



# OLDE NEWS

EAST • PROVIDENCE • HISTORICAL • SOCIETY  
• NEWSLETTER •

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

There's no rest for the wicked or the Board of the Historical Society. The newly elected Board had its first meeting of the 1990-91 membership year on July 23 at the Hunt House. Indications are that we are well prepared for the new year, with one notable exception: we still lack a Ways and Means Chairman.

Madeline and Walter Vincent, who did such an admirable job for the past three years, will no longer chair this committee. Both expressed the need for a change and have since moved on to take other positions on the Board.

However, Madeline, with the

## MEETING



THE NEXT MEETING  
OF THE  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
will be held September 24,  
1990  
from 7:15 pm  
at Newman Congregational  
Church.

*Details in Sept. Issue*

assistance of Pat Millette, has completed a detailed outline and resource guide to all the fund raisers held during her tenure as Ways and Means Co-Chair. This information should make the re-creation of these events relatively painless, and relieve future Chairs of "reinventing the wheel". Another factor making the work of the Chairman easier this year is the division of labor.

We decided last year that each event should have its own chair and committee so that a small group of people is not left running everything and facing burn-out.

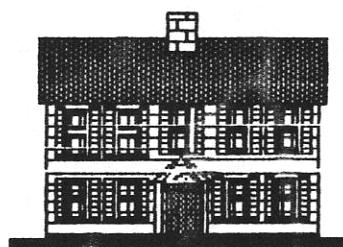
Meanwhile even without a Ways and Means Chairman we are going to have another Christmas bazaar to coincide with the Victorian open house.

So if you volunteered to make crafts at home for this year's event - start now! Call me if you plan to do "homework" so I can co-ordinate the crafts.

If you would like to make my day, volunteer to be Ways and Means Chairman!

*Claudette Field*

**Preservation Society of  
Pawtucket House Tours  
Oct.6, 9-4:30  
Ticket info 725-9581**



## OLDE NEWS

published monthly by

The East Providence Historical Society  
Editor George Field, IV

EAST PROVIDENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 4774  
East Providence, Rhode Island 02910  
438-1750

### OFFICERS

President	Claudette Field
First Vice-President	Scott Booth
Second Vice-President	Ginny Berwick
Secretary	Rose Marie Sirenski
Corresponding Secretary	Lura Seilew
Treasurer	Martha Rivas
Board Members-at-Large	Billie Arden Ellen O'Hare Nancy Stevens

### SPECIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Building	
Hunt House Restoration	Walter Vincent, Earl Berwick

### STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Artifacts	Edna Anness
Grant Writing	Jewel Drickamer
House Plaques	Kit Rodman
Membership	Madeline Vincent
Newsletter	George Field, IV
Mailing subcommittee	F. Adams
Preservation	Nancy Moore
Publicity	Florence Adams

## MUSEUM COMMITTEE

The new Museum Committee met to organize on July 19, 1990. Members who have volunteered thus far are Virginia Berwick, Ellen O'Hare, Gladys Panzarella, Fales Pierce, Chris Rose, Bill Simpson, Rose Marie Sirenski, Nancy Stevens and Onna Williams. Our mission this year is to continue to accept donations to the Collection, conduct oral histories, continue the Open House (which this year will be a Victorian Christmas), train volunteer docents to conduct tours of the Hunt House and, once we find a good location, to arrange a display. Presently there is a permanent bedroom display in the Borneing Room, off the Keeping Room.

In September we will be looking for volunteers who have a spare hour or two to be a docent: i.e. hostess/tour guide willing to take a few hours of training in interpreting the house for visitors. If enough people volunteer, the "hostessing" could be on a rotating basis. This would not involve permanent Museum Committee responsibility.

*Edna Anness*

## DAY TRIPPERS

Bill Simpson has organized the first of what we hope will become a standard feature of the Society: field trips to local historical sites. Bill has mentioned this idea to several members of the Board, and with their encouragement he took the ball and ran with it.

Our inaugural trip on Saturday, September 8 is to exotic, far-off Coventry: the Nathaniel Greene Homestead, lunch at the Stone Gate Inn and then on to the Paine House and the first one room schoolhouse in Coventry. The itinerary is as follows:

### **Saturday, September 8**

**9:30** Meet at Hunt's Mills and car pool.

**10:00 a.m.** Arrive at Nathaniel Greene Homestead for "extensive, behind the scenes" tour.

**12:00 p.m.** Lunch (off the menu) at the Stone Gate Inn.

**1:00 p.m.** Tour the Paine House (under the auspices of the Western Coventry Historical Society).

**3:00 p.m.** Coventry 1 room schoolhouse. Tour ends; head for home.

cont. on pg. 9

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## THE KITCHEN FROM HELL! DANGER EDITOR RETURNS! His most perilous case yet!!

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The voice at the end of the phone line was guarded; she was obviously a lady with a problem. That's the only kind that call me. I'm Danger Editor.

"Are you...Danger Editor?"

"I could be, sweetheart. Who wants to know?"

"Please, no names. I'm...I'm in a terrible situation!" Her voice was trembling slightly.

"Everybody's in a terrible situation sister. It's called life. What's so special about yours?"

"I...I'm on the Building Committee of the East Providence Historical Society."

My mind reeled as though I had taken a hit from a blackjack. This poor kid was in worse trouble than she knew! The kind of trouble I knew I should stay away from. But I was always a sucker for a dame in big trouble, just like I am for cheap liquor, fast cars and faster women. And peanut butter.

"Are you still there?" Her voice had a plaintive note.

"Just barely. Go on."

"It's the kitchen. Some of us call it the Kitchen from Hell. We're trying to design one for the Hunt

House, but we can't get anyone to agree on *anything* about it. The things they've been saying at the meetings! And the temper tantrums. I...I'm at my wits end!" Her voice ended in a sob, but she tried to hold it back. Poor kid, she sounded like she was at the end of her rope. My heart twisted like someone had stuck a switch-blade in my guts and then gave it a little turn for good luck. For him, not me.

"Calm down, sister. Take deep breaths."

I could hear her breathing into the phone. It was getting to me. "All right, sweetheart, I'll take the case, but we play it my way, all the way, is that clear?"

"Yes, oh, yes! I'll do anything you say, just so we can get that kitchen built! You can't know what it will mean to me... to all of us!"

I cut her short. She was starting to babble. If we hadn't been talking on the phone I would have had to shake her up a little, but instead I banged the phone on my bullet scarred desk to get her attention.

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"Listen sweetie, it doesn't take a genius to see that all our troubles don't amount to a hill of beans compared to getting that kitchen completed so that it is a functional unit, yet still respects the historical integrity and existing fabric of this fine example of a late 18th center center hall, five bay, Colonial period farm house."

"Yes, you understand! Finally someone who understands!"

"Here's my plan, sweetness, take it or leave it. Everybody wants to put their two cents in, well we'll just let 'em. We'll open up the whole thing to the Society's membership. We'll have a Kitchen from Hell Design Contest! We'll publish it in...what's the name of that poor excuse for a newsletter?"

"OLDE NEWS," she said defensively. "What's wrong with it?"

"It's the kind of rag you line your parakeet's cage with. We'll do it up proud: give them floor plans, pictures of appliances they can cut out and paste, the works. And you're going to love this: they have to tell us why their design is the best one, in twenty five words or less."

She was silent for a moment. Had I gone too far too soon for

her? I buffed my nails on my trenchcoat lapel as I waited for her reply. "I like it!" she finally said. "That way no one can complain that they weren't consulted about the kitchen, and we'll get some great ideas as well! You're brilliant!"\*

"No, precious, not brilliant. Just...the Danger Editor."

**HELP DANGER EDITOR  
COMBAT THE FORCES OF  
APATHY! JOIN THE  
E. P. H. S. TODAY!  
America will thank you!**

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)

\*Thanks to Pat Millette who originated the idea of the K. from H. Design Contest.



## HUNT HOUSE UPDATE



### **TAKING IT TO THE STREETS**

Summer has been slow at the Hunt House, but some things take time. For example, the Providence gas company is showing signs of putting our money to work: Hunts Mills Road has been marked with the location of the water lines, (we hope) in anticipation of the big dig that will bring gas to the Hunt House.

The specifications for the new heating system are complete and by now have "hit the streets". Paul Millette, who volunteered to design the system, thinks installation should take only a couple of weeks, so if all goes well, and the bids are not astronomical, *and* the Gas Company sees fit to hook us up, we may be heating with gas this winter.

### **WILL YODER**

Will Yoder, a noted local engineer, and recent appointee to the controversial Public Building Authority, came to the Hunt House to inspect our sagging floor problems and offer suggestions. He essentially concurred with the

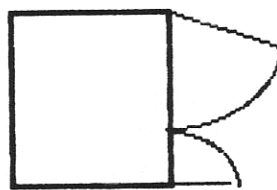
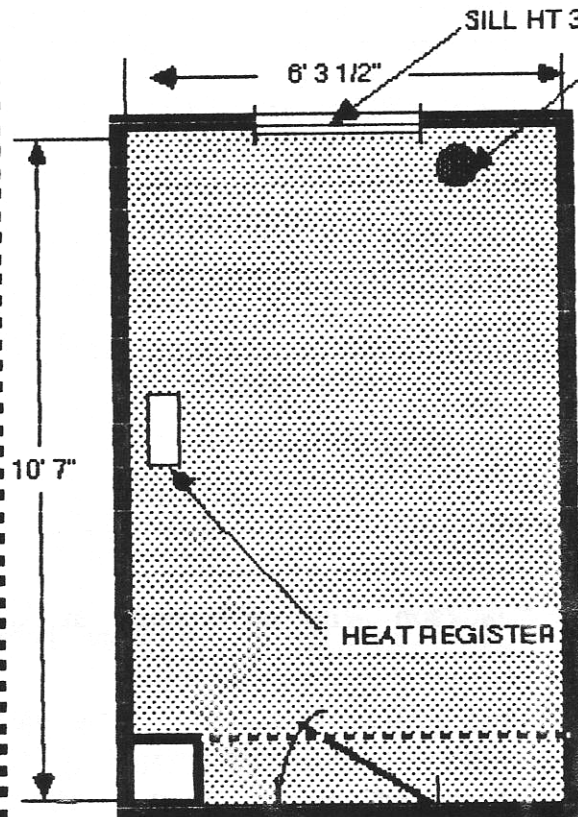
members of the building Committee who want to place a temporary column under the point of maximum sag, and slowly jack it up. Mr. Yoder cautioned against re-adjusting the floor too much, since much of the house has accommodated itself to the sagging floor over the years: door frames have twisted, doors have been cut, etc. He also pointed out that any support system will place some sort of structure, be it a wall or a column, almost directly in front of the cellar fireplace. The trick will be to arrive at a compromise that keeps the house stable and does not interfere too much with the basement as it once was.

### **EXCITING NEW CONTEST!**

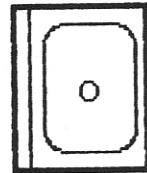
The Building Committee is pleased to announce our Kitchen-from-Hell Design Contest, wherein all Society members are encouraged to send us their ideas of the best way to convert the former bathroom off the Keeping Room into the best possible kitchen/break room for the Soci-

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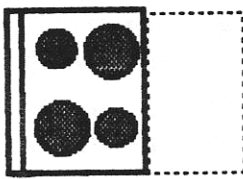
OFFICIAL OLDE NEWS DESIGN CONTEST ENTRY FORM



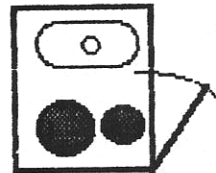
REFRIG.



SINK



STOVE



COMBO UNIT

Remember to leave room for doors to open!

**CONTEST RULES**

The following rules apply:

1 The scope of this project is to provide the Society with a place to make beverages, store and warm food prepared elsewhere: in short a "break room", *not* a "full service" kitchen.

2 Any changes or additions to the room must not alter or compromise in any major way the ap-

pearance of the Hunt House from the outside, and can not intrude unduly on the inside.

3 You should specify the colors/patterns of any wall and floor treatments you would like to use. The floor currently has been leveled and covered with plywood. Underneath it is a not-so-level pine plank floor like that in the keeping room.

cont. next page

**RULES (cont.)**

4 Your entry should show (at a minimum) a floor plan with the arrangement and type of appliances you wish to see installed. You can use the appliance outlines provided on page 7 (if you can bear to cut up your copy of OLDE NEWS) or make a photo copy or draw your own. You should also include a brief (25 to 50 word) description of what your design is trying to accomplish.

5 If you are feeling very ambitious, you can provide the Building Committee with a sketch of what the walls would look like with your arrangement of shelves, counters, etc. Remember that counter heights are normally 36", and that the heat register in the floor cannot be blocked.

6 The winner(s) of the contest will receive the satisfaction of a job well done, and their very own hammer to use and help build it. (Are we talking great prizes or what?)

7 Deadline for entries is the **Sept. 24th.** or mail your entries to: OLDE NEWS Kitchen Contest  
PO Box 4774

East Providence, RI 02916

Or bring them to the meeting! All entries will become property of the E.P. Historical Society. If none of the designs submitted meet the criteria outlined in the rules the best design will be modified to comply with the requirements. The final kitchen design will be subject to review by the Board of Directors, and to second guessing by the entire Society membership.

**HUNT HOUSE cont.**

ety. See rules and guidelines for the exciting details.

**THE BACKDOOR MEN RETURN**

And finally, we once again must pay tribute to the Backdoor Men: Earl Berwick and Charlie Jackson who have done an exemplary job in restoring the sadly deteriorated back door of the Hunt House. Using original material and reconstructing the damaged pieces, they transformed a useless door into one better than the original. Once painted, their work will be invisible (the mark of a true preservationist!) so drop in and check out their craftsmanship before it disappears.

**Bristol  
House & Garden Tour  
Sept. 15, 10-4  
253-7223**



- THE OFFICIAL OLDE NEWS CALENDAR -

SUN	MON	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
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
19	20	21 hunt house workday	22	23 hunt house workday	24	25
26	27	28 hunt house workday	29	30 hunt house workday	31	1
2	3	4 hunt house workday	5	6 hunt house workday	7	8 Coventry tour
9	10	11 hunt house workday	12	13 hunt house workday	14	15 House & Garden tour Bristol
16	17	18 hunt house workday	19	20 hunt house workday	21	22
23	24 Sept. Meeting	25 hunt house workday	26	27 hunt house workday	28	29
30	Workdays are Tuesdays and Thursday from 8AM to noon.					

**DAY TRIPPERS cont.**

A \$5 dollar contribution (payable to the E.P. Historical Society) is required. We will donate the money to the historic sites. Lunch

will be on you. If you are interested call Bill Simpson at 438-0623, by Wednesday, September 5. Coventry is on the Other Side of the Bay, but let's be brave and support Bill's efforts.

HARK! HAVE YOU  
FORGOTTEN YOUR DUES?  
1990-1991 DUES ARE  
DUE! SEND \$\$\$\$\$!

## BULLETIN BOARD

**Wanted:** crafty members to work  
at home to create handiwork  
for Christmas Open House &  
Bazaar! Call Claudette to volunteer.

**Ways and Means Chairman:** No ex-  
perience needed, will train! Progressive  
organization, job sharing encouraged  
and recommended. You dictate  
working conditions! Call 431-0257 today,  
don't miss this important opportunity!

**Dues News:** Remember if you joined in 1990 your  
dues are prorated. Please call if you need information!

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