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Editor's Note

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Editor's Note:

A few years ago, Camille Paglia wrote, "All objects, all phases of culture are alive. They have voices. They speak of their history and interrelatedness. And they are all talking at once." Inadvertently, Paglia, an author, social critic, educator, and cultural historian, articulated the essence of the Newport Historical Society.

Since its founding in 1854, the Newport Historical Society has been fulfilling its mission to "collect and preserve the artifacts, photographs, documents, publications, and genealogical records that relate to the history of Newport County; to make these materials readily available for both research and enjoyment; and to act as a resource center for the education of the public about the history of Newport County, so that knowledge of the past may contribute to a fuller understanding of the present."

All types of objects, representing all phases of Newport society and culture, are collected by the Newport Historical Society, from the account book of the most humble shop keeper to the papers of 18th century Newport's most prosperous merchants, from photographs of immigrant families to the fabulous clothing worn by members of the summer colony, from the city's many newspapers to books about Newport's renowned arts and crafts. There is a synergy among these collections, an interrelatedness that enables the Society's patrons to achieve a multidimensional understanding of Newport County's complex history.

This special double issue of *Newport History* contains a complete description of the Society's collections, assembled for the first time in a single space. Joan Youngken, the Society's Deputy Director for Collections, contributed the sections on museum collections, and photographs and graphics collections; Bertram Lippincott III, the Society's Librarian, wrote about the library collections; and Ron M. Potvin, Curator of Library Special Collections, describes the Society's manuscripts and archives. The introduction was written by the Society's Executive Director, Daniel Snyder.

This issue of *Newport History* is intended as a guide to the Society's collections for use by researchers, and stands alone as a chapter of the community's history. It is from these noble and indispensable artifacts of the past that the history of Newport County is written. From academics to local historians, everyone who has perused the Society's books and manuscripts and examined its artifacts and photographs will surely agree that they are speaking together—loudly.