

The GREEN

LIGHT



BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

VOL. V

JUNE 1961

No. 6

MAY AND JUNE BOARD MEETINGS:

The Executive Committee met on May 18 at 22 Bridge Street, with the President, Wm. C. Harrington, presiding.

It was noted that the City Manager, on the resignation of the Dog Constable, has proposed that the post be made a full time one at an increased salary. It was voted that the Point Ass'n send Mr. Bisson a letter approving his proposal.

The resignation of Wm. F. Kitts as Chairman of the Nominating Committee was accepted with regret. Lt. Kitts is called to sea duty.

Miss Price reported a circulation of 319 for the April GREEN LIGHT. There was considerable discussion as to the future of the Bulletin when its present editor leaves Newport. It is really considerably more than a one-man job, and should have a working committee to handle its various departments. The possibility of issuing it as a quarterly was noted, and also the advisability of the mechanical work being done by a professional stenographer. Anyone interested in serving on the Bulletin Committee, please step forward. Needed: an Editor, Membership, Advertising, Circulation, and Production Committee. The new regime will take effect after the Annual Meeting in October.

JUNE MEETING:

The Board met on the evening of June 15 at 42 Walnut Street.

The President appointed Kenneth V. Stein as Chairman of the Nominating Committee, to replace Lieut. Wm. F. Kitts, who is on sea duty.

Correspondence was read, and our membership in the National Trust for Historic Preservation was renewed.

After routine business, most of the meeting was given over to a discussion of Mrs. George Weaver's plans for a summer event.

The affair itself will be a simple one, consisting of a tour of gardens (without charge) and light refreshments at a nominal price.

The pilot project leading up to the afternoon of August 5 itself would form the more important part of the plan in its over-all improvement and beautification of the Point.

Mrs. Weaver's plan calls for a number of items which the Board approved:

- 1) Permission to be sought from the New Haven Railroad to paint or whitewash the fence over the track at Walnut St. bridge, with installation of flower-boxes to improve a spot which is at present run-down and unattractive. This has been done in other communities.

2) The hiring of a gardener to weed around all trees planted by the Point Association, and a request to the City to do the same for the other trees, as well as removing weeds from sidewalks and along the curbs.

3) Flower-tubs or boxes to be installed in Battery Park, and also offered, fully planted, to our friends of the neighborhood stores if they are willing to water and maintain them.

4) A request to the New Haven Railroad and to J.T. O'Connell to tidy their properties on Bridge Street.

These projects, undertaken by the Association, should much improve the general appearance of parts of the Point. It is hoped that our members will cooperate.

Acceptance of Mrs. Weaver's plan was voted; also that an estimate of expenditure should be sent in for approval in detail.

A number of complaints were also registered, to be brought to the attention of the City Manager as Director of Public Safety.

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A TOUR of Point Gardens - including those of the winners of the Junior Garden Contest: SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 1:30 to 5:00 P.M. Gardens open free of charge. Refreshments at a location to be announced, for a nominal sum.

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ITEM: The position of Dog Constable is being temporarily filled by Donald P. Bosare, of 73 Memorial Boulevard. Contact may be made with him by calling the Police Department, VI 7-1212.

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In this respect, the Point Association has sent a communication to the City Manager, endorsing his desire for a full-time Dog Constable and suggesting that a constable patrolling the city, rather than being on call, would be able to correct many existing problems.

IN CONNECTION with her research on Fort Greene (see following two pages) Mrs. Sherman has come on an amusing poem which appeared in the Newport Daily News in 1926 on the occasion of the presentation of Fort Greene Park (FGP) to the City by Frederick P. Garrettson (FFG)

"F.G.P. stands for Fort Greene
Park

And F.P.G. for a name.

This strange coincidence we mark,

'Tis fitting just the same.

A little gift so well bestowed

Shall bless the heart that gave

The oldest fort in this old town

From obloquy to save.

From its northern side a tunnel
ran

Eastward to old Bliss Mine,

Then southward ran past Morton

Park

Far beyond the picket line.

Thus smugglers brought provisions
in

And information out -

For the British foe who held the
town

Were vile beyond a doubt.

Near its southern (?) side there
was a spring

At the foot of Battery Street,

Where townsfolk came to fill

their pails

And gossips there to meet.

A thing of beauty - its crescent
walls -

Methinks it has no peer.

Our thanks to thee, dear F.P.G.

For this gift to our town so

dear!

-- Ernest I. Hinds.

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Editorial Comment: Now that we have learned that the Fort extended all the way to Second St. originally, we are not surprised that nothing much will flourish in our garden but Artillery plant.



A BRIEF HISTORY OF FORT GREENE -- PART TWO

Louise C. Sherman

* * * * *

In 1797 John Adams was elected second President of the United States and became the first Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Navy. Fortifications along the Atlantic coast were strengthened against threat of war with France. * On August 27, 1799, President Adams purchased the site of the North Battery, "it being deemed necessary to erect fortifications thereon for the defense of the Port and Harbour of Newport".

The fort was rebuilt in a semi-circular form, with an elliptical barbette battery of twelve guns, as described in the May issue of the Green Light. It was named Fort Greene in honor of Rhode Island's Revolutionary hero, General Nathaniel Greene, and remained Government property from 1799 to 1926. *

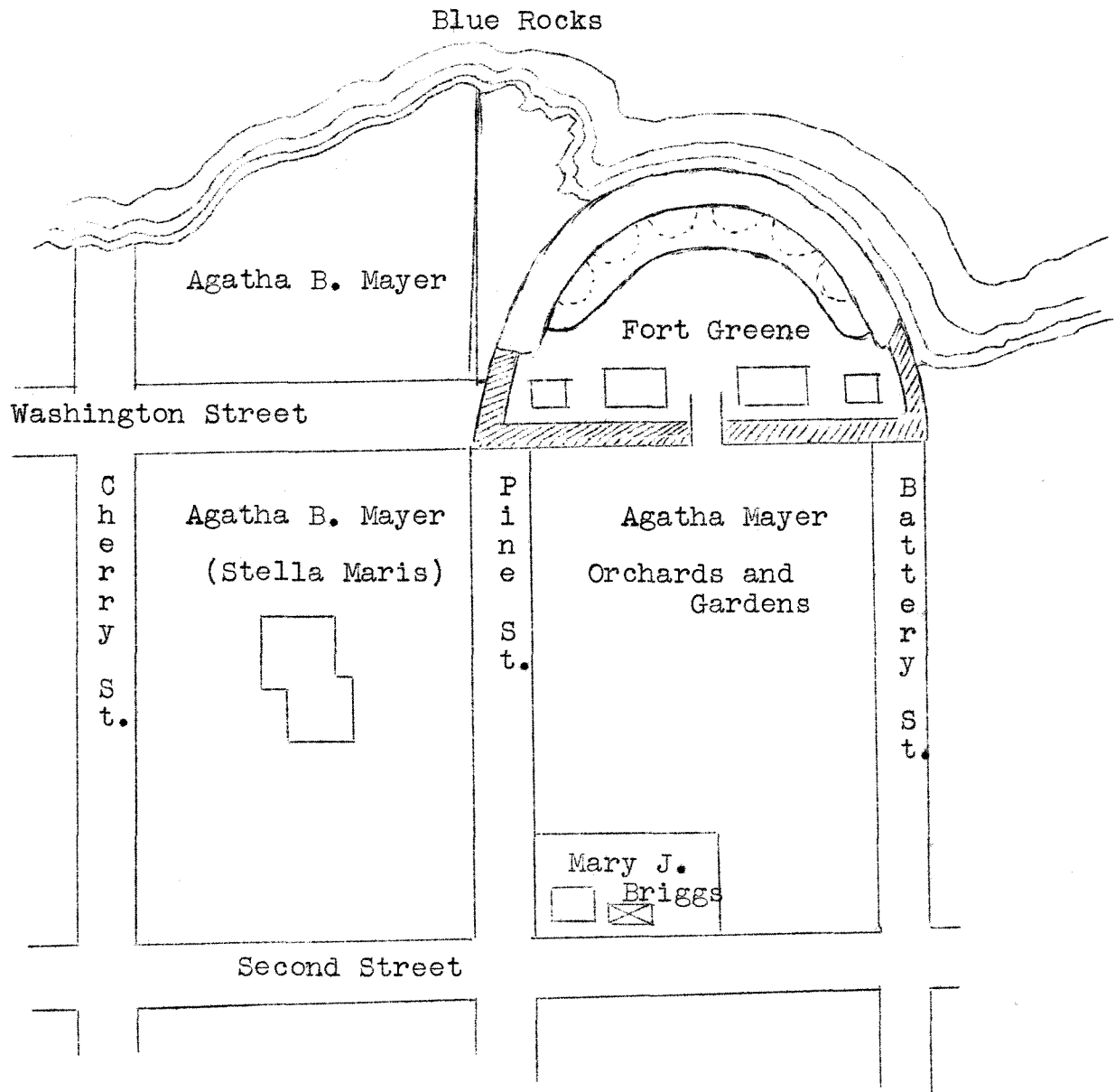
In 1853, Agatha B. Mayer purchased land to erect her mansion (the house we now know as "Stella Maris") and additional land for orchards and gardens. During 1853, the Mayer property was extended from Cherry Street to Battery Street; from the harbor to Second Street. On September 30 of that year, the Overseers of the Rhode Island Monthly Meeting of Friends conveyed to Agatha B. Mayer "the lots on which Fort Greene stands." This amounted to rental, as the fort itself remained Government property. Washington Street, which in 1853 ended at Fort Greene, was extended by 1859 to Battery Street.

* By Act of Congress approved February 23, 1887 and ratified in July 1891, the Secretary of War authorized the City of Newport to use Fort Greene solely for the purpose of a public park - and at this time the fort was filled in to become the attractive park we see today; though we no longer have the bandstand, where many remember the concerts of a moonlit Sunday night.

On June 7, 1926, the U.S. War Department announced the proposed sale of Fort Greene. Frederick P. Garrettson, a prominent merchant who was Mayor of Newport 1900-1902, generously offered to purchase and present the site to the City of Newport. The auction was held on July 22, 1926. Mayor Mortimer Sullivan bid for the City of Newport, and other bidders withdrew in respect for the City's offer. The tract was purchased for \$5471.41 - and on September 30, 1926, Frederick P. Garrettson presented Fort Greene Military Reservation to the City of Newport to preserve it forever as a public park.

Today, the outer wall is the only visible part of Fort Greene, which lies buried intact beneath the soil and green grass of Battery Park. An observant visitor can follow a faint indentation of half circles, where the park has settled inside the barbette area. It outlines the battery - where twelve guns mounted in pairs turned to defend the Port and Harbour of Newport.

NEWPORT HARBOUR



The plan of Fort Greene is copied from
"Historical Sketch of the Fortification
Defenses of Narragansett Bay"

The street plan shows the area after Mrs. Mayer's
acquisition of land in 1853, but before Washington Street
was extended to Battery Street in 1859

INTERIOR DECORATOR VI 7-5163
William H. Fullerton
41 Washington Street

+ + + + +
FIFTY-STAR AMERICAN FLAGS
All Types and Sizes
Steven Weaver VI 6-2894
9 Chestnut Street

+ + + + +
HELEN'S BEAUTY SALON
All Branches of Beauty Service
3 Stone St. VI 6-1165
Helen Preece Willis, Prop'r
Residence, 16 Second St.

+ + + + +
THE JOHN STEVENS SHOP. VI 6-0566
29 Thames St. Founded in 1705
Letter Carving on Wood & Stone

+ + + + +
BOOK BINDING AND REPAIRING
Initialling on Leather
Glenn A. Bissell
16 Walnut Street VI 7-4340

+ + + + +
THE POINT MARKET VI 6-1088
Groceries - Frozen Foods
Second and Walnut Streets

+ + + + +
G & H TV SERVICE, 28 Third Street
VI 6-0455
Service Day & Night
Saturday and Sunday Included

THE ST. LEO SHOP VI 7-5428
118 Washington Street
Religious Cards, Books, Mantillas

+ + + + +
BRIGET'S BEAUTY BAR VI 7-0236
Two Mile Corner
By Appointment Only
Mrs. Joseph Waluk, Res. 34 Third St.

+ + + + +
CORPUS CHRISTI CARMEL
RETREAT HOUSE
21 Battery Street, VI 7-6165
Religious Articles and Cards
for all Occasions

+ + + + +
PETE'S CANTEEN, 74½ Third Street
Bakery, Canned and Dairy Goods
Daily Newspapers - Magazines

+ + + + +
LEARY'S OIL COMPANY
Range & Fuel Oil. Metered Service
George Leary, Prop'r.
47 Washington St. VI 7-5591

+ + + + +
VINCENT'S
AT 64 THAMES ST.
Ladies' Haircutting a Specialty

+ + + + +
GAMAGE'S VARIETY STORE, VI 7-9626
9 Thames Street
Candy, Cigars, Cold Cuts,
Ice Cream, Magazines, Newspapers

+ + + + +
Put your paper trash in bags. Don't throw papers DOWN - pick 'em up!
Tell the children what city trash containers are for. Teach the
kiddies that trees are not poles to try out jack-knives on, and that if
the bark is stripped off a tree all the way around, the tree will die.