Paula has been with us many years and has helped to keep us running smoothly over those years. However, she has decided to retire. We will miss her deeply, but wish her a Happy Retirement with time to do the many things she has put off over the years.

For those of you who have visited the Fenton History Center over the years you have most likely met Paula. We have considered her the Face of the Fenton. Paula opened the doors and turned the lights on in the morning. She then welcomed our guests as they arrived. After providing a quick overview she directed them to the wonderful exhibits.

On a personal note, she fit in immediately with her open and friendly manner. As she met with the individual staff members and many of the volunteers, it became obvious that she has a love of history and the Fenton. Conversation with her, is always a wonderful exchange of thoughts and ideas. And now for Jane’s story in her own words.

I am grateful to have the oppor-

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I went in a different direction. I worked in several Ohio hospitals and nursing homes as a certified Activities Director and went to Kent State University Graduate School for a masters in Therapeutic Recreation and Administration. I also owned my own consulting business and KoPiper’s Place, a doggie daycare, training, grooming, and retail business.

Many years went by before I finally began my museum career! I was the director of the Chagrin Falls Historical Society & Museum before moving to Western New York. For many years I wanted to move to Western New York because I have family in Buffalo and own a house in Lily Dale. I moved to Lily Dale in 2018 and became the executive director of the Historical Society of Dunkirk.

My hobbies include playing bagpipes with the 96th Highlanders of Jamestown, playing ukulele with several groups and playing several other instruments. I train dogs and I am an AKC CGC evaluator and an evaluator for Therapy Dogs International, Inc. I also write (have published historical books, articles related to pets, and articles on Spirituality) and frequently speak in church and work as a Healer.

Because of my love of pets, I had to move to a larger house in Fredonia where I have six dogs, two cats, and a green cheeked Conure.

That’s my life in a nutshell! I hope to meet our members of the Fenton History Center, so please stop in at the museum and introduce yourself.

Jane Babinsky

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tunity of serving the Fenton History Center as the executive director. The museum reminds me of the Seneca County Museum in Tiffin, Ohio, where I did my internship during my senior year at Heidelberg University. My major at Heidelberg was American Studies and Museology (the modern term is Museum Studies).

I grew up in Chagrin Falls, Ohio, surrounded by antiques in a century home and my grandmother was the town historian. As a small child my grandmother would take me on various museum visits, which instilled my love of history and museums. I was supposed to go to Cooperstown after graduation from Heidelberg, however, there was an economic crunch that effected museums at the time, so,
Summer is always an exciting time here at the Fenton History Center. This month we are opening the 2022 Featured Exhibit, Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church; the First 100 years. 2022 marks 100 years since the church was incorporated and began holding services in Jamestown. Come learn about the Greek community that built the church, the history of the church itself and their lasting impact on the community. The exhibit will open on Wednesday June 22nd with a reception from 6-8pm, and will remain on exhibit through November 1st.

We are also excited to announce the return of our Historic Walking Tours. On Saturday June 25, July 9, July 23, August 6 and August 20. For more details on walking tours visit our website or Facebook page, or call the Fenton History Center at 716-664-6256.

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CURATOR’S CORNER

by Victoria Parker
CURATOR

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Over the years she has been a superwoman who managed memberships, bills, payroll, gift shop items, and other jobs too numerous to mention. She has been indispensable and amazing. She will be missed.

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50% OFF Museum Admission for Seniors (65+)
FIRST TUESDAY EACH MONTH

Fenton Canteen will be meeting at the Fenton History Center beginning July 9, 2022.
A JUNE NIGHT RIDE ON THE D.A.V.

by Bruce A. Lawson

For many years in the past when railroads were the main method of transporting goods and people, most traveling circuses and carnivals also used the rail service during their show season. One such local line was the D.A.V. & P., a very small branch of the mighty New York Central Railroad. These letters were used to indicate the area served. In this case meaning Dunkirk, Allegheny Valley & Pittsburgh. But the line was never finished beyond Titusville (Pa). That may be why the line is usually referred to as just the D.A.V.

Growing up in the village of Falconer in the 30s & 40s, I had my very own railroad, sort of, as the above mentioned D.A.V. line ran just beyond our backyard. One of my earliest forms of entertainment was to run to the back fence when I would hear a train coming. There I could enjoy watching the action of the huge locomotive, and also wave to the train crew. They would usually wave in return.

When a circus came to this area and set up at the Falconer (NY) circus grounds, they arrived early in the AM via the D.A.V. and left that night on the Erie Railroad. A week or so before the arrival of the show, colorful ads would show up around town to advertise the coming event. For many, the best, and only show to watch was the unloading of the circus train, as that was free. Another free feature, that I can remember, was the circus parade, which usually took place around noon. That practice however, was discontinued while I was still very young.

One year a few days before a circus was to visit, a couple of my buddies namely Douglas (Doug) Webster and Larry Lloyd, and myself were discussing the pending arrival of the above when we hatched a daring plan. Wouldn't it be great if we could hitch a ride on the freight train from Falconer to Dunkirk the night before the circus and hop on the circus train at Dunkirk and ride back to Falconer in the AM. This would not be quite as simple as it sounds, as in those days kids were required to be home and in bed at night. Therefore, it was necessary to make some sneaky arrangements at home. In the past we had sometimes stayed overnight at a friend’s house, so it was presented that way, and OK'd.

When the big night arrived, we were able to climb into an open gondola car unseen by the train crew at around 9 PM. After a short delay, the train was on it’s way out of town. As I remember, the train consisted of about 10 or 12 cars, and our car was about in the middle of the train. At our position we were treated to the full benefit of all the oily steam and soft coal smoke. The trip was mostly quite uneventful, however the track conditions imparted a fair amount of extra motion to the ride. Lightning bugs were flashing in the fields and woods as we passed and heat lightning could be seen flashing in the distance. At one point the train slowed to a walk on the grade of Cassadaga hill. There we considered hopping off to wait for the circus train, but changed our minds when the train picked up speed. After a few more miles, the train slowed again while running through Fredonia and into Dunkirk, then came to a stop. So, now what? Here we were in the middle of the night, in a strange place, with no circus train in sight.

There is an old saying about what can happen to the best laid plans of mice and men. Apparently that also applies to the plans of boys in their early teens, as about this time, our plans started to unravel. Just before stopping, we passed a small building that

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was the only place lit up around there. Without much thought we hopped down and headed back there to inquire about the circus train. Inside were two men that were quite surprised when we came through the door. “What the heck are you kids doing in here” they shouted. We gladly explained our plans, which they seemed to get quite a kick out of. They even offered to let us stay there to wait for the circus train when it would come through later. But with the idea of three kids trying to board a moving train in the dark, and also maybe with their jobs in mind, they reconsidered and decided they didn’t want to be part of any possible disaster. At about this time we learned of our whereabouts. Our train ride had come to a stop inside the grounds of the Brooks (Alco) locomotive works, and this being war time, these guys were supposed to be guarding the place. Therefore, they figured, the best solution was to have the Dunkirk police contact our folks and have someone come out and pick us up.

We were then given a free ride to the police station, where we were treated quite well. We were even offered the use of a large cot in one of the cells, where we could stretch out and get some sleep, but being pretty well keyed up, no sleep was to be had. My dad was working in Buffalo and Doug’s dad was in the navy, but Larry’s dad was available for the job. So he was called, and after about an hour he arrived to take us back home.

On the way, Doug wasn’t feeling very well, and noticed a little swelling around his neck. Larry had just gotten over the mumps and apparently had passed them on to Doug. I had had the mumps years before, so was immune. Doug spent the next couple of weeks at home in bed, so missed some school and the circus too.

Due to an event that was occurring almost half a world away, our little misadventure fortunately, received very little attention. As that day happened to be the 6th of June in the year 1944.

Editor’s Note: This article was submitted by Norman Carlson, Collections Manager. Bruce Lawson of Falconer, who passed away on September 26, 2010, had attempted to publish the article without success.
2022 Featured Exhibit
Learn more about the community that built the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and their history here in Jamestown.
Exhibit opens June 22 and runs through October 31st.
Fenton History Center
67 Washington Street
Jamestown NY
Open Mon-Sat 10-4
$10 Adults
Children and Members Free
Walking Tours

Saturday, June 25, July 9, 23, August 6, and 20, 2022
10 AM-noon
$10 per person
$5 Fenton History Center Members
Children 17 & under: Free

Tours leave from the Fenton History Center parking lot.

*Riverwalk tour meets in front of the National Comedy Center

The 2022 Walking Tours series is sponsored by:

For more information, and additional events, please see our Facebook page, visit fentonhistorycenter.org or call 716-664-6256
Follow us on social media for more great local history content!
Genealogy Support Group Presents:

New York State Research Workshops

a 6 part series

May 21, June 11, July 23, August 20, September 24 and October 15, 10:30 to 12:30.

$20 per session or $100 for all 6 sessions if you sign up all at once
$10 each or $50 if paid all at once for Fenton History Center Members.

Please call the Fenton History Center to reserve your spot.
716-664-6256.

Workshops are being held both in person and on Zoom. Space is limited.

Please see the Fenton History Center Facebook page at www.facebook.com/FentonHistoryCenter or the website www.fentonhistorycenter.org
Please join us for another exciting year of interesting local history topics!

**May 11th:**
Randy Elf, Constitutional Lawyer, on Judge Robert H. Jackson’s case WVA vs Barnett

**June 8th:**
Norman Carlson, Collections Manager of the Fenton History Center on the Prehistory of Chautauqua County

**July 13th:**
Fletcher Ward, Local Author, and Historian on the Muskellunge of Chautauqua Lake

**August 10th:**
Wendy Straight Mapping Assistant, Chautauqua County 19th Century Sites on Mapping Jamestown Sites of the 1880s

**September 14th:**
Paul Johnson, Property Developer, on the History of the Packard Family in Chautauqua county

**October 12th:**
Tom Greer, Fenton Archaeology Director, on the 2022 Archaeological Dig Results

**Wednesday April 20:**
Sara Reale, Former Education Director at the Fenton History Center on The Ringling Legacy: The Circus and Beyond

STARTING MAY 11, 2022
THE SECOND WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH
12 NOON

FENTON HISTORY CENTER
67 WASHINGTON ST
JAMESTOWN NY 14701

AND
VIA ZOOM AND FACEBOOK LIVE
The Fenton History Center’s Genealogy Support Group serves to support 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.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, June 29, 2022 @ 6:30 PM
ORA: Online Repository Assistant

\textit{presented by Vince Courtney}

Saturday, July 21, 2022 @ 10:30 AM
New York Workshop III: Early British Period and German Palatines

\textit{presented by Andrew Kolstee}

Wednesday, July 27, 2022 @ 6:30 PM
Book Review of New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer

\textit{presented by Janet Wahlberg}

Saturday, August 20, 2022 @ 10:30 AM
New York Workshop IV: 19th Century New York

\textit{speaker TBD}
This is an exciting month for Vets Finding Vets, as we will soon know the name of the recipient of the Soldier’s Friend Scholarship. This is our maiden voyage into the realm for High School graduate scholarships, but that just adds to the excitement!

Why would we have a scholarship named “The Soldier’s Friend”, you ask?

Many people are surprised to learn that a person from rural Chautauqua County was elected Governor of New York State for two terms, that in itself is an inspiring message. Born in 1819, in what is now Carroll, Reuben E. Fenton began his political career by becoming Carroll’s youngest Supervisor at the tender age of 27. He was reelected Carroll Supervisor seven times and thus began his journey toward Governorship. Once elected to the House of Representatives in 1852, Fenton’s first act as Congressman from the 31st District was to introduce a bill to grant relief to the surviving invalids of the Revolution and the War of 1812. He also advocated laws to facilitate furloughs and discharges for disabled Civil War soldiers, payments of bounties and arrears of pay due to wounded and deceased soldier families, and to simplify the application form for pensions.

As Governor during the last few months of the Civil War, Fenton continued his efforts to help families locate their soldier sons, “franked” their letters with his signature so they could send them without postage, and continued many long months forward to visit the wounded in hospitals. These late night hospital vigils often led to trips to the War and Navy Departments as he worked through the needed paperwork to ease the burden on the soldiers and their families.

After the deaths of then Ex-Senator Fenton in 1885 and Mrs. Fenton in 1901, the Fenton Mansion sat empty until 1919 when the City of Jamestown purchased it for the purpose of a Soldier and Sailor Memorial. Many Veteran and Patriotic organizations have held their meetings and events in our beloved Fenton Mansion.

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So, there, in a very large nutshell, are the many reasons we have named it “The Soldiers’ Friend Scholarship”. This scholarship for $1000 will be presented to a graduate making plans to enter further education in pursuit of a military-related field. If you would like to help sponsor our worthy cause, you can stop in at the Mansion or call us at 716-664-6256. We are hoping that the Scholarship Recipient will be available to join Gov. Fenton on the Fenton History Center float in the Fourth of July Parade in Mayville!

The Fenton History Center is now a Blue Star Museum!
Free admission to all active military and their family through September 5, 2022!

We are a BLUE STAR MUSEUM

presented by NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS and BLUE STAR FAMILIES

arts.gov/bluestarmuseums
MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS
• Unlimited complimentary admission to the Governor Reuben Fenton Mansion.
• Unlimited access to the Hall House Research Library.
• Reduced fee for Fenton events and programs unless specified.
• A discount to the museum gift shop.
• Members only e-mail updates.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP LEVELS
• Student $15
• Senior (age 62+) $30
• Educator $30
• Individual (under age 62) $40
• Family $75. Includes 2 adults and up to 3 children.

SUPPORTING MEMBERSHIP LEVELS
• Supporting $120, can be paid monthly ($10). Includes 4 complimentary admission
  passes for guests.
• Friend of Fenton $250, can be paid monthly ($20.83). Includes 6 complimentary
  admission passes for guests.
• Representative’s Circle $360, can be paid monthly ($30). Includes 8 complimentary
  admission passes for guests.
• Senator’s Circle $500, can be paid monthly ($41.67). Includes 16 complimentary
  admissions for guests, lunch with Executive Director, and a behind the scenes tour of the
  Gov. Reuben Fenton Mansion for up to four people.
• Governor’s Circle $1,000, can be paid monthly ($83.33). Includes unlimited
  complimentary admissions for guests, lunch with Executive Director, a behind the
  scenes tour of Gov. Reuben Fenton Mansion for up to four people, and a behind the
  scenes tour of Hall House Research Center for four people.
VOLUNTEERS: THE HEART OF THE FENTON

by Janet Wahlberg
PRESIDENT

Fenton History Center relies on its volunteers. Over the years, these people have truly been the heart of the organization. This continues to be the case. However, many have retired from their positions creating the opportunity for new volunteers to join us. Currently, our biggest needs are:

**Grounds Workers.** This can be anything from trimming shrubbery, planting and weeding flowers, picking up sticks, edging sidewalks to shoveling walks in the winter.

**Typists.** There are many projects that need to be catalogued and simple typing skills would be a major help.

**Inventorying.** We receive boxes of donations that need to be inventoried to allow the Collections Department to store these donations until there is time to do the formal archiving of them. Having a list of what is in each box is an incredible help.

These are only a few of the places that we can use volunteers. You would be able to set your own hours, and we would provide tools and training as needed. If you can help, please call us at 716-664-6525.

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Caring for our exhibits and artifacts requires constant temperatures and levels of humidity. Our basement area can get quite damp in the summer and requires that we run a dehumidifier continuously. We would welcome a new one if you are able to help us out.
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