

# HISTORIC PROGRAM



**Perinton Historical Society**  
**18 Perrin Street**  
**Fairport, New York 14450**

***Home of the Fairport  
Historical Museum***

**Newsletter for the Perinton Historical Society**

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**Editor: William Keeler**

**Inside:**

- ☐ **PHS Meeting Schedule.**
- ☐ **It Has Been a Cold Winter in the Museum.**
- ☐ **What I Left Out: Why a Carnegie Library was Never Built in Fairport Part 1.**
- ☐ **Several Local History Supporters Pass Away.**
- ☐ **...and more.**

**Society Meeting in February to Feature Talk on New York's Classical Place Names.**

Have you ever wondered why there are so many classical (Greco-Roman or ancient) names in the Empire State? Why do such historic communities (Rome, Athens, Troy, Syracuse, Utica, Carthage, Homer, Plato, Aristotle, Egypt, Rochester, Palmyra) pepper the map of New York State?

Retired Latin and history teacher Bill Farrell has had a long interest in this topic, and now has recently published his second book entitled:

THE MISSION OF THE PERINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY INTEREST IN THE PRESERVATION OF LOCAL RECORDS AND ARTIFACTS FOR POSTERITY, AND FOR THE ENLIGHTENMENT OF THE PERINTON COMMUNITY.

*Classical Place Names in New York State: Origins, Histories and Meanings.* Bill has researched some 300 names, which are accompanied by countless maps and some 300 illustrations. In his presentation, Bill will use an overhead projector to illustrate his talk about the link of these New York towns, villages and cities to the classical world of the Greeks and Romans.

William Robert Farrell was the youngest of three children born in Syracuse, New York. Farrell graduated from St. Anthony of Padua Academy on Syracuse's southside in 1955. He later earned his A.B. degree from Catholic University of America in Washington D.C. and his M.A. at Syracuse University.

Bill joined the staff of Fayetteville-Manlius High School in 1961. As a teacher he wrote Latin programs and taught his students about the interrelationship between the Latin language and its culture.

Retiring in 1995, he helped to found ATLAS (Association of Teachers of Latin Around Syracuse) and is also a member of the Board of Directors of CAES (The Classical Association of the Empire State)

Come and find out the origins of some popular New York communities. Bill Farrell will also be offering for sale signed copies of his books after the meeting. In case of inclement weather and Bill can't make it from Syracuse, this presentation may be postponed to March.

#### UPCOMING PERINTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETINGS:

Tuesday, February 11<sup>th</sup> 7:30 at the Fairport Museum.

*Classical Place Names in New York State* presentation by the author William Farrell. Books will be available and signed by the author after the meeting.

Tuesday, March 11<sup>th</sup> 7:30 at the Fairport Museum.

*Patents and Trademarks from Perinton and Fairport, Part 2*

A slide and overhead transparency presentation by Bill Keeler curator for the Fairport Museum.

Tuesday April 15<sup>th</sup> 7:30 at the Fairport Museum.

*Treasures from the Rochester Historical Society* by Ann Salter, Executive Director of the Rochester Historical Society.

Tuesday, May 13<sup>th</sup> at Perinton Park. Annual Perinton Historical Society Picnic and election of officers.

## It Has Been a Cold Winter So Far at the Museum.

If you have been a visitor to the Fairport Museum the past couple of weeks, you may have found the doors locked or if you were lucky enough to find someone there you were treated to a very cold reception.

The museum furnace finally gave up last November. We have been nursing our 20 year old electric furnace for the last couple of years replacing burned out coils as recently as last year. This time it was just too expensive to fix. Bill Keeler and Bill Matthews have been meeting with the village officials to strike a deal for a new heating plant. It was decided to put in a new high efficient gas furnace to replace the old electric one. There was just one catch, there was no gas line coming into the building. So for most of November and December, crews have been on the grounds locating water, cable and electric lines, digging a trench under our trees in front and hooking up our new furnace in the basement.

Several scout trips and volunteer shifts at the museum had to be canceled. None of the pipes froze due to three electric heaters located

in the basement but the temperature hovered at 52 degrees on the first floor and 62 degrees in the basement.

Finally the Monday before Christmas we were able to get heat in the building. Many thanks to Bill Matthews for coordinating the installation and letting the workmen into the basement. There is also a special thanks to the museum volunteers who braved the very cold museum the two weeks before Christmas so that visitors and members could buy presents in our gift shop.

## Sunday School Building Moved to South Main Street in 1892.

In the last issue of the *Historigram*, we asked our readers to add to our list of moved houses and buildings from Perinton and Fairport. Bob Rickard informed our staff that the house at 154 South Main Street had once been on East Church Street.

The building was originally a Sunday School Building on the grounds of the Free Will Baptist Church. O.C. Adams, who owned a market on South Main Street, bought the building in 1892 and moved it to 154 South Main. Originally the building was Greek



Revival and Adams remodeled it as a double house by adding a double entrance with a Queen Anne polygonal turret. When the building was moved it was placed on the new lot with the rear of the building facing Main Street. You can still see the old front of the building from Clinton Place.

Thank you Bob, we will add this information to our files at the museum.

## What I Left Out: Why a Carnegie Library Was Never Built in Fairport. Part 1 of 2

By Bill Keeler

This is one of a series of articles written by Bill Keeler, which gives more information about the pictures found in the book *Perinton, Fairport, and the Erie Canal*. The page numbers given in the articles correspond to those in the book.

The library has always been a source of pride for the Fairport community. From the first subscription library in the Dickenson House (p.90), to the chartered public library in the small house on Perrin Street (p.91), to the opening of the new W.P.A. library in 1937 (p.92-93) and finally to the present library at the Village Landing, the library building has constantly been

changed and moved to meet the needs of the growing community. The Fairport Public Library is currently one of the busiest branch libraries in the county. Not too long ago, the library expanded into space formerly occupied by a restaurant.

In 1914 there was a lack of space for books in the library building. A community effort was started that researched the possibility of building a Carnegie Library in the village. If there had been agreement as to the location of the proposed building, a different library may have been built 23 years earlier than the former library building, now the Fairport Museum, which was built during the Great Depression.

The Fairport Museum has recently acquired some typed and handwritten documents from former library board member Days Elizabeth Defendorf Price which shed some light on the conflict over the site of the public library.

On March 2, 1914, the Fairport Chamber of Commerce felt there was an urgent need for a better library and had taken the first steps in an effort to improve the library by contacting the Carnegie Corporation to ask for funds for a new library building in Fairport.

Andrew Carnegie, noted philanthropist and owner of Bethlehem Steel, had established an organization that funded library buildings in communities across the country. Lyons had received \$12,500 and Penn Yan \$10,000 from the Carnegie Corp. to construct their own libraries. The Corporation required that a community provide a site free of encumbrances and that the people of the community vote an annual appropriation of 10% of the gift to the maintenance of the library.

E. Roy Bowerman headed the Chamber of Commerce's committee and made a proposal to the Library Board who in turn approached the School Board. The library was, and still is, part of the school budget and any expense needed the approval of the taxpayers. By May, two factions had emerged regarding the location of a new library; People who wanted the library on Main Street and those who wanted the building on Perrin Street. On May 7th 1914 at a Chamber of Commerce meeting 4 locations were suggested and the sentiment was almost evenly divided between a Main Street location and the Perrin Street location.

An argument for not building a library on Main Street was supported by an article written by

Mr. Wynkoop and published in *New York Libraries* in 1914. The four reasons for not locating a library on Main St. or a business district are "...Books and book friendships have no natural relation with a business block. The dust and noise of the main business street or block seriously interferes with the best work and best enjoyment of the library...It has been found by experience that where libraries are thus placed directly on the main street, they are apt to be used by young and frivolous people, not for library purposes, but as a place to gather and stare into the street, and thus interfere with the more serious and dignified purposes."...and finally the site would be more expensive in the business district.

## Several Local History Supporters Pass Away in November and December.

What seems like a whole generation of local history advocates and supporters have passed away in the last two months. These people had a significant impact on local history in the Rochester area and some of them have been directly involved with our Historical Society.

Sheldon J. Fisher, born 8-12-1907, died 12-21-2002 was founder of Valentown Museum, former curator of the Rochester Historical Society and he helped establish the Ganondagan State Historic Site in Victor. You may not know that he was involved with the Perinton Historical Society in the 1950's and helped the Society acquire our permanent charter from the New York State Board of Education. He also helped establish some of our exhibits at the museum in 1979 when we moved our collections to Perrin Street.

Elizabeth Holahan died 12-12-2002 at the age of 99. Miss Holahan restored Eastman's birthplace, which is now at the Genesee Country Village and Museum, acquired the Stone Tolan House, the oldest surviving frame house in Monroe County, for the Landmark Society, President of Landmark Society of Western New York and former director of the Rochester Historical Society. As director of the RHS she donated two rare framed portraits from the Rochester Historical Society's collection of Henry Addison DeLand and his first wife Mary Melinda Willard DeLand that are on display in our museum.

Grace W. Whitney, who died in December, was a loyal supporter of the Perinton Historical Society.

She was a continuous member of the Society since 1948 and also a member of the Fairport Historical Club.

Sara Kuhnert, who died in December, was an honorary member of the Perinton Historical Society and a former volunteer at the museum on Tuesday afternoons.

Paul P. Malczewski died November 25<sup>th</sup> and was a friend and colleague of the editor of this newsletter. He was volunteer and tour coordinator for the Landmark Society of Western New York, gave tours of Mount Hope Cemetery and was an excellent scholar and researcher of local history.

The local history community will miss these fine people.

SPECIAL DONATIONS MADE  
TO THE PERINTON  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

- ❑ Donation in memory of Mrs. Onderdonk.
- ❑ Gift of a holiday wreath for the front door of the Fairport Museum by the Fairport-Perinton Merchants Association.
- ❑ Donation from the Fairport-Perinton Merchants Association.



## George Eastman House Conservators to Treat Society's DeLand Chemical Works Photograph.

Arguably, the most important photograph in the Perinton Historical Society's collection is the circa 1860's albumen print of the DeLand Chemical Works. The mounted photo, which is on page 61 of our book *Perinton, Fairport, and the Erie Canal*, shows the DeLand factory facing the Erie Canal with several workers engaged in unloading a canal barge of raw materials. On the left in a white suit is Daniel DeLand, founder of the company. The hoist being used is a working prototype of the first patent applied for by a Fairport resident Joseph Yale Parce in 1859.

The photograph was donated to the society in 1944 by Dr. George Price, who was a longtime Fairport physician. The paper board on which the photo is mounted has been deteriorating for years. The photo is dark with age and many attempts to repair rips and tears in the board, has left adhesive stains and metal staple holes. A brief typewritten description was added later and pasted to the front of the board.

Bill Keeler, museum curator, brought the photo to the George Eastman House Museum for evaluation. Grant Romer and Gary Albright, photo conservators, looked at the photograph and have agreed to perform conservation treatment on the print for the price of materials. A donation made in the memory of Helen J. Emery will be used to purchase the conservation materials.

Gary, who is supervising the work, will have the surface cleaned, remove the print from the board and remount the print onto a more stable surface. The original printed caption on the board will also be removed and remounted under the print.

There is no time-table for the treatment but we are extremely grateful to the George Eastman House Museum staff for their very kind gesture.

### 3 Authors still needed to write book

Bill Keeler is still looking for Society volunteers to help write a pictorial book about Perinton and Fairport. The 3 chapters left are: *Pre-Trolley Era, Churches, Schools, and Organizations and Sports*

If you are interested call the museum at 223-3989 and leave a message for Bill to call you back.

Perinton Historical Society  
18 Perrin Street  
Fairport, New York 14450

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