

OUTSTANDING COBBLESTONE HOUSES

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This Saturday, the Cobblestone Society will hold a tour of historic Cobblestone homes in the Town of Gaines. Five private residences will be open from 1 to 5 p.m., with tickets going on sale at 11 a.m. in the Cobblestone Church at Childs. This tour is being held in celebration of the bicentennial of the Town of Gaines.

The tour booklet, including a map, has been dedicated to Cyrus Witheral (1817-93) a Gaines mason who was a master of his craft. Recently his headstone at Otter Creek Cemetery has been marked with a bronze plaque which states:

"During the 1840's & 1850's Cyrus Witheral built some of the most

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**Bethinking
of Olde
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outstanding cobblestone homes found here in the Town of Gaines. These lake stone landmarks including several along the historic Ridge Road, in the herring bone pattern, express his extraordinary skills as a builder."

The house pictured from a photo taken around 40 years ago, is one of the homes on the tour. Although not built by Witheral, it is an outstanding example of cobblestone masonry as well as Greek Revival architecture located west of Childs.

From Delia Robinson's book "Cobblestone Buildings in Orleans County" we find this history:

"Noah and Polly Burgess were two of the earliest settlers in Gaines, coming in 1809. Noah was ill when they arrived on the frontier and it



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was Polly, with the help of Elizabeth Gilbert, who built the Burgess' log cabin. The Burgessess ran a tavern in their home, and Polly set out the first apple orchard in the town.

The Burgessess built their large, impressive Greek Revival home in 1844. The name of the builder, partial costs and the date of the construction agreement for the building were found in legal actions recorded in the Surrogate's records after Noah's death.

On March 29, 1844, Noah Burgess made an agreement with his son-in-law, David Hall, to build a house. In the agreement, David Hall

The current owner Theresa Ames acquired this home around three years ago and has rescued the landmark from neglect. She has undertaken extensive restoration both inside and out. The front porch with four Doric columns, restored by her brother, is a noteworthy feature. Inside, tour goers will be totally impressed with the curved staircase rising to the second floor from a spacious hall. The Greek Revival wood work in the front parlor is bold in its character and unique in style to this time.

The house tour on Saturday will give people a glimpse into Gaines history, as all these cobblestone homes were built during the 1830s and 1840s as farm residences.

Notice: The county historian will present a free Halloween program for adults on Victorian Mourning Art at 7 p.m. Oct. 29 at the Pullman Universalist Church in Albion. Organ music begins at 6:45 p.m.