



Jamestown Historical Society

HERITAGE

Fall 2025

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

Preservation and Restoration

Restoration of the 1786 Conanicut Meetinghouse continues despite delays.

Plans for a full basement under the building had to be dropped because of high groundwater regulations. A cement slab and crawl space were poured in August. The new foundation will raise the building slightly higher than it had been, protecting the restored structure from the dampness that has contributed greatly to its deterioration. Grading around the foundation will make the change imperceptible.

The building was moved above the new foundation in September. Kirby Perkins Construction, a member of the National Trust For Historic Preservation as well as local preservation organizations, was contracted to restore the building. The benches were removed and stored securely on site to allow work on the floor joist beams. The perimeter beams and some framing members were replaced. To replace the beams, the workmen had to remove shingles near the bottom of the wall (*right*). The exterior sheathing remains in place and is attached to the perimeter beams. However, the building may need to be re-shingled. The repaired structure was lowered onto the foundation in mid-December.

After the building has been completely reassembled, the interior will be replastered and repainted using techniques and materials appropriate to the late 18th century and the windows, doors, and shutters will be repaired.

The estimated cost of the renovation is \$350,000. Thanks to generous grants and donations, we are about half way to raising the funds needed, but we still need your help. Please consider making a donation to help



restore this historic building so that we can open it to the public regularly when the work is complete. Feel free to contact the JHS if you have questions. To make a donation, please click jhsri.org/donation.

Grants

The JHS has received several substantial grants, primarily for the Meetinghouse project.

- Champlin Foundation – \$50,000 for the Meetinghouse Restoration
- Preserve RI/1772 Foundation – \$10,000 for the Meetinghouse Restoration
- BankNewport – \$2,000 for new signage
- Palmieri Trust – \$25,000 for the landscaping
- Pomeroy Enterprises - \$400 for a National Historic Register Plaque

At a time when federal and state funding is less available, we are very grateful to the private foundations that support with our work.

From the President

Sue Maden

In the Spring issue of this Newsletter, I paid tribute to two extraordinary volunteers. Sadly, we lost Sue Maden in November. Sue was our historian, collector, author, mentor, and friend and we will all miss her terribly. You can read more about her many contributions to the society on page 5.

Jim Buttrick

There is another important volunteer at the JHS who has been active with the organization for many years – Jim Buttrick. Jim organizes our outings to interesting sites in the area. He is often able to arrange for special tours to places not usually open to the public. He also lines up great tour guides to show us around.

In the past few years, we have visited the Vanderbilt family private apartment and attic at the Breakers, Hale House, the World War II Museum in Wakefield, Casey Farm, Gilbert Stuart Museum, Belmont Chapel including a talk by the stained-glass artists, Vernon House, several exhibits at Rosecliff, Blithewold, Newport Friends Meetinghouse, Blue Garden, and so many more.

In 2025, we spent a delightful day at the Herreshoff Maritime Museum in Bristol with a very knowledgeable guide, visited the Richard Morris Hunt Exhibit at Rosecliff guided by the Chief Curator of the Preservation Society, and traveled by ferry thanks to Conanicut Marine to explore Rose Island on a tour led by the Executive Director of the Rose Island Foundation.

These outings are offered only to members of the JHS and fill up quickly. Members receive an email invitation a few weeks in advance of each trip. Jim arranges carpooling for those who prefer not to drive. The outings are a great reason to make sure your membership is current!

Membership

Now is the time to sign up for membership for the calendar year 2026 as we celebrate the 250th anniversary of our country. We have an exciting year coming up including many events that are exclusively for members. This includes several exciting talks, invitations to themed dinners and galas, interesting outings, and a special cruise on the Coastal Queen. See more about some of the 2026 Events on page 6.

Renew or join the JHS at jhsri.org/membership-dues/

If you opt to sign up with a check, please print our online form and make a note on the check that says, “membership dues.” Please include your email address so that you will receive JHS invitations and notifications about events and programs. We never share our email list with others.



Jim Buttrick as Abel Franklin, the first keeper of the Beavertail Light at the Cedar Cemetery tour in 2021.

Enjoy the holidays. I look forward to seeing you at the JHS in 2026!

Betsy Baldwin

New Board Members



Suzanne (Sue) Fay

the Jamestown Soccer Association as their registrar. In 2013, she became the volunteer Director of St. Matthew's Thrift Shop.

Sue has been a bookkeeper for many decades and worked at St. Matthew's Church as their bookkeeper and administrator from 2003 until 2010.

Sue Fay

Sue Fay, the new treasurer of JHS, grew up in central Massachusetts and has lived in Jamestown since 1999.

She and her husband Peter, who is also a member of the JHS Board, raised their two sons here and she was active in the Jamestown PTO as their Treasurer and Secretary, as well as serving



Gary Nussbaum

versity of St. Thomas.

For several years he volunteered as a head coach of youth baseball and as a Boy Scouts Scoutmaster. He greatly enjoys history. His initial introduction to JHS was his efforts to maintain the historic elements of the 1776 Conanicut Battery.

Gary Nussbaum

Gary Nussbaum and his wife, Mary, live in the Dump-lings. They have four adult children, two sons-in-law, and a new grandchild.

Gary is a co-owner of Peregrine Capital Management in Minneapolis and has been with the firm for 25 years. He has also been an Adjunct Professor at the Uni-



Mary Jo Diem

president throughout her second term. She subsequently founded Per Diem Inc., a company dedicated to guiding teachers, students, parents, and administrators in reforming their local school science programs. Her clients included over 40 school districts throughout the New York Metropolitan area.

After retiring to Jamestown, Mary Jo joined the Quononoquet Garden Club and enrolled in the URI Master Gardener Program, class of 2013. She is a founding member of the Friends of the Jamestown Rights of Way.

Mary Jo Diem

New JHS Board member Mary Jo Diem has as a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and Chemistry and a Masters degree in Chemistry.

Mary Jo started her public service experience in Croton-on-Hudson, NY, where she was elected to two 3-year terms on the local school board. She served as board



Donna Dutra Wood

Donna's career has been spent in the public accounting and bookkeeping fields. She has worked for many years in the boating industry and is currently CFO for Conanicut Marine Services, Inc., which includes the Jamestown Newport Ferry, CruiseRI.Com, and the Conanicut Gift Shop.

When she's not working, Donna enjoys researching her Portuguese ancestry, biking, traveling, and attending the annual JHS house tours with family.

Donna Dutra Wood

Donna Dutra Wood was born and raised in Jamestown. She and her siblings Patti, Laurie, David, and Brian were fortunate to have their grandparents, who were all of Azorean descent, living on the island along with them. She raised her son Alan here and now her two grandchildren are growing up on the island as well.

Jamestown Historical Society Board

Officers 2025-2026

President Betsy Baldwin
Vice President Ross Williams
Secretary Patricia Pereira
Treasurer Suzanne Fay

Directors to 2026

Bill Burgin
Abigail Campbell-King
Christine Clarke
Alma Davenport
Joyce Hooley-Bartlett
Karen Montoya
Elizabeth Reid
Pat Sheehan

Directors to 2027

Carol Chew
Peter Fay
Timothy Noble

Directors to 2028

Mary Jo Diem
Greg Nussbaum
Donna Dutra Wood

Honor Roll of 2025 Volunteers

Deborah Allen	Peter Fay	Cynthia Levesque	Jody Saarmaa
Stephanie Amerigian	Suzanne Fay	Paul Levesque	Nancy Sall
Carol Anderson	Aileen Flath	Marcia Lindsay	Ginny Saunders
Emily Anthony	Bob Flath	Anne Livingston	Pat Sheehan
Betsy Baldwin	Edie Flynn	Sue Maden	Lisa Sheley
Ted Baldwin	Denise Gamon	Larry McDonald	Cynthia Smith
Judy Bell	Alexandra Gillis	Jean McDonough	Helen Smith
Jane Bentley	Nikki Gladding	Ed Mello	Janet Smith
Robert Berczuk	Michael Glier	Lois Migneault	Judy Smith
Charlotte Biddle	Laura Goldstein	Sarah Mikolay	Mike Smith
Susie Brady-Goodman	Sandy Good	Jane Miner	Valerie Southern
Lisa Bryer	Carolyn Goodrich	Pat Monahan	Diane Stover
Bill Burgin	Michael Gray	Karen Montoya	Debby Swistak
Jim Buttrick	Mary Gregory	Ourida Mostefai	Joseph Toole
James Campbell	June Halliday	William Munger	Robin Tregenza
Abigail Campbell-King	Lisa Harris	John A. Murphy	John Tschirch
Harry Chase	Gabrielle Highstein	Michele Musselman	Pat Ustick
Carol Chew	Deborah Homer	Ellen Noble	Onne van der Wal
Christine Clarke	Joyce Hooley-Bartlett	Tim Noble	Tenley van der Wal
Jennifer Cloud	Polly Hutcheson	Gary Nussbaum	Juliet Vasey
Tina Collins	Joanne Hovey	Sean O'Donnell	Ted Walls
Diane Cormier	Rick Johnson	Helen O'Malley	Chris Walsh
Trudy Cox	Sandy Johnson	Barbara Parent	Linda Warner
Wendy Cressotti-Knox	Karen Kalisch	Roland Parent	Geoffrey Waters
Alma Davenport	Alexandra Kent	Ilesh Patel	Dennis Webster
Rat DeFalco	Delia Klingbeil	Varsha Patel	Kim Westcott
Anne De Stefano	Ralph Klingbeil	Patti Pereira	Ross Williams
Elizabeth di Censo	Judy Knight	Linnea Petersen	Bill Wood
Mary Jo Diem	Winston Knight	Chris Powell	Donna Wood
Jesse Dutra	Janet LaBranche	Connie Rainone	Josy Wright
Joe Dutra	Paul LaBranche	Elizabeth Reid	Martha Yates
Rosemary Enright	Carol Lake	Tim Riel	Ann S. Zartler
Karen Estes	Anne Lane	Barbara Ross	Stephen Zimniski
Roberta Fagan	Denise Lazo	Eric Saarmaa	Howard Zwick
			Susan Zwick

Thank You

Sue Maden: 1934-2025

Sue Maden, volunteer extraordinaire, died November 25.

Sue had a long family history in Jamestown. "I first came here at six weeks old," she said, "a fourth-generation summer visitor."

She and her husband, Phil, retired to the island in 1982 and built a house on her family's land on the West Passage. At 48, she was too young and too vibrant to really retire. She immediately involved herself in the life of the town and particularly in the Jamestown Historical Society.

Sue was a trained librarian and a compulsive collector of both objects and facts. She collected over a thousand postcards of Jamestown, which inspired her first book, *Greetings from Jamestown*, in 1988.

Over the next 37 years, Sue wrote or co-authored nine more books and over 200 articles and columns on Jamestown history. Two of her most important projects were the documentation of the first Jamestown-Saunderstown bridge and of Jamestown's Bates sanitarium.

The old Jamestown Bridge, built in 1940 was scheduled for demolition at 50 years old. Sue was determined to document the old bridge. She interviewed people who had worked on or for the bridge. She examined state records and contemporary



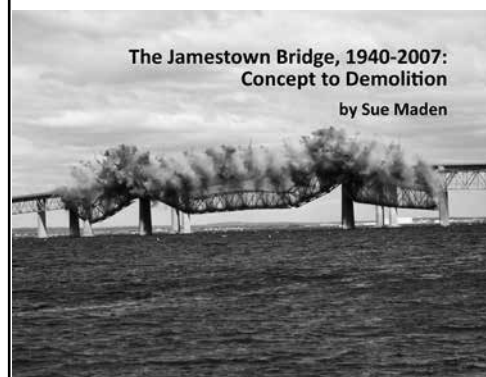
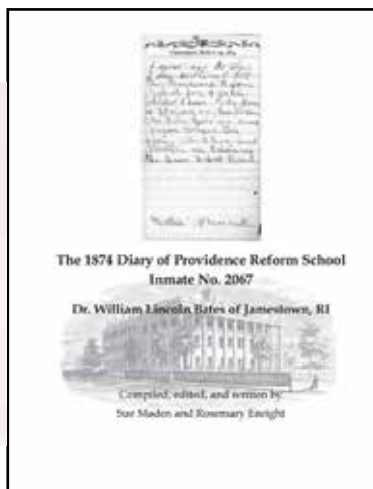
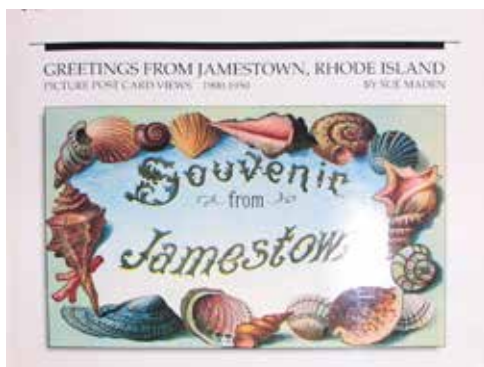
Sue gave her last talk on Jamestown history to Jamestown Seniors on October 29, 2025. Her presentation traced the fight to prevent a refinery at the north end of Conanicut Island.

accounts. In 1990, the JHS published the results of her research in *The Jamestown Bridge, 1940-1990, from "The Bridge to Nowhere" to Obsolescence*. In 1990, she followed up with an expanded second edition, *The Jamestown Bridge, 1940-2007*, that included the demolition of the old bridge. JHS museum exhibits captured her accounts visually.

Sue's other major project was William Lincoln Bates and his sanitarium, Maplewood. A Carr by birth, Bates spent a year in the Providence Reform School in his late teens. While there he kept a diary of his daily experiences. He later became a doctor and established a sanitarium in Jamestown for the practice of electrotherapy.

Sue was fascinated by Bates' ability to rise above his troubled childhood. She wanted to make his 1874 reform school diary available to anyone interested in correction system reform. In 2019, she published the diary along with a history of Bates' life and family in *The 1864 Diary of Providence Reform School Inmate No. 2067*. The JHS museum exhibit that summer displayed the material she had collected for the project.

Sue gave the historical society all of her postcards and the material she had collected for her many projects. She also established the Sue and Phil Maden Fund at the Rhode Island Foundation for the benefit of the society.



Summer/Fall 2025

Evening at the Windmill Gala

Friday, July 25, began with much needed summer rain, but by the 5 o'clock cocktail hour the weather had cleared and a good sized crowd gathered to celebrate with an evening of wine and appetizers under the big tent at the Jamestown Windmill.

The proceeds will be used for the Meetinghouse restoration project underway just across the field.

Windmill Day and the Stuck Cluck Truck!

Hundreds of people turned out for Windmill Day on July 26, despite one major glitch. The food truck mistakenly went to the entrance to the parking field off Weeden Lane, generously loaned to the JHS by the Dutra family, and got firmly stuck. No tow truck was available. Arriving cars couldn't get into the parking field and the 20 cars already parked in the Dutra field couldn't get out!

The day was saved by several heroes. The Dutra family led a convoy of cars already in the field through their farm to a different exit. Harry Chase of Hodgkiss Farm, after trying unsuccessfully to move the truck with his tractor, opened his field on the west side of North Road for parking. The Scouts and their awesome leaders directed traffic and got everyone safely across North Road. A big thank you to all from the Jamestown Historical Society!



Harry Chase using his tractor to try to move the food truck blocking the entrance to the Dutra parking field.

Everyone enjoyed seeing the windmill with the sails on and taking a tour. Sadly, there was not enough wind to turn the arms this year.

Children enjoyed playing quoits, cornhole, walking on old fashioned stilts, and creating colorful Azorean tiles at the art table. The JHS offered Azorean treats and lemonade while the food truck managed to transport hotdogs and burgers across the field and grill them. All enjoyed listening to music from the To Be Continued Band while relaxing under the shady tent.



The tent in place for Friday's Evening at the Windmill Gala and Saturday's Windmill Day.

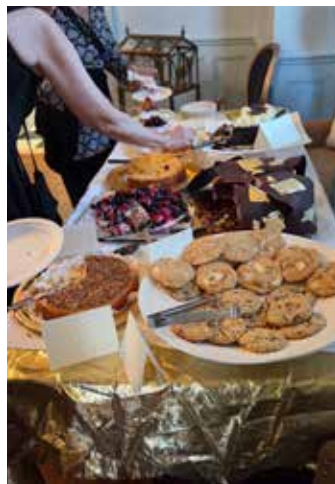
Annual Meeting and Documentary

After a brief business meeting and the election of new members and officers of the JHS Board, the audience welcomed Nick Francis, a filmmaker who showed his 18-minute documentary *The Last Azorean Whalemens*. The film follows a group of Azorean septuagenarian whalemens on the islands of Pico and Faial preserving their rich shared oral history of whaling, survival, and friendship. The whalemens in Azores along with their families are the central characters and narrators of this documentary, and the film tells the story through their eyes.

House Tour Preview Party and Tour

We had gorgeous weather for the Preview Party and House Tour this year.

On September 19, a large group of members enjoyed cocktails and appetizers at the lovely historic Howland Mansion of Sandy and Rick Johnson. The 1875 mansion, designed by George C. Mason of Newport, was named *Fairacre* by Lyman Tiffany.



Guests toured the home, which the Johnsons have been renovating. Sandy has created exquisite stained-glass artwork throughout the house. All enjoyed the view of the gardens and harbor from the new front terrace.

The table of fabulous and decadent homemade desserts provided by Sandy Johnson.

Summer/Fall 2025 (continued)



"The Chapel" in Conanicut Park on the 2025 House Tour.

The next day hundreds visited the three gothic cottages in Conanicut Park on the north end of the island. Originally, this 1870s development was designed to have more than 2,000 cottages on small lots along with a hotel and a wharf for the ferries stopping on their way to and from Wickford, Providence, and Newport. Only the hotel, wharf, and a small number of cottages were ever built and the cottages are charming. The JHS thanks the homeowners for sharing their houses with us.

Volunteer Party

Without our dozens of wonderful and dedicated volunteers, the JHS would not be able to function. To thank all of them, we held our annual Volunteer Party in October at the home of Susan and Howard Zwick on Standish Road. All enjoyed the wine, appetizers, and socializing with the folks who act as docents, work in the vault cataloguing, researching, and maintaining the JHS Collection, write articles, arrange outings, take care of our properties, recruit volunteers, manage our finances, create exhibits, help plan and put on events like Windmill Day and our galas and fundraisers, write grants, keep track of our memberships, and much more.

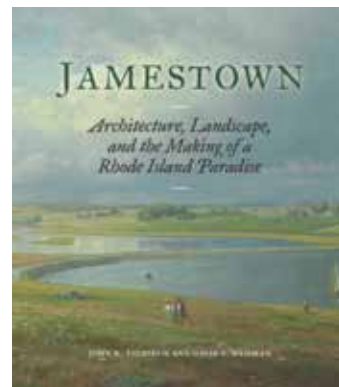
Talks and a Book Signing

Onne van der Wal showed slides and talked about his new book, *Jamestown, RI* in October. A world-renowned nautical photographer, Onne captures the breathtaking beauty, rich character, and timeless charm of Jamestown and Conanicut Island in this love letter to a place like no other. The books are available online at vanderwal.com/product/book-jamestown-ri/ or from Amazon.

Sue Maden and Rosemary Enright gave a talk with slides about "How Jamestown Almost had an Oil

Refinery" at the Senior Center (Golf Course) on Oct 1 and Oct 29. This was the fascinating story of the long history of the battle with Commerce Oil.

On November 14, the JHS held a book signing with John Tschirch, an award-winning architectural historian. His book, *Jamestown: Architecture, Landscape, and the Making of a Rhode Island Paradise*, includes 137 photos and paintings from the JHS Collection. This book illustrates the vibrant heritage of Jamestown, its role as a place of refuge and retreat through the ages, a paradise shaped by its inhabitants. The book is available from the JHS online at jhsri.org/shop/ or may be purchased in the JHS vault in Town Hall on Tuesdays and Thursday mornings between 9 am and noon.



Jamestown: Architecture, Landscape, and the Making of a Rhode Island Paradise

Holiday Fair

On December 6, the Museum was open and many visitors stopped by to purchase books, mugs, prints, and other gifts. As the final event in a year of celebrating the Azorean community, we offered tasty Bolo de Laranja (orange cake), Bolo de Mel com Nozes e Figos Secos (honey/walnut/fig cake), and Arroz Doce (Sweet Rice Pudding). Tiny framed old family photos hung on the tree. There were also framed stories with Christmas memories contributed by many of Azorean descent.



Azorean decorations at the museum.

Exciting Events Planned for 2026

We will be celebrating the 250th Anniversary of US Independence with several events throughout the year.

Colonial Dinners Reimagined

The JHS is teaming up with three local restaurants and chefs to offer colonial dinners reimagined using some of the same ingredients from the colonial period but cooked and served in a whole new way. The chefs at ***Beech, Our Table***, and the ***Conanicut Yacht Club*** are all excited about this project. The dinners will be offered to members only during the winter and early spring months. Members should look for an emailed invitation soon with dates and details.

Speakers

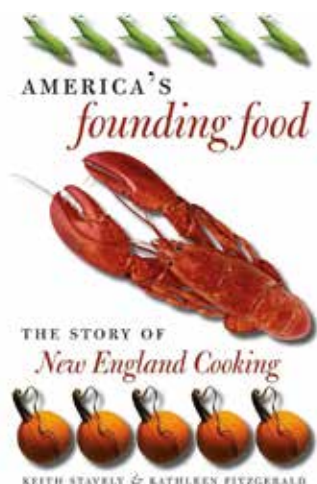
We will offer several free talks to members on various topics related to our early history throughout the year. Two of these are already scheduled.



The Dirty Blue Shirts

The Dirty Blue Shirts will present “The Web They Wove: Women & their Wardrobes during New England’s Revolution.”

Following up the colonial dinners reimagined theme, local residents Keith Stavely and Kathleen Fitzgerald will give a talk on Revolutionary Era food. They are scholars and acclaimed authors of books on American cooking, including *America’s Founding Food: The Story of New England Cooking* (2004) and *Northern Hospitality: Cooking by the Book in New England* (2011).



Battery Day Celebration

The Conanicut Battery, built by the colonial Rhode Island government in 1776, was taken over and expanded by the British in late 1776. When the British left in 1779, the site was reclaimed by the 1st (Black) Rhode Island Regiment, which included several men who had previously been enslaved in Jamestown. Then the French occupied the Battery in 1780-81. We’ll honor all the nations who spent time there this spring on Battery Day with costumed reenactors, patriotic music, food, and more.



The Newport Artillery at Battery Day

JHS Museum Exhibit

Members will be invited to the opening reception of the summer exhibit at the JHS Museum on May 21. This year the exhibit will consider the voices of those not usually heard during the Revolutionary Era – women, children, enslaved people, indigenous people, and others.

Coastal Queen History Tour Around the Bay

During the summer of 2026, the JHS will offer a tour to JHS members on the Coastal Queen. We’ll hear about some of the historic sites around Narragansett Bay while enjoying drinks and appetizers. Look for an emailed invitation this spring.



The Coastal Queen

Outreach

Salve Regina's Compass Program

Under Salve Regina's Compass Program, professors from the Cultural and Historical Preservation Department and their students surveyed the JHS Windmill Hill properties with Ground Penetrating Radar and other technology in May. They report that they may have located a possible foundation of an earlier windmill located a short distance from where the current 1787 mill stands today.

One of the students is writing his senior paper on their findings and analysis. In the spring of 2026, the group may return to investigate further, perhaps doing a small dig to see if they can locate the foundation.

Regional History Fair

The Jamestown Historical Society and the Beavertail Lighthouse Museum Association shared a table at the October "Regional History Fair" sponsored by the Rhode Island Historic Sites Coalition.

The Westerly Historical Society hosted the fair to introduce 45 historical organizations from across Rhode Island and Connecticut to each other and to make the public aware of them.



Hundreds visited the free event. JHS and BLMA displayed pictures and book about Jamestown's history and invited everyone to visit the town's historic sites.

JHS President Betsy Baldwin at the Regional History Fair at the Westerly Armory

Articles and Exhibits

The *Jamestown Press* published monthly articles written by Peter Fay, Rosemary Enright, and Sue Maden. The short articles each focus on a single facet of Jamestown life. Recent articles celebrated the 70th anniversary of the Lawn Avenue School, the contribution of Italian, Irish, and Azorean residents to Jamestown life, and began what will be a year-long look at Jamestown during the late colonial and revolutionary era.

In addition, "What's in a Name? The Voyage of the *Jolly Bachelor*" by Peter Fay was published in the Fall 2025 issue of *Newport History - Journal of the Newport Historical Society*.



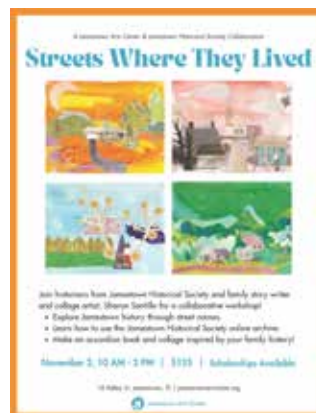
Plaques acknowledging the WPA reconstruction of the East Ferry waterfront after the Hurricane of 1938 were pictured in the October "From the Collection."

On the first day of each month, the Collections Committee sends out a "From the Collection" email featuring an artifact or collection of artifacts found in the collection. This summer and fall the subjects varied from the WPA plaques around the island and what they tell us about the Great Depression of the 1930s to objects in the collection that reflect the pastoral history of the town.

On the same day that the emails go out a new display is put up in the small exhibit case in the foyer of Town Hall. One recent exhibit featured 18th and 19th century payments for the housing and feeding of town paupers. Another showed memorabilia of movies made here.

The history of Azoreans in Jamestown was the subject of the fall exhibit at the Lawn Avenue School. Because of space constraints the school exhibit is limited to three 22 by 40 inch panels. We often find new homes for the panels when we remove them from the school. Three that tell the story of the Jamestown post office are framed in the post office lobby. The Senior Center has often displayed a set for a short time. If your organization is looking for a temporary display of some aspect of Jamestown history, please contact us at research@jhsri.org.

Jamestown Arts Center



On November 2, Elizabeth Di Censo and Rosemary Enright introduced a JAC class in montage to Jamestown history, the JHS website, and our collections database. Since the subject of the montages to be created was streets where they lived, Rosemary presented the history of Jamestown with a focus on street names and plat development.

Additions to the Collection:

May 2025 to November 2025

Donations

Marco Almeida: Photo, Battery K-243d Fort Getty, RI September 1941.

Betsy Baldwin: Digital photos of the Jamestown Friends Meetinghouse at various stages of its renovation.

Ted Baldwin: History of Friends of the Jamestown Philomenian Library, 1968-2025; poster for Around the Island Race, August 31, 2025.

Kathy Brownell: Photos of Conanicut Ferry Fire and 1938 Hurricane.

Jim and Lisa Bryer: Preliminary Engineering Report evaluating construction of a tunnel versus a bridge for East Passage, February, 1955.

Bill Burgin: Friends Meetinghouse Preservation construction drawings.

Ken Caswell: Handwritten notes about Cedar Cemetery and Quaker Meetinghouse.

Carol Chew: Digital photos of visit to the the Hammonton Pilot House.

Archie Clarke: Digital photos of photo album documenting the purchase and refurbishment of Hammonton Pilot House, 1958-1975; *The Jamestown Press* article in "Island History, 50 years ago," August 15, 1975.

Alma Davenport: Conanicut Friends Meeting sign; *The Yankee Stock Cookbook* by Alma Davenport de la Ronde.

Elizabeth DiCenso: Model Beavertail Lighthouse; booklet, Rhode Island's Historic Background Publication by the Tercentenary Commission of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, 1936.

Michael Dupre: *Ye Ballad of Ye Jamestown Ferry*, poems by Winthrop Wilson, 1975, signed by the author; certificate Telephone Pioneers of America, May 9, 1939; Princess telephone, circa 1970; candlestick phone with bell box, circa 1890s; wood



Candlestick Phone.

pencil with metal dialing piece for use with rotary phone; photographs of Hurricane Carol, 1954.

John Doty: Jamestown Valuation of and Tax on the Real Estate and Personal Property, May 8, 1854.

John Godena: booklet, "...And BOB was his name, A Diary of Destruction," August 19, 1991.

Delia Klingbeil: Digital photos of WPA markers in Jamestown and a map showing where the markers are.

Sue Maden: *Rhode Island Roots*, April 2025, Linda L. Matthew; timeline of notable JHS achievements.

Mary Madden: *Buildings of Rhode Island*, by William H. Jordy.

David S. Martin: Brief history of the Jamestown Humane Society, 1971-2025.

Debbie O'Hara: Photos from Hurricane Bob, August 19, 1991

Roland Parent: *Sentimental Voyage, A Maritime Memoir* by Roland Parent.

Mark J. Paliotti: Poster, The Jamestown Ferryboats 1873-1969; poster Jamestown Ferry with Rose Island and Bridge beyond; photo of Captain Bill Boone in wheelhouse with poem about "the ferry rumbles..."

John Potter: West Ferry memorabilia and photographs; multiple Jamestown & Newport Ferry Co. records and reports

David and Denise Quattromani: Research materials for book *Portuguese of Conanicut Island* by Shirley Teixeira Quattromani.

William Richardson: Copies of original photos and tintypes of Jamestown.

William Sisson: Jamestown-Newport Ferry Winter Schedule, September 11, 1961 to May 26, 1962; 12 ferryboat trip tickets

Jim and Suzanne Slattery: Jamestown scenes notecards by Connie Armbrust.

William Slattery: Photos of results of Hurricane Carol, 1954; aerial view of East Shore and Old Walcott Ave. circa 1936-1938.

Bob Sutton: *Our Island Home, Stories of Individual Commitment and Love of the Land*, fund-raising booklet about island farms, introduction by Robert Sutton.

Town of Jamestown: Probate Court embosser; cast statues from the Clarke School (demolished): Theodore Roosevelt, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln.

Unknown Donor: Photo of Boardwalk, Jamestown, RI; view from Shoreby Hill Casino looking east, printed November 8, 1926.

Linda Warner: Election Official ID, Melissa Burrows; Election Official Pin 2020 with "I Voted" sticker; Name tag



Postcard of the Conanicut Yacht Club prior to Hurricane Carol.

for Melissa Burrows, Board of Canvassers; Pin, Town of Jamestown, RI; photo of Linda Warner at Post Office mailroom rack, 11/1988; news articles from *The Jamestown Press*, 12/14/1989, "Meet the Jamestown Postal Workers" and 12/7/2006, "Spreading Holiday Beauty, Quononogott Garden Club;" Jamestown Directory 1928; bill for advertising with sketch of Beavertail; photos by Henry Armbrust of East Shore with Bay View and Thorndike Hotels and of West Ferry; plan for New Jamestown Elementary-Junior High School (later called the Lawn School)

Greg Zeek: Polaroids and 4"x6" photos of Jamestown fishermen and women with their catches at weigh scale at Zeek's Creek Bait and Tackle, 1990s to 2024.

Jean Brazil Della Vecchia: 17 Jamestown School pictures of Florence Brazil's classes in the 1960s and 1970s.

Mary Vieira: "The Portuguese of Jamestown," thesis by M. Vieira.

Collected by Staff

Monthly "From the Collection" posts by members of JHS Collections Committee.

Videod interviews and transcription of interviews with Archie Clarke, Rosemary Enright and Sue Maden, William Munger, and Greg Zeek.

Signage for Fort Getty for the Conanicut Island Sailing Foundation.

Signage for JHS events.

Descriptions, panels, photographs, and keys for exhibits created by staff.

Beavertail Lighthouse Association newsletters.

Mailer, Jamestown Fire Department, JFD COAST.

Multiple articles from *The Jamestown Press*, including monthly articles by Rosemary Enright, Peter Fay, and Sue Maden.

Multiple articles from other local newspapers,

Programs and flyers for events in Jamestown.

Acquisitions

Postcards: Ham Radio Station W1LY Willy Maclean; Old Conanicut Yacht Club prior to 1954; Thorndike Hotel; Ferry Landing and Hotels 1909; Yacht Club Pier 1905; Ogden House, Newport Avenue; View of West Ferry Shoreline; Bailey and Woodward House, Walcott Avenue, 1911; Fort Greble various views from 1910 and 1912; Fort Greble Infantrymen, 4 views circa 1915

Matchbook Cover, "Jamestown Diving and Salvage."

1946 article from *The City* about the then private water company.

Matchbook, Michael's Smoke and News shop at 47 Conanicut Ave.

Plastic ruler advertising Anderson's Dairy.

An Interview with Greg Zeek

In early 2025, the Jamestown Historical Society began a new series of island interviews: "Memorable People and Places of Jamestown."

Our first interview was with Greg Zeek, shortly after the state claimed Zeek's Creek Bait and Tackle by eminent domain, an early step in the replacement of the state highway that currently sits inches above the high tide mark in the Great Marsh. Zeek had already lost his home to the state in 1997 when the John Eldred Parkway was constructed.

Zeek came to Jamestown as a boy in the 1960s, fishing regularly with his father and the local kids. Fishing was a critical piece of life on Jamestown, not just for sport, but as a critical meal for many families. Zeek remembered "I would always go down to the Creek Bait Shop, Rebelle Felice owned it, and I loved the place. I mean how could you not? It was the coolest place. All the kids in town all

through the years loved it, flocking down there to explore the marsh and buy penny candy."

Felice had bought the bait shop in 1954. It was originally owned by Billy Westall, who had built the tiny building in 1949. Rebelle, himself a lobsterman, lived in the shop. His wife, Lenora, and three daughters joined him in the summers. They enjoyed five bunks, a tiny kitchen, gas stove, and a bathroom, but no shower.

"I was invited," Zeek continued, "probably when I was about 12 years old, to go out with him and kind of helped him do whatever I could on the boat and I just loved it. Every trap that came up was like Christmas; I couldn't wait to see what was in it. It was always exciting. There were lobsters, eels, fish, you name it, crabs, all kinds of stuff. You never knew what was going to be in the next trap – or nothing, you know, you never knew. And so that's where I got my real love for it.

(continued page 12)

Greg Zeek (continued from page 11)

Zeek graduated from high school in North Smithfield in 1975 and then went to the URI School of Commercial Fisheries, getting a degree in commercial fishing and fisheries economics. He started his lobster business after graduation with an 18-foot lobster skiff and 100 handmade traps with the hope of purchasing the Bait and Tackle one day.

That day came in 1985, when Felice decided to retire and sell his business. Zeek went to visit him at his home, his baby daughter on his knee. Rebelle agreed to a price and Zeek got a bank loan with no collateral except a hand-written history of hard work and honesty. Zeek remembered: “when I first bought it, because I’d open up every morning at like 5 am, especially when it was more of just bait and tackle, I slept there on weekends so that I could be right there and just get up when the first customer showed up, knocking on the door [laughing] and it was pretty cool sleeping down there and living down there. And I did that for, you know, maybe the first ten years.”

With the help of his family, Zeek went on to expand the retail store to include fresh seafood and lobsters. The first week the used lobster tank was filled, it broke and flooded the shop with 300 gallons of seawater, most of which drained down through the floorboards to the creek below. Business improved after that. Zeek’s insistence on quality attracted customers from off island as well as from Jamestown and his Newport and South County competitors began to worry about matching Zeek’s high quality standards.

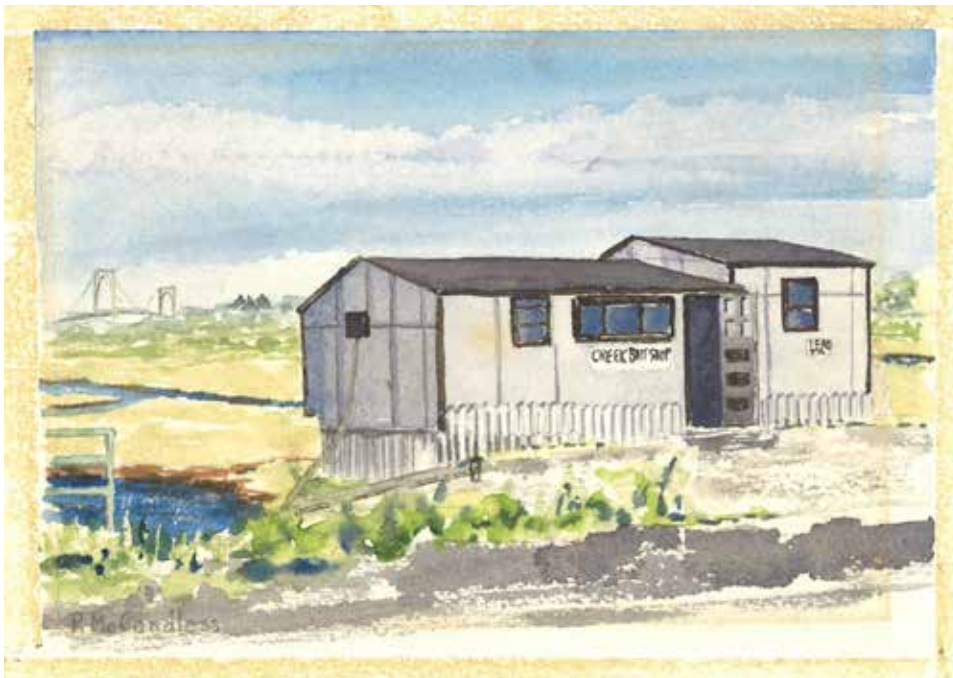
Greg, his wife Deedee, and their daughters, used their imaginations to go beyond bait and tackle and fine

seafood. They designed Zeek’s Creek tee shirts and fitted “Zeek’s” fishing caps. At the shop, they began posting “big fish” Polaroid photos. After a big catch, fishermen young and old would return to the shop and have their photograph taken standing outside by the scale. Zeek posted the photos in the shop. In the final months of 2024, Zeek offered the photos to the people in the pictures as well as to the historical society.

Although Zeek was approaching retirement, losing the shop to the state for a disappointingly low price was very emotional for everyone. However, Jamestown showed their love, starting on Facebook. Daughter, Samantha was working at the store one weekend when she contacted Greg saying “Dad, look! The Jamestown Facebook page is blowing up. They want hats!” By the time he contacted his supplier that Friday, the order was for 300 hats. The owner, Jake, said that since Zeek had been a loyal customer for more than 30 years, he would work through the weekend and deliver the hats in assorted colors on Monday. A 2024 miracle!

One year after the Bait and Tackle Shop closed, the building sits empty, although photographers and fishermen park in the parking lot at all hours of the day.

Meanwhile, Greg and his daughter Emily are helping Windmist Farm on Weeden Lane to open a spinoff Zeek’s Creek Bait and Tackle in a renovated building on the farm. The DEM has slowed the new owners’ progress, raising issues of possible drainage from the fish and lobster storage containers contaminating the surrounding groundwater. Greg hopes that the issues will be resolved by spring 2026 so that once again fresh fish and seafood will be available in Jamestown.



Creek Bait Shop by Patsy McCandless, circa 1980.