



NORTH SMITHFIELD HERITAGE ASSOCIATION MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Volume IV Issue III~ March 2023

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North Smithfield turns 152 years old

On March 8, 1871, the RI State Legislature created the towns of Slater and Lincoln. Residents of Union Village (the former commercial center for Old Smithfield) still felt a strong connection to the name "Smithfield" so they presented a petition to the legislature to rename the town to North Smithfield. The legislature approved the name change after only three weeks.

Happy Birthday
North Smithfield





COMMUNITY ANNUAL APPEAL

We rely on you to help preserve North Smithfield's amazing heritage!

2023 INITIATIVES

- ✓ Complete restoration of Forestdale School interior
- ✓ Cemetery restoration
- ✓ Historical artifact acquisition & preservation

WAYS TO DONATE

- Scan QR codes for PayPal or Venmo
- Mail check payable to NSHA to P.O. Box 413, Slatersville, RI, 02876
- Drop off at the Memorial Town Building
- Call 401-447-6394 to arrange doorstep pickup

For any questions or inquiries please email:

nsha@nsheritageassn.com

or visit:

<https://www.nsheritageassn.org/>



NSHA Board Members started the 2023 Appeal by donating \$3,700 thus far. We thank them for their leadership and generosity!



Thank You



We thank the Veterans Memorial Museum of Woonsocket for donating a display case. Charlie and Sam were kind enough to go pick it up for us.



We thank the Woonsocket Sportsmen's Club for donating 31 stackable chairs!

WANTED

We are looking for art and photographs to hang in Heritage Hall. Local subjects would be ideal but not required. Please think of us as you begin your spring cleaning!

The archives and the research center are open every Tuesday from 9:00 am until 12:00 pm and every Wednesday from 10:00 am until 12:00 pm. Stop by and visit or contact us to make an appointment to visit on another day.

Your memories contain our local heritage! Please loan your old family photos and/or letters to us to scan. We'll return them promptly! We'll also store old photos for you if you'd like.

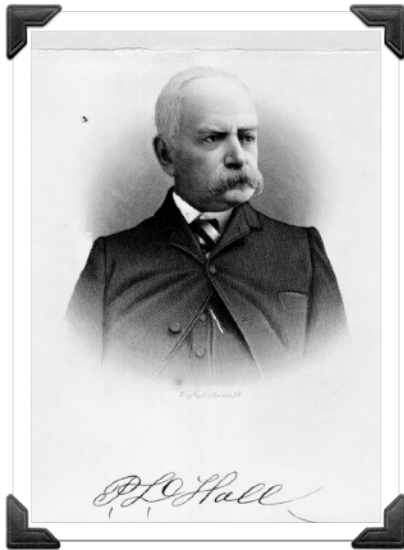
Please contact us at nsha@nsheritageassn.com or call [401-651-6316](tel:401-651-6316)



From the Archives

Capt. Philip D. Hall – Artist and Soldier

by Al Menard



This picture of Captain Philip D. Hall comes from the “History of Providence County, Rhode Island, Volume 2” under Biographical Sketches, Town of Smithfield, published in 1891.

A largely forgotten figure, Philip D. Hall was one of the most accomplished artists in our area at the turn of the twentieth century.

The Halls were a founding family of the town of Plainfield, CT where Philip was born on June 8, 1822. Philip’s father, William Hall, was a teacher and a farmer. At one time he was deputy sheriff and tax collector for the town. He married Ruth Davis. They had seven children; Philip was the youngest. He soon discovered art and it would always be his passion. When faced with the choice of furthering his education or devoting himself to art, Philip chose the latter. Under the tutorage of the eminent artist, Alexander Emmons, Hall grew to become an excellent painter. For a short time, he had a studio in Hartford, CT near Emmons. By 1860 he had moved his studio to Slatersville in Smithfield, RI. At first, he lived with the Dodge family who also had connections to Plainfield, CT.

Soon Philip was living on his own and working in his own studio on Main St. As his reputation grew, he was able to work enough to make a comfortable living. He invested his money in property, became a landlord and moved to North Main St.

He was very civic minded. He always voted and enjoyed the comradery he found in local politics. He like politics but he was happiest doing what he believed to be “the greatest thing in the world, art.”

When painting, he preferred to do large landscapes which were classically historical in nature. Some of these paintings were four feet by six feet in size! It was these he considered his favorite. He also painted many portraits including one of North Smithfield’s first town clerk, Albert A. Mowry.

Philip had strong feelings about war and was an earnest advocate of universal peace. He believed that all discussion between nations should be settled by arbitration. This opinion was formed from his actual experiences when he was Captain of a company of men from Rhode Island during the Civil War. After the war, he continued as Captain of his company in the R.I. State Militia.



Albert A Mowry: Walter Nebiker mentions in his book, “The History of North Smithfield” that Philip Hall painted a portrait of North Smithfield’s first town clerk, Albert A. Mowry. It’s possible that this is the portrait and if so it would be the only known local painting by Captain Hall



From the Archives

Mysteries surround Capt. Hall's life. For example, when he was 42 years old, he married a woman of 24 years! And the poor woman was dying of consumption! Within 4 months Rosina Wilson was gone. What drama must have occurred in those four months? Rosina was buried in the Dennis Ballou Cemetery in North Smithfield. After her death, Philip lived alone until the very last years of his life.

Another mystery is that we have photographs of only four of his paintings and those images are in a newspaper from 1907. He sold hundreds of portraits and landscapes, yet, at this time, we have not been able to locate any other examples of his work. There is a possibility that the North Smithfield Heritage Association has a portrait of Albert A. Mowry, first clerk of North Smithfield, but the painting that the NSHA owns is unsigned.

Philip died at the home of a nephew in Attleboro, MA on January 14, 1917. He was buried with other family members in Plainfield Cemetery, Plainfield, CT.

In 1907, the Providence Sunday Journal ran a feature story about Captain Philip D. Hall called "Philosophy of an Artist at 85."

When interviewed at his home on North Main St. in Slatersville, "as he gazed out across the pretty valley in front of his home, he expressed the opinion that after all – art, music, peace and a restful life are the only things worth striving for."



The Providence Journal June 2, 1907. This detail from the newspaper article shows four of Hall's paintings. After his death, the family posted an ad selling four large paintings. At this time, none of his many paintings have been found.



Fifty Years Ago

This month's article was taken from the North Smithfield Heritage Association's January 1973 newsletter. It is an essay written for the 1915 edition of "The Quiver" by Helen Thayer Paxton about her family's farm.



The Thayer-Paxton house was located on what is now Village Way, Thayer Court and Weeks Street. The ruins of the house foundation and the old sycamore tree still remain.

“Just imagine that you and I are sitting in the shade of the sycamore tree. The cool afternoon breeze is very refreshing and peace and quiet reign. To the west lies the apple orchard near the foot of a hill. The land slopes gently upward, so a part of each tree can be seen from where we sit. I believe that I never saw anything as beautiful as the apple orchard is now, for the trees are in full bloom, and the scent of apple blossoms fills the air. Everything harmonizes. The clear, blue sky, the dark, green hill and the shades of pink outlined against the black bark of the trees form a beautiful picture. Once in awhile we can hear the clear, sweet notes of a bird. A few butterflies flit in the sunshine. Everything is so beautiful that it hurts.

Many of the trees are very aged: some are even a hundred years old. Year by year the dear old trees are falling, but each is being replaced by a young vigorous one. Beyond the orchard, in a pasture, are a few of the oldest fruit trees on the farm. In the heat of the day, the cows gather in the cool, dark shadows and placidly chew their cuds.

Do you see that tree with the wide, outspreading branches? I am very fond of it, and have named it “Mother Tree” because its branches seem like gigantic arms ready to hold you. Every limb forms a seat and even now I like to climb up there to read or think.

The tree directly in front is an Astrachan tree. I like it because its apples are the earliest in the orchard. When I was little, I used to play dolls under that tree, with its low boughs for cradles. Nearly every Fourth of July, our family has a picnic there.

We cannot look long on this beautiful natural picture without feeling strangely quieted and we leave it with a sense of restlessness and peace.”

By Helen Thayer Paxton
The Quiver, 1915



NS Historic Cemeteries

The Town Council recently took possession of the abandoned Old Town Burial Ground and Old Aldrich Burial Ground at the Hotchkiss Cemetery on Smithfield Road. NSHA volunteers will continue to restore and maintain the cemetery with assistance from the North Smithfield DPW.

We found another unrecorded cemetery! Thanks to a tip from Tim Coulombe, we were able to locate a small historic cemetery near the power lines off Iron Mine Hill Road. It contains three burials marked with simple fieldstone markers. We think it may belong to members of the Brown family.

We thank Boy Scout Troop 2 for helping to clean Old Aldrich Burial Grounds at Hotchkiss Cemetery. They did an amazing job!



Check out all of the cemetery restoration work on our NS Heritage Assn. Cemetery Group Facebook page.



Historic Cemetery of the Month

The Sterry Young Lot by Lynne Pelletier

The historic cemetery of the month for March is the The Sterry Young Lot, also known as NS018. It is unique in that it is located in the front yard of a home on Mattity Road and the homeowner maintains the graves as part of the front lawn. This very well cared for family cemetery contains only two graves. These graves belong to Sterry Young and his eldest son, Frederick F. Young. No other members of the Young family are buried nearby.



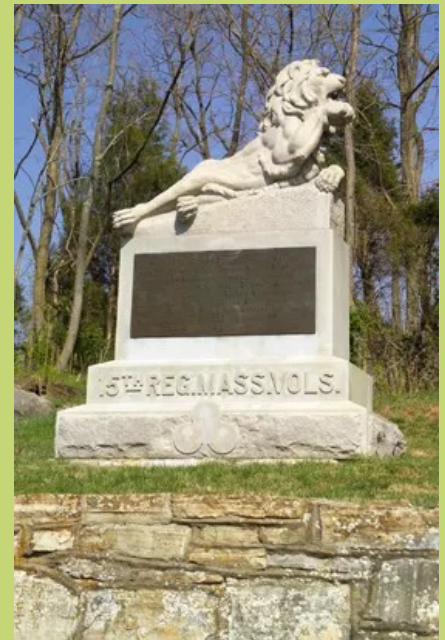
Inscription - "Frederick F Young, Private Co. K, 15th MA volunteers, d. 10 Nov 1862 of wounds received in the U.S. Service during the Great Rebellion aged 19 years"

Frederick F. Young was born in 1843 in Smithfield, Rhode Island. When he was 18 years old enlisted in the military. On July 1, 1861 Frederick was mustered into service with Company K of the 15th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry.

Frederick and his unit fought at the Battle of Antietam in Sharpsburg, Maryland. The Battle of Antietam was the deadliest 1 day battle in the history of the Civil War. After only 12 hours, 23,000 men from both the Union and the Confederacy were wounded, killed or missing. Frederick was wounded and he suffered for weeks before finally dying of his injuries on November 7, 1862. He was only 19 years old.

On September 17, 1900, a Civil War monument was erected on the Atietam Battlefield in Sharpsburg, Maryland. Frederick F Young is memorialized on this monument, however he was misidentified as Francis F. Young.

Sterry Young was born on March 21, 1815 in Smithfield, RI to parents Zebediah Young and his wife, Phila Albee. Sterry worked as an overseer in a woolen mill and he was married to Mary Ann Inman. Together they had at least 11 children including 7 daughters and 4 sons. Sterry died on September 14, 1865.



**15th Massachusetts Volunteers
Memorial at Atietam Battlefield,
Sharpsburg, Maryland.**



March Spotlight

What is Daylight Saving Time?

Daylight saving time began on Sunday, March 12, 2023 at 2:00 am. Daylight Saving Time (DST) is the practice of moving the clocks forward one hour from Standard Time during the summer months and changing them back again in the fall. The general idea is that this allows us all to make better use of natural daylight. Moving the clocks forward one hour in the spring grants us more daylight during summer evenings, while moving clocks back one hour in the fall grants us more daylight during winter mornings.



Daylight Saving Time always begins on the second Sunday in March and ends on the first Sunday in November. To remember which way to set their clocks, folks often use the expression, “Spring forward or Fall back.”

The correct term is “Daylight Saving Time” not Daylight Savings Time with the extra “s”, though many of us are guilty of saying it the wrong way. The technical explanation is that the word “saving” is singular because it acts as part of an adjective rather than a verb.

The first true proponent of Daylight Saving Time was an Englishman named William Willet. A London builder, he conceived the idea while riding his horse early one morning in 1907. He noticed that the shutters of houses were tightly closed even though the sun had risen. In “The Waste of Daylight,” the manifesto for his personal light-saving campaign, Willet wrote, “Everyone appreciates the long light evenings. Everyone laments their shrinkage as the days grow shorter; and nearly everyone has given utterance to a regret the nearly clear, bright light of an early morning during Spring and Summer months is so seldom seen or used. That so many as 210 hours of daylight are, to all intents and purposes, wasted every year is a defect in our civilization. Let England recognize and remedy it.”

Willet spent a small fortune lobbying businessmen, members of parliament, and the U.S. Congress to put clocks ahead 20 minutes on each of the four Sundays in April, and reverse the process on consecutive Sundays in September. But his proposal was met mostly with ridicule.

Attitudes changed after World War I broke out. The government and citizenry recognized the need to conserve coal used for heating homes. The Germans were the first to officially adopt the light-extending system in 1915, as a fuel-saving measure during World War I. The U.S. followed in 1918. However, this was amidst great public opposition. Many Americans viewed the practice as an absurd attempt to make late sleepers get up early. Others thought it was unnatural to follow “clock time” instead of “sun time.”



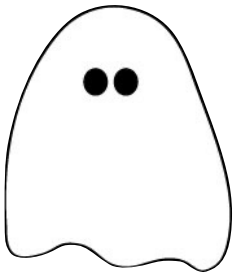
Farmers did not favor DST. In fact, farmers were its strongest opponents and, as a group, stubbornly resisted the change from the beginning. Once World War I was over, they demanded an end to DST claiming that it benefitted only office workers and the leisure class. DST lasted only until 1920 when it was repealed due to opposition from dairy farmers.

DST returned during World War II. It was imposed again to save fuel. Clocks were set ahead to save energy. After the war, DST started being used on and off in different states, beginning and ending on different days of their choosing. To remedy the confusion this caused, Congress passed the Uniform Time Act in 1966, establishing the consistent use of DST in the U.S. Some state legislatures took exception via a loophole that had been built into the law. Residents of Hawaii, and most of Arizona do not change their clocks.

As of January 2023, 19 states have passed bills to end the practice of switching clocks. However, the legislation can only go into effect if *federal* law changes. The Uniform Time Act would need to be amended to allow such a change.

~ From *The Old Farmer's Almanac*

Ghosts and Paranormal Activity



The team conducted its first ghost investigation this week at a house on Greenville Road! We're trying to confirm a date to conduct another investigation of a house on Green Street and one near Bushee School/NSPD Station.

Have you heard about or seen a ghost in North Smithfield? We would like to document it! Anyone interested in joining the Paranormal Research Team please contact us at nsha@nsheritageassn.com.

Genealogy

Would you like help to conduct research on your family tree? Lynne Pelletier has extensive experience and access to several databases. Please contact nsha@nsheritageassn.com to coordinate an appointment.





Preservation and Restoration

Forestdale School (190 School Street)

Design drawings are almost complete for the new emergency exit stairs and cupola base at the Forestdale School. We hope Martone Construction can start their work next month.



HERITAGE HALL

*perfect for
your small
Shower*

101 GREEN ST
NORTH SMITHFIELD, RI
NSHA@NSHERITAGEASSN.COM

A collage of three photographs. The top photo shows a room with several round tables covered in white tablecloths, each with a small floral centerpiece, and white chairs with light blue bows. The middle photo is an exterior view of a blue, two-story building with white trim and a white picket fence in front. The bottom photo shows the same interior room as the top photo, but from a different angle, highlighting the high ceiling and large windows.

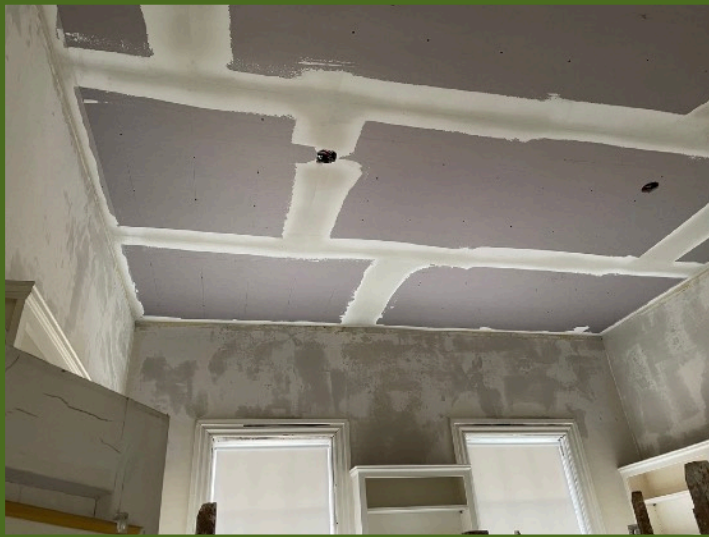


Maintenance



Forestdale School (190 School Street)

Work continues at the Forestdale School. Charlie has been very busy painting the kitchen and the library.





Indigenous Ceremonial Stone Features

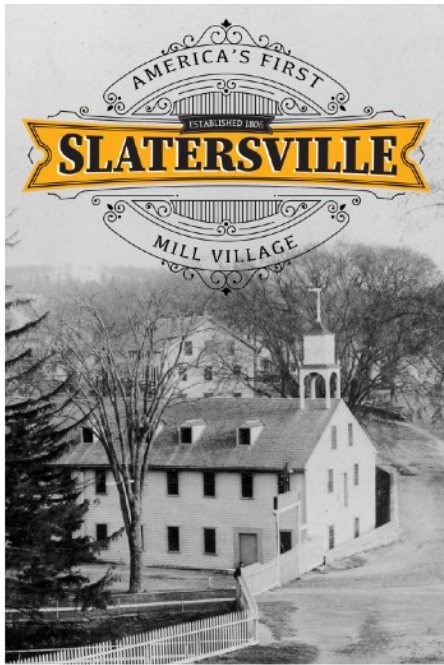
The Research Team continues to locate and document local colonial and indigenous stone features.



It's hard to see due to the leaves but there are 3 fieldstone graves located at the base of the large tree.

Recently, team members were directed to an old 18th century farmhouse foundation and well off Iron Mine Hill Road.

The team meets at 7 pm every other Friday night at the Memorial Town Building. Attend in person or via Zoom!



In case you missed any of season one's episodes they can be streamed at RIPBS.org!



The Board of Directors will meet at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, April 11th at Heritage Hall's lower level. Members are welcome to attend in person or via Zoom.



Conservation

2023 North Smithfield Heritage Walks

Heritage walks are held on the 2nd Saturday of each month. The locations are in the descriptions below. All walks meet at 9:30 am.

Heritage Walks 2023 Schedule:

April 8: Pound Hill Road: Walter Allen House, Israel Aldrich Farm, Nathan Staples farm, Staples School, Nike Site, Luke Philips Cemetery, Lovell Farm, and Dennis Ballou Cemetery. Meet at the Union Cemetery office building.

May 13: Crookfall Brook: Woonsocket Reservoir #1 & Pump House, Woonsocket Reservoir #2 and Mill Site, Spring Brook. Meet at Aldi's parking lot at Dowling Village.

June 10: Waterford: Coblin Rock, Mammoth Mills Ruins, Blackstone Canal, Waterford School, St. Paul's Church Waterford RR Station, RR Fountain, Covered Bridge Site. Meet at Fire House Pizza parking lot, Great Road.

July 8: Slatersville: Main St. Green Street, Slatersville Mills, Centennial Park. Meet at the Memorial Town Building. 1 Main Street.

August 12: Nipsachuck Legacy: The Blunders, Nipsachuck National Battlefield & Black Plain Hill Stone Landscape, Three Dog Site, NS57. Meet at the NS Middle School Parking lot, Providence Pike.

September 9: Wunnashowatuckqut: Old Harkness Rd, High Rocks Gorge, Colony Rd, and Stone Features. Meet at the Forestdale School, 190 School Street.

October 14: Wesquidomsett: West Farm, NS 60, NS24, Tyler Mowry House, NS 32, Old Sayles Hill Rd, Rustic Drive-In, Milk Can; Paine Mill. Meet at Aldi's parking lot at Dowling Village.

November 18: Woonsocket Hill: Mowry Fire Tower, Philip Mowry House and NS47, National Grid stone features. Meet at the NS Middle School parking lot.

December 9: Cedar Brook Legacy: Todd's Farm and Cedar Brook Cart Path, Meet at NS High School Tennis Courts on Grange Road.

North Smithfield Nature Walks

Nature walks are walks on North Smithfield trails on the 1st, 3rd, and 4th Saturdays of each month. All walks meet at 9:30 am.

Nature Walks Schedule:

1st Saturday - High Rocks Gorge 3 mile Loop meets at Martha Road.

3rd Saturday - Booth Pond Preserve Trail 2.4 mile loop meets in Aldi parking Lot.

4th Saturday - Fort Wildlife Refuge 3.3 mile loop on Providence Pike.





Conservation

The NSHA continues to work with the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council to plan an extension of its greenway and bike path into North Smithfield along the abandoned Providence and Springfield rail bed.

Volunteers continue to partner with the Blackstone River Valley Heritage Corridor and NS DPW to clear trash, trees, and brush from Mammoth Mill Park on Mill Street. The transformation is amazing! Take a ride by and let us know what you think!

Volunteers will meet at 9 am on Sunday, April 2 to continue clearing and cleaning Mammoth Mill Park. Join our amazing group if you can!





NSHA Activities



NSHA Annual Meeting April 14, 2023

The NSHA Pot Luck Dinner and Annual Meeting are scheduled for 6 PM on Friday, April 14 at Heritage Hall (101 Green Street). All members and a guest are welcome to attend. **Please bring a dish to share with others!**

After dinner, at 7:00 pm, we will vote on By-laws amendments, then elect Officers and at-large Board members.



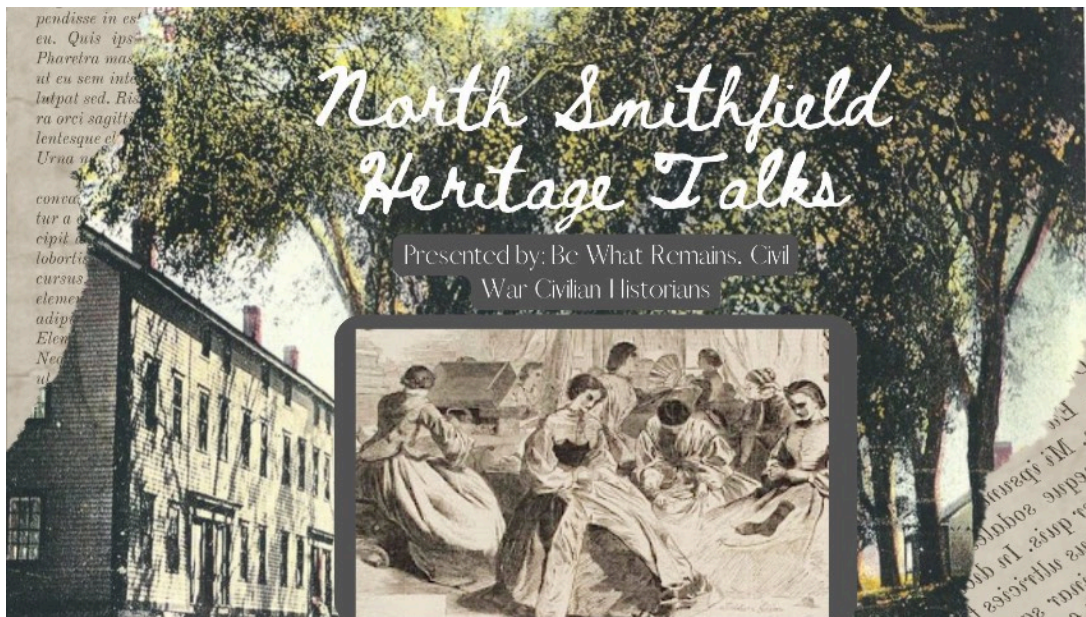
An intrepid group recently braved the wind and cold temperatures to participate in the Union Village Heritage Walk. See our Facebook page for more photos.



NSHA Activities



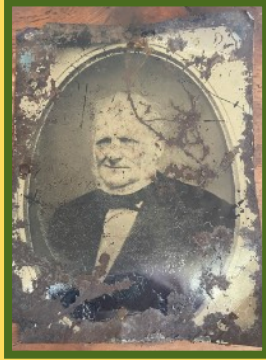
Join us on Friday, March 24 at 7:00 pm, our monthly Heritage Night will feature artist Til Dibner and his paintings at Heritage Hall.



Join us on Saturday, March 25 at Heritage Hall at 10:00 am, ***Be What Remains Civil War Historians*** will explain how to make a Civil War-era dress, describe Civil War-era medicine, as well as amusements of Civil War-era youth.



Mystery Photo



Unfortunately, no one seems to have recognized the man in last month's mystery photo. We will keep hunting for his identity!



This month's mystery photo appears to be a civic group of some sort. Nothing is written on the back of the photo, however. Does any one recognize the individuals or perhaps their group? If you do, please let us know!



NSHA Merchandise

We maintain a wide range of merchandise that includes books, maps, puzzles, and so much more! View our entire inventory at the **NSHA On-line shop** at www.nsheritageassn.org.



**Slatersville
Congregational
Church
Ornament!**

Cost is \$15.



*Scenic 2023 Heritage Association Calendars now available
\$10 each at the following locations:
Li'l General, Leeway Hardware and Village Paint*



**Our 2023 calendars are now 50% off!
Get this beautiful calendar for just \$5!**



The new Wright's Farm 252-piece puzzle. Cost is \$20. Puzzles are available for purchase at the Forestdale School, The Memorial Town Building and Wright's Dairy Farm.



Membership

We welcome new members Julie Tilley and Diane Prete!

~Your \$20 annual dues allow us to conduct vital preservation activities. Seniors over 85 and full-time students are still free. If you are not sure of your status, please contact us.

~2023 Annual Dues are due on **May 1** each year. We thank the **172 current members** who have renewed. Members in arrears or with expired memberships can still renew by mail, via PayPal Giving Fund, Venmo or Tuesday mornings at the Memorial Town Building.

~You can become a member by filling out an application found on our website:

<https://www.nsheritageassn.org/membership>

You Can Help

Join: It costs just \$20 each year!

Volunteer: Help with any of our ongoing activities and events. No need to make a commitment. We appreciate whatever you can do!

Donate: Our Annual Appeal runs all year long. We like local artifacts. We appreciate whatever you can give!

Share: Share this free newsletter with friends and family. Encourage them to subscribe. Only shared knowledge can preserve our heritage!

NSHA Payment Options

- 1. PayPal Giving Fund:** search for nsha@nsheritageassn.com, select “**Donation**” and type the purpose for the payment on the memo line.
- 2. Venmo:** Open the Venmo app and search for **North Smithfield Heritage Assn@NorthSmithfieldHeritageAssn**. Tap on **Pay**, enter the dollar amount to be paid, and fill in the field what’s it for (ie., dues, merchandise, donation etc). Tap on **Pay** and select your payment method you have established in the Venmo app.
- 3. Give cash or check.** Make checks payable to “**NSHA**”. Note “**Dues, Annual Appeal or Merchandise**” on the memo line.
- 4. Mail Checks** to NS Heritage Assn, P.O. Box 413, Slatersville, RI 02876.
- 5.** We will also pick up payments and deliver purchases at your door if you live locally. Contact nsha@nsheritageassn.com or call [401-651-6316](tel:401-651-6316).



Development

The North Smithfield Heritage Association Fund

Background

The NSHA created this RI Foundation endowment fund in 2021 with personal donations made by its Board of Directors and a corporate grant from Amica Mutual Insurance Company.

Purpose

The Fund establishes a perpetual investment that grows every year to help fund NSHA preservation projects and activities.

Tax Benefits

Your donation is tax-deductible.

In addition to cash, the Foundation accepts gifts of securities, real estate, and other personal property, which may help you avoid capital gains taxes on appreciated assets.

Free legal assistance

Receive legal assistance with trust or bequest language; charitable annuities; charitable remainder trusts;

Contact

Kelly Riley

Donor Services Administrator

401) 427-4028

kriley@rifoundation.org

Make a tax-deductible donation to this RI Foundation managed fund that will grow perpetually.

The NSHA can use a portion of the fund each year for preservation activities.

Gifts can be made to the Heritage Association Fund in two primary ways:

1. A check made out to the Rhode Island Foundation (with a reference on the memo line to the NS Heritage Association Fund) can be mailed to the Rhode Island Foundation, One Union Station, Providence, RI 02903.
2. A credit card gift can be made at this link: <https://rifoundation.org/funds/north-smithfield-heritage-association-fund>



Outreach

Members who would like to create a post or event on the NSHA Facebook Page, should send a photo and text to the NSHA email account.

Facebook Page Followers: 1,159

Website: 278 interactions in last 30 days

NSHA Newsletter Subscribers: 1,210

Instagram Followers: 125

nsha@nsheritageassn.com



We now have a Venmo account that you can use to make dues payments, donations or to purchase merchandise.

Instagram (nsha1970) Please follow us!



We welcomed Julie Tilley to our publicity team. Julie took the lead with our Instagram account and now makes the majority of posts to our Facebook page. Her arrival has been a Godsend!!

Visit our **Facebook Page** to learn about our events and activities. Get acquainted with some of our members and supporters. Like and share with friends and family!

www.facebook.com/northsmithfieldheritage



Visit our website! Read past newsletters, learn about our organization as well as our many ongoing historic preservation activities. <https://www.nsheritageassn.org/>

Most importantly, share this newsletter with family and friends! To join our mailing list, simply contact us at nsha@nsheritageassn.com or [401-651-6316](tel:401-651-6316)

