

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Location

street & number 18889 9<sup>th</sup> Road

N/A	not for publication
X	vicinity

city or town Plymouth

state Indiana code IN county Marshall code 099 zip code 46563

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this X nomination     request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets     does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

    national     statewide   X   local

Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Indiana DNR Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property     meets     does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

    entered in the National Register     determined eligible for the National Register

    determined not eligible for the National Register     removed from the National Register

    other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

**Category of Property**  
 (Check only one box.)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	0	buildings
0	0	district
1	0	site
1	0	structure
0	0	object
6	0	<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

Round and Polygonal Barns of Indiana

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE: agricultural  
 outbuilding

RESIDENCE: single-dwelling

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURAL/SUBSISTENCE: agricultural  
 outbuilding

RESIDENCE: single-dwelling

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: Round Barn

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: WOOD: Weatherboard

METAL: Aluminum

roof: SYNTHETICS: Fiberglass

other: METAL: Steel

WOOD: Shake

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### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### Summary Paragraph

The Ramsay-Fox Farmstead of West Township, Marshall County, was established ca. 1900 on property that had been in the ownership of the Ramsay family since 1839. A farmhouse, privy, and milk house were constructed on the farm, as well as other buildings no longer extant. The most impressive building on the property is a true-circular round barn constructed by George W. Ramsay in about 1911, after the construction of the farmhouse. These buildings together with their location on a slight knoll and fencing around the property provide a picturesque rural setting on the south side of 9<sup>th</sup> Road (photo 0001). There are four contributing buildings on the site: the farmhouse, milk house, privy, and round barn. There is one contributing structure, a windmill, and the property is considered a contributing site.

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### Narrative Description

SITE: ca. 1900. Contributing

The farmstead as a site exhibits a neatly cared for grouping of farm buildings from the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The farmstead consists primarily of fenced livestock yards on the east side of the barn, mowed lawn between the barn west to the house and west of the house to a wooded area (former pasture). Mature landscaping that includes bridal veil and lilacs and several older trees is part of the property. A clothesline, the privy and a large garden are located on the west side of the house. The milk house is located north of the barn, between the barn and the road. The windmill is located near the east side of the house. A gravel drive forms a horseshoe, entering and exiting the property between the house and barn. Fencing around the property includes mostly board fencing for livestock yards east of the barn and woven wire fencing with barbed wire strung between wood posts along the south and west boundaries of the property. Because of placement of buildings on a slight knoll, the view of the farm from the east is particularly impressive. This is heightened by the round barn's placement in the landscape and its basement level being exposed above grade on the east side.

STRUCTURE: Windmill, ca. 1920. Contributing (right side of photo 0007)

A steel windmill is located near the southeast corner of the house. A concrete pad is under the windmill. The windmill tower is approximately 25' tall with all of its component parts including wheel and sails extant. An integral steel ladder gives access to the wheel on the south side of the tower.

#### BUILDINGS

Round Barn, ca. 1911. Contributing (photos 0001-0003, 0012-0014)

##### *Exterior*

A true-circular round barn with a diameter of 60' is located on the east side of the property, south of the milk house. The barn faces west and has concrete retaining walls supporting a central drive leading to the front of the barn. The concrete basement of the barn is exposed on its east and north sides and partially on its south and west sides. The barn has tongue-in-groove wood siding installed horizontally around the barn. A wide frieze board is located just below the eaves around the entire building. Windows have wood sashes and have simple wood casings. The barn has a 2 pitch gambrel roof and is covered with wood shakes that were installed during the barn's restoration between 2006-2008. A cupola is located at the top of the roof and has vertical wood siding. It has a low-sloped roof with exposed rafter tails and is also covered with wood shakes. A decorative metal finial is located at the top and center of the cupola roof. The cupola has wood louvered vents on its east, south, and west sides.

The basement has a pair of wood doors that face north and a single door that faces east. The doors are constructed of vertical wood planks and slide on rails. There are three wood windows with six panes of glass between the pair of doors and the single door and between the pair of doors and the drive's north concrete retaining wall. There are three wood windows with six panes of glass to the south side of the single door. There are two short wood windows with two panes of glass to the south of the drive's south concrete retaining wall. The main level's front facade has a central entry with a

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large pair of doors constructed of vertical wood planks, accessed by the drive supported by the concrete retaining walls. There is a wood window with four panes of glass on the south side of the main level in an area that was formerly a door opening but has been covered with wood siding that matches the other siding on the barn (photos 0002, 0012). This was an early change to the building (ca. 1940). Another window is located just south of center on the east façade; it is a 4/4 wood window.

#### *Interior*

The basement of the barn is divided into two primary sections. An area for livestock housing and feeding is located in the east half; an area for storage is located in the west half of the basement. These two parts are separated at the center by a concrete silo that was reduced in height to just below the main level floor. Around the silo is a walkway for access to the silo basement and to the wood feeding troughs in the livestock area (photo 0014). A wood staircase is located in the west half, leading to the main level. Floor joists for the main level are exposed in the basement and run east/west. They are supported by large timbers, some with bark, running north/south. The larger timbers are supported by wood posts, some round and others sawn square. The basement floor is concrete; it is slightly lower in the livestock area with a short raised curb radiating out from the silo (photo 0013). The impression from wood form work when the basement walls were poured is visible on the concrete walls (photo 0013). The wood in the basement was white-washed at one time and the wash is still evident. Wood rail pens and gates are still located in the basement. The silo door is located on the southeast corner of the silo. The door is a two-panel wood door. The silo floor is approximately eight feet deeper than the barn's basement floor. The silo floor is concrete and is accessed by a wood staircase. The current owners used the silo for potato storage for many years.

The main level has wide wood plank flooring. The main level is void of any interior supporting structure or walls with the exception of four large wood braces placed around the building's walls. A hinged wood door composed of wood planks is located in the floor just northeast of the center of the building; this leads to the basement stairs. A steel railing surrounds the hinged door on its north, south and east sides. A small wood tool bench is built below the south facing window. The former opening on the south wall is evident from the larger framing members creating a rectangular panel (photo 0012). The cupola is open to the main level of the barn, but has a few wood joists supporting a few boards creating a floor deck in the base of the cupola. A circular hay track is mounted to the underside of the roof.

Milk House, ca. 1920. Contributing (photo 0004)

A small wood framed milk house is located north of the barn between the barn and 9<sup>th</sup> Road. The building has a concrete foundation and floor and narrow, vertical tongue-in-groove wood siding. The building has wood corner boards and simple straight stock wood casings around its windows and door. The building faces west (toward the house) with a wood door, constructed of vertical wood planks, centered on the front façade. A 1/1 wood window is located just north of the door. A 1/1 wood window is centered on both the west and north facades. The building has a gabled roof with its ridge running north and south. The roof has virtually no eaves with a narrow piece of trim forming the fascia. The roof is covered with interlocking T-shingles. The current owners used the building as a tool shed.

Privy, ca. 1900. Contributing (photo 0005)

A wood framed privy is located near the southwest corner of the house and faces east (toward the house). It has a concrete foundation and floor. The walls and door are constructed of wide, vertical wood planks. The roof has a single slope toward the west and is covered with standing seam metal roof panels. Wood fascia boards are located around the eaves of the roof.

Farmhouse, ca. 1900. Contributing (photos 0006-0011)

#### *Exterior*

The house is constructed in a gabled-ell plan with the inside corner of the ell facing northeast. A single story portion is located on the south side of the main house. A breezeway connects the single story portion to an attached garage. The single story portion has a hipped roof and is an early, if not original, part of the house. The breezeway and garage were constructed in 1966 (photo 0007). A porch is located on the north side of the house and wraps around to the east side of the north facing gabled leg. This was originally an open porch with simple Doric columns but was enclosed with windows and screens when the columns were removed in 1973 (photo 0006, 0011). The porch has a wood beadboard ceiling. The porch continued as a wrap-around porch on the east face of the east facing gabled leg, but this part was enclosed and expanded into with a dining room in 1968. The east facing gabled leg extends slightly through to the west with a

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gabled end facing west. In that intersection of the west gabled face and north gabled leg is a red brick chimney with a brick cap.

The house has a foundation constructed in molded concrete block; the porch has a poured concrete foundation. The house walls are covered with wide aluminum siding that was installed over weatherboard siding in 1973. The original wood siding is still visible in the enclosed front porch (photo 0011). The house has 1/1 wood windows with aluminum storm windows fixed to their exterior; simple wood casings are around the windows. The original wood entry door is located in the enclosed porch and is still accessed by concrete steps and a stoop leading to a porch door on the east side of the house. The roof has aluminum fascia and soffits; fiberglass shingles were installed on the roof in 2003.

*Interior*

The basic layout of the house's first floor includes a sitting room in the north gabled leg where the entry door is located (photo 0010). A dining room is located in the east part of the east gabled leg and a bedroom is located in the west part. The hipped roof single story portion on the south side of the house is the kitchen with a bathroom in its west end. The breezeway connects to the kitchen through an enclosed set of stairs that also lead to the basement. There are three bedrooms on the second level accessed by a landing at the top of the open staircase from the dining room (photo 0009). These bedrooms are arranged with a bedroom in the front part of the north gabled leg and a bedroom in the west and east ends of the east gabled leg.

The interior finishes of the house include carpeting over wood floors and plaster walls and ceilings. Doors and windows have simple pine casings with crown moldings over the top trim boards. Interior doors are mostly five panel pine doors; the entry door has a window in its upper half and carved rosette surrounded by eight small rectangular panels in the lower half (photo 0010). The open staircase is made of simple square pine balusters, rails, and newel posts (photo 0009).

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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1899-1949

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Ramsay, George W.

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance is a fifty year span from 1899-1949. It begins with the estimated construction date of the house and ends with the year the farm left the Welborn Family, the first owner/resident family who operated the farm. Within the period of significance are all of the contributing resources that were constructed by Sarah Burch/George W. Ramsay and the Welborn family necessary to operate a farm on the property.

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**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

Not Applicable

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm is significant under the criteria of Agriculture and Architecture. While the property is a simple farmstead with attributes typical of a farm of the early 1900s, it also includes a round barn. This exemplifies not only innovation in agriculture, but also an important architectural form. The property meets the parameters for eligibility discussed in the MPDF, Round and Polygonal Barns of Indiana. Most nominations submitted under the MPDF do not include buildings other than the barn. In this case, the nomination acknowledges a broader context by including support buildings essential to the dairy farm such as the milk house and farm house. The buildings and structures are exceptionally well maintained and preserved as intact examples of early 20<sup>th</sup> century farm buildings. While the house has had some modifications that include aluminum siding and an enclosed porch, its many intact features are representative of farm homes of the period.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

AGRICULTURE

While the property's roots can be traced to the settlement period of Marshall County and basic sustenance farming practices of that time period, the property became an investment farm for its non-resident owners through the early part of the 1900s. The various owners of the tilled acreage reaped the benefits resulting from the innovation of agricultural practices during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as land was cleared and crop production increased. By the time the farmstead was established at the turn of the century, farming had become a lucrative business which no doubt led to the establishment of the home and round barn. This "Golden Age" of agriculture saw land values soar, the change from horse drawn equipment to powered machinery, and the decreased need for labor.<sup>1</sup> Innovations in farming also were evident by homes and barns created from pattern books.<sup>2</sup> It seems likely that the round barn, and possibly the house, on the Ramsay-Fox Farm was the result of following early trends in utilizing designs from plan books, farm magazines, and possibly catalogs.

*Property's Farming History*

The Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm is located in West Township, Marshall County, on property that originally entered the Ramsay Family in 1839. The original Ramsay family property consisted of 160 acres known as the northwest quarter of section 4 in West Township.<sup>3</sup> A homestead was established on the property and an early cemetery bearing the Ramsay name is located directly south of this property on 9C Road in the southwest quarter of section 4. The burial ground has no recorded Ramsay burials, but has burials of descendents of the family.

The George Ramsay Family was living in Onondaga County, New York when they purchased the acreage from John Jr. and Hiram Leach, also of Onondaga County. The Leaches had purchased the land from Allen and Emeline Leach of LaPorte County, Indiana, and formerly of Marshall County. The land had one previous owner to the Leaches, Timothy and Abigail Barbour, who were early settlers of West Township. The Barbours had received the land from the United States government.<sup>4</sup> George Ramsay moved his family to Marshall County in 1841 and began to clear the land for "many substantial and valuable improvements".<sup>5</sup> The family consisted of Mariah, his wife, and thirteen children; those who lived to adulthood include: Sophia (Hanley-Montgomery), Sarah (Burch), George Henry, Winfield, Charles W., Helen, and Eliza (Tuttle).<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Round and Polygonal Barns in Indiana*, Section E, pg. 2

<sup>2</sup> McMurry, pg. 209

<sup>3</sup> Abstract of Title

<sup>4</sup> Abstract of Title

<sup>5</sup> McDonald pg. 567

<sup>6</sup> Abstract of Title, Will of George Ramsay Sr.

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George Sr., who had been born in 1771, died on January 8, 1850 intestate. The land, or portions of the land, passed between the heirs of George Sr. including Sarah (Ramsay) Burch and Charles W. Ramsay after George Sr.'s death. Charles W. Ramsay is shown as the owner of the west half of this quarter section in the 1881 plat of West Township.<sup>7</sup> At that time there was no residence on the west half of the quarter section which is the parcel on which the Ramsay-Fox Farm was later established. Maria Ramsay died on June 29, 1882. She and George Sr. are buried at Oak Hill Cemetery, Plymouth, Indiana. Charles W. was described as "a prominent farmer and stock raiser in West Township".<sup>8</sup> In 1893 Charles W. and his wife Abigail sold the west half of the quarter section, containing 80 acres, to his sisters Helen Ramsay (never married) and Sarah Burch<sup>9</sup>, whose husband died just after returning from his service in the Civil War.<sup>10</sup> The value of these 80 acres was \$2500 and it did not appear that a farmstead had yet been established on the site at that time. Helen Ramsay, who had made her residence in the City of Plymouth until the last few years of her life when she lived in Chicago<sup>11</sup>, died on March 23, 1899. She left her interest in the property to her sister, Sarah Burch.<sup>12</sup>

Sarah (Ramsay) Burch, though never living on the property, was responsible for the establishment of the farmstead. In the 1908 plat of West Township a residence is marked on the west half of the quarter section.<sup>13</sup> In Sarah's will, dated February, 1912, she bequeaths to George W. Ramsay the amount of \$900.00 stating "this amount is to also cover amount of money paid out by him for building barn on my farm".<sup>14</sup> George W. Ramsay was Sarah's nephew, the son of Charles Ramsay. It is not clear if George W. also lived on the farm owned by Sarah, though he is listed in the 1910 West Township census with his wife, Ada (Medbourne).<sup>15</sup> Sarah died at the home of her sister, Sophia Montgomery, on February 15, 1912. She was described as a long-time Plymouth resident.<sup>16</sup> Sarah had no children and in her will she ordered her property to be sold with the proceeds to be divided among her sister, nephews and nieces.<sup>17</sup>

The purchaser of the property was Ora Welborn and his wife, Clara (Austin). They purchased the 80 acre farm at auction on October 3, 1912 for the sum of \$5,000.00.<sup>18</sup> The Welborn family became the first owner/operator family residing on the farm. Ora was born in West Township on February 7, 1881 and died on October 8, 1918<sup>19</sup>, having lived on the farm only six years. Ora was the son of William and Margaret Welborn and the grandson of David Welborn who came to Marshall County from Ohio in 1848.<sup>20</sup> Ora Welborn was passed down the farming trade by his father and grandfather. Ora's father was trained by his father "early becoming acquainted with all the duties and labors that fall to the lot of an agriculturalist." Ora's father's farm was described as having "well-tilled fields bringing forth golden harvests each autumn. Everything about the farm is kept in excellent condition and his energetic labors are seen in its attractive appearance."<sup>21</sup> When Ora died he left behind his wife and four children: Margaret (Large), Helen (Bare), William, and Bernard.<sup>22</sup> Though deceased, Ora Welborn is indicated as the owner of the property in the 1922 plat of West Township.<sup>23</sup> Clara continued to operate the farm until her death on May 24, 1939. She and Ora are buried at Union Cemetery, West Township.<sup>24</sup> The property then passed to William and Eva Sibert in 1940 and Dorothy Dill in 1941 through an apparent land contract agreement, but returned to the ownership of the family in 1941 when Helen (Welborn) and Clayton Bare became the owners. They held

<sup>7</sup> McDonald, Plat of West Township, 1881

<sup>8</sup> McDonald, pg. 567

<sup>9</sup> Abstract of Title

<sup>10</sup> *Plymouth Republican*, February 15, 1912, Obituary

<sup>11</sup> *Plymouth Democrat*, March 23, 1899, Obituary

<sup>12</sup> Abstract of Title, Will of Helen Ramsay

<sup>13</sup> 1908 Standard Atlas of Marshall County, pg. 37

<sup>14</sup> Abstract of Title, Will of Sarah Burch

<sup>15</sup> 1910 Census, West Township

<sup>16</sup> *Plymouth Republican*, February 15, 1912, Obituary

<sup>17</sup> Abstract of Title, Will of Sarah Burch

<sup>18</sup> Abstract of Title

<sup>19</sup> Welborn Genealogy

<sup>20</sup> McDonald, pg. 153

<sup>21</sup> McDonald, pg. 480

<sup>22</sup> Abstract of Title, Will of Ora Welborn

<sup>23</sup> 1922 Standard Atlas of Marshall County, pg. 15

<sup>24</sup> Welborn Genealogy

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the property until 1949 when it was purchased by James and Betty Wade, who then sold the property to Clement and Anita Fox in 1965.<sup>25</sup>

Clement and Anita Fox have maintained and preserved the farm for the past 45 years, longer than of any of the previous owners. The Foxes raised four children at the farm: Charles, Lorraine, August, and Sister Rosaria. The Foxes were responsible for the addition of a breezeway and two-car attached garage, the enclosure of the front porch, and installation of aluminum siding on the house. Clement Fox used the milk house as a tool shed. The Foxes removed a chicken coop that was located between the barn and the house and a garage that was located behind the attached garage. The round barn continued to be used by the Foxes for cattle the first few years after they purchased the farm. They restored the barn by repainting it and installing a new shake roof between the years 2006-2008.<sup>26</sup> The Foxes maintain ownership of the farmstead, occupying just less than four acres. The remaining acreage was sold to a nearby farm operated by the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ near Donaldson, Indiana, who continue to use the land for crops and pasture for livestock kept at the farm.

#### *Development of agriculture in Marshall County*

The county's first settlers of European descent cleared small sections of land and raised corn initially. Within a few years the corn crop was largely converted to wheat as farming practices grew from mere sustenance for the family to raising products to sell. The crops were sown by broadcast method and harvested with a sickle. Five men could harvest about a half acre of wheat per day. Corn, wheat, rye, and beans were common among the first crops produced in the county. Corn typically yielded 25-50 bushels per acre. Wheat was frequently a failure but in favorable years produced 14-18 bushels and acre. Buckwheat was a favored crop by the early farmers due to its quick maturation and it required less labor to produce than other grains.<sup>27</sup> The 1840 census of Marshall County indicates that 327 heads of households were engaged in farming; all other professions accounted for only 74 other heads of households. In 1856, twenty years after the county was established, the total number of bushels of corn produced in the county was 240,303 and 94,863 bushels of wheat. West Township, in which the Ramsay-Fox Farm is located, produced 20,180 bushels of corn and 15,548 bushels of wheat.

About 1865 farmers began to realize the soil was becoming less productive at which time they began to grow clover and timothy to replenish nutrients lost by the previous years of production. No well-planned system of draining the land was initiated until 1876 when open drains were established across wetlands and dredging began on the county's streams and rivers. In 1872 the county's farmers formed the Agricultural Association of Marshall County. It led to the establishment of the county fair and was principally financed by shares purchased by area farmers. About the same time a monthly newsletter was established for the county's farming community. The Farmer's Monthly began publication in 1876; its editor was H. V. Reed and it had a subscription of 700 households.<sup>28</sup> By 1879 the county produced 2,339,300 bushels of corn and 1,123,105 bushels of wheat. West Township accounted for 251,000 bushels of corn and 100,500 bushels of wheat. Oats were also becoming a popular crop. The county produced 202,800 bushels of oats; West Township accounted for 16,500 of those bushels. Almost 109,000 acres in Marshall County were under cultivation for the two primary crops of wheat and corn. A listing of livestock by the county assessor in 1879 reveals 7,029 horses, 14,608 cattle, 9,312 sheep, and 24,632 hogs.<sup>29</sup>

The Ramsay-Fox farm was established between 1899 and 1911 when the round barn was constructed. A description of what would have been the current state of agriculture in Marshall County is given in McDonald's 1908 History of Marshall County. In it he often distinguishes the better productivity of farms in the eastern half of the county from those in the western half. Marshall County is generally divided in half by better quality loamy soils in the east from sandy soils in the west. This soil condition is particularly true in West Township where the county's sandiest soils are located. McDonald states that Marshall County farmers were in a fairly prosperous condition; those in the eastern part were more prosperous than those in the western part. The houses, though often small, were nearly always painted and barns were of a sufficient size to shelter livestock and machinery, and many silos were constructed across the county. As a rule, he states, houses were "smaller and not so good on the sandy soils" and often there may be a dwelling but no barn. The value of farmland

<sup>25</sup> Abstract of Title

<sup>26</sup> Interview with Clement & Anita Fox, August 6, 2010

<sup>27</sup> McDonald, 1908, pg. 165, 167

<sup>28</sup> McDonald, 1881, pg. 69

<sup>29</sup> McDonald, 1881, pg. 93, 94

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was \$65-100 per acre in the east as opposed to \$30-40 per acre in the west. 75% of the county's land was under cultivation by 1908; however much of western lands were not cultivated.<sup>30</sup> Draining and dredging of land was essentially complete by 1908 with the exception of some of the muck lands in the north central part of the county. These also would soon be drained and a lucrative mint crop established.

As a tenant-operated farm, the Ramsay-Fox farm was not alone. In 1908 40% of the farms in Marshall County were operated by tenants. Rental of two-fifths to one-half of the crop was generally secured by the owners. Rarely cash rent was paid, but in such circumstances the rent was between \$3.00 and \$4.50 per acre. The average size farm was 90 acres (the Ramsay-Fox farm was 80 acres); some of the smaller farms raised crops of onions and potatoes. Livestock was raised on larger farms where nearly the entire grain crop produced was consumed on the farm by livestock.<sup>31</sup>

Corn and wheat were still the principal crops of Marshall County in the early part of the 1900s. They accounted for 15-25% of cultivated lands by each of these crops (a combined total of as much as 50%). The average yield of corn was increased to 35 bushels an acre and wheat 10 bushels an acre. Buckwheat cultivation gave way to winter wheat due to freezing and invasion of the Hessian fly. Clover was also important in Marshall County by this time; it accounted for over 15,000 acres each year. The seed crops were shipped and clover and timothy were baled and shipped to eastern American markets. Some minor crops were also grown, most notably cucumbers which grew exceptionally well on sandy soils and were popular on smaller farms. There were seven salting stations in the county which purchased cucumbers from the farmers. McDonald noted that "except on sandy land every farmer keeps one or more milch cows". The farmers sold the milk to one of the many creameries operated in Marshall County. The 1900 census of Marshall County shows the value of dairy production at \$163,028. There was becoming a tendency for farmers to invest in livestock or dairy production due to the principal of more livestock meant more manure that could be used on the land to produce richer soils.<sup>32</sup>

The Ramsay-Fox farm initially was used for grain crops such as corn and wheat, prior to the establishment of a farmhouse or barn on the property. The adjacent farm owned by Charles Ramsay had been developed to cultivated acres since the 1860s and after 1900 became a location for raising livestock.<sup>33</sup> The land in the area has sandy or sandy/loam mixed soils and thus likely provided for lesser yields from grain crops. Whether or not this was a reason for Sarah Burch to develop the round barn on the property, which was more suited to livestock and dairy production, is unclear. The round barn was the leading edge of animal care and productivity for farm operations, so it would seem that the focus of the farming operation was turned to livestock or dairy production. After Burch's death the farm was sold to Ora Welborn. In Marshall County farm statistics from 1919 Ora Welborn was listed with 80 acres under cultivation, the same number cultivated under Burch. The farm continued as a small operation through the remainder of the early and mid 20<sup>th</sup> century with some grain crops and livestock and dairy production. The farm is currently used for pasture for livestock raised at the site.

## ARCHITECTURE

### *History of Round Barns*

The origin of round barn construction may date to early European models in France or to the round design plans of churches from the early Christian and medieval periods. Wealthy farmers invested in agricultural experiments like the round barn. George Washington created the earliest known circular structure in the United States; it was a 16-sided barn built in 1793 on his farm in Fairfax, Virginia. The most famous round barn was constructed by the Shakers, a religious group, in 1826 in Massachusetts. The true-circular barn burned in 1865 but was reconstructed later in that year.<sup>34</sup> During the mid 1850s Orson Squire Fowler promoted the importance of octagonal design in houses for a healthier and better life, but his designs did not include patterns for barns.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>30</sup> McDonald, 1908, pg. 75

<sup>31</sup> McDonald, 1908, pg. 76

<sup>32</sup> McDonald, 1908, pg. 76, 77

<sup>33</sup> McDonald, 1908, pg. 567

<sup>34</sup> Hanou, pg. 6

<sup>35</sup> Hanou, pg. 7

Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm

Marshall County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

Round and polygonal barn construction in Indiana began during the 1870s but did not become popular until about 1900. Nathan Pearson Henley is credited with creating the first round barn in Indiana near New Castle. He constructed an octagonal barn in 1874.<sup>36</sup> However, the majority of round barns constructed in the Hoosier state took place between 1900 and 1920 with the peak year being 1910.<sup>37</sup> Included in the round barn development were polygonal barns constructed with multiple sides including six, eight, nine, ten, twelve, fourteen, sixteen, and eighteen sides. The barns also had a variety of roof types that included domed and gambrel roofs; the gambrel had two and three pitch variations as well as sectional variations.<sup>38</sup> The barns were typically constructed around a central silo which supported the roof allowing the remaining interior of the upper level free of support posts. Constructing the true-circular barns required the use of lumber that was easily bent for forming concrete and sometimes for use of siding and interior bracing. Freshly cut sycamore and elm proved to work the best for these purposes.<sup>39</sup>

Round barns were promoted by agricultural authorities and through farm magazines such as the *Farm Journal*.<sup>40</sup> Often the barn developer published his own technique of construction in the farm magazines. Professor F. H. King of the University of Wisconsin conducted research on the development of circular silos which led him to design a true-circular barn. His design became the prototype for future round barn development.<sup>41</sup> Round barns were most popular in the Midwest with high numbers constructed in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Illinois. Indiana led the nation in the creation of round barns and continues today to have more extant round barns than any other state. However, the loss of these structures is very apparent. Round barns were surveyed in Indiana between 1985-1988; the survey identified 226 round barns of an estimated 250-300 which originally existed. By 1992 only 111 remained of the 226 surveyed with an estimated 40% loss of these structures since 1960.<sup>42</sup>

By virtue of the Ramsay-Fox Round Barn, the property exemplifies a farm that was on the cutting edge of technology in construction of buildings for agricultural uses in 1911. As agriculture, as an industry, changed, the architecture of farms began to change also. While round barns were probably the most significant shift in barn design, the industry, with larger equipment and more livestock on larger farms, continued to create more demand for change in farm buildings. A 1953 newspaper carried this headline "Pole Barn-New Innovation in Marshall Farm Building"; it was located on the Pearson Farm in Marshall County, IN.<sup>43</sup> The pole building allowed for larger machinery and more livestock and continues to be the most prevalent building type constructed for agricultural uses today.

*Round Barns in Marshall County*

Marshall County is part of a group of four counties where the heaviest presence of round barns are/were located in the state and nation.<sup>44</sup> This group also includes Kosciusko, Miami and Fulton Counties-Fulton County is considered the "round barn capital". The Ramsay-Fox round barn is the last surviving true-circular barn in Marshall County. A twelve-sided barn also remains at the Clarence and Nellie Quivey Farm on South Olive Trail, Green Township. Compiled from two sources it appears that Marshall County at one time had three twelve-sided barns and six true-circular barns (five true-circular barns are recorded in *A Round Indiana*<sup>45</sup>, the sixth was gleaned from a 1986 list at the Marshall County Historical Society). The following is a list of the barns from these two sources:

1. John Leland, Sr. Twelve-Sided Barn, Lawson Leland, builder. 1913-1914. Muckshaw Road, Green Twp.  
Removed between 1986 and 1992
2. Lawson Lester Leland Twelve-Sided Barn, Lawson Leland, builder. 1912. W. 16<sup>th</sup> Road, Green Twp.  
Collapsed in 2001
3. Clarence & Nellie Quivey Twelve-Sided Barn, Lawson Leland, builder. 1913-1914. S. Olive Trail, Green Twp.

<sup>36</sup> Hanou, pg. 7

<sup>37</sup> Hanou, pg. 2

<sup>38</sup> *South Bend Tribune*, April 13, 1992

<sup>39</sup> Gould, pg. 8

<sup>40</sup> Gould, pg. 5

<sup>41</sup> Hanou, pg. 13

<sup>42</sup> Hanou, pg. 1

<sup>43</sup> *Plymouth Pilot News*, May 4, 1953

<sup>44</sup> Hanou, pg. 3

<sup>45</sup> Hanou, pg. 85-86

Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm

Marshall County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

Remains standing and is in good condition. The owners, descendants of Clarence Quivey, are adamant that Quivey constructed this barn, not Leland. It seems highly unlikely unless Leland advised and directed its construction since it matches perfectly his other two barns.

4. Round barn on 12<sup>th</sup> Road, West Township (from 1986 list at Marshall County Historical Society)  
Removed between 1986 and 1992
5. Ramsay-Fox True-Circular Barn, Sarah Ramsay Burch, original owner; George W. Ramsay, builder. Ca. 1910 West Twp. The barn is in good condition and is the subject of this nomination.
6. Edward Heyde True-Circular Barn, Philip Lauderman, suspected builder. Ca. 1910. E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Road, North Twp. Demolished by owner in 2004. The barn had withstood a tornado prior to the 1960s; a massive log was positioned into place where the roof had partial damage and dipped inward on its northwest side
7. Frank Aker Sr. True-Circular Barn, Philip Lauderman, builder. 1911. Plymouth-Goshen Trail, German Twp. The barn was dismantled and reconstructed at Amish Acres, Elkhart County, IN in 1992
8. True-circular barn, construction date unknown, German Twp.  
Razed, date unknown
9. Bryan Williams True-Circular Barn, Bryan Williams, builder. 1912. Location is unknown  
Razed, date unknown. It may be possible that #9 and #4 are the same barn.

Round and polygonal barns were often the inventions of their builders and frequently the farmer/owner was the inventor. Such was the case with several of the Marshall County examples. Lawson Leland is credited with creating the three twelve-sided bank barns in Green Township for family farms between about 1912 and 1914. Leland taught himself carpentry from a book. His barns were constructed around a silo, their foundations were concrete, and their beam structure was created from hewn native trees and pegged in mortise and tenon construction.<sup>46</sup> Barn #2 above was featured in "A Twelve Sided Barn" *Farmer's Guide*, May 30, 1914. Philip Lauderman likely borrowed his ideas for the true-circular barns he created from Benton Steele since his barns closely resemble those in Steele's pattern books. The Bryan Williams round barn also appeared in the *Farmer's Guide* on August 23, 1913. Williams wrote about the 50' diameter barn he constructed in 1912 in the publication.<sup>47</sup>

Little is known about George W. Ramsay's experience in carpentry work. Evidence from Sarah Burch's will indicates that she was the owner of the farm at the time of the Ramsay-Fox barn's construction in about 1911 and that she paid George W. Ramsay, her nephew, to construct the barn.<sup>48</sup> While *A Round Indiana* states that George W. Ramsay fell into financial despair because of the construction of the barn, and lost the farm due to this<sup>49</sup>, it is not consistent with the Abstract of Title on the property. The financial allocation from Sarah Burch's will (\$900.00) to George W. Ramsay for the construction of the barn at her farm<sup>50</sup> also seems consistent with the expense of round barn construction during this time.<sup>51</sup> George W. Ramsay likely ordered prints and a supply list from one of the popular farm journals of that time and constructed the barn himself. It is also plausible, given the period of time the farmhouse was constructed, that Sarah Burch requested the farmhouse also be created from available mail-order plans.

The Ramsay-Fox Round Barn is a true-circular barn created as a bank barn with an embanked central driveway entrance to the main floor and ground level access to the cattle area in the basement. Central driveways are found in about 45% of Indiana's round barns. The barn also has horizontal siding, found on only 25% of Hoosier round barns.<sup>52</sup> Ramsay constructed the barn around a central silo which has since been removed to just below the main level floor. The basement walls are concrete and show lines where wood was used to form the concrete; the portion of the silo remaining is also concrete (photos 0013, 0014). To equip the barn for livestock, the building has a circular hay track attached to the roof on the main level; a concrete floor sloped and stepped away from the center (lower toward the outside walls) for easy cleaning (photo 0013), and feeding troughs in the lower level (photo 0014). At 60' in diameter, the barn also was larger than many 40' and 50' models being constructed, but was consistent with the diameter of both the Heyde and Aker

<sup>46</sup> Leland

<sup>47</sup> Hanou, pg. 85-86

<sup>48</sup> Abstract of Title, Will of Sarah Burch

<sup>49</sup> Hanou, pg. 85

<sup>50</sup> Abstract of Title, Will of Sarah Burch

<sup>51</sup> Hanou, pg. 45, c.1910 advertisement lists \$885 for materials for a 60' diameter barn

<sup>52</sup> Hanou, pg. 1

Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm

Name of Property

Marshall County, IN

County and State

barns constructed in Marshall County. The barn's roof is a gambrel two pitch roof with a wider than typical cupola. The cupola has a very low-sloped roof that appears nearly flat (photos 0001-0003).

Unfortunately the trend of losing round barns in Indiana is consistent with their losses in Marshall County. The 1986-88 round barn survey shows three true-circular barns and three twelve-sided barns extant. By 1992 those numbers were reduced to two true-circular barns and two twelve-sided barns. At the time of this writing, the Ramsay-Fox Barn stands as the last true-circular barn and the Quivey Barn stands as the last polygonal barn extant in the county. This represents a loss of two-thirds of these structures in the last 25 years.

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**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

Not applicable

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

1910 Census of West Township, Marshall County

*Abstract of Title*, west half of northwest quarter of section 4, West Township, Marshall County  
Includes wills & dispositions of George Ramsay, Helen Ramsay, Sarah Burch, and Ora Welborn

Gould, George E., "The Round Barn Fad", *Outdoor Indiana*, Vol. 45, No. 9, November, 1980, pp. 5-11.

Hanou, John T. *A Round Indiana, Round Barns in the Hoosier State*, West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1993.

Leland, Lester. Written recollection of father, Lawson Leland's barn construction work. c. 1986. Marshall County Historical Society archives

Marshall County Interim Report. Historic Sites and Structures Inventory, Indianapolis: Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, 1992.

McDonald, Daniel. 1881 History of Marshall County, Indiana Illustrated, Chicago: Kingman Brothers, 1881.

McDonald, Daniel. A Twentieth Century History of Marshall County, Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1908.

McMahn, Jerry, *Round and Polygonal Barns of Indiana*, Multiple Property Documentation Form. National Register of Historic Places, 1993.

McMurry, Sally. Families & Farmhouses in 19<sup>th</sup> Century America, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Photograph & architectural barn files, Marshall County Historical Society

*Plymouth Democrat*, March 23, 1899. Obituary of Helen Ramsay

*Plymouth Pilot News*, May 4, 1953. Pole Barn Innovation

*Plymouth Republican*, February 15, 1912. Obituary of Sarah Burch

*South Bend Tribune*, April 13, 1992

Standard Atlas of Marshall County, Chicago: Geo. A. Ogle & Co., 1908.

Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm  
Name of Property

Marshall County, IN  
County and State

Standard Atlas of Marshall County, Chicago: Geo. A. Ogle & Co., 1922.

Welborn Genealogy, family file of the Marshall County Historical Society archives

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 099-171-15012

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approx. 3.8 acres  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>548318</u>	<u>4577335</u>	3	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	4	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Part of the northwest quarter of Section 4, Township 33, Range 1: beginning at the northwest corner of the northwest quarter section, where the west line of Section 4 intersects the south right-of-way of 9th Road, continue in a line east 849.98' on the right-of-way of 9th Road. Turn south and continue in a line south 189.31'. Turn west and continue in a line west 846.22'. Turn north and continue in a line north 202.11' to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Within the described boundary are all of the contributing resources of the Ramsay-Fox Farm. The boundary generally describes the area known as the farmstead and includes site features contributing to a ca. 1910 farm.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kurt West Garner

organization Partners in Preservation, Inc. date September 13, 2010

street & number 12954 6<sup>th</sup> Road telephone 574-936-0613

city or town Plymouth state IN zip code 46563

Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm  
Name of Property

Marshall County, IN  
County and State

e-mail kwgarner@kwgarner.com

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Ramsay-Fox Farm

City or Vicinity: Plymouth

County: Marshall State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: August 6, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: 0001 Ramsay-Fox Farm from 9<sup>th</sup> Road, looking west at farm  
1 of 14.

Name of Property: Ramsay-Fox Farm

City or Vicinity: Plymouth

County: Marshall State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: August 6, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: 0002 Round barn, looking north  
2 of 14.

Name of Property: Ramsay-Fox Farm

City or Vicinity: Plymouth

Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm  
Name of Property

Marshall County, IN  
County and State

County: Marshall State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: August 6, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: 0003 Round barn, looking southeast  
3 of 14.

Name of Property: Ramsay-Fox Farm

City or Vicinity: Plymouth

County: Marshall State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: August 6, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: 0004 Milk house, looking southeast  
4 of 14.

Name of Property: Ramsay-Fox Farm

City or Vicinity: Plymouth

County: Marshall State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: August 6, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: 0005 Privy, looking northwest  
5 of 14.

Name of Property: Ramsay-Fox Farm

City or Vicinity: Plymouth

County: Marshall State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: August 6, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: 0006 House, looking southeast  
6 of 14.

Name of Property: Ramsay-Fox Farm

Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm

Marshall County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

City or Vicinity: Plymouth

County: Marshall State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: August 6, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: 0007 House, looking northwest

7 of 14.

Name of Property: Ramsay-Fox Farm

City or Vicinity: Plymouth

County: Marshall State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: August 6, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: 0008 House, looking east

8 of 14.

Name of Property: Ramsay-Fox Farm

City or Vicinity: Plymouth

County: Marshall State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: August 6, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: 0009 Dining room of house, looking northwest at staircase

9 of 14.

Name of Property: Ramsay-Fox Farm

City or Vicinity: Plymouth

County: Marshall State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: August 6, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: 0010 Sitting room of house, looking southeast at entry door

10 of 14.

Name of Property: Ramsay-Fox Farm

Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm

Marshall County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

City or Vicinity: Plymouth

County: Marshall State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: August 6, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: 0011 Enclosed porch of house, looking south

11 of 14.

Name of Property: Ramsay-Fox Farm

City or Vicinity: Plymouth

County: Marshall State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: August 6, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: 0012 Main level of round barn looking southeast at former door

12 of 14.

Name of Property: Ramsay-Fox Farm

City or Vicinity: Plymouth

County: Marshall State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: August 6, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: 0013 Basement of round barn, looking southwest at troughs

13 of 14.

Name of Property: Ramsay-Fox Farm

City or Vicinity: Plymouth

County: Marshall State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: August 6, 2010

Description of Photograph(s) and number: 0014 Basement of round barn, looking north along troughs

14 of 14.

Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm  
Name of Property

Marshall County, IN  
County and State

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**Property Owner:**

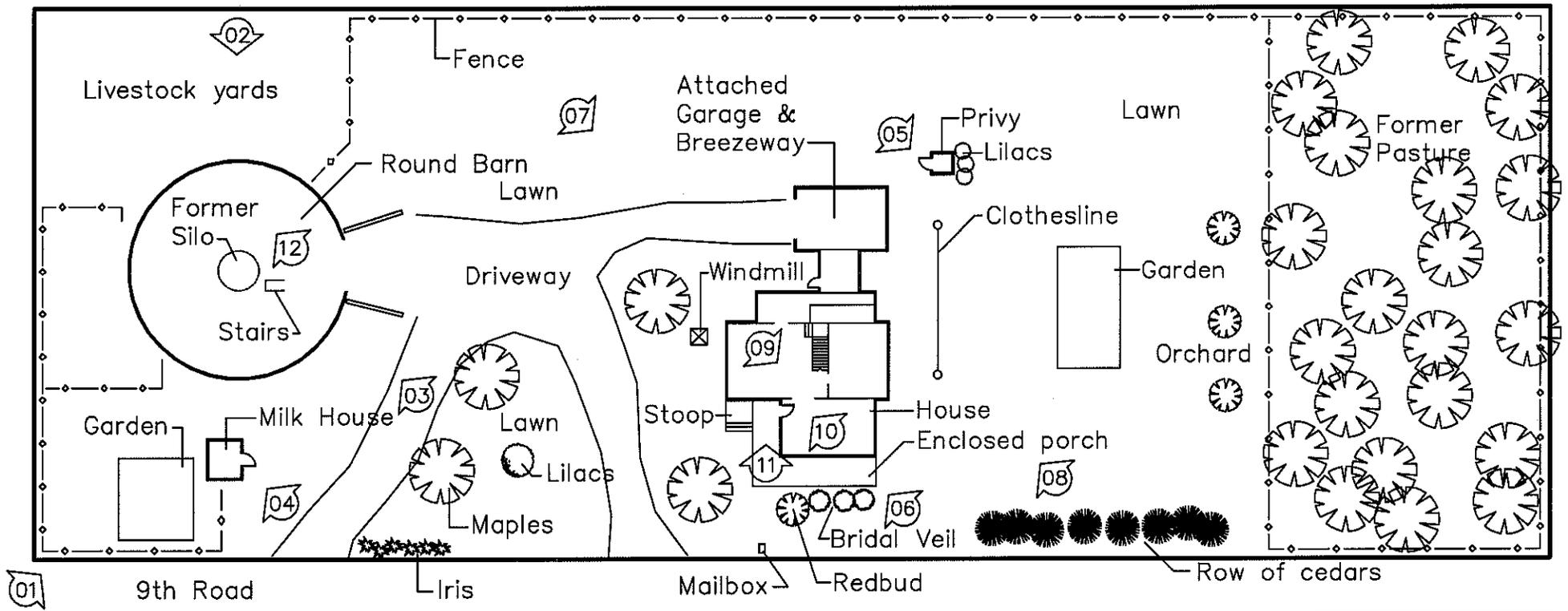
(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

---

name Clement & Anita Fox  
street & number 18889 9<sup>th</sup> Road telephone 574-936-9159  
city or town Plymouth state IN zip code 46563

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

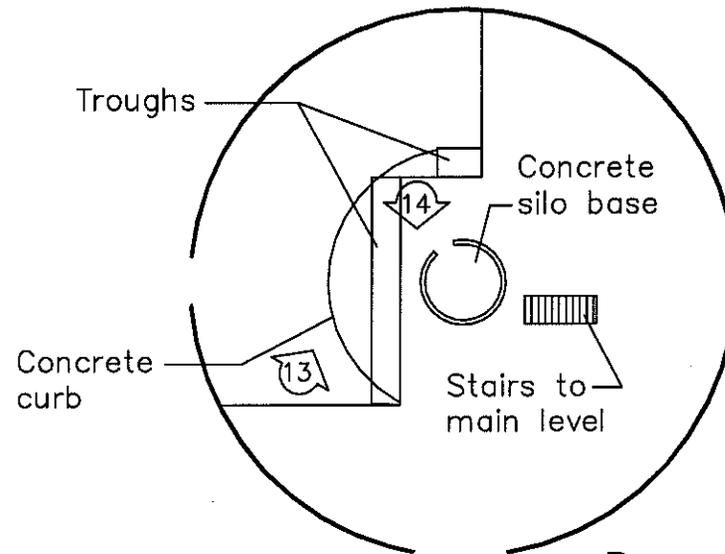
**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



Site Plan



00 = Photograph



Basement Level-Barn

Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm  
Plymouth, Marshall County, IN



Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm, Marshall County #0001



Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm, Marshall County #0003



Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm, Marshall County #0004



Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm, Marshall County #0007



Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm, Marshall County #0008



Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm, Marshall County #0009



Ramsay-Fox Round Barn and Farm, Marshall County #0013