

Fall 1999

## Editor's Note

Ron M. Potvin

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.salve.edu/newporthistory>



Part of the [European History Commons](#), [Military History Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Potvin, Ron M. (1999) "Editor's Note," *Newport History*: Vol. 70 : Iss. 242 , Article 1.  
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.salve.edu/newporthistory/vol70/iss242/1>

This Editorial is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Salve Regina. It has been accepted for inclusion in Newport History by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ Salve Regina. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@salve.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@salve.edu).

## Editor's Note:

Many readers of *Newport History* probably have been following the saga of HMB *Endeavour* in the press of late. D. K. Abbass and the Rhode Island Marine Archaeology Project (RIMAP) believe they have traced the history of Captain Cook's ship of discovery from a coal bearing vessel named the *Earl of Pembroke*, to the *Endeavour*, to its ultimate fate as the *Lord Sandwich*, a British troop transport intentionally sunk in Newport Harbor during the American Revolution. Abbass uses published works, British Admiralty materials in the Public Records Office in London, and the collections of the Newport Historical Society to make her argument.

RIMAP's findings are in conflict with a long-standing tradition that *Endeavour* lay derelict at a wharf in Newport as late as 1828. Pieces of this ship, including its sternpost, were removed from the rotting hulk, and some of its wood was carved into a variety of items, including a box presented to author James Fenimore Cooper. Many of these relics are preserved at the Newport Historical Society.

Abbass admits that only archaeology can provide the definitive answer to this contradiction. RIMAP has moved to provide legal protection to the site where Abbass believes the wreck of *Endeavour* lies, until it can be extensively studied. Abbass and RIMAP are presenting their findings in full for the first time in *Newport History* so that they may receive broad critical review from maritime scholars and other interested parties. The Publications Committee of the Newport Historical Society invites those with contrary evidence and opinions to submit letters or articles for possible publication in *Newport History*. All submissions are reviewed by the Publications Committee for appropriateness and the relevance of the research.

From sea to air. This issue of *Newport History* also includes "Newport State Airport: A History," by Arliss Ryan. For more than fifty years, a stretch of land in Middletown has been the primary point of entry for people and goods traveling by air to Aquidneck Island. Newport State Airport was the vision of Bob Wood, a barnstorming veteran World War II fighter pilot, who built his "air park" practically by hand. Throughout its existence, Newport State Airport has been a busy place, offering freight and passenger service, flying lessons, and serving as an airplane sales and service center. Today, it has also become a valuable—if informal—wildlife preserve, providing habitats to a number of animals and grassland nesting species of birds.

D.K. Abbass took her Ph.D. in anthropology from Southern Illinois University in 1979, then turned to maritime history following post-doctoral work at Harvard and Berkeley. Since 1991, she has been the Project Archaeologist for Bateaux Below, Inc., at Lake George, New York. She organized the Rhode Island Marine Archaeology Project in 1992 and the Foundation for the Preservation of Captain Cook's Ships in 1999, Box 1492, Newport, R.I. 02840.

Arliss Ryan is a freelance writer whose first novel, *The Kingsley House*, will be published by St. Martin's Press early in 2000. She is also a licensed private pilot and Vice President of the Newport Pilots Association.