

# THE ROTCH-JONES-DUFF HOUSE & GARDEN MUSEUM

WINTER/SPRING 2024

PRESERVING THE PAST





THE ROTCH-JONES-DUFF  
HOUSE & GARDEN MUSEUM

396 County Street  
New Bedford, Massachusetts  
508-997-1401  
www.rjdmuseum.org

OFFICERS & TRUSTEES

PRESIDENT

Natalie A. Mello

VICE PRESIDENT

Rebecca G. Barnes

TREASURER

G. Stewart Young

ASSISTANT TREASURER

Nathanael R. Brayton

CLERK

Anne Heller

TRUSTEES

Amelia Alburn

Howe Allen

William Rotch Bullard II

Kayla C. Conner

Donna Criscuolo

Sandy Hall, Ex-Officio

Diana Henry

Alanna Jaworski

Kenneth Lauderdale

Ann M. Lopes

Jayne Rebello Korn

Leonardo Reis

ANNUAL APPEAL CHAIR

Francis C. Gray, III

STAFF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dawn E. Salerno

DEVELOPMENT & ADMIN COORDINATOR

Hillary Fortin

FACILITIES MANAGER & LEAD GARDENER

Frederick Finneran

FUNCTIONS & SALES MANAGER

Claudio Pereira

FUNCTIONS

Lauren Helley

MANAGER OF COLLECTIONS

& INTERPRETATION

Lauren Prescott

## From the Director

# Continuing to Grow



By the close of 2023, the Museum found itself in a strong place, seeing growth in visitation and social engagement, making progress on our collections care plan, and receiving the largest grant in the RJD's history from the city's American Rescue Plan Act funding.

We saw more use of the grounds in 2023. And we aim to expand community use of the historic mansion this winter and spring. One need only see a professional photographer's shoot in Mrs. Duff's bedroom or on the curved stairwell to realize how well the space lends itself

to unique photo shoots.

I am already enjoying my work with three new and incredibly dynamic trustees (read about them on page 2), as well as the board as a whole. Our team effort to make the RJD a more equitable and inclusive organization, where everyone feels welcome and a multiplicity of perspectives is apparent, was recognized with an \$11,000 grant from the Southcoast Community Foundation. These funds are paying for the outside expertise we need to help us define specifically what equity looks like in all areas of Board activity.

Equity is now every committee's imperative rather than being relegated to just one person or committee.

You're sure to see lots of activity at the Museum this winter and spring. The first of those ARPA funds will be utilized to restore the garden patio

and iron railings throughout the property. Inside the mansion, you can enjoy our usual full schedule of tours, lectures, concerts, and family activities. I'm especially excited for our new series with WHALE about historic house preservation and the talk with Jeremy Fogg, who was one of the conservators responsible for the restoration of *The Carpenter's Son* in 2007. This will be Jeremy's first public talk at the RJD about the restoration, so don't miss it.

For our local supporters, we hope to see you at the Museum soon.

For those that engage in other ways, like our social channels or volunteer program, we thank you for staying in touch with us and for supporting our work.

Be well,

**Dawn E. Salerno**

*Executive Director*



## RJD Welcomes New Members to Board



Kayla C. Conner

Kayla C. Conner is an artist, poet, and reiki master born and raised in New Bedford, MA. She operates a small business, Little Seashell Studio, LLC in Westport, MA where she combines reiki healing, tarot reading, and watercolor art. Her art and poetry have been regularly published in local collective's *Anomaly Poetry* and Domesticated Primate's anthologies, *Rituals* and *Tidings*, and she has shown her artwork at Gallery X and Winston Gallery. She received her Bachelor's degree in Philosophy from UMass Dartmouth in 2012.

Most Saturdays she can be found at Co-Creative Center in downtown New Bedford running a pop-up shop with a small group of fellow entrepreneurs. She also organizes a monthly fiber circle, Fiber + Friends, at Co-Creative. She lives with her husband, Ryan, son, Liam, and daughter, Amelia, in New Bedford, along with their small menagerie of animals. When not working she loves spending time by the ocean, watching movies, and crafting for her children.



Jayne Rebello Korn

Jayne Rebello Korn is an accomplished talent management consultant and executive coach. For over two decades, Jayne has been partnering with for-profit and non-profit organizations across a broad range of sectors, including healthcare, technology, financial services, retail, higher education, and manufacturing. Previously, Jayne was the Director of Strategic Talent Management at MIT Sloan School of Management and the Director of Human Resources at Lids, and she held talent management positions at Polaroid.

Jayne holds a Master's Degree in Training and Development from Lesley University and a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management from Boston University. She is a Certified Professional Coach from Coaches Training Institute.

Jayne is a New Bedford native. She and her husband reside in South Dartmouth. She is actively involved at the SouthCoast Community Foundation: Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors, Chair of the Governance Committee, and Chair of Corporators. She is a former member and chairperson of Gibbs College Board of Trustees.



Leonardo Reis

Leonardo (Leo) Reis is Senior Director of Product Innovation at Evolent. In his role at Evolent, Leo is focused on developing scalable, next-generation condition management solutions that enable patients to achieve their best health outcomes. Prior to joining Evolent, he was responsible for pharmacy product development at CVS Health.

Leo earned his Doctor of Pharmacy degree at Northeastern University in Boston, MA, and Master of Business Administration degree at Boston College in Chestnut Hill, MA. He is a registered pharmacist, credentialed HIV Expert, and recipient of the Paragon Award, the highest honor a colleague can achieve at CVS Health. Leo is a lifelong resident of Greater New Bedford and lives in Dartmouth, MA, with his partner, Robert, and their Jack Russell Terrier.

Those interested in serving on the Museum's board may contact Executive Director, Dawn Salerno, for more info: [Dsalerno@rjdmuseum.org](mailto:Dsalerno@rjdmuseum.org) / 508-997-1401. Nominations open in March of 2024 for the following September.

# Volunteer Spotlight: Catherine Adamowicz

BY CATHERINE ADAMOWICZ

When I looked toward retirement from my career as a professor of American literature, I thought about seeking volunteer work that would enable me to pursue some aspect of that field. Further, since I tend to think from an historical, cultural, and feminist perspective, I hoped to find volunteer work that could be viewed from that lens. I was very pleased, then, when my volunteer application to Rotch-Jones-Duff House & Garden Museum in New Bedford, my hometown, was accepted this past spring.

To begin my volunteer research, Lauren Prescott, Manager of Collections and Interpretation, suggested that I familiarize myself with the art and related materials in the RJD. Along with suggesting that I examine and take notes on all of the



Conducting inventory of *The Carpenter's Son*, in the rear parlor of the museum.

paintings and sketches on the walls and on artwork stored away so that I could later compare my recordings with the inventory, she encouraged

me to take note of anything I found of particular interest for possible follow-up.

Indeed, doing my own inventory led me to a variety of intriguing research projects. One project to which I return periodically concerns the diaries of Amelia Jones (1849–1935), housed at the New Bedford Whaling Museum Research Library. Having only read through two of her earliest diaries thus far, I have not yet found an answer to a question concerning a painting, which initially led me to read her diaries. However, I have made a startling discovery: Miss Jones apparently kept a record of her menstrual cycles—at a time when much was written about them in the world of medicine. Why Miss Jones might have kept that record is perhaps an article for a future Newsletter.

## From the Intern's Corner

BY SAGE LAMADE

This season at the RJD I've been concentrating on our collections! Beyond what you may see displayed in the house or on exhibition, we have a vast array of domestic objects in our collection. There's a lot to sort through, but dutiful collections management practices ensure that our unique history remains well-preserved and accessible for all.

Over the last few weeks I've been sorting through our extensive collection of antique textiles, updating our catalog records with detailed condition reports on all of these delicate items. It's difficult to choose a favorite piece amongst all the extravagance—smooth silk taffeta, floral embroidery, and scalloped lace trims—but I am partial



One of many, many bloomers.

to one of Beatrice Duff's dresses from the 1920s—a celery green chiffon and lace trimmed gown with pink satin roses dotting the neckline and sides.

Equally fascinating—and perhaps puzzling—was the discovery of

dozens of uncatalogued, white cotton bloomers in our attic storage, adorned with tiny satin ribbons, lace ruffles, and yes... 100-year-old stains. Now the only question is what to do with them!

Jokes aside, there is quite a bit of “detective work” that goes into collections management, as we inspect each item, match description to catalog number, reconcile any inventory discrepancies, and slowly digitize all our records. Transitioning from old-school, analog “pencil and paper” methods of collections management to the digital world promises easier navigation and further opportunities for interpretative work, such as new exhibitions and objects-oriented programming.

## Calendar

### JANUARY



#### FAMILY STORYTIME

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NEW  
BEDFORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY**

**Wednesday, January 17, noon**

Meet in the mansion for an engaging half hour of stories for the whole family. After the stories, take home a family fun craft kit to collaborate and create together! Family Storytime will run third Wednesdays of every month, through June. Open to all ages with accompanying adult. Free.



#### MEMBERS RECEPTION

**Sunday, January 21, 11:30am – 1pm**

Museum Members are invited to a reception and talk about the latest Museum happenings. Refreshment will be served. Members are welcome to bring two non-member guests with them. R.S.V.P. to Hillary Fortin: HFortin@rjdmuseum.org 508-997-1401 x103.



*Photo courtesy of WHALE*

#### **LIVING THE OLD HOUSE DREAM: AN ASK THE EXPERT SERIES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WHALE**

**Tuesday, January 30, 5:30pm**

Historic homes can be unique, charming, beautiful.... and intimidating maintenance and restoration projects. Hear from experts about best practices, processes, and resources and gain insight into preserving an older home. This three-part series will feature informative presentations from New Bedford City representatives, a preservation consultant, and professionals with hands-on experience working with historic homes. Bring your questions and your love of historic homes!

Fee: \$8 RJD or WHALE Members / \$12 Public.

Series: \$20 Members / \$30 Public.

### FEBRUARY

#### GAME NIGHT

**HOSTED BY THE NEXTGEN COMMITTEE  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8**

**4pm – 6pm, Family Games**

**6pm – 8pm, 21+ Games**

Assemble some teammates and head to the RJD Mansion. The early hours feature family-oriented games. The later hours are for 21+ games. Bring your favorite board game, Magic Deck and beverages (no red wine or Twister in the mansion please!) The Museum provides classic board games and teammates as needed, plus low-priced snacks for the evening. This event is free as part of AHA Night.



#### **VALENTINE EVENING PRELUDE**

**FEATURING NEW BEDFORD SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA'S TIMOTHY MACRI  
(FLUTE) & LUÍS AVÍLA (GUITAR)**

**Wednesday, February 14, 5:30pm**

Enjoy a full hour of romantic music from Bogotá to Broadway, from São Paulo to Sicily, and from Venezuela to Valencia. Advance reservations requested: \$15 Members / \$18 Public. Sweetheart Table (includes front row café-style seating for two, with flowers and chocolates): \$50.

#### **FAMILY STORYTIME**

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NEW  
BEDFORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY**

**Wednesday, February 21, noon**

See January listing for details. Open to all ages with accompanying adult. Free.

#### **LIVING THE OLD HOUSE DREAM:**

**AN ASK THE EXPERT SERIES**

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WHALE**

**Tuesday, February 27, 5:30pm**

See January 30 listing for details.

Fee: \$8 RJD or WHALE Members / \$12

Public. Series: \$20 Members / \$30 Public.

Please call the museum in advance  
or visit our website to register  
for programs with a fee:  
rjdmuseum.org / 508-997-1401.  
Virtual program info can be  
accessed from our website.



## MARCH



### BEHIND-THE-SCENES: PHOTOGRAPHING COLLECTIONS

Thursday, March 14, 5:30pm

Get a glimpse of museum collections and archives from an insider's perspective. Collections Manager, Lauren Prescott, will demonstrate how museum objects get catalogued and photographed using a light box. Participants will have a chance to photograph a museum piece. Admission is free as a part of AHA night.

### FAMILY STORYTIME

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

THE NEW BEDFORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Wednesday, March 20, noon

See January listing for details. Open to all ages with accompanying adult. Free.



### OPEN HOUSE AT THE MANSION

Saturday, March 23, 1pm – 3pm

Drop by the estate at 396 County Street for brief guided tours of the mansion and refreshments. Enter a drawing to win a Museum membership! Free admission.

### LIVING THE OLD HOUSE DREAM: AN ASK THE EXPERT SERIES

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WHALE

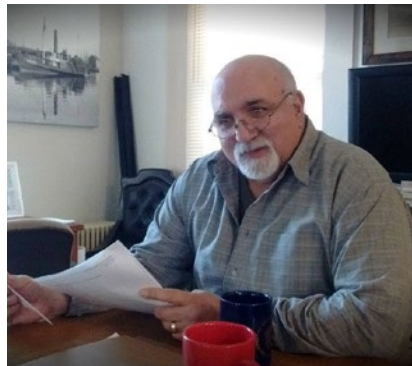
Tuesday, March 26, 5:30pm

See January 30 listing for details.

Fee: \$8 RJD or WHALE Members / \$12

Public. Series: \$20 Members / \$30 Public.

## APRIL



### BEHIND-THE-SCENES:

#### THE SPINNER PHOTO ARCHIVES

Thursday, April 11, 5:30pm

Get a glimpse of museum collections and archives from an insider's perspective. The Spinner Archive consists of more than one million historical and contemporary photographs, depicting 150 years of life in the southeastern Massachusetts region. It is also an important community resource. Hear about the formation of the archive from Spinner Publications co-founder, Joe Thomas. Admission is free as a part of AHA night.

Please call the museum in advance  
or visit our website to register

for programs with a fee:

[rjdmuseum.org](http://rjdmuseum.org) / 508-997-1401.

Virtual program info can be accessed  
from our website.



### STORYTELLING OBJECTS & ANIMALS IN THE GILDED AGE (VIRTUAL TALK)

WITH PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF

NEWPORT COUNTY CURATORIAL FELLOWS

Tuesday, April 16, 5:30pm

Dani Zhang's efforts have illuminated a world of meaning by decoding imagery, identifying previously unknown Chinese artists, and uncovering the nuanced nature of traditional vs. western utility. She will discuss her exploration of Chinese-crafted artwork and objects held in the collection of the PSNC. Isla Stewart's research investigates important cultural themes through a range of fine and decorative objects as well as period literature to illuminate significant developments in Americans' changing relationship with animals in the Gilded Age. She will illuminate her work in support of the upcoming PSNC summer 2024 exhibition, Wild Imagination: Art and Animals in the Gilded Age.

A suggested donation of \$10 in lieu of a fee is accepted.

### FAMILY STORYTIME

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

THE NEW BEDFORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Wednesday, April 17, noon

See January listing for details. Open to all ages with accompanying adult. Free.

## MAY

---



### **BEHIND-THE-SCENES: THE CARPENTER'S SON**

Thursday, May 9, 5:30pm

Get a glimpse of museum collections and archives from an insider's perspective.

*The Carpenter's Son*, a painting by Edward Simmons would only return to the walls of the RJD Museum after it had been terribly vandalized and restored. Hear the story of its conservation from Jeremy Fogg, Lead Conservator, Northeast Painting Conservation. Donations are accepted in lieu of a fee, as part of AHA Night.

### **FAMILY STORYTIME IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NEW BEDFORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Wednesday, May 15, noon

See January listing for details. Open to all ages with accompanying adult. Free.

### **THE BIRDS OF DOG: AN HISTORICAL NOVEL BASED ON MOSTLY TRUE EVENTS AUTHOR'S ILLUSTRATED TALK & BOOK SIGNING**

Wednesday, May 15. Reception: 5:30pm, Talk: 6pm

"The Birds of Dog" opens in the early days of The Boston Society of Natural History and simmers with stories about America's emerging sciences and its first scientists. Science journalist Ann B. Parson will relate some of the amazing but forgotten sagas in her newest book. Books available for purchase at event. Free. RSVP requested: HFortin@rjdmuseum.org / 508-997-1401.

### **MODERN MUSIC CONCERT IN THE GARDEN**

WITH NEW BEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ,  
STEEL, AND ROCK BAND

Tuesday, May 21, 7pm

This concert features jazz, and contemporary pieces from the last 100 years. The NBHS Jazz Band is an after-school ensemble directed by Tim Mason specializing in multiple styles of jazz and improvisation. The NBHS Steel Band is an after-school band, grades 6-12, conducted by Lee Dias. They perform contemporary music steeped in the traditions of Trinidad and Tobago. The NBHS Rock Band is directed by Tom O'Leary and performs modern music from different eras of Rock & Roll History. Free admission; general seating on the lawn and patio.

## JUNE

---



### **SAVE OUR DATE! THE ANNUAL GARDEN PARTY OF THE ROTCH-JONES-DUFF HOUSE**

Friday, June 7, 6pm – 9pm

Our annual party in the garden includes seasonal hors d'oeuvres, open bar, and great décor as well as fun and creative ways to support the Museum. Details coming by May 1.



### **FAMILY STORYTIME IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NEW BEDFORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Wednesday, June 12, noon

See January listing for details. Open to all ages with accompanying adult. Free.



### **A BLOOMSDAY CELEBRATION**

Thursday, June 13, 5pm – 7pm

Bloomstday is a celebration of the life of writer James Joyce. Observed annually in Dublin, the day will be celebrated at RJD with Rick Finneran, Lead Gardener. Rick will give a 45-minute tour in the RJD's garden followed by a walking tour to explore nearby gardens, church bells, and the literary history of the neighborhood. The group will visit Our Lady of Assumption, The Friends Meeting House, and The Unitarian Church among others. Join for either, or both tours. This event is free as part of AHA night.





THE ROTCH-JONES-DUFF  
HOUSE & GARDEN MUSEUM

396 County Street  
New Bedford, MA 02740  
508-997-1401  
[www.rjdmuseum.org](http://www.rjdmuseum.org)

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



THE GRIMSHAW-GUDEWICZ  
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

NON-PROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
NEW BEDFORD, MA  
PERMIT NO. 296



## When Beauty Meets Architecture... *Magic Happens*

Entertain your guests in one of the most unique event venues in South Coast Massachusetts.

Whether you're planning a gathering of 30 or 200, you can make it an event to remember by reserving the Rotch-Jones-Duff House & Garden Museum. From sophisticated splendor to casual fun, the possibilities are limited only by your imagination.

Easy access from I-195 and a location in New Bedford's Seaport District near three hotels, and just minutes from the Cape & Islands high speed ferries, make the Museum the ideal central location for your next event.

Contact our Functions & Sales Manager to assist with the planning of your special event.

tel | 508.997.1401

email | [functions@rjdmuseum.org](mailto:functions@rjdmuseum.org)

website | [www.rjdmuseum.org/weddings](http://www.rjdmuseum.org/weddings)