

Barn Survey of Clay County

Clay County Historic Preservation Commission

Summary

Over three years, Clay County HPC member Jim Stone has systematically surveyed 348 barns as well as fifteen silos, granaries, and elevators built before 1960 in Clay County. Each barn was visited in person and is recorded in photographs, sketch plans, written description, and historical research. Survey forms were completed and filed with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for entry into the statewide survey database:

<http://arcgis.sd.gov/server/dtsd/shpoCRGRID/>

. Additional local measures to make the information publically-accessible are being discussed. Grant funds to the Clay County Certified Local Government through the Historic Preservation Fund (NPS) went to expenses for travel and printing, and the hours spent made up a considerable part of the required in-kind match.

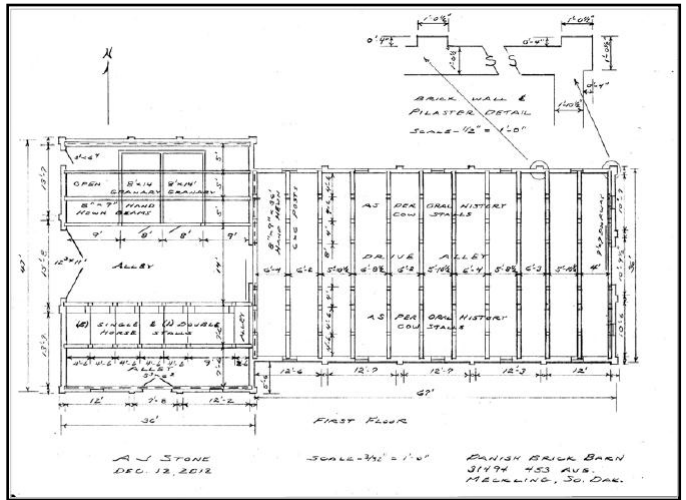
Impact

The main goal of the project was to document a type of historic building that most represents the county's rural agricultural heritage, as barns face growing threats from deferred maintenance, obsolescence, and demolition. Other goals were to make sure this project had long-lasting research value, visibility in the community, and was of benefit to the entire county.

This survey project has led to at least nine public presentations in Vermillion, Wakonda, Yankton, SD, and St. James, NE; features on Channel 9 KCAU-TV in Sioux City, Iowa, and SDPB's "Dakota Life" program; and articles in the Southeast's *Equalizer* and the Sioux Falls *Argus Leader*. The public response has been highly positive and has led to additional research and resources to build up the project. A Danish brick barn slated for demolition was recorded and researched in even more detail. In annual project summaries filed with the South Dakota SHPO, Jim has been able to analyze common historic building materials, designs, and construction techniques on a comprehensive scale.



Eilts Barn, 1913, near Wakonda



Calle Nissen Johnson brick barn, 1878, near Meckling