



## The East Providence Historical Society

# Gazette

March 2019

Volume XXXI No. 4

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

### March

Sunday, March 10  
1:00 - 3:30 pm  
Hunt House open

Monday, March 25  
6:30 pm Site Visit  
7:00 pm Presentation  
Public Meeting

#### Herrings' Plight

Education Center at  
Hunt's Mills  
68 Hunt's Mills Road  
Rumford, 02916

### April

Sunday, April 14  
1:00 - 3:30 pm  
Hunt House open

### May

Sunday, May 12  
1:00 - 3:30 pm  
Hunt House open

#### CONTACT US AT:

East Providence  
Historical Society  
P.O. Box 4774  
East Providence, RI  
02916-4774  
Tel. (401) 438-1750  
Email: [info@ephist.org](mailto:info@ephist.org)  
Web Site: [ephist.org](http://ephist.org)

## President's Letter

By Nancy Moore, Co-President

Hello Everyone: You need to give your Museum Committee and "friends" a huge thank you for the work they have done during our winter hiatus. As you know, we received a grant from the Champlin Foundation to redo the Hunt House to get ready for the 2019 RI Preservation Conference. (It has been 25 years since the first restoration paint job.) So the surfaces in nearly every room have been scraped, patched, painted and put back in order, sometimes a completely new order. The committee has had a free hand to experiment with new arrangements and use of rooms so you will enter a museum with a different feel. We think you will like the changes.

One of the bennies for the EPHS participating in the conference is that places and speakers who are being featured are very happy to host and speak to our membership. See the March meeting blurb separately in this issue. In April we have been invited to have our meeting at the Masonic Hall. The Hall is hosting the conference registration and is part of the Center City Walk. In May, Richard Ring has agreed to speak about the Narragansett Race Track and we will co-host with the Pawtucket Preservation Society. More on that later.

There is much more exciting news to share with you next month. So glad you are members of EPHS!

### April 2019 Conference Update:

The RI Preservation Conference is less than 2 months away! The State has been putting together a look at East Providence through the vehicle of sports and recreation, not one's usual take on preservation. But it seems that EP, with all its open land and easy accessibility to Providence was a mecca for all kinds of activity. We had a race track, an airport and flight school, the 2<sup>nd</sup> oldest tennis court in the nation (1914), 4 amusement parks, 3 full golf courses and several smaller ones, Pierce Field, a baseball team and the usual roller rink and skating ponds, beaches and boating (I surely am omitting many things.) Add to that the amazing history line descending from the first community in the area (Rehoboth 1642) and EP has much to share with the 500 people who will come to visit for the Day on April 6<sup>th</sup>. For the complete schedule, please go to [preservationconferenceri.com](http://preservationconferenceri.com) Registrations will be done on line and fill up quickly.



**The Gazette**

Is published by the  
East Providence  
Historical Society

P.O. Box 4774, East Providence, RI  
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Web Site: ephist.org

**OFFICERS**

Nancy Moore/Cheryl Faria *Co-Presidents*  
Deborah Ormerod *Vice President*  
Nancy Allen *Recording Secretary*  
Pat Henry *Corresponding Secretary*  
Dorothy Thornley *Treasurer*

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Brian Turgeon *Buildings*  
Jeffrey Faria *Grounds*  
Miriam Kenney *Membership*  
Nancy Allen *Museum*  
Deborah Ormerod *Curator*  
Sandra Turgeon *Marker Program*  
Reinhard Wohlgenuth *Newsletter*  
Nancy Moore *Preservation*  
Nancy Moore *Programs*  
Nancy Moore *Publicity*  
Becky Ellis *Website Manager*

**Thank You to Our Open House Sponsors!!**



**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

## The Historian's Circle

Thank you to those who have donated to our Annual Fund. With your Historian's Circle gift, you are helping to make a profound difference in the achievement of the Society's annual, strategic vision and endowment goals.

### Hunt's Mills Park: \$500+

- Nancy Allen
- Cheryl and Jeff Faria
- Nancy and Dan Moore
- Dotty Thornley

### Crescent Park: \$250-\$499

### Vanity Fair Park: \$100-\$249

- Ann Linde
- 10 mile River
- Gail Ransom
- Cindy Sloan

### Boyden Heights Park: \$50-\$99

- Pamela and Paul Gaudet
- Miriam Kenney
- Jena and Mike McNulty
- Ed Serowick
- Tom Warzeka

### Friends - \$1-\$49

- Karen and Mike Antonowicz
- J. Stephen Bentz
- Carolyn DiFabio
- Hillary Fournier
- Dave Kelliher
- Bill King
- Carol Lavin
- Loretta Monahan
- Deb Ormerod
- Jack Richer
- Marianne Walsh
- Hillary Fournier

Thank You!!!



## Volunteer Corner

Would you like to be more involved with the East Providence Historical Society?

We certainly would welcome your help!! Your help can be on an as needed basis for specific projects or as an active member of one our committees, or somewhere in between!

Please visit our website at [ephist.org](http://ephist.org) and review the many opportunities listed in the Volunteer Opportunities link. Or contact Cheryl Faria at [cherylafaria@verizon.net](mailto:cherylafaria@verizon.net) 401-419-8682 or Nancy Moore at [nancykmmoore@gmail.com](mailto:nancykmmoore@gmail.com) 401-438-4299.

We look forward to hearing from you!



### 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Spring Open Houses

March 10

April 14

May 12

The John Hunt House  
65 Hunt's Mills Road  
Rumford, RI 02916

1:00 pm - 3:30 pm

"Hikes at Hunt's"  
With Ernie Germani  
1:30 pm at the Gazebo  
March - December

# A Neighborhood Gas Station

by Bill McWeeney



Back in the early to late 60's, the local gas station was where many a teenage boy had visions of a summer job and a place to work on his first car. I was lucky as my dad owned the Atlantic station on the corner of Ferris and Pawtucket Avenue in Rumford and I didn't need to apply for the job. Back then, Atlantic had Red Ball Service (clean the windows - weather permitting, check the oil and ask "fill'er up?") Forgetting to do any of this resulted in "Free Gas" so needless to say, my dad made sure you never forgot.



Whenever a car was serviced, the inside was cleaned out, ashtrays emptied, windows cleaned inside and out. Remember the blue coating on new whitewall tires? Not only did we wash it off, but dad's rule was: wash all four tires so the new one would not stand out. We washed cars, Simonized cars, did brake jobs, engine repair, state inspections, exhaust systems, etc. I may not have appreciated the long hours then, but the skills my dad and other mechanics taught me are still with me today.

We were also a AAA road service station that resulted in some very interesting calls. My favorite was a late night call from an EP High senior girl whose boyfriend got the car stuck down close to the water off Veterans Memorial Parkway. After I pulled out the vehicle, the girl asked if I could take her home as the "boyfriend" had left! (Ed. note: Anyone have this memory also?!)

We had quite a few customers that wanted to have their cars serviced and needed the vehicle to be picked up at their house and returned when the work was completed. I got to drive some really great cars and will always remember the '65 Mustang 3-speed. We were required to have a spare uniform at work so if we had to pick up a car, we could

Atlantic gave out coupons in sealed envelopes for prizes to be redeemed by the customers. Since we also sold Goodyear tires, come Christmas, we were required to sell the Goodyear Christmas Record. People would pull up to the pumps and when you answered the driveway bell, they would roll down their window and ask, "Any new songs on this year's record? Don't need any gas - can we see this year's album?" Atlantic also gave away miniature oil can banks and my all-time favorite, double S&H Green Stamps on fill-ups. When the Boston Red Sox won the American League Championship in '67, we either sold or gave away glass mugs commemorating the event. I still have mine!

change if needed and ALWAYS put a seat cover on the customer's car. As if winters weren't challenging enough, my dad offered snow plowing services. During Christmas break, I can remember opening at 7:00 am, closing at 10:00 pm and plowing until midnight or early morning. As a AAA station, winter time was "chains on - chains off" in the service bays, driveways or on the



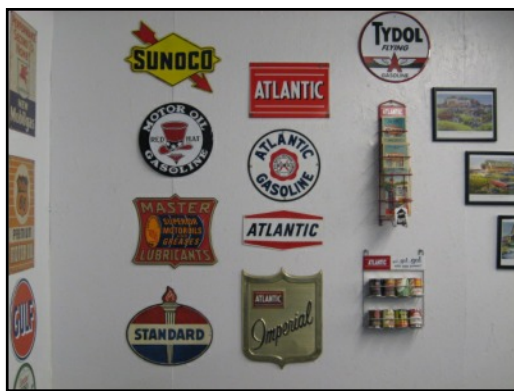


side of the road. Sure, gas was only 22/25 cents per gallon back then and wages were only \$1/1.25 per hour, but a Kelly's hamburger was only "a nickel and a dime."

Behind the station was a small store known as "Pete's" where lots of the neighborhood kids hung out for the comics, soda fountain, soft drinks and the cool cars that showed up on weekends. I remember that black '60 Ford convertible with 3 deuces and 3 on the column and Joe's '62 red Vette with chrome roll bar, 4-speed and cheater slicks.

Over the years, I have managed to stay heavily involved with cars and have an old restored Atlantic pump, Red Ball service sign, S&H sign and oil memorabilia throughout my shop. But I am missing one item I have searched for each time I have returned to East Providence: a photo showing my father's station. I would appreciate hearing from anyone who might know of such a photo. The Newman Church was across the street and the Rumford Pharmacy was on the other corner. My years growing up in EP and the friends I made always bring a smile to my face. Some of us still keep in touch and get together when I make the trip home. Thanks for the memories.

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Amarillo, Texas 79118  
806- 681-5327



## Public Meeting

The Education Center at Hunt's Mills  
68 Hunt's Mills Road, East Providence 02916  
Monday March 25  
Site Visit 6:30 / Presentation 7:00 pm

Larry Oliver and Marc Paiva

Those of you who have volunteered to do the fish count and have followed the progress of the blue herring over the past 10 years know that those fish have a tough time figuring how to navigate Herring Rock and the small falls above. The Army Corps of Engineers has studied the situation and has a possible solution to present. Larry Oliver and Marc Paiva of the Concord, MA office will be on site from 6:30 pm and will present to us at the ED Center just across the circle. Seating in the Ed Center is very limited (25) but we hope that more people will be able to have questions answered at the site visit.



- Ana Enes
- Pam & Paul Goulet
- Scott, Renee, Caroline & William Haggerty
- Shawn Pease
- Richard Lucas Silva
- Victoria Zanghi-Brown

## Gardening Tips

By Jeff Faria, Master Gardener

Look through seed catalogs and choose seeds for flowers, vegetables and herbs that you would like to grow this coming season. I also plan to have seeds available at our next member meeting!

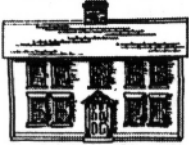
Some seeds can be started indoors at this time, such as onions, celery and leeks.

Try not to venture into your garden when the soil is wet and muddy.

When starting seeds, use clean containers and sterile seed starting mix to avoid damping off disease. You can sterilize garden soil by baking it in small batches in your oven. Fill an oven proof container with about 3 inches of soil, add enough water to make it wet but not runny, bake it in a 200° oven until the center reaches 180°, then continue for 30 minutes. Do not overheat or over bake the soil because it can kill other beneficial organisms.

Bring your house plants outdoors on a warm day to give them a shower to clean the leaves of dust and any insect problems (aphids, white flies) you may have.





John Hunt House

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

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# Preservation, Recreation and Sport

THE 34<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONFERENCE

Saturday, April 6, 2019 ♦ East Providence



**Registration is open!**  
[preservationconferenceri.com](http://preservationconferenceri.com)

**Register online for your pick of tours and sessions.**

- **Keynote Speaker Brent Leggs** Director of the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund at the National Trust for Historic Preservation
- **12 tours** by boat, bus, bicycle, and foot in historic East Providence
- **12 workshops** on historic sports, amusements, civil rights, roadside and dockside architecture, playful programming, and more
- Countless opportunities to network and socialize

**Don't delay! Online registration closes March 22.**

Questions? Call 401-222-2078 or email [ripresconf@gmail.com](mailto:ripresconf@gmail.com)

Find us: [facebook.com/rihphc](https://www.facebook.com/rihphc)

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**REGISTER NOW!**

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THE 34<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONFERENCE

Saturday, April 6, 2019 ♦ East Providence