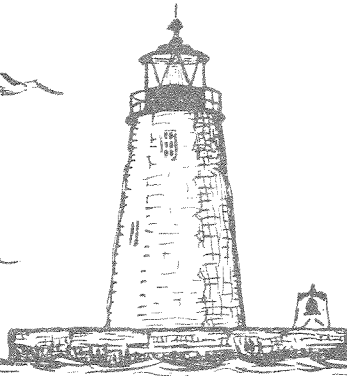


# The GREEN

# LIGHT



## BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

Vol IV - #5

VOL. IV

MAY 1960

No. 5

THE QUARTERLY MEETING of the General Membership took place on the evening of May 3 at St. John's Guild Hall, with the president, Edwin H. Brownell, in the chair.

After the reading of the minutes by Mrs. Harold E. Watson, Recording Secretary, the Treasurer, Richard S. Weiss, reported a total balance of \$2365.95

Mr. Brownell exhibited the resolution of commendation presented to The Point Association by the City Council, and also pictures and pamphlets relating to Shimoda, given to Mrs. Weiss by Mayor Suzuki on the occasion of his visit to the birthplace of Matthew Calbraith Perry.

Mrs. Henry E. Eccles, chairman for "An Afternoon on the Point" to be held Sat. July 9th, reported that 10 houses and gardens would be open, as well as a Maritime Exhibition. Tea, a puppet-show, rare silver, applehead dolls, and other attractions will be featured. Emphasis will be on a number of houses which have been "redeemed" and made into delightful homes. Mrs. Eccles displayed a flower-box and bucket to be used in beautifying the area, and said that the boxes can be made by a 4-H group anxious to take part. The first ten boxes will be free to applicants; a subsequent fee of 75¢ for materials will be charged.

**CLEAN-UP and BEAUTIFY:** Mrs. George D. Weaver, jr., Chairman, detailed her plan. In addition to the garden and clean-up contest, for which 21 junior contestants are already entered, a poster project in which Callender and Potter Schools are participating will feature posters dealing with historical subjects, to be displayed on

July 9, especially at the Perry birthplace. The entries are not confined to children; - posters by adults will be welcomed. Colonial costumes, games and activities, historical events, before-and-after clean-up scenes, are some suggested subjects. A book for the school library will be awarded on the junior level.

Mrs. Weaver also announced that the first prize in the garden and clean-up contest will be TWO weeks at camp, rather than one. The camp selected is the Beach Pond Camp for boys and girls, located near Voluntown, R.I. and operated by Rhode Island Camps, Inc. In a beautiful woodland setting, and fully staffed and protected, the camp should provide a wonderful experience for the lucky winner.

A bonus after the completion of the judging will be a picnic for ALL contestants. Mr. Wm. C. Harrington has kindly consented to be the chairman of this event.

**GARDEN COMMITTEE:** William H. Fullerton, chairman, reminded the members that consulting service is freely given, and urged them to ask for any needed help and hints. No area is too small or shady to be utilized in the beautification of the Point. Mr. Fullerton also said that he had inspected the children's gardens and that all the youngsters are working hard.

**BULLETIN:** Miss Price reported a total circulation of 1116 for the quarter, an increase of 416 over the corresponding quarter last year. Expenditures for the three months amounted to \$99.80, occasioned by

the payment of the bulk rate fees, and an unusual amount of printing and other expenses which will not be repeated for many months. She stated that an attempt would be made to secure a lower bulk rate, if the P.A. can qualify as a non-profit educational organization.

The membership stands at 416, with only 12 persons who have not signified their desire for renewed membership. This is a remarkable record. (N.B. Membership May 12 - 420)

SEA-GULL: An amusing interlude followed, when serious business was interrupted by the bestowal on the surprised Editor of the "Order of the Seagull" - a ribbon decoration bearing a fuzzy fowl and ornamented with postage stamps, accompanied by a fine parchment scroll commending the mysterious web-footed messenger which monthly delivers about 100 of the 375 Green Lights !

PROTECTION: Dr. David Nemptzow, Chairman, reported numerous complaints about garbage, litter, junk, vandalism, overflowing sewers, vacant houses "small children and large dogs", and told of the countless calls he had made to the Refuse Dept., Police, Health Dept., and Councilman.

Dr. Nemptzow suggested that a call to the City Manager's office often produced a quicker result than a complaint to the Refuse Collector; he also reminded the members that Mr. Robert Delehanty is interim Nuisance Inspector. He urged a direct call by individuals to the Building Inspector, Dog Constable, etc., depending on the type of complaint being registered, and noted that constant report and complaint were necessary in order to effect the improvement we all desire. He explained that the correction of conditions was often not the fault of the authorities, but in the constant relapse of the offenders. He told of an instance where it has taken 15 months to force a family into purchasing a garbage-can. He again urged members to make their complaints to him in writing; all such communications are of course confidential.

LIGHTING: A complete survey and priority list has been turned over to the Councilman for the First Ward, and action is contemplated.

CHARTER: Re-incorporation proceedings have been completed, and we are once again The Point Association of Newport, Rhode Island, INCORPORATED.

Mrs. Henry E. Eccles made a proposal from the floor, to establish a revolving loan fund to assist persons who wish to buy and improve old houses on the Point. Her detailed written plan was turned over to the President, and it was voted that the Executive Committee study the proposal and report back to the General Membership Meeting.

Mr. Brownell reminded these present that any member is always welcome at a Board meeting.

The President announced that Capt. C.J. Harter has replaced Miss Marion Galvin as chairman of the Nominating Committee, and that Miss Mary B. Perry has been appointed Corresponding Sec'y to fill the unexpired term of Mrs. Gary Sullivan.

SPEAKER: Mr. M. Joseph Sullivan, President of the Newport Horticultural Society, then addressed the meeting on planning the small home garden. Exhibiting plans and pictures, he outlined a lively and encouraging framework of suggestions and advice. Syressing the importance of soil-testing, and the desirability of borders rather than scattered ornamental beds, he urged the raising of old-fashioned flowers compatible with the Point surroundings, and made many specific suggestions.

An interesting angle was his use of praying mantises to control insect pests. These may be raised by the home gardener, and eliminate the need for poison sprays. At least one member, after the meeting, made inquiry as to where to order the initial batch of mantises.

Questions and answers flying to and fro proved a lively interest on the part of the listeners.

Free seeds were distributed by Mr. Fullerton and were eagerly taken. A plant sale of items brought in by members netted \$12.15 for the Greedy Green Light.

Refreshments were served by Mr. and Mrs. William F. Kitts, assisted by Mrs. Ivy O'Neill.

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**MAY BOARD MEETING:**

On May 5 the Executive Committee met at 16 Battery Street, with the president in the chair.

The minutes were read; the treasurer's report remained the same as that given at the Quarterly Meeting; the Corresponding Secretary reported on letters sent out.

"STORER LAND": The committee to investigate the status of the so-called "Storer land" south of Hunter House is being formed.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE:** The president named Miss Mary Perry to replace Mrs. Gary Sullivan, who has left Newport.

**LOAN FUND:** There was discussion of the proposal brought up by Mrs. Henry Eccles at the Quarterly Meeting regarding the creation of a revolving loan fund. It was voted to hold a special meeting of the Board for the purpose of considering the plan, at which time legal and professional advice would be sought.

**EVENT:** Mrs. Eccles reported progress in plans. Mrs. Charles J. Barker has consented to act as the treasurer for the event.

Miss Perry outlined a project for a "drawing" in connection with the "Afternoon on the Point" and stated that Walsh Bros. will donate an item of \$50 value for the purpose. She also announced that an anonymous donor is contributing \$20 towards printing expenses required by the July 9 event. (Details of the "Secret Treasure" on Page Five)

**BULLETIN:** Miss Price reported a circulation of 371 for the April Green Light, which was a six-page issue. (The present issue also runs to six pages.)

**GARDEN CONSULTANT:** Mr. Fullerton reported that he had distributed 60 packets of seeds at the Quarterly Meeting and had given Mrs. Weaver 60 for her junior garden contest. He stated that he was mailing cards to a number of persons who might be interested in gardening.

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**!! CLEAN-UP WEEK !!**

The annual city-wide clean-up week is slated for May 23-28. With its Monday, May 23 collection, the Point must set the ball rolling. Now is the time to get those bulky articles and trash out on the curb on Sunday night, May 22. Last year the Point was commended for a good job. Let's better our own record - get the Point REALLY CLEAN and then KEEP IT THAT WAY !

**ITEM:** On Tuesday, May 17, Mrs. G. D. Weaver, jr, and Mrs. R.S. Weiss were guests on the WADK Open Forum, discussing the Clean-up and Beautification Contest, in which there are now nearly 40 contestants.

**ITEM:** On April 27, the Editor spoke to the Portsmouth Historical Soc'y. Subject: The Point.

**ITEM:** The Beautification Contest was featured in a front-page picture in the Daily News, showing some of the youngsters at work. The caption was a little confusing. Though Mr. Fullerton is an ardent amateur gardener and generous consultant, his profession is that of interior decorator !

**ITEM:** In the interesting write-up of Prof. Thornton Wilder's Newport visit, Daily News, May 3, we were gratified to read the following: ". . . Incidentally, an anonymous somebody has been sending Wilder the periodic bulletin of the Point Association, and he has been reading it. He mentioned the description of old houses and the explanation of the landing site of the Newport Bay Bridge atop Washington St. ." (N.B. The Editor is NOT the "anonymous somebody"!)

### REDEEMING THE OLD HOUSE

For some time there has been an increasing interest in the redeeming of old or neglected houses. Often older houses have more living-space than later ones, and an indefinable charm that age bestows upon them. A house of this type can bring much happiness and comfort to its owners and become a distinct asset to the community. Much has been said about the remodeling of all types of houses, and many people look upon the acquisition of an old house and its subsequent face-lifting as an almost insurmountable task. Therefore, in this article, an effort is being made to consider some of the problems facing those interested in acquiring such property.

Older property which is for sale very often comes to the attention of The Point Association, where a listing is kept of old houses. Those of historic import (such as the Easton house) are purposely brought to our notice. Other houses are not listed with our group or any agency, but are advertised by "word of mouth".

In any event, the person becoming attached to an old house should have it thoroughly inspected by one (or preferably several) reputable contractor. There is no fee for this, and the purpose is to tell the interested party 1) just how sturdy the house actually is; 2) what repairs would need to be made in the immediate future; 3) approximately how much the most immediate repairs will cost (all costs are usually more than the contractor can honestly estimate and the purchaser should allow for "extras" in his budget); 4) Approximate price of entire remodeling work (this should include yard); 5) How alterations can be scheduled to fit within the purchaser's budget. (Names of reputable contractors familiar with problems encountered in rehabilitating old houses may be obtained from The Point Association upon request.)

If major repairs need to be made, the cost will naturally go up in proportion to the types of repairs. If work is to be arranged by a contractor, the cost will be higher than for those doing some of the work themselves. Usually a redeemed or remodeled house will cost no more than a new house of comparable size. In buying a new house, most costs are included in the purchase price, thereby making the original cost higher. In an older house the renovations and changes bring the cost up, but can be scheduled to the purchaser's finances. It is best to plan on maximum rather than minimum expenditure.

If the prospective buyer is satisfied with the report from the contractor and is still strongly attracted to the house, the next step would be to consult a lawyer and/or bank. Banks naturally take a realistic view of financing, and often require a larger down payment and a shorter loan period on an older house. Frequently an older house does not meet FHA specifications and therefore does not qualify for a FHA loan. There are advantages as well as disadvantages to the above mentioned conditions. A larger down payment usually means a lower monthly mortgage rate. Very often new houses require a small down payment but the monthly rates can be very large. Another condition sometimes imposed by a bank requires that a certain amount of the loan be used in immediate improvement of the property. Some banks are more lenient than others, and it might be to the purchaser's advantage to discuss the purchase of the property

(continued)

with several banks. Perhaps as more people become interested in the purchase of old houses, the banks will change or modify some of these requirements.

The word "restoration" has been purposely avoided in this discussion. Often "restoration" conjures up visions of exact, authentic, and extremely expensive work on old, historic homes. These are not the kinds of houses generally available on the Point, nor is this the type of work being considered here. Museum restoration is not only costly, but often not practical nor desirable in a private home.

Some of the houses on the Point are of indeterminate ancestry. They may have been moved to their present location, and no one really knows their exact age or origin. Seeking clues to their identity and pedigree is one of the exciting hobbies of the "old house addict". Some may not appear to be particularly distinguished. Many are shabby and forlorn - but not so forlorn that an acute eye cannot discern many possibilities for improvement. Some have tiny gardens with a glimpse of the bay, - and the sceptical have been amazed at the transformation from poor old derelicts to respectable, comfortable, and well-preserved members of the community, loved and lived in. These are the houses that can be acquired by the imaginative; that can be rehabilitated - redeemed -- and that can make of the Point an unusual, waterfront section of Newport.

- S. W. W.

SECRET TREASURE ! ! !

Perhaps YOU will be the one to unlock the Pirate Chest in the Poplar Street driftway on July 9 and receive a wonderful \$50.00 item donated by Walsh Bros.

An additional bonus to the winner is a season membership in the Newport Player's Guild.

Every Point Association member should be interested in promoting this project and participating in it ! Look for the Pirate poster in the window at Walsh's Thames St. and Aquidneck Shopping Center, - and then go in to make your donation.

Interested people are needed to help in putting this event across. Please get in touch with Mary Perry at VI 6-3144 for information as to how you can help.

Be Ready for Memorial Day  
WITH A 50-STAR AMERICAN FLAG !  
All Types and Sizes  
Steven Weaver, 9 Chestnut Street  
VI 6-2894

OBITUARY:

Well, Jonathan Easton - that "last house" of yours was spared by the British, but we who wished so much to save it, had to see it come down at last after all these years - all these centuries.

Thrice condemned, branded as an eyesore and a nuisance, its good gray shape is now only a memory. Again and again we thought it could be saved; over and over the plans for it failed. It did not come down without a struggle, a last sigh and shudder.

That gray ghost will haunt some of us. But sleep well, Jonathan; sleep better than we can, now that the last of the Easton houses is gone from "Easton's Point".

IF THERE IS DELAY in Refuse Collection, spillage, or any other violation of regulations, call VI 7-2646 immediately.  
(Paid Ad.)

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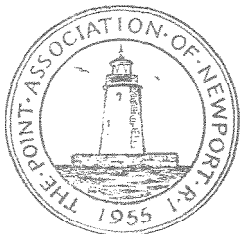
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**THE GREEN LIGHT  
THE POINT ASSOCIATION**

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