

Johnston Historical Society

Historical Notes

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Christopher Martin, Editor Louis McGowan, Assistant

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www.JohnstonHistorical.org

The Angell House of Plainfield Pike by Steve Merolla

Out in the western part of town along the north side of the Plainfield Pike and near to the Scituate line once stood a house thought to belong to Revolutionary War hero Israel Angell. The house was a typical five-bay, two-story structure with a large center chimney, most likely built in the later part of the eighteenth century. The story of the house was quite interesting in that it was said to have once been owned by Johnston's own Israel Angell, who attained the rank of Colonel during the Revolutionary War; Angell commanded the 2nd Rhode Island Regiment of the Continental Line, participating in many engagements and campaigns. The other point of interest concerning the house was a story that in the far past the house had been moved to the north side of Plainfield Pike.

Unfortunately the house was torn down in the 1960s, when the State widened the road.



The Angell House as it looked in the 1950s.
From *Images of America: Johnston* (1997).

A study of maps drawn in 1850 and 1870 indicate that Angells did in fact live in the general area of Plainfield Pike and present-day Pippin Orchard Road. Determining that members of the Angell family lived in the area, a search of genealogical records was initiated. At the Rhode Island Historical Society an outstanding resource was found, "The Genealogy of the Descendants of Thomas Angell, who settled in Providence in 1636," authored by Avery F. Angell in 1872. As the story goes, Richard Angell was born around 1703, and he died in Scituate in 1796. He had three wives, Abigail Ross, Mehitable Sprague, and Sarah Ballou. Angell and his wives had seven children: Elsie, Amy, Abel, Anna, Benjamin, and twin sons Jeremiah and

Richard, who were born September 18, 1762. Richard Angell had married Zilpha Fiske, the daughter of Joseph and Mary Fiske; the Fiske family settled in the western part of Johnston in the early 1700s and owned over 150 acres in the area. The Angell genealogy, starting at page 58, states: "...Richard Angell Sr. was brought up in Johnston and went with Thomas Owen to Chepachet to learn the trade of blacksmithing. After his apprenticeship, he purchased a farm and built a house & shop just east of the Angell tavern in South Scituate... By perseverance & industry he secured five farms, which he left to his sons, clear of debt... The four farms were in Scituate, but the farm given to his son Richard was in Johnston & is yet partly owned & occupied by his grandson Olney Angell..." (It must be noted that this is not the same Olney Angell of the Graniteville section of Johnston).

This Richard Angell Jr., as noted above, was born September 18, 1762, and married Zilpha Fiske. They had three children: Mary, who married Sheldon Luther; Betsey, who married William Field; and Olney, who married Almira Fenner. An extensive quotation from the Angell genealogy tells us the interesting story of the Angell house:

Richard, twin brother to Jeremiah, received of his father a farm in Johnston 8 1/2 miles from Providence, on the Norwich Pike [Plainfield Pike]. He commenced business by cultivating his farm and keeping a tavern. He continued in these operations till after his children were born and his first wife died. After this he rented his real estate and went to Norfolk, Virginia, where he remained a year or two, married again, and returned. His wife was not pleased with keeping a public house and gave it up, sold part of his land, and cultivated a small farm with a good garden, and lived much at ease.

For a considerable period his tavern was of real service to the traveling public. During the successful period of his business, as landlord, the Turnpike Company changed the location of a section of the road, avoiding a bad hill, but in doing so they moved the road several rods from Mr. Angell's house. Mr. Angell had no difficulty in seeing that the road would be improved by this change, nor had the Turnpike Co. have any difficulty in seeing that by this change they were liable to lose the advantages of a good & desirable public house, which they preferred to retain. The inconveniences of remedying this was increased by the fact that Mr. Angell's house was at the junction of the Turnpike with the Cranston road [Pippin Orchard Road], and in the new crossing of the roads, another man, Israel Fiske, owned the land and had a house at this crossing. Finally, the Company

concluded that if Mr. Angell would board the workmen employed in changing the road, they would be at the expense of moving his house. Thus, when the road was completed, the house was moved northwest of its former location about 25 rods. It was an old-fashioned, 2-story house of very heavy frame, and with the appliances called in to requisition, was quite a difficult job. It was placed in the new location near a spring brook, convenient as a watering place. This house is now standing and is occupied as a tenement. Olney Angell, son of Richard, now lives in a house near the location of the old tavern and occupies a part of what used to be his father's farm.

As related in the above story, in the area of Pippin Orchard Road, Plainfield Pike dipped south of its present location for about 1,200 feet. A modern topographical map shows that the original route of the Pike did indeed butt up against the northern edge of what is known as Horn Hill, just west of Pippin Orchard Road. To this day, a very small section of Johnston still is thus located south of Plainfield Pike.



Google Maps view showing how the current Johnston border dips below Plainfield Pike (Route 14) at the southwest corner.

At the Rhode Island State Archives a map was located that is entitled "Plat of the New Turnpike Road by Richard Angell's, December 28, 1805." The map clearly shows the location of the old road, and the new location, along with the location of Richard Angell's house on the south side of the Plainfield Pike, before it was moved. The 1805 map also shows that Richard Angell also owned land on the north side of the Turnpike Road, where the house was ultimately moved. The 1850 Walling map of Johnston shows a house on the north side of Plainfield Pike and just west of Peck Hill Road; the house is marked "Wm. Field" and this is almost certainly the house that was moved. William Field was the son-in-law of Olney Angell and received the house from his father-in-law's estate.

So it can be said that the story of the Angell house being moved as part of the relocation of the Plainfield Pike is certainly true, especially since Richard Angell's grandson (Olney) more than likely related the story to the author of the genealogy. The genealogy was published in 1872, and Olney Angell died in 1885. If Richard Angell originally built the house, it was probably some time in the 1780s, based on the fact that he was born in 1762.

But what of the story of Israel Angell, the Revolutionary War hero? It is clear from the genealogy and the names involved therein, that Colonel Israel Angell had nothing to do with this particular house. Clearly, two different branches of the Angell family are involved here. Research by this author on surrounding

properties in the west end of Johnston has uncovered that Colonel Israel Angell and his family did live in the general area, but about a mile to the north, on the north side of Shun Pike.

Why Israel Angell was associated with this house is unknown. Perhaps it has to do with the fact that Israel Angell and a part of his family were once buried in Johnston Historical Cemetery #43, on the Salisbury Farm; their remains were removed to North Burial Ground in Providence in the early twentieth century. This burial place is probably only a quarter mile away from where the house in question once stood (as to why Israel Angell was buried in #43 is another mystery, as he and his family never owned the land). As the years went by and the real story was forgotten, perhaps people knew that the structure was an Angell house and they decided to associate it with the most famous Angell in the area, but we shall likely never know the real reasons.



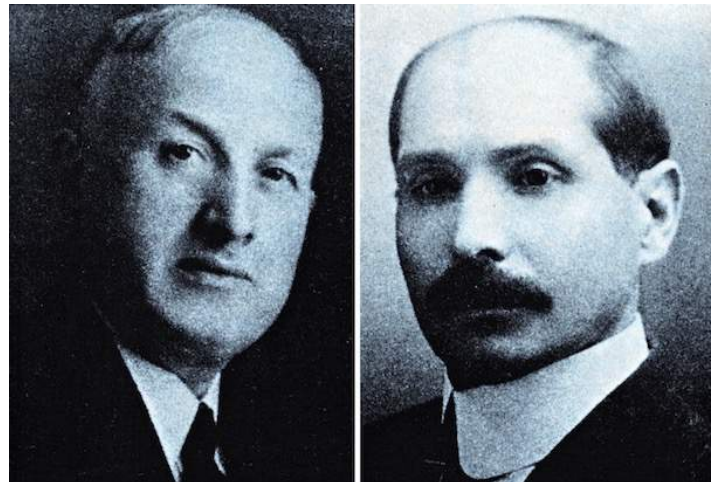
Recollections of Centredale, Our Nearest "Downtown" (Part 2)

by Thomas C. Rhodes; edited by Louis H. McGowan

Some Less Frequented Shops

While the stores mentioned above [*see last issue -- ed.*] were regular haunts of this writer during the period in question, there actually *were* other places that commanded only infrequent visits. Not surprisingly, the resultant recollections will be less detailed and extensive.

Likely the oldest shop in Centredale was a clothier's called Winkleman & Finklestein's, which was located on Smith Street further down from King's, but before Adams Drugs. It was housed in a very old wooden building but enjoyed a following, largely from housewives and dowagers, wanting traditional, Eisenhower-era fashions, *not* the "mod" trends of the Sixties or early 1970s (as burlesqued in the *Austin Powers* movies, for instance). On his few visits inside, the merchandise and austere displays looked to this rather uninterested beholder like they had been last updated during World War Two. Despite the incredibly staid and stuffy atmosphere, this prissy old shop had acquired the nickname of "Wink & Fink's," possibly its only amusing attribute.



Arthur E. Winkleman (left) and Samuel Finklestein (right) founded their eponymous store in 1907. *From The Observer, April 8, 1965.*

Handling a distinctly less prissy line of merchandise was Jack & Harry's an "auto-hardware mart" on the lines of the present Benny's but differing in merchandising policy. It was actually part of a small local chain of stores, with a larger store in Pawtucket, well-known for its unsubtle advertising in our local papers, and was located just a few doors up from the Buonacorsi news stand. In general merchandising layout it was quite akin to the Benny's in Greenville, but was smaller than the stand-alone brick building occupied by that well-known Smithfield retail landmark. As a result, Jack & Harry's was much more crowded in setting up its merchandise, being just a small shop along that commercial block. It appeared to be stuffed from floor to ceiling with a wide range of products, from automotive jacks to bicycles suited for "every girl & boy." It is even possible that the large, heavy Columbia bicycle that this writer received for Christmas of 1967, to replace the little second-hand red bike acquired from the Sutcliffes, may have come from this Centredale shop. One of their chief product lines was automobile tires, and in this they were direct competitors to the larger Benny's chain. It was by way of selling such tires that much of the unsubtle newspaper ad "ballyhoo" was devoted by this small chain, although most retailers, even the august Sears on North Main Street in Providence, was not exempt from "crowing" about their newest bargains! To this writer at that time, such matters were of far less concern than seeing what toys might be lurking on the crowded shelves.

Top portion of a full-page Jack & Harry's ad from the April 8, 1965, *Observer*.

Of similar reputation, though hardly exempt from whispered aspersions over its "connections" was the Ace Hardware Store, located on the by-pass, diagonally across from the Community Theatre. My family was not a frequent patron of this store, supplies for an occasional painting project being the limit of our participation. (We much preferred recourse to the close by Paint Bucket for home improvement endeavors). My mother *did* pay her utility bills here, a practice that now has nearly reached extinction. As so much of its product line consisted of rakes, clippers, mowers, and related lawn care products, it little tempted even a glance from this allergy-ridden, yard-work-hating writer.

Without question the most misnamed place in Centredale had to have been Modern Shoe Rebuilding. It occupied a ramshackle wooden building set back adjacent to Adams Drug. The structure itself looked like some "old West" movie set, replete with large roof arches and Victorian era crenellations unburdened with paint

or decent repairs. While no fan of the then-emerging suburbanite shopping plaza that sought to banish life's unpleasanties behind formica facades, this writer *did* draw the line, nonetheless, at "Modern"!

While Adams Drug was the chief pharmacy and sundries shop in Centredale, it lacked one feature that was likely the only attraction of its competitor. One door up from Pat's Barbershop was a very small drugstore with a Rexall affiliation, which due to its small size and location seemingly never commanded a fraction of the trade enjoyed by Adams. Its unwashed windows, faded signs and crumbling paint bespoke a fading operation at best. However, despite or perhaps *because* of its antiquated appearance, this drugstore *did* feature a genuine old time soda fountain. On occasion, especially during summer's heat, this writer would fortify himself, just before the return walk to Graniteville, with an ice cream soda or large Coke at this fountain, which even had retained the streamlined counter and round stools of its 1930s heyday. The elderly proprietor would make the soda in the old fashioned way, first squirting the syrup from one fixture, then filling the glass from a hose dispensing carbonated water. Even forty years ago such a process struck this writer as quaint but he was glad to have witnessed such obsolete technology at first hand, rather than just hearing stories about it.

Your Neighborhood Bank

During the earlier grades of Graniteville Elementary, a program existed to encourage the young students to save, this being sponsored by one of the Centredale banks. For some odd reason, the start of this program somehow escaped me, so, envious of the *whole dollars* contributed by my classmates each week, as well as weary of carrying around the old sock filled with change that constituted my worldly assets, this essayist convinced his parents to establish a private account for his benefit. This was done in 1963 and after the completion of the paperwork at the Citizen's Bank in Centredale this writer felt like a *real* adult. From my former parish priest (Episcopal), the late Nelson Wright MacKie (1906-1999), I gathered that the original name of the bank was the Centredale Trust Company. At any rate, this bank, located just as Woonasquatucket Avenue branched off from Smith Street, saw this writer but few times before he was employed by the A&P supermarket starting in March of 1970. Not only did this furnish enough income to warrant regular banking trips but the store manager, Richard Gormley, took me along as a kind of junior assistant to make official store deposits at the separate business window. This brought me into contact with Mr. Al Arage, a senior teller whose career at that particular bank branch spanned geological eons. Unlike the customary self-effacing little drudge on the model of "Mr. Peepers," Al, a tall fellow with a full throated delivery, was a commanding presence behind the counter, reducing the remaining staff to nameless functionaries in comparison. It should be noted that none of the banks in Centredale, including the Industrial National, were housed in architecturally noteworthy structures; all were rather simple, plain brick or cement block structures of a purely utilitarian cast.

The Community Theatre

Technically speaking, this small local cinema was obviously *not* a store, but *did* sell tickets to see movies, so it belongs in this set of Centredale recollections. While the grand motion picture "palaces" of Providence, such as The Majestic or Loew's State

could boast of their overdone pseudo-classic architecture and huge auditoriums, most Rhodes family film viewing was confined either to the Route 44 Drive-In or the Community Theatre in Centredale. The latter building, long torn down, was up from Pat's Barbershop, actually not on Smith Street proper, but on the by-pass. Its address was technically 13 Waterman Avenue, not the most auspicious of numbers. It had been originally built as Trahan's Theatre, named after its founder Napoleon J. Trahan, as a silent cinema in 1926. Mr. Trahan, born in Central Falls in 1875, had been showing motion pictures since at least 1918, according to city directories consulted. It was a modest cinema, built of cement blocks, measuring roughly perhaps twenty-five feet wide and perhaps fifty feet in length. It was fronted by a brick façade with a large marquee. Inside, there was a small lobby, not much bigger than a large living room, that lead past the concession stand and into the auditorium proper. There were only two main aisles, with a seating capacity of scarcely two hundred viewers. The interior was very dim, even with the ceiling lights on, and the décor thus revealed consisted of some simple, faded murals using "Twenties exotica" such as palm trees above plain paneling. There was a stage proper at the front, indicating that it had been indeed constructed during the silent era when local variety and modest vaudeville acts might have appeared. There were two features that stood out from the general non-descript air of the place. On either side of the projection screen were two architectural projections having ornate painted grilles. The one on the right seemed to be a "dummy" feature but the one on the left, in the view of this writer, housed what was likely the original folded horn loudspeaker, installed circa 1930 or 1931 that could even have been one supplied by Western Electric, the originators of the Vitaphone disk-based sound process. Of course the horn speaker was not in use during the Sixties, having been replaced by a large cone equipped "Voice of the Theatre" unit installed above the stage.



The Community Theatre in 1941.
From *cinematreaures.org*, uploaded by Gerald A. DeLuca.

This local movie house was essentially run by a staff of three: the manager, Larry Forgue (said like "forge"), a short balding man, the unseen union projectionist, and "Flashlight Bill," an usher and general helper, whose attempts to assert his authority over unruly teenage audiences provoked nothing but derisive laughter from the offenders. Bill and his customary flashlight were always on active patrol, ready to pounce with Broderick Crawford-like determination upon those miscreants attempting to deposit gum

on the seat backs! Certainly his attempts to maintain order among the "ruffians" were no doubt praised by the old "biddies" in the audience.

The cinematic fare offered by The Community, as it was commonly called, was similar to most other programming shown by local houses; a hodge-podge of adventure, romance, and comedies, especially those made by the Walt Disney studio. Occasionally there was science fiction, but not often. There would be little point in dwelling on those seen by this writer, since his experience was even less than the average of his peers, due to getting headaches either while watching the feature, or upon immediately walking outside into a bright, sunny day. Among the noteworthy would be *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*, which was the very first film seen with his late father Thomas Rhodes Jr. in late 1961 or early 1962, which featured such veteran performers like Jimmy Durante, Terry Thomas, Phil Silvers, and the comedy team of Stang and Kaplan (better known among "boomers" for doing voices for television cartoons like *Top Cat*). He also saw *Major Dundee* with Charleton Heston, Jim Hutton, and a rather well developed Senta Berger, as well as *The Blue Max* with George Peppard, James Mason, and sex goddess Ursula Andress, who held sway until being dethroned by Raquel Welch later in that decade. One of the few science fiction films seen was *The Time Travelers* with Preston Foster, John Hurt, and Merry Anders. This film made a tremendous impact on this viewer and his sister, Valyrie, since it was the first and rather unexpected part of a double bill joined to a rather insipid Disney film with Brian Keith. It featured scary looking androids and awful bleeding mutants in yet another science-spiced yarn about the post-Atomic-war age. Despite a modest budget it was a fairly effective film at least to an eleven-year-old and his baby sister. It almost scared us as much as *The Outer Limits*, caught on rare occasions watching our RCA Victor black and white television!

An End Note

After this writer moved to 18 Larchmont Avenue in Greystone, Rhode Island, in 1978 he renewed his acquaintance with Centredale, which had fallen off during the middle of this decade. Sad to say, what he encountered could hardly be described as progress. Almost all of the shops mentioned above had closed, and the buildings became either vacant or further run-down by the seedy successor occupants. The general air of the place was one of aimlessness and quiet decay. What had been King's and Williams five and ten was occupied by a Salvation Army store, which at least kept the building in use. The former First National had become a Mr. Christmas outlet, selling Christmas items during the Fall and swimming pool supplies in the Spring. Most other of the small shops had changed hands several times, given the lackluster economy, losing whatever charm they once possessed. What had once served as the well-regarded local cinema had burned in 1976 and not long afterwards was torn down. From 1982 through 1986 this writer lived in Providence and all contact with Centredale was lost. Only occasionally in the Eighties and early Nineties were trips to Centredale made, since by that time this essayist was once more living in Greenville, after a lapse of over two decades. At present, both Greenville and Centredale have changed almost beyond recognition, having become gentrified with upscale businesses and developments that would have been impossible to envision in the late 1970s. While such improvements certainly

were needed, it tends to disorient those like this writer, who find it hard to relate the present scheme of things to past recollections of forty years ago. This puts me in a similar situation to that experienced by my late grandmother, Alice Firby Rhodes who, when visiting England in July of 1973, was often confused and flustered when trying to point out to my sister Valyrie and my cousin Betsy, features of her girlhood in Bradford, England, that had long since been torn down! *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

--Mr. T.C. Rhodes, first written in 2004; revised in 2012.

Society Doings

Yard Sale

On April 21, 2018, we held a very successful yard sale on the museum grounds. We grossed \$790 for the day.

A big thank you goes out to Dan Brown, who headed up the event. Also, a big thank you to Robbins Funeral Home for all the items that they donated. And, of course, thank you to all our members who worked the sale that day – Dan, Elise Carlson, Marie and Walter Thierfelder, Anthony Ursillo, Shar DiMaio, Doug Stephens, Joe Jamroz, Kevin Brown, Warren and Ellen Lanpher, and Louis McGowan.

PBS “Our Town” Series Features Johnston

In September of 2018, Channel 36, our local PBS station, will feature Johnston’s entry in its TV series “Our Town.” Our organization played a large role in the production with a number of our members handling different segments in the 1 1/2 hour program. Liz Burch, Jim and Alice Lombari, Steve Merolla, Elise Carlson, Anthony Ursillo, Dan Brown, Tim Kee, and Louis McGowan all were involved. We look forward to the airing of the show!

Simmons ville Bridge

Built in 1948, the bridge over the Simmons ville Brook is seventy years old this year. It’s also been in poor shape for more than a decade, with, according to RIDOT, “extensive deterioration [of] concrete and steel reinforcements.” Finally it’s being replaced, at a cost of \$2.8 million. Work began earlier this summer, and Simmons ville Avenue was closed to through traffic on July 9th as demolition began in earnest.

As some of you may be aware, a marker adjacent to the bridge commemorates the deadly flood that took the lives of eleven persons on April 13, 1848. Concerned about the disposition of the marker during and after bridge construction, Louis McGowan and Christopher Martin spoke with one of the construction workers at the end of July and were assured that the marker is included in the plan for the new bridge. We’ll follow up as work progresses. The bridge is expected re-open in November.



Photo by Christopher Martin.

Our Properties

Yard Cleanup

On April 28 and May 5, we cleaned and spruced up our grounds for the spring. Thanks to the following for helping out: Shar DiMaio, Elise Carlson, Anthony Ursillo, Fred Graham, Louis McGowan, Steve Merolla, Joe Jamroz, and Brad Rounds.

Angell House Chimney Restoration

As mentioned in our last newsletter, the chimney at the Elijah Angell House was found to have deteriorated so badly that sunlight could be seen through in some places. We were fortunate to secure a generous grant from the Champlin Foundations, and restoration work was begun around mid-June. Workmen took the chimney down to about halfway between the peak of the roof and the level of the attic floor, then built it back up, using as many of the original bricks as possible. They also installed a metal sleeve inside the chimney to safely vent exhaust from the furnace. The restoration is expected to be completed in early August.



Photo by Christopher Martin.

A New Sign

Earlier in the summer the Executive Board made the decision to purchase a new custom-made sign for the exterior back wall of our museum barn. The sign, which will measure twelve feet long by two feet, will say simply "Johnston Historical Society." Hopefully this will raise our visibility somewhat, as patrons of Emmily's Restaurant next door will no longer have to wonder, "What's that building over there?" Made of resin, but looking like carved wood, the sign should last for many years to come.

John Fenner Atwood Visits Johnston History Museum

On Saturday, July 21, 2018, John Fenner Atwood from Washington, D.C. visited our museum. He is, of course, a person with long family ties to Johnston, both from his Atwood side and from the Fenner side. His great-grandfather, Henry Harrison Atwood in 1870 owned the farm at Atwood Avenue and Memorial Drive, on which is now the Ferri Middle School, the court building and the new Mohr Library. It seems probable that Atwood Avenue derives its name from his family. John's grandfather, Charles Fenner Atwood, grew up on the family farm and in 1892 graduated from the first Johnston High School, which was located on Killingly St. near Plainfield Street in the Annex Section of what is now Providence. He later went on to graduate from Harvard Medical School. When John told me that his grandfather Charles had graduated from high school probably in 1892, I remembered a graduation program from the old high school that we have on display. When I saw the piece in our School Display case, I saw that it was from 1892. On the back of the program was the list of graduates – all six of them! First on the list was Charles Fenner Atwood. I was almost as excited as John was. Looking at the names, he saw that his grandmother, Adah Caroline Gorton, was also on the list! Out of six graduates, two were John's grandparents. He said that he had always wondered how they met, since his grandmother had grown up in Providence. Now, he knows the answer.

It was nice to meet with John and be able to provide him with answers about some of his family matters. John had not known where the family farm was and he had not known that his grandparents had graduated from Johnston High School. We said good-bye, with a promise to meet again in the future.

Our museum barn is open Tuesdays, 9-11am and 6:30-8:30pm; and Thursdays, 2-5pm; and the first and third Saturdays of each month, 9-11am, 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.

Speakers

Our April speaker was Joe Coduri, Rhode Island vintage postcard collector and author, who gave a presentation on his recent book of Rhode Island villages as seen through postcards. His informative talk was enjoyed by all.

Our May speaker was Louis McGowan, whose topic was Education in Johnston.

Charlotte Taylor's presentation on shipwrecks in Rhode Island waters was well received by the thirty-five-plus people who attended our June meeting. An archaeologist with the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission, she has recently published an Images of America book on the topic of her talk.



Charlotte Taylor presents. Photo by Christopher Martin.

Acquisitions

- In February, Louis donated two books, *Your Guide to Cemetery Research* by Sharon DeBartolo Carmack and *A Glossary of Terminology for Genealogists and Social Historians* by Barbara Jean Evans.
- In March, Pat Macari donated a small curio cabinet and many newspaper clippings from the past thirty years.
- In April, Louis purchased on-line an El Morocco place holder that was signed by Jerry Vale, the famous singer.
- In April, Anthony Ricci donated: one Norfolk latch to be installed in the barn and one wooden architectural doorway header from the Dr. Bowen house on Morgan Avenue. He also donated a few dozen 1/2-pint Crandall Dairy milk bottles.
- In April, Thomas E. Greene donated two Johnston School Reports (1897 and 1903) and a copy of *The Lands of Rhode Island as They Were Known to Caunonicus and Miantunnomu When Roger Williams Came in 1636* by Sidney S. Rider (modern reprint of original 1904 work).
- In April, Doug and Linda Stephens donated a number of items for our yard sale as well as a couple of pieces that we are displaying in our museum – a sculptural piece of the Minuteman statue and an all-copper kettle.
- In April, Jim Ignasher donated a number of Johnston tax books: 1904, 1906, 1907, 1909, 1910, 1928, and 1934.
- In April, Carol Bovee donated a full-sized photo of the 1928 Graniteville Parent Teachers Association (from the estate of Carol Berry).
- In April, Sharon Gauvin donated a set of blueprints that her father drew up for Tony American's Appliance Center. (See below for details).
- In April, Linda Heroux donated a number of furniture items for our museum and for a future yard sale.

- In May, Louis bought a 1920s photo of the Antioch Grange which once stood on Plainfield Street, the only one ever in Johnston.
- In May, Louis purchased a 1940s matchbook cover from Casey's Grille, which was located at 1255 Hartford Avenue, Johnston.
- In June, Louis bought a 1932 business letter from the T.W. Evans Cordage Company, which operated out of a building on Maple Avenue in Thornton.
- In June, Regina Barattini donated a trench coat that her husband John received in 1957 when he joined the Army National Guard.
- In June, Meredith (Brown) Clarke donated a booklet with her classmates' photos in 1951-'52 at Thornton School. She also donated ten photos of downtown Thornton.
- In July, Robert Aubin donated a vintage bar horseshoe that he found off Reservoir Avenue.
- In July, Louis purchased a genealogy of Thomas Clemence, the first of his family to settle in Rhode Island.
- In July, Cynthia Judge Nusbane donated two vintage camping items from her family (Raymond Judge who lived in Simmonsville), one camping oven and one kerosene lantern.
- In July, Christopher Martin donated three iron rock bars to the Cemetery Committee.

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!

Donation of Blueprints

On April 26, 2018, Sharon Gauvin visited our museum and donated a set of blueprints for an appliance center and warehouse that her father, William "Bill" Testa, had drawn up for Tony American's Appliance Store on Hartford Avenue. The store was the business of Tony "Sonny" DePetrillo, Bill's nephew. A photo of the ground breaking for the building was also given to us.

Bill Testa was an engineer for the Grinnell Corporation for 45-plus years. While there, he designed sprinkler systems for hospitals, cruise ships, nuclear power plants, hotels, commercial buildings, and private residences. At Bill's retirement, the New York Fire Department sent him a gift and a recognition letter for his work in the industry that helped to save lives during the 911 attacks. Topping off his career, Bill was elected to the National Fire Protection Association Hall of Fame.

Wish List

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

- Display mannequins
- Old photos of Johnston
- Any Johnston-related ephemera or memorabilia

Historical Advertising

Here's another old ad from the Historical Advertising photo album on our Facebook page. This one is from the November 19, 1998, *Johnston Sun Rise*. The address is the current home of Uncle Tony's Pizza & Pasta.



Upcoming Events

July/August -- Summer hiatus

Executive Board meetings and General meetings are suspended for the summer.

September 26, 2018

7pm

Bertha Mudge Humble, professor of English at the Community College of Rhode Island, will present another of her fascinating and fun Rhode Island trivia programs. Come learn new little-known facts about your home state, or have your memory refreshed on some you may have forgotten.

October 24, 2018

7pm

Donovan K. Loucks, creator of the H.P. Lovecraft Archive website, will give a presentation on Lovecraftian Geography.

November 28, 2018

7pm

Betty Mencucci, President of the Burrillville Historical and Preservation Society, will give a presentation called "The Life and Travels of Hiram Salisbury, 1815-1844." Hear how this man from Burrillville traveled by horse and wagon out to Buffalo, New York, visiting his father and relatives who lived in western New York, and also visited Niagara Falls and several War of 1812 sites. Later when the Erie Canal was built he traveled by boat on the canal. He was a man of many skills. He was carpenter and built furniture, wagons, coffins, sawed out gunstocks, and built a schoolhouse. He plowed with oxen, collected taxes for the town, worked at surveying, hunted wild bees, and set gravestones for family members. This fascinating program will be of interest to genealogists, War of 1812 enthusiasts, and people interested in history. Come and learn what life was like in the early 1800s and for an appreciation of the hard labor endured by our ancestors.

December 2018

7pm

No general meeting -- Enjoy the holidays!

January 27, 2019

General Meeting

2pm

It's so depressing to go out on a Wednesday night in January, we decided to try a special Sunday daytime meeting. Speaker TBD.

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.



As of this month our Facebook page has 875 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: November 15, 2018.

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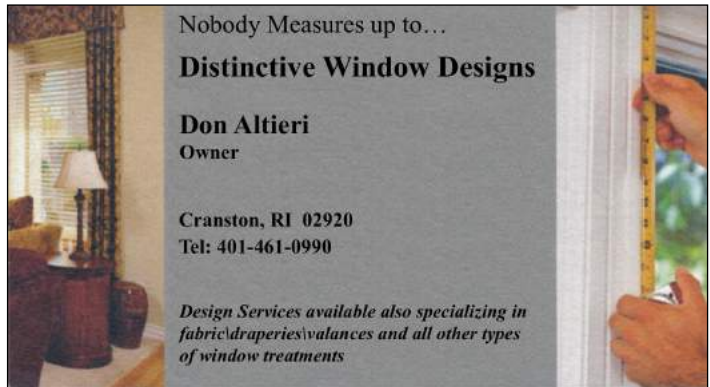
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Our Executive Board meets at 7pm in the Museum building, 101 Putnam Pike, on the second to the last Wednesday of each month, September through June (except December). All are welcome to attend.

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!

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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.

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