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June 2024 these paint

Artist

Kathleen Starkey

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Todd Rothert

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Doris Klausstermeyer

113 Elmorites

119 Road Appeal

116 Round Barns of Perry County

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118 Round Barns of Perry County:

Ottawa County Historical Society

Paintings of Robert Kroeger

Available for Purchase

Proceeds benefit OCHS Scholarship Fund

More information on artist at www.robertkroeger.com

Artist and book author Robert Kroeger visited Ottawa County in 2023. He completed several paintings of historic County barns. During June 2024 these paintings were offered for sale in an online auction. These nine remain from the auction and are available for purchase. If you would like to purchase a painting, please send an email to the Ottawa County Historical Society at info@ottawaohistory.org.

103-Strong & Silent: One of my favorite types of barn to capture – one in its final stages. Owned by Leonard Camper, Jr., and located in Genoa, a village settled initially in 1835 as Clay Township, which grew to become known as Stony Station, finally changing to Genoa in 1857.

107-The Commodore: Not long after the American Revolution ended, the young country was once again at war with Great Britain. In the War of 1812, one of the key battles was fought not on land but on sea, due north of where this barn sits in the middle of Ottawa County, which, were it not for the Yanks winning the war, might have been part of Canada.

111-Tomatoes: This barn, built circa 1900, is in excellent condition and is owned by Todd Rothert. The fields leading up to the barn aren’t all full of soybeans or corn, but rather tomatoes. I’ve seen a few of these fields in Ottawa County but none in the other 87 Ohio counties I’ve visited.

113-Elmorites: This beautiful red barn with its gambrel roof and devil doors sits (or sat, if it’s gone soon) on Route 163, in Elmore, a village, whose city limits touch both Ottawa and Sandusky counties. Fortunately, its owner Renee Gross has decided to continue to maintain it, including a new coat of red paint. The village, officially platted in 1851, sits on land which was once part of the Great Black Swamp.

114-The Beginnings: On a warm June day, 2023, I met Mike Libben, director of the regional soil and water district, at this barn, which was the beginning of a whirlwind tour of county barns. Though we didn’t have the opportunity to meet its owner, Kathleen Starkey, or go inside the barn, it offered a good composition.

119-Road Appeal: Barn scout, Mike Libben, told me that the Klaustermeyer family owns the barns which have matching asphalt shingle roofs and siding that’s losing its red paint as it fades to gray. Though we couldn’t go inside, I’d guess that the smaller one with the simple gambrel roof was built first, followed by the larger one with the gambrel roof, which, in turn, was followed by the milk house, hinting that this was once a productive dairy farm. Maybe it’s history will surface one day, but for now its weather gray-red siding has plenty of road appeal.

115-Hampshire Country: This 15-sided two-story barn, placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985, sadly collapsed in 2005, due to lack of maintenance. However, thanks to information from Mary Kuykendall-Weber, whose family owned the barn previously, its history, as rich as any, has survived.

116-Round Barns of Perry County: Like Vernon County, Wisconsin, and its ten round barns, three of which lie within a few miles of one another, and Fulton County, Indiana, and its eight round barns, three of which also are close together, this rural Ohio county also has a distinctive cluster of round barns. Until recently, four circular barns sat within five miles of one another. Three remain today. I visited them in the autumn of 2018.

120-Nature’s Mouse Trap: This Pennsylvania German bank barn was one of the first my barn scout took me to see on our tour of old barns in Whitley County, Indiana, in early December, 2023. The sixth generation owner was kind enough to allow us to explore the barn. She explained there her great-great-grandfather emigrated from Baden, Germany and purchased the land acquired in a treaty with the Miami Indians in 1846. As I walked around looking at the traditional forebay, I glanced upwards and noticed a hex-shaped hole near the top on the short end of the barn. I'm not sure if I had seen one of these on my many travels. Maybe I had, but it must not have registered. This was an owl hole, an opening that doubled as ventilation and as a way to rid the barn of vermin.

NOTE: These three paintings are not in Ottawa County but are part of Robert Kroeger’s America collection.