

# TTRAG Historic Wooden Structure Archives

## Survey Checklist

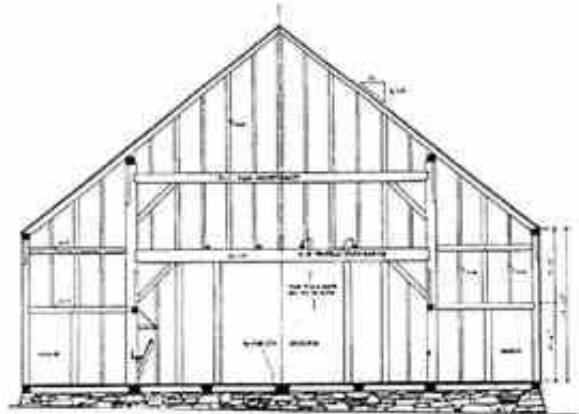
One of the primary missions of the Traditional Timber Frame Research and Advisory Group, is to aid in the systematic recording of historic wooden structures and to begin an archive of that material. To that aim, the group has prepared a working draft of a survey checklist for your use.

Because of the complex nature of the structures involved, i.e. timber framed, log houses, barns, bridges, etc., this form can only be a checklist. A fill-in-the-blank form is not flexible enough. Therefore, use it as a guide in your work but don't be limited by it. Also, don't feel that you are required to complete a full survey, any information you can provide is welcome. Obviously, to provide all the information would take several weeks of work for an average building. It is more important to get a handle on just what is out there and what needs more study.

This checklist can be used for any wooden structure including but not limited to timber framed buildings, log structures, plank, plank on plank, studwall, timber bridges, trestles, towers, and even interesting remnants of these. We ask that all materials be clearly legible and easily filed in an 8 1/2 by 11 inch format.

The archive will be open to all Guild members for their study purposes. Not only will it be a record of historic structures, but it will aid in the advancement of the crafts practiced today. Please send all material to:

Historic Wooden Structure Archives  
 Timber Framers Guild  
 PO Box 60  
 Becket, MA 01223



### General Information:

- Building name and description
- Type of building
- Location: street, town, county, state, zip
- Owner's name, address, telephone
- Present status of building, i.e. threatened, preserved, etc.

### Site Information:

- Draw a site plan to scale (1" = 50' or larger).
- Indicate North (true North), with arrow

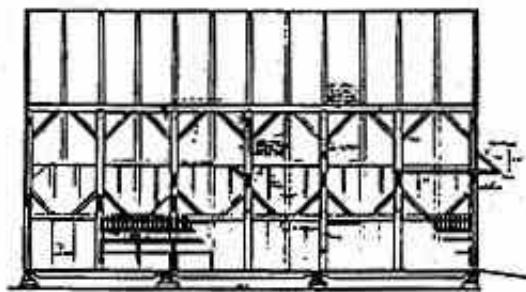
- Include all natural features, roads, structures, foundations, cemeteries, prominent trees, etc.
- Include copy of USGS map, aerial photo, if possible

#### Historical Data:

- Name of original owner, subsequent owners. Deed search?
- Oral history of structure, site, property
- Any known dates of construction for original portion, additions, modifications?

#### Recording:

- Provide photographs or sketches of four exterior elevations of the structure.
- Draw floor plans (1/4" or 1/8" = 1'-0") of each floor including basement and attic.
- Draw a typical cross section and longitudinal section at same scale indicating floor to floor heights, to top of plate.
- Indicate roof pitch.
- On plans and sections show stairs, partitions, doors, and timber framing.
- Always indicate North arrow on plans and show where sections are taken on the plans.



#### Timber:

- Typical sizes for posts, tie beams, plates, rafters, purlins, braces, floor joists, sills, studs, etc.
- Indicate species (where identified positively) for individual members, don't assume the whole frame is oak or chestnut, rather look at individual members.
- How was the timber converted from the log?

#### Hand Hewn:

- Regular scoring, widely spaced scoring, (juggled), or no scoring visible, broad axed, and/or adzed, planed?

#### Sawn:

- Pit sawn, up and down sawed, circular sawed, band sawed

#### Riven:

- Are smaller members out and then dressed?

#### Qualities:

- Are timbers boxed heart, halved, quartered, etc.?
- Are there any round faces, one, two, three, or all sides?
- Are there any natural curved, crooked, forked pieces?
- Are there any pieces that are sawn or hewn with a taper or crown, jowled posts,

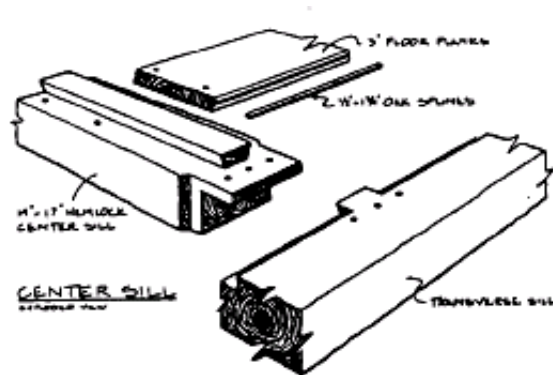
tapered rafters, etc.?

#### Layout System:

- Scribe rule or square rule? Don't guess.

#### For Joinery:

- Which side of interior framing is the reference face - east, west, north, south? (Braces are often flush with reference face)
- What is the typical mortise and tenon layout?
- Distance from edge of timber (face) to mortise, and width of mortise, i.e. inch and a half, inch and a half - two, two- three, three-four, four-or a combination of several and indicate typical ones.
- Was joinery laid out with a scribe, pencil, other?



#### Marks:

- Tool used: Chisel ( what sizes), gouge, race knife?
- Race knife with compass attachment, what diameter (of circle?), crayon, ink, pencil, chalk, other?
- Show typical marks on plan or sectional drawings.
- Are all timbers marked or just principals?
- Marriage marks (across joints)?

#### Pegs:

- Diameter of peg holes, are there different sizes within the frame?
- Are they all through or are some blind?
- Distance from center line of peg shoulder? (typical)
- How long are typical pegs?
- Are they sawn off flush, proud of left as is?
- Are they riven, octagonal, square, shaped round, or machine turned round?
- What species of wood are the pegs made from? (only say if you are sure)
- Draw a typical shape and cross section of a peg.

#### Tools Used in Joinery:

- Type of bit used to bore mortises, i.e. bottom of hole shows square bottom, with or without point, with or without spurs, round bottom, or no bit used at all?
- Indicate typical chisel widths used.
- Corner chisel used?
- Gouge used to start peg holes with early bit type?
- Adze or axe used in joinery?

**Joinery Types:**

- Draw an isometric, perspective, or freehand sketch (with dimensions) of typical joints, tying joints, joists, rafters, braces, and key these joints to the plan's sectional drawings.

**Surface Decoration:**

- Are there chamfers on edges? Sketch detail and indicate where it occurs.
- Any carving work?
- Oiled, painted, etc.?

**Nails:**

- Any nails used in framing?  Are they wrought, cut nails with wrought head, cut nails, or wire nails (modern)?
- What connections are nailed?

**Foundation:**

- Stone, brick, wood, etc.? Full basement, piers, etc.?

**Walls:**

- Describe the walls makeup. Indicate material types, thicknesses, and how secured.
- Include siding, sheathing, plaster, lath, infill, etc.
- Types of windows? Types of trim?

**Floors:**

- Describe the floor including widths and thicknesses, materials, layers, fastening, etc.?

**Roof:**

- Describe the roof makeup, including eave and rake trim.

**Hardware:**

- Sketch or photograph typical or unusual hardware such as hinges, latches, etc.

**Miscellaneous:**

- Describe, photograph or sketch interesting, unique, or inexplicable details, items, or framing systems.

**Drawings, file format:**

- All written information, photos, and small sketches shall fit in 8 1/2" x 11" format.
- Architectural drawings shall be non-fading (no blueprints) and on 8 1/2 x 11, 11 x 17, 18 x 24, or 24 x 36 inch format.
- If drawings are reduced, have a drawn scale.
- Building name shall be on everything.

Surveyed By:

- Names, addresses, phone numbers of all involved
- Date(s) of survey work
- Drawings done by? Photographer(s)?