



A public arts project with an environmental conscience, for people of all ages.

Frogs, Frogs, Frogs!

16 small, bronze frog statues have been strategically placed throughout town and the surrounding area to call attention to the fresh water flowing under and around the streets and buildings of downtown Blacksburg. Each frog has been given a name associated with an important figure in Blacksburg's history. The 16 Frogs campaign seeks to restore the health of Stroubles Creek, the broader watershed, and the water quality of downstream communities through increased public interest and awareness.



The frogs were created by local artist Christine Kosiba and are modeled after native Green Frogs, range from 6–12" in size, and are poised (or sometimes hiding) on culverts, stormwater drains, sidewalks and kneewalls.

Meet the Frogs



Virginia



Phillip



Harriet



Lindsay



Keister



Crawford



Harvey



Mary Louise



A.G.



Gilbert Vaughn



Lyle



E.D. Frog



Millie



Nick



Nannie Bell



Bogen

Can you find them all?

To learn more about each frog and the reason for their names, just look on the back of this brochure or visit us online at 16Frogs.org or facebook.com/16Frogs

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Where's the Water?

Downtown Blacksburg and the Virginia Tech campus are underlain by numerous streams and waterways that have been piped, channeled or covered over the last 200+ years. These abundant freshwater streams, springs and seeps are an essential part of our history, and in fact, are why Native Americans, and later, European settlers, settled in and around present-day Blacksburg.

Since Blacksburg is located near several of the headwaters for the New River, where our municipal drinking water supply is obtained, we have a very direct connection to and reliance on our local water supplies that many residents may not be aware of.

Where can you see and hear the streams?

Do Your Part

Local residents can protect our water quality.



Fertilize lawns and gardens properly



Dispose of pet waste and fence livestock away from streams



Plant native trees and plants



Use alternate forms of transit, such as walking or biking



Service vehicles to eliminate leaks



Properly dispose of household trash and chemicals

For More Information

Please visit us online at 16Frogs.org or facebook.com/16Frogs

Our Sponsors



Waterways Map



Map Key

- Roads
- Aboveground streams
- Underground streams
- Huckleberry Trail
- Eastern Continental Divide

Frog Locations and Namesakes:

- 1 Crawford:** The Crawford family ran a general store near here in the mid-1900s, when the area was mostly farmland.
- 2 Gilbert Vaughn:** Vaughn, formerly enslaved, was the first Black landowner in this neighborhood, called New Town. About 20 Black families lived here starting in the late 1800s.
- 3 Keister:** In the 1800s, the Keister family owned a large farm just north of downtown. Several Blacksburg neighborhoods were carved from their estate.
- 4 Lyle:** John Lyle, Sr., and his son John Lyle, Jr., owned a boys' school on this hill in the mid-1800s. In 1872 that school was converted into a college, which we now know as Virginia Tech.
- 5 Nannie Bell:** One of the first Black female business owners in town, Nannie Bell Snell ran a beauty salon here for 14 years in the mid-1900s. She lived around the corner on Jackson Street.
- 6 Nick:** In 1920, Nick Kappas, a Greek immigrant, opened a restaurant at the northeast end of College Avenue. It's still there, now called The Cellar.
- 7 Millie:** The building across the street—now home to Gillie's and the Rivermill—was originally a flour mill, powered by Stroubles Creek.
- 8 Harvey:** Harvey Black, who lived at the corner of Main and Washington Streets, helped found the college that became Virginia Tech.
- 9 Mary Louise:** Mary Louise Black was the adopted daughter of the couple who owned the Black House. She died in 1918, likely of Influenza.
- 10 A.G.:** Archibald Gray Smith, II, was the last person to live in the Five Chimneys house. A horticulturist, he laid out the garden to look like a European estate.
- 11 Virginia:** Virginia Hummel, an English teacher, helped preserve the extensive iris garden at the Price House.
- 12 Phillip:** Phillip Price was one of the first Black students to attend Blacksburg High School, which was then on Main Street between Clay and Eheart Streets.
- 13 Lindsay:** Lindsay West was the first woman elected to the Montgomery Board of Supervisors. She lived just north of here, in a farmhouse built in the 1830s by the Keister family.
- 14 Harriet:** Harriet Dorsey was the first female lawyer in Montgomery County and the first female judge in the district. For many years, her office was here at the corner of Church and Washington Streets.
- 15 Bogen:** Bill Ellenbogen—a Blacksburg land developer, restaurant owner, and former NFL player—led the effort to reinvent the old Huckleberry rail spur as a bicycle and walking path. It now extends more than 11 miles, from Brush Mountain to Christiansburg.
- 16 E. D. Frog:** The Eastern Divide is a curving boundary that stretches from New York to Florida—and runs through Blacksburg. Rivers on the east side of the divide empty into the Atlantic Ocean, and rivers on the west side flow into the Gulf of Mexico.

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