



NEWPORT RESTORATION FOUNDATION

Founded by Doris Duke

BACKGROUND ON THE WHITEHORNE HOUSE AND DORIS DUKE COLLECTION OF NEWPORT FURNITURE

Built in 1811 for one of Newport's last merchant princes, the Whitehorne House is the only Federal period mansion open to the public in Newport today. It features an elegant hipped roof, classically inspired circular entry portico, and a formal garden recently redesigned to feature period flowers and plants. Whitehorne is home to a remarkable collection of Newport and Rhode Island furniture assembled personally by Doris Duke, a wealthy heiress and founder of the Newport Restoration Foundation.

Intensely interested in craftsmanship, Doris Duke became fascinated with 18th century Newport furniture known as one of the leading schools of furniture craftsmanship in the country. Her belief that this furniture should be on display in the city where it was created led her to assemble a wide-ranging collection between the late 1960s and early 1970s. This collection was installed at the Whitehorne House and opened to the public in 1975.

A simple elegance is the hallmark of this furniture influenced by the "plain style" Quaker beliefs and formal designs from England. Newport furniture is known for smooth curves, graceful lines, and the richness of its carving. Created with the simplest hand tools, the furniture attests to the tremendous skill and design sense of these artisans.

The Doris Duke Collection of Newport Furniture features excellent examples from the renowned Townsend and Goddard workshops, including work from some of their artisans such as Benjamin Baker and Holmes Weaver. More than 200 years after their creation, these examples of Newport furniture are highly esteemed as enduring symbols of American creativity and craftsmanship.

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