



Remembering the Muchmore

Barn by Carol (Klenk) Heck

Quite a while ago, say around 1882, Joseph A. Muchmore needed a home in Madeira for himself and his family. We don't know where they first lived, but in 1890, they purchased a parcel of land at 7010 Miami Avenue. It was located in the very first subdivision of Madeira which was laid out in 1871. It was the Moore and Hosbrook Subdivision.

The Muchmore's lived in the house that is still there today. The house is on the corner of Miami and Railroad, across the street from the Madeira depot. You can view the historical plaque outside of this "Joseph A. Muchmore House."

Joseph had followed his brother Elias G. Muchmore to Madeira and took over E. G.'s store. Joseph was also Madeira's first postmaster for 35 years between 1882-1917. He and his wife, Eliza Jane Jeffers Muchmore, had 7 children, a horse, a dog and a barn. When they lived in Madeira, Miami Avenue was a dirt road. They kept hay in the barn loft and their carriage was stored below. See the photo of the barn above. The horse went by the name of "Lady".

Lady and the carriage were their sources of transportation. Lady grazed in the yard which kept the grass "mowed". She was tethered to a 12-inch stone which could be pulled around to get to the grass all over the yard, but kept her from running away. She also was fed hay from the loft during the cold winter months. You can come see the stone which is currently on display at the Madeira Historical Society at 7226 Miami Avenue.



The barn was very unique. It had a peaked roof with gable construction and half-moon windows. Its posts and beams consisted of heavy logs which caused it to pitch to one side later on. The loft had its own outside door so the hay could be hoisted up and stored there.

The youngest of the 3 Muchmore daughters was named Maude. Maude married Charles Hosbrook in 1901 and built a house next-door to Maude's parents. We call the house The Charles J. Hosbrook House. It is still there today at 7014 Miami Avenue. It also has one of those historical markers out front. Charles and Maude had only one child named Cleo who was born the next year in 1902.

After the parents, Joseph and Eliza Muchmore, passed away, both of their other 2 daughters, Belle and Eliza Jeanette, continued to live in the Muchmore house. Belle outlived her sisters.

Then in 1951, Belle passed away and the property deed went to the members of the Charles Hosbrook family, most probably, Cleo.

After that, the Muchmore house was a home for other Madeira residents throughout the years. In the end, Cleo Hosbrook, at the age of 87, still had ownership of both properties. She had to move into assisted living and gratefully gifted both homes, both lots and the barn to the city of Madeira in 1989. Her letter of intent stated that this area and the structures were to be preserved and maintained by the city.



The barn was needing repair and the homes needed some upkeep. In fact, the barn was unmistakably leaning as seen in these several pictures. You are viewing this picture from Railroad Avenue which was the driveway entrance for the large carriage house / barn. By the time this picture was taken in the early 90's, grass had overgrown the driveway.

The barn was a subject of debate for over 18 months starting around January 1992. Residents wanted to maintain and restore the barn and keep the promise made to Cleo Hosbrook. They said the barn provided a visual backdrop for the other historic buildings grouped near the depot. The City Council didn't want to spend any money to fix the structure.



The Madeira Historical Society got very interested and involved with the preservation of the barn which had been on that spot and part of the



downtown scene for about 107 years. Many other residents wanted the barn saved and City Council was torn between preserving the past or moving forward into the future. There were absolutely different opinions! The more the meetings and discussions went on, votes for and against seemed to arbitrarily alternate back and forth.

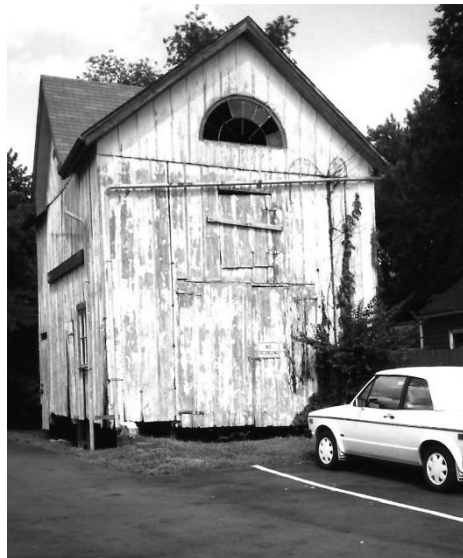
The press had a field day writing about our plight over those 18 months of negotiations, planning, securing funding, considering liabilities, seeking advice from architectural firms, outside offers, costs, costs and costs. It was even considered to have the barn moved to Sharonville Historic Village and preserved there. Madeira Historical Society and other residents launched a "Save the Barn" campaign and raised around \$6,000 for the Hosbrook / Muchmore

project. They even had an agreement with The Interfraternity Council to complete the restoration as a philanthropic project.



During this time, 1991, the current new municipal building on Miami and Euclid was being constructed. The city had refurbished the Muchmore House with federal grant money and City Hall had moved into the refurbished Muchmore House. (Note the United States flag in the picture.)

I don't know of all the repairs,



but I saw in pictures where the asbestos siding was removed on the house and new wooden frame slats were replaced as needed. Old paint was scraped off and a fresh coat of blue paint was the finishing touch. The barn structure was supported so as to prevent it from falling down on someone or something. Soon after that, the left-over federal grant money was used to hire a company to replace many of the rotted beams in the barn which then straightened up the structure. These two pictures show the rehabilitated structures.

Cleo Hosbrook was still alive and was very saddened when she heard that her grandparent's barn might be demolished. She wrote letters to her friend stating, "That was not the original plan!" We have a copy of such a letter at the Madeira Historical Society.

As it turned out, the barn was demolished on September 9th, 1993 early in the morning only 12-13 hours after the council vote. The barn was so unsteady that it came down in less than 15 minutes and all that was left was to haul away the debris.

I guess in conclusion, I have to say that "you can't save them all". It was a quaint old barn and not many of this type were built in the surrounding area. So folks, here's what it looked like. I believe that now the area where the barn stood is a couple of parking spaces for the businesses that rent out our remaining two historic homes: The Muchmore House and The Hosbrook House.



This story was sparked by the realization that many younger Madeira residents don't know what I'm talking about when I mention the Muchmore Barn or show them a picture or painting of it. I hope you have enjoyed my pictorial story. The Madeira Historical Society has archived many newspaper articles and letters to the editors from those 18 months which I used as my resources: included are *Suburban Life Press*, *The Cincinnati*

Enquirer, *Sycamore Messenger*, and *The Cincinnati Post*. If anyone is interested in research, we would be happy to pull these articles for you.

The hand-made ceramic pin, seen on the previous page, is a Doris Burton original piece of jewelry art.

Photos courtesy of Elen Lunn and Madeira Historical Society.

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Also see, “A Bird’s Eye View” under Maps and Homes, and “Madeira Village Hall, Then and Now” under Madeira City Hall.