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# NANTICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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## Local Civil War Veterans Honored in Observance of 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg

After success at Chancellorsville, Virginia, General Robert E. Lee confidently marched his forces through the Shenandoah Valley crossing into Pennsylvania on July 1, 1863. The advancing Confederates were confronted at Gettysburg by the Union's Army of the Potomac commanded by General George G. Meade. Fierce fighting continued throughout the next day at various sites surrounding the small farming town. On July 3, Lee ordered an attack at Cemetery Ridge. The assault known as "Pickett's Charge," weakened the Union lines but failed to break through. On July 4, Lee was forced to withdraw his troops and return to Virginia. As we observe the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg, it's important to note the local men who volunteered to fight with the Union Forces. The following names are on file at the Nanticoke Historical Society Offices. For the sake of space, we have given a brief note about each, but more information can be obtained on these men as well as family names listed by obtaining an **Historical Research Request Form** online or at the Historical Society offices.

**Alexander, J.P.** Enlisted in Union Army 4/22/1861 under Maj. Gen W.H. Gore, Co. 1 1<sup>st</sup> Reg. Reserves, Infantry Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Reg. US Infantry. Served in 32 battles and skirmishes including Gettysburg, Interred at Newport Cemetery.

**Alexander, John** – Served in the 41<sup>st</sup> PA Infantry

**Alexander, Eugene** – Served in the 41<sup>st</sup> PA Infantry

**Arnold, Levin**, Served in the war of the rebellion. Interred at Hanover Green Cemetery

**Carey, John** – Died 1918 -

**Cosler, Jacob** – Member of the G.A.R., a fraternal organization composed of veterans of the Union Army, US Navy, Marines and Revenue Cutter

## 1956 – 57 YEARS AGO IN NANTICOKE

In this publication of our newsletter we chose to focus on the year 1956 and topics of interest appearing in the Times Leader Evening News. Here are some of the things that were happening in Nanticoke from July to December of that year.

### July

The largest budget in the history of the Nanticoke School District, \$767,425 was adopted.

Nanticoke Businessmen's Association planned the first Friday the 13th sales promotions. Over 35 to 40 stores participated.

One of Nanticoke's oldest landmarks, the **Cimmet's Building** was being remodeled. The Sterling Variety Store housed in the building, was established by **Harry Cimmet** 47 years prior.

### August

Leonard Pawlowski representing the executive group of Samantha Mill Citizens Committee appeared before Mayor **Frank E. Kielar** and members of city council to request the quit claim deed be furnished to trustees of the estate so construction of the \$100,000 library could begin. Atty. **Charles Makar** informed the committee that the deed would be ready and submitted to the mayor for proper signatures. The mayor announced that the city will maintain the balance of the Mill estate grounds surrounding the library to the best of its ability. Also present at the meeting were **Alois Bohinski** and **Martin Zaniecki**.

### September

The Tank Company of the 109<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment in Nanticoke planned to sponsor a Miss Nanticoke Tanker contest. Members were

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Local Civil War Veterans      *Cont'd from page 1*

Service who served in the American Civil War.

**Culp, Peter** - 149<sup>th</sup> Reg. PA Volunteers Bucktail Brigade. Came to Nanticoke in 1890.

**Culver, John M.** – Lived on Allen Street in West Nanticoke.

**Davis, William L.** – fought at the battle of Gettysburg was wounded by saved by a fellow soldier. Resided on E. Green Street

**Dunn, John** – Enlisted in Co K of the 187 Regiment served in the war for three years. Married to, Frances E. Coolbaugh of Hanover Township. He lived in Nanticoke after the war and is buried in Hanover Green Cemetery.

**Espy, Barnet** – Served in the 41<sup>st</sup> PA Infantry

**Espy, Theodore** – Served in the 41<sup>st</sup> PA Infantry

**Fogerty, Daniel** – Is pictured in a Historical Society photo taken in front of Hill and Evans Hardware on May 30, 1893.

**Freed, John G.** – Dentist in the 200<sup>th</sup> Reg. PA Volunteers before transferring to 51<sup>st</sup> Regiment.

**Freeman, Norman** – With Co. A 90<sup>th</sup> Reg. of NY Infantry Volunteers. Lived on North Mill Street, West Nanticoke.

**Hall, John D.** – Lived on N. Mill Street, West Nanticoke.

**James, Samuel J.** – Fought at Gettysburg.

**Keithline, Peter** – Served with the 203<sup>rd</sup> PA Infantry

**King, John Perry** – Oldest surviving Civil War veteran in Wyoming Valley died in 1942. Arrived in Nanticoke in 1942. Was a member of Company I, Pa Infantry.

**Lape, Andrew A.** – Served in the 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry, died in service.

**Lape, Frank** – Served in the 52<sup>nd</sup> PA Infantry

**Lape, William** – Served in the 9<sup>th</sup> PA Infantry, imprisoned in Andersonville. Died 1864

**Leisenring, William** – Buried in Hanover Green Cemetery

**Line, Cornelius** – Served in the 41<sup>st</sup> PA Infantry

**Line, Samuel** – Served in the 41<sup>st</sup> PA Infantry

**McLeish, T.** – Officer – no other details

**Montgomery, Robert** – A member of the Conyngham Post G.A.R.

**Moyer, William** – Lived at 37 N. Mill Street, West Nanticoke

**Nash, William** – Last surviving veteran of the war from West Nanticoke in 1931.

**Owens, Edward “Pop”** - Lived at 319 E. Broad Street. Served throughout the war as a member of the 3<sup>rd</sup> PA Heavy Artillery, Died in 1924, surviving members of his family Charles Owens, Wilkes-Barre; Nora Bellas, sister and John Owens, brother, both of Nanticoke.

**Powell, John R.** – Served with Co. K 132<sup>nd</sup> Reg. Pennsylvania Volunteers

**Reese, Shadrach** – Served for three years as private under Captain John Craig and Col. J.W. Geary with the 28<sup>th</sup> Regiment Penn Volunteers. Fought at Harper's Ferry, Leesburg, Bull Run, Antietam, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. Died at his home on E. Noble Street. Is buried in Nanticoke Cemetery.

**Rinehimer, Cornelius** – Is buried at Slocum Cemetery

**Rood, Almon W.** - Served as a sharpshooter in Co. F 143<sup>rd</sup> Pennsylvania Volunteers. Moved to Nanticoke in 1875.

**Schultz, William** – Served as a sergeant in the Civil War. Lived in West Nanticoke.

**Sieple, Tillman** – Lived on E. Broad Street. Had a son Charles and daughter Mary who lived in Nanticoke. Is buried in the Nanticoke Cemetery.

**Sheppard or (Schappert), Jacob** – Survived the war – Married to Rebecca.

**Skipper, Elijah J.** – Resident of Nanticoke for 50 years. Had two daughters who remained in the area Mrs. J.L. George and Mrs. Jenkin R. Davis.

**Sorber, John** – Was with Sherman in Atlanta during the famous march to the sea. He was captured by Rebels and confined at Libby Prison.

**Sorber, Nathaniel** – Member of the Grand Army Lodge. He had two local relatives listed, Mrs. VanFossen, sister, Nanticoke and William Pressler, grandson, West Nanticoke.

**Stachowiak, Joseph T.** – Served in the 52<sup>nd</sup> PA Infantry

**Szymanowski or Szumowski, John** – Joined the Polish Legion of NY, the 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment under General Kryzanski – Lived with the Thomas Butkiewicz family in Nanticoke.

**Vandermark, John** – Buried from a relative's home in Nanticoke.

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**Walp, Nathan** – Member of the 9<sup>th</sup> PA Cavalry. Took part in march to Raleigh, North Carolina.  
**Williams, Thomas** – Was visiting relatives in Nanticoke, took ill outside the DL&W Store at the Bliss Colliery, and later passed away.  
**Womelsdorf, Jonathan** Veteran of Co. D 52, PA volunteers.

**NANTICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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**OFFICERS**

**President: Julianna Zarzycki**  
**Vice President/Corresponding Secretary/Treasurer: Chester Zaremba**

**NEWSLETTER**

Judith L. Minsavage

## Calendar of Events

### OPEN HOUSE, - BAKE SALE AND A YARD SALE

PLACE: SAMANTHA MILL HOUSE

495 E. MAIN STREET, NANTICOKE

WHEN: SEPTEMBER 14 - 9 AM. UNTIL 2 PM.

A FILM ABOUT OLD NANTICOKE AS WELL AS PHOTOS WILL BE RUNNING ALL DAY FOR EVERYONE TO SEE. THE BAKE SALE WILL FEATURE SOME HOMEMADE GOODIES AND THE YARD SALE WILL HAVE MANY SURPRISES.

### CIVIL WAR PLAY – BRIDEGROOM OF BLOWING ROCK

PLACE – CULTURAL CENTRE OF ST. FAUSTINA  
CHURCH STREET, NANTICOKE

– 7 P.M. SAT. NOV. 2 AND MATINEE 3 P.M. SUN. NOV. 3

Dietrich Theater Actor's Ensemble will present this moving play. See our facebook page for more details.

dispatched into the town to take “candid” photos of possible contestants.

**Martin Gronka**, principal of Nanticoke High School announced the initial opening of Teen House. Admission was by membership card, available at the door.

### October

Mr. and Mrs. **Martin Demko** of Centre Street, Hanover Section of Nanticoke had a mystery on their hands when they found a letter written by a Pennsylvania cavalryman during the Civil War. In the letter penned by **Edward Avery**, Co. 2, of the 9<sup>th</sup> PA Cavalry to his wife, Evaline, he wrote of the hardships of the battlefield and his concern for national politics. The letter was found in the Demko's garage stacked in a box with other old papers. Neither they, nor the parents of Mrs. Demko, who owned the home prior, were not familiar with the Avery's. A call to Kingston street commissioner Henry Avery revealed he was the grandson of the cavalryman. Mr. Avery reported his grandfather, was thrown from a horse and killed shortly after returning home. But could not account for why the Demko's had the letter.

On March 12, 1917, **William Jenkins** purchased the Leader Store from J.W. Schreiner. In 1956 Jenkins celebrated his 39<sup>th</sup> year of ownership.

### November

**Barbara Stachowiak** of West Church Street was chosen as “Miss Nanticoke Tanker” at the Tanker Ball held by the 109<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment.

The Nanticoke Businessmen's Association announced the annual “Talk Turkey” Sale. Along with specials offered in stores city-wide, over 40 turkeys were given away and a Thanksgiving dinner valued at over \$10 was awarded.

### December

Here's a sampling of goods and services offered in 1956. The Leader Store offered black heel nylon hose for 57 cents, **Wysocki's** Seafood Restaurant on South Market Street advertised an old fashioned chicken dinner with mashed potatoes, gravy, cole slaw and sliced tomato for \$1. **Bavitz** Service Station on Broadway Street sold “snow tread tires” for \$9.95. **Gallie's** Fresh and Frozen Seafood Market listed take out platters of shrimp, oysters, or deviled crab for 75 cents.

# DID YOU KNOW?

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- One Hundred and Seventy-six men from Hanover Township, which included Nanticoke, joined to fight in the Civil War. Twenty-one of these men died in battles or later from wounds obtained in battle.
- The first of fourteen volunteer companies left Luzerne Counties after the fall of Ft. Sumter on April 12, 1861,
- The Conscription Act of 1863 provided a man eligible to escape the draft by paying a \$300 fee.
- In order to cover the costs of the Civil War, on August 5, 1861, Congress passed a Revenue Act, which represented the very first income tax. The tax was repealed in 1872 and a flat rate tax was passed in 1894.

## Nanticoke Historical Society announces move

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With the scheduled demolition of two historical sites, The Nanticoke Jr. High School and the State Theatre, a group of citizens passionate about preserving local history for future generations met in 1996 and formed the Nanticoke Historical Society. In 2008, the Society moved from the manse of the First Presbyterian Church to the East Main Street home built in the early 1800's by John Mill. The last surviving member of the Mill family, Samantha, stipulated in her will that the City of Nanticoke establish a public library on the grounds of the Mill Homestead. The Mill Memorial Library was completed in 1958 and serves the community today.

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To Read More about the History of Nanticoke. Get your copy online at [www.nanticokehistoryonline.org/](http://www.nanticokehistoryonline.org/)  
Or call The Society at 570-258-1367

### History of Nanticoke City and Newport Township

*by Charles Ciesla and the Nanticoke Historical Society*

This 361 page book contains hundreds of photos, drawings illustrations and maps detailing stories dating back to 1703 thru 2003. This is an encyclopedia of facts and lore to entertain and capture the mind the reader. The fascinating stories about the early farmers, Native Americans and Miners will captivate and charm you back from the earliest days to the present. The timeline transcends through the days of early settlers through World War II and the Industrial Revolution. Experience as though you were there as the coal industry and railroads grew to incredible strength and prosperity. Re-live and visit the time when churches and schools developed into the backbone of the community. Little history is untouched in this riveting chronicle.

### Images of America - Nanticoke

*By Author Chester J. Zaremba, Nanticoke Historical Society*

This is a collection of hundreds of photos and facts collected by Mr. Zaremba and the Nanticoke Historical Society. Our latest release since December 2011. A best seller and must have for the historical enthusiast.

### Volunteer or Join

We are currently in need of people to help with photograph classification, filing, data entry, sorting and updating our current inventory of historical data. Please call us if you are interested. We appreciate any help you can give us in this regard.

***Add to our database....***

*If you have historical photos of Nanticoke and Newport Township, will can scan them into our database and immediately return them within a short period of time.*

In the five years since the move, the Society occupied the second floor of the Mill home while the South Valley Chamber of Commerce operated on the first floor. With the addition of new computers, printers and scanners as well as an expanding quantity of archival information and material it has been agreed that the Chamber will move to the second floor while the historical society utilize the first floor for their offices and to greet guests. An expected acquisition of original pieces of furniture previously taken from the home will soon be returned to the premises to be utilized and enjoyed.

There never has been a more exciting time to be a part movement to uncover as much of our history as possible. The Nanticoke Historical Society is leading in that effort. The group has diligently assembled a wealth of information that encompasses the early Indian tribes, local coal mining industry, histories of homes, churches, schools and businesses, newspaper accounts, families and lifestyles, along with an extensive collection of photographs that reflect all of the above. These records have been painstakingly assembled and documented by dedicated volunteers who tirelessly continue their quest to compile a complete history of the people, places and times of the City of Nanticoke.

Nanticoke holds a rich history of hard working men and women who against all odds left us with a heritage of which we can be proud. To learn more, go to our facebook page and web site.

*All that the historians give us are little oases in the desert of time, and we linger fondly in these, forgetting the vast tracks between one and another that were trodden by the weary generations of men. ~John Alfred Spender, The Comments of Bagshot*

## Samantha Mill Pens poem in 1910.

Here are excerpts of an untitled poem Samantha Mill penned, perhaps as she sat at the window of her family home describing all she surveyed. The poem can be seen in its entirety on our web site [www.nanticokehistoryonline.org](http://www.nanticokehistoryonline.org)

**On May the twentieth day, and clear  
And nineteen hundred and ten the year,  
Is century birthday of Mill-ground.  
Here, two descendants still are found.**

**The open fireplace, stone immense,  
With hearth and log, for fire intense  
And crane and hooks, and kettle old  
With sweetest thoughts of joys untold.**

**The library good, the books combined,  
For pleasure and for food for mind,  
The Holy Word of peace and rest  
The poets sweet, and novels best.**

**The vegetables in garden placed,  
With poppies scattered, interlaced.  
Grandmother's old and dainty pinks  
The fragrance, sweet connecting links**

**The boxwood old, no more is seen,  
But shrub and lilac still are green  
And bitter rue and celandine  
And comfrey root and sage, tea vine**

**And ramble round, from street of Main  
To Street of Green and Street Mill Lane  
Across ravine attractive too  
To College Street, is garden through**

**And View the scenic mountain blue  
Or oft of purple deep and hue  
Or misty grey or red and brown  
Or shaded green surrounds the town**

**The sweet and silent silvery eve  
It is the beauty hour believe  
As damper softly falls o'er day  
Amid a radiant light display**

**Samantha J. Mill**