



# NORTH SMITHFIELD HERITAGE ASSOCIATION MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME III, ISSUE 2 ~ March 2022

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## North Smithfield 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

### *Anniversary Parade-May 7, 2022*

The parade committee is making great progress. Many groups have already committed trucks, motorcycles, marching units, bands and floats. We encourage all civic groups and businesses to participate. The committee will next meet at 10:00am on Friday, March 18th at the Memorial Town Building as well as via Zoom. Please contact [kpasquariello@northsmithfieldri.org](mailto:kpasquariello@northsmithfieldri.org) for further information.



## Time Capsules

We discovered the location of the NS 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary time capsule buried on June 6, 1995 in front of the Memorial Town Building. We will plan an opening ceremony in April.

### *The North Smithfield 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary time capsule*

Donate iconic items from the past 150 years. Contact us to arrange drop off or pick up! We plan to seal the capsule in April 2022 and then store it in our archives at the Memorial Town Building.



## ***Sesquicentennial History Book***

Author John Hill, met with archivist Al Menard to discuss the Sesquicentennial History book. Mr. Hill is a retired reporter for *The Providence Journal* and continues his research for the new history book. Currently, we seek information about local sports programs especially histories of Little League Baseball, Pop Warner Football, Youth Hockey and Youth Soccer.



## ***Thank You!***

We thank all businesses who have donated thus far to our Corporate Giving Campaign. Your support allows us to preserve some of our most precious artifacts.

We hope to fund the following projects in 2022:

1. Purchase mannequins for five Victorian Era dresses.
2. Conduct archeological studies of Native American ceremonial sites in the Nipsachuck area town.



## **Thank you**

We'd like to thank Bob Dubois for interviewing with us on Thursday, March 10th. Bob shared his memories of growing up in North Smithfield and had many great stories about Little League baseball. He also brought photos and articles for us to scan.





## March 2022

### *We Welcome Spring!*



Unsurprisingly, the spring season gets its name from the verb “spring.” It’s a nod to the flowers and plants springing up, springing open and bursting into blossom. Meteorological spring starts March 1st and ends May 31st. *The Farmer’s Almanac* predicts drier than normal spring weather this year.

### *Spring or Vernal Equinox*

The word *equinox* comes from the Latin words for “equal night”—aequus (equal) and nox (night). An *equinox* is one of two times of the year when the amount of daylight and nighttime hours are just about of equal length. The vernal *equinox* marks the start of spring.

Here in the Northern Hemisphere, we welcome the astronomical spring on **March 20, 2022**, at precisely 11:33am EDT, with the arrival of the spring equinox. After this date, the Northern Hemisphere begins to be tilted more toward the sun, resulting in increasing daylight hours and warming temperatures.

### *The March Full Moon*

As the temperature begins to warm and the ground begins to thaw, earthworm casts appear heralding the return of robins, thus the origin of March’s full Moon named the *Full Worm Moon*.

The more northern Native American tribes knew this Moon as the *Full Crow Moon*, when the cawing of crows signaled the end of winter.

It was also referred to as the Full Crust Moon because snow cover becomes crusty from falling by day and freezing at night.

The Full Sap Moon marking the time of sapping maple trees is another variation.

To settlers, it was also known as the Lenten Moon and it was the last full Moon of winter.

March 22nd will mark the official end of the towns of North Smithfield’s and Lincoln’s 150th birth year. However, due to the pandemic, some celebrations will continue beyond.

### *It’s time to start your garden!*

Spring marks the time to plant your seeds. Visit *The Farmer’s Almanac* for great planting tips!  
<https://www.farmersalmanac.com/spring-extended-weather>



## *NSHA'S PRESERVATION & RESTORATION*



### Forestdale School (190 School Street)

APG has installed the restored window sashes. We applied for \$145K in grants to install emergency stairs, replace the roof and recreate the cupola. Petro has removed and replaced the old fuel oil tank.

### Memorial Town Building (1 Main Street)

Renovations continue at the Memorial Town Building. One of our community service workers recently started to take up carpet upstairs. UV film will also be installed on all of the windows to cut down on the solar effect of the sun's rays on the artifacts in the building.



### Heritage Hall (101 Greene Street)

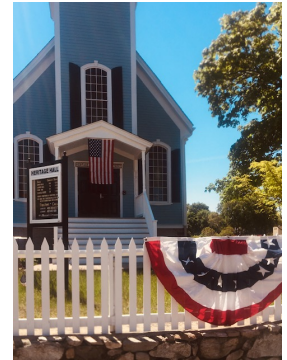
New storm windows for the stained-glass windows are installed. They will dramatically reduce energy costs in this building. Local electrician, Roland Menard, offered to donate his time to move the unused fire alarm radio box at the Memorial building to Heritage Hall



## Heritage Hall Rentals (101 Green Street)

Rent the newly renovated upper and lower halls!

Call Jeanne at 401-447-1801 to make a reservation or contact our office at [nsha@nsheritage.com](mailto:nsha@nsheritage.com) or 401-651-6316



### NS Zoning Ordinance Amendment Local Historic Districts

The NSHA, is working with the NS Historic District Commission (NS HDC) and asked the Planning Board to consider an amendment to the ordinance that reduces the administrative and financial burden of property owners who agree to let the town designate their historic buildings as an individual local historic district. The Planning Board will vote on a recommendation at their next meeting.

### Thomas Sayles Local Historic District (152 Grange Road)

The NS HDC will ask the NS Town Council to create a new local Historic District for the 18th century Thomas Sayles Farm, currently known as Gardner's Farm. It's one of only two remaining farms in town with free ranging cattle. The NS HDC plans to present the proposal to the Town Council as soon as it considers the Zoning Ordinance Amendment.



### Dorr Rebellion Artifacts

Jon Peirce, a local master furniture maker, has offered to donate a display case for the 1842 Dorr Rebellion Flag that once belonged to the Slatersville Grenadiers.





## *Historic Cemetery OF The Month*

Joanna Comstock Lot

By Lynne Pelletier

The Joanna Comstock lot is also known as NS056 and it is located on Premisy Hill Road in North Smithfield. It is a family cemetery named after the matriarch of the Comstock family. There are 6 memorials with engraved headstones; however, according to the Rhode Island Historical Cemeteries Commission, there are actually 13 burials here. Some of the graves are marked only with field stones.

The individuals buried here include: Joanna Aldrich Comstock who was born July 5, 1781 in Smithfield and was the daughter of Samuel Aldrich and Rachel Bassett. Joanna married her second cousin, Arioch Comstock on December 25, 1800 and they were the parents of 5 children. Joanna died at age 87 on August 28, 1868.



Arioch Comstock was the son of Stephen Comstock and Hannah Aldrich. He was born March 10, 1770 in Smithfield and died at age 65 on May 3, 1835. Two of the Comstock children are also buried with their parents. A son, Fenner Comstock, was born in 1814 and died at age 62 on July 13, 1876. He was a farmer and he never married. A daughter, Joanna Aldrich Marsh, was born November 19, 1823 and she died of a stroke at age 74 on October 19, 1897. Her husband, William Marsh, is buried beside her. William Marsh was the son of Nahum Marsh and Sabra Dexter and he was born in Smithfield in 1814 and died at age 58 of heart disease on April 28, 1872. William and Joanna married May 13, 1866 and had no children. Husband and wife are memorialized on a double headstone.

The final, and perhaps most interesting grave, belongs to grandson, Frederick N. Comstock. His military headstone is for a veteran of the Civil War and it does not list the date of his death. Frederick enlisted in the military on October 5, 1861 and then re-enlisted as veteran volunteer in company B of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Rhode Island Heavy Artillery on January 30, 1864. Military records show he mustered out of service on August 27, 1865. He married Harriet Miller of Woonsocket on January 24, 1868 and in August of 1869 they had a son named Frederick Napoleon. By June of 1870 when the United States Federal Census was taken, Harriet is alone with her child. The only other bit of information found for Frederick is from a record for the headstone for Frederick's grave. This source lists the headstones that were provided for deceased Union Civil War veterans and it indicates that Frederick died on May 25, 1879. No death record can be found for Frederick in the state of Rhode Island. Could Frederick have died in another state and why is there no record of him with his wife and child? Is Frederick truly buried here or is this headstone only a memorial for him? It remains a mystery.



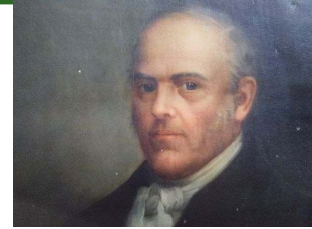
When NSHA cemetery volunteers first approached this cemetery for restoration, it was in poor shape. Joanna's stone lay broken against a tree, Fenner's stone was lying in the grass and Arioch's slate headstone was broken into shards and was unreadable. All of the stones were cleaned and repaired as best as could be and then reset into place. Unfortunately, a piece of Joanna's headstone remains missing and therefore it could not be placed into its base securely so it was set into the ground instead. Arioch's headstone was broken beyond repair and what could be saved was set into place with the broken pieces close by. Lastly, what was thought to be a small headstone was actually discovered to be the footstone marker for Arioch's grave when a volunteer discovered the initials A.C. carved into its surface. It proved that this was Arioch's resting place beside his wife, Joanna. One final issue remains however, the double headstone of Joanna Aldrich Marsh and her husband William Marsh appears to be facing in the wrong direction. While the remainder of the graves all face eastward as was the tradition, the Marsh grave faces west. Since it is impossible to know if this was done intentionally or if the grave had been moved at one point, it was decided to leave this headstone as it is. The cemetery is now once again a peaceful resting place for the Comstock family.





## Genealogy

Would you like help researching your family tree? Lynne Pelletier has extensive experience and access to several databases. Please contact [nsha@nsheritageassn.com](mailto:nsha@nsheritageassn.com) to make an appointment.



## Archives

Your memories contain our local heritage! Please loan your old family photos and documents for us to scan. We will return them promptly!

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

## NSHA Membership

This month we would like to welcome new members Doris Wilk, Oliver Hazard, Brian Gartland, and Lucia Vescera. Our current member roll indicates that we now have 172 members with current dues. We sincerely thank all who recently renewed. If you are not sure of your status, please contact us.

### *Want to join?*

Your \$20 annual dues allow us to conduct our many preservation activities and events. Seniors over 85 and students are still free. We thank all our members for everything you do to support our historic preservation efforts!



## Save The Date!

### History Tours



Due to Saturday's rainy forecast this walk will be now be held on **Sunday, March 13, 9:30am Woonsocket Reservoir #3 History and Nature Walk**- Visit NS 48 Oliver Smith Lot, walk woodland trails to see the Amasa Sweet Quarry, Great Wall, William Mowry Homestead and Obed Paine Homestead. Meet at

NSHS student parking lot on Grange Road.

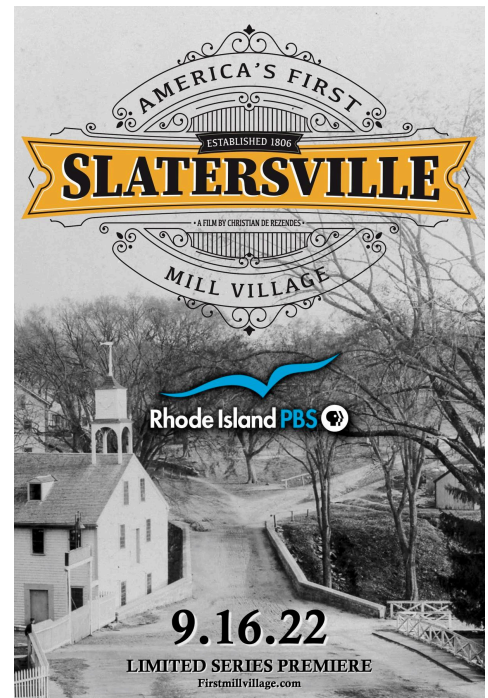
**April 9, 9:30am Nipsachuck Legacy-Driving and walking tour.** Visit The Blunders, Nipschuck National Battlefield, Black Plain Hill indigenous people stone landscape, Three Dog site and NS57. Meet at the Middle School parking lot.



### Slatersville Movie premiere date!

After more than a decade in production, we are truly excited to announce that the World Premiere of SLATERSVILLE: America's First Mill Village will take place on Friday, September 16, 2022 at 8pm on Rhode Island PBS. The entire series will consist of 12 episodes and be split into two seasons of six episodes each.

Season One will premiere on September 16, 2022 with a new episode to follow every Friday evening at 8pm through October 21, 2022. Season Two will premiere in 2023 on a date to be determined.







# Save The Date!

## NSHA partners with The Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor

The NSHA has partnered with the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. What this means is that we have the wonderful opportunity to get credit for all the hard work our volunteers do. Each hour our volunteers work is currently worth \$28.54! This really adds up quickly and can greatly benefit us when we apply for grants that match volunteer hours. Volunteers may sign up to be a part of this program by stopping by the Memorial Town Building and filling out two forms or email a request for forms to [nsha@nsheritageassn.com](mailto:nsha@nsheritageassn.com) When completed, the volunteer will be able to log their hours on a personal page created just for them. A Zoom workshop is being presented by Molly Cardoza of the BRVNHHC on March 23 at 6:30pm to teach users to login and log their hours. Participants may register at <https://bit.ly/BetterImpactSW>



Blackstone River Valley  
National Heritage Corridor

## Rhode Island Historical Cemeteries Awareness and Preservation Weeks April-May 2022.

This is a joint effort by the RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission and the RI Historic Cemeteries Commission. The two-month event replaces the annual RIHPHC conference. One of our NSHA members and co-founder of the NSCemetery Team, Christine McWilliams, is organizing it. Our local team members have already begun plans for the two months. We're organizing local cemetery cleanups for April 16th and May 21st. Also on May 21st, our team plans to give a Gravestone Restoration Demonstration and a historic tour of Union Cemetery. Follow the link on the postcard for more events!

[www.preservationconferenceri.com](http://www.preservationconferenceri.com)



Rhode Island Historical Cemeteries  
Awareness and Preservation Weeks  
APRIL - MAY 2022

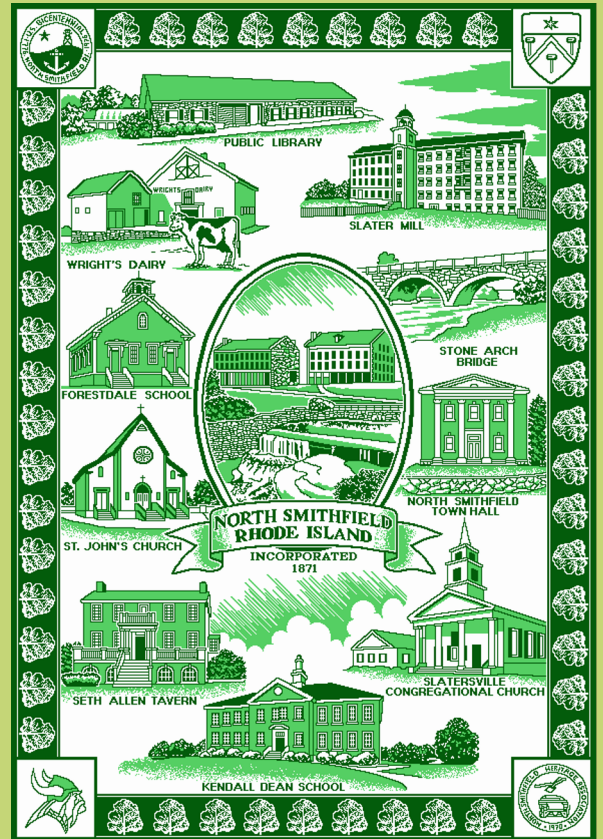
<b>R.I. Historical Cemeteries Awareness + Preservation Weeks APRIL - MAY 2022</b>	RIHPHC + RIACHC 150 BENEFIT ST PROVIDENCE RI 02903	PRESORT STANDARD U.S. POSTAGE PAID PERMIT #1284 PROVIDENCE, RI
Join cemetery tours, clean-ups, stone conservation workshops + other outdoor programs throughout Rhode Island		
Free and open to the public		
Info + calendar: <a href="http://www.preservationconferenceri.com">www.preservationconferenceri.com</a>	3391024 North Smithfield Heritage Association North Smithfield Heritage Association 802 Pound Hill Rd North Smithfield, RI 02896-9575	
Organized by R.I. Advisory Commission on Historical Cemeteries R.I. Historical Preservation + Heritage Commission		
Williams Burial Ground, Roger Williams Park, Providence, c. 1907 (Providence Public Library)		



## Get Your NSHA Merchandise!

Did you know that NSHA offers a wide variety of items that make perfect gifts for yourself or loved ones? And the best part: All profits support our preservation efforts!

2022 Historic Calendars \$10, NS 150th Anniversary Ornament \$15, NS Throws \$35





## *Where and How to Purchase NSHA Gifts:*

- Our gift shop at the **Forestdale School** offers calendars, ornaments, maps, books, and other items that reflect our local history. The gift shop opens the second and third Thursday and Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. To make an appointment on other days, contact Louise at 401-769-8177.
- Limited items are available at **The Budding Violet at Red White & Brew Coffeehouse** on Great Road.
- Limited items are also available at the **Memorial Town Building** at 1 Main Street on Tuesdays from 9am-12pm or Call 401-447-6394 for an appointment.
- Visit our **online shop** on our website, [www.nsheritageassn.org](http://www.nsheritageassn.org). Pay by check or PayPal Giving fund. Make checks payable to “NSHA.” Orders ship immediately upon payment. The shipping fee for a single item is \$5. Multiple or large items require an adjusted rate. Local delivery to your door is free. Contact [nsha@nsheritageassn.com](mailto:nsha@nsheritageassn.com). Thank you for your support!
- All profits support our schoolhouse operating costs. View our entire inventory at the NSHA On-Line shop at [www.nsheritageassn.org](http://www.nsheritageassn.org)

\$5 shipping each fee for each item. Free local delivery. Orders ship upon payment.  
Contact [nsha@nsheritageassn.com](mailto:nsha@nsheritageassn.com) or 401-651-6316 with questions.

### **Payment Options**

- 1. PayPal Giving Fund:** search for [nsha@nsheritageassn.com](mailto:nsha@nsheritageassn.com), select “Donation” and type the purpose for the payment on the memo line.
- 2. Give cash or check.** Make checks payable to “NSHA”. Note “Dues, Annual Appeal or Merchandise” on the memo line.
- 3. Mail Checks** to NS Heritage Assn, P.O. Box 413, Slatersville, RI 02876.
- 4.** We will also pick up payments at your door if you live locally. Contact [nsha@nsheritageassn.com](mailto:nsha@nsheritageassn.com) or call 401-651-6316



### AMAZON SMILE

Amazon Smile is a part of Amazon that allows you to shop as well as generate a corporate donation for **The NSHA**.

- ❖ Simply create an account on **Amazon Smile** (<https://smile.amazon.com>).
- ❖ Choose The North Smithfield Heritage Association as the charity that will benefit from your purchases at no extra cost to you.



**Make sure you use the AmazonSmile website to shop!** (<https://smile.amazon.com>)



### Help Promote Local History

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](http://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](mailto:nsha@nsheritageassn.com) or [401-651-6316](tel:401-651-6316)

### Follow us on Instagram!

Many members and friends ask us how they can help. Starting this month, we will use our Instagram account, "nsha1970" to announce upcoming work and participation opportunities. Simply follow us on Instagram!

