

NEWBURYPORT PRESERVATION TRUST

P. O. Box 184, Newburyport, MA 01950
www.nbptpreservationtrust.org

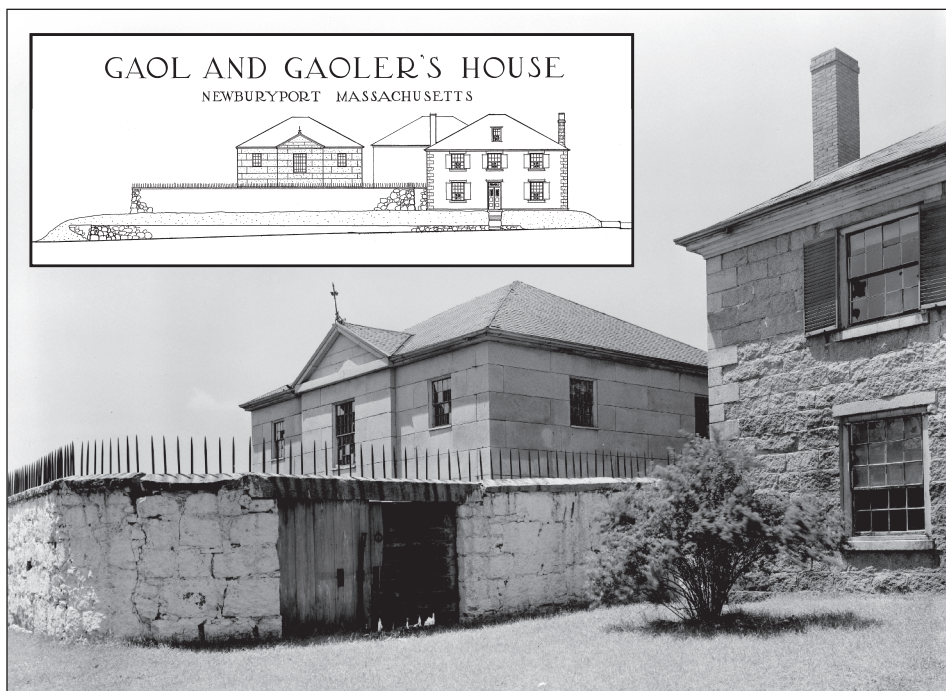
Linking the past with the present and future



Quarterly Newsletter of the Newburyport Preservation Trust

Spring 2017

Preservation Week is a time to celebrate past advances . . . and contemplate the future of preservation in Newburyport



The photo above of the "Gaol and Gaoler's House & Barn, Auburn & Vernon Sts." was taken for the Historic American Buildings Survey in June 1934 by Arthur C. Haskell (1890-1968). Inset is the elevation looking west, one of four elevations and 12 measured drawings by HABS team delineator Bernard Boisclair (1903-1949).

Don't miss this one!: 'An Evening in Gaol,' NPT's Preservation Week fund-raising event

Don't miss this rare opportunity to visit Newburyport's landmark old granite jail on Friday, May 19, 2017, 6-8 p.m.

You'll enter through the Jail Keeper's House, tour the jail with expert guides, and enjoy refreshments in the Carriage House and courtyard, serenaded by the music of guitarist Mark Young.

The "Old Gaol" was Newburyport's jail from 1825 to 1912. Privately owned since 1923, it is rarely open to visitors. Architect Charles Griffin and his wife Gillian have owned and restored the property since 1987, and both will be on hand to talk to

guests about its history. Drawings from the jail's 1934 Historic American Buildings Survey will be on display along with other history information. Complimentary food, wine, beer, and water will be served.

Pre-registration and ticket purchase are required. Register on the "Events" page of www.NbptPreservationTrust.org, the NPT website. Tickets are \$50 per person for Newburyport Preservation Trust members, and \$60 per person for non-members. All proceeds benefit the all-volunteer non-profit Newburyport Preservation Trust. Register now, and we'll see you in gaol. ■

"Newburyport in the Historic American Buildings Survey" showcases photos and measured drawings from 1930s documentation

Preservation Week, the annual spring celebration of the city's historical and architectural preservation, is Tuesday through Sunday, May 16-21, 2017, with a lineup of tours, presentations, exhibitions, awards, and social events.

Since 2007 the preservation-themed festivities – with most events through the years presented free to the public – have been organized by the all-volunteer non-profit Newburyport Preservation Trust.

This year's theme, "Newburyport in the Historic American Buildings Survey," takes a look back at the federal HABS program that advanced historic preservation throughout the U.S. in the 1930s, and at the surveys conducted in Newburyport.

Highlights of the week include the debut of a new book, *The HABS and the HABS Notes*, on the documentation of Newburyport architecture; two exhibitions related to the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) at the Custom House Maritime Museum and the Museum of Old Newbury; Sash Revival Day with Window Woman of New England; an evening fund-raising event and tour at Newburyport's 1825 "Old Gaol"; and the presentation of the Newburyport Preservation Trust's annual Preservation Awards.

The complete schedule of events is listed on the dedicated Preservation Week page, and in the Preservation Week 2017 flyer. Both can be found at the NPT website at www.NbptPreservationTrust.org. ■

New book debuts at Preservation Week 2017

The HABS and The HABS NOTS:**Documenting the Architecture of Newburyport
in the Historic American Buildings Survey**

The newest "must-have" book on Newburyport architecture, published in conjunction with the Newburyport Preservation Trust, will be available for purchase throughout Preservation Week 2017.

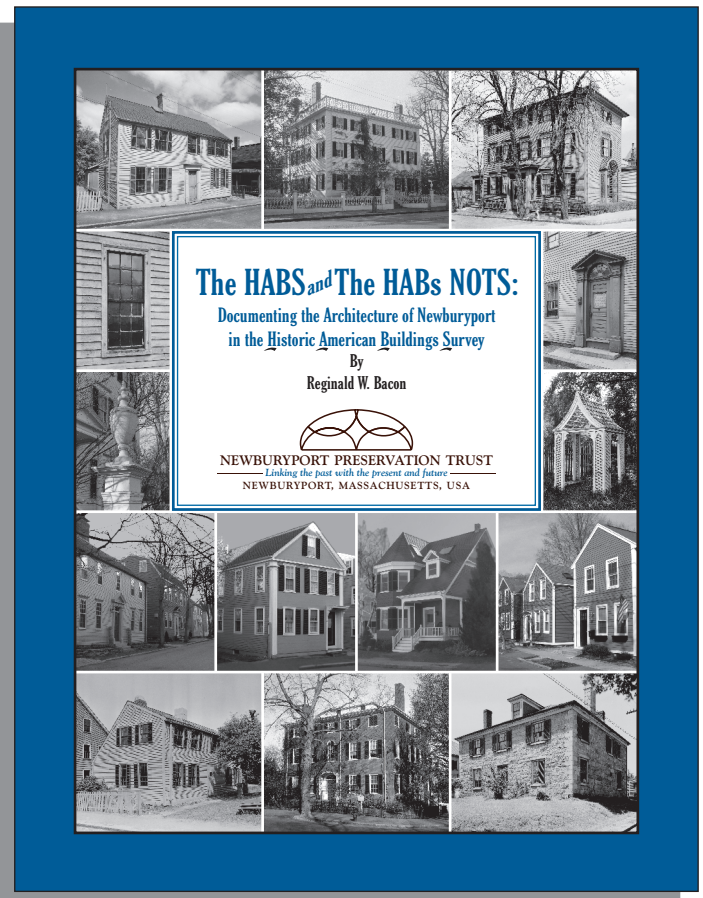
The HABS and the HABS NOTS: Documenting the Architecture of Newburyport in the Historic American Buildings Survey takes a look back at the wide-ranging federal program that advanced historic preservation throughout the U.S. in the 1930s. The large-format case-bound volume presents the crisp analog photos and elegant measured drawings for the many HABS surveys in Newburyport, our small city especially known for the riches of its authentic 18th- and 19th-century domestic architecture.

The "HABS NOTS" Gallery then looks at the *future* of preservation in the once down-and-out but rejuvenated city. Newburyport's smaller-footprint historic homes, never the subject of the HABS-like attention lavished upon its Georgian and Federal-style showplaces, fill the city's 750-acre National Register Historic District and contribute to its ambiance. Yet their authenticity is at the greatest risk of being lost to the "march of progress."

For additional context, the book includes chapters on the economic history of Newburyport; the origin of the HABS program; and earlier efforts at documentation. Also included is a guide to 300 years of house styles in Newburyport, plus a bibliography-by-topic for history enthusiasts and preservation advocates. ■

The author, R. W. Bacon, is a museum and history professional with specialties in 17th- and 18th-century New England architecture and domestic life. In addition to his work in the museum field, he serves on the board of the Newburyport Preservation Trust. He is the author of ten books on varied history topics.

Order from NPT at: www.NbptPreservationTrust.org . . . P. O. Box 184, Newburyport, MA 01950
or from the publisher at: www.VarietyArtsPress.com . . . P. O. Box 489, Newburyport, MA 01950



8.5"x11.0" Hardcover; 160 pages; ISBN: 9780997752816; LOC: 2016920943

On-site purchase at Preservation Week events: \$30.00

Online or mail-order purchase: \$35.00 includes shipping

Will the 1690 House fiasco be 'Deja vu all over again': (1) developer ignores requirements, (2) developer offers crumbs, (3) lawyer fogs facts, and (4) our history is lost in a Dumpster?

A developer's disregard of requirements, the city's slack enforcement, and a lawyer's fogging of facts may once again combine to allow the tossing of more chunks of Newburyport's historic authenticity into a



Dumpster. This time the victim is the c. 1730s "1690 House" at 262-264 Merrimac Street, part of the residential development of the former Towle Manufacturing Co. site by Berkeley Investments.

To summarize, the city issued a Special Permit for the rehabilitation of the "1690 House" in 2007, in which the developer was required to submit a preservation restriction for work performed according to the U.S. Dept. of the Interior *Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings*. These requirements were ignored. Original architectural features were removed. Now the developer seeks an occupancy permit from the city, and in addition to offering

profuse apologies, wants to pay the city "recompense" for its transgressions.

Newburyport Preservation Trust all-volunteer advocates have argued that the building's original features should be restored. On April 12, the Newburyport Historical Commission (NHC) voted for a "settlement framework" excluding that possibility in favor of money and signage. Following NPT questions at the April 26 NHC meeting, the city's Planning Office said the City Solicitor will get involved.

"Deja vu all over again," descriptive of this fiasco, is a quip credited to baseball great Yogi Berra (1925-2015). He is also credited with another relevant profundity: "You can observe a lot by just watching." ■