

# Nanticoke Valley Historical Society

2016 Newsletter # 2 May *edited by Phil Childs*



1850



1830



1840



1845



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“Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in service of the United States of America. Over two dozen cities and towns claim to be the birthplace of Memorial Day. While Waterloo N.Y. was officially declared the birthplace of Memorial Day by President Lyndon Johnson in May 1966, it's difficult to prove conclusively the origins of the day. Regardless of the exact date or location of its origins, one thing is clear – Memorial Day was born out of the Civil War and a desire to honor our dead. It was officially proclaimed on 5 May 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his General Order No. 11. “The 30th of May, 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie

in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land,” he proclaimed. The date of Decoration Day, as he called it, was chosen because it wasn't the anniversary of any particular battle. The first state to officially recognize the holiday was New York in 1873. By 1890 it was recognized by all of the northern states. The South refused to acknowledge the day, honoring their dead on separate days until after World War I (when the holiday changed from honoring just those who died fighting in the Civil War to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war)”. [www.usmemorialday.org/](http://www.usmemorialday.org/)

NVHS Museum Sites  
located at 13 Nanticoke Road  
Corner of Route 26 & Nanticoke Road  
P.O. Box 75  
Maine NY 13802

<http://nanticokevalleyhistoricalsociety.com/>

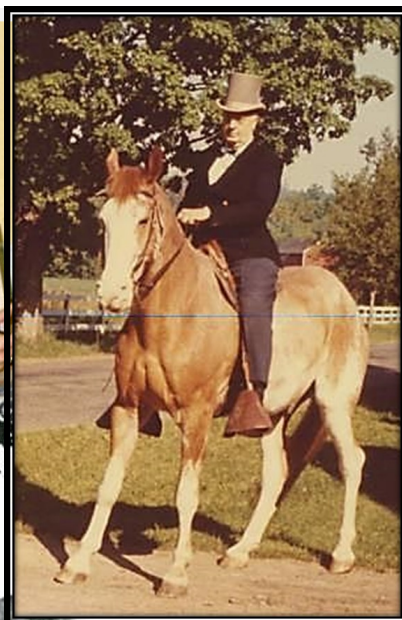
[https://www.facebook.com/  
NanticokeValleyHistoricalSociety/](https://www.facebook.com/NanticokeValleyHistoricalSociety/)



Thanks to Sue Lisk for the card.

NVHS' current membership will formally honor Ms. Bowers by renaming the original Nanticoke Road Museum Site the "*Jan W. Bowers Museum*" during a dedication ceremony which will occur at the close of the New York Heritage "Path Through History" celebration. *The dedication ceremony will take place at the Museum between the hours of 4 and 6 on **Saturday, June 18.*** Wine, cheese and appetizers will be offered to those attending.

To further acquaint readers with Janet Bowers' life and accomplishments, the NVHS newsletter will share portions of her life's story periodically. Also a biographical publication will be compiled from researched articles and information received from writing contributors. We encourage everyone who is acquainted with Janet Bowers to write emails and letters about her and address them to: NVHS Charter Committee, c/o Carla Sullivan ([carla1202@gmail.com](mailto:carla1202@gmail.com)) or PO Box 205, Maine NY 13802. Carla Sullivan, past president



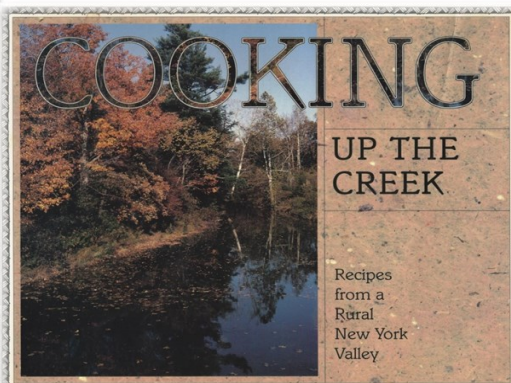
### Officers

President:	Philip M. Childs	862-3405
Vice President:	Alice Hopkins	862-3635
Secretary:	Carla Sullivan	862-5385
Treasurer:	Sandy Halliday	862-3470
Museum Curator	Sue Lisk	862-9705
Mill Curator	Tom Kotasek	862-3636

### The Board of Trustees\*

- 2016: John Haggerty, Diane Fleenor, Betty Welch
- 2017: Nancy Berry, Sandy Rozek, Pat Stacconi
- 2018: Lucas Kaczynski, Rita McKeon, Anita Shipway

\* New positions are voted on each year. The term of a trustee is three years. This provides for an ever changing but ongoing board coverage.



## IMAGINE THE WORLD WITHOUT JAN W. BOWERS !!!1936—2004

- ⇒ Jan W. established *The Bowers Foundation* in 1967, and as President, she focused the Foundation's efforts on historic preservation in and around the Town of Maine, N.Y.
- ⇒ Through her efforts, the J. Ralph Ingalls School and the 1851 Cyrus Gates House in the Town of Maine have been named to the National Register of Historic Places.
- ⇒ “In honor of Janet's father, Clement G. Bowers, a noted horticulturist and an authority on rhododendrons, the foundation assisted in the establishment of the Clement Gray Bowers Rhododendron Collection on Comstock Knoll at Cornell Plantations, Ithaca, N.Y.”
- ⇒ Norton Wagon Shops on Nanticoke Road obtained by the Bowers in 1933 were donated to the NVHS in 1978.
- ⇒ Pitcher's Mill purchased by Bowers foundation in 1985 was donated to NVHS in 1988. It was opened to public in 1998 after restoration to help celebrate the 150 year town anniversary.
- ⇒ Jan W. hired a designer and assisted in the designing of the interior of the Maine Federated Church. 1982.
- ⇒ She donated the organ for the Maine Federated Church.
- ⇒ Under Jan W. direction, the Bowers Foundation contributed to Binghamton's Roberson Museum and Science Center, including the installation of a permanent display of 1880's parlor furniture from the former house of her grandfather, Lamont Montgomery Bowers, which was located at 203 Main Street, Binghamton, N.Y.
- ⇒ Donation of the Lamont M. Bowers Papers to Binghamton University. From Glenn G. Bartle Library, State University of New York Special Collections The Papers of Lamont Montgomery Bowers Biography 1847 – 1941 by Jerry Peppers 1979.
- ⇒ Janet co-edited *Broome County Heritage: An Illustrated History* (Windsor Publications, 1983).
- ⇒ She edited a Nanticoke Valley heritage cookbook, *Cooking Up the Creek* (Bowers Corners Press, 1994).
- ⇒ Curator of Nanticoke Valley Historical Society from 1970's to 2002.
- ⇒ Established the original exhibits at the museum
- ⇒ Bowers Foundation established an Endowment Fund for the NVHS whose purpose is to secure the future of the society.
- ⇒ Donation to the playground and its landscaping at the Maine Memorial Elementary School by the Bowers Foundation.
- ⇒ Jan arranged for an article in *Victorian Homes* Winter 1987 Vol. 6 Issue 1 featuring “The Tiny Hamlet of Maine, NY”

**SCHOOL and GROUP TOURS AVAILABLE**

**BY CALLING 607 862 -9480**

How about a visit to our Home Town  
Museum? Call the Curator!

## PATH Through History :

**Saturday: 1– 4 PM**

**Bowers Corners: The crossroads community that produced entrepreneurs, artists, botanists and philanthropists.**

This event will mark the historical society's dedication of its museum to *Janet Bowers*. Museum displays will document the impact the Bowers Family has had on the community and beyond. A power point program incorporating archival photographs, will present the genealogy of the Family from 1752 to 2004. Exhibits which feature photographs and personal items will reach out from past decades to help us understand the professional and personal lives of this family.

**4—6 PM**  
Dedication  
Ceremony  
and  
Reception at the  
Jan W. Bowers  
Museum.



1940 Lamont & Jan

**Sunday: June 19th**

**1 PM—4 PM**

**Gallery Opening & Reception**

**“THE MAINE INFLUENCE”**

This year we are fortunate to have two local artists:

Meet these two talents and see how the rural nature of our region has impacted their works.

**Ken Weir** Oil Paintings and  
**Nancy Braches**—Pottery.

FACT: The NVHS started in 1973 and was officially chartered by New York State in 1977. Next year will be the **40th** anniversary of our NYS Permanent certification.



**GOURMET BARBECUE**

**“IT’S EMOTIONAL”**

<http://smokeylegend.com>

**Monday May 30th 11—2 PM** Swing by after the Parade to the One room School House, 14 Nanticoke Road and Route 26

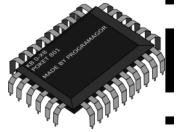
Smokey Legend BBQ, Rummage Sale , Raffle Baskets, Bake Sale and Tours. Mill, School House and Jan W. Bowers Museum will be open.

**No Need To Imagine Programs/Trips/Picnic and Fundraisers : 2016**

Subject to change As of today these are the scheduled event but we hope to add other events to our calendar. Emails and phone calls will be made to keep you up to date. Call Alice Hopkins at 862-.3635 or Phil Childs 862 3405 if you have a question.

May 16 Monday's meeting will be at the *Center for Technology& Innovation (aka Techworks)*. We will meet at our museum at 6:30 to carpool to Binghamton. You can also meet us there for our 7 pm tour.

May 30 Monday **Smokey Legends BBQ 11 –2 plus raffle baskets, bake sale and a NAEOS event\*** (new and exciting opportunity sale) (aka rummage sale).



All the above are at the one room school house site.

Also available for tours will be our: 1845 One Room School House, 1830 Pitcher's Grist Mill and the Jan W. Bowers Museum

June 18 Saturday PATH Through History Weekend. Bowers Exhibits and Power Point 1-4, followed by 4-6 Bowers Dedication with reception. See page 4 for details.

June 19 Sunday Art Gallery Opening 1-4 with reception *The Maine Influence* Nancy Braches pottery & Ken Weir oils see page 4 for more info.



Also available for tours 1 –4 will be our: 1845 One Room School House ,1830 Pitcher's Grist Mill and Jan W. Bowers Museum

June 20 Monday 6 pm Summer Picnic at the museum Bring a dish to share...

July 18 Monday we will not be having a meeting, join us on Friday—Sunday.

July 22 Friday Evening \* musical production of **Nuncrackers**.

July 23 Saturday \*,++,^

Events planned including: hamlet tours, theatrical production\*, vendors++, street musicians^, one roving Elf! Limited purchase of Knee Hugger Elves and an original children's mini book.

July 24 Sunday \*

\*The three performances of **Nuncrackers** will be held at the Maine Memorial Elementary School Auditorium.



\*\*Saturday Our one room school house ground site (14 Nanticoke Road) is the location of our vendors and Hilltop BBQ.



August 14 Newark Valley Historical Society Parade celebrating their 40th anniversary.

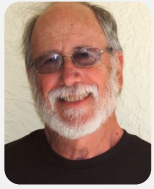
August 15 7 pm Monday Waiting on confirmation...Very Interesting topic.

September 13 7 pm Tuesday combined meeting with Newark Valley Historical Society at our Bowers Museum. Special guest speaker Grey Osterud *author of Bonds of Community: The Lives of Rural Women in Nineteenth-Century New York and Putting the Barn Before the House: Women and Family Farming in Early Twentieth-Century New York.*

September 11 Sunday *I Run Half Marathon* Half Marathon, Marathon, 5K Town Park <http://www.irunforhalfmarathon.com/> Come and Support this event!

Oct 17 7pm Meeting Betty Welch *Maine NY home of many Professors from Harpur College.*

Nov 21 and Dec 19 *details in our September Newsletter*



## Presidents Page

### May 1 = May Day the old fashion way!

“The earliest May Day celebrations appeared in pre-Christian times, with the *Floralia*, festival of Flora, the Roman goddess of flowers. As Europe became Christianized, the pagan holidays lost their religious character and May Day changed into a popular secular celebration. The secular versions of May Day, observed in Europe and America, may be best known for their traditions of dancing around the maypole and crowning the Queen of May. Fading in popularity since the late 20th century is the giving of "May baskets," small baskets of sweets or flowers, usually left anonymously on neighbors' doorsteps.” [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/May\\_Day](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/May_Day)



Our New May Day celebration occurred at The Maine Event when a Victorian Tea was held for over one hundred festive participants. Thanks Rachael .



The March Issue photo quiz was taken on Route 26 just south of the Gun Club Road. The tree line follows the road. Alice Hopkins provided the photo and she believes it is her father driving the wagon towards the town of Maine. The photographer was situated on top of Tartanian Hill.

If you wish to get in contact with Phil Childs (editor of the newsletter ) contact him via email [achild233@aol.com](mailto:achild233@aol.com) or phone 862 3405 . Get your newsletter via email, it's colorful!

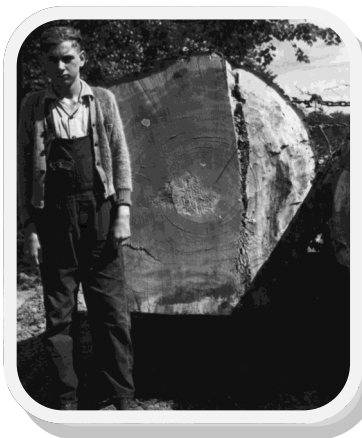
**IMAGINE** that you can travel back in time to visit the town you live in today. Let's turn back the clock to around 1799 and look around. Many of the earliest settlers traveling from the New England states have arrived and a few are listed here; Benjamin Norton from Stockbridge, MA in 1794; Russell and Alfred Gates from East Had-den, MA in 1793; Nathaniel Slosson from Massachusetts and Je-didiah Dudley from Stockbridge ,MA in 1796. Why did they leave their homesteads in New England to travel to the wilderness of what would be Maine, NY? Why did they come here, and more im-portantly, what did they hope to accomplish once they established themselves here?

The land was covered from hilltop to hilltop by old growth trees such as hemlocks and hardwoods .The eastern hemlock takes over 250 years to reach maturity and may live for 1000 years , attain a height of 160 feet and have a trunk diameter of over six feet. Forests had to be cleared to gain open farm lands. Wild animals were abun-dant including many which were dangerous. Mountain lions, bob-cats, bears and wolves were common and early settlers built barns to protect their livestock from these predators. Settlers arrived with the bare essentials: perhaps an iron plow head, axes, firearms and oxen. Roads had to be created by "hand" but that would occur later! On their land they would build a small shelter and barn and slowly they would clear the land. The trees were a great natural resource, and some early settlers rafted logs down the Nanticoke Creek to the Susquehanna River for sale. By 1825 sawmills and grist mills were built and population centers started to grow. In 1832 E.H. Clark started a tannery in the Hamlet of Maine. It was located behind the site of the current Masonic Lodge building . The tannery slowly grew in size from two employees in a 30 x 40 foot building, which held four tanning vats to twenty five workers in a 40 x 100 foot building housing 132 vats. The tannery bought hemlock bark from local sources. The bark was needed to make the acid necessary for tanning hides. Each day required up to ten cords of bark and over thirty thousand tanned hides were produced at this location yearly. The hides came from Texas and South America. "Lamont Bowers told of seeing one hundred loads of hemlock bark pass in one day." The used bark from the tannery was brought south of the hamlet and used as fill along the toll plank road which stretched from the Maine cemetery to Union. Slowly the hills were cleared of trees, fields were farmed and by 1848 the town of Maine was formed. The tannery operated until 1890 and the buildings were torn down around 1908. Doanes Creamery would be the next industry to occupy this site.

In 1870 the town had grown to a population of over 2,305 and both Lewis St. and McGregor Ave. were laid out. The major industries in the region were lumbering and farming. Between 1875 and 1883 Maine had a fair ground. Our museum has a copy of the 1876 Broome County Atlas, one illustration is of the Maine Agricultural Field Ground (Notice that the hill in the background is cleared of trees). This hill is the one behind the Maine Memorial Elementary School and the next time you are at the *Main Scoop* ice cream shop look west. You'll note that the hill is now covered with trees. (see photo next page). The photo above is of Robert Rozelle taken in the 1930's. Some old growth trees were still around!



**Eastern Hemlock**



Hill across from Main Scoop looking west. 2.2.2016 100 % Total tree coverage



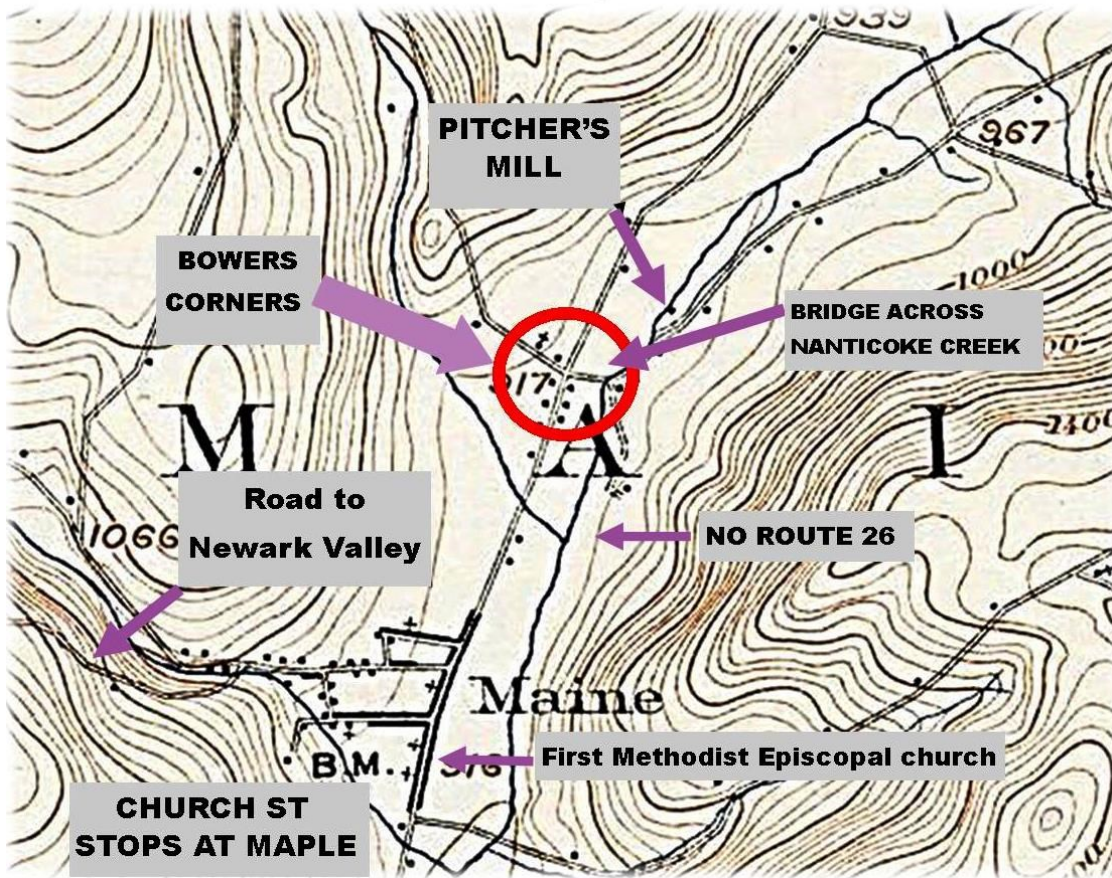
**Same hill as above, sketch from the Broome County 1876 Atlas Note the hilltops in 1876 were devoid of trees. The Maine Agricultural fair was held in October during the years 1875 to 1883.**



**E.H. Clark Tannery  
This Clarence Stratton, 1970  
painting is located in the Town  
Hall on Lewis St.**

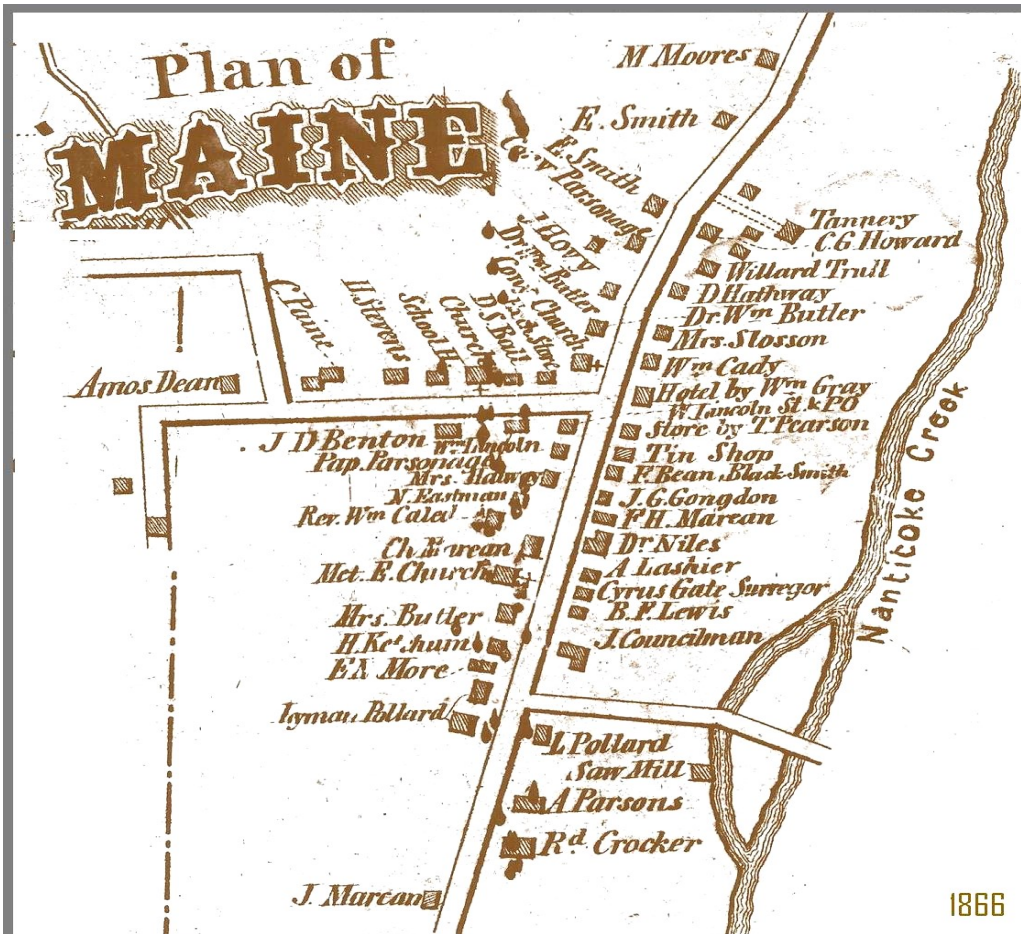


IMAGINE MAINE, NY IN 1900



Maine, NY 1904 Topographic Map, Surveyed in 1900

What other differences can you find on the map above?



**1866 Map of the Hamlet of Maine  
McGregor Ave.  
and Lewis St are  
not yet laid out.  
The E.H. Clark  
Tannery is found  
at the north end  
of the map and  
east of main  
street**

Nanticoke Valley Historical Society,

PO Box 75 , Maine, NY 13802

May 2016 Issue # 2

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Please mail returns to: Nanticoke Valley Historical Society, Attn: Treasurer, PO Box 75 , Maine, NY 13802

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**City/State/zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone: (Home)** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Work)** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Newsletter:** Mailed or Electronic

Dues: \_\_\_\_\_ \$20.00 Individual \_\_\_\_\_ \$35.00 Family \_\_\_\_\_ \$15 Senior/Student \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 Patron \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 Business \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_