



The Cobblestoner



Cobblestone Society Annual Meeting—November 7, 2020 (1pm)

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Due to COVID-19 restrictions, our Annual Meeting (without luncheon) will be held in the Cobblestone Church on Saturday, November 7 at 1pm. There are two additional options for attending the meeting, including a live broadcast in the fully accessible Proctor Room in the church's lower level. Another option is to join the meeting remotely on your computer or phone using Zoom. The full agenda for the business meeting can be found on the museum's website: CobblestoneMuseum.org.

At the conclusion of the business meeting, attendees can opt to walk to the nearby Vagg House (formerly the René Schasel residence) for a brief guided tour conducted by C. W. "Bill" Lattin. Light refreshments will be served while awaiting your turn.

Cobblestone Museum Day at Lures Restaurant Sunday, November 15, 2020 (11am-7pm)



their proceeds for the day to the Cobblestone Museum.

This fundraiser is a win-win. You receive a great meal and make a donation to the Cobblestone Museum at no extra cost!

Please wear a face mask until seated at your table.

Reservations required: (585) 548-1020

The Cobblestone Museum invites you to participate in a great fundraiser to be held at Lures Restaurant. The fine folks at Lures have joined forces with the Cobblestone Museum to create "Cobblestone Museum Day at Lures" to be held on Sunday, November 15 from 11am—7pm.

Mark your calendars now and plan to dine at Lures on Cobblestone Museum Day. Order from the menu and pay your bill as usual and Lures will donate a generous percentage of

Lures Restaurant

**One of Orleans County's Newest
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North Ridge United Methodist Church—Cambria, NY



By Richard Palmer (CobblestoneStructures.blogspot.com)

North Ridge United Methodist Church at 3930 North Ridge Road (Route 93) in the hamlet of North Ridge, Town of Cambria, was built in 1848. It is constructed of mostly round, evenly colored, lake-washed cobbles, laid four to five courses to a limestone quoin. There are a few later period additions. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2002.

Olive Beach is credited with introducing Methodism to this area. Services were originally held in the nearby District No. 9 schoolhouse. Reuben Wilson donated the land for the present church which is Greek Revival style. The small frame addition was built in 1892. The present steeple was added in 1913 when the old one was struck by lightning. Stained glass windows were added in 1919. *Photo courtesy Richard Palmer.*

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As an additional membership benefit, Sustaining Members (Patron Level and higher) are recognized in every issue of the Cobblestoner. Members at the Individual and Family levels are recognized in one quarterly issue at the time of their payment.

The Legacy Society—Planned Giving Providing for the Cobblestone Museum's Future



SILVER LEVEL (0-\$99,999)

Anonymous Donor-

For historical preservation





By Erin Anheier, Cobblestone Society President

The Cobblestone Info Base is growing its non-NYS information by a chance encounter and a series of efforts from helpful friends. Recently, I was rearranging a bookshelf at my home when I casually flipped

through a book I hadn't yet read about architectural house styles. Naturally, I checked the glossary for "cobblestone." There was one photo, illustrating the Greek Revival style, of a cobblestone house. To my surprise, it wasn't any of the wonderful examples in Western New York. It was a home located in Crystal Lake, McHenry County, Illinois. I checked the info base and although it did contain a few buildings in Illinois, this one was not included. After a little internet researching, I sent a quick email to inform Greg Lawrence and Cynthia Howk of the discovery. Greg is the creator of the info base and Cynthia is the Architectural Research Coordinator at the Landmark Society of WNY. Cynthia shared that email with a group of her contacts who are interested in historic preservation.

The first surprise was a rapid response from Greg, who lives in Clarendon, about the amazing coincidence that his daughter and son-in-law were visiting him and that they live in Crystal Lake! They volunteered to gather more history on the house

and told Greg of another in their town. I had found the name of the first house's mason on the internet and began chasing his history, learning that he had been born in Le Roy, NY in 1827. This fit with what we know about other cobblestone structures outside of NYS. Like many adventurous early residents, some masons traveled farther west to settle and they brought their knowledge and love of cobblestone masonry with them.

Cynthia's email brought a response from Richard Osgood of Bero Architecture. He had previously lived in the Chicago area and informed us that other cobblestone houses could be found in the town of Elgin, Illinois. This tip inspired Richard Palmer, a retired reporter who has photographed most, if not all, NYS cobblestone buildings for his blog and our info base, to pick up the trail. So far, Richard has located information on four other Illinois cobblestone houses.

This story is an example of how the Cobblestone Info Base can be enriched by the grassroots efforts of individuals. We welcome new information regarding cobblestones structures, whether existing or destroyed, to be added to the info base. Perhaps you can help! If you haven't already, be sure to visit the museum's website and click on the "EXPLORE NOW" button to access the info base. If you have additional information, please let us know!

Editor's note: Articles on the Crystal Lake and Elgin cobblestone homes can be found later in this issue of Cobblestoner.

Cobblestone Church is Cortland Landmark



By Richard Palmer (CobblestoneStructures.blogspot.com)

Looking remarkably like the cobblestone church in Childs is the Universalist Church at 3 Church St., Cortland. It was constructed in 1837 and placed on the National Register in 1992. The church is reputed to have been a link in the Underground Railroad during the Civil War.

The congregation was officially organized in 1835. The stones for this, the oldest church building in Cortland County, primarily came from the properties of church members in the immediate

area. It has cobblestone walls and granite quoins. Interestingly, the former village of Cortlandville contributed \$100 towards its construction so it could use the basement to conduct business. It did so for 45 years.

Many famous people lectured here including Ralph Waldo Emerson, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Thomas Starr King, William Lloyd Garrison, Theodore Parker, Henry Ward Beecher, Wendell Phillips, Lucretia Mott and Clara Barton. It is one of the few surviving cobblestone churches in New York State.

In 1895, a large arch was cut in the east cobblestone wall and a Morey and Barnes organ was set in the arch. It is only one of two such historic organs in existence. It is nationally recognized by the American Organ Historical Society for its superb sound quality and nearly original condition.

The addition of the porch and the transformation of the interior took place in 1889 (as I gather from news items). Other people remember the gallery and plain bench-pews; whether the present interior is an improvement is a question. No doubt the hall is more easily heated in its present vaulting, but it is something of a shock to get the impression of a theater from the rows of chairs. The two rows of windows are still there as intended but the upper row is now a blind, or blinds.

The Romanesque archway of the porch was never in the mind of the original architect. The church bell was formerly in the belfry of the old Presbyterian church which was a fair companion of this church building, though of wooden construction. This bell has the highest pitch of the four that we sometimes hear ringing in sequence. Due to deterioration the bell tower or belfry, as well as the bell itself, were removed in 2016.

Donors and More!

Many thanks to our members & friends who have made donations to the Cobblestone Society since our last issue of *The Cobblestoner*. Special thanks for tremendous support of the Pomeroy Fund Challenge Grant.

Albion Agencies-Bill Bixler	Rita Burrell in memory of Dale Burrell	Gail Hyde	Maureen O'Donnell	Nancy Snyder
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Thank you again to everyone who renewed their membership or sent a Pomeroy Fund Challenge Grant donation during the months of August or September. With your help, the campaign was a huge success! We received over \$23,000 from 179 supporters.

Cobblestone Museum Adds Vagg House to its Tour



This view of the Vagg House shows the east kitchen wing and glassed-in back porch as it has been for many years.

The Cobblestone Museum is pleased to announce that it has added the "Vagg House" to its tours beginning this fall. The house is named in memory of blacksmith Joseph Vagg and his wife Nellie, who formerly owned the house on the corner of Routes 104 & 98 next to their blacksmith shop. The Vagg House is now set up to interpret life as the Vaggs would have lived it in the 1920s and 30s. The amazing transformation to

bring this about is through the Herculean effort of C. W. "Bill" Lattin who invested countless hours of blood, sweat and tears to make it happen.

Many of the furnishings in the house have been given in memory of René Schasel (1947-2019) through his estate by C. W. "Bill" Lattin and Marena Rupert, René's sister.

René was the last resident of the house and served on the Cobblestone Society Board of Trustees for several years. He was an avid collector of antiques from the period 1910-1940. The photo above shows René helping with the Cobblestone Society Auction in 1990.



Those who would like to tour the house are encouraged to attend the Annual Meeting on Sat. Nov. 7 when the house tour is scheduled to conclude the meeting.

A photo array and history of the Vagg House follows for your enjoyment, curated by Bill Lattin.

The Vagg Residence

By Bill Lattin, Photos by Doug Farley

Joseph and Nellie Bulmore Vagg moved to Childs from Barre in 1909 with their two children, Melva and Norris. Melva who married Kenneth Warner, recalled that she was three years old when they came to live at the corner of Routes 98 & 104. After her mother died in the late 1970s, Melva inherited the home and lived there until she sold it in 1985 to William Nestle and René Schasel. René liked the house because he said it was "untouched."

When Melva had the house for sale, Mark Tillman looked at it making the comment that the kitchen would have to be done over. Melva took great offense and stated, "Young man, this kitchen was remodeled in 1929 and there is nothing wrong with it today!"

When William Nestle, former president of the Cobblestone Society, died in 2009, René Schasel became sole owner of the house. He was an avid collector of things from the teens, twenties and thirties, especially electrical appliances. René's sister, Marena Rupert, and I became co-beneficiaries of his estate when René died in March 2019 and currently serve as executors.

Three house sales occurred to clear things out. After the first sale, it occurred to me that since the Museum had agreed to purchase the property to protect its interests and preserve the visual integrity of the neighborhood, that certain furnishing and artifacts should remain in the house to represent the time frame in which the Vaggs lived there. I also felt the house could be

used for small gatherings such as meetings or teas put on by a caterer, as well as being part of the Museum.

Most of the furnishings in the accompanying pictures were collected by René Schasel and are given in his memory by the executors.



This Monitor Top refrigerator from around 1930 was one of seven that René collected. It's still in working order in the kitchen. I am holding an unusual electrical coil used to help defrost the freezer.

The Vagg House (Continued)



In this corner of the kitchen is a 1930s table and chairs. Against the wall is an 1840s chest recently given to the Museum by Camilla and David VanderLinden. On the top are displayed a Drip-O-lator, coffee urn, tea urn and toaster, all from the early 1930s. Prints on the wall date to 1920. The two Wedgwood plates of George and Martha Washington are part of a set of thirty depicting Americana. These may be likely used for luncheon plates. The wallpaper is something I recently added to make the kitchen look better.



The Vaggs purchased this Kalamazoo kitchen range which was made in 1935. They used it for heat as well as cooking during the winter months. Their gas range shows at the far left which they used in warmer weather, thus not heating the kitchen too much.



Here we see some of the kitchen cupboards loaded with pink Depression glass and American Pattern Glass next to the gray enamel sink from 1929.



In this view we see an early 1930s food mixer and a green enamel hot plate.

The Vagg House (Continued)



The upper part of this kitchen cupboard is full of cobalt blue Depression glass known as Modern Tone. This became very popular in the mid-1930s. With over 30 cups and saucers, it will be wonderful for future teas.



Positioned on the dining room buffet is a small plaster bust of Frances E. Willard, published in 1932. Note she is wearing a little white ribbon. Miss Willard was born in Churchville, NY and became the President of the National Women's Temperance Union in 1890. Nellie Vagg was also a member of the WCTU and wore the white ribbon until her dying days.



Here we are looking through the sliding doors into the living room from the dining room. The overstuffed furniture with original fabric dates to the mid-1920s. The player piano, sectional bookcase and table lamps with original fringe shades, along with a Fox print over the bookcase, all date to the mid-1920s. The hooked wall hanging over the piano was given to the Museum by Eleanor Williams over 25 years ago. It finally has a home. The harbor scene oil painting over the sofa belonged to William Nestle.



In this glimpse of the dining room, we see a Royal Rochester waffle iron recently given by Pat Morrissey. Note that it is plugged into the ceiling light fixture. Notice, too, the candlesticks with little shades which were very popular in the teens and twenties. In the corner is a very fine Orthophonic Victrola dating to circa 1928.



The Vagg House (Continued)

(Page 8-Lower Right) In this corner of the living room we see a late 1920s radio above which hangs a shadow box given to the Museum by Linda Schwartz a number of years ago. The taxidermy there is from the 1920s and consists of three stuffed quail. The wallpaper in this room was put up in 1948 when the Vaggs celebrated their 45th Wedding Anniversary.



Gerard and Pat Morrissey have recently donated this Morris chair which belonged to Gerard's grandfather Poelma. Gerard believes the chair was purchased new in 1917. The original fabric is in remarkable condition



(Lower left) On the second floor of the Vagg House which is not open to visitors is a fully furnished bedroom. It seemed to me this should stay intact for several reasons. If, for example, a summer intern needed a place to stay it could serve for that. Or, perhaps someone conducting a week-long workshop in the future might be welcomed here. It could serve as a quiet spot for museum personnel to retreat for study or stay overnight in case of a bad storm.



In this picture we see an outhouse which I built out of scrap lumber this summer for the backyard. It is the same dimensions as the old outhouse behind the Gaines Basin Cobblestone Schoolhouse. I didn't spend a nickel on lumber but spent around \$60 on nails. I believe electric power was distributed down Ridge Road between 1926 and 1928. Prior to that the Vaggs certainly had an outhouse. In the distance is the Vagg's barn where they at first kept a horse. Melva told me when she was little they had pigs in the basement level of the barn.

Visitors to the 1920-era Vagg House will notice a big difference between this home and the Ward House that depicts the 1880s. It was advertised in the 1920s that "electricity is the only servant you will ever need."

P.S. Special thanks to Camilla VanderLinden, Chris Sartwell, Pat Morrissey and Kim Charron for all their volunteer cleaning skills getting the Vagg House ready for viewing.

The Legacy Society—Planned Giving Providing for the Cobblestone Museum's Future



Anyone can become a member of the Legacy Society simply by letting us know that they have remembered the Cobblestone Society & Museum in their will or other planned giving arrangement. For additional information about membership in the Legacy Society or to discuss a potential planned gift, please contact Douglas Farley, Museum Director at director@cobblestonemuseum.org or call 585.589.9013. All inquiries are confidential and without obligation.

Bellwood Farm—Geneva NY



By Richard Palmer (CobblestoneStructures.blogspot.com)

Bellwood Farm, an impressive country estate with a view of Seneca Lake, is on the east side of Pre-Emption Road, two miles south of Geneva. One drives through the gate of a cobblestone fence and along a winding drive to reach this stunning Greek Revival cobblestone house which bursts on the scene. It was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Ralph H. Poole in 1942.

The main two-story section of the house has an Ionic portico, and on either side are one-story wings with Ionic porches across the front. House-viewers will find that the west

wing door is a false one, never used from the inside of the house, but added to the outside to give the two porches perfect symmetry. Two of the interior walls of the home are as thick as outer walls, 18 inches so made to support the weight of the construction. The portal is enflamed by egg and dart moldings; the door fittings are German silver.

The land at Bellwood Farm was first cultivated by Silas Tucker, who purchased the property in 1826 from his prosperous father-in-law, Jephtha Earl. The original cobblestone house, which Silas built in the 1830s, was less than half the size of the present structure. The transformation from homestead to country estate took place in 1905. It was then that Perry Tucker, a descendant of Silas, sold the home to Mrs. Katherine Belle Lewis of Buffalo.

Using wealth that came from Pennsylvania oil and gas investments, Mrs. Lewis added the northern half of the house with cobblestones and mortar work of the "new" matching perfectly that of the "old." The interior was changed at that time to the elaborate woodwork and spacious rooms of the present time.

The landscaped grounds around the house included both formal and informal gardens. The entire property was enlarged to 600 acres (from Silas Tucker's farm of 150 acres) giving the later owner an extensive area for beef cattle feeding and breeding.

Elgin Illinois Top Landmark



By Richard Palmer (CobblestoneStructures.blogspot.com)

The cobblestone house at 328 Mountain Street in Elgin, Ill. was named the top Elgin landmark by the Elgin Bicentennial Commission in 1975. The home is located at the highest point on the west side of the river, hence the name of the street, "Mountain." It was built in the 1850's for Edson A. Kimball, a cousin of Samuel and William Kimball, who were among the first settlers of Elgin. Edson was born on July 3, 1820 in Ver-

mont and married Ellen M. Willard, who was born in 1824 in Canada. Edson ran a hardware store at the southeast corner of Chicago and State streets. Edson was also a member of the first city council in 1854.

The Willards had three children: Leonidas, Royal and Luella. Ellen died at the age of 38 on August 9, 1862. Edson remarried two years later. They had one daughter, Carrie, who died in 1899. The home was converted into two apartments in 1930 by the Solyom Family to help cover the mortgage costs during the Great Depression. It was originally lit by gas jet lamps. Running water was not introduced until 1921. The home features included a built-in pie cooler that doubled as a freezer in the winter and a spacious fruit cellar. Over the years owners and residents have heard stories about one hundred dollar bills encased in the walls, but no one has ever found anything.

It is of the Greek Revival style, with limestone lintels and quoins and is built of fieldstones. Of Greek revival style, its characteristics include a front gable and wing with a low pitched roof, cornice lines that are emphasized with a wide band of trim, narrow sidelights with transom around the door as well as the eaves returns.

[Information and photos courtesy of the Elgin Area Historical Society]

Sixty For Sixty Fund—60th Anniversary

Albion Agencies	Kim Charron	Deanna Houck in memory of her Great – Grandfather,	Charles & Kim Nesbitt	Lattin
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	Dave & Kathy Greenfield in tribute to those with the wisdom to lead the Society	Doug Miller & Sue Starkweather-Miller in honor of Bill Lattin	Edward Sawken in memory of Great Grandfather Frank H.	
	James P. Harold	David Mitchell-Christopher Mitchell Funeral Home		

Director's Report



I would be remiss in failing to acknowledge the tremendous financial support given to the Cobblestone Museum during this very difficult year.

First, I was amazed by the number of donors and the amount given in support of our Sixty for Sixty Campaign. This fundraiser recognized the importance of our Sixtieth Anniversary Year and the hard times we faced when we were forced to cancel our

schedule of over 20 events in 2020 due to the COVID-19 restrictions. The Sixty for Sixty donors are listed above.

Next, coming directly on the heels of Sixty for Sixty, the Cob-

blestone Museum was one of a few organizations that was selected to participate in a Challenge Grant from the Pomeroy Foundation wherein they would match donations received in August and September. I was worried about how we would do with this second fundraising request because the first campaign was so successful. But, once again our donors came through and responded with amazing results. We far exceeded my expectations. The donors for the Pomeroy Campaign are listed on page 5.

Regarding all of those cancelled events, I am hoping that things will look brighter in 2021. My intent would be to reschedule as many of our "Anniversary" activities as possible into the new year. We will update you more fully in our Winter *Cobblestoner*.

Cobblestone Museum Membership & Annual Meeting Response
All New & Renewing Memberships Will Remain Effective Until April 30, 2022

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Telephone Number (Home) _____ (Cell) _____

Email Address _____

_____ I am a new member _____ I am renewing _____ I am a life member

_____ I have a current 2020 Membership and would like to increase my level by paying the incremental increase only

_____ Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.

_____ I prefer an electronic copy of the newsletter.

_____ I will participate in the Annual Meeting on Saturday, November 7 at 1pm

_____ Attending on site in church, _____ Attending in Accessible Proctor Room, _____ Using Zoom at Home

Email Address Required for Zoom (Please Print) _____

Membership Category

_____ Individual \$25+ _____ Silver \$1,000 +

_____ Family \$40 + _____ Gold \$2,500 +

_____ Patron \$100 + _____ Diamond \$5,000 +

_____ Bronze \$250 +

Please make checks payable to:
The Cobblestone Society
P.O. Box 363, Albion, NY 14411
(585) 589-9013

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Credit Card info: Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Feel free to contact us if you have a question about your membership at director@cobblestonemuseum.org or (585) 589-9013.

Donations to the Cobblestone Society are tax deductible under IRS Code 501c3. Please consult your financial advisor.

I give permission to the Cobblestone Society to apply my donation towards any matching or challenge grants that are now or will become available.

