



Jamestown Historical Society

HERITAGE

Spring 2023

To collect, preserve, and share with others the heritage of Jamestown, Rhode Island.

What We Have Been Doing

Starting on January 25, the Jamestown Historical Society offered a series of five webinars.



On January 25, John Henry, a former reporter for Long Island's *Newsday* and the New York *Daily News*, presented, "Night Boats to Newport: Remembering the 'Floating Palaces' of the Illustrious Fall River Line."

Keeping with our ferry theme in this 150th anniversary year of Jamestown to Newport steam ferries, Peter Fay talked about "A Perilous Passage: The Ferrymen of Narragansett Bay" on February 8.



Historic New England's Jane Hennedy took us to Jamestown's Watson Farm on February 22 with her talk "Walking Hand-in-Hand with the Past at Watson Farm." The land and buildings at the farm speak to the continuity of cultivation in

the singular place that is Jamestown.

We finished the season with two videos: the ever-popular "We Took the Ferry: Ferry Boat Students of Narragansett Bay" on March 8 and "Stories in Stone," the film of the October 2021 tour through Cedar Cemetery and the adjoining Hazard and Friends graveyards, on April 26.



Not all of the winter and spring events were online.

A new book by Sue Maden and Rosemary Enright – *Island Chronicles: Stories from Jamestown, Rhode Island* – was published in March. (Read about

the book on page 6.) Betsy and Ted Baldwin held a book-signing party on April 2 at their home on Whittier Road. All were invited. More than 75 people showed up to have Sue and Rosemary autograph their books.

Jim Buttrick arranged a members-only tour of the private quarters of the Breakers for April 18. Trudy Coxe, Executive Director at The Preservation Society of Newport County, was one of our guides on this special tour through the Vanderbilt family's third floor quarters and the attic – areas that are not open to the public.

John Robertson, military historian and author of *Revolutionary War Defenses in Rhode Island*, visited Jamestown on May 3, sponsored by the Battle of Rhode Island Association and the JHS. After touring Jamestown forts, he gave a talk based on his book.

And finally the JHS has a table at the General Washington's Crossing Celebration on May 13.

If you didn't get email notifications of these events, we don't have your correct email. Make sure when you renew your membership to include your email. Or subscribe to JHS news at the bottom right of the JHS home page, jamestownhistoricalsociety.org. More and more of our communications and invitations are going out only by email. Don't take the chance of missing an event!



Sue Maden and Rosemary Enright with Jack Pereira, their youngest admirer, at the April 2 book signing.

Summer/Fall 2023 Program Calendar

Thursday, May 25

Exhibit Opening Reception

5 to 7 PM

Jamestown Museum

Opening reception of this year's museum exhibit

Celebrating Jamestown Ferries:

150th Anniversary of Jamestown's First Steam Ferry

Wine and appetizers

MEMBERS ONLY

Friday, May 26

Opening Day for Museum and Windmill

Open House at Meetinghouse

1 to 4 PM

Friday, July 21

Evening at the Windmill

5 to 7 PM

Jamestown Windmill

Wine and appetizers

MEMBERS ONLY

Parking on site for those unable to climb stile
General parking in Dutra field off Weeden Lane

Suggested donation: \$50

Saturday, July 22

Windmill Day

10 AM to 2 PM

Jamestown Windmill and Meetinghouse

A Mano Food truck with gelato and pizza

Music by the To Be Continued Band

Tours of Windmill and Friends Meetinghouse

Games, Kids' Art Table, Turf Maze

Free cornbread, windmill cookies, lemonade

ALL WELCOME

Donations appreciated.

Tuesday, August 8

Annual Meeting

7 PM

Jamestown Senior Center

Annual report of society

Election of officers and directors for 2023-2024

Guest speaker: Archie Clarke

History of the Jamestown Ferries

ALL WELCOME

Friday, September 15

JHS Gala Preview Party

5 to 7 PM

The Boulders

52 Newport Street

Cocktail party at one of Jamestown's Resort Era
summer cottages

Full bar and appetizers

MEMBERS ONLY

Suggested donation: \$50

Includes ticket to Saturday House Tour

Saturday, September 16

House Tour

10 AM to 2 PM

Visit historic houses in Jamestown

Learn their history

Watch for detailed information in August.

ALL WELCOME

Member pre-ticketing online: \$20

Tickets at the door: \$25

Sunday, October 1

Quaker International Day

10 AM to 2 PM

Conanicut Friends Meetinghouse

Weeden Lane

Learn about the history of Quakers in Jamestown

ALL WELCOME

Monday, October 9

Closing Day

Jamestown Museum and Windmill

Last day to visit the museum or windmill this year

Saturday, October 14

Volunteer Appreciation Party

5 to 7 PM

Venue TBD

Wine and appetizers

and a chance for us to say "thank you".

VOLUNTEERS ONLY

From the President

Happy Spring!

The Jamestown Historical Society had a busy winter with many major preservation projects getting underway.

- The museum is getting new paint, roofing, and landscaping.
- At the Battery, we are adding supports to the six World War I cement observation posts.
- The windmill and Conanicut Friends meetinghouse have new gardens full of roses and other plants.
- The stone wall between the windmill and the meetinghouse has been cleared of all trees, vines and debris. Soon a stone mason will rebuild the wall in colonial farm fashion without cement.

This winter we also enjoyed a wonderful series of webinars, held a festive book signing to introduce Sue and Rosemary's new book, *Island Chronicles*, and had a very special outing to see the Vanderbilt family's private third floor apartment and the attic at the Breakers. This area is not open to the public and is still mostly in its 1895 condition. Thanks to Jim Buttrick for arranging this.

The "Vaultarians" have been hard at work preparing the database to move to a web-based system. Plus they are constantly reviewing new items for inclusion. The JHS catalog contains almost 50,000 records! There are photos, objects both tiny and large, magazine and newspaper articles, obituaries, postcards, and paintings. All items are Jamestown related. Go to the JHS website and spend a little time looking in the online catalog – it's easy to lose track of time as you look at fascinating old photos and artifacts.

Many of our signs, photos, documents, models, and recordings of interviews relate to the Jamestown ferries. Visit the museum this summer for a look at many of these in the 2023 exhibit, "Celebrating the Jamestown Ferries." May 12 was the 150th anniversary of the first steam ferry between Jamestown and Newport, so this is a special year.

If you are cleaning out your attic or maybe a parent's attic, let us know if you have relevant Jamestown photos, documents or other historic items. As we mourned the pending demolition of the old Shoreby Casino, we realized we don't have old photos of events like dinners and dances at the club. We'd love to have items like that.

Once again, many of you signed up to be docents at the Windmill and Museum and filled the schedule. Thank you! It is very rewarding, and we couldn't open our sites without you. Look for announcements for volunteers to help with our summer events as well.

We hope to see everyone at this summer's events (opposite page). Some of these events are open to members only, so be sure to renew your membership. You should also make sure we have your email. We use email to send our announcements and invitations. You don't want to miss a chance to enjoy a JHS event!

It takes many people and resources to make all this happen, and we are thankful to them all.

- The Dutra family for letting us restore their wall.
- The great staff at the Jamestown Department of Public Works for clearing away the trees.
- Matt and Nick Rinaldi for roofing the museum.
- Senator Dawn Euer and Representative Alex Finkelman for sponsoring legislative grants to help fund our major projects.
- The Palmieri Fund for funding our landscaping efforts and Preserve Rhode Island/1772 Foundation for helping with the cost of painting the museum.

I want to especially acknowledge our hard-working board members. Bravo!

Betsy Baldwin



Jamestown Historical Society Board

Officers 2022-2023

President	Betsy Baldwin	<i>Programs</i>
Vice President	Sue Maden	<i>Exhibits & Print Media</i>
Secretary	Gabrielle Highstein	<i>Outreach</i>
Treasurer	Rosemary Enright	<i>Maintenance</i>

Directors to 2024

Peter Fay	<i>Website</i>
Leo Orsi	<i>Finance</i>
Dianne Rugh	<i>Collections</i>

Directors to 2023

Fred Brown	<i>Buildings & Grounds</i>
Judy Knight	<i>Volunteers</i>
Marcia Lindsay	<i>Meetinghouse</i>
Larry McDonald	<i>Conanicut Battery</i>
Debbie Swistak	<i>Memories</i>

Directors to 2025

Ross Williams	Conanicut Battery
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At Our Sites

Winter is a time for maintenance and planning at the windmill, Conanicut Friends meetinghouse, and the museum.

Museum

This spring, the exterior of the museum got a complete facelift.

In line with our maintenance plan, Vlad's Painting replaced deteriorated clapboards, repainted the storm windows installed in 2007 to protect the original sashes, cleaned the sign, and painted everything from the walls to the iron handrails. We are very grateful to Preserve Rhode Island and The 1772 Foundation for their grant that covered half the cost of the work.

During the spring wind storms, some shingles were blown off the museum roof. A new roof was not in the maintenance plan. We knew the roof, which had not been replaced in the 2007-2008 renovation, was nearing the end of its life but had hoped to delay replacing it for a few more years. When we sent out for bids, Matt and Nick Rinaldi of Rinanldi Roofing offered to donate the expertise and labor. They further arranged for free pick-up of the debris. "Thank you" doesn't express the depth of our gratitude.

A final touch was added by Jonathan Thurston of Sensible Yacht Cordage. For several years, museum docents have struggled with the lines putting up the flags in front of the museum. Jonathan replaced them all.

New landscaping is coming as part of the rose garden project.



Courtesy of Vlad's Painting

Vlad's Painting at work on the museum.

Meetinghouse

When no one else is around in the colder months, critters try to enjoy living in the meetinghouse. Keeping them out is a winter-long problem. In addition to normal pest control measures, ensuring physical barriers to animal incursions is vital.

To this end, stone mason Chris Evans sealed segments of the old stone foundation with cement to keep out winter visitors. In addition, William Smith installed a new white oak threshold on the western door. The old one had worn down under the many feet that had gone in and out over the years.



Photograph by Marcia Lindsay

The new threshold at the meetinghouse.

The Conanicut Friends Meeting resumed meeting at the meetinghouse on May 7. Meeting is at 9:30 AM every Sunday through October. Visitors are welcome. Tours of this unique example of early New England Quaker architecture can be arranged at any time.

Windmill

It was a quiet and uneventful winter at the windmill as our team focused on improving the view of the mill from North Road.

One planned new addition at the mill that won't be in place on opening day is a turf maze. Like a hedge or corn maze, a turf maze is a labyrinth. However, the convoluted path through the maze is edged by longer grass rather than by a hedge or corn. The maze cannot be laid out until the grass is long enough.

Our first tour of the season is May 18 for a group of school children from the Wolf School in East Providence. We are always delighted to give private tours of the mill, especially to school groups.

The windmill opens officially on Friday, May 26, from 1 to 4 PM and will be open every Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and holiday from then until Columbus/Indigenous People Day, October 9, except in bad weather. When it rains more than a sprinkle, the field gets too soggy for parking.

At Our Sites (cont'd)

Rose Gardens

In 2021 and 2022, the JHS received grants from the Palmieri Fund for landscaping, with the proviso that the landscapes include roses. Roses need lots of sunlight, so the planning committee, chaired by Judy Knight, initially designed matching gardens at the windmill and the meetinghouse.

Those gardens were dug and composted last fall, and planting and mulching has begun. The three beds along the inside of the North Road wall – one on each side of the North Road entry to the meetinghouse lot and one at the windmill – will contain a total of 27 Virginia roses. The species, despite its name, is native to New England. The beds are anchored at either end by other native plants: blueberry and holly at the meetinghouse; elderberry and shadbush at the windmill.



Meetinghouse garden ready for planting.

This spring an expanded committee took on the much more arduous task of devising a landscape plan for the museum that included roses. Sunlight is scarce at the museum once the trees leaf out, which makes selecting plants difficult.

As a first step, most of the current vegetation will be removed, both in front of the museum and on both sides of the handicap ramp.

Town Pound

The town pound on North Road at the end of Cedar Lane was used in early days to hold animals found at large. JHS accepted responsibility for it in 1996. The wall is in need of work.



Diversity Initiative Update

The JHS is very interested in making sure that our programs, articles, and events are inclusive, and that we share the stories and history of all Jamestowners for a richer understanding of our past.

Most of our webinars included stories of diverse people. For example, in her webinar about Watson Farm, Jane Hennedy of Historic New England, owners of the farm, spoke about the roles indigenous people and enslaved people played in the farm's early years. She acknowledged the assistance of research done by JHS historians in exploring this history, which has not been told before. The research continues and Historic New England will be updating its website and literature accordingly.

Several *Jamestown Press* history articles covered the stories of immigrants from Ireland and from the Azores/Portugal. Peter Fay wrote an article on Orman Remington, the only local slave to buy his freedom. In 1781 he paid "100 Spanish silver milled dollars" to his owner, Gershom Remington, for his freedom.

In our search for a stone mason, we requested bids from nine contractors, among them a Narragansett tribe member who is a fourth-generation mason, a woman from Wakefield, and a contractor of Hispanic heritage. As I write this, we are evaluating the bids.

The Jamestown Art Center sponsored a terrific evening with artist Jean-Marc Superville Sovak and Peter Fay of the JHS. Peter did much of the research for Jean-Marc's sculpture "Six of the First" which was on display all last summer in East Ferry. It was a very moving piece which included a list of six African women who were sold as slaves in Newport in 1743. Knowing the African name of an enslaved person is very unusual. Peter uncovered the names in legal papers resulting from a dispute about the ship on which the women were brought to Newport.



We will continue to look for opportunities to enrich our understanding of our shared past.

Betsy Baldwin

"Six of the First"

by

Jean-Marc Superville Sovak

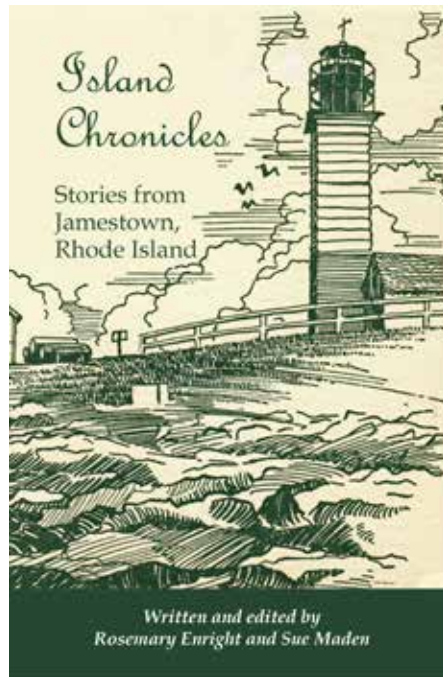
New Book of Jamestown Essays to Benefit JHS

Island Chronicles: Stories from Jamestown, Rhode Island, the new collection of essays written and collected by Rosemary Enright and Sue Maden, has arrived! Betsy and Ted Baldwin hosted a book signing on Sunday, April 2.

According to a journalist in the late 19th century, Jamestown was “the liveliest, the noisiest, and the most hilarious summer city on the Rhode Island coast.”

“In these essays,” Rosemary explained, “we try to capture the excitement and the worries of people living on the island between the introduction of the steam ferry to Newport in 1873 and the Great Depression of the 1930s.

“The changes in the period were immense. Look at numbers. In the 50 years 1870 to 1920, Jamestown’s year-round population exploded from 378 to 1,633. And that doesn’t count the estimated 2,500 summer people.”



Most of the essays originally appeared in *The Jamestown Press* as part of a series of monthly articles about the town and its past inhabitants that began in 2012, the 100th anniversary of the historical society. Three essays are from a different time and by different authors. They were written in 1893, 1902, and 1928, respectively, by individuals who lived in or visited Jamestown at that time. They present a contemporary view of Jamestown in the Resort Era.

The book costs \$20 and is available on the JHS website (jamestownhistoricalsociety.org), on Amazon.com, and at All Ashore Cottage Outfitters, Conanicut Marine Gift Shop, Curiosity & Co., Fuller Gallery, Jamestown Hardware, and McQuade’s. When the museum opens for the summer, the book will be on sale there.

Or if you see Rosemary or Sue, ask them for an autographed copy.

All proceeds benefit the Jamestown Historical Society.

Helping Our Sister Organization

The Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association is now taking pre-orders for Rhode Island’s newest charity license plate. Your purchase will support the Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association’s efforts to preserve the historic buildings and keep Beavertail Light shining for future generations.

Artist Don Mong created the design for the plate which costs \$42.50 for a set of two plates (front and back of vehicle.) BLMA collects the money for the plate and gets \$20 to be used towards the preservation of the Beavertail Lighthouse buildings and for program development at the Museum. The \$20 is a tax-deductible charitable donation as is the \$10 registration renewal surcharge. When you switch to the Beavertail Lighthouse plate, your current plate number is transferred to the new plate.

At this time, BLMA still needs to collect over 200 pre-orders for RI DMV to fully process the plates. Once 600 plates are ordered, plates may be ordered directly from the DMV.

Do your bit to protect this historic site. Go to beavertailight.org to pre-order your plates now.

The advertisement features a central image of a Rhode Island license plate. The plate has a blue background with a white border. At the top, it says 'Rhode Island' in a serif font. Below that, 'BLMA' is written in large, bold, black letters. At the bottom, it says 'Beavertail Lighthouse' in a smaller font. To the left of the text is a small illustration of the Beavertail Lighthouse. Above the plate, the text reads 'Don't Wait Get Your Plate! Beavertail Lighthouse RI License Plate'. Below the plate, it says 'The Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association is now taking pre-orders for Rhode Island's newest Charity License Plate!'. In the bottom right corner, there is a circular logo for the Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association.

Major Preservation Initiatives

Conanicut Battery

For several years, the Battery Committee, which legally has oversight of the historic elements of Jamestown's Battery Park, has been concerned about the six Fire Control Stations on Prospect Hill above the 1776 battery. Preservation of these structures is important because, if they disappear, an valuable artifact of Jamestown's importance as a military site in the early 20th century will be irretrievably lost.

The emplacements have large concrete caps that are at risk of collapsing where the underlying supporting structure has deteriorated or in some cases is completely missing. Somebody - probably bored teenagers - has entered these structures from time to time, so it's important that they be structurally sound to prevent personal injury and resultant liability.

Members of the committee toured the installations with Parks and Recreation Director Ray DeFalco late last year to evaluate the problem. The original goal for 2023 was to stabilize the wooden supports for the observation slots of the bunkers, with the longer term goal of restoring Observation Bunker Number 1 so that visitors could better understand why the bunkers existed.

The Joseph Gnazzo Company, which has worked on the restoration of Fort Adams, was consulted. Recognizing the danger posed by the deteriorating structures, they recommended that galvanized steel posts replace the weakened or missing metal and wood supports at the openings of each structure. The posts will support the caps and prevent their collapse. The estimated total cost is \$14,000.

The town has agreed to the plan and will reimburse \$4,000 of the cost. Income from the battery endowment established in 2002 and a \$1,000 Rhode Island Senate grant sponsored by Senator Dawn Euer will defray much of the rest of the cost.



Photograph by Chris Zeeman

One of the Fire Control Stations to be stabilized.

North Road Wall

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.

Robert Frost

The wall along North Road between the Conanicut Friends meetinghouse and Jamestown windmill fit Robert Frost's description of a wall in spring. The wall was further compromised by the vegetation that had grown up through it.



The wall in February before clearing began.

The wall connects the two JHS properties in the Windmill Hill Historic District - the Conanicut Friends meetinghouse and the windmill - and is itself an historic artifact of Jamestown's agricultural past. In addition, the removal of the vegetation would increase the visibility of both the windmill and the meetinghouse and open the vista across open fields to the Newport-Pell Bridge.

The historical society, in cooperation with the town and the Dutras, whose farm the wall borders, decided that it was worth preserving. During the winter, the town removed the trees and vines that had encroached on the wall, essentially dismantling it.



The dismantled wall in April.

As spring approached, the historical society began negotiation with local masons to use the stones from the dismantled wall to build a new "farmers wall," that is, a wall in which the stones are placed one above the other with no concern for the fit of the stones beyond nesting them together, as if they were logs in a stack of firewood.

Preserving and Sharing Our Collection

In the Vault

One of the most read emails sent out by JHS is the monthly “From the Collection.” These peeks into the collection are generated by members of the Collections Committee. This winter and spring, the topics included Jamestown’s working farms, Jamestown teacher Clara Lewis, ladies’ fans, the Carr School, artworks of Old Fort Dumpling, the Thorndike Hotel, and most recently, the the Mackerel Cove Beach Pavilion, pictured below.



JHS P1965.158

Much of Collections Committee’s energy this winter has been directed toward preparing the database for transition to a web-based system. The database is quite complex, and not all of the current data works correctly in the new structure. The evaluation and update should be completed by the end of the summer.

The main advantage of the web-based system is that all information entered is available to users immediately. Currently, new records and corrections are uploaded periodically - once every three or four months - to the online site. This delay is unacceptable in our online world.

The committee members still found time to evaluate, accept, document, and create records for the numerous additions to the collection listed on page 10.

In the Press

Rosemary Enright, Peter Fay, and Sue Maden continue to write montly columns on historical subjects for *The Jamestown Press*. Over



the past six months, they addressed many diverse topics from Orman Remington, the only known slave in Jamestown’s history to purchase his own freedom, to the celebration of the Portuguese *Festa do Espirito Santo* (Festival of the Holy Spirit) and the purchase of the silver crown (left) for the festival.

Exhibits

Each month an exhibit is mounted in the JHS display case that temporarily stands in the front hall at Town Hall. (It was moved from the library during construction.) Objects and archives from the collection are displayed under the direction of Sue Maden.

This year’s exhibits have included *Identifying with Your Interests*, membership cards for Jamestown organizations; *Bottles; Licenses and Applications*, which included a 1760 application for a license to sell “strong & spiritous liquors;” *From the Jamestown Historical Society*, books and DVDs produced by or for the JHS; and *Badges and Symbols of Status*.

The spring semester exhibit at the Lawn Avenue School, *School Days: Then and Now*, compares the school experience from the early 19th century to the current day. Pictures contrast the dress codes, means of transportation, and classroom facilities across the years.

Summer Exhibit

On May 12, 1873, the ferry *Jamestown* made its maiden voyage from Jamestown to Newport. *Celebrating Jamestown Ferries*, this summer’s museum exhibit curated by Rosemary Enright, commemorates this event and the 96 years of Narragansett Bay ferry service that it initiated.

Pictures and artifacts of the Jamestown & Newport Ferry Company, which was majority-owned by the Town of Jamestown, its successor state-run Ferry Authority and RIDOT Ferry Division, and the opposition Narragansett Transportation Co. are on display. Models of the ferries, many of them made by ferry employees, are featured. Interviews with ferry personel were scoured for descriptions of duties and anecdotes about working on the ferry. See page 10 for some other stories from the ferry workers.

The exhibit opens with a members-only reception on May 25 and will be open Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays from 1 to 4 PM until October 9.



JHS P1980.186

Jamestown, the first of four ferries with that name.

Some Things We Learned From You

In 1986, the Jamestown Historical Society undertook an Oral History project with former employees of the Jamestown & Newport Ferry Company. Ten interviewers were recruited. Thirty-six former employees were interviewed. Together they had worked for the ferry company for 334 years!

This year, in preparation for the summer exhibit celebrating the 150th anniversary of Jamestown's first steam ferry, we listened to the recordings again. Following are excerpts from the interviews. Other snippets of the interviews are featured in the exhibit.

Tom Carr was like many employees who rose in the ranks. First he was a maintenance worker who chipped paint and scraped the bilge of the ferryboats undergoing repair at West Ferry. Then he became a purser who collected fees from drivers and their passengers. Next he got his AB (Able Seaman) certificate, which he needed in order to take tests for other positions. The captains taught him to steer the ship, and he became a quartermaster. He would usually pilot the run from Jamestown to Newport and the Captain did the Newport to Jamestown run.

William Boone and **Jimmy West**, deckhands, thought the pay was good compared to other jobs. "It was the best job I ever had."

Eleanor Hull Brown worked in the ferry company's office beginning in 1939. In the summer, there were 65 employees and they were all paid in cash. Every afternoon Jesse Tefft took a satchel of money to a bank in Newport. He would return with \$300 in change for the pursers and ticket takers. It was extremely heavy.

Nick Robertson worked 14 hours each day during the Newport folk festival.

Jayne Chesbro Clarke worked summers from 1941 to 1945 as a purserette. She applied for the job as soon as she was 16, as so many Jamestowners did, including her mother. She was nervous when German prisoners from the Jamestown forts were transported in trucks to Newport but got used to it.

Bill Sheehan recalled that in the late 1950s or early 1960s the ferries got radar. Before that it was clock and compass in poor visibility.

Frank Sylvia, a quartermaster, reported that when the boats went to Boston for maintenance they went through the Cape Cod canal.

Joe Vietri, a fireman, called the "Hammie" (*Hammonton*) his favorite ferryboat. "I used to love that boat. Six doors to feed. . . . Some of the old timers would remember I could really fire that boat."

Captain Bill Pemantel started as a deckhand and never expected to be hired as captain. He recalled that he and Joe Andrade painted the *Wildwood* with 40 gallons of paint using a sprayer they made from a TV antenna.

Earl Caswell, fireman, started on the ferry service in 1932. His first job firing was on the *Beaver Tail*, a side-wheeler. Then the *Conanicut*, the *Hammonton*, and the *Governor Carr*. "I liked the *Hammonton* the most because it was bigger. I threw more coal on that one. *Governor Carr* was harder to keep steam on."

Alton Head Jr. was hired as a deckhand in the late 1920s. Later he was a purser and a quartermaster and was elected State Senator. When he was a deckhand, he was sitting having a smoke in the smoking room about half way to Newport when a seemingly intoxicated man struck up a conversation with him. The drunk must have taken to him because he pulled some money out of his pocket and gave it to him. He then went back downstairs to his Rolls Royce. Later Head discovered the money was a \$100 bill. "Captain Fillmore told me to keep it. That if I turned it in, they would pocket it."

Victor Richardson went to work for the ferry in 1953. It was a family tradition. He admitted there was some nepotism in the hiring. His Uncle Foster Caswell ran the ferry company but not when he was on the ferries.



JHS P1972.196

Captain Bill Pemantel at the helm.

Additions to the Collection

November 1, 2022 to April 3, 2022

Donations

Anonymous: Architectural drawing of Bay Voyage Inn, Jamestown, RI. Bay Voyage Associates, John Smyth Architect, 1983.

Anonymous: two scrapbooks about the Conanicut Island Arts Association; left at the Jamestown Arts Center.

Judy Bell: "Pull Up a Seat," *So Rhode Island Magazine* article about Our Table restaurant.

Emma Brown: newspaper clippings about demolition of the old Jamestown Bridge.

Ken Caswell: invitation to the dedication of the Fireman's Memorial Museum, Fireman's Memorial Committee, November 20, 1958.

Carol Chew: documents related to the original purchase of Bleecker properties, 10 Racquet Road and surrounding parcels.

Elizabeth Di Censo: photo of Beth Sheehan [later Di Censo] arriving on the ferry with a cash box, 1966; photo of Beth behind ferry ticket counter, 1969; newspaper article, "Beth Sails Her Way to Education," 1969; "Dining out Beech," *Rhode Island Monthly*, December 2022.

Rosemary Enright: Jamestown Community Farm stationery with drawing by Donald Mong; book, *Revolutionary War Defenses in Rhode Island*; book, *The Rhode Island Scene* (includes photographs and information about Jamestown); Wetherill family photos and aerial photo of Walcott Avenue before road extended; Jamestown Golf Course Facility proposal.

Louis Godena: digital image ca. 1952 of Manuel Coelho Godinho (Godena) (1878-1956), and his grandchildren at Godena Farm on North Road.

Katherine Grimes: stock certificate for Beaver Tail Corporation, August 1, 1945; photo album of Marshall/Keeler property at 196 Highland Drive; postcard of Beavertail Point Lighthouse.

Hannold Family: Orville Minkler painting.

Gabe Highstein: Island Treasures 2023 12-month calendar, photography by Joe and Jessie Dutra.

Delia Klingbeil: photos of Jamestown farms.

Hugo Lazen-Bernardt: Citizens Pell Bridge Run 2022 medal.

Sue Maden: "The Joy of Shopping: Jamestown Beauty and The Bridge," *Hey Rhody Magazine*, December 2022.

Barbara Magruder: 2023 Humane Society of Jamestown calendar.

John Murphy: Jamestown Country Club scorecard.

Manuel Neronha: Ferry tickets; Jamestown photos, including photograph of Neronha giving instructions to new ferry purser.

Kathy and Warren O'Sullivan: Steel engraving ca. 1830, "Ruins of the Old Fort Conanicut, Rhode Island," drawn by W.G. Wall, engraved and tinted by Fenner Squire Co.

Barbara Ritter: *A Memoir* by S. Morton Vose II on Cajacet.

Jim Rugh: rabies tag from Jamestown Animal Clinic.

Linda Warner: newspaper clippings about Jamestown Hunters and Shooters Cub; photo of East Ferry with ferry *Hammonton* taken from East Ferry Apartments just after Hurricane Carol, August 31, 1954; photo, Mrs. Blythe's Junior Choral Group; photo, basketball team, The Dribblers; photo, Mary Jane Sisson, Linda Warner, and Dawn Diamond with prize winning doll carriage decorated as a sail boat, August 1952; postcard, *Governor Carr*, Newport RI, 1938; "Her Art Keeps Island Memories Alive," *The Jamestown Press*, October 3, 1991; "A Decade by the Numbers," *Newport Daily News*; photo of Old Jamestown Bridge sitting parallel to the new Jamestown Bridge; print, "East Ferry," by Connie Armbrust, 1967; poster, "The Jamestown Ferries, 1873-1969."

Harrison Wright: *Newport History* v. 97 Summer/Fall 2022 #286.

Acquisitions

Postcard, Jamestown Dock Harbor, Water Front looking South, 1910.



"East Ferry"
by Connie Armbrust
1967

Finances

Despite losses in both investments and endowments this past year, JHS finances remain robust.

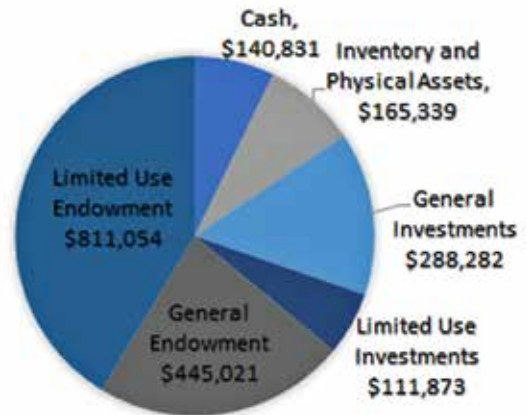
As the chart to the right shows, two-thirds of our assets are in endowments. Endowments are funds that are held in trust for JHS by a third party. The society receives a legally determined portion of the funds each year – approximately 4 percent of the average value of the fund. This percentage allows the fund to continue to grow while providing a steady source of income.

The General Endowment income is the “nut” that ensures that the minimum requirements of operating the society, such as insurance and lawn maintenance, are met. The Limited Use Endowments are generally associated with a single property or use and can be used only to support that property or use. The Windmill Endowment is the largest property fund and pays for the millwright and some maintenance at the windmill.

The investments are similarly divided between general and limited use. These can be accessed at any time. For example, the windmill investment fund was used to pay for the new windshaft in 2021.

Cash could also be divided between general and limited use as grants are received for specific purposes. This year we have been awarded, but have not yet received, \$13,000 in grants for specific purposes. \$21,000 from the Palmieri Trust for landscaping is included in Cash.

Inventory and Physical Assets is the sum of the depreciated value of the improvements we have made at the museum and the vault and the value of items for sale. The items for sale are expensed, or removed from the asset list, when they exceed their shelf life.



*Jamestown Historical Society Assets
December 31, 2023*

Membership

Last year, annual memberships paid 13 percent of our total expenses, while donations from members, often received with the dues, contributed another 39 percent. Patron and 1667 membership payments are deposited in the General Endowment so that they continue to generate dues in perpetuity. It was partially this generosity that convinced us to take on the expensive task of renewing the farmer’s wall at the Dutra farm.

The dues year runs from July 1 to June 30, so renewal time is near. Use the form below or go to the Get Involved tab on the JHS website to renew. The many perks to membership have been mentioned, but the most important reason to be a member is to be a steward of island history.

RENEW TODAY

Name: _____

Primary Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Seasonal Only **from** _____ **to** _____

Alternate Address: _____ **City/State/Zip:** _____

Home Phone: _____ **Cell Phone:** _____

Email: _____ **Email:** _____

MEMBERSHIP TYPE: Annual: Student (\$15) _____ Life: Patron (\$500) _____ Donation: \$ _____
 Individual (\$25) _____ 1657 Society (\$1,000) _____
 Family (\$40) _____

(See other side)

Jamestown Historical Society
P.O. Box 156
Jamestown, RI 02835

**Non Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage PAID
Newport, RI
Permit #286**

Volunteer Interests

- Work with Collection
 - Volunteer and Member Solicitation
 - Program Support (e.g., event parking)
 - Museum Docent
 - Windmill Docent
 - Spring Cleanup at Battery and/or others sites
 - Committee/Board Member
- Committee: _____

Send form and check to:
Jamestown Historical Society
P.O. Box 156
Jamestown, RI 02835