



OLDE NEWS

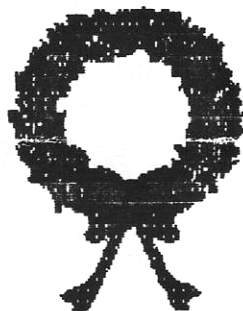
EAST ■ PROVIDENCE ■ HISTORICAL ■ SOCIETY
■ NEWSLETTER ■

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

References to our December 3rd event at Hunt House abound in this issue but surely that's not surprising. Last January we announced our intentions of completing a room and holding a craft boutique at the House this Christmas. The room was not only finished but it was furnished and decorated in proper eighteenth century style; and the modest boutique grew to fill four rooms of the house.

Our efforts brought over two hundred people to the Hunt House, generated a tremendous amount of interest in our restoration project, and added thirteen hundred dollars to our coffers. So

MEETING



THE DECEMBER MEETING
OF THE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
will be held December 18, 1989
from 7:15 pm
at Newman Congregational
Church.

Guest Speaker, Michael Fink

*coffee and refreshments
will be served*

PRESIDENT'S LETTER cont.

we are justifiably proud. It proves that if we work together *anything* is possible!

SPEAKER

This month our guest speaker is Michael Fink, who teaches liberal arts at RISD. Professor Fink's East Providence connection came to light a few years ago through articles he wrote for the East Bay section of the Journal. The articles were filled with reminiscences about the years his parents ran Wayside Furniture on Taunton Avenue. Since I had already been impressed with Professor Fink's phenomenal memory (he not only remembered me after twenty years he remembered what my writing looked like when I was in his class!), I thought he would be a valuable addition to the nostalgia series that we began with Father Barnes' memories of Hunts Mills.

While we're on the subject of the meeting, the bakers for December are Ginny Berwick, Wendy Plummer, and Ruth Peirce. Cheers!

**TREASURER'S REPORT
as of DECEMBER 12, 1989**

General Fund	2,689.61
Savings	11,314.05
Credit Union	26.20
Total	\$14,029.86
Profit from Christmas sale	\$1,336.75

**OLDE NEWS**

is published monthly by The East Providence Historical Society

Editor

George Field

EAST PROVIDENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 4774

East Providence, Rhode Island 02916

Telephone 438-1750

OFFICERS

President	Claudette Field
First Vice-President	Michael Charves
Second Vice-President	Virginia Berwick
Secretary	Lura Sellow
Cor. Secretary	Rose Marie Sirenski
Treasurer	Martha Rivas

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	Ellen O'Hare
	Nancy Stevens

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Artifacts	Edna Anness
Grant Writing	Jewel Drickamer
Hunt House Restoration	G. Fales Peirce
Membership	Virginia Berwick
Newsletter	George Field
Mailing subcommittee	Florence Adams
Preservation	Nancy Moore
Publicity	Florence Adams
Safety and Security	Scott Booth
Ways and Means	W. and H. Vincent

THE COMMITTEE MONSTER RETURNS !

At the last meeting we needed volunteers for three new committees: By-Laws, Plaques, and Hospitality. The By-Laws Committee is filled but it was suggested that the other two committees be explained in the newsletter so that new people who might be interested in participating would get a chance.

The Plaque Committee is being formed to investigate the house plaque programs of organizations such as the Providence Preservation Society. It will gather information about the various programs throughout the state and make recommendation to the Board. The Society has had a plaque program for quite a few years but it was never widely publicized. Since the City's Historic Properties Study Commission and the Board of the Historical Society agree that the plaques can be valuable educational tools to promote local history and preservation we would like to revitalize our program.

The Hospitality Committee, which will coordinate refresh-

ments at the general meetings only needs a Chairman (and perhaps an Assistant). The volunteer bakers each month can help the Committee set out the refreshments so this Committee is a very easy way for a busy person to get involved with the Historical Society.

The Plaque Committee need not be time-consuming either as the Committee can set its own pace. So please consider helping out by volunteering to serve on either of these Committees. We'd all love to see some new faces!

Join the Historical
Society today! Send this
coupon (with money) to
E.P.H.S.
P.O.Box 4774
East Providence, RI
02916

NAME (S) _____

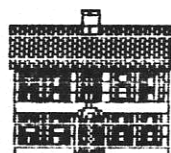
ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

Single (\$10) Family (\$15)



HUNT HOUSE UPDATE



E.P., PHONE HOME

Workers at the Hunt House can now communicate to the outside world, and vice-versa. New England Telephone took some time out from its busy schedule and installed our official Historical Society Phone on the week of 11/20. The telephone comes complete with its own answering machine, so if you call up Hunt House and no one is home you will get a cheery (or inane, depending on your mood) message asking you to start talking at the sound of the beep. Many of you may feel intimidated by these new-fangled electronic toys, but don't be afraid! Just speak your mind in a natural tone of voice. You're among friends. The number at the Hunt House is **(401)438-1750**. Cute, huh?

COMING EVENTS

Walter Vincent has established a tentative list of projects to be attempted over the winter.

Firstly, he is discontinuing the Saturday workdays until Spring. The Tuesday and Thursday times (8a.m. til noon) will continue as usual.

The "crew" has discovered some disconcerting conditions in the structure of the house in the area around the keeping room fireplace. The hearth area has taken on a pronounced sag in the middle, and the famous sloping floor between the keeping room and the back room (the soon-to-be-kitchen) seems to be held up only by the inertia of two hundred years. As a temporary measure, a lolly column will be installed in the basement to support the floor at this point until more permanent structural repairs can be made to both the chimney and the floor joists in this area.

Once this has been dealt with, Walter hopes to complete the restoration of the keeping room and the front hallway and stairs by Spring.

THE FIVE YEAR PLAN, AND BEYOND

The Building Committee has adopted an ambitious long range plan to organize the Society's efforts in restoring the Hunt House. Highlights from the plan follow:

During the twenty-five years of the lease the Historical Society will be working toward creating a fully operational museum of East Providence history at Hunts Mills. The Society will restore and maintain rooms depicting life as it was once lived at the John Hunt House. We will also have revolving theme displays of artifacts pertaining to East Providence history. The Society will maintain a small office at the Hunt House to service the Museum and rooms will be set aside for the work of amassing a collection and for storage of donated artifacts.

In addition to providing space for exhibits, the house will be used for Historical Society Board meetings. Other civic groups will be encouraged to use the house to promote preservation and familiarize people with the restoration process.

First five years:

The heating system will be replaced and major problems with the chimney corrected. The downstairs rooms will be restored and a service kitchen installed in the former bathroom on the ground floor. A new security system will be installed to insure the safety of our growing collection of artifacts. The rear brick ell will be torn down and any structural damage it has caused to the building will be repaired. The outside of the house will be painted and repairs made to the exterior. The leaded glass window over the front door will be restored, the aluminum gutter on the front of the house removed, and the crown moulding on the rear of the house replaced. As an ongoing program throughout the early years of the lease, the Society will replace the existing windows with more authentic (and better fitting) ones. The windows will be divided in a more authentic pattern, either 12 over 12 lights, or 9 over 6, rather than the 6 over 6 pattern we have seen in turn-of-the-century photographs of the house.

Five to ten years:

The restoration will continue

UPDATE cont.

upstairs. Heat will be installed in the attic and basement and the whole house will be air conditioned. Wiring and plumbing will be upgraded. Work will begin on the restoration of the summer kitchen in the basement. The outside of the house will be painted and landscaped as befits an eighteenth century house.

Ten to fifteen years

The restoration will be finished upstairs and the repainting of the downstairs will proceed where needed. The attic restoration will begin. On the first floor, the wall between the original parlor and the office in the back will be replaced and the chair rails and moldings will be copied and replaced where missing.

Fifteen to twenty years

The chimneys will be lined so that the fireplaces can be used during open houses. Outside landscaping and wood repair will continue. The repainting of the upstairs will proceed where needed. Brick walks and terraces will be built around the house and the plantings expanded. More original looking

lighting will be installed



Twenty to twenty-five years

A library of restoration materials and techniques documenting what has been learned will be assembled to continue the restoration. Revolving exhibits will complement the restored rooms of the house and artifacts on permanent exhibit. The outside of the house will be repainted as part of a continuing maintenance program.

It should be noted that this program, ambitious as it is, is a deliberately conservative one which will be included as part of the lease package still being negotiated with the City. The Committee felt that the Society should not commit itself to promises it can't possibly deliver, so they "went slow." It can be seen that at the end of the first five year period, the bulk of the most expensive work will have been completed, so if you are feeling over endowed with either your money or your time, the next few years are the ones that would most benefit from your generosity.

George Field

THE OFFICIAL OLDE NEWS CALENDAR

SUN	MON	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1 	2
3 Hunt House Christmas	4	5 hunt house workday	6	7 hunt house workday	8	9
10	11	12 hunt house workday	13	14 hunt house workday	15	16
17	18 December Meeting	19 hunt house workday	20	21 hunt house workday	22	23
24	25  Christmas	26 hunt house workday	27	28 hunt house workday	29	30
31	1 New Year's Day	2 hunt house workday	3	4 hunt house workday	5	6
7	8	9 hunt house workday	10	11 hunt house workday	12	13
14	15	16 hunt house workday	17	18 hunt house workday	19	20
21	22 January Meeting	23 hunt house workday	24	25 hunt house workday	26	27
28	29	30 hunt house workday	31			

Note that Saturday workdays are discontinued until the spring. Tuesday and Thursday workdays are from 8am until 12 noon.

MUSEUM COMMITTEE

Our debut as a Museum with the eighteenth century restored room, decorations and desserts was a success, judging from the comments made by the hundreds of guests who passed through the house on December 3rd. First we owe a great deal of appreciation to those who scraped, hammered and painted the back room into readiness. Loans of furniture and accessories from Nancy Stevens, Nancy Moore, Lura Sellow and Madeline Vincent made the overall effect sensational. The gifts of Hunt memorabilia accepted last month, some of which were in the room, were the icing on the cake. They were from Charles Gross, a descendant of the Hunts and his wife Frances.

Upstairs was a general display of some artifacts which are in our collection already. Visitors were pleased to see our workroom and we received several potential offers of gifts. Mulled cider and desserts made from eighteenth

century recipes were offered at a reception from three to five and fliers were available explaining eighteenth century customs at Christmas.

Two hundred and two guests signed our guest book and since I have a general idea of who passed by me, I know that many more were there who did not sign in. Thirty-four invitations were mailed to people in the community who might have a special interest in seeing what has been accomplished so far at the Hunt House.

Many thanks to Nancy Stevens who stood for seven hours in the restored room and to Rose Marie Sirenski and Virginia Berwick who helped me upstairs all day. Thanks also to Michael Charves who came early to photograph the room and to Fales Peirce who loaned us the use of his van to move furniture. Thanks to Lowell for help making the desserts and for seeing that they arrived

MUSEUM COMMITTEE, cont.

on time and most of all thanks to Walter Vincent and the restoration crew without whom the open house would not have been possible.

In other Museum Committee news, Article Six of the museum policy was approved by the membership at our last meeting. We will have more museum business to report on next month. Yuletide greetings!

Edna Anness

**COOKIE OF THE MONTH
DEPARTMENT**

This recipe was requested by many people who sampled Fran Gross' cookies at the last meeting. We have decided, in deference to the season, to publish the recipe Fran so graciously provided.

Hopkins House Cookies

- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups flour
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup butter or marg.
- 1 egg
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup molasses
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tps. baking soda.
- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups raisins or currants

- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. ginger
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt

Melt butter and add sugar, add other ingredients and let stand in the refrigerator several hours or overnight. Place by teaspoon (or roll in balls) and then flatten, smooth with a knife dipped in milk. Bake at 350 about 7 to 10 minutes. Remove to rack to cool.

Makes three or four dozen cookies.

IT'S OFFICIAL!

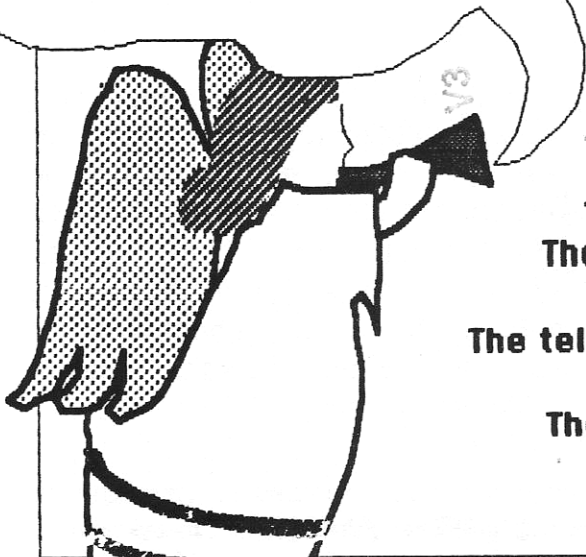
November 17, 1989

We are pleased to inform you that at a recent meeting of the Distribution Committee of The Champlin Foundations a grant of \$13,000 was approved for your organization to replace the heating system at the John Hunt House. We anticipate funds will be distributed about mid-December.

Yours very truly,
Dave King
The Champlin Foundations

Hark!

Let us give thanks! We couldn't have had a Christmas sale without this list of volunteers!



The List. . .

The Ways & Means Chairmen,
their Committee,
and craft workers.

The Hunt House Restoration crew.

The Museum Committee Chair
and her Committee.

The Treasurer.

The members who lent furnishings
for our eighteenth century display.

The decorators, guides, sign painters,
hosts, salespeople, and cashiers.

The telephone volunteer who garnered so
many donations from members.

The people who responded to our call
by donating handmade items,
jams, jellies, and baked goods.

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