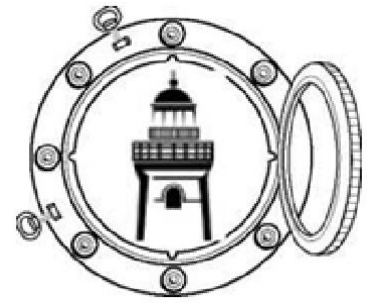


A VIEW THROUGH THE PORTHOLE



Fairport Harbor Historical Society

Vol. XXXVIII No. 2

May 2023

From the President's Desk

Marty O'Gara

PRESIDENTS LOG

Hello everyone; We at the Marine Museum are happy to welcome this glorious spring weather. We look forward to our opening day - Saturday, May 27. Visit our website and facebook page for our revised hours and days. Spring cleaning at the museum was done Saturday May 6. We were assisted by 13 volunteers, young people from the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints from Kirtland. They were accompanied by President Scott Barrick and his wife sister Shauna Barrick from Perry. John Ollila welcomed the group with a history of the lighthouse and the connection with the Latter Day Saint members who traveled to Fairport in the 1800's on their way from New York state to Kirtland. After two hours of scrubbing and polishing we all enjoyed a light lunch.

On Saturday, May 13 John Ollila, Linda Toth, Jan Merrick and Marty O'Gara traveled to the Cleveland Museum of Art to represent the Marine Museum at the NEOIMC museum day from 10 am to 2 pm. All member museums were invited to set up a table to display information, hand out membership applications, and answer questions. Great chance to reach out and let people know about our museum. One of our goals this year is to expand our membership/volunteer base. We were selected by Leadership Lake County as a site for them to help us implement digitization of our photography and eventually many of our historical documents. Aside from the hands



on hours they spent with us, they left equipment that will be important to continuing the process on our own.

We will be open on June 20 when the GOBA event passes through Fairport; Fairport is a designated lunch stop for the bike tour which attracts up to 1500 riders and family members. We will open the museum and gift shop as well as the lighthouse tower. We will also offer Gatorade refills, bagged cookies, and fruit. Anyone interested in baking cookies can contact Marty at the museum. The Congregational Church pastor Tina Green has offered to ask their congregation to bake for us as well. And of course, we will have extended hours during Mardi Gras June 29 through July 2. Terry Wodarski is in charge of our parade entry, this year's theme is "Beach Party". Anyone who wants to assist with decorating the float or being in the parade should contact Terry via the museum. Sadly, two of our member passed away - Flora Tuisku, long time member and volunteer and Beverly Sabo Shapiro, a life time member. May they rest in peace.

The lighthouse grounds will be the setting for three weddings, one in May, one in July, and one in October. We look forward to an exciting and busy season with many visitors from all over the state, country and internationally. Please check our website and face book page for what is happening. Please remember private, personalized tours are available for groups. Call the lighthouse and leave your request. A tour guide will contact you.

Come and see us this summer and enjoy the view! We are always happy to welcome you and share our stories.



Thursday, June 29th - Parade Day 7:00 PM

Friday, June 30th - Senior Day

Saturday, July 1st - Kids Day

Sunday, July 2nd - Fireworks at Dusk

The Lighthouse and Museum have extended hours during the Mardi Gras Festival

Fairport Harbor Historical Society - Those Who Served...

Volunteers are the life-blood of any non-profit organization. While cash and in-kind donations are always important, it is the 'gift of time' that truly makes its impact on volunteer organizations. Webster's dictionary defines tribute as giving testimony or compliments. It is a means of honoring accomplishments. It is proof that a person can make a lifelong impact. The list provided is a timeline of the Past Presidents of this historical society since its humble beginnings in early 1945. There have been 16 volunteers who have held that position. In March of this year Mary Alyce Gladding ended the longest tenure as steward of our iconic lighthouse.

As with most volunteers, the first few years saw Mary Alyce assist with a myriad of duties from the gift shop, public events, to helping Tuesday afternoons with scrapbooks, clippings, archiving, cleaning and such. What followed was a 15 year run as society secretary, a period of time that offered continuity and stability to the two previous Presidents. In 2015, Mary Alyce stepped up and assumed the role of FHHS President, and for a span of eight years helped transition the lighthouse marine museum's outreach to the public, represent society interests as needed, assist this all-volunteer, ever changing group in assorted tasks as well as assume tasks necessary to interior and exterior preservation.

In her years as President, security cameras were added, new museum carpeting secured, AC unit replacements obtained along with deck and eaves being refreshed. Additionally the Frontenac pilothouse, interior tower, and oil house restorations were completed or actively begun. Her true passion was the gift shop where she effected improvements with cash register sales, implemented credit card sales and monitored POS needs. Harbor Holidays, Lighthouse Garage Sales, Flower Sales, Chinese Auctions, Cstary Art Shows and Community Days all had her imprint on them. Hundreds of hours were donated annually to these endeavors, most behind the scenes.

When pressed to recall some favorite society moments, Mary Alyce did offer these two. First, she mentioned with gratitude the long time members Eleanore Sabo, Julia Lehto, Louise Nagy, Alice Leathers, Helen Kasari, and Valerie Laczko for mentoring her in the early years and providing a long fellowship in the decades to follow. Secondly, she was proud of the society Edmund Fitzgerald Memorial Event that is hosted every five years.

These active years also saw her commit to volunteering with the Village Mardi Gras (20 years), St. Anthony's Church, Tall Ship visits and her children's schools. Mary Alyce begins her 28th year in a new role as a volunteer trustee with the FHHS. Her impact and accomplishments still unfolding. Thank you for all you do, it has been noticed and is appreciated...

2023 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

President: Martha O'Gara

Second Vice President : none

Treasurer: Sharon Chamberlain

Trustees: Mary Alyce Gladding - Cindy Shega - Henry Saalfield (Chip)

Other trustees now serving are Tony Bertone and John Ollila

First Vice President: William Farroni

Secretary: Linda Toth

Fairport Harbor Historical Society History 1945 - Present

Past Presidents / Curators

George I. Gideon
1945-1947, 1952-1954, 1962-1966

Lillian Luthanen Robinson
1947-1949

Carroll C. Mitchell
1950-1951, 1954-1955

John W. Laczko
1951-1952, 1961-1962

Bernard L. Farmer
1955-1957

Mary M. Whitmore
1957-1959

Frank S. Converse
1959-1961, 1966-1968

John L. Killinen
1968-1988

Merton I. Pohto
1988-1989

John C. Fedak
1989-1992

John E. Laczko
1992-1994

John Taipale
1994-1997

Kathryn Popp
1997-1999

Valerie A. Laczko
1999-2009

Daniel J. Maxson
2009-2015

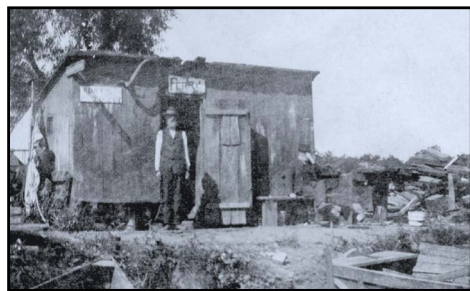
Mary Alyce Gladding
2015-2023

Researched by Valerie Laczko - 2014

Fairport Public Transportation History, part 1 by Lee Silvi

This is the first part in a mini-series that will provide an overview of the various transportation options that have been known to exist in Fairport history. Over time the planned topics will include those found here, plus the interurban, passenger train, and buses.

Before the bridges into Grandon/Fairport were constructed the only known access other than by water was a dirt road or trail from the east, near today's Fairport Nursery Road, or by ferry. Two ferries were known to exist. One ferry departed Hine's Landing near New Market, which was northeast of today's St. Clair Street Bridge. It transported passengers to an area near the original Fairport Lifesaving Station. The exact years of operation are unknown, but one mid to late 1800s ferry photo caption states the fare at that time was 25 cents. The other ferry departed Richmond (today's Village of Grand River) for the Fairport side of the river. Depending on the reference source, either the first or second railroad in Ohio started in Fairport, organized as the Painesville and Fairport Railroad Company. (One source also names the railroad as the Painesville, Fairport, and Warren). It was chartered in 1835 by several locals, who sold subscriptions to finance the construction. The railroad car was pulled by two horses, and followed the route of the long abandoned "Old State Road", and crossed the river just northeast of today's St. Clair Street bridge (see map insert). The tracks were wood with steel strips attached on top to reduce wear. The long term plan was to add a steam locomotive, more cars, and extend the rail line, but it never made it past Painesville. This is because in 1841 a spring freshet destroyed the bridge over the Grand River.



Ferry terminal on the Richmond (Grand River) side. This was not the same ferry that ran from Hine's Landing.

Lack of funding combined with a recent recession prohibited the railroad from rebuilding. (This short explanation is included here to keep the historical information in the sequence that the transportation modes were developed. For additional details on this railroad see the August 2022 issue of A View Through the Portal.)

At least a couple other railroads were planned in this era, but were never constructed for the similar economic reasons. One of those was the proposed Fairport and Wellsville Railroad. The group that planned the railroad actually sold \$283,000 of stock subscriptions to fund the project! But when preliminary costs were received, it turned out the cost of the line was going to be more than was anticipated. That fact, combined with the 1837 recession, caused cancellation of the project. It is unclear if the \$283,000 was ever returned to those that contributed to the cause, or if the funds were merely promised by subscribers and never collected. Regardless, according to the Consumer Price Index calculator, \$283,000 in 1837 would be worth \$89 million in today's dollars.

One other mode of early transportation we'll mention this month was the Fairport-Wellsville Stagecoach, which started operation around 1836. No photos are known exist. It ran a regular route from Fairport, following "Old State Road" across town, across the Grand River to and then down State Street in Painesville. From there it is believed to have followed today's Ohio State Route 86 to Windsor, and other roads from there to Warren and eventually Wellsville, which is located on the Ohio River. Historical records indicate there was at least one toll house, near today's St. Mary's Cemetery in Painesville.

Next issue: The Painesville & Youngstown Railroad and the Depot-Fairport Line. The latter became part of a much larger Interurban System.



Ferry that ran from Hine's Landing to an area near the original Fairport Lifesaving Station.

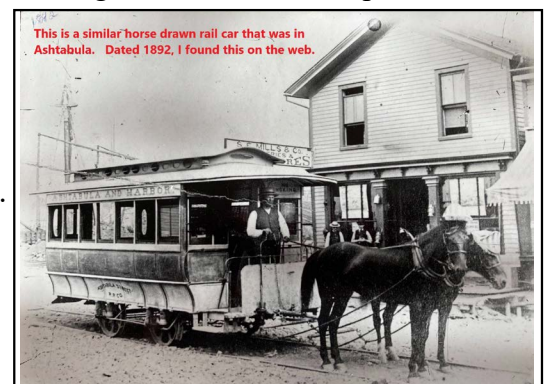
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Route of the Old State Road, that crossed the Grand River at Hine's Landing

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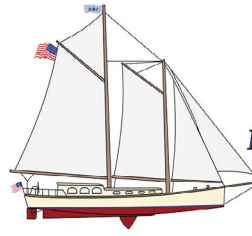


This is a similar horse drawn rail car that was in Ashtabula. Dated 1892, I found this on the web.

Photo of the Ashtabula and Harbor horse drawn railcar. This is similar to what would have been found in Fairport. (Photographer and web source unknown.)

Schooner Huron Jewel Returns in June

The Schooner Huron Jewel made a stop at Fairport Harbor late in August on the “Dream Inspirational Tour” to inspire others to live their dreams. Docksides tours are offered free while the ship is in Fairport Harbor. The ship plans to return around June 3rd. Check the Historical Society website or Facebook page for updated info.



Schooner Huron Jewel
Drummond Island Tall Ship Company

Committees 2023 - Chairperson

Tours: Dan Maxson

Buildings & Grounds: Tony Bertone

Membership: Cindy Shega

Newsletter: Vance Todd

Technology: Martin Trawicki

Audit: T. Miller

Nominating: Louise Wayner

Accessions: Louise Nagy

Historian: John Ollila

Museum Store:

Publicity: Cindy Shega

Preservations: Linda Toth

Budget: Sharon Chamberlain

Displays: Dan Maxson

Current Membership Totals:

Regular: 39 - **Couples: 21 (42 people)**

Patron: 5 - **Life: 94**

Honorary: 4

Total as of May 1, 2023: 184

2023 New Admission Rates

Adults: 13-59: \$10.00 Seniors: 60+ \$7.00

Children: 6 -12: \$5.00 Under 6: Free

Active military: Free including family

Inactive military; (Military person only.) Free

Members: Free

In Memoriam

Flora Tuisku, 88, passed away on April 15, 2023. She grew up in Fairport and graduated from Harding High with the class of 1953. She was employed by the Diamond Shamrock, and retired in August of 1980. Flora was a very active member of the Zion Lutheran Church and was a long-time member of our Society. She volunteered in the gift shop, conducted the yearly inventory, and helped with special projects. She was preceded in death by her parents, Salomon and Mary (Leikas), brothers Eugene, Forrest and Allan, and sister, Norma.

Beverly (Sabo) Shapiro, 72, passed away on May 3, 2023, in Miami, Florida. Beverly grew up in Fairport, and after graduating from Harding High, she moved to Florida to attend the University of Miami. She dedicated her life to teaching special education. She was a life-time member of our Society. She is survived by her son, Zachary (Jennifer), grandsons Aiden and Tyler, and daughter, Amanda. She was preceded in death by her husband, Michael, parents Elmer and Eleanore Sabo.

A VIEW THROUGH THE PORTHOLE

“A View Through The Porthole” is the official newsletter of the Fairport Harbor Historical Society.

The newsletter is produced quarterly for members of the Society: February, May, August and November.

If your address changes, please notify us.

To be informed about upcoming events, tours, and Fairport Harbor Lighthouse news send us your e-mail address and we'll add you to our E-News list soon.



**FAIRPORT HARBOR
LIGHTHOUSE &
MARINE MUSEUM**

Fairport Harbor Lighthouse & Marine Museum

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