

Perinton Historigram

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October 2003

William Keeler, Ed.

October House Tour Special Edition

*The Perinton Historical Society's 35th Tour
Sunday October 19th, 2003. 1:00 to 4:00*

A Word from this years Co-Ordinator, Theda Ann Burnham

The Perinton Historical Society is pleased to present four marvelous homes on its Twenty-fifth Annual House Tour from 1 to 4 PM on Sunday, October 19. The homes on the tour represent the period between 1830 and 1900. The tour is open only to members of the Perinton Historical Society. However, new applications for membership will be accepted through Thursday, October 16 at the Historical Society, in the Fairport Museum, 18 Perrin St., as no memberships will be sold the day of the tour. The museum is open on Sunday and Tuesday from 2 to 4 PM and on Thursdays from 7 to 9 PM.

Volunteers from the community participate in the activities and are captains and hosts assigned to the homes. I am incredibly grateful for their assistance and to the homeowners that have allowed our membership to tour their homes. During the tour, a reception is planned at the Perinton Community Center, 1350 Turk Hill Road, in Room 204A from 2 to 4 PM. A preview of each home is provided in this issue so that you can mark your calendar for an exciting and truly memorable day.

Other Information You Should Know

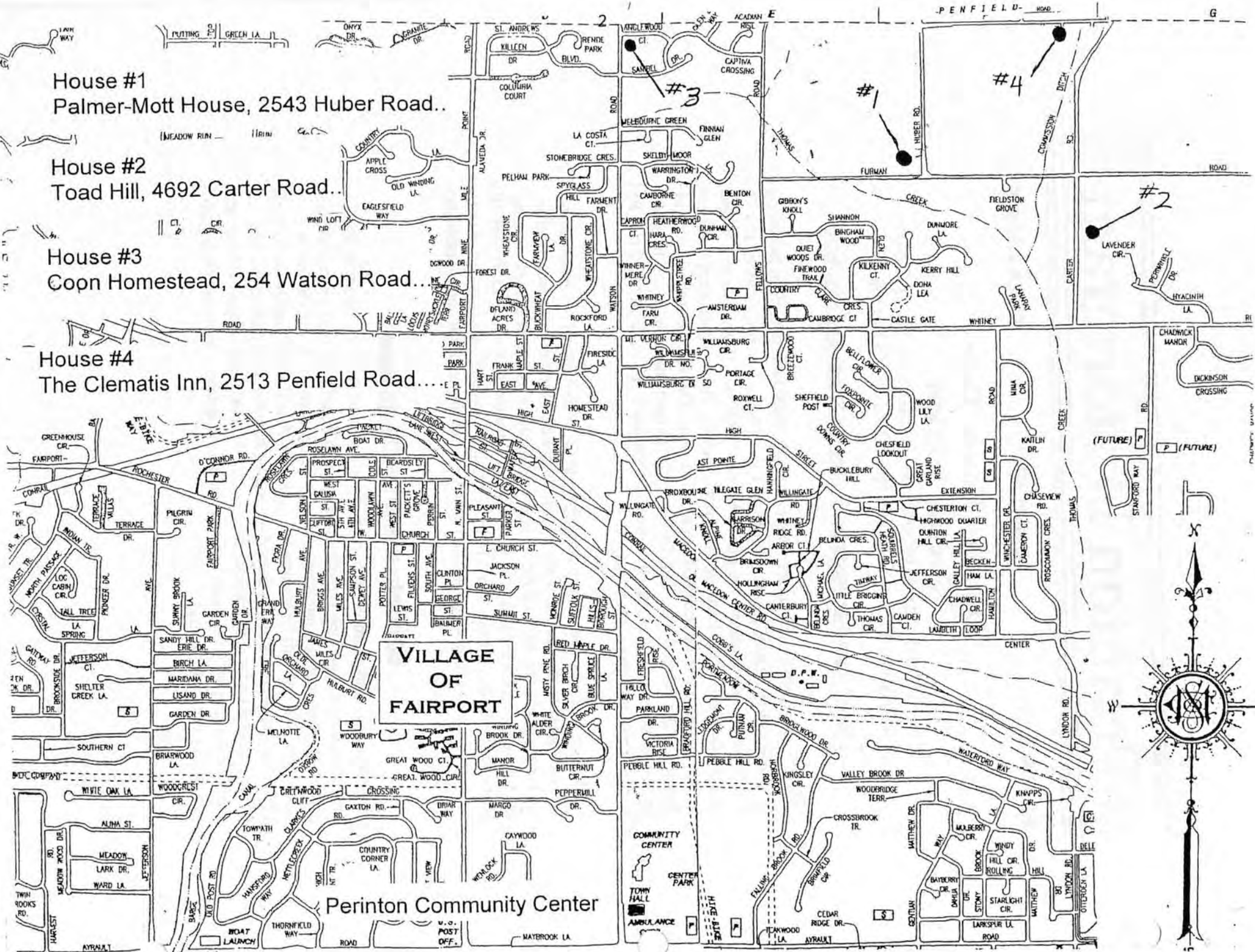
The tour will start promptly at noon and you can start with any house on the list. There is a map and parking directions under each description of the house in this paper. The last page is your ticket and must be checked off at each house by volunteers. No one will be admitted to room 204 A at the community center until 2 PM. Enter the center by the front door and be sure to take a look at the new Aquatic Center under construction, the physical fitness room, basketball court and track. Please take off your shoes before entering the houses. You may carry them with you as you take the tour.

House #1
Palmer-Mott House, 2543 Huber Road..

House #2
Toad Hill, 4692 Carter Road..

House #3
Copn Homestead, 254 Watson Road...

House #4
The Clematis Inn, 2513 Penfield Road....



Palmer-Mott House, 2543 Huber Road.....House #1

Historically, this cobblestone house represents a farmstead with long ties to the Palmer family, early settlers in the town of Perinton. Because of its relative rarity in town, only two others of its kind, this cobblestone house is of high significance.

The house features a two-story, gable front main section with wide cornices, frieze windows, and stone quoins. The fenestration is regular with 6/6 sash and windows with wood lintels and sills. The main front entrance also has a wood lintel; its paneled door appears to be original. Both the front and the south gables have gable and returns. The frame wing is also interesting—a gable with two shed roofs on either side—an unusual configuration. The large stone chimney on the north elevation is constructed in the style of the early 20th century. This chimney was probably erected sometime after 1947. The vernacular Greek revival detailing is also present in the frame south wing with its wide cornice, frieze windows, and gable end returns. The front porch, extending along the east facade of this wing, is still open at the north end and features turned posts and wood railing. The southern part of this porch has been enclosed and sided with clapboard. A small one-story shed addition appears on the west elevation of this frame wing. The concrete block chimney and metal stove chimney are later 20th century additions.

This house is described in Carl Schmidt's book *Cobblestone Masonry* (published in 1966) as follows: "The Palmer-Mott House on Huber Road, now owned by Barlow Mott, is a story-and-one-half cobblestone farmhouse with the gable end facing the highway. The cobblestones are round and oval-shaped lake-washed stones of various colors with reddish stones predominating. The round ones vary from 1 ½ to 2 inches in diameter, and the ovals from ¾ to 1 ½ inches in length. The horizontal and vertical joints are 'V'd'. Roughly squared red sandstone quoins vary from 8 ½ to 11 ½ inches high, hence the cobblestones are also lake washed ovals, but larger, and laid in a crude herringbone pattern. The stones range from 1 to 1 ½ inches in thickness and from 2 ½ to 4 inches in length. The longer stones are laid on a greater slant in order to be contained in the course height. The window openings have plank frames with 8 inch thick wood sills." A 1940's photo shows the east and north windows with louvered wood shutters, which have since been removed.

Ira Palmer and his wife Sarah Beilby moved to this area from Chatham, New York in 1803. He built a log cabin across from the present home. His plans for clearing the surrounding land and farming were interrupted when he joined the armed forces in the War of 1812. He returned from the war and built the existing cobblestone house sometime between 1835 and 1839. Ira passed away in 1863. The property was listed in an 1872 county plat map as belonging to Myron Palmer, his son, with the 1878 county directory listing Myron Palmer as a farmer with 28 acres in Fairport/Perinton. The 1902 county map shows Isaac E. Peters as owner. Barlow Mott purchased the property in 1939 and was the owner until 1965. In 1966 the house was owned by Robert Bacher, followed by the Luczkowski family, and in 1981, it was purchased by Charles Pembroke. Several changes were made during the Pembroke occupancy, including the family room addition in 1992. In 1995, the house was purchased by the present owners, Deborah and James Elman.

To enter this unique cobblestone dwelling, you must climb one of several sets of stairs located on the property, as this house is built on top of a hill. Climb the stairs closest to Huber Road, which will bring you to the porch and front door. The Elmans ask that you please remove your shoes, as they are trying to continue to preserve some of the original flooring. As you proceed through this most interesting house, you will get the feeling of being back in a 19th century farmhouse. Deborah and James have successfully created this atmosphere, using both authentic and antique furnishings, as well as, several excellent reproductions. You will observe Deborah's interesting collection. (i.e., hog scrapper candlesticks and pewter candy molds.)

As you turn, hosts throughout will point out the many special features/articles you will be seeing. You will leave by the kitchen door and back onto the front porch. You are also invited to take a look at the barn at the back of their property. The beams, etc. are believed to be the original wood. Parking would be best along Huber Road, as the driveway is long and not easily accessible for backing out. Enjoy your visit to the past!

Parking Instructions for House #1

The house is located on the west side of Huber Road. The house is the first one on the left at the intersection of Huber and Furman Roads. Parking is along both sides of Huber Road or on Furman Road. Huber Road rises at this point going north so be careful of cars coming over the rise. Please use the stairs closest to Huber Road and take your shoes off before entering the house.

Toad Hill, 4692 Carter Road.....House #2

This magnificent 16-room, 2-1/2 story, solid brick home was built in 1875 atop a knoll overlooking the countryside by Richard Woolsey, a prosperous Perinton farmer, who came to Perinton from Austelitz, NY in 1830. Woolsey and his wife, Mercy, had four children. The 1858 map shows no building on this site, but Richard Woolsey is shown as owner of a building just north of this home. By 1872, R. Woolsey is shown on the county plat map as owner of Lot 18, the designated site of this home. The house, whose construction date is visible on the rear east side brick facade, is built in a cross-gable style – from the air it would resemble a cross with “peaks” or gables on all four sides – and has many Italianate details that were popular in the 1870s. High in the gable ends are small rounded-arch windows with keystones and stone sills. The other windows have arched rowlock brick lintels, as well as keystones and stone sills. A stone water table or stringcourse surrounds the house. The arched, front double doors with stained glass panels earned the house its early nickname as “Woolsey’s Church.” There is a central interior brick chimney.

Around 1900, porches – with Roman Ionic fluted columns and cast concrete bases in the Classical Revival style – were added on the north, south, and west sides. Another 1900 addition was an east wing used as a cottage cheese factory. Outbuildings include a gable barn with a gambrel wing and concrete block silo to the north of the house, a small gable barn with fieldstone foundation to the northeast, a frame carriage house that the current owners have converted into a recreation room, and a stone smokehouse to the east (rear) of the house. The lot is attractively landscaped with mature deciduous trees and scattered conifers.

The farm was owned for a time by Jason Spears, who sold it to Merton and Bernice Bridges in 1921. The Bridges ran a dairy farm for many years before selling the house to Priscilla and Richard Minster in 1970. The Minsters named the house Toad Hill because of the hundreds of toads everywhere on the property when they first arrived.

The house was surveyed by the Landmark Society of Western New York in 1989 and was recognized as an architecturally distinctive and important building in the town with National Register potential. The house, barn, and five acres were the first officially designated landmark home in Perinton and was designated a Perinton Landmark on May 14, 1991.

The kitchen was enlarged by the current owners, Charlie and Kathy Runyon, who purchased the home in October 2002, where they reside with their three children, Shawn, Abby, and Allison. Follow the pumpkin row to enter through the double front doors and exit through the room that was used to make cottage cheese long ago.

Parking Instructions for House #2

Toad Hill is on Carter Road on the east side between Whitney and Furman Roads. Parking is along both sides of Carter Road. Be careful if crossing the street

Coon Homestead, 254 Watson Road.....House #3

Located near the Penfield line on Watson Road is a mid-19th century historically significant farm complex. Nathaniel Blood, a farmer, originally constructed the present day home of David, Janice and Brennan Coon in the late 1840s. Census records in 1855 show that Nathaniel, his second wife, Hannah, and two children, Thomas and Lucy, resided at this property.

In 1865, the census listed Thomas Blood as the owner with his wife, Elizabeth, and their two children, Carrie and Laura. Thomas' parents continued to live at the home and work the farm with him. By the 1878 census, no Bloods are listed as living in the Fairport/Perrinton (old spelling) area.

Rufus E. Watson, age 21 and a member of the family for which Watson Road was named, lived on a farm just south of the Blood farm complex according to the 1865 census. Rufus, his wife Ruth, daughter May, brother G.W. and servant Ellen Hipp, were the new residents of the Blood farm in 1880. They named the property "Fair View Farm." By the 1900 census, Rufus Watson and his expanded family of six children and two farm laborers lived at the farm and continued to live there past 1915.

This present day farmstead has survived to the 21st century with few changes. The architecture has evolved from the 19th century style to early 20th century colonial revival over the decades.

This 2-1/2 story home illustrates the colonial revival detail in which the main rectangular portion of the house has 8/8 windows, a gable roof, hipped dormer, and an enclosed porch along the south side. The center entrance front door has eight pane sidelights and wood panels below. The entry porch has a shed roof, open wood balustrade and Tuscan columns. There is a rear wing on the east that also has 8/8 windows, and the northeast corner of the rear wing is an enclosed porch.

On the grounds there are a number of outbuildings: a concrete tile silo, a small gable barn/shed, a stone smokehouse, and a small gable storage shed/outhouse.

Visitors to this beautiful and delightful residence enter through the front entryway to a large center foyer. In the dining room, special highlights include a china cupboard from a great, great aunt; blue china, a wedding gift to a great aunt from her husband; and hand-hooked rugs dyed and hooked by Mrs. Coon's grandmother. In the family room, pay close attention to the mantle and the fireplace constructed from materials obtained from the property by a previous owner. Mrs. Coon's grandmother stitched quilts that are in the family room. Visitors will be enchanted by the warmth, style, beautiful grounds, and enhancements that grace this beautiful home. See the outstanding renovations that David and Janice have made over the years while maintaining the integrity and the splendor of this historical property.

Parking Instructions for House #3

The Coon Homestead is along the east side of Watson Road. You can park along the shoulder of the road on both sides of the street. Be careful when crossing

The Clematis Inn, 2513 Penfield Road.....House #4

A gable front-and-wing National Folk House, the Clematis Inn Bed & Breakfast and home of Theda Ann Burnham, Innkeeper, was built in 1900 for the James I. George family during the post-Victorian era and is an Edwardian designed home. The entry wrap-around porch with Greek Revival columns (originally found in the period between 1825 and 1860) were observed in rural areas in the Northeast and remained a popular form for folk houses until the 1930s. The property housed the James I. George & Son, Inc. Nursery until 1966, and then the

D.S. George Nursery, one of Penfield's oldest remaining businesses started in 1894, which ceased operation in August 2001 when the greenhouses were removed.

James I. George and his wife, Harriette, were parents of two children, Clinton P. and Eleanor. Shortly after 1894, David S. George wrote his brother James I., who resided in California, and asked him to join the business. In the spring of 1895, James and David formed a partnership known as George Brothers Nursery. Although they originally grew cabbage and tomatoes, and later added shrubs and roses, their specialty was the Clematis vine. Subsequently, they dissolved the George Brothers Nursery and each started their own Clematis nursery on adjacent properties. Clinton P. and Elizabeth George were parents of three daughters, Elizabeth (Betty), Sally, Harriette, and a son, Clinton P., Jr. In 1953, at the age of 47, Clinton P., Sr., died and his father James I. died three months later. Although James I. had resided in Rochester for 23 years before his death at age 84, he actively participated in his nursery business until the time of his fatal three-day illness.

The nursery continued operation by the James I. George family and Lewis G. Brooks, the grandson of David S. and Donna George, worked for Clinton P. as his grower and lived in the home at the time of Clinton's death. Mr. Brooks continued to work for Elizabeth George until 1958 and left the home when Elizabeth and her young son, Clinton, Jr., moved into the home. In 1966, Elizabeth sold the James I. George & Son Nursery to Norman Vane and his wife Lois, the granddaughter of David S. and Donna George. The Vane's continued to operate the nurseries until November 1981 when they sold the business to two former employees, James D. DeRue and Edward Welch. This partnership was dissolved in 1997 when Mr. DeRue became sole owner. Elizabeth George, who died in 1979, was the last member of the George family to live in the house. The house was sold by Elizabeth's children in March 1981 to David A. and Nancy Glick, who lovingly restored much of the chestnut wood to its original beauty and added the solar room in 1983. Peter E. and Karla Priepki purchased the home in January 1985. Floyd and Cathy Lee Maxwell resided in the home from April 1989 until March 1992.

The house remained vacant until the current and sixth owner purchased the home in September 1995 and restored the interior and exterior of the house to reflect the original era. Hand-painted clematis vines – named the official flower of Penfield on March 5, 1973 – cascade up the stairs to the second floor walls. Local artist, Sharon Woolever, the great niece of Carl Peters, also painted the vines on the bedroom door panels – a style traditional during the 1900s. The interior is adorned with chestnut wood: paneled walls, a large pocket door in the dining room, as well as the doors, windows, and staircase. The home has stained glass, leaded windows and doors and a tear-shaped light fixture that are original. The dining room reverse painted chandelier is c.1923 and is typical of the original lighting fixtures. The reverse painted rose fixture in the main bathroom is original to the home.

On the grounds, there is a detached garage, gable storage building, gambrel barn and springhouse. In growing season, the many, many varieties of clematis vines are in bloom around the property. The Innkeeper continues to cultivate the clematis plants that are propagated from the D.S. George Nursery stock.

Parking Instructions for House #4

Penfield Rd. is Rt. 441 and is very busy. The shoulder on the north side drops off sharply and is not recommended. When heading east on 441, pass the house and turn right into the next entrance road at the bottom of the hill across from the fire department. Park anywhere along the paved road leaving room for cars to enter and exit. Do not park in the driveway or the grass areas on the property or the barn.

Upcoming Perinton Society Meeting Speakers

- ❑ Sunday October 19th, Perinton House Tour. Noon to 4.
- ❑ Tuesday November 11th, a presentation by Howard Ford on *Stories Behind Historical Markers of Central New York*.
- ❑ Tuesday December 2nd, Christmas Program.
- ❑ Tuesday January 13th *In Search of the Lost Powers Orchestra* an intriguing presentation by Craig Smith. Joint meeting with the Fairport Library at 7:15 PM.

The Perinton Historical Society Receives Money from the Helen H. Biggs Estate.

Former Fairport resident Helen Biggs died in Fairfax, Virginia on January 31, 2001 leaving an amount of money in her will to the Perinton Historical Society. This past summer the estate was settled and the Society received a substantial check to support the Society.

Imogene Blum, our curator emeritus, was able to tell us a little about Helen and her family.

"Her family was well-known and somewhat prominent in Fairport. They lived in a brick house on Parker Street at the corner of Pleasant Street. She had several children. The parents and some other relatives are buried in Greenvale Cemetery.

Her sister Betty Harris Pierce worked with Elma Gaffney in the library. Later she became Town Clerk.

In later years Helen visited Fairport during the summer and visited the museum. She gave the museum a copy of the Harris Genealogy and was interested in our efforts and was also concerned about the cemetery. Tom Pierce, her brother-in-law is still living in a facility on Chardonay Drive."

The Society is extremely grateful for Helen's generous gift and for remembering us in her will.

Fairport Facts

Mrs. Daisy Elizabeth Defendorf Price was a member of the Fairport Library Board responsible for approving the building of the public library in 1937. When the plaque was made for the front foyer of the library listing the board member's names, Mrs. Price's maiden name was misspelled Diefendorf. This mistake remains today carved in oak in the Fairport Museum.

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House #2

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House #3

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House #4

The Clematis Inn, 2513 Penfield Road.....☐

Don't forget to stop in at the Perinton Community Center for refreshments at 1350 Turk Hill Road in the Town Hall complex from 2 to 4.

Perinton Historical Society
18 Perrin Street
Fairport, New York 14450

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