

# Perinton Historical Society Historiogram

18 Perrin Street  
Fairport, NY 14450

Vol. XLVI • No. 1

September 2013  
585-223-3989

*The 2013 Peter McDonough Memorial Scholarship has been awarded to two Fairport High School seniors this year. Below is Jessica Wurzer's winning submission. Next month the HISTORIGRAM will feature the research paper of Samantha Broking, whose topic is Perinton pioneer Hiram Moseley.*

## Albert Knapp: A Piece of Perinton Legend

*By Jessica Wurzer*

In the wintertime in the village of Fairport, one of the most picturesque spots in town is the ice skating rink by the railroad tracks at an area dubbed "Fairport Junction." There, beside a quaint rink, one will find a sturdy wooden pavilion. In the winter, it offers shelter from the snow and ice. In the summer, it transforms into a stage for musical acts during Canal Days and other festivals. The sign on the structure reads, "The Albert H. Knapp Rotary Pavilion." One day, when I was untying my skates after a few hours of fun, I looked up and wondered; "who was Albert Knapp? And what did he do?" I would soon find out that Albert Knapp is truly a piece of Perinton legend.

Albert was born on February 19, 1912, the son of Bruce and Lucy Knapp. He was a third generation Perinton resident and his family already had a rich history of community involvement. His ancestors Lauren Loomis Knapp and wife Mary were early settlers who started a canal store in Perinton (Butler). In his early years, Albert helped out on the family farm. Despite the dismal job market of the Great Depression, he managed to find work at the American Can Company after graduating from high school. In 1934, Albert began running a Texaco service station on North Main Street in the village of Fairport. Albert leased the station for 21 years, and he eventually ran another service center on Fairport-Webster Road.

Throughout the next few years, Albert branched out into many different areas of business. After loaning his black car to a local funeral department, Albert became more involved in the funeral business and studied in Syracuse to become a licensed embalmer and undertaker. Next, Albert entered the banking world, becoming a director of the Fairport Savings and Loan and later working for Colombia Banking. He helped open new banks in Wellsville, Honeoye Falls, and Seneca Falls.



Albert Kanpp patches tires at his Texaco service station on North Main Street. Photo supplied by the author

*Continued on page 4*

## HISTORIGRAM

Published nine months per year by the  
Perinton Historical Society

Editor: Bill Poray  
Layout: Keith Boas  
Production & Distribution: Jim Unckless

## Perinton Historical Society

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Curator	Bill Keeler
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The Village has been responsive in efforts to solve chronic drainage problems in the window well areas, by providing coverings to help alleviate the problem in the future. We are also working with our Village partners to paint the building and do some trimming of the large tree in the back. In addition, Fairport Electric is providing their personnel in repairing some electrical problems at the museum. This is a true community effort and we appreciate the cooperation and support.

Again I send thanks out to the Greenbrier Garden Club for their care of our gardens. If you want to relax for a few moments, come to the museum and sit on the purple bench, enjoy the beauty of the gardens, and listen to the sound of nature. I have had people tell me that it is their own "Secret Garden." My youngest granddaughter has said, "come on Grandpa, let's get some Vitamin N", which means to get out and enjoy Mother Nature (Vitamin N). So come to the museum and get some Vitamin N.

Good news regarding the Saturday hours we have started this year to correspond with the Fairport Farmer's Market. We have opened the museum from 9-11:00 am. on Saturday mornings and the response has been great. This is made possible by members who are willing to volunteer for a couple of hours so that the museum can be open. The public has responded, and thanks to the members for volunteering. As I have mentioned in the past, we always need volunteers, so if you have an hour or two, please give us a call.

At our August board meeting, the primary topic of discussion was fundraising. The present income for PHS is the dues structure, which basically covers the operation of the museum and does not allow for the expansion of what we do. It is the desire of the Board to provide programs which could be viewed by members at any time and in different media. What a joy it would be to view Bill Poray's *Carl Peters* program again, or other wonderful presentations, when you have time. Also, we need a system in which members can search our files, records, photos and other data when looking for information about their homes, ancestors, or a topic of interest. In order to add younger members to our organization, we need to get up to speed with their technology. Of course, this all takes money. If you have an idea for raising additional income for PHS, please contact me or another board member.

In closing, one of the ways we generate a few dollars for PHS is by helping out at Fairport's Oktoberfest, to be held on October 4th and 5th. If you would like to volunteer, please let me know. It is a fun time and you will hear some great music.

Thanks for your support, and now it's time for a bit of Vitamin N, so we will chat again next month.

Bob Hunt, President  
585-415-7053 ~ rhunt1@rochester.rr.com



## Comments from your President

What a wonderful summer Cindy and I have enjoyed, with short trips to Chautauqua Institute, Cedar Run and Franklin, PA. We have also spent time with our granddaughters in sports, attended concerts at Perinton's Center Stage and the gazebo in Kennelly Park, bicycled over 1,000 miles, and



~ Bob Hunt ~

spent time in Fairport with friends.

Your museum has enjoyed the summer as well, and has benefited from some minor care and maintenance. We have been able to utilize a volunteer assigned by village court to provide 50 hours of work at the museum. Items completed thus far include cleaning, scraping and painting of the front railings. Our sign in the front lawn has been cleaned and painted with red lettering (see photo on page 10), as we have been told it was originally. In addition, the front and back entrances have been power washed, which has removed many years of grime. Finally, the front doors have been stripped of decades of old paint.



**GREAT WAY TO RAISE MONEY FOR PHS!**

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## Electronic Communications from PHS

Since September 2006, many PHS members have been receiving their copies of the *HISTORIGRAM* via e-mail, and currently 142 members have opted to have the newsletter delivered to them electronically. This method of distribution is faster and cheaper, plus it includes many photographs in color.

In addition, we occasionally send e-mail alerts to announce upcoming programs and other events, particularly in the months in which the *HISTORIGRAM* is not published. These alerts are usually sent four to six times per year to the *HISTORIGRAM* distribution list, plus about 120 other members who have provided their e-mail addresses. We would like to make these alerts available to more members and encourage you to include your e-mail address, even if you don't want to receive the *HISTORIGRAM* electronically.

We'll continue to provide the printed version of the *HISTORIGRAM* for all members who prefer it in that format. All membership e-mail communications are sent using the "blind carbon copy" option, so that your e-mail address does not appear on the copies received by others. The board of trustees has established a policy for protection of member information and the Perinton Historical Society will not share your e-mail address or use it for purposes other than PHS business.

If you have not been receiving the e-mail alerts and would like to in the future, please send an e-mail to—

**[membership@perintonhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:membership@perintonhistoricalsociety.org)**

Also, be sure to let us know if you change your address.

## Catch Them While You Can

*By Vicki Masters Profitt*



Our *Downton Abbey* exhibit is winding down its run and will close on September 15<sup>th</sup>. If you haven't had the chance, please stop by the museum during regular open hours to see these exquisite gowns inspired by the hit public television series *Downton Abbey*.

Also closing on September 15<sup>th</sup> is a wonderful exhibit created by curator Bill Keeler, celebrating 100 years of door-to-door postal service in the village of Fairport.

*Photo by Keith Boas*



# Downpour Fails to Sink PHS Float

*By Ann and Harold Castle,  
Float Chairpersons*

The Perinton Historical Society honored a prominent 19<sup>th</sup> century Fairport family in this year's Fourth of July Parade. The theme of our float was *A DeLand Family Christmas Eve in 1876*.

Members who volunteered their time, talents and materials were Sue Broda, Ann and Harold Castle, Sharon Catanese, Cindy and Bob Hunt, Anne Johnston, Lucy McCormick, Sue and Dave Scheirer, and Barb and Dave Wild. Ricci's Towing Service once again donated a flatbed truck and driver to carry our float. Helping to portray our theme on the float were Heather and Tristan Bauer. Taran Bauer passed out candy along the route. They were all still smiling when we unloaded a soggy float after a soaking downpour during the parade.

Although there was no judging of parade entries this year, we felt like winners as we helped to spread the word about our



The PHS float is pictured with some of the many volunteers involved in the project. All were dry when this photo was taken, but not for long.

wonderful museum. Bob Hunt treated us at the Moonlight Creamery once again this year, and each volunteer received a "special award" and a picture from Lucy and Ann to commemorate the event.



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*"Albert Knapp..." continued from page 1*

Albert became a familiar face around the community, even serving as fire chief of the Fairport Fire Department in the 1950s. Albert also started up the Fairport Business Association, which would eventually lead to the founding of the Perinton Chamber of Commerce. "We started Fairport Business to promote business, help other businessmen with any problems, and to establish good relations," said Knapp. Despite his many different endeavors, Albert is perhaps best known for his role in local politics. He started out with a position on the Perinton Recreation Commission. He was elected village mayor in 1963 and served as village trustee for four years starting in 1967.

While Albert's accomplishments and offices are sundry, it is what he did with those accomplishments and offices that have left such a lasting effect on the Perinton community. I sat down with Albert's son Warren and his wife Pat to find out what Albert was like as a father, a citizen, and a friend. "I've never met a man or animal I didn't like," said Albert, according to Pat. This friendly and positive attitude was clearly evident in all that Albert did and said. When he ran the Texaco station, Albert always helped out his customers in whatever way he could. "He was always a great friend," says Warren. "Farmers would come in with corn and other foodstuffs to trade for gas or service and he would take it." Additionally, Knapp saved his customers an estimated 67,500,000 tire miles when he installed a recapping and tire repair machine in his station. This machine was especially important due to the shortage of rubber

during World War II. Warren remembers his father working with the molds and caps in the shop saying, "It was a hot job." Warren also remembers his father as being a very enthusiastic fire chief, who loved to drive around in a red Jeep complete with siren. Albert was a very social and outgoing person. Warren and Pat remember that he loved music and dance. At a party, he was always the first to arrive and the last to leave. "He was known for selling tickets for the annual Rotary Christmas party," Warren says. "He would sell over half the tickets. He just had a way with people."

Family was vitally important to Albert. "He never could have done it all if Harriet hadn't been such a supportive person," says Warren of his mother. Warren recalls how his mother would help Albert to manage his impossibly busy schedule. She was always by his side, supporting him in all that he did, and the two loved to joke around together. "Dad always liked to joke that he had married a MUCH older woman," says Warren with a laugh. Harriett was born on February 13, 1912, just six days before Albert. Warren also has fond memories of the family vacations that Albert would take his children on in the summers. Despite his many commitments, Albert always managed to make time for family and friends.

Albert was committed to making a difference in his community, not only through his service as a public employee, but also through involvement in charitable works. He was always looking for ways to help others, whether it was in the commu-

*Continued on next page*

"Albert Knapp..." continued from page 4

nity or on the street where he lived. "When he was snowblowing his driveway, he never did just his," says Pat. Albert and his wife Harriet enjoyed serving the community with "Meals-on-Wheels" and they also worked on charitable projects with their church. Additionally, Albert was an extremely dedicated member of Fairport Rotary Club. He served as president of the club from 1949 to 1950 and had an astonishing attendance record of sixty perfect years. In 1982, the Perinton Chamber of Commerce named him "Citizen of the Year" in recognition of his innumerable contributions to the community.

Albert's political legacy lives on today in the accomplishments of Pat Knapp, his daughter-in-law. She has been a member of Perinton Town Council since 1981 and currently serves as Deputy Supervisor. Pat served as Fairport Trustee from 1975 to 1981. She has followed in Albert's footsteps, and was named the Perinton Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year in 2006. Pat says that Albert was always there to support and motivate her. "Oh yes, he was very proud of me," she says. "He always helped out younger politicians. He wanted to further good government, and get others involved." As a politician, Pat says that Albert was certainly unique in his friendly and helpful outlook. "He never considered the people he ran against as enemies," says Pat. He was also a very hands-on and involved leader. Warren likes to tell the story of when his father received a call from a Perinton citizen calling to complain that their leaves had not been picked up. Upon receiving the call, Albert drove to the home, picked up the leaves himself, and disposed of them. When Albert lost a political race, Pat was inspired to work towards her own political goals. "The night that he lost, I vowed to run for office," she says. "It was important for me to carry on, because of him." Pat is not the only one who Albert took under his wing. Clark King served as mayor of Fairport from 1989 to 2006. He knew Albert almost his whole life and came to greatly admire his passion for the community. "He was a mentor to many of us," King said. "He was the one that first encouraged me to be mayor".

Perinton is a place that many people grow up in, and choose to never leave. They choose to work, live, and raise their families in their hometown. Albert Knapp did all of that, but he also made a difference in his community and had a profound effect on those around him. He was known for his selflessness, his can-do attitude, and above all, his pure love for Perinton and the people who live there.

Now, when I see the pavilion by the ice-skating rink, I pause for a second to remember all that Albert Knapp did for our community, and what a fantastic example he has set for each and every community member to follow. "Albert followed the Golden Rule," says Pat. "Do unto others as you would do unto yourself." Albert and his impact on our community will certainly never be forgotten.



## 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual House Tour

By Deborah J. Wilcox Mabry,  
Chairperson

As I mentioned in the April, 2013 HISTORIGRAM, the 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual House Tour takes us into the twentieth century with a focus on the American Craftsman Bungalow and the Arts & Crafts movement. Our terrific committee consists of Elaine Lanni, Lucy McCormick, Jeanne Cole, Robin Ezell and myself, and we have been working on this tour since last fall.

We wanted to bring to our members an opportunity to delve into bungalow-style homes in Perinton and the history behind the development of this style of architecture. We also wanted to tie into what was happening in nearby communities, including East Rochester and Pittsford. In addition, to broaden everyone's knowledge, we developed a plan to provide our members with the information we have gathered. We view the 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual House Tour as more than a tour—it's a special opportunity to learn.

We started last fall, driving around Perinton, Pittsford and East Rochester, to uncover the bungalows in these communities. We did research and reached out to the area historians. We discovered many bungalow homes in Perinton, together with other homes that had characteristics of the style. The Midvale Drive community was one of Perinton's first subdivisions, established to provide a special place for middleclass folks to live in affordable homes—in a beautiful countryside. Bungalows were built and the community grew, because Midvale Drive had a stop, right there, for the Rochester, Syracuse, and Eastern Trolley Line.



Until the early 1930s, the Rochester, Syracuse, and Eastern Trolley Line made regular stops at both Midvale Drive and East Rochester (shown above).

Photo supplied by Jim Burlingame

Continued on page 6

*Our house tour this year will feature American Craftsman Bungalow homes, with architectural features displayed in the examples shown below. This structural style was popular in Perinton and neighboring communities about 100 years ago.*



37 Parker Street



54 East Street



752 Whitney Road

There were many other bungalow homes built in Perinton during this timeframe of 1905–1930s, some of which reside now in East Rochester, one of America’s earliest planned industrial suburbs—a major stop on the same trolley line (see the photo at the bottom of page 5 and the article on page 7 by Jim Burlingame, East Rochester Village Historian).

The growth of Pittsford coincided with that of Fairport and East Rochester, and includes Long Meadow Circle, the first subdivision in Monroe County. The trolley system ran adjacent to the roadway by the community and brought people from downtown Rochester to the village. There are varied styles of architecture in Long Meadow Circle, including several bungalows, such as the home at 4 Westbrook Road, a Sears Roebuck prefabricated California bungalow.

To provide you with all the information gathered, as well as present you with a tour of the houses, we’ve established the following plan: On September 17th at 7:30 pm, at the Fairport Historical Museum, the House Tour Committee will present a lecture and pictorial slideshow on our theme—the American Craftsman Bungalow. This presentation will include an overview of the development of the American bungalow, showcase the bungalows in Perinton with pictures and discuss their style and location.

We’ve also been privileged to have Keith Boas be our resident photographer and will present his photos, including interiors, from three homes—95 Midvale Drive, 150 Midvale Drive and 2753 Baird Road. The home-owners were not able to have their homes on the actual tour, but wanted to be a part of the project, and for that we are thankful.

In addition we will have photographs of some of the East Rochester and Long Meadow Circle bungalows. Lastly, we will discuss the development of the Rochester, Syracuse and Eastern Trolley (1906-1931) and its impact on the area.

On Sunday, October 6, the 43rd Annual House Tour will begin with a lecture at the Perinton Community Center at 1 pm. Our special guest speaker will be Alan Nowicki, Program Director for the Roycroft Campus in East Aurora, NY. He will talk about this National Historic Landmark, its architecturally rich Arts and Crafts buildings, the philosophy of Elbert Hubbard and the Roycroft and the Arts and Crafts Movement.

At 2:30 pm, attendees will go on to tour selected bungalow homes in our community. In addition, we are pleased to also provide PHS members with a map and self-guided walking tour of many other bungalows uncovered in Perinton

As you know, the House Tour is a special benefit of being a member of PHS. We hope you will join us on both September 17th and October 6th.





An early, 20th century view of Commercial Street in East Rochester, with the Rochester, Syracuse and Eastern trolley on route to Fairport.

*Photograph supplied by Jim Burlingame*

## A Very Short History of the Town and Village of East Rochester

*By Jim Burlingame  
East Rochester Village Historian*

East Rochester was formerly named Despatch, after the Merchants Despatch Transportation Company (Car Shops for short). The Car Shops manufactured refrigerated railroad cars. An average days production was around 20–25 cars. It was in operation from 1898 to 1970. East Rochester was the second planned community in the nation with Washington D.C. being the first. All the streets, lots and services were installed before the first lot was sold. The residential lots were all 40' x 80'. The east-to-west streets were named after trees, and the north-to-south streets were named after presidents. At one time it was the fastest growing community in New York.

In 1905, after a disastrous fire at its plant in Rochester, the Aeolian American Piano Company Piano Works), with the promise of free land, moved to East Rochester. When in full production, 5,000 pianos per month were being shipped all over the world. Many asked where the plant in Despatch, NY was located. It was hard to explain where Despatch was located

but most people knew where Rochester was, so the Piano Works promoted a referendum to change the name to East Rochester. After a close vote the name was changed. The Piano Works was in operation from 1905 to 1985.

One of the main reasons, other than the Car Shops, for the fast growth of the village was the introduction in 1905 of the Rochester, Syracuse and Eastern Trolley Line. It brought passengers to the village and further east through the trolley community of Midvale and the village of Fairport.

In 1970 a project changed the picture of the downtown section of East Rochester permanently. It was called Urban Renewal. Many thought it was a mistake, but it was done. Also at that time another event happened that greatly changed East Rochester. After 75 years of the village being in both the towns of Pittsford and Perinton and paying taxes to the towns and also to the village, the village decided to go co-terminous. That meant the village would become both a village and a town, called the Town/Village of East Rochester. This eliminated the payment of taxes to two entities. This worked for a while, but now there are few benefits to the arrangement.

The village of East Rochester is again undergoing a transformation, and is known as a place with good food and friendly people. After more than 115 years, this small village is still doing well, and looking forward to another 100 years of small-town living.



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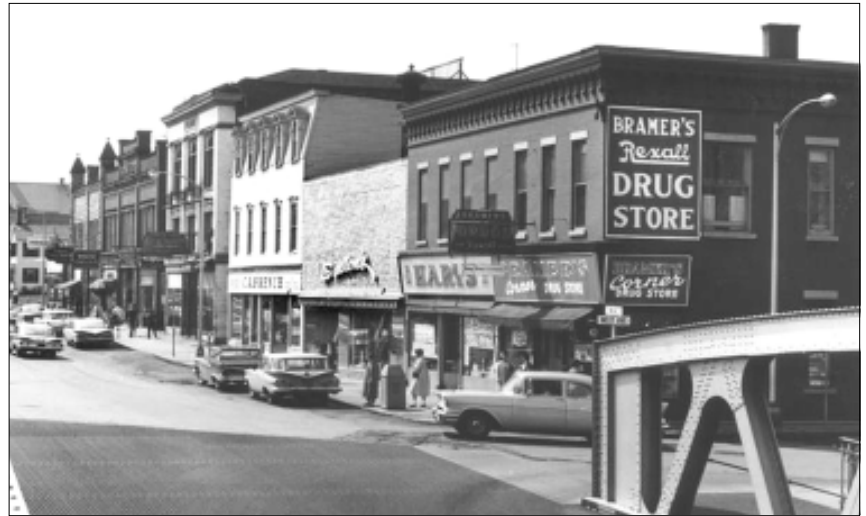
# West Avenue in the 1950s

*By Tom Bastian*

*Before demolition for the construction of the Fairport Village Landing, Bramer's Drug Store (right side of photo) stood at the corner of West Avenue and South Main Street, next to the lift bridge. Kennelley Park and a gazebo now occupy the site.*

*In the 1950s, the busy Bramer's Drug Store also served as the local Greyhound bus station.*

Photo from the  
Town of Perinton Archives



**I**t began on a bridge and ended at a field. It was just over a half mile in length, but in that distance it contained a remarkable diversity of architecture and purpose.

At its eastern end it was the third way to get onto the Fairport lift bridge. In the fifties, the canal was a much busier waterway than it is today. Grain, petroleum and a wide variety of commodities were still transported via the Barge Canal, as it was called then. It was common for the bridge to be raised to allow commercial traffic to pass, making it difficult to get on or off of West Avenue.

The eastern end of West Avenue had a busy commercial district. On the south side of the street was Bramer's corner drug store, which also served as a Greyhound bus station. As one moved west on the street you would find Fiandach's barber shop, a four lane bowling alley and a hardware store operated by Gerry Williams, on the first floor of what had been a silent movie theater. Next door was Sam Jacobson's tailor shop and Harland Laird's moving van business, which was also home to Fairport's first school buses. Next was a hobby store and finally Dr. Charles Whitney's dentist office.

Across the street and working back toward the bridge was the Rochester Telephone office in the red brick building, which still stands today. Farther toward Main Street was Clifford's Buick Dealership, in the large, light colored brick building. Then came the Fairport Herald Mail and Lieb's Bakery, replaced by today's modern apartment and commercial building. Finally, backing up to the canal, there was a large wooden building, which everyone figured would burn down any day. It housed Lin Bruening's Fairport Hardware.

To summarize the first block of West Avenue, you could buy just about anything you needed for your daily needs, except for food (other than baked goods), and there were several grocery stores just around the corner on Main Street

Traveling further west, you encountered the imposing Fairport High School. It housed grades 7 through 12 until Minerva Deland opened in 1959. From there to Nelson Street, West Avenue was strictly residential. The homes on West Avenue were a mix of small two story and larger homes built in the 19th century. Some had been converted into multi-family but most remained single family.

West Avenue was a street of families and children. In slightly more than a block just west of Woodlawn Avenue, there were nearly 30 children growing up in the 1950s. The Schoolmasters, Duttons, Marshes and Greens provided enough children to field teams to play almost any sport in anyone's side yard. In the 1950s, young people seemed to be outdoors most of the time. The Marsh house at the corner of West and Fourth Avenue seemed to be the center of activity. Their front porch was where everyone gathered to visit with David Marsh, who had contracted rheumatoid arthritis when very young and was confined to a wheelchair. Many a summer hour was spent on the Marsh front porch listening to Yankee games on the radio and playing games.

Further up the street things were pretty much the same. Until the mid fifties when Roselawn Crescent was developed, West Avenue ended in a field. Kids played in the field and fished and swam in the canal. The canal was a scary body of water in those days with stories of all kinds of unpleasant creatures lying on the bottom.

It may sound sappy, but Fairport's West Avenue in the 1950s was an almost ideal place to grow up, surrounded by safe places to play, a multitude of friends and many generations of wonderful citizens.





# Support the Perinton Historical Society with Your Membership

If you haven't already renewed your annual membership in PHS or would like to join for the first time, please fill in the form below and send it now. All memberships renewed before October 1 will include admission to the October 6<sup>th</sup> house tour. From October 1 to the tour, we will offer memberships at only the Individual and Family levels. We hope to hear from you soon.

**New Membership Levels:** Our membership form includes a new concept: special recognition levels of membership authorized by the Board of Trustees. The Business membership will acknowledge the member as a supporter of the Perinton Historical Society in each issue of the *HISTORIGRAM*, on the PHS website and at the museum. The DeLand, Potter and Perrin memberships acknowledge greater monetary contributions. These members will be recognized once in the *HISTORIGRAM* and listed on the website and at the museum, unless they prefer to remain anonymous.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please check the level of membership you prefer:

- Individual..... \$15
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- Senior Single [65 or older] .....\$10
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- Patron ..... \$50
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Special Recognition Levels:

- Business..... \$100
- DeLand ..... \$101-\$249
- Potter .....\$250-\$500
- Perrin ..... \$500 and above

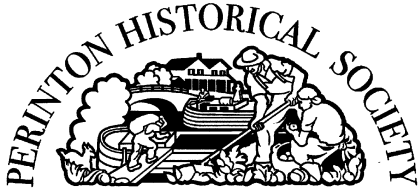
To make our programs successful, we depend on the generous gift of your time and talents. Please consider volunteering by joining a committee or serving on the Board of Trustees.

Check areas of interest:

- Board of Trustees – governing body of PHS
- Finance Committee – budget, fundraising
- Education – helping with adult and children's programs
- Museum Volunteer – 2 hours per month
- Property Committee – upkeep of the facility
- Historigram* – articles, editing, production, distribution
- Historic Tours – house, cemetery, landmark
- Technology Committee – assesment, planning, implementing
- Seasonal projects – parades, Canal Days, etc
- Other – give us your ideas

Our membership year runs from  
September 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>.

Please make checks payable to:  
**Perinton Historical Society**  
**18 Perrin Street**  
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## Fairport Historical Museum

18 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY 14450

The museum is open to the public on  
Saturdays, Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays  
at the hours listed below.

### Hours

Sunday 2:00-4:00 pm  
Tuesday 2:00-4:00 pm  
Thursday 7:00-9:00 pm

Group tours, presentations and special  
projects are by appointment. Please call  
and leave a message at 223-3989.



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