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# NORTH SMITHFIELD HERITAGE ASSOCIATION MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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VOLUME I, ISSUE 5 ~ JULY 2020

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## JOIN THE NSHA FACEBOOK AUCTION!

The NSHA is very excited to announce its first-ever Facebook Auction, which will be held each week during the month of August to fund its ongoing historic preservation activities. Beginning on Saturday, August 1, 2020, and continuing each Saturday in the month of August, the NSHA Auction Committee will post new items for bid on the Facebook auction public group page.



To participate, join the “NS Heritage Auction” Facebook group. The page will be updated with instructions for participation in the auction.

Payment for items will be COD or via PayPal, and the pickup date will be Saturday, August 29, 2020, at Elaine’s Flowers on Great Road. Shipping or local delivery may be arranged at an additional cost to the buyer.

For more information about this exciting event, contact Adrienne Nys via email at [amikenys@aol.com](mailto:amikenys@aol.com) or by phone at (508) 829-7744.



## *JULY SPOTLIGHT:* Harry L. Halliwell, M.D.

This month, as the subject of *schools* is on the minds of the residents of North Smithfield and all around the world—including parents, children, schoolteachers, and school staff—we take a closer look at the namesake of the recently closed Dr. Harry L. Halliwell Memorial School. Who was “Dr. Harry”?

Harry Lippitt Halliwell was born in Providence 98 years ago this month, on July 18, 1922, to William Russell and Ruth E. Lippitt Halliwell. His father was a North Smithfield Republican leader and member of the state Board of Elections. Later, his only sibling, William R. Halliwell, II, served as a member of the North Smithfield Town Council. In 1943, Harry graduated magna cum laude from Brown University, where he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. On September 16, 1944, at the age of 22, he married Obiella Marguerite Beaudoin Halliwell, and the couple went on to have four children over the next ten years. Harry earned his medical degree from Yale University in 1946. After interning at Rhode Island Hospital, Dr. Harry served two years in the Army medical corps in Germany, achieving the rank of captain.

After his discharge from military service, Dr. Harry entered private practice in Woonsocket in 1949. He soon established a reputation as a specialist in children’s diseases, and eventually became the school physician for the Town of North Smithfield. He was a member of the American Medical Association and the Woonsocket District Medical Society.

In response to the 1953 polio epidemic, and the hope offered by Jonas Salk's vaccine, the nation's medical community was mobilized to fight the poliovirus, and Rhode Island was no exception. The state experienced an outbreak that lasted into 1955; a week after entering the hospital, Dr. Harry died from the disease on November 12, 1955; he was the state’s fifteenth polio fatality. Dr. Harry L. Halliwell left his wife, brother, mother and father, and four children aged from 9 months to 9 years. He was interred at Saint James Cemetery in Manville.

Two years later, the town’s new elementary school was named in honor of Dr. Harry and dedicated to his memory in a ceremony on November 17, 1957. The school continued to serve generations of families until its closure in 2019.

The first edition of the Dr. Harry L. Halliwell Memorial School yearbook in 1958 included a dedication to Dr. Harry: *"beloved pediatrician, conscientious school physician, and devoted father. It is our hope that the principles for which he stood will serve to stimulate and raise the minds of those who study here."*



## Upcoming Events

\*Like our Facebook page for updates\*

Ongoing  
*Historic Cemetery Cleanup*  
Follow State COVID Guidelines  
See NSHA Facebook page  
for information

Saturday, July 25, 2020 ~ 9 a.m.  
& Various Dates  
*Historic Legacy & Historic  
Cemetery Guided Tours*  
See Page 8 for details

Saturdays in August  
*Facebook Auction*  
Join “NS Heritage Auction”  
Group on Facebook for updates!

Tuesday, August 25, 2020  
6:30 p.m.  
*NSHA Board Meeting*  
*Zoom Video Conference*  
~ open to all members ~  
email [nsha@nsheritageassn.org](mailto:nsha@nsheritageassn.org) for  
access information



## SHARE YOUR STORY

*Do you have a story of how you've managed during this historic time? Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, NSHA temporarily suspended its Annual Appeal fundraising effort, which the association relies upon greatly in normal times to fund its programs and building preservation. While donations are always appreciated, we are in historic times, and therefore we are making a different kind of “appeal” to the members of NSHA and to the residents of North Smithfield: **Tell us your story.** Share your story for publication in our newsletter and for the NSHA records at our email address: [nsha@nsheritageassn.org](mailto:nsha@nsheritageassn.org). Thank you!*





## IN NS HISTORY: School Strike

The article to the right appeared in September 1928 in the *Boston Sunday Advertiser*, and tells of “warring factions” in the town involving a strike by parents of the students at the little Primrose School. The parents had ordered their children “to keep away from the schoolhouse until the school board reinstated Mrs. Martha Harris, a veteran teacher[.]” The school board had hired Miss Margaret Louise Ewen, age 22, to replace Mrs. Harris. The article indicated that the factions were “preparing for a genuine showdown of strength” at an upcoming school board meeting.

The article explains that only one pupil, Barbara Fort, had attended school since Wednesday of that week. Miss Ewen was there to teach her in the schoolhouse that at that time housed 29 students. According to the article, the parents had no ill will toward Miss Ewen, but contended that Mrs. Harris was “a very efficient teacher and that their children made marked progress under her care.” They vowed to remove their students if Mrs. Harris was not reinstated. See future newsletter editions for more about this event in town history!

### Whole School for 1 Pupil



— Photo by Boston Sunday Advertiser Staff Photographer.  
**BARBARA FORD**, only pupil in the Primrose school, North Smithfield, R. I., where 28 others are out on strike, can well say she is the pet of the new teacher, Margaret L. Ewen, shown with her. A showdown is expected tomorrow. The strike follows the failure to reinstate a veteran teacher.

### SHOWDOWN IN R. I. SCHOOL STRIKE NEAR

Warring Factions Ready to Test Strength at Monday's Meeting

#### NEW TEACHER HOLDS FORT

Lawyer, Once Pupil of Ousted Instructor, Is Leading Battle Array

North Smithfield, R. I., Sept. 7—Warring factions in the strike of 28 pupils in the little Primrose school in this town are preparing for a genuine showdown of strength at a meeting of the school board Monday night.

Officially the trouble in the village school is listed as a strike involving 28 youngsters, but it is actually a strike of parents.

The children went on strike a few days ago when their parents ordered them to keep away from the schoolhouse until the school board reinstated Mrs. Martha Harris, veteran teacher, who has presided over the destinies of the little school for eight years.

The school board engaged Miss Margaret Louise Ewen, 22, graduate of the Rhode Island College of Education, to replace Mrs. Harris. **ONLY ONE PUPIL ATTENDS.**

Only one pupil, Barbara Fort, has attended classes since Wednesday morning.

Despite the strike and the assertions of angry parents that they won't send their children to the school until Mrs. Harris is put back on the job, Miss Ewen is holding the fort.

Her position as the storm center has been made easier by parents who have assured the young woman they do not attach any blame to her and that she is merely the victim of circumstances.

James T. Greene, a Woonsocket lawyer and at one time a pupil of the veteran Mrs. Harris, is leading the parents. The latter contend that Mrs. Harris is a very efficient teacher and that their children made marked progress under her care.

#### MAY HAVE TUTORS

The school board, headed by Mrs. F. J. Pitts, feels differently toward Mrs. Harris, although no formal statement concerning the board's position will be made until Monday night.

Parents of the children on strike assert that they will not end the strike unless Mrs. Harris is reinstated. They assert that if they lose their fight they will either hire a special tutor for their children or send them to Woonsocket schools.

Primrose is a picturesque village in this town and the school, constructed a few years ago at a cost \$15,000, replaced an old building that had done service for more than 50 years.

### Do you know more about this story?

If you know of more information about this story—the outcome of the strike, the individuals involved, or any other information of historical interest—please share it with us at [nsha@nsheritageassn.org](mailto:nsha@nsheritageassn.org). Thank you!



## *DID YOU KNOW...*

...that the building that housed the “little Primrose School,” the site of the so-called “student strike” in the article on page 4, still exists on the corner of Providence Pike and Greenville Road? It is known as the Andrews Building, and currently houses the North Smithfield school administrative offices.



Built as the two-room Primrose School, the one-story brick building has an above-grade, half-story basement. The hip-roofed building has “more-or-less Georgian Revival trim,” according to historical records. Located near the current North Smithfield Middle School and North Smithfield High School in the village of Primrose, the building was first constructed in 1838. The wooden building was replaced by a larger brick building in the 1920s, according to the article, “at a cost of \$15,000, replaced an old building that had done service for more than 50 years.”

According to NSHA President Rich Keene, the Andrews Building is one of three “Andrews Schools,” which future issues of the Newsletter will discuss. He explained:

“The door on the left was for girls and the door on the right was for boys. The toilets all had raised water tanks with a pull chain to flush. There was a small coat room in the front of the building and another room next to it that contained supplies and a small library. The town kept a playground next to the school with three swings and a seesaw. Every summer, the town hired a teenaged supervisor to stay at the playground to do activities and keep an eye on things. There was a small wooded area behind the school and on the small hill where the high school now stands. In the spring, hundreds of lady Slippers bloomed there. The students would pick handfuls and bring them to the teacher, Mrs. Lapham. There was a cow pasture on the other side of the woods. An electric fence kept black angus cows contained. During recess, the boys would try to climb through the fence without getting zapped and harass the poor cows. We so enjoyed looking under rocks and logs for bugs and toads.”



## 2020 NSHA Officers and Directors

### EXECUTIVE BOARD

President	Richard Keene
Vice President	Peter Hainley
Treasurer	Fred Grant
Assistant Treasurer	Beth Faricy
Recording Secretary	Rachel Pecoraro
Corresponding Secretary	Louise Vanhouwe
At Large Director	Ruth Pacheco
At Large Director	Bill Nangle

### STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Archives	Al Menard
Audit	Linda Rawlings
Budget	Beth Faricy
Cemetery	Denis Chamberlain
Development	Natalie Norris
Education	Jeanne Marion
Governance	Sarah McConnell Dubois
Grants	Beth Faricy
Information Technology	Fred Grant
Maintenance	Charles Dubois
Membership	Martha Shean
Merchandise	
Preservation & Restoration	Jeff Harris
Program & Hospitality	Freya Hainley
Property Rental	Louise Vanhouwe
Marketing	Jen Bolduc
Research	Paula West
Past President	Jerry Faricy (ex-officio member)

*Officers were elected at the Annual Meeting, which was delayed from April due to the coronavirus emergency and held on June 26, 2020, via Zoom online videoconferencing. The committee chairpersons were appointed by the President after the Annual Meeting.*



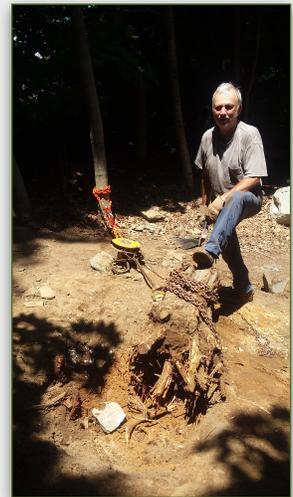
## HISTORIC CEMETERY OF THE MONTH: SAMUEL ALDRICH LOT



An 1892 survey by James N. Arnold describes the location of the Samuel Aldrich Lot as "In pasture in land of Mr Metcalf on west side of road and a short distance east of Woonsocket Hill." The location can currently be described as west of the Phoenix Rising Horse Farm on Pound Hill Road, at the end of a long driveway leading to the top of the hill. It is known as North Smithfield Historic Cemetery #08 and it measures about 25 feet by 25 feet, with no enclosure and eleven gravestones standing, including four inscriptions.

While the lot had become overgrown, NSHA Cemetery Restoration volunteers located the abandoned cemetery three years ago and began work to clear trees and brush. Last year, Ed Walker led the effort to locate, restore, and reset many buried and unrecorded gravestones. Today, eleven gravestones stand in the lot, including four with inscriptions.

The cemetery contains the burials of Captain Samuel Aldrich III (1722-1802) of the Colonial Militia, his wife Elizabeth Keeley Aldrich (1726-1757), and his sons Samuel (1757-1809) and David (1753-1780), who, according to the Rhode Island Sons of the Revolution, was a drummer in Captain Stephen Whipple's Smithfield Company, Spencer's Expedition in October 1777, and ensign in the Second Company Militia, Smithfield, May 1778. The cemetery contains burials of other family members including their sister, Hannah Aldrich Staples (1747-1770).



Ed Walker battles with a stubborn stump in the Samuel Aldrich Lot

### THINGS TO DO: At home edition

View the 4th work-in-progress screening for *SLATERSVILLE: America's First Mill Village*, which premiered on July 22, 2020, through the Museum of Work & Culture's Virtual Valley Talks. "The Wedding Present with 27 Rooms" can be viewed at the following link: <https://vimeo.com/440369878>





## Historic Legacy & Historic Cemetery Guided Tours

Join us on the following Saturdays at 9 a.m. for Historic Legacy and Cemetery Guided Tours. Due to COVID-19 protocols, tours are limited to 15 people. Register at [nsha@nsheritageassn.com](mailto:nsha@nsheritageassn.com) to obtain meeting place information.

July 25

Nipsachuck Legacy: The Blunders, Nipsachuck National Battlefield & Black Plain Hill Ceremonial Stone Landscape

August 8

Slatersville Cemeteries (NS1, NS3 & NS4)

August 29

Woonsocket Reservoir Legacy: Great Wall, William Mowry Homestead, Amasa Sweet Quarry

September 12

Sayles Hill Cemeteries (NS10, NS13, NS24, NS 32, NS 60)

September 26

Cedar Brook Legacy: Todd's Farm and Cedar Brook Cart Path

October 10

Grange Road and Rocky Hill Road Cemeteries  
(NS20, NS30, NS25, NS23, NS46, NS27)

### ***IMPORTANT NOTES:***

1. Tours are generally rain or shine unless there's a downpour when we start.
2. All participants must wear a cloth mask or face covering.
3. Participants are encouraged to wear long pants, use insect repellent, and bring water.



## MEMBERSHIP DUES

As with any civic organization, NSHA relies solely on its members for its success. Most of our 186 members pay dues, read our newsletter, and visit our Facebook page, and we sincerely thank you! Dues help to pay the electric bills at the Heritage Hall and the Forestdale Schoolhouse; keeping up on stories and events helps to achieve our purpose of promoting; and preserving North Smithfield's rich cultural heritage.

Preservation of our town's history is a multifaceted and never-ending endeavor. Some members volunteer their time to help with NSHA's many chores and activities. It is a lot of work, but can be a fun and satisfying way to give back to the community.

If you are already a member and have paid your dues (they are due annually in April), we thank you sincerely for your support. If you have not yet renewed your membership, please mail your dues today. The cost of dues is \$20 per individual and \$40 per family. Dues are waived for students and individuals 85 and over.

If you are not yet a member, we welcome you to join today! Applications are available on our website.

To pay dues, send check with "Dues" on the memo line to:

North Smithfield Heritage Association  
P.O. Box 413  
Slatersville, RI 02876



## CONTACT NSHA

Email: [nsha@nsheritageassn.org](mailto:nsha@nsheritageassn.org) ~ By Phone: (401) 477-6394

By Mail: PO Box 413, Slatersville, RI 02876

## VISIT US AT

Website: [www.nsheritageassn.org](http://www.nsheritageassn.org)

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