

MADISON COUNTY BARN DOCUMENTATION PROJECT

Common Identity of Barn: Thurman Briggs
Address of Barn: 2501 Old Mars Hill Highway.
Mars Hill, NC 28754
GPS Location: N35-48.028 / W82-31.919
Elevation: 2032'
Township: Beech Glen
Vicinity: Mars Hill/Forks of Ivy
Approx date/decade built: 1954-56

Current Owner: Mark Peyton, 787-208-9458,
markpeyton119@gmail.com
Historic Owner(s): Thurman Briggs
Current Use: storage
Historic Use: livestock, burley tobacco
Permission to visit property by: owner Mark
Peyton

ORIGINAL BARN characteristics

Integrity

- High
- Medium
- Low

Condition

- Good
- Fair
- Deteriorated
- Ruin

Add. Info.:

Function of original barn

- general purpose
- livestock/hay
- flue-cured tobacco
- burley tobacco
- bull face tobacco
- dairy
- other

Add. Info.:

Type Construction of original barn

- Post and Beam
- timber frame
- mortise and tenon
- sawn lumber
- hewn timbers
- notched logs
- stud frame

Add. Info.: This is an example of a well built post WWII general purpose barn built exclusively for livestock and utility. The barn features typical elements of the late '40's early '50's barn construction.

Original siding materials

- milled boards
 - lattice
 - exposed logs
 - board and batten
 - metal
 - shingles
 - other
- Add. Info.:

Orientation of siding

- angled on diagonal
 - vertical
 - horizontal
- Add. Info.:

Roof pitch or slope of original barn: 12/12 and 5/12

Roof type of original barn

- gable
- broken gable
- gambrel
- shed
- monitor
- cupola
- other

Add. Info.: this is not a true gambrel roof structure, but is supported by interiors posts

Roofing materials of original barn

- split wood shingles
 - 3-V metal
 - 3-u metal
 - 5-V metal
 - stamped metal shingle
 - tar paper
 - unknown
 - other
- Add. Info.:

Roof framing of original barn

- round pole rafters
 - milled rafters
 - gambrel shallow trusses
 - gambrel with post and beam support
 - round purlins
- Add. Info.:

Foundation of original barn

- Dry laid stone
- wood sills on rock piers
- mortared stone
- concrete
- concrete block
- columns/wood piers
- posts on concrete footings

Add. Info.: large sawn wood sills on scattered concrete blocks

Flooring of original barn

- dirt floor
- wood flooring
- concrete slab

Add. Info.: wood flooring in tack room and loft

Species of wood used in original barn

- chestnut
- other, list known species

Add. Info.: various common species

Hinges

- leather
- wooden
- wrought iron
- commercial metal
- rubber
- other

Add. Info.:

Fasteners

- wire nails
- cut nails
- wrought spikes
- wood pegs
- other

Add. Info.:

Tobacco tier poles vertical spacing

- +/- 2 feet
- +/- 3 feet
- +/- 4 feet
- other, list

Add. Info.:

Additional traditional features, list:

ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS characteristics

Has the original barn been altered or added to? yes

Description of alterations and additions: Before the construction was completed, the owner was approached by neighbors to allow them to hang their burley tobacco in this barn, and he agreed to allow them to alter the barn with tier poles hanging for burley tobacco. Some other alterations have been made recently to open two stalls for a workshop space.

Condition of alterations

good

fair

poor

ruin

Add. Info.:

Function of barn alterations and additions

general purpose

livestock/hay

flue-cured tobacco

burley tobacco

bull face tobacco

dairy

other

Add. Info.:

Type Construction alterations and additions

Post and Beam

timber frame

mortise and tenon

sawn lumber

hewn timbers

notched logs

stud frame

Add. Info.:

Siding materials of alterations and additions

milled boards

lattice

exposed logs

board and batten

metal

shingles

other

Add. Info.:

Orientation of siding

angled on diagonal

vertical

horizontal

Add. Info.:

Roof pitch or slope of alterations and additions:

Roof type of barn alterations and additions

gable

broken gable

gambrel

shed

monitor

cupola

other

Add. Info.:

Roofing materials of alterations and additions

split wood shingles

3-V metal

3-u metal

5-V metal

stamped metal shingle

tar paper

unknown

other

Add. Info.:

Roof framing of alterations and additions

round pole rafters

milled rafters

gambrel shallow trusses

gambrel with post and beam support

round purlins

Add. Info.:

Foundation of alterations and additions

Dry laid stone

wood sills on rock piers

mortared stone

concrete

concrete block

columns/wood piers

posts on concrete footings
Add. Info.:

Flooring of alterations and additions

dirt floor
 wood flooring
 concrete slab
Add. Info.:

Species of wood used in alterations and additions

chestnut
 other, list known species
Add. Info.:

Hinges/ alterations and additions

leather
 wooden
 wrought iron
 commercial metal
 rubber
 other
Add. Info.:

Fasteners/ alterations and additions

wire nails
 cut nails
 wrought spikes
 wood pegs
 other
Add. Info.:

Tobacco tier poles vertical spacing/ alterations and additions

+/- 2 feet
 +/- 3 feet
 +/- 4 feet
 other, list
Add. Info.:

Outbuildings: one storage shed, now on adjacent property

Setting and/or Surrounding Land Use: This site is a classic early twentieth century family commercial and living setting where the family lived in the gas station/store and ran the business while operating basic farm activities with chickens, draft horses, garden and some crops. This family business began as an earlier gas station and store, down the hill from the barn, on the original Burnsville Highway built in 1922 as part of the US/NC highway expansion to accommodate the new automobile age. It is a good example of the progression over time of

the changes in highway location and its dominance of the landscape, replacing farmland and home sites. The early road (1922) ran primarily following the old horse and wagon road that closely followed the creek (Little Ivy Creek) with many crossings at fords. The second generation road, built circa 1950 was located uphill skirting the hillsides and cutting through other land uses. The last generation of road is the current I-26 built higher up the valley and cutting through entire hillsides.

Historical Background: Thurman Briggs was born Nov 31, 1914, deceased Jan 21st, 1992, and is buried at the Mars Hill town cemetery. Surviving family members recall very little about this barn although they believe it was built circa 1954-56 following the construction of Briggs' new store and gas station, adjacent to the barn. The gas station was built for Briggs by Esso Oil Co. and is a good example of the mid-20th century rural highway gas station and country store. The barn was built by Briggs' cousin Stanley Marshbanks and his brother-in-law Kyle Jamerson. They also worked on the store construction.

The Briggs family is also representative of a typical extended family living within a common valley, including in this example the Willis,' Marshbanks, Andersons, and Briggs, all of which had close associations with Mars Hill College. Thurman Briggs frequently employed one of the nearby African American families, the Briscoes, as tenant farmers and workers. The Briscoes are the primary family associated with the historic Rosenwald School located on the ridge above the Willis and Briggs property.

Thurman Briggs' daughter, Barbara Willard, remembers many stories from her childhood living at the store and barn, including seeing a "panther", or cougar, perched up in the tier poles of the barn after raiding the chicken coop. She also recounts visits by gypsy caravans, the women dressed in traditional gypsy dresses of long billowing skirts with loose blouses into which they would hide shoplifted food from the store.

Date Photos Taken:

Submitted By

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