



PERINTON HISTORIGRAM

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EDITOR Ruth Ewell

IMPORTANT NOTE: This issue is for two months and contains announcement of two coming meetings. You will not receive another reminder of the December Christmas Party, so be sure to put the date on your calendar now so you won't miss it!

Calendar of Coming Events

Tuesday, November 16 -- "Tippecanoe & Tyler, Too," 7:30 p.m. at the Museum, (details below).

Thursday, November 25 -- Museum closed for Thanksgiving holiday.

Tuesday, December 7 -- Christmas Party at the Museum, 7:30 p.m. (details below).

Thursday, December 23, and Sunday, December 26 -- Museum closed for Christmas holiday.

Tuesday, January 18 -- "Genesee River & Erie Canal," at the Fairport Library (details later).

Tuesday, February 15 -- "Perinton Historical Landmarks," (details later).

Note that in order to conserve heat, the museum will be closed every Thursday night in January and February.

November Meeting

Our speaker, Charles Miller, has had a lifelong interest in American history. He has acquired a vast collection of books, photographs, slides, memorabilia and anecdotes about the presidents and first ladies that he enjoys sharing with his audience.

His topic, "Tippecanoe & Tyler, Too," will give us some interesting insight into the 1840 campaign and the surprising events that transpired afterward.

The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room. It is open to the public, so do come and bring a friend or neighbor!

Christmas Party

The Christmas Party will once again feature the music of Ken Brown, Fairport high school music teacher, and some of his students. Those who have attended this event in the past remember what a delight it is to hear these talented young people.

The party will commence at 7:30 p.m. in the Merriman-Clark Room. It's a great way to begin the holiday season.

Bequest to Society

The estate of the late George Payne contained a generous bequest to the Perinton Historical Society. He had been a benefactor to the society for a number of years before, and we are grateful for his past contributions and for this remembrance in his will.

Continuation of Report of September Meeting

(Because of lack of space, we were not able to publish the whole account of the September 14 meeting in the October Historigram. It is now included below.)

Bill Matthews' "historical five minutes" was a "tale of two lakes." One was Keuka Lake, where an HS-2L Curtiss flying boat has recently been brought up from the bottom. The other was a lake in Switzerland, where a Halifax bomber was dredged up. Both planes are now in the Trent Museum in Canada, and Bill had the privilege of seeing them there this summer.

Our speaker, Bob Gallo, a well known local historian and philosopher, told us not only the story of the Shaker movement, but also wove into it the stories of several other religious movements in Western New York in the 1800s. The Shaker society was started by Anna Lee, a disgruntled Quaker, who came to Watervliet, New York, in 1774. She was illiterate, but she had a firm belief in the sort of society she felt should exist. She wanted it to be celibate, because it was felt the sins of Adam were sexual. The Shakers led simple lives, worked hard, and acquired land. They felt the best kind of existence was an agricultural commune. Converts included husbands and wives, but they had to live separately when they joined the group. In about 1826 some settled in Sodus, where they had about 1600 acres, called Alasa Farms. They did not make furniture for sale there, as some Shaker groups did, but they did sell seed packages. In 1836 the colony at Sodus was dissolved, and the members moved to Groveland, where they stayed until 1891.

Alasa Farms in Sodus has a yearly "Shaker Day," when visitors are invited to come visit the buildings which still exist and to dance the Shaker dances. Other former Shaker colonies which can be visited are at Hancock, Chatham, and Pleasant Hill.

Western New York in the 1800s was an area where many movements were begun or expanded upon -- Mormons, Spiritualists, Abolitionists, Women's Rights groups, in addition to the Shakers. Mr. Gallo recommended a book, "The Burned-Over District -- The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religions in Western New York, 1800-1850," by Whitney R. Cross, which gives the story and backgrounds of many of these groups.

Report of October House Tour

For a while, the issue seemed in doubt, but fortunately the rain held off until just 4 o'clock, enabling tour goers to enjoy the autumnal countryside and to walk around the houses without having to put up the umbrellas which many carried.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the houses on display, which represented a wide variety of architecture and decoration. House tours always present a fine opportunity for the visitors to get ideas for their own homes and gardens, and this tour was no exception.

We were sad that, because of a sudden illness in the immediate family, the Coon home could not be opened for the afternoon. However, we hope very much that another year we will have the opportunity to visit this beautiful property.

The reception at the Baptist Home gave many a chance to visit this amazing new facility. We are grateful to the home personnel for conducting the comprehensive tours and for providing such a gracious setting for the reception itself.

Many thanks are due to Carol Santos, who organized the tour, to her house captains, to Lorrie McMahan and Ruth Post for the reception goodies, and most of all to the homeowners.

New Members

We welcome the following:

From Fairport -- Josephine Alesi, Joyce Amarel, Catherine & Scott Baker, Lynn Barber (whose Fairport home was on the tour last year), Elizabeth Broda, Susan Broda, Paul & Margaret Derleth, Roberta Garland, Ted & Sandra Good, Sandra Hahn, Gene & Donna Harr, Dorothy Hughes, Richard Mabry & Family, Bonnie R. Myers, Diane Patton, Thomasine Ruter, Linda & Michael Ryan, Barbara Willoth.

From Rochester -- Stephanie Prader.

From Baldwinsville -- Jane Shriver.

We hope to see more of them at meetings in the future!

Tea for Fairport Business & Professional Women's Club

Sunday afternoon, September 26, 1999, was a special one for the past members of the Fairport Business & Professional Women's Club. The Perinton Historical Society held a private reception at the museum in their honor, celebrating their many years of service to the community. In late 1998, when the club disbanded, they gave the society a very generous donation which enabled us to purchase three life-size mannequins and to refurbish part of our costume collection. A plaque honoring the club's service was presented by Anne Johnston of the Perinton Historical Society, to Mary Ellsworth, who accepted it on behalf of the members of the club. This plaque will accompany displays in the museum which are made possible by the club's donation. In addition to the Fairport Business & Professional Women's Club, invitations to the reception had been sent to museum volunteers and officers of the Perinton Historical Society. Afternoon tea was served by May Thomson, Anne Johnston and Anne Stonehocker.

The occasion presented the first opportunity to display our newly restored historic Pioneer Prohibition Banner in the case which was recently designed and handcrafted by Chris May. Also on display were records, photographs, guest books, and the 70-year history of the club, all of which they have given to the museum for its collection.

One Hundred Years of Fashion

Approximately one year ago, Costume Curator Carol Rolph had an idea that the museum should celebrate the millenium by putting on an exhibit of fashions from the last hundred years, particularly some of the beautiful old wedding gowns we have in our collection. Alas, we did not have enough mannequins to display these gowns! To our rescue came the Fairport Business & Professional Women's Club whose financial help enabled us to purchase two female and one male mannequin. In the Victorian parlor of the museum we now have a display of six bridal gowns dating from the 1880s to the 1950s with a tuxedoed groom. Additional gowns and bridal accessories are on display in several of the cases on the main floor of the museum.

In the downstairs Marriman-Clark Room is a semi-permanent display of costumes which date from the 1880s to the 1980s. This exhibit will be in place until February 2000.

Many thanks to Carol Rolph and Anne Johnston who spent many hours preparing this display. We encourage all of our members to stop in to see this wonderful exhibit. It should be noted that it marks not only the millenium but also the 20th year that the museum has occupied the building at 18 Perrin Street.



Be sure to stop at the museum to see the display "One Hundred Years of Fashion."

And don't forget to mark on your calendar the next two meetings -- November 16 and the Christmas Party on December 7.

This is the last Historigram you will receive until the year 2000.

Perinton Historical Society
18 Perrin Street
Fairport, New York 14450

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