Editor's Note

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FROM THE EDITOR

"A forsaken, mildewed place," wrote Julia Ward Howe, remembering the Newport of her girlhood in the early 1830's, "A sort of intensified Salem, with houses of rich design, no longer richly inhabited."

More than a century later these miraculously surviving 18th century buildings were still slowly deteriorating and had been joined in their decline by the architectural treasures of Newport's 19th century and even the pleasure palaces of her Gilded Age. The arrest of this decline and the beginning of the restoration movement together constitute one of the most important moments in the recent history of the City.

The struggle to preserve the architectural heritage of Newport now has a history of its own. It has been an effort deeply shared by many members of the Newport Historical Society.

This issue of *Newport History* is devoted to examining a part of that history. E. F. Benson's article on Operation Clapboard and the Oldport Association records the history of the two pioneer organizations which established a momentum for restoration. Accompanying her article is a photographic essay created from Society archives. These photographs argue eloquently for the impact which these determined people have had on the saving of the past for the present City and its future citizens.

— E.H.W.