



18 Perrin Street
Fairport, NY 14450

Perinton Historical Society **Historigram**

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A Navy Man Paul Earl's Story

By Bill Poray



Fairport's Paul Earl, home on leave from his assignment with the U.S. Navy, stands in front of the family home at 41 Roselawn Avenue.

Photo provided by the Earl family

"Any man who may be asked in this century what he did to make his life worthwhile, I think he can respond with a good deal of pride and satisfaction, I served in the United States Navy."

John F. Kennedy, at the U.S. Naval Academy,
Annapolis, Maryland, August 1, 1963

One year ago in the *Historigram*, we briefly wrote of Perinton's Paul Edward Earl (1919-2016) who served in the US Navy during World War II. Earl was aboard the USS Chester, a Northampton-class cruiser en route from Wake Island to Pearl Harbor, when news of the attack was received. Since then, we have had the privilege to meet with members of the Earl family, who have provided us with copies of detailed journals and records kept by Paul Earl during his years in the Navy, from 1939 to 1945. We are grateful to be able to share some of the extensive experiences of Paul Earl on these pages.

The summer before he enlisted, Paul and a school buddy, Jack Stewart, tried their sea legs on the ferry from Rochester to Cobourg, Ontario. The successful experiment behind them, each joined the peace-time Navy.

In Paul Earl's Words:

I was graduated as the last one in the upper quarter, number 22, in a class of 88, from Fairport High School, in Fairport, NY in June of 1937. I couldn't find steady work and I couldn't afford to go to college. So, after working two summers for local farmers and two months one fall in the shipping department of the American Can Company, I decided to pursue my desire to join the Navy—to see the world and learn a trade! A friend, Jack Stewart, and I signed up and were put on a waiting list in July of 1938. We spent the winter sawing and splitting firewood for another farmer.

I was notified to report for induction on March 1, 1939 to the recruiting office in Rochester. J.J. Miller, a Chief Turret Captain, was in charge of the office. Albert Messorre and I took the New York Central train to Buffalo. After a brief physical, we were sworn into the U.S. Navy.

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Comments from your President

November 15, 2017:

I am back up in my carriage barn office again as I prepare to jot some comments for the December *Historigram*. I'm getting around quite well with my broken femur, using a cane and being careful. The doctor cleared me to drive last week so have been able to get out and

~ **Bob Hunt** ~

about a bit, and it seems good to get away from the house. Last Saturday we took a drive east on 5 & 20 as far as Waterloo, and had lunch at a classic old diner called Connie's. It is right out of the 1950s, with jukebox selections at each booth. We finished the trip by going north on Route 414 to Sodus and then back along the old Ridge Road, a nice three hour getaway.

Speaking of a getaway, we spent the first weekend of September with four of Cindy's sorority sisters and their husbands. This annual gathering has been ongoing for about forty years, and normally was held on Columbus Day weekend. Since the ladies were all teachers, they always had Columbus Day off, giving them a long weekend. We met in Albany for this year's reunion, a highlight of which was a trip on Saturday to Olana, the country home of American landscape painter Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900).



Olana, the country home of American landscape painter
Frederic Edwin Church

The main house at Olana sits majestically at the top of a long incline overlooking the Hudson River. The house is a wonderful combination of Victorian architectural elements

Perinton Historical Society

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and Middle-Eastern decorative motifs. The artist worked closely with architect Calvert Vaux to design this unique home. Church chose the color schemes for the many rooms by mixing paint on his palette, and providing details to his workers on how to mix the colors. Windows in the house are located to capture an outdoor scene of beauty, and are outlined in stained glass to give the impression of a picture frame holding a painting. We spent a couple of hours viewing the home and surrounding grounds and would highly recommend a visit if you are in the vicinity. Olana is near Hudson, New York, about 45 minutes south of Albany.

A couple of months back, I wrote that when a train approaches a public crossing, the train's whistle blows the Morse code letter Q, which is two longs, a short and a long. On a recent night I heard a different whistle signal coming from a train, which I believe was removing and delivering box cars at the LiDestri plant on Whitney Road. Three short toots means a train will start to back up. A single long toot means the train is stopped and air brakes are applied. Two long toots means the train is releasing brakes and proceeding.

If you are looking for some stocking stuffers or gifts to give this season, please do not forget about the gift shop at the museum. There are many books, puzzles, maps and other very nice gifts to be found in the shop. And as we enter another holiday season, let us pause and reflect on the many blessings we enjoy as a family and community.

"Peace, Love and Joy" to all.

Bob Hunt, President

585-415-7053, rhunt356.rh@gmail.com



Volunteer Coordinator Position Available

If you're interested, please email museum director Vicki Masters Profitt at Director@PerintonHistoricalSociety.org. First preference will be given to current museum volunteers.

Yuletide Traditions 2017 Kicks Off

Bill Poray's *Little Journeys to Pleasant Places* presentation on November 21st was the perfect kick off to our *Yuletide Traditions 2017* event. Over 100 people attended the presentation and bid on our 68 YT items. The donations range from gift baskets to wreaths, trees, candy dishes and even a decorative Santa figure! We are so appreciative to the community members who donated these lovely items for our silent auctions, the proceeds from which benefit the Perinton Historical Society.



For the first time, the PHS is also offering three pieces of furniture in the auction—a buffet sideboard measuring 72” wide x 87” high x 21” deep, a desk with secretary which measures 51” wide x 87” high x 34” deep, and a country cupboard measuring 40” wide x 74” high x 24” deep. These lovely items have been fixtures in the south wing of the museum for many

years, and are now ready to move on to new homes.

Bidding on our *Yuletide Traditions* silent auctions takes place anytime the museum is open. The final chance to bid will take place from 6:00–7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 12th. Following the holiday party and presentation by Lisa Brown, auction winners will be announced. Cash and checks will be accepted as payment.

Vicki Masters Profitt would like to thank the following PHS members for their dedication in planning and executing another wonderfully successful *Yuletide Traditions* fundraising event:

Lucy McCormick, Renee Barry, Ann Castle, Jean Hamel, Joyce Hawkinson, Suzanne Lee, Joyce Lyle, Pat May, Peg McGee, Sue Scheirer, Jolene Smith, Karen Wickens and Linda Wiener; to our Santas, Doug Whitney and Bill Wickens; and to the museum volunteers who helped to decorate the museum for the holidays and help set up the YT event—Jean Whitney, Nancy Slaybaugh and Pat Grace. Special thanks to Catherine Angevine for helping to prepare the museum for the event, Bill Poray for his *Little Journeys to Pleasant Places* presentation, which drew more than 100 people to the museum for the YT kick off, Membership chair Jim Unckless for sending YT info to Perinton Historical Society members, and Doris Davis-Fritsch for publicizing all the special events on the PHS website.



Lisa Brown will present *A Jane Austen Christmas* on December 12th at the Fairport Historical Museum.

A Jane Austen Christmas: **Yuletide Traditions during the Regency Era**

*Presented by Lisa Brown on Tuesday, December 12th
at 7:00 p.m. at the Fairport Historical Museum*

Did Queen Victoria invent the Christmas tree? Is “Christmas creep” just a modern phenomenon? Do the “Twelve Days of Christmas” come before or after the holiday? All these questions will be answered and more!

Lisa Brown is a Life Member of the Jane Austen Society of North America (JASNA) and serves as Regional Coordinator for the Central & Western NY Region of JASNA. She is president of the Country Dancers of Rochester and director of the Meryton Assembly Dancers, a performance group that demonstrates English Country Dancing.

Lisa is also the proprietress of Regency Rentals, a Regency-era costume rental business. In addition to renting out costumes for balls, conferences, weddings and parties, she uses her costume collection to give fashion shows at libraries, colleges and historic sites. Lisa regularly gives presentations on historical topics related to the Regency era (1811–1820).



This graphic photo, taken from a Japanese plane, was shot shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor began.

Public domain photo from the U.S. National Archives



FROM A REMINISCENCE BY PAUL EARL: *"This is the first sight that greeted our eyes on our return to Pearl Harbor at noon on December 8th. The Nevada had gotten underway and then was torpedoed a few times and the Captain ran it aground into the bank of the channel so that it would not sink and block the entrance to Pearl Harbor. It was a sad sight, but only the beginning, the farther in we went, the worse it got. It was a very sobering and frightening spectacle."*

Public domain photo from the U.S. National Archives

On December 20, 1939, Paul Earl first stepped aboard the U.S.S. Chester a Northampton-class cruiser with a crew of 700, commissioned nine years earlier. Paul toiled below deck, and worked his way up through the stages of the operation, as a Chief Machinist's Mate (CMM), helping to keep the ship's boilers and engine rooms in tip-top operating condition. The U.S.S. Chester and her crew participated in some of the most important missions across the Pacific theatre of operations.

Paul Edward Earl served his country in the United States Navy, from his enlistment on March 1, 1939, until the time of his honorable discharge on October 1, 1945. Like many others, 17-year-old Gerald William "Jerry" Earl, Paul's brother, enlisted soon after the invasion of Pearl Harbor. A year after that, William Charles Earl, Paul and Jerry's father, enlisted at the age of 45. William served with men half his age or less in the 77th Construction Battalion at Guadalcanal. His youngest son, Henry Benjamin Earl, later served in the United States Coast Guard from 1952 to 1955.

Life Aboard the U.S.S. Chester in 1942

The year 1942 was especially eventful for the crew of the U.S.S. Chester. On February 1, the ship was torpedoed in a heavy air attack. Eight of the crew were killed, and 38 injured. A few days later, Paul Earl learned in a letter from home that his brother Jerry had joined the Navy a month earlier. This entry from Paul's log is from February 5th, 1942:

"G.Q.-0800-1200 -go into Pearl Harbor-cheered from ships there, moor to Pier 14-workers started right in fixing damage. Lots of mail-2 books, paper, letter from Mom, Marion, Uncle Bill, Caroline, Malvina-Jerry joined Navy, Bob Earl in California-my letter in Fairport newspaper..."

After completing repairs at Pearl Harbor, the U.S.S. Chester and her crew participated in a long list of missions in 1942, including the Guadalcanal-Tulagi raid (May 4), Misima Island and Louisiade Archipelago (May 7) and the Battle of the Coral Sea (May 8), in which several crewmen were wounded. Two days later, the ship transported almost five hundred survivors of the bombing of the U.S.S. Lexington. Eight months later, on October 20, 1942, the Chester was hit by an enemy torpedo, in which 11 crewmen were killed and 12 wounded. Six days later, the S.S. President Coolidge, a luxury liner transformed into a troop carrier for the war struck a mine while approaching the island of Espiritu Santo, an Allied Forces military supply and support base east of Australia. The Chester had cruised to the island for emergency repairs of the damaged caused by the torpedo hit days earlier, and was dispatched to help in the rescue of the 5,340 troops aboard the Coolidge. The Chester transported 440 of these troops to Espiritu Santo. After several weeks in Australia for repairs, The Chester finally departed for the long trip home, to the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, for a complete overhaul.

Paul Earl returned from overseas on September 22, 1945 and received an Honorable Discharge from the U.S. Navy on October 1, 1945. He served his country for six years, including all of World War II. We are proud to share some of his story here, and are grateful to the Earl family for helping us learn more about one of our hometown heroes.

Entries, shown as written, into Paul Earl's log for December, 1941, including the 7th, the day of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Military time is used. G.Q. stands for General Quarters:

- 1 0530-G.Q.-08-1200 and 20-2400 throttle-slept.
- 2 Crossed 180-degree Meridian-skipped Tuesday.
- 3 0530-G.Q.-ran air comp. up-checked valves in fireroom for leaks-G.Q.-damage control. 08-1200 and 20-2400 throttle-clocks back to -11.
- 4 Same routine-ran air comp. for loading drill. P.D. - drew small stores-dungarees, white pants.

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William Earl (left) with his sons Paul and Jerry Earl, all of whom served in the U.S. Navy during WWII

Photo provided by the Earl family

Paul Earl wrote:

"When the war started on December 7, 1941, I was already in the Navy and on the heavy cruiser USS Chester, which was stationed in Pearl Harbor. We had just been on a mission with the carrier USS Enterprise, the cruisers USS Portland, USS Salt Lake City, and the USS Pensacola, plus six destroyers, delivering a squadron of Marine fighter planes to Wake Island.

"Luckily we were about one hundred miles west of Pearl Harbor on that fateful morning and escaped the debacle of the sneak attack on the ships there. We went in the next day and witnessed the devastation.

"The USS Lexington and a similar task force had been on a similar mission to Midway. Both groups refueled and went out to patrol around the Hawaiian Islands. We were now just about the backbone of the Navy in the Pacific."



Yuletide Traditions

The PHS holiday fundraiser



With Appreciation

to the individuals, organizations and businesses that
donated to Yuletide Traditions:

Jan Aldridge
Karen and William Allen
Catherine Angevine
Anonymous
Carol Boas
Susan Broda, Anne Johnston &
May Thomson
Ann Castle
Church of the Assumption
Cire d'Abeille Skin Care
Audrey Connolly
The Corner Bookstore
Craft Bits and Pieces / Fairport
Perinton Senior Living Council
Diane Dowling
Emily's Garden, on behalf of
Greenbrier Garden Club
Fairport Rotary Club
Girl Scout Troops 60029 & 60374
Girl Scout Troop 60336
Girl Scout Troop 60862
Jean Hamel
Helping Hands for Helping Hearts /
Wellness Center
The Inn on Church
Klimasewski Family
Joyce Lyle

Main Street Mercantile
Karen Martin
Lucy McCormick
Peg McGee
Kathy Miller
Marilyn Moran
Perinton Quilt Guild
Susan Prener
Rita Prince State Farm
Vicki Masters Profit
Red Bird Market
Revelations Design Studio
Marilyn Reynolds
Laura Schmidt
The Shannon-Missal Family
Skip's Meat Market & Deli
Jane Stock & Carol Klinger
Sue Templeton
Supergirl Fitness
Valerie VanBortel
Sylvia Vecellio
Wagonjack Antiques
Wegmans Perinton
Margo Wheeler
Jean Whitney
Windy Acres

Upcoming Events

Saturday, December 2nd

from 10:30–11:30 a.m. at the museum

Book sale and signing—*Sioux Code Talkers of World War II*
Author: Andrea M. Page. Meet the author; \$15.00, cash only

Children's craft with PHS Member Suzanne Lee

This event is free and is open to the public.

A visit from Santa, 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 3rd

from 2:30–3:30 p.m. at the museum

The Striking Strings Hammered Dulcimer Ensemble of the
Eastman Community Music School

Come listen to the beautiful sounds of the hammered dulcimer in
our downstairs program room.

A visit from Santa, 2:30–3:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 9th

from 10:30–11:30 a.m. at the museum

Book sale and signing—*On Pins and Needles: A Christmas Tale*

Author: Carole R. Young

Illustrator: Mary Lynn Miraglia

Meet the author and illustrator of the book.

\$9.95, cash and checks accepted

A visit from Santa, 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 10th

from 2:30–3:30 p.m. at the museum

Talk and book sale and signing—*My Heroes and Their Stories
of Survival*

Author: Patrick J. Bastow, D.D.S. Meet the author as he
discusses and signs copies of his book about America's World
War II veterans. \$15.00, cash and checks accepted.

A visit from Santa, 2:30–3:30 p.m.

Tuesday, December 12th

from 6:00–7:00 p.m. at the museum

PHS Yuletide Traditions

Final bids accepted for silent auction items. Winners will be an-
nounced at the conclusion of the evening's program.

7:00 pm

Annual Holiday Party & Program: *A Jane Austen Christmas:
Yuletide Traditions during the Regency Era*

Presenter: Lisa Brown

Please bring a dessert to pass

Tuesday, January 16, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

at the Fairport Public Library

The Three Erie Canals: History and Folklore

Presenter: Bruce Schwendy

This program is sponsored by the Fairport Public Library, and
reservations are required. Please call 223-9091 or visit www.FairportLibrary.org for reservation details.



Museum News

December 12th will be a busy night at the museum. Final bidding on our *Yuletide Traditions* silent auction items takes place from 6:00–7:00 p.m., followed by a presentation by Lisa Brown on yuletide traditions during the Regency Era. We will also celebrate the holidays with our annual party.

You can support the Perinton Historical Society whenever you shop on Amazon.com. Just log in to Smile.Amazon.com and select the Perinton Historical Society as your charity of choice. Amazon will donate a portion of the sale to the PHS. Thank you for your support! smile.amazon.com/ch/22-2372953

The museum gift shop has a wonderful selection of unique gift ideas, ranging from autographed books by local authors to hand-painted slate tiles showing scenes from early Fairport and many other items in between. New to the gift shop are fairy lights, created by our *Yuletide Traditions* committee members, selling for \$6.00 and \$4.00, depending on the size of the jar.

The Three Canals: History & Folklore

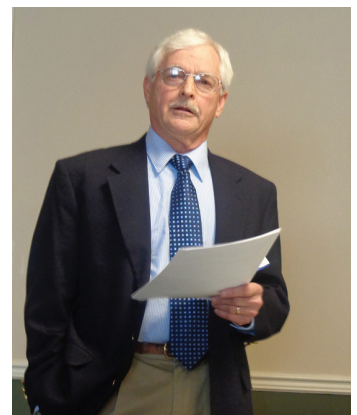
*Presented by Bruce Schwendy
on January 16th at the
Fairport Public Library*

New York's canal system went through three eras: the original Clinton's Ditch, completed in 1825, the enlarged canal, completed in 1862, and today's barge canal system, completed in 1918.

Bruce Schwendy, a member of the board of directors of the Canal Society of New York State, will discuss the folklore of the Erie Canal and some common misconceptions. He will also demonstrate actual canal horns and tell how they were used for signaling on the early canals.

Bruce Schwendy, a graduate of Clarkson University, is a retired engineer from General Motors. He has studied NYS canal history for many years and enjoys traveling with his wife, Donna, throughout the canal system on their 40-ft houseboat, the *Li'l Rooster*.

This program, free and open to the public, is sponsored by the Fairport Public Library. Reservations are required. Call 223-9091 or visit www.FairportLibrary.org for reservation details.



Yuletide Collaborators

By Lucy McCormick

The Perinton Historical Society is fortunate to have many supporters of its annual fundraiser, *Yuletide Traditions*. Many donors of the silent auction items have been on board since the inception of this holiday experience four years ago, working with others to create very special items. This month we are highlighting two such groups.



137 North Main Street, Fairport

Rita Prince State Farm Insurance Agency

The historic home at 137 North Main Street (pictured above) was once the home of William Newman, the proprietor of a saleratus and spice business. Later the home was owned by Walter Parce, a shipper of Crystal Springs Water and a real estate developer, among many other interests and professions. Today, the building houses an amazingly spirited and crafty crew—the staff of the Rita Prince State Farm Insurance Agency.

Jills of All Trades

Another loyal group of yuletide crafters is longtime friends Sue Broda, Anne Johnston and May Thomson—nicknamed Jills of All Trades. Come Fourth of July float time, they wield mean paint rollers and duct tape anything that moves. Come Scarecrow Festival time, they stuff and secure historical figures to weather gale storms. For *Yuletide Traditions*, they have crafted elegant wreaths and baskets for holiday entertaining.



Jills of All Trades:

Anne Johnston,
Sue Broda and
May Thomson



This year's creators of festive wreaths and a Mason jar novelty are, as pictured, Wendy Ashley, Wyatt Matulic-Keller, Linda DeMatteo, Rita Prince, Josh Thurston and Julie Vega.

The Perinton Historical Society is grateful to these groups and to all of its fundraiser donors. PHS members and the community are invited to bid on these lovely items as well as many others until December 12th.



Special Recognition Level Memberships

As of November 16, 2017

Business (\$100)

Barranco's Clothing and Shoes

32 North Main Street, Fairport, NY 14450,
Phone: 585-388-1270

Fairport Village Inn, Wayne and Patty Beckwith

103 North Main Street, Fairport, NY 14450
Phone: 585-388-0112
<http://www.thefvi.com>

Robert Ruhland, Keller Williams Realty

2000 Winton Road S. Bldg. 1, Rochester, NY 14618
Phone: 585-303-6607
<http://bobruhland.yourkwagent.com>

Joel Cuminala, Turning Point Signs & Design

3 Railroad Street, Fairport, NY 14450
Phone: 585-377-9310
www.tpsigns.com

The Inn on Church

11 West Church Street, Fairport, NY 14450
Phone: 585-678-1106
www.facebook.com/theinnonchurch

Pixos Print

75 Goodway Drive, Rochester, NY 14623-3000
Phone: 585-500-4600
www.ReadytoRun@pixosprint.com

New Listings for Special Recognition

DeLand (\$100–\$249)

Anonymous (1)

Potter (\$250–\$499)

None

Perrin (\$500 and above)

Robert C. Stevens



"A Navy Man," continued from page 5

- 5 G.Q. at sunrise and sunset – same throttle watches.
- 6 Same routine – wrote to Marion.
- 7 00-0400 throttle-G.Q.-jammed air-awakened by G.Q. alarm and P.A. saying we are at war with JAPAN. Hostilities commenced with an air raid on PEARL HARBOR. Broke out service ammo – flags – tin hat – wild scuttlebutt and speculation – G.Q. often.
- 8 Congress declared war-G.Q. – wrote Mom – sent her my bankbook – went into Pearl Harbor at noon – could hardly believe devastation-NEVADA bow down at CHANNEL EDGE-HICKAM FIELD hangars and planes all wrecked – ARIZONA burning – UTAH and OKLAHOMA bottoms up – WEST VA and CALIF. settled on bottom – TENNESSEE, MARYLAND pinned in – VESTAL – aground OGLALA sunk. SHAW blown apart, CASSIN and DOWNES – wrecked in dry-dock – oil, debris all over the place.
- 9 00-0400 and 08-1200 and 16-200 jammed air – we refueled, underway 0400 – rough weather – same task force – wild rumors – submarine alarms – G.Q. several times. GERMAN and ITALY declare war on U.S. too.
- 10 00-0400 and 08-1200 and 20-200 air comp. G.Q. Several submarine alarms.
- 11 12-1600 air comp. – made 3 section watch list. 4 hours on – 4 hours off – sleep when possible. G.Q.
- 12 00-0400 and 12-1600 – G.Q. Did laundry.
- 13 00-0400 and 12-1600 and 20-2400 – G.Q. Sleep.
- 14 G.Q. – 08-1200 and 20-2400 – slept – read magazines. We refueled 3 destroyers – rough seas, made very tough job of it.
- 15 G.Q. sunrise – 08-1200 and 20-2400 – P.D. – Sec Knox publishes dope on air raid after flying to PEARL HARBOR and back to U.S.
- 16 Checked guns and lines for air leaks – ran air up 20-2400 – wrote Mom, Gram, Sis and Stewarts.
- 17 Went into PEARL HARBOR 1630 – moored to north dock – refueled and got provision and mail. Letter from Mom and Xmas card. 08-1200 and 20-2400 aux. – all blackout.
- 18 Ran in 5" guns – Hedge and I packed air valves in fireroom – laundry – read paper – got drafts of men from sunken ships.
- 19 Lit-off, underway 0900-08-1200 and 20-2400 – Throttle, watched planes and ships. G.Q. sundown.
- 20 Same routine.
- 21 Same routine – clock back to +12.
- 22 04-0800 – G.Q. slept – fueled destroyers – 16-2000.
- 23 Same.
- 24 Same, cold, foggy and rainy.
- 25 Xmas. 04-0800 – G.Q. Read – good dinner – 12-1600 read.
- 26 04-0800 G.Q. Watch ships – moved bunk to A division. Clocks ahead +11.
- 27 04-0800 G.Q. 12-1600 and 20-2400 – read and slept.
- 28 04-0800 G.Q. 12-1600 and 20-2400 – slept.
- 29 G.Q. – 08-1200 and 20-2400 – read – Sea Smooth – clocks ahead ½ hour.
- 30 08-1200 – G.Q. 20-2400 – read, took out 5000 ins. (insurance)
- 31 G.Q. – 08-1200 topside – watch coming into PEARL HARBOR. Moored 1345 – P.D. – read book and paper. Letter from Mom, cards from Dad, Gram, Violet, and F.F. A sad New Year's Eve.



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Confused Canada Goose
On the Frozen Erie Canal

*Photo by Keith Boas,
taken from Perinton's Turk
Hill Road Bridge*

Season's Greetings from the Perinton Historical Society

The Fairport Historical Museum—18 Perrin Street, Fairport—will be closed from December 23rd through March 2nd. It will reopen on Saturday, March 3rd. During this period, you may call Vicki Masters Profitt at 585-233-1204 or email at director@perintonhistoricalsociety.org to book a group tour or do research.

www.PerintonHistoricalSociety.org