



50 EAST PROVIDENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1966-2016

April 2017

Volume XXIX No. 5

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

— April —

Monday, April 24
7:00pm
Atwater/Donnelly Duo

Weaver Library
41 Grove Ave.
East Providence, RI

— May —

Sunday, May 14
1:00pm - 3:30pm
Hunt House Museum
open
1:30pm at the Gazebo
“Hikes at Hunt’s”
2:30pm in the Garden
“Talks and Walks”
Planning and Planting
Your Garden
Flowers for Moms

Monday, May 22
7:00pm
Blackstone Valley
National Heritage
Corridor
By Head Ranger
Kevin Klyberg

CONTACT US AT:

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President’s Letter

By Nancy More

The 10 Mile River is roaring as I sit down to write this update. One wonders how those blue herring can handle all that turbulence but on they come. The Great Blues are hovering overhead and the roost behind Home Depot on Rte. 6 is full of activity. And the basement of Hunt House is full of activity also. In March, a crew emptied out the back room of 25 years of debris (and a few treasures) in anticipation of a reincarnation of that space into a new home for the Rumford collection which has returned from Indianapolis. With the grant

backing of the Champlin Foundation, this old foundation (see photo) will provide a great backdrop for the barrel making, smithing, and wood working tools used in the early production of containers at the Rumford Company. The mason is doing two jobs for us:



on sunny days, he is outside repointing the Ed Center foundation and on rainy days, he is in the basement. Romeo arrives at work at 7:00am and leaves at 3:00pm so you can stop by on any weekday to watch the progress. After the walls have been repointed, a brick floor will be laid at the same level as the summer kitchen floor allowing for a flowing exhibit space.

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The Gazette

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2nd Sunday Spring Open Houses

May 14
1:00 - 3:30pm
The John Hunt House

Spring has begun to flesh out at Hunt's. The great blue heron are cruising the waterway and are very active in the roost behind Home Depot on Route 6. Join us for a trail walk and stop to talk with the Master Gardeners. Pick up free seeds and plants. Check out the photography/art exhibit featuring the entire mills area.

**Hikes: 1:30pm at the Gazebo
March through December**

**"Walks & Talks": 2:30pm in the Gardens
Master Gardener Presentations
April through October**

**Exhibit: Hunt's Mills: A 100 Year Retrospective
Through the Lens of a Camera**

In the early 1900's, Hunt's Mills was a mecca for artists and photographers of all kinds. We know this from our extensive postcard collection of the area and professional photographs from which the post cards were made. Hunt's Mills Amusement Park was the "place to be seen" on the weekends with it's midway, acclaimed orchestra and Looff carousel. Lately, there have been photographers working there again and a group of artists meets in the gazebo from time to time. Six local

**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

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Membership Form

New

Renewal/Change

Name(s): _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

\$15 Individual

\$25 Family/Business

\$150 Life

amateur photographers have submitted their works for this exhibit and some of the photos feature the bird life which has flocked to the river for the April herring run. Of special interest is a set of drone photographs which capture an intriguing bird's eye look at the Pump House and dam area. Our thanks and appreciation for their work goes to these new eyes at Hunt's: Wayne Barnes, Becky Ellis, Ernest Germani, Keith Gonsalves, Dwayne Hall and Dave Tantarelli.



We welcome our newest members:

- Sandra I. Barber & William Luther
- Bullock Point Townhouses
- Eastgate Nursing & Rehabilitation Ctr.
- Peter Hunt Gross
- Elyssa Tardiff & Stefan Kaszycki
- Nancy Wojtyto



Don't forget to check for electronic news and photos about EPHIST at ephist.org and on Facebook.



President's Letter

Continued from page 1

The other news is that Steve Tyson's team has stabilized that sagging structural beam in the basement with a chestnut post (8x8) which came from another old place of the same vintage as Hunt House. The work has been so carefully crafted that one would think the repair was done some time ago. The repair has lifted that section (the 1790 addition) 1.5" and given it structural integrity. Next comes plumbing work in the kitchen and bathroom!



Master Gardeners "Walks & Talks"

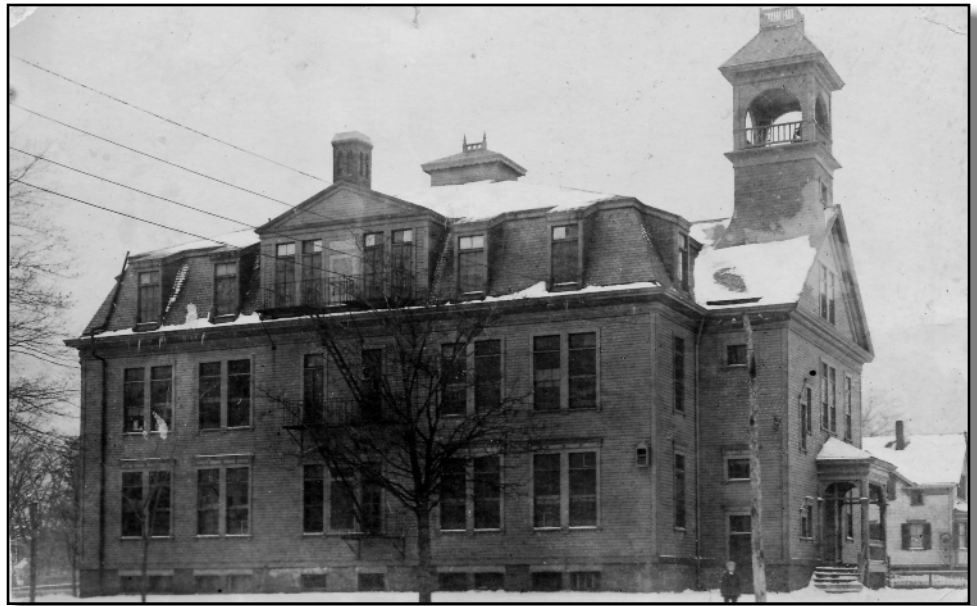
The URI Master Gardeners have added educational sessions from 2:30pm-3:00pm on the days of the Sunday Open Houses. The topics offered are:

- May 14 Planning and Planting Your Garden
- June 11 Historic Grounds Tour
- July 9 Planning Your 2nd Harvest
- Aug. 13 Medicinal and Culinary Plants
- Sept. 10 Dividing Plants
- Oct. 8 Preparing the Beds for Winter

Life in the 1930s of an A. P. Hoyt Grammar School Student

Recalled by Joseph F. Andrews, Jr. to Susan Cady [2017]

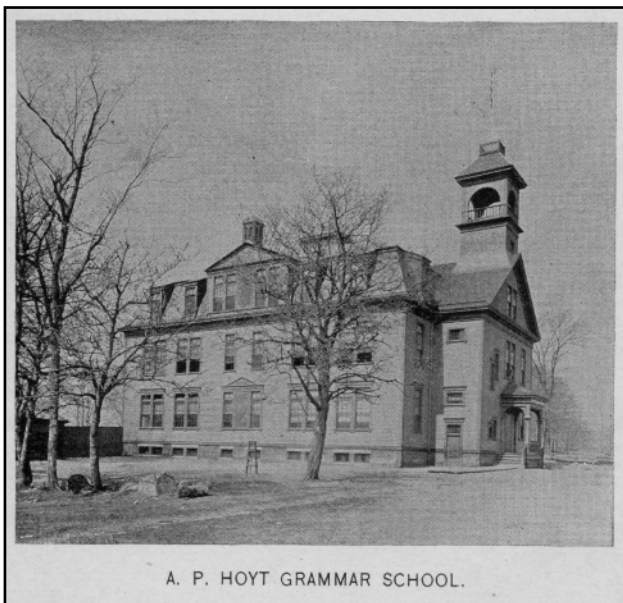
In 1891¹, a three story school building with a bell tower was constructed on land between Carpenter St., Freeborn Ave., and Lyon Ave., near School St. and Oakley St. in East Providence, RI. This grammar school was named A. P. Hoyt for Albert Pierce Hoyt who was a school committee member and a banker. There were 4 classrooms on each of the first 2 floors. The desks in the larger classroom on the third floor were pushed aside on inclement days for indoor recess. In the 1930s, students completed grades 1-6 here before continuing at the Central Junior and Senior High School located on Taunton Ave. and Whelden Ave. A. P. Hoyt School was a



Reinhard Wohlgenuth collection

Early postcard of the A. P. Hoyt School with its beautiful bell tower. Don't miss the message on the back of the card on the next page written by a teacher. No class size limits in those days.

wooden building with indoor plumbing. The fire escape was on the Carpenter St. side and the indoor stairs were on the Lyon Ave. Side.



Historical Society collection

Similar to the postcard view, this picture may have been a page of a booklet.

In the 1930s, Joseph Andrews and his 4 brothers and 2 sisters walked from their house on Broadway up the Freeborn Ave. hill to attend A. P. Hoyt School. Joseph arrived about 20 minutes before classes began to ring the school bell. From the second floor, the school janitor, Mr. Wesley, supervised the student as he climbed the stairs to the bell tower. The pealing bell informed students it was time to come to school. Later, after the students went home to eat lunch, the bell would toll again to call the children to return to school.

To the left of the bell tower entrance, on the first floor, was Miss Kayhill's classroom. The principal was Mrs. Card. Miss Shields and Miss Remington were also teachers. Grade A students occupied the first and second floors while the third floor was reserved for Grade B students, the slow learners and backward students. Backward students were students who daydreamed during lessons and did not pay attention.



Across the street from the school's bell tower, at 144 Lyon Ave., was Mr. Antonio C. Vieira's press shop. Joseph and other students were given 25 cents to distribute grocery store flyers to houses in their neighborhoods. Mr. Vieira ran the printing business from 1935-1938 to raise money to send his son to medical school. Dr. Edwin Vieira became the local family doctor.

Mr. Howard Prendergast ran a spa, a store that sold cigarettes, tobacco, chewing gum, magazines, and newspapers. He employed many students to deliver the Providence Journal newspapers. Joseph picked up his bundles of newspapers on the Warren Ave. sidewalk between Broadway (near "Pic & Pay") and Ingraham St. He carried the papers, in a cloth bag hung on his shoulder, without a bicycle. His delivery route included the businesses on both sides of Broadway, from Warren Ave. down to Taunton Ave., and to houses scattered along the many side streets.

With his pay from his paper route, Joseph would buy a ¼ pound of butter at Rocha's Broadway Market (It's now the 195 overpass on the east side of Broadway.) and then buy bread at the bakery (now a laundromat on Warren Ave.). He shared half the long loaf of bread with his friend Eddie Camille. They ate bread with butter in front of the bakery before they delivered their newspapers.

There was a 2 story white house on the east corner of Carpenter St. and Grove Ave. (across from the first Grove Ave. School.), where Miss Cushman, his A. P. Hoyt teacher, lived. Joseph cut her lawn with a push mower (the type without a motor) for fifty cents. Today this area is the St. Francis Xavier church parking lot.

As a teenager, Joseph spent the full day on Saturdays and the rest of the day after attending mass at St. Francis Xavier Church on

Sundays, delivering ice. Mr. Henry Miller drove his ice truck from early in the morning to sunset distributing loads of ice to East Providence, Fox Point, and Seekonk residences. Mr. Miller bought the ice from the commercial icehouse located on the corner of Juniper St. and S. Broadway, now East Bay Ice Co. This was the day before motorized refrigerators and freezers existed. Large blocks of ice were placed in the top of an insulated metal box and food was placed below. When you needed another block of ice, residents would post a card in the window so the ice man would stop and deliver more ice. The placard had 4 weight markers, indicating the size of the ice block you desired. Prices ranged from 10 cents to 15, 20, and 30 cents. Using metal claw tongs, Joseph carried the 10# and 25# blocks, one in each hand, up stairs, while Mr. Miller carried the 50 # blocks. It was a good way to cool off in the summer but cold in the winter to earn one dollar a day.

In the 1920s, Joseph's father, Joseph F. Andrews Sr. was an United Electric Railway trolley conductor in Providence. In the winter, he drove a special trolley car with a snow plow in the front. His children often rode his trolley line from Providence to Crescent Park. A round trip would take one

Life in the 1930s...

Continued from page 5

hour with the trolley cars passing each other at the old Tockwotton School on George Cohen Blvd. in Fox Point. Once in Providence, you could get a transfer for 2 cents and ride another trolley line.

created by President Roosevelt. She rode the trolley from Broadway to the west end of Warren Ave., and went over the (new in 1930) Washington Bridge to Providence.

As for the A. P. Hoyt School building, it experienced several minor fires. But in 1940, when students were not in the building, a devastating fire broke out. Students had to attend other schools while the damaged third floor and bell tower were removed and a new roof was installed. In the late 1950s, the school building was torn down as it was in the path of the new Interstate 195 Expressway.



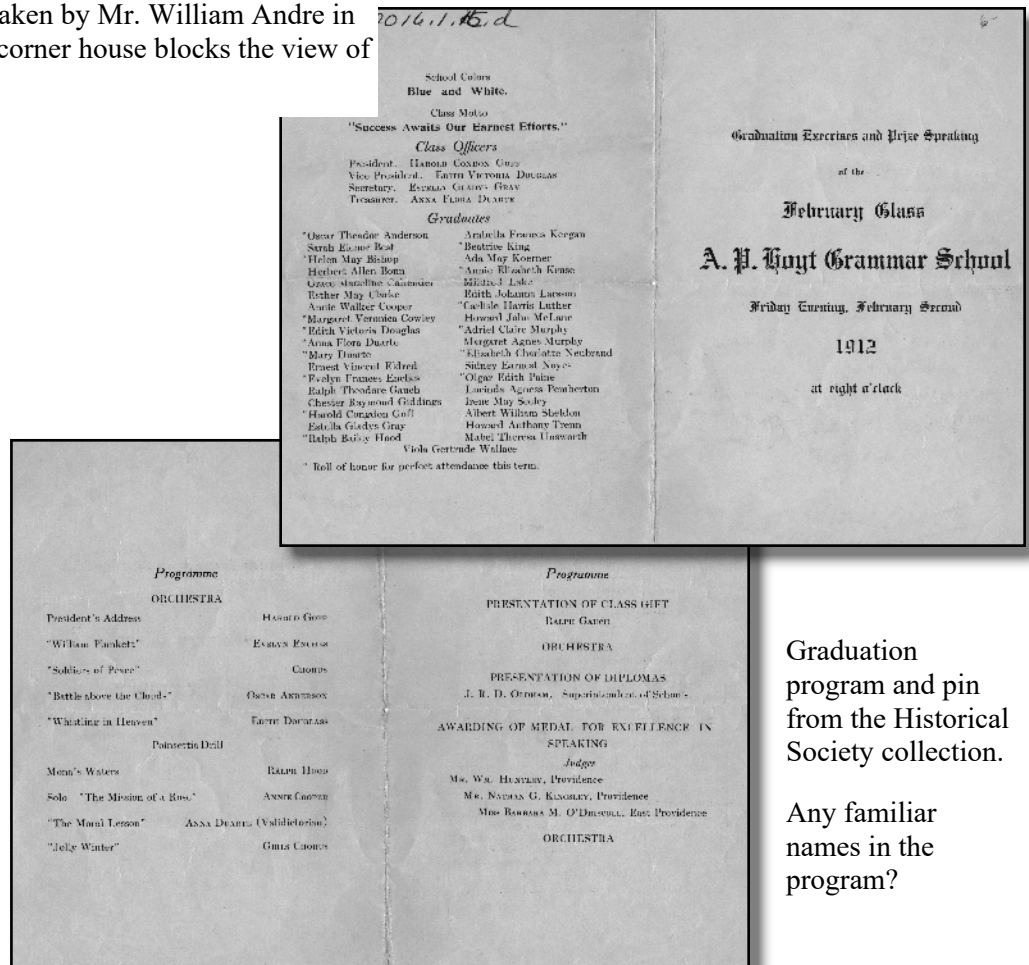
Photo of A. P. Hoyt School and the playground on the north corner of Carpenter St. and Freeborn Ave., taken by Mr. William Andre in 1955. In this photo, the porch on the corner house blocks the view of the school door on Freeborn Ave.

Having several jobs was common for many families living during the Depression (early 1930s). Newly widowed in 1931, Joseph's mother, Mary Andrews, sewed bib overalls for kids and adults at a textile factory in Providence. These became uniforms for the servicemen of the National Industrial Recovery Act agencies



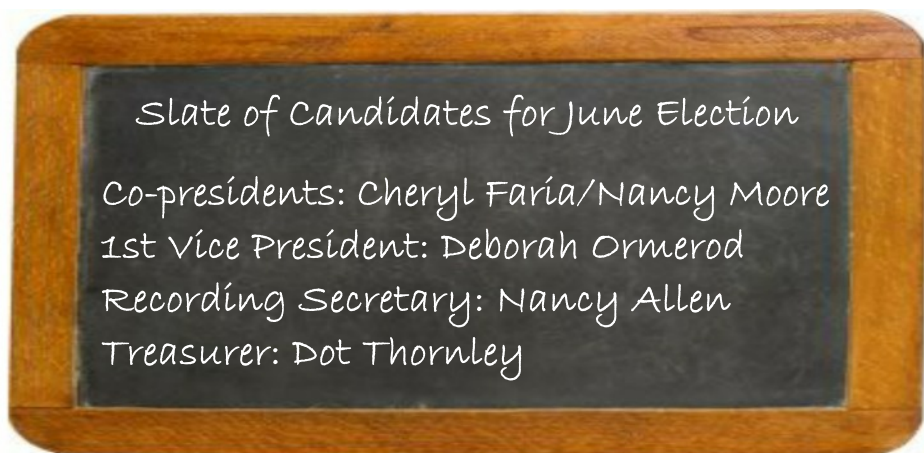
Footnote 1: Years from J. Conforti, *Our Heritage: A History of East Providence*. 1976. Monarch Publishing Inc.

Share your school day memories with Joseph Andrews and Susan Cady, digsEPhistory@hotmail.com or contact the EP Historical Society, 438-1750.



Graduation program and pin from the Historical Society collection.

Any familiar names in the program?



Any questions / further nominations for this slate may be referred to the current Board. The membership will vote on this slate at the Annual Meeting June 26th.

Members Meetings

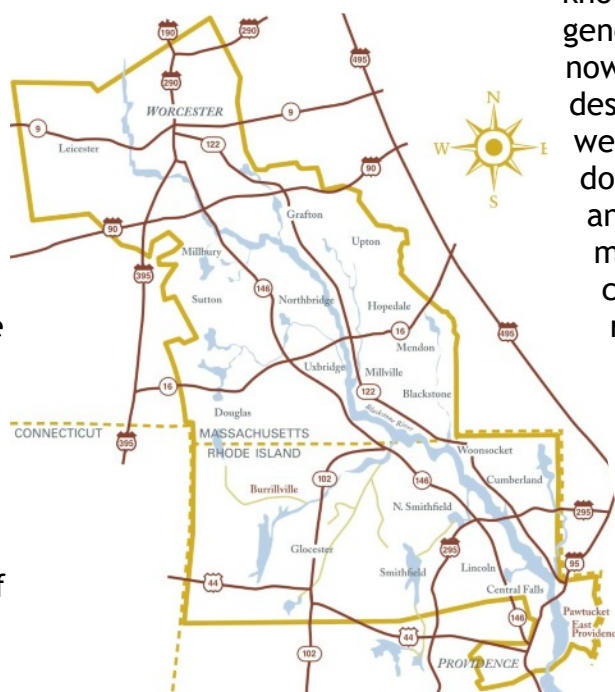
Monday, April 24



In the second of three programs about the Blackstone Valley National Heritage Corridor, the EPHS and the Weaver Library present a free family concert of folk music performed by Atwater-Donnelly, one of the area's most celebrated duos. Their spirited renditions of our folk heritage are done with great humor and encourage audience participation. Between them, Aubrey and Elwood play guitar, banjo, dulcimer, tin whistle, harmonica, and lumberjack with a good bit of clogging thrown in for good measure. Please join us for an evening of family fun and song.

Monday, May 22

Mark your calendars for May 22nd for the last of three programs about the Blackstone Valley National Heritage Corridor. Head Ranger Kevin Klyberg will talk about the history of the Corridor and what having national status means for our region.

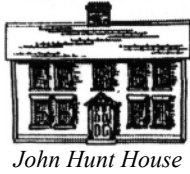


Docents Needed

Do-cent (from the Latin "to teach")

A voluntary guide or person of knowledge in a museum or cathedral.

Docents for Hunt House, both inside and outside. We have a wonderful opportunity for you to join the group who interact with the public at Hunt House. For years, we have had volunteers who welcome visitors to areas of the house. For many, a particular room speaks to them and they become "expert" at fielding questions about the focus of that area. For others, being a floater and taking whatever room lacks a docent is a challenge needing a quick study. Some docents can be counted upon to be in a room, say the research room, for a quick knowledgeable answer to a genealogy question. And now, with Hunt's becoming a destination on 2nd Sundays we find we have need of docents to be outside to answer questions and give mini tours. If you've been curious yourself about a room (how about the basement Rumford room which will be on exhibit soon?) please email Nancy Moore at nancykmmoore@gmail.com to find out more details.



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

John Hunt House

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Gardening Tips

By Jeff Faria, Master Gardener

- With the days growing longer, you can still be successful starting seeds indoors. They need 12 to 16 hours of light each day, so adding a light source is important for healthy seedlings. Try peppers, tomatoes and eggplant early in the month and cucumbers and flowers by May 1st!
- Adding mulch to your beds and gardens will help suppress weed seeds.
- Add compost to your vegetable and flower gardens before tilling and planting.
- Protect trees from string trimmers by having a 3 foot ring of mulch around the base of the trees. Do not allow the mulch to touch the trunk of the tree as that could create constant dampness and allow diseases to harm your tree.
- Winter moths and gypsy moths will be bad again this year. Watch for their egg casings on the undersides of branches and along the trunk of many oak, maple and apple trees. They are also a problem with blueberry bushes and the emerging worms eat the buds. We have had success in vacuuming them with a shop-vac with several extension arms attached. Spraying with dormant oil is another way of smothering the eggs.
- Cut down seasonal grasses before new growth makes the job more difficult.
- Remove winter mulch from perennials and roses.