

# Nanticoke Valley Historical Society

2022 Newsletter # 3 September 1

edited by Phil Childs

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



## Officers 2022

President:	Gordon Gottlieb	232-0702
Vice President:	Joanne Weir	239-1020
Secretary:	Sylvia Ward	242-3523
Treasurer:	Judy Kunz	862-3410
Fundraising/Special Events:	Jeff Egan	862-5033
Media & Content Director:	Phil Childs	862-3405
Museum Curator:	Sue Lisk	862-9705
Mill Curator:	Luke Kaczynski	239-8009
Town of Maine Historian:	Susan H. Lisk	

## The Board of Trustees\*

Emeritus:	Nancy Berry, Sandy Rozek, Anita Shipway
2022:	Linda Hansen, Bob Lawler, Rita McKeon
2023:	Kerin Flannery, Lynn Ross, Brenda Stolarcyk
2024:	Bill Austin, Phil Childs, Christine Clifton-Kendall

\* 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.



## Mainefest Saturday 10th

Saturday September 10, 2022—in the Town Park! NEW LOCATION  
Starting 10:30

Live Music, Plein air art show at 4:30, family fun, artesian crafts and more!!!

1. Table of Contents, Board of NVHS, Photo Sunflowers bath East Maine road
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6. Norton Carriage Shop will be transformed
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8. NVHS summer picnic, Look back to 1969
9. Pitcher's Grist Mill repairs
10. School visitations return, BCAC grant and Richard Henry will hold an art class 10.8
11. Lost civil war cannon, Summer Rec visits museum, Gazebo in town park
12. Join Us! .



Sunflowers on East Maine Road and NYS Route 26 planted by the family of Scott Voltz



# THE MAINE FEST

Promoting the Art and Music of the Nanticoke Valley

**Saturday, September 10th, 2022 - 11 am - 5 pm**

**At the Town of Maine Park Rt 26. Maine, NY**

**Chicken BBQ by the West Corners Lions Club - 11 am until sold out!**

## **En Plein Air Painting Event**

Paintings will be on display starting at 4:30 pm followed by Awards and Auction at 5:30 PM

**Artisan & Flea Market**

**Children's Activities**

**Blacksmith & Woodworking  
Demonstrations**

**Bake Sale**

**Music**

**Magic Show**

**Trolley Rides**

**Bring your Lawn Chairs!**

***[www.nanticokevalleyhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.nanticokevalleyhistoricalsociety.com)***

This event is made possible thanks to the generous support of the Town of Maine, Town of Maine Rec Committee, and the Broome County Arts Council.

FYI When the 1845 school house was moved to 14 Nanticoke road it was joined with the monument and bell from the J. Ralph school on Church street. It has sat on that property for 20 plus years until this summer when an automobile crashed into it destroying the monument and bell support structure. The driver and his family were not injured but part of our towns history has been removed. We are trying to get insurance companies to cover the cost of re-building the monument and re-hanging the bell. More details to follow!!!



## Members Monthly Meeting News —Joanne Weir— Vice President NVHS

We have some exciting programs coming up this fall! Please continue to watch your email for exciting updates and additions.

**Monday, September 19** at 7:00 PM at the museum, we will welcome Ed Nizalowski from the Newark Valley Historical Society. Ed's presentation "Tree Talk: Stories from Wood and Ways to Honor the Trees" will surely help us all transition to the fall season when trees become a focus in our lives.

**Monday, October 17** at 7:00 PM at the museum, we are pleased to announce a presentation by **Presentarts**, an acting company that brings historical characters to life. We will learn about Belva Lockwood who, in the 1800s, was among the first female attorneys in the US and was the first woman ever allowed to practice at the bar of the US Supreme Court. In 1884 she became the first woman to run a full campaign for the US Presidency and earn votes.

**Monday, November 21** at 7:00 PM at the museum, we will have an exciting presentation - details to follow!

**December Back** by popular demand, our annual **Muse Night** will be held in December - watch your email, our website and Facebook page for further details.

**Also on the calendar:**

**Saturday, September 10 - Maine Fest** is back! NVHS will host our annual day-long arts celebration in the Town of Maine. This family-friendly event will include live music performances, a magic show, children's activities, an artisan and vendor market, a chicken barbecue and concession by the West Corners Lions Club, a bake sale, trolley ride, museum tours, and a Plein Air painting competition. The festivities will be centered on the grounds of the Maine Town Park and will take place between 10:30 AM and 5:30 PM.

### Performance and event schedule:

**10:30 - 11:30 AM: Maine Community Band**

**11:00 AM Vendor fair opens, Chicken BBQ available until sold out**

**11:30 AM - 12:00 noon: Kenny's Choir under the direction of Hilary Rozek**

**12:00 - 2:00 PM: Brotherhood Duo featuring Kassi Rozek Profera and Jim Apricella**

**12:00 - 3:00 PM: Free trolley rides and museum tours**

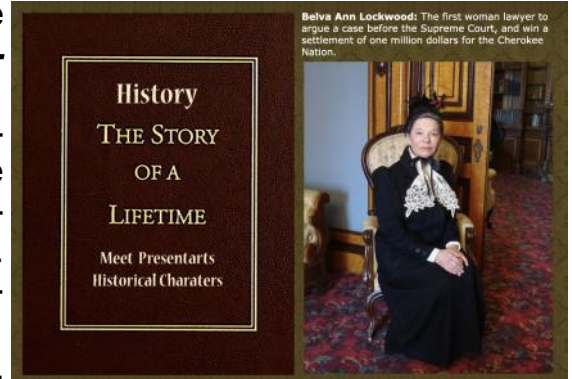
**2:00 - 3:30 PM: Friday at Fred's featuring Nino Samiani and Mark Blackwell**

**3:30 - 4:00 PM The Hometown Magic Show starring Doug Welch**

**4:00 PM Plein Air Submission and Judging**

**4:30 PM: Plein Air Exhibit and Sale**

**5:00 PM: Plein Air Awards**



### Looking forward...

**Next year** on **Memorial Day Weekend** (May 26-28, 2023), NVHS and the Town of Maine will co-host the **Demisemiseptcentennial** (175th anniversary) of Maine. We are planning 3 days of family fun starting with a community musical on Friday evening. Plans are in the works for music, art, square dancing, a general store, old-time games and contests, artisan exhibits, museum and house tours, and much, much more! We will soon be signing up volunteers, but in the meantime, if you'd like to get involved, please contact Lynn Ross (607-321-5952) or Joanne Weir (607-239-1020).

## CURATORS CORNER Sue Lisk

The archives have gone through many changes this summer. Located on the third floor, new lighting and a new thermostat was installed by Kerin Flannery and Rich McPherson. I look forward to working up there in the winter. Thank you Rich and Kerin!

While going through the files I found this interesting story written by one of our former members, Lousie Gates Gunsalus, about a chest we have in our collection.

This chest was made in the Cyrus Gates House between 1848 and 1850. It was made for Aravesta Clementine Gates, a daughter of Cyrus, by A.C. Yarrington, a New York City architect and builder employed by Cyrus. The architect was doubtless bored by the long winter evenings and so found an outlet for his energy by constructing this chest for the 12 or 14 year daughter of the house to keep her treasures in. Yarrington's home was so far away that he lived with the Gates family during the construction of the new house.

When Aravesta married, she left home to live in the village of Maine, accompanied by the chest. Some years later the family moved to Syracuse, and the chest remained with them.

Aravesta had a daughter, Mary. She graduated from Syracuse University, and years later, after the death of her husband, she attended a theological seminary in the West. Mary was a very religious woman who always wanted to be a minister. When she was past 50 years of age, she was ordained in the Baptist ministry. The chest had gone with her to California and Chicago and later, returned to Syracuse. At this time Mary looked for a church of her own and found one in Lyons, New York. She bought the church and a large house nearby. Here she lived and held services for 10 to 15 years until her death in 1945. She left the church and the house with its contents, including the chest, to the church organization.

I had heard the story of Aravesta's chest many times from my grandfather, Byron Gates. He was about the house while it was being constructed. I visited Mary in Lyons, and she showed me a quilt that her mother had made years before, The quilt was kept in the chest.

Recently I met a new resident of Maine, Wilfrid J. Cherrington. During the conversation he learned that my name before marriage was Gates. This prompted him to tell me about a chest that he had seen for sale by an antique dealer. The top, side and ends of this piece were plainly marked A.C. Gates, Maine, New York. He purchased the article because of the village name.

So Aravesta Clementine Gates' chest has returned to the place of its origin. I, as well as the Nanticoke Valley Historical Society, feel very grateful to the Cherringtons for their interest and their generosity in giving this chest to the Society.



**Plein Air class taught by Richard Henry. On October 8th join Richard for a wonderful day of art lessons in watercolor and acrylics in the Plein Air technique. It is sponsored by the Broome County Arts Council. Information will be forthcoming.**

# What going back to school was like when we were kids.

Sylvia Ward

September 8, 2021

“What going back to school was like when we were kids! Oh my goodness compared to today? Pretty simplistic. Girls wore dresses back then, so a crisp new red plaid dress was in order. If you were lucky new shoes were added. If you didn’t outgrow your shoes, the ones from last year would do. But to get new saddle shoes with new Bobbie socks would complete the first day of school outfit. No doubt this outfit would do for school pictures too. Now getting to supplies, loose leaf notebook, filler lined paper, ruler, one notebook and pencil and eraser! I don’t remember back packs. Cursive was taught back then, and there was a little hole in the right hand corner of the desk, assuming everyone was right handed! But the ink bottle would be held in that handy hole in the desk. We had pens yep! They were a plastic instrument that held the nib that had to be repeatedly dipped into that ink. If the ink spilled or smeared your paper, no eraser was invented to fix it. If it got on your fingers and inadvertently smeared your face, you would’ve sure to be snickered at. If you got it on your clothes, you could be sure to get lectured of how hard your parents worked to buy you that nice dress! Oh but technology progressed! They invented a pen with a little lever that got pulled out and the little rubber reservoir would hold your ink for you. Your pen could take you much further without interruption. Oh it gets better, I’m not sure what grade it was, that the ballpoint pen came into existence, but we knew no limits to what could be done. Little did we know what the future would hold!



Edward R. Pomeroy Sept 1977

We were most fortunate at Maine Central School, aka J R Ingalls. Wonderful caring dedicated teachers they were, now slipped into our memories forever. Mrs. Crockett had a clothing store right in town (now part of Frank’s restaurant). Those God awful one-piece blue gym suits, that were required, could conveniently be bought at Mary Crockett’s store. That beautiful building housed the gym quarters down in the basement, “Girls” on one side “Boys” on the other was embedded on the outside over the doors leading down to the gym showers and changing lockers. Oh yes and showers, a little splash on the shoulders, bare feet in the communal foot powder bin and Mrs. Crockett would check your name off as you yelled “shower”. Mrs. Spencer was our home economics teacher. I could write a whole book on her. I loved her class. We sewed a gathered skirt in 7th, blouse in 8th and a dress in 9th. Which included the grand finale of a fashion show and the end of the year! Can you imagine how she must of kept her composure, with that many girls and teaching them to sew straight. Not to mention keeping their shoe box supplies in order and put back in the cubby hole when they were done. But the only time I remember her “losing it” was, when she had two girls (you know who you are) stay after school to make special sugar cut out cookies for the facility tea at the end of the week. Well the girls had let their taste testing get away from them. Yep their baking was so tasty they did not stop. Cookies all devoured and consequences to face. I think everybody in that school heard about that dirty deed. Mrs. Spencer’s exclamation of “oh horrors” was repeated over and over. And Mrs. Spencer’s husband, Mr. Spencer taught history. He too was a colorful character. He got the name “Charlie pill box”. I’m not sure why but I believe he had a throat condition and coughed quite a bit. He would nonchalantly would bring up a tin and slip a pill to calm the persistent cough. A small group of us joined his “Jr. Historical Club” we would make note of the locals and lug the giant reel to reel recorder to make a record of what life was like so long ago. He took us to Cooperstown for the day one Saturday. It was fun to get to know him in a relaxed fun setting, far away from the ridged classroom. But then he was quick with his knowledge to give us a personal guided tour. And who could forget Dorothy Raftis, with the Bunsen burners and the different bubbling glass beakers ready to stretch your mind into the unknown experiments.

I loved lunch time. I always bought my lunch, those lunch ladies cooked tasty wholesome lunches. Mac n cheese with beets was my favorite. Next Spanish rice, and unforgettable tomato soup and toasted cheese. The gov. supplemented butter and cheese made the best sandwiches. We could buy a small 5 cent cup of ice cream with a wooden spoon that felt like it wanted to stick to your tongue, as we savored the sweet ending. Lunch time was always noisy, we would be wound up good before recess, to get rid of all that excess energy.

I could go on forever, maybe more another time. I can only hope this generation (our grandchildren) can not only get the best education, but they too can cherish their memories of school days, like I have. Wishing the best for them, as they grow learn and remember.”



Our fourth site has been sitting idle since it was donated by the Bowers foundation in 1979. We funneled our energy and monies into the restoration of the Mill , moving the school house from Bornt hill road and upgrading and maintaining our main museum building It is the location of the Norton Carriage shop ca. 1840. It is just east of Tiona Road and it contains two barn structures. The building closest to Nanticoke road was the location where they built carriages, wagons and sleighs, operating until 1921. The Norton family was the first to settle this area around 1794 and later it was called Bowers Corners after Gardiner Bowers who came here around 1822. Bowers corners was a busy crossroad with: the carriage shops, school house, general store and about a dozen families. NVHS has plans to turn the western barn into a museum highlighting the carriage business and agricultural implements. Since the area floods we will need to raise the two structures a few feet among at least one thousand other things. The second structure we hope to turn into a meeting room and gallery. The grounds will be restored including planting Rhododendrons'. Dr. Clement Bowers who was the third generation to live at Bowers Corners was a botanist who developed Rhododendrons which were hardy in the northern climate, Cornell has a series of gardens named after Clement Bowers. We also hope to link the school house via a nature trail and to build a bridge across the Nanticoke to join Pitchers grist mills to the other buildings via a walking trail. We hope to have community involvement for this massive undertaking.



ca 1890

Carriages were painted on the second floor to avoid dust. They were ramped down.



## President's Page

“ I’d like to take my space in this newsletter to say thank you to our small, but ambitious group of volunteers. Since some of the COVID restrictions have eased, we have tried to fit a lot of diverse activities into our summer. We’ve had some great monthly coffeehouses, diverse monthly member programs, distributed newsletters, hosted a BBQ, a members’ picnic, quilting classes, done some amazing work at the mill and Norton Waggon Shops, opened the museum for Sunday tours, and helped the Town of Maine begin the planning for the Town of Maine’s 175th Anniversary Celebration coming up next Memorial Day Weekend. In the next couple of weeks we’ll be putting another Maine Fest in the books!



The fall will be no different as we try to stay on pace with some new and interesting offerings. We have been doing frequent short email newsletters to promote our events. If you are a member who doesn’t use the computer and receives this newsletter via mail, you may be able to ask a friend or relative to receive the short email newsletters and relay the information to you. The advertising/notification landscape has changed a bit and we use our website, Facebook, and phone tree to let people know about our activities, but I am sure we miss people. If you would like to designate someone to receive our email notifications, please have them write to us at: [nvhsmaineny@gmail.com](mailto:nvhsmaineny@gmail.com). They can also “Like” our Facebook page. So please stay tuned as we head into the fall and thanks again to all our volunteers. We have some great plans for the fall and winter please join us!

**Historic Building Group.** NVHS along with 8 other small museums located in Broome and Tioga counties have organized into a small forum that shares ideas with one other. We have been meeting for two years every two months in order to assist each other. Deposit Historical society, Phelps museum, Roberson museum, Kilmer museum, Bundy museum, Vestal museum, Newark Valley Historical society and Tioga County Historical museum have all worked together to improve the historical experience throughout the region.

## IN MEMORIAM



Russell C. Jackson May 5, 2022  
Zenon J. Rutkowski May 12, 2022  
Raymond L. (Butch) Ward May 21, 2022







Charlene Thomson and Gordie Gottlieb provided the entertainment for the annual NVHS summer picnic held in the town park..



**WOODSTOCK  
MUSIC & ART FAIR  
PRESENTS AN  
AQUARIAN EXPOSITION  
IN WHITE LAKE, N.Y.**



Jimi Hendrix



Grateful Dead



Janis Joplin

★ ★ ★  
**3 Days of  
Peace & Music  
AUGUST 1969**  
★ ★ ★

Music Starts at 4:00 pm on Fri. and 1:00 pm Sat. & Sun.

**FRIDAY 15th**

MELANIE  
JOAN BAEZ  
ARLO GUTHRIE  
RICHIE HAVENS  
SLY AND THE  
FAMILY STONE  
JOHN SEBASTIAN  
SHA-NA-NA  
SWEETWATER

**SATURDAY 16th**

CANNED HEAT  
CREEDENCE  
CLEARWATER  
GRATEFUL DEAD  
JANIS JOPLIN  
JEFFERSON AIRPLANE  
SANTANA  
THE WHO  
COUNTRY JOE  
AND THE FISH

**SUNDAY 17th**

THE BAND  
JEFF BECK GROUP  
BLOOD, SWEAT AND  
TEARS  
JOE COCKER  
CROSBY, STILLS &  
NASH  
JIMI HENDRIX  
IRON BUTTERFLY  
TEN YEARS AFTER  
JONNY WINTERS

**HUNDREDS OF ACRES TO ROAM ON**

Ticket Prices, One Day \$7.00  
Two Days \$13.00. Three Days \$18.00

Where were you in August 1969? Woodstock was held less than two hours from Maine NY via route 17. However it might have taken longer since you probably walked in due to the massive traffic jam. .





When the Slosson brothers decided to build a grist mill they sought the perfect place next to the Nanticoke Creek. North of the site they built a small coffer dam across the creek and diverted the water along a sluiceway to a small pond next to the building. Water was channeled under the mill to turn a water wheel and for the next 190 years water flowed beneath the mill. How many floods have there been since 1830? The flood of 2011 brought the water level to within one foot of the first floor. When Janet Bowers donated the mill to NVHS Tom Kotasek was the one who brought the mill back to "life" and this was done over 30 years ago!. Last summer after a day of volunteer clean-up, the crew noted a sagging stone wall beneath the structure. The wall had to be strengthened and supported as it was holding up a huge timber which spanned the structure beneath the building. This summer the restoration crew headed by Kerin Flannery waited for the water level to drop so work could begin. It is mostly done by hand since machines cannot get underneath and the ground is so "mucky" that they would sink into the ground. Hopefully with weather remaining dry the work can be completed by early fall and the mill could be open for tourists. Work will include external work on the grounds and a new paint job. The historic significance in Broome county is immense as it is one of the oldest grist mills still standing in the county.

### Call for Plein Air Artists - Registration for September 10 event is now open

Sign ups are now being taken for participants in the outdoor Plein Air painting contest. Artists must register by contacting Phil Childs ([achild233@aol.com](mailto:achild233@aol.com)), 607-862-3405 or Richard Henry ([henry.artist1@gmail.com](mailto:henry.artist1@gmail.com)) 607-754-0535. *This event is made possible thanks to the generous support of the Town of Maine, Town of Maine Rec Committee, and the Broome County Arts Council.*



School visitations returned this spring when second grade students from Newark Valley school district and students from Homer Brink Elementary school visited our school house and museum. This was the first time in over two years that we were able to hold school tours.



We are pleased to announce that the Broome County Arts Council has awarded a grant to NVHS. We will continue our fine arts programs which include: 1. a **Plein Air class taught by Richard Henry. On October 8th**, and 2. A **Paint Out on September 10** during the MaineFest



BROOME COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL  
**UNITED CULTURAL FUND**  
**NANTICOKE VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MAINE, NY**

**2022 UNITED CULTURAL FUND PROJECT GRANT RECIPIENT**  
 provided by the Broome County Arts Council

*Nancy Barno Reynolds*  
 NANCY BARNO REYNOLDS  
 Executive Director

April 7, 2022  
 DATE

BAT returns to Maine.....On October 1st and 2nd Broome County Arts Council will host its third annual **Broome Art Trail**. Over 50 venues throughout Broome County will house artwork. We at NVHS will host five artists; Suzanne Wirth, Ken Weir, Sue Gottlieb, Phil Childs and Luke Kaczynski. Hearts of Hope will also be represented here in Maine "*Hearts of Hope's mission is to help those with grief and loss find hope. We strive to be a partner in a journey that begins in sadness and moves forward with opportunities for empowerment, healing, resilience and growth. Our 'Paint with a Purpose' healing art program offers a path for communities to create and deliver hope, in the form of small handmade Hearts of Hope gifts, as beacons of light and hope for those facing tragedy and trauma.*"

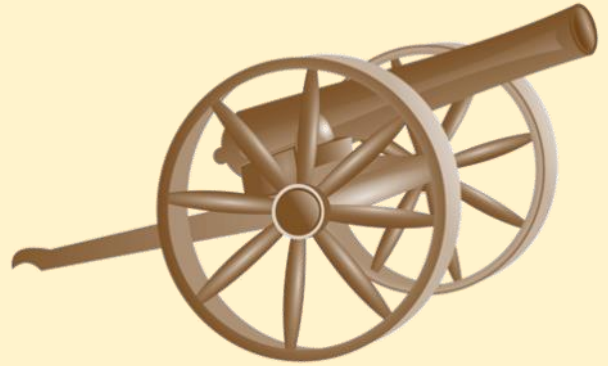


Barn Quilts, are you familiar with the term? NVHS will be conducting a class in creating one for your home or barn. Information will be coming on how to enroll in this program/ Check our website for enrollment forms. Also we have just ended our quilting class taught by Linda Austin. Quilting will be part of our 175th celebration as it was in 125th and 150th town celebration.



Old cannon lost in Union Center, Shirley Woodward from the  
125th anniversary celebration book 1973, p.65

“Residents were firm supporters of the Union. When President Lincoln called for volunteers, Maine immediately raised a whole company. When they were informed that the call had been over-subscribed, the men were forced to wait. Eventually all joined different regiments. This small town sent 190 to fight in the Army, a high percentage not exceeded by many communities. Fifteen were killed or died of other causes. The main event of the day for town folks was the arrival of the mail and letters from local soldiers. During the War, the home guard of Union Center obtained a small cannon to protect the community, and installed it at the corner of the Congregational Church cemetery. One night it was stolen by the Maine home guard and placed in the village square at Maine Village. The Union Center guard was naturally incensed. A skirmish occurred, and the Union Center people recaptured their cannon. The Maine guard would not let the matter rest, and a more serious battle erupted in the Union Center church yard. During the fracas, the cannon was pushed off the hill. It rolled across the road, down an embankment, and sank deep in the mud of the Brazilla Howard mill pond. It was never recovered.”



This past month the MIT's from summer rec. volunteered to help out the NVHS. One task they did was to scrape and paint the picket fence at the 1845 school house. As their leader Chris started the task they followed in his leadership, as did the friends of Tom Sawyer did in the 1876 novel "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" by Mark Twain. Over twenty years ago the original paint job was part of a boy scout project. It seems that fence painting is a natural for volunteers. Thanks to all that participated.



Nanticoke Valley Historical Society,

PO Box 75 , Maine, NY 13802

September 1, 2022 Issue # 3

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Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Dues: \_\_\_\_\_ \$20.00 Individual \_\_\_\_\_ \$35.00 Family \_\_\_\_\_ \$20 Senior/Student \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 Patron \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 Business \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Newsletter: Mailed or Electronic

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

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

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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