

## Historic Discovery in a Landmark Fairport Home

*By Bill Poray*

*Halloween of 2018 was a treat for Mike and Laura DiCaprio. That was the day the couple, with their young sons, nine year old James and six year old Charlie, moved into a historic home first owned by Daniel and Minerva Parce DeLand.*

Located on the corner of North Main Street and Whitney Road, the property is as important as any in the early history of Fairport. It was Daniel DeLand, with the help of his wife, who founded the DeLand Chemical Company, and whose canal-side saleratus factory put the village on the map more than 160 years ago.

Mike and Laura love the big old house, which measures close to 4,000 square feet, on a one-acre lot. The historic property also includes an early barn, complete with stalls once used for horses, and even the remnants of an outhouse. The DiCaprios are methodically implementing projects to improve the livability of their home, including upgrading the insulation and electrical wiring. As many other owners of old homes have found, projects such as these can reveal some fascinating bits of history, and the former DeLand house has revealed some secrets.

When an electrician was hired to replace wiring in the attic of the 1856 Italianate home, a surprise was discovered, tucked out of sight, and apparently unseen for well more than 130 years. Three large pieces of paper were removed from their resting place, which when unrolled, revealed pencil drawings, each a profile of an unknown person. The date, "1883" and a signature, "S. DeLand" were also present on the drawings.

Of the DeLand family members living in the



The home of Minerva Parce DeLand, as depicted in the book, *History of Monroe County, 1788 to 1877*. Her husband Daniel Brown DeLand died in 1872, five years before its publication, from injuries sustained when he accidentally fell down an elevator shaft at the DeLand factory in Fairport.

household at that time, only one had a first name beginning with the letter "S." Stella DeLand was born on June 23rd, 1863, almost certainly in the big family home on North Main Street. Many young ladies from Fairport with the DeLand name have attended the prestigious Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, and Stella was no different, having enrolled for her first semester in the fall of 1882. The pencil drawings, dated 1883, suggest that she may have created them as part of an art curriculum in her second year at the school.

As Christmas of 1885 drew near, shoppers at Arthur Birdsey's jewelry store in Fairport could find examples of her work on display, where a local critic described a painting as "remarkably fine and true to nature." Research has turned up no other evidence of Stella DeLand's artwork.

*Continued on page 4*



~ Bob Hunt ~

## Comments from your President

If you think I'm in my office in the carriage barn, you have guessed incorrectly. In fact, I'm writing today from the back room of our home, which we call the nature room because of all the windows, and the nature they bring into our home. The reason for this location is that I had a right knee replacement on

March 20th, and getting up to my carriage house office is a bit difficult, but not impossible.

Bill Poray called me a couple of days ago to check on how my recovery was going. I confirmed that I was recovering very well, and added, "I think it is time to get outside and blow the stink off." He said, "What did you say?" Again, I said, "get outside and blow the stink off." When I was a kid, say eight to twelve years of age, I would whine to my mom, "What can I do now?" or "There's nothing to do, I'm bored." She would tell me to go outside and blow the stink off. She would also say, "See what Mother Nature is up to around the house." I didn't think I smelled, but took the hint and went outside to discover something to do, and found I wasn't as bored as I thought. Once outside there was our Dalmatian dog, Babe, to play with; a baseball to ricochet off the pigpen, to practice my ground balls; or a walk down to the creek near our house to catch minnows, skip stones or get a soaker by slipping into the water.

Upon my return home with the stink blown off, my mother would greet me with a hug and say, "You smell wonderful, now wash up for dinner."

Despite my mother's suggestion, as a youngster I didn't notice much about what Mother Nature was up to. But after chatting with Bill, I took a stroll around the yard, and noticed the crocuses starting to blossom in their yellows and purples. The daffodils were in bud and ready to explode into various shades of yellow and orange. The goldfinch were changing from their winter bronze color to a bright yellow, and were feeding on the niger seed sack hanging on the back patio. The house sparrows were already starting their nesting in a hole in the side of the carriage barn next to my office, on the other side of the sheetrock. The grass is still in its winter brownish shade, and the trees are putting out their new buds for the upcoming season. A rabbit hopped to the patio to snack on the droppings from the bird feeders overhead.

Enough with blowing the stink off, I went back inside to rest the new right knee.

I googled "blowing the stink off" and found that it was a common phrase used by many parents to get the kids out from underfoot and out of the house. My mother probably

was told by her parents the same, and I know I have used it on our daughters.

You will be receiving this issue of the *Historigram* around the first of May, so I suggest you place the following items on your calendars. The Fairport Spring Fling will take place on two Saturdays, May 4th and May 11th. Merchants will have special sales and events, and of course your museum will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. On May 21st the Perinton Historical Society will hold our annual meeting and picnic in the pavilion at Perinton Park. It starts at 6 p.m., and is a great event with lots of good food and fellowship.

Finally, of note: George Washington was inaugurated our first president on April 30th, 1789. On May 10th, 1869, the golden spike was driven at Promontory Point, Utah, linking the Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroads.

Thanks for your continued support of PHS. We will chat again in our next issue.

Bob Hunt, President

585-415-7053 rhunt356.rh@gmail.com



## Upcoming Events

**Saturday, May 11 from 9:00 a.m. until noon**

At the Fairport Historical Museum

**Greenbrier Garden Club Annual Plant Sale**

**Tuesday, May 21 at 6:00 p.m.**

At the Perinton Park Pavilion

**PHS Annual Meeting and Picnic**

**Tuesday, June 11 at 7:00 p.m.**

At the Fairport Historical Museum

**Bushnell's Basin Cemetery Tour**

### Perinton Historical Society

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

<i>President</i>	Bob Hunt
<i>Vice President</i>	Vicki Profit
<i>Secretary</i>	Doug Whitney
<i>Treasurer</i>	Linda Wiener
<i>Communications</i>	Renee Barry

#### TRUSTEES

Keith Boas	Lucy McCormick
Bill Poray	Jim Unckless
David Wild	George Wolf

#### MUSEUM

<i>Director</i>	Vicki Profit
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## Special Recognition Level Memberships

*As of April 14, 2019*

### Business (\$100)

#### The Inn on Church

11 West Church Street, Fairport, NY 14450

Phone: (585) 678-1106

Web: [www.facebook.com/theinnonchurch](http://www.facebook.com/theinnonchurch)

#### Barranco's Clothing and Shoes

32 North Main Street, Fairport, NY 14450

Phone: 585-388-1270

#### Bonnie Wetzel, Howard Hanna Real Estate Services

65 South Main Street, Fairport, NY 14450

Phone: 585-303-1678

Web: [TopRochesterAgent.com](http://TopRochesterAgent.com)

#### Canandaigua National Bank and Trust

72 South Main Street, Canandaigua, NY 14424

Phone: (585) 394-4260

Web: [cnbank.com](http://cnbank.com)

#### Fairport Village Inn, Wayne and Patty Beckwith

103 North Main Street, Fairport, NY 14550

Phone: 585-388-0112

Web: [thefvi.com](http://thefvi.com)

### DeLand (\$100–\$249)

### Potter (\$250–\$499)

### Perrin (\$500 and above)

None this month

### Perinton Historical Society

## Mission

To promote interest in preserving and sharing local history through education and accessibility.

## HISTORIGRAM

*Published nine months per year by the  
Perinton Historical Society*

Editor: Bill Poray      Art Director: Keith Boas

Production & Distribution: Jim Unckless

Proofreading: Irene Poray



Navy man Paul Earl with his mother, Ruth. At the time of his enlistment, the Earl family lived at 41 Roselawn Avenue in Fairport. William Earl, Paul's father, and his brother Jerry, all served in the U.S. Navy in WWII.

*Photo provided by the Earl family*

## In Celebration of Paul Earl

*By Bill Poray*

We recently received a kind letter and generous donation from Don Earl, Perinton Historical Society member, and “proud son of Paul E. Earl.” Don’s donation is in celebration of what would have been his father’s 100th birthday, on March 23rd, 2019.

I had the opportunity to meet with Don and his family when they visited Fairport. We toured the museum, visited Potter Memorial, the VFW, and other locations remembered fondly by the family, and even had a nice lunch together.

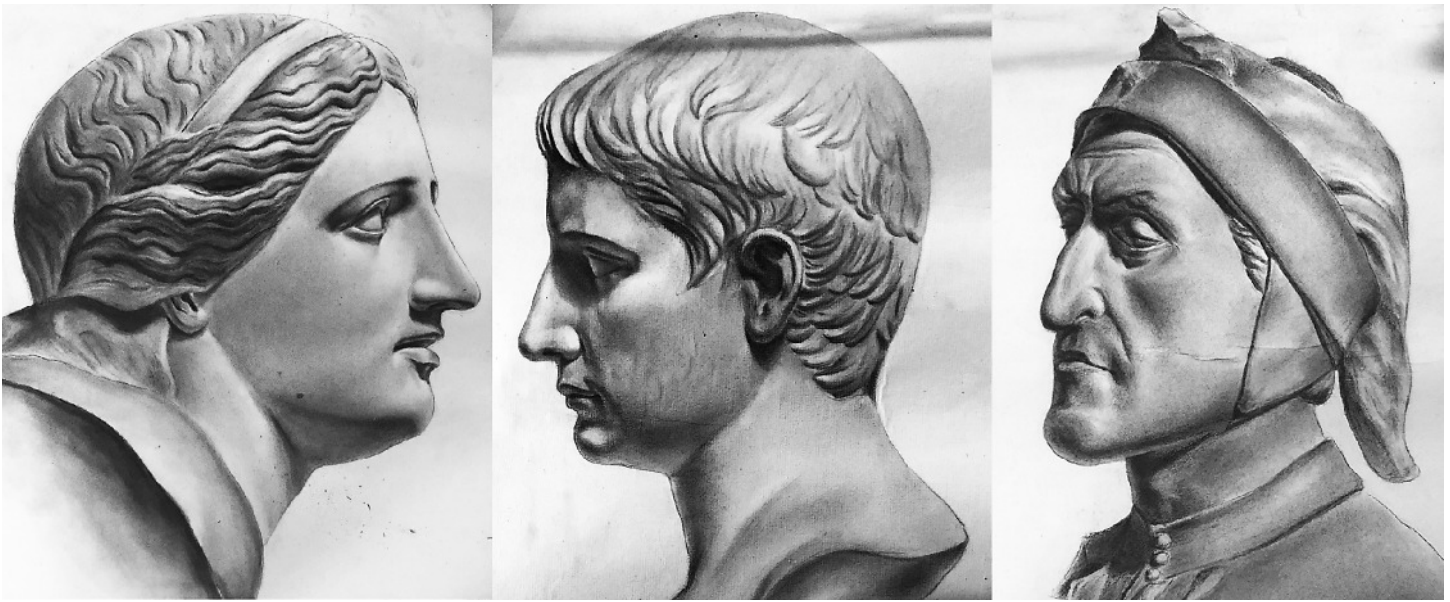
The December, 2017 issue of the *Historigram* featured an article, *A Navy Man, Paul Earl's Story*. Paul was a graduate of Fairport High School’s class of 1937, and served in the U.S. Navy from his enlistment on March 1st, 1939, until the time of his honorable discharge on October 1st, 1945.

He was among the crew of the heavy cruiser, the USS Chester, stationed at Pearl Harbor in December of 1941. In Paul’s own words: “Luckily we were about one hundred miles west of Pearl Harbor on that fateful morning and escaped the debacle of the sneak attack on the ships there. We went in the next day and witnessed the devastation.”

A sincere thank you to the Earl family, several of whom have served our country with distinction. Thank you as well, for the generous donation to the Perinton Historical Society.

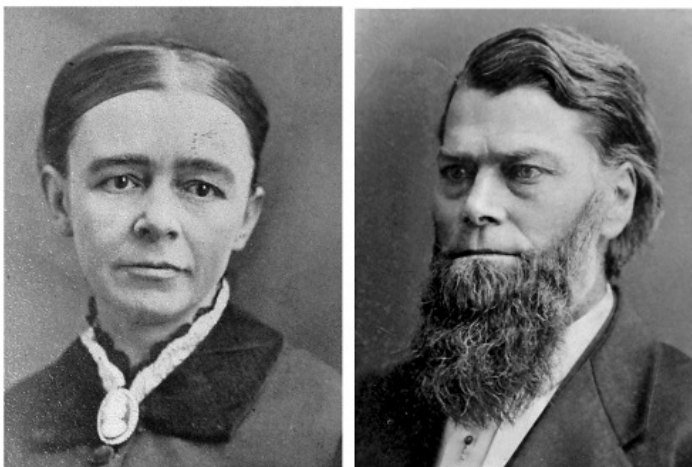




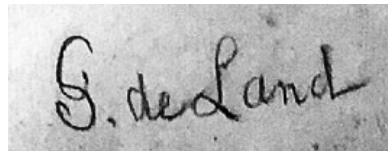


Early 1940s view of the DeLand home on North Main Street. When this photo was taken the residence had long been in the possession of the Cary family.

*From the collection of the Perinton Historical Society.*



Minerva Parce DeLand and Daniel Brown DeLand  
*From the collection of the Perinton Historical Society*



Pencil drawings by Stella DeLand discovered in the attic at the former DeLand home.

In the summer of 1887 the congregation at the Fairport First Baptist Church heard an engaging sermon delivered by a visiting minister from Orange, New Jersey. Seven weeks later, Reverend James T. Dickinson and Stella DeLand announced their pending wedding to friends and family, to be held on a Tuesday night, the 18th of October, at 8:00 pm.

On the chosen evening, guests arrived at the Baptist Church, for what must have been considered a very important event in the community. It was all documented in the Fairport Herald in a 600-word dissertation, including vivid descriptions of the clothes worn, the music played, and the flowers that decorated the sanctuary. After the ceremony, everyone present made their way to the DeLand home on North Main Street. Later that night, the bride and groom boarded the 11:30 pm train on the West Shore Line for a honeymoon trip to the east coast.

Only four years before her wedding, Vassar College student Stella DeLand created the three portrait drawings. They silently hid, concealed in their attic sanctuary for the rest of her life. Seventy-seven years after Stella DeLand Dickinson's death, the drawings have come back to life. They won't be hidden away anymore. Instead, the new owners of Daniel and Minerva Parce DeLand's landmark home will lovingly display the now beautifully framed drawings. Mike and Laura DiCaprio, young James and even Charlie, will have a good story to tell, for a very long time to come.



# 2019 House Tour Goes West

*Provided by the House Tour Committee*

This year's Perinton Historical Society House Tour will take us west of Fairport's South Main Street to visit a few select homes on West Avenue and West Street. We'll retrace the "steps" of a race in 1899 down West Avenue, between a horseless carriage and a horse. (Bill Poray's article on this race was featured in The Post, February 28, 2019). Many of the houses on these streets were already built by 1899 and have been beautifully preserved. Several of them have been designated local landmarks by the Fairport Historic Preservation Commission.

We hope you will join us on Sunday, September 29th, to walk this remarkable neighborhood and get a look inside some of these historic homes. To volunteer to be a docent for this year's tour, or to join the House Tour Committee, please contact Kay at kbjoslyn@frontiernet.net or Elaine at eellaannii@gmail.com.



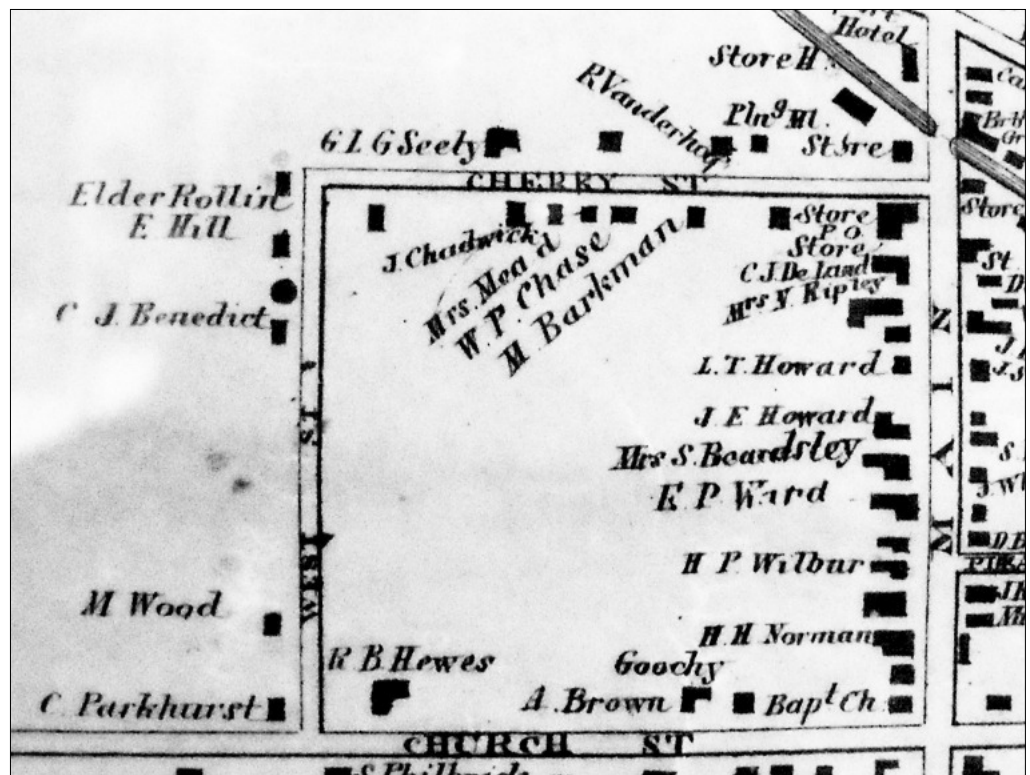
Pictured here are two of the homes featured on the house tour:

Above, the Queen Anne style home of Ellen Stoll Walsh on West Street

Above right, the Conant-Boyland House on West Street, listed on the National Register of Historic Places

This map is dated 1858.

Note that Cherry Street (now West Avenue) ends at West Street. The Baptist church, marked at the lower right (on the corner of Main Street and Church Street), was not the current structure, which was constructed in the 1870s.





## Buffalo Soldiers a Big Hit

Members of the Pennington-Moye VFW Post 9251 presentation team did a superb job informing the crowd of over fifty people about the history of the Buffalo Soldiers during the April 16th program at the Fairport Historical Museum. Danny Wyatt led off with a timeline of the soldiers' service. Ninety-six-year-old Charles Price followed up with information about his service during World War II. Mr. Price was also the first African-American member of the Rochester Police Department, in which he served for 38 years. Bing Reaves, also a retired veteran and police officer, completed the trio by sharing the story of the soldiers' uniforms and the reason for each piece. The team brought a buffalo hide and several saddles to show attendees, who also had the opportunity to hear several different bugle calls, including taps.



### 100 Years Ago This Month

Below is a selection of "Brief Items" from the Monroe County Mail, May 1, 1919.



### Bushnell's Basin Cemetery Tour

The ever-popular Illuminated History cemetery tour is back after taking a break in 2018. This year we feature Bushnell's Basin Cemetery on Route 96, which is home to more than 250 eternal residents, many of whom are early settlers of Perinton, Victor and Pittsford. Suzanne Lee and Vicki Masters Proffitt are in the research process now and will soon begin writing scripts. There is an exciting change this year in that the actors portraying the burying ground inhabitants are all children between the ages of 12 and 18.

The virtual cemetery tour takes place on Tuesday, June 11th at 7:00 p.m. at the Fairport Historical Museum.

### BRIEF ITEMS

Of special interest in and about our Village

Hereafter the state tax on automobiles will be computed on the value and the horse power of the car.

The Western Union telegraph office has been moved to rooms on the second floor of the Clark building.

Fairport needs more houses.

The local Red Cross Chapter has finished its work and closed the rooms until fall.

The Kodak Park Glee Club of Rochester, comprising sixty voices, will give a concert in the First Baptist church, this evening.

Plenty of sunshine and warm weather would be appreciated by everybody.



## Greenbrier Garden Club Annual Plant Sale

Come support the Greenbrier Garden Club's annual plant sale, which will take place on the sidewalk of the Fairport Historical Museum on Saturday, May 11th from 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. The PHS Board of Trustees is so appreciative of Greenbrier's maintenance of the museum's gardens. Stop by the backyard of the museum to enjoy the peaceful surroundings from the pretty purple bench.

The annual plant sale on the sidewalk of the Fairport Historical Museum always draws a crowd.

*Photo from 2015*

## Annual Meeting and Picnic Scheduled for May 21

The annual Perinton Historical Society picnic and meeting will be held rain or shine in the shelter at Perinton Park on Fairport Road, near the canal at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 21st. Hot dogs, hamburgers and veggie burgers, decaf coffee and lemonade will be provided by the Society. Members coming to the picnic are requested to bring a dish to pass, and their own plates and silverware. Please make reservations with the form below, or by calling the museum at 223-3989 and leaving a message.

Please indicate:

1. How many people will be coming
2. Whether you would like a hot dog, hamburger, or veggie burger
3. What dish you would like to pass (salad, hot dish, cold dish, dessert)

At the meeting there will be a few words from our President, and then the members will vote on the nominations for officers for the Society. This is always a good time to renew friendships, meet new people, and partake in some excellent food. Please join us for a pleasant evening in the park.

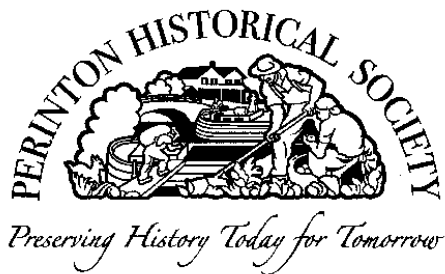
Name \_\_\_\_\_ Number of people attending \_\_\_\_\_

I would like (indicate number) \_\_\_\_\_ hot dogs \_\_\_\_\_ hamburgers \_\_\_\_\_ veggie burgers

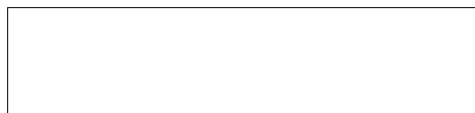
I will be bringing (circle one)    Salad    Hot dish    Cold dish    Dessert

*This form can be delivered and dropped in the mail slot at the Fairport Museum no later than May 19th,  
or mailed to the Perinton Historical Society, 18 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY 14450.*





Non-Profit Organization  
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Fairport, NY 14450



## Carl Peters Exhibit Grows

Thanks to the generosity of our members and others in the community, our collection of art and artifacts related to Perinton's nationally renowned artist, Carl W. Peters (1897–1980) continues to grow. Recently donated by Jeff Miller is this lovely painting by Peters of his wife, titled “Blanche with her book.” Jeff also gifted a 1941 photograph of Peters, taken as he painted a mural in Rochester.



**Fairport Historical Museum, 18 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY 14450**

The museum is open to the public on Saturdays, from 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. and Sundays and Tuesdays from 2:00–4:00 p.m. Free admission.  
Group tours, presentations and special projects are by appointment. Please call and leave a message at **585-223-3989**.

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