

The Barker Historical Museum Building  
By Douglas H. Shepard, 2013

Leverett **Barker**, no relation to Hezekiah, came to Fredonia in 1809. He was a tanner by trade and built a small home and a tannery behind it at 23 East Main Street. In 1811 he married one of Hezekiah's daughters, Desire **Barker**. They had eight children, one of whom was Darwin R. **Barker**.

In 1821 Leverett built the first brick home in the village, a stone corbel is marked "May 1821." No architect is known. The house originally had stepped gables at front and rear, which were removed to bring the building up to date in the 1850s. Inside, there were the entry hall and stairs to the second floor. To the left of the hall were a small parlor and behind it two rooms. Later additions were the east wing, a frame rear portion and probably a kitchen/pantry area. Upstairs there were two rooms leading off the hall at the head of the stairs.

An apprentice to Leverett **Barker**, Rosell **Greene**, married the **Barkers'** daughter Eliza. Although Darwin **Barker** and Rosell **Greene** and their families also lived in Versailles, NY, the **Barkers** and then the **Greenes** lived in the home for many years before and after their time in Versailles. In 1882, Darwin R. **Barker** began the process of buying it from the other heirs and then donating it for a Fredonia Library building.

Once the Library was in its permanent home, a small Historical Collection began. It was first housed in the downstairs parlor, then in the upstairs meeting room, which had been made by taking out the partition walls from the earlier bedrooms. The collection gradually grew, and when the new Library addition was built in 1984, the Historical Museum expanded into the Leverett **Barker** home.