

When President Lincoln Came to Town

By Bill Poray

Abraham Lincoln traveled by train to Fairport, or more accurately, through Fairport, twice over a span of four years and two months. The first instance was the President-elect's journey from his home to Washington, DC, passing through Perinton on February 18, 1861.

As President Lincoln departed the depot in Springfield, Illinois, he addressed the assembled crowd before him: "To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything... I now leave, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon [George] Washington."

Lincoln's second passage through this community occurred 150 years ago this month. Sadly, it was the President's funeral train that brought him. The train left Albany at 4:00 p.m. on April 26th, 1865 en route to Buffalo and ultimately, Springfield, Illinois. The slowly moving train was met with crowds of mourners at every crossing. Throngs of grief-stricken residents paid their respects in the towns and villages along the route, with endless American flags unfurled and torches illuminating the night.

New York Secretary of State Chauncey M. Depew (1834–1928) was aboard Lincoln's funeral train for the trip from Albany to Buffalo, and wrote of the experience in his book, **My Memories of Eighty Years**:

"It was late in the evening when we started, and the train was running all night through central and western New York. Its schedule was well known along the route. Wherever the highway crossed the railway track the whole population of the neighborhood was assembled on the highway and in the fields. Huge bonfires lighted up the scene. Pastors of the local churches of all denominations had united in leading their congregations for greeting and farewell for their beloved president. As we would reach a crossing there sometimes would be hundreds and at others thousands of men, women, and children on their knees, praying and singing hymns. This continuous service of prayer and song and supplication lasted over the three hundred miles between Albany and Buffalo, from midnight until dawn."

The funeral procession passed through Fairport shortly after 3:00 a.m. Despite the late hour, hundreds from the community witnessed the somber event. The crowd included young Hebert Howard, just five years old, and 14 year old John Talman Jr. Such an event would likely find a place in the memory of anyone there, for the rest of their lives, and this was true of both Talman and Howard. Both men, at age 74, recalled the night decades later. Their memories were each published in newspaper accounts, Talman in 1925 and Howard in 1935.



One of the engines utilized for President Lincoln's funeral train



Comments from your President

March 15, 2015

Saint Patrick's Day is coming this week. To help celebrate this year, we are going to try a new lamb stew with a turnip recipe I recently found in a magazine. It looks tasty. Time will tell. We get together with two other couples about once a month to

~ **Bob Hunt** ~

play Mexican train dominos, with the host being responsible for the soup or stew portion of the lunch menu. I have some unsuspecting tasters, and will let you know how it turns out.

As I have mentioned in past columns, Cindy and I enjoy the four seasons we have in the Fairport area, and have activities we partake in which we both enjoy. It could be hiking, biking, gardening, skiing or cooking. This winter has found us out on the ski slopes—downhill skiing twelve times, and once cross country. We have enjoyed the over 90 inches of snow received this year.

The last week of February, we traveled with my brother and his wife to North Creek, New York, to ski a few days at Gore Mountain. Well the first morning we awoke to a -13 degree windy day and made the decision not to ski that day—one is supposed to get smarter as one grows older. So instead of skiing, we decided to drive to Saratoga Springs about 45 minutes away to visit one of their museums and have lunch at the Olde Bryan Inn. We chose to visit the New York State Military Museum, located at 61 Lake Street. The mission of the museum is to preserve, interpret and disseminate the story, history and records of New York State's military forces and veterans. The museum houses over 10,000 artifacts dating from the Revolutionary War to Desert Storm. These artifacts relate to New York State's military forces, the state's military history and the contributions of New York's veterans. I found the Civil War section to be extremely interesting. The museum is definitely on our list to revisit someday. Check their website at <http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/about.htm>. Once the weather warmed a bit, the skiing was great and we taught my brother and his wife to play Mexican train dominos.

Last year about this time I encouraged you to take some cuttings from your forsythia bushes to bring inside and force into blossom. This is a great way to have a sense of spring inside, a bit early. The snow is so deep around my bushes that I haven't brought in cuttings to date, but I will in the next few days. Another sign of spring is the tapping of maple trees, and this leads me to tell of one of our favorite late winter/early spring day trips. For about ten years we have picked up one of Cindy's high school friends, who now lives in Geneseo, for our ride to Cartwright's Maple Tree Inn. They serve the best

HISTORIGRAM

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Perinton Historical Society

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ever buckwheat pancakes (all you can eat) with their own maple syrup. Their location is 4321 County Road 15A, near Short Tract and Birdsall, in as one would say, "the boondocks." This year Cartwright's is open from February 10th to April 12th. They're closed on Mondays and Easter. Call them or google their website for the hours of operation. Last year I asked our waitress the seating capacity of the restaurant and I recall she said it was 235. Considering their location "in the boondocks," it has always amazed me that all our visits to Cartwright's have begun with a wait in line for seating. Believe me, it is well worth the trip.

Don't forget to add May 19th to your calendar. This is PHS's annual meeting and picnic at the enclosed pavilion in Perinton Park along the canal. This is a dish-to-pass event starting at 6:00 pm. Meats and beverages will be provided by the Perinton Historical Society. The Board trustees and officers are elected at this time and there will be a short presentation about happenings at your museum since the last picnic.

Like many others, I am ready for the next Fairport season to arrive. Thanks for your continued support—it is certainly appreciated. And we will chat with you again next month.

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



From Pianos to Maple Syrup

By Keith Boas

The year was 1930 and the United States was deep into the Depression. Like so many factories in the country, East Rochester's piano works had closed its doors, which caused my father, piano maker Don Boas (1908–1957) to be temporarily out of a job.

But Don did not sit around feeling sorry for himself. He had a strong work ethic and was constantly searching for job opportunities, regardless how small. To earn a few dollars in that early spring of 1930, Don drove 290 miles back to his hometown of Moores Forks, New York, to make maple syrup on the farm of his uncle Elmer Boas.

It is not known how much maple syrup was made on Elmer's farm or how much was brought back to Perinton to sell door to door. But the adventure definitely kept Don busy for a few weeks during that unsettling era. And the syrup sales, no doubt, helped a bit to pay the mortgage on his and his wife Edna's new Midvale Drive home.

For more comments on maple syrup, read Bob Hunt's column on page 2.



Perinton resident Don Boas, making maple syrup in 1930

From the Keith Boas Photo Archives

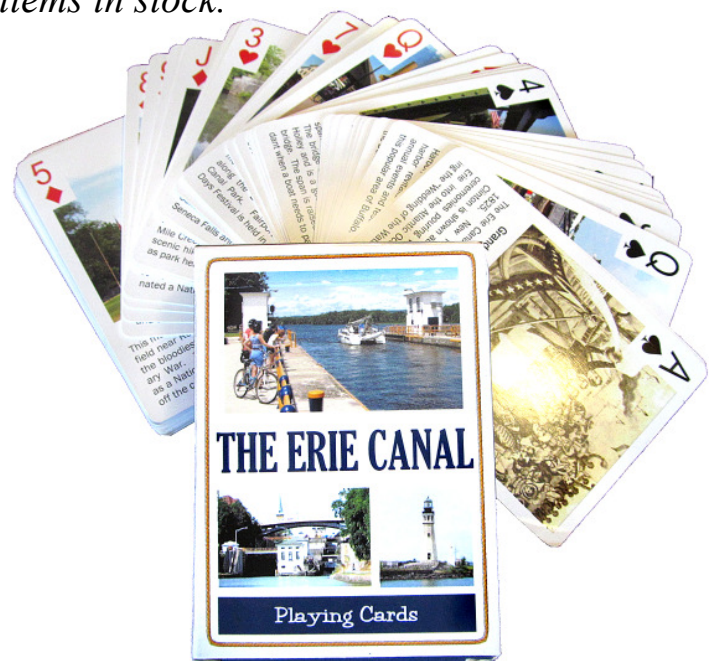
New Items in the Museum Gift Shop

Spring is here, the museum is open and the gift shop has some new and interesting items in stock.

Check out the decks of Erie Canal playing cards that have just arrived from Show Me Cards in Missouri. Each deck features 52 different scenes from the Erie and Cayuga-Seneca Canals, including bridges, boats, locks, parks, nearby attractions and historical sketches. You'll especially be interested in the Queen of Hearts, featuring Fairport's own North Bank Canal Park. The playing cards are \$7.00 per deck.

Also in stock are autographed copies of *Myron Holley: Canal Builder*; *Abolitionist, Unsung Hero* by Richard O. Reisem and *Frederick and Anna Douglass in Rochester; New York* by Rose O'Keefe. Both available for \$20.00 each.

Thanks for your support and patronage. Last year's gift shop sales were record-breaking! Proceeds from the gift shop help fund the Perinton Historical Society's educational programs, artifact collections and operation of the Fairport Historical Museum.



Excerpts of both men appear below.

Because he was so young, Herbert Howard's memories of the event consisted of a few brief images, and his commentary, published in the Fairport Herald-Mail, December, 1935 is brief:

"It is not given to many youngsters to see a train go through his old home bearing the remains of the President of the United States. Our beloved President Lincoln was shot April 14, 1865, and gave up his life April 15th, and it must have been some ten days after when the train bearing his remains went through Fairport. I was then a youngster of five years, and too young to go down to the depot alone, so my sister Mary very likely was the one to take me down. Frank, three years older than I, must have gone on ahead. I wonder if the train went through in the daytime. I can see the soldiers standing on the platform with drawn bayonets. If the train was moving at all, it must have been very slowly. I was too young to take in any particular significance, but the slowly moving train and the soldiers with bayonets will always have a place in my memory."

At about age 14, John Talman Jr.'s recollections of the events related to the death were more vivid. His essay was published in the Duluth (Minnesota) Herald in April, 1925:

"It would be impossible for those of the present generation to understand fully the effect upon public feelings of the tragedy in Ford's theatre on the night of April 14, 1865. The Civil War had ended, practically, with the surrender of Lee less than a week before, and, naturally, the North was rejoicing with exceeding gladness to realize that our national unity was no longer endangered. The awful deed of John Wilkes Booth suddenly transformed this universal jubilation to the most poignant sorrow that the American people have ever known. With it was blended a feeling of anger nothing less than terrible in its nature."

"At that time I was living at Fairport, New York. On the morning of April 15, when the dreadful news reached the village, I went out in response to the milkman's bell, to obtain our daily supply. The milkman, well along in years, was one of the northern sympathizers with the South known as "copperheads." He was grinning from ear to ear. "Lincoln has been shot", he announced. "What! Lincoln shot!", I exclaimed. "That's what they say," the old fellow chuckled.

"I was the first of the family to receive the startling tidings. That day a number of the villagers went to Rochester, ten miles away, to witness the exciting scenes being enacted there. As may be readily understood, it was dangerous for anybody in that city (or anywhere else, for that matter) to express approval of the crime of Booth. One man learned this to his cost. "I'm glad of it!" he said. The crowd rushed him and the first to reach him was a crippled soldier, who knocked him senseless with one of his crutches.



John Talman Jr, in July of 1863

From the archives of the Perinton Historical Society

"Never shall I forget the Lincoln memorial sermon delivered shortly after by Reverend Jeremiah Butler, pastor of the Fairport Congregational Church. He was a rather gruff and decidedly outspoken man and not to be reckoned among those who 'wear their hearts on their sleeves.' But during his discourse—a model of simplicity and patriotic earnestness—tears ran down his face, his voice broke, and only with the greatest difficulty did he regain sufficient self-control to continue."

"The funeral train bearing the immortal martyr in the cause of human liberty and national oneness passed through Fairport on its way to Springfield, Illinois. My father and I arose at three o'clock in the morning to join the waiting hundreds at the station. With a feeling of awed solemnity never before or since experienced, we watched the long train, with its somber drapings, pass slowly, to the sound of tolling bells."



Talman's Stop on the Underground Railroad

John Talman Jr. (1851–1936), whose childhood memories of President Lincoln's funeral train are featured in earlier pages of this issue, was an accomplished author and historian. He spent much of his adult life in Minnesota, where his poems and essays were frequently published and widely read throughout the state. In one such essay Talman wrote of his recollections of the family farm on East Whitney Road in Perinton, a stop on the Underground Railroad. Below are excerpts from his article:

"In the township of Perinton, Monroe County, New York, twelve miles southeast of Rochester and two miles east of the village of Fairport, stands (or at any rate stood when last I saw it) a farmhouse that cuts a significant, if humble figure in the anti-slavery crusade that brought on the Civil War of 1861–1865.

"This farmhouse, my birthplace, tops a hill sloping gently to the west. It was owned by my father, John Talman, Sr., one of the 'black Republicans' of his day, as implacable and intolerant an enemy of human slavery as the North could boast, and as sturdy, fearless and unfailing a defender of what he deemed the right as I ever knew. He was one of the band of Abolitionists that conducted what was known as the 'Underground Railroad', whereby fugitive Negro slaves from the South were enabled to find asylum in the free air of Canada. The runaways were passed along from station to station, and this Perinton farm was one of the stations. We were not far from the port of Charlotte, where the fugitives in summer could cross Lake Ontario, and in winter, when navigation was suspended could land on British soil by way of Niagara Falls or Buffalo.



John Talman Sr. – photographed in 1863
From the archives of the Perinton Historical Society

"I have a distinct recollection of the time when in the winter of 1859–1860 a runaway slave from Georgia, his wife and half dozen little children were concealed in our house for a week or more on their way to Canada. They were quartered in the kitchen and provided with food, not only for present needs, but sufficient for several days after leaving us. The family remained with us until the time agreed upon by the liberators, when my father, in the dead of night, packed them in a large lumber wagon under quilts and blankets and drove them to the next station. A relative, a neighbor, afterwards told of his surprise when he called at our house and found himself in the midst of our Negro guests.

"It was a perilous business, this aiding slaves to escape. The 'Underground Railroaders' were near-outlaws, operating in defiance of the United States government and being under the constant espionage of government agents, whose utmost vigilance, however, could not nullify the services of these devoted men of the sacred cause of liberty."

The author's father, John Talman Sr., "the implacable and intolerant enemy of human slavery," was laid to rest in Elmwood Cemetery in Perinton in 1885.



Talman house on East Whitney Road,
a stop on the Underground Railroad

Photograph circa 1945 – from the archives of
the Perinton Historical Society



AN EVENING WITH ANDERSONVILLE SURVIVOR OLIVER CLARKE

Presenter: Steve Trimm

Tuesday, April 21, 7:00 p.m. at the Fairport Historical Museum

In December 1861, 18-year-old Oliver Clarke enlisted in Company B, 94th New York Infantry. After his capture by the rebels at the battle of Cold Harbor, Oliver was imprisoned in Andersonville. He survived the war's most infamous death camp and recorded his memories of being a POW. That 40-page handwritten memoir has never been published in its entirety. It is preserved at Grant Cottage, the place where General Ulysses S. Grant wrote his own celebrated memoirs and where Grant ultimately died in 1885.

After General Ulysses S. Grant's death, Oliver Clarke became the first Grant Cottage caretaker. Drawing heavily from Oliver's Andersonville recollections, this presentation will also look at his life in upstate New York before the war and how he coped with what we now recognize as PTSD after the war. Oliver Clarke was the brother-in-law of Fairport Civil War soldier Joseph S. Kelsey.

Steve Trimm has been a tour guide at Grant Cottage State Historic Site in Wilton, New York, for seven years. He is the author of the booklet *Saving Grant Cottage: How a Survivor of Andersonville, A Housewife, A Medical Missionary, An Immigrant from Japan (and Others) Saved a Precious Piece of Our History*, which will be available for \$10.00 – cash or checks accepted.

Believing that one of the best ways to share history is by telling a good story—and better yet, by telling the story in the first person, as if he'd lived it—Steve Trimm began offering “living history” portrayals six years ago. In 2011, he portrayed President Ulysses S. Grant in a special program for the Perinton Historical Society.



Saving Grant Cottage

How A Survivor of Andersonville,
A Housewife, A Medical Missionary,
An Immigrant From Japan (And Others)
Saved a Precious Piece of Our History

**SPECIAL
COLLECTOR'S
EDITION**

By
Steve Trimm
Grant Cottage
Tour Guide

All Proceeds to
Benefit the
Friends of
Grant Cottage

Volunteer Recognition and Orientation

Fairport Historical Museum Volunteer Recognition and Orientation was held the afternoon of Saturday, February 28th. Thanks to our volunteers who attended, and also to our Volunteer Coordinator Suzanne Scheirer for organizing such a fun event. Well wishes go out to long-time volunteer Eileen Slocum, who was unable to attend the event due to an injury but who cheerfully fills her shift and substitutes when needed, all with a smile that lights up the room.

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, April 21, 7:00 p.m.

At the Fairport Historical Museum

Program: AN EVENING WITH ANDERSONVILLE SURVIVOR

Oliver P. Clarke

Presenter: Steve Trimm

Tuesday, May 19, 6:00 p.m.

At the Perinton Park Pavilion

Event: ANNUAL MEETING & PICNIC for members of the
Perinton Historical Society

Tuesday, June 16, 7:00 p.m.

Location to be determined

Event: ILLUMINATED HISTORY cemetery tour.
Additional information is forthcoming.

**Please note that all PHS programs
now begin at 7:00 p.m.**

Special Recognition Level Memberships

As of March 17, 2015

Business (\$100)

Ed Bradford, Liftbridge Financial Advisors

6 North Main Street, Suite 400w, Fairport

Website: <http://liftbridgefinancial.com>

Suzanne Lee Personal Histories

33 Chesham Way, Fairport

Phone: 585-267-6189

Website: <http://SLeePersonalHistories.com>

Joel Cuminala, Turning Point Signs & Design

3 Railroad Street, Fairport

Website: <http://www.tpsigns.com>

Fairport Village Inn, Wayne and Patty Beckwith

103 North Main Street, Fairport

Phone: 585-388-0112

Website: <http://www.thefvi.com>

Robert Ruhland, Keller Williams Realty

2000 Winton Road S. Bldg. 1, Rochester, NY 14618

Phone: 585-303-6607

Website: <http://bobruhland.yourkwagent.com>

The Fairport Historical Museum Needs You!

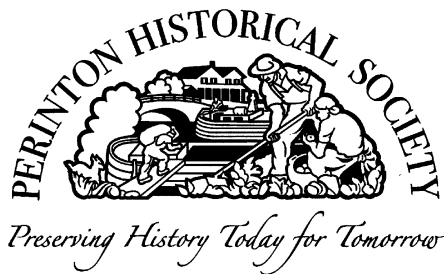
The Fairport Historical Museum is always looking for volunteers to staff the museum. If you can give of your time for one two-hour shift per month, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Sue Scheirer, at 585-377-3789 or by email at dscheir1@rochester.rr.com.

You Oughta Be in Pictures!

Or maybe you already are—in past pictures of Potter Place, that is. In last month's *Historigram*, the house tour committee made a plea for memories of life on Potter Place which could enhance the Sunday, October 4 house tour of this area. We are still looking for your stories, as well as any pictures of life on Potter in the past: the victory gardens, the skating rink, dog walking or sporting events on the Potter Park fields. Please contact Elaine Lanni, at eellaannii@gmail.com if you have a memory or photo to share.



Jerry Bennett, speaking on THE SLAVE EXPERIENCE AND
THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD at the Fairport Historical
Museum's March program



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Looking east on Fairport's West Avenue. Photo, about 1962, by Rev. Albert D'Annunzio.
From the archives of the Perinton Historical Society

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 below:

Saturday 10:00 a.m.–Noon	Tuesday 2:00–4:00 p.m.
Sunday 2:00–4:00 p.m.	Thursday 7:00–9:00 p.m.

Group tours, presentations and special projects are by appointment. Please call and leave a message at **585-223-3989**.

www.PerintonHistoricalSociety.org