Lowell National Historical Park
2011 Annual Report

Lowell
Stewards of Heritage

The theme of this year's Annual Report, **"Stewards of Heritage"** supports the belief that the city of Lowell and the Lowell National Historical Park share a vision of evolving as thoughtful stewards of our natural and built environment. The national park presence in this city is a testament to the conviction that the people of Lowell, and this nation, have in preserving a culturally rich community with a powerful story to tell. It is our hope that the issues of the past—immigration and race, business and labor, the environment, innovation—will act as a platform for inspiration and civic dialogue in confronting similar issues today. The City of Lowell has developed a culture of collaboration. When it comes to problem solving within our community, we must continue to think and act in new ways. As in the past, it will require that government bodies, educational institutions, businesses, and non-profit organizations work differently—and together.

Michael Creasey, ***Superintendent***

Park Legacies & Community Values

Stats 2010

576,415 Visitors

5,080 Tours, Events and Special Programs

32,000 Lowell Summer Music Series

2,303 Volunteers Contributed **95,410** Hours!

Thank you to all for the energy and enthusiasm you inject, and the links you provide with the local community!

Community

Exporting the Lowell Experience
Now in its third year, **"Public Matters: Lowell's Emerging Leaders"** continues to grow and support learning and activism that will ensure the Lowell of tomorrow will be served by inspired stewards of our history, social and cultural capital, and economic and government institutions. The Class of 2011 is a diverse group of people representing businesses, arts and culture, social services, government, and education.

More than 200 nationwide and international participants attended June's **"Innovative Cities: Best Practices in Urban Development"** Conference. The Park partnered with Congresswoman Niki Tsongas, UMass Lowell, Middlesex Community College, and the Lowell Plan to organize and present this collaboration about the economic, physical, and social development of small- to mid-sized cities. National Park Service Director Jonathan Jarvis and White House Office of Urban Affairs Director Adolfo Carrion shared their perspectives. In addition to Lowell, speakers from Ann Arbor, Michigan; Asheville, North Carolina; Belfast, Northern Ireland; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Portland, Oregon offered pioneering efforts from their communities. Congratulations to Congresswoman Tsongas, UMass Lowell, and all the partners.

Through the years, Lowell has hosted many delegations representing cities from around the world seeking to better understand Lowell's preservation and revitalization success. In August, Lowell hosted **a contingent from Paterson, NJ.** A fifty member delegation representing the City Council, Mayor, preservation organizations, and the business community met with Lowell's leaders to discuss the country's newest national park, **"Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park."**

Clear views of Lowell's transformation are readily made with the **"City as a classroom."** Students and faculty from the Harvard University Graduate School of Design made their way to the City in April. Renowned urban planner, Susan Fainstein, brought her class to Lowell to look at urban renewal over time and the ways that cities address planning, design, economic, preservation and social issues.

Congresswoman Tsongas, National Park Service Director Jonathan Jarvis, and speaker Gil Kelley of Portland, OR at the conference.

Preservation

The rehabilitated Appleton Mills sees artists moving into contemporary apartments and studios, where looms and cotton once dominated the floor space.

Some 30 years ago the City had over 5 million square feet of vacant mills. With the recent opening of the Appleton Mill, the **rehabilitation rate for historic mills in Lowell is over 80%**. This phenomenal success has been accomplished through good urban planning, financial support through the National Park Service and State Historic Tax Credit programs, and developers who have made **investments of over $400M**. Given its preservation success, it is not surprising that the City and National Park were recognized as the **2010 Paul E. Tsongas Profiles in Preservation Honorees** by Preservation Massachusetts.

As part of Preservation Week in 2010, the Park hosted the collaborative exhibit, **"Historic Preservation: Then & Now"** with Historic New England at the Boott Mill Gallery. The exhibit presented Lowell's decline and various urban plan proposals for recovery. During this time, the demolition of significant buildings spawned the historic preservation movement in Lowell.

In April, Senator John Kerry and Representative Niki Tsongas announced a **$5 million U.S. Dept. of Energy grant** to the City of Lowell for the Carbon-Neutral Lowell Park and Preservation District initiative. It will provide a model for pairing historic preservation standards with energy conservation.

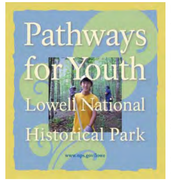
Cultural

Year-Round Folk!
Lowell is well known for its annual presentation of folk music, traditional crafts and ethnic foods through the **Lowell Folk Festival**. This July's festival will be a very special one! For 25 years, Lowell has celebrated heritage traditions and this year will be bringing forth some of the premier artists from around the globe. Check it out: www.lowellfolkfestival.org. A partner-ship with the Massachusetts Cultural Council has established a presence in Lowell. Dr. Maggie Holtzberg joined the park staff as our resident folklorist and director of Cultural Programming. The **Lowell Folklife Series** offers a robust variety of interactive presentations of crafts, foodways, performing, and traditions year round. Keep up to date on Lowell Folk at: massfolkarts.org/blog/.

A Rockin' National Park
As a commitment to community revitalization, the Park in partnership with the Lowell Festival Foundation has developed the **Lowell Summer Music Series** that has become one of the best venues for popular music in New England.

The waterways along Lowell's canals and rivers now have forty new exhibit panels that tell the story of Lowell's growth and development.

Youth



Pathways to Learning
Numerous buses arrive each school day on French Street, students and teachers stream onto the curb and head into the mill to become scholarly detectives and explore issues related to immigration, environmental history, innovation, globalization and labor history. The **Tsongas Industrial History Center** will receive its one millionth program participant during the Center's **20th anniversary this year**.

Lowell National Historical Park has developed vast and innovative programs for youth to connect to the outdoors and explore aspects of American history. Over 80 youth were employed by the park and its partners this past summer. During a visit to Lowell this year, NPS Deputy Director Mickey Fearn observed the Park's pathways for youth engagement and heard from many students who discussed their participation in the **Student Career Intake Program** that lead to careers in conservation; the **Spindle City Corps** that provides summer employment and leadership skills to youth ages 16-25; the **Youth Theater Program** that engages young people in living history; and a **Preservation Trade Skills Program** with the Greater Lowell Vocational and Technical High School that provides opportunities for students to hone preservation skills on historic properties.

Going to School in a National Park
As UMASS Lowell has increased its downtown presence, the Park and Tsongas Industrial History Center have committed to orienting incoming freshman into their new environment—a national park. Nearly 2,000 students explored downtown Lowell as a new component on their jam-packed orientation agenda.

Eleven UMass Lowell professors incorporated the Tsongas Industrial History Center and Park into their syllabi for a new "Lowell as Text" course and for the Honors Seminar course, which also used a "city as text" theme incorporating the Boott Museum, Mill Girls and Immigrants Exhibit, Tsongas Center work- shops, and the Concord River Greenway with Tsongas Center and Park staff.

Totals 1978–2010

18M Visitors

1M Students Tsongas Industrial History Center

2M People Lowell Folk Festival

$50M Invested Canalway & Riverwalk

80% Historic Mills Restored

$413M Invested

Farewells and Congrats!

A salute to those who have moved on...

Patricia Jones to Independence National Historical Park

Donna Richardson to Grand Canyon National Park

JR Roberts to John F. Kennedy Birthplace National Historic Site

Maryann Zujewski to Salem Maritime National Historic Site

And... we bid all the best in retirement to: *Cathy Burkhart*, *Ted Fowler*, *Lee Hammond*, *Danny Hyde*, *Dave Redding*, and *Rick Smith*

Historic Preservation and Cultural Heritage Awards

The National Park, in collaboration with the Lowell Heritage Partnership, recognize:

David McKean for his contributions to preserving Lowell's Irish cultural history

Maurice Comtois for his documentation of Lowell's residents in the Civil War

Trinity Financial for the restoration of the Appleton Mills Apartments

Rebecca Duda and students Emily Fox and Meghan Fawcett for Claypit Cemetery documentation

A Special Tribute to Superintendent Sandy Walter

This year saw the loss of Chrysandra Walter. Sandy served as Lowell's 3rd park superintendent. She was known for her vision and persistence in moving Lowell from a concept to an operational park. Her passion for education, traditional music and preservation led to the development of nationally recognized programs such as the Tsongas Industrial History Center, the Boott Mills Museum, and the Lowell Folk Festival. We are grateful for her leadership and commitment to Lowell.

Lowell National Historical Park
67 Kirk Street, Lowell, MA 01852
www.nps.gov/lowe

Photography and Design: Higgins & Ross

LOWELL

Heritage Legacies

Lowell National Historical Park