

# Perinton Historical Society Hisorigram

18 Perrin Street  
Fairport, NY 14450

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May 2014  
585-223-3989

## HAPPY 100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY FAIRPORT LIFT BRIDGE



Fairport's iconic Main Street lift bridge is one of a kind, literally—there is no other bridge like it in the world. The need to eliminate an existing steep approach from the north influenced engineers to custom-design a bridge solely for Fairport. The proposed bridge design was approved, despite concerns of residents that traffic congestion, already an issue with railroad and trolley crossings on North Main Street, would be unbearable.

The lift bridge replaced a fixed-position span built in 1886 for \$2,350. Although the bridge was only 28 years old, it had the same fundamental problem as every other bridge on the canal. It was too short! Its length became obsolete when the canal was widened between the years 1905–1918. Construction on the newly named Barge Canal impacted Perinton and Fairport primarily in the years 1912 to 1914.

Photo by Keith Boas

Continued on page 4



Brothers Bob (left) and Tom Hunt, circa 1950

## Comments from your President

At last, the winter that wouldn't give up is behind us, with the last couple of days in the 80s, temperature wise. Despite this, on a trip to Bath last Saturday, skiers were still on the mountain at Bristol. When we first started skiing some 50 years ago, we were told, "Wait for spring skiing, it's the best." Well that was true in our younger skiing years, but now mashed potato-like snow is hard on my 73-year-old knees.

Even though the season seemed a bit long and cold, I have always enjoyed winter. As a youth I couldn't wait to get outside in the winter, and after school would immediately go out to play. We had a beautiful sledding and skiing hill in our front yard, down which we would take a zillion rides, coming inside only when it was too dark to see. Sometimes, even that didn't stop us, as we would fasten flashlights to our sleds. When we finally gave in, we would usually be frozen through and would warm by the coal stove in our dining room. There was a creek by our property, and we would go there for ice skating and hockey. We would cut a tree branch shaped somewhat like a hockey stick and use a mayonnaise jar lid for a hockey puck, again only quitting when we were almost frozen. Some neighborhood kids didn't have skates and would slide around in their four- or five-buckle arctic boots. Oh, what great memories from my youth. Next month, I will try to remember to chat about our spring time sports and pastimes.

It's good to see activity at the museum again after a couple of months of closure. Our volunteer docents are welcoming visitors who are stopping by to do research. Others come to visit our gift shop or view the special displays created by our director, Vicki Profitt. Be sure to stop in to see the display of

wedding gowns and also the purse and hatpin display on loan from Howard Sharp. How did you think he keeps his hat on when participating in the *Great Race* in an open automobile? Bring your friends and neighbors with you when you stop by the museum.

Rapidly approaching is the annual PHS picnic and meeting, at 6:00 pm on Tuesday May 20<sup>th</sup> at Perinton Park. We supply the burgers, hots, and beverages, and you bring a dish to pass and your table settings. From my memory, the dishes to pass have been mighty tasty and it would be nice to share the recipes, so if you would, bring your recipes on 3x5s to share.

Other events just around the corner include Fairport's Spring Fling and Canal Days. Spring Fling is on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. That's when the Farmer's Market kicks off. On that day, there also will be sidewalk sales, activities at Kennelley Park—and the official reopening of the canal. At Canal Days (June 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>), we will again have a booth with items from our gift shop for sale. We are seeking volunteers for two-hour shifts, from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday and 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Please let me know if you can lend a hand.

Thanks for your continued support of the Perinton Historical Society, and we will chat again next month.

Bob Hunt, President

585-415-7053 ~ rhunt1@rochester.rr.com



Photo by Vicki Masters Profitt

## Green Lantern Dinnerware For Sale at the Museum Gift Shop

Thanks to a generous donation from Terry O'Neil, the Perinton Historical Society was fortunate to receive many pieces of dinnerware from the former Green Lantern Inn. Carrying the Green Lantern Inn logo, the items include dinner, bread and dessert plates, and are now for sale in the museum gift shop. They are going fast, so stop by soon to pick up your piece of history! Receive a free Green Lantern Inn postcard with every purchase of the dinnerware.



## PHS Supports *Operation Potter Patriot*

On March 5<sup>th</sup>, several Boy Scout troops from the Perinton area hosted a fundraiser at Potter Park for the rebuilding of its Veterans Memorial. Called *Operation Potter Patriot*, the event brought in \$7,500 by selling bricks, to be personalized with the names of veterans of the U.S. Armed Services.



PHS member Jean Whitney explains details of the project to some Scouts. Photo by Keith Boas

## At the Museum on May 12<sup>th</sup> Grown-up Show and Tell

Remember Show and Tell from when you were a kid? Well it's time for a grown-up Show and Tell with a personal-history twist! Bring a photo, letter, family heirloom, instrument, game/toy, or other artifact that has meaning to you and share your story about it in five minutes or less. Or just come, listen and enjoy all of the great stories from others. Join Suzanne Lee of Suzanne Lee Personal Histories and Taylor Whitney of Preserving the Past, who are members of the Association of Personal Historians, for an event sure to evoke laughter, tears, and memories. The event will be at the museum on May 12<sup>th</sup>, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Please RSVP to Suzanne Lee at [SLeePersonalHistories@frontier.com](mailto:SLeePersonalHistories@frontier.com).

## Greenbrier Garden Club Plant Sale on May 10<sup>th</sup>

The Greenbrier Garden Club will hold its annual plant sale on the steps of the Fairport Historical Museum on Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Stop by to support the club and pick up some lovely plants at incredible prices, just in time for Mother's Day! The museum will be open to visitors from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on this day.

## Volunteer at the Fairport Historical Museum

We're always looking for additional museum volunteers and would love to add you to our roster. Each museum shift consists of two volunteers who work a two-hour shift once a month. We especially need volunteers to cover Saturdays from 9:00–11:00 a.m. and Sundays from 2:00–4:00 p.m.

If you are interested in volunteering at the Fairport Historical Museum, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator Gail Black at [gcblack@rochester.rr.com](mailto:gcblack@rochester.rr.com) for more information.

## Special Recognition Level Memberships

A membership and contribution of any amount are greatly appreciated and important to the future of the PHS. We list business memberships as supporters in each issue of the HISTORIGRAM, on the PHS website and at the museum. We recognize the Deland, Potter and Perrin memberships once in the HISTORIGRAM and list them on our website and at the museum, unless those members prefer to be anonymous.

### Business (\$100 and above)

Ed Bradford, Liftbridge Financial Advisors  
Bob Ruhland, Keller Williams Realty  
R C Shaheen Paint and Decorating Centers

## Save the Date!

The 2014 Perinton Historical Society House Tour will be held on Sunday, October 5th.

**Calling all docents!** To volunteer, contact Elaine Lanni at [eellaannii@gmail.com](mailto:eellaannii@gmail.com). Just a two-hour stint will allow you enough time to tour the rest of the featured houses.

**Raise Money For PHS!**

Drop off your deposit cans and bottles to EZ Bottle and Can Return, and tell them you want to donate the deposit to the

**Perinton Historical Society**

**EZ BOTTLE and CAN RETURN**

1259 Fairport Road  
Fairport, NY 14450  
585-377-9140

# Our Main Street Lift Bridge

*Charles R. Waters, one of the engineers engaged on the Barge Canal work in Perinton, wrote a detailed article describing Fairport's lift bridge. It was originally printed in a trade journal, Engineering News, shortly after the completion of the bridge in 1914.*

*Below are edited excerpts of the article.*

*Bill Poray, Editor*

A lift bridge of unusual design was put in operation last fall at the Main Street crossing of the Barge canal in Fairport, N.Y. The old crossing at this point was made by a fixed bridge, 80 feet long, on a skew of about 32 degrees, having a clearance of 12 feet. The Barge canal construction required a length of 139 feet and a clearance of 15.5 feet, the elevation of the water being the same in both cases.

Economical prism alignment required that the increased width for the new canal be made on the south side, and that the north abutment of the new bridge be located on the site of the old abutment. In order to not increase the grade of the north approach, which was already prohibitive (10 percent) and on account of a railway crossing at the foot of this approach, it was impossible to design a structure of the fixed type. On the other hand, it was desired to reduce the grade of the north approach, by a bridge of the lift type.

After considering these controlling features, the type of bridge adopted by the department was a four-post lift, constructed on a four percent grade and at a skew of 32 degrees. The trusses were of the Warren type, but the west truss, instead of being designed a through truss for its entire length, was shortened about 25 feet and the remaining distance spanned by an extension girder carrying a 20 foot roadway shelf in the shape of a triangle.

The operator's cabin is located near the southeast corner of the bridge and is a two-story frame structure about 10 x 12 feet. Stairs are provided for foot travel when the bridge is raised. When the bridge is down, its appearance is the same as that of a bridge of the fixed type. The counter



This photograph, from the winter of 1914, reveals the existence of a temporary wood bridge, which spanned the canal just west of Main Street. It had to be removed in the spring prior to boating season.

weights, lifting frame, etc., are concealed in underground rectangular concrete pits. The pits have reinforced concrete walls three feet thick.

The total weight of the steel is 350 tons. The floor is composed of two thicknesses of yellow pine, the lower being four inches treated timber and the upper a two inch wearing surface. The bridge has a lift of ten feet, seven inches, and is operated by two 37 horsepower motors located under the east sidewalk near the center of the span. The operating shaft runs across the bridge, and the bridge is raised or lowered by two cables. The moving part of the bridge weighs about 375 tons complete, and is balanced by two reinforced counterweights.

The improvement to Main Street is very marked in that the old north approach has been reduced from a ten percent grade to a four percent grade. The total cost of this bridge to the state, exclusive of the excavation charge, was \$75,000. H.S. Kerbaugh, Inc., was contractor, and F.P. Williams of Rochester, Division Engineer.

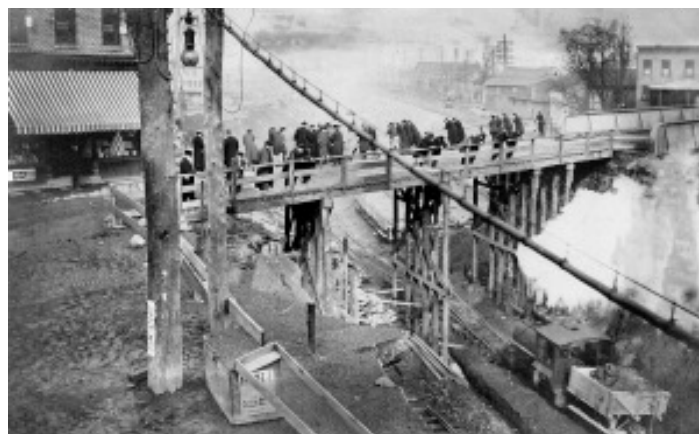




Left above:  
Assembly of steel framework for the new lift bridge. You can see South Main Street in the distance.

Left center:  
Construction of forms for the new north wall of the canal. The old fixed-position bridge has not yet been removed.

Below:  
A temporary wood bridge extends over the newly widened canal, while "bridge superintendents" monitor the project.



Above: Finished lift bridge, as shown in a New York State engineering photograph.

Left: Two plaques were mounted on the bridge in 1914. One remains on the bridge, while the other is on display in the Fairport Historical Museum.



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## *Inventors from Fairport:* **Joseph Yale Parce, Fairport's First Inventor**

Hoisting Crane. Patent No. 24,912 granted in 1859  
Improved Packing Press. Patent No. 30,342 granted in 1860

*By William Keeler, Curator for the Fairport Historical Museum*

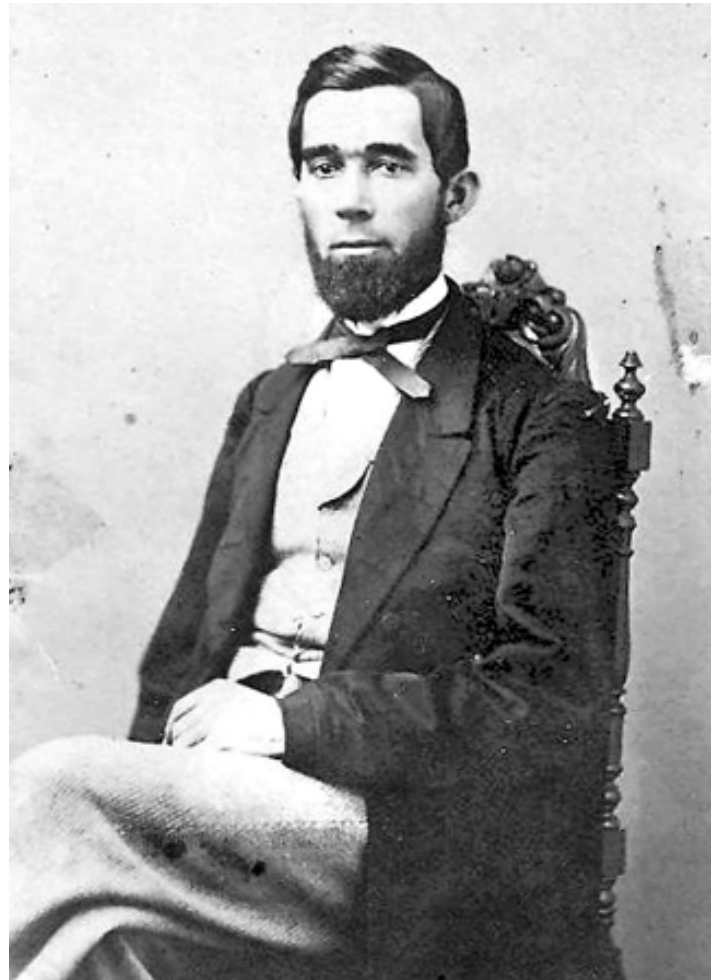
With his invention of the hoisting crane in 1859, Joseph Yale Parce became the first of more than 100 inventors from Fairport and Perinton in the next 100 years to be granted a patent from the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

Joseph Yale Parce was born in 1821 in North Pitcher, NY, near the city of Syracuse. One of eight children, Joseph was very close to the DeLand family. Minerva, Joseph's older sister, married Daniel DeLand, the founder of the DeLand Chemical Company, and his younger sister Sara married Henry DeLand, who was part owner of the factory after Daniel's untimely death in 1872. Joseph Parce married Lucy Mead, also from North Pitcher, in 1857. Shortly after their marriage, they moved to Fairport and lived in a house on the corner of Perrin Street and West Avenue in the village.

Joseph was working for Daniel DeLand at the saleratus factory when he invented his hoisting crane. It was a jointed arm crane, which could be swung out over the canal to pick up casks and barrels off a barge, and then swung back over the dock area to release its load. The crane was designed to lift casks five to six feet in diameter or six to seven ordinary barrels. The stationary part of the crane was fitted with an ingenious truss system, which prevented the arm from twisting under heavy loads. This crane was used not only to unload canal barges but also on the factory floor. After Parce was granted the patent, several cranes were sold to companies in Rochester. A wooden scale model of this invention can be found in the north wing of our museum.

In 1860, Joseph solved another engineering problem at the factory with his packing press. Saleratus is a powder much like baking soda. The trick in manufacturing was to make compressed cubes of the powder and wrap the product in paper without it flying into the air. Parce's invention was a small box attached to a wooden bench. The box was lined with a paper wrapper, and the loose, powdered saleratus was poured into the box. A foot-operated tamper would compress the powder, and the operator would then fold over the top wrap and remove the package from the mold. There was a row of these machines made for the company and installed on the third floor of the chemical works. Fourteen to sixteen young girls and women worked at these machines six days a week, making seven- to ten-ounce packages of saleratus at 45 cents a day. The packages sold for a dollar and were distributed to stores throughout the northeastern United States.

In 1877, the Parce family, with the exception of teenage son



Joseph Yale Parce, circa 1890  
*From the archives of the Perinton Historical Society*

Walter, moved with the Henry DeLand family to the backwoods of Florida. Here Henry founded the city of Deland\* and Joseph became involved in real estate and later the hotel business. The Parce Land Hotel was located close to the train station in Deland and was one of the few hotels in town. After Florida's "Big Freeze" in 1896, when most of the orange groves froze, Joseph and his wife Lucy sold their hotel in Deland to John B. Stetson, the Philadelphia hat maker. They moved back to Fairport, along with Henry DeLand and his family. Joseph Parce entered the clothing business with Joseph H. Snow and also worked for Levi DeLand at the Chemical Works. He was not well when he returned to Fairport. In November of 1898,

Joseph had to give up his position at the DeLand Chemical Works because of his declining health. Both Joseph and Lucy moved in with their son William in Rochester that Thanksgiving. Joseph died three years later in 1901 at the age of 70.

Parce was the first in a long line of brilliant people who lived in Fairport and Perinton and submitted applications for inventions to the US Patent and Trademark Office. From 1859 to 1959 these men, and one woman, produced more than 200 new inventions. The reason for this proliferation of inventions and inventors is that industry began in Fairport very early in the community's life, spurred on by the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825. Also, the founding of the DeLand Chemical Works in 1852 provided non-farm work to residents and attracted bright and energetic people to the area. The factory and related businesses provided the impetus to find new and improved

methods of performing ordinary tasks faster and better. The Fairport Museum has four volumes of inventions from Fairport and Perinton in its library, chronicling these new innovations. People living in this community today still produce an above-average number of new ideas to the world.

If you would like to see the original patent applications for the hoisting crane or improved packing press, go to Google Patents on the internet and search for the patent numbers shown in the subheading on page 6.

*\* The family name in the article is written DeLand which is the accepted form used by the family in their genealogy. Deland, the city, is spelled with a lower-case l, which is the acceptable spelling used today.*



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Thursday, May 1 – At the Museum

**7:00 p.m.** *Abandoned: The Untold Story of Orphan Asylums*  
Encore performance by author Michael Keene

### Saturday, May 3 – At the Museum

**9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** *Spring Fling*

The museum will be open to celebrate the re-opening of the canal and the Farmer's Market

### Saturday, May 10 – At the Museum

**9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** *Greenbrier Garden Club Plant Sale*

### Monday, May 12 – At the Museum

**7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.** *Grown-up Show & Tell*

Sponsored by the Association of Personal Historians

### Tuesday, May 20 – At Perinton Park Pavilion

**6:00 p.m.** *Annual Meeting & Picnic.* For members of the PHS

### Saturday, May 31 – At the Museum

**9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.** Last day: Howard Sharp's collection of wire mesh purses and hatpins

### Tuesday, June 17 – At Greenvale Rural Cemetery

**7:00 p.m.** *Illuminated History tour*

Actors portraying local cemetery residents

### Saturday, July 26 – At the Museum

**9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** Fairport High School Class of 1964 Reunion program, tour and scavenger hunt

### Thursday, July 31 – At the Museum

**7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.** Last day: *Decades of I Do: Wedding Gowns of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*

## Annual Meeting and Picnic

May 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

Our annual PHS picnic and meeting will be held – rain or shine – in the shelter at Perinton Park, off Fairport Road near the canal, on Tuesday, May 20<sup>th</sup>. The Society will provide the hot dogs, hamburgers and veggie burgers, decaf coffee and lemonade. Members coming to the picnic are requested to **bring a dish to pass** and their own **plates and silverware**.

Please use the form below to make reservations. Or call the museum at 223-3989 to leave a message.

At the meeting, there will be a few words from our president, Bob Hunt. Then members will vote on the nominations for officers of the Society. We hope that you can join us for a pleasant evening in the park.

### Annual Meeting and Picnic, May 20<sup>th</sup>

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people attending: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like (indicate number)

Hot dogs \_\_\_\_\_

Hamburgers \_\_\_\_\_

Veggie burgers \_\_\_\_\_

I will bring (check one)

Salad \_\_\_ Hot dish \_\_\_ Cold dish \_\_\_ Dessert \_\_\_

*Deliver this form to the mail slot at the museum no later than May 18, or mail it to the Perinton Historical Society, 18 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY 14450. You can also call in your reservation by leaving a message at 223-3989.*





*Preserving History Today for Tomorrow*

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Hoisting crane in use at the Deland Chemical Works.  
See story beginning on page 6.

*From the archives of the  
Town of Perinton*

## Fairport Historical Museum

18 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY 14450

The museum is open to the public on Saturdays,  
Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays at the  
hours listed below:

### Hours

Saturday	9:00–11:00 a.m.
Sunday	2:00–4:00 p.m.
Tuesday	2:00–4:00 p.m.
Thursday	7:00–9:00 p.m.

Group tours, presentations and special  
projects are by appointment. Please call and  
leave a message at 223-3989.

**[www.PerintonHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.PerintonHistoricalSociety.org)**