

NORTH SMITHFIELD HERITAGE ASSOCIATION MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Volume V Issue V September/ October 2024

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I7th Annual Great Pumpkin Festival LANDMARK North Smithfield

September 21st, 2024

Behind the NS Middle School and High School

Il am - 5 pm

While visiting the Great Pumpkin Festival, don't forget to stop by the North Smithfield Heritage Association booth. There will be merchandise for sale

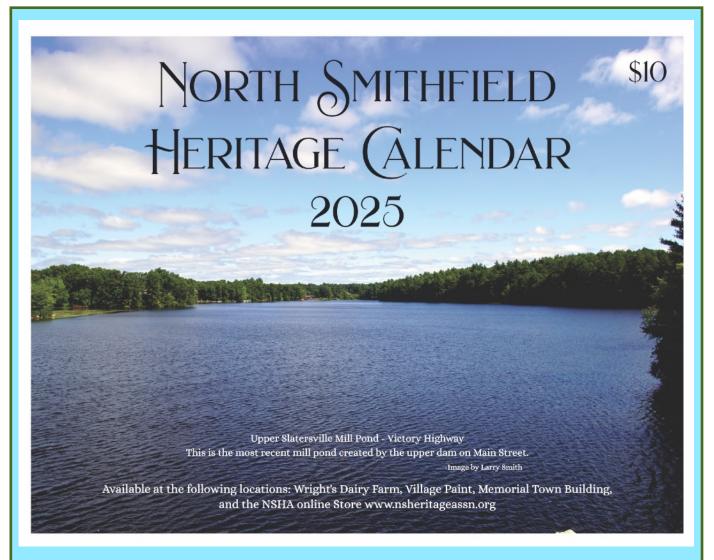
including the new 2025 calendars, throw blankets, collectible Christmas ornaments, puzzles and so much more!

Also, the Archives, Research Team and Cemetery Team will have displays highlighting their work. Please stop by to learn more!

We will also be raffling off a very special hand-crafted birdhouse you don't want to miss!







Hot off the press
NSHA 2025 Calendars!
Available at the NSHA booth at The Great Pumpkin Festival and coming soon to local merchants!







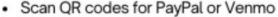


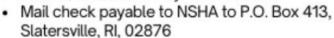
COMMUNITY ANNUAL APPEAL

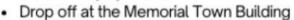
We rely on you to help preserve North Smithfield's amazing heritage!

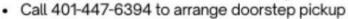


WAYS TO DONATE















For any questions or inquiries please email: nsha@nsheritageassn.com or visit: https://www.nsheritageassn.org/

Make a 2024 donation: We appeal to the community to help fund our preservation efforts with a tax-deductible donation. We are now focused on the renovation of the main hall at the Memorial Town Building. When complete, it will serve as a museum and large group meeting room. Please help us restore one of Slatersville's most historic buildings.

You may make a tax-deductible donation via mail, PayPal Giving Fund, or Venmo. Or you can simply drop off your donation or pay with a credit card at our headquarters at the Memorial Town Building, 1 Main St. during our weekday morning business hours:

Tuesdays from 9:00 am- 12:00 pm or Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:00 am- 12:00 pm.

We will also pick up donations at your door! Any amount helps enormously!

Board Giving: The NSHA Board of Directors continues to set an example for the community by making meaningful donations in January to the NSHA. This year, their donations covered 16% of the organization's operating expenses.



Thank You



We thank Marcel Labrecque for donating a bird house replica of Heritage Hall. This bird house will be raffled off at Pumpkinfest. Visit the NSHA booth for a

chance to win!!



We thank Don Sansoucy for donating this baby carriage or perambulator, that he found on his property on Grange Road.



Thank You



We thank Commander Don Morin for donating American flags to be used to mark Veteran graves.

We also thank Joe Kozlik for donating photos of North Smithfield's 125th anniversary when he was Director of Parks and Recreation.

We also thank Deb Nysa for allowing us to scan her photos of Battye Ewen and family.

We appreciate the opportunity to scan any photos or yearbooks from local schools that you may keep at home. Our oldest school newsletter dates back to the Kendall Dean School in 1946.

Your family photos and old letters contain our local heritage!

Please allow us to scan them to maintain a digital copy in our archives.

Important! Please write the names on the back of your photos of all the people photographed and the location if possible. Use a pencil as ink may damage the photos. Too many wonderful photos get thrown away because younger generations don't know who is in them. Images of ancestors are then lost forever.

Please contact us at nsha@nsheritageassn.com or call 401-376-2927

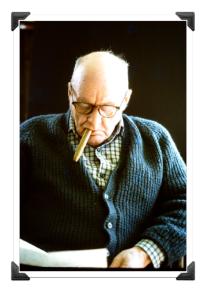
The NSHA archives and the research center is open at the Memorial Town Building every Monday through Wednesday from 10:00 am until 12:00 pm. Stop by and visit or contact us to make an appointment to visit on another day.



From the Archives

Battye E. Ewen-Storyteller, Bard of Comstock Road

By Al Menard



Battye was named after his greatgrandfather, Jonathan Battye, Battye being a common Scottish surname. Here one can see why some people told Battye that he resembled Winston Churchill. There are certain people who society identities as "characters." Battye Ewen was a character. Often seen in suspendered pants and floral shirt, Battye charmed folks for decades with his wit, intelligence, and outspokenness.

Battye Elton Ewen was born on a small farm in North Smithfield, R.I. on May 31, 1900. His father was Adam Love Ewen, a machinist for Taft Pierce in Woonsocket, and son of a Scotch immigrant. His mother, Leona Burlingame, was "a Yankee from way to hell and gone back" as Battye often referred to her

The Ewen family lived in Union Village where Battye went to the local school and was a good student. As a young boy Battye soon had his own bank account. He hunted skunks, muskrats, and mink. He once said that these traps "brought in pretty good money." Battye also cleaned the Union Village school and lit the fires. He was paid two dollars a month. He sold pullets and tires using ads in the local newspaper. Later he worked in the local mills and sold real estate. Finally, for many years he managed Jack's Tydol Gas Station on Great Road.

Bessie Frances Isenor, his wife, came from the Aldrich family- a family that had been in North Smithfield for centuries. Battye, however, would smile and refer to them as, "Probably the laziest bunch of oversized people as ever struck New England."

Battye and Bessie were married in 1927 in Birmingham, Alabama. They had four children: Robert, Jean, Neal, and Susan. Bessie, who had attended the Congregational Church, converted to The Smithfield Monthly Meeting of Friends and soon became "Clerk of the meeting," an important role in Quaker community. Battye referred to her as "the religious one in the family."



Battye and Bessie in their yard on Comstock Road in 1979.



From the Archives

Despite a limited formal education, Battye was somewhat of an intellectual. He had a sharp and inquiring mind. He was an avid reader, could quote Shakespeare and loved Harper's magazine. He also loved to tell stories. And the townsfolk loved to hear his stories. They all knew that Battye wouldn't hold back and might even get 'risqué.' Battye did once admit," I'd rather tell an off-color story than I would any other."

Battye was a poet and collected poetry. He also saved newspapers, especially the Woonsocket Patriot, which he called, "one of the best early New England papers, probably the best." He was particularly fond of 'risqué' epitaphs. His favorite was, "Here lies the body of Daughter Charlotte, born a virgin but died a harlot. For 16 years, she preserved her virginity, which is almost a record in this vicinity." Battye insists that this epitaph really exists in a Martha's Vineyard cemetery.

In 1940, the Ewens returned to Bessie's ancestral home on Comstock Road. The house had become run down and was in constant need of repair. There the Ewen family lived a simple but full life. Bessie had her work with the church and the children. Battye worked in the garden. He was often busy with community work, and preforming, be it telling his humorous stories, or playing Santa Claus for the town. He was also a dear member of the North Smithfield Heritage Association.

Battye died on May 6, 1980, Bessie in 1997. They are both buried in Union Cemetery.

In 1979, a year before he passed away, Battye and Bessie were interviewed about their lives and their reminiscences of living in a small New England town. The interview is warm and very entertaining. I would urge the reader to visit the Library of Congress site on the Internet and search for Battye Ewen. In addition, NSHA has a copy of the interview for review and a transcript of the two-hour interview will be available soon.



The Ewens moved into the homestead of Esther Aldrich and Harry Isenor on Comstock Road in 1940. This phots was taken in 1973 by Walter Nebiker.



The Ewen outhouse. Battye was proud of his "three-holer." It was custom to scratch your name on its wooden walls. Photo compliments of Tony Chernasky.



The April 1974 North Smithfield Heritage Association newsletter contained this interesting excerpt from the book "The Descendants of John Mowry of Rhode Island" written by William A Mowry. William compiled this extensive genealogy of the Mowry family which includes birth dates, marriage dates, death dates and family anecdotes which he published in 1909. NSHA member Shirley Reichenberg submitted this sweet little story that was probably written in the early 1700's.

"Timothy Harris, then in his 32nd year, having occasion to call at his neighbor Mowry's, knocked at the door, but getting no answer from within, he pulled the string of the door latch and entered. Now there was no one in the house for the moment but an infant in a cradle; and her little ladyship, awakened probably by his unceremonious entrance from a comfortable nap, began to express her displeasure, as babies have been known to do both before and since that day, by a most determined and persevering fit of crying.

Timothy, aware that he had been, though unwillingly, the cause of raising the storm, thought it his duty to try some means to allay it. Accordingly, he set himself to rocking the cradle in the most subdued and husband-like style imaginable.

He proceeded in this pacific overture to the tiny belle till Mrs. Mowry came in, and in her surprise exclaimed, "Good Heart, Old Bachelor! Why, I have hopes of you yet."

"Aye, Good Woman," answered Timothy, "and not without good reason; for I have made up my mind to claim this little damsel for my wife the instant she is old enough."

"He did claim and marry her in less than a month after the completion of her sixteenth year. Timothy Harris was born on July 9, 1650. Abigail Mowry was born March 30, 1681. They were married April 20, 1697 and had four children together."





NS Historic Cemeteries



The old burial tomb and Hotchkiss cemetery got a new fence.



Thank you to Mark for helping to install the new granite posts.

Summer is a very busy time at our historic cemeteries! Preservation work will continue through the Fall until it gets too chilly to work outdoors comfortably.



A hawk keeps watch over Union Cemetery



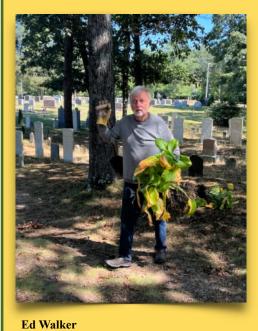
The last veterans headstone has been raised and re-set. All together, 27 veterans stones have been cleaned, re-set and are now finished. Now work has shifted to restoring fences and planting flowers.



New granite fence posts waiting to be installed at Hotchkiss.



NS Historic Cemeteries



Volunteers have been busy beautifying Hotchkiss cemetery with donated lillies and hostas.



Barbara St Germain



Members of the cemetery team recently took a well-deserved break to watch the new Beetlejuice movie. Members said they really "dug"it!



NS Historic Cemeteries

Things have also been busy at NS 22, the Richard Mowry Cemetery off Greenville Rd......



Mark Laprade does the infill on a repair to this tablet.



Gayle O'Donnell triumphantly finds the missing piece of a base to be repaired.



We thank Bob and Lori Couture for donating a tripod and hoist for our work. We also thank Bob Hanson and his crew who have been removing stumps and eradicating the poison ivy in the cemetery.



Mark Laprade has an interested audience as he prepares epoxy for a repair. Gayle's grandson, Miles, is our youngest volunteer!



Lori Couture fills in a crack on the stone to prevent water infiltration.

Check out all of the cemetery restoration work on our NS Heritage Assn. Cemetery Group Facebook page.



Historic Cemetery of the Month

The Mowry-Sayles Lot, NS 41 by Lynne Pelletier

Located on Mattity Road at pole #22, the Mowry-Sayles Lot contains the graves of 34 individuals. The 52' x 60' burying ground is enclosed with granite post and iron rails. There is an iron gate leading into the lot. The current landowner has cleared the cemetery of brush and it is in good condition although some of the headstones have fallen over. Fourteen of the graves are marked with engraved headstones while 20 are just fieldstone markers. The oldest known burial took place in

1777 while the most recent burial took place in 1851.



through some incredible times!

Esek Savles

The 3 family names in this cemetery include Mowry, Sayles and Taylor. All are descended from Roger Mowry who arrived in Boston in the year 1631. Zebedee Mowry and Esek Sayles were third cousins and the Taylor children's mother was a Mowry by birth. We will start with Esek Sayles because he was born the earliest and it is said that the land which the cemetery is located on belonged to his father as the family farm.

Esek Sayles was born on August 18, 1749 in Smithfield in the colony of Rhode Island to parents, John Sayles and his wife Martha. Esek married Sarah

Cowen on December 30, 1776. They had at least 10 children. Two of the children, Asil and Vashti are buried alongside their father, Esek, as is one grandchild, George B Sayles. Esek died on October 26, 1810 at the age of 61.

To give you some perspective on the happenings that occurred during Esek's lifetime, Rhode Island was still a colony of Great Britain the time of his birth. When Esek and Sarah married, Rhode Island had just become the first of the original 13 colonies to renounce allegiance to England on May 4, 1776. Rhode Island would not become officially become a state until May 29, 1790 when it was the last of the 13 original colonies to do so. Esek and his family lived



Zebedee Mowry

Zebedee Mowry was born on May 24, 1756 to parents Ezekiel Mowry and his wife Ruth Aldrich. Zebedee married his cousin, Mercy Mowry on October 29, 1780. Mercy was the daughter of Gideon Mowry. Together they had at least 13 children. Some of their children and grandchildren make up the final Mowry graves. Zebedee died August 30, 1833 at age 77.

Zebedee also lived during interesting times. According to the book "The Descendants of John Mowry of Rhode Island" by William A Mowry, Zebedee is described as "very eccentric in his habits" and his large family is described as "industrious and frugal, respected and respectable." Zebedee was said to be "near Bunker Hill on the day of the battle but did not arrive in time to participate in the action." A pension record verifies that he served as a private during the Revolutionary War. Zebedee died on August 30, 1833 at age 77.



Albert Taylor, 1

The last two graves belong to siblings with the same name. These young boys were both the children of Horace Taylor and Hannah Ballou. Hannah Ballou's mother was a Mowry by birth and this may by why the children are buried here. The first Albert Taylor was born in 1811 and died March 11, 1812. Albert's headstone appears to read that he was 1 year and 5 months old when he died. It looks like the original stone said 5 months but someone added in ^ 1 year above that. The second Albert Taylor was born in 1812 and died 14 November 1813. While it may seem unusual to us to give the next sibling the same name as the deceased older child, it was common during times of high infant mortality for bereaved parents to do this to honor their child. Unfortunately, in this case, they lost them both.



Albert Taylor, 2



Veterans Memorial Program

The NSHA is looking to honor a departed NS veteran who was mortally wounded in Vietnam on March 3, 1968, while serving with Company B, 2nd Battalion, 501st Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division. He lived in Slatersville before enlisting and is buried at St. John's Cemetery.

We are looking to locate any family or friends of Private Atteridge to coordinate a date for the ceremony. If anyone has any connections to the family please contact NSHA.

The Flagpole top pulley is broken. No further ceremonies until we can fix it.





Veterans Memorial Program

The U.S. Flag will fly at the Memorial Town Building each month in honor of a deceased local veteran. We will conduct a flag-raising ceremony in honor of the veteran as well as publish a brief biography of the honoree's military service in the NSHA newsletter. Families can use the honored veteran's Memorial Flag or the VFW Flag. Please contact the NSHA to nominate a Veteran.



Located on the bank of Blackstone River in North Smithfield these stones are smoked-blackened from campfires carbon dated over 3 thousand years old where fish were cured. Prior to European colonization, the Blackstone River had abundant populations of migratory fish including shad, herring, and salmon.

Research Team

The Research Team continues to locate and document local colonial, indigenous and other historical stone features.

The Research Team generally meets at 6:00 pm at Heritage Hall on the second Friday of each month. The next meeting is scheduled for October 11, 2024.

Please contact NSHA if you'd like to participate!





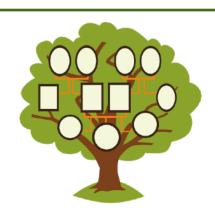
Monthly Board Meeting

The Board of Directors will meet at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, October 8, 2024 at Heritage Hall, 101 Green Street. Members are welcome to attend in person or via Zoom. Zoom information is included in the email notification.

President Richard Keene and Vice President Peter Hainley will step away from their positions in December after five years of service. We need replacements! Please contact the Nominations Committee at nsha@nsheritageassn.com for more information. The individuals on the Nominating Committee are: Peter Hainley, Fred Grant, Doug Osier and Beth Faricy.

Genealogy

Would you like help to conduct research on your family tree? Lynne Pelletier has extensive experience and access to several databases. Please contact nsha@nsheritageassn.com to coordinate an appointment.



Ghosts and Paranormal Activity



Kara Pessia, a local spiritual medium continues to help with spiritual research!

Have you heard about or seen a ghost in North Smithfield? We would like to document it! Anyone interested in joining the Paranormal Research Team please contact us at nsha@nsheritageassn.com.



HERITAGE HALL

Perfect for your small Event

101 GREEN ST NORTH SMITHFIELD, RI NSHA@NSHERITAGEASSN.COM

CHAIR LIFT ACCESSIBLE









Heritage Hall Rentals (101) Green Street

Rent the newly renovated upper and lower halls!

Visit the NSHA website for an application and rules: https://www.nsheritageassn.org/general-3

Call Jeanne at (401) 447-1801 to make a reservation or send an email to <u>nsha@nsheritageassn.com</u>



Preservation and Restoration

Forestdale School (190 School Street)



We need members to help open the Forestdale school to the public.

Please contact us if you can spare a couple of hours a month. Meanwhile, we will open the building by appointment.

Memorial Town Building (I Main Street)



Second-floor renovations at the Memorial Town Building continue. The electrician is almost ready for a rough inspection. Plaster repairs are underway in the main hall. We hope to start painting soon.



We thank Mark Laprade for painting the auxiliary generator at the Memorial Town Building.

Heritage Hall (101 Green Street)



Please contact Charlie Dubois at 401-741-8022 if you would like to help with routine maintenance!







Events & Activities





Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park



FALL WALK SERIES

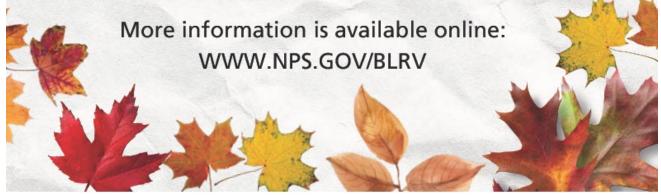
Saturday, October 12 at 11:30 AM
Jenks Walking Tour by Slater Industrial Archives
Meet at 67 Roosevelt Ave., Pawtucket, RI

Saturday, October 19 at 10 AM Whitinsville Community Walking Tour Meet at 17 Church St., Northbridge, MA

Saturday, October 26 at 10 AM Blackstone River State Park Archaeology Tour Meet at 1075 Lower River Rd., Lincoln, RI

Saturday, November 2 at 10 AM Hopedale Community Walking Tour Meet at Adin Ballou Park, Hopedale, MA

Saturday, November 9 at 10 AM Slatersville Veterans Day Tour Meet at Slatersville Cemetery, North Smithfield, RI





September/October Mystery Photo



This month's photo comes to us from our archives. On the back of the picture it says "St. John's Choir" and the name "Margie." Does anyone recognize the young ladies in the picture or maybe the year this photo was taken or the event? Looks like they were all dressed up for something special! If you can help, please contact us.

The NSHA often receives photos without any type of identification which is why we post them here. Please help us to identify them for our archives!



July/August Mystery Photo



This photo of a church was found in an album belonging to Veronica Hutton, but because it was unlabeled, we were unsure of its name or location.

It appeared in our last edition of the newsletter as our mystery photo and luckily, Irene Blais of the Woonsocket Historical Society identified it as the St. James Episcopal Church on Hamlet Avenue in Woonsocket.



This photo also appeared in the July/ August newsletter accompanying the 50 Years Ago article about a bicycle tour that took place in 1974. Reader Jennifer Broulliard wrote to tell us how much she enjoyed opening the newsletter and seeing her parents! Her father, George St. Jean is on the far left of the photo while her mother, Dorothy St. Jean is on the right leading the tour. Thanks for sharing, Jennifer!



NSHA Merchandise

The NEW 2025 Calendar has arrived!

Our wide range of merchandise includes calendars, books, cozy throws, jigsaw puzzles, ornaments and so much more! Free local delivery!







View our entire inventory at the NSHA On-line shop at https://www.nsheritageassn.org/shop

NSHA Payment Options

- **1. PayPal Giving Fund:** search for <u>nsha@nsheritageassn.com</u>, select "**Donation**" and type the purpose for the payment on the memo line.
- 2. Venmo: Open the Venmo app and search for North Smithfield Heritage Assn@NorthSmithfieldHeritageAssn. Tap on Pay, enter the dollar amount to be paid, and fill in the field what's it for (ie., dues, merchandise, donation etc). Tap on Pay and select your payment method you have established in the Venmo app.



- 3. Give cash or check. Make checks payable to "NSHA". Note "Dues, Annual Appeal or Merchandise" on the memo line.
- **4. Mail Checks** to NS Heritage Assn, P.O. Box 413, Slatersville, RI 02876.
- 5. We will also pick up payments and deliver purchases at your door if you live locally. Contact nsha@nsheritageassn.com or call 401-376-2927.

The North Smithfield Heritage Association Fund

Estate planning? Need to make a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from your IRA? Make a tax-deductible legacy donation to this RI Foundation managed fund. Your donation earns interest every year. The NSHA only uses a portion of the earned interest each year for preservation activities. Your donation therefore, continues to grow in perpetuity, increasing the interest that the NSHA can use each each year for historic preservation.

Click on the link for more information:

https://rifoundation.org/giving/funds?q=north+smithfield+heritage+&s=3



- ~ We welcome new members: Robin Maloney and Winifred Harlow!
- \sim The NSHA relies heavily on membership dues to pay operating expenses. We thank our members for their steadfast support! Our membership now stands at 182 including 41 life members and 6 students. Some members live as far away as NH, CA, WA and AR.
- ~Your \$20 annual dues allow us to conduct vital preservation activities. Seniors over 75, high school students and full-time college students pay no dues.
- ~We thank the members who joined or renewed this year!
- ~There are 36 members in arrears or with expired memberships that can renew at any time. If you are not sure of your status, please contact us.
- ~You can become a member by filling out an application found on our website: https://www.nsheritageassn.org/membership
- ~You may pay membership dues online via the PayPal Giving Fund, or Venmo, by mail to P.O. Box 413, Slatersville, RI 02876 or in person on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings at the Memorial Town Building. You can also drop off a check in our mailbox in the rear of the Memorial Town Building.

You Can Help!!

Volunteer: Help with any of our ongoing activities and events. No need to make a commitment. We appreciate whatever time you can spend with us.

Join: Membership costs just \$20 each year!

Share: Only shared history can preserve our heritage!

Donate: Our Annual Appeal runs all year long. We like local artifacts. We appreciate whatever you can give!



Instagram (nsha1970) Please follow us!

Instagram followers:290

Visit our **Facebook Page** to learn about our events and activities. Get acquainted with some of our members and supporters. Like and share with friends and family! www.facebook.com/

northsmithfieldheritage



Facebook followers:1,411

We thank Julie Tilley for making posts to all of our social media platforms,

We continue to see steady follower growth!

Website visitors: 273 site sessions in last 30 days.

Visit our website! Read past newsletters, learn about our organization as well as our many ongoing historic preservation activities. https://www.nsheritageassn.org/

NSHA Newsletter Subscribers:1,514

To join our mailing list, simply contact us at <u>nsha@nsheritageassn.com</u> or <u>401-376-2927</u>



2024 NSHA Calendar Sponsors

























This newsletter is published by Lynne Pelletier. The editorial team includes Beth Faricy, Jody Lamoureux, Linda Rawlings, Al Menard and Rich Keene.

Please share this free newsletter with family and friends!!