

Newport Antiques Show Shines at Gala Preview Party

By Carmela Geer, August 13, 2011

The world of art and antiquities sparkled at Friday's Preview Gala, where more than 400 patrons helped kick off the 5th Annual Newport Antiques Show, taking place this weekend at the St. George's School.

The stars and power players from the world of arts and antiquities have come out to represent some of their finest pieces at the 2011 Newport Antiques Show.

Over forty of the nation's top antique dealers have traveled from across the country to exhibit their collections at the fifth annual charitable event, which is open to the public Saturday and Sunday at the St. George's School Ice Rink in Middletown. General admission is \$12.

Friday night's Preview Gala was sponsored by Brown Brothers Harriman of Boston. Party tickets started at \$150 and provided arts patrons and collectors with the opportunity to view and purchase pieces before the show opens to general admission on Saturday.

The show draws about 2,500 visitors each year.

Whether attending the Friday Preview Gala, or the show itself on Saturday and Sunday, attendees this weekend have the opportunity to purchase paintings, furniture, folk art, jewelry, and fine and decorative arts in an unparalleled seaside setting.

All net proceeds from sponsorships and ticket sales will benefit the Newport Historical Society and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Newport County. Every year since 2007, this powerhouse fundraiser has raised more than \$100,000 for *each* institution.

By the close of this fifth annual show this weekend, the event will have raised an anticipated total of one million dollars, according to organizers.



Enjoying a moment as the event began are John Walsh, Ann Hamilton (event organizer), Matt Hamilton and Emily Hard. Mr. Walsh and Ms. Hard represented Brown Brothers Harriman, preview sponsors for the show.



On loan from the Newport Historical Society were 18th century and early 19th century embroidered samplers. These items represent the signature Newport highlights of this year's event.

In a tough economy where nonprofit organizations face funding hurdles and fundraising challenges, this seminal event has proven essential in continuing the missions of The Newport Historical Society and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Newport County.

Anne F. Hamilton, of Newport and Philadelphia, who is returning for the fifth year as Chair of the Show and Gala Preview Party, shared that the event was like “a museum of dealers.”

She encouraged everyone to come out to the show Saturday and Sunday to see what this year's dealers have to offer. “This event transforms a hockey rink into a beautiful showplace where one can come to feast on the sites and learn. It’s a lot of fun whether you are a collector or not,” Hamilton said.

Bill O’Hanley, Boys & Girls Club Board President, enjoyed the evening with his wife Sabra and daughter Lauren. He expressed his gratitude to the Newport Historical Society for their partnership.

“This is the most important event of the year for the Club and we always look forward to it,” O’Hanley said. “Anne Hamilton is an angel to us as the proceeds from this event help us to provide much needed services to children who otherwise could not afford it.”

Fifth year exhibitor William Vareika, of William Vareika Fine Arts LTD, the show's Presenting Sponsor, stated that he was “thrilled with the turn out for the event and so proud to be the presenting sponsor for this event every year.”

"It is a great success for our worthy recipients," Vareika said. Diana Bittel Antiques, another fifth year exhibitor, shared, “It has been five years and it just gets better and better. This could be New York City in January with great dealers and fabulous materials here in Newport in the summer.”



The Preview Gala held Friday night to kick off the 5th Annual Newport Antiques Show hosted more than 400 patrons who came out to support the Newport Historical Society and the Newport Boys and Girls Club.



Founding event presenter and sponsor William Vareika poses with his daughter, Hope, by an impressive bust of George Washington circa 1850.

Show information

- The Newport Antiques Show runs 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 13 and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 14.
- General Admission tickets are \$12.



Browsing in one of the many individual venues was Newport Boys and Girls Club Board President Bill O'Hanley with wife Sabra and daughter, Lauren.

Seen here beside a Portsmouth, NH mahogany Tallcase clock circa 1800 is event sponsor Diana H. Bittel from Bryn Mawr, PA. "This show could be set in New York City in January," explained Bittel. "This is such a perfect venue for this event. Even the ceiling sparkles to reflect the beautiful works beneath it."



Barbara Nicholson and Natalie Fandetti from Russell Moring Fine Catering were expecting to serve more than 400 guests at tonight's gala event.



The team from Antique American Wicker explained that each piece of wicker furniture all dated prior to 1930 is painstakingly restored to its original luster. When asked how long an average piece would take to restore, representatives from Nashua, NH replied, "As long as it takes. Each piece is unique and requires its own time."



Another "little touch of Newport" was displayed by Danielle Ann Millican at R House from Florham Park NJ. These penny postcards of Newport were juxtaposed with large botanical paintings and German designs, circa 1880.