

Perinton Historical Society Historiogram

18 Perrin Street
Fairport, NY 14450

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March 2012
585-223-3989

Tony's Shoe Repair A Slice of Fairport History

By Keith Boas

Tony's Shoe Repair, owned by Anthony C. Pittinaro, was located in the Adams Block on South Main Street, opposite the Fairport Village Hall. It was a well-known shop, liked for its quality workmanship and pleasant, efficient customer service. But then came a major change to South Main Street—*urban renewal*—a change that drastically affected Tony's little shop.



Circa 1960s: A portion of South Main Street before urban renewal. Tony's Shoe Repair is in the center—No. 34.

*Photo courtesy of
Jean Keplinger, Perinton Town Historian*

In the fall of 1975, the Adams block and adjacent Bown, Clark, Ives, Smith-Morey and Seeley blocks were demolished to make way for the Fairport Village Landing. Down came Tony's Shoe Repair, along with the Fairport Laundry, Norton Dry Cleaning, C. A. French Co., Wagor's Drug, Saxton's Dept. Store and Bramer's Drug.

Taking advantage of the demolition in progress, my brother Roger Boas recycled many of the old bricks from the rubble to



October, 1975: Bricks free for the hauling from the rubble of Tony's Shoe Repair and several other businesses.

*Photo from the archives of the
Perinton Historical Society*

build a fireplace in his home on Perinton's Moseley Road. Roger saw the reuse of those free-for-the-taking bricks as a big way to save money on his construction materials.

On several occasions in late 1975, Roger drove to the demolition site, between South Main and Perrin Streets, with a utility trailer hooked to the back of his pickup truck. After making many "back-breaking" trips and demonstrating an amazing level of determination, he had sorted, transported and cleaned more than 6,000 bricks, most of which found a new home across the back wall of his family room.

Roger remembers that on one trip to the rubble, he saw Tony Pittinaro, wiping the tears from his eyes while studying the chaos of what once was his thriving business. The building's back wall had just been knocked down, exposing the interior rooms including a bathroom. Tony pointed out to Roger that, many years before, he had personally installed the bathroom fixtures, hanging now in full view. Roger could understand how heart-wrenching it must have been for Tony to see his hard work, workplace and "world" for more than 32 years, be so completely destroyed.

Continued on page 3

Comments from your President

~ Bob Hunt ~



Greetings—An interesting winter we are having in the northeast this year. Many are enjoying the warmer weather and lack of snow, while others like myself and my wife Cindy are missing the snow because we enjoy the outdoor winter activities of down hill and cross country skiing.

Perhaps this unusual weather has caused my spell check to misfire, as I received a nice letter from a Perinton resident and *HISTORIGRAM* reader about the barns with the overheard doors. The writer said he checked with several door installers and was told they also had never *head* of *overheard* doors. Possibly the editor uses words of this nature to see if anyone actually reads our *HISTORIGRAM*. I had a fraternity brother in college who would put the baseball scores in the middle of sentences of his term papers to see if his professor actually read his masterpieces—The professor never made a comment and my friend received an A- on most papers.

Happenings at our February 14th board meeting held at the Fairport Library: It was Valentine's Day so cookies were available—important things first. Being our bicentennial year, many activities are being planned which involve your society:

- ◆ A scavenger hunt is being prepared for the time frame of July 1st–15th to feature many historical sites in our town. It plans to be a fun, history-learning experience for families and individuals.
- ◆ PHS will have a display in one of the Fairport Library display cases from March 17th–31st. Vicki Profitt is heading this up so let Vicki know if you wish to help.
- ◆ The Green Lantern Inn will be hosting a bicentennial dinner on April 19th and has asked PHS to provide some displays during the event.
- ◆ Hemmings Motor News Great Race will be stopping in Fairport on June 28th from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm on Main Street and asked for the museum to be open.
- ◆ Our museum will be open for Fairport's Spring Fling on May 5th, which will feature the opening of the Farmers Market and the canal for the season, sidewalk sales and other fun activities.
- ◆ A float is being planned for the July 4th parade. Chairperson Ann Castle is looking for volunteers and ideas.

Our annual meeting/picnic is scheduled for May 15th, 6 pm at the Perinton Park building, so please get the date on your calendar and plan to attend.

The property committee under Ray Buchanan's direction had the downstairs carpets cleaned while the museum was closed this winter. Thanks Ray, nice job.

The next board meeting is March 13th at 7:00 pm at the museum. Thanks for your continued support, and we will chat again next month.

Bob
Rhunt1@rochester.rr.com
585-415-7053



New Gift Shop Item

The Fairport Museum Gift Shop now has Fairport playing cards for sale. The cards are poker size, have white silhouettes of buildings over a dark blue background and are packaged in a small white box. The words "Fairport, New York" are in the center of each card, and you can pick out several Fairport village landmark buildings from the silhouettes.

The cards, which are \$8.00 a pack, were designed by New York graphic designer Anna Keeler. All money from the sale of gift shop items goes to pay for utilities and maintenance for the museum.

Perinton Historical Society

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

<i>President</i>	Bob Hunt
<i>Vice President</i>	Vicki Profitt
<i>Secretary</i>	Doug Whitney
<i>Treasurer</i>	Linda Wiener
<i>Communications</i>	Joan Alliger

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Ray Buchanan	Sean Delehanty
Bill Poray	Jim Unckless
David Wild	George Wolf

MUSEUM

<i>Director/Curator</i>	Bill Keeler
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HISTORIGRAM

Published monthly by the Perinton Historical Society

Editor: Bill Poray

Layout: Keith Boas

Production & Distribution: Jim Unckless

"Tony's Shoe Repair", continued from page 1



Photos courtesy of the current Tony's Shoe Repair on North Main Street

NOTICE

Going Out of Business
SALE

TONY'S SHOE REPAIR
34 SO. MAIN ST., FAIRPORT, N.Y.
377-0885

WILL DISCONTINUE SHOE REPAIRING BY APRIL 15. ALL UNCLAIMED SHOES & BAGS WILL BE SOLD FOR COST OF REPAIRS AFTER APRIL 30.

ALL NEW SHOE INVENTORY WILL BE SOLD AT 20% OFF
MANY OTHER BARGAINS THROUGHOUT THE STORE

This notice ran in the April 9, 1975 issue of the *Fairport Herald-Mail*.

Tony (Anthony C.) Pittinaro (both photos above) was the son of Carmen Anthony Pittinaro, who came to Fairport from Italy 100 years ago this year.

Son Tony, who was born a year later in 1913, started his shoe repair business in 1934 at the age of 21. In 1943, he moved his shop from 9 North Main Street (upper left) to 34 South Main Street.

32 years later in 1975, he was forced to close the shop when his building was razed to make way for the new Fairport Village Landing.



The shop reopened in a new location, at 4 High Street, a short time later (see the news article, right and photo, left).

This year, Tony's Shoe Repair is proud to be celebrating its 75th anniversary.

This milestone salutes a remarkable slice of Fairport history, dating back to 1937, when a young Anthony C. Pittinaro launched a thriving little business in the village of Fairport.

2012 photo by Keith Boas

These days, Roger enjoys pointing out to his houseguests that his fireplace is an authentic slice of Fairport history, personally linked to Tony Pittinaro and his old Main Street shoe repair.

Fortunately for area residents, there's still a Tony's Shoe Repair in Fairport. But now it's located on High Street. Tony's son, Anthony M. Pittinaro, restarted the business in 1977 (see the 1981 article below from the *Herald-Mail*).

From the *Fairport Herald-Mail*,
January 28, 1981

Tony* (Anthony M.) Pittinaro, owner of Tony's Shoe Repair on 4 High Street, says his father gave him his big step.

"My father worked repairing shoes for 43 years," Tony says, "until his building was torn down by Urban Renewal to make the new mall. He taught me everything he knew. I worked for him in junior high and high school. After high school I went into the service, and was stationed in Arizona. In Arizona, I worked in a few shops repairing boots..."

Tony moved back to Fairport after the service, bought his father's equipment and opened his own business on High Street.

"Every year it gets better and better here," Tony comments. "Ever since I opened my doors, I've never had a problem with business."

Tony is content where he is—an expansion is not a foreseeable possibility. "I'm very happy where I am," he declared. "I've been in Fairport most of my life. This is a perfect location for me, and I think my service is the kind people need."

* Son Anthony M. Pittinaro currently is the owner of Perinton Properties at 100 North Main Street.

Nick Dibello, son-in-law to the founder of the business in 1937, now owns and operates the shop, which continues to flourish at 4 High Street.



~ Our Mission ~

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

Early Perinton Pioneers

By *Bill Keeler*

Fairport Museum Curator

Every generation lives in a unique time. How people live their lives changes with every generation. Things and places remembered by our parents and our parents' parents are different from those today. Some people have a desire to instruct or leave memories of times gone by to a new generation to chronicle their struggles and how things used to be. Others form organizations or clubs to join their contemporaries to talk about their common experiences in years gone by.

In Monroe County, the original pioneers of western New York began to look at their accomplishments and wanted to celebrate their achievements with other pioneers. In 1847, the Pioneers of Rochester was formed. Later the organization was known as the Pioneer Association of Western New York. Members were restricted to only those people who settled or were born in Western New York before 1816, which was five years previous to the forming of Monroe County from parts of Genesee and Ontario Counties.

The very first meeting of the Pioneer Association was in September of 1847. Almost 75% of the 62 original members attended, many still robust, having settled in the area at a young age. The first meeting set a pattern that was repeated for annual festivals that were held on the same weekend every year. The

participants met at Blossom Hall in Rochester and had a meal, followed by speeches from the members about their first experiences on the frontier. Later, a medal was awarded after dinner to the oldest pioneer on the membership rolls.

At the 1852 annual festival, there was a recollection by Henry S. Potter of Pittsford about Glover Perrin who first moved to Perinton in 1789 and later relocated to the village of Pittsford. Henry Potter was the grandfather of Frederick Potter who was born and raised in a house on West Church Street in Fairport in what is now the Potter Memorial Building. Henry came to Pittsford on March 8, 1815 and set up a store in that village. Newspaper accounts of the day documented Mr. Potter's recollections: "There were then 3 Distilleries in full operation in the village, one of them owned and run by Glover Perrin; he also kept a Tavern and vended his own productions. It was said his gill cup [a measuring cup used to dispense liquor] had no handle and that his large thumb was put well down into the cup to handle it." This would be considered unsanitary by today's standards but was a good way to dispense less liquor in a customer's drink.



NEW-YORK TRIBUNE.

TUESDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 5, 1847

MEETING OF THE PIONEERS OF ROCHESTER.
The assembling of the Pioneers of Rochester took place at the Blossom House yesterday afternoon at 1 o'clock. There were some fifty or sixty present on the occasion, and among them many who helped to lay out the first roads and build the first houses where now stands our beautiful city. A large number of them are still actively engaged in the business pursuits of the day, while others, whose heads are silvered o'er with honorable age, have given place to the younger portion of our stirring inhabitants. How forcibly must those present have been impressed with the wonderful changes of a few years! - changes which have hardly a parallel even in the fabled stories of the ancients.

On assembling at the Hotel the Pioneers made choice of the following officers: *President*-ENOS STONE. *Vice Presidents*-RALPH PARKER, ASHLEY SAMPSON, OLIVER CULVER.

After the organization, the company adjourned to the spacious dining-hall and sat down to one of the most inviting dinners which has been got in Rochester in many a day.

Rochester Adv. Oct. 1st, 1847

Another recollection was made by Fairport resident John Kelley at the annual meeting of 1858 and reported in the local Rochester newspaper. He came to Western New York in 1775 and was the oldest member of the Pioneer Association in 1859 at the age of 84. John died the next year. "Mr. Kelley, of Fairport, bought his time of his father when 18 years of age, (he was a tanner and courier,) and so having made a little something, he found a woman who was willing to join with him in the endeavor to make an honest living. In February, 1798, both started for this Western country. On the Macedon line, they found a small unfinished house, which the builder had left, and went into it; their furniture being quite scanty. When a heavy rain came on, it was necessary to place the bed [in the far corner of the room where] the roof was in better condition. Once]...he remembered waking up to find themselves covered with snow, which had blown in upon them. Their provisions were chiefly boiled wheat, with maple molasses, and sometimes 'mush' from Indian meal...When the green corn was large enough to use, they considered their condition vastly improved. Their next acquisition was a cow—a great treasure—and when they were able to buy a pound of tea and a set of cups and saucers, they were living in clover.

"Early Perinton Pioneers", continued from page 4

That year his first child was born, and he described how he made a cradle out of a basswood log, and his cabinet-making, at which he succeeded to his own great gratification. He remembered having to buy brandy for his sick wife, at the rate of \$7 per gallon. In those times, all were equal, as had been said—all were neighbors. There were only four families in town! The wolves and bears came so near the house, that they were obliged to keep the doors pretty well closed. They managed to save their little pig from the prowling creatures. When the ague came upon him, he was somewhat homesick; but he did not give up; and looking back, he really thought he enjoyed life in those days of trial."

In 28 years of existence, The Pioneer Association of Western New York had a total of 482 members, 8 of whom settled in what is now the town of Perinton. On June 8, 1875, the decision was made to dissolve the association. There were

only 100 members left and many did not attend the annual meeting. The last entry in the minutes proclaimed, the association had outlived its usefulness.

Editor's Note: To preserve authenticity, the quotations in this story are as found in the early newspapers referenced. Meeting minutes of the Pioneer Association of Western New York are located in the archives of the Rochester Historical Society.

Members of the Pioneer Association of Western New York from Perrinton:

Mrs. Sophia Kelley	John Kelley
Mrs. Sally Scott	Abner Brown
Nancy Ripley	Mulforde Butts
Poly Hepburn	Stephen P. Butler



Looking for Old Photos

By Bill Poray

I was surprised to find the photo below tucked inside an old book which I purchased at a Fairport garage sale a few years ago. Photos such as this one are literally a snapshot in time, a unique perspective into the places and people of our community.

Pictured in this photo, from about 1960, are Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts marching in a parade on North Main Street, probably on Memorial Day. In the background, you can see the former Rochester, Syracuse & Eastern trolley station, modified, at that time, for use as a used car dealership and service station.

Do you have old photographs of people or places in Perinton or Fairport? The Perinton Historical Society is always on the lookout for vintage photos of houses and other buildings, street scenes and people in our community. If you would be interested in sharing your photos, please contact me. I will digitally scan your photos and return them to you, unless you would prefer to simply donate the original images to the Society.

Contact me at (585)746-5905 or wporay@rochester.rr.com.



Photo, circa 1960, found in a book at a Fairport garage sale by Bill Poray

Spotlight on Fairport Landmarks

First Congregational United Church of Christ

By Jean Whitney, Fairport Historic Preservation Commission



Early postcard of the First Congregational Church

*Photo from the archives of the
Perinton Historical Society*

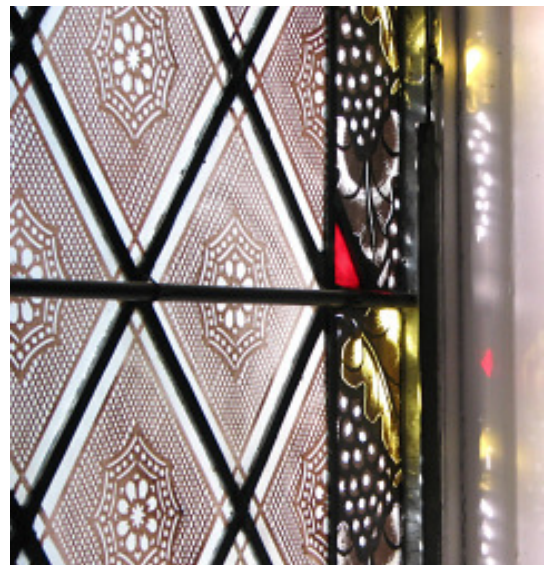
The First Congregational Church at 26 East Church Street, was built by Hiram Kingsley in 1868. It is the oldest church on Church Street, and one of three early remaining churches on the street in original or close to original condition. This building represents the first established church in Perinton and anchors the churches on the east end of the street.

In 1824, nine people met at the home of Jesse Perrin to form a church called the First Congregational Church of Perinton. In 1831, the group resolved, "That female members of this church have the right to vote on all matters that come before the church." The Congregational Church was designated a landmark of Fairport in 2009.

The church is Romanesque Revival style with a Gothic steeple. It has a monochromatic brick surface with rounded arches over tall stained glass windows. Belt courses mark the

horizontal divisions on the front of the building with keystones over the doors and front windows. The square spire and turrets are Gothic. Both west turrets are missing pinnacles, which are present in photos of the early 1900s. Grey and red bride-work and front *dripping verge boards* are unique to this building.

The stained glass windows in the sanctuary are an important historic feature, worthy of designation alone. Valerie O'Hara from Pike Stained Glass in Rochester, describes the clear glass part of the windows with the diamond-shaped pattern called *quarries*, as giving an overall effect called *grisaille*, meaning grey. This French style was a common method of making stained glass in the early 1800s. The details are painted on clear glass with iron-oxide-based vitreous paint, which is fired onto the glass in a kiln. Most of the pieces of glass in the sanctuary have several layers of hand-applied paint, each application



The inner grisaille windowpanes were probably made in the 1840s.

Photo by Jean Whitney

requiring a separate firing. The symbols incorporated in the windows were taken from medieval teachings, when every color, number, letter, tree and flower had symbolic meaning. Symbols such as the Fleur de Lis were popular.

The quarry pieces in this church have an abstracted flower in the center. Valerie O'Hara confirmed that the year 1868 is late for grisaille windows and this style of window is becoming very rare.

Continued on page 7

"Church", continued from page 6

There was an earlier Congregational Church, built in 1844, on this site, which was moved to West Avenue before the construction of the 1868 building. The 1844 Church became Shaw's Hall and eventually Jerry Williams Hardware store. Early photos of the 1844 church show a window pattern on the west wall similar in shape to the present windows. Perhaps the grisaille windows were moved to the "new" 1868 church and the colored stained glass was added.

The 1868 church has had several additions over the years. On the west side in 1900 and 1951, on the east side—the "Snow Room" was added in 1924, and the two-story back addition in 1971. Since the historic designation in 2009, the back part of the building has received a new metal roof and a new look: The paint replicates the brick, and canopies have been built over the side and back doors. In 2012, the steeple, which is visible from much of the village, acquired new lights and now shines to remind us of the religious and social history attached to this beautifully cared for building.

The Fairport Historic Preservation Law was passed in June, 2007. Since that date, the Commission has developed a consistent set of procedures for a designation process which ensures proper consideration of individual properties and preserves structures having architectural beauty and significance to an area.



Shaw's Hall on West Avenue, April, 1922. The peak of the 1844 First Congregational Church is slightly visible at the top of the façade, as well as the side window openings, which once housed the church's stained glass windows.

Photo from the archives of the Perinton Historical Society



***Tuesday, March 20, 2012 — 7:30 pm
at the Fairport Historical Museum***

An Evening with Susan B. Anthony

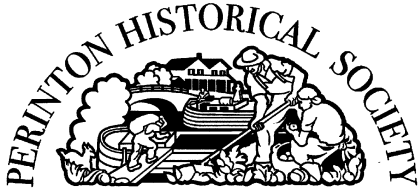
Presented by Jeanne Gehret

Join us on Tuesday, March 20, 2012 as we welcome Susan B. Anthony to the Perinton Historical Society. Miss Anthony, as portrayed by author Jeanne Gehret, will relate tales of her struggles to help change United States laws regarding slavery, alcoholic beverages, and voting for women. Hear how Miss Anthony kidnapped a mother and child to save them from a violent husband, how angry mobs wanted to kill her and about her arrest for voting.

Jeanne Gehret is the author of *Susan B. Anthony and Justice For All*, a fascinating look at the woman whose drive and passion for equality made such a difference in the lives of women and African-Americans. Through painstaking research of primary sources such as diaries, letters, newspaper clippings and Ms. Anthony's own authorized biography, Ms. Gehret gives rare insights into the famous woman.

While writing this book, she served as a tour guide of Ms Anthony's home-
stead in Rochester, New York, traveled to many of the places that Ms. Anthony frequented, and included in her book some stories that have never been documented before.





Preserving History Today for Tomorrow

18 PERRIN STREET, FAIRPORT, NEW YORK 14450

FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 149
Fairport, NY 14450



Fairport Historical Museum

18 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY 14450

The museum is open to the public on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays—on the hours listed below. If you want to do research or have other needs at the museum on other days and/or times, you may make an appointment. Please call and leave a message at (585) 223-3989.



Photo from the archives of the Perinton Historical Society

HOURS

Sunday 2 pm—4 pm
Tuesday 2 pm—4 pm
Thursday 7 pm—9 pm

Group tours, presentations and special projects by appointment

The grand opening of the Fairport Public Library was held in March of 1938. In this early photo, the Carl Peters mural had not yet been displayed above the Librarian's desk.

Today, the Perinton Historical Society is proud to utilize this landmark building as the home for the Fairport Historical Museum.