

Johnston Historical Society

Historical Notes

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Christopher Martin, Editor Louis McGowan, Assistant
www.JohnstonHistorical.org

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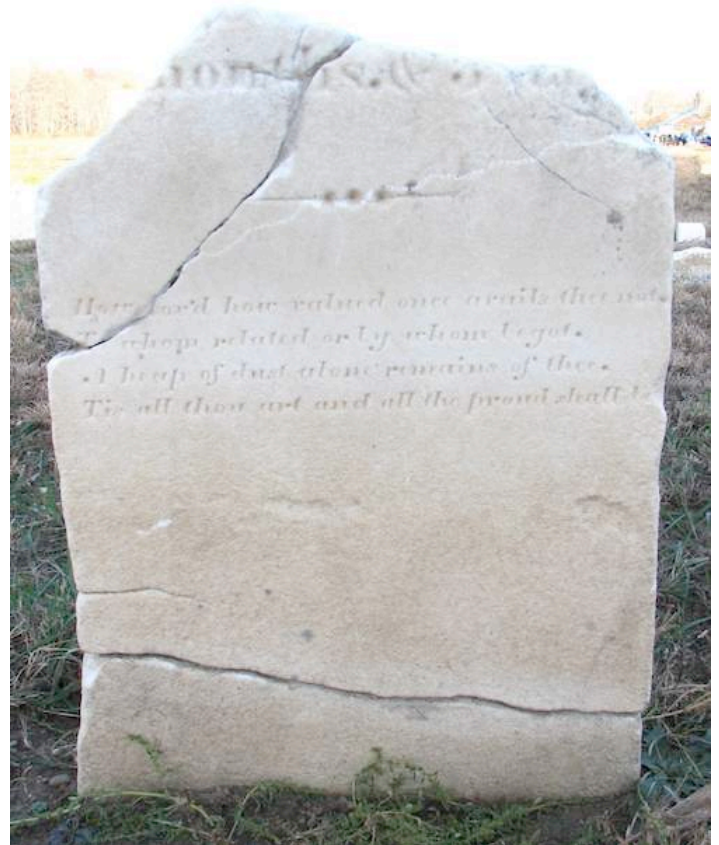
An Unfortunate Lady by Steve Merolla

This past summer, the Cemetery Committee tackled a big project, Cemetery #43, located on the Salisbury Farm, at the confluence of Peck Hill Road and Plainfield Pike. Work began at the end of May and concluded in the middle of August, with a couple of diversions to other cemeteries to perform clean-ups. We made a total of about thirteen visits to #43. This burial ground had been a real mess for many years, much overgrown and with many broken stones. Thankfully, the Salisburys cleaned the overgrowth and requested we restore the lot.

This cemetery was originally the resting place of the Richard Fenner family; he was born around 1718 and died here in 1799; deed records reveal that he originally purchased the property in the 1740s. While this was originally and primarily a Fenner burying ground, other families from the surrounding area were later interred here. Also present were the remains of Revolutionary War hero Colonel Israel Angell (removed to North Burial Ground), along with members of the Kent, Whittaker, and Greene clans.

After a stone search using the inventory of nineteenth century researcher James N. Arnold (he recorded here May 24, 1891), we found a good many of the grave markers. Arnold had noted the burials of eight members of the Greene family. One marker was just the very lower portion of a large marble headstone. From its location and Arnold's records, we determined this remnant was of a member of the Greene family, and probably the only adult member of them buried here, Abby Ann Greene, wife of Henry Greene. Because so little of the stone remained, all we could read was a small part of the epitaph, which Elise and Eric Carlson then Googled. They discovered that the whole verse was in fact called "Elegy of an Unfortunate Lady," written by Alexander Pope. With this information we re-checked Arnold's records and confirmed that it matched Abby Ann's epitaph. According to Arnold, her gravestone stated that she was the eldest daughter of Hardin Steere, born on November 17, 1818 and passing on June 20, 1843. Her grandfather was Samuel Steere, who along with wife Mary are buried in Cemetery #55 on the old Dame farm off Brown Avenue. Genealogy records at the Rhode Island Historical Society note that she married Henry Greene of Pawtucket on November 11, 1838, also giving a death date of June 6, 1843. A discrepancy is that here her birth date is given as September 28, 1817. Buried just to the north of Abby Ann were seven of her young children: Henry Clay died August 28, 1840, a little over a year old; Harriet Amelia Victoria died September 25,

1841, at a little over seven months; an infant son, who probably died at birth on June 19, 1843; Georgianna died February 26, 1846, at only about two months; an infant daughter, who was born and died on October 20, 1848; Lydia Frances died just short of three years, but no death date was recorded; and finally, Henry 2nd died on April 13, 1852, at eleven months and seven days. This rather sad and depressing sequence of infant deaths was in the Arnold records, but we could not locate any of the gravestones and assumed the family remains may have been removed elsewhere. However, Doug Stephens and new member Nick Sprague finally discovered some of the markers buried about two feet deep in small piles.



The repaired remnant of Abby Ann Greene's head stone. Photo by Christopher Martin.

When studying the Arnold transcript, some of our group noticed a glaring anomaly -- Abby Ann Greene's stated date of death (June 20, 1843) was several years earlier than the birth dates of some of her children. In our experience, Arnold's records are 99% accurate, thus a transcription error with him is quite rare.

Another point is that the record chiseled into the stone added up: someone who died twenty-five years and seven months after an 1818 birth indeed would have died in 1843. Possibly the stone carver made an error or was given faulty information. Neither of these explanations seem to make any sense and it must be remembered that we can't check Arnold's work because most of the gravestone is missing. I suspect that the death stated in the genealogy was taken from the gravestone record. In any case, other means had to be used in order to discover if Abby Ann Greene did indeed die after 1843, and two ways to do that were through the deed and census records.

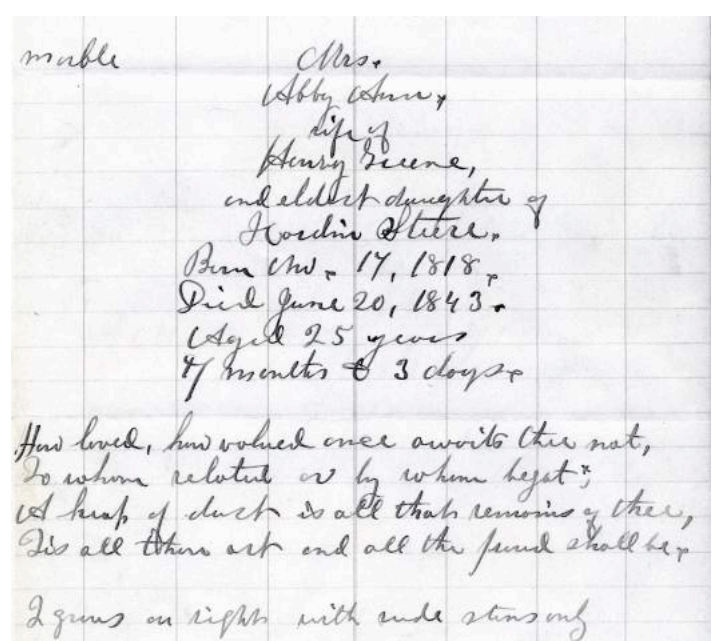


Gravestones of the Greene children, some marked only by marble scraps. Photo by Christopher Martin.

On February 7, 1839, Hardin Steere, father of Abby Ann, sold to Henry Greene of Cranston (for \$1,750): "The undivided 1/2 part of the real estate where I now live... 42 acres of land with all the buildings... and is known as the Isaac Fiske place..." (Johnston Deeds 11/17). Henry and Abby Ann Greene would eventually gain full ownership of the forty or so acres and this would become their homestead farm. Their house still stands today at the northwestern corner of Plainfield Pike and Peck Hill Road. Making use of this location along a main roadway, Henry Greene transformed the house into a tavern. The 1851 Walling map indicates a tavern here. When Henry Greene mortgaged his farm on September 24, 1855 (J 16/345), the deed reads in part: "One certain farm... and is known as the Henry Greene Tavern Stand..." As to the main point of the story, in four separate deeds (J 16/57, 79, 263, 301, and 401), spanning the years 1854 to 1856, Abby Ann Greene co-signed deeds with her husband Henry, of course meaning that she could not have died in 1843. She also co-signed two deeds from Scituate; January 23, 1855 (Scituate Deeds 22/431) and August 6, 1857 (Sc 22/484), one of these being part of the old Fiske farm just over the town line. She co-signed the deed of February 26, 1856 (J 16/401), in which she and Henry sold the farm to Squire William Salisbury of Cranston for \$2,800. The farm now consisted of twenty-five acres on the north side of Plainfield Pike on the west side of Peck Hill Road and another seven acres on the south side of the Pike west of Pippin Orchard Road. The fact that the Greens had mortgaged their farm so many times (six) may indicate that they were experiencing some financial difficulties.

Another means to track Abby Ann's life is through census records. In the 1850 Federal Census they are listed as family #56 in house #53 in Johnston. The neighbors listed around them confirm the location as stated in this story. Listed as living in the house are Henry, age 44 (b. 1806); Abby Ann, age 27 (b. 1823); Arthur, age 8 (b. 1842); Caroline, age 4 (b. 1846); and Sophia L., age 1 (b. 1849). There are also three non-family members who

were residing in the tavern, probably renting lodging: Joseph Luther, a farmer, Cornelius Rice, a laborer from Ireland, and Henry L. Burton, a shoemaker from Massachusetts. After the Greens sold their Johnston farm, the 1860 Federal Census now finds them in Scituate, and the connection to this town is confirmed by the mortgage deed of September 24, 1855 (J 16/345, previously noted), which notes: "Henry Greene of Scituate..." The household consists of Henry Greene (age 53), Abby A. Greene (age 37), Eliza F. Greene (age 6), and Albert H. Greene (age 3). These two census records, and subsequent ones, indicate that Abby Ann Greene was born in 1823, not 1818, as Arnold recorded from her gravestone. Both the gravestone and census records indicate that she was almost constantly pregnant, giving birth almost every year for a time. The 1865 Rhode Island Census indicated a big change in the family fortunes. Henry (age 59), Abby Ann (age 42), Eliza (age 10), Albert (age 7), and a new child, Silas (age 3), are now back in Johnston but they are now listed as residents of the Poor House. When they became indigent, it is possible that the town of Scituate forced them out of town and back into Johnston, their last legal residence; this was a common practice in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries because communities did not want to support someone else's poor; at this time Henry no longer owned property in Scituate. Oddly, only Henry Greene shows up in the 1870 Federal Census, and he is listed as "Works on Poor Farm." Also of interest, it is noted that his right to vote has been abridged or denied. One can only speculate as to why he and his family ended up in the poor house and his voting rights removed. In the 1875 Rhode Island Census, Abby A. Greene reappears. She is now 52 years of age (born 1823 in Johnston) and listed as widowed, meaning Henry died within the past five years. Her occupation is listed as "Nurse" but she is once again a boarder, living somewhere along the Hartford Turnpike in Johnston. Also, she seems now alone, not living with any of her children for some reason.



Here's the page from James N. Arnold's inventory which records the complete inscription on Abby Ann Greene's stone. The discrepancy between the dates recorded here and those in other official records is perplexing. Volume 2, page 229.

From here on the census records get a little hazy. In the 1885 State Census an Abby A. Green, age 60 and born in Johnston is enumerated. The record states that she is widowed and living alone in Ward 6 of the City of Providence. Even though this record would make her birth date 1825 instead of 1823, I still think that this is “our” Abby Ann Greene. There is no match for the name in the 1890 Federal Census, thus we can assume that she died some time between 1885 and 1890.

So ends the tale of Abby Ann Greene. Truly we can say that she was an unfortunate woman. Married at an early age to a man sixteen years her senior, in quick succession she had to bury seven infants in Cemetery #43. Probably experiencing financial difficulties, she and her husband may have had to sell their farm and relocate, only to later end up ignominiously in the town poor house. Her husband may have been involved in criminal activity and thus had his voting rights removed. Finally, as she ages she ends up alone in a boarding house. As Alexander pope wrote; “How lov’d how valued once avails thee not/ Whom related or by whom begot/ A heap of dust alone remains of thee/ Tis all thou art and all the proud shall be”

This story is quite perplexing. As stated, James Arnold’s gravestone records are nearly flawless, but census and deed records indicate Abby Ann was born in 1823, not 1818. Also, the gravestone carving gives a death date of 1843, but Abby Ann was clearly living into the late 1800s. Since the top half of her stone is missing, we can’t check Arnold’s work. We may also recall seeming errors in genealogical works. Hopefully some day we may find that piece of gravestone or discover some explanation for these discrepancies in the record.

Mabel Sprague Interviews (continued)

(Editor’s note: over the years I interviewed Mabel Atwood Sprague a number of times. We have printed some of the interviews in the past and will continue with more of them this issue. These interviews were conducted on February 18 and 21; July 7; and December 12 and 15, 1997 -- LHM)

Leander Peckham: Peckham, a local textile manufacturer, lived at 278 Morgan Avenue in a large, cross-gambrel house next to the present A-Stone property. Mabel said that they built their house “for show.” Josephine, his wife, was a Bennett (related to Mabel; Mabel’s mother was a Bennett) and, as Mabel said, “loved to dress to the nines.”

Thornton Town Hall: located 1343 Plainfield Street, the Town Clerk’s office was on the right side of the building and had long benches. The police station was on the left and the jail cells were in the basement.

The White Family: Clarabel White (daughter of George White and sister of Alice and Leroy White, Sr.) married Edward E. Mathewson and lived in the house just to the west of Mabel. Edward drove oil trucks and worked in the Bailey-Shippee Funeral Parlor in Scituate. Edward had a son, Edward J., born in 1919 by a previous wife. Alice worked in Jacob W. Wilder’s insurance agency, Piper and Wilder.

Jeremiah Atwood: Jeremiah was the oldest brother of Edmund Clark Atwood, Mabel’s father. Jeremiah lived in a little house just to the east of Mabel’s brook on Morgan Avenue. The house had one room and was never painted. He lived by himself and was a dump picker and worked at odd jobs. Mabel said that there was always an iron basket hanging in his house in which he kept his Jonny Cakes. He left an estate of \$6,000 or \$7,000 and six acres of land, which Edmund bought.

Hughesdale: the William R. Wilder house and farm was on the south-east corner of the intersection of Atwood and Central Avenue. It was previously a Mathewson property (note: there is still a Mathewson cemetery there). The house was torn down “in recent years.” Mabel went to church in Hughesdale, which was at the time a branch of the Beneficent Congregational Church in Providence. After the State widened Atwood Avenue in 1928, it was closed some of the time after that -- when they did not have enough money to afford a minister. (After the 1938 Hurricane, the church was torn down). There was a Sunday school room in the back, the pulpit was on the north side and to the right of the pulpit was a pump organ. On the left there was also a rectangular piano which folded up. Jacob Wilder played the organ and his wife Gertrude played piano. Mr. Provost came up from Olneyville to preach, but there was no fulltime minister in Mabel’s memory. She was told the church was built in 1859. Her grandmother came in 1863 and soon got involved in the church. She told Mabel that the neighbors built the church.

The Hughes family gave the property to the Town that the **Hughesdale School** is on. Henry Armstrong bought the property at public auction after it was no longer serving as a town school. Rebecca (Hughes) Sheldon said that the building should revert back to the Hughes family. Armstrong worked out a deal and sold the building to the Jehovah’s Witnesses, who ran it for a while. It was a nursery after that (the school building still stands and is used as a day care center).

Mabel said that Borden Avenue did cross Morgan Avenue and met the old Scituate Road. She said that the right of way by her property was put in for access to that road.

The Welcome Fenner House, just to the west of Mabel’s house was built in 1836.



Crandall Dairy as it looked around 1939. Photo courtesy of Mabel Sprague, from *Images of America: Johnston (1997)*.

Crandall Dairy: there was room for sixty milking cows in the main barn. The help dressed in white to work in the barn and

wiped their feet on a disinfectant mat. The barn was spotless. There were silos that are now gone. In recent times, the barn has been used as a riding stable. There was a modern water tank in back of the barn from which a line ran down to the brook on Mabel's side. The Crandalls drank the water as did Mabel's family. There was also a windmill on the property.

The dairy started life in an old horse barn at #12 Lowell Avenue in the Annex section of Providence. Originally they had one horse for deliveries. The business grew to where they had twenty-two trucks before moving to Johnston on June 1, 1938. On that date, Edward Sweet Crandall took over Frank W. Tillinghast's dairy on Morgan Avenue. Prior to the purchase, on September 8, 1937, Tillinghast lost three horses and 100 tons of hay due to a fire in his barn. Crandall replaced that barn with a large one that he built during the summer of 1938. The Belknap brothers of Wakefield built it for \$20,000. Mabel said that he wanted a showy farm and so used purebred Guernsey cattle. The dairy processing building was added in 1955, putting an end to the plant in Providence. Crandall continued selling milk until May 31, 1971, when they were foreclosed.

Before the Crandalls, **Frank W. Tillinghast** owned the property and bought and sold cows as well as milk. He took some milk to the city in the mornings. Later, Chester Knight from Phippen Orchard took Tillinghast's milk to the city along with other farm's milk. At the end, Frank sold milk from his barn. He was also a practicing lawyer and had monetary interest in local textile mills.

Round Rocks: located between Scituate Avenue and Shun Pike, the property was sold about 1920 by Mabel's family who owned it until then. She did not know who they sold it to.

#285 Morgan Avenue was built by Joseph Webb (note: in the late nineteenth century) sometime after he bought Hiram's house. Harold Beaudoin later purchased the property.

Morgan Avenue: A-Stone Company tore down the stone mill house that once stood on the lane from Morgan Avenue to the Morgan Mills.

Byron Sweet owned and farmed much of the land on the Morgan Avenue side of Neutaconkanut Hill near Monson Avenue. His house was just past Monson. Fannie Sweet, Byron's daughter, married Walter D. Waterman, Sr. and sold the house on Morgan Avenue to Abraham Lincoln Smith, who lived there into the 1950s. He was a junk dealer (Ed.'s note -- he owned Smith's Ford Farm at 167 Morgan Avenue).



Smith's Ford Farm, circa 1924. Photo courtesy of Bob Whittaker, from *Images of America: Johnston II* (1999).

One half of the cemetery on Mabel's property was sold to the Fenner family, who lived two houses west of Mabel. Minerva Taft, a Fenner relative, was buried in the cemetery in 1955. This was the last burial in that cemetery.

The "**stone crusher**" on Morgan Avenue, just north of its junction with School Street, was worked by Famigletti Construction. They owned a strip of land on both sides of Morgan Avenue. On the east side they blasted and crushed rock for construction. Mabel thought that they went bankrupt in the 1930s, and the site has not been worked since.

The Crotch Hotel: located at junction of Scituate and Simmonsville Avenues, it was not an official bar, but a place where men gathered to drink in the basement of the house in the 1870s and 1880s. There was no electricity. Jim Vanner owned the property, but Mabel did not know who ran it. Jim's father was called Billy Muck (corrupted from McVanner).

Mabel's Family:

Abraham C. Atwood's House at 216 Atwood Avenue was built about 1789 (by the Harris family). The tree in the front yard was planted around 1874. The addition on the front of the house was put up because one of Abraham's (Mabel's great-grandfather) wives wanted a front hall. The staircase is solid mahogany and each spindle cost \$.50 each. The kitchen ell was built as a porch. A deed that Mabel possessed gave an original date for the oldest part of the house as 1789. Abraham built all the additions to the house. He was originally from Scituate and was one of five boys. One of his brothers went to Wauregan, Connecticut, and built the stone mill there. One brother went to North Attleboro, one went to the Cape, and one stayed in Scituate.

Hiram Atwood, son of Abraham and thus Mabel's grandfather, built his house at 281 Morgan Avenue about 1845. He had purchased the ten-acre property in 1844 from Samuel Randall. The property extended from the Pocasset River to the Welcome Alverson property. Hiram's house was finished on the outside and in the ell, including a bedroom and a kitchen. As the family grew, he finished other rooms. His first wife Mercy Mann died young, leaving five children. Hiram's second wife was Clarissa Cargill, whom he married in 1863. A native of Providence, Clarissa's father was a furniture maker. Much of Mabel's furniture was made by him.

Hiram and Clarissa had six children. In 1875, Hiram sold the family house (#281) and six of the ten acres to James Lincoln, an attorney. Lincoln's sister Sarah kept house for him. Lincoln later sold the house to Joseph Webb. After the sale, Hiram's family moved into Mabel's house (#216). He was a maker and repairer of water wheels. Abraham, father to Hiram, moved from the house and settled in Olneyville. Hiram died a year later in 1876.

Besides buying Jeremiah's six acres on Morgan Avenue, Mabel's father Edmund also bought Samuel and Cynthia Randall's property (ten acres) on the north side of Morgan Avenue on the west side of the brook. Mabel said that Edmund (who was eight at the time) and his family moved into Mabel's house in 1875 from Webb Wilder's house (which had been built by Hiram Atwood about 1845).

Mabel's parents, Edmund Clark and Malena (Bennett) Atwood came to Mabel's house in 1905 (presuming he moved away after getting married) and lived upstairs over Mabel's grandmother, Clarissa (Cargill) Atwood (her husband Hiram had passed away in 1876). Mabel's father, Edmund Clark Atwood, was town sergeant around the turn of the twentieth century. He was also a cow trader and a farmer.

The Webb/Wilder Family:

The Hiram Atwood House, as noted above, was purchased by Joseph Webb. He and his wife, Mary Ballou, had a daughter Gertrude, who married Jacob Wilder. Jacob and Gertrude lived in the house with their two children, Webb Westcott Wilder and Magel Craig Wilder. Webb inherited the property, died in 1988 and the property passed to Harold Beaudoin. Harold's mother and Webb's mother were cousins (Harold is no longer alive).

Aunt Dolly Onsley:

Aunt Dolly Onsley, who lived down the road from Mabel's family, did their laundry in the wash kettle in the wash house in the rear of the Atwood House. The laundry was done every Monday after which Aunt Dolly would have dinner with Mabel's parents. Mabel was told that Dolly smoked her corn cob pipe before eating. Dolly told the family that she was born a slave. She lived with her grandson, Ben Onsley, who resided at the Bill Kent house on Atwood Avenue in Hughesdale. Ben worked on the Kent farm. Ben, his wife Annie Hall and family, along with Aunt Dolly, later moved from Hughesdale to the old house on Borden Avenue, a short ways in from Morgan Avenue. When the old house burned, Ben built a new house in 1905, the one still standing and lived in by Mel Steppo and his wife Mary.

Blacksmith Shop Restored



A view of the interior of the restored blacksmith shop. *Photo by Christopher Martin.*

On October 1, Anthony Ricci had the blacksmith shop on his property on Morgan Avenue open to the public for Rhode Island Land Trust Day. He has done a wonderful job of restoring the building and has furnished it with all the tools and equipment

that were left in it by Fred Bennett, an uncle of Mabel Atwood Sprague.

Society Doings

JHS Exhibit at Mohr Library

During the months of June and July, our society had a display on Education in our town using artifacts from our collection. Jon Anderson tells me the exhibit was well-received (LHM).

Newsletter Editor Donates Newsletter Cost

Christopher Martin, our newsletter editor, has graciously donated the cost of the printing of our July 2016 Historical Notes.

JHS Newsletter Organizing

Thanks to Elise Carlson for taking on the task of organizing our over thirty years of back issues of JHS Historical Notes. We now have ten copies of most issues, arranged by volume in file folders in a file cabinet. Since most of our issues are on-line, we felt that this was adequate for future needs. We are sending a complete run of hard copies of the newsletters to the Mohr Library and to the Rhode Island Historical Society Library. Copies over and above the ten copies stored in the cabinet will be sent to the Mohr Library to leave out for patrons. Since most of our newsletter is devoted to historical matters, they don't really go out of date.

We do have a few sets of back issues that we will give out to interested parties. Let us know if you would like a set.

Annual Picnic

On Sunday, September 18, we held our annual picnic, which because of the threat rain, we held inside the barn. Attendance was down, but we enjoyed some good food and good conservation.

By-Laws Update

Over the past few months, a JHS by-laws committee has been working to update our by-laws. The committee is composed of: Pat Macari, Elise Carlson, Anthony Ursillo, Dan Brown, and Louis McGowan. Thanks to all of them and a special thanks to Elise for organizing the changes, typing them up and getting copies to the committee members. The final recommended changes will be sent out to all members, who will then vote to approve or veto the changes.

JHS Yard Sale

On October 15, we held a yard sale at Anthony Ursillo's property on Hartford Avenue. A big thank you goes out to Anthony and Tim Kee for all their hard work. There also was plenty of help from our members. The day was a nice success. Anthony and Tim held a second yard sale the following Saturday to sell off left-overs.

Our Properties

Elijah Angell House

Steve Merolla donated the cost of a new plaque for our headquarters property. Our thanks go out to Steve.

Museum

Our museum barn is open Monday nights (except holidays), 6:30-8:30pm; and Fridays, 2-5pm, for those who would like to visit the museum or examine the society's collection of printed materials. 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 history@jhs.necoxmail.com, 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.

Cemetery Committee Report

by Pasco Macari

The Cemetery Committee restoration mission is a two part plan. First, clearing, cleaning, and cutting must be completed before the second phase begins -- and that is repairing head and foot stones, and resetting all markers in correct locations. Also perpetual care is needed so our work doesn't go back to nature. With this in mind the following yards throughout the past four months have been cleaned and cleared of growth and debris; some were completed by committee members on Sunday mornings, many by member Kevin Sarli on his own, and several by recreation department workers. Thanks to all.

#46, Simon Smith
#43, Fenner
#27, Remington
#59 and 60, Thornton and Fenner
#50, Hudson
#9, Olney
#40, Richardson
#33, Mathewson
#5, Wade-Paine
#17, Irons-Sweet
#87, Knight

The committee continued restoration of #43 on the Salisbury Farm to its completion (please see our lead article, "An Unfortunate Lady"). We repaired four head stones, reset nine headstones, repaired one foot stone, and reset nine foot stones. This was a very difficult yard to restore as most stones were uprooted and misplaced. Also many stones were discovered many inches below grade.

An all too common sight in many cemeteries is the discovery of children's graves. Cemetery #43 is no exception as Henry and Abby Ann Greene had seven young children buried there. We believe all seven graves lay to the north of mother Abby Ann, therefore under plowed land, thus preventing the exact placement of their stones. Note: all seven head and foot stones were not found so we used scrap pieces of marble to indicate all seven burials.

Next we moved on to #40, the Richardson yard, on Taylor Road; a well protected 40x60-foot yard with stone wall on the east side with yard access. Three sides have granite posts with iron rails. The yard has not been vandalized with minimum growth. Only three marble head stones needed repair. Two have brownstone

pass-through bases in very good condition. The other was cemented to a base from a previous repair. A new sign was installed. The yard is complete.

Further north on Taylor Road is #39, the Randall yard; a very large yard, about 80x80 feet with all sides having a four-foot stone wall. We cleaned the yard in four visits. No repairs needed, but eight headstones were mortared into bases. We did not find any foot stones. Also four Turner family members were re-interred to a yard in Coventry.

The committee was asked to help erect two toppled head stones in a Warwick yard by Pegee Malcolm. She is chairwoman of the Warwick Commission on Historical Cemeteries, and a member of a small group of volunteers cleaning and restoring Warwick yards. Four members of our cemetery committee responded. Everett's tripod was needed. With Everett was Steve, Pat, and Nick. The job was completed within an hour, and we told Pegee to call us anytime she needs help.

As always many thanks to the highway department workers, recreation department workers, Kevin Sarli, and Joe Jamroz, who maintains yard #11.

Speakers

At our September 2016 meeting, Kurt Deion thrilled us with a wonderful talk about his visits to U.S. presidential and vice-presidential burial sites. He has visited every one, starting with his first one when he was nine years old!

Marine archeologist David Robinson came to our October meeting to tell us about his research into the twenty-nine ship graveyard that exists in the Providence River between India Point in Providence and Bold Point in East Providence. David, a researcher at the URI Graduate School of Oceanography, thoroughly entertained and enlightened the thirty-two members and guests that attended.

Acquisitions

- In September, Louis McGowan purchased at a local flea market a set of forty-nine receipts from Joseph Webb for purchases for his store in Morgan Mills
- In August, we made two eBay purchases: a matchbook cover from the Thomas Garthwaite Insurance Company in Graniteville and a 1965 Johnston Hose Company #2 advertising booklet.
- In August, Mrs. Mabel Sweet donated a framed photo of the Sweet House at Highland Memorial Park along with some related genealogical info.
- In September, a Johnston Police Department Chaplin's badge and case was given to us by Timothy Kee. The badge came from the estate of Father Horgan, who was pastor at St. Robert Bellarmine Church. Anthony Ursillo also passed on to us a plaque from the Town of Johnston commemorating Father Horgan on his retirement.
- In October, Louis McGowan donated two Wilder Dairy milk bottle caps that he purchased at a local flea market.
- In November, Christopher Martin secured the donation of an almost new, stainless steel, gas grill. We'll make good use of it during future outdoor events at the Barn.

Many donated 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

November 30, 2016

General Meeting
7pm

RISEUP (The Rhode Island Society for the Examination of Unusual Phenomena) will present the history of hauntings, close encounters, and paranormal activities here in Rhode Island.

December 4, 2015

JHS Christmas Party
2pm

JHS members and their guests are invited to join us at the JHS Museum Barn for a celebration of holiday cheer and seasonal merrymaking. Pat Perry from Sneak Peek Productions will give a presentation on Victorian Christmas at 2pm, followed by a potluck at 3pm. Please bring a dessert or appetizer to share. Period dress optional. To defray the cost of Pat Perry's visit we'll be asking a donation of \$5 a person. Space is limited; please reserve your place by calling Bel at (401) 529-0873 by Monday, November 14.

January 25, 2017

General Meeting
7pm

Our president, Louis McGowan, will give a presentation on recent acquisitions.

February 22, 2017

General Meeting
7pm

CCRI Professor Roberta Mudge Humble will return to talk about Rhode Island armories.

March 29, 2017

General Meeting
7pm

Our speaker will be Helen Hersh Tjader of the Neutaconkanut Conservancy, giving a talk entitled: "Neutaconkanut Hill -- Gateway to Sowams." It can be argued that, as a pivotal place of cultural exchange between indigenous people and colonizing settlers in North America, Neutaconkanut Hill is the gateway to Sowams. Come learn more about the incredible role of our local land and its people have played in our national history.

April 26, 2017

General Meeting
7pm
Speaker TBD.

May 31, 2017

General Meeting
7pm
Speaker TBD.

June 28, 2017

General Meeting
7pm
Speaker TBD.

Note: Our museum barn is open Monday nights (except holidays), 6:30-8:30pm; and Fridays, 2-5pm, for those who would like to visit the museum or examine the society's collection of printed materials. Just in case, call ahead to confirm we're here.

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 history@jhs.necoxmail.com or leave a message at (401) 231-3380.



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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: March 15, 2017.

Our Executive Board

President: Louis McGowan
Vice-President: Dan Brown
Treasurer: Joe Jamroz
Recording Secretary: Elise Carlson
Corresponding Secretary: Christopher Martin
Trustees: Belmira McGowan, Doug Stephens, Marie Thierfelder, 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: History@JHS.necoxmail.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/johnstonhistorical

Annual Dues

Have you paid your 2015 dues yet? Your dues help us to operate. The price of a single membership is only \$20; a family membership is only \$30. Wotta bargain! So once more, please pay your 2015 dues. Send us a check today!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Renewal Single (\$20) _____
 Family (\$30) _____

New Single (\$20) _____
 Family (\$30) _____

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**