

"IT'S GOT A DANCE-FLOOR IN THE HAYLOFT"

They Turned Their Unused Dairy Barn Into A Dance Hall

One of the more unusual dance halls you'll ever see is an old two-story 32 by 60-ft. barn complete with a dance-floor hayloft on the Carl Fischer farm three miles west of Waldorf, Minn.

People have arrived from as far away as Australia and Europe to visit "Carl's Barn" where dances are held every other Friday night. They can sit by a window in the hayloft-turned-dance hall and watch dusk settle over fields of corn and soybeans which grow right up to the barn. Buggies and all sorts of other antiques are suspended from the rafters which, along with an overhead hay carrier track, keep the "barn dance" look intact. Down on the first floor is an old country western "cowtown" complete with 1800's-style miniature replicas of Main Street buildings.

Fischer and his wife Barb spent 24 years entertaining people with their "Carl Fischer Band" in which Carl played accordion and Barb sang. They also run a 600-acre cash crop farm. The Fischers started slowly with private parties for friends, relatives, and neighbors. They rounded up a used bar and a hodgepodge of antique tables and chairs and other antiques from household auctions. Later they converted the barn's hayloft to seat 125 people and obtained dance and liquor set-up permits.

"We advertise only by word of mouth, but we've had to turn people away many times and we see new people at every dance," says Fischer. "Most people thought I was crazy to start something like this in the middle of nowhere. It's much different than your average dance hall or nightclub. Other

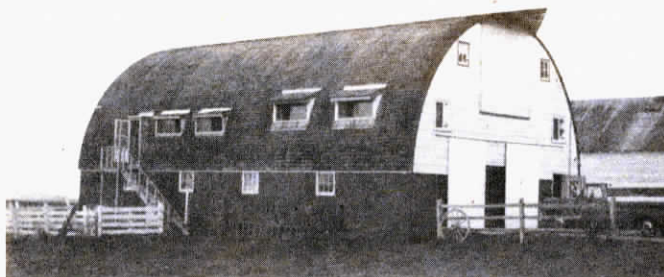
barns have been converted to dance halls, but they don't have the authentic barn look or the old country western antiques. My father and mother did their courting in one of the buggies that hangs from the roof. The roof is supported by birch tree logs. A stud cart, sleigh, covered wagon, cartoon character cutouts, and old-fashioned lanterns supported by spoked wheels hang from the rafters. The tables and chairs are antiques. Checkered table cloths and glowing candles complement the decor."

Fischer built an inside stairway leading up to the hayloft and an outside stairway for emergency exits. He installed windows on one side and one end of the barn. He reinforced the hayloft floor with posts, added plywood and 1/4-in. pressboard on top of the floor. He covered the dance floor portion with linoleum and carpeted the rest of the floor. He added restrooms on the first floor which contains a lobby, pool room, bar and eating tables and has a sky-blue ceiling."

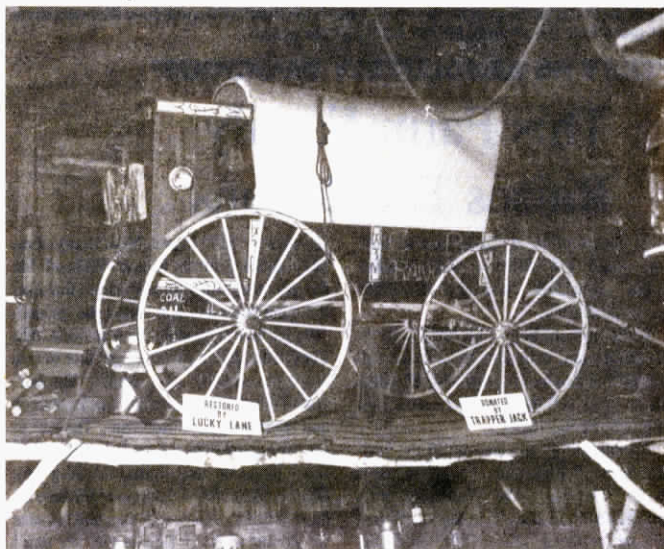
Fischer insulated the barn by adding 3 in. of foam to the outside of the roof. A small LP-gas furnace heats the barn. "Even when the outside temperature is 20° below, the barn will warm up in an hour," he notes. Ceiling fans cool the dance floor in the summer.

The barn is available for private parties on Saturdays.

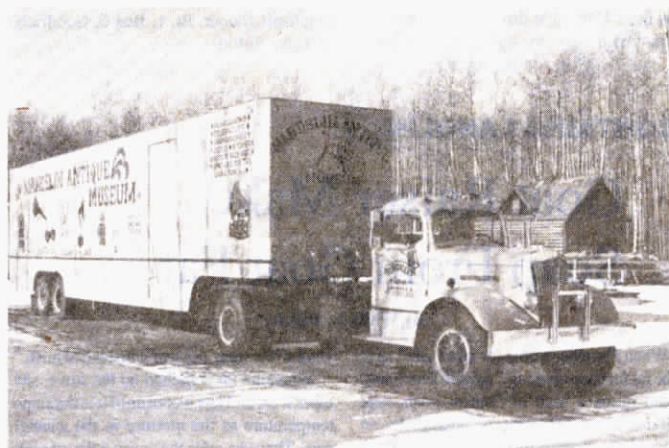
For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Carl Fischer, Rt. 1, Box 79, Minnesota Lake, Minn. 56068 (ph 507 239-2240).



Fischer completely rebuilt the old barn, installing windows, an outside stairway, and a reinforced hayloft dance floor.



Several restored buggies and wagons provide "atmosphere" inside the barn.



When it's not on the road, the traveling museum is open at Mandelin's home.

SEMI-TRAILER IS FULL OF ANTIQUES FROM HIS CHILDHOOD

He Makes Money With Traveling Farm Museum

Eldon Mandelin says he might have the world's first traveling antique museum and he's thrilled with the response of people who've had a chance to see the collection he's put together over the past two decades.

The museum consists of a 1957 White Mustang semi truck and trailer jammed full of phonographs, telephones, stoves, hand bells, photographs, old tools, and many other items.

Eldon has taken the traveling museum to

fairs and exhibitions across the U.S. and Canada. When he's not on the road, he parks the truck and trailer in his farmyard that borders a busy highway near Rocky Mountain House, Alberta. While parked at his home the museum is open to the public from June 15 to September 15, Thursdays through Mondays. He charges \$2 admission.

During each personally guided tour, Mandelin tells stories about special items in the collection, plays records on some of the

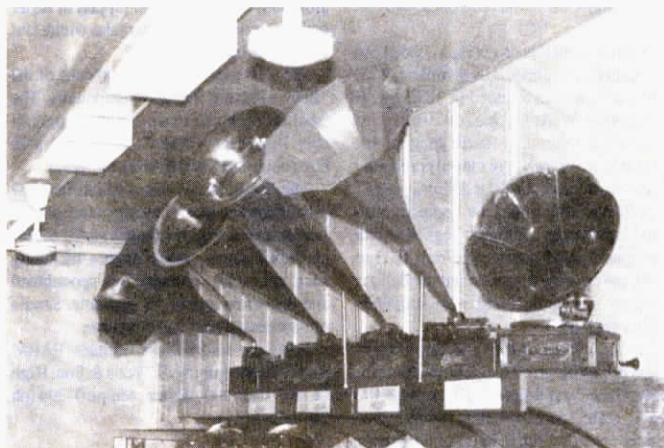
old phonographs, and answers questions from anyone who asks.

In addition to what's inside the trailer, Mandelin also has a collection of antique farm machinery and cars around his yard that visitors are invited to explore including old threshing machines, tractors, and implements. He is restoring his 75-year-old home to its original state with bare wood floors and other original features.

All of Mandelin's antiques have been

carefully restored to like new condition. One of the highlights of the museum is Mandelin's fence wire collection. He has over 1,900 different wire strands collected from all over North America.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Eldon Mandelin, Rocky Mountain House, Alberta, Canada (ph 403 845-6144).



A portion of the antique collections inside the truck consists of old phonographs