

# OLDE NEWS

EAST • PROVIDENCE • HISTORICAL • SOCIETY  
• NEWSLETTER •

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Promises. We promise to watch a neighbor's house or feed their cat or get them the name of that great plumber Aunt Sadie has. In the course of every day we make many promises. People take them lightly but they shouldn't. A member who volunteers is making a promise; and organizations like the Historical Society cannot function without them. When we get broken promises everyone in the organization suffers. In 1987 City officials in East Providence promised the Historical Society that the City would provide heat and electricity to the Hunt House for an in-

*page 3*

## MEETING



THE OCTOBER MEETING  
OF THE  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
will be held October 23, 1989  
from 7:15pm  
at Newman Congregational  
Church

*coffee and refreshments will be  
served*

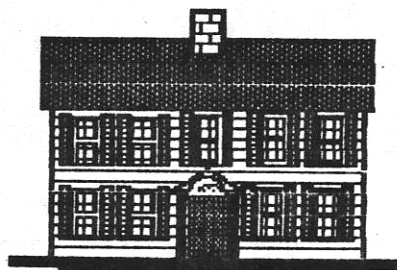
## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

definite period. The apparent intent was to help the group concentrate on the job of restoring the house without the additional worry of also finding money for utilities. Well, two years have passed and we still don't have heat. Oh, don't get me wrong, there are people in the City who are willing to help us get heat if only someone would tell them it's okay. Unfortunately, the man who could authorize the heating of Hunt House says he can't because it was not spelled out explicitly in the original lease (it does say, however, that the City will provide *utilities*) and it might be perceived by the taxpayers as an impropriety and make the front page of the *Post*!

Please! There's something *very* wrong here. Since when is it an impropriety subject to public censure for a city to maintain its own historically valuable buildings by providing heat?

The real scandal is that the building hasn't been heated in years and all the painted surfaces and most of the plumbing have deteriorated. *That's* what should

page 5



### 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

### OFFICERS

President	Claudette Field
First Vice-President	Michael Charves
Second Vice-President	Virginia Berwick
Recording Secretary	Lura Sellew
Corresponding Sec.	Rose Marie Sirenski
Treasurer	Martha Rivas

### BOARD MEMBERS

Members at Large	Alyce (Billie) Arden
	Ellen O'Hare
	Nancy Stevens

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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

## NOSTALGIA

It's gratifying to know that East Providence Fire Chief Anthony J. Guglielmo reads OLDE NEWS so carefully that he noticed that the firemen weren't given credit for their work in the Nostalgia column. When the metal on the old Red Bridge expanded in the heat and would not close who came to the rescue? The East Providence Fire Department of course. They were the ones who doused the bridge with water to get it back into shape so it would close. Thank you Chief Guglielmo for that information and for reading OLDE NEWS!

### LAST MONTH'S RESPONSE

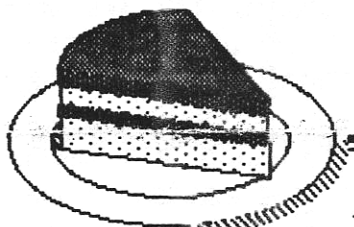
Name the five and dime across from City Hall? Ben Franklin's. Remember the counter with the glass divided sections? Windows full of various merchandise? And that very helpful and friendly manager? Remember more? Tell *OLDE NEWS!*

### THIS MONTH'S QUERY

Forty years ago, Ray Anderson's father built him a small snow plow, which he took

to the Turner Reservoir and plowed paths for the many skaters there. As Ray was leaving, he was stopped by Charlie Higgins, who wrote his name in a little black book. Who was he?

Doesn't anyone have any Riverside, Watchemoket or Kent Heights nostalgia? Send it to Nostalgia Dept., c/o *OLDE NEWS*, P.O. Box 4774 E. Providence, RI 02916, you'll be glad you did!



## BAKERS

I joked at the meeting about the cookies I baked but I wasn't the only baker. Agnes Thompson and Madeline Vincent also contributed some home-baked goodies. Our bakers for October are Billie Arden and Gladys Panzarella. Pat Millette will be in charge of the kitchen with Walter.

As I said somewhere else in this issue the response at the meeting was wonderful. It's pretty gratifying to ask for two volunteers and have ten people volunteer! Thank you all.

*Claudette Field*

## WAYS AND MEANS

Our Attic Treasure Sale is just around the corner (October 15) and since it is, the Ways and Means Committee had a special meeting setting up plans and scheduling a program for each ones duties. Plans for the other projects are also being discussed and in the making. There's been a bit of pressure on us, but we're really looking forward to all projects being successful, but we do need assistance, so please volunteer your services for all these affairs.

The Craft Workshop has been doing well and I am excited to see so much interest and having so many of you coming forth with such great ideas and willingness to work with us. Would the people who are doing their craft work at home please contact me so that we may know what variety of items we'll have to display? Thanks to so many and keep up the good job being done on crafts. Our date for the Christmas Bazaar has been set for December 3 from 10 to 4.

And we mustn't forget our other project on the agenda: the Harvest Supper on November 4. Tickets are now available by call-

ing the Vincents at 434-0481 or Greta Charves, our newly appointed assistant to the Treasurer, at 434-6003.

Just remember, we're asking for most returns to be turned in at the next regular meeting, October 23, but we have extended the deadline to October 30. We **must know** the count by that deadline in order to plan our food purchases.

*Madeline Vincent*

\*\*\*\*\*

Your dues count! If you joined after March they will be prorated. Those who joined in the summer when we were not meeting are paid up for this year.. Dues for 1989-90 were due in September.

### TREASURER'S REPORT as of OCTOBER 9, 1989

General Fund	511.67
Savings	3,207.51
C.D.	7,967.77
Credit Union	25.57
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,712.52</b>

---

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

---

be emblazoned on the front page of the *Post*! Not to mention the fact that the Historical Society is offering the City an enormous gift (the restoration of a City-owned building) worth about two hundred thousand dollars and the City is quibbling about providing heat for a few months. Not only are they ungrateful but they have a skewed sense of values. Now there's a near fatal case of tunnel vision for you!

---

## ANNUAL MEETING

---

For those who missed it I'd just like to say that our annual meeting was everything we could have hoped for. Fr Barnes' reminiscences about his early life at the Hunt House were wonderful. The election was held and we have a new officer and three new Board members, two elected and one appointed. Rose Marie Sirenski is our new Corresponding Secretary; Alyce (Billie) Arden, and Nancy Stevens are new Members-at-Large and Jewel Drickamer officially replaced Ellen O'Hare as head of the Grant

Writing Committee.

The renewed enthusiasm of our members was obvious, because we have some important new volunteers. Bill Wade, our past Vice-President is going to apply his professional carpentry skills to the kitchen in progress at the Hunt House and George Amaral, a new member, offered to do research for us.

But with all the excitement I forgot that Bill Wade wanted me to ask if anyone has an apartment-sized electric stove and/or refrigerator to donate for the Hunt House. I forgot to mention it then, but now you know.

*Claudette Field*

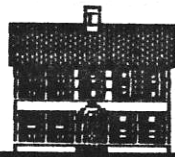
---

## PPS WORKSHOPS

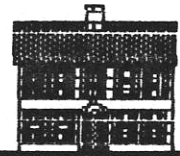
---

If you own an older home and are about to embark on a renovation project the Providence Preservation Society is offering two workshops series which may interest you. The first beginning October 21 is on basic home rehabilitation. The second series offered November 3-4 and 17-18 is on decorative paint techniques and faux finishes. For more information call 831-7440.

---



## HUNT HOUSE UPDATE



### *COLORS*

Using the US Department of the Interior guidelines I've done paint sampling at the Hunt House and found much to my relief that the original color of the house was not golden mustard as I feared but was a pale buff color similar to that of the First Baptist Church in America on North Main St. in Providence. Over the buff was a deep beige typical of the Victorian era and over that the dreaded bright mustard color with dark brown trim, which was an early twentieth century aberration. One our members, Bill Rix, said that he remembers the house as that bright gold color. Later the house was a series of off-white colors, grey white, creamy white and finally the bright white that it is now.

I plan to sample another area to confirm my findings but you should be warned that the house will not be white when we finish with it as white was not a color

which the colonials chose for the outside of their homes. White homes gained popularity in this country during the federal period in the early 1800's. The Victorians rejected white for warmer, deeper colors, which got progressively darker as the century progressed.

*C. Field*

### *WAMPANOAGS!*

On September 26th the GFWC Wampanoag Women's Club had their meeting at the Hunt House. Their President, Mary Irons, sat near me at a GFWC banquet last May and I persuaded her that the Historical Society needed her support even if she did not have the time for hands-on involvement. Mary and Bill Irons did join the Society and Mary got the idea of having her first meeting at the house to acquaint the members of her club with our project. Many of them were dismayed by the work the house needs but this

is an understandable reaction and quite common as I reported last month. However they were also supportive and appreciated the Historical Society's commitment to the project. They gave us a donation and requested membership.

We are pleased to welcome the GFWC Wampanoag Women's Club as members.

## ***SAFETY & SECURITY***

The group has purchased 3 ten-pound, all-purpose fire extinguishers. There is one each in the basement, first and second floors. Please read the directions on the label to familiarize yourself with their operation the next time you visit the Hunt House. Although we hope we will never have to use them, a quick response in an emergency could prevent a disaster.

Scott Booth has replaced Ray Anderson on the Security Committee. Scott, an architect whose office is on Meeting Street in Providence, is also a charter member of the Building Committee.

We would like to thank Ray for the time and effort he devoted to looking for the perfect alarm system for the Hunt House and we wish him well on his future pursuits.

### **WISH LIST**

#### **Professional Skills:**

Plumber  
Electrician  
Cabinetmaker

#### **Office equipment:**

Copy machine  
Macintosh computer

#### **Furnishings:**

Small electric stove  
Refrigerator

Keeping room furnishing (see article on the inventory of John Hunt's property at the time of his death.)

## ***OUTSIDE***

With winter coming we are stepping up the work schedule.

Richard Lee has taken over the responsibility of getting the facade painted. Volunteers will be painting on Saturdays and during the week weather permitting. There is still much to be done before winter, so if you want to help drop by the house for details and times or call 434-0481 for information.

---

## MUSEUM COMMITTEE

---

The Museum Committee met October 11 to accept three donations to the collection and to rewrite article Six of the Museum Collections Policy pertaining to the deaccessioning of artifacts. We will be considering two methods of donating artifacts to the collection; the outright gift places in trust with the Museum, and the gift which comes with restrictions and/or special exceptions. Policies must be written to deal with each exception according to the condition.

A trip to see the restored Babcock-Smith House in West-erly took place October 12. The house was built c. 1734 and the interior restoration resembles the work needed at the Hunt House. Those active in the restoration project who were free came along. Issac Smith of the Board of Trustees answered questions.

Joanne Bouchard conducted two interviews with Beverly Chalko and Barbara Brainerd of Rumford. We are still looking for volunteers to be a part of the Oral History Project.

We are researching the two wills of the two John Hunts who

occupied the Hunt House: one written in 1751 and one in 1799. We can determine from these what furnishings were in the house during the occupancies of the two men. We can discover from the inventories of the wills what type of furnishings we will need to collect in order to furnish the house authentically in eighteenth century decor. We will publish a "wish list" shortly.

We also hope to be able to borrow some household items to furnish the small back room on the first floor as it might have looked at Christmas time in the eighteenth century for the Christmas Bazaar and open house in December.

One hundred and sixty-one artifacts have been accessioned as of this newsletter. We still are in need of file folders; used ones are fine.

*Edna Anness*

---

**VOTE on NOV.7th**  
Bond Issue \*2 will provide three million dollars in grants for restoring historic property, owned by non-profit agencies.

---



## THE OFFICIAL OLDE NEWS CALENDAR

	SUN	MON	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRI	SAT
OCT	1	2	3 hunt house workday	4	5 hunt house workday	6	7 hunt house workday
	8	9 Colum. Day	10 hunt house workday	11	12 hunt house workday	13	14 hunt house workday
	15	16	17 hunt house workday	18	19 hunt house workday	20	21 hunt house workday
	22	23 October meeting	24 hunt house workday	25	26 hunt house workday	27	28 hunt house workday
	29	30	31 Halloween	1	2 hunt house workday	3	4 hunt house workday
NOV	5	6	7 hunt house workday	8	9 hunt house workday	10	11
	12	13	14 hunt house workday	15	16 hunt house workday	17	18 hunt house workday
	19	20	21 hunt house workday	22	23 Thank- sgiving	24	25
	27	28 November meeting	29	30			

NOTE: Tuesdays & Thursdays 8am → 1pm and even numbered Saturdays are inside workdays  
All Saturdays until No 4 are Outside workdays also

### SPEAKER

A representative from the RI State Historic Preservation Commission will speak at our October meeting about Bond Issue #2 for Historic Preservation on the ballot for November 7th. This bond issue will provide \$3 million dollars in grants to preserve historic sites throughout the state which are owned by cities and towns (like the Hunt House!).

If your Dues are  
overdue, send them in today!

NAME (S) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

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

The East Providence Historical Society presents

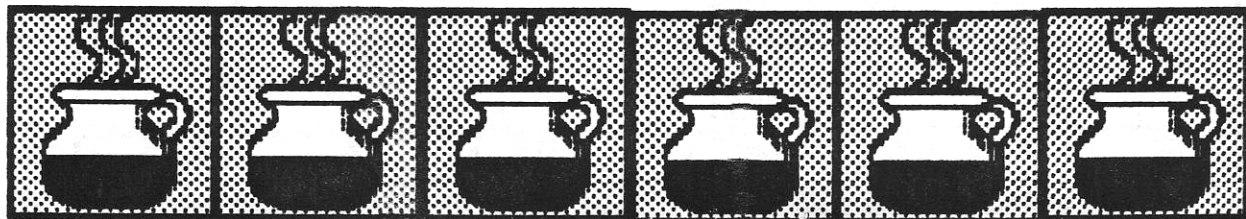
# The 3rd Annual Harvest Supper

(and First Annual Silly Auction)

to benefit the Hunt House Restoration

**Saturday November 4 at 6PM**  
at Newman Congregational Church

Call 434-0481 or 434-6003 for ticket information



## OLDE NEWS

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

