

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

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United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: John N. A. Griswold House

Other Name/Site Number: Newport Art Museum and Art Association

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 76 Bellevue Avenue

Not for publication: ___

City/Town: Newport

Vicinity: ___

State: RI County: Newport Code: 005

Zip Code: 02840

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private:

Public-Local:

Public-State:

Public-Federal:

Category of Property

Building(s):

District:

Site:

Structure:

Object:

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

3

Noncontributing

___ buildings

___ sites

___ structures

___ objects

___ Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 2

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: N/A

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4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ___ Entered in the National Register
- ___ Determined eligible for the National Register
- ___ Determined not eligible for the National Register
- ___ Removed from the National Register
- ___ Other (explain):

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

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6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: Sub:
DOMESTIC/Single dwelling and secondary Structure
Current: Sub:
RECREATION AND CULTURE/Museum

7. DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification: LATE VICTORIAN/Stick/Eastlake

Materials:

Foundation: Stone
Walls: Wood
Roof: Stone
Other: Brick chimneys; Wood porches

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Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.**Exterior**

The Griswold House is a 2½ story wood frame structure sheltered by a steep, complex slate roof comprised of a central mansard with multiple intersecting gables and dormers and covered with red, dark gray and light gray slate set in a diamond pattern. Exterior sheathing consists of clapboard walls ornamented with contrasting simulated half-timbering. Adding to the polychrome effect, three red brick chimneys with decorative concrete panels and concrete caps rise above the slate roof. Deep overhanging eaves, balconies and overhanging gables are supported on heavy braces often ornamented with pendants. Irregular in plan, with projecting polygonal and rectangular bays, an asymmetrically placed porte cochere, a deep veranda on the west and a portion of the south elevations, and an offset rear ell, the entire composition comprises a picturesque silhouette. The Griswold House is acknowledged as the first example of the mature stick style.

The house stands on its original site, which is bounded by Old Beach Road on the north, to the east by Liberty Street (formerly State Street), to the south by Downing Street and to the west by Bellevue Avenue (formerly South Touro Street). The original granite wall topped by a lighter colored granite capstone runs along Bellevue Avenue. It is interrupted at the northwest corner by two granite gate posts marking the original driveway. The wall turns the corner continuing for a short distance on Old Beach Road where it is continued by a hedge along Old Beach Road to the present driveway entrance. Another opening has been cut in the wall (1920) on Bellevue Avenue toward the south end to provide an entrance to the walkway leading to the Cushing Memorial. The granite wall also just turns the corner at Downing Street and a chain link fence encloses the remainder of the lot. The site is relatively level, sloping down slightly at the east along Liberty Street. Several mature trees are located on the lot, a few of which date from the construction of the house and others may date from a 1921 Olmsted Brothers landscape design. For the most part, shrubs and plants date from the late 20th century. A paved driveway enters from the northwest corner and continues toward the porte cochere on the north elevation. Much of the area north of the house has been paved for parking. Parking lots have also been built along Liberty Street.

Set on a granite foundation, the building is set well back from the street, and is partially obscured by large trees. The main building, which is the westernmost section of the structure, is in its original location. The east ell is a later addition, which consists of the original Hunt designed stable that had been altered and moved in 1920 to its present location and attached to the east elevation of the house, which was the former kitchen ell.

Main House

Contributing to the picturesque effect, each elevation is asymmetrical with single, paired and bay windows. The half timber detail is laid out in a rectangular grid which frames the windows and is figuratively reinforced with diagonal or cross bracing. The half timbering is an applied detail and does not represent or reflect the structural framing of the house. Articulated with chamfered edges, the half timbering at the corners of the building is detailed with a three-quarter round molding. The three-quarter round is also used to frame all of the window openings. Carved detail found throughout such as pendants and rafter ends is generally simple and heavy. Two early photographs show the house unpainted, a temporary condition that has been attributed to the scarcity of paint during the Civil War. It was soon painted in a polychromatic scheme consisting of dark yellow clapboards, brown wood trim and dark green, nearly black window sash.

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The porte cochere, one of the most notable elements of the facade, was described by the critic Montgomery Schuyler as "a spirited and admirable piece of design, in which the treatment of the material is as idiomatic as it is artistic and in which even the emergence of the Mansard roof contributes to the success of a successful and piquant composition."¹ Located on the north elevation, the porte cochere is two-stories in height supported on a brownstone arch. A wood frame balcony projects from the north elevation of the second story and the straight-sided mansard roof is intersected by projecting gabled dormers on the east and west elevations and by a projecting gabled pavilion on the north elevation. Curved braces at the corners of the brownstone piers support the balcony and the second story of the porte cochere. On the north elevation of the main block, two gabled projecting pavilions frame the porte cochere. The pavilions are similar, each has a rectangular projecting bay at the first story which continues up to progressive overhangs at the second and third stories. Between the pavilions on the roof, a single gabled dormer ornamented with carved brackets contains a gothic sash. The pavilion is repeated elsewhere on the building and at each of the pavilions, the third story overhang is carried by heavy braces and the gable eaves are supported by knee braces with pendants.

At the east end of the north elevation, the kitchen ell is connected by a 1 ½ story recessed section which has a hip roofed dormer that interrupts the roof line. The former kitchen ell, topped by a jerkinhead gable, projects north from the plane of the main block. (The remainder of the east ell is described under the stable/Ilgenfritz Gallery.)

The west elevation is covered at the first story by a deep veranda with a low pitched roof supported by square posts and knee braces. Like the house, the plan of the veranda is irregular. It has a canted northeast corner and it juts out slightly near the center of the facade. Echoing the half-timbering on the house, all of the posts have chamfered corners and the balustrade consists of a wide railing supported on vertical posts and cross braces. The porch originally had no railing. This railing matches that found at the porte cochere balcony and also was originally found at the southeast entry porch, since altered. In the north bay of this elevation, a three story polygonal bay forces its way through the roofline forming a tower. A gabled projecting pavilion, similar to those found on the north elevation, is located at the south corner of the west elevation. There are some minor differences. At the first story under the veranda, the bay is polygonal rather than rectangular and the second story overhang is supported by heavy curved braces with simple pendants.

The veranda continues along the first story of the south elevation from the southwest corner to a projecting gabled pavilion matching that found on the west elevation. Uncovered, the open porch continues around the pavilion and ends at the east side of the pavilion. A section of the open porch was removed (1956) in front of the bay to the east of the pavilion. The south elevation continues with a three story, rectangular, hipped roof bay which projects up through the line of the main roof. A two story projecting pavilion topped by a jerkinhead roof similar to the north elevation of the kitchen ell is located at the southeast corner. Also at the south east corner, an entrance porch leads into the office and the former butler's pantry. The porch has been enclosed with vertical siding. There is a jog, where the east ell of the house is set back from the south elevation. The first two bays of the east ell are the original kitchen wing and the remainder of the ell consists of the former stable, that was moved in 1920 and attached to the east elevation of the house to form a gallery.

Doors

The main entrance is under the porte cochere on the north elevation. The original main entrance doors have been

¹ Montgomery Schuyler, "The Works of the Late Richard M. Hunt," *Architectural Record* 5 (Oct. - Dec. 1895): 101.

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replaced with paired wood doors with full length glass panels. The original doors are visible in the pre-1895 photograph of the porte cochere and are described in the HABS documentation. They are paired four-paneled doors with chamfered woodwork and may be located on the property. A wood and glass entrance door at the northeast corner of the main house appears to be a new door, but may have been based on an earlier door. It has a four-light upper panel and cross bracing on the lower section of the wood panels. An aluminum and glass vestibule and door were installed in 1988 on the south veranda providing access through a former a window in the library. Wood and glass panel doors leading into the office and butler's pantry at the southeast corner are probably original and had been exterior doors.

Windows

Windows typically diminish in height from the first to the third story. Most of the first story windows that look out onto the veranda or onto the open porch from the main rooms are full length French windows. In each window, paired three light casement sash are topped by a two light transom. A variation is found in the polygonal west bay, which has wooden lower panels on the operable sash. Other first story windows and most of the windows at the second story are two-over-four double hung sash. The four-light lower sash have a heavy center mullion that suggests the center stile of the French windows. Casement sash found at the second story over the porte cochere have diamond panes at the center. Most of the attic story, some second story windows (N and S elevations, under the jerkinhead gables and at the SE corner) and first story windows at the pantry and at the 1½ story connector to the kitchen ell contain double-hung sash with diamond panes. At the northwest corner, on the north elevation, a two-story double width window was installed at the second and third stories by the Art Association in 1916. It is glazed by 9" x 12" panes, which overlap vertically so that the window has only vertical mullions. Small windows on either side of the main entrance contain one-over-one double hung sash. Most of the sash are original and retain some early or original glazing.

Stable/Ilgenfritz Gallery

The original stable was located at the northeast corner of the property. It was at that time 1½ stories in height and had a different roof from the existing structure. During the 1916 renovations conducted by the Art Association of Newport, the stable was converted to three studios on the first floor. A new floor and floor framing were installed at that time.

Due to a demand for larger gallery and meeting space, the stable was relocated in 1920 to its current site and attached to the east end of the house. At that time, a brick chimney that rose through the kitchen and second floor was removed down to the basement. Originally at grade, the stable was raised on a stone foundation in order to meet the height of the first floor in the main house. The stable now sits on a foundation of random coursed ashlar.

The present east ell (now known as the Ilgenfritz Gallery) consists of the former kitchen ell and the stable. Approximately rectangular in plan, it repeats much of the vocabulary of the main house, but is generally more simplified. In contrast to the main house, the elevations are essentially symmetrical and the slate mansard roof dominates most of the ell. A large skylight covers most of the upper slope of the mansard. Jerkinhead gables flank the east and west ends of the north elevation and a single jerkinhead gable at the east end of the south

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elevation is balanced by the remnant of the mansard roof of the kitchen wing on the west end. On the north elevation, a central pedimented dormer contains a single triangular diamond paned sash.

Some of the sheathing and detail may date from the 1920 alterations. The walls at the first story are sheathed with clapboard and simulated half-timbering. The east elevation has no applied half timber. A molded skirt or drip mold runs above the first story at the north and east elevations and wraps around to the east bay of the south elevation. The south elevation originally had no half timber, and the existing detail is more shallow and has a shallow chamfer compared to that found on the main house. At the second story, the north and east elevations and the east gable of the south elevation are clad with board and batten siding. The remainder of the second story at the south elevation (which was added in 1920) is clapboard with half timber. Windows and double doors at the balconies have diamond paned sash. It is assumed that the entire mansard roof was installed in 1920, although the framing of the north elevation may be original. A large north window fills a double bay at the first story in the east bay and lights a studio on the interior. It has vertical mullions only and overlapping glazing similar to that at the northwest corner of the main house. It was probably added in 1916 in an opening that had been a carriage entrance. Also on the north elevation, concrete steps lead up to a single wood and glass panel door topped by a diamond paned transom.

The south elevation has two groups of windows consisting of a long band of transom windows over a band of narrow windows. An original door located between the windows has been replaced with clapboard. One pedestrian door and one wide door open onto a concrete loading dock, which is set on a stone foundation. A balcony under the east gable shelters the wide door, which is flanked by sidelights. At the second story balcony, two sets of narrow double doors flanked by sidelights are topped by a transom. The doors and windows have diamond panes.

The symmetrical east elevation has two second story balconies set under gabled dormers. The wood detail is surprisingly elaborate on these balconies which have carved openwork balustrades, pendants at the balcony newel posts, square paneled columns supporting the gables and finials rising at the peak of the gable. First story windows are set below each of the balconies. All of the first story windows in the east ell have been filled.

Interior

Upon entering the building there is a tiled open vestibule, leading to a broad flight of five steps, placed off-center to the entrance doors. The stairs lead up to the main floor of the house and the main stair hall, which is open three stories to the attic. Continuing south on axis with the entrance there is a square antechamber that leads into an hexagonal alcove, which looks out onto the south side of the veranda and the lawn beyond. The primary rooms are all entered from the stair hall; doors at the canted southeast and southwest corners of the stair hall lead at the southeast to the Drury Gallery/dining room and at the southwest to the library. The Wright Gallery/parlor is entered to the west. A wide corridor runs directly east from the stair hall to the Ilgenfritz Gallery. This corridor had been extended when the east wing was converted to a gallery in 1916. Sometime after 1969, a pair of wood panel doors and transom were removed from the opening into this corridor. A former guest room, now the Griffon Shop, is located just off of the corridor to the northeast.

Paul Baker, who has written extensively on Hunt's life and work, offers his impression of the interior: "The openness of plan invites one to wander from one room to another. The many bays in the several principal rooms,

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as well as the octagonal shape of the dining room and library and the broken octagonal shape of the hall, give a sense of discovery in each area, and with the rich paneling and the varied timbered members the interior spaces provide a fascinating play of light and shadow. In a rather informal manner, Hunt had adapted well the Beaux-Arts lesson of the importance of relationships and the flow of interior spaces to a dwelling."²

The exterior theme of applied timber is carried into the stair hall which also has exposed wooden trusses under the balconies, paneled beams and stringers. The main feature of the stair hall, a broad dog-leg stair, leads up to the second floor and access to the third floor is gained by a stair in the east corridor on the second floor. At the base of the main stair, a carved griffin stands guard at the main newel post from which rises a tall wooden lantern topped by a round globe. At the rest of the stair and third floor balcony, square paneled newels with 3/4-round corners are topped by heavy finials. At the upper stories they have heavy carved pendants. The balustrade consists of alternating cross braces and vertical posts infilled with delicately carved openwork. Floors in the stairhall are striped with alternating light and dark wood. The wood in the stairhall was identified as walnut, but a conservator with The Composition Group, Ltd. has conjectured that some of the wood in the stairhall may be mahogany.

The broad stair landing over the porte cochere and the walls of the stair are finished with paneled wainscoting. Two light fixtures at the landing appear to be original. They appear to be cast in bronze and each has a graceful figure centered on a low pedestal. Projecting from the pedestal at an angle are two lanterns each with a light fixture rising from the spout. The figures may represent Hermes and Hebe. The landing provides a view of the full height of the stair hall and of the third floor balcony overlooking the space. Enclosed at the time of the HABS documentation, the later infill at the third floor balcony has since been removed.

Library: Octagonal in plan, the library is probably the most intact room in the house. The walls are paneled with wood and the ceiling has paneled beams and wooden ribs. Carved pendants decorate the paneled beams and elongated pendants drop at the intersection of the ribs. A chandelier that appears in the HABS photographs of the library was not original and has been removed since its weight was causing damage to the plaster ceiling. The ceiling was repaired and repainted ca. 1995 replicating the gold stars on a field of deep blue. The window hoods and molded door caps are supported on turned colonettes set on high pedestals and topped by stylized leaf capitals. Variations of a vine pattern are found on the window hoods, the transom screens, and the floor in the main library and decorating the risers of the entry steps in the main stair hall. The full height French windows topped by fixed transom windows have sliding, louvered shutters at the two south windows. The west window bay has paneled and louvered shutters which fold into the reveals. Sliding wood screens with carved vine openwork cover the transom windows. The walls are lined with three low glass-fronted bookcases and the centerpiece of the north wall is the fireplace, which is faced with slate and framed by paneled pilasters supporting a paneled frieze and a shelf. This is surmounted by a wooden arched overmantle with a deep recess also framed by paneled pilasters. The arch originally provided a view through to the parlor, now the Wright Gallery, but the opening was filled when the gallery was created in 1916. The hearth is laid with ceramic tiles in tans, reddish browns, blues, and white. The cornerblocks of two bookcases and the panels in the mantelpiece held hand tinted lithographs that are being reinstalled in 1999. Tests by The Composition Group, Ltd. reveal that some of the wood in the library is mahogany. The conservator surmised that the library may contain some walnut as well and described the library floor as "a complex repeated parquet, with a marquetry border in a stylized vine motif, with oak leaves attached. It is composed of various woods, including cherry, oak, and walnut, among others."³ The

² Paul R. Baker, *Richard Morris Hunt*, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1980), p. 135.

³ The Composition Group, Ltd. "Newport Art Museum - Consultant's Report," May 16, 1985, p. 2.

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original brass light sconces in the library have been converted from gas to electric and are missing the original glass globes.

Wright Gallery/Parlor: The Wright Gallery is approximately rectangular in plan except for a projecting rectangular bay to the north and a polygonal bay to the west. According to the HABS documentation, the north window bay originally had paneled and louvered shutters which folded into reveals. Presently, two sliding doors with heavy moldings can close off the window bay. The polygonal west bay, which was closed off at the time of the HABS survey in the 1970s, was reopened ca. 1995. The original window shutters are now exposed and the proscenium arch, similar to that on the north bay, was recreated. The walls of this room have been built out, concealing the original fireplace, a door to the library on the west side of the fireplace and any remaining baseboards. The cove molding at the ceiling and the fireplace hearth are still visible. One door has been removed from the doorway. Also closed in the remodeling was the glass window over the fireplace which permitted a view into the library. The inlaid floor was identified as oak by The Composition Group, Ltd.

Drury Gallery/Dining Room: Like the library, the Drury Gallery is octagonal in plan. As the result of an extensive restoration project in 1993-94, the room closely resembles its original appearance. The plaster walls were repainted based on a paint analysis. White paint was removed from the wood ceiling ribs and pendants and black paint or stain was removed from the remainder of the wainscot and woodwork including the heavy carved mantelpiece which has dogs' heads carved in high relief at the spandrels. The mirrored overmantel appears to be original. The focal point of the ceiling is a large wooden ceiling medallion enriched with rope molding at the edges. On the south wall, the projecting bay window is set in a paneled recess which holds the paneled shutters for the full length windows. The floor is laid in a chevron pattern with alternating dark and light wood. The gallery now serves as the Croquet Hall of Fame and contains related exhibits.

The intimate hexagonal alcove is decorated at the ceiling with a cornice molding and a small ornate medallion. Wood and glass panel doors in the corners of the alcove provide access to the Drury Gallery and the library. Sliding doors from the anteroom also lead into the Drury Gallery and the Library. Heavy six panel doors with chamfered edges at the stiles and rails lead from the stair hall into the Drury Gallery, library and the Wright Gallery. Similar doors are also found at the main rooms at the second floor. Also notable are the original locks on many of the windows, the ornate enrichment and acorn details on the door hinges and silver plated brass door knobs on the doors to the primary rooms.

The Griffon Shop/Guest Room has a replacement hard wood floor and a simple mantelpiece, that appears to be a later replacement. The door to the east room has been closed off. The cornice molding is original and this room has what appears to be an original closet, which is unusual since most were removed when the Art Association acquired the building.

Second Floor

The second floor has wood floors, many of which are painted. The second floor landing is polygonal in plan and has a railing at the wide stair that looks back to the intermediate landing over the porte cochere.

The southwest room has two canted corners and partial paneled wainscoting on the south and west walls. The paneling matches that of the six panel doors which have chamfered stiles. The floor is covered with linoleum and the original cornice molding remains at the ceiling. A later picture molding has been installed just below the original cornice molding. The fireplace mantel enriched with molded paneled pilasters and a single blue and

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white tile has been painted white. A remnant of wallpaper preserved on the north wall had been behind the molding installed by the Art Association. The moldings were installed in 1916 to hang artwork and therefore the wallpaper probably dates from the Griswolds' occupancy. A door at the west of the fireplace has been removed and the opening filled.

The northwest room is a two-story space that was the former portrait studio. It is rectangular in plan except for the west polygonal bay that continues up the full height of the room. The third floor was removed in 1916 and beams span the room at the height of the former floor. The floor, which has a parquet border, is intact but in poor condition. The heavy carved fireplace with a delicate mirrored overmantel is painted white, but was originally not painted. A remnant of wallpaper preserved on the east wall had been behind the molding installed by the Art Association. The moldings were installed in 1916 to hang artwork and therefore the wallpaper probably dates from the Griswolds' occupancy. A door to the west of the fireplace that led into the southwest room has been removed. Lockers have been installed on either side of the fireplace.

The center north room is almost square in plan and retains much of its original fabric including the cornice molding, fireplace and window surround which has paneled wainscot below the window. The wide board floor is painted. The panels at the pilasters and frieze of the mantelpiece are filled with what might be Delft tiles, some of which are cracked. The north pilaster is covered suggesting the tiles are broken or missing. The two north rooms had served as a studio when the Art Association first moved in. Both rooms retain the picture molding installed in 1916. The rear room, which is two steps lower than the main second floor, has plaster walls and simple detail.

The center south room has two canted corners and a projecting south bay. It retains an original fireplace with a single blue and white tile. The heavy cornice molding is damaged showing cracks and chipping. The floor is covered with carpet. Most of the original paneled doors remain except for one door to the north of the fireplace which has been removed and the opening filled. The rectangular south bay has a paneled recess. This room retains the picture molding installed in 1916.

The southeast room, which was the design studio and later the print studio, is similar to that across the hall, with plaster walls, the 1916 picture molding and simple detail. The purpose of a window in the north wall of the southeast room is not clear.

The second floor library, designated the boudoir in one of Hunt's plans, has a paneled rectangular bay flanked by bookcases. It is entered from the stairhall through an anteroom and from adjoining rooms at the east and west through doors set in canted corners.

A stair to the third floor is located on the south wall of the corridor that runs east from the stair hall. The dog leg stair with landing has turned balusters. A bathroom was installed in the southeast corner of the corridor. A change in the baseboard along the south wall of the corridor suggests there has been a change here. A fire stair was added in the 1980s at the northeast corner of this corridor leading down to a first floor exit.

The third floor rooms have plaster walls and ceilings and simple finishes similar to those in the northeast and southeast rooms. The southwest room in the attic does have low paneled wainscoting. Most have closets or storage spaces under the eaves and sloping ceilings with dormer windows at the exterior walls.

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Ilgenfritz

Entered through two wood and glass panel doors, the Ilgenfritz Gallery takes up most of the east ell and consists of a large, two-story rectangular space with a cove ceiling that rises to a central skylight. The space was renovated in 1976-77 through the bequest of McNair Ilgenfritz. The parquet floor was most likely installed at that time. From two large beams, which span the ceiling running north-south, there are rails for hanging partitions. The walls have been built to hang exhibits and there are no windows in the room. A door at the southeast corner of the room leads to an small entrance vestibule and back hall under the stairs, beyond which is the children's studio. The studio is an open space with painted wood walls lighted by a large north window. At the second floor above the studio, there is a dark room at the north end, in an area that steps up from the main floor, and at the south end there is a small space that had recently served as the photo studio and formerly may have been the caretaker's apartment.

Landscape

The layout of the lot illustrated in the 1876 Hopkins Atlas indicates a slightly curved drive that enters the property at the corner of Bellevue Avenue and Old Beach Road and runs east leading to a large circular drive under the porte cochere. This drive still remains. The 1870 description and some early photographs indicate that there had been more lawn south of the house, which is now largely filled by trees. Paved walks have been installed between the south porch of the Griswold House and the north entrance to the Cushing Memorial. A walk also has been installed from Bellevue Avenue to the west entrance to the Cushing Memorial and from the parking area at the east to each building.

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

Nationally: X Statewide: Locally:

Applicable National

Register Criteria: A X B C X D

Criteria Considerations

(Exceptions): A B C D E F G

NHL Criteria: Criteria 1 and 4

NHL Theme(s): Expressing Cultural Values: architecture
 Expressing Cultural Values: visual and performing arts

Areas of Significance: ARCHITECTURE , ART

Period(s) of Significance: 1864 - 1949

Significant Dates: 1864; 1915

Significant Person(s): n/a

Cultural Affiliation: n/a

Architect/Builder: Hunt, Richard Morris, Architect
 Cranston, William S. & Burdick, Charles H., Builders

Historic Contexts:

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State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

Completed in 1864, the John N. A. Griswold house possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Identified by Vincent Scully, Jr. as the first example of the mature Stick Style, it is nationally significant as a seminal work by the noted architect Richard Morris Hunt. It is also nationally significant as the home, since 1916, of the Art Association of Newport, now called the Newport Art Museum and Art Association, one of the oldest continuously operating art associations in the country. The John N. A. Griswold House meets criteria 1 and 4 for listing as a National Historic Landmark.

History of the John N. A. Griswold House and Landscape

The John N. A. Griswold House represents an early example of Richard Morris Hunt's work in the United States, it is his first major commission in Newport where a large number of his designs were built, and it has been called the prototype for the mature Stick Style. Historically, the house has had two owners both requiring two distinct uses. Originally built in 1863-64 by China trade and railroad magnate John N. A. Griswold, the house served as his residence for 45 years. Still owned by the heirs, it was vacant for six years before it was acquired by the Art Association of Newport for its headquarters, gallery and studio space. Founded in 1912, the Art Association is one of the oldest continuously operating art associations in the country and has remained at this site to the present. The Griswold House is important for its role in the development of American domestic architecture and as the home of an important institution, the Art Association of Newport.

Richard Morris Hunt and his wife Catharine had been friends with John N. A. Griswold and his wife Jane prior to the Hunt's marriage in the spring of 1861 (discussed later). While the Hunts stayed with the Griswolds in Paris for two weeks in July of 1861, it had been agreed that Hunt would design a house for the Griswolds in Newport. The Hunts and the Griswolds returned from Europe in the fall of 1862, while the United States was in the midst of the Civil War. On November 25, 1862, J. N. A. Griswold purchased from Rowland R. Hazard, Jr. and Margaret E. Hazard of Newport, the lot of land bounded to the north by Beach Street, to the east by State Street (now Liberty Street), to the south by Downing Street and to the West on South Touro Street (now Bellevue Avenue), which are the same boundaries of the site occupied by the house today. The deed refers to the lot as the "Fry Estate and Shaw Estate" and to houses on the lot. The property was subject to a taking by the city of five feet along the length of the north boundary for the purpose of widening Beach Street, at such time as the city decided to grade Beach Street. The purchase price of \$28,000.00 consisted of \$18,000.00 paid to the Hazards and payment of two mortgages, one for \$4,000.00 made by Mary E. Rhodes and a second for \$6,000.00 made by the Hazards, both to the Savings Bank of Newport.⁴

By March 1863, plans for construction of the present house were reported in the Newport Mercury noting J. N. A. Griswold as one of seven gentlemen who were building or about to build residences on the hill. In October of that year, another mention in the Newport Mercury suggested that construction had begun on the building. It included a description of the location of the house toward the center of the Fry lot. The dimensions of the house were 101 feet in length by 60 feet in depth. The location of the present house was apparently not on the footprint of the previous houses since according to the report, "the houses now at the south and east will be moved off in a few weeks."⁵

⁴ City of Newport, Land Evidence. Book 36, p. 617.

⁵ Newport Mercury, Oct. 10, 1863, Newport Historical Society Scrapbook.

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In December of 1863, Kate Hunter, 14 years old at the time, wrote in her journal that she made two visits with her father to Mr. Griswold's house, which she described as very large. On the second visit, on December 31, 1863, Mr. Griswold was there and took the party for a tour to see the view from the roof. The lengthy description describes views of the harbor looking west, of the ocean looking south and into the country looking northeast. The front stairs had been constructed since the previous visit, and she noted that work was progressing.⁶ Reported to cost \$30,000 when it was finished, the house was built by the local firm of Cranston and Burdick. By the time the house was completed in 1864, the name of the street had been changed to Bellevue Avenue, most likely a reflection of the residential development that was occurring in the area.

The Griswolds were living nearby at Kingscote while their house was being constructed.⁷ Upon completion, the Bellevue Avenue home became the Griswold's primary residence where Mr. Griswold remained for the rest of his life.

Observations on the Griswold House in the year it was completed suggest that the style was unfamiliar and perhaps a bit curious, yet at the same time it was well received: "J. N. A. Griswold has built one of the best houses in the city on the corner of Bellevue Avenue and Beach Street. It is two stories high, Gothic, with slate roof, as is also the carriage house and stables. The style is quite peculiar but attractive."⁸

Some of the later houses, most likely by Hunt and his contemporaries, were descriptively referred to by a local society reporter as based on the Swiss style. "The new villas are very costly and elegant seaside residences. They are constructed after the Swiss style and are very showy. One could easily imagine himself in a Swiss village, so rapidly have houses of this description sprung up on the Avenue."⁹ Although local critics' comments may seem a bit ambiguous, perhaps the clearest evidence of the appreciation for Hunt's design of the Griswold House were the many subsequent houses built through the seventies in the same style.

An opinion on the architectural style and an impression of the interior spaces of these houses is offered by a local society columnist, Mrs. Theophilus Pitman, under the pen name of Margery Deane in her column "Letter from Newport." "The new cottages built within half a dozen years are of an entirely different style of architecture and built mostly after designs of R. M. Hunt of New York. They are very novel and attractive, as well as peculiar. I have no time in this letter to make mention of these, many of which are the most costly of the places here, but will do so in my next. In the houses built recently, very few, if any, carpets are used. The floors are laid with hardwoods of different kinds, and highly polished. Bright rugs are placed before the doors and sofas, and the effect is very rich and at the same time very appropriate for summer residence. Walls are hung with chintz in many cases, and no money is spared to make these houses complete and elegant in their appointments."¹⁰

⁶ Kate Hunter, "The Journal of Kate Hunter," Vol. 2, 1863 unpublished manuscript, p. 118. Newport Historical Society.

⁷ The sale of Kingscote on April 29, 1863 was subject to a lease to John N. A. Griswold, which expired May 1, 1864, when it is assumed that the Griswolds expected to move into their new home. (HABS RI-322)

⁸ Providence Daily Journal, Dec. 3, 1864, p.1.

⁹ Margery Deane, cover of the Evening Post, May 19, 1870, "Margery Deane Scrapbook," unpublished, Newport Historical Society.

¹⁰ Margery Deane, "Letter from Newport," American Society, May 2, 1871. Writing under the name of Margery Deane, M. Jennie Pitman was the wife of Mr. Theophilus T. Pitman, one of the publishers of the Newport Daily News and the daughter of Rev. L. D. Davis an editor at the News. Margery Deane was also a correspondent of

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Ms. Deane's description of the exterior of these houses in her next "Letter" articulates the vocabulary Hunt developed at the Griswold House. "Everything in the Swiss style is the fashion this year, and the new houses are made more striking and novel in their construction than any built heretofore. The number of peaks, gables, towers and dormer windows which are tacked on to one roof is really surprising. Where slate is not used the shingles are painted in stripes, usually bright red and brown, and the window frames and caps and the cross pieces or braces with which the whole of the exterior is checkered off, are painted in decided contrast with the rest of the building. Not infrequently red, brown, gray, black and yellow is seen on the same building and a very light pale green is also fashionable. Some very fine rustic fences are to be built on the Avenue, and some very fancy ones after the Swiss style also."¹¹

In 1871, Margery Deane, commented that Mr. Griswold's "own residence on the Park is one of the finest here." (American Society, March 14, 1871). Completed almost seven years earlier, the Griswold House remained among the most notable houses in Newport.

As mentioned above, Hunt himself designed several houses in what would later be called the Stick Style by the architectural historian Vincent Scully. The popularity of the style seems to have attracted a number of interested clients. Among those attributed to Hunt were houses in Newport for Mrs. Coleford Jones (1866-67), the expansion of the Hitchcock-Travers House (1862; 1869-71), the Thomas G. Appleton House (1870-71), and the Charlotte Cushman House (1871-72).¹² The influence on other architects is evidenced by the fact that several of Hunt's contemporaries adopted this style to design notable houses. An immediate successor to the Griswold House, Greenvale Farm in Portsmouth by John Hubbard Sturgis was, according to David Chase, stylistically related. A slightly later example by Peabody & Stearns is the Nathan Matthews House, Newport, (1871-1872). Vincent Scully points to the Sturtevant House, Middletown, RI (1875-76), by Dudley Newton, which Scully states, "represents the apogee of the movement: a highly articulated plan, deep porches, high, jagged, movemented silhouette, full of 'masculine' activity, the surface exploded into a basketry of sticks."¹³

Many of Hunt's larger and more impressive buildings have been acknowledged for their individual architectural expression. However discussion of Hunt's work at the time of his death in 1895 acknowledged the importance of the Griswold House in the development of vernacular domestic architecture. The popularity of the stick style in the 1870s, and the Griswold House as the first example of the mature phase of that style was evident in 1895. Architectural historian and critic Montgomery Schuyler was rather critical of the design of the Griswold House as a whole, but at the same time he recognized its status as the first in what became a popular form. "The first of Mr. Hunt's Newport houses is an object, it may fairly be said, of historical interest, for it was the precursor of a long series which for at least twenty years, and until the cottage had expanded itself successively into a villa and a palace, continued to give its architectural character to our most famous watering place."¹⁴ It is also important in light of the fact that most of Hunt's other early Newport houses have been demolished.

the *Boston Traveler*, the *New York Evening Post* and *American Society*, a popular society Journal published in New York.

¹¹Deane, special cover of the Evening Mail, May 4, 1871, Deane Scrapbook, p. 42.

¹²Sarah Bradford Landau, "Richard Morris Hunt, the Continental Picturesque, and the 'Stick Style'" *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 42 (1983): 281-285.

¹³Vincent J. Scully, Jr., *American Architecture and Urbanism*, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1969), p. 91.

¹⁴Montgomery Schuyler, "The Works of the Late Richard M. Hunt," *Architectural Record* 5 (Oct.-Dec. 1895): 99.

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In an article published in December 1895 Barr Ferree recognized that Hunt's work was not a "complete transference of the French system and its forms" and Ferree pointed to the early work as his most individual. "His very earliest work shows this freedom from academic traditions that did so much to make his art distinctive and personal. . . . Hunt's later work shows more strongly the influence of his Parisian training than his earlier."¹⁵ This perspective corresponds with Vincent Scully's comment that the Griswold House may have been Hunt's most American work.

Mr. John N. A. Griswold died September 13, 1909 at the house on Bellevue Avenue. His wife, Jane Louise Emmett Griswold, had died several months earlier, and the house remained vacant until it was purchased in 1915 by the Art Association of Newport.

The Second Phase: Home to the Art Association of Newport

On November 11, 1915, Frederick Frelinghuysen and George G. Frelinghuysen, executors of the Last Will and Testament of John N. A. Griswold, sold the property to the Art Association of Newport, for \$40,000.00. The 1915 deed repeated the restriction that the property was sold subject to the City's right to widen Beach Street.¹⁶ William Paine Sheffield, acting on behalf of the Art Association, made the commitment to purchase the property with the understanding that the Association must raise forty thousand dollars before Dec. 18th. He was enthusiastic about the implications for the Art Association: "I cannot forbear congratulating you, and thro' you, the Art Association, on the great future which opens before it, by securing this unique and centrally located site for the home of its activities. It thus furnishes the means, when adequately improved, for the Association to be of still greater benefit and a continuing inspiration to the education of the youth of this city, and it ensures a far reaching development in Art for the entire community."¹⁷

The purchase price was substantially below the assessed value of the house, which was reported as \$68,000 in 1915.¹⁸ In recognition of the generous support offered by the Griswold heirs in agreeing to a purchase price that was \$18,000 less than the property's assessed value, the following resolution was passed by the Board of the Art Association: "That the grateful thanks of this Association be and hereby are extended to the heirs of the Griswold Estate for their public spirit and generous act in conveying to the Association the splendid site for the permanent home of the Art Association of Newport at a price which can only signify a handsome contribution on their part to the success of our enterprise."¹⁹

Marsden J. Perry, an active member of the board and chairman of the Buildings and Grounds Committee, made a substantial gift of \$2,000.00 toward the purchase. Mr. Perry also personally paid many of the bills for the early work on the house. The two largest contributors to the building campaign, each donating \$5,000.00, were Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney and Mrs. Arthur Curtiss James. It is also interesting to note that one of the Griswold daughters, Mrs. John Murray Forbes (Minnie Griswold), made a generous offer to donate furniture for the building. Other donations included that of Mrs. Ruth Payne Burgess who proposed at her own expense, "to

¹⁵Barr Ferree, "Richard Morris Hunt: His Art and Work," *Architecture and Building* 23 (2 Dec. 1895):

¹⁶City of Newport, Land Evidence, Book 102, Page 172.

¹⁷William Paine Sheffield to Mrs. Maud Howe Elliott, Dec. 9, 1915, Newport Art Museum Records.

¹⁸*American Art News*, Dec. 18, 1915, Newport Art Museum Scrapbook. City of Newport Tax Assessor's Records list the value of the property as \$68,833 on February 1, 1916.

¹⁹Art Association of Newport, Meeting Minutes, Resolved Dec. 16, 1915.

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fit up and furnish the South West room of the first floor as a library and reading room and stock it with the standard works upon Art and the approved Art periodicals, . . .²⁰ Mrs. Burgess had been elected an artist member of the Council of the Art Association in 1914. Her husband, John W. Burgess, served as the vice chairman of the Buildings and Grounds Committee during the transition to the new building.

Following a special meeting of the Art Association on Dec. 16, 1915 to ratify the purchase of the Griswold Estate, the Newport Herald reported that work would be required on the house to adapt it to its new use. "It will be needful to make some improvements about the place at once so that pictures may be hung in the most advantageous way. There is desired a flood of northern light and plans will be devised and carried out to get this into the building. Moreover, it is evident that under the present construction shadows would be cast upon the pictures and the cause of this must be removed."²¹

The Art Association moved into the Griswold House on March 18, 1916, the date the lease expired on their former quarters on Church Street. To suit its needs for adequate light and classroom space, the Association continued work on the house during most of that year. The use of the space has not changed significantly since the Art Association first took up residence. The Drury Gallery, the former dining room, became the Directors' Room and was set up with an office for Maud Howe Elliott. It also was intended to function as a meeting space for lectures so that overflow seating could be provided in the adjoining rooms. The library remained as a library, the Wright Gallery served as a gallery, the center north room, now the Griffon Shop, was the ladies' cloak and retiring rooms and to the east of that were the rooms for the men. The laundry, which had been located at the east end of the corridor leading from the entrance, was transformed into a tea room. Three rooms in the east ell, consisting of the kitchen and two adjoining offices, were consolidated into one gallery and the corridor leading from the entrance to the ell was extended into the gallery. Classrooms and studios were located on the second and third floors. When the building opened, the children's Saturday classes were held in the southwest room of the second floor, the portrait class met in the northwest room, while the north room and the northeast room were used by the Saturday morning class in modeling and for "studies with casts as subjects." In addition, during the 1916 renovations, the floor and floor framing for the stable were replaced and the entire first floor of the stable was converted into three art studios, each 17 x 37 feet, at a cost of \$2,204.²²

The reason for the ultimate removal of the third floor in the Portrait Studio (NW room 2nd floor) is explained in a letter from Stone Carpenter and Sheldon, Architects to Marsden J. Perry, Chairman of the Committee on Buildings and Grounds. "Since writing you in regard to the slanting ceiling for the Portrait Class Studio in the Art Association of Newport's building, Mr. Sheldon has devised a way by which the ceiling can be slanted the whole length of the room as you desire. We can accomplish this by putting a small platform one step up above the hall floor in the part of the third story hall that jogs into the room."²³ It appears that rather than raise the floor, it was removed and the infill along the railing was installed to close off the room on the third floor.

Subsequent work at the Art Association property included moving the former stable and attaching it to the east end of the building. In 1920, the kitchen ell, which had been converted to a gallery, and the stable were converted to a new large gallery and meeting hall, which was intended to seat 300 people. The idea originated with John Elliott, who brought in his nephew, Samuel Prescott Hall, as the architect for the project. One studio

²⁰ Art Association of Newport, Annual Report 1916.

²¹ Newport Herald, Dec. 18, 1915, Art Association of Newport Scrapbook.

²² Art Association, "Annual Report," 1917.

²³ Stone Carpenter and Sheldon, Architects to Marsden J. Perry, Sept. 7, 1916, Newport Art Museum Records.

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was retained or rebuilt at the east end of the stable, and continues in that use today. This work was completed at a total cost of \$15,000.00.²⁴

Meanwhile, beginning in 1918, it was proposed to build a memorial to Howard Gardiner Cushing, an artist and one of the Art Association's original members who died in his mid forties. William Adams Delano of the New York Architectural firm of Delano & Aldrich designed the Cushing Memorial that was built to the south of the Griswold House within the bounds of the original property. Opened on August 1, 1920, the gallery had been planned by his friends to house a number of Cushing's paintings. Once again, among the largest benefactors was Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney. The building had been designed to accept an extension at the rear and in 1989-90, the east extension to the Cushing Memorial was built to the designs of Peter Roudebush. The new gallery was named in honor of Mrs. Sara Rives, who donated the Swanhurst property to the Art Association of Newport.

Landscape

Although no documentation has been found to determine who designed the landscape for the Griswolds, it is likely that this too was a notable feature of the property. In August of 1870 in reporting on a charitable event held at the Griswold's, the New York Post described Mr. Griswold's lawn as "so very finely laid out, containing many rare shrubs and plants."²⁵

Prompted by the relocation of the stable and the construction of the Cushing Memorial, both completed in 1920, the Art Association engaged the Olmsted Brothers to design the landscape. Henry Vincent Hubbard, the principal in charge, made several recommendations regarding the driveway, parking areas, entrances and exits from the property, proposed plantings and existing trees. In January of 1921, the Olmsted firm also supplied a planting plan and accompanying planting list. By 1923, it was reported that most of the plan for the grounds (presumably the Olmsted Bros. plan) had been carried out.²⁶ Since that time the property has experienced damage and loss of several trees from a number of storms and hurricanes, loss of trees through disease, additions of memorial plantings and trees, gifts of plantings and trees or relocation of plantings. Since the 1920s, at least two new planting or landscape plans have been commissioned. One completed by 1971 by Mr. Rudy Favretti, from the University of Connecticut at Storrs, CT, recommended "to retain essentially the present forms and to evolve further aspects of the grounds, keeping in mind outdoor exhibits and the easy movement between buildings and grounds and street." (Annual Report, 1971) The second was a planting plan by Morgan Wheelock. Documentation from these plans has not been located. Except for the largest trees, most of the plantings do not date from the construction of the house or from the Olmsted plan.

John Noble Alsop Griswold

China trade and railroad magnate John Noble Alsop Griswold resided in Newport for nearly a half century, where he became "closely identified with everything which pertained to the city's enhancement." Griswold was an extremely wealthy man by the time he moved to Newport in 1863. He used his influence to encourage land

²⁴Maud Howe Elliott, *This Was My Newport*, (Cambridge, Mass.: The Mythology Company, 1944), p. 127; Art Association, "Annual Report" 1921.

²⁵New York Post, August 4, 1870, Margery Deane Scrapbook, Newport Historical Society.

²⁶Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1923.

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development and local businesses such as the Newport & Wickford Steamboat & Railroad Company, and the Newport Casino. In addition to his large house on Bellevue Avenue, Griswold owned Commercial and Scotts wharves, the Berkeley Block, and large holdings on Coggeshall and Bellevue Avenues and Price's Neck. At the time of his death in 1909, his estate was worth over three million dollars.

J.N.A. Griswold began his successful business career as an importer in his father's China Trade house in New York. He traveled to the Far East in 1847 and was within a year appointed United States consul at Shanghai. He held that position until 1854. Upon his return to America, he helped develop several prominent railroads, serving as president of the Illinois Central Railroad Company and chairman of the board of directors of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad Company.

Griswold was also involved in the house of Charles H. Russell & Co. "one of the world's foremost business houses of that time." It may have been through the owner of that merchant and shipping company that the Griswolds met Richard Morris Hunt. In the summer of 1860, Hunt was introduced to his wife, Mrs. Russell's sister, at "Oaklawn" the Newport house where Charles H. Russell was born and spent his summers. Mrs. Griswold wrote of their engagement the following October, referring familiarly to the suitor as "Dick Hunt."²⁷

John N. A. Griswold and Jane Louise Emmett were married on February 29, 1859 at St. Mark's Church in New York. The wedding had been delayed on account of her mother's ill health, but took place quietly after her death in January. They moved to an apartment on the Avenue Gabrielle in Paris where their first child was born in the summer of 1861. Soon after the birth, they hosted their "old friend" Richard Morris Hunt and his new wife who were honeymooning in Paris. During their visit, the Griswolds "concluded arrangements with Hunt for the design and construction" of a house for them in Newport, where Mrs. Griswold's brother Thomas Addis Emmett was spending the summer.²⁸

"Being an intense Union man," J.N.A. Griswold returned to the United States in November of 1862 after the Civil War broke out to help finance volunteer troops in New York. He purchased two lots on Bellevue Avenue in Newport that month, and leased Kingscote while his new house was constructed under the supervision of Richard Morris Hunt. Although Kingscote was sold during his tenancy, he retained the right to occupy the premises until the lease expired in May 1864. Thereafter, the Griswolds maintained addresses in both Newport and New York and joined many social clubs at both locations. Mr. Griswold belonged to the Union Club and Union League in New York, and hosted meetings of the Town and Country Club at his Newport home.

Mrs. Griswold was known for her entertaining and authored two novels, *Houses Not Made With Hands* and *The Lost Wedding Ring* (1887). J.N.A. Griswold's original will, written in 1890, made provisions for his wife, allowing her to select one of the houses and its contents plus an annuity of \$15,000. Shortly afterward, Griswold revoked these passages of his will since "My wife Jane Emmett has seen fit without just cause from me to accept an annuity of \$6,000 per annum to live separate and apart from me and members of my family." He directed that she receive what the law provided as her right of dower, and later revoked that clause, leaving her \$6,000 per annum in exchange for her dower's rights.²⁹

The Griswolds' lives were filled with additional strife. Their only son George (christened Addis McEvers), a

²⁷Mrs. John N. A. Griswold, "Copy Book," excerpts in the records of the Newport Art Museum.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Newport County Probate Records, Vol. 66, p. 275.

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lawyer and graduate of Harvard and Oxford Universities, became reclusive and apparently committed suicide. "His health broke down about two years ago under strain of study and since that time he had lived in seclusion with his mother [in New York], two nurses being employed to care for him. He escaped from their keeping, and scantily clad, made his way to the place where, later his corpse was found." George Griswold was found "decapitated by a train on the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad near New Rochelle" at Christmastime in 1902.³⁰

The Griswold daughters, Florence and Minnie, fared better than their brother. Minnie married John Murray Forbes of New York and produced three children, while Florence married Lieutenant Colonel Surgeon H.R. Odo Cross of the British Army.

John N. A. Griswold died at his Newport home on September 13, 1909.

Richard Morris Hunt

A highly esteemed individual and respected architect, Richard Morris Hunt was considered by his contemporaries the dean of American architecture. The international awards and honors bestowed upon him exceeded those he received in the United States, confirming Hunt as an architect of international stature. The general acclaim he received both during his lifetime and upon his death is attributed to his training of younger architects through his studio, his contribution of the infusion of professionalism into the practice of architecture and his skill and talent as an architect. During his career, he marked many firsts including the first American trained at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, the first architect to receive the degree of LL. D. from Harvard University, and the first American to receive the Victoria gold medal bestowed by the Royal Institute of British Architects. Paul R. Baker, Hunt's biographer, claims that Hunt was "one of the most highly acclaimed of all nineteenth-century Americans."³¹

Born on October 31, 1827 to a prominent family in Brattleboro, Vermont, Richard Morris Hunt spent some time in Washington, D.C. while his father Jonathan Hunt was a congressman. The fourth of five children, Richard Morris Hunt was from an artistic family that included his older brother the celebrated painter William Morris Hunt and Hunt's mother and sister, both talented painters. After Hunt's father, a wealthy lawyer, banker and landowner, died in 1832 the family moved to New Haven and later to Boston. In 1843, after Hunt graduated from the Boston Latin School, his mother, Jane Maria Leavitt Hunt, took the family on a trip to Europe, where they decided to stay. While attending boarding school in Geneva, Hunt took architectural drawing lessons from Samuel Darier, who it seems had a great influence on the course of Hunt's future. Rather than attend military academy as formerly planned, in 1845 Hunt settled in Paris where he was accepted into the atelier of Hector Martin Lefuel (a former colleague of Darier's) and the following year Hunt was accepted at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. While continuing his studies for nine years, Hunt traveled extensively. When Lefuel was appointed to the position of architect of the Louvre charged with linking the Louvre and the Tuileries, he invited Hunt to join him in 1854 as an inspector of construction. Hunt's duties involved making studies and full-size drawings under Lefuel for the Pavillon de la Bibliotheque. The following year, Hunt returned to the United States and for six months worked under Thomas U. Walter on completion of the Capitol in Washington, D. C. Settling in New York in 1856 or 1857, Hunt opened a studio where he introduced the Ecole's rigorous system of training to

³⁰ Unidentified Newspaper clipping, Dec. 27, 1902, Griswold Family File. Newport Art Museum.

³¹ Paul R. Baker, "Richard Morris Hunt: An Introduction," in *The Architecture of Richard Morris Hunt*, ed. Susan R. Stein, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 3.

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American students, several of whom became prominent architects in their own right. Among Hunt's pupils were Henry Van Brunt, William R. Ware, George B. Post and Frank Furness.

Richard Morris Hunt met his wife Catharine Clinton Howland in Newport in 1860. Following their wedding in early April 1861, they traveled for a year and a half through Europe where they had their first child. Of their five children (three boys and two girls) two of the sons later became architects. Catharine Clinton Howland was the daughter of Samuel Shaw Howland, senior member of the prosperous New York shipping firm of Howland & Aspinwall. Henry Van Brunt described their fortunate union: "To this alliance [Hunt] was indebted for a high companionship of the soul, a solace of perfect appreciation, a constant service of sympathy, consecrating all the most productive years of his life."³² The Hunts maintained strong ties to Newport and although they lived in New York, in 1864 they purchased William Morris Hunt's House "Hill Top" on Bellevue Avenue, which was not sold until 1911, after Mrs. Hunt's death. Also during their lives, the Hunts returned to Europe several times, often for extended stays.

Hunt enjoyed a popular and prolific career, designing urban and suburban buildings, commercial, residential, institutional and public structures as well as numerous monuments. His palatial Newport cottages are well known, as are many of his New York residences. Among his work several buildings have received accolades, among these are the Stuyvesant Apartments, America's first fashionable apartment house, the Lenox Library, the Tribune Building, the W. K. Vanderbilt Mansion, and the entrance wing for the Metropolitan Museum of Art all in New York, Biltmore at Asheville, N. C., and the base and pedestal of the Statue of Liberty. These range from his earliest to his latest commissions and the Griswold House must be included on the list of buildings that is generally acknowledged as one of Hunt's most significant. It is unfortunate that much of his work, including some of his most important buildings, has been demolished.

There is some sense that Hunt's architecture was underappreciated at least in the United States. Hunt seems to have been eclipsed by his contemporary H. H. Richardson, described as a man of "original genius" and of the two "the more exciting figure." Hunt's contribution to American architecture, perhaps undervalued, may have simply been different. Rather than develop an egocentric following or school, Hunt advanced the profession of architecture as a whole and encouraged through classical training the individual development of his architectural students. According to William Francklyn Paris, Hunt's talent was his "scholarly understanding of his profession and taste in adapting the principles he so thoroughly understood to existing problems." In comparison to Richardson, Paris continued, ". . . it is quite possible Hunt was the greater force not only for good taste but also for artistic freedom."³³

Among his achievements Richard Morris Hunt was an important force in promoting professionalism in the practice of architecture. As a spokesman and advocate, Hunt worked to advance professional standards among architects and to promote a professional relationship between architects and their clients. He was also instrumental in formalizing the system of architectural education. As stated by William Francklyn Paris: "Hunt . . . lifted architecture to its rightful position as an art in America and its practitioners to their rightful status as professional men."³⁴ Hunt was one of the founders of the American Institute of Architects in 1857 and its first

³²Henry Van Brunt, "Richard Morris Hunt: A Memorial Address," *American Architect and Building News* 50 (2 Nov. 1895): 56.

³³William Francklyn Paris, "Richard Morris Hunt, First Secretary and Third President of the Institute," *Journal of the AIA* 25 (January 1956) Part II, p. 18.

³⁴Paris, "Hunt," *Journal of the AIA* 24 (Dec. 1955) Part I, p. 246.

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secretary. Paris claimed that “No one worked more actively for the development of the Institute than Hunt.”³⁵ Elected the third president of the A.I.A., Hunt held the position from 1888 through 1891. As a spokesman for architects, his interests included promoting a formalized architectural education, which included the study of the great work of the past, and improving the quality of federal buildings. During his career, Hunt served in the United States and abroad as a juror for architectural exhibits in numerous expositions. Perhaps his most renowned role was as chairman of the board of architects for the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago for which he designed the Administration Building. As the gateway to the grounds, it was described as a “monumental, neoclassical edifice whose gleaming gold and white dome was visible all over the grounds,” and although it was a temporary structure, it is said to have been his best-known work during his lifetime.³⁶

Hunt was honored extensively and according to Paul Baker “was the most honored American architect of his time and one of the most internationally honored Americans.”³⁷ In addition to the many awards received during his lifetime, following his death a memorial was erected in honor of Richard Morris Hunt on Fifth Avenue in New York in 1898. Sponsored by the city’s art societies, it was designed by sculptor Daniel Chester French and architect Bruce Price.

Richard Morris Hunt died on July 31, 1895 at his summer home in Newport. His wife Catharine died while in Italy in February 1909.

Cranston & Burdick

Cranston & Burdick, the builders for the Griswold House, were Newport’s premiere contracting firm at the time the house was built. As young men, William S. Cranston and Charles H. Burdick apprenticed as carpenters together in Providence and eventually after returning to Newport, formed the partnership of Cranston & Burdick. The firm was listed in the 1865 Newport directory as carpenters and builders, with their office at Williams Wharf. Known as the leading contracting firm in Newport in the 1860s, the partnership was dissolved in the late 1870s by mutual consent. The two men reportedly remained friends and each continued in business separately. Burdick first operated his business alone and later in association with his two sons as C. H. Burdick & Sons.

Discussion of the Architectural Significance of the Griswold House

Numerous architectural historians have acknowledged the architectural significance of the Griswold House. Although there is some disagreement regarding the direct influences for the design and whether it represents a truly American architecture or an American expression of the European vernacular revival, it seems the building’s architectural significance lies in the pivotal role it played in the development of a style of American architecture called the Stick Style by Vincent Scully. In addition, it is significant for what it represents among Hunt’s own architectural oeuvre, perhaps Hunt’s most American work. The following summary is intended to provide an overview of some of the discussions of the Griswold House, which has been the topic of analysis by many notable architectural historians, and thus to provide some understanding of how the building has been perceived in terms of its place in the history of American architecture.

³⁵Paris, “Hunt,” Part II, p. 16.

³⁶Paul R. Baker, “Richard Morris Hunt,” in *MacMillan Encyclopedia of Architects*, ed. Adolf K. Placzek, (London: The Free Press, 1982) p. 442.

³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 443.

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In their assessment of the Griswold House, architectural historians have generally agreed that the Griswold House holds a significant place in the evolution of American domestic architecture. This was largely due to the fact that the Griswold House represents a particularly individual or more American expression than Hunt's other work. Perhaps the first to make this point was Montgomery Schuyler, who noted that two earlier designs, The Rossiter House (1855-57) and the Studio Building (1857-58), both built in New York, were as expected, products of the Beaux Arts. In contrast, at the Griswold House Hunt developed a particularly original design or as Schuyler put it, Hunt was "thrown . . . upon his own resources." Schuyler reasoned that this was due to the use of wood frame and clapboard construction, an exterior sheathing that was not part of the training at the Ecole. Although critical of the overall design of the Griswold House, Schuyler did compliment the details and particularly liked the carriage porch, which he called a "spirited and admirable piece of design."³⁸

Unlike Schuyler, Antoinette Downing and Vincent Scully admired the Griswold House and explained how it differed from Hunt's later buildings. "Less turgid than his later work, the Griswold house is also Hunt's most American creation. In its sense of open interior space expanded by piazzas, it looks forward to the spatial achievements of the cottage of the eighties, while in the skeletal explosion of its sticks it sets the stage for a similar development in the cottages of the late sixties and early seventies."³⁹ It was Vincent Scully who brought attention to the Griswold House using it to illustrate what he named the "Stick Style." Downing and Scully went further, singling out the Griswold House. "If the Griswold house is an early example of this apotheosis of skeletal expression, it is also an excellent building in its own right and is perhaps Hunt's best."⁴⁰ Barr Ferree, writing in 1895, also believed, although he did not mention the Griswold House by name, that Hunt's early work was his most distinctive.

Scully was perhaps impressed by Hunt's own opinion of his early projects. Scully referred to Hunt's personal preference for his early work, among which would be included the Griswold House. "By the sixties a feeling for mediaeval half-timber work, already implied in the feeling for wood and Gothic of Downing and Wheeler, produced such a building as the J. N. A. Griswold House in Newport, R.I., built in 1862 by Richard Morris Hunt. This is one of the best of the stick style houses which Hunt built in America after his return from the Beaux-Arts in the fifties. Later, as a 'Vanderbilt architect' of the early nineties, Hunt was to profess a nostalgic admiration for these earlier and less pretentious houses and to wish that they might not be forgotten."⁴¹

Antoinette Downing and Vincent Scully concurred with Hunt. It was their contention that in his early domestic designs Hunt, "embarked upon a series of wooden buildings which we today may well feel to have been his best work. He himself, late in life, claimed to prefer them to his later palazzi."⁴²

Vincent Scully also noted that Montgomery Schuyler in his 1895 article seemed "somewhat appalled" at Hunt's later work and "therefore stressed the earlier, more vernacular works as much as possible." In light of this

³⁸Montgomery Schuyler, "The Works of the Late Richard M. Hunt," *Architectural Record* 5 (Oct.-Dec. 1895): 101.

³⁹Antoinette Downing and Vincent J. Scully, Jr., *The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island, 1640-1915*. (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, second edition, 1967), pp. 133-134.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 133.

⁴¹Vincent J. Scully, Jr. "Romantic Rationalism and the Expression of Structure in Wood: Downing, Wheeler, Gardner and the 'Stick Style, 1840-1876,'" *Art Bulletin*, 35, (Mar 1953, No. 1): p. 139.

⁴²Downing and Scully, *Architectural Heritage of Newport*, p. 133.

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comment, it is interesting to note that Schuyler included two views of the Griswold House in that article.

The popularity of the Griswold House in Newport has been addressed in the earlier discussion of the history of the building. The noted architectural historian, Sarah Bradford Landau recognized the regional influence of the Griswold House, which she claimed “. . . encouraged the building of picturesque suburban and resort houses in Newport and elsewhere in the northeast for the next fifteen years or so.”⁴³ While the Griswold House may have been the precursor to other American examples of this style, Hunt did not always follow his own lead. Although he did design other stick style houses very much reminiscent of the Griswold, some of Hunt’s later houses, such as the Jones Chalet (1866-67), are more directly evocative of the Swiss chalet than the Griswold House. It may be the Jones House that Schuyler referred to as “[a]n avowed reproduction of the Swiss chalet in the vernacular clapboard.”⁴⁴

The influence of the Griswold house on both clients and other architects was pointed out again by David Chase. While Chase was clear that the Griswold House “brought a new level of sophistication to Newport architecture,” he was less clear about its direct descendants. “If not the direct progenitor of the ‘modern Gothic’ style which flourished so creatively in Newport in the late 1860s and early 1870s, the Griswold project certainly showed the way to prospective clients and architects alike; it illustrated the suitability of the updated and creatively interpreted vernacular late Gothic to the practical, symbolic, and aesthetic desiderata of country-house design.”⁴⁵

In addition to picturesque, architect-designed houses appearing around Newport and the Northeast, there was a vernacular movement that embraced the stick style. Having identified the Griswold House as the first example of the developed Stick Style, Vincent Scully also discussed the predominance of the style among vernacular buildings. “By the early seventies, however, this reaction toward the heavy and the sculptural had in general run its course, and the stick style emerged before 1876 as the main carrier of the American vernacular in wood.”⁴⁶ In comparison to examples outside the United States, Scully considered the American expression of this style the most predominant. “The Stick Style was to be found to some extent all over the world, from Istanbul to Buenos Aires, but its importance, again largely because of its comparatively large volume in contrast to pre-existing work, was apparently greater in the United States.”⁴⁷

Others have made similar observations about the stick style and the Griswold House in particular implying that its influence was not limited to architect-designed houses built in one of the country’s most exclusive resorts. In the context of the Griswold House as the first example of the mature stick style, it was the vernacular expression of this form and its national popularity that make Hunt’s design of the Griswold House significant. Schuyler recognized the influence Hunt’s early buildings (referring specifically to the Griswold House and Travers Block) had on domestic architecture: “. . . they were not without considerable results in their day in bringing about a more intelligent and artistic treatment of the vernacular construction in country houses than would otherwise

⁴³Sarah Bradford Landau, “Richard Morris Hunt: Architectural Innovator and Father of a ‘Distinctive’ American School” in *The Architecture of Richard Morris Hunt*, ed. Susan R. Stein, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 52.

⁴⁴Schuyler, “Works of Hunt,” p. 101.

⁴⁵David Chase, “Richard Morris Hunt (1827 - 1895), J. N. A. Griswold House and Stable” in *Buildings on Paper, Rhode Island Architectural Drawings, 1825 -1945*, William H. Jordy and Christopher P. Monkhouse, (Providence, RI: Brown University, 1982), p. 88.

⁴⁶Scully, “Romantic Rationalism,” p. 138.

⁴⁷Vincent J. Scully, Jr., *American Architecture and Urbanism*, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1969), p. 91.

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have been obtained.”⁴⁸ In a similar vein, Henry Russell Hitchcock said the Stick Style was not an “architect’s mode.” He called the Stick Style a “popular attempt, remarkably successful for a few years, to create an American domestic vernacular, suited to the materials in general use and to the current methods of building.”⁴⁹

Discussion of the sources for the Griswold House generally point to European examples of “rustic” architecture, in particular French pavilions built in the Bois de Boulogne but also to the Swiss chalet as well as English and German picturesque architecture, particularly the half-timber country houses published in pattern books. Vincent Scully also saw the design as part of the evolution of basic American wooden framing technique. According to Downing and Scully the Griswold House not only represented a step in the evolution of certain American forms, but set the standard for domestic architecture for the next decade. “It marks the beginning of that last phase of total skeletal articulation which was to displace the sculptural mansard and to dominate wooden domestic building in the early seventies.”⁵⁰

Although predecessors to the Griswold House in the fifties were consciously based on the Swiss cottage or Swiss chalet, Scully differentiated the Griswold House from rustic houses of the previous decade in places such as the Bois de Boulogne and elsewhere because although it evoked mediaeval half-timber, “. . . it can be nevertheless be seen that the house has by no means a mediaeval look. It is not dominated by a desire for antiquarian correctness, but is instead a creative amalgamation of picturesque intentions and the use of the wooden frame, enhanced by a feeling for the hard rather than for the fuzzy line, like the hard line engravings of the Pattern Books themselves. Like Wheeler, Hunt is here ‘essentially real,’ and the multiplication of expressed posts, plates, and diagonal braces continues the dominant skeletal logic of the developing stick style. Here the skeleton becomes a total basketry of sticks, and the house is a woven fabric, penetrated by the veranda voids of space which the structural members themselves define.”⁵¹

Sarah Bradford Landau again seemed to agree with Scully. “Conceived before the war, Richard Morris Hunt’s Griswold house (ca. 1861-1863) in Newport is the most prominent bellwether even though it had its American, and specifically, its Newport precedents.”⁵² But in some respects Landau differed with Scully. Landau identified several European precedents, which she saw as the primary influence on Hunt’s design. She did not accept Scully’s premise that Hunt’s design also derived from the exterior articulation of framing elements that was appearing in American vernacular buildings and which Scully related to the ultimate adoption of the balloon frame. Landau offered evidence (referring to Robert Jensen) that Hunt’s applied half timber was in no way related to the framing underneath. Landau also rejected Scully’s reference to French Gothic Revival rationalism from sources such as Viollet-le-Duc as an inspiration for the Griswold House. It was her contention that through its European inspired design, the Griswold House was responsible for bringing Continental and specifically French rustic architecture to the attention of American architects, more specifically, “As the chief American practitioner of the European vernacular revival, he set an example that was followed by such architects as the French-trained Robert Swain Peabody and the Newport firm of George Champlin Mason.”⁵³

⁴⁸Schuyler, “Works of Hunt,” p. 101.

⁴⁹Henry Russell Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, Ltd. 1958), p. 264.

⁵⁰Downing and Scully, *Architectural Heritage of Newport*, p. 133.

⁵¹Scully, “Romantic Rationalism,” p. 139.

⁵²Sarah Bradford Landau, “Richard Morris Hunt, the Continental Picturesque, and the ‘Stick Style’” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 42 (1983): 273.

⁵³Landau, “Architectural Innovator,” p. 52.

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In general, however, Landau was in accord with Scully when she suggested that Hunt had begun a particularly American genre. "Somewhere along the way, the concept of Hunt as the father 'more than anyone else' of a school of American architecture, as A. J. Bloor expressed it, has been forgotten. It was buried by the Richardsonians in the 1880s as well as by Hunt himself, who abandoned the innovative and sometime gawky designs of his early career for the grander work and the mansions that characterized his late career."⁵⁴

Landau even pressed this point further than Scully suggesting that the Griswold House was a catalyst that presaged later phases in the evolution of American architecture. "Bloor rightly credits Hunt with having stimulated a new development in American domestic architecture, a development that would culminate in the vernacular expression known as the Colonial Revival."⁵⁵

The claims about the Griswold House set out by Downing and Scully have achieved wide acceptance. As a result, the building has been used as the classic illustration of the stick style in a number of style books and architectural history texts. Among those who have endorsed their theory is Paul Baker, who described the Griswold House as "a picturesque, seemingly sprawling structure" which "initiated Hunt's vernacular, stick-style mode of expression."⁵⁶ Baker also reiterated Downing and Scully's position. "With its suggestion of half-timbering and the overhang of the upper stories, the Griswold house faintly echoes medieval construction. More relevant as antecedents, however, as Downing and Scully point out, were the self-conscious rustic designs being built in France in the early 1850s and the vernacular American wood-frame buildings in which, by the early 1860s, the visual skeleton was increasingly expressed, with posts, plates, and diagonal braces emphasized. The Griswold house is thus an important example in the development of the American stick style, which reached a high point by the early 1870s."⁵⁷

Interior Plan

Although it is the exterior features that are most strongly associated with the stick style, the plan of the Griswold House also has been identified as an important model in later developments. The plan is decidedly informal and encourages a flow between spaces that is enhanced by multiple large doorways that allow some rooms to open into several adjacent spaces. Descriptions of the interior have common themes of an open plan and flexible living spaces. The main stair hall functions as the circulation core leading to all of the primary rooms and yet there is also secondary circulation between rooms and with the veranda at the first floor that offers a surprising variety of options for movement. According to Landau, the plan is quite logical. "Its plan, which is symmetrical except for the service portion at one end, is noteworthy in several respects: the grand staircase is open to the third floor and occupies an unorthodox position over the entrance hall, and the principal rooms seem to relate centrifugally to the core space of the house--the octagonal central reception hall. This plan, which bears a resemblance to certain early 19th-century English villa plans of the Picturesque variety, foreshadows several of Hunt's later houses and already contains elements of the open planning Scully assigns to the Shingle Style."⁵⁸

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 49.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 52.

⁵⁶Paul R. Baker, "Richard Morris Hunt," in *MacMillan Encyclopedia of Architects*, ed. Adolf K. Placzek, (London: The Free Press, 1982) p.438.

⁵⁷Paul R. Baker, *Richard Morris Hunt*, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1980), p. 135.

⁵⁸Landau, "Continental Picturesque," p. 276-277.

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Scully mentioned that variety is also offered by the play of light and shadow, providing contrasts of the deeply shaded library surrounded by the expansive roof of the veranda, adjacent to the sun drenched alcove, which has a direct southern exposure. Texture and visual interest are further enhanced by the sometimes elaborate interior details found in features such as the stair banisters, the inlaid floors and the wooden moldings of the library, dining room and several fireplace mantels. Downing and Scully's positive reaction to the interior seems to echo the enthusiasm of the contemporaries who commented on the house when it was first built. "Enough of the original plan remains, however, to give an idea of its character, which is both articulated and open, flexible and ordered. One enters on the north under a stick-work porte-cochere, mounts a few steps, and stands in a central octagonal hall, the circulation core of the house. The stairs mount again to a large landing over the porte-cochere, which has a high and structurally expressive ceiling. From the octagonal hall a reception room and a study open left and right, while straight ahead, on a cross axis to the south, are the living and dining rooms. The room shapes take on vitality as they interlock with the central polygon, and through the wide door openings, movement in the high-ceilinged interior space is rhythmical and varied. The light also is varied--muted in the hall, darker in the high landing, and brighter in the dining room, between which and the shadowed living room spills a bright pool of light from the central bay on the south. Glass doors open from the living room to the surrounding piazza, where diagonal stick-work casts a further pattern of shadows."⁵⁹

While there are differing points of view on the sources for the Griswold House there is general agreement about its significance. For this reason, it has been the topic of discussion and analysis which hopefully will continue and will shed further light on its impact on the development of American domestic architecture. Sarah Bradford Landau has described the enigma the Griswold House presents even to the present. "Today, as in 1895, the preeminence of the Tribune Building, the Stuyvesant Apartments, and the Griswold house in the context of their specific genres is acknowledged if not fully understood."⁶⁰ Most importantly, the recognition of the Griswold House will help to ensure that it is not overshadowed by Hunt's numerous accomplishments and impressive body of work.

The Art Association of Newport

Founded in 1912 for "the cultivation of artistic endeavor and interest among the citizens of Newport,"⁶¹ the Art Association of Newport (also commonly referred to as the Newport Art Association) is one of the oldest continuously operating Art Associations in the country. Its founding took place during a transitional period in the history of American art, developing out of the art colony movement and the rise of American Impressionism at the turn of the century, and at the same time introducing innovative New York shows to a New England audience. Although the association has been largely excluded from major histories of American Impressionism and the art colonies with which it was associated, nationally known impressionists painted substantial bodies of work in Newport. Furthermore, native artists of the coastal city who founded the association were well known locally for their *en plein air* paintings, and envisioned themselves as being successors to the many generations of prominent artists who lived, practiced and taught in Newport. These artists organized immediately after first exhibiting together in March of 1912, two years before their more famous contemporaries in the colonies at Old Lyme, Connecticut and Provincetown, Massachusetts would make an effort to formally unite.

⁵⁹Downing and Scully, *Architectural Heritage of Newport*, p. 134.

⁶⁰Landau, "Architectural Innovator," p. 49.

⁶¹Art Association of Newport, "Council Minutes," June 13, 1912.

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The art field was historically dominated by men, and the trend continued in the early part of the twentieth century in Lyme, Provincetown and other art colonies. The Newport Art Association board, on the other hand, included powerful female members who were largely responsible for the administration of the organization, well before the women of this nation were given the right to vote in 1920. The early history of this association and its ultimate success was largely dependent upon the efforts of a few devoted artistic and literary women: Maud Howe Elliott, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, and Helena Sturtevant. This triumvirate of "pre-war titans" defined the character of the association from its inception to today with its many and varied exhibits (particularly its annual exhibit of living artists), its art school, lecture series, etc.⁶²

Pulitzer Prize-winner and suffragist, Maud Howe Elliott was by all accounts "the guiding spirit of the founders."⁶³ Her bulky correspondence and eloquent annual reports both chronicle and characterize the early history of the association. Her book *This Was My Newport*, written in her ninetieth year, combined with the hundreds of paintings of the buildings and coastline of the city by her friend and colleague Helena Sturtevant evoke the artistic atmosphere of Newport at the turn of the century. Sturtevant headed the art school of the association for its first thirty years.

While Maud Howe Elliott and Helena Sturtevant have yet to be discovered by art historians studying national trends, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney is recognized as a major figure in the history of American art and its patronage. Whitney, through her exhibitions and purchases in both New York and Newport, encouraged at an early date the work of contemporary American artists who were not welcome in academic venues. Whitney served on the board of the Art Association of Newport for a decade, bringing her influential New York shows to Newport during the summer. The Association shared many common goals with her famous Whitney Studio and its successor the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. While hosting exhibitions and making purchases in Newport, she also provided a substantial portion of the funding for two Newport Art Association facilities: the Griswold House and the Cushing Memorial.

With the recent increase in scholarship of turn-of-the-century American art, it is surprising that an in-depth study of the Newport Art Association in a national context has not yet been written. This essay is intended to serve as a preliminary overview of the history of the association and place in the context of national trends in order to encourage and promote further research.

Maud Howe Elliott, the Administration and Programs of the Art Association of Newport

Maud Howe Elliott's lecture "An Artist's Life in Rome" on March 20, 1912 and the exhibition that followed inspired the artistically inclined summer residents of Newport to form the Art Association of Newport. The untitled exhibit that followed Elliott's lecture for the Current Topics Club featured paintings of the Newport coastline by local artists. Future founders of the association showed out-door scenes with titles like 'Indian Summer, Paradise Ledges, near Newport'; 'Hanging Rock in Winter'; 'The Garden by the Sea, Hydrangeas, Larkspur'; 'Misty Day' and 'Fishing House at the Foot of Ann Street.' Twelve of the twenty-one exhibitors became founding board members of the new art association, which held its first meeting that June. The first show

⁶²Bruce Howe in Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1962.

⁶³Cora Lee Gibbs, *1912 Revisited: The 75th Anniversary Exhibition: Harrison S. Morris Memorial Exhibition*. (Newport, RI: Newport Art Museum and Art Association, 1987).

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sponsored by the fledgling association (discussed below) took place in July.⁶⁴

Bruce Howe's research has shown that Maud Howe Elliott and Helena and Louisa Sturtevant were responsible for initially developing a "concrete scheme" for the organization and for recruiting William Sargeant Kendall as its first president. This scheme was formulated at the Sturtevant studio on Second Beach on March 24th, just four days after the impromptu spring exhibit. "Mr. and Mrs. Kendall were approached the following Sunday, March 31, and the next evening the Sturtevants went to New York to interest Mr. Albert Sterner and found him very enthusiastic."⁶⁵ The logical choice as leader of the new organization was William Sargeant Kendall who was spending his first summer in Newport, but had an established name, having received numerous prizes in America and abroad. Kendall also would have been aware of the art associations in Brooklyn, New York and Paris, where he studied in the 1880s.⁶⁶ By April 12, Kendall distributed a rough draft of a constitution for the association to seven artists: Elijah Baxter, Charles Biesel, Albert Sterner, Leslie P. Thompson as well as Elliott and the Sturtevants. "The plan is to have five or eight artists. . . sign a letter to be sent with this proposal, if possible, to have an exhibition in the end of June or thereabout." Each artist agreed to sign, some with reservations, and the letter immediately attracted 141 members.⁶⁷

The proposed organization promoted "the cultivation of artistic endeavor and interest among the citizens of Newport" by holding at least one "exhibition of pictures" per year. Membership, consisting of artists and associates, was open to any person resident in Newport or its vicinity for some portion of the year. The officers served as the Jury of Selectmen for the exhibit (open to any artist regardless of residence) and were responsible for reviewing artwork to determine who was eligible for "artist membership." The membership fee of \$5.00 entitled one to five tickets to a private viewing of the exhibits. Non-members were charged a nominal fee to attend and certain days were free to all.⁶⁸

Five of the eight artist-organizers served on the original board, with Maud Howe Elliott as secretary. Elliott's long association with Newport and nearby Portsmouth was a characteristic shared by most of the early board members. Visitors to her Portsmouth homes included William Morris Hunt, William and Henry James, Col. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Alexander Agassiz and Harrison S. Morris several of whom belonged to Julia Ward Howe's Town and Country Club. In her early twenties, Elliott became the art editor of the *Boston Transcript* and in 1887 she married English artist John Elliott. Between 1903 and 1913 the couple lived in the Cornish, New Hampshire art colony, well known for its musicals and theatricals as well as for being the home of Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Maxfield Parrish, Thomas Wilmer Dewing and Willard Metcalf.⁶⁹

The first meeting of the board "opened with a discussion of the Hunt studio as the future home of the association." These artist-founders were consciously creating associations with the earlier artist colony of William Morris Hunt and his Newport school, for they each owed a great deal to Hunt's method and style of

⁶⁴Bruce Howe, "Early Days of the Art Association," *Newport Historical Society Bulletin*, 110 (April 1963), passim.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶"William Sargeant Kendall," *National Cyclopedia of American Biography*.

⁶⁷Howe, "Early Days," pp. 11-12; Maud Howe Elliott, *This Was My Newport*, (Cambridge, Mass., The Mythology Company, 1944), pp. 125-126.

⁶⁸Art Association of Newport, "Council Minutes," June 13, 1912; Art Association of Newport Scrapbook, 1912.

⁶⁹Art Association of Newport Scrapbook, 1948; Elliott, *My Newport*, p. 104; A Circle of Friends, 83-84; Harrison S. Morris, *Confessions in Art*, (New York: Sears Publishing Co., Inc., 1930), p. 270.

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painting. The council voted to rent the Hunt studio for one year with the understanding that the association had the right to renew the lease on the same terms for a five-year period. They discussed how the gallery "could be made of service to the members and to the community," concluding that loan exhibits and one-man shows particularly by members should supplement the annual exhibit. The president expressed his intent to exhibit "pictures by well-known living American artists" in addition to those by members of the association.⁷⁰

In the new charter of 1915, the mission of the Newport Art Association was broadened to foster all arts including literature, music and science, and its educational objectives included the establishment of a museum open to the public. "The Art Association of Newport is hereby continued a Corporation for the objects and purposes of education by cultivating and promoting artistic endeavor and interest in art, literature, music and science; aiding in the cultivation of the arts of design; advancing study and research in art, literature, music and science; establishing, collecting, maintaining and preserving a museum of pictures, sculpture, engravings, books, prints, drawings, casts, manuscripts, and any and all objects or things whatsoever, related to or in any manner bearing upon education and particularly art, literature, music and science, which shall be open to the public at such times and subject to such restrictions as may be found expedient; conducting exhibitions, lectures and classes for instruction in the various branches of art, literature, music and science; disseminating knowledge and encouraging art, literature, music and science in any and every way, and the general advancement of artistic, literary, musical and scientific culture, and the said corporation is hereby empowered to exercise any other proper power or privilege to carry into effect the objects of this Act."⁷¹

In order to fulfill its mission, the association adopted a rigorous schedule, divided into summer and winter functions. The schedule was well established by 1920 when it was first described in detail by Maud Elliott. "Newport's 'season' has for some years opened with the Reception and Private View of the Annual Exhibition of works of Art by living American artists, held early in July, followed by a series of private or special exhibitions for artists of the present day. Our studios are let for the summer months to artists from different parts of the country who wish to come to Newport to work. When the autumn comes, the opening of the school with daily classes for advanced scholars, Saturday morning classes for junior students and evening classes in Mechanical Drawing. With the New Year our lecture series begins. For four months, from the first of January to the first of April, the members gather together on Saturday afternoons to hear lectures and to enjoy the social hour that follows the address. Once a month a musical afternoon is arranged."⁷²

One can only imagine how such a demanding schedule affected the volunteer board who were personally responsible for the various operations until 1975 when the first paid director was hired. The office of president was refilled every two years until Harrison Morris, its third president, came on board in 1916.

Maud Howe Elliott was undoubtedly responsible for recruiting Mr. Morris, a Philadelphia industrialist who had served as the art editor of the *Ladies Home Journal*, managing director of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and commission general from the US to the 1910 Art Exposition in Rome. Harrison Morris' optimism and high aspirations carried him through the next thirty-one years as president. At his death in 1948, just a few months after that of Mrs. Elliott, he was remembered in conjunction with her as "advancing the Art Association to its present position."⁷³

⁷⁰ Art Association of Newport, "Council Minutes," June 13, 1912.

⁷¹ Art Association of Newport Scrapbook, 1915.

⁷² "Secretary's Report," Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1920.

⁷³ *Newport Daily News*, May 13, 1948.

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Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, the Exhibitions and Facilities of the Art Association of Newport

Founded during the summer of 1912, the Newport Art Association was established during a turbulent period in the history of American art, preceding the famously scandalous and influential Armory Show of 1913 by just a few months. The Armory Show was an unprecedented showing of modern European and American art, receiving so much negative press that the entire country was shocked into awareness of the new trend. The 1913 show organized by Arthur B. Davies and a group of independent New York artists called the Association of American Painters and Sculptors (founded 1911) signaled the advent of American Modernism. It traveled to New York and Boston, where it would have been seen first hand by many artists and patrons who summered in Newport. In 1963, Bruce Howe had concluded that the show "played little or no contemporary role in the Association's exhibition history."⁷⁴ Cora Lee Gibbs has since determined however that many of the nationally-known artists in the 1912 Newport show also exhibited at the Armory Show with the avant-garde European artists that attracted so much press.⁷⁵ Arthur B. Davies, its organizer, exhibited in Newport in 1912, 1913 and 1914.

The prominent artists invited to the Newport Art Association's first exhibition in July of 1912 included Mary Cassatt, John White Alexander, Joseph DeCamp, Frank W. Benson, Childe Hassam, J. Alden Weir, Charles Hawthorne, George Bellows, Ernest Lawson and Arthur B. Davies. Impressionism was the prevailing style. DeCamp, Benson, Hassam and Weir were among the group of American Impressionists known as "The Ten." Two additional members of The Ten, Willard Metcalf and Edmund Tarbell, showed their work in Newport in 1914. Ernest Lawson and Arthur B. Davies on the other hand regularly exhibited as part of a group of rebellious independent New York artists called "The Eight." Often associated with The Eight, George Bellows also painted realistic images of urban life that won the group the title of the "Ashcan School" or the new American realists. In the Newport show, paintings by Lawson and Bellows were criticized as "robust and over emphatic. . . not as well coordinated and thought out pictorially as might be desired. . . a sensation of incompleteness."⁷⁶ Despite the criticism, these New York artists would continue to exhibit regularly in Newport, through the patronage of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney who joined the board in 1915.

An important outcome of the first exhibit was the sale of eight pictures exhibited. Four additional one-man shows were held the first year, largely through the efforts of the artists themselves who rented the gallery space in order to show and sell their work. With each new show, interest, sales and commissions increased.⁷⁷ The art association received 10% commission for sale of member's work and 15% commission for sale of nonmember's work.⁷⁸ Unfortunately there is no known record of the sales or the purchasers.

Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney purchased artwork through the Association in 1915. Founder of the Whitney Museum of American Art, Whitney is recognized as being among the first to appreciate the new American realists of the Ashcan School and developed into one of the most forward-looking art patrons of her day. She had the foresight to purchase four of the seven paintings sold at The Eight's first show in the MacBeth Gallery in 1908, a show now famous in its defiance of academic technique and subject matter. Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney

⁷⁴Howe, "Early Days," p. 23.

⁷⁵Gibbs, *1912 Revisited*, p. 6.

⁷⁶Howe, "Early Days," p. 14.

⁷⁷Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1913.

⁷⁸"Report of the Exhibition Committee," Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1920.

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joined the council of the Newport Art Association in 1915, the very year she established the Friends of Young Artists to encourage contemporary art in New York. Whitney served as an artist member of the Art Association board during its formative years between 1915 and 1925, when she was contemporaneously forming what would become the core collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art. Her purchases of the works of Young Artists who exhibited in both New York and Newport under her patronage comprised its early collection. Whitney retained contacts with the Association as an Honorary Vice President of the Association, a title she held until her death in 1942.

Both the Newport Art Association and the Friends of Young Artists were at an early date encouraging the work of contemporary American artists through exhibition. Mrs. Whitney's "first sizable public display of her art collection" took the form of a show in her Whitney Studio called Modern Paintings by American and Foreign Artists in January 1916.⁷⁹ She brought this landmark show to Newport that summer. Supplementing the exhibit of modern artists was a retrospective of her own sculpture at the Griswold House. "She utilized the whole of the lower story, the hall, staircase and landing, and the grounds as well. The exhibition was of a twofold character, showing Mrs. Whitney as an artist by the full and interesting exhibit of her own sculpture, and as a collector by a large number of paintings from her private collection by artists of distinction, both American and European."⁸⁰

With her secretary, she organized shows in Newport on the painters: Ernest Lawson (1917), Howard Gardiner Cushing (1917), George Bellows (1917), Arthur B. Davies (1917), William Glackens (1917) and Guy Pene du Bois (1920); as well as the sculptors: Paulanship (1917), Jo Davidson (1917), James E. Fraser (1917), John Gregory (1917) and Andrew O'Connor (1920). Whitney's Newport shows were extremely popular. Maud Howe Elliott reported that the Bellows, Davies, Blackens, David son, Framer and Gregory show "aroused greater interest and attracted more visitors than any other in the history of the association. Jo Davidson's statue of La France on the lawn and James E. Fraser's 'End of the Trail' continued to attract a continuous procession of people all day long."⁸¹

Daughter of the railroad tycoon Cornelius Vanderbilt, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney had summered in Newport at the Breakers since childhood. In her youth, she befriended the artist and fellow Newporter Howard Gardiner Cushing who would introduce her to his brother-in-law Hendrick Christian Andersen with whom she would take private sculpting lessons.⁸² Cushing also introduced Gertrude Whitney to the Newport Art Association. In a letter to Maud Howe Elliott where Cushing agreed to send a group of his pictures to a Newport exhibit, he suggested contacting Mrs. Whitney about "some small pieces of sculpture" for the exhibit as well.⁸³ Mrs. Whitney's response to Maud Elliott's letter was her first contact with the Association. She loaned four pieces of sculpture.⁸⁴ In her second handwritten letter, that December, Mrs. Whitney sent a check for \$5000 toward the purchase of the Griswold House, enabling the Newport Art Association to fulfill its long-term goal of acquiring a permanent home.⁸⁵

⁷⁹ Avis Berman, *Rebels on Eighth Street: Juliana Force and the Whitney Museum of American Art*. (New York: Atheneum, 1990), pp. 121, 122.

⁸⁰ Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1917.

⁸¹ Art Association of Newport, "Report of the Exhibition Committee," Sept. 12, 1917.

⁸² Berman, *Rebels*, passim.

⁸³ Howard Gardiner Cushing to Maud Howe Elliott, June 8 [1915].

⁸⁴ Art Association of Newport, Correspondence and Scrapbooks, 1915; Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney to Maud Howe Elliott, Aug. 28, [1915].

⁸⁵ Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney to Maud Howe Elliott, Saturday [1915].

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The association had been preoccupied with locating a home since 1913, when its rented quarters at the William Morris Hunt Studio went up for sale, a sale which would leave the new association homeless. Soon after an appeal went out to its membership for \$5000 to purchase the building, and local newspapers reported that it was "practically assured" that the association would acquire "the old Hunt studio together with cottage and several thousand feet of land adjacent."⁸⁶ That scheme was shortly abandoned in favor of a new building intended "to be erected on the lot on Old Beach Road, now occupied by the chapel" but never executed.⁸⁷

In December 1915 Marsden Perry, the owner of Narragansett Electric Lighting Company, obtained a contract for the Griswold house property, making the first payment of \$2000 himself directly to the Griswold heirs as his contribution to the building fund. The \$5000 check from Gertrude Whitney followed soon afterward. The association moved into its new building in March 1916, holding its first event there in celebration of the Shakespeare Tercentenary probably at the suggestion of Perry, a Shakespeare enthusiast.⁸⁸

Less than two years after the purchase, construction of a new building was again proposed, probably by Gertrude Whitney who received credit for the building upon its completion. There was some debate about the proposal, particularly about how the building would "architecturally harmonize with the plan of buildings which the Association might erect in the future."⁸⁹ The board may also have questioned the advisability of erecting a new building when the mortgage on the Griswold House was not yet fully paid. In response to this opposition, donors threatened to retract their gifts. "The self appointed committee to receive funds for the memorial to Howard Cushing has held several meetings, and has also consulted with many of the people who subscribed to this project. It has come to the conclusion, after weighing the matter carefully, that unless the Newport Art Association is willing to receive the gift as originally proposed-namely, in the form of a small detached building which would stand distinctly as a memorial to Howard Cushing - to make some other disposition of the funds outside of Newport."⁹⁰

The board's reply was to be directed to Mrs. Whitney at 8 West 8th Street, New York. Needless to say, the gift of the Howard Cushing Memorial Building was approved as originally proposed. Marsden Perry resigned as head of the building committee (perhaps coincidentally) shortly thereafter.

Maud Elliott reported that "It is largely owing to the zeal of a member of our Council, Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney, that this valuable new building has been given to us."⁹¹ Other friends of Cushing made generous contributions to the structure. "William Adams Delano gave the plans for the building and he with other generous donors subscribed the money to erect the building, and subsequently three of these friends Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney, Mr. Delano and Mrs. Bristow gave an endowment fund to meet the expenses of its upkeep."⁹²

In August 1920 the Cushing Memorial with its "ample fireproof gallery properly lighted with skylights" was dedicated and immediately put to use as a place to hold loan exhibitions. Several Cushing works were

⁸⁶Unidentified newspaper clipping, [February 1914], Art Association of Newport Scrapbook, 1914.

⁸⁷Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1914.

⁸⁸Art Association of Newport, Council Minutes and Scrapbook, 1916.

⁸⁹"Report of the Committee on Buildings and Grounds," Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1918.

⁹⁰Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney to Maud Howe Elliott, Mar 8, 1918.

⁹¹"Secretary's Report," Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1919.

⁹²"Report of the Secretary," Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1932.

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permanently installed in the outer hall. The very year it was completed, a Committee on Exhibition of Objets d'Art was formed to create a loan exhibition comprised of objects owned by Newport residents. The committee hopefully proposed that "some summer residents might allow their objects to be on view during the winter months for safe keeping."⁹³

The construction of the Cushing Memorial signaled a turning point in the history of the art association, for these new fireproof facilities allowed the group to not only accept loans, but also to collect. The goal of collecting objects for exhibition in a public museum expressed in the 1915 charter of the association could finally be realized. By 1923 a separate Art Commission set out to create a collection to form "the nucleus of a Museum of Fine Arts, an aim of the founders since its inception." The collection was first envisioned as "somewhat the same character as the small working school museum of the Cooper Union in New York."⁹⁴ The students of the Newport Art Association school now had ample accommodations to exhibit their work.

Helena Sturtevant and the Newport Art Association School

Schools promoting painting out of doors were an important development of the turn-of-the-century art colony. The educational objectives of the colonies and Associations are manifest in the schools that characterize them, distinguishing them from the exclusive clubs which catered to their members rather than to the larger community. In Maud Howe Elliott's estimation, "Perhaps no work that the association has accomplished is quite so valuable as that of the school."⁹⁵

The first season of the Newport Art Association School took place in the summer of 1913, just one year after the founding of the organization. Helena Sturtevant who assisted John Elliott as instructor in the first season, would direct the school until her death in 1946. Sturtevant was born in Newport and lived in nearby Middletown most of her life. She had studied at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston under Edmund Tarbell before completing her education in Paris at Colarossi and La Grande Chaumiere. She and her Parisian-trained artist sister Louisa who were instrumental in founding the Art Association in Newport must have been aware of the American Art Association in Paris, founded in 1890 "to afford the members a place of meeting, facilities for the promotion of good fellowship, to preserve American individuality, and the advantages of organized effort."⁹⁶ The Newport organization shared a mission similar to the Parisian group and its school operated on "the French [atelier] system."⁹⁷

The old William Morris Hunt studio was transformed from a lecture hall into an atelier for the art school over the winter of 1912-1913. Kendall was to be in charge of the school at its opening, but had become ill. Within a few months, he left Newport permanently to fulfill his new role as the director of the School of Fine Arts at Yale University, succeeding John Ferguson Weir. John Elliott opened the course on short notice, undoubtedly at the encouragement of his wife.⁹⁸

⁹³"Report of the Committee on Exhibition of Objets d'Art," Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1920.

⁹⁴Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1923.

⁹⁵Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1915.

⁹⁶*American Art Annual*

⁹⁷*Newport Daily News*, April 12, 1913; Howe, "Early Days," p. 15; *Newport Daily News*, Nov. 9, 1946; *National Cyclopedia of American Biography*; Records of the School of the Association.

⁹⁸Howe, "Early Days," p.15.

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The school was open every day from 9 a.m. "until as late in the afternoon as the light lasts, or the students wish to stay." The charge in this school, as in Parisian ateliers, "is small and meant to cover the actual expenses of heating, lighting and keeping the studio in order. The teaching is given free by the artists and is their contribution to the school."⁹⁹ This approach to teaching apparently differed from that of the art schools of Lyme and Provincetown which were intended to provide a reliable source of income for the artists/art instructors.

Classes were offered for both children and adults, and the first detailed description of the method of instruction appeared 1916. "In the beginning the youngest students draw from blocks and still life objects in charcoal, later the addition of color lends a new interest to their work. A most ingenious means of teaching perspective is in use here, the "Cross" glass slate and pencil, an appliance which has been used with great success by Boston teachers. The next step for the student leads him to another room where he makes drawings in light and shade of the simpler forms of casts, separate features of the human anatomy, etc. Then he is advanced to the full head and figure following the methods of the best schools of art. If he wishes to take up portraiture, an opportunity is afforded when he has sufficient training in draughtsmanship."¹⁰⁰

According to this description and that of the first exhibition of student work, still lifes and life studies executed in the studio were the dominant genres for the beginning students. Leslie P. Thompson, a founding artist-member and instructor at the private preparatory school Saint George's, formed "a class for out of door sketching under the auspices of the art association" for more advanced students in 1914.¹⁰¹

Instruction in anatomy accompanied a clay modeling class. In response to the rising popularity of the Arts and Crafts societies and schools, a class in decorative design was opened in 1916 "to obtain practical and artistic knowledge of ornament and its application of various commercial purposes like fabrics, woven and printed, wall paper, glass, silver, book covers, etc.... Even if the student never uses it professionally, it cannot fail to improve and cultivate his taste and strengthen his judgment regarding the beauty or its lack in the things he has to buy or use or by which he is surrounded in his daily life."¹⁰²

A severe drop in enrollment during World War I resulted in the introduction of new classes directed specifically toward the training of Army and Navy men stationed in Newport. Mechanical drawing classes offered by the "chief draftsman of the Torpedo Station" were held and "on more than one occasion the 'plant' of the Association has been used by the draftsmen employed by the Government to get out drawings for which there was some haste."¹⁰³ A separate Army and Navy Hospitality Committee was also created to host Sunday afternoon receptions and holiday balls for the men.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹*Newport News*, April 12, 1913, Art Association of Newport Scrapbook.

¹⁰⁰*Newport Herald*, Dec. 1916, Art Association of Newport Scrapbook.

¹⁰¹*Newport Herald*, July 22, 1914, Art Association of Newport Scrapbook.

¹⁰²*Newport Herald*, December 1916, Art Association of Newport Scrapbook.

¹⁰³"Secretary's Report," Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1918.

¹⁰⁴"Secretary's Report," Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1919.

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Newport Art Association: A Growing Organization, 1920-1999

By 1920 the Newport Art Association owned two substantial buildings and had eliminated all debt. After its first bequest in 1921, the association began to consider developing an endowment to cover its operating expenses. The endowment began in the form of a bequest from Samuel F. Pratt, an octogenarian who spent "every pleasant summer day . . . sitting upon the piazza or in the library looking over the books and magazines."¹⁰⁵ Pratt left his property on Bellevue Avenue to the association, which was also named the residuary legatee of his estate. Board members unanimously decided to sell the property, invest the profits and spend only the income on yearly expenses.¹⁰⁶

A second large bequest arrived in 1928, when Mrs. George Rives left the "Swanhurst" estate with an endowment for its maintenance to the association in memory of her mother Sarah Swan Whiting. The Swanhurst Summer School of Arts, offering courses in music, dancing and the languages was an integral element of the Newport Art Association for sixty years until its sale in 1988.¹⁰⁷

Higher levels of membership were introduced in 1920 and again in 1923, and an appeal for an endowment fund of \$200,000 was issued in 1927. During that decade, the range of rental clientele expanded from exhibiting artists to various other organizations and individuals for lectures, weddings, balls and bridge tournaments.¹⁰⁸ Pageants, like "The Viking" (1922) and the 200th anniversary of Trinity Church (1926), became their most popular form of fundraising.

The 1930s and 1940s were difficult decades for the association which experienced a drop in membership from 860 to 665 in 1934, suffered considerable damage in the hurricane of 1938 and lost three of its founders and most devoted members Helena Sturtevant (1946), Maud Howe Elliott (1948), and Harrison S. Morris (1948).

Mrs. John Nicholas Brown who died in office in 1950 succeeded Morris as president. William H. Drury who had been a member of the council since 1925 served as president for the next decade until his own death in 1960. After a short interim period where Vice President Commodore George H. Bowdoy assumed the lead role, Bruce Howe took over the position. Howe was interested in the early history of the group, often reflecting on it in his Annual Reports and in an article for the Newport Historical Society. During the 1950s and 1960s, the association, in Howe's words, continued "on an even keel," save for some "minor damage during the jazz riots of 1961."¹⁰⁹

Throughout these administrative changes, continuity was maintained by yet another board member who devoted her life to the well being of the organization, Marion K. Carry. Carry had studied at the school in her youth and became an instructor there under Helena Sturtevant. From the late 1950s until her retirement in 1972, she headed both the school and the exhibition committees, personally teaching hundreds of students in an abstract style with her favorite paper flower props. She continued to teach at least a decade after her retirement from her administrative duties.

¹⁰⁵"Secretary's Report," Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1921.

¹⁰⁶Ibid.

¹⁰⁷"Report of the Secretary," Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1932.

¹⁰⁸Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1923.

¹⁰⁹"Report of the President," Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1961.

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Marion Carry's retirement, described as a milestone in the history of the organization, left a large gap in the administration of the most essential functions of the Newport Art Association. An Action Committee was soon formed to "elicit ideas and reactions regarding the Association's goals, performance, new ventures, image and scope."¹¹⁰ A trial newsletter was initiated and, in 1975, the first salaried professional director was hired to "plan, coordinate and administer exhibits and other functions of the association."¹¹¹ During her first year, Judith Richardson Silvia instituted the "first major overhaul and updating of bylaws" which passed in May 1976, but she resigned shortly thereafter. The association, which had been run for sixty years exclusively by a volunteer board, quickly gained and lost four additional directors in the next decade. Symptomatic of this difficult transitional period were: the sale in 1978 of eleven paintings to cover a deficit, the 1979 burglary and the 1981 fire in the Swanhurst Theatre.

Frederick P. Walkey, formerly the director of the DeCordova Museum in Lincoln, Massachusetts, was hired as director in 1983, and instituted several major changes during his short time there. He changed the name to the Newport Art Museum and Art Association and made additional amendments to the by-laws, clarifying the role of the trustees to professional staff (which had been the cause of antagonism in the 1970s) and doubling the number of Trustees. Walkey had planned to convert the Swanhurst Theatre to a museum facility exclusively for the display of contemporary art.

Cora Lee Gibbs, a former curator of education at RISD Museum of Art, took over as director in 1985, and unlike her predecessors remained in that role for eight years. Under her tenure, the Swanhurst Theatre was sold for 1.3 million dollars, substantially increasing the endowment to 1.8 million dollars. Extensive capital improvements were implemented, including the construction of an addition to the Cushing Gallery, a climate controlled, secure space, intended to attract donations of works of art. The year after the addition opened the collections of the Museum tripled in size, and the accessioning and loan procedures were professionalized.

Gibbs was succeeded by Richard West and Judith Sobol and the current director is Christine Callahan.

¹¹⁰"Report of the President," Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1974.

¹¹¹"Report of the President," Art Association of Newport, "Annual Report," 1975.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- Previously Listed in the National Register.
- Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
- Designated a National Historic Landmark.
- Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: # RI-322
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other (Specify Repository):

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: 2.41 acres

Griswold, John N. A. House**Page 46**

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UTM References: **Zone Easting Northing**
 19 307250 4595050

Verbal Boundary Description:

That certain tract or parcel of land, situate in Newport, bounded as follows:

Northerly on Old Beach Road;
Easterly on Liberty Street ;
Southlerly on Downing St.; and
Westerly on Bellevue Avenue.

Boundary Justification:

The nominated property includes essentially the entire parcel upon which the John N. A. Griswold House and stable have stood since they were constructed.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

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NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS SURVEY
May 31, 2000

ADDENDUM No. 1
to the National Historic Landmark Nomination

Research conducted at The Octagon, the Museum of the American Architectural Foundation, for the Griswold House Historic Structures Report (October 1999) revealed new information regarding the design and sketches of the house and stable and is provided here as an addendum to the statement of significance.

In May of 1861, shortly following their marriage, Richard Morris Hunt and his wife Catharine left for an eighteen-month European tour. They first went to Paris and due to difficulties with the servants at their apartment at 24 Rue de L'Oratoire, the Hunts stayed with John N. A. Griswold and his wife Jane in Paris for the first two weeks in July. The Hunts left for England around the middle of the month. (Biography, II p.72) It was during the July visit that Hunt was commissioned to design a house for the Griswolds. Although the house was to be built in Newport, the site had not been acquired or perhaps even selected.

It has been mentioned that Hunt drew three sketches of the Griswold House while staying with the Griswolds in Paris. David Chase has written that during Hunt's travels in Europe, he made dozens of alternate schemes, all of which were articulated with half timbering. In Hunt's 1861 sketch book there are actually five sketches of the present Griswold House including two slightly different perspectives of the north and west elevations. The first sketch is of the porte cochere with the Tudor window above it, but unlike the existing building, the lower 1½-story section of the north elevation in this sketch has a mansard roof. The second sketch, the first perspective of the north and west elevations, is published in Paul Baker's book on Hunt (Fig. 14) and in David Chase's essay on the Griswold House in *Buildings on Paper* (Fig. 64a). It illustrates the essential form of the present Griswold House. Differences between this sketch and the house as built are minimal. They include a change in the shape of some of the dormers, changes made to porches and overhangs, the introduction of the three story, polygonal bay on the west elevation and the continuation of the veranda to the northwest corner of the house. The third sketch, a section through the main stair hall, closely resembles the existing hall (although the stair is reversed) with a broad mezzanine over the porte cochere. The interior applied half timbering and pendants are visible. The fourth sketch is the revised perspective of the north and west elevations. It is interesting to make a comparison with the slightly earlier sketch and to note Hunt's insertion of a jerkinhead roof on the kitchen wing over the gable roof he had already drawn. The fifth sketch represents the south elevation and clearly shows the massing of the existing building but in this early version there were some differences, primarily in the roof forms. In this sketch, the west bay is a projecting bay (similar to the one that was eventually built at the north bay of the west elevation), the central bay has a jerkinhead roof rather than a gable, the east bay has a gable rather than a hip roof and the office wing has a gable rather than a jerkinhead roof. It should be noted that the office wing (on the south elevation) and the kitchen wing (on the north elevation) were both originally designed to be identical. In the final building, the roof form of both wings was changed so that they would remain identical.

At the beginning of the sketch book that contains the series of the Griswold House there are sketches Hunt made of his wife Catharine titled "Champs Elysees," of Catharine and Dick (their first son Richard Howland Hunt, who was born on March 14, 1862) and a family portrait of the three of them. The Hunts returned to Paris in the winter of 1861-62 where they stayed in the apartment of Mr. Benjamin G. Wainwright at 21 Champs Elysees. (Biography, Vol. II p. 74) It seems possible that Hunt made the Griswold House sketches, which are only a few pages beyond the Champs Elysees sketches, during that winter. Among the other sketches in this book are those made of Hunt's friend Dr. Rimmer, which Mrs. Hunt dates to 1864.

Following the advice of Catharine Hunt's guardians that she should be at home when she "came of age that autumn," the Hunts returned to the United States in the fall of 1862. The Griswolds, having also returned from Europe, were "eager to begin their house at Newport and Richard commenced the plans at once." (Biography, Vol. II, p. 76) The design process for this house appears to have been somewhat complex. In the American Architectural Foundation, Prints and Drawings Collection there are approximately five designs for a house for J Griswold at Newport. Two of the designs are extremely well developed including watercolor renderings or perspectives and a full set of plans. Although there are elements from each of the designs in the final building, they are for the most part quite different from the building that was constructed. Interestingly, it is the design from the sketch book that was ultimately built. Although the chronology of the designs is not known, it is assumed that the sketch book designs would have been the first. It should also be noted that the sketches in Hunt's book are not labeled.

Among Hunt's alternate schemes for the house, two of the designs include a tower. The first version is fully developed including plans of the first floor, second floor and roof, watercolors of the south elevation, the south east elevation and the north elevation. Two and a half stories in height, the house has a series of porches at the first and second stories. The roof, which has both gables and hips with a number of dormers and two conical towers, is striped. An open porch on the roof of the main block is accessible from the tower. The plan for this version is noticeably more formal than that for the existing house. Approximately Y-shaped in plan with an oddly projecting service wing, the house is encircled by walkways with an expansive driveway on the north side. It appears that the plan is oriented as if the rear of the building looks toward a view such as the ocean although there is no such suggestion in Hunt's watercolors, which show a background of dense trees.

A second design contained a two stage open tower that was only sketched in. There are two perspectives of this design, each showing the tower only in pencil. It seems likely that Mr. Griswold may have requested an observation tower in light of the interest he later showed in the views from the roof of the house. This version, characterized by its pronounced mansard roofs with multiple dormers, chimneys and roof cresting, has a one story and a 2 ½ story section. Several of its details (not the tower) appear later in the Hitchcock-Travers House (1862, 1869-71), also in Newport. A third design, also 2½ stories at the main block, has a gable roof, and an open porch along one entire elevation.

A fourth design consists of two first floor plans that are clearly variations of the same scheme. The plans, which suggest a pinwheel, do not seem to correspond to any of the elevations in the

collection of Griswold House drawings, however, they may have been the later inspiration for the plan of the Charlotte Cushman House (1871-72) in Newport.

A fifth design, which has elevations and plans drawn to scale, has the half timber proportions and detailing worked out as it was applied at the Griswold House. The chamfering is delineated on the elevations although the $\frac{3}{4}$ -round corners are not. It shows the knee braces, carved brackets at the eaves and the progressive projecting overhangs at the 2nd and 3rd stories, all of which are found on the existing building.

In addition to the alternate designs for the Griswold House, there is a preliminary first floor plan for the present Griswold House. It is particularly interesting because the east portion of the house and the kitchen wing are well developed and appear to reflect several features used in the final design for that section of the house. Still schematic, the central stair hall and entry are only barely sketched in, the proportions of the parlor and library (labeled the Drawing Room) were later changed slightly and none of the rooms have canted corners. One interesting feature of the house is suggested in this plan. The opening over the fireplace between the parlor and library appears in this preliminary plan. The most intriguing aspect of the plan is the lightly sketched north-south view corridor drawn from the entrance hall through the dining room to a projecting south bay in the dining room, an axis Hunt later executed leading from the stair hall through the anteroom to the south alcove.

The plans for the alternate designs also explain some of the program for the house, which may have come from the Griswolds. Two of the first floor plans show a room named the Bureau, which was located near the dining room and pantry. A built-in safe was even indicated on one of the plans opening into the dining room and the Bureau. This room was carried into the existing design at the southeast corner off of the dining room. Several of the plans have guest rooms at the first floor on one or both sides of the entrance hall. The room now used as the Griffon Shop at the east side of the main entrance was indicated as a guest room on the preliminary plan for the present house and it once had a bathroom attached to it. Like most of the alternates, the preliminary plan and the house as built originally had a separate entrance porch at the end of the service wing.

All of the plans have the main entrance under a projecting porte cochere. It is also notable that although early photographs of the building show there was no railing at the veranda, Hunt's several designs all show a railing. Another feature of each of the plans is the back service stair, which is separated from the main rooms and circulation spaces of the house. This suggests that the back stair in the Griswold House must have continued to the first floor somewhere in the back (east-west) corridor. It is also likely that a partition wall has been removed between the main stair hall and the service wing.

A second floor plan from one of the alternate designs was quite similar to the second floor of the existing house. The southwest room (in the same configuration as the existing) is labeled the nursery, which has a connecting door to the boudoir (the present second floor library), which in turn connects to the master bedroom (in the same configuration as the south center room). The

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Addendum No. 1

primary difference is that there is a narrow bedroom for the nurse connected by a door to the nursery at the west end of the floor and no room existed to the east of the master bedroom.

There are also several drawings of the Griswold stable, including versions that were not built. The stable appears to have been built from one set of drawings that have Hunt's notes for changes. This drawing shows a profusion of half-timbering at the first story that was never built. Hunt's notes indicate changes to the number and location of windows. The latter changes were executed but there is no note to omit the half timbering.

No documentation has been found to indicate how the final design for the Griswold House was selected. During the summer of 1863, Richard and Catharine rented William Morris Hunt's house in Newport, which was located nearby on Bellevue Avenue. Hunt therefore could easily supervise the project during construction.

ADDENDUM NO. 2
to the National Historic Landmark Nomination

The following documentation compiled for the Griswold House Historic Structures Report (October 1999) provides the context for the founding of the Art Association of Newport. Specifically, this includes background information on Early Art Clubs and Associations, the Newport Art Colony and Maud Howe Elliott.

Early Art Clubs and Associations

The history of American art organizations is characterized by the constant struggle between the needs of artists and the desires of wealthy patrons. The longevity and success of the Art Associations of Newport (1912), Lyme (1914) and Provincetown (1914) would suggest that the conflict was finally resolved in the early part of the twentieth century, when artist-run organizations with open membership superseded exclusive gentlemen's social clubs as a popular means of organizing groups of individuals interested in art.

Philadelphia artists formed the first institution devoted to art in 1795. The Columbanium, as it was called, was defunct within a year and artists would not play a role in the development of art organizations for nearly a century. Art institutions founded in the early part of the 19th century were run by wealthy laymen who had the business sense required to structure a successful organization and the capital required to purchase buildings and transport casts and old masters to this country from Europe. The American Academy of Fine Arts in New York, the Boston Athenaeum and the Pennsylvania Academy in Philadelphia, for example, were operated like joint-stock companies where affluent subscribers owned shares of the property. This system created a dependency on wealth that alienated the very artists for whom the associations were formed. Nonetheless, any artist seeking advancement in the 1820s was drawn by necessity to these northeastern cities where academies and collections of casts and old masters were located. After developing his artistic talent, the artist would often remain in these urban centers which contained publishing houses, wealthy patrons and literary communities. (Harris, *passim*)

Increased public interest in art and respect for the profession resulted in the development of artist-run academies and powerful professional associations in the 1840s. These art associations created by and for artists were also founded in large cities: the Artists and Amateurs Association of Philadelphia (1840), the Boston Artists Association (1842) the New York Gallery of Fine Arts (1844) and the American Art-Union (New York, 1839). (Harris, *passim*) In fact, even through the end of the nineteenth century, formal Art Associations were without fail founded in cities such as Brooklyn (1864), San Francisco (1872), Columbus (1879), Indianapolis (1883), Paris (1890) and Chicago (1897). The Central Art Association of America (1894), "a national organization for the promotion of art among the people," had 3000 members by 1897, spreading the opportunity to join a formal association to American artists throughout the country. None of these associations survived the twentieth century. (Boston Art Guide, 1895, *passim*; American Art Annual, 1898, *passim*)

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While none of the above-mentioned associations survived the twentieth century, the Boston Art Students Association continues to operate today as the Copley Society. Founded in 1879 as an alumni society for the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the group opened its membership to all interested in art in 1891 and changed its name to the Copley Society in 1901. The Society holds an esteemed position in American art history, being the oldest non-profit art association in the country. (Fairbrother, 41) Interestingly, it was not until 1957 that the Society acquired its first permanent home, where it is located today.

The majority of the art clubs that emerged in the mid- to late-nineteenth century were similar to the early art institutions in that they were for the elite who had a special interest in art, and not necessarily for the promotion of local artists. One founding member of the Boston Art Club, for example, explained, "Ours is an *Art* Club, not an Artists." (Troyen, 25) The Boston club received a great deal of contemporary criticism for doing "little for professionals" and for the makeup of its board and members, "nearly all... men of trade—who certainly do not claim to know much about art." (Beta, 100) The Providence Art Club, founded by sixteen artists in 1880, seems to be an exception. The artist-founders of the Providence club met at the invitation of Charles Walter Stetson and others who had already "banded themselves together for mutual protection, intending to make a united stand against their arch-enemy, the dealer." (Stetson quoted in Miner, 128) The heart of the clubhouse in Providence was its gallery where artists could exhibit and sell their work.

Whether or not artists participated in administrative decisions, private clubs excluded individuals who could not afford or were not invited to join the membership. A club, by definition, is

an association of persons (admittance into which is usually guarded by ballot), formed mainly for social purposes, and having a building (or part of one) appropriated to the exclusive use of the members, and always open to them as a place of resort, or, in some cases, of temporary residence; the club may be political, literary, [artistic], military, etc., according to the aims and occupations of its members, but its main feature is to provide a place of resort, social intercourse, and entertainment. (Oxford Dictionary of the English Language)

To distinguish their more democratic aims from those of an exclusive private social club, the Newport group selected the word "Association" to describe its membership. It encouraged participation by enlisted men, and charged very little for enrollment in its school which offered many scholarships. It also catered to the needs of artists. "We do not want to make money out of our artists; we want rather to help them make money, and with their interest in mind, the rental [of gallery space has] been kept as low as possible." (Annual Report, 1916) Its second president William Coles Cabell strongly opposed anything approaching a "club idea," speaking out against "the service of tea as a regular business," an enterprise which would detract from the principle objectives of the association. (Cabell to Elliott, August 18 and 28, 1914)

Some members of Newport society, who undoubtedly belonged to private clubs in Boston and New York, did not realize that the association had an open membership policy. When one

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non-member confessed that she had not joined the association "because I was never asked," Mrs. Elliott explained that the invitation to join was--and always had been--open to all.

Our strength lies in the fact that we are truly a representative association, including people of every age and every sort of income, that we welcome with equal cordiality all sorts and conditions of men, women and children, asking only one thing, that they come to us in the same spirit of devotion to the cultivation of artistic endeavor that inspired our founders. (Annual Report, 1921)

Newport, the Art Colony

A phenomenon separate from and to some extent in reaction to the rise of art organizations and academies in America was that of the summer art colony. At the same time formal art associations were being formed in major cities in the 1840s, the growing aversion to industrialism and appreciation for the American landscape prompted certain established artists to seek out the rural countryside. Other artists who studied abroad in the next decade, returned home with a nostalgia for the communal and rural life they had experienced in European art colonies such as Barbizon in the Forest of Fontainebleau outside of Paris. (Jacobs, *passim*) The Barbizon painters living the life of peasants inspired many French-trained, American-born artists to seek out picturesque sites and establish colonies for learning art from nature rather than from academic theories. As a result, informal summer art colonies gradually developed along the coast and in the mountains and picturesque valleys of New England and New York, introducing to America *en plein air* painting. From these colonies and their innovative approach to painting landscapes developed American Impressionism.

The artists who followed Thomas Cole to the Hudson River, Catskills and White Mountains in the 1840s and 1850s anticipated the development of the earliest American art colonies. While these summer treks to northeastern mountains and valleys are well known, less well known are the treks to Newport, Rhode Island that the next generation of Hudson River School followers made beginning in 1854. John F. Kensett a friend of Asher B. Durand arrived in Newport that year and remained in the Narragansett Bay region until his death in 1872. (Sullivan) His Luminist paintings of the coastline of Newport attracted the attention of non-native artists like W.J. Stillman, artist-editor of *The Crayon*, who wrote in 1855,

I had never dreamed of the amount of picturesqueness concentrated in the little space called the island of Rhode Island. We have thought of Newport only as a place of fashionable resort--the very antipodes of an artistic location; and, although Kensett's studies have done something in the way of introduction, I was entirely unprepared for the amount of beautiful material which may be found by the Rambler on the island. (Danes, 145)

Other Luminist painters like Albert Bierstadt, Martin Johnson Heade, Worthington Whittredge, Bricher and William Trost Richards followed soon after Kensett, sketching out of doors and completing carefully studied and idealized compositions in their studios.

William Morris Hunt, on the other hand, "pioneered in transferring to America the art colony concept and its corollary art teaching out of doors" which was essential to the development of American Impressionism. (Gerds, *En Plein Air*, 16) Hunt had befriended Millet while studying at Barbizon and is the American painter most closely associated with the school, for he embraced the Barbizon method and promoted the work of Millet and others in the United States. When Hunt returned to this country from France in 1856, he settled in Newport and founded an important but short-lived school in his studio off Bellevue Avenue on Church Street.

According to Henry James, one of Hunt's students, mid-century artists were attracted to Newport by its atmospheric qualities.

Newport imposed itself at that period to so remarkable a degree as the one right residence, in all our great country, for those tainted, under whatever attenuations, with the quality and effect of detachment.... The atmospheric tone, the careful selection of ingredients, your pleasant sense of a certain climatic ripeness-these are the real charms of Newport.... You are affected by the admirable art of the landscape-with so narrow a range of color of form.... It is an especial degree the charm of Newport in general-the combined lowness of tone, as the painters call it...in mingled shades of yellow and gray. (Henry James. *Notes of a Son and Brother and Portraits of Places* quoted in Danes, 144)

While the quality of light and picturesque coastline attracted many painters, William Morris Hunt also recognized in Newport "the advantages of the right kind of society." (Danes, 145) During that period, the literati of Cambridge and Boston such as Charles Eliot Norton, Thomas Gold Appleton and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, preferred Newport to the Massachusetts shore as a summer retreat. Hunt's studio in turn attracted members of a younger generation of budding artists and writers to Newport: William and Henry James, Edward Wheelwright, Sarah Wyman Whitman and John LaFarge. When Hunt moved to Boston in 1862, he rented and then sold his Bellevue Avenue house, "Hill Top" to his brother the architect Richard Morris Hunt who lived there until his death in 1895. (Danes, *passim*) John LaFarge likewise spent nearly fifty years in that city where he painted the cliffs, beaches and pastures of Paradise near Second Beach in Middletown. (Yarnell, *Paradise*) John Twatchman and Theodore Wendel taught early out-door classes at the art school of Anna Falconnet Hunter, "imparting principles of the very new aesthetics of Impressionism" in 1889. (Gerds, *Art Across America*, 92 and *In Nature's Ways*, 32)

This circle of ever evolving intellectuals and artists prompted writer Julia Ward Howe to create the first art-oriented club in Newport in the summer of 1871. The object of the Town and Country Club, a social club consisting of and organized by artists, writers and scientists, was to discuss the value and beauty of "the great artist, Nature." Its members united efforts "in order to afford ourselves opportunities of becoming acquainted with the marvels the summer world so lavishly offers us. Flowers in the season, fish while the waters are warm and clear, rocks while those who can explain their wonderful record are among us." The spirit of Town and Country Club formed the germ of the Newport Art Association, founded by Howe's daughter Maud Howe Elliott and others in 1912. (Elliott, *Newport*, 104-105)

These studios and social clubs were early attempts at organizing the elite artistic and literary community of Newport. At the turn of the century when improved public transportation and summer travel became commonplace, Newport became an increasingly popular summer residence for Bostonians and New Yorkers. The influx of artists into this burgeoning summer community at the turn of the century was not a phenomenon unique to Newport. Painters' resorts at the coastal towns of Old Lyme, Connecticut and Provincetown, Massachusetts also sprung from Barbizon roots by "scenery-seeking landscapists." (Marling)

Critical developments of these turn-of-the-century art colonies were the concepts of the summer art school and the annual summer art exhibition. The Lyme Summer Art School (Lyme, Conn., 1899) and Charles Hawthorne's Cape Cod School of Arts (Provincetown, Mass, 1899) attracted hundreds of artists transforming these small coastal towns to favorite artistic retreats. The art classes offered at these summer schools were invariably out of doors. The quantity and popularity of the schools which became ubiquitous at the turn of the century caused a transformation in the method of creating landscaping paintings. The new, widely accepted methods "led to a radical change in their appearance and in the aesthetic and critical assumptions that developed in the later nineteenth century concerning the nature of the communication, both spiritual and topographical, which landscapes were expected to transmit to the viewer." (Gerds, *In Nature's Ways*, 25) This change had a profound influence on the artist-founders of the Newport Art Association as well as the majority of their American contemporaries.

Summer annuals, beginning in Old Lyme in 1902, also altered the character of American art by offering exhibition opportunities to young artists who would not be welcome in academic shows. Indeed, "free exposure to innovative trends kept art colonies on the frontiers of change, at least so long as exhibition opportunities in urban centers remained limited." (Marling) Soon after the Newport Art Association was founded in 1912, exhibition opportunities in urban areas would begin to open up under the influence of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, an artist-patron who was also intimately involved in the Newport exhibitions beginning in 1915.

Other well-known colonies in Dublin and Cornish, New Hampshire were unusual in that they never formed an art school, hosted a formal annual exhibit or established an art association. (A Circle of Friends, 5) Two of the Cornish artists, John and Maud Howe Elliott, were instrumental in founding the Newport Art Association which would contribute to these important developments of the turn-of-the-century art colony movement.

Maud Howe Elliott

More than any other, the name of Maud Howe Elliott will forever be linked with the Art Association of Newport. Contemporaries within the art association described her as "our beloved patron saint" and "Newport's Grand Dame." (Annual Report, 1945 and obituary Mar 23, 1948) A "long-lived, physical and intellectual dynamo," Elliott was the "guiding spirit among the founders." (Howe, Annual Report, 1962 and Gibbs, 1912 Revisited)

John N. A. Griswold House
76 Bellevue Avenue
Newport, RI

6

The Pulitzer Prize winning daughter of Julia Ward Howe, Elliott was the most eloquent of the founders who chronicled the association's growth for thirty years. Her enthusiasm for its broad mission and ambitious programs comes through in every Annual Report she wrote. She and her sister won the Pulitzer prize in 1917 as co-authors of *The Life & Letters of Julia Ward Howe* (1915), a biography of their mother. Maud Elliott's book, *This Was My Newport*, written in her ninetieth year remains one of the best historical sources on the "more famous days in one of America's most famous communities." (Providence Journal, Mar 20, 1948) Her lectures on the "Art Traditions of Newport" and "An Artist's Life in Rome," her ninetieth birthday celebration, and ultimately her death mark key transition points in the history of the organization.

Once organized, the scope of the young organization quickly grew, beginning with a series of afternoon teas held in conjunction with the exhibits, an art lecture series and an art school the following spring and summer. Maud Howe Elliott's "Art Traditions of Newport" launched the lecture series in January 1913, and by 1915, several lectures were held each month in the off season, with as many as six in January alone. Musicians' Afternoons and Artists' Afternoons were added in the fall and winter of 1914, opening the house up more regularly to the community. (NAA Annual Reports and Scrapbooks, 1912-1914) The association rooms were envisioned "as a meeting place and as a center of interest for the benefit of all those who desired to see the artistic, literary and intellectual life of the community grow in proportion to the growth of other interests." (*Newport Herald*, Feb. 11, 1914)

Griswold, John N. A. House

NEWPORT QUADRANGLE
RHODE ISLAND-NEWPORT CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

6767 11 SW
(TIVERTON)

CE ISLAND) FALL RIVER, MASS. 18 MI. TIVERTON 12 MI. 17'30" 309 560 000 FEET TIVERTON 12 MI. 1.7 MI. TO R. I. 138 311 312 71°15' 41°30'



UTM REF
19/307250
4295050

John N. A. Griswold
House
76 Bellevue Avenue
Newport, R.I.

Griswold, John N. A., House

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

List of Photographs

John N. A. Griswold House
76 Bellevue Avenue
Newport, RI.

- View #1 North and west elevations
Photographer: Leslie Donovan
Date: December 1999
Neg. Number: 2207-29
- View #2 View of porte cochere
Photographer: Jack E. Boucher
Date: September 1969
Photo Number: HABS No. RI-322-3
- View #3 West (front) and south facades
Photographer: Jack E. Boucher
Date: September 1969
Photo Number: HABS No. RI-322-1
- View #4 View of south facade of main house
Photographer: Jack E. Boucher
Date: September 1969
Photo Number: HABS No. RI-322-2
- View #5 View of southeast corner of main house and south facade of Ilgenfritz Gallery
Photographer: Leslie Donovan
Date: December 1999
Neg. Number: 2207-7
- View #6 East and north facades of Ilgenfritz Gallery
Photographer: Leslie Donovan
Date: December 1999
Neg. Number: 2207-4
- View #7 View of the Library from the east
Photographer: Jack E. Boucher
Date: September 1969
Photo Number: HABS No. RI-322-6

Griswold, John N. A., House

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

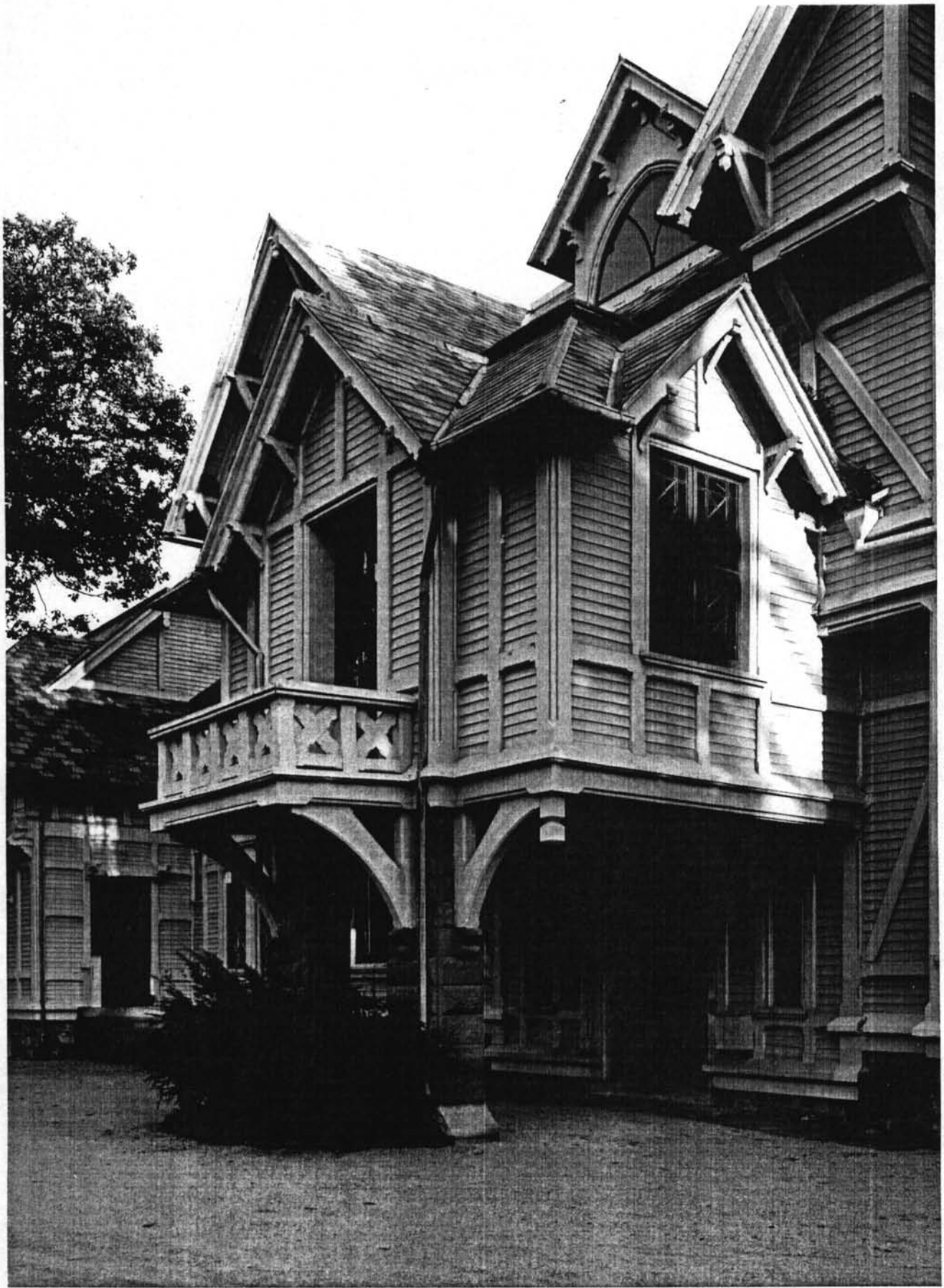
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

List of Photographs

Page two

- View #8 View of the Dining Room/Drury Gallery from the west
Photographer: Leslie Donovan
Date: December 1999
Neg. Number: 2206-9
- View #9 View of stairhall at second and third floors from the north
Photographer: Leslie Donovan
Date: December 1999
Neg. Number: 2206-21
- View #10 View of Ilgenfritz Gallery from the west
Photographer: Leslie Donovan
Date: December 1999
Neg. Number: 2206-10
- View #11 View of Cushing Memorial Gallery from the northwest
Photographer: Leslie Donovan
Date: December 1999
Neg. Number: 2207-11





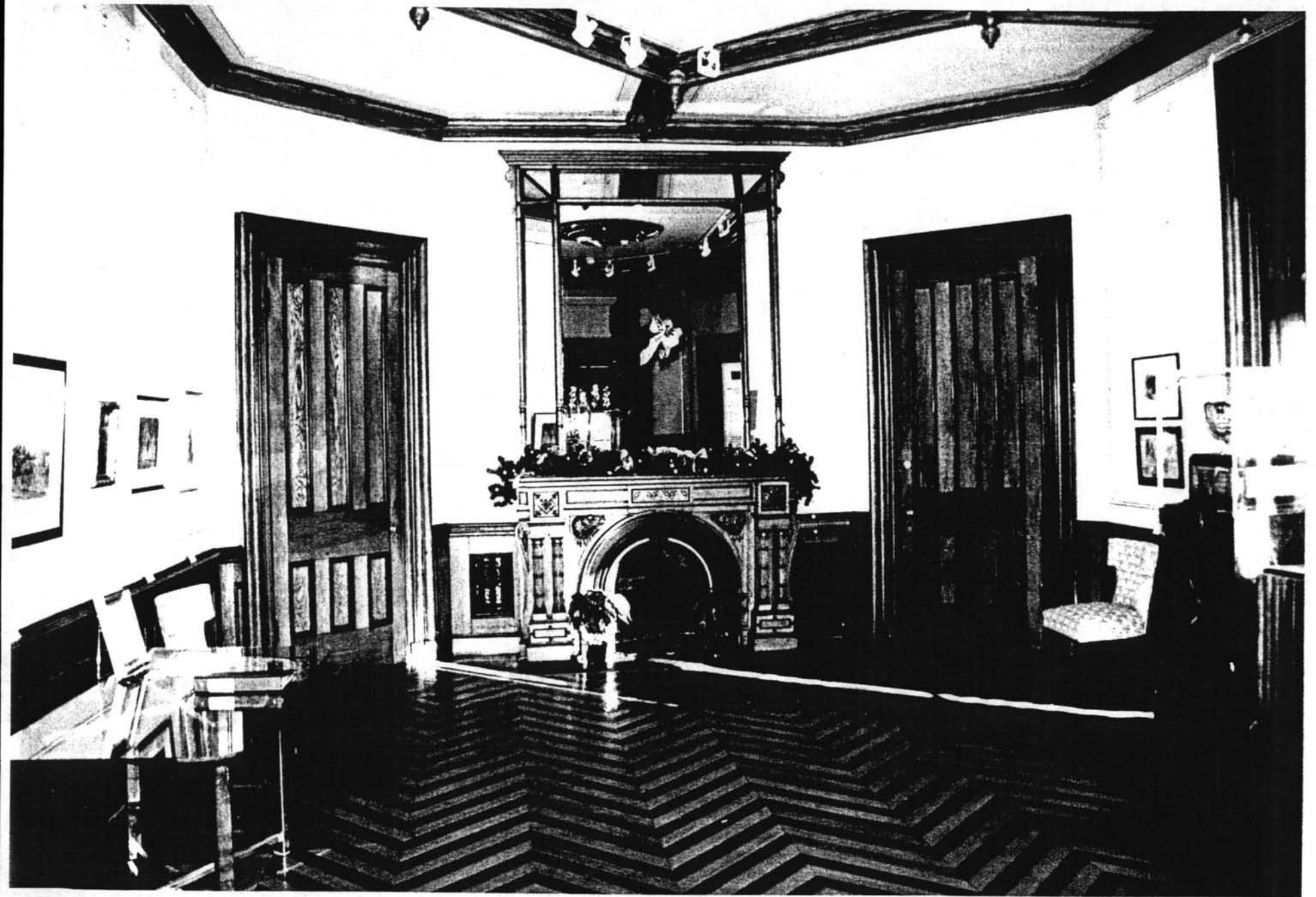


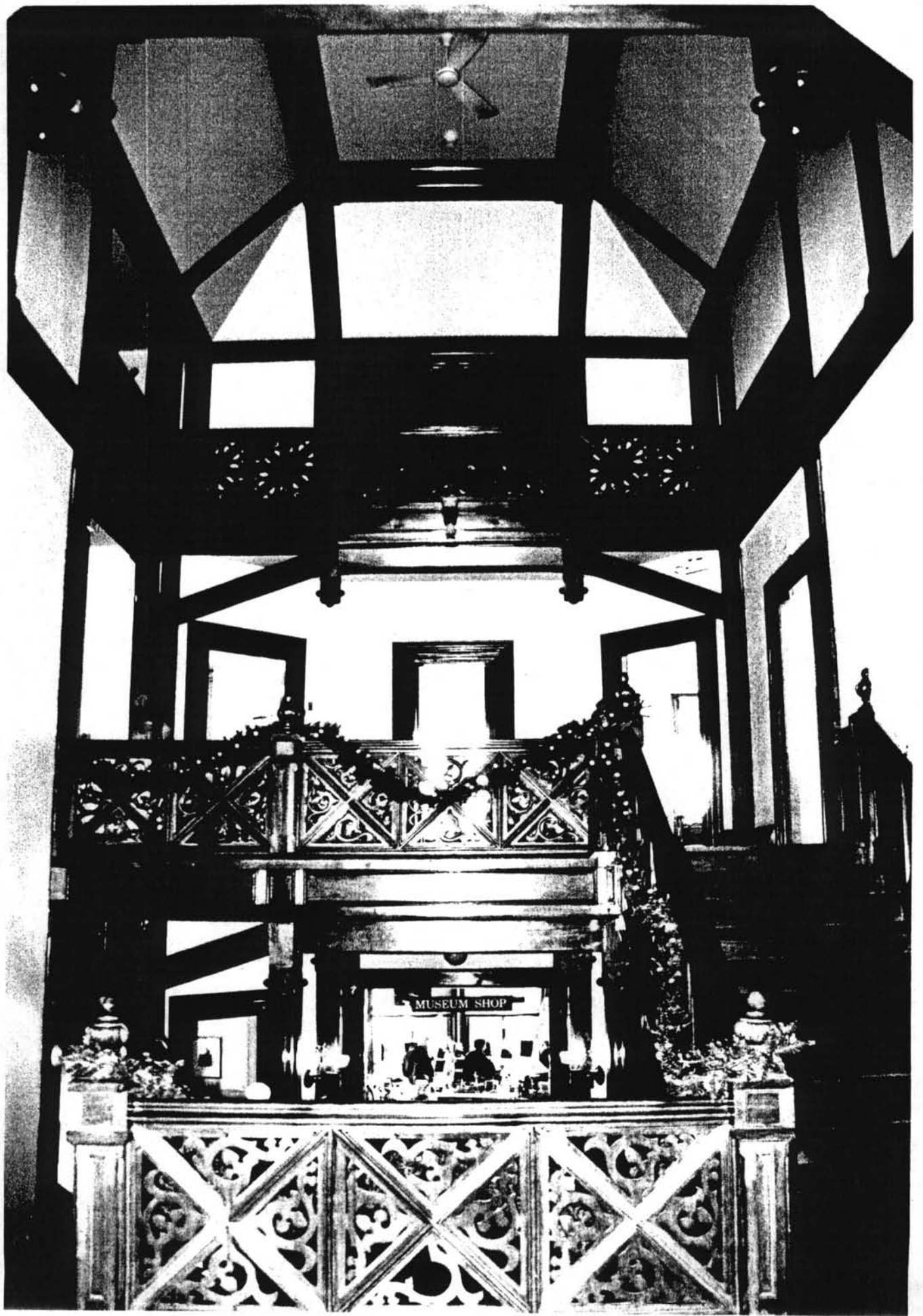






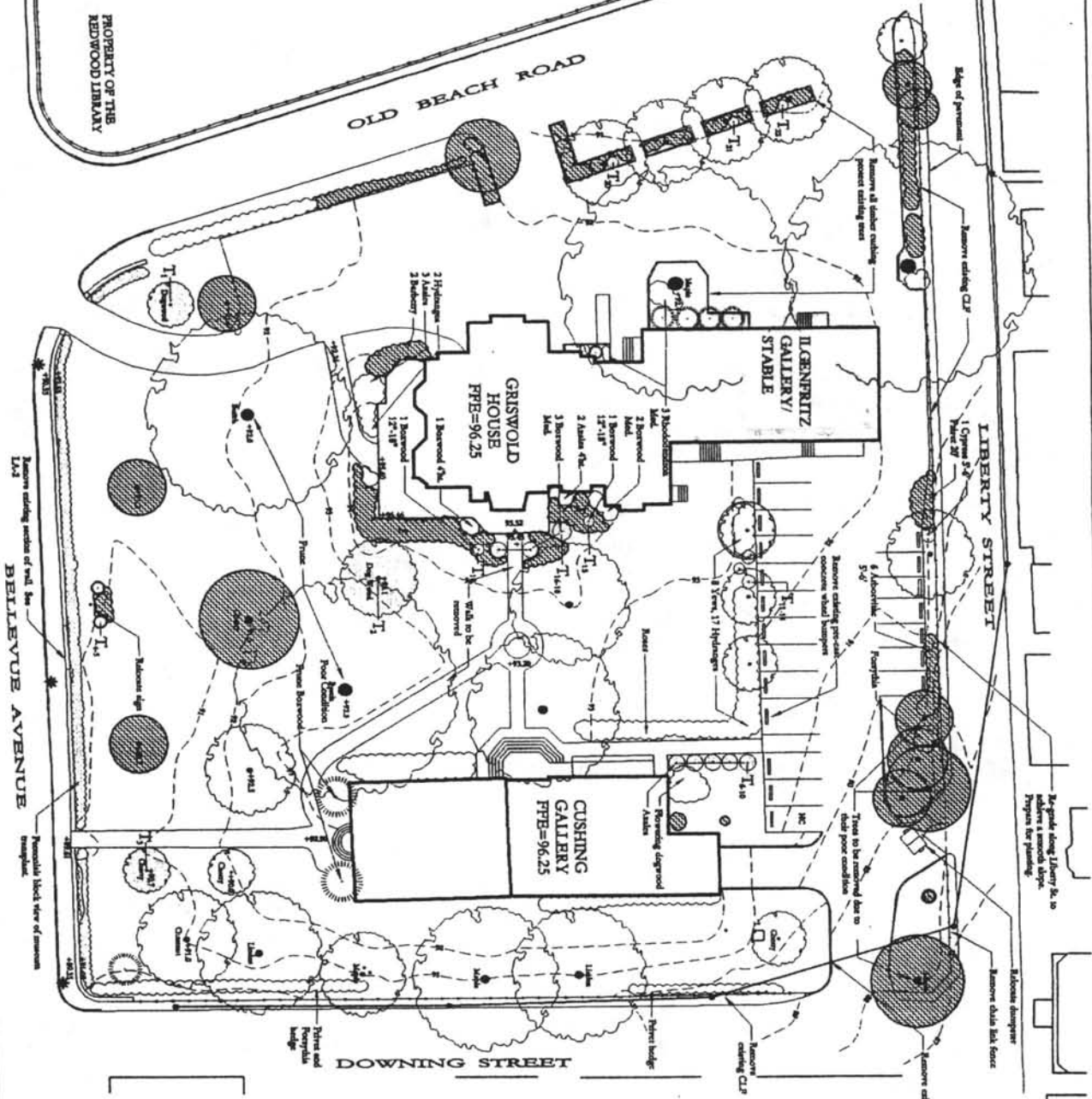












LEGEND

	Existing Deciduous Tree to Remain - Prune as directed by Landscape Architect or Arborist
	Existing Tree to be Removed
	Existing Deciduous Tree to be Transplanted
	Existing Burgeoning Tree to Remain - Prune as directed by Landscape Architect or Arborist
	Existing Shrubs to be Transplanted
	Existing Shrubs to Remain
	Existing Perennials to be Transplanted
	Existing Shrubs to be Removed
	Existing Site Topography
	Existing Spot Elevation
	Edge of Pavement
	Curb Line
	Existing Overhead Utilities
	Existing Pedestrian Street Lighting
	Existing Chain Link Fence

Prepared By:
Pressley
 Associates, Inc.
 1000 North Main Street
 Newport, Rhode Island 02840
 Phone: (401) 863-1111
 Fax: (401) 863-1112

Newport Art Museum

Newport, Rhode Island

Site Preparation and Demolition

DRAWN: JRH
 JOB No: 99032
 DATE: 9/17/99
 CHECKED: NP, JRH
 SCALE: 1"=60'

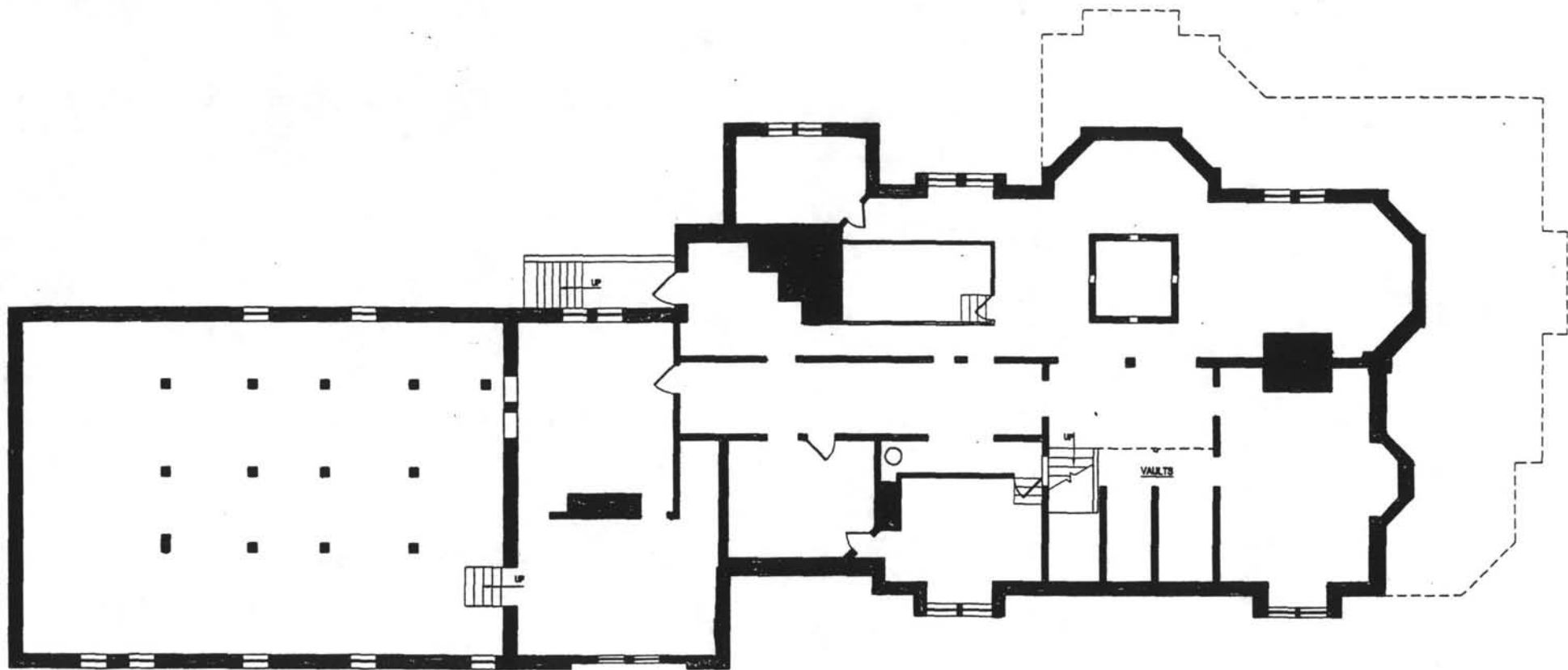


LA-1

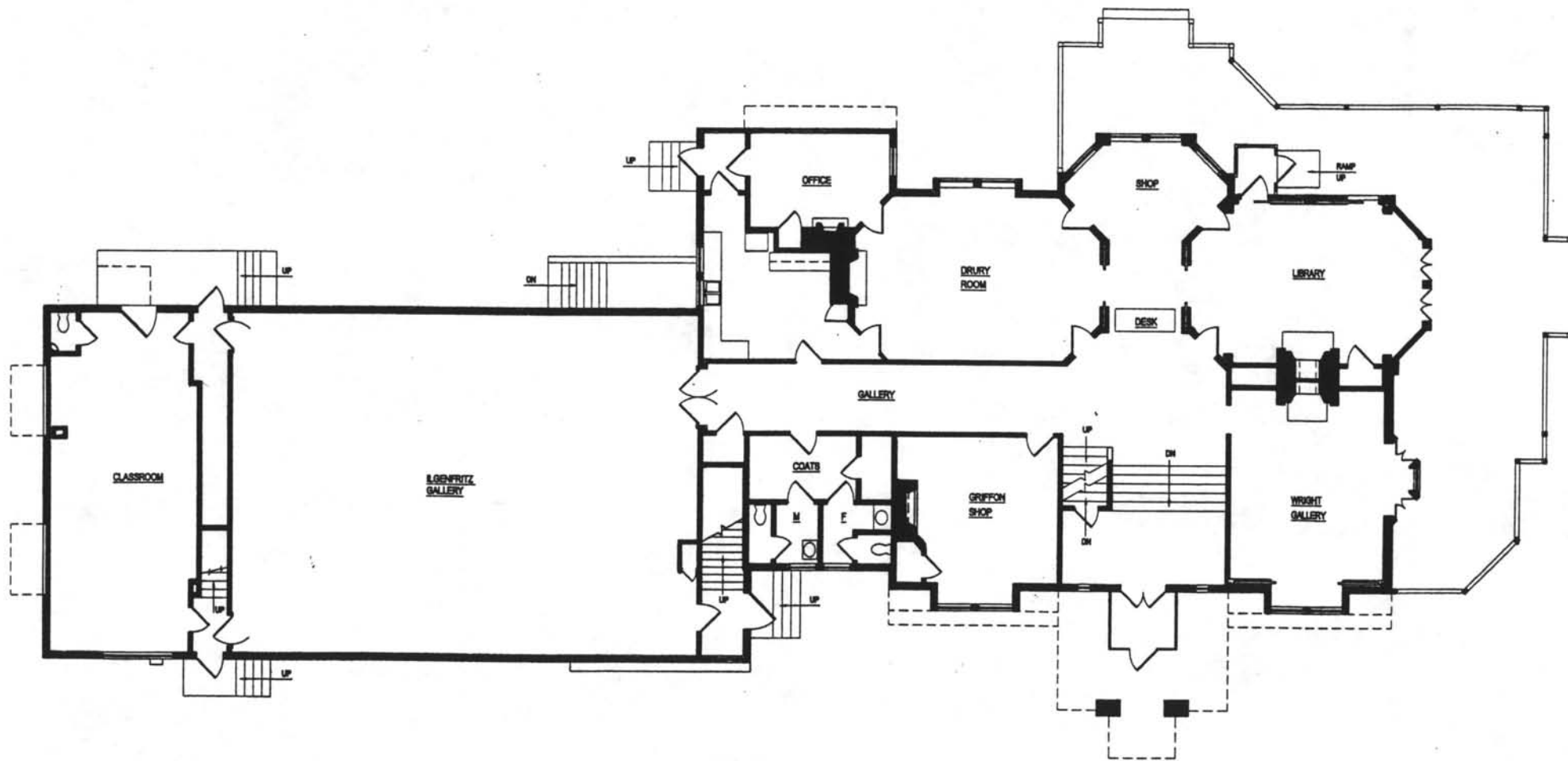
NAM STUDIO
 ANNEX

The grade along Liberty St. to be removed shall be as shown. Pruning for planting.

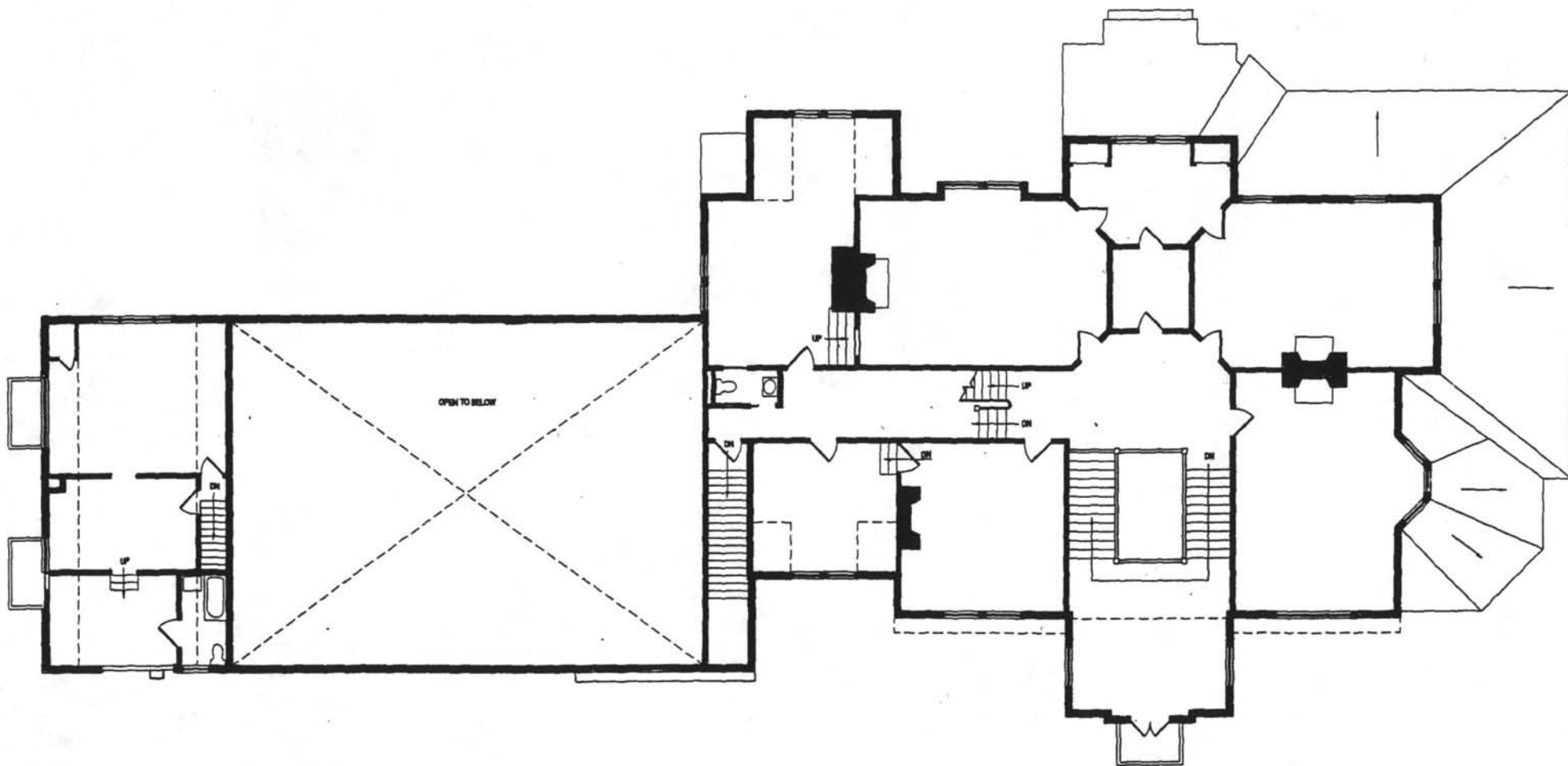
PROPERTY OF THE
 REDWOOD LIBRARY



BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



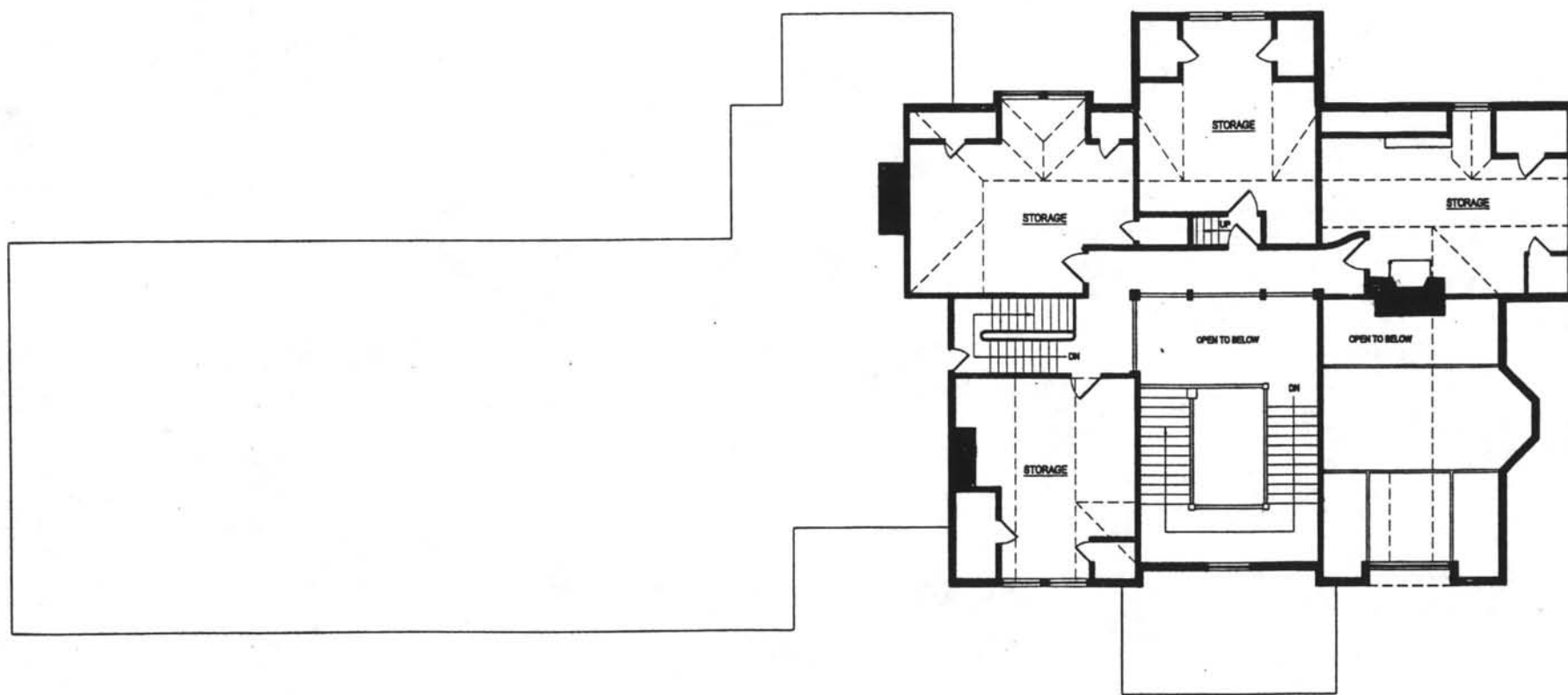
FIRST FLOOR PLAN
SCALE 3/8" = 1'-0"



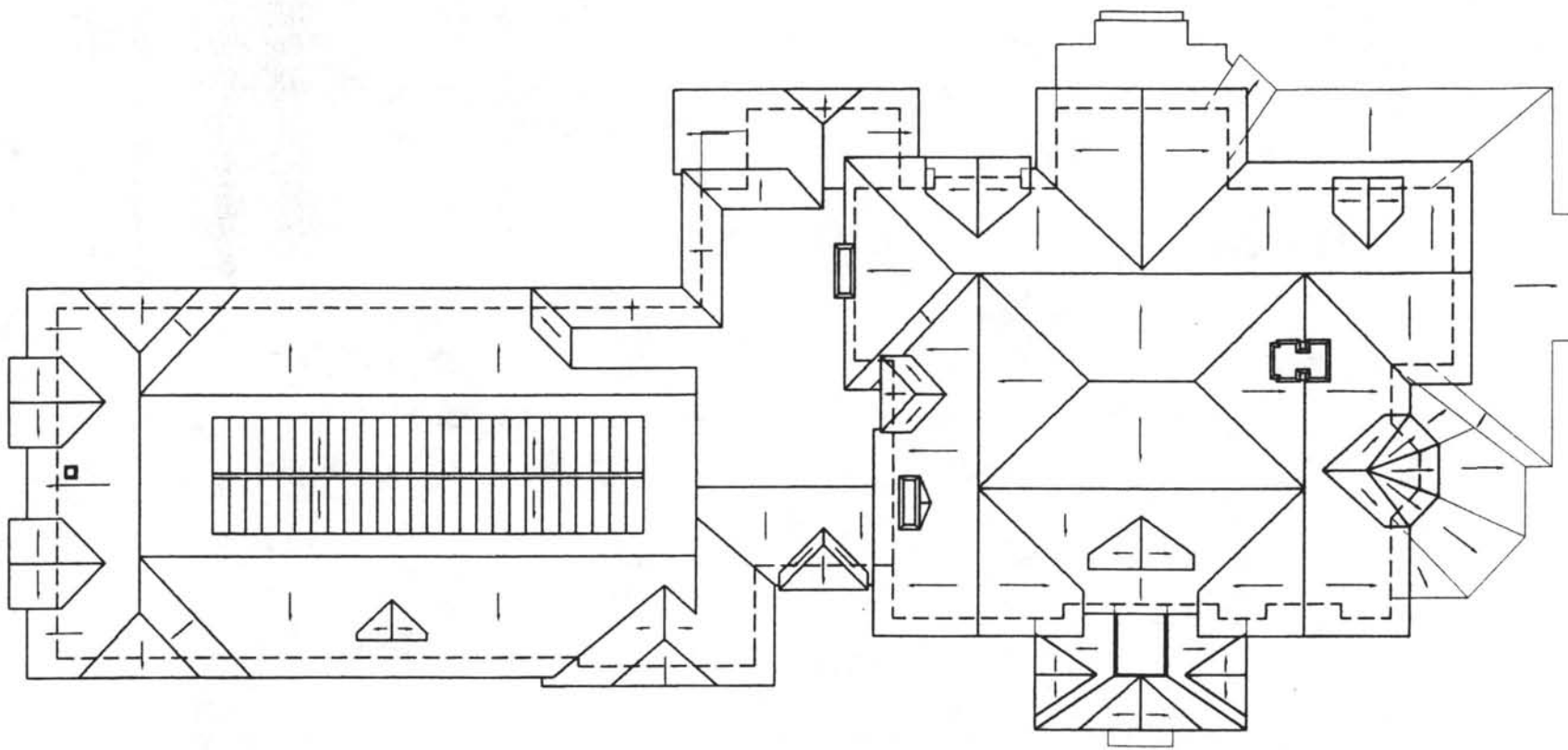
SECOND FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

BURT HILL KOSAR RITTELMANN ASSOCIATES
MAY 12, 1999

NEWPORT ART MUSEUM
GRISWOLD HOUSE X3



THIRD FLOOR PLAN
SCALE 3/8" = 1'-0"



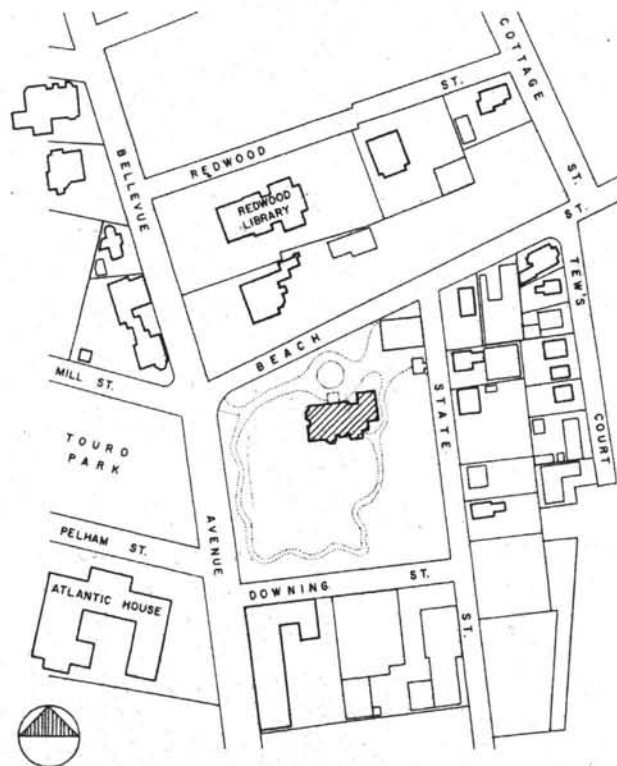
BURT HILL KOSAR RITTELMANN ASSOCIATES
OCTOBER 18, 1999

ROOF PLAN
Scale: 1/20" = 1'
0 5 10 20

NEWPORT ART MUSEUM
GRISWOLD HOUSE

X5

JOHN N. A. GRISWOLD HOUSE, THE ART ASSOCIATION OF NEWPORT



SITE PLAN ADAPTED FROM HOPKINS MAP OF 1876

THIS HOUSE, BUILT 1863-1864, IS AN IMPORTANT EARLY WORK OF THE ARCHITECT RICHARD MORRIS HUNT. MADE OF WOOD WITH ELABORATE PATTERNS OF HALF-TIMBERING AND BRACKETING, AND WITH INTRICATE SAWN AND CARVED INTERIOR WOOD DETAIL, IT IS A KEY EXAMPLE OF THE "STICK STYLE". J. N. A. GRISWOLD, THE ORIGINAL OWNER, WAS PRESIDENT OF THE ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD, AND U. S. CONSUL AT SHANGHAI. THE BUILDING WAS ACQUIRED BY THE NEWPORT ART ASSOCIATION IN 1915 FOR EXHIBITION GALLERIES AND STUDIOS.

THIS PROJECT WAS UNDERTAKEN BY THE HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY IN COOPERATION WITH THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION, PARTLY MEASURED AND DRAWN BY THE NEWPORT HABS PROJECT 1969 AND COMPLETED IN AUGUST, 1970, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF JAMES C. MASSEY, CHIEF OF HABS AND OSMUND OVERBY (UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI), PROJECT SUPERVISOR, AND ARCHITECTS GERRON S. HITE (CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC COLLEGE), THOMAS J. SANFORD (WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY), AND STUDENT ARCHITECT LESLIE DIVOLL (UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA) AT THE HABS FIELD OFFICE IN NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND. THOMAS M. SLADE (UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME) PROJECT HISTORIAN.

SCALE 1" = 100'

DRAWN BY: GERRON HITE

NEWPORT HABS PROJECT - 1970
OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
UNDER DIRECTION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

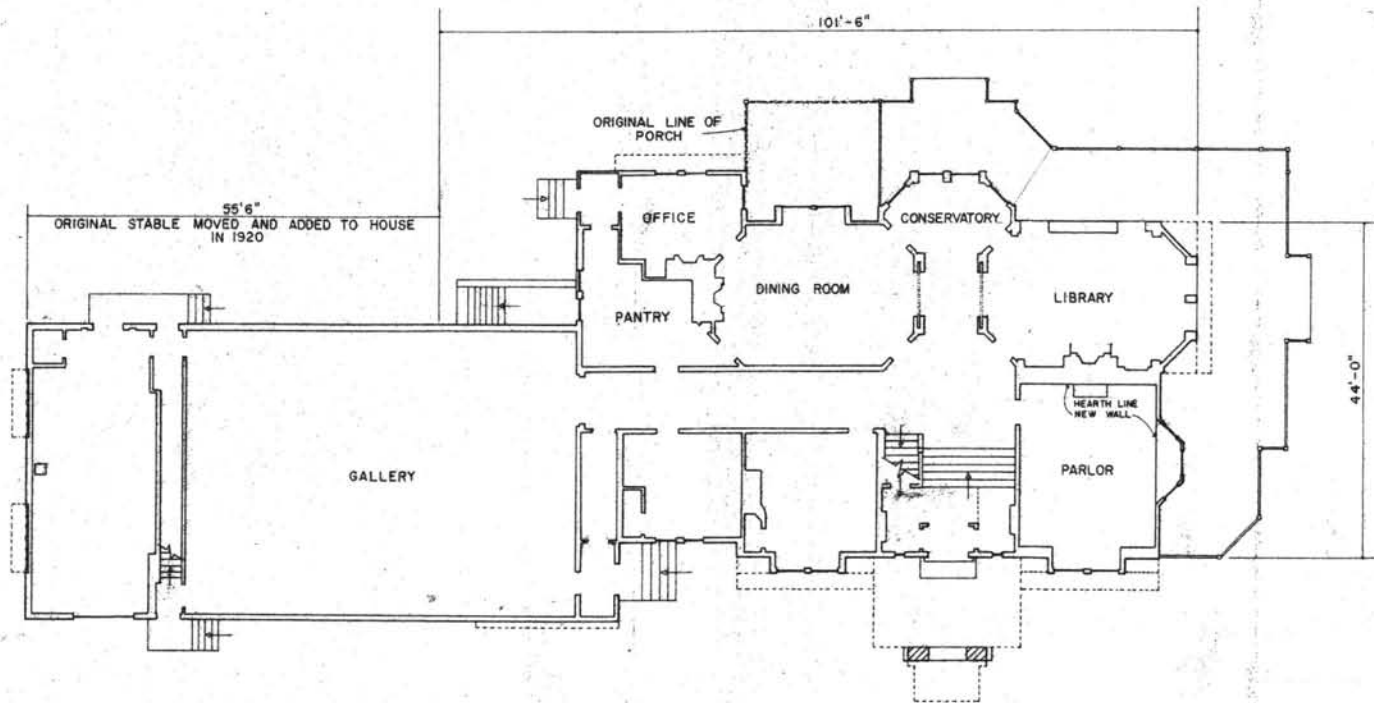
NAME AND LOCATION OF STRUCTURE
JOHN N. A. GRISWOLD HOUSE, THE ART ASSOCIATION OF NEWPORT
76 BELLEVUE AVENUE NEWPORT COUNTY NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

SURVEY NO.
R 1
322

HISTORIC AMERICAN
BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 1 OF 4 SHEETS

DATE OF SURVEY
1970

TRIM LINE



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



SCALE 3/32" = 1'-0"

DRAWN BY: BARBARA STOKEY & GERRON HITE

NEWPORT HABS PROJECT - 1989 & 1990
OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
UNDER DIRECTION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE,
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

JOHN N.A. GRISWOLD
76 BELLEVUE AVENUE

NAME AND LOCATION OF STRUCTURE
HOUSE, THE ART ASSOCIATION OF NEWPORT
NEWPORT COUNTY
NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

SURVEY NO.
R1
322

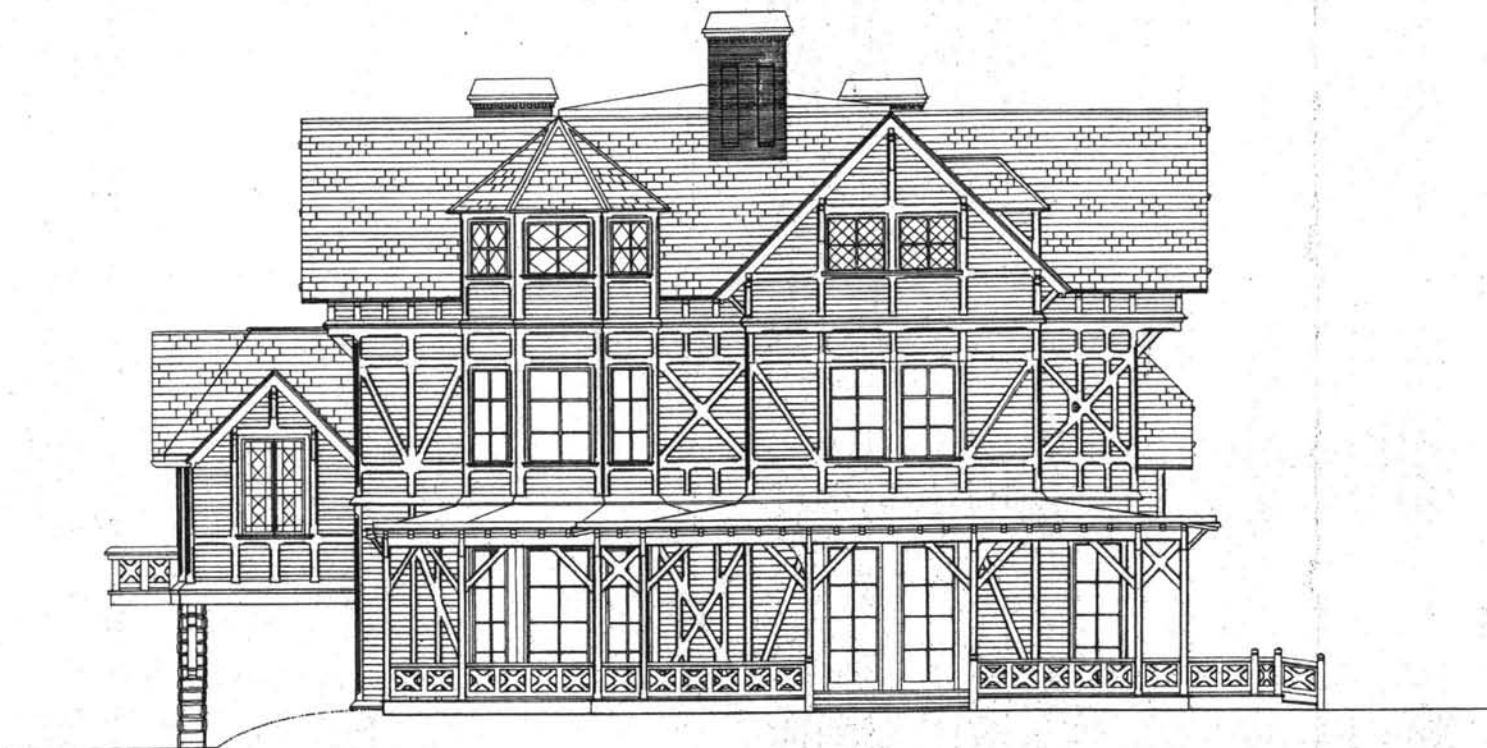
HISTORIC AMERICAN
BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 2 OF 4 SHEETS

DATE OF SURVEY
1989

TRIM LINE

ORIGINAL — NOT FOR REPRODUCTION

TRIM LINE



WEST ELEVATION

SCALE 3/16"=1'-0"

DRAWN BY: JEFFREY CHIMURA

NEWPORT HABS PROJECT - 1970
 OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 UNDER DIRECTION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE,
 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NAME AND LOCATION OF STRUCTURE
JOHN N.A. GRISWOLD HOUSE, THE ART ASSOCIATION OF NEWPORT
 76 BELLEVUE AVENUE NEWPORT COUNTY NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

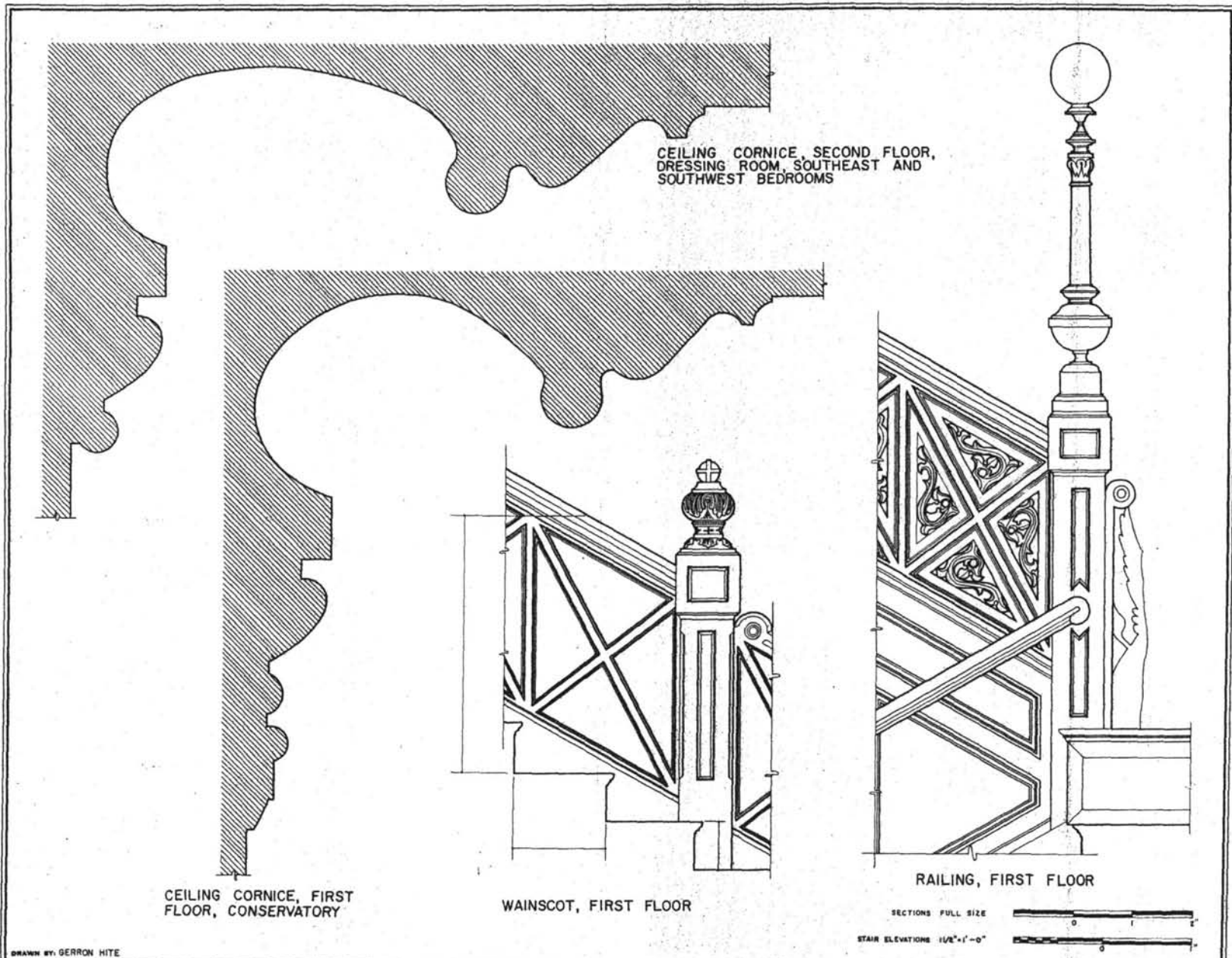
SURVEY NO.
 R 1
 322

HISTORIC AMERICAN
 BUILDINGS SURVEY
 SHEET 3 OF 4 SHEETS

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
 SERIALS NUMBER

TRIM LINE

TRIM LINE



CEILING CORNICE, SECOND FLOOR,
DRESSING ROOM, SOUTHEAST AND
SOUTHWEST BEDROOMS

CEILING CORNICE, FIRST
FLOOR, CONSERVATORY

WAINSCOT, FIRST FLOOR

RAILING, FIRST FLOOR



DRAWN BY GERRON HITE

NEWPORT HABS PROJECT - 1970
 OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 UNDER DIRECTION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE,
 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NAME AND LOCATION OF STRUCTURE
JOHN N.A. GRISWOLD HOUSE, THE ART ASSOCIATION OF NEWPORT
 76 BELLEVUE AVENUE NEWPORT COUNTY NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

SURVEY NO.
 R1
 322

HISTORIC AMERICAN
 BUILDINGS SURVEY
 SHEET 4 OF 4 SHEETS

DATE OF DRAWING
 1970

TRIM LINE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Rhode Island	
COUNTY: Newport	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
The Art Association of Newport

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Griswold (John N. A.) House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
76 Bellevue Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:
Newport

STATE Rhode Island	CODE 44	COUNTY: Newport	CODE 005
-----------------------	------------	--------------------	-------------

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure 	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both 	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) Art studios

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
The Art Association of Newport

STREET AND NUMBER:
76 Bellevue Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:
Newport

STATE: Rhode Island	CODE 44
------------------------	------------

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:
Broadway

CITY OR TOWN:
Newport

STATE: Rhode Island	CODE 44
------------------------	------------

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1969-1970 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:
Independence Avenue and 1st Street, S. E.

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE: District of Columbia	CODE 11
--------------------------------	------------

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:
COUNTY:

FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This is a large (about 100 feet by 60 feet), irregularly-shaped house, two-and-a-half stories high, with steeply-pitched roofs. It is of frame construction, covered by clapboarding within a pattern of applied half-timbering, and is painted light gray. Numerous projecting bays and balconies are carried on diagonal braces or brackets similar to the half-timbering work. The main entrance is through a porte-cochère on the north. Across the west side and part of the south side of the house extends a porch whose roof with bracketted eaves is carried on square posts with chamfered corners and prominent knee braces. The picturesque main roofs, with gables and hips, are covered with patterned slates and have open eaves with various forms of bracketting, bracing, turned ornamental drops.

From the north entrance within the porte-cochère, one goes through a vestibule and then up a few steps to a large polygonal hall occupying the center of the house and containing the stairs. The stairs, returning, rise to a large landing over the porte-cochère and double back to a large upper central hall. This stairway, U-shaped, has an open well two-and-a-half stories in height, with sloped ceilings. It has a parapet railing with crossed braces (echoed by the stair wainscoting) and with scrolled openwork ornament; the square newel has a carved winged lion seated against its base; all of this stair adornment is of walnut wood. The stairs to the third floor, originally opening off the second-floor hall and rising to an overlooking balcony or gallery area, have now been enclosed. Walls of halls and stairs maintain the character of the house's exterior treatment and are strongly articulated with dark-stained beam-work against light-colored plaster.

On the first floor, the large hall is flanked on the right and left as one enters (north-west and north-east corners of the main house) by a parlor (remodelled as a gallery) and by a reception-room (now a ladies' rest-room). Diagonally ahead, to the right, off the central hall one reaches the library at the south-west and diagonally, to the left, the dining-room. Directly ahead is an open passage area running between library and dining-room, on a cross-axis. Still further ahead, on axis with the main entrance and central hall, is a hexagonal sun-room let out on the south side of the house. A long hallway off the central hall leads to service rooms in an original east wing of the house and also to a large north-eastern exhibition gallery; the latter is the former stable, moved up, attached at his location and rebuilt in 1920. On the second floor, bedrooms which are now used as artists' studios reflect the plan below. There are smaller bedrooms, with dormer and gable windows; on the third floor.

(See Continuation Sheet.)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Rhode Island	
COUNTY Newport	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

7. Description.

In respect to interior decoration, the library preserves the most elaborate treatment. It has dark, fully-panelled walls with low glass-fronted book-cases. The ceiling, of dark blue painted plaster with gold stars, is divided by heavy beam-work with turned drops or pendants at the intersections. The windows have hoods, or projecting pelmets, with angled-out braces supported on twisted colonnettes. These floor-length windows have panelled and louvred shutters which are sliding on the south exposures and folding on the west; their uppermost panels have a carved, pierced vine pattern. A vine pattern is also found in the border of the parquet floor laid in wood of contrasting colors. The fireplace has a low mantel above which is a deep, high niche with arched top. The mantel shelf is carried on panelled pilasters; the frieze between pilasters has small painted plaques of animal subjects; the surround of the hearth is in tiles of reddish browns, blues and white.

Other rooms throughout the house have been simplified in décor to accord with their present uses. However, the dining-room retains its panelled wainscoting, stained nearly black, and its plaster ceiling laid out in a large hexagonal pattern of deep plaster mouldings. Its fireplace has a cast iron surround to its arched opening, and a large wood-enframed mirror forms the over-mantel. Upstairs, several bedrooms retain their fireplaces with panelled wooden mantels, and one fireplace there keeps its facing of blue tile.

Though not in residential use for fifty years, the house of The Art Association still proclaims itself as a dwelling and retains its large, open and informally landscaped lawns in a predominately residential section.

6. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1863-1864

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art | | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Griswold house is important in itself, but it is also important as an early work of Richard Morris Hunt, before he occupied himself only with châteaux and palazzi. This house bursts as an example of American easy, balloon-frame, timbered and nailed construction. Its exterior details, flat but prominent, are part both of mediaeval reminiscence and of the economical "stick style." Its mass is indeed not flat, and here we see open planning (internally), irregular and picturesque play of volumes, deep porch recesses, richly articulated surfaces, plentiful incidental adornment. Hunt, who had only recently returned from his studies and early career in France, would have known many of the essential aspects of this new architecture from his stay and observation in Europe. The Griswold commission provided an opportunity to introduce these into America and re-interpret them in the way of American practices, particularly the flood of wooden buildings just before and just after the Civil War.

John N. A. Griswold was a leading American financier of the mid-XIX Century. However, once he had built this Newport house, he moved to it and settled in it. He then admirably took and continued an interest in the visual and architectural improvement of Newport which equalled his own interests in domestic and foreign financial areas.

In 1915 the house was sold by the Griswold estate to The Art Association of Newport, and it has since then provided most suitable studio and exhibition space. This house is an important piece of our architectural history. Art interest and activities in Newport have been for many years focussed upon the house which contains The Art Association.

It is most fortunate and appropriate that this house--a landmark in American architecture and Hunt's career, as well--is preserved, very well maintained and actively occupied.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Downing, Antoinette F., and Scully, Vincent J., Jr.: The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island ... (2nd ed., New York, 1967), pp. 145-146, pl. 174, 175.

Schuyler, Montgomery: The Architectural Works of the Late Richard M. Hunt (in "The Architectural Record," New York, 1895, Vol. 5), pp. 97-180.

Howe, B.: Early Days of the Art Association (in "Bulletin of the Newport Historical Society," No. 110. April, 1963).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 . . "	0 . . "		41 0 29 09 - N	71 0 18 31 - W	
NE	0 . . "	0 . . "				
SE	0 . . "	0 . . "				
SW	0 . . "	0 . . "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Osmund R. Overby, Supervisor

ORGANIZATION: Historic American Buildings Survey Newport Project DATE: August, 1970

STREET AND NUMBER:
90 Bridge Street

CITY OR TOWN: Newport STATE: Rhode Island, 02840 CODE: 111

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

<p>As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Title _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____ Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____ Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date _____</p>
---	---

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE Rhode Island	
COUNTY Newport	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON: The Art Association of Newport			
AND/OR HISTORIC: Griswold (John N. A.) House			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: 76 Bellevue Avenue			
CITY OR TOWN: Newport			
STATE: Rhode Island, 02840	CODE 114	COUNTY: Newport	CODE 005
3. PHOTO REFERENCE			
PHOTO CREDIT: Jack E. Boucher, for Historic American Buildings Survey			
DATE OF PHOTO: September, 1969			
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Library of Congress, Independence Avenue and 1st St., S. E., Washington, D. C.			
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. Porte-cochère from the north-west.			



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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1. NAME

COMMON: The Art Association of Newport
AND/OR HISTORIC: Griswold (John N. A.) House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

76 Bellevue Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:

Newport

STATE:

Rhode Island, 02840

CODE

44

COUNTY:

Newport

CODE

005

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Jack E. Boucher, for Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF PHOTO: September, 1969

NEGATIVE FILED AT: Library of Congress, Independence Avenue and 1st St., S. E.,
Washington, D. C.

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

West elevation.



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE Rhode Island	
COUNTY Newport	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: The Art Association of Newport
AND/OR HISTORIC: Griswold (John N. A.) House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
76 Bellevue Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:
Newport

STATE: Rhode Island, 02840	CODE 141	COUNTY: Newport	CODE 005
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3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Jack E. Boucher, for Historic American Buildings Survey
DATE OF PHOTO: September, 1969
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Library of Congress, Independence Avenue and 1st St., S. E.,
Washington, D. C.

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.
South elevation.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE
Rhode Island

COUNTY
Newport

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: The Art Association of Newport
AND/OR HISTORIC: Griswold (John N. A.) House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

76 Bellevue Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:

Newport

STATE:

Rhode Island, 02840

CODE

44

COUNTY:

Newport

CODE

005

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Jack E. Boucher, for Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF PHOTO: September, 1969

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Washington, D. C.

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

Main stair hall, looking at upper and lower central halls from
stair landing.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE Rhode Island	
COUNTY Newport	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON: The Art Association of Newport			
AND/OR HISTORIC: Griswold (J. N. A.) House			
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: 76 Bellevue Avenue			
CITY OR TOWN: Newport			
STATE: Rhode Island, 02840	CODE 44	COUNTY: Newport	CODE 005
3. PHOTO REFERENCE			
PHOTO CREDIT: Jack E. Boucher, for Historic American Buildings Survey			
DATE OF PHOTO: September, 1969			
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Library of Congress, Independence Avenue and 1st Street, S. E., Washington, D. C.			
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. Library.			



GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES

Latitude: $41^{\circ} 29' 09''$ N

Longitude: $71^{\circ} 18' 31''$ W

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE Rhode Island	
COUNTY Newport	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: The Art Association of Newport
AND/OR HISTORIC: Griswold (John N. A.) House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
76 Bellevue Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:
Newport

STATE: Rhode Island, 02840	CODE 44	COUNTY: Newport	CODE 005
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3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:
U. S. Geological Survey

SCALE: 1: 24,000

DATE: 1957

4. REQUIREMENTS

- TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS
1. Property boundaries where required.
 2. North arrow.
 3. Latitude and longitude reference.