



The East Providence Historical Society

Gazette

Volume XXXVI No. 2

September 2023

Dedicated to Preserving the Heritage
and Enjoying the History of Our City

OCTOBER OPEN HOUSE

Sunday , October 8

1:00 - 3:30 pm

EXHIBIT

“The Heyday of Amusement Parks in EP”

Hikes at Hunt”s

1:30

Family Games

1:00 - 3:00

“EP Roots” at the EducationCenter

MEMBER MEETINGS

“Union Primary Tour”

1320 Pawtucket Avenue

Monday - September 25

5:30 - 7:00 pm

“Throw the Brass Ring”

A Serowik Story Hour

Monday, October 23

Weaver Library - Grove Ave.

6:30 - 8:00 pm

CONTACT US AT:

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East Providence, RI 02916-4774

Tel. (401) 473-0677

Email info@ephist.org

Web Site ephist.org

PRESIDENT’S LETTER

by Cheryl Faria and Jeff Faria, Co-Presidents

John Hunt House Museum

We will continue to showcase the exhibits of East Providence’s Amusement Parks during our Open Houses on the 2nd Sunday of the month through December of this year. Ed Serowik and his son, Ed Serowik Jr., will be at each exhibit with videos and anecdotes about the parks. Part of the display is in the rotating exhibit room on the first floor of the Museum and another part is in the Education Center, the small yellow building to the left of the Museum.

*Carousel Exhibit and Researchers Sandra Turgeon and Tom Warzeka
in the Education Center*



The Gazette
 Is published by the East
 Providence Historical Society
 Eight times a year

OFFICERS

Cheryl Faria/Jeff Faria Co-presidents
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 Maggie Dooley Treasurer
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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 \$25 individual, \$35
 family or business, or a Life
 Membership for \$250.

Please make check payable to:

East Providence Historical Society
 and mail membership form to
East Providence Historical Society
P.O. Box 4774
East Providence, RI 02916-4774

Memorial Fund

The Memorial Fund, established in 1993 as a qualified endowment,
 commemorates past members for the "betterment of the Society
 and with no specific purpose." Those wishing to contribute may do
 so by check or through PayPal on our website ephist.org

Memorial Donations

In memory of Beth and Paul Agren

- Lois R. Thompson

In memory of Mona L. Breault and Virginia Neves Gonsalves

- Nancy Moore

Dues Reminder

Oops! Did you forget to pay your dues? If you had received a dues notice
 in July and not yet paid, please mail the form on this page along with your
 check or go to our website ephist.org and use Paypal.

Among your membership benefits you get:

- this monthly newsletter
- free programs and special events
- access to historical resources and genealogical research
- fellowship and opportunities to preserve and learn about local history

In return, we gain a stronger base to:

- apply for grant monies to match donations
- present to the city and state governments when collaborating with
 them on preservation issues
- partner with schools, libraries, and other non profit groups
- garner new talent and ideas (that could be you!)

Thank you for your continued support!

Membership Form

New
 Renewal/Change

Name(s): _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

\$25 Individual

\$35 Family/Business

\$250 Life

Painting the Education Center

We have received a grant from the Rhode Island Historical, Preservation & Heritage Commission with matching cash funds from the City of East Providence to preserve and maintain the John Hunt House Museum and the Education Center. Last spring, under the leadership of Paul Barnum, Buildings Chair, we reglazed and repainted 39 windows in the John Hunt House Museum. This fall, we have contracted with Levine Painting to strip, seal and repaint the Education Center. Thank you Paul for making all of this happen!



Left: Levine Painters preparing the Education Center for repainting.

Below: Cheryl Faria, Nancy Moore and Count Rumford at the Block Party

Weaver Library's Block Party

On August 24 we were proud to be asked to participate in the Weaver Library Block Party that featured organizations from East Providence. Nancy Moore, Cheryl Faria and Count Rumford had a table at the event and helped children play Colonial

Games including: Graces – where you toss colorful hoops back and forth; running with a hoop; walking on stilts and wooden puppets dancing on a board.

A Mill at Hunt's Mills?

As many of you know, Stephen Paine built the first mill along the river in 1643. There eventually were four mills here – a saw mill, gristmill, fulling mill and a dye mill. In 1854 the property, then known as 'Hunt's Mills Estate' was sold, eventually to be owned by the East Providence Water Company. In 1895 the



Hunt's Mills Amusement Park was built on the 44 acres. The street to the John Hunt House Museum is called 'Hunt's Mills Road'; the welcome sign says 'Hunts Mills Heritage Park' and the 26 raised bed gardens behind the museum are called the 'Hunts Mills Community Gardens'. Which leads to the question: Should there be a mill at Hunt's Mills?

We are in the beginning stages of exploring the feasibility of rebuilding a gristmill. It probably can't be located at the original site, as the fish ladder is there now. But maybe it could be located a little below that, at the next drop, and be connected somehow to the Pump House? If anyone is interested in helping bring this project to life, please contact Cheryl Faria at cherylafaria@verizon.net or 401-419-8682

*The East Providence Public Library and
East Providence Historical Society are proud to present...*

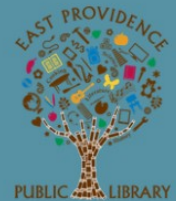
**EAST
PROVIDENCE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

**ON-SITE Tour of
Union Primary School Property!
Monday, September 25th 5:30pm**



**Architect David Sisson and
project manager Tom Clayton
will be giving the public a full tour!**

Meet us at 1320 Pawtucket Ave. for 5:30pm



Contact Ryan with any questions at rmccauley@eplib.org

A Note from Dave Sisson, the architect with a vision for Union Primary

We discovered this project through the RFP (Request for Proposal) process with the City of East Providence and I was taken by the location of the property in beautiful Rumford, the size of the property (almost an acre) and the way the building lended itself well to becoming a small muti-family apartment building. I appreciated the park-like setting of the building and its relationship to the residential neighborhood behind, and how far it's set back from Pawtucket Avenue. Once I toured the building and discovered the extremely high ceilings, large windows and some of the historic character (mostly exterior but also interior) I was convinced to respond to the RFP and put in an offer to the City of EP. I did bring in Touchdown realty (Tom Clayton) in order to realize the project, as it was complex beyond what I'd initially estimated. Touchdown did an amazing job of getting the project moving forward. In terms of the history of the building, we discovered that the building has received multiple generations of additions, but the front of the building establishes as a coherent mass and appears as a single building, with a much more modern addition to the rear. We discovered that this schoolhouse has been there, possibly as one of the oldest buildings in the neighborhood, since when the neighborhood was just farms and it was established along what was most certainly a wagon trail. I'm sure that the schoolhouse has been owned by Rumford, Seekonk, and Rehoboth throughout its life but this is certainly the first time it's been privately owned.

Father and Son Share a Love for Crescent Park

Monday - October 23 - 6:30 at the Weaver Library - Grove Avenue

For years, Ed Serowik, Sr., “Mr. Carousel” and 86 years young, has been our resident expert in all things having to do with the amusement parks in East Providence. In his own words: “My family moved to Riverside when I was 12 years old. I got a job setting pins at the bowling alley behind the Alhambra Ballroom which later became the Colonnade Lounge. While there, I heard that they were looking for a ring boy on the carousel. I went to see Helen (Loeff) Simmons and she hired me in 1951. My part-time job became a full time job and reverted to a part-time job after 70 years. As far as my son Ed Jr. is concerned, he applied for a job at the park office like every other 16 year old did every spring and they hired him too. After working there through high school, and because of my great interest in Crescent Park, his interest grew as mine did.”

Ten years ago, Ed did a program for the Historical Society at East Bay Manor and there he said he was a “pony boy” walking ponies around the track in 1947. By the time he became a full time hire, he was supervising 65 employees. But in 1972, the Park was sold and the future of the carousel uncertain. Through the efforts of local citizens, the City regained control of the carousel and Ed went back to his job, getting the carousel ready to revolve once again for other generations of RI youngsters and the young at heart.

Since July, both Eds have been sharing their knowledge of East Providence’s unique amusement park past at the Hunt House museum and plans are afoot to record their memories. It has been a great pleasure to have Ed, Jr. with us and we welcome this tag team to Weaver. They both have great stories and memorabilia which you will not want to miss!



Ed Serowik on the carousel



If you enjoy photos like these, come see them in person at the Hunt House during Second Sunday open house and come to the meeting at Weaver Library in October and meet Ed

HISTORIAN'S CIRCLE

January 1 – December 31, 2023

Thank you to those who donated to our Annual fund. With your Historian's Circle gift, you are helping the Historical Society meet our annual, strategic and endowment goals for the 2023 calendar year.

Hunt's Mills Park: \$1,000+

Angel Cabral	Cheryl and Jeff Faria
Hugh Kiley	Laurie and Bill McWeeney
Barbara Rix	Dotty Thornley
James N. Viara	Lois Williams

Crescent Park: \$500-\$999

Jacqueline and Lee Ashcraft	Hugh Kiley
Nancy and Dan Moore	Woods Heating Service

Vanity Fair Park: \$200-\$499

Nancy Allen	Earl Berwick
Richard R. Bushnell & Paula Perkins	David Czerwonka
Carole DiFabio & William Litchman	Hugh Kiley
Margaret Dooley	Virginia Neves Gonsalves
Darryl Hardern	Elizabeth Ingraham
Pat Paulson McGrail	
Jack and Kathy Richer	Mary and Steve Rosa

Boyden Heights Park: \$100-\$199

Gordon R. & Wendy L. Wood-Hubbard	
Barbara Barnes & Beverly Pettine	William Francis
Caroline D. Chick	Romeo DaSilva
Friends of Katherine Kazarian	Pam and Paul Goulet
Frederick F. Harrop	Miriam Kenney
Kathryn McGovern	Patricia McGrail
Tracey and Todd Moline	Michael & Norma Reynolds
Ed and Paula Serowick	Charlene Underhill

Friends: \$25-\$99

American Ring Company	
Helen Archibald	Sandra Barber
Peter G. and Sandra M. Barilla	James Boyd
James Boyd	Ivan and Malinda Colon
Jane Dennison	Rebecca Ellis
Gil Fletcher	Gilmore's Flower Shop
Michele H. Kazarian	DeDe Moubayed
Ruth McCarthy	Ryan McCauley
Deb Ormerod	Jayne Poland
Mark Saunders	Jack and Kathi Savage
Candy Seel	Betty Stoner
Lois Thompson	Anthony Valerio

Jean and Gary Zunda

Thank you!!!

If there are any errors or omissions in this list, please let Cheryl Faria know so we can correct it for the next issue of The Gazette. 401-419-8682 cherylafaria@verizon.net

The Ten Mile River flexed its muscles this past week as it roared over the falls and careened down through the rapids, closing down Pawtucket Avenue at the Agawam Ball Field.



Gardening tips from Jeff Faria

URI Master Gardener

Bring house plants and tender herbs that have been summering outdoors back inside before frost.

End of season plant sales can increase your perennial gardens at half the cost of spring ideas!! Design and plant a garden bed this fall, watering well through the fall until the ground freezes, and you will be delighted in the spring!

Continue to create floral bouquets of cuttings of your favorite flowers until a hard frost.

Dig tender, perennials, like dahlias, and Gladiolas, after the tops are killed by a hard frost. Clean off the tubers and corms before storing them in sand, sawdust or a vermiculite mix.

Mature weeds with seed, heads are better off placed in trash, rather than your compost bin.

Historian's Circle Giving Levels

- Hunt's Mills Park: \$1,000+
- Crescent Park: \$500+
- Vanity Fair Park: \$200+
- Boyden Heights Park: \$100+
- Friends: \$25+

Please apply my gift to:

- Annual Fund
- Endowment
- Split between the two

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Gift enclosed: _____

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Visa MasterCard Amex

CC# _____

EXP _____

Signature: _____



Please place your phone camera over this PayPal bar code for payment.

Please make your checks payable to the East Providence Historical Society.

The East Providence Historical Society is a 501(c)3 and all donations are fully tax deductible.

EP Historical Society Annual Fund

Thank you to those who gave to our 2022 Annual Fund. Your generous gifts were used to help us meet our goals in the 2023 calendar year. Thank you to those who are considering a donation this year! **On the right is a list of what your gift will support in calendar year 2023**

General Operating Support

Operating expenses of the John Hunt House Museum.

Maintain and host monthly Open Houses at the John Hunt House Museum and Education Center.

Endowment Goals

Continue to build our Endowment.

Annual draw to offset costs.

Endowment gifts matched 2:1 the first \$2,000.



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

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Thank you for supporting the
 East Providence Historical
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