

Efforts Underway to Honor and Protect the UW-Dairy Barn

If there is a single barn that made Wisconsin "The Dairy State," it is the University of Wisconsin-Dairy Barn located on the Madison campus at 1915 Linden Drive. Yet, after over 105 years of existence, the barn has not received formal recognition at the state or national levels.

Two organizations, the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation and Barns Network of Wisconsin (N.O.W.), are correcting this historic oversight. The organizations are starting a campaign to list the UW-Dairy Barn as a National Landmark with the National Park Service.

"This barn is worthy of all the recognition it can get," says Roger Springman, President of Barns N.O.W.!. "Thousands of immigrant families sent their sons to the Short Course where they learned dairying in the barn's classrooms and on its milking floor. Important nutrition and animal husbandry research was conducted there too. Vitamin A discovery is directly linked to the barn," said Springman.

The UW-Dairy Barn was completed in 1898 at a cost of \$16,000 as a teaching and show barn. It had the latest and finest technologies and ideas of the day and was patterned after rural buildings in Normandy, France. The main barn is 86 feet long by 50 feet wide and stands three stories high. Two wings were added to the barn in the teens.

"The barn remains in fine shape but is only used for storage today," said Springman. The biggest threat now facing the UW-Dairy Barn is the proposed Walnut Street power plant. Numerous greenhouses may have to be relocated because of shade produced by the power plant, and the only spot being proposed for greenhouse relocation is the UW-Dairy Barn. A preliminary site plan for the proposed power plant is expected to be released this fall by the Alliant and MG&E Power Companies. The UW-Dairy Barn was recognized as one of Wisconsin's "Top Ten Endangered Buildings for 2001" by the Wisconsin Trust for Historic Preservation in May.

"There is not a single state or national plaque commemorating the contributions of this legendary barn," said Springman. "And now with the barn facing an even more uncertain future, thousands of students and citizens could be robbed of an opportunity to see and sense the special place this barn was for the State of Wisconsin."

It will take \$3,200 to have a consultant prepare papers for National Landmark nomination. The Madison Trust for Historic Preservation and Barns N.O.W.!. are looking for donations of any size to make this nomination possible.

People and organizations interested in helping nominate the UW-Dairy Barn can send checks to: Barns N.O.W.!, PO Box 2288, Madison, WI 53701-2288. Checks should be made out to: Wisconsin Trust for Historic Preservation, then note "UW-Dairy Barn Project" on the memo line. Donations are fully tax deductible.

Anyone interested in finding out more about the UW-Dairy Barn, its past and future, can contact Roger Springman, President, Barns N.O.W.!. at 608-223-9548 or www.madisontrust.org.