

The Baptist Church On The Move

by Lynne Belluscio

After dropping off the boys for nursery school, I stopped by the D&R Depot for breakfast and ran into Marcia Yacuzzo who asked, "Do you know where the Baptist Church was located when it was out on East Main?" "I'll have to check the map file and get back to you." As it turns out, the answer wasn't on a map. I found it in the architectural "blue books."

The history of the Baptist Church notes that Deacon Chamberlain gave land for the Baptist Church which was raised in 1823 "near what is now 123 East Main Street." (123 East Main Street is the former home of Keene Bolton. The house was built during the Civil War.)

The lumber for the church was brought from Dansville by Austin Phelps, who started out before dawn in the morning so he could return to LeRoy before the end of the day. While the church was being completed, meetings were held at the nearby school, which also served during bad weather until the installation of the stove (which was placed at the front of the church. This certainly encouraged folks to sit up front!)

The building was completed in 1829. But the Baptist pastor, Elder Crane was concerned that the church did not have a growing membership and he decided that the church was too far from the center of the village. "If you would catch rabbits you must place your traps where the rabbits run," he admonished the congregation.

So in 1835, the building was hooked to 25 yoke of oxen and rolled up into town to Church Street. (Where it was located until 1902 when it was moved again, to its present site on East Main Street.) The church faced west, towards the creek and had a wide porch across the front. The tower was 75 feet tall with an octagonal section with louvered sides. In 1843, people in LeRoy contributed money to install a clock in the bell tower that would be visible all over town. The weights were boxes filled with stones. One weighed 1300 pounds and the other 800. Austin Phelps maintained the clock and climbed the narrow wooden stops into the belfry. It required 300 to 400 turns of the crank to



The Baptist Church when it was located on Church Street.

wind the clock. As Mr. Phelps by a member of his family who grew older, he was accompanied watched for his safety. Eventually

the clock stopped and the hands were removed so they wouldn't fall and injure someone below.

As parishioners entered the church, they came into a small vestibule. The pulpit, faced east, so as the latecomers came into the meeting room, they faced the congregation and had to walk past the minister. There was no sneaking into the back seats unnoticed! The pulpit had the "appearance of a half-bushel sawn in tow and reached by narrow winding stairs ... heated by two box stoves some five feet in length, cracked from end to end which added much to the cheerfulness of a green wood fire." It seems that the stove pipes which extended from the front of the church to the back, dripped black creosote, from all the seams.

Along the floor were tin pails to catch the black goo. "If the congregation lifted its eyes heavenward it was not with piety but to avoid droppings from the stove pipes which might ruin bonnets and shawls. "Originally members of the church owned the pews and held deeds to the space for their family. As people moved away, the pews were rented. The history of the church mentions that "much to the disgust of one old lady who considered a bargain a bargain, refused to pay and sat each Sunday in a chair at the end of her original pew."



SIGN-UPS

For Boys and Girls Ages 5-19 Years

Saturday, February 6th • 9 am to Noon

at the Pavilion Fire Hall, back room

Saturday, February 13th • 11 am to 2 pm

Pavilion High School Gym Lobby

OR By Mail To:

PASA, PO Box 192, Pavilion, NY 14525

IMPORTANT REMINDER:

1x1 picture is needed to play on travel teams.

Registration forms may be picked up in Pavilion at:
The Post Office • High School Office • Elementary School Office

Registration Forms are also available online at:

www.eteamz.com/PavilionSoccer/

Deadline For Registration Forms:

March 9th For Travel Teams • May 4th For In-House Teams

Any registration form received after these dates must include a \$10.00 late fee.

Anyone interested in coaching or with questions please contact Don Park, PASA President at 585-584-8008.

