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Editor's Note

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Editor's Note:

Bradford A. Becken was born in Rhode Island and educated in its school system, and currently serves as President of the Newport Historical Society. He readily admits that in the past his knowledge of acts of rebellion predating the American Revolution was limited to the Boston Tea Party and the burning of the *Gaspee*. In 1967, he met his good friend, Ruth Kennedy Myers, founder of the widely recognized annual event, "Christmas in Newport." It was Mrs. Myers who corrected Becken's admitted educational shortcomings about the important role Newport played during Parliament's attempt to impose a Stamp Act on the colonies in 1765, and who discovered the mystery upon which their article, "Who was John Webber?" is based.

Also in this issue, in their article, "A Pre-Columbian Origin for the Newport Tower Can (Still) Almost Certainly be Excluded: A Reply to Professor Andre J. de Bethune," Jan Heinemeier and Högne Jungner respond to a critique of their dating of mortar samples from the Old Stone Mill. This critique appeared in "On the Carbon-14 Analyses of Mortar from the Newport Tower: Theoretical Considerations," *Newport History*, Vol. 69, Part 1, 1998, No. 238. Heinemeier and Jungner's original findings appeared in Johs. Hertz, "Round Church or Windmill? New Light on the Newport Tower," *Newport History*, Vol. 68, Part 2, 1997, No. 235.

Dr. Jan Heinemeier has a Ph.D. in atomic physics related to atomic accelerators. He is Director of the AMS ¹⁴C Dating Atomic Laboratory at the University of Aarhus, which was made a Danish national facility in 1992, based on the development work in the 1980s of Dr. Heinemeier and two of his colleagues. The AMS (Accelerator Mass Spectrometry) facility performs about 1,000 radiocarbon age determinations annually on samples of geological and archaeological origin, specializing in dating of medieval mortar samples. The mortar dating is performed in close collaboration with the inventor of the method, Dr. Högne Jungner, who is Director of the conventional radiocarbon dating laboratory in Helsinki, Finland. Dr. Jungner has worked with radiocarbon dating for more than thirty years. His experience with mortar dating goes vastly beyond the dating of the Newport Tower and covers more than ten years, as documented by numerous scientific papers published in international scientific journals.

Finally, I would like to announce the release of a new type of publication by the Newport Historical Society and its Publications Committee: the official Newport Historical Society Internet website. The site contains information about the Society's collections, properties, educational programs and activities, and includes a virtual tour of some of colonial Newport's most important sites. Readers of *Newport History* will be pleased to know that a complete index of past issues eventually will be included, and abstracts of current articles will be available online. The site can be found at www.newporthistorical.org.