

## Chamber of Commerce Profiles from the 1960s

*By Bill Poray*

In the years 1961 through 1964, the Fairport Chamber of Commerce published personal profiles of members of the organization in the *Fairport Herald-Mail* newspaper. A total of 73 profiles were written and published, along with portraits by local photographer and Chamber of Commerce member John North.

A sample of six of North's portraits are reproduced here, along with excerpts of the published profiles of those pictured. (See member profiles on page 6.) Perhaps you will recognize some of the individuals featured.

Also, see page 8 for photographer John North's portrait and an excerpt from his personal Chamber of Commerce profile.

The collection of photos is a portion of the Earl Pittinano Collection of the Perinton Historical Society, and has recently been digitized.



**Six examples of Chamber of Commerce member profile photos  
from 1961 and 1962**

top-left: Imogene Copeland, top-center: Henry Masciangelo, top-right: Dewey Jackson,  
bottom-left: Helen Felix, bottom-center: Lewis Bramer,  
bottom-right: Maude Schoolmaster.



## From your President

The new year of 2023 dawns bright with possibilities. I am reminded of how much the Perinton Historical Society has accomplished since its inception in 1935. PHS founders started meeting at the homes of

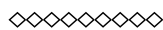
~Vicki Profitt~

members, gathering information and artifacts, intent on preserving Fairport and Perinton's history for future generations. Those charter members would be so proud to witness the vitality of the organization they founded and to see it housed in a beautiful historic building, supported by a membership of over 550 members.

Although the museum is closed in January and February, our Thursday Morning Crew volunteers keep busy sifting through the wealth of information about families, organizations and businesses that has accumulated in the 88-year history of the PHS. They have done a fantastic job in the museum's Resource Library gathering and organizing materials in order to better assist our visitors with their research questions.

Volunteer Coordinators John and Nancy Bowley are eagerly awaiting the Volunteer Recognition and Training Seminar, which will take place on February 25<sup>th</sup>. During the closure, Nancy Slaybaugh and I are refreshing exhibits in preparation for the museum's reopening on Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup>. Committees are already hard at work planning this year's house tour, PHS June Members Event and the Colonial Belle cruise.

It is going to be a wonderful year for the Perinton Historical Society. Thank you for your support of our efforts to preserve today's history for tomorrow.



**150 Years Ago This Month:** On February 14, 1873, the very first newspaper in Fairport was published.

**THE FAIRPORT HERALD.**

VOL. 1--NO. 1. FAIRPORT, MONROE COUNTY, N. Y. FEBRUARY 14, 1873.

## Perinton Historical Society

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

|                       |               |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| <i>President</i>      | Vicki Profitt |
| <i>Secretary</i>      | Suzanne Lee   |
| <i>Treasurer</i>      | Linda Wiener  |
| <i>Communications</i> | Jane DeMeis   |

### TRUSTEES

|                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Keith Boas     | Bill Poray      |
| Kay Joslyn     | Nancy Slaybaugh |
| Lucy McCormick | Jim Unckless    |

### MUSEUM

|                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| <i>Director</i> | Vicki Profitt |
|-----------------|---------------|

### MISSION

To promote interest in preserving and sharing local history through education and accessibility.

The *Historigram* is published nine months per year by the Perinton Historical Society. The content of our newsletter is provided by PHS Board members and committee staff. Opinions expressed in any article in this newsletter are those of the author of the article alone and are not those of the PHS unless expressly stated otherwise.

|                                      |                                 |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Editor</i>                        | Bill Poray                      |
| <i>Art Director</i>                  | Keith Boas                      |
| <i>Production &amp; Distribution</i> | Jim Unckless                    |
| <i>Proofreading</i>                  | Irene Poray,<br>Nancy Slaybaugh |

The John Clayton article published in this issue of the *Historigram* was written by him and is published in the *Historigram* verbatim at his request. The *Historigram* staff has not researched or verified any facts or edited the article, and any statements are those of the author alone. Any opinions stated in the article are also those of the author alone and are not necessarily those of the *Historigram* and/or the Perinton Historical Society.



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**2022–2023  
Special Recognition Level  
Memberships**

*As of January 14, 2023*

**Business (\$100)**

**Barranco's Clothing and Shoes**

32 North Main Street, Fairport, NY 14450,  
Phone: 585-388-1270  
Email: BarrancosClothing@gmail.com

**Canandaigua National Bank & Trust**

72 South Main Street, Canandaigua, NY 14424  
Phone: 585-394-4260, Web: cnbank.com

**Fairport Village Inn**

Wayne and Patty Beckwith  
103 North Main Street, Fairport, NY 14550  
Phone: 585-388-0112, Web: thefvi.com

**Fulkerson Services, Inc.**

111 Parce Avenue, Fairport, NY 14450  
Phone: 585-223-2541, Web: fulkersonservices.net

**GRITWORX Designs Woodwork**

7 Tea Olive Lane, Fairport, NY 14450  
Phone 585-678-1156, Web: gritworxdesigns.com

**Hon. Evelyn Frazee, Hon. Thomas Klonick**

**Lift Bridge Yarns**

23 North Main Street, Fairport, NY 14450  
Dawn Verdugo & Jessie McNaughton  
Phone: 585-364-0521, Email: Dawn@LiftBridgeYarns.com

**Lucien A. Morin II, Partner**

McConville Considine Cooman and Morin, P.C.  
300 Meridian Centre Blvd., Suite 110, Rochester, NY 14618  
Phone: 585-512--3534, Email: lmorin@mccmlaw.com,

**Salle d' Escrime of Prescott, AZ  
A Fencing Club**

Patricia Dodge Waples, Owner

**DeLand (\$100–\$249)**

Carol Ann Britt  
Kathleen Cloonan and Barry Childs  
Kathleen Desko  
Diana Howk

**Potter (\$250-\$499)**

Bill and Pat May

**Perrin (\$500 and above)**

Anonymous

**Memorial Donations**

Lucy and John McCormick in memory of  
Frank Angevine

Nadine and Jack Fiero in memory of  
William Wilcox

Donna J. Strelow and Dr. Lisa Strelow in memory of  
William Wilcox



**Upcoming  
Programs & Events**

**Tuesday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 7:00 pm at the  
Fairport Public Library**

Program: Perinton Ambulance–  
The Past and the Future

Presenter: Chief Mike Hoskins

REGISTRATION REQUIRED through the library

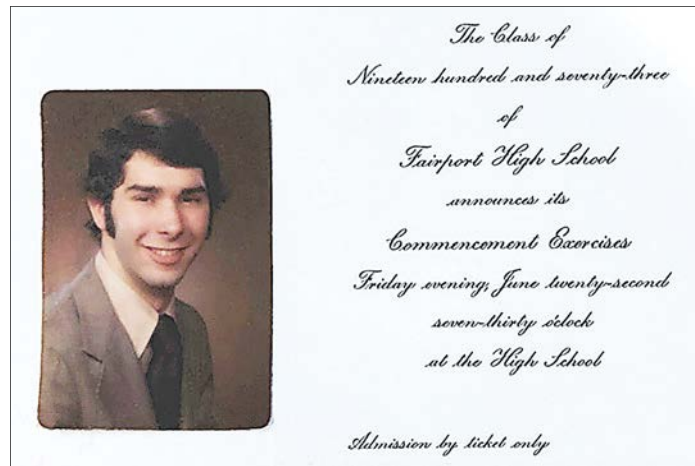
**Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00 am–12:00 pm  
at the museum**

Event: Volunteer Recognition & Training Seminar  
Registration required  
–email jandnbowley@rochester.rr.com to register.

**Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00 am–1:00 pm**

The museum reopens for the season.





**Hi, my name is John D. Clayton.** I came out at age 16 in September 1971, a time when most actions involved with homosexual behavior were illegal and would easily cause other boys & men to become violent against me. I had few rights. I always wanted to be an authentic person so it was clear to me that I had to come out early.

**Here is my story:**

I moved to Fairport at age 8 from Dover, Delaware. Even by that age, I knew I was gay. How did I know? I was attracted to James Bond in the 1962 movie Dr. No, not to his girlfriends! Unfortunately, I didn't know what to do about it.

My adjustment to living in suburban Fairport took several years, but I made good friends...but I was always conscious that I was different. I never felt I was less than others, just different. I was bullied often, but so was everyone else, or so I reasoned. In seventh grade I was called a HOMO by one of my jock friends on my crowded school bus (after he had aggressed on me sexually the evening before). In my junior year, one of my classmates used hate speech on me during chemistry class. I thought it would never get better and that maybe I was just too sensitive. Now I know what they did was wrong.

The big revelation came for me when my mom encouraged me to take an after-school job at Sibley's department store the month their Eastview Mall store opened up, August 1971. I had just turned 16. I worked 20 hours a week selling men's clothing and, as such, I got to meet many kinds of adults, my co-workers, who I would never have met as a high school kid. Within the first month, it became clear to me from conversations I overheard that there were men who danced and partied with each other...even some men who lived with each other and shared the same bed. This was a pleasant shock. I got to know them socially and they were not weird. Finally, I met people I could talk to without any fear. People who were like me.

My parents saw the change in me. My mom really, really, really didn't approve, but I was determined they would not stop me, which they did not. She told me if I continued this way I would "end up in the gutter" and "she hated all my old men" (her hurtful words for my older boyfriends). My dad, on the other hand, was quietly supportive.

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I was the first student to take AP French and I was graduated from FHS in June 1973 with honors. I had a circle of 12 friends, The Group--I planned events, parties and trips. I still have the T-Shirt they gave me in 1973 that says in big blue letters: Social Director. We have had reunions every few years for the last 47 years. I even had a jock for a boyfriend in my junior and senior years of high school, but he was so closeted that no one knew about us.

I was the only student from FHS to get into Duke University that year. I spent my Junior Year abroad in Geneva, Switzerland as the only male (and first-ever gay) student with 30 women from Smith College. These successful women are now my best friends and we have been meeting and speaking to each other for over 45 years. I was the only student who lived with a Swiss family, which also helped me master both French and German. I also sneaked out and had fascinating foreign boyfriends: a businessman from Quebec, a diplomat from Portugal and a graduate student from Uruguay. I always loved geography.

Four years later, I was graduated magna cum laude from Duke with a double major in French & Economics...and I had my first live-in boyfriend during my senior year.

In the business world, I encountered only occasional anti-gay hostility, but adults are just a little bit more polite about it than straight male high school students.

I worked for two years before I got my M.B.A. with honors from The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. It was quite an achievement to get into this school because it is one of the top 3 business schools in the whole world. I was the only openly gay student in my 1981 class of 250. I was openly living with my boyfriend, who was attending the Dental School there. Some of my male classmates made nasty remarks about me, but my women friends shut them up quickly! I graduated in 1981 and took a job in marketing in the airline industry in Texas.

Early in my life, my career advancement was more important to me than where I lived, so I moved 9 times in my first 9 years. My ultimate goal was to move to California (which I did in 1986 at age 31) and get a 6-figure job (I accomplished this at 34). My dream was to marry my fantasy James Bond, have a big in-ground swimming pool and drive a Jaguar convertible. I accomplished all this by age 54.

I lived in Southern California over 32 years, first in my house in the Hollywood Hills of Los Angeles, then finally in on a 200-acre estate in Santa Barbara. I have been in two long-term relationships: one domestic partnership of 18 years (you couldn't get married in 1992) and my current marriage of 11 years. I have now retired back here, in Brighton. Thanks for listening to my story. **Just remember, you can be whatever you want and live with whomever you want. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise!**

**PLEASE FEEL FREE TO EMAIL ME: [JohnDouglasClayton@gmail.com](mailto:JohnDouglasClayton@gmail.com)**

### **Imogene Copeland**

"An outstanding example of a girl on the go. A lady who works a full time job but makes opportunity to serve on civil committees, participate in various clubs and organizations, indulge herself in a multitude of hobbies but can still find time to cook her own breakfast. She is a medical full time secretary for a Rochester MD, the secretary of the Greater Fairport Chamber of Commerce, secretary of the Village Planning Board, a past president of the Fairport Business and Professional Women's Club, active in the Perinton Historical Society, clerk and treasurer of the Greenvale Cemetery Association. Imogene lives in the house in which she was born. It is now more than a century old."

### **Henry Masciangelo**

"A native Fairporter that established his personal popularity at an early age. In his high school days he starred at track and football and was named "All County" guard on the 1940 eleven, of which he was co-captain. Energies he expended on the playing field were funneled into the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Henry was bitten by two bugs while in the service: construction and travel. When Henry returned from the army he went into the building business, and many of the fine homes (up to \$30,000) on Turk Hill Road are the result of his imagination and handiwork. Six or seven years ago the Village administration, aware of his talents, appointed him building inspector."

### **Dewey T. Jackson**

"Thomas Jackson, Dewey's grandfather, settled on what is now Jackson Road almost 125 years ago. The late Dewey Jackson Sr. was born on the farm and began the Dewey Jackson Inc. fuel business more than half a century ago, 1904 to be exact. Dewey is a graduate of the Fairport schools and RBI. He served in the U.S. Navy from 1942 to 1945. He is active in Little League, bowls once a week with a commendable average of 164, plays golf at Monroe Country Club, and is addicted to home movies. Under future plans – to "keep our business booming by attention to customer service and dedication to quality products."

### **Helen Felix**

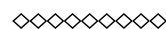
"...A girl that knows her groceries! She is Helen Felix, who operates a dawn to way-late food operation on High St. It is not only the fine provisions that have made the Felix Market a by-word in Fairport but the genial personality of the blonde and bouncy Helen. The Felix Market has a long established precept—"The customer comes first"—it's paid off over the years. There are no surly clerks in the store. Along with the purchases you get a smile, a kind word, and engaging conversation, and in this department, Helen excels. The grocery gal is a member of the Chamber of Commerce, active in affairs of the church of the Assumption, a member of St. Theresa Society and St. Mary's Guild."

### **Lew Bramer**

"A fellow with countless hobbies and little time to indulge himself. As co-proprietor of Bramers Corner Drug Store, one of the area's most successful pharmacies, the needs of the store's ever growing list of customers comes first. Lew somewhat wistfully dismisses his dedication to duty with a wry smile and the observation that "a pharmacy (and its owners) have a never-discharged responsibility to their customers—they come first. Lew and his father before him have embraced that creed. Lew is a graduate of Fairport High School, Colgate University, and the Philadelphia Academy of Pharmacy and Science. He has been a partner in the family enterprise for more than ten years."

### **Maude Schoolmaster**

"A lady who has made a career of keeping busy. Devoted to her family, she has found time to keep a career going on the side, indulge herself as a sewing addict, and to haunt the auctions and antique shops to add to her collection. She was born in Penfield, the former Maude Peters, and graduated from Fairport High School. For many years she was an employee of the Rochester Telephone Company as an operator. Still reluctant to give up the work with the coming of the dials, she now serves part time on the switchboard at Minerva DeLand High School and part time in the cafeteria. She is the Chamber of Commerce representative for the 140 members of the Fairport Business and Professional Women's Club."



## **How You can Support the Perinton Historical Society**

- Become a member / give a gift membership.
- Volunteer your time as a museum volunteer or on a committee.
- Donate artifacts to the museum that pertain to Fairport and Perinton.
- Purchase unique gifts from the Fairport Historical Museum gift shop.
- Donate gift cards and gift baskets for Yuletide Traditions silent auctions.
- Donate to the PHS through estate bequests, planned giving, IRA charitable giving, memorial and honor gifts, employer matching contributions, AmazonSmile, and ROC the Day.



# Celebrating Perinton Ambulance

Our first responders play a vital role in our community. In 2023, PHS will highlight these hometown heroes, beginning with a presentation about Perinton Ambulance. Please join us at the Fairport Public Library on Tuesday, February 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 pm to hear about the ambulance corps from Chief Mike Hoskins. Registration information is included below.

Perinton Ambulance was started through the Fairport Lions Club with an idea and need to service the medical needs of our friends and neighbors. Chief Hoskins will present a look at the origins of Perinton Ambulance with images and stories of the growing pains and challenges of the organization. The Chief will explain how the entire public safety and healthcare landscapes have changed dramatically, along with the emergency service workforce. There will be historical pictures and some vintage equip-



ment to view. We will look at how healthcare innovation, equipment, and treatment protocols have evolved to bring a higher level of service than ever before to the doorstep of every 911 caller. Learn how Perinton Ambulance continues to innovate and invest in critical technology, equipment, and staff development to provide the exceptional medical services this community has come to depend on.

The program is co-sponsored by the Perinton Historical Society and the library. Registration is required through library and is limited. To register, visit [FairportLibrary.org](http://FairportLibrary.org) or call the library at 585-223-9091.



## Volunteer Recognition & Training Seminar

Left: Photo taken during last year's seminar

On Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00 am–12:00 pm, current and prospective museum volunteers are invited to attend a Volunteer Recognition & Training Seminar at the Fairport Historical Museum.

The seminar is an opportunity for volunteers to get to know each other and to get a refresher on everything from greeting visitors to processing gift shop sales. Volunteers will also be able to view the new exhibits before the museum re-opens to the public in March. Please RSVP by

February 22<sup>nd</sup> to our Volunteer Coordinators, John and Nancy Bowley, at [jandnbowley@rochester.rr.com](mailto:jandnbowley@rochester.rr.com).

Museum volunteers work one two-hour shift per month. New volunteers are paired with veteran volunteers for each shift, and training is provided. The PHS is always looking for new volunteers to staff the museum. Please contact John and Nancy if you have any questions.



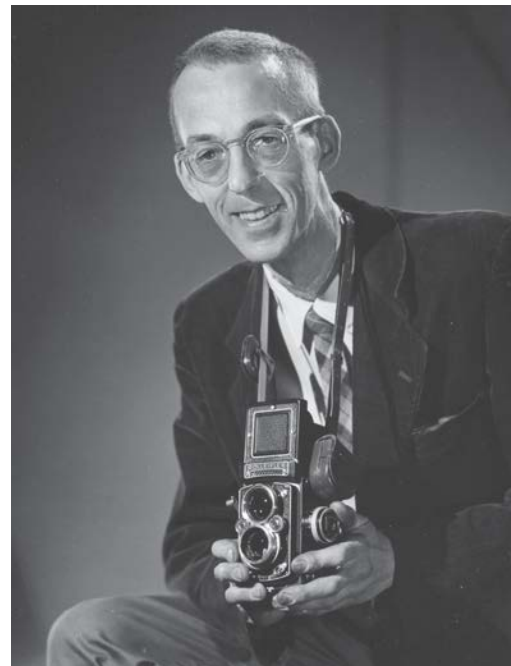


Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 149  
Fairport, NY 14450



*Photographer **John North's** portrait  
and an excerpt from his 1961 Chamber  
of Commerce profile*

“A fellow who turned his hobby into a business and persuaded his wife to join him in the enterprise. Thus he is the rare soul whose pleasure is his work and whose work is his hobby. The North Studio and the words “photo by North” are household words in this area and have equal significance in Rochester and in the photographic showings across this part of the country. John was the most avid photographer in high school. He later graduated from RIT majoring in color photography. His army service found him in the role of topographical engineer. North photographs have been accepted for exhibition at countless state and national exhibitions for professional photographers.”



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**Fairport Historical Museum, 18 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY 14450**

The museum is currently closed to the public for the season. It will reopen on Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup>. During this period, you may call Vicki Masters Profitt at **585-233-1204** or email at [director@perintonhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:director@perintonhistoricalsociety.org) to book a group tour or do research. [www.PerintonHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.PerintonHistoricalSociety.org)