



Perinton Historical Society HISTORIGRAM

18 Perrin Street
Fairport, NY 14450

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585-223-3989

Twenty Five Erie Canal Drawings Acquired for the Fairport Museum

by *Bill Keeler* curator and editor for the upcoming book "Fairport and Perinton Then and Now"

Collecting research in an archive is a little like playing the children's card game Fish. The players are initially given ten cards and they need to form sets of 4 and 3 with all the cards in their hand to win. You play the game by asking your opponent if they have a certain number card. If your opponent has the card they give it to you. If they don't have the card or cards they say "go fish" and you have to pick up a card that you may or not need from the deck. As in all card games you are never allowed to see any of your opponent's cards and you may only guess at what they may have in their hand.

In researching the book Fairport and Perinton Then and Now, I go to archives and historical depositories looking for information that will help in writing captions for the photos I collected for the book. One of the chapters in the book is on the rebuilding of the Erie Canal in Perinton from 1905 to 1918. What better place to look for documents on a state project than the New York State Archives in Albany. In March I went to the archives looking for a specific drawing. The archivist told me they did not have the drawing I was looking for and basically told me to "go fish." What they did have

were 161 drawings and maps from the contract concerning the reconstruction of the canal in Perinton.

Contract number 63 was awarded to the firm of H.S. Kerbaugh Inc. out of Philadelphia for the sum of \$2,349,697. The company was responsible for enlarging the old Erie Canal, constructing culverts, sluiceways, waste wiers, guard-gates, dock walls, bridges, highway changes, and anything else concerning the canal from the Wayne-Monroe County border to Kings Bend near the Main Street bridge in Pittsford. The maps in the archives consist of drawings of the canal route along with the names of property owners along the canal, buildings that needed to be removed, and dimensions and locations of structures that had to be built. The architectural drawings in the collection consisted of details of structures such as the Thomas Creek culverts, John Street waste wiers, Main Street lift bridge and an interesting elevation drawing of the control tower for the lift bridge in Fairport.

After looking over this wealth of information, I made arrangements to purchase 25 representative drawings and maps for the Fairport Museum. They are now hanging up on display in the Merriman-Clark Room in the museum and can be viewed during open hours or after our monthly meetings.

At this point, you may be asking "With all these detailed drawings, what more could you possibly want?"

In 1912 the canal was widened and deepened at the Great Embankment in Bushnell's Basin. The embankment is a earthen aqueduct that carries the

≡ Our Mission ≡

"The Mission of the Perinton Historical Society is to promote interest in preserving and sharing local history."

canal over the Irondequoit Creek Valley. The construction company lined the trough carved out of the embankment with concrete. In September of 1912 the trough began to leak and washed away all the soil underneath the concrete. A break developed, the concrete slabs fell in and the canal was closed. A temporary wooden flume was built to bridge the gap in the canal. This temporary channel remained until 1918. In 1913 the Canal Commission decided to create contract number 111 to replace this earthen aqueduct with a seamless concrete channel 96 feet wide, 16 foot 6 inches deep and 600 feet long held up by seven arches. The plans were completed in August of 1913 and contract number 111 went out for bid. The contract was never fulfilled and the Canal Commission made the decision to keep the embankment as it was. The contractor just rebuilt the sides of the embankment and installed a concrete trough now twice as thick as originally designed.

So now I am going out again in search of this elusive contract number 111. Perhaps it is in the state archives under another category or another depository altogether. That's life in the world of research. Go fish.

Memorial Tree Planted in Museum Garden

Not more than ten feet from the memorial dogwood tree planted by the society to commemorate those who died on 9-11 is another memorial tree planted by the Wayside Garden Center in memory of Anne Stonehocker. The hydrangea tree was planted in the far corner of the garden near where the barn next door to the museum once stood. The ceremony was held on June 12 and was attended by members of the Greenbrier Garden Club of which Anne was a member. Anne Stonehocker was a long time trustee of the Perinton Historical Society and was affectionately known as the "Perennial Lady" at Wayside Garden Center where she worked.

Summer Volunteers Acknowledged

The summer of 2008 has been busy at the Fairport Museum. Much was done, but not without the dedication of many volunteers. Here is a list of accomplishments the names of those to whom we owe our thanks:

- The booth at Canal Days was a success. Despite the high temperatures, wind and threatening rain everything went well. Bill Keeler would like to thank the following volunteers for helping him set up and run the booth. Jim Unckless; Debbie Mabry, Pat Wilcox and friend; T.C. Lewis; George and Holly Wolf; Clark King and Janet Marchbanks; Bill and Karen Wickens; Ruth Erdmann and Ruth Post; Doris Davis-Fritsch; Lucy McCormick and Sharon Catanese; Harold and Jane Stock and their granddaughter; Bob and Gail Black; and Ann Johnston.

- Bill Keeler and Art Wilson took out the air conditioners that were in the meeting room which didn't work and patched up the holes.

- Mike DeGooley with his daughter Sarah and son Patrick trimmed and cleaned up the hedges this summer. Sarah will be getting credit at the Fairport Schools for community service for her help in cleaning up the trimmings.

- A tree was planted in our garden courtesy of Wayside Garden Center in honor of long time board member and master gardener Anne Stonehocker.

- Our lawn was cut this summer by Fritz May.

- Our gardens and the pots on the front portico were maintained by the Green Brier Garden Club.

Pending Projects

- A backed up waste pipe to the street will be replaced and cleaned out by the village of Fairport Public Works crew.

- Lighting in the Museum will be replaced with vintage fixtures from Villa Marie High School in Buffalo along with energy saving bulbs.

- The slate roof will be replaced with a substitute slate roof by the village of Fairport with funds from the State sponsored by our representative Dave Koon.

Museum Roof to be Replaced with Help from State Assemblyman David Koon

For years people have noticed thin sheets of gray slate littering the sidewalk and side yard of the Fairport Museum. This is the natural deterioration of slate as the forces of water freezing and melting during the winter causes flakes to peel off the slate on the museum roof. A grade A slate roof should last 100 years or more and a grade B roof should last from between 50 and 75 years.

The Fairport Museum was built in 1935 as the Fairport Public Library. This WPA project put several dozen craftsmen to work on the project paid for by the United States Government. The community of Fairport paid for the materials which amounted to \$40,000. This Georgian Revival building is made of brick from Virginia and steps are made of Indiana limestone.. The roof is a grade B slate from Bangor, Pa. The roof has held up surprising well for the last 73 years. About seven years ago the valleys on the roof and broken slates were replaced. Now it is impossible to walk on the roof without breaking the thinning slates. A recent evaluation showed that it is now time to replace the roof before we get a damaging leak.

On behalf of the village of Fairport, which owns the building, the Perinton Historical Society Board approached our state representative David Koon to see if he could help with the expense of the roof. Assemblyman Koon came through, and with help from the village, the money has been secured to replace the roof with a substitute slate. The slate is made out of recycled materials and should last 50 years or more.

The Society is grateful to David Koon and the village officials for making this project happen and maintaining this historic building.

Historic Structures Committee Looking for Volunteers

by Catherine Angevine

Are you interested in old houses? Are you a shutterbug? Got time on your hands? Have we got a job for you!

The Historic Structures Committee of the Perinton Historical Society is looking for one or two new volunteer members to participate in a project just starting up. The project the committee is embarking on currently requires some research, taking photos and downloading photos and information to a digital format.

The committee (of six) formed about a year ago and sees their role as a resource to help identify significant local historic structures; to promote public awareness and education about local historic structures; and to provide assistance to citizens, government, and other groups seeking information about local historical structures. The group recently concluded a study for the Preservation Commission. The present task centers on a village architecture survey done in 1976. As the village becomes more aware of its historic structures, an updated analysis of the 1976 survey was needed.

This volunteer must be:

- Computer literate
- Equipped with a digital camera
- A team player with a positive attitude
- Have an interest in antique houses, from either:
 - an architecture standpoint
 - an historical standpoint
 - an engineering standpoint
- Able to attend once monthly evening meetings
- Interested in the unique Village of Fairport

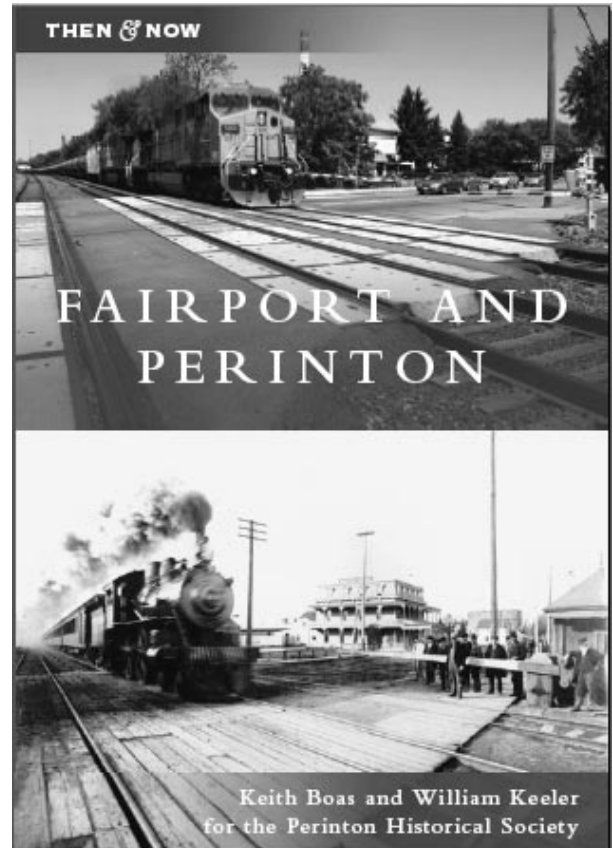
If this is you, please contact Catherine Angevine at cange@frontiernet.net.

September Meeting to Feature *Then and Now* Presentation

To get everyone excited about the new book the Society is sponsoring called *Then and Now; Fairport and Perinton* due to come out in Spring of 2009, we have invited Jean Keplinger, Perinton Town Historian, to give a Then and Now power point presentation of "then and now" pictures of buildings in Fairport north of the Erie Canal. Jean has hundreds of historic photographs in the town's archives and will be showing historic pictures of buildings on the north side of the village with modern photos of the buildings or sites today along with stories about the buildings.

You may be familiar with Jean's work. She writes articles about the history of the town that are featured each week in the Fairport-East Rochester Post. Many of the historical pictures you will be seeing at the September meeting you can find on the town of Perinton's web site and also at the Rochester Public Library's "Rochester Images" site. This is one of two Power Point presentations Jean will be presenting at our society meetings this year. In February, Jean has been invited back to give another Then and Now presentation this time of the buildings south of the canal in the village. This should be an interesting and informative set of talks.

Plan on coming to the meeting Tuesday September 16 at 7:30 p.m. at the Perinton Community Center next to the Town Hall on Turk Hill Road. The meeting is free and open to the public.



Keeler and Boas Author *Then & Now* Book

The latest book produced by the Perinton Historical Society is currently being finalized. Bill Keeler performed extensive research on dozens of historical photos and local photographer Keith Boas positioned himself to replicate today's view of each selected scene to produce what is sure to be an interesting and enjoyable read for all ages. The book will be available in the spring of 2009 at the museum gift shop. Keep an eye on future issues of The Historigram for further details.

Perinton Historical Society...

Newly Elected Board of Trustees Members

- Alan Keukelaar, Vice President and Meeting Coordinator.
- Joseph Cicero, at large trustee.
- George Wolf, at large trustee.
- Sean Delehanty, at large trustee.

Perinton Historical Society

*18 Perrin Street
Fairport, New York 14450*

Membership Renewal for 2008-2009 Season

If there is an asterisk (*) next to your name on the mailing label for this issue, we had not received your renewal by the time this newsletter was mailed. If you haven't already renewed your membership, we hope that you will. Your membership dollars and contributions help support the Society's work, including the community programs and operating the Fairport Historical Museum. Please fill out the form below and indicate the level of membership at which you wish to renew. Our membership year runs from September 1, 2008 to August 31, 2009.

All levels of membership include:

- Monthly meetings featuring stimulating local and regional speakers
- **Annual House Tour (Spring 2009)**
- Annual Society picnic (May 2009)
- The newsletter *Historigram* with articles of historical interest and upcoming events
- Admission to the museum and access to our collections and research assistance

Visit our website at: <http://www.anglefire.com/ny5/fairporthistmuseum/>

Volunteers are needed to continue and expand our work in the community. If you wish to help by serving on one of our committees please check the appropriate box below, or write in your own ideas about how you would like to be involved. You can also leave a message at the Museum (585-223-8939).

This page can be mailed to Membership at the address above or dropped off at the Museum.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ E-Mail: _____

_____ I wish to receive *Historigram* via:
email _____
US mail _____

Please check your category of membership:

- () Individual\$10
- () Family\$15
- () Senior Single [65 or older] \$5
- () Senior Couple \$8
- () Patron\$40
- () Extra Contribution \$_____

I would like to volunteer for the following:

- () Education Committee - includes 4th grade program, tours of the museum
- () Museum Maintenance Committee
- () Museum Volunteer Staff (2 hours per month)
- () Membership
- () Newsletter
- () House Tour Committee
- () Historic Structures Committee
- () Leadership position
- () Other (we invite your ideas):

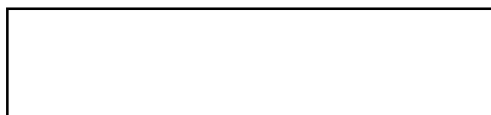
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FAIRPORT HISTORICAL MUSEUM

18 PERRIN STREET, FAIRPORT, NY 14450

REGULAR HOURS

Sunday	2 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Tuesday	2 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Thursday	7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

The first two Mondays of every month the Archives open for Researchers only.

Visit our website:

www.angelfire.com/ny5/fairporthistmuseum

*Group tours, presentations and special projects by appointment.
Call 223-3989 and leave a message.*