The GREEN LIGHT

BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

THE GREEN LIGHT JANUARY 1974

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The Quarterly Meeting

The Quarterly Meeting of the Point Association will be held Thursday, January 24th, at 6:00 PM. It will be a Pot Luck Supper, in St. John's Guild hall. Mrs. Robert Elster is in charge of this event. Please call either 847-0563 or 847-2273 if you wish to bring food, or if Mrs. Elster has been unable to reach you and ask you for your contribution.

The President's Greeting

As we move into a new year -- my GREETINGS to all. With the coming of 1974 we may both reflect and project. Reflecting, we have to our credit significant accomplishment for our community. Notable is the presentation of Storer Park for the enjoyment of all who live on or visit our Point. We all may be proud of this project, which was a true community commitment. Individually and collectively through your Executive Board we have given both thought and action to improve safety, beauty and cleanliness of our streets and total environment. Looking to the future, I see numerous areas where with pride we all may work for our Point community. Your suggestions have included desire for more trees along our streets, street lighting that is compatible with our historic character, greater concern for the casual trash that gets "out of hand," and ways of maintaining safety and quiet of our streets and homes. Constructive suggestions and efforts to assist are very welcome. I hope that in 1974 other residents of the Point will join our Association where they may have a voice in solving our problems. Let each of us ask our neighbors to join the Association.

I thank each of you who has contributed ideas and service in 1973. Especially I thank all who have worked on or with your Executive Board which meets monthly to plan action on behalf of the Association.

To all I wish a new year of success and accomplishment with satisfaction and contentment to all.

New Notes

The first presentation of certificates to "Born-on-the-Pointers" was the annual meeting in October. The second presentation will be made at the January meeting. If you were born on the Point and would like to receive a certificate, please call Clyde Sargent, 847-5736.

A certificate of appreciation has been presented to Mary B. Kinsella recognizing her continuing concern and action to eliminate disorder on the Point. We are also aware of the efforts of many other residents in keeping us tidy.

Joseph Vars, Vice-President of the Point Association, has generously accepted the appointment as liaison for the Association with the City Council. We hope that his continuing knowledge of Council plans and actions may be used to benefit our endeavors.

Let us remind you that our Seal bears the date of our founding, 1955. Both Masthead and Seal were designed by our founder, Edith Ballinger Price.

Report of the Annual Meeting of the Point Association

The Annual Meeting was held Thursday, October 25, 1973, in St. John's Guild hall at 8:00 PM.

Dr. Sargent called the meeting to order, and welcomed all present. The minutes of the last meeting of April, 1973, were read and approved. In the absence of the treasurer, Mr. Kazanjian, Adm. Eccles gave a synopsis of the financial report, showing a cash balance of $5,468.94. A copy of the full report is attached to the minutes. Report accepted as read.

Report of the Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee reported that the following members were proposed for office:

Mr. Joseph T. Vars -- First VP
Dr. Albert Henry -- Treasurer
Mrs. Deborah Lutman -- Cor. Secretary

Moved and accepted. Lt. Com. Elster reported that the following were appointed to the Nominating Committee for 1973-1974:

Mrs. Wm. MacLeod
Mrs. Arthur Newell
Mrs. Mark Walsh

Adm. Eccles reported that, except for some benches, Storer Park is practically complete. He expressed thanks to the many people who had made this possible. The total cost was $53,000.00; a detailed treasurer's report is attached to these minutes. The Park was deeded to the City without encumbrances, and the Point Association will continue its interest.

Mrs. Eccles reported that the Cook Book has contributed more than $1,200.00 to Storer Park.

The Peace and Quiet Committee reported that it is in touch with the Police Dept., which urges individuals to call the Police Dept. upon seeing anything out of order in the neighborhood, however trivial it may appear.

Mrs. Walsh reported that there is a movement on the Historic Hill to put old-fashioned street lights there. Would this be possible to accomplish on the Point?

Capt. Newell reported that Patrolman Ronald Sears would like to organize activities for Point boys, with supervisionffrom fellow officers. The question as to where they might meet arose.

Miss de Bethune proposed, together with architectural plans she passed around, plans for the use of the south side of Marsh Street for homes for the elderly. Further discussion and study will be needed before it can be endorsed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM, after which Dr. Sargent introduced the speaker of the evening, Mr. Sam Jernigan, who holds the office of City Planner. He outlined the function of his office and described the research and evaluation work he has accomplished in different neighborhoods of Newport.

The meeting was adjourned.

Eileen Peterson, Recording Sec.

Christmas Carols

Because of the energy crisis, we did not light our tree this year. Instead, we met in St. John's Guild hall, Sunday afternoon, December 23rd, at 4:30 PM, for our caroling. Many Newporters, happily bringing children with them, attended. Mr. Wm. King Covell led us at the piano with his usual gusto, and Mrs. Kay James provided ample and delicious refreshments. It was a joy that so many people came!

Our Editor

You will notice that we have not included any advertising copy in this edition. Our beloved Editor, Ess Bates, has had to be in Boston with her daughter. Without her able guidance, this section was not included. She would not forgive us if we did not say:

"PAY YOUR DUES.
PAY THEM NOW."

(Mrs. Albert Henry, Treas.
81 Second Street)

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

POINT MEMORIES

The winter months gave many of us the opportunity of going sledding and ice-skating after school hours and on Saturdays and Sundays. Some of us would even walk to the Big Pond near Easton's Beach, while many of us were content to go to the Hayes and Durfee stream on outer Third Street. How we enjoyed the Sleigh Rides! About a dozen of us would take off in a sleigh after a good snow storm with a friendly driver warmly dressed for the occasion. To be sure, we, too, had our stocking hats, scarves and mittens and were well

clothed for the cold that faced us. With a snap of the driver's whip, we were off and the sound of bells rang out as we ploughed through the Point streets. It was great fun, as we usually sang all the songs we knew and at the end of our ride, we were always invited to stop at one of the friend's homes for hot chocolate, cake or cookies.

Some of our winters in the early 1900's were bitter cold and very often the bay froze over and steamers were unable to make their way into the inner harbor. I well remember one such day when a few of us dared to walk on the ice from Poplar Street shore to the breakwater--the bay one mass of steaming vapor. Then, too, we had such blizzards that it took all of us many hours to clear the snow from our door and sidewalks. The City, itself at times, would be at a standstill until the roads were cleared and made passable. Many of us at school were always hopeful of hearing a "No Session Signal" sounded in order that we might have the opportunity to get out and wallow in the snow. Now our winters of late have been much milder which many of us older folks enjoy.

Summertime with the long vacations is what we looked forward to. My father had always thought that riding a bicycle was a good and enjoyable exercise for all the family. On Sunday of each week after the morning service at St. John's Church, we would mount our bikes and go around the Ocean Drive providing the weather was fit. Our parents were along with us to see that we followed one another and furthermore to see that we observed the rules of the road by sounding our bells as we approached a turn in the road.

Without a doubt for those who lived on the Point, swimming and boating were the favorite pastimes, and fishing, too. We were always ready to get into the water, or to be on it. I thought little of rowing to Jamestown with a friend at a moment's notice. We would push off in our rowboat from Poplar Street shore with a nickel or dime tied in the corner of our handkerchiefs and be off for Jamestown. Reaching the other shore, we would tie up to one of the docks and walk to John E. Watson's store on Narragansett Avenue to purchase a box of ice cream or a bottle of soda which in those days cost only five cents. Having refreshed ourselves, we would return to our boat, untie the painter and row back to Newport with many blisters on the palms of our hands.

On one pleasant Sunday morning, my father consented to accompany me in the rowboat as I started to swim from the Poplar Street shore, heading for Jamestown. Having succeeded in swimming across the bay to Jamestown made me feel very happy that I had made my goal.

We were a "boating" family, and were taught the art of sailing at an early age. When learning to sail, how hard it was for me to realize that I must keep the sail full at all times in order to make headway and at the same time to allow what the tide would do if trying to reach a certain point.

Our boats, the Emma and Virginia, and Ralph had the Jack Rose, took us all over the bay whether we set sail for the Light Ship or around Conanicut Island, or even up the bay. Many summers the family would sail to Wickford, R. I., and remain there for a two week vacation staying at Mother Prentice House while our boat was anchored off Wickford Beach Shore.

I am certain that many Pointers recall the many steamers that sailed in and out of Newport. Do you remember the New Shoreham which came from Providence and sailed to Block Island. The City of Newport came also from Providence and docked here before making her return trip to Providence. The Mount Hope, a good size steamer, ran from Providence to Block Island and Newport. Do you remember the General, which came down from Wickford, R. I., three times a day, at 10 o'clock AM, 4 o'clock PM and 10 o'clock PM?

As all these steamers made their daily appearances in the bay, one could always tell the hour as they blew their whistles nearing the Light. Still another steamer, the Nantucket, operated by the Eastern Steamship Lines, came to Newport and sailed on to Oak Bluffs. Now that I look back on those days, when all of these steamers ran, it gives many of us pleasure to know we have sailed on them at various times. "Those were the days."

How about the ferries that sailed back and forth from Newport to Jamestown? The Newport-Jamestown Ferry dates from 1873-1969. I am certain the fare to ride these ferries in those days was five cents for children and ten cents for adults. So many of us here in Newport have sailed on these ferries and while they were all so faithful and useful to carry us back and forth, we children were always impressed with the Conanicut. Whenever loading this particular ferry, we would waste no time in reaching her upper deck where we could watch the encased "walking-beam" as it rose up and down all the way to its dock. One could ride the ferries all day for one fare if one remained on board. When these boats were taken from us in 1969, it made many of us sick-at-heart and I don't believe for one moment that they wanted to leave Newport where they had sailed for so many years.

On Saturday, June 21st, 1969, at 12:30 PM I was able to get a group of devoted Newporters to take a last trip on one of these ferries This trip was called "Sentimental Journey." I will always remember that special day as well as those who shared it along with Harold and me.

The U. S. Navy has always been well established here in Newport with her installations as long as I can remember, namely: The Training Station on Coasters Harbor Island was used as a school for educating seamen for our Navy.

The War College also situated here has served as a college for the higher study of naval warfare.

Fort Adams, located at the entrance of the harbor, is where Coast Artillary were quartered and trained.

The Torpedo Station on Goat Island had served as a home for the destroyers.

Vessels were always on the go whether they went out to sea or up the bay to practice where the Torpedo Testing Range was located. I remember many years ago when the huge battleships sailed into the bay and anchored off the Jamestown Shore. These ships were part of the "Great White Fleet" and were so named because their hulls were painted white.

I remember the U. S. Frigate Constellation that was moored at its dock at the Training Station. This ship served as a training ship for the seamen on the base. The school children here had the opportunity of visiting this renowned vessel during her stay here in Newport. With many naval vessels based here, plus the steamers, private yachts, launches and sailing craft that we were accustomed to see each day about and in the bay had become a way of life to many of us living on the Point.

Last, but not least, how can we ever forget "The Old Fall River Line." These gracious steamers would come down every night from Fall River and dock at the foot of Long Wharf to pick up passengers going to New York. Many times we would walk down to the dock to see these steamers arrive. The captains on board of these boats displayed great skill in docking these steamers and if the wind and tide were unfavorable, it took even greater skills. Once the boat was docked, we would walk down to the freight shed to see the stevedores pull the freight in the hand-trucks aboard the boat. During the fishing season hundreds and hundreds of barrels of fish were taken on and distributed in New York the following morning. These men, with their freight, were always on the run, never walking.

One never knew what excitement there would be with the passengers coming ashore and those going on. Often the dock was strewn with rice or confetti by some well-wisher seeing a gay party or newlyweds making their departures. Our family had the good fortune of travelling on many of these steamers, especially the Priscilla and Commonwealth. I can remember so well when we were boarding the gangplank of any of these steamers, how a porter would carry our bags, pick up our state-room key and proceed up the carpeted staircase and direct us to our stateroom. At this late date, I can hear the sound of these large metal keys being placed in the keyhole of the many stateroom doors. Once our bags were in our stateroom, we would go out to the deck rail to see and hear the final instructions that would be given out for departure.

A voice could be heard calling out "All ashore that's going ashore" and last of all the whistle sounded for the gangplank to be hauled in on the dock. The friends on the dock and those aboard were were waving and saying more good-byes to each other as the steamer got under way leaving her dock behind. Once we passed our shoreline and had turned the Light, we would make our way the the dining-salon. Here we were greeted by the head dining steward who seated us and placed a menu folder before us for our eating pleasure. Foods of every description were listed on the menu, and the prices most reasonable. The service had a quality that could not be duplicated. Here, again, I must say "Those were the days!"

Do you remember the New England Steamship Company repair shops situated where the Newport Ship Yard is now located? Every kind of a mechanic was employed in these shops to service and overhaul these steamers during the winter months. These side-wheelers were a tradition to thousands of passengers who have had the pleasure of travelling on them. In the last edition of the late Roger W. McAdam's book, "Floating Palaces" how well he has made us aware of an era that existed, never to be forgotten.

Phillipine M. Arnold

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Editor: 22 Bridge Street
NEWPORT, R. I. 02840