



Gazette

Volume XXXVI No. 7

Summer 2024

Upcoming dates -

Summer Open Houses

1:00 - 3:30 pm

July 14, August 11

Hikes at Hunt's Gazebo

1:30 pm

"Roots" at the Education Center

1:00 - 3:00 pm

Exhibit

The Past Can Guide the Future

The Onna Moniz-John Collection

**Opening Reception:
August 11 at 1:30pm**

The Mayor's Council on Indigineous Affairs is presenting an intertribal Pow Wow on July 14 from 12-5 at Pierce Field.

East Providence Historical Society

P.O. Box 4774

East Providence, RI 02916-4774

Tel. (401) 473-0677

Email info@ephist.org

Web Site www.ephist.org

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

by Cheryl Faria and Jeff Faria, Co-Presidents

Welcome to Summer! Here are some of the highlights of

John Hunt House Museum Open House

We had great turnout for our Open House on Sunday, May 12th. Many people took advantage of the docent-guided tour of the Museum. The hike of the grounds, led by Ernie Germani, was decorated with teddy bears along the paths. For both May and June, our special exhibit displayed the artistic talent of East Providence High School students. Their paintings, some of which are for sale, are based on the theme: "Historical Architectural Landscapes and the Wildlife that Surrounds Them."

Outside the Museum tables full of plants were offered to visitors for a small donation. Our sponsors HomeSmart and Washington Trust were in the Gazebo giving away drinks, treats and popcorn!



Johanna Quatrucci, Mayor DaSilva, Jeff Faria,

Nancy Moore, Cheryl Faria

Is published by the East Providence Historical Society

Eight times a year

OFFICERS

Cheryl Faria/Jeff Faria	Co-presidents
Deborah Ormerod	1 st Vice President
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Eric Underhill	Recording Secretary
Sandi Barber	Corresponding Secretary

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Cheryl Faria	Finance
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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

Attention Annual Dues Members

Time to Renew

We are grateful for your support this past year (July 31, 2023-2024). Bills will be mailed out to those of you whose membership expires July 31, 2024. We rely on membership dues to help us fund projects and programs. We hope you will continue to be part of the EPHS community by renewing your membership.

Carole DiFabio, Chair, Membership Committee

Among your membership benefits you get:

- this monthly newsletter mailed to you
- 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

A Day in the Life of a Child in 1751

In 2019, we had developed and piloted an interactive program for 3rd and 4th grade students at the John Hunt House Museum. COVID forced us to discontinue it. We are pleased to report that this program has resumed. Over the course of three visits this school year, 100 students from the Alice M. Waddington School and Kent Heights Elementary School took a field trip to the Hunt's Mills site. They experienced what daily life was like in the 1750's in the Museum with interactive demonstrations, participated in hands-on activities of a one-room schoolhouse, played colonial games, and walked through the grounds and historic gardens.

If you know of an East Providence school that might be interested in participating in this program in 2025, please let Sandra Turgeon know at info@ephist.org.



Sandra Turgeon greets the children



Nancy Allen in the one-room schoolhouse



Kara Evans explains carding



Games on the lawn



Tangled up in hoops!!



Brian Turgeon leads the hikers

“The Past Can Guide the Future” with Onna Moniz-John
 A life’s commitment to collecting artifacts of the past and present.
 Opening Reception - August 11th 1:30pm

“I never had a Black doll. None of my friends or relatives had Black dolls either,” said Onna Moniz-John as we sat at her dining room table. An uncle gifted her with a 6” high Ruby Bridges doll and Onna’s passion for collecting her Black heritage was kindled. By the time she met Ruby and they were photographed together, the flame had burst open, the search consuming Saturdays and vacations. What is now the best Black memorabilia collection in RI and beyond the State’s borders will be on display July through December at the Hunt House/ Education Center. From a simple set of salt and pepper shakers to slave shackles and authentic posters and newsprint of seminal events in Black history, Onna has recognized the power of these images to spark conversation. Whether you are interested in our local Black history or in a more national focus, she will want to talk with you!

For 29 years, Onna was the Affirmative Action Officer for East Providence, working to ensure fair hiring and equal opportunity for underserved groups in the City. She comes from a family of dynamic women and has welcomed all to her big historic home with its wrap-around porch on Anthony Street.

Onna and her inspiration,
 Ruby Bridges



A very special doll

The EPHS now welcomes Onna and her family to Hunt’s Mills with an opening reception on August 11. Please join us!



Of special note in the Education Center: In WWII, a number of East Providence Black families sent their sons to the South Pacific to fight the Japanese. In honor of their sacrifices, RI established Victory Over Japan Day. We now know it as Victory Day and it occurs this August 12th. In remembrance of V-Day and of D-Day’s 80th anniversary, a special Moniz - John exhibit will include the history of the Revolutionary War 1st RI Regiment, East Providence Black men and women who served in WWII and the Vietnam War, plus the local history of the Tuskegee Airmen. This exhibit includes videos and taped interviews. Come and share your stories.



Love at the Indoor Court

On June 3rd, Tom Brun gave a re-match presentation at the Weaver Library about the 1914 Indoor Tennis Court. His original date co-incident with the closing of the bridge on Dec. 11 2023 and many people asked for a replay. The court was built by a woman, Lyra Brown Nickerson, and is the longest continuously in-use public single court in the nation. Preceding the talk was a well-attended open house at the 60x100' structure on Blandin Avenue. People in the area were pleased to be able to tour "the Barn." There have been many famous names associated with this court in the past 100 years: Bill Tilden, Arthur Ashe, Malcom Chace, Arnold Jones to name a few. Our thanks to Tom for his restoration work and his research.



Thrive Grant

We were fortunate to be one of 18 non-profits chosen to receive a \$5,000 THRIVE grant from the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities. THRIVE provides "funding for small cultural heritage organizations and local historical and preservation societies that support and strengthen Rhode Island's many diverse, dynamic communities." Our plans for the funding are to modify the Education Center to be an extension of our museum exhibits; upgrade our database computer and software; and utilize a laptop computer and a wearable camera to livestream the contents of the museum from the handicap accessible Education Center.

(Editors note: the person chosen to speak on behalf of the funded organizations was our very own Cheryl Faria!)



An honor it was for Cheryl to be chosen to speak!!



Senator Britto with the Farias

Hunt's Mills Weir Report - Army Corps of Engineers

The Army Corps of Engineers has listened to comments from the EPHS and RIHPHC concerning the look of the weir to be built this fall at Herring Rock in the 10 Mile River just below the dam. You may remember that the blue herring cannot jump the 2' leap from the rock to access the fish ladder at Hunt's. Some make their way through clefts in the rocks but the ACE has determined that a weir system of gradually lifting the fish to the upper level is the way to go. Section 106 review revealed a cement weir which appeared to be above the water line at all times. EPHS countered with a request for colored cement which duplicates the rocks in the river there, a rock-like pattern imprint on the cement and a construction level that would be below the water-line.

The latest plan from the ACE gives us colored, imprinted cement and a projection level that will be below the water line for 9 months of the year, showing only during the traditional 3 month low water time in the fall. Thank you ACE!

Hunt's Mills Community Gardens

On Saturday, May 11th, we gave away plants to the 26 gardening groups. Our volunteer group of Seed Starters has grown over 6,000 plants in the Garden Center to give away to the gardeners and to members of the community. On Saturday, May 25, we marched in the Seekonk Memorial Day Parade and gave away over 1,000 plants!



The Curious Curator Asks: WPA Walls? : Member Input, Please!

East Providence WPA projects included Pierce Field, the main Post Office, the Turner Reservoir, and "miles and miles of sidewalks." One of those works (1935-37) is the massive granite block wall on the east side of South Broadway just north of Martin Avenue. Thus far, research has not turned up this wall as a work by itself. Could it be that a small part of those "miles of sidewalks" necessitated a retaining wall which turned out to be the more interesting feature? Did anyone watch this wall being built?

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

Laurie & Bill McWeeney

Crescent Park: \$500-\$999

Hugh Kiley

Nancy and Dan Moore

Jack and Kathy Richer

Vanity Fair Park: \$200-\$499

Nancy Allen

Jacqueline and Lee Ashcraft

Richard Bushnell
and Paula Perkins

David Czerwonka

Margaret Dooley

Darryl Hardern

Hugh Kiley

Carole DiFabio

and William Litchman

Elizabeth Ingraham

Boyden Heights Park: \$100-\$199

Peter G. and Sandra M. Barilla

Barbara Barnes & Beverly Pettine

Vickie and Pete Barnum

James Boyd, Jr.

Malinda and Ivan Colon

Romeo G. DaSilva

Gordon R.

& Wendy L. Wood-Hubbard

Kevin Zona

Pam and Paul Goulet

Charlene Underhill

Bonney B. Sevellon

Friends: \$25-\$99

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and John Eng-Wong

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and Alison A. Bowden

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Tracey and Todd Moline

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Michael and Norma Reynolds

Edward Serowick

Paul Barnum

Gil Fletcher

Gilmore's Flower Shop

Frederick Radway

Margarita and Mark Saunders

Candy Seel

Lois Thompson

Tom Warzeka

Gary and Jean Zunda

Henry and Christina Skillern

Chris Beattie

Gardening tips from Jeff Faria

URI Master Gardener

Intersperse blooming annual flowers with your short blooming perennials for a season of color.

Lightly fertilize tomatoes, and other long seasoned crops every 3 to 4 weeks. Staking will help reduce disease, but remove lower leaves when they become infected and discard them.

Male squash and pumpkin flowers make delicious stuffed fried blossoms. They often preceded the female flower, which has the unfertilized bulb along its stem.

Attract beneficial insects with pollinator plants like marigold, bee balm, and Queen Anne's lace.

To help eliminate powdery mildew on the leaves of plants, use a solution of 4 tablespoons baking soda, 2 tablespoons Murphy's oil soap, or dish soap and mix with 1 gallon of water. Evenly coat the affected plant leaves and its under side.

Wine and Weeding!

Our second Wine and Weeding session was Tuesday, May 7th, from 4-7. As the name implies, a group of volunteers weed and spruce up the period gardens surrounding the Museum from 4-6, followed by a pot luck dinner from 6-7. New gardeners are always welcome, so consider joining us.

For more information, contact Cheryl at

cherylafaria@verizon.net

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



John Hunt House

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

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East Providence Historical
Society.



William Francis
Financial Advisor
1275 Wampanoag Trl Ste 12
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401-674-1237



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