



Gazette

Vol. XVIII No. 2

October 2005

President's Letter

Nancy Moore, President

Hello Members:

What a special way to start our year! The Masonic Temple tour was outstanding and the tour itself was personal and complete, just like the tours we give at the Hunt House Museum. Our deepest thanks to the Grand Lodge for opening their space to the society and to our members who suggested the venue. We urge any of you who missed the tour and are "into" fine restoration and beauty in architecture to take the next opportunity to view the space.

As for the October 24 members meeting, those of us on the East Providence Historic Preservation Study Commission were treated to an update of the plans for the former Rumford Chemical Works. It's a well-thought out proposal and the developers were open to our ideas and questions. Come and decide for yourself if this is a good plan for Rumford.

The good news flowed at the society's September 26 members meeting: the tarp is off the front of the Weaver House, Grove Avenue; a historical architect has reviewed the Brown-Williams cottage, Hunts Mills Road; the Pomham Rocks Lighthouse restoration will be complete by December; WORK HAS BEGUN ON THE GAZEBO (on the grounds of the Hunt House Museum); the former Rumford Chemical Works has been designated a national site by the American Chemical Society; the pamphlet on historic sites in East Providence has been reprinted and is available at city hall, the libraries and the Hunt House Museum; "Images of East Providence", copyright East Providence Historical Society 1997, has gone back to press, hopefully to be in our hands by the holidays.

How is that for a great start to the year! See you at Newman Church, Rumford, on October 24th. Please bring a friend.

THE RUMFORD CENTER

Members Meeting

Monday, October 24, 7 p.m.

Newman Church, Rumford

The Rumford Center is the new name which will be given to the old Rumford Chemical Works site which is being bought for development of condominiums by the Peregrine Group, Kirkbrae of Lincoln. Jordan Stone and Colin Kane of the Peregrine Group will present their plans for the development of the area. You will find the plans interesting and attractive. They have requested this chance to present their plans to the community so this is everyone's opportunity to view them and ask questions. The public is invited.

Refreshments and business meeting will follow.

RUMFORD CHEMICAL MILL SITE TO BE DESIGNATED "NATIONAL CHEMICAL HISTORIC LANDMARK"

Last September the historical society was asked if they would submit an application to the American Chemical Society for national recognition of the Rumford Chemical Works as a chemical historic site. Dr. Paul Jones, formerly of the University of New Hampshire, whom we met when he gave his lecture to the society during the Rumford Exhibition, wrote to Edna Anness and asked her to write the application and the history of the company. Dr. Martin Saltzman, Chemistry Professor at Providence College, a representative of the Rhode Island Chapter of the Society, was asked to write about the Baking Powder invention which put

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DECEMBER EVENTS

The society will sponsor a **Holiday Tea** on Saturday, December 3, 3 to 5 p.m. at the Hunt House Museum.

Volunteers are needed:

4 bakers to provide finger desserts and 4 workers to set up/clean up.

Our thanks to those who donated cups and saucers. We could use some sandwich plates (6 1/2" x 7") and china and/ or porcelain tea pots.

Guests will be served by ***ladies in 18th century attire.***

Gentlemen invited.

('George Washington' will be there.)

Cost: \$10. Reservations will be Accepted at the Monday, October 24, members meeting. Seating is limited.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT
ephist.org

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**.

Request information by sending your name, address and phone number to the

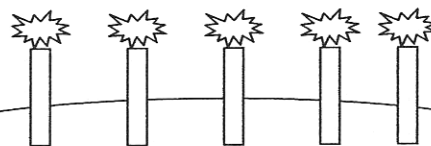
Marker Program
East Providence Historical Society
P.O. Box 4774
East Providence, RI 02916-4774



The society will hold a **Holiday Party** for members and guests on Monday, December 19, 6:15 p.m. at Newman Church, Rumford. There will be a catered buffet and holiday cabaret. The cost is \$15 members; \$18 guests. Reservations will be accepted at the Monday, October 24, members meeting. All reservations must be honored.

The society is accepting mittens, socks and toiletries to be donated to Crossroads Rhode Island, formerly Travelers Aid.

To add to the festivities, holiday decorations are requested for the 6 mantles in the Hunt House Museum. The theme is 18th century. In other words, greens, fruit and vegetables. Children's toys from the museum collection will also be used. Set up time is the week of November 28, before the Tea, December 3 and the museum open house, December 11.



BIRTHDAY PARTY

The historical society received an invitation from the Rumford Library inviting members to attend its 100 year birthday party (1905-2005) on Wednesday, October 26, 6 to 8 p.m.

BABCOCK & DOLLY

By Robert Tetreault

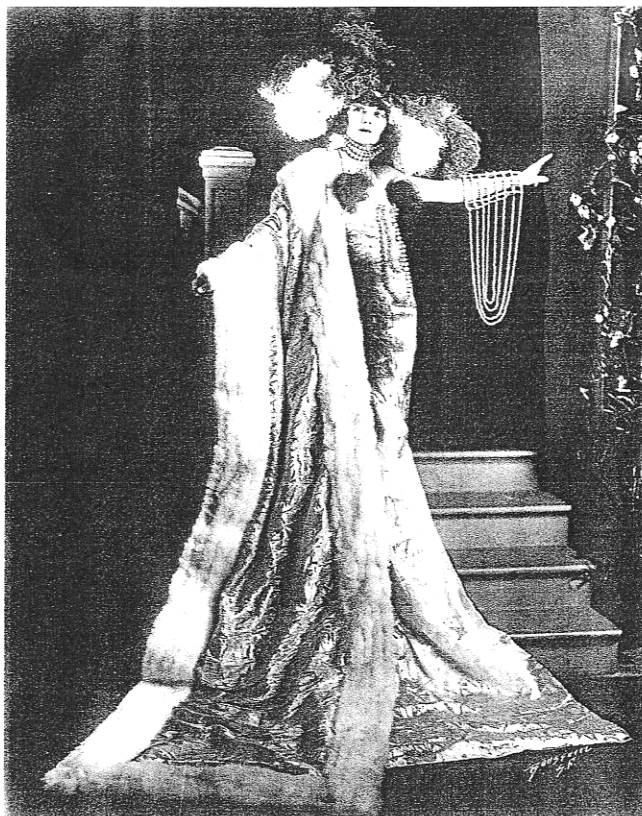
There have been several articles printed in the East Providence Historical Society Gazette in the past and it is time for me, a relative, to set the record straight regarding the Babcocks on Riverside Square.

Arthur G. and Dorilda (Tetreault) Babcock were vaudeville actors who performed in the Keith Orpheum vaudeville circuit. They played all over the U.S. and eventually at the Palace Theater in New York City. A booking there meant that you had reached the top for vaudeville performers. They were active from the early 1920's to the early 1930's when moving pictures taking over audiences forced them to retire. I got to see them on the stage at Fay's Theater in Providence in 1931 when I was 16 years old. One of their last bookings was at Keith's Theater in Portland, Maine, in 1930. They never traveled light when they were on the road. They took their dog Babby and 2 parrots.

Dorilda Babcock, better known as "Dolly", was my father's niece. Arthur Babcock was from New York City and had the typical Bronx accent. Their stage name was "Babcock and Dolly". Dolly was a beautiful woman and I have many promotional photos of her in her many fantastic costumes which she made herself. One photo that I gave to a friend was used in your first mention of her in the Gazette story in the March 1995 issue titled "Who is she?" Promotional photos were used to obtain bookings in theaters. The story was quite accurate, but I have provided more information so Riverside will know a little more about them.

Their home was at the corner of Park Drive and Booth Avenue, overlooking Bullock's Cove in the Pinecrest, Kent's Corner section of Riverside. They had lived there before, during and after their vaudeville period. Arthur was also a first-class carpenter, as you can see by the building he rebuilt on Riverside Square for their store. They lived upstairs when the store was open, but their home was on Park Drive. Arthur also built 6 houses on Park Drive, which are all occupied at the present time. As a member of the Kent's Corner Volunteer Fire Company, he supervised many shows there that were performed with local talent. My father, a musician, led the orchestra used for the shows.

Arthur died in 1953. Dolly lived 12 years after and died in 1965. They are both buried in Little Neck Cemetery in Riverside. I hope this story will be the answer to who the "Babcocks on Riverside Square" were.





*The Gazette welcomes
"Members Memories"
and articles of
historic interest.
Mail to the society:
P.O. Box 4774,
East Providence, RI 02916*

*More photos of
Dolly*





East • Providence • Historical • Society
P.O. Box 4774
East Providence, RI 02916

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Providence, RI
Permit #2712

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER

Monday, October 24, 7 p.m.
Members Meeting *Public Invited*
Newman Church, Rumford
Program: *Jordan Stone and Colin Kane,*
Peregrine Group,
Plans for the new Rumford Center
(former Rumford Chemical Works)

NOVEMBER

Wednesday, November 2, 7 p.m.
Board Meeting *Members Welcome*
Hunt House Museum
Hunts Mills Road, Rumford

Monday, November 28, 7 p.m.
Members Meeting *Public Invited*
Location To Be Announced
Program: Progress Report on Pomham Rocks
Lighthouse Restoration

November's "Member's Memory", entitled "Gone Fishing", is by John Agren. It's about fishing with a childhood friend under the Ten Mile River Dam.