

The core of the Blackstone Valley is water

The river was an organic blueprint for the transportation routes that grew up alongside its waters. Imagining the Corridor from the inside out, think first of the Blackstone River from its headwaters in Worcester, Massachusetts to where it empties into the Narragansett Bay in Providence, Rhode Island – this is the core. Next, alongside the river, think of an historic system of trails, canal and towpath, and the structures of the industries that grew up beside that transportation system, the cities and towns that grew up around those industries, the changing faces of these communities, and the natural landscapes that surround and connect the communities. This history and the landscape pattern it created is what people up and down the Valley once had in common.

Many, not all, of these elements are still visible – although we do not understand them as the system that they once were because the time when it was a working system has just about passed from living memory. That understanding is lying just below the surface of our modern-day consciousness.

The Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor was established to assist communities, and the region as a whole, in re-surfacing that historic system – to return it to prominence – not as an example of a “working” system of yesteryear, but one that is relevant to the Valley’s planned future. As you will see on the following pages much progress was made toward that goal in 2003.



Corridor Commission

EXECUTIVE SUB-COMMITTEE

Robert Billington, Chairman-Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, President
Richard T. Moore, Vice-Chairman- MA State Senator
Donna Williams, Secretary and Chair, American Heritage Rivers Sub-Committee
Massachusetts Audubon Society, Conservation Advocacy Coordinator
Michael Cassidy, Treasurer – City of Pawtucket, Director of Planning & Redevelopment

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Marie Rust, Regional Director, Northeast Region

Massachusetts

Katherine Abbott, Commissioner, MA Dept. of Conservation & Recreation
Matthew Amorello, Chairman, MA Turnpike Authority
Barbara Berke, Director, Department of Business & Technology
Paul Clancy, Councilor, Worcester City Council
Mary K. Connor, Chair, Strategic Planning Sub-Committee
Cara Metz, Executive Director, MA Historic Commission
Louise Redding, Certified Public Accountant, Chair, Blackstone Valley Institute Sub-Committee

Rhode Island

Dr. William Ankner, Transportation Consultant
Kenneth Bianchi, Executive Director, RI Turnpike & Bridge Authority
Michael McMahon, Director, RI Economic Development Corp.
Patricia Mehrtens, Historian, Burrillville
Edward Sanderson, Executive Director, RI Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
Burton Stallwood, United States Federal Marshall, RI District
Fred Vincent, Acting Director, RI Department of Environmental Management

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE STAFF

Michael Creasey, Executive Director



Planning and Project Management

Halford Welch, Director
Diane Wendland, Landscape Architect and Riverways Coordinator
Nancy Brittain, Community and Landscape Preservation Coordinator
Mark Jewell, Outdoor Recreation Planner and Bikeway Coordinator
Lorraine Provencher, Planning Assistant
Barbara Dixon, Visitor Information, Special Events and Tourism

Interpretation & Ranger Services

Sue Andrews, Chief of Interpretation
Jack Whittaker, Park Ranger
Kevin Klyberg, Park Ranger
Chuck Arning, Park Ranger & Television Producer
Suzanne Buchanan, Park Ranger & Volunteer Coordinator
Karen Mateleska, Biologist and Environmental Educator
Raymond Boswell, Park Ranger
Peter Coffin, Park Ranger

Administration

Elizabeth McConnell, Chief of Administration
Linda McWhorter, Executive Secretary & Cooperative Agreement Specialist
Diane Angell, Budget Analyst
Pauline Lozeau, Receptionist

Roger Williams National Memorial

Sue Andrews, Site Manager
John McNiff, Park Ranger
Sparkle Bryant, Park Ranger
Maria Levesque, Park Ranger
Paul Coletta, Maintenance Worker

Welcome New Commissioners...



Katherine Abbott joins the Corridor as Commissioner of the newly established Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Prior to her recent state appointment, she was the President of the Boston Harbor Island Alliance and earlier held positions with MA DEM and in education.



Michael McMahon, as Executive Director of the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation, arrives

on the Commission with over 30 years of experience in venture capital, private equity, and investment banking.



In Memory

This year saw the passing of **Gerald Gaudette**, a former commissioner with the National Heritage Corridor. Gerry's passion for the Blackstone Valley and his wisdom and leadership on the Commission from 1990-1998 inspired many people in his home town of Northbridge, MA and throughout the Valley.

Message from the Commission Chairman

It sounds like a cliché, but it seems like yesterday that the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor was born. In fact it was November of 1986. It was a bold new idea then. Congress challenged the region, defined by its historic and cultural resources, whole communities and watershed, to create a model respectful of its heritage and adaptable for new economic growth. This new model has been embraced by the people of the Blackstone Valley and adopted across the nation. Where the Blackstone Valley once stood alone on the edge of the frontier, 23 nationally designated heritage areas are now prospering.

New statistics indicate that over \$300 million in private investment has followed public funding along the Blackstone Riverway. We are now seeing the Blackstone Valley as a target for investment. One might suggest that *it is our time*. I might suggest that *it is our obligation* to ensure that what we started in the 1980's, the abstract challenge that we met and have worked so hard to make concrete, is upheld and carried out with gusto. The Blackstone Valley has an inexhaustible source of strength in its history, our sense of who we are, how we got here, and what we have achieved along the way. As we grow and change we should never forget this.

Today we have different people by our side, more people leading the charge, and a cadre of "believers" that have become the stewards of this place. I want to applaud 24 communities that make up the Corridor for their efforts to take on these extraordinary challenges of conservation and growth. Our non-profit partners have put their hearts and souls into making the Blackstone story come alive, the Blackstone River cleaner, and our communities more vibrant. Our political leaders have shown great commitment to our efforts and provide valuable resources to pursue our mandate. We want to thank Governors Carcieri and Romney and our state representatives for their continued commitment. And talk about "believers," our congressional delegation – Senators Reed and Chafee and Representatives Kennedy and Langevin from Rhode Island and Senators Kennedy and Kerry and Representatives Neal and McGovern from Massachusetts once again delivered tremendous support for fiscal year 2003. With their efforts, the Heritage Corridor Commission received \$2.1M to support the types of projects and programs that are described in this report. And to the National Park Service staff, all the volunteers, and Commissioners, I say thank you and congratulations on another year of success.

As we look to the future, the Commission has much to consider. Maybe most immediate, the Commission is facing the end of its timeframe established by Congress to achieve its mandate. As we come near the end of our term in 2006, we must ask ourselves what has yet to be accomplished and what role should the Commission continue to play? A series of focus groups this year has given us new insights and reinforced our collaborative missions. It has become clear that the regeneration of communities, ecosystems and historic resources takes time. Over the next year, the Commission expects to reach out to all of you for your ideas and support as we define the future of the National Heritage Corridor and Commission. I firmly believe that our work is not yet complete. Our story is about the innovation, enterprise and ingenuity of both yesterday and today. *And now it is our time.*

Robert D. Billington, Chairman

Connections Along the “Riverway”

The concept of a Riverway crystallized during a River Expedition a few years back. A group of thirty people boarded canoes and kayaks at the headwaters of the Blackstone in Worcester, Massachusetts and traveled for four days to where the river becomes tidal in Pawtucket, Rhode Island.

On this journey we met with hundreds of people along the riverbanks to hear of their interest in revitalizing this river corridor. It became clear that the river presented great opportunities for many people. To some, it was a recreational asset that would bring about a bike path, fishing, boating access and parklands. But we also heard concerns that the river still had serious pollution issues and that its ecological health needed to be improved for both human use as well as aquatic life. People also made a connection to its historical significance as “America’s hardest working river” as evidenced by the industries, canal, reservoirs and mill villages. These places were seen in a new light as opportunities for regeneration of a new economy.

We saw transition and change all around us. The sense from participants was that this was certainly greater than any one project. It is more than the bikeway, or a river clean-up effort, or a brownfield restoration. The “Riverway” is all of those and more. People began to see and envision a heritage park system that celebrates our historical roots as well as provides people with the opportunity to bicycle or paddle along the entire length of the river; a place to live and work in historic mills that may also offer entertainment and shopping; and a river healed so that aquatic and wildlife systems may once again flourish.

The Expedition became a gathering ground for ideas, concerns, opportunities, and passion for positive change. We are now working within a new paradigm along the Blackstone. It is about integrated planning and development. Maybe most importantly it is about developing a relationship with the Riverway, becoming involved with it, aware of it and committed to its health and positive renewal.



Cordis Mill, Millbury, MA

Several exciting riverfront mill restoration projects have gotten underway in 2003. Most recently, the 1870’s **Cordis Mill in Millbury** has been completely restored into 112 apartment units along the river and proposed bikeway. **Pawtucket’s creative Arts & Historic District** and riverfront are now experiencing a renaissance. \$14 million in renovations is being invested to create residential and work lofts in the historic Lebanon Mill Co. complex, now renamed **The Riverfront Lofts**. Across the way, the



Arts Exchange at Pawtucket Armory

107-year-old **Pawtucket Armory** is being converted into a performing arts center. And the Pawtucket Foundation has completed the **Tidewater Plan** calling for rejuvenation of the waterfront. In **Woonsocket**, the 1870's **Narragansett Knitting Mill** has been completely renovated into housing units and the City has undertaken a river development plan calling for a revitalized waterfront. The **Stillwater Mill in Burrillville** is in the second phase of redevelopment that includes a 50-unit mixed-income rental housing complex, while preserving the historic nature of the site. **East Providence** has established a **Waterfront Development District**. The District Plan calls for a rebirth of the waterfront with mixed land-uses that include retail, commercial, residential and recreational. There is renewed movement on one of the most significant mill complexes in the Corridor, the **Slatersville Mill in North Smithfield** – plans are now pending for its restoration and development.

Connecting communities and improving recreational use along the Blackstone River is the goal of a partnership between the Corridor, the RI Department of Transportation, the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council and local communities working to construct a **River Landings**



Central Falls Landing

system in Rhode Island. \$1.2 million in Transportation Enhancement funding has been secured for construction of several river landings. Construction of the **Central Falls Landing** has created momentum for the completion of **landings in Woonsocket and at Manville Dam in Cumberland** – both of which are in final design and slated for construction in 2004. Planning and design for two other river landings in Lincoln and Pawtucket, RI will continue to expand the river access system over the next few years. The Blackstone River Watershed Council and the Blackstone River Watershed Association have contracted with the Heritage Design Group to develop **18 river access and portage sites** between Northbridge, MA and Cumberland, RI. Sites will be designed and permitted this spring/summer followed by construction over the next year. Several businesses have volunteered their time to assist in the construction.

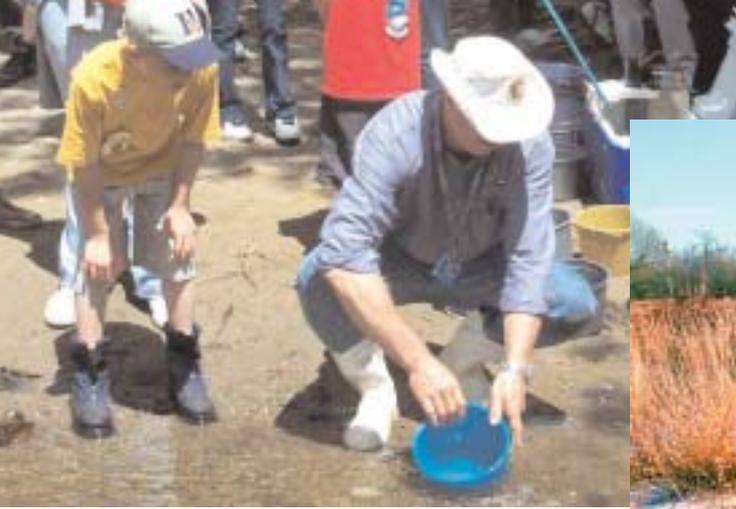
A series of **River Trip Guides** are being developed for the 2004 paddling

River Visioning, Fisherville, MA

season that will guide paddlers through beginning and intermediate tours on the Blackstone River. Tours include river to canal “loops” in both states as well as 3 to 12 mile river excursions and will be available to download from the web site or for pick up at visitor centers throughout the Corridor. The **Blackstone Valley Paddle Club** continued to offer outings between May and August on rivers and ponds throughout the Valley. The Paddle Club also offered three instructional sessions to help introduce the sport and waterways to new audiences. Great Canadian Canoe Company provided canoes and kayaks for the public on Tuesday nights, and the Rhode Island Canoe and Kayak Association provides their web site to promote the club's events.

In partnership with Massachusetts Audubon, communities along the Blackstone River were invited to share their ideas and visions for the river. These **River Visioning** sessions brought communities together to look at the river in its entirety and to share upstream and downstream plans and developments throughout the Corridor. The final product will be a compilation of the activities and visions for the Blackstone Riverway.

Conceptual designs for **community parks along waterways** were completed for **Sutton, MA** as well as **Chepachet and Pascoag, RI**.



Hands-on Watershed Education

Protecting the Missing Links: A Strategy for Assembling the Blackstone River Bikeway in Massachusetts was completed through a partnership with the Trust for Public Land, a national land conservation organization. The report identifies, evaluates, and prioritizes the land needed to complete the bikeway in Massachusetts and protect critical resources associated with the riverway system.

The **Lonsdale Marsh** is one of the *most significant ecological restoration projects ever* accomplished along the Blackstone. The old drive-in theatre, once a sea of asphalt covering wetlands has been removed and restored to wetlands and wildlife habitat. Kudos goes to the Army Corps of Engineers and RI DEM for completing this priority **American Heritage Rivers** initiative project.

Also in support of the American Heritage Rivers initiative, the EPA has provided special funding to the towns of **Cumberland and Lincoln, RI** to conduct an intensive study of the potential uses for the Superfund property known as Peterson Puritan and now referred to as the **Ashton to Pratt Corridor**.

Land conservation organizations throughout the Corridor have come together to form the **Blackstone River Conservation Alliance**. Through a series of workshops sponsored by Metacomet Land Trust and Clark University a report, *"Achieving Conservation through Collaboration,"* offers maps of protected



Lonsdale Marsh, above

Jump in campaign, right

lands, identifies critical sites for future protection and sets the course for BRCA to move forward with conservation efforts in the future.

High school students from Worcester to Providence participated in the first ever **Clean Water Festival** at the Visitor Center in Pawtucket. It was the culmination of this year's Blackstone River Watershed Education project and allowed students to participate in activities including the Parade of Waters, presentation of their storm-water testing results, and a decision-making activity based on real-life, environmental dilemmas. The **2nd Annual Clean Water Festival** is scheduled for March 7th and March 8th, 2004, at Rhode Island College. The two day event will be coordinated by the Blackstone Valley Rivers Project, Massachusetts Audubon, Blackstone River Watershed Council, and the Heritage Corridor and will involve 1,000 middle and high-school students. In addition there will be exhibits by businesses and organizations that will engage students in environmental activities.



The watershed-wide **Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Program** is a collaborative effort by the Blackstone River Coalition. More than sixty volunteers are collecting water samples from various waterways to provide consistent and reliable water quality data. The Coalition would specifically like to thank Brandi Sangunett, its former Water-Quality Coordinator, for the enthusiasm and determination she brought to her work.

This summer the Valley celebrated the **30th Anniversary of "Project ZAP,"** a monumental day in 1972 when 10,000 people decided to take back the Blackstone River and carried out a massive clean-up effort. The ZAP 30th Celebration, organized by the Blackstone River Watershed and Tourism Councils with great support by the Town of Lincoln and RIDEM, included boat and canoe tours, eco and

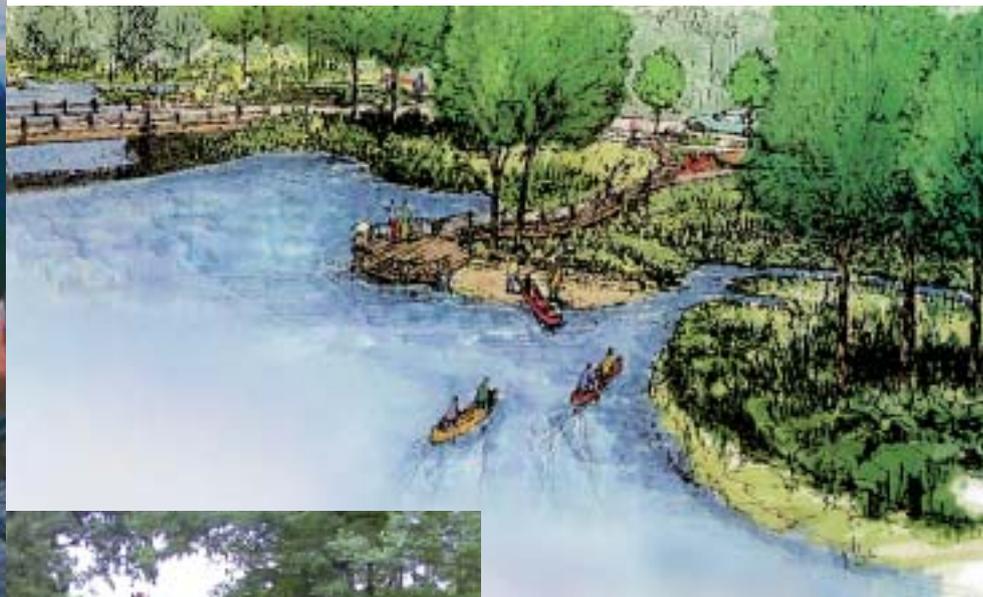


The Greenway Challenge starting line.

heritage pavilions, tours of the historic Kelly House and canal, and a finale concert by the Rhode Island Philharmonic. The ZAP 30th event provided the perfect platform for the **Blackstone River Coalition** to launch the watershed-wide campaign – *“Jump in . . . the water’s (going to be) fine!”* The goal is to achieve a **fishable-swimmable Blackstone River by the year 2015**. So jump-in! Find your watershed address and join your watershed organization now to be part of this effort.

The third annual **Blackstone River Valley Greenway Challenge** began at the Worcester Common where bicyclists lined up to begin the first leg of the 64 mile course. As in previous Challenges, new hills and roads were added to the route. This year’s event featured 70 teams and 424 participants. The Corridor Coalition wishes to thank the many sponsors including the P&W Railroad, Unibank for Savings, Glad Works Design, Citadel Communications, Great Canadian, and Whiting Community Center as well as all the volunteers who made the event successful.

The 50-mile long **Blackstone River Bikeway** continues to evolve. You can hop



Sutton 300th Tricentennial Park concept

Force is updating the 1996 Bikeway Feasibility Study. Under the leadership of the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Corridor, the entire bikeway alignment in MA has been evaluated and alignments adjusted where needed due to land use changes or opportunities for better connections.

175 years after the first canal boat arrived in the Port of Worcester, the **Blackstone Canal** is still “Raising a Ruckus.” The celebration of this historic event of 1828 was launched at the canal basin (now Waterplace Park) in Providence with speeches from Lt. Governor Fogarty and noted canal historian Rick Greenwood. Cannon blasts and bell ringing at Valley churches, schools and town halls throughout the Valley marked the anniversary and the event culminated in Worcester with a parade and the unveiling of new outdoor exhibits and interpretive tours. Worcester has completed a **Blackstone Canal Feasibility Study**, an innovative look at how to use this historic resource as a means for propelling economic and neighborhood redevelopment. In Rhode Island, preservation plans for the **Blackstone Canal** are being undertaken in partnership with RI DOT.



ZAP The Blackstone celebration

on your bike or pull on your inline skates right now and experience six continuous miles in Lincoln/Cumberland, RI. The next two segments scheduled for completion in 2005/06 will begin in Lincoln, cross the Pratt Dam to Cumberland and continue to John Street and south to Central Falls. The Manville to Woonsocket segment is scheduled to be completed in 2006. The final RI segments will connect Central Falls south to Pawtucket and Woonsocket north to the Massachusetts border.

Although not officially open, one mile of the path has been completed in Millbury, MA. The four mile segment connected to the MA Pike/ Route 146 interchange is being constructed as part of that project. A **Blackstone Bikeway Task Force** to coordinate state and local activities was established by MA Highway. The Task

Landscapes Defined by Places and Stories

“The Blackstone River Valley is one of the best preserved repositories of landscapes, structures and sites that recall an era of the American past: the Age of Industry.” (National Park Service)

One message that continues to resonate from ongoing dialogue with communities and local organizations, is that people like living in the Blackstone Valley, and feel that it has special characteristics that are worthy of preserving. There is also a real sense of pride emanating from residents. The Corridor Commission believes that it is important to connect people with their heritage and to provide resources to communities that want to preserve special places. Two years ago at the Community Preservation Super Summit, one of the speakers told the audience, “...the Blackstone Valley landscape will be defined or redefined within the next ten years.” We can see major changes all around us. If we choose to preserve the special characteristics that make the Blackstone Valley a quality environment to live and work – respectful of its heritage, then the actions we take today are critical.



Southwick-Daniels Farm, Blackstone MA

Ongoing partnerships with the National Park Service and educational institutions brought needed assistance to several heritage sites that will help shape conservation and management decisions. An **Historic Landscape Report** was completed for the **Southwick-Daniels Farm** in Blackstone, MA by the National Park Service’s Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, and the Architectural Preservation Division performed a **Conditions Assessment** on the buildings to determine priorities for maintenance. In Lincoln, RI, the Historic Preservation Program at Roger Williams University completed an **Historic Structures Report for Hearthside**, the early 19th century stone mansion on Great Road. A workshop and report developed for the **Red Shop** in Hopedale, MA. — the oldest building

associated with the Draper plant — outlines next steps for the community to interpret, utilize and sustain the building. In Millville, the **Chestnut Hill Meeting House and Cemetary Association** celebrated completion of the restoration of the 1769 meeting house. The Grafton Land Trust and Trust for Public Lands have negotiated an agreement to purchase **Hassanamesitt Woods** in Grafton which includes a 17th century praying village founded for members of the Nipmuc tribe who embraced the Christian religion. With Corridor assistance, an archeological study by the University of MA was undertaken to determine the existence and extent of the praying village.

Corridor communities continue to grapple with issues related to growth and community character. The Commission applauds the **Town of Cumberland, RI** for their intensive public dialogue as part of

their **Comprehensive Plan update**. They addressed issues of balancing open space preservation, affordable housing, and economic development. **The towns of Grafton, Mendon and Upton, MA approved the Community Preservation Act** which allows communities to create a local Community Preservation Fund to be used for open space, historic preservation and low and moderate income housing. **The “Four Town Initiative”** is a collaborative effort among the bordering towns of Uxbridge, Douglas, Sutton and Northbridge, MA to look at common issues and the potential for sharing resources to address community development. **Grow Smart Rhode Island** is also recognized as a vital Corridor partner. GSRI delivered a successful municipal training program, *Making Good Land-Use Decisions* to many Valley officials.

Prompted by a local nomination, **PreservatiON MASS designated the Blackstone Canal to its “Ten Most Endangered List” in 2003**. Preservation of the remaining canal segments is anticipated from the increased awareness brought on by this selection.

The ethnic and cultural heritage of the region is being perpetuated through many Valley organizations. The **Blackstone River Theatre**, located in the restored Masonic Temple in Cumberland, RI is the Corridor's premier institution for promoting the traditional arts. In the last three years they have presented over 280 cultural performances that have attracted over 22,000 people. The **Heritage Arts Studio** initiative allows people to discover or reconnect with traditional art forms such as music, song, dance, stone carving, storytelling, and literary arts. This year also saw the **Blackstone Valley Celtic Festival**, sponsored by the BV Chamber of Commerce, blossom as a huge success, attracting thousands to the beautiful Sutton landscape of the King Farm.

The fourth class of **Leadership Blackstone Valley** began this fall with 24 participants. This partnership among the Commission, Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce Education Foundation, and the Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce strives to cultivate a network of leaders to serve as stewards of the Blackstone Valley. Interested in upcoming Leadership classes? Go to www.blackstonevalley.org/leadership.

New signs were installed in ten communities.



Our **National Park Service Volunteers In Parks** program continued to grow, providing a grand total of 23,124 volunteer hours throughout the Corridor. "Their uniformed presence, enthusiasm and passion for the program have been our best recruitment tool" proclaimed VIP Coordinator Ranger Suzanne Buchanan. Highlights for the year included a SOLD OUT 6 week fly tying workshop. VIP's assisted DEM Rangers at the newly opened Canal and Transportation Museum at Blackstone River State Park and made significant contributions to the ZAP celebration, the Greenway Challenge, Paddle Club and many ranger programs.

The design for the **Northern Gateway Visitor Center** is underway. The Worcester Historical Museum, with support from the City of Worcester, has contracted with Amaze Design to develop conceptual plans for the center. This phase will also include the development of a business model that explores the potential for retail and other uses for the building.



With a focus on speaking the same language as the teachers who bring students to Valley sites, the **Education Network** developed curriculum-based education programs this year. Slater Mill Historic Site's enhanced programming is just one of the results. A special thanks to MA Audubon's Doug Kimball for sharing his expertise in this area with the group!

The Corridor identity program grew with **new signs fabricated and installed** in Burrillville, Smithfield, Glocester, Lincoln, Grafton, Millville, Uxbridge, Millbury, Leicester and Douglas. Interpretive exhibitry was developed for the Blackstone Canal in Worcester as well as new trailblazers in Millbury. Five new **interpretive guides** were published to help you explore Leicester and the Worcester Canal in MA and Harrisville, Chepachet and Georgiaville in RI. – These and other tours are available at visitor centers or by contacting the Corridor Office.

A strong **Tourism Partnership** among the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Commission coordinates public relations and marketing for the Valley. The campaign encourages travel writers to visit the Valley, carries out a direct mail campaign, and places advertising in major New England travel magazines. The partnership orchestrated a successful **Tourism Summit** for industry professionals in the Valley.

Volunteers fly tying



The Celtic Festival's Mary MacInerney Dancers

Entrepreneurial Spirit of the Blackstone Valley

The Blackstone Valley is represented by a Congressional Delegation that firmly believes that the heritage corridor approach to conservation and economic development is an exceptional value. The Commission has built a legacy of leveraging its federally appropriated funds through strong partnerships with communities, private investors and other stakeholders. Over the length of the Commission's tenure, \$23.6m has been appropriated through the National Park Service to fulfill the Commission's mission. Preliminary figures indicate that over \$300m in private investments for heritage-related projects has occurred along the river during that time. This entrepreneurial spirit brings added value to the Blackstone Valley Region and builds a strong base for continued growth while maintaining the character that makes the Blackstone Valley unique.

FISCAL YEAR 2003 APPROPRIATIONS

The Commission is supported by a Federal Congressional Appropriation which has leveraged substantial local, state and private funds to pursue a wide range of projects that benefit the National Heritage Corridor.

COMMISSION OPERATIONS: \$800,000

Congressional Appropriations to support Commission administration and project development.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE OPERATIONS: \$307,000

Appropriations through the Operations of the National Park Service to provide technical specialists in historic preservation, planning and design, environment, and National Park Rangers for interpretation.

DEVELOPMENT FUNDS: \$1,000,000

Congressional line-item appropriation to provide funding to implement the following preservation and development strategies outlined in the Commission's Plan and legislation.

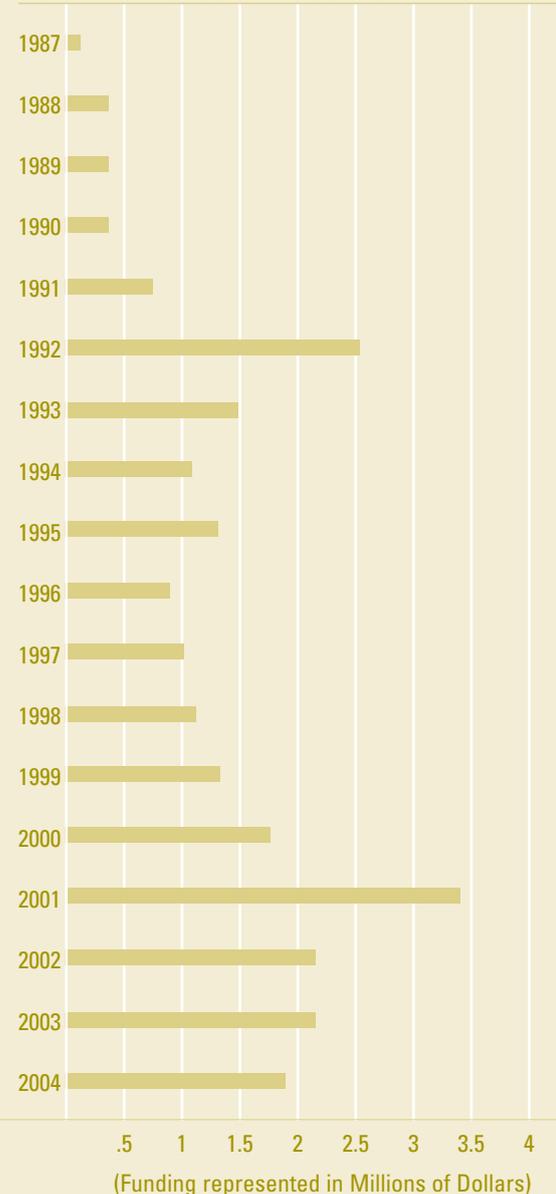
ONGOING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Tourism Marketing and Products	92,000
Special Heritage Events	50,000
Commission Communications Program	65,000
Community Planning Assistance	25,000
Along the Blackstone Television Program	35,000

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Tourism Outreach Program	70,000
Watershed Education Program	10,000
"ZAP the Blackstone" Programming	53,000
Fishable-Swimmable 2015 Campaign	25,000
Blackstone River Science Center	50,000
Alternative Wastewater Treatment Designs	20,000
Blackstone Valley Institute	35,000
Leadership Blackstone Valley	25,000
"Downtown Centers" Program	30,000
Local Zoning Analysis	30,000
Regional Economic Strategy Plan	20,000
Blackstone River Theatre Cultural Arts Programming	30,000
Northern Gateway Visitor Center	150,000
Blackstone Canal Interpretation	10,000
Blackstone Valley Visitor Center Exhibits	50,000
Education Webpage	20,000
Interpretive and Education Plan	10,000
Museum of Work & Culture Exhibits & Plng	50,000
Slater Mill Historic Site Living History Program	5,000
Volunteer In Parks Program	15,000
Preservation Programming	25,000

FUNDING HISTORY FOR FISCAL YEARS 1987 THROUGH 2004



2004

Call for Proposals

This year Congress appropriated \$750,000 for implementing the Corridor's Strategic Plan. The Heritage Partnership Program "Call for Proposals" opens in early February. Applicants will submit a one-page project description in Round One, which is due by March 12, 2004. Projects chosen from Round One will be invited to submit a more detailed proposal. Project selections will be announced in May. **A meeting to present the Commission's priorities and CFP process will be held on Thursday, February 26 from 3:00 to 5:30 p.m. at the Holiday Inn in Woonsocket, RI.** More information and application materials are available on the Corridor website at www.nps.gov/blac/home.htm or by calling the Corridor Commission office at 401-762-0250.

Publications & Resource Information

If you want to know more...the Corridor websites are packed with great information. We encourage you to bookmark the National Park Service website for the Blackstone Heritage Corridor: www.nps.gov/blac/home.htm. New publications available this year include:

Blackstone Valley Trail & Greenway Vision Report outlines a vision for trail and greenway development and is intended to help plan and build a comprehensive and integrated trail system in the Corridor. www.nps.gov/blac/what/recreation.htm

Volunteer In Parks – Find out how to become a volunteer and take advantage of the variety of opportunities for putting your skills to work in the Blackstone River Valley – and have fun doing it ! www.nps.gov/blac/who/volunteers.htm

The Blackstone Valley Institute website concentrates on current topics and profiles selected examples of projects, bylaws and ordinances, and other relevant documents. "New" to the site is the Design Review Manual - A Guide for the Blackstone Valley. The manual was developed for Valley communities to provide general information on how design review works, and how to begin a local design review process as an effective tool for shaping community character. www.nps.gov/blac/who/bvi.htm.

The Red Shop's Future – A Community Workshop for Hopedale provides an outline of recommended next steps for the realization of a vision for the Red Shop – the oldest building associated with the Draper plant operations in the community of Hopedale. www.nps.gov/blac/what/current.htm

Blackstone River Bikeway brochure is an updated publication providing general information about the bikeway and maps of built segments, future routes and a temporary on-road route through the Valley. www.blackstoneriverbikeway.com

To access information on the **Blackstone River Watershed**, local river organizations and how you can get involved, visit www.nps.gov/blac/zap/index.html (www.zaptheblackstone.org.)



Noteworthy



Ranger Suzanne Buchanan received the National Park Service award for "Excellence in Interpretation." Regional Director

Marie Rust announced the award saying that "Suzanne is being recognized for her successful coordination of the Volunteer-In-Parks program at Blackstone, building a program with a tremendous esprit de corps among the volunteers." Congratulations Ranger Suzanne!

Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton saw our heritage corridor in action. Her visit included a tour of Slater Mill Historic Site and an opportunity to meet with nearly 100 Corridor partners and business leaders. Secretary Norton was impressed with what she heard and touted the Blackstone as "an important partnership example for everyone in the country."

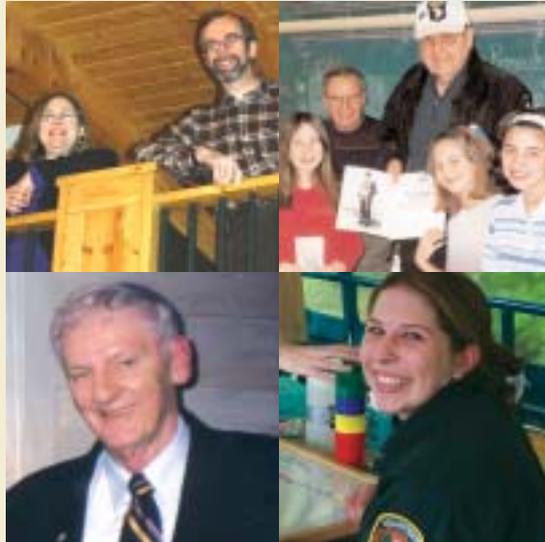
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers chose the Blackstone River as one of eight rivers across America for an **Urban River Restoration** designation. The agencies will assist in addressing water quality issues, economic revitalization, and the public use and enjoyment of urban rivers.

Chafee Heritage Awards

The fifth annual John H. Chafee Heritage Award acknowledges the contributions of individuals in the Blackstone Valley in the spirit of the late Senator's legacy of environmental preservation, historic preservation and community service.

Ken Crater and Peg Ferraro

Through innovative approaches, Ken Crater and Peg Ferraro have achieved community-based goals with a vision toward land protection. Every venture involved numerous partnerships and collaborations. At four sites, 468 acres have been protected in Grafton, MA. The long-term purposes vary from a wildlife corridor, to assuring limited future development, and to pre-serving the site of a historic Native American "Praying Village" and its significant archeological resources. In addition, they have been at the heart of the creation of the Brigham Hill Community Farm as part of the Community Harvest Project. This endeavor has placed 11 acres of fields into growing crops that assist in providing the Worcester County Food Bank with fresh produce for food banks that rarely receive these perishable items. A beautiful new barn was constructed as a meeting place for the farm and serves as a center for civic and community engagement for non-profit organizations and local governments.



Eugene Peloquin

The Museum of Work and Culture has received tremendous benefits from Eugene's enthusiasm and energy for what he refers to as "this gem of a Museum." As a constant proponent for the site, he has been involved in effective fundraising efforts where his personal approach toward drawing connections with individuals and businesses has been successful. The necessary funds were raised for the "Nun Project" with Eugene spearheading that addition to the Museum classroom setting. His continued leadership in the Annual Appeal and Raffle has made this fundraising

approach an ongoing success as well. With his advocacy for the Museum and connections to the whole Heritage Corridor, Eugene's contributions are constantly raising the public's awareness of this historical and cultural resource.

Cumberland Hill School - Fifth Grade Class 2002-2003

The stories of those who experienced World War II on the battlefields and at home have been documented through a student learning project at the Cumberland Hill School, Cumberland, RI. The fifth grade students interviewed 34 WWII veterans and civilians to discover their experiences in the Valley and abroad during this time. With their findings, the students wrote and illustrated "Heroes of History," a hardbound book published by the school. As such an important era of transition that WWII was for this region, these are a valuable piece of Blackstone Valley history.

Tiffany Shaw

As a student volunteer from Millville, MA, Tiffany donated her time to teaching students about the Blackstone River and has started many down the path toward becoming young stewards of this fragile resource. Working aboard the Blackstone Valley Explorer, with the ZAP the Blackstone 30th Anniversary event, and as a part of the Volunteer Citizen Water Quality Monitoring Program, her commitment to the River and the Heritage Corridor is an inspiration to many young people.

John H. Chafee

BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY

National Heritage Corridor Commission

