



Richmond Reflections

Vol. 45 No. 3 The Richmond Historical Society Newsletter Fall 2019

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings Members and Friends of RHS,

It is an honor to address you as President of the Society. I look forward to continuing its work in preserving and promoting the history of Richmond, along with the valued assistance of the Board of Directors and members like YOU!

There are several exciting events and activities in the works. On September 22nd we will be hosting "Driftways into Their Pasts", a reception and exhibit honoring the lives of Patty Millar and Betty Mowchan, two indefatigable members of the Society who are sorely missed. See the program below for complete details.

On November 3rd, we will be co-hosting a presentation with the Hopkinton Historical Association on Prudence Crandall. Joan DiMartino, Curator of the Prudence Crandall Museum, will be the guest speaker. Lauri Arruda, President of HHA, will also be speaking and displaying Prudence's baby cradle. More information to come.

Of great importance is the revision of the RHS Constitution and Bylaws. The Constitution was last amended in 1992, and it was time to review and revise as needed to bring it up to date. A special committee consisting of Richard Wolke, David Johnson, Merrill Moone, and myself put much time and thought into the revision. The draft is in the newsletter for your review. If you have any comments or questions about the revision, please email us at

rihiso@gmail.com . A special meeting will be held at the Clark Library on October 24 at 7:00 PM so the membership can vote on the proposed Constitution. Please make every effort to attend.

Thanking you for your support of RHS.

Kristen Chambers

Historic Cemetery Committee

The RHS Historic Cemetery Committee has responded to a couple of requests from property owners about their historic cemeteries. The usual inquiries are concerning the do's and don'ts of cemetery cleaning, plus asking whose job it is to clean their cemeteries.

I would like to invite all interested folks to join me in an organizational meeting of the RHS Historic Cemetery Committee. The meeting will be held on Thursday, December 5, 2019 at 5:30pm at the Clark Memorial Library. Many volunteers are needed to help locate, preserve, and maintain our nearly 100 neglected cemeteries.

Some of the tasks we will be discussing are:

- Finding lost cemeteries
- Checking tax maps for accurate cemetery locations
- Cleaning all our cemeteries
- Photography
- Recruiting more volunteers
- Plans for RI Historical Cemetery Preservation and Awareness Day
- Make corrections to state database
- Answer general inquiries from the public
- Repair damaged headstones
- Town hall research of our cemeteries that have perpetual care funds

Thank you!

Dory Wagner

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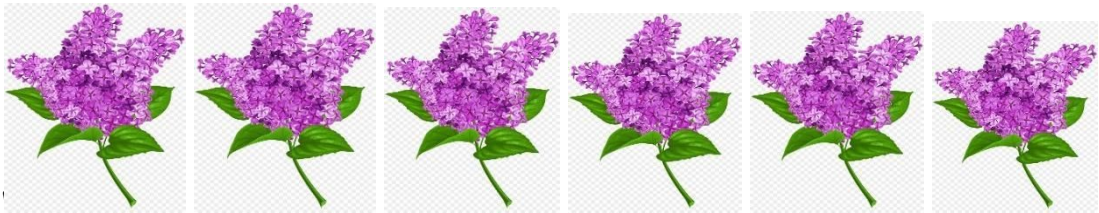
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Refreshments following at the Town Hall

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I would like to offer two possible explanations as to why the village of Wyoming is so named. Initially, it was called Brand's Iron Works. Then, for a short time Alton. Our seminal history, "Driftways into the Past", published in 1977 is of no help, reporting, "Alton was later changed to Wyoming on December 11, 1855. Wyoming is an Indian name meaning 'Meeting of the Plains', but is not known why this name was chosen." Actually, Wyoming is a Munsee (Delaware Indian) word meaning, 'at the big river flat'.

In 2010 I received a phone call from the President of the Luzerne Historical Society in Pennsylvania. He was curious to know why the town of Richmond had a village named Wyoming. I told him I had no idea, but that I would look into the question. He then suggested the following possibility: that residents of Brand's Iron Works had migrated to the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania in search of better farming land.

It is said that they were often considered intruders since the land at that time was claimed by both Pennsylvania and Connecticut. The tension led to some emigrants returning to Richmond to name our village Wyoming. This is certainly a possibility, as evidenced by living residents today in Hopkinton that will confirm that their ancestors did indeed move to the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania.

More likely is the influence in 1809 of a famous lyric ballad of interminable length (I count 93 stanzas!) that was published by the Scottish poet Thomas Campbell (1777-1844) entitled, 'Gertrude of Wyoming'. It records the Wyoming Massacre of 1788 in which many of the local Indians were murdered, and also the beauty of the Wyoming Valley in Pennsylvania near the Susquehanna River.

The poem was of great popularity and it is said that a number of villages, and even the State of Wyoming, found their names in its writing. While this reference is a possibility, its publication date to the naming of Richmond's Wyoming is 46 years. One might wonder about the impact of the poem at this late date.

R. E. Wolke

2019 Annual Meeting Highlights

The Annual Meeting of the Richmond Historical Society was held on June 20, 2019 at the Clark Memorial Library.

New officers were elected:

Kristen Chambers, President

Richard Wolke, Vice President

Carolyn Richard, Treasurer

Johanna Wolke, Secretary

Members at Large: Virginia Williams, Dory Wagner, David Johnson

Laura Orabone volunteered to be Assistant Treasurer.

Bruce and Chamoni Simone will be reconstructing the RHS website

<https://www.richmondrihistoricalsociety.org/>

Merrill Moone joined the Archive Committee.

The reprinting of Driftways was rejected due to expense and lack of time and personnel.

The 2019 Legislative Grant will be used primarily for upkeep and development of the Bell School and the Old Town Clerk's Office.

A proposal was accepted to form a committee to update the RHS Constitution.

Proposals were accepted to pay speaker honorariums of \$50, and to pay \$25 for the use of buildings where programs are held.

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Shown L-R: Johanna Wolke, Secretary; Laura Orabone, Assistant Treasurer; Merrill Moone, Archivist; Dave Johnson, Member at Large; Chamoni Simone, Website; Kristen Chambers, President; Bruce Simone, Website; Richard Wolke, Vice President; Susan Jalette, Newsletter Editor.
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New Website Home

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<https://www.richmondrihistoricalsociety.org>

Facebook: Richmond RI Historical Society

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The name of this Society shall be the "The Richmond Historical Society".

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The purpose of this Society shall be to promote interest in historical research, by conducting and supporting studies of the history of Richmond and the surrounding areas, to be a repository for the collection and preservation of manuscripts, pamphlets, and relics of historical significance, and to aid and encourage the maintenance, support and preservation of historical sites, properties and landscapes.

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Membership shall be open to all interested persons and shall consist of Lifetime, Sustaining, Supporting, Regular (which includes Individual and Family levels), and Honorary members.

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Lifetime, Sustaining, Supporting, and Regular members shall have the privilege of voting.

Honorary members shall be those who have rendered service to the cause of historic inquiry or historic literature in general and such others as this Society may deem worthy of election.

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All members, with the exception of Honorary, and Lifetime members will pay annual dues in September of each year.

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The officers of this Society shall consist of a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

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The officers shall be elected annually and shall hold their respective offices until their successors have been elected.

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President – It shall be the duty of the President to attend all meetings and appoint all committees not otherwise specified in the by-laws. The President shall have a casting vote only in a tie.

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Vice- President – The Vice President shall be an aide to the President and in the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President. The Vice-President shall be the Chairperson of the Program Committee.

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Secretary – The Secretary shall keep a full record of all the proceedings of the Society, and shall take care of and keep properly filed all the communications and papers of this Society, and conduct promptly and completely all correspondence of the Society unless it is otherwise provided for.

"

Treasurer – The Treasurer shall keep an accurate account between the Society and each of its members, receive all monies due the Society; pay all bills properly

authorized and perform such other duties as pertain to the office of Treasurer. The Treasurer shall also prepare a report of all receipts and expenditures for each meeting or more if required. Prior to the annual meeting or anytime upon request, the Treasurer will provide the Secretary with a copy of the current membership roster.

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There shall be a Board of Directors consisting of the Officers of the Society and two members at-large elected at the Annual Meeting. The President may appoint, with the approval of the Board of Directors, an individual to fill any vacancy that may occur during the year. The Board of Directors shall exercise a general supervision over all business of the Society between meetings, shall appropriate funds for current expenses, shall devise ways and means to promote the purpose of the Society and shall appoint members of Standing and Special Committees.

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The Archives Committee will have the responsibility and authority to accept or reject offers of items to the Society as gifts. The Committee shall be responsible for arranging exhibits and displays for special events and shall properly record and label all accessions before filing. This committee shall keep the history of the Society and such other matters as deemed necessary, and keep a complete set of the Society's Newsletters.

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The Public Relations Committee shall consist of the Society's Website Manager and the Social Media Administrator. The committee shall work to create and sustain a favorable public image of the Richmond Historical Society among members of the community at large, and provide the news media with timely, accurate information about the Society's activities.

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The Newsletter Committee shall consist of an Editor, the President, and a third member appointed from the membership. The Editor is responsible for the preparation and distribution of the newsletter to members and others. The third member shall contribute articles to the newsletter and assist with editing as needed. The President shall conduct a final review of each newsletter prior to distribution.

"

The Historic Cemetery Committee shall consist of a chairperson and two members of the Society. The committee's purpose is to protect, maintain, and preserve all of Richmond's Historical Cemeteries according to the rules set forth by the Rhode Island Historical Cemetery Commission. To this end, responsibilities of the committee consists of identifying and initiating projects related to the location and maintenance of Richmond's Historic Cemeteries, assisting with genealogical research on request, and arranging the annual Rhode Island Historical Cemetery Restoration and Awareness Day.

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The Program Committee shall consist of the Vice President (Chairperson) and two members appointed from the membership. The Program Committee shall be responsible for developing program ideas, procuring speakers, and arranging for hospitality at regular meetings of the Society.

A Nominating Committee consisting of three members shall be appointed by the Board of Directors two months prior to the annual meeting. The committee shall present a slate of candidates for each office at the Society's annual meeting. Members of the Nominating Committee are not barred from becoming nominees for office.

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There shall be an annual meeting on the third Thursday in June for the purpose of hearing reports, selecting officers, and transacting other pertinent business.

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Ten (10) percent of the membership shall constitute a quorum for the election of officers and the transaction of other business at any regular or special meeting.

The Board of Directors may call special meetings by giving at least one week's notice to each member.

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Four (4) members of the Board of Directors, including the President, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business of the board. Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at the call of the President or upon request of three (3) of its members.

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This Constitution may be amended by two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting at any annual or special meeting, provided that notice of the proposed amendment is included in the call of the meeting.

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Notwithstanding any of the provisions of these articles, this corporation is organized for the following purposes:

To further the study of the history of the region; to foster the collection and preservation of various manuscripts and articles of historic interest, both for literary and educational purposes. To conform with regulations regarding all listed activities specified in section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, and shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from Federal Income Tax under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

"

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of any member, trustee, director, officer of the corporation, or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the corporation),

and no member, trustee, officer shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets upon dissolution of the corporation.

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No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation (except as otherwise provided by Internal Revenue Code 501 (h), or participating in, or intervening in (including the publication or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

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In the event of dissolution, all of the remaining assets and property of the corporation shall after payment of necessary expenses thereof be distributed to such organizations as shall qualify under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended, or, to another organization to be used in such manner as in the judgment of a Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of Rhode Island will best accomplish the general purposes for which this corporation was formed.

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President Date

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Secretary Date

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