

Perinton Historical Society Historiogram

18 Perrin Street
Fairport, NY 14450

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The Big Snow Storm of 1944

By Bill Poray

As the days become shorter and the wind turns cold, it can be hard for some of us to warm up to the reality of the long winter ahead. For me, it helps to take a few moments to recall the memories of youthful snowbound adventures, including my wobbly attempts at skating, blazing trails in fresh deep snow, and hot cocoa by the fire after an afternoon spent with the Flexible Flyer.

Thankfully, former resident Betsy Garner Carpenter provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the joy of winter, through the eyes of a little girl in 1940s Fairport.

Betsy Garner Carpenter Remembers Winter in Fairport

The HISTORIGRAM's gargantuan layout department staff (consisting of Keith Boas) shares an email message Keith recently received from a class of 1958 Fairport High School friend, Betsy Garner Carpenter, who now lives in Chatsworth, New Jersey.

The Garner family came to Fairport in May of 1944 from Merchantville, New Jersey. In her email to Keith, Betsy recalls, "We rented the second floor of the DeVoes' home at 15 Pleasant Street. Looking at this house's front, Dr. Dodge and his family lived on the left and the Hendricks lived on the right (on the other side of the alley). The Hendricks had high hopes of bringing this huge old mansion back to its *glory days*."

The Big Snow

A page from Betsy's family photo album, titled "The Big Snow—December, 1944", provides views of Pleasant Street, one of our oldest village roads. In fact, our area suffered through two large storms over a period of two weeks that year.

While big snowstorms can be difficult to endure, to a little girl on Pleasant Street, the snow was a reason to celebrate and have some fun.



The photo at left includes Betsy posing in December, 1944. Upon their arrival in Fairport, the Garner family initially lived on the second floor of the closer house, number 15. A massive cupola crowns the distant house, number 19. At right is a recent photo for comparison.

Continued on page 3

Comments from your President

~ Bob Hunt ~



First of all, let me follow up on last month's comments where I mentioned volunteers from Perinton Historical Society provided 27 hours of service at the Octoberfest event. We just received a check in the amount of \$540 for helping at the event. It certainly helps our finances!

I have registered Perinton Historical Society for *ROC the Day* to take place on December 8, 2011. *ROC the Day* is a 24-hour online-giving event providing an opportunity for the generous people in the greater Rochester area to support their favorite nonprofits, and we hope we are one of their/your favorites. From midnight on Thursday, December 8 until 11:59 pm that night, the secure online giving platform at *RochtheDay.org* will accept online and mobile donations. So please let all your friends and neighbors know of this opportunity of supporting PHS. We are also in the running to receive one of five \$1,000 bonus gifts to be given away on December 8th.

The year 2012 is the Town of Perinton's bicentennial year and PHS is planning to be involved in several ways to support a number of events. There will be events taking place throughout the year, but the primary focus will be in the month of July. July 4th will find our community celebrating with a special bicentennial parade featuring antique equipment and floats. Also that day, organizers have planned a community picnic in the park, plus a boat parade and races. PHS is planning to have a float ready for the celebration and, at present, just beginning discussion on what we'd like to have in the way of a float.

The second area in which the PHS is getting involved: putting together a scavenger hunt based on the history of Perinton. This will be a fun, educational activity, probably taking place in July, designed to let participants discover interesting facts about our town and its history. We're also considering a possible geocaching event.

If you would like to participate on either the float or the scavenger committee, please let me know.

I wish all of you a warm and peace-filled holiday season. Thank you for all you do on behalf of the Perinton Historical Society. It is appreciated!

Bob
415-7053, rhunt1@rochester.rr.com



Historigram

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Editor: Bill Poray

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Perinton Historical Society

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Consider a PHS Gift Membership for those on your Christmas list.

Membership in the Perinton Historical Society is a thoughtful gift which will be remembered throughout the year and will help support our educational and preservation programs. Just fill out the form below, include the appropriate dues and send it to the Fairport Historical Museum, 18 Perrin St., Fairport, NY 14450.

We'll acknowledge your gift and send a welcome letter with the most recent HISTORIGRAM to your recipient.

Your Name: _____

Recipient's Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State & Zip: _____

Membership Level:

Individual \$15 ___ Family \$20 ___ Patron \$50 ___

Senior Single \$8 ___ Senior Couple \$12 ___

"The Big Snow" Continued from page 1



Betsy with her father, Elwood A. Garner, Teddy the dog, and an unidentified snowman. Mr. Garner was a Perinton town councilman from 1955 to 1966, and also served as president of the Fairport Rotary Club.

Skating on the Canal

To her old friend, Keith Boas, Betsy wrote, "Your photo, *Pond Hockey Tournament at Fairport* (see below), brought back happy memories for me. When I was about six or seven, my dad took me skating on the canal just below Fairport's slant-and-angled lift bridge. There were bonfires on the ice, and I was wearing strap on, double-runner skates. It was a magical night. Much of the water in the canal had been drained. To climb down to the ice, we used wooden steps, or maybe a ladder, braced against the canal's cement wall. In today's world, I suppose this would have been considered unsafe access; but I don't recall having any difficulty getting up or down."

"I do recall that Dad wore Maynard Barnes' black skates. Maynard and Bert (Alberta, his wife) Barnes were our next-door neighbors. We, the Garner family, lived at 1 Galusha Street, and the Barnes family lived at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Galusha Street. This was immediately after WW II, and money was scarce, so we shared skates."



Pond hockey tournament on the canal in Fairport. Photo by Keith Boas in February, 2010.

From the FAIRPORT HERALD-MAIL
December 14, 1944

Fairport Herald-Mail

Streetly Spelt Year - Number 47 FAIRPORT, N. Y., DECEMBER 14, 1944 \$2.00 a Year, Single Copy 10c

Second Heavy Snow Storm Reported the Worst on Record

Winter's fury was again hurled on this area in such force as to make the storm of two weeks ago appear as just a preliminary.

Starting Monday evening and continuing through Tuesday and part of Wednesday, nearly 24 inches of snow fall was recorded by the weather bureau, one of the worst December storms in New York's history. High winds which accompanied the storm piled drifts as high as 7 ft. in some sections.

Snow plow crews labored diligently to keep highways open against overwhelming odds. Traffic was a standstill, except for a few emergency cases, late Monday night and all day Tuesday. Bus service was practically discontinued, even in Rochester. A few Greyhound buses made the trip between Rochester and Fairport on Tuesday and Wednesday and all were crowded to the doors and forced to pass up many waiting along the route.

(It) appears that conditions were brought under control in Fairport and in the Town of Perinton ahead of the city of Rochester where streets are still reported to be blocked with snow and stranded motorized equipment.

The Fairport Municipal Commission reports that, outside of a tree blown down near the Green Lantern Inn, 2 poles on Whitney Rd. and a pole down on Palmyra Rd., electric service was maintained with only one interruption. Telephone service was way overtaxed as operators struggled to get calls through. Deliveries were made wherever possible, and milkmen did their utmost to cover their routes, although somewhat late.

~ Our Mission ~

The Mission of the Perinton Historical Society is to promote interest in preserving and sharing local history.

Another Story of Baseball in Fairport

By Bill Keeler

Based on information from Leonard Sayles

In the October issue of the HISTORIGRAM, Bill Poray wrote a detailed article about baseball in Fairport. Later that month, Bill Keeler received a call from a long-time member and avid reader of the newsletter who recalled the oddest baseball game ever played in Fairport in the 1930s.



Fairport newspaper story from another donkey ball game, this one in 1935

The phone call came from Leonard Sayles who grew up in Fairport in the 1920s and 30s and now lives in Dobb's Ferry, New York. His father owned the Robert Sayles Men's Wear Store at 11-15 South Main Street, which was later known as Rudin's store.

Leonard recalls that a semi-professional team came to town in the summer of 1932 that played a special brand of baseball called donkey baseball. The games ran over several evenings and were held on the high school field, which was behind our museum between Church Street and West Avenue.

When the batter hit the ball, he would then mount a donkey tethered near home plate and "race" to first base riding the beast. The fielders, all sitting on donkeys, would try to field the ball while mounted on animals that never really grasped the essence of the game.

Leonard says that a good time was had by all except, perhaps, the donkeys.



FALL CLEAN UP Courtesy of the Greenbrier Garden Club

I arrived at the museum, one morning recently, to find several members of the Greenbrier Garden Club spread over the grounds, weeding, trimming, raking and pruning, all with smiles and a lots of laughter.

We are fortunate to have a long term relationship with this wonderful group of volunteers. The president of the Greenbrier Garden Club, Joyce Lyle, is also the membership chairperson for the 7th District, New York State Garden Clubs, Inc., which includes 46 clubs in the eleven county region.

Joyce would like us to know that if anyone is interested in joining a garden club, please call her at (585) 425-0501. There are three clubs in the Fairport / Perinton area.

The Editor



Some of the many Greenbrier Club members who keep our museum grounds beautiful, from left to right: Linda Wentworth, Cathy Clarke, Lynn Forbes, Dot Latone, and Pat Beckwith

Spotlight on Perinton Landmarks Orchard Glen

*Provided by the Perinton Architectural Commission
and Jean Keplinger, Town Historian*



On the Perinton-Penfield boarder, on Lincoln Mills Road, a street that lies between Irondequoit Creek and a driving range, is a five-acre parcel of land upon which stands a charming 1830s Greek Revival house called *Orchard Glen*.

This area along Irondequoit Creek was a thriving part of the town by the 1830s, with settlers taking advantage of the available water power to build mills. A one-mile area of the deep and fast creek supported 25 water-powered industries, including saw and grist mills, foundries, tanneries and forges. Stephen and John Carpenter owned and operated a carding and fulling mill on the creek just south of the town line. The mills initially carded wool fibers into thread that would be woven into cloth at home. The woven material could then be “fulled” or washed with fuller’s soap, beaten and dried. The resulting fabric was smaller and thicker after the process, which made it warmer than before.

In 1835, Stephen brought his bride, Ambeline Aldrich Carpenter, home to the house that he had built above the creek and his mill several years earlier. The original two-story part of the house was built in the Greek Revival style with a front gable and side wing that was typical of the times. It includes pilasters, gable-end cornice returns, six-over-six double-hung windows, louvered wooden shutters and frieze band windows. The two additions, a one-story north wing and a one-story shed-roofed ell, date from the early to middle 20th century. The property includes a tennis court and historic plantings. It is surrounded by a white board fence. The land across the street



leading down to Irondequoit Creek is protected by the Genesee Valley Land Trust.

Stephen Carpenter and his wife Ambeline had seven children. Four of the children are named in the 1840 census: Charles, Helen, Adelia, and

Cassius. The 1852, 1858, and 1872 maps all show S.C. Carpenter as owner of the same property in Lot 55. A quote from *Penfield's Past* describes the site of the Carpenter home: “Mott’s Lane was a wagon road leading down to the west bank of Irondequoit Creek from the road above, now called Lincoln Mills Road. It was said to ford the creek there and go up the hills on the opposite side to Five Mile Line Road. At the base of this land, beside the creek, stood the slaughter house and carding mill operated by S.C. Carpenter in 1863.” The 1878 county directory does in fact list Stephen Carpenter as a butcher.

Stephen and Ambeline died in 1886 and 1889 respectively. By 1902, the map shows C. Carpenter as owner of the property, probably Stephen and Ambeline’s son Charles. According to family records, Charles’ youngest sister Alice and her husband Edward Hawkins regularly spent summers at the house.

Subsequently, Stephen and Ambeline’s granddaughter Doris and her husband Schuyler Baldwin took over the house and raised their three children there. Doris’ early memories of the house include finding spear heads, a grain grinder, and half of an iron ox shoe on the road, which was a former Seneca trail. She also remembered American chestnut trees before they were wiped out by blight. Her love of the orchards, woods and fields on the family property and her desire to preserve the integrity of her ancestral land led her to seek protection for a portion of the property from the Genesee Land Trust, which was done.

The Carpenter family through its Baldwin descendants retained ownership of the property for over 165 years, until 2000 when the house was sold. The new owner felt a strong affinity for her new home and has had the opportunity to talk about the property and its history with Beryl Punt, Doris and Schuyler’s daughter.

To the delight of Carpenter and Baldwin descendants, the house was designated a Perinton landmark in 1991.



Fairport's Forgotten Founding Father

By Bill Poray

The 1944 photo on page 1, provided by Betsy Garner Carpenter, prodded my curiosity regarding Pleasant Street, and specifically about the big house with the rooftop cupola. According to Monroe County tax records, the house at 19 Pleasant Street is over 4,000 square feet, and is divided into several apartments. I decided to find out as much as I could about what was at one time one of Fairport's great show-places.

The relocation of houses and buildings was a common occurrence in the early days of our town and village. According to a 1935 newspaper article featuring the recollections of Herb Howard, born in 1860, the house now at 25 Pleasant Street formerly stood at the site of number 19. Herb recalled that it was the home of A. C. Hill, and was moved a short distance so that Mr. Hill could construct his new home, the house with the cupola in Betsy's 1944 photograph.

If you have heard of A. C. Hill, you are probably in an exclusive group. Even if you are a student of Perinton and Fairport history, you may not know much about him. As intriguing as his story is, it might be equally interesting to understand how Mr. Hill virtually vanished from our local history. In any case, here is some essential information to know about Mr. Augustus C. Hill, and why I have unofficially dubbed him "Fairport's Forgotten Founding Father".

Augustus C. Hill was born February 27, 1825, in Victor, New York. After attending Lima Seminary, he taught school for a short time at Bushnell's Basin. By 1847, the 22 year old Hill relocated to Fairport, and accepted a position as a clerk for the retail firm of Dickinson & Webb. In addition to working for Mr. Webb, he also lived with the Webb family, according to the 1850 federal census.

Hill must have impressed his employers, because he eventually was made a partner in the company. Over several years, partners came and went, and eventually the firm came to be known as Dickinson and Hill, carrying a wide assortment of products in the general mercantile trade. In 1865 the firm built



Closer view of the house built by A. C. Hill.
Photo taken in 1944.

a large brick building near the corner of South Main Street and West Avenue, ultimately torn down during urban renewal.

A.C. Hill became one of Fairport's most successful business leaders of his era. However, his most important contributions came as a community leader. By 1854, at the age of 29, Hill was elected Perinton Town Clerk. Ten years later, he served as Perinton's town supervisor, and led the enlistment drive that allowed Perinton to fill its quota of soldiers for the Civil War more quickly than any town in Monroe County. He later led the effort to place the Civil War monument at the newly established Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

To be continued in our next (February) issue

~ 100 Years Ago ~
From the FAIRPORT HERALD-MAIL
December 13, 1911

Making a rough guess, there have been more than 60 new houses built in Fairport during the past 11 months, which we call a pretty good growth. One firm of contractors now has the work under way for ten new houses in DeLand park, and with the ten or more that Mr. Christler is going to build on Miles Ave. and West Church St., that is a fine start for 1912.

Perinton Historical Society Holiday Party

Please join us at our annual Holiday Party on Tuesday, December 13, 2011 at 7:30 p.m. at the Fairport Historical Museum:

- ◆ Please bring a plate of cookies or bars to pass.
- ◆ Music will once again be provided by Samantha Anderson's Fairport High School Chamber Ensemble.

*January 17, 2012 at 7:00 pm
at the Fairport Public Library*

The Underground Railroad in the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region

Presented by Dr. Preston E. Pierce

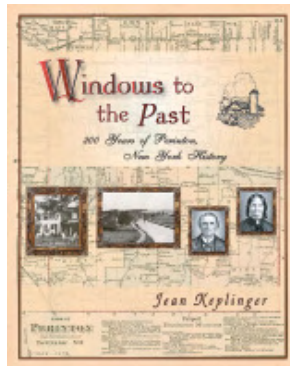
This program focuses on the development and operation of one of the great social protest movements of the 19th century. The slide presentation examines the development and rationale for the Underground Railroad at the national level, and looks at the regional people and places associated with it. The program will focus on the lesser known participants in addition to those who achieved fame such as Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman. The Genesee-Finger Lakes region was a busy junction for several of the routes taken by "freedom seekers."

Those attending the program will be provided with a reading and viewing resource list so that they can learn more about the movement.

Presented by Dr. Preston Pierce, Regional Archivist for the Rochester Regional Library Council and Ontario County Historian. Dr. Pierce is the author of several books, including the recently released *Canandaigua and Canandaigua Lake*, a postcard history book published by Arcadia Publishing Company, and *Honor to Whom Honor is Due*, a guide to the Civil War medals, monuments and markers in Ontario County, New York.

Special notes regarding this program:

- ◆ The program begins at 7:00 pm.
- ◆ This program will be held in the Elma Gaffney Room at the [Fairport Public Library](#).
- ◆ Registration is required. Register at the library in person, or by calling 585-223-9091. Or you can go to www.fairportlibrary.org, click on "Events & Classes", locate the calendar date of January 17, click on "Historical Society, The Underground Railroad in the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region" and follow directions to register. Please note registration for this program begins on December 20th.



WINDOWS TO THE PAST 200 Years of Perinton, New York History By Jean Keplinger

The Town of Perinton will be celebrating its bicentennial in 2012. In honor of that significant event, Perinton Historian Jean Keplinger has written a book celebrating Perinton's story. *WINDOWS TO THE PAST, 200 YEARS OF PERINTON, NEW YORK HISTORY*, is a compilation of fourteen years of articles and columns, organized into ten chapters, and featuring numerous photos, many stories of people, businesses, and organizations and a comprehensive index.

The softcover, 8 1/2 x 11-inch, 300-plus page book is priced at \$29.95, but can be pre-ordered for \$27.00. The projected publication date is December. To order, please call Jean Keplinger at the Perinton Town Hall: 223-0770 or email her at jkeplinger@perinton.org. You can pay in cash or by check made out to the Town of Perinton, 1350 Turk Hill Road, Fairport, NY 14450.

The Perinton Historical Society anxiously awaits the arrival of Jean's book, which will also be available at the gift shop of the Fairport Historical Museum.

~ 100 Years Ago ~
From the FAIRPORT HERALD-MAIL

December 27, 1911

The muddy streets of the last few weeks have been a good object lesson to the citizens of Fairport that might be a suggestion for paved streets instead of mud. If we would lay only one half a mile of good macadamized or brick paved streets every year it would not be noticeable to any extent in the increase in taxes and in a few years our principal streets would be entirely paved and wading in mud would be an unusual instead of a usual affair during rainy seasons.



Preserving History Today for Tomorrow

18 PERRIN STREET, FAIRPORT, NEW YORK 14450

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Photo by Keith Boas in 2008