Bethinking of Old Orleans

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GUIDED TOUR OF BOXWOOD CEMETERY JUNE 3

The Chapel at Boxwood, Medina, N.Y.

Official Notice — As Orleans County Historian, I am pleased to announce that Mr. Richard Nellist, the Town of Ridgeway Historian, Mr. Ed Grinnell, Assistant Historian for the Village of Medina and I will jointly conduct a guided walking tour of Boxwood Cemetery. This will take place on Saturday afternoon, June 3 beginning at 2:00 P.M. at the cemetery chapel and will end no later than 4:00 P.M. back at the chapel. The cemetery is located on North Gravel Road (Rt. 63) just north of Medina. This will take place rain or shine.

Our photo shown here is taken from a post card showing the Boxwood Chapel as it appeared in the early part of this century. The card was published by the Bickle Brothers of Medina who ran a news, stationary and cigar store in the Downs and Kearney Block many years ago. This view of the chapel shows it when it was adorned with its original green Spanish tile roof. On June 3 the chapel will be open to afford tour goers the opportunity to view its interior, most especially the beautiful Tiffany Style figural window of the life-sized angel created in 1903. Truly, this is one of Orleans County's finest stained glass windows which cannot be fully appreciated unless seen from within.

Last fall a guided walking tour of Mt. Albion Cemetery was held with over 300 people in attendance, a phenominal success! As occurred then, a $10 prize will be awarded to the person who first spots a certain symbol which will be disclosed at the beginning of the tour. Incidentally on Thursday, May 18 at 7:00 P.M. there will be a meeting at the Albion Village Hall to form "A Friends of Mt. Albion Cemetery" group.

Now for some background about Boxwood Cemetery. The original 5 and 8/10 acres was purchased January 10, 1846. This was paid for by twenty-three men who paid ten dollars each and one woman who paid two dollars, a total of $232.00. Those subscribers were Silas Burroughs, Roswell Starr, Wm. Baker, Chandler Farnham, Isaac Burroughs, Simion Bathgate, Elisha Whalen, Orin Britt, Levan Merritt, John Ryan, Isaac Swan, Jacob Bennett, Philip Nichols, Myron Hopkins, Geo. Northrup, Horace Close, Botsford Fairman, Joseph Crary, Caleb Hill, Wm. P. Baker, Christopher Whaley, M.D., John Alcorn, Sylvester Sherman and Miss Emily Bennett. Those men were the leading business men of the Village of Medina in their lifetime. As a side note, the angel window in the chapel is a memorial to Silas M. Burroughs.

At the time of its purchase, Boxwood Cemetery was still a forest and had to be cleared, landscaped and laid out into lots. The first person buried there was David Card in 1849. The cemetery however, was formally opened for burial purposes in 1850. By 1915 almost all the bodies from the old Gwinn Street Cemetery in Medina had been disinterred and removed to Boxwood. Actually the oldest burying ground in Medina was a small plot located on the east side of West Avenue across from the Baptist Church. However, at a later time those bodies were transferred to the Gwinn Street Cemetery, only to again be removed. John Weld then built a house on the site of this first cemetery in Medina.