



The East Providence Historical Society

Gazette

June/July 2021

Volume XXXIII No. 8

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

June

Sunday, June 13
1:00 - 3:30 pm
Hunt House Museum
open
1:30 pm
Hikes at Hunts
Meet at the Gazebo
65 Hunts Mills Road,
Rumford, RI

July

Sunday, July 11
1:00 - 3:30 pm
Hunt House Museum
open
1:30 pm
Hikes at Hunts
Meet at the Gazebo

August

Sunday, August 8
1:00 - 3:30 pm
Hunt House Museum
open
1:30 pm
Hikes at Hunts
Meet at the Gazebo

CONTACT US AT:

East Providence
Historical Society
P.O. Box 4774
East Providence, RI
02916-4774
Tel. (401) 473-0677
Email: info@ephist.org
Web Site: ephist.org

Presidents' Letter

by Cheryl Faria and Jeff Faria, Co-Presidents

Hello and welcome to the start of Summer!

John Hunt House Museum

Our Open House on Sunday, May 9 was glorious! It was a beautifully sunny day with a lot of people coming for a tour of the museum and/or to take the Hike at Hunt's Mills. We had seeds and plants to give away, and many gardeners working in the new Community Gardens. As they did in April, the Rumford Junction Band, an all acoustic group made up of guitars, percussion, accordion and fiddle, could be heard throughout the grounds.



Our next Open House will be on Sunday, June 13 from 1-3:30. We will once again have the Hike at Hunt's Mills, seeds and plants to give away and colonial games on the front lawn. In addition, we will have interactive colonial activities for children in the Children's Room, the Walker Room and the Keeping Room. This month will be the start of a special exhibit featuring Len Iannacone's artwork.



Toys are timeless!
Bev Pettine and River Celeste are playing without electronics in the Children's Room

Continued on page 3

The Gazette

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P.O. Box 4774, East Providence, RI
02916-4774
Tel. (401) 473-0677
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 *Corresponding Secretary*

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Open *Buildings*
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Beverly Pettine *Education*
Leslie Tente *Events*
Cheryl Faria *Finance*
Jeffrey Faria *Grounds*
Sandra Turgeon *Marker Program*
Miriam Kenney *Membership*
Nancy Allen *Museum*
Reinhard Wohlgemuth *Newsletter*
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

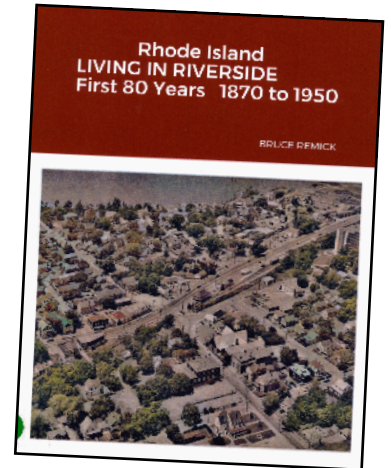
P.O. Box 4774

East Providence, RI 02916-4774

**Rhode Island, Living in Riverside
First 80 Years 1870-1950**

By Bruce Remick

An in-depth story of the beginning of Riverside, R.I. as a summer tent
community to a thriving year round suburb of Providence. Marvelous
pictures, maps, and descriptions of living in the early community of
Riverside. Mr. Remick relates "former routine activities in the
community". He also describes "Riverside
businesses and entertainment activities,
especially in and around the village center
in the Square." (page 5)



**Welcome to Our
Newest Members!**

- Michelle Cartwright
- Francisca Matola
- Barbara Simon

A Notice Regarding July Dues Payments!!

It's that time of year again! Some members have dues expiring July,
2021. Bills will be sent early July to those affected. They can be paid
on our website (ephist.org) using PayPal or mailed in to the post office
box found on this page of the "Gazette". Any questions can be
directed to miriamkenney@aol.com or by phone (401) 434-9462.

Thank you all for your continued support.

Miriam Kenney, Membership

Membership Form

New

Renewal/Change

Name(s): _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

\$25 Individual

\$35 Family/Business

\$250 Life

Presidents' Letter
From page 1

Hunt's Mills Community Gardens

The raised bed community gardens are beginning to look great! We have had the generous volunteer help of six URI Master Gardeners who have been working in the Garden Center three mornings a week since March to grow seedlings for the gardeners and for the community. On Saturday, May 8, we gave seedlings away to the Community Gardeners, and many planted them in their garden beds that day!



Slate of Officers

In the April 7 Board Meeting, Board Members voted unanimously to keep the same Slate of Officers for another year. The officers are:

Co-Presidents – Cheryl Faria/Jeff Faria

1st Vice President – Deborah Ormerod

Recording Secretary – Nancy Allen

Treasurer – Dorothy Thornley

Corresponding Secretary – Pat Henry

Not Hunt's Mills, but...



This is the site of the old Underwood Farm. What is it now?

Rumford Junction

We have been fortunate to have Rumford Junction perform in the Gazebo at our spring open houses and they will be performing again on June 13, beginning at 1:30. Rumford Junction consists of Tim Messitt and Ed Synan on guitar and vocals, John Popoli and Jay Mimoso on drums and percussion, and Lisa Gallant on accordion, fiddle and vocals. They usually play weekends in each other's yards and have put together a repertoire of mostly Americana/ Folk/ Rock cover songs and some originals. A one-hour performance is likely to include a 50/50 mix of original material and covers by artists such as Johnny Cash, Jason Isbell, Tom Petty, and The Band. Thank you Rumford Junction!



!! ONE NIGHT ONLY !! Irene and Vernon Castle at Hunt's Mills!

This really was the bigtime for Hunt's Mills and Eddie Fay's orchestra: Irene and Vernon Castle made a "one night only" appearance on May 22, 1914. The husband/wife team was at their peak of popularity with a new movie which introduced the foxtrot ("Watch Your Step" -1914) and had been touring the world since 1911. They were best known for promoting African American dance music such as jazz and ragtime and had a devoted following in Europe. Irene became a fashion icon and is generally credited with bringing the "bob" hair style into vogue. Vernon was killed in a WW1 training mission in 1918 but Irene continued to perform through the 1920s. In 1939, Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire played the duo in the movie "The Story of Vernon and Irene Castle."



*Mr. and Mrs.
Vernon Castle*

World's Premier
Exponents of
Modern Dancing

The Highest Priced individual
"one night" attraction ever
seen in Providence, appeared

at

HUNT'S MILLS
MAY 22, 1914



May 25, 1914.

Fay Bros.,
Fay's Pavilion, Hunts Mills,
East Providence, R. I.

Gentlemen:-

It has given me great
pleasure to have danced for you.
You have a perfect summer pavilion,
one of the best I have ever seen.

Very truly yours,
Vernon Castle

HUNT'S MILLS
EAST PROVIDENCE, R. I.
FAY BROS., Mgrs.



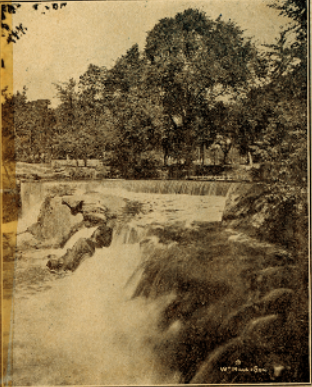

*How do you
like this
some place
Come and
see us.
All our*

*Mrs. William Carr.
Camptons.
N. H.*

Editor's note: We think of summer nights at Hunt's in the dance hall era as a wonderful escape from everyday life. Reinhard Wohlgenuth has donated his collection of Rumford/Hunt's Mills artifacts to the Society and this advertisement, signed by both Irene and Vernon, is a real bonus.

Gardening Tips

By Jeff Faria, Master Gardener



HUNT'S MILLS

No spot in Rhode Island has greater historical interest to the pleasure seeker than Hunt's Mills, East Providence, R. I. Nature has bestowed a richness of the picturesque in woodland, rocks and boulders and running water, with a charming waterfall, deep pool and foaming rapids leading to the famed lower Ten Mile River, the mecca of the canoeists—a stream whose banks are fringed with over-hanging foliage sheltering scores of unique alcoves for siestas.

Hunt's Mills was for generations in the hands of Hunt family; a grist saw mill and two others having been operated by the falls. The grist mill, the first to be built, remained as the last vestige of this little spot of prosperity.

As far back as March 9, 1697, a deed is on record from Stephen Paine to Henry Sweeting, who transferred the property to John Hunt, May 1, 1713. John Hunt left the estate to his son John, who in 1799 willed it to his sons Peter and Josiah, who operated the grist mill alternate weeks, taking their tolls from the farmers whose grain they ground into the famed Rhode Island meal.

The saw mill was abandoned in the early '60's and was later swept away by a freshet. The Sabinet mill, which stood where the pumping station now does, and which was built in 1823, by Alfin and Daniel Hunt, was later used by these cousins as a cotton mill. Fire destroyed it in July 1861.


The freshet which swept away the saw mill so weakened the old dam that the new owners replaced that structure with the present curved granite one which was set back of the original dam.

Today Hunt's Mills is the most beautiful Summer Park in New England for recreation, Club, Fraternal and Sunday School Outings.

The out door attractions include new Merry-Go-Round, Circle Swing, Ferris Wheel, and other amusements for Adults and Children.

NO LIQUOR IS SOLD ON THE GROUNDS.

The Fay Pavilion for Dancing is the largest and most modern in appointments in the East, and is open from May 15th to Oct. 15th.



FAY'S ORCHESTRA under the able direction of Edward M. James Lead Business man for the past ten years.

The orchestra for the public dance parties of the highest class which have been given in Providence since 1880, has been chiefly through their untiring efforts that the city is now the home of more than a dozen dancing pavilions than any metropolis in America.

The Pavilion at Hunt's Mills, was opened on May 15th, 1910. It is not only the largest of private houses which extend along the south end of the park, but the first building in an amusement park of this kind.

Lighting system consists of perfect installation. Two musical cabinets have complete sets of records ready to be played at any hour of the night.

Concessions from the city to the date of the Fay's Pavilion, via the Tamson street that can be located, during the summer season during a enjoyed every night and H. P. M.

- Now is the perfect time to transplant tomatoes, peppers, eggplant and basil. Of the three, transplant tomatoes differently. The little hairs growing on the stem of the tomato plant will turn into roots if you bury them in the soil. One gardener suggested planting them up to their armpits!
- Growing fresh herbs are a great way to mix up flavors in your meals. They are easy to grow and it is best to pinch the leaves off early in the morning and keep the plants short and bushy. The more you pinch or cut them back, the better they perform. You can use fresh herbs or dry them and store them in cover jars for later.
- Floating row covers over young plants like squash and cucumbers, allow to grow with less risk of insect damage. Remove the covers when flowers appear, so pollinators can do their work!
- By putting bird netting over your strawberry plants, you'll discourage birds, but not chipmunks! I've got a remedy for them, but you'll have to ask "Count Rumford" at the next open house, June 13! We will also have plants to give away on that day. Please stop by from 1 to 3:30pm!!

This was an advertisement print designed in a tri-fold layout with one blank section that would allow it to be folded to be used in the mail as we can see on the previous page. The panel above was part of the outside, giving a short history of the area and advertising the amusement park. The back of the document promoted the Fay's Orchestra in word and pictures.

Docent Spotlight: Pat Henry

Pat had a career in nursing at Fatima Hospital, retiring to the house she now owns - a Rumford mill house on Corky Hill which proudly sports an historic marker. Pat is a clever and talented cook, seamstress, quilter, and gardener. Her family and adopted "family" attend sumptuous holiday events at her home and she has hosted dinners for the Master Gardener team when it was too wet and raw to be outside after weeding. Pat is very much at home in the master bedroom with its spinning equipment and hooked rugs but her real strength lies in her gift for greeting visitors and making THEM feel very much at home.



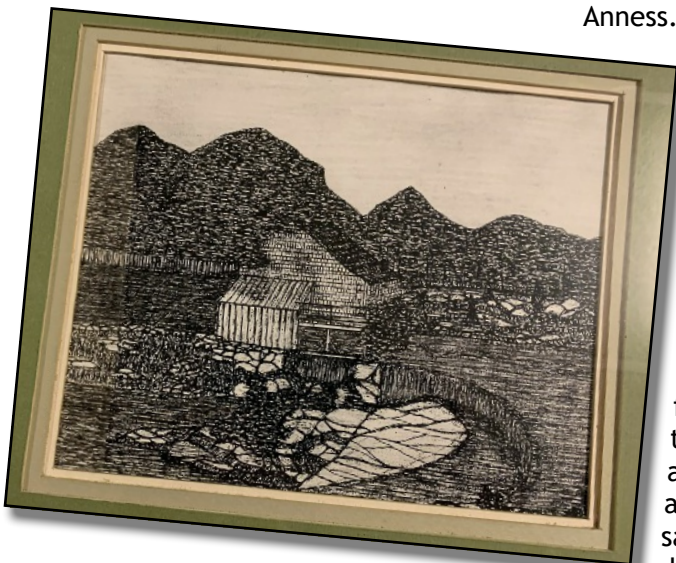
3 Sisters Garden: A Coordinated Effort

The plans were laid this winter but on Sat. May 15, the first seeds went into the ground: corn for the coming bean seeds to climb. Katie Gregory from Riverside Girl Scout Troop 447 and her dad, Tom, joined Elsie Napauz Upshaw, Dot Thornley and Nancy Moore in planting a traditional 3 Sisters plot. Napauz (Sunflower in the Pokanoket language) guided the group in gridding off the 4 by 12 plot, mounding the corn hills, planting 4 types of corn and watering the mounds well. When the corn grows to 8-10", the beans and squash will go into the ground. The bed is letter Z in the Hunt's Mills Community Garden and is at the far right corner close to the walking path so everyone can watch as the corn sprouts and the beans climb and the squash leaves shade the bed and keep it free of weeds.

Fact: corn has been cultivated in the Northeast for 1200 years, beans for 500 years and squash for 1000. Hunt's Mills is one of the Sowams Heritage Group's 50 important 17th century sites for both Native American and colonial use. As I write the corn has sprouted in at least 6 hills!

Len Iannacone Retrospective

When the HS first took over the Hunt House and its environs, one of the first visitors was Len Iannacone with his sketch pad. He would roam the grounds and draw but we secretly knew that he was hoping to chat with the workers, especially Ginny Berwick and Edna Anness. We have two drawings from that time: a recreation of the grist mill at its original site and a fanciful rendering of Hunt House as he imagined it becoming. (We did eventually get a wrought iron fence but not quite as Len envisioned it.) Over the past 50 years, Len traveled RI, drawing and painting. He was trained as a draftsman/designer at RSD so his pen/ink work is masterful. His interpretations in oils are fanciful and inventive in many respects but never boring. In his later life, Len divided his time between homes in Las Vegas and EP. Several years before his death, he decided to open a gallery on lower Warren Ave, not far from his home near Pierce Field and filled four rooms with his art. After his death in Jan 2020, the connection with EPHS came to light and the Board was asked to take on the collection. The Board agreed to accept all except the Aquidneck Island works and moved them to safe storage last September. The art opening on June 9 showcases works culled from that collection, some of which will remain in a permanent house collection. Others will be auctioned off to the public at a later date.



The Historian's Circle

Thank you to those who donated to our Annual Fund. With your Historian's Circle gift, you are helping the Historical Society meet our annual, strategic and endowment goals for the 2021 calendar year.

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

Nancy Allen
 P.T. Barnum and Patricia A. Anthony
 Cheryl and Jeff Faria
 Laurie and Bill McWeeney
 Dotty Thornley

Mike and Norma Reynolds
 Jack and Kathy Richer
 Ken and Barbara Rix
 Ed Serowick
 Rickard Smith, LLC
 Marianne Walsh
 Margaret Wieboldt

Crescent Park: \$500-\$999

Roy and Claire Anderson
 Rod Annis
 BayCoast Bank
 Nancy and Dan Moore
 Navigant Credit Union
 Nancy Stevens
 Woods Heating Service

Friends - \$25-\$99

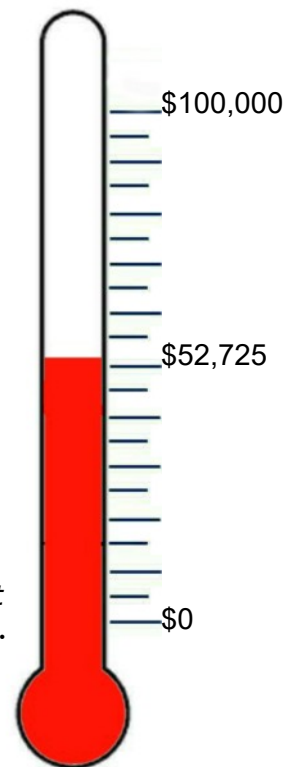
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 Rose Marie Sirenski
 Meredith Swan
 Anthony Valerio
 Tom and Missy Warzeka
 David Weed
 Patricia Wilds
 Jean and Gary Zunda

Vanity Fair Park: \$200-\$499

Richard R. Bushnell and Paula Perkins
 David Czerwonka
 Carole DiFabio and William Litchman
 Maggie Dooley
 Darryl Hardern
 Munroe Dairy
 Ray and Mary Jo Pouliot
 Washington Trust

Boyden Heights Park: \$100-\$199

Roy and Claire Anderson
 Barbara Barnes and Beverly Pettine
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 K. Eric Crook
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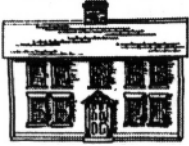


Thank You!!!

If there are any errors or omissions in this list, we 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

EP Historical Society Endowment!!

We have set a goal to raise \$100,000 to establish an endowment for the East Providence Historical Society. So far we have raised \$52,725 towards that goal.



John Hunt House

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

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Thank You to Our Sponsors!



Thank you for supporting the
East Providence Historical
Society.



William Francis
Financial Advisor

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