

The Narragansett Times Collection

Overview of the Collection

Repository: South County History Center 2636 Kingstown Road Kingston, Rhode Island 02881
Tel: 401.783.1328, website: southcountyhistorycenter.org

Title: Narragansett Times Collection

Dates: 1855-1891

Media: bound volumes, correspondence, newspaper, paper

Quantity: 1 box, 1 oversized folder, .5 linear feet

Identification: 2021.503.0001, 2023.509.0001

Language: English

Historical Note

The *Narragansett Times* is a weekly newspaper that primarily focuses on the towns of South Kingstown and Narragansett, Rhode Island.

Thomas P. Wells (1809-1884) published the first issue of the *Narragansett Times* on May 5, 1855. That same year, Wells hired Duncan Gillies (1830-1881), a Scottish immigrant who learned the trade in New York, to be the newspaper's first editor. Gillies ultimately also became the newspaper's publisher, and he served in both roles until his death.

In 1868 Gillies built the Columbia Building on the corner of Main Street and Columbia Street in Wakefield, which housed the Narragansett Times offices. In 1880 an arsonist set fire to the building, completely destroying it. Subsequently, a smaller building was constructed at the same location that still houses the Narragansett Times offices today.

Following Duncan Gillies's death his son, John, took ownership of the newspaper. The business remained in the Gillies family until 1946, when it was sold to Frederick J. Wilson, Jr. After a period of increased circulation in the 1970s, the newspaper was sold to corporate owners in 1983. Today the *Narragansett Times* is part of Southern Rhode Island Newspapers, and one edition is published each week.

Scope and Content

The records of the Narragansett Times Collection include bound volumes, correspondence, newspapers, and papers. The records in the collection were generated as a result of the newspaper's business operations in the mid-to-late 19th century. The collection also includes a transcription of the judge's instructions to the jury in a libel case against the newspaper in 1891.

Administrative Information

Access: Any qualified person doing personal or scholarly research is permitted to utilize materials in the South County History Center collections.

Preferred Citation: Narragansett Times Collection, South County History Center

Provenance: The collection likely reflects acquisitions from multiple sources.

Processed by: Caleb Goodhouse, with the generous support of Betty J. Cotter.

Subject Terms

Narragansett Times (Wakefield, R.I. : 1855); Newspapers--Rhode Island

People

Gillies, Duncan, 1830-1881

Gillies, John, 1859-1921

Hazard, Rowland, 1829-1898

Wells, Thomas P., 1809-1884

Related Materials

Researchers interested in this collection may also wish to consult the following sources in the South County History Center holdings:

Archival Collections – Narragansett Times Newspapers, Westerly Sun Collection

Photograph Collections – South Kingstown Collection: Wakefield, Main Street and Columbia Street Photographs

Contents Listing

Box	Folder	Description	Date
-	Oversized Folder 1	Narragansett Times Specimen Edition	1855
1	Loose	Subscription Book 1	1854
1	Loose	Subscription Book 2	1855-1856
1	Folder 1	Advertising Receipts	1855-1871
1	Folder 2	Articles of Agreement	1858
1	Folder 3	Land Deeds	1866-1877
1	Folder 4	Letter from Rowland Hazard to Duncan Gillies	1880
1	Folder 5	Property Construction and Maintenance Records	1880-1893
1	Folder 6	Cross v. Gillies – Jury Instructions	1891