



# PERINTON HISTORIGRAM

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**EDITOR**

Ruth Ewell

NOTE: The January meeting will be held in the Fairport Library, not in the Museum!

## Calendar of Coming Events

- Tuesday, January 16 -- Cynthia Howk will be the speaker. See details below.  
To be held at the Fairport Library, 7:30 p.m. Reservations suggested.
- Tuesday, February 13 -- Bill Keeler, Museum Curator, will be the speaker on  
"Early Inventions from Perinton and Fairport." Details next month.
- Tuesday, March 13 -- "Historical Gravestones and Carvers," by Laurel Gabel.
- Tuesday, April 17 -- "Stained Glass Windows from Orleans County Churches,"  
by Bill Latin.

## January Meeting

As usual in January, we will have a joint meeting with the Fairport Public Library, at the library, starting at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 16. Cynthia Howk, Architectural Research Coordinator of the Landmark Society of Western New York, will present an overview of "Architectural Styles in Western New York from 1790 to 1940." The overview will include building styles from Federal to Art Deco, as well as an introduction to historic house styles in our region.

Reservations at the library are suggested. Please call 223-9091.

## Report of November Meeting

David Wild, society trustee and museum volunteer, began the meeting by showing an exhibit of wagonjacks which he had assembled and commenting on how some of them worked. David has been collecting wagonjacks for many years and owns a large variety of them. In fact, the antique store which he and his wife, Barbara, run is called "Wagonjack." Most of the audience knew very little about this useful tool, and they were fascinated to discover how it operated and about the role it had played in the life of the pioneers in their westward journeys.

The meeting was then turned over to our speaker, Chuck Miller, who was with us in spite of having had a recent hip replacement. Many remembered the program he had given a few years ago on "Tippecanoe and Tyler, Too" and were happy to welcome him back. His topic was the homes of the presidents, most of which he has visited not just once but many times. He covered just the first half of the presidents who have been in office. Another time we may be able to entice him back to do the rest.

Report of November Meeting (continued)

The slides of George Washington's home at Mt. Vernon included not only the exterior of this lovely home but also many interior shots, including the bed in which Washington died in 1799.

We saw a picture of the original house in which Adams was born. John Adams was also known as "Old Man Eloquence" or "His Rotundity." His wife, Abigail, was an early women's libber.

Thomas Jefferson was probably the most talented of our presidents, although he died deeply in debt. Mr. Miller's slides showed some of his remarkable inventions as well as views of his home at Monticello. It is interesting to note that John Adams and Thomas Jefferson both died on July 4, 1826, fifty years to the day after the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

James Madison and his wife Dolly (known as the queen of Washington) lived in Virginia. They were residing in the White House when it was burned by the British during the War of 1812. Dolly is famous for rescuing the portrait of Washington.

James Monroe was another Virginia president. Many of the early presidents had slaves. Monroe had 40; Washington had as many as 450 at any given time.

Andrew Jackson, known as "Old Hickory," lived at The Hermitage. Although he was known as a crude man, it is said that when dealing with women he could be quite charming.

Martin VanBuren, the first president from New York and the first one to be born after 1776, lived in Kinderhook, New York.

William Henry Harrison became president at age 68. His home near the James River was referred to as a "log cabin," although it was anything but. Harrison died while in office and was succeeded by John Tyler, the first vice-president to become president. His first wife died while he was in the White House, and he then married a glamorous woman named Julia. Tyler's house on the James River was the longest wooden house in America.

James Polk served only one term as president. His wife, Sarah, would not allow alcoholic beverages in the White House and so she was known as "Sahara Sarah." Their home was in Columbia, Tennessee.

Mr. Miller had only pictures of the outside of Zachary Taylor's home in Louisville, Kentucky. It is now privately owned, and the owner was not well enough to let him come in when he visited there. Zachary Taylor, born in Virginia, was the first one to use the term "First Lady," which he used in speaking of Dolly Madison.

Millard Fillmore was another president from New York. He came from East Aurora and is buried in Forest Lawn Cemetery in Buffalo. He was once an indentured servant.

Franklin Pierce, described by Mr. Miller as the "dimmest" of all our presidents, was born in Hillsboro, New Hampshire, and practiced law in Concord, New Hampshire.

James Buchanan was the first president to come from Pennsylvania. His home in Lancaster was called "Wheatland." Buchanan was a southern sympathizer.

There is now a replica in Kentucky of the log cabin in which Abraham Lincoln was born. He lived for 17 years in Springfield, Illinois. Mr. Miller showed slides of the presidential box in Ford's Theater in which Lincoln was sitting when he was shot.

Andrew Johnson started out as an indentured servant just as Millard Fillmore did. He came from Greenville, Tennessee.

November Meeting (continued)

Ulysses S. Grant, the first of seven Ohio presidents, lived in Galena in a home given to him after the Civil War.

Rutherford B. Hayes, who came from Freemont, Ohio, was known as "His Fraudulency." His wife was another first lady who would not allow alcohol to be served in the White House and so she got the name of "Lemonade Lucy."

William Garfield, a Civil War general from Mentor, Ohio, later became president of Hiram College.

There is a replica of Chester Arthur's house in Vermont. He was the first president from this state.

Grover Cleveland from Caldwell, New Jersey, and Benjamin Harrison from Indianapolis, Indiana, were the last two presidents Mr. Miller discussed.

It was a most informative and entertaining evening, capped off with delicious refreshments served by Helen Matthews.

Report of December Christmas Party

The Merriman-Clark Room was beautifully decorated for Christmas, thanks to Joyce Lyle, Anne Johnston, and May Thomson.

Once again this year, we were privileged to hear a talented group of Fairport High School students, directed by music teacher Ken Brown. Ken said the program would be a "musicological" journey, going back 300 years. The quartet first played the last movement of the Hayden quartet #50. Next came three movements of Handel's "Concerto Grosso." This was followed by Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" and then by the spring and autumn movements of Vivaldi's "Four Seasons." A most unusual piece was a canon by Pachelbel. To get us all in the Christmas spirit, the quartet ended with a medley of many different Christmas tunes, supposedly 27 of them.

The students were Dan Valente, a Junior; Debbie Chen, a Sophomore; Britta Whitehead, a Senior; and Nate Brown, a Senior. They, and their instructor, are certainly to be congratulated for the professionalism and spirit of their playing.

We were treated to a wonderful assortment of Christmas goodies, for which we thank Helen Matthews and others who brought in their special recipes.

New Member

We welcome Betsy Gilbert of the Fairport Public Library.

Outhouse Memories from our President, Bill Matthews

As a kid (I qualified for that title long ago), I was fortunate to have an old farm to go to for several weeks every summer. And when I say "farm," I mean an old 19th century farm with horses and cows, hay wagons, wood-burning cook stoves, kerosene lamps, and a white pot under every bed. One year the cat fell in the well and drowned, and I gave up drinking water for at least two weeks, if not longer. The farmhouse, though ancient even in those days, was comfortable, and I'm sure furnished with many things we would love to have today on display in the museum. In addition to the attached woodshed, chicken house, and abandoned buggy workshop with its old forge, there was the weathered old wooden outhouse. The interior walls were lined with the calendar pictures of the day, some going back to 1895 or so, and they remained there year after year.

Outhouse Memories (continued)

About the same time, here in Fairport, one of our "seniors" remembers visiting a little brick outhouse located behind 70 E. Church Street, though when it was built no one knows for sure. By 1999 this little building, long abandoned to a local woodchuck family, was sadly in need of friends. Enter Arnold and Anne Smeenk of Fairport, owners of the property, who made us, the Historical Society, an offer we couldn't refuse. If we wanted this old artifact, we could have it. Period.

We knew it could be moved and restored, but where to put it and how to finance the project took a little more time to arrange. But arrange it we did, and on November 6th this "Old Outhouse" was on the road to a great new location behind Potter Memorial. Next spring restoration work will begin with a new roof, brick replacement, carpenter work, painting and landscaping. This is the fun part we are looking forward to next year.

Our thanks and appreciation go to Arnold and Anne, Fritz May, Bob Radell, the Urban Renewal/Development Agency, the Perinton Historical Society Board, and Peter and Dan Matthews, the building movers. (This was the fourth small historical building they have moved in Fairport.)

Bill Matthews, Project Manager

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A reminder -- the Museum will be closed Thursday nights in January and February.

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Perinton Historical Society  
18 Perrin Street  
Fairport, N.Y. 14450

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