

The GREEN

LIGHT



BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

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CITY CLEAN-UP WEEK

WEEK OF MAY TWENTY-SECOND

Put your bulky articles out on the sidewalk before 8:00 A.M. on
Monday, May 22nd

When street-sweeping signs are placed on your street, PLEASE do
co-operate by parking your car over night SOMEWHERE ELSE

Now is the time to get rid of that trash, to clean attic, cellar
and yard; to pull up that ragweed, and get out the paint-pot !

There has just been made available to us a wealth of material from the National Clean-up - Paint-up Fix-up Bureau in Washington. We regret that our limited space precludes giving more than a tiny sample, nor is there now time for the many suggestions to be acted upon - covering as they do every phase of school and civic participation. The establishment of a year-round City Clean-up Committee would permit the use of such material in a continuing effort, to the great benefit of Newport.

"For HEALTH - clean up and haul away that accumulation of trash and rubbish that invites rodents, fire and disease.

"For BEAUTY, get out the paint brushes, rollers and spray guns. . . Painting adds to the value as well as the beauty of your home.

"For SAFETY - tidy homes prevent accidents and protect your family.

"For CIVIC PRIDE - have that yard raked, the fence fixed, seeds planted, bushes trimmed. Help make the BLOCK YOU LIVE IN a joy to see !"

The League of Women Voters of Newport - sponsors

COLONIAL NEWPORT HOMES - OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, May 20th, 1:30 - 4:30 P.M. Donation \$ 1.50

1. THE BANNISTER-PRESCOTT HOUSE, 56 Pelham St. 1751: Home of Colonial merchant John Bannister; headquarters of Gen. Prescott.
2. 42 WALNUT STREET: Restored by owners, Mr & Mrs. R.S. Weiss
3. "THE PINEAPPLE HOUSE" 1750: Faithfully restored by its present owners, Mr & Mrs David Leathers Smith. 36 Walnut St.
4. THE GEORGE GIBBS HOUSE, 9 Chestnut St. corner of Second St. Built well before 1750. Architecturally important and finely restored by Mr & Mrs George D. Weaver, jr., its owners.

THE QUARTERLY MEETING of the membership took place on the evening of Thursday, May 4, in St. John's Guild Hall, with a good attendance.

==The President, Wm. C. Harrington, called the meeting to order, and the minutes of the January meeting were read by Mrs. Gordon A. Bates, Recording Secretary.

==The Treasurer, R.S. Weiss, presented his report, which showed a balance of \$3784.19, still including the grant of \$500.

==The Editor of THE GREEN LIGHT reported a circulation for the quarter of 931 - a regrettable 263 less than for the previous quarter. The balance for the Bulletin stands at \$255.44

==Mrs. J.H. Benson, Chairman of the special committee on the Fleet Landing, spoke of the letters sent to interested legislators, and of their courteous replies. No new developments on the fate of the area have been apparent.

==Mr. Harrington commented on his appointment as a member of the city committee to study possible uses for Goat Island, now surplus.

==Kenneth V. Stein, a member of Mrs. Benson's committee, stated that appraisal of the Fleet Landing has been made, both privately and by the government, and that the private appraiser had been warned that there would be opposition to any attempt to re-zone the area at the north end for industrial or commercial use.

===M. Joseph Sullivan, chairman of the Junior Garden Contest, displayed the flyers which will be distributed in the schools. He was empowered to furnish the children with such seeds as he saw fit.

REVOLVING FUND: Mrs. R.S. Weiss, chairman of the study committee, gave a brief review of the purposes of such a fund, and reminded the members of the necessary amendments to by-laws and charter, of which due notice had been given.

Mr. Harrington stated that the Executive Committee recommends to oppose the proposition at this time.

Mrs. Weiss then moved "That consideration of a revolving fund be tabled until such time as the Board and Point Association members should wish to reconsider it"

This was passed on a nearly unanimous hand vote. A motion was then made to return to the Homeland Foundation of New York the \$500 grant which has been held in escrow awaiting a decision. This too was passed.

The decision to table the proposal will enable the Board or the membership to revive it at any time if desired, rather than abolishing the plan entirely. Mr. Harrington further explained that it was deemed wise at this time to postpone such a project, owing to lack of adequate funds, the necessity of a committee of experts, etc.

NEW BUSINESS: The President cited the need for a chairman for the Protection Committee and also the Refreshment Committee.

==He reported that Mrs. George D. Weaver, jr. has accepted chairmanship of a summer event, and is making plans.

==Mr. Harrington congratulated William F. Kitts on his commissioning as a Lieutenant JG, USN, the reward of ability and hard work; this was applauded.

==Mr. Stein rose to point out that the Association has the opportunity of watching the zoning act as pertaining to non-conforming uses, and cited various examples - stressing the fact that the amended act clearly states that no non-conforming use can be changed from one use to another. Several illegal uses exist on the Point. We must be alert and take steps to see that the act is strictly administered.

Mr. Harrington replied that all such cases are being watched.

SPEAKER:

The President introduced William W. Corcoran, Esq., of the Newport Redevelopment Agency, who gave a detailed summary of the steps to

to be taken in urban renewal. He described the four stages of planning for the down-town area, with particular emphasis on Stage One - the area from Long Wharf to Market Square along the waterfront. Initial steps have already been taken for this part of the project, and federal funds would bear a large part of the expense. Actual plans are not yet drawn up, and would await the services of an expert planner - but Mr. Corcoran stressed the need for a citizens' advisory committee, both to suggest ideas of planning, and to carry the message to and from the people of Newport.

== At the close of the meeting there was a slight plant sale and distribution of seeds, presided over by Miss Eileen Burke.

== Refreshments were served by Mrs. E. Allen Bloom.

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Owing to postponement of the May meeting of the Executive Committee, reports of both the May and June meetings will be given in the June GREEN LIGHT.

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THE EDITOR'S POINT OF VIEW:

Here in Newport, we have a tendency to complain bitterly, without implementing our complaints with action. It is quite true that the City, through lack of funds and owing to other factors, is often pretty lax in fulfilling all its duties. However, we ourselves - the disgruntled citizens - could do more than we are doing to remedy some of the very conditions we deplore.

The refuse collectors spill the papers as barrels are emptied - but do we call the Nuisance Inspector and demand follow-up - or even humble ourselves to sweep up the litter and put it back in the can? We turn away in disgust from accumulations of refuse, but do we insist in no uncertain terms that the authorities crack down on the spot?

Are we always careful, ourselves, to follow the ordinances governing the storage of refuse? Do we always take the trouble, in passing, to discard papers in a city container rather than dropping them on the street or tossing them from a car window?

The annual slight brush-up and junk removal is not enough to clean up Newport. Merchants sweep litter into the street, whence it blows back on to the sidewalk. Citizens grumble at strewn papers, but never soil their hands to pick them up. "Keep Newport Clean" - we see this suggestion or command blazoned on the refuse trucks and municipal trash-cans of what is perhaps the dirtiest city on the Eastern seaboard. Courtesy or politics should not prevent the imposition of fines (for we have a littering ordinance) discouragement or apathy should not deter the citizens themselves from combatting actively the problem we so deplore.

A good housewife cleans her home and sets out her best before inviting guests; Newport invites her guests, the tourists, to a historic city of which we should not be too proud. We are like a hostess displaying with pride a rare piece of antique furniture, thick with dust and cobwebs, scratched, marred and disfigured.

The National Clean-Up, Paint-Up Fix-Up Bureau, 1500 Rhode Island Ave. Washington 5, D.C. puts out a budget of fascinating material for use by city, merchants, Boy and Girl Scouts, churches, schools grade by grade. Clever ideas, movies, posters, stickers, plans, are available. Every organization in this town should obtain and implement this valuable assistance - so that in 1962, when the America's Cup Race will again be with us, this town may be fit to receive its many distinguished guests - so that we shall not have to hastily "sweep the dirt under the rug" and apologize. Or do we even apologize? We should.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF FORT GREENE
Louise C. Sherman

In pre-Revolutionary days, the land now encompassed by Battery Park was the pasture land of Thomas Robinson, but with the coming of the British a fortification was thrown up in one night of early 1776 to give battle to the British ship Scarborough, then off Rose Island. Taken by surprise, the man-o'-war retreated before the fire from the new fort.

Later in the year, the fort was extended across Water Street (now Washington) and about 100 feet south and east, into the present grounds of "Stella Maris". Daniel Austin's small house, which stood just about where the north curve of the "Stella Maris" driveway now is, was removed in June 1776, to make room for erection of that portion of the "North Battery", as it was then called.

It was an enclosed fort, whose only entrance was from Pine Street. From about 50 feet up Pine, it extended across the property now owned by Rear Admiral H.E. Eccles and the next lots north, to the northern side of Battery Street, where it circled to join the western portion of the fort.

Newport fell before the overwhelming British invasion, and the fort became part of the British lines which encircled the city until the evacuation of the invaders.

In 1798, the North Battery was re-named Fort Greene, in honor of Rhode Island's great Revolutionary general, Nathaniel Greene, and Water Street became Washington Street, to honor the first President.

On July 19, 1814, the Newport Artillery Company, under Colonel Benjamin Fry, took possession of Fort Greene and there performed camp duty until February 1815, by order of the Secretary of War. Many Newport and Point names are to be found on the roster:- Sergeant Sylvester R. Hazard, Corporal Joseph W. Hazard, Clerk Holmes Weaver, Drummer Samuel H. Lawton, Fifer Jesse Burdick, and Privates Benjamin Tew, Stephen N. Jacques, John Howard, Benjamin Dunham, James Boone, Silas Brownell, John Boone, William Pitt Carr, Edward Berry, William Wilson, Abraham Sherman, David Huntington, Benjamin B. Howland - and the cook, Philip Wyatt.

A description of the fort as it was set forth in a Report of the Board of Engineers, April 7, 1820, shows it to have been as follows:

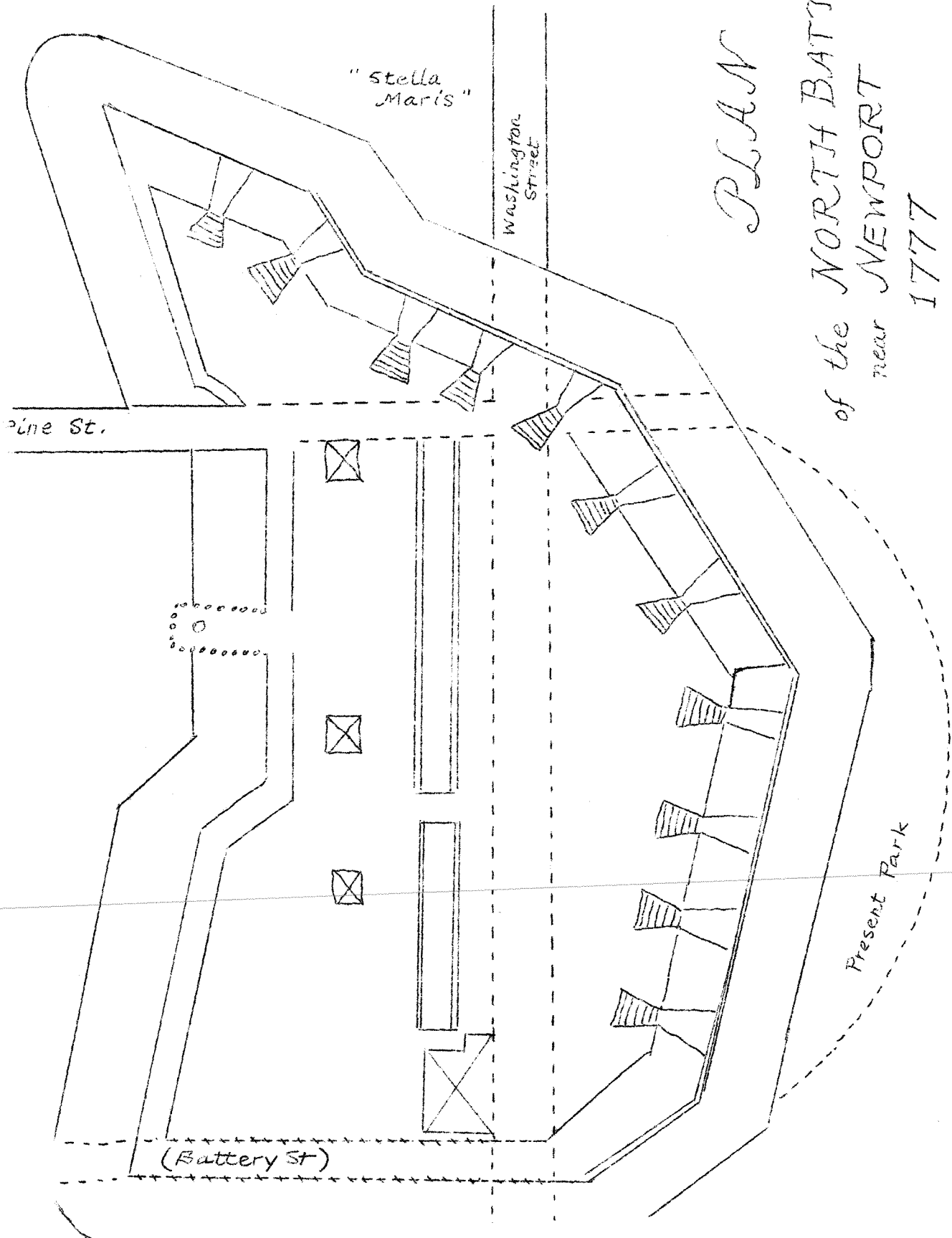
"Fort Greene is an elliptical barbette battery for 12 or 13 guns, with a palisaded gorge. The work has a development measured upon its interior crest of 240 feet. Its parapet is 21 feet thick, its rampart 26 feet broad, its scarp wall 20 feet high, has command of 29 feet above low water, and within the work is a brick barrack and guard house, a bomb-proof magazine, and a hot-shot furnace." The comment of the Board of Engineers states that "this is sufficient for its purpose."

(Historical Sketch of the Fortification Defenses of Narragansett Bay, by Bvt Major-General George Cullen, U.S. Army, ret. 1884)

Our information was gleaned from Newport Historical Society records, with the ever-welcome help of Mrs. Peter Bolhouse.

In the June issue of THE GREEN LIGHT, we shall trace the subsequent history of Fort Greene, and its eventual transition into the Battery Park of the present day.

(Dotted lines indicate present streets and park)



"Stella
Maris"

Washington
Street

PLAN

of the NORTH BATTERY
near NEWPORT
1777

Pine St.

(Battery St)

Present Park

