

MADISON COUNTY BARN DOCUMENTATION PROJECT

Common Identity of Barn: John Shelton (1882 to 1981) barn
Address of Barn: jcnctn with Levi Branch and Big Pine Rd (approx. 3900 Big Pine Rd.)
GPS Location: N35 50.095 / W82 46.693
Elevation: 1770'
Township: Walnut
Vicinity: lower Big Pine Creek
Approx date/decade built: 1930s

Current Owner: Ben and Roos Geradts
Historic Owner(s): Major Marler, John Shelton
Current Use: not in use, marginal storage
Historic Use: burley tobacco
Permission to visit property by: owner, Roos (Rose) and Ben Geradts; 813-977-6992
The property is on the market for sale.

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.: This barn is an example of a transitional form, as a livestock barn that was also built to air cure burley tobacco.

Type Construction of original barn

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

Add. Info.: notched log ends are flush, an uncommon method.

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.: log throughout, including gables

Roof pitch or slope of original barn: 6.5 / 12

Roof type of original barn

- gable
 - broken gable
 - gambrel
 - shed
 - monitor
 - cupola
 - other
- Add. Info.:

Roofing materials of original barn

- split wood shingles
- 3-V metal
- 3-u metal
- 5-V metal- current
- stamped metal shingle
- tar paper
- unknown
- other

Add. Info.: There is no roof lath strips that would support split oak shingles and the existing 5-V metal roofing sits across the round pole purlins. It is likely however, that the original roof was split oak shingles, replaced at a later date.

Roof framing of original barn

- round pole rafters
- milled rafters
- gambrel shallow trusses
- gambrel with post and beam support

round purlins

Add. Info.: purlins are spaced 30 inches apart and average 5"-6" in diameter.

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.: a rock retaining wall supports a bank at the north end

Flooring of original barn

dirt floor

wood flooring: in loft

concrete slab

Add. Info.: round pole floor joists supporting loft floor are 27" +/- OC

Species of wood used in original barn

chestnut

other, list known species

Add. Info.: the logs appear to be exclusively white pine. Sawn boards are mostly oak, with some pine.

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.: vertical spacing ranges from 32” to 39”. Horizontal spacing averages 44’.

Additional traditional features, list: The length of the roof is broken by another set of logs of decreasing lengths that mirror the end gable logs, to support the purlins.

This is a bank barn, but the bank was altered when the road was upgraded and no longer functions as a bank barn.

ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS characteristics

Has the original barn been altered or added to? No

Outbuildings: none surviving. There was a house approx. 80’ to the west.

Setting and/or Surrounding Land Use: This barn is in a narrow stretch of the Big Pine Creek gorge with no bottom land nearby. It was part of an active farm when built, but most of the tillable land has returned to forest. Levi Branch road crosses the creek and continues east where it opens into a valley of more suitable farm land.

Historic Information: John Daniel Shelton, July 5 1882, d. May 11 1981, lived to be ninety-nine years old. He spent much of his life in the Wilson Cove area of Big Pine where he built at least three other large log barns, on very steep land, which were likely flue-cured tobacco barns. According to family history, Shelton always built his barns and farmed “by the signs”. This barn is an exceptional example of a round log bank barn using a massive rock retaining wall, saddle notches and the old tradition of continuing the log wall into the gable end. This requires that the two gable ends be part of a roof structure of round pole “purlins” that span the distance between log walls, and lock the gable end logs in place. The near-perfectly round logs form a barn 26 feet by 27 feet, and run 25 logs high, totaling 100 logs, plus 24 logs of decreasing lengths in the gable ends. The family recalls that his daughter-in-law, Pearl, helped fell and drag the logs by horse team, and hauled from many miles away on Doe Branch. The barn is in very good condition considering it is over eighty years old and sits in a damp creek bottom. The old house also stood nearby until the new road was built.

Primary source contacts: Jack Smith 645-6197- elvert5@frontier.com

Other contacts: Steven Porter, grandson of Pearl, daughter-in-law of John Shelton (wife Belle), Luther Roberts

John Daniel Shelton, born on Little Pine, buried at Cedar Hill Cemetery, Alexander; children John Wm b. 1907, wife Pearl; Nellie Josephine b. 1909; Farlan b. 1910; Wayne Wilson b. 1913; Viola b. 1917
Shelton also lived up Wilson Cove Rd. in a log house;

Date Photos Taken: July 27, 2015

Submitted By

Name: Taylor Barnhill

Address: 226 Beech Glen Rd., Mars Hill, NC 28754

Phone home:

Cell: 828-380-9336

Email: taylor.barnhill@yahoo.com