

The Avon Inn

The Avon Inn has held a significant presence in the village of Avon for nearly 200 years. The Greek Revival structure was used as a residence by many families, each making changes and additions to fit their taste. Later, the building was used as an inn, accommodating visitors traveling on one of the only major east-west roads in western New York.

The story begins with Jonathan H. Gerry, a Massachusetts native who came to Avon around 1800. He bought what was then farmland, on the corner of East Main and Temple Streets, and built his home for his wife and six children. He planted corn on his farm for the making of brooms, however it is believed that he was unable to completely finish the home before he died in 1848. He is buried in the Avon Cemetery. One of Mr. Gerry's sons, Houghton, enlisted in the call to arms in 1862 under Captain Orange Sackett. His name is listed on the Soldier Monument in the Avon Village Park.



Earliest known photograph of the Avon Inn, taken before 1882.

Source: Avon Town Historian

Curtiss Hawley, a merchant and Town of Avon Supervisor and his wife Sarah were the next owners. Mrs. Hawley's death prompted the sale of the house to George W. Sherman and his wife, Adeline Campbell Blake Sherman and family. The photograph above shows the house being well maintained, likely by the Sherman family. After the death of Mr. Sherman in 1879, the house was eventually sold to become a business for the first time.

During the Spa Era, many inns were built throughout the town to accommodate visitors who sought the health benefits of Avon's sulfur water. Dr. Cyrus Allen and James D. Carson, Sr., who had been innkeepers for several years at the Avon Cure, on what is now Wadsworth Avenue, bought the home in 1882. Adding a third floor, a cupola, and the west wing enlarged the building for their spa business, the "New Sanitarium". Other improvements were made to ensure the comfort of guests: sulfur baths, central heating, gas lighting, elevator, livery service, a bank, and a taproom.



In 1882 the building was expanded to host its first business, adding a west wing, third floor and a cupola. *Source: Avon Town Historian*



On April 14, 1910 the *Avon Herald* announced the reopening of the business as the **Avon Inn**, offering a garage for twenty automobiles, complete with attendants and mechanics. Remodeling included upgraded sulfur baths for the guests.

Source: Avon Preservation & Historical Society

In 1979, a fire extensively damaged the Inn as reported in the *Avon Herald*:

...The upper floors were rented apartments. At 5:43 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 24, 1979 the Avon Fire Department responded to a fire call at the Inn. Fire had broken out on

the third floor. People were taken from the building, some suffered from smoke inhalation, but none were seriously injured. Priceless antiques and paintings were removed from the building as the fire spread. The fire was able to seek out hidden spots difficult to detect because the old building had been remodeled so many times that there were crawl spaces, layers of flooring and partitions aiding in its camouflage. The third floor and cupola of the building collapsed. One of the chimneys came tumbling to the ground, a floor collapsed trapping a Henrietta fireman in the debris for over an hour while firemen struggled to rescue him. He was taken to a nearby hospital with minor injuries. The fire spread to the second floor and the roof above the front porch. The fire was halted there. Firemen were on the scene 13 hours. This was the third fire at the Inn in recent years...

Frank Csapo bought the building in 1980, restoring it to its present size and style.

Linda Moran purchased the inn in 1982. She maintained the building with a deep respect for its long historical significance in Avon. In 1991 it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This designation assisted present owners, Jim and Jen Krause to access grants so they could open for the 2017 New Year's Eve celebration. Soon after, they were ready for special events, serving dinner and booking hotel rooms upstairs.

Information provided by Maureen Kingston, Avon Town Historian Emerita