

## The Appeal...

**Renaissance is defined as** a revival of architecture, art and culture; a transition; a rebirth—the very things that inspired the charter members when founding the group. It is part of a larger spirit of rebirth and revival that has taken hold in the Village of Medina as of late that seeks to improve the quality of life for its inhabitants. We are committed to this vision, this mission, and this future for our community.

**Won't you join us?** We invite you to contact us with any additional questions or comments you may have regarding this restoration project.

**Tax-deductible donations can be made payable to:**

**The Orleans Renaissance Group, Inc.  
PO Box 606  
Medina, New York 14103**

The Orleans Renaissance Group is a 501(c)(3) volunteer organization.

For information about the **Orleans Renaissance Group, Inc.** go to: [www.eggstreet.org](http://www.eggstreet.org) or visit us on **Facebook** at "**Bent's Hall**". Both sites provide contact information for making financial contributions, lease inquiries, Group-sponsored cultural events and concerts, general information, and opera house history.

[www.eggstreet.org](http://www.eggstreet.org)

The website of The Orleans Renaissance Group, Inc.

## About Egg Street...

**Egg Street** was derived from an excerpt of John Steinbeck's "*Travels with Charley- In Search of America*". While traveling to Niagara Falls, Mr. Steinbeck writes that he found himself in Medina and references "Egg Street".

**Members of the Orleans Renaissance Group** decided to use the "fictitious" but intriguing Egg Street as the title for their arts & cultural "rebirth" initiatives. Visit Egg Street soon and often!



*The Orleans Renaissance Group, Inc.*

PO Box 606 • MEDINA, NEW YORK 14103



## BENT'S OPERA HOUSE

**BENT'S HALL Restoration Project  
Orleans Renaissance Group, Inc.**

**Built 1864 • Downtown Historic District, Medina, New York**

## The History...

**Built in 1864 by Don C. Bent**, this structure served as the social center of the village and surrounding area until the early 20th century.



Bent's Opera House, circa 1865, built during Lincoln's Presidency.

Palace in London, the H. H. Richardson Towers, St. Louis RC Church and St. Paul's Cathedral in Buffalo, the George Washington and Brooklyn Bridges in New York, and countless other architectural masterpieces in Medina, Western New York, and around the world.

**Through a charitable donation** of this building by the Bank of America, the property is currently owned by the Orleans Renaissance Group, Inc. The Group is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization founded in 1997, and dedicated to bringing a rebirth of cultural events and preservation to the surrounding area.

**The Village of Medina** is rich in history, and its contributions measured greatly to that which made our nation grow and prosper. The Renaissance Group has taken the initiative in this spirit to bring a rebirth to one of region's true treasures: the venerable Bent's Opera House. It is the crown jewel of the Downtown Historic District of Medina, and a contributing structure in the NYS and National Historic Registry designation for Medina's historic downtown.

**It is one of the oldest surviving opera houses** in the nation, having been built at the height of the Civil War and the Lincoln Presidency.



**Its Medina Sandstone construction** shares a heritage with such other notable places as Buckingham



First floor façade of Bent's Opera House, early 1900's.

## The Project...

The Renaissance Group's vision for Bent's Opera House is two-fold:

- ◆ to stabilize, renovate, and restore the building and façade in a historically sensitive manner, and
- ◆ to re-use the facility as a viable, year-round, multi-purpose, 21st century commercial, entertainment, and culinary destination.



The stage at Bent's Opera House as it appears today.

provide the Group with the necessary information to determine the scope and cost of the project. Until that time, the first and second floors will be leased to an appropriate commercial enterprise.

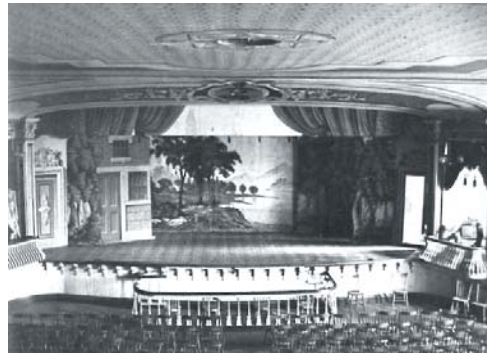
Members of the Orleans Renaissance Group have taken on the daunting task of restoring the Opera House to its original condition so future generations can enjoy artistic performances similar to those experienced over 100 years ago.

The opera house is at a crossroads- it's now or

never. Renaissance understands that if the building is allowed to deteriorate any further, it will be forever lost to history. They are not willing to let that happen... **but they need your help now.** This historic facility will not only be restored- *it can and will become a destination in the Western New York region- music, theater, films, weddings, conferences, gala events- endless possibilities in this Victorian jewel!*

Additionally, the vision for the facility will provide the flexibility to meet multiple needs for the community and surrounding area. Each floor is approximately 6,000 square feet.

The initial phases of the project will require various engineering, architectural, and design studies to be undertaken. These will



The stage at Bent's Opera House, late 1800's.

The renovation and restoration of Bent's Opera House is without question an ambitious undertaking. However, the vision is exciting and the potential is breathtaking. The Renaissance Group needs your support. Tax-deductible contributions can be made to further this project and help bring it to completion.



DON. C. BENT, ESQ.

above - Don C. Bent, builder  
below - private box seat balustrade today.



Turn-of-the-century stage production.

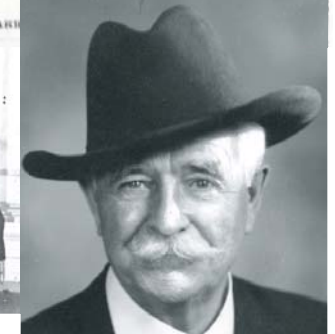
BENT'S OPERA HOUSE,  
CAPT. LINA BEECHER, - Lease and Manager  
Friday Eve., Feb. 18th, 1881



1881  
Buffalo Bill's  
Wild West Show  
comes to  
Bent's.

A New and powerful Drama. The renowned  
Government Scout and Guide,  
**BUFFALO BILL,**  
(HON. WM. F. CODY)  
A Troup of Cheyene Indian Chiefs,  
A SUPERB BAND AND ORCHESTRA, and  
A STAR DRAMATIC COMPANY, making  
it the largest COMBINATION traveling  
this season, exhibiting as it does  
25 First Class Artists, who will  
appear in BUFFALO BILL'S  
new Drama by JOHN A.  
PAYSON, author of  
Unknown, entitled,  
**PRAIRIE WAIF.**  
A STORY OF THE FAR WEST.

In act with a genuine Band of Cheyene Indian  
Chiefs will appear in their scalp and war dances  
assisted by C. A. Burgess, Indian Interpreter.  
Mr. Cody, "BUFFALO BILL," will give an exhibi-  
tion of Fancy Rifle Shooting.  
Upon the arrival of the company in town look  
out for the Grand Street Parade by the Indians  
on horse back headed by Buffalo Bill's Serenade  
Band. Popular prices of admission. Reserved  
Seats 75 Cents, to be had at Tomlin & Davis.



Charles Newton Hood,  
one of the more notable managers of Bent's Opera House.