Bachelor Of Architecture
Thesis Report
Spring Semester 2001
Department Of Architecture
Ball State University

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Historic Reincarnation
Reclaiming The Materials And Spirit Of Old Rural Buildings
I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who assisted me in my thesis work.

Studio Professor: Robert Fisher  
Faculty Advisor: Dan Woodfin  
Outside Advisor: James Weisman DVM  
Historic Barn Owner: Kim Schauss

A special thanks to Bob and Dan for keeping me on the straight and narrow path, thanks to Jim for telling me everything I wanted to know about the veterinary practice plus so much more, and thanks to Kim for sharing her barn and a piece of her past.

This report is dedicated to my parents, Melvin and Linda, whom without their love and support I would not be where I am today.
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Background

Growing up on a dairy farm I gained an appreciation for the strength and character of some of the old barns that stood on our farmstead. The farm has been in our family for several generations, with each son adding buildings and equipment to his father's possessions. The farm has become a collection of barns, sheds, and bins, which span the decades in their construction. However the core of any farm is that single old barn build at it's heart. These barns are not only significant in their age and materials, they have a history all their own. In many cases that old barn was the very first thing erected in a newly acquired plot of land to establish a homestead. Family friends and neighbors would all gather to help create a barn that will stand for over a century. Men would fell mighty trees from right there on the property. With axes and handsaws they would shape massive beams of solid oak. Using trees that had stood for a century, they would assemble a rigid framework built off of large fieldstones. The sides would be clad with rough-cut boards from a local sawmill that would weather hundreds of storms.

This was just the beginning of the barn's spirit. Time and use would contribute to its character like the wrinkles on an old man's face. The posts worn smooth by scores of animals rubbing against them, the weathered siding, bearing its grain after years of water and ice, and the rusted metal roofing that creaks with a assuring rigidity in heavy winds all convey the soul of the structure. These barns have become trustworthy old friends to the family farmer. They are a part of our heritage that stand proudly throughout the countryside. However many of these mighty old barns are being lost through urban expansion and neglect. A barn that stood for a century of storms can be leveled in a day. Left to reside only in our memories.

That does not have to be their fate. These structures are much too valuable to simply bulldoze into a hole. I understand that cities must expand and it is hard to maintain a barn that is no longer in use, but I propose Historic Reincarnation. Save the materials and the spirit of the barn to be reborn in a new structure, on a new site, with a new use.
A New Life For An Old Barn

So how do you reincarnate a dying old barn? The materials themselves are easy enough to save. With the rigid frame construction many of these old structures have all the cladding and secondary members can be easily removed and reused. The frame can then be disassembled and moved to its new site. However the soul of the structure must also be preserved. Consideration must be given to the new use these materials will perform.

That is why I have selected a veterinary clinic as the ideal second life for an old barn. Traditionally these barns were built to house and protect animals and their food stores. By creating an animal hospital from the parts of an old barn both the materials and the spirit can live on. The barn will continue to be a safe haven for animals in its new life.

Finding A Dying Barn

I started out by locating a barn that was going to be torn down because it was in the way of expansion or was no longer useful to the owner. I located a very nice barn in southern Indiana, just north of Evansville. It sat in the middle of an old homestead that had long since given up farming. The owner of the barn, Kim Schauss, had inherited it from her mother and had no practical use for it. The barn was in very good shape structurally, but she was considering removing it. It was a financial decision, if the barn was gone there would be more land to rent out for farming and she did not want to continue paying taxes on a building she did not use. However, Mrs. Schauss did have an appreciation for its value as a historic structure, and would like if it could be reused.
Space Relationships

- Reception
- Offices
- Diagnostic
- Treatment
- Kennel
- Large Animal
- Service
Research For A Veterinary Clinic

Once I had selected an appropriate structure I met with James Weisman DVM a young local veterinarian. He is currently working for a practice in Evansville, but he hopes to someday own his own clinic. I was able to treat him as my client for a new animal hospital made from the barn. To get a scope for the project we assumed that he would have two other partners and the clinic would service both large and small animals. After touring his current clinic and discussing the need and preferences for a larger practice I developed a fairly accurate program. Mr. Weisman also provided me with plans of other veterinary offices, so that I was able to understand the arrangement of the spaces and the movement patterns.
Space Summary

**Reception - 850 sq. ft.**
Waiting - 600 sq. ft.
Reception - 200 sq. ft.
Restroom - 50 sq. ft.

**Offices - 910 sq. ft.**
Doctor’s Offices - (3) 120 sq. ft.
Business Office - 100 sq. ft.
Conference Room - 150 sq. ft.
Filing Room - 100 sq. ft.
Break Room - 200 sq. ft.

**Diagnostic - 800 sq. ft.**
Exam Rooms - (4) 80 sq. ft.
Pharmacy - 200 sq. ft.
Lab - 200 sq. ft.

**Small Animal Treatment - 1,000 sq. ft.**
Treatment - 300 sq. ft.
Surgery - 250 sq. ft.
Exotics - 150 sq. ft.
Isolation - 120 sq. ft.
X-Ray - 180 sq. ft.

**Kennel - 850 sq. ft.**
Dog Runs - 500 sq. ft.
Cat Ward - 150 sq. ft.
Grooming - 200 sq. ft.

**Large Animal Treatment - 1,790 sq. ft.**
Stalls - (4) 150 sq. ft.
Isolation - 150 sq. ft.
Recovery - 130 sq. ft.
Surgery - 360 sq. ft.
Receiving - 550 sq. ft.

**Addition Space - 1,600 sq. ft.**
Restrooms - (2) 50 sq. ft.
Janitorial Closet - 30 sq. ft.
Storage - 300 sq. ft.
Laundry - 60 sq. ft.

Net square footage of spaces = 7,800 sq. ft.
Factor 25% for structure, mechanical, and circulation space.
Gross square footage = 9,750 sq. ft.

The final building will be approximately 10,000 sq. ft.
Locating A Site

I paid careful consideration to locating a site for the new clinic. I knew that I wanted to stay in a fairly rural location to keep the spirit of the barn in its natural context. However, a successful veterinary practice must be close to its clients.

I located a two-acre plot of farmland that was approximately five miles from the original position of the barn. The proximity of the new site to the original and a nearby operating dairy farm provide excellent context so that the building looks very comfortable in its new location. The site is also bordered by a major highway running through Evansville. This will provide easy access to the large client base in the city, plus the site is close to many smaller towns to the north that may not have veterinary services. In addition to the rural setting being contextual, it is also convenient for the large animal practice to be closer to the farms.
The Design Process

The strong, hand hewn, oak framework was obviously the most significant characteristic of the barn and I wanted to really preserve that aspect of the construction. I also wanted to use most of the weathered wooden planks and tin roof. I began to look at the idea of the barn being the core of the farmstead and all the other buildings are either directly or functionally connected to the main barn. This layout was almost identical to many veterinary clinics, where the treatment space is at the core and all other spaces are connected to it like spokes.

So I decided to completely reassemble the original frame and most of the cladding. This would serve as the main treatment space of the clinic with all of the secondary spaces connected to it. These attached spaces would be constructed on modern glass and steel to both juxtapose and emphasize the original barn structure. This reestablishes the old barn as the heart or the complex.
First Floor

Second Floor
The Space Layout

As I began to layout the floor plan I realized that if the new modern sections address the old barn at an angle it would strengthen the differentiation between the new and the old. From a programmatic standpoint, addressing the intersections of the angled pieces in the soft areas such as the waiting room, create very interesting spaces without cluttering the layout.

By using a standard centered linear circulation the barns column grid lent itself almost perfectly. The progression starts by entering into this bright open lobby that is defined by the rigid oak beam framework. From the central reception counter the client and their patient can move to either the designated cat or dog waiting wings. Once the doctor is ready to see them they progress into one of the four exam rooms. Many simple procedures and check-ups can be preformed there and the client and patient can leave through the exit in the designated waiting areas. If the patient requires a more thorough procedure the animal is brought into the lab for blood work and then taken to the treatment space. The client heads back into the lobby to either wait or go home to return later. The two rear wings on the clinic comprise the kennel and large animal treatment space. Up on the second floor are the office and clerical spaces. The doctor's offices overlook the lobby and treatment area in a loft type fashion.
Floor Plans

Second Floor Plan
The Farmstead Complex

I have also continued the vocabulary of the old barn by creating smaller framed structures at the ends of the new wings. These serve as both signifiers and protection to the entry and exit points. By doing this I have created a new farmstead in form, with the new glass and steel wings serving as the connectors. Every connector has an access point to the building on it. The two waiting rooms have exits for departing clients, the kennel has an exit to take animals outside, and the large animal area has a receiving area for animals arrive by truck or trailer. These outer structures each have their own function such as each addition building on a farmstead serves a new or addition purpose.
Physical Model
3D Computer Models
3D Computer Models
3D Computer Models
Honor Our Past

When I think back over this last year, I find it hard to quantify the experience. I have thoroughly enjoyed the process to which has brought me to this point in my thesis. This is primarily due to the fact that I have a strong personal connection to the subject matter. While we as architects work diligently to create artistic designs, some beauty can only be achieved through age. These old barns were designed with a very pragmatic use in mind. The materials and form were conducive with the local resources and needs of the structure. However these purely functional buildings began to take on a spirit and beauty all their own. These sturdy old barns stand like giants in the landscape, reminding us of our past. In our ever growing, developing country we must remember and respect our past. These barns were built upon the sweat and determination of men that exist only in memories. We must preserve the souls of these structures with the hopes that our contributions to this world will be as fondly remembered.