

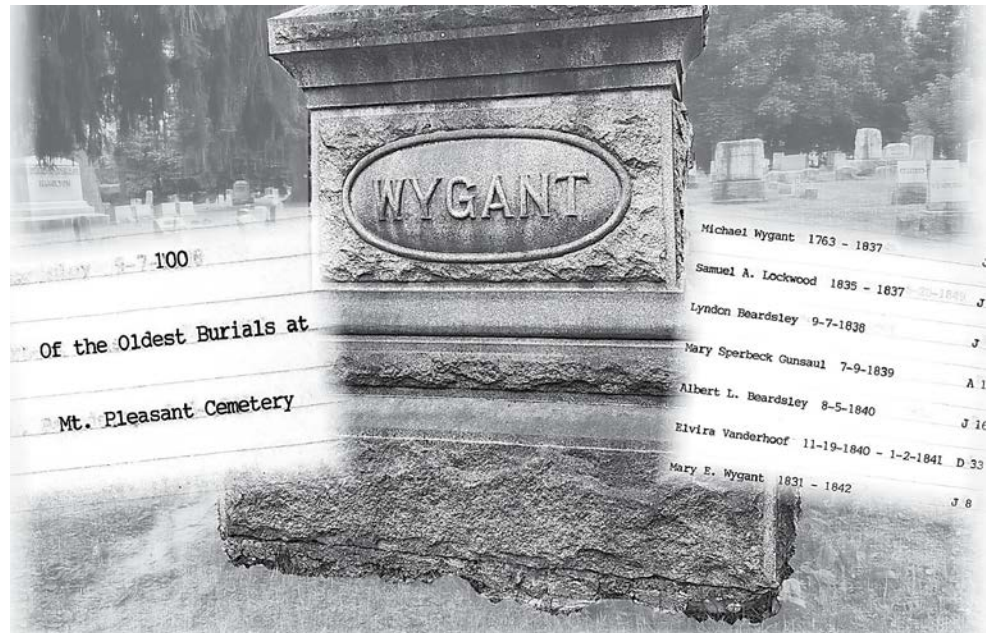
## Cemetery Records Reveal Previously Unknown Revolutionary War Veteran

*By Bill Poray*

Recently I had the opportunity to meet with village trustee Tim Slisz at Fairport Village Hall. Tim has made a significant study of very old burial records at Greenvale Cemetery on East Church Street, including several early ledger books with handwritten burial information. While there, I noticed a document related to the village's other burial ground, Mount Pleasant Cemetery. It is undated and includes no signature to identify the author. The typed multi-page document is titled, "One Hundred of the Oldest Burials at Mount Pleasant Cemetery." A quick look captured my interest, for a very good reason. Most of the people listed in the document died long before the cemetery was opened for business in 1865-1866.

Based on the date of death for most of these 100 burials, they clearly occurred long before the cemetery was built!

Typed long ago, this is a transcript of an item in Rochester's *Union & Advertiser* newspaper from September 13, 1865, announcing the creation of Mount Pleasant Cemetery in Fairport.



UNION & ADVERTISER  
Sept. 13, 1865 page 2 column 2

A few of the enterprising men of Fairport have been much interested for a few months past in grading and laying into lots a most lovely plot of ground, a little south of the village, for a new cemetery. The grounds were laid out by Mr. Wm. Webster, of Rochester, and under his care have been tastefully arranged. The grounds are on an elevation that overlooks the village and surrounding country, and even some parts of the city of Rochester are seen from the summit.

A public meeting was called on Wednesday of last week and appropriate services held for the setting apart of this place for the sacred purpose of burying the dead out of our sight. The exercises of occasion were very interesting. The singing was led by Prof. Everett, and was good. An address was delivered by Rev. Mr. Butler, and was listened to with great pleasure by the large crowd convened. The speaker dwelt particularly in the body of his discourse upon the past custom of civilized and heathen nations as to the rite of burial, etc.



~Vicki Profitt~

## From your President

October was a busy month for PHS members. It started beautifully with a gorgeous day for the house tour on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Congratulations to the House Tour Committee on another job well done! On October 13<sup>th</sup>, NYS Canal Corporation Senior Director of Public Engagement Rebecca Hughes gave an

interesting talk via Zoom on researching her ancestor who was a lock tender on the Erie Canal. Also in October, we welcomed ROC Diggers to the museum to discuss the fascinating finds they have made in our community using their metal detectors.

This is also the time of year we look forward to our annual Yuletide Traditions silent auctions, in which individuals, organizations and businesses donate gift baskets. The baskets are then auctioned off with all proceeds benefiting the PHS.

As we gather together with family and friends later this month to celebrate Thanksgiving, the PHS Board of Trustees is thankful for the support we receive from our members and our community.



## Breaking News! Bill Poray to Present November 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>

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. Perinton-Fairport historian Bill Poray will present stories about 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, Bill will report on what just might be a Can Factory ghost story, and the unearthing of teeth as big as bowling balls!

## REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Bill will present at the Fairport Museum on Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup> with an encore presentation on Wednesday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, both at 7:00 pm. See a museum volunteer to reserve your seat or call the museum and leave a message with your name, phone number, preferred evening and number of attendees.



## Perinton Historical Society

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

<i>President</i>	Vicki Profitt
<i>Secretary</i>	Suzanne Lee
<i>Treasurer</i>	Linda Wiener
<i>Communications</i>	Jane DeMeis

### TRUSTEES

Keith Boas	Bill Poray
Kay Joslyn	Nancy Slaybaugh
Lucy McCormick	Jim Unckless

### MUSEUM

<i>Director</i>	Vicki Profitt
-----------------	---------------

### 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.

<i>Editor</i>	Bill Poray
<i>Art Director:</i>	Keith Boas
<i>Production &amp; Distribution:</i>	Jim Unckless
<i>Proofreading:</i>	Irene Poray, Nancy Slaybaugh

## 2022–2023 Special Recognition Level Memberships

*As of October 15, 2022*

### **Business (\$100)**

#### **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 14550  
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: gritworxdesigns.com

#### **Hon. Evelyn Frazee, Hon. Thomas Klonick**

#### **Lift Bridge Yarns**

23 North Main Street (new location), Fairport, NY 14450  
Dawn Verdugo & Jessie McNaughton  
Phone: 585-364-0521, Email: Dawn@LiftBridgeYarns.com

#### **Lucien A. Morin II, Partner**

McConville Considine Cooman and Morin, P.C.  
300 Meridian Centre Blvd., Suite 110, Rochester, NY 14618  
Phone: 585-546-2500, Email: lmorin@mccmlaw.com

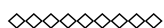
#### **Salle d' Escrime of Prescott, AZ A Fencing Club**

Patricia Dodge Waples, Owner

### **DeLand (\$100–\$249)**

### **Potter (\$250–\$499)**

### **Perrin (\$500 and above)**



## Upcoming Programs & Events

**Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup> at the museum**

**9:00 am–1:00 pm**

Yuletide Traditions donation drop offs

**Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup> 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 16<sup>th</sup> at the museum, 7:00 pm**

Program: Breaking News! Historic Stories

Never Before Told (encore presentation)

Presenter: Bill Poray

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

**Tuesday, December 6<sup>th</sup> 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 10<sup>th</sup> at the museum**

**9:00 am–1:00 pm**

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



### **How You can Support the Perinton Historical Society**

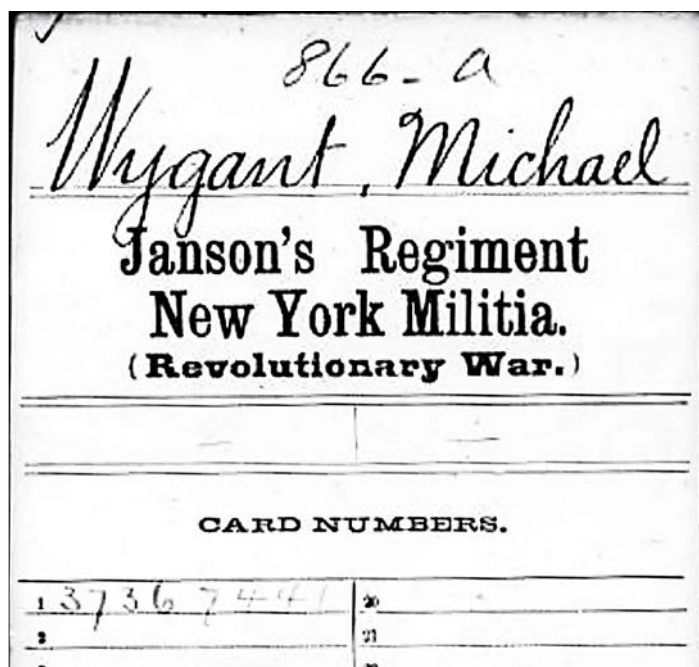
- Become a member / give a gift membership.
- Volunteer your time as a museum volunteer or on a committee.
- Donate artifacts to the museum that pertain to Fairport and Perinton.
- Purchase unique gifts from the Fairport Historical Museum gift shop.
- Donate gift cards and gift baskets for Yuletide Traditions 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.



The existence of a large number of burials that predate the cemetery in which they are interred is probably more common than might be imagined. In this case, a review of the list of families, names and dates, provides a reasonable explanation. In the early years, Perinton was primarily a farming community. It appears likely that in many cases, a death of a family member resulted in burial at the homestead. With the opening of the Mount Pleasant Cemetery, families had the opportunity to purchase plots, and relocate those who were buried on the farm to the new cemetery. The "100 Oldest Burials" document reveals several instances in which the death of a family member occurred in the mid-1860s, about the time when Mount Pleasant opened, and likely triggered the relocation of the earlier homestead burials.

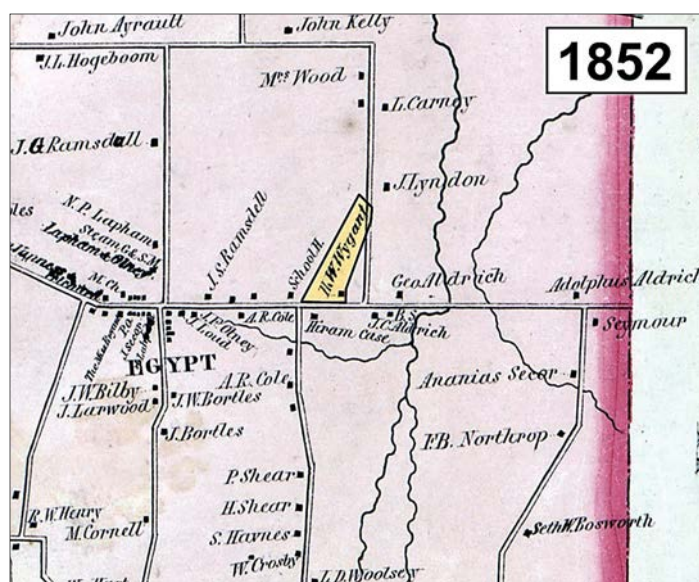
## Discovery of a Revolutionary War Veteran

Of the "100 Oldest Burials," one of the earliest was that of Michael J. Wygant Jr., born in 1763, and died in 1837, almost thirty years before the cemetery was created. Michael Wygant Jr. lived in Marlborough, Ulster County, New York. Like many in his family, he fought in the Revolutionary War, in the Fourth Regiment of Ulster County's New York State Militia, under Captain Uriah Drake.



Michael Wygant Jr. of Marlborough in Ulster County, was one of several of his family to serve in the Revolutionary War.

After the war, Wygant and his wife Hannah started a family, which eventually included a son, Harvey Wygant, born in 1808. Years later, after his mother died, Harvey Wygant brought his wife and children to Perinton, specifically Egypt, in 1833. He was commonly referred to



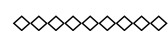
Harvey Wygant came to Perinton from Marlborough, Ulster County, New York, after the death of his mother in 1832. He most likely brought his aged, widowed father, Michael Wygant Jr. with him. The Wygant home still stands, and is located on the corner of Pittsford-Palmyra Road and Aldrich Road.

as Deacon Wygant, a title related to his faithful service to the Fairport Congregational Church.

I've told you what I believe to be the facts, and now I will fill in the rest of the story with a theory. After the death of Michael Wygant Jr.'s wife in 1832, the almost 70-year-old Revolutionary War veteran joined his son Harvey and his young family on the trip to Perinton. He lived out the last five years of his life on his son's farm, at the corner of Pittsford-Palmyra Road and Aldrich Road. When Michael Wygant Jr. died in 1837, his body was placed in a grave at the farm. Over the next twenty years, two more Wygant family members passed, and they too were probably buried at the homestead. When Mary Wygant (1846-1868) died, Mount Pleasant had recently begun burials at the cemetery. It is likely that her death spurred the decision to unearth the body of Michael Wygant Jr. and the others from their farm graves, and relocate the bodies to the new cemetery.

No mention of Michael Wygant Jr. in our local history appears to have existed, until the list of early burials at Mount Pleasant Cemetery was recently discovered. Wygant's birth in 1763 triggered the thought that he may have served in the Revolutionary War, based upon his age. Research confirmed his participation in the war.

On Veterans Day, November 11<sup>th</sup>, let us welcome Michael Wygant Jr. to the short list of Fairport and Perinton residents who, prior to relocating to this community, served in the war that resulted in American independence.





ROC Diggers presenters, from left to right: Curtis Woods, Doug Craven, Steve Schalabba, and Mick Nolte

## Enthusiastic Crowd Digs ROC Diggers

*By Bill Poray*

The museum was rocking, when Fairport's ROC Diggers provided a crowd-pleasing program on Tuesday evening, October, 18<sup>th</sup>. Four of the six ROC Diggers were on hand to demonstrate their metal detecting skills and equipment, and show off a collection of their treasure.

The ROC Diggers are a group of six friends with a passion for metal detecting. The group includes Doug Craven, Dan Mantell, Mick Nolte, Sara Schaeber, Steve Schalabba, and Curtis Woods.

Each of the ROC Diggers shared some of their favorite stories, and laid out an impressive display of the results of their digs. In several cases, the Diggers have come to the rescue, finding an item of lost jewelry, much to the relief of the owner. A large, enthusiastic crowd peppered the presenters with countless questions, and more than a few volunteered their properties for future digs.

The enthusiasm and passion of the ROC Diggers was contagious, as the audience was in no hurry to leave the building. Many engaged the presenters in dialogue well after the curtain closed. It was by all measures, a fun and successful engagement, and another great program night at the Perinton Historical Society's Fairport Historical Museum.



Audience members enjoyed examining the display of treasures found by ROC Diggers members.





# Enjoy Your Museum!



18 Perrin Street in Fairport has been the home of the Fairport Historical Museum for 42 years! The former library, a designated Fairport landmark, is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Operated by the Perinton Historical Society, there is no fee for visitors to enjoy the displays and collections of the museum.

Stop by soon, and take the opportunity to learn and enjoy the history of the Fairport and Perinton community.

The gift shop at the Fairport Historical Museum—a unique little store with lots of special items for your holiday shopping.







Created in 1938, this Works Progress Administration (WPA) mural by famed artist Carl William Peters (1897–1980) is a cornerstone of the collection at the Fairport Historical Museum.

Peters, who spent most of his life in Perinton, is a nationally renowned artist. Our museum includes a permanent display related to the life and art of this important former resident.



While enjoying a beautiful autumn Sunday afternoon, hundreds of PHS members toured this historic home, as well as five others, on the 2022 Perinton Historical Society House Tour, aptly named, "Strolling South Main."

*Photo by  
Bill Poray*



## Strolling South Main

### *The Annual PHS House Tour*

More than 300 people attended the Perinton Historical Society's House Tour on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. The six host homeowners decorated their entries with mums and pumpkins to welcome enthusiastic tour-goers. We presented a diverse group of homes, ranging from those built in the early 1800s to the 2014 "green" house, nestled in the backyard of 199 South Main Street. In addition to learning about various types of architecture, docents shared interesting information regarding previous owners and their many accomplishments.

We are thankful for such gracious homeowners, as well as the teams of docents who guided us through the homes. We also appreciate the assistance of PHS members Bill Poray, Doris Davis-Fritsch, Jane DeMeis and Jim Unckless. A record number of memberships were sold prior to this event.

2022 House Tour Committee members were Nadine Fiero, Joyce Hawkinson, Elaine Lanni, Deb Mabry, Lucy McCormick, Maxine Nelson, Nancy Shadd and Sheila Tulloch.





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



Members gathered in anticipation of a guided tour at one of six beautiful homes on this year's Perinton Historical Society House Tour. Special thanks to all the participating homeowners and volunteers who made this annual event a success. *Photo by Lucy McCormick*

---

**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](http://www.PerintonHistoricalSociety.org)**