

Why does Medina have a Sandstone Hall of Fame?

Two hundred years ago settlers began to move into the heavily forested regions where Medina is located today. A waterfall on Oak Orchard Creek became a power source for the first sawmill in the area. Along that creek they also found stone suitable for building foundations.

A few years 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 Medina 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 increase appreciation for this important product of Medina's and Orleans County's history.

Medina Sandstone Buildings

During the 2013-2023 period our Hall of Fame has compiled a list of 249 Medina Sandstone structures. From that list 78 buildings have been nominated for consideration and 39 buildings have been inducted and their photo plaques displayed in the Medina Sandstone Hall of Fame.

You can find the complete list along with other resource materials at :

www.SandstoneSociety.org/medina-sandstone-library/ ♦

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

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

2023 Sandstone Hall of Fame



The 2022 Hall of Fame inductees included the Canal Culvert in Ridgeway, Ryan Quarry Home in Clarendon and St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Albion.

"A heap of Medina Sandstone will catch your eye.

I can see it now, freshly cut and wet from a shower.

Like a rainbow."

Pasquale DiLaura quote (1971)

The Hall of Fame is located in Medina City Hall, 600 Main Street. Open weekdays from 9-5.

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

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2023 SANDSTONE HERITAGE AWARD

WHAT IS THE HERITAGE AWARD?

The new Sandstone Heritage Award is intended to recognize buildings, individuals, groups, etc. that significantly contribute to our understanding and appreciation of Medina Sandstone.

We are proud to honor the following individuals as recipients of the first Medina Sandstone Hall of Fame Heritage Awards!!

2023 AWARD RECIPIENTS

JENNIFER WELLS-DICKERSON

Over the past two decades Jennifer has amassed an outstanding collection of information, photographs, ledgers and other materials about her great-grandfather Pasquale DiLaura and the DiLaura Stone Co. Pasquale was a stone cutter, business owner and tireless promoter of Medina Sandstone. He kept his quarry running into the 1960s after most others closed in the 1920s and 1930s. DiLaura led the crews that built facilities at Hamlin Beach State Park where he taught young men in the Civilian Conservation Corps how to cut stone.

Jennifer's research started with a report on her great-grandfather and local quarries for an Albion high school English class and it continues today when she frequently presents her work at local historical societies and community events. ♦

ED EVANS

For the past 32 years Ed has been researching the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) camp at Hamlin Beach State Park. Starting in 1935 the young men in the CCC built many of the park's Medina Sandstone buildings, walls, culverts, drinking fountains and fireplaces. Evans remains proud of the work they accomplished – about 80 years after they did the hard labor.

Starting in 2008 Evans, his wife and friends began clearing away decades of thick underbrush and fallen trees on the 8 acre site which was used as a POW site after the CCC. Over the next ten years they carefully mapped the camp buildings and pieced together much of the camp's history.

A retired science teacher, Ed continues his mission and passion of educating. He has chronicled the Hamlin CCC and POW history in a detail filled booklet and given more than 200 presentations and tours for Park visitors. ♦

**HAMLIN BEACH STATE PARK
HAMLIN, NEW YORK**



At Hamlin Beach State Park in Monroe County, the Medina Sandstone is everywhere – the shelters, bathrooms, culverts, fireplaces, fire pits, drinking fountains, retaining walls and a concessions building.

The entire park, which draws about 300,000 people a year, is a tremendous showcase of Medina Sandstone.



Hamlin Beach State Park was largely developed by the Civilian Conservation Corps from 1935 to 1941, with state contractors then working on the park until 1952.

Operating from a camp on Moscow Road, the CCC employed local stone masons, carpenters, forestry crews, auto mechanics, truck drivers, rock crusher operators and road crews to build the park during the latter years of the Depression.



New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation has made recent investments in the park's upkeep, and the Friends of Hamlin Beach State Park have pushed to make the park more accessible and its history more fully understood..♦

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
MEDINA, NEW YORK**



For 150 years, the First Baptist Church of Medina has been a landmark, one of the most iconic sights in the village. The steeple, peaking at about 150 feet high, is one of the first sights approaching the downtown, especially from Route 31 to the east.

The church was constructed between 1870 and 1873 at 203 West Center St. It is made of locally quarried gray Medina Sandstone and was built in an example of Gothic Revivalism tempered with influences from the then-even more popular Romanesque Revival style.

The Medina Tribune on Jan. 16, 1873, made the church's dedication front page news, saying the Medina community could pride itself for having “one of the most elegant and substantial church buildings in all of Western New York.”

A congregation of 140 people contributed the \$45,000 to have the church built on one of the best sites in the village, the Tribune noted.

The church's members through a century and half have proven devoted caretakers of the building, ensuring its longevity and lofty presence for the community.♦

**ROBIN HILL MANOR
LYNDONVILLE, NEW YORK**



This beautiful home, located on Platten Road in Lyndonville, was built in the late 1940-1950 by Lyndonville residents William and Mary Smith and their children George and Marion Smith.

William and Mary Smith designed the Manor House and had drawings done by a professional architect from Rochester. It took them 5 years to quarry and cut the Medina Sandstone and build the house. George did most of the stone work and all of the interior wood and cabinetry while Marion and Mary finished the kitchen, hauling materials for the floors and staining the cedar shakes for the roof.

The house was finished in 1952. The family lived there until Marion's passing in 2013, when Doug Pratt inherited the estate.

He lives there and has set up the non-profit Robin Hill Nature Preserve for the public to enjoy the 45 acres and more than 250 varieties of trees.

“Smith's Pond” has been a beloved landmark for decades in Lyndonville, with many people stopping to admire the wildlife and majestic trees. Pratt continues to make this “jewel” available to the community.♦

**EPHRAIM MASTEN HOMESTEAD
MEDINA, NEW YORK**



In 1819 Ephraim Masten and his wife Nancy came to Ridgeway and purchased 130 acres of land two miles east from what would become the village of Medina. They built and lived in a log cabin until 1831 when the family had done well enough to be able to construct a house of locally quarried sandstone to replace the log cabin.

Ephraim died in 1840 and his wife in 1872, but the home remained in the family for many succeeding generations of Masten descendants.

In more recent years the home was occupied by attorney Vincent Cardone, who did considerable restoration work on the historic building, then industrialist Milford L. Phinney and family.

Most recently Matt and Heather Mundion have further expanded and beautified the home using repurposed Medina Sandstone for new porch and patio areas and other interior and exterior improvements.

With its long history of restoration and stewardship this historic home will soon be 200 years old! ♦

The Medina Sandstone Society is proud to induct these outstanding examples of Medina Sandstone construction into the Medina Sandstone Hall of Fame Class of 2023.