

Perinton Teen Gives Historic Markers New Life

Perinton's past is reflected in 24 historic markers found in the village of Fairport and town of Perinton. The earliest signs were first posted in 1949, and have become a part of our history. They reflect the growth of our community, from a pioneer wilderness to a canal boomtown. One marker documents the first log cabin, built by Glover Perrin in 1791. Others refer to important early industries, companies such as Deland Chemical and American Can. A few can be found at Perinton's early burial grounds.

There are three different types of historic markers in Perinton, each with their own color scheme. The earliest markers were established by the New York State Education Department in 1949. In the late 1950's Monroe County created additional historical markers. The town has posted markers identifying other areas of historic interest, including cemeteries and historic districts. All have been maintained and repainted over the years, sometimes by municipal employees, and at other times, through the efforts of volunteers.

Andrew Paratore is a 17 year old Fairport High School student, and a Boy Scout, a member of Troop 208. He joined Cub Scouts at the age of five, and twelve years later, is pursuing the rank of Eagle, the highest advancement level in Boy Scouting. One of the requirements is to plan, develop, and provide leadership in the completion of a service project. Andrew has chosen the rehabilitation of Perinton's historic markers. He has been supported by a team of about 25 friends and fellow scouts, his Eagle Coordinator, John Larmann, as well as by his parents, James and Michelle.



Andrew Paratore applies paint to one of Perinton's 24 historic markers

Andrew began planning for his Eagle service project in the summer of 2012. In addition to the restoration of the historic markers, he plans to establish GPS (global positioning system) geocache locations for each of the signs. Each marker's GPS location will be established, and enthusiasts of geocaching, a growing recreational activity, will be able to locate them using a GPS device.

The process of restoring the historic markers started with sandblasting at the Perinton Department of Public Works facility on Cobb's Lane. Andrew and several of his crew members were instructed in the safe operation of the equipment, with the guidance of a DPW employee. All 24 markers were then delivered to the Paratore home for painting.

I met Andrew at his home recently, and saw several members of his team working on the historic markers. The signs were spread across the floor of the garage, in various stages of the painting process. Each is double sided, with lettering on both sides. After sandblasting, the steps include priming, adding the background color, and finally painting the raised letters on each sign. This must be done on both sides of all 24 signs, with correct coloring for state, county, and town signs. I asked Andrew what the biggest hurdle in the project has been thus far, and he replied, "Applying the primer was the most challenging. It was a difficult paint to work with, and we did it on very hot days."

Tom Beck, Commissioner of the Perinton DPW, has high praise for Andrew, saying, "He has done an excellent job in managing this project. His planning, organization, and scheduling efforts have allowed the project to move forward in an efficient manner and produce quality work." Soon Perinton's revitalized historic markers will be remounted, thanks to the efforts of Andrew Paratore and his team, with the support of the town's Department of Public Works.

Written by Bill Poray, Perinton Town Historian Published in the Fairport-ER Post, 07/18/2013