Chairman’s Report

By Monty Burnham
From the Annual Meeting
June 19, 2021

It is now time for me to give you my life story. But failing that, I will give you an Annual Report.

Before I read it, I want to make note of a number of individuals whom we have lost during these past years. These are people who have given exceptional energy over the years to the Preservation Society, and we shall miss them in a myriad of ways.

Dayton T. Carr; William W. Corcoran, Esq.; Robert J. Coyne; Ted Eayrs; David B. Ford; Sarah M. Gewirz; and Eugene B. Roberts, Jr.

Please join me in a moment of silence for these great friends.

Thank you.

As many of you have heard me say, probably over and over, one of my favorite things to do is say “thank you.” Tonight is no exception. As I end my tenure as Chairman of the Board, I want to thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you for the chance I had to serve as Board Chair for the last five years, and as a Trustee since 2001. The latter one does strike me as rather long, but I have loved every minute of it. It has been a great experience and I shall remember it always.

Twenty years ago, the budget of the Preservation Society was $14.4 million. Before the COVID-19 pandemic closed down activities, we were preparing to approve a $26 million budget. The scope of this growth made us all feel very confident. But the pandemic put a wrench in our best-laid plans. Things looked perilous until very recently. The good news is, as you will hear from our Treasurer, Bill Lucey, we are currently holding our own and have even managed to comply with the 11th commandment – “Thou Shall Not Spend Thy Principal.” In other words, we were able to avoid drawing on our endowment and the outlook is reasonably positive at this point. There have been a number of wonderful moments in the past 20 years, and I would have great difficulty producing a list of these.

“Thou Shall Not Spend Thy Principal.”
The Preservation Society Of Newport County

The Scenic Aquidneck Coalition project buried utility lines and removed 77 utility poles along the Paradise Valley area.

Governor Daniel J. McKee addresses the Annual Meeting, The Breakers, June 10, 2021

To both past and present leaders of the Preservation Society, you all played a key role in preserving The Breakers and its grounds for generations of visitors to take in the splendor.

Governor Daniel J. McKee

Two items to note before closing:

First, I have had the privilege of serving – and I am not fooling around – with outstanding trustees and the chance to work with a staff that is professional, committed, hardworking, and incredibly helpful. I have seen the many members and volunteers who support this organization do remarkable things for us. Among these, especially, have been my immediate predecessors as Board Chairs. Knowing and working with Armin Allen, Pierre Irving and Don Ross was valuable beyond measure. I admire them all, their endurance, stamina and wise advice, and know that you will see this also in my successor, Bill Lucey.

I thank you over and over and want you to know how much I will miss you.

Item two: From my own educational standpoint, I have had the pleasure and excitement of learning an enormous amount. I have learned about zoning – with a little extra help from my son on that one – about adaptive re-use, about value engineering (that means finding something that you want to be less expensive), about geothermal heating and cooling, about fundraising and maintenance (inevitably intertwined events), about gardens, garden design and restoration. Quite honestly, all kinds of things I might never have thought of had I not had this experience.

For this, I also thank you one and all.

A few follow:

The development of the Welcome Center is especially meaningful to me with, now, a lovely arrival spot for the many visitors who come to The Breakers. It provides what we sought from the outset: tickets, toilets and tea. As well as air conditioning for weary tourists, limited food service for the hungry ones, and some helpful directions toward other points of interest in Newport. Perhaps the most entertaining aspect of the Welcome Center is a question often heard (I’m not making this up), from our visitors. After all the controversy, visitors frequently ask about the year in which Cornelius Vanderbilt built the Welcome Center. It fits in so beautifully that many of our visitors see it as part of Vanderbilt’s original design, not as a small contemporary garden-style building finished only in the last three years.

The pandemic has also given us positive opportunities, as demonstrated by our Halloween party – all ages – at The Breakers, Sparkling Lights at Christmas, virtual lectures from locations in the U.S. and abroad, and collaboration with other non-profits, like Scenic Aquidneck, which emulated similar work done earlier, burying utilities in Paradise Valley. I would say honestly, I think burying utilities in Paradise Valley was such a good thing to have done, it ranks right up there with the Welcome Center. There are really far too many to count.

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Three simple lessons grounded me:

One: When you’re going up a steep hill, you’ve got to lean into it. You can’t pull back. So, our approach to beating the pandemic has been to lean in. Take it on. To not be daunted by it.

Two: When you’re out in the woods, you’ve got to be prepared for the unexpected. The boulder field that’s not in the trail book; the rushing stream that you have to get over. There is not a day of the week when there hasn’t been an unexpected surprise at work. And just like you can’t plop down in the middle of a boulder field and say I’m not going to go on, we’ve had no option but to just keep going.

And the final lesson is to take each moment, step by step. We got from Charlestown to Burrillville, moving forward, sideways, sometimes backwards, one step at a time. It may sound simplistic but there were times – out in the woods – when that mantra, “step by step,” got us to our destination. Same for work.

Despite this pandemic, think about this past year:

• First museum in the state to open. Back on June 3 of last year, we got the go-ahead from the state and we opened on June 4. That’s 371 days ago. There are a lot of museums that have still not opened.
• 243,000 visitors. Off by about 75 percent, but I cherish each one of those 243,000 people. They saved our bacon.
• A year that ended in the black.
• A massive roof restored at Marble House.
• A total transformation of the landscape here at The Breakers. Walk the path.
• Records set for fundraising. Thank you, thank you, thank you.
• Virtual everything and thousands and thousands of people from around the world were part of us.

You cannot imagine how hard the staff at the Preservation Society has worked. They leaned in. Remained calm. Took it step by step. Phenomenal people. Some of them are here tonight and I want to ask them to stand and take a bow and please give them a round of applause.

We’re still in a hole. But we’ve got to get to Burrillville. What’s ahead?

Get as many houses open as we can, and this will depend upon the attitude of the traveling public.

Build our budget back to $26 million.

Grow our staff, because when you’re 69 percent down, it’s hard on everyone.

Broaden our research and our preservation and our education.

Build our reputation as the nation’s foremost center for the Gilded Age because, I believe, Julian Fellowes’ “Gilded Age” TV series on HBO is going to make the term “Gilded Age” a household word and we intend to be the beneficiaries.

Monty is one of the coolest women I’ve ever known and a perfect Board Chairman. She always let me run the business and she always – intuitively – knew when to call to check in.

I am going to repeat one of Monty’s signature and heartfelt phrases: Thank you, thank you, thank you.

We can do this. Our board is strong. Our members are generous. Our staff is unbelievable.

How do you get out of a pandemic?

Lean in.

Enjoy and delight in the unexpected.

Thank you.
We saw similar revenue declines in membership, sales, special events, food service and our fundraising events, such as the Flower Show and the Summer Dinner Dance. All told, the decline in total operating revenue was over $15 million.

We were saved from financial disaster by our incredibly generous donors, strict cost control measures and innovative programming. We received $5.5 million in government grants, which will be vital to our recovery efforts. We experimented with new ideas that worked well, including new outdoor tours, holiday lights at The Breakers, virtual events, and educational programming that reached thousands of people.

Despite the pandemic, and thanks to grant funding from previous years, we were able to accomplish several major initiatives this year. We replaced the air conditioning system at Rosecliff, we put a new roof on Marble House, and we continued our work on rehabilitating the landscape at The Breakers, as you have witnessed here this evening.

But our budget has shrunk from $25 million to $13 million, and our mansions aren’t getting any younger or less expensive to maintain. Before the pandemic struck, we were wondering how we could afford to put a new roof on Rosecliff which could cost as much as $5 million, and how we could afford to lose a summer season of weddings and other lucrative rentals while it was being done. These concerns loom even larger now, on a budget half as big as it was before.

It will doubtless be years before we achieve the lofty heights of the past, but I am certain we can get there. I am convinced that the Preservation Society can and should lead the way to Newport’s recovery. Our mission is to preserve, protect and present, not to lay low and wait for clear skies. Businesses and visitors to Newport are looking to the Preservation Society to open our houses. That is why I am proud of the staff who got The Breakers and The Elms up and running prior to many other businesses in Rhode Island. We are helping to lead the way for Rhode Island to get back on its feet.

So, the pandemic continues to challenge us, but we are resilient. We will eventually emerge from this pandemic and when we do, the Preservation Society, along with the rest of our community’s businesses, will need all of our support.

I look forward to seeing you at the iconic Newport Mansions again soon.

Madame Chairman, that concludes my report.

Treasurer’s Report

Presented by William F. Lucey III
From the Annual Meeting
June 10, 2021

We had to close our doors in March of 2020. Our guides, ticket sellers, and custodial staff felt the impact first, but we kept everyone at full pay during the first Paycheck Protection Program. When that ended, we were forced to lay off 231 employees, including some who had been with us for over 40 years. Those who remained worked from home, as best they could. Those were dark days indeed.

Then the skies brightened, and we reopened on an extremely limited basis in early June. Museums needed the government’s permission to open, and we were the first to apply. Our application was so thorough, it became a state model for other museums to follow.

We opened The Breakers and The Elms in June, and Green Animals in July. We gave 243,000 tours, down from nearly 1,000,000 tours the previous year. Admissions revenue fell over $7,000,000.
Throughout 2021, the Preservation Society hosted events for the Accomplishments

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Denise LeClair-Robbins, and Elizabeth Hayes.

Prince Charitable Trusts, Katie and Steven Gewirz, The Estate van Beuren Charitable Foundation, The Champlin Foundation, Treasures Program administered by the National Park Service, many thanks to contributors, including the Save America’s Properties, and Apollo Roofing for their meticulous work. And resiliency against storms and flooding.

An area of Middletown, R.I., known as Paradise Valley, was beautified by the efforts of Scenic Aquidneck, a coalition of the Preservation Society, Preserve Rhode Island and Aquidneck Land Trust. The project, completed in the summer of 2021, removed 77 unsightly utility poles and buried miles of power and communications lines along Third Beach Road and Indian Avenue. In addition to restoring the natural scenery, the project also promotes resiliency against storms and flooding.

An extensive project to restore the 128-year-old Marble House roof was finished in the spring. This project – critical to the long-term viability of Marble House – included complete replacement of the 6,500-square-foot rubber roof membrane installed in 1991; replacement of all copper sheet metal on the mansard roof; new copper downspouts and gutters; and reconstruction of the roof drains. Kudos to Mike Taber, the Director of Properties, and Apollo Roofing for their meticulous work. And many thanks to contributors, including the Save America’s Treasures Program administered by the National Park Service, van Beuren Charitable Foundation, The Chamlpin Foundation, Prince Charitable Trusts, Katie and Steven Gewirz, The Estate of Helen Andrews, The Campbell Family Foundation, Denise LaClair-Robbins, and Elizabeth Hayes.

During the month of April, the Newport Symposium and the Preservation Society presented “Creativity From Crisis: Design in Times of Need,” a series of 10 virtual lectures exploring how a public health crisis can lead to inventiveness and innovation.

In June, a project to remove years of dust and common air pollutants from the limestone walls in the foyer and central hall of The Elms began. A latex-based cleaner from Cathedral Stone Products was applied like thick paint and allowed to cure for two days while absorbing dirt on the wall surface. It became a film that was peeled away with the dirt. The results were amazing!

In spring and summer, Phases 1 and 2 of the window and door restoration at The Elms were completed. Five large floor-to-ceiling exterior doors on the south elevation, and a total of 22 windows and doors on the first floor of the west elevation, were completely restored and made operable for the first time in years.

On July 1, the Preservation Society returned to live lectures at Rosecliff. While continuing to offer a Zoom attendance option with its Summer Lecture Series, “Gilded Age Games,” it was the first time since February 2020 an in-person lecture was hosted by the Preservation Society. This continued with the Fall Lecture Series, “Makers and Music: Sculpting the Gilded Age.”

The Newport Flower Show and presenting sponsor Bartlett Tree Experts returned to Rosecliff June 18-20 after a one-year hiatus because of the pandemic. “Back in Bloom: A Ballroom Floral Fantasy” was an indoor, self-guided tour of floral design exhibits that filled the 2,800-square-foot Rosecliff Ballroom. The Salon was filled with floral creations by talented designers interpreting the theme of “A Garden at Nighttime,” while the back Terrace featured a conservatory-like garden space featuring al-fresco exhibition tables created by local designers.

Back In Bloom
A Ballroom Floral Fantasy

On May 28, the first day of Memorial Day weekend, The Garden Cafe at The Breakers Welcome Center opened for the first time since the pandemic started. On that same day, Marble House reopened for tours, and The Elms gardens and grounds opened for strolling and picnicking.

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• Our curatorial staff created digital images and documentation of 1,811 objects in our collections and uploaded them to www.NewportRI.org.

• The Preservation Society received a significant National Endowment for the Humanities grant to reestablish our exhibition program. This allowed the rehiring of Museum Affairs staff and engagement of distinguished Visiting Curator Ulysses Grant Dietz.

• On August 21, with a hurricane forecast to arrive the next day, more than 300 guests turned out at Green Animals Topiary Garden for the Preservation Society’s “Enchanted Evening” Summer Dinner Dance. It was the first time this major fundraiser was held at Green Animals, and it was a complete success thanks to the hard work of the five co-chairs Kim Darden, Anne Ford, Adrienne Glascock, Kate Lacey and Kim Palmer.

• On October 29, the Preservation Society hosted a scavenger hunt and trick-or-treat event at The Breakers for the second year. The event sold out.

• Opening for its second year on November 20, “Sparkling Lights at The Breakers: An Outdoor Magical Wonderland” was significantly expanded to include the southern portion of the property. A 16-foot Christmas tree-shaped light display was set up on the porte-cochère above the main entrance to The Breakers.

• Also in November, the front façade and exterior of Marble House was significantly brightened by a steam-cleaning process that removed decades of grime, pollutant residue and lichen. Also, the Marble House driveway was paved, and the Chinese Tea House painted.

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• In July, The Elms Servant Life Tour was restarted. It had been suspended since the pandemic forced the three-month closing of all Preservation Society properties in March 2020.

• From August 9-16, our 2021 Newport Mansions Exclusive Experience Summer Auction offered participants the chance to bid on a wide array of remarkable packages. The response was enthusiastic and the auction was a great success.

• Beginning September 1, visitors could enjoy the Marble House Family/Kids Tour by downloading it on the Newport Mansions app. Designed for children younger than 13, and entertaining for any age, this tour features a professional voice actor playing the role of Marble House.

• The 2021 Newport Mansions Wine & Food Festival, held September 17-19, featured two elegant wine dinners, a Sunday Brunch and Bubbly, and 23 tasting seminars. There were also nine pairing dinners held in local fine restaurants. Many loyal sponsors supported this event. Food & Wine magazine was the presenting sponsor of the festival, and BankNewport was the presenting sponsor of the restaurant program.

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• On August 2, a 3D virtual tour of The Breakers interior was completed by Preservation Society Research Fellow Sébastien Dutton. This was the last interior of the Preservation Society’s historic properties to be digitally mapped by Dutton.

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George Henry Warren
Trustee Emeritus, The Preservation Society of Newport County
June 17, 1920 – April 5, 2022

Newport and the Preservation Society have lost a dear friend, a man who loved Aquidneck Island, historic preservation and his family for close to 102 years: George Henry Warren. Mr. Warren served 18 years (1977-1995) as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Preservation Society, including many years before, during and after that in leadership positions. An architect by profession, his preservation efforts left an indelible imprint on the Preservation Society and on Newport. His crowning achievement was spearheading the acquisition and renovation of the McKim, Mead & White-designed Isaac Bell House in 1994.

George received the 2005 Laurel Award for Volunteerism and, in 2019, he was awarded the Preservation Society’s highest honor, the Antiquarian Award, for his decades of dedicated service to the organization that his mother, Katherine Urquhart Warren, founded in 1945.

George was a kind and considerate gentleman, and he will be greatly missed.
Elected in 2011, Monty Burnham has been a Trustee of The Preservation Society Of Newport County for 20 years, including two years as Assistant Secretary, five as Treasurer and five as Chairman of the Board. The life of our organization, including its growth and sustainability, is guided in large part by the Trustees. In addition to fiduciary responsibility for securing revenues and philanthropic gifts, their role requires ambassadorial and diplomatic skills in tandem with reasoned decision-making and a calm, collected demeanor.

Monty possesses these skills and many more, all of which she brought to the fore when asked to step into critical leadership positions. Highly intelligent, pragmatic when needed, Monty’s diplomatic skills in tandem with reasoned decision-making and a calm, collected demeanor were tested time and time again. Monty’s leadership throughout was exemplary.

As Chairman of the Board, Monty’s many accomplishments include:

- The installation of a geothermal system at The Breakers, saving $500,000 annually.
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- Climate-control installation at Rosecliff.
- Kingscote exterior roof restoration.
- Marble House roof restoration.
- The installation of a geothermal system at The Breakers, creating a sustainable future for the Preservation Society.

These projects and more were part of the mission to preserve and protect 11 museum properties, 8 acres of gardens and landscapes, 1,700 specimen trees, and more than 60,000 collections objects. The crowning achievement of Monty’s tenure as Chairman was the construction and dedication of the beautiful and much-needed Welcome Center at The Breakers. This years-long effort, which was led by Monty, ensured that each fiscal year ended with a balanced budget.

As Chairman of the Board, Monty was resolute in her belief that the Preservation Society would come through the storm intact. Under her leadership, the organization embraced numinousness, flexibility and innovation of new strategies to fight back against the effects of the pandemic. These included a new “Stroll the Gardens” offering with picnic lunch and golf cart tours. Monty’s keen aesthetic sense was evident in the “Sparkling Lights at The Breakers” that brought much-needed holiday cheer to the community. Monty was also instrumental in transitioning the Preservation Society from a physical operation to a virtual one, ensuring that the mission continued during the pandemic.

For her help to “Save Historic Trinity Church,” Happy was chosen to select the building’s exterior paint color in recognition of her keen aesthetic sense. For her leadership, Happy was awarded the Antiquarian Award, our highest organizational honor.

For Happy, philanthropy is a vocal and very loud chorus, never a solo act. As a Life Trustee of the International Tennis Hall of Fame, she was a leader and benefactor of the restoration of the Stanford White Casino Theatre to its original 1881 grandeur. She played a pivotal role in the Hall of Fame’s campus-wide makeover, working to ensure that the footprint would align with Newport’s historic aesthetic.

Happy van Beuren is a force of nature, a woman of deep conviction and action. For decades, she has championed the well-being of Newport County, its residents and the businesses fortunate enough to call it home. As the Preservation Society approached its 75th anniversary in 2020, it faced its biggest challenge to date: global pandemic. Closing all the properties and cancelling revenue-generating events and activities led to a financial crisis on a magnitude never seen before. Despite having to lay off more than 200 dedicated staff and reduce mission-related activities to a bare minimum, Monty was resolute in her belief that the Preservation Society would come through the storm intact.

Happy and her late, beloved husband John “Archie” van Beuren raised three children – Barbara, Archie and Andrea, who in turn gave their parents six grandchildren. As parents, Happy and Archie worked to make sure their children could make wise and good decisions for their futures and their children’s, for the communities in which they would live, and the interests that would ultimately inspire each of them.

Happy’s is a legacy of family. While change is constant, Happy knows firsthand that courage, strength of character, and a sense of humor sustain anyone through the vagaries of life.

Four generations of Happy’s family have provided vision and direction to The Preservation Society Of Newport County. Happy’s mother, Elmo Hill Ingersoll, succeeded Katherine Warren as the Preservation Society’s President. Husband Archie, daughter Barbara and son Archie have each served as Trustees. Happy has chaired, co-chaired or been Honorary Chair of Preservation Society events – and her granddaughter, Adrienne Glascock, is co-chairing the 2021 Summer Dinner Dance.

Happy van Beuren has been a founding member of organizations large and small to safeguard and advance our island’s history, outstanding architecture, stunning gardens and open spaces. As the Preservation Society approached its 75th anniversary in 2020, it faced its biggest challenge to date: global pandemic. Closing all the properties and cancelling revenue-generating events and activities led to a financial crisis on a magnitude never seen before. Despite having to lay off more than 200 dedicated staff and reduce mission-related activities to a bare minimum, Monty was resolute in her belief that the Preservation Society would come through the storm intact.

For Happy, philanthropy is a vocal and very loud chorus, never a solo act. As a Life Trustee of the International Tennis Hall of Fame, she was a leader and benefactor of the restoration of the Stanford White Casino Theatre to its original 1881 grandeur. She played a pivotal role in the Hall of Fame’s campus-wide makeover, working to ensure that the footprint would align with Newport’s historic aesthetic.

Happy and her late, beloved husband John “Archie” van Beuren raised three children – Barbara, Archie and Andrea, who in turn gave their parents six grandchildren. As parents, Happy and Archie worked to make sure their children could make wise and good decisions for their futures and their children’s, for the communities in which they would live, and the interests that would ultimately inspire each of them.

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Laurel Awards

Horticulture

John Palmer
In recognition of your reliable and meticulous volunteer work in our gardens and landscapes, and the extensive knowledge of plants and plant care you give in service to the Preservation Society.

Artisanship

Sandra Liotus and Sir David Crampton-Barden
In recognition of your more than 20 years of providing custom-designed and engineered lighting systems for the Preservation Society, taking care to illuminate our exhibitions and objects to best advantage while meeting the standards of historical conservation.

Volunteerism

Angela Moore
In recognition of your two decades of volunteer service to the Preservation Society, most recently bringing your flair for marketing and design to the branding and messaging of our Educational Sales Department and NewportStyle.net.

Ruth Thumbtzen
In recognition of your cheerful contributions at the mansions and many of our special events for more than 10 years, lending a hand wherever needed and welcoming visitors with your warm smile and friendly manner.

Presented in recognition of outstanding service, artisanship or leadership.
Awards of Special Distinction

**Matt Dias**

In appreciation for your remarkable dedication to the Preservation Society by continuing to help as a volunteer after losing your employment with the Gardens & Landscapes Department because of budget cutbacks during the COVID pandemic.

**Rolf Wenge**

In appreciation for your remarkable dedication to the Preservation Society by continuing to help as a volunteer after losing your employment with the Visitor Experience Department because of budget cutbacks during the COVID pandemic.

**Peggy Cavaliere**

Starting in 1972, Peggy’s roles have included tour guide, cashier, sales and more. She continues to help in many ways beyond her duties at Hunter House, where she became caretaker in 1998. Peggy’s continuing 50-year tenure as an employee almost certainly is unmatched in this organization’s history.

**Thank You**

Board Chair Monty Burnham, Rolf Wenge, Trustee Dale J. Venturini, Matt Dias
Thank you to generous supporters, visitors and members, The Preservation Society Of Newport County was able to persevere through the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021.

OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS

- Annual Report 2021
Robert & Kate Bartlett Arboretum Walk

The weather was perfect for a stroll around the grounds of The Breakers on June 10, the day the Robert & Kate Bartlett Arboretum Walk was officially unveiled with a ribbon-cutting ceremony before the Preservation Society’s Annual Meeting. This marked the completion of Phase II of The Breakers Landscape Revival Project.

Comprising the entire southern portion of the historic serpentine path, it begins on the right side of the front drive and extends all the way to the Cliff Walk. Combined with the northern part of the project that was completed in August 2019, this creates a landscaped path more than a quarter-mile long around The Breakers property.

The serpentine path once linked three neighboring estates as one continuous private park. Today, the only remnant of this extraordinary landscape survives at The Breakers. The renowned Ernest Bowditch designed the landscape with formal garden terraces, and the grounds were ringed by a meandering path bordered by dense plantings and layered garden beds. The Hurricane of 1938 decimated the landscape, and it was never fully restored.

The completion of Phase II marks another major progression in the master plan to revive this 13-acre historically significant landscape. The ongoing revival relies on generous donors, like Bartlett Tree Experts, whose gifts are dedicated to this transformational initiative.
The Karel van Mander II Tapestry Returns

The 400-year-old van Mander II tapestry “The Family of King Darius of Persia Paying Homage to Alexander the Great” returned to its niche above the Grand Staircase of The Breakers in October 2021 after painstaking conservation by experts in Belgium.

Its reinstallation marked the completion of a four-year sojourn that was prolonged by the COVID pandemic. The restoration company, De Wit Royal Manufacturers, was forced to shut down for months, delaying the work. Restrictions on international shipping further postponed the tapestry’s return.

The need for conservation work was noted as far back as 2008. The fibers were dry and brittle and small splits had developed due to breakage in the warp, the longitudinal threads that support the tapestry’s weight.

Internationally recognized as the most trusted experts in the field, De Wit cleaned the wool and silk fibers using their patented aerosol suction method. Their conservation weavers then used a network of stitches to consolidate the entire tapestry, adding a support textile to the back and bridging areas of loss. A new lining was added to reduce dust penetration and high-strength Velcro was placed on the top and sides of the tapestry to hold it in place on the wall.

To prepare for its reinstallation, the Preservation Society’s conservation team cleaned and prepared the niche and surrounding areas in the stair hall of The Breakers. A newly designed frame system and new velvet side panels were made.

A few days after its arrival at The Breakers, the tapestry – approximately 20 feet long and 11 feet high – was slowly unrolled and attached, little by little, to the new frame. At last it had returned to the place where it had hung since The Breakers was completed in 1895.

This is one of nine tapestries depicting events in Alexander’s life designed by Karel van Mander II (Dutch, 1579-1623) and woven in his workshop in Delft, Holland. Made in 1619, it depicts a pivotal scene where the Macedonian conqueror, fresh from victory in the Battle of Issus in 333 B.C., is being honoured by the family of defeated Persian King Darius III.

Cornelius Vanderbilt II purchased the tapestry in 1880 at an auction in Florence, Italy. Previously, it was in the famous collection of the Russian Anatole Demidoff, Prince of San Donato. The tapestry was given to the Preservation Society in 1974 by Countess Nandine Eltz, a granddaughter of Cornelius Vanderbilt II.

The Preservation Society sincerely thanks David B. Ford, the Coby Foundation, the Alletta Morris McBean Charitable Trust, Lynne and Armin Allen, Monty and Dick Burnham*, Lynn and Gene* Roberts, Tia and Ken Scigulinsky, and Mary and Guy Van Pelt for their generous contributions to this project.

*We Remember.
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The Preservation Society Of Newport County thanks our many members, individual, foundation and corporate contributors, sponsors and matching gift programs for their ongoing generosity. Your support makes it possible for us to protect, preserve and present the exceptional historic collection of house museums, landscapes and decorative objects entrusted to our perpetual care.

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January 1 – December 31, 2021

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Patricia Wood
Sharon Wood
William N. Wood
Mark Zeller

MUSEUM AFFAIRS
Leod Jones, Director
James Donahue
Glenn Barnwell
Laura Lark
Angela Meti
Kathryn Petronelli
Amada Quirk
Carola Schreiber
Nicole Williams

MUSEUM EXPERIENCE
Melissa Garcia, Director
Bradley Able
Matteo D’Amore
Colin Davis
Beverly Ware

PROPERTIES
Michael Tolber, Director
Robert Bick Jr.
Margaret Caroline
Michael Gough
Robert Marvel Jr.
Harold Mathews
Robert O’Keefe
Terry Pedron
Frank Ross
Amada Sams
Joseph Silva

SPECIAL EVENTS
Philip Polk, Director
Victoria Papp
Megan Pinto
Patrick Seher
Beverly Winc

COMMUNICATIONS
Barbra Shea, Director

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS
Barbara Shea, Manager
Diane enner
Gary Raff
William Tarrant

If you would like to volunteer, we’ll welcome you with open arms. Kindly contact Debra Hunt, Volunteer Coordinator, dhunt@NewportMansions.org or 401-847-1000, ext. 126.

• We recognize.

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Full-Time Employees