

The GREEN

LIGHT



BULLETIN of the POINT ASSOCIATION

JANUARY 1959

CHRISTMAS ON THE POINT:

The lights are out, the ornaments are carefully put away, the tissue paper is folded up, and the New Year is already gathering speed - but the Point has another pleasant Christmas tide to look back upon.

The big spruce tree in Battery Park was splendidly illuminated with red and white lights (we are sorry to say that many disappeared) and the Washington Street Carollers braved a piping wind to sing at the lighting of the tree. The Editor of the Green Light was pleasantly surprised when she was serenaded with her own verses, set to music by W. King Covell. All regretted the circumstance that made Mr. Covell unable to lead the singing as he usually does. The task was ably taken over by Elton Manuel.

On the evening of December 26, Miss Nancy Hay, Robert Kerr III and David P. Leys had the difficult assignment of judging the decorations to be seen on the Point. After some lengthy discussion, prizes were awarded as follows:

(1) MOST APPROPRIATE TO SEASON: Miss Adé de Béthune, 118 Washington St., who showed a stained glass medallion of Madonna and Child, of her own making, gracefully framed with wreath and garland against a brilliantly lit white background.

Honorable Mention: Mrs Reginald Bryer, 24 Van Zandt Ave., whose French-roofed house glowed with a subdued light in every window, and gave the effect of a cosy Victorian Christmas card.

(2) MOST ORIGINAL: The only prize given in this class went to W. Harry Groff, 79 Washington Street, whose flood-lit display gave the unusual effect of a charming summer garden.

(3) MOST EFFECT FOR LEAST EXPENSE: The sun-porch of the Patrick Murphys at 54 Third Street combined red and white striped curtains with a restrained use of glass-wax stencils.

Honorable Mention went to John Murphy of 36 Second St. for his beautiful wreath of laurel and pine-cones, spotlighted.

---At the last moment, a fourth category was created --

(4) APPEAL TO THE YOUNG AT HEART: and this prize was given to the Nathaniel Addison of 15 Bridge St. who displayed a gay and riotous ensemble of all the figures dear to childhood.

Joseph Zammer of 82 Third Street received Honorable Mention for his welcoming snowman and picture windows displaying lighted trees.

First prize in each class was \$5 and honorable mention received hand-lettered scrolls.

Though officers and board members of P.A.N. were not eligible for a prize, The Green Light cannot forbear mentioning the charming Della Robbia wreath made by Wm. Fullerton, and . . . who knows where the Fourth Pineapple Pediment is in our fair city? (only two are genuine!) Over the door of the Hannah Robinson house, our clever president had affixed a real pineapple, gilded and festooned with laurel and light!

NOTICE !

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING ! ! !

DATE: Thursday, January 29

TIME: 8:00 p.m.

PLACE: St. John's Guild Hall

ROBERT KERR III

Executive Secretary of The Preservation Society of Newport County will speak on THE HOW OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN NEWPORT.

Refreshments
BE SURE TO COME !

S O S ! ! !

The Treasurer and the Editor of The Green Light have had their heads together over the membership and mailing list, and have come up with some dismal statistics.

We have a membership list of some 227 persons, of whom 142 have paid their 1958 dues, according to the data we have on file. This means that The Green Light is going to 85 people who not actually been members since 1957 (we have regretfully had to drop those who have not rejoined since 1956). We are very loth to stop sending the bulletin to these people, and we hope that they would be sorry to miss seeing it.

If you feel that you might be one of these people, and have lost track of just when you did pay your dues, PLEASE contact the Treasurer, Richard Weiss, VI 6-9457, 42 Walnut St. or the Editor, E.B.Price, VI 7-3341, 16 Battery St., in order that we may get squared away for the New Year.

Next membership will not be due until October 1959 - but DO let us get all the 1958 odds and ends cleared up before the year advances much farther. These back dues would help us very much in getting out The Green Light, now that postage has gone up.

Active Membership: \$1.00

Sustaining: \$5.00

Patron: \$10.00

One dollar a year is really very little for all that the Point Association offers, and to help in all that it is trying so hard to do.

JANUARY BOARD MEETING:

At the meeting of the Executive Committee held on January 6 at the home of the president, Edwin H. Brownell, the Beautification Committee reported on the Christmas contest and outlined tentative plans for a spring and fall garden show and a possible community garden in an unused lot.

The Protection Committee proposed meeting with the Board of Review and the Board of Health in regard to various conditions needing correction.

Dr. David Nemtsov, 31 Third Street would welcome complaints regarding any condition involving health or safety - but such complaints MUST be in writing.

The organization of Point youth under City supervision was discussed - a program to effect a clean-up of weeds, and vacant lot improvement.

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Every one should read the article entitled WANTON DISREGARD OF OUR HERITAGE in the January "Reader's Digest". The author quotes the experts as saying: "It is better to preserve than to repair, better to repair than restore, better to restore than reconstruct."

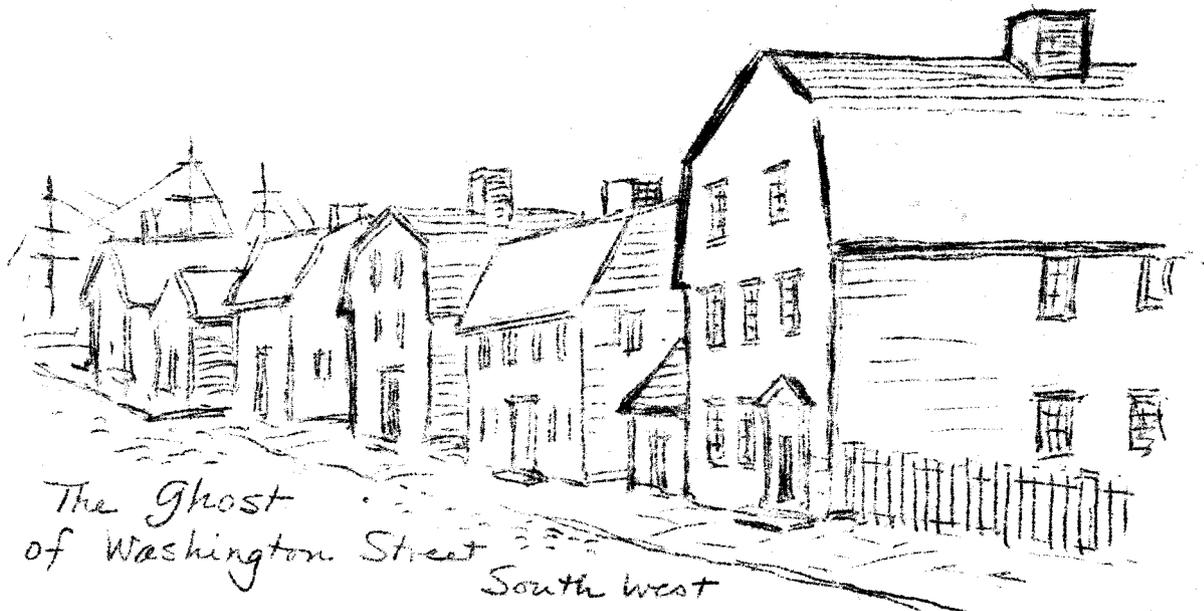
An awakening to a realization of Newport's true assets is essential to its survival and of paramount importance to its prosperity.

We are fortunate in having Mr. Kerr of the Preservation Society speak to us in line with the subject at the coming General Membership Meeting on January 29. BE SURE to attend this important meeting, and bring your friends.

PUBLICITY:

The Newport Daily News gave good publicity to "Christmas on the Point" by means of three large pictures, as well as a number of short news items.

COME TO THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING, THURSDAY EVENING, JANUARY 29th



- Everything at the south end of Washington Street fell before the progress of the mid-19th century, just as we are losing so much before the progress of the mid-20th. The bringing of the Old Colony Railroad to Newport, the filling in of the Cove, put a railway yard where the maritime commerce had flourished, and the New England Steamship Company razed all the buildings where the Fleet Landing now is, finding them a fire hazard.

Gone is the Theophilus Topham house with its double Dutch door and wooden shutters - a bakery where whale oil for lamps was sold, as well as pastry. Gone is the Dennis house, and "Lady" Southwick's (her son built the Round House in Southwick's Grove, up the Island), gone the Hayden house, and Captain Carter's, with its garden that ran way east to the Cove. Where now is the No. 2 Engine House, with the old wooden fire-engine, found to be covered with dust on the rare occasions when it was manned? Where is "Daddy" Southwick's house - he who made molasses candy and peddled it about, with two pails hung from a yoke on his shoulders? "The Lantern" (so called from its many windows) is gone - that fine three-storied house said to have been built by Jacob Rodriguez Rivera, who introduced the making of spermacetti candles to Newport, thereby establishing a most profitable trade. In its latter days, the place was the well-known boarding-house kept by the Misses Wilbour, where many a distinguished visitor was entertained. . . . The old ferry-house whence the sailing-wherry plied to Jamestown is gone - and the great Crandall shipyard, where vessels were built and launched as late as the 1860's, amid fiddling and festivity. . . . Ghosts crowd this region now occupied by the Fleet Landing - ghosts of fine houses, of merchants busied with their affairs in the Cove; of Quaker and Jew, patriot and pirate, artisan and sailor; of tall masts and square sails; of the ring of the shipwright's hammer, and the bustle of a great and prosperous mercantile community.

Listen down the wind on a still night. . . to catch the echo of those voices. . . candlelight in small-paned windows. . . the slap of an incoming tide against the hulls of anchored brigs and barkantines and privateer sloops. . . the sound of dark water around the piers and piles of the Cove. . .

RESTORATION AND RENOVATION:

David Leathers Smith is doing much work on the interior of his interesting old house at 36 Walnut Street in order to bring it back to its original condition. Former occupants had made changes unsuited to the house, and Mr. Smith has removed quaint but un-authentic additions and is restoring original features.

Mr. and Mrs. John Lyons of 70 Third Street are to be congratulated on the appearance of the house they own at 77 Third. It has been painted a fine red with white trim, the doorway has been restored, and the house bears a sign giving its approximate date - 1750.

Speaking of signs, the cellar of 16 Battery St. harbors a lot of them, all awaiting the go-ahead from people who would like their houses to display their date. The fee for painting the signs is only \$2.00 and the proceeds are used to benefit The Green Light.

ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT:

Quite understandably, work on the seawall is at a standstill, but there are evidences that much more is planned.

TREES: The new Bridge Street trees have already sustained a certain amount of damage, and two of the stakes intended to protect them have been snapped off at the base.

The spruce tree in Battery Park is surrounded by branches which have been torn off and strewn about.

POINT MOVIE PRODUCER !

On the evening of December 26, Miss Adé de Bethune showed a motion picture entitled "We Give Thanks" at Corpus Christi Carmel on Battery Street. The picture, in full color, was made by Miss de Bethune and was a demonstration of the Roman Catholic Mass, with commentary by Monsignor Hellriegel. Many of the scenes which interlarded the showing of the celebration of the Mass were filmed on the Point, and friends and neighbors who participated were amused

and delighted to see themselves. The film ran for half an hour and was most professional in every way.

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