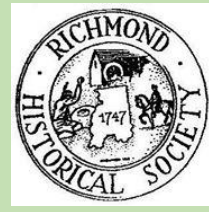


# RICHMOND REFLECTIONS

## The Richmond Historical Society Newsletter



Vol. 47 No. 2

June 2021

### Greetings Members and Friends of RHS,

The 2021 Annual Meeting of RHS was held on June 17. Minutes are attached to the email. To summarize, there were no in-person meetings or programs due to Covid, but the Archives and Cemetery committee members kept busy behind the scenes. With the advent of the vaccine and as Rhode Island has pretty much “opened for business” as of this writing, we look forward to planning programs and meeting together again.

Officers for the coming year were voted in:

President- Kristen Chambers; Vice President- Richard Wolke; Secretary- Johanna Wolke; Treasurer- Merrill Moone

Continuing as Members at Large are Dave Johnson and Denise Stetson, and Dory Wagner as RHCC Chair. Thank you to the Wolkes for stepping up once again to continue in their positions when no one else did!

Dave Johnson reported on the condition of the Bell School, which requires some expensive repairs to replace damaged siding. We will be applying for grants to cover the cost.

Many thanks to Dory Wagner and her daughter Heidi (below) who have volunteered to tend to the garden at Bell School for the upcoming year. Thanks too to Johanna Wolke, who last fall planted bulbs and perennials in the neglected garden so that currently there is some lovely color and buzzing bees to enjoy. If you would like to donate to help cover supplies, or to be part of a rotating schedule of members who will water the garden when needed, contact me.

Thank you to Susan Jalette who has taken on the task of indexing *Driftways Into the Past*, which will make locating information in the book much easier. As always, we are looking for members to become involved in many ways in the Society- how are you interested in helping?

I'm always thrilled to receive contributions from members for *Richmond Reflections*. In this issue, Christine Thornton-Lepikko describes what sounds like an idyllic childhood growing up in the family home in Wood River Junction. Dave Johnson has done extensive research on the McInnes family of Carolina by way of Scotland for a series on its history, the first part of which is in this issue. Richard and Johanna Wolke share a tribute to their friend, community servant and long-time RHS member Richard Millar, who passed away in April.

Here's to a happy and healthy summer!

Kristen Chambers, President, RHS



## **The Journey in Wood River Junction, RI**

by Christine Thornton-Lepikko



*The farmhouse in 1967*

My home in Wood River Junction has been the family hub since 1967. It is mentioned in the book *Driftways into the Past*, published by the Richmond Historical Society. Within the section on Wood River Junction, written by Claudette Romzick D'Ordine, my house is noted as the Monahan-Adams Home (#6 on the map). The farm was purchased by my grandmother, Frances Monahan, and was also occupied by my aunt and cousins. At the time of purchase the property was still a working farm. It was a place that my siblings and cousins loved to visit and spend time with my grandmother and each other. In the book it is indicated that the house was built by Mr. George Ennis and resided in by a Mr. and Mrs. Kenyon. Town records indicate that the house was built in the year 1890.



*Left- Chrissy at age 1 with father and brothers*

Initially the house number was indicated as 17 Kings Factory Road, and it extended from bordering the railroad tracks all the way to the edge of the river. This was prior to the railroad crossing being shut down and the end of the property being split to make way for a new extension of Kings Factory, at which time our address changed to 878 Kings Factory Road. Prior to purchasing this farmhouse my grandmother owned a very large farm located in Foster, Rhode Island. She must have been very fond of farm life, as upon selling that property she chose to buy this farm house. I remember as a little girl coming to visit and there being a pony and a cow, as well as ducks and chickens. There was always a very large garden, which we were expected to help with.

As you can imagine, a bunch of children together digging in the dirt made it a very fun activity. This was always followed by a family trip over to the Meadowbrook Pond for a well-deserved dip. When my grandmother felt enough swimming time had taken place she would call us from



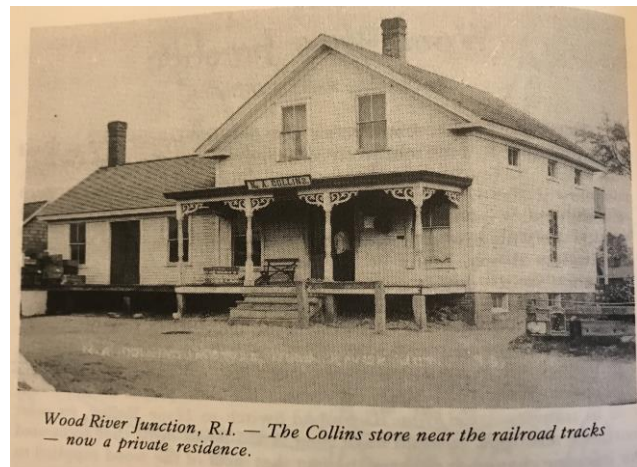
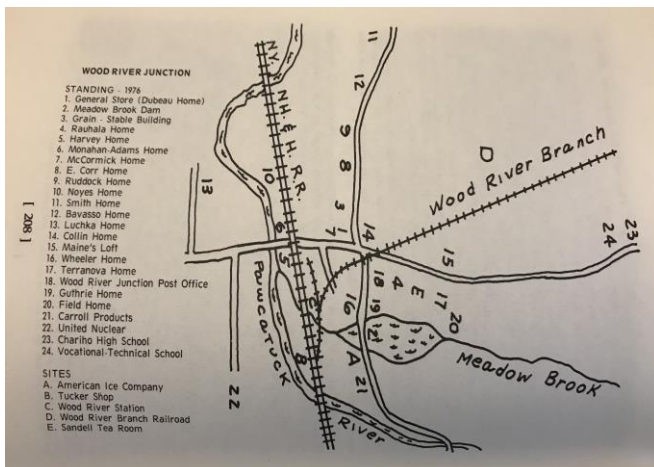
*Grammy pumping water from the well, with Cousin Mary*



*Everyone pile in, we're going for a swim!*

the bank, but being kids we weren't very quick to go along with her choice to end swim time. In the summertime we would play outside and wander into the garden to pick fresh tomatoes and green peppers to snack on. There were several wild blueberry bushes just across the street, and we frequently would go and pick the blueberries for my grandmother to make blueberry pancakes for breakfast.

At the time my grandmother purchased the house it was set up as a two-family living space. My family moved into the house in 1976 to live with my grandmother and care for her after an illness. Needing more living space, my aunt and cousins moved out and lived for some time in the house indicated as the Collins Home (#14 on the map), which is pictured in the book on page 214.



*Wood River Junction, R.I. — The Collins store near the railroad tracks — now a private residence.*

What is now the living room and dining room in our house was divided by a wall. We never would have known that the house was originally built with an archway between these two

rooms if it wasn't for a chance conversation that my mother had with an older woman who lived in the house next door, Ms. Harvey. She told my mother a story of being a young girl and playing with a little girl who lived in this house, and remembering that the archway was there. Of course this intrigued my mother and she made the bold move of taking a hammer to the wall and finding the archway inside, with an unopened cigar still sitting on the ledge. I also remember a time that my parents found a diary in the ceiling while they were doing some home improvements. The diary was kept by a farmer who had lived in the house and indicated entries regarding his planting, with frequent remarks about shucking his corn. It may not sound like much, but it was fascinating to me to read about somebody living here such a long time ago. There is also an historic cemetery on the property; however, the cemetery was established quite some time before the house was built, with many of the stones that still remain indicating dates in the 1700s.



*Horse barn*



*Bunkhouse and carriage shed*

As children we would spend quite a bit of our time playing in the outbuildings, which consisted of a large horse barn, bunkhouse, carriage house, corn crib, and chicken coop. Of course I can't forget to mention the outhouse, which as young children was still a working "facility." I also remember playing with the hand pump on the well, and didn't understand at that time why my grandmother used to get so upset with us wasting the water. It wasn't until I was much older that I found out that the well was only a 14-foot hand-dug well that supplied water to the house. I'm not sure when that hand pump was disassembled, but I still have it today as well as a picture of my grandmother using it way back in the day. Having many grandchildren, my grandmother would have to select one or two at a time to accompany her to spend the weekend, and this was a thrill to be chosen to "go to the farm."

We needed to consider selling this property upon my mother passing in 2016. As the family continues to have a great affection for the property and the memories it holds, I sold my house and purchased the family home from her estate. The family continues to gather here for family events, such as birthday parties, as well as gatherings on Friday nights that we have dubbed "movie/game night." It is still referred to lovingly as "the farm" and will hopefully continue to be the family gathering place for many years to come, as originated by Frances Monahan in 1967.

## Remembering Professor Richard Millar

Richard and Johanna Wolke



Society Lifetime Member, Richard “Dick” Millar died on April 17, 2021. Dick was pre-deceased by his wife, Society Archivist Patricia Smith Millar.

Dick retired as an Associate Professor in the Department of Animal and Veterinary Science. He served on many State and regional agricultural committees. In addition to his professional activities, he was deeply involved in his hometown of Richmond.

Professor Millar was my colleague in the College of Life and Environmental Sciences at URI, but he was much more than that - he was our friend. I first met him in 1972 and our relationship grew when we found we had both been in the Army, at the same time, in Germany after the war. It grew professionally, but even greater through our community activities in Richmond. As I remember he never missed a Council meeting and was quick to see answers to problems facing the Council. Quite conservative in his thinking, his first response was often “No” which was a stimulus to rethink the problem. When sufficient evidence was then presented, he was more than open to new ideas.

Dick may have been a bit conservative, but he had an impish bent and twinkle in his eye. I recall one Council meeting in 1978 when we had to consider a zoning ordinance regarding the number of pigs allowed on residential lots. As I opened the meeting, I saw Dick in a back row with a smile on his face. I wondered what was to happen when suddenly he reached to the floor and lifted a large sign proclaiming, “Save Our Pigs!” It brought the house down and made for a relaxed discussion.

Dick was a past member of the Chariho School Committee, Treasurer of the Carolina-Richmond Volunteer Fire Department, and a member of the Richmond Grange. Each year he volunteered and worked at the Washington County Fair. Until recently, he served on the Richmond Planning Board and the Richmond Senior Activities Committee. Dick and Patricia donated land to a local church, fire department, Nature Conservancy, and the Meadowbrook Waldorf School. It would be difficult to find a more generous and concerned citizen.

Dick is survived by his four children, many grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

His accomplishments and community service are an indication of a life of generosity and service. Richmond has lost a valuable citizen; he will be greatly missed.

## **McInnes Family Chronicles, Part 1**

### **Duncan McInnes (1815 – 1895)**

#### **His Early Years in Scotland and Emigration to Carolina Village, RI**

By David G. Johnson



The gravesite of Duncan McInnes (1815– 1895) may be found in the extreme southeast corner of White Brook Cemetery, found on Pine Hill Road in the Village of Carolina, Town of Richmond, Rhode Island. The scenic location, overlooking the White Brook and Pond, was undoubtedly chosen by Duncan McInnes as his final resting place, reminding him of his birthplace and early years living and working on the banks of the River Teith in Scotland. Buried with him are his wife, Agnes Black (1818-1881) and children, Jennet McInnes (4 Mar – 4 Mar 1856), Flora R. (15-26 Sep 1860), and Agnes B. McInnes Bray (1852-1870) and her husband John Bray (1854-1870). Duncan McInnes was born on 22 June 1815 in the Village of Callander (bridge and village seen below) Kilmadock Parish, Perthshire to Hugh and Sarah (McIntyre) McInnes. His older sister, Sarah, was born three years earlier.

Little is known of his early life, but given the times and place, young Duncan was undoubtedly put to work as a hired farm laborer. In 1837 at age 22, he was employed as a farmhand at Long Bank Farm near the Village of Doune, located a few miles down- river from his birthplace. (1) Long Bank Farm was a large farm, consisting of 90 to 100 acres of ploughed land. It is there that he met Agnes Black, age 20, who lived and worked on Long Bank Farm, managed by her father, James Black.



A child (William W. McInnes) was born to the unwed couple in July 1838. The couple continued to live and work at Long Bank Farm with Agnes's parents, James Black, and Helen Wallace Black, for the next three years. The couple was officially married on 13 April 1841 in Kilmadock Parish and the following day, their second child (Hugh Duncan McInnes) was born. (2) Being ambitious and with a growing family, Duncan decided to seek an apprenticeship in a higher-paying trade in the nearby Village of Doune.

The 1841 Census of Scotland conducted on 6 June 1841 finds: Agnes McInnes, Age 23; William McInnes, Age 3; and Hugh McInnes, Age 2 months, living at Long Bank Farm in the

Village of Doune, Kilmadock Parish. The same census lists Duncan McInnes, Age 24, as being alone at Doune West Street, Village of Doune, Occupation: Iron Turner (3) Apprentice. (Note: At the time of the census, apprentice Duncan was absent from Long Bank Farm, apparently working overtime for his iron turner employer/mentor). The 1841 Census shows another separate family grouping at Long Bank Farm, namely the James Black family.

*Below- Long Bank Farm viewed from the A820*



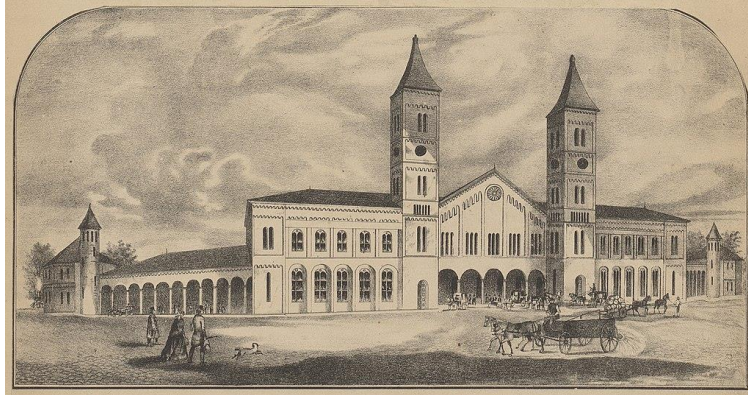
By 1843, Duncan had completed his apprenticeship and had moved the family to Glasgow where he easily found work as a machinist. Three more children were born to Duncan and Agnes while in Glasgow, namely Margaret, born 10 September 1843 (died young); Sarah, born 13 November 1845; and James, born 19 November 1847.

Since the family's arrival in Glasgow, the population of the city had steadily increased with the influx of poor Irish families escaping the displacements

and starvation in Ireland caused by the potato famine (1845-1851). Accompanying this influx was an increase in cholera and typhus in the city. The situation motivated Duncan to think of moving the family again to a healthier place. Learning from flyers, newspapers, or agents of the need for experienced machinists in New England, he decided to move the family there.

In June 1849, Duncan reserved passage from Glasgow to Boston for himself and family on the *Barque Jessie* of St. Johns, New Brunswick, captained by John Ennis. Arriving in Boston on the 15th of August 1849, a total of 24 passengers were listed on the manifest including the following 19 persons immigrating to New England from Scotland:

- William Mercer, age 35, Farmer, and wife, Elizabeth with their 7 children ranging in ages from 11 months to 13 years
- William Walker, age 18, Farmer
- **Duncan McInnes, age 35, Machinist**, Agnes McInnes, age 30, Hugh McInnes, age 8, Sarah McInnes, age 4, and James McInnes, age 1 (4)
- John Heraet, age 24, Machinist.
- Jessie Crofoot, age 28, Housewife, and her 3 children ranging in ages from months to 6 years



*Providence's Union Station in 1857*

Upon arrival in Boston, all immigrants were checked by a doctor for disease and if found well, were released to the city. Duncan and family were undoubtedly directed to the train station in Boston where they boarded a train to Providence. Arriving in the newly completed Union Station in Providence, they transferred to the Stonington-Providence Railroad for the final trip south to Shannock Village in Richmond, Rhode Island. A final short trip down river by wagon to Carolina Mills in Richmond completed their journey. The following 1850 US Census for Richmond, Rhode Island finds the family with a new addition, namely daughter Helen (Ellen) McInnes.

1850 US Census for Richmond RI. Enumerated 4 September 1850:

- Daniel (Duncan) McInnes. male. Age: 34. Occupation: Machinist. Born: Scotland.
- Agnes McInnes. female. Age: 32. Born: Scotland
- Hugh McInnes, male. Age: 9. Born: Scotland
- Sarah McInnes. female. Age: 4. Born: Scotland
- James McInnes. male. Age: 2. Born: Scotland
- Ellen (Helen) McInnes. female. Age: 5 months. Born: Rhode Island (5)

*(To be continued)*

Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Long Bank Farm is located ½ mile east of Doune Castle, built in 1400 by Robert Stewart, Duke of Albany. Scenes were shot at the Castle for the following movies: *Monty Python, The Outlander, and Crown of Thorns.*

<sup>2</sup> Hugh Duncan McInnes's grave stone in White Brook Cemetery in Carolina, Rhode Island states that he was born on April 14, 1842. Year should be 1841: Hugh McInnes (age: 2 months) is listed in the 6 June 1841 Census of Scotland.

<sup>3</sup> An Iron Turner is one who shapes iron or steel using a lathe. Modern term: a machinist.

<sup>4</sup> Duncan & Agnes' oldest child, William, did not sail with the family in 1849, rather he remained at Long Bank Farm with his maternal grandparents. Several years later, he joined his family in Carolina Mills with his wife, Hannah Wright.

<sup>5</sup> The 1850 Census listed age of 5 months for Ellen (Helen) McInnes is incorrect. Her birth date was 26 Dec 1849, indicating that Agnes was pregnant with Ellen upon arrival in Boston on the *Barque Jessie.*

## Richmond Historical Cemetery News

The weather was perfect for the annual cemetery cleanup sponsored by the Richmond Historic Cemetery Committee and RHS. Thank you to all who came out and put in the work to trim branches, cut back thorns and weeds, rake lots of leaves, and remove litter. The Israel Lewis Lot, #37, is looking in much better shape!



RHCC Chair Dory Wagner's provided the following information for the annual meeting:

We had a request from a descendant saying their ancestors' location in the White Brook Cemetery is incorrect in the state database. Indeed it was. We met at the cemetery for confirmation and I contacted John Sterling to make the correction.

All Richmond veteran graves were flagged before Memorial Day, minus the ones done by the American Legion and Boy Scouts.

One new cemetery sign was installed.

A neighbor to RD #54 on Punch Bowl Trail requested information on the burials there. I directed them to the database and the Richmond Historic Cemetery Book and thanked them for their interest.

A new statewide program has begun, and has started in Richmond, for all historic cemeteries to provide a general photo of the cemetery. These photos will now appear in the State database.

An inquiry came in from a CT resident looking for information on a cemetery just over the RI border into CT that contains a Mayflower passenger. I was not much help but directed them to CT historical societies.

For the April statewide historical cemetery cleanup, we chose RD # 37 (The Israel Lewis Lot) at the Park n Ride on Route 138. Trees were cut, brush removed, briars pulled up, and the whole cemetery raked. There were 11 volunteers. Many hands make fast work.

It is gorgeous now and will need it all over again next year. The town of Richmond kindly picked up our debris. And one of our volunteers (president) even picked up trash in the entire park n ride. Amazing!!

## Old Currency Donation

Thanks to Christopher Murray at [Rhode Island Currency](#) for donating these beautiful bank notes from the Richmond Bank and Washington County Bank. They are a wonderful addition to the Archives! The bank notes were recently in a display put together by Johanna Wolke and Chamoni Mossa-Simone at the Clark Memorial Library along with other bank and currency related items. Mr. Murray also made a generous donation to the Society.



While indexing old issues of the newsletter, this snippet from 1978 records a donation of currency and other items to the Archives from a Mr. Elliott B. Clarke.

GIFT

The Society thanks Mr. Elliott B. Clarke, Spring St., Hope Valley, R. I. for his donations to the historical archives which included a one dollar and five dollar Richmond Bank bill; a Confederate five and twenty dollar bills; a Wood River Branch Railroad ticket; 1892 Democratic Wild Cat Money; Camp Meeting Flyer at Greene, R. I.; and 1863 E.W. Lincoln Grocer Redeemables among several other items of interest.

## Bell School History



The Bell School was moved from its original location in Tug Hollow to its present location by the Town Hall in 1971, fifty years ago. It was quite an undertaking and required years of preparation and ongoing upkeep through the present day. The Bell School is a symbol of both the Richmond Historical Society and the town of Richmond. The building

requires extensive and expensive repairs to replace the siding and maintain the integrity of the building. The Society will be fundraising and seeking grants and donations to cover repairs.

A 30-page typewritten account of the Bell School Museum, covering the years 1968-1976, is in the Archives. The first two pages of that account are reproduced here.

BELL SCHOOL MUSEUM

History in the Making

The first mention of Bell School by the Richmond Historical Society occurred in casual discussion during an Executive Board Meeting and appeared in the secretary's minutes as follows:

Executive Board Meeting  
November 5, 1968

Lucy wondered if it would be feasible to restore Bell School for a museum. She also suggested the possibility of a vigilante committee, perhaps including several towns whose purpose would be to save old buildings from the demolition crews of urban renewal projects.

The school situation remained much in our thoughts and in general discussion, however it did not come to light again as an official consideration until

Executive Board Meeting  
June 3, 1969

"Bell Schoolhouse has been vandalized again and the door left ajar. Construction markers in the school yard would seem to indicate that the school is being threatened by the construction work involved with the development of a camping trailer park on adjacent property. The Society is concerned with preserving this school building as it is the only one remaining of the 15 original school districts which has been left unchanged but in good repair. It was noted to send a letter to the Richmond Town Council, Rhode Island Development Council, Rhode Island Hospital Trust Co., and the Department of Natural Resources expressing our concern."

Public Town Meeting --- First Annual Meeting  
June 17, 1969

A letter was written to the R. I. Hospital Trust Co. concerning the condition and future of Bell School. It was read for public information. No action was taken as no response had as yet been received.

The new year began with increased activity on what was to become our major project. The following is a summer addend to the regular minutes, inserted by the secretary to inform of correspondence activities.

July 7, 1969

"With regard to the letter sent to the Department of Natural Resources concerning Bell School House, Mr. William Carter of the Division of Parks and Game called to say that the DNR is concerned about the building and is going to run a survey on the land to determine just what belongs with the school.

He stated the R. I. Historical Society turned the school over to their care until such time as adequate protection and time and labor would permit the building to be opened as an example of a typical early school.

The DNR feels that when the survey is completed a meeting of Department members, R. I. Historical Society representatives, and Richmond Historical Society representatives should be held at the site to determine whether the building should remain on Hillside Road, which is what the R. I. Society would like, or be moved to a State Park area (Arcadia) for protection and preservation."

August 5, 1969 (Executive Board Meeting)

"Lucy gave a brief resume of the secretary's work concerning Bell School. The School was discussed at length, all members present being very concerned. All agreed that if school must be moved, that it should be placed in the Town Hall triangle. Lucy suggested requesting John Rego or Bill Carter to discuss the problem at a public meeting.

her) Henry: - 'I think we should pursue that,' and suggested we get more information and hold a special meeting if necessary.

nds) Charlie: - 'This is important! Why not throw it open to the whole town?'

It was agreed to persuade Mr. Rego or Mr. Carter to come to the September meeting or whenever available. If this should occur at a time when we can't use the Town Hall, then we'd try to meet in Richmond School. Earl Smith volunteered the fact that the first public meeting concerning the Richmond consolidated school was held in Bell School. Others (Lucy or Henry?) stated the first Richmond PTA meeting was held in Arcadia School.

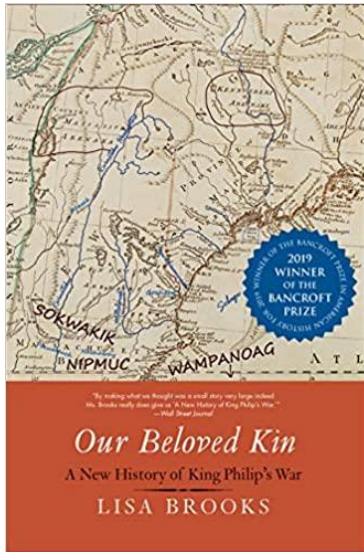
Executive Board Meeting  
September 2, 1969

"John Rego will be at the next town meeting, September 9 to speak on conservation and the preservation of Bell School. We are to encourage all interested persons to attend. Henry

**Book Review** by Kristen Chambers

*Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Phillips War*

Written by Lisa Brooks



Full disclosure- I had started the book with the intention of writing about it in a future issue, but when I saw that the author is presenting on it via a Zoom discussion as part of the Literature and Culture Author Conversations sponsored by the Tomaquag Museum, I wanted to be sure to give you a heads up here so you don't miss it. Note that there is an amazing [interactive website](#) that you can refer to as you read the book, or can peruse on its own.

From the Tomaquag Museum webpage:

“The *Literature and Culture Author Conversation* series is a public discussion with authors, reflecting on indigenous life, history, literature, health and wellness, and representation. We will explore what inspired them to write, their literary interests, techniques and passions, and what they hope will be the impact

of their writing.

Join us for a discussion with Lisa Brooks as we discuss her book, *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Phillips War*. With rigorous original scholarship and creative narration, Lisa Brooks recovers a complex picture of war, captivity, and Native resistance during the “First Indian War” (later named King Philip’s War) by relating the stories of Weetamoo, a female Wampanoag leader, and James Printer, a Nipmuc scholar, whose stories converge in the captivity of Mary Rowlandson. Through both a narrow focus on Weetamoo, Printer, and their networks of relations, and a far broader scope that includes vast Indigenous geographies, Brooks leads us to a new understanding of the history of colonial New England and of American origins.”

**Literature and Culture Author Conversations with Lisa Brooks, Ph.D.**

**Wednesday, June 30, 2021, 6:00 PM - 7:15 PM**

**Advance registration is required- click [HERE](#).**



*Weetamoo Woods, Tiverton, RI*

## **RICHMOND HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**NEW MEMBERS:** Laurie and Mark Friel

**Find us at:**

Website: <https://www.richmondrihistoricalsoc.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RichmondRIHistoricalSociety/>

Email: [rihiso@gmail.com](mailto:rihiso@gmail.com)

Snail Mail: RHS, PO Box 408, Wyoming, RI 02898

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Secretary- **Johanna Wolke** - [hansicloud@cox.net](mailto:hansicloud@cox.net)

Treasurer- **Merrill Moone** - [mkmoone@gmail.com](mailto:mkmoone@gmail.com)

Member at Large- **Dave Johnson** - [oneshadowridge@gmail.com](mailto:oneshadowridge@gmail.com)

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Newsletter Editor- **Kristen Chambers**

Proofreader- **Laura Orabone**



**Volunteers Needed!**