



THE LANDMARK

PUBLICATION OF THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Continuing the Tradition ~ Preserving Our History

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

Experience History Come to Life

John McNiff as Roger Williams at BVHS



Return of Roger Williams from England with the First Charter, 1644. From a painting by C.R. Grant.

Join us at 2:00 p.m. on May 18 for a captivating presentation at the Blackstone Valley Historical Society, where historian and re-enactor John McNiff will bring Roger Williams to life.

Through first-person interpretation, McNiff will explore the life, beliefs, and legacy of this influential 17th-century figure. With decades of experience

in historical re-enactment, McNiff offers a compelling portrayal. A former National Park Ranger at the Roger Williams National Memorial in Providence, he has spent years researching the era and educating audiences. In addition to his historical work, McNiff has a background in acting, production, and stage combat instruction, making his performances both informative and engaging.

Don't miss this unique opportunity to step back in time and gain new insights into one of Rhode Island's most important historical figures.

May 18
1:30 pm. Annual Meeting

2:00 John McNiff as Roger Williams

BVHS Annual Meeting May 18

The annual meeting for the BVHS will be on May 18 at 1:30 p.m. The Nominating Committee for the BVHS, led by Don Coelho and Bob Ferri, announces that the slate of officer nominees for 2025-2026 remains the same:

Jason Dionne - President
Lori Melucci - Vice President
Francine Jackson - Secretary
John Houghton - Treasurer
Members at large: Gail Harris
Bob Ferri, and Don Coelho

We would welcome suggestions for new officers and encourage you to ask your friends to join the society. If you are interested in joining the board or wish to suggest someone, please contact the committee chairman, Don at don.coelhojr@icloud.com. Nominations will also be taken from the floor during the annual meeting.

The BVHS board organizes historically related
(Continued on p. 4)



Cheryl Barata flagging veteran's graves at Mineral Spring Cemetery with Ken Postle, May 10

Ken Postle Honors Veterans' Graves



Ken Postle, cemetery restoration coordinator for BVHS, has been placing flags on veterans' graves for Memorial Day. He started work at Lincoln Cemetery 15 on Great Road, but was driven away by the downpours.

On May 10, he worked with volunteer Cheryl Ann Barata on the Mineral Spring Avenue Historic Cemetery and St. Mary's Cemetery.

If you would like to help, he will be working in Pawtucket at Oak Grove Cemetery on Saturday May 17, and at the St Francis Cemetery after that. Please check the Facebook page for updated times.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/PawtucketsArlingtonMSACemetery/?fref=nf>

Above left, left and below are pictures of the Mineral Spring Avenue Cemetery on May 10. In the center, Cheryl Barata in the midst of flagging. Photos by Ken Postle.



As Ken explained to the Facebook groups that an appointment is now needed to drop off old flags, Suzey Wilson responded that the American Legion will be doing a flag retirement ceremony this year as part of their flag day celebration on June 8 at Chase Park in Lincoln RI, near the Pullen Corner Schoolhouse.



Stone of Peter McGrath, a Civil War veteran at St. Mary's Cemetery, where some of the stones were intentionally buried.



Fresh flag on the grave of Simon Whipple, Lincoln 15 on Great Road. Whipple fought in the Revolutionary War.

Happy 100th Birthday to BVHS's Historic Stage Curtain



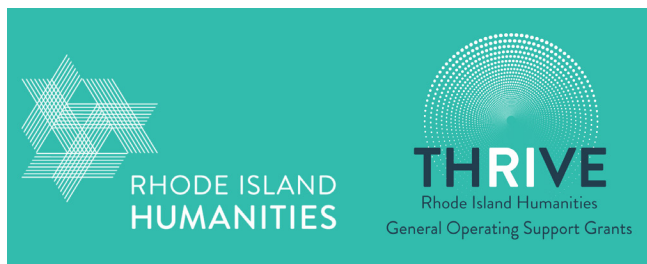
BVHS Advertising Stage Curtain

The striking stage curtain at BVHS was installed by Lime Rock Grange #22. According to a history of the Grange written in 1960, the curtain was hung in 1925, and touchingly adds “members have refused to part with it, even though the ads on it are out-of-date.”

Advertising stage curtains were popular from the 1880s through the 1930s. These curtains varied from displaying simple spon-

sor information to intricate compositions of ads incorporating painted scenes. The BVHS curtain features ads from local businesses of the time, including Newell Coal and Lumber, Couto Bros, the Dennis Printing Co., Anna Tessier’s Dry Goods and Notions, the Narragansett Milling Co., Central Auto Supply, Moon Cars, and of course, “Lime from Lime Rock.”

BVHS Receives Thrive Grant



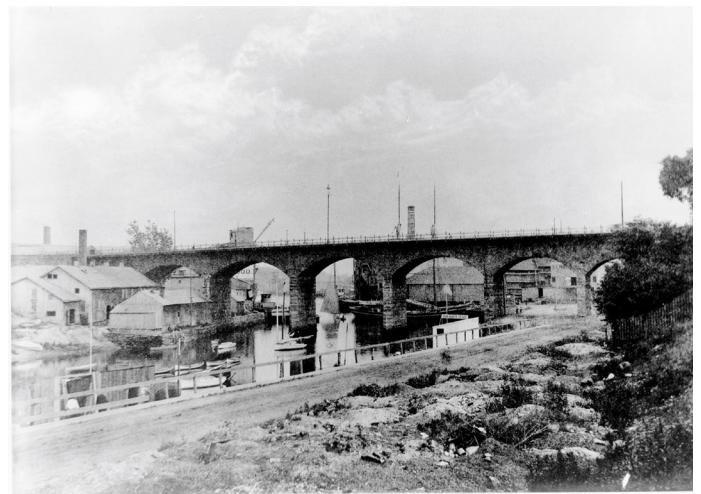
RI Humanities - Thrive Grant

BVHS received a grant this year for \$5,000.00 from RI Humanities this year through the THRIVE Operating Support Grant program. Francine Jackson, secretary of BVHS, went to the celebration for the grant awardees on April 24, and received a certificate for the BVHS

signed by the Secretary of State Gregg Amore.

We appreciate the support of RI Humanities and the State of Rhode Island through this program that seeks to help local cultural heritage organizations and historic preservation societies with operational support.

From the Archives: Division St Bridge, Pawtucket



Photographs showing before and after the construction of the Division Street Bridge. The photo on left is the scene in approximately 1880, and the photo on the right is from around 1896.

BVHS Map at Blackstone Valley Cartography Exhibit at Slater Mill



Tim Wynne and ranger Allison Horrocks stand near the Valley Falls map and the Sayles Bleachery Bird's Eye View.



Maps from Providence to Worcester can be seen at the exhibit.

An exhibit featuring bird's eye view maps from the late 19th century of cities and towns along the Blackstone River is now on display on the second floor of Slater Mill. This exhibit was curated by Tim Wynne, a history student at Rhode Island College, interning at Slater Mill. Bird's eye maps are illustrated views that depict towns as if seen from above at an angle. While not usually drawn to scale, they show street layouts, individual buildings, and prominent landscape features. BVHS loaned its map of Valley Falls to this exhibit, which is free, and is open on Fridays and Saturdays in May, and from Thursday through Saturday this summer.

BVHS Annual Meeting

(Continued from p. 1.) activities, lectures, and exhibits, cares for North Gate and its artifacts and collections and works to increase awareness of local history. If you are interested in attending a board meeting, they are usually held on the 3rd Monday of every month at 6:30 p.m.



BVHS Members enjoying the exhibit from the State Archives on April 21. Photo by Jim Hendrikson

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at our new location!

BVHS Executive Board

President: Jason Dionne

401-862-4202

Email: bvhsri@gmail.com

Vice President: Lori Melucci

Secretary: Francine Jackson

Treasurer/Property Manager:

John Houghton

Members at Large

Gail Harris, Bob Ferri, Don Coelho



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