

Malden's Revere Knitting Mills

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As the temperature gradually drops and we transition into fall, I begin planning and working on knitted gifts for the upcoming holiday season. I will likely take on too many ambitious projects and end up having to purchase knitted goods to compensate for my unrealistic goals... If only Revere Knitting Mills factory store were still open! Just a five-minute walk from the library, the company had a storefront at 108 Ferry Street. They sold knitwear and yarn for hand knitting that was produced around the corner at their factory on Eastern Avenue. Revere Knitting Mills was one of Malden's many successful industries. It was active in Malden from 1919, when the company was founded, to 1958. The company was still operational after 1958, but it relocated to Wakefield.

Revere Knitting Mills was founded in 1919 on Bryant Street by Maldenians David Hillson, Bertram Green and Hyman Solomon. By May of 1921, the company had purchased and built a factory on the corner of Ferry Street and Eastern Avenue. You can see "Revere Knitting Mills" carved in stone at 124-126 Eastern Avenue to this day. The company had need to expand its factory, and in 1929 a \$40,000 project to build an additional 18,000 square feet was completed. All of this additional space was anticipated to yield a 50 percent increase in their production. The company's location at 108 Ferry Street was converted to a storefront in 1934, in addition to selling men's and women's knitwear, they also had a section for hand knitting supplies. Sales must have been successful because the storefront on Ferry Street underwent renovations to double its size within the year. In September of 1937, the company joined the interna-



Malden's Revere Knitting Mills' factory was on the corner of Ferry Street and Eastern Avenue.

national Ladies Garment Workers Union. This dramatically benefited Revere Knitting Mills' workers. A few examples of this are a 10 percent increase in wage, a 40-hour work week and an increase in pay for overtime work. The agreement with this union was only scheduled for one year. Shortly after the agreement expired, in November of 1938, a meeting took place between management and employees about wages. The results of this meeting must not have pleased the company's workers because 218 employees went on a week-long strike three days later. Legal efforts were taken to reduce the size of the strike. There was an official ruling that factory

workers could not strike on behalf of storefront workers. Upper management of the company sought to quickly resolve the issue. There was a meeting between company officials that caused workers to call off the strike. A fire broke out in August of 1938. Ironically, not much damage occurred because of the fire, but there was significant damage to goods that occurred because of the sprinklers and water. The fire was caused by the overheated motor of a sewing machine. Revere Knitting Mills remained in Malden until 1958 when the factory moved to an even larger location in Wakefield. The store-

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front on Ferry Street, however, stayed in Malden. Bertram Green was with the company for many years. He was one of the founding members of the company in 1919. He became treasurer and eventually became the president that oversaw the company's move to Wakefield in 1958. Green was considered a civic leader of Malden in his time; he was involved with many Malden projects during his 75 years in this city. To name a few, he was president of Malden Hospital, president of the Malden School Committee and a founder and lifelong member of Temple Tifereth Israel.

Want to learn more about Revere Knitting Mills (or anything else about Malden)? Come and visit Malden Public Library's Local History Hours on Mondays from 6 p.m.-8 p.m. and Wednesdays from 2 p.m.-4 p.m. You can also email me at pwright@maldenpubliclibrary.org with questions. As a veteran educator, I always believe that to bridge the Achievement/Opportunity Gap, we have to bring the leadership together to focus on creating an internal learning and literary environment that is on par with the school curriculum and culture. Training stakeholders on school curriculum and culture, doing Tech Outreach, providing basic technology skills, learning English and many other skills needed to navigate life in a new city or country will fall within the realm of Education that ARPA and other educational funds allow. Having been active in the region for five decades, I am seeing the lack of basic skills, understanding of the US culture, learning, and cross-cultural awareness that were not built up over half a century is creating a colossal crisis we are facing now with new migrants having Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and holders of President Biden's two-year Humanitarian Parole Program. Allocating and/or "setting aside" some of the ARPA funds (or group's) with weaker leadership and hire some staff to help run it until 2026 will have long-term benefits locally, regionally, and nationwide. Nikita Lamour is an educator with a theological formation from the former Cambridge-based Western Jesuit School of Theology that merged with Boston College in 2008. She has been a Ward 5 resident for 25 years and a cultural organizer for more than 15 years.

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~ Guest Commentary ~

Towards an Educational, Leadership, Communication, Cross-Cultural skills, and Tech Outreach to Current Migrants

By Nikita Lamour

As the reactions and/or responses about Haitians in Springfield, Ohio had spread the world after the presidential debate, I'd like to mention, there is a significant growing population of Haitians in the region

and the city in particular in need of urgent educational, Tech, linguistic, cultural adaptation skills. As seen in the past several years calls to organizations to submit proposals for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) or COVID funds, I would like to suggest that local ARPA funding

committees consider allocating, "putting aside" some of the ARPA funds to plan for a conversation around those aforementioned needs by December 31, 2024 when the funds are to be obligated. Some actions would be implemented by 2026 when the ARPA funds have to be used.

US Census 2020 reported 9,723 Blacks or African Americans in the city, but not stating specific ethnic groups of African descent. As officials have calculated the number of Haitians in Springfield, Ohio through several means such as school, health, social service, and housing re-

ports, similar research may need to occur locally. References such as BIPOC, Black or African Americans underestimate the specific, social, educational, cross-cultural, internal leadership/communication, language dynamics and other needs of Blacks of Haitian descent whose current migration in Malden started in the mid to late 1950s. I have spoken with a Haitian-American whose sifter first came to the city between 1955 and 1958. The evolving and growing presence of Haitians in the region is another topic. I also want to say today unlike Springfield, Ohio, we don't have 12 to 20,000 Blacks of Haitian descent in this city or any city in the Metro North Region. Based on my observations as a former Census enumerator, I have seen in 2010 that Haitians live in every Ward in the city. As a Ward 5, Precinct 1 resident of the Salem Street area for 25 years who has family and friends in Ward 7, I could say the majority of an estimated 6,000 to 7,000 Blacks of Haitian descent are concentrated in Ward 5 Precinct 1 and Ward 7 areas. However, despite of close to 70-year presence in the city, this particular group

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