

Lori Thursby
Editor

Alumni Newsletter

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SPECIAL EVENT: LECTURE BY RICHARD GUY WILSON, MAY 7, 2026

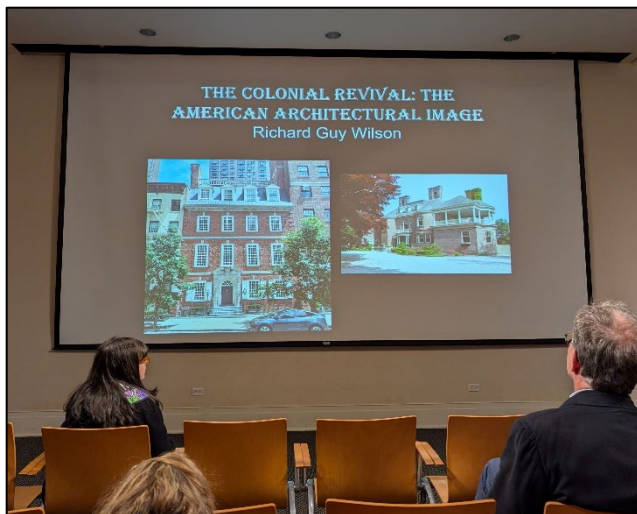
Scholarship Benefit Lecture and Reception

By Liz Leckie (Newport '96, London '08, and Chicago '23), Summer Schools Committee Co-Chair
Photos courtesy of James Russiello

On May 7, 2026, Professor **Richard Guy Wilson** (London '76) delivered the lecture "The Colonial Revival: The American Architectural Style" at the New York School of Interior Design in New York City. The net proceeds of the lecture and reception following were in support of the respective Summer Schools scholarship funds of the Victorian Society in America (VSA) and of the Alumni Association of the Victorian Society Summer Schools.

Virginia Commonwealth Professor Emeritus of Architectural History.

As Prof. Wilson explained, the Colonial Revival Movement emerged in the mid-19th century, and was spurred on by the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition, when the United States was eager to celebrate its first century of independence and looked to its past for roots of a national identity. Some 20 years before, in 1853, the Mount Vernon Ladies Association had been founded to rescue George Washington's house and plantation from dereliction. The enormous success of this national effort had already contributed to Washington's veneration as the Father of His Country and established Mount Vernon as an architectural icon.



Prof. Wilson is well known to us as the Founding Director of the VSA Summer Schools and Director Emeritus of the Newport Summer School, and University of



The lecture considered the wide range of responses to the search for a national style, with regional examples as diverse as the red-brick Georgian houses of Virginia planters to the shingle and clapboard houses of New England to the Mission Styles of California and the Southwest. Prof. Wilson presented images of surviving early houses that served as inspiration, including: Bacon's Castle, begun 1655, and Westover, ca. 1734, both in Virginia; the John Capen House, 1675, in Massachusetts; and the simple adobe Governor's Palace in Santa Fe, 1609–14.

Among the outstanding examples of Colonial Revival houses given was the Isaac Bell House in Newport, built in 1883 for a wealthy cotton broker and designed by McKim, Mead and White in a style popular in New England and known at the time as "Modernized Colonial." Vincent Scully later coined the term "Shingle Style." In Redlands, California, the mansion designed for William F. Holt by Louis Cooper in 1903 is described as Spanish Colonial Mission Style, in stucco with red-trimmed Baroque gables. Another grand example is Gracelands, in Memphis, Tennessee. Renowned as the home of Elvis Presley, this red brick mansion with a columned portico was designed by architects Furbringer and Ehrman in 1939 for Ruth and Thomas Moore, and purchased by Elvis for his parents in 1957.

By the 1890s when the World's Columbian Exposition was being planned in Chicago, the classical styles of the 18th century and early years of the Republic were still firmly fixed as appropriate expressions of national public architecture. Into the 20th century, Colonial Revival remained a popular choice for buildings of all types. Along with formal public edifices and high-style homes and furnishings for the wealthy, its influence could be seen virtually anywhere. As Prof. Wilson's images demonstrated, Mount

Vernon look-alikes were to be found in catalogues of Sears houses, as well as in modest commercial examples, such as a motor inn and a warehouse. Wallace Nutting's colorized photographs of domestic life in replicated colonial interiors played to the nation's nostalgic romance with its past. The restoration of Colonial Williamsburg, begun in 1929, must have refreshed the public's enthusiasm for this distinctly American taste. Prof. Wilson's lecture was an illuminating, witty, and sympathetic survey of the origins, development, and enduring influence of America's Architectural Style.

At the reception following, Alumni Association President **David Lamdin** (Newport '15, London '17, and Chicago '18) thanked Prof. Wilson and presented him with a gift from **Sibyl Groff** (London '82, Newport '05), who was unable to attend, in honor of his great contributions to the Summer Schools over many years.



*Richard Guy Wilson
and Alumni Association President David Lamdin*

Several Newport class "reunions" occurred at the reception. They included:

- **Sandra D'Andrea** and **Jay Shockley**, from the classes of 1993 and 2005;

- **Jennifer Carlquist** and **Gale Harris** from the class of 2008;
- **Noah Duell** and **Robert Ouimette** from the class of 2024; and
- **Lynne Funk, David Lewis, David Orcutt, Thomas Rice, and Molly Stockley** from the class of 2025.



Brent Dean, Sandra D'Andrea, and Jay Shockley



David Orcutt, Lynne Funk, Richard Guy Wilson, Tom Rice, David Lewis, and Peter Trippi, Newport Summer School Assistant Director

Also attending the reception were longtime Alumni Association members **Warren Ashworth** (Newport '09, and Chicago '15), **Alexis Barr** (Newport '14 and Chicago '17), **Justin Ferate** (London '82 and '09, Philadelphia '86, Newport '94), **Sara Hudson** and **Ronald Gold** (Newport '03), **David Lamdin** (Newport '15, London '17, and Chicago '18; Alumni Association President), **Elizabeth Leckie** (Newport '96, London '08, and Chicago '23), **John Martine** (London '79 and '13, Newport '07, Chicago '16 and '19), **Victoria Neel** (Newport '04 and '05), and **James Russiello** (Newport '12 and London '13), Alumni Association Treasurer.



Bob Ouimette, Richard Guy Wilson, and Noah Duell

A number of other members and friends of the Alumni Association bought tickets to the event, but were not able to attend in person. They included: Anne Margaret Baum, David Gallagher, **Sibyl Groff** (London '82, Newport '05), Kevin Grose, Jaclyn Houseknecht, Judith Hubbard, **Elizabeth Milnarik** (Newport '07), Barbara Robinson, Robert Rudesill, Elizabeth de Sola Mendes, Rebecca Stramiello, and **Stephen Wohleber** (Newport '07 and Chicago '16).

QUÉBEC CITY, CANADA: THE VICTORIAN SOCIETY IN AMERICA SPRING STUDYTOUR, MAY 20–23, 2026

Article and photos by Liz Melanson, VSA Director and VSA StudyTour Director

This May, the Victorian Society in America traveled to Québec City for its spring study tour. Over four days, our group of 20 enjoyed gorgeous weather, delicious food, and a packed itinerary in this truly special city.

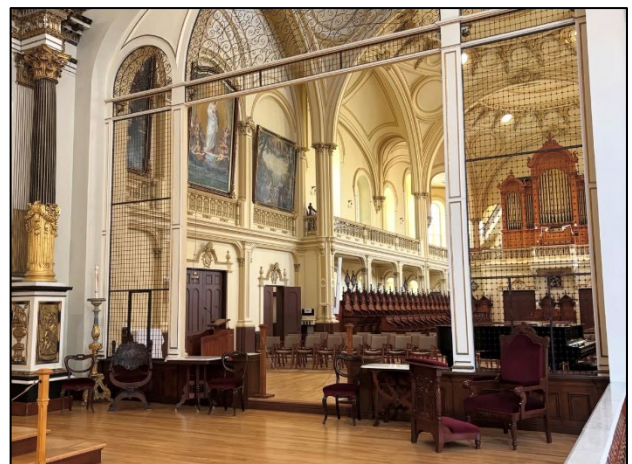
On our first evening in town, we took a short stroll from our hotel in Old Québec to the 150-year-old Garrison Club to meet renowned historian David Mendel. After cocktails and dinner, David treated us to a lecture covering more than 500 years of Québec's dramatic past. Named Tourism Personality of the Year and awarded the Medal of the Québec Historical Society in 2015, David was our trusted guide throughout the tour, which began the next morning in the Upper Town.

Our first stop was the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, where we learned about the city's 190-year-old change-ringing tradition. Change-ringing, a mathematical form of bell music in which ringers follow constantly shifting sequences rather than conventional melodies, has been practiced in Québec since the bells were installed in the Cathedral in 1830. As luck would have it, we were in town for the city's annual Ringing Weekend, which welcomes ringers from around the world and provided a wonderful soundtrack for our visit.

Stops at the Ursuline Monastery, Seminary Courtyard, Notre-Dame-des-Victoires, and the magnificent Notre-Dame de Québec Cathedral-Basilica rounded out our introduction to the city's rich religious architectural history. I especially enjoyed the Ursuline Chapel with its collection of Baroque paintings and exquisite 18th-century gilded woodwork. Our secular stops included the Plains of Abraham, where the British defeated the French for control of the city in 1759, and the Dufferin Terrace, a vast boardwalk overlooking the St. Lawrence River that first opened in 1838.



Dinner at the Garrison Club



The Ursuline Chapel



Notre-Dame de Québec Cathedral-Basilica

A highlight of the tour was our morning in the breathtaking Victorian library of the Morrin Centre listening to David speak about the mix of British and French influences in the city. The Morrin began its life more than 200 years ago as a prison, and we were able to visit its cells before heading to the National Assembly of Québec, built in 1886.

No trip to Québec would be complete without a visit to the famous Château Frontenac, which was opened in 1896 by the Canadian Pacific Railway to attract luxury travelers. After a short lecture on its terrace, we had lunch with a spectacular view of the St. Lawrence River at the hotel's Bistro Le Sam. Other culinary treats this week included a classic French dinner at Le Continental and crêpes at the Cochon Dingue. In our free time, many of us continued to explore the city's dining scene. I was particularly grateful for a dinner invitation to the iconic Le Saint-Amour, where each course was more surprising and delicious than the last.

We ended our tour in the historic Lower Town, the birthplace of the city, with its cobblestone streets and 17th-century buildings. There aren't many nicer places to spend a sunny May morning than the Place Royale, known as the "cradle of French North America," with its bustling shops and cafés. From there, we ascended back to the Upper Town and our hotel via the Old Québec Funicular or the aptly named "Breakneck Stairs."

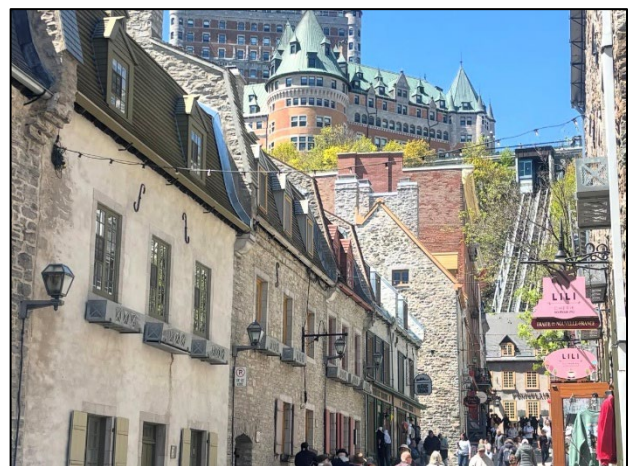
It was a great tour. With its old-world atmosphere and rich architectural history, Québec offered the perfect setting to dust off our high-school French, brave some steep hills, and immerse ourselves in the heart of French-Canadian culture.



David Mendel at the Morrin Centre's Victorian Library



National Assembly of Québec



View from the Lower Town of Château Frontenac and the Old Québec Funicular

ACHP VOTES TO WEAKEN PROTECTIONS FOR HISTORIC PROPERTIES

By Lori Thursby (Newport '98 and London '23), Alumni Association Corresponding Secretary and Newsletter Editor

On July 24, 2026, the [Advisory Council on Historic Preservation](#) (ACHP) voted to advance changes that would substantially weaken federal regulations that guide the review process for federal actions that may affect historic and cultural sites. The ACHP created these regulations, titled Protection of Historic Properties and codified in 36 CFR [Code of Federal Regulations] Part 800, in 1979 to implement [Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act \(NHPA\)](#). The NHPA was signed into law in 1966, following public outrage from the destruction of entire neighborhoods and prominent buildings like New York's Penn Station in the preceding years by urban renewal and federal highway construction projects.

Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to consider the effects of projects on historic properties; however, it does not mandate preservation of historic properties. Nonetheless, the Section 106 review process "does ensure that preservation values are factored into federal agency planning and decisions" (ACHP 2021). A project that is federally funded or requires a federal license or permit is subject to review under Section 106. The federal agency is required to consider whether the project would cause "adverse effects" (which are defined in the ACHP regulations) to a historic property and, if so, explore ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate the adverse effects. Historic properties are defined in the Section 106 regulations as any building, structure, object, site, or district that is listed on or eligible for listing on the [National Register of Historic Places](#). There are currently more than 100,000 properties comprising 1.8 million individual

resources listed on the National Register (Treisman 2026).

The Section 106 review process includes consultation with interested parties. Specifically, the federal agency overseeing a project must invite interested parties (e.g., the State Historic Preservation Officer, local and tribal governments, preservation groups, and applicants for federal assistance) and the public to weigh in on the results and determinations made during the Section 106 review process. As stated in the current Section 106 implementing regulations: "The views of the public are essential to informed Federal decision-making in the section 106 process" [36 CFR § 800.2(d)(1)].

The ACHP's proposed revisions would create the most significant rewrite of the Section 106 implementing regulations in more than a quarter century. Some of the proposed changes to the Section 106 review process by the ACHP reportedly include the following:

- reducing the types of federal actions that are mandated for review under Section 106 (e.g., federal programs carried out by state or local agencies would no longer be subject to Section 106 review);
- limiting what kinds of resources can be considered historic (e.g., excluding significant landscape features);
- narrowing what is considered an "adverse effect" to only what is directly and foreseeably connected to the project (as opposed to indirect or cumulative effects); and
- providing a comment period to interested properties on an agency's

findings at the end of the planning process, instead of collaborative consultation throughout

- removing the requirement for public comment on new projects, making it optional instead

The ACHP's proposed changes must now go through an interagency review process. After voting to proceed with the proposed amendments to the Section 106 implementing regulations (36 CFR Part 800), the ACHP submitted its proposal to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA). After the OIRA completes its review, the ACHP publishes a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the *Federal Register*. A formal public comment period, typically 30 days, begins with the publishment of the notice; all comments received during this period become part of the official record. After the public participation period ends, the ACHP will review the comments, revise the proposal as appropriate, and prepare a final regulation. The ACHP, assuming it approves its final regulation, submits it to OIRA for review. The final regulation may be published in the *Federal Register*, typically becoming effective 30 days later. The ACHP will provide

updates on its website:

<https://www.achp.gov/news>. For more detailed information on the proposed changes, refer to the sources NCHPO 2026a and Treisman 2026, listed below.

Sources:

ACHP. 2021. *Protecting Historic Properties: A Citizen's Guide to Section 106 Review*. January 13. Digital copy available at <https://www.achp.gov/protecting-historic-properties>.

ACHP. 2026. "ACHP Votes to Move Forward with Notice of Proposed Rulemaking." July 24. <https://www.achp.gov/news/achp-votes-move-forward-notice-proposed-rulemaking>. Accessed July 29, 2026.

The National Conference of Historic Preservation Officers (NCSHPO). 2026a. "The End of Section 106 as We Know It?" July 20. <https://ncshpo.org/2026/07/20/the-end-of-section-106-as-we-know-it/>. Accessed July 31, 2026.

NCSHPO. 2026b. "Section 106 Rulemaking: What's Next?" July 24. <https://ncshpo.org/2026/07/24/section-106-rulemaking-whats-next/>. Accessed July 29, 2026.

Treisman, Rachel. 2026. "Trump allies vote to weaken protections for historic sites — not just in D.C." July 23. <https://www.npr.org/2026/07/23/nx-s1-5904435/section-106-review-trump-historic-preservation-council>. Accessed July 25, 2026.

THE ALUMNI-SPONSORED RECEPTION FOR THE NEWPORT SUMMER SCHOOL CLASS OF 2026

By David Lamdin (Newport '15, London '17, Chicago '18), Alumni Association President

On behalf of the Alumni Association, **Pauline Metcalf** (London '80 and Newport '05) hosted the annual reception for the Newport Summer School class at her Philmoney estate in Exeter, Rhode Island. The reception was held on Wednesday, June 3, 2026.



Phimoney main house (above) and formal garden (below). Photos by David Lamdin



After a day of touring, the Class of 2026 arrived at Philmoney shortly before 6:00 pm and were invited to the patio for refreshments, including soft drinks, a selection of wines, various cheeses and crackers, and assorted snacks. Attendees enjoyed the beautiful, sunny day in Rhode Island, as the sun shined brightly on the patio

and illuminated the adjacent formal garden. Old acquaintances were renewed as new friendships were established.



Photo by David Lamdin



From left to right: Richard Guy Wilson; Dr. Willie Granston, Newport Summer School Director; Peter Trippi, Newport Summer School Assistant Director; and David Lamdin, Alumni Association President.

Photo by Liz Leckie



***Richard Guy Wilson, Pauline Metcalf, and J.P. Couture.
Photo by David Lamdin***

Guests were then invited into the great room of main house where Pauline spoke about the home. Architect George Locke Howe designed the main house, which was built in 1931. Following Pauline's presentation, I gave a brief introduction about the Alumni Association to the students, highlighting the costs and benefits for continuing a relationship with classmates and the Victorian Society Summer Schools. After these brief remarks, Pauline invited all for a guided tour around the main house. Guests were invited to explore the property some more, including her residence in the converted barn, the pool, and the tennis courts.



Pauline Metcalf (far left), speaking to (from left to right): Hannah Peck, Phoebe Salomon, Haley Barber, Hailey Robbins, Charlotte Whiting, Lara Damabi, and Taylor Russell. Photo by Liz Leckie

After about an hour and a half, it was time to board the bus for the brief trip back to Newport. Members of the class expressed their appreciation for Pauline's gracious hospitality, as does the Alumni Association for her steadfast support.



From left to right: Hailey Robbins, Lara Damabi, Phoebe Salomon, Erin Dowding, Charlotte Whiting, and Haley Barber. Photo by Liz Leckie

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ❖ Regrettably, the **Alumni Association StudyTour** that was planned to take place this October in Toronto, Canada has been postponed until 2027. Information about the Toronto StudyTour will be announced after new trip dates have been determined.
- ❖ **James Russiello** (Newport '12 and London '13), Alumni Association Treasurer, is researching the history of the Victorian Society in America and its associated summer schools. He would appreciate hearing from any early members, especially if they have photos or ephemera to share. He wrote a short article published in the Victorian Society New York's [Spring 2026 issue of Panorama](#) on page 16, and was looking to interview others and gather more information about the Society in the 1960s through early 1980s. If you have any information you would like to share with James, please contact him at membership@vsaalumni.org.

ALUMNI NEWS



Debra Mancoff's (Newport '15) new book [Great Artists Steal: How Artists Really Get Their Ideas](#) will be published in late August 2026. Publisher Frances Lincoln describes the book as follows: "...takes over 30 groundbreaking artworks throughout history and shows how in truth they have their roots firmly in the past or in other works.... Richly illustrated and global in scope, *Great*

Artists Steal reveals the hidden networks of influence that bind together centuries of artistic innovation. Accessible yet deeply researched, it reframes art history as a story not of solitary geniuses but of creative exchange."

Interior Designer **Thomas Jayne** (London '84) of Jayne Design Studio is one of the featured speakers at [The Preservation Society of Newport County's](#) annual Newport Symposium, which will take place on November 5 and 6, 2026, at Rosecliff and Marble House. The celebration of America's 250th anniversary inspired the theme of this year's Newport Symposium: "What Makes It American." Through a series of

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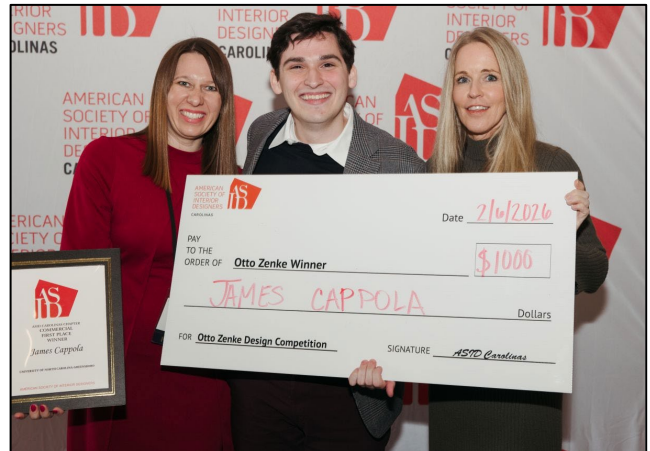
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lectures and tours, the symposium will examine the origin and legacy of the nation's art, architecture, landscape, and design, and include discussions of our national, as well as Newport's identity through visual culture. Registration for the [Newport Symposium: "What Makes It American"](#) opened on August 1st.

James Cappola IV (Newport '25) earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Interior Architecture with a minor in Historic Preservation from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro this spring. This past February, he won the 2026 First Place Commercial Winner for the Carolinas in the Otto Zenke Student Design Competition for excerpts of his proposed redesign of the Historic Orange Hotel in Wilson, NC. James writes that "this project was deeply personal. Looking back at where I started in my first year of interior design school at WakeTech coming out of a global pandemic to now preparing to graduate from UNC Greensboro. This moment feels full circle. Growth, late nights, revisions, doubt, breakthroughs all of it led here. The Orange Hotel represents more than adaptive reuse. It represents preservation, storytelling, and honoring cultural legacy through design. To have that work recognized across the Carolinas means everything." Among the many he thanked for help with this project was the entire Interior Architecture Department at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, especially his professor and the Historic Preservation Coordinator "...**Kista Mansell**, who expanded my lens into Historic Preservation and has been an incredible mentor. Thank you for pushing me to think deeper." **Kista Mansell**, who is a Newport 2025 alum too, is also UNCG's Main Street Fellows Director.



Jay Shockley (Newport '93 and '05) and **Amanda Davis** (Newport '15) are half of the team that was recognized for a Pillar of New York Award by the Preservation League of New York on May 19, 2026. The leadership team of the [NYC LGBTQ Historic Sites Project](#), which also includes Ken Lustbader, and longtime Victorian Society member Andrew S. Dolkart, were honored during the 2026 Pillar Awards Gala at The Rainbow Room in New York City. "This remarkable team has transformed how New Yorkers and the world understand LGBTQ history through documentation, advocacy, and public engagement. Their combined expertise in architecture, preservation, design, and community activism ensures that these historic sites are recognized, preserved, and celebrated. Their groundbreaking work documents historic places connected to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in New York City, from the 17th century to the year 2000, and tells the often-untold story of their influence on American history



The NYC LGBTQ Historic Sites Project leadership team (from left to right): Andrew Dolkart, Amanda Davis, Jay Shockley, and Ken Lustbader, at the Church of the Holy Trinity, NYC, after presenting to the Victorian Society New York on March 8, 2018.

Photo by James Russiello, Victorian Society New York

and culture" (Preservation League of NYS 2026). Additionally in March, **Amanda Davis** joined the board of the Latinos in Heritage Conservation, a national nonprofit advocating historic preservation of Latinx heritage in the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

Source: Preservation League of New York State [NYS] 2026. "Pillar of New York Awards."
<https://www.preservenys.org/pillar-awards>. Accessed May 11, 2026.

IN MEMORIAM



Photo by Sara Durkacs,
VSNY, 2017

Mary M. Cope (October 11, 1928–May 5, 2026), a long-time Victorian Society member and supporter and alumna of the London Summer School ('83), died in her sleep at age 97 at her assisted living residence in New York, where she had lived since 2024. Born in

Washington, DC, and raised in Illinois, Indiana, and other states, Mary received her bachelor's degree in art history from The City College of New York. She held a master's degree from Columbia University's School of Library Service and studied independently at the Art Students League, all in Manhattan. Mary served for many years as Art Librarian at The City College of New York Library. She was a world traveler, having visited sites as varied as Iran, Egypt, and virtually all of the countries within the EU.

An early member of the Victorian Society in America through her Columbia University and many librarian connections, Mary wrote in the NY chapter's newsletter about the transfer of the Society's membership records—which were on index cards in shoeboxes—to Philadelphia's Athenaeum prior to the official creation of the NY chapter. She served several continuous board terms for the NY chapter, often stepping down after the 10-year limit, and lastly served as the

recording secretary. She attended nearly every NY chapter bus tour and function, and provided space to house the VSNY archives at her Riverside Drive residence until they were donated in 2019 to The New York Historical [Museum]. Mary attended 16 of the Victorian Society in America's annual meetings between 1980 and 2016, and the VSA symposia in Washington, DC in 1995 and 1999. She took numerous Victorian Society trips, including the VSA study tours in Manhattan (2018), Columbus, OH (2013), Lynchburg and Bedford, VA (2012), Springfield, OH (2011), Cincinnati (2009), Mobile, AL (2007), Buffalo (2003), Louisville (2002), Victoria, BC (2001), and St. Paul (1999); and the Alumni Association study trips to Rome/Como/Milan, Italy (2011), Buenos Aires, Argentina (2009), and Barcelona, Spain (2007).



Mary Cope in front of the Codman House in Lincoln, MA, during the 2014 VSA Annual Meeting.
Photo by James Russiello, VSA

Mary was a lifetime member of the Association for Gravestone Studies (AGS) and attended all of their meetings and study tours. Her related collection of notes, programs, books, and some index cards was preserved. In her last years, she often went by the name Polly.

RHODE ISLAND PBS SHOW FEATURES NEWPORT MANSIONS

The Rhode Island PBS series *Treasures Inside the Museum* highlights selected pieces from the collections of more than a dozen museums throughout Southern New England. Episode 4 of the current season (Season 7) of the series, "Newport Mansions/Warwick Historical Society," tells fascinating stories about treasured items from as well as several of the Newport Mansions that are part of the VSA Newport Summer School program, as well as a few pieces from the Warwick [Rhode Island] Historical Society. Three Preservation Society curators guide the viewer through 27-minute segment. Highlights from the Newport Mansions include the following: original furniture from Edward Berwind's bedroom at The Elms, the Rigaud portraits of the Duchess and Duke of Mantua in the Marble House Dining Room, a rare album of photographs of mid-19th century Japan collected by David King, Jr. of Kingscote, John Singer Sargent's portrait of Cornelius Vanderbilt II at The Breakers, and the 1974 earthwork "Sod Maze" created by artist Richard Fleischner on the grounds of Chateau-sur-Mer.

Episode 4 of Season 7, which aired on April 5, 2026, is available to view online at the Ocean State Media PBS website: <https://watch.ripbs.org/video/newport-mansionswarwick-historical-1cxcn1/>.

The **Alumni Association of the Victorian Society Summer Schools** is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit chapter of the Victorian Society in America, dedicated to supporting the summer schools through scholarships, fundraising, and engagement with alumni. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law.

DONORS OF THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The Officers and members of the Alumni Association Board are very appreciative of all alumni who help support our mission. We are pleased to acknowledge the following members whose contributions over and above the basic membership amount enable us to continue to provide significant financial assistance for scholarships to deserving students of the Victorian Society Summer Schools. This list donor contributions since October 1, 2025. If you see any errors in the current donor list, please email Alumni Association President **David Lamdin** at president@VSAalumni.com.

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