

Gazette

Volume XXXVI No. 4

March 2024

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



Upcoming Dates:

Spring Open Houses

1:00 - 3:30 pm

March 10, April 14, May 12

1:30 pm

Hikes at Hunt's Gazebo

1:00 - 3:00 pm

Family Games

front lawn

1:00 - 3:30 pm

"Roots" at the Education Center

Exhibit

"Bits and Pieces"

General Meeting

Monday, March 18

6:30 pm Weaver Library

"Men on the Move: Walking Hunt's
and the Local Area" with John
Kostrzewa and Ernie Germani

East Providence Historical Society

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

by Cheryl Faria and Jeff Faria, Co-Presidents

Winter is ending! Spring is coming! And the East Providence Historical Society has not been hibernating! We've highlighted events, activities and cultural happenings that have been going on at the Society and throughout the East Providence community since our last *Gazette* was published.

John Hunt House Museum Open Houses

Our final Open House for 2023 was Sunday, December 10th. Visitors to Hunt's Mills braved the cold drizzly weather to take a guided tour of the Museum or trail hike led by Ernie Germani, and stopped by the Education Center for genealogical research. Instead of teddy bears lining the hiking trail, we had them peeking through the bannisters of the stairs in the John Hunt House and greeting visitors in most of the rooms of the Museum.

Our first Open House of 2024 will be on Sunday, March 10th from 1-3:30. We will resume our docent guided tours of the Museum and the 1:30 hike of the grounds. Our researchers Sandra Turgeon and Tom Warzeka will once again be available to assist visitors with genealogy questions. Stop by the Education Center and take advantage of the online tools 'Ancestry', 'Family Search' and 'Find a Grave' to facilitate your search.

The Gazette

Is published by the East Providence Historical Society

Eight times a year

OFFICERS

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- Deborah Ormerod 1st Vice President
- Maggie Dooley Treasurer
- Eric Underhill Recording Secretary
- Sandi Barber Corresponding Secretary

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- Deborah Ormerod Curator
- Sandra Turgeon Education
- Cheryl Faria Finance
- Jeffrey Faria Grounds
- Sandra Turgeon Marker Program
- Carole DiFabio Membership
- Nancy Allen Museum
- Eric Underhill Newsletter
- Nancy Moore Preservation
- Nancy Moore Programs
- Nancy Moore Publicity
- Tom Warzeka Technology
- Kathryn McGovern Volunteer Coordinator
- Deborah Ormerod Website Manager

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

During our December Open House we also had a presentation by David O'Connell of a \$58,000 gift from the late Len Iannacone. As many of you may remember, Len gave a generous gift of \$100,000 to the EP Historical Society a year ago. That gift is now in an Endowment at the RI Foundation. Last year we used some of those funds to install the new sign at the entrance to the Hunt's Mills property.



A most appreciative board!

Membership Update

Welcome to our newest members:

Richard and Stephanie Lux

Joan Fleming

Lifetime Upgrade - Thank you for your commitment.

Jack Richer

In memory of . . .

Jean Kesner, longtime Life Member.

Our condolences to her family and friends.

Membership Form

New

Renewal/Change

Name(s): _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

\$25 Individual

\$35 Family/Business

\$250 Life

State Preservation Grant

Last year we received a grant from the RI Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission for historical preservation projects. We used this grant money to



reglaze and paint 38 windows in the John Hunt House Museum (Phase I) and paint the exterior of the Education Center (Phase II). This winter, we completed Phase III of the project— cleaning the storm windows in the Museum. We contracted with Ada's Cleaning Service who did a thorough and beautiful job of cleaning the windows, including rubbing the frames with beeswax thus making the windows easy to open once again.

Roger Williams Park Botanical Center Tour

On February 3rd, Ivan Colon, one of our lead Community Gardeners, hosted a tour of the Roger Williams Botanical Center. Community Gardeners and Master Gardener Seed Starters were inspired by the many gardens. Following the tour we had a brief meeting where we introduced each other and talked about plans for the 2024 growing season.



'Big Picture' Board Meeting

On February 7th we held a 'Big Picture' Meeting. We heard reports from Carole DiFabio, Cheryl Faria, Nancy Moore, Nancy Allen, Sandra Turgeon and Deb Ormerod about our progress against the five priority areas identified a year ago for our three-year strategic plan 1/1/2023-12/31/2025.

The five priority areas are:

- 1.) Expand Internal Organizational Capacity
- 2.) Maintain Financial Stability
- 3.) Continue Partnering with other Organizations
- 4.) Expand Education Programming
- 5.) Maximize use of Technology

We are making good progress in all areas and agreed to continue working to realize the identified goals. The full Strategic Plan is posted on our website and we will be updating it regularly with our progress.

We discussed new ideas that have come up within the last year which include partnering with the City on a New Cultural Center on site and updating the City of East Providence's History book; having the museum open more often; exploring the feasibility of a mill on site; and making plans to incorporate Native American and African American history in the Hunt's Mills experience. Much of the discussion was about the need for new volunteers to help us implement many of these new ideas.

We revisited the list of Volunteer Opportunities, developed a year ago, and made revisions to the list, which is now posted on our website. Our biggest needs are for Museum Docents, Building Committee Members, Education Committee Members, a Gift Shop Manager and a Grant and Report Writer.

Please consider volunteering your time, talent or treasure. If interested in learning more, please contact Kathryn McGovern, our Volunteer Coordinator at ka-mcgovern@comcast.net

John Hunt House Museum Clean Out

On January 15th we held a Martin Luther King Day Museum clean out. Volunteers from EP Historical Society's Board and membership, Master Gardener Seed Starters and the Blackstone Valley Heritage Corridor group sorted through piles and stacks of accumulated items from broken furniture to old paint cans stored in the Museum's attic and cellar. We placed them into categories of 'Keep', 'Recycle' and 'Throw Out'. The City provided a dumpster and recycling bins. With many volunteer hands, we saw an amazing transformation of the top and bottom floors of the Museum in just three hours.



Look
out
below!!

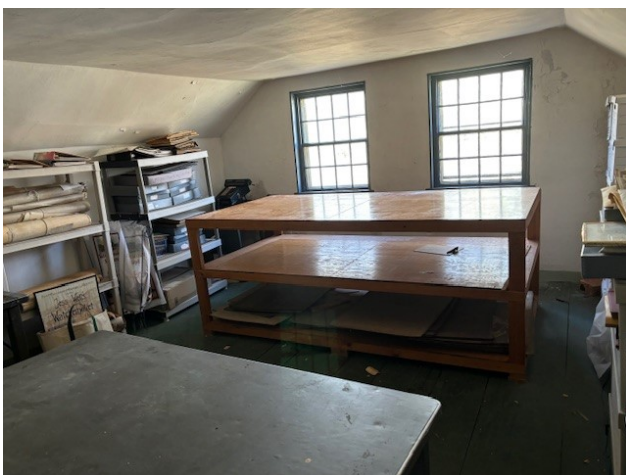


Our cleanout crew



Attic before...

And after



Messy basement...

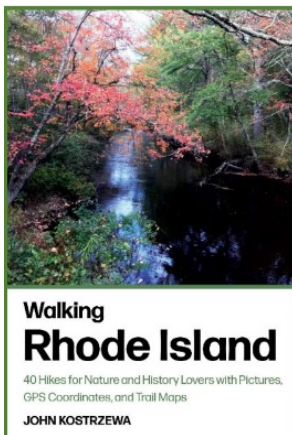
Clean basement



“Men on the Move: Walking Hunt’s and the Local Area” with John Kostrzewa and Ernie Germani

Weaver Library : Monday March 18 - 6:30

There are people who love to explore on foot and a walking staff feels like a natural extension of their arm. We are so fortunate to have Ernie Germani (and others from the 10 Mile River group) with us for each Open House. Ernie also guides walks for the Blackstone Valley Heritage Corridor, which begins at Hunt’s Mills. Several seasons ago, John Kostrzewa, the hiking guru for all RI, did some hikes in our area and reached out to us at Hunt’s. We’ve been looking forward to having John share these walks with us and to introduce his fascinating new book. John has been tromping trails for over three years and has written 120 columns for the Providence Journal, his former employer. He hasn’t run out of paths yet! If you know of one in your backyard, come and tell him about it.



John Kostrzewa worked for 29 years at The Providence Journal and has been hiking across Rhode Island for decades. He retired from the Journal in 2017 and taught at Bryant University for three years. In 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic, he launched “Walking Rhode Island,” a hiking column posted online and published in the Sunday Providence Journal. He has since written about more than 100 trails. Kostrzewa resides in Cranston, Rhode Island with his wife Carol.

Spring Exhibit: “Bits and Pieces”

With the much loved EP High School art show now a fixture for late Spring at the Hunt House gallery, there has appeared a short window of whimsy for the museum crew. That does mean you have only two chances for viewing! Recently, the donation of a Newman Concordance made sense that it should be spotlighted. Were there other very singular treasures hidden away also? What made sense as compliment to the Concordance? What IS a Concordance anyway!

It appears that this exhibit is literally all over the map and there will be something for everyone.

We welcome you to help us open this Spring season.

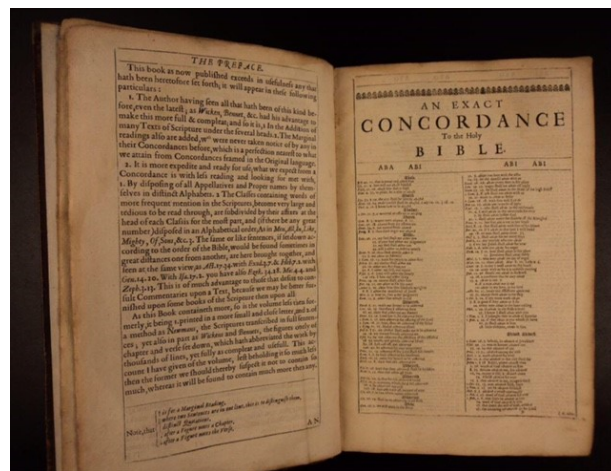
The Concordance: (This short piece has been culled from the Newman stone and from a recent donation of a March 1,1962 article run in the Post by an unknown writer. Mike Rego, now publisher, gives us permission to use it.)

The founding father of East Providence, judging by his accomplishments, was a rugged individual undaunted by hard work or the things most people are afraid of. He was born to wealth in Banebury, England and graduated Trinity College in 1620. His goals: to preach and to write a concordance to the Holy Bible. A concordance is an alphabetical index of the words of a book, and a work needing much focus. Young Rev. Newman was a Puritan, not a comfortable stance in the England of that day and he moved seven times looking for a secure home parish.

Just before Newman came to America in 1635, his Concordance was published and he became rather famous for it. In the New World, he preached in Dorchester and Weymouth, finally leading his flock to the Indian lands of Seeconke in 1643. (Ed note: was it important that Roger Williams was right across the river?) Newman’s band carved the town of Rehoboth (Hebrew meaning open space) from the forests and built the first meetinghouse in 1646. In his spare time he rewrote his Concordance! Three editions of the book were issued before his death. After his death on June 6,1663, further editions bore the title of “Cambridge Concordance.”



Ernie leading some happy hikers.



The Newman Concordance



The Newman monument, in Newman Cemetery, in front of Newman Church on Newman Avenue.

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: _____

PayPal

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.

EP Historical Society Annual Fund

Thank you to those who gave to our 2022 Annual Fund. Your generous gifts were used to help meet our goals in the 2023 calendar year. Thank you to those who are considering a donation this year!

Below is a list of what your gift will support in calendar year 2024.

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.
- Provide monthly educational programs for adults and children.

Endowment Goals

- Continue to build our Endowment
- Annual draw to offset costs
- Endowment gifts matched 2:1 for the first \$2,000

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 2024 calendar year.

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

Angel Cabral

Cheryl and Jeff Faria

Hugh Kiley

Dotty Thornley

Lois Williams

Crescent Park: \$500-\$999

Hugh Kiley

Nancy and Dan Moore

Vanity Fair Park: \$200-\$499

Nancy Allen

Jacqueline and Lee Ashcraft

Richard Bushnell

and Paula Perkins

David Czerwonka

Margaret Dooley

Darryl Harden

Hugh Kiley

Jack and Kathy Richer

Carole DiFabio

and William Litchman

Elizabeth Ingraham

Boyden Heights Park: \$100-\$199

Peter G. and Sandra M. Barilla

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Vickie and Pete Barnum

James Boyd, Jr.

Malinda and Ivan Colon

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Gordon R.

& Wendy L. Wood-Hubbard

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Nancy McBride

Kathryn McGovern

Pat Paulson McGrail

Tracey and Todd Moline

John and Elaine Puhacz

Michael and Norma Reynolds

Edward Serowick

Bonney B. Sevellon

Friends: \$25-\$99

Priscilla J. Angelo

and John Eng-Wong

Sandra Barber

Meredith A.

and Alison A. Bowden

Community & Teachers Federal

Credit Union

Ruth V. McCarthy

and William Mitchell

Frederick Radway

Margarita and Mark Saunders

Candy Seel

Lois Thompson

Charlene Underhill

Tom Warzeka

Gary and Jean Zunda

Deb Ormerod

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. 401-418-8682 cherylafaria@verizon.net

Gardening tips from Jeff Faria

URI Master Gardener

Show your house plants some love and pinch them back to encourage new growth as the days grow longer. Maybe add some fresh soil or even repot in a new pot no bigger than 2 inches larger than its current pot.

Pruning fruit bushes, now will get better production during the spring season! Focus on crossing branches, and any that are damaged!

Fill houseplant watering containers a day prior to use so the water temperature becomes less of a shock to your plants. This will also allow any chlorine to dissipate! Use a sterile seed germination mix to avoid issues like damp off disease which kills young seedlings.

Think about your garden design and plan to add some new showpiece to a visual spot, which is lacking sparkle! Maybe it's time to move a showstopper who's been hiding in the back and put it out where all can see it!

Community Garden Seed Sorting Session

On February 15th, the Master Gardener Seed Starters had their first session to support the Community Gardens. Led by Ann Fletcher and Jackie Allen, the group sorted hundreds of seeds in preparation of the 2024 growing season.



Master Gardeners in action



John Hunt House

East Providence Historical Society
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