



NEWPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newport History Starts Here.

SPRING 2016 NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 5, NUMBER 2

❁ INSIDE ❁

Summer Programing
Newport Antiques Show
History Comes Alive
Newportal





Ruth Taylor and Estelle Barada after the 2015 Stamp Act Riot re-enactment.

Director's Note

When the first English families settled in Newport in 1639, they bought the island from the Native population, and divided it into farmlands. But, the farming was poor: the soil rocky and salty, the fields exposed to wind and sea. The sea was a detriment for farming. But, it was a huge advantage for something else. In the next 100 years, Newport developed into a trading behemoth, taking full advantage of its ability to be accessible by sea.

All of this movement – in and out – made Newport a cosmopolitan center, full of economic activity and of ideas. Folks from different places have different ways of thinking and doing things, and this multiplicity of thought and practice made for a creative environment for business, learning and the arts. Combine this activity with Newport's celebrated tolerance of religious difference, and the various economic actors could settle as well as doing business here, becoming permanent participants in the City's economic and cultural life. While the sea was Newport's primary route in and out during the Colonial period – including many small ferries to Jamestown and the mainland – road and bridge building was also essential to the community's health. The original Stone Bridge between Tiverton and Portsmouth was instigated by Newport's Daniel Lyman in 1794.

Accessibility continued to be an asset after the American Revolution, when the beauty and temperate climate of Aquidneck Island attracted visitors from the South and elsewhere, especially during the summer. Direct routes by ship from Charleston, Philadelphia and New York made Newport a relatively easy trip, and led to the City's second career as a vacation destination. Travel by sea became more steady and predictable with the advent of the famous Fall River Line of steamships, which brought New York's industrial elites to Newport for the summer during the Gilded Age. Sea travel was enhanced by railroad stations in Wickford and Narragansett as well as direct service to Boston from downtown Newport.

The center of Newport's thriving community has histori-

cally been the harbor and what is now Washington Square. At the very top of the Square sits the town spring, which appears in land deeds and descriptions from the earliest times, and was the site of a well even into the 20th century. The one-mile and two-mile markers on the road out of town are measured to the spring, and the site has been both the launch pad and the arrival point for travelers since 1639. The spring made it a convenient place to water the horses on the way out of town, and the location became a center for liveries and carriage shops in the 19th century. When the Short Line bus came to Newport, the station was placed here, a short walk from the train station on Long Wharf. It is no accident that one of the first gas stations in downtown Newport was placed here, in the 1920s. It has been a fuel-up and get-going spot since the infancy of days (to use a phrase from a 17th century deed).

If historically, Newport's economic success has been based on a combination of beauty, accessibility and tolerance for new ideas and different ways of thinking, is this part of our heritage useful as we think about how to create a thriving economic community today? What do we need to do now, in this time, to create modern accessibility without destroying our beauty? How do we work to accommodate visitors and new residents with new ways of thinking without losing our essential character? These are strategic questions that can benefit from an historical perspective. For those who say that now is now and we need to look forward, and not back, I quote the indomitable historian Patty Limerick: "When amnesia strikes an individual that is not an occasion for celebration. People don't say, 'How great your life must be, every second is fresh, so open and full of opportunities.' Instead, you rush them to the neurologist. And when a society has amnesia, that's just as bad, that's just as dire, and so I've said and I still believe, you rush them to an historian."

Newport has an opportunity in the coming year to celebrate its historical accessibility and openness as the community comes together to find a new use for the former Coffey's gas station site – also the site of the original town spring. This transportation-based location deserves a use that celebrates and recognizes the role this spot has played in our wildly creative, diverse and open community. At least in part, we should let our history be our guide: here, and in other plans for progress into the 21st century.

And, as we do this, the community can rely on the Newport Historical Society as the custodian of that history, in incredible detail.

– Ruth S. Taylor, *Executive Director*



NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

The NHS held its 161st Annual Meeting on September 17, 2015 and cut the ribbon on a modern and functional facility at 82 Touro Street. Now with our house in order, the real work may begin.

While the building is complete, we are still raising money to endow our upgraded staffing plan and to equip the building with new furniture – for the offices, and for collections! We are working to raise about \$1.75 million before the end of this year to close the campaign.

As we do this, naming rights to the new facility, and to segments of our collections, are starting to be chosen by donors to the campaign! We are pleased to announce the following appellations, and to remind all who have given, and those who have not yet done so, that there are still opportunities to place your mark on the new NHS.

The NHS Library shall now be known as the
ALLETTA MORRIS LIBRARY

The NHS Reading Room shall now be known as the
HUGH D. AUCHINCLOSS III READING ROOM

The NHS costume collection shall be named by
THE LEATHERMAN FAMILY

The following opportunities and others are still available for those wishing to leave their mark on Newport's history.



PHOTO (LEFT TO RIGHT) Mohamad Farzan of NewPort Architecture, NHS Executive Director Ruth Taylor, NHS President Thomas Goddard, and Jim Farrar of Farrar and Associates cut the ribbon on the Society's newly renovated Resource Center.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NHS DIRECTOR, JESSICA HAGEN

VAULT (MANUSCRIPT STORAGE) \$150,000

LOBBY GALLERY \$150,000

ENTRANCE FOYER \$100,000

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION \$500,000

NEWPORT FURNITURE COLLECTION \$250,000

WATCH AND CLOCK COLLECTION \$250,000

PAINTINGS COLLECTION \$250,000

MAP COLLECTION \$100,000

For more information on the campaign, please contact NHS Executive Assistant, Mat DeLaire, at 401-846-0813 ext. 110, or by email at mdelaire@newporthistory.org.



Newport Historical Society

Resource Center

82 Touro Street, Newport RI 02840 | 401-846-0813

Brick Market: Museum and Shop

127 Thames Street, Newport RI 02840 | 401-841-8770

Daily 10 to 5

Colony House, Washington Square

Wanton-Lyman-Hazard-House, 17 Broadway

Great Friends Meeting House, 22 Marlborough Street

For Guided Site Tours see:

www.NewportHistory.org | www.NewportHistoryTours.org

A Digital Strategy for the Newport Historical Society

The appearance of museum and history content on the web over the past decade has transformed the way we research and learn. As individuals, as scholars, and as institutions, we are more easily informed and more connected than ever before. It is a pleasure and a delight for anyone who cares about history. The push towards continuing to put information up on the web is consequently relentless. There are grant programs specifically set up for digitizing collections, and one of the questions most commonly asked of us by new donors, scholars, and members is “is that on the web?”

As the field of digital humanities has become a discipline, however, we are beginning to ask ourselves questions about what goals we can expect to set for ourselves and our work. And, increasingly, I am gratified to find that, in museum work generally, realism and a sense of the practical are acceptable factors in decisions that have traditionally been defined by theory and what is possible. We cannot do everything, so we look at the bottom line that our mission defines, and build out from that.

Our mission at the NHS for over 150 years has been explicitly educational. While we are required to collect and preserve, it is the use that we put our collections to that has been emphasized. As we look to ensure that our activities are educational, we must at same time make decisions about how to deploy our limited resources and remain a sustainable institution. Articulating a strategy for the digital will be a part of a planning process that will begin this summer at NHS. In advance of that, however, we can begin to talk about its likely components.

NHS will not be working towards putting images of all of its collections online in the foreseeable future. What we will do, and are already engaged in, is focus on two goals for the digital. The first is to continue to provide better and better indexes and finding aids for our collections online. We focus on finding aids for most of our collections, rather than full content, for two reasons. The first is simple capacity. We have determined that it would take a generation, 30 years, for us to create scans of all of our manuscript collection items and get them on the web.

The second reason focuses on an issue that has emerged with internet research. As folks increasingly expect to be able to do research on the web, anything that is not available becomes invisible. “If I can find a lot of information on the web, and it is so easy, surely that is enough.” Concerns about this have driven calls to digitize everything, but, as I suggested above, more practical solutions are also being discussed.

If it would take us 30 years to digitize everything, including indexing the scans so that they can be found, for that long period only a part of what we have would be accessible on the web. In essence, the rest of this important collection would be invisible to most people. If instead, we provide better and better indexes to this collection, any researcher on the internet can get links to all of what we have, and then be in touch with us for specific images, if they are not able to visit our Resource Center.

Our second strategy is to place educational content online, including digital exhibits, videos, and blog posts, as regularly and as comprehensively as possible. This leverages the expertise of our staff, guest curators, and others to provide interpretation, historical narrative, and curated content for our audiences.

The newly launched Newportal project will help us do both things, and will do so in collaboration with other collecting institutions in Newport. This website will serve as an access point for information about collections held at NHS and four other local institutions, and we hope that others will join us as the site begins to be used. The site will also be a platform on which digital exhibits (educational content) can be placed, and increasingly, we will be transferring our program of digital exhibit content from our app, Explore Historic Newport, to Newportal with all of its collaborative possibilities. www.newportalri.org

In addition, we are continuing to add video content to our Newport History Videos channel on Youtube, and have a couple of new productions in the pipeline, including one on our important marine chronometer (see page 14), and another about Daniel Lyman and the Marquis de Lafayette.

These activities are increasingly at the core of what we do at NHS. Over time, the digital, will, I believe, become less a distinct activity and more and more simply how we do the business of helping the public learn about history.

– Ruth Taylor

2015 WAS A *Revolutionary* *Summer*



ABOVE NHS Board Members and staff aboard *L'Hermione* at Fort Adams.
LEFT Detail of the Lafayette Sword (NHS 2015.1.1)

The arrival in Newport of *L'Hermione*, a replica of the ship which carried the Marquis de Lafayette to America in 1780, was celebrated in July with an event dockside at Fort Adams, two pop-up exhibits at the Colony House and the Brick Market Museum, a walking tour and a living history program. The ship's visit also coincided with the NHS's most significant artifact donation in some time: a silver-hilted sword given by Lafayette to Daniel Lyman, which was donated in the spring by Lyman descendant Bruce Lyman Blakemore.

The exhibits: *Brothers in Arms: Lyman and Lafayette*, and *Fraternite: The French in Newport* both celebrated the history of France's support for the American Revolution. *Illuminating the American Revolution: A Living History Event*, recreated Newport's preparations for an illumination that took place shortly after the arrival of French troops in July 1780.

Later in the summer the 9th Annual Newport Antiques Show hosted a loan exhibit from the National Museum of the American Revolution. NHS staff enjoyed working with their colleagues from the NMAR, who brought with them some of the important and evocative artifacts that will be seen in the inaugural exhibit when the museum opens in Philadelphia in the Spring of 2017. In addition, the NMAR staff erected a replica of Washington's campaign tent on the lawn at Miramar, where it was the centerpiece of an informational reception kindly hosted by David Ford.

Finally, in August, the NHS hosted a living history reenactment of the 1765 Stamp Act riots in Newport. For the second year in a row, costumed interpreters roamed the streets of Newport, complaining about taxation without representation and arguing for the responsibilities of British citizenship, all to the surprised pleasure, and education, of Newport's downtown visitors. Videos of the event can be seen by visiting our website, choosing the "Initiatives" tab and going to Newport History Videos.



ABOVE Reenactors gather during the *Illuminating the American Revolution* event at the Colony House.
BELOW The Stamp Act Riot Reenactment takes over Washington Square.



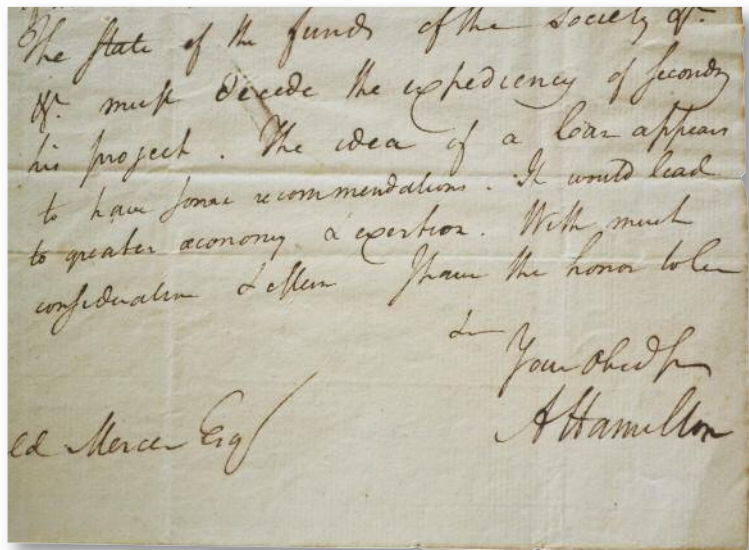
What's Next for Rhode Island?

An Essay Contest for Rhode Island Tenth Grade Students

Rhode Island has been a place of many firsts – innovation is in our blood! We were the first place in the modern world to incorporate the revolutionary principle of religious freedom in our Charter of 1663. That idea and the related concept of separation of church and state have gone on to sweep the world. Today, these principles are included in the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. About a century later, Rhode Islanders changed the world again – this time by starting the Industrial Revolution. What will we do next?

The Newport Historical Society Essay Competition is open to Rhode Island students enrolled in tenth grade in public, private, and parochial schools, with or without full class participation; students may enter individually or through their class. Each is asked to respond to the prompt below:

What is happening now in your community, or what could be happening, that has the power to change the future in Rhode Island and potentially the world?



Letter from Alexander Hamilton,
NHS COLLECTIONS

Competition winners will receive Saturday matinee tickets to the award-winning and genre-busting Broadway show, ***Hamilton, An American Musical***, including a post-show dinner, and transportation to and from New York City for each winner.

For more information, including submission guidelines and deadlines visit www.NewportHistory.org.



Thompson Middle School students tour NHS Resource Center with Archivist, Molly Bruce Patterson.

Community Partners

The Newport Historical Society was pleased to be a community partner to Thompson Middle School's sixth grade annual documentary unit. The sixth grade was invited to behind the scenes tours of NHS' newly rehabilitated Resource Center as part of research for this year's documentary theme "Sustainability – Thinking Globally, Acting Locally." Students learned about preservation and adaptive reuse as they toured through collection spaces and heard how NHS transformed a dysfunctional 19th century building into a fully accessible, 21st century Resource Center. They also learned about the kinds of objects NHS collects and cares for, what can be learned from them and about the kind of people who conduct research at the Center. Other community partners for the TMS documentary project include NewportFilm and Friends of Jane Pickens. Students shared the results of their research in student-created documentary films that were presented at Jane Pickens Theater in collaboration with NewportFilm on June 6 from 5-7PM.

RECENT ACQUISITION

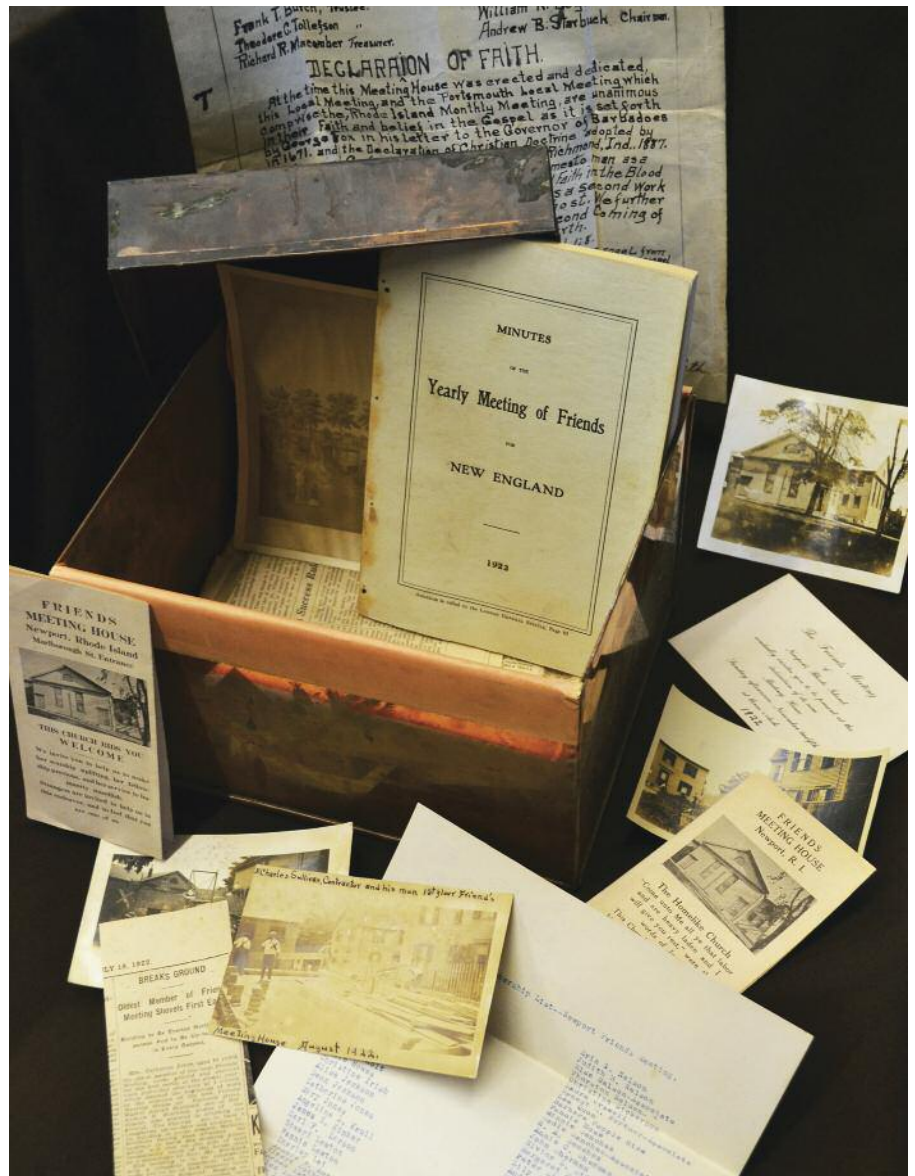
1922 SOCIETY OF FRIENDS TIME CAPSULE

The Newport Historical Society recently acquired a copper box holding a small trove of photographs and ephemera documenting the Society of Friends' construction of a new meeting house at 23 Farewell Street in 1922. The box was discovered in the foundation of the new meeting house when the building was demolished in 1976, and based on information gleaned from its contents, it was most certainly placed there intentionally as a commemorative time capsule. As such, the box serves as a window into the Society of Friends and their meeting house almost a century ago.

The Society of Friends started planning the sale of their old meeting house, now known as the Great Friends Meeting House and owned by the Newport Historical Society, in the summer of 1919. According to records of meeting minutes preserved in the time capsule, on July 30 the Newport Pastoral Committee requested that the Rhode Island Monthly Meeting give consent "to place the property whereon their Meeting House now stands, Marlborough and Farewell Streets, on the market, and if sold, the proceeds thereby received from such sale [...] to be used to build a suitable Meeting House in the city of Newport and equip it with fitting furnishings."

Three years later, the old meeting house had been sold to the city for \$28,000, and construction on the new building began with a groundbreaking on July 17, 1922. This event is shown in a photograph of "Catherine Jones 83 years old and Joseph Starbuck age 4 yrs. throwing out first dirt for excavation of the New Meeting House." Additional photographs of the construction site include one depicting contractor Charles Sullivan and his men erecting the first floor in August. These photographs are a delightful visual resource for the contemporary researcher, because they include detailed handwritten descriptions providing clear identification of the individuals and activities they depict.

After construction of the new meeting house was complete, a ceremony to deposit its cornerstone was announced



The time capsule and its contents, NHS COLLECTIONS.

in the October 26, 1922 issue of the *Newport Daily News*. According to the announcement, the laying of the cornerstone had been delayed "until certain documents desired to be placed in the stone" were ready. Those documents were found fifty-four years later, when the copper box was recovered during demolition of the new meeting house and adjacent buildings in 1976. This spring the Friends' capsule of carefully selected documents was donated to the Newport Historical Society, where it shall be preserved for the education and enjoyment of generations to come.

YUSHA AUCHINCLOSS

Just about one year ago, the community mourned the death of Hugh D. Auchincloss III, known to all as Yusha. Yusha was a supporter of the NHS long before most of us arrived to work here, and continued to be actively interested and involved until days before his death. Every year he would make an annual fund donation, and every year he would tell me “there is more for you in my will.” In what became a ritual for us, I would reply “Yusha, I am in no rush.”

This year, we are proud to name our reading room for Yusha, thanks to his own generosity and that of the Firestone Foundation. His bequest will also – and I am sure this will please him – help to fund some of the scholarly activities that are ongoing at the NHS.

– Ruth Taylor



Yusha Auchincloss with his daughter Maya.

FOUND | EZRA STILES’ “BILL OF MORTALITY FOR NEWPORT,” 1765-1776



Detail of the 1776 entry in Ezra Stiles’ “Bill of Mortality for Newport.”

Ezra Stiles, minister of Newport’s Second Congregational Church and an indefatigable collector of facts, kept a “Bill of Mortality for Newport” that has been the delight of historians and genealogists for more than a century. A transcription of the years 1760 through 1764 from a document at Rhode Island Historical Society appeared over two issues of the New England Historical and Genealogical Register in 1908 and 1909. The manuscript showed the names, religious affiliation, age, and occasionally circumstances of death as far as Stiles was able to determine them. The only problem with this five-year window into Newport history has been its brevity.

Recently a researcher working in Second Congregational Church records at Newport Historical Society on an unrelated matter discovered that Stiles continued his bills of mortality 1765 through 1776, some of the most turbulent years in Newport’s history. His Bills of Mortality were neatly kept in 2nd Congregational Record Book

1725-1772, a title that in no way hints at the riches inside. That Stiles completed 1776 at all is remarkable: he had fled with his family for the safety of Dighton, Massachusetts in March of that year. His entries for that year include deaths of privateers and soldiers and those who “died abroad” (off the island) in addition to burials reported to him by a church sexton. These records are presently being transcribed for publication in New England Historical and Genealogical Register. The interval between the first part of the transcription and the second will undoubtedly be the longest in the journal’s history.

Contributed by Cherry Fletcher Bamberg, Fellow of the American Society of Genealogists and Editor of *Rhode Island Roots*.

Staff Transitions

The NHS lost three valuable team members this year:

Charles Morgan, who gave decades of service to the NHS taking care of our buildings and systems has retired.

Chelsea Gunn, our first Archivist and Manager of Digital Initiatives, is enrolled in a PhD program in information science in Pittsburgh.

Kathleen Vanderveer, our long time Director of Retail Operations and the originator of the program at our Museum Shop, has left to take on a new and exciting position as a manufacturers' rep.

New members of the team include:

Molly Bruce Patterson

Archivist and Manager of Digital Initiatives

Asa Montgomery

Properties Manager

Stephanie Poole

Manager of Visitor Services

Nancy Cardoza

Interim Business Manager

Jenna Teachout

Manager of Museum and Shop



Community Garden

The Newport Historical Society is excited to announce a partnership with the Aquidneck Community Table (501 c-3). ACT's newest initiative, Island Community Farms, brings Newport's first community garden to the grounds of the Great Friends Meeting House. With the launch of the Society's Newport Eats initiative, a multi-year of study and programming around food-ways of the past, this partnership brings the past into the present in an extremely vibrant and useful way.

For more information on renting raised beds in the Great Friends Meeting House Garden, email info@aquidneckcommunitytable.com

ABOVE: Visitors gather on the lawn of the Great Friends Meeting House to celebrate the opening of the gardens on Friday, May 27.

PROFILE



Molly Bruce Patterson

Archivist & Manager of Digital Initiatives



Molly joined the NHS staff in July 2015 as Archivist & Manager of Digital Initiatives. In this role, she manages cataloging and preservation of manuscript collections and assists researchers. Molly also maintains NHS websites and the Explore

Historic Newport mobile app, manages the Society's transition to Collective Access, its new collections management database, and serves as technical liaison for Newportal, a collaborative project of local cultural institutions to create a free online database of Newport collections.

Molly first worked in archives in 2006, as a Processing Assistant in the Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at New York University, where she discovered her passion for facilitating discovery of primary source materials. She earned her M.L.I.S. from Simmons School of Library and Information Science in 2013, and has since worked at Tufts University Digital Collections & Archives and the department of Curation, Preservation & Archives at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. Molly lives in Providence with her husband. When she isn't at work, she is usually cooking or going on long walks with her dog.



THE NEWPORT ANTIQUES SHOW

To Benefit the Newport Historical Society and
the Boys & Girls Clubs of Newport County

The Newport Antiques Show hosted over 40 dealers from across the country, and even Europe, to exhibit during the July 24-26, 2015 show at the St. George's School Ice Rink. The 2015 loan exhibit, *Liberty Forever: Treasures from the Museum of the American Revolution*, presented a diverse selection of objects from the new museum's collection which is currently being constructed in historic Philadelphia.

The Audrain Automobile Museum was the 2015 Presenting Sponsor and Franklin & Company Design Associates returned as the Gala Preview Party Sponsor. To date, the Show has raised over \$1.8M for its co-beneficiaries, the Newport Historical Society and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Newport County, supporting Newport's past and Newport's future.

This summer, the tenth anniversary of the show will be marked with the exhibit: "Virtuous Amusement" or Curating the Future – Trends in Collecting Today. What we collect is defined by taste, values and personal history, and what we choose to collect can be a statement of what we think is important in our lives today, and in the future.

Who is collecting what in 2016, and what changes do we see in collecting patterns and trends, compared to past generations? Our lectures and programs will explore various aspects of this question. The Newport Historical Society will create a series of small vignettes highlighting collecting trends of the past using objects from their collections. Guests are even invited to learn more about their personal collections through an appraisal event offered in partnership with Freeman's Auction house on Sunday, July 24th. For more information on the show, please visit www.NewportAntiquesShow.com.





NEWPORT ANTIQUES SHOW 2015

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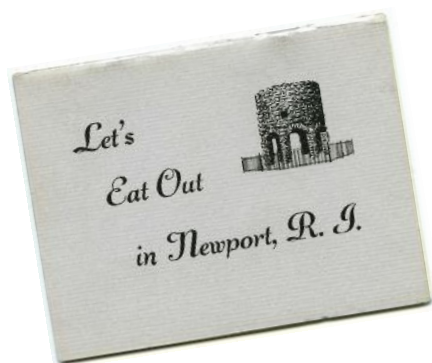
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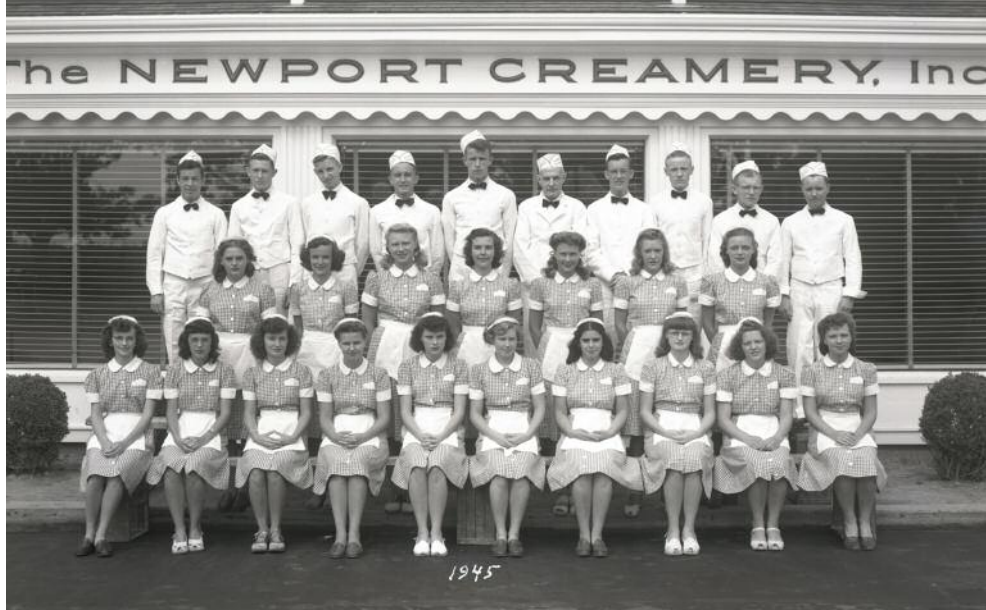


Newport Eats

In January, the Newport Historical Society launched a year-long initiative called Newport Eats, an investigation of Newport's culinary past through public lectures, exhibits, and other interactive programming. This initiative aims to connect Newport's past food traditions to modern trends, and to provide historical context for present ideas such as food sustainability, community development, and healthy eating. To date, we have successfully collected many current menus from local restaurants as a record of contemporary dining experiences in Newport, hosted a lecture on the topic of Puritan food traditions in Colonial New England, and begun scouring our collection for food-related artifacts, archival materials, and ephemera for several upcoming pop-up-style exhibits.

The first of these exhibits opened May 16 in the Museum of Newport History's temporary exhibit space, located on the second floor of the Brick Market: Museum and Shop. The exhibit features Newport's 20th-century dining culture, including rare menus, photographs, brochures, and other artifacts from famed local institutions such as Newport Creamery, the Mile Post, and the Hotel Viking. It also illuminates the role that community played in mid-20th-century local dining experiences, including clambakes, so-called "testimonial dinners," and more.

Join us as we continue to explore the role of food in Newport's rich and diverse history throughout 2016!



Highlights from the Newport Eats exhibit.



PROFILE



Elaine Forman Crane

Board of Directors



When I was a graduate student at New York University about a thousand years ago, I remember thrashing around for a dissertation topic. While I thought about the many possibilities, my professor of urban history, Bayrd Still, men-

tioned that Newport had been one of the most important cities in the revolutionary era. As a wildly committed New Yorker, my disbelief was profound. A little investigation proved me wrong, of course, and in time I became what Gladys Bolhouse, curator of NHS in the 1970s and 1980s, dubbed me: a born again Newporter. I have remained so through four non-fiction books that focus on Newport in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. And the fifth is nearing completion.

As a professor of early American history at Fordham University in New York, I have had ample opportunity to introduce both undergraduate and graduate students to Newport. If they come to class unaware of the genesis of America's commitment to religious diversity, I point out that Rhode Island, not Massachusetts, welcomed dissidents. Indeed, the vibrant complexity of Newport's heterogeneous population spurred its growth and prosperity. This is not to say it was all positive: few students knew how important the slave trade was to that prosperity. As an author, I began to specialize in women's studies and legal history. Working with the extensive manuscript collection at NHS once again, I began to realize that much of what had been written about early American women was wrong; that they were economic actors in their own right in ways that continue to dazzle me.

Such women were international merchants; one was an apothecary whose ledger transactions showed her to be a competitor of the well known merchant moguls of Newport. But it is legal history that holds my attention these days. Trial records are fascinating because they often contain witness statements, which are one of the few ways we can "hear" early Americans speak. It is also one of the few ways we can become acquainted with what were called "the lesser sort," those people with little money and even less education.

I'm not sure how much my husband Stephen, a lawyer, former judge, current mediator and arbitrator, has influenced my scholarly interests. But I do know that his delight in the subject matter is only matched by his delight in trips to Newport where he combs the NHS archives by my side. Let it not be said, however, that we only come to Newport to work. We drive up a few times a year to antique, stroll on Cliff Walk, enjoy the hospitality of a B and B, revel in the views, and eat. Ah, yes, eat. One might think this an odd thing for someone who lives in Manhattan to admit, but I never eat lobster in New York. But when I cave to my craving, the lobster duels take place in Newport, night after night, every time we are in town.

Our daughters were introduced to Newport when they were young. One is a judge, the other an art dealer, and they in turn have introduced Newport to their children who have taken a liking to the town as well. Our son in law, a movie producer, worked on a film in Rhode Island a while ago. I look forward to seeing the newly renovated NHS and to spending a month in Newport this summer, where I will continue to work and play. I have been honored by being elected to the Board of NHS, which makes me feel very much at home. All things considered, I guess we might be considered Newporters on some level. At least I hope so.

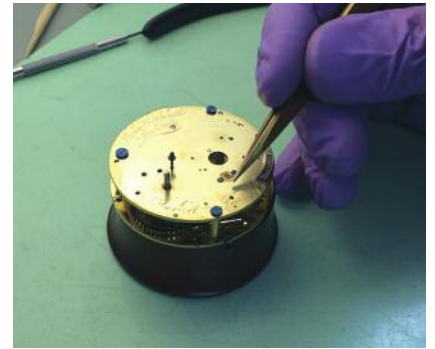
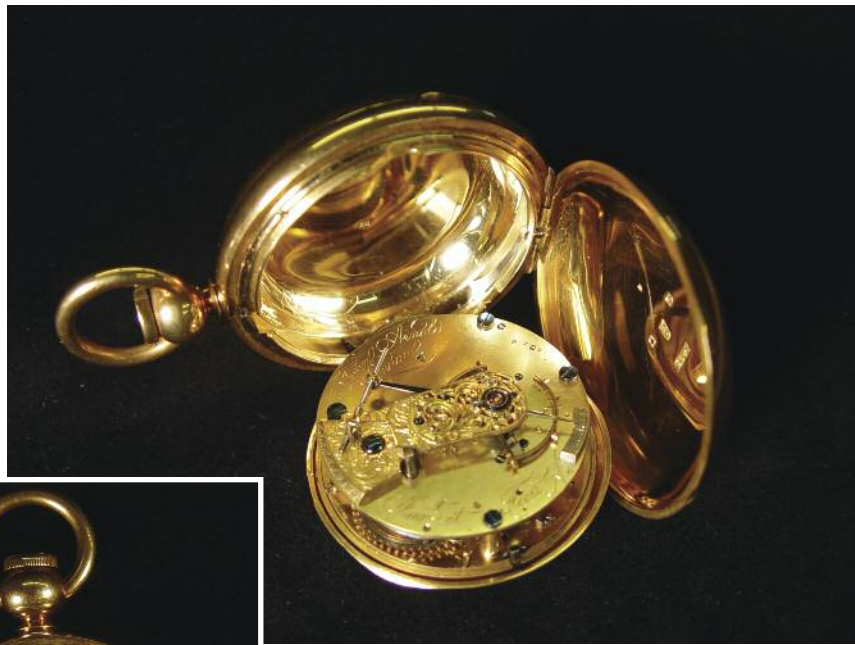
Arnold Chronometer

Ingrid Peters, a staff member of the Newport Historical Society, recently traveled to the Royal Observatory, Royal Museums Greenwich, England to have curator of Horology, Rory McEvoy, examine a pocket watch from the NHS collections. The pocket watch was donated to the Society in 1997, cataloged and put away until six years later when Ray Grenon of Newport was invited to survey the Society's collections of watches. It was Mr. Grenon who recognized that the watch was something more than an 18th century pocket watch. Various experts were consulted and it was determined that the watch was made by John Arnold of London, one of several men competing for the Board of Longitude prize to produce a chronometer that would ensure safe and accurate navigation. However Arnold produced several time keepers, and in order to authenticate the Society's Arnold watch it was decided that it should be sent to Greenwich, England.

In March, 2016 the timing was right and Ms. Peters traveled with the watch to the Royal Observatory where Mr. McEvoy verified that the pocket watch was made by John Arnold of London and is #4 in a series of marine watches circa 1772. Only a few of these paradigm-shifting time pieces from this period of technological development are known and in public hands, and the discovery of Arnold's #4 adds significantly to the scientific record. Arnold's #3 is in the collections at the British Museum; #1, 2 and 5 of this series are missing.

John Harrison (1639 – 1776) was awarded the Board of Longitude's principal award for producing the first accurate marine timekeeper that could ascertain longitude at sea. Arnold (1736-1799) is credited with introducing many original ideas and perfecting those of others. This watch, produced in the early 1770s while one of Arnold's see-saw escapement timekeepers was away on sea trials features a pivoted detent escapement; others had designed such mechanisms, but Arnold's was a technological improvement.

The watch was acquired by Peleg Clarke in 1792. Clarke was a descendant of one of Newport's first English settlers and wealthy merchant of the American colonial period who likely bought the watch from Arnold during a trip to London. He was an eyewitness to the Boston Tea Party and recorded his impressions in a letter now also in the collections at the NHS. The watch was passed down in the Clarke family for over 200 years, as a pocket watch, until it was donated to the Newport Historical Society.



The Arnold watch and Curator Rory McEvoy as he examined it in Greenwich, England.



ABOVE a view of the Bateman House, c. 1895. This photo was taken by Newporter Clarence Stanhope. NHS COLLECTION P25.

RIGHT The Old Stone Mill water tower in this image taken by H.H. Harris in the summer of 1938; his series of rare aerial photos taken before the Hurricane of 1938. NHS COLLECTION



The Other Old Stone Mill

In 1848, Seth Bateman purchased the old Governor John Collins Farm (1786-1790) at Castle Hill Avenue and Ocean Avenue, and developed the property into a deluxe resort hotel. As the property expanded, additional water sources were required from wells and a water tower. In 1867 Bateman installed his new water system in a building which was a perfect replica of the Old Stone Mill in Touro Park.

Bateman House flourished through The Gilded Age under several owners. A 1947 plan to restore the hotel back to its 18th century appearance failed and the property was sold in 1957 to Louis Chartier. The hotel was destroyed by a fire in 1959 and all of the buildings were demolished, including Bateman's Old Stone Mill, which was bulldozed into Narragansett Bay. Today, the site of Bateman House is now occupied by the Chartier Circle neighborhood.

Lyman/Lafayette

Last summer the NHS was given a remarkable artifact. A silver-hilted French gentleman's sword made in Paris about 1765. This lovely object is a pleasure to look at, but it is not its beauty that made the gift exceptional. It, along with a pair of French silver spurs, were, perhaps, given to Newport's Daniel Lyman by the Marquis de Lafayette during the American Revolution. When, why, and in what context was this gift given? And was this story even true?

The Lafayette gift must now be properly documented. We have the objects, a somewhat contradictory but very tantalizing family history, and both Lyman and Lafayette to explore. In mid-May we gathered a team to begin this process: material culture specialists, historians, public humanities practitioners, and a film crew. Working with a documentary maker who understands and supports history, we intend to develop a film presentation of the Lyman and Lafayette story. The film will also, necessarily, capture the process by which a collecting institution studies and interprets history.

This work is not a stand-alone initiative. It is connected to our work on the Revolution House Project – which seeks to present Newport's role in the American Revolution through a



L TO R: Ingrid Peters, NHS Director of Education; Guillaume Wadia, Graduate Student in History, Harvard University; Ruth Taylor, NHS Executive Director; Taylor Stoermer, Instructor of Public History, Harvard University; and Bridget Sullivan, NHS Registrar discuss objects from the NHS collection related to the documentary.

reinterpretation of the home in which Daniel and Polly Lyman lived in Newport, and to the Spectacle of Toleration, which seeks to offer the public a sense of the lived experience of the past in Newport. We will be blogging the project discoveries over the next few months. By watching our website, you can join us – and Dr. Taylor Stoermer of Harvard Public History who is directing the research – and follow along as we explore our topic.

BTW, we have already discovered that Lyman was very fond of tea, cigars, and the ladies.

Upcoming 2016 Events

Exhibits

2016 Newport Antiques Show Loan Exhibit:
"Virtuous Amusement" or Curating the Future – Trends in Collecting Today
July 21 – 24, 2016; St. George's School, Middletown

Known to be Useful, Believed to be Beautiful
Highlights from the collections of the Newport Historical Society.
Through Fall 2016; NHS Resource Center

Newport Eats
Highlights from the collections of the Newport Historical Society exploring Newport's culinary past.
Through Fall 2016; Brick Market: Museum & Shop

Programs

Blue Garden Tour and "Rescuing Eden" Book Talk
A private tour of the newly restored Blue Garden, followed by a box lunch and book talk delivered by Carolyn Seebom and Curtice Taylor, author and photographer of *Rescuing Eden: Preserving America's Historic Gardens*. Participants will meet at 10:30am at the Breakers Stable & Carriage House and take a trolley to the Blue Garden, then return to the Breakers Stable for lunch. Space is limited to 35 participants. This event is rain or shine. Copies of *Rescuing Eden* will be available for purchase.

Thursday, June 9, 11 AM; Breaker's Stable and Carriage House

John F. Kennedy in Newport
Join Tom Putnam, Special Assistant in the Office of the Presidential Libraries for the National Archives and Records Administration, as he offers insight on John F. Kennedy's long association with Newport.
Thursday, June 23, 5:30 PM; Colony House

Fourth of July Open House
Visit the Washington Square for a morning of patriotic activities, including a reading of the Declaration of Independence.
Monday, July 4, 10 AM



Photo: Courtesy of Newport Daily News

Newport Antique Show Gala
Thursday, July 21, 7 PM
St. George's School, Middletown

Newport Antiques Show
Friday, July 22 – Sunday, July 24, 10 AM – 4 PM
St. George's School, Middletown

For more information, please visit www.NewportAntiquesShow.com

Rhode Island's Shellfish Heritage
The shellfish in Narragansett Bay and Rhode Island's salt ponds have provided people with sustenance for over 2,000 years. Author Sarah Schumann will cover the history of Rhode Island's iconic oysters and quahogs as well as offer the perspectives of those who catch, grow and sell shellfish.
Thursday, September 29, 5:30 PM; NHS Resource Center

An 18th Century Dinner
Join the Newport Historical Society and special guests for an evening of culinary indulgence and 18th century culture as we dine in the Colony House in the manner of our forbearers.
Saturday, September 17, 2016, 6:30 PM; Colony House

For details visit NewportHistory.org or call 401-841-8770 to register.

Brick Market: Museum and Shop

From the reconstructed Omni Bus that takes museum guests on a virtual stroll down Bellevue Ave, to our engaging walking tours that interpret the history of Newport, to our selection of inspired merchandise in the shop, the Brick Market Museum & Shop continues to be a lively place among locals and visitors alike. So far in 2016, we are into another record year and look forward to all the activity the warmer weather will bring!

Last year wrapped up strong, with a very successful season of sales and 'Holiday Lantern Tours.' Guests who braved the cold weather were delighted with the opportunity to purchase their own LED lantern that they could use on the tour and take home to commemorate their festive Newport experience. In August of 2015, we worked with Rhode Island jewelry maker, Luca + Dani to create a bracelet commemorating the Stamp Act Riot. The bracelet features an image of the Stamp that colonists boycotted and is still available for purchase at the Brick Market. Luca + Dani even contributes \$1.00 from every bracelet sold back to the NHS. At the beginning of last summer we had a booth at the Newport Flower Show. This was a great opportunity for us to promote our historic tours and museum, but also sell interesting product, including beautiful locally made pearl jewelry and gardening supplies that were inspired by vintage seed packs.

In the spirit of the Newport Eats thematic programming, we are currently carrying a wide range of food related products! This includes a line of yummy jams from the

Beekman Boys, stock-pots large enough to prepare this summer's Aquidneck lobsters, and sets of cheese markers made from vintage sterling silver spoons. We also have a wide selection of pineapple inspired items, from locally made pineapple earrings, to pineapple scented candles, to ceramic pineapple cookie jars.



While it is clear the sweet yellow fruit is loved in this seaport town, what is not so clear is where this fascination with the tropical fruit came from. Local lore suggests that when ship captains and sailors returned from voyages to the tropics, most likely to acquire molasses for Newport's thriving rum industry, they would place a pineapple outside their front door as a sign that they had a successful trip and wanted to share its bounty. Over time, this story has evolved, making the pineapple a universal symbol for hospitality.

We welcome you to come stop in the Brick Market next time you are around Washington Square to learn more about Newport's spirited history and pick up a gift inspired by our past.

127 Thames Street, Newport, RI | 401-841-8770

Hours

Open Daily 10 – 5

Museum Admission

Free for members. For nonmembers, suggested donation of \$4/adult and \$2/child over age 5.

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The 21st Century Fund represents the highest level of support for the Newport Historical Society. These individuals and organizations are helping to create an active and vital new century for Newport's history. Giving to all funds, including membership, counts for recognition in the 21st Century Fund. Members of the 21st Century Fund receive recognition in all NHS publications. Donations to the Newport Antiques Show are included if a qualifying donation has also been made directly to the Newport Historical Society.

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