

Perinton Historigram

Perinton Historigram

Vol. 35 No. 2 October 2002 William Keeler, Editor

OCTOBER CHURCH TOUR SPECIAL EDITION

Perinton Historical Society's 34th Tour
Sunday October 13th, 2002

In a variation of our usual *House Tour*, the Perinton Historical Society will be touring the *Churches of Fairport* this year. This is a members only event with memberships taken, that will allow you to walk the tour, up to Thursday evening October 10th. Memberships will not be accepted the day of the tour and there will be no entry without a ticket.

Please note change in tour hours: The tour will be from 1:00 to 4:00 P.M. Because of a wedding being performed in the First Baptist Church (Stop #5), the church will not be open until 2:00.

The last page of this issue of the *Historigram* is your ticket and must be presented to the volunteer at each stop so it can be checked off. The hours of the tour are 1 to 4. Because of church services and a wedding, members should not arrive early at the sites. Our membership secretary will make every attempt to make sure that every member receives a ticket in the mail. For those who paid membership dues before October 10th and did not receive a ticket, a volunteer will be at the brick outhouse behind the Potter Memorial on West Church Street with a updated membership list and a signed copy of your ticket. You can also view the newly restored outhouse

as part of your tour. The Fairport Museum will not be open the day of the tour.

There are 6 churches on the tour this year and members can begin with any church on the list except the 1st Baptist Church, which will not be open until 2:00 because of a previously scheduled wedding. For friends of longtime member, Bertie Cleveland who passed away last year, there is a special unveiling of the restored DeLand Military Band drum at the 1st Congregational Church at 1:00. The restoration was made possible by funds from the Bertie Cleveland Memorial Fund and a grant from the Rochester Community Fund. A short ten-minute speech by Bill Keeler will follow. The drum will be on display in the community area of the church where refreshments will be served from 2 to 4.

Special thanks go out to Bill Keeler and Bill Matthews for their efforts in pulling together their first and last House Tour. Both men put aside their projects and duties as Board Member and President of the Society to make the tour happen this year. If you would like to participate in preparing for next year's tour, please contact the museum at 223-3989.

Perinton Historical Society Meetings and Speakers for 2002-2003

October 13th Fairport Church Tour 1 to 4

**November 12th, Tuesday Evening 7:30 PM at the Fairport
Museum, *Armchair Walk Down Fairport's Main Street*
During the Late 1940's a presentation by Donovan
Shilling.**

**December 3rd, Tuesday Evening at the Fairport Museum
Annual Christmas Party**

**January 14th, Tuesday Evening at the Fairport Public Library
Historic and Stylistic Connection Between Silver and
Pewter a presentation by H.P. Prazer**

Old Brick Outhouse to be Open for the Tour

By Bill Matthews

Members and friends of the Perinton Historical Society have had progress reports from time to time about the relocation and restoration for this village artifact, but now, as an add-on to the Fairport Church Tour, this unique little building will be open for your inspection from 1 to 4 PM. It is located near the rear entrance to Potter Memorial, with plenty of parking in the adjacent lot. So far we don't know when this building was built, but we do know that it was last used in 1934, suffered the ravages of weather and neglect, and then was donated to the Society by Arnold and Anne Smeenk in 1999. The original builders, whoever they were, would be proud to see their creation restored and preserved as a part of Fairport's heritage.

November Meeting to Feature a Presentation by Donovan Shilling.

By Bernadette McDonough

An Armchair Walk Down Main Street During the Late 1940's will be the topic of a presentation by Donovan Shilling. Mr. Shilling will share his boyhood memories of growing up in Fairport and as members of our museum we are always eager to learn any new information that Mr. Shilling can share with us.

Mr. Shilling is a retired Brighton Elementary and Middle School Principle and for the past score of years has been an instructor at the Rochester Museum and Science Center where he has shared his knowledge of Rochester's rich history.

Come and enjoy a relaxing evening and bring a friend.

Perinton Historical Society Membership Facts

2002 will be known as a transition year for the Society as many of the jobs done by the Ewells over the years are transferred to other Society members. Jim Unckless, longtime member and trustee, has taken over the role of Membership Secretary. Jim has done a fine job this year and has converted our membership records from 3"x5" file cards to a computer data base. As a result, he has brought to light some interesting facts about our membership.

- ❑ As of this writing, there are 453 memberships including honorary members and institutions.
- ❑ There are no members living in foreign countries but there are 98 members who do not have a Fairport mailing address.
- ❑ We send our newsletter as far east as Brunswick, Maine, as far south as Fort Myers, Florida and as far west as Riverside, California.
- ❑ There are 16 members who have supported the Society for 30 years or more, 21 members with 25 years or more and 37 members with 20 years or more of support.
- ❑ Two members who have supported the Society the longest are Imogene Blum, our curator emeritus and Grace Whitney both of whom joined the Society in 1948.

Images of Fairport and Perinton now on the Internet.

The Rochester Public Library web site has a section called *Rochester Images* that has been online for the past year. The site contains vintage pictures and information about buildings and scenes of Rochester in the 19th and 20th centuries.

This year the library has expanded its program to include photographs from various towns and communities in Monroe County. Jean Keplinger, Perinton Town Historian, was asked by the Rochester Public Library to contribute 500 of the best pictures in the Town's archives to be published on their web site. The photographs chosen reflect the town's agricultural and architectural heritage and include many Fairport village scenes and past businesses. Each page includes a small thumbnail photo, a title for the picture and a brief history. As of this printing, over 300 images have been loaded onto the site.

If you would like to view these fascinating pictures go to <http://www.rochester.lib.ny.us/rochimag/>. Click on *Search Images*, then click on the drop down menu and select *Series Browse*. Type in *Perinton Municipal Historian Collection* and then click *Search*. You can then click on the collection and view the photos.

A Brief History of the Churches on the Tour By Pastors and Church Historians.

#1 26 East Church Street, First Congregational United Church of Christ.

On December 18, 1824 a group of 6 women and 3 men met at the home of Jessie Perrin, about one mile south of the present village of Fairport on what is now Moseley Road. After much discussion, the First Congregational Church of Perinton was organized.

In 1828, four years after its organization, a council of ministers was called to consider the dissolution of First Church, as membership was at a standstill. However, it was determined that since there were 12 members of the congregation—"a number equal to that of the Apostles of the Redeemer"—they were determined to "trust in God and go forward".

There were three buildings erected on the present site of our church. The first one was built in 1833, and when it became too small for the growing congregation, it was moved elsewhere in the village, and a second one was built in 1844. That, too, became too small, and building of our present structure began in 1868. The minister at that time was named Jeremiah Butler, and he was quite instrumental in not only building the present structure but in building the membership as well. The building was dedicated on April 26, 1869. The Snow Room was added in 1920 with a gift from the Snow family in memorial for their daughter Kathleen. In 1945 the sanctuary was remodeled, but the windows and pews are original to the 1868 building. In 1951 the Parish Hall was enlarged, and new Sunday School rooms were added. 1971 saw a major addition to the education wings. The exterior, which had been painted red in later years, was restored to its original brick in 1981.

#2 20 East Church Street, Raymond Memorial Baptist Church

The history of Raymond Memorial Baptist Church began in the hamlet of Egypt in 1840, where a group of nineteen people formed the Free Baptist Church. Meetings were held in various buildings in Egypt, as well as occasionally in the homes of some of the church members. In 1847, it was decided to move the church to the village of Fairport, and in 1848, a new church building was completed on the present location. In the ensuing 40 years, there were 13 different pastors. However, in 1887, Rev. L. W.

Raymond accepted the pastorate of the struggling church and stayed until 1903.

In January 1892, the congregation voted to build a new church. The Warsaw blue stone for the walls of the new church building were brought to the site on the Erie Canal. Field stone was donated by a number of farmers to use for the foundation. After the foundation walls were finished, the cornerstone was laid on August 2, 1892. The roof was on and the building enclosed early in January of 1893. The church was dedicated free of debt on February 7, 1895.

According to records kept at the time, Reverend Raymond "labored by the side of the masons, the carpenters and the painters; anywhere that he could lend a helping hand he was always found ready." In 1915 the church changed its name to Raymond Baptist Church, in honor of the man who had given so much to the building of the church.

In 1954, the church changed its name again to Raymond Memorial Baptist Church, apparently because people thought it was a church located in Raymond, New York. In 1957, under the leadership of Rev. M. Eugene Levy, the congregation began a fund drive to finance an educational and fellowship building. The large addition at the rear of the church is called Levy Hall.

In 1992, the inside of the sanctuary and the rest of the original building underwent a major renovation, with most of the work done by the members of the congregation. The renovations were completed in August in time for a 3-day celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the church building.

#3 31 West Church Street, Fairport United Methodist Church

Methodism first appeared in Fairport and Perinton as early as 1810, when a certain Adam Gower, described as "an exhorter and resident," initiated a series of meetings held in various homes in the community. In 1816, Methodist circuit riders-ordained clergymen serving several communities, normally on the frontier-began their work in the area, continuing until 1825, when a Methodist Episcopal Society was formed, creating the first Methodist church in the area. Although this church did not survive and the Society closed its doors in 1842, a second Society was founded in 1825, and was followed in 1837 by the establishment of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Perinton.

These churches were followed by the formal organization of the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Fairport in the fall of 1876. Initially meeting in rented facilities, this church moved into its own building in 1879, which

was a brick structure located in the site of the present Fairport United Methodist Church. The total cost of the building was \$15,000. Membership at the time numbered 100.

This building underwent several renovations in the years that followed. In 1903, for example, \$6,000 subscriptions campaign led to the construction and rebuilding of a new sanctuary seating about 400 people. In 1913, a \$2,600 pipe organ was donated to the church. An additional renovation of the entire facility was initiated in 1926, followed by still a third renovation in 1955, which focused on the improvement of the educational facilities. A serious fire in the mid-seventies brought yet more reconstruction to the building.

The latest renovation took place in 1994, with the construction of a new entry that includes an elevator, plus an enlarged narthex and a general upgrading of the entire facilities. Shortly thereafter, the pipe organ was completely rebuilt by the Parsons Company of Canandaigua, NY. As the result of an ongoing capital improvement campaign, plans are currently underway for a renovation of the kitchen and fellowship hall in the basement.

Throughout its history, the Fairport United Methodist Church has attempted to be a witness for Jesus Christ, who taught us to heal the sick, clothe the poor, and bring the message of His salvation and reconciliation to the entire world.

#4 48 Perrin Street, Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Fairport is a daughter congregation of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Roseland (Penfield). In August of 1921 a group from that parish officially held their first worship service in Fairport. The group purchased the Jacobson property on West Church Street for \$1,150 and while construction of a house of worship was being completed, met for worship in the Bown Building on South Main Street. The original building was completed on March 11, 1923. Ten years later, the sanctuary was remodeled and enhance with an arch chancel, three art glass windows donated by Karl Stoh, and a two manual/four rank pipe organ.

The congregation grew and in 1971 a major educational facility was added which included multi-purpose Sunday School classrooms, an office wing, and a space dedicated for youth. One of the distinguishing marks of this facility was an accessibility ramp-a visible sign that this was a parish that welcomed all. The congregation was awarded a commendation for accessibility. As Perinton continued to grow and as Fairport became a

suburb of Rochester, the congregation continued their growth. Under the leadership of the Rev. Kent H. Garner who was installed as pastor in November of 1977, a major remodeling of the sanctuary was begun in 1982. The sanctuary was rotated on its axis 90 degrees and the worship space was transformed into a *centrum*, which is a space where the congregation gathers around Word and Sacrament. A new A. David Moore 17 rank tracker-action organ was installed in 1986. In 1995 we began an addition to achieve accessibility creating a main entrance on Perrin Street removing the ramp and adding an elevator.

The final step of our development was a major addition dedicated on September 9, 2001. Because of turning the sanctuary on its axis in 1982, we were able to kick out the east wall, enlarge our sanctuary-adding room for 80 more worshippers, and expand our choir loft to better serve our fifty voice adult choir, our two children's choirs, and two bell choirs. A large space was created as a welcoming space- a narthex. It uses a clerestory- an open second level, which allows the entry of light and causes the eye and spirit to be lifted when entering the space. Stained glass windows-, some of which had been stored, since 1971- were reinstalled and a new window was commissioned where our front door on Church Street had welcomed folks for so many years. Our new entry is now on Perrin Street and our main parking is now at the Village Landing parking area. Our new space also includes five new climate-controlled classrooms, new bathrooms, a nursery, a library and a sacristy for preparing for worship. Glass pocket doors enable us to utilize the narthex for over-flow worship and provide seating for over 400 people at special services. New landscaping has made our facility a pleasant addition to our wonderful village! A seven rank addition to our organ will be added this fall.

Our prayer is that our facilities 'speak to the street' saying: welcome; come in and worship our glorious God. Welcome to Bethlehem-house of bread-where all might be fed. *Soli gloria*- to God be the glory!

#5 92 South Main Street, First Baptist Church of Fairport

In 1842 the "First Baptist Church and Society of Perinton" was incorporated. The church members began the meeting in the local schoolhouse. In May 1842, Rev. Franklin Woodward purchased the property at the corner of Main and Church Street, for a mere \$500. He then sold a portion to the church trustees for \$150. In 1876 after out growing the sanctuary, the current building was constructed at a cost of \$35,000.

The sanctuary is built in the shape of a cross being 90 feet long, 45 feet wide and 15 feet for each side vestibule.

The sanctuary woodwork is oiled chestnut. The original lighting was three gas chandeliers located down the center isle, which was later wired with electricity in 1903.

The baptistery is still in its original design and is 30 feet long with sloping approaches like a riverbank.

The original pews are still being used in the church. At one time, church members purchased their pews and name and numberplates were adorned. This was done for budgetary reasons and was soon frowned upon. The original numberplates of "Sheffield Silverplate" are still installed.

The bell tower is 13 feet square and rises 184 feet above street level. It has frequently hit by lightning with the worst damage being done in 1962. The original bell cracked shortly after being installed. It was removed in 1889 and sent to "McShaw Bell Foundry" in Baltimore, melted down and recast into the 1506-pound bell, which is still being used today. "Hang on, hang on!" was shouted during the installation due to the bell's untimely return to the earth and the workmen's sudden rise to the sky.

The organ was bought in 1881 for a cost of \$2,500. The money to fund the organ was raised by the women of the church who entertained with church socials and bazaars. A unique and elaborate "Telephone Concert" was held on December 20, 1878 and rewarded the church with \$400. In 1994 the organ was completely rebuilt and repaired for a cost of \$108,500. The organ is valued at over \$238,000. The organ contains 1072 pipes, the console houses 3 keyboards and a pedal keyboard. The switching system that receives the signal from the keyboard and sends it to the pipes contains 3000 keys, relays and switches and contacts. The organ also contains three air reservoirs that blow through the pipes to make beautiful music.

#6 20 East Avenue, Assumption of Our Lady Catholic Church

The first Mass was said in 1849 and our small family literally gathered around a table on the towpath of the canal. Our first church, built in 1854, on High Street, was expanded to twice its original size in 1862. This frame structure still stands on its original site at 22 High Street across the road from the present church. The shape is the same but is now covered with siding and houses apartments.

It was during Father John Codyre's pastorship in 1882 that the familiar Celtic cross first graced the sky over the church on East Avenue bearing the name of the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Father James Wood arrived in 1925 as Father Codyre's successor,

made many improvements and saw a need for further expansion. This building is no longer standing but was located where the parking lot is.

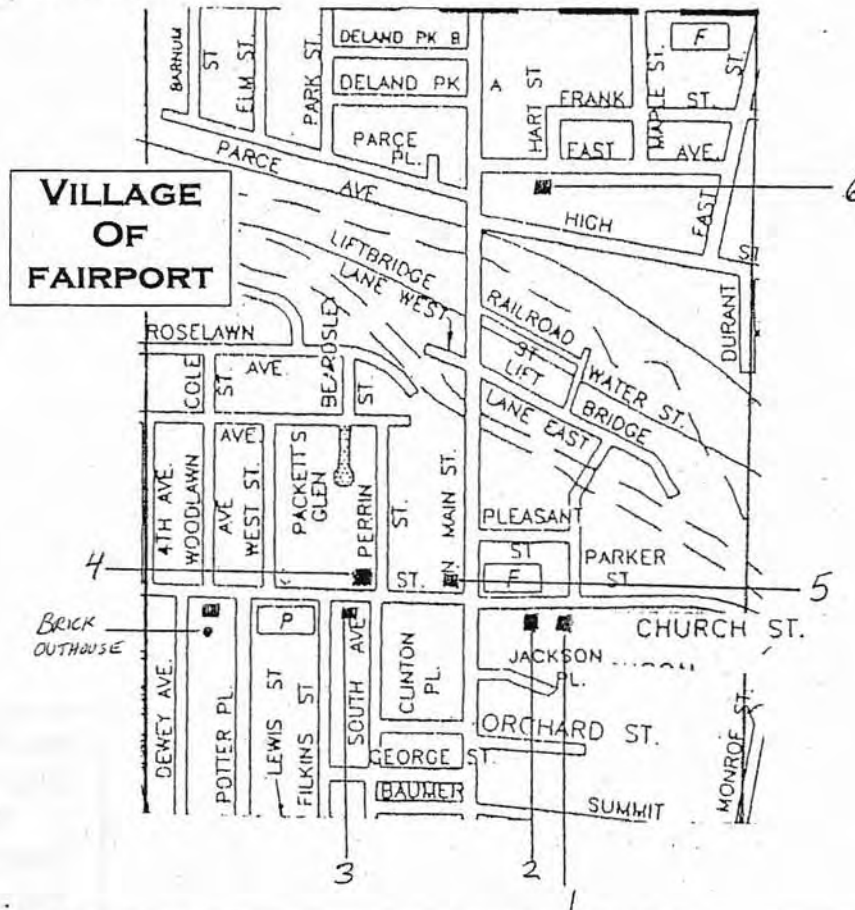
Shortly after Father Leonard Kelly arrived in 1954, our parish saw more major improvements. While advancing the catechetical teaching in Fairport, he became aware of the need to expand or rebuild the church. He had the foresight to plan for a School of Religion rather than a full time school, which was until this year (2001) located on Baumer Place. In addition to religious classes for about one thousand high school and elementary students, adult sessions are held in teacher training, parenting, doctrine, scripture, contemporary moral and social issues. These are given by parish staff, parishioners specially trained for this work, and visiting lecturers. (Newcomer volunteers for lay catechists are especially welcome.

In 1964, one of our parishioners, Joseph Dellelce, deeded his land on High Street to the Church of the Assumption as an expression of his devotion to Mary. He unknowingly gave us the actual foundation for our present church. When Father Joseph Beatini began his brief pastorship here in 1975, he began an appeal to his people for a building fund to enlarge the church on East Avenue. 1980 brought our seventh pastor, Father John Norris who completed this third building in 1981. It still retains some links to the past. The Stations of the Cross came from the earlier building as did the stained glass windows in the front foyer, which are over one hundred years old. The bells also came from the earlier church and ring out the Angelus during the day. In 1990, Father Norris added a carillon to the church.

In 1991, Father Norris retired and was succeeded by Father Ed Golden. During Father Golden's nine-year tenure, plans were developed to expand the church building, and consolidate it with a new School of Religion and a parish life center on one campus. Plans went forward under Father Gary Tyman as administrator and construction began after a formal ground breaking ceremony on June 26, 2001. This was the same day on which Father Edward Palumbos, our ninth pastor, was welcomed as the leader of our faith community. The old rectory, now called the Parish Ministry Center, has been converted to offices and meeting rooms, along side the new Parish Life Center. The priests' residence has moved to 44 High Street, just a few yards from our first church!

PERINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBER TICKET

This is your ticket for the Church Tour. Note that your name is on the back of this sheet. Those with family membership need only one ticket. Bring this sheet with you and have it checked at the entrance to each church. The churches can be visited in any order except #5 which cannot be toured until after 2:00 because of a wedding. The numbers shown below correspond to the numbers on the signs in front of the church.



#1	First Congregational United Church of Christ 26 East Church Street
#2	Raymond Memorial Baptist Church 20 East Church Street
#3	Fairport United Methodist Church 31 West Church Street
#4	Bethlehem Lutheran Church 48 Perrin Street
#5	First Baptist Church of Fairport 92 South Main Street
#6	Assumption of Our Lady Catholic Church 20 East Avenue

Refreshments will be served starting at 2:00 until 4:00 at the First Congregational Church of Fairport (Church #1).

Many thanks to all those who have made this tour possible and to the pastors and church members who have opened their doors to us and have conducted tours in the churches.

Perinton Historical Society
18 Perrin Street
Fairport, New York 14450

Change Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Fairport, N.Y.
Permit # 149

