

Winter 2011 Newsletter

February 2011



Inside this issue:

February Meeting	1
Happenings	2
Obituary	2
Humorous Anecdotes	3-5
The Maine Community Band	6
Officers & Trustees, Committees, Dues Return Slip.	7

February Meeting Scheduled for Tuesday February 15

The February meeting of the Nanticoke Valley Historical Society will be a dinner meeting, at the **Friends Diner** on February 15. We will begin at the earlier time of 6:00. Everyone can order from a special menu, as we did last year

Volunteer work days at the J. Ralph Ingles building have been discontinued for the winter. Watch for notice of starting up again in the spring.

The fancy dinner at the museum building will be postponed until April 2, to allow for availability and recuperation of some of the planners and workers.

Winter & Spring Meeting Schedule

**Tuesday March 15– Ham Radio—Is it Outdated or Vital
Presented by Howard Dingman**

**Tuesday April 19– Rozelle Family in Maine
Presented by Diane & Gary Rozelle**

**Tuesday May 17– Strange Farm Tools
Presented by Lucas Kaczynski**

**Tuesday June 21– The Art of Frank Taylor Bowers
Presented by Yancy Moore**



Curator Sue Lisk has begun work on a book of local history. It will be one of the Arcedia Publishing Company's Images of America series, which you probably have seen with a photo from the book on the covers. When it is printed the Historical Society will acquire some copies to sell. There will be copies available at a number of stores and other museums as well. If you know of a shop or museum that carries such things, please let Sue know at 862-9705 so she can give the information to the publisher.

Many thanks to Shirley and Gordon Woodward, who gave us a generous donation to buy a computer for our archives. The "green book" from which we have been taking chapters for the news letter was compiled by Shirley Woodward, back when she was the Town of Maine Historian, and they have remained interested members, even since moving to Arizona.

We received a number of photographs, circa the late 1800s, from Bradford Councilman. His paternal grandfather and great grandfather were born in Glen Aubrey. About half of those photographs have names on them.

We also received a number of photographs of the St. John, Hogg, Paisley and Osterhout families, of that same time frame. These are all identified. Sue Lisk will have them all on display at the next meeting we have at the museum. Perhaps someone will have more information to add to them.

A long time active member of the Historical Society died in December. Carol Sienko taught locally from 1968 through 2001, covering the Hooper School, Union Center School, the J. Ralph Ingalls School, and finally the Maine Memorial School. After retiring she still was helping children, through the Summer Rec. Program, tutoring one on one reading, being involved in the Wide Horizons Preschool, and doing school children tours at our museum. She had been an officer and was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Historical Society at the time of her death.

Humorous Anecdotes

*Reprinted from "A Short History of
Maine, New York"
(Chapter 11)*

*Compiled by Shirley L. Woodward
Historian, Town of Maine, 1973*

Note: We are planning to re-issue the book this chapter is from. We understand there are some awkward to read bits and some seemingly not right sections. Please look for such spots, as you read it, and point them out to Sue Lisk so they can be addressed for the new publication.

To Contact Sue: Sue Lisk, 2625 Main St., P. O. Box 275, Maine, NY 13802, or E-Mail at Slisk@stny.rr.com or Phone at (607) 862-9705.

I'd Choose to be a Daisy

I'd choose to be a daisy,
If I might be a flower.
My petals closing softly
At twilights quiet hour
And waking in the morning
When falls the early
dew
To welcome heavens bright
sunshine
And heavens bright tear
drops
I love the gentle Lily,
It looks so meek and
fair,
But daisies I love better,
For they grow every-
where;
The lilies bloom so sadly,
In sunshine or in
shower,
But daisies still look upward
However dark the hour.

March 17th 1863
by
Lala (Ketchum) Marean

We cannot hope to relate all the anecdotes pertaining to Maine people, but we shall relate a few here. Descendants of the pioneers living today recall their grandparents relating many stories of the early days. One is that Maine village was originally called "Graball".

Between the years of 1794 and 1815-20, the sound of the axe filled the air as pioneers cleared the lands and built their homes. Only the sturdy could stand this strenuous labor. More elegant buildings replaced the cabins in the period between 1820-50. Many more people arrived during this time and villages formed at the "four corners". Mrs. Fannie D. Atwater and Miss Mary Alice Dayton had in their possession a letter written ~. by their grandfather, Francis H. Marean, II on May 30, 1847. He spoke of Edward who r; had gone to the store and purchased enough ~; cloth for two pairs of "pantaloons" , one !;: of Kentucky green at twenty-six cents ~- per yard and one of blue cassimere at one dollar and fifty cents per yard. He was going away and had to be "dressed up". The grandfather had taken 125 pounds of maple sugar to Union, the previous Saturday, "and sold it all for 10 cents a pound. I got four bushels of wheat at \$1.20 a bushel and the rest in money."

"I have been shopping most of the time the past week, and third time I carried down a tub of butter to Collier. Have 46 1/2 pounds that we made this spring. He paid me in money 12 1/2c a pound. I promised him that price some weeks ago and he furnished the tubs to put it in, but I did not agree to let him have but one tub at that price. I have 15c for the next. Prices have arisen very much here in two weeks past, and money is plenty. Almost everything brings cash now."

"I have the public money \$22.00 I have paid out for some books, store goods and so forth, and have \$100 in the house now. I suppose I should have to buy some oxen by and by and I intend to have someone help me chop. If I can get anyone who is good for anything. I shall not have a great deal of hoeing to do, so I can chop considerable then."

Certainly, a more vivid pic-

ture of prevailing conditions should be hard to find.

Next from family records of the Riley family we find the exciting adventure of Mary Riley, the wife of Thomas who settled near North Maine in the early 1840's as told by their daughter, Elizabeth Riley Newton.

"And now I will tell you a little story of an incident that came very nearly costing mother's life.

About one or two years after our people settled in Cherry Valley our parents moved a mile or two from the village on to what was called Cherry Valley Hill. Mother sometimes worked for a wealthy English family in the village who thought no one could do things quite as well as the young English woman. One of these times in the fall of the year it became dark before mother finished the work she was doing and as brother Sam was a baby she felt that she must go home. They urged here to stay saying it is dark and you have over half a mile of woods to go through but all to no purpose for she said I am not afraid. The man said if you dared ride the colt you might take him but a woman has never been on his back. But mother said you risk the colt I will risk myself (women in those days were very much used to riding horseback). So he brought out the colt and mother started, he handing her a small riding whip. She had no trouble until she was about half way through the woods when she heard a piercing scream. The colt stopped still in the road. Again she heard the scream, then the bushes began to crack and she knew something was approaching and she remembered that the panther's cry was like that of a woman in distress. She put the whip to the colt. He sprang into a run but she could still hear the animal. Faster and faster they flew, both herself and the colt really frightened, but could get no further from the pur-

suing beast. Now the house where our people lived was just beyond these woods and there was a fence and pair of bars at the front. Now, thought she, if the bars are closed I am lost but on reaching them found them open. She rode to the door, jumped from the horse, pulled open the door with just enough strength to throw herself in and slam the door when the creature threw itself with all its force against the door. Of course the whole family was frightened but as soon as she could speak told father all about it. He took a brand of fire from the fireplace, went out and scared the animal away and secured the colt all right. In the morning mother went back to town and told the circumstances. A posse of men went in pursuit. After some hunting they captured him. It proved to be a panther of unusual size, said to be the largest seen in those parts in a good many years."

Every town has a gold swindle pulled on them.

This is a story told to Louis Paige, a former owner of the famous Hathaway House, by Ray Smith, now deceased. At the time when the Paige home was an inn, a man came and rented a room. He was very secretive about work he was doing. He would go south, down the main road and dig around on land above the falls in a small gorge off the Old Newark Valley Road. People were very curious about the stranger, but he would not tell anything about what he was doing. People tried the doors to his room one day and found it unlocked. Inside the room they found many rock samples of gold ore. These people approached the stranger and wanted to know if he had found gold. He said he had. Naturally they wanted a share of his money, so they gave him money to start large scale operation and when he

had their money, he skipped town.

And what town does not have a haunted house. In Maine, one of the old Marean homesteads is reported to be haunted. Legend has it there was a murder or suicide in the home; the ghost of this person still walks the floors. On cold damp days, residents of this house can hear footsteps that sometimes come down the stairs and the door, securely fastened with an old fashioned latch, suddenly swings open.

And now to Death Valley Road. This foreboding name is attached to a small portion of a road in the town of Maine - the road itself not much more than a mile in length. The origin of this name seems lost in the midst of history, but is remembered by our elderly residents with slight feelings of awe and fear instilled in them as youngsters. The tall stately hemlocks are gone, but the valley is still shadowy and lonely, cold and dark even on sunny days. No wonder tales of fear and mystery are remembered of that small stretch of road.

Many of our older residents remember tales told to them by their grandparents who in their youth were stalked by panthers as they walked down this lonely road.

In 1855 only one family was living on the logging road - now Death Valley Road. George Rhodes and his family settled there in 1853 from Schoharie County. He purchased land with an abandoned log house. By 1866, according to county maps, Death Valley Road, which connected these two mills, was definitely a town road, with two families living on the south end; Ezekiel Anderson who settled Maine 1851 from Ulster County and Samuel Aker who settled Maine 1852 from Dutchess

County. George Rhodes was joined on the north end by William Ross who came from Scotland about 1850.

Now -how did the road acquire such a foreboding name? Each person talked to remembered a different and rather tragic death that occurred in the dark valley road; and yet as each was recorded, it was amazing how each story seemed to corroborate another, or be just a little different variety of the same story. First the Indian Massacre. This legend could not be traced down although two persons mentioned that an Indian or Indians had killed a family in what was later the Rhodes log cabin. This area was the hunting grounds for the Iroquois Indian Nations just north of Broome County in the Finger Lakes Region. Several people mentioned a fight between one white man and an Indian in which the Indian killed the white man - could this be the unexaggerated story of the massacre? What happened to the Indian- no one knew! But another story tells about the two men who moved into an old abandoned log cabin, the Rhodes place, and these men stole everything they needed or wanted from their neighbors. Do you suppose these men were the two who had a fight, and the Indian killed the white man - it was the same log cabin? And what about the story of the unknown horse thief in the area who was finally caught and hung on the big hemlock on the corner of Death Valley Road and Fredericks Road -could that have been the Indian who killed the white man?

Another source related the tale that when the men went to work at the Chauncey mill one morning, they found a man hanging from one of the beams! Who was he?

And then there was the 20 year old boy, a half-wit sub-

ject to epileptic fits, who disappeared one night. Those searching the woods found his shoes and socks near the cider mill. Had he been locked in the cider mill or did he break into it and sample the "hard" cider working in the vats? Anyway his body was found in the woods north of Death Valley Road. Cause of death unknown!

Is it any wonder the youngsters of the late 1800's were fearful of that road! In later years the Ludington family of Maine who operated a meat-slaughtering business had their first slaughterhouse on Bradley Creek near Death Valley Road. At night the wild animals would drag the bones up into the woods to chew on. Over the years there were plenty of bones scattered along the roadside thus perpetuating the name DEATH VALLEY ROAD.

Church trials are a source of personal history in this town. The church people believed it was their duty to watch over one another, to admonish and be admonished, to confess their sins, and to restore to the community those who gave of repentance. The church records are full of committee reports of those who labored with the "sinners" to bring them back into the fold! Everything was covered from petty jealousy to disputes over property lines. One young girl was excommunicated because she attended a "ball". Another lady who was reported to have gone buggy riding on Sunday reported she was rushing to the bedside of a dying relative and just didn't feel she could wait until Monday. She was finally forgiven.

The longest trial on record in Congregational Church records was that between Moses Delano and Captain Gardner S. Bowers between whom there was

deep animosity. Captain Bowers was accused of falsehood -probably stemming from his charges against those young men who failed to report for military training of the home militia. This trial lasted for over three years and finally ended with ex-communication.

It was reported in one place that "a female church member" was frequently seen intoxicated with ardent spirits - three men were appointed to inquire into the circumstances! A local man was guilty of profane swearing - he confessed and repented but later was found guilty of heresy and excommunicated. A young couple were having marriage difficulties, and a committee was appointed to look into this. Such activities made life most interesting in the mid-1800's.

During Civil War days a small cannon purchased to protect the local inhabitants was a source of contention between the Union Center and Maine residents. It seems that the folks in Union Center fearing invasion from the southern army, then up as far as Pennsylvania, purchased a cannon which they placed on the hill in front of the Nanticoke Valley Cemetery by the former Congregational Church. Well, the Maine militia decided that Maine, being more populated, needed the cannon worse than Union Center -so one night they confiscated it and put it in the Maine Commons. Union Center residents were up in arms about this, after all, they paid for it. One night they went to Maine and got it, returning it to its rightful place in Union Center. The Maine militia decided not to stand still for this and came down

to get the cannon. This time Union Center men were waiting for them and in the "scuffle" over who would keep it, the little cannon was jarred loose from its site, rolled over the road and down the bank into the mill pond behind the old saw mill, and disappeared into the mud bottom. It was never found and rests there to this day!

Like all small towns Maine had a town "character" who was the bane of the local storekeeper's life. Mr. Dyer who operated the general store, apprehended him snitching some fruit and locked him in the cellar. Whereupon the fellow, who was referred to as "Pinhead" -due to a marked physical peculiarity - (proceeded to pull the plug from the molasses barrel. The molasses ran out on the cellar bottom and "Pinhead" made his escape through the cellar window.

Another time, so we are told on good authority, he crawled through the cellar window, filched two dozen eggs from a crate which was stored there (in those days there were no coolers and many articles were placed in the cellar to be kept cool) exited through the cellar window, proceeded to the front door of the store and sold the two dozen eggs to the proprietor.

Another humorous anecdote concerns the "big fire" which destroyed the Lincoln store. One of the volunteers who was trying to rescue some of the household furnishings from the second story proceeded to throw the chamber "china" out of the window and then carefully carried the mattress from the bed down the stairs on his back!

The Town of Maine Town Board Meetings have been changed from the second Tuesday of each month to the third Tuesday, which is the day the Historical Society meetings have been taking place. There has been discussion about changing the Historical Society meeting times, at least temporarily, so that persons can attend both. The 3rd Thursday of each month seems to be an open alternative. There will be more discussion at upcoming meetings.

The Maine Community Band is Celebrating its 150th Year

That Band was formed in Maine in 1861 and will be holding several special events to celebrate its 150th year of continuous existence. The first event will be held on Sunday March 27th @ 3:30 PM at the Maine Memorial in conjunction with the Maine Memorial School Band. A second special concert will be presented at Highland Park in Endwell on Sunday July 24th at 3:30 PM.

Please support your band, it is your Community Band.



1910 Maine Town Band

Date - ca. 1910

Henry Hemenway (off to extreme left)

POST CARD

PLACE POSTAGE

STAMP HERE

CORRESPONDENCE	NAME AND ADDRESS
1st Row	2nd Row
J. R. ALLEN - Drum	Earl Hingham - snare Drum
Fay Bronk - coronet	John Allen (behind Green)
Clara Green	Henry Ingalls
Wellington McIntyre	Chauncey McIntyre
Gouford Dudley, M.D.	Earl Lewis
Ray Moulton	(Rev) Ralph Gould
Lynn Delano	Dee Crandall
Frank Bean - Leader	Fred Ingalls
	Brom Green
	Ralph Centey
	Wm. Frost
	Roy Ellis
	Arroy Benton
	Ina Tymeson's Brother
	Information rec'd from Ina T. 2/75

3rd Row

free

The Board of Trustees for the Nanticoke Valley Historical Society

- Each voting board position has a three year term. Three board positions are to be refilled each year, providing an ever changing but on-going board coverage.
- Board Members Mike McKilligan, Dorothy Winans, and Anita Shipway will serve through 2010.
- Board Members Nancy Berry, Betty Welch, and Sue Hoskins will serve through 2011.
- Board members Stan Lisk, Yancy Moore, and Diane Chianis will serve through 2012.

Officers


President: Sandy Rozek
 Vice President: Alice Hopkins
 Secretary: Carla Sullivan
 Treasurer: Sandy Halliday

2010 Committees	
Membership	Dottie Winans, Sandy Halliday
Finance	Dottie Winans, Sandy Halliday
Buildings & Grounds	Tom Kotasek, Stan Lisk
Ways & Means	Sue Hoskins, Debbie Stark, Lil Ames
Curator - Museum & School-house #4	Sue Lisk
Curator - Mill & Norton Wagon Shops	Tom Kotasek
Education	Sandy Rozek
By-Laws	Sandy Rozek, Charles Hathorn, Anita Shipway
Video / Audio	Betty and Leo Welch
Town Historian	Nancy Rutkowski
Endowment	Carla Sullivan, Mike McKilligan
Special Projects	Stan Lisk, Nancy Berry
Newsletter Editors	Anita & Dick Shipway

2011 Dues Are now due.

Check the address label to verify that your dues are up to date.

Please use the dues return slip below. On the top of your address label is printed your dues Paid/Due status for years 2009 and 2010. Your dues may either be mailed to the Treasurer at the address on the Slip or given to the Treasurer at meetings (in an envelope with your name on it and the dues slip enclosed). **Please note that the dues have increased effective January 2009.**

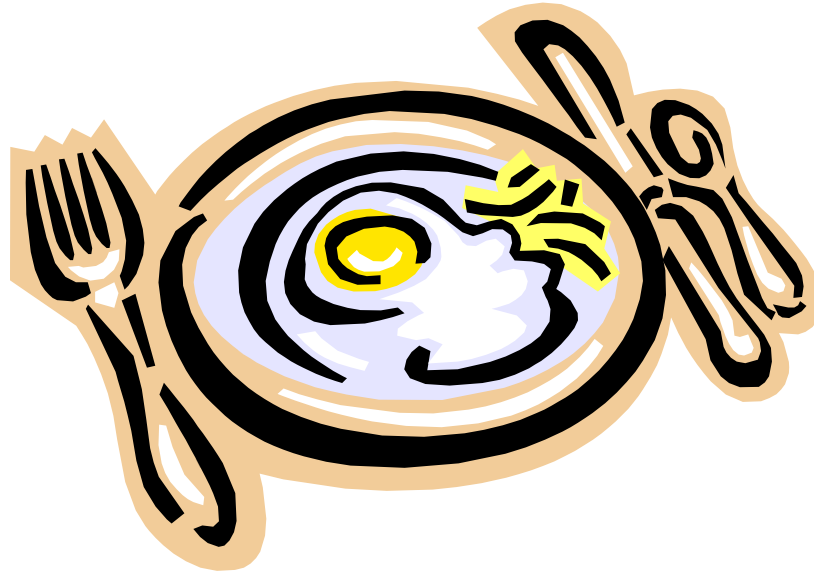


Dues Return Slip - Please Circle Year(s): 2010 2011

Note: See address label for your Dues Status.

Please mail returns to:	Nanticoke Valley Historical Society Attn: Treasurer P. O Box 75 Maine, New York 13802	Is this name or address a change from your address label? Yes ___ No ___
Name:	_____	Amount Enclosed
Street Address:	_____	\$ _____
City/State/Zip:	_____	
Phone: (Home)	_____ (Work) _____	
Dues: <input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00 Single <input type="checkbox"/> \$20.00 Family <input type="checkbox"/> \$50.00 Patron <input type="checkbox"/> \$100.00 Business		

The February meeting of the Nanticoke Valley Historical Society will be a dinner meeting, at the Friends Diner on Tuesday February 15. We will begin at the earlier time of 6:00. Everyone can order from a special menu, as we did last year.



**NANTICOKE VALLEY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

PO Box 75
Maine, NY 13802

Winter 2011 Newsletter