

The Historian

BURRILLVILLE HISTORICAL & PRESERVATION SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2013

Civil War Expo Planned for the May 4th Weekend

Would you like to learn more about the Civil War and how it impacted our town? If the answer is yes, please mark the weekend of May 4th and 5th on your calendar as an event not to be missed. For that weekend, we have a number of activities planned for Civil War enthusiasts. There will be an encampment on the grounds of the Bridgeton School; inside, there will be Civil War displays and informative talks by re-enactors. We will have information and exciting stories about some of our soldiers from Burrillville who fought in the war – one of our soldiers was a Medal of Honor winner. Come and learn about his heroic action that earned him this special honor. We are also planning to have cemetery tours so that you can visit the graves of some of these soldiers. In addition, we will hold a Civil War book and magazine sale. The event will be held on Saturday, May 4th and Sunday, May 5th. We are looking for volunteers to help in a variety of ways. If interested, please call Betty at 568-8449.

Come and learn about Burrillville's "Boys in Blue."



President's Message

Our normal meeting in March with election of officers has been rescheduled to Thursday, April 4th at 11:00 a.m. Please try to attend, as we will be making plans for our Civil War Expo. This will be a very exciting event.

We are also asking for your input on a change of meeting day and time. Attendance at our meetings has been down and we are looking for feedback.

Plan to come to the regular April and May meetings where we will be showing the movie, "West of the Seven Mile Line, Episode 3". It highlights some of the farms and old trades in Gloucester, including charcoal making, ice-cutting, logging and sawmills, livery stables, gristmills, wheelwrights, etc. There are several references to places in Burrillville. This film offers us a look at the traditions and skills of our ancestors, making it of interest to everyone.

Betty Mencucci

Upcoming Meetings/Events

Thursday, April 4 – 11:00 a.m.
Meeting to discuss Civil War Event. Election of Officers.

Tuesday, April 23 – 7:00 p.m.
West of the Seven Mile Line, A History of Gloucester, Episode 3 (first half).

Tuesday, May 28 – 7:00 p.m.
West of the Seven Mile Line, A History of Gloucester, Episode 3 (second half).



THE NASONVILLE AXE, HOE, AND SCYTHE MANUFACTURING ESTABLISHMENT TO BE LET AT AUCTION.
 Will be let at Public Auction, on FRIDAY, the 13th day of September, 1861, at 11 o'clock, A. M., on the premises, the estate known as NASON'S AXE, &c. ESTABLISHMENT, hitherto used and now adapted to the manufacture of Axes, Hoes, Scythes, and the like, situated on Branch River, Burrillville, R. I. Said estate consists of about sixteen acres of Land, ample Water Power, and suitable buildings for carrying on the above business, together with a store, dwelling house, and out houses. A sufficient number of tenements for the employes can be obtained at a reasonable rent. The machinery and tools for carrying on the business are in the building, and can probably be purchased or hired at a very reasonable rate, and put in running order in a week or so. The estate will be leased for one or three years, as parties bidding may elect. Rents payable quarterly and satisfactory security required. For further particulars inquire of LEONARD NASON, Esq., on the premises, or of DANIEL M. SALISBURY, Esq., Long Wharf Street, Providence, R. I.
 By order of Mortgagees in possession.
 August 30, 1861. 3w52

Nasonville Axe, Hoe and Scythe Manufacturers was located where the old Nasonville Mill is now.

Newsletter by Email

Instead of receiving your newsletter through the mail, you now have the option of receiving it electronically instead. If you choose this option, you will receive an email with an attached pdf file. Please indicate your wishes on the membership form. This is a service for those members who would prefer to read things electronically. It also saves printing and mailing costs and any colored pictures will actually appear in color.

The Cemetery Committee meets on the first Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m.
 New members are always welcome.

BH&PS earns money from DINO'S and IGA slips; also Ink Cartridges! BH&PS receives a percentage of the total. Drop them off at the Jesse M. Smith Library, mail them or bring them to a meeting. Proceeds are used to preserve our archives! Remember, we are also collecting used ink and toner cartridges.

Pascoag Business Directory - 1862

- W. H. Waldron**, Pastor of Free Will Baptist Church
- W. E. Duffy**, Catholic Priest
- S. O. Griffin**, Physician and Surgeon
- L. H. Hammond**, Physician and Surgeon

Manufacturers

- Sayles, Cook & Co.**, manufacturers of fancy cassimeres
- W. R. Waterman**, manufacturer and dealer in furniture
- J. Shaw**, loom harness manufacturer
- H. Sayles & Son**, manufacturer of fancy cassimeres
- S. Emerson**, manufacturer of satinett
- J. T. Fisk**, manufacturer of satinett
- J. O. Inman**, manufacturer of satinett
- H. L. Hopkins**, manufacturer of spindles
- A. M. Hopkins**, manufacturer of spindles
- R. A. Cooper**, manufacturer of boxes
- Steere & Tinkham**, manufacturers of fine cassimeres (Harrisville)

Merchants

- T. E. Hopkins**, (Salisbury & Hopkins) dealers in dry goods and groceries
- A. Rose**, dealer in dry goods and groceries
- N. Armstrong**, dealer in lumber
- J. A. Field**, dealer in dry goods, groceries, boots and shoes
- J. Greenhalgh, Jr.**, superintendent of woolen mill (Harrisville)
- J. O. Connor** (Harrisville) tailor
- A. A. Sayles**, carpenter
- D. Mathewson**, postmaster, jeweler and news agent
- E. C. Sayles**, teaming
- G. W. Esten**, machinist

March is Membership Month

- Please support BH&PS by renewing your membership. Ask a friend to join. An individual membership is \$10.00 and a family membership is \$15.00. There are other categories; see the enclosed sheet.

Donations

Edna Kent – a copy of the Hiram Salisbury diary from 1815-1844.

Louise Vanhouwe – Bridgeton School postcard.

Carol Hagglund - miscellaneous papers that once belonged to Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Rihm. Mr. Rihm was a German pianist (composer and performer). Austin T. Levy, owner of Stillwater Mills, decided that the people of Harrisville should have the chance to hear and study music of the highest quality and paid Mr. Rihm to come to Harrisville along with two other musicians. The group was called the Rhode Island Trio. In 1919 Mr. Rihm organized the Harrisville Glee Club.

The Great Snow Storm of 1857

In February of this year Burrillville experienced a major blizzard bringing over two feet of snow accompanied by high winds. A few days after the blizzard the temperature warmed up to 50°, causing a lot of melting and making the snowfall easier to deal with. I thought this would be a good time to look back in history at a blizzard similar to the one we had and see how much hardship it caused 155 years ago.

During the evening on Sunday, January 18, 1857 the storm began with heavy accumulating snow and howling gale-force winds. It continued all through the day on Monday, January 19th, ending late in the night. The final accumulation was about two feet. Besides the snow and gale force winds, it was intensely cold.

All train service in the area was suspended for days. On Tuesday the train from Providence, led by five locomotives, was able to reach Woonsocket. Other railways in the state as well as in New England and Canada remained blocked. Enormous drifts made the roads impassable. This great snow extended as far south as Virginia and as far north as the British Provinces (Canada).

The stages running from Providence to Scituate, Chepachet, Pascoag, Thompson and Dayville were

cancelled and no mail was carried.

On January 24th the village of Mapleville reported that the temperature had plummeted to 30° below zero. Because of the extreme cold, all the mills were closed. The mills ran on water power and the trenches carrying water to the mills were blocked by ice and their boilers were frozen. The boiler at Copeland and Company's Mill in Glendale had burst.

In Burrillville the roads remained impassable. The town voted to pay the expense of breaking out the roads. Many men came out to shovel but new snows, intense cold and fierce winds caused many to quit. Thirty men began shoveling the road from Dutee Lapham's house to Glendale, a distance of about a mile. A drift in front of the residence of Eddy Keach had to be tunneled through to get out to the road. People began to run out of coal, flour and wood.

The temperature in Montpelier, Vermont was said to be 50° below zero. In Massachusetts, the bay at Marblehead was frozen solid and many big rivers in the north and mid-west were frozen. Commerce was conducted by teams of horses crossing the frozen waterways with sleighs. In Connecticut, several church steeples blew over in the gale during the storm.



Imagine clearing the roads with wooden shovels!

This is how snow was removed from the town's roads to make them passable.

Happenings in Burrillville in 1861 at the start of the Civil War (Thanks to the Woonsocket Historical Society for access to the Woonsocket Patriot)

May 10, 1861

The ladies of Burrillville met at the Town House on Monday of last week to prepare lint and bandages for the Union Camp. A large flag is flying at Graniteville and small ones in many places about town. The sentiment is almost unanimous for the war.

Mr. Joseph O. Clarke is building a wheelwright and blacksmith shop at Harrisville. This central and pleasant village is destined to become a flourishing place. The mills here and at Graniteville are large and the building lots are good in almost all directions.

D. S. Whipple has repaired his dam at Mapleville and commenced the manufacture of military cloths. Several other mills are engaged on the same work.

May 17, 1861

There were patriotic flag raisings at Pascoag and Laurel Hill on Saturday afternoon last. At the former place, prayer was delivered by Dr. S. O. Griffin, and speeches were made by H. A. Keach, Esq. of Burrillville and C. A. Updike and C. H. Parkhurst, Esqrs., of Providence. The prettiest feature of the occasion were thirty-four young ladies, representing the States, dressed in red, white and blue. We have the authority of a bachelor correspondent for saying *they* were *very* pretty. At Laurel Hill an address was delivered by D. R. Ballou, a prayer by Rev. Mr. Waldron and speeches by the aforementioned gentlemen. The Mechanics Brass Band of Blackstone furnished excellent music for this patriotic gathering.

May 31, 1861

Burrillville has raised another flag at the village of Harrisville. The ceremonies took place last Saturday afternoon, and were enjoyed by a large concourse of people. Speeches were made by DeWitt C. Remington, B. N. Lapham, Jas. C. Collins, and Daniel R. Ballou. The new "Graniteville Cornet Band" furnished the music for the occasion. At the close, cheers were given to President Lincoln, Gov. Sprague and the Rhode Island troops.

June 7, 1861

Burrillville and the War. At the town meeting on Monday, it was voted that the town pay each of the volunteers who enter the service of the United States, ten dollars per month for the first three months' service; in other words, a bounty of \$30. This is quite liberal. We learned that about twenty volunteers have already gone in companies formed out of the town.

August 16, 1861

Contracts for Army Clothing. Among the manufacturers in this region who obtained contracts for army cloths on July 29th, are the following: Evans, Seagrave & Co., Waterford, Mass., 100,000 yards dark blue kersey, 27 inch, 95 cents per yard; Sayles, Cook & Co., Pascoag, R. I., 30,000 sky blue kersey, 27 inch, 80 cents per yard.

September 13, 1861

Going to the War. Dr. John H. McGregor, recently of Harrisville, Burrillville, has accepted an appointment in the medical staff of Col. Stevenson's regiment, now in camp at Readville, Dedham, Mass.

September 18, 1861

A Company of Volunteers from Burrillville. A full company of stalwart men, under command of Capt. Nelson Kenyon, recruited in Burrillville, went to Camp Greene on Wednesday. The town pays each volunteer 10 dollars, while the citizens have subscribed a liberal sum for the benefit of their families.

December 13, 1861

Comforts for Soldiers. The ladies of Cumberland Hill have furnished 48 pairs of socks and the same number of mittens. Those of Pascoag, Harrisville and Diamond Hill have also sent in liberal contributions.

BH&PS Officers

President and Newsletter Editor

Betty Mencucci
1777 Victory Hwy.
Glendale, RI 02826
(401) 568-8449

Vice President

Denice Mitchell
41 Merrimac Road
N. Smithfield, RI
02896
(401) 769-8174

Secretary

Rose Shaw
725 Wallum Lake Rd.
Pascoag, RI 02859
(401) 568-8872

Treasurer

Mabel Hopkins
175 Cherry Farm Road
Harrisville, RI 02830
(401) 568-4548

Directors

Shirley Richard
611 South Main St.
Pascoag, RI 02859
(401) 568-6295

John Shaw
725 Wallum Lake Rd.
Pascoag, RI 02859
(401) 568-8872

Nancy Greene
50 Harris Street
Webster, MA 01570
(508) 943-4565

Burrillville Historical & Preservation Society

P.O. Box 93
16 Laurel Hill Ave.
Pascoag, RI 02859
(401) 568-8534

www.bhps.org