

River Byway News

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CONNECTICUT RIVER BYWAY



Byway Funding Awarded

NATIONAL BYWAY status for the Connecticut River Byway not only means prestige and national publicity. It also means increased funding from the Federal Highway Administration's scenic byway program.

This fall, the Byway received approval for \$178,000 in new federal funding that is expected to arrive early in 2007. In 2005, the FHA granted \$342,200 for installation of signs along the Byway. State and local matching funds will bring the sign project up to \$421,500 in value.

These grants will help bring needed visibility to the Connecticut River Byway and enable significant capacity development on the part of the Byway Council and partner organizations and communities.

Signs to Guide Byway Travelers

In the spring of 2007, the first signs will go up along the 500 miles of Byway roads bordering the Connecticut River. Sixty-two trail blazer signs on Byway roads will feature the Connecticut River Byway logo in blue on a white background, and will be located at intersections to and from waypoint communities or where other travel ways intersect the Byway.

Another 166 directional and information signs will go in the waypoint communities themselves. All the sign designs and placements were developed by LandWorks of Middlebury, Vt., in consultation with town officials in waypoint communities.



Continued page 3

Publications Manual is a New Tool for Byway

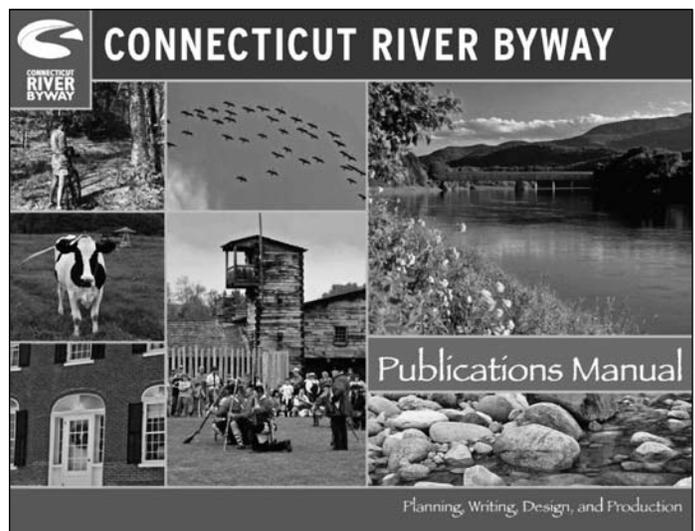
DOES your organization want to reach more visitors or customers? Would a new brochure help do that? Would distributing it at the Byway Waypoint Centers help reach your audience? Who is your audience anyway?

The new **Connecticut River Byway Publications Manual** can help answer all of those questions. Part style guide, part instruction manual, it's a tool for communities, businesses, and organizations wanting to produce a brochure, booklet, or other publica-

tion for their marketing and outreach efforts. It's meant to take the mystery out of publication writing, designing, and printing, and make the production of high quality publications accessible to all.

Publications following the manual's style and content suggestions will be

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Connecticut River Scenic Byway Council

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Portraying Industrial Heritage

THE rich industrial heritage of the Connecticut River valley is the subject of a very stylish new brochure. *From Mills to Main Streets* highlights St. Johnsbury, White River Junction, Windsor, Springfield, Bellows Falls, Brattleboro, Vt., and Claremont, N.H.

“The goal was to reflect the vibrancy of the downtowns today where people live and work and as destinations to visit,” says Robert McBride, director of the Rockingham Arts and Museum Project, who conceived the project. “The idea was to present information that is somewhat timeless and can be explored on foot, by bicycle, or driving, in all seasons and is not dependant on seasonal hours of operation at sites within each village.”

Also working on the project were Ann Lawless, executive director of the American Precision Museum, and Nancy Hoggson, the museum’s communications and development consultant.

Mary Lynch Designs of Bellows Falls combined text and historic and contemporary photographs effectively to convey the unique architecture and heritage of each community.

Richard Ewald, development director for Rockingham, Vt. wrote the text, telling the stories of river and rail transport, papermaking, machine tooling, and power generation.

The brochure includes an insert with local information that can be changed annually as funding permits. Each participating community also has access to a second insert template, which can be used to feature specific information unique to them—heritage sites, community events, festivals, with days/hours of operation and contact information.

The brochures are distributed by the participating sites, welcome and waypoint centers, area regional marketing programs, chambers of commerce, and Vermont’s interstate distribution service, local business and cultural

organizations and through local/regional events/festivals. PDF versions are also available for each participating organization, as well as a link from www.ctrivertravel.com

The cost to design, print, and distribute 30,000 copies was approximately \$13,000. The project was underwritten by the Connecticut River Joint Commissions’ Partnership Program, the Southern Vermont Regional Marketing Program, Preservation Trust of Vermont, The Vermont Country Store, with additional support from municipalities, chambers of commerce and businesses from the seven communities listed in the brochure.

For more information about the project, call the American Precision Museum at 802-674-5781 or RAMP at 802-463-3252. 



Byway Funding, continued

Directional signs will have arrows pointing to “historic district,” “boat launch,” etc. Other signs will identify the waypoint center and parking. When LandWorks worked with the waypoint community officials, they also looked at sign clutter and made recommendations of places where existing signs can be consolidated and improve town appearance.

The Vt. Agency of Transportation and N.H. Department of Transportation are working closely with the Byway Council to make the Byway sign project a success. Preliminary engineering phase of the project is being managed by Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission.

Managing Tourism

A byway is much more than asphalt and signs. It's scenery, history, and culture, places to paddle and hike, places to ski and snowmobile. Most of all, it is the people of our valley who share the stories of our history and civic life and who engage visitors in caring about this heritage.

The new federal Byway grants will help the Byway Council start a multi-faceted effort of building networks, and engaging communities and businesses in the twin goals of promotion and preservation. On the drawing board are:

- Creation of a *prioritized list of special places* along the Byway

that communities would like to see conserved.

- A *handbook* for Byway communities and partners that will provide guidance on land use, outdoor advertising, aesthetics, preservation priorities, strategies for hospitality and visitor services, and the roles of various partners including chambers of commerce, historic societies, waypoint centers, and more.

- *Hospitality training* for waypoint center staffs and volunteers, chambers of commerce, providers of recreation services and accommodations with the aim of creating an esprit de corps and shared information along the Byway among the diverse people who are contacted by the traveling public.

- A *marketing plan* and a 16-page *brochure* for the Byway being developed in partnership with the Vt. Department of Tourism and Marketing and the N.H. Division of Travel and Tourism (see below).

- A *cultural heritage tourism booklet* for the Upper Valley.

- *Reprint of the Byway Explorations map and updating of the Byway exhibit panels* in the waypoint interpretive centers.

This barebones sketch gives a glimpse of the diverse ways in which the Connecticut River Byway is going to come to life as a benefit to Connecticut River communities over the next year. Stay tuned... or better yet, get involved. 

Preservation News

New! Historic Preservation E-mail Network

The N.H. Division of Historical Resources, with help from Plymouth State University, has developed a free listserv to share information, ideas, experiences, and questions related to historic preservation. While primarily intended for New Hampshire preservationists, historic district commissioners, and heritage commissioners, Vermonters are welcome too. To subscribe, send an e-mail to psu-heritage-commission@toto.plymouth.edu with the word “subscribe” in the body of the text. 

Historic Preservation Field Service Offers Assistance

Have a historic preservation headache? The New Hampshire Preservation Alliance's new National Trust Shared Field Service program went into action this summer, and has already resulted in help for historic preservation efforts on the Connecticut River Byway.

An energetic group in Pittsburg is gathering around the idea of restoring the Indian Stream Schoolhouse, a tiny landmark in a region with a big history. The landowner, a fourth generation member of the family that settled at the confluence of Indian Stream and the Connecticut River in the 1800s, and local volunteers are exploring the possibility of opening the school as a site for teaching visitors and residents about the heritage of this beautiful region, including the Indian Stream Republic. A field service visit helped focus the concept and offered fund-raising ideas.

To arrange a field service consultation, call Maggie Stier at the N.H. Preservation Alliance at 603-224-2281 or e-mail ms@nhpreservation.org 

‘Discover the Connecticut River Byway of Vermont and New Hampshire’ will Lure Visitors

A new four-color, lavishly photographed brochure marketing the Connecticut River Byway is on its way. The 16-page brochure is a joint project of the Vermont and New Hampshire tourism offices and the Byway Council. It will be distributed at state welcome areas, to media and travel industry professionals, and at trade shows. The Byway Council is very pleased to have the enthusiastic and generous assistance of the two states in this first-ever joint marketing project. In addition to the brochure, the Byway will have a new toll-free number for visitor information: 1-877-CTRIVER, courtesy of Commissioner Bruce Hyde and the Vermont Department of Travel and Tourism. 

Community Profile

A Place Up Back: Colebrook

By Charles Jordan

THE late local author and historian Dr. William H. Gifford called Colebrook “a place up back of New Hampshire.” Residents in this town in the Upper Coös region like to think of being in a world of their own. Folks in nearby Pittsburg 160 years ago, in fact, felt that this area was neither New Hampshire nor Canada and formed for a brief period their own independent country, the Republic of Indian Stream. That celebrated example of revolt didn’t last long, but the region’s fierce independence still reigns to this day.

Colebrook’s closeness to Quebec province (8 miles up the road), Maine (less than 30 miles to the east) and Vermont (within eyesight across the Connecticut River) is just one of the geographic attractions to this region. The 45th Parallel, marking the point halfway between the equator and North Pole, is another attraction. Two local towns, in fact, are so proud of the fact that they have state historic markers to indicate the imaginary line. You’ll find one on Route 3 in West Stewartstown and a second on Route 145 in Clarksville.

The New North Woods

Colebrook is in the heart of a region that hosts the northernmost link to the White Mountains, with Dixville Notch’s craggy peaks a key attraction, along with the Balsams Grand Resort Hotel, a manmade wonder set amid nature’s own show.

Nevertheless, while maps have for decades considered the region part of the White Mountains, residents felt differently. The White Mountains, with their hiking trails and ski resorts, have attracted a clientele of tourists somewhat different than can be found in the northernmost tier.

Here, fishing, snowmobiling and hunting are the predominant attractions for many. In the late 1990s, through local efforts, the Upper Coös region received its own distinct designation, the Great North Woods Region.

The Great North Woods is a world inhabited not only by fishing and forests, but in recent years, a profusion of moose. Local inhabitants have learned to live with the moose, which sometimes can be compared to traffic cones for their habit of finding their way into the highways of the north. But even as natives and tourists have learned to employ a certain caution while traveling the favored highway crossings of moose, residents have also learned to profit by the growth of the herd over the years.

Moose Means Business

One of the most popular events of northern Coös County is the annual Moose Festival, held at the end of August each year. Thousands of residents join the many tourists who flock north to celebrate all things moose. There is a moose-calling contest, and “Mr. Moose” wanders Colebrook’s Main Street during the big Friday night parade and street fair. The next day, activities move up north and just across the Connecticut River into Canaan, Vt., with more fun and games. Before it’s all over, numerous towns have taken part and natives once again are thankful that moose have chosen this region to call home. For those who want to see moose any time of year, be sure to make your way to



The Colebrook Welcome and Waypoint Center.

“Moose Alley” just above Pittsburg village on Route 3.

An Evolving Economy

As in many other North Country communities, the past 50 years has seen Colebrook move away from an economy based on agriculture and logging to a tourist-driven and light manufacturing-based economy. The open fields of places like Clarksville and Columbia have been filling in with trees as more and more farmland has been returned to nature. Today, the vast potato industry that put Colebrook on the map back in the first half of the 19th century is the stuff of history books. In addition to the dairy farms that remain, two of the other active agricultural efforts in the region are maple syrup making in the spring and the harvesting of Christmas trees in winter.

Many businesses and places of accommodation have come to depend on tourism to replace the jobs lost as farming and logging have declined. However, in order to keep people employed, new forms of enterprise need to be attracted to the region. Groups like the Colebrook Development Corporation have been working to bring new businesses to Colebrook’s Industrial Park. One of the successes of recent years has been the construction of a “spec building” in the park. The structure stands ready to be

adapted to the needs of a prospective company looking to locate in Colebrook.

A Downtown Renaissance

Another very active group has been the Colebrook Downtown Development Association (CDDA). Formed in the late 1990s, this group has been instrumental in getting Colebrook designated as a National Main Street Community. Its energetic members have also been an inspiration to many business owners on Main Street to spruce up downtown buildings. As a result, a virtual Renaissance has taken place in the downtown district.

The CDDA has worked closely with another local group, the Upper Connecticut Valley Community Coalition, in getting a long-held dream of a regional community swimming pool constructed. Opened in 2005, the North Country Recreation Center is a showcase of cooperation between area towns that use the facility.

The community coalition also was instrumental in the construction of the Great North Woods Interpretive Center and Connecticut River Byway Waypoint Center, which was built in 2001 at the state welcome center on Route 3 north of Colebrook village. Again, it was through cooperation of several agencies, including the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge and the N.H. Department of Transportation, that the new center came about. Today not only is the wildlife refuge exhibit housed in the facility, but so is the Great North Woods Interpretive Center, which features historical, natural and business exhibits, as well as the state rest area and the offices of the North Country Chamber of Commerce.

Today the CDDA and community coalition are working with the Great North Woods Center for the Arts to bring another long-held community

dream to fruition: a much-needed theater and arts center. The region is also fortunate to have many other service clubs, like the very active Colebrook Kiwanis Club, working on its behalf.

Vibrant Traditions and Institutions

Local folks place a high value on education. In the past decade alone, Colebrook, Pittsburg, Errol, and West Stewartstown voters have all approved major repairs or new schools in their communities.

Since 1970, Colebrook has been home to its own hospital, Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital. Through capital campaign funds and the generosity



Photo: Charles Jordan

Mr. Moose and young friends enjoy the Moose Festival held annually in Colebrook.

of local patrons, it continues to be maintained as a state-of-the-art facility. Most recently, the emergency room has had a facelift. Across the parking lot a community medical center also helps provide the area's medical needs.

Recreation remains a big part of the regional picture. While residents often joke about the region's seasons being summer, fall, winter and mud season, the fact is the North Country is a year-round attraction with a wide range of recreation enthusiasts. The Connecticut Lakes, the celebrated headwaters of the Connecticut River, have been a magnet for water and fishing enthusi-

asts for generations. Since the 1960s, a major industry has developed around snowmobiling to the point that every March the Sno-Deo draws thousands of snowmobilers to Coleman State Park in Stewartstown, just outside of Colebrook.

The Upper Coös region also has a long tradition in the arts. Over the years, many poets, writers, photographers, and artists have been drawn to the region. The famous woodlands writer Stewart Holbrook, author of "Holy Old Mackinaw," hailed from the region. Folklorist Robert Pike used some of the region's rich history in his books "Spiked Boots" and "Tall Trees, Tough Men." Richard Pinette of Errol wrote about the region in his two well-received books, "Northwoods Echoes" and "Northwoods Heritage." Others who have contributed to spreading the stories of the north between hard covers include Colebrook writers Dr. William H. Gifford, Ellsworth Bunnell, and Richard Leavitt. Bunnell, who was also a talented musician, wrote many of his stories for New Hampshire Profiles and Northern New Hampshire Magazine.

Colebrook is the first waypoint center along the Connecticut River Byway heading south, and the region takes its position seriously. The welcome mat is placed out for all to explore the vast beauty and attractions of the Connecticut River valley. And it all starts just up the road in Pittsburg, where one can literally step across the beginnings of one of North America's greatest waterways, the Connecticut River. 

Charles Jordan owns and edits several northern New Hampshire publications. He has also contributed his share of stories about the region, including in his book, Tales Told In The Shadows Of The White Mountains (University Press of New England, 2003).

Partnership Grants Benefit the Byway

EACH year the Connecticut River Joint Commissions awards Partnership Program Grants to non-profit and community organizations doing work that supports CRJC's goals in education, preservation, land use, and other areas. Grant criteria are at www.crjc.org.

AGRICULTURE

Locally Grown Guide

Grant awarded: \$2,000

Submitted by: Vital Communities/
Valley Food and Farms

Project location: Peacham, Vt. to Keene, N.H. and Warner, N.H. to Braintree, Vt. This third edition of the guide helps residents and visitors find and learn about locally produced food.

FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

Important Bird Areas of the Upper Connecticut River

Grant awarded: \$4,000

Submitted by: Audubon Society of
New Hampshire

Project location: River towns from the Massachusetts border to Springfield, Vt. This award will fund conservation planning for two Important Bird Areas in the CT River Valley, identified through a project by the Audubon Society of N.H. and the Green Mountain Audubon of Vt., and previously funded by the Partnership Program.

LAND USE MANAGEMENT

Dummerston Operators' Manual

Grant awarded: \$3,500

Submitted by: Dummerston Planning
Commission

Project location: Dummerston, Vt.

A partnership of active Dummerston organizations will create a high quality, easy to read publication describing their town's cultural, environmental, historical and human resources.

Planning Board Training and Assistance

Grant awarded: \$2,000

Submitted by: Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission

Project location: Upper Valley Lake
Sunapee Region

This award will fund training sessions and follow-up technical assistance to four planning boards, with emphasis on tools and resources available for corridor management plan implementation.

Lyme Natural Resources Inventory

Grant awarded: \$1,500

Submitted by: Lyme Conservation
Commission

Project location: Lyme, N.H.

This award supports a natural resources inventory of the town of Lyme.

PRESERVATION OF SCENIC & HISTORIC FEATURES

Orford Church Tower Restoration

Grant awarded: \$4,000

Submitted by: United Congregational
Church of Orford

Project location: Orford, N.H.

This award will fund the replacement of badly deteriorated Gothic Revival finials and balustrade which crown the clock tower of the United Congregational Church of Orford.

McDermott Bridge Restoration

Grant awarded: \$2,000

Submitted by: Langdon Covered
Bridge Association

Project location: Langdon, N.H.

This project focuses on stabilization of the stone abutments, the restoration of the lower chords and other structural components of the McDermott Covered Bridge using historically appropriate materials.

RECREATION

Monadnock Mtn. Trail Restoration – Phase II

Grant awarded: \$4,500

Submitted by: NorthWoods Stewardship
Center

Project location: Lemington, Vt.

This award will enable NorthWoods to field a Kingdom Corps back country crew for one week to maintain

vulnerable sections of the upper trail and relocate several sections of the Monadnock Mountain Trail.

Nulhegan River Access

Grant awarded: \$4,500

Submitted by: Vermont River
Conservancy

Project location: Bloomfield, Vt.

This project will provide a permanent public access easement and parking area at the confluence of the Nulhegan River with the Connecticut River, near a previously funded public cartop boat access and adjacent to Vermont Route 102 in Bloomfield, Vt.

Bailey's Eddy & Sleepers Meadow Trail Improvements

Grant awarded: \$3,500

Submitted by: Upper Valley Land Trust

Project location: Newbury, Vt.

These funds will be used to improve public trails on two conserved properties, Bailey's Eddy and Sleepers Meadow, along the Connecticut River Byway in Newbury, Vt.

Blueprint for Lebanon Community Trails

Grant awarded: \$3,500

Submitted by: Lebanon Recreation &
Parks Department

Project location: Lebanon, N.H.

This document will include ideas and action steps developed during a community trails forum, detailed maps, phasing recommendations for safe routes to school, commuter pathways, accessible trails, and trail connections.

Springfield Trails

Grant awarded: \$2,000

Submitted by: Southern Windsor County
Regional Planning Commission

Project location: Springfield, Vt.

This project will sponsor creation of a Trails Committee and the inventorying and mapping of Springfield's trails, bike routes, and accessible roads on public and private property.

RIVER RELATED EDUCATION Art, History and Ecology Along the Sugar River

Grant awarded: \$3,000

Submitted by: The Fells

Project location: Newbury, Sunapee, Newport and Claremont, N.H.

This award supports the marketing, advertising and printing of a program book for an art exhibit at the Fells that presents the Sugar River through landscape paintings, photography and explanatory panels.



This painting of the Sugar River by Lisa Jelleme-Miller is one of many in The Fells exhibit. A feature story on the exhibit will be in the next issue of Byway News.

Watershed Stewardship Education Program

Grant awarded: \$3,000

Submitted by: Southern Vermont Natural History Museum

Project location: Grafton, Townshend, Bellows Falls, Westminster, Springfield, Marlboro, Putney, Dummerston, Saxtons River, Brattleboro, Vernon, Whitingham and Wilmington, Vt.

This award supports the museum's expansion of its watershed education program, a hands-on program which teaches students about water quality, and instills a sense of stewardship.

Lull's Brook Trout Aquarium

Grant awarded: \$1,500

Submitted by: Hartland Elementary School

Project location: Hartland, Vt.

This award will be used to partially fund a large aquarium in the central hub of Hartland Elementary School that will allow

students to observe Brook Trout, the focus of a school wide study project.

VISITOR EDUCATION FOR CONNECTICUT RIVER BYWAY Industrial Heritage Trail Brochure

Grant awarded: \$5,000

Submitted by: American Precision Museum

Project location: CT River Byway from Brattleboro to St. Johnsbury, VT.

This project (described on page 2) is to design, print and distribute a new promotional brochure that will highlight the Byway's Industrial Heritage.

Geotourism in the Northern River Valley

Grant awarded: \$4,000

Submitted by: Nulhegan Gateway Association

Project location: Dalton to Pittsburg, N.H.

The Nulhegan Gateway Association will collect and include information from the Connecticut River Byway in a "geotourism" map of the Northeast Kingdom it is creating in partnership with the National Geographic Society. 

Publications Manual, continued eligible to carry the logo of the Connecticut River Byway. With the logo, the Byway Council hopes that over time, waypoint and other communities will offer a recognizable family of Byway publications known for their quality. A family of publications will help create a sense of continuity along the Byway from Brattleboro to Pittsburg, helping attract visitors and extend their lengths of stay. The publications will also offer great information for residents about the bountiful experiences available in their own backyards.

The manual is written so organizations may take advantage of heritage tourism, the hottest segment of the tourism industry. Heritage tourists seek the experiences that define a region and give it its character — experiences different from what they have at home. The possibilities for

such experiences in the Connecticut River valley are endless: our local artists and craftspeople, farms and farmers' markets, historical museums, and covered bridges, to name a few.

The manual suggests that whatever their subject matter, publications reach the heritage-minded visitor (and resident) by relating to Byway history, culture, recreation, civic life, natural resources, agriculture, or local products. For instance, a dining guide might include information about the history of your community. A trail guide might describe plant or animal species hikers might encounter, or explain local efforts to conserve land for public recreation.

The manual takes you through planning and organizing a publication, including tips on hiring a designer, working with a printer, and devising a budget. An entire section is devoted to

creating heritage tourism guides. Also included is information on using digital photos, distributing publications, and finding resources in Vermont and New Hampshire for funding and other assistance.

Complimentary copies of the Publications Manual are available for the waypoint centers, chambers of commerce and Main Street organizations, historical societies, recreation organizations, and other similar organizations along the Byway. Additional copies are \$12 each, plus \$3 for shipping and handling. Call Barbara Harris at 603-826-4800 or e-mail contact@crjc.org to request a copy.

CRJC Communications Director Rebecca Brown is also available to meet with you about publications and using the guide. You can reach her at 603-823-7282 or e-mail [Rebecca.brown@crjc.org](mailto:brown@crjc.org). 

The Connecticut Valley Porch

By Adair Mulligan

NOT every region can boast a signature architectural feature, and fewer can claim one so appealing as what we've identified as the Connecticut Valley Porch.

The Connecticut Valley Porch is a recessed, upper-story porch decorating the gable end of Greek Revival and Gothic Revival style homes of the mid-1800s. The porch may be large or small, and the opening can take many shapes, with elliptical arches most common. Recessed porches with square or rectangular openings, and semi-circular or trapezoidal openings have also been seen. These porches almost always appear on wood-frame structures, or on the wooden second story of a house whose first story is built of stone or brick.

The style appears to be common only in the Connecticut River valley; only a few have been spotted outside the watershed. We have found them in Twin Mountain, Lisbon, North Haverhill, Piermont (the public library), Orford, Alstead, and Chesterfield, N.H. A possibly unique double example on an early duplex survives in downtown Lebanon. In Vermont, they

are sprinkled through Waterford (Rabbit Hill Inn), Newbury Village Historic District (Knight House), Ascutney, Saxton's River, and Grafton. There may be more—let us know of ones in your town!

Many of these porches date from the few years surrounding 1840, and we wonder if an architect or builder traveled up the valley at that time, dazzling prospective owners with this intriguing new building element. We also wonder how these porches were used. The era of leisure that accompanied the Industrial Revolution, when many a prim early house received a lavish new wrap-around verandah, had not yet arrived. Connecticut Valley Porches are integral features of the original house design, not later additions. Tuberculosis and the lung afflic-

tions that sent so many seeking "the cure" of sleeping on porches in the fresh, cool air of northern New England had not yet erupted on the scene. Perhaps these porches simply provided a functional but protected outdoor space for needlework or escape from hot summer nights indoors.

We hope we've piqued your interest in this distinctive feature of our region's architecture. Point out local examples to Byway visitors, and encourage homeowners to protect their porches from undue alteration. ☒

Adair Mulligan is conservation director for the Connecticut River Joint Commissions.



Rabbit Hill Inn, Lower Waterford, Vt.



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