



NEWPORT
MANSIONS

The Preservation Society
of Newport County

For Immediate Release
June 1, 2026

Preservation Society Celebrates America's 250th with Series of Events in the Newport Mansions

NEWPORT, R.I. – The Preservation Society of Newport County is getting into the Spirit of 2026 with an insightful exhibition, theatrical performances bringing Newport's Revolutionary history to life, programs for children and a series of lectures by leading voices in the field of American history and arts.

- Exhibition, June 26-Nov. 1, Rosecliff: **"Revolution Reimagined: Evolving Stories from Newport's Past."** Curated by Dr. Nicole Williams, the Preservation Society's Curator of Collections, this exhibition explores Newport's vital role in the American Revolution through the lens of myth and memory. Visitors will learn how diverse Newporters experienced the tumult of the Revolution and how later generations of Newport-based artists, writers and activists shaped, and re-shaped, the collective memory of the Revolution at benchmark moments, including the 1876 Centennial and the 1976 Bicentennial.
- Theatrical performances, Tuesdays and Saturdays, June 30 through September 1, 6 p.m.-7:15 p.m., Hunter House: **"Loyalty or Liberty: Tales from Revolutionary Newport."** Produced in partnership with Plays in Place, "Loyalty or Liberty" combines three short plays highlighting the difficult choices faced by many during the American Revolution. Characters are based on real occupants of Hunter House, including a stranded Loyalist wife, an enslaved woman and her enslaved husband, and the French naval commander of the squadron in Newport. Supported in part by a grant from the Rhode Island Semiquincentennial Commission (RI250).
- Family programs, Tuesdays, July 7 through August 18, 10:30-11:30 a.m.: **"Time Traveling Tuesdays at Hunter House."** Children will learn about Colonial American life at one of Newport's most important Colonial houses.
- The David W. Dangremond Lecture, July 9, 6 p.m.-7 p.m., Rosecliff: **"The Athens of America: The Arts of Philadelphia from Colonial to Colonial Revival."** Speaker Alexandra Kirtley, the Montgomery-Garvan Curator of American Decorative Arts at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, delves into Philadelphia's dominant role in American artistic and design identity from the early 18th century through the Revolutionary period and into the industrialized 19th century, culminating in the 1876 Centennial Exhibition at the dawn of the Gilded Age.

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- The David B. Ford Family Lecture, July 30, 6 p.m.-7 p.m., Rosecliff: **“America at 250: From Colony to Country.”** Pulitzer Prize-winning author and historian Rick Atkinson and F. Anderson Morse, Executive Director of the American Revolution Institute of the Society of the Cincinnati, explore the American semiquincentennial in discussing the causes, consequences and characters of the war that gave birth to our nation. Atkinson is the author of “The British Are Coming” and “The Fate of the Day,” the first two volumes in a projected trilogy about the Revolution.
- The John G. Winslow Lecture, August 11, 6 p.m.-7 p.m., Rosecliff: **“The Thrill of the Chase: Collecting Art in our Time.”** Speaker John A. Hays, former Deputy Chairman of Christie’s Americas, takes us on a remarkable journey of discoveries made in the field of 18th-century Rhode Island furniture. Through objects, he will reveal how connoisseurship, persistence and good fortune changed and continue to change our thinking about the greatest furniture made in the world.
- Lecture, September 10, 6 p.m.-7 p.m., Rosecliff: **“Revolution Reimagined: Memory and Freedom Struggles from 1876 to 2026.”** Inspired by our exhibition at Rosecliff, “Revolution Reimagined,” this lecture by Dr. Nicole Williams, Curator of Collections for the Preservation Society, explores how generations of Newporters turned America’s war for independence into a rallying cry for social and political revolutions from the struggle for Black civil rights in the aftermath of the Civil War to the modern Civil Rights Movement and American Indian Movement.
- Symposium, November 5-6, Rosecliff: **The Newport Symposium: “What Makes it American.”** As we celebrate America's 250th anniversary, presenters will address how national identity has evolved through visual culture.

Information and tickets for each program are available at www.newportmansions.org/events.

The Preservation Society of Newport County, Rhode Island, is a nonprofit organization accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. It is dedicated to preserving and interpreting the area's historic architecture, landscapes, decorative arts and social history. Its 11 historic properties – seven of them National Historic Landmarks – span more than 250 years of American architectural and social development.

For more information, please visit www.NewportMansions.org.

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