DIRECTOR’S REPORT

by Noah Goodling
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Fall is in the air and Saints & Sinners is on its way! By the time this newsletter is released, we’ll be counting down the hours until our fundraiser kicks off. It’s around this time of year that I always get reflective of, and thankful for, the wonderful community that supports and uplifts the work we do at the Fenton.

I think we set a new record this year for the earliest call to come in regarding getting tickets for our tours. Way back in May we got a call with someone looking to book their preferred carriage tours – I encouraged the folks calling to call back when we had actually started planning the event! It was wonderful, though, to know that there are people anticipating our tours nearly six months in advance, and fearing that we’d be so popular that they needed to book tickets that far out to secure their spot. That’s something to aspire for!

Coming up more towards the present, our carriage tours are just about sold out, and the walking tours are headed that way too. I’m so excited to present another set of stories to our waiting audience, and to know that we’ll be able to share the weird and inspiring history of Jamestown with such a wide diversity of people from so many different backgrounds. Part of what makes these tours even more fun, though, is seeing the com-

By Noah Goodling
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Fall is in the air and Saints & Sinners is on its way! By the time this newsletter is released, we’ll be counting down the hours until our fundraiser kicks off. It’s around this time of year that I always get reflective of, and thankful for, the wonderful community that supports and uplifts the work we do at the Fenton.

I think we set a new record this year for the earliest call to come in regarding getting tickets for our tours. Way back in May we got a call with someone looking to book their preferred carriage tours – I encouraged the folks calling to call back when we had actually started planning the event! It was wonderful, though, to know that there are people anticipating our tours nearly six months in advance, and fearing that we’d be so popular that they needed to book tickets that far out to secure their spot. That’s something to aspire for!

Coming up more towards the present, our carriage tours are just about sold out, and the walking tours are headed that way too. I’m so excited to present another set of stories to our waiting audience, and to know that we’ll be able to share the weird and inspiring history of Jamestown with such a wide diversity of people from so many different backgrounds. Part of what makes these tours even more fun, though, is seeing the com-

By Noah Goodling
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Fall is in the air and Saints & Sinners is on its way! By the time this newsletter is released, we’ll be counting down the hours until our fundraiser kicks off. It’s around this time of year that I always get reflective of, and thankful for, the wonderful community that supports and uplifts the work we do at the Fenton.

I think we set a new record this year for the earliest call to come in regarding getting tickets for our tours. Way back in May we got a call with someone looking to book their preferred carriage tours – I encouraged the folks calling to call back when we had actually started planning the event! It was wonderful, though, to know that there are people anticipating our tours nearly six months in advance, and fearing that we’d be so popular that they needed to book tickets that far out to secure their spot. That’s something to aspire for!

Coming up more towards the present, our carriage tours are just about sold out, and the walking tours are headed that way too. I’m so excited to present another set of stories to our waiting audience, and to know that we’ll be able to share the weird and inspiring history of Jamestown with such a wide diversity of people from so many different backgrounds. Part of what makes these tours even more fun, though, is seeing the com-

...CONTINUED ON PAGE 2
munity of people coming together behind-the-scenes to make the tours happen in the first place.

Putting on these bigger events gives me the humbling opportunity to see what happens when many hands join together in partnership towards a common goal. In the months preceding the event, the Fenton staff and a few community volunteers put their heads together to try and identify some new stories for the tours. Laurie Peterson and Hugh Golden up at Lake View Cemetery are especially great partners each year – they suggest some stories, make every part of the process so much easier, and they’re just friendly, hard-working people on top of all that.

Once the stories are identified, and the routes are laid out, we need trained guides who can lead our groups around, and talented actors to portray the folks that we’ve picked out. Some of our guides have done these tours every year since they started – this is our 16th year – and can tell you more about the cemetery at this point than anyone else. I always pick up new tidbits for myself when I offer trainings to these guides on the new stories, drawing on their amazing experience.

Our actors are just as committed as our guides. It’s a wonder that all of our actors still remember who they really are, with all the different roles that they’ve played for us over the years, sometimes taking on multiple roles within the same Saints & Sinners tours. Many of them are agreeing to sit contentedly in a pitch-black cemetery for hours at a time in whatever weather October throws at them, jumping up to give an enthusiastic performance anytime a tour group wanders near. It’s wonderful to see our new and returning volunteers get so excited to take on a next role and share a newly discovered piece of our local history.

Beyond story-collectors, actors, and guides, we have volunteers that take tickets, help us spread the word in the community, prepare and sell treats for us each tour night, handle technical problems, take photos and videos at the event, help take care of the rest of the volunteers, assist with preparing and marking out the tour routes, and a multitude of other tasks. It takes dozens of people working together to create a unique tour experience that leaves on time and has our audience leaving satisfied. It is a true honor and privilege for me to have such a vivid reminder of the community that I’m fortunate to have and to live in. Whether you support us with your time, your energy, or your interest, know that I’m grateful to have you as a part of the Fenton experience.

Thank you for all that you do to support local history!
The Fenton History Center presents the 16th Annual Saints & Sinners Cemetery Tours and Mausoleum & More Tours at Lake View Cemetery in Jamestown at the corner of Buffalo St and Lakeview Ave. Hear Costumed Actors tell revealing stories about Jamestown’s famous- and infamous- former residents.

**Walking Tours**

Saturday, October 9th 6pm-10pm and Saturday, October 16th 3 pm-6 pm
Tours starting every 30 minutes
$10 adults presale/$2 children (Adults at the gate $12)
Fenton Members ONLY $5
Join Now!
Group sizes will be limited!

**Carriage Tours**

Saturday October 9th 3, 4, & 5pm and Saturday October 16th 6, 7 & 8pm
Tickets $20

October is possibly my favorite month here at the Fenton History Center. The house is decorated for Halloween featuring our fun, non-scary historical Halloween displays, and The Saints and Sin- ner’s tours of Lakeview Cemetery are here! October is also the last chance to see our 2021 Featured Exhibit, Protest and Pride: The LGBTQ+ Community in Chautauqua County. Come visit the Fenton, see the exhibit and enjoy our Halloween display for some fall fun.

On Thursday October 21st join us for another Virtual Paint Night. This time we will be painting pumpkins on rocks. The smooth flat rocks were collected from the shores of Lake Erie, and are all pumpkin shaped! Kit includes a rock, paint and paint brush and instructions to join us on Zoom to paint together!

We are having a Halloween open house the day before Hallow- een, Saturday the 30th from 10 to 6:30. We will have some fun photo opportunities, games and make-and-take activities for the kids. The Halloween open house is a family friendly spooky event. Masks and costumes are strongly encouraged! Standard admission rates apply.
FENTON HISTORY CENTER
67 Washington St
Jamestown

FENTON VIRTUAL PAINT NIGHT

Join us via Zoom to paint a Pumpkin Rock

OCT. 21ST 7PM

For $20 we provide everything you need to paint this, including the rock. Call the Fenton or stop in to reserve your spot!

Call 716-664-6256 to register and stop by the Fenton Gift Shop to pick up your kit!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT US AT (716)664-6256
A Halloween Open House

Come take a self guided tour of the Fenton History Center's 1864 Mansion decorated for Halloween. Enjoy fun photo opportunities, take-and-make activities for the kids, and our historic Halloween exhibit.

October 30th 2021 10-6:30
Admission:
Adults $10
Children Free!

Masks and costumes are highly encouraged!

Call the Fenton History Center at 716-664-6256 for more details.

Fenton History Center
67 Washington Street
Jamestown, NY 14701
We are showing one of two recently received pictures apparently taken the same day and place. They show a young girl in a long drab dress heavily festooned with cookies and crackers. In the picture we show, she looks at the camera with a cracker in her mouth and a silly smile on her face. She holds a large white bag and is surrounded by barrels and boxes of John H. Tousley Company’s crackers, cakes, and biscuits.

The photos are very much not in keeping with the rest of the well-organized donation. The donation consists of the papers of Sabra Wilbur Vought (1877-1942). Miss Vought was a highly accomplished and respected librarian. She was born in Towanda, Pennsylvania but lived with her parents many years in Jamestown. She graduated from Jamestown High School in the class of 1895 when there were no yearbooks or senior pictures. She graduated from Allegheny College in 1899. There, we learn from her college yearbook on line, she was essayist for her senior class, a member of two sororities, and was on the tennis team. Although she never married, she is quoted in the yearbook thus: “One haughty glance of mine eyes can conquer any man.” By the time she was 37 and listed in the Woman’s Who’s Who of America she gave her favorite recreation as reading.

Information about her adult life is dead sober. After graduating from the New York State Library School in 1901 she became librarian at the University of Tennessee. A compilation in the donation lists 10 distinguished positions she held all over the eastern U. S. She was also instructor at the Library School at Chautauqua from 1906 to 1914. From 1930 until her death, she was librarian in the U. S. Office of Education. The collection includes a number of books inscribed to her by the authors. She died in Washington, D. C. but is...continued on page 7
buried in Lake View Cemetery.

We do not know; we only suspect the girl in the photos is Sabra. They were taken at Eclipse Studio at 119 West Third Street which places them between 1886 and 1892, or when Sabra was between nine and 15 years old. The family did live in Jamestown at that time. Her appearance, to the extent we can tell, in a senior class group photo in her Allegheny yearbook is consistent with the appearance of the cracker girl. A colleague from her Tennessee days reminisces in 1934 that she was “a pretty, fresh looking, delightful young girl.”

We have only begun to examine the papers. Perhaps we will find clues to confirm or refute our suspicions.

I have not been able to establish a connection to explain why Sabra might have been modeling for the Towsley bakery. John H. Towsley was born in Morrisville, Madison County, New York in 1827. He was a carpenter in early life but in 1855 he established a bakery. He came to Jamestown and established a bakery here in early December, 1864 at 19 East Third Street. His obituary in 1905 says he retired in 1899 but the business disappears from city directories a few years earlier. In any event, he was in business in the early 90’s when the photos were apparently taken.

We have a number of strange and comical photos in the collection. People had fun in the past, sometimes even enough fun to record with then relatively expensive photography. Most photos of people with bizarre costumes show the casts of theatrical productions or groups in the ceremonial regalia of fraternal or corresponding sorority organizations. In the early 20th century there are occasional outlandish party photos. In any event, I like the reminder that even librarians and Episcopalians (which she was), or at least future librarians, can have fun and that even old people were once young. History is what historians select and report. Both deliberately and inadvertently, they project themselves onto people in the past. That is one reason primary documents are so important to preserve.
A Call for Board Members!

The Fenton History Center is governed by a Board of Trustees. We are a “working board,” meaning we discuss, plan, strategize, and work with staff to coordinate activities at the Fenton. We currently have two open positions on the Board and are always looking for new members, with diverse skills and backgrounds that can help aid in the Fenton’s mission.

If you are interested in joining the Board of Trustees, the only eligibility requirement is that you need to be a dues-paying member of the Fenton. Members of the Board of Trustees are elected at the annual meeting, usually held in February of each year. If you are interested, fill out the application on our website at the link below. Prospective Board Members have also been typically invited to meetings of the Board of Trustees to get a better idea of how the Board operates.

fentonhistorycenter.org/joinboard
The Fenton Christmas Market

A Christmas Craft Show throughout the Historic Victorian Mansion

Saturday, November 13th, 2021
10am-4pm
67 Washington St Jamestown NY

Admission $2

A selection of vintage Christmas items and handmade holiday and gift items will be available for sale throughout the festively decorated historic Fenton Mansion
67 Washington Street
Jamestown NY, 14701

This event is separate from our annual holiday display. Come back on or after Nov. 26th to see Christmas at Santa’s Workshop.
The Fenton History Center’s Genealogy Support Group serves to support to both experienced and amateur researchers. Meetings feature invaluable lectures, discussions and are an excellent way to become familiar with the Fenton History Center’s impressive collection of resources.

The Support Group typically meets on the last Wednesday of each month at the Fenton History Center in the historic Hall House building, located at 73 Forest Avenue in Jamestown, New York. Doors open at 6, and the meeting begins at 6:30 with a brief business meeting followed by a program. Program topics and speakers are subject to change. Meetings are also often held via Zoom.

*The upcoming New England Workshop is the sixth in a series of six on the topic.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, October 27, 2021 @ 6:30 PM
Ellis Island Film
*presented by Barry Keller*

Saturday, November 20, 2021 @ 10:30 AM
New England Workshop V: NEHGS Resources*
*presented by Janet Wahlberg*

Wednesday, November 24, 2021 @ 6:30 PM
Brickwalls
*Open Forum - Bring your brickwalls!*

Wednesday, December 29, 2021 @ 6:30 PM
Christmas Party
The New England Genealogy Workshops will continue in the Fall with the following programs.

Part IV: Using Town Records for New England Research (Sept. 11, 2021)
Part V: Online Resources for New England Research (Sept. 25, 2021)
Part VI: Resources of the New England Historic Genealogical Society (Nov. 20, 2021)

All sessions are held in-person at the Hall House Research Center and on Zoom. Each session begins at 10:30 a.m. and is finished by 12:30 p.m. In-person participants are asked to wear a mask during the workshops. Space is limited. Please call the Fenton History Center at 716-664-6256 to reserve your spot.

* Recordings of the first three sessions, “Formation and Settlement of New England,” “Migration Out of New England,” and “Local Resources for New England Research” are available to those who paid for the workshops individually or all 6 sessions as a whole.

Non-Members: $20 per session or $100 for all 6 sessions*

Members: $10 per session or $50 for all 6 sessions*

Don’t Miss Our Final Brown Bag Lecture of the Year!

Wednesday, October 13, 2021 at Noon via Zoom and Facebook Live

Tom Greer, Fenton Archaeology Director, will talk about the 2021 archaeological dig results.
On Sunday September 5, the Fenton History Center lost one of its most dedicated researchers, Marty Hagstrom. Marty could be found nearly every day at the end computer in the Salon at the Hall House working quietly away. Most of his research centered in the Scandinavian counties, especially Sweden and Denmark. He worked on friends and acquaintances families as well as his own.

Marty generously shared his expertise with others who might be struggling to find answers or to read the Old-Style script in the records. He was very gentle and patient in offering his help. Some of his expertise came from his friendship with Lars-Ola Jakobsson who spent time at the Fenton several years ago. The remained friends long after Lars’ return to Sweden.

Marty shared an interesting experience with some of us from early in his life. He was about 8 years when his family heard the news that the train carrying Judge Robert H. Jackson would be coming into Warren. He, his brother, and his father went down to the station in Warren very early in the morning and were there when the train arrived. As the Falconer Legion was late getting there, Marty’s dad and brother helped lower the casket from the train to the awaiting wagon. They then waited until the Legion got there and draped the casket with a flag. He said that it made him feel really proud to have been a small part in history.

Marty graduated from Warren High School in 1964 and was drafted into the US Army in 1965. He served during the Vietnam War as a communication specialist. Upon his discharge, he enrolled in the Jamestown Community College, where he studied Mechanical Engineering, and upon graduation he was hired at Pittsburgh DeMoes Steel where he and others designed the famous St. Louis Archway.

IN MEMORIAM

MARTY HAGSTROM
1946-2021

by Janet Wahlberg
TRUSTEE, TREASURER

I have received many tributes from people connected to the Hall House. Some of which I will share with you:

“RIP Marty! He was so good to help people searching for Swedes and Danes who had stayed in Pa. We always appreciated his help. He and Bob Munson used to come on Monday nights back in the days before the Hall House.” - Barb

“He is a sad loss.” - Vince

“Very sorry to hear this. Rest in peace, sympathy to family.” - Steve

“He was so helpful when I had Swedish questions.”

“What a nice person Marty was, and so sorry to hear of his passing. May God bless his family.”

- Sue Ellen

“Ooh... That is sad news indeed.”

“A great guy!”

“I will miss his friendly attitude and willingness to help. He was fun to do research with and sometimes I would have to remind him that he was talking to himself and the computer... always with good humor.”

“Marty happened to be there one weekend day when I was in town and he helped me solve a mystery regarding my Olson great-grandmother, which led me to finding out so much more about my family.”

Indeed, he will be greatly missed by many.
Follow us on social media for more great local history content!
VETS FINDING VETS

by Barb Cessna

VETS FINDING VETS COORDINATOR

In just a few short days, the next Buffalo Niagara Honor Flight appears to still be scheduled to take a total of 30 Veterans and their guardians to Washington, D.C. The HF Volunteers work tirelessly to make sure each flight is “the trip of a lifetime”, as a way to honor the service of our Veterans. They will enjoy these memories for the rest of their lives, and will talk about it often.

There are a total of 10 Veterans going from Chautauqua County with our group, because 2 of the guardians are also Veterans. Five Vets and their guardians will leave on the Chautauqua County Veterans Van on Friday Oct 8th at 2:30, and we will stop in Dunkirk to pick up 5 more Vets and guardians. We’ll reach the Aloft Hotel just in time to snap some “before the flight” pictures and will join the others for the Meet & Greet Dinner where we meet the Veterans and guardians and Honor Flight volunteers who will be on our bus. (Generally, the flight has 50 Veterans and their guardians, but due to Covid restrictions, it was limited to 30 Vets. Therefore there will probably be only 2 buses we will board when we reach the Baltimore Airport.)

Everyone has a great time at the Meet & Greet, and after instructions about when we will board the shuttles to go to the Airport at the crack of dawn, it’s time to settle in and get a good night’s sleep. There will be no chance to take a nap, as the HF volunteers manage to work up a tight schedule in order to have time to begin with a short tour of Washington before spending the rest of the day visiting each of the War Memorials. All too soon, the sightseeing is over and we board the bus to journey back to Baltimore for a nice dinner and entertainment before heading back to the Airport. By the time we get back to Buffalo and arrive at the Hotel, it is too late to travel back to Chautauqua County, so we stay overnight again. The Veteran’s Van comes back to pick us up Sunday morning at 10 am, and we are back to the Fenton parking lot by noon.

There are two WWII Veterans on this flight (Alden Smith and Charlie Mason), and they have been waiting for two years for this trip, when normally it would only have been a six month wait. They have both been interviewed by Greg Peterson for the Defenders of Freedom project. Enjoy these videos of their service in a nutshell.

Alden Smith was in the U.S. Army Air Corps, and he didn’t stop with WWII.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T2uf1--rqig

Charlie Mason was in the U.S. Navy on a minesweeper, among other adventures.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1eV5hRKhF8
Introducing the 2021 feature exhibit. Learn about the history of the LGBTQIA+ community in Chautauqua County and hear stories from community members about their experiences in Jamestown and Chautauqua County.

Exhibit opens March 31st 2021 and runs through October of 2021

Visit us Monday through Saturday 10-4
Admission $10 adults
Members and Children 17 & under free!

Fenton History Center
67 Washington St
Jamestown NY 14701
www.fentonhistorycenter.org
One of the ways you can support the Fenton History Center is through our Amazon Wishlist. Of course we accept gifts purchased in other places, or monetary donations too!

www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1PU3BVS0HQ5E0

Fenton History Center’s

amazon

Wishlist

www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1PU3BVS0HQ5E0