

# SEEDS OF CHANGE

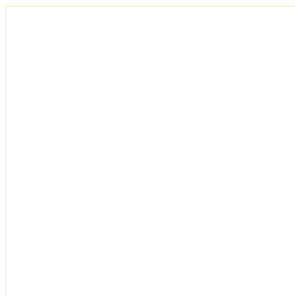
JULY 2002 – JUNE 2003



September 25, 2003,

On behalf of the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council Board of Directors, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the Eighteenth Annual Meeting of the Council. your support has enabled us to accomplish our vital mission and your continued interest is most appreciated. Thank you to the state of Rhode Island, our nine communities for their support and a special thank you to the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission for their continued partnership. With everyone's help and support, Rhode Island's Blackstone River Valley has gained international recognition as a Visitor Destination. Enjoy our "Seeds of Change" Annual Meeting. Watch our seeds sprout and grow.

David W. Balfour, Chairman



# FISCAL 2003 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Blackstone Valley Tourism Council held its 17th Annual Meeting recognizing local officials for their commitment to tourism development. Governor Almond addressed the meeting noting investments in the bike path, McCoy Stadium and open space acquisition his administration made to the region. Candidates York and Carciari pledged to support and enhance regional tourism efforts. Pawtucket historian Betty Johnson inducted into the William Blackstone Society, noted for her preservation of city history and her archival library.

The Tourism Council led a group of 12 Blackstone Valley citizens on a trip to our sister valley, the Amber Valley of England.



Supported the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor in testifying in support of the agency's Federal FY 2004 funding.

Recognized by the Governor's Growth Planning Council in its August 2002 report on Growth Centers. Tourism agency cited for its efforts to promote cultural, heritage, environmental and recreational tourism development as a focus on community development, quality of life and sound economic growth in the region as an effective model for smart growth planning and development in Rhode Island.

Purchased authentic 1981 model British double decker bus that will be used for group tour excursions throughout Blackstone River Valley. Bus is the only one of its kind in Rhode Island and is the first double decker to travel the state in over 15 years.

British Double Decker Bus profiled as feature article in AAA Southern New England March 2003 newsletter, being exposed to over 250 thousand readers. Double decker bus was also featured in Pawtucket St. Patrick's parade.

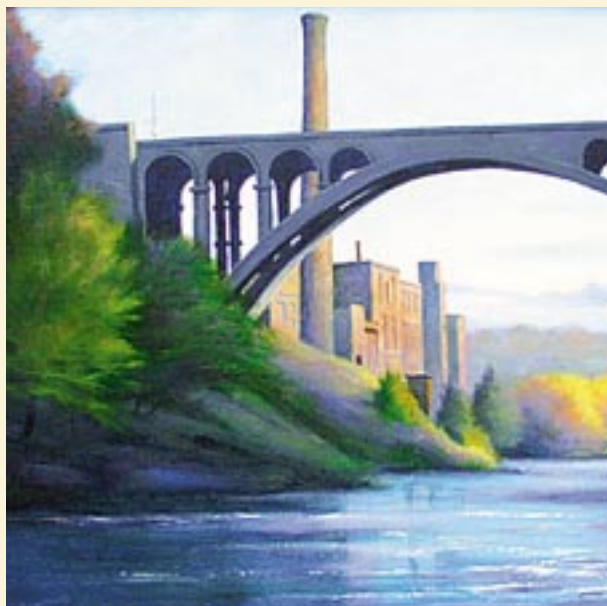
The Council hosted over 3000 parents and children aboard the Blackstone Valley Polar Express.

Received grant award from the Narragansett Bay commission to provide scholarships for student groups to participate in the Blackstone Valley Explorer ecology program.



Presented riverboat tours on the Blackstone River for catch and release fishing aboard the Blackstone Valley Explorer to acquaint people to the recreational uses of the Blackstone River.

Blackstone Valley Scenic Railway Tours has sponsored train trips on the Providence and Worcester Railroad since 1989. Over 15,000 passengers have travelled the rails in the last 15 years.



The Council launched "Blackstone Valley Passport" an online coupon offering discounts to historic and cultural attractions, performing arts, dining and retailing throughout Blackstone River Valley.

The Samuel Slater Canal boat was featured in the Providence Sunday Journal and Rhode Island Monthly magazine as a "hidden treasure." The Valley was also featured in a special article to be published in Fodor's, a renowned travel and tourism publication.



Hosted local attraction training session in June 2003 to continue quality service development with owners and operators of tourist destinations in region.

Contacted over 400 local, regional, national and international news media and travel trade media weekly via successful e-mail releases on Blackstone River Valley events. Each week new themes are highlighted and focused on targeted activities and attractions appealing to travelers and residents. Events are regularly picked up in newspapers in Providence & Boston media markets.

Assisted the JHCBRVNHCC with the creation of the new Corridor web sites for the Corridor, the Blackstone River Coalition and the Blackstone Valley Institute.

Launched the New England General Store on-line in cooperation with Gladworks of Pawtucket. Visit the store at [www.tourblackstone.com](http://www.tourblackstone.com)



The Blackstone River Watershed Council in partnership with the Heritage Corridor, the Blackstone River Watershed Association, the Blackstone Headwaters Coalition and Mass Audubon Society started a watershed-wide, citizen water-quality monitoring program.

Worked in cooperation with The Valley Breeze newspaper to produce the 2003 Blackstone River Valley Visitor Guide. The tabloid newspaper publication is distributed in every Blackstone River Valley visitor center and destination free of charge to the public. The Valley Breeze and its publisher, Tom Ward, were given the Governor's Regional Tourism Award for producing this publication. Over 60 thousand copies are distributed within the Blackstone River Valley of MA and RI three times yearly (Spring/Summer, Fall, Holiday Season)

With the Blackstone River Valley, MA Visitor Bureau, sponsored weekend summer river craft tours on Whitins Reservoir in Douglas, MA as part of joint/regional tourism development efforts.

The Council received a \$6,000 donation, in Blackstone Valley paintings from the Mandeville family of Lincoln. (Peter Campbell's paintings are featured throughout this report.)



Attended the Travel Industry Association of America trade industry expo in St. Louis, MO to promote the Blackstone River Valley as a cultural destination to group travel and tour industry representatives.

Continued active partnership efforts with the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor and the Blackstone Valley, MA Chamber of Commerce in attaining national advertising in top trade magazines and visitor guides. Region received national coverage in publications including; Yankee Magazine, Urban Land, and the official travel and tourism guides for the State of RI and the Commonwealth of MA.



Joined with Elderhostel in presenting statewide and regional heritage tours featuring the Blackstone River Valley as a focal point.

Held first ever King Philip's War historic interpretive tour on March 22 on double decker bus. Profiled early 1676 Colonial battle of Nine Men's Misery that occurred in the Blackstone River Valley.



In cooperation with Conway Tours, the Council held the 14th Annual Travel Experiences group travel industry trade show at Lincoln Park, RI, October 29, 2002.

Participated in the Discover New England Travel & Tourism Summit highlighting regional cultural destinations.

Presented the John H. Chafee Award on RI Rivers Day to Dave Newton of the Environmental Protection Agency for his continued involvement and support over the last 7 years.

With the City of Pawtucket, the third Annual Chinese Dragon Boat Race and Taiwan Day Festival was held. The event drew 8,000 on September 7th, 2002.

The Tourism Council hosts the Sandra Feinstein Gamm Theater's operations office as they transition from Providence to Pawtucket.

With assistance from Ocean State Charities, the Heritage Corridor, Morris Nathanson Design and the Narragansett Bay Commission, completed a Business Plan and early designs for the Blackstone River Exploration and Research Center.



The Watershed Council with the Blackstone Valley Rivers Project, MA Audubon Broad Meadow Brook and the BRVNHCC presented a Clean Water Festival at which over 10 schools from Worcester to Central Falls presented projects on water quality.

The Blackstone River Watershed Council secured a \$250,000 open space grant through Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management to go towards the purchase of the Blackhall property in Cumberland.

The Blackstone River Watershed Council received \$7,500 from the RI Rivers Council to administer the Council.

Blackstone Valley region hosted artists and visitors from Belper, England who were in the area promoting a new exhibit on the connections between the two areas and Samuel Slater, a native of Belper and the father of America's Industrial Revolution.

Planning started for the trade mission and partnership visit to England's Amber Valley, birthplace of Samuel Slater, to continue cultural exchange and mark 10th anniversary of the Blackstone Valley-Amber Valley Compact.

For the fourth year the Watershed Council provided scholarships to graduating seniors in the Valley who have shown a commitment to improving the environment of the Blackstone River watershed. Ten \$250 scholarships were awarded.

Blackstone Valley Watershed Council participated in the Keep America Beautiful 50th Anniversary. Organized all nine cities and towns to sponsor cleanups at various sites.

In cooperation with the Blackstone River Watershed Council, presented the 30th anniversary of Project ZAP the Blackstone, held in Lincoln. Over six thousand people attended this major environmental awareness event. Event received national publicity



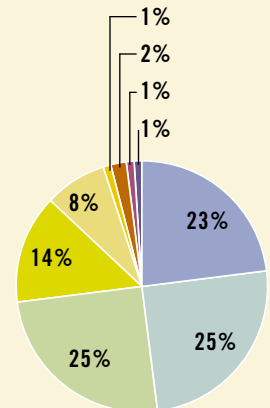
BVTC President Bob Billington and Group Tour Manager Mary Harrington attend the 2002 National Tour Association convention and trade show held in Los Angeles. Leads were developed to spotlight group tourism of heritage and cultural destinations.

# REVENUE AND EXPENSES 1985-2003

YEAR	INCOME	EXPENSES
1985	\$ 7,750.00	\$ 5,293.00
1986	9,250.00	8,814.00
1987	58,243.00	52,560.00
1988	57,710.00	53,626.00
1989	102,729.00	85,312.00
1990	110,182.00	109,422.00
1991	109,596.00	109,919.00
1992	128,013.00	132,975.00
1993	171,858.00	161,653.00
1994	301,069.00	260,008.00
1995	333,556.00	329,010.00
1996	352,753.00	342,179.00
1997	393,105.00	371,070.00
1998	394,367.00	343,423.00
1999	353,893.00	322,571.00
2000	1,026,876.00	1,032,408.00
2001	894,148.00	865,477.00
2002	789,920.00	758,655.00
<b>2003</b>	<b>841,130.09</b>	<b>821,609.75</b>

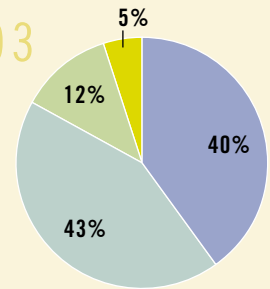
## SOURCE OF FUNDS 2002-03

Hotel Occupancy Tax	\$ 192,019.17
Cooperative Agreements & Management Contracts	210,592.89
Programs	212,580.14
Elderhostel & Group Tours	115,281.93
Grants and Donations	63,563.53
Watershed	10,300.00
State & Community Support	13,750.00
Conway Ticket Sales & Store	11,884.24
General	11,158.19
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 841,130.09</b>



## USE OF FUNDS 2002-03

Personnel	\$ 326,121.39
Programs	354,438.47
Operations	101,641.40
Watercraft	39,408.49
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 821,609.75</b>



# DIRECTORS, STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

## BLACKSTONE VALLEY TOURISM COUNCIL STAFF

Robert Billington  
*President-Director*

Natalie Carter  
*Director of Operations /  
Business Manager*

Donna Houle  
*Manager of Special Projects*

Angela Hyllested  
*Trade Show Manager/  
Canal Boat Coordinator*

Amanda Wood  
*Office Manager/Spanish Translator*

Olon Reeder  
*Public Affairs and  
Intergovernmental Relations*

Tammy Gilpatrick  
*Environmental Education and  
Advocacy Coordinator/Director,  
Blackstone River Watershed Council*

Mary Harrington  
*Group Tour Manager/  
Elderhostel Administrator*

## VISITOR CENTER STAFF

Wendy Jencks  
*Manager*

## VOLUNTEERS

JoAnne Billington  
Joseph Billington  
Christine Boudreau  
Stu and Mimi Freeman  
William "Billy" Hulme  
Barbara Leach  
Jay Newton  
Donna Sakkinen  
Tiffany Shaw  
Ellen Spilewski  
Barbara Steinbrick  
Tolman Key Club

JOHNSON & WALES  
TEACHING ASSISTANTS  
Patrizia Barone  
Kristine Mendes

ONGOING INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS  
Rhode Island College  
Bryant College  
RI State Internship Program  
Johnson & Wales University  
Rochester Institute  
of Technology

BLACKSTONE VALLEY  
RIVERBOAT STAFF  
Ramon Rodriguez, *River Engineer*  
Lucy Rivera  
Kimberly Jernegan  
Carol Lussier  
Eric Hogan  
Captain Frank O'Keefe  
Captain Bob Dombrowski

Captain John Amalfitano  
Captain Tom Koolen  
Captain Randy Smith  
Captain David Pinson

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TOUR GUIDES  
Rosemary Danforth  
Gordon Beeton  
Paul Papineau  
Charlie Sciaraffa  
Yvonne Fitts  
Barbara Barnes  
Betty Grayson  
Mike and Jan Ferry

ELDERHOSTEL  
GROUP LEADERS  
Richard Danforth  
Rosemary Danforth  
Beverly Pettine

DOUBLE DECKER  
BUS DRIVERS  
Walter England  
Mary Murphy  
Janice Rigano

BLACKSTONE VALLEY  
WATERSHED COUNCIL  
*Co-Chairs*  
Linda Jzyk  
Frank Matta

## Volunteers

Frank Carter  
Alice Clemente  
Frank Geary  
Judy Hadley  
Keith Hainley  
Charlie Hawkins  
Steve Kearns  
Karen Mateleska  
Armand Morin  
Brian Murphy  
Dave Newton

## WILLIAM BLACKSTONE SOCIETY

David Balfour  
Robert Billington  
Luther Blount  
Michael Cassidy  
John Chan  
David Gulvin\*  
Clinton Johnson\*  
Al Klyberg  
Louise Lind  
David Macaulay  
Patrick Malone  
Carol Metivier  
Robert Metivier  
Ben Mondor  
Dana Newbrook  
Leonard Panaggio  
Thomas Shanahan  
Betty Johnson  
Wil Gates

\*Deceased

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Normand Beauregard  
David DePetrillo  
Dave Richards  
David Goldstein  
Richard Murphy  
Robert Cahill  
Jackie Moran  
Dr. Tim Tyrell  
Thomas V. Ward  
John Lefrancois  
Leo Leclerc  
Leo A. Beliveau

## BLACKSTONE VALLEY TOURISM COUNCIL

## BLACKSTONE VALLEY

## TOURISM CENTER

175 MAIN STREET

PAWTUCKET, RI 02860

WWW.TOURBLACKSTONE.COM

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