

“Senior Project” and Pot Luck Encore Features of February Meeting Monday, February 26, 6:00 PM Newman Church, Rumford

By popular demand, a pot luck supper will lead off the February 26th meeting. The Telephone Committee will call the membership requesting main dishes, salads and desserts. Beverages will be provided. Also it's been suggested that the major ingredients or a recipe accompany the dish to satisfy health and curiosity factors.

As part of the program, **Donald Babbitt**, Recruitment Coordinator, will speak about the *Senior Project*, a health survey conducted by the University of Rhode Island, with the help of East Providence elderly. The purpose is

to identify life style habits and recommend changes where improvement is needed.

Another part of the program will be a “How Are We Doing?” survey. **Ray Anderson** has put together a 5 question survey to obtain “feedback” (appropriate for a pot luck supper!) to be used as “fodder” for the Board of Directors.

And finally, the proposed bylaws changes will be presented to the members for review and approval.

Our Plate is Full

Who Are Those Others ?



This photo of the East Providence Town Hall staff ca.1930 is one of two donated to the John Hunt House Museum by **Marilyn Brewer**. The photo, taken at an outing at Crescent Park, includes Marilyn's grandfather, *Orlo Hobbs* (first row 3rd from right and highlighted on page 6). Orlo, who lived to be 99, was Tax Assessor in the 1920's and 30's.. A street and a school now bear his name. The Museum seeks HELP in identifying the OTHERS in the photo. Readers who recognize people in the photo are urged to contact the Museum at (401) 438-1750 or E-Mail: ephist @home.com. For a closer look on your PC, e-mail a request for a JPEG copy)

BOARD BRIEFS

A copy of the Board approved bylaws changes was mailed to the membership on February 10. The bylaws require approval by two-thirds of the members who are present at a regular meeting, hence members living in Colorado or Pennsylvania, etc., were not included in the mailing (a penny saved is a penny earned) However, copies of the bylaws are available upon request. *Please bring your copy of the changes to the February 26 meeting.*

Kris Rose, *Markers Chairman*, has received 3 requests from East Providence residents to have their houses evaluated for a Society Historic Marker.

The John Hunt House is closed through February except by appointment. Telephone (401) 438- 1750.

CHANGE of ADDRESS

The Society has a "Return Service Requested" arrangement with the Post Office. You'll see the information block on the address label page of the Gazette.. There is a *charge every time we retrieve an undeliversble mailing*. Please advise the Society of all changes, whether temporary or permanent.
Thank you for helping us save money

The Gazette

is published monthly by the

EAST•PROVIDENCE•HISTORICAL•SOCIETY

P.O. Box 4774, EAST PROVIDENCE, RI 02916-4774
Tel: (401) 438-1750 E-Mail: ephist@home.com

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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

and mail with form below to:

Mona Breault

34 Josephine Avenue

Rumford, RI 02916-3018

NEW MEMBERS

Warm Welcome to Our New
Members:



Frank and Teresa Ryan-Henry
Elizabeth Woodcock

New Renewal/ Change

EAST PROVIDENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Name(s) _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip (+4) _____

Phone _____ Amount Enclosed: \$15.00 Family \$10.00 Individual

From the Attic

Edna Anness, *Museum Curator*

Plans have been set for the *Open House* and *Dedication of the Philip Walker Room*. By coincidence "May is Museum Month" sponsored by the **Heritage Harbor Museum** is being held again this year from April 29 through June 3rd. The month long activities will be called "Re-Discover Rhode Island's Treasures During Museum Month".

The John Hunt House Museum will take part again this year with two special events. One will be in conjunction with the **East Providence Land Conservation Trust** at a date to be announced and the second will be the *Dedication of the Philip Walker Room* on Sunday, June 3rd. The House will be open for tours, the dedication and a reception on that day. We are attempting to contact as many of the Walker family descendants that we can locate. If any reader knows of some local Walkers, please pass along their names to us for an invitation. One Walker is coming from Orlando, Florida for the event.

The John Hunt House will reopen on March 8th.

Gifts and Accessions

Ted Adams: Article about St. Mary's Church

Lowell and Edna Anness: Antique mahogany commode, milk glass inkwell for the Walker desk, Crescent Park pennant, Crescent park postcard and Fisk milk bottle

Marilyn Brewer: Two Girl Scout books, two photos of E.P.. Town Hall employees from the 30's, 10 maps and five RI postcards.

Geraldne Bonanno: Munroe Plat and Jenkins Plat maps.

Dan Howard: Paule Loring original cartoon entitled "It Does Strike the Same Place Twice", referring to lightning and D Day, Sept. 15, 1944.

Fales and Ruth Peirce: Brass colored Rumford Tin. (We'll do a report on it soon)

Beverly Simmons: "Terrace Cookbook" put out by members (cooks) of the Terrace Association. of Riverside in the fifties.

Paul Sincero: Photo of his father's shoe store at Six Corners.

Andy Valerio: Child's rocker which had belonged to his wife.

EAST•PROVIDENCE•HISTORICAL•SOCIETY Historical 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

For information, send the coupon below to:

The Marker Program

East Providence Historical Society

PO Box 4774, East Providence RI 02916-4774

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

Name _____

Address _____

East Providence, RI Zip +4 _____

MEMBERS' MEMORIES

THE ST. MARY'S BAYVIEW FIRE

Mona Breault (Class of '48)

On the morning of February 5, 1948, fire broke out at Bayview, in the cupola over an unused dormitory above the third floor. The fire was discovered by one of the students and the alarm was sounded by the principal.

Evacuation immediately took place, 530 boys and girls marched out of the school in an orderly fashion under the safe supervision of their teachers. The fire escapes were covered with ice when a student inquired as to how we would get down them. Sister replied "on your butts, dear"

The flames spread rapidly through the wooden structure because of icy road conditions and a strong wind from the north the fire fighters were handicapped in fighting the fire, the water pressure was low, snow and ice hampered the firemen. The flames burst through the roof and smoke rose above the cupola. Before long flames destroyed the ceiling of the second floor and it was apparent that the wooden building could not be saved, excessive heat caused the windows to crash with glass falling in all directions.

Frantic parents not knowing if their children were safe came to find them. Busses arrived and before long all were safely home. The building continued to smolder throughout the night and the fire fighters remained to guard it. Zero temperatures caused the water to freeze forming ice everywhere.

The building was totally destroyed. The disaster was now realized and help came from all directions. The East Providence School Dept. offered any school for temporary placement of the students. On the afternoon of February 12, and every afternoon until graduation or the remainder of the school year, Brightidge School with its little chairs and desks became Bayview.



St. Mary's Bayview at height of fire.

THE RIVERSIDE CANAL

Ned Connors

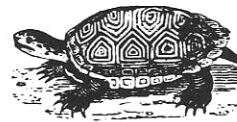
During the depression years the WPA (Works Progress Administration) hired unemployed men to repair and upgrade streets, sidewalks, build walls, refurbish public parks etc.

One of their local projects was the construction of a canal- like bed for the brook running from the Socony Woods (now Mobil property) to the Willett Avenue ice pond then under Willett Avenue and Fenner Avenue where it emptied into Bullock Cove.

In the spring, large snapping turtles climbed out of the brook and pond, travelled to some place on land and laid their eggs in the ground. They are still doing this today.

Way back, during the depression, when in some households food was hard to come by, I remember seeing a local boy take one of these turtles home. He had the turtle grab a strong stick in its mouth. Then with a four foot long rope, which he tied to each end of the stick, he pulled the turtle to his nearby home.

They had some good free turtle soup, which lasted them for more than one meal.



The Gazette ...

welcomes "letters to the editor". Mail to
Doreen Bonney,
c/o E.P. Historical Society, PO Box 4774,
East Providence, RI 02916-4774

"Members Memories" and articles of historic
interest. mail to:

Ray Anderson,
32 Algonquin Road,
East Providence, RI 02916-3502

FEBRUARY 2001 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF EAST PROVIDENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A Written History Is Their Goal

Historical Society Stresses Importance Of Community's Past



where in the Post the first school in East Providence was founded in 1800. The school was founded on a small 30-acre site on a hillside across which several roads and passages were built. The school was founded in 1800.

With the father, Laura C. Flint, he has long been interested in the restoration of the John Hunt House. The house is a fine example of the work of the architect John Hunt. The house was built in 1800 and is one of the oldest houses in East Providence. The house is now a museum and is open to the public.

EAST PROVIDENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY



GAZETTE

RIGHT ON.

FEBRUARY 1996

1996 MARKS 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Thirty years ago the East Providence Historical Society was organized. Laura Sellow, who was Secretary for many of those years recalls

THE "ISLAND CONNECTION" VIEWED BY HUNDREDS OF VISITORS

The East Providence Post announced the beginning... and our own Gazette tells of 30 years of progress

On February 10, 1966 the Post announced that .. " ...if Harold N. Flint of Riverside has his way, it wont be too long before the East Providence community is aware of its rich, colorful history."

"Mr. Flint . . . is one of a handful of people who are now organizing a group that will be concerned with this community's heritage .. the East Providence History Society.."

"What we need in the society," Mr. Flint said, "is the membership and cooperation of everyone with an interest in this type of organization. It doesn't make a bit of difference whether members have lived her for a year or for all of their lives. Interest, enthusiasm and a willingness to work are the most important factors."

" We intend to take it slow and easy. What we want to accomplish will take patient effort. Certainly there's no glory and financial reward involved, but there will be a lot of personal satisfaction for everyone who takes part."

Thirty years later the East Providence Historical Society was completing the "Island Connection" , a cooperative project of the Society and members of the local Cape Verdean community which had the largest visitor registration of any exhibition in our history

Among events scheduled for the 30th Anniversary were a "Memories Roundtable" which included all the surviving Presidents of the Society and a "Recollections" exhibit at the Museum.

Had we accomplished the objectives of the original group? The Gazette observed that we had:

- Expanded the membership from a dozen to 300.
- Acquired the John Hunt House for a headquarters.
- Won awards for restoration oh the Hunt House.
- Turned a collection in a shoebox into the John Hunt House Museum.
- Participated in historic properties preservation.
- Encouraged community interest in East Providence history.
- Provided a repository for the documents, photographs and artifacts of East Providence history, revealing to young people the roots of their heritage.

"A Written History is Their Goal" was the headline in the Post. We have accomplished much in a mere 35 years Haven't written that History yet ... Still PLENTY to do.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO US!



First Officers: l-r: Dixwell Goff, 1st VP; Laura Sellow, Secretary and Fred Bushnell, President



EAST•PROVIDENCE•HISTORICAL•SOCIETY

P.O. Box 4774

EAST PROVIDENCE, RI 02916

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**RETURN
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REQUESTED**

Who . . . Are . . . They . . . ?



That's Orlo Hobbs, East Providence Town Tax Assessor (over 70 years ago). . . . but WHO are all those OTHERS? see front page

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY

Monday, February 26, 6 PM
Member's Meeting/Pot Luck Supper
Newman Church, Rumford
Program: "Senior Project" *Donald Babbitt*
Bylaws review, Questionaire.,

MARCH

Wednesday, March 7, 7:30 PM
Board Meeting (members welcome)
John Hunt House, Hunt's Mills Road, Rumford

Monday, March 26, 7:30 PM
Members Meeting
Weaver Library, 41 Grove Avenue
Bruce Sundlun "What's On Our Minds?"

APRIL

Monday, April 23, 7:30 PM
Strictly Sentimental Swing Band
American Legion Post 10, Riverside. (fundraiser)