

Johnston Historical Society

Historical Notes

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www.JohnstonHistorical.org

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The James E. Coffin House by Steve Merolla

Situated at the top of Borden Avenue where it meets with Hartford Avenue is a beautifully maintained, white Victorian-era house that is surely known to most town residents. It is the James E. Coffin house, most likely built in the year 1897. It is owned today by Mike and Betty Gatta, who have done an outstanding job preserving this very special dwelling.



*James E. Coffin house, 1065 Hartford Avenue, Johnston.
Photo by Christopher Martin.*

The Coffin family made its appearance in Johnston in 1850. On April 2 of that year, Edward Bunker Coffin purchased a seventy-five-acre tract of land from Isaac Brown that ran along the west side of Borden Avenue and then turning a corner, along the northern edge of Hartford Avenue [Johnston Deed Book 14/ page 68].

Edward B. Coffin was born on Nantucket Island on March 31, 1807, a son of Paul and Priscilla Coffin. Edward and his family changed residence many times before finally settling in Johnston. He and his family first left Nantucket for Coventry, Rhode Island, then to Franklin, Massachusetts, then to Cranston in our state, then to Vermont and finally to Johnston. The J.H. Beers & Co. book *Representative Men & Families of Rhode Island* (published 1908) volume II, page 1301, provides a fine history of the family. It states that the seventy-five-acre tract purchased by

Coffin in 1850 was a bleak wilderness of stone, underbrush, and briars that had to be laboriously cleared and cultivated. Edward built a house made of stone around 1852 that still stands today at 167 Borden Avenue (this house has since had an upper storey added and is now covered with green vinyl siding). Edward was married to Mary Greene, daughter of Thomas and Phebe Greene of Smithfield. The Coffins had two children: Charles Henry, born in Cranston on August 11, 1843, and James Edward, born in Johnston on April 20, 1855. James was undoubtedly born in the stone house above mentioned. The 1860 Federal Census lists Edward Coffin as a farmer living with his wife Mary and two sons; Charles, at 16 years of age is listed as a milk peddler, and his brother James at the time was only five years of age. Also living in the house was Edward's brother William G. Coffin, who worked as a laborer on the farm along with a school teacher named Abby A. Barton. Finally, there was also a Martha J. Greene present, most likely a relative of Edward's wife, Mary.



*Edward B. Coffin house, 167 Borden Avenue, Johnston.
Photo by Christopher Martin.*

Ten years later, at the time of the 1870 Federal Census the small stone house was certainly getting crowded. Edward and Mary are present along with their two sons, but now five other people are also in residence. There are now two members of the Greene family, Eliza and Eva, along with Elizabeth Gifford, the housekeeper, and her husband Ezra Gifford, who is listed as a "sea captain." Edward's brother William was still working as a laborer on the farm. The 1870 Beers & Co. map depicts the "E.B. Coffin house" along Borden Avenue. Edward, along with his two sons and his brother turned the seventy-five-acre parcel of land into a model farming operation.

Eldest son Charles H. Coffin married Eliza Greene, daughter of Job and Frances Greene of Vermont on November 22, 1876. James E. Coffin, the builder of the subject house of this article, married Mary Greene, daughter of Rowland and Harriet Greene, on February 6, 1877. They had two children, Hattie M. (who died young) and Lillian. It is notable that the Coffin brothers married daughters of different branches of the Greene family. More than likely, their wives could be found somewhere in their mother's family line. Their mother, Mary Greene Coffin, died on June 28, 1874, at 56 years of age. Edward Bunker Coffin himself passed on April 20, 1890, at age 83. After the death of their father, Charles and James Coffin carried on their farming and dairy business with continued success.

Charles H. Coffin built his own house just north of the old stone homestead around the year 1876. This house is standing today at 157 Borden Avenue. The 1880 Federal Census points to the new situation. Charles Coffin is listed as living in house 57/ family 66, along with the rest of his family, and his father is listed as house 56/ family 65. Edward is listed as head of family and his son James, now 25 years of age, is listed as a milk peddler. At this point James was married to wife Mary (she is keeping house); their daughter Hattie, who was at this point a year and a half old, is also listed. In addition, there were two boarders residing in Edward's house.



*Charles H. Coffin house, 157 Borden Avenue, Johnston.
Photo by Christopher Martin.*

James E. Coffin and Mary E. Greene had married in 1877. Their daughter Hattie May Coffin was born June 22, 1879, but tragically she passed away on December 23, 1880, after she had already been enumerated in the 1880 Federal Census. Their second, and only other child, Lillian Coffin, was born November 9, 1881. There are no records existing for the 1890 Federal Census as it relates to Johnston, but I believe that the living arrangements for the Coffin family would have been basically the same as it was previously, with the big exception of the passing of family patriarch Edward B. Coffin in 1890. James E. Coffin and his family would have continued living in the old

stone house at 167 Borden Avenue. However, towards the end of the decade, James built the grand Victorian style house now standing at the corner of Hartford Avenue and Borden Avenue, the address being 1065 Hartford Avenue.

The 1900 Federal Census listed the James E. Coffin family in what at that time would have been the new residence along Hartford Avenue. Residing in the house were James, wife Mary, daughter Lillian, and a servant named Mary C. Peterson (18 years old), who was a native of Denmark; interestingly, Mary Peterson's sister, Christian Peterson was a servant in the household of Charles H. Coffin, brother of James, and just one house away. For many years, the Coffin brothers carried on a very successful business enterprise as farmers and milk dealers; in fact, James is most often described as being a milk dealer. In the meantime, James' daughter Lillian attended Brown University and eventually became a public school teacher. The 1910 Federal Census lists James, Mary, and Lillian present in the house, there being no other occupants. At this time, Lillian was 27 years of age and teaching; she was never to marry. On October 16, 1917, Mary E. Coffin died at 60 years of age of a cerebral hemorrhage, leaving behind her husband and daughter to occupy the grand house. The two of them, father and daughter, were to live alone together at 1065 Hartford Avenue for the rest of their lives, as indicated in the Federal Census records of the years 1920, 1930, and 1940.

In the meantime, several important land transactions had taken place years earlier. On July 5, 1906, James and Charles together purchased 36 1/2 acres of land, contiguous with their own property, from the New England Land Company [J 16/303]. On February 11, 1911, the two brothers quit-claimed to each other their respective houses and a small area of land around them [J 13/99 & 13/100]. On October 9, 1918, the Coffin brothers mortgaged to the J.W. Wilbur Co. all the 109 acres that they owned, excepting the 1.63 acres surrounding the James Coffin house and the 1.64 acres surrounding the Charles Coffin house [J 28/274]. On the same day, the J.W. Wilbur Co. mortgaged back to the brothers fifty-nine acres of land on the western part of the original estate [J 26/636].

Lillian Coffin, daughter of James, died on December 3, 1941, at 60 years of age. It must have been a very sad situation, for James E. Coffin was now left to live alone in the large Victorian style house he had built some forty years previously. He died on September 4, 1948, at 93 years of age. In his will (Johnston Probate Docket #1207) James left to his niece Ethel M. Coffin and nephew Charles E. Coffin, children of his brother Charles, the house at 1065 Hartford Avenue and all the rest of the real and personal estate. James, Mary, Lillian, and eight other members of the Coffin family are interred in Pocasset Cemetery (CR002, section 10) in Cranston, Rhode Island.

A little over a year later, on September 22, 1949, Ethel and Charles Coffin sold the house to Oliver and Marie Dufour [J 69/409]. The Dufours only owned the property for a couple of years, eventually selling it to Columba and Teresa Pascone on June 5, 1951 [J 71/513]. In the years to follow, there were a number of transactions among family members, but in fact the house and property remained in ownership of the Pascones during that time.



*The Coffin family marker, Pocasset Cemetery, Cranston..
Photo by Christopher Martin.*

On January 10, 2003, after about fifty years of ownership, the Pascone family sold the estate to Mike and Elizabeth Gatta [J 1136/89], and it has remained in the care and ownership of the Gattas to this day. A special note must be made of the Gatta family's efforts to preserve this grand house. In a day and age where it has become so commonplace and economical to cover a house with vinyl siding, the Gatta's made the decision to preserve the integrity of the structure by sanding and scraping down the wood clapboards and then painting it. This is a process that is both time consuming and expensive -- we appreciate their efforts. Hopefully, their decision will be an inspiration to other owners of historical houses in town to do the same.

Many maps confirm the basic story of the Coffin family residences. The 1870 Beers & Co. map depicts only one house on the estate, and this is correct, for at that time James and Charles were still living with their father in the old stone house at 167 Borden Avenue. The 1882 Hopkins Co. map now shows two houses on the farm, this newer house being that built by Charles Coffin in 1876. The 1895 Hopkins map depicts relatively the same situation; at this point Edward B. Coffin was deceased. Shown is a lone house marked "C. Coffin" (157 Borden Avenue) and the old stone house at 167 Borden Avenue, this house surrounded by many outbuildings. This house is marked as "J.E. & C.H. Coffin" and would have been occupied by James Coffin. It seems that though James lived here, it was not in his ownership, but was a part of the business operation; within a couple of years, James would build his new dwelling at the top of the road, along Hartford Avenue. Later maps depict this new situation.

One way in which to determine the approximate build date of a structure can be the use of street directories, especially beginning

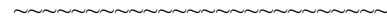
in the late nineteenth century. The 1890 Directory is stated thusly:

"Charles H. Coffin, farmer; house Borden lane 2nd from Hartford Av."

"Edward B. Coffin, farmer, house Borden lane 1st from Hartford Av."

"James E. Coffin, milk dealer; house Borden lane 1st from Hartford Av."

The Charles Coffin house, situated on Borden Avenue, was indeed the second house in from Hartford Avenue and the old stone house, where Edward and James resided at the time, was in fact the first house along Borden Avenue down from Hartford Avenue. The 1892 Directory states that Edward Bunker Coffin had died; the Directories from the years 1894, 1895, and 1896 all confirm the same housing situation as noted above from the year 1890. The 1897 Directory is missing. In the 1898 Directory, there is a significant change in status for the residences of the Coffin family. In the 1898 Directory, page 24, Charles Coffin is listed, as usual, as living in the "house Borden lane, 2nd from Hartford Av.", but now Charles E. Coffin is listed as "milk dealer, Hartford av. c. Borden lane." This indicates that James E. Coffin was now residing in his new house on Hartford Avenue at the corner with Borden Avenue. There is no directory listing for the old stone house, because census records indicate that it was being occupied by laborers, or boarders, they not being the owners and thus not included in the Directory. It is unfortunate that the 1897 Directory is missing, but it is safe to say that the new house, our subject grand Victorian, was most likely built in 1897, and tax records seem to confirm that date.



Our Firefighters by Louis McGowan

The first reference we have found to a fire-fighting unit in town was in the 1870s, when Johnston Hose Co. #1 was mentioned in the town records. Nothing is known of the company, although we can be sure that it was in the Olneyville area.

Olneyville, in the first half of the nineteenth century was divided among the towns of Providence, North Providence, and in the western section, Johnston. In 1814, an engine company was started up in the Providence section of Olneyville. It was called the Eagle Engine Company. In 1832, it was designated as Engine 1 of Providence, and it is assumed that this company would have handled fires in the adjacent section of Johnston. In 1853, the Eagle Company #1 had its engine confiscated "in consequence of disturbances there at fires," and the company was dissolved. After Providence began using paid firefighters in 1854, there appear to be no fire companies in the Olneyville Square area. The nearest station was on Putnam Avenue in Providence. The first fire-fighting group in Johnston proper that we know anything about was organized on July 15, 1886. This volunteer group called themselves the Rough and Ready Eagle #2 Fire Company (it is not known if there is any connection between the #1 Eagle Co. of Providence and the Eagle #2 of Johnston, but it seems like

there might be). The Rough and Ready opened the first known fire station in town on March 5, 1891 on Plainfield Street and Rye Street in the Annex section of Olneyville (then Johnston, now Providence). They had occupied a building called the Wigwam previously, which was just across the street.

A very active group, the Rough and Ready took care of the needs of the heavily built-up Olneyville section of Johnston. They were well-known for their Nameaug, a steam hand-engine dating to the 1850s, which won many prizes in the 1880s and 1890s at local musters. The busy Ladies' Rough and Ready Auxiliary raised a lot of money for the fire fighters with socials, suppers, and entertainments. The station became part of the Providence fire department when the Olneyville section of Johnston was annexed to the city in 1898.



Manton Hose Company #3 in front of the old Manton fire barn, circa 1900. Photo courtesy of Manton Hose Company #3.

Since fire was an ever-present danger, other areas in Johnston soon started their own groups. Manton Hose Company #3 was established on April 7, 1892 under Foreman William H. King. They started with a thousand feet of hose and a hose cart that came from the Providence Fire Department (their hose company history states that their first home was on Plainfield Street in the Rough and Ready Station in the Annex section of what was then Johnston. This does not agree with the Rough and Ready Company history, though). Their first actual chief was Robert A. Black in 1923. Among other sites, they used a barn-like building at Hedley and Greenville Avenues for their headquarters. In 1911, they were granted a charter and later opened a new fire house on Greenville Avenue in May 1913. Their first truck, a Pope Hartford, was purchased in 1914. It replaced the hose-cart and horse-drawn wagon that they had been using. Money for operations was secured by fundraisers along with some money allocated yearly from the town. Old Home Week celebrations were held on the station grounds in the 1930s and 1940s.

Some of the men who served more than 45 years with Hose 3 were: Arthur Newman, Edward Newman, Oscar Bouchard, Rocco Scorpio, and his brother Henry.

The 1913 fire house still stands, and Hose Company #3 still exists but is no longer an active fire-fighting group. It ceased operation in the 1990s.

Graniteville's volunteer group started up in 1890, but in the beginning, they had no fire barn. On December 6, 1910, the Graniteville Volunteer Fire Association's charter was signed. Their station, Johnston Hose #2, was a building erected around 1911 at the corner of Cottage Street and Putnam Avenue. In 1947, the Graniteville volunteers purchased the town's first ambulance, a 1935 Buick that was converted from its previous use as a hearse. The ambulance was one of the pioneer rescue units in the state at the time. It was equipped by the Graniteville firemen with their own funds. Many were not familiar with the term rescue squad back then. The present Graniteville fire station was built in 1968, and it is the last of the old village fire houses still in use.



Johnston Hose #2's 1935 Buick ambulance.

The Thornton Volunteer Fire Company #1 was incorporated on August 19, 1914, although mention is made of a fire company in the village in 1892. It is not clear if this early group was the Thornton Volunteers or the British Hosiery Volunteer Fire Co., which was attached to the hosiery mill on Mill Street, whose chief was John R. Shaw. The latter company, although primarily there for the mill, did fight fires around the Thornton area. It must have been small, though, because when the Thornton Worsted Mill was on fire on September 2, 1893, a Dr. Thoms had to pedal to the Rough & Ready Fire Co. in Olneyville to get them to come and fight the fire!

Conditions were difficult even years later. When a large fire was ablaze in Thornton on the 6th of July, 1926, the fire companies were forced to use water from the Pocasset River because the water pressure from the 6-inch water main was not sufficient to render the needed pressure for hoses.

The company's first motorized equipment was a Maxim truck.

The Thornton Volunteers purchased the land and building at 1 Willow Street to be used as their fire house about 1918 from Colonel Frank Tillinghast, who held the mortgage on the property. The fire company built a new station in 1940 at the corner of Willow and Plainfield Streets. The volunteer group turned the building over to the town in 1946 in return for an appropriation for renovation of the building. At some point, the volunteer group re-took possession of the fire station.

Ambulance service started up in 1956 and in 1957, a new ambulance replaced the well-used old one. In 1962, the station

had three trucks, an ambulance, and a rescue boat. The building, which still stands, served the community until a few years ago. The new Fire Station #1 was completed in the 2000s on Atwood Avenue to serve the Thornton area and surroundings. Two Thornton firefighters, Angelo "Ace" Cappelli and Alan Zambarano, went on to become chief of the town's department, and both served over four decades as firefighters. Ace served about 51 years and Alan served 42 years. Both men started out as volunteers at age 15.

The fourth of the town's volunteer station was the West End Volunteer Fire Association, Hose 4, which became active in March 1955.

Up to that time, the Scituate Volunteer Fire Department had covered the western portion of Johnston. In their early days the West End station, under the leadership of Chief Kenneth Round, acquired a tanker truck, a pumper truck, and a forest fighting truck as well as a rescue boat. Their headquarters, which also served as a community service building (the building was turned over to the firemen by the West End Community Club), was demolished in the first few days of 2021, having been replaced a couple of years ago by a new station on Hartford Avenue at Reservoir Avenue.



*The old West End Fire Station, demolished in early 2021.
Photo by Christopher Martin, (July 2014).*

The Modern System

In the 1950s, a call system was instituted, whereby the firefighters who went out on calls were paid a flat rate for each fire. No longer was fire-fighting all volunteer. In 1964, a Home Rule Charter went into effect, which among other things, led to the gradual elimination of the volunteer fire companies in town over time. It took until the 1990s to complete the transition to a permanently staffed fire department. William C. Northup was appointed the town's first permanent fire chief in December 1965.

Johnston's Police and Fire Headquarters Building (known as the Colwell-Newman Memorial Building) at 1520 Atwood Avenue was dedicated on June 9, 1968. Now operations were centralized and provisions could be made for permanent firefighters, who first manned the building in 1971.

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**From an undated newspaper article:**  
Transcribed by Beth Hurd

Origin of Ochee Spring.  
To the Editor, Evening Bulletin:

Under the date of June 9, 1937, an article of news appeared under the head "State Hotel Men Answer Maine With All Rhode Island Dinner." It is with pride I take exception to a portion of this article dealing with the following statement.

"Even the sparkling water came from the spring beside Hartford avenue in Providence where red-skinned laborers once refreshed themselves while at work in the soapstone quarry close by."



*The sanitary bottling room of the Ochee Spring Water Company, from a circa 1910s-1920s postcard from the collection of Louis McGowan.*

If my impression serves me correctly you refer to the spring whose real name is "Ochee Won't You Come," for trade purposes called "Ochee." This spring was not born at the time of the Indian, as you refer to red-skins. It was created in the year 1875 by my father, John Clary, at the invitation of Mr. Angell, Sr. Mr. Angell, Sr., was in search of gold, which was found in small quantities on this property. Being of an anxious nature in conservation, together with my father, who had considerable experience with powder, they both set out to find some of that gold. Mr. Clary had received his earlier experience at North Conway and Epping, N.H., where he was engaged by the O'Neils Railroad Builders of Portland, ME.

Mr. Angell, Sr., suggested he would like to blast and see what could be found. Agreeing to take the job if Mr. Angell would stand all damages, Mr. Clary ordered a keg of powder. After a number of days' drilling and excavating the keg of powder was placed in the hole. The result, 'Ochee' was born to the world.

Considerable damage resulted from the blast to a greenhouse and windows. Large quantities of soapstone were removed to Brown University. The water was also tested by the university and pronounced "Aqua Puro" or "Pure." Incidentally, Mr. Clary was the first person to drink this water.

Prominent men who were acquainted with these facts are: Littlefields, Thorntons, Proctors, Gleasons.

James F. Clary, Providence.

**From Mineral Sources of the United States, part 2, 1920:**

**RHODE ISLAND.**

Rhode Island reported in 1917 sales from 6 springs amounting to 368,976 gallons, valued at \$24,975. The average price per gallon remained the same, 7 cents. The water was sold exclusively for table use, and in addition 31,830 gallons was used in the manufacture of soft drinks, as against 16,500 gallons used for this purpose in 1916. The sales in 1916, at 7 cents a gallon, amounted to 449,453 gallons, valued at \$33,050. Thus there was a decrease of 18 per cent in quantity and 24 per cent in value in 1917. One mineral-water resort was maintained.

The names of the 6 commercial springs are as follows:

- Berry Spring, Pawtucket, Providence County.
- Girard Spring, North Providence, Providence County.
- Gladstone Spring, Narragansett Pier, Washington County.
- Holley Mineral Spring, East Woonsocket, Providence County.
- Ochee Spring, Johnston, Providence County.
- Prophet Spring, Providence, Providence County.

**218 Morgan Avenue Purchased**

In early April Anthony Ricci closed on 218 Morgan Avenue, a Harris family house that partially dates back to the 1700s. Ricci previously bought the adjacent 1768 Andrew Harris House (residence of the late Mabel Sprague) in 2008, and did a remarkable job restoring and renovating it. He intends a similar treatment for 218 Morgan Avenue.



*The south-facing facade of 218 Morgan Avenue. Photo by Christopher Martin.*

The property sits on twelve acres, and includes historical cemetery #57 (the Atwood-Harris Lot), as well as one of the oldest historical sites in town, Hipses Rock. The huge glacial erratic, an important Native American landmark, is one of the boundary points cited in the original 1638 deed for the town of Providence.

Now that he owns it, Ricci hopes to make Hipses Rock more accessible to the public. You can bet the Historical Society will be looking at ways to take advantage of that increased access.

And the Cemetery Committee can't wait to begin cleaning and restoring cemetery #57. There's a lot of work ahead!

**Historical Advertising**

Here's another old ad from the Historical Advertising photo album on our Facebook page. This one is from The *Johnston Sun Rise*, May 21, 1998. Who remembers partying here?



**Society Doings**

As we mentioned last issue, we're keeping busy behind the scenes doing everything required to keep our bills paid and property maintained. We're looking into installing lighting to make our buildings and their approaches more visible at night. A future project might be a new crushed stone walkway for the Museum barn (the walkway currently consists of a few flagstones sunk in the grass).

The Matteson map project that we mentioned last issue has been completed, and it looks great! It's printed on heavy duty plastic so it should be durable enough to take and display anywhere.



*Detail of the 1948 Matteson map -- Greenville Avenue on the left, George Waterman Road on the right. Photo by Christopher Martin.*

On March 11 a den of cub scouts (about a dozen, plus parents) visited our Museum barn.

A new solar farm project is going in on Scituate Avenue, and a team of archaeologists has been examining the property to document anything of historical interest. Steve Merolla has been in touch with them to make sure they are aware of a nearby cemetery, JN032, the Caleb Remington Lot.

Grayce Morehead, former librarian at Mohr Memorial Library here in town, has offered to help teach us to organize and archive our printed materials and ephemera.

Additional projects we're working on or researching include: grounds cleanup, air conditioning system maintenance, pest control, sealcoating for the Museum barn, small repairs around Elijah Angell House, and our 2020 taxes. Also, we're aware of a small museum at Dame Farm that hasn't been open to the public for many years. We're looking into the status of that.

### **Cemetery Committee Report**

by Steve Merolla

The period of this report basically covers the winter of 2020/'21, and as such there was not so much activity as during warmer periods. Before the turn of the year we were able to clean Cemetery #1, situated off Hopkins Avenue in the west end of town.

With the turn of the new year there was not much snow on the ground, but the conditions were not perfect. In that situation though, Doug was able to continue his project of erecting new cemetery signs. In that regard, he was able to do so in cemeteries # 6, 24, and 34.

With the melting of the snow and moderating temperatures, we have at the time of this report (mid-March) gotten back into the field. Thus, we have completed the clean-up of cemeteries #14, 34, 59, and 60. This is a good start for the Committee and I am happy to report that the cemetery crew are all back on board and anxious to get back into the field. Many thanks as always to the Committee members. If anyone wants to get involved please contact any member of the Committee.

### **Volunteers Needed!**

Retirees, Scouts, students! We always need volunteers to perform various duties to ensure the smooth operation of the society. For instance, we could use a Properties Committee to oversee the maintenance of our properties. Or volunteers to serve as docents in the Elijah Angell House during open hours. Or someone to help on meeting nights, setting up coffee, setting up the room, etc. The president would like to see many people doing small jobs. If you'd like to help out, please approach a board member at the next meeting.

### **Our Properties**

Our museum barn is open Tuesdays, 6:30-8:30pm; and Thursdays, 9am-12pm, 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 johnstonhistorical1825@gmail.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.

### **Acquisitions**

- A display case purchased from the Slater Mill gift shop.
- Craig Scorpio donated a handful of vintage business cards that he found while renovating his kitchen.

Many donated objects may be seen in the "Acquisitions and Items from our Collections" photo album on our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/johnstonhistorical](http://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
- Old photos, slides, or home movies of Johnston
- Any Johnston-related ephemera or memorabilia
- A gas-powered leaf blower
- Fire extinguishers

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### **Upcoming Events**

General meetings continue to be suspended, due to the ongoing pandemic.

#### **April 17, 2021**

Annual Cemetery Cleanup

9am-12pm

King Cemetery (JN021), Hartford Avenue at Winfield Avenue.

Bring yourself, a rake, and a friend!

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 [johnstonhistorical1825@gmail.com](mailto:johnstonhistorical1825@gmail.com) or leave a message at (401) 231-3380.

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### **Seven Ways You Can Help the Johnston Historical Society:**

1) The Find on 6, 2953 Hartford Avenue, is now accepting consignment items on behalf of the JHS! That means you can donate some gently used white elephant items and, if they sell, JHS gets 60% of the proceeds! Each person may bring two boxes of goods at a time, Wednesday through Friday, 11am-4pm.

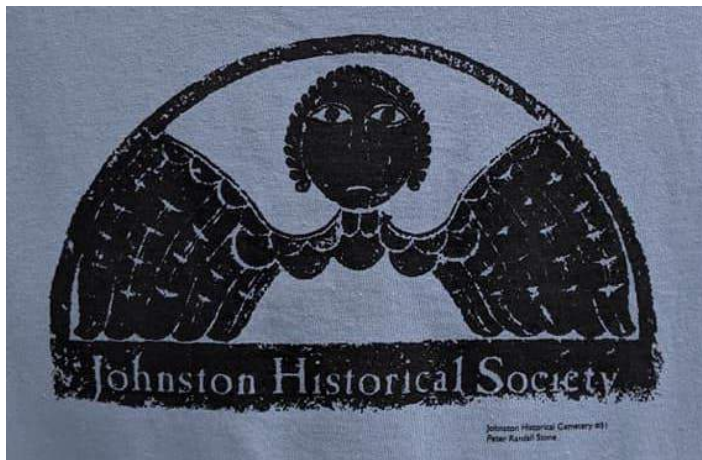
Appropriate items include antiques, collectibles, vintage clothing or handbags (in good condition), jewelry, kitchenware, furniture, etc. Nothing broken or soiled.

2) When purchasing items on Amazon, if you enter via smile.amazon.com, you can designate JHS to receive a small portion of the purchase price as a charitable donation!

3) Stop n Shop has a program where they donate \$1 from every purchase of a \$2.50 shopping bag to a local charity. The Johnston Historical Society was chosen as the charity for the month of May 2021! So if you were planning on buying a shopping bag, May is the time to do it!


4) Buy a book! We still have copies of *Images of America: Johnston I* and *I*. \$15 each, or two for \$25!

5) Buy a t-shirt! We still have new t-shirts for sale in slate blue and khaki, and we have a few left in sage green. S/M/L or XL. \$15 each. Pick one up at an upcoming general meeting, or drop us a line and we'll arrange to deliver one to you.



6) We very much appreciate everyone who has kept their membership up-to-date, despite the fact that we haven't been able to hold any in-person meetings over the past year. Please keep it up! We hope to be able to return to holding monthly meetings later this year.

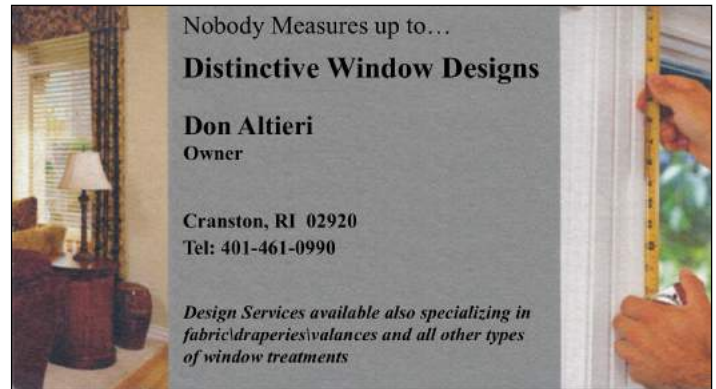
7) And of course, we always welcome cash donations!

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <b>Find us on Facebook</b>    | As of this month our Facebook and Instagram pages have 1,237 and 209 followers, respectively! Have you 'liked' us yet? To find us type these addresses into your computer browser: |
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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: July 15, 2021.**





## Elliott M. Robbins Funeral Home

2251 Mineral Spring Avenue  
North Providence, RI 02911-1743

401-231-9307

[www.robbsfuneralhome.com](http://www.robbsfuneralhome.com)

email: [robbsfuneralhome@verizon.net](mailto:robbsfuneralhome@verizon.net)



2179 Mineral Spring Avenue  
No. Providence, RI 02911  
Tel: (401) 231-1660  
Email: [afrances1@verizon.net](mailto:afrances1@verizon.net)



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**Our Executive Board**

President: Elise Carlson  
Vice-President: Steve Merolla  
Treasurer: Joe Jamroz  
Recording Secretary: Carl Johnson  
Corresponding Secretary: Christopher Martin  
Trustees: Dan Brown, Doug Stephens, Marie Thierfelder,  
and Anthony Ursillo.

Our Executive Board meets at 6:30pm 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: johnstonhistorical1825@gmail.com  
Facebook: www.facebook.com/johnstonhistorical

**Annual Dues**

Have you paid your 2021 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 2021 dues. Send us a check today!

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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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.

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