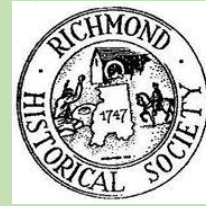


RICHMOND REFLECTIONS

The Richmond Historical Society Newsletter



Vol. 46 No. 3

September 2020

RHS President's Message

Welcome to the Fall 2020 issue of *Richmond Reflections*; I hope that it finds you in good health and good spirits.

Our **Annual Meeting** and election of officers originally scheduled for the third Thursday in June at the Clark Memorial Library was instead held via email vote due to COVID-19 restrictions. This resulted in the largest number of members voting in several years, as no one had to leave home to do so! The slate of candidates passed unanimously, and is as follows:

President – Kristen Chambers

Vice President- Richard Wolke

Secretary- Johanna Wolke

Treasurer- Laura Orabone

Member at Large- David Johnson; Denise Stetson (Appointed)

Cemetery Chair (Appointed) - Dory Wagner

We are delighted that member **Denise Stetson** has agreed to join the Board as a Member at Large. As a former Town Planner and currently on the Board of Canvassers, the Elder Affairs Committee, and the Affordable Housing Committee, you can see Denise is an active Richmond resident and will have much to contribute with her experience and enthusiasm. She has already volunteered to help with some much-needed organization in the Archives.

Membership renewals will be arriving in the mail in the month of September for anyone who is not a Lifetime member. Please return your renewal form and dues in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope as soon as possible after receiving it so that we may update our records. We have some names on the list who have not renewed in a couple of years, so if you want to continue to support the preservation of Richmond history and to continue to receive the newsletter, be sure to renew before the end of the year.

The Board is exploring ways that we can bring **programs** to you in this time of social distancing, and are hoping to coordinate a Zoom presentation with a guest speaker in the near future. We need to be creative in order to keep the membership informed and engaged, and we welcome your ideas.

The **Newsletter Editor** position is still open. I am filling in until a volunteer steps up. (I actually enjoy doing the newsletter, so if anyone is interested in being President I will gladly offer you that position!) All kidding/not kidding aside, if you are interested in editing the newsletter I can give you all the assistance you need to get started.

If you are interested in joining the board, we anticipate openings for **VP and Secretary** in June 2021. Dick and Johanna have more than put in their time and deserve to sit back and enjoy being duty-free members, so please consider helping them achieve that goal!

~ Kristen Chambers

RHS Board Meeting



We want you - yes, YOU!

RHS Board members held their first business meeting via Zoom on August 25, 2020. Since we haven't been able to have any in-person events, we wanted to brainstorm ways to engage the membership as well as attract new members and young people. Here is a recap of what was discussed.

One way is by contacting the History Departments of Chariho Middle and High Schools and coordinating ways that students could fulfill community service hours. They could help in the Archives, conduct interviews, assist at events, etc. The Board approved a reduced **student membership** fee of \$5.00 for students who would like to become members of RHS. As **September is Membership Month**, we encourage members to invite spouses, family, and friends to join.

Speakers and programs can be held online via Zoom, webinars, and Facebook or Google Watch Parties. Many organizations have taken advantage of these platforms during social distancing. The League of Women Voters, the Tomaquag Museum, and the New Hampshire Humanities Councils have recently held interesting programs which are often recorded and available online. Chamoni Mossa-Simone will help with the technical details. Please share what you would be interested in learning about.

We have a few extra copies of the RHS publications *Driftways Into the Past* and *Down Country Cookin'* and are planning to **raffle** them off!

Ideas for the **Newsletter** were discussed. By far the most commented upon articles are those highlighting people—their lives and reminiscences. (Think the recent submission by member Russ Lacey, our last issue's interview with Sallie Hoyle, and Roberta Whelan in this issue.) We would like to get **you** involved, perhaps by sharing something about your life; for instance your job, hobby or family genealogy? Your experience of the Blizzard of '78? What it's like for you to be working or learning from home during COVID-19? Because **all these things add up to the History of Richmond!** We'd also love to have people interview their older family members, neighbors, veterans, etc. so that those memories can be preserved. As mentioned above, this would also be a great activity for students to do. We can assist with ideas for **conducting interviews**.

For those who enjoy reading history, we are starting a **book review column** with this issue, which can also include documentaries and other programs. My particular historical interest lies in biographies, and in the stories of those whose voices have not been heard because they were not in power, and so did not write the history— including women, Indigenous people and people of color. Submit any reviews for upcoming newsletters to me (email on last page).

It would also be great to have someone write the **Upcoming Events** column. That person would scout newspapers and the web for events of interest offered locally or in the drivable region. Of course right now most events are online but that expands our horizons even more as we can virtually attend conferences anywhere in the world.

Dave Johnson reminds us that the **Bell School** turns 200 years old in 2026! That gives us plenty of time to plan for a gala anniversary. In anticipation, we are seeking anyone who attended the school (it was in use until the 1930's, so we may be a bit optimistic) or had a parent or grandparent who attended the school, and could share their story. **We would also like to hear from anyone who took part in moving the school to its current location in 1971.**

A Letter from Roberta



The Old Town Clerk's Office in Carolina

It was a pleasure to receive a lovely handwritten note from long-time member Roberta Whelan shortly after the last newsletter was published. I recognized her name, and that of her husband Bryan, from the membership list, but have never met either in person. As she wrote with good humor, “We are still hanging on to the 20th century- no email - no Facebook – no website. Have cell phone – usually turned Off!” She provided her phone number, and luckily for me the Whelan cell phone was turned On when I called to thank her for the note, and to ask if I could share from it for this newsletter. A pleasant and enlightening conversation ensued.

(I recalled why Roberta’s name was so familiar. Her charming illustrations of historic buildings in Richmond are interspersed among recipes in the RHS cookbook, *Down Country Cookin’*, published in 1995.)

Roberta is originally from Canada (you can hear it in her accent), her ancestors having been United Empire Loyalists (more commonly called Tories or simply Loyalists in the U.S.). Bryan a native of Australia and a textile chemist by trade, was “working his way around the world”, but his travels ended in Canada when he met Roberta! After marriage they lived in Quebec for 20 years until the decline of the textile industry in Canada, which occurred earlier than the decline in the U.S. They moved to Richmond in 1977, and Bryan was a manager at Kenyon Mill, and later the mill in Bradford.

Roberta joined RHS shortly after moving here, “to meet others and to honour my mother’s memory”. Her mother, a Mayflower and UAE descendant, was very involved in historical society activities in Canada, and as a youngster Roberta “was dragged by her to historical meetings, graveyards, museums – bored me stiff!” She reminisced about her mother teaching first in Montreal for many years, and after marrying Roberta’s father in 1934 and moving to a dairy farm, continuing to teach in a one room schoolhouse. In her last year teaching in that school, she had 14 students, with only one in the seventh grade. That student came in First Place in the

province of Quebec on the provincial exams. Roberta says, “Hey- Hugh Salisbury was a bright kid – and he had a private teacher who was possibly one of the best teachers on the planet! Hugh went on to be a dairy farmer – like his dad!”

I asked Roberta about her artistic talent and whether she had had formal training. She explained that she had always been able to draw, and had won prizes in school for her work. She especially enjoyed drawing faces, and when her children were born, drew their faces every two weeks. Over the year she acquired a lot of art supplies, and when her children were older, Bryan encouraged her to take formal lessons. She admired the work of RI Impressionist painter [Chris Benvie](#), and took lessons from him for many years. As for her illustrations in the RHS cookbook, Roberta recalled driving around town to take photos of the buildings, then sketching them in pencil and going over them in ink.

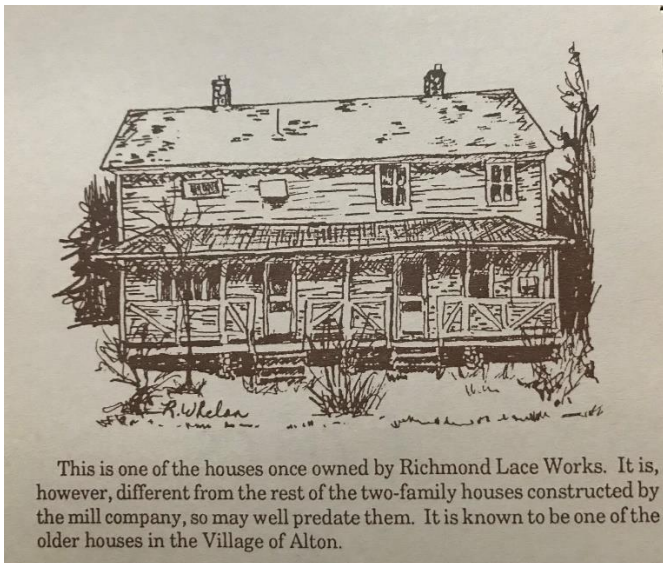


(L) Painting by Roberta’s mentor, Chris Benvie

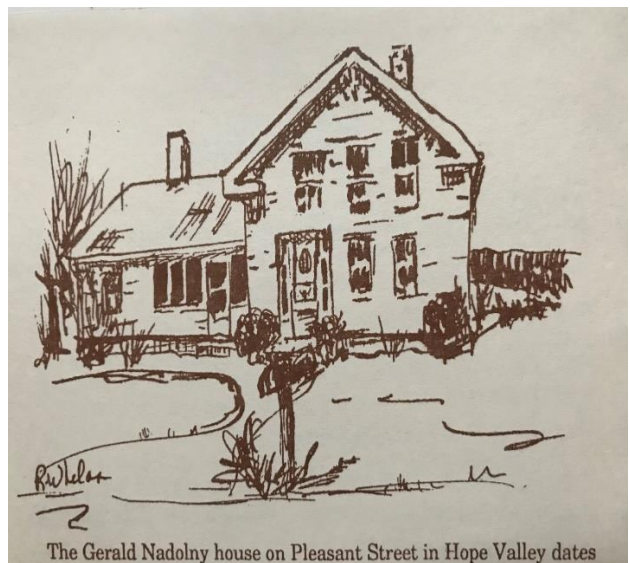
Obviously Roberta had overcome her aversion to historical societies by the time she joined RHS. “It introduced me to great neighbours (with a “u”- I’m still Canadian!) including Sallie Hoyle I enjoyed the meetings...and fundraising stuff was fun!” The Whelans are also next door neighbors to RHS members Frank and Virginia Williams.

Roberta and Bryan have slowed down some, and like all of us have been sidelined by social distancing. She says they feel well looked after as people keep dropping goodies off for them. Which comes as no surprise as

they are the kind of “neighbours” you wish lived next door to you! ~~~ K. Chambers



This is one of the houses once owned by Richmond Lace Works. It is, however, different from the rest of the two-family houses constructed by the mill company, so may well predate them. It is known to be one of the older houses in the Village of Alton.



The Gerald Nadolny house on Pleasant Street in Hope Valley dates

+ + + + + + + +

#1-Quote Quiz- Who Said It? If you don’t vote, you lose the right to complain.

(Answers to all quotes and trivia on final page.)

The Richmond RI Town Pound – A Forgotten Artifact of Early Town Life.

By David G. Johnson

Located in a bucolic setting on the east side of Carolina-Nooseneck Road, 0.1 mile north of its junction with Route 138 in Richmond RI is a stone structure partially covered with vines and guarded by poison ivy and brambles. This is the Richmond Town Pound, constructed in 1846. The Pound, once owned by the Town of Richmond, is a historical relic, owned by and now part of the Meadowburg Farm property. The 7-foot-tall by 2-foot-wide walls of the Pound make it one of the most impressive of the 100 known pounds remaining in New England and is featured and pictured in William F. Robinson's book entitled *"Abandoned New England – Its Hidden Ruins and Where to Find Them"* (1976, p. 58). The structure is quite large being 50-foot square with a ten-foot-wide gate opening in the middle of the north side wall.



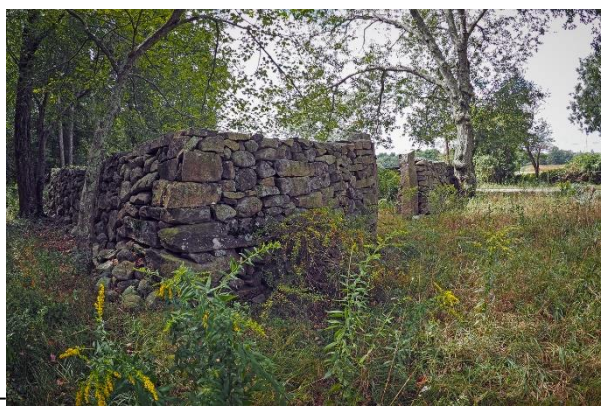
Bucolic Setting (L, R- photos by DGJohnson)



Roadside West Wall



Gateway in Middle of North Wall (L,R- photos by Mary Doo)



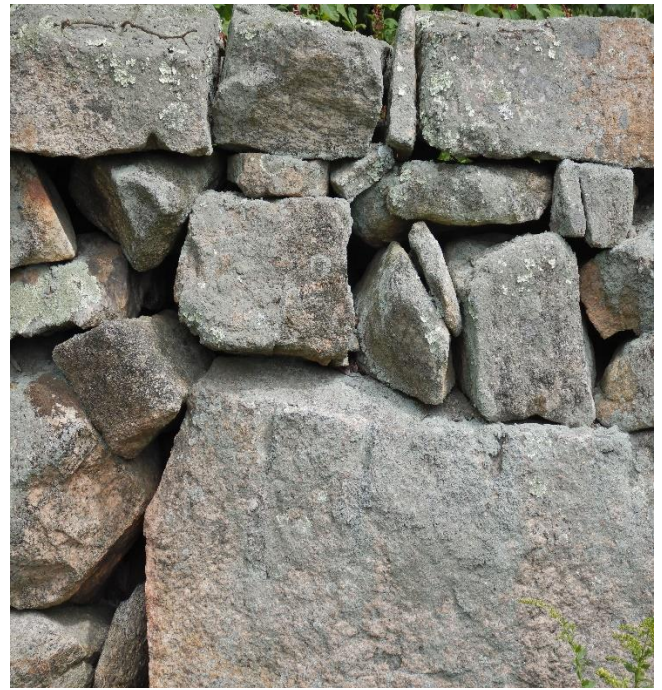
Northeast Corner of Pound

Town pounds trace their beginnings to early colonial New England as towns began to grow with the subsequent increase in farm crop lands and farm animals. Town pounds were in common use from the mid 1600's to the late 1800's and were built to hold stray farm animals that had become a problem to neighbors and town folks by wandering around loose.

Early pounds were constructed of wood fencing which often had to be rebuilt. Stone-walled pounds began to replace wood fenced pounds around 1740. By 1800 stone was the favored building material.



Closeup of wall (Photos by DGJohnson)



Half round holes, evidence of quarried stone

The Richmond stone pound was built from quarried surface-granite-ledge stone, most likely quarried from ledges located just north on the Carolina Nooseneck Road. Note the half round holes marks on the sides of two of the wall stones in the two closeup wall photos. The stone was quarried using the commercial plug and feather method which was a common method used to quarry stone in the mid 1800's throughout the northeast.

Pounds were built and financed per order of the town council and pound managers, known as pound keepers were appointed at annual meetings of the council. The position served as the apprenticeship of promising future politicians or was given to the most recently married young man in town. The pound keeper's duties included rounding up reported stray cattle, bulls, horses, hogs, sheep, goats, geese and ducks and placing them in the pound where he was responsible for feeding and watering the animals and collecting the imposed fines when the animals were collected by the owners. Attempts were made to find the owners and if owners were not found, the animals were sold at auction. The Richmond Town Pound had a brief resurrection after the Meadowburg Farm was purchased by the Kenyon Family in 1954. The farming family used it as a pigpen for several years. The following photo of the pen in use appeared in the aforementioned book by William F. Robinson.



Further research into the origin of this pound is underway. Questions remain: Did this replace an earlier structure? How much did it cost to build? Who built it? Who or what determined the size? What was the source of the quarried stone? How long did it take to build? What were the names of the first pound keepers?

Nineteenth Amendment Centennial



RHS had hoped to celebrate the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote with a special presentation, but Covid-19 stymied that plan, at least for the present.

Two well-known suffragists have RI ties: Elizabeth Buffum Chace and Paulina Wright Davis. Chace was a native Rhode Islander born to a Quaker family, and was an avid abolitionist. After the Civil War she turned her energy to women's rights and the care and education of indigent children. The Elizabeth Buffum Chace Center in Warwick continues her legacy by serving individuals and families affected by domestic violence and sexual assault.

Davis, a feminist, abolitionist, and temperance backer, assisted in the passage of the Married Women's Property Act in 1848. She came by her RI connection after marrying her second husband, Thomas Davis, a

RI Congressman. "In 1868, Davis, the first president of the New England Women's Suffrage Association, and the editor of the *Una* newspaper, formed the Rhode Island Women's Suffrage Association with Chace. The following year, on June 24, 1869, Davis came to Westerly and presided over the Woman's Suffrage Convention at the original armory hall. In a statement, the participants said "We are assembled ... to declare our right to be as free as man is free, to be represented in the government which we are taxed to support." (*Westerly Sun*)



Paulina Wright Davis



Elizabeth Buffum Chace

There are many valuable online sources to learn more about the history of woman suffrage both on a national and Rhode Island level. Here is a sampling: <https://www.womenofthehall.org/inductee/paulina-kellogg-wright-davis/>

https://www.thewesterlysun.com/news/westerly/league-celebrates-100-years-of-the-right-to-vote/article_51d05084-3bbe-11ea-af6a-e3521f37c8e0.html

<http://smallstatebighistory.com/rhode-islands-long-quest-for-womens-suffrage/>

<http://library.providence.edu/encompass/the-struggle-for-woman-suffrage-in-rhode-island/>

<https://www.womenhistoryblog.com/2016/06/elizabeth-buffum-chace.html>

FROM THE ARCHIVES

This page from the October 1980 issue of the RHS newsletter contains an early reference of the preparation for the cookbook that would become *Down Country Cookin'*. The members were overly optimistic in thinking it would be ready for the Spring Exhibit- unless they were planning for the Spring Exhibit of 1995, when the cookbook was finally published 15 years later! Also of note: This was "only" 40 years ago, but married members were still referred to as "Mr. and Mrs. Husband's Name". How many members from 1980 do you recognize?

XIII - 2

April through June--an ambitious series of exhibits in the Bell School. Two weeks each will be devoted to Wyoming, Alton, Usquepaugh, and Kenyon-Shannock. The exhibits are to consist of photographs, costumes, and objects pertinent to the organization and life of each individual village. We are soliciting the help of any and everyone who has something they would care to donate or loan to the exhibit, input into the arrangement or things to be included, reminiscences, and research time. For this program, we will be calling on some specific people we think might have something of interest to share with us.

June--A triumphant and JUBILANT !! annual meeting!

AND

This is to be known as the year of the cookbook. You've been hearing about this for several years now, and have been watching the cookbook balance climb, if ever so slowly, to a point where publication might be a feasibility. We would like this to be our project for the years. The Cookbook Committee members may be asking you to do some recipe testing to insure that some of the unusual recipes are clearly written; they would also like you to submit, at the earliest possible date, any traditional or family recipes that have particular significance to you, with a small bit of history with them. Send your recipes to Mrs. Mildred Chatalian, Hillsdale Road, West Kingston, R. I. 02892. This is to be a local history recipe book. The committee must prepare it to be camera ready for printing; so you see, it is a project, and time is important if it is to be ready for sale during our spring exhibit.

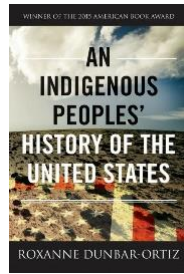
MEMBERSHIP

The following persons have renewed membership until May, 1981. Please let us know if there has been an omission from the list. These people will, of course, continue to receive the NEWSLETTER throughout the year; those who for some reason have overlooked subscription renewal will not receive further issues.

Mr. & Mrs. Herbert Arnold
Mr. & Mrs. John Anderson
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Bader
Ed. Barsk
Henry Boucher
Mr. & Mrs. Earl Brunskill
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Chatalian
Charles Edmonds
Mr. & Mrs. Clarence Handell
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Jordan
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Joslin
Stuart Kenyon
Mrs. Jeanne Lees

Mr. & Mrs. Wm. Hopwood
Marjorie Lillibridge
Mr. & Mrs. Richard I. Millar
Ms. Mary Panciera
Mr. & Mrs. RobRoy Rawlings
Roy Richmond
Mr. & Mrs. Carl Richard
Ms. Marjorie Schunke
Ms. Gladys Segar
Mr. & Mrs. Earl Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Wm. Stetson
Mrs. Martha Stoner
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Williams

Book Review



An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States

by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

The failure of the Framers of the Constitution to abolish slavery outright is seen as America's Original Sin. In 2020 the country still reels from the consequences of their cowardice in failing to deal with the euphemistic "peculiar institution". Ongoing protests against the racial inequality which has never been fully resolved, despite a bloody Civil War intended to end slavery and ensure Black men equal rights, are evidence that America has a long way to go before "all men are created equal" becomes a reality. It can be rightly argued that the Original Sin of assuming superiority over people of color was in place well before the establishment of the United States, extending back to the first European explorers' treatment of the Indigenous people they encountered in the "New World".

Back in February, I signed up for a two part workshop sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Church of South County (UUCSC) to discuss Dunbar-Ortiz's *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*. "The book was chosen by the UUA General Assembly for the 2019-2020 Common Read and invites congregations across the country to join in a shared experience. Our relationship with Indigenous Peoples will be a key focus for this year's UUA General Assembly (GA) in Providence, RI." Due to Covid-19, the workshops had to be canceled, and the GA was held virtually in June.

The book is an eye-opener. I went to school in the 1960's and '70's, when most US history classes tended to be taught from a Eurocentric, 'culture of conquest' perspective, complete with the origin myth of Columbus, while egregious events in our history were ignored or glossed over. I didn't realize that at the time, and it wasn't until adulthood and after much reading of American history from a variety of sources that I had my "Wait...what?" moment.

Dunbar-Ortiz describes Indigenous history in the Americas from pre-European contact to a look to the future. Her anger at the treatment of Natives bubbles under the scholarly research, and at first her use of terms like "squatters" and "settler colonialists" had me looking askance. On second thought I understood those were accurate terms to describe people who had invaded occupied land and subsequently over the centuries worked to wrest ever more land through imperialism, colonization, dispossession, treaty breaking, war, and attempted obliteration of Indigenous tribes. As the author puts it, "The history of the United States is a history of settler colonialism- the founding of a state based on the ideology of white supremacy, the widespread practice of African slavery, and a policy of genocide and land theft...From the colonial period through the founding of the United States, and continuing into the twentieth century, this has entailed torture, terror, sexual abuse, massacres, systematic military occupations, removals of Indigenous peoples from their ancestral territories, and removal of Indigenous children to military-like boarding schools." Exploitation of Native nations continues into the 21st century and can be seen almost daily in news stories, including repeated attempts to violate Native sovereignty by appropriating natural resources on tribal lands, and the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on both the health and economy of Indigenous people.

As a result of the UUCSC choosing this book for study, a proposal was written and accepted to support the Tomaquag Museum. The museum's Executive Director, Loren Spears, conducted a workshop at the UUA General Assembly on "Spirituality of Native Americans". Videos she produced with PBS were also available for viewing by GA members. ~~~ K. Chambers

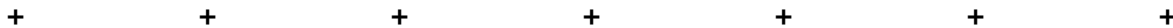


More **donations** arrived from the Hopkinton Historical Association, courtesy of Martha Baton of the Langworthy Library. Member Chamoni Mossa-Simone displayed some of the items in the Clark Memorial Library Display case.

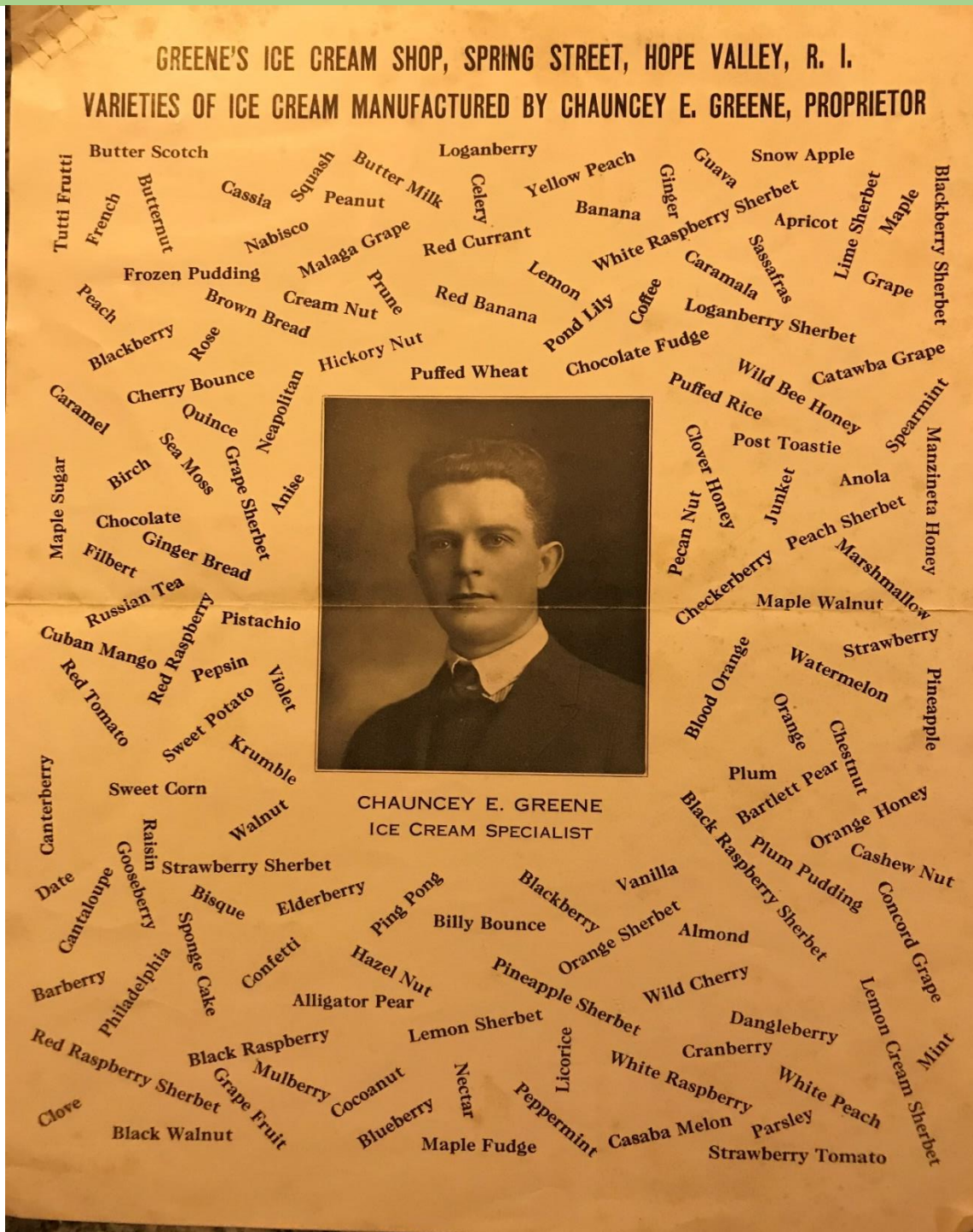


How Cool is This?

Text any town or city plus state to 907-312-5085 to find out whose land you're on. You'll receive a text back telling you which Indigenous people live(d) on that land.



#2- RI Trivia- Who was Elizabeth Pabodie, and where is her final resting place?



Austin White, the young man from Indiana featured in the last newsletter when he was in search of a local stonecutter to add a Mayflower engraving to his ancestors' headstone, also sent some interesting ephemera. Established in 1898, Greene's Ice Cream Shop with its 137 varieties could give Ben and Jerry's a run for its money! Triple scoop of Ping Pong/Parsley/Dangleberry, anyone?

+ + + + + + + +

#3- Richmond Trivia- Who is the current Town Administrator?

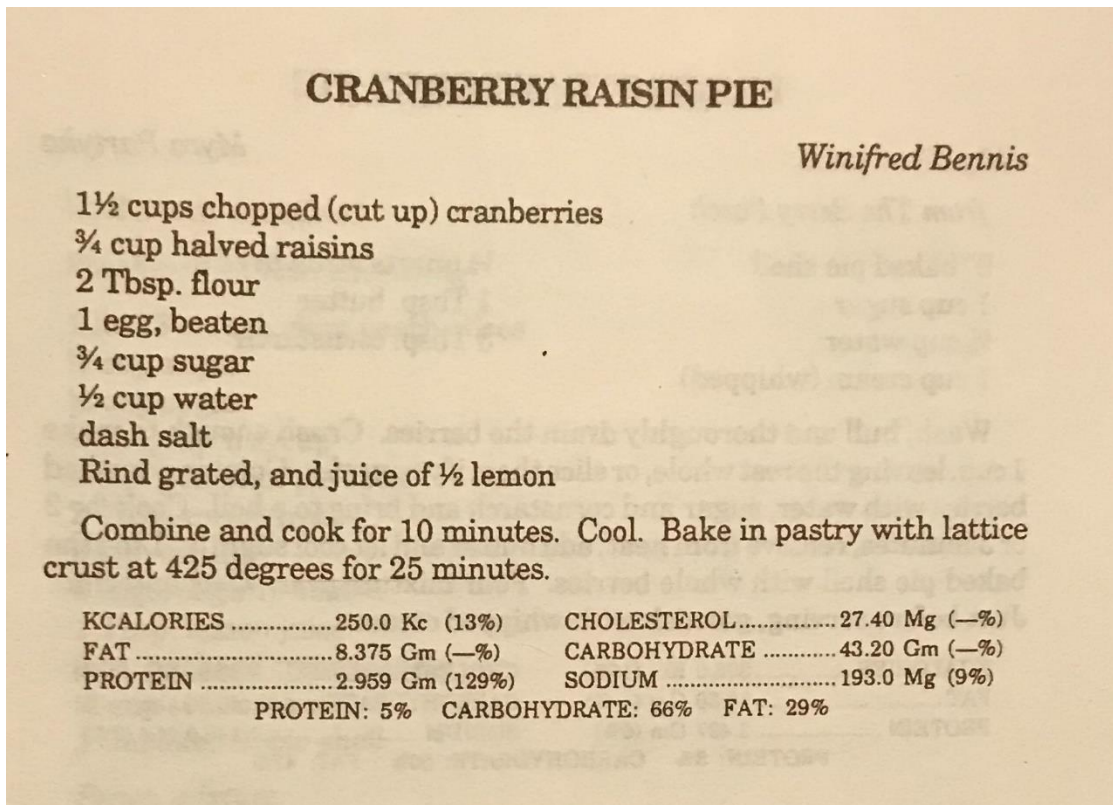
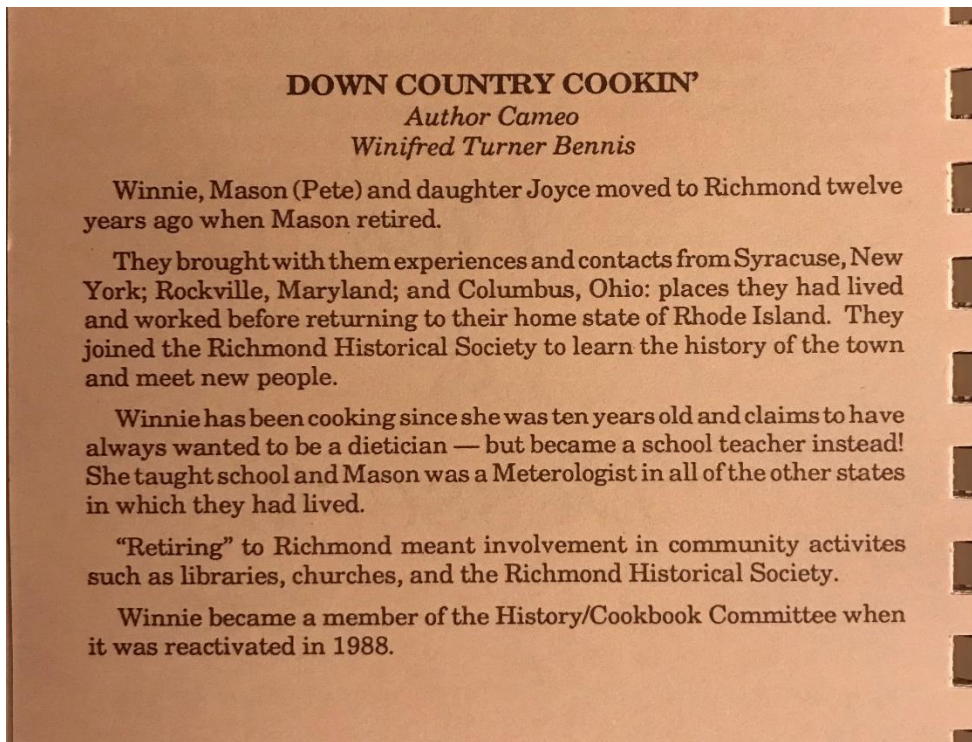


For the first time since its inception in 1967, The Washington County Fair was virtual due to COVID-19. Did you or anyone you know participate? If so, we'd like to hear about your experience. Hopefully the Fair will return "Live" in 2021; in the meantime enjoy some scenes from years past.



From Down Country Cookin'

The following recipe for Cranberry Raisin Pie was contributed to the cookbook by Winifred Bennis, and sounds like a perfect ending to Thanksgiving dinner. Winifred passed away in 2015 at the age of 93.



RICHMOND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Find us at:

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

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

Email: rihiso@gmail.com

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

RHS Slate of Officers

President- **Kristen Chambers** - krischambers1@gmail.com

Vice President- **Richard Wolke** - cloud11@cox.net

Secretary- **Johanna Wolke** - hansicloud@cox.net

Treasurer- **Laura Orabone** - laura@orabone.com

Member at Large- **Dave Johnson** - oneshadowridge@gmail.com

Member at Large - **Denise Stetson** - den.stetson@verizon.net

Cemetery Chair – **Dory Wagner** - dorwagg@aol.com

Archives- **Merrill Moone, Richard Wolke**

Newsletter Editor- **OPEN**

+ + + + + + +

Quiz Answers

#1- George Carlin (Yes, he was a comedian and not a historian, but he got it right!)

#2- The first known white child born in New England; Old Commons Burial Ground, Little Compton
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_Pabodie

#3- Karen Pinch

