



# Gazette

Vol. XV No. 4

January 2003

## Crescent Park

### JANUARY MEMBERS MEETING

Monday, January 27, 6 PM  
Newman Church, Rumford

Just about now, you would gladly exchange this winter for a shore dinner or chowder and clam cakes at **Crescent Park**. Can't quite pull off this magic, but maybe the January pot-luck supper and Crescent Park slide program might bring a winter respite. The telephone committee will call the members for main dishes and salads. Dessert will be a special cake to commemorate the completion of the John Hunt House restoration.

The program will be a slide presentation with narration on Crescent Park from the 1890's, the glory years of the 'teens and 20's, through the 1960's, the closing in the 1970's and the ongoing restoration. And who is the presenter? Our own expert, **Ed Serowik**. **Dave Kelleher**, society president, will contribute at least two cents worth.

Come for some 'summer fun'. Short sleeves and shorts are encouraged.

### President's Letter

David Kelleher

Well, here it is, 2003. Where did 2002 go? I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season and that you all enjoy a healthful and happy new year.

Everyone enjoyed the December 9 Christmas dinner. Thanks to **Billie Arden** for making the arrangements.

The society's board members selected a contractor to paint the John Hunt House: **Precise Painting, Inc.**, Rumford, **Ron Johnson**, President. Mr. Johnson will paint the walls, ceilings, two floor surfaces on the first

floor and the front hallway. He will begin on Monday, January 20th. The exterior of the house will be painted in the spring.

Plans are firming up for the **Antique Appraisal Day** which will be held on Saturday, February 22, 10 am to 4 pm, Newman Church. **Nancy Moore** is doing an excellent job making the arrangements. She is in need of volunteers to help in the kitchen and in helping people get to the right appraisers. If interested, call the society, 438-1750. Look around your house for interesting pieces that you think may be valuable and put the date, February 22, on your social calendar of coming events.

**Egna Anness** will be putting together a collection of artifacts from the John Hunt House Museum to be displayed at the upcoming exhibit at the Rhode Island Convention Center: **Rhode Island Treasures**. The exhibit opens Saturday, May 10.

**Earl Berwick**, longtime Chairman of the Building Committee has submitted his resignation. Earl is having trouble climbing stairs and carpentry work has become difficult for him. Earl is responsible for a great deal of the restoration at the John Hunt House. His skills and expertise will be sorely missed but he will still be available for advice when needed. The board members accepted his resignation with regret.

A grant request has been made to the **John H. Chafee Blackstone Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission** to help develop a master plan for the Hunts Mills area. Hopefully, our request will meet with their approval.

Hope to see you at the January 27 pot-luck supper to enjoy a pleasant meal and to view **Ed Serowik's Crescent Park slide presentation**. I am sure it will bring back many fond memories. Ed has, by far, the largest collection of pictures of the park taken over the years.

Dave Kelleher

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**EAST • PROVIDENCE • HISTORICAL • SOCIETY**  
 P.O. Box 4774, East Providence, RI 02916-4774  
 Tel: (401) 438-1750

**OFFICERS**

David Kelleher	<i>President</i>
Nancy Moore	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Vice President</i>
Raymond Anderson	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President</i>
Jo Marchi	<i>Recording Secretary</i>
Gladys Panzarella	<i>Corresponding Secretary</i>
Peter Allen	<i>Treasurer</i>

**COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS**

Earl Berwick	<i>Buildings</i>
Ray Anderson	<i>Grounds</i>
Kris Rose	<i>Markers</i>
Mona Breault	<i>Membership</i>
Virginia Berwick	<i>Museum</i>
Edna Anness	<i>Museum Curator</i>
Doreen Bonney/Florence Adams	<i>Newsletter</i>
Les Haworth	<i>Preservation</i>
Ray Anderson	<i>Program</i>
Florence Adams	<i>Publicity</i>

**ANTIQUe APPRAISAL DAY**

Saturday, February 22, 10 to 4 pm, Newman Church.

The East Providence Historical Society invites members and friends to participate in the **Antique Appraisal Day**. We are working with the model for an appraisal day set up by the *Cranston Historical Society*, based at the Sprague Mansion. They have run four highly successful days. **Diane and Joe Asciooli** of the Cranston society came to the John Hunt House Museum to meet with us. Categories for appraisal: **antique toys, dolls, glass, china, ceramics, porcelain, art work, paintings, small furniture, early country items, general items.** SORRY, no coins, stamps or fire arms.

**Fee: \$7, first item; \$5, each succeeding item (limit - 4 items per person).**

**FREE REFRESHMENTS WHILE YOU WAIT.**

**Appraisers:** Seven well-respected antique dealers. Members of the **Southeastern New England Antique Dealers Association**. Verbal appraisals only.

Proceeds to benefit the East Providence Historical Society. In the opinion of Diane and Joe Asciooli, we need 18 workers spread over six hours to pull this off smoothly. Therefore, we have divided the day into two 3-hour shifts: **10 am to 1 pm** and **1 pm to 4 pm**. Chances for 'employment' are: **greeters, runners, kitchen crew, set-up/break-down.**

Job Descriptions

**GREETERS:** work front table, take money, give out numbers.

**RUNNERS:** seat waiting clients, take clients to appraisal area according to their numbers.

**KITCHEN CREW:** set up coffee/refreshments for everyone, ready lunch for workers and appraisers (probably busy morning-light afternoon),

**SET-UP/BREAK-DOWN:** tables arranged for appraisers, chairs for clients, put away.

**Perks for volunteers:** One item of your choice appraised FREE of charge!!!!

For further information, call **Nancy Moore**, 438-4299, or the society, 438-1750.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

The Society has a "Return Service Requested" arrangement with the Post Office. *There is a CHARGE every time we retrieve an undeliverable mailing....* Please advise the Society of all changes, temporary or permanent. Thank you for helping us save money.

**The Gazette was not published in December**

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 \$15 individual, \$25 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**

**Membership Form**     New     Renewal /Change

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

Street \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

**Amount Enclosed:**

**\$25 Family    \$15 Individual    \$150 Life**

**The John Hunt House Museum, Hunts Mills Road, Rumford, (off Pleasant Street) will reopen on Tuesday, March 4, 1 to 4 pm**

## From the Attic

Edna Anness, Museum Curator

For years, the area surrounded by Pleasant Street, Bishop, Hoyt, Bourne and Greenwood Avenues has been called "**The Ring of the Green**", the original settlement of Rehoboth. No one questioned this name until a new member asked last week, "Why does the plaque across from Newman Church call this area "**The Ring of the Town**"? Which is correct?" And so it was back to the history books for the Curator.

The standard written and published histories of this area are: '*History of Rehoboth*', **Leonard Bliss, Jr.**, 1836 (the earliest) and a series of four volumes, '*Early Rehoboth*', **Richard Lebaron Bowen**, a descendent of one of the original 58 'Seeconcke Planters', and published one by one between 1946 and 1950. Both men used primary sources from records of early Rehoboth still extant in various locations along with preserved correspondence and writings of early historians such as **Baylies** and **Mitchell**. (I do not have their first names.) Bowen critiqued Bliss' account and then our own society historian in the 1970's, **Harold Flint**, wrote an as yet unpublished history which critiqued Bliss and Bowen. And finally, society member, **John Erhardt, PhD**, wrote a series of volumes in the 1990's on local history, one dealing directly with the same early period. (All of these histories are in the Harold Flint Library, John Hunt House Museum.)

Bliss calls the area in question at various times the '*Seekoncke Plantation*', the '*Seekonk Common*' and the '*Seekonk Settlement*'. (Seekonk is sometimes spelled Sekunc, Seacunck, Seacunk.) Bowen writes in Volume II, "The owners (early settlers) were required to fence the head end of each (lot) which made a continuous fence around the parallelogram (the common) of which was the 'Ring of the Town' or 'Ring of the Green' or 'Common' or 'Seekonk Common' into which cattle and other livestock were turned to pasture." To further complicate matters, the name of the site was changed from Seekonk to Rehoboth on June 4, 1645, from Rehoboth to Seekonk in 1812, from Seekonk to East Providence in 1862.....and to further confuse us, a plaque put up in front of Newman Church last year by the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council reads, "Rumford, a Mill Village, established in 1856".

I would have to conclude that any of the aforementioned names is correct. Whichever one is used in a story or printed on a plaque is the option of the writer or printer. All have basis in fact. You take YOUR pick!

## DOCENTS & CURATOR NEEDED

**DOCENTS:** Thus far, six ladies have signed up. They are: **Jeanne Davis, Joan Hanlon, Kit Rodman, Muriel Sadler, Eunice Tuckerman, Charlotte Underhill**. Charlotte and Kit have done this for the society in the past. **Edna Anness** is the 7th volunteer and we need at least one more.

There will be two informational sessions at the John Hunt House Museum in February for about two hours in the morning. Dates yet to be decided. Information material will be mailed out as well. We cannot begin classes this month because the interior of the house is being painted.

**SEARCH FOR A CURATOR:** We need a volunteer to serve as curator as **Edna Anness** did. (Edna's resignation takes effect March 2003) Basically, the job entails accepting gifts to the museum, having the museum committee pass on them about three times a year and accessioning them: recording their acceptance, describing them, placing them on display or in storage and filing their new cards into the system already established. Another responsibility would be seeing that they are being taken care of properly.

The curator could do the work on his/her own schedule. A gentleman or lady.....someone with an interest in things old and in the history of East Providence.

Edna will train the person who comes forward. Contact the society, 438-1750, and leave a message for Dave Kelleher, Virginia Berwick or Edna Anness.



*In Memory Of*  
 Donations were made to the society's  
 Memorial Fund in memory of  
**Virginia Sollitto**  
 Who recently passed away.  
 Sadly Missed...Fondly  
 Remembered

*Warm Welcome to our  
 New Members:*

**Atlantic Flag and Banner  
 Bucketts' General Store  
 Clockwork Deli  
 and Catering**



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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### JANUARY

Monday, January 27, 6 pm  
**Members Meeting Public Invited**  
Newman Church, Rumford  
**Pot Luck Supper/Crescent Park Slides**  
Ed Serowik, Presenter

### FEBRUARY

Wednesday, February 5, 7 pm  
**Board meeting Members welcome**  
John Hunt House Museum  
Hunts Mills Road, Rumford.

Saturday, February 22, 10 to 4 pm  
Newman Church, Rumford  
**Antique Appraisal Day**

Monday, February 24, 7 pm  
**Members Meeting Public Invited**  
Newman Church, Rumford  
**Pot-Luck Supper/ Flag-Banner Presentati**

### PROGRAMS FOR 2003

6 pm, Monday, February 24, Newman Church.  
**Pot-Luck Supper/Flag-Banner Presentation**  
Les Haworth

7 pm, Monday, March 24, Newman Church.  
**Life of Billy Yank, East Providence, in the Civil War**

7:30, Monday, April 28, American Legion, Riverside.  
**Alhambra Cabaret/Dancing**

7 pm, Monday, May 19, Newman Church.  
**Evolution of Men's Trouser's**  
Susan Hay, RISD Museum

Monday, June 23, Hunts Mills.  
**Annual Picnic**