

PRIMITIVE PIECES

The Newsletter of The Peace Dale Museum of Art and Culture

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Fall 2018

Meet Roger Williams on Thursday, November 1

Compared to the tight-packed, gritty streets of London, the cove at the convergence of the Mosh-assuck and Woonasquacket Rivers must have seen like an Eden to Roger Williams. Tall grasses along the banks gave way to hills thickly forested with oak, maple, and hickory. Birds filled the skies and migrating fish filled the rivers.

Roger Williams was about thirty-three years old when he arrived in what would become Providence, but he had already lived lifetimes.

A chance encounter with the great jurist Sir Edward Coke when he was only about thirteen thrust him into the courts and Parliament, and into the presence of King James. Coke's influence led him to Cambridge University, where he studied for the ministry. Persecution for his Puritan beliefs forced him to cross the Atlantic in

mid-winter.

Williams, a man unafraid to ask questions and change his mind, could find no peace among dogmatic Christians. Banished from Massachusetts Bay, he fled for his life, ill and alone, in "a bitter winter season." For weeks, he struggled through deep snow on foot to escape exile to England and certain death in prison. He survived because his Native American friends—the people Puritans called savages—sheltered and fed him.



P. F. Rothermel. *The Banishment of Roger Williams*

Now he was about to embark on a different kind of journey, a journey of ideas.

In an age when clergymen enforced civil laws and magistrates enforced religious laws, he believed that the state had no right to interfere with a person's relationship with God.

Could Williams and a small group of like-minded people create a new kind of government that recognized liberty of conscience?

Could a city-bred clergyman forsake a life of physical comfort to plant and harvest crops, chop wood, and handle a canoe?

You'll be able to find out the answers to those questions and more when Roger Williams himself (as interpreted by National Park Service Ranger John McNiff) visits the Museum Gallery on Thursday, November 1 at 7:00 p.m.

Please join us for an evening in 17th century Providence Plantations.

The Rise and Fall of the Narragansett Pacer

In the later part of the seventeenth century, large farms began to dominate the newly-opened southern part of the Providence Plantations. From those farms emerged the first uniquely American breed of horse, the Narragansett Pacer.

Thursday, October 25

At a time when roads, if they existed at all, were rough and full of stones, a horse that could give its rider with a smooth and comfortable ride was highly prized. The Narragansett Pacer was bred to provide such a ride. It had a natural pacing gait and could move smoothly and quickly over long distances.

Its backbone moved in a straight line and the two legs on the same side of the horse moved forward together— characteristics found in the twenty-first century to be the result of a genetic mutation.

By the eighteenth century, Narragansett Pacers were known throughout the English-speaking world as the most superior type of saddle horse. One writer described them as "the finest saddle horses in the world: they neither fatigue themselves nor their

rider."

On Thursday, October 25, Dr. Charlotte Carrington-Farmer, Assistant Professor of Early American History at Roger Williams University, will talk about the rise and fall of the Narragansett Pacer and its place in the economy of colonial Rhode Island. The program will begin at 7:00 p.m. in the Museum Gallery.



Ernest Hamlin Baker. *The Economic Activities of the Narragansett Planters* (1939)

Dr. Carrington-Farmer, who received her Ph.D. in history from Trinity Hall, University of Cambridge, is a keen horse rider who has competed at a national level for many years.

New England on the Eve of European Contact

The residents of Plymouth Colony got together with their Wampanoag neighbors 397 years ago this autumn for a three-day feast to celebrate a successful harvest. Many traditions arose from that first Thanksgiving; we now know that most of them are myths.

But what was that thanksgiving feast really like? What foods were harvested? How were the Wampanoags dressed? How did they cook the food they brought?



Hongnian Zhang. *Thanksgiving, 1621*

Recent archaeological investigations at the head of Point Judith Pond in Narragansett are answering those and other questions about what life was like on the eve of the first successful European settlement in New England.

Thursday, November 15

The 50-acre Salt Pond Archaeological Site (RI 110), once the location of a complex Narragansett Indian settlement, is the only surviving and recently-preserved pre-Contact native settlement on the New England coast and one of the most important Native American excavations on the Eastern Seaboard.

Jay Waller, Senior Archaeologist at The Public Archaeology Laboratory, has worked at RI 110. On Thursday, November 15 at 7:00 p.m. in the Museum Gallery, Jay will tell us about the discoveries that have been made at RI 110 and the new insights those discoveries have provided into life in New England just before Europeans arrived.

The Peace Dale Museum of Art and Culture
1058 Kingstown Road, Room 5 • Peace Dale, Rhode Island 02879 • (401) 783-5711
www.peacedalemuseum.org

Beth Hogan, Museum Administrator

Louise Weaver, Administrative Assistant • Mary Brown, Educator

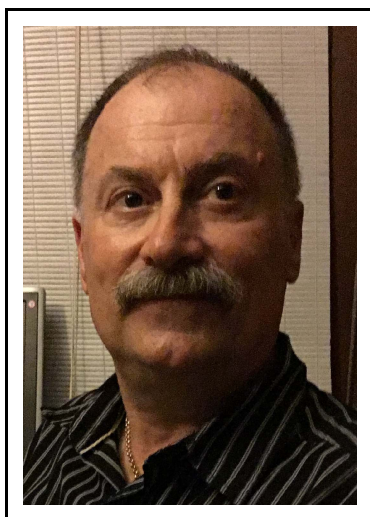
The Museum Gallery is open Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and by appointment.

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Meet Our New Antiques Appraiser

Tom Tomaszek, a Blackstone, Mass. resident with more than forty years' experience in the antiques business, will appraise your treasures (and your "trash"?) at our 2018 "Trash or Treasure" event on Sunday, September 30 at the Dunes Club in Narragansett.



Tom has been buying, selling and collecting antiques since the 1970s. He currently sells at Antique Associates at West Townsend, in West Townsend, Mass., the 101A Antique & Collectible Center in Amherst, New Hampshire, and on eBay.

He has exhibited at the Brimfield Antique Flea Market for more than forty years.

His areas of expertise include numismatics (coins, medals, tokens); military items, especially Samurai swords; antique jewelry and pre-1960 costume jewelry; pre-1940 Native American objects; pre-1920 toys; pre-1850 American furniture; bottles and stoneware; pre-1945 paintings, sculptures, drawings, and etchings; pre-1920 American primitives; pre-1900 silver and pewter; and pre-1940 American art pottery.

We look forward to welcoming Tom to our "Trash or Treasure" event.

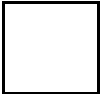
We've made a few changes at the Museum

Next time you visit the Museum Gallery, you'll notice a few small but important changes. Our new display case in the upstairs lobby gives visitors a quick overview of our mission and what we offer. We have also added new, more comfortable and easier-to-move chairs and a larger projection screen in the Gallery to accommodate the growing attendance at our lectures. In the works: updated labels for the collection items on display.

Right: Museum volunteer Frances Topping at our new display case.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Our new sign is mounted on the exterior of the Peace Dale Office Building.