



FRIENDS OF THE STONE BARN

Newsletter – vol. 2, no. 2 June 2022

Through this newsletter, working with the University, we hope to keep all those interested in the preservation, restoration, and adaptive re-use of the University of Saskatchewan’s Stone Barn (or Main Barn), up-to-date on initiatives to save this iconic structure. Please feel free to pass the newsletter along to anyone interested in supporting this work.



Stone Barn, June 2022. Photograph by David Bindle

Report of the Working Group to Advise on the Stone Barn

Ernie Barber,
Co-Chair

The Stone Barn was built in 1912, is one of eleven buildings on the USask campus that were constructed prior to 1920 and is one of only four of these buildings that are currently unused. The Stone Barn was initially a critical infrastructure component for the university's working farm, and for many years was one of the principal facilities for teaching, research and extension in animal science. By 2010 the modern needs of these activities had outgrown the Stone Barn's capacity to provide them, and since then the university has attempted to prevent the structure from failing, prior to a new use being identified.

In December 2021, President Stoicheff formed a Stone Barn Working Group and mandated the group "to articulate an informed, renewed and realistic vision for the stone barn structure and provide recommendations to the President on a path forward". I am pleased to have been asked to Co-Chair the Working Group which also includes:

Dara Hrytzak (Co-Chair), Chief of Staff, Office of the President
Dave Christensen, Professor Emeritus, Representative from the Stone Barn Committee
Danielle Dunbar, Associate Vice-President, Development
Alex Fallon, Executive Director, Saskatoon Regional and Economic Development Authority
Gord Hunchak, Associate Vice-President, Communications & Chief Communications Officer
Janelle Hutchinson, Director, Infrastructure Planning and Land Development
Patrusia Rudy, Administrative Support, Office of the President

While the Working Group is still in the early stages, we have begun by reviewing some of the most recent building condition assessments and the substantial actions that the University has taken to protect the structure, before and after it ceased to be used. Some of the most recent work has been to shore up the pilasters supporting the stone walls, and to add internal bracing to increase wind resistance. More repairs and alterations will be required to maintain the structural integrity and meet modern building codes: The nature of this work has to be informed by the intended future uses of the building. All of this speaks to determining, as soon as we can and in conversation with internal and external constituencies, what those future uses might be. We intend to identify ideas for partnerships and re-use, funding sources, and operating models.

The Stone Barn Working Group has the support at the highest levels of the University and reports to the President. We've started our work in a systematic way and anticipate taking a few months before making recommendations to the President. One of the immediate priorities of the Working Group is to establish effective channels for communication with interested community members whose perspectives and ideas are very much needed. Please watch for announcements about how you can become or stay engaged.

[Editor's note: this report should have been in our last newsletter. I regret the delay in providing it, which was unintentional. My sincere apologies to Ernie Barber and to our readers].

Since the last newsletter: at the invitation of USask, there have been two public meetings, held via zoom, to discuss USask heritage buildings. The first of these was a discussion around guiding principles to assist with decision-making; for those not at the meeting, the working draft follows. Your input on these is welcomed!

DRAFT USask Heritage Stewardship Process and Principles

Stewardship Process

Goal: •to design a long-term process that enables optimal stewardship through a deliberate and consistent approach to managing heritage assets

- Pilot approach used with Seed and Poultry barns
- Current focus on four unused buildings (Stone Barn, College of Emmanuel and St. Chad, Feed Elevator, Rugby Chapel)

Stewardship of Heritage Buildings:

Decisions about investments in heritage buildings will be made with:



1. Evidence-based approach
2. Supported by Heritage Principles
3. Holistic and Comprehensive Approach

Left: UASC photo A-11012; exterior, Rugby Chapel [ca. 1930], looking north-west. Photo donated by Dr. and Mrs. Lloyd Frostad of High River, Alberta.

Evidence-based Approach

“Evidence” or data will include:

- Building Condition Assessments and any other structural studies
- External heritage designations
- Internal USask Heritage Register (2014)

Heritage Principles

- Principles are designed to be “always true” because they align with an organization’s vision, mission and values
- They support decision-making criteria but are not decision-making criteria

Heritage Preservation

Hierarchy

- Use
- Re-Use
- No Use

Right: UASC photo A-338.
Emmanuel College and Rugby
Chapel, 1912. Looking east.



Holistic and Comprehensive Approach

All USask buildings, including those with heritage features, will be regularly assessed, in a strategic building renewal matrix to ensure a holistic and comprehensive approach to all investment decisions.

Heritage Principles

1. The best way to preserve building and sites is to ensure they have a use that meets the USask teaching and research mandate.
2. The best way to preserve a building that is no longer meeting the USask mandate, is to identify a financially feasible re-use that meets the USask mandate.
3. Operating buildings as museums unto themselves is not part of the USask mandate, but some buildings may be a feasible landscape feature.
4. USask has reputational obligations to buildings and sites that have existing external designations but will not seek new external designations unless there are financial and usage advantages.



UASC photo A-97-141: looking west at Sheep Barn and elevator [cropped].

Existing Constraints/Realities/Best Practices

Preservation will experience the following:

- Changing the use of a building will often bring new code requirements into effect that reduce the financial feasibility of preservation.
- In nearly all cases, an investment in hazardous material remediation will be required.
- Prioritizing the roof, foundation and window maintenance is often needed to maintain the integrity of the structure.
- Removal of some buildings that have no use will continue to be necessary in order to focus financial and maintenance resources

Please send any comments you may have to:

ernie.barber@usask.ca
janelle.hutchinson@usask.ca
james.cook@usask.ca

Stone Barn: We're Harvesting Your Ideas for its Future Use

"The University of Saskatchewan can accomplish anything it choose to, and it *chooses* to save the Stone Barn." – Vera Pezer, former Chancellor

A second meeting was held on Friday, 10 June 2022 (again via zoom); this time to discuss the Stone Barn specifically. Did you know:

- The first floor of the barn is 16,622 ft.²
- The second floor is 14,510 ft.² - for a total of over 31,000 ft.²
- A series of seven studies have been conducted about the Barn between 2000 and 2020;
- The Barn is on already serviced land [sewer, water] although depending on future use, those services may need upgrading
- A 2021 report recommended \$1.2 million be spent immediately to mitigate some of the damage and halt further deterioration

Please send us your ideas on the potential future use(s) for this building! If we want to try to save it, we need creative thinking about ways in which we can best put a structure of this size, location, and the land around it to good use: for the University and for the larger community it serves.



UASC RG2024 - Photograph by David Mandeville, DAVS / eMAP

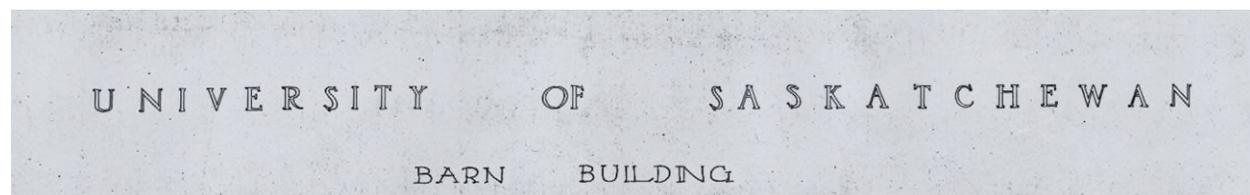
The “Friends of the Stone Barn” ad hoc committee includes:

Cheryl Avery	Hank Classen	Claire Lewchuk	Karen Schwean-Lardner
Ernie Barber	Patrick Hayes	Merle Massie	Lindsay Stokalko
David Christensen	Lisa Kirkham	Vera Pezer	Bill Waiser

...with support from several current and former University faculty and staff, alumni, and individuals across the city, province and country interested in adaptive re-use of this building. We appreciate all the support received so far.

Special thanks for their advice and assistance to:

Merry Beazley, David Bindle, Lisa Carpenter, Sarah Carter, Kristin Catherwood, Marianne Fedori, Gord Gilmour, Jim Hercus, Ewald Lammerding, the *Manitoba Coopertator*, Bill Peterson, Pearl Ann Reichwein, Brian Rossnagel, Peggy Sarjeant, the Saskatchewan Agricultural Graduates’ Association (SAGA), the Saskatoon Heritage Society, Chris Wiebe, and the University of Saskatchewan Retirees’ Association (USRA).



SAVE THE STONE BARN!