

# Nanticoke Valley Historical Society

## 2023 Newsletter # 2 September

edited by Phil Childs

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

See us on Facebook



### Officers 2023

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:	Joanne Weir	239-1020
Museum Archivist:	Sue Lisk	862 9705
Mill Curator:	Luke Kaczynski	239-8009
Town of Maine Historian:	Susan H. Lisk	

### The Board of Trustees\*

**Emeritus:** Linda Hansen, Bob Lawler, Rita McKeon

**2023:** Kerin Flannery, Lynn Ross, Luke Kaczynski

**2024:** Bill Austin, Phil Childs, Christine Clifton-Kendall

**2025:** Dixie Kucharski, Carla Sullivan, Sandy Rozek

\* 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.

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Peek - a - Boo

Greetings Everyone, After our four day 175th celebration in May, we continue with our salute to Maine, NY. with our annual **Maine Fest**. Notice that our location is at our newest site the J. Ralph Ingalls building which along with our four other locations are the Nanticoke Valley Historical Society. We have invested a lot of energy into the maintenance and clean up of J. Ralph and we are prepared to use it for various events through out the year. Please check our upcoming events listed in this newsletter to see how full our schedule is for this year. January is the beginning of our new year so consider sending in your membership forms for 2024. Thanks for your continued support, Gordie



PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE  
**MINI-MAINE FEST  
 BBQ AND PLEIN AIR  
 PAINT OUT**

**SATURDAY  
 SEPTEMBER 9 2023  
 11 AM - 5 PM**

J RALPH INGALLS SCHOOL  
 35 CHURCH STREET  
 MAINE, NY

**MUSIC:**

DREAMBIRD - 11 AM - 12 PM  
 MARISA & JORDAN - 12 PM - 2 PM  
 AUSTIN MACRAE - 2 PM - 4 PM

**BOOK SALE - 11 AM - 4PM**

**ART SHOW BEGINS AT 4:00 PM  
 JUDGING & AWARDS AT 4:30 PM**



**BRING YOUR  
 LAWN CHAIRS!**

**SCAN THE QR CODE  
 BELOW LEARN MORE  
 ABOUT A PLEIN AIR PAINT OUT**

**SMOKEY LEGEND  
 BBQ FOOD TRUCK**



**PLEASE NOTE: THE BBQ AND MUSIC WILL TAKE PLACE ON SEPTEMBER 9TH RAIN OR SHINE.  
 THE PLEIN AIR AND ART SHOW WILL MOVE TO SEPTEMBER 10TH IN THE CASE OF RAIN**

**EVENT PRESENTED BY THE NANITCOKE VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
 NANITCOKEVALLEYHISTORICALSOCIETY.COM**



# Call for Artists!

Attention All Artists, there will be a one day **Paint Out** in Historic Maine New York on Saturday, September 9th 2023. Rain Date Sunday September 10th, 2023

From 7:00 AM until 4:00 PM. Rain date will be Sunday September 10th  
This is a non-juried show with awards following the judging that day.  
Judging will be held at the J. Ralph Ingalls building, 35 Church St. Maine, NY

This event is part of the 2023 Maine Fest.  
Other activities include live music, tours, displays and food vendors.

Paint time from 7:00 AM until 4:00 PM. Open to all skill levels

*Come and get your paint on!!*

For information and to register contact:

Philip Childs at:  
achild233@aol.com/  
Ph: 607 862 3405  
or  
Richard Henry at:  
henry.artist1@gmail.  
com/607 754 0535



## Newark Valley's 42nd *Apple Festival* October 7 & 8, 2023 10 AM - 5 PM



\$6 Adults; \$5 Seniors (60+)  
\$4 Students (6+)  
\$4 NVHS Members  
\$20 Family (2 adults, 3+ kids)  
**FREE PARKING**

Tickets available at  
[nvhistory.org](http://nvhistory.org)

Please...**NO PETS**



Apples; Pie, Crisp, Ice Cream  
Live Music--Stage & Barn  
BBQ, Soup, Salt Potatoes  
Artisans' Marketplace  
Apple Dessert Contest  
Barnista Coffee Cafe'  
Charming Gift Shop  
Historic Portrayals  
Blacksmith Demo  
Kids' Activities  
Pumpkin Carving  
Horse & Wagon Rides  
Demos of 1800's Skills  
Sycamore Bridge & Trails  
Mountain Men & Women  
Farmstead Museum Tours

*...and much more!*



9241 Rt. 38; 1 mile N. of Newark Vly.; 20 mi. S. of Dryden





**Thomas Marean** (1753 - 1829) and his wife **Esther Patterson Marean** (1756- 1832)  
 played by Keegen Lynch and Kaz Maney.

**Levi Henry Baldwin** (1832-1907) and his wife **Sarah Carter Bolles Baldwin** (1839 - 1909)  
 played by Richard and Maribeth Baldwin

**Gardner Sawin Bowers** (1802-1882) played by Don Vanhart

**Isaac Thomas Lamb** (1813 - 1907) played by Yancey Moore

**Lyman Pollard** (1809 - 1907) played by Sam Smith

**Sue Lisk** introducing Gardner Bowers

This event was created by Sue Lisk, town of Maine historian and NVHS archivist. The program will be presented as a video on our website this fall.

***History in the Headstones* Maine Cemetery**

**August 2023**



## *The Move to Maine*

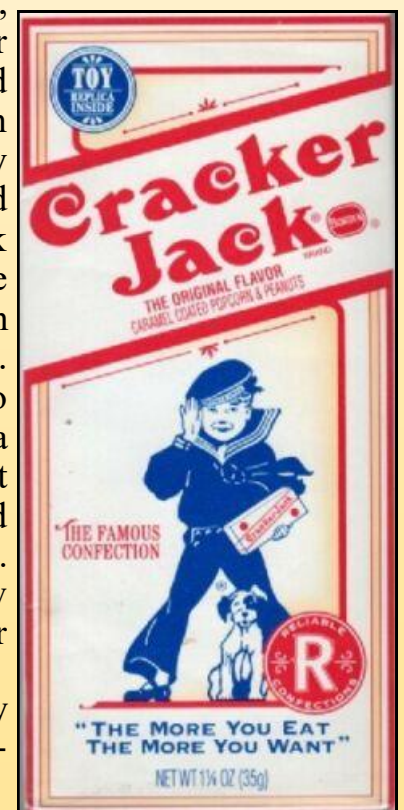
By **Sylvia Ward**

“Moving from Ketchumville, my world was suddenly expanded to people, lots of them close by. This place quickly became my town. No more isolation or lonely long days by myself. Winters even felt warmer here. And a gang of playmates was the best part. It was 1949 and I was 6 years old. My parents bought a house here in Maine. My Dad was a tractor trailer driver and my Mom was a hard working upper leather tannery worker at EJ’s. It also meant she could catch the bus from Endicott and get off at Harvey’s store, and only walk about a quarter mile to get home. It also meant she would be home a lot earlier, especially in the winter.

It was early spring when they bought the house. Mr. Davis was in the process of transitioning an outhouse to a toilet. But it was not quite completed. But using an old metal Maxwell Coffee can and pouring it down a pipe was a far cry from the outhouse at the farm. Eventually my Dad put in a gleaming shiny white toilet. My grandmother was so delighted with this convenience, she used it to wash her muddy feet from coming in from the garden. She always went barefoot. Oh to just wash away the dirt, only with the flick of the handle and then more clean water. But my mom got suspicious when she noticed metal scrape marks on the sides of her prized porcelain throne! She finally caught grandma mopping the kitchen floor. Yep ! No mop pail! To her horror in went tide detergent with a splash of Clorox, with a slosh of the metal mop into the bowl. It’s a wonder this caustic combo didn’t blow up. Not to mention what it would do to the septic, if she was allowed to continue. Oh but then came the bathtub! We always laughed at grammas pure delight of splashing around in that bathtub. Now mind you on the farm, taking a bath meant, carrying pails of water in, heating on the wood stove, a round galvanized wash tub would be placed in front of the wood stove in the living room. I was always grateful I was a young only child. That meant I got in first. I think Gramma was last.

This house was equipped with an ole time crank phone, hanging on the wall. It meant you would share the line with your neighbors. Then we got a hand held which had the speaker and hearing all built in. It also meant you could sit and chat rather than reaching and speaking into a separate piece on the wall. Now my world was really opening up. We were the last in the neighborhood to get a tv. Radio was our constant companion. An old hand crank Victrola was my entertainment on the farm. Now I could hear the adventures of “Hopalong Cassidy” “Roy Rogers” and “The Green Hornet”. Eventually we folded and indulged in a tv. I believe Mrs. Guiles next door always invited my mom and I to come over to watch “Alfred Hitchcock” which helped speed the decision. Well a black and white tv was a welcome presence in our living room, but if the wind blew! That would mean the antenna on the roof would need adjusting, to rescue the coveted image from the snowy screen. So I would climb on the roof and Gramma from an open window would yell when to stop turning. As a side note my Mother never found out.

I was allowed to walk to Harvey’s store to buy penny candy and an occasional 5 cent box of Cracker Jacks. And to think just another block away was another grocery store, Mitchell’s .



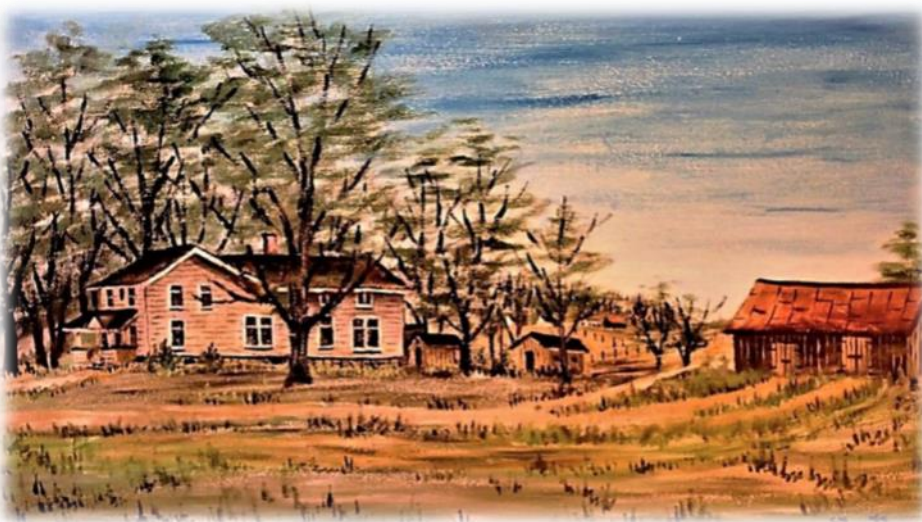
Ward continued

Being part of a neighborhood gang filled my days with cops and robbers, cowboy and Indians, kick the can, and playing in the Nanticoke creek. I was delighted until my Grandmothers call to come in. She did not call me “Sylvia” she called me by my Ukrainian name “Zoysha”. But she would call me with a sing song emphasis on that name. Which always caused an explosion of laughter with the gang.

Another reason I loved moving to Maine was my Aunt Katy was closer. She lived on top of King Hill. In fact my Gramma would don her “Babushka” and she and I would walk up King hill, and barefoot at that. Oh my Mother was not happy with that because of my heart murmur! The bottoms of our feet were tough like soles on shoes. A few people in Maine still pick on me to this day about always being barefoot back then.

Because of my closeness to my Gramma, I was always befriending other older people in the neighborhood. Mrs. Guiles right next door. She worked in the egg cellar at McGregor’s up the road. It was nothing for her to get out of Mr. McGregor’s truck hanging on 2 dead chickens by their feet or carrying a can of eggs. I remember her molasses cookies. Her larder was always full for us. And she didn’t skimp, they were huge and delicious. Mrs. Soule and her husband lived in a rustic little cabin, where the Maine Plaza is now. They were a childless couple, who delighted in my presence. Gramma and I would pick strawberries for them for their roadside stand. She eventually discovered I was struggling with reading. She introduced me to poetry and classics over tea through the years. She was always building me up and I grew up with her as my close friend. She also became “Grammy” to my children. I did not realize until she died that the child she lost at birth would have been my age had she lived. Then there was **Gurtha Durfee!** Everybody was afraid of her! But somehow I got the nerve to pick her flowers from her yard and gingerly knock on her door to timidly present them to her. She was delighted and invited me in. Our chats consisted of plants to houseplants and her giving me slips of snake plant, spider and aloe Vera. My only regret was I had wished I wrote down all she told me about growing up in Maine as a kid. She was a storehouse of history. That was a treasured friendship that was so dear also.

Many memories were made here in my home town. I have so much more, and will try to get them down. As we progress forward, may we always be mindful of the importance of preserving these memories today and yesterday.” *Sylvia Ward*



Gurtha Durfee farm painting by Clarence Stratton in 1970. The location of this farm is where the former NBT bank was, today we would say it was located where the Zimmer building of the town of Maine is located. Gurtha Henrietta *Mooers* Durfee 1875—1968, husband George George Julius Durfee 1872—1958, married in 1910

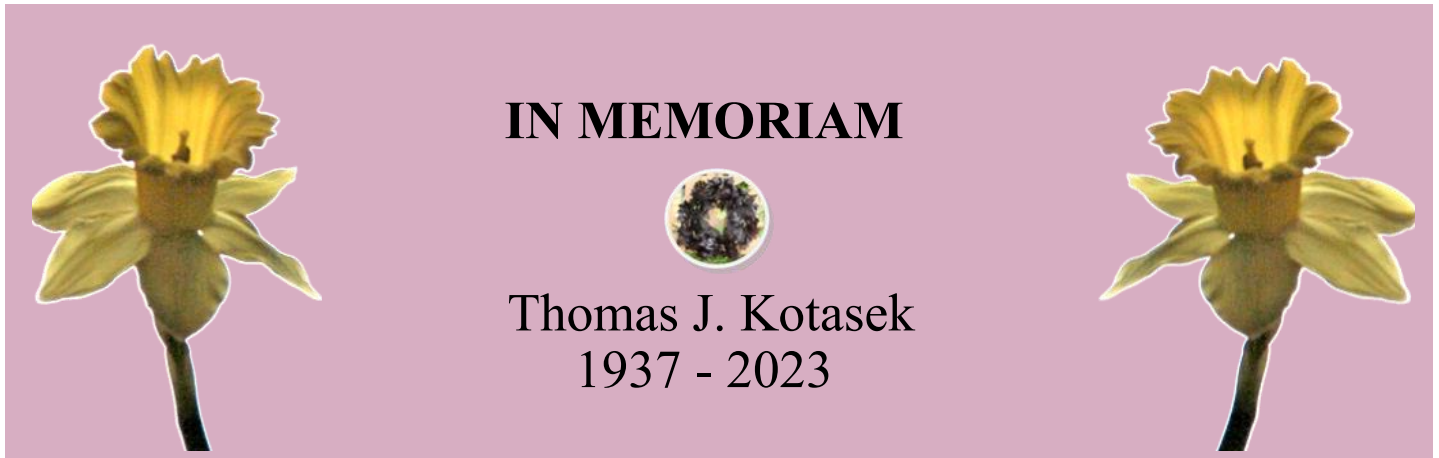




**Jerry Russell** of Liverpool NY was part of our Plein Air completion last year. His painting of Nanticoke Creek (left) won first place. Join us on Saturday September 9th for this years artists **Paint Out** and see how an artist views Maine, NY The original paintings are for sale at this event. [www. Jerryrussellart.com](http://www.Jerryrussellart.com)



Two views of our post office on Main and Church streets. Photograph by Richard McPherson and painting by Scott Yurko.



Our archives at the museum are full of stories of remarkable people who once lived here in the Nanticoke Valley and I would like to tell you about one of my very favorite, **Tom Kotasek**.

In 1988 the Bowers Foundation gave Pitcher's Grist Mills to the Nanticoke Valley Historical Society. Tom's love of that mill and his special skills were well known throughout the Town of Maine. As a young boy Tom rode to the mill with his father, Mathew so when the time came Tom was asked to head the massive restoration that was needed to bring the mill back to its' former glory. In 1993 the work started. Tom was aided by his son Mark , his brothers , Bob Griffin, and many of the Maine residents, to complete the work in time for the Town of Maine sesquicentennial in 1998. Through their efforts guided tours of the Mill continue today.



Tom was also responsible for the WWII Maine veterans' monument that is located in front of the Town Hall on Main Street. It took a lot of research to find all the names that are on that monument!

There is no part of the museum, inside or out, that has not received Tom's attention. One morning as I drove up to the back of the museum I saw Tom laying on the ground under a side wall. He was hand chiseling out a very large rotted beam so he could replace it with another one. Windows received the same treatment. The sign out front was replaced. We would not have a kitchen at the museum if it wasn't for Tom putting a stove and sink as well as a hot water heater in our pantry. Tom worked on every roof on all our buildings until his wife, Anna told him he was not to risk his life up there! Tom also replaced many of the windows at the Norton Wagon Shops always looking for the historically correct style to do the job.

Then the floods hit in 2006 and 2011. Tom coordinated the clean up and recovery efforts at the Nanticoke Valley Historical Society in replacing the furnace, helping Darwin McKittrick rebuild the museum foundation and replacing the cellar windows.

I am sure I have not mentioned all of the things Tom has accomplished on our behalf. There is no one like you Tom!

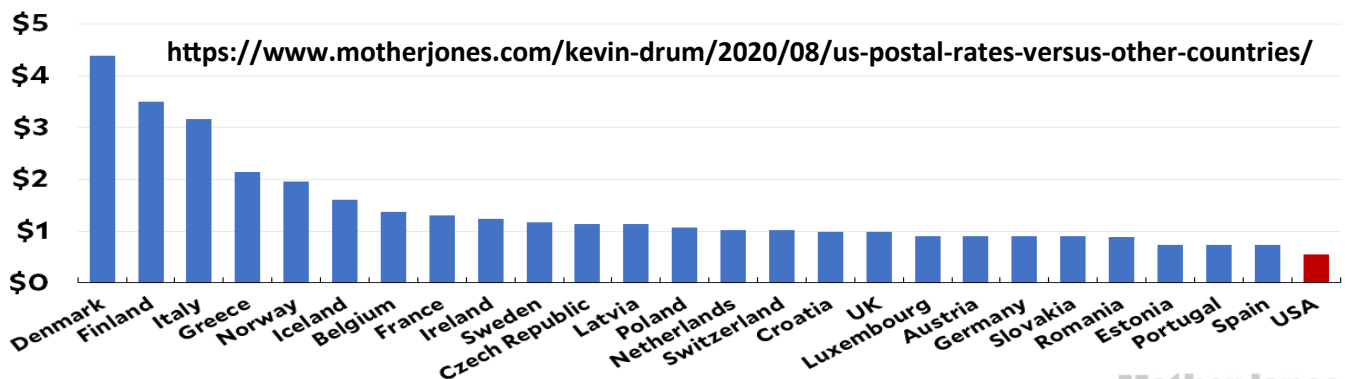
Tom passed away April 12,2023 at the age of 86. We want you to know we all appreciate everything you did for us and you will be missed here in the Nanticoke Valley. Thank you Tom. Good bye for now. Sue Lisk





Photo by **Franck Bowers** ca. 1900. He was the son of Lamont Montgomery Bowers 1847—1941 and Fanny Adella Gray 1852—1909. Frances Benedict Nicoll Bowers 1877—1953 was his wife. His brother was Clement Gray Bowers 1893—1973, He was a painter , photographer and illustrator. <https://nyheritage.org/collections/bowers-collection> This photograph is possibly of the Pitcher farm in Maine,, NY

## Cost of First Class Postage Europe and the US



Source: Deutsche Post

Mother Jones

# Esther Jane Flint Bowers 1839—1914



ca 1900

## MAINE

Mrs. Esther J. wife of Charles G. Bowers died very suddenly last Tuesday night shortly before twelve o'clock. Mrs. Bowers was in her usual health when she retired she had been making calls in this village the afternoon before, and appeared to be in unusually good spirits. She is survived by her husband who is an invalid. Mrs. Bowers was about seventy four years of age, and had always lived in this vicinity. She was an excellent neighbor and friend and a member of the Congregational Church of this place. Funeral services were held at her late home last Friday afternoon, her pastor Rev. M. L. Dalton officiating. The funeral was largely attended by friends and relatives both from this place and out of town.

“When Esther Jane Flint was born in 1839, in Hancock, Hillsborough, New Hampshire, United States, her father, William Jackson Flint, was 24 and her mother, Annis Marean, was 22. She died on 16 June 1914, in Maine, Broome, New York, United States, at the age of 75, and was buried in Maine Cemetery, Endicott, Union, Broome, New York, United States.”

<https://>

[ancestors.familysearch.org/en/LJL8-MX6/esther-jane-flint-1839-1914](https://ancestors.familysearch.org/en/LJL8-MX6/esther-jane-flint-1839-1914)

Esther and Charles were married in 1860 and they lived at 2895 NYS Route 26. It is the one with the flag on the barn next door. The flag was painted in 1976 for the towns bicentennial celebration. Esther was a milliner (hat maker) and her shop was in the hamlet. The photo of her in the sleigh is in front of the Lamont Bowers home on Tiona and Nanticoke roads. The photo is from: <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/219543809/esther-jane-bowers>



## News from the Vice President...

### Looking forward to 2024!

Are you interested in joining a **Book Club** at the Historical Society? Starting after the first of the year we will meet, on average, once a month to discuss books that are historically connected. These may be historical fiction or nonfiction, and the group will be choosing books after the first meeting. If you are interested in joining the book club, or would simply like more information, please email Joanne Weir at [jweir551@gmail.com](mailto:jweir551@gmail.com) and include the words "Book Club" in the subject line. We are offering members priority in signing up before we offer this program to the public.

Stay tuned for updates on another exciting series of events coming next year - **Try It On Tuesdays** - when we will offer monthly 'one night stand' classes in a vast array of areas! Members will be given the first opportunity to sign up for these classes (class size will be limited).

### 2024 Officers needed!

Many hands make light work and we certainly have seen the results of this in the work that's been done both at J Ralph Ingalls and the museum. The terms of our **President** and **Vice President** are expiring and we need our members to consider stepping up to a new role. If you, or someone you know, is interested in learning more about these opportunities, please contact Gordie Gottlieb or Joanne Weir.

### Upcoming programs...

Schedule of Events for Nanticoke Valley Historical Society of Maine NY

#### AUGUST

**Saturday August 26th 9 AM—noon** Sale of furniture and commercial kitchen materials in the J. Ralph Gym. (Whatever is leftover we will set up a last-minute giveaway on August 27th).

**28 Monday 5 –6 PM Picnic** J. Ralph Ingalls school (indoors) on Church St. Followed by a **free concert** 6:30—8:00 PM

#### SEPTEMBER

**9 Saturday 11– 4 plus Mini Maine Fest** J. Ralph Ingalls School Church St.

Plein Air Paint Out competition and sale (4:00- 5:00 Judging and artists present works), Smokey Legions BBQ 11 starting, Book Sale in gymnasium, Bake Sale, Pop-up general store, Ice cream

**TBA Auction** in Owego of items from J Ralph collection

#### OCTOBER

**7 Saturday Broome Art Trail 11 AM—4 PM** J. Ralph Ingalls Church St. - sale, exhibit, live music and art demonstrations Nine artists

**16 Monday Members meeting 7 PM** tentative program meet the authors. Bowers museum 13 Nanticoke Road

#### NOVEMBER

**20 Monday Members meeting 7 PM** TBA Slate of officers and trustees introduced.

#### DECEMBER

**16 Saturday Holiday Coffee House and Members Meeting 7 PM** Maine Federated Church 2615 Main St (route 26) in Maine.

**Meetings will resume in March 2024**

J. Ralph  
Ingalls  
Prior to 1980  
Name on  
front façade.



35 Church street was willed to NVHS by Mike McKiligan in 2023. We are currently working on the building.

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### Renew Your Membership Today

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

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

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

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Newsletter: Mailed (Add \$5:00) or Electronic

Dues: \_\_\_\_\_ Individual \$25.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Family \$35.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Senior/Student \$20.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Patron \$50.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Business \$100.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Donation

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

Nanticoke Valley Historical Society, PO Box 75, Maine, NY 13802

Save a stamp and renew online <https://nanticokevalleyhistoricalsociety.com/become-a-member>