



# THE LANDMARK

PUBLICATION OF THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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*Continuing the Tradition ~ Preserving Our History*

[bvhsri.org](http://bvhsri.org) ♦ 1873 Old Louisiquisset Pike (Rte 246) ♦ PO Box 125, Lincoln RI, 02865

Central Falls ♦ Cumberland ♦ Lincoln ♦ North Smithfield ♦ Pawtucket ♦ Woonsocket

## ~ It's Annual Meeting Time!! ~

The BVHS Annual Meeting and Election of Officers will be held

**SUNDAY MAY 15, 2016 at 1:30 P.M.**

in the downstairs hall.

Following the meeting and election, we will have our now 4th yearly discussion in honor of Christine Nowak. In previous years we have heard about the origins of the geographic area known as Louisiquisset and the history of the uprooting of the original settlers as a result of King Phillips War. In 2016, our post-Annual Meeting discussion will focus on the families that filtered back into the region following the war. The time period covered will be 1680-1731. All the towns in the Blackstone Valley will be represented. Our presenters will be **Steve Stodero** for Pawtucket, **Dan Santos** for the Arnold family of Lincoln and Woonsocket, **Jim Ignasher** for Smithfield, **Gail Harris** for Cumberland, **Al Klyberg** for Central Falls and the rest of Lincoln, **Irene Nebiker** for North Smithfield, and **Irene Blais** for Woonsocket.

## SAVE THE DATE!

<b>APRIL TBA</b>	Ken Postle Part II! <i>Join Ken 'in the field' as he takes you to the site of one of his historical cemetery restoration projects (or finds a new one).</i>
<b>MAY 15 2:00 P.M.</b>	2016 Christine Nowak Lecture <i>Panelists from each town will discuss the pioneering families from the Blackstone Valley following the King Phillips War.</i>
<b>JUNE 12 3:00 P.M.</b>	Andy DiPaola Concert <i>Benefit for the Blackstone Valley Historical Society.</i>
<b>OCTOBER 16 2:00 P.M.</b>	Raymond Wolf Lecture <i>Ray Wolf will discuss his latest book, written from the personal log of John E. O'Hara during his service to the Navy during World War II (1942-1945).</i>
<b>NOVEMBER 20 2:00 P.M.</b>	C Morgan Grefe, R.I. Historical Society <i>Lecture concerning history of the triple decker building.</i>

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

President Jason Dionne has appointed this years nominating committee as:

Glenn Laxton (Chair)  
Bob Ferri  
Jim Bethel  
Don Coehlo  
& Rick Walker

Here are your current officers:  
President: Jason Dionne  
Vice President: John Houghton  
Secretary: Francine Jackson  
Treasurer: Lori Melucci  
Members-at-Large: Gail Harris, Glenn Laxton, Bob Ferri

Please Contact **Glenn Laxton** with nominations by **APRIL 26, 2016.**  
(401)728-5615 or  
[glennlaxton@gmail.com](mailto:glennlaxton@gmail.com)

In downtown Pawtucket there's a pie slice of a place called **The Gately Building**. Triangular and three stories, it's been passed down from business to business and eventually, in 1993, was left vacant. It has recently been renovated and the Preservation Society of Pawtucket will hold their annual meeting there on April 25 at 5:45 P.M. to honor that accomplishment.

In 2011, The Pawtucket Central Falls Development group saw the opportunity behind rehabilitating the 100 year old structure and undertook a 5 year journey that culminated with a ribbon cutting in June 2015. Stories like this warm a preservationists heart. Not only was it preserved, it was reverted backwards in order to pay homage to the original design. The story the building began in the early 1900's is now still being written.

To begin with, we obviously go to the beginning. Annie Gately of Boston, a wealthy heiress, demolished what was already at the site and employed Albert H. Humes to oversee the construction of her namesake. The building, when unveiled three years later, was top of the line in innovation.

The *Pawtucket Times* 1914 article boasted it as having "the latest, improved Otis electric elevator ... an excellent lighting system, both natural and artificial .. and modern sanitary appliances on every floor." At 40 feet tall and 5000 square feet, it offered 23 office rooms on the top floors and 20 fair sized store-fronts on the first.

The first floor was built with cypress, the second and third with birch and mahogany finishes. With a flat roof, a steel frame and copper and granite on the outside, the total cost of construction was around 50,000 dollars.

When I told Andrew Pierson from the PCF this, and asked for a comparison on their spending, he laughed and said they spent approximately 3 million, using Historic and Federal Tax Credits, grant money, and the help of Morgan Stanley as an investor. Probably one of the hardest hurdles was the excessive water damage the building had undergone in the years it sat empty. According to Pierson, "I saw mold in the basement that was multiple layers. At least 6 inches thick." If they had not received an influx of money in 2013 they would have started considering demolition as a more viable route.

Thankfully, they didn't have to. They also decided at the beginning to restore the building to its original model of store-fronts on the ground floor. Back in the early 1935 the Gately Building transformed into The Old Colony Bank. It stayed there for 50 years before Citizens Bank took over, eventually vacating in 1993. A lot of Pawtucket remembers the Gately Building as the Old Colony Bank, but Pierson and the PCF wanted to step further back in time to what Annie Gately intended.

The second and third floors haven't been reverted to office space (some of the rooms hosted dentists, The Providence Journal Pawtucket division and a Naval office), instead each floor has 6 apartment's. Pierson believes that creating more living space downtown will help revitalize the city. All the apartments are currently occupied.

Adding living space helps, but more importantly, the PCF created a community space on the first floor for city groups to rent, and built a commercial kitchen that Farm Fresh is in the process of moving into. Along with using the kitchen, Farm Fresh will offer job training and run a street side cafe. Creating residential and commercial in tandem is a smart strategy towards breathing life back into the downtown area, as both are lacking.



The PCF's attention towards the Pawtucket 's past while forging into it's future echos a quote from Rui Almeda, who will be guest speaker at the Preservation Society's Annual Meeting. "When we sway from our past, we sway from our future."

The Preservation Society of Pawtucket will be hosting their Annual Meeting at the Gately Building on April 25 at 5:45 P.M. It is free and open to the public. R.S.V.P. to [pawtucketpreservation@gmail.com](mailto:pawtucketpreservation@gmail.com)

*(Picture from the preservation.ri.gov.)*

In March of 2015, BVHS Member Ray Wolf was selected Citizen of the Year by the Chepachet Grange; he then, in October of 2015, became Citizen of the Year of all the state Granges. Congratulations from all of us within the Historical Society!

Ray, one of the most prolific authors of Rhode Island's historic regions, will be speaking at North Gate in October on a love story from World War II. Don't miss it!

*(Photo by Ashlee Wolf)*



## Cleanup at Lampercock Cemetery-April 16

Save the Date! The Lincoln Conservation Commission voted to sponsor a cleanup at the

Lampercock Lane Cemetery (LN044) on April 16 from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Free lunch for all volunteers.

Please call John Houghton (401-651-6463) for more information.

## 2015 - 2016 Capital Campaign



**Help us meet our goal!**

### BVHS EXECUTIVE BOARD

President: Jason Dionne

401-862-4202

Email: [jhdio70@gmail.com](mailto:jhdio70@gmail.com)

Vice President: John Houghton

Secretary: Francine Jackson

Treasurer: Lori Melucci

### Members-at-Large

Gail Harris, Glenn Laxton, Bob Ferri

Visit us at [www.bvhsri.com](http://www.bvhsri.com)