

Perinton
Historical Society

Historigram



18 Perrin Street
Fairport, NY 14450

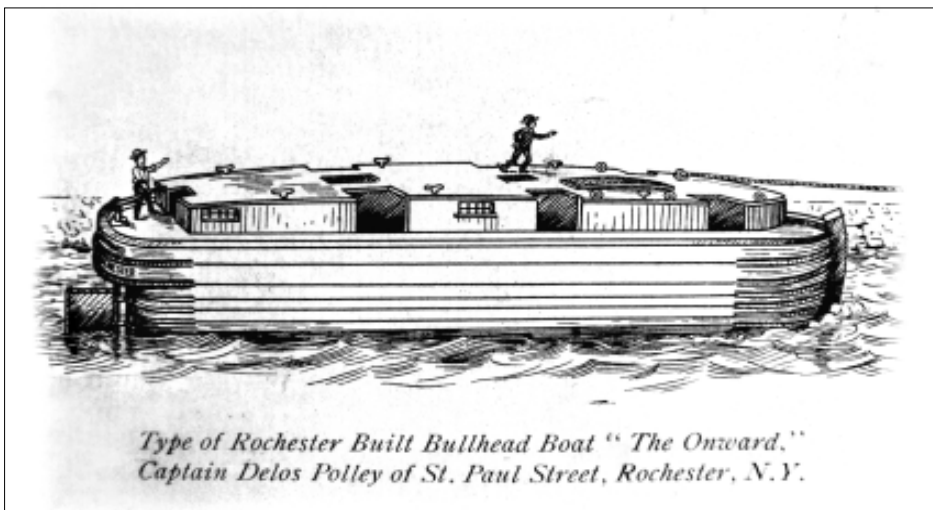
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The Erie Canal Brought New Occupations to Bushnell's Basin

*By William Keeler
Curator, Fairport Historical Museum*

When James Geddes came through western New York looking for a route for the Erie Canal in 1817, there was no Bushnell's Basin. The one occupation near where the basin stands today, besides farming, was milling at Man's Mill, which was located where Irondequoit Creek would soon flow under the Great Embankment in 1825.



A type of early canal boat built and used in the Rochester area.
From the collection of the Perinton Historical Society

The Erie Canal was built in sections and these sections were open to traffic before the canal officially opened the entire length in 1825.

In 1822 the canal was open up to where the Great Embankment would be built. Boats coming from the east would have to tie up at Bushnell's Basin, unload their cargo and transfer the goods by wagon to the canal in Pittsford to the west until the embankment was finished in 1825. This break in the canal gave jobs to freight

handlers and wagon drivers. On this temporary bottleneck a canal tavern rose—known at that time as the “West End of the Canal Tavern.” We know it today as Richardson's Canal House Restaurant.

Businessmen at Bushnell's Basin (known in the early days as Hartwell's Basin) soon built a set of warehouses that stored grain from farmers before being shipped on the canal. The Basin became a major stop on the canal and even had a packet boat dry dock constructed on its southern bank for building and repairing boats.

In the early years, the canal was a major route for passengers before the railroads took much of this traffic in the 1850s. In the first years of railroad operation, the railroad companies actually had to pay a fee to New York State for every passenger that rode the rails instead of the canal.

In 1828 Bushnell's Basin was home port to three packet boats, for passengers

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HISTORIGRAM

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~ **Bob Hunt** ~

Comments from your President

Greetings! Standard time is again on our clocks, which means we are headed into a slower time at your museum. The last museum open date will be Thursday, December 20th from 7:00-9:00 pm. The 2013 museum season will begin on Sunday, March 3rd.

Thanks to Gail Black and her team of volunteers who open the museum during the year and are available to assist with research and answer questions from our members and the general public. During our recent strategy session, we discussed ways the museum could be open for more hours and it comes down to volunteers. With more volunteers, we could be open for more hours, so if you can spare a couple of hours a month, please let me know. We will schedule a training session for new volunteers in March, just in time to kick off our museum hours for 2013.

Thanks also to President Joyce Lyle and the membership of the Greenbrier Garden Club who spend many hours during the year maintaining the beautiful gardens and grounds of the museum. When you visit the museum, walk around to the back and see the work they are providing for your historical society.

Last month I talked about the Technology Committee. This month's strategy session topic is membership. During the session we discussed many ways to expand our membership, including our new programs for kids, both at the museum and in the schools. We also talked about initiating an annual fundraising activity, building relationships with local businesses, and several aspects of communications.

We also identified the need to establish a Membership Committee. Historically, the membership has been handled almost single handedly by board member Jim Unckless. Our goal is to develop a committee of five members as we look to the future and expand our membership. Please let me know if you are interested in helping with this effort.

Perinton Historical Society has again registered for the *ROC the Day* fundraising event. *ROC the Day* is a day for giving to local charities and will be held on December 12, 2012 (12.12.12). The United Way of Greater Rochester will hold a 24-hour donation drive for not-for-profit organizations in the Rochester area communities. On this one-day giving

Perinton Historical Society

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MUSEUM

<i>Curator</i>	Bill Keeler
<i>Director</i>	Vicki Profitt



event, community members will be able to make an end-of-year gift to help their charities of choice. Please give support to the Perinton Historical Society on that day by going to www.roctheday.org and making your donation. Your donation will be used in the ongoing maintenance of your museum and help fund our programs and exhibits. Thank you for your support, it is appreciated. Remember **12.12.12, ROC the Day for PHS.**

In closing, I extend to each of you a joyous holiday season and a wish for peace and good health in 2013 and beyond.

Thanks for your continued support of PHS. We will chat again in our next issue.

Bob Hunt, President
585-415-7053 / rhunt1@rochester.rr.com



Coming Events

By Vicki Profitt

Sunday, December 9, 2:30–3:30 pm
At the Fairport Historical Museum



Children's Holiday Party

The Fairport Historical Museum is the place for kids to be on Sunday, December 9th as we hold our 1st annual Children's Holiday Party! Drop in to the museum, 18 Perrin Street, anytime between 2:30–3:30 pm for delicious treats and fun winter crafts. Take a look at the cool displays in the museum and check out great gift ideas for moms and dads in the gift shop!

Children of all ages are invited to attend the holiday party with an adult in attendance. The event is FREE and open to the public. Scout groups are welcome.

Tuesday, December 11, 7:30 pm
At the Fairport Historical Museum

Holiday Program

Music teacher Samantha Anderson and her Fairport Schools music students will perform at our annual holiday program on Tuesday, December 11, 7:30 pm, at the Fairport Historical Museum, 18 Perrin Street. Please bring a dessert to pass, and join us in celebrating the holiday season at the museum. Be sure to check out the museum gift shop for some interesting gift ideas for the entire family.



Sunday, January 13, 2:30 pm
At the Fairport Historical Museum

Children's Program: 20th Century Medicine in Fairport

Come learn about Fairport's role in 20th century medicine. Hear the story of Taylor's Oil of Life made right here in Fairport! Kids can create a label for a "cure all" of their own design! The program begins at 2:30 p.m. at the Fairport Historical Museum, 18 Perrin Street in Fairport.

This program is best suited to children in kindergarten through 6th grade, with an adult in attendance. The program is FREE and is open to the public. Scout groups are welcome.

Wednesday, January 15, 7:00 pm
At the Fairport Public Library

Setting Up House: The Building of Rochester City Hospital

Presented by Kathleen Emerson Britton

Founded in 1847, Rochester City Hospital—forerunner of Rochester General—did not establish its first permanent home until 1864. Kathleen Emerson Britton, Director/Curator of Collections of the Rochester Medical Museum and Archives will speak on the early days of the Hospital and its first home on West Main Street.

Kathleen Emerson Britton has been Director and Curator of Collections at the Rochester Medical Museum and Archives since 2007. A graduate of St. John Fisher, the University of Albany, and New York University, she lives in Spencerport with her husband, two sons and a grumpy, semi-neurotic former barn cat.

This program will take place on January 15, at 7:00 pm at the Fairport Public Library, 1 Fairport Village Landing, in the Elma Gaffney Meeting Room. Registration begins December 19th and is required through the Fairport Public Library. Please visit the library for details on registering for this program.



The People Have Spoken!

At our children's program on November 11th, we learned about Perinton's veterans from the Revolutionary War through modern times. We also voted on the name of our mule mascot. The mule has been christened "Merriman". Thanks to all who did their part and voted.



Detail from the Gillette's 1858 map of Monroe County

going both east and west along the Erie Canal. These boats were the *Honeoye*, captained by Jacob Hughes and George St. John, the *Lyman Clark*, captained by Gardner Bouley, and the *Erasmus Darwin*, captained by R.B. Hughes and W. Perrin. The boats carried an average of 17 passengers and made up to four stops at various ports along the route, exchanging passengers at each stop. The packet boats traveled away from their home port for up to two months at a time.

From 1827 to 1829, the State of New York required that each packet boat be registered with the state and send a report after each trip proclaiming how many passengers they transported, and how many miles each passenger logged. Some captains merely logged in the person's last name and others the first initial and last name. Some entries describe people simply by their occupation, religion, or ethnicity. Several people were described as "way passengers," indicating people picked up along the way and not at a designated port. Some passengers would travel only a few miles while others traveled for a hundred miles or more. The *Honeoye* was by far the busiest packet boat in 1828. The boat made six trips from April 17th to November 13th that year. Half of these trips lasted a month or more. Captains Hughes and St. John transported 245 people along the canal that year.

In 1829 the *R. W. Wood* was added to the fleet in Bushnell's Basin and made two trips from October to November. After 1829 the state no longer required boat captains to report the number of passengers traveling along the canal.



Statistics on Packet Boats Operating from Bushnell's Basin in 1828

From the New York State Archives
A1057-78

- 4-17 to 5-20, 1828. The boat *Honeoye*, captained by Jacob Hughes took 32 passengers including the Goodrich family of three people who traveled 147 miles.
- 4-24 to 5-12, 1828. The boat *Lyman Clark*, captained by Gardner Bouley took 12 passengers who logged a total of 1448 miles collectively in 16 days.
- 5-10 to 5-27, 1828. The boat *Erasmus Darwin*, captained by R.B. Hughes took a total of 18 passengers who logged 3231 miles collectively in 17 days.
- 5-28 to 8-26, 1828. The boat *Erasmus Darwin*, captained by W. Perrin took a total of 78 passengers a collective 7661 miles in two months. One passenger is listed as traveling 91 miles and then running away without paying.
- 6-11 to 6-27, 1828. The boat *Honeoye* transported 78 passengers for a total of 7,053 miles collectively. Included were three "way passengers", and an Englishman and doctor who both traveled 18 miles.
- 7-9 to 7-26, 1828. The boat *Honeoye*, captained by George St. John, took 28 passengers east along the canal stopping in Albany. Passengers included William Lewis who traveled 118 miles, and Lewis Cofflin, who traveled 15 miles.
- 7-26 to 9-2, 1828. The boat *Honeoye* stopped at Bushnell's Basin long enough to relieve Captain St. John with Captain Hughes, who took the trip back to Albany. The boat was out for 36 days and transported a total of 22 people.
- 9-2 to 10-4, 1828. The boat *Honeoye*, captained by Jacob Hughes, traveled west toward Buffalo. The canal toll at Buffalo was \$13.89.
- 10-4 to 11-13, 1828. The boat *Honeoye*, captained by Jacob Hughes, took 53 passengers a collective total of 5390 miles in 39 days.
- 11-6 to 12-10, 1828. The boat *Lyman Clark*, captained by Gardner Bouley, took a total of 33 passengers a collective 3661 total miles in 34 days.

Thank You from Deb Mabry Our House Tour Chairperson

My sincere thanks to our 2012 House Tour Docents, listed below. If you didn't volunteer, or show up with smiles and enthusiasm, we wouldn't be able to provide the annual house tour to our membership. I'll be calling again in 2013.

Bob & Cindy Hunt; Dave & Carol Large; Harold & Ann Castle; Eric & Doris Hooker; Vicki Profitt; Suzanne Lee & daughter; Janet St. Pierre, daughter Julie & friend Lisa; Cheri Mascitti; George Wolf; Doug & Jean Whitney; Milly Blaylock; Bob & Gail Black; Jim & Karen Unckless; Joan Alliger; Dee Molinari; Gary & Julie O'Dea; Joyce Lyle; Eunice Roby; Lucy McCormick; Sue Templeton; May Thomson; Sue Broda; Jill Kemp; John & Eileen Wierzbicki; Carol Christensen; Anne Johnston; Sharon Catanese; Bonnie Myers; Warren & Pat Knapp; Jim Smith; Mike Barker; Carol Shurek; Rod & Jeanne Rittenhouse; Elaine Lanni; Sandy Ryan Otto; Sean Delehante; Ken Rohr; Clark King; Ciaran Hanna; Joe LaFay; Fritz & Georgia May, Alyssa Sand; Melissa Balonek; Nancy Goodermote; Fran McCarthy; Stephen Van Vreede; Judy & Mike Mason.

HELP WANTED

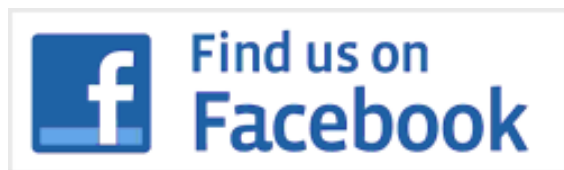
2013 House Tour Committee and 2014 Chairperson

It is important to PHS to develop our volunteers to take on leadership roles, and we are searching for the next house tour chairperson. Deb Mabry will complete the 2013 house tour, but would like a Vice Chair to learn the ropes and assist in the process, so Deb can then hand over the responsibilities for the 2014 house tour. Please call Deb at 738-7866 or e-mail her at djwm1@rochester.rr.com with questions or to volunteer.

In addition, we'd like to get a committee set up to meet in January, 2013 to formulate a plan for the 2013 house tour. A tentative meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 3, 2013-7:00 pm at 100 Broxbourne Drive, Fairport.

The Perinton Historical Society is now on Facebook!

"Like" us to hear about upcoming programs and events. Search for "Perinton Historical Society" and tell your friends!



Scout Groups Welcome

The Fairport Historical Museum is a great place to earn scout badges for Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

To learn more about the museum's Scout programs, please contact Vicki Profitt at vprofitt@rochester.rr.com.



2013 Peter McDonough Scholarship

By Bill Poray

In 2012 the Perinton Historical Society was proud to award \$1,000 scholarships to high school seniors Brady Meixell and Megan Gilmore for their winning historical research papers, judged the finest among many entries. We are once again looking forward to providing scholarships to two students in 2013. PHS scholarship representatives have visited several senior English classes at Fairport High School in November, to communicate the program and energize students regarding this opportunity. Teachers have been extremely supportive of this effort.

During one of the class visits, FHS teacher John Baynes and David Dunn, Principal of Martha Brown Middle School, presented PHS with a \$1,000 donation to help support the 2012 scholarships. The two men are co-chairs of *Friends of Fairport*, a philanthropic organization affiliated with the employees of Fairport Central Schools. We are very thankful for their support.

We also thank the many people who have generously donated to the Scholarship, established as a memorial to former Fairport Mayor and Historical Society President Peter McDonough.

If you would like to make a donation to our scholarship program, please send your check to the Perinton Historical Society, 18 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY, 14450 with the notation, "Scholarship Fund".

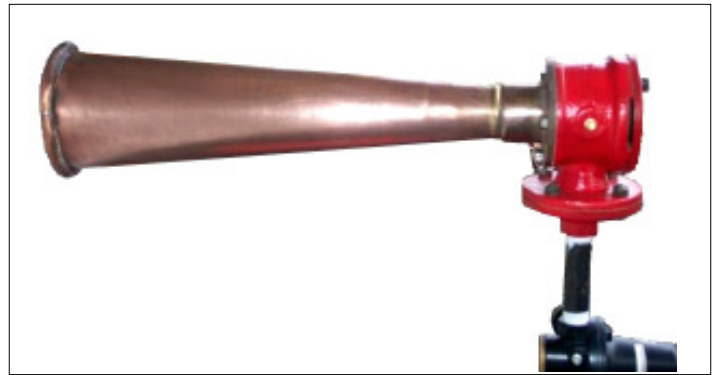


The Fire Horn

Story and Photos provided by Matt Wells

Recently, I was shopping with my family at the farmers market in the village when a fire call came in. The fire horn blasted out its deep, dying cow-like tune as some of the other shoppers and vendors asked, “What is that?” As most of you know, I am a fire department history buff. As I explained what it was, a few folks passing by stopped and listened to my brief history lesson. Many of the people assumed the horn had something to do with the canal. It then dawned on me that many of our new residents, especially those who moved to Fairport from other areas, don’t know what it is or its history.

Since the 1880s, Fairport has had some type of steam or air horn system. The first was a steam whistle located at the Deland Chemical Company. Main Street and the Erie Canal were “intersected” and the village was divided into four districts. Southwest of this “intersection” was district one, southeast was district two, northwest was district three, and northeast part of the village was district four. The whistle was sounded with one long blast followed by a short blast(s) of the appropriate district. For example: If a fire occurred on High Street, the whistle sounded one long blast followed by four short blasts. Ironically, the fire whistle was destroyed by fire in 1893. In 1917, a “Three-Bell Whistle” was installed and used until early 1921.



Gamewell Diaphone horn installed in 1921



Diaphragm air horns in use today



Three- bell steam whistle of the type used in Fairport in the 1880s

In March 1921, a compressed air horn was installed on the clock tower on top of the village hall. This horn was a Gamewell Type B Diaphone Horn. This horn was tied into two street boxes. One was located in front of the village hall, and the other on Parce Avenue. As the village grew, more street boxes were added to the system, a total of 27 in all. Each box had a number. When the hook on the box was pulled, the horn would blast out the box number. For example, the old West Avenue School was box 36. The horn would blow three times, pause, then blow six times. That number would repeat for three rounds. A blast of 2-2-2 meant the fire was “out of town”.

In 1976, Monroe County began dispatching fire calls. A radio receiver and timer were hooked up to the horn. The 2-2-2 code changed from “out of town” to Monroe County fire dispatcher alert, because of its age and the lack of available replacement parts. The diaphone horn was replaced in the early 1980s with two diaphragm air horns. One points north, the other south. They are still located on top of the clock tower, and still sound the 2-2-2 code. Until the late 1990s, the horn blew one blast at 7:00 A.M. 12:00 Noon, and 9:00 P.M.

That’s the story of Fairport’s fire horns in a nutshell.





Framed print of a painting by artist Edward Lamson Henry (1841-1919), entitled *Before the Days of Rapid Transit*. It is on display at the Fairport Historical Museum, in memory of Bill Mathews, President of the Perinton Historical Society from 1996-2003.



WE WANT YOU!

The Fairport Historical Museum is looking for volunteer docents. If you have just two hours a month to donate your time, we want you!

Please contact Vicki Profitt.

vprofitt@rochester.rr.com

or 585-233-1204

Give A Gift From Our Gift Shop.

Looking for a holiday gift?

Our **Museum Shop** has many traditional gift items for sale. The selection also includes local history publications, postcards, pictures and maps, both framed and unframed.

Consider a PHS Gift Membership for those on your Christmas list.

Membership in the Perinton Historical Society is a thoughtful gift which will be remembered throughout the year and will help support our educational and preservation programs. Just fill out the form below, include the appropriate dues and send it to the Fairport Historical Museum, 18 Perrin St., Fairport, NY 14450.

We'll acknowledge your gift and send a welcome letter with the most recent HISTORIGRAM to your recipient.

Your Name: _____

Recipient's Name: _____

Address: _____

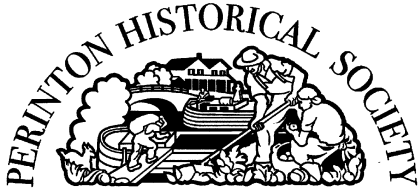
City, State & Zip: _____

Membership Level:

Individual \$15 ___ Family \$20 ___

Patron \$50 ___ Senior Single \$8 ___

Senior Couple \$12 ___



Preserving History Today for Tomorrow

18 PERRIN STREET, FAIRPORT, NEW YORK 14450

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Looking East from the Parker Street Bridge

Boat captains and sometimes their families would often winter in Fairport, living right on their boats until the spring thaw when canal traffic resumed.

Circa 1913 photo from the archives of the Perinton Historical Society

Fairport Historical Museum

The last day the museum will be open in 2012 is Thursday, December 20, 7:00-9:00 pm. We will re-open on March 3, 2013. During this period, call or email Vicki Profitt (585-233-1204 or vprofitt@rochester.rr.com) to book a group tour or do research. Bill Keeler and Vicki Profitt will be working hard to set up exciting new exhibits for debut upon our re-opening.