



Heritage Corridor NEWS

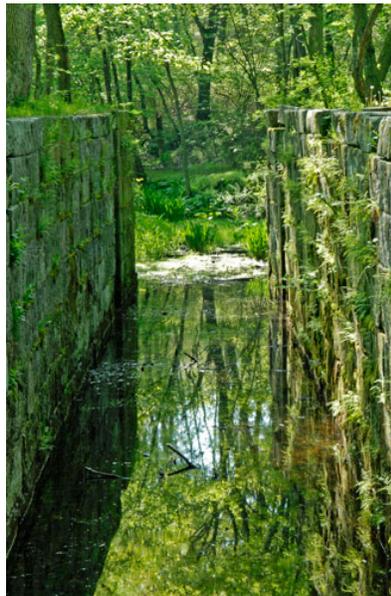


John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission

March 2009

New Blackstone Canal Preservation Efforts

The Corridor Commission and its new partner, Preserve Rhode Island, are working together to complete a study on the Rhode Island section of the Blackstone Canal. This project will enable partners and the public to develop a deeper understanding of the canal's significance, its condition and its preservation potential. Local preservationists and canal advocates were invited to share their knowledge at a public forum in January. Attendees reviewed maps showing the canal's path and shared ideas about which sections of the canal hold the greatest preservation potential. Areas of interest included Ashton, Lonsdale, Pawtucket and the canal basin in downtown Providence. Project consultants, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., will present their findings and recommendations at a public meeting in late spring.



"Together with the already completed [Massachusetts report](#), the Blackstone Canal Preservation Study for Rhode Island will help us decide on an implementation strategy for the preservation of the canal," said Jan Reitsma, Executive Director of the Corridor Commission. "The success of this effort, and the future of the canal, will depend in large part on the active involvement of the public. We hope to foster the creation of a strong group of advocates - a 'Canal Friends Group' - to join us in this important work."

For more information, or to volunteer for this project, contact Joanna Doherty at 401-762-0250 x14.

Valley Personality



Congratulations to **Michael Cassidy** who was elected Chair of the Corridor Commission at its recent annual meeting. He has served on the Commission since 2002 and is the Director of Planning and Redevelopment for the City of Pawtucket. Read about our 2008 John H. Chafee Award recipients in the Heritage Corridor's Annual Report. [Download your copy here.](#)

Special Resource Study



The study begun last year by the National Park Service continues to move forward. The part of the study that evaluates the national significance of Corridor resources is almost complete. The current phase focuses on what a National Park in the Corridor could actually look like. During a recent workshop, Corridor Commissioners and officials from the Northeast Regional Office of

the National Park Service (NPS) discussed which sites and resource areas could be included in a Park, what the management structure might be, and how the Park could partner with organizations that work to preserve the Valley's heritage. The study is currently expected to be available for public comment by late summer or early fall. Commissioners and staff look forward to discussing results and recommendations with you. Visit our [web site](#) to learn more and stay up to date about the study, the planning and decision-making process, and opportunities for public input.

VIP Coordinator in Philadelphia

National Park Ranger and Volunteers in Parks (VIP) Coordinator Suzanne Buchanan was recently accepted to the National Park Service Northeast Region Leadership Excellence Program. She is serving with the Regional Office in Philadelphia on a three-month detail as the Assistant Regional Volunteer and Youth Programs Coordinator through May 8. Suzanne is working with Robin Snyder, Northeast Regional Volunteer & Youth Coordinator, to coordinate, conduct and evaluate six Volunteer Management Workshops being held across the northeast region.



"Suzanne has developed a great reputation within the Park Service based on her ability to develop and maintain a successful Volunteers in Parks program at the Heritage Corridor," executive director Jan Reitsma explained. "The Regional Office recognizes her ability to transfer her knowledge and skills to others in a way that energizes them and helps our programs grow and succeed."

"The Leadership Program is a terrific experience and I am able to travel to parks with national exposure. It is also a great opportunity to share what I've learned through the Blackstone VIP program with other VIP coordinators," Suzanne said. "I am really looking forward to bringing new skills and creative ideas back to the Valley, too. Imagine the possibilities."

You Will See...

Ranger Kevin Klyberg and others at [Slater Mill](#) in Pawtucket conducting interpretive programs for school groups and through the weekends in March and April....**Rangers Chuck Arning and Kevin Klyberg** presenting at the [2009 Annual Meeting of the National Council on Public History](#) on April 2 - 5 at the Biltmore in Providence.

Valley View



A view of the Triad Bridge from the Blackstone River.

Photo credit: Michelle Fontaine

Featured Events

Dedication: The Heritage Gallery at Alternatives, Inc. will be dedicated to Northbridge citizen activist and preservationist, Spaulding Aldrich, on April 9. The public event will take place in the Heritage Gallery at Alternatives' Whitin Mill, 50 Douglas Road in Whitinsville, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Congratulations, Spaulding! [[link](#)]

Workshop: Protecting the Past - Safeguarding Your Cultural Heritage
The Heritage Corridor staff is coordinating a free planning meeting to provide training and online information for organizations to use in creating their own customized "disaster plan" to protect their irreplaceable cultural heritage materials. Plan on attending on April 17

News from CorridorKeepers

The Blackstone River Valley CorridorKeepers is undertaking a strategic planning initiative with guidance from consultant Nanette Robicheau, who is a manager with TDC of Boston. "We are looking at how best to position the organization to complement the mission of the National Heritage Corridor as well as to meet the needs of our partners and friends in this challenging economy," CorridorKeepers' president, Paula Brouillette, explained. "We welcome comments and suggestions and we hope to have a plan in place by the end of June."



The organization is also planning its second annual Wellness Walkathon along the Blackstone River Bikeway starting at the 295 Visitors Center in Lincoln, RI on Saturday, May 9. "Groups raised \$4,000 for their own programs through our event last year and we are encouraging them to "piggy back" on our event again this spring," Brouillette said. "We are also looking for organizations and wellness vendors who want to capitalize on the exposure this kind of event can bring them. We will be bringing everyone together in an outdoor fair atmosphere instead of along the route and we look forward to another great time!"

Participants and vendors can contact CorridorKeepers at 401-762-0480 or e-mail corridorkeepers@verizon.net for more details.

from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Depot at One Depot Square, Woonsocket. To r.s.v.p. call Barbara Dixon at 401-762-0250 x-30 before April 10.

Complete listings of events in the Heritage Corridor can be found at EventsBlackstone.com. Be sure to post your events there!



Visit our website at www.nps.gov/blac

