

John Hunt House

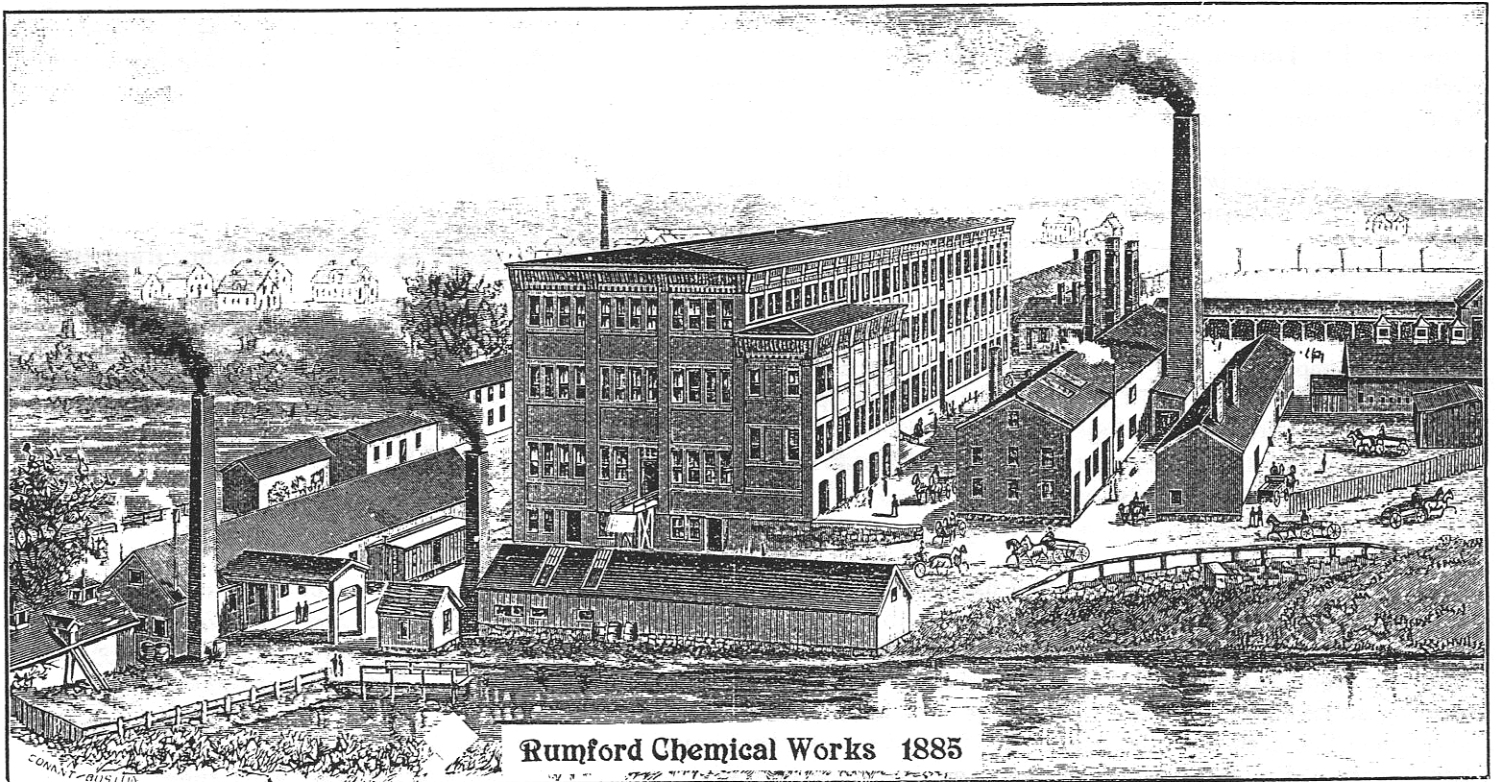
# OLD NEWS

EAST • PROVIDENCE • HISTORICAL • SOCIETY • NEWSLETTER

VOL. VI NO. 2

SEPTEMBER 1993

## "RUMFORD MEMORIES ROUNDTABLE"



Rumford Chemical Works 1885

1994 marks the 140th anniversary of the founding of the RUMFORD CHEMICAL WORKS. To prepare for this event, the East Providence Historical Society is launching the RUMFORD PROJECT with a "RUMFORD MEMORIES ROUNDTABLE"....open to ALL who would be interested in sharing memories of the Rumford Chemical Works.

**Monday, September 27 at 7:30 p.m.  
Newman Congregational Church**

We urge anyone who was associated with Rumford Chemical in any way...former employees, relatives of former employees.....anyone who might have anecdotes about the company....to participate in the roundtable.

If you have information about Rumford Chemical, or if you would like to work on the RUMFORD PROJECT, please call **Virginia Berwick** at 434-0998, **Edna Anness** at 434-3347 or leave a message on the Society phone at 438-1750.

### The Rumford Story

In 1854, George F. Wilson and Eben N. Horsford erected a chemical laboratory near the city of Providence and began the manufacture of chemicals required in the culinary arts. The Firm name was **George F. Wilson & Company**.

Professor Horsford had been the Rumford Professor of Chemistry at Harvard University. Before that he had been principal of the Albany Academy, in Albany, New York, his native state. For several years previous, Professor Horsford had studied in Germany under Baron Liebig, a celebrated chemist and naturalist.

In honor of this professorship and its founder, **Count Rumford**, the works and the village in which they were located took the name. **p.3**

# President's Letter

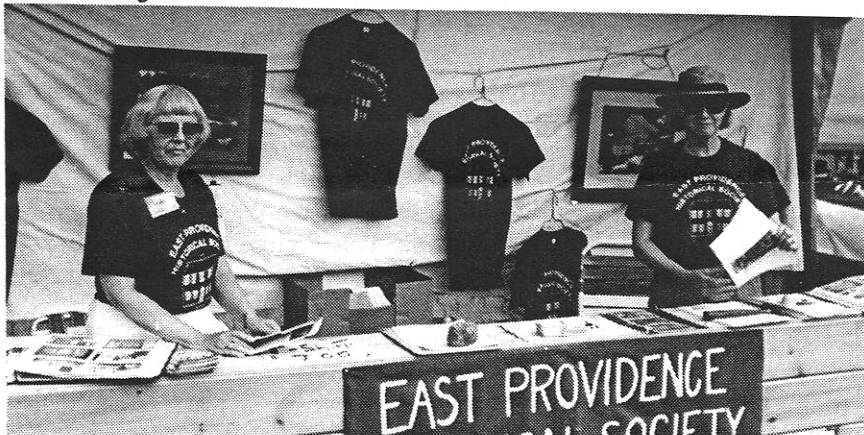
Nancy Moore

I'm sure that all our Society members have been stopped in the street or at the market by, "I just love all the pictures in OLDE NEWS!...I can't wait for the next issue!" These comments came to me both while on a mission at City Hall and through the mail. ( the photo of Allen's Drug Store and the mention of Stevensons Bakery jogged **Ruth MacDougald's** memory about her young life lived next door to the then Bentley Bakery.) So here's to you, *Editor*, keep those pictures coming!

July brought the Heritage Days Festival around once more and the Society proudly set up its booth. Actually, the **Booths, Scott and his dad**, set up the booth along with help from **Dan Moore** and **Armando Ladeira**. We certainly missed **Madeline and Walter Vincent** on the greeting team, but **Florence Adams** did a great job of finding volunteers. Thanks very much to the set-up and break-down crews, and to **Florence, Billie Arden, Virginia Berwick, Lois Driscoll, Louise Healy, Rhonda Marzetta, Nancy Moore, Gladys Panzarella, Kris Rose and Marjorie Welt**. We were never lonely and were actually quite busy both days. As with the newsletter, our *pictures* caught the eye and drew the crowds in. We must capitalize on that!

Does this seem possible.....a complete schedule of meetings, events and speakers for the fall season!? With the engaging of Joe MacDougald as speaker for October, we did accomplish the heretofore impossible. And dare we whisper that the schedule for spring is nearly complete? There are only two slots open for programs, so if you have a suggestion, speak up. Thanks to the Board who slogged through a long evening to accomplish all this. What this means to the rest of you is: expect your tickets for the October 30th Autumn Supper at the September Meeting.

Our Hunt House Restoration crew has been dealt another blow with the further injury to **Earl Berwick's** leg, the news of **Walter Vincent's** surgery and the death of **Bud Plummer** this month. How lucky we were to have **Bud and Lew** and the pictures of them working so lovingly to restore Hunt House. The house has obviously seen many fine craftsmen throughout its life, and our workers have been among the most talented and dedicated. We know that **Walt and Earl** are anxious to get back the the project and will guide the remaining crew by phone if need be. And...to that carpenter who stopped by at Heritage Days....we have some openings for lovers of old buildings. WE TRAIN!



Gladys Panzarella (l.) and Florence Adams tend the Society's (erected by) Booth booth at East Providence Heritage Days

# OLDE NEWS

is published monthly by  
The East Providence Historical Society  
Editor.....George Adams  
EAST PROVIDENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 4774  
East Providence, RI 02916  
(401) 438-1750

## OFFICERS

President	Nancy Moore
1st Vice President	Kristine Rose
2nd Vice President	Edna Anness
Recording Secretary	Don Brothers
Corresponding Secretary	Lura Sellow
Treasurer	Rose Marie Sirenski

## COMING EVENTS

### SEPTEMBER

**Wednesday, September 8**  
Board Meeting 7:30 p.m., Hunt House

**Monday, September 27**  
**"RUMFORD PROJECT"**  
Rumford Memories Roundtable  
7:30 p.m.  
Newman Congregational Church

### OCTOBER

**Saturday, October 2**  
Visit to the *Florence Griswold Mansion*  
and Art Museum and walking tour  
Old Lyme, Connecticut

**Wednesday, October 13**  
Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m. Hunt House

**Monday, October 25**  
Members Meeting 7:30 p.m.  
Newman Congregational Church  
Joe MacDougald, guest speaker:  
"The Massachusetts Historic  
Commission"

**Saturday, October 30**  
**AUTUMN SUPPER**  
Society Fundraiser  
Newman Congregational Church

# OLDE NEWS

is printed at



1062 Willett Ave., East Providence

## The Rumford Story, continued

The products of the **Rumford Chemical Works** comprised general and special chemicals, particularly preparations of the phosphates suitable for food and medicine, such as *Horsford's Cream of Tartar Substitute, Baking Powder, Rumford Yeast Powder and Horsford's Acid Phosphate.*

At that time, the use of brewers' yeast in the making of bread resulted in the loss of certain nutritious elements of the flour. By the process developed by Professor Horsford, the nutritious constituents of the flour were wholly saved and it became, by the addition of the acid phosphate, more easily digestible.

The Horsford method secured a uniform, excellent result, furnishing a bread which retained its moisture longer and was more digestible than yeast bread while its accuracy reduced the measure of skill required to a minimum.

The **Rumford Chemical Works** was established for the purpose of manufacturing these products. The progress made in their production and sale was considered a wonderful achievement and one that reflects great credit upon its originators and producers.

From the beginning the advance of the **Rumford Chemical Works** was rapid. A well-kept village, known as "Rumford", had grown up around the works, on the land owned by the company. Its area was about two square miles, and through it passed branches of the Boston and Providence and the Providence and Worcester railways, as well as the Ten Mile River. The floor space of the different buildings was nearly equal to an area of five acres in extent.

A large force of workmen, many of them specially educated to do what was required from them, "press the products forward from one process to another, and to the consumer".

.....To Be Continued....at the  
**RUMFORD MEMORIES ROUNDTABLE**  
September 27, 7:30 p.m.  
Newman Congregational Church

### The East Providence Historical Society

is dedicated to preserving the heritage and enjoying the history of our city.

If you are not a member, we invite you to join now.

Annual dues are: \$10 per year, individual or \$15 per year, family.

Please fill out the coupon below and mail with your check to:

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

#### EAST PROVIDENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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


Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ @ 10.00 individual, 15.00 family

Page 3



# HORSFORD'S

## ACID PHOSPHATE.

(Liquid.)

**For Dyspepsia, Mental and Physical Exhaustion, Nervousness, Diminished Vitality, Urinary Difficulties, Etc.**

---

PREPARED ACCORDING TO THE DIRECTIONS OF

Prof. E. N. HORSFORD, of Cambridge, Mass.

There seems to be no difference of opinion in high medical authority, of the value of the Phosphates, and no preparation has ever been offered to the public which seems to so happily meet the general want as this.

**It is not nauseous, but agreeable to the taste. No danger can attend its use. Its action will harmonize with such stimulants as are necessary to take. It makes a delicious drink with water and sugar only.**

It is a pleasant and nutritious Substitute for Lemons or Lime Juice in the preparation of "Lemonade" or other acidulated drinks, with or without alcoholic stimulants.

**DR. M. H. HENRY**, the widely known and eminent family physician of N. Y., says:  
"Horsford's Acid Phosphate possesses claims as a beverage, beyond anything I know of in the form of medicine, and in nervous diseases I know of no preparation to equal it."

**DR. C. O. FILES**, of Portland, Me., says:  
"Through the summer I find that Horsford's Acid Phosphate affords the most refreshing drink I have ever used. After perspiring freely, when cold water has utterly failed to satisfy my thirst, it has accomplished the purpose with the most perfect success."

Prices Reasonable. Pamphlet giving further particulars mailed free on application to manufacturers. Manufactured by the

## RUMFORD CHEMICAL WORKS,

PROVIDENCE, R. I.



# Reminiscences and Recollections

From Joe MacDougald . . . .



*The above picture was taken of **Six Corners** while I was flying as a passenger in Fred Lethbridge's (of Philipsdale) little 40 horsepower plane out of the Providence Airport on Route 6 in Seekonk in 1938. We both worked at the Glenlyon Print Works and on weekends or summer afternoons we could squeeze in an hour or so of flying.*

*There was a string of high tension wires at the southeast end of the airport runway and the tension came right into the cockpit while the struggling motor fought to get us over that obstacle ! The plane was a great platform for photos. You could fly with your head and arms out over the half door and still be sitting down. Did I mention that it was **small** ?!*

*Fred didn't make it through WWII. His love of flying got him to volunteer as a military glider pilot, and somewhere in the Mediterranean area.....*

*Sorry the quality of the photograph is so poor. Anyway, the **subject** is good. It was made with a folding Kodak and somehow survived 28 household moves, including twice to Europe and once to Puerto Rico.*

**J.J.M.**

We don't understand how it's so difficult to stick your head and arms out of a plane and take a picture without shaking the camera! The OLDE NEWS staff thought the picture was *great*...and we think you will, too. If you have good eyesight and a little imagination, you can see Central Junior High School near the center and go from there. If you want a closer look at Six Corners, see the back page.

If you want a closer look at the **real Joe MacDougald**, come to the October 25th meeting. Joe, if indeed he actually *exists*, is the guest speaker.

# EAST PROVIDENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY MARKER PROGRAM

Your home may be eligible for a **MARKER**.

George, are you planning  
to attend the  
**Rumford Memories Roundtable**  
on September 27th ?

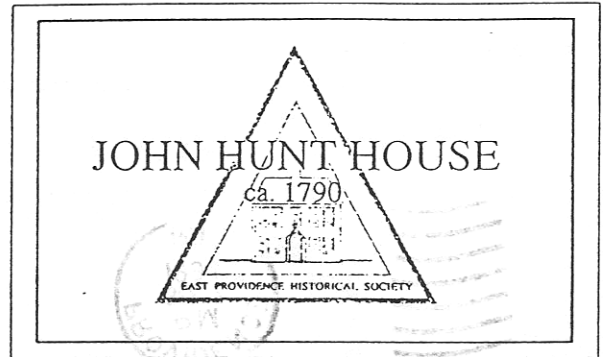
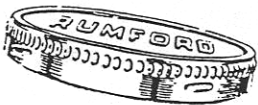
Yes I am, Eben....  
and you had better bring  
some of your Acid Phosphate  
along in case they serve  
refreshments !



EBEN N. HORSFORD



GEORGE F. WILSON



(example)

Any building in the City of East Providence which contributes to the historical development or architectural character of the city is eligible to be considered for a historical marker.

Help promote an appreciation of the heritage of East Providence.

Send the coupon below to:

The Marker Program  
East Providence Historical Society  
P.O. Box 4774  
East Providence, RI 02916-4774

If anyone has files, documents, etc.  
relating to E. P. Historical Society  
Please return them  
to HUNT HOUSE  
so that all our records  
may be consolidated.

*Nancy Moore*, President

**NOTICE:** New membership cards are ready. They will be distributed at the September 27th meeting by Membership Chairman, **Madeline Vincent**.

Those who cannot attend the meeting will receive their card by mail. One more reason to attend the meeting....**save postage!**

-----  
I am interested in receiving information about the  
East Providence Marker Program

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_



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



# Six Corners 1930 *Jess Welt Photo*

**Q:** "What did Taunton Avenue say to Waterman Avenue?"  
**A:** "Give My Regards to Broadway!" (old thighslapper)