

## Perinton's Long Lost Landmarks

*An Occasional Series by Bill Poray*

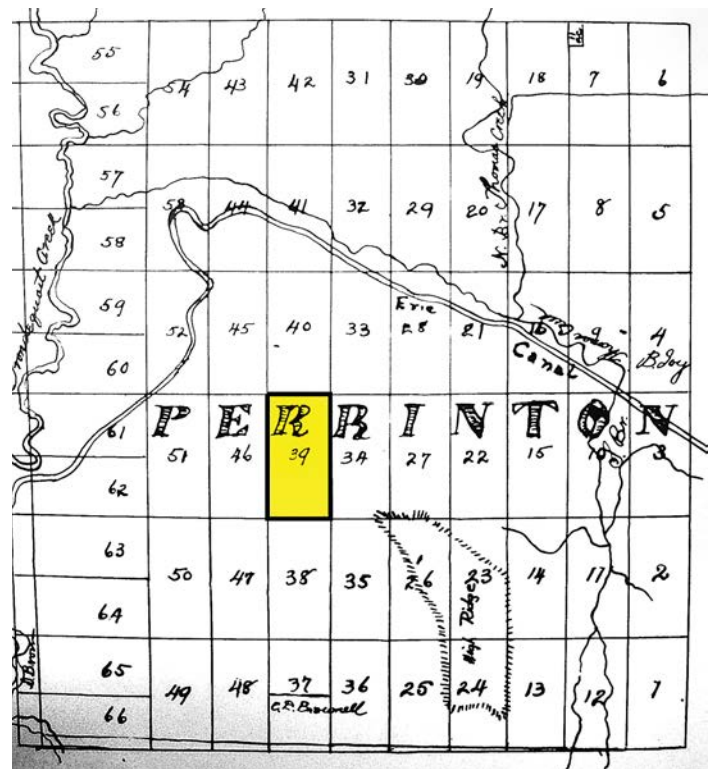
Close to 50,000 people make their home in Perinton, including approximately 5,500 who reside in the village of Fairport. That number is roughly three times the residents living in the town in 1960. Today the vast majority of people live in private homes, condominiums or apartment buildings that didn't exist in the first half of the twentieth century. The inevitable growth of Perinton came at the expense of a great deal of the tangible evidence of our early community and its history. Many farms and 19<sup>th</sup> century homesteads, primarily outside of the village, were harvested in favor of commercial and residential development. Most of this occurred long before Perinton's preservation ordinance was adopted by the town board in 1987.

The inevitable suburban sprawl and the resulting loss of large numbers of 19<sup>th</sup> century homes is most distinctly found on the major east-west thoroughfares. These include Fairport Road, for a century referred to as "the Rochester Road" and Pittsford Palmyra Road, once upon a time simply called Palmyra Road. Both date back to stage coach times, and each was dotted with early 19<sup>th</sup> century homes and farms owned by some of our earliest west-bound settlers, seeking new opportunities and fertile farm land.

Former town historian Jean Keplinger wrote of the massive land transaction that resulted in the western migration of so many families to this area:

*Oliver Phelps and Nathaniel Gorham purchased 2.6 million acres of land in the wilderness of Western New York in 1788. The area had rich soil and abundant water power, both essential in luring farmers from the rocky hills of New England to the western frontier. William Walker of Canandaigua purchased 36 square miles of the land and hired his brother Caleb and his cousin Glover Perrin to survey the land and divide it into 66 equal lots. The area was known as Township 12, Range 4, in the governmental unit of Northfield.*

*Glover Perrin, his family, and his six siblings and their families settled in the same area, which became known as Perinton when it was officially established by the New York State Legislature on May 26, 1812. Other settlers soon followed, as word of the area's good farming traveled back east. Between 1800 and 1814, the Perinton census showed a growth in population from 71 to 821 people.*



This map of Perinton shows the location of the 66 lots created by William Walker after purchasing in 1789 what later became the town of Perinton. After a survey of the entire area was completed, Walker commenced with the sale of individual lots. Most were 320 acres, although some on the west boundary were a bit larger. Benjamin Slocum purchased lot 39 (highlighted above) in about 1804. Today lot 39 includes a portion of land immediately east of Moseley Road, from Ayraut to well south of Pittsford Palmyra Road.

*Continued on page 4*



# From your President

## Welcome, spring!

Mother Nature is not being very hospitable to those anxiously awaiting the change of seasons. As I write this, it is snowing outside and several inches more is expected to fall before the night is out. Nearly one month

~Vicki Profitt~

ago, we had a mini-ice storm. I had the luxury of taking the day off from work so I could spend it with my children, both human and furry critters. As I stepped into the Secret Garden, the rhododendron was bowed by a multitude of small icicles. Copper, the red squirrel, came running for her breakfast as soon as the door shut behind me. My camera was ready and I got this beautiful shot of her nearly hidden in the shrubs. Fortunately, my rhododendron, boxwoods and children all survived the weather event.



Copper came for breakfast.



Volunteer Orientation at the museum in February

Volunteer Coordinators John and Nancy Bowley did a wonderful job with the Volunteer Orientation, which took place the last Saturday of February. Thanks to them for organizing it and to Jean Whitney and Nancy Slaybaugh for discussing the house history and genealogical resources available at the museum. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact John at:

**jandnbowley@rochester.rr.com.**

Greenbrier Garden Club's annual plant sale will take place on the sidewalk of the museum. Please stop by to support the club on Saturday, May 13<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am–12:00 pm. They always have a great selection of plants available for very reasonable prices. PHS is so appreciative of the Greenbrier members, who have maintained the museum gardens for more than 40 years.

Kay Joslyn and Nadine Fiero have once again taken the reins on planning a PHS Colonial Belle cruise on the Erie Canal. This year's cruise will take place on Saturday, July 15<sup>th</sup>. Check upcoming issues of the *Historigram* for information about ticketing and the trip's theme.

Thank you for being part of the PHS family. I very much enjoy seeing you at our events and in our community.

## 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

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

### MUSEUM

<i>Director</i>	Vicki Profitt
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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>Proofreaders</i>	Irene Poray, Nancy Slaybaugh

## Special Recognition Level Memberships

*As of March 15, 2023*

### 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, Web: cnbank.com

#### **Fairport Village Inn**

Wayne and Patty Beckwith

103 North Main Street, Fairport, NY 14550

Phone: 585-388-0112, Web: thefvi.com

#### **Fulkerson Services, Inc.**

111 Parce Avenue, Fairport, NY 14450

Phone: 585-223-2541, Web: fulkersonservices.net

#### **GRITWORX Designs Woodwork**

7 Tea Olive Lane, Fairport, NY 14450

Phone 585-678-1156, Web: gritworxdesigns.com

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

#### **Lift Bridge Yarns**

23 North Main Street, 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.

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Phone: 585-512-3534, Email: lmorin@mccmlaw.com,

#### **Salle d' Escrime of Prescott, AZ**

##### **A Fencing Club**

Patricia Dodge Waples, Owner

### **DeLand (\$100-\$249)**

Fairport Lions Club

Lori's Natural Foods

### **Potter (\$250-\$499)**

Fairport Historical Club

Fairport Rotary Club

Friends of Fairport

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

Fairport Perinton Merchants Association

Last Man Standing Club in Memory of William Wilcox

## Upcoming Programs & Events

### **Tuesday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm at the museum**

Program: Fairport Historic Preservation Commission

Speakers: David Steitz and Jill Wiedrick

### **Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> from 10:00 am-12:00 pm at the museum**

Event: All Aboard the PHS Express

### **Saturday, May 13<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am-12:00 pm at the museum**

Event: Greenbrier Garden Club Annual Plant Sale

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

Program: Cemetery Tour

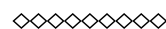
Host: Suzanne Lee

### **Tuesday, June 13<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-8:00 pm at the museum**

Event: PHS Members Open House

### **Saturday, July 15<sup>th</sup> from 2:30-5:30 pm at Packett's Landing**

Event: PHS Cruises the Canal on the Colonial Belle



## How You can Support the Perinton Historical Society

- Become a PHS 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 and ROC the Day.





### **Slocum House—6735 Pittsford Palmyra Road**

This was the home of Benjamin and Sarah Mowry Slocum, built in the early 1800s after the presence of a saw mill in the area allowed for the replacement of their log cabin. The 320 acre farm covered a vast expanse both north and south of Pittsford Palmyra Road. Subsequent owners included the Lockwood, Garnham, Williams, and Likly families.

As referenced by Jean Keplinger, the 36 square miles of land purchased by William Walker in 1788 was divided into 66 lots. One of Walker's neighbors, when he lived in Massachussets, was Benjamin Slocum. From Walker, Slocum purchased lot 39 for \$1,170 in about 1804. Located geographically near the center of Perinton, lot 39 was 320 acres of prime land and included an existing log cabin. In addition, Walker had hired Glover Perrin several years earlier to clear the land and lay out an orchard on the property. But who was Benjamin Slocum, the buyer of lot 39?

Born in Rhode Island in the 1750s, Benjamin Slocum married Sarah Mowry in Smithfield, Rhode Island in 1774. The early years of their marriage were spent in Adams, Massachussets. In August of 1777, he enlisted for duty in the Revolutionary Army, and served in Captain Enos Parker's Company, a part of Colonel Benjamin Simond's Regiment, which primarily served to reinforce the Continental Army at Bennington, Vermont. Led by Lieutenant General John Burgoyne, the British Army moved from Canada to the south, with a strategy to cut off New England from the other colonies. An American victory over Burgoyne's army at Bennington set the stage for the subsequent defeat of the British at Saratoga, New York. The tide had turned in favor of the Americans, and Benjamin Slocum was there.

After sending his son Amasa (1777–1868) ahead to inspect lot 39, the Slocum family began their migration west to the newly purchased property in about 1805. At that time, the area including this town and others near us were part of Northfield, and also for a short period known as Boyle. Regardless of the name of their new community, the trip for the Slocum family was far from easy. Benjamin and Sarah were accompanied by four sons, the aforementioned Amasa,

along with Benjamin Jr. (1786–1865), Smith (1787–1835) and Elisha (1776–1860).

The trip from Massachussets to their new 320 acre property, along with difficulties upon their arrival, was chronicled by Perinton town historian Helen E. Butler in a 1977 essay. She wrote:

*"In the spring of 1805, Benjamin, his wife, their children and one grandchild came by the land route, with oxen, taking about five weeks for the journey. It must have been quite a caravan. Usually the pioneer used long sleighs which served as a bed at night as well as a means of carrying their possessions. The oxen survived by foraging on twigs and buds on the underbrush. The frozen ground and streams permitted a smoother passage.*

*The first night the Slocums spent here, their cabin burned down. Chimneys were made of twigs and mud and easily caught fire. This was a hard blow as many of their cherished possessions, carried here under difficulties, were lost.*

*A neighbor, Samuel Bennett who had purchased 320 acres across the road in 1792, took the Slocums in until they could build a new cabin. Slocum's son Benjamin Jr. fell in love with Lydia Bennett and they were married as soon as a traveling preacher came through."*

Benjamin and Sarah Slocum transferred large portions of their 320 acre property to their sons in 1815, who continued to farm the land for several decades. Much of this property eventually became part of farms owned and operated by the Ellsworth family. Sarah died in 1837, and Benjamin 14 years later. Each found their eternal rest at the Friends Cemetery in Farmington, among fellow Quakers.

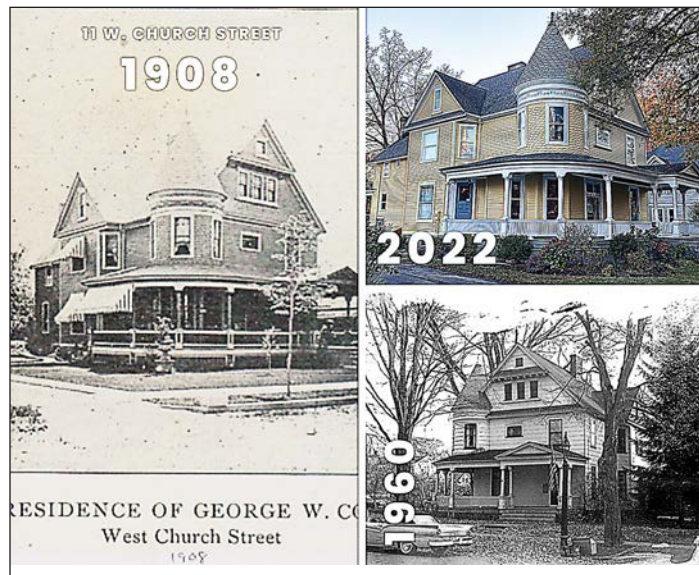
The next owners of the original Slocum house appear to have been William August Lockwood (1806–1864), who served as town supervisor of Perinton in 1846, and his wife, Polly Hubbard Lockwood (1806–1878). For many years after their death, a daughter, Inez, owned the home and farm, which at the time totaled about 40 acres. She died in 1922.

Members of the Slocum family have played an important role over the course of Perinton's history. In particular, Benjamin's sons Amasa and Elisha were both active in town affairs, holding many public positions for decades in the first half of the 19th century. Amasa was Perinton's first town clerk, and also the first commissioner of schools. Elisha served over many years as overseer of the poor, constable, and tax collector. His wife, Anna Staples Slocum, was one of the small number of charter members of the Fairport First Baptist Church in January of 1842.

Along with Benjamin Slocum's service in the Revolutionary War, subsequent generations of the Slocum family in Perinton served in the War of 1812, and also the Civil War. Perinton's E.A. Slocum Post of the Grand Army of the Republic was named for Edwin A. Slocum. The great-grandson of Benjamin Slocum gave his life on the battlefield at Gettysburg in July, 1863.

The dignified old home (below) was owned by several more families over the coming decades. Over the years lots were sold off, until by the late 1950s, less than three acres remained with the house. Eventually a developer purchased the home, and it was razed in 1971. If it still stood today, the original Slocum house would be over 200 years old. In the vicinity of the site where the old home once stood is a nursing home and an animal hospital.

Pittsford Palmyra Road, once a trail used by Native Americans, and later a stage coach route, inevitably became a busy thoroughfare and commercial center of Perinton. While we are fortunate to maintain a large number of historic landmarks both in Perinton and Fairport, there are many more that were lost to both residential and commercial development. In coming months I'll share the stories of a few more long lost landmarks that most readers have probably never before had the opportunity to see.



## Fairport Historic Preservation Commission Looks to the Future

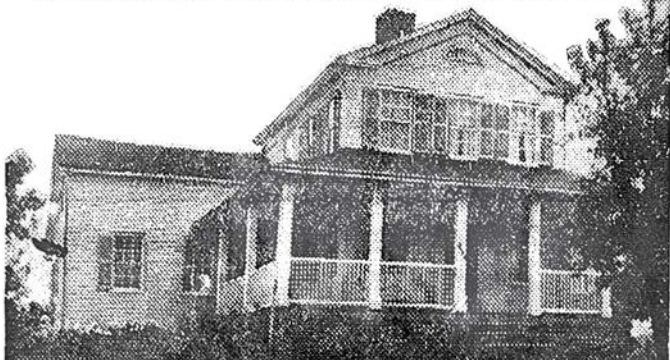
Join us at the museum on Tuesday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm for an evening highlighting our shared village history and a look toward its future as you learn more about the Fairport Historic Preservation Commission (FHPC). In 2007, the village of Fairport committed to include architectural heritage as part of its long-range planning efforts and established an Historic Preservation Local Law and the FHPC to protect, enhance, and perpetuate Fairport's landmarks and historic districts. To meet those goals, the FHPC develops educational programs, provides resources related to the renovation of historic homes and properties, and designates historic landmarks. To date, the FHPC has more than 40 designations, including homes, bridges, churches, a cemetery, and hitching posts. This evening's presentation will be an opportunity to learn more about the FHPC and its role in our village.

This event is free and open to the public.

David Steitz, Deputy-Chair of the FHPC, and Jill Wiedrick, Fairport Village Planner, will:

- Provide a brief history and discuss the current role of the FHPC.
- Describe the designation process and share some success stories of locally and nationally designated properties.
- Share FHPC work with local developers/contractors.
- Discuss a sample of previous Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications.
- Describe the COA application process for current property owners.
- Share exciting news about an upcoming village-wide event and educational opportunities.

**PITTSFORD--PERINTON  
COLONIAL GEM**



**6735 PITTSFORD-PALMYRA RD.**  
(Route 31 Out of Pittsford Village to Corner of Mosely Rd.)  
Colonial farmhouse, approx. 140 yrs. old, 4 bedrooms, 3 fireplaces, oil heat, modernized kitchen, new bath, large barn with water & electricity; ideal for keeping horses or kennels, about 2½ acres. Hen house, fruit trees, city bus at corner.

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ANDY  
CHENELLY  
ON  
PREMISES

Offered for sale in this 1958 advertisement is the original Slocum home at 6735 Pittsford Palmyra Road. At that time the home still retained a large barn and hen house on 2 ½ acres. Four years earlier the property was listed for sale with 68 acres of land.

The architectural details of the two-story wing were built in the Greek Revival style. The more primitive wing to the left (east) was probably the earliest part of the house.





# Calling all Rail and Photo Enthusiasts

*By Lucy McCormick*

*The installation of the rail viewing platform in 2020 and the more recent arrival of a 1978 Conrail caboose in February of 2023 have made Fairport THE place for rail fans of all ages.*

The Perinton Historical Society wants to share this excitement by displaying rail related photos of all types: local and regional trains, viewing sites, and of course, fans, young and old. Up to three printed photos of any size per person can be dropped off at the Fairport Historical Museum through the mail slot, sent to the museum, or brought to the museum during open hours by April 30<sup>th</sup>. (See museum hours on the back page of this issue.)

Each photo should be labeled on the back with the donor's name, location taken, and an e-mail address.

Photos will be featured in the museum in May and June. Some might be posted on the PHS Facebook page and PHS website. Children's submissions are welcome as well.

**Grab a camera and get on board!**



An eastbound train passes through Fairport over one hundred years ago. The train is in the same location as is its modern counterpart in the recent photo below. Today's railroad viewing platform is in about the same location as the former West Shore Railroad (WSRR) station visible in the center of the top photo.

*Photo from the Town of Perinton archives*



An eastbound train passes Fairport Junction and the railroad viewing platform, which is also known as the Albert H. Knapp Rotary Pavilion. Immediately west of the platform, Fairport's newly installed 1978 Conrail caboose is in position, and ready for restoration.

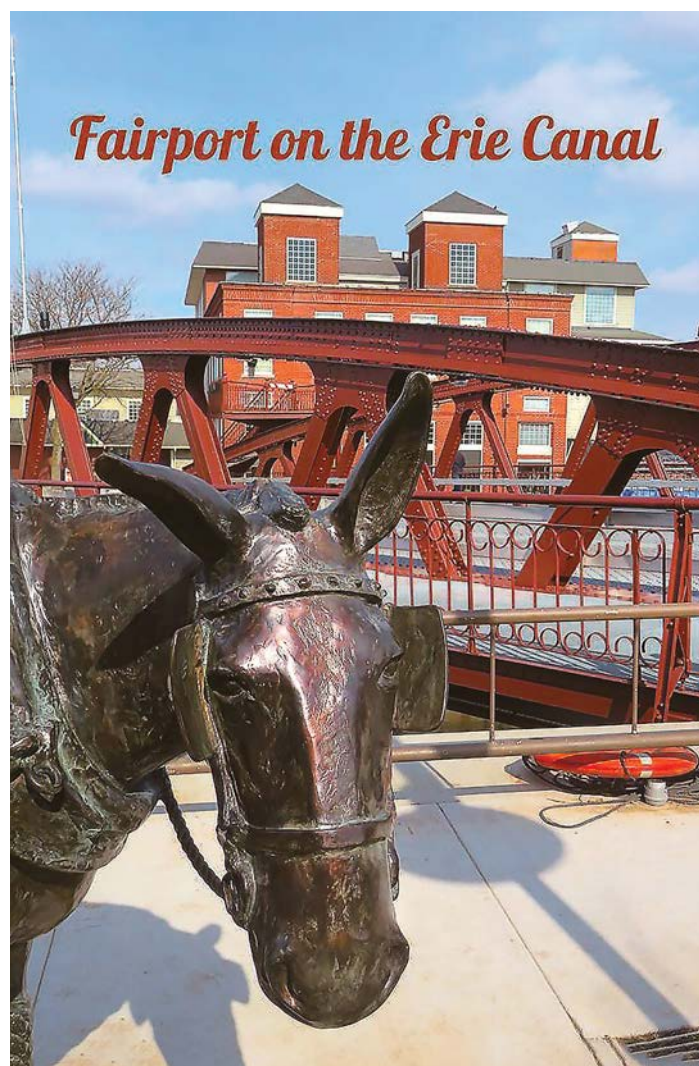
*Photo by Bill Poray*





Early last month, on a cool sunny day, a local grandmother waits with her grandson to see trains traveling through the village, a daily adventure for this duo.

*Photo by Lucy McCormick*



## New in the Museum Gift Shop

The museum reopening has prompted a purchasing flurry of new gift shop items. The next time you are at the museum, check out the newly-arrived 12"x18" garden flags, both of which feature the mule, Box Factory and lift bridge. The flags sell for \$16 each and flag holders are also available for just \$3 each.

Arriving soon are a multitude of train-related items, including engineer caps, train engineer plush animals with PHS bandanas, four-tone train whistles stamped with the PHS logo, trains in a tin and more!

Be sure to stop by on Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> for our children's train activities.

Our Square is up and the volunteers are being trained on it thanks to the Bowleys, so credit cards are now accepted as well as cash and checks.



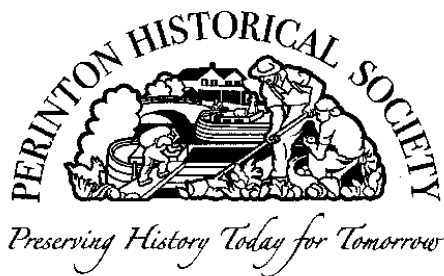
## All Aboard the PHS Express!

Celebrate the arrival of the Fairport Junction caboose by stopping by the museum anytime between 10:00 am and 12:00 pm on Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> for a morning of train fun!

Kids can play train games, do crafts, read stories and enjoy treats.

**Get free train party temporary tattoos while our supplies last.**





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



Donald Ecott's portrait by photographer John North, and an excerpt from his Chamber of Commerce profile (below) published in the *Fairport Herald-Mail* in 1962

**“Donald Ecott is a man of dedication** – to his banking job, to hunting and fishing – and fortunately, in that order. The fact that business comes first probably saved his life. Not too many years ago he arranged a combined hunting and fishing trip with three pals. They were going to operate in the Sodus Bay area. At the last moment Don had to forego the fun. It was probably the luckiest day in his life. The hunting trip ended in tragedy. A storm upset the sportsmen's boat and all three were drowned. The experience has in no way diminished his activity for the outdoor sports but he is giving just a little more of his spare time (no pun intended) to bowling.

As assistant vice president and manager of the Security Trust office here Don has become a popular figure. His future plans after retirement (and he is in no hurry) is to pack up his guns, fishing tackle and lovely wife and take off for a grand tour of the U.S.A. with no schedule of when to return. All of which proves that Don Ecott is an uncommon man for a banker and there is good reason for his popularity.”

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

The museum is open for the season! 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)**