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Executive Director's Note

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Newport Historical Society

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Executive Director's Note

The Newport Historical Society is a public history organization. As such, one of our primary responsibilities is to serve as a bridge between high-level, current scholarship and the general public. We strive to do this in a number of different ways: through popular programs, our museum and various online offerings. However, the NHS has provided its most direct and tangible link to scholarship through this Journal, *Newport History*.

The Journal has highlighted local and regional history in text and images for over one hundred years. While the focus in the past has been on social and architectural history, articles have taught us also about the art, political, military, and economic history of Newport County, and have done so in a venue that is accessible to all of our friends and members. Under a new editor and refreshed publications committee, the Journal will offer a broader scope of scholarly articles, but will continue to be publically accessible.

As the NHS moves into a strategic planning process this year, the function of providing a link between the public and academia will be an important topic for conversation. When we held the Spectacle of Toleration conference in 2013 one thing that we heard loud and clear from young scholars was that they wanted the public to know about their research. The constraints of teaching and working towards tenure in an academic institution make it hard for young professors to spend time interacting with the public or preparing papers for public-focused journals, as these activities generally will not count towards their tenure portfolios. With *Newport History*, we hope to be both a credible scholarly publication and a place where our non-academic members can learn about history scholarship.

There are probably new ways that the NHS can also perform its mission, and we hope to discover and examine them in the year ahead. For a history-based organization, however, it is extremely gratifying to know that a one hundred-year-old journal still has “legs.”

Ruth S. Taylor

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR