The Preservation Society of Newport County 1945-1965

The Founding Years

Prepared by:
Holly Collins
Research Fellow
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The Preservation Society of Newport County 1945 - 1965:

The Founding Years

Innovation, trial and error, and financial struggle marked the founding years of the Preservation Society of Newport County. Foremost, the flexibility and foresight of the early officers and board of trustees allowed the organization to grow toward its own unique identity as steward of an outstanding wealth of architectural heritage, and promoter of community partnerships in preservation that rejuvenated a fading Newport. As the Society grew they embraced opportunities that changed their course and redefined their mission. Throughout these years and beyond, one woman, Katherine Urquhart Warren, held a steady hand at the helm.

Precedents in Preservation

When the Preservation Society of Newport County (PSNC) incorporated in 1945 it was preceded by a little over a century of preservation efforts in the United States. These milestone initiatives provided a valuable frame of reference and the impetus for moving forward in the second half of the twentieth century to merge the cultural inheritance of a singular city with its future.

Private sector beginnings

The first enterprise in historic preservation in the United States took place in Newport, Rhode Island. It was an independent effort to insure the heritage of Touro Synagogue, home of the congregation Jesuhat Israel. Founded in 1658 the congregation is a testament to the heritage of religious freedom espoused by the colony. Local architect Peter Harrison designed the Neo-Palladian synagogue that was dedicated on December 2, 1763.\(^1\) Upon the death of Abraham Touro in 1822 (son of the first Rabbi, Isaac Touro), his last will and testament established the Abraham Touro Fund for restoration and repair of the synagogue and Jewish burying ground. Touro endowed the fund with $10,000.00 ($138,550.01 in 2005 dollars).\(^2\) He vested the state with authority to manage the investments of the bequest, and the city council of Newport with the “duty to cause all repairs to be made” as directed by the Jewish synagogue.\(^3\) This intelligently crafted bequest established a preservation hallmark in Newport.

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2. [http://www.westegg.com/inflation/infl.cgi](http://www.westegg.com/inflation/infl.cgi)
In the second half of the nineteenth century preservation efforts in the United States were dominated by private sector women’s volunteerism. Characterized by a fierce patriotic zeal, these organizations sought to save historic dwellings of American heroes to serve as shrines of pilgrimage that promoted Victorian moral standards and the values of “home.”

The principal model that spawned many similarly designed organizations was initiated by Ann Pamela Cunningham, a South Carolina native who persevered for five years in her struggle to save George Washington’s Mt. Vernon. The Mt. Vernon Ladies’ Association (MVLA) was formally established on March 22, 1858. Although intended as a Southern enterprise, Cunningham’s efforts also spread north to include inspired women whom she established as “vice-regents” of the organization. The grass-roots campaigning efforts of this corps of women proved an effective publicity tool and fund raising strategy.

An important outcome of Cunningham’s mission indirectly motivated women into more active roles in the public and political realms, at the time considered improper for a lady. Despite a commitment to bipartianism, Cunningham’s efforts drew her into dealings with the Virginia government and the conflicts of antebellum politics. The success of MVLA established a precedent for women’s leadership in historic preservation in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The organization also demonstrated the intricate relationship between political, social, and material culture and values in the United States.

A turn toward professionalism

After 1900 the preservation model began to change. A leader in the transformation of preservation theory and practice was William Sumner Appleton, a respected architectural historian who created the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA) in 1910 (now operating as Historic New England). Appleton dispelled the emotional character of nineteenth-century organizations such as the MVLA. By instituting a new professional methodology he shifted the preservation focus away from the enshrinement of heroes, thus drawing more educated professionals into the preservation movement. He reorganized “…the field from a preoccupation with romanticized history to one stressing architectural aesthetics, scientific method, and historical scholarship.” Another hallmark change instituted by

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6 Ibid. pp. 36-37.
Appleton’s SPNEA was to focus on the acquisition of humble domestic dwellings. SPNEA restored them and returned them to public use with tenancy restrictions and guidelines for their maintenance, endowing these structures with continued life within the community. Thus, Appleton established a precedent for adaptive reuse.

Appleton’s SPNEA redirected the course of preservation theory, practice, and scope. Another outcome of turning away from the model of preserving shrines of worship endowed preservation with a broadened cultural significance, laying the foundation for future historic districts. Appleton’s diligent methodology promoted the development of distinct fields of expertise in historic preservation. Upon his death in 1947 he had saved fifty-one New England buildings.\(^8\)

**Broadening the scope**

In 1926 preservation strategy took a quantum leap. A prominent figure in the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (established in 1889) was the Reverend W.A.R. Goodwin of Williamsburg, Virginia. Goodwin had conceived of a plan for the restoration and recreation of the entire town of Williamsburg. His enthusiastic plan engaged the interest and bankroll of John D. Rockefeller. The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation was formed to create the first outdoor museum in the country, “. . . the most costly, trendsetting enterprise in the annals of historic preservation,” remarked historian James Lindgren.\(^9\) Colonial Williamsburg had as much to do with preserving the past as it did preserving the future. Solid funding and savvy business acumen were combined with top notch professionals in the field of architecture and archeology. The project would prove the economic merits of creating a national tourist destination of an entire town committed to heritage preservation.

Another milestone in preservation history in the United States took place in Charleston, South Carolina. The Society for the Preservation of Old Dwellings, formed in Charleston in 1920, is the oldest community historic preservation organization in the country (renamed in 1957 as The Preservation Society of Charleston). They were instrumental in the passage of the first historic zoning ordinance for the protection of historic resources, creating the first Old and Historic District in 1931.\(^10\) In 1945 Kenneth

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\(^10\) [http://www.preservationsociety.org](http://www.preservationsociety.org)
Chorley, the President of Colonial Williamsburg, spoke to Charleston’s Civic Services Committee stressing the need for a foundation similar to nonprofit Colonial Williamsburg’s that would be unencumbered by municipal government and political control. By 1947 Historic Charleston Foundation was formed. The multi-dimensional and co-operative aspects of Charleston’s preservation efforts, and their leadership in historic zoning held valuable lessons for the future. MVLA, SPNEA, Colonial Williamsburg, and Charleston all offered insight into preservation strategies during the founding years of the PSNC. Chorley’s mentoring was particularly significant during the PSNC’s early years.

**National government initiatives**

Shortly after the turn of the 20th century, the federal government took their first step in historic preservation with the passage of the Antiquities Act in 1906. This legislation provided protection of public lands from unlicensed excavation, removal of Native American artifacts, or other destruction of natural monuments, landmarks or structures. In 1916 the National Park Service, under the Department of the Interior, was established based on the work of John Muir and the Sierra Club. Under the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service the government gradually expanded their preservation efforts to the built environment.

The first step was in 1933 when Franklin Roosevelt established the Historic American Buildings Survey, a genius of New Deal politics that employed one thousand out-of-work architects. The purposes of the survey were to document historic buildings and place them on public record. Most importantly, it demonstrated an active government interest in and support of privately owned historic properties.

Roosevelt further enhanced the government’s authority by signing the Historic Sites Act into law in 1935. This established the framework for developing an information data base through research. It also allowed the government to acquire, restore and maintain historic properties and co-operate with and support activities of private organizations. Finally, the Act established a program for heritage interpretation.

President Roosevelt’s commitment to preservation was also demonstrated by his personal support of a study of America’s Georgian houses, which was published for the benefit of the Architects’

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13 Ibid. pp. 54-55.
14 Ibid. p. 58
Emergency Committee. The two volume work, *Great Georgian Houses of America*, was published in 1933 and 1937 “. . .to give work to draughtsmen thrown out of employment in the recent difficult years and in so doing improving their morale, giving them training in an exact and serious technique and rendering financial aid.” Over six hundred subscribers joined the President in supporting the publication of this work. Several affiliated with Newport and the city’s strong commitment to preserving historic houses were among the subscribers.  

Following WWII momentum was building for the formation of a national preservation organization. The National Park Service joined forces with other distinguished advocates to design the model for the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP), established in 1949. This organization instituted guidelines and standards for preservation efforts nationwide. Two individuals who were integral in promoting the development of the NTHP were David E. Finley, director of the National Gallery of Art, and Fiske Kimball, director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Both Finley and Kimball were appointed advisors to PSNC in 1948. Drawing on the milestones before them, the PSNC was challenged to model an organization appropriate to a unique situation on Aquidneck Island.

**Newport’s Heritage**

*Tides of change*

Founded in 1639 Newport had a bright future. Blessed with a natural seaport and enterprising, intrepid, and liberal-minded colonists the town grew and prospered. “The prosperity of her merchants, however, was built on a foundation as shifting as the sea which they served,” remarked Maud Stevens in a SPNEA Bulletin of 1930. Increasing strife with Great Britain and the ensuing Revolutionary War laid waste to the prospering economy and the years following the Revolution were blighted. The only exception was the French occupation in 1780-1781 led by Comte de Rochambeau. General Washington met with Rochambeau in Newport where they planned the legendary march to Yorktown that defeated the British.

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16 Ibid.  
18 PSNC Executive Committee Meeting Minutes, 13 May 1947. PSNC Archives.  
Newport was left with half their population after the Revolutionary War, and very limited commerce. Not until the turn of the eighteenth century did commercial activity began to reappear.\textsuperscript{20} Maritime activity resumed after the War of 1812, and by mid-nineteenth century Newport began to draw genteel and intellectual summer visitors to her windswept shores; many from the South. Although the Civil War drove away the Southern contingent, Newport was well on the way to renown as “Queen of Resorts” of the well-to-do and future showcase of Gilded Age splendor.

However, before the glitter of the Gilded Age an architectural and cultural phenomenon was brewing, and with a strong presence in Newport. From the 1870s to 1880 America became transfixed by the romantic and mythical allure of the eighteenth century and attention riveted on “a new evaluation of colonial architecture.” Newport became a hotbed of the Colonial Revival movement.\textsuperscript{21} A leading enthusiast was architect Charles Follen McKim, whose 1870s photographs of Newport and his exploratory trek through New England sketching colonial structures planted seeds of further inspiration and creativity. His photograph of Bishop Dean Berkely’s house in Middletown, Whitehall, was the first to appear in a national magazine, emphasizing its handsomely textured roof.

McKim’s inspirations were notably demonstrated in two Newport houses; his colonial restoration of a room with a richly detailed fireplace wall in the Thomas Robinson house on Washington Street in 1872, and his remodeled interior of the Dennis house on Poplar Street in 1876, where McKim employed more personal creative expression.\textsuperscript{22} The creative endeavors of McKim took the lead in developing the indigenous American Shingle Style architecture in the 1880s. Meanwhile, the Colonial Revival passion had laid deep roots, as will be seen in the twentieth century when a Georgian Society of Newport County refocused their mission.

After the turn of the twentieth century, juxtaposed in Newport were three centuries of architectural heritage. Spared the fate of many historic American cities, industrialization never claimed or destroyed Newport’s historic structures for factories or housing, nor was the city ever devastated by a major fire.\textsuperscript{23} Much of Newport’s built environment remained intact. However, Newport would again experience shifting

\textsuperscript{20} Antoinette Downing, \textit{The Architectural Heritage of Newport, RI 1640-1915}, (1967), p. 105
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid. p. 157.
seas following WWI and WWII. The residential and commercial sections of Colonial Newport were beginning to suffer neglect. The glimmer was fading on famous Bellevue Avenue.

**An uncertain future**

“...two wars, a long depression, high income and inheritance taxes and the shortage of servants have dimmed Newport’s splendor,” noted a *Life* magazine feature in 1944.\(^{24}\) After the passing of the Gilded Age in Newport, the United States Navy fortified the fading economy of Newport during WWI and WWII. But soon this was to be a thing of the past with the withdrawal of the Torpedo Station and the majority of the Navy population.\(^{25}\) *Holiday* Magazine observed in 1949: “Rumor has been for a number of years that Newport is finished,” and that the surviving old town of Newport, without the saving grace of a free-spending summer colony or a healthy Naval presence, had essentially been a poor town since the revolution, and quite possibly was destined to be again.\(^{26}\)

Although Newport escaped the ravages of industrialization, preserving its wealth of natural beauty and architecture, the island lacked a solid economic base. Newport was forced to seek alternatives to bolster their economy. One notable attempt to fill the gap in 1945 was a proposal and invitation submitted by the City of Newport to the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations to establish their headquarters in Newport:

> It is respectfully requested that Newport be accorded the honor of presenting by United States Senator Theodore Francis Green and his colleagues the reasons why we believe the city of Newport to be the most outstanding location in America and worthy of selection as the capital of the United Nations.\(^ {27}\)

Despite Newport’s many assets this was not to be. However uncertain Newport’s future seemed, groundwork had been laid for preserving and restoring the city’s architectural heritage, and this foundation would prove to point the way to a new life for the city.\(^ {28}\)

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\(^{25}\) PSNC Executive Committee meeting minutes, 19 August 1948, “General conditions in Newport necessitate drastic action.” PSNC Archives.


\(^{27}\) John Nicholas Brown, Cable to the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations, 23 November 1945. PSNC Archives.

**Newport’s preserved colonial treasurers**

By mid-nineteenth-century distinguished locals, and the intellectuals and artists of the early pre-Civil War summer colony began preservation efforts. Taking the lead in the 1840s was architect and editor of the *Newport Mercury*, George Champlin Mason who began a campaign to save Trinity Church (ca. 1726). Champlin was also a founder of the Newport Historical Society (NHS), chartered in 1854 (formerly the Southern Cabinet of the Rhode Island Historical Society), which would become active in preservation efforts.

There was a surge in Newport preservation initiatives in the 1920s through the efforts of Rhode Island architect Norman M. Isham, an authority in early American architecture and furniture. Following are the structures that were preserved prior to 1945:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great Friends Meeting House (ca. 1700)</td>
<td>Survived through various alterations, adaptive reuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Day Baptist Meeting House (ca. 1729)</td>
<td>Purchased and restored by the NHS in 1884.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanton Lyman Hazard House (ca. 1670s)</td>
<td>Purchased by the NHS in 1927. Oldest house in Newport restored by Norman Isham.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Colony House (ca. 1739)</td>
<td>Site of Rhode Island’s second capital until 1900 Architect Richard Munday. State owned. Restored by Isham 1920s. Managed by NHS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brick Market (ca. 1772)</td>
<td>Erected as a city market, thereafter mixed use. Architect Peter Harrison. Restored by Isham 1920s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinity Church (ca. 1726)</td>
<td>Architect Richard Munday. Restored by Isham 1920s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitehall (ca. 1729)</td>
<td>Dean George Berkeley House Taken over by the Colonial Dames in 1899 Restored by Isham in 1936</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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29 Ibid. p. 66.
In 1945 a corps of Newport’s summer residents and concerned citizens who were proud of the city’s rich architectural heritage and troubled by its forgotten treasures, were inspired by the plight of a single colonial house to take a step that would lead the way to a singular preservation model and the revitalization of the city of Newport.

**Beginning Anew**

**Raison d’être**

Mr. and Mrs. George Henry Warren resided at 53 East 66th Street in New York in the winter and summered in Newport at 118 Mill Street. George Warren was a lifelong resident of Newport. Katherine Urquhart Warren, who was from a prominent New Orleans family, was a patron of the arts and integral in the growth of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Following WWII, George Warren received a Newport visitor in New York. The relationship with his guest, John Howard Benson, likely developed not only from a Newport connection but Benson’s distinguished career as a master stone carver and calligrapher of national fame who continued the business of the John Stevens Shop established in Newport in 1705. Benson was a devotee to the old colonial Point section of Newport, and alerted Warren to the potential demise of an important colonial dwelling, the Hunter House, and that the valuable paneling would be removed to museum exhibitions. Warren agreed to consult with a group of potentially interested parties who could join efforts to acquire the house.

That spring the Warrens came to Newport to examine the house and began talking to acquaintances; professional architects, local businessmen, and members of the summer community. On June 18, 1945, principals of the newly formed 54 Washington Street Company; Richard C. Adams, Edward F. Byrnes, William King Covell (all year round residents of Newport) and George H. Warren, purchased the Nichols Hunter House from St. Joseph’s Church for $10,000.00 and other valuable considerations.

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36 Ibid. pp. 1-3.
37 Land Evidence Book 157, p. 582, Newport City Hall Probate Court.
The handsome Deputy Governor Jonathan Nichols house, famous as the home of two governors, of an ambassador to Brazil, and as the Headquarters of Admiral de Ternay, first in command of the French Navy during the Revolution, was once part of the complex of home, garden, wharf, and shops that made up the waterside property of an important eighteenth-century Newport merchant. 38

The house was in a state of serious disrepair when purchased by the 54 Washington Street Company, who offered an option on the property to the soon to be formed Preservation Society of Newport County, an outgrowth of a local group known as the Georgian Society of Newport County. 39

**Incorporation**

Articles of Association were filed on August 2, 1945, and the first meeting of the Preservation Society of Newport County was held at the Newport home of Mr. and Mrs. George Henry Warren at 118 Mill Street on August 9, 1945. The purpose of the society was defined as raising the necessary money to save Nichols Hunter House from demolition and pursue restoration strategies. George Warren was elected Chairman pro tem, and Adams was appointed secretary. 40

The incorporators:

Maude A. K. Wetmore                      George Henry Warren
William King Covell                      Richard C. Adams
Edward Frances Byrnes                    Natalie Bayard Brown
Lawrence W. Champlin                     Maxim Karolik
Edith Wetmore                            John Perkins Brown
Michael F. Walsh

First members:

August L. Noel                           Lloyd Robeson
Dr. Harold Watson                        William R. Harvey
Ena Prochet

Nominating Committee:

Michael F. Walsh, Chair                  Dr. Harold Watson
Ena Prochet                               Natalie Bayard Brown
Richard C. Adams

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39 Minutes of the first meeting of PSNC. 9 August 1945. PSNC Archives.
40 Ibid.
Biographical profiles

Newport was a small town with big connections both locally and nationally. Within this diverse core group of eight women and twelve men were representatives from the world of art and architecture, banking and investments, education, law and real estate. There were socialites, members of Newport’s oldest families, locally influential Republicans and Democrats, and both part-time and full-time residents of Newport. Many held civic appointments in Newport. If there was a common denominator among them, they all shared a keen sense of civic and community responsibility, and a commitment to Newport’s architectural heritage as the town’s most compelling asset.

George Henry Warren, Jr.

Born in Newport on January 29, 1889, George Warren had been a lifelong resident of Newport, residing at Seafields on Ocean Drive. He was a graduate of Columbia University and during WWI served as a liaison officer between United States and French armed forces. During WWII, Warren was a member of American Field Services, coordinating American volunteers to be sent to Europe. He was a member of the New York Stock Exchange and served as director of the Metropolitan Opera in the 1930s. In New York, Warren was a member of the Knickerbocker Club and Racquet Club, and in Hobe Sound Florida, a member of Jupiter Island Club. His Newport social affiliations were the Reading Room, the Clambake Club, Spouting Rock Beach Association, the Newport Casino, and the Redwood Library.  

Katherine Urquhart Warren

Katherine Urquhart Warren was born on January 29, 1897, in Oakland California. She lived in San Francisco, New York, and Hobe Sound, Florida, and was educated at Spence School in New York City. Mrs. Warren served on the Advisory Committee and as president and trustee of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. During the 1930s and 1940s, she was part of a group of adventurous collectors of American and European early twentieth century art. Sharing a lifelong interest in music with her husband, she was a board member of the Newport Music Festival. She also served a directorship at the Newport Historical Society. Her social affiliations in Newport were the Newport Reading Room, Clambake Club and Spouting Rock Beach Association.  

Maude A.K. Wetmore

Maude Wetmore was born in Paris, France on February 7, 1873. Her grandfather, William S. Wetmore, built one of the first grand houses in Newport in 1852, Chateau sur Mer. Her parents were George Peabody and Edith K. Wetmore. Her father served terms as both Governor and United States Senator from Rhode Island. She was educated in private schools and by tutors in the United States and abroad. The family considered Newport their home although they traveled extensively in Europe and lived in Washington D.C. during Wetmore’s terms in the Senate. As adults, Maude Wetmore and her sister Edith maintained a winter residence in New York at 1 Beekman Place. Wetmore was active in politics throughout her life, as president of the Women’s National Republican Club, and as a Rhode Island delegate to a National GOP convention. She held several chairmanships for the Building Committee of the Women’s National GOP Club in New York, the Women’s Organization for Prohibition reform, the National League for Women’s Service, and the Women’s Department of the National Civic Federation. She was also an Executive Committee member of the American Women’s Association, Inc. Her social affiliations included membership in the Colonial Dames of America, and the Cosmopolitan and Colony Clubs in New York. She held a life interest in the Metropolitan Opera. In Newport, Wetmore was a member of Redwood Library, Newport Art Association, and the Newport Casino. She was an accomplished golfer. With her sister Edith, they donated the Seaman’s Church Institute to Newport in memory of their parents.43

Edith Wetmore

See above for family background. Edith Wetmore, sister of Maude Wetmore, was born in Geneva, Switzerland on September 23, 1870. She became an avid collector of art and rare books, owning a particularly outstanding collection of children’s books. Wetmore had a passionate interest in gardening, which she pursued at Chateau sur Mer in Newport. She was a fellow in perpetuity of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, a member of the Yale University Art Gallery Associates, and Rhode Island School of Design. In Newport, Wetmore was a charter member of the Old state House in Newport, Inc., she served as chairman of the women’s division of the Rhode Island Tercentenary celebration, was a

founder and early officer of the Newport Casino Theatre, and a member of the Newport Garden Club and Newport Horticultural Society.

William King Covell

William Covell was born in Newport on March 9, 1904, to Walton and Elizabeth Greene Covell, one of Newport’s oldest families. He was a graduate of Newport’s Rogers High School and Harvard University. Covell also received a master’s degree from Harvard, where he taught as an assistant professor in the fine arts department for a year and a half. William Sumner Appleton was a college classmate of Covell. Later he taught at Rogers High School for ten years and was elected to the School Committee. Covell was an avid historian, collector, and music buff, and devoted timeless energy to maintaining his family’s historic home in Newport. He was active in the Art Association of Newport and the Rotary Club as well as several historical societies including; the Association for the Care and Preservation of the Old State House, and the Newport, Jamestown, Fall River, Block Island, Rhode Island, and American Historical Societies. He also held memberships in the Sons of the American Revolution, American Branch of the Newcomen Society, the John Alden Kindred Society, and the Mayflower Society.

Richard C. Adams

Richard Adams was born in Newark, N.J. on August 22, 1892. He was educated at the Newark Academy and Stevens Institute of Technology. During WWI he entered the Navy, leaving a position as salesman for Ballantine Brewery. Adams served as lieutenant in the supply corps for six years, and upon leaving the service he settled in Newport and started a real estate and insurance business. In 1929 he was a principal in the formation of the Newport Realty Trust, and served as president until his death. Adams was also a promoter of the Newport Airport. He was vice president of the Newport Chamber of Commerce in 1929 serving on many committees, notably the community development committee. He also served on the Newport Board of Tax Assessors in 1941. Adams was a member of the Army and Navy Club of Washington, a former director of the Armed Services YMCA, and a member of the Newport Lions Club. His wife, Adele Bull Adams was from one of Newport’s founding families.

44 “Miss Wetmore Rites Here Death Releases $10 Million,” RIHS, Mss 1078 Box 1.
Edward F. Byrnes

Edward Byrnes was a native of Waterbury, Connecticut. Upon his retirement from a career in banking he purchased property in Newport and built a summer residence, “Bycroft,” on Rhode Island Avenue. Byrnes was active in Newport as a vice president and trustee of the Newport Hospital and as a treasurer of the Newport Art Association. He was also a treasurer of the Clambake Club. The Byrnes wintered in Sarasota, Florida.47

Dr. Michael F. Walsh

Michael Walsh was born in Newport in 1898. He was a life-long resident of the city. He graduated from Holy Cross College in 1922 and pursued graduate studies at Harvard University, the University of Illinois, University of Notre Dame, Boston University, Brown University, Rhode Island College of Education, University of New Hampshire and Columbia University. Walsh taught English at Rogers High School and De La Salle Academy and was a coach and athletic director at Rogers. In 1942 he became superintendent of Newport schools. Walsh held honorary doctor of education degrees from Rhode Island College, Bryant College, the Catholic Teachers College of Providence, and a doctor of science degree from the College of Pharmacy (URI). He was presented with the Navy Distinguished Public Service award for the education programs he established at Quonset Point. Walsh’s distinguished career in education included directorship for the National Council of Chief State School Officers, he served as chair of Northeastern Area Association of Commissioners of Education, the National Education Association and the American Association of School Administrators. He was also active in the Newport Knights of Columbus and the Dennis E. Collins Chapter of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. Walsh also served as a president of the Newport Chamber of Commerce.48

Natalie Bayard Brown

Natalie Bayard Brown was born on May 12, 1869. After the untimely death of her parents in 1883 she was raised in Newport by her maternal grandparents, Susan Fish and Daniel LeRoy. She became a popular socialite in Newport and New York society. Upon the death of her grandmother she was endowed with a sizeable inheritance. In 1897 Natalie married John Nicholas Brown of the distinguished Brown family of Providence. He tragically died in 1900. Mrs. Brown, with her infant son, made her home in

48 Obituary, NHS, 16 September 1976. NHS. Source unknown.
Newport at Harbour Court, but traveled extensively worldwide during her life. She served as chair for the
Women’s Committee for the Council of National Defense. In Newport Mrs. Brown was a president of the
Civic League, the Newport City Democratic Women’s Club, and the Newport Art Association. She was
also active in the Newport School Committee and was the first woman to serve on a jury in Newport.49

Maxim Karolik

Maxim Karolik was born in Russia in 1893. He studied singing in St. Petersburg and attended
drama school in Odessa. Karolik became an accomplished concert tenor and traveled and sang throughout
Europe. In 1922 he came to the United States and was invited to perform at Berkeley Villa in Newport, the
home of Martha Codman. Karolik married Codman, who was thirty-five years his senior, in 1928. The
couple became celebrated collectors of American folk art, furniture and paintings. They contributed three
important collections to the Boston Museum of Art, and Karolik was appointed honorary curator of
praising the unembellished beauty of American folk art.50

Lawrence W. Champlin

Lawrence Champlin was born in Middletown, Rhode Island on January 16, 1894. He was
employed by the Newport Trust company in 1912, and then served in the United States Army during WWI.
In 1925 Champlin joined the Savings Bank of Newport, where he remained throughout his banking career,
becoming an executive vice president and treasurer of that organization. He was the first Newport County
member to serve as president of the Savings Bank Association of Rhode Island. Civically active in
Newport Champlin was a member of School Committee and a director of the Newport Chamber of
Commerce.51

John Perkins Brown

John Perkins Brown was born in Exeter, New Hampshire in 1905. He received his education at
Phillips Exeter Academy and the School of Design in Boston. He also attended Harvard University
Graduate School of Architecture. Brown pursued a career in architecture, moving to Providence in the
1930s. In Providence he was instrumental in saving the Arcade building and renovating historic homes on

PSNC Archives.
51 Obituary, NHS, 6 March 1958. NHS. Source unknown.
the city’s East Side. Brown’s active career included directorships in the Society for the Preservation of Governor’s Island, Boston, the Salon of Allied Arts in Boston, and served as graduate advisor to Harvard Memorial Society. He wrote and lectured on the restoration of old houses. He brought his expertise to Newport and was vice president of Old State House, Inc. of Newport. As an enthusiastic collector of early American art, he once owned an antique shop on Pelham Street in Newport. Brown was also founder and first president of the Georgian Society of Cambridge, Massachusetts, and was credited with writing the PSNC charter in 1945.  

August A. Noel

August Noel was born in New York City in 1886. He was educated at the Polytechnic Preparatory School in New York, and studied architecture at the Ecole des Beaux Art School of Architecture in Paris and MIT. Noel established his residence and business, Noel & Miller Architects, Inc. in New York City. During WWII he was head of the technical and planning division of the Civilian Defense Council. During his architectural career he designed the Whitney Museum of Modern Art, and the National Museum of Racing at Saratoga Springs. Noel married Newporter Theodora Winslow and summered in Newport, residing at Flower Cottage on Bellevue Avenue. His architectural work in Newport included the King Park bath house, the recreation hall at The Anchorage in Middletown, and he designed and supervised the reconstruction of Baily’s beach after the 1938 hurricane. Noel headed the technical and planning division of the Civilian Defense Council during the war, and was reappointed to the Planning Board in 1948. Noel’s social affiliations were the Knickerbocker and Military-Naval Clubs in New York, the Hope Club in Providence, and the Reading Room and Spouting Rock Beach Association in Newport.

Harold Watson

Harold Watson was born in Johnston, Rhode Island on August 16, 1891. He graduated from Brown University in 1915 and received a master’s degree from that university in 1916. He moved to Newport in 1917 and established residence in the Point at 75 Washington Street. Watson was employed as a chemist-bacteriologist for the Newport Water Works and was appointed Newport Water Commissioner,

53 “August L. Noel Dies at 78; Ex-Planning Board Member,” 16 March 1964. NHS. Source unknown, and The Newport Social Register, 1946.
where he greatly improved the town’s water quality. He was a member of the Newport Historical Society and Redwood Library. A devoted collector of antique clocks, he also became skilled in their repair.  

**Ena Prochet**

Ena Prochet was born in Pittsburgh on September 3, 1898. Her first marriage was to Chance Vought, airplane manufacturer. Upon his death she inherited controlling interest in Vought Aircraft. She was once an executive with Pratt & Whitney Company, a leader in the design and manufacture of turbine engines. Prochet was also a director of Tiffany’s in New York City. Upon marrying Ottavio Prochet of Rome, Italy, she established residence in Newport at “Stonybrook,” on Indian Avenue. Mrs. Prochet was an active socialite and a member of Spouting Rock Beach Association, the Clambake Club, and the Newport Reading Room.

**William R. Harvey**

William Harvey was born in Newport in 1878. He became a prominent attorney in Newport with the firm he co-partnered, Sheffield and Harvey, and resided at 45 Everett Street. Harvey served as a city official and was active in many civic organizations. He was an influential Republican locally. Rhode Island Hospital Trust appointed Harvey as a director. He was a president of the Newport Bar Association, and also served as a vice president of the Newport Historical Society.

**Lloyd Robeson**

Lloyd Robeson was born in Newport in 1878 and was a life-long resident. Robeson graduated from George Washington University Law School. He was a veteran of WWI, and following WWII was an appointed volunteer advisor to veterans on vocational education and rehabilitation. In 1925 he began teaching English at the Naval Torpedo Station in Newport. Robeson then taught at Rogers High School until his retirement, and in 1927 was appointed head of Rogers commercial department. A devoted local historian, Robeson was active on the Board of Newport Historical Society. He authored “Newport Begins,” a chronicle of the early decades of the colony. He was a member of the Redwood Library and Hazard’s Beach Association.

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55 “Mrs. Prochet, Civic Worker,” 14 October 1965, NHS. Source unknown.
56 “William R. Harvey Dies; Lawyer Was Civic Leader, Influential Republican,” 29 May 1953. NHS. Source unknown.
Other early executive committee members who played advisory roles and served as active Executive Committee members were integral in the development of PSNC were; Emil Jemail, editor of the *Newport Daily News*, Wilmarth Lewis, a world authority on Horace Walpole and leader of the Walpole Society, Mason Rector, a local businessman who was active on many city committees, Cornelius Moore, a prominent lawyer, banker, philanthropist, and power in local Democratic circles, and John H. Greene, Jr., another influential Democrat, noted local historian, and state Supreme Court Clerk. “The original board was the best group of people I have ever worked with,” stated Ralph Carpenter, then a rising authority in early American arts and crafts who also played a major role in the Society’s early development. “There was a sense of unity. There was no acrimony, no second guessing,” Carpenter remarked. “Maybe it was because we started from scratch and learned the hard way.”

Monique Panaggio, director of public relations for the Society for over forty years, observed that Katherine Warren had a “knack for bringing people together,” creating a diverse and exciting board. According to Panaggio, Warren gracefully maintained a warm and genuine relationship with the diverse Newporters who supported the PSNC.

**Developing a mission statement**

The first meeting of the Preservation Society of Newport County took place on August 20, 1945, at Chateau sur Mer, the family home of Maude and Edith Wetmore. There were twenty people present.

The nominating committee reported on the officers elected and the executive committee appointed:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Officers</th>
<th>President</th>
<th>Maude Wetmore</th>
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<tr>
<td>First Vice President</td>
<td>Katherine Warren</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Vice President</td>
<td>William King Covell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Richard C. Adams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Lloyd Robeson</td>
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<th>Executive Committee:</th>
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<tr>
<td>John P. Brown</td>
<td>August L. Noel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Natalie Bayard Brown</td>
<td>Ena Prochet</td>
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<td>Edward F. Byrnes</td>
<td>Michael F. Walsh</td>
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<td>Lawrence W. Champlin</td>
<td>George H. Warren</td>
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<td>William R. Harvey</td>
<td>Dr. Harold Watson</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maxim Karolik</td>
<td>Edith Wetmore</td>
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58 Ralph Carpenter, personal interview, 4 August 2006.
59 Monique Panaggio, personal interview, 7 September 2006.
60 Ibid.
Maude Wetmore emphasized that the mission of the Society was to preserve old houses in Newport, and that the primary objective at hand was to develop strategies for proceeding with the purchase and restoration of Hunter House. Their objective would be enhanced, Wetmore stated, by involving Newport schools and educating youth on the history of Newport. Katherine Warren stressed the need for local newspaper coverage and out-of-town publicity. She also proposed a calendar featuring photographs of Newport’s old houses as a possible promotional tool. A discussion ensued about potential uses of Hunter House. It was agreed that it could become a model for building new homes or restoring existing houses. There was also consensus that Hunter House should be lived in and self-sustaining.61 A Planning Committee meeting on August 29, 1945, more closely defined their mission: “The primary purpose of the Preservation Society of Newport County is to preserve old Newport houses of the 17th and 18th century. Buildings of later dates will still be considered.”62 Over a year later at a November Executive Committee meeting the organization’s mission was further refined:

The policy of this Society is to preserve and protect houses of historic and architectural merit. For this purpose it reserved unto itself the right to purchase, sell, exchange or lease such houses or to interest the present owners in their preservation, or to take whatever steps it may deem desirable to accomplish the above purposes.63

The following spring at an Executive Committee Meeting Cornelius Moore proposed the need for a more detailed and well defined statement of the Society’s aims and intentions. Katherine Warren, who was elected president of the Society at their second annual meeting on July 19, 1946, appointed John P. Brown, John H. Greene, and Emil Jemail to draw a statement of purpose. The following was submitted:

OBJECTS AND PURPOSES OF THE SOCIETY

The principal purpose of the Society is to save one of the greatest historical possessions of the Country, the old houses of Newport. No American City or Town has more or finer early houses than has the City of Newport. Their preservation is a matter of patriotic concern to the whole country. Newport’s inheritance is disappearing. Every year sees beautiful and historical buildings torn down, buildings which all of the money in the world could not recreate. We propose:

61 Minutes, First PSNC meeting, 20 August 1945, PSNC Archives.
62 Minutes of PSNC Planning Committee meeting 29 August 1945, PSNC Archives.
63 Executive Committee Meeting minutes, 8 November 1946, PSNC Archives.
1. To inaugurate and complete a survey of these historical treasurers and record their location, the period of their construction, the names of the architects and original owners, and to record accurately the contribution these early settlers made to our City, State and Nation; also, include the names of the present owners.

2. To preserve for the City, State and Nation the remaining buildings which are outstanding examples of Colonial architecture.

3. To consult and advise with the present owners and occupants to the end that these treasurers be preserved, and restored if need be.

4. To consult and advise with prospective purchasers of these treasurers to the end that there will be no demolition or defacement of the same.

5. To determine the buildings, or edifices, entitled to be designated as National Shrines and to petition the Government supported with complete factual data to the end that they be so designated.

6. To consult and advise with those who contemplate erection of new buildings (residential and commercial) to the end that the design of the proposed buildings will be in keeping with the plan for colonial and recognized succeeding periods of architecture in Newport.

7. To oppose the erection of buildings, or the use of buildings, which will result in an encroachment and defacement of the areas where remaining early treasurers are located.

8. To preserve for future generations buildings of later Newport periods which are of outstanding architectural interest.

9. To establish a record, to be preserved for posterity, of the customs of the original settlers of Aquidneck Isle in 1683 and of succeeding generations.

10. To sponsor exhibits of the crafts of Colonial Newport - furniture, silver, paintings, etc., and to revive and reproduce these arts and crafts.

11. To re-state for our City, State and Nation the great principles and beliefs which were declared originally by the founders of Portsmouth and Newport, and upon which the Government of our Country was founded.

12. To institute and inaugurate an educational program which will insure to the present and succeeding generations knowledge of the priceless heritage of this area.\(^\text{64}\)

Within these purposes and objectives are elements of MVLA, SPNEA, Colonial Williamsburg, Charleston, and national government preservation initiatives. There is patriotic appeal, dedication to professionalism, a preservation commitment to Newport’s heritage as a collective whole, and a pledge to historic documentation of buildings appropriate for federal government recognition. In two early Executive Committee meetings, Adams stated that the PSNC charter was patterned after SPNEA, and Katherine

\(^{64}\) Objects and Purposes of the Society, PSNC Archives.
Warren directed acquiring “charters of other societies who have accomplished what we are striving for such as Charleston and Newcastle, Delaware,” stating, “it would be wise to follow their example.”

At the annual meeting of July 11, 1946, the Society recorded 61 members. This number would grow to 587 over the next year and a half. Officers elected were:

- **President**: Katherine Warren
- **First Vice President**: Maude Wetmore
- **Second Vice President**: William Harvey
- **Secretary**: Richard Adams
- **Treasurer**: Albert Sherman

Katherine Warren remained president of the Society until her retirement in 1975. With their mission defined, the Society began a slow struggle without a major benefactor or supporting foundation toward a new direction in preservation history where preservation joined forces with a city’s economic development.

**The Founding Years**

**Nothing ventured, nothing gained: 1945-1949**

“Then we got panic-stricken,” remarked Katherine Warren in a 1970 interview as she recalled absorbing the reality of their undertaking with virtually no financial backing. Nevertheless, during the first five years operating on a shoestring, the Society reached milestone goals and took on new challenges:

- Initiated a survey to document the historic architecture of Newport.
- Acquired Nichols Hunter House, Pitts Head Tavern, and committed to saving White Horse Tavern from demolition.
- Established a guest speaker program.
- Organized an exhibition of antique furniture, silver and porcelain.
- Formed a corporation to buy, hold, and sell real estate.
- Organized and supervised an archeological study of Stone Tower.
- Negotiated agreement with Countess László Széchényi to show The Breakers.
- Appointed a nationally distinguished advisory council.

**The Survey:** In November of 1946 Katherine Warren met with architectural historians Antoinette Downing and Phillip Creer in Providence. She proposed they conduct a professional survey to document

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65 PSNC Executive Committee Meetings, 26 March 1947, and 16 August 1946. PSNC Archives.
and record the significant colonial architecture in Newport. Six years later this epic task resulted in the publication of a highly respected tome, *The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island, 1640-1916,* a hallmark achievement for the PSNC. As the Society engaged in the fund-raising, Downing and Creer endured, and eventually Yale student Vincent Scully joined them to extend the work to cover Newport’s nineteenth-century architecture. The project was financially supported largely through the generosity of Mrs. Michael Van Beuren. Other contributors were the City of Newport, the Rhode Island Foundation, the Newport Improvement Society, and the Newport Historical Society. The initiation and success of the survey project affirmed the Society’s first statement of objectives.

**Hunter House:** The house was formally acquired by the Society on November 4, 1946. The original house was constructed between 1748 and 1754 by a merchant and colonial deputy, Jonathon Nichols, Jr. Colonel Joseph Wanton, Jr. acquired the house in 1756 and enlarged it into a formal Georgian mansion. Wanton fled Newport during the Revolution. When the French occupied Newport in 1780-1781 Admiral de Ternay was quartered in the house and he died there before the march to Yorktown. Following the war it was purchased by William Hunter, a U. S. Senator. Hunter House thereafter “. . . became successively, a shabby-genteel rooming house, a convalescent home and an abode for the Sisters of St. Joseph.” Initially the Society entertained several offers for the purchase of Hunter House from preservation-minded buyers who would restore and live in the house. Upon the death of the owners, the house would revert back to the Society. Renting the house to be operated as a tea room was also considered. Neither of these options transpired.

“In Antoinette Downing lived in the house the first year that we had it,” noted Katherine Warren. In fact Downing, by her own hand, commenced restoration of Hunter House the summer of 1947:

“. . . Antoinette had scraped the paint off the parlor on the right, right down to the bone.” Consulting on the restoration was her colleague Phillip Creer, and Joseph Downs, Curator of the American Wing at the

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68 Executive Committee Meeting minutes, 23 November 1946. PSNC Archives.
69 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes, 10 February 1947, 26 March 1947, 5 September 1947, 21 January 1948 27 April 1948. PSNC Archives.
70 City of Newport Probate Court. Land Evidence Book 162, p. 346.
71 “Hunter House,” http://www.newportmansions.org
73 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes, 8 November 1946. PSNC Archives.
Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Downing’s tenure was followed by a series of short-term tenants with caretaking responsibilities as restoration slowly proceeded. In 1947 the Society formed an Activities Committee under co-chairs Philippine Arnold and Mabel Watson, who worked tirelessly at fund raising efforts for restorations over the years. Small scale events such as teas, auctions, food sales, card parties, and Bingo, many held at Hunter House, incrementally raised money. Before the end of the decade, Ralph Carpenter’s expertise contributed invaluable efforts toward the completion of the Hunter House restoration through interior paint selections, acquisition of furnishings and artifacts for exhibits, and eventually the acquisition of the Hunter House collections.

Pitts Head Tavern: At an Executive Committee meeting on February 10, 1947, Katherine Warren announced that the owner, John P. Brown, would deed the tavern to the Society. The land however, was owned by the Odd Fellows (a local Lodge) who agreed upon a lease arrangement of $30.00 a month. Pitts Head Tavern was slated for use as headquarters. At the time the PSNC leased space at the Chamber of Commerce for business purposes. The Society’s first publication, the Newport Gazette of October 1947, featured a history of the tavern “donated by John Perkins Brown.” In the same issue an article by Maude Wetmore, “What has Been Accomplished, 1945-1947,” was published noting that to adequately restore Hunter House and Pitts Head Tavern, $50,000.00 was required. In this article she also stated the Society’s commitment to save historic White Horse Tavern from demolition.

Pitt’s Head Tavern had a lengthy history, dating before 1726. That year John Clarke sold the house to a fellow mariner Jonathan Chase who, in 1742, sold the house to Henry Collins, a well known local patron of the arts and letters. It appears he gifted the house to his niece upon her marriage to Ebenezer Flagg, whereupon they doubled its size by 1765. Flagg became engaged in business with his uncle in a prosperous Colonial commercial enterprise, Collins and Flagg, known “to have a ship for every letter in the alphabet.” The firm was lost during the years of pre-revolution strife with the British. The house then sold to Robert Littlebridge who turned it into a famous coffee house under the “Sign of the Right Honorable William Pitt’s Head.” Soon thereafter Littlebridge made the establishment a tavern. The

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75 Ibid. p. 12.
76 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes, 10 March 1948. PSNC Archives.
77 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes, 13 May 1947. PSNC Archives.
78 Ralph Carpenter, personal interview, 4 August 2006.
tavern was used by both the British and French forces during the Revolutionary War. Restoration work on the historic house was slow but steady and the Tavern served as the PSNC headquarters until 1958.

**Speakers:** Speakers were engaged as an important part of the Society’s strategy to arouse an active interest in their goals in Newport. Not only did they hope to inspire city officials and local businessmen, but the whole citizenry of Newport. Thus, these public lectures were coined “Town Meetings.” On September 26, 1946, Fisk Kimball, Director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and Wilmarth Lewis, a Horace Walpole scholar and member of the Executive Committee of the PSNC, spoke at the Newport Art Association. Kimball stressed that Newport had more architectural heritage to offer than any other colonial capital in the United States, and believed Newport had the wherewithal to bring about a revival of their architectural heritage. Lewis added, “we have something that can be turned into substantial revenue for the city.”

“Newport has an obligation to save for posterity its many fine examples of colonial buildings, as few communities, if any, can exhibit, side by side, a record of how people have lived,” lectured Professor Carl Bridenbaugh, Director of the Institute of Early American History and Culture at Williamsburg. At a Town Meeting on November 20, 1946, Bridenbaugh stressed that if the preservation, restoration and development of Newport were carried out appropriately, the city had the potential to become a true tourist Mecca.

On February 24, 1947, Antoinette Downing and Phillip Creer announced to the town their plans for a survey to identify the potential buildings and sites whose restoration would lead to the rejuvenation of Newport: “The program of reviving in Newport the particular splendor of its past will not only leave to its citizens a legacy of enhanced physical beauty and charm, but also will present a dramatic re-evaluation to the whole country of our historic place in the life of a young nation,” stated Downing. Creer noted that Newport’s architecture was “an invaluable record of the cultural development of a country,” and that “Newport’s heritage is second to none.”

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80 Annual Meeting Minutes, 30 September 1958. PSNC Archives.
Kenneth Chorley, President of Colonial Williamsburg, delivered a moving speech, “Only Tomorrow,” at Rogers High School on March 25, 1947. It was a masterpiece in inspiring enthusiasm.

“Newport has always been conscious of their heritage . . . but the real awakening came with Kenneth Chorley’s 1947 speech before the Preservation Society of Newport County,” declared Vincent McHugh in a *Holiday* magazine of 1949. After outlining the progress in establishing Colonial Williamsburg and the successful economic outcomes, he fully endorsed the integrity and goals of the Preservation Society of Newport County, and the spectacular heritage of Newport that could reap similar financial benefit if carefully managed. Finally, Chorley engaged the responsibility of the citizens of Newport:

“If you will undertake this adventure together - each doing that part which he is best fitted to do - there is no question in my mind as to the outcome of your endeavors. Newport’s history belongs to all of you. All of you share the responsibility for your city’s future. Together you can bring lasting prosperity to this area.”

**Exhibition:** From August 4 through September 7, 1947, there was an exhibition, “Newport of the Past 1740-1840” at Old Colony House conducted under the auspices of Katherine Warren, president of the Preservation Society of Newport County, and Edith Wetmore, president of The Old State House, Inc. Featured were antique pieces from private collections, including furniture, silver, porcelain and various artifacts. The exhibit recalled the gala celebration held at Old Colony House for President George Washington following the defeat of the British: “. . . there may be some of the very pieces that graced the celebration of long ago. . . One cannot leave the exhibition without a very strong feeling that the Colony House should henceforth house a permanent collection of examples of colonial craftsmanship,” said the *Newport Daily News*. The event was excellent publicity for the PSNC, and a successful confirmation of one of their defined objectives and purposes.

**Restoration, Inc:** The Corporation received its charter from the secretary of state in February 2, 1948. “Plans for the purchase of eighteenth century houses, their restoration . . . and resale to homeowners,” as well as re-establishment of “old colonial shops and old Newport crafts,” was the goal of the incorporators. Officers were; Richard Adams, president, John P. Brown, vice-president, Mabel Watson, secretary, and John H. Hodgson, treasurer. At an Executive Committee meeting of PSNC on

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84 Vincent McHugh, “There are Really Three Newports,” *Holiday Magazine*, July 1949.
January 21, 1948, secretary of the PSNC Richard Adams explained that the new corporation will carry out the aims of the Society but not be directly connected with it. “That society, however, is a non-profit organization and it could not do the work itself,” Adams stated. Establishing this corporation was a step toward achieving their second major objective. Although corporate records of Restoration, Inc. were not available for this research, references throughout meeting minutes and Newport Gazettes, as well as several documents in Land Evidence at Newport City Hall, indicate the company had a measure of success in saving colonial structures. On October 5, 1956, at the annual meeting Warren announced that the historic Thomas Claggett House had been saved through the joint efforts of the Society, the Point Association, and Restorations, Inc. During the founding years PSNC actively promoted partnership efforts with local grass-roots preservation groups such as the Point Association and later, Operation Clapboard. “It was of the furthering of projects such as this that the Society was formed and this accomplishment should be a source of satisfaction,” she declared. At the annual meeting of October 30, 1962, Katherine Warren stated there was “success this year in promoting the purchase and restoration of a quantity of 18th century houses.”

**Stone Tower:** At an Executive Committee meeting of January 21, 1948, it was announced that a sum of money had been donated anonymously to the Society to organize and pursue an archeological excavation of Stone Tower in Newport. There were two main theories regarding this curious structure; one that it was of Norse origin, and the other, that it was erected by Governor Benedict Arnold as a windmill. The excavation was conducted by archeologist William Godfrey and there were no conclusive results confirming the builder of Stone Tower, which remains an enigma to this day.  

**The Breakers:** At the annual meeting of August 18, 1946, Emil Jemail suggested that the Society consider efforts to preserve the beautiful private homes of the nineteenth-century, such as The Breakers. Wilmarth Lewis reinforced this point of view in his address at the “Town Meeting” a month later. He also noted that the Gilded Age heritage should not be overlooked, believing that, “the average tourist is interested in these larger homes.” Meanwhile, Newport became more keenly aware of their plight. “The doors of many of these villas will never be opened again,” stated a *Life* magazine article of October 16, 1944, placing Newport’s sad decline in the national public eye. Negotiations ensued with Countess Lázsló

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88 Ibid.
89 Annual Meeting 24 September 1948. PSNC Archives.
91 Ibid.
Széchényi, youngest daughter of Cornelius Vanderbilt II, who then owned The Breakers. On June 30, 1948, a lease agreement was signed granting the Society use of the first floor of the house for public tours. The Breakers was leased for one year for one dollar plus the responsibility to pay all charges for cleaning and maintaining the premises, covering the costs of light, heat and water, and providing trained guides and security.92

The Chamber of Commerce gave their full support and the city pledged up to $10,000 to defray costs. However, the Society now needed a director to take charge of the program. Holbert Smales was elected manager in charge of the necessary employees, housekeepers and guides.93 Smales was a teacher-administrator in the Newport School Department and a vice principle of Rogers High School. He later served as an executive secretary for the PSNC and was noted for his furniture reproductions.94 In 1950 Smales authored “The Breakers Handbook,” which was published by the Society and sold well to visitors.95

A management committee of five members was appointed. Katherine Warren and the PSNC Vice President Mason Rector were nominated by the Society, Maude Wetmore and William Harvey were nominated by the Countess Széchényi, and Matthew Faerber was nominated by the Chamber of Commerce.96 The first month The Breakers was open to the public it drew 8,339 visitors, which “greatly exceeded original estimates.”97 In nine weeks of operation 20,000 visitors had passed through The Breakers. Due to the financial success of the undertaking only half the City’s pledge was required in support of the project.

In response to the impressive interest in The Breakers a strip ticket program was proposed at a meeting on September 17, 1948. The intent was to engage visitors drawn to Newport by The Breakers to also visit the preserved colonial buildings, thus raising interest in Newport’s colonial heritage and keeping tourists in town for longer periods of time. Hopefully, the new program would also offset the economic loss to Newport from the pending withdrawal of the Navy Torpedo Station. The Chamber of Commerce

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92 Lease agreement between Countess Széchényi and PSNC. 30 June 1948. PSNC Archives.
93 Executive Committee meeting, 22 June 1948. PSNC Archives.
95 “Report by the President for the Years 1945-1953,” Booklet. NHS.
96 Executive Committee meeting 15 July 1948. PSNC Archives.
agreed to assist marketing the strip ticket program and survey the city facilities necessary to accommodate an influx of tourism. To assist in developing the program the PSNC appointed an advisory council.98

Advisory Council:  William G. Roelker, Director, Rhode Island Historical Society
Gordon Washburn, Director, Rhode Island School of Design
Joseph Downs, Curator, American Wing, Metropolitan Museum New York
John Phillips, Curator, Garvin Collection, Yale University
David Finley, Director, the National Gallery in Washington D.C.
Fiske Kimball, Director, the Philadelphia Museum of Art
Kenneth Chorley, President, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

The Society “. . . has not progressed very far in achieving their initial goals, but having incorporated our program into the economy of the town, we will eventually be financially able to achieve our original goals,” stated Katherine Warren.99 The strip ticket evolved to include The Breakers and The Breakers Stables, Hunter House, Wanton-Lyman Hazard House, Whitehall, Touro Synagogue and Trinity Church.100 The price of a strip ticket was $2.50 (approximately $20.00 in today’s dollars).101 At the Annual Meeting on October 15, 1953, Mr. Smales reported that although the strip ticket was initially a disappointment and attendance was poor, Life magazine coverage of The Breakers in 1951 caused a dramatic turnaround. Attendance doubled as people flocked to Newport to pass through the “. . . immense, hushed halls and into the sumptuous rooms of one of the most extraordinary dwelling places ever built in the U.S,” commented Life.102 In 1953 the Society sold almost twice as many strip tickets, and all the houses enjoyed record attendance.103

Overall, although the going was slow during the first five years, the Society had established a strong local presence and forged important economic ties with the city. Another significant step locally in 1947 was the formation of a City Coordinating Council for collaboration between the Chamber of Commerce, Newport Development Authority, Newport Improvement Association, and the PSNC.104 Also

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98 Council meeting Minutes, 9 November 1948. PSNC Archives.
99 Ibid.
100 Board and Council meeting minutes 4 November 1955. PSNC Archives.
103 Annual meeting minutes. 15 October 1953. PSNC Archives.
104 Executive Committee meeting minutes, 27 September, 1947. PSNC Archives.
in 1948 the PSNC initiated By-Law changes to strengthen the organization, establishing an interactive
council and board of trustees.\textsuperscript{105}

On the national level, Katherine Warren was invited to an October meeting of the National
Council of Historic Sites and Buildings and her name was proposed for board membership (it is unknown if
this transpired). The National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings led the way for the formation of the
National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) in 1949. Katherine Warren attended one of NTHP’s early
meetings in 1950 raising interest in the work of the Society, and establishing important national
connections in preservation.\textsuperscript{106}

\textbf{Forging ahead: 1950-1955}

Progress continued over the next five years culminating in an event that placed Newport and the
Preservation Society of Newport County in the limelight nationally:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island 1640-1915} was published.
  \item John Benson gifted the PSNC the Benedict Arnold Burial Ground.
  \item The National Trust for Historic Preservation held an annual meeting in Newport.
  \item Exhibit of colonial furnishings and artifacts was held at Hunter House.
  \item \textit{The Arts and Crafts of Newport, Rhode Island} was published.
  \item PSNC pursued possibilities for a Historic Zoning Ordinance in Newport.
  \item PSNC acquired Whitehorse Tavern.
  \item A Washington-Rochambeau Celebration was held in Newport.
\end{itemize}

\textit{The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island 1640-1915}: The publication of this
scholarly book by Antoinette Downing and Vincent Scully in 1952 was celebrated with a public ceremony
at the Colony House. Bernard Knollenberg, historian and former Yale University librarian, delivered a
congratulatory address. The book was praised as being “. . .the most comprehensive view of Newport
buildings ever assembled.” Scully was noted as referring to Newport’s wealth of architecture as a
“laboratory” in which to study.\textsuperscript{107} Governor Dennis Roberts and Mayor Dean Lewis also praised the book
as a landmark work, the governor commenting that, “It will make the country more proud of Newport and
inform the world that Newport will endure.” Three hundred people attended the ceremony.\textsuperscript{108}

\textsuperscript{105} Annual meeting minutes, 24 September 1948. PSNC Archives.
\textsuperscript{106} Meeting of the Council and Board, 27 November 1950. PSNC Archives.
\textsuperscript{108} “Colonial Newport Recalled At Exercises Marking Publication of Book on Architectural History,”
**Benedict Arnold Burial Ground:** At a 1953 Board of Trustees meeting a document composed in the artful calligraphy of John Howard Benson was submitted gifting the Benedict Arnold burial ground to the Society. As descendants of the Arnold clan, the deed to the property was in the care of Benson’s family.\(^{109}\) The burial ground was preserved and restored through the rescue efforts of Alice Brayton and John Benson’s own hand with stone restoration work.\(^{110}\) In October of 1947 the Society resolved to issue a formal statement of recognition to Alice Brayton and Mrs. William Greenough for saving the burial ground.\(^{111}\) In 1960, *The Burying Place of Governor Arnold* was privately published by Alice Brayton in honor of John Howard Benson who passed away in 1956.

**The National Trust for Historic Preservation:** On October 23, 1953, The National Trust for Historic Preservation opened ceremonies for their annual meeting in Newport with a speech by their Board Chairman David Finley at the Newport Art Association. Finley noted that few places in the nation had the wealth of “architecture of successive generations.” Two hundred and seventy five delegates toured Newport’s treasures, including Hunter House. The day concluded with a banquet at The Breakers where Sir Edward Keeling of the British National Trust spoke. It was announced that the National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings would be merged into the National Trust.\(^{112}\)

**Hunter House Exhibition:** As one Society member put it, the Exhibition was a “pilot project” to demonstrate what could be done by reviving Colonial Newport.\(^{113}\) The genius largely behind the execution of this undertaking was a man named Ralph Carpenter. “And then Ralph Carpenter came along, said Katherine Warren, recalling their first meeting at Hunter House. “And he had a great deal of knowledge. And that’s why Hunter House looks so great now. . .and then he said, ‘We’ll have an exhibition. . .’”\(^{114}\)

The Exhibition included approximately one hundred pieces of furniture, fourteen paintings and fifty pieces of silver, all by Newport craftsmen of the colonial era. The *Newport Daily News* reported:

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\(^{109}\) PSNC Board meeting. 4 October 1953.

\(^{110}\) Alice Brayton, *The Burying Place of Governor Arnold,* (1960).

\(^{111}\) Executive Committee meeting, 17 October 1947. PSNC Archives.


You enter the front door of the Nichols-Wanton Hunter house and step into the Newport That Nobody Knows—the Newport which was neither a show window for exhibitionist millionaires of the Nineties and Naughts or a down-at-heels backwater ruined by the War for Independence, but a lusty, wealthy town inhabited by colonial moneybags who expressed their riches in fine houses and good living.\textsuperscript{115}

The 1953 summer exhibition at Hunter House drew five thousand people. The event received national coverage in the magazine \textit{Antiques}, with an illustrated article by Ralph Carpenter.\textsuperscript{116} In 1959 Mrs. Connal-Rowan of Scotland and formerly of Bristol gifted the Society her family’s Townsend and Goddard furnishings to be placed on permanent display at Hunter House.\textsuperscript{117}

\textit{The Arts and Crafts of Newport, Rhode Island}: Ralph Carpenter’s book published in 1954 catalogued the Hunter House exhibition and “became a textbook all over the country,” according to Katherine Warren.\textsuperscript{118} Carpenter had earned a degree from Cornell University in mechanical engineering but suffered the ills of a Depression-struck economy until he eventually made his way to New York and diligently carved his way into the pension insurance industry. Having married young, Carpenter and his wife became avidly engaged in antiques collecting, furnishing their first apartment for five hundred dollars. His family heritage hailed to a William Carpenter who established himself in Providence before Newport was incorporated. Thus, with the Rhode Island connection and his burgeoning expertise in American arts and crafts, Carpenter would make his own history. Eventually to be known as “Mr. Newport,” Ralph Carpenter “has been at the center of a high-spirited group of collectors that has requited its passion by sharing it with others. In his unyielding determination to save a city he loves deeply, Carpenter has transformed Newport and inspired a following.”\textsuperscript{119}

\textbf{Historic Zoning:} At a board meeting on November 2, 1953, Katherine Warren introduced Felix de Weldon, a member of the National Fine Arts Commission and internationally renowned American sculptor.\textsuperscript{120} de Weldon’s talk focused on the importance of historic zoning ordinances, using Georgetown as an example, and described the provisions of the Shipstead-Luce Act. The act enabled the Fine Arts Commission with the authority to review and arbitrate construction plans within proximity of the National

\begin{footnotes}
\item[116] Annual Meeting minutes, 15 October 1953. PSNC Archives.
\item[117] Annual Meeting minutes, 16 October 1959. PSNC Archives.
\item[118] Mrs. George Henry Warren and Harold Talbot, interview, 16 July 1970. PSNC Archives.
\item[119] Laura Beach, “Ralph Carpenter: The Man They Call Mr. Newport,” \textit{Antiques and the Arts Online}. \url{http://www.antiquesandthearts.com/archive/ralph.htm}
\item[120] \url{http://www.felixdeweldon.com}
\end{footnotes}
Capital. He stressed that all plans for restoration or change in Newport should be subject to approval by a commission appointed to review plans. Thereafter historic zoning became a target issue for the PSNC.

At the 1955 annual meeting of the Society Executive Director of the Rhode Island Development Council, Thomas Monahan, stated his hope that at least one section of Newport could be restored and that a local ordinance preventing the razing of old buildings, similar to the Beacon Hill Architectural Commission in Boston, should be reviewed and used as a guideline for moving forward to meet this end. Judge Arthur J. Sullivan declared that work should commence on drafting an enabling act to present to the Rhode Island General Assembly in their next session. The issue progressed slowly over the years. However, a promising step forward came in 1959. The Newport Gazette published in May of that year announced that the State of Rhode Island passed a bill for historic zoning.

White Horse Tavern: The original building was constructed before 1673 and became an inn before the turn of the seventeenth-century. For over two hundred years it was owned by the family of Robert Nichols and by 1708 Town Council meetings were regularly held at the tavern and included a meal paid from the town treasury. The tavern was also used as a criminal court, and existed as a vital center of town affairs until Colony House was built. Acquiring such a significant structure in Newport’s early history was a major goal of the Society. At a September meeting in 1947 Maude Wetmore proposed a plan to raise the $15,000 necessary to purchase the tavern; that six people each loan the Society $2,500 for three years, and treat the interest as a donation. Wetmore and her sister Edith agreed to each take a pledge to begin the plan and the offer was accepted. No other records appear in Society minutes regarding this matching-gift strategy for fund raising, or what became of the Wetmore’s pledge.

A special board meeting was called on December 15, 1953, to act on the offer of a donor to gift the Society the necessary funds to purchase White Horse Tavern and two adjacent buildings. Negotiations with the owner regarding an option to purchase were presented and the board directed Vice President Mason to sign the option on behalf of the Society. Grateful appreciation was extended to Archbold Van Beuren, who wished to dedicate the building to the memory of his father Michael Van Beuren. Alice

121 http://www.cfa.gov/shipsteadd/index.html
122 Annual meeting minutes, 29 September 1955. PSNC Archives.
125 Executive committee meeting minutes, 5 September 1947. PSNC Archives.
Brayton donated the services of her nephew Thomas Marvel to proceed with the restoration of the tavern.\footnote{Board meeting minutes, 18 March 1954. PSNC Archives.} The society committed to pursue restoration to make the tavern self-sustaining as a restaurant, which “will prove that old houses can be made to do their part in the community,” stated Katherine Warren at a joint meeting of the Board and Council on November 4, 1955.

**Washington-Rochambeau Celebration:** In April of 1954 the Society hired Monique Panaggio as a full time public relations director. Her lively enthusiasm, French heritage, and fluency in the French language would prove invaluable during the year to come, and for many beyond. It was she who planted the seed for an event of international scope.\footnote{Monique Panaggio, personal interview, 7 September 2006.} By December of 1954 plans were underway for a gala celebration to commemorate the 175th anniversary of the French occupation of Newport in 1780-1781. The city and the state pledged their support and Panaggio reported excellent relations with the French regarding the event. Co-operating and collaborating with the Society were, the French Embassy and Consulate General, the Alliance Française, the French Institute Library and tourist office.\footnote{Executive Committee meeting minutes, 5 September 1947PSNC Archives.} According to Ralph Carpenter, he and Katherine Warren commiserated over two key elements they believed crucial to the success of the event; engaging the participation of the French descendants of Rochambeau and Lafayette, and securing the sponsorship of Air France. By June 25, 1955, the Society presented a comprehensive timetable of events. The weekend of July 8-10 began with the arrival of the French battleship Jean Bart and descendants of Rochambeau and Layfayette. The weekend was jammed with receptions, a grand parade of U. S. and French forces, various luncheons, dinners and parties, religious ceremonies, exhibitions, tours, a colonial costume promenade, band concerts, and a regatta.\footnote{“Comprehensive Timetable of Events.” PSNC Archives.} Saturday July 9th a gala ball attended by one thousand was held at The Breakers. “It was the first time that the noted Vanderbilt estate had been opened for a public dance, declared the *Newport Daily News.*” Actress Grace Kelly was a crowd-pleasing guest.\footnote{“More Than 1,000 Dancers Gather At ‘Breakers Ball,’ *Newport Daily News,* 11 July 1955.} The Society’s efforts were largely focused on the celebration for a year, and generated impressive national and international publicity.\footnote{Ralph Carpenter, personal interview by Holly Collins, 8 August 2006.} Panaggio remarked that she “didn’t
spend a dime” on the extensive publicity generated. At the Annual Meeting of September 29, 1955, Treasurer Gertrude Taylor reported that the Society had finally achieved a more secure financial position.

**A developing dynamic: 1956-1959**

An editorial in the *Newport Daily News* of October 10, 1956, congratulated the Society upon reaching their tenth anniversary:

But were it not for the vision and endurance of Mrs. George Henry Warren . . . and her able and loyal co-workers, the society’s accomplishments in preserving Newport’s precious past would not have been possible. The anniversary should be as much of an accolade to them as it will be an observance of ten years of progress.

Over ten years the Society’s membership had grown to 925, according to the *Newport Gazette*, which resumed publication in March of 1956. Eighty thousand publicity materials had been distributed nationally, and the Society received excellent press coverage in national magazines. Also in 1956 the Society was proud of their role in assisting the newly formed Rhode Island Heritage Foundation and its principle founders, John Nicholas Brown and Antoinette Downing, in saving Ft. Adams from being dismantled by the Navy to create an artificial reef at Coddington Cove. In 1957 The Breakers attendance reached record breaking numbers for the year when the 50,000th visitor crossed the threshold in October. Before the close of the decade the Society established an Endowment Fund though the generosity of their officers and trustees. As the Society moved forward over the next five years their scope and undertakings grew toward a stronger identity.

- The White Horse Tavern formally opened.
- An annual Antiquarian Award was initiated.
- The Tiffany Ball and Gorham Silver Ball were crowning achievements.
- Rovensky Park was donated to the Society.
- Historic Newport Reproductions became official.
- PSNC involvement with the City of Newport Development Plan.

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136 *Newport Gazette*, No. 7 May 1959.
Restored White Horse Tavern Opens: On July 12, 1957, the White Horse Tavern opened with a formal dinner. Guest speakers commemorating the opening were Richard M. Howland, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and Kenneth Chorley, president of Colonial Williamsburg. Member organizations of the National Trust were also represented. The structural restoration work was credited to Alvin G. Reese. Interior painting was done in authentic ‘Newport colors’ determined by Nicholas Durante of New York, and period furnishings were donated by Katherine Prentis Murphy of New York, a close colleague of Ralph Carpenter. Bringing the tavern to full operation as a restaurant open to the public was delayed by conflict with state law over granting a liquor license due to proximity of the tavern to two churches. This conflict would weigh like an albatross for years to come, inhibiting the successful commercial operation of the tavern by the Society. At the Society’s annual meeting of October 14, 1957, it was reported that due to the liquor license debate, a corporation known as Preservation Society Enterprises, Inc. was formed to run the White Horse Tavern and employ a manager.

Following the dinner, there was a special meeting at The Breakers where Howland’s address to the five hundred attendees affirmed: “What a heritage there is here to preserve! It must be saved for the country not just for the city or the state.” Chorley stated that the Society should have at least ten million to continue their work. However, “[a]lthough receiving no financial support worthy of the name the Preservation Society has produced remarkable results,” he acknowledged.

Antiquarian Awards: A highlight of the meeting was the presentation of medals to ten individuals who distinguished themselves in the fields of historic preservation, restoration and decorative arts, formally initiating an annual Antiquarian Award. The first recipients were:

- Mrs. Frances Crowninshield
- Henry F. duPont
- Mr. and Mrs. Henry Needhan Flynt
- Colonel and Mrs. Edgar W. Garbish
- Maxim Karolik
- Charles Scarlet
- H. Rodney Sharp
- Katherine P. Murphy
- Archbold Van Beuren
- Mrs. J. Watson Webb

137 Ralph Carpenter, personal interview by Holly Collins, 4 August 2006.
140 The Newport Gazette No. 4. November 1957.
The Tiffany Ball: A fundraising ball underwritten by the Tiffany Company with $8,000 was held at Marble House on July 13, 1957, the day following the opening ceremonies at Whitehorse Tavern. Tiffany’s furnished a $12,000 table service and loaned a $6,000 yellow diamond to be worn by honorary chairman of the ball, Mrs. Sheldon Whitehouse, setting the stage for an event reminiscent of the lavish entertainments of Newport’s Gilded Age society. Senator and Mrs. John F. Kennedy were in attendance, reported *Life* Magazine in a feature article on the event. The Tiffany Ball raised over $23,000 for the Society’s work and encouraged the onset of plans for another ball the following year, according to PSNC Secretary Ena Prochett.

The Gorham Silver Ball: The next year Gorham Silver sponsored a Silver Ball held at The Breakers on August 1, 1958. Gorham showcased an exhibit of Furber silver in the dining room and a highlight of the evening was a cotillion featuring young women dancers wearing silver wigs. Fifteen hundred guests attended the ball, with proceeds topping the Tiffany Ball and Washington-Rochambeau Ball. Panaggio’s publicity efforts included television coverage by a Boston station, and reporters were in attendance from *Life*, *Holiday*, and *Town and Country* magazines.

Rovensky Park: In 1959 John E. Rovensky donated funds to the PSNC to acquire property at the corner of Bellevue and Wheatland Avenues to the Society with a grant of $175,000 to establish and maintain a park in the memory of his wife Mae Cadwell Rovensky. This was the first gift of major importance donated to the Society. It “indicates the Preservation Society of Newport County has a respected and permanent place in the community. It will generate interest from other benefactors and organizations and foundations,” Warren remarked.

Historic Newport Reproductions: The realization of one of the original purposes and objectives of the Society was finally initiated in 1959. The licensing of manufacturers to reproduce furnishings, silver, glassware, china, hardware and fabrics native to Newport’s colonial era was completed. Royalties from sales were to go to the Society and to owners of the pieces that were copied. Hopes were high that

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142 “Preservation Society Got $23,000 From Tiffany Ball Last Summer,” *Newport Daily News*, 15 October 1957.
143 “1,500 At Silver Ball At ‘Breakers’; Proceeds May Top 2 Previous Events,” *Newport Daily News*, 3 August 1959.
144 Annual Meeting minutes 16 October 1959. PSNC Archives.
proceeds would generate a steady income.\textsuperscript{145} Lamar-Gillette Interiors LTD of New York City was hired as consultants in 1960. Brick Market (then headquarters) was sub-let to the firm to display the reproductions.\textsuperscript{146} In 1963 a store named “Newport Crafts” operated by Preservation Enterprises, Inc. was opened in Brick Market.\textsuperscript{147} The President’s Report of 1965 stated that in four years Historic Newport Reproductions had earned $53,000 in royalties.

**City of Newport Development:** In 1958 the Society took a new step by hiring a full time director, Mr. Robert J. Kerr. Kerr was to re-evaluate the Society’s programs and project a comprehensive plan for development and preservation of Newport’s historical heritage.\textsuperscript{148} In his first year Kerr identified a list of foundations sympathetic to the goals of the Society and began working on a step-by-step plan to secure endowments. He also surveyed local individuals and community groups whose response to the activities of the Society he found positive. “We are an organization vitally interested in the welfare of the community,” Kerr declared.\textsuperscript{149} Strengthening the Society’s ties with the city of Newport, Kerr attended the city planning commission meetings but with no vote.\textsuperscript{150}

The *Newport Gazette* of November 1958 ran a piece, “Why Historic Preservation in Newport?” It stressed the need for, and positive outcomes of careful preservation and restoration planning; “. . .we hope to assist the City of Newport in establishing a profitable economic and cultural life. . .Will Newport seize the opportunity to preserve its heritage and guarantee strong economic life? We must move from complacency to action.” In August of 1959 the Director’s Page of the *Newport Gazette* stated that the society “must think in terms of blocks rather than single units.”

The success of the PSNC in revitalizing Newport was recognized in other cities. An article in *The Indianapolis Star* noted: “Since an average of $20 is spent every vacationing day by the roaming tourist, according to the United States Chamber of Commerce, one begins to get an idea of what preserving the old Newport is beginning to mean to the citizens of today’s Newport, economically speaking.”\textsuperscript{151}

\textsuperscript{145} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{146} *Newport Gazette*, No 15 Winter 1961.
\textsuperscript{147} *Newport Gazette*, No 19 August 1963.
\textsuperscript{148} Annual Meeting minutes. PSNC Archives. 30 September 1958.
\textsuperscript{149} *Newport Gazette*, No. 6 February 1959.
\textsuperscript{150} Annual Meeting minutes, 16 October 1959. PSNC Archives.
\textsuperscript{151} Jane Allison, “Historic Landmarks Become Cash Asset,” *The Indianapolis Star*, 7 July 1959.
Dodge Magazine dubbed Newport a “Rejuvenated Dowager,” remarking that “...its Chamber of Commerce and fine Preservation Society, unlike some of their New England counterparts, are not hesitant to brag about the face-lifting given this gay old dowager. Tourists are not only welcome--they are sought after.”

A stellar achievement of 1959 was a grant from the Avalon Foundation for $13,500 for a planning survey to discover means of integrating preservation and restoration of Newport’s heritage with general planning for the city’s future. The Society engaged the firm Tunnard and Harris of Connecticut to conduct the study. Christopher Tunnard, director of Yale University’s city planning program, delivered a speech on “Preserving Newport’s Heritage” at the PSNC annual meeting of October 15, 1959, held at their new headquarters at Brick Market. His speech stressed the necessity of thoughtful joint efforts to succeed in an appropriate plan:

To bring Newport to the peak of its economic function and full beauty will require many cooperative factors, such as minimum housing standards, a vastly increased preservation program, an organized tourist movement, and much individual enterprise. ...It can be done if everyone joins in. It’s not too late, but the way things have gone in the last few years, the cost may become too great.

The PSNC became ever more strongly established as a stakeholder in the Newport community’s future. The seventy-five page report of Tunnard & Harris was submitted to the city by the PSNC early in January of 1960. “Less a blueprint that it is an exhortation or sermon, the so-called Preservation Planning Report is not a public document for action by the city, but a contract project for the Preservation Society,” stated the Newport Daily News on January 19th. “The Yale men view their work as a first step by which somebody can proceed to secure funds and pay for future professional planning of action.” It was reported from the mayor’s office that “Mr. Harris’ presentation of the concepts for the re-development of the historic 18th century section of the city has opened new avenues of approach to the city which have not been made clear to us before.”

Strongly focused in the study was a downtown plan for Queen Anne Square, rehabilitation of Golden Hill for low and middle-income housing, and developing Washington Street in the Point for upper-income housing. The Tunnard’s and Harris’ analysis of the General Business District

pointed out that the various elements involved “all merge to form a complex mosaic of problems and proposed solutions.”

The report identified a critical conflict point:

The defense highway proposal [the present America’s Cup Boulevard], which in essence becomes a Chinese wall closing the city and the commercial sector from the sea. In addition, the highway location destroys the historical intent of the finger openings of the Colonial wharf system, thus eliminating any opportunity for a more sympathetic opening of the commercial district to the harbor.

**Defining the future: 1960-1965**

The years 1960-1965 would prove a turning point that directed the future of the Society. Kicking off the new decade, a three day conference of the Society of Architectural Historians was held in Newport, organized by the PSNC and the NHS. The historians approached Newport enthusiastically and praised Newport’s architecture, which they declared, “. . .wider in scope than that offered to them during previous conferences held in other American cities and in Europe.”

Acquisition of The Elms (1962) and Marble House (1963) would bring even more historic properties under the PSNC stewardship.

National publicity soared under Panaggio’s management. In 1960 she issued 4,500 news releases and 300 photographs nationwide, and secured radio and television coverage in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. A four-color folder featuring The Breakers was produced and distributed nationally, and was the first of its kind promoting a specific attraction in Rhode Island. The Society also participated in the Eastern States Expo, the Hartford Travel Show and the National Sports and Vacation Show in New York City. In 1965 the President’s report read at the Annual meeting of October 21 stated that 250,000 promotional folders were distributed in the country and abroad. Also, Historic Newport Reproductions were on display in four New York City F. Schumacher & Co. showrooms. The displays attracted so much favorable attention they were extended from one to three months.

On the local level the Society initiated annual awards to Rogers High School students for excellence in history essays in 1960. In 1961 the By-Laws were again amended, enlarging the board of trustees to thirty members, creating an executive committee of nine members, and abandoning the

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council.\textsuperscript{159} Although tenures of Director Kerr and his successor Antonio Ponvert were short-lived, Harold Talbot was hired in 1962 and remained director of the Society for years to come.\textsuperscript{160} PSNC headquarters was moved to Rogers House, an old school house on Washington Square, donated to the Society by the Reverend Russell J. McVinney, Bishop of the Catholic Dioceses in 1961. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Van Pelt financed the restoration in memory of their son Charles Van Pelt.\textsuperscript{161}

In 1964 came a decision that would “dramatically” enhance Newport’s and the PSNC’s tourism venue and economic stability, according to Jerome Kirby who joined the newly expanded board in 1961.\textsuperscript{162} “The favorable vote to build the $42,000,000 Newport Bay Bridge connecting Newport and Jamestown was the highlight of developments here during the past year,” declared the \textit{Newport Daily News}.\textsuperscript{163} Determining access of the new bridge to Newport demanded resolve of the waterfront highway issue. In January of 1965 the City of Newport adopted an urban renewal plan drawn by a Boston firm hired by the city, Izadore, Candeub, Flessig & Adley Associates. The plan included a waterfront super-highway despite urging from PSNC and others for further study.\textsuperscript{164} At the Annual Meeting of October 21, 1965, Katherine Warren reported that the PSNC had engaged the firm of Sasaki, Dawson, DeMay Associates to conduct a survey and plans to upgrade and beautify designated urban renewal areas as well as improve alignments and beautification of the new roads. It is unknown how much these efforts influenced the final design of America’s Cup Boulevard. However, Plan 2004 - Urban Design for Central Newport, drawn by Taylor & Partners, criticized America’s Cup Boulevard for the same reasons outlined by Tunnard & Harris: “It sliced north-south along the waterfront, its 98-foot-width (130 feet measuring from the east curb on Thames Street to the west curb of the Avenue) amputating the city functionally, visually, and psychologically from the harbor that gave it birth.”\textsuperscript{165}

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\textsuperscript{159} Annual Meeting minutes, 29 September 1961. PSNC Archives.
\textsuperscript{160} \textit{Newport Gazette}, No. 17 1962.
\textsuperscript{161} Ibid. and Annual Meeting President’s Report 29 September 1961.
\textsuperscript{162} Jerome Kirby, telephone interview, 28 August 2006.
\textsuperscript{165} Taylor & Partners, Plan 2004 - Urban Design for Central Newport, for the Newport Redevelopment Agency.
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As the Society approached their twentieth anniversary Katherine Warren’s unwavering spirit and initiative held strong. “Katherine Warren was an idea person,” remarked Ralph Carpenter, “a catalyst.”

She was unafraid of new challenges and believed in where they could lead. The years between 1960 and 1965 held several important events:

- The PSNC initiated a one-day summer tour of private Newport estates.
- Katherine Warren was appointed to the Fine Arts Commission for Jacqueline Kennedy’s White House restoration.
- The Pink Ball was successfully held without a sponsor.
- The PSNC acquired The Elms.
- The Australian Ambassador hosted a dinner honoring President Kennedy at The Breakers during the America’s Cup.
- The PSNC acquired Marble House.
- The Elizabeth Arden Ball was a success.
- The City of Newport passed a Historic Zoning Ordinance.
- Katherine Warren was honored at a party at The Elms.

Summer tour of private estates: In August of 1960 the Society held their first tour of six private estates open to the public for the first time. Sixteen hundred people, many out-of-town visitors, toured the homes earning $8,000 for the PSNC. The private estate tour was so successful it became an annual event through 1964. The second year realized $10,000, and a box lunch served on the lawn at Beaulieu sold out to 300. Featured homes as they appeared in publications of the Gazette were:

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166 Ralph Carpenter, personal interview by Holly Collins, 4 August 2006.
1962 | Oakwood | Hammersmith Farm  
Beaulieu | Bonniecrest  
Ker Avor

1963 | Beacon Rock | Marble House  
Bay House | Ocean View  
The Ledges | Harold Brown Estate

1964 | Martin House | White House  
Erastus Pease House | Ayrault House  
Samuel Gardiner House

**White House Fine Arts Committee:** In 1961 Jacqueline Kennedy and Henry du Pont collaborated on selecting a committee of influential individuals to assist funding the White House restoration. One of these distinguished individuals was the Society’s president. “Mrs. George Henry Warren, president of the Preservation Society of Newport County has been selected to serve on the 12-member Fine Arts Commission for the White House,” reported the *Newport Daily News* on March 4, 1961. According to Mary Van Rensselaer Thayer in *Jacqueline Kennedy: The White House Years*:

Mrs. George Henry Warren had a more extensive practical knowledge of restoration problems than any other committee member. Mrs. Warren, alone, had initiated the action which saved historic Newport from obliteration. She had raised countless thousands of dollars toward this end and had interested people all over the world in her successful methods of preservation. She had served as president of the Preservation Society of Newport County for fifteen years. Specifically, for the White House, she was to persuade a group of her Newport friends to contribute to the purchase of a handsome marble bust, attributed to Houdon, of Comte d’Estaing, a comrade-in-arms of General Lafayette.

In 1962 the PSNC Award for Outstanding Contributions in the Field of the Decorative Arts was awarded to Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy for “... the inspiration that you have furnished to our nation” with the White House restoration. Jacqueline Kennedy responded with a telegram to Katherine Warren from the White House:

I am most touched and honored to accept The Newport Preservation Society medal. I have grown up seeing the wonderful things accomplished by this organization. So I am sure it is your work in great part that made me become so interested in the restoration and preservation of our national shrines. With appreciation for this medal, and for all you have done.

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171 *Newport Gazette*, No 17, November 1962.
The Pink Ball: The Breakers Ball, dubbed the Pink Ball for the theme of the décor, was held August 5, 1961. The Society took the risk of holding the event without the support of a sponsor. Nevertheless, expensive prizes and a performance by a renowned flamenco dancer, Teresa, were featured, which staged an event as successful and lucrative as previous balls. Co-operation of prize donors, the police force, and The Breakers staff surpassed other events, reported Pink Ball Chairman Ena Prochett.

The Elms: The Elms was purchased by the Society on July 23, 1962. “How would you know that you were going to save the Berwind’s...[w]e lost it three times and finally got it,” remarked the persistent Katherine Warren. “She [Warren] was one of the most spirited women I’ve ever met,” declared Ruth Buchanan, one the investors in the Elms purchase. Individual donors were solicited whose contributions ranged from $10 to $10,000 and secured the acquisition:

Mr. Charles Patterson  Mr. Wiley T. Buchanan
Mr. and Mrs. George Henry Warren  Mr. and Mrs. Harvey S. Firestone
Mr. Archbold Van Beuren  Mr. Lucius P. Ordway
Mr. W. Gurnee Dyer  Mrs. David Van Pelt
Mr. Beverly Bogart  Mr. Verner Z. Reed
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Russell  Mrs. Nathaniel Hill
Mr. Whitney Warren  Mr. and Mrs. John Nicholas Brown
Mr. John Crawford  Mrs. Guy F. Cary
Mrs. Gertrude Vanderbilt  Mrs. Forsyth Wickes
Mrs. John N. Stearns, Jr.  Mr. J. Edgar Monroe
Mrs. Crawford Hill  Mr. Norman O. Whitehouse
Mrs. Anita Morris  Mrs. Sheldon Whitehouse
Mrs. John Nicholas Brown  Mr. H. Irving Pratt
Mr. and Mrs. Howard G. Cushing  The Frazier Jelke Foundation

In the Newport Gazette of May 1963 the Society announced that The Elms was expected to be used as Newport’s own cultural center. House committee chair Mrs. John Nicholas Brown (daughter-in-law of Natalie Bayard Brown) facilitated the rapid furnishing and opening of the house, which received both enthusiasm and support of the PSNC membership and the city. Despite most of the furnishings going at auction, Warren reported that Mrs. John Nicholas Brown and Mrs. Sheldon Whitehouse “…went

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172 Annual Meeting minutes, 29 September 1961. PSNC Archives.
175 Ruth Buchanan, interview, 15 July 2005, by Andrea Carneiro.
177 Annual Meeting minutes 30 October 1962. PSNC Archives.
off to the museums and into their own attics, and in three weeks that house was furnished and open.”

Six important events took place at The Elms the opening year. On September 11, 1962, First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy, who was vacationing in Newport, unveiled the plans for the proposed National Cultural Center (to become the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts) in Washington D.C. in The Elms’ ballroom. Actor Danny Kaye delivered a relaxed speech on the value of communication through the arts. Also present were film-star supporters Joanne and Paul Newman. The Elms was engaged by Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Firestone for a ball, by the New York Yacht Club for a cocktail party during the America’s Cup festivities, and it was the venue for the Newport Hospital Ball. Mr. and Mrs. Gurnee Dyer (who devoted their own labor to reviving The Elms gardens) gave an illustrated talk on their African Safari, which was attended by 245 people, and Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Brown gave a dinner for the Elms donors followed by a concert and a supper. Already in the making were plans for an Opera Ball at The Elms the next year following a performance of the opera *Cosi Fan Tutte*, sponsored by the PSNC.

**Dinner for the Australian Ambassador:** Not to be outdone by Newport’s new cultural center, The Breakers set the stage on September 14, 1962, for a dinner given by the Australian Ambassador, Sir Howard Beale in honor of President and Mrs. Kennedy during the America’s Cup. From President Kennedy’s speech at this dinner issued one of his now famous quotes: “All of us have in our veins the exact same percentage of salt in our blood that exists in the ocean, and, therefore, we have salt in our blood, in our sweat, in our tears. We are tied to the ocean. And when we go back to the sea -- whether it is to sail or to watch it -- we are going back from whence we came.”

**Acquisition of Marble House:** On December 7, 1963, Marble House was acquired through the generosity of Harold Vanderbilt. All the existing furnishings were gifted by the Frederick H. Prince estate. Remembering the Society’s first Gilded Age acquisitions Katherine Warren commented, “How

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180 *Newport Gazette*, No. 18, May 1963.
181 Annual Meeting minutes, 30 October 1962. PSNC Archives.
184 “Remarks at the America Cup Dinner Given by the Australian Ambassador,” 14 September 1962, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum.
185 Annual Meeting minutes, 16 October 1964. PSNC Archives.
do we know we are going to get Marble House? You know, you couldn’t make a plan . . . You couldn’t even say you hoped to get them, and it didn’t even look as though you ever would.” The President’s Report of 1964 published in the *Newport Gazette* recorded the attendance at Marble House for the first year was 15,658. During an interview on September 7, 2006 with the author of this report, Monique Panaggio remarked that following these major property acquisitions Katherine Warren defined the Society’s future scope of property ownership to include only the very finest examples of period architecture, and that they should be accompanied by an endowment. Tension with the city of Newport over the Society obtaining tax exempt status also became a delicate issue at this time, Panaggio noted.

**Elizabeth Arden Ball:** The Elizabeth Arden Ball held on August 8, 1964, at Marble House staged an elaborate pink and red theme; colors associated with Arden. Guests were presented with Elizabeth Arden favors by costumed young women representing Arden perfumes. The highlight of the evening was a discotheque where the ambitious could learn the latest dances; the Hully Gully, the Frug, the Rhino Rump, the Bug, the Surf, the Hitch-Hiker, the Watusi, and the Monkey. On August 8, 1964, the *Newport Daily News* informed: “An innovation is a discotheque on the upper floor while the ball is in progress. A discotheque concerns itself with a style of dancing that requires little footwork. It is the rage in Europe and is being introduced to this country.” Ball Chairman Mrs. William C. Langley reported on a successful event with attendance estimate at 1,200.

**Historic Zoning Ordinance:** Long-awaited by the PSNC, success was finally achieved in passing a controversial historic zoning ordinance in Newport on January 27, 1965, by a 5-1 vote. There had been concern over inconsistencies regarding commercial districts and non-historic homes within the historic district. Controversy for over a year also involved a series of revisions to conform the ordinance to the most recent state legislation. The revisions “. . . which were drawn up at a recent meeting of the association [Taxpayers Association] and the principal supporting group, The Preservation Society, received Council approval last night,” reported the *Newport Daily News* on January 21, 1965. The ordinance provided for a designated Historic District and a Historic Commission to rule on proposed changes to

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In addition to the ordinance a historic district plan map was drawn to identify the designated historic district of 1965. PSNC Vice President Mason Rector was elected temporary chairman of the commission. Other members were William H. Fullerton, president of the Point Association, and another active PSNC member and local historian, Lloyd Robeson. The commission was deemed “qualified and lenient” by the Mayor, including a real estate dealer and landlord, a mill manager, a bank executive specializing in home improvement loans, and an official of the Navy YMCA.

Party for Katherine Warren at The Elms: Three hundred guests attended a surprise gala testimonial celebration at The Elms to honor Katherine Warren’s twenty years of dedicated work for The Preservation Society of Newport County. As she was ushered into the party by Charles Paterson and Mr. and Mrs. John R. Drexel III, guests sang “When the Saints Come Marching In.” Newport Mayor Charles Hambly presented Katherine Warren with a silver bowl from the city. A silver tray inscribed “In Admiration, Appreciation and Affection” came from the daughters of Countess Széchényi, and another from the president of Operation Clapboard, Richard Sheffield. Governor Chaffee’s speech referred to Katherine Warren as a “sparkplug.” “On behalf of the state I want to thank you for what you have done for Newport and for Rhode Island,” he declared. Senator Pell had acknowledged Katherine Warren’s efforts in the Congressional Record on the floor of the Senate on August 5, which he read to the gathering:

Rarely has one lady contributed so much of herself, her talents and her energies as Mrs. Warren to Newport, and equally rarely has a city so benefited from one individual. Together with the support of such community leaders as Mrs. Ottavio Prochet, she has built the Preservation Society into one of the driving forces not only of Newport but the whole Rhode Island community . . . Thanks largely to the efforts and devotion of Mrs. Warren a heritage of great historical value is being preserved for our nation.

Mrs. W. Randolph Burgess, a board member of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, was present and also spoke: “What Mrs. Warren has done in Newport can be done all over the country to preserve the nation’s heritage and landmarks. I want to express my appreciation and admiration and to say how happy I think you were to have found her,” she declared.

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190 Ordinance of the Council, No. 416 Chapter 149, 27 January 1965. City of Newport, RI.
194 Ibid.
In the President’s Report of 1964, Katherine Warren reflected on the Society’s development over twenty years, “This is the only organization of its kind that has gotten off the ground without a wealthy individual benefactor or foundation behind it.” She continued:

We started modestly and proudly to save one colonial mansion, the Hunter House and it was not long before we realized that could only be a beginning and we must attempt to preserve Newport’s great architectural heritage, spanning three centuries, and that this heritage could be converted into a rich economic potential for Newport’s future.

The Elms event was a fitting conclusion to twenty productive founding years, and a gala prelude to ten more years of growth and development guided by Katherine Warren.
PSNC HISTORICAL TIMELINE

THE FOUNDING YEARS 1945-1965

1945

June 18:

August 2:
Articles of Association of the Preservation Society of Newport County, drawn by eleven incorporators, were filed with the Secretary of State of the State of Rhode Island.
Minutes of the first meeting, 9 August 1945. PSNC Archives.

August 9:
Six of the incorporators meet at the home of George and Katherine Warren at 118 Mill Street, Newport, RI, to organize the society and adopt by-laws.
Goal: to protect, preserve and restore Newport’s Colonial architecture and heritage.
Minutes of the first meeting, 9 August 1945. PSNC Archives.

August 27:
Executive Committee of the PSNC accepts an option to purchase the Nicholas Hunter House from the 54 Washington Street Company.
Maude Wetmore is elected the first president.
Executive Committee meeting minutes, 27 August 1945. PSNC Archives.

1946

July 19:
First Annual Meeting. Membership; 61.
- Fund raising and Membership drive are crucial to meeting goals.
- Lecture program featuring distinguished preservationists is planned.
- Interest in saving White Horse Tavern is raised.
- Katherine Warren is elected president.
Annual Meeting minutes 19 July 1946. PSNC Archives.

August 16:
Emil Jemail, Editor of the Newport Daily News raises the potential of mansions such as The Breakers in attracting visitors and publicity.
Executive Committee Meeting minutes, 16 August 1946. PSNC Archives.

September 26:
Dr. Fisk Kimball, Director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and Wilmarth Lewis inspire interest in the architectural treasures of Newport, claiming it excels Williamsburg, Annapolis and Charlestown, at a PSNC “Town Meeting.”
November:
Resolution: “The policy of this Society is to preserve and protect houses of historic and architectural merit. For this purpose it reserves unto itself the right to purchase, sell, exchange or lease such houses or to interest the present owners in their preservation, or to take whatever other steps it may deem desirable to accomplish the above purposes.”
Executive Committee meeting minutes, 8 November 1946. PSNC Archives.

PSNC purchases the Nicholas Hunter House from 54 Washington St. Co. on November 22.

Noted Historian Carl Bridenbaugh spoke on 18th Century Newport on November 22.
Executive Committee meeting minutes, 8 November 1946. PSNC Archives.
“Speaker Urges City to Save Colonial Houses.” Newport Daily News, 23 November 1946.

Katherine Warren reports that Providence Architectural Historians Antoinette Downing and Phillip Creer will outline a proposal for a Survey of Newport’s colonial architecture and significant buildings and districts.
Executive Committee meeting minutes, 23 November 1946. PSNC Archives.

1947 National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings is organized.

February:
John Perkins Brown agrees to deed the Pitts Head Tavern to PSNC for use as headquarters.
The land to be rented from the Odd Fellows for $30.00/year.
Executive Committee meeting minutes, 10 February 1947. PSNC Archives.

March 25:
Kenneth Chorley, President of Colonial Williamsburg, presents “Only Tomorrow” speech to Newport public to promote the interests of PSNC.
Chorley advises PSNC that opening The Breakers to the public is crucial to their financial growth and development.

June:
Downing report identifies 12 sites/sections of Newport that should be slated for restoration and preservation.
Executive Committee meeting minutes, 10 June 1947. PSNC Archives.

August 4:
Old Colony House Exhibition, “Newport of the Past 1740-1840” opens under the auspices of PSNC and Old State House, Inc.
August 20:
Hunter House Auction is held to raise money for the restoration of Pitts Head Tavern.

September 5:
Mrs. Warren reported that she had been invited to the October meeting of the National Council of Historic Sites and Buildings and her name proposed for board membership.
Executive Committee meeting minutes, 5 September 1947. PSNC Archives.

September:
Newly formed City Coordinating Council will hold meetings with the PSNC, Chamber of Commerce, Newport Development Authority and Newport Improvement Assn.
Executive Committee meeting minutes, 29 September 1947. PSNC Archives.

October:
First Newport Gazette is ready for publication.
Plans for formation of Newport Restorations Inc. are approved.
Resolution: Formal recognition will be issued to Alice Brayton and Mrs. William Greenough for saving and restoring Benedict Arnold Burial Ground.
Executive Committee meeting minutes, 17 October 1947. PSNC Archives.

November:
Pitts Head Tavern is official PSNC Headquarters.
Annual Meeting minutes, 25 November 1947. PSNC Archives.

1948

January:
Anonymous donation funds excavation of Stone Tower.
PSNC will consult Joseph Downs, Curator, Metropolitan Museum of Art, regarding total accuracy of restoration work on historic houses.
Executive Committee meeting minutes, 21 January 1948. PSNC Archives.

April:
Mrs. Michael Van Beuren underwrites the remaining expenses to Publish the Survey. Other contributors were the RI Foundation, the City of Newport, the Newport Improvement Assn., Newport Historical Society.
Executive Committee meeting minutes, 27 April 1948. PSNC Archives.

June:
Countess Lázsló Széchényi allows PSNC to show the first floor of The Breakers for $1.00 per year plus operating expenses.
- Managing committee of four PSNC officers and one Chamber of Commerce representative is formed. Chamber of Commerce underwrites $10,000.
- Holbert Smales is appointed manager of The Breakers for the summer.
Executive Committee meeting minutes 10 June, 15 July, 19 August 1948. PSNC Archives.
June: 
Selling Strip Tickets to show other historic sites beyond The Breakers is proposed. Incentive: Promote Colonial architecture and encourage tourists to stay in Newport for longer periods of time.
Executive Committee meeting minutes, 22 June 1948. PSNC Archives.

July: 
The Breakers draws 8,339 visitors in the first month of operation. 
“Breakers” Draws 419, Record Attendance One-Day Mark.”

September: 
- Stone Tower excavation report unable to determine builder.
- Closing of the Naval Torpedo Station will bring economic hardship to Newport.
Annual Meeting Minutes, 24 September 1948. PSNC Archives.

October: 
PSNC makes By-Law changes to strengthen the Society. Board of 9 Trustees will operate PSNC. A Council of 18-30 will set policy and submit proposals to the Board.
Annual Meeting Minutes, 15 October 1948. PSNC Archives.

November: 
Board of Consultants appointed to assist in Strip Ticket program:
Mr. William G. Roelker Director RIHS
Mr. Gordon Washburn Director RISD
Mr. Joseph Downs Curator of the American Wing Metropolitan Museum of Art
Mr. John Phillips Curator of the Garvin Collection Yale University
Mr. David Finley Director of the National Gallery in Washington DC
Mr. Kenneth Chorley President Colonial Williamsburg
First Council Meeting. Minutes, 9 November 1948. PSNC Archives.

1949
The National Park Service creates the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

February: 
Strip Ticket Program top priority: Breakers & Breakers Stables, Hunter House Trinity Church, Touro Synagogue, Wanton Lyman Hazard House, Colony House. Profits did not cover expenses.

Joseph Downs advises on Hunter House restoration.
Meeting of Council and Board of Trustees, 7 February 1949. PSNC Archives.

1950
Charles Peterson and Thomas Marvel hired to continue restoration at Hunter House.
The lease arrangement at Hunter House was unsuccessful.
“Report by the President for the Years 1945 - 1953.” Booklet. NHS.
November 27:  
Katherine Warren reports to the Council and Board on her attendance at a meeting of **The National Trust** in Washington D.C. and the interest raised for PSNC.

**Mrs. Michael Van Beuren** subsidizes the remaining cost to publish the survey with Harvard Press plus an additional $6,000 for a color type process.  
Meeting of the Council and Board, 27 November 1950. PSNC Archives.

1952  
June 21:  
*The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island, 1640-1915*, by Antoinette Downing and Vincent Scully is published by Harvard University Press.  

1953  
October 2:  
**The National Trust for Historic Preservation** to hold their annual meeting in Newport October 2 and 3.  
Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes, 20 May 1953. PSNC Archives.

**David E. Finley** Board Chairman for the National Trust for Historic Preservation and director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington spoke.  
A reception and banquet was held at The Breakers October 2.  

October 4:  
**John Howard Benson** famous calligrapher and stone carver, and descendant of Benedict Arnold gifts the **Governor Arnold Burial Ground** on Pelham Street to the PSNC.  
The burial ground was restored through the efforts of Alice Brayton.  
Alice Brayton privately published *The Burying Place of Governor Arnold* in 1960 in honor of John Benson who died in 1956.  
Board of Trustees meeting minutes, 4 October 1953  
Handwritten document by John Howard Benson  
PSNC Archives.

**Hunter House Exhibit of Newport Furniture, Arts and Crafts**  
Draws 5,000 people.  
Annual Meeting Minutes, 15 October 1953. PSNC Archives.

November:  
**Mr. Felix deWeldon** addresses the Board of Trustees regarding the **Shipsted-Luce Act** using the restoration of Georgetown as an example and urging the importance of **historic zoning ordinances**.  
Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes, 2 November 1953.  
PSNC Archives.

1954  
*Arts and Crafts of Newport, Rhode Island* by **Ralph Carpenter** is published by PSNC featuring the Hunter House Exhibition.  
March:
**White Horse Tavern.** Mr. Archbold Van Beuren provides funds to Purchase the tavern dedicated to the memory of his father Michael Van Beuren. Plans proceed for restoration. The PSNC plans for the building to be self-sustaining as a tea room or tavern.

*The Newport Gazette* No. 2, March 1956.

April:
Monique Panaggio is hired as full time Public Relations Director.

PSNC Archives. Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes, 23 April 1954.

1955

1956

July:
**Washington-Rochambeau Celebration** in Newport to commemorate the 175th anniversary of arrival of French in Newport is organized and supervised by the PSNC. Descendants of Layfayette and Rochambeau attended.

“It French Warship Arrives with Kin of Rochambeau for Newport Celebration.”

*Newport Daily News* 8 July 1955.

**Ball at The Breakers** July 9 in honor of the Rochambeau Celebration. Actress Grace Kelly attended. Over 1,000 tickets were sold. First Public dance at The Breakers.


November:
PSNC looks to Historic Beacon Hill legislation in Boston to prepare a plan for Historic Zoning in Newport.


1956

June:
**Richard H. Howland President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation** overviews restoration plans for White Horse Tavern.

“Few historic buildings have been made into restaurants.” Howland considers the project a “pilot” because it is so “intimately associated with the community.” Success of the project will encourage other societies to restore buildings on a self-sustaining basis.


October:
PSNC joins forces with newly formed **Rhode Island Heritage Foundation** to save **Fort Adams.** John Nicholas Brown and Antoinette Downing, incorporators of the foundation define its purpose as a coordinator between local preservation organizations and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.


Annual Meeting Minutes, 5 October 1956. PSNC Archives.

PSNC joins Point Association and Restorations, Inc with financial assistance to save Thomas Claggett House and find a suitable buyer.

“It was of the furthering of projects such as this that the Society was formed and this accomplishment should be a source of satisfaction.” Katherine Warren

Annual Meeting Minutes, 5 October 1956. PSNC Archives.

1957

**July:**

Noted Preservationists **Kenneth Chorley** of the Williamsburg Foundation and **Richard Howland**, President of the National Trust speak at a special meeting at The Breakers on July 12. Call for financial backing for PSNC to continue preservation work

*The Newport Gazette* No 4, 1957.


**White Horse Tavern** opens to the public as a restaurant July 12. Gala dinner celebrates the opening.

“Re-created White Horse Tavern To Open with Formal Dinner July 12.” *Newport Daily News*, 22 May 1957.

The **Tiffany Ball** sponsored by Tiffany & Co. was held at Marble House. Net proceeds were $23,000.00. Senator and Mrs. Kennedy attended.

“Preservation Society Got $23,000 from Tiffany Ball Last Summer.” *Newport Daily News*, 15 October 1957, and *Newport Gazette* 1957.


PSNC Archives.

**October:**

50,000th visitor for the year crosses the threshold at The Breakers.


PSNC initiates annual **Antiquarian Award** and Medal

For 10th Anniversary. Ten medals were presented to:

Mrs. Frances Crowninshield  Mr. H. Rodney Sharp  Mr. Henry F. DuPont  Mr. Archbold Van Beuren  Mr. and Mrs. Henry Needham Flynt  Mrs. J Watson Webb  Colonel and Mrs. Edgar W. Garbish  Mr. Charles Scarlett  Mr. Maxim Karolik  Mrs. Katherine P. Murphy

*Newport Gazette*, No 4, November 1957.

1958

**Robert J. Kerr II** is hired as Executive Director

Reevaluate PSNC and develop a comprehensive plan for development and preservation of historical heritage in Newport

**September:**

Antiquarian Award presented to **Hope Powel Harkness** Regent of the Mt. Vernon Ladies Association and Chairman of the House Committee for Whitehall.

*Annual Meeting Minutes, 30 September 1958*. PSNC Archives.
PSNC defines their role in the economic development of Newport
“By intelligent appraisal of the many facets of our historic treasures, by careful efforts at their restoration, preservation, and exhibition, and by attempting to encourage others to recognize the need for such a program, we hope to assist the City of Newport in establishing a profitable economic and cultural life.”
*Newport Gazette. No 5, November 1958*

**1959**

**February:**
**Reproduction Program** is initiated to reproduce Newport furniture and Arts & Crafts
*Newport Gazette No 6, February 1959.*

**May:**
RI passes a bill establishing **Historic Zoning**
*Newport Gazette No 7, May 1959.*

**July:**
PSNC is praised as **best model for preservation.**
“Since an average of $20 is spend every vacationing day by the roaming tourist, according to the United States Chamber of Commerce, one begins to get an idea of what preserving the old Newport is beginning to mean to the citizens of today’s Newport, economically speaking.”

**August:**
**Gorham** sponsors a **Silver Ball** at The Breakers.
“1,500 At Silver Ball At ‘Breakers’; Proceeds May Top 2 Previous Events.”
*Newport Daily News,* 3 August 1959.

A Committee is appointed to prepare a plan for historic zoning for Newport
“PSNC strives to be self-sustaining. But now we must think in terms of blocks rather than single units. Here is where a private, commercial endeavor would be productive.”
*Newport Gazette No 8, August 1959.*

**September:**
**Christopher Tunnard** Director of Yale’s graduate city planning program
Addresses PSNC Annual Meeting stressing cooperation needed to meet goals.
“City Needs Cooperation To Gain Its Goal, Preservation Society Told.”

**October:**
**John E. Rovensky** donates $175,000. to PSNC to establish and maintain a park at the corner of Bellevue and Wheatland in memory of his wife.

PSNC moves Headquarters to **Brick Market** Chamber of Commerce will also lease space.

PSNC establishes an **Endowment Fund** through the generosity of Officers and Trustees.

PSNC receives a grant from **Avalon Foundation** for $13,500.00 to fund a comprehensive development plan for the City of Newport with **Tunnard & Harris** of Hartford, CT.
Mrs. Connal-Rowan of Scotland gifts PSNC Townsend & Goddard furniture for Hunter House collection.

Antiquarian Award to John E. Rovensky and Esther I Schwartz
Annual Meeting Minutes, 16 October 1959. PSNC Archives.

1960

The National Park Service creates National Historic Landmarks program.

January:
City Planning Study by Tunnard & Harris was received by City Planning Board, Redevelopment Agency, City Council and Chamber of Commerce.

Williamsburg President Carlisle Humelsine and his wife visit Newport in January and are guests of PSNC.

August:
Society of Architectural Historians holds conference in Newport. PSNC and NHS assist arrangements and program.

First Tour of Newport Mansions features 6 houses open to the public for the first time on August 17, 1960.
Bonniecrest Eastbourne Lodge
Rosecliff Hopedene
Clarendon Court Gray Craig
Flyer. PSNC Archives. Scrapbook of Monique Panaggio.

4,500 news releases and 300 photographs are distributed nationwide
Newport Gazette No 13, August 1960.

October:
Copyright and trademark applications filed for Historic Newport Reproductions. Lamar-Gillette Interiors, LTD of NY is hired as consultants.
Annual Meeting minutes, 20 October 1960. PSNC Archives.

PSNC awards prizes to 3 Rogers High School Seniors for best history essays.

Executive Director Kerr resigns to take a position in Annapolis.
Annual Meeting Minutes, 20 October 1960. PSNC Archives.

Antiquarian Award is given to Alice Brayton.
Annual Meeting Minutes, 20 October 1960. PSNC Archives.

1961

March:
Mrs. George Henry Warren is elected to the Fine Arts Commission for the White House.
Summer:
Second **Newport Mansions Tour** of private homes. Box lunch on the lawn at **Beaulieu** sold out to 300.
Harbourcourt  Berkeley Villa
Beechwood  Marble House
Sherwood

PSNC produced a **four color folder** on The Breakers for national distribution. 1st to promote a specific attraction in RI.
*Newport Gazette* No 14, Summer 1961.

August:
**Breakers Pink Ball** August 5 to feature famous flamenco dancer and elaborate prizes. Successful event without sponsor.
“Pink Ball Attracts 1,000 Dancers.” *Newport Daily News*, 7 August 1961.

September:
**By-Laws** are amended to strengthen the organization
Enlarge the Board of Trustees from 9 to 30 members
Form Executive Committee of 9
Abandon Council

**Mr. Antonio Ponvert, Jr.** is hired as new Executive Director

**Lamar-Gillette Interiors, Inc** lease **Brick Market** to retail Historic Newport Reproductions.

**Rogers House** is donated to PSNC by Reverend Russell J. McVinney Bishop of Providence. **Mr. & Mrs. David Van Pelt** fund the renovations for use as new **PSNC Headquarters**.

Antiquarian Award to **J. A. Lloyd Hyde**.

1962

**Summer:**
Expected to be used as Newport’s Cultural Center. Events this year:
- Jacqueline Kennedy unveiled the model for the National Cultural Center
- Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Firestone hosted a ball
- NY Yacht Club hosted a cocktail party for the America’s Cup.
- Newport Hospital Ball
- Mr. and Mrs. Gurnee Dyer present on their African Safari followed by a supper.

*Newport Gazette* No 16, Summer 1962, and No 18, Winter 1963.

**Third Annual Tour of Newport Mansions** of private homes.
Oakwood  Hammersmith Farm
Beaulieu  Bonniecrest
Ker Avor
*Newport Gazette* No 16, Summer 1962.
Proposed that PSNC’s business corporation, **Preservation Enterprises, Inc.** should act as real estate developer for the restoration portion of Newport’s urban renewal program.  
*Newport Gazette No 16, Summer 1962.*

**Mr. Harold Talbot** is hired as Executive Director.  
*Newport Gazette No 16, Summer 1962.*

**September:**  
America’s Cup Dinner given by the **Australian Ambassador Sir Howard Beale** at The Breakers.  
**President and Mrs. Kennedy** attended. Kennedy speech welcomes Australians.  
“Remarks at the America Cup Dinner Given by the Australian Ambassador.”  
14 September 1962. JFK Presidential Library and Museum.  
http://www.jfklibrary.org/Historical+Resources/Archives/Reference+Desk/  
“U.S., Australia Friendship Hailed By President At Envoy’s Dinner.”  
*Newport Daily News, 15 September 1962.*

**October:**  
Antiquarian Award is presented to **Jacqueline Kennedy**. Acknowledgement telegram points to the work of PSNC as inspiration for her preservation efforts:

> “I am most touched and honored to accept The Newport Preservation Society medal. I have grown up seeing the wonderful things accomplished by this organization. So I am sure it is your work in great part that made me become so interested in the restoration and preservation of our national shrines. With appreciation for this medal, and for all you have done.” 
> Annual Meeting Minutes, 30 October 1962. PSNC Archives.

**1963**  
**May:**  
**Preservation Society Enterprises, Inc.** purchased the Old Newport Store Company in May and is operating it in Brick Market as **Newport Crafts.**

**June:**  
Annual **Tour of Newport Mansions** of private homes June 22.  
Beacon Rock  Marble House  
Bay House  Ocean View  
The Ledges  Former Harold Brown Estate  
*Newport Gazette No 20, December 1963.*

**September:**  
PSNC sponsors performance of Mozart’s comic opera, “**Cosi Fan Tutte**” at the Van Alen Casino Theatre, reclaimed from possible demolition.  
An **Opera Ball** at The Elms followed the performance.  

**October:**  
Antiquarian Award to **Mrs. Cynthia Roche Cary**.  
The President’s Report stated:
Mr. Talbot has established firm ties with the **Urban Renewal Program.**  
“It is in that field that we feel our influence will be felt,” noted Katherine Warren in her President’s report.  
December:
*Newport Gazette, No 21, March 1964.*

1964

Summer:
**Private Mansion Tour**
- Martin House
- Erastus Pease House
- Samuel Gardiner House

Elizabeth Arden Ball held at Marble House August 1.
*Newport Gazette, No 22, November 1964.*

October:
**President’s Report** looking toward 20th Anniversary
“We started modestly and proudly to save one colonial mansion the Hunter House, and it was not long before we realized that could only be a beginning and that we must attempt to preserve Newport’s great architectural heritage, spanning three centuries, and that this heritage could be converted into a rich economic potential for Newport’s future.”

“This is the only organization of its kind that has gotten off the ground without a wealthy individual benefactor or foundation behind it.

Antiquarian Award to **Esther Fisher Benson**
Annual Meeting Minutes, 16 October 1964. PSNC Archives.

1965

January:
Newport City Council enacts **Historic Zoning Ordinance**, establishing a **Historic District and a Commission** to administer the ordinance.


July:
**Breakers Ball** draws 1,200 July 9.
*Newport Gazette No 24, October 1965.*

August:
**Senator Claiborne Pell:** “The publicity generated by the Society has been a major factor in the growing Newport tourist industry.”
Congressional Record August 4, 1965, as quoted in the *Newport Gazette, No 24, October 1965.*

**Katherine Warren** is honored at a reception at The Elms August 9

**Senator Claiborne Pell:**
“Rarely has one lady contributed so much of herself, her talents and her energies as has Mrs. Warren to Newport, and equally rarely has a city so benefited from one individual. Thanks largely to the efforts and devotion of Mrs. Warren heritage of great historical value is being preserved for our nation.”

**Governor John N. Chafee:**
“Mrs. Warren has made Newport the principle tourist attraction in the State.”
*Newport Gazette* No 24, October 1965.

“State and City Honor Founder Of Preservation Society.” *Newport Daily News, 10 August 1965.*
Historic Newport Reproductions on display at F. Schumacher & Co. in NYC
*Newport Gazette* No 24 October 1965.

Antiquarian Award to Holbert T. Smales
Annual Meeting Minutes, 21 October 1965. PSNC Archives.

1966

**National Historic Preservation Act** establishes criteria for evaluation and legal guidelines for preservation practices and delineated responsibilities for other government agencies.

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- 19 July 1946
- 25 November 1947
- 24 September 1948
- 15 October 1953
- 29 September 1955
- 30 September 1958
- 16 October 1959
- 20 October 1960
- 29 September 1961
- 30 October 1962
- 25 October 1963
- 16 October 1964
- 21 October 1965

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- 7 February 1949
- 27 November 1950
- 20 May 1953
- 3 October 1953
- 23 April 1954
- 4 November 1955
- 29 September 1961
- 30 October 1962
- 29 September 1961
- 30 October 1962

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- 29 August 1945
- 16 August 1946
- 8 November 1946
- 23 November 1946
- 10 February 1947
- 26 March 1947
- 13 May 1947
- 10 June 1947
- 5 September 1947
- 27 September 1947
- 17 October 1947
- 25 November 1947
- 21 January 1948
- 10 March 1948
- 27 April 1948
- 10 June 1948
- 22 June 1948

“More Than 1,000 Dancers Gather At ‘Breakers Ball.’” Newport Daily News. 11 July 1955


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No. 5 November 1958.
No. 6 February 1959.
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No. 13 November 1960.
No. 15 Winter 1961
No. 16 Summer 1962.
No. 17 November 1962.
No. 18 May 1963.
No. 19 August 1963

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Addendum

♦ First Meeting of the Incorporators
♦ “Only Tomorrow”
♦ Downing Report
♦ Lease of The Breakers
♦ Outline of Suggested Program for 1949
♦ John Benson Document
♦ “Ten Productive Years”
♦ “Historic Landmarks Become Cash Assets”
♦ “City Needs Cooperation To Gain Its Goal”
♦ “Plans For City’s Future Outlined by Consultants”
♦ “Historians Praise City’s Architecture”
♦ City of Newport Historic Zoning Ordinance of 1965
♦ 1965 Map of Designated Historic Zone in Newport
First Meeting of the Incorporators

We, the undersigned, incorporators of The Georgian Society of Newport County, do hereby agree that the first meeting of said corporation for the purpose of organization shall be held at 117 Mid #, Newport, Rhode Island, on August 9th at 11 o'clock A.M., and we hereby waive all other and further notice of said meeting.

[Signatures]

[Handwritten text]
“ONLY TOMORROW’
AN ADDRESS BY
KENNETH CHORLEY
PRESIDENT OF COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG
March 25, 1947

It seems fitting indeed that a representative of Williamsburg, Virginia, should be in Newport, Rhode Island, discussing the mutual interests of these two cities, for Newport and Williamsburg have surprisingly much in common. The stories of these two cities might well have been planned by the same author. While the characters and action are different, the plots are almost identical. Both grew to be the outstanding cities in their respective colonies. Both became famous social and legislative centers. Both achieved their greatest importance about the middle of the 18th century. Both went into an eclipse at the end of the Revolutionary War. And both watched other cities succeed them as the capitals of their states. One of them -- Williamsburg -- now has recaptured its past and has become a monument to our heritage; the other -- Newport -- stands tonight on the threshold of opportunity. Whether that threshold will be crossed and Newport will take its rightful place in the historical sun remains to be seen.

Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. undertook the restoration of old Williamsburg to its 18th century appearance in 1927, twenty years ago. He did this in an effort to help present and future generations to have a more vivid idea of what America was like during our colonial era. He hoped that from this restoration Americans might gain a fresh inspiration to preserve the ideals of freedom and democracy handed down to them by the men and women who established our nation. It was an unique experiment and one which the world has watched with interest. Tonight I should like to tell you how it has worked out and to suggest to you the advantages of doing something of the kind here in Newport.

During most of the century leading up to the Revolutionary War, Williamsburg was the capital of England’s largest and most populous colony in America. Many thrilling chapters of our nation’s history were written in that little city. Many of the concepts of freedom and democracy which flowered in Philadelphia were planted first as seeds in Williamsburg by George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, George Mason, Peyton Randolph, James Madison and other Virginia patriots.

Williamsburg remained the capital of Virginia until 1779 when it was decided to move the seat of government to Richmond where it would be more centrally located and sager from enemy attacks from the sea. During the decades when Williamsburg was the capital many fine homes and taverns were built there. The Palace of the Royal Governors was said to be the finest structure of its kind in America and when the imposing brick capitol was erected it was the pride of England’s oldest American colony. The College of
William and Mary, which was chartered in 1693 and whose original buildings are still standing in Williamsburg, took its place beside Harvard as the second college to be established in English America.

But after Richmond became the capital. The luster of Williamsburg dimmed rapidly. Much of the business and social life followed the seat of government to its new location. The fine buildings and beautiful gardens were no longer kept up as they had been and for the next century and a half Williamsburg languished and her beauty faded.

The story of the restoration of Williamsburg, like that of so many other important accomplishments in this world, starts with a minister. This minister was Dr. Goodwin -- the late Dr. W.A.R. Goodwin -- who was rector of Burton Parrish Church in Williamsburg. His church was one of the oldest and most historic in America. For years he had been struggling to restore and preserve it for the nation. That he succeeded in doing this came as no surprise to anyone who knew him for Dr. Goodwin was a rare combination of vision, courage and persistence. Long before he had finished this assignment his imagination took hold of an idea of much broader scope. Why stop with the church? Williamsburg had made an extraordinary contribution to America's national development. Why not restore the whole town as it was in the days when Washington, Jefferson, Patrick Henry and all those other patriots made history there?

It was a tremendously exciting idea. If Dr. Goodwin had been a more “practical” man he probably would have dismissed it as impossible. But he had had about as little experience in being practical as he had had in restoring cities, so he went right ahead. After all, even if the idea was impossible, it was a good one and there was nothing to be lost by trying. So he appointed a committee of one -- with himself as chairman-- to do something about it.

Eventually, he met Mr. Rockefeller, and told him about his dream. I wish I had time to tell you the whole story about how Dr. Goodwin got Mr. Rockefeller interested in Williamsburg and how wholeheartedly and completely Mr. Rockefeller caught Dr. Goodwin’s enthusiasm and shared his patriotic aspirations. Tonight, however, I must stick to my text and tell you what we have done in Williamsburg, and invite you to consider whether the sage admonition “Go thou and do likewise” does not apply in Newport.

When Mr. Rockefeller decided to undertake the restoration project his first step was to launch an extensive research program to discover what Williamsburg had been like in the 18th century, to find out what buildings were there then, how they looked and how they were furnished and what they were used for. His next step was to acquire by purchase or gift as much as possible of the property in the area to be restored. Then as a third step most of the buildings built since the Revolutionary War were removed -- some six hundred of them -- including banks, schools, churches, a railroad station, electric light plant, ice plant, knitting mill, business buildings and residences. It was also necessary to move the main line of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad. After that the 18th century buildings which had survived the centuries -- about ninety in all -- were carefully restored to their original appearance. And finally, some three hundred of the most significant of the missing 18th century buildings were painstakingly reconstructed on their
original, long forgotten foundations, and fifty or more colonial gardens were made to bloom again with the
same flowers an shrubs that grew in Williamsburg when the city was in her prime.

Before telling you more about the restoration itself perhaps it would be helpful if I told you a little
about the machinery which was set up to achieve Mr. Rockefeller’s objectives. Two corporations were
created to carry on the work. The first, Colonial Williamsburg, Incorporated, is a non-profit educational
corporation which is responsible for the actual restoration of the city and for carrying forward the
educational and patriotic purposes of the undertaking.

The second, Williamsburg Restoration, Incorporated, is a business corporation which is
responsible for renting the buildings we won, operating our hotels, carrying on our craft program and
managing similar activities which produce operating income. All of the stock of the business corporation is
owned by the educational corporation so every dollar earned is plowed right back into the project.

The capital investment required for the Williamsburg restoration has averaged more than
$1,000,000 a year -- some $25,000,000 since the undertaking was started twenty years ago. By now we
have approximately eight hundred persons working in various phases of the project -- architects, builders,
research workers, laborers, guides, painters, engineers, janitors, gardeners and many other types of workers,
headed by an executive staff of about twenty administrative officers and department heads. Our operating
budget amounts to approximately $2,000,000 a year, exclusive of the large sums required for capital
investments, and I am glad to tell you that, except during the years when war dislocations upset our plans,
we have in the main been able to balance our budget.

Such is the story of an undertaking into which much effort, brains, money and the best part of the
lives of hundreds of people have gone. Has all this been worth while? Have the results achieved justified
all the hard work involved? We think they have.

More than five million persons from every state and fifty different countries have visited
Williamsburg since the restoration was undertaken. I am confident that hundreds of thousands of American
citizens who have made the pilgrimages to Williamsburg have returned to their homes with a deeper
appreciation of their nation’s history and with an earnest determination to do whatever they can to protect
the time-tested ideals and principles which have been handed down to them.

Thousands of public school children on the Atlantic Seaboard and from the Middle West have
come to visit Williamsburg. In many instances these students and their teachers have given plans and
entertainments in their home towns in order to finance these trips.

Nor is our educational program confined to those privileged to visit Williamsburg. Just recently
we have given to the State Department of the Federal Government sixty prints of a color motion picture on
Williamsburg. These prints will be distributed all over the world, and, in addition, the State Department is
having other prints made with sound tracks in fifteen foreign languages for use in non-English speaking
countries.

Through the restoration of Williamsburg we have rescued from oblivion and have saved for
posterity something important in our nation’s heritage. We have succeeded in providing a dramatic and
interesting opportunity for Americans to visualize at least one segment of the environment out of which our legacy of liberty and democracy has grown. We have helped to deepen the roots of our nation so that it is better able to bend with the winds of an “isms” which may blow against it in the future.

If I need proof of that statement, I received it in a dramatic way during the war when I entered the reconstructed Capitol and saw a soldier in the uniform of the United States Army standing before a portrait of General Washington. The soldier was alone in the room. He was obviously so absorbed that he did not realize there was anyone near him. He was standing at attention in front of the portrait, and I heard him say “George, you got this for us and, by God, we will keep it.” Whereupon he saluted General Washington.

When I was invited to speak to you this evening I was asked particularly to tell you something about the economic effect the restoration has had on the City of Williamsburg and the State of Virginia. I am somewhat reluctant to enter into such a discussion because Colonial Williamsburg is an educational project designed to teach Americans. I would, therefore, much prefer to keep the emphasis where it belongs and to confine my remarks to a report on how well we have succeeded in our educational endeavors. Since, however, one does not ignore a request from one’s host, I shall try to accede to your request.

Williamsburg, like Newport, is a living community with a mayor and other local officials who are charged with the responsibility for carrying on municipal affairs. Neither Mr. Rockefeller nor Colonial Williamsburg has anything to do with the operation of the city itself. The restoration is confined to a limited area which in the 18th century was the main portion of the city but which now comprises on one-sixth of the present city. I am revealing no secret when I tell you that when the restoration was first begun some people in Williamsburg looked upon the idea with considerable skepticism. This is not surprising for it was only natural that local residents should have been concerned about what the restoration project might do to the city’s tax revenues, to local property values and to the prosperity of its citizens.

A few years ago a study was made to determine exactly what effect the restoration did have on Williamsburg. This survey came up with facts which should be of interest to any of you who may be wondering what effect a similar development might have on Newport.

The permanent population of Williamsburg increased only about 5% between 1927, the year the restoration was undertaken, and 1940. but although the population increased only slightly, the assessed value of the property in Williamsburg increased 99%.

The tax rate has been lowered in 10% since 1927. In spite of this welcome tax reduction, the revenue derived from local property taxes has increased nearly 90%.

The restoration activities and the great number of visitors attracted to Williamsburg have had marked effect on local businesses. The over-all increase in the volume of business in the stores has averaged nearly 100%. In some of the more progressive concerns, business has increased as much as 300%. Bank deposits have gone up 141%; 85% more electricity is used; 134% more water is sold. Local automobile licenses have increased 94%; postal receipts have jumped 160%; and the number of telephones has increased 313%, all between 1927 and 1940.
The economic advantages brought about by the restoration have not been limited to the city alone. A former Governor of Virginia told me that in the light of what the restoration of Williamsburg had meant to the State, Virginia might well have appropriated all of the money needed to restore Williamsburg if Mr. Rockefeller had not undertaken the project. The additional revenue the State has derived from gasoline taxes alone, he said, could easily have paid for the undertaking.

So much for Williamsburg. Now let’s turn to Newport. After being in Newport for two days, exploring your city with “walking historians”, and visiting every historic building open to the public, I cannot tell you how tremendously impressed I am with the opportunity you have here. Trinity Church, the Colony House, the Redwood Library, the Touro Synagogue, the Old Brick Market, the Old Stone Mill, the Wanton-Lyman-Hazard House, the Vernon House and many other are priceless treasures. And besides these you have your marvelous mansion along the ocean which represent a unique era in America’s development and which are famous the world over for their beauty and their associations. All together you have a perfectly extraordinary wealth of American architecture - a colorful panorama which sweeps across three centuries of our history!

It is of great interest to me to know that the Preservation Society of Newport County has been formed to preserve this architectural heritage for posterity. I am glad to hear what wide spread civic support this new Society has earned in such a few months. This is an excellent beginning and it should be extremely encouraging to all of you.

The President of the Preservation Society had told me that you would welcome any suggestions which might be helpful in developing your program for preserving America’s Newport heritage. Accordingly I should like to offer several which have grown out of our experience in Williamsburg.

I am told the Preservation Society already has begun a survey of your architectural treasures. This is important. I would suggest that you locate every structure in the county which should be saved for the centuries. Discover who owns it; photograph and measure it inside and out; fin out as much as you can about it; determine what needs to be done to preserve it.

After you have made your architectural inventory, select the buildings of special historical significance which should be maintained as a public trust and take steps to have the Preservation Society acquire title to them. Some of these buildings, when they are restored and refurnished, should become Exhibition Buildings and they make a very substantial contribution to our operating revenues. Considerable thought and planning should be devoted to creating a suitable environment for our architectural treasures. Unsightly surroundings should be corrected. Architectural monstrosities should be eliminated. Open spaces and colonial garden should be provided.

One by one, each of the scores of time-honored structures which I have been seeing since my arrival here should be restored as accurately as possible to its original appearance under the direction of the Preservation Society. In many instances the present owners will be both willing and able to operate in doing this. Where for any reason such cooperation is not forthcoming from present owners, new owners who are in a position to undertake such changes should be found. As the project develops, individuals
should be persuaded to assume responsibility for the rehabilitation of specific buildings, as their part in the restoration program.

In your research activities you undoubtedly will discover that a number of buildings of great historic significance are missing from the picture. I should be one of the objectives of the preservation Society to find individuals of groups who will acquire these sites and turn them over to the Preservation Society in order that these historic structures may be rebuilt.

Eventually, plans should be developed to make your business section and your famous harbor outstanding show places of America. If you have the daring to make it so Thames Street and the Parade can become one of the most interesting business sections in the country. And, if properly restored, your harbor not only can attract visitors from all over the world but it also can be as effective as restored Williamsburg as a visual method of teaching American history to future generations.

How should you go about starting a preservation program such as I have outlined? Well, you already have taken the first step in setting up the Preservation Society to take the initiative in the undertaking and to develop strong public sentiment for it. In this connection I think you might find it of some advantage to change the by-laws of the Preservation Society so that the governing board may be established on a self-perpetuating basis and thus operate in a way similar to that of the trustees of a great university. Such trustees are charged with the responsibility for financing and carrying forward the activities of the institution. Behind them they have the strong support of a loyal alumni body, which in this instance would be the members of the Preservation Society. By making your Executive Committee a self-perpetuating group it would become in effect a permanent “Newport Foundation” and thus it would acquire a certain stability and prestige which would encourage generous citizens to entrust it with large gifts and important legacies.

I would also suggest that at the very outset you obtain expert architectural advice and assistance to help you to prepare an over-all comprehensive program. These experts should focus their efforts on creating for you broad-gauged plans to reclaim for your city as much as possible of the charm and flavor and atmosphere of the Newport of the 18th century when it was the fourth largest city in English America, when 3,000 ships weighed anchors in its harbor and carried its citizens and products to all parts of the world.

In two days of practically continuous discussion about your preservation and restoration problems, I have not heard anyone say that you have a plan. In my opinion, that is one of the most important jobs you have ahead of you - to develop a plan. You are putting the cart before the horse when you talk about going out to raise money to preserve Newport before you have a plan showing how you are going to preserve it.

Yesterday and today have been days of mixed emotions for me. I had two thrilling experiences when I visited Old Trinity Church and the Touro Synagogue. I was impressed with their architectural beauty and by the way they have been preserved. But above all they came to like for me because they are practically complete in their interiors and because their histories were presented in such an authoritative and interesting way. Some of the other historic buildings which I visited I found incompletely restored,
unfurnished, badly kept and poorly exhibited. To preserve an historic building - particularly a public building - just for the sake of preserving it means little. That is not the end, it is only the means to a much greater end.

I think the Preservation Society will find it necessary to set up a full-time paid staff to coordinate plans and procedures and to carry forward the policies adopted by its Executive Committee. Such a staff need not be a large one in the beginning but in any undertaking of this magnitude it would be sheer folly to rely entirely on volunteer assistance and expect to get very far with your program.

This leads me to another recommendation - perhaps the most important of any suggestion I may make. **Plan to do this job superlatively well.** Remember you are building for the centuries. A superficial restoration will not do. If you restore your city in the same spirit that the 18th century craftsmen in Newport built their furniture, it will stand up against time just as staunchly.

You should take steps to see that no harm comes to a single one of your buildings which are likely to acquire historical significance in the centuries to come. A commission of architects, historians and civic leaders who are capable of commanding the respect and confidence of the local people should be set up by the City to prevent as far as possible, the destruction or alteration of any of your local treasures which should be preserved for the future. Such a commission can do much to encourage the development of harmonious architecture and to discourage unwise acts which might result in future complications in the City’s restoration plans. In addition, the Preservation Society itself ought to make competent architectural advice available to property owners who will wish to cooperate by rehabilitating their buildings in keeping with the Society’s preservation program.

The citizens of Newport, and particularly the members of the Preservation Society, should resolve to protect the civic leaders who will be taking the initiative in this restoration movement from persons who may embrace this project for selfish motives. They should also be protected from persons small ideas and limited vision who, often with the best of intentions, may place obstacles in the way of those who are looking a century ahead. You people who are here tonight can create and keep alive such a strong local public sentiment in favor of doing this job right that neither politics, selfishness nor lack of vision will be permitted to hinder or slow down this tremendously important undertaking.

If I may, I should like to add a word of warning. Do not invite visitors to come to Newport to see you architectural treasures until you are ready for them. Of course, you already have a number of remarkable things to show such visitors but I am sure you will not think me critical if I say that **most of your treasured buildings can stand a lot of repair and refurbishing** and their surrounding a lot of improvement - before you are ready to show them off to advantage. Most of your houses are in much the same condition that most of Williamsburg’s old houses were in when we started our program there. One of our greatest problems was to keep visitors from coming to see our project before we were ready for them. In the early years of the Williamsburg restoration, visitors insisted on coming before we were ready and then they would go away saying, “There’s not much to see there except a lot of shabby old houses.” So, if you are planning to set out to attract visitors right away, tell them about your **climate** and let it go at that.
Meanwhile, keep on quietly and persistently with your preservation activities and in a half a dozen years from now you need not hesitate to invite people to come to see what you are doing. It will take a long time to finish the job. I am not sure that such a job ever really gets finished. We have devoted twenty years to our project and are hoping to complete it in ten years more.

“But who is going to do all this? Where is the money coming from?” I can hear you thinking. This is where I am going to disappoint you, for I cannot answer those questions except to say that when Dr. Goodwin conceived the idea of restoring Williamsburg he didn’t have any money or any prospect of any. But he did have a plan and he had vision, courage, determination and persistence. You will have all of that here. Among your year around residents you have as intelligent and patriotic a group of citizens as are to be found anywhere. Among your summer residents you have men and women of broad vision and large means. Together these two groups can accomplish wonders in Newport. Your restoration project should be a joint undertaking with the responsibility for carrying it forward shared by outstanding representatives of all groups. If it is to succeed all of the citizens of Newport - year around resident and summer residents alike - must get behind it.

I can think of no more stimulating challenge for cooperation than this opportunity presents. If you will undertake this adventure together - each doing that part which he is best fitted to do - there is no question in my mind as to the outcome of your endeavors. Newport’s history belongs to all of you. All of you share the responsibility for your city’s future. Together you can bring lasting prosperity to this area. Together you can make Newport one of the most interesting tourist centers in the United States. Together you can help to preserve America’s history in bricks and mortar and do a tremendously important service for the generations which will come after you.

It is not inappropriate for Newport’s citizens to give some thought to the economic results which such a program is likely to produce in Newport and Rhode Island. I have told you something of the financial advantages Williamsburg and Virginia are deriving from the Williamsburg restoration. I have every reason to think that a similar project here would produce similar results only on a much broader scale. Your location is much more convenient for millions of Americans. Newport is known to thousands where Williamsburg was known to hundreds. Your project will be more extensive than ours for your city is ten times as large. Here you can recapture three centuries of history: In Williamsburg we have concerned ourselves with but one. Your historic treasures are spread over a greater area. You have every opportunity to expand your housing and hotel facilities. You can easily develop ways to accommodate many times as many visitors as we can.

Some of you may be saying, “But do we want all these people swarming over Newport?” That is for you to decide - but may I remind you that a lot of your things in Newport belong to these people. They are Americans, too, and Newport is part of their heritage, also. In a sense, you who live here are trustees of their treasurers.

Your possible hesitancy about having tourists in Newport in large numbers is a natural one. It is not unknown in Virginia. I remember a delightful story about a charming lady in Virginia who felt the
same way about the thousands of visitors who came to her state. Once when she was speaking her mind about the inconvenience such visitors can cause to permanent residents who dislike having the tempo of their lives altered, she was reminded that those visitors bring $100,000.00 a year to Virginia. “But,” she protested, “couldn’t they send the money?”

I hope that I have convinced you that you need have no fear as to the effect of a sound authentic restoration program will have on the economic life of your city. Important as this is you should not loose sight if the even more important rewards that come to the citizens of any community which preserved its historical treasures for present and future generations.

Think, if you will, what it will mean to your children and your grandchildren to grow up in an atmosphere of beauty, where in every block there is at leas one inviting garden. Crime does not thrive in that kind of environment but education and social progress do.

It will be no small satisfaction to you to know that you are doing your share to achieve something that really ought to be done for your country. And you will discover there is an inner contentment that comes with the realization that you are doing something - not for yourself - but for those who come after your, the countless American yet unborn who will never even know your name but who will love what you have done and thank you in their hearts for doing it.

Let me tell you how one American thanked Mr. Rockefeller. He was a Private in the United States Army who had visited Williamsburg during World War II. He wrote as follows:

“I was Williamsburg recently and I wish to thank you for your kindness in inviting me, as well as the other soldiers from Fort Eustis, as your guest on this memorable tour. I want to thank you especially for the unique and wonderful way in which this visit made me realize the heritage and rich gifts of our country. Of all the sight I have seen, the books I have read, and the speeches I have heard, none ever made me see the greatness of this country with more force and clearness than when I saw Williamsburg slumbering peacefully on its old foundations.

It was a rare pleasure indeed to be in the same church where Washington prayed; to be in the same chamber where Patrick Henry shouted, ‘If this be treason, make the most of it’; to be in the same class room where Thomas Jefferson studied law, and in the same tavern where he danced with this fair Belinda. Never before or after in history have so may great men lived together at one time, and all their lives and works seemed to me to be mirrored in Williamsburg.

As a soldier in the United States Army, I am proud to have set foot on such grand old soil. More than ever it has made me live in the daily hope that by facing the future together, we shall all survive it together, both as a united nation and as free men.”

You and I know that somebody is going to have to put in a great deal of time and hard work if the Newport preservation project is going to get anywhere. It would be a great deal easier to forget the whole thing. If the preservation and restoration of this historic city is accomplished, it will be because there are enough people of vision and character in this community to carry it through. Not the least of your rewards will be the abiding joy that comes from knowing that you are that kind of person.
I hope that nothing that I have said tonight will give you the impression that I am suggesting that you try to make another Williamsburg out of Newport. Nothing is further from my mind. You have a totally different situation here - which should be approached in an entirely different way. What I am urging you to do is to make this place - not another Williamsburg - but another Newport, to recapture the charm and flavor of the old Newport, that stood here so proudly when the early chapters of America’s history were being written.

In my lifetime, I expect to see Newport born again. I expect to see the 18th century homes and buildings here carefully restored to the beauty which even their present-day shabbiness cannot conceal. I expect to see Newport a city of lovely doorways, gleaming brass knockers and well-painted houses. I expect to be among the thousands who will come to Newport to enjoy the lovely music festivals, to review its panorama of architecture, to enjoy its fascinating colonial taverns and to explore its delightfully different shops. Above all, I expect to thrill at the recaptures spirit of the city of that far-off time when a forest of tall masts grew in its harbor, and to delight in the quaintness and charm of its unique waterfront - a memorial which will be fitting indeed for those men of the sea of another century who first made Newport great and who carried the City’s fame to the most distant places of the earth.

As other countries measure their history we are a very young nation. The oldest landmarks in our country’s evolution are of such recent origin that if they were in Europe or Asia or even in other countries in this hemisphere they would be passed over as too young to merit too much attention. But may I remind you that our history - young as it is - is all the history we’ve got! A few hundred years from now the shabby evidences of our early beginnings will be among the most priceless treasures in our nation’s heritage. If such things - here and elsewhere - are to be preserved for posterity, we ought to begin preserving them without delay. Only yesterday - as history is measured - we were a new and struggling nation. If our generation is to make this kind of an unselfish gift to the American who will pass this way in the centuries to come, we who are here now should make it now.

Only tomorrow it will be too late.
Report to the Preservation Society of Newport County by the Committee for the Survey of Historic Buildings

This report is based on the work of the committee for the Survey since February. It will be discussed under the following headings.

1. The Survey itself. The preparation for publication of a survey of Newport building in order to show the value of restoring Newport’s historic building.

2. Research. The collection into an adequate file of data, photographs, measured drawings, maps and architectural and historic information about Newport’s building for reference and use as the project develops.

3. Public relations. The sponsoring of public interest and understanding of Newport’s architectural heritage and the education of the citizens of Newport in how to preserve and restore their old buildings.

4. Restoration. The plans for saving and restoring with care and accuracy the historic buildings of Newport County. Mr. Creer.

5. The comprehensive Plan. The development of a practical plan for restoring the historic aspect of the city. Recommendations for procedure.

1) The survey itself. The preparation for publication of a survey of Newport building as a basis for the undertaking of restoring the old part of Newport. The report on this section must of necessity be subject to later revision, since Mr. Lewis, who is chairman of the Publications committee is not here, and had not yet had the opportunity to make suggestions on this projected outline.

The purpose of the survey is to give to the public a clear and brief account of the existing architectural heritage of Newport, with notes on what has been lost, and suggestions for the preservation and enhancement of what remains. The basis of the work will depend chiefly on careful selection and analysis of the maps studied, and on many photographs of both existing and lost buildings.

The first section should consist of a short account of

1) The physical character of the town of Newport in colonial times and now.

2) The history of the city.
The kind of settlers who came, together with their reasons for coming.
Their background and interests, both religious and cultural.
Their pursuits.
The effect of the sea and land on the life of the city

3) The rise of the city.
4) The revolution.
5) The recession.
6) The revival as a summer resort.

The second section will comprise a study of the old city based on an analysis of maps of several selected dates.

The third section. The unique architectural possession of the City of Newport, which is especially rich in public and religious building of the pre-revolutionary period. It also possesses fine dwellings.


The Photographs.
A. Photographs of buildings that have been appreciated and restored, or that have survived in fair condition.

17th century
Wanton Lyman Hazard house
Maudsley house. - 17th century parts

18th century
Sabatarian Meeting house Maudsley house
Colony house Vernon house Trinity Church
Hunter house Bannister house 32 Fair Street
Lucas Robinson house Amanda Green house
Peter Simon house Robinson house Brick Market
Henry Collins house Redwood Library Touro Synagogue

19th century
Durfee house St Paul’s M.E. Church and others
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greek Revival</th>
<th>Van Zandt house</th>
<th>Central Baptist Church</th>
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**Asher Benjamin**  People’s Library Building

B. Good buildings, and sections of the city which have been allowed to become run down and shabby, or to be hidden by later additions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>17th century</th>
<th>The Wilbur Farm</th>
<th>The Quaker Meeting house</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18th century</td>
<td>Josiah Lyndon house</td>
<td>Oak Street house</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Restaurant next to Brick Market</td>
<td>Ennis House</td>
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<td></td>
<td>White Horse Tavern</td>
<td>Caleb Earls St. house</td>
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<td></td>
<td>House on Bowen’s Wharf</td>
<td>Pitt’s Head Tavern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bannister country house</td>
<td>42 Fair St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Young St.</td>
<td>St. Clare’s Home 77 Third St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perry House, Washington Square</td>
<td>78 Burnside Ave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J. Whitehorne house</td>
<td>Goddard house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mason house</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| 19th century       | S. Whitehorne house   |                          |

**Greek Revival**

Elmhurst with grounds and small buildings

**C. Lost Buildings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>17th century</th>
<th>Gov. Coddington house</th>
<th>Suston Grant house</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maxon house</td>
<td>Bull house</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Early 18th century**

Brenton-Coe house          Thomas Richardson house

Benedict Arnold Jr house   Gov. Joseph Wanton   Metcalf Bowler country house

**Mid 18th century**

Christopher Champlin house Godfrey Malbone house

Abraham Redwood house      Ayrault house

Polly Lawton house
Late 18th and 19th centuries

Richmond house Vaucluse

Conclusion. The Old Newport reviewed with prints, drawings, and daguerreotypes.

A paragraph about the physical appearances of the colonial city

The gardens, fruit trees and tobacco patches

The fences The hitching posts

The pavements The watering troughs

The wharves The yard buildings

The chance to recapture the past and turn misunderstood and neglected possessions into the assets to an old city that they inherently are and should be.

Cost of the Survey.

This has to be tentative, since it is hard to foresee unexpected expenses.

If the book is largely composed of photographs, one of the major expenses will be incurred in acquiring a collection of fine prints suitable for a book of distinguished character. An allotment of $1000 should be generous for this purpose.

Salary fees are the other chief source of expenditure. $1000 should cover these, for much of the preliminary ground work is already done. An allotment of $500 for service charges and unexpected expenses out to cover the cost of bringing the survey text ready for publication. Total. $2500.

2) Research. The collection into an adequate file of data, photographs, measured drawings, maps and architectural and historic information about Newport's building. This branch of our work underlies all other phases, and therefore is of paramount importance to the sound growth of the Society. With this end in mind, the committee recommends that there must be a continuous and separate fund for the needed research and collection of data. The Preservation Society and the Historical Society have applied for and received a grant of $1000 from the R.I. Foundation to be used jointly for such research. To this sum each society has added $500 and it is from this fund of $2000 that the work of collecting photographs, enlarging maps, etc. is being carried on.

A. Photographs. The Historical society and the Preservation Society are each developing a duplicate file of photographs, using as many sources of supply for existing photographs as possible. When we have
listed and catalogued all these we recommend that gaps be filled to complete the pictorial record. We have already found a great lack of interior views, much needed in our analysis of building style. To date, we have purchased 325 photographs of Newport buildings from Mr. Ralph Arnold. These were drawn from Mr. King Covell’s collection of negatives and include 88 early views, chiefly of Thames Street taken about 1880 by Clarence Stanhope. Thirty of these have been enlarged for clearer study.

The Historical Society has given permission to have prints made from the collection of nearly 1000 negatives left by Mr. Jonas Bergner. Most of these are already printed and identified. Two hundred and five are renumbered and listed and the negatives are now filed in available order. Six hundred more are in process of being sorted, listed and filed. Mr. Elton Manuel has printed these negatives for both Societies for the cost of the materials thus making an invaluable contribution both in the material results of his work and by this expression of his deep interest in the achievement of the society’s aims. Mrs. Sherman has given us an excellent mounted collection of Mr. Stanhope’s photographs of about 1880 which show many buildings now lost.

We have begun arrangements to select for printing, the negatives from collections of the Daily News, and to print the collection of Mrs. Milton Rall. We are issuing an appeal for all early views and prints of Newport, especially the stereopticon views and daguerreotypes by J. Appleby Williams. We want to borrow them so that we may have new negatives and enlargements made.

B) Maps

In order to study the growth of the city, we have listed the maps made at various dates beginning with Mumford’s map of 1712 and continuing until the last Sanborn Atlas of Newport dated 1920. From these we have selected the following for enlargement and particular study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mumford</td>
<td>1712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezre Stiles</td>
<td>1758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blascowitz</td>
<td>1777</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walling</td>
<td>1859</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dripp</td>
<td>1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlas</td>
<td>1878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlas</td>
<td>1907</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Upon the last four maps we have indicated in red the extant early buildings. Mr. Creer has made a key map based on Walling’s map of 1850, which includes all the areas of interest to the Society. From this map we have begun to take off special maps for various purposes, such as the showing of lost buildings, seventeenth century buildings, areas of building of different periods, suggested spot restorations, etc. From these out report for a comprehensive picture of Newport is being developed, together with recommendations for the plan of work.

The preliminary survey is completed. This data is recorded on the appended working maps and we are now developing our sets of special key maps.

C. Measured Drawings.

We have listed the sets of measured drawings of Newport buildings which have already been made. We have also prepared a preliminary list of buildings which should be measured both as a safeguard to their preservation and as an addition to the knowledge of Newport building. The list of buildings which have already been measured to date include

Trinity Church  Brick Market  Micah Spencer house
Colony house  Maxon house  Hunter house
Wanton-Lyman-Hazard house  Redwood Library
Sabbatarian Meeting house

Plus details of doors and mantels measured by Jones Bergner.

We have started measurements of Pitts Head Tavern.

Those buildings which should be measured as soon as possible include

The Touro Synagogue  Quaker Meeting house
The Vernon house  Wilbur Farm
The Maudsley house  The Robinson house

We have started to make a group of full scale measured drawings of architectural details for comparative study and for later publication. Subjects selected for these drawings are

Interior: door mouldings, window mouldings, cornices, chair rails, paneling, fireplace surrounds, decorative details, stair details.

Exterior: Doorways, paneled doors, windows, cornices, dormers
The list of houses to be used for measured details as it stands at present include

1. Maudsley, both 17th and 18th century parts
2. Wilbour Farm
   Lucas Robinson  House on Bowen’s Wharf
   Pitts Head  Peter Simon house
   Josiah Lyndon  Irey house - Church & High St
   78 Church St.  Robinson house
   20 Pelham St. (Ennis house)  Collins house
   Bannister house (town)  Shipley house
   Bannister house (country)  Southwick house
   Christopher Fowler house  St Clare Home
   Durfee house  John Whithorne house
   Tobin house  Samuel Whitehorne house
   Doors - 36 Church St.
     - Spring St.

D) Collection of records and historic data.

We are organizing the material already available in this field into a filing system comparable to our file of photographs. New information is collected and added to this file as rapidly as possible.

We have organized a committee to collect data and to recommend other sources of information about early Newport. Meetings are called monthly. Records of these meetings are kept and the new material that comes in is filed under its proper heading.

The note books in possession of the Historical Society are being studied and reorganized into the comprehensive file. These include the note books of Mr. Bergner, Mr. Stanhope, Mrs. Sherman, The Colonial Dames, Mr. Richardson, and Miss Powell as well as the comprehensive books of clippings gathered by Mr. Stanhope and Mrs. Sherman.

Miss Alice Brayton has searched the early newspapers for all references to building, houses and shops. She has completed and invaluable reference file from the time of the Mercury first out in 1758 to the beginning of the Revolutionary War.
Mrs. Bolhouse, Mrs. Covell, Mr. Manuel, Mr. Robeson, Mr. Lawton, Miss Ruth Davenport, and Mr. Brigham have all contributed helpful material.

Mr. John Benson has lent into the keeping of the Historical Society the account books of John Stevens until transcriptions of them can be completed.

3. Public Relations. The sponsoring of public interest and understanding of Newport’s architectural heritage and the education of the citizens of Newport in how to preserve and restore their old buildings.

Publications come under this heading. The survey has already been discussed. We have also made plans for a Society publication to be edited by Mr. Leonard Pannaggio. We hope to publish the first number in July and six numbers annually thereafter.

We also have in preparation material for pamphlet publication on run mouldings and paints as well as monographs on individual buildings etc. We have already discussed the study of the run mouldings under measured drawings. We have had preliminary talks with a good mill work company about making knives and mouldings to order and listing them so that people interested in restoring their old houses with correct detail may do so more easily. The Society will furnish information to be put out by the mill shop which will show the proper mouldings for houses of different periods.

We are collecting specific date about paints and colors used in early Newport building. We have conferred with a representative of a leading paint company and hope to arrange for the publication of a pamphlet of our findings to be distributed by the company as advice on paints and colors for owners of colonial homes, together with colors, either especially blended, or with direction on how to mix them for the proper tones.

Meanwhile we are collecting into our files, material which will enable us to run an informal bureau of information and advice on the restoration of the old houses, wharves, streets, shops, gardens, etc. in the city.

4. Restoration. The working plan for restoring with care and accuracy the historic buildings of Newport county.
A committee composed of Mr. Creer, Mr. Brown, and Mrs. Downing have begun the study and restoration of Pitt’s Head Tavern as headquarters for the Preservation Society. The method of work and the findings to date are presented in Mr. Creer’s report.

This committee is also engaged in collecting information about the Hunter House and in studying the fabric of the building itself in preparation for its restoration. Two rooms will be freshened and furnished suitably enough to be opened to the public on certain days this summer.

5. **The comprehensive plan.** The development of a practical plan for restoring the historic aspect of the city. The following recommendations are made by the committee based on the study of maps and of the building themselves.

Since Newport was a thriving town of some 1,500 buildings at the time of the Revolution and since the present city encompasses and has grown beyond the bounds of the 18th century town, this means that old Newport is sprawling in the heart of today’s city. It also happens that some of the best old buildings are in areas now blighted by modern business and transportation centers, and that many more have been swept away by modern indifference and needs.

Because of these factors, and the problems incurred by them, the committee recommends a “spot” restoration, based on developing around important buildings small areas which can be expanded as money and interest permit, and which can be subsidized separately. The committee recommends that these selected areas be restored as carefully and as completely as possible, with studied vistas, gardens, cobblestone streets, hitching posts, yard buildings, watering troughs, and all the paraphernalia of an earlier day. Whenever possible, those areas chosen for restoration should be linked with each other by connecting streets, which have been brought back to their former condition, and which form a fitting approach to the special sections. All aspects of the life of old Newport should be considered as factors in the historic restoration.

With these things in mind, the committee has suggested the following areas and buildings in the plan for restoring Newport.

1. Clarke Street, because of its historic associations and the unique importance of the Vernon house. The Strand Theatre, fronting Touro Street should be restored to its original state as a Greek Revival Church. The Second Baptist Church should be restored; also, the remaining old houses. The open spaces
should be gardened. Cobblestones and hitching posts should be put back. Trees should be planted. The Vernon House should be suitably furnished and set like the priceless possession it is.

2. Then to Spring and to Church Street for Trinity Church.

3. Redwood Library down Mill Street, past the First Congregational Church (restored) across……

4. Division Street which should be brought back as a small dwelling house section, to the Sabbatarian Meeting House and Touro Synagogue to Spring Street and the Square (restored--for the present plan--along Touro Street side to the Perry House.

5. A careful restoration of an 18th century and early 19th wharf, with the ships chandler’s building, the block makers shop, sail lofts, etc., used as the basis for a marine Museum and dock for the Constellation, if possible, and other old ships of varied type. This would be a unique development in museum units and would have a great appeal for visitors. Bowen’s Wharf has the most old buildings still standing, and also a good deal of information is available about this wharf, but the Torpedo Station location for this reconstruction might be more feasible and would connect with Washington St. group of houses and the Point section.

6. Marlborough Street, selected because of the Whitehorse Tavern, the M. E. Church, and the Pitt’s Head Tavern, on Charles Street. Also because of the vista of an old street that is given from Broadway.

7. The Quaker Meeting house.

8. A section of Upper Thames Street beginning with No. 75 and 77 (Betsy Coddington’s house) and continuing to the liberty tree, past John Steven’s stone mason shop, and branching down Bridge and down Cross Street. This should give a picture of an 18th century shop and home district combined. Here the early crafts shops should be again established with silver, pewter, glass, weaving, wood working and fine cabinet work etc. sponsored in their old setting, both as part of the activity of the colonial town, and as a revival of old industries for present may see.

9. Washington Street, featuring the Hunter, Collins, Robinson and Shipley houses up Poplar to Second to develop a small section of one story gambrel roofed houses.

10. The Wilbur Farm, available as one of the few seventeenth century houses remaining in Newport.
11. Lower Thames Street to restore a little bit of the “Court End of Town” and to do justice to three fine houses, the Francis Malbone, and the Israel and John Whitehorne houses.

12. Up from Thames to John and …for the Mawdsley House.

In conclusion, I wish to take this opportunity to record my deep appreciation of Mr. John Brown’s constant generous help and able guidance, and my own dependence on his good judgment, wisdom, and profound interest in the work of the Society.

Respectfully submitted

Antoinette F. Downing

Chairman of the committee for the Survey.
THIS INDENTURE OF LEASE made this 30th day of June, A. D.
1948 by and between Gladys Szeczenyi, of the City of Newport, County
of Newport, State of Rhode Island, hereinafter called the LESSOR,
and the Preservation Society of Newport County, Inc., a corporation
created under the laws of the said State of Rhode Island, hereinafter
called the LESSEE;

Whereas the Preservation Society of Newport County, Inc. has
been created for the purpose of preserving so far as possible for
posterity the buildings within the County of Newport which are by
reason of their history or their architecture representative of
the three centuries since Newport was founded; and whereas the said
Society desires as part of its program in furtherance of the ob-
jectives of the Society and of stimulating the interest of the
public therein, to make available for exhibition certain buildings
in Newport which are outstanding examples of the various periods
in Newport's history; and whereas "The Breakers" on Ochre Point
Avenue, owned by the LESSOR is such a building; and whereas the
LESSOR is in accord with the objectives of the Society, and is
desirous of assisting in the furtherance of those objectives, by
making "The Breakers" available for inspection by the public under
proper supervision and safeguards, and has agreed to lease the said
building and the grounds surrounding the same to the aforementioned
SOCIETY, NOW, THEREFORE,

WITNESSETH:

The LESSOR for and in consideration of the said premises, of
the rents, covenants and conditions hereinafter contained on the
part of the LESSORS to be paid, kept and performed, does hereby
release and lease unto the said LESSEE the tract of land with the
main building thereon, situated on Ochre Point Avenue in said
City of Newport, and known as "The Breakers", and the tract of
Breakers" are located.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said premises unto the said Lessee
for and during the period beginning the 1st day of July, A. D. 1948,
and ending the 30th day of June, A. D. 1949.

The Lessee covenants and agrees to pay to the Lessor the sum
of One Dollar during the said term for rent and hire of the said
granted premises, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged.

The Lessee further covenants and agrees with the Lessor as
follows:

1. It will use the ground or first floor only of the
main building or residence (hereinafter in this lease referred to
as the building), and will use the same only for the purpose of
exhibiting the same to the public and for occasional concerts.
It will not permit access by the public to any part of the building
above said ground or first floor.

2. It will provide proper safe guards at all times for
the protection of the premises including the household furniture
and furnishings, and will employ adequate personnel for that pur-
pose. It will provide properly trained attendants who will guide
the visitors to the building through the various rooms and who
will keep them under their supervision and control, so that they
may not go unescorted through the building.

3. It will pay all charges for water, light, heat and
other like services used on the premises, and will maintain heat
in the building whenever it may be necessary in the opinion of
Lessor's present caretaker or of such other person as she may design-
ate. It will also pay all charges for cleaning and maintaining
the premises in as good condition as they now are, and all charges
for closing the same at the termination of the lease.

4. It will keep the interior of the building in ordinary
made necessary by reason of structural defects.

5. It will maintain the grounds surrounding said building in a neat and orderly condition, and will control the use of the same, so that the same may not be damaged by the public. It will not permit picnicking or the eating of lunches, etc. by the public either on the grounds or within the said building.

6. It will not lease or underlet, or assign this lease without the consent in writing of the Lessor.

7. It will secure and maintain adequate public liability insurance against liability for personal injury to persons or damages to their property on the premises, and the lessee shall indemnify and save harmless the lessor against all loss, costs, damages and expenses caused by or arising out of any accident, injury or damage to persons or their property on the premises. It will further secure and maintain insurance against loss by theft or burglary of the household furniture or furnishings in a sum to be agreed by the lessor and the lessee.

8. The lessee will not contract any debts or incur any liabilities in the name of the lessor and shall indemnify and save harmless the lessor against all loss, costs, damages and expenses for any labor or materials furnished to the premises during the term of this lease by order or authorization of the lessee.

9. It will employ in the care of the said premises such persons now in the employ of the Lessor as she may designate, as long as they desire employment and render satisfactory service.

10. In the event that the City of Newport during the period of this lease increases the assessment against the demised premises, the Lessee will pay the increased tax due to such increased assessment.

11. The Lessee will, as far as possible, provide parking
Breakers for exhibition purposes may not be detrimental to the neighborhood.

The Lessor covenants and agrees with the Lessee as follows:

a) She will pay the taxes during the period of this lease, except any increase in taxes due to an increase in the present assessment, said increase to be paid by the Lessee as hereinbefore provided.

b) She will maintain such insurance of the premises and contents of the same against loss by fire as she may desire and will pay the cost of the same.

c) She will maintain the exterior of the building in good repair and will make such repairs to the interior of the building as may become necessary by reason of structural defects.

This lease may be terminated by either party on the first day of November, A.D. 1948, provided notice in writing of intention to terminate shall be given to the other party at least thirty (30) days prior to said date.

At the expiration or sooner termination of this lease, the Lessee will quietly and peaceably surrender possession of the premises to the Lessor in as good order as they now are, ordinary wear and tear and damages by the elements excepted.

It is further agreed that where in this lease the words "lessor" and "lessee" are used, the same both as to rights and as to duties and liabilities shall import and extend to the heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns of such lessor and lessee, except where the context clearly excludes such meaning.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the said Lessor has hereunto set her hand and seal, and the Lessee has caused these presents to be signed and the corporate seal to be hereto affixed by Katherine Warren, its President, and Albert K. Sherman, its Treasurer, this 30th day of June, A.D. 1948.

In presence of:

[Signature]

[Signature]
OUTLINE OF SUGGESTED PROGRAM FOR 1949
PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF NEWPORT COUNTY

I. General conditions in Newport necessitate drastic action.
   A. No economic relief to offset the loss of the Torpedo Station and possible future reduction in Naval activities.
   B. Declining land values and taxes in certain areas tend toward chaos and a situation that will completely disrupt the economic and social life in Newport.

II. Purpose or objectives.
   A. To broaden the present activities of the Preservation Society.
   B. To create the most desirable type of economic development in keeping with the standards and traditions of Newport--the attraction and entertainment of tourists.
   C. To preserve additional houses and landmarks in Newport County.

III. Buildings to be opened.
   A. Under a strip ticket.
      1. "The Breakers"
      2. Museum for Antique Vehicles
      3. Colony House
         a. Completely restored to original condition.
         b. To house supplementary displays such as Gilbert Stuart’s portrait of Washington, special displays of costumes, Newport furniture, etc.
      4. Opening of at least one garden each week of the summer.
      5. "Belcourt" - display of old automobiles.
      6. Wanton Lyman Hazard House
      7. Whitehall
   B. Free or voluntary box contributions
      1. Trinity Church
      2. Touro Synagogue
      3. Salve Regina
      4. Newport Historical Society
      5. Redwood Library
   C. Individual subscriptions
1. Hunter House
2. Vernon House
3. Pitts Head Tavern

IV. Available tours

A. Ocean Drive
   1. Renewal of road bed.
   2. Cleaning and landscaping of areas which have fallen into neglect.
   3. Completely new system of parking with adequate policing to enforce these regulations.

B. Swiss Village

C. Cliff Walk

D. Military & Naval Establishments

V. Available recreation

A. Golf
B. Swimming
C. Tennis
D. Boating

VI. Machinery of operation

A. A complete reorganization of the Preservation Society to include:
   1. A strong advisory body to control the standards of operation and to advise on policies.
   2. An executive committee to ultimately determine the policies to be pursued.
   3. The appointment of an executive secretary to become the administrative officer of the Society.

B. The selection of a site for a central agency or bureau to distribute not only the strip tickets but all desired information.

VII. Supplementary Activities

A. The conduction by the Chamber of Commerce of a long clean-up and paint-up and landscaping program from now until June 1st.

B. The development of an adequate system of housing these tourists.

C. Expert promotion and advertising of these projects to insure their success.
Board of Trustees of the Preservation Society of Newport County.

Dear Sirs,

I hold title to the Governor Arnold Burial Ground & the Lot in front of same on Pelham Street in Newport. If the Preservation Society would be willing to accept them I should be glad to deed both these pieces of land to the Society.

Very sincerely,

John Howard Benson

29, Thames Street - Newport - R. I.
TEN PRODUCTIVE YEARS

It seems hardly possible that ten years have passed since Kenneth Chorley, president of Colonial Williamsburg, visualized to a large gathering here how Newport could coordinate its efforts successfully to preserve its priceless heritage of colonial buildings and other examples of its historic past.

It was in March, 1947, that the talk inspired a group that since has become the Preservation Society of Newport County. In the passing nine and a half years the society has accomplished a prodigious mission. Yet it can be truly said, the society’s past is only prologue.

Its goal isn’t the preservation and restoration of old buildings alone, although that has been done in three outstanding instances—the Hunter House on Washington Street, The Pitts Head Tavern on Meeting Street, and now the White Horse Tavern of Marlborough Street.

But through its sponsorship and the generosity of friends, two publications of historical importance have been issued—*The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island* by Antoinette F. Downing and Vincent J. Scully Jr., and *Arts and Crafts of Newport County* by Ralph E. Carpenter, Jr.

Through Preservation Society sponsorship, not only has that great showplace of the 1890s, “The Breakers” been opened to the public view but showings of other famous homes and public edifices have been arranged and a vast amount of valuable material publicizing Newport has been issued.

No wonder the Preservation Society is anxious to mark appropriately the end of its first decade, and such a successful decade, with an appropriate celebration next year. But were it not for the vision and endurance of Mrs. George Henry Warren, its first and only president, and her able and loyal co-workers, the society’s accomplishments in preserving Newport’s precious past would not have been made possible. The anniversary should be as much of an accolade to them as it will be an observance of ten years of progress.

But the very model for cities who don’t have one, and intend to get one exists at Newport, R.I. For what Newport has that every city in the country could do well to get one just like is a Preservation Society.

A Society that protects the historic and architectural landmarks of a city from the razing hand of a so-called Progress that destroys the enduring for the purpose of replacing it with a neuter modernity. A society that keeps historical buildings, institutions and land intact for future generations to see and profit from. To learn just what part of the nation’s total history was made in that very city at that very spot.

Here in New York the iron ball of the wrecker has demolished so much that actually didn’t belong to the city at all, but which indeed belonged far more to the citizens of the country.

The home of Mark Twain, its library and appurtenances would be a national shrine today, except for the fact that there was no Preservation Society to keep it from being sold and replaced with an ugly square modern building.

But if New Yorkers go on knocking down the homes and erasing the records of its storied great, Newporters won’t. They won’t because it’s paying off. In cash, that is. As well as the knowledge of having saved a part of America that can never exist again. Last year nearly 60,000 people came to Newport to see “The Breakers,” the magnificent 70-room summer home built in 1895 by the late Cornelius Vanderbilt. Since an average of $20 is spent every vacationing day by the roaming tourist, according to the United States Chamber of Commerce, one begins to get an idea of what preserving the old Newport is beginning to mean to the citizens of today’s Newport, economically speaking.

As a matter of fact, this celebrated island-city chiefly thought of as the gilded resort of the wealthy, actually has roots that go back to 1638 in the history of the country.
So, while it’s perfectly true the tourists who come they would like to see such palatial splendor as “The Breakers,” they want also to see the White Horse Tavern, oldest ale-house still in operation, restored by the Preservation Society as a combination museum and colonial tavern.

They want to see the Touro Synagogue, not only the oldest synagogue in America, but also one of the most beautiful places of worship anywhere, the masterpiece of Peter Harrison, America’s first architect. Also on their route is the Redwood Library. They visit the Colony House, one of the very few early 18th Century government buildings still standing, the Old Stone Mill, sometimes said to have been built by Norsemen seven centuries ago; the elegant Hunter House where Admiral de Ternay, who commanded the French Navy during the Revolutionary War, had his headquarters and where he died; the House, where Gen. Rochambeau was quartered; and the Trinity Church, a Christopher Wren type church in style and feeling, where George Washington used to worship.

There are 350 or 400 such unique houses in Newport thanks to the Preservation Society’s efforts, they now stand perfectly restored, for all to see, to learn from, and be exalted by. For in a sense they belong to everyone. “When the Newport Preservation Society was founded 19 years ago, said Mrs. Ottavio Prochet, chairman of the annual ball committee conducted each summer by the group as its only fund-raising effort, “the apathy of Newporters toward restoring and preserving their city was in the main the most noticeable thing about the town. Now, with the economical proof before them and in their pockets, the people on the island are beginning to wake up. They see people come from all over the world, prepared to spend money in the city of today, in order to have a look at the city of the past.”

* From the scrapbook of Monique Panaggio.
Universal cooperation will be needed if Newport’s goal of carefully planned historic preservation is to be realized in full, a Yale University expert told the Preservation Society of Newport County at its annual meeting in “the Breakers” last night.

The guest speaker was Christopher Tunnard, director of Yale’s graduate city planning program and partner in the firm of Tunnard & Harris which is drawing up a comprehensive plan for Newport under a $13,500 grant from the Avalon Foundation. The plan is scheduled to be submitted Nov. 30.

Tunnard, who showed color slides said, “There is no more wonderful community than this in which one could be brought up.” He cited the cultural and artistic environment in which Newport is steeped.

To bring Newport to the peak of its economic function and full beauty will require many cooperative factors, such as minimum housing standards, a vastly increased preservation program and organized tourist movement and much individual enterprise, the Yale teacher said.

“It can be done if everyone joins in. Its not too late, but the way things have gone in the last few years, the cost may become too great,” Tunnard said.

He pointed out that throughout the nation one-quarter of the historic buildings that existed in 1911 have now been destroyed. Slow-moving Congressional measures to set up some means of historic preservation were cited by Tunnard.

He cautioned that preservationists must keep in mind the great mass of the traveling public, not just the scholars and artists who are trained to appreciate restoration work.

Downtown Newport can become once more a highly fashionable place to live, said Tunnard, as he showed the uplift of the Strand section in southwest London.

The city planning expert praised Thursday night’s initial attempt by Newport and Portsmouth Planning Boards to set up some sort of regional planning on Aquidneck Island. “A most wholesome development,” Tunnard declared.
“Plans For City’s Future Outlined By Consultants”

A team of planning consultants has recommended that the Preservation Society of Newport County aid the city in developing an all-embracing plan of future development covering historic preservation, housing, traffic, and commerce.

Tunnard & Harris of Mr. Carmel, Conn., the consultants engaged by the society, say Newport’s prime immediate need is a properly-staffed fulltime city planning office.

The time of comprehensive physical planning runs throughout the long-awaited 75-page report made public today by the Preservation Society, which used a $13,500 grant from the Avalon Foundation to procure the study.

The authors are Christopher Tunnard and Walter DeSales Harris, professors in the Graduate School of City Planning at Yale University. They are affiliated as a consultant firm, independent of the university. Work on the project, which included field surveys, interviews, historical research, study of past plans and the drawing of sketches, began June 15.

Received 12 days ago, the report as been viewed by the society and was briefly outlined by Robert J. Kerr II, its director, in an executive session of the city Council last Wednesday. The press was given time to study the report and make it public today.

Less of a blueprint than it is an exhortation or sermon, the so-called Preservation Planning Report is not a public document for action by the city, but a contract project for the Preservation Society, which expended the Avalon Foundation grant and was itself one of the agencies studied and interviewed by Tunnard & Harris.

No price tags are affixed to any of the recommendations or sample development plans in the report, nor does it set any timetable of detailed sequence of steps. The Yale men view their work as a first step by which somebody can proceed to secure funds and pay for future professional planning of action.

Samples of the kind of development that would be possible in limited areas, Tunnard & Harris spent considerable time on two suggestions:

1. The inclusion of the proposed “Queen Anne Square” of Trinity Church in a “downtown plan” which would revamp Thames Street from Washington Square to Mill street, opening up views to the water.
2. The rehabilitation of the Golden Hill area as an ideal low or middle-income housing district, making use of existing structures of historical significance.

   Additionally, they suggest that Washington St. is a logical place for upper income housing in rehabilitated historical homes which possibly would be attractive to upper-echelon Raytheon Co. workers.

   On traffic matters, Tunnard & Harris are very dubious about the logic or practicality of present proposals for a waterfront street or new super-artery that would sweep along Thames Street and head uphill to connect with Memorial Boulevard. They think it would merely divide the city from the waterfront without solving the critical problem of north-south traffic flow.

   The planners find much in Newport that hints at a bright future, but they also see a certain amount of chaos from lack of overall full-time planning. They hail the “imaginative lead” taken by the Preservation Society, but they do not say the society should single-handedly re-make Newport.

   Here is a summary of the consultant’s recommendations:

   -- The Preservation Society should aid the city in developing a comprehensive plan.

   -- That can be furthered by having the society formally represented on the Planning Board and the Redevelopment Agency, and by setting up a planning committee within the society.

   -- Immediate “impact” studies of district housing areas like Golden Hill and the Point should be made.

   -- As part of the comprehensive plan, a traffic survey should be made, using federal and state funds, together with a city contribution. The survey should keep in mind the traditional street arteries among which Newport history has grown up.

   -- As another “impact” or limited sector project, the downtown area should be studied to include the Trinity Church open-square plan and redevelopment of the commercial area.

   -- An historically-based harbor redevelopment project should be given high priority.

   Already the Preservation Planning Report has drawn a preliminary response from the city. Mayor James L. Maher, who with Councilman J. Harold McCormick met last month with Kerr and Harris of the planning firm, wrote: “Mr. Harris’ presentation of the concepts for the redevelopment of the historic 18th century section of the city has opened new avenues of approach to the city which have not been made clear to us before.”
The Mayor assured Kerr of the city’s interest and cooperation. As a result of this exchange, the completed report was shown to the Council last week.

Tunnard & Harris speak of the report as “analytical and promotional.” They originally thought they would concentrate on basic investigations and analysis but decided to devote time in attempting to aid the community in “organizing for action.”

In an historical introduction the planners point out that “free-worshiping Rhode Island” does not have towns centered on a single colonial church with a village green. In Newport, the important public buildings are not massed in a square, but are scattered “presenting a most interesting and unusual urban scene.”

They hasten to add that the 19th century estate mansions must be fitted into the preservation plan just like the 18th century colonial seaport section of Newport.

But it would be unrealistic to try and turn the central business district into a museum of architecture. A downtown economic revival is an essential part of preservation-planning, the report states, “We are not dealing with a small town like Williamsburg, but with a Rhode Island city which must continue to function as a modern city while emphasizing its unique national importance as one of the five great seaports of colonial times,” the planners say.

They find that the current opportunities for economic growth here are bright, but warn that “No one is going to step forward to ‘save’ Newport from Decay - there is no one agency or individual in existence which can afford to do so.”

Bearing in mind the economic benefits of the summer colony and the Navy, the city must still expand its attractions for a wider segment of the public in order to compete with other tourist “magnets,” the urban planners believe.

Looking at the resort colonists, the planners say, “The fact that summer people are still coming to Newport, in spite of its decline, is a tribute to their loyalty, but reflects no particular credit on the city, which has done little to protest the invasion of the estate area by commercial development and sporadic new residential intrusion.”
The long-term summer residents are a very desirable economic asset and, though small in number compared to transient tourists, spend a lot more money - in Newport and other resorts, Tunnard & Harris note.

But the city has to create a new source of revenue by projecting a “new image” that of the historically-important Old Newport, the experts say. Attracting tourists means attracting desirable industry, since executives would see and like the town.

One possibility is that, with the completion of the state highway program Newport could become a “dormitory” of Providence, housing hordes of commuters who would be within 35 minutes of upstate jobs. However, Tunnard & Harris don’t particularly like this goal. And they rule out as illogical any attempt to foster Newport as a center for massive industrial development.

There is no one panacea for Newport, the visiting surveyors assert. The “Museum village” idea presumably like Sturbridge, Mass has to be ruled out, since that scheme is for small historic places.

It would be unrealistic to base all hope on federal urban development and renewal programs, the planners feel. Besides governmental help, Newport’s revamping requires aid from private financial sources, non-profit corporations and trust foundations.

A great amount of municipal face-lifting and house-cleaning has to be done, the report makes clear. At every turn in the downtown area, the consultants “found existing conditions hampering both historical appreciation and orderly modern growth.

Single historic units cannot be preserved without planning Tunnard & Harris feel. Some are in objectionable surroundings or are difficult of access, it is reported, and there must be an overall what-to-do plan. Without some brand new building and development, the city will stagnate, the Yale men declare.

But they see a solution in the future pooling together of many individual efforts in an orderly, comprehensive total plan. Taking note of recent moves for regional planning in the country, Tunnard & Harris say:

“To achieve any worthwhile participation in an island-wide planning effort without having one’s own city’s planning organization in order is impossible. Newport’s inability to develop its renewal program, ease its traffic congestion, stimulate and revitalize its commercial function and enhance its
position as a tourist and living environment is largely due to its lack of an organized planning effort,” the consultants’ assert.

The present Planning Board, Redevelopment Agency and part-time city planning consultants can’t hope to solve the adjustments a 300 year old city has to make as it emerges into the last half of the 20th century, Tunnard & Harris state, “the pooling of resources so as to make funds available for competent technical and administrative planning is without a doubt the most important problem facing the city of Newport,” the survey firm informs the Preservation Society.

Newport Daily News
August 20, 1960

“Historians Praise City’s Architecture”

Members of the Society of Architectural Historians expressed enthusiasm with all that Newport offered them during their three-day conference which ended at noon today.

Some members said that the city presented a variety of architecture which was wider in scope than that offered to them during previous conferences held in other America cities and in Europe.

Gerald Waitland of New York City, chairman of the conference and architect for the Touro Synagogue restoration was enthusiastic about the arrangements made by the Newport Preservation and Historical Societies for the conference.

Mrs. George Henry Warren showed slides of old Newport and narrated the history of the city to the members at a meeting in the Colony House on Saturday night. Members visited the White Horse Tavern, Touro Synagogue, mansions in the summer colony, the Naval base and other points of interest.
ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL

No. 416

(Chapter 149)

AN ORDINANCE IN AMENDMENT OF AND IN ADDITION TO THE ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, REVISION OF 1945, AS AMENDED, ENTITLED “AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR HISTORIC AREA ZONING”.

BE IT ORDAINED by the City of Newport:

SECTION 1. The Ordinances of the City of Newport, Revision of 1945, as amended, are hereby further amended by adding a new Chapter, number 149, entitles “An Ordinance To Provide for Historic Area Zoning”.

149-1. PURPOSE--The regulations set forth in this ordinance are adopted pursuant to the authority of Title 45-24.1 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, 1956, as amended, to preserve districts and specific buildings of Newport which reflect elements of its cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history. This ordinance is designed to stabilize and improve property value in such historic districts and to preserve specific buildings or structures which are deemed to be of historic or architectural value, to foster civic beauty, to strengthen the local economy and to promote the use of such districts and specific buildings for the education, pleasure and welfare of the citizens of Newport.

149-2. DISTRICTS--For the purposes of this ordinance the boundaries of historic districts are established as shown on a map entitled “Historic District Map”, filed at the office of the City Clerk of the City of Newport. Said map is hereby incorporated as a part of this ordinance.

149.3 REGULATION

A. A certificate of approval from the Historic District Commission is mandatory before the following may be undertaken within any district shown on the Historic District Map or on a list of specified buildings or structures which are approved by the City Council upon recommendation of the Historic District Commission:

1. Erection of a new structure;
2. Moving, demolition or alteration of an existing structure in any manner affecting the exterior appearance of such structure.
3. Change in land use affecting the exterior appearance of any building thereon;
4. The erection, remodeling or replacing of any sign affecting the exterior appearance of any building.
B. The regulations of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Newport, as amended, shall remain in full force and effect within any historic district.

C. The provisions of this ordinance shall not apply to any structure which must be removed or demolished by reason of the construction of a new public highway or the widening of an existing highway or by reason of the operation of any other law pertaining to the City of Newport relating to the repair or demolition of any building.

IN COUNCIL
READ & PASSED
January 27 1965
A TRUE COPY ATTEST:

John F. Fitzgerald
City Clerk

Historic District Commission:

A. Establishment - There is hereby established a Historic District Commission to carry out the purpose of this ordinance

B. Membership and Appointment -

1. The Commission shall consist of seven (7) members, residents of the City of Newport, to be appointed by the mayor of the City of Newport, with the consent of the City Council. Members shall be appointed for a term of three (3) years except that the initial appointment of two members shall be for one year, two members for two years and three members for three years. Members shall be eligible for reappointment.

2. In the event of a vacancy on the Commission the Mayor shall make an interim appointment with the consent of the City Council for the remainder of the unexpired term.

3. The Commission shall organize annually and, by election, shall select from its membership a chairman, vice chairman and secretary and shall adopt rules of procedure deemed necessary in discharging its duties. Said rules and procedures and any additions and amendments thereto shall be submitted to the City Council for its approval.

C. Powers and Procedures

1. It shall be the duty of the Historic District Commission to review any application to erect, alter, move or demolish and existing structure within a historic district and to approve or reject such application.

2. Any person, individual, firm or corporation proposing to erect, alter, move or demolish an existing structure within a historic district shall file an application for the same with the Historic District
Commission at the office of the Building Inspector of the City of Newport, who shall forward said application together with all maps, plans, and all other data to the Historic District Commission. Each application shall include all necessary data required by the rules of the Historic District Commission and shall be advertised by the Building Inspector in such manner as provided for in the rules of the Commission.

3. In reviewing an application and plans the Commission shall give consideration to
   
   (a) The historic or architectural values of significance of the structure and its relation to the historic value of the surrounding area;
   
   (b) The relationship of the exterior architectural features of such structure to the rest of the structure and to the surrounding area;
   
   (c) The general compatibility of the exterior design, arrangement, texture, and material proposed;

4. The Commission shall pass only on exterior features of a structure and shall not consider interior arrangement; not shall it disapprove application except in regard to the considerations set forth above.

5. It is the intent of this ordinance that the commission be strict in its judgment of plans for structures deemed to be valuable according to studies performed for districts of historic or architectural value. It is also the intent of the ordinance that the commission shall be lenient in its judgment of plans for structures of little historic value or for plans for new construction except where such plans would seriously impair the historic or architectural value of surrounding structures. It is not the intent of this ordinance to limit new construction, alteration, or repairs to any one period of architectural style.

6. Special Considerations
   
   (a) In the case of an application for alteration effecting the exterior appearance of a structure or for the moving or demolition of a structure which thereof will be a great loss to the city, state or nation, the Commission shall endeavor to work out with the owner an economically feasible plan for the preservation of such structure.
   
   (b) Unless the Commission is satisfied that the retention of such structures constitutes a hazard to public safety, which hazard cannot be eliminated by economic means available to the owner, the Commission shall file with the Building Inspector its rejection of such application.
   
   (c) Unless the Commission is satisfied that proposed construction or alteration will not materially impair the historic value of a structure, the Commission shall file with the Building Inspector its rejection of such application.
   
   (d) In the absence of a change in such structure arising from casualty no new application for the same or similar work shall be filed within one year after such rejection.
   
   (e) In the case of any structure deemed to be valuable for the period of architecture it represents and important to the neighborhood within which it exists, the Commission may file with the
Building Inspector its approval of such application if any of the circumstances under which approval might have been given under the preceding paragraphs are in existence, of if:

1. such structure is a deterrent to a major improvement program which will be of substantial benefit to the community;
2. retention of such structure would cause undue financial hardship to the owner, or,
3. retention of such structure would not be in the interest of the majority of the community.

(f) Moving of structures of historic or architectural value may be permitted as an alternative to demolition.

7. Pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 220 of the Public Laws of Rhode Island, 1964, the Historic District Commission is authorized to recommend to the City Council a list of specified buildings or structures which are deemed to be of historic or architectural value. The City Council may adopt such recommended list of specified buildings by ordinance after first advertising the same and conducting a public hearing thereon. Specified buildings may be added to or deleted from such recommended list from time to time upon recommendation of the Historic District Commission.

D. MEETINGS

1. All meetings of the Commission shall be open to the public. Any person, or his duly constituted representative, shall be entitled to appear and be heard on any matter before the Commission reaches a decision.
2. The Commission shall keep a record of its proceedings and action which shall be on file for public view at the office of the Building Inspector.
3. Notice of Commission meetings shall appear in a newspaper with general circulation in the City of Newport seven (7) days prior to such meetings.
4. Five (5) members shall constitute a quorum and the concurring of four of the members shall be necessary for a decision.

E. ACTION OF THE COMMISSION

1. The Commission shall file with the Building Inspector its certificate of approval or rejection of all applications submitted to it for review.
2. No work shall begin until such certificates shall have been filed.
3. In the case of rejection, such certificate shall be binding on the Building Inspector and no permit shall be issued.
4. Failure of the Commission to act within forty-five (45) days from the date an application is filed shall constitute approval unless and extension is agreed upon mutually by the applicant and the Commission. In the event, however, that the Historic District Commission shall make a finding of fact that the circumstances of a particular application requires further time or additional study and information that
can be obtained within the aforesaid period of forty-five (45) days, then and in said event the said
Commission shall have a period of up to ninety (90) days within which to act upon such application.

149-5. EXCEPTION

A. Nothing in this ordinance shall be construed to prevent painting, routine maintenance or repair
of any structure within an Historic district; nor shall anything in this ordinance be construed to prevent the
construction, alteration, moving or demolition of any structure under a permit issued by the Building
Inspector prior to the passage of this ordinance. The work “repair” as used in this section shall mean a
replacement in kind of any exterior portion of a building.

149-6. VIOLATION

Where there is any violation of this ordinance or any action taken thereunder the Building
Inspector, the Historic District Commission or the Zoning Board of Review, through the City Solicitor,
shall institute appropriate action to prevent, enjoin, abate, or remove such violation.

149-7. APPEAL

Any person or persons jointly or severally aggrieved by a decision of the Historic District
Commission shall have the right of appeal concerning such decision to the Zoning Board of Review, for a
hearing, de novo.

Any person or persons jointly or severally aggrieved by a decision of the Zoning Board of Review
on a matter of appeal under this ordinance may appeal to the Supreme Court of Rhode Island by writ of
Certiorari.

149-8. SEPARABILITY

If any word, phrase, clause, paragraph or section of this ordinance should be ruled invalid or
unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, it shall not effect the validity of this ordinance as a
whole or any part thereof other than the part so judged to be invalid or unconstitutional.

SEC. 2 EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage and all ordinances and parts
of ordinances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.