

Fairport's Shade Trees

By Andrew J. Deal
Editor – Fairport Herald, June 12, 1901

The Village of Fairport is governed by an elected Mayor and Board of Trustees. That's probably not a surprise, nor is the existence of planning and zoning boards. Readers may also be aware that a board has served to implement the village's historic preservation ordinance since 2007. I suspect less readers are aware that sixteen years ago Fairport established a "tree law," and appointed a Tree Board. According to Village Board meeting minutes from 2003, the local law was put in place to "regulate the planting, maintenance, and removal of trees, shrubs, and other plants in the tree lawns and public places." The ordinance appears to have stemmed from a previous law, going back to 1968, or perhaps even earlier. The root of this initiative, over fifty years ago, was consistent with concerns voiced by Fairport newspaper editor Andrew J. Deal (1846-1912), in an editorial published in 1901. If Mr. Deal were here today, he would be gratified to learn that the seeds he planted 118 years ago are being addressed through the efforts of the Fairport Tree Board and the village's Department of Public Works. For your review, reprinted here is Editor Deal's essay from 1901.

Bill Poray
Editor, PHS Historigram

Zera Burr was one of the very first settlers in Fairport. He was a great lover of fruit, and early recognized the fact that the soil and climate was wonderfully favorable for the growth of cherries in particular, as well as for other kinds of fruit. With his usual energy he set out lots of cherry trees and got others to do the same, until these fruit trees lined most of the streets of the village, and in many cases were set in the yards, and everywhere room could be found for them; in fact one street was christened Cherry Street, now West Avenue. These trees bore most prolific, and for some years after 1860 Fairport was the greatest cherry producing village in the world—there was never more luscious cherries grown.

The products of Fairport's shade trees became known everywhere along the lines of shipping clear to New York and Boston, and also were instrumental in the starting of our first canning factory in 1873. In the



This turn-of-the-century postcard view looking south on Woodlawn Avenue from West Avenue shows the recent addition of cement sidewalks and electrical wires and poles—new challenges to shade trees planted in the tree lawn, the area between the sidewalk and the street.

Photo from the collection of the Perinton Historical Society

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~ Bob Hunt ~

Comments from your President

For this month's article I'm back in my office in the carriage barn on a sunny but windy day. The old structure in the wind, built in 1896, is a bit like me, creaking and groaning in the joint areas. The knee recovery is coming along very well, with no trouble climbing the stairs up to the office. I'm

even back on the bicycle when the weather cooperates, with about 120 miles to date, a bit behind our norm but we will catch up as the season progresses. As usual, it is a joy riding the canal path with the wild flowers jumping into bloom. The honeysuckle and autumn olive are just beautiful, and what an aroma, especially from the autumn olive.

We had a record turnout for the PHS annual meeting and picnic. As in previous years, there was great fellowship, good food and a short business meeting, in which we brought attendees up to date on what's happening at your museum. For more on the event, see page 7.

You may not have HEARD, but you should HERD yourself, family and friends, to HURD'S. Hurd Orchards that is, located at the corner of Route 104W and Monroe-Orleans County Line Road, in Holley, NY. The Hurd family have lived and worked on the fruit and vegetable-producing farm for eight generations going back to the pioneer era in the early 1800s. Hurd Orchards is 1,000 acres of rich farmland left by the glaciers over ten thousand years ago. It benefits from the fruit-friendly climate found near the Great Lakes of Erie and Ontario.

The reason I herded Cindy, our daughter Kim, granddaughter McKenna, and yours truly to Hurd's was to enjoy one of their 2019 farm and folklore programs, which are lunches featuring a theme. Our luncheon was entitled "An Orchard Nest—A Birding Luncheon" held on Friday, May 31st. The description states, "The luncheon will capture the fun of living with birds on our farm. Between Audubon prints and bird nests to identify, maps of birding outings in our area and a sumptuous May luncheon menu, this will be a day to remember. Special guests Bari Greenfield and Mike Molnar will share Great Lakes birding reflections."

The menu consisted of fresh greens with chive blossom lemon dressing, spiced cedar beverages, rhubarb/apple compote, egg and ham quiche with herbs, pearl couscous with asparagus, rhubarb muffins and breads with strawberry and rhubarb jam and a lemon and rhubarb pound cake drizzled with lemon sauce for dessert. Need I say more, for someone who loves lemon, I was suddenly in heaven. The luncheons

take place in an old barn with stories to tell if it could talk. There is about a half hour program based on the theme of the day. The cost was \$40 and I felt an excellent value was received. There are many luncheon events right up until October 31st. For a listing, go to www.hurdorchards.com and click on Events at the top. You need to make reservations, and it is about a 45-minute drive from Fairport.

Speaking of birds, we had a recent visit to the feeders on the back patio by a pair of gray birds with black caps on their heads, to partake of seeds and suet. We had never seen this species before, so after checking the bird book, we confirmed them to be a pair of gray catbirds. They were around for about two weeks, but we have not seen them since. Maybe they found better flavored suet somewhere else.

We just returned from a three-night visit to New York City and yes, we were near the roof where the helicopter crash-landed. We also saw a great Broadway musical called "Come From Away." The editor tells me I'm running out of space so I'll have to fill in the details the next time we chat.

Thanks for your continued support, it is appreciated, and we will chat again next issue.

Bob Hunt, President
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HISTORIGRAM

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Perinton Historical Society

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DeLand (\$100–\$249)

John D. Clayton

Carl and Sylvia Yoder

Potter (\$250–\$499)

None this month

Perrin (\$500 and above)

None this month

Upcoming Event

Our 2019-2020 program season will begin Tuesday, September 17th with a special presentation by Perinton Town Historian Bill Poray celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Fairport Historical Museum. Check the September (our next) issue of the *Historigram* for details about that and other upcoming programs.

A Return to Fairport

By John Douglas Clayton

I moved to Fairport 55 years ago in 1964 when I was eight years old. I graduated from Fairport High School in 1973 and went to college at Duke University, then to the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania for my MBA. Like 95% of my FHS friends who went to out-of-state schools, I left the Rochester area for my career. Unlike these friends, though, I have returned to work and someday retire here.

It wasn't clear to me exactly how special the Rochester area was until I had been in Southern California for about twenty years. I missed my friends, family and the change of weather. After 32 years in the Hollywood Hills and Santa Barbara, I have finally moved back.

I am an econometrician specializing in Predictive Analytics, so my work allows me to examine population demographics and lifestyle psychographics, then measure their impact.

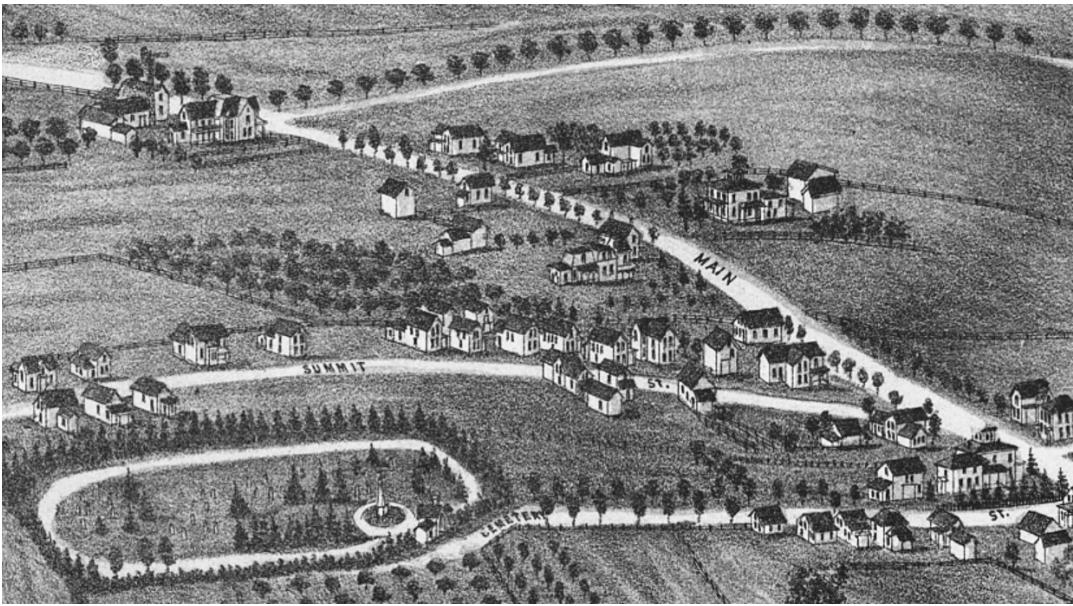
As a backdrop for this article, I want to tell you that I have twelve close friends from junior and senior high school here in Fairport who I get together with every few years. In fact, we've had over a dozen in-person Group Reunions since the '80s. We now have an incredible collective experience that is valuable and I want to share it with you. You will see why this could only have happened in Perinton.

Only one of our group, Elaine Smith, was a lifetime resident of Perinton. Her family was the Humphrey family of Penfield. In our discussions with Elaine, her mother and her aunt (FHS, class of '49), Fairport was largely a farming community with some industry, but it was quite separate from the gravitational pull of Rochester. Even into the early '70s, many of my classmates had not been to downtown Rochester more than once or twice in their lives, and had never been to New York City or Toronto. It was not the commuter suburb it is now. Perhaps due to greater proximity to downtown Rochester, the placement of country clubs, being on East Avenue or other factors, Pittsford and Brighton had been important, prosperous suburbs of Rochester since the 1920s.

Things changed when parents, such as my group's parents, chose Fairport as their home in the 1960s. They brought highly technical skills and very bright children to Fairport's already renowned schools. In the 1960s, many Pittsford and Brighton families sent their children to private schools but not so much in Fairport. As a result, Fairport Schools got an influx of creativity and talent never before seen.

Let me quantify what I mean by this. In my group of twelve friends alone, there were seven mothers and fathers who were engineers, chemists, scientists and inventors who moved here starting in the early 1960s. My friend Eric Gundlach's father Robert, was one of the primary inventors of

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Evidence of the methodical planting of trees is visible along South Main Street, Cemetery Street (later renamed Orchard Street), and Hulburt Road, in this view from L.R. Burleigh's 1885 *Birds-Eye View of Fairport*.



A turn-of-the-century postcard view, this one looking west on West Avenue. These shade trees took the place of early cherry trees on this street once named for them.

Photo from the collection of the Perinton Historical Society

meantime, D.B. DeLand had settled here, and had begun to exert a great influence upon the village, and had started in 1852, the chemical works which did so much, more than all other forces, for the enlargement of the village. He was the first one to see that the cherry trees, while all right for a quickly grown shade in a new village, would not last very many years. They would soon be gone both as fruit producers and as shade trees. So he set out maple trees in front of his long frontage on Main Street, between the cherry trees. Others followed his lead, except in front of the Briggs place (as known in 1872) on South Main Street, only maple trees were set.

When the writer came to Fairport in 1876 it was a wonder to see the cherry trees everywhere, and all in the height

of bearing. In spite of all the factory could put up, over two hundred tons more of this fruit were shipped each year. But it was easy to see that the older fruit trees were failing, and many were beginning to follow the example of D.B. DeLand and others, and were putting out maple trees between the cherry trees or where the others had failed.

From or after 1876 the cherry trees failed rapidly until now most of them are gone. In the meantime the maple trees have come on at a remarkable rate. Those in the north part of the village meet the roadway, and in other places, particularly on South Main Street, they are nearly as large and far spreading. But on the newer streets the trees are younger, but will soon spread clear across the roadways. All this time the maple trees have been allowed to grow without trimming,

except that several times the village board have made an effort to have the lower branches cut off so that pedestrians could walk under them.

During the past few months electric lights have been put in the streets. This together with the fact that the trees are getting very large, and are constantly growing, makes imperative that the trees must be trimmed. They should be trimmed so as to increase their symmetry and beauty, enlarge their efficiency to afford shade, and at the same time give the electric lights a chance. If any citizen will think of this proposition for just one minute they will see that this is a pretty difficult proposition, especially where one knows very little about how to accomplish all these needed and desirable objects. We feel safe in saying that no one in Fairport has the necessary knowledge or experience, although a start will have to be made in the near future.

Of late we have wondered if the State Forestry Commission can send a man here to show some of us how to do it, and plan out and start the work. It seems as if this work comes within the province of this commission, in fact it should be a part of its work. Or it may be a man could be sent from the experimental station at Geneva or Ithaca to inaugurate the improvement. In the older New England cities they have a landscape commissioner or some official, or the board elects or hires a man for this purpose. Perhaps Fairport will have to do this.

Certain it is that something will have to be done, and at an early day. If everyone goes at it, hit and miss, the beauty and utility of our shade trees will be injured, but by concerted and intelligent action our Fairport shade trees will increase in beauty.

What is Fairport going to do about it?

A Message from the Fairport Tree Board

Thank you for the inclusion of this letter in The Historical Society's newsletter. The history of the village of Fairport is not just the chronicles of its people and businesses, but also of our silent, lofty co-habitants that the Fairport Tree Board refers to as "Our Village Forest." My own first memory of Fairport is not of the sidewalks or the houses, but of seeing the trees that line West Church street, their branches stretching to meet one another in a ceiling canopy that grant our main roads their own almost magical quality. The 1901 essay by Andrew Deal is an amazing window into the history of our village. For me, it is as hard to imagine unkempt tree limbs blocking the way of pedestrians as it is to picture our maples and elms replaced entirely with cherry trees, although I'm sure it provided quite the sight when they were all in flower! One thing that certainly has not changed is the passion of our citizens for their trees, evident both by Fairport's commitment to the Arbor Day Foundation's "Tree City USA" program, and by the interest that people take in the care and welfare of the village trees that shade their property.

*Matthew J. Brown, MD
Fairport Village Trustee and Chair, Fairport Tree Board*



– Canal Days – *Fun at the PHS Booth*



(Above) Jean Whitney and Holly Wolf, two of many members to volunteer their time at the PHS booth during Canal Days

(Right) Linda and David Wiener helped set up the booth, and spent many hours over Canal Days weekend supporting our PHS volunteers.



Photos by George Wolf

A Return to Fairport, Continued from page 3

the xerography process that made Haloid (now Xerox) an important corporation in the late 1950s. Robert had an astounding 155 patents. My friend Betsy Seeley's father Dunham was an inventor with dozens of patents for the Research & Development Department at Burroughs. My father, Dr. William J. Clayton, invented the Hefty Freezer Bag, Trash Bag, Plastic Plate, Meat Tray and thirty other patents for Mobil Chemical, Plastics Division in Macedon where he was VP of Research & Development. The collective impact of these patents attributed to these three men alone was worth more than four billion dollars to Xerox, Mobil and Burroughs (based on product sales at the time and sales of these businesses to other corporations in later years). These profits encouraged these companies to bring more scientists, inventors and engineers into the Rochester area, with the largest percentage moving into Perinton for the schools and the sense of community.

In short, great schools attract smart, engaged parents and successful students, which benefits their local communities for decades to come. I'm so glad I moved back!



Greenbrier Plant Sale—*It Was a Perfect Day!*



Thanks to everyone who supported the Greenbrier plant sale on May 11th. The weather was perfect for this event, held each year on the sidewalk in front of the Fairport Historical Museum the Saturday before Mother's Day.

Greenbrier Garden Club maintains the museum gardens, which are in full bloom with vibrant purples and pinks. Take a stroll through the back gardens or sit on the front porch and relax on the benches.



Photos by Keith Boas and Vicki Masters Profitt



Bushnell's Basin Cemetery Tour—*A Rousing Success*

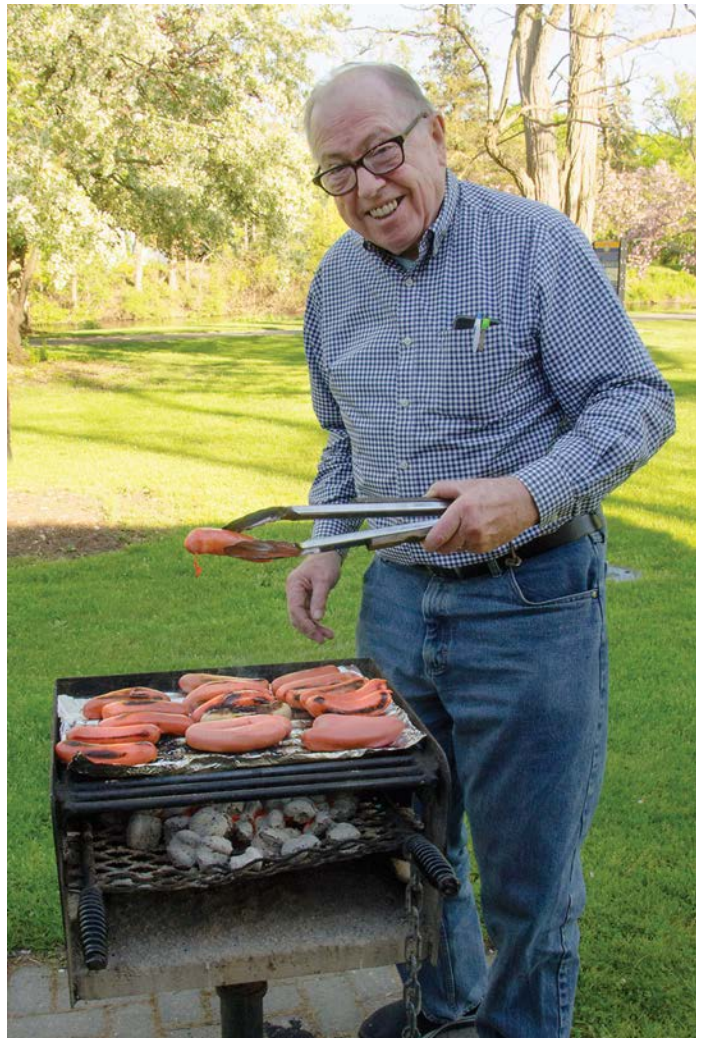
Thanks to the hard work of young people between the ages of 12–19, seven eternal residents of Bushnell's Basin Cemetery were brought to life for the seventh annual Illuminated History cemetery tour. More than 70 attendees enjoyed hearing the life stories of Clarissa Simmons Richardson, Mary Wiltsie Woodin, Alma Tedman Ketcham, Peter S. Bonesteel, Martha Boughton Collins, Joseph McCoord and Jacob Megerle. Scriptwriters Suzanne Lee and Vicki Masters Profitt are greatly appreciative to the following students for their wonderful portrayals: Bianca Lewey, Jordyn Bagley, Alison Profitt, William Profitt, Avery Stadler, Tristan Bauer and Tristan Berlet.

Annual PHS Meeting and Picnic

The cool breezes of beautiful Perinton Park greeted a large and enthusiastic group of Perinton Historical Society members for our annual meeting and picnic on May 21st. As is typical, hots and hamburgers, fresh off the grill, were accompanied by home-cooked dishes and desserts provided by the members.

Among the highlights of the meeting, two new officers to the Board of Trustees were confirmed. Suzanne Lee will serve on the Executive Committee as Recording Secretary, while the role of Member at Large will be filled by Matt Wells. In addition, President Bob Hunt and Keith Boas, Trustee, were reelected for another term.

Among the reports provided for the group were the Property and Building Committee, as well as the Treasurer's Report by Linda Wiener and the Museum Director's Report by Vicki Profitt. The Parade Committee gave an update on the PHS entry in the 4th of July celebration. Special thanks were offered to John Laurence for his significant efforts as our Volunteer Coordinator, and to President Bob Hunt, whose guidance and leadership have been an essential ingredient in the success of the Perinton Historical Society. Thanks to all for attending and for your support for the Perinton Historical Society and the Fairport Historical Museum.



Photos by Keith Boas



New Exhibit of a Favorite Summer Treat

Former Fairport resident Juliet Miller Moynihan visited the Fairport Historical Museum on Sunday, June 9th to see the 50 ice cream molds on display she had recently donated. The molds had belonged to her uncle, David Starr Jordan (1921–1990). David, a local attorney, had delighted in accumulating a substantial collection of these collectibles, which are made of pewter.

The ice cream molds, featuring a variety of shapes, will be on display through the end of the summer.

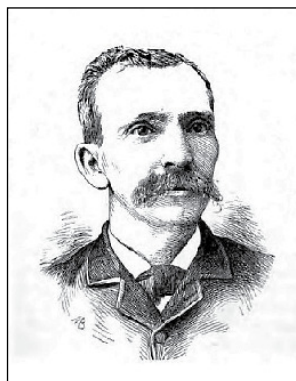
Photo by Vicki Masters Proffitt

Chester Hutchinson's Relatives Descend Upon the Museum

On Saturday, June 8th, 17 family members (photo on right) of Civil War soldier Chester Hutchinson arrived at the Fairport Historical Museum to see the exhibit featuring artifacts that had belonged to Chester. Chester's Springfield Model 1863 rifled musket, a shadowbox, two powder horns and discharge papers had been donated in 2018 by his great-grandson, William Palmer Hutchinson.

It was especially interesting to note the striking physical similarities between Chester and his great-great grandson, Scott Masclee—

See images on the right.



House Tour 2019

“West x West x Woodlawn”

By Lucy McCormick

Some of the street names have changed, but many of the vintage homes constructed on them still remain the treasures they have always been. This year’s Historical Society house tour on Sunday, September 29th, will feature homes on three streets on the north side of Church Street: West Avenue, West Street, and Woodlawn Avenue.

West Avenue used to be called Cherry Street, because of the extensive cherry orchards at the site of what is now Packett’s Glen. The east end of the street was once a mixture of commercial and residential buildings. The street originally went from Main Street to West Street, was later extended just beyond Cole Street, and finally to Nelson Street.

West Street is one of the earliest streets in the village of Fairport, with many homes built between 1852 and 1872. Two main landowners were Martin Wood, who owned property on the west side of the West Street, and Omar Wilcox, who owned much of the property on the east side.

Woodlawn Avenue, once named Woodland Avenue, was part of property owned by Martin Wood, a Fairport farmer who owned six acres called Woodland Farms. The street was originally named after the farm.

**Mark your calendars so you will not miss this tour:
Sunday, September 29th, from 1:00 to 5:00 pm.**

Tickets will be sent to PHS members, and memberships (tickets) can be purchased at the museum and other venues during regular hours as we get closer to the event. Stay tuned.

Interested in helping with the tour? Please contact:

- Kay Joslyn (kbjoslyn@frontiernet.net)
- or Elaine Lanni (ellaannii@gmail.com).



*Photos by
Lucy McCormick*



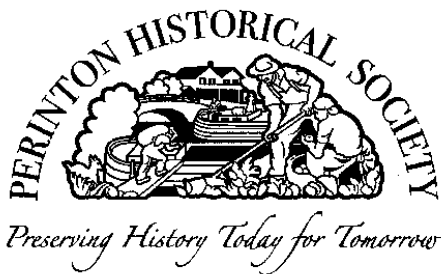
37 Woodlawn Avenue



17 Woodlawn Avenue



35 Woodlawn Avenue



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Rehabilitation and restoration of Fairport's iconic Main Street Lift Bridge is scheduled to begin on September 4th, and is estimated to continue until November, 2020. This photograph was taken during the original assembly of the bridge over 105 years ago.

Photo from the collection of the Perinton Historical Society

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

The museum is open to the public on Saturdays, from 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. and Sundays and Tuesdays from 2:00–4:00 p.m. Free admission. Group tours, presentations and special projects are by appointment. Please call and leave a message at **585-223-3989**.

www.PerintonHistoricalSociety.org