

OLDE NEWS

EAST ■ PROVIDENCE ■ HISTORICAL ■ SOCIETY
■ NEWSLETTER ■

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

In the past two years the Historical Society has undergone some whirlwind changes and as always happens in cases like these some people are thrilled with the changes while others are uncomfortable. It isn't even particularly surprising because one of the things in life that seems to be immutable is human nature.

People haven't changed much since Lincoln penned his poetic rationale, "You can please some of the people. . . etc.."

Those of you who like change have an opportunity to create some of your own this month by nominating new officers. I told you last month how I felt about

MEETING



THE JANUARY MEETING
OF THE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
will be held APRIL 23, 1990
from 7:15 pm
at Newman Congregational
Church.

Guest Speaker, Edna Anness:
A Hunt House History Lesson-
coffee and refreshments
will be served

PRESIDENT'S LETTER (cont.)

the Presidency now it's your opportunity to express *your* views by filling out the ballot in this issue and mailing it in to the Post Office box.

Those of you who think things have been moving too fast can also express your views by voting for people who have similar philosophies.

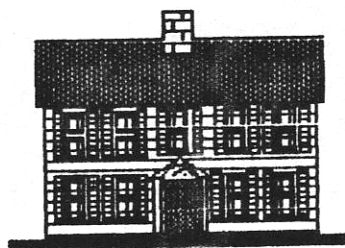
This is everyone's opportunity to be heard if you don't make an effort you can hardly complain later, can you?

So speak your mind, register your approval or disapproval - vote!

The Historical Society has lost a loyal member and an old friend. On Sunday April 15, Ann Bannister, who had recently moved to Maryland for medical treatment, passed away.

We will miss her not only for the generosity she displayed toward the Historical Society during the past year (our first furniture acquisitions were from Ann) but also for her lively spirit and wicked sense of humor.

When I was Treasurer of the Society, I could always count on her to be a friendly face in the crowd; Ann rarely missed a meeting before she became ill. She was interested in us until the end. Edna's acknowledgement of Ann's latest gift to the Society appears in this issue.

**OLDE NEWS**

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
Recording Secretary	Lura Sellev
Corresponding Secretary	Rose Marie Sirenski
Treasurer	Martha Rivas
Assistant Treasurer	Greta Charves

BOARD MEMBERS

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

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Artifacts	Edna Anness
Grant Writing	Jewel Driokamer
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 M. Vincent

PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

GREAT NEWS - THE LIGHT HAS DAWNED AT DOT! On March 27, this committee along with representatives of the City's planning and engineering departments met with RIDOT and Rick Greenwood of RIHPC. The end result of that meeting stands as follows:

"...that RIDOT is proposing to replace the existing traffic signal with an ornamental fluted pole with a fluted mast arm painted black, similar to those being installed on Memorial Boulevard, Providence. Because of safety considerations, the signal heads will have a 12' diameter, but the casings will be painted black, if possible.

It is our determination that the project as described above will have no adverse effect on the Rumford Historic District. We also understand that this type of signal meets with the approval of the East Providence planning department and the East Providence Historical Society"

The above text is from a letter sent to Edmund Parker of the DOT from Edward Sanderson of the RIHPC. A letter from the Historical Society was also sent

to the DOT confirming our agreement with the new arrangement. It was also stated that the Society understands this process may take as long as six months, during which the Society will be in contact with the DOT to inquire as to progress.

BRIDGHAM FARM: On April 2, a group representing the EP Coalition, the EP Land Conservation Trust, and the EP Historical Society, went before the City Council to ask for the City's support for the buy-out of this property. The City agreed to send a letter to the bank presently holding the mortgage, informing them of the City's support for the project. The City also offered the assistance of the planning department in preparing the DEM Open Space grant application.

This support is of great significance to this project as it indicates that the City is aware of the importance this land has, both in regard to protection for a potential water source and as valuable passive recreation area.

UNION PRIMARY: On March

PRESERVATION (ctd.)

29, members of the Union Primary committee met with Jack Renshaw, an historical architect, to view the school from his expert eye. To quote from his report:

"It seems to me that there is a possibility of nominating this structure to the Register if its historical importance to the community can be uncovered and documented.My gut reaction is that it is possible, but research into the town histories and perhaps the school department records will be required. The architectural significance would also be included in a nomination, but it will only be filling a supplemental

role."

It is obvious that much digging needs to be done. Thank you to people like Margery Angell who have already started us in that process.

NOTICE: For all of our members interested in preservation of open space (specifically the Bridgham Farm) there will be a meeting of the EP Land Conservation Trust on May 9th. Please watch your paper or call Nancy Moore for the time and date. Your support and membership in this group is important to this project.

Nancy Moore

WAYS AND MEANS

The Third Annual Pasta Supper was held on March 31 and was the most successful to date. Over 140 adults and children attended. Patrons enjoying the meal may not realize the volunteers hours spent in making this event such a success. Since January, Society members worked on planning, publicity, newsletter, telephoning and tickets. Many of these same volunteers came out in force on the 31st to set up, decorate, cook,

serve, clean, collect tickets and bake. A special thanks from these co-chairmen go to our own dedicated Society members, Newman Congregational Church, the Rumford Juniors and our own Ways and Means Committee. Door prizes and children's favors were a small thank you to those attending. Net proceeds will be announced at the April meeting.

The Murder Mystery Dinner

WAYS & MEANS (cont.)

will be our next event and we think the Society will find it fun and profitable. Based on the actual "mysterious causes" of Allen Hunt's death in 1844 our members handcrafted an historical plot and cast in which our dinner guests will participate in solving a 146 year old mystery. No elaborate costumes or acting experience is necessary. Over 60 ticket reservations have already come in.

The four course dinner will be held at the Hunt House on Friday and Saturday, May 4 and 5 and May 11 and 12 at 7 p.m. On Sunday May 6 and 13 it will be held at 2 p.m.. Special gifts will be provided to mothers on Mother's Day, May 13. Character selection is on a first come first served basis and the plot is based on twenty very different historic personalities. The Playbill/Ad Book will be used all year as a keepsake history. It should be our greatest fund raiser ever. Hundreds of letters have been sent to local businesses. If you regularly patronize any of our city's businesses please call Claudette Field at 431-0257 before April 22. If each member brought in one or

two ads, we could bring this event's proceeds to our goal of five thousand dollars.

Ticket reservations are \$25 per person and sales close May 1st. Call Pat Millette days at 431-2055 or Martha Rivas 6 p.m.-9 p.m. at 351-5042.

Walter and I have enjoyed co-chairing this committee. The use of a sub-chairman system for large events has made our job easier, but after 2 1/2 years we are stepping down after the Murder Mystery Dinner. We have compiled a detailed log of two years of events and we're more than willing to help the next chairman design and stage upcoming events after May 15. Please contact the President if you are interested in chairing this committee.

The next meeting of the Ways and Means Committee will be Tuesday, May 15 at 7 p.m. at the Vincent's house, 45 Priscilla Avenue, Rumford. If you want to be a part of our very exciting, busy group please join us.

Madeline and Walter Vincent

PRESERVATION WEEK

See OLDE NEWS insert for details



HUNT HOUSE UPDATE



The building Committee met on April 5 at the Hunt House. Technical questions were brought up by our dedicated building workers and decided upon. Building workdays are Tuesday and Thursday from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.. Three members, Walter Vincent, Charlie Jackson and Bud Plummer have spent the last few months sanding doors, restoring hardware and removing floors. All doors were restored to operable condition in preparation for the new alarm system. With up coming events so close to hand, we need more members to spend just a few hours a week sanding, cleaning or painting. Please, now that the weather is better, drop into the workshop on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and become a part of this House's history. Call Walter Vincent at 434-0481 for further information.

Saturday, April 28th will be a major clean-up day for the Hunt House. We will sand, haul, sweep, and polish the house to

ready it for Allen Hunt's Mystery Guests. Hours are from 10 a.m. til 2 p.m. Bring a bag lunch, your work gloves, and energy. We'll provide the music, drinks, and jobs.

MUSEUM COMMITTEE

The Committee met on April 7th to accept the following gifts: a Windsor chair from Ann Bannister, a Victorian rocking chair from Gladys Panzerella, two Victorian occasional chairs from Lura Sellew, a class picture album of the First Grade at Union School from 1931 from Marjorie Angell and two file boxes from the chemistry lab of the Rumford Chemical Works from Earl and Virginia Berwick. We thank them very much.

A meeting was held with Mr. John Rezendes, principal of Martin Junior High School, to plan a pilot project, a bus tour of historic sites and house tour of Hunt House for the seventh grade class of member Angela Heaton in the spring.

Lawrence Hardy, an honorary member who donated his research on the Hunt Family last Fall, passed away in March. We were honored to receive two memorial gifts in his memory.

Oral histories from Barbara Brainerd and her sister Beverly Chalko along with an interview with Helene Wilkinson Jones, who lived for several years in the Caleb Williams House, have entered the collection.

The Accession file card system is completed and work is beginning on the Tracing card files so that we can easily locate artifacts when called upon to do so. June Goff and I represented the Society at the workshop on "Historical Cemeteries" presented by the League of RI Historical Societies on March 24th.

Time for spring cleaning is here. REMINDER! Call me before you throw away such items as EP yearbooks, class, team, special event pictures, newspaper articles on special EP events, programs, old report cards, etc. For example: the other day I found a dance program for a Ball of the Washington Club in the NEW TOWN HALL, May 6, 1891. Anyone know what the "Wash-

ington Club" was?

Edna Anness

CORRECTIONS FROM LAST MONTH

Bud Plummer's name is *not* spelled Plumber as it was last month. Sorry Bud.

The headquarters of the RI Historical society are in Aldrich House on Benevolent street in Providence, and not in the John Brown House, as reported last month in WHO'S WHO, WHAT'S WHAT.



MURDER MOST FOUL!

The Murder Mystery Dinners

at the Hunt House,

May 4, 5 @ 7:00 p.m.

May 6 @ 2 p.m.

May 11, 12 @ 7:00 p.m.

May 13 @ 2 p.m.*



* Take your Mom
to a murder on Mother's Day!

431-2055 Days. 351-5042 6-9 pm

NOMINATIONS

Yes, it's (groan) that time of year when a young man's (or woman's) fancy turns to thoughts of nominating a new slate of officers for the up-coming year! So please avail yourself of the nominating form on this page and make your preferences known.

If you value what the Society is doing, then your input to the nomination process is vitally important: the nominating committee will use these forms to generate a proposed slate of officers for the Annual Meeting, and these are the people who will guide the EPHS for another year. And don't think you can get out of it by nominating the same old gang again. Our beloved Treasurer, Martha Rivas, is definitely stepping down from office at the end of this year, so we will need a new Treasurer to be nominated at minimum.

And there is no need for modesty either. If you think you are the best person for the job, then go for it and nominate yourself! But at least let us hear from you.

Make your voice heard!
Fill out this Nomination
Form today and send it
to:

E.P.H.S. Nominating Committee
P.O.Box 4774
East Providence, RI 02916

I would like to nominate
the following members as
officers of the East Providence
Historical Society: for 1990-91
For President:

For 1st V.P.:

For 2nd V.P.:

For Treasurer:

For Secretary:

**For Corresponding
Secretary:**

**I would like to chair the
following committee:**

**I would like to work on the
following committee:**

THE OFFICIAL OLDE NEWS CALENDAR

SUN	MON	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRI	SAT
1	2	3 hunt house workday	4	5 hunt house workday	6	7
8	9	10 hunt house workday	11	12 hunt house workday	13	14
15	16 Last Day for Tax Returns	17	18	19 hunt house workday	20	21
22 Final Ad Deadline	23 April Meeting	24 hunt house workday	25	26 hunt house workday	27	28 hunt house clean-up
29	30	1 hunt house workday	2	3 hunt house workday	4 Murder Mystery Dinner	
6 Murder Mystery Dinner		8 hunt house workday	9	10 hunt house workday	11 Murder Mystery Dinner	
13 Murder Mystery Dinner		15 Ways & Means Committee	16	17 hunt house workday	18	19
20	21 May Meeting	22 hunt house workday	23	24 hunt house workday	25	26
27	28	29 hunt house workday	30	31 hunt house workday		

Hunt House Workdays: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays

MEMBERSHIP OPPORTUNITY!

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Corporate/Patron-\$100 Life-\$75

Family-\$15 Single-\$10

UPCOMING EVENTS

To honor the bicentennial of Rhode Island's ratification of the Constitution on May 19, 1790, the Rhode Island Heritage Commission will stage a re-enactment of George Washington's and Thomas Jefferson's visit to this state August 17-19, 1790.

The President (portrayed by William Sommerfield) and his delegation will arrive in Newport aboard the sloop *Providence* on Saturday August 18. While there he will revisit familiar sites: the Old Colony House, Hunt House, Trinity Church and Truro Synagogue among others. In the evening, there will be a semi-formal reception in his honor at the Old Colony House. (Tickets will be available in advance.)

The next day, Sunday, August 19, President Washington and his entourage will sail up to Providence, again on the sloop *Providence*. Following a ceremony at the Old State House, Washington's visit to Rhode Island will be concluded by an afternoon tea presented by the RI Historical Society, at the John Brown House. Tickets to the tea will be available in advance.

For further information about this historic visit, contact the Rhode Island

Heritage Commission at (401) 277-269 or the Rhode Island Historical Society at (401) 331-8575.

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The Public Archeology Laboratory, Inc., an independent, non-

profit corporation conducting research on New England history and pre-history, will conduct three field school sessions in archeology this summer. These sessions will be offered

on the Lambert Farm in Warwick RI, listed on the National Register and known to be at least 3,000 years old. This will

be the last chance for any further research on this site as it will be destroyed by development in the fall.

Enrollment for each session is limited to 15 people and college credit is available through the Office of Continuing Education at Providence College.

Contact either Alan Leveillee, Field School Co-Director, or Cynthia Torzi at the Public Archeology Laboratory, Inc. at (401) 728-8780.



PRESERVATION WEEK CONTEST

Enter your best photos of historic EP architecture. Call 434-3311 ext 277 for rules - or come to the April 23 Historical Society meeting for a copy of the contest guidelines.

SAFE AT LAST!

After eighteen months worth of investigation into the ins and outs of alarm systems by the Safety and Security Committee, the Hunt House is finally secure.

Article VII, Paragraph 1 of the Museum Collection Policy which was passed by the general membership earlier this year required that a "professionally installed" alarm system be in place in the House for the protection of the collection.

Recommendations were sought and bid packages were sent out to qualified alarm companies. The alarm which is now in place at the Hunt House was installed by the low bidder (There was only \$400. between the high and low bid.), J-Cor of Warwick who did a superb job concealing as much of the mechanics of the system as possible as recommended by the Building Committee.

Now that Article 7.1 has been fulfilled the Museum can really move ahead.

DETERMINATION PAYS

The Historical Society has achieved something of a landmark in its past month: we finally have received our determination letter from the I.R.S. stating that we are indeed a legitimate, tax-exempt, non-profit organization. It has taken us countless hours over the course of a year to achieve this status, which is extremely important when we go off in search of grant money. Most funding organizations require we produce this letter of determination before they will consider us for a grant.

It was an epic task wresting this determination out of the maw of the I.R.S.. In the process we have had to amend our Articles of Incorporation and had to send the I.R.S. a budget for our projected expenditures, and promise that if we changed *anything* we would be sure to let them know about it. In addition, the I.R.S. recommended that we file a Form 990 every year.

Now we can forge ahead to perhaps our greatest challenge yet: final negotiations on our lease with the City!

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