



The East Providence Historical Society

Gazette

March 2014

Volume XXVI No. 4

Dedicated to Preserving the Heritage and Enjoying the
History of Our City

March

Monday, March 24
Members' Meeting -

Public invited

6:00pm

Annual Potluck

7:00pm

Jeff Howe presents:
**Pomham Rock - How
did it get its name?**

Newman Church Hall
Rumford

April

Sunday, April 13
1:00-3:30pm

Hunt House Museum
Open

Monday, April 28
7:00pm

Members' Meeting -
Public invited

Chip Bishop presents:
**Panama Canal 100th
Anniversary**

Weaver Memorial
Library
41 Grove Avenue,
East Providence, RI

CONTACT US AT:

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A New Home at the Rumford for The Count

By Nancy Moore

We hope that by now you have visited Count Rumford's bust by internationally acclaimed sculptress Suzanne Silvercruz in his new home at the Rumford Complex behind Seven Stars Bakery. It was a fine day on November 21 when a large group of interested community people gathered to bring the bust full circle. President Margaret Dooley gave a brief synopsis of the bust's history and travels and the people responsible for bringing it back to the Rumford. Then the Count himself (Board member Jeff Faria) talked about his life and how happy



Laurie Stevenson photo

Welcome home, Count Rumford

Left to right: Laurie Stevenson, Maggie Dooley, Count Rumford, Count
Rumford (Jeff Faria)

The Gazette

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New Home for the Count

he was to be firmly in place once again. Eileen Socha of the EP Library Board spoke about its conservancy of the bust and the circumstances which led to its donation to the EPHS. Community people, Dave Czerwonka of Stanley Granite, and Peter Barilla were recognized for their stewardship and Len Harmon of the Rumford Historical Association of Woburn, MA was introduced.

Len oversees the Benjamin Thompson (Count Rumford) birthplace in Woburn, a national historic site. Colin Kane of the Peregrine Company, which redeveloped the Rumford Complex, spoke about the Rumford Company's important role in the growth of East Providence and its prominence internationally. Colin cited Brendon Kane and Jennifer Vennitti at the Rumford for their work in getting the Count back home.



Laurie Stevenson - Photo

At the end of this success story is a look back at a trail of community involvement, stewardship, preservation, and redevelopment which perhaps began in 1939 with the height of financial success for the Rumford Company, but which definitely took hold with the 1960s closing of the factory. EPHS, which began with many of the Rumford workers as members, is very proud to have been the catalyst for pulling all the above groups together to close the Count's circle.

The East Providence Historical Society

is dedicated to preserving the heritage and enjoying the history of our city.

If you are not a member we invite you to join now.

Annual dues are \$15 individual, \$25 family or business, or a Life Membership for \$150.

Please make check payable to:

East Providence Historical Society

and mail membership form to

East Providence Historical Society

P.O. Box 4774

East Providence, RI 02916-4774



Membership Form

- New
- Renewal/Change

Name(s): _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

\$15 Individual

\$25 Family/Business

\$150 Life

Dues Change Proposal!

The Board of Directors is recommending a change to the time of year that dues are payable. Dues are now collected throughout the calendar year on the anniversary of the month a member joined the society. We are considering having dues collected once a year, as most other organizations do this. This makes the collection of dues more structured, and is better for budgeting purposes. We are proposing that all dues be paid on July 1 each year. The Board looks forward to input from the membership regarding this change.

Welcome to Our New Members

- Barrington Print & Copy (Barry Couto)
- Anthony Calandrelli
- Paul Cleary
- Darlene A. Dorego
- Stephanie Poole
- Robert & Joyce Poyton
- Tom Warzeka

For Sale: 1799 Providence/East Providence Map

At the King Phillip War presentation in November, orders were taken for reprints of a very unusual early map of Providence/East Providence found in the archives at Hunt House and used in the Watchemoket Day display at City Hall in October. (See October Gazette for a photo) A first run of 50 reprints is now available from EPHS and will be sold at members meetings and open houses. Prints are \$8.00 or 2 for \$15.00. Please contact Nancy Moore at nancykmmoore@gmail.com to purchase a map other than at those times. Thank you to all the pre-order people - over half of the reprints have already been sold.

Spring "2nd Sunday" Open House April 13 – May 11 1:00 – 3:30pm

The EP Historical Society welcomes the public back to Hunts Mills after a long winter's nap. If you have not viewed the 160th Anniversary exhibition of the Rumford Baking Powder Company, there are still these two dates to make a visit.

April will also feature the work of the Ten Mile River Group and their determined push to bring fish back to the Ten Mile. Remember to check for the fish flag on the pole at the entrance to Hunts Mills Road in April and come on down to the fish ladder and herring rock if it is flying.

During our open house events the Master Gardeners will also be available after 2:00pm to answer visitors' questions. And in May they will have flowers for mothers and seeds for everyone available.

In Memory Of:

Gloria Peterson

Sadly missed...fondly remembered



Queries – Can You Help with Answers?

This is a new column where we are trying to solicit information from our membership to help answer people's questions.

Deb Ormerod is currently trying to answer as many email requests for information directed to the Historical Society as she can. Although she is good, she can't know everything and she follows up with emails to all the board members for help. When that gets her no results she has to admit defeat and sends a negative reply to the person.

This problem was discussed at the last board meeting and we decided that through the pages of the Gazette we can reach many more people and someone might just have the answer someone else was looking for. To protect people's privacy Deb contacts the sender first before publishing the request and if they agree we will print it here.

So please take a look and read the queries, then search through the filed away information in your head (or the bottom of your sock drawer in the bedroom or wherever you keep your old photos) and use the contact information included with each query to help that person.

NEEDED: a photo of SAMUEL HUNTER, EP Police Sergeant, born 1867 - died 1951 (Lakeside Cemetery) Lived at 36 Cedar Ave, Riverside. Married Bessie Miller - 1921
Respond to jlewis8@netscape.com

INFO WANTED ABOUT: an orphanage in the area of Uncle Tony's on Newport Ave. close to the cemetery which has just been re-excavated, vicinity of New Rd/Rosanna Dr.
Respond to Becky Rego 434 0811

PHOTOS WANTED: 1900-1940s of Fort Hill, Lyons Farm, Pierce Field area. Also early photos of Waterman Avenue area.
Respond to nancykmmoore@gmail.com



Hello,

I am hoping to learn more about my ancestor Brian Hall who died in Seekonk (now India Point) in 1839 five days after filing marriage intentions with Lucy Mason. I believe he was a farmer based on the items listed in his probate and he owned half a Pew in a Baptist Church. Would you have any records that could help solve his mystery? Church records, land deeds, books? Any help would be much appreciated! This blog post details what I know:

<http://passagetothepast.wordpress.com/2014/01/29/help-solve-my-mystery-52-weeks/>

Thanks!

Linda Hall-Little
lindahalllittle@gmail.com

To: whom it may concern,

I am working on my family tree. My family is advising that someone named Joseph Lamb was the mayor of East Providence Rhode Island. I was not given a time frame, but if I had to guess I would say early 1900's. Can you confirm this? Also my grandfather was Frank Vinacco who died in 1955. My family always says he owned a lot of businesses in Providence before the depression wiped out the family fortune. How could I go about finding out what some of those businesses were?

Thank you for any help you may give.
Clint Vinacco
rcvinacco@verizon.net

Pomham Rock – How Did It Get Its Name?

Members meeting and annual potluck.

The EP Historical Society member meetings reconvene in March with a potluck supper at 6:00pm and speaker Jeffrey Howe at 7:00pm. We welcome the public at both. Mr. Howe, an EPHS member and published historian, will continue our discussion about the King Phillips War and how that war affected the family of Warwick Sachem (Chief) Pomham. Locals know well the Riverside rock with the newly restored Pomham Lighthouse. After Chief Pomham was killed late in the war at Dedham MA, his nine year old son was captured. Did this son find his way to Riverside and did his descendants name the rock? An intriguing question and one that Jeff Howe has some answers to.

Teddy Bears at the Freezing Point – A Very Cool Idea!

The first Teddy Bear Hunt in honor of the friendship of Joseph Bucklin Bishop and President Teddy Roosevelt took place at Hunts Mills on a frigid December Sunday afternoon. (Has this winter been other than frigid?) Three youngsters and their families braved the cold. Of the 47 bears hidden, 43 were found. Our thanks to teddy bear lovers Dave Kelleher (lots of Irish teddies), Dot Thornley, Pat Henry, Rose Sirenski and Nancy Moore for trusting us with their favorites. All were recovered safely, even Pat’s little bear who got put in a drainpipe. Perhaps our next hunt will happen in more hospitable weather! And inside Hunt House were antique teddies, an incredibly timely new donation.



Native Plant Highlight

By Jeff Faria, Master Gardener

This is a column where Jeff introduces us to some of the heritage plants used by the early settlers. Many of them can also be found around the Hunt House today.

Witch Hazel (*hamamelis vernalis*)

This perennial is occasionally called Winterbloom because you may have seen it already in full bloom this year. It looks like a forsythia, but you’d say, “that can’t be blooming this early!”



Witch hazel is colored in yellow, red or orange and the tiny fruit and flower appear simultaneously. The fruit seed matures in the fall and explodes, ejecting the seeds up to 30 feet. The leaves and bark may be used to produce witch hazel, used externally on sores, bruises, psoriasis, eczema, as well as insect bites and poison ivy.

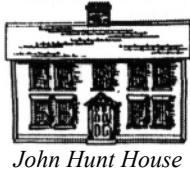
This plant can be a real showstopper in an otherwise gloomy winter garden!

Memorial Fund

The Society’s Memorial Fund was established in 1993, in memory of past members, for “the betterment of the Society and with no specific purpose”.

The Memorial Fund is a qualified endowment administered by the Executive Committee. Members and friends wishing to contribute may make checks payable to the East Providence Historical Society and mail to the Society at

Box 4774
East Providence, RI 02916-4774



East Providence Historical Society
P.O. Box 4774
East Providence, RI 02916

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Gardening Tips

By Jeff Faria, Master Gardener

- March is a great month for pruning. It is time to prune overgrown deciduous or evergreen shrubs.

That is, if the deer have left anything green after such a cold snowy winter!

- Prune fruit trees, blueberries, raspberries and grapes. Do not prune spring flowering shrubs like forsythia, lilac, rhododendron or



azalea. Wait until immediately after they bloom or you will cut off the buds for the coming year. If you don't mind sacrificing this year's bloom on those shrubs, then get them into shape!

- Blueberries should be thinned out by approximately one third, removing the oldest stems. Only leave the one year old raspberry canes, and prune grapes to no more than 60 buds per individual vine.
- Before planting in your garden, be sure the soil is well-drained and workable. If it is too wet, you may lose the plants or seeds that you were starting.
- Late March is a great time to apply pre-emergent weed control.