



# REHOBOTH ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY FALL 2023 NEWSLETTER

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE 2023

## CRAFTERS' MARKETPLACE SHOW



**SATURDAY OCTOBER 14TH  
9AM TO 4PM**

**IN THE HISTORIC REHOBOTH VILLAGE**

FREE TO ENTER | FREE TO PARK

CARPENTER MUSEUM  
GOFF MEMORIAL HALL  
REHOBOTH CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH HALL

### PRESIDENT'S LETTER FALL 2023

I recently read that the National Geographical Society is celebrating its 135th anniversary. It struck me that, although the Rehoboth Antiquarian Society (now 139!) sends out no expeditions to distant lands, we share a common interest in "the increase and diffusion of knowledge." Over the course of this summer, I enjoyed several opportunities for exploring and learning, including a printmaking workshop at the Carpenter Museum and an exhibit of bee-related art at the Blanding Library, not to mention all the books I borrowed on a variety of subjects. I know other RAS members had similar experiences. Humans have an innate curiosity about the world, and museums and libraries help us to satisfy that curiosity and to find new things to be curious about.

Best wishes and happy exploring!

Rebecca H. Smith, RAS President

### UPCOMING MUSEUM EVENTS

**First Saturday of the Month Museum and Research Center Open 1-4PM**

*October 7  
November 4*

**Crafter's Marketplace  
October 14 9:00AM-4:00PM**  
Join us in historic Rehoboth for our 44th Annual Craft Show!  
With over 30 Venders  
free to enter!  
Food Truck and Bake sale!

**October 28th, at 3:00pm  
October 18th, at 7:00pm**  
Sowams Heritage Project public meetings  
(learn more on page 6)

**Genealogy Meetings  
3rd Wednesdays of the Month at  
7:00PM**

**October 28 5:45PM -8:00PM  
Moonlight Memories from the  
Palmer River Watershed**  
costumed re-enactment of 1700-1800 of historic residents of the Burial Place Hill Cemetery

**Workshop Series  
November 16th**  
Adult paper making workshop. Learn about the history of paper in connection to Rehoboth, and try creating and decorating your own paper

**rehobothantiquarian.org**

# hands-on history

## 2023 MUSEUM WORKSHOP SERIES

On August 3rd, we kicked off our 2023 "Hands-On History" series with a block printing workshop. Summer intern Laura Clerx presented information on the history of decorated textiles and calico cloth manufacturing in relation to early Rehoboth. Local artist Cheryl McKenna and the museum's Acting Director Chelsea Johnston gave demonstrations and assisted participants in carving and printing their own designs. The Tilton Room event space was brimming with excited crafters, and -- as you can see from the photo of everyone's prints (upper righthand corner) -- the results were amazing! Thank you to all of you who joined us for such a fun-filled evening!



Weren't able to attend? Here's a snippet of the history we learned:

Around 1825, Rehoboth residents set up the Orleans Manufacturing Company along the body of water we know today as Shad Factory Pond. By 1826, the mill was harnessing the Palmer River's current to power machines that wove cotton cloth. (You can see a sample of cloth produced at the Orleans Mill in our "Rehoboth History in 10 Objects" exhibit. in the Tilton Room)

Leonard Bliss Jr.'s 1836 *History of Rehoboth*, comments that the Orleans Mill "soon commenced the making of fine cloths for calico printing, which were then in good demand" (285). We don't know where these particular cotton cloths were sent for printing, but they may not have needed to travel far. In the mid-1800s, nearby Pawtucket (once part of Old Rehoboth), was home to a calico printing factory in the Wilkinson Mill, next to Slater Mill. The ancestor of Lende McMullen, the museum's E. Otis Dyer, Jr. Research Center Manager, worked there as a calico printer!

Rehoboth residents certainly purchased and wore printed clothing. Workshop participants viewed the 19th century calico jacket and neck scarf (pictured upper right) on display at our workshop. Once owned by Rehoboth residents, these items were donated to the museum by Pearl Crawford.

In addition to this historical background, workshop participants learned about early printing methods, and the inspirations behind early European patterns and designs.

So the next time you dress in a printed fabric, remember all the ways these textiles connect us to the past!



## UPCOMING BLANDING PUBLIC LIBRARY EVENTS

### Hank Coleman's History Discussion

**Wednesdays, 11:00 AM- 12:00 PM**  
Come chat about history!

### A Spooky Evening with Author Barry Lee Dejasu

**Tuesday, October 24th, 6:30-7:30**  
Author (and long-time Rehoboth resident) Barry Lee Dejasu brings his words of the dark, the weird, and the horrific to this special Halloween season event, in which he will read from his short story collection, *Black City Skyline* and *Darker Horizons*.

### Chilling Tales

**Monday October 30, 6:30 -7:30PM**  
Cozy up with a cup of cider and listen as readers share spooky snippets, stories and poems in a dimly lit Goff Hall. Just the right amount of chills for ages 12 and up.

**\*\*Not responsible for goose bumps or lost sleep!\*\***

### Baby / Toddler Story Time Tuesdays, 10:30-11:00AM

Children & caregivers are invited to join us in our hall for a fun interactive program of movement, books, music, games & more.

Please register for this event.  
*0-4 / siblings welcome*

### Story and Craft Time Thursdays, 10:30-11:15AM

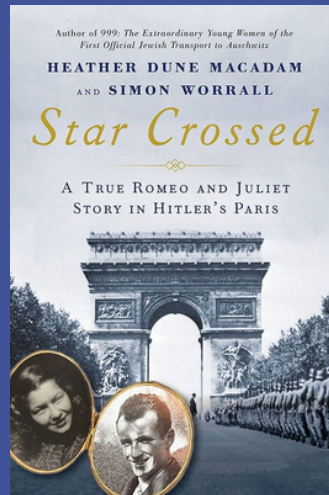
Join us for a story or two! A simple craft will be available to make or take home. Please register for this event.

*3+ / siblings welcome*

## AUTHOR VISITS AT THE LIBRARY

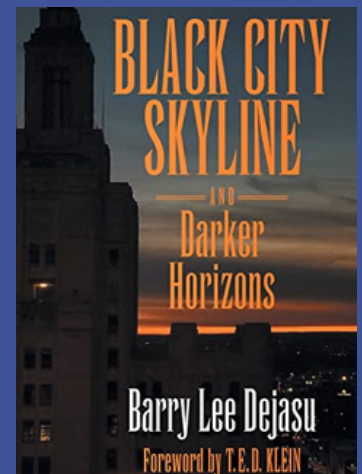
## BLANDING LIBRARY

Blanding Free Public Library will welcome the authors of two recent books to Goff Hall in October.



Authors Heather Dune Macadam and Simon Worrall will discuss their research and details of their recently published book, *Star Crossed: A True Romeo and Juliet Love Story in Hitler's Paris*, a novelistic nonfiction account of romance amid the terror of the Holocaust. For readers of *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah who are hungry for a nonfiction account of Nazi-occupied Paris, *Star Crossed* is an epic true story of love and resistance during WWII from the award-winning author of *999*. Part historical portrait of life during the Occupation, part valentine to *The City of Light* and the resilience of its people, this true love story follows the romance between the Romeo and Juliet of war-torn Paris – a Catholic Resistance fighter and a Holocaust victim who meet at the famous Café Flore before war, prejudice, and disapproving families set them on divergent and tragically inevitable paths. There are two copies of the book at the library, and there will be an opportunity to purchase a copy in Goff Hall on the night of their visit. October 12 at 6:30 p.m. in Goff Hall.

In celebration of Halloween, join local author Barry Lee Dejasu for a reading from his short story collection, *Black City Skyline and Darker Horizons*, published by Hippocampus Press in 2022. Dejasu is an author of weird and horror fiction. Born in Providence, Rhode Island, not far from the birthplace of H. P. Lovecraft, he grew up in Rehoboth, Massachusetts and attended Southern Vermont College, in Shirley Jackson's hometown of Bennington, Vermont. He plans to share a story that takes place in Rehoboth—a love letter to urban legends—and in particular, a certain red-headed phantom hitchhiker from Route 44. Copies of *Black City Skyline* and *Darker Horizons* will be available for purchase at the event. October 24 at 6:30 p.m. in Goff Hall.



## Early Twentieth Century Automobile Registrations in Rehoboth

By Rebecca H. Smith

photos courtesy of Arthur Pierce and Carpenter Museum



1908 maxwell

In 2023, nearly every adult resident of Rehoboth owns at least one motor vehicle. A century and more ago, things were rather different. The number of automobiles registered in all of Massachusetts was small enough that a booklet was published annually listing each of them, their owners, and information about where to find dealers and repair shops. In 1908, 6,000 vehicles were registered in<sup>1</sup>the Commonwealth, rising to 15,000 in 1910. Published lists for the years 1908 through 1910 are available through the New England Historic Genealogical Society.<sup>1</sup>

During those three years, four men registered their automobiles in Rehoboth<sup>2</sup> :

**Harold A. Goff** was the only one of the four to be listed in all three years. He registered a 10- horsepower Maxwell in 1908 with plate number 1058. In 1909 and 1910, he had a 14-horsepower Maxwell Briscoe. Harold was born in Rehoboth 17 January 1887, son of Arthur C. and Carrie F. Goff. In 1910 Harold<sup>3</sup> was a 23-year-old farmer, living with his parents and sister on the family dairy farm on Perryville Road;<sup>4</sup> the house is now well-known as the Perryville Inn.



Harold A. Goff Haying



Artuhur L. Parker

**Arthur L. Parker** first registered a car here in 1909, an 18-horsepower Buick; in 1910 he had a 10-horsepower Stanley. Arthur was also listed under “Repairs” in 1910, although the 1910 census which shows him with his wife and daughter lists him as a farmer.<sup>5</sup> It is possible that his repair shop occupied the School Street premises where his grandson Richard Ramspott later had his tool-making business. Arthur’s descendants preserved the story that he was one of the first in Rehoboth to own an automobile.<sup>6</sup>

These two license plates were used by Arthur L. Parker on his Pope Hartford auto while living in RI and MA. The car was manufactured in Connecticut. He brought the car to Rehoboth in 1901 and came to know he had to register it in Mass. The Mass. license plate was "the first in Rehoboth".



**Albert D. Waterman** of Wheeler’s Corner,<sup>7</sup> Rehoboth registered a 10 horsepower Cadillac in 1910. In that year, he was 29, had a wife and four children, and worked as a butcher.<sup>8</sup> Albert was born in Rehoboth on 21 December 1881.<sup>9</sup> Interestingly, his marriage record gives his first name as Adelbert.<sup>10</sup>

**Albert L. Wilworth** [sic] of North Rehoboth also appears only once in these records: in 1910, he registered a 16 horsepower Maxwell-Briscoe. “Wilworth” is almost certainly an error caused by someone mis-reading Albert’s handwriting. There are no Wilworths listed in Rehoboth in the 1910 census, but there are two families of Wilmarths; one includes a 24-year-old apprentice carpenter, Albert F. Wilmarth, whose older brother was a garage mechanic.<sup>11</sup> Albert was another Rehoboth native, born on Valentine’s Day 1886 to Charles and Annie Wilmarth.<sup>12</sup>

The sight of a “horseless carriage” must have been quite unusual in Rehoboth in those years. On the other hand, although the numbers are small, the increase from one in 1908 to four in 1910 is 400 per cent! One wonders how much the cars were actually used, considering the state of the Roads, which were mostly dirt. The first to be paved was the Taunton Pike (mostly present-day Route 44 but with a diversion along Bay State Road through the Village until 1923); it was macadamized in sections over a period of several years and was completed in 1908 with state funds.<sup>13</sup> Roads were not plowed until the 1920s<sup>14</sup> and the unpaved roads were often muddy and/or full of holes even when not snow-covered.<sup>15</sup> Driving a car took considerable determination.



The Mass license plate dated 1908 was on Artuhur L. Parker’s Stanley Steamer auto.

1 New England Historic Genealogical Society Rare Book Collection. Numerical List of Automobiles Registered in Massachusetts (Boston: Auto List Publishing Company, 1908-1910). [Images available at Massachusetts: Automobile Registrations, 1908-1910 Online database, AmericanAncestors.org, 2021.]

2 All vehicle registration information is from the Numerical Lists. See note 1

3 Births Registered in the Town of Rehoboth for the Year eighteen hundred and eighty-seven (Massachusetts Vital Records from 1840. Images online under various titles.)

4 1910 U. S. Census for Rehoboth, Bristol County, Massachusetts, Enumeration District 222, sheet 6 B, line 92.

5 1910 U. S. Census for Rehoboth, Bristol County, Massachusetts, Enumeration District 223, sheet 10 B, line 86.

6 Personal communication from Lende McMullen, great-granddaughter of Arthur L. Parker

7 Wheeler’s Corner was the name given to the intersection of Winthrop and New Streets See E. Otis Dyer, “Wheeler’s Corner” in In Old Rehoboth (Rehoboth Historical Commission, 1979) p. 16

8 1910 U. S. Census for Rehoboth, Bristol County, Massachusetts, Enumeration District 222, sheet 3 B, line 84.

9 World War I Draft Registration card for Albert DeForest Waterman. (Image online at Ancestry.com)

10 New England Historic Genealogical Society; Boston, Massachusetts; Massachusetts Vital Records, 1911–1915. Vol. 524, p. 221.

11 1910 U. S. Census for Rehoboth, Bristol County, Massachusetts, Enumeration District 222, sheet 5 B, line 64.

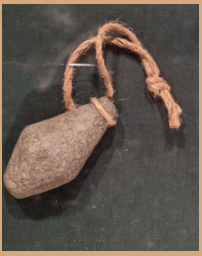
12 Births Registered in the Town of Rehoboth for the Year eighteen hundred and eighty-seven (Massachusetts Vital Records from 1840. Images online under various titles.)

13 Ralph M Horton, “Rehoboth Roads” in In Old Rehoboth (Rehoboth Historical Commission, 1979) pp. 44-46; Rehoboth Through the Years (Anawan Historical Society, Rehoboth, Mass. 1993) p. 106

14 E. Otis Dyer, “More on Snow Storms,”

15 “Rehoboth Roads” in In Old Rehoboth (Rehoboth Historical Commission, 1979) pp. 25-27

## Sowams Heritage



plummet used for fishing

Have you ever heard of the word Sowams before? Well it might be more relevant to you than you think. Rehoboth is a small part of Sowams, which was the ancestral homeland of the Massasoit

Ousamequin who welcomed the Pilgrims in 1621. This area is part of the origin story of what we think of as America today and that first treaty created between Ousamequin and the Puritans led to around 50 years of peace. Sowams is also the starting point of the breakdown of that peace which became what we now call the King Philip's War. Rehoboth is just a small part, the Sowams region also includes Barrington, Bristol, East Providence, Providence, and Warren, RI, as well as Seekonk, Somerset, and Swansea, MA.



Map of the Sowams area

Rehoboth, as we know it today, was started in 1643, just a little bit after that first treaty, but was lived in for thousands of years before the colonists came over. During much of that time it was used by the Pokanokets who fished, farmed and hunted the region. 50 years after that first treaty, relations broke down and one of the most devastating wars in America's history broke out. There are still rippled effects from these events that we see today right here in Rehoboth. This is one of the many stories that we are trying to protect, and engage with, at the RAS, and there are new ways to do this each and every day. Not only do we explore this early history in the Carpenter Museum, through objects like the King Philips Kettle, but also through being a part of the Sowams Heritage project, which is aimed at getting the Sowams area designated as a NHA. A program of the National Park Service, National Heritage Areas (NHAs) are living, working, landscapes, which are designated by Congress to honor the important role of a region in our country's development and celebrate its contributions to American history and culture. Through dynamic public-private partnerships, NHAs provide a way to recognize, share, and conserve a region's significant history and outstanding qualities. You yourself can get involved in this important work as well!

The Sowams Heritage Area Project invites members of the community to participate in a community conversation to discuss the significance of Sowams. The conversation will be held twice: Tuesday, October 17, 2023, at 3:00pm at the First Christian Congregational Church in Swansea, MA and Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at 7:00pm at Hope and Main, in Warren, RI..

### About the Sowams Heritage Area Project:

Led by a regional coalition of town planners, tourism entities, historical societies, environmentalists, Tribal leaders, and other volunteers, the Sowams Heritage Area Project is undertaking an initiative to develop a National Heritage Area (NHA) in Sowams, the ancestral homeland of the Massasoit Ousamequin who welcomed the Pilgrims in 1621. NHAs protect and promote a region's history, heritage and culture and use those assets to advance local economies through tourism, recreation and community development. For more information, go to <https://sowams.org>.



this iron kettle or cauldron belonged to the Pokanoket grand sachem Metacom (or Philip, c. 1639–1676).

It was probably used for cooking over an open fire in his camp. This kettle was taken as booty by Captain Benjamin Church (c. 1639–1718) early in the bloody conflict that came to be known as King Philip's War (1675–1678).

Thursday, November 16th

6:30PM

Carpenter Museum  
Workshop Series

Paper Making and Decoration