

FESTAS DO ESPÍRITO SANTO

Holy Ghost Society of North Smithfield, Rhode Island

BROTHERHOOD

Brotherhood	Autonomous.
Year founded	1939
Current number of members	<p>23 active members, but only one person per family can be a full voting member. Any family members however can attend meetings. Family in this case is considered to be husband and wife, not brother and sister. Members that fall into this category bring the number of those participating as active members to 36 (representing a much smaller number of participants than in previous years.)</p> <p>There are however several levels of membership including: Active members (attend meetings and do work); Life time members (this is a status voted upon by the membership, a status that is only conferred on distinguished former active members); Honorary members (those with unquestionable interest in the Feast, but who do not participate in meetings or work at the festival).</p>
Meetings and activities during the year	<p>Meetings start in May to organize the Feast and yearly activities. The Holy Ghost Society of North Smithfield, however, is quite active with a number of gatherings and activities outside of the Feast weekend.</p> <p><u>Community service Committee</u> This sub-committee of the Society meets throughout the year usually via telephone, to disburse money in the community. Gifts are given during the year to local people suffering from difficult circumstances. These include a milk fund (a charity for children who need milk) and a food bank. The Society usually makes its charitable contributions at Christmas, but is active throughout the year whenever they learn that someone in the community may be sick or might have lost their jobs or otherwise be in difficult circumstances.</p> <p><u>Scholarships</u> Scholarships are offered to college bound residents of North Smithfield and Burreville. The students do not</p>

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	<p>have to be Portuguese to win a scholarship, but there is a community service requirement to win each of the \$1000 awards.</p> <p><u>Fundraising</u> Money for these activities is funded through the auction at the Feast, food sales during the Feast weekend and from donations placed into the crown (both members and non-members)</p>
Hall	<p>The original Feasts were not held at the Hall, but rather at a picnic grounds on a nearby hill. The Hall, built during the 1940s was sold to a local chapter of the VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars) in the 1950s with the stipulation that the Holy Ghost Society of North Smithfield would be able to use the facilities and grounds for their Feast every year in perpetuity. The Holy Ghost Society also occasionally contributes to upkeep of the Hall for example they once paid to replace the air-conditioning in the building.</p>

THE FESTA: GENERAL INFORMATION

Year founded	1939
Date	First full weekend in August
Azorean Festa ritual model	The Feast is run with some reference to São Miguel but the membership is largely composed of descendents from the continent.
Organization of the festa	<p>The Society's Secretary and Treasurer run the Feast. These two positions are elected by the voting members of the Society about four weeks after the Feast.</p> <p>The <i>Mordomo</i> (or "Muldoon" as the position is called in North Smithfield) who draws the 7th Sunday will also assist.</p> <p>There are also specific responsibilities for each of the following standing committees within the Society: Volunteers, Service committee, Scholarship committee, Membership committee, Finance committee Kitchen committee, Soup committee Decorations committee (handles the crown altar). Ad hoc committees will be formed to handle other activities and aspects of the Feast.</p>
Mordomo	The Muldoon is technically the leader of the

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	<p>meetings. He or she is charged with running and keeping the meetings in order and is not without some authority. He has the ability to suggest changes, and technically can appoint the soup and kitchen committee, although previously this was a power that was rarely exercised, as one family was long responsible for running the kitchen. Given that so many members have been lost as a result of old age, who runs the kitchen and makes the soup has become more of an open question.</p> <p>The Muldoon is chosen through <i>sorteio</i>.</p>
Number of workers	<p>15-20 do most of the difficult work: setting up, preparing for and running the <i>Festa</i>, with no more than a total of 40 working during the Feast weekend.</p>
Number of crowns	<p>There is 1 (one) crown.</p> <p>The crown was brought to North Smithfield from São Miguel by Manuel Melo, who actually had two crowns, one of which he kept for him and his wife, and the other, which was donated to the Society. Melo's grandson inherited this second crown, and once brought it to the 25th anniversary of the Feast, but appearances of this crown are rare.</p>
Flags	<p>The Society has 2 flags.</p> <p><u>Small Flag</u></p> <p>While cleaning up the trailer where they store all of their equipment and gear from the festa, an old and smaller sized holy ghost flag of unknown origin was discovered</p> <p><u>Large Flag</u></p> <p>Arranged by Kelly Pacheco who was the treasurer for 30 years.</p> <p><u>"The Original Flag"</u></p> <p>There is another flag that is even older ("the original flag"). This flag got ripped and was brought it to a dressmaker and to be fixed. The flag was then donated to the Holy Ghost Society of nearby Georgiaville. The origin of the flag is likely attributed to Marge Murphy, and was probably from either New Bedford or Fall River although from exactly where is not really known.</p>
Crowning	<p>The Muldoon selects who will be crowned.</p> <p>No queens are crowned at the <i>Festa</i>, however they will crown individuals. The Society even has an</p>

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	<p>active list with the names of those who were selected to be crowned, that dates from the current day back to 1939.</p> <p>Normally the person crowned is a child, sometimes, however, it is an older person who may be honored by the society who has been a member for a long time. Typically however, it is a child and usually a girl who is crowned.</p>
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THE FESTA: RITUAL COMPOSITION

Domingas	<p>There are 7 Sundays.</p> <p>One must have been a member for a full year to have the right to put one's name in.</p> <p>The auction is linked to the <i>sorteio</i>. Those who do not draw a Sunday will draw a slip of paper with a specific item to bring to the following year's Feast. "Traditional items" include produce, watermelon, eggs, a fruit basket, sweet bread, etc.</p> <p>Starting in the 1960s, the individual responsible for each <i>dominga</i> will usually put on a cookout, although not all will do this.</p>
Circulation of the crowns	<p>The crown moves from home to home each Sunday, with the host family offering an open house.</p> <p>The crown pedestal "the tray" and the crown will be present at the Sunday gathering and attendees are expected to give donations.</p> <p>There is not really any praying around the Sundays. Years ago praying was a more prominent feature during the Sundays, but not so much now. The prayers are personal, with individuals kissing the scepter before they "make their own personal wish" rather than participating in a "group prayer".</p>
Pensões	<p>There are no pensões. All of the money is raised through the auction, a raffle, and from food concessions during the Feast.</p>
Musical accompaniment during the festas	<p>Previously, on the Saturday of the Feast, the North Tiverton Band went to the Muldoon's house to pick up the crown. At the <i>Festa</i> grounds, the band would then play for a couple of hours, in a program that included Portuguese dancers from a <i>Rancho</i></p>

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	<p><i>Folclórico.</i> The Tiverton <i>Filarmónica</i> band plays as well, charging \$1400.</p>
Arraial	<p>In 2012, there was some Portuguese <i>Rancho Folclórico</i> dancing and singing before a rock band performed. The <i>Rancho Folclórico</i> of Cumberland, Rhode Island has played charging \$300, while a group from Milford charges \$1000</p>
Parades and Processions	<p>There is a Saturday procession to bring the crown from the charmain’s house to the festival grounds. On Sunday the group meets at 8:30 am and then marches to Saint John’s Church accompanied by a police escort. There is a Holy Ghost Society flag as well as the flags of Portugal, United States of America and <i>Açores</i>. Over the years, there have been politicians, but they have largely been discouraged from participating. At one Feast, politicians were hoping to hand out election paraphernalia, but were asked not to as the Society does not want to create a political event, but prefers that the events of the Festa will give “honor to the crown.” In one case, a local town politician and Rhode Island State Representative participated, but he was there as a member and not a politician. Before it went defunct, the Georgiaville Holy Ghost Society marched as well as the Knights of Colombo. Georgiaville. Interestingly, the Holy Ghost Society of Georgiville marched in the North Smithfield <i>cortejo</i> even though they themselves had no Feast. There has even been some discussion about inviting Georgiaville to join the North Smithfield Holy Ghost Society, as there is some fear among members that their Feast is also in danger of disappearing.</p>
Holy Ghost soup	<p>After the mass, the members walk back and serve a Portuguese “kale soup” The soup committee makes it, and there are people that have done it for year after year. One of the main chefs—the grandson of the one of the original members— passed away, however, and caused some difficulty and discussion about how the soup would be made.</p>

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Number of people who participate in th open distribution of sopas	200 people.
Other	Portuguese rolls are distributed, but wine and drink is not offered with the soup, by the Society.
Number of people who attend the Festas	350-400
Additional information	2010 Bylaws of the Holy Ghost Society of North Smithfield, Rhode Island. September 1, 2010. 8p 2011 Pamphlet. Holy Ghost Society of North Smithfield. 2p

Written by Miguel Moniz (CRIA - Centro em Rede de Investigação em Antropologia, ISCTE, IUL). Information collected by Miguel Moniz in 2012, through interview with members of the organization of the Festa. Final edition of the text: Dulcinea Gil.