

## NORTH SMITHFIELD HERITAGE ASSOCIATION MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Volume VI Issue III May/June 2025

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Irene Nebiker and Louise Vanhouwe celebrated their 95th birthdays at the annual NSHA Spring dinner in March.



The NSHA Spring dinner was held on Friday, March 21, 2025.



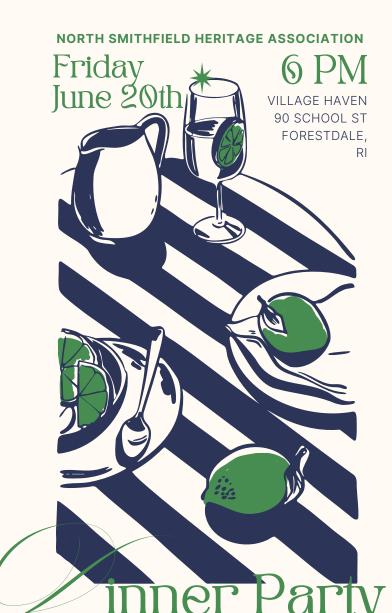


The NSHA recently held its annual Spring dinner at Heritage Hall. Members socialized while enjoying a delicious Italian buffet with a baked scrod entree.

After dinner, Marty Podskotch gave an informative presentation about the history of Civilian Conservation Corps Camps, including the camp that was once located in Primrose. Marty also had a variety of interesting memorabilia that he passed around allowing members to closely examine the artifacts.







Join us for a traditional family-style chicken dinner \$35 per ticket

Pay by Venmo, PayPal, or check payable to "NSHA" mailed to NSHA, P.O. Box 413, Slatersville, RI 02876 Pay in person at Village Paint, 900 Victory Hwy or Town Hall, 83 Greene St

North Smithfield Heritage Dinner, 6:00 pm on Friday, June 20, 2025 at the Village Haven. The public is welcome. The NSHA Cemetery Team will give a presentation about its preservation work at local historic cemeteries.







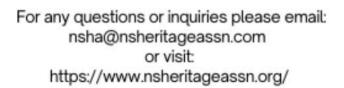


## **COMMUNITY** ANNUAL APPEAL

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

#### **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







**Make a tax-deductible 2025 donation!** Please help fund our preservation efforts. Renovations are underway on the second floor of the Memorial Town Building, one of Slatersville's most iconic historic buildings. When finished, it will become a museum and large group meeting room.

Donations may be made via PayPal Giving Fund or through Venmo. You may also mail your cash or check donation to NSHA, P.O. Box 413, Slatersville, RI 02876. You may also pay with a credit card at our headquarters at the memorial Town Building (1 Main Street) from 10 am -12 pm, Monday thru Wednesday. We will also pick up donations at your door!

Any amount helps enormously!





We thank Irene Nebiker for donating artifacts from Abner Bailey. Abner Bailey was a retired teacher and an early president of the NSHA.

The team appreciates the opportunity to scan any photos or yearbooks from local schools that you may keep at home. Our oldest school newsletter dates back to the Kendall Dean School in 1946.

*Your family photos and old letters contain much of our local heritage!* Please help us to preserve that heritage by allowing us to scan them to keep in our archives.

**Important!** Too many wonderful photos get thrown away because younger generations don't know who is in them or where the pictures were taken. Images of ancestors are then lost forever. Please write the names on the back of your photos of all the people photographed and the location if possible. Use a pencil as ink may damage photos.

Please contact us at nsha@nsheritageassn.com or call 401-376-2927

The NSHA Archives are located at the Memorial Town Building, 1 Main Street, Slatersville. It's open every Monday through Wednesday from 10:00 am until 12:00 pm. The Archive Team continues to work tirelessly to manage our extensive archive collection. We welcome help from anyone with an interest.



#### Thank You



We thank Rosie, Tina, and Gayle for helping to clean trash at the Mammoth Mill Park! Mammoth Mill Park is located in the Waterford district of North Smithfield on Mill Street.



We thank NSHA volunteer, Bob Mowry for spreading loam for a grass area at Mammoth Mill Park.

#### **Education Outreach**



NSHA volunteers will display artifacts from WWII at the North Smithfield Middle School on Tuesday, May 20, 2025.



#### Elisha Thornton-Educator, Quaker by Al Menard

During the time of the American Revolution, life thrived along the Great Road in Woonsocket Village, later known as Union Village. Union Village was first called "Woonsocket Village" because of Woonsocket Hill. The section of the village near the river was simply called "The Falls". Commerce on Great Road (Woonsocket Village) flourished because of the stagecoach routes that intersected at Pound Hill Road. Woonsocket Village became Bank Village after 1805 when the Smithfield Union Bank was incorporated. Years after the bank moved to Woonsocket in 1851, it became Union Village. The area, first settled in the late seventeenth century, had become a hub for Quaker (Society of Friends) activity, with the Smithfield Friends Meeting House (1719) at its center.

Elisha Thornton was born into this community on June 30, 1747, to parents Ebenezer and Ruth Thornton. Like most of the settlers of the time, they were farmers. His father died when he was three years old. Reports of his early life are vague, but they suggest that he was on his own from early on. Yet Elisha was known to be a happy child, in love with nature and with having fun. He played a lively violin that delighted his many youthful friends. Although he received very little schooling he managed to become quite well educated. In addition, he had also developed a strong commitment to his fellow man.

There was no established educational system in town at that time. The responsibility for basic learning fell to parents and neighbors. Seeing the need, Elisha Thornton started a school in his home at the age of nineteen.



The Smithfield Friends Meeting House, as it looked in Elisha Thornton's time. Note the horse sheds. This building burnt in a disastrous fire in 1881. The present Meeting House was built in that same year.



When he was twenty-three, he joined the Quakers. His upright character and eloquence of speech soon made a strong impression on the Society. Attendance was falling at the Meetings and many of those who did attend fell asleep during the intervals of silence. With no set ministers, the Quakers allowed anyone to speak as the Spirit moved them. When Elisha spoke, no one fell asleep! His powerful sermons and melodious voice impressed the congregation beyond description. Attendance grew, as did his reputation as a speaker.

It was challenging for Thornton to sustain himself on the income gained from the lessons he provided to local children. Marie Bonier writes in her "History of Woonsocket" that "Before him lay a vast sphere of activity in which to deploy his talents, for the ignorance of the inhabitants of North Smithfield was matched only by their narrow-mindedness." In addition, he was also suspected of sorcery due to his use of a telescope and a globe during his lessons, leading some to believe he taught magic. Over time, however, his school gained a strong reputation, and his circumstances improved.

In 1773, Elisha married Anna Read from Blackstone, Massachusetts. Together, they had thirteen children. Elisha continued his career in education, at times working with Moses Brown and the Quaker academy in Providence. He edited the Society almanac for many years while actively advocating for Quaker causes, particularly those concerning antislavery and peace.

After some thirty years of teaching at his academy, he moved to New Bedford where relatives were living. There he was instrumental in starting another school with his son Daniel.

On December 31, 1816, he passed away. He is buried in the Russell family plot within the Friends section of Rural Cemetery in New Bedford. His wife, Anna, is interred in the Quaker Cemetery located on Great Road.

We are deeply indebted to this humble Quaker individual for his exemplary moral conduct and significant contribution to the establishment of public education in our region.



This simple stone commemorates Elisha's death in the Quaker section of a New Bedford cemetery. His wife, Anna, returned to Smithfield where she died and is buried in the Friends Cemetery on Great Road.

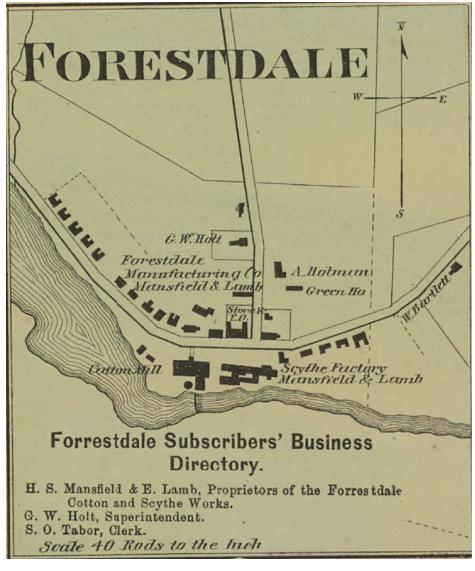


From the January 1975 edition on the North Smithfield Heritage Association newsletter

#### Century-old Report Indicates Forestdale to Grow

The following excerpt is from the Woonsocket Patriot and Rhode Island State Register, January 19, 1866.

"Messrs, Mansfield and Lamb have enlarged their scythe works by the erection of a building ninety feet long, in which will be done the grinding and tempering. A machine shop is to be fitted up for building the new steam "Governor" and twelve new tenements are to be erected next summer. Forestdale is destined to be a large village."



1870 map of Forestdale. (Editor's Note: there are 16.5 feet or 5.5 yards in a rod, just in case you were wondering!!)



#### Hotchkiss Veterans Tour

Mark your calendar and join us! We are preparing for a Memorial Day weekend cemetery tour on **Saturday May 24, at 9:00 am with a rain day set for Sunday at 9:00 if needed.** Please park at Union Cemetery.

Come and see the 27 graves of the men who served during seven wars beginning with the Revolutionary War and ending with WWII. We have discovered more stories to share on this walking tour!

Thanks to NSHA volunteers Mark, Janet, Lori, Stephanie, Kathy, Paul, Ed and Kim, the Spring clean-up at Hotchkiss is nearing completion. The perennials donated by NSHA members are in full bloom and look beautiful!



Stephanie Moaz



Paul Collamati



Kathy Wilkins



#### **NS Historic Cemeteries**



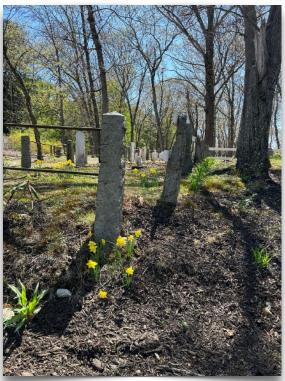
NSHA cemetery team volunteers recently installed new signs at several locations. Thanks to Kim, Denis, Mark, Janet, Rich and Mike.



We are looking for more perennials to plant at Hotchkiss Cemetery to help beautify this local gem. Right now we could use irises if anyone has too many and would like to thin out their gardens.







Spring daffodils at Hotchkiss



#### Historic Cemetery Of The Month

#### NS 20, The Thomas Sayles Lot by Lynne Pelletier

The Thomas Sayles Lot is located on the north side of Pomona Avenue, 820 feet east of Grange Road. The lot is roughly 50' x 70' in size and is enclosed by old stone walls. The Rhode Island Historic Cemetery Commission lists 10 graves for this cemetery in its database; while <a href="FindAGrave.com">FindAGrave.com</a> adds 1 more for a total of 11. <a href="FindAGrave.com">FindAGrave.com</a> claims that this lot is also known as The Mowry-Steere Cemetery. The individuals buried here comprise 6 generations of the Sayles family.

The namesake of this cemetery was an interesting individual. Thomas Sayles, Esquire was born on February 9, 1699 in Providence, Rhode Island to parents John Sayles and his wife Elizabeth Olney Sayles. Thomas had a very close connection to the founding of the state of Rhode Island because he was a great-grandson of its founder, Roger Williams through Williams' daughter, Mary. Thomas married his wife Esther Scott Sayles on December 14, 1721 in Providence, Rhode Island.

NSHA cemetery volunteer, Janet Robidoux, discovers the face of Thomas Sayles' headstone in 2019.

Thomas settled in the brand new town of Smithfield in 1731. Smithfield was incorparated the previous year in 1730. Thomas' farm was said to be on the west side of Sayles hill not far from Primrose. He was very active in local politics and he served on the town council, as the moderator of town meetings, as the town clerk, and as a deputy to the General Assembly. Thomas died at age 55 on November 9, 1754.

Esther Scott Sayles was the daughter of Major Sylvanus Scott and Joanna Jenckes Scott. She was born on December 5, 1700. Esther and Thomas were the parents of about 10 children, although some sources say less. Esther died on July 7, 1786 at age 85.



A closer look at the intricate carving on Thomas' stone.



#### Historic Cemetery Of The Month

#### OBITUARY

The following cases of death, at a very advanced age, are all in the state of Rhode Island.

At North Providence, on the 1st inst John Sayles, Esq. in the One Hundred and First year of his age. He was born on the 18th January, 1722, and was one of 13 male children born in the town of Smithfield in that year, all of whom, except himself, have been long since tenants of the tomb. Mr. Savles was an eminent man in his prime of life; more than half a century ago he was one of the leading politicians of the state, having been for many years previous to, and throughout the revolutionary war, an Assistant or Senator, or a Representative, in the General Assembly-a man of strong mind and great influence; his patriotism was well tested before, during and since the revolution, and he discharged the duties of many important offices with fidelity and ability. His remains were removed to Smithfield, and interred on his own homestead, by the side of those of his wife.

John Sayles obituary from *The National Advocate*, March 19, 1822, New York, New York. (His birthday appears to be incorrect here)

John Sayles was the eldest child of this couple. Records claim he was born on January 6, 1723 in Providence, Rhode Island but his obituary shared here states January 18, 1722. He married Martha Arnold on December 19, 1742 and they had 9 children. Throughout his life, John was "one of the leading politicians of the state, having been for many years previous to and throughout the Revolutionary War, an assistant or Senator or Representative, in the General Assembly." It is said he was "a man of strong mind and great influence." John died on February 28, 1822 at close to 100 years old.

Martha Sayles Smith Steere was born on January 6, 1786. She was the daughter of Charles Sayles and his wife Charlotte Mowry. She was a great-granddaughter of Thomas and Esther. Martha married Syra Smith in about 1805 and they had 4 children. Syra unfortunately passed away just 5 years later at about age 30 and is also buried here.

Martha then married Paoli Steere sometime between 1811 and 1819. Two more children were added to the family, Mowry P Steere and Urania Steere Mowry. Mowry was born in 1820 and died on January 30, 1874 at about age 53. He never married and was a farmer by trade. His sister Urania was born on July 29, 1821 and died at age 43 on July 21, 1865. Urania was the wife of Barney Mowry, however it does not appear that Barney is buried with his wife.

The remaining 4 graves all belong to children: Nelson Smith, 1812-1813, was a son of Syra Smith and Martha Sayles. Emor Steere, 1824-1825, was a son of Paoli Steere and Martha Sayles.

Finally, two of Syra and Martha's grandchildren also rest here. They were the children of daughter Charlotte and her husband William Sheldon. Mary E Sheldon, 1835-1835, died as an infant and Nelson Henry Sheldon 1838-1844 who died at about age 5.

In 2019, members of NSHA began to clean up this abandoned cemetery. They removed fallen branches, leaves and other debris. They then cleaned the gravestones and repaired those that were broken. NSHA volunteers also took classes to learn the best methods of preservation in order to try to preserve this cemetery for future generations. In July of that year, the Valley Breeze wrote a wonderful article featuring the team's preservation efforts in the cemetery.



NSHA cemetery volunteer, Rachel Pecoraro repairs a stone from the cemetery. *Valley Breeze 2019* 





#### **Veterans Memorial Program**



The U.S. Flag will fly at the Memorial Town Building each month in honor of a deceased local veteran. The VFW and NSHA will conduct a brief flag-raising ceremony in honor of the veteran as well as publish a brief biography of the honoree's military service in the NSHA newsletter. Families can use the honored veteran's Memorial Flag or the VFW Flag. Family or friends may contact the NSHA to nominate a veteran, <u>401-376-2927</u>.





#### Monthly Board Meeting

The Board of Directors will meet at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, May 20, 2025 at Heritage Hall, 101 Green Street. Members are welcome to attend in person or via Zoom. See the meeting email for instructions to join via Zoom.

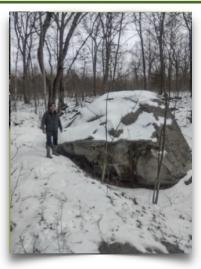
#### Research Team

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

Ron Lapierre is the RI Coordinator for the New England Antiquities Research Assn. (NEARA)

The Research Team generally meets at 6:00 pm at Heritage Hall on the second Friday of each month.

Please contact NSHA or just show up if you'd like to participate!



Research team member, Ron Lapierre at Cobble Rock this winter.



#### 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.

#### Ghosts and Paranormal Activity

Kara Pressia, a local spiritual medium continues to help with spiritual research. Have you hear of about or seen paranormal activity in North Smithfield? We would like to document it. Anyone interested in joining the Paranormal Research Team please contact us at nsha@nsheritageassn.com.



HERITAGE HALL

# Perfect for your small Event

101 GREEN ST NORTH SMITHFIELD, RI

NSHA@NSHERITAGEASSN.COM

CHAIR LIFT ACCESSIBLE









#### Heritage Hall Rentals (101) Green Street

Rent the newly renovated upper and lower halls!

Visit the NSHA website for a rental application and rules: <a href="https://www.nsheritageassn.org/general-3">https://www.nsheritageassn.org/general-3</a>

Call Jeanne at (401) 447-1801 to make a reservation or send an email to <a href="mailto:nsha@nsheritageassn.com">nsha@nsheritageassn.com</a>



#### Preservation and Restoration



#### Memorial Town Building (I Main Street)

The two flag poles in front of the building have been repaired. Volunteers continue to work diligently to restore the second main hall. We especially thank Charlie and Christine Dubois for spending hundreds of hours refinishing the wood trim and painting the walls. Painting is now complete. We will refinish the wood floors next.



Charlie and Christine hard at work.



Jon, Ralph and Jeff remove staging used for painting.



The stage



Larry is working on the woodwork.



#### Forestdale School (190 School Street)

New storm windows have been installed. The glass protects artifacts from UV exposure as well as enhances energy efficiency.

We thank Joan DiNunzio and Catherine Reyes for opening the school to the public three days a month. Visit our Gift Shop at the Forestdale School from 1:00 pm- 4:00 pm every first and third Friday and from 9:00 am until 12:00 pm on every first Saturday.

More volunteers will allow us to open more often. Contact us if you can spare a couple of hours a month. Meanwhile, we will continue to open the building by appointment.



NSHA new volunteers Joan DiNunzio and Catherine Reyes (second and third from the left) are welcomed by NSHA members Beth, Christine and Jeanne.

#### Caption



#### Heritage Hall (101 Green Street)

We thank the NS Ambulance and Rescue Association for donating \$2,500 to install a radio box at Heritage Hall.

We also thank the 1772 Foundation for donating \$7,000 to repaint the exterior of Heritage Hall.

The new wifi service at the hall allows us to remotely control the temperatures in the halls.

Please contact Charlie Dubois at 402-741-8022 if you would like to help with routine maintenance



#### Activities and Events

We thank the Blackstone Valley National Historical Park for inspiring us to collaborate with the National Park Service and the Slatersville Congregational Church to commemorate the 250th Anniversary of the Battles of Lexington and Concord on April 21, 2025.

We also thank the many local groups that contributed to the event, including Rev. Natalia DeRezendes and Hannah Hazelton (Smithfield Friends Meeting, Woonsocket), Peter Tedeschi (Congregation B'nai Brith, Woonsocket), Janna Creighton (NS High School Chorus), Town Administrator Scott Gibbs, Boy Scout Troop 1139 (Slatersville), Frehill Council Knights of Columbus, and the Rhode Island Reds Militia Company.

We also thank Park Rangers Allison and Jill for their tremendous support.

Most especially, we thank the Slatersville Congregational Church, including Pastor Sean Amato, Jill Boday, the Bell Choir, and members, for their invaluable support in making the commemoration such a success!







The event included a musket salute by the RI Reds Militia.



#### Memorial Day Parade

The LeClair Kozlik Logan Bassett VFW Post 6342 will hold its annual Memorial Day Parade at 10:30 am on Monday, May 26. The parade will feature the NS High School Band, Police and Fire Departments, Boy Scout Troops, Town officials, and Veterans.

The parade will proceed from Brigidos Market down North Main Street to the Memorial Town Building, where VFW officials will conduct a Memorial Ceremony at 11:00 am. The parade will then continue down School Street and end at the Pavilion behind Lindy's Tavern at 98 School Street, North Smithfield. Following the Parade, the VFW will offer a free collation at the Pavilion. Contact Farrell McMillan at 401-617-1268 for more information.



# Sa

#### Strawberry Festival

Saturday, June 7, 2025 from 10:00 am- 2:00 pm at the Forestdale School.

Come enjoy old-fashioned strawberry shortcake while you tour the one-room schoolhouse!

See yearbooks from Kendall Dean School, Halliwell School, and NS High School, as well as numerous artifacts.

The gift shop will also be open

Proceeds benefit the archive exhibits at the Memorial Town Building.

#### Heritage Day Festival

We will hold our Annual Heritage Festival on Saturday, July 5 from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm at Heritage Hall.

National Park Rangers will offer a Slatersville Walk at 10:00 am..



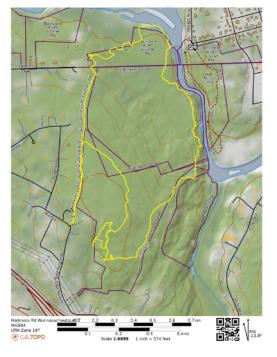


#### **Conservation**

The NSHA worked with local Boy Scout, Max Olsen, to design a new kiosk for the Wunnashowatucket Conservation Area as his Eagle Scout project. Max also plans to clear undergrowth and tree falls from the trails.



Wunnashowatucket: The confluence of the Branch River and the Blackstone River.



Wunnashowatucket conservation area located off Harkness Rd.



We plan to resume hiking events in local conservation areas. We will post days and times on our Facebook page and on our website.





#### Mystery Photo Update

Last edition's Mystery Photo is a painting by Beverly Caya (1937-2016). She painted this quaint cabin and because she usually based her paintings on actual buildings, we were wondering about it's location. Several readers identified the cabin as a small building on Greenville Road near the corner of Grange Road. Thank you for your help!



#### May/June Mystery Photo



Here is this edition's mystery photo. What street is this? Does anyone recognize any of the buildings in the background? Any help would be much appreciated!

If you have an idea, please contact us at <a href="mailto:nsha@nsheritageassn.com">nsha@nsheritageassn.com</a>

The NSHA often receives photos without any type of identification which is why we post them here. Please help us to identify them for our archives!

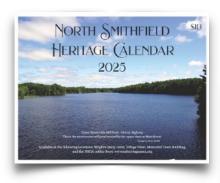


#### NSHA Merchandise

We offer a wide range of merchandise including calendars, books, maps, puzzles, ornaments, birdhouses and much more! Get 2025 calendars at a 50% discount!

Visit our Gift Shop at the Forestdale School from 1:00 pm- 4:00 pm every first and third Friday and from 9:00 am until 12:00 pm on every first Saturday.

Also visit our online store at <a href="https://www.nsheritageassn.org/shop">https://www.nsheritageassn.org/shop</a>. We will deliver locally for free.







#### **NSHA Payment Options**

- **1. PayPal Giving Fund:** search for <u>nsha@nsheritageassn.com</u>, 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 <a href="mailto:nsha@nsheritageassn.com">nsha@nsheritageassn.com</a> or call <a href="mailto:401-376-2927">401-376-2927</a>.

#### The North Smithfield Heritage Association Fund

Estate planning? Need to make a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from your IRA? Consider making a donation to this fund to avoid paying higher taxes. The RI Foundation manages the fund, helping it to grow every year. Annual disbursements fund the NSHA's preservation activities and our town's wonderful heritage.

Click on the link for more information:

https://rifoundation.org/giving/funds?q=north+smithfield+heritage+&s=3



- ~ We welcome new member: Cameron Siciliano
- ~ We thank our wonderful members for their vital support! Our membership now stands at 220 including 42 life members and 6 students. Some members live as far away as NH, CA, WA and AR. Your dues help significantly to fund our local preservation activities!
- ~Your \$20 Annual Dues were due on January 1, 2025. 33 members have not yet renewed their dues. We will send a final email notice to members who have not renewed. Former members can renew their membership at any time. You can renew your membership or become a new member by filling out an application at :https://www.nsheritageassn.org/membership
- ~We thank the members renewed their 2025 membership dues! Members in arrears or with expired memberships can renew at any time. Seniors over 75, high school students and full-time college students pay no dues. If you are not sure of your status, please contact us ASAP.
- ~You may pay membership dues online via the PayPal Giving Fund, or Venmo, by mail to P.O. Box 413, Slatersville, RI 02876 or in person on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings at the Memorial Town Building. You can also drop off a check in our mailbox in the rear of the Memorial Town Building.

#### You Can Help!!

Join: Membership costs just \$20 each year! No commitment required!

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

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

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



Instagram (nsha1970) Please follow us!

https://www.instagram.com/nsha1970/

Followers:: 308

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 Followers: 1,473



We thank Julie Tilley for making posts to all of our social media platforms, We continue to see steady follower growth!

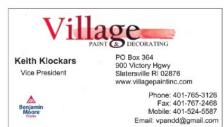
Website: 265 site sessions in the last 30 days. NSHA Newsletter Subscribers: 1,618

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

To join our mailing list, simply contact us at <a href="mailto:nsha@nsheritageassn.com">nsha@nsheritageassn.com</a> or <a href="mailto:401-376-2927">401-376-2927</a>



### Type to enter text **2025 NSHA Calendar Sponsors**























This newsletter is published by Lynne Pelletier. The editorial team includes Beth Faricy, Jody Lamoureux, Linda Rawlings, Al Menard, Beth Newberry and Rich Keene.

Please share this free newsletter with family and friends!!