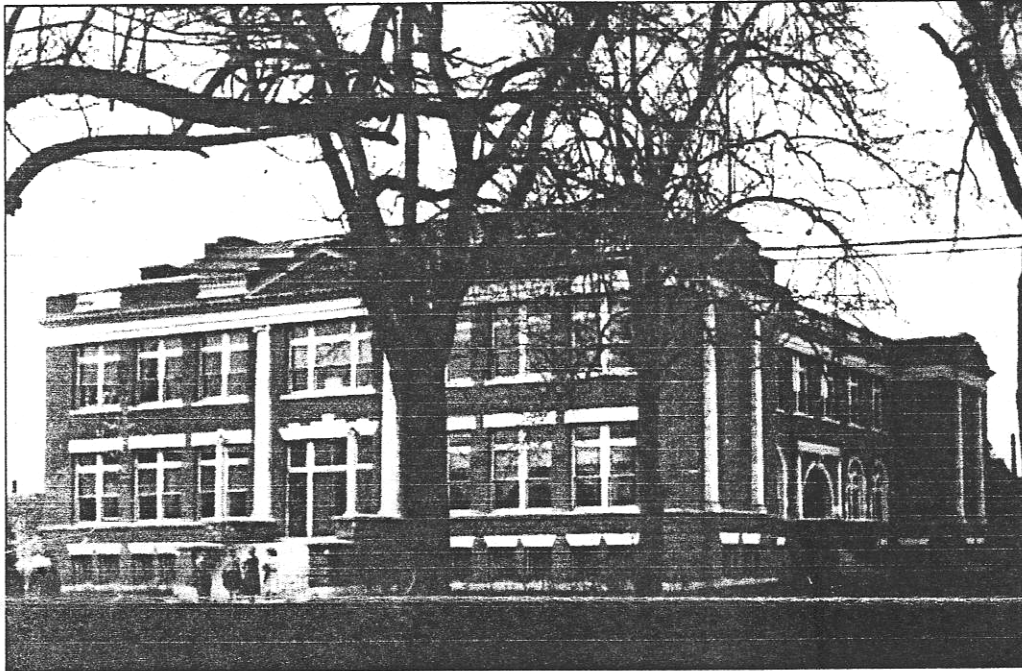




John Hunt House

# Gazette



In 1910, the population of East Providence had grown and a larger high school was needed. The new high school was completed by 1912. It had two floors and before 10 years had passed a third floor had to be added. The building eventually became Central Junior High School. It is now used for senior citizen apartments.

## From the Attic

by Edna Anness, Museum Curator

### *Schools of the Last Century*

The Town of East Providence started its school system in 1862 and during the first thirty-eight years built sixteen new schools. Women were hired who had graduated from Rhode Island Normal School. After the high school curriculum was started in 1874 students from Brown University, alumni of the University and alumni of other liberal arts colleges were hired. In 1854 Rhode Island Normal School had begun a training program and issued teaching certificates to women who taught in our elementary schools up to the eighth grade. The high school grades nine through twelve were taught by liberal arts grads until Rhode Island College established a degree program in the early 1930's.

Until as recently as the 1930's female teachers had to resign their positions if they married and could only be hired as "permanent substitutes", a practice which ended around 1950. Also in the fifties a graduate of "just a liberal arts college" could no longer teach. It became necessary to

take 36 semester hours of Education courses beyond the degree and teach five years before obtaining a teaching certificate, unless one acquired a Master's Degree, and then a professional teaching certificate was automatically granted. Today just about all teachers are expected to attain a Master's Degree, but first must still do a training stint in the area of the expertise. Currently most career personnel in the Office of Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent have Doctor of Education degrees. Education has come a long way.

During the first ten years of the past century no new schools were constructed until 1912 when there was a building flurry as our town was expanding and a high school education was expected of all students. The first new building was the high school on Taunton Avenue, now the senior housing apartments. Two floors were needed and before ten years had passed a third floor was added.

Below ninth grade, grammar schools were taught through the eighth grade. In that same year, 1912, a large new brick grammar school was built in Riverside.

(continued on Page 3)

## Board Briefs

Thanks to **Peggy Carter** for her service to the society as a 'telephonie'. She may join us at a later date. We could use a couple of people who are comfortable communicating by telephone. Calls to the membership are made about 5 times a year.

The search is on by the **Building Committee** to find a **master plasterer** to install a ceiling in the John Hunt House basement 'summer kitchen' and store room. Then comes the new floor.

The **Grounds Committee** is looking for *volunteers to weed, water, prune and otherwise maintain* the John Hunt House gardens to meet Ray Anderson's standards. Along with this notice, one will be placed at the Senior Citizens Center. Call Ray, 438-2464, for further details.

**Bob Tewksbury**, President, appointed **Ray Anderson** *Chairman of the Bylaws Committee*. **Florence Adams** and **Rose Marie Sirenski** will serve on the committee.

The John Hunt House will be closed through February. However, the society's telephone, 438-1750, is monitored daily.

**THE BOARD VOTED ON FEBRUARY 2<sup>ND</sup> TO CANCEL THE FEBRUARY MEMBERS MEETING DUE TO LACK OF A PROGRAM AND THE POTENTIAL FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER.**

The *Gazette* welcomes "letters to the editor" and articles of **historic interest**, especially **personal reminiscences**. Deadline: first Friday of the month. Mail Attention **Doreen Bonney**, East Providence Historical Society, P.O. Box 4774, East Providence, RI 02916

### URGENT. We need volunteers!!!

If we are to have a **Pasta Supper March 25<sup>th</sup>** we need people to help in the following places! Shop for food. Kitchen help to cook the food. Set up tables and take them down. Set tables - tablecloths, silverware, napkins, etc. Servers for coffee or serve your own. Servers for buffet table. And clean up the kitchen and hall afterward. Possibly table decorations, too.

We need to know by March 1<sup>st</sup>. As you all know we have fun at our suppers. Call **Ginny Berwick**, 434-0998, or **Mona Breault**, 431-2945.

## The GAZETTE

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

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The  
**GAZETTE**  
 is printed at



3 Crescent View Avenue, Riverside



In memory of...

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

**Phyllis Kirkman**

*who recently passed away.*

*Sadly Missed... Fondly Remembered*

## 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**

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

It contained four rooms and was the start of a building which was to be later enlarged to become **Riverside Junior High School** on Bullocks Point and Pawtucket Avenues. We do not usually think of that school as ever having only four rooms. In 1912 **Tristram Burgess** and **Warren Avenue Schools** were also built, both of which are currently storage buildings for the School Department. **Wilson School** was built as a grammar school and **Union Grammar School** was named **Union Primary School** at that time.

Another eight years passed before **Brightridge School** was built as a two room school building. We can now only remember its enlarged version which was necessitated by the growth of the *Kent Heights* and *Silver Spring* areas. In 1922 **Bliss School** was built. There was a choice of two people for whom the school was to be named, **George Bliss** and **Orlo Hobbs**. The school became Bliss and the street it was on was named Orlo. Now the new replacement is name Orlo for one of our members' (**Marilyn Brewer's**) **grandfather**.

In 1927 **Arthur E. Platt** was built in Riverside and named for a local doctor. In 1928 the **Kent Heights School** was built, attesting to the growth of that area of the city. And finally in 1928 several beautiful Victorian homes were razed to make way for **Central Junior High School**, attached to the rear of the high school. At this time grades seven, eight and nine were taught at the new junior high and grades ten through twelve were considered "high school". At this same time Riverside Grammar was enlarged and became **Riverside Junior High School**.

In the 1930s only one school was built in East Providence. In 1936 it was located behind Wilson School and consisted of four rooms for the first four grades. It replaced PS #9, or **Phillipsdale Primary** which still stands on Roger Williams Avenue. It continued to be called Phillipsdale Primary even though it was officially named **Roger Williams Primary** to celebrate the *Rhode Island Tercentennial* that year, and the new name was set into the upper exterior moulding of the building.

Soon **World War II** caused a cessation of expansion to the building era and it was not until well after the war, in 1951, that three new schools were built. One, of course, was the "new" high school on **Pawtucket Avenue**, and the other two were *mirror images* of each other, the **Thompson School** in Rumford and the **Oldham School** in Riverside, both named for former school superintendents. The "old" high school became part of Central Junior High School.

In 1957 six new schools were built to accommodate our burgeoning population. Two schools were razed and two new ones were built at the same location - **Grove Avenue**

**School** and **Orlo Avenue School**. **Agnes B. Hennessey** on Fort Street, **Emma G. Whiteknact** on Grosvenor Avenue, **William R. Watters** on Hoppin Avenue and **Alice M. Waddington** on Legion Way joined the list. Hennessey and Whiteknact were named for two school principals as was Watters, and Waddington was dedicated to a high school teacher. **Meadowcrest** was added later to accommodate the new building developments in Riverside.

Retired **Superintendent Edward Martin**, in a conversation with us at the Museum, was very proud of the new Riverside Junior High School built and dedicated in April of 1966. He was most proud of the library. He believed that the library was the core of the school curriculum and wanted it to be the best in the state.

In the 1970s our school population was swelling to unbelievable proportions. Between 1970 and 1976 it was necessary for the School Department to lease the *parochial school building* from *Our Lady of Loretto Church* for grammar school students. It became known as **Carlton Avenue School**. At the same time, the seventh grades could no longer fit into the Central Junior High School and so the empty *parochial school belonging to St. Francis Xavier Church* was rented and became known as the **Orchard Street School**. Finally in 1977 a *new junior high school* was completed and called **Edward R. Martin Junior High School** and a new style of junior high school curriculum was embarked upon.

In the early 1970s a new and separate *addition* was added to East Providence High School and called the **Vocational School**. Students from neighboring towns were accepted. Students were coming by bus from Warren, Bristol and Barrington. Also in 1970 the **Progress School** was completed which is now known as **Silver Spring School**. Between 1980 and 2000 only two schools have been added - the **Myron Francis School** in Rumford built on the site of the Wilson School, and recently the **new addition to the high school to accommodate the ninth grade**. Thus we have come full circle in one hundred years - the *ninth grade is back to being considered part of the high school* as was the case between 1874 and 1928.

The total: **twenty-seven** new schools between 1900 and 2000. I am sure in the telling of this story some important facts have been omitted, but this is supposed to be a brief summary of our schools "in a nutshell" and perhaps someone else can fill in important blanks by writing an article for us and mailing it to the Historical Society. **We would love to hear from you.**

### COMMUNITY EVENTS

**Wampanoag Women's Club Meeting**  
**John Hunt House Feb. 28 7:00 pm**  
**Lecture "Hunt House Restoration"**

# Grounds Committee

by Ray Anderson, Chairman

Donations to the Cottage Rock Garden (memorials) now total over \$1,000. These moneys will be used for plants, replacements, signs for plants and other such expenses directly attributed to the Hunt House plantings. The committee is considering options for the best choice for plant identification signs. It is hoped that information sheets listing plants, memorials and donors will be available on the grounds this spring.

## MEMBERS MEMORIES

At the conclusion of the *Grounds Report* at the Pot Luck Supper Members Meeting, I made an appeal to the membership for their memories and recollections of places gone by in East Providence. You might have seen the magazine "Reminisce". It is written by people like you and me and talks of life in times of their childhood and beyond.

I'd like to model an article after this format. I don't need dates and other formal details, only your memories of anything about any place in East Providence. Your memories are East Providence history. What would Crescent Park be without the people who went there?

All memories need not be old. Weren't there two Zayre's on Taunton Avenue not too long ago? One was previously W.S.W. (My son was the first to get lost in the store.)

Here's a way to leave something of yourself to the history of East Providence. The "human side"...the best side because you lived it. Questions? Call 438-2464, Ray Anderson.

P.S. I'm still looking for what you remember about Six Corners; its stores and what you recall about shopping there. Only one person has given me information on the traffic lights. I remember a clothing store named \_\_\_\_\_? and Finkelman. Or was it Winkleman and Finkelstein? Remember Nike's motto? **JUST DO IT!** Hope to hear from YOU.

## New Members

Warm Welcome to Our New Members  
Charles and Dawn Hall



*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*

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) \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

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

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

✂

## More "Memorable Local Residents of this Century"

A Postscript to Last Month's *Gazette* Article

Bob Moravec wrote to ask that we remember *Alice M. Waddington*, a walking encyclopedia of East Providence High Alumni news. He also reminded us of *Dr. Farnum* at the High School in the Music Department. *Virginia Whitcomb* called to remind us of *John Oakland*, Larry's brother, who ran a market on Waterman Avenue. *Ray Anderson* wants us to remember the members of the *Citizen's League* who helped us become a City, *A. G. Helgerson* of the Handy Shop fame, *Alice Waddington* and *Mr. & Mrs. Swartout* who ran Ben Franklin's on Taunton Ave. Ray also reminded us of East Providence policeman *Jimmy Caruso*, who was killed at the "Project" (Prospect Heights) in Pawtucket, and *Niles Palmer* who blew the 9 p.m. whistle in Rumford.

### THE ORIGINAL "58"

"Gathering" - 2:00 pm Feb. 20<sup>th</sup> at the John Hunt House, Hunts Mills Road

Let's see how many descendants can be found.

- |                                      |                           |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Allin, Ralph and John                | Bliss, Thomas             |
| Bowen, Richard                       | Browne, James             |
| Bullock, Richard                     | Butterworth, Samuel       |
| Carpenter, William                   | Cheesborough, William     |
| Clarke, James                        | Clifton, Thomas           |
| Cooke, John                          | Cooper, Thomas            |
| Fuller, Robert                       | Gilman, Edward            |
| Hitt, Thomas                         | Holbrook, John and Thomas |
| Homes, Obediah                       | Hunt, Peter and Ephraim   |
| Howard                               | Kendricks, George Leonard |
| Ingram, Richard                      | Matthews, John            |
| Laine, Job                           | Miller, John              |
| Martin, Abraham and Robert and Isaac | Newman, Samuel            |
| Meggs, John                          | Patteson, Edward          |
| Morriss, Robert                      | Peck, Joseph              |
| Palmer, Walter                       | Pratt, Matthew            |
| Payne, Stephen                       | Roades, Zachary           |
| Peram, John                          | Seale, Edward             |
| Reade, John                          | Shepherd, Ralph           |
| Sabin, William                       | Sutton, John              |
| Sharpe, Robert                       | Torrey, Joseph            |
| Smith, Edward and Henry and William  | Widow Walker              |
| Titus, Robert                        | Wright, Richard           |
| Walker, James                        |                           |
| Winchester, Alexander                |                           |

Does anyone know how Kettle Point got its name? If so, call Ginny Berwick at 434-0998.

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

Your Home May Be Eligible for a MARKER



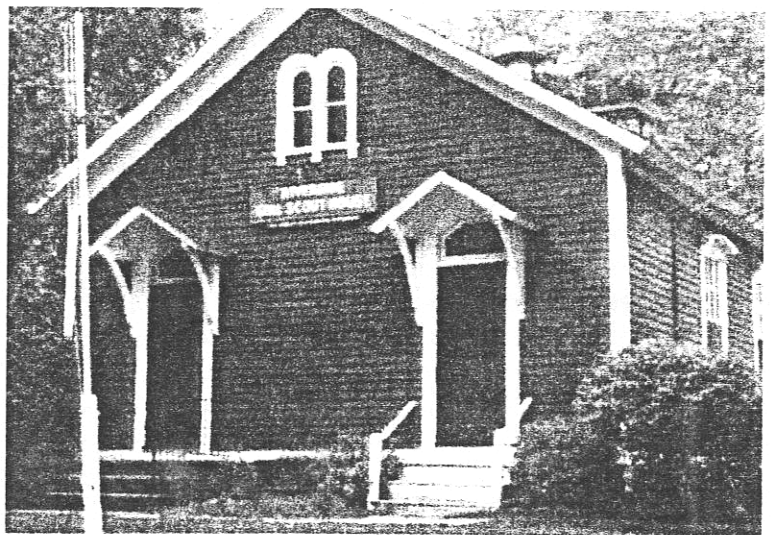
Any building in the City of East Providence which contributes to the historical development or architectural character of the City is eligible to be considered for a historical marker.

Send the coupon 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 \_\_\_\_\_



The Riverside Girl Scout House on Willett Avenue is actually the oldest school building still standing in East Providence. It was built in 1869-70 and was called PS No. 6.



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 EAST PROVIDENCE, RI 02916

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## EVENTS CALENDAR

### FEBRUARY

Monday, February 28 Members Meeting  
**HAS BEEN CANCELLED**

Sunday, February 20, 2:00 p.m.  
 First meeting of descendants of  
*The Original "58" Settlers*  
 John Hunt House, Hunts Mills Rd., Rumford

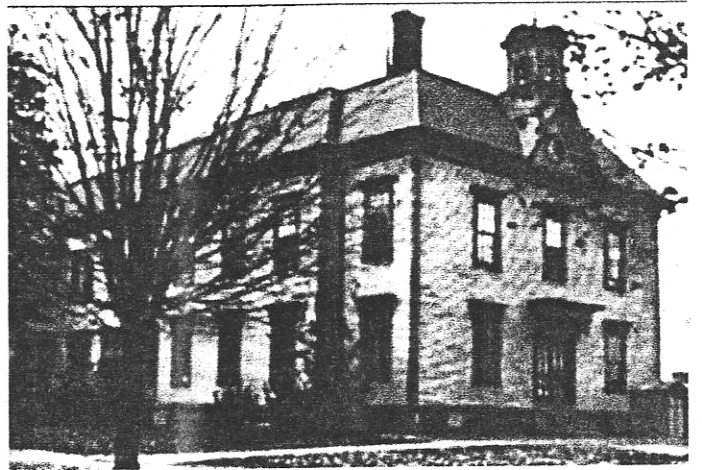
### MARCH

Wednesday, March 1, 7:30 p.m.  
 Board Meeting (*members welcome*)  
 John Hunt House, Hunts Mills Rd., Rumford

Saturday, March 25, 6:00 p.m.  
*Pasta Supper*/Members Meeting  
 Newman Church, Rumford  
 CONFIRMED or CANCELLED  
 at March 1 Board Meeting

### APRIL

Monday, April 24, 7:30 pm  
*Strictly Sentimental Swing Dance Fundraiser*  
 American Legion Post  
 Willett Avenue, Riverside



*The East Providence High School, built in 1875 on Grove Avenue was originally named Grove Avenue Elementary. In 1884 a high school was established on the first floor, and later 2 floors were added. A new high school was built in 1910*