

# TURNPIKE TALES

by Jim Ford

## **"TURNPIKE TALES" #2**

*(Historical items from the "Madison Bouckville Antique Week" region)*

*By Jim Ford*

The Madison-Bouckville area has been rich in history from the arrival of the first settlers to the present day. As an addition to the website, we have decided to share some of that history in order that the patrons who travel to the Madison-Bouckville Show will have a better understanding of our truly unique region.

### **HISTORIC HOMES AND BUSINESSES ALONG THE TURNPIKE**

As you visit the many dealers and vendors during this year's "Antique Week," take a moment to view some of the outstanding architecture of our beautiful area. Whether the building is currently a home or a business, the Madison-Bouckville area has a variety of historical structures to rival any in the northeast.

In this article we will feature six historic buildings, three from Madison and three from Bouckville. Each structure has a story to tell and has been instrumental in the history of our area.

We begin our tour just to the east of Madison Village. If you are coming to the show from the Albany region, you would pass a lovely red-brick farmhouse on the right side of the highway. This is the Samuel White House. Built in 1840, Mr. White was a hop farmer and dealer. He was also the Supervisor of the Town of Madison for 13 years. This is currently the home of Ron and Viola Neff.

Traveling west from the Samuel White House toward the blinking light in the main intersection in Madison, we see the green-brick store just past the Post Office building.

The store was built by Gen. Erastus Cleaveland in the early years of the 1800's as a grocery and dry-goods emporium and is currently the business establishment of Peavey Insurance and Realty.

Gen Cleaveland, who obtained his title as a General of Militia following the War of 1812, also built a sawmill and gristmill in the area. The Cleaveland family lived in a brick home on South St. in Madison. The family also had a unique way of spelling their last name.

Continuing west we see Madison Central School on the right and two houses past the school entrance, on the right hand side of the road is the William Cleaveland House. This home was built in 1836 and is reputed to be the only octagon cobblestone home ever to be built in the United States. This is the home of the James Gerow family today.

The octagon idea for homes was made popular by Orson Fowler. Mr. Fowler is also credited with the science of Phrenology, which is telling your future by reading the lumps and bumps on your skull.

Moving on to Bouckville and still heading west, we drive down the hill into Bouckville proper and soon see a lovely red-brick home on the left. This is popularly known as the Washburn House and was built in the early 1800's from locally manufactured bricks. The brickyard and kiln were located along what is now the Chenango Canal heading north from Bouckville.

This structure has been a private residence, an antique shop and is now the home of the John Mancino family.

Continuing through Bouckville and located just to the east of the Depot Antiques building is the McClure's Tavern/Mott House. Built in 1805 as a tavern on the Third Great Western Turnpike, it became the home of Samuel R. Mott in 1868. Mr. Mott began the business which led to the nationally known Mott's products. He lived in the house until his death in 1915. It has changed hands several times since that time and continues to be a private residence today.

Traveling just a few hundred feet further west from the Mott house is the Landmark Tavern. Designed and largely owned by James E. Coolidge as a joint-stock Company, the construction took place from 1847-1851. The four distinct fronts to the structure housed four separate stores, the principal one on the left side of the building being a grocery and dry-goods establishment.

Many years later Robert Palmiter bought the building and began an antiques business. Mr. Jock Hengst then purchased the building and the landmark Tavern was born. The building continues to be a great tourist attraction with its cobblestone construction and six-sided cupola adorning the roof line. The Landmark Tavern continues today under the ownership of Steve and Linda Hengst.

Enjoy your visit to this year's show and please take a moment to view some of the finest architecture in Upstate New York.