

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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HOLIDAY SHOP

During the first weekend in November the Cobblestone Museum, in the ground floor of the historic Cobblestone Church at Childs (Rts 104 & 98) will be turned into a Holiday Christmas Shop. The shop will be on open Saturday, November 4, 10-5 and Sunday, November 5, 1-4. Fine quality hand crafted gift items and Christmas decorations will be on sale. On Sunday afternoon beginning at 2:30 p.m. Wade Gidley will entertain with Christmas selections at the antique organ in the historic Cobblestone Church. This will be the first opportunity for the public to hear the Cobblestone Society's newest acquisition. In September, the museum was given an antique reed organ made in 1904 by the Estey Company of Brattleboro, Vt. The organ which is a two manual console with also foot pedals, was donated by Mrs. Katherine Tuthill of Williamsville, N.Y. It was originally used in a church and was operated by a lever on the side of the instrument. Frequently churches who had organs of this type years ago, would hire a blow boy (job title) to pump the organ for the organist.

As an added feature of the Holiday Shop on November 4 and 5, the Ward House adjacent to the Cobblestone Church will also be open to the public. This museum house will be decorated as a house might have looked around one hundred years ago.

Our picture which illustrates this article, is from a 1915 Christmas post card stating "Christmas Greetings". From this illustration we note the small table type Christmas tree with tinsel and just a few glass ornaments. No lights or candles are a part of the decorative scheme. Christmas packages appear here on the floor but they are simply wrapped in plain paper. The general ambiance of this family grouping is one of simplicity in an era before the over-commercialization of Christmas.

The Ward House will in essence, reflect the more subdued attitude people had about Christmas years ago. As a child, I can well-remember that we got Holloween and Thanksgiving behind us before Christmas decorations appeared in stores and on the streets.

During the Holiday Shop, refreshments will be served in the kitchen of the Ward House. Admission to the Holiday Shop, including the Sunday musical program and Ward House is \$1.00 per person.

The Ward House is so named for its last owner, Mrs. Inez Ward, who sold it to the Cobblestone Society in 1975 for \$16,000. The Society also acquired for another \$2,500 at the time, many of



Mrs. Ward's furnishings. It seems she was a collector of antiques beginning back in the 1920's. This last spring the kitchen of the house was restored to its original size.

It was during the early 1860's that Horace Greeley agreed to be his aunt and uncle's co-signer so they could get a mortgage on the property. Within a short while Mr. and Mrs. Dwinnell defaulted on their payments, thereby forcing Horace Greeley to buy the house. He never lived there but you will recall he supposedly said "Go west young man, go west!" He was indeed, an influential 19th century thinker. He was an Abolitionist, a proponent of temperance and a sympathizer of women's suffrage. Naturally these areas of interest eventually affected four amendments to our U.S. Constitution. However, being perceived as liberal, U.S. Grant beat him for President in 1872. So you see, the Ward House has its touch of notoriety.