

FALL 2026

Reassessing The Hollis Street Church

Charles Bulfinch and the Palladian Tradition in New England

DARRYL T. SAUNDERS

New England, a region whose post-Revolutionary architecture is not generally associated with Palladianism, sustained a far stronger connection with the tradition among its architects and housewrights than has previously been recognized.¹

Charles Bulfinch's Hollis Street Church, Boston, 1787–88 reinterpreted Palladian precedents for a Congregational religious society while establishing a model that architects and builders throughout New England and beyond quickly emulated.² The church's relatively brief existence has obscured its historical significance, but in its day, it was one of the most influential models for church architecture in post-Revolutionary America.

The Hollis Street Church was also unique in that it existed in not one but two Neo-Palladian iterations. After serving its original Boston congregation, the church was dismantled and reconstructed in East Braintree-Weymouth, MA, where builders reworked its original elements into a new composition between 1810 and 1811.³

Charles Bulfinch, like Thomas Jefferson, possessed a significant architectural library. Although the complete

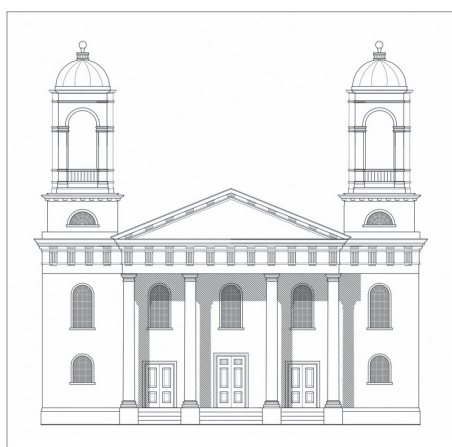
inventory of Bulfinch's collection has not survived, the known volumes demonstrate his admiration for Palladianism. Among the books that belonged to him were Sébastien Le Clerc's *Traité d'Architecture*, Jacques-Raymond Lucotte's *La Vignole Moderne*, and John Miller's *Andrea Palladio's Elements*

of Architecture. These works however represent only a portion of a much larger architectural library.⁴

Bulfinch was not alone. Thomas Dawes, one of Boston's leading pre-Revolutionary builder-architects, owned a translation of Palladio's *First Book of Architecture*, William Salmon's *Palladio Londoniensis* (1748), Colen Campbell's *Vitruvius Britannicus*, and James Gibbs' *Rules for Drawing*.⁵ Gilbert Stuart portrayed Dawes around 1806 holding a volume of Palladio's *I Quattro Libri*. Likewise, the Architectural Library of Boston, founded in 1809 by Ithiel Town, Solomon Willard, and others, with Alexander Parris' involvement, contained Palladio's *I Quattro*

Libri, William Kent's *Designs of Inigo Jones*, Giacomo Leoni's *The Architecture of Leon Batista Alberti in Ten Books*, and numerous British pattern books, disseminating Palladian principles.⁶

Continued on page 6



Conjectural drawing
Elevation of the Hollis Street Church
Image by author

INSIDE

- 2 Presidents' Letter
- 3 Annual Meeting
- 4 CSPA Visits Edenton, NC

- 6 Reassessing the Hollis Street Church
continued
- 12 New Board Members

- 13 Continuing Education, Valmarana Center
- 14 Book Review
- 15 Membership

New Board Members *Advisory Committee Expands*

BRYAN CLARK GREEN AND DALE HILTON, CO-PRESIDENTS

The Center for Palladian Studies in America (CPSA) is delighted to announce the election of five new board members who bring considerable experience and professional depth to our organization. We enthusiastically welcome Richard Chenoweth, Randolph Hooks, Brien Poffenberger, and Will Rieley. You may read their biographies on page 12.

Several notable individuals have also graciously agreed to serve on the CPSA Advisory Committee: K. Edward Lay, Bruce Boucher, Susan Stein, Richard Guy Wilson, and Betty di Valmarana. All these individuals should be familiar to CPSA members for their contributions to the field and to CPSA.

K. Edward Lay is the Cary D. Langhorne Professor Emeritus of Architecture at the University of Virginia (UVA), a historic preservation consultant, and author of *The Architecture of Jefferson Country: Charlottesville and Albemarle County, Virginia*. Ed also previously served on the CPSA Board.

Bruce Boucher is an expert on Palladio and Italian Renaissance sculpture. He has held curatorial positions and directorships at the Art Institute of Chicago, The Fralin Museum of Art at UVA, and, most recently, London's Sir John Soane's Museum from which he retired in 2023. Bruce also previously served on the CPSA Board, including as president.

Susan Stein is the Richard Gilder Senior Curator, Special Projects, at the Thomas Jefferson Foundation. Susan has



See page 12



See page 13

overseen the Curatorial and Restoration departments at Monticello and has been involved in the presentation and interpretation of the site since 1986. She was project director of the interpretive elements at the Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center at Monticello, which include four exhibitions and the film *Thomas Jefferson's World*.

Richard Guy Wilson's broad scholarship spans the architecture, design, and art of the 18th through 21st centuries in America and beyond. His research, publications, and exhibitions have ranged from Jeffersonian architecture to the Arts and Crafts and related movements such as Art Nouveau in the United States and Europe, as well as the history of cities and the American suburb. He also studies the foundations of Modernism, the revival of classicism in the late-19th century, and mid-20th-century modern houses and furniture design. Wilson is known for integrating literature and the visual arts into his architectural history lectures. He has written numerous books on subjects ranging from the Prairie School to McKim, Mead and White to Colonial Revival architecture. For more than 40 years, he has directed the Victorian Society in America's Summer School, held in Newport, RI, London, and Chicago. Richard also served on the CPSA board.

Betty di Valmarana is a beloved, long-serving supporter of and friend to CPSA, serving for many years on the CPSA board.

Palladiana

JOURNAL OF CENTER FOR PALLADIAN STUDIES IN AMERICA | FALL 2026

NEWSLETTER CREDITS

EDITOR
Calder Loth
COPY EDITOR
Kay Slaughter
DESIGN
Anne Chesnut
PRINTER
Mid Valley Press

CONTACT

MAILING ADDRESS
Center for Palladian Studies in America
PO Box 4754
Charlottesville VA 22905

VISIT

Facebook | @PalladianStudies
Instagram | @palladianstudiesusa
palladiancenter.org

Palladiana



Edgewater, West Facade, Barrytown, NY

Our last letter noted that CPSA provided travel funds for then fifth-year architectural history student Victoria Bittrick to conduct research in the Veneto. Her penetrating (literally!) findings are summarized in the Spring 2026 issue of *Palladiana*. If you haven't read it yet, download "Design Under Constraint: Palladio's Design Negotiations at Villa Gazzotti" on the CPSA website, under Publications, *Palladiana* Spring 2026. It is a pleasure to know that we are playing a role in emerging scholarship on Palladio.

This past spring, CPSA also underwrote part of the multifaceted Veneto 50 initiative, which celebrates 50 years of the Vicenza and Venice Programs at the UVA School of Architecture. Guests enjoyed lectures, reminiscences of program participants, and information on the newly opened Mario di Valmarana Center for Studies in Venice and Vicenza. See the update on page 13.

Finally, looking ahead, we are planning a trip to the Hudson River Valley during the first half of 2027. This eclectic tour includes early- to mid-19th-century sites such as Edgewater—the Richard Hampton Jenrette Foundation's Barrytown, NY site with its celebrated collection of decorative arts. We also expect to visit a private home or two and to explore buildings, including Edgewater, renovated or designed by Alexander Jackson Davis. Watch for emails from CPSA after the first of the year with details of the trip. ■

CPSA Annual Meeting Held September 27

This issue of *Palladiana* will arrive after CPSA's annual meeting at Barboursville Vineyards September 27. The meeting included tours of several historic sites, including the Blacksmith Shop Project at James Madison's Montpelier and Bloomsbury, near Orange, VA.

The blacksmith archeological project, located near the iconic Temple and Ice House, is the site of a Revolutionary War-era smithy operated by enslaved blacksmiths. Moses, one of the few enslaved persons named in James Madison's 18th-century plantation records and letters, was entrusted with the smithy's accounts and projects for a shop that boasted several forges and blacksmiths. The smithy produced over 1500 items per year and boasted 200 customers. Archeological surveys have uncovered many artifacts.



Bloomsbury

Calder Loth/Va. Dept. of Historic Resources, 2007

Bloomsbury, the other site visited, was originally a Colonial-Georgian home consisting of a one-and-a-half story frame structure built over a full basement. Built in two phases, the first between 1729–1750s, it was completed with an addition

between 1797–1810. Generous use of wainscoting and decorative woodwork are among the architectural features making Bloomsbury an historic treasure. Visitors may contact the James Madison Museum of Orange for tours.



Submissions

Our deadline for the Spring 2027 issue is January 15 for images and February 1 for copy. We appreciate early submittal of potential articles of no more than 1000 words.

Images for digital printing must be jpegs at a minimum size of 350 dpi, 9-inch width. Check size by clicking on image, "tools," "adjust size," which will provide the dpi and width of your image.

If images are not 350 dpi/9"w, please consult with state libraries or departments of historic resources, Library of Congress, historical societies, or house museums to request high resolution images. While cell phones' cameras are used by many and may be acceptable for web or other formats, the results produce lower resolution than necessary for *Palladiana*.

If you have questions, prior to submission please email katherineslaughter61@gmail.com. Send images to her and essays to Editor Calder Loth, cloth@verizon.net.

CPSA visits Edenton, NC

CALDER LOTH

Last April, CPSA members and guests enjoyed an educational visit to Edenton, the idyllic county seat of Chowan County in eastern North Carolina. Picturesquely set overlooking Albemarle Sound, the compact community was established in 1712. It served as the first capital of the North Carolina colony from 1722 to 1743.

Our tour began with a visit to St. Paul's Episcopal Church whose construction started in 1736, but not completed until 1762. A distinguishing feature of the church is its semi-circular chancel protruding from the rear wall. Its bricks are laid in all-header bond. The church's interior preserves much of its colonial character, including its side galleries.

A highlight of the tour was an edifying visit to Edenton's unique Cupola House.

The 1758 dwelling takes its name from the conspicuous cupola crowning its roof. Another feature setting the house apart is its jetty or overhang. The jetty is the slight extension of the second story facade beyond that of the first story. This Tudor-period framing method is found on a number early colonial New England houses, but except for the Cupola House, it was not employed elsewhere in the South during the colonial period.

Owned and exhibited by the Cupola House Association, the house is currently undergoing an examination and restoration led by restoration specialist Andrew Owenby. The project involves installing the dwelling's original decorative woodwork that had been sold to the Brooklyn Museum in 1918. The Museum deaccessioned the woodwork in 2024, returning it to Edenton.

The Cupola House visit was followed by a tour of Edenton's 1767 Chowan County Courthouse. The building is located at the head of leafy green mall extending to the waterfront and lined with historic houses. The brick structure is one of the country's best examples of Georgian Colonial public architecture. The building preserves its original interiors including its historic courtroom. Following the courthouse



St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Edenton, NC

Completed 1762

Photograph by author

visit, the group was led on a walking tour of several antebellum houses having noteworthy interiors and gardens.

The group was treated to an evening reception at nearby Hayes Plantation, a property owned by the State of North Carolina and managed by a local foundation that makes the property accessible for tours and events. The mansion was designed by the English-born architect William Nichols, Sr. Completed in 1817, the structure exhibits an outstanding use of the Palladian villa five-part format. Its composition consists of a two-story porticoed center section linked to a pair of dependencies by colonnaded hyphens. The left hyphen contains a Gothic Revival library.

The following day, the CPSA group motored through the countryside to Hope Plantation, near Windsor. The 1803 mansion, fronted by a two-level portico, is built in the Palladian square-plan format. The portico and roof deck are highlighted with Chinese lattice railings. The little-altered interiors are furnished with many North Carolina antiques. ■

Calder Loth is *Palladiana's* editor, CPSA vice-president, and a frequent contributor to this and other publications on Palladian and historic American architecture.



Cupola House, Edenton, NC
1758

Photograph by author



Hayes Plantation, Edenton, NC
1817

Photograph by author



Chowan County Courthouse, Edenton, NC
1767

Photograph by author



Hope Plantation, near Windsor, NC,
1803

Photograph by author



Comparative analysis
 Peter Harrison's Redwood Library, Newport, RI, and Charles Bulfinch's Hollis Street Church, Boston
 Drawing by author based on original image, Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress

Continued from page 1.

Unlike most American-born architects or master builders of his generation, Bulfinch had seen European architecture firsthand during his Grand Tour of 1785–87. Upon returning to Boston shortly before receiving the Hollis Street commission, he recalled that the journey exposed him to “the wonders of architecture and the kindred arts of painting and sculpture.”⁷ His family connections likewise immersed him in Boston’s evolving religious landscape. The Bulfinch family maintained close associations with the religious societies at both Peter Harrison’s King’s Chapel (1749–54) and Thomas Dawes’ now-demolished Brattle Square Church (1772–73), exposing the architect to Anglican, Congregational, and eventually Unitarian traditions during a period of profound religious transition in New England.

To appreciate the architectural significance of the Hollis Street Church and its impact, it is essential to understand the tradition it displaced. Eighteenth-century Congregational meetinghouses reflected the theological principles of New England’s Puritan origins while also functioning as civic spaces rather than solely as houses of worship. Architecturally, they served as auditory spaces, with the pulpit as the principal focus rather than the liturgical arrangements favored by some other religious traditions. The Congregational preference for rectangular plans, and plain interiors consciously rejected the ceremonial architecture associated with Catholicism and Anglicanism. By the 1780s, however, the seeds of change

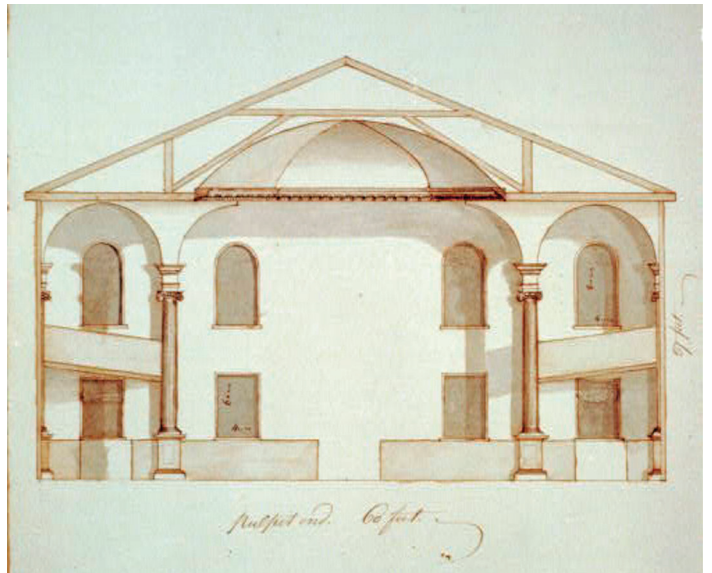
had been sown, ultimately leading to the rise of Unitarianism, centered at Harvard, which had originally been founded primarily to educate Puritan clergymen. Together with the growing presence of Episcopalians, Universalists, and Roman Catholics, these developments encouraged architects to conceive ecclesiastical structures not merely as meetinghouses (in the Orthodox Calvinist sense) but as churches possessing greater architectural splendor and following a more liturgical format.

Bulfinch’s designs for the Hollis Street Church embodied that transformation. Conceived and constructed immediately after his return from Europe, it became his first completed structure and one of the most original ecclesiastical designs produced in post-Revolutionary America up to that point and even beyond. A contemporary observer described it as “an entirely new and elegant model, the thought of an ingenious architect.”⁸ Rather than relying on a single European prototype, Bulfinch synthesized several architectural models into a distinct composition.⁹

Bulfinch’s biographer Harold Kirker connected the design to Wren, Gibbs, and a plate from Isaac Ware’s *Designs of Inigo Jones*, although, as Kirker noted, the volume is not known to have been in Bulfinch’s library. More recently, Thomas Conroy emphasized Continental precedents, particularly Giovanni Niccolò Servandoni’s West façade for Saint-Sulpice

in Paris, while architectural historian Terry Friedman traced the composition to London church designs associated with James Gibbs and George Dance, the Elder. Yet these interpretations overlook the more direct influence of Palladio and the Neo-Palladian tradition represented in New England by Peter Harrison, who had been a friend of Bulfinch's maternal grandfather, Charles Apthorp.¹⁰

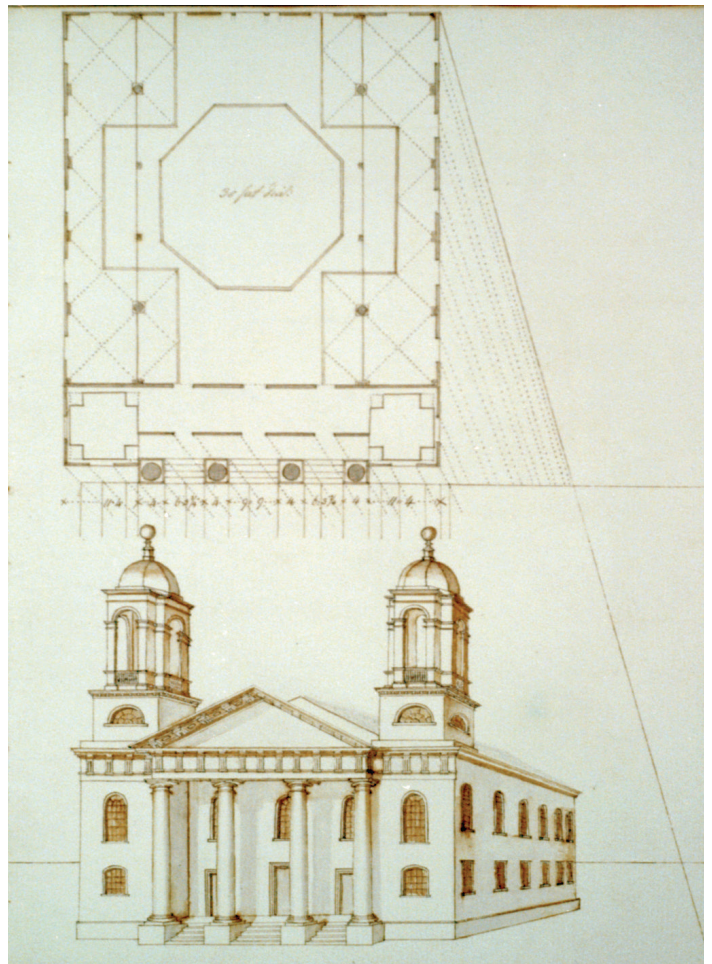
The exterior of the Hollis Street Church displayed distinctly Palladian characteristics through its temple-front portico, symmetrically placed twin towers flanking the portico, and restrained classical ornament, avoiding the excessive decoration of the previously suggested Baroque models. Bulfinch's Doric portico bore a distinct resemblance to Harrison's Redwood Library in Newport, RI (1747–50), especially in its widened central-bay intercolumniation. Although Bulfinch's lack of detail on his perspective drawing



Transverse section of the Hollis Street Church
Library of Congress



Tempio del Santo Spirito
Photograph by Colin Hepburn



Charles Bulfinch, Plan and Perspective of the Hollis Street Church
Library of Congress



First Congregational Church
Providence, RI

Courtesy of Rhode Island Historical Society

made a detailed analysis of the order and entablature difficult, he employed the Doric mutulary order, which does not appear in *I Quattro Libri* and therefore must have derived from another source. Harrison likewise employed the mutulary order on the Redwood Library.

Bulfinch's twin belfries likewise reflect Palladian precedent. Their square open stages, surmounted by compact domed roofs, resemble the bell towers of Palladio's *Tempietto Barbaro* (c1580) at Maser, Veneto, one of his final ecclesiastical works. Although absent from *I Quattro Libri*, the church appeared prominently in Ottavio Bertotti Scamozzi's *Le fabbriche e i disegni di Andrea Palladio*, which

is known to have circulated in American architectural libraries, particularly those of Ithiel Town and Robert Mills.¹¹ These short belfries also departed decisively from the Georgian Baroque tradition represented by James Gibbs. While Gibbs drew heavily from Palladio, his towers retained the elongated vertical emphasis of medieval Gothic steeples, whereas Bulfinch embraced the compact proportions characteristic of the late Italian Renaissance. He continued to favor a Renaissance-infused mode in later works, including Holy Cross (1802–03), New North Church (1803–04), and the second iteration of Hollis Street in the form of the Union Religious Society meetinghouse.

The interior plan of the Hollis Street church proved equally innovative for America. As Kirker observed, Bulfinch adapted Wren's Greek-cross plan for St. Stephen Walbrook in London to Congregational worship, creating one of Boston's earliest domed ecclesiastical spaces. Four Ionic columns supported a queen-post truss system with truncated bottom chords and diagonal struts, allowing for an octagonal interior dome, while a longitudinal barrel vault defined the ceiling above the aisles. Rather than merely decorating a traditional meetinghouse with classical ornament, Bulfinch fundamentally re-imagined Congregationalist worship through new architectural forms.

An engraving based on Bulfinch's perspective drawing of Hollis Street appeared in the *Columbian Magazine* in April 1788, giving the design immediate national exposure. Its influence spread quickly. Architectural Historian Peter Benes has described the diffusion of successful New England meetinghouse designs as architectural "runs," and Hollis Street initiated precisely such a sequence. In 1794, the building committee of the First Congregational Society of Providence recommended that "the plan of the Hollis Street Meeting House in Boston be the general Plan to proceed upon."¹²

Other congregations soon followed. Kingston, MA erected a meetinghouse closely modeled on Hollis Street in 1798, while the Rev. William Bentley recorded in 1809 that South Abington's (MA) meetinghouse had likewise been "modelled upon the South Meeting in Boston with two turrets in front connected by a piazza & pediment."¹³ The First Presbyterian Church in Baltimore (1789–95), Philip Hooker's North Dutch Church in Albany (1797–99), and Charleston's First Scots Presbyterian Church (1814) each adapted Bulfinch's Hollis Street design to different denominational and regional settings.

Benjamin Henry Latrobe also appears to have taken an interest in this model. A little-known depiction of a church that at least superficially resembles the Hollis Street design appears on the frontispiece to *Designs of Buildings Erected or Proposed to be Built in Virginia* by B. Henry Latrobe, 1795–99.

In 1810, as the Hollis Street congregation outgrew Bulfinch's wooden church, its proprietors voted to replace it with a larger brick church and offered the original building for sale.¹⁴ The newly formed Union Religious Society (Congregational) on the Weymouth–Braintree line purchased the structure, dismantled it, and rafted it across Boston Harbor. Although a fire destroyed many of the salvaged materials, the congregation rebuilt the church during 1810–



First Scots Presbyterian Church
Charleston, SC
Library of Congress



Benjamin Henry Latrobe, Detail from the Frontispiece of
Designs of Buildings Erected or Proposed to Be Built in Virginia
Library of Congress

11, and dedicated it in January 1812.¹⁵ Records associated with the project identify housewright Isaac Damon among those involved. Damon later moved to Northampton, where he became associated with the design or execution of several important Classical Revival buildings in the Connecticut River Valley.

Far more than a simple reconstruction of the Hollis Street church, the Union Religious Society structure represented a sophisticated and complete redesign. Included on Bulfinch's own list of works, it combined features from other Bulfinch designs, such as the Pittsfield and Taunton meetinghouses, with an engaged Doric tetrastyle portico from Hollis Street and a tower closely resembling that which he designed for Old South Church, Hallowell, ME in 1806.¹⁶ The composition became an influential prototype, helping establish the temple-front church as one of the dominant ecclesiastical forms in Early Republic New England.¹⁷

This form found significant precedent in Palladio's ecclesiastical work, where he employed double temple-front facades in churches such as San Francesco della Vigna (1564–70) and San Giorgio Maggiore (1566–1610) to express the relationship between the taller central nave and the lower side aisles. Although medieval church planning inspired this arrangement, which arose from the need for the lower side aisles to form part of the structural system supporting the high masonry walls of the nave and resisting their lateral thrust, Palladio transformed the double-temple form into one of the defining features of his ecclesiastical architecture. By the 18th century, however, churches generally required full-height side aisles to accommodate galleries rather than to buttress a vaulted masonry nave. Bulfinch adapted Palladio's double-temple concept into an innovative composition featuring an engaged portico set before a pedimented gable, preserving Palladian principles while accommodating contemporary requirements.

As unique compositions that drew on Palladian traditions, both iterations of the Hollis Street Church deserve more recognition. The churches stood at the intersection of different architectural traditions. Looking backward, they drew upon Palladio, Wren, Gibbs, and Harrison; looking forward, they established a new model for Congregational church architecture throughout New England. This Classical Revival tradition, which was indebted to the ecclesiastical designs of Palladio himself, would become one, if not the most common, typology for churches and meetinghouses in New England over the next decade.

Darryl T. Saunders is a North Carolina-based preservationist and principal of Aylesbury Preservation. He writes on American architectural history, with a particular interest in the Early Republic. His current project is a multi-year study of the architecture of New England churches and meetinghouses during the late-18th to early-19th centuries.

- 1 The chronology of the construction of Hollis Street Church is less clearly documented than that of many contemporary Boston churches, as neither a cornerstone ceremony nor a dedication service appears to have been recorded in surviving newspapers or other known primary sources. According to George Leonard in an 1877 history of the congregation, the new meetinghouse was opened for worship by August 31, 1788. Although no formal dedication notice has been identified in the Boston newspapers, a notice published in the *Massachusetts Centinel* on September 3, 1788, stated that "The Committee who were appointed by the South Society, Boston, to build the Meeting-house in Hollis-Street, having compleated [sic] the work...," strongly suggesting that construction had been substantially finished by that date. The church's new minister, the Rev. Samuel West, was not installed until March 1789, as reported in the *American Herald and Worcester Recorder* (March 19, 1789), and his installation sermon was published in Boston later that month. Although the surviving financial records of the congregation are incomplete, they indicate that the great majority of payments and accounts associated with the construction of the new meetinghouse were made during 1788.
- 2 The primary source material relating to Hollis Street Church survives but is incomplete and dispersed among several repositories. Most of the records for the 1787–88 structure discussed in this article are housed in the Harvard Divinity School Archives, *Hollis Street Church (Boston, Mass.) Records, 1787–1879*. Additional records are held by the Massachusetts Historical Society in the *Hollis Street Church (Boston, Mass.) Ledger, 1787–1788*. The church's financial records, meeting minutes, vouchers, and other documents were evidently dispersed at some point. In 2025, the author located on the online auction platform eBay a receipt documenting masonry work in 1806 for the amount of \$4.17 performed on the church by Henry Blaney, stone mason, for the Proprietors of the Hollis Street Church.
- 3 David Merrill, *Isaac Damon and the Architecture of the Federal Period in New England*, PhD diss., Yale University, 1965. Merrill outlines Damon's involvement in the execution of the Weymouth/Braintree church and his subsequent ecclesiastical work.
- 4 Harold Kirker, *The Architecture of Charles Bulfinch*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969, p. 387, appendix 3. Although published nearly 60 years ago, Kirker's catalogue and assessment of Bulfinch's work remains the most complete study of Bulfinch's architectural career.
- 5 Boston Athenaeum, Library Catalog. Many of Thomas Dawes' books are now in the collections of the Boston Athenaeum and can be identified through its online catalog. As Dawes served as Charles Bulfinch's mentor, Bulfinch likely had access to these volumes during the period in which he designed Hollis Street Church.
- 6 American Antiquarian Society. *Constitution of the Proprietors of the Architectural Library of Boston*. Instituted 15th November, 1809. Boston: Printed by T. Kennard, 75 State Street, 1809. The AAS possesses one of the only known copies of this rare publication, which lists all the books in the society's collection at the time of its founding in 1809.
- 7 Ellen Susan Bulfinch, *The Life and Letters of Charles Bulfinch, Architect*, Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1896, p. 4. This publication reproduces in full the statement by Bulfinch from which this quotation is taken.
- 8 Thomas Pemberton, "A Topographical and Historical Description of Boston," *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, III, 1794, 253
- 9 Id, reproduced in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society for the Year 1794*, vol. 3, Boston: Munroe & Francis, printers to the Massachusetts Historical

Loth Receives Preservation Award

CPSA vice president Calder Loth has received the prestigious Historic Preservation Medal by the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

The Medal honors a person who has done extraordinary volunteer work over a long period of time in establishing a historic district; preserving a local landmark; restoring or preserving objects of historic cultural significance; or establishing or participating in oral history projects, youth leadership, and education related to historic preservation at the regional, state, and/or national level.

The award nomination was submitted by Cheryl Billingsley, Virginia Commonwealth Chapter's Regent, with assistance from committee chair Carol Beam.

In addition to his professional activities, Loth, an internationally acclaimed architectural historian, has volunteered in historic preservation projects for 59 years.

He is a prolific writer, esteemed scholar, and highly regarded lecturer. Today, in retirement, Loth serves on advisory committees of numerous historic sites and actively volunteers with organizations such as The Menokin Foundation, The Battersea Foundation, The Garden Club of Virginia, and The Historic Richmond Foundation. He is also editor of this journal.

Loth remains passionate to save Menokin, located in Virginia's Northern Neck and the home of Francis Lightfoot Lee, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. The home has been identified as one of the most threatened historic sites in our country. Loth continues tirelessly to preserve and protect this historic site with his innovative techniques: for example, glass will be used to replace parts of the structure where walls are missing, making it the first project of its kind in North America to fuse a ruin and modern glass as an innovative interpretive approach to historical preservation.

2027 Trip Planning?

As noted in the Presidents' Letter, CPSA is working on details for a trip to the Hudson River Valley during 2027. A tour would include early- to mid-19th-century sites, including Edgewater in Barrytown, NY. Edgewater is known for its outstanding collection of decorative arts



Edgewater, East Facade, Barrytown, NY
Courtesy of Wikipedia.org



- Society, 1810. In this publication, Pemberton describes Boston's principal public, private, commercial, and ecclesiastical buildings and provides a history of the town's religious societies. His lengthy description of Hollis Street Church, originally published in the *Massachusetts Magazine* in 1793, remains one of the most valuable contemporary accounts of the building.
- 10 Previous stylistic analyses of Bulfinch's Hollis Street Church appear in Harold Kirker, *The Architecture of Charles Bulfinch*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969, 17-22; Thomas Conroy, "Charmed by the French: Reassessing the Early Career of Charles Bulfinch, Architect," *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* 34, no. 2, 2006, pp. 115-21; and Terry Friedman, *The Eighteenth-Century Church in Britain*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011, p. 615
- 11 The presence of Ottavio Bertotti Scamozzi's four-volume edition of Palladio's designs in America during the Early Republic has not been fully examined. Evidence that Robert Mills owned a copy appears in Gene Waddell and Rhodri Windsor Liscombe, *Robert Mills's Courthouses & Jails*, Easley, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1981, p. 11. Ithiel Town's ownership of the set can be documented through the 1844 sale catalogue of his architectural library, auctioned by the Washington, D.C., bookseller William M. Morrison in April and May 1844. Entry no. 1025 reads: "Scamozzi's [sic] Buildings and Designs of Palladio, with descriptions in French...." A copy of this sale catalogue is preserved in the George Dudley Seymour Collection, Yale University Library.

- 12 Rhode Island Historical Society, *Records of the First Congregational Church of Providence*. This substantial collection of 18th- and 19th-century primary source material documents both the 1794 church discussed here and its early 19th-century replacement, designed and executed by John Holden Greene.
- 13 William Bentley, *Diary of William Bentley, D.D.*, vol. 2, Salem, MA: Essex Institute, 1907, Vol. 3
- 14 Boston Gazette, Jan 18, 1810.
- 15 Boston Patriot, Jan 04, 1812.
- 16 Library of Congress, Charles Bulfinch, *Architectural Drawing for Alterations to the Old South Church, Hallowell, Maine*. Front elevation, 1806.
- 17 The known list of Bulfinch's commissions, a "Memorandum in Bulfinch's hand," first appeared in Ellen Susan Bulfinch's *The Life and Letters of Charles Bulfinch, Architect*, Boston, 1896, and was later reprinted as Appendix II in Harold Kirker's *The Architecture of Charles Bulfinch*. In the memorandum, Bulfinch distinguished between churches—generally urban structures of brick or stone—and meetinghouses, listing them in separate categories. Significantly, the entry for the second iteration of Hollis Street, the Union Religious Society meetinghouse in Weymouth, appears simply as "Weymouth, wood," suggesting that Bulfinch regarded the building as one of his own commissions and was involved in its reconstruction.

Spring 2026 | *Call for New Board Members*

Fall 2026 | *Four Join Board*

The CPSA Board has elected four new members for three-year terms beginning June 2026. These include Richard Chenoweth, Randolph Hooks, Brian Poffenberger, and Will Rieley.

Richard M. Chenoweth, AIA | Richmond, VA

Richard M. Chenoweth has worked as a preservation architect for Glavé & Holmes Architecture since 2022, focused on several comprehensive historic rehabilitation projects. Prior to Glavé, he was a Visiting Professor at Mississippi State for four years.

Richard's digital recreations of Latrobe's lost works at the U. S. Capitol, based on original sources, have been published widely. His research on Benjamin Latrobe was funded by three U. S. Capitol Historical Society fellowships, resulting in many peer-reviewed papers and articles. Richard won the Gabriel Prize for the study of French Classical Architecture, which supported a three-month residence in the vicinity of Paris, where he studied several of Thomas Jefferson's influences through drawing and painting. The confluence of Jefferson's correspondence with Latrobe inspired Richard's research on the Capitol.

During his years living in the Washington, DC region, he won the national competition for the WMATA Metro Canopy Program. The curving glass canopy parti was directly inspired by Jefferson's obsession with the roof of the Halle aux Blés. Richard and his partner have built over 50 of these steel and curving glass canopies. Richard earned his Master's in Architecture from the University of Virginia, and studied Civil Engineering at Vanderbilt University.

Randolph Hooks | Chase City, VA

Until his retirement in February 2018, Randolph Hooks was Managing Director and Associate General Counsel at JPMorgan Chase in New York, overseeing the legal aspects of the firm's underwriting of municipal bonds. Born and raised in Fayetteville, NC, he attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and law school at Georgetown University, Washington, DC.

A resident of New York City for more than 20 years, he now lives in rural Lunenburg County, VA,

conserving historic Spring Bank (1793). Randolph currently serves on the Board of Trustees of Preservation Virginia and served two terms on the Board of Directors of the American Friends of Attingham, supporting study of British country houses.

Brien Poffenberger | Annapolis, MD

Brien Poffenberger brings to preservation work something that formal credentials alone cannot supply: a family presence in western Maryland stretching back to the 1730s and an intimacy with a region's buildings that comes from having grown up among them. As owner and president of Gruber-Latimer Restoration, he led a firm specializing in the masonry conservation of historic brick and stone structures across Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia, with clients ranging from Antietam National Battlefield to Shepherd University. The work has been grounded in craft as much as in theory; among his personal projects was the restoration of an 18th-century stone house in Sharpsburg, the town where his family's roots run deepest.

His formation is unusual in the breadth it spans. A bachelor's degree in government from The College of William and Mary preceded graduate study in architectural history at the University of Virginia and an MBA from Georgetown University, a combination that has proved directly useful across a career moving between the building site and the boardroom.

Brian has served as president and CEO of the Maryland State Chamber of Commerce, executive director of the National Association for Olmsted Parks, and chairman of the Maryland Historical Trust, Board of Trustees beginning in 2018, a role that placed him at the center of the state's preservation policy at a critical moment. Teaching has also been a calling: adjunct appointments at Northern Virginia Community College and Shepherd

University, where he offered survey courses in American architectural history, reflecting a consistent interest in forming the next generation of practitioners.

William D. Rieley | Charlottesville VA

Will Rieley founded Rieley & Associates in Charlottesville more than four decades ago, and the firm has become one of the most consequential practices in historic landscape preservation in the mid-Atlantic region. His work is concentrated at the intersection of documentary research and site design: projects at Monticello, Poplar Forest, Stratford Hall, and Carter's Grove have required sustained archival investigation as the precondition for intervention, and the results have shaped how those landscapes are understood as well as how they look.

The firm's reach extends well beyond Virginia, with historic resource studies completed for Acadia National Park, the Vanderbilt Mansion Historic Site, and Ozarks National Scenic Riverways, among many others. Rieley taught at the University of Virginia for 20 years, and his commitment to the field's intellectual formation has continued through the Historic Landscape Institute, administered jointly by UVA and Monticello and through annual mentorship of Garden Club of Virginia research fellows.

He served for eight years on the Albemarle County Planning Commission, a tenure that gave institutional expression to his conviction that preservation is not a specialist concern but a dimension of how communities make decisions about their own continuity. His published work, which includes contributions on Jeffersonian landscape and garden history, reflects the same premise: that the designed landscape is a primary historical document, legible to those willing to read it carefully.

Craft, Conservation and Continuing Practice

Valmarana Center, October 21–24, 2026 Vicenza, Italy

WILLIAM SHERMAN

Below is an announcement from UVA School of Architecture website that builds on the announcement of the Valmarana Center in our Spring 2026 *Palladiana*.

When we opened the Mario di Valmarana Center for Studies in Venice and Vicenza last Fall, we always imagined that it would be a place to live and learn, not only for our students and faculty, but for our alumni, friends, practitioners and partners. We want the Veneto to be a place for continued education, exploration, and excitement—not just a place where some of you studied many years ago, or traveled to on vacation, or read about in a book.

We are partnering with the UVA School of Continuing and Professional Studies to offer the first of a series of continuing education programs at the Valmarana Center. Alexandra di Valmarana and I will lead “Craft, Conservation and Contemporary Practice in the Veneto” from October 21–24 in Vicenza and the surrounding areas to learn about the role of traditional materials and crafts in both building conservation and new construction. You’ll explore the history, materials,

and cutting-edge methods used in the ongoing preservation of the Villa la Rotonda; visit a historic quarry; see how traditional lime stucco is produced; and experience firsthand the material and craft innovations that characterize Andrea Palladio’s architecture with exclusive tours and access.

We will be offering AIA CEU credit and a digital badge and Award of Completion from UVA for completing this short course. You do not need to be an alumni of the University nor the A-School to participate so please share this opportunity with your colleagues and friends. We aim to offer two continuing education programs in the Veneto each academic year (one in the spring and one in the fall). Our future programs are in the works and will focus on digital scanning and historic preservation and another on design, health and climate change in partnership with the UVA School of Medicine.

If you have suggestions for topics you would be interested in learning about in the Veneto, please reach out to me, sherman@virginia.edu.

We look forward to exploring the Veneto with you.

1	2	4
	3	5

- 1 View of the Duomo from the Valmarana Center
- 2 Students sketching in the Center’s courtyard
- 3 The Center behind students seated in the Piazza
- 4 A noble room in the former Bishop’s Palace or “Vescovado,” one of four in addition to classrooms, studios, and meeting spaces
- 5 A scholar suite, one of six



Suburban Palladianism

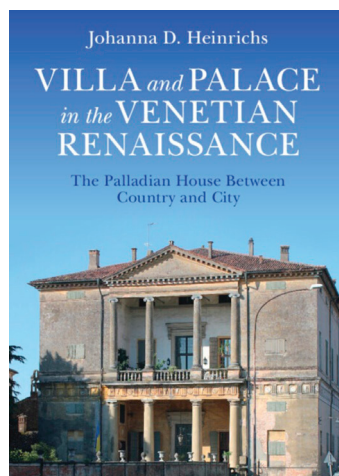
A book review

NOAH DUELL

Villa and Palace in the Venetian Renaissance *The Palladian House Between Country and City*

Johanna D. Heinrichs, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024, 362 pp., \$130.00, hardcover

In his *Four Books of Architecture*, Palladio divides his domestic projects into two categories: villas in one, and *palazzi*, or urban palaces, in the other. This distinction has had a broad impact on our understanding of these buildings. But what do we make



of suburban villas, situated near the city limits and inspired by *villa suburbana* of the Roman republic, that do not fit neatly into either category? This was the charge of Johanna D. Heinrichs in her impressive and richly illustrated book, *Villa and Palace in the Venetian Renaissance: The Palladian House Between Country and City*, which centers on the design, social network, and

lived experience of Villa Pisani at Montagnana. Designed by Palladio around 1552 for Francesco Pisani, Villa Pisani at Montagnana “combines features of both villa and palace architecture, and it challenges the conventional view of a villa as subsidiary to the urban palace, the true seat of an elite family.”

To make her case, Heinrichs organized the book into three parts: “Villa and Palace,” “Territory and Town,” and “The Villa in Time.”

“Villa and Palace” describes Villa Pisani’s place in Renaissance architectural theory, particularly as an example of Alberti’s *hortus suburbanus* (his conception of an ideal suburban villa), and includes fulsome chapters on the villa’s patron and spaces.

“Territory and Town,” discusses the villa’s setting, both Montagnana and the site itself. Interestingly, Heinrichs also gives some attention to what she calls a “stop-over villa,” where the family would decamp on its journey between Venice and Montagnana. The third and final part, “The Villa in Time,”

compares Palladio’s design with the villa-as-built, making a valuable contribution to the robust literature relating to these discrepancies between the *Four Books* and the villas in situ. Part III also includes what I found to be a less convincing but timely chapter on the triumphal arch motif in Palladio’s design for the villa’s wings, which—then as now—were subject to a “politically fraught reception.”

While the book is no doubt academic both in scope and language, there are parts that are broadly accessible. Particularly enlightening is Chapter III, “Four Seasons,” which “examine[s] how its environment was experienced daily, seasonally, and over time.” Those fortunate enough to have visited a Palladian villa have probably only done so over a day or two; this chapter allows readers to experience various spaces of the house across the year as a 16th-century fly-on-the-wall might have. Whether with the *fattore* or farm manager in the farm court during the summer or with the friends of the Pisani family during a winter meal, the narrative engages the reader with details about how the house operated in practice, both as an agricultural estate and as an elite 16th-century family home with all their attendant socioeconomic complexities.

Perhaps the most relevant section of the book for readers of *Palladiana* is the Epilogue, which demonstrates how Villa Pisani served as an inspiration for 18th-century Anglo-Palladian architects in British North America. Heinrichs describes its influence through such familiar examples as Drayton Hall and the Miles Brewton House in Charleston, SC, Shirley Plantation in Charles City County, VA, and the Chase-Lloyd House and Hammond-Harwood House in Annapolis, MD—all staples of the *Palladiana* back catalogue (which, incidentally, is now online and available in full at <https://palladiancenter.org/palladiana>). Suffice it to say, Villa Pisani’s five-part form, symmetrical massing, and two-tier (i.e., superimposed) classical portico have reverberated through the ages. As if that wasn’t enough, the notes to the Epilogue are a veritable goldmine of sources and commentary on American Palladianism, and the books it references would make for a formidable Palladian library all on their own.

In sum, Heinrichs makes a compelling case that our work to understand Palladio rests at least in part on how we comprehend the rural–urban paradigm embodied by structures like the Villa Pisani. The book is a worthwhile read for any academic or eager enthusiast seeking to uncover some of the many layers of this extraordinary Palladian villa and the ways it speaks to our world today. ■

Noah Duell is an architectural historian and museum development professional living in New York, NY. You can reach him at noahduell@gmail.com.

CPSA Membership

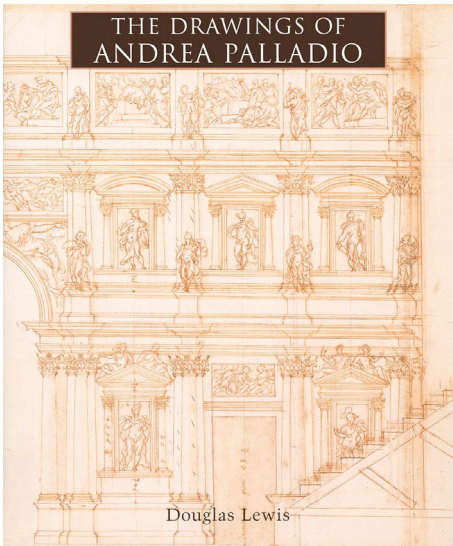
Renews each December for upcoming calendar year

CPSA membership entitles you to receive our Palladiana journal twice a year and to attend various trips and tours. Since 1980, CPSA, founded by Mario di Valmarana, has held events and published articles about Palladianism and its impact on American architecture. Questions? Email palladianstudies@gmail.com for answers.

Membership benefits include—

- Palladiana Journal*
- Weekend tours
- Symposia and exhibitions
- Travel stipends for UVA students
- Educational website
- Travel abroad
- Annual meeting

New and renewing members receive a FREE copy



Douglas Lewis, *The Drawings of Palladio*

2000. Hardcover, 317 pages.

Non-member price \$40

Founded in 1980, CPSA is a non-profit educational organization founded in 1980 to research and promote understanding of the Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio. It is only organization focusing on Palladian architecture as it developed in America.

* PALLADIANA is published twice each year and is mailed to all current CPSA members.

Additional copies are available for circulation; please contact palladianstudies@gmail.com

Join or renew!

Membership runs from January through December.

Use PayPal on palladiancenter.org or by mailing the coupon below.

- ☐ Individual, \$50 | ☐ Family, \$100 | ☐ Patron, \$500 | ☐ Sponsor, \$1,000
- ☐ Corporate Sponsor or Charitable Gift? Please contact us for more information.
- ☐ Student, \$15 School Enrolled _____ | ☐ Academic Institutions & Libraries, \$25
- ☐ Renewals only: Yes, I would like another copy of *The Drawings of Palladio*.

Gift Subscription: two gifts for the price of one

- ☐ Purchase a gift subscription for a friend, colleague, and/or institution and they will receive a handsome copy of Douglas Lewis' *The Drawings of Andrea Palladio*.

Name(s)

Email(s)

Mailing address

City

State Z

ip

Country, if not USA Phone(s)

Mail check and form to

Center for Palladian Studies in America, PO Box 4754, Charlottesville VA 22905

Or go online to

Palladiancenter.org and renew by Pay Pal

The Center for Palladian Studies in America, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) organization. All gifts are fully tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

LEARN MORE & JOIN!

Facebook@PalladianStudies, Instagram@palladianstudiesusa, or palladiancenter.org

Palladiana

CENTER FOR PALLADIAN STUDIES IN AMERICA is a non-profit educational organization founded in 1980 to research and promote understanding of Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio and his influence in the United States. In furtherance of its goals, the Center organizes symposia, lectures, and study tours on Palladian subjects, publishes books and periodicals, sponsors exhibitions, and makes grants to scholars and others.

 **@PalladianStudies**

 **@palladianstudiesusa**

Have you renewed?

This will be your final issue of *Palladiana* for 2026. Renew for 2027 and receive a complimentary copy of *The Drawings of Palladio* as a gift for you or for a friend.

In addition to *Palladiana*, you will be eligible to attend meetings and programs throughout the coming year. Gift memberships are also available.

DIRECTORS

Bryan Clark Green
*Co-president and
Executive Committee*
Richmond, VA

Dale Hilton
*Co-president and
Executive Committee*
Barboursville, VA

Calder Loth
*Vice president and
Executive Committee*
Richmond, VA

Bucci Zeugner
*Treasurer and
Executive Committee*
Richmond, VA

Gibson Worsham
Executive Committee
Kent's Store, VA

.....

Richard M. Chenoweth, AIA
Richmond, VA

Noah Duell
New York, NY

Julia Todd Henley
Richmond, VA

Randolph Hooks
Chase City, VA

Andrew Johnston
Charlottesville, VA

Patrick W. McClane
Richmond, VA

Brien Poffenberger
Annapolis, MD

Judith Proffitt
Baltimore, MD

Helen Scott Reed
Manakin, VA

Will Rieley, ASLA
Charlottesville, VA

William Sherman
Charlottesville, VA

Madison Spencer
Charlottesville, VA

Alexandra Valmarana
Byfield, Northamptonshire, UK

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Bruce Boucher
London, UK

Gardiner Hallock
Charlottesville, VA

K. Edward Lay
Charlottesville, VA

Susan Stein
Charlottesville, VA

Betty di Valmarana
Free Union, VA

Richard Guy Wilson
Charlottesville, VA

John J. Zeugner
Richmond, VA

EMERITUS DIRECTORS

Bruce Boucher
London, UK

Betty S. Valmarana
Free Union, VA

Warren J. Cox, FAIA
Washington, DC

Carl I. Gable
Atlanta, GA

K. Edward Lay
Charlottesville, VA

Richard Guy Wilson
Charlottesville, VA

EX-OFFICIO

Mark Hoerath
Administrator
palladianstudies@gmail.com

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Bryan Clark Green

Dale Hilton

Calder Loth

Gibson Worsham

Bucci Zeugner