

The GREEN

LIGHT



BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

VOL. IX

OCTOBER 1965

No. 4

OCTOBER GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The October General Membership Meeting of the Point Association of Newport will be held on October 28th at 8 P.M. at Mumford School. This will celebrate the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Point Association, with some highlights of the history, given by the President, Mr. William Fullerton, and a birthday cake. The report of the nominating committee will be presented (see below). Mr. Emil Jemail will show his movies of Greece, Lebanon, and Jerusalem.

Report of the Nominating Committee:

First Vice President - Rear Admiral Henry E. Eccles
Treasurer - Mrs. Francis Carr, Jr.
Recording Secretary - Miss Anne B. Canole
Nominating Committee for 1965 - 1966 - Mrs. Harold Arnold
Mrs. Walter Whitley
Mrs. Peter Bolhouse

Presented by the 1964 - 1965 Nominating Committee:

Mrs. Harold Arnold
Mrs. Louise Sherman
Mrs. William MacLeod
Mr. M. Joseph Sullivan
Miss Anne Hagerty, Chairman

SPECIAL NOVEMBER MEETING

Mr. Henry N. Flynt, the President of the Heritage Foundation of Deerfield, Massachusetts, said, before he went abroad, that he would be delighted to speak to the Point Association in November, and we hope to send out invitations soon. The lecture will be at the Art Association, and the public is cordially invited. This will be a special meeting in honor of our tenth anniversary.

LECTURE BY PROFESSOR RUDY FAVRETTI

On November 16th Professor Rudy Favretti of the University of Connecticut will give a lecture at the Art Association at 8 o'clock. He is an expert on Colonial gardens, and planned the gardens at Sturbridge. This is sponsored by the Horticultural

Society, the Point Association of Newport, and the Newport Garden Club. The public is invited, and admission is free.

THE JULY GENERAL MEETING

The July general membership meeting of the Point Association was held on July 29th, a supper picnic at Mrs. William MacLeod's, on a beautiful evening. Not too many came, but all enjoyed it. The business meeting was brief and informal, and no decisions were made. Esther Bates then sang the lugubrious ballad of "Little Nell of Narragansett Bay", with appropriate tolling of bells, as we gazed out over the Bay and sang the choruses. After sunset, everyone adjourned to King Covell's, and we were delighted to see more of his slides of gardens, sunsets, and Point scene

OLD FASHIONED AUCTION

The first auction was held on Mrs. Benson's lawn, with John Lyons, the Auctioneer, on August 7th. There was an amazing collection of what-have-yous, but everything was sold, thanks to Mr. Lyons. Everyone agreed it was much easier and more profitable than opening houses, or getting together collections, and it was enjoyable. \$548.45 was cleared.

TEENAGE LAWN DANCE

On Monday, August 30th, the Point Association sponsored a teenage Lawn Dance on the lawn at Mr. King Covell's, 72 Washington Street. Mrs. Curtiss James was Chairman, with Mrs. Francis Carr and Mrs. John Barton as committee members. The chaperones were: Mr. and Mrs. James, Mrs. Carr, Mr. and Mrs. John Barton, and Mr. Fullerton. The policeman on duty was Mr. Joseph Sullivan, who so kindly donated his time. The teenage committees, appointed by Mrs. James, organized and ran the dance, which proved to be a success. The amount of money taken in was \$29.00 which was donated to Care. The committee members were: Mary Arnold, Paula James, Sue Arnold, Louise Duffy, Cathie James, Jane Barton, Pat Carr, Mary Ann Carr, Helen Devol, and Shannon Doolan.

For door prizes there were two albums from Moss's Music Shop, two pizzas from Bellagamas Pizza Parlor, ice for the coke by Peckham Coal and Ice Company, and four tickets to the Music Festival at Rogers High from Jimmy Douglas. Refreshments were donated by Point members, and the coke was furnished by the Point Association.

The Point Teens would like to thank the Point Association for sponsoring this dance, and Mrs. James, Mrs. Carr, and Mrs. Barton for helping us to show what the teens can do on their own to contribute to the Point.

Cathie James

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER FROM JANET BROWNELL FROM PUERTO RICO

Ten years ago we felt the urgency to do something about the fine old Newport houses which were being ignored, neglected, and even worse -- being torn down. We asked friends from the Point to meet with us -- to see if, as a group, we could do together what individually seemed impossible -- to show others that living in an old house can be a satisfying, interesting, and practical experience. The idea was approved in theory, but most felt we could not carry it out. Suggestions showed much interest in an area improvement society which would be practical. After the proposed bylaws were drawn up by a committee, the Point Association of Newport was started. Out of the numerous people who helped, I must mention William MacLeod, who gave us endless legal aid, and helped us to get our charter.

The Point Association served its purpose admirably. There have been moments of frustration -- our young maples cut to ribbons, the never ending garbage problem, which David Nemtzw struggled over for years, but the moments of success are many: our successful Point Days, the Christmas festivals each year, the garden contests in the summer, the Arts and Crafts show, the Antiques and Collections exhibit, thanks especially to Phil Arnold and Isabel Eccles, and our Green Light, thanks to Edith Ballinger Price.

Our life here is very different, interesting and healthy for all of us, but we miss the Point, the Point Association, the many wonderful people, and the Peter Simon House.

Ned and Janet Brownell

OCTOBER 1965

Viewing the Point Association of Newport as a sturdy ten year old, it is sometimes difficult to recall the many joys and sorrows which accompany the cries of a newborn infant. We vividly remember, however, the evening Janet and Ned Brownell visited to sound out on an idea they had. The Brownells had recently purchased their Bridge Street home (the Peter Simon house) and were in the process of restoring the lovely

house. Since they were relative newcomers to the city, what did we, as "the natives", think of establishing an organization to help restore the Point to its original beauty, charm, and historic value? Some of the questions the Brownells came armed with followed:

Were there enough Point residents interested in a neighborhood renewal program? Would a large cross section of neighbors become involved to make the project completely representative of the entire Point? Will the local government lend its support and aid? Can we surmount -- even avoid -- the inherent problems which plague all organizations: narrow-minded factions, lack of diversified leadership, scarcity of workers, etc.?

In our eagerness to launch the plan, we promptly embraced the idea, and lightly disposed of all the problems presented.

A meeting was then arranged at which the organization's proposed name, purpose, goals and rough constitution were agreed upon. This evening was spent discussing the pros and cons with Joe and Ann Weaver, David and Tama Nemptow, and the Brownells. The eight of us were quick to agree on the basic purposes and goals of the organization; they were to be direct, simple, and tightly incorporated in the constitution. The organization, also, was to be as democratic as possible to guarantee membership participation and control, and dues were to remain at a nominal figure so that this fee would not act as a deterrent to membership. The dubious distinction of drafting a constitution was awarded to Joe and Ann Weaver. The rest of us were to select a meeting night, a place in which to meet, and finally to contact Point residents we felt sympathetic to such a cause.

Ten years ago our sights were set on a target: Complete renewal of the Point section of Newport -- not alone the historic aspect of the Point, but total neighborhood renewal.

Looking back at the Point Association's accomplishments, we can't help but beam with something like parental pride. However, because there still remains so much to be done, little time can be spent luxuriating in past achievements. Since P.A.N. is now ten years old, it seems reasonable to expect the organization to take firmer strides, and be at the same time more deliberate and swifter.

There are still more weeds to pull, more streets to clean, more houses to paint, more trees to plant, more signs to renew, more lights to install, more driftways to improve, more parks to beautify, more trash to clear away, and the ever elusive city ordinances to have enforced. And so with this labor of love still confronting us, we hope for continued success and growth during the next ten years.

George and Eleanor Weaver

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION

The Point Association of Newport was founded ten years ago in 1955; the first meeting was held at the Chamber of Commerce (then in the Brick Market) in June, with Edwin Brownell presiding. Its aims from the beginning have been:

1. The general improvement and enrichment of the Point.
2. The beautification of approaches, streets, properties, waterfront, and other areas of the Point.
3. The protection of the section against detrimental structures, obnoxious enterprises, and nuisances.
4. The encouragement and promotion of active interest in all properties with special emphasis on the historical aspect of the Point.

From the Bylaws of the Point Association of Newport

The restoration of old houses was not considered feasible by the Point Association, since that is a most expensive proposition. It was decided the dues for active members should be \$1 a year, and so they have remained. This was to encourage everyone interested in our aims to take an active part in discussions, and help with our projects. Membership is open to anyone interested.

Our most noticeable beautification is the planting of trees, scores of them by now, many replacing ones broken off by vandals, or hit by motorists or even girdled

by knives. Bridge Street has had the worst record -- the latest being four healthy maples cut off when the Pitts Head Tavern was moved down Bridge Street to its new home near Washington Street. But it is at last encouraging to look down the streets and see them shaded, and the trees flourishing. Boxes of red geraniums in Battery Park are much admired, though even here vandals take plants every year, and often tip the boxes over. This year Mr. Joe Sullivan planted four trees in private yards, near the sidewalk, hoping they will survive better. *15 trees 2 in parks - 2 on sidewalk and*

We have had several garden contests for both adults and children, and when the houses are open, some gardens are shown. King Covell is making a collection of colored slides of gardens and flowers at different seasons; we plan to show these slides at intervals to encourage us all. *11 mail Jones*

We have fewer unsightly places, and most home owners try to keep their property looking better. We are still pursuing hopefully some of the worst nuisances. There is a perpetual battle about trash and garbage collection and littering. We have hired a man part time to clean up the sidewalks and gutters, a great help temporarily. There are trash barrels in some of the driftways. The city has repaired the sea wall at Battery Park and Washington Street for years a hazard, put up new street signs and stop signs, and improved the street lighting. But, the city has done no repairs on the Washington Street sidewalk between Van Zandt Avenue and Cypress Streets. We no longer have to contend with the soot from Goat Island, though it has been dusty from all the wrecking operations there.

When the Lobster Claw was given permission by the Board of Review to move across Bridge Street and build a restaurant in a vacant lot at the corner of Bridge and Third (a non-conforming use, as the north side of Bridge is zoned for residential), the Association filed a suit forbidding this with the Supreme Court of Rhode Island, where it is still pending. The Point Association has also appointed committees to report to the general membership on various projects -- the Bay Bridge, Redevelopment, and Historic Zoning, all of which we have approved in principle, and the Hurricane barricade, of which we strongly disapprove.

Believing the children of the Point are one of our great assets, we have donated \$100 scholarships for three years now. For two years we helped the Concentric Teens 4H club with camperships and donations, and they provided refreshments for the general meetings, and helped in many ways at our summer activities.

Ten years ago the Point Association ran dances every two weeks for Point teen agers; these were later taken over by St. John's Church. Next we tried a series of square dances, a less successful venture.

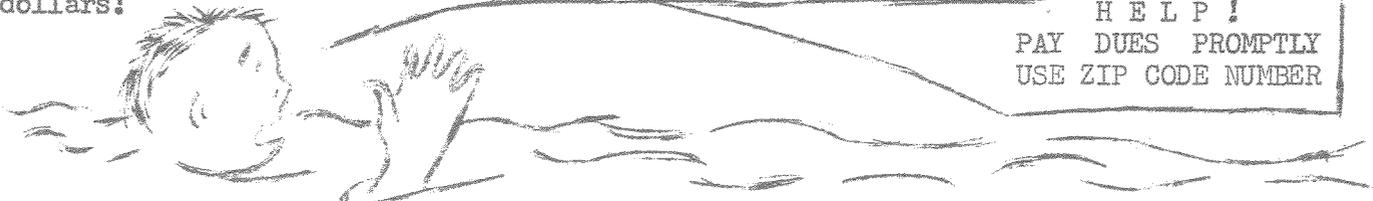
Every year we have had a summer money raising affair, some large, some small, usually open houses every other year, and all have been popular -- Old Port Days, Afternoons on the Point, Apple Blossom coffee hours, garden parties, Arts and Crafts exhibitions, marine exhibitions, teas, and auctions.

Every year we have had a Christmas celebration, usually with a tree and lights at Battery Park, contests for Christmas decorations, and carol singing.

The Green Light, the bulletin of the Point Association of Newport, is now published four times a year, with special notices sent out for extra events. Since Edith Price moved away, we have had Mrs. Whitman mimeograph everything, and we mail all the copies, as we no longer have a sea gull to fly from door to door. This adds to the cost of the Green Light, but all this expense is paid by the memberships. We now have a membership of 354 local (of whom 60 are new this year), 72 off island (of whom 15 are new this year), and 20 complimentary copies.

"Here and There on the Point", compiled from excerpts from the Green Light, has now sold over 500 copies -- more are available from Mrs. Eccles.

We extend our thanks to every member, as we realize that all our successful accomplishments are due to the entire membership. We look forward to your continued support, your interest and help. Come to the meetings, take part in the discussions, send in your suggestions, which we welcome and need very badly, and also send in your dollars!



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Let's all work the year around to keep the Point clean and beautiful. Try to teach children to respect the trees, and to pick up paper, not throw it down.



THE GREEN LIGHT
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