

# ♥ OLDE NEWS ♥

EAST • PROVIDENCE • HISTORICAL • SOCIETY  
• NEWS LETTER •

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

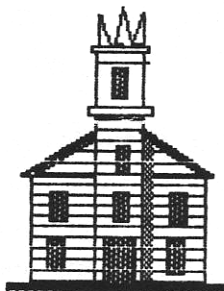
There was *one* Historical Society meeting last month which came off on schedule and it has become known as the "Big Meeting".

On Saturday, January 20th, the governing Board of the Historical Society gathered at the Hunt House for a workshop. It was a day for discussing where we've been and to plan where we're going.

Written reports for the past six months were presented and plans for the next six months were disclosed by the various committees. Informal discussions during lunch produced

cont. on pg. 2

## MEETING



THE FEBRUARY MEETING  
OF THE  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
will be held February 26, 1989  
from 7:15 pm  
at Newman Congregational  
Church.

*coffee and refreshments  
will be served*

**PRESIDENT'S LETTER**

(cont.)

valuable ideas, many of which will be implemented in the coming months.

Unlike some organizations which have large and largely honorary boards, the Board of Directors of the East Providence Historical Society consists of some of our most dedicated and hardest working members.

The fact that they were willing to take time out of their busy lives to spend a Saturday on Historical Society business says a lot about the caliber of the people on our Board. It also shows their dedication to the restoration of the John Hunt House and the creation of a museum of East Providence History.

As President I am particularly grateful for the countless hours they have given and will give to help the Society achieve its goals — because I know all too well how many hours it takes!

*Claudette Field*

**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
Secretary	Lura Sellow
Corresponding Secretary	Rose Marie Sirenski
Treasurer	Martha Rivas
Assistant Treasurer	Greta Charves
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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
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

Good news on the education front! The committee met on Feb. 1 to view David Kelleher's slides of Union Primary and discuss the possibility of its inclusion on the National Historic Register. (As reported in a recent issue of OLDE NEWS, the school had not passed primary scrutiny by the RI Historic Preservation Committee.) A letter was sent to the RIPHC detailing our reasons as to why Union School should be reconsidered, and as of Feb. 5 this committee has received a nomination application. The eligibility is by no means a sure thing, but the RIPHC is very willing to help with the details and give us another look. *VERY IMPORTANT:* Anyone with pictures or memoirs, or who recalls details of the school in its early years, please give this committee a call or bring them to the Feb. meeting.

*Nancy Moore*

Several updates to items reported in last month's article:

### **The Traffic Light Affair**

The DOT's latest effort to beautify the Rumford Historic

District is now adorning the intersection of Pawtucket Avenue and Pleasant Street and in the opinion of Your Faithful Editor (who has an unobstructed view of it out his front window) it is even more monstrous and insensitive than his most fevered imaginings. If anyone out there agrees, the RI Historic Preservation Commission, which has jurisdiction over such things, is soliciting your letters. Send your comments to:

Rick Greenwood  
RI Historic Preservation  
Commission  
150 Benefit Street  
Providence, RI 02903.

### **The Moore Peterson Farms**

We also had the opportunity to get a quick on-site tour of the work being done to the Moore house by Ken Kazarian, which only reinforces our original thought that this project could well become a major improvement to the area rather than the Blight on the Land it could have been.

Mr. Kazarian has done a great deal of work on the house: new plumbing has been roughed in,

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**PRESERVATION** cont.

deal of work on the house: new plumbing has been roughed in, the kitchen gutted, the rear porch restored with new footings, etc. He is relocating the kitchen, turning one of the upstairs bedrooms into a new bathroom, and creating a master suite out of the rooms added over the top of the back porch.

He has made every effort to save the original moldings, cabinets, etc. even if he does not intend to use them.

It's an important project for the Historic District, and we wish him well.

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**GRANT WRITING**

The Grant Writing Committee has set some goals and is working on grant applications.

It can announce a small anonymous grant of \$500 toward the work of the Artifacts Committee. I quote the pertinent stipulation: "...for the use of your museum committee for protective materials, files, or display cabinets, or such items as contribute to the preservation or exhibition of historical items."

*Jewel Drickamer*

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**WAYS AND MEANS**

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The annual Pasta Supper will be held Saturday March 31, 1990, 6:00 p.m. at Newman Congregational Church. Tickets will be \$6.00 for adults, \$3.00 for children under 10 years with children under 3 free. Order tickets now thru Pat Millette, 431-2055 days or evenings. Tickets will be available for pick-up at our February 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. A sign up sheet for the Pie and Cake baking, Kitchen, Serving and Clean Up will be passed around at the meeting. Please plan to attend and give of your time and talents for this event.

We are always interested in new ideas for fund raising events and entertainment for those events. Please call Walter and Madeline Vincent at 434-0481 with your ideas. The Ways and Means Committee is

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also looking for Sub-Chairmen and volunteers for the Attic Treasure Sale, Harvest Supper, and Christmas Boutique. This is a great way for new members to get to know everyone and become involved in our Society.

Dates have been set for the First Annual Murder Mystery Dinner. The dinner will be held at the Hunt House and will be based on historical data and poetic license. Everyone attending will actually participate in solving the mystery while dining on 19<sup>th</sup> century fare. Seating will be limited so mark your calendars and watch upcoming OLDE NEWS for more details. The dates are:

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

Saturday, May 6 @ 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 7 @ 2:00 p.m.

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

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

Sunday, May 13 (Mother's day) @ 2:00 p.m.

Also watch for details on the Sandwich Board at the entrance to Hunts Mills Road beginning in March. This dinner will be in conjunction with a Playbill/Ad Book and several thousands of dollars could be realized with your help.

*Pat Millette*

## **MEMBERSHIP OPPORTUNITY!**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Corporate/Patron - \$100.

Family-\$15.

Life-\$75.

Single-\$10.



## HUNT HOUSE UPDATE



The Building Committee met Saturday, Feb. 3 at the Hunt House for a productive session of decision making.

### **HEATING SYSTEM**

It was decided to release specifications for the heating system for bid by the second week in February. The specifications will detail a gas fired two unit system, with one heating unit in the basement, probably in what is now the meter room, and the second either on the second floor with a trunk duct built into the ceiling or alternatively a unit in the attic with the ductwork running along the perimeter of the attic floor and only the registers exposed. An alternative specification will also be released for bids on cooling coils and compressors to give us a basis for later upgrading the system to include air conditioning.

The very high cost of running a gas line from the street to the house was also discussed (we were given a rough initial esti-

mate of \$9000 dollars). The possibility was raised that the cost may be reduced if the City did the actual excavation for the line rather than the gas company, and if it would be possible to run the gas line along the side of the road rather than rip it up for its entire length. This would be possible since the line will be run entirely on City owned land, and thus there is no need to keep the gas line within the boundaries of a right of way.

### **SECURITY SYSTEM**

Scott Booth announced that all three bids we received for installing a security system to our specifications came within a few hundred dollars of one another. The committee voted to accept the low bid from J-Cor for \$8080, and set a target date for the work to proceed on or about March 1. Committee members will monitor the daily progress of the installation to insure that it is being performed in a manner that will not cause damage to the house, or

alter its historic character any more than is necessary.

A Society member who wishes to remain anonymous has offered an interest free loan to the Society to cover the cost of installing the Security system. The Society will then apply for a grant to repay the loan. The committee voted unanimously to accept the loan, subject to approval of the board.

### ***KITCHEN***

Continuing in its madcap frenzy of decision making, the Committee next tackled the controversial Kitchen Project from Hell, and adopted a plan modified from Scott's original design of 10/19/89. An anonymous benefactor (That Anonymous family is a generous bunch lately) donated an apartment sized stove to the project, to accompany the refrigerator already donated by the Knight family of Attleboro. It was also decided to retain the leveled plywood floor as a subfloor for installing a quarry tile finish floor for the kitchen.

### ***CHIMNEY REPAIRS***

Another specification will be written and bids solicited for repair work to the chimney and hearths. It was emphasized that

the work must conform to guidelines provided by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service of the Department of the Interior. Walter was also authorized to purchase and install a lolly column under that portion of the keeping room floor that has no visible means of support at present. This will be a semi-permanent repair until restoration start in earnest on the finished room in the basement. Scott Booth will remove more of the ceiling in this room to reveal the framing (or lack thereof) in this problem area.

### ***EXTERIOR PAINT***

Pat Millette will try to have an exterior paint specification ready by Feb. 17<sup>th</sup> and Walter was encouraged to obtain the balance of our paint donated by (you saw this coming) another anonymous donor. The committee has determined that the original color of the house was a "creamy putty" color (according to Claudette who did color research on portions of the front of the house) much like the color of the First Baptist Church in Providence. We are trying to

cont. next page

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## HUNT HOUSE UPDATE

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prepare the general membership for the inevitable shock when the house is not repainted white.

### **CLEAN UP DAY**

A clean up day has been proposed for Saturday, April 7<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. At that time we will try to remove construction and demolition rubble, and generally clean up the house, especially the attic and basement areas. All members are urged to pitch in and help, and if you come bring a bag lunch. The Society will supply drinks and dessert.

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## MUSEUM COMMITTEE

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It has been a fortuitous month for the Museum. We started off the New Year with the receipt of an anonymous gift of \$500 (forwarded to us from the donor by Jewel Drickamer) for use in the storage and conservation of the Museum's artifacts. This came at a very opportune time as we are preparing the artifacts for permanent storage and conservation materials cost money. Many thanks to our anonymous angel who has made the purchase of

acid free storage materials possible.

Secondly, we received an offer of two glass display cases from the Carpenter MUseum in Rehoboth. These are a gift and we certainly can put them to good use. What we need now is the offer of a pickup truck to help us move the cases from the Carpenter Museum to the Hunt House.

The committee will be meeting this month to hopefully accept three gift offers. Mrs. George McNiff, now of Florida, has sent us via the Ripleys a spindle rope bed and a quilted coverlet. Lura Sellew has donated to us a pair of antique eyeglasses which she had loaned to us for the Open House. Fales and Ruth Pierce have donated two Rumford Company signs which they also loaned us for the Open House. They would also like to loan us the antique map of Rehoboth which hung in the front hall then, as well. One typist has volunteered to help us with the Museum files.




If you can loan us a truck or van (and it doesn't have to be an antique one) please call me at 434-3347.

*Edna Anness*

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THE OFFICIAL OLDE NEWS CALENDAR

SUN	MON	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6 hunt house workday	7	8 hunt house workday	9	10
11	12	13 hunt house workday	14 	15 hunt house workday	16	17
18	19	20 Board Meeting	21	22 hunt house workday	23	24
25	26 February Meeting	27 hunt house workday	28	1 hunt house workday	2	3
4	5	6 hunt house workday	7	8 hunt house workday	9	10
11	12	13 hunt house workday 	14	15 hunt house workday	16	17 
18	19	20 hunt house workday	21	22 Board Meeting	23	24
25	26 March Meeting	27 hunt house workday	28	29 hunt house workday	30	31

FEB

FEB

MAR.

MAR.



THIS MONTH'S OLDE NEWS APPLAUSE AWARD GOES TO THE ANONYMOUS FAMILY.

For all you do, this one's for you!  
(Whoever you are.)

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## THE MISSING MEETING

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After listening to the weather report on the noon news the decision was made to cancel the January meeting of the Historical Society. In talking to our Board members that afternoon it became clear that it was a good move. Three of them reported that the side streets were so bad that they had slid through various intersections throughout the city.

The cancellation galvanized our fledgling Telephone Committee into action and they performed yeoman service by calling each and every one of our members.

One of the callers, Jewel Drickamer, reported that: "One of the bonus parts of all the telephoning . . . was the sense of what really good people we have as members! They were all gracious, and grateful that they had a call!"

Our intrepid callers even managed to have some fun. One of them reported that "One member said, 'I can't thank you enough for calling. . . it was a comfort for you to let me know that there's no meeting. But I didn't intend to come anyway.'" And so it goes.

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They also learned how many people were looking forward to hearing David Kelleher's presentation, "East Providence Then and Now". (We got quite a few calls from non-members asking if we were going to reschedule the talk and the answer is yes, in March.)

We would like to thank the Telephone Committee for doing such a good job on such short notice. Their efforts were appreciated.

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## ADBOOK

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Jane Sander has agreed to be in charge of the Program/ Playbill/ Ad book (mentioned on page 5) for the Mystery Dinner.

She has started sending letters to local businesses soliciting ads. It's a time consuming proposition for Jane, with many follow-up calls and visits to local firms. If you own or have some connection with a business in East Providence, you can help make this project a success. Call Jane at 438-8283 and tell her your son-in law's XYZ company would love to support the Society with an ad. Then she can concentrate on the other companies.

Please give Jane a call and help the Historical Society sell some ads..

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Middletown Historical Society,  
Inc.

P.O. Box 4196  
Middletown, RI 02840  
Jan. 30, 1989

I enjoyed our conversation a few weeks back and after reading the OLDE NEWS letter it is quite evident that we both have the same type of problems—money, policy issues, etc.

I am enclosing a copy of our winter newsletter and I have asked our editor to include the East Providence Historical Society on our distribution list.

Best regards,  
Stanley Grossman

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The following are excerpts from a letter from the RI Historical Preservation Commission to Nancy Moore. It is felt that the explanation about the evaluation process for National Register listing would be instructive for us as we continue our efforts to get Union Primary School on the Register.

Dear Ms. Moore:

Thank you for your letter of 19 January...

The Rhode Island Review Board examined only preliminary materials for this structure; the consensus reached (that the building does not appear to meet the...criteria) is likewise preliminary.

A final evaluation...is made on the basis of a fully documented nomination to the National Register.

...Evaluations of integrity and judgement about the National Register are an important part of the Review Board's work, which explains why National Register Nominations must carefully detail and describe the original structure and all its alterations.

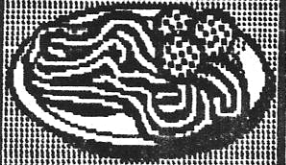
...Whether the Union Primary School meets the eligibility criteria...has yet to be determined...It is clear in any case that the Union Primary School has an important place in the affection of many East Providence residents.

Sincerely,  
Pamela Kennedy  
Deputy Director

For Tickets  
call 431-2055



# THINK PASTA!



**E.P.H.S. 3rd Annual Pasta Supper**  
**Saturday, March 31, 1990.**  
**6:00 p.m.**  
**Newman Congregational Church**  
**Adults \$6 • Children \$3**  
**under 3 free!**

## OLDE NEWS

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

