

Johnston Historical Society

Historical Notes

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Christopher Martin, Editor Louis McGowan, Assistant

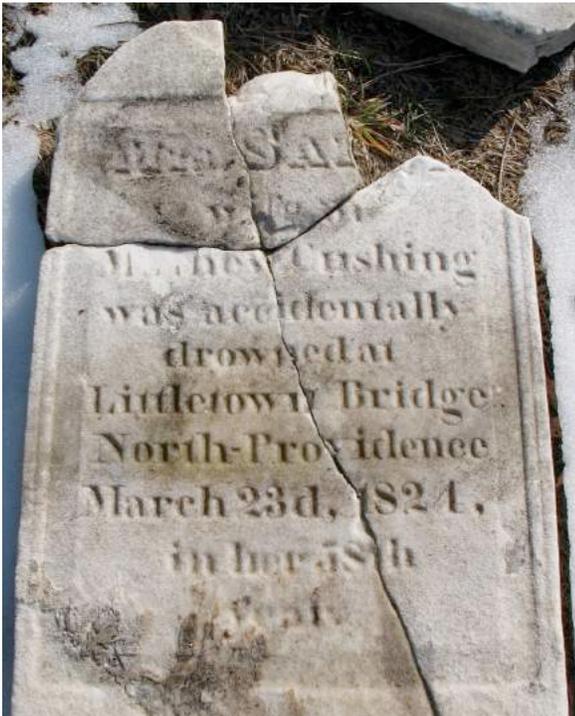
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What's in a name? -- A Bridge

by Steve Merolla

A particular gravestone in the Manton Cemetery (Johnston Historical Cemetery #18) carries an intriguing epitaph: "Sarah Cushing wife of Mathew Cushing... accidentally drowned at Littletown Bridge, North Providence." Where was Littletown Bridge, and what was the derivation of the name? Since the Town of North Providence was mentioned, Tom Greene had to be contacted, he being their Town Historian. Both of us agreed that the location of this bridge was in fact basically where the present-day bridge carries traffic over the Woonasquatucket River, at the Johnston/Providence line, as lower Greenville Avenue ends and the other side of the bridge becomes Manton Avenue. Tom Greene stated that the area on the east side of the river was once part of North Providence, and that this particular section of town was at one time referred to as "Littletown." However, he did not know the derivation of the name. Having come across this name before, I checked Johnston Town Council records.



Sarah Cushing's stone at Johnston Historical Cemetery #18.
Photo by Christopher Martin.

A useful research tool is to study the town Highway Districts, which are detailed in the Council records. Basically, residents of a given area were assigned to maintain the roads where they resided; the Council entries described the area covered and the people assigned to maintain the roads in that particular area. Though there was probably a bridge over the Woonasquatucket River from the earliest days of the colony, the first official note I found in the Johnston records comes from a Town Council of October 7, 1768: "Jeriah Hawkins District of Highway to begin at a rock at Belknap's Upper Dam so far as to take half the bridge by Edward Tripp's House..." The area described was present-day Greenville Avenue where Pine Hill Road meets it, then all the way down to lower Greenville Avenue, where it meets the bridge over the river, quite a distance. The naming of Edward Tripp's house is important, for the Tripp family owned land and lived on both sides of the river in this general area, and did so from early days. Richard M. Bayles in his seminal work "History of Providence County" (1890-1), states that a John Tripp located to the Johnston side of the village from Cranston as early as 1700. The Town Council of July 25, 1772, is notable because it puts a name to the locale where the bridge over the Woonasquatucket River was located: "Resolved that Daniel Manton's District of Highway begin at a Chestnut stump near the lower end of Richard Clemence's wall and to extend to the River at Tripptown, taking in half the bridge at said River..." Thus, at least by the 1770s this area of town was known as "Tripptown." At this point, however, as far as Johnston records go, there was no particular name for the bridge; several other Town Council meetings just refer to the "bridge." However, in the Town Council of August 17, 1782, there is the following entry: "Resolved that Richard Thornton's District of Highway begin at Nehemiah Sheldon's house and to extend northerly on Killingly Road as far as the fork in the road that leads to Tripp Bridge..." The section of roadway described here refers to Killingly Street as it meets Greenville Avenue. Thus at this time the bridge is referred to as "Tripp's Bridge," and rightfully so, as previously mentioned because of the presence of the Tripp family in this locale. However, just four years later the bridge carries a new name. The Town Council of August 12, 1786, has two references to "Littleton Bridge": "Resolved that Richard Thornton's District of Highway begin at Nehemiah Sheldon's house and extend northward on Killingly Road as far as the fork in the road that leads to Duelton Bridge..."; also: "Resolved that Esek Olney's District of Highway begin at a Chestnut stump near the lower end of the wall of Richard Clemence deceased, and to extend down the road to Littleton Bridge, taking in the half thereof..." The bridge is referred to by this name for many years, but in the Town Council of June 30, 1801, there is reference to "Tripptown Bridge."

However, the Town Council of May 19, 1810, describes Edward Manton's District of Highway as including "little Town Bridge (so-called)..." And so it went on. There were references to Littleton (or Littletown) Bridge in the years 1813, 1819, and 1826. Then again, the name Tripptown bridge is used at least in the years 1825, 1830, and as late as 1850. This indicates one of the perils of carrying out research in the old records, whether it involves Town Council, Town Meeting, or even deed records: the recording clerks or officials could be quite inconsistent and/or informal in their work. It is obvious that there was no official name for this bridge. The name Tripptown seems to make most sense; I have no idea where the name Littletown or Littleton is derived from. It seems as if the various Town Clerks couldn't make up their minds. Richard M. Bayles in his work states: "Edward and Jeremiah Manton owned considerable property in this vicinity, and the place after the establishment of a post office was changed from Tripp-town to Manton, in honor of that family. The name was changed just before the late war." Considering that Bayles published this work in 1891, the war being referred to must have been the Civil War, meaning that the name change occurred just before 1861.



The bridge over the Woonasquatucket at Manton.
Photo by Christopher Martin.

It is interesting to note that the name of the village was changed from Tripptown to Manton, because the two families were related in some way. A deed executed on March 25, 1755, by Edward Manton refers to his "Cousin John Tripp." The connection is further reinforced by the fact that there are many members of the Tripp family interred in the Manton Cemetery in Johnston. This is quite a large burial ground, and the Tripps have their own section in it. There are four gravestones inscribed with the Tripp name, but nearby are also stones from other families related to the Tripps through marriage, such as the Thirsfields (3 stones), the Angelis (5 stones) and probably also the Cushings (3 stones). Oddly enough, while some deeds indicate that the Thirsfields, Angelis, probably the Cushings, and at least one Tripp resided in North Providence, their final resting place is in Johnston.

Interview with Clara Feeley by Louis McGowan

On April 27, 1984, Bob Burford (former town librarian) and I interviewed Clara Feeley, born about 1900 and a longtime Johnston resident, about the old days in Manton.

In 1984, Clara Feeley lived at #22 Hedley Avenue in the Manton section. Her house, she was told, was moved from the site of the present Providence Public Library. She remembered (or was told) that the Trippside Inn was at the corner of Greenville and Hillside Avenues. It was said to be a stagecoach stop and had a barroom on the first floor. The first house on Hillside Avenue was built on the foundation of a hall, while the long building on Greenville Avenue was formerly Holden's Hall (still standing in 1984), where dances and plays were held. A third hall, just up the road on Manton Avenue in Providence, was Foresters' Hall, which was situated on the site of the first little plaza on the left after you cross the river.

A few blocks ahead in Providence, at the junction of Manton and Chalkstone Avenues, stood Christ Church.

Starting at the river and heading back into Johnston along Greenville Avenue, just ahead on the left was Norton's Bowling Alley. It was torn down about 1910, and the wood from the building was used to construct four identical houses at numbers 28 through 34 Greenville Avenue. Continuing west along Greenville Avenue, not too far past Killingly Street, was the Manton Baptist Church on the right. It is now gone, but Mrs. Feeley remembers going to school there in the back of the building. Directly across the street was the Manton School.

The trolleys ran up Manton Avenue and Greenville Avenue to about the present Our Lady of Grace Church. The car barn was on Greenville Avenue, in back of the Sunoco Gas Station. The New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad also came through Manton and ran 5 or 6 passenger trains a day. The Manton Depot was at the junction of Greenville Avenue and Hillside Avenue.

Miss. Feeley's father was John Joseph Feeley, who was born in 1865 in Manton. He had a Stanley Steamer, one of the two cars in the area in the early days. He was appointed Postmaster of Manton on March 6, 1896. The post office was next to the depot, attached to a store. Feeley later resigned and Rev. Remington, minister at the Christ Church, took over the job. He was the last postmaster in Manton before the carriers started delivering mail. Mr. Feeley was an engineer at the Dyerville Mill and before that worked at the Merino Mill. He invented a drop wire for looms which was used on looms throughout the twentieth century. He sold the device to the Joslin Manufacturing Company. He died in 1917.

Clara Feeley also worked in the mills, being a bookkeeper at the Manton Mill (just across the river in Providence). She started working at the mill at the age of 16.

Miss Feeley told us of a 1920 revolt of taxpayers in town. Some people did not pay taxes for 3 or 4 years. They were said to be the democrats from the east section of the town. The debts were later wiped off the books. This revolt must have been one of the

contributing factors leading to the Republicans being voted out of office in 1934. They had been running the town for many years. The Democrats have pretty much run the town since then.

Oak Swamp Comes Into Being

by Louis McGowan

In Clarence I. Brown's genealogical work on the Brown family in Johnston, we find the following: "The physical geography of Oak Swamp underwent a marked transformation on or about 1831. Thomas M. Brown says the present dam of Oak Swamp Reservoir was commenced that year and that it controls 200 acres and more. Without doubt Thomas Brown sold part of his farm, it being meadow land, to the Spragues under whose supervision the reservoir was constructed."



Almy Reservoir as seen on Google Maps. The straight side is the dam.

At first reading, this interesting passage makes a lot of sense in stating that the Sprague family built the dam at Oak Swamp. Oak Swamp (aka Almy Reservoir) flows into Jillson Reservoir, out of which flows Dry Brook, which forms the smaller reservoirs in Hughesdale, which in turn empty into the Pocasset River. The Pocasset eventually flows into the Pawtuxet River on whose shore sat the Cranston Print Works, the Sprague's very profitable mill complex. Having a large reservoir upstream was a necessary ingredient for a successful textile mill at that time. In the 1870s, the Sprague family owned property on Oak Swamp, on Jillson Reservoir, and they owned the Morgan Mills complex, which is on the Pocasset River, just below where Dry Brook flows into the Pocasset. So, in 1870, they controlled water rights to much of upper Dry Brook and Pocasset River.

Now comes a big "but." Oak Swamp is called Almy Reservoir for a reason. William Almy and Samson Almy bought Morgan Mills in 1822. The mill had been built probably by Benjamin F. Atwood in or before 1814. There would have been a small reservoir at Morgan Mills, but a larger holding reservoir is always desired, so that a constant flow of water is available when dry spells crop up. The area selected for this reservoir was the land on which sits the present Oak Swamp. It seems beyond a reasonable doubt that the Almys built the dam across Dry Brook,

thus forming Oak Swamp. Most of the property around the reservoir, including the reservoir itself, was sold to William and Samson Almy in the 1830s. If they were buying up the property then, it would make sense that they were doing it so that they could build the dam and form the reservoir. The Sprague family did not own large pieces of land in Johnston at what would have been the time of the dam construction. They bought the Morgan Mills estate in 1864 and bought up much land in Johnston protecting their water rights to Dry Brook and the Pocasset River. Oak Swamp Reservoir was long in place by that time. The 1851 Wallings map shows it, labeling it as "Reservoir."

So, in conclusion, Clarence I. Brown did some wonderful research on his family and their doings, but I do not think that the information that came from family history about the Spragues building the dam that created the reservoir at Oak Swamp is correct. It looks like the Almy family built the dam.

Sources:

- 1) Brown, Clarence Irving, Clarence I. Brown Collection; unpublished manuscript on microfilm at the R.I. Historical Society.
- 2) "Plat of Oak Swamp Reservoir, Johnston, R.I."; Frank E. Waterman; 1903, Collection of Johnston Historical Society
- 3) Wallings, Henry F.; 1851 Map of Providence County
- 4) "Johnston Historical Society Historical Notes"; Vol. XIII., #1, March 2007 ("Morgan Mills"); Louis McGowan

What's in a Name? -- "Morgan" Mills

by Louis McGowan

In studying the history of our town and its villages, sometimes we come across a place name which seems to pop up out of nowhere, with no apparent connection to families in the area. This seemed to be the case with Morgan Mills. Where did the Morgan name come from? There were no property owners with that name. The little textile village was called by various names in the past, usually associated with the mill owner(s), e.g., Almy's Mill, the Clay Print Works and Larcher's Print Works. In 1864, William Larcher and Lucy Larcher, his brother John's widow, sold the property to brothers Amasa and William Sprague, who ran the A&W Sprague Co., the large textile manufacturing company, headquartered in Cranston, R.I. On the 1870 Beers map of Johnston, we see the first reference to Morgan Mills. Why did the Sprague brothers use this name for the mill and village?

In our 250th Anniversary Booklet of the town, we state that Amasa Sprague's father-in-law was named Young Morgan. This is true, and, of course, Young's daughter (Amasa's wife), Fanny Morgan, was the mother of brothers Amasa, Jr. and William IV. So, the mill was named in honor of William and Amasa's maternal grandfather, Young Morgan, and their mother, Fanny Morgan Sprague (who also was a partner in the A&W Sprague Co. along with her two sons and her sister-in-law, Harriet, widow of William III. The Sprague family continued to run Morgan Mills until the National Panic of 1873, when the property went under the auction block. The mill passed out of the family, but the Morgan name stuck, and today the village is still known as Morgan Mills.

Triptown Church

From about 1830 to 1860, there was a Baptist congregation in Triptown (now Manton) on the Johnston side of the Woonasquatucket River. From 1830 to 1841, their religious services (meetings) were held in the Triptown Schoolhouse (according to the WPA report from 1941 on the Baptist Church Archives in R.I.). These were meetings of the Baptist group that descended from Samuel Winsor's original Six Principle Baptist congregation that started up in Belknap. In 1842, Josiah King gave land in Manton to the Six Principle Baptist Church on which they could erect a meetinghouse. The new building was dedicated in that same year in the village (it was now called Rockville). The WPA report tells us that meetings were held here in both summer and winter from 1842 to 1853. In 1858, at a meeting at Daniel Sweet's house (in Graniteville probably, since it is known that he lived there), it was decided to sell the meetinghouse. In 1860, the sale was completed. It is presumed that the congregation was now meeting in Graniteville, because the Graniteville Baptist Church, led by Elder Daniel Sweet, was built in 1859.

The history of Samuel Winsor's congregation is complicated, with meetings held in three towns, various villages, as well as in different schools and many different houses. Additionally, there were a number of name changes and affiliations with other larger Baptist groups.

Sources:

- 1) Inventory of the Church Archives of Rhode Island: Baptist, (Providence: R.I. Historical Records Survey, 1941)
- 2) Book of Deeds, #11, pg. 203; #19, pg. 104 (Johnston Town Hall)
- 3) Graniteville Baptist mss. at Graniteville Baptist Church and R.I. Historical Society Library

Thomas H. Hughes of Johnston

Thomas Henry Hughes, the progenitor of this branch of the family in America, embarked for America in 1839 and on arrival first located at Pawtucket where he was employed in the capacity of a printer of cotton and silk goods, in which work he was especially skillful. He possessed an excellent knowledge of the textile industry and was familiar with a number of different branches. In 1849 he removed to Johnston where he founded the village of Hughesdale, and in 1850 established the Hughesdale Dye & Chemical Works. Here were manufactured various dye stuffs, which found a ready market. The industry was successfully conducted until merged into other lines.

Hughesdale, the village founded by Mr. Hughes, has an interesting history which displays the resource, energy and tenacity of purpose of its founder. It is situated in a picturesque location, lying between Pocasset on the north and Thornton on the south, and is destined to better things as the city of Providence continues its growth, as it is admirably situated either for manufacturing sites or as a residence district. James F. Simmons, in the early forties began a bleaching business in this location, and a few years later sold his interests to Thomas H. Hughes and James Walch. Later Mr. Hughes became sole proprietor, and began the manufacture of chemicals for textile purposes. In May, 1868, he suffered great loss by a flood which nearly, or quite, destroyed the entire village, including mills,

plant, homes, etc. Undaunted, however, Mr. Hughes at once set about erecting new buildings and in a short time Hughesdale became a village entirely new and of much greater pretensions. In 1871 the business of Mr. Hughes was organized into a stock company, the same being styled The Hughesdale Manufacturing Company. The stock was closely held, and Mr. Hughes was its president; Mr. T.S. Hughes, treasurer; and Mr. W.H. Hughes, secretary. They conducted a business of about \$100,000 per year, and gave employment to some sixty men.

Mr. Hughes married, in 1846, Mary, daughter of Nathan Smith, a native of England, and one of the first block printers coming to America, and who, like Thomas Henry Hughes, did much to advance this industry during its earliest history in New England. The children born to Mr. and Mrs. Hughes were: William H., who died in Hughesdale; Thomas F., who died in Boston; Theodore S.; Oscar L., who resides in Pawtucket, R.I.; Harold E., who resides in Pittsfield; and Alfred E., who resides in Southbridge, Mass. Mr. Hughes died June 11, 1884, and was buried in Swan Point cemetery, as also was his widow, who survived him till 1902, when she died in Fall River, Massachusetts.

Theodore S. Hughes, son of Thomas Henry Hughes, was born Feb. 10, 1853. He received such educational advantages as were common to the youth of the period. Inheriting a thrifty, progressive industrious spirit at the age of sixteen he became a business man, establishing a general store at Hughesdale. In 1872, when nineteen years of age, he was appointed postmaster of the village. In 1871 he became a factor in his father's business, and in 1878 was elected treasurer of the Hughesdale Manufacturing Company. At the death of his father he succeeded to the business which, in 1892, was consolidated with the Bradford Soap Works, and he has since conducted the enterprise in a manner highly satisfactory. Mr. Hughes is clearly deserving of his success. He began hard work when many another youth was spending his time in amusement. His business training was along difficult and rigorous lines, and he learned thoroughly every detail of whatever enterprise he was identified with, truly beginning at the bottom or most humble position, and rising to the most responsible. Nor have his time and abilities been entirely occupied with his personal advancement. He has served his town in various official capacities, including those of school committeeman and trustee, president of the town council in 1880, member of State Legislature for five years, going in as representative in 1899, and in 1901 as senator. As a citizen Mr. Hughes has always taken a keen interest in the advancement of the town in which his industry has been a prominent factor.

Mr. Hughes was married, in March, 1876, to Miss Rebecca, daughter of Daniel and Sarah E. Yandes, of Indianapolis, Ind., and they have two children, Thomas Yandes and Rebecca. Mrs. Hughes comes from a family that was among the earliest to settle in Indianapolis, and that has been prominent in the business and social circles of that city for many years.

--from "Representative Men and Old Families of Rhode Island"
Chicago: Beers (1908), p. 1243. Transcribed by Beth Hurd.

Note: The Greek Revival style Thomas H. Hughes House, located at 423 Central Avenue, was added to the National Historic Register in 1979.

In Memorium

Joe Silliman

Our society mourns the passing of its long-time member, Riverda "Joe" Silliman. Just shy of his 90th birthday, Mr. Silliman passed away on February 10, 2013. For many years he maintained the grounds of the Kiely Cemetery on Bucklin Street in the Manton section of town. Mr. Silliman attended our meetings for many years with his friend, Larry Pezza. We extend our sympathy to his family.

Warren Lanpher's Father

Our society also mourns the passing of the father of Warren Lanpher, who died in his native Vermont in the last week of February.

Society Doings

2012 Holiday Picnic

On Friday, December 7, 2012, we had our annual holiday party at the home of Phil and Lori Lemoi. It was a great time. The outside of the house and property was beautifully decorated by Phil, and the inside was also beautifully decorated by Phil and Lori. There was a lot of tasty food, much of it homemade by our members. The main meal was nicely prepared by the Lemois and was delicious. There was plenty of good conversation and comradeship, befitting the wonderful surroundings of the Lemoi homestead. A big thank you goes out to Phil and Lori for opening their house to us and hosting a fantastic evening.

Our Properties

Our museum barn is open Monday nights (except holidays), 6:30-8:30pm; and on the third Saturday of each month, 9-11am, for those who would like to visit the museum or examine the society's collection of printed materials. Also, the Belknap School, corner of Atwood and Greenville Avenues, is open 2-4pm the first Saturday of each month, April to October. Both the museum and Elijah Angell House continue to be open by appointment -- we always welcome visits by interested individuals or groups. Just shoot us an email at info@johnstonhistorical.org, or leave a message at (401) 231-3380 to set one up.

Our museum space is also available (on a limited basis) for meetings of small groups of adults at a reasonable price. If you know of a local group or organization that is looking for a meeting space, and might be interested in using our museum, please have them contact us.

Grant Activity

In November of 2012, the Narragansett Bay Commission presented us with a \$2,500 grant to help set up a program at the Belknap School for the town's school children. With the money we will have a number of wooden benches built for the children to sit on while attending programs at the school. Whatever money is left over will be spent on educational packets for the

children to take with them. We do have some period desks and chairs in the building, but many of them are not secured and present a safety hazard if someone sits in them. We decided not to secure them so that the center of the room can be cleared and used for other society functions.

Our thanks go out to our good friend, Mike Salvatore, who helped to get us this grant.

At our January 2013 general meeting, Johnston State Representatives John Carnevale and Falella presented our society with a \$1,000 State House Grant. Part of the grant will be used to buy a decent lawn mower for the cemetery committee and the rest of the money will be used to purchase shelving for our archives.

Cemetery Committee Report

by Pasco Macari

Working in yard #11 (Dame Farm property), we decided at day's end to visit the other two cemeteries on the farm, #48 and #55. Both are Steere yards. #48 is protected with granite posts and iron rails in decent shape, just with high grass. #55 Steere yard is in poor condition; no protection and all the stones are thrown in a pile. This one will be a nightmare to restore.

On November 25 we began our restoration of yard #26, the Young family yard located on Central Avenue. This yard is almost 50 feet by 150 feet and protected on three sides with granite posts and iron rails. The entrance has a well-kept stone wall and stairs. We cleared debris and raked the complete yard today. The next three weeks we repaired stones.

December 2

Reuben A. Keach: reset into base. Phebe A (wife of Reuben): reset into base. Esther A. Young (Chappelle): repaired head stone. Mary A. Hopkins: epoxied top half onto bottom half that was still secured in base. Reset into bases the foot stones of Hiram Hopkins and Chandler N. Young, and repaired foot stones of Thomas Young and Thomas Hopkins.

December 9

Using the tripod we erected head of Joseph N. Young and mortared into base. Erected head of Mary (wife of William) Young and mortared into base; base for her foot stone is on site but foot stone was not found. Erected head of Lydia A. (wife of Charles S.) Potter. Note: this stone is granite and placed on double base; no foot stones found; there may not have been a foot stone with a granite head.

December 16

Because of rain and cold weather during the early part of last week we discovered some of our mortared repairs did not cure correctly. In addition to these repeat repairs, we were able to do the following repair work:

Erected head and base of Mary (wife of Hiram) Hopkins, also filled a void (left middle) with cement. Mortared head of George (son of Robert and Hildah) Young into brown stone base. We chiseled out base of Robert Young and mortared head into base.

We also chiseled out the keyway and epoxied right lower piece onto head of Hannah (wife of Nathaniel) Taylor. Nathaniel Taylor -- his head stone base needs to be chiseled out before we can erect it. Herbert Luther -- mortared head into marble base (head is marble and very worn); foot stone on site and very good condition.

The cold weather has put an end to our repair work for now. We will return in the Spring. We also plan on meeting a member of the Young family that maintains the yard and still uses it as the family burial ground. Gail Young Murray left us a note thanking us for our work in her family cemetery. I called her and she was so grateful and loos forward to meeting the committee.

We lost the next four weeks to snow and cold but were able to get out again on January 20, 2013. All we could do in this type of weather would be cleaning debris and raking. We worked in yard #41, Welcome Sprague, located on Peck Hill Road. This yard is protected on all sides by a stone wall in good shape. We found six burials; James Arnold in the 1890s found seven.

March 3

Yard #66, Colonel John Waterman, located off Plainfield Pike, opposite Comstock Parkway. This yard is unprotected, has about 15 burials, mostly slate with several rude burials. We cleaned and raked the complete yard. Everett cut several trees. We adjusted some of the slate stones as they were leaning. There has been some vandalism of slate stones but we will attempt to repair.

March 10

Another visit to yard #18, Manton cemetery, to continue where we left off last year. This has been the most difficult yard to date to restore.

Although we lost several weeks this season to snow and cold we did move forward in our goal to restore Johnston 's Historical Cemeteries.

The Cemetery Committee is Time Kee, Anthony Ursillo, Bill Rotondo, Doug Stephens, Everett Cogswell, Shar DiMao, Elise Carlson, Anthony Ricci, Steve Merolla and Pasco Macari.

Speakers

At our January 30, 2013 general meeting, our guest speakers were society members Christopher Martin and Kim Calcagno. They entertained us with a slide presentation, showing us scenes from their recent vacation to Maine and the Maritime Provinces. There were many beautiful coastal shots, kitschy views of things like the world's biggest lobster and Babe, Paul Bunyan's ox, and a grouping of photos of the fabulous restoration of Louisbourg, the eighteenth century fort and town built by the French in Cape Breton. It was a fun show and was enjoyed by all.

For our February 2013 meeting, society member and prolific author Ray Wolf educated us on some of the sights of the villages of the Pawtuxet Valley. It was a nice presentation, and it you missed it, all the views can be seen in his latest book from Arcadia Publishing, *Pawtuxet Valley Villages*.

Acquisitions

- Bel McGowan donated a covered, pewter tankard (modern).
- Steve Merolla donated two matchbook covers (Corsetti's Driving Range and the 1025 Club) and a Johnston Fire Department patch.
- Dan Meunier donated a beautiful, vintage iron gate and an old oak desk chair.
- Mayor Joseph Polisena donated an early nineteenth century broadside that urged people to vote for Hiram Kimball for Town Sargeant.
- Ray Jobin donated a complete run of Rhode Island Yearbooks.

In January, we received a donation of items from the Atkinson family in Graniteville. The material belonged to Alan Atkinson, long-time member of the Graniteville Fire Station. The collection includes: a few paper items, his leather helmet shield, photographs, a large jacket patch and many of his wallet membership cards. We thank his wife, Joann, for this important donation.

In February, the family of George Sutcliffe, decorated WWII war hero, donated a number of George's items to us. George, who grew up in Graniteville, passed away recently. He served in England as a P-47 fighter pilot, flying many missions and earning numerous decorations, including the Silver Star. The items given to us include: two of his uniform jackets (with rank and unit insignia and his ribbons), his lifetime VFW cap, a framed photo of him in his flight suit next to his plane, his fighter unit history book (with numerous references to George), the booklet from the Rhode Island Aviation Hall of Fame when he was inducted, three posters showing ribbons and fighter plane views in action (one showing his plane) and parts of his flight suit (including his leather gloves and helmet, his oxygen mask and his goggles).

We thank his wife and son for their generous donation to our museum. We plan to set up a special display with the items.

Many of these objects may be seen in the Acquisitions photo album on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/johnstonhistorical). As always, our sincere thanks to all who have donated items for our collections. Keep it coming!

Wish List

Following are a number of items we could make good use of:

- Display mannequins
- Any Johnston-related memorabilia

Upcoming Events

April 13, 2013

The 4th Great Johnston Scavenger Hunt
9am-5pm

Elijah Angell House, 101 Putnam Pike. Think you know Johnston well? Test your knowledge against that of other teams and individuals in the fourth annual town-wide scavenger hunt! Teams will scour the town to locate and complete a series of tasks. At the end of the day, a point system will determine which team reigns supreme! Prizes will be awarded and refreshments will be served. \$8 donation per team, payable on day of the event. Rain date: April 14.

April 20, 2013

Clean Day on the Greenway

10am-3pm

Meet near Scrambler's Restaurant, 2 Greenville Avenue. Clean Day on the Greenway, now in its eleventh year, brings over 300 volunteers together to clean and beautify the Woonasquatucket River and the Fred Lippitt Woonasquatucket River Greenway Bike Path from the Providence Place Mall into Johnston. A team from the Johnston Historical Society will be taking part. Typical activities include weeding and mulching tree wells and plant beds, touching up paint on benches, signs and fences, pulling debris from in and near the river, and more! Call (401) 861-9046, email ablevins@wrwc.org, or visit the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council <www.wrwc.org> website for more information or to register.

April 24, 2013

General Meeting

7pm

Richard Dragon, author of a compelling history of Rhode Island license plates since 1904 entitled "Registered in R.I.," will be talking to us about --- what else? -- Rhode Island license plates.

April 27, 2013

Tree Planting Ceremony

10am

Belknap School, 509 Greenville Avenue. The Apple Blossom Garden Club has donated a sugar maple for Belknap School. Join us for an Earth Day planting ceremony. Local Boy Scouts will be on hand to do the honors. Elise Carlson, chairperson.

May 4, 2012

JHS Yard Cleanup Day

9am-11am

Many hands make light work, so they say. Please lend your hands and help spruce up the yard around the Elijah Angell House and our museum barn.

May 29, 2013

General Meeting

7pm

Louis McGowan will give a slide presentation entitled "A Look at Johnston through Postcards."

June 26, 2013

General Meeting

7pm

Arthur Iannelli will give a presentation on prehistoric artifacts found in the Johnston area. His collection of such artifacts --

arrow heads, axe heads, stone scrapers, etc. -- has been on display in our museum barn for several years.

September or October

Big Ol' Fundraiser

Details pending

Unless otherwise noted, all events take place at the Johnston Historical Society Museum Barn, 101 Putnam Pike, Johnston, and are free and open to the public.

Note: Our museum barn is open Monday nights (except holidays), 6:30-8:30pm; and on the third Saturday of each month, 9-11am, for those who would like to visit the museum or examine the society's collection of printed materials. Also, the Belknap School, corner of Atwood and Greenville Avenues, is open 9-11am the first Saturday of each month, April to October.

Do you have a suggestion for a future speaker? Or do you yourself have a topic you'd like to present at one of our meetings? Please drop us a line at info@johnstonhistorical.org or leave a message at (401) 231-3380.



As of this month our Facebook page has 159 followers! Have you 'liked' us yet? To find us type this address into your computer browser:

www.facebook.com/johnstonhistorical

Contribute To Our Newsletter!

We are always looking for articles for our newsletter. Naturally, we would like pieces that have to do with the town's history, but if you have an interest that ties in with history somehow, why not share it with us? Maybe you collect old snuffboxes or old railroad material. Maybe you have done some of your family history that others might be interested in. Maybe you would like to talk about the old days in Johnston. Wouldn't it be fun to share your knowledge! You do not have to be a great writer to put together an article. None of us are great literary figures. If you need help though, one of us would be glad to assist you.

We think that it will make for a much better newsletter if others contribute pieces that they have written. Remember, your reminiscences about the old days in Johnston will become valuable pieces of our town's history. But if you do not get them down on paper, they will be lost forever. We should make sure that future generations know what went on in times past.

Next newsletter deadline: July 15, 2013.

Our Executive Board

President: Louis McGowan
Vice-President: Dan Brown
Treasurer: Joe Jamroz
Recording Secretary: Elise Carlson
Corresponding Secretary: Christopher Martin
Trustees: Belmira McGowan, Rolf Johnson, Doug Stephens and Anthony Ursillo.

Our Executive Board meets at 7pm in the Museum building, 101 Putnam Pike, on the second to the last Wednesday of each month, September through June (except December). All are welcome to attend.

General Meetings are held at 7pm the last Wednesday of each month, September through June (no December meeting. We hold our Holiday Party that month). The meetings are held in the Museum Barn.

Phone: (401) 231-3380
Website: www.JohnstonHistorical.org
Email: Info@JohnstonHistorical.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/johnstonhistorical

Annual Dues

Have you paid your 2013 dues yet? Your dues help us to operate. The price of a single membership is only \$15; a family membership is only \$20. Wotta bargain! So once more, please pay your 2013 dues. Send us a check today!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Renewal Single (\$15) _____
Family (\$20) _____

New Single (\$15) _____
Family (\$20) _____

Don't forget -- your donations to the Johnston Historical Society can be deducted from your taxes. We are registered with the Federal Government as a non-profit organization.

**JOHNSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
101 PUTNAM PIKE
JOHNSTON, RHODE ISLAND 02919**