

Town of North Smithfield
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Press Release

North Smithfield Receives \$15,000 RI Foundation Centennial Community Grant

**April 28th, 2016
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SLATERSVILLE, RI**

This morning the Town of North Smithfield received a \$15,000 grant for the production of **"Slatersville: America's First Mill Village,"** a two-part documentary directed by Christian de Rezendes of Breaking Branches Pictures.

This award was given by the Rhode Island Foundation as they celebrate their 100th anniversary with the Centennial Community Grant Program. Of the 200 grant submissions received, 43 were selected, and "Slatersville" made the cut. Town Administrator Paulette Hamilton and De Rezendes were present at the official announcement at Camp Meehan in North Providence.

"Slatersville" has been in production on and off since 2012. To date interviews with 72 individuals have been filmed, 8 of whom have passed away, and over 6,000 images have been donated and scanned from a wide variety of sources that tell the story of Slatersville in a personal, in-depth way. De Rezendes filmed key events back in 2005, where the film was first attempted and later shelved. Hours of 8mm and 16mm film footage from as far back as the 1930's have also been transferred and utilized creatively, and personal letters from as early as 1808 and from as many as a dozen archive sources throughout the country will be voiced to tell the story.

"Community means engaging, entertaining and educating citizens of all ages about the 'origins of place,'" said Christian de Rezendes, filmmaker and founder of Breaking Branches Pictures, who is producing the documentary. "The film will not only work to educate people about the evolution of mill village life in a way not done previously, but it will bring communities together in enlightening and enriching ways."

In addition to the Rhode Island Foundation's support, major support has also been received from as far away as Melbourne, Australia, where Slater descendant Sharon Fox-Slater and husband-to-be Alan Bishop reside. Fox-Slater discovered the film's website in 2014, and both she and Bishop have made considerable donations. Over 150 people have made personal donations on the film's GoFundMe page, and the film has garnered the support of RI State Council for the Arts, the RI Council for the Humanities, and the Blackstone Heritage Corridor, along with variety of companies, museums and archive houses. For a complete list, visit www.firstmillvillage.com.

De Rezendes plans to put this grant funding towards much needed filming in South Carolina and the Norwich/Jewett City, Connecticut area, as well as continued filming of remaining interviews throughout Southern New England, scanning, obtaining of rarely seen images and the like. However, the majority of time over the remainder of 2016 will be on the much-needed editing of the film. For updates and questions about **"Slatersville: America's First Mill Village,"** contact Christian de Rezendes at www.breakingbranchespictures.com.