

REHOBOTH ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

*Carpenter Museum
Blanding Library
Goff Memorial Hall
Arts in the Village
Cultural Events*



SUMMER 2019
Quarterly Newsletter

SUMMER READING PROGRAM

Every year, as schools are preparing to let out for the summer, the library prepares to help our town's students maintain their reading skills and avoid the "summer slide," a decline in reading ability and other academic skills over the summer months. Numerous studies show that kids who don't read during their summer vacations experience a decline in reading ability by the time they return to school in the fall.

Since 1987, the Collaborative Summer Reading Program has established suggested themes for each year's program. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing, and the theme is "A Universe of Stories." At the Library, we've brought back the popular Read & Bead program rewarding readers for every 15 minutes of book time with a colorful, glow-in-the-dark, or sparkly bead to add to a necklace they receive at the beginning of the summer. We held a series of Yum-Yum Story Hours on Mondays in July, featuring a story and a space-themed creative food activity, and Outer Space Story Hours on Mondays and Thursdays in August.

Other special events planned for July and August include: The Night Sky presented by the Museum of Science, Boston, with an inflatable planetarium in Goff Hall, author visits for special story times, Martial Arts basics, three Aerospace Camps, Balloon Aliens creation, constructing Alien Ants, Mr. Vinny's Bubble Show, learning about owl calls, habitats, and habits, creating Galaxy Necklaces, Fiona the Whale and whale activities, crafts, facts, and a new story read by the author, and Rockets & Airplanes with Ed the Wizard. We've also trained new families to use our lending telescope so they can explore the universe from their own backyards.

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The RAS preserves, promotes and enhances the significant historical, educational, and cultural assets of Rehoboth, Massachusetts.

UPCOMING MUSEUM EVENTS

GENEALOGY GROUP

**Third Wednesday of the Month
7 to 9 PM**

Join this lively group to discuss DNA, wills and probate records, land records, technology tools and the brick walls we encounter while researching. All invited. Wifi available.

MEMORIAL & RECEPTION

**Sunday, September 22
1 PM**

Rehoboth resident Alexander Williams, Civil War Sailor, will be remembered at a graveside service followed by a gathering at the museum.



*For more info about any museum group or events, visit
rehobothantiquarian.org*

RAS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The 135th Annual Meeting of the Rehoboth Antiquarian Society took place on May 1, 2019, preceded by a pot-luck dinner and a brief talk by Bev Baker of the Rehoboth Cemetery Commission. It was a pleasant social occasion, and also an opportunity to reflect on the past year. I'd love to hear your ideas for the future as well.

Our Society had a float in Rehoboth's 375th anniversary parade, of which our President Emeritus E. Otis Dyer was Grand Marshal. The annual Library Book Sale, Strawberry Festival, and Folk Art and Artisans Show were all successful, and the Arts in the Village concert series drew record crowds. The Rehoboth Cultural Council and the Bristol County Savings Bank Charitable Foundation have supported several of our programs, and we have worked extensively with the Rehoboth public schools. Palmer River School's third-graders paid their annual visits to the colonial kitchen and the herb garden this spring, and this year's scholarship recipient is Michaela Rennick.

Improvements to the buildings continue, although never as rapidly as one would like. Thanks to a generous donation from the Robert D. Wray Charitable Trust, some significant repairs have been made to all of the buildings, the long-awaited concrete walkway to the lower level of Goff Hall is in place, and this summer should bring repainting of trim and some landscaping.

As always, the Blanding Library's programs have benefitted the entire town and we could not wish for better representatives than the dedicated staff at the Library and also at the Carpenter Museum. There were some changes of personnel there: Debbie D'Isabel joined us as Assistant Director, and a new Museum Director, Danielle DiGiacomo, arrived this spring. We are grateful to the Museum staff for the smoothness of these transitions. Danielle brings important collections-care experience, and Debbie is turning her notable talents to improving communication with members. I hope you are all enjoying the newsletters.

I also hope you'll find yourselves inspired to enjoy active roles as members, perhaps as a committee member or as a volunteer for one of our events. Please contact me if you would like more information. We are grateful to all our members, to those who volunteer their time and energy, to our wonderful staff, to our financial donors, and to those who come to participate in what we do. We thank you all and hope for a fine year ahead.

Rebecca Smith

Welcome Danielle DiGiacomo, New Carpenter Museum Director



Hello! I'm so happy to join the Carpenter Museum as Director. Rehoboth is a wonderful town with a rich history that I'm glad to preserve and share.

A little about me: I was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri and have worked in museums, archives, and historical societies for the past ten years. I love local history and being engaged with the community. I have a bachelor's degree in history and a master's in museum studies. Before coming to work for the Carpenter Museum, I was the Registrar at the St. Louis Cardinals Hall of Fame and Museum in St. Louis. I haven't been converted to being a Red Sox fan yet! I'm excited to experience long New England winters with plenty of snow. I enjoy hiking, camping, canoeing, and gardening. Almost anything outdoors is where I like to be. My husband and I are expecting our first baby this October.

Danielle DiGiacomo

Arts in the Village Concert Series 19th Season Preview 2019-2020



OCTOBER 5

Bahmann & Cienniwa — 2 HARPSICHORDS

NOVEMBER 9

Matthew Graybil — SOLO PIANIST

FEBRUARY 29

Neave Trio — VIOLIN, CELLO, PIANO

MARCH 28

Bay Winds Sextet — WIND INSTRUMENTS & PIANO

APRIL 25

Schwartz & Bournaki — CELLO-PIANO DUO

All concerts: Saturdays at 7:30 PM • Goff Memorial Hall, 124 Bay State Road
Rehoboth MA • For information, www.carpentermuseum.org/Arts.htm



BLANDING LIBRARY GOFF MEMORIAL HALL

SUMMER READING EVENTS

Please visit BlandingLibrary.net for full details about remaining summer events like Outer Space Story Hour, Whale Alert!, Rockets & Airplanes, and more.

WEEKLY TOT TIME

Wednesdays at 10 AM.

This fun 30-minute program is designed for children under three years featuring books, finger play, and music.

YOGA FOR FAMILIES

Tuesday, August 13 from 10:15 to 11:15 AM

Free parent-child wellness program offered by PACE Child Care Works Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Program with funding from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care.

STORY & CRAFT TIME

Mondays at 10:30 AM

For children age 3 and up. Enjoy a story and make a craft to bring home. Registration required.

LEARN TO USE E-BOOKS

Saturday, August 10 from 2 to 4 PM

All ages welcome. We supply the Legos!

BLANDING BOOK CLUB HISTORY DISCUSSION GROUP LEGO CLUB

Visit BlandingLibrary.net for complete information on upcoming events.

REHOBOTH CONTRA DANCE SUNDAY NIGHT JAMMERS LYME DISEASE SUPPORT GROUP ARTS IN THE VILLAGE CONCERTS

The public is invited to events held in Goff Memorial Hall. Go to BlandingLibrary.net for complete information.

TOUCH-A-TRUCK THANK YOU



A big thank you to everyone who brought their vehicles to the library's Touch-A-Truck event held this summer for kids of all ages. We had fire trucks, ambulances, tractors, and various heavy equipment and specialty cars.



Learning About Local History

This spring, the Carpenter Museum hosted over one hundred third graders from Palmer River Elementary School. Students observed open hearth cooking while making ginger bread and corn chowder. They also learned about the household use of herbs and made herbal sachets. Here we see instructor and RAS Board President Rebecca Smith checking the fire before the students' bread is put in the Dutch oven.



RAS Questionnaire

In July, RAS members were invited to complete a short online opinion survey with questions that will provide valuable information and feedback as we plan for the future.

Arts in the Village

The upcoming 2019-2020 Season of Arts in the Village will feature five concerts with world-class artists for their first-ever performances in Goff Memorial Hall. You don't want to miss these incredible performers and enjoy the great acoustics in Goff Hall. Season tickets are once again available for purchase. Full information will be available online soon.

Visit Us Online: Rehobothantiquarian.org



WHAT IS IT?

This is the Lewis Tavern or Anawan House or Anawan Inn, located at the intersection of Routes 118 and 44. The (Isaac) Lewis Tavern was built circa 1730. By the 1850's it was known as Anawan House. It was at one time or another a stagecoach stop, tavern, hotel, and meeting place for the Union Baptist Church. It also housed a store and ballroom. It was demolished on February 1, 1971. Today a gas station stands in its place.

Anawan Stables can be seen in the far right corner where carriages and horses of the Anawan House clientele were secured. Later in the 20th century it was a public riding stable with paths into the countryside. Today, a strip mall housing Dunkin' Donuts and other shops stand in its place.

GENEALOGY GROUP

Do you have a genealogical brick wall you can't seem to break? Do you need help with Ancestry.com? Fold3?

Group members can assist you and share access to online resources at summer meetings held on Wednesdays at the Carpenter Museum, beginning at 7 PM. A sampling of resources: Ancestry.com, Family Search, Fold 3, NEHGS, FindMyPast, Genealogy Tree, Newspapers.com and many more.

All are invited, Wifi available. Free!

UPDATE: CIVIL WAR VETERAN ALEXANDER WILLIAMS

Reverend George Tilton's book A History of Rehoboth MA gave us our first hint that Alexander Williams, a "colored Civil War soldier" who once lived in Rehoboth, is buried at Hix Cemetery, RHC #27. Town records show Alexander lived in Rehoboth and died at the Alms House on October 14, 1888. The Cemetery Commission found that Alexander Williams had no grave marker and no flag to honor his service. The town's Veterans Services Officer and Graves Officer applied for a grave marker based on the record of service provided by the National Archives. The records sent showed that Alexander Williams was part of the MA 54th Company A. The stone was received and set at the cemetery in November 2018.

In doing further research on his widow, Catherine Mack, it was discovered the National Archives gave us the wrong records! Catherine applied for a Widow's Pension shortly after her husband died. In her statement to the Navy, she describes her ordeal of taking care of Alexander at the Rehoboth Alms house every day up until he was dead and buried, and how he was in the NAVY assigned to the ship USS Mahaska from 1864 to 1867. She needed to prove her case to the powers that be. She sent them statements which included proof of their marriage, proof of her husband's death, proof he was at the Alms House in Rehoboth, a statement from the Navy of his service, and statements of several ordinary citizens who had known her for years to be an honest person. It took her about a year to obtain the necessary documentation before she received her pension of \$8 per month. By this time, 1890, she was in poor health herself. She died in Lakeville or Berkeley on December 1, 1894.

There are no Navy records found to date for Alexander Williams, other than those from Catherine's Widow's Pension application. His stone which was set in place last November, will be corrected to read "NAVY USS MAHASKA". His service in the Civil War was as a Sailor, just like George H. Tilton had written in his book.

As for the other Alexander Williams of the MA 54th, he died on July 5, 1911 in Boston and is buried at Mt. Hope Cemetery in Mattapan, MA. His grave is marked with a Veteran's stone.

A Graveside Memorial Service for our Alexander Williams, Civil War Sailor, is planned for Sunday, September 22 at 1 pm followed by a gathering at the Carpenter Museum.



Save the date for the Folk Art and Artisan's Show held this year on Friday, November 8 from 4-9pm and November 9 from 9am-4pm.

This year's 41st annual show is dedicated to Betty Collins who passed away in July 2019. A talented crafter herself, Betty was one of the Folk Art Show's original committee members. Thanks to the hard work of Betty and other volunteer committee members, the Folk Art and Artisans Show quickly outgrew the space at the Carpenter Museum and is now held at Francis Farm in Rehoboth. With over 70 vendors, the Show welcomes thousands of visitors each year.

The Museum would like to thank this year's Folk Art Committee for all their hard work: Sherry Tibbetts, Deb Craft, Sue Carpenter, Becky Webster, and Betty Collins before her passing.

Blanding Library card holders are invited to reserve the Blanding Library's lending telescope to bring it home for star gazing. We will provide training on how to use it.





STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL



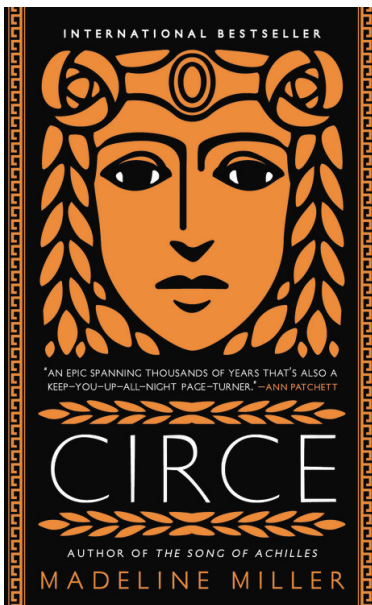
A record turnout of over 500 visitors enjoyed the Carpenter Museum's Strawberry Country Festival held on Sunday, June 2. This annual community festival highlights Rehoboth history with many hands-on events including rope-making, butter-churning, corn-grinding and of course delicious strawberry shortcake. Two miniature ponies (who enjoyed rolling in the sand) were a hit with kids and adults.

Thanks to both the Rehoboth Cultural Council, local affiliate of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, that funded this event and to the many wonderful volunteers who generously share their expertise and love of history.



BLANDING LIBRARY BOOK REVIEW

Meghan Sullivan-Silva shares this review of Circe by Madeline Miller.



The enchantress Circe is usually remembered for her minor role in Homer's *The Odyssey*. Her encounter with the hero Odysseus began when he and his crew landed on her island but her appearance in the narrative is brief and one-sided. Madeline Miller's *Circe* seeks to rectify this oversight. Circe's lonely childhood is explored, with various familiar immortals flitting in and out of the story. Ultimately recognized as a great sorceress, Circe came to her power through a slow and painful process. She was cast out from her home and banished to the island where she would someday play host to Odysseus, from there witnessing the lives of mortals and gods play out while honing her skills. Miller's beautiful retelling of this small chapter of the *Odyssey* lends depth and humanity to characters that are otherwise forgotten. This book is an enjoyable adaptation for those already familiar with Homer's work, and a lovely introduction to the rich world of Greek mythology for those who aren't. An easy read that remains engaging throughout, this is the perfect book to pick up this summer.