

Medicine Hat Cowboy Life

March 2021

Official Newsletter for Medicine Hat Cowboy Poetry Foundation

Celebrating Barns



By Gina LaCoste

www.MHCowboyLife.com



From My Perch on the Corral: President's Message

You'd think life would slow to a relaxing walk in the winter, especially this year with COVID restrictions, but no! Maybe it's because it has been a relatively mild winter (until February, that is). Maybe trotting along at a steady pace is how to keep up with emerging ideas for our March newsletter.

We decided to feature Buddy Gale's barn poem for our March Senior Story. That started our 'barn find', (see barn idioms) first pictures of barns and more barn pictures, and now stories to go with them. The search was on for 'barn tidbits'. A Facebook find on Old Saskatchewan alerted us that barns could be ordered from the Eaton's catalog along with winter long-johns and a pair of rubber boots. That's how researching the T. Eaton company came about. Now a monthly barn segment begs to be on our website.

The lowly Chappice Lake and the area around it had more important features to report, so it is this month's destination in 'Round Medicine Hat. See the full story on our website.

What horse to highlight? Why not Curlies? I love their natural curly hair and the more I learned about them, the more I wanted everyone to know about them too.

Meanwhile I've written the first poem from a senior's story for 2021. Soon all our 2020 Stories From Seniors will be published and available for purchase. There is a brief biography of each senior along with their pictures and the poem telling their story. And we've created videos posted on our site for most of them.

By now life was at a full gallop, preparing for MHCPF's first ever AGM on February 16th, about the same time Shelley, our layout expert, is needing the newsletter entries. It's also when Cheryl, our photographer, came to Medicine Hat to take pictures of...you guessed it.... Barns!

Many thanks to the MHCP board who canter along with me: Shelley Goldbeck, Cheryl Dust, Carol Eisenbarth and Ken Feser.

It's been an exciting ride seeing the familiar in a new light, learning about the unfamiliar and meeting people by telephone that I haven't had the chance to see yet. I hope you enjoy the articles in this issue as much as I enjoy sharing the 'finds'. Be sure to visit our website www.MHCowboyLife.com, follow us on Facebook, join our monthly blog and don't forget to subscribe to our quarterly newsletter!

Have You See Our Recent Senior Stories?

January: Florus Bouman, "It's Hockey Night in Canada" (a song)

February: Grace Roth, "We Got Charolais Cows" (a poem)

March: Buddy Gale with Don Kletke (from idea, to poem, to song)



Jen Zollner, President Medicine Hat Cowboy Poetry Foundation

Finally, some big thanks: Hale Hearing donated the cost of printing our Stories from Seniors booklet, which will be an important support to our online video series and a vital fundraising vehicle.

Drowning Ford Grazing Association contributed \$1000 to our coffers, for which we are so grateful.

We just received word of Medicine Hat Cowboy Poetry Foundation's successful application for a grant from New Horizons for Seniors Program Funding for community-based projects that foster social inclusion and engagement of seniors in all aspects of society. This grant will allow us to collect more Medicine Hat and area senior stories.

As we gallop along, I hope you enjoy the stories we're collecting and sharing to preserve our rural history.



MAIL ORDER CATALOGS

Mail Order Catalogues were the shopping mall for Western Canadian farm families starting with T. Eaton Co and later Sears & Roebuck. Most Canadians at that time lived nowhere near a department store and this colorful book was filled with stuff to buy, stuff that dreams are made of, items for everyone from housewife to farmer. The catalog carried everything from clothes to toys, from cars to machinery, from groceries to tools and even houses and barns!

No item was too big or too small and the order came right to your post office or to the nearest rail depot. Barter and trade was the usual practice at the time so it was a radical move to have a set price and only accept cash. Folks found many uses for catalogs after they were read including arts and crafts, wall décor, hockey pads, learning English and even outhouse paper!

Eaton's and Sears were monumental mail-order empires, the Amazon of the early 20th century that sold high quality goods at low prices with a money-back guarantee.

AMAZON'S ANCESTOR, THE T. EATON CO.

- 1869 T. Eaton Co Ltd is established in Toronto, two years after Confederation
- 1884 First catalog is published, the first of its kind in Canada. It had 34 pink pages, text only.
- 1887 Catalog begins to include black and white illustrations
- 1890's Early: Starts selling furniture
- 1890's Late: Starts selling farm machinery and agricultural implements
- 1905 Expands to downtown Winnipeg, an entire city block, the first one outside of Toronto
- 1905 When railway service comes, offers free shipping on orders of \$25 or more, equivalent to \$500 or more today
- 1907 Timothy Eaton, founder of the Eaton's empire, dies, the family carries on
- 1908 Adds mail-order houses and barns to their business
- 1913 *Hudson's Bay Co. discontinues their catalog*
- 1915 Catalogs now in color
- 1919 Catalogs include photographs combined with drawings of the body
- 1926 This year's catalog has 500 pages
- 1931 Stops selling its iconic houses and barns by catalog
- 1934 Starts selling hockey equipment, hockey sweaters by personal letter to Mr. Eaton. 48,000 orders a day!
- 1954 *Simpson Sears, Eaton's top rival, publishes their first catalog in Canada*
- 1970's Most people live within 30 miles of an Eaton's store
- 1976 Mail order business closes: 9,000 people lose their jobs
- 1979 Reopens as Eaton Place, as a retail business, part shopping, part office space and retail chain rental
- 1993 *Sears closes its catalog division, except for the Christmas Wish Book*
- 1999 All Eaton's stores close when the chain declares bankruptcy
- 2002 Iconic Eaton building is demolished to make way for a sports arena

What wonderful 92-year service the Eaton's mail-order catalog was, especially for homesteaders and the emerging Western Canada!



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Order This Barn From Eaton's Catalog:

Folks could order barns from the catalog between 1910 and 1931. They could choose from four different barn plans.

The lumber came by boxcar from British Columbia and the millwork came from Winnipeg. Freight was paid to the nearest railway station and the lumber was hauled to the farm by horse-drawn wagon. They were not prefabricated, just 'how to' directions. They were shipped as a single item but the lumber wasn't precut.

Picture these barns being built before the days of electricity, each board sawed, every beam lifted and every single nail hammered by hand.

Barn raising was the 'old fashioned' way to "get it done", neighbors all working together. There was an abundance of food and drink, a chance to socialize and they built a sense of community.



EAGLEBANK
EATON PLAN BOOK
#24

Order This House From the Catalog:

The Eaton's 'plan book' listed 30+ different house plans. Every plan had a name and all the names started with the letter E. This is a sketch of Earlswood, ordered out of the catalog to build Darleen Peter's house in 1923.

In fact, there are numerous Eaton's catalog houses on Dundee where she lives in the SE Hill. You'd be surprised how many Eaton houses there are, not just in Medicine Hat but also in Redcliff and in the countryside. They must have been well-built to last 100 +/- years and to this day they have 'class'.



EARLSWOOD

Eaton's Ideal Homes Plan Book: Earlswood house design, sketch close-up.

Medicine Hat Cowboy Life is the official newsletter of the Medicine Hat Cowboy Poetry Foundation, (a registered Society in the Province of Alberta), published four times per year. Our mandate is to preserve, promote and celebrate cowboy traditions and country living. If you wish to submit articles or information of interest to our readers, please email jzollner10@gmail.com subject: Newsletter.



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ORDER ANYTHING FROM THE EATON'S CATALOG

Paul and John with their overalls on
Had a farm way out in the sticks,
Two bachelors were they
That lived day by day
With their animals, had quite a mix.

They each had a horse and had cattle
of course,
Had chickens and each had a dog,
Life was good except
The house was not kept,
Then along came an Eaton's catalog.

A book such as this was certainly bliss,
They needed some new underwear,
The knees let in cold,
The snaps didn't hold,
And the flap out back wasn't there.

Paul and John with their overalls on
Had holes in line with their knees,
When the wind blew through,
They certainly knew
When the temp was in minus degrees.

The worst of their chores was sweeping
the floors,
And cooking, the both of them hated,
After they'd eat,
Because they weren't neat
The mess it was unregulated.

How could it be whatever you need
An order you'd just have to send?
There was so much to choose,
All things they could use,
Each would order a girl as a friend.

Now bachelor John had his eyes set on
A brunette, the one with blue jeans,
Paul liked the blonde,
With her he could bond
She looks like she mends and she cleans.

John wrote out the order and Paul 'cause he's
shorter
Rode his mare to mail it in town,
A week after that,
Put on his best hat
Took the wagon to bring the girls home.

The parcel was small; it's a mistake, that's all
Thought Paul, as back home he went,
But John was convinced,
Their clothes just came first,
And their darling girls soon would be sent.

They waited and waited and oh how they hated
The sweeping and cleaning and cooking,
But never it seems
Forgot the dreams
Of the girls that were so good looking.
by Jen Zollner

Need Purpose?

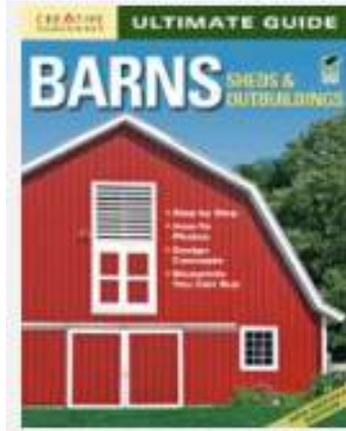
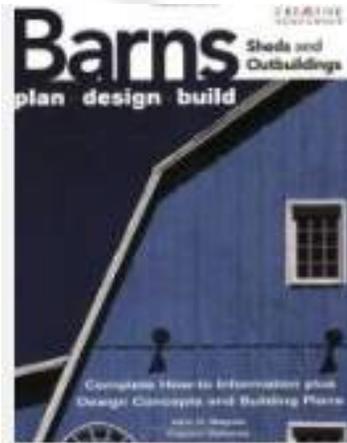
Do you have unused skills?
Do you have the desire to contribute?
Consider joining Medicine Hat Cowboy Poetry Foundation
board or as a volunteer committee member.
Make a difference and have fun. Contact Jen Zollner to
volunteer. jjollner10@gmail.com



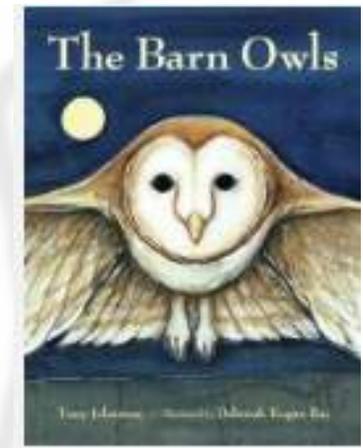
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The **Medicine Hat Public Library** serves as a community hub, providing equitable and convenient access to books, media, information, and programs that help to educate, enrich, entertain, and inform. Anyone can use the library and its resources. During library opening hours, you are welcome to read, listen to music, access your e-mail and search the library's online magazines and newspapers. If you become a library member, your library card allows you to take home books, e-books, magazines, DVDs, CDs, and audio books. **Current Library Hours Monday to Friday: 10am-6pm.** <https://mhpl.shortgrass.ca>

Barn Books Available at the Medicine Hat Public Library:



Barns of Western Canada



Barns, Sheds & Outbuilding, Written for the do-it-yourselfer who wants to build the simplest garden shed, backyard art studio or a huge gambrel barn. It covers design, architectural plans, building codes, foundations, framing and finishing.

The Barn Owls, by Tony Johnson. For at least 100 years generations of barn owls have slept, hunted, called, raised their young and glided silently above the wheat fields around an old barn. This poetry book in the children's library depicts nature's cycles with circular text, quiet rhythms, and warm art using water colour and pencil drawings.

BARN SWALLOWS: so called because their cup-shaped mud nests are often tucked under the eaves of barns, stables, etc. It is the world's most widespread and common land bird species. In 2011 it was designated as threatened.

BARN SPIDERS: You're sure to find the spider webs left by nocturnal barn spiders in the open rafters of barns, shelters etc.

BARNYARD GRASS: an annual plant that can be used for hay or grazing but is a widespread and troublesome weed



Discover the Amazing Curly Horse

CURLIES HAVE IT ALL

By Jen Zollner

Did you know there's a horse breed with natural curly hair?

Even eyelashes, mane and guard hairs,
They got curls on their fetlocks, winter mane is in dreadlocks,
After Spring sheds the curls not all there.

Seems they come in all sizes, any colour and body type,
Can survive in the harshest of climes,
But that one special gene can be easily seen,
In the winter, in the coldest of times.

If you're looking for something for young kids to ride,
The Curly's the best you can get,
Even-tempered and calm, but you can count on
Their speed, when to win is your bet.

They're great for barrel-racing, for roping, for sport,
Quick learners, they remember what's taught,
Yet for special-needs kids, their bonding trait rids
Them of traumas, with which they are fraught.

They make the best pet, love being with people,
Yet for ranch work they give it their best,
To pack and to trail, they're your horse, never fail,
Sure-footed strong hooves pass the test.

There's one special gene other equines don't have,
They're allergy friendly. It's true!
You react around horses? Now you have recourses,
Get a Curly, should really get two.

Their owners are saying they can figure things out,
Are curious, can reason it seems,
Are thoughtful and kind, level-headed in mind,
Curly cute, it's the horse of your dreams.



Are you convinced it's the best all-round horse?
It's the one that you just have to get?
Well, they are kind of rare and I caution, Beware,
That to curry their mane you may fret.

But the Curly has taught us that anything's likely,
On your dreams don't ever give up,
If I ride a horse Curly, with magic I'll surely
Have ringlets that I'd never cover up.

The first Curlies came to Canada in 1883 when three Pollock brothers and cousin Solomon Pollock trailed a large herd of horses up Fort Benton Trail to Maple Creek. If a Native acquired one of the Curlies he was considered quite classy.

The Curly horse breed was first established and registered in 1971. The Canadian Curly Horse Association was formed in 1993.

Thanks Tom Carroll for lending his book "Our Home on the Range" by Harry Forbes (2008) Harry Forbes was born April 1918 and in February 2021 is still a good storyteller.



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FROM HORSE-POWERED SWEEP TO MASSEY-FERGUSON

The Legacy of Daniel Massey

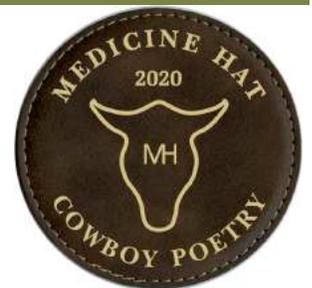
- 1798** Daniel Massey attends school in NY, his family homesteads in Upper Canada
- 1812** 14-year old Daniel manages the family farm, his dad in the Upper Canada militia
- 1817** Daniel rents land when he leaves home as a 19-year-old
- 1820** Daniel now has 200 acres of land that he owned
- 1830** Industrious Daniel has cleared 1200 acres of land and sold the timber. He starts wheat farming full time
- 1844** Daniel has his son, Hart manage his farm. Daniel spends his time in a farm shop repairing implements
- 1845** Imports a crude threshing machine and a horse sweep after a visit to NY
- 1847** Harris is obsessed with developing labor-saving farm machinery. At age 49 he turns his farm to his son to start a machine shop and foundry where he begins building simple implements using iron castings and wood. Builds horse-powered sweeps, plows, harrows, cultivators, etc.
- 1851** Daniel Massey brings his son, Hart in as factory superintendent
- 1855** Hart Massey takes over. Daniel Massey dies a year later.
- 1870s-1880s** High tariffs on imported machinery (McCormick & Deering) Competition, 'harvester wars' between the Massey and the Harris companies
- 1891** Massey merges with Harris, now Massey-Harris Co Ltd. Was the largest agricultural equipment maker in the British Empire
- 1910** Buys NY Johnson Harvester Co, thus one of Canada's first multinational firms
- 1920's** The ideas of Harris Ferguson give the company an edge in tractor technology
- 1927** Company acquires a US patent, the Wallis tractor
- 1941** Manufactures the world's first commercially successful self-propelled combine, commemorated on a stamp in 1996
- 1953** Merges to form Massey-Harris-Ferguson Ltd
- 1958** Name shortened to Massey-Ferguson Ltd
- 1981** Daniel Massey is inducted into Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame
- 1987** Corporation is reorganized into Varsity Corp, with plants in Canada and overseas
- 1994** Varsity sells the Massey-Ferguson division to AGCO Corp, an American company
- 2021 It is 175 years ago since Daniel Massey made horse sweeps in his tiny shop. The company still bears his name. Massey-Ferguson (a branch of AGCO Corp). MF can be found in virtually every country in the world

Compiled by Jen Zollner from various internet sites

WHY BUY A MEMBERSHIP to the Medicine Hat Cowboy Poetry Foundation?

1. You'll get a tax receipt and a bonus souvenir leather coaster
2. You'll get our e-newsletter "MH Cowboy Life"
3. You're supporting our 'Stories From Seniors' program
4. You're supporting cowboy poetry workshops
5. You're proud to be part of a foundation that:
 - brings country folk together; brings the young and old together
 - actively promotes a wholesome genre of country entertainment
 - keeps the history of our area alive through story

Annual Membership: \$20, (tax receipt). Donations gratefully appreciated and receipted.





Horse-drawn Sweep



Stories from Seniors

A collection of stories and poetry by and for seniors who've lived and worked in rural areas around Medicine Hat



Now taking orders for our first edition of *Stories from Seniors*, a booklet to accompany our video series on our web site. www.MHCowboyLife.com Meet the contributors to our series, read their stories and the poems inspired by their stories. This handsome book is illustrated by two local artists, Donna Mae Goldade and Gina LaCoste. To order your copy, contact Jen Zollner at 403.529.6384 or email, jzollner10@gmail.com. Only \$15, with all proceeds going to the Medicine Hat Cowboy Poetry Foundation.

'Round Medicine Hat, *Featuring a Local Destination*

Highlights of Chappice Lake

It may look like just an alkali lake when you drive by it on 41 highway. But it was once a school district and there was a Chappice Lake School for 30 odd years. The layers of sediment on the lake bottom hold 7000 years of climate and fossil history. The lake and the area around it are important habitat for birds, plant species and wildlife, as is the South Saskatchewan Canyon that runs from Chappice Lake to the river. In the near future a solar farm is proposed. Visit our website for to learn more about this local treasure.:

<https://mhcowboylife.com/cowboy-stories/round-medicine-hat/chappice-lake/>



Buddy Gale is one of the oldest and most prolific members of the Alberta Cowboy Poetry Association. Pushing 93, Buddy is the author of hundreds of poems and songs, cheerleader for young talent, collaborator and all-round good guy.

Buddy grew up in Buck Lake where his first job at around four-years-old was helping his grandpa with his moonshine operation. By age seven he was taste-testing. I asked if he acquired a taste for it. Apparently he didn't.

He remembers there being thousands of rabbits; trapping them for supper was his job as a youngster. Like most farm boys of the day, Buddy worked on the farm, picking up a variety of skills, which led to a job in logging. By the age of 15 he was working on a ranch in Southern Alberta, where he drove teams of horses at harvest. There, Buddy "accidentally" ended up breaking insolent horses. Back then, it was "catch 'em, get on 'em and stay on 'em if you can". He attributes his success to deciding to think differently about the way horses were handled.

When I asked him how he got into Cowboy Poetry, he stared wistfully into the distance and said, "People don't know what they've got in them."

He admitted to having little schooling. He always thought of himself as a frustrated writer. He wrote countless letters to newspaper editors on a variety of issues. He worked in the pipeline business off and on for 48 years and had little thought of much else.

One day his daughter came home from school with a Cowboy Poetry poster. Buddy was surprised and delighted to learn about it. Then he thought, "I can do this!"

He sat down and wrote four poems that afternoon. He wrote some about pipelines. He wrote a poem, Cowboy Sunrise, which he entered into a rodeo contest in Edmonton. He won that contest.

Buddy admitted somebody else read that poem the first few times. He decided he'd better get

Buddy Gale, Cowboy Poet



serious. He started by reading his poems. Then he realized he had to recite them if he wanted to be taken seriously. Soon musicians were asking him to use his lyrics.

He chatted about the business of writing songs, royalties and such. He laughed about the tiny cheques he's received. He doesn't sell his songs. He lets musicians use them.

According to Buddy, putting his poetry to music and performing it takes more effort than it takes him to write it.

"That's the hardest part!" Then he met Don Kletke, who has since worked with Buddy on turning dozens of his poems into songs. Buddy's farm experiences led him to write the poem Old Barn, which, with Don Kletke, became a song and it is the first in our series of videos to focus on barns.

On the future of Cowboy Poetry, Buddy is reticent. "You can't write what you don't know." Fewer and fewer people have cowboy experiences. Some poets and musicians don't know the vocabulary of Cowboy Poetry. Some audiences don't understand even if the musicians do.

By Shelley Goldbeck



Medicine Hat Cowboy Life

See Buddy Gale's Old Barn music video on our web site at

<https://mhcowboylife.com/cowboy-stories/stories-from-seniors/>.

If you have a barn story you'd like to share contact Jen Zollner jzollner10@gmail.com

BARN IDIOMS

As broad a a barn door: very wide

Barnburner: any thing, event or occasion that's especially exciting, impressive or successful

Barn find: something of great value especially an antique vehicle discovered in an abandoned barn or shed

Bit by a barn mouse: drunk or tipsy; maybe because beer is made from barley and mice eat the barley stored there

Can't hit the broad side of a barn: having very poor aim

Dog in the manger: someone preventing another from having or doing something he himself won't or can't do/have

Go around Robin Hood's door: to take a long indirect route

Ideas as lofty as a barn: talking of overly big ideas

Close the barn door after the horses are out: inability to prevent or rectify a problem after the damage is done

Were you born in a barn?: a mother admonishing her kid for his/her messy room or not closing the outside door

Your barn door is open: alerting someone their fly is open)

WHERE 'BARN' ISN'T WHAT YOU THINK:

Barnstorming: stunt pilots performing tricks either individually or in groups called flying circuses.

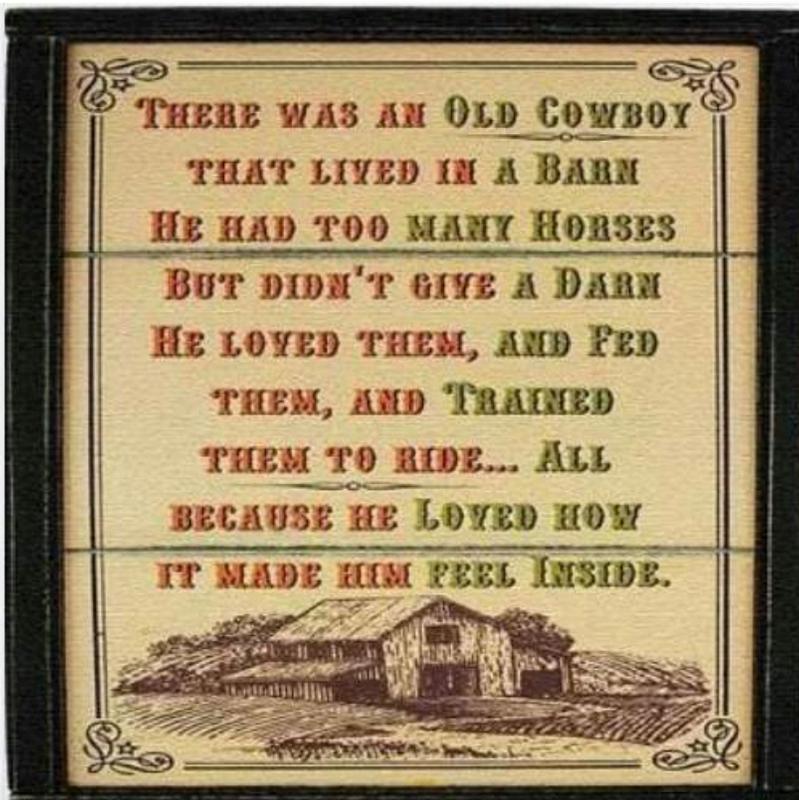
Barn door: a hinged, usually opaque panel on a lamp to screen or direct light

Barndominium: house plans designed with a strong barn-like influence

Urban Barn: a Canadian furniture maker

Encore Recording

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www.recordingcalgary.com
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 Calgary, Alberta T2Y 4C3



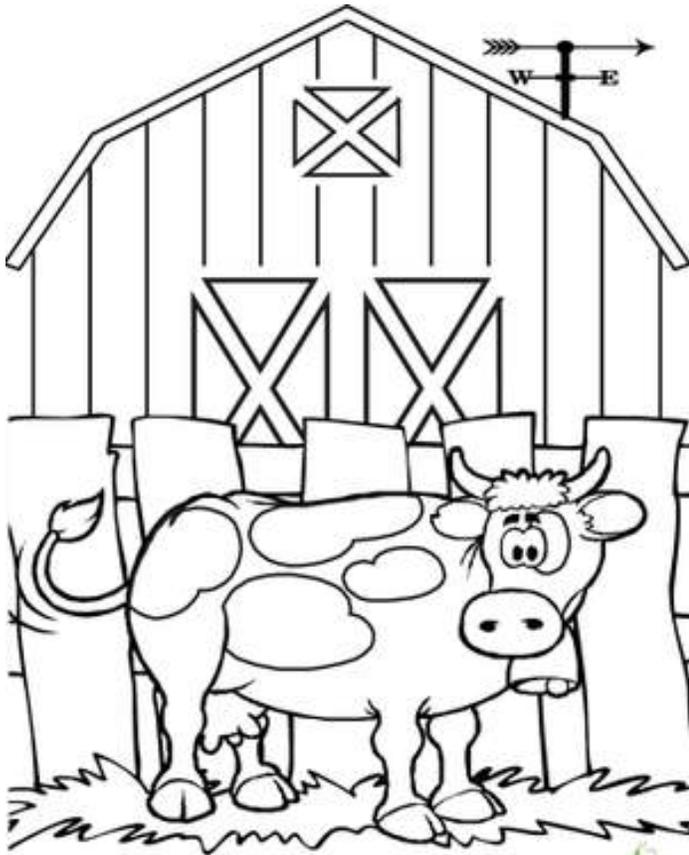


Word Search

'BARN' in Other Words

Answers are on our website, Newsletter page

M S Y Z D Q B M H Y P J F B W
 S I H S X O S X A L J I A Q L
 D H L E Z A X T Y J P E R I H
 Q H E K E U K Z L I L J M K G
 A T N L I P T I O D I N B V S
 E W C B T N F T F T V F U I T
 M H H O T E G O T U E X I O O
 T M O O W S R P L C R F L K R
 X G R M X S D V A D Y L D W E
 S R S F Y P H D W L C V I W R
 T A E S S I H E B K A N N K O
 A N B R B R D V D I E C G Y O
 B A A F U F Q V F M T D E Z M
 L R R B E H C D Q L A P J Q A
 E Y N O U T B U I L D I N G A



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| GRANARY | HAYLOFT | LIVERY | STABLE |

How Red Became a Common Colour for Barns

The 'barn red' we see nowadays is a 'fire engine red'. Historically it was more of a 'burnt orange red'. Way back when (if barns were painted at all) barns were painted with a linseed-oil mixed with fresh blood (that turned from bright red to a darker burnt red). In wetter climates the oil was mixed with rust which also served to kill fungi, mold and moss. Linseed oil hardens when it dries and provides long-lasting protection.

In the mid to late 1800's when pigment paints started being produced, red paint was the cheapest to buy. In any case, it became fashionable to have a red barn.

Source: home.howstuffworks.com