



Parma Hilton Historical Society

1300 Parma Corners Road

Hilton, NY 14468

FEBRUARY 2026



"In the coldest February, as in every other month in every other year, the best thing to hold on to in this world is each other."

Linda Ellersee

February 2: Ground Hog's Day - will Punxsutawney Phil see his Shadow?

February 14: Valentine's Day - Who will be your Valentine?

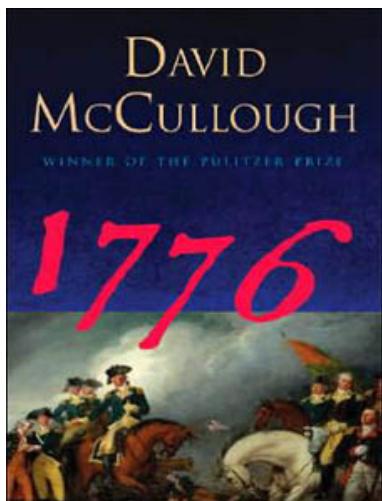
February 17: Mardi Gras – AKA "Fat Tuesday" the day before Lent begins

February 17: Chinese New Year – marks the year of the Horse

February 21: President's Day - honoring all Presidents but especially Washington and Lincoln whose birthdays are in February



Plans are underway to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence in Parma/Hilton. A committee made up of Dave Crumb, Amanda Dudley, Margaret Whelehan, Emma Watt, Ryan Rockefeller and Nancy Leport met on January 26 to begin formulating a list of special events and activities for our community. You can start in March at the Historical Book Club reading 1776 by David McCullough. See below and be watching for more information.



Historical Book Club

We will be focusing our discussions on the year 1776 by reading 1776 by David McCullough. Join us on March 10 at 6:30 in the Parma Public Library. Books are available at the library. You do not have to read the book. It's always a great discussion. Join Us!

And don't forget the documentary, The American Revolution, by Ken Burns which is being replayed on PBS. You can also watch it on YouTube.



Mike Heise of The Big H podcast has interviewed Dave Crumb about the importance of the America 250 celebration and in the next few months other members of the committee will be featured talking about the plans that Parma Hilton has for the year. You can find this on YouTube or follow the link on our website.

Historical Program February 9, 2026



Dan Cody, back by popular demand, returns to share Part II of his talk on the Erie Canal. Dan is well versed in Rochester history and is a favorite of the PHHS members.

Presentations are held at the Hilton Community Center's Ingham Room. Located at 59 Henry Street in Hilton. Presentations are free and open to the public. See you there!

Your response is needed: One of our program attendees suggested that you submit 5 topics of local interest you would like to hear more about. Let us know what your thoughts are and we can explore ways to present your ideas. Email me at naleport@gmail.com or parmahiltonhistory@gmail.com or snail mail to 1300 Hilton Parma Corners Road or just bring your suggestions to the next program on February 9. Thank you.



Great turnout for Dave Crumb's talk on the Fraser Department Store. He drew a large crowd of over 70 people. It was a cold night, but folks came out to hear about "When Hilton Had a Department Store." What other pieces of local history would you like Dave to share with us?

Meet Emma Watt



Emma is our new Intern from SUNY Brockport. She began her internship in January and will be with us until May. Familiar with PHHS, Emma has been videotaping our second Monday programs for 4 years. Following graduation from Hilton Central in 2024 she became a history major at Brockport with the goal of becoming an archivist or museum curator. Always attracted to history she wasn't sure she wanted to major in it because she thought the only career would be teaching, which she did not want to do. Her professors quickly dispelled that idea when they talked about museum and archivist work as a career.

What she likes about history is that she is always learning because there is so much to learn! Learning how history changes over time as more is discovered feeds her love of learning.

I asked her if there were any Monday programs that she found particularly interesting and she immediately responded to the presentation on the Lost Buildings of Orleans County. Historical architecture and fashion, especially the Victorian era, interest her so the discussion of Victorian hair wreaths was a favorite as well. What we choose to live in, whether buildings or clothes in any time period fascinates her.

Emma lives in Hilton with her parents, Amy and Larry and her young sister who is a sophomore at Hilton this year. We welcome her and look forward to working with her. I'm sure there will be mutual learning opportunities for all of us.

What Has the Board Been Up To? A Lot!

- ❖ Save the Date: May 11, 2026 Annual Banquet to be held at the Exempt Club. Tickets will be available soon.
- ❖ Four new historical markers are ready to be placed at: The Wright Cemetery, Burritt Road, Bartlett's Corners and Hoosick Cemetery. Be watching for dates and times for these installations
- ❖ Bylaw revision – we have posted them on our website, www.parmahiltonhistoricalsociety.com, and emailed the suggested bylaw revisions for your review. We will be receiving your comments, questions and suggestions until February 17. We hope to present the revisions for a vote at our April 13 annual meeting.
- ❖ We now have a Procedures Manual that contains operating practices as well as the who and how of what needs to be done. We were able to move some of the bylaw procedures to this manual.
- ❖ ***Are your dues up to date? Check with Nancy Leport, naleport@mail.com or call 585-943-3314 to see if you are behind. You can also pay at any Monday night program.***

- ❖ Would you like to be a member of the PHHS? Dues are \$10 for individuals and \$15 for a family up to 4. Lifetime membership is \$200. Why not consider joining and helping the PHHS continue its work into 2026 and beyond.
- ❖ A new display is in process remembering James Hard, a Civil War Veteran from this area. His family has loaned us some of his memorabilia to put in the Museum. We will let you know when it will be ready for viewing.



Parma Town Hall Window

Make sure to stop and see the Window display at the Parma Town Hall. Curator, Ken Freeman, has once again put together a timely display of Olympic memories including Cathy Turner's speed skating newspaper clippings and Sparky Hess' uniform and the torch she carried for the Salt Lake City Games. The Hess family donated the torch she carried to the museum so if you miss the window display stop by the museum building to

see it up close.

What's New In the Collection by Ken Freeman

February 2026

Random ramblings from the Curator

As the title says, this is all random thoughts before the “Big Snow”.

Why is it that big snowstorms always come at the end of January? Remember the Blizzard of 77? Or 78? We have a picture on the wall in the Wadsworth Meeting Room of a Russell snowplow at the Hilton depot in February of 77, somewhere

around the 15th. I have two or three slides I bought on eBay a couple years back, that railfan Paul Templeton took of that plow at Walker, probably the next day. Even two weeks after the storm, the snow was still at the rooftop of the plow.

Speaking of the cold. I keep wondering what happened to our fake ice that was in the icebox in the kitchen? So, now I must come up with a way to make a fake block of ice. I have an idea or two. One of the challenges I face is how to fake things for display, like a bowl of mashed potatoes. (Hint, think bright white grout).

Right now, in our off season, is when Assistant Curator Jim Otto and I think up and build new displays. Last year it was the doctor's office, plus we rearranged the furniture in the Meeting Room, to make it all more welcoming for our visitors. We try and come up with some neat new interactive displays for the kids to enjoy. I'm not sure just what Jim has in mind yet. I'm working on a refresh of what we have always called the Ag Room, plus a display of our collection of milk bottles and other items. Last year I refreshed what was the sewing area into a quilt display area, of which we have many. (Reminder, time to rotate the stock). In the "be creative" area, I need to figure out how to make an apple about the size of a basketball. Email me with ideas, or if you have one already.....

Someone asked me what I have on my wish list for display items. The top one now? A rotary dial pay phone. Memorabilia from the village, like items from the Candy Kitchen, or the Pleasure Shop or the Theatre. We just got a couple more pieces for Barile's Shoe Store. Just imagine if we had a barber pole and a barber chair. Now that would be a whole new display in the Gallery. Now, where to put that??

One thing that I'm tasked with is decorating the window in the Town Hall. If you don't know where it is, when you come in the front doors, it's to your left. Not a big space, thankfully. I thought our Christmas display was our best ever. Have you seen the latest one? All about the Winter Olympics. The seed of an idea came along when Sparky Hess's daughter called me and asked if we wanted her Olympics memorabilia, from when she ran with the Olympic Torch before the Salt Lake City Games. Sparky was an old family friend, and I can still recall my mom giving me updates on Sparky's quest to be able to run with the torch. Looking through all the paperwork, it would be like applying to work at some top security job. There's also Cathy Turner news clippings, and the backdrop is one of those Kodak panoramic



photos. This one measures about 10 feet long and is of the opening ceremonies at the Lillehammer Games in 1994.

America's Semi-quincentennial (250th anniversary) is this year, and we will be decorating the museum and the town hall window for that, so stay tuned.

Our new season kicks off the second Sunday in April, as Easter Sunday is the week prior. We are always looking for new visitor guides (docent seems too stuffy to me). If you're interested, get in touch. We provide training. It's not a huge commitment, 2 hours on a Sunday, maybe three or four times during the season. I always make sure the newer guides have someone experienced with them, and the core we have has some great stories to tell of their time here in Parma. It's always a great way to learn more about happenings of the past.

Until next time.....

Ken

February Parma Public Library Programs

Visit www.publicparmalibrary.org to see if you need to register.
<https://calendar.libraryweb.org/event/15778965>

February 9 at 6:30: A Changing Climate

February 16 at 6:00: Voicing the Constitution: A celebration event

February 17 at 6:00: Our Last Walk Home: A conversation with end of life coach Jennifer Sanfilipo

YEARBOOK SEARCH

Did you know your Historical Society has a collection of Hilton Yearbooks?

We are still looking for: anything pre 1937, 1939, 1942 1972, 1973, 1974, 1976, 1984 to 1990 and 1992, then 1997 through 2000 and 2002-2025. Do you have any of these years you would like a nice, warm, well-kept home for them to go to? We will be more than happy to adopt them.

Thank you to Dick Howie who is sharing his mother's 1942 yearbook to be digitized.



Help us Discover Hilton History The Crimson Crier

We need your help locating copies of **The Crimson Crier**, the Hilton High School student newspaper. If you have any issues, or know where we might find some, we would like to scan them for our archives and return the originals to you. Please contact John Foster at (585) 820-8633 or email him at FosterMonshipour@gmail.com with any information you have. Thank you for helping discover local history.

Find us at:

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