



John Hunt House

Gazette

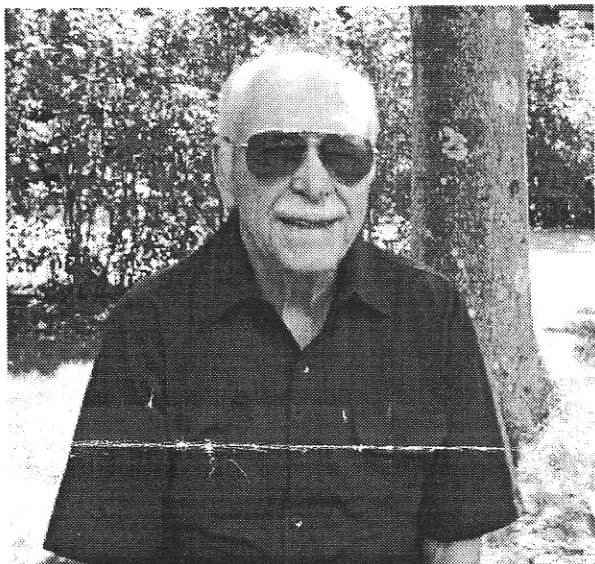
VOL. XIV No. 1

SEPTEMBER 2001

“The Early History of East Providence” . John G. Erhardt, PhD

How Seekonk in 1812 Became East Providence in 1862 .. The Boundary Disputes ..

Monday, September 24, 7:30 PM, Newman Church, Rumford



John G. Erhardt, PhD, Inspired and Enthusiastic Historian.

Dr. Erhardt, a retired chemist and teacher, is an inspired and enthusiastic avocational *historian* who has been writing a comprehensive history of East Providence, Seekonk, Pawtucket and Rehoboth. He will be discussing sections from Vol. IV, “Historical Seekonk 1812-1862, Pre East Providence, RI 1812-1862, Village of Pawtucket 1812-1858”, especially the account of the heated boundary disputes between Seekonk and East Providence.

Dr. Erhardt grew up in the Sabin Point section of Riverside. He now lives in Seekonk, where he is at work on Vol V, “History of East Providence 1862 -1900”

The Blackstone River Valley Greenway Challenge

The John Hunt House Museum will be open from

11:00 AM to 2:00 PM

on Saturday, September 29 and Sunday September 30.

Bridgham Farm Tours 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM both days.

This is to support, and participate in “The Greenway Challenge!” in which teams of runners, canoeists and cyclists will pass through the Valley from Worcester to Slater Mill. The event, sponsored by many Blackstone Valley organizations, The Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce The East Coast Greenway Alliance (which includes the East Bay Bike Path) and others, to celebrate the Blackstone River Valley.

Local activities, such as our open House and tours, will highlight the historical, natural, recreational and cultural activities in communities in the Blackstone River Valley.

The Best ..



See Page 4

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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George Adams	<i>Newsletter</i>
Les Haworth	<i>Preservation</i>
Ray Anderson	<i>Program</i>
Florence Adams	<i>Publicity</i>

The John Hunt House Museum is OPEN

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 AM until noon during September.

Beginning on **October 2** the hours will be: **1 to 4 PM**

and by appointment.

For an appointment, telephone the Society at (401) 438-1750

The Board established the new hours to make the Museum more available to visitors and students who may use the facilities for research.

Volunteers needed !!!

We would also like to open the Museum on Sundays and seek VOLUNTEERS to attend to the Museum **one** Sunday a month. from 2 to 4 PM. *Please Call !!*

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, \$15 family or a Life membership for \$150.

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

Welcome to our recent new members:

*Bob & Jennie Angell
and Family*

New Renewal/ Change

EAST PROVIDENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Name(s) _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip (+4) _____ Phone _____

Amount Enclosed: \$15.00 Family \$10.00 Individual \$150.00 Life

Presidents Letter

Dear Members,

Although the Hunt House has been closed for the summer and many of our members have been away on vacations, a number of activities have continued.

Here are a few of the ongoing projects:

Building Committee: *Earl Berwick* has had the front of the Hunt House painted in a few needed spots. The front door has also been repainted. The summer kitchen project is on hold until the fall.

Grounds: *Ray Anderson* has been working with the city and a good deal of work has been done in the rear of the house. A lot of brush has been removed and soil has been moved to improve the landscape.

Meter House: *Ray Anderson* and *Bob Tewksbury* have been working with the city in making final plans and requests for materials to repair the Meter House. A letter of request to take over the building and get funds for materials has been given to **City Manager Paul Lemont**.

Website: *George Adams* is looking into the possibility of a website for our society.

Master Plan: A suggestion that a master plan be developed for the Hunts Mills Area has been submitted to **Mr. Lemont** by the *East Providence Historic Properties Commission*.

Garden Tours: Positive reports have been received from our first garden tour on Narragansett Terrace in Riversde. *Ray Anderson* and *Rose Marie Sirenski* have already begun checking out gardens for next year's tour which will be in the Rumford area.

Fish Ladder: I was invited to a meeting at the Hunts Mills dam with a number of people from the **Army Corps of Engineers** and **Save the Bay**. I was given the opportunity to let them know of our plans for restoring the grist mill some day, the restoration of the pumphouse, and our concerns about the ambiance of the area.

Membership Cards: The board has decided to eliminate mailing membership cards every year. Only new members will get cards this year. The Board feels that new membership cards every year is an unnecessary expense. Over the next couple of months the Board will be looking at all of the society's expenses to see if there are other areas where expenses can be reduced.

All of us on the Board sincerely hope that you will join us at all our programs this year.

See you all in September.

Sincerely,
Dave Kelleher

THANK YOU PETER AUGUSTYN

The members of the Society wish to express their thanks to Mr. Peter Augustyn for his work in restoring the John Hunt House sign that is located in the front of the house.

The sign was in poor condition and needed painting badly. It is now in excellent condition thanks to Peter. A job well done and appreciated.

The Gazette ...

Welcomes "Members Memories"
and articles of historic interest.

mail to:

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

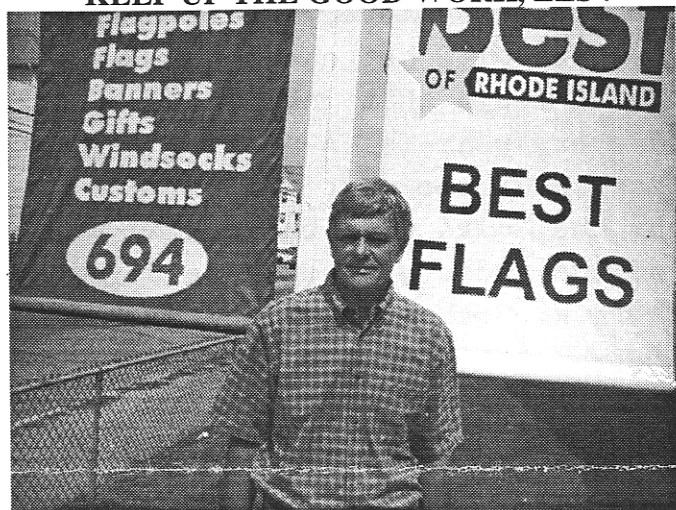
BEST Les

The August Issue of *Rhode Island Monthly* featured their annual **Best of Rhode Island** selections:

Atlantic Flag and Banner, 694 North Broadway, East Providence, was one of this year's selections.. Atlantic Flag and Banner is owned and operated by **Les Haworth**, past President of the Society and currently Preservation Committee Chairman, is also a member of the **East Providence Historic Properties Study Commission**

He is now possibly in line for the "Allstars", a group that includes **The Pawtucket Red Sox, Del's Lemonade** and **Twin Oaks**.

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK, LES !



Les Haworth another Del's ?

In Memory of

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 02916-4774

GIFTS TO THE MUSEUM

Lorna Andrews - photo of testimonial dinner honoring Anthony Lamb.

Earl Berwick -YMCA insignia, map of rotary formerly at Newman and Pawtucket Avenues and picture of his Boy Scout Troop I at the Rumford Town Hall.

Marilyn Brewer - Six Corners Dept. Store bag, corn popper and accessories for maintaining the Hunt House.
Bob Derrick - Book entitled "US Volunteer Life Saving Corps"

Thelma Eros - Genealogy of the Loyalist Walkers of Canada.

Norman Green - Antique white cotton petticoat.

Althea McAleer - Graduation photos from EP High School class of 1910 and AP Hoyt Class of 1906.

Susan Moseson - A detailed history of the Philip Walker House and an earthenware jug with blue decoration, made in Providence, RI (from the Walker House) along with five Shedd Family photographs.

Pat Peirce - three Hunt's Mills photos.

Margaret Wieboldt - Large collection of Walker family photos.

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**

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The Marker Program
East Providence Historical Society
PO Box 4774
East Providence R02916-4774

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MUSEUM NEWS

Edna Anness,, *Museum Curator*

Virginia Berwick is recovering from knee surgery and will not be at the Museum for some weeks to come. I'm sure she would like to hear from you.

Kit Rodman has retired from the Museum Committee after twelve years of volunteer service. We appreciate her valuable help in the past. She will continue to help out as a docent.

The **Museum Committee** will meet on Wednesday, September 19th, at the Hunt House at 7pm to accept new gifts.

FROM THE ATTIC

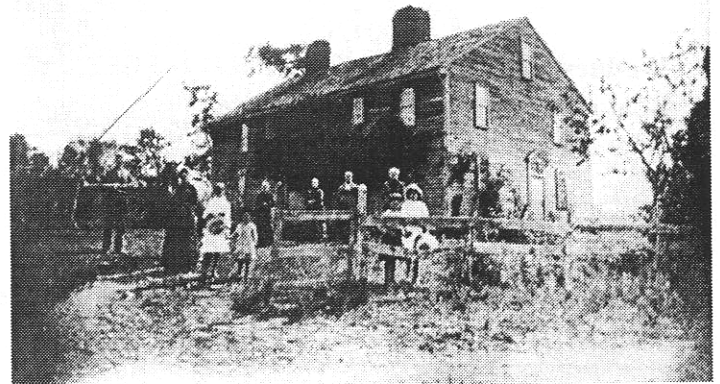
Shortly after our Walker Room Dedication Susan Moseson, a Walker descendent, sent us an in-depth history of the Walker House, the descendance of its ownership and its architecture, prepared at Brown University in 1977. It was a fortuitous gift for it answered many questions about the Walker land holding, the house and how it had stayed in the family from the time Widow Walker built her first house as a member of the original Fifty-Eight Rehoboth Proprietors in 1643 until Faith Shedd Potter willed it to the Heritage Trust in 1986. Many people have wondered how such a house could stay in one family for such a long time. We now have the answer.

The first Walker House built by the Widow Walker was burned in 1676 by King Philip of the Wampanoag Tribe and it was not until 1679 that the Widow's son Philip built a new house on the old foundation of the burned home. He died in 1679 before the house was finished. The home was on a farm which extended from today's North Broadway west to the Seekonk River and North to Omega Pond and the Ten Mile River where Philip had a sawmill. Now in those days it was customary for the homestead property to be willed to the oldest son of the family and the widow would receive the use of a bedroom and kitchen privileges until she died or remarried. Other children after negotiating with the oldest son would receive some household items and the privilege of continuing to live there or to receive other pieces of land. So when THE Philip Walker died, his house went to his son, Capt. Samuel Walker. Capt. Walker died in 1712 and his wife was the administrator. The house and property went to their oldest son Timothy.

Timothy died in 1745 and the house passed to HIS oldest son Timothy .That Timothy lived there with his mother Rachel until he died in 1796 . His wife Patience got use of the guestroom and use of the kitchen to wash and bake but the house went to their son, also named Timothy.

It was at this time that tradition died when the final Timothy died in 1845. This Timothy had one son and five daughters. The one son Samuel and sisters, Mary, Sally ,LucyAnn, Arvilla and Eunice divided the estate into six strips of land each containing about 19 acres and the five daughters also each received one fifth of the Walker House. Lucy married a Capt. Davis .Eunice and Arvilla married two Dexter brothers. Eunice built a house on her fifth of the farm which is a gambrel roofed house still standing on Massasoit Ave. Eunice's daughter Abby ran a cow farm on their property and sold part of the farm on Omega Pond cove to a paper company in 1905. She sold the remainder of the land in 1925.

Arvilla married Edward Dexter III and, outliving her sister Lucy and Mary, inherited their shares and occupied the house. Arvilla and Edward had a son Christopher and eventually Christopher gave the house to his daughter, Jessie Dexter Shedd, who was the mother of Faith Shedd. (Faith in later years married her cousin Dexter Potter so they both became caretakers of the family homestead and occupied the house.) This is a simplistic rendering of the history of ownership and would not have been possible without Susan Moseson's gift of the paper entitled "*The Philip Walker House, East Providence 1679*", Brown University 1977, Author unknown.



Philip Walker House ca 1870. Women, l-r Lucy Davis at horse, daughter of Lucy Walker Davis, who is second from left; Mary Walker; Eunice Walker Davis; Arvilla Walker Dexter.

(photo: gift of *Margaret Wieboldt*)



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September

Monday, September 24, 7:30 PM, Members Meeting
 Newman Church, Rumford. *Public Invited*
 Program: **John G. Erhardt, PhD**
 "East Providence 1812 -1862"

Saturday and Sunday, September 29, 30,
11:00 Am - 2:00 PM John Hunt House Museum
 "The Greenway Challenge"
Bridgham Farm Tours: 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM

October

Wednesday, October 3, 7:00 PM
 Board Meeting *members welcome*
 John Hunt House, Hunt's Mills Road, Rumford.

Saturday, October 27, 7:30 PM Members Meeting
 Riverside Congregational Church *Public Invited*
 Program: "Pomham Light .. Can it Be Reactivated?"
Timothy Harrison, The Lighthouse Foundation.

November

Wednesday, November 7, 7:00 PM
 Board Meeting *members welcome*
 John Hunt House, Hunt's Mills Road, Rumford.

Monday, November 26, 7:30 PM Members Meeting
 Newman Church, Rumford. *Public Invited*
 Program: **Ella Sekatau, DHL**
 "Lifestyles of the Narragansett People"

December

Wednesday, December 5, 7:00 PM
 Board Meeting *members welcome*
 John Hunt House, Hunt's Mills Road, Rumford.

Monday, December 10, 6:00 PM
 Newman Church, Rumford.
Christmas Buffet and Program

CHANGE of ADDRESS

The Society has a "Return Service Request" stamp on all mailings. There is a CHARGE every time we retrieve an undelivered mailing. Please advise the Society of all changes, temporary or permanent. This will help us save money.

engagement with the Post Office. Please advise the Society for helping us save money.