centric barns are noteworthy not only for their rarity, but also because they reflect a certain time and place and its corresponding ideas, people, and agricultural practices. They indicate a period of agricultural experimentation in rural Wisconsin. Their contribution and influence on agricultural practices, dairy farming in particular, is a specific reflection of this period applied to daily rural life.

In the early 1980s, Larry Jost, in his catalogue of centric barns *The Round and Five-or-More Equal Sided Barns of Wisconsin*, identified 188 centric barns in the state, 122 of which were confirmed to still be standing.<sup>104</sup> In the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, a large number of centric barns disappeared. Thirty years later 175 centric barns were identified across Wisconsin, 111 of which are confirmed as extant. The number of extant centric barns is slowly but steadily decreasing. While it is possible that other centric barns may be found in Wisconsin, the surveyed properties included in this overview of the centric barn type is both exhaustive and comprehensive. Ideally, some of these important agricultural buildings would be preserved for their architectural and cultural significance.

<sup>103</sup> Perrin, *The Architecture of Wisconsin*, Page 33.

<sup>104</sup> Jost, Pages 8 & 107.

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**Criteria for Eligibility**

The centric barns of Wisconsin are associated with the history of Wisconsin and of the United States. The centric barns indicate a physical manifestation of progressive and technical values at the turn of the century, emphasizing a trend in American society that valued improvement and efficiency. In this case, such improvement and efficiency was in relation to agriculture, specifically dairy farming. Centric barns within the state of Wisconsin, constructed between 1876 and 1930, often possess a direct connection to these agricultural ideals. Some barns follow the prescribed models of agricultural publications and the work of agricultural experiment stations and colleges of agriculture. Others were designed directly by professionals eager to demonstrate the efficiency of the new barn building type. Still other builders were inspired by development of the centric designs as models for their own barns.

Wisconsin centric barns should broadly qualify as one of these three types: octagonal, polygonal, or true round barn and possess a good level of integrity and form for eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. Eligible centric barns will likely have a direct connection to motivations of efficiency and design. They will also have historically served an agricultural function, most likely dairy farming.

Wisconsin centric barns may be nominated individually to the National Register of Historic Places for their significance under Criteria A, B and C. They may also be listed as part of a larger farmstead or part of a historic district. Most will be eligible at the local level of significance. Individually, these barns may be significant under Criterion A, if the barn is associated with specific and significant historic events. A barn's relationship to notable historic figures, most likely associated with agricultural developments, may make it significant under Criterion B. Most centric barns will be significant and eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a building type.

Criteria for the assessment of centric barns in Wisconsin may include historical significance in relation to dairy farming and progressive agricultural practices. Under Criterion A for historical significance, centric barns may qualify if the specific history of the barn or larger farmstead contributes to the agricultural history of the state of Wisconsin or of a region. In rare cases, a centric barn may be associated with other historical movements or events.

Centric Barn resources can be associated with significant historic figures for eligibility under Criterion B. In most cases, the home, place of business, or a larger farmstead will be the property most closely associated with a person of historic importance. In a rare case, the round barn may be the most closely associated resource. Most of the historic figures associated with centric barns in Wisconsin will likely be farmers and landowners who carry local significance. Under Criterion B for the association with a historically significant person, centric barns should clearly demonstrate the relationship between the centric barn and the person of significance in the state of Wisconsin.

Most centric barn will be eligible under criterion C as an example of a unique agricultural building type. Centric barns, whether octagonal, multi-sided, or true round in plan, have unique architectural characteristics. The most obvious being their distinct plan, which is rare and notable in agricultural buildings of the period. Centric barns, by definition, have a round shape intended to save and use interior space more efficiently than their rectilinear counterparts. Almost all centric barns share a similar function of animal husbandry and most also served, when

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constructed, as the largest and primary agricultural building on a farmstead. Without a known exception all centric barns have at least two floor, a first one to house animals, usually dairy cattle or horses, and second to keep hay and feed. Most centric barns are constructed with a foundation and low wall of masonry with an extended wall of wood framing terminating in a large, convex wood frame roof. Some of the earlier wood frame roofs are supported with interior columns, but many are self-supporting reinforced arches stick-built with sawn dimensional lumber. An interior silo is also common in the center of the barn. Siding is often wood boards, subsequent metal panel sheathing, or occasional masonry materials such as clay tile, brick, concrete block, and fieldstone, though these are rare. Centric barns, because of their use, are rarely smaller than a diameter of forty feet, and rarely larger than a diameter of ninety feet. The number of sides of a centric barn can vary from six to twenty or more. Under Criterion C for architectural significance, a centric barn must demonstrate a good level of integrity and correspond with the design and building practices related to the centric barn type.

While a centric barn may not be individually eligible because of a loss of historic features or alterations, a barn may contribute to a farmstead. When included in a farmstead, a centric barn, like any other barn structure, may be considered as a contributing resource if it maintains an acceptable level of integrity within the broader context of the farmstead and changes to the barn reflect the farmstead's period of significance.

An assessment of eligibility of centric barns in Wisconsin to the National Register of Historic Places must take into account the historical and architectural features of a given resource. The centric barn must demonstrate its original agricultural use, a lack of significant additions and alterations, multiple floors in their historic configuration, and the original structural system. In terms of integrity, the centric barn resource should exist in its original location and should exist in an approximation of its original setting. It should have the original or historic materials, especially on the exterior, including siding, fenestration, and structural elements. An eligible centric barn should maintain its original form, aesthetic, and period appropriate building materials. Satisfying these aspects of integrity contributes to the eligibility of centric barn resources in Wisconsin under criteria A, B and C for the National Register of Historic Places.



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The area covered by this Multiple Property Documentation form is limited by the boundaries of the state of Wisconsin.

Because of historical reasons of economy and development, some regions of the state possess a greater density of resources than others. The eastern portion of Wisconsin was the first to have a number of centric barns constructed, followed by the southern portion, and finally the western and northern portions in turn. Each of these regions constructed centric barns in roughly chronological order within a period of significance spanning from 1876 to 1930. Centric barns, in almost all cases, were used to house livestock and specifically dairy cattle. Their development corresponds with the rise to prominence of dairy farming in Wisconsin and across the nation. All of the resources included in this study fall within these temporal and spatial parameters.

This multiple property nomination covers all centrically designed agricultural barns, regardless of form, in the state of Wisconsin. It is estimated that over 290 centric barns were built in Wisconsin from the 1880s to the 1920s; roughly 180 properties were still extant in the 1970s. Of 174 identified properties, 111 still exist and 63 have been demolished or have collapsed. While most of the octagonal, polygonal and true round barns in Wisconsin cluster in certain regions in the southern and western portions of the state, centric barns can be found across Wisconsin.

The following tables list all identified centric barns in the state of Wisconsin, including the nine examples constructed as fair ground and exposition buildings. As noted earlier, these unique buildings are outside the scope of the context established in this documentation form. This list is not meant to be exhaustive, but merely indicates confirmed resources. It is divided by type: octagonal, other polygons, and true round barns, and arranged according to location by county, town, address, and township-range-section. Barns denoted with a \* are previously listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Tables listing all confirmed non-extant centric barns are also included. Where the date of the barn is unknown, the field has been left blank.

Examples of Extant Octagonal Barns in the State of Wisconsin include the following:

<i>Historic Name</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Street</i>	<i>T/R/S</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>James A. Hoglund Octagonal Barn</b>	Bayfield	Mason	62183	US Highway 63	46/6/12	1900
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Buffalo	Modena	1316	Menting Road	23/12/18	
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Buffalo	Nelson	2006	County Road D	23/13/29	1917
<b>Loethar Octagonal Barn</b>	Chippewa	Lake Holcombe	30810	State Highway 27	32/6/4	1911
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Dane	Pleasant Springs	3109	Oak Street	6/11/4	
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Dane	Springdale	8815	County Road G	6/7/33	1889
<b>Brenner Octagonal Barn</b>	Douglas	Bennett	8971	Bennett Road	46/12/14	1905
<b>James Kluesner Octagonal Barn</b>	Grant	Bloomington	11565	Holly Road	5/5/29	
<b>Elmo Holt Octagonal Barn</b>	Iowa	Moscow	7234	State Highway 191	5/5/19	1876
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Kenosha	Pleasant Prairie	12338	Green Bay Road	1/22/34	

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<b>Edwin Albert Octagonal Barn</b>	Kewaunee	Carlton	147	State Highway 42	22/24/35	c.1890
<b>County Fairgrounds Octagonal Barn</b>	Langlade	Antigo	1633	Neva Road	10/25/01	
<b>Stock Pavilion Octagonal Barn</b>	Lincoln	Merrill	2001	2nd Street	31/6/3	1928
<b>Exhibition Building Octagonal Barn</b>	Marathon	Wausau	1201	Stewart Avenue	29/8/18	
<b>Judging Pavilion Octagonal Barn</b>	Marathon	Wausau	1201	Stewart Avenue	29/8/18	
<b>William Tetzlaff Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Grafton	364	County Road C	10/22/33	1895
<b>Gustav Timpel Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon	13669	N. Port Washington Road	9/21/5	1892
<b>George Hanser Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon	11656	N. Port Washington Road	9/21/8	1896
<b>Frank Vocke Octagonal Barn</b>	Ozaukee	Mequon	1901	Pioneer Road	9/21/3	1891
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Pepin	Albany		County Road D	25/11/5	
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Pepin	Pepin		Balsam Road	23/15/12	1908
<b>County Fairgrounds Octagonal Barn</b>	Price	Worcester	940	Forest Lane	37/1/8	1918
<b>Gilley-Tofslund Octagonal Barn*</b>	Rock	Porter	8805	Stebbinsville Road	4/11/3	1913
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	Rock	Spring Valley	8747	Stebbinsville Road	2/10/7	1913
<b>County Fairgrounds Octagonal Barn</b>	Rusk	Ladysmith		Rusk County Fairgrounds Road	34/8/9	1930
<b>Peter Tommcok Octagonal Barn</b>	Rusk	Stubbs		County Road F	34/8/18	1912
<b>George Trumpf Octagonal Barn</b>	Sauk	Franklin	9692	County Road N	10/4/32	1893
<b>Charles Ott Octagonal Barn</b>	Sauk	Honey Creek	6864	Leland Road	10/4/14	1895
<b>Joseph Feiner Octagonal Barn</b>	Sauk	Spring Green	4350	Horseshoe Road	9/3/26	1898
<b>Bodendein Octagonal Barn</b>	Sauk	La Valle	3575	Minicreek Road	13/3/25	
<b>Octagonal Barn</b>	St. Croix	Springfield		Park Road	29/15/26	
<b>Anna Hardy Octagonal Barn</b>	Washington	Jackson	2540	Western Avenue	10/20/30	

Examples of Extant Polygonal Barns (multi-sided, but not octagonal) in the State of Wisconsin include the following:

<i>Historic Name</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Street</i>	<i>T/R/S</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>August Fontaine 14-Sided Barn</b>	Brown	Humboldt	4553	County Road N	24/22/32	1905
<b>10-Sided Barn</b>	Buffalo	Nelson	1788	County Road KK	23/13/16	
<b>Nashold 20-Sided Barn*</b>	Columbia	Fountain Prairie	1744	County Road E	11/12/8	1911
<b>Martin Wagnild 14-Sided Barn</b>	Dunn	Spring Brook	9483	290 <sup>th</sup> Street	27/11/26	c.1910
<b>Gus Hesselman 14-Sided Barn</b>	Grant	Bloomington	9802	Cemetery Road	5/5/36	1912
<b>6-Sided Barn</b>	Iowa	Brigham	8950	Clay Hill Road	5/5/12	



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Wohlrab 12-Sided Barn	Juneau	Lindina	3163	County Road G	15/3/33	c.1920
Irwin Eakins 13-Sided Barn	Juneau	Lyndon	579	US Highway 12	14/5/20	1916
10-Sided Barn	Monroe	Weldon	19291	Mesa Avenue	16/2/28	
12-Sided Barn	Monroe	Clifton		County Road N	16/1/16	
Frank Broetzman 12-Sided Barn	Oconto	Maple Valley	9012	Hickory Cemetery Road	29/18/11	1916
Fuhs 14-Sided Barn	Polk	Beaver	1401	County Road T	34/15/24	
Ivan Eshenbach 10-Sided Barn	Sauk	Greenfield	4680	Rocky Point Road	12/7/32	
Herman Leuder 13-Sided Barn	Sheboygan	Plymouth	4651	County Road J	15/21/2	1916

Examples of Extant True Round Barns in the State of Wisconsin include the following:

Historic Name	County	Town	Address	Street	T/R/S	Date
William Modersback Round Barn	Barron	Crystal Lake	171	19 1/2 Avenue	35/14/29	1908
Adolph Brommer Round Barn	Buffalo	Modena	80	County Road F	23/12/18	1916
A.O. Albergston Round Farm	Buffalo	Naples		County Road HH	24/10/24	1913
Rudolph Fried Round Barn	Buffalo	Naples	2661	State Highway 95	24/10/29	1898
Round Barn	Crawford	Seneca	56722	Duna Ridge Road	9/5/22	
Gangstad Round Barn	Dane	Deerfield	1326	US Highway 12/18	7/12/30	1903
Melvin Nelson Round Barn	Dunn	Sand Creek			24/11/31	1914
Round Barn	Eau Claire	Washington	4900	Loews Creek Road	26/9/4	
Harry Andrew Round Barn	Grant	Clifton		Rock Church Road & State Highway 80	5/1/26	1915
Hood and Doyle Round Barn	Grant	Waterstown	18491	County Road T	8/2/14	1903
Eisley Round Barn	Grant	Clifton	657	Billings Road	5/1/28	1915
Round Barn	Grant	South Lancaster	7965	County Road N	3/4/25	
A.M. Ten Eyck Round Barn	Green	Spring Grove	961	State Highway 81	1/9/3	1919
Round Barn	Green	Spring Grove		County Road OK	1/9/19	
Llewellyn Jones Round Barn	Iowa	Arena	6105	County Road K	7/5/2	c.1915
John Berkett Round Barn	Iowa	Eden	3287	State Highway 80	6/1/25	
Annala Round Barn*	Iron	Oma	12248	DuPont Road	46/3/31	1917
Annala Round Milkhouse*	Iron	Oma	12248	DuPont Road	46/3/31	1917
Siekman Round Barn	Jackson	Curran	8197	Farness Road	22/6/11	1890
Charles Tisch Round Barn	Marathon	Maine	7125	60th Avenue	30/7/17	1895
Douglas Miles Round Barn	Marinette	Peshtigo	1647	State Highway 64	30/23/3	1900
County Fairgrounds Round Barn	Marquette	Westfield	757	South Main Street	16/8/20	

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Tom Tunks Round Barn	Monroe	Wellington		County Road P	15/1/28	1918
Stoddard Round Barn	Monroe	Wellington	30964	Oregano Road	15/1/33	c.1915
John Krolsman Round Barn	Monroe	Wells	21275	Karlsbad Road	16/3/14	1915
Elmer Blomberg Round Barn	Pepin	Stockholm	3494	State Highway 183	24/15/27	1920
Round Barn	Pierce	Ellsworth		Landfill Road	26/17/35	
County Fairgrounds Round Barn	Pierce	Ellsworth	353	Grant Street	27/17/7	1921
Peter Huppert Round Barn	Pierce	Trimbelle	9298	480th Avenue	26/18/30	1915
Round Barn	Polk	Alden	501	210th Avenue	32/18/24	
Peter Nelson Round Barn	Polk	Apple River	1038	175th Avenue	34/16/5	1913
Round Barn	Polk	Balsam Lake	1311	120th Avenue	34/17/13	
Round Barn	Polk	West Sweden	1426	350th Avenue	37/17/11	
Round Barn	Portage	Stockton	3258	County Road J	23/9/16	1898
Round Barn	Richland	Eagle	16131	Round Barn Lane	9/1/7	
Round Barn	Richland	Ithaca		Route 2	10/2/4	1880
Round Barn	Richland	Willow	31190	Dog Hollow Road	11/2/32	
Carl Risum Round Barn*	Rock	Spring Valley	5600	Risum Road	2/10/34	1892
Ewalt Andreas Round Barn	Sauk	Spring Green		State Highway 14/60	8/3/1	1914
Mary Elandt Round Barn	Shawano	Germania	4205	Mauds Road	26/11/12	1913
Round Barn	Shawano	Wittenberg	5399	County Road M	27/11/33	
Nicholas Lundgren Round Barn	St. Croix	Erin Prairie	1645	200th Street	30/17/12	1914
Round Barn	St. Croix	Hammond		County Road TT	29/17/29	
Round Barn	St. Croix	Springfield		Park Drive	29/15/8	
Round Barn	St. Croix	Springfield	2823	110th Avenue	29/15/3	
Round Barn	St. Croix	Warren	1075	100th Avenue	30/18/12	
Round Barn	Trempealeau	Caledonia			18/8/19	
Richard Bibby Round Barn	Trempealeau	Gale	183364	Silver Creek Road	19/7/27	1902
Martin & Mabel Laursen Round Barn	Trempealeau	Pigeon		State Highway 53	23/7/27	
Schultz Round Barn	Trempealeau	Caledonia	21937	Wagner Road	18/8/13	
John Evenstad Round Barn	Vernon	Clinton		Pa's Road	14/3/22	1913
George & Ida Apfel Round Barn*	Vernon	Clinton	11314	County Road P	14/3/25	1914
Ernest DeWitt Round Barn	Vernon	Forest		County Road Z	14/1/5	1912
George Harris Round Barn	Vernon	Forest		Town Hall Road	14/1/9	1906
George Pepper Round Barn	Vernon	Forest	1122	County Road V	14/1/13	1910
Mittie & Jake B. Markee Round Barn	Vernon	Forest		Burr Ridge	14/1/27	
Frank Lisker Round Barn	Vernon	Greenwood		County Road Q	13/1/35	1910

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Round Barn	Vernon	Hillsboro		County Highway WW	14/1/2	
Joseph Dank Round Barn	Vernon	Hillsboro	17517	Dank Lane	14/1/9	1921
Bert Cunningham Round Barn	Vernon	Viroqua	7702	Upper Maple Dale Road	13/4/33	1915
Matthew Donahue Round Barn	Vernon	Whitestown	12686	Lower Ridge Road	14/2/9	
L.L. Bush Round Barn	Washburn	Bashaw	4048	County Road O	38/13/8	1918
Hans Christianson Round Barn	Waupaca	Mukwa	4789	Otto Road	22/14/28	1900
Central Wisconsin State Fair Round Barn*	Wood	Marshfield	501	E. 17th Street	25/3/9	1915
Martin Reedle Round Barn	Wood	Sherry	1801	County Road N	24/5/1	1918

Examples of Non-extant Octagonal Barns in the State of Wisconsin include the following:

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Octagon Barn	Barron	Rice Lake		County Road O	35/11/31	
W.T. Calkins Octagonal Barn	Dane	Mazomanie	5704	State Highway 78	8/6/15	1915
Octagonal Barn	Dane	Primrose		County Road A	5/7/9	
Octagonal Barn	Jackson	Curran		County Road		
Powers Octagonal Horse Barn	Kenosha	Randall		County Road E	1/19/17	
Octagonal Barn	Manitowoc	Centerville		Westview Road	17/23/28	
Emily Koopman Octagonal Barn	Ozaukee	Grafton		Lakefield Road	10/22/31	c.1890
Arnold Clausing Octagonal Barn	Ozaukee	Mequon		County Road W	9/22/8	1898
Henry Kiekhaefer Octagonal Barn	Ozaukee	Mequon		County Road M	9/22/17	1894
William Clausing Octagonal Barn	Ozaukee	Mequon		N. Port Washington Road	9/21/8	1897
Octagonal Barn	Racine	Caledonia	7241	Douglas Avenue	4/22/12	1909
Dean-Armstrong-Englund Octagonal Barn	Rock	Lima		County Road N	4/14/2	1893
Truman Stone Octagonal Barn	Sauk	Sumpter		County Road N	10/4/31	
Taylor County Fairgrounds Octagonal Dairy Barn	Taylor	Medford		State Highway 64	31/1/27	
Thomas Mills Octagonal Barn	Vernon	Jefferson		Ostrem Lane	13/5/28	c.1915
Christian Matthews Octagonal Barn	Wood	Siegel			23/5/26	1904

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Examples of Non-extant Polygonal Barns (multi-sided, but not octagonal) in the State of Wisconsin include the following:

Historic Name	County	Town	Address	Street	T/R/S	Date
Charles Johnson 10-Sided Barn	Burnett	Anderson		County Road Z	37/19/36	1910
10-Sided Barn	Dane	Montrose		Remy Road & Frenchtown Road	5/8/23	
Frank Hiles 10-Sided Barn	Wood	Pittsville	8103	Jackson Street	23/3/28	1912
A.K. Christiansen 12-Sided Barn	Sauk	Freedom		Happy Hill Road	11/5/25	
14-Sided Barn	Crawford	Wauzeka		County Road N	7/5/3	
Chivok 14-Sided Barn	Price	Worcester		Airport Lane & Musser Road	38/2/31	1895
Charlie Sheldon 14-Sided Barn	Taylor	Aurora		State Highway 64	31/4/28	1909
Patrick J. Walsh 15-Sided Barn	Juneau	Lemonweir		County Road K	15/4/31	1914
16-Sided Barn	Rusk	Dewey		Range Line Road	35/5/22	1923
Bradley 18-Sided Barn	Dodge	Westford		County Road C	12/13/8	

Examples of Non-extant True Round Barns in the State of Wisconsin include the following:

Historic Name	County	Town	Address	Street	T/R/S	Date
Otis Blyton Round Barn	Barron	Dallas	1282	County Road A	32/12/30	1914
Round Barn	Barron	Arland	1847	County Road D	33/13/14	
Herold Round Barn	Buffalo	Belvidere		County Road E	21/12/17	1913
Round Barn	Buffalo	Cross	2661	State Highway 95	20/7/14	1890
Henry Struve Round Barn	Chippewa	Eagle Point		State Highway 178	30/8/36	1906
Frank Mohr Round Barn	Chippewa	Edson	2893	County Road H	28/5/12	1915
William Witte Round Barn	Dane	Blooming Grove		County Road AB	7/10/25	1901
Charles Oakes Round Barn	Douglas	Amnicon			47/12/4	1908
Round Barn	Grant	Fennimore		US Highway 18	6/2/18	
Stephen Miller Round Barn	Grant	Liberty		State Highway 61	5/2/6	
Round Barn	Kenosha	Brighton		224th Avenue	2/20/12	
Round Barn	Monroe	Sheldon		Endicott Court	15/2/28	
John Habheyger Round Barn	Monroe	Wells		State Highway 27	16/3/29	1911
Round Barn	Monroe	Wilton		State Highway 131	16/1/26	
Round Barn	Monroe	Wilton		State Highway 71	16/1/33	
George Penz Round Barn	Ozaukee	Grafton			10/22/30	1909
Round Barn	Pierce	Ellsworth		East View Road	26/17/25	
Round Barn	Pierce	Martell	6650	690th Avenue	27/17/29	
Axel Johnson Round Barn	Polk	Beaver		County Road V	34/15/8	
Trautwein Round Barn	Racine	Mount Pleasant		Newman Road	3/22/1	1919



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

**Various**

Name of Property

**Wisconsin**

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**Wisconsin Centric Barns**

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number   G   Page   32  

<b>Round Barn</b>	Richland	Bloom		Seely Ridge Road	12/1/10	
<b>W.J. Dougan Round Barn*</b>	Rock	Beloit	2605	Colley Road	1/13/28	1911
<b>Christopher Gempler Round Barn*</b>	Rock	Spring Valley		Gempler Road	2/10/4	1912
<b>Townsend Brothers Round Barn</b>	Sauk	Reedsburg			12/4/16	1910
<b>Charles Borgen Round Barn</b>	St. Croix	Emerald	2466	County Road DD	30/16/34	1914
<b>Albert Aldertson Round Barn</b>	Trempealeau	Albion		County Road Y	24/9/17	1909
<b>Round Barn</b>	Trempealeau	Trempealeau	183	County Road F	18/9/4	1896
<b>J.W. Appleman Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Clinton		County Road D & McDaniel Road	14/3/32	c. 1910
<b>Eva &amp; Vern Stelting Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		Stelting Ridge Road	14/1/3	
<b>C.J. Miller Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		County Road V	14/1/13	c.1910
<b>Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		Grim Road	14/1/24	
<b>Adam Mayenschein Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		Fish Hollow Road	14/1/34	1911
<b>Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Forest		County Road P	14/1/35	
<b>Frank Sterba Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Hillsboro		Dank Road	14/1/9	1920
<b>Round Barn</b>	Vernon	Union		Mancie Lane	13/1/35	
<b>C.E. King Round Barn</b>	Walworth	Whitewater			4/15/15	1889
<b>Henry Schreiber Round Barn</b>	Waukesha	New Berlin	4908	S. Calloun Road	6/20/28	1905

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

**Various**

Name of Property

**Wisconsin**

County and State

**Wisconsin Centric Barns**

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number   H   Page   33  **Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods**

(Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)

The multiple property listing of centric barns in Wisconsin is based on existing literature on the subject of round barns and a brief survey of extant and recorded non-extant centric barn resources in the state. While it is recognized that other centric barn resources may have been missed and could still be identified, the list of centric barns in the state is thorough and close to complete. Criteria for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places for centric barns are based on historic significance within the state of Wisconsin pertaining to rural and agricultural life and the architectural integrity of a unique building type.

**Acknowledgements**

The Fuldner Heritage Fund paid for the preparation of this nomination. This endowed fund, created through a generous donation by the Jeffris Family Foundation and administered by the Wisconsin Historical Society, supports the nomination of historically and architecturally significant rural and small town properties.

**Methodology**

The Round Barn Multiple Property Documentation originated with the Wisconsin Historical Society in an effort to create a framework for the future nomination of centric and round barn resources in the state of Wisconsin. Legacy Architecture was contracted to conduct research, gather data, and prepare a multiple property nomination for round barn resources in accordance with the National Register of Historic Places program. This study focused on the wide range of centric barn types and their history in the state of Wisconsin.

Primary and secondary research utilized resources obtained from the Wisconsin Historical Society, the University of Wisconsin Library in Madison, Wisconsin Area Research Centers, and the Vernon County History Museum and Historical Society. Valuable resources included the *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin, Volumes I, II, and III* and the National Park Service Brief *The Preservation of Historic Barns*. Excellent books on the subject include Lowell Soike's *Without Right Angles: The Round Barns of Iowa*, John Hanou's *A Round Indiana: Round Barns in the Hoosier State*, and Richard Triumpho's *Round Barns of New York*, among others. Personal interviews, conducted on site, at a number of the centric barns of Vernon County also proved invaluable. In establishing a comprehensive and verified list of centric barn resources in the state Larry Jost's *The Round and Five-or-More Equal Sided Barns of Wisconsin*, Kevin and Patsy Alderson's *Barns without Corners: Round Barns of Vernon County, Wisconsin* and Gail Fish, Wava Haney, and June Zalewski's *Round Barns of Vernon County, Wisconsin* were consulted. The University of Wisconsin Extension Barn Preservation Program was also helpful, as was Dale Travis' excellent internet-based images and information on round barns. While existing academic surveys and research on round barns was used, primary source material drawn from journals and bulletins was also utilized. Data was collected on extant resources in the state from existing surveys corroborated with physical evidence from maps and atlases as well as from amateur architectural historians. This research was supplemented with site-specific field research in Vernon County. Much of the research can be clearly divided into two subcategories; one touching on the broad subject of centric barn development at a state level, and the other focusing on the physical evidence and cataloguing of centric barn resources in the state of Wisconsin. All of these sources aided in the research and writing of this study. Once the research was completed and this document prepared it was submitted for review.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Various**

Name of Property

**Wisconsin**

County and State

**Wisconsin Centric Barns**

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number   I   Page   34  

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(List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

**Various**

Name of Property

**Wisconsin**

County and State

**Wisconsin Centric Barns**

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number I Page 35

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section photos Page 1

Cunningham, Bert and Mary, Round Barn  
Town of Viroqua, Vernon Co., WI

<b>Name of Property:</b>	<b>Bert and Mary Cunningham Round Barn</b>
<b>City or Vicinity:</b>	<b>Town of Viroqua</b>
<b>County:</b>	<b>Vernon County</b>
<b>State:</b>	<b>Wisconsin</b>
<b>Name of Photographer:</b>	<b>Rowan Davidson</b>
<b>Date of Photographs:</b>	<b>August 30, 2013</b>
<b>Location of Original Digital Files:</b>	<b>Legacy Architecture, Inc. 529 Ontario Avenue, Suite FN1, Sheboygan, Wisconsin 53081</b>

Photo #1 (WI\_VernonCounty\_Bert&MaryCunninghamRoundBarn\_0001)  
General view, camera facing northeast.

Photo #2 (WI\_VernonCounty\_Bert&MaryCunninghamRoundBarn\_0002)  
Southwest façade, camera facing northeast.

Photo #3 (WI\_VernonCounty\_Bert&MaryCunninghamRoundBarn\_0003)  
South façade, camera facing north.

Photo #4 (WI\_VernonCounty\_Bert&MaryCunninghamRoundBarn\_0004)  
Southeast façade, camera facing northeast.

Photo #5 (WI\_VernonCounty\_Bert&MaryCunninghamRoundBarn\_0005)  
East façade, camera facing west.

Photo #6 (WI\_VernonCounty\_Bert&MaryCunninghamRoundBarn\_0006)  
Northeast façade, camera facing southwest.

Photo #7 (WI\_VernonCounty\_Bert&MaryCunninghamRoundBarn\_0007)  
North façade, camera facing south.

Photo #8 (WI\_VernonCounty\_Bert&MaryCunninghamRoundBarn\_0008)  
Northwest façade, camera facing southeast.

Photo #9 (WI\_VernonCounty\_Bert&MaryCunninghamRoundBarn\_0009)  
Window detail, south façade.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section photos Page 2

Cunningham, Bert and Mary, Round Barn  
Town of Viroqua, Vernon Co., WI

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Photo #10 (WI\_VernonCounty\_Bert&MaryCunninghamRoundBarn\_0010)  
Hay mow interior roof framing.

Photo #11 (WI\_VernonCounty\_Bert&MaryCunninghamRoundBarn\_0011)  
Hay mow interior looking out of barn doors.

Photo #12 (WI\_VernonCounty\_Bert&MaryCunninghamRoundBarn\_0012)  
Silo interior looking up.

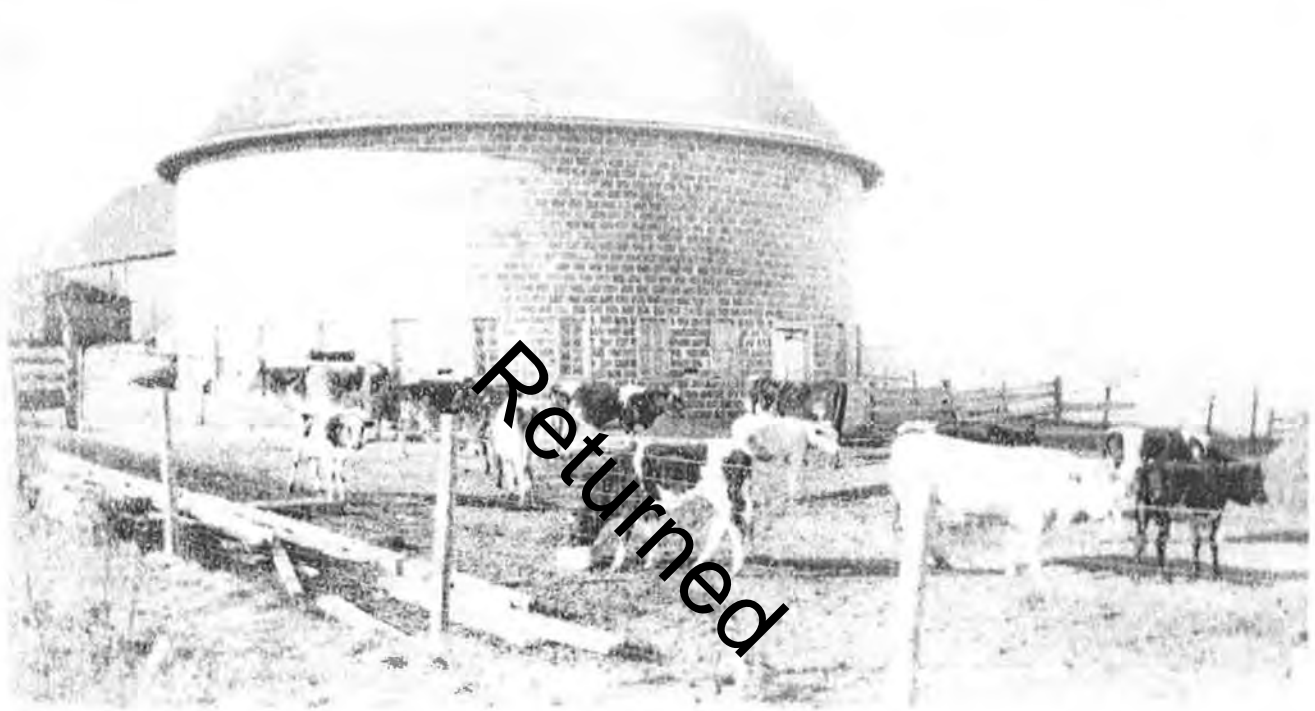
Returned

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section figures Page 1

Cunningham, Bert and Mary, Round Barn  
Town of Viroqua, Vernon Co., WI



Photograph of the Bert and Mary Cunningham Round Barn from the southeast; dated November 21<sup>st</sup>, 1919.  
Image courtesy of Angela Cina.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: COVER DOCUMENTATION

MULTIPLE NAME: Wisconsin Centric Barns MPS

STATE & COUNTY: WISCONSIN, Multiple Counties

DATE RECEIVED: 06/25/14

DATE OF 45<sup>th</sup> DAY: 08/13/14

REFERENCE NUMBER: 64501218

\_\_\_\_ ACCEPT ☒ RETURN \_\_\_\_ REJECT \_\_\_\_ 8-13-14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**RETURN**  
Please see attached comments.

RECOM./CRITERIA

REVIEWER *Barbara Rye*

DISCIPLINE *Historian*

DATE *8-13-14*

DOCUMENTATION see attsched comments Y/N



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20240

## United States Department of the Interior

### National Park Service

### National Register of Historic Places

#### Comments Evaluation/Return Sheet

**Property Name:** Wisconsin Centric Barns Multiple Property Documentation Form

**Property Location:** Wisconsin (statewide)

**Reference Number:** 64501218

**Date of Return:** 8-12-14

The Wisconsin Centric Barn MPDF is being returned for various problems, including context definition and registration requirements.

#### Explanation

##### Contexts

The Wisconsin Centric Barns MPDF nomination presents three contexts that concern centric barns:

- 1) Development of Octagonal and Other Polygonal Barns in Wisconsin, 1875-1914
- 2) Agriculture and Dairy Farming during Wisconsin's Progressive Era, 1885-1920
- 3) Development of True Round Barns in Wisconsin, 1889-1921

The National Register bulletin *How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form* provides four basic approaches to context development: theme, geography, architecture/building types, or chronology. Each historic context must have a theme, geographical area, chronological period, and associated property types identified (see NR Bulletin, p. 11).

The first and third contexts are clearly based on building type. The second context is based on the theme of the Progressive Era and pertains to all forms of centric barns. If the intent is for more than one context to apply to some nominated barns, guidance should be provided on determining the context(s) that apply. A true round barn (third context) could easily relate to the Progressive Era (second context), but is that determined by date of construction, source of plans,



location, or some other factor? It is difficult to know if a barn built within the intersection of the two contexts belongs to one or the other or both contexts. The same problem may exist for a polygonal barn (first context) that was built during the Progressive Era. On the other hand, some centric barns may be a legacy of earlier or later movements and not pertain to the Progressive Era at all. Please provide some clarification about how to determine which contexts apply to nominated properties.

Better explanation for the selection of dates for contexts is needed. The dates of the Progressive Era in Wisconsin may be accepted historiography. The dates for the other contexts may be based on the earliest and latest examples of the barn types that have been found. Although generally a consistent approach is used in selecting dates for contexts, for this MPDF, if properties are intended to relate to two contexts in some cases (round and Progressive or polygonal and Progressive), it may be adequate to indicate this rationale and method of using the contexts.

### **Description**

Much of the architectural/construction description of centric barns is excellent in the MPDF, but elements of descriptions are either missing or presented too vaguely to be useful in evaluations. Complete descriptions are needed so that character defining elements can be recognized in nominated properties. This helps a great deal in evaluating integrity. The following areas require additional explanation:

Information on interior **floor plans** is scant. On page 6 it is revealed that “The interior concentric formation of cow stanchions or horse stables meant a purely round form, as the extra, and sometimes awkward, spaces created at the obtuse interior angles were not necessarily used.” The concentric arrangement is mentioned elsewhere, especially in the section on the twentieth century that indicates its drawbacks with the introduction of mechanized milking, but a clear description of the floor plan is lacking, including variations of the “typical plan” (if such exists), accommodation to larger or smaller diameters, etc. Floor plan drawings would provide a useful explanation of the location of aisles, access to the silo, and the number of concentric stanchions that were possible. If the loft was anything but the open space mentioned in the nomination, this should also be described. Such information would be useful in evaluating interior integrity.

**Fenestration** is not discussed. Where did windows tend to be located? Were they on both levels? What was their typical size, spacing, and style (sash? casement?) and how might this have varied in different contexts or periods? Doors and door openings are discussed to some extent, but this discussion too should be comprehensive enough to help evaluate whether a barn has original or replacement doors and openings.

**Additions**, although they may be rare, were attached to some centric barns. Where would they have been placed? Would they have been one or two stories? Were they built in response to some change in the operation? Any information would be useful, because the registration requirements use “significant and insignificant” additions as impacting integrity.

### **Integrity**

It would be difficult to evaluate the integrity of properties that have some degree of compromise using this MPDF. The essence of the integrity discussion is at the top of page 20. This paragraph



says that Wisconsin centric barns should “have at least some of the preceding physical components to demonstrate a minimum level of integrity for eligibility.” The preceding physical components mentioned include the form, foundation, siding or sheathing, roofs, and interior silos; essentially, the exterior appearance of the barn, plus the silo.

The last paragraph of the Section F provides more information on evaluating integrity, and it is so critical it should somehow be highlighted—perhaps with a heading calling attention to “Integrity.” This last paragraph—which presumably pertains to all three contexts—is much stricter than the paragraph that states that “minimum integrity” can be based largely on features visible on the exterior and retention of the silo. This last paragraph requires centric barns to demonstrate their original agricultural use and to lack significant additions and alterations. Information should be given to assist preparers in determining what is needed to demonstrate the original agriculture use, particularly how the interior is affected by this requirement; what indicates if additions are significant or insignificant; and what constitutes significant alterations.

The nomination states that “original or historic materials, especially on the exterior, including siding, fenestration and structural elements” should remain. In regard to siding, it should be clarified when siding is considered “historic” even if it is not “original.” Similar information may be needed for windows or other features. A discussion regarding the degree of alteration acceptable on the interior would also be helpful, and, if there are ameliorating situations (rarity, for example) that make some alterations acceptable in some cases, this also would be helpful information for evaluating eligibility.

### **Application of the Criteria**

The discussion of Criterion C should include the potential application of “work of a master.” From the text, it appears that association with Alga Shivers and Ernst Clausen may, in some cases, be significant (p. 24, bottom). If they are not considered “masters,” but simply prolific builders whose work is identifiable, that might be explained. The discussion of Criterion A should clarify that in addition to “specific and significant historic events,” this criterion can be applied to a pattern of events or a historic trend that made a significant contribution to the development of an area. In either case, the “events” should have a strong association with the historic context. Examples are always useful.

The nomination mentions that most centric barns will be “eligible at the local level of significance” (p. 24). However, because centric barns have a place in the history of Wisconsin agriculture, as described in the contexts, it seems possible that a barn may exist of statewide significance. This potential should be explored. A national context is not presented, so within these contexts national significance seems unlikely.

Please contact me if you have any questions about these comments. I can be reached at 202-354-2252 or by email at [barbara\\_wyatt@nps.gov](mailto:barbara_wyatt@nps.gov).

Barbara Wyatt, Historian  
National Register of Historic Places



September 18, 2017

Barbara,

After reviewing my draft re-write for the Wisconsin Centric Barns MPD nomination, you asked a follow up question regarding a roof detail. I have clarified the description of that detail in the nomination on page F-32 (my edit, in the draft I sent you, of that detail was incomplete). I have also included some photographs of Shivers barns for your reference. I hope this helps.

Once again, thank you for your help with this MPD nomination. It has been a long road and I am extremely excited to finally have these materials to you for final consideration.

Peggy

Peggy Veregin  
National Register Coordinator  
608.264.6501

## PEGGY ANN VEREGIN

---

**From:** Wyatt, Barbara <barbara\_wyatt@nps.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 28, 2016 8:01 AM  
**To:** PEGGY ANN VEREGIN  
**Subject:** perfect MPDF

Peggy, the revised MPDF for Wisconsin Centric Barns was a delight to read. It is a model for the format, and after you submit the final, I plan on requesting it to be included on the NR webpage as a sample MPDF.

Congratulations on a job well done! I notice that Wisconsin staff is not included in Section C as a contributing author, but--unless it's contrary to your policy--the SHPO staff contribution might be noted. This is a such a significant improvement, it seems there's another contributing author who could be credited--you, I assume. But that's up to you--we government workers certainly aren't accustomed to getting our heads swelled with credit!

One small question, which a photo would probably clarify. On page F-32, second paragraph, second-to-last sentence: the Shivers' roofs are said to rise "to the high point above the central silo". Does this mean the top of the silo is below the roof, with an opening in the roof? Just curious, but including a few photos of the different property types and masters' works would be useful.

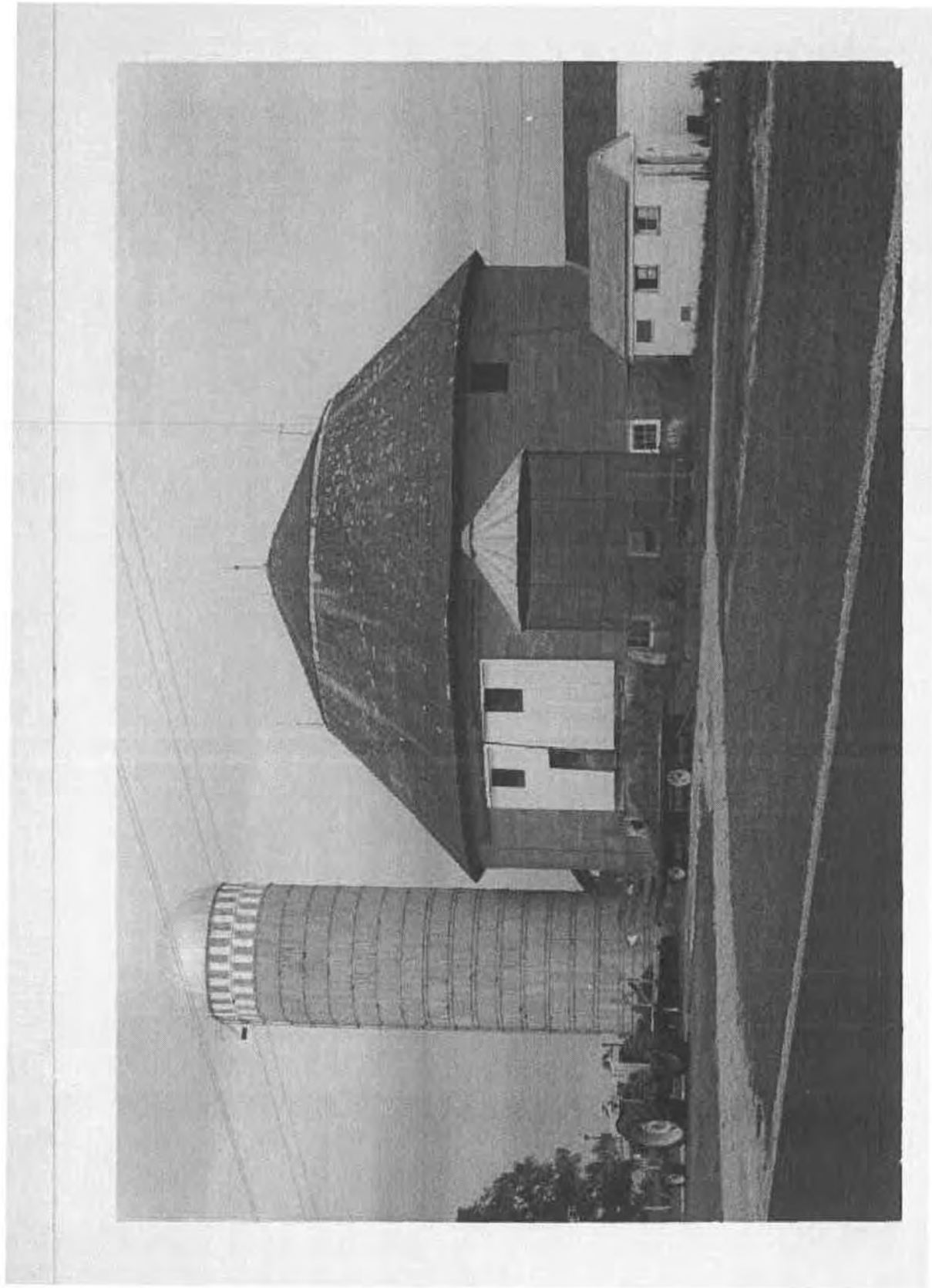
Thanks for sharing this draft. I'm totally impressed with the revised document.

Best,  
Barbara

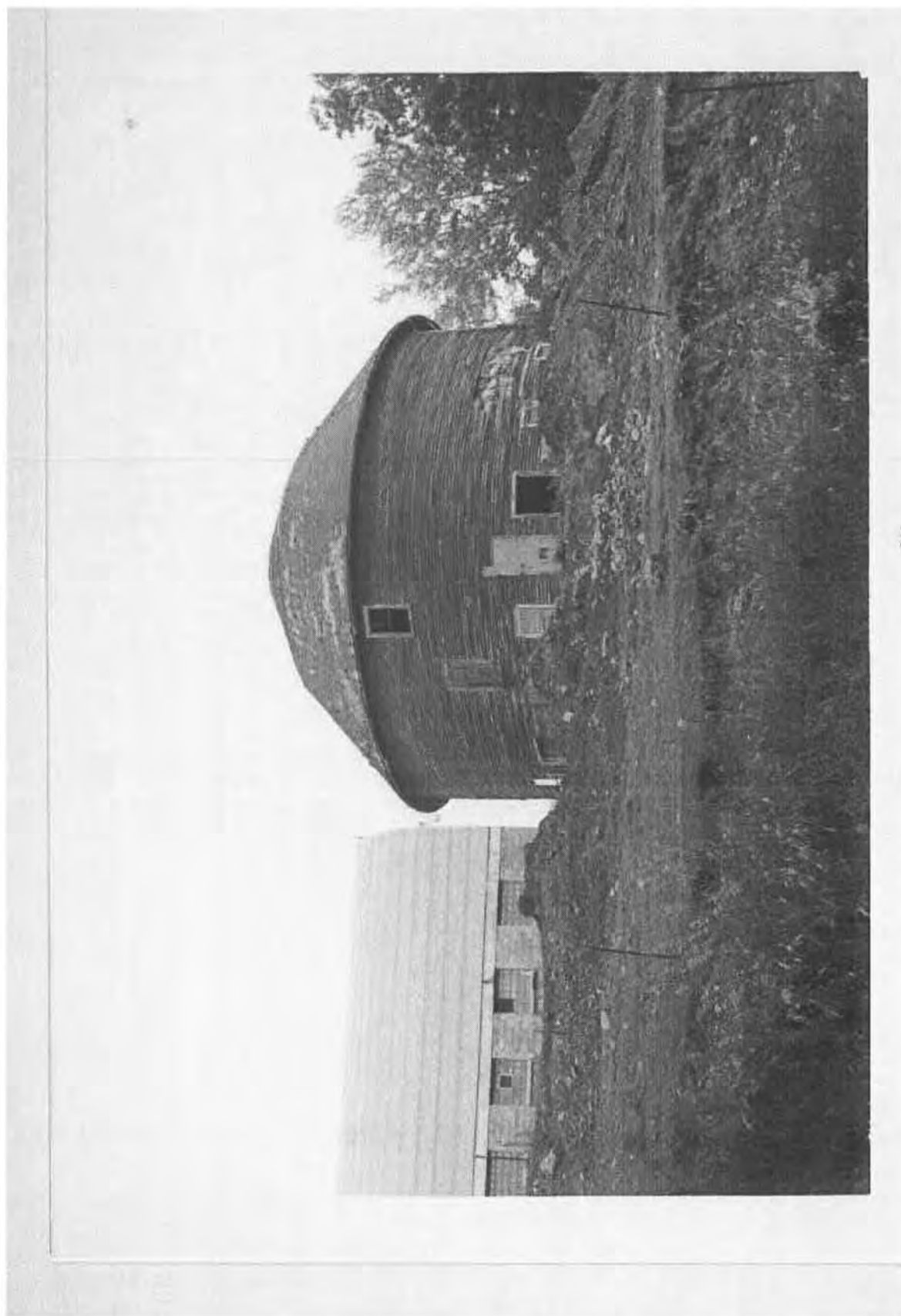
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Barbara Wyatt, ASLA  
National Park Service  
National Register/NHL Programs  
1201 Eye Street NW  
Washington, DC 20005  
202.354.2252 Tuesday and Thursday  
410.775.0056 Monday, Wednesday, Friday

AHI 87080



AHI 87083



AHI 87084 – George Harris Round Barn

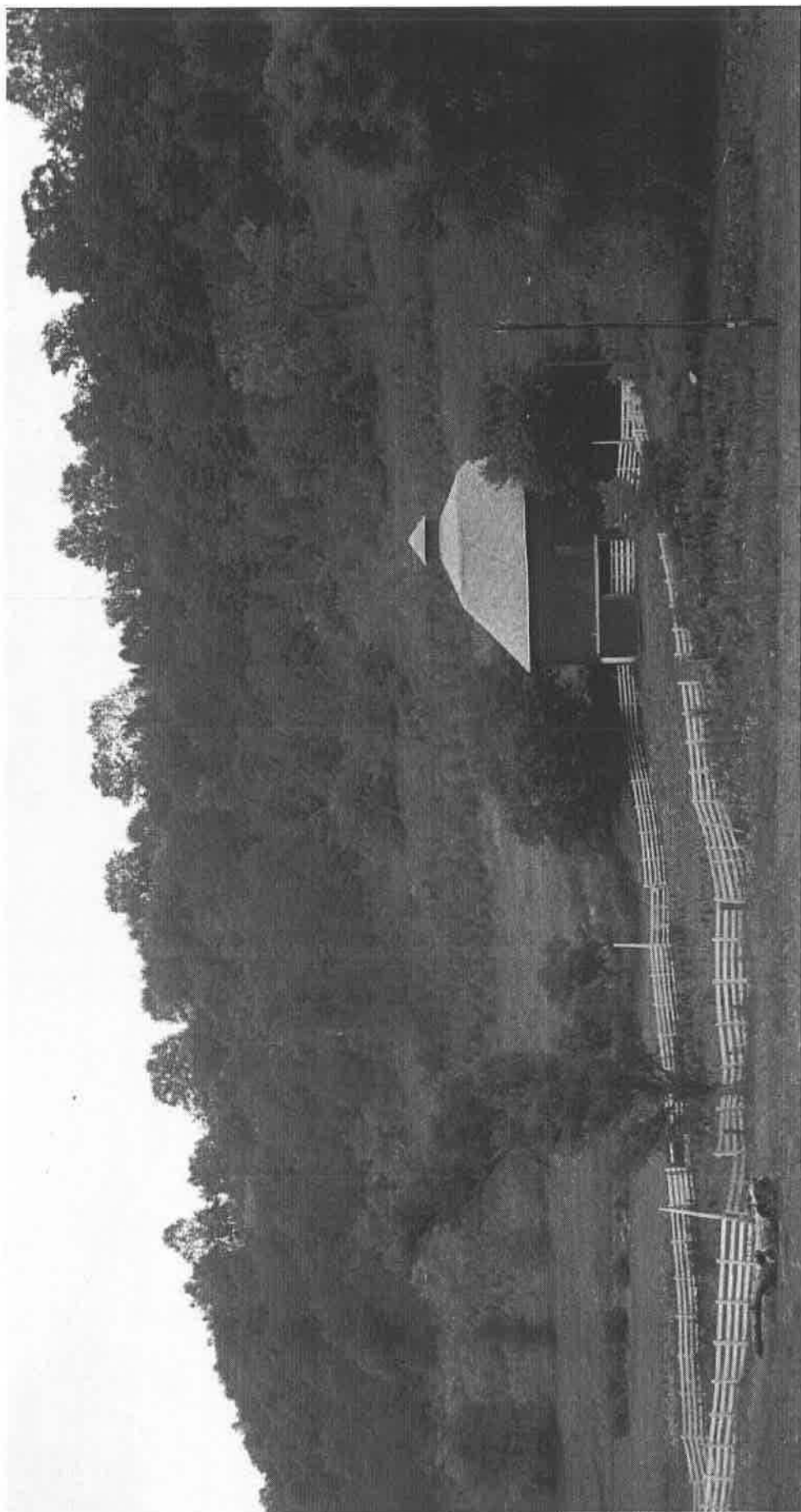




AHI 85407



AHI 111809





WISCONSIN  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

NOV 15 2017

DATE: November 14, 2017  
TO: Barbara Wyatt  
FROM: Ian Gort  
SUBJECT: Wisconsin Centric Barns Multiple Property Nomination

Please see the requested revisions from the Wisconsin Centric Barns Multiple Property nomination.

If there are any questions, please contact me at 608-264-6502 or  
Ian.Gort@WisconsinHistory.Org

*sent subs for pages 16, 17 and 30-33*



September 18, 2017

Ms. Barbara Wyatt  
National Register Historian  
National Park Service  
1201 Eye St. NW  
Washington D. C. 20005

NRHP Reference number: 64501218 / Wisconsin Centric Barns MPD

Dear Ms. Wyatt,

Enclosed is our amended Wisconsin Centric Barns Multiple Property Documentation. After careful review of your return comments, and in consultation with the consultant who wrote the document, we have made revisions that we believe address all of your concerns. I have provided a summary below to help identify where in the document we have made changes as they relate to each respective review comment.

#### 1. Contexts

The original document suggested three contexts having overlapping dates of relevance as well as references to Wisconsin's Progressive Era. Your questions related to how one context would be chosen over another if the barn's date of significance intersects more than one context, and further, you ask how barns would be evaluated as being related to the Progressive Era.

Answer: The context was intended to reference "small p" progressive (scientific, forward-thinking) ideas embraced by Wisconsin farmers, not the "large P" political and social "Progressive Movement" and we understand how the wording in the document may have conflated the two, causing confusion. Further, we agree that trying to determine the correct context when the dates overlap is unnecessarily confusing.

As a remedy, we have simplified the contexts, providing a much more concise discussion of the contextual history of centric barns. The sub-headings in Section E, simply refer to the historical progression and influences of the different forms of centric barns but they all relate to the same context which is Wisconsin Centric Barns, 1876-1921.

#### 2. Descriptions

You asked for more detailed architectural descriptions.

Answer: We have added the following additional descriptions.

- Windows – page F 22
- Doors – page F 22
- Plan with sample plan drawings showing typical conditions – page F 22 through F 25
- Additions – page F 26

### 3. Work of a Master

You requested a discussion regarding the potential application of “work of a master”.

Answer: We have added a section heading “The Work of a Master” which discusses and defines how the work of a master would be identified. This text starts on page E 16 and continues through page E 20.

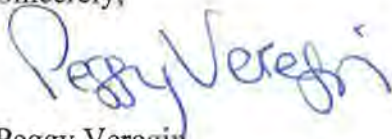
### 4. Integrity

You pointed out that on different pages of section F there were conflicting standards for evaluating integrity and asked for clarification.

Answer: We have compiled the discussion of integrity under a single heading which you will find on page F 32, and have edited the text to provide consistent guidelines for evaluation.

We appreciate the opportunity to make these corrections and clarifications to this Wisconsin Centric Barns Multiple Property Documentation and believe we have addressed all of your concerns. Please let me know if you have any questions or if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Peggy Veregin  
National Register Coordinator  
608.264.6501  
[peggy.veregin@wisconsinhistory.org](mailto:peggy.veregin@wisconsinhistory.org)





WISCONSIN  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY



**TO:** Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places

**FROM:** Peggy Veregin

**SUBJECT:** National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form, Amended  
**Submission:** NRHP Reference Number: 64501218

The following materials are submitted on this 18th day of September 2017,  
for the Multiple Property Documentation Form, Amended for the Wisconsin Centric  
Barns MPD to the National Register of Historic Places:

\_\_\_\_\_ Original National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form

1 \_\_\_\_\_ CD with NRHP Nomination Form Word Document

1 \_\_\_\_\_ Multiple Property Nomination form, Amended

\_\_\_\_\_ Photograph(s)

\_\_\_\_\_ CD with electronic images

\_\_\_\_\_ USGS map(s)

\_\_\_\_\_ Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)

1 \_\_\_\_\_ Piece(s) of correspondence

\_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Please insure that this nomination is reviewed

\_\_\_\_\_ This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67

\_\_\_\_\_ The enclosed owner objection(s) do \_\_\_\_\_ do not \_\_\_\_\_  
constitute a majority of property owners.

\_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_