

Summer 2013 Newsletter

Nanticoke Valley Historical Society



Historical Society Happenings

July 13 and every Saturday, Work Day at J. Ralph, 9-12

July 14, and every Sunday, buildings open 1 to 4

July 15th Walking/wagon tour of Maine – 6:00 meet at the front of the Federated Church for a tour given by our junior members.

July 16, and every Tuesday, Work Day at J. Ralph, 4-8 Work

Barbeque on Sunday July 28th at the museum. 12:15 to 5:30 Pulled Pork, Marinated Chicken or Brisket– Dinners (\$8/\$9) sandwiches (\$5/\$6) Bake Sale, and raffle baskets

August 19 meeting: Jerald Marsh, Civil War soldiers of Maine and Nanticoke. He is a local author whose latest book is BROTHERHOOD OF BATTLE

September 16 meeting: Gay Canough, Physicist and owner of ETM Solar Works speaking about renewable energy

Sept 22 Maine's annual Musical will be the first production on the stage of the J. Ralph Ingalls building, 3 to 5. September Sounds in Maine, Where Everybody knows your name!

Sept 29 PAST members will be taking a tour of our buildings.

October 21 (this will be at 6 PM) we will get to see the newly opened Endicott History and Heritage Center located at 40 Washington Avenue in Endicott (old Burts building. We can park in the Cinema Saver lot, in back) Those who would like to, will go to Consols' Family Kitchen, for outstanding Italian food afterwards.

The November meeting will focus on what individuals feel thankful for, because of being part of the Historical Society and thinking of the things accomplished in the Town of Maine through the Historical Society.

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Words from the editor:

I commented the other day that in my experience LOL meant Loads of Love, with a signature, or Lots of Luck (either as “I wish you great good fortune” or “You’re gonna need some really good luck with that crazy idea”). We looked it up, and of course it mentioned LOL meaning Laughing Out Loud in electronic correspondence. But then, it identified the other as “historical usage”. Your editor has now passed “obsolete” and gone on to “historical.” That is appropriate perhaps for an Historical Newsletter.

You will see that along with the Barbeque on July 28, there will be basket raffles. Historical Society raffle baskets can be very exciting. They are put together from items brought in by members, and though the contents of each are listed, you never can be really sure what you’ve really won.

After one raffle, the winner sat down on her cushy sofa to see what she’d got. Spreading everything out, she examined each item but then read over the list to be sure she had not missed anything. One item hadn’t been seen – the Hat Pin. Ykes! Where was the hat pin? She was sure a 5 inch steel spike had fallen down into the sofa and awaited the slightest movement to skewer her behind. Pat, pat, patting the cushions found nothing. Husband-help removing, cautiously, each surrounding cushion turned up paper clips, dog treats, an empty pen etc. but no hatpin. Then very carefully, with helping hands, she arose from the spot she had been sitting on and began to look there – nothing.

Rereading the list, she ticked off each item as she looked at it, until she came to the darling little crocheted white lace hat, banded by tiny ribbon roses with (she saw now) a pin-back attached to the other side. It was a hat pin!

So, her recommendation to ticket buyers is to be careful where you sit when you open the basket you win. You can save a lot of time, that way.

If you have some things for a basket, contact Carla Sullivan 862-5385

Every Sunday afternoon the buildings will be open. Bring your house guests and groups to see the interesting stuff there, and come help when you can. The books will be available to buy at those times and at meetings. They make wonderful souvenirs, and go so good under an apple tree.

There are things that need doing always, and most of them cost money. There is a need for fund raisers and for ideas and leadership in organizing some. Please give some thought to how you can contribute in this way.



Labor of Love

After three years, volunteers are making progress restoring the historic J. Ralph Ingalls School

Lorrie Flannery paints the walls of a bathroom at the J. Ralph Ingalls School in the Town of Maine on Saturday.

By Anthony Borrelli
aborrelli@gannett.com

TOWN OF MAINE — Empty hallways speckled by a few cobwebs, and rooms cluttered with debris haven't faded fond memories of the J. Ralph Ingalls School from the mind's eye of Nancy Berry.

Built in 1938, the two-story former school with mammoth white columns in front is an imposing sight on quiet Church Street in the Town of Maine. But inside, the 20 years' worth of neglect since the school shut its doors strike a different chord.

"My three daughters went to school here in the 1960s, and they had basketball games, ice cream socials and parties," said Berry, a member of the Nanticoke Valley Historical Society. "This is the most beautiful building in our community, and the bones of it are still here — you just have to look past what happened to it."

With the vision of restoring the former school to a center for family-friendly activities, Berry and fellow members of the historical society have led a three-year endeavor to clean the



Kerin Flannery, left, and Gordie Gottlieb look for possible sources of a leak on the roof of the J. Ralph Ingalls School on Saturday. KRISTOPHER RADDER / STAFF PHOTOS

building inside and out. Hundreds of volunteers have pitched in, about a dozen at a time, on Tuesday nights and Saturday mornings with tools and cleaning supplies.

They still have plenty of work to do.

"My heart used to break driving past this building every day, but not since things started happening," said Berry, who lives near the former school. "We're

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School

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making progress.”

She's optimistic, but also keeping her fingers crossed. Volunteers hope the gymnasium — its wooden floor recently replaced and its stage in the midst of repair — to be ready for a public event by September.

To speed things up, the historical society is seeking more helping hands from 8 a.m. to noon Saturdays and 4 to 8 p.m. Tuesdays.

“We've gotten a little discouraged because there's so much to get done, but I can't imagine how you could do more in this amount of time with this many volunteers,” said Sandy Rozek, historical society president. “We've had people helping out who really love that school.”

The J. Ralph Ingalls School is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Circumstances over the past 20 years almost turned it into a community blight.

Its previous owners bought the building from an architectural firm in 2004, intending to turn it into a catering hall.

But after three years, Broome County foreclosed on the property for back taxes.

During an auction that same year, Nanticoke Valley Historical Society member Mike McKilligan bought the 30,000-square-foot building for \$70,000. The historical society leased the property from him for a dollar a year, while the project to re-



Jim Tokos operates a lift to bring books to the second level of J. Ralph Ingalls School on Saturday.

KRISTOPHER RADDER / STAFF PHOTO

store the former school into a center for community activities got under way.

McKilligan has lost count of how many hours he's spent on repairs, from repainting the exterior window frames to patching up the leaky roof.

It's “sweat equity,” he said, which is sure to pay off.

“Buildings can crumble, but what's made this special is the involvement of people who have been drawn together,” McKilligan said. “Once we can get that core of it fixed up so we can have some community events in there, we'll gradually work on the rest.”

With any luck, that could take at least five years, Berry said. But the historical society isn't in a rush.

Apart from seeking out the occasional contractor for heavy jobs, the labor and tools have all been

supplied by the volunteers. Berry said the historical society is adamant about keeping it that way — no grants to fund the project and minimal outside help.

“We want this to be ours from start to finish,” she said. “The joy of it will be knowing that a lot of love went into this building.”

Lorrie Flannery attended the J. Ralph Ingalls School until third grade, when she and fellow students transferred to Maine Memorial elementary.

Now, she's a volunteer helping restore the old building. Walking through the vacant hallways evoke not just feelings of nostalgia in Flannery, but also excitement for the future.

“This was a great school and a beautiful building when I went here,” she said. “I can't wait to see it look just like that again one day.”

The Board of Trustees for the Nanticoke Valley Historical Society

- Each voting board position has a three year term. Three board positions are to be refilled each year, providing an ever changing but on-going board coverage.
- Board members Chris Underwood, Janice McKittrick, and Pat Krzyzewski will serve through 2013.
- Board members Alice Hopkins, Clark Gardner, and Dottie Winans will serve through 2014.
- Board members Sue Hoskins, Joanne Weir, and Phyl Childs will serve through 2015.

Officers

President: Sandy Rozek 862-9480
 Vice President: Nancy Berry 862-4527
 Secretary: Carla Sullivan 862-5385
 Treasurer: Sandy Halliday 862-3470

Museum Curator

Sue Lisk 862-9705

Mill Curator

Tom Kotasek 754-0381

2013 Dues Are now due.

Check the address label to verify that your dues are up to date.

Note: If you are receiving this newsletter via E-mail please check your records to verify that your dues are up to date. Your yearly dues help the Historical Society pay its bills.

The Newsletter E-mail address is:

nvhistoric@verizon.net

Please use the dues return slip below. On the top of your address label is printed your dues Paid/Due status for years 2012 and 2013. Your dues may either be mailed to the Treasurer at the address on the Slip or given to the Treasurer at meetings (in an envelope with your name on it and the dues slip enclosed).

Dues Return Slip - Please Circle Year(s) 2012 2013

Note: See Address label for your Dues Paid status.

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

Is this name or address a change from your address label?

Yes ___ No ___

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: (Home) _____ **(Work)** _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Dues: ___ \$15.00 Single ___ \$20.00 Family ___ \$50.00 Patron ___ \$100.00 Business

Along with the indoor picnic, at the June meeting there was a “What’s This?” sharing time. People brought in interesting looking things that they didn’t know the original intent for. The hope was that someone else would. The item pictured below was identified as a melon baller, but then we wondered if it might have been one of those once made in Binghamton. It has no marks at all except for MADE IN USA & Patented (and no number). The handle is the usual shade of green.

Jerry Smith had given us a good talk on the A&J Manufacturing Co. one time, so he was contacted. Here is what he wrote:

Anita,

I think this might have been made by A & J Manufacturing of Binghamton. The green color used on the handle was one of their traditional colors. Often their pieces are marked on the metal parts with A & J inset into a small diamond shape. I would guess they did make some pieces that were not marked. They were located on Eldridge Street in Binghamton and were purchased by the Edward Katzinger Co. (EKCO) from Chicago which still makes kitchenware.

Gerry Smith



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NANTICOKE VALLEY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

