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Hertzler House ready to return after barn raising

Community event at George Rogers Clark Park lets everyone restore a piece of history.

By Samantha Sommer
Staff Writer

The timber-frame barn going up at the Hertzler House on Saturday has already survived about 160 years and should last at least another 100 to 200 years.

Some timber-frame structures have endured for 1,500 years, said Joel McCarty, executive director of the Timber Framers Guild.

"It's not a temporary technology," McCarty said.

The state razed the then-century-old Hertzler House barn in 1951 when it owned the property, leaving the stone foundation.

The Clark County Park District began looking to fix it up in the 1990s and it will be restored during a community barn raising from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday.

The timbers came from a similar-era barn near the Dayton Mall, donated by the Chamberlin family.

As a testament to the staying power of timber framing, about 90 percent of the hickory was sal-

vageable, said Jim Campbell, open space manager for National Trail Parks and Recreation District.

The public is invited to participate in the barn raising or watch the event.

The barn will be raised by hand with pulleys, weather permitting.

"When we build these things with a collective, a big crowd of local people, the ownership of the project moves firmly into the community," McCarty said.

In early July, a workshop offered lessons about the craft and prepared the barn for raising. Participants came from across the country: New Hampshire, California, Oklahoma, New Mexico and other places.

Gene Moore came from Marysville to learn more about timber framing so he can restore his 19th century barn.

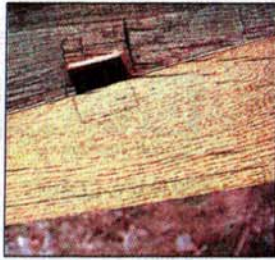
He likes the sturdiness of the all-wood construction.

"It will last a lot longer," he said.

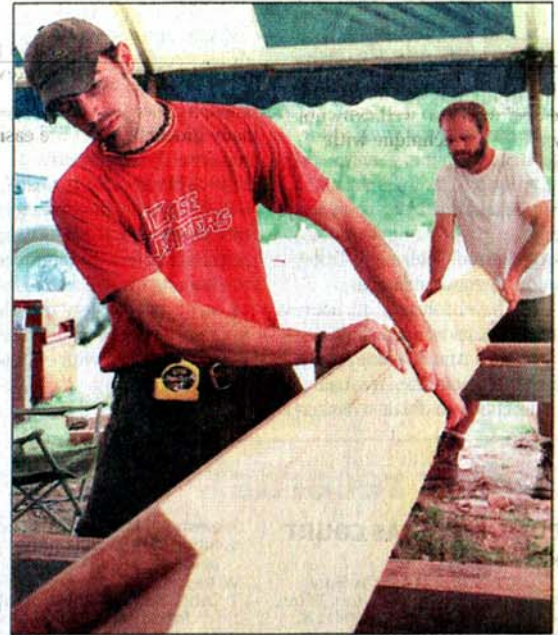
A big part of the project is making sure all the measurements are exact, Campbell said.

"All that's done precisely so that when we put this jigsaw puzzle together, it will fit and you will have very few problems," he said.

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A scarf joint made from new and old wood will be a part of the barn's construction.



Chris Dressler, left, and Dane Gustafson work on a scarf joint made from new and old wood that is going into the barn. One of the project's goals is to use as much of the original timber as possible.

Hertzler House barn raising

When: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday

Where: George Rogers Clark Park

To participate: A booth will be on site to sign up

On the Web: www.tfguild.org



Brian Beals of Evolution Design/Build in Springfield uses a sledgehammer Tuesday to pound uneven spots in a rough-hewn floor of the barn that is being constructed at George Rogers Clark Park. Beals is one of two local instructors at the Timber Framers workshop, which is reconstructing the barn using a combination of original and new timber. The final raising of the barn is scheduled for Saturday. Staff photos by Barbara J. Perenic