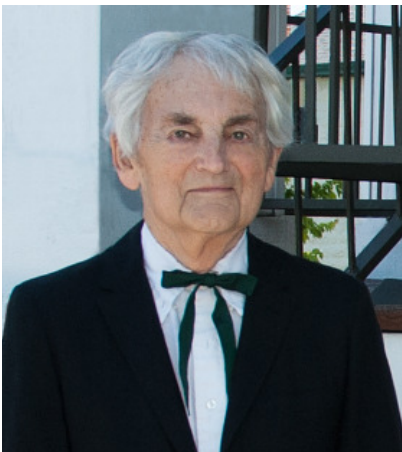


Memories of Matson Ewell

Matson Ewell, past president of the Perinton Historical Society and popular figure in the Fairport community for many years, passed away on March 8, 2016, at the age of 93.



Matson Glenn Ewell
(1923—2016)

2008 photo by
Keith Boas

Matson is survived by Ruth Ewell, his wife of 67 years, and two sons; Peter of Boulder, Colorado, and Louis of Avoca, New York. For many years, Matson and his wife Ruth gave tirelessly of themselves to preserve the history of the village. In 1999, they were honored with the title *Fairport Citizens of the Year* for their many contributions to the community.

The following quotes are from the Perinton Historical Society website, with help from Doris Davis-Fritsch: “Matson, along with other society members, were instrumental in the negotiations to move the society...to the former Fairport Public Library on Perrin Street.” The website story goes on to state that “Matson’s love and care of this building was to continue for the next 27 years. He served as president of the society from 1977 to 1979 and was on the board of trustees from 1980 to 1989. Even after his term expired, Matson continued to attend board meetings as director of the museum.”

The long-time home of Matson and Ruth at 182 West Church Street was designated a Fairport historic landmark in 2012. Known as the Cook-Ewell house, it represents the history of Fullam’s Basin, a part of the early settlement, which later became Fairport. (See photo of the house on the back page). It was Matson and Ruth’s dream to have the name “Fullam’s Basin” become more recognized in the history of the village.

Personal Recollections

Matson was one of the most intelligent men I ever met—and the most generous. He was a mentor during my early years as Town Historian, giving me a new perspective on town and village history. Matson shared his knowledge and his connections, his “corporate memory” whenever he could, including his joy in all things historic. Still, the best Matson memory of all is of his laugh—that wonderful, infectious laugh. I will miss that most of all.

—Sue Roberts

Matson and Ruth were quite a team for the Perinton Historical Society over many years, with him as Museum Director and her in charge of membership, managing the gift shop and writing for and producing the *Historigram*. Matson was also the last Village Historian for Fairport. And being a good salesman, he convinced me to join the board in 1995.

—Jim Unckless

Matson’s passion for Fullam’s Basin: When I spoke with Matson and Ruth about designating their house as a village landmark, they were very pleased. He so wanted his house to be a center to learn trades of the early canal days when the intersection of the canal and Church Street was the center of Fairport activity. He had an image of how it would be, and I was so happy to recently see the new banners.

One Valentine’s Day, Matson and I were both at Skips, buying meat. He wanted crab meat and said, “this is for my sweet Valentine.” He loved Ruth dearly.

And then there was his blue Volvo: You always knew when Matson was traveling around the village.

He was sincere, happy, sweet, kind and always interested in all things Fairport.

—Jean Whitney

Recollections continued on page 3



~ Bob Hunt ~

Comments from your President

March 15, 2016:
Greetings! It is the *Ides of March*. The soothsayer's warning to Julius Caesar, "Beware the Ides of March," has forever imbued that date with a sense of foreboding. But in Roman times, the expression "Ides of March" did not evoke a dark mood; it was simply the standard way of

saying "March 15." Surely such a fanciful expression must signify something more than merely another day of the year? Not so. Even in Shakespeare's time, sixteen centuries later, audiences attending his play, *Julius Caesar*, wouldn't have blinked twice upon hearing the date called the Ides.

The term "ides" comes from the earliest Roman calendar, which is said to have been devised by Romulus, the mythical founder of Rome. Whether it was Romulus or not, the inventor of this calendar had a penchant for complexity. The Roman calendar organized its months around three days, each of which served as a reference point for counting the other days. Kalends (1st day of the month); Nones (the 7th day in March, May, July, and October), the 5th in the other months; and Ides (the 15th day in March, May, July and October, the 13th in the other months. The remaining unnamed days of the month were identified by counting backwards from the Kalends, Nones or Ides. For example, March 3rd would be V Nones or 5 days before the Nones. *(The above information was obtained from Infoplease on the web.)*

A lot has been happening at your museum over the last few months. The property committee, under the direction of Catherine Angevine, has been busy cleaning the basement area, which includes the program room, tool room, furnace room and area at the bottom of the stairs. The idea was to open some area in the tool room for badly needed storage space to hold museum items. Many of these are of a seasonal nature, and we just need storage space. Two new cabinets have been installed in the front left area of the program room for use by the Fairport Historical Club and the Fairport Rotary Club. The Rotary Club received some grant monies to help with this project. A new podium has been built for use in the program room and the carpet has been shampooed and cleaned. The Deland Band base drum, found in storage, is now beautifully displayed at the rear of the program room. The area is looking mighty fine.

On the main floor, see how much brighter the Carl Peters mural looks, illuminated with new light bulbs that were recommended by someone who understands proper lighting of displays. What a difference these bulbs have made in the brightness and details of the mural.

Perinton Historical Society

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

<i>President</i>	Bob Hunt
<i>Vice President</i>	Vicki Profitt
<i>Secretary</i>	Doug Whitney
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Keith Boas	Lucy McCormick
Bill Poray	Jim Unckless
David Wild	George Wolf

MUSEUM

<i>Director</i>	Vicki Profitt
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This winter certainly wasn't what we endured last year, with only one major storm for the season. Consequently, Cindy and I have skied only seven times, compared to twelve last year. Our trip during the last week of February found us in Manchester, Vermont, where we had plans to ski Bromley Mountain one day and Stratton the next. Well, the Bromley day was a day of rain, so we went to plan B, which I'll tell you about further down in my comments. The next day, we skied Stratton. It was a beautiful, sunny day with excellent ski conditions. Following Vermont, we traveled east and further north to Bethlehem, New Hampshire, where we stayed in the summer cottage originally built for the F.W. Woolworth family. This cottage, built in 1908, is a seven bedroom home located in the beautiful White Mountains. Google *Mulburn Inn* for photos and more information. We stayed in the Jefferson Room, which happened to be where Joe DiMaggio and Marilyn Monroe stayed when visiting the area. With this B&B as a base, we skied for two days at Bretton Woods, one of our all-time favorite ski areas. Visible from the slopes is Mount Washington and the historic Mount Washington Hotel at its base. We enjoyed great skiing conditions here as well.

Well, back to our rainy day while staying at Manchester, Vermont. We had been told, prior to our trip, that we should be sure to visit Hildene, the Lincoln Family Home located in Manchester. As I am running short on space here, I will continue this story next month. I will add, at this point, only to be sure you put this historic location on your *to-visit* list when traveling through Vermont.

Thanks for your continued support, and we will chat again next month.

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



Recollections of Matson (Bud) Ewell

By Sara Hartman

My recollections of Bud Ewell stem back to my first year at The Harley School, 1957, where Bud was an administrator and teacher. I was lucky to have him as my math teacher in grades 9-12. I say lucky because math does not come intuitively to me, and Bud was one of those teachers who was convinced that any student could learn a subject if she persevered and her teacher tailored the instruction to her learning style. I persevered, and I'm sure he tried every approach imaginable to make math intelligible and practical for me.

Bud was a wonderful teacher, elf-like, defined in terms of "size, demeanor, and magical powers." He was energetic, positive, engaging, encouraging, and unfailingly supportive of his students. He was a "tour de force" in his own right!

A generation later, Bud was also my children's teacher at Harley. Our son Chris had Bud for shop class, and this circumstance launched the remarkable story of the Ewell-Hartman boat connection. For nearly 65 years of his adult life, mostly in his back yard alongside the Erie Canal, Bud worked on his dream—a self-designed, 3-ton, 30-foot, mahogany and oak, gaff-rigged ketch with a teak deck and two masts, likened by all his students to Noah's ark. At its inaugural launch, it was to be christened *Ruth* in honor of his wife. Through the decades Bud's now legendary boat, in cardboard replicas, sailed across the Harley stage, in progressing stages of completeness, in various skits.

This opus magnum in the making was not lost on Chris. Partially influenced by Bud, he came to share the vision that "there is nothing like a beautiful, traditionally built, wooden boat to evoke the romance of the sea and voyaging." Returning to Harley eight years' post-college graduation to join the faculty, Chris commenced a number of design/build projects for students. These initially entailed the students' design and construction of three historical dinghies, benefitting from Bud's shared experience and knowledge.

Alas, the boat was not completed in his lifetime, but Bud recognized Chris' shared passion and offered the boat to him. Bud watched the crane lift the boat from its berth by his garage, transfer it to a trailer that my husband Pete had made from a hay wagon, and then transported to Chris' back barn. He and his sons subsequently assured themselves that it had landed in good hands. In the final analysis, all recognized that the labor of love was not for an end-in-itself; it was truly about a journey of self-education.



Matson (Bud) Ewell sits by his self-designed boat on the day it was moved from his back yard to Chris Hartman's barn.

Photo by Sara Hartman on July 19, 2013

Special Recognition Level Memberships

As of March 15, 2016

Business (\$100)

Ed Bradford, Liftbridge Financial Advisors

6 North Main Street, Suite 400w, Fairport, NY 14450

Website: <http://liftbridgefinancial.com>

Suzanne Lee Personal Histories

33 Chesham Way, Fairport, NY 14450

Phone: 585-267-6189

Website: <http://SLeePersonalHistories.com>

Fairport Village Inn, Wayne and Patty Beckwith

103 North Main Street, Fairport, NY 14450

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>

Forever Financial Advisors, LLC

Annie McQuilkin, MS, CFP®

140 West Church Street, Fairport, NY 14450

Phone: 585-598-1377

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

DeLand (\$100–\$249)

Year to date: 21

Potter (\$250–\$499)

Year to date: 5

Shovel Rides and Indian Adventures

An Essay by Tom Arnold



1870s photo of the Arnold home and family. Located at 224 South Main Street, former Fairport Mayor Peter McDonough and his wife Bernadette resided here for many years. Both were active members of the Perinton Historical Society.

Forward by Bill Poray

Born twelve years shy of two centuries ago, at 84 years of age Thomas H. Arnold penned a newspaper essay for the Monroe County Mail. Published on December 19, 1912, his reminiscence titled "Christmas in Perinton Seventy Years Ago" didn't have much of anything to do with the holiday. Mr. Arnold did, however, provide some vivid recollections of growing up in Perinton in the 1830s and 1840s.

The Arnold family were early settlers in this area. Isaac Arnold, Tom's father, operated an early Perinton tavern, in a building that still stands today at the northwest corner of Ayrault and Turk Hill Roads. Tom married the granddaughter of another Perinton pioneer family in 1852. Her name was Mariette Sperbeck—Mary for short. Martin and Catherine Sperbeck, her grandparents, came to Egypt, Perinton's center of activity,

about 1814. By 1817, they had purchased one hundred acres of land in what would later become the village of Fairport. They soon built a primitive home of squared timbers near a path that we now call South Main Street. At number 200 stands a grand Italianate home with hints of an earlier Greek revival beginning, and resides where the Sperbeck cabin first stood. It was here that Tom Arnold courted the girl who became his wife.

Tom and his new bride built their home at 224 South Main Street in the mid-1850s, just south of the Sperbeck house, on land carved out from the family estate.

Provided on pages 5 and 6, for your enjoyment, is Thomas Arnold's essay in its original form, published 104 years ago.

Christmas in Perinton Seventy Years Ago

By Thomas H. Arnold
Aged 84

Thomas H. Arnold's primary occupation was farming. He also served for 17 years as Fairport's first Street Commissioner. He was said to be proficient at lawn grading, and examples of his work included Fairport's Union School on West Church Street, the Potter residence, and the grounds of the Baptist Home.

Photos in this article, including the one on page 1, are from the archives of the Perinton Historical Society and Town of Perinton.



Like all the old folks, it seems to me that the winters in those days were longer and more severe than they are now, but I'm sure in the days of my boyhood the snowfalls were heavier and the snow lasted longer. I remember that it was frequently possible for us to hitch up the bobs and drive across lots over the ice crusted snow from Fullamtown in a more or less straight line to the "Center" as the section near the Hartley homestead was then called. Sleigh rides and coasting parties were the chief winter sports and I can tell you we had some good times.

Manys the time when I was a lad, did I take a good swift ride down the hill on the William Bumpus farm south of the village, seated on an old wooden scoop shovel, with my feet astride the handle, steering as best I could.*

**Editor's note:*

The hill referenced in the bottom of the left column, is Moseley Road, heading south. At the foot of the hill was the Bumpus farm, located where the U.S. Post Office facility currently resides—at the corner of Moseley and Ayrault Roads.

And there were still a few Indians left in this section in those days, though of course, they caused little trouble aside from stealing poultry and the like, but I remember one old fellow who lived down in the swamp, gave me a scare when I was a small boy and he received one in return, let me tell you.

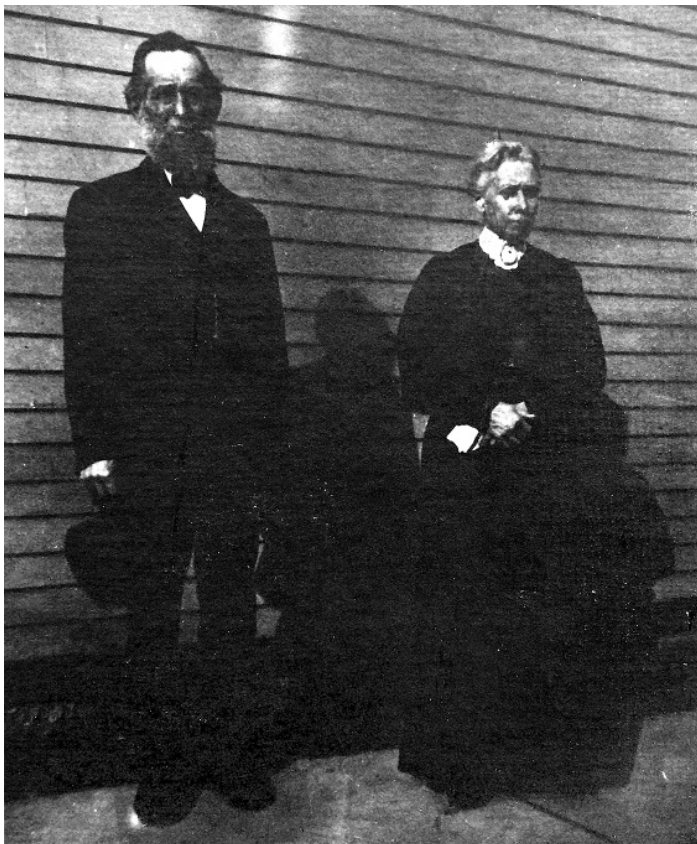
It seems that the old fellow was in the habit of prowling about with his dog at all times and places, making away with anything he could lay his hands on, and I, but a lad of a few years, had learned to dislike the old fellow thoroughly. Thus one day when I saw his dog back of our barn, I threw a stone at the beast and as luck would have it, the stone struck the mark, making the animal howl with pain. I had not noticed him but the dog's owner was not far away and had seen the whole performance. He was so mad that he started after me on a run and I believe he would have killed me had I not reached the house ahead of him. But he followed me right in until I reached the big living room where my Quakeress mother put an end to the pursuit, by seizing a flat-bladed iron shovel, and placing herself between the redskin and me, said forcibly; "If thee don't leave this place, I'll split thy head and let thy brains out." And he left.

Later this same Indian murdered his wife and I have always felt he intended fully to kill me, if he had caught me.



Undated photograph of the south side of the Arnold home at
224 South Main Street

Continued on page 6



Thomas H. Arnold (1828-1914) and his wife Mariette Sperbeck Arnold (1833-1918) were married on November 25, 1852. After their wedding at her family's home, they traveled to Canandaigua "where they spent a week in merry-making", according to an article documenting their 60th anniversary.

And the boys were as full of mischief in those days as they are today. I know when I was courting the girl who afterwards became my wife, she had a younger brother who was just at the right age to say and do many remarkable things. The incident I remember most particularly occurred the first time I was invited to a dinner at her home. Of course I was somewhat embarrassed and my condition of mind was not improved when, as the party gathered about the table, that youngster turned to me and asked, "What you coming to our house so much for? You going to take my sister away?"

But great changes take place as time goes on and I often wonder what my parents would say, could they return and see the trolley cars whizzing along over the iron roadways through the farmlands or the chugging autos, which even a few years ago were such a novelty, but are now so common.

But through all of the changes of the past 84 years, Perinton and Fairport have always been good enough for me and mine and I'm sure they always will be.



Upcoming Events

U.S. Games Through the Decades

Exhibit featuring the board game collection of Clark King
The exhibit runs March 1–May 31 during regular hours
—*At the Fairport Historical Museum*

Gatsby's Gala: Fashions from the Roaring Twenties

The exhibit runs March 19–June 30 during regular hours
—*At the Fairport Historical Museum*

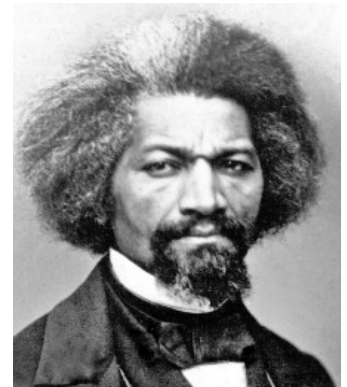
Tuesday, April 19th at 7:00 p.m.

—*At the Fairport Historical Museum*

Program: An Evening with Frederick Douglass

Presenter: Dr. David Anderson

Please join us for a special presentation about the life of social reformer, abolitionist and statesman Frederick Douglass, as portrayed by Dr. David Anderson.



Rare, formal portrait of Frederick Douglass

Just in time for Mother's Day



**Saturday, May 7th from
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.**

Greenbrier Garden Club Annual Plant Sale

—*On the sidewalk in front
of the museum*

Tuesday, May 17th at 6:00 p.m.

Annual Meeting & Picnic—*at the Perinton Park Pavilion*

For members of the Perinton Historical Society.
Please bring a dish to pass.

Tuesday, June 21st at 7:00 p.m.

Illuminated History Tour—Mount Pleasant Cemetery
—*At the Fairport Historical Museum*

Hear the stories of some of Fairport's most respected pioneers, business owners and veterans, as told by the actors portraying them. These stories and others will be shared on this special "tour" for the Perinton Historical Society, which will be held in the program room on the lower level of the Fairport Historical Museum.

We Want You as a Volunteer!

Museum volunteers work one two-hour shift per month greeting and assisting visitors. New volunteers are paired with veterans for each shift, and training is provided. We are always looking for new volunteers to staff the museum, and especially need volunteers on Saturdays from 10:00 a.m.–noon and Sundays from 2:00–4:00 p.m. If you can give of your time just two hours a month, please contact PHS Volunteer Coordinator Sue Scheirer by phone at 585-377-3789 or at dscheir1@rochester.rr.com. We look forward to adding you to our volunteer roster!

NEW EXHIBIT *Gatsby's Gala: Fashions from the Roaring Twenties*

Now Through June 30th



The “Roaring Twenties” was an exciting time in American history. As the citizens of the United States celebrated the end of the Great War, America’s women were celebrating their newly-acquired right to vote. The 1920s was a decade of liberation for women, who were no longer bound by the constraints of the past. Necklines were lowered, hemlines were raised and ladies from all social classes bobbed their hair.

Twelve dresses from the collection of the PHS will be showcased in this new exhibit, featuring sumptuous velvets and silk satins, many of which are heavily beaded in the style of the day. One dress belonged to Eleanor George Jennings, valedictorian of the Fairport High School Class of 1917. Another was found hidden in the attic of Carleton and Elaine Higham Boyd’s home at 11 Fourth Avenue.

Stop by the Fairport Historical Museum during regular open hours to view the exquisite gowns in this new exhibit.

Greenbrier Garden Club Holds Luncheon at the Museum



On Thursday, March 10th, the Perinton Historical Society was pleased to host the Greenbrier Garden Club in the North wing of the Fairport Historical Museum. The club held their meeting, which was followed by a lovely luncheon provided by Joyce Lyle and other members of the club.

Afterward, the ladies enjoyed a tour of the new *Gatsby's Gala: Fashions from the Roaring Twenties* costume exhibit, given by museum director Vicki Masters Profit.

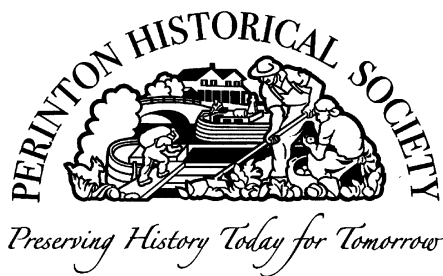
Please stop by the museum the morning of May 7th to support the Greenbrier Garden Club during their annual plant sale, and to visit the museum gardens, which are beautifully maintained each year by the Club.

New in the Museum Gift Shop

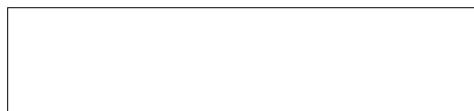
Some exciting new items are on their way to the Fairport Historical Museum gift shop! These include Erie Canal-related items, specially commissioned stained glass pieces and one-of-a-kind artwork hand painted on slate tiles.

Your purchases in the gift shop are always greatly appreciated, as they support the operation of the museum and the educational programs, which are offered by the Perinton Historical Society.

For information on becoming
a member of the Perinton Historical
Society, visit our website at—
www.PerintonHistoricalSociety.org.



Non-Profit Organization
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The home of Matson and Ruth Ewell at 182 West Church Street. Known as the Cook—Ewell House, it is located in Fullam's Basin or Fullamtown. The house was designated as a Fairport Historic Landmark in 2012.

*Circa—1940s photo from the
Perinton Historical Society archives*

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–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