January 16, 2009

Dear Members and Friends of the Fenton History Center,

As we begin 2009 I am reminded again how quickly time seems to go by. More and more history is being made everyday and the Fenton History Center is working hard to preserve, record, and make available that history so future generations can see all that has gone into shaping their present.

I was at a history teachers’ conference recently and one of the seminars was on a traveling exhibit of Princess Dianna’s life. The discussion focused on properly displaying and caring for her dresses and personal items. Great lengths are taken to make sure that nothing is damaged or mistreated. As I listened to this I thought, “These items are only thirty years old. At the Fenton we take care of clothing and other items that are over one hundred and fifty years old and must regularly care for these items using the best techniques that we know and can afford.” This is a great undertaking and we greatly appreciate and need your continued support in this tremendous endeavor.

2008 was a good year for the Fenton. In the effort to better serve the purposes of the Center we were able to purchase the Hall House next door to the Fenton Mansion. This was made possible through grants from Senator Cathy Young, the Sheldon Foundation, the Chautauqua Region Community Foundation, the Johnson Foundation, and the Lenna Foundation. We are in the process of preparing the house to relocate many of our offices and research center there, as well as storage of a portion of the collections. This will allow the Fenton Mansion to become a showcase of the Victorian period, to better tell Jamestown’s story and to have more space for exhibits. This process will take time and “roll of your sleeves” work. We need our members’ and the community’s help in making these changes.

The Fenton undertook many successful events and projects this year. Events like the “I’ll Be Home for Christmas” holiday tours, the Red, White, and Blue Patriotic evening, the Old-fashioned Day, and the Saints and Sinners Lakeview Cemetery tours are community favorites with growing support. Thanks to the hard work of the staff and volunteers the Fenton is becoming known in the area as an organization that has quality events and is committed to excellence. I plan to work to see that reputation continue and improve in the next year.

As we look toward the future we want the History Center to become a major attraction in the City of Jamestown which draws tourists to the area. We would also like to see the legacy of Reuben Fenton become better known nationally. We are planning to produce a book of his life and involvement in mid nineteenth century America. We will continue to work together with other area attractions so that we will compliment each other, and prosper together. The City has much to offer of interest and we are eager to play an active part.

In order for all this to occur we need your continued support in 2009 and beyond. We value our members and hope to see our membership increase. If you know someone who feels history is important, encourage them to become members. We also need volunteers to help with events, fundraising, research, exhibits, collections, and in various other areas that you may have an interest. We cannot do what we do without the help of our volunteers. If you would like to help in any way, let us know.

Much is in store for the future, and the Fenton Board, staff and volunteers are looking forward to the changes and improvements. Even though time passes we must remember to be grounded in our past and the mission of the Society. It is our desire to preserve the rich history of our area. If you do not know where you came from, you really do not know where you are going. The Fenton’s job is to remind us where we have been and where we should be going.

Sincerely,

Michael T. Rohlin

Michael T. Rohlin, President, Fenton History Center Board of Trustees
From the Director

Dear Members and Friends,

2008 was a year of growth for the Fenton History Center. The Fenton grew in all aspects of facilities, operations and education. We acquired the adjoining Hall Home property from WCA Hospital and now have a beautiful campus to better present programs, meet researchers needs and provide workspace for the staff and volunteers. Obviously this was not done without the tremendous support of a few local foundations and the work of Senator Catharine Young. I know you have been hearing about the changes coming down the road for quite a while, but as the economy is changing, so is our work plan to make sure the Board and staff use our resources in the most prudent manner possible. We want to give you the opportunity to support the growth of the Fenton too. The Board of Trustees, the Capital Campaign volunteers and myself will be reaching out to you when the time is at hand.

We expanded our community and educational outreach via the Post-Journal’s Hometown History articles, the Fenton Institute workshop series and increased involvement with Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc.'s after-school programming. Even one of our summer exhibits was generated from the community’s interest in their local history. The “Satan’s Bowl of Death” exhibit was a huge hit because of the collective memory of former racer’s, spectators, and early dirt track racing enthusiasts. It was a wonderful example of how the local historical society can serve its audience – you.

The Fenton staff and long time volunteer textile curator, Phoebe Forbes, were able to add to their professional development when we closed the doors for a few days in September and attended the national American Association of State and Local History Annual Meeting in Rochester, N.Y. It was a great time to meet our colleagues, increase our networking reach and hear interesting speakers on a variety of topics.

The core mission of teaching our local history received a great boost in 2008 with the award of the Institute of Museum and Library Services Museums for America grant to catch up on the cataloging of the 30-year backlog of archival donations. The donations are in good condition, just waiting to be made accessible.

Of course I would be remiss if I didn’t mention the terrific response the community has shown for our events: Doors Open, the Red, White and Blue Patriotic evening, Old Fashioned Day, and the Saints and Sinners Lake View Cemetery Tours. These community events are fun, appealing and spark interest in our local stories. They are carried out by a cadre of volunteers, Fenton staff and supported by wonderful sponsors. Thank you to all who enjoyed the events.

As I look back on 2008 I am encouraged about the goals set for 2009 through 2011. According to Norman Cousins, “History is a vast early warning system.” The Fenton’s job is to provide the facts, figures and stories from the past to help guide us into the future. My hope is you will find a project or interest that compels you to become a part of the important work (and play) that we do at the Fenton.

Sincerely,

Joni Blackman
Joni Blackman
Director
ATTENDANCE AND WEBSITE USAGE

- The dramatic drop in attendance numbers is due to new website measurements that are more accurate for the visitors that spend more than 30 minutes on the website.
- Public school classroom visits are still recovering from the 50% decline of a few years ago. There is still strong competition for classroom time, transportation resources and funding.
- All the exhibits in 2008 were at the Mansion, unlike the past few years where significant numbers of visitors were able to see Fenton artifacts-based exhibits at other venues.
- There was an increase of 500 visitors to the Fenton Mansion in 2008. This was welcome after a few years of level admission numbers. A number of advertising and marketing choices over the past couple of years have made the Fenton History Center more visible, both locally and regionally.
- The downloadable photographs, list of manufacturers, the Lucille Ball exhibit pages and the “Mr. Lincoln’s War” Civil War pages continue to be the most popular web pages.
- The on-line gift shop was launched this that year as well as an on-line credit card capability.
- The website was re-designed with a NYS Education grant.

Dressing up on Old Fashioned Day.

Grace Galloway’s monument on the Cemetery tours and the first mausoleum tour fundraiser “residents”.

Municipal Band Director Rick Lundquist wore a vintage bandleader uniform and added musical history notes to the Red, White and Blue program.
# Financial Report 2008

## Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008 Actual</th>
<th>2008 Annual Budget</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Assistance</td>
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<td>County Assistance</td>
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<td>Donations</td>
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## Program Grants (for operations)

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<td>Education</td>
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<td>Exhibits</td>
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<td>$ -</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library &amp; Genealogy</td>
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<td><strong>Total Grants</strong></td>
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## Earned Income

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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
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<td><strong>$171,614.00</strong></td>
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## Expense

### Administration

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Travel &amp; Conference</td>
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<td>Payroll Expenses</td>
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<td>Insurance</td>
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### Programming

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<td><strong>Total Programming</strong></td>
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<td>Gift Shop</td>
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<td>Advertising &amp; Fundraising</td>
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<td>Maintenance &amp; Repairs</td>
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<td>*Miscellaneous</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$20,250.16</strong></td>
<td><strong>$16,700.00</strong></td>
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## Net Gain/(Loss)

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<th>2008 Actual</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Net Gain/(Loss)</td>
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## General Operating Expense

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<thead>
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<th>2008 Actual</th>
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<tr>
<td>Restricted Expense from current and previous years</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expense</strong></td>
<td><strong>$178,879.14</strong></td>
<td><strong>$171,614.00</strong></td>
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## Net Ordinary Income

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008 Actual</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Net Ordinary Income</td>
<td><strong>$(8,616.25)</strong></td>
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THE FENTON HISTORY CENTER MISSION STATEMENT – WHAT WE DO

The mission of the Fenton History Center – Museum & Library is to provide educational and cultural opportunities for the residents of Chautauqua County and its visitors through the collection, preservation and exhibition of artifacts and archival materials pertaining to Jamestown, New York and Chautauqua County.

THE FENTON HISTORY CENTER VISION STATEMENT – WHERE WE WANT TO BE

As a trusted steward of the community’s heritage, the Fenton History Center – Museum & Library will champion the preservation and interpretation of regional history by maintaining the foremost historical center of its kind in southwestern New York. Research based exhibits and innovative programming will inspire people of all ages to enjoy, appreciate, and understand the rich history of Jamestown and the surrounding area, as reflected by the FHC’s extensive collection and library holdings. The dedicated staff, membership and Board of Trustees will work together to build a strong, dynamic organization and expand the reach and scope of the FHC’s activities.

The Fenton History Center will ensure the preservation of the Fenton Mansion, while providing adequate facilities to meet the growing needs of the organization and the people it serves. A superior regional history and genealogy research center will accommodate local and visiting researchers. The facilities will also afford space for state-of-the-art storage, educational programs, collections management, exhibit preparation, and visitor orientation.

The staff and Board of Trustees will offer responsible and enthusiastic leadership for the future. Professionally trained, the staff will provide direction in the implementation of current best practices. To strengthen the FHC’s ability to accomplish its mission, an informed Board of Trustees will provide additional guidance and strive to secure the fiscal health of the organization for years to come.

The Fenton History Center will also reach beyond the walls of the Fenton Mansion to engage area residents, students, visitors, and institutions with an increasing variety of activities. Off-site, traveling, and web-based exhibits will compliment multi-media in-house exhibits. Web-based technology will enhance the services offered by the library and research center. Whenever possible, the FHC will collaborate with other historical agencies, non-profit organizations, schools, and businesses. The FHC will be recognized as an indispensable asset to the intellectual and cultural life of the surrounding community.

FENTON HISTORY CENTER STAFF

Joni Blackman, Director
Paula Bechmann, Office Manager & Housekeeping
Norman Carlson, Collections Manager
Barbara Cessna, Researcher
Frances Fair, Education Director
Karen Livsey, Librarian/Archivist
Sylvia Lobb, Registrar/Volunteer Coordinator
Thomas Lobb, Maintenance

Volunteer Staff:
Phoebe Forbes, Textile Curator
Sam Olson, Collections
Lillian Carlson, Collections Care
Julie Hull, Exhibits

Sylvia Lobb retired after 23 years of faithful service to the historical society. She is remaining "on staff" volunteering to maintain the photo collections.
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE THROUGH EDUCATION

- Helping schools meet curriculum goals and providing resources for lifelong learning.
  - 6,061 members and non-members took part in various educational programs for all ages; bus tours, Fenton Institute, History Detectives Club, Textile Seminars, student summer camps, and community events.
  - 108 programs were presented to area school students, community groups and special programming for all ages.
  - This year the summer camps included “Camp Brown” and “In the Good Ole Summertime.” The Jr. Historians (grades 1-3) and History Clubs (grades 4-6) met a few times over the school year and learned about local history and our place in the history of our nation.
  - This past school year, the Fenton Education Department was involved in three of Chautauqua Opportunities’ s after-school programs.
  - The Fenton Education department taught in 8 of the 16 public school districts in Chautauqua County and at JCC.
  - The Fenton Institute was started in 2008 to meet the growing needs of our adult learners. The four sessions ranged from how to take care of your vintage family photographs to learning about the earliest years of our county’s beginning as we approach it’s Bicentennial in 2011. Approximately 120 members and non-members participated in the workshops and lecture.

Education Director  Frances Fair
Museum Teachers   Gesele Koehler  Dolores Parsons  Michael Rohlin
Julie Hull   Norman P. Carlson   Janelle Scolton  Frances Wolinsky

PREPARING THE COMMUNITY’S PAST

- Caring for a collection that is the community’s cultural heritage.
  - 202 separate donations were accessioned and processed in 2008. These collections included approximately 3,000 separate artifacts. 11 collections from previous years were also accessioned.
  - 5 loans in and out of the collections department were processed.
  - On-going physical maintenance of the Fenton Mansion is a fundamental activity.
  - 69 requests for photograph reproductions from the FHC collection with 207 photographs processed.

The Gov.’s Chair will be conserved this year with a NYS grant

Collections Manager  Registrar  Housekeeping  Maintenance
Norman P. Carlson  Sylvia Lobb  Paula Bechmann  Tom Lobb

Whether the students come to learn their local history by visiting the Fenton Mansion with their class, at a summer camp or Fenton staff takes the programming to their school, it happens in fun and interesting ways all year long.
Serving Through Information

- **Your story is our community’s story:** a center for inquiry, investigation and scholarly research where you can explore your family history and discover how it is a part of this community’s history.
  - 746 people used the library and archives for genealogical and historical research
  - Researchers responded to 42 written/faxed, 91 e-mail, and 2,090 phone research requests from around the world
  - 4,242 unique visits to the library/archive website pages
  - 12 Archive requests

Librarian/Archivist
Karen E. Livsey

Researcher
Barb Cessna

Volunteer Researchers
Fran TeCulver
Pam Brown
Clarence Carlson
Sharon Terwilliger
Kathy Barber
Del Mee

Telling the Community’s Story

- **Exhibits** serve as a bridge to awareness and knowledge of our unique local history by presenting a personal understanding of the collection.

In the Good Ole Summer Time’
Explore life around beautiful Chautauqua Lake during the first tourism boom.

SATAN’S BOWL OF DEATH
- Jalopy racing every Sunday afternoon!
  - Exciting! Racing at the Busti track.
  - There was mud wrestling, Dare devils and fun!

I’ll be Home for Christmas!
The core of our exhibits, the Fenton Mansion and the local history exhibits.

3,667 on-sight visitors
9,651 website visitors
Thank You for Your Support

PLANNED GIVING
Winslow T. Shearman – purchase of a life insurance policy which will contribute the sum of at least $50,000 in unrestricted funds.

If you would like information regarding opportunities for Planned Giving or the benefits of a gift of appreciated securities or other property please contact Joni Blackman, Director, at 716-664-6256

MEMORIALS are a meaningful way to show the family you care and to support the work of the Fenton History Center.

GRANTS
NYS Education Department Bullet Grant (Sen. C. Young’s Office) $250,000
Chautauqua Region Community Foundation $30,000 (2007-2008)
Greater Hudson Heritage Network $7,400
Hultquist Foundation $10,000
Gebbie Foundation $21,000
Upstate History Alliance $1,450
Institute of Museum and Library Services, Museums for America Grant $216,000 (2008-2010)

GOVERNOR’S CIRCLE $1000+
City of Jamestown Chautauqua County George C. Fowler Fund
Eleanor S. Morris Dr. & Mrs. William Rapaport

CONTRIBUTORS $100+
Lynda Albert American Scandinavian Heritage Foundation Mr. & Mrs. Eric Anable
Catherine Anastasi Mr. & Mrs. Brad Anderson Mr. & Mrs. James W. Anderson
Mr. & Mrs. John C.R. Anderson Teresa J. Anderson Marcia Bliss
Albert Brown Mr. & Mrs. Michael Corey Ruth Chipman
Dennis Conklin Carroll Historical Society Mr. & Mrs. R.E. Dietrick, Jr.
Constance Cryer Ecklund Mr. & Mrs. Frank Farrell, Jr. Fessenden, Laumer & DeAngelo
Margaret Filbrick Suzanne Foley Phoebe Forbes
Annie C. Davidson-Funke Lorena Garmezy Mr. & Mrs. James Giesler
Thomas Goodwill Greater Jamestown Area Thomas & Sally Greer
Dr. & Mrs. Lyndy Gritters Chamber of Commerce J. Mathew & Lane Hagberg
Rhoe B. Henderson Carl Hagberg Ingjald Lodge #65
J.A.M.A. Mr. & Mrs. John Hendrickson Martin Juul
Elizabeth Kiebala Mr. & Mrs. John G. Lanphere Traci Langworthy
Jacqueline G. Lanphere Jamestown Business College Doris Levin
Margaret K. Look Dr. & Mrs. Ronald Kohl Martin Lydell
Sally Martinez David & Carol Larson Mr. & Mrs. Mark Olson
Robert & Anne Plyler Pamela Lopienski Joan Shevory
Dr. Charles Sinatra David & Linda Melquist Mr. & Mrs. A. Theodore Steegmann
Stormer Mechanical Services Elizabeth Rink Tyler Swanson
Janet Vannstrom Slone-Melhuish Insurance Ken & Lois Strickler
James Ventura John & Lisa Yaggie A.E.P. Wall
Thank you to the area businesses that have chosen to help preserve and collect Jamestown’s history. Please add them to your list of preferred businesses!

Thank you—We couldn’t do it without you!

Active Members as of December 31, 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Leader Level $500</th>
<th>Business Sponsor Level $250</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Habittera Architecture &amp; Landscape Architecture</td>
<td>Streetwise Creative Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harrington, Sandberg Architecture &amp; Engineering</td>
<td>Stormer Mechanical Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safehouse, Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc.</td>
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<td>Lake Shore Savings Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jamestown Area Medical Associates</td>
<td>Hitchcock Signs</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Hills Country Club</td>
<td>Moran’s Floor Store</td>
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<td>Jamestown Board of Public Utilities</td>
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<td>The Legend Group</td>
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<td>Lind Funeral Home, Inc.</td>
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<td>Short &amp; Smith Insurance</td>
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<td>Slone-Melhuish Insurance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vullo’s Restaurant &amp; Veal House</td>
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<td>Frank A. Zimba, MD</td>
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Goods & Professional Services


Active Members as of December 31, 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mr. &amp; Mrs. H. James Abdella</th>
<th>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Stephen Abdella</th>
<th>Ms. Ellen Adams</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Lynda Albert</td>
<td>Mr. James C. Alexander</td>
<td>Ms. Inez Alston</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Eric Anable</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Neil Anderson</td>
<td>Ms. Mildred V. Anderson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Todd Anderson</td>
<td>Mrs. Geraldine Anderson</td>
<td>Ms. Lois L. Anderson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Brad Anderson</td>
<td>Ms. Nancy O. Anderson</td>
<td>Ms. Jeanette Anderson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. James W. Anderson</td>
<td>Dr. Lee Anderson</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. John C.R. Anderson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms. Audrey E. Anderson</td>
<td>Ms. Judith Anderson</td>
<td>Mr. Sydney Baker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Thomas Andolora</td>
<td>Mr. James Auria</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs Robert Barber</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms. Tammy Bakewell</td>
<td>Col. Frederick Banse-Fay</td>
<td>Mr. George Bataitis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Larry Barmore</td>
<td>Ms. Ethel Bastian</td>
<td>Mr. Douglas Beardsley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Bruce Battler</td>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. Cliff Bauer</td>
<td>Ms. Sue Benson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms. Cheryl Behner Patterson</td>
<td>Ms. Shirley C.Benson</td>
<td>Ms. Kathryn Benware</td>
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<td>Mr. Peter Bentley</td>
<td>Mr Richard Bentley</td>
<td>Mr. Robert Blackman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms. Eleanore Bergquist</td>
<td>Mr. John Blackman</td>
<td>Ms. Donna Bloomquist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. &amp; Mrs. John Blackman</td>
<td>Ms. Marcia Bliss</td>
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Annual Business Meeting
The Annual Business Meeting of the Fenton History Center will be held at 7 pm on Wednesday, February 4, 2008 at the Fenton Mansion, 67 Washington St. Jamestown. All current members of the Fenton Historical Society are invited to attend. The membership will be electing Officers to serve the 2009-2010 term.

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