

## Why does Medina have a Sandstone 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.

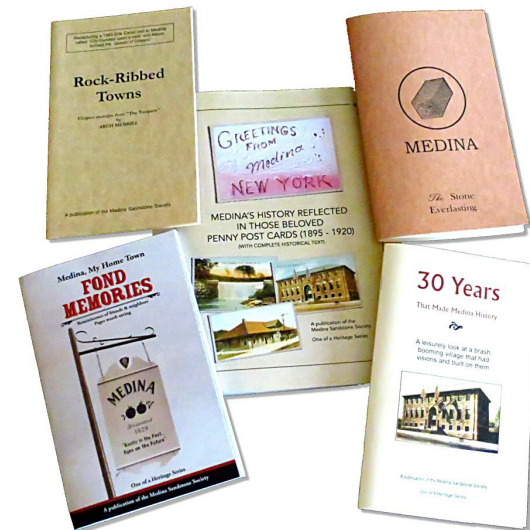
At the turn of the century there were 50 quarries covering 2,000 acres located between Medina and Holley in Orleans County. These quarries employed as many as 1,200 workers and immigrants to the U.S. from Ireland, Poland, Italy, Germany and England came to this region to earn "good money". A stonebreaker 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.
- Establish and maintain the Sandstone Hall of Fame.
- Develop an exhaustive list of Sandstone structures.
- 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)

**Medina Sandstone Society and Trust**  
P.O. Box 25  
Medina, NY 14103

Printed October 2021

# Medina Sandstone Society Sandstone Hall of Fame 2020-21

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

Quote by Bill Lattin, retired County Historian



2019 Hall of Fame inductees

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

Hall of Fame plaques are manufactured and installed courtesy of  
Takeform Graphics, Medina, NY ([www.takeform.net/](http://www.takeform.net/))

## List of Sandstone Structures

### 2020-21 Nominees / Inductees

<b>St. Mary's RC Church in Canandaigua</b>	Graestone Manor ( <i>foundation only</i> ) in Gasport
Woodlawn Chapel in Canandaigua	<b>St. Luke's Episcopal in Brockport</b>
First Presbyterian Church in Titusville, PA	<b>Bent's Opera House in Medina</b>
Residence 1140 Edgewood in Rochester	

### 2013-2019 Nominees / Inductees

#### Orleans County

First Baptist Church in Holley  
St. Joseph's Cemetery Chapel in Albion  
Granchelli Home (*Front porch*) in Medina

#### Albion Presbyterian Church

"Robin Hill" Smith home  
St. Rocco's in Hulberton  
**St. Mary's R.C. in Holley**

**St. John's Episcopal**

Clarendon Old Stone Store

**Mt. Albion Monument**

**Hillside Cemetery**

**Pullman Church**

**Medina Armory/YMCA**

**St. Mary's Church**

Medina Railroad Station

#### Buffalo

**St. Paul's Cathedral**

**H.H. Richardson Complex**

**St. Louis Church**

**Connecticut Street Armory**

Buffalo Crematory

Olmsted traffic circles

**Delaware-Asbury Church**

**"Martin Manor" residence**

St. Patrick's Friary

**First Presbyterian Church of Buffalo**

St. Michael's RC Church

**Lafayette Presbyterian / Lofts**

Eberhardt Mansion

Blessed Sacrament RC Church

Trinity Episcopal Church

#### Other Locations

**St. John's Episcopal Church in Clifton Springs**

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Olean

Belhurst Castle in Geneva

Charlotte Lighthouse

**St. Bernard's Seminary in Rochester**

**Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Rochester**

"Million Dollar Staircase"

Brockport Civil War Tower

Genesee County Jail, Batavia

Hamlin Beach Structures

**Sonnenberg Manor in Canandaigua**

**Richmond Library in Batavia**

St. Mary's in Batavia

First Lutheran in Jamestown

**St. Luke's in Jamestown**

**Prendergast Library in Jamestown**

**Zion Episcopal Church in Palmyra**

**Emma Flower Taylor Mansion in Watertown**

St. Peter Cathedral in Erie, PA

St. Peter's Lutheran in Sanborn, NY

Christ Church in Rochester

Old Stone Warehouse/ Skalny Bldg. In Rochester

First Methodist in Dunkirk

**St. Peter's Episcopal in Geneva**

**Watson-Curtze Mansion in Erie, PA**

St. Ann Catholic Church in Erie, PA

St. Paul Catholic Church in Erie, PA

**\* Colored text indicates a HOF Inductee**

**BENT'S OPERA HOUSE  
444 MAIN STREET  
MEDINA, NY**



Bent's Opera House is one of the oldest surviving theaters in the entire nation, having been built at the height of the U.S. Civil War. From 1865 to the early 1920's it was the cultural center of the Medina area. Its construction is of native Medina Sandstone, laid in a random ashlar pattern with a hammered finish.

Built by Don Carlos Bent, a wealthy local farmer and a man of varied interests. He secured the services of a local sandstone builder Patrick O'Grady, and together explored opera houses throughout Western New York in preparation for building a grand theater in Medina.

The building was largely underutilized the second half of the 20th Century and was in danger of collapse in the early 21st Century. The Orleans Renaissance Group worked to initially stabilize the structure.

Talis Equity Inc. of Medina then purchased the building and took on one of the community's most ambitious restoration projects, working over three years to have the building fortified and redesigned to include a restaurant, hotel, and entertainment/lecture hall. A remarkable transformation was accomplished, and the newly refurbished building was opened again in 2021, restoring it to its former luster.

**ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
14 STATE STREET  
BROCKPORT NY**



St. Luke's Episcopal Church has been a dominant, soaring presence on Main Street in Brockport since 1855.

The congregation paid \$6,897 to have the church constructed from 1854 to 1855 in a Gothic Revival style with Medina Sandstone. In 1903, the church added a parish hall in Medina Sandstone with a Romanesque architectural style. That parish hall initially was used for a church school. It has been provided meeting space, a gymnasium in basement, a stage on third floor, and even was set up as a hospital for a week long clinic for tonsillectomies.

St. Luke's continues to be used for many outreach programs – food, clothing, music and ministry. It has hosted the Brockport ecumenical food shelf since 1972.

The church also features several Tiffany Glass windows, including two groupings of three windows. Tiffany created a scene of the "The Nativity" at the narthex.

St. Luke's was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1990 and was declared a "Historic Landmark" by the Brockport Historic Preservation Board in 2000.

**ST. MARY'S RC CHURCH  
95 NORTH MAIN STREET  
CANANDAIGUA, NY**



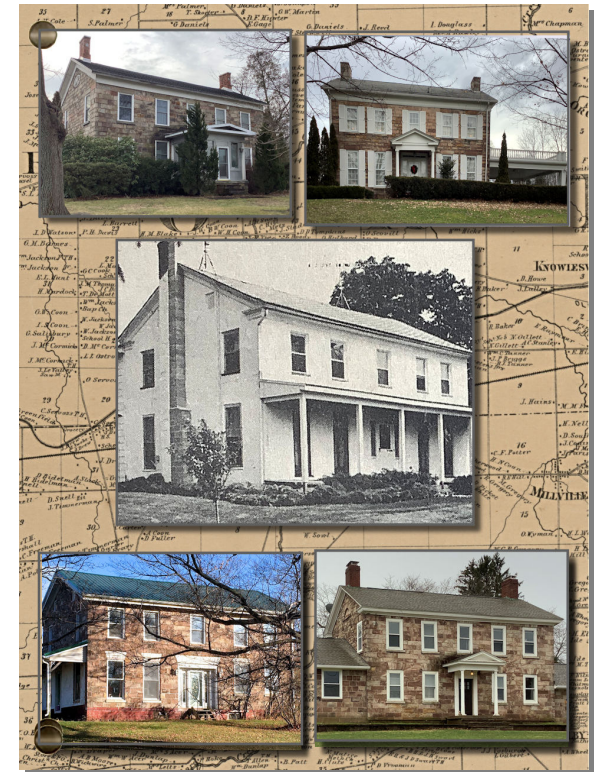
This Parish can be traced back to 1843 when a small group of Catholic families began meeting. In 1846 the first St. Mary's church was built. By 1865 church membership had grown and a new church was needed. The old J. Albert Granger property was purchased in 1873 but construction of the present church was delayed to pay off the debt. Construction on the present church was started in 1903. The architects were Gordon & Madden of Rochester, New York. The building was dedicated on December 17, 1905.

The Building Committee was pleased with the use of pink Medina Sandstone and they got good terms for the sandstone and favorable railroad rates for the delivery of this beautiful stone.

In 2007, St. Benedict's Parish was established. St. Mary's in Canandaigua and St. Benedict's in Bloomfield became clustered.

Over the years, the Parishioners have lovingly taken care of this beautiful edifice and have had several major renovations, the last being in 2019 where a major renovation took place. Like the magnificent Medina Sandstone, this beautiful church will stand for another 100 years.

**WILLIAM JACKSON HOMES  
TOWN OF RIDGEWAY, NY**



William Jackson (1799-1890) was one of the earliest settlers in the Town of Ridgeway and one of the first to build homes from what would later become known as Medina Sandstone.

Arriving here in 1826 he purchased 100 acres from the Holland Land Company on which he built a log cabin not far from the Erie Canal. Pioneer History of Orleans County reports that "In a short time he purchased more land which he fitted and cultivated into one of the finest farms in the area." This was before any commercial sandstone quarry had been established, but the Erie Canal construction had revealed readily accessible sandstone in Medina.

The original Jackson Homestead at 3669 Fruit Avenue is in the center (*sadly the sandstone was stuccoed over perhaps 75 years ago*). The others (clockwise from top) 10598 Ridge Road, 10923 West Center Ext., 11986 Telegraph Road and 3531 Fruit Avenue.

*The Medina Sandstone Society is proud to induct/recognize these outstanding examples of Medina sandstone construction into the Medina Sandstone Hall of Fame class of 2020-21.*