

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 71.11.44.0027	DATE 11/5/71

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<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
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <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) <u>Art studios</u>
			<input type="checkbox"/> Comments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

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:

71.11.44.0027	11/5/71
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
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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
	(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

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Rhode Island	
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(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.



3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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"/> Science | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

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).

02701467
 12-10-75
 19/307250/4695000

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE			LATITUDE		LONGITUDE
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	71°	18'	31" W
NE	°	'	"			
SE	°	'	"			
SW	°	'	"			

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**

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:

National State Local

Name: Frederick C. Williams

Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: June 8, 1971

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ernest A. Connally
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

NOV 5 1971

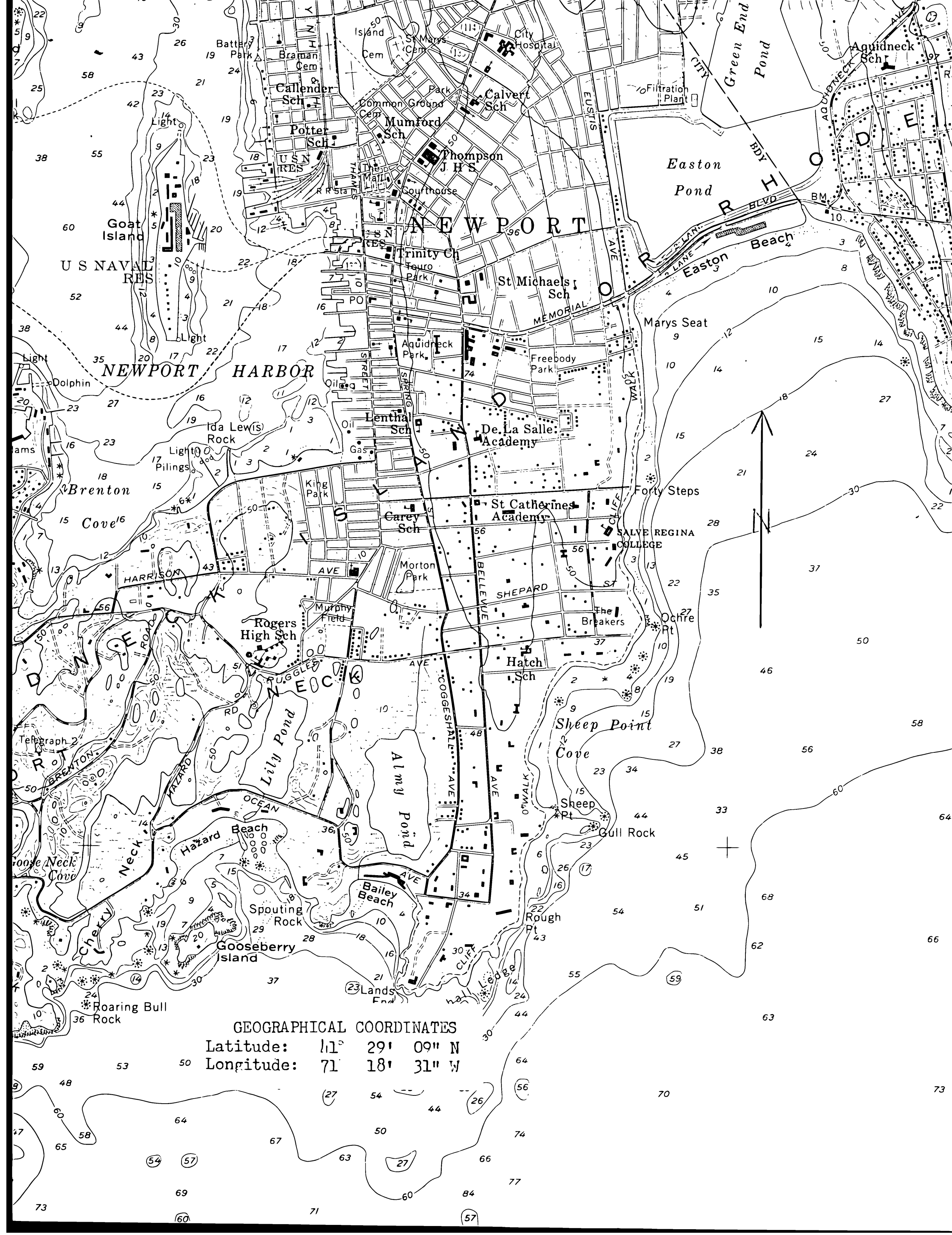
Date: _____

ATTEST:

W. Bradford
 Acting Keeper of The National Register

Date: Oct. 26, 1971

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES

Latitude: 41° 29' 09" N
Longitude: 71° 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	111144-00-27
DATE	11/15/71

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, 02810

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.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS