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## Editor's Note

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## Editor's Note

The streets and avenues of Newport contain a stunning variety of architectural styles. This issue of *Newport History* reflects two strands of the narrative of Newport's unique buildings. In his "An Architect and His Environment: The Career of George Champlin Mason Jr. and His Generative Role in Architectural Preservation and the American Colonial Revival," Ronald J. Onorato explores the significant career of architect and preservationist George Champlin Mason Jr., a Newport native who grew up amidst what the author rightly calls a "rare field museum" of colonial architecture. Onorato not only highlights Mason Jr.'s significant architectural contribution to post-Civil War Newport, and later, Philadelphia, but also highlights Mason's pioneering role in helping to establish the field of historic preservation and in nurturing the Colonial Revival movement among American architects and builders. Dr. Onorato is Chair of the Department of Art & Art History at the University of Rhode Island. He is the author of several books and numerous articles on public sculpture, historic preservation and the architectural history of Rhode Island including the American Institute of Architects' *Guide to Newport Architecture*, and co-author of the Oxford University Press Rhode Island volume of *Buildings of the United States*.

In contrast with the story of George Champlin Mason Jr.'s attachment to and promotion of colonial American architecture, in "Morning at The Breakers," Maria Mack D'Amario carefully analyzes a room at a Newport residence, designed and furnished in a decidedly European aesthetic. The Breakers, a splendid Italian villa, built in Newport in the 1890s by Cornelius Vanderbilt, was designed by an accomplished American architect, Richard Morris Hunt. Hunt, a graduate of the École des Beaux-Arts, was greatly influenced by his Parisian study. For the Morning Room at The Breakers, D'Amario shows us how Hunt brought together craftsmen and artists from France, who provided much of the furnishings and décor of this extraordinary space. Further, she meticulously demonstrates that the antecedents of the Morning Room's décor can be found by studying the decoration of the grand state buildings of mid-century Paris, especially the Palais Garnier (Opera House) and the work of one of its principal artists, Paul Baudry. Maria Mack D'Amario currently works at the Preservation Society of Newport County. She holds a post-graduate diploma in the History of Art from Oxford. She also has an M.A. in the Venetian Renaissance from the University of Warwick, Coventry, U.K. She has worked with the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and the Royal Collection Trust in London. She wishes to acknowledge the resources provided by the Preservation Society of Newport County in the preparation of her article.

Elizabeth C. Stevens

EDITOR