

John Hunt House

# Gazette

## Fish Ladders on the Ten Mile River

*Dave Kelleher, Preservation Committee*

Wenley Ferguson of Save the Bay addressed the December 1<sup>st</sup> board meeting concerning a proposed project to install fish ladders in the Ten Mile River.

The Turner Reservoir in Rumford is a large body of fresh water that would be very desirable for *anadromous* fish, fish who spawn in fresh water but live in salt water as adults, such as herring and shad.

DEM, Department of Environmental Management, Wildlife Division, is very interested in opening the waterways to these fish. The Ten Mile River is one of the best in Rhode Island.

In order for these fish to get to the Turner Reservoir, three dams need to have fish ladders installed. The three dams are located at **Omega Pond, Hunts Mills** and at the **Turner Reservoir** itself.

Fish ladders are rather large concrete structures. Putting fish ladders at the Omega Pond Dam and the Turner Reservoir Dam would not affect the overall area of those dams. However, the historic dam and falls at **Hunts Mills could be seriously affected**. Wenley Ferguson is, therefore, concerned about the feelings of the Historical Society as to the installing of a fish ladder at Hunts Mills.

After a lengthy discussion of the various possibilities, the Board informed Wenley that a fish ladder on the East Providence side of the river would be satisfactory if it were to run under a proposed grist mill. That way, if a water wheel was built, the fish ladder would not interfere. Also, the surface of the concrete could be covered with fieldstone or brick.

Having a fish ladder at Hunts Mills would be a good addition to that scenic area and help to bring more people, adults and children, to the historic site.



## MEMBERS AND FRIENDS CHRISTMAS PARTY

Monday, December 20, 7:00 pm  
Newman Church, Rumford

We will again be donating non-perishables to the **Community Center** this year. If you like, wrap it up fancy or funny - be creative and watch the fun. There will be prizes. All had a good time last year while filling the needs of the less fortunate. (Canned goods, paper goods, etc.)

## From the Attic

*by Edna Anness*

### WHAT PRICE PROGRESS

It would be unreasonable to expect our City to never change, to never modernize our buildings, improve our transportation systems, update our school buildings, or improve our streets and water system. BUT in the process of keeping up with the times we have paid a price by losing some well-known and familiar landmarks. In the beginning of the century we had a tendency to indiscriminately destroy buildings and sites in the name of progress. After the **Bicentennial Celebration** we began to realize the advantages of preservation and moved more carefully in our selective destruction of history. *Historic Preservation* became the buzz words of the latter part of this century, to our advantage.

For many of our readers there will be no memory of the places to be mentioned, but to those of us who grew up with these places, their memory will be nostalgic.

Few of us remember the old **Watchemoket** such as **Len Erickson** described in his recollection of the area. When the "new" **Washington Bridge** was dedicated in 1930 many buildings had been removed. The '38 hurricane removed many of the rest and the **Route 195** throughway

*(continued on Page 4)*

## Board Briefs

At the members meeting, November 22 in Riverside, **Mayor Joseph Larisa, Tom West and Lester Farnsworth**, Riverside Business Owners Association, and **Noa Temprow**, Noa's Community Art Center confirmed plans for a Riverside park and beach near the carousel, the sprucing up of Riverside Square and beyond, and a mural featuring Riverside landmarks to be painted on the concrete wall under the Bullocks Point Avenue overpass along the East Bay Bicycle Path. **David Howard**, editor of the East Providence Post, reported the details in the November 24 and December 2 issues.

Thanks to **Ray Anderson** for the home baked goodies he made for the meeting.

**Edna Anness**, museum curator, had a conversation with **Doane Hulick**, staff writer for the Providence Journal, which was published November 30. The city's history and the society's history and current projects were retold in Edna's astute and informed 'chat' with Mr. Hulick.

**The John Hunt House is open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 AM to noon through December.**

**The Gazette welcomes 'Letters to the Editor' and articles of historic interest, especially personal reminiscences. Deadline: 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month.**

**Mail Attn: Doreen Bonney  
East Providence Historical Society  
PO Box 4774, E. Providence, RI 02916**

## **CROCKER'S SPA**

*by Ray Anderson*

I grew up on Case Street and Ferris Avenue, Rumford. One neighborhood memory concerns **Crocker's Spa**. Mom, Pop and son Pete ran the variety store at the corner of Pawtucket and Ferris Avenues. Most every day there was a reason to go to the "Spa". Maybe we needed Bond or Tip-Top Bread. For special occasions it was hand-packed Hood's ice cream. But most of the time it as to buy penny candy at the rear of the store. My favorites were malted milk balls, Boston baked beans (measured in a little barrel) and red jelly cowboy hats. I'd treasure my purchase and bring it home in a small paper bag.

Crocker's also sold comic or "funny books". Every kid had their favorite and had a collection they threw away just before they found out they were *COLLECTORS ITEMS!* I vividly remember the revolving Classics rack and I had my share of these, too.

**HOODSIES!** Could I go for one right now. A "Dixie Cup" with a lid held chocolate and vanilla, my favorite. You ate it with a wooden spoon not unlike a tongue depressor. The lids had peel-off waxed paper that revealed a photo of a movie actor or actress. The movie title and name were arched above and below the picture. Are there any lids still around?

Mom, Pop and Pete were always kind to us kids. They knew us by name and also our families. Sometimes I'd sit and have a soda at the marble-topped counter and talk to the owners. They always had time and showed interest. After our baseball games, my friends would ride their bikes to the "Spa" and we'd sit in a booth with our purchases: soda, ice cream, candy or chips. We were "big shots" then. Fond memories!!

Do you have any neighborhood memories? I'd love to hear them and put them together in a future article. Right now I'd like to hear special memories about **Six Corners** and the businesses there. Send your memories to the East Providence Historical Society, P.O. Box 4774, East Providence, RI 02916, Attn: Ray Anderson.

## **The GAZETTE**

is published monthly by the

**EAST•PROVIDENCE•HISTORICAL•SOCIETY**

P.O. Box 4774, East Providence, RI 02916-4774

(401) 438-1750

### OFFICERS

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### COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

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| Grounds        | Ray Anderson     |
| Markers        | Kris Rose        |
| Membership     | Mona Breault     |
| Museum         | Virginia Berwick |
| Museum Curator | Edna Anness      |
| Newsletter     | Doreen Bonney    |
| Preservation   | Les Haworth      |
| Publicity      | Florence Adams   |

The  
**GAZETTE**  
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**PRONTO PRINT**

**3 Crescent View Avenue, Riverside**

# Gifts to the Museum

- Ruth and Joe McDonald** - Ads for Rumford and Horsford and Hunts Mills Dance Hall.
- George Rodericks** - Campaign poster, five programs for Ruth Williams Dedication this year.
- Richard Hughes of the Pawtuxet Valley Historical Society** - Pamphlet from Rumford Grange #52.
- Bruce Humphreys** - pew from Kent Corners Congregational Church.
- Francis Miller** - Colonnade post card.
- Oliver Hopkins** - Picture of Central Village Mill Houses.
- John Agren** - Thimble from the Handy Shoppe.
- Meribeth Simcock** - 28 photos of members of E.Prov. High School Class of 1921.
- Eileen Perry** - 1908 class picture of grade five - Turner Avenue School.
- Mike Tierney** - Stories of Little Neck Cemetery, Watchemoket, "The Congregationalist", "News of the Olde Home Town" with envelope, and copy of "Discover RI". He also allowed us to copy several photos of old Riverside. Kent Corners Congregational Church program.



*Applause! Applause!*

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, individual or \$15, family.

Please make check payable to

**East Providence Historical Society**

Mail with form below to:

**Mona Breault**

**34 Josephine Avenue**

**Rumford, RI 02916**

New       Renewal

Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

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## MEMORIAL FUND



The Society's Memorial Fund was established in 1993 in memory of past members for "the betterment of the Society and with no specific purpose."

The Memorial Fund is a qualified endowment administered by the executive committee. Members and friends wishing to contribute may make checks payable to the

**East Providence Historical Society**

and mail to the Society at:

**Box 4774**

**East Providence, Rhode Island 02916-4774**

## REPORT ON THE PHILIP WALKER HOUSE AUCTION

*Articles purchased from Philip Walker House by the East Providence Historical Society:*

- Black ironware including a peel, fireplace set,
- Cooking utensils, wall hanger, etc. - \$75.00
- Cannonball and bell bed - \$100.00
- Child's potty chair - \$25.00
- Child's highchair - \$25.00
- Brass bed warmer - \$300.00

**COME DOWN TO SEE THEM!** At least these pieces of East Providence/Rehoboth history are still in East Providence.

*Memorialize a Loved One  
in the Hunt House  
Cottage Rock Garden*

*Please make checks payable to  
East Providence Historical Society  
and mail to the society at  
P. O. Box 4774  
East Providence, RI 02916-4774  
Attn: Ray Anderson*

*For additional information, call the  
Society at (401) 438-1750*

*Your donations are greatly appreciated*

## From the Attic *by Edna Anness* (continued from page 1)

finished the destruction of so many houses and neighborhoods as it stretched out to the Massachusetts border. We lost our first "skyscraper", the **Ray Building**, the **Ingraham Building**, markets, drugstores, restaurants - the heart of the commercial area of East Providence. We lost the oldest school in the town - the **Potter Street School** which we had inherited from Seekonk in 1862. We lost the **A.P. Hoyt School** - the largest elementary school in the city, as well as **P.S. #4** near Woods Gas Station.

Few remember the **Roller Rink** on South Broadway. Road construction also "blew out" **Six Corners** for a new underpass. Remember **Cox's Drug Store** and all the stores in Six Corners? Gone forever. Then the Henderson Bridge and the dead-end highway to North Broadway came through and out went the **Broadway School - P.S. #3**, and the old **car barn**, and of course memorable old **Red Bridge** (we have the sign in our collection). Remember when the bridge opened and traffic backed up for miles. It was a standard excuse for being late to school or work for fifty years for those who had to make the crossing. Remember when it used to swell in summer and not close until it was hosed down.

We watched **Crescent Park**, **Boyden Heights**, **Vanity Fair** and **Hunts Mills** come and go as well as the **Narragansett Race Track**. The horse barns were on our side of the Pawtucket boundary and many kids in the northern section of town reminisce about playing around the barns. And oh yes, remember the **rifle range** behind the barns - left over from the Training Grounds used by the Navy and Army during World War I. St. Margaret's Church ran a **USO** in a building in their side yard for the servicemen in 1918.

Some buildings were lost for what were considered noble causes at the time: the old **Riverside Library** and **Mauran Avenue School** for playgrounds, the old Rumford post and beam **Town Hall** on the corner of Miller and Pawtucket Avenues is now a parking lot. The old **Armington House** and farm on Pawtucket Avenue and Wampanoag Trail is a

gas station/convenience store. **Old P.S. #5 School** (Miss Pagny's) is now a block of stores. **Victorian Newman Rectory** is now an office building, **Turner Avenue** and **Dean Schools** are now parking lots.

And then there were the open space areas. The new Reservoir in 1930 erased the beautiful **Bridgham woods**, the Wampanoag Mall erased the **Bliss Farms**, the area of **Crescent Park** is condominiums, the **Bridgham Farm** is a new housing development. The old **Ellery Wilson Mansion** on Wilson Avenue is gone as well as **Wilson School**, named in George Wilson's memory because he donated the land for the school.

Recently and for good reason we lost the old **Kent Heights Water Tower**. Some things have to go for progress. However, the 1860 **Dennis House** went for more houses as well as the back yard of the **Walker House** on North Broadway. Many beautiful Victorian mansions disappeared over the years from Waterman Avenue and Taunton Avenue, and for the building of Central Junior High School.

Remember Kent Heights when it was a farm? Remember Riverside and Rumford neighborhoods when one's back yard backed up to cows grazing in the fields? Remember the boathouses on the Ten Mile and the water tower in Riverside? The Rumford Tower shaped like a can? Do you remember?... Remember?... Remember?

A century from now folks will be reminiscing about the "old" 1950 high school; and the old 1976 City Hall; and the antique green water tower; and Rte. 195 before it was a heliport!!!!??

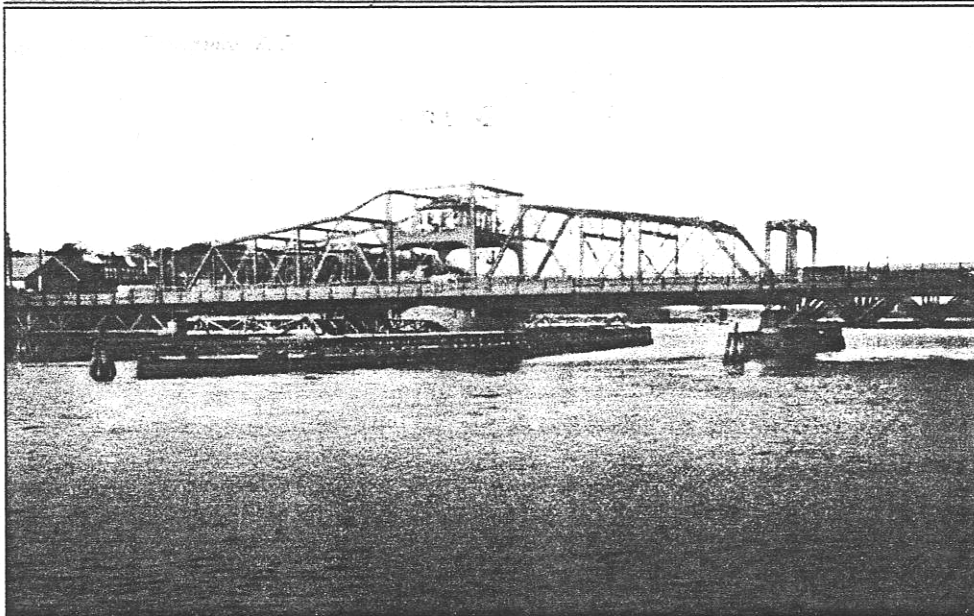
**Photos:** *Potter St. School - donated by Supt. Edward Martin, Six Corners - donated by Elmer & Hope Yeaw, also John Agren, Red Bridge - donated by Ray Anderson*

### NEXT MONTH: Memorable Local Residents of this Century.

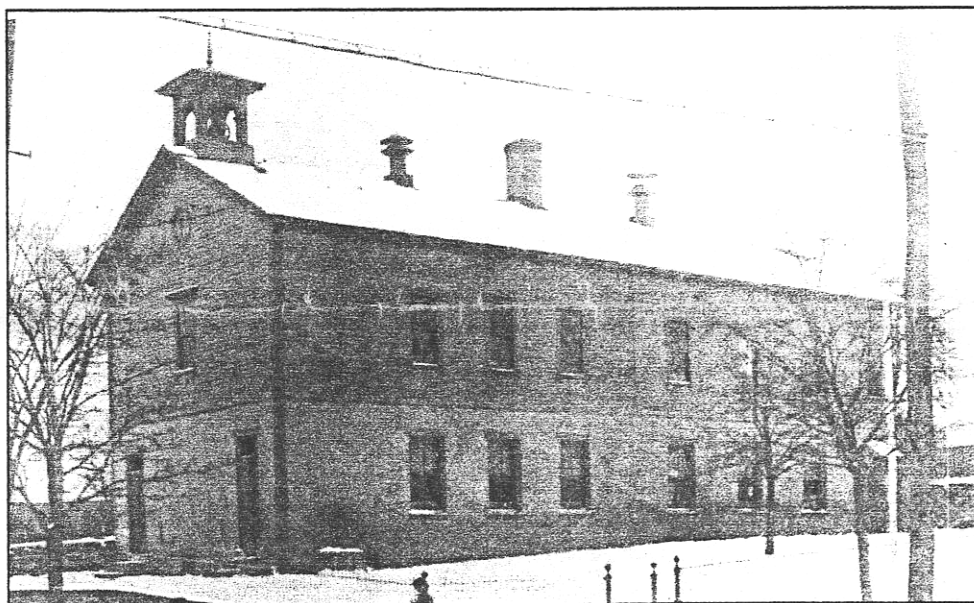


*Six Corners*





*The Old "Red Bridge"*



*Potter Street School*

 In memory of...

*A donation was made to the Society's Memorial Fund  
in memory of*

***Barbara Brainard***

***Past President of the Society***

*who recently passed away.*

*Sadly Missed...Fondly Remembered*

## New Members

Warm Welcome to Our

**New Members**

June Balcewicz

Natalie Clancy

Cheryl Peterson

Stella Gordon

Michael Tierney





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## EVENTS CALENDAR

### DECEMBER

Monday, December 20, 7:00 p.m.  
**Members/Friends Christmas Party**  
 Newman Church, Rumford



### JANUARY

Wednesday, January 5, 2000 7:30 p.m.  
**Board Meeting (Members Welcome)**  
 John Hunt House  
 Hunts Mills Rd., Rumford

Monday, January 24, 7:00 p.m.  
**Members Meeting**  
**Pot Luck Supper/Brown Bag Auction**  
 Newman Church, Rumford  
*(details in January Gazette)*

### EAST•PROVIDENCE•HISTORICAL•SOCIETY MARKER PROGRAM

Your Home May Be Eligible for a MARKER  
 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.

Send coupon to:

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

I am interested in receiving information about the  
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