

Bethinking of Old Orleans

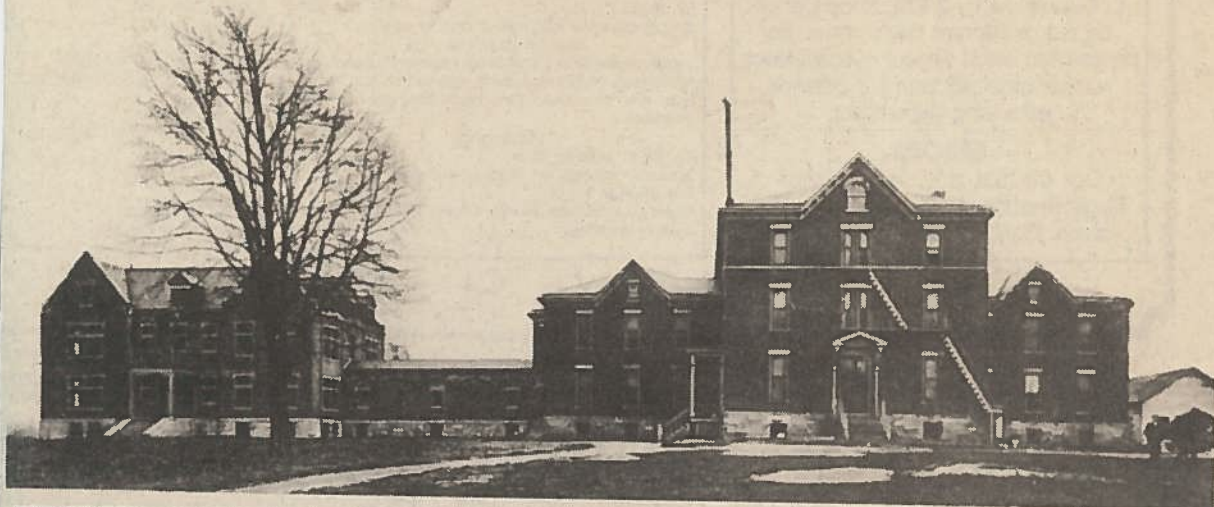
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"LOOKING BACK"



With the new addition to the Orleans County Nursing Home rising daily, it seems appropriate to look back at its predecessor. The complex of buildings shown here was located on County House Road and served the needs of the infirmed prior to our present county nursing home. The first action in Orleans County toward the erection of a County House or Alms House as it was called, occurred at the fall meeting of the Board of Supervisors in 1828. The following year a site was purchased on County House Road and the first building constructed. In 1878 this early building was replaced with a much more commodious structure. That is the building to the right in the photo with a three story main section and two matching wings on either side. In 1903 another building was added which was known as the infirmary or hospital. This structure appears to the left in the photo and was connected to the main building by a covered breezeway.

As the social welfare program was gradually taken from local responsibility, the requirements of State and Federal welfare agencies demanded more adequate facilities. Since approximately two-thirds of the cost of our County welfare program was reimbursed from State and Federal funds it was imperative that necessary action be taken to qualify for this assistance.

A Special Committee of the Board of Supervisors was appointed in 1957 to study this matter. As a result a thorough investigation by New York State Welfare Department consultants indicated that, because of high costs of repair and restricted capacity, the renovation of the old County Home and Infirmary buildings was completely impractical and that current needs could best be met through a new structure. The decision to proceed with plans for such a new structure was further

prompted by the indication, through the experience of other counties where facilities had been likewise consolidated, that a reduction in percapita costs of care and administration would result.

Consideration of building on the County House Road location was ruled out because of inadequate water supply. The availability of village water and sewer services and the desirable central geographical location were prime factors in deciding on the present site on Route 31, west of the Village of Albion, which was purchased in 1958 at a cost of \$10,000.

By unanimously adopted resolution on June 5, 1958 the Board of Supervisors authorized a new County Home and Infirmary at a cost not to exceed \$1,000,000 for construction and equipment. Orleans County was fortunate to be approved for Hill-Burton aid, which was an agency of the Federal Government established to assist financially in the constructing and equipping of infirmaries and hospitals with priority being based on need. Slightly over \$200,000 was received from this source.

On August 28, 1950 the cornerstone was laid for the Orleans County Home and Infirmary by State Senator Austin Erwin who is shown here with the trowel. In 1985 a granite tablet was mounted and dedicated on the building which states:

On the 25th Anniversary
Of It's Dedication
This Facility
Was Renamed The
Orleans County
Nursing Home
August 1985
"The Temporal Body Is
The House Of The Enternal..."