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Continuing the Tradition ~ Preserving Our History

EMAIL: bvhsri.org ♦ 1873 Old Louisquissett Pike (Rte 246) ♦ PO Box 125, Lincoln RI,

Author Scott Molloy traces social dynamics of mass transit in Rhode Island during the Gilded Age at the Sunday, March 3 BVHS lecture and book signing

By Francine Jackson

American cities' rapid expansion after the Civil War fueled the growth of organized transportation systems—omnibuses, horse car, and, later, electric streetcars.

Trolley Wars traces the social dynamics of these first mass-transportation systems as they developed in Rhode Island, the most urbanized state in Gilded Age America. Covering years of rapid growth, **Scott Molloy** focuses on the laborers who operated the transit system, the changing ownership of the streetcar lines, and the strong bond that grew between trolley crews and passengers—a bond that sustained a powerful political alliance during the bitter "car wars" of 1902.

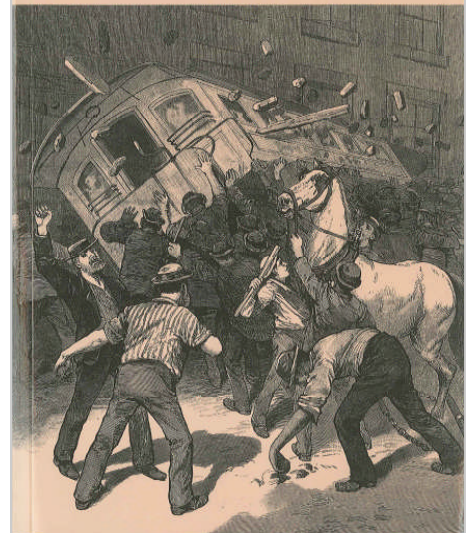
On March 3rd in the upstairs hall of the North Gate Toll House, Professor Scott Molloy will bring this period of Rhode Island history to life. Join us as we go back to what some feel was a simpler time in our state.

Scott Molloy received his Ph.D. in American History from Providence College. He is currently a Professor at URI, teaching history and labor relations. He founded the RI Labor History Society in 1988, and has been inducted into the Rhode Island Hall of Fame. He also spent many years as a RIPTA bus driver and labor official.

For a **Sneak Peek** of *Trolley Wars* and more fun, go to page 2.

TROLLEY WARS

Streetcar Workers on the Line
SCOTT MOLLOY



We Have a New Website! www.bvhsri.org

By Laurie Taylor

The Blackstone Valley Historical Society has a new website thanks primarily to the efforts of Kristina Guadagni. I recently asked her some questions to gain some insight into the process of creating the new website.

Q: First of all, how did you become involved with this process and do you have any other experiences with creating websites?

A: Yes, I did a small website for the Friends of Joe Taylor and the Cookout for a Cause - Laurie Taylor's Scholarship fundraiser. During that event, Jason asked if I'd like to join the BVHS and then one thing led to another. I also have a certificate in Web Development from Bryant University and use those skills in my work at TWOBOLT Marketing Technologies in Pawtucket, Rhode Island with the website www.MercuryCard.com.

Q: What were some of the things that you thought were important for the website to have?

A: *We all thought the website should have a modern, dynamic and welcoming feel, but also become a resource for the community to learn about Blackstone Valley history - sites, events, people. An area where folks could connect with others interested in these things, and perhaps find out a bit about their own genealogy was also important. We've created a page for people to post information and/or questions about anything related to these topics. We hope it will see a lot of activity!*

Q: How did you decide on the final appearance of the website?

A: *Well this, along with most other decisions was a team effort. We chose the WordPress platform because of its ease of use and then we chose a theme for ease of deployment. The WordPress format allows for blog-type comments and we hope we'll see a lot of interest in contributing comments.*

Q: How will this website be helpful for BVHS members?

SAVE THE DATE

We regret to have cancelled our February 17th book talk with Robert Grandchamp on *Rhode Island and the Civil War Voices from the Ocean State*. He will appear April 6th, at the North Scituate Library, as part of the Rhode Island Genealogy Society conference on researching your Civil War ancestor. We will reschedule Robert when he is available.

Sun. April 21 ~ 2 pm Downstairs
Dan Bethel talk and display
Saylesville Ephemera

Sun. May 19 ~ 1:30 pm Downstairs
Annual Member Meeting
2:00 pm
Al Klyberg talk
Chris Nowak & the Blackstone Valley
Writers Guild

A: *The website, along with the monthly newsletter will be the go-to source about events and information in the Blackstone Valley. It is updated immediately in the*

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SNEAK A PEEK



Pawtucket motorman Joseph C. Fiske (right foreground) poses in front of his snow-encrusted trolley in 1895. Streetcars lacked a protective vestibule in front until after the turn of the century. Fiske, a union activist fired during the 1902 strike, later spent almost 50 years as a railroad engineer. (*copied directly from Trolley Wars*).

DID YOU KNOW?

In 1887, an independent horse car operation in Woonsocket initiated trolley service, the first of its kind in New England. The line only lasted a few months due to technical difficulties and some community opposition, but if it had maintained service for a year or so it might have made claim to being America's first electric streetcar operation. (*from p.64, Trolley Wars: Streetcar workers on the Line.*)

Researched by *Lori Melucci*

BVHS EXECUTIVE BOARD

President: Jason Dionne

401-862-4202

Email: jjhdio70@gmail.com

Vice President: John Houghton

Secretary: Francine Jackson

Treasurer: Lori Melucci

Members-at-Large

Gail Harris, Glen Laxton, Bob Ferri

Past President: Pat Armitage

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event of a weather cancellation. Visitors can contact any one of our officers or other members of the BVHS community. It is easy to join from the website and even-

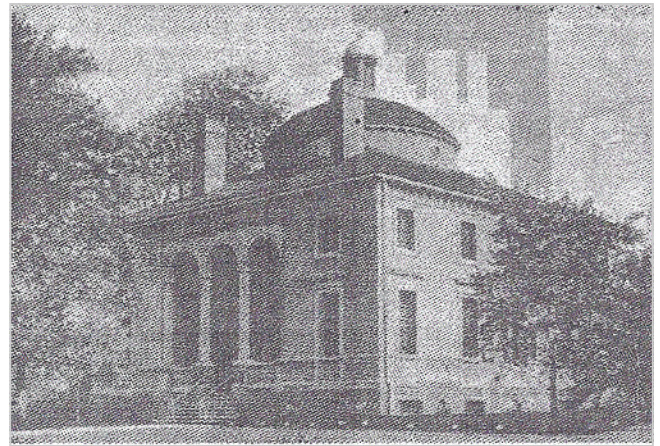
This was Memorial Hospital in its beginning. Pawtucket Time April 30, 1960 photo celebrating the 50th Year mark of the hospital.

FROM BVHS



ARCHIVES

Look what we discovered in the our the archives. Can you identify this building?



Photograph reprinted from The Pawtucket Times

Don't know. Look for the answer hidden in this newsletter!

BVHS MISSION STATEMENT

The Blackstone Valley Historical Society is dedicated to securing and preserving items related to the history of that area of Rhode Island known as the Blackstone Valley. BVHS is a non-profit organization dedicated to the exploration, preservation, and appreciation of the Blackstone Valley heritage. The Blackstone Valley is comprised of six communities: Pawtucket, Central Falls, Lincoln, Cumberland, North Smithfield and Woonsocket.

The BVHS Program Committee recently met to begin reviewing programs, events and activities for the coming months. Many of you sent great ideas and suggestions. The committee will use the BVHS Mission Statement and the five emphasis areas of Education, Preservation, Community, Membership and Fundraising as yardsticks for their selections.

EDUCATION

Talks about North Providence, Nipsachuck, Mill Baseball Teams, Old Time Radios, Blackstone Valley Ethnic Diversity, Furniture, Stenciling, Paramount Cards, Genealogy

PRESERVATION

Clipping Bees, Grange Memorabilia Display, Historic Themed Art Exhibit, Continued Maintenance of BVHS Archives and Property

COMMUNITY

WWII Grange Veterans Honor Ceremony, Strawberry Social, Summer History Camp for Children, Expand Collaboration with Blackstone Valley Historical Societies and Organizations

MEMBERSHIP

Expand Outreach to Young Adults, Teens, and Children; Develop More Member Premiums

FUNDRAISING

Old Movie Night, Wine Tasting, Dinner Theater Mystery, Beer Tasting, Holiday Choral Concert, Open Mic Night, History Themed Drink & Dabble, History Themed Poker Run

As you can see, there will be many opportunities for you to participate in BVHS!

usually will be even easier with online purchasing of memberships and event tickets. etc.

Q: Is there anyone you would like to thank for helping you with the creation of this new website?

A: Lots of people were helpful - everyone has so many ideas. But, especially I'd like to thank Lori Melucci for her tireless as-

sistance with providing content, suggestions and proofreading! It continues to be an enormous help. Pat Armitage shared her files to facilitate the transition. Sue Nicewander, the newsletter editor contributed her creative genius as well as her very organized publication archives for use on the site. It was certainly a team effort!