



John Hunt House  
Vol. X No 9

May, 1999

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## May Event ... A Unique Program.. and Important Business Meeting

### SHARON SNAPE PRESENTS HER AUTHENTIC HISTORIC DOLLS AT MAY MEETING

**Sharon Snape** makes and dresses dolls in the styles of various historic periods. She will describe her research and techniques in this interesting hobby.

She will introduce "Emma", a doll dressed in authentic 19th century Civil War period costume.

Mrs Snape will donate "Emma" to the East Providence Historical Society in memory of the 3 boys (friends of her son) who died near the reservoir last summer.

**Monday, May 24, 7:30 PM at Newman Church**  
Refreshments and business meeting to follow.

### NOMINATING COMMITTEE

**Ray Anderson, chairman**

*"The Nominating Committee shall be responsible for presenting a slate of candidates for elected office for the ensuing year at the May members meeting. NOMINATIONS FROM THE FLOOR SHALL BE ACCEPTED AT THE MAY MEETING ONLY."* (Section IV, Standing Rules and Procedures)

The search is on with the help of Billie Arden and Florence Adams. The committee will report at the May members meeting at which time members may nominate their choices. Elections will be held at the Annual Meeting/Family Picnic, June 28.

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## The Riverside Businessmen's Association .... in the 30's

(see "From the Attic" page 4)



## NEXT MEETING

**Monday, May 24, 7:30 pm**  
**Newman Church**  
**Sharon Snape's Historic Dolls**  
**Business Meeting - Refreshments**

## **OTHER MAY EVENTS**

- May 11-** School tour at Hunt House -  
Orlo Avenue
- May 12-** Edna Anness at Bay View  
Retirement Center, 1:00 pm  
Lecture and slides- "History of  
schools in East Providence"
- May 18-** School tour - Hennessey
- May 19-** School tour - Whiteknact
- May 20 -** Blackstone Valley Educ.  
Organization Network Meeting.
- May 25 -** School tourm -Whiteknact
- May 26 -** School tour - Kent Heights

## **The GAZETTE**

is published monthly by the  
**EAST•PROVIDENCE•HISTORICAL•SOCIETY**  
P.O. Box 4774, East Providence, RI 02916-4774  
(401) 438-1750

### OFFICERS

President	Les Haworth
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	Nancy Moore
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	David Kelleher
Recording Secretary	Betty Soderlund
Corresponding Secretary	Gladys Panzarella
Treasurer	Rose Marie Sirenski

### COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Buildings	Earl Berwick
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

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

**Your Home May Be Eligible for a MARKER**



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

Send the form below 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  
East Providence Marker Program**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **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, RI 02916**

# **PRESERVATION REPORT**

Dave Kelleher

The Heritage Trust of Rhode Island, current owners of the Philip Walker House corner of Massasoit Avenue and North Broadway, is now having meetings concerning the future use of this historic, c. 1679 house.

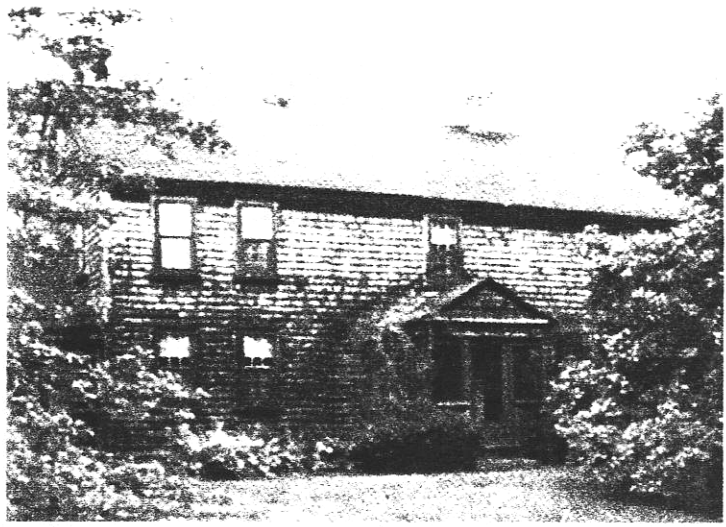
The exterior of the house was completely restored a number of years ago. The contents of the house were put in storage during the exterior restoration. The interior was to be restored but funds from the state bond issues did not materialize. Basically, the house has remained at a standstill.

The trust is now faced with doing something with the house so that it does not deteriorate. At the first meeting, the following were the options:

- 1) Restore the inside and make it a house museum.
- 2) Make the house livable and have someone occupy and maintain it.
- 3) Make the house a working museum: leave the house as it is so that students of colonial architecture would have a site for study.
- 4) Move the house to Hunts Mills near the John Hunt House.

Because of costs to restore the house and the expense of maintaining it, its use as a museum or residence is not feasible. Using the house as a working museum seems to be the logical option at this time.

The possibility of moving the house to Hunts Mills is still open. Input into the decision by the Heritage Trust is being sought from the City of East Providence, the East Providence Historic Properties Study Commission and the East Providence Historical Society.



**The Philip Walker House**

The 400 year old giant oak tree in the Bridgham Farm area of Rumford, known as the Newman since it is thought that the Reverend Samuel Newman held some of his first services under its branches, is now on private property since the area has been developed into house lots. The East Providence Land Conservation Trust, which oversees the 19 acre Bridgham Farm Conservation Area that abuts the tree by a few yards, is in negotiations with the land owner to have a small area around the tree given to the land trust so that the public will have access to the tree. Hopefully, all will go well.

A survey and evaluation of the piece of land will be done first for the protection of the generous land owner and the land trust.

More information about this development will be given once it becomes official and more specific details can be made public.

The East Providence Historic Properties Study Commission presented its annual Preservation Awards to the following winners:

**Dr. and Mrs. Stephen Farnum**, owners of the historic Viall Homestead, circa 1692, 787 Willett Avenue, Riverside.

**Gustave and Janet Mills**, owners of a charming Swedish farmhouse, circa 1880, 89 Bishop Avenue, Rumford.

**St. Mary's Episcopal Church**, beautiful historic church on the corner of Warren Avenue and Fourth Street, Watchemoket. .. Rev. T. James Hargrave, Rector; Frank C. Dearnley, Senior Warden.

# Museum Activity

## From the Attic

Edna Anness  
Museum Curator

*(Refer to photo on cover page)*

In the 1930's Riverside and its business community were seeing financial reverses due to the depression, the decline of business at Crescent Park and the devastating damage from the 1938 hurricane. A group of local businessmen joined together to form the RIVERSIDE BUSINESSMEN'S ASSOCIATION. They banded together to strengthen the business community and do philanthropic work. For example, during the Second World War they published news booklets and mailed them all over the world to our servicemen from Riverside no matter how far away they were. We have some copies in the Museum. The booklets included news of other servicemen, local events and photographs of Town sites of local interest. The committee also sent Christmas cards to the servicemen.

The photo on the front page was taken c. 1934 of some of the members after a meeting. From left to right in the first row: **George Kirby, Henry McCusker, Sylvio Chretien, James Dunn, Frank Slepko, Dr. Blake and Frank Bucci**, the tailor.

In the second row left to right: **Albert Dennison, Rev. Bray, Samuel Ramsay, Reginald Whitcomb, Russell Rooney, Harold Mopith and Milton Hall**.

The photo and information were donated to the Museum by Frank Bucci's daughter, **Philomena Bucci**, who did not know where the photo was taken.

**Peter Midgley** also gave us the glass sign from the old Riverside Clock at the Square which reads:  
"RIVERSIDE BUSINESSMEN'S ASSOCIATION".

## Accessions - Gifts

**George Page:** 8 pieces of flashed glass Crescent Park commemorative punch cups, mugs, creamer and sugar: Centennial beer mug, steamer tickets, Crescent Park matchbooks, ride tickets, Carousel rings, Carousel envelopes, 2 Boyden soda bottles, AND various and voluminous souvenir items from Crescent Park !!

**Edna Wilcox:** Photo of Leonard School, Pawtucket Avenue.

**Edna Anness:** Antique wall Mirror

*Thank You !*

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### YARD SALE REPORT -

Virginia Berwick

On April 17, The Society participated in the Newman Church yard sale. **Ray and Linda Young** took care of the details, getting a permit and distributing flyers.

**Les Haworth, Armando Ladeira and Dan O'Connell** put up tables on Friday night. Les took them down and put them away Saturday afternoon. He also took away the trash. **Rose Marie Sirenski** purchased hot dogs, relish, mustard, coffee, milk and cups. **Ray Anderson** got a good deal on doughnuts and also got potato chips. **Rose Marie, Ray and Bob Soderlund** worked in the kitchen.

**Virginia Berwick** opened Newman Church at 6:30 am. got hot dog rolls, plates, and soda and made apple brownies.

Workers at the society's table were: **Rose Marie Sirenski, Mona Breault, Virginia and Billie Arden. Nancy Moore** took all the unsold items to the Wheeler School.

**Thanks to all the helpers.**

# COMMITTEE REPORTS

## "BALLROOM MEMORIES" Report

Florence Adams

The 5th annual "Ballroom Memories" Swing Dance at Post 10 American Legion was a swinging affair. The 17 piece *Strictly Sentimental Swing Band* ... whose home base is Riverside ... provided those sentimental swing tunes that showcased the dancers. And there were many.

Thanks to the 8 telephone committee members who took reservations and refreshment commitments from the membership. And to the bakers - for the great variety of goodies. To **Dorothy Marshall, Ken and Irene Roberts and Tom and Olive Stringfellow** for their donation even though they were unable to attend. To **Billie Arden and Diana McLean**, ticket takers at the door. To **Sophie Fredrick and Trudy Lema** for volunteering to help. To **Eileen Enos** who helped in the kitchen. To **Nancy Moore and Kris Rose** for making the fabulous "Rainbow Punch".

The Society will again make a contribution to the Legion's scholarship fund, ... **Les Haworth**, President, made the presentation.

## GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Ray Anderson, Chairman

The new plantings have been weeded, mulch applied courtesy of the Parks Department and pine needles topping it off for a natural effect. A drain problem was also corrected, hopefully. Thanks to **Bob Soderlund** for his assistance.

The removed trees show the bridge at the rear of the Hunt House much clearer. Bare lawn spots are to be reseeded by the Parks Department.

Memorial Garden Funds continue to come in. Donations have been made by **Virginia Ripley, Billie Arden and Florence Adams**. Should you care to memorialize or honor someone, send a check, made out to the *East Providence Historical Society*, and mail to: East Providence Historical Society, Box 4774, East Providence, RI 02916, Attn: Ray Anderson.

## 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. Dues are \$10.00, individual or \$15.00, family. Please make your check payable to East Providence Historical Society, and mail with coupon below to:

Mona Breault  
34 Josephine Avenue  
Rumford, RI 02916

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### EAST•PROVIDENCE•HISTORICAL•SOCIETY

New  Renewal

NAME (s) \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_ @ 10.00 INDIVIDUAL, 15.00 FAMILY



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RETURN  
SERVICE  
REQUESTED

# Events Calendar

## MAY

Monday, May 24, 7:30 p.m.  
Members Meeting/Candidates for Office  
Newman Church, Rumford  
Sharon Snape, Doll Maker and "Emma"

## JUNE

Wednesday, June 2, 7:30 p.m.  
BOARD MEETING (members welcome)  
John Hunt House, Hunts Mills Road  
Monday, June 28  
Annual Meeting/Election of Officers  
Family Picnic

Details in June Gazette