

Lewiston
History
Mysteries

The Frontier House: Lewiston's "Crown Jewel"

Frontier House Timeline

1819: Robert Troup is the owner of the property today known as 460 Center Street.

1824: Benjamin Barton, his son, Samuel and Joshua Fairbanks reach an agreement with Troup to begin constructing the Frontier House. It opens when the Erie

Canal begins service in Lockport and Buffalo.

1826: William Morgan, the Masonic traitor, is kidnapped by Masons and brought to the Frontier House. He was later transferred to Fort Niagara and disappeared.

1828: Benjamin Barton becomes owner of the Frontier House.

1842: Barton dies and Amos Tryon becomes executor.

1844 to 1963: Caleb Raymond buys the Frontier House for \$5000, and his family owns and operates it for generations. Years later, Mayor Terry Collesano writes a book about Perdita Raymond entitled, Miss Purdy and Me.

1963: James Russell Smith buys the Frontier House.

1969: Local attorney, William McDonald, becomes the principle owner of the Frontier House.

1974: Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

1977: McDonald's leases the property for a fast food franchise.

2000: Richard Hastings buys the property for \$270,000.

2004: McDonald's ceases operations.

2018: Mayor Collesano and the Village Board sign an agreement to purchase the Frontier House for \$800,000. A provision allows the Village to transfer the agreement to another buyer.

2019: Newly elected Mayor Anne Welch finds a private buyer and the agreement is transferred to a partnership of Jeff and Jerry Williams of Lewiston, and William Paladino of Buffalo. The bulk of the mortgage is financed by Lewiston resident, Bill Game.

2020: Plans are announced to restore the Frontier House.

\$5 Million+ Renovations to be Completed by Summer of 2023 in Time for Bicentennial



Will Celebrate 200 Year Anniversary in 2024

It's considered one of the most historic buildings in Western New York. In the 1820's, it was the finest luxury hotel in the United States located west of the Hudson River. And while it has experienced ups and downs over the past 200 years, the Frontier House is about to undergo renovations that will restore its proud past.

The Frontier House is constructed of stone from the Bay of Quinte at the Northeastern end of Lake Ontario. 18 men worked 18 months in laying up the solid stone 30 inch walls.

Fifteen fireplaces would keep visitors warm. Everyone in town could see the smoke bellowing from the chimneys on the east and west side of the building. It fulfilled Benjamin Barton's expectations and was ready to house Gov. Dewitt Clinton and other state officials who came to Lewiston after the official opening of the Erie Canal in Lockport.

The new renovations will convert the 2nd and 3rd floors to six Airbnb's and five apartments. The basement and 1st floor will be retail, office and restaurant space.

Historically accurate windows and a rear porch will also be added to restore the original features.

Actual Stagecoach Schedule

Stagecoaches once thundered up to the Frontier House doors when it served as a stop when Lewiston was the center of the "Great Overland Route Across the Continent."

You can see on the schedule below that a coach departed Lewiston at 3am everyday for points east. You could get to Rochester in a day. It would take 4 days to get to Albany and cost 4 cents per mile, or a total of \$12.72 for the 318 mile trip. The Lewiston to Buffalo service ran twice a day.

It was a very bumpy, dusty and noisy trip, and if you didn't get a headache, you could enjoy the scenery!

RIDGE ROAD.		
THE line of Mail Stages, on this road, between Lewiston and Rochester, is one of the best in the State, as the road also is; fare, 4 cents a mile. This line is a part of one that runs from Lewiston to Albany, and back, each way in 4 days, as below. Leaves Lewiston every day, at 3 A. M., and reaches Rochester same day, at 8 P. M.; leaves Rochester at 3 A. M., and reaches Auburn at 8 P. M.; leaves Auburn at 3 A. M., and reaches Utica at 8 P. M.; leaves Utica at 3 A. M., and reaches Albany at 8 P. M. of the 4th day. Returning, in the same order and time.		
	Miles.	Total.
Lewiston to Cambria,	15	
Hartland, (7 miles from Lockport,)	11	26
Oak Orchard,	14	40
Gaines,	7	47
Sandy Creek,	8	55
Clarkson,	7	62
Parma,	7	69
Greece,	6	75
Rochester, (1st day, on Ridge Road,)	5	80
Pittsford,	8	88
Mendon,	7	95
Canandaigua,	15	110
Geneva,	16	126
Cayuga Bridge,	14	140
Auburn, (2d day,)	9	149
Skaneateles,	7	156
Onondaga,	17	173
Manlius,	10	183
Vernon,	24	207
Utica, (3d day,)	15	222
Albany, (4th day,)	96	318

Between Lewiston and Buffalo there are regular Stages, twice each day; fare the same.



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HistoricLewiston.org 716-754-4214

Ranked "Top Ten Best Small Towns in America"
— USA Today & Rand McNally