

## **Why does Medina have a Hall of Fame?**

Two hundred years ago settlers were beginning to move into the heavily forested regions where Medina is located now. A waterfall on Oak Orchard Creek became a power source for the first sawmill in the area. These early pioneers found stone suitable for building foundations along the creek.

A decade later the famous Erie Canal was being constructed between the Hudson River and Lake Erie. The intersection of the canal and the creek was a perfect place for a village and "Medina" was born.

As the canal was dug through Orleans County, workers found sections of stone very near the surface. In 1837 John Ryan opened the first commercial sandstone quarry adjacent to the canal in Medina. Thus began a local industry that would grow tremendously for the next 80 years.

At the turn of the century there were 50 quarries covering 2,000 acres located between Medina and Holley in Orleans County. These quarries employed as many as 1,200 workers and immigrants to the U.S. from Ireland, Poland, Italy, Germany and England came to this region to earn "good money". A stonebreaker could earn four dollars a day!

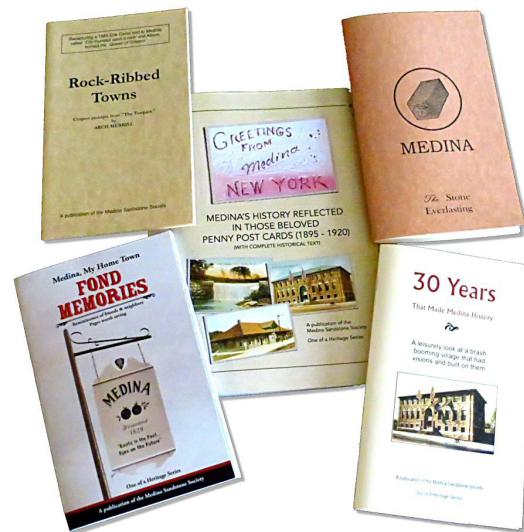
Stone from these quarries provided paving stones and curbing for the streets of Buffalo, Rochester, Cleveland and New York City. But more importantly a portion of the stone was used to create structures large and small - homes, churches, civic buildings, monuments and more.

The Medina Sandstone Hall of Fame seeks to identify where these structures are located and give special recognition to the most significant based on their architectural beauty and other criteria. We hope to increase appreciation for this important product of Medina's and Orleans County's history.

Founded in 2004, the Medina Sandstone Society today is a New York State not-for-profit corporation with the purpose of serving as a viable community asset to aid local programs.

The Sandstone Society has engaged in a wide variety of activities, including:

- Understanding the renowned stone itself.
- Fostering community support and esteem, supporting local projects and celebrations.
- Establishing the Hall of Fame.
- Encouraging historic preservation.
- Marking special sites with sandstone tablets.
- Using grants and gifts to protect structures.
- Publishing texts and books of local interest.
- Honoring special citizens with awards
- Saluting Medina's status as an Erie Canal port.
- Sponsoring "walking tours" of historic sites.
- Recruiting associates called "Stone Cutters"
- Establishing a Medina civic endowment named the Sandstone Trust.



Consult our website to learn about and purchase books.  
They're also offered at local book stores.

[www.SandstoneSociety.org](http://www.SandstoneSociety.org)

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## **Medina Sandstone Society**

# **Sandstone Hall of Fame 2014**

**Appreciating the  
"extraordinary  
ordinary" that  
surrounds us in  
western NY and  
beyond.**

Quote by Bill Lattin, retired County Historian



2013 Hall of Fame inductees

The Hall of Fame is located in Medina City Hall, 600 Main Street. Open weekdays from 8:30-4:30.

# Inductees in the (2nd annual) 2014 Hall of Fame →

## List of Nominees

\* indicates inductee in the Hall of Fame

### 2013

#### Orleans County      Buffalo

St. John's Episcopal	St. Paul's Cathedral
Clarendon Old Stone Store	H.H. Richardson Complex
Mt. Albion Monument	St. Louis Church
Hillside Cemetery	Connecticut Street Armory
Pullman Church	<u>Other</u>
Medina Armory / YMCA	Belhurst Castle
St. Mary's Church	St. Stephen's Church
Medina Railroad Station	"Million Dollar Staircase"
Medina City Hall	Genesee County Jail

#### Rochester

Charlotte Lighthouse	Brockport Civil War Tower
St. Bernard's Seminary	Hamlin Beach Structures

### 2014

#### Orleans County      Other

Albion Presbyterian Church	Sonnenberg Manor
"Robin Hill" Smith home	<u>St. Peter in Erie, Pa</u>
St. Rocco's in Hulberton	St. Luke's in Jamestown

#### Buffalo

##### Delaware-Asbury Church

Buffalo Crematory
Olmsted traffic circles

The Medina Sandstone Society is proud to recognize these exceptional examples of Medina sandstone construction that are such an important part of our region and our nation's past and its future!

## Delaware-Asbury Church

(currently renovated as Babeville)

339 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, NY

Designed by the Buffalo-based architect John H. Selkirk, this Gothic Revival structure was constructed between 1871 and 1876.

This was Selkirk's most ambitious project of many in the Buffalo area. The building, with its northern steeple on the asymmetrical front towering to over 200 feet in height, was constructed of brown Medina sandstone.

Saved from demolition by the *Citizens to Save the Asbury Church* in the early 1990's, a five-year reconstruction project created Babeville, a center for music and art. The restoration of this historic building contributed to a new appreciation of Buffalo's architectural heritage, which today plays a major role in the revitalization of the city. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2003.



## St. Peter Cathedral

West 10<sup>th</sup> and Sassafras, Erie, PA

The Diocese of Erie initiated plans for building St. Peter Cathedral in 1873. Note 19th-century ecclesiastical architect Patrick Charles Keeley, who in his career designed 21 American cathedrals and more than 600 churches, designed this Gothic Revival church in the French Victorian tradition.

The magnificent cathedral, constructed primarily of red Medina sandstone, is formed from three massive towers. The center bell tower, still dominant in the Erie skyline, stands 265 feet high with two 150-foot Norman-style towers on each side.

The 1884 History of Erie County, Pennsylvania was correct when they observed that "St. Peter's...when finished will be one of the grandest – if not the grandest – and most imposing church edifices in the lake country."



## Mt. Albion Memorial Tower

Mt. Albion Cemetery, Albion, NY



Rising from the top of the highest point in Mt. Albion Cemetery, the Soldiers and Sailors Civil War tower memorializes the 463 men of Orleans County who "Fell in Defense of the Union".

Built of red Medina sandstone from nearby quarries, the memorial tower was completed in time for a dedication ceremony on the 100th anniversary of the country, July 4, 1876.

Considered unsafe in the early 1970s, the tower was in danger of being demolished.

Local students began a Save the Tower campaign which raised the funds to repair masonry joints and the interior spiral staircase. The tower was rededicated on July 4, 1976, and is open to the public today.

Mt. Albion cemetery was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2003.

## St. Louis Catholic Church

Main and Edward Streets, Buffalo, NY



In 1832 a simple hand-hewn log building became the first Roman Catholic church in Buffalo. In 1843 this building was replaced by a stone and brick church, and finally, between 1886-1889, the magnificent St. Louis Church, designed in the Gothic Revival style by architect William Schikell of New York City, was constructed from red Medina sandstone on the same site.

Perhaps the church's most distinctive feature, the center spire is the tallest open-work spire ever built completely of stone in the United States. It is also believed to be the only open-work spire remaining in the United States.

A major restoration project included slate roof repairs, tower restoration, exterior stone re-pointing and cleaning was undertaken on the 175th anniversary in 2002-2003.