

# Bethinking of Old Orleans

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## MEET GROVER CLEVELAND

On Sunday, June 2 you will have a rare opportunity to meet Pres. Grover Cleveland. John P. Spare of Canandaigua will present a portrayal of our 22nd and 24th President of the United States. His impersonation will take place at 2:30 p.m. in St. Mary's R.C. Church Parish Hall at 215 Eagle Street in Medina. Following his forty-five minute presentation, the audience will then be invited to march one block to the corner of Eagle and Main Streets where an historic marker will be dedicated. This marker at 300 Main Street, denotes the house where Frances Folsom lived with her grandmother in the mid-1870's. It was on June 2, 1886 that Pres. Grover Cleveland was married to Frances Folsom in the White House. As you may see, our event will be taking place on the 110th anniversary of their wedding day. Following the marker dedication, the Medina Historical Society Museum at 406 West Avenue, just two blocks away, will be open. Here visitors will see the parlor decorated for a 19th century wedding. Refreshments will also be served at the Historical Museum.

This is a time for celebration as we are now in the 100th year anniversary of Grover Cleveland's second term as President. In 1888, Grover Cleveland lost re-election because he had fewer total votes in the Electoral College even though winning the popular vote handily.

Grover Cleveland lived and served in New York State in several capacities: Ass't. DA of Buffalo, A Democratic Sheriff of Erie County, Democratic Mayor of Buffalo, and Governor of New York State prior to his election as USA's 22nd President, taking office in 1885. He was therefore, the first Democrat to be elected President since Lincoln and the Civil War. Likewise, he was the first Democrat President who had to deal with a Republican controlled Congress in 1895 and 1896.

Grover Cleveland was the first bachelor president to marry in the White House and consequently, heard John Philip Sousa's premier performance of "Stars and Stripes" which was composed for the Presidential wedding in the Blue Room.

In October 1886 it was Pres. Cleveland who dedicated the Statue of Liberty and it was also Cleveland who enacted Labor Day.

On the local scene, there is an interesting, yet embarrassing story about Grover Cleveland. It seems that on one occasion when he came to visit Frances Folsom, his ward at the time, he was arrested by the Medina constable, Edmund Fuller who recognized the Bent Family horse and carriage which had been loaned to Cleveland to drive. Fuller did not believe the story but Cleveland was finally able to convince him to go to the Depot where the ticket agent was able to identify Cleveland as an upright, honest individual. The arrest delayed the then Mayor of Buffalo so that he had to catch a later train back home.

John Spare who is pictured here, began researching Grover Cleveland in 1990 when an actor friend suggested he looked something like Cleveland. Research included two visits with the Former Presi-



dent's 91 year old son, Francis Cleveland, who died last October in Tamworth, N.H. Spare, a musical comedy actor, has portrayed many leading roles in Central N.Y. productions of "My Fair Lady", "Kiss Me Kate", "Oklahoma", and "42nd Street". In 1993 he won the role of Alexander Graham Bell in the original musical pageant called "Seaplane". He has also studied voice at the Eastman School of Music. In his character as Pres. Cleveland, he has marched in parades and performed for historical societies and special interest groups throughout Central N.Y.

### Other Up-coming Events

The Orleans County Dep't. of History has put together a package of historical programs for the first weekend in June. On Saturday, the 1st at 2:00 P.M., there will be a guided walking tour of Mt. Albion Cemetery. That evening at 7:30 P.M., there will be the dedication of an antique reed organ, new to the Cobblestone Church at Childs, and a program of organ music by Wade Gidley.

On Sunday evening, June 2, following the aforementioned Cleveland event, there will be a premier slide presentation of One Man's Work 1925-1940, Part I, at the Pullman Church beginning at 7:30 P.M. These pictures taken by the late Fred Holt include Albion scenes, events, organizations, candid shots and people. Part II of this program will be held Friday, June 7 also at 7:30 P.M. in the Pullman Church during the Albion Strawberry Festival. This portion will feature artistic shots, portraits of local people and generally beautiful pictures of a timeless quality.

So mark your calendars folks, so you won't miss any of these interesting events.