



The East Providence Historical Society

Gazette

March 2021

Volume XXXIII No. 5

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

March

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

April

Sunday, April 11
1:00 - 3:30 pm
Hunt House Museum
open
65 Hunts Mills Road,
Rumford, RI

May

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

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

President's Letter

by Cheryl Faria and Jeff Faria, Co-Presidents

Hello and welcome to Spring! It feels so good to be getting back into some of our usual routines. While we won't be having a March member meeting, we will be holding our first Open House of the year on Sunday, March 14 from 1-3:30. As we did in the fall, we will wear masks, practice social distancing, and have limited numbers of visitors in the museum at a time with a one-way traffic flow.

Leslie Tente, our Events Chair, has been working on a virtual presence for the Great Rumford Bake Off. And the Community Garden volunteers have been busy preparing the new Garden Center and the 26 raised bed gardens for a season of growing beginning in April. Special thanks to Ken Rix and Rod Annis! The gardens have been immensely popular. We began taking applications in October from family groups from the community who want to grow their own food and are now completely sold out!



The Great Rumford Bake-off



Visit The Great Rumford Bake-off Group on Facebook, and join this community of bakers. Members have been having a lot of fun sharing recipes, photos of their latest creations, as well as providing support and encouragement with their fellow bakers.

Until we can safely gather for The Great Rumford Bake Off, we hope you enjoy this virtual community!

The Gazette

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Historical Society
six times a year;
March, April, May, September,
October, November

P.O. Box 4774, East Providence, RI
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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	<i>Buildings</i>
Deborah Ormerod	<i>Curator</i>
Beverly Pettine	<i>Education</i>
Leslie Tente	<i>Events</i>
Cheryl Faria	<i>Finance</i>
Jeffrey Faria	<i>Grounds</i>
Sandra Turgeon	<i>Marker Program</i>
Miriam Kenney	<i>Membership</i>
Nancy Allen	<i>Museum</i>
Reinhard Wohlgemuth	<i>Newsletter</i>
Nancy Moore	<i>Preservation</i>
Nancy Moore	<i>Programs</i>
Nancy Moore	<i>Publicity</i>
Deborah Ormerod	<i>Website Manager</i>

**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

Membership Updates!


**Welcome to our
newest members!**

- Gerald Abbott
- Nazare Aguiar
- Kathryn McGovern
- Peregrine Group LLC
- John Turbitt

Come and enjoy the fun,
fellowship, and educational
opportunities the Historical
Society offers.

In Memory Of

**Florence Adams
Rachel Agren
Gladys Panzarella
Elizabeth F. Socha**



***Sadly missed...fondly
remembered***

Florence Adams, 1930 – 2021

How many of us remember Jazz
Nights with the Strictly
Sentimental Band at the Legion
on Willett Ave? Florence and
George Adams set those up and
performed also. They also
handled the Gazette for 15
years. For a YouTube
performance from Florence, go
to obits at the Smith-Mason
Funeral Home site.



Membership Form New Renewal/Change

Name(s): _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

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

The Civilian Conservation Corps

by Leo Caisse



A Young Man's Adventure

During the depths of the great depression, a 17 year old boy from Warren, RI enlisted in the Civilian Conservation Corps (the CCC). He did it to help his family but his time in the CCC turned into the adventure of a lifetime. The CCC started when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) persuaded Congress to pass the Emergency Conservation Act on March 31, 1933. His Goal: generate jobs for young men suffering from an almost

25% unemployment rate. The Warren boy at first was too young to join the CCC as one had to be 18 to enlist. But in Oct, 1935, the government lowered the age requirement to 17 and he signed up. The teenager met all the other requirements: he was unemployed, unmarried, physically fit and his family was on relief. He would make \$30 a month (\$570 today) but he had to send \$25 home. That beat the \$21 that regular Army soldiers made at the time. The money the CCC boys sent home supported an estimated 12-15 million family members.

Go West, Young Man

The Warren boy was sent to Ft. Adams in Newport for physical conditioning and evaluation, just as all other enrollees in the nation did at their local Army depots. At the end of these two weeks, he received his first physical and inoculations. For some of the boys, it was the first time they had seen a doctor. Then he took the CCC Oath. The CCC assigned the Warren boy to the 141st Company posted at Burlingame in Charlestown, RI. He was issued a denim work suit and a renovated Army olive drab uniform with CCC patches. (In 1938, FDR thought the uniforms looked shoddy and ordered the Navy to design a new spruce-green uniform.)



Part of the 141st Company CCC
Leo Caisse is second row up second from right

His company, like several others, was transferred out West which had more forest work and fewer unemployed young men than back East. He had to get his parents' permission because of his age. He took a train across country from Ft. Adams to a campsite at Triangle Lake near Junction City, Oregon. There he became part of the 2018th Company. In Oregon, his company built fire guard service stations, fire lookout towers, trails and shelters. They fought forest fires when needed, a hallmark of the CCC wherever they were.

The Warren boy earned a truck driving license issued by the Department of the Interior. He learned to operate a bulldozer, a tractor and a jackhammer. He also learned the skill of welding which he would later use in helping to build the USS Massachusetts at the Fore River Shipyard in Quincy, MA. In

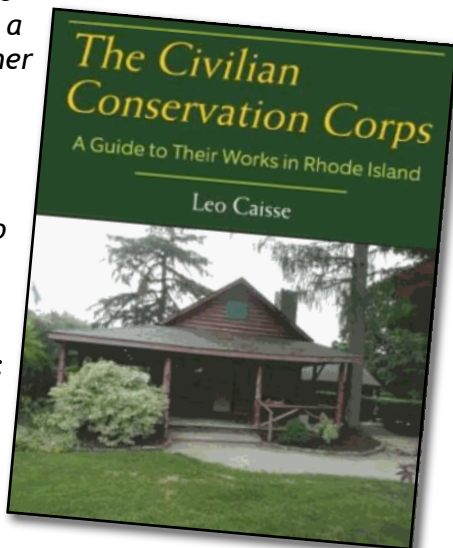
Oregon, he served a maximum of four 6-month enlistments, all that the CCC allowed and was honorably discharged on June 23, 1936. He returned to Warren, but after a little more than a year he reenlisted in 1937. This time he was assigned to the 2130th Company in Casper, Wyoming.

Cowboys and Mountain Lions

In Wyoming, according to Nat'l Archive Records, his company built bridges, roads and a dike. He fought fires of course and some of his company fought coal fires. While in Wyoming, he also learned another skill: how to evade a mountain lion in the wild. In the 1950s, he told stories to his young son about how he knew real cowboys and Indians out West. That was really intriguing because it was the heyday of cowboy shows on TV and Cowboy Town in Plainville, MA. The Warren boy's name was Leo Caisse, Sr. He was my father and he passed away when I was very young.

Leo's note: *It has been a revelation researching my dad's adventure, and it has given me a sense of pride that he and so many others benefited from this program, which began the Green Movement.*

Nancy Moore's note: *Leo started research on the CCC in 2017 and would update me as to his progress as he knew the HS would like a presentation about the subject, which he did in Nov, 2019. As he sent excerpts along, he began to realize that this subject could become a book, which it did in April of 2019! Publication of his father's story in the Gazette was slated for Fall 2020 but life caught up with all of us. Leo died of Covid last summer. Leo's dad's story now stands as a tribute to both father and son. I already sorely miss Leo's research abilities and love of a good story. If you wish to know more about the CCC and its work in RI, please look for Leo's book: "The Civilian Conservation Corps: A Guide to Their Works in RI" – April 2019*



Preservation Updates

1. Pomham Rocks Lighthouse is 150 years old this year! And what a birthday this will be as the "Friends of Pomham" group pulls out all the stops to celebrate with a fully restored lighthouse, grounds, and launches for onsite tours. Now would be a great time to show your support with a new or renewed membership - it will get you special notice of events.



2. Member Susan Cady (EP Military Honor Roll) has let us know that the City, through Mayor DaSilva and the law department, has formally requested that RIDOT replace all signs honoring fallen heroes of WWII and the Korean War on the bridges crossing the East Providence Expressway from the Seekonk River to the Seekonk line. It is hoped that those signs will be in place by the fall of 2021, when a Nov. rededication is planned.

3. Do you recognize this building? We're not sure whether the Odd Fellows Hall was ever gray, but it surely looks a lot better - go by lower Warren Ave. / Burgess Ave. and see for yourself.



4. A quiet time for Metacomet Golf Course but perhaps a time for all of us to reflect on the Native American presence at Jones Pond/Kettle Point and the need for careful archeological work no matter what takes place there. Did you know that the Providence Gazette of June 11, 1763, advertised a slave sale of 23 Africans on John Lyons land leading down to Watchemoket Cove?

5. And lastly, a reminder that the Great Blues will soon return to their roosts behind Home Depot in Seekonk. There are a number of new roosts from last summer so the flock is doing well.

The Historian's Circle

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

Nancy Allen
 Cheryl and Jeff Faria
 Laurie and Bill McWeeney
 Dotty Thornley

Crescent Park: \$500-\$999

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

Vanity Fair Park: \$200-\$499

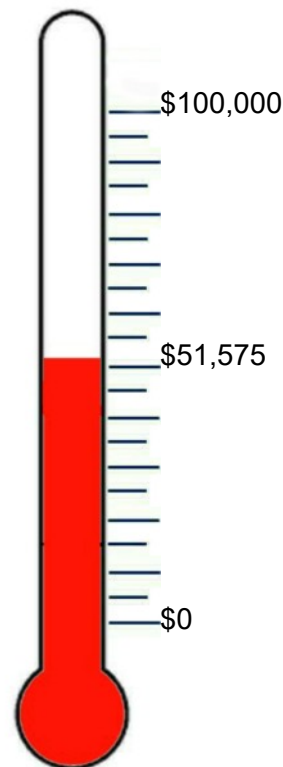
Carole DiFabio and William Litchman
 Maggie Dooley
 Darryl Hardern
 Richard R. Bushnell and Paula Perkins
 Munroe Dairy
 Washington Trust

Boyden Heights Park: \$100-\$199

Roy and Claire Anderson
 Barbara Barnes and Beverly Pettine
 Twyler Boyce
 K. Eric Crook
 Romeo DaSilva
 Sharon H. Dubois
 Will Francis
 Ronald Gomes
 Virginia Neves Gonsalves
 Paul and Pam Goulet
 Mary and Richard Harrall
 The Indoor Tennis Club
 Dave and Eleanor Kelleher
 Gordon and Wendy Hubbard
 Miriam Kenney
 Valerie Lawson
 Ann Linde
 Pat Paulson McGrail
 John and Elaine Puhacz
 Mike and Norma Reynolds
 Jack and Kathy Richer
 Ken and Barbara Rix
 Ed Serowick
 Rickard Smith, LLC
 Marianne Walsh
 Margaret Wieboldt

Friends - \$25-\$99

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 Anthony Valerio
 Tom and Missy Warzeka
 David Weed
 Patricia Wilds
 Jean and Gary Zunda



Thank You!!!

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.

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 or 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. Once established, we plan to use the annual draw to offset costs and hire a part-time employee. So far we have raised \$51,575 towards that goal.



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.



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