

THE CAPE VERDEAN IN RHODE ISLAND

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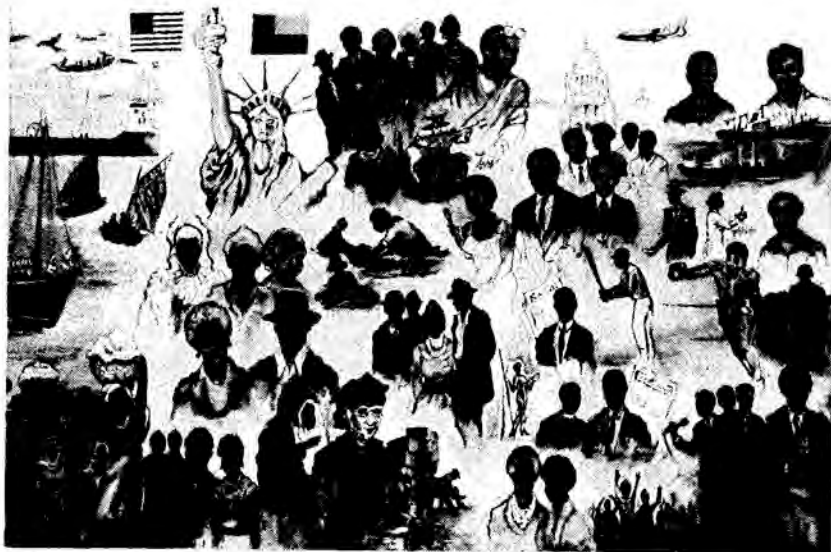
A Brief History

By

WALTRAUD BERGER COLI

and

RICHARD A. LOBBAN



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Rhode Island Ethnic Heritage Pamphlet Series

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Cover: Mural by three Cape Verdean artists—
Lori Rodricks, Daniel Lima, and Matthew Barros—
depicting the Cape Verdean odyssey.

EDITOR'S FOREWORD

In 1975 and 1976, on the eve of the bicentennial observance, in my capacity as chairman of Rhode Island's celebration (ri76), I established eighteen ethnic heritage committees, consisting of recognized leaders of this state's major ethnocultural groups. One purpose of this move was to involve in bicentennial activities those ethnic communities whose contact with this country did not extend as far back as the Revolutionary era. I urged such groups to observe and commemorate the contributions they had made to the American and Rhode Island experience from the time of their arrival down to the bicentennial year. A much more important reason for establishing the ethnic heritage program, however, was to allow each group to present its unique contributions, customs, and folkways to its neighbors from other cultural backgrounds. Formulated under the premise that knowledge promotes understanding and understanding begets brotherhood, the program was designed to break down the ethnocentric barriers and antagonisms that hindered us from achieving that lofty motto and goal—*E pluribus unum*, one out of many.

The one task assigned to each group upon its formation was to write a brief interpretive account of its Rhode Island experience—its motives for migration, areas of settlement, cultural survivals, and economic, political, and social activities—together with an assessment of its contribution to the development of our state. Though some efforts are more sociological, subjective, anecdotal, or selective than the neat, precise historical narrative that I envisioned, each of these pamphlets in its own way makes a valuable statement to all Rhode Islanders and provides a useful self-evaluation for the group that is the subject of analysis.

After the bicentennial's expiration, the concept of an ethnic heritage pamphlet series was kept alive by the Rhode Island Heritage Commission and its tireless chairman, Robert J. McKenna. Albert T. Klyberg of the Rhode Island Historical Society, Dr. Hilliard Beller of the Rhode Island Publications Society, and, especially, the authors of the various essays have also labored to bring this project to fruition as their contribution to the 350th anniversary of the founding of the state. No historical enterprise could be more appropriate for this 1986 celebration than a recounting of the toil and the triumph of our diverse peoples: From American Indians to Southeast Asians, we are Rhode Islanders all!

Patrick T. Conley

PREFACE

The history of Cape Verdeans in America and Rhode Island is a fascinating story that will have relevance to all citizens in the state. Without the support of the Cape Verdean community, the information in this pamphlet could not have been gathered. We extend our appreciation to all who have helped, and our apologies for our errors and exclusions.

This abridged history of the Cape Verdean-Americans in Rhode Island presents some of the main data and observations drawn from a master's thesis, "Cape Verdean Ethnicity," presented by Waltraud Berger Coli to Rhode Island College in 1987. The research on Rhode Island's Cape Verdeans for this pamphlet is mainly the work of Ms. Coli, but the pamphlet itself has been jointly discussed, analyzed, and written. Our long-term collaboration and endless discussion makes it almost impossible to separate our specific contributions. We will make every effort to publish our longer version of this work, which offers much more detail and analysis.

We also want to express our gratitude to our respective spouses, Dr. Robert D. Coli and Dr. Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, for their patience and understanding during the years that this work has required.

Richard A. Lobban, Jr., Ph.D.
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Cape Verdean Ethnic Identity

The Cape Verde Islands are remarkably isolated, and they were not recognized as an independent country until 1975. The isolation of the islands was a central feature in the creation of the unique sense of Crioulo/Cape Verdean ethnicity.

Cape Verdean identity lies in the slave-holding and slave-trading past, when certain characteristic patterns of race relations emerged. While Cape Verdeans were peripheral to Portuguese society and power, they sometimes acted as middlemen and administrators in the Portuguese African colonies. This placed them in a difficult position. On the one hand, the Portuguese colonial system practiced forms of racism to justify and administer the colonies, and insofar as Cape Verdeans thought of themselves as Portuguese, it became appropriate for them to adopt ideas of racial superiority. On the other hand, Cape Verdeans have an unmistakably African heritage, and thus some were led to deny their heritage and seek a European identity that could not be theirs. This schizophrenic cultural position—being simultaneously on the bottom of one set of sociopolitical relations and on the top of another—added to the sociostructural and psychological isolation of the Cape Verdeans.

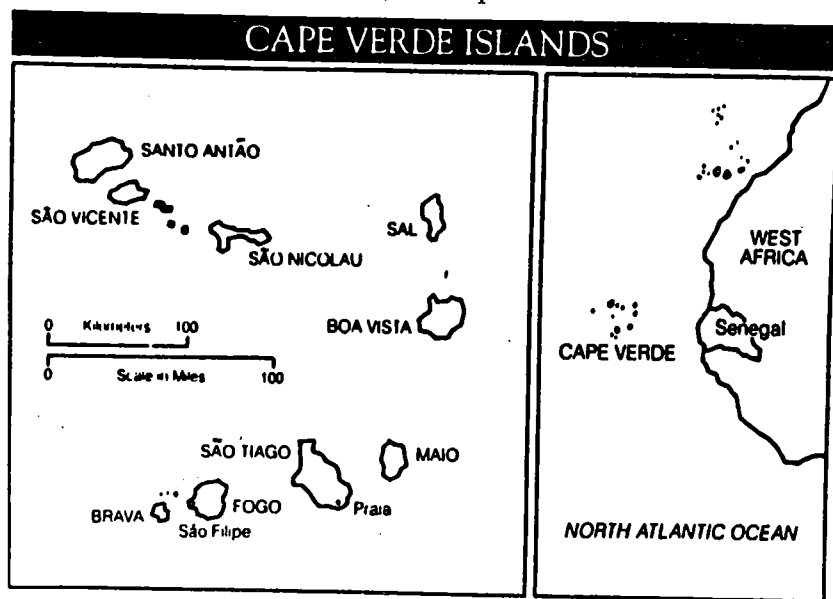
Thus the roots of Cape Verdean ethnicity are built around a contradiction: that is, all Cape Verdeans saw themselves both as unified in being Portuguese and as highly differentiated within the Portuguese structure of race and class. Compounding this complexity in ethnic consciousness was the fact that virtually all Cape Verdeans were of the same religion, irrespective of their station in life. Both masters and slaves were usually Catholic, worshiping the same God and celebrating the same feasts. Gradually "race," in the American sense of the term, became a difficult means to differentiate people in the islands, as all Cape Verdeans sought to acquire and maintain Portuguese beliefs and customs. The homogenization of Cape

Verdean society was furthered by fictive kinship of godparenthood and a rich network of actual blood ties.

The present population of the islands is considered to be 71 percent Crioulo, or Mestizo; 28 percent African; and 1 percent European. In Cape Verde's postindependence situation, this racial hierarchy has already shown some significant modifications.

The Background of Rhode Island's Cape Verdean Population

The Cape Verde Islands are located in the Atlantic Ocean approximately 300 miles west of Cap Vert, Senegal, and 700 miles northwest of Cabo São Roque, Brazil. Formed by ten small islands and eleven islets, the archipelago is divided into two groups: (1) the Ilhas de Barlavento, the northern, windward islands, which include Santo Antao, São Vicente, Santa Luzia, São Nicolau, Sal, and Boa Vista; and (2) the Ilhas de Sotavento, the southern, leeward islands, which include Maio, São Tiago, Fogo, Brava, and the three islets of Grande, Luis Carneiro, and Sapado.



The surface area of the archipelago is 1,557 square miles, which makes the Republic of Cape Verde slightly larger than Rhode Island.

The islands vary greatly in size, topography, and climate. Brava, the smallest inhabited island, has a surface area of only 24.7 square miles, about the size of Manhattan or Bristol County, Rhode Island; São Tiago, the largest, has an area of 328.5 square miles. Low rainfall, combined with hot, dry, tropical air, produces a very arid climate and recurring cycles of drought. Soil conditions have been worsened by poor land conservation, centuries of feudal land ownership, and strong winds from the Sahara.

Parts of the archipelago were first visited by various navigators sailing in the service of Portugal's Prince Henry from 1456 to 1462, and colonization began soon after. The first inhabitants were a small group of Portuguese business men, colonists, and Iberian political exiles and substantial groups of Mande, Fula, and Balante slaves from the Upper Guinea coast in West Africa. The mixing of diverse racial groups of African, European, Moorish, and Jewish background is prevalent in Cape Verde, with the resultant blend being the essence of the Crioulo culture and language. The difficulties of interisland transportation and communication led to limited contact among the islands, causing each to develop its own cultural and linguistic distinctiveness.

The history of the Cape Verde Islands is closely tied to the European expansion that led to the discovery of the New World. Because of its location on the maritime crossroads between Europe, Africa, and the Americas, Cape Verde was an important oceanic crossroad for fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century explorers, as well as for ships carrying food-crops, livestock, and slaves. Vasco da Gama, sailing from Portugal to India, stopped there in 1497; and in 1498 Christopher Columbus may have picked up some Cape Verdean sailors on his third transatlantic crossing. Portuguese navigator Pedro Alvares Cabral visited in 1500 before he discovered Brazil. Once Brazil became a Portuguese colony, rice, sugarcane, African yams, and Old World domesticated animals were sent there, while Brazilian maize became the staple food of the islands, and manioc plants were sent to West Africa by way of Cape Verde.

After this initial phase the islands played a role in supplying ships with fresh water, salt, and salted meats, as well as in providing essential ship repairs. The islands continued to be central in this trade during the height of Portuguese slavery and the colonialization of Brazil. Given the cultural, racial, and historical context of the population of the Cape Verde Islands, one may say that they represent the westernmost extension of Africa or the easternmost extension of the Caribbean.

Cycles of severe drought and famine have often reduced the population of the Cape Verde Islands by 10 to 40 percent. Emigration was, and is, a strategy to cope with the effects of drought, economic underdevelopment, and population pressure in the islands. Temporary and permanent emigration over several centuries has led to the creation of Cape Verdean communities in many countries. Today an estimated 300,000 Cape Verdeans and their descendants live in the United States, a number equal to the islands' total population (299,000 in 1981). Remittances have been of considerable economic importance for Cape Verde. In 1981 over one-third of the national budget—a total of 24 million dollars—was sent to the islands from Cape Verdeans living abroad.

Cape Verdeans are distinct among early American populations of African or mixed origins because they came as free laborers rather than as slaves. On the other hand, Caribbean-bound American ships involved in the infamous "triangle trade" arrived in Maio, São Tiago, and other of the islands to take on "seasoned" slaves who had been captured or purchased by Cape Verdeans on the African coast.

Between 1698 and 1708 some 103 ships were built in Rhode Island, most of them for use in the African slave trade. Some of these Rhode Island vessels stopped at Cape Verde, landing especially at Maio, Sal, and Boa Vista, to take on supplies of salt. Salt was used in preserving meat and fish, and it was helpful as ballast on the voyage back to New England. In the seventeenth century ships arrived regularly in Boston, and probably also in other New England ports, with Maio salt.

As early as 1765, Yankee seamen engaging in whaling and fishing often left New England shores with a skeleton crew and recruited cheap and reliable labor in the Cape Verde Islands, particularly in Brava and Fogo. In the early 1800s almost 40 percent of Nantucket whaling ship crews were from Cape Verde. Herman Melville's literary classic *Moby Dick*, in fact, prominently includes a Cape Verdean, the harpooner Daggoo, among its characters.

In 1808 the United States officially abolished the importation of slaves, and in the 1840s its "African Squadron" was based in São Tiago for the suppression of the maritime slave trade. The famed American ship U.S.S. *Constitution* ("Old Ironsides") visited Cape Verde on several occasions at this time. From 1816 onward the United States had consuls at Praia (São Tiago) and Mindelo (São Vicente).

During times of drought and famine, Brava attracted destitutes from other islands, and thus emigration was always greater from this island than from the others. The southern islands, of which Brava and Fogo are a part, produced over twice as many emigrants as did the northern islands. Brava's long seafaring tradition and the disproportionate emigration from this one island led to the American habit of calling all Cape Verdeans "Bravas."

A few dozen documented immigrants arrived in the United States each year between 1860 and 1880. With the decline of the whaling and sealing industries in the late nineteenth century, many Cape Verdeans bought old whaling ships and began the Cape Verdean-American packet trade. This trade served many functions: it was a means for emigrating to the United States, a pipeline for sending back money and goods to friends and relatives in the islands, and a way home for Cape Verdeans after they had made their "fortunes" in America.

Two distinct movements between the islands and the United States can be noted. One type may be characterized as "chain" (or delayed) migration, in which prospective migrants learned of opportunities, were provided with transportation, and had their initial accommodation and employment arranged through close social relationships with previous migrants. Chain migration was facilitated by America's liberal immigration policy prior to World War I. The other type of migration may be called "circular." This was the migration of lone working males who intended to save money in the United States and then to return home.

Migrants with few skills useful in urban America often took unskilled seasonal employment, which allowed them to return to their homeland on Cape Verdean-owned or operated packet ships. The tentative nature of some Cape Verdean settlement in this country led to reduced frequency of family migration. The early migrants had the persistent dream of eventually returning to their island. Around the turn of the century, however, the New England textile and cranberry industries attracted many Cape Verdeans who became more permanently established. When women came to America for work in textile mills and cranberry bogs, they often left their children with relatives in the islands until they were more settled.

The rate of immigration climbed steadily from 1860 until the 1920s, when as many as 1,500 immigrants arrived annually on packets or steamships. Then, with the passage of the new immigration laws of 1921 and 1924, the level of mobility for Cape Verdeans declined

dramatically. These laws were particularly stringent toward groups of non-European origin. Cape Verdeans were now reluctant to return to the islands for fear they would not be able to reenter the United States. Forced to make a decision that would likely be final, most opted for American residence.

During the Great Depression the flow of remittances of money, food, and clothing to the islands dried up almost completely, bringing great hardship to family members left behind. However, the packet trade was interrupted only during World War II, and it then continued until 1965. The last Cape Verdean packets were the *Madalan*, the *Maria Sony*, and the *Ernestina*. The packet trade ended with the *Ernestina's* last voyage between Providence and Brava in 1965.

Immigration from the islands increased slightly after World War II. Then it began to accelerate with the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which allowed unlimited admission of immediate relatives. However, until Cape Verdean independence in 1975, immigration from the islands—then still a part of the Portuguese empire—was restricted to 200 persons per year. Currently more than 1,200 immigrants are arriving in Boston annually.

Cape Verdean-Americans are to be found everywhere in the United States, but they are most concentrated in southeastern New England, where there are more Cape Verdeans than anywhere else in the world outside of the Cape Verde Islands. In the early nineteenth century, young Cape Verdean whalers started to settle in Nantucket, New Bedford, Fall River, Providence, Bristol, and other coastal communities. Some Cape Verdean men had established families in the United States even before the mid-nineteenth century. The permanent Cape Verdean population in America, however, dates from 1864, when immigration of the first Cape Verdean women was recorded. The town of New Bedford, Massachusetts, is recognized as the "Cape Verdean capital of the New World," as it has traditionally been a center for the arrival and dispersal of such migrants.

The size of the Cape Verdean community in the United States is very difficult to measure. Early Cape Verdean immigrants were grouped under "Portuguese," "Black Portuguese," "Bravas," "Atlantic Islanders," or "Cape Verdeans." Furthermore, the Anglo-Saxon racial system that classified immigrants by phenotype into "White" or "Black" complicated the issue. This classification does not reflect Cape Verdean reality; there are, in fact, many cases of full siblings who were classified into two different "racial" groups. This has led

to confusion on the family level and in American society. Official sources do not usually register Cape Verdeans as a distinct population, but group them with "Portuguese," "Afro-Americans," or "Other." Until Cape Verdean independence, the United States Immigration Service usually did not differentiate between Cape Verdeans and Portuguese because Cape Verde was a Portuguese colony.

Since there was no special category for Cape Verdeans until the 1980 United States census, the reported 18,244 Americans then having at least a single ancestor of Cape Verdean origin must be considered an absolute minimum. The great majority of these—17,100, or 94 percent—lived in New England. The official distribution of Cape Verdeans by state was 12,804, or 75 percent, in Massachusetts; 3,629, or 21 percent, in Rhode Island; and 667, or 4 percent, in the remaining New England states. However, for reasons relating to the ambiguity of self-identity, the politics of racial discrimination in America, and the legal status of Cape Verde as a Portuguese colony, these figures are certainly low. If the Cape Verdean population was 10,000 to 15,000 in the 1920s, immigration and natural increase (especially of those with only one parent of Cape Verdean origin) would have expanded it well beyond the 1980 census figure.

The major ports of entry to the United States for the Cape Verdeans were New Bedford and Providence. Between 1860 and 1930, 22,624 Cape Verdean immigrants arrived in New Bedford; of these, 3,961, or 17.5 percent, listed Providence as their intended destination. A flavor of the early Cape Verdean migration may be found in the names of the sailing ships that brought immigrants to Rhode Island—ships like the *Blue Bell*, the *Unique*, the *Hattie and Lottie*, the *Germania*, the *Canada*, the *União 2nd*, the *Yukon*, and the *John R. Manta*.

These small but hearty vessels provided most local Cape Verdean families with their start in a new land. The majority of the captains and crew members were Cape Verdeans. The first Cape Verdean known to have purchased a vessel in Rhode Island was Antonio Coelho, who sailed the *Nellie May* from Providence to Brava in 1892 and returned in the spring of 1893 with 117 passengers and crew members.

Coming to America on a Cape Verdean packet ship made the transition from the old country to the New World less harsh. The "Brava Packet" ships plied between the Cape Verde Islands, the African coast, and the United States, delivering cargo, mail, and passengers on a seasonal basis. In spring the westward migration

brought workers to Rhode Island. In fall and winter, when jobs were fewer, the eastward migration brought passengers and goods back to the islands. Many migrants used the winter seasons to build a house in the islands with lumber bought in Providence.

The epoch of the Cape Verdean packet ships to Rhode Island spanned the years from 1867 to 1965. During the Second World War the use of packet ships fell off, but service was resumed, though at lower levels, in the late 1940s. The number of passengers varied: some packet ships had only a handful, while motorized steamships carried a hundred or more. The sailing ships were small and the passage rough and long, taking three to four weeks at least, sometimes in harsh weather conditions and unfavorable winds, and with intervening ports of call. But this was an authentic Cape Verdean experience, in which all faced the same shipboard living conditions. On the steamships the passage was usually faster, but the passengers on these vessels were treated more like third-class human cargo.

Rhode Island's Cape Verdean Communities

The cultural heart of the Cape Verdean community in Rhode Island was Fox Point, near the India Point docks. Whalers, merchant mariners, and longshoremen resided close to their waterfront jobs. Settlement of the Cape Verdeans expanded from its initial core and spread further along South Main, Pike, Brook, Link, Tockwotton, Transit, Wickenden, and South Water streets in an ethnic enclave of three-decker tenements. "Chickenfoot Alley," a street between James Street and Transit Street, is considered the site of the first permanent settlement of Cape Verdeans in Rhode Island. In the late nineteenth century the waterfront had changed from a neighborhood for the early well-to-do residents of Providence to a place dominated by maritime commerce and port facilities. The upper-class residential area moved northward along the southern end of Benefit and Prospect streets to form the present prestige addresses of the East Side, while the immediate waterfront was built up with less desirable buildings. The waterfront economy had weakened as a result of the abolition of slavery, the collapse of the rum-molasses market, and the decline of the China trade. However, the rise of textiles and other industries in Rhode Island brought new needs for raw materials, coal, and cheap labor, and these changes resulted in a shift from transatlantic to coastal shipping.

The composition of the Fox Point community just after the turn of the century was mixed. There were Irish, Portuguese from the Azores and Madeira, Syrian-Lebanese, Afro-Americans, and Cape Verdeans. Despite images of the American "melting pot," Fox Point was a community with multiple ethnicities living separately, though together, with invisible boundaries. Each group was largely endogamous and formed its own social clubs, religious groups, and

mutual-aid societies. By 1911 the Cape Verdean population in Fox Point officially numbered 407, and in the 1915 the Rhode Island census counted only 256 Cape Verdeans. It is certain, however, that the numbers were much greater.

Ironically, even as the Cape Verdean neighborhood was growing, it was on the verge of its demise. A series of events slowly started to displace Cape Verdeans. In 1914 a streetcar tunnel was built to connect North Main Street with Thayer Street. While it was outside of Fox Point proper, the tunnel changed the transportation network of Providence. In 1928 the construction of the George M. Cohan Boulevard and Washington Bridge "necessitated" the destruction of Cape Verdean tenement houses. To expand their church, Holy Rosary Church officials also demanded the clearing of several tenement houses occupied by Cape Verdeans. The hurricane of 1938 caused additional damage to tenements, as well as huge economic losses to many Cape Verdean waterfront businesses.

Even through the 1950s there was a self-contained and integrated community, with a variety of stores and social activities that precluded any need to go downtown. The heart of the community extended from South Main Street to the corner of Benefit and Wickenden. However, outsiders saw South Main Street as an eyesore, and given its proximity to the downtown business district, many considered it underutilized. A 1951 report from the Providence Redevelopment Agency described the site as "one of the worst slum areas in the city."

Isolated by social and ethnic factors, declining employment opportunities, and new highways, Fox Point's Cape Verdean community suffered the final blow in the late 1950s, when interstate highway I-195 tore through the heart of the neighborhood. This highway limited access to Fox Point, cutting it off from the waterfront, changing traffic patterns, and fragmenting the social and commercial life of the community. As a result, many Cape Verdeans moved to North Main, Camp Street, South Providence, and Washington Park, as well as to East Providence, North Providence, and various areas in Pawtucket. Patterns of residential racial segregation in Providence made it difficult to move into other neighborhoods, however. Subsequently the Brown University community, young urban professionals, students, and "smart shops" invaded the area, and the Cape Verdean character has now been all but erased by this process of gentrification.

Because of American racism, the choices for work available to

Cape Verdeans in general were not very great. The earlier immigrants often worked as stevedores, longshoremen, riggers, sailors, coalboat workers, crew members on fishing or oyster boats, or construction laborers. Dangerous working conditions at sea, on the docks, or in unhealthy mills and factories made life hard. With their agricultural background in the islands, many families preferred seasonal work in the cranberry industries on Cape Cod. Women worked in the same textile and jewelry factories as men, while some found employment as domestic servants in the homes of the wealthy on Providence's East Side.

In short, the Cape Verdeans joined the American working class, but along divisions of race and ethnicity, a separation evident, for example, in the Cape Verdean dominance of the Longshoremen's Union (Local 1329). America's "Protestant work ethic" was broadly accepted in the Cape Verdean community. Cape Verdeans were especially appreciated because they were usually hardworking, trustworthy, reliable, cooperative, and tolerant of difficult working conditions.

As the first American-born generation emerged, factory work began to replace maritime labor, and more Cape Verdeans became self-employed. Domestic service for women declined. Reflecting their occupational mobility in the 1950s, Cape Verdeans became the first "colored" people to obtain jobs in Providence's fire and police department. Later immigrants arriving between 1960 and 1974 often worked in factories and in food and health services. These jobs were frequently arranged through relatives. At present, Cape Verdeans are in most professions, including law, medicine, teaching, sports, banking, and business.

As an immigrant population, most Cape Verdeans arrived with little capital and first found work on the docks, in factories, or in fields. However, there are numerous examples of enterprising Cape Verdean merchants who built businesses within the Providence Cape Verdean community, establishing a reputation for honesty in their business dealings. These ventures included boardinghouses, barbershops, poolrooms, and funeral parlors.

One notable Cape Verdean entrepreneur was John F. Lopez. Born in New Bedford in 1888, Lopez was an undertaker and a leader of the Cape Verdean community in Providence. With Manuel Quirino Ledo and others, he founded Local 1329 of the International Longshoremen's Association. In 1948 he became the first "black" appointed to the state Fair Employment Practices Commission when

he was selected for this post by Governor Dennis J. Roberts. The goal of this agency, as its name indicates, was to enable minorities to enter the labor market without racially motivated discrimination. Lopez was president of the NAACP, and in 1949 he received recognition from the National Urban League.

Another successful businessman was Ambrose Cardoza Mendes, born in 1887 in São Tiago. After studying at morticians' school, he operated funeral homes on Olney and Camp streets in Providence. Mendes was once nominated Rhode Island's "best business man of the year." He owned as many as twenty-seven pieces of property and was called "the highest tax-paying Negro" in Rhode Island. He died in Providence in 1976.

In the early 1900s a Cape Verdean community took root in East Providence as an offshoot of the Fox Point community. Its formation was facilitated by the ferry and, later, by the wooden covered bridge across the Seekonk River. A convenient link to Fox Point was maintained by the new Washington Bridge, opened in 1928. After the construction of I-195, however, Cape Verdeans in East Providence could no longer easily walk over the Seekonk River to Fox Point to visit, shop, socialize, and participate in religious feasts.

Cape Verdean entrepreneurs on the east bank of the river included Joe Santos, who owned a fish market on Martin Street from the 1930s to the 1950s. During this same period Nho Joao di Pesh from Brava sold his fish from a horse-drawn wagon on Waterman Avenue in the area of Watchemoket Square. Further down the East Bay, Caesar Britto—who has made a handsome living in construction—resides on a prestigious estate on Poppasquash Point in Bristol.

According to the noted anthropologist Elsie Clews Parsons, author of *Folk-Lore from the Cape Verde Islands*, there were 200 or more Cape Verdeans living in Newport about 1916 and 1917. Cape Verdean homes and businesses there were generally concentrated on West Broadway, on Warner, Pond, Tilden, Burnside, and Kingston avenues, and in the Carry Hill area. Early businesses included restaurants, barbershops, poolrooms, and grocery stores. Cape Verdeans also found work as domestics, gardeners, laborers, cooks, farmers, and fishermen. The Cape Verdean Club of Newport began as the Portuguese Caboverdeano Social Club Newport in 1917-18. This club is a mutual-benefit organization providing sickness and death payments to its membership.

Notable members of Newport's Cape Verdean community include Dr. Jose Ramos, a prominent physician; Dr. L. S. A. Gomez, a distinguished dentist, author, professor, and military man; Albert Anton, who served as the city's postmaster; and Ethel Hermina Ramos Harris, an internationally famed pianist and composer, who was the daughter of a Cape Verdean sea captain.

The fastest-growing Cape Verdean community in Rhode Island is located in the Central Falls-Pawtucket area. This community was already well established when it experienced a second wave of substantial expansion in the early 1960s. The Cape Verdean population of Pawtucket increased between 1960 and 1989 to an estimated 15,000. This growth was primarily due to the heavy concentration of factories and affordable housing in the area. Immigrants arriving in Rhode Island after 1975 settled almost exclusively in Pawtucket, and thus a new cycle of chain migration from the islands began. These immigrants had little affinity with older residents who had moved from Fox Point to East Providence and Washington Park.

Life Behind the Facts

The descriptive sections above do not convey a subjective feeling of Cape Verdean character and personality. The Cape Verdean community is remarkably close, supportive, and intimate because of its small size and unique ethnic features. There is a level of community cooperation and cohesiveness that produces a genuine sense of group solidarity.

Cape Verdeans are "survivors," and they plan to succeed in this country despite problems of racial prejudice. They value hard work, honesty, discipline, persistence, and education. Their community's history and folklore recall the collective hardships and struggles of Cape Verdean whalers, fishermen, and those early migrants who risked their lives to come to the United States on small sailing ships. This tempering of the Cape Verdean-Americans became their badge of honor.

As soon as an immigrant ship arrived in port, an excitement would run through the community and everybody would go to the piers. After the immigration formalities, the newly arrived passengers would receive shoes and clothing from their friends and relatives and be guided to their kinfolk's homes. Cape Verdeans music—*mornas*, *masurkas*, waltzes, and *coladeras*—would be heard until late into the night. Some of the favorite Cape Verdean foods—*canja*, *manchupa*, *gufong*, and *pastel*—were brought to the pier, and every evening there would be spontaneous parties on the ships. Crioulo, the spoken language of the islands, would be heard everywhere. This is the language of intimacy among friends, between husband and wife, and between mother and child. It is the language that has developed over 500 years in the islands from a largely Portuguese vocabulary and grammar and some Mandingo and Fula languages from Africa.

On such occasions special *mantenhas*, or oral greetings, were delivered. For most Cape Verdeans, these were an important lifeline to their loved ones left behind. "My wife and my children, how are they?" "What did they tell you?" "How is mother?" "Did it rain?" Such messages kept the communities on both sides of the ocean bound closely together. When a Cape Verdean returned to the islands, he carried *mantenhas* back together with gifts, locks of hair, and small amounts of money for family members, relatives, and friends. (Today the mode of transportation has changed from packet ships to airplanes, but the custom of sending *mantenhas* is still the same.)

Kinship or the ties of fictive kin meant that new arrivals expected food, housing, and employment. Family members or friends in the diaspora helped them to adjust to their new country. Boarders became a part of the family; they joined in all activities, and meals were eaten together. When an immigrant could send for his own family, he would move to a tenement house with brothers or cousins.

Dancing and socializing were always very important in the community. During Prohibition and the Depression, inexpensive restaurants became common meeting places for the Cape Verdeans. After an evening of dancing at the What Cheer Hall on North Main Street or Monahan's Hall on Wickenden Street—both patronized almost exclusively by Cape Verdeans—many stopped in at Jake's Restaurant on the corner of Wickenden and Benefit streets in Fox Point for a 15-cent special of beans and toast.

For entertainment at home, Cape Verdeans, young and old alike, danced in kitchens to music made by their countrymen and ate *canja* (a chicken-rice soup). Babysitting was no problem on these occasions; when the little ones were tired, they just lay down on a bed between the coats and fell asleep. These "kitchen dances" were also places for supervised courtship.

When children met older members of the community, they would say "*Dam benson*," which means "Give me your blessing," and reach out their hand. The older person would softly put his or her hand on the forehead of the child. The closeness of the community gave young and old a great sense of security, of belonging, of being loved. Almost all had only limited means, but life was still usually comfortable and secure.

In order to help neighbors and relatives, rent parties were sometimes held. Some migrants received a loan for their travel costs, and parties might be held after they arrived to help raise some

money to get them started. Although some aid came from the Work Projects Administration (WPA) during the Depression years, Cape Verdeans tried to make it on their own and were reluctant to accept help from outside their community.

Often-repeated stories tell of the excitement and boredom, the drama and tedium, the risks and routines of Cape Verdean ocean voyages. These tales could fill volumes. Perhaps typical is the case of Captain Henry Rose, born in Brava in 1898. Rose made his first trip to America as a messboy in 1911, at age thirteen. Three more voyages followed. He crossed the Atlantic twice as mate, and at twenty-one he was a master. For many years Captain Rose made two round trips to the islands and several trading expeditions to the African coast annually. Tales of other intrepid Cape Verdean mariners abound.

Cape Verdean children had a variety of recreational resources. One of these was the Providence Boys' Club on South Main Street, an organization that played an important part in the life of Fox Point's young Cape Verdeans and helped them to integrate into American society. Values learned at home were reinforced at the Boys' Club, which urged its members to respect others, keep their hats off in the club, and refrain from smoking. The Boys' Club offered basketball, boxing, swimming, baseball, movies, vocational classes, and other activities for both children and parents. Many prominent Cape Verdean athletes and community leaders were enriched by their experience at the club.

Until 1950, Fox Point boys went swimming and diving from the India Point docks. The playground near Tockwotton Park (now the grounds of the Fox Point Elementary School), Sparrow Park, and Triangle Park (destroyed by the South Main Street exit of I-195) were favorite places for young Cape Verdeans to play ball or just "hang out" with their Irish and Portuguese neighbors. Fox Point youths also liked to hop the trolley cars and ride downtown.

Most Cape Verdeans enjoyed a morning meal of *papa con leite*, a thick porridge served with milk and margarine. Such a meal helped satisfy hungry appetites at a crowded table where nothing was left uneaten. A big pot of *canja*, *manchupa*, or *djagacida* would be cooking in every house, and visitors were expected to eat before departing. On Saturdays children looked for pieces of wood or spilled railway coal that could be used as fuel for cooking. Kerosene space heaters took the chill off bedrooms, where more than one Cape Verdean child may have slept in each bed. Since most apartments were cold-

water flats, once a week the big washtub would be brought into the kitchen and filled with hot water so the girls and women could take their bath. The boys had it easier, because they could shower at the Boys' Club after practice or after swimming at the docks.

Many Cape Verdeans born in the 1930s and 1940s remember their close-knit community with great warmth and nostalgia. One described it wistfully: "We were like a big family. Everybody knew everybody else, we cared for each other, and nobody went without. We took care of each other's children; we shared our joys and our sorrows. It was wonderful." Unfortunately this Fox Point ethnic neighborhood has been destroyed by people in high decision-making positions with other goals and values. It will not return.

Community Life and Organizations

During the five centuries of colonial rule in the islands, mutual-aid societies were built mainly around kin, church, and community groups. Individuals could expect very little help from formal governmental agencies, so helping and sharing of scarce resources usually took place at the neighborhood and family level.

In Rhode Island the first mutual-aid societies emerged in response to the new kinds of uncertainty the immigrants encountered in the American urban environment. The concept of mutual-aid societies appealed to immigrants who did not trust the big, impersonal insurance companies but who felt it necessary to have some additional source of security. Some of the associations they founded therefore provided sickness and death benefits.

Given the history of voluntary associations in the islands, it is not surprising that those in Rhode Island were either established on the local level or organized around churches. The vast majority of Cape Verdeans consider themselves Catholics, but there are some small, active Protestant groups as well; the oldest local religious-based association, in fact, is Protestant rather than Catholic.

Religious Organizations

The earliest known Protestant association, the Cape Verdean Christian Brotherhood and Mutual Benefit Association of the Central Congregational Church in Providence, was formed in May 1914 by a group of Cape Verdeans. The organization had 294 members at its peak. Until 1940, when this brotherhood was legally dissolved, it played a vital role in the Cape Verdean community for both Protestants and Catholics.

The Holy Name Society and the Sociedade Santiago were the best known of the Catholic voluntary associations. The membership



*Top: Sociedade Santiago
Providence, July 1929.*

*Bottom: Holy Name Society
Providence, September 1930.*

Cape Verdean Catholic voluntary associations provided sickness benefits and paid for the mortuary expenses of their members. Members of both societies came from Massachusetts and Connecticut to participate in a Mass held at the Holy Rosary Church and then marched through the streets of Fox Point.

of these organizations was much greater than that of the Cape Verdean Christian Brotherhood.

The Holy Name Society was founded in Providence on September 7, 1923, and remained active until 1963. It grew to eight chapters on the East Coast, and at its peak it served more than 900 members. For several years all chapters came to Providence on the Sunday before Labor Day for a great celebration of Cape Verdean ethnicity. Members and their families attended the Mass held during the morning at the Holy Rosary Church, and then a great procession of several hundred members in formal attire and top hats marched through the streets of Fox Point. A twenty-five member marching band, the Spirito Cabo Verdeano (active until the 1940s), played American marching music.

The Sociedade Santiago was founded in Providence on October 10, 1926. By 1927 this organization had about 300 members, with one chapter, or *loja*, in Woonsocket and at least four others in Connecticut. The *loja* in Norwich, Connecticut, was still active in 1989. This society provided sickness benefits and paid for the mortuary expenses of its members. The group's biggest event was its annual dance and banquet, often featuring an orchestra and a singing presentation by a Cape Verdean youth group, followed the next morning by a Mass in the Holy Rosary Church attended by 450 to 500 adults and their children.

Although each association had its own activities, there was a great deal of intermingling with other groups. On certain occasions neighborhood or family groups would organize special events. On August 23, 1931, for example, Brava families who lived in Lonsdale, Central Falls, Pawtucket, and surrounding areas held a festival in Lincoln Woods. Attended by more than 400 persons, this outing had a specific Brava character, with stringed instruments, songs, and such typical food as *milho verde* and *melancia*.

In the midst of the Great Depression, another mutual-aid society, the Associacao Caboverdeana Santo Antonio, was organized on May 20, 1934. The association offered sickness and death benefits and, according to its bylaws, performed "other deeds to bolster the spiritual side of life, in such activities as annual masses, visiting the sick, comforting and giving solace to the bereaved, and in various ways promoting the virtues of understanding to its fullest extent."

Churches in general, and the Catholic Church in particular, have been very important institutions for ethnic awareness and reinforcement in the Cape Verdean immigrant community. Church life supports the transition to life in America. Some of the prominent

churches with Cape Verdean membership are Immaculate Heart of Mary and Saint Anthony in Pawtucket; Holy Rosary, Saint Patrick, Saint Joseph, Holy Name of Jesus, and Saint Michael in Providence; Saint Francis Xavier and Our Lady of Loretto in East Providence; Saint Elizabeth in Bristol; Saint Thomas the Apostle in Warren; and Saint Joseph, Saint Mary, and Jesus Saviour in Newport.

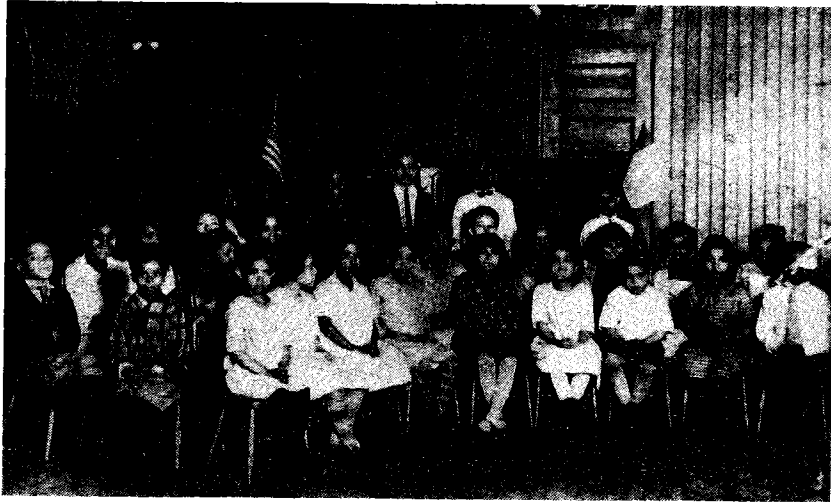
Protestant churches such as the Faith Community Parish in Providence, the Bethany Church of the Nazarene in Rumford, and the Portuguese Calvary Baptist Church in Lincoln also have Cape Verdean members.

The Faith Community Parish, located at 51 Sheldon Street in Providence, is the oldest Cape Verdean church in the United States. Its small size belies its historical importance within the Cape Verdean community. Beyond its religious functions, it also serves as a meeting place for varied community groups and activities.

This parish traces its origins to the work of Manuel Ricardo Martin (1837-1905), a Cape Verdean who was always concerned with the spiritual interest of his people and who perceived a special need to help the immigrants and whalers adjust to life in America. In 1885 Martin gathered his followers in his tenement room on Chickenfoot Alley. Later he found a larger room on South Water Street, where he put a small sign in the window officially proclaiming the Gospel Mission. In 1888, in an old store at 34 Link Street, Martin arranged for English classes, legal aid, a church school, and evening gospel services. In the early 1890s the Gospel Mission moved to quarters over a blacksmith shop at 27 Transit Street. Some ridiculed Martin's enterprise, labeling it a "kerosene church," but Martin only replied that since Christ was born in a stable, there was a church wherever Christ was.

After six years of informal ministerial work preparing Crioulo summaries of sermons, Martin was formally employed by the Central Congregational Church as a missionary among his people. In 1892 his church was renamed the Portuguese Mission. In 1904 the members of the mission and the Church Society at Central Congregational joined forces to build the new brick Portuguese Chapel, which by 1905 numbered 106 men and women in its congregation.

A variety of activities were offered at the chapel. The work of Martin's industrial school for women, started in 1892, was continued there, along with Americanization classes, worship and Bible study, Sunday School, summer school for boys and girls, and Girl Scout and Boy Scout activities. In the 1930s this socially and culturally active church hosted the Christian Endeavor Society, the



Top: Sunday School class at the Portuguese Chapel on Sheldon Street in 1926.

Bottom: Boy Scout Troop 40 at the Portuguese Chapel in 1928.

Dramatic Club, midweek prayer meetings, game nights, receptions, and play rehearsals.

Under the leadership of Jefferson Wright (1961-64) the church introduced art classes, a youth club, and two new adult community

clubs for bowling and sports, which were operated independently of the church. The athletic program centered around boxing, and the ring in the church's basement served as one of the two training facilities available for amateur boxing in the state.

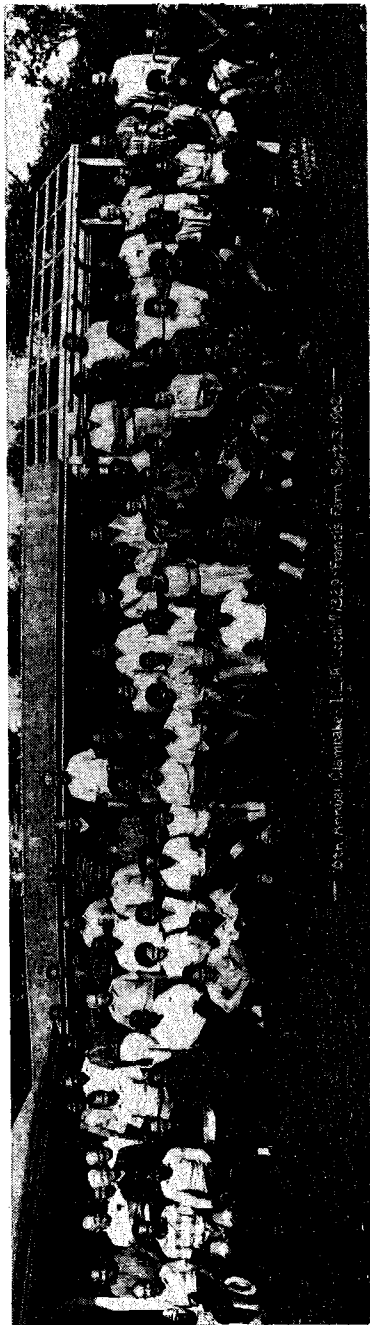
In 1949, while John DeBarros and Sebastian Soares were deacons at the Portuguese Chapel, it had become known as the Sheldon Street Congregational Church. After suggestions in the 1950s that the church merge with the Union Baptist Church on John and East streets, in 1967 the two churches joined forces, without merging, to create the Faith Community Parish.

From the late 1960s through the 1970s, the newly organized parish served the needs of an even wider community. It maintained a strong affiliation with such community projects and organizations as the Adult Basic Education classes for immigrants, the Brown-Fox Point Day Care Center, the Fox Point Senior Citizens, the Fox Point Community Organization, the Fox Point Neighborhood Association, and the Fox Point Neighborhood Housing Corporation.

The history of the Catholic Church in the Cape Verdean community is quite different from that of Manuel Martin's church. To begin with, Catholicism is the faith of the vast majority of Cape Verdeans; moreover, since it represented an established, traditional, and more formal order, it did not have the local grassroots experience of the Faith Community Parish. The local Catholic Portuguese-speaking community at large was first served by the Holy Rosary Church, which has a history dating back to the mid-1870s. However, its Cape Verdean parishioners were not fully integrated into the parish community because of the linguistic, cultural, and racial differences between them and other Portuguese.

At long last, in 1979, the Cape Verdean community prompted the Diocese of Providence to establish the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Pawtucket. The founding figures of this church were Rosendo Brito and Padre Jose Maria de Sousa. Even before Father de Sousa arrived on the scene, Brito and others had been aware that Cape Verdeans needed their own church, for many immigrants felt isolated in churches where they could not understand the language.

The creation of this new national parish came about with the increase in immigration that followed Cape Verdean independence. Since then the church has been actively fulfilling its mission of welcoming new immigrants to Pawtucket and nearby cities. By 1986 the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish had about 400 families attending masses in Portuguese and English. It also offers a number



*Top: Holy Name Society and the Spirito Caboverdeano Band
Boston, September 1932.*

*Bottom: International Longshoremen's Association Local 1329
Sixth Annual Clambake, Francis Farm, September 1962.*

of community-related activities, including adult education classes and cultural projects of various kinds.

Labor Organizations

As Rhode Island developed as an industrial center, the need for raw materials arriving by ship grew. The influx of European immigrants to Providence produced an oversupply of unskilled workers extremely vulnerable to exploitation. Many Cape Verdean immigrants in Providence worked on the waterfront, rigging, coaling, loading, unloading, and docking vessels. Working conditions in such maritime occupations were dangerous, accidents were frequent, and workers had little protection.

Manuel Quirino "Chief" Ledo and other Cape Verdeans who labored on the waterfront tried to change these conditions and to gain some control over their working environment. In the early 1920s Ledo contacted a number of labor organizations and trade union councils in New England, and in 1922 he helped found the Coal Trimmers Local. Six years later he organized a protest strike of hod carriers at the building site of the Industrial National Bank. The organizing efforts of Ledo and John F. Lopez, a Cape Verdean undertaker, intensified in the early 1930s, when meetings were held in a small downtown hall and thirteen charter members were recruited for a longshoremen's union. This group was chartered by the International Longshoremen's Association as Local 1329 of Providence in 1933. Overwhelmingly Cape Verdean in membership, Local 1329 strongly influenced the trade-union movement in Rhode Island during the 1940s. The local continues to this day and has generated other, allied union groups, especially on the waterfront.

The National Maritime Union in Rhode Island has a history similar to that of the ILA. This union was also composed largely of Cape Verdeans. In addition to its labor activities, it provided various types of mutual aid. The NMU also created a women's auxiliary, which in 1948 was headed by Maria Smart of Providence.

Social Organizations

One early and enduring community organization for Cape Verdeans has been the Providence Boys' Club in Fox Point. While it was not officially a Cape Verdean enterprise, the Boys' Club was

an integral part of the community for many years, touching the lives of Fox Point youngsters and helping them over their growing pains. Founded in 1910 in a building on Canal Street, the club was renamed the Fox Point Community Center when it moved to Ives Street in 1975. The Fox Point Senior Citizens, formed in 1972, meet at the center regularly.

The Crusaders, a social and political club, was formed in 1934 "to raise the self-respect of the members." Crusader events were always formal and included an annual dinner dance at the Edgewood Yacht Club in Cranston. The Cape Verdean-American Citizens Club was an organization that emerged during World War II in a rented storefront on South Main Street. In 1946 it purchased a property at Brook and Pike streets. The club offered sick benefits to its members, and its facilities were used both for its own dances and those of other clubs. The group also sponsored public demonstrations of American patriotism for Cape Verdean immigrants.

Such clubs were, and are, typical of the Cape Verdean community. Some were large and influential; others were small and composed of friends from specific parts of the Cape Verde Islands. Some lasted many years, while others went quickly in and out of existence.

The first social clubs organized by and for Cape Verdean women were The Smart Set (1933) and the St. Isabel Club (1934). On holidays these organizations distributed canned goods to needy Cape Verdean families. The clubs also sponsored cultural events. In 1934 the Smart Set's "Cotton Ball," held at the Edgewood Yacht Club in Cranston, drew more than 300 people. It is notable that for minority immigrants there was social mobility and access to these clubs at this time.

Other women's social clubs emerged in the late 1930s. The Neighborhood Art Club held afternoon teas in Fox Point's Gaspee Hall. At one of these events thirteen-year-old Vicki Viera, later a well-known singer, performed for the first time. Since some clubs did not have their own meeting place, the International Institute at the North End House provided facilities for such groups; among these were the Cape Verdean Women's Club and the Cape Verde Ladies Club, which met there in 1938 and 1953 respectively. The Rhode Island Cape Verdean Girls Club was active in the 1940s. The girls held dances and participated in the parades of the Cape Verdean-American Citizens Club, dressed in their black skirts and white blouses.

In the late 1940s twenty-seven women of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Cape Verdean Social Club formed a new organization, the

Cape Verdean Women's Club. The goals of this organization were to promote good will and fellowship and to integrate social, educational, and patriotic programs. In 1949 they were joined by a group of men in constructing a building in East Providence. The expanded club, called the Cape Verdean Progressive Center, included political activities on its agenda. It also sponsored many athletic and youth groups, such as the Verdettes, the Sunday Do-the-Best-You-Can League, the Hangovers, the Hangerettes, the Sporterettes, and the Ever Ready Verdettes Bowlers. In 1964 the club's women reasserted their identity by founding the Cape Verdean Women's Guild of the Progressive Center.

In recent years many other organizations have met at the Progressive Center's hall. These have included the Five-O Club, the Minority Caucus, the International Senior Citizens of East Providence, and the Injured Workers Organization. English classes, benefit dances, wedding showers, and a *mastro* for the Feast of Saint Anthony are held regularly at the Progressive Center.

Another women's organization was the Curlerettes, founded in Providence in 1952 by Regina Miranda. Its goal was to "be a group of friends to come together not only for ourselves but also for our friends and our community." Some Cape Verdean clubs had women's auxiliaries, and Cape Verdean women took an active role in organizations such as the Ladies Auxiliary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. In 1975 Candida L. Tavares of Providence brought distinction to the local Cape Verdean community when she was elected national president of this organization.

Through the first half of the century Cape Verdean clubs were most often organized for social or patriotic purposes. Later, other groups were formed to help organizations in the islands, to seek further social mobility through support of grassroots political organizations, or to promote education by offering scholarships and awards.

Educational opportunities in the Cape Verde Islands were limited mainly to the elementary grades. This pattern continued in America. In the early spring even Cape Verdean children born in Rhode Island or Massachusetts often followed their parents to Cape Cod, where they would pick strawberries in early June, blueberries by midsummer, and cranberries in the fall. It was not uncommon for these children to stay back a grade or more because of this work. Some Cape Verdean youngsters would drop out of school entirely to join the work force. Nevertheless, despite such limitations on early educational opportunities and achievements, Cape Verdeans have always placed

a high value on education as an accessible pathway out of a life of poverty for their children.

A number of local Cape Verdeans have made significant contributions to education. This list includes Dr. Belmira Nunes Lopes, Dr. Isadore Ramos, Dr. Valentin J. Cruz, Dr. William Lopes, Dr. Norman Araujo, Dr. Maria Louisa Nunes, and Dr. Claire Andrade-Watkins. Special notice is due to Virginia Neves Gonsalves, who in the 1980s organized eight Annual Cape Verdean Conferences focusing on a wide range of educational concerns, especially those involving bilingual and bicultural themes. Others active in cultural or educational endeavors include Julia Gonsalves, Vernon Lisbon, Alberto T. Pereira, Laura Pires, Ron Barbosa, Georgette Gonsalves, Antonio Lopes, Toni M. Santos, Marlene Lopes, Celeste Andrade, Joseph Costa, Yvonne Smart, Graciano Ramos, Manuel Vicente, Adelaide Britte, and Mercedes Torres.

Several organizations have been formed to meet the scholarship needs of college-bound Cape Verdeans. In 1964 the Rhode Island Cape Verdean Association held its First Annual Scholarship Award Dinner Dance. Many early recipients of the association's scholarships have become prominent in medicine and education. Other scholarship programs include those of the Cape Verdean-American Scholarship Committee, founded in 1973 in Rhode Island and Massachusetts, and the Gala Cape Verdean-American Reunion, formed in 1975 by Cape Verdeans from Providence, Boston, and New Bedford to promote higher education and to raise money for scholarships.

Political Clubs and Civic Activities

Local Cape Verdeans did not develop political organizations on the same scale as their religious, labor, or cultural associations, nor did they form such groups as early in their process of adjustment. The earliest example of such a club was the Capeverdean Civic Democratic League of Rhode Island, which formed in 1935 and changed its affiliation and name to the Capeverdean Civic Republican League of Rhode Island by 1936.

From the 1960s onward, however, Cape Verdeans have been very active within the civil rights movement, especially through their membership in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In the early 1960s George Lima served as president of that organization's Providence branch, and in the late 1960s Ermino Lisbon presided over the Newport Branch.



Ambrose Cardoza Mendes, funeral director and business man.



Manuel Q. Ledo, I.L.A. Local 1329 founder.



Dr. Belmira Nunes Lopes, educator.



John F. Lopez, political leader.



Dr. Charles Fortes, social activist.

The Urban League of Providence emerged in 1939 as the result of a split in the leadership of the black community, with older leaders tending to favor the NAACP, and younger members, including some Cape Verdeans, gravitating toward the new Urban League.

The Congress for Racial Equality, to which other Cape Verdeans belonged, generally worked closely with the NAACP. Led by Clifford Monteiro, CORE was active in the civil rights movement in Providence in the mid 1960s, serving as a militant adjunct to the coalition known as the Negro Leadership Conference. This latter group, made up of the NAACP, the Fearless Fifty, and the East Side Neighborhood Council, worked successfully for school desegregation in Providence.

The Providence Corporation was the brainchild of Charles Fortes, one of Providence's most dynamic community leaders. The corporation was a rebel outgrowth of Progress for Providence, a city-sponsored community-action program that Fortes believed "did not meet the community needs." One of the many projects sponsored by the corporation was the Black Coalition, a pressure group that facilitated the entry of minorities into the building trades. The Providence Corporation also succeeded in raising minority enrollment in the state's colleges.

Community action groups were common in the late 1960s. Local programs included Progress for Providence, which became the Providence Community Action Program, and the federally financed Fox Point Drop-In Center, run by John Britto. In 1970 the Fox Point Neighborhood Housing Corporation was organized in collaboration with Providence's First Ward Democratic Committee. The FPNHC administered a grant that provided funds for needy families in Fox Point.

The Fox Point Community Organization evolved from block clubs in the 1970s and affiliated with Faith Community Parish. This nonprofit, community-controlled group was concerned with neighborhood security, youth employment, senior-citizen care, housing, and displacement. It waged an ideological battle against Brown University and absentee landlords who were seeking control of affordable housing in Fox Point.

Other recent examples of political and civic activism were the Cape Verdean-Americans of Pawtucket, founded in 1983, and the Fox Point Cape Verdean-American Coalition. These groups were organized to seek political involvement in community issues affecting younger Cape Verdeans, issues such as housing, education, and

employment. The Poor People's Park in Fox Point is another example of an unfunded grassroots organization. Under this group's auspices Cape Verdean music, children's stories, and other social activities took place in a building that had been condemned by the city.

Cape Verdeans played a significant role in mainstream Rhode Island political life as well, especially in the state's House of Representatives. Members of the House's Black Caucus have included Harold M. Metts, George Castro, George Lima, and Maria Lopes. Currently (1990), Metts is the representative from the 19th District (South Providence); Castro represents the 20th District (Washington Park); and Lopes represented the 83rd District (Central East Providence) as Lima's successor.

Peter J. Coelho, who worked for twenty-two years at various levels in the Democratic party, served as the first Cape Verdean member of the state legislature, where he represented the 84th District (East Providence). For many years he was the only minority member of the House. During his years of service Coelho acquired a special expertise in matters of housing and state finances.

Other Cape Verdean pioneers in public service are Donald Lopes, the first Cape Verdean elected to the Providence City Council; Joe Tavares, head of the East Providence Minority Caucus in 1987, when that group formed a Cape Verdean study commission; Alfred Lima, who became the first "black" policeman in Providence in 1948; and Sidney Lima, the first Cape Verdean fireman in Providence. Local Cape Verdeans displayed strong patriotism during our nation's wars, and many thousands have served in the armed forces with distinction.

Generally speaking, Rhode Island's Cape Verdeans have strongly tended to support the Democratic party, at least since the 1930s, because of that organization's more liberal stance on civil rights and social issues. Ironically, however, the only Cape Verdean to run for general office in Rhode Island—John DaLuz, Jr.—was the nominee of the state Republican party. In 1974 and again in 1976, DaLuz, an accomplished Providence businessman, ran unsuccessfully for the office of general treasurer.

Cape Verdean civic consciousness has also extended to the homeland. In 1948 the Rhode Island Association for Cape Verdean Improvement sought to raise \$1,000 to buy food and medications to be sent on the brigantine *Madalan* to the famine-stricken islands. The Santo Antonio Association also made a large contribution to this relief effort, and the Cape Verdean Fraternal League of Providence sent contributions totaling \$1,700 to the national headquarters of United Cape Verdeans in Boston for the same cause.

In the years beginning just before the independence of Cape Verde from Portugal in 1975, a number of groups were formed to give political, economic, social, and educational support to the struggling new republic. Based outside of Rhode Island, but including locals in its membership, were Tchuba, the American Committee for Cape Verde, organized by Raymond Almeida, and the PAIGC Support Committee, headed by Salah Matteos. The PAIGC is the African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, which was led by the Cape Verdean revolutionary intellectual Amilcar Cabral. Local Cape Verdeans were found on all sides of this complex issue of independence; some supported the PAIGC, which fought an armed struggle against Portuguese colonialism, while others aligned themselves with the stance taken by such Cape Verdean organizations as the Democratic Union of Cape Verde and the Popular Union for the Independence of Cape Verde, which opposed the military tactics of the PAIGC. The community was deeply split over these issues.

Visiting dignitaries from the Republic of Cape Verde have come to Rhode Island and toured its Cape Verdean communities. These visitors have included President Aristides Pereira, Mrs. Amilcar Cabral (widow of the assassinated founder of the PAIGC), Prime Minister Pedro Pires, and a number of ministers. Because of its importance, the Cape Verdean community of southeastern New England has merited the establishment of a consulate general in neighboring Boston.

Other support groups with ties to Cape Verde include the Cape Verde Islands Relief Association, founded in 1978, and the National Coordinating Council for the Development of Cape Verde. In 1983 the Providence City Council passed a resolution by Third Ward councilman Donald Lopes to adopt a sister-city relationship between Providence and Praia, the capital of Cape Verde.

Cultural Organizations and Activities

The Cape Verdean-American Federation and a number of later organizations were broadly humanistic, secular, and educational in their orientation, thus representing a departure from the traditional religious models for voluntary associations. The federation, one of the largest and most influential of these organizations, was founded on September 17, 1971, by Rosendo Brito, Charles N. Fortes, Yvonne Smart, and Dr. T. Steven Tegu. The first general membership meeting

of the new federation was held on July 30, 1972, at the Cape Verdean Progressive Center, and soon the organization had enrolled over 200 members. Its first annual convention in 1974 drew 624 participants.

Charles Fortes, the federation's leader, was subsequently awarded an honorary doctoral degree at Rhode Island College, and a reading room at the college library has been named in his honor. This library now houses the Cape Verdean Studies Special Collection, which encourages contributions from the public.

The Cape Verdean-American Federation has given way to newer cultural groups, especially the Cape Verdean Subcommittee of the Rhode Island Heritage Commission. This group was formed in 1976 by Dr. Patrick T. Conley as a component of Rhode Island's bicentennial independence celebration. The purpose of the subcommittee is "to commemorate and promote the history and culture of Cape Verde and Cape Verdean-Americans; to study the economic, social, political, and religious aspects of Cape Verdean immigration; and to foster brotherhood and understanding among all Rhode Island citizens."

From 1976 to the present (1990) the subcommittee has been led by the tireless efforts of its chairperson, Oling Jackson of Providence. Its concerns have ranged from hurricane and drought relief in the islands to drives for school and sports equipment. The subcommittee has also hosted Cape Verdean diplomatic delegations, advocated bilingual education, and staged the extremely popular annual festival in Fox Point commemorating Cape Verdean independence.

Other cultural groups have been formed by recent immigrants from the islands. These groups include the Associaçao Folclorica Caboverdeana (1972), the Cape Verdean Cultural Association (1977), the Grupo Folclorico Monte Cara (1980), Juventude Caboverdeana (1983), Batuku di Grupo Po di Terra (1983), Morabeza (1985), and Po d'Terra (1987). Their general goals are to maintain contact with, and perpetuate Cape Verdean culture in, the diaspora. Dance groups, poetry readings, violin performances, and skits are staged by these groups to further their mission.

No survey of the cultural heritage of Cape Verdean-Americans would be complete without mention of the sailing ship *Ernestina*. Not only did this vessel actually carry Cape Verdean cargo and passengers from the islands to Providence for many decades, but it was the only non-training ship invited to participate in the



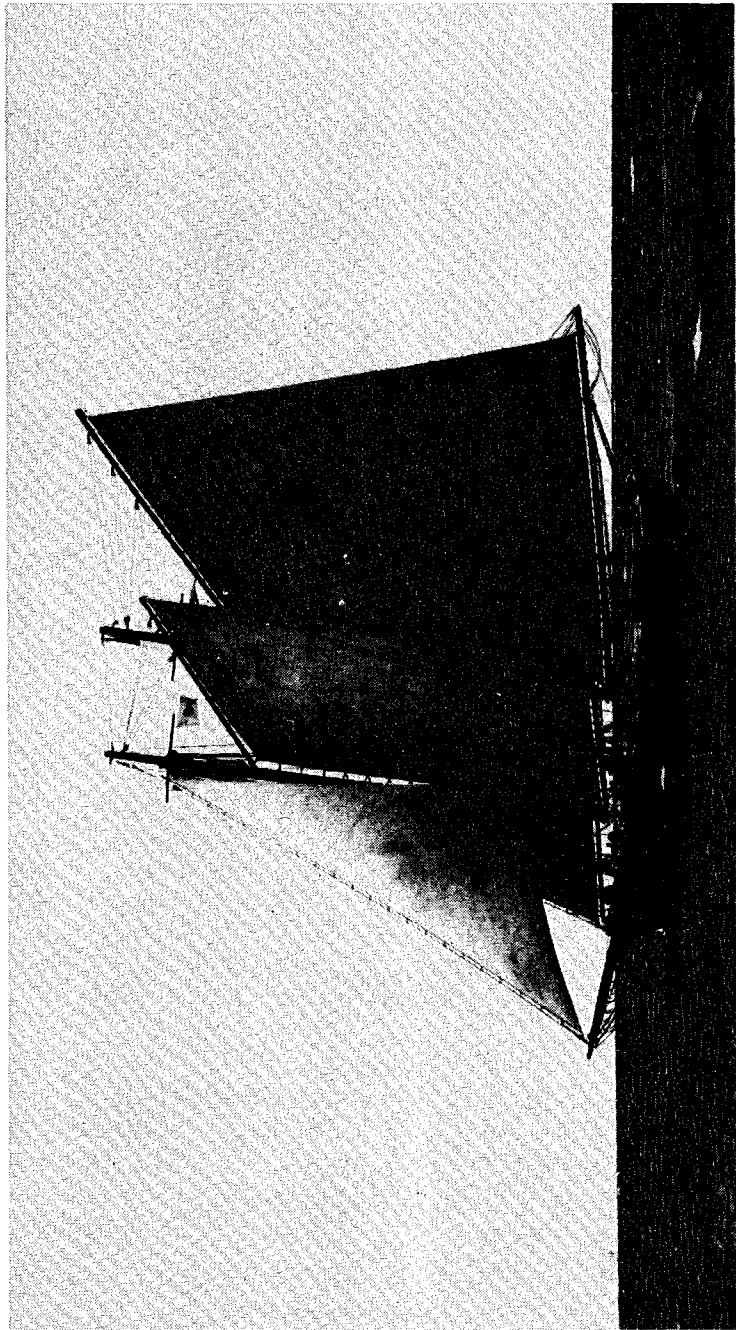
Top: Founders of the Cape Verdean Subcommittee of the Rhode Island Heritage Commission, 1976.

Bottom: Maria (Mrs. Amilcar) Cabral, center, and the two authors, Dr. Richard Lobban and Waltraud Berger Coli, at the Cape Verdean Independence Celebration in India Point Park, July 1989.

1976 parade of Tall Ships that came to Newport to celebrate the bicentennial of American independence.

The *Ernestina* was launched in 1894 in Essex, Massachusetts, as a "Fredonia-type" Gloucester fishing schooner. This 106-foot ship was first known as the *Effie M. Morrissey*. For two decades she carried salted fish and cargo in the Maritime Provinces of Canada. In the 1920s and 1930s she sailed on Arctic exploration expeditions with Captain Bob Bartlett, and during World War II she carried out a number of secret naval missions. Then, in 1947, the ship was purchased by Captain Henrique Mendes, who renamed her *Ernestina* after his daughter. Thus began three decades of packet trade between Cape Verde and New England, during which the *Ernestina* became the most famous of the Brava packet ships.

In 1982, after a major overhaul, the *Ernestina* was presented as a gift from the Republic of Cape Verde to the state of Massachusetts to symbolize the long and deep ties between Cape Verde and the United States. It is now on the American Register of Historic Places. The group mainly responsible for the gift and its current use is the National Friends of the Ernestina/Morrissey.



Until 1965 the famous Cape Verdean packet ship Ernestina plied between the islands and Providence with passengers and cargo.

Sports and the Cape Verdeans

Rhode Islanders of Cape Verdean descent have been prominent in competitive athletics, displaying their proficiency in such sports as baseball, basketball, boxing, track, and soccer. Among those local Cape Verdeans who have earned national distinction in baseball is Joe Gomes (1908-1986), the only Rhode Islander ever to play in the Negro Leagues (1929-36). He compiled a 362-41 pitching record with a 1.74 earned-run average during an eight-year career. In 1983 he was inducted into the Providence Gridiron Club's Hall of Fame for his prowess in football, and in 1988 he earned admission to the Rhode Island Heritage Hall of Fame for his impressive athletic exploits.

David "Davey" Lopes, who retired in 1987 after sixteen years as a major league baseball player, had an even more illustrious record. Born in East Providence and raised in South Providence, Lopes began his extraordinary career in the Fox Point Little League and then became an all-state baseball and basketball player at La Salle Academy (class of 1963). He went on to star with the Los Angeles Dodgers and then played with the Oakland A's, the Chicago Cubs, and the Houston Astros. Lopes batted .308 in four World Series, played in four straight all-star games, and won a Golden Glove Award. He twice led the National League in stolen bases (77 was his seasonal high) and once held the major league record for most consecutive successful steals (38). After his retirement as an active player, Lopes began a promising career as coach with the Texas Rangers.

Basketball is another sport in which local Cape Verdeans have produced their share of accomplished performers. From the 1930s through the 1950s, Hope High School was a perennial state and regional power in basketball, due, in no small measure, to those gifted Cape Verdeans from Fox Point who learned the game at



Davey Lopes, major league baseball star, 1963.

their neighborhood Boys' Club. The Antone Gomes Memorial Athletic Club was for five years the best amateur basketball team in New England and won the Rhode Island Basketball Association championship in the early 1950s. Seventy-five percent of its members were Cape Verdeans. Preeminent among Providence's Cape Verdean hoopsters has been Johnny Britto, a high school and amateur star in the postwar decade, who capped a brilliant local career by playing one season (1955-56) with the famed Harlem Globetrotters. Double all-stater Al Santio went from Hope High School to a starring role as starting center for the powerful University of Kansas team in the early 1960s. A decade later (1973-75) Central's Rick Santos starred as a guard at nationally ranked Providence College after a brilliant career at Rhode Island Junior College (now CCRI).

Boxing has a long and popular history in Rhode Island, especially among Italians, Portuguese, and Cape Verdeans. Various clubs and gyms provided places for training, such as the Fox Point Boys' Club, Infantry Hall on South Main Street, and a gym run by Manny Almeida at the corner of Wickenden and Governor streets. Manny Almeida's Ringside Lounge (at the corner of Wickenden and Brook streets)

was a Cape Verdean landmark. Joe Louis, Sugar Ray Robinson, Willie Pep, Sandy Saddler, and Rocky Marciano were among the boxing greats who passed through Manny's portals during its heyday in the 1940s and 1950s.

Among the many talented Cape Verdean-American pugilists, several attained regional, and even national, prominence. In the featherweight division, John "Jackie" Amado of Newport started his amateur boxing career in December 1936 and enjoyed rapid success. In 1937 and 1938 he won successive state championships and the Diamond Belt that signified that accomplishment. In 1938 Jackie added the New England Golden Gloves title to his list of achievements. He turned professional by 1939, when he was still in high school. Billy Bento was a notable flyweight who appeared on the same fight card as several world champions while winning 124 of 130 professional bouts.

For twenty-six years Antonio R. "Tony" Costa and his brother Alfred Costa were juvenile specialists with the Woonsocket Police Department, where they operated boxing gymnasiums for city youngsters. Before turning professional in 1937, Tony had compiled a sparkling amateur record of 115-9 and held the Rhode Island bantamweight title. To this crown he added the New England title and also competed in several national amateur championships. Costa then fought in Ireland for the U.S. national team. Later, as a professional featherweight, he ran up an impressive record of 106 wins against 15 losses. In 1946 he had become the third-ranked boxer in the nation in his weight class.

George Araujo of Fox Point has been Rhode Island's best-known and most successful Cape Verdean boxer to date. By 1952 he had risen to the rank of number one lightweight contender in the world when he fought champion Jimmy Carter for the world crown. A national, prime-time television audience watched the two lightweights go toe-to-toe in their exciting Madison Square Garden encounter. With Araujo leading on points in that battle, Carter scored a twelfth-round knockout to preserve his title against the challenge of Providence's great Cape Verdean fighter.

Although the world championship narrowly eluded him, Araujo held both the New England lightweight and featherweight titles during a career in which he registered 73 wins and 8 defeats against top-flight competition. In his heyday George was a local celebrity particularly known for his affability and modest demeanor. In addition to his boxing skills, Araujo possessed a talent for painting, a craft

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Gabby Hayes' Advice to Kids

The Life of A TV Director

Warren Walden Predicts World Championships for Rocky Marciano and George Araujo

George Araujo (right) at the peak of his career, with Rocky Marciano (left) and sportscaster Warren Walden.

that he has cultivated since the 1950s. In 1981 George Araujo, the artist, presented a successful exhibit at the Rhode Island School of Design museum. Presently he is writing his memoirs in conjunction with his wife Frances, a Head Start administrator.

Track and field has been another area in which local Cape Verdeans have excelled. Hope and East Providence high schools have been the major beneficiaries of their talent. Kenneth "Jiggy" C. Reis—an all-stater in football, basketball, and track at Hope—won the state high school title in the high jump in 1949 with a leap of 6 feet 2 1/2 inches, setting a state public high school record in the process. George "Joe" Daluz, Hope's all-state high and low hurdler in 1955, briefly held the state record in the outdoor 180-yard lows (19.6 seconds) and recorded a 5.5 clocking in the 45-yard low hurdles indoors—a high school record that still stands. Phil Hazard of East Providence, a Rhode Island and New England schoolboy sprint champion in 1973 and 1974, is still the co-holder of the all-time state high school record in the 100-yard dash (9.7 seconds).

Hope basketball star Al Santio was even more adept at throwing the discus. In 1959 he set state marks in both the high school and collegiate discus (167 feet 7 3/4 inches and 157 feet 8 1/2 inches respectively). Santio's record for the college discus survived for twenty years.

Most recently Matthew "Matty" Lopes and his younger sister Laurie of East Providence have brought distinction to the local Cape Verdean community through their athletic exploits. Matty (now an attorney) followed all-state performances in indoor track, outdoor track, and football with a successful sports career at prestigious Dartmouth College. Attending Dartmouth on an academic scholarship, Lopes won the college's Godwin Award, presented to the senior who "through extraordinary perseverance has risen above personal disadvantage to contribute measurably to the team." Laurie, also an all-stater in track at East Providence, followed in her brother's footsteps at Dartmouth, starring both in basketball and track. In 1987 Laurie set a Dartmouth record with her effort of 7.25 seconds for the women's 55-meter dash.

Perhaps the Cape Verdean family most noted for its athletic exploits has been the Pinas—Bernie ("Little Slick"), Tommy, and "Handsome Joe." Raised in South Providence, the three Pina brothers were prominent on the local sports scene during the decade of the 1950s. Bernie, now a highly respected high school coach, twice earned

all-state honors in football at La Salle Academy, where he starred in basketball and track as well. At URI he also excelled in these sports, earning all-Yankee Conference honors as a halfback in the great Ram backfield that included future professional star Pat Abbruzzi. Tommy followed his older brother as a two-time all-state halfback at La Salle. Joe, who did not attend high school or college, compiled a remarkable record as an amateur and semi-pro athlete in baseball, football, slow-pitch softball, and track. He is widely regarded as Rhode Island's fastest sprinter of all time. Though Joe lacked formal training and ran on substandard surfaces, he repeatedly ran under 10 seconds in the 100-yard dash and once recorded a time of 9.6 seconds in that event.

While most noted for their expertise in baseball, basketball, boxing, and track, individual Cape Verdean athletes have gained local distinction in other sports as well. Over the past three decades golfer George di Pina of the Louisquisset Country Club has won numerous club and regional tournaments and still holds the record (27) for low score on Louisquisset's front nine. Among the exploits of well-known long-distance swimmer Antone "Toto" Laudie was a swim from Providence to Block Island in the early 1950s. Soccer, an extremely popular game in the Cape Verde Islands, is also played in Rhode Island. In the early 1970s Louis Carvalho's team won the all-state and the all-New England soccer championships. The Elmwood Intruders were the 1982 Junior Varsity and 1984 Varsity Super Bowl champions of the Rhode Island Interstate Football League. Clearly, in most areas of athletic endeavor, Rhode Island's Cape Verdeans have recorded impressive accomplishments.

Media, Arts and Literature

After decades of decline, Cape Verdean newspapers, like those of other ethnic groups, are again helping new immigrants in their acculturation process by providing them with important social, legal, and economic information. In a break with the past, second- and third-generation immigrants are also turning to the ethnic press as a means of preserving their cultural heritage. For them, the papers play a cultural role that helps define the Cape Verdeans' place in this nation of immigrants.

Joao Christiano Da Rosa was the Cape Verdean editor and founder of the *A Voz da Colonia*, the only Portuguese-language newspaper published in Rhode Island in the 1920s and early 1930s. Founded as a weekly in 1926, the paper covered news from the Cape Verde Islands, Portugal, and other Portuguese colonies and also included local news about club activities, advertisements of ship departures, and poetry. In 1934 an English-language section was introduced.

An exclusively Cape Verdean newspaper, *Lebanta*, was first published in 1973. The intent of *Lebanta* was to regularly inform members of the Cape Verdean-American Federation and affiliated organizations about local activities. This paper should not be confused with the short-lived *Labanta* that was published with a similar purpose in Pawtucket in 1985 and 1986.

At present there are two monthly Cape Verdean newspapers serving southeastern New England. These are the *Cape Verde News* (New Bedford) and *The Cape Verdean* (Lynn, Massachusetts). The *Tchuba Newsletter* and the *No Pintcha* newsletter, both supporters of the PAIGC, were published in the 1970s, but they have now ceased publication. *Archipelago*, a quarterly journal of Cape Verdean opinion and culture, has been published in Boston since 1986 and is distributed and read in Rhode Island.

With the steady expansion of the electronic mass media, in the 1970s and 1980s some Cape Verdeans sought access to radio and television to reach their community. The result has been many talk shows, cultural events, and special features on Cape Verde. These broadcasts include "Let's Talk About Now," a weekly community radio talk show with hosts Alberto Torres Pereira and state representative George Castro on WHJJ and WHIM. "Musica di Cabo Verde," started by Alcide Vicente and Romana Ramos Silva in 1980, is broadcast on Saturday mornings in Crioulo from the Pawtucket station WRCP. On Sundays this station also broadcasts the Cape Verdean program "Mantilhas," inaugurated in 1983. This Portuguese-language show is hosted by Lourdes Fontes.

Cape Verdean culture has been promoted on television as well. In 1973 Manuel T. Neves originated "The Cape Verdean Hour," which was aired on Channel 6, WTEV, from New Bedford. Another program on the same channel, "Reflections: A Cape Verdean Experience," was based on original material (including poetry) by Peter Roderick and Alberto T. Pereira. The Cape Verdean program "Nobidade," directed by Joao do Rosario, is aired weekly.

Archival film and videos, ranging from home movies and snapshots to documentary tapes and video productions, also record life in the local Cape Verdean community. An important collection of such material was developed under a grant awarded to Anthony Ramos, who filmed Cape Verdeans in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and the islands at the time of independence.

Numerous tapes on the Cape Verdean experience are now housed in a special collection at Rhode Island College. These range from a locally produced videotape entitled "Vision on Fox Point" to a half-hour video documentary, "Spirit of Cape Verde," produced by Dr. Claire Andrade-Watkins and aired on PBS television channels in 1987. A collection of thirty-five tapes of oral history pertaining to life in the islands and at sea, together with a companion slide show, was compiled by Alberto T. Pereira between 1972 and 1974. More recently a collection dealing with local Cape Verdean history was assembled by Waltraud Berger Coli between 1985 and 1988.

The print media is also a source of ethnic consciousness. Cape Verdean literature is steadily gaining international recognition with the growing acknowledgment of the importance of the Claridade movement and the translation of the works of Baltazar Lopes, Jorge Barbosa, and Manuel Lopes. The Claridade movement takes its name from a literary review founded in 1936 by these and other Cape

Verdean writers. The journal's primary purpose was to examine the roots of Crioulo culture and to promote the development of an original regional literary style. With the contributions of social commentators such as Felix Monteiro and Joao Lopes, *Claridade* became more than a literary review; it also offered a socioeconomic analysis and an understanding of the whole archipelago.

The Cape Verde Islands have a very long tradition in poetry as well. This tradition includes such internationally known poets as Eugenio Tavares, Jose Lopes, Manuel Lopes, and Baltazar Lopes. Cape Verdean literary traditions have been continued in Rhode Island with the writings of Rosendo Evora Brito (Brit Evrao), Peter Roderick, Alberto T. Pereira, and Graciano Ramos. Scholarly studies of this literature have been done by Norman Araujo, Russell Hamilton, and Maria Ellen.

The land-bound Cape Verdeans found relief from the misery of famine and drought in music, poetry, and dance. The emotional release comes in bodily movement, in rhythm, and in tender lyrics of the melancholic *morna*. The *morna* is to the Cape Verdean what the blues are to the Afro-American and the samba is to the Brazilian. It has been said that the *morna* is a spiritual without the religion.

Because of its multiple origins in Portugal, Europe, Africa, and Brazil, music in the Cape Verde Islands is very richly blended. This complexity has led to musical forms such as the *batuco*, the *mazurka*, the *finacon*, the *coladeira* and the *funana*—all of which are continued in Rhode Island with still more local variations. Other musical folk traditions include *chora-guiza* music, which could be heard at wakes, and *canta-reis* serenading, which is a tradition on New Year's Eve when musicians go from house to house singing and playing special songs and dancing music. The *mastro* is a festive folk celebration of important saints, in which a mast adorned with fruits and bread for children is the centerpiece.

In America, Cape Verdean traditions have been influenced by the host society and other cultures. Such interaction has resulted in the emergence of new syncretic forms, including brass marching bands, big dance bands, and string instruments. Popular bands have included Johnny Perry's Cape Verdean Serenaders, who recorded on Columbia Records in the early 1930s, and the Mellow Tones. Many bands have emerged and disappeared over the years, but local Cape Verdeans still remember such groups as Koladance, United Brothers, Independent, A.G.T., Melodias, and Johnny Pina and the Leftovers.

Well-known local Cape Verdean musicians include jazz pianist Eddie Soares, Vicki Viera Almeida, and her brother "Flash" Viera, father of the Tavares brothers. Also important are Paul Gonsalves, a saxophonist in the bands of Count Basie, Dizzy Gillespie, and Duke Ellington; Jack Gomes; Joe "Cut" Cardoso; Horace Silver; Joli Gonsalves, a singer and composer; and Protazio Brito. The most renowned musicians of all are the five Tavares brothers. They are a nationally known musical group that has made several recent gold records and popular albums with Capitol Records, including "Check It Out," "Hard Core Poetry," "In the City," and "Sky High."

Other Artistic Traditions

The roots of West African storytelling, folk narratives, and moral tales can be traced to the *griots* of the African savanna kingdoms. Such traditions are reborn and reconfigured in Cape Verdean storytelling with *Nbo Lobo* tales. In America this tradition is perpetuated with the marvelous abilities of Lenny Cabral, a professional storyteller from Providence.

In 1984 Matthew Barros founded the Barros Gallery at 198 Ives Street in Providence. In addition to offering opportunities for the study of art and painting and serving as a site of frequent art exhibitions, the gallery also is the meeting place for the Cape Verdean Artists League and various community organizations. Of special interest is the gallery's large mural showing scenes of Cape Verdean life experiences, and panels depicting the history of the ship *Ernestina*.

Cape Verdean textile traditions in *panos* (always dark indigo and white) are appreciated in New England, where the *pano* is often used as a symbolic expression of Cape Verdean ethnicity. Similarly, crocheting is quite popular.

Wood carving, another Cape Verdean tradition, includes large ship models, sometimes worn in parades, as well as carved coconuts, boxes, pipes, and *ouri* boards for playing an ancient African "pit and capture" game.

Summary and Conclusions

The different associations and individuals mentioned in this pamphlet do not represent a comprehensive list; we deeply regret material excluded due to space limitations. What appears, however, has been carefully selected to show some markers in Cape Verdean-American history and culture, and to illustrate changes in the goals and perceived needs in the Cape Verdean community.

Within voluntary associations, it is remarkable to see the persistence of island loyalties that have been carried to this country. *Morabeza*, the Cape Verdean spirit transported across the Atlantic, has added to the existing cultural fabric of Rhode Island. This spiritual force has been kept alive at home, in the neighborhoods, and at clubs and associations.

The first voluntary associations in the 1920s were mutual-aid societies which also sponsored social gatherings. Later, work-related associations such as the International Longshoremen's Association appeared. More recently, the associations have developed overt political action groups, and they have made the preservation of Cape Verdean culture and history their major goal.

Women have been prominently involved in Cape Verdean social life from the start. They continue to be vital to most organizations, whether such groups are built around church and religious programs or espouse cultural or educational goals. Their role cannot be overstated, since the strongest cultural markers are found in food and language—traditions predominantly transmitted by women.

In the 1970s, when civil rights, housing, education, and ethnic awareness were important community themes, Cape Verdeans were especially active in the NAACP and the Urban League. Even while colonialism still ruled in the islands, an underground minority was active in supporting the liberation movement until independence was achieved.

Cape Verdeans have contributed to Rhode Island life in music, literature, arts, labor, and sports. Despite their allegiance to America, they are also Cape Verdean at heart. Although small in numbers, their impact on the political, economic, and religious life of Rhode Island has been considerable. This pamphlet has focused on some of the more prominent figures, but it has been the tireless effort of all Cape Verdeans, who have accepted the hardest of tasks and successfully adapted to challenging conditions, that has truly enriched our state.

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Francis Dawley: George Araujo.

Waltraud Berger Coli, personal collection compiled with the help of numerous friends in the Rhode Island Cape Verdean community: M. Q. Ledo, J. F. Lopez, A. C. Mendes, C. Fortes, B. Nunes Lopes.