

Senior Class Trip—1958 Style!

*By Betsy Garner Carpenter
Fairport High School Class of 1958*

- *Eat wisely! Don't try to exist on a diet of hot dogs for four days. There are very good restaurants and cafeterias in the vicinity of our hotel where complete meals are served at reasonable rates.*
- *You should have dimes and nickels ready for subway fares.*
- *There are to be no boys in girls' rooms and no girls in boys' rooms.*

These were just three of the 17 RULES FOR NEW YORK TRIP. Printed on a mimeographed sheet, each Fairport High School student participating in this four day Easter vacation adventure received a copy. For weeks prior to the trip, members of the Class of 1958 had gone door to door selling magazine subscriptions. Each subscription sold helped defray the cost of this trip. Some of the most popular magazines included: Highlights (for children), McCall's, Reader's Digest, The Saturday Evening Post and Seventeen (a favorite with teenage girls).

Day One—Saturday, April 5

Finally the big day arrived. We were told to be at Rochester's New York Central Train Station at 5:30 a.m. Our train, located on track 2, left at 5:45 a.m. sharp! My luggage tag read, "Van Zile Tours, F. W. Van Zile, Caledonia, N.Y." My home address read as 1 Galusha St.—Fairport, New York.

Our train arrived at New York City's Grand Central Terminal at 12:45 p.m. on April 5th. From here, we boarded a bus that took us to Hotel Taft, located on 7th Avenue at 50th Street. This would be our home base for four days. Our packed itinerary, detailed on a mimeographed 8 ½-inch x 11-inch sheet, concluded with the directives:

*Meet promptly at the designated time in the lobby.
We represent our school!!! Be a credit!!
Future senior trips depend upon you!!!*



Fairport High School on West Avenue—Circa 1958

I shared hotel room number 1171 with three friends—Karen Ingalls, Brenda Vogt and Cheryl Kahler. Slightly more than six decades have passed since our senior trip. Happily, I still keep in touch with Karen who is married and lives outside Boston, Massachusetts. Today Karen claims that I have a better memory than she does. No, I just think that I'm a saver of things that served as milestones in my life.

When I read our itinerary today, I feel like I'm running a marathon. Senior class officers that included Bob Meyers, Karen Ingalls, Sonya Holbrook, and me seemed to have boundless energy. We wanted to do everything! Fortunately, our class had able and willing advisors—John Clarke and Mary Dedie. Additionally, Milton "Milt" and Betty Yonkers, parents of our classmate Jane, were willing to help out as chaperones. Mr. Clarke (he always reminded students that it was Clarke spelled with an "e") was our World History teacher. Mary Dedie was a superb English teacher who introduced us to "journaling" and emphasized the importance of outlining when preparing a term paper. Milt Yonkers



Comments from your President ~Bob Hunt

October 9, 2019: Once again, I am in my office in the carriage barn, ready to share some thoughts for the

November *Historigram*. My writing commenced early this month, as we leave Friday the 11th to visit Cindy's brother Buck and family in northwest Montana. We are driving and will spend the first night near Kenyon College in Ohio, so we can visit our granddaughter Kinsey, a freshman and soccer player at the college. I believe this is our seventh trip driving across the country, which we obviously enjoy. This time we will travel on Route 2 for most of the trip, which is just south of the Canadian border, through very rural countryside. In this country, when you come home from work, "Don't forget the bread, Fred," as it is a long trip to the grocery store. The fall foliage should be nice, which leads to my discussion topic for this issue: Why do leaves change color?

It seems that if it were not for the manufacturing of food for the tree, the leaves would be the color they are during the fall foliage season. The food-making process takes place in the leaves' numerous cells, containing chlorophyll, which gives the leaf its green color. This extraordinary chemical absorbs from sunlight the energy that is used in transforming carbon dioxide and water to carbohydrates, such as sugars and starch. The process is so strong during spring and summer that the green color of chlorophyll overpowers the natural color of the leaf and thus green is dominant.

But in the fall, because of changes in the length of daylight and changes in temperature, the leaves stop their food-making process. The chlorophyll breaks down, the green color disappears, and the yellow-to-orange colors become visible, giving the leaves part of their fall splendor. At the same time, other chemical changes might occur, which form additional colors through the development of red anthocyanin pigments. Some mixtures give rise to the reddish and purplish fall colors of trees such as dogwoods and sumacs, while others give the sugar maple its brilliant orange.

The autumn foliage of some trees show only yellow colors. Others, like many oaks, display mostly browns. All these colors are due to the mixing of varying amounts of the chlorophyll residue and other pigments in the leaf during the fall season. As the fall colors appear, other changes are taking place. At the point where the stem of the leaf is attached to the tree, a special layer of cells develops and gradually severs the tissues that support the leaf. At the same time, the tree seals the cut, so that when the leaf is finally blown off by the wind or falls from its own weight, it leaves behind a leaf scar. Temperature, light, and water supply have an influence on the

degree and duration of fall color.

Enjoy the color, it appears only for a brief period each fall. Information on this topic came from the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF) in Syracuse, New York.

It has been an exciting time in the village of Fairport, with events such as the PHS house tour, Oktoberfest, the Scarecrow Festival, and Fairport on the Rise. The house tour resulted in 43 new members to the ranks of PHS. Thanks go out to Elaine Lanni and her hard-working committee, and of course, the property owners. It was a great day with beautiful homes to tour. Thanks also to Lucy McCormick and her committee for our scarecrow, featuring our museum's 40 years at 18 Perrin Street, and PHS On the Rise. It looks like time for ice cream at Moonlight Creamery for the volunteers, when I return from Montana.

Now, for what you just need to know: Richard Burton bought a 69-carat ring for wife Elizabeth Taylor in 1969, at a cost of 1.1 million dollars. Is that considered removing carbon footprint?

Thanks for your continued support, it is appreciated. We will chat again in our next issue of the *Historigram*.

Bob Hunt, President
585-415-7053, rhunt356.rh@gmail.com



HISTORIGRAM

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Yuletide Traditions

November 19th—December 10th

Thanks to all who have donated gift cards and baskets, tabletop trees, wreaths and decorative items to our *Yuletide Traditions* silent auctions. The proceeds raised from these auctions benefit the PHS by supporting its educational programs and in its operation of the museum. Check the December *Historigram* for a listing of our generous donors.



Please stop by the museum during open hours of Sundays and Tuesdays 2:00–4:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m. to view and bid on these wonderful items between November 19 and December 10. Auction winners will be announced following the December 10 holiday party.

Upcoming Programs and Events

Tuesday, November 19

4:00—7:00 p.m. at the museum

Event: PHS *Yuletide Traditions* opening bids accepted for silent auction items

Tuesday, November 19

7:00 p.m. at the museum

Program: Genesee Country Village & Museum:
50 Years in 40 Minutes

Presenter: Peter A. Wisbey, GCV Curator of Collections

Saturday, November 23

10:30—11:30 a.m. at the museum

Special Event: Author appearance and book signing

Author: G. Rollie Adams, author of *South of Little Rock*.
Softcover \$20.00; cash and checks accepted

Sunday, November 24

2:30 p.m. at the museum

***Please note new date and time.**

Special Event: Author appearance, discussion & book signing and a Walsh-inspired children's craft

Author: Ellen Stoll Walsh, author of 17 children's books
Various prices; cash accepted

Saturday, November 30

11:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m. at the museum

Special Event: Face painting by Girl Scouts and a visit from Santa

Sunday, December 1

2:30—3:30 p.m. at the museum

Special Event: Girl Scouts Gathering

Saturday, December 7

10:30—11:30 a.m. at the museum

Special Event: Free children's craft with PHS member Karen Allen, visit from Santa and face painting by Girl Scouts

Sunday, December 8

2:30—3:30 p.m. at the museum

Special event: Topping Ladder Company presentation

Presenter: Doug Topping

Tuesday, December 10

6:00—7:00 p.m. at the museum

Event: *Yuletide Traditions* final bids accepted for silent auction items. Silent auction winners will be announced following the evening's program.

Tuesday, December 10

7:00 p.m. at the museum

Event: Annual Holiday Party

Presenter: "Quantasonic Pipes" featuring Steve Whitman and Dick Hendrick. Please bring a dessert to pass.

Saturday, December 21 from 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

Museum's last day open for the season

Check the December *Historigram* for additional information about special events occurring during our *Yuletide Traditions* fundraiser!

An early postcard of the Taft Hotel, named after President William Howard Taft in 1931. First opened five years earlier, it was initially the Manger Hotel. Built with 2,250 rooms, it was at one time the largest hotel in Times Square. Private condominiums make up the majority of the former hotel today. A remaining smaller portion continues to operate as a hotel.



(“Uncle Miltie” to many) was our shop teacher as well as our driver education instructor. And Betty was a village Girl Scout leader who had plenty of experience working with kids.

Karen, Brenda, Cheryl, and I were the only FHS seniors lodging on the hotel’s 11th floor. We discovered that our room was surrounded by seniors from Florida. As I recall, they were from Dade County. Whatever the exact details, three of them, our “next door neighbors,” introduced us to pizza, and one, Bruce Elder, visited Cheryl the following summer as she was preparing for nursing school. They fell in love, were married, and settled in Florida. Ah romance! This was an unexpected senior trip perk.

But back to our class adventure! At 2:30 Saturday afternoon we left the Taft and headed to the American Museum of Natural History. Our mimeographed directions advised us to “take elevator to top floor and work down.” Today, at the age of 79, I think that this would be a full day’s activity. A search on the museum’s web site notes that this is the largest natural history museum in the world. One could say that we were “supercharged” because 5 ½ hours later our class members were seated in the end arena of Madison Square Garden enjoying the circus. Per person seat cost was \$3.00.

Day Two—Sunday, April 6

Did we get any sleep the previous night? I have no idea; however, I do know that we were to be in the hotel lobby at 8:15 a.m. ready to attend Easter Sunday service. We had a choice of three churches: The Riverside Church, Marble Collegiate Church, or St. Patrick’s Cathedral. I was issued a ticket for the 9:00 a.m. service at The Riverside Church along Riverside Drive at the corner of 122nd Street. Directions on my ticket stated that “Due to the large attendance Easter Sunday, this card will not be accepted if presented after 8:50 A.M.” Yes, the time was underlined, and a note in the church

bulletin requested that silence be maintained after the Organ Prelude began. The organ prelude was Cesar Franck’s Grand Piece Symphonique and George De Foe’s Fanfare. I don’t recall which organist, Virgil Fox or Frederick L. Swann, played these works. Regardless, we were treated to renditions of these magnificent pieces by two of the finest organists in the country. The vast sanctuary throbbed with their music. The message delivered by The Reverend Dr. Robert J. McCracken was almost an afterthought.

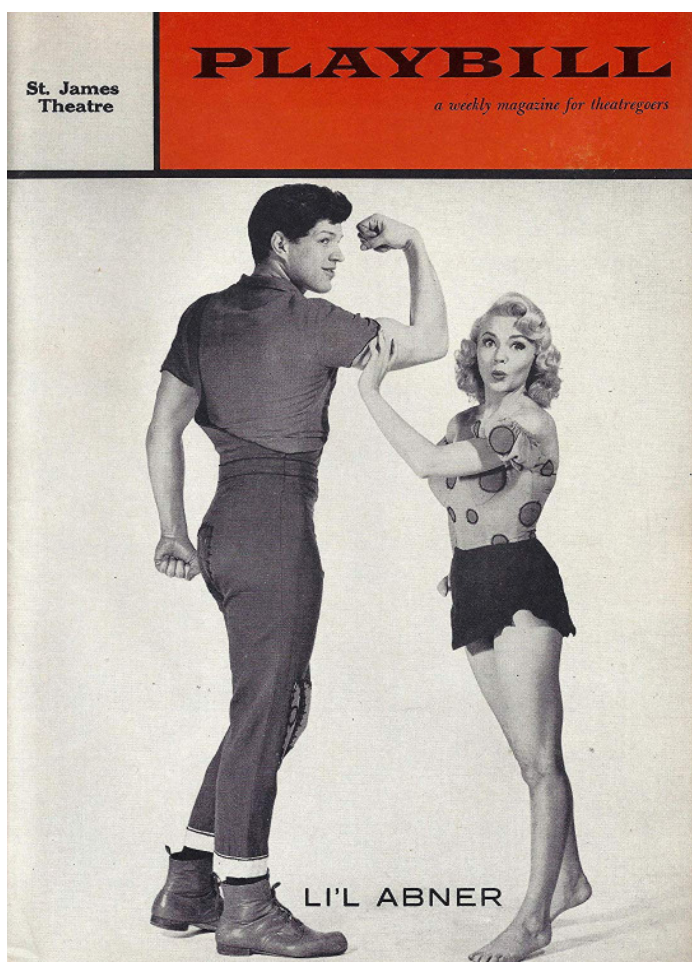
After church and lunch, we gathered in our hotel lobby at 1:30 p.m., then boarded “a special bus with guide for tour of Upper and Lower New York from Grant’s Tomb to the Battery, stopping at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and walking through Chinatown.” Type of dress was not optional. Girls were to wear hats and gloves. Oh, how I disliked wearing a hat! Sixty-one years ago shoes especially designed for walking and running didn’t exist. Flats, saddle shoes, loafers, and sneakers were our options. That evening we attended the Cinerama show, “A Search for Paradise”, at the Warner Theatre. Our balcony seat tickets cost \$2.40 each.

Day Three—Monday, April 7

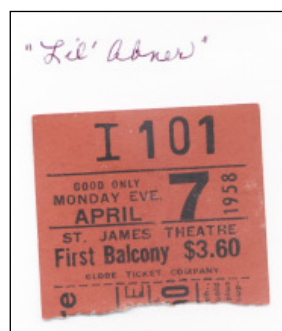
Today I find thinking about all this activity exhausting—and we were only half way through our long anticipated Senior Class Trip! We kicked off our Monday excursions with a visit to the United Nations Building that had been completed just six years before in 1952. I do remember being very impressed with this. We, as a nation, had such high hopes for a more peaceful world. Later that morning, after a whirlwind tour of the UN, we visited the Empire State Building’s Observation Roof. Each of our tickets read, “souvenir receipt of a visit to the world’s tallest building,” and the small red button we were given featured an image of the building with the inscription, “I’ve Been On Top.”



1958 postcard of the home of the United Nations in New York City



The class of 1958
attended a performance
of *Li'l Abner*, at the
St. James Theatre.



At 12:30, after a hastily eaten lunch, we gathered at the wharf for a Circle Line Cruise around Manhattan Island. Our boat left the 42nd Street pier at 1:30 p.m. We loved this change of pace. Seeing the Statue of Liberty was a treat.

Come evening we journeyed to the Saint James Theatre located at 246 West 44th Street. Here we had first balcony seats for the play, *Li'l Abner*. Price per ticket was \$3.60! It was based on the cartoonist Al Capp's popular comic strip of the same name, with music and lyrics written by Johnny Mercer. Peter Palmer, cast in the title role of *Li'l Abner*, won the Theatre World Award in recognition of an outstanding New York City stage debut performance. His love interest, Daisy Mae, was played by Wynne Miller, niece of Glenn Miller who led one of the best known big bands of the swing era.

Day Four—Tuesday, April 8

Our trip's finale began at 8:45 a.m. when we left our hotel for Radio City Music Hall. Our bags had to be packed and ready for the 2:15 p.m. Van Zile transfer to Grand Central Terminal. While at Radio City, we enjoyed a grand organ performance, precision dancing by the Rockettes, the Easter Pageant and a movie. By this time, it was all a blur to me. Today I look over Radio City Music Hall's program for the week beginning Thursday, April 3, 1958 and have no memory or the roles Danny Kay and Pier Angeli played in any of the production numbers. Musical extravaganzas listed in the program were given names like "Honey Bunnies," "Eastertime in Shadowland," and "In the Spring."

The Van Zile bus delivered us to Grand Central Terminal in time for our train's 3:45 p.m. departure for Rochester. We were scheduled to arrive in Rochester at 10:25 p.m.

Day Five—Wednesday, April 9—Home Again!

Danny Peck, FHS Tennis Team Captain, Student Council Vice-President, and contributor to the Democrat and Chronicle's "Teen Scene" section, wrote an article summarizing our trip. It was included on page 4 of the April 14, 1958 edition of the paper.

Charles Witty, our school principal, convened an assembly that morning. This included all 73 seniors who, as Danny wrote, "slept through their study periods and stumbled from class to class." No, we had not slept on the train ride home. As Danny noted, "Bill Erbland, who will attend Eastman School of Music next year, led the class in songs—the boys in their crazy hats and the girls with their toy animals bought in New York. Bill wore a beret and dark glasses as he conducted with a long cigar. During the occasional rests between songs, cards were played and jokes and stories were told."

Mercifully, Mr. Witty, after commending the seniors for their good conduct on the trip, excused them for the day, and told them to "take the afternoon off, go home and sleep."

Happily Ever After

Sixty-one years after our trip, our numbers are fewer; yet several friendships remain. Keith Boas, *Historigram* Art Director, was a member of our class. He served as Magazine Campaign Homeroom Captain, was yearbook photographer and played trumpet with the Rochester Inter-High Band. His photographic skill was honed at Rochester Institute of Technology. Now retired from Kodak, Keith has launched a second career as a commercial photographer. And Danny, now H. Daniel Peck, Ph.D., is Professor Emeritus of English at Vassar College. Recently, he authored *Thomas Cole's Refrain, The Paintings of Catskill Creek*, the companion to his retrospective book of Cole's paintings exhibited at the Thomas Cole National Historic Site in Catskill, New York.

For my part, it's always a pleasure to return to Fairport from my Mount Laurel, New Jersey home, and to visit with long-time friends. It is a gift for me to be able to share these memories with you.





Milton Yonkers in the early 1950s

Photo by Earl Pittinaro

From the collection of the Perinton Historical Society

Milton H. Yonkers

School Administrator, Teacher, Driver Education
Instructor, Director of Adult Education

By Betsy Garner Carpenter

If “Patience of a Saint” were a career category, Milton (Milt) Yonkers would surely have qualified. Any student enrolled in his driver education course in the mid-1950s, may well recall the pedal alignment in a manual transmission car: clutch, brake, accelerator. Riding in the passenger seat of Fairport High School’s driver ed car, Mr. Yonkers had back-up controls. This was a fortunate arrangement, especially

when navigating Fairport’s Summit Street. With a couple of classmates in the back seat, the student driver was instructed to park the car curbside near the street’s highest point. Once this was accomplished, the 16-year-old behind the wheel was told to start the car and move it forward. Successfully coordinating the smooth release of the clutch while depressing the accelerator was not a given. More than once, the ever patient and calm Mr. Yonkers had to use his controls to prevent the car from careening backwards down the street, or just stalling. Add to this the spring 1958 incident on West Avenue when one student driver backed into a fireplug. The unflappable Mr. Yonkers never lost his temper.

Rochester’s Democrat and Chronicle carried the sad news of Mr. Yonkers’s death on June 6, 1968. Retired just the year before after a 35-year teaching career, he was remembered for his many accomplishments. A graduate of Fredonia State Teachers College, he began his career as principal and sixth grade teacher at the West Church Street School located at the site of today’s Fairport Central School District Office. It was an easy walk to work from his young family’s 48 South Avenue home. His obituary notes that “During World War II, he became supervisor of industrial arts at Fairport High School, where he taught until retirement last June.” He was a member of Fairport’s First Congregational Church, a Rotarian, an avid hunter and fisherman, and active in sports, as well as the high school’s extracurricular activities. Serving as chaperone along with his wife, Betty, for the 1958 Senior Class Trip, was one of his many civic-minded activities.

“Drive defensively: Beware of what other drivers are doing.” Important advice, especially today, with our multi-lane, high speed highways. Thank you Mr. Yonkers for this advice and for your many contributions to our community.

Museum Gift Shop

The museum gift shop is filled with unique gift ideas for your holiday shopping. The new puzzles mentioned in last month’s *Historigram* have arrived. Featuring the lift bridge and museum, the puzzles sell for \$20 each, plus tax. Cash and checks are accepted as payment in the gift shop.

The 2019 Perinton Historical Society Christmas ornament celebrates the building at 18 Perrin Street, formerly the Fairport Public Library, and now in its 40th year as the Fairport Historical Museum. The new ornament will arrive in the gift shop in the next few weeks and sell for \$10, plus tax. Canal coasters and bread warmers are back in stock and make lovely and useful gifts. The gift shop also stocks many books, signed by the authors, and local landmarks that have been hand-painted on slate tiles and created in stained glass.



Gift shop sales help support the operation of the Fairport Historical Museum. We appreciate your patronage.



4 + 0 = Scarecrow 2019

The Perinton Historical Society scarecrow took a numerical turn this year, with the characters “4” and “0,” lounging comfortably near the canal to celebrate forty years of PHS at its location on Perrin Street. “4” and “0” were accompanied by two faithful scarecrow regulars, an affable newly-spiffed up ghost and a purrfectly bristly cat. The setup crew for this year’s troupe was Anne Johnston, Lucy McCormick, and Sue Templeton. Other members of the committee included Sue Broda, Ann and Harold Castle, Sharon Catanese, May Thomson, and Dave and Sue Scheirer.



Genesee Country Village & Museum *50 Years in 40 Minutes*

Presented by Peter A. Wisbey, Curator of Collections
Tuesday, November 19th, 7:00 p.m. at the
Fairport Historical Museum

Genesee Country Village & Museum was founded in 1966 with the goal of preserving the architecture of the Genesee Valley region in a recreated historic village, providing context for the telling of New York State and 19th-century American history. The museum now covers 600 acres and includes the historic village, John L. Wehle Gallery and Genesee Country Nature Center, all providing interactive programs, exhibits and special events to help you live history.

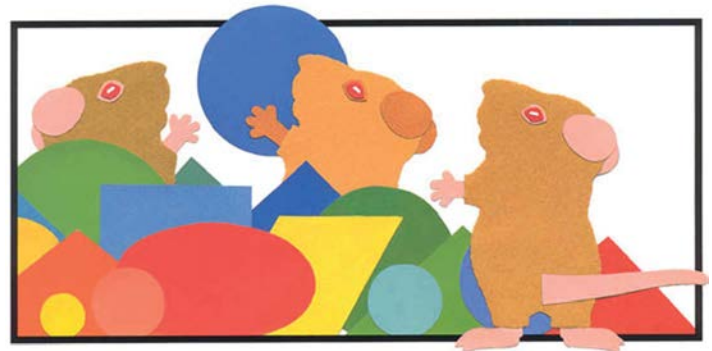
Peter Wisbey has been curator of the historic village collections of Genesee Country Village & Museum in Mumford for twelve years. He holds a master’s degree in History Museum Studies from SUNY Oneonta/Cooperstown and a master’s degree in Early American Culture from the University of Delaware/Winterthur Program in American Material Culture. Free admission. No registration required.

Spend an Hour with Fairport Children’s Author Ellen Stoll Walsh

At 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, November 24th, visitors will have the unique opportunity to spend a delightful hour with local children’s author Ellen Stoll Walsh as she talks about her books and how she makes wonderful pictures for her stories. Attendees can then make a picture of their own to take home—from a choice of critter parts.

A selection of Ellen’s books will be available for sale at various prices; cash accepted.

Mouse Shapes



Ellen Stoll Walsh

Creator of Mouse Paint and Mouse Count



Another Successful PHS House Tour

By Kay Joslyn

Chairperson for the 40th Annual PHS House Tour in 2020

Members visiting 14 West Street during the house tour are being briefed at the door by Peg Havens.



More than three hundred people attended the Perinton Historical Society's 2019 House Tour on Sunday, September 29th. It was a beautiful day for walking on West Street, West Avenue and Woodlawn Avenue.

Seven houses were open to PHS members, where docents provided architectural details as well as some history about previous owners for each house. It was a very pleasant way to learn interesting facts about our village. Many thanks to the teams of docents who donated their time and talent.

We also appreciate the assistance of PHS members Bill Poray for his help with research, Doris Davis-Fritsch for her architectural knowledge input, Jane DeMeis for PR and Jim Unckless for his help in membership ticket sales. And without the generosity of the homeowners, this tour could not have taken place.

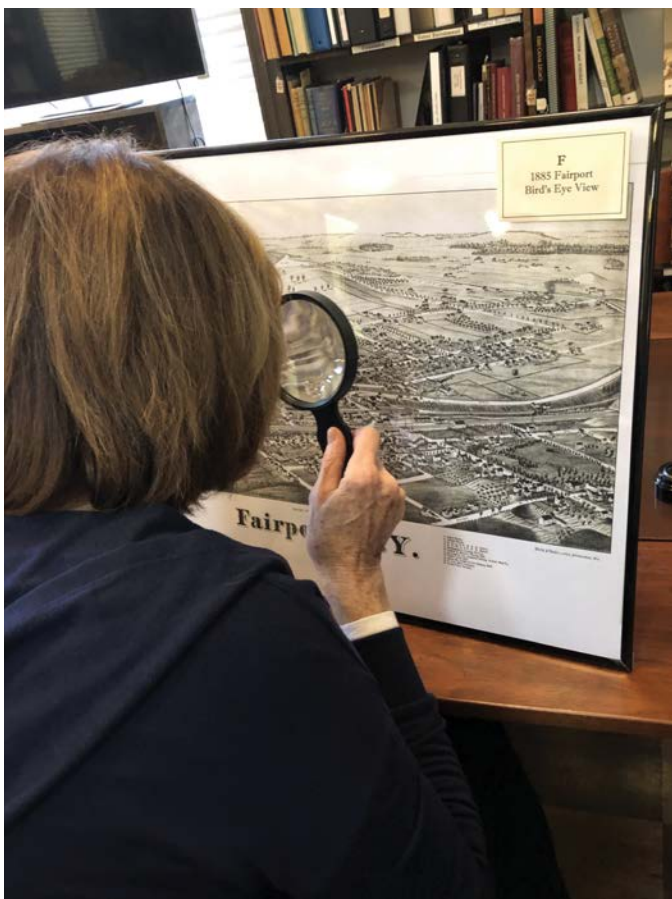
The 2019 House Tour committee members were Colleen Donahue, Robin Ezell, Nadine Fiero, Joyce Hawkinson, Lucy McCormick, Wendy Murray, Karen Smallman, Sheila Tulloch and co-chairs, Kay Joslyn and Elaine Lanni.



Left: PHS members visit 37 Woodlawn Avenue, another popular stop on the house tour.

Above: Mike Mason welcomes house tour goers to 30 West Street.

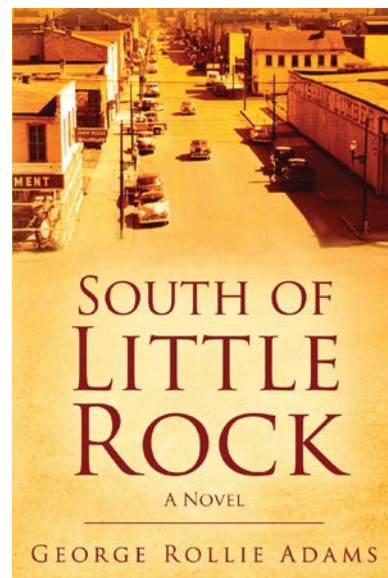




Sheila Tulloch zeros in on 124 West Avenue during the Society's 2019 House Tour.



Pictured above: Docents Joyce Hawkinson, Sarah Hawkinson and Wendy Murray

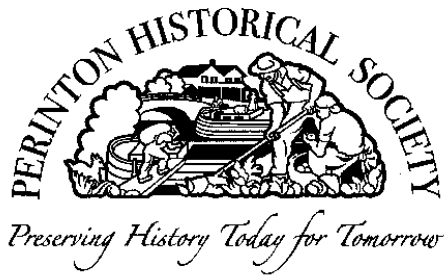


Meet G. Rollie Adams Author of *South of Little Rock*

*PHS is pleased to welcome local author G. Rollie Adams to the museum on Saturday, November 23rd from 10:30–11:30 a.m. Mr. Adams will briefly discuss and then sign copies of his book, *South of Little Rock*. The softcover book is \$20.00; cash and checks accepted.*

A native of southern Arkansas, George Rollie Adams is president and CEO emeritus of Strong National Museum of Play in Rochester, author of *General William S. Harney: Prince of Dragoons* (a finalist for the Army Historical Foundation's Distinguished Book Award), coauthor or coeditor of three other books, and founding editor in chief of the *American Journal of Play*. A former teacher, Adams holds graduate degrees in history and education and has served as director of the Louisiana State Museum and as a writer, editor, and program director for the American Association for State and Local History.

South of Little Rock is a story of race, family and small-town southern life in the 1950s with present-day meaning for all Americans. Sam Tate is a widower who dotes on his two children in tiny Unionville, Arkansas. Becky Reeves is an unmarried northerner who ignores a warning from her mother and comes south to teach. Ida Belle Tate is a strong-willed woman who loves helping raise her grandchildren and dislikes blacks and Yankees. Life changes for all of them when Governor Faubus resists the desegregation of Little Rock Central High School. President Eisenhower sends troops to ensure it, and an ambitious Unionville newspaper editor and others fan racial hatred. *South of Little Rock* has received four independent publishing awards, including the 2019 Next Generation Indie Book Award for Regional Fiction in the U.S. and Canada and the 2019 Readers' Favorites Silver Medal for Social Issues Fiction.



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This Genesee Light Ale can was produced at the American Can factory on Parce Avenue in the early 1940s. One just like it sold at a recent auction for almost \$5,000, including fees. The extensive collection of scrap metal during WWII increase the scarcity of cans such as this.

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