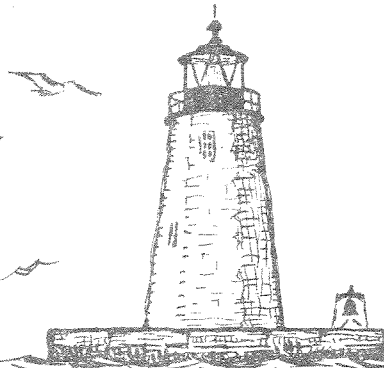


The GREEN

LIGHT



BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

VOL. X

OCTOBER 1966

No. 4

OCTOBER ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Point Association of Newport will be held at the Guild Hall on Poplar Street on Thursday, October 27th, at eight o'clock. Mrs. Gladys Bolhouse, of the Newport Historical Society, will talk about "Women in the Battle for Rhode Island."

Be sure to notice that we are moving back to the Guild Hall, and since the Executive Board voted this change, it will be explained at the meeting. We hope that many more people will find it easier to come to the Guild Hall, which is friendly and familiar. So plan to come, and see if you can't bring a friend or two who would like to join us.

All are welcome.

JULY QUARTERLY MEETING

The July Quarterly Meeting was once again a picnic, held on Mrs. Benson's lawn. It was an ideal evening, with a beautiful sunset, and everyone enjoyed his sandwiches, and the cookies and coffee provided by Mrs. Kay James and her committee. But the best of all was to see so many old friends who left Newport years ago, and came back to visit. You should have heard all the reminiscences, and if we could write down some of the stories, the Green Light would have to be twice as big.

Let's try to have a reunion picnic every July!

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE 1966-1967

President: William H. Fullerton
Second Vice President: Captain Arthur
Newell
Corresponding Secretary: Mrs. Robert
Lewellen

Nominating Committee for 1967-1968:

Mrs. Walter Whitley
Mrs. Robert Foley
Mrs. William Canole

Presented by the 1966-1967 committee:

Mrs. Harold Arnold, Chairman
Mrs. Peter Bolhouse
Mrs. Walter Whitley
Mrs. Gordon Bates
Mrs. Francis Carr, Jr.

REMARKS FROM THE PRESIDENT

The time has arrived to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to all the members of the Point Association for their untiring efforts in making my term of office a very pleasurable one. My most grateful thanks go to the Board members and all the committee chairmen. Without them the Point Association could not have accomplished so much in the past ten years.

There is so much more yet to accomplish, and it will take the support of each and every one, as well as hard work, to

make the Point the most desirable area in Newport for living. Our most serious problem in this area is trying to keep the streets and sidewalks free of paper and debris. I feel that a campaign should be started very soon. With so much activity scheduled for next summer - open houses by Operation Clapboard, races, regular tours, the music festivals, and our own special programs, a new committee should be formed to try and induce people on the Point to try just a little harder to beautify their property.

The Point area is the "In Area" now, but not just restoring houses will do the job. Our streets must be a delight to drive through, in order to appreciate the excellent restoration job these property owners have undertaken. The Point has just started its face lifting, and within the next five years we will have a complete new atmosphere. The people who have been away from Newport for a few years, and return, are astounded at the progress made in such a short time.

Again I say thank you all for a job well done, and it was a pleasure to serve as your President the last two years.

William H. Fullerton

OLD HOUSES MOVED

There was great excitement on the Point when four houses were moved from the plot where the Old Age Housing Development will be built, between Farewell Street, E., Coddington Street, S., Charles Street, W., and North Baptist Street, N. Four of the houses were judged worth moving, and they are now in place on the Point. Mrs. Bolhouse and Mrs. Cushman have been investigating their history from old records, but very little is known of their owners, even Gideon Wanton, though he was Treasurer of the State, then Governor, and very influential.

59 Charles Street

In 1721 Gideon Wanton bought 3/4 acre of land with housing from Abraham Borden. In 1802 this was sold to James Mitchell, land with large stable or building thereon, 60 ft. by 100 ft., partly on land formerly belonging to Gideon Wanton. In 1810 this land is listed as James Mitchell - stable.

This land changed hands seven times until the Housing Authority bought it. Mrs. C. Penner Briggs (Frances Edgar) writes from California that her daughter was born in the back bedroom of this house in 1916.

The house was moved to Elm Street, and is waiting to be restored.

28 Farewell Street (Next to Governors' Burying Ground)

In 1743 Richard Clarke gave this plot of land to his daughter, Martha Pitman, and which the said Martha by her will in 1765 devised to the Second Congregational Church. In 1826 Samuel Vernon, Treasurer of the Congregational Church Society, at a meeting in July, authorized to lease 900 years to William W. Freeborn Tanner, for \$40, a lot of land whereon a house formerly stood; he, the said William Freeborn, yielding and paying to the Treasurer of the said society for the time being as rent for said leased premises yearly and every year on the 3rd day of July in each year one mustard seed. The Freeborns owned this house until well after 1900.

It is now at the NW corner of Bridge and Third Streets where the old Townsend house was torn down recently.

14 Coddington Street

In 1721 John Colman, husbandman, sold to Captain John Draper, mariner, for 290 pounds a piece or parcel of land containing 3 lots with dwelling house thereon situate; is bounded easterly on ye street, southerly on another street, westerly on a street that divides the above said land and land of Gideon Wanton, and northerly on land belonging to William Hall, Esq., partly on land lately belonging to Joseph Freeborn, etc.

John Draper died in 1739 and left this land to his widow and his four daughters who were all married to mariners, one deceased, and two missing for some years past and unheard of, and supposed to be lost at sea. In June 1739, sold for sum of two thousand 800 pounds (?) to Benjamin Sherburne of Newport, Gentleman. In 1759 Rev. Dr. Stiles

shows a shop on this site.

The house has been moved to Elm Street.

12 Coddington Street

In 1720 Abraham Borden sold to Gideon Wanton together with messuage or mantion house and housing, 3/4 acre. Deeds for the Perry Weaver house on NE corner of Charles and Coddington Streets (now demolished) from 1744-50 give E boundary land of Gideon Wanton.

In 1767 Gideon Wanton died.

In 1816 Frances Robinson, Sarah Huntington, and Mary D. Wanton, widow, to Perry Weaver, Hatter one fifth part of the house and lot with all the buildings late the estate of Gideon Wanton which said 5th part was set off to Edward Wanton by rule of court.

On Coddington Street S 60 feet. W 49-1/2 feet on land of Perry Weaver. N on land late belonging to heirs of Gideon Wanton 60 feet. E 49-1/2 feet on Wanton Street.

In 1815 Christopher Fowler deeds to Perry Weaver, Hatter One certain lot of land together with a part of the Mansion House of the late Gideon Wanton, Esq., Dec'd., standing thereon, that is to say the Easternmost Great Room with the closet and bedroom adjoining and 1/2 the cellar and rooms together with garden lot number one as expressed in the partition of said estate as recorded in office of Common Pleas partition of said estate May term in 1784.

But so far no record has been found of where in this area the mansion house stood, or why the one fifth of the house left to Edward Wanton was separated from the other four fifths. Gideon Wanton, Jr., lived in this four fifths, 1783, when he ordered by the court to deliver to the heirs of Gideon Wanton, Dec'd., four fifths of the said house - the rest to get money. That is the last mention of the four fifths of the mantion house.

This little house now stands on the E side of Cross Street at the head of Elm Street.

TEEN AGE LAWN PARTY

On July 14th the Point Association again sponsored the Teen Age Dance held on Mr. King Covell's lawn. There was a good crowd despite the rain at the beginning of the evening, and everyone had a good time. A total of \$45 was made, and a check for \$32.90 was sent to CARE. Many marvellous door prizes were given by the merchants, some of which were: records from Moss Music Center, the Music Box, and the Broadway Record Shop, from the Narragansett Surf Shop 2 surfers' shirts, 6 surfer crosses, and 12 lessons (divided so that 3 lessons went to 4 learners), passes to the Opera House and the Strand, and the Newport Creamery. Music was provided gratis by the Enchanters. The chaperones were: Mr. and Mrs. Curtiss James, Mr. and Mrs. William Jones, Mrs. Barbara Carr, and Mrs. Linda Robinson. The committee chairmen were: Marianne Carr, refreshments; Pat Pedillo and Richey Santos, publicity; Sue Arnold and Cathy James, decorations; Paula James and Joe Mathews, entertainment; Diane Olivera and Cathy Nance, tickets.

Cathy James

REPORT OF THE GREEN LIGHT

Number of local members:	350	Complimentary:	23
Number of off island members:	90		
Expenses: Stamps	\$ 51.50	Printing seal and letterhead	\$ 15.00
Paper	36.30	Mimeographing four copies	47.00

Our membership is gaining every year, especially the non-local ones. Practically all of these renew their subscriptions promptly, and write how much they enjoy reading the Green Light. Our local membership stays the same approximately, but only because we get many new members to replace those who forget to pay their dues. The Pointers are the most forgetful of all, and we may have a house to house campaign to see whether we can get some of our old friends to join again. If you have a notice in this issue, your dues are payable now, and this is the best way of telling us that you are still interested, and enjoy reading the Green Light.

SUMMER TIME ON THE POINT

No child in the early 1900's worried about Potter or Callendar School closing -- there was too much activity ahead. Very early in the spring the water was tested every day by dipping in a hand, to see whether it was warm enough to go swimming. Some parents thought the 4th of July was early enough to start.

The girls' outfits were something -- blouses with short sleeves, and full skirts; many had to wear long black stockings, and always shoes, as the Point beaches are rocky, and broken glass was common. One Point lady hung her new mohair skirt out on the line. Her daughter wanted a new bathing suit, so she cut up the skirt and made one. Her mother couldn't understand what had become of her skirt, but she remembered she'd seen some gypsies around, and thought they took it.

Elm Street pier and Blue Rocks were favorite places to swim, and also Sandy Bottom in front of Capt. Sage's house (now Bethune). That was a little scary, because the eel grass was very thick there, and a clergyman was actually drowned in it. Everyone learned to swim by trial and error -- getting pushed in, sink or swim. First you started by dog paddling, then breast stroke, and the experts swam side stroke. The daring ones tried to swim out to the buoys off Van Zandt pier where destroyers were moored, but they usually turned back before they made it. One girl remembers going all the way, and being met at the pier at the end by her father, who scolded her furiously. There was no swimming on Sundays; the girls all wore white dresses and hair ribbons and took a walk to the Park.

Most families had row boats, and Timothy O'Connell had a fleet of row boats he rented, and also a few sail boats. His son, J. T., used to take sailing parties to Jamestown when he was eleven.

Stella Maris was known as the Haunted House, and had a well that was most popular. The yard was covered with stars of Bethlehem, and the girls would see who could pick the largest bouquets. The Norman house had steps going down with huge granite slabs on each side, and the children slid down those slabs until they even wore out their clothes.

Often they took picnics and walked along Long Shore to the old Maitland House, an old hotel where the Naval Hospital is now; the hotel was moved to Bayside Avenue, and is called the Wissahickon. The children played on the pier, and picked bouquets. They walked along the beach and picked up crabs, starfish and all sorts of treasures, and after they began to study geography in the fourth grade (Miss Wilcox), they hunted for peninsulas, islands, continents. They picked up periwinkles, and cooked and ate them, but there wasn't much to eat.

The favorite candy stores were:

Langley's -- chocolate molasses sticks

Ladyman's -- penny bags of candy

Westall's -- 5¢ boxes of ice cream with a tin spoon, and later, cones

Bucky Spencer's with a bell that jangled.

On Sundays it was fun to watch the elegant carriages drive up to St. John's Church, with beautiful horses pulling them, and waiting patiently with the coachman for the service to end. Also on Sundays Mr. Huntington, the head of Cloyne School, took the boys to church, all walking down Third Street, dressed in their best clothes. Mrs. Huntington drove one of the first electric cars. Once a week everyone went to the Training Station drill, and came home on the navy launch, Annie, which landed at Bannister's Wharf. The "General" came down from Wickford Landing, where it met trains, twice a day, and that made a good expedition. Also some took the trolley to Fall River, and came back on the boat in the evening. For a great treat, mothers would take their children to a matinee at Freebody Park, the home of the first vaudeville. It was a big thrill to take the trolley up to the Training Station.

Most of the children had fathers working on the Fall River Boats, so the big excitement every night was to watch the boat come in at nine. Everyone tried to be first to shout, "Here comes Papa's boat!" Some nights they loaded barrels and barrels of fish, but the big excitement was when wedding parties came down to see the happy pair off.

A man with a harp walked around the Point stopping to play every so often, and if you gave him some money, he played a long time. There was also a very spirited German band. There were band concerts at the Park every two weeks from 8 - 10, but all the

younger children had to be home at 9, and didn't go too often. Mr. and Mrs. Child had a candy and peanut stand at the park.

As you can see, there was always plenty to do, though it probably seems very simple to modern children, and speeding bicycles were the greatest menace. When crickets began to chirp at night, it meant back to school soon.

GIRL SCOUT TROOP

Mrs. John Mathinos is the new leader of Mrs. O'Neill's girl scout troop, and they are hoping to brighten the days for Point residents who are kept in the house by accident or illness, by making them small favors, or sending cards, or other things that should be popular, and trying to show a personal interest in them. If you know anyone who would like such attention, please call Mrs. Mathinos -- 846-1487.

QUESTION OF A PARK ON WASHINGTON STREET, SOUTH OF THE HUNTER HOUSE

By this time most of you have probably heard of Storer Park, a plot of land given to the city some years ago for the enjoyment of women and children. The Redevelopment Agency now owns this land, zoned for residential. A petition was made to the Council to change this zoning to Commercial A, and at a recent Council meeting, a hearing was heard on this change. The Preservation Society, the Conservation Commission, Operation Clapboard, and the Point Association were all represented at this hearing. The Council voted that all land north of the approach to the causeway to Goat Island should be zoned residential. This is much more land than the original Storer Park, and includes a ferry dock, which makes a fine fishing pier. The Point Association is in favor of making this whole area into a park, which would serve as a buffer between the residential and commercial areas. The various groups are having meetings together trying to come to some agreement, and at the next meeting very soon, they hope to have definite plans which will be acceptable to all four parties.

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GREETINGS!
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Leffy.

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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.

