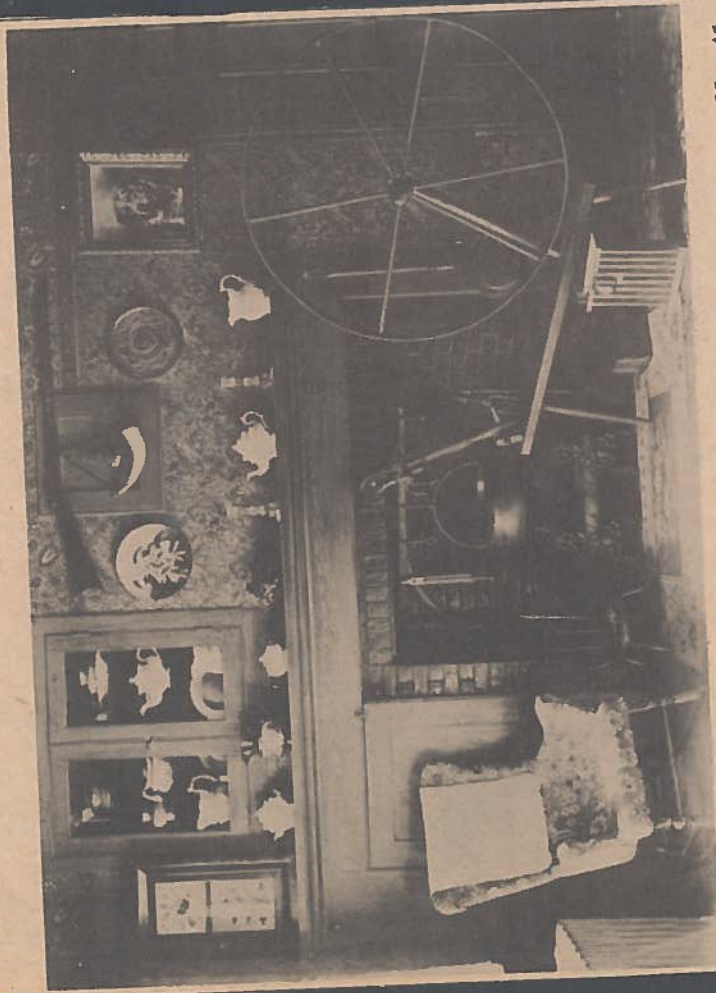


Bethinking of Old Orleans

C.W.Lattin
County

Historian

10-14-82



Vol. IV

MEDINA HISTORICAL MUSEUM

No. 41

After several years of planning and hard work by a new board of trustees, the Medina Historical Society will reap the real fruit of their efforts on Sunday, Oct. 17. The Medina Historical Museum will be formally dedicated on that day with many dignitaries present during an open house and reception from 3 - 5 P.M. to which the public is cordially invited. This museum which is located on West Avenue in Medina, houses a rapidly growing collection of relics from the surrounding area. The Medina Historical Society which was formed in Nov. 1971 has met in a variety of places until the acquisition of its museum building commonly referred to as the "Chase" house. On May 21, 1979, Dorothy Corlis who was the president of the society, signed a 20-year lease agreement with the Town of Ridgeway for their old building to be used as a historical museum. Supporting such an ambitious adventure always means fund-raising which the Medina Historical Society has done creatively through their annual Quilt Show and annual community events and Birthday Calendar, to mention a couple.

The "Chase" house was actually built in 1841 by Levan Wheeler Merritt who was an early settler in Medina. Traveling to this area by canal boat in 1833, Mr. Merritt operated a flour mill near the Medina docks. In 1840 he married Cynthia P. Loomis of Clarkson and they had eight children. One of their sons, Charles, married a Julia Ryan Chase which explains the relationship of the Chase family name to the house. Levan Merritt was a much esteemed townsman and with the assistance of Adam Garter as surveyor, laid out, plotted and mapped Boxwood Cemetery. He was a village trustee in 1844 and 1849, assessor, a member of the Board of Education, the first fire company organized in Medina and Vestryman of St. John's Church for many years prior to his death in 1886.

The house remained in the Merritt family until 1916 when it was left to John and Lulu Chase. Mr. Chase was associated with Chase & Breed, a hardware store which later became Brundage's. Mrs. Lulu Chase who outlived her husband, died in 1958. It was then that the Village of Medina bought the house which they in turn, during 1960, sold to the Town of Ridgeway for a Town Hall. A new Town Hall was erected in 1979 directly behind the old Chase House which then made it feasible for the Medina Historical Society to have a home of its own. Solidly built of red brick, the "Chase" house remains today as one of Medina's significant examples of an early pioneer home in the Greek Revival Style. The photograph displayed here shows the dining room fireplace as it appeared sometime between 1897 and 1904. This view indicates that the Merritts must have had an interest in antiques long before it was thought fashionable by most people to display such artifacts. At any rate, antiques once again adorn this fine old structure upon which the Medina Historical Society is to be congratulated. Special credit goes to Mrs. Inez Metz for arduous research of many facts contained in this article.