

# NANTICOKE LEGACY



A PUBLICATION OF THE NANTICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SAMANTHA MILL HOUSE – 495 EAST MAIN STREET, NANTICOKE, PA – 570-258-1367

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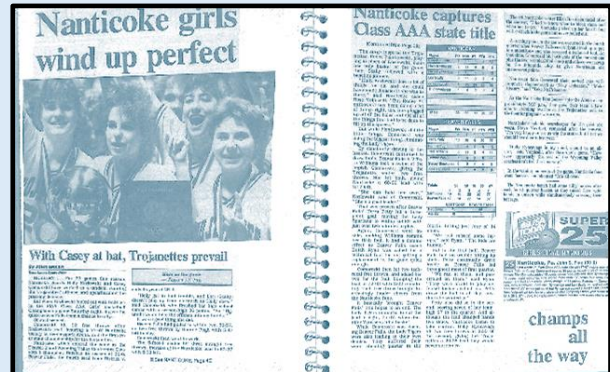
[www.nanticokehistoryonline.org](http://www.nanticokehistoryonline.org)

May 2024



## NANTICOKE LIONS CLUB STILL SERVING THE COMMUNITY

## NANTICOKE TROJANETTES THE 1990 GIRLS BASKETBALL DREAM TEAM



## NANTICOKE'S GROCERY STORES – A TRIP BACK IN TIME

THESE STORIES AND MORE IN THIS ISSUE OF NANTICOKE LEGACY:

- SOCIETY PARTICIPATES IN CONCRETE CITY EVENT HELD AT LCCC
- DONATION RECEIVED - THE DREAM COLLECTION OF NANTICOKE BASKETBALL COACH SYL BOZINSKI
- SOCIETY AIDS MORRIS COUNTY NEW JERSEY IN CIVIL WAR PROJECT
- SALLY'S CORNER – MOMS, WOMEN WHO WERE ALL GIVING AND ALL LOVING
- TRIBUTE TO OUR MILITARY continued
- OUR NEW MYSTERY QUESTION

## **NANTICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Samantha Mill House  
(Next to the Mill Memorial Library)  
Off Kosciuszko Street  
495 East Main Street Nanticoke, PA 18634  
570-258-1367

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

*The object of this society is for educational, charitable, and literary purposes with a primary focus to research, preserve, develop and disseminate the history of Nanticoke, Pennsylvania. To collect artifacts, memorabilia and historical documents and fact Nanticoke, Pennsylvania and to store such items in a central location or specific area where these articles may be preserved, appreciated and used by the citizens of Nanticoke to enhance their heritage.*

### **OUR WEBSITE**

[www.nanticokehistoryonline.org](http://www.nanticokehistoryonline.org)

### **EMAIL**

Office email – [NHS63@comcast.net](mailto:NHS63@comcast.net)

### **OFFICERS and STAFF**

President: Julianna Zarzycki  
Vice-President/Treasurer: Chester Zaremba  
Membership Coordinator: Charlotte Dudkowski  
Archive Coordinator: Tania Gronkowski  
Archivist: John Sherrick  
Building and Grounds: Mike Passetti  
Nanticoke Legacy Editor News and Stories : Judith L. Minsavage

### **MEMBERSHIP FEES**

Individual \$35

Family \$40

### **RESEARCH**

**See our website and click on our RESEARCH TAB – [nanticokehistoryonline.org](http://nanticokehistoryonline.org).**

**Welcome New Members**

**CARL AND JOANN OBORSKI**

**MARY EMMA DEAN**

**SALLY BILLINGS**

**THANK YOU to the following individuals who have given so generously in support of  
the Nanticoke Historical Society.**

**We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization your donations are tax-deductible.**

**DIAMOND**

**ANDY SHERBINE**

**JOHN PAUL MARTIN**

**PLATINUM**

**JOHN GREGOROWICZ**

**WYOMING VALLEY STAMP CLUB**

**SILVER**

**KEVIN GREVERA**

**BARBARA LEGINS**

**RYAN STETZ**

**JUDY THOMAS**

**CHRISTINE LEANDRI**



A donation made in memory of

## Viola Van Slyke

is a testament to the society's commitment to honoring its history and those who have been a part of it. Contributions like these support the society's mission to research, preserve, and share the history of Nanticoke, Pennsylvania, ensuring that the legacy of individuals like Viola Van Slyke continues to be remembered and celebrated.

### Notice to our members!

The Nanticoke Historical Society Membership Coordinator, Charlotte Dudkowski asks that if any member has had a change of address, phone number or email address to please contact the society office at 570-258-1367. You may also email those changes to our new email address [NHS63@comcast.net](mailto:NHS63@comcast.net)

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# NEWS:

## SOCIETY PARTICIPATES IN LCCC STUDENT SYMPOSIUM

The Nanticoke Historical Society served as a resource for a program hosted by Luzerne County Community College. A community/student forum on Concrete City and Abandoned Pennsylvania was held at the LCCC Educational Conference Center on April 11, from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. The forum, moderated by students, featured presentations and discussion with notable community members about the history, present, and future of Concrete City, which was abandoned one hundred years ago.



*Pictured left to right LCCC student Kaila Hoffman, Vice President Nanticoke Historical Society Chet Zaremba and LCCC student Brandon Carpanella.*

The program began with a short video presentation produced by a team of students in LCCC's



*Chet Zaremba narrates a Power Point Presentation on Concrete City*

Communication Arts program. Presentations and moderated discussion included Chester Zaremba vice president of the Nanticoke Historical Society, photographers Kelly Klee and Jordyn Muckey and Gary Gronkowski, president of the Nanticoke Conservation Club with Business Administration major Angelina Ramos and LCCC Computer Science major Christopher Santos. Kaila Hoffman, a history major and officer in LCCC's History Club, Brandon Carpanella, a Computer Science major and member of the History Club, worked with Zaremba on the presentation at the society's offices. 📷



*Kaila Hoffman Thanks Chet Zaremba and the Nanticoke Historical Society for assistance in providing reference material and photos for the Concrete City Program*

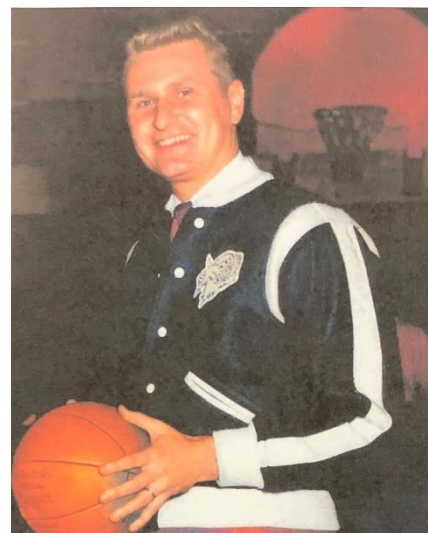


*Gary Gronkowski, president of the Nanticoke Conservation Club discusses the challenges in keeping Concrete City free of debris and garbage, Angelina Ramos and Christopher Santos discuss the condition of the site and possibilities for the future.*

# **SYLVESTER “STRETCH” BOZINSKI**

## **Society gains a dream collection**

Over the years, the Nanticoke Historical Society has garnered numerous acquisitions that include memorabilia, photos that documents detailing the lives of those who at one time lived in Nanticoke. We treasure every one. That is why we are proud of our latest acquisition which follows the lengthy career of Sylvester “Stretch” Bozinski, He was head coach of the Nanticoke Area basketball team for 31 years (1954-85), compiling a record of 616 wins against 199 losses. Those victories included a State Championship for the Rams in 1961 and state runner-up for the Trojans in 1985 (the last game in his career).



**Syl "Stretch" Bozinski**

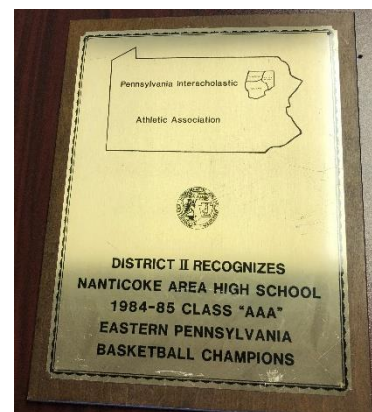
During his 36-year career in the Nanticoke Area School District, he served as teacher, assistant principal, and principal at John S. Fine HS, and assistant district superintendent. Bozinski also collected 18 league titles and 13 District 2 championships. In February 1986, Nanticoke Area dedicated the gymnasium in his honor.



**A collection of basketballs signifying Bozinski's notable triumphs is now on display at the society offices.**

championship game in Harrisburg, at which Bozinski and his amazing Rams team cinched the State Title. We will keep you posted on our progress and will display the items at one of our events. We thank the Bozinski family for making us the stewards of this priceless collection.

Over those years, coach Bozinski accumulated a considerable number of plaques and honors, many of which are in the collection we recently received from his son Glenn. The number of items is tremendous and will most likely take months to sort and catalog, but we most certainly are up for the challenge. One particular item, the society, as well as others, have been in search of for years is a video taken at the 1961



# **SPRING RAFFLE WINNERS ANNOUNCED**

We would like to thank all those who participated in our Spring Raffle Fundraiser this year. All monies raised either through fundraisers such as this or donations we receive go to keeping the Nanticoke Historical Society in operation. We serve not only our community, but many people across the United States and in countries across the world. Our office is staffed from Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. We are eager to help those who are interested in obtaining their family history or to supply information on locations such as churches or grave sites throughout the city. We have served many proudly and will continue to do so with the generosity of our members and friends. Thank you. 🇺🇸

## **Winners of the 2024 Spring Fundraiser: Congratulations to**

**Gary Gronkowski - \$25**

**John Gregorowicz - \$50**

**George Gula - \$125**

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## **Charles Erb – Civil War Veteran Project Complete**

Vice President of the Nanticoke Historical Society, Chet Zaremba, announced the completion of a project that began with a request for information on Charles Erb in 2021.

In March of that year Zaremba received an email from Jan Williams, the cultural and historic resource specialist for Morris County, New Jersey. Her email notified Zaremba of a project they were working on to collect information on Morris County Civil War veterans. Charles Erb, a former Nanticoke native, was on their list. Erb was a member of the Union Army and fought in major battles. After the war, Erb settled in Nanticoke, but he moved to New Jersey and later was laid to rest in Dover, Morris County. Williams was interested in obtaining the name of the G.A.R. Post that Erb belonged to while he lived in Nanticoke. Zaremba Notified Williams Erb belonged to the G.A.R. Lape Post #161 and also noted he had been a high constable in Nanticoke.





*Nanticoke Civil War veterans, May 30, 1893, posing in front of the Hill & Evans Hardware Store, 18-20 E. Main St. Mr. Erb is second row, second from the left*

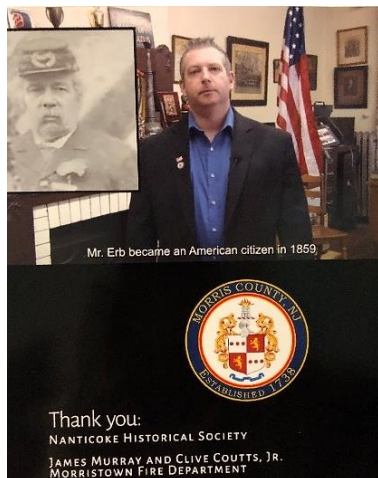
**Seated: Charles Erb, High Constable; Harry Williams, Burgess; Lee Millington, Chief; Pat Keating, George Loewer, Steve Thomas**



The Historical Society had in its archive the photo of Erb with a group of Civil War veterans posing on Main Street and a photo of Erb as a constable. Zaremba noticed a date on the photograph appeared incorrect. The photo in question appeared in a local newspaper and was dated 1901. From his research, he knew Erb had passed by then. Zaremba, through a process of elimination and arduous research, found the proper date to be 1892. He notified Williams of the correction. Just

recently, the project was completed and a video honoring the veterans was released on April 12 of this year.

Upon completion, Zaremba received a letter from the Morris County Office of Planning &



Preservation, thanking him for the information given and for his tireless efforts in making sure that the date on the photograph was correct. They also sent a screenshot of the video narrated by Edward Engelbart of the Pequannock Historical Society. This is just one of the various requests that the society receives weekly. We are proud to assist those seeking information to help “connect the dots” and aid in completing important projects such as this. We are always ready to help find that missing piece of your Nanticoke past. Please call us 570-258-1367 or email [NHS63@comcast.net](mailto:NHS63@comcast.net). We are always happy to welcome new members. 🇺🇸



The Morris County Office of Planning & Preservation appreciates the efforts of the Nanticoke Historical Society regarding the history of Mr. Erb.

Vice President of the society, Chet Zaremba, realized the “Constable” image had been misdated.

Meticulously pulling records, Chet began cross referencing when men joined and left the department.

Previously dated 1902, the image is now correctly dated 1892.

The dedicated effort expended by Chet were featured in the society’s newsletter:



*Thank you, Chet, and the entire Nanticoke Historical Society.*



# TROJANETTES BRING HOME STATE TITLE IN 1990



John S. Pine High School--PIAA District II Champion--Record: 30-0

Principal--John Gregorowicz; Athletic Director--James Davis; Head Coach--Rose Volpicelli; Assistant Coach--Elaine DeLuca; School Nickname--Trojanettes; School Colors--Blue and White

No.	Name	Grade	Hgt.	Wgt.	Position	No.	Name	Grade	Hgt.	Wgt.	Position
40	Ellen Bartuska	12	6-0	130	Center	12	Nicole Getts	10	5-6	100	Guard
11	Casey Comoroski	12	5-2	100	Guard	41	Lisa Prezkop	10	5-5	105	Guard
30	Holly Kozlowski	12	5-6	105	Guard	22	Michelle Stashik	10	5-5	105	Guard
20	Holly Ryncavage	12	5-7	115	Forward	44	Joelle Glushchanski	11	5-6	110	Forward
23	Lori Scally	12	5-6	115	Forward	35	Jennifer Szot	11	5-6	115	Forward
10	Terri Galozin	11	5-4	115	Guard	42	Melissa Betkoski	9	5-6	100	Guard
14	Renee Piontkowski	11	5-7	120	Forward	40	Lisa Pristas	9	5-4	105	Forward
32	Tia Hornlein	10	5-6	115	Forward	20	Tanya Sauers	9	5-5	110	C/F
43	Joann Opachinski	10	5-11	135	Center	34	Kristen Surdowski	9	5-6	112	Guard

It was March 31, 1990, and though usually busy on a Saturday night, the streets of Nanticoke were bare as residents huddled around their TV sets to see if the 1990 Trojanettes basketball team coached by Rose Volpicelli, could bring home the PIAA Class AAA Girls' District II Championship Trophy. Throughout the game the Trojanettes proved their mettle playing hard and tough coming close to losing the lead only one time during the game. A few nail-biting hours later city residents took to their sidewalks and porches to proclaim the team the best in the state.

After finishing the 89-90 season with a 30-0 record, the Trojanettes capped their perfect run proving themselves to be one of the best teams to ever come out of Wyoming Valley.

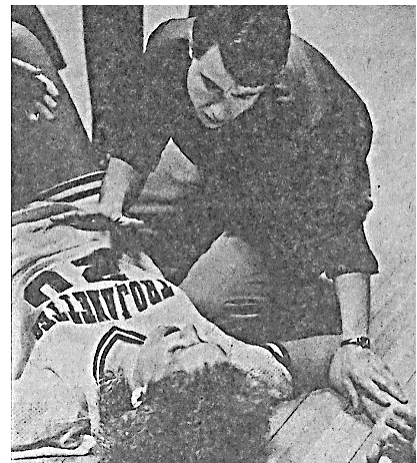


Casey Comoroski takes a shot during the PIAA Class AAA Girls' District II Championship Game at the Hershey Park Arena

Over three thousand fans traveled to the Hershey Park Arena, to cheer on the team facing a tough rival, the Beaver Falls Lady Tigers. Casey Comoroski topped the night with 36 points, Ellen Bartuska 13, Holly Ryncavage 12, Holly Kozlowski 8 and Lori Scally 4. Nanticoke led at the half, 35-33, and kept the pressure on the Lady Tigers. It was business as usual for the team that lost just three out of eighty-five games over three seasons. Fans witnessed a rough game which was no more evident than in the final four minutes when a Beaver Falls player jumped on Holly Ryncavage leading both players to fall the floor. Ryncavage suffered facial scratches and a leg injury. That incident only tightened the team's intent to take home the prize. Nanticoke remained relentless and took Beaver Falls down with a score of 77-67.

Over a three-year period the Trojanettes and team coach Rose Volpicelli dominated the sport treating fans to some of the best

Over three thousand fans traveled to the Hershey Park Arena, to cheer on the team facing a tough rival, the Beaver Falls Lady Tigers. Casey Comoroski topped the night with 36 points, Ellen Bartuska 13, Holly Ryncavage 12, Holly Kozlowski 8 and Lori Scally 4. Nanticoke led at the half, 35-33, and kept the pressure on the Lady Tigers. It was business as usual for the team that lost just three out of eighty-five games over three seasons. Fans witnessed a rough game which was no more evident than in the final four minutes when a Beaver Falls player jumped on Holly Ryncavage leading both players to fall the floor. Ryncavage suffered facial scratches and a leg injury. That incident only tightened the team's intent to take home the prize. Nanticoke remained relentless and took Beaver Falls down with a score of 77-67.



Coach Rose Volpicelli, talks to injured Holly Ryncavage

basketball played including college or professional. With a three-year record of 82-3 and three Wyoming Valley Conference Division I and District II titles, Residents of Nanticoke would rally and form a parade after each post season contest.



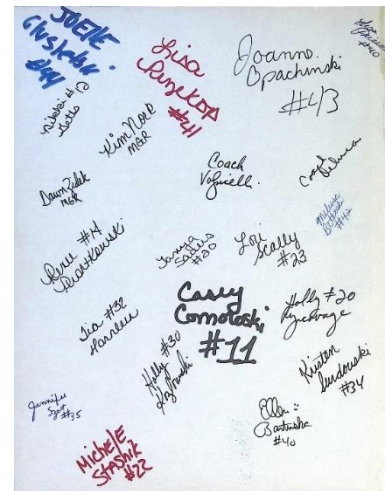
*Coach Rose Volpicelli "Cuts down the Net" denoting a hard fought contest*

There were banners, streamers, signs on houses along the way. It was a time for celebration but at the end of the 1990 season it was also a time to realize that this perfect storm of a team would not play together again as Volpicelli would be moving on to the college ranks and the five starters Bartuska, Comoroski, Kozlowski



Ryncavage and Scally would be graduating.

This was a time for pride in honoring and recognizing the achievements of a hugely talented group of teammates and their coach and the city of Nanticoke obliged. Thousands of fans lined the streets to greet the team as they returned home from Harrisburg. Starting on the Sans Souci Partway, the parade traveled to the city's municipal building on Ridge Street. It was truly a day to remember.



*1990 Trojanette team signatures*



*Diamond's Candy Store displayed its chocolate creations honoring the 1990 team and its State Championship Title*



*Nanticoke was alive with fans waiting to get a glimpse of the Trojanette team members as they entered the city the day after winning the Pennsylvania State Girls Basketball Championship*



*Fans anxiously await their turn for autographs*

## TEAMMATES AND COACHES HONORED IN 2024



*Athletics Wall of Fame in the Greater Nanticoke Area High School main hall*

In January of this year, The Historical Society was proud to assist in honoring the five starters of the 1990 Trojanette Girls Basketball team and their coaches Rose Volpicelli, Elaine DeLuca, and Debra Krupinski. Their plaques, alongside many other outstanding Nanticoke athletes, now hang on the Greater Nanticoke High School Athletics Wall of Fame.



## MEMORIES AND GOOD ADVICE

When recently asked about the plaque dedication, team forward, Holly Ryncavage Scarbrough, stated, “We were all very honored,” admitting she did not know about the wall initially, but wasn’t surprised with the induction, “We had a very special team.”

One of Scarbrough’s fondest memories is of the many fans that came to cheer them on that March night in 1990. “It definitely was one of our tougher games, but we were prepared.”

Guard, Holly Kozlowski Udzilla’s, fondest memory was the sound of the final buzzer, “We finally realized our dream. A dream we all decided in 7<sup>th</sup> grade to one day be state champions. It’s an indescribable feeling, so fortunate to have experienced it with my teammates. Returning to Nanticoke the next day with a parade and hundreds of welcoming fans was another thrill for both women. Udzilla stated “It was very overwhelming to see so much support from our fans. They were with us for so many years. They deserved that celebration just as much as we did.” Scarbrough added, “It was amazing, the amount of wonderful fans we had through the years supporting us.”

Scarbrough who went on to play basketball at Luzerne County Community College for a half season, advises young girls who want to play the sport, “Have fun, do your best and practice, practice, practice!” Udzilla went on to play for Lock Haven University from 1990 to 1994. Her advice to young girls, “Practice hard like no one is watching, stay humble and true to yourself and most importantly have a lot of fun.”

**Thank you Trojanettes for giving us a game that will go down in Nanticoke history!**

# NANTICOKE LIONS CLUB

## SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

The motto “We Serve” are words the Nanticoke Lions live by. Presently the club is beginning to make plans for future events, their goal is to continue to serve the residents of Nanticoke as they have for so many years.

At a recent meeting John Dinelli, club president, Mike Wisniewski, treasurer and disaster chair for District 14W, along with club members met with Chris Pacelli, zone chair and Jamie



**Nanticoke Lions host Kidsight USA at West Side Park – from Left Mike Wisniewski, treasurer and disaster chair for District 14W; Tom Kobusky District, Governor; Donald Reese, Member**

for the Blind work to prevent avoidable blindness with new testing techniques for youngsters. They also provide support for families affected by childhood cancer, diabetes, disaster relief, environmental issues, humanitarian needs, along with offering programs that support a positive lifestyle for young people.

## Nanticoke Lions History

In March of 1935. With a deep desire to serve the community, A.J. Catnes formed the Nanticoke Lions Club. That commitment to this day, has been the lynch pin of the Lions Club. In November of that year, an election was held with Dr. A.G. Gibbs serving as president; Dr. I.C. Morgan, first vice president; A.A. Prushinski, second vice president; William F. Schimmel, third vice president; John T. Runyan, secretary; Dr. J.A. Hugo, treasurer; Evan J. Williams Jr., lion tamer; T.R. Crotzer, tail twister, and directors, A.J. Catnes, G.W. Porter, A.F. Davis, E.B. Nordell, and Dr. E.J. Kielar. Members were Dr. J. Harold



DePalma, who will take the reins of district governor in July.

While known for their initiative to assist those who are blind or visually impaired, the Lions, through the Association

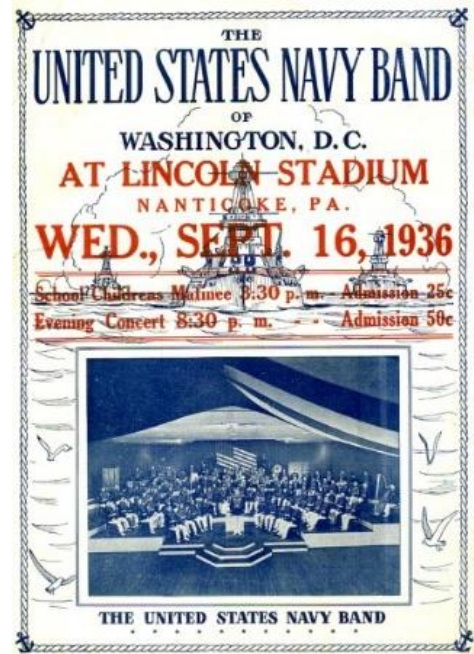


**The Nanticoke Lions Club collecting items for Disaster Relief Initiative after a devastating flood in Kentucky, Pictured left to right Mike Wisniewski, disaster chairman and Linda Zaneski, past district governor**

Beckley, Dr., B.J. Ford, Zigmund Butkiewicz, Dr. P.J. Matusavage, L.P. Wysocki, Henry Levi and Angelo Brunozi.

Immediately the club set about being a force in the community by donating to the Nanticoke and Vicinity Federation of Charities. The Club announced plans for their charter night dinner dance and arrangements were made for the United State Naval Band to perform at the Nanticoke High School Stadium. Thousands were expected to attend. In June of 1936, at the State Convention of Lions in Scranton, the thriving organization was recognized for showing the largest gain in membership for that year.

Soon after, with the continued growth, committees were formed to reflect the organization's commitment to the betterment of their community. The first committees were headed by the following: Attendance: Arthur Davis and Edward Keiser; Constitution and By-Laws, Edmund Nowick and George Jones; Extension, Angelo Brunozi and A.A. Prushinski; Finance, Edward B. Nordell and Carl Horlacher; Education, Gerald Porter and Stanley Bozinski; Membership, Frank Kishel, Robert Blythe, L.P. Wysocki; Program, Dr. Carl Kivler, Stephen P. Cottrino, Daniel Thomas; Publicity, William Schreiner, John T. Runyan, Dr. A.V. Lupcheck, Stuart DeMott; Sight Conservation and Blind Work, Richard Crotzer, Dr. B.J. Ford and Dr. J.A. Hugo; Boys and Girl's work, Henry Graboske, Harold Weaver, Edward Keiser; Citizenship and Patriotism, Frank Kieler, Ellswood Rosser; Civic Improvements, William Schimmel, Jesse Link and E.J. Williams Jr.; Community Betterment, William H. Evans, Clifford Wilson, Albert Catnes and Tallesin Waters; Education, Dr. J.H. Beckley, Nelson Thomas, Dr. E.J. Kieler; Health and Welfare, Dr. W.W. Walp, Dr. J.W. Sarpolis and Dr. Harold Superko and Safety, Sigmund Butkiewicz and Howard Wolfe.



In August of 1936, the U.S. Navy Band of Washington D.C. performed at Lincoln Field fortunately they obtained one of the few dates the band was available. The Club personally sent invitations to local residents who were affected by blindness and also invited the children of the St. Stanislaus Orphanage.

Controversy arose when an Exposition sponsored by the Lions Club was to be held on Broad Street between Prospect and Walnut. There would be music, games, rides, prizes, and plenty of booths for displays. One businessman thought it a bad idea, as it would take business away from the many small stores lining the streets of the city. But the club prevailed by announcing that the purpose of the event was to bring about the establishment of Nanticoke's first dental clinic. Over the next few years the Lions Club grew to an even larger scale, by

becoming more involved with sports and school programs designed to spark interest in youngsters to serve their community.

Into the forties, the Lions Club was a substantial force, raising funds for various projects, sponsoring shows and events supported by local businesses.



In 1950, the Lions Basketball league formed with senior division teams - St. Joseph's Warriors, Hanover, Honey Pot Miners, Duplan, Texaco Gas, Junior-Piscotty's Polish Falcons, Walter's AMVETS, Price's, and teen division teams - Pat's Italian Club, Lacey's, Ruth's, St. Francis, Wanamie, Eagles Club, Nell's, Zab's, AMVETS, Troop 418 and Union Street.

This undated photo shows early members of the Nanticoke Lions Club circa 1940s

*First row left to right: Thomas Burrows, Arthur Davis, Lawrence Wermuth, Dr. T.R. Crotzer, Frank Kielar, Frank Kishel, Anthony Prushinski. Second row: Dr. B.J. Ford, Joseph Grobowski, Gerald Porter, Roy Rees, William Evans, John Evans, Steven Cottrino, Joseph Harcharik, Harold Weaver. Third row: Edmund Newicki, Stephen Manes, Dr. Edward Major, Bert Katanie, Benjamin Howells, Albert Fink, Robert Thomas. Fourth row: Dr. Walter Walp, Leland Vandermark, Atty. Joseph Gallagher, William Schimmel, Thomas Owens, Arthur Kingsbury. Absent from the photo, Dr. J.H. Beckley, Dr. Harold Superko, Andrew Koval, Henry Graboske, Joseph Skuzinski, William Haus, Jesse Link, Clifford Wilson, Thomas Mundry, Steven Seldon, Archie Vincent, Nick Rudowski, Ignatz Miller.*



Officers in 1950 were Leonard Pawlowski, president; Roy Reese, first vice president; Joseph Shannon, second vice president; Joseph Grzynski, third vice president; Arthur May, secretary; Edward Moskas, treasurer; William Switoyus, tail twister; John Yenchak, lion tamer; and directors, Edward Gorka, Al Bohinski, William Davis.

**1954 - The Floor Crafters beat West Side Club of Nanticoke in the final playoffs taking the Senior Division Basketball Championship of the Nanticoke Lions Club League. Pictured left to right Team Coach Chuck Sullivan, Edward Kolenkiewicz, Jerry Roman, Paul Gronka, Leonard Roman, Gerald Cooney, James David, Bob Dombrowski, John Rapaduski, Joseph Tabbitt, Eddie Muskas. Absent from photo Stanley Sivick.**

In 1951, plans were made to add Senior, Junior and Teenage teams to the Lion's Baseball League joining the already popular Kid's Division.

Throughout the fifties, The Nanticoke Lions Club sponsored public auctions, fishing contests, broom sales, theater nights, fund drives and donated to numerous charities. In 1957, the club started an effort to reopen the Rex Theater. In a letter to Edward Connolly, owner of the theater, lion tamer, John Shipp stated, "The community should not let this old landmark fall by the wayside." Unfortunately, the theater closed in November of that year.



In 1975, the Nanticoke Lions sponsored the Kujawiaki Dancers, A Polish folk-dance ensemble that, in 1968, performed at the White House Christmas Party by invitation of President Lyndon Johnson. The event was expected to attract a large crowd at the John S. Fine High School Auditorium.

Meetings were held at 23 W. Broad Street in 1984 and the Lions remained a powerful entity. The Nanticoke Lions Club celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its charter with Clem Mayewski president; Henry Swartz, first vice president; Wasil Kobela, second vice president; Xavier Rygwalski, third vice president; Joseph Murray, secretary; Thomas Bedoski, lion tamer; Mark McNealis, tail twister. Various committees oversaw, Eye Eucleations, White Cane Day, Salvation Army, Christmas Decorations, Santa Claus Visitation, Boys and Girls Basketball banquet, Ambulance dinner, Golf Tournament, Blood Bank, Eye and Hearing Bank, Ethnic Festival, Civic Improvement, Drug and Alcohol Programs and Little League Liaison.

*Every year the Lions Club set up a Christmas display in Central Park, now Patriot Square. Throughout the years its display was chosen as the best. In 1959. Judges from left to right, Benjamin Howells, Chamber of Commerce; Charlotte Stoehr, general manager Credit Bureau of Wyoming Valley, Mrs. Nathaniel Elliott, executive director of Luzerne County unit of the American Cancer Society; Frank S. Boguszewski chairman of the Central Park committee.*



## Lions Club history

The first Lions club was formed in 1917 after World war I by Chicago business executive Melvin Jones. His dream was to assemble individuals who had a desire to serve their communities. The Lions went

international in 1920. Shortly after Helen Keller addressed the Lions at a convention in Cedar Point, Ohio, the organization became stewards of the mission to assist those affected by blindness.

In 1957, The Leo Program introduced the youth of the nation to serve in the best interest in their communities.

In 1968, the Lions Clubs International Foundation was formed and was awarded more than 1.2 billion in grants for humanitarian projects. 1973 saw their millionth member. Today, there are 1.4 million members worldwide. Through the Lions SightFirst program more than 488 million people have been helped worldwide.

## Women join the initiative

1975 saw the birth of the first Lioness Club designed to give women an opportunity to collaborate with their male counterparts to focus on healthcare, education, environmental conservation and community development. While originally formed as a separate entity, some of the smaller clubs were brought under the auspices of the Lions Club, but some Clubs chose to remain independent.



*The Nanticoke Lioness Club in 1987 From left, first row: Ann Boyle, Lillian Lastkowski, Myrtle Parge, Ruth Iverson, Helen Bedeski, Carol Chrzyan, Isabelle Galat, club president; Lillian Condu, Dorothy Grotkowski, Edna Szatkowski, Ann Omelecki. Second row: Dorothy Gabel, Helen Smith, Loretta Frankevich, Dorothy Ashford, Isabelle McMahon, Ann Buczkowski, Sophia Dudrick, Matilda Collipardi, Celia Swigonski, chairwoman; Rose Biscontini, Florence Chepolis, Helen Shipkowski, Becky DeHaven; Eleanore Pashinski. Third row: Rose Ann Stegura, Frances Micocci, Carolyn Warren, Celia Sawicki, Margaret Petro, Dorothy Tobin, Mary Negosh, Clair Gawat, Dorothy Bray. Absent from photo, Josephine Siesko, Ann Sunday, Dorothy Gorski, Celia Buczkowski, Eleanor Gasciensi.*

See more Lions Club  
Photos on our  
website Click on the  
Photos/Video Tab

*The Nanticoke Lions Club  
sponsored Christmas in the  
Park for many years. This ad is  
from 1953.*





## **In 2025 The Nanticoke Lions Club will celebrate the 90<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of its charter.**

Attending a recent meeting of the Nanticoke Lions Club, from left Jamie DePalma, future Lions district governor, Nicole Carey, Gene Danowski, Mike Wisniewski, treasurer and disaster chair for District 14W; Judy Minsavage, Nanticoke Historical Society Legacy editor, and John Dinelli, Nanticoke Lions president and Funeral Director-Dinelli Funeral Home.



## **WONDERING WHAT TO DO WITH OLD PHOTOS AND MEMORABILIA?**

Our loved ones have a history. Their life stories are deeply rooted in their community as residents, veterans, business owners, teachers, members of organizations and so much more. The Nanticoke Historical Society realizes and respects how important each person's story is to their relatives and friends as well as the community in which they lived. That is why the society respectfully asks those who have lost a loved one to consider the historical society when taking stock of memorabilia and photos.

The society may already have pieces of a family's history in its vast database to which pictures of an old homestead, business, rare family photos or writings may be added completing a genealogical picture in tribute to those who have passed.

We sometimes find ourselves with memorabilia or photos passed down through generations. Some of these photos may contain scenes of old Nanticoke, a street, or building that has been long since razed or changed. Society archivists will scan and, if requested, return items to families. We do reserve the right to deny items that we cannot use, or store, but at the very least, we may be able to take some of the burden off of family members who find themselves undecided as to what to do with countless old photos and/or memorabilia that may contain valuable pieces of the city's history.

For more information or to donate items Contact the Historical Society at 570-258-1367 or email: [NHS63@comcast.net](mailto:NHS63@comcast.net).

### **WE CAN HELP**

**DO YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR FAMILY, CLUBS, ASSOCIATIONS, BUSINESSES, AND MORE? WE ARE YOUR GO TO PLACE TO RESEARCH NANTICOKE'S PAST.**

**OUR OFFICE HOURS ARE MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY 9 A.M. TO 2 P.M.**

**OR CALL US AT 570-258-1367**

To obtain a research request form go to [www.nanticokehistoryonline.org](http://www.nanticokehistoryonline.org) and find our quick links at the top of our home page.

# NANTICOKE'S GROCERY STORES

## A trip back in time

The many grocery stores that lined the streets of Nanticoke hold special memories for its residents. These stores were more than just a place to purchase food. They were places where neighbors met and children learned the value of a dollar, where residents shared stories, laughter, and also times of sorrow. Store owners knew their customers by name, extended credit to those who fell on hard times, and to those experiencing the loss of a loved one in the mines. Meat counters held smoked hams, roasts, and sausages, a testament to the city's taste in ethnic foods, while the shelves lined with canned and boxed goods represented the everyday necessities required to run a household. At the front of the store, the often gigantic cash register ringing another sale bringing a smile to the store owner's face.



Breads, packaged bake goods, cereals and paper products played a part in the tapestry of daily life. Wide-eyed children scoured the generous selections of penny candy, which was overseen by watchful proprietors who served not only as store owners but as guardians of the neighborhood's youth.

Small family-owned grocery stores are rare. The memories of Nanticoke's markets stand as a reminder of a different era. They remind us of a time when grocery stores were intimately tied to the neighborhood they served. As the years pass, these memories grow ever more precious, a link to a past that shaped the lives of those who were fortunate enough to experience it. The legacy of Nanticoke's grocery stores aligns with the nurturing of a community and the lessons learned from hard work while extending a generous hand.

After a recent Facebook post, we learned just how fresh these memories are. One person remembered her dad sending her to the A&P for ground coffee, another remembered bag day, filling a brown bag with day old bread for one dollar and how Friday was the family shopping day. We thought we would supply, in

this and future issues of Legacy, a little history and, if possible, a photo or two of the locations you remembered the most. We will list the stores most remembered, but we may not have archival material.



*The A&P circa 1950s*

## A&P Supermarket.

Originally, the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company, better known as the A&P grocery chain, operated from 1859 to 2015. Between 1915 and 1975 it was the largest grocery retailer in the U.S. From 1919 to 1927 the A&P in Nanticoke was at 184-186 South Market Street.




*The busy checkout counter at the A&P*

In 1927 a fire destroyed the building. The store moved to 201 East Ridge at the corner of Walnut. Another fire forced the store to move to 286 E. Green at the corner of Chestnut. Another move in 1935 found the store at 27 E. Green Street. This store was advertised as self-service. Russell Glanville was the store manager and a crew of twenty would be on hand for the grand opening. Patrons were advised that “Plenty of the gliders of the basket type would be provided” for shoppers to pick their desired items. In 1953, Joseph T. Flannery celebrated 25 years as manager of the store.

In 1963 ground was broken for a new A&P Super Market on North Market Street across from the city new Post Office

1964 – the Last A&P in Nanticoke

A&P closed all of their stores in 2015. 



*The A&P on Green Street*



*North Market Street location*

**MORE GROCERY STORE HISTORY- IN OUR NEXT ISSUE OF LEGACY**



# In Honor of Our Military

The Nanticoke Historical Society is honored to hold a vast amount of military information in its archives. It is our pledge to focus on those hometown heroes who sacrificed so much for our country's freedom. A new partial list of the names of local veterans of all wars will be listed in our "In Honor of Our Military" Section of each Newsletter. The lists are long, so if a loved one's name has not appeared, please follow upcoming issues. Information obtained from the Nanticoke Historical Society archives.

## WORLD WAR I

- Paul Shepanski* – U.S. Navy
- John Shepela*
- Alexander Shergoni* – PVT - MIA
- Ralph Sherman* – U.S. Navy
- Leon Shershen* – PVT – Wounded in Action
- Thomas Shibilski* – U.S. Marines
- Adam Shima*
- Michael Shimko* – PVT – Wounded in Action
- Anthony Shinski*
- Stanley Shiska* –
- Joseph Shipkowski*
- Stanislaus Shitnick* – U.S. Army
- Joseph Shon* – U.S. Army
- Alex Shumito*
- Stanley Shumusic* –
- Alexander Shurkonis* – KIA - France
- William Sidorowicz* – U.S. Army
- John Siergiej* – U.S. Army
- Matthew Sinkiewicz*
- Gorz Sinkowski* – U.S. Army – Wounded in France
- Gregory Sinkowski* – Wounded in Action
- William Slusser* -348<sup>th</sup> Co C Machine Gun Battery - KIA Ypres-Lys Offensive
- Michael Sluzalis* – U.S. Navy – 1<sup>st</sup> class gunners mate U.S. Destroyer Phillips
- Michael Slavinskas* –
- John Smatko* – Aviation Section Signal Corps
- Stephen Smigelski* – U.S. Army
- Benjamin Smith* – Battery C 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery
- Laberta Smith* – Aberdeen Proving Grounds
- Michael Smith* –
- William Smith* – Died in Service
- George Smithers* – Pvt Co. C 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Wounded in Action
- John Snyder* – Battery C 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery
- Thomas Sobiecki*
- Anthony Sobila* – U.S. Army
- Adam Sobolewski*
- Leon Sobolewski* – Pvt. 153 Depot Brigade
- Walter Sobotka* – Polish Army served in France
- Anthony Soldinski*
- Edward Solkowski*
- Emil Sopinski* – U.S. Army
- Clyde Stackhouse*
- John Stadt* - – U.S. Navy

## NOTE:

In the August 2018 issue of Nanticoke Legacy, we started publishing the names of all of the Nanticoke veterans who served in various battles and wars. The first publication began with The Battle of Wyoming, Spanish American War, Vietnam War, World War I, Korean War and Iraq War followed. The listing of names of those who fought in World War II started in the November 2018 issue. The longest of all the lists were World War I and II. Now in 2024 we are publishing the last of the names under World War I. We salute all the brave men who served this country during the various conflicts and in peace time as well. We will continue to preserve their legacy by maintaining for future generations their names and any and all information collected regarding these brave men. Please continue to follow our listing of World War I veterans in upcoming issues.



# In Honor of Our Military

## WORLD WAR I Con't

*Michael Stadt*  
*Joseph Stanonis*  
*Joseph Stashok* - –Wounded in action  
*Louis Staskiel*  
*Stanley Staskiel* –U.S. Navy Fireman 1<sup>st</sup> class  
*Chester Stermick*  
*William Stevens*  
*Anthony Stienski* – U.S. Army  
*Albert Stratton* – Battery C 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery Army  
*Felix Strawinski*  
*Harry Strome* – Pvt Battery C 10 FA 3<sup>rd</sup> Div  
*John Stroch* – Died in Service  
*Leo Strozski*  
*Stanley Stryjak* – Wounded in Action  
*Leon Stooks* – U.S. Navy Seaman 2<sup>nd</sup> Class  
*Alexander Storkowski* – American Contingent of the Polish Army  
*Stanley Stortz*  
*John Suda*  
*Thomas Sullivan* – Served in France  
*William Sullivan*  
*Walter Sumeracki* – U.S. Army  
*Dr Frank Summa* – Medical Corps  
*Stephen Supco* – U.S. Army  
*John Supkowski*  
*James Swanberry*  
*G.H. Sweeney*  
*Peter Swioski* – U.S. Navy  
*George Swithers* – U.S. Army Pvt.  
*Stefan Sybicki* – Polish Army  
*Charles Sybulski* – U.S. Navy  
*Edward Synowicz*  
*John Szandrocha* - U.S. Army Pvt – Wounded in action  
*Mickel Szat* – U.S. Army Pvt – Wounded in action  
*Marian Szczpanski*  
*Stanley Szwatkowski*  
*Joseph Tatara* –U.S. Navy  
*Peter Tennyson* – Telegraph Corp. U.S. Army  
*Dr. Albert Thomas* – U.S. Medical Corp  
*Arthur Thomas*  
*Baden Thomas*  
*Raymond Selner*  
*David Thomas* - Battery C 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery  
*Edward Thomas*  
*Hobert Thomas* – Engineer – Wounded in Action  
*Lawrence – Thomas* – Battery C 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery  
*Luther Thomas*

### **NOTE:**

**The names are as listed in our Historical Society Records. If there are misspellings, we apologize. Please contact our office to correct any discrepancy. Thank you....**

## From the Editor:

*Nanticoke Historical Society member and lifelong resident, Sally Gorgas, will from time to time be sharing her memories of people, places and things that are unique to the city.*

# ON SALLY'S CORNER

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by Sally Gorgas

Mommy, mom, mother are words to describe the many women in my neighborhood when I was growing up. Eleanor Grudkowski and her husband Edmund lived across Hanover Street from my home. She had two daughters, Carol and Diane. I was friends with Diane. Mrs. Grudkowski was a warm person. She was involved with many of her daughters' activities. My sister Pattie and I spent many days at their large home. Diane had her own bedroom. I remember Diane telling us her mom didn't want posters on the walls because they would do damage. I didn't understand that, but that was what her mom wanted. Also, Mrs. Grudkowski was a good cook!



Marlene Zielinski and husband Joe lived in my old house at R. 932 S. Hanover Street. She had a daughter and two sons. My mom was friendly with her. Mrs. Zielinski was close with her children. She was a concerned neighbor, and that was appreciated in the neighborhood. You could say Marlene and Joe were the “neighborhood watch.”

Mrs. Stacia Cassoni lived in the top apartment at 923 S. Hanover Street with her husband Alex and two daughters, Jean and Susan. I remember she liked to go to high school basketball games. She liked to play bingo and was always going to one. I know she was a good mother to her daughters. They didn't want for anything.

Mary Rudawski was a widow who lived in the same apartment building. Her daughters Sandy and Tootsie and son Stevie lived with her. I remember Mary was always borrowing something from us. I know she loved her children by her concern for their welfare.

The mothers in the neighborhood were unique in themselves. I interacted with them many times over the years. They are all gone now, but I



*Me and my Mom*



remember each one fondly. The most important mom, mommy, mother in the neighborhood was my mom, Isabelle Haydock. Her family was her priority. She always wanted the best for me and my three sisters. Her deep faith carried her through hard times. Mom was always ready to help anyone. She got along with all the other moms in the neighborhood and was the center of all of them. I miss her every day, but many things still remind me of her. She is always in my thoughts, but mostly in my heart. 🙏

## LAST ISSUE'S MYSTERY QUESTION:

What Nanticoke Civic Club received the Fred Andrews Memorial Trophy for bringing cheer to Nanticoke residents in 1955, 1957, 1958 and 1959?



These Lions Club members accepted the Fred Andrews Memorial Trophy for their Christmas display in Central Park, now Patriot Square in 1959. Pictured left to right, Fire Chief Thomas Morris, Nicholas Sinco, Joseph Flannery, Lee Elgart, Millard Gallat and Bud Weaver.

# THIS ISSUE'S MYSTERY QUESTION

**In 1938, The Old Civic Legion Club donated \$42.69 to the Nanticoke Kiwanis Club to construct something on Harvey's Creek. What was it?**



**We hope you enjoyed this issue of the Nanticoke Historical Society's publication of Nanticoke Legacy**



Follow the Nanticoke Historical Society on Facebook and our website [nanticokehistoryonline.org](http://nanticokehistoryonline.org) for coming events.

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