

The month of October is Cobblestone Heritage in Orleans County as officially designated by the Orleans County Legislature in 1985.

RESOLUTION NO. 315-1085

By Legislator Swiercznski, who moved the adoption.

Unanimous Second.

RESOLUTION DESIGNATING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER AS "COBBLESTONE HERITAGE MONTH" IN ORLEANS COUNTY, NEW YORK

WHEREAS, on October 23, 1960, a group of local history enthusiasts and preservationists gathered at Childs, New York to form the Cobblestone Society; and

WHEREAS, the Cobblestone Society was granted its provisional Charter by the Board of Regents on behalf of the State Education Department April 28, 1961, and its Absolute Charter on November 17, 1967; and

WHEREAS, the Cobblestone Society has created a Museum Complex devoted to the preservation of our local heritage through six historic buildings; and

WHEREAS, the Cobblestone Society established a Resource Center in January 1982 which has the only comprehensive collection of data on cobblestone masonry; and

WHEREAS, the Cobblestone Society through its Museum Complex at Childs acts as an educational and cultural center for the benefit of humankind; and

WHEREAS, the Cobblestone Society has published innumeral books and articles on cobblestone masonry, related forms of architectural and local history;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that since the Cobblestone Society will celebrate its 25th Anniversary on October 23, 1985, this Legislative Body joyously recognizes these many achievements and designates the month of October as-

COBBLESTONE HERITAGE MONTH IN ORLEANS COUNTY, NEW YORK

Adopted. 6 ayes; 0 nays; 1 absent

Ten years have passed since this resolution was made honoring the Cobblestone Society and Museum. Now celebrating its thirty-fifth anniversary with another decade added to its own history, the list of accomplishments has grown.

Let me briefly touch upon four areas where developments have occurred since 1985:

1. Physically, the museum was expanded with the addition of the Harness Shop in 1987. It was a gift from Rose Welles, which now houses equipment once belonging to John J. Peters of Lyndonville. Upon research, its exterior walls were restored by Bruce Midkiff, using the same kind of soft lime mortar as in cobblestone buildings.

2. In 1993 the three cobblestone buildings at the museum complex in Childs were designated a Cobblestone Historic District and a National Historic Landmark by the United States Department of the Interior. NHL listings are also on the National Register but are considered more important because of real national uniqueness. Whereas, National Register status is granted because of State or Regional importance.

3. In the area of publications, the Society has had over the past decade, articles in numerous magazines and newspapers. In 1992 Luminaries In The Firmament A Guide to Stained Glass Windows in Orleans County was published. In 1993 a booklet on Cobblestone Masonry Construction was published which answers many of the questions about cobblestone construction and soft lime mortar thus proving that many of the old myths simply are not true.

Presently the Cobblestone Society and the Orleans County Historical Association are cooperating on publishing a book about all the cobblestone buildings in Orleans County including those that have been destroyed.

4. Ten years ago the Cobblestone Resource Center was in its infancy having only been established in 1982. Since then the collection of archival materials has grown astronomically. With the death of Robert Frasch in 1990 the Cobblestone Resource Center under the direction of Delia Robinson not only inherited \$20,000 from his estate to be set up as a trust for the center but also all of Mr. Frasch's research materials from over three decades.

More recently O.W. Shelgren of Buffalo has given his entire collection of over 100 architectural books and manuals, all from the 19th century, to the Resource Center. These include primary source materials such as masonry hand books that tell how to make soft lime mortar, thus disproving that this is a "lost art". With this significant collection, the Cobblestone Resource Center has become the only repository for information on soft lime mortar in the United States.

Local stone mason Bruce Midkiff, following these 19th century procedures, has been able through building a lime kiln to replicate soft lime mortar as it was made for cobblestone construction so long thought to be a secret. Consequently, the Resource Center has organized a number of masonry workshops where cobblestone home owners have come to learn about the proper care and repair of their structures. Our photo from the Resource Center files shows the Dist. #5 school of Gaines around one hundred years ago.

Indeed, thirty-five years of accomplishments give the Cobblestone Society a lot to celebrate for its present anniversary and Cobblestone Heritage Month.

On Friday, Nov. 3rd the 35th annual meeting of the Cobblestone Society will take place at the Pullman Memorial Universalist Church in Albion beginning at 6:00 p.m. There will be a social hour followed at 7:00 p.m. with either a strip steak or stuffed chicken breast dinner, your choice. At 8:00 p.m. a gala musical program will be provided by the Bell Choir of the First United Methodist Church of Albion. Wade Gidley will also be performing at the Great Johnson Organ Opus 812. A silent benefit auction will also be taking place throughout the evening. For more information and reservations call 589-9510. The Cobblestone Board of Directors extends an open invitation to the community to come help celebrate this milestone of historic preservation.