

Bethinking of Old Orleans

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Louis Monacelli Photo

RECOLLECTING OUR ROOTS

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From "Ways of the Spirit, and Other Essays" by Frederic H. Hedge 1805-1890) an American transcendentalist and Unitarian minister, we find the following passage: "We reach back with our recollection and find no beginning of existence. Who of us knows anything except by report of the first two years of earthy life?... We began to exist for others before we began to exist for ourselves. Our experience is not co-extensive with our being, our memory does not comprehend it. We hear not the root, but the root us."

Our past through this root is very much alive and the history is more than dusty books, broken artifacts and useless information. As we recollect, this root is an on-going process. How little they know who scoff at anything old and how much they lose out of life by refusing the acquaintance.

Here in our immediate and present midst, yet rooted in the past, is the alluring Cobblestone Museum Complex at Childs, N.Y. Have you been there and seen all six buildings? More than two hours of educational entertainment is at our doorstep. Relics from our local past become visual aids to teach us taste and character from which we can begin to establish and awareness of ourselves. And from this point of reference we can follow our roots to loftier life. Memory indeed can not comprehend it all until we associate ourselves directly to the source of output. You may wonder if this is for you. I say, welcome it, it is beckoning -- indulge!

The photo here was taken at Joseph Vagg's Blacksmith Shop which is a part of the Cobblestone Complex. Showwielding the hammer is blacksmith Don Newcomb of Greece, N.Y. as farrier Henry Flemming of Clarendon looks on. What a relief from the plastic world! You know, we are not really so long removed from the days of forging horse shoes, using the backyard privy or walking a mile to attend a one-room school.

The Cobblestone Complex can give you a glimpse of our roots. The museum program for the 1981 season is about to begin bringing alive memory and defining our existence. The first event of the season is the Annual Mother's Day weekend Art Show May 9 and 10. Don Newcomb will demonstrate blacksmithing during the Sunday afternoon hours. On July 5 at 11:00 A.M. the Annual Patriotic Program will be held with the American Legion participating. This is a solemn event bespeaking the high Yankee pride of our country's founders. This year the Country Arts Fair and Flea Market will be held August 15 which is a fun-filled time of browsing, entertainment and sociability in a picturesque setting of long ago.

One of the highlights each year is the Annual Tour of Cobblestone Homes which gives you a chance to set foot, and step back into time through the charm of several historic residences. The tour will be held Saturday, September 12. Following this on September 27 and "Olde Tymers Day," with a Universalist Revival and Reunion will take place at the Cobblestone Church. The rugged spirit of our ancestors' individuality land their knowing the importance of freedom of worship will become alive.

Then on October 18 comes the Pumpkin Festival and Annual Lamplight Program. This occasion is mixed with nature's Fall bounty amid the flickering flames and aroma of kerosene lamps. The season's activities end with a delightful Christmas Play in the country school tradition and party which this year will take place December 6.

Regular museum hours begin June 23 through Labor Day 11-5 Tues. - Sat. 1-5 Sundays and during Sept. and Oct. 1-5 Sundays. Won't you come and be a part of these exhilarating experiences and recollect the past as that root bears us.