

The Famous DeLand Band Predecessor to the Fairport Fire Department Band

by Keith Boas

In 1879, Joseph Duncan, who operated Duncan's Palace Meat Market at the corner of Fairport's High and North Main Streets, started the groundwork for the funding of Fairport's first serious community band. Serving as president of the village, he no doubt used considerable influence to get the contributions rolling in.

Less than a year later, on October 8, 1880, the *Fairport Herald* newspaper published the following:

"This was in a letter to the newspaper from William Alcorn, President and Secretary of the Fairport Cornet Band, thanking the community residents for their generosity in contributing money for new band instruments. 'The members of the Fairport Cornet Band desire to thank their friends for their generous response to the application of the band for assistance in the purchase of new instruments.'"

Soon after, in 1881, Robert Wignall, Sr., took over the task and formally organized the L.J. DeLand Band at the request of Levi DeLand, who owned the DeLand Chemical Works. Mr. DeLand had also founded the DeLand Hose Company—the first fire department in Fairport. Thus Fairport's first "fire department" band was unofficially born.

Major credit to the early success of the band went to Robert Wignall, who was its director for 22 years. He recruited 20 talented musicians, a few even from as far as New England. Some were given jobs at the DeLand factory where Wignall, who had just moved to Fairport from Palmyra, was a recently hired foreman. He also brought in a tailor from Ohio to measure each musician and sew impressive uniforms for them.

The original name, Fairport Cornet Band, dating to the early 1870s, became the L.J. DeLand Cornet Band and later, in 1896, the DeLand Military Band. The reason for the second name change might have had to do with how other fire



The DeLand Military Band, circa late 1890s. The photo's contributor used a blue-ink pen to point out Wignall relatives in the group.

Photo from the archives of the Town of Perinton

departments in the area were naming their bands about that time. Back then, "Military" seemed to be a more appropriate label than "Cornet." The word "Military" also described the distinctive, patriotic marches being played on the street—many still popular with today's fire department bands.

About that same time, it was reported in one local newspaper that the Fairport Moose Lodge had been a major financial contributor and it was possible that the band would be known as the Fairport Moose Band. Apparently, that proposal did not get very many votes (fortunately).



From your President

September 15, 2022

As the days get shorter and the nights become colder, I'm left to wonder where the time went. Like my furry little outdoor friends, I have been preparing for the crisp autumn air. Instead of stocking up on nuts, I've been gathering hot chocolate and books. My children were

~Vicki Profitt~

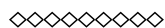
left speechless when the 72 packets of raspberry and French vanilla hot chocolate I had ordered arrived.

It seems like our first Erie Canal Bicentennial celebration on May 20 was just a few weeks ago. Yet here we are in mid-September preparing for the Bicentennial Flotilla at Perinton Park on Saturday. Bill Poray and I will be at the festivities and are honored to be guests on the Colonial Belle as she leads the aqua parade.

October 2nd marks the return of the in-person PHS House Tour for the first time since 2019. Tour chair Kay Joslyn and her crew* have been busy preparing for this special PHS member event.

I hope you can join us for our Strolling South Main House Tour and the other special events and programs of the upcoming season. Tonight seems like a good night for some hot chocolate, while I listen to The Moody Blues sing *Forever Autumn*.

* The 2022 House Tour Committee and PHS Board greatly appreciate Nancy Shadd's work on this year's PHS Historic House Tour. We regret that her name was omitted from the house tour program acknowledgements in our last issue.



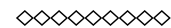
Yuletide Traditions The Most Wonderful Time of the Year

Yuletide Traditions, the annual PHS fundraiser, is back for its seventh season. During this three-week event, gift cards and gift baskets that have been donated to the PHS from individuals, organizations and businesses are placed in silent auctions. Visitors view and bid on the items during regular museum hours. All proceeds benefit the Perinton Historical Society.

This year's event takes place from November 15th through December 6th. Final bids are accepted up until the PHS holiday party on Tuesday, December 6th. Winners will

be notified following that evening's program. The event has raised more than \$14,000 in its first seven years. Thank you to our donors, special event attendees and bidders!

We ask that all donors register so the YT Committee can plan for space requirements. Registration runs October 15th through October 30th and donations should be dropped off on Saturday, November 12th from 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. To register, simply complete the registration form (see page 9) and drop it off at the museum or mail it to: YT 2022, Perinton Historical Society, 18 Perrin Street, Fairport NY 14450. Registrations can also be emailed to Vicki Masters Profitt at Director@PerintonHistoricalSociety.org.



Perinton Historical Society

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MISSION

To promote interest in preserving and sharing local history through education and accessibility.

The HISTORIGRAM is published nine months per year by the Perinton Historical Society. The content of our newsletter is provided by PHS Board members and committee staff. Opinions expressed in any article in this newsletter are those of the author of the article alone and are not those of the PHS unless expressly stated otherwise.

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<i>Art Director:</i>	Keith Boas
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<i>Proofreading:</i>	Irene Poray, Nancy Slaybaugh

2022 Special Recognition Level Memberships

As of June 14, 2022

Business (\$100)

Barranco's Clothing and Shoes

32 North Main Street, Fairport, NY 14450
Phone: 585-388-1270, Email: BarrancosClothing@gmail.com

Canandaigua National Bank & Trust

72 South Main Street, Canandaigua, NY 14424
Phone: 585-394-4260, Website: cnbank.com

Fairport Village Inn

Wayne and Patty Beckwith
103 North Main Street, Fairport, NY 14450
Phone: 585-388-0112, Website: thefvi.com

Fulkerson Services, Inc.

111 Parce Avenue, Fairport, NY 14450
Phone: 585-223-2541, Website: fulkersonservices.net

GRITWORX Designs Woodwork

7 Tea Olive Lane, Fairport, NY 14450
Phone 585-678-1156, Website: gritworksdesigns.com

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Salle d' Escrime of Prescott, AZ A Fencing Club

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Vicki and Charles Profitt
Mary and Bill Stevens
Anonymous (1)

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Marjory and David Hall
Bob and Cindy Hunt
Doug and Jean Whitney
Dave and Linda Wiener
Anonymous (1)

Perrin (\$500 and above)

Heidi and Jack Gilmore

Memorial Donations

Heidi and Jack Gilmore in memory of
Kenneth and Grace Phillips

Eleanor Piccarelli in memory of
Daniel Piccarelli, WWII veteran

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Upcoming Programs & Events

Sunday, October 2nd from 1:00–5:00 pm

Event: Annual House Tour

Thursday, October 13th at 7:00 pm on ZOOM

Program: Tracing our Roots Along the Erie Canal

Presenter: Rebecca Hughes

REGISTRATION REQUIRED THROUGH THE LIBRARY

Saturday, October 15th–Sunday, October 30th

Registrations for Yuletide Traditions silent auctions
are accepted

Tuesday, October 18th at 7:00 pm at the museum

Program: Discovering Artifacts from the Past

Presenters: ROC Diggers

Tuesday, November 15th at the museum, 6:00–7:00 pm

Opening bids on Yuletide Traditions silent auction
items accepted

7:00 pm Program: Breaking News! Historic Stories
Never Before Told

Presenter: Bill Poray

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Wednesday, November 16th at the museum, 7:00 pm

Program: Breaking News! Historic Stories Never Before
Told (encore presentation)

Presenter: Bill Poray

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Tuesday, December 6th at the museum, 6:00–7:00 pm

Final bidding on Yuletide Traditions silent auction items

Auction winners will be announced following the program.

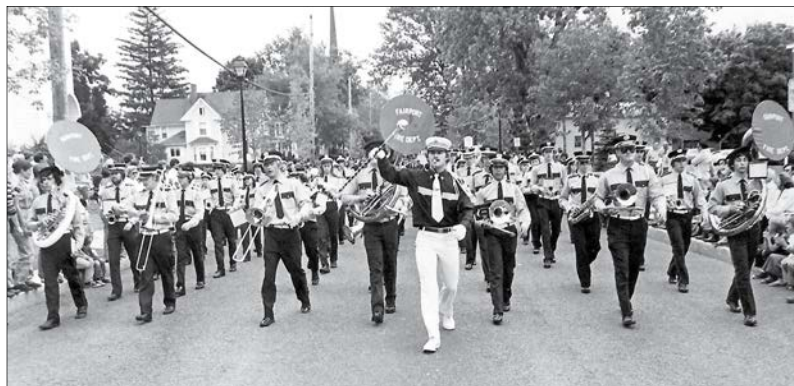
7:00 pm Event: PHS Annual Holiday Party

Saturday, December 10th from 9:00 am–1:00 pm

The museum's last day open before closing for the season

–Fairport FD Band– *Continuing the Tradition*

Formed back in 1972 by firefighter legend Don Fox, and now in its **50th year**, the Fairport Fire Department Band continues the DeLand Band tradition of performing in many parades and concerts, including the annual Salute to America concert at Perinton Center Park, Fairport Gazebo series, Fairport Oktoberfest, and village's Home for the Holidays Festival in December. The band also performs annually on the front lawn of the Fairport Baptist Homes and at other housing facilities for seniors in the area.



This 1970s photo shows drum major John Felker (center in white pants).

At our far left is Dan Matricia (sousaphone). To John Felker's left is Steve Nicholas. Two over from Felker's left is Paul Jacoby (sun glasses and trombone). Scott Smith (sousaphone) is on our far right.

Some other band members in the lineup include Sue Collier Brooks, John Cary, John Carini, and possibly Tim Mason.



Here's the band's drum line in the early 1990s.

On tritoms is John Hosel (spelling?). To his right is Richard Baker. Behind Baker on base drum is Kevin O'Meal. Dale Castle is on cymbals. Behind Dale and to our right is Bob Ockenden on snare.

*Photos from the archives
of the Perinton Historical Society*

Over the years, the band has been recognized as one of the most accomplished marching bands in New York State, achieving the title of NYS Volunteer Fire Department Champions in 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004 and 2006.



Robert Wignall, Sr. (1842–1927)

Director of the DeLand Band for 22 years

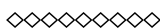
Photo from the archives of the Perinton Historical Society

For many years, the DeLand Band gained fame by winning tournaments across the state. It also gave many concerts and marched in parades, including the Fairport Old Home Week parades in 1908, which according to newspapers, featured more than two dozen marching bands.

Sadly, the DeLand Band eventually marched into the sunset. No records have been found to indicate when the band stopped functioning or if another band took its place on the street.

However, in the late 1940s, the Fairport VFW Band came on the scene, giving concerts and marching in parades for the local fire department. (In 1956, while in high school, I was a member of the VFW Band, playing trumpet in parades and concerts throughout the year.)

In the early 1970s, the VFW Band disbanded and its sheet music was turned over to the fire department to help get the current band started. It's possible that some of the band musicians went along with the transfer of sheet music.





The Fairport Fire Department Band in 2011
With Larry O'Meal (white pants) as its famous drum major

The band is pictured on and around the fire department's 1930s antique Buffalo fire truck. Wait a minute! Where's the truck?



Fairport Memorial Day Parade
In the Rain—2017



This Year:
The Fairport Fire Department Band's
50th Anniversary

This anniversary photo was taken a few minutes before the band marched in Fairport's 2022 Independence Day Parade, down Main and W. Church Streets, from the Baptist Homes to Perinton Park.

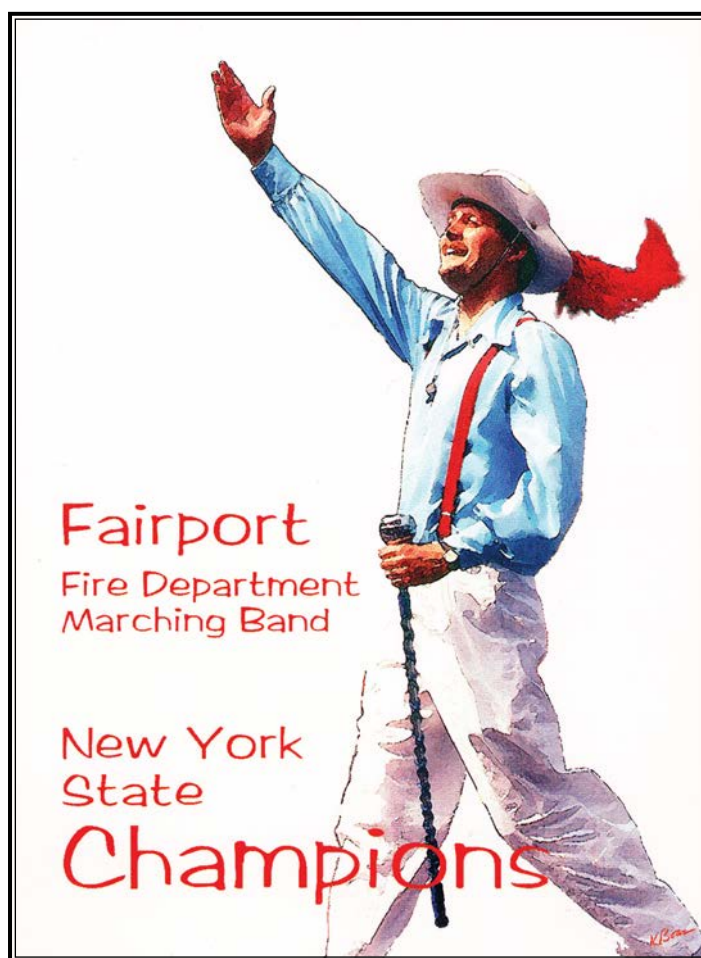
Ron Milliman (far left with saxophone) is music director, Kyle Schneider (far right, white shirt) is drum major, and Scott Smith (sousaphone) is administrative director.

Photo by Michael Boas

More recently, instead of the state fire fighters parade, the band has competed in the annual Hudson Valley Fire Fighters Association parade, marching for the city of Ossining Fire Department. Several times, the band has earned Best Musical Unit, defeating as many as 60 creditable contenders.

In 1999, and again in 2006, the band had the honor of marching down Main Street USA at Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom—at the request of the Disney Company. In 2001, New York Governor George Pataki surprised the crowd by leading the band in Fairport's Independence Day parade.

Through the years, band members have come and gone. But not Lynn Selke (euphonium). He is an original member, joining the band when it formed in 1972. Although Lynn is no longer marching in parades, he is still active in the group, playing his horn in concerts.



Pictured here in an early 2000s poster, you see Larry O'Meal, who was the band's drum major for 22 years. With his famous, flamboyant style, Larry was always very popular in parades:

The crowds really loved him!

Sources:

Mary Alvut, Ryan Boas, Ann Castle, Dale Castle, Bob Ockenden, Bill Poray, Bob Reiter, Scott Smith, Fairport Fire Dept. Band website, plus *Monroe County Mail*, *Fairport Herald* and *Post* newspaper articles in 1879, 1880, 1881, 1882, 1896, 1919, 1925, 1926, 1936 and 2011





Tracing our Roots Along the Erie Canal *A Virtual Presentation*

As one of our final Erie Canal Bicentennial celebratory events of 2022, please join us on ZOOM Thursday, October 13th at 7:00 pm as NYS Canal Corporation Senior Director of Public Engagement, Rebecca Hughes, discusses her ancestor's connection to the canal.

When Rebecca Hughes came to work for the Canal Corporation in 2021, a relative mentioned that her great-great-grandfather had been a lock tender on the Erie Canal. This small hint sparked a journey of discovery, uncovering the life of Captain Eugene Gorham that might have been otherwise lost to time. Join Rebecca as she describes the sometimes complicated work of discovering our roots along the Erie Canal.

The New York State Canal Corporation is a subsidiary of the New York Power Authority (NYPA). Rebecca's team is responsible for public and government relations across the 524-mile canal system, engaging with a wide range of stakeholders on a broad range of topics. Rebecca strives to build coalitions through open dialogue and transparent communication. She earned a bachelor's degree in politics

from the State University of New York at Potsdam, and graduate certificates in labor law from Empire State College and in strategic marketing from Cornell University.

This event is free and is open to the public.

Co-sponsored by the Perinton Historical Society
and Fairport Public Library.

Registration is required through the Fairport Public Library
and is limited.

To register, visit <https://fairportlibrary.libcal.com/event/9572796> or call the library at 585-223-9091.



Digging for nuggets of local history can yield some amazing results, and in this regard, 2022 has been a productive year. Through a combination of research, a growing network of engaged residents and sleuths, and no shortage of dumb luck, a bountiful harvest of local history has presented itself.

And now, Perinton-Fairport historian Bill Poray will present it to you.

Among the stories to be told are a previously unknown local anti-slavery society, a mysterious and surprising collection of burials at a local cemetery, and the discovery of several works of a prominent architect in Fairport.

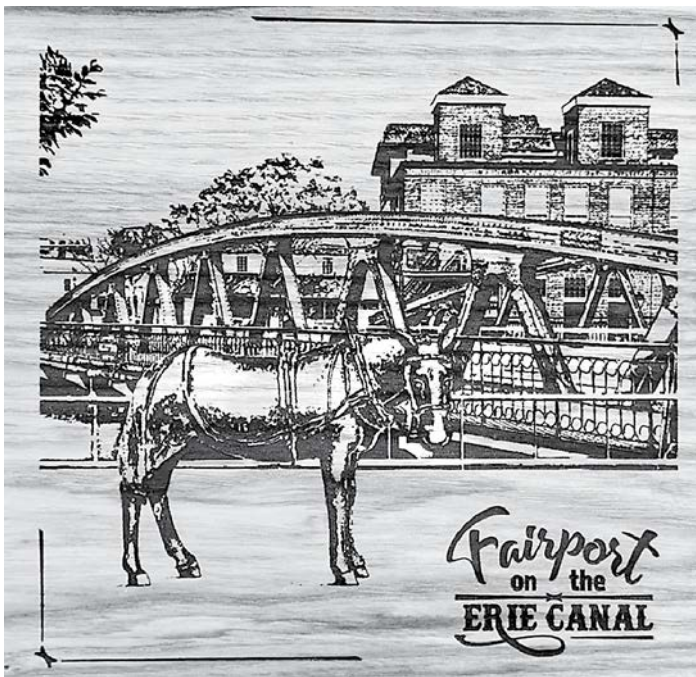
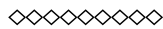
But that's not all—other stories include the earliest Fairport home of Daniel and Minerva DeLand, in which it has been said they first produced their landmark saleratus product. For good measure, also included will be the recent acquisition of photos of local people and places from well over 100 years ago. Finally, he will report on what just might be a Can Factory ghost story, and the unearthing of teeth as big as bowling balls!

In order to offer the chance for more people to attend, this program, provided by Bill Poray, will be offered on two separate nights, Tuesday, November 15th, and Wednesday, November 16th, both at 7:00 pm. Registration is required. To reserve your seats, call the museum at (585) 223-3989 and leave a message, or stop by during open hours at the museum.



How You can Support the Perinton Historical Society

- Become a member / give a gift membership.
- Volunteer your time as a museum volunteer or on a committee.
- Donate artifacts to the museum that pertain to Fairport and Perinton.
- Purchase unique gifts from the Fairport Historical Museum gift shop.
- Donate gift cards and gift baskets for Yuletide Traditions silent auctions.
- Donate to the PHS through estate bequests, planned giving, IRA charitable giving, memorial and honor gifts, employer matching contributions, AmazonSmile, ROC the Day.



New in the Museum Gift Shop

These beautiful wooden trivets have just arrived in the museum gift shop. Created by Perinton business owners Heather and Mike Merlo of GRITWORX Designs, LLC, the trivets feature our historic lift bridge, box factory and mule sculpture at the canal. A second design of the Kennelley Park gazebo is also available. The trivets sell for \$40.

Another canal-related item from GRITWORX will soon make its way to the museum gift shop this holiday season, so stop in to see these and other unique gift ideas.



ROC Diggers Share Their Treasures on October 18th

Join us on Tuesday, October 18th at 7:00 pm at the museum, as Fairport's own ROC Diggers share their treasures and the stories behind them.

The ROC Diggers are a group of six friends who use their skill with metal detectors to find bits and pieces of the past, long concealed from the light of day. The group includes Doug Craven, Dan Mantell, Mick Nolte, Sara Schaeber, Steve Schalabba, and Curtis Woods.

With years of experience behind them, the ROC Diggers have a passion for discovering artifacts from the past. The team seeks locations for their exploration, using maps and records to learn a bit of the specific history of the site. Property owners sometimes contact the ROC Diggers, offering them the opportunity to explore their yards or land. The team then painstakingly utilizes their sophisticated equipment to locate any metal objects under the surface. While some searches are more successful than others, the enjoyment is in the hunt.

Meet this engaging group of local explorers, who have developed a passion for finding stuff long buried beneath our feet. This event is free and is open to the public.



From the *Fairport Herald* June 23, 1915

Nathan Horn, the five-year-old son of S. J. Horn, caught a fishhook in the lid of his left eye Sunday afternoon, and it was necessary to take him to the doctor to remove the hook. Mr. Horn was fishing in the canal, and the boy was playing nearby and in some manner received the injury.



2022

Donate a gift card or gift basket for silent auctions
to benefit the Perinton Historical Society.



Your donations support the Perinton Historical Society's educational
programs, exhibits, and the operation of the Fairport Museum.

Registration:	Saturday, October 15 through Sunday, October 30	
Donation drop off:	Saturday, November 12	9:00 am - 1:00 pm
Start of silent auction bids:	Tuesday, November 15	6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Final silent auction bids:	Tuesday, December 6	6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Announcement of auction winners:	Tuesday, December 6 following the museum program	

Check the PHS website at PerintonHistoricalSociety.org
for Yuletide Traditions viewing times and special events.



All donations will be acknowledged at the Fairport Museum, in the December
Historigram newsletter, and on the Perinton Historical Society website and Facebook page.

See next page for registration information.



2022 PHS YULETIDE TRADITIONS REGISTRATION FORM

Name of Individual or

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone #: _____

Contact Email Address: _____

Provide the donor's name to be used on all signage: _____

Please indicate the item(s) you would like to donate:

- ❖ _____ GIFT CARD(S)
- ❖ _____ GIFT BASKET. Please provide a list of the basket contents
- ❖ _____ MONETARY DONATION to the Perinton Historical Society in lieu of donated items

Donations do not need to be holiday themed. Be creative and have fun!

Return the completed registration *by October 30, 2022*
by email to Director@PerintonHistoricalSociety.org or mail to the Fairport Museum at

PHS Yuletide Traditions 2022
Perinton Historical Society
18 Perrin Street
Fairport, New York 14450

Please drop off your donation to the Fairport Museum on
Saturday, November 12, 2022 between 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

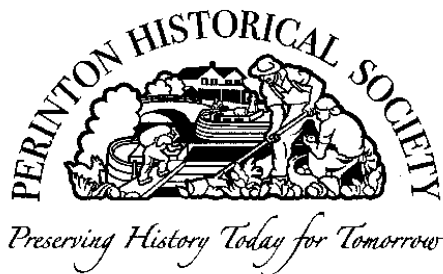
Please provide us with the value of the item(s) being donated at the time of drop off.

The Perinton Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, and your donation may be tax deductible.

Please keep your receipt for tax purposes.

Contact PHS Yuletide Traditions Representative Lucy McCormick with any questions.
lmccormick@rochester.rr.com / 585-223-6934

All proceeds from the Yuletide Traditions event benefit the Perinton Historical Society.
We appreciate your support!



Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 149
Fairport, NY 14450



This past September 17th, the Fairport Fire Department Band played from the deck of the Colonial Belle (shown here about to pass under the lift bridge). They were leading a flotilla from the village to Perinton Park, celebrating the 200th anniversary of the opening of the Erie Canal to Fairport. For the story on the fire department band's first 50 years, see pages 4 and 5.

Photo by Nikki Bittner

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

The museum hours are 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