

# HISTORICGRAM



**Perinton Historical Society**  
**18 Perrin Street**  
**Fairport, New York 14450**

***Home of the Fairport  
Historical Museum***

**Newsletter for the Perinton Historical Society**

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**Volume 35**  
**Issue #8**  
**Date: May 2003**  
**Editor: William Keeler**

**Inside:**

- ☐ **Details about the Perinton Historical Society Annual Picnic.**
- ☐ **Slate of Candidates for the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee.**
- ☐ **What I Left Out: The Story of the Wanderer**
- ☐ **...and more.**

**Matson Ewell to Resign as Director of the Fairport Museum in July.**

With great reluctance, the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee accepted the resignation of long time member, former officer of the Society and Director of our Museum, Matson Ewell.

No matter what is written here, it can never fully describe the influence and quiet leadership shown, not only of Matson but also Ruth Ewell. Consciously or unconsciously, Matson has been a friend and mentor to many people in the community. He has a quiet unassuming manner with a

THE MISSION OF THE PERINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY INTEREST IN THE PRESERVATION OF LOCAL RECORDS AND ARTIFACTS FOR POSTERITY, AND FOR THE ENLIGHTENMENT OF THE PERINTON COMMUNITY.

sweeping outlook on life that draws analogies from all fields and subjects. Reporters seek him out for his unique view of Perinton and Fairport and how it relates to the world around us.

Matson Ewell's uncanny ability to see history in life has brought the museum a paving stone from South Main Street when the road was being paved, a girder from the Main Street bridge when it was being rebuilt, all the newspapers issued during the first Gulf War, furniture and artifacts from the streets of Fairport. He can envision a trolley running near Main Street on rails dug up from old State Street and a mobile wooden voting booth on wheels being towed down the street during parades in the village.

As a showman, with top hat and canal horn, he has entertained adults and children alike. But his real talent can be seen as a teacher. It is a pleasure to watch him weave a story about Fairport and the world as young future historians watch and listen as Matson points out and explains features and people in the mural, which hangs proudly in our museum. His sense of history has influenced so many.

The first pictures we have of Matson Ewell is with a small band of Society volunteers moving our collections

from the Crosman Center to our present location on Perrin Street. His love of the building is evident in the subtle changes he made to transform the former library into a working museum. Every nail, pipe and board taken down has been safely saved and stored. If asked, Matson could reconstruct the building exactly as it looked in 1979.

Matson was President of the Society in the 1970's, a Trustee in the 1980's and has been to almost every board meeting since then. He and Ruth became "Citizens of the Year" in 1999 for their work in the community. As far back as anyone can remember, Matson has been Director of the Fairport Museum, filled in as Volunteer Coordinator and any other job as the need arose. Volunteers at the Museum are used to seeing him at least once during their shift always with a story or a word of encouragement.

We don't see him as often now. Matson is involved in the English Speaking Union or running errands at home. It has now come to a point where he is needed elsewhere much more than at the Museum. Bill Matthews, our current President, is fond of recalling when he first met Matson. Bill thought Matson actually owned the Museum and in a way he really does. We will all miss

you Matson. Take care and thank you.

## Slate of Candidates Selected for Society Officers.

The traditional election of officers for the upcoming season takes place this May at the Perinton Historical Society picnic. Surprisingly every member of the Executive Committee and the one Trustee up for election this year have all decided to come back for another term.

The nominees for election to the Executive Committee 2003-2004 for a one-year term are:

- William Matthews-President
- Bernadette McDonough-First Vice President
- Joyce Lyle-Second Vice President
- May Thomson-Treasurer
- William Kinsman-Recording Secretary
- Heather Bauer-Corresponding Secretary

Returning to the Board of Trustees for another 5 year term is T.C. Lewis.

The Society members should be proud of these dedicated officers as well as the returning Board members Jim Unckless, John Jongen, David Wild and Bill Keeler. If you recognize any one of the above on the

street or at one of our meetings, be sure to thank them for the time and effort they put in to keeping our Historical Society running.

## CURRENT OFFICERS AND STAFF OF THE PERINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

T.C. LEWIS  
JOHN JONGEN  
DAVID WILD  
JAMES UNCKLESS  
WILLIAM KEELER

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

WILLIAM MATTHEWS, PRESIDENT  
BERNADETTE McDONOUGH, 1<sup>ST</sup> VICE-PRESIDENT  
JOYCE LYLE, 2<sup>ND</sup> VICE-PRESIDENT  
WILLIAM KINSMAN, RECORDING SECRETARY  
HEATHER BAUER, CORRESPONDING SECRETARY  
MAY THOMSON, TREASURER

### MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

JAMES UNCKLESS

### HISTORIGRAM EDITOR

WILLIAM KEELER

### COSTUME CURATOR

CAROL ROLPH

### COLLECTIONS CURATORS

IMOGENE BLUM AND WILLIAM KEELER

### VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

GAIL BLACK

### GIFT SHOP MANAGER

JOYCE LYLE

### GIFT SHOP ACCOUNTS

RUTH EWELL

### MERCHANTS ASSOC. REPRESENTATIVE

ANNE JOHNSTON

### HOUSE TOUR COORDINATOR

THEDA ANN BURNHAM



## Perinton Historical Society Picnic Set for May 13.

The annual Perinton Historical Society Picnic will be held rain or shine in Perinton Park at 6:00 P.M. on May 13<sup>th</sup>. Hot dogs, hamburgers and lemonade will be provided by the Society. People wishing to come to the picnic need to call Helen Matthews at 377-8456 before May 10<sup>th</sup>. When you call please tell Helen how many people will be coming, whether they would like to have a hot dog or hamburger and what dish you would like to bring (salad, a hot dish or dessert). The charge is \$1.00 a person and will be collected at the picnic. You also need to bring your own plates, cups and cutlery.

After dinner there will be a brief meeting and election of next years Executive Committee and Board Member.

This is the last meeting of the year. We have ordered good weather so come and spend a leisurely evening at the park with good friends and conversation.



## What I Left Out: The Story of the Wanderer.

This is one of a series of articles written by Bill Keeler about pictures found in the book *Perinton, Fairport and the Erie Canal*. Page numbers in the articles refer to page numbers in the book.

It is often difficult to date photographs or to identify the people in them when nothing is recorded on the back. Sometimes, just like a detective, you can extract information from clues found in the picture.

The pictures on the cover and on page 102 have many clues embedded in them that help identify the boat, the people in it and the year the photograph was taken.

The launch is on the Erie Canal and looks like it could almost stretch from shore to shore. We know it is the Erie Canal because the building in the background has a sign on the front identifying it as the P. Cox Shoe Manufacturing Co. which operated in that location in Fairport from 1889 to 1901. If you look on page 16, you'll see the reconstruction of the canal in 1912, which widen the waterway from 70 to 123 feet across. Therefore the picture must have been taken before 1912 when the canal was much narrower.

The name of the photographer on the back of the picture is Frank Clench, who operated a photo studio in the Deal Block on North Main Street from 1886 to 1901. What is interesting is that this is the only known photograph taken by Frank outside his studio. It must have been a very important picture for him to lug all his photo equipment to the docks.

The launch is named the *Wanderer* as seen on the front of the boat. A *Democrat & Chronicle* article in the 1940's describes the *Wanderer* as being owned by a D.O. Worden. There was a farmer, machinist and inventor by the name of Deyo Worden who lived in East Penfield during the late 1800's and early 1900's. A picture from the Penfield Local History Room confirms that the man in the front of the launch is indeed Deyo Worden. As an inventor, Deyo S. Worden patented a steam engine in 1897 that looks remarkably like the one in the picture.

With all these clues, we can safely say that the picture was taken between 1897 and 1901 by photographer Frank Clench in Fairport, NY of a launch on the Erie Canal named the *Wanderer* owned by inventor Deyo Worden seated in the front whose patented steam engine is being used to power the

boat. And what about the man in the back of the boat? I suspect he is H.J. Wooden of Fairport, who was an inspector on the Erie Canal. But that is a story for another time.

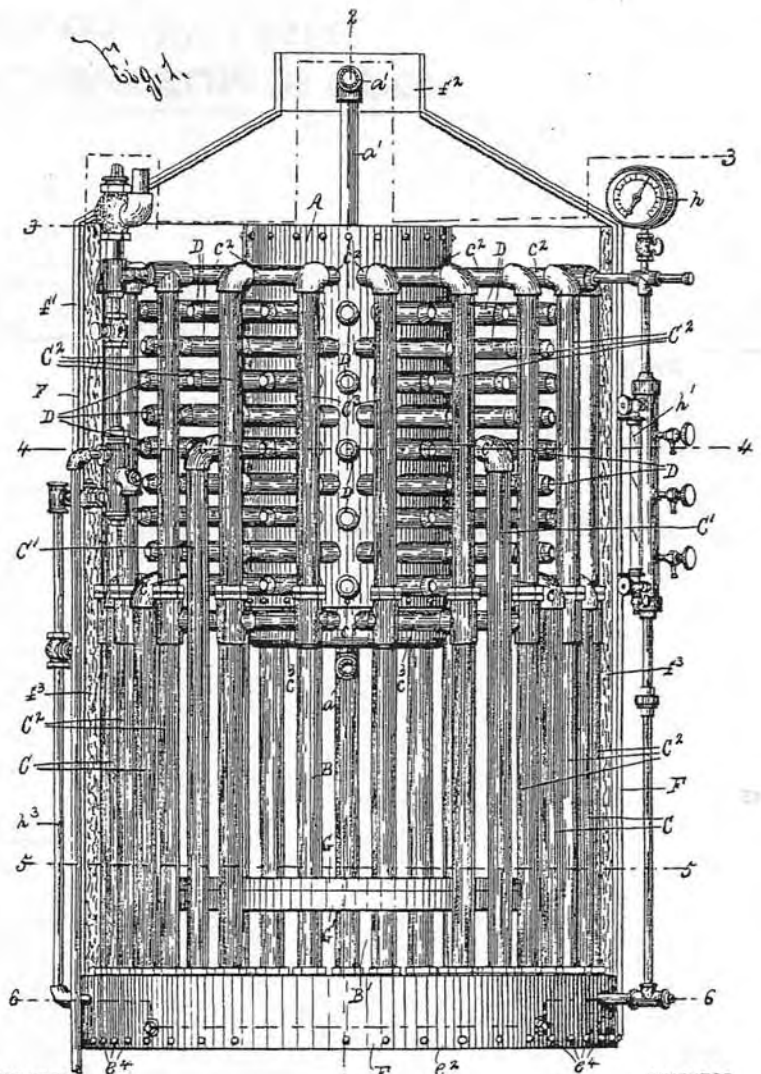
(No Model.)

D. S. WORDEN.  
STEAM GENERATOR.

5 Sheets—Sheet 1.

No. 582,969.

Patented May 18, 1897.

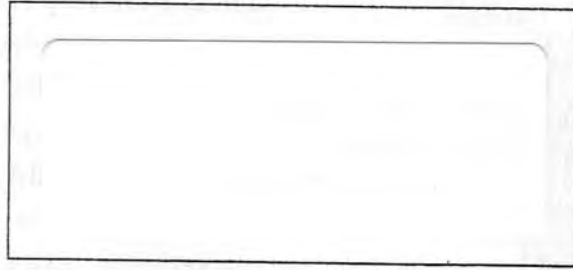


WITNESSES:

*N. C. May*  
*N. H. Thibault*

INVENTOR  
*Deyo S. Worden*

BY  
*Wm. Parsons*  
ATTORNEYS.



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## **FAIRPORT HISTORICAL MUSEUM IS OPEN**

18 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY 14450

- Tuesday 2 P.M. to 4 P.M.
- Thursday 7 P.M. to 9 P.M.
- Sunday 2 P.M. to 4 P.M.
- The first two Mondays of every month the Archives are open  
for Researchers Only  
9 A.M. to 1 P.M.
- Additional Summer Hours from July 7th to August 30th,  
Wednesday, Thursday and Friday  
2 P.M. to 4 P.M.

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