

MADISON COUNTY BARN DOCUMENTATION PROJECT

Common Identity of Barn: Ernest Snelson Burley tobacco barn

Address of Barn: +/- 300 Ramsey Snelson Rd.

GPS Location: 82.690 / 35.737

Elevation: 2095 feet elev.

Historic Owner(s): Ernest Snelson, son, Harold Snelson

Township: South Marshall

Current Use: hay storage

Vicinity: Rector Corner/Pleasant View

Historic Use: air curing burley tobacco

Approx. Date Built:

Permission to visit property by: Maxine Snelson

Current Owner: Maxine Snelson

Historic Information:

Maxine Snelson is the wife of the late Harold Snelson, who was son of Ernest, the son of Elmore Snelson. The barn was built in 1948, a massive burley tobacco barn built as part of a surge in burley tobacco barn building following WWII, as men returning from the War were eager to rebuild their family's farm economy. It was built by Ernest Snelson, son of Elmore Snelson, when he was 32 years old. The barn shed addition appears to have been built within a few years of the original barn. A unique technique used in its construction is the use of wooden nail kegs as containers for the poured concrete footings that anchor the interior vertical posts of white pine. It has an unusually large center hallway, with massive doors. The height of the barn accommodates seven levels of horizontal tier poles, an uncommonly high barn. The older traditional use of wood lattice strip siding is seen on the upper walls and serves to provide ventilation for the hanging tobacco, which was air-cured, needing ample airflow. Many of the exterior siding boards on the end are warped, which would indicate those trees were cut at the wrong "signs", phase of the moon, or when the sap was "up" according to farm traditions of the period. The use of all horizontal siding is also a "modern" feature, as most of the county's early burley barns were built with a combination of diagonal, vertical, and horizontal siding.

Outbuildings: none (there the ruins of a shed building nearby)

Setting and/or Surrounding Land Use: This end of the Rector Corner ridge is a landscape of rolling hills southwest of the town seat of Marshall, consisting of many small hollows and less forested land, and an above average amount of pastureland, which was likely tillable crop land before the end of the Federal Tobacco Program. Much of this area overlooks the French Broad River to the east and down the hill.

ORIGINAL BARN

Integrity:

___ High

- Medium
- Low

Condition:

- Good
- Fair
- Deteriorated
- Ruin

Addtl Info.:

Function of original barn:

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

Addtl Info.:

Type of Construction of original barn:

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

Addtl Info:

Original siding materials:

- milled boards
- lattice
- exposed logs
- board and batten
- metal
- shingles
- other

Addtl Info.:

Orientation of siding:

- angled on diagonal

- vertical
 - horizontal
- Addtnl Info.:

Roof pitch or slope of original barn: 12/5.5 on main barn and 12/3 on shed addition

Roof type of original barn:

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

Addtnl Info.:

Roofing materials of original barn:

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

Addtnl Info.:

Roof framing of original barn:

- round pole rafters
- milled rafters
- gambrel shallow trusses
- gambrel with post & beam supprt
- round purlins

Addtnl 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
Addtnl Info.:

Flooring of original barn:

dirt floor
 wood flooring
 concrete slab
Addtnl Info.:

Species of wood used in original barn:

chestnut
 other, list known species: pine, oak, poplar, other
Addtnl Info.:

Hinges:

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

Fasteners:

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

Tobacco tier poles vertical spacing:

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

Additional traditional features, list: A unique technique used in its construction is the use of wooden nail kegs as containers for the poured concrete footings that anchor the interior vertical posts of white pine. It has an unusually large center hallway, with massive doors. The height of the barn accommodates seven levels of horizontal tier poles, an uncommonly high barn. The older traditional use of wood lattice strip siding is seen on the upper walls and serves to provide ventilation for the hanging tobacco, which was air-cured, needing ample airflow.

ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS - characteristics

Has the original barn been altered or added to? The barn shed addition appears to have been built within a few years of the original barn

Description of alterations and additions:

Condition of alterations/additions

good

fair

poor

ruin

Addtl Info.:

Function of barn alterations and additions

general purpose

livestock/hay

flue-cured tobacco

burley tobacco

bull face tobacco

dairy

other

Addtl Info.:

Type Construction alterations and additions

Post and Beam

timber frame

mortise and tenon

sawn lumber

hewn timbers

notched logs

stud frame

Addtl Info.:

Siding materials of alterations and additions

- milled boards
- lattice
- exposed logs
- board and batten
- metal
- shingles
- other

Addtnl Info.:

Orientation of siding

- angled on diagonal
- vertical
- horizontal

Addtnl Info.:

Roof pitch or slope of alterations and additions: 12/3

Roof type of barn alterations and additions

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

Addtnl 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

Addtnl Info.:

Roof framing of alterations and additions

- round pole rafters

- milled rafters
- gambrel shallow trusses
- gambrel with post & beam support
- round purlins

Addtl 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

Addtl Info.:

Flooring of alterations and additions

- dirt floor
- wood flooring
- concrete slab

Addttnl Info.:

Species of wood used in alterations and additions

- chestnut
- other, list known species: pine, oak, poplar, misc.

Addtl Info.

Hinges/ alterations and additions

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

Addtl Info.:

Fasteners/ alterations and additions

- wire nails

- cut nails
- wrought spikes
- wood pegs
- other

Addtl Info.:

Tobacco tier poles vertical spacing/ alterations and additions

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

Addtl Info:

Date Photos Taken: August 29th, 2018

-

Submitted By:

Name: Taylor Barnhill

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

Phone Cell: 828-380-9336

Email: taylor.barnhill@yahoo.com