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THE FAIRPORT BEACON ARCHIVE IS NOW ONLINE

Library patrons, history buffs, genealogists, researchers, and members of the Fairport Harbor community now have a new search tool at their disposal. A complete run of the *Fairport Beacon*, the community newspaper of Fairport Harbor, is now available online on the library website. The digitization project was made possible through a \$500 mini grant from Advantage Archives and the generosity of the Fairport Harbor Friends of the Library.

Previously the contents of the historic community newspaper was not available anywhere in digital format. At some point the library had previously purchased it on microfilm, a format that is cumbersome to use. The reels were thought to have been lost or withdrawn from the collection and library also lacked a microform viewer to access it. While exploring in the library basement, the library director found one reel in a file cabinet previously blocked by heavy shelving. Initially it was thought that the other reels were long gone, but further exploration revealed the remaining reels scattered among miscellaneous drawers filled with old photos, newspaper clippings, and other papers, making it a perfect candidate for digitization.

Enter Advantage Archives. This company digitizes regional newspapers from around the country, many of which would otherwise be “lost to the erosion of time,” and adds them to its Community History Archives database. The database is fully searchable by keyword, or exact phrase. Each entry is customized to the individual library, with its logo, photos, history, and description of the scope of the collection. All of the other participating libraries’ holdings are accessible to any of the libraries in the database. There are over 1,000 individual library archival collections in the Community History Archives database, and a number of Ohio libraries, including Stark County District Library, Medina County District Library, and Avon Lake Public Library. Fairport Harbor Public Library is the only Lake County library in the database.

Local history is a popular topic of interest in Fairport Harbor. The library’s online and print collections of the *Harbor Light*, the Fairport Harbor High School Yearbook, is consistently one of the most viewed pages on the library website. This new resource will provide another means of exploring the community’s heritage. Those wishing to explore the *Fairport Beacon* archives can go to the library website <https://fairportlibrary.com> or go directly to <https://fairportlibrary.historyarchives.online/home>. For more information, contact Karen Zoller at karen.zoller@fairport.lib.oh.us or 440-354-8191, x6521.

