



THE LANDMARK

PUBLICATION OF THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Vol. 55

February 2014

No. 5

Continuing the Tradition ~ Preserving Our History

bvhsri.org ♦ 1873 Old Louisquisett Pike (Rte 246) ♦ PO Box 125, Lincoln RI, 02865

BLACKSTONE VALLEY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CONCERT
SERIES

Live at
North
Gate



'TUNES OF TRUE LOVE'

Michael DiMucci & David M. Marshall

Sunday February 9 3 PM

BVHS Annual Fundraising Concert



By Francine Jackson

Just in time for Valentine's Day, come and enjoy musicians **Michael DiMucci and David M. Marshall** as they present a Concert of Love at North Gate Sunday, February 9th, at 3:00 P.M. in the Upstairs Hall. Featuring the music of such giants as Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Duke Ellington, Tony award winner Jason Robert Brown, and Billy Joel, Michael's and David's perfect combination of vocals, piano and sax will present a memorable musical afternoon.

Michael DiMucci has been part of the Rhode Island music scene for many years. A gifted keyboard artist, he also has sung tenor at many opera venues, including *The Magic Flute*, *The Mikado*, and *H.M.S. Pinafore*.

David Marshall has been the Director of Music for the Swansea public school system for many years. He has also been Director for the award-winning Joseph Case High School marching band, and a performing member of the East Bay Summer Wind Ensemble since 1990.

Together, DiMucci and Marshall will bring *The American Song Book* to all who listen. Come and enjoy an afternoon of beautiful music!

North Gate Toll House, located at 1873 Old Louisquisett Pike (Route 246), Lincoln, RI, is the headquarters of the Blackstone Valley Historical Society, which is dedicated to the history and antiquities of the Northern Rhode Island communities of Pawtucket, Central Falls, Lincoln, Cumberland, North Smithfield and Woonsocket.

The Train Wreck that Changed Time ~ Valley Falls, RI ~ August 12, 1853

Member Lori Melucci created an exhibit for the September 28 BVHS Open House. Following is the first installment of the information on display that day. **THE STORY**

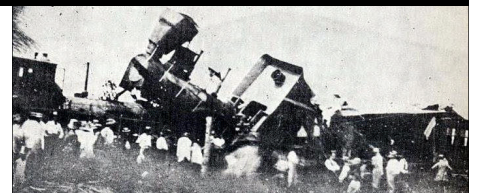
On August 12, 1853, the Providence & Worcester train started from Whitsunville, north of Uxbridge, at 6:25 a.m., and began to travel south through the Blackstone Valley's mill villages. It was an excursion train bound for Narragansett by way of Providence. By the time it reached the Valley Falls Station, there were about 400 people aboard.¹

The Boston to Providence line joined the Providence & Worcester line (as it does today) in Central

Falls at a place near Foundry Street called Boston switch. In 1853, the P & W track north of Boston switch was a single track, at least as far as Valley Falls.²

Back then, the Valley Falls station was roughly behind 135 Broad Street in Central Falls, not far from the intersection of Titus Street and High Street.

The train from Uxbridge that arrived at Valley Falls that morning was running late. According to the engi-



**THE RAILROAD SLAUGHTER.
THE DISASTER ON THE WORCESTER
AND PROVIDENCE ROAD.**

neer, Ephraim Gates, the train left the Valley Falls station at 7:32 a.m. According to the depot master, it should have left at 7:29 a.m. The train coming north from Providence was due at Boston switch at 7:32, and was under orders to wait at the

Train Wreck (Con't on Page 2)

Central Falls ♦ Cumberland ♦ Lincoln ♦ North Smithfield ♦ Pawtucket ♦ Woonsocket

*Chris Nowak
Lecture Series*

**Funded
by her
Generous
Bequest
to BVHS**

Archaeological evidence places Narragansett peoples in the region that later became the colony and state of Rhode Island more than 30,000 years ago. They inhabited the area along Narragansett Bay from present-day Warwick to South Kingstown and were the largest of a number of native tribes living in the area. In 1524, the Italian explorer Giovanni da Verrazano encountered a large Native American population living near Narragansett Bay, hunting and practicing agriculture and organized into systems under "kings." In fact, the Narragansett divided themselves into eight divisions, each ruled by a territorial chief; these chiefs were then subject to a head chief or sachem. For subsistence, the Narragansett depended on the cultivation of corn (maize), hunting, and fishing. Members of the tribe were also known for their prowess as warriors, offering protection to smaller tribes (such as the Niantic, Wampanoag and Manisseans) who in turn paid tribute to them.



Clipping Bee

Next Meeting Monday evening, February 10 at 6:30 PM. - Weather Permitting

- You can get started now, and here are a few hints as you compile materials for BVHS' archives: **REMEMBER** what happens today will be history tomorrow - save articles of important happenings in the Blackstone Valley, save the whole page(s) to include both the publication name and publication date. It is important to know the date and source of each item clipped.
- If you would like to know more about this event or would like to participate in sorting the articles into more specific categories and experience history in your own hands **contact:**

Pat 401-737-6229, Jason 401-862-4202, Sue 401-729-0818, or bvhs58@gmail.com

Please bring with you any articles you have been saving. Together we can all keep history alive!

Train Wreck (Con't from Page 1)

switch for the Uxbridge train for five minutes.

However, Fred Putnam, the 25-year-old conductor, had checked a watch that would later prove two minutes slow. He asked Gates if he could reach Boston switch in four minutes, a distance of about a 1/2 to 3/4 mile. If not, the train would wait at Valley Falls. Gates felt he could make it, however, relying on the erroneous

watch, and the train left the station. Minutes later the two trains collided at nearly full speed.³

Thirteen passengers were killed and about forty injured in the head-on collision.⁴

1., 3. Marcia Green, *In Valley Falls: 1853 inquest finds train crash was inevitable*, Valley Breeze, February 14, 2008.

2. Ian R. Bartky, *Selling the True Time: Nineteenth Century Timekeeping in America*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, Ca 2000.

4. Providence Journal, *The Railroad Calamity*, August 15, 1853.

"No one could have seen the mingled mass of ruins without wondering how, save by a special intervention of Providence, a single passenger in either of the first three cars attached to the downward train, could have escaped uninjured. The first one was nothing but chips. The third entered the second at the top and passed nearly through it, smashing and tearing both in pieces."

**Description of the accident in
The Providence Journal
Saturday, August 13, 1853**

SAVE THE DATE	Sunday, February 9 3 pm Upstairs Hall	Michael DiMucci & David M. Marshall	'Tunes of True Love'
	Sunday, March 9 2 pm Upstairs Hall	Bob Kynch	Lincoln Downs
	Sunday, April 6 2 pm Downstairs Hall	Dan Bethel	Central Falls Ephemera
	Sunday, May 18 1:30 pm Downstairs Hall	Annual Meeting & Dr. Kevin McBride	Chris Nowak Lecture
	Saturday, June 21 Downstairs Hall	Strawberry Social	Returning to BVHS

BVHS EXECUTIVE BOARD

President: Jason Dionne

401-862-4202

Email: jihdio70@gmail.com

Vice President: John Houghton

Secretary: Francine Jackson

Treasurer: Lori Melucci

Members-at-Large

Gail Harris, Glen Laxton, Bob Ferri



Get Social With BVHS

Visit us at www.bvhsri.org

**All these Programs & Events take place at North Gate Toll House
1873 Old Louisquissett Pike (Rte 246) Lincoln RI 02865**