

Rethinking of Old Orleans

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COBBLESTONES AND PUMPKINS FOR GOOD OLD TIMES

On Sunday, October 19 the Cobblestone Society will celebrate its twentieth anniversary with two different events. Beginning at 2:00 P.M. until 5:00 P.M., the third Annual Pumpkin Festival will take place on the museum grounds at Childs along with a pumpkin contest for students through Junior High age. At 7:30 P.M. the Eighth Annual Lamplight Program will take place with Affiliate Artist Barbara Hocker singing.

It was a cold rainy Sunday afternoon on October 23, 1960 when the Cobblestone Society was officially organized at the old Universalist Church in Childs. Many area residents were concerned as to the fate of the cobblestone church at the time, since the Universalists were desirous of selling the property. With around sixty people in attendance a slate of officers was approved who are shown in the photo above taken on that occasion. From left to right are: Maurice Wilson, Vice-Pres., Cary H. Lattin, director; Katharine Billings, Secretary; Robert Frasch, Pres.; J. Howard Pratt, Director; and Hannah Thompson, Treas. From that concern for preservation just two decades ago the Cobblestone Society has become widely recognized as an institution symbolizing Orleans County. Acquisition of the church did not stop there as six historic buildings and related architecture now make up the Cobblestone Museum Complex. October is not only the anniversary month for the Cobblestone Society but also the month in which the Cobblestone Church was dedicated 146 years ago. The foundations were dug in April 1834 and the stones used in the masonry were collected from surrounding fields as pioneer farmers cleared their land. It was largely through the efforts of John Proctor and at his own expense, that the church was erected for the First Universalist Society of Gaines. Chiseled in the marble tablet above the entrance are the immortal words "God Is Love" which capsulized the reason why the church was conceived and built.

This year for the Lamplight Program, as in the past, the church will be illuminated with the original kerosene lamps depicting the odor and atmosphere of days long ago. And with the melody of Soprano Barbara Hocker, this anniversary and harvest celebration will serve as a reminder of Good Old Times.

"Should old acquaintance be forgot
And never brought to mind,
Should old acquaintance be forgot
Should old lang syne.
And days of old lang syne,
For old lang syne we meet tonight,
For old lang syne.
For old lang syne.
To sing the songs our fathers sung,
In days of old lang syne."