

preservation society of newport rhode island

preservation society of newport rhode island is a renowned organization dedicated to the protection and celebration of Newport's rich architectural heritage. Established in 1945, the society has played a pivotal role in safeguarding some of the most significant historic buildings and estates in Rhode Island, ensuring that future generations can appreciate the grandeur and cultural significance of Newport's past. This article will explore the history and mission of the preservation society of newport rhode island, highlight its key properties and landmarks, discuss its educational and outreach programs, and explain its ongoing efforts in historic preservation. Through this comprehensive overview, readers will gain a deeper understanding of how the society contributes to cultural heritage conservation and community engagement in Newport. The article will also provide insights into visiting the preserved sites and participating in related events and tours.

- History and Mission of the Preservation Society of Newport Rhode Island
- Iconic Properties and Historic Landmarks
- Educational Programs and Community Outreach
- Preservation Efforts and Conservation Techniques
- Visiting and Experiencing Newport's Historic Sites

History and Mission of the Preservation Society of Newport

Rhode Island

The preservation society of newport rhode island was founded in 1945 in response to the threat of demolition faced by several historic mansions in Newport. The organization's primary mission is to preserve, protect, and promote the architectural and cultural heritage of Newport, a city known for its spectacular Gilded Age estates and colonial-era buildings. Over the decades, the society has expanded its scope to include not only preservation but also education and public engagement, ensuring these historic treasures remain accessible and relevant.

Foundation and Early Efforts

The society was initially created to save the Hunter House, a colonial-era mansion built in 1748, from destruction. This successful campaign set a precedent for future preservation work in the region. Since then, the preservation society of newport rhode island has acquired and restored many other properties, becoming one of the oldest and most respected historic preservation organizations in the United States.

Mission and Vision

The organization's mission encompasses the protection of historic buildings, landscapes, and collections. It is committed to fostering appreciation for Newport's architectural heritage through tours, educational programs, and community events. The society envisions a future where historic preservation is integral to cultural identity and sustainable community development.

Iconic Properties and Historic Landmarks

The preservation society of newport rhode island manages and maintains a diverse portfolio of properties that represent various architectural styles and historical periods. These landmarks are not only architectural masterpieces but also serve as tangible connections to Newport's social and cultural

history.

Notable Mansions and Estates

Among the society's most famous holdings are the Gilded Age mansions located on Bellevue Avenue.

These include:

- **The Breakers:** The grand summer residence of the Vanderbilt family, renowned for its opulent design and Italian Renaissance style.
- **Marble House:** An exquisite mansion inspired by the Petit Trianon at Versailles, showcasing Beaux-Arts architecture.
- **Rosecliff:** Known for its lavish ballroom and cinematic appearances, this mansion exemplifies the extravagance of Newport's elite during the early 20th century.
- **Elms:** A classical revival mansion featuring stunning gardens and architectural details.

Colonial and Early American Properties

In addition to the Gilded Age estates, the society preserves important colonial-era houses such as:

- **Hunter House:** A Georgian colonial mansion representing Newport's 18th-century mercantile wealth.
- **Great Friends Meeting House:** One of the oldest surviving Quaker meeting houses in the United States, reflecting early religious history.

Educational Programs and Community Outreach

The preservation society of newport rhode island places strong emphasis on education, offering a variety of programs designed to engage the public and foster a deeper understanding of historic preservation and Newport's heritage. These initiatives serve both local residents and visitors of all ages.

Guided Tours and Lectures

The society organizes guided tours of its properties, providing visitors with detailed historical context and architectural insights. These tours are often supplemented by expert lectures and special presentations that explore specific themes such as architectural styles, historical figures, and preservation techniques.

School and Youth Programs

Educational outreach extends to schools, where the society offers tailored programs that align with curriculum standards. These programs aim to inspire younger generations through hands-on activities, workshops, and interactive tours that highlight the importance of historic preservation and cultural heritage.

Community Events and Exhibitions

Throughout the year, the society hosts community events, exhibitions, and seasonal celebrations that encourage public participation and raise awareness about Newport's historic resources. These events provide opportunities for learning, networking, and cultural enrichment.

Preservation Efforts and Conservation Techniques

Central to the mission of the preservation society of newport rhode island is the rigorous application of conservation principles and preservation techniques. The organization employs skilled professionals and collaborates with experts to maintain the integrity and authenticity of its properties.

Restoration Projects

Restoration work undertaken by the society involves meticulous research and careful craftsmanship. Projects often include structural stabilization, architectural detail replication, and the preservation of original materials such as woodwork, plaster, and decorative finishes. Each restoration is guided by historical documentation and best practices in the field.

Sustainability and Preservation

The society integrates sustainable practices in its preservation efforts, aiming to balance historic authenticity with environmental responsibility. This includes utilizing energy-efficient systems sensitively incorporated into historic structures and promoting the reuse of materials to reduce waste.

Advocacy and Preservation Leadership

Beyond physical conservation, the society advocates for historic preservation policies at local and state levels. It serves as a leader in preservation planning and collaborates with government agencies, preservation commissions, and other organizations to protect Newport's architectural heritage.

Visiting and Experiencing Newport's Historic Sites

The preservation society of newport rhode island offers visitors a unique opportunity to experience history firsthand through its well-maintained properties and engaging programs. Newport's historic sites

attract tourists, historians, and architecture enthusiasts worldwide.

Tour Options and Visitor Information

Visitors can choose from a variety of tour formats, including self-guided audio tours, docent-led group tours, and special thematic tours focusing on particular aspects of Newport's history. The society provides detailed visitor information to enhance the experience, including accessibility options and seasonal hours.

Membership and Volunteer Opportunities

The society encourages community involvement through membership programs and volunteer opportunities. Members receive benefits such as exclusive event invitations and discounts, while volunteers contribute to preservation work, event staffing, and educational outreach.

Special Events and Seasonal Activities

Throughout the year, the society hosts special events such as garden tours, holiday celebrations, and art exhibitions that highlight the cultural richness of Newport. Seasonal activities provide additional reasons to visit and engage with the city's historic environment.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Preservation Society of Newport County?

The Preservation Society of Newport County is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and sharing the historic mansions, landscapes, and cultural heritage of Newport, Rhode Island.

Which historic mansions are managed by the Preservation Society of Newport County?

The Preservation Society manages several famous mansions including The Breakers, Marble House, The Elms, Rosecliff, and several others located in Newport, Rhode Island.

Can visitors tour the mansions operated by the Preservation Society of Newport County?

Yes, visitors can take guided or self-guided tours of the historic mansions and gardens during the open season, usually from spring through fall.

How does the Preservation Society of Newport County contribute to historic preservation?

The society maintains and restores historic properties, offers educational programs, and promotes awareness of Newport's architectural and cultural heritage.

Are there any special events hosted by the Preservation Society of Newport County?

Yes, the society hosts various events including garden tours, holiday celebrations, lectures, and fundraising galas throughout the year.

Where is the Preservation Society of Newport County located?

The society's administrative offices are located in Newport, Rhode Island, and their historic properties are spread throughout the city.

How can someone support the Preservation Society of Newport

County?

Support can be given through memberships, donations, volunteering, or attending events and tours organized by the society.

Does the Preservation Society of Newport County offer educational programs?

Yes, the society offers educational programs for schools, families, and adults that focus on history, architecture, and preservation.

Additional Resources

1. *The Preservation Society of Newport County: Guardians of Gilded Age Splendor*

This book offers an in-depth look at the Preservation Society of Newport County, highlighting its mission to protect and maintain the historic mansions and estates of Newport, Rhode Island. It explores the society's history, key figures, and the architectural significance of the properties under its care. Richly illustrated, the book captures the elegance and cultural importance of Newport's Gilded Age legacy.

2. *Newport Mansions: Stories from the Preservation Society*

Delving into the stories behind Newport's grand mansions, this volume provides readers with a detailed history of the homes preserved by the society. It includes anecdotes about the families who lived there, the architects who designed the estates, and the restoration efforts that have kept these treasures intact. The book is a celebration of Newport's architectural heritage and the society's role in its conservation.

3. *Legacy of Elegance: The Preservation Society's Role in Newport's History*

This title chronicles the origins and development of the Preservation Society of Newport County, emphasizing its impact on local heritage and tourism. It examines how the society has balanced preservation with public accessibility, ensuring that Newport's historic sites remain vibrant and

educational destinations. The narrative also touches on challenges faced in maintaining aging structures and landscapes.

4. Newport, Rhode Island: Preserving America's Gilded Age

Focused on Newport's broader historical context, this book highlights how the Preservation Society has safeguarded the city's unique architectural and cultural identity. It discusses the significance of the Newport Mansions within American history and the efforts to maintain their authenticity. Readers gain insight into the society's strategies for preservation and community engagement.

5. Behind Closed Doors: The Hidden Histories of Newport's Preservation Society

This book uncovers lesser-known stories and behind-the-scenes efforts of the Preservation Society in safeguarding Newport's historic properties. It includes interviews with preservationists, volunteers, and historians who contribute to the society's mission. The narrative reveals the complexities involved in restoration and the passion that drives ongoing preservation work.

6. The Art and Architecture of Newport's Preservation Society

A beautifully illustrated guide focusing on the artistic and architectural details of the mansions managed by the Preservation Society. It explores the design influences, craftsmanship, and decorative arts that define Newport's historic homes. The book serves as both a visual feast and an educational resource for enthusiasts of architecture and historic preservation.

7. Stewards of History: The Preservation Society of Newport County in the 21st Century

Examining the modern challenges and innovations in historic preservation, this book presents how the Preservation Society adapts to contemporary conservation techniques and sustainability practices. It highlights recent restoration projects and the use of technology in maintaining Newport's historic estates. The work underscores the society's commitment to preserving history for future generations.

8. Newport's Preservation Society: A Community's Commitment to Heritage

This title emphasizes the community involvement and volunteer efforts that support the Preservation Society's mission. It showcases how local residents, donors, and advocates contribute to preserving Newport's cultural landmarks. The book also addresses educational programs and events that foster

public appreciation for historic preservation.

9. *Gardens and Grounds: Landscape Preservation by the Newport Society*

Focusing on the outdoor spaces of Newport's historic estates, this book highlights the Preservation Society's work in maintaining and restoring gardens and landscapes. It discusses the historical significance of garden design in the Gilded Age and the challenges of preserving living elements alongside architectural ones. The book offers a unique perspective on the society's comprehensive approach to preservation.

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preservation society of newport rhode island: Newport's Gilded Age Donna Russo Morin, 2023-06-13 Both books in Donna Russo Morin's 'Newport's Gilded Age', a series of historical fiction, now available in one volume! Gilded Summers: Pearl and Ginevra grow up in the era known as the Gilded Age in Newport, Rhode Island. Surrounded by Astors and Vanderbilts, Pearl fills her days with teatime and shallow friendships, yearning for something more. A chance meeting with Mary Cassatt sparks her secret desire to be an artist. Meanwhile Ginevra, fresh off the boat from Italy, finds her own dreams out of reach as she joins the unwelcoming household as a servant and seamstress. The girls become fast friends, but must keep their friendship hidden from Pearl's controlling mother. Soon, the two young women must decide who they want to be in this world, and survive what it takes to get there...even if it includes murder. Gilded Dreams: The battle for the vote is on fire in America. The powerful and rich women of Newport, Rhode Island nearly single-handedly funded the major suffrage parties. Yet they have been left out of history, tossed aside as mere socialites. Pearl and Ginevra are college graduates, professional women, wives, and mothers. The two progressive women have fought their way through some of life's harshest challenges. Now they set their sights on the vote, the epitome of all they have struggled for, the embodiment of their dreams. From the sinking of the Titanic, through World War 1, Pearl and Ginevra are once more put to the test.

preservation society of newport rhode island: Rhode Island's Civil War Hospital Frank L. Grzyb, 2014-01-10 During the Civil War, thousands of wounded Union soldiers and Confederate prisoners convalesced in a general army hospital in rural Portsmouth Grove, Rhode Island. Because of its location on the periphery of the action, the hospital has remained a footnote to the dramatic sweep of Civil War literature. However, its history and the experiences of the doctors, nurses, patients and guards that gave it life provide a new perspective on the interaction between the army and society in wartime and on life in Civil War America. This in-depth account also explores the barbarities of medicine, daily routine in a general army hospital, the role of citizens in providing aid,

the later adventures of former patients and staff, and the final resting places of those who died on the grounds.

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preservation society of newport rhode island: **Legendary Locals of Newport** Annie Sherman, 2013 Established by Colonials seeking religious and cultural freedom in 1639, Newport has enjoyed nearly four centuries of growth--from a thriving seaport to a summer hideaway for industrial revolution excesses, from an active Navy town to a modern world-class destination for sailing and tourism. But beyond the marbled mansions and active harbor-front wharves lie legendary locals building a city of living history, education, arts, and philanthropy. And as this City-by-the-Sea celebrates 375 years in 2014, residents honor the diversity of the people who keep it flourishing. Stone carvers John Fud Benson and son Nick utilize time-honored techniques etching gravestones and memorials by hand in the oldest trade shop in the country, while nearby, the largest high-tech megayachts in the world dock at the Dana family's Newport Shipyard. Newporter and Navy SEAL Terry Moy helped the last Apollo mission land safely back on Earth, while advocate Florence Gray helped keep affordable housing residents grounded only a few blocks from the city's upscale neighborhoods.

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preservation society of newport rhode island: The Counter-Revolution of 1776 Gerald Horne, 2016-09 Illuminates how the preservation of slavery was a motivating factor for the Revolutionary War The successful 1776 revolt against British rule in North America has been hailed almost universally as a great step forward for humanity. But the Africans then living in the colonies overwhelmingly sided with the British. In this trailblazing book, Gerald Horne shows that in the prelude to 1776, the abolition of slavery seemed all but inevitable in London, delighting Africans as much as it outraged slaveholders, and sparking the colonial revolt. Prior to 1776, anti-slavery sentiments were deepening throughout Britain and in the Caribbean, rebellious Africans were in revolt. For European colonists in America, the major threat to their security was a foreign invasion combined with an insurrection of the enslaved. It was a real and threatening possibility that London would impose abolition throughout the colonies—a possibility the founding fathers feared would bring slave rebellions to their shores. To forestall it, they went to war. The so-called Revolutionary

War, Horne writes, was in part a counter-revolution, a conservative movement that the founding fathers fought in order to preserve their right to enslave others. The Counter-Revolution of 1776 brings us to a radical new understanding of the traditional heroic creation myth of the United States.

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preservation society of newport rhode island: *American Architecture and Urbanism* Vincent Scully, 2013-04-29 A classic book authored by the foremost architectural historian in America, this fully illustrated history of American architecture and city planning is based on Vincent Scully's conviction that architecture and city planning are inseparably linked and must therefore be treated together. He defines architecture as a continuing dialogue between generations which creates an environment across time. This definitive survey extends beyond the cities themselves to the American scene as a whole, which has inspired the reasonable balanced, closed and ordered forms, and above all the probity, that he feels typifies American architecture.

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preservation society of newport rhode island: *The Banisters of Rhode Island in the American Revolution* Marian Mathison Desrosiers, 2020-12-14 When Thomas Banister fought for the British during the American Revolution, his farm and business were confiscated. He was exiled in far-off Nova Scotia, before he returned to a secluded life on Long Island. His older brother, John Banister married with a child, swore allegiance to the United Colonies, then witnessed the destruction of his Newport lands by the British Army. Convinced British laws supported remuneration, John left for England, where he sought justice for four years. His wife, Christian Stelle Banister, managed the family property and raised their son while the state threatened confiscation and the French Army lived in Newport. Tracing the lives of three young Americans during the Revolution, this study of the Banister family of Rhode Island contributes to an understanding of the war's effects on the lives of ordinary people.

preservation society of newport rhode island: *Gross Misbehavior and Wickedness* Jean Elson, 2017-06-15 The bitter and public court battle waged between Nina and James Walker of Newport, Rhode Island from 1909 to 1916 created a sensation throughout the nation with lurid accounts of—and gossip about—their marital troubles. The ordeal of this high-society couple, who wed as much for status as for love, is one of the prime examples of the growing trend of women seeking divorce during the early twentieth century. *Gross Misbehavior and Wickedness*—the charges Nina levied at James for his adultery (with the family governess) and extreme cruelty—recounts the protracted legal proceedings in juicy detail. Jean Elson uses court documents, correspondence, journals, and interviews with descendants to recount the salacious case. In the process, she underscores how divorce—in an era when women needed husbands for economic support—was associated with women's aspirations for independence and rights. The Walkers' dispute, replete with plot twists and memorable characters, sheds light on a critical period in the evolution of American culture.

preservation society of newport rhode island: *Encyclopedia of Local History* Amy H. Wilson, 2017-02-06 The *Encyclopedia of Local History* addresses nearly every aspect of local history, including everyday issues, theoretical approaches, and trends in the field. This encyclopedia provides both the casual browser and the dedicated historian with adept commentary by bringing the voices of over one hundred experts together in one place. Entries include: ·Terms specifically related to the everyday practice of interpreting local history in the United States, such as "African American History," "City Directories," and "Latter-Day Saints." ·Historical and documentary terms

applied to local history such as "Abstract," "Culinary History," and "Diaries." ·Detailed entries for major associations and institutions that specifically focus on their usage in local history projects, such as "Library of Congress" and "Society of American Archivists" ·Entries for every state and Canadian province covering major informational sources critical to understanding local history in that region. ·Entries for every major immigrant group and ethnicity. Brand-new to this edition are critical topics covering both the practice of and major current areas of research in local history such as "Digitization," "LGBT History," museum theater," and "STEM education." Also new to this edition are graphics, including 48 photographs. Overseen by a blue-ribbon Editorial Advisory Board (Anne W. Ackerson, James D. Folts, Tim Grove, Carol Kammen, and Max A. van Balgooy) this essential reference will be frequently consulted in academic libraries with American and Canadian history programs, public libraries supporting local history, museums, historic sites and houses, and local archives in the U.S. and Canada. This third edition is the first to include photographs.

preservation society of newport rhode island: Rhode Island Adam Furgang, 2010-08-15
The Ocean State is the country's smallest, only 48 miles long and 37 miles wide, yet it has assumed a large place in American history, often finding itself at the very center of momentous national events. Founded by Roger Williams as a bastion of religious freedom and tolerance, The colony very early developed a strong independent streak. Though sandwiched between the powerful and often domineering neighbors New York and Massachusetts, Rhode Island remained fiercely self-sufficient, relying on its maritime economy and local industries for sustenance. Though tiny, Rhode Island is a ferment of creative, historical, and cultural energy. This book reveals the riches contained within it and captures its vibrant and enduring spirit.

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