



# The East Providence Historical Society

# Gazette

June 2020

Volume XXXII No. 5

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

## June

Sunday, June 14  
1:00 - 3:30 pm  
Hunt House Museum  
open  
Hunts Mills Road,  
Rumford

## July

Sunday, July 12  
1:00 - 3:30 pm  
Hunt House Museum  
open  
Hunts Mills Road,  
Rumford

## August

Sunday, August 9  
1:00 - 3:30 pm  
Hunt House Museum  
open  
Hunts Mills Road,  
Rumford

### CONTACT US AT:

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Historical Society  
P.O. Box 4774  
East Providence, RI  
02916-4774  
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Web Site: ephist.org

## President's Letter

by Cheryl Faria, Co-President

Welcome to the start of Summer! The last three months have certainly been challenging and we have missed seeing all of you. Now that many of our restrictions are starting to lift, we look forward to getting back to some of our usual activities. Here are some updates since the last Gazette was published.

### John Hunt House Museum

While the John Hunt House Museum hasn't been open to the public during this time, we did have a modified Open House on Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, Mother's Day, from 1:00pm-3:30pm. Thank you to Mayor Bob DaSilva who arranged to have Hunts Mills open to the public for the day. We set up a table and tent at the front of the Museum and gave away free seeds, plants and masks that Nancy Moore had made. We all wore masks and practiced social distancing. It was a beautiful day and about 50 people came over the course of the afternoon including Mayor Bob DaSilva and his wife!



### The Great Rumford Bake Off



We have rescheduled the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Bake Off to Sunday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020 from 11:30am-3:30pm. In the event that we need to reschedule again, Leslie Tente, Events Chair, is working on ideas for a Bake Off presence on the websites of The Great Rumford Bake Off and the EP Historical Society and exploring the possibility of some form of virtual Bake Off.

### A Day in the Life of a Child in 1751

We piloted this educational program last spring with 26 third and fourth graders from St. Margaret's School. We had planned to have more children visit from East Providence Schools this spring, but had to cancel due to COVID-19. When we start meeting again, the Education Committee, chaired by Beverly Pettine, will be working on incorporating components of this interactive program into our monthly Open Houses.

Continued on next page

**The Gazette**

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Web Site: ephist.org

**OFFICERS**

- Cheryl Faria/Jeff Faria *Co-Presidents*  
Deborah Ormerod *1st Vice President*  
Nancy Allen *Recording Secretary*  
Dorothy Thornley *Treasurer*  
Pat Henry *Rec. Secretary*

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

- Open *Buildings*  
Deborah Ormerod *Curator*  
Beverly Pettine *Education*  
Leslie Tente *Events*  
Cheryl Faria *Finance*  
Jeffrey Faria *Grounds*  
Sandra Turgeon *Marker Program*  
Miriam Kenney *Membership*  
Nancy Allen *Museum*  
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Nancy Moore *Preservation*  
Nancy Moore *Programs*  
Nancy Moore *Publicity*  
Deborah Ormerod *Website Manager*

**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 \$25 individual, \$35  
family or business, or a Life  
Membership for \$250.

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**

**President's Letter**

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**June Picnic Postponed**

The maximum size for group gatherings has increased from 5 to 15 people. Because of this we are postponing the June picnic and the annual Election of Officers until a later date when we can meet in larger groups.

**East Providence Community Gardening Project!**

We have just received the good news that The Rhode Island Foundation has approved our grant for the East Providence Community Gardening Project. They have awarded us \$8,500 which will be used to transform the Education Center basement into a gardening workshop; Establish raised bed gardens behind the Museum; and Educate the community about gardening.

**Thank You to Our Open House Sponsors**



**Thank you for supporting the  
East Providence Historical  
Society.**

**William Francis**  
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1275 Wampanoag Trl Ste 12  
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**Membership Form**

New  
 Renewal/Change

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\$25 Individual 
\$35 Family/Business 
\$250 Life

## The Covid Story Project - 2020

If you have a Covid Story that you would like us to know about or photos of your family coping with this pandemic, please send them along. We definitely think this spring has been “one for the books” and the HS will archive your thoughts and print them as we are able. The story below is just an example of how long it might be or less. One idea in the pipeline here is to collaborate with the Weaver Library in a “Stories from the Stage - Covid 19” format, an evening of sharing. We’ll keep you posted. Please send to [info@ephs.org](mailto:info@ephs.org)

### Aunt Vic

by Nancy Moore



When the announcement came that people would have to wear masks in public, I got 3 messages from relatives in Maine who work in the healthcare field. “Would I be gearing up to do masks and how soon could they have some, please?” Coming from a long line of seamstresses, I went to the sewing closet and then went off to Loraine Fabrics for elastic. A few days later I sent off masks to Augusta General, followed by more the next week. By this time, the first batch of fabric was depleted and I dove back into the closet to “Aunt Vic’s bag,” a

black plastic trash bag which had once been totally filled with pieces of cloth and from which I had been sewing for many years. I dumped the last of the bag on the floor and was delighted to see that a good deal of it was fabric suitable for men’s masks.

That bag had come from my best friend’s Aunt Victoria whose family first settled Lubec, ME, a place as far east as one can get in the US. Aunt Vic had never married and was the area seamstress. Once a year she made a pilgrimage to Boston’s China Town garment district and brought home cloth she was sure her town’s residents wouldn’t see coming down the street. When Aunt Vic died 25 years ago and my friend was in charge of clearing out her house, I got a call asking what I could use since Aunt Vic’s living room looked like a fabric store - not a spot to sit. I got first pick of the most elegant, unusual, exotic pieces!

After I had sent off the 2<sup>nd</sup> batch of masks to Maine, I wrote my friend to tell her that Aunt Vic’s material bag had been a godsend and it had been such fun remembering opening it for the first time. She wrote back, “Did I ever tell you that Aunt Vic was born in the Great Flu Epidemic of 1918-19? She and her whole family, along with most of the town of Lubec, had the flu and they lost many

people. Aunt Victoria lost her father. She would have loved her fabric being used in this way.”

P.S. There will still be some “Aunt Vic” masks available for free at the summer open houses. Stop by Hunt House and pick one up.

And if memory serves (there are several of you out there who may need to correct me), during the 1918-19 Spanish Flu, our very own Rumford Rifle Range served a special role. A Naval hospital had been set up there as part of the base. When the Spanish Flu struck the area, that hospital became a quarantine spot.

And one last thought: someone sent me a timeline with major catastrophic epidemics attributed to 1719, 1819, 1919, 2019. I added this date: 1619 - the decimation of the Native American population from Nova Scotia down through the Eastern Seaboard. There were pockets of small tribes which never recovered and was the reason the Pilgrims found scarcely any resistance to their appearance on these shores in 1620.

## Volunteer Corner



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

We have an opportunity to create several community garden plots behind the John Hunt House. Mayor Bob DaSilva and the City have donated fencing for our future community garden. We now need a volunteer to take charge of this worthwhile endeavor. Please contact Jeff Faria at 401-556-6804 or [cjfarria@verizon.net](mailto:cjfarria@verizon.net) to get this plan off the ground. If anyone would like to have a garden plot, please also contact Jeff.

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



# Mother's Day at the Hunt House

Count Rumford (Jeff Faria) welcomes Mayor Bob DaSilva and his wife during their visit. Major DaSilva made it possible for us to invite the public to enjoy the beautiful grounds around the museum at least for a few hours on Mother's Day.



Dot Thornley and Miriam Kenney are the gatekeepers to maintain order and enforce social distancing in the tent. More importantly though, to keep the tent stable since it was quite windy that day.

As in past years, visitors were able to browse through free seed packets that came to us via the URI Master Gardeners. To honor mothers free "Mom's" plants were also available and due to the Covid 19 problems Nancy Moore made free face masks available.



Although it may look like Keith Gonsalves, representing the Ten Mile River Watershed Council, is explaining the moves of the Corona Two-Step to the visitors, he really is extolling the importance of the Ten Mile River to the region for the mayor.



## Also at Hunt's Mills . . .



Records indicate that already back in Civil War days General Burnside would come to Hunt's Mills for "quiet contemplation". If you have never done it you should try exploring the river bank or take a walk along the trail that starts near the gazebo. It is well marked so you can do it alone or you can go with a group led by Ernie Germani. Ernie will be able to answer any questions you might have about the sights along the trail.



Photographer Mark Fisher's camera recorded these scenes at some more quiet spots of the Hunt's Mills area.

## The Historian's Circle

### Hunt's Mills Park: \$1,000+

Nancy Allen  
 Cheryl and Jeff Faria  
 Laurie and William McWeeney  
 Nancy Stevens  
 Dotty Thornley

### Crescent Park: \$500-\$999

Susan Cady and Gloria Cady  
 Stephen Dickinson  
 Pat Paulson McGrail  
 Nancy and Dan Moore  
 Lois Williams

### Vanity Fair Park: \$200-\$499

Richard R. Bushnell and Paula Perkins  
 David E. Czerwonka  
 Woods Heating Service

### Boyden Heights Park: \$100-\$199

James Robert Boyd, Jr.  
 Carole DiFabio  
 Jane and Allen Dennison  
 Virginia Gonsalves  
 Wendy and Gordon Hubbard  
 David and Eleanor Kelleher  
 Katherine Kazarian  
 Wendy Edwards and Jerry Mischak  
 Tracey Moline  
 Kathy and Jack Richer  
 Miriam Kenney  
 John Puhacz  
 Norma and Michael Reynolds  
 Ed Serowick

### Friends - \$1-\$99

Norma and William Conley, Jr.  
 Joanne Perella and Eric Crook  
 Stephen Greenleaf  
 Mary and Richard Harrall  
 Pat Henry  
 Elizabeth Ingraham  
 Valerie J. Lawson  
 Ruth McCarthy and William Mitchell  
 Barbara Barnes and Beverly Pettine  
 Mark Saunders  
 Charlene Underhill  
 Andy Valerio  
 Mary Ann and Robert Walsh  
 Tom and Missy Warzeka  
 Gary Zunda

Thank you to those who donated to our 2019 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.

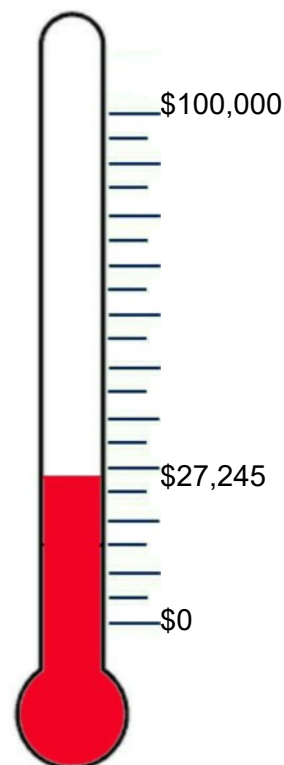
## EPHS Endowment!!

We have set a goal to raise \$100,000 over three years to establish an endowment for the East Providence Historical Society. Once established, we plan to use the annual draw to offset costs and hire a part-time employee.

We have already raised \$27,245 towards that goal. Thank you so much to those of you who have already contributed. If you can help contribute to this goal, please make your check payable to the East Providence Historical Society with a note saying Endowment in the memo line. Your gift could be in the form of Planned Giving, an Annual Bequest or other donation recommended by your Financial Advisor. Remember, no amount is too small!

Thank you for considering this!!

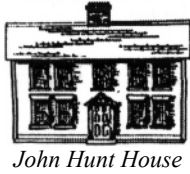
## Endowment Fund Progress



If there are any errors or omissions in this list, we apologize and ask you to please let Cheryl Faria know so we can correct it for the next issue of The Gazette.

401-419-8682  
 cherylafaria@verizon.net





East Providence Historical Society  
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East Providence, RI 02916

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**U.S. POSTAGE PAID**  
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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

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## Gardening Tips

By Jeff Faria, Master Gardener

We will all be spending more time in our gardens during this very different growing season. Reevaluate the areas of your yard and gardens and focus on creating a peaceful space. Plant and encourage the types of vegetables, flowers, shrubs and trees that enhance your space and give you a smile.

Plan for special plants that give you pleasure, both visually, emotionally and even spiritually, and how you feel as you watch and experience them each day, at different times of the day. Also watch, listen and smell how your plants behave and absorb water, sun and even wind at different times of each day and how they vary from day to day. Be more attentive to their needs for spacing, water, light and pruning/deadheading.

Be sure not to kill them with too much kindness, remembering that they have done fairly well when you weren't home so much.



*Don't have a garden of your own? Come visit the Hunt House Museum grounds that are well maintained by volunteers.*