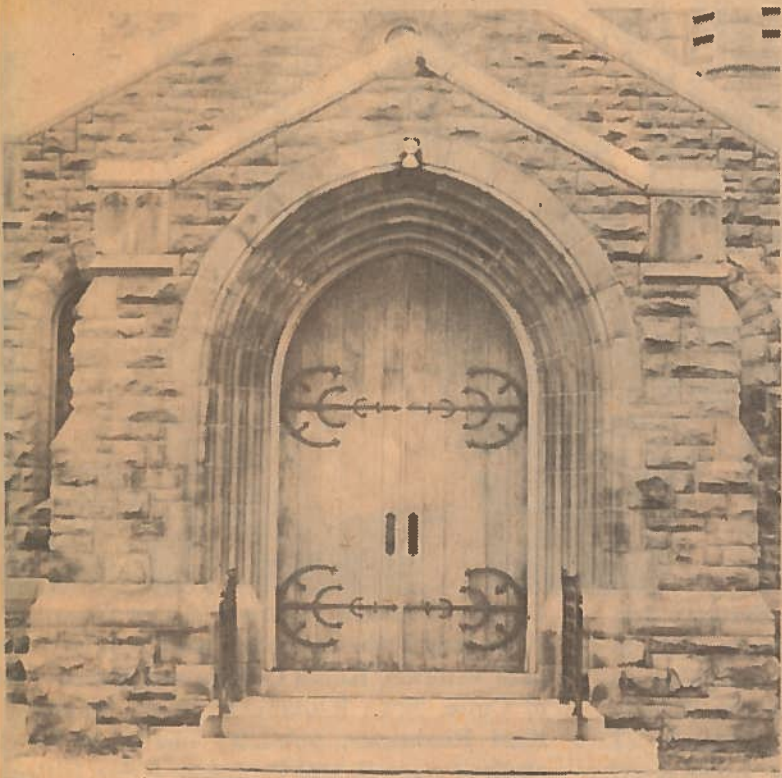


Bethinking of Old Orleans

C.W.Lattin County Historian



Tour Of Churches

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"If where you are
Were a faraway place,
Would you not be looking with astonishment
At things you pass by every day...
Waiting for the extraordinary
Do not miss the extraordinary ordinary,
The beauty of the familiar,
The wonder of the nearby now at hand."
Adapted From: James Dillet Freeman

Next Sunday, October 19 is the day set by the Orleans County Department of History for a tour of the seven churches around the Court House Square in Albion between the hours of 2 and 5. Each church will, in essence, be open for visitors to come and view their building, appreciate its architecture and see various art treasures including innumerable stained glass windows. The tour has been set in accordance with and in celebration of Architectural Heritage Year in New York during 1986. Visitors may begin their walking tour of churches at any one of the seven. However, if you desire to hear three of the pipe organs and description of them by their organists, the following schedule will be of interest. The First Presbyterian Church organ will be played between 2 and 2:30 by Kate Echanez, the First Baptist organ will be played by Phil Greaser from 3 to 3:30 and the Pullman Memorial Universalist organ will be played from 4 to 4:30 by R.C. Monaghan. In other words, there will be time to visit the other churches between organ presentations. The four other churches on the historic tour include: St. Joseph's Roman Catholic, Christ Episcopal, First Free Methodist and United Methodist.

Greeters and historians of each church will be on hand to answer questions and tell about their respective buildings. Several of the churches expect to hand out fact sheets for your interest.

Albion is remembered by older folks as a beautiful little town with spreading Elms, gracious lawns and large man-

sions. Granted, the Elms and the mansions are mostly gone, but the very heart of Albion remains pretty much intact with a true-to-life late 19th Century flavor. Indeed, the County Court House Square is extraordinary. Others must think so too as the seven historic churches around the Square were accepted into the National Registry of Historic Places. In fact, Channel 4 TV's Doug Smith did a two-minute spot last week on the architecture of Albion.

The exceptional entrance shown here is that of the Pullman Memorial Universalist Church erected in 1894. The building was designed by S.S. Berman of Chicago, personal architect to George M. Pullman who had the church built in memory of his parents who were one time residents of Albion. The stone for the church is Medina Sandstone, pink in color and was quarried at the DeGraff Quarry off East State Street in Albion. At the time the church was dedicated, it was stylistically termed to be "Old English Gothic." Supposedly one of George Pullman's daughters had traveled through England and was enchanted by a rural English Gothic church. At any rate, legend has it that the Universalist Church here was a design based on an English configuration of similar quality. The entrance is by far one of the most sumptuous doorways with its series of Gothic mouldings to be found in Western New York. It is an outstanding landmark to the stone cutting skills of artisans long forgotten. The tooling of the Gothic panels surmounting the buttresses supersedes any other stone work locally.

All the churches at the Court House Square have their own stories to tell making a rich heritage which belongs to all of us regardless of specific doctrines. Do you know that the Episcopal Church was built by Presbyterians in 1830 and is the oldest structure built for a church in Orleans County still being used for religious services? And then there is the Catholic Church which was built next to the street so as to hide a view of the Baptist Church next door, a stipulation by a disgruntled Baptist who sold the Catholics the lot. Do you know that the Baptist tower has a holding vault in its cellar which was once used to house the dead when the ground was too frozen to bury? The Free Methodist Church built in the unusual Norman Style is the oldest building on a lot given them by an Episcopalian, Nehemiah Ingersoll. Indeed, many legends surround these seven churches which are all in their own way, architectural wonders. Space and time at this point does not permit a full history of each. Therefore, as county historian I urge you to take time on the 19th of this month to avail yourself of "The beauty of the familiar." And incidently, I happen to know that refreshments will be served at the Universalist Church from 2 to 5.

As a further point of interest, the Landmark Society of Western New York will conduct a seminar at the Universalist Church on Saturday, October 18 from 9:30 to Noon on the topic "What Style Is It - Architectural Styles in Western New York" by Cynthia Howk. Mrs. Howk is an architectural historian and preservationist affiliated with the Landmark Society Office in Rochester. She suggests that those wishing to attend, bring photos for her to identify. A \$3.00 registration fee will be taken at the door.

"To me, beauty is the wonder of wonders.

It is only shallow people who do
not judge by appearances. The true
mystery of the world is the visible,
not the invisible.

Oscar Wilde