

COVID-19 Response

Face masks are required on NPS-administered lands where physical distancing cannot be maintained and in all NPS buildings and facilities. Park operations vary based on local public health conditions. Before visiting, please check the [park website](#) to determine its operating status. Additional details are available at www.nps.gov/coronavirus. Please [recreate responsibly](#).

The Wayback Machine - <https://web.archive.org/web/20210331211848/https://www.nps.gov/blrv/learn/news/januar...>

National Park Service

Blackstone River Valley

National Historical Park
RI, MA

January 2018 Newsletter

view of Slater Mill in winter time

New and Big Things!



Rt. 295 Visitor Center in Lincoln, RI

New Park Headquarters Coming Soon

Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park is looking forward to moving into a new home. This spring we will be opening a new park headquarters in the Blackstone River State Park Visitor Center on Interstate 295 in Lincoln. The Visitor Center, which is owned by Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, opened in January 2006. It is adjacent to the Blackstone River State Park, and connected to the Blackstone River Bikeway and the

Kelly House by a spur bike path that starts right outside the back door.

The new park headquarters will occupy space in the northern wing of the building. The Visitor Center already contains a visitor information desk and restroom facilities, and is served by a large parking lot. We are really looking forward to having a space large enough for all of our staff to work together. Look for the announcement of our grand opening in the spring.

Barn Raising at the Kelly House

A new barn is being built in Blackstone River State Park, just south of the Kelly House. This barn is a replica of one built by the Lonsdale Company, who ran a company farm on the meadow south the Kelly House throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries. A small family farm then operated on the site into the 1980s. The original barn stood for about 100 years until it collapsed during Hurricane Belle in August of 1976.



The replica barn at the Kelly House under construction this January.

NPS

The new barn will give us a place to tell the Blackstone Valley's farming story, which was a key element of the development of the mill villages. Much of it was built off site, so the fabrication will be quick. Be sure to check out the latest addition to the park on your next visit to the Kelly House.

Engaging Youth



Enjoying the 2017 BioDiversity Festival

NPS

Second Annual Biodiversity Festival Celebrates

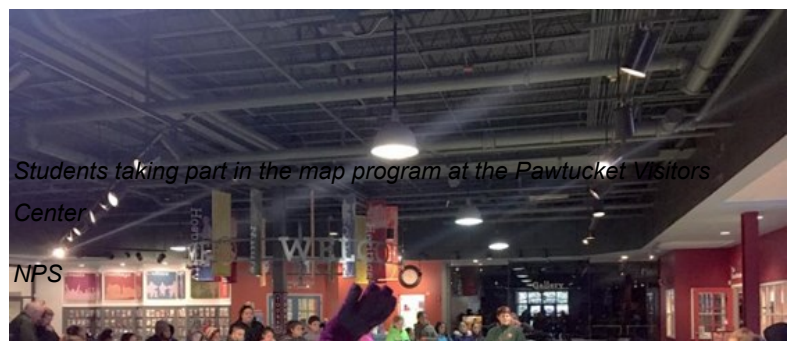
Our second annual Biodiversity Festival, held in September, brought together nature stewards, educators, and people who just love the Blackstone Valley at the tranquil Blackstone River State Park. The organizations represented take part in land conservation, environmental advocacy, citizen science, and environmental education in the Blackstone River Valley and greater New England Region. Each of them brought a sampling of their program to showcase for the Biodiversity Festival.

Outdoor yoga, paper rocket launching, water quality observing, pollution modeling and turtle petting we're just a few of the activities of the day.

We look forward to the exciting programs we'll have at the Biodiversity Festival next year. To see all the photos from the event and a full list of participants, visit our facebook page. For additional questions about the Biodiversity Festival, contact Emma Schlam at Blackstonevista@gmail.com.

Slater Mill School Programs

Fall was a busy time of year at Slater Mill, as fourth graders from Pawtucket and other places come to visit. This fall our staff and VIPs, offered 30 educational programs in partnership with Slater Mill. The students



tour the Slater Mill, and take part in a map activity that shows how the activities at Slater Mill were duplicated all across the Blackstone Valley.



Telling the Stories Preserving the Resources



World War I Memorial Bench in Whitinsville

NPS

World War One Centennial

In 2017, the National Park Service commemorated the Centennial of America's entry into the First World War. The Blackstone Valley played a key role in the nation's war effort. Mills around the region produced goods for the war effort such as blankets, tents, and uniforms, this proved to be the last major boom period for the Valley's textile mills.

This fall our rangers offered three programs about the Blackstone Valley during the First World War. To learn more about other ways

that the National Park Service is celebrating the story of America's role in the First World War, check out [**World War I**](#)

Park videos now have closed-captioning

Ranger Chuck Arning has been producing the "Along the Blackstone" television series since 1994. Each of the 75 thirty-minute episodes explores a different piece of the



Blackstone River Valley story, everything from who was William Blackstone and the story of the Blackstone Canal, the preservation of our historic mill villages, and the on-going efforts to protect and restore the Blackstone River.

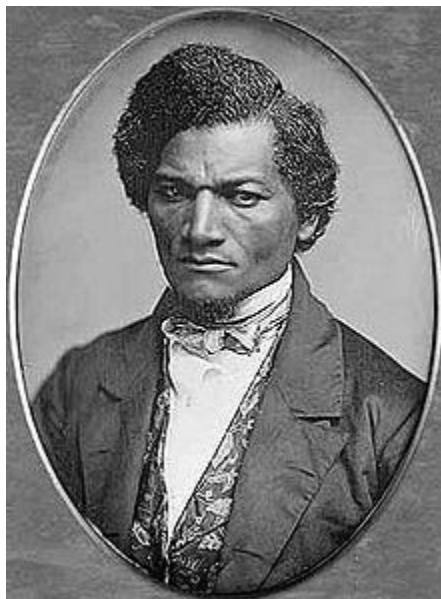


Recently the park has had these videos

digitized, and we are in the process of having the shows closed captioned so that they are accessible to our visitors who are hearing impaired.

After the shows are closed captioned, they are being added to our Youtube page. Right now there are fifty-one episodes available for viewing on Youtube, with twelve more currently being closed captioned to be uploaded over the winter. The remaining episodes will be added next year. To watch these episodes of "Along The Blackstone" and our other park videos, please visit the [park's YouTube channel](#).

Upcoming Events



Winter Civic Dialogue Series

"The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction but provocation." -
Freeman Tilden

These words form the essence of Freeman Tilden's philosophy as the National Park Service's foremost thinker on how interpretive park rangers should interact with visitors. He wanted the park ranger's interpretation to stimulate the visitor to expand their horizon of interests and knowledge so that after their ranger led experience, they would want to discover on their own an additional perspective based on new information they had gathered themselves. In other words, we want our visitors to continue their learning experience well after leaving the national park.

This winter we are engaging in a series of thoughtful and provocative panel discussions with a civic engagement component with our audience on issues that are relevant to today's headlines.

"Communities of Color Through a Different Lens: Frederick Douglass to Black Lives Matters"

February 18 from 1:30 - 4:00 PM

at [Worcester Historical Museum, 30 Elm Street, Worcester, MA 01609](#)

"Women Pushing the Boundaries: Where Did the 19th Amendment Get Us?"

March 18 from 1:30 - 4:00 PM

at Auditorium at Alternatives, 50 Douglas Road, Whitinsville, MA 0158

Volunteers In Parks

Join Our Amazing Volunteer Crew!

It might be the winter, but we're not slowing down. During the winter months, the park and BHC, Inc. are running a series of Skills Workshops for existing volunteers. Topics are ranging from the Enviroscope use to Visitor Services training. We're also seeking new volunteers who would like to share their time and talents with us. If you're interested in helping with visitor services, at the co-managed 295 Visitor Center, giving tours to school kids, reporting on events throughout the park, like being outside in nature, keeping our historic landscapes trash-free, or delving into community history, we have a great volunteer opportunities for you. If you didn't see something that speaks to you, let us know. We're happy to work with people who want to give back to their communities. For more information about volunteering in the new Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, contact Joshua Bell at 401-725-8638, etc.104 or by **email** or contact Suzanne Buchanan by **email**.



Volunteer Spotlight: Dave Lewis

V.I.P Dave Lewis joined our volunteers this summer. He's been a tremendous help with setting up for events, helping visitors to find their way around the park, and giving Map and Movie programs to school kids visiting at Slater Mill. As if this wasn't enough, Dave can also be found on the Bikeway



volunteering with the Bikeway Patrol or behind the desk at New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park Visitor Center.

We're always looking for volunteers to help us preserve, protect, and interpret the historical, cultural, natural, and recreational resources of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park.

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CONTACT THE PARK

Mailing Address:

282 North Main Street
Providence, RI 02903

Phone:

401-521-7266