

The GREEN LIGHT



BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

FOR YOUR DUES AND DONATIONS
ARTICLES AND QUOTATIONS —

ANYTHING UNDER THE SUN
THE POINT ASSOCIATION, P. O. BOX 491

Vol. XXV

June-July - 1980

No. 3

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Several things have been accomplished the last few months. The most important was the leasing of the Pier at Storer Park, or I should say the "unleasing." The City Manager wanted to lease the Pier at Storer Park to a Boat Company from Boston, during the America's Cup Races. This is impossible, thanks to the Deed we had drawn up when the Park was Transferred to the City as a Public Park for the people of Newport. Absolutely nothing commercial can be in this park. Our special thanks to Dave Rodericks, Alfred Angel, Paul Gaines, Peter Dugan.

Mrs. John Howard (Rowan) did a super job on the Plant Sale. The day was perfect and everyone had a very enjoyable time. Our thanks to Admiral and Mrs. Henry Eccles for again letting us use their garden. It was a wonderful setting for our plants.

A parking lot is being made on lower Washington Street, and we hope this will eliminate some of the parking in our residential area.

The "Day on the Point" Street Fair is well on the way. All the street space is sold. We have many new exhibitors, and all we need is a sunny day. Mrs. Nesbitt and her young men are doing the Puppet Show. Everyone enjoys this, young and older.

My moaning and groaning has elicited an answer. Virginia Covell will be Chairman of Refreshments, the day of the Fair. Thanks, Virginia. You're a peach, or should I say, you're a sandwich.

SEE YOU ALL THE DAY OF THE FAIR!

WILLIAM H. FULLERTON
President

Anyone interested in Fall Bulbs, call me, 847-5163

DON'T FORGET THE POINT PICNIC! THURSDAY, JUNE 26th!
(Rain Day June 27th)

AT Fisher Benson's on Washington Street - Bring your supper and the kids - MUSIC by Arco Strings, Arthur Cohen, Conductor - this thanks to our Mary Rommel.

"DAY ON THE POINT" STREET FAIR

AUGUST 16, 1980

CHAIRMEN OF THE FAIR - William H. Fullerton, Arthur Newell
Treasurer - Dennis McNamarra
Sewing Basket - Mary Rommel
White Elephant - Dana Magee
Point Refreshment Booth - Virginia Covell and Posy Hall
Point Association Food Table - Betty Stephenson
Ethnic Food - Alberta Kazanjian
Quilt Table - Diane McNamarra
Hostesses for Street - Dede Elster
Chairman for Quilt Tickets - Aline Sullivan
Publicity - Theo Duncan
Children's Activities - Charles and Theo Duncan
Puppet Show - Ilse Nesbitt & Sons
Street Supervisors - Bob Elster and Art Newell
Soda and Coffee Stand - Jack Martin
Posters and Signs - Charles Duncan

SEWING BASKET

The Sewing Box is "going great needles" making things to be sold at our Day on the Point Fair. Two young grandsons are merry at the number of people, over and beyond two elkhounds and a bull dog, that may be crowded into a volkswagen, as the various comings and goings are handled, five people anyway!

Among those helping make things, under the chairmanship of Mary Rommel, are Dorothy Slocum, Cheri Murphy, Madeleine Holt, Mabel Watson, Betty Stephenson, Gladys MacLeod, Donna Maytum, Theo Duncan, Edith Wilson, Isabel Eccles, Mrs. Lawton, Peggy Musnicky, Tonie Peters, Marge Willett, Lois Cooper. This surely seems a goodly number - yet - every hand is needed; this is an all-Point Day on the Point. Will you - paint a small picture - present a bottle of your homemade wine - make some of your cherry jam or salad dressing. Anything you do well, please let the Sewing Basket have a sample. Perhaps you have some charming oddment and do not yourself have a use for it?

See you at the Fair!

LIBERTY TREE May 4th 1980

Once more our fine, great tree, spreading wide its branches, had its part in the tribute to our liberties and the men who pledged their lives to them, as Newport celebrated Rhode Island's own Independence Day. The parade came from Washington Street, lead by a contingent from the Ancient Artillery Company. Thirteen children in colonial costume were bearing lanterns, many others carrying Betsy Ross flags, as they proceeded to Ellery Park. There the lanterns were placed on the Liberty Tree, one for each of the original states.

The children participating in the "lighting" of the LIBERTY TREE were Terry Day, Heather Day, Alexander Nesbitt, Rupert Nesbitt, Mary Julian Graham, Martha Elizabeth Graham, Harry William Graham, Erica Bach, Cody Bach, Jason Peters, Anthony Peters, Anna Chramiec and Peter Chramiec. They played their parts well! Those joining up with the Betsy Ross flags also looked charming. Too bad we haven't the names.

Joseph P.T. Vars, as President of the Rhode Island Commemorative Association of Newport, spoke a brief welcome to the people gathered to witness the event, as did William H. Fullerton, as President of the Point Association. Admiral Eccles was Speaker of the Day. He addressed himself strongly to the young people. He says he has been emphasizing these points with them for the last several years. They must study English: the reading, writing and speaking of their tongue, so they can understand liberty and act always in its best interests. The editor of The Green Light was greatly heartened by his remarks, as she feels strongly about this, too.

It was good to see so many Point Association members at the Liberty Tree celebration. Dorothy Fillebrown, interested as always in young people, was telling us of some of the problems they faced, as we waited for the marchers.

After the ceremonies, children, parents, Artillery Company, officials - all - streamed off to the hospitable Pitts Head Tavern for joyous celebration, the young people asking, "Can we do it again next year?"

THE PLANT SALE

Mrs. John Howard was the able and charming Chairman of the Plant Sale this year. The Point Association is much indebted to her for everything was so well done. The flowers and all the plants looked lovely and as usual it was a wonderful time for meeting friends. Everyone was very happy and it seemed the plants were gone in a twinkling. The Plant Sale made more than \$270.00.

Assisting at the Plant Sale were Leslie Bowdell and David Tully, Heide Bach, Donna Maytum, Mary Rommel, Nancy Harley, Mary Jane Hitchings, Kurt and Dana Magee, John Howard, David Robbins, Robert Elster, and at least three William Fullertons all at the same time.

Aileen Sullivan and Madeleine Holt sold chances on the Quilt, which was on display there. Theo and Charles Duncan did Publicity.

In addition to thanking Rowan Howard and the Captain, the Point Association wishes to thank the Horticultural Society and all those others who donated plants.

One of the happy results of my fire was the discovery what a very good Green Light can be done by DAVID ROBBINS. The whole issue was efficiently turned out. An excellent contribution to the annals of the Point was David's article on MARTINS.

My fire showed just what grand people Point neighbors are! First thing in the morning, they were offering their services, some of them very special and very expert. Jobs done were also taxing and time consuming! Humility fills me as I think of all the needs that were filled before I could ask. I should like, very much like to thank people by name. They might not wish it, so let me just say, I shall remember what was done all my days.

PLANTS OF THE POINT

SOLOMON SEAL--- This is a biblical plant. It has been written about in books I read but I have often wondered just how it arrived at the name. Thanks to Mr. Richard Champlin of the Redwood Library new light shines forth.

When you look at the root, which is like a white tuber, you will see a small design that looks just like a seal stamped by hand. Each root has one. We had many Solomon Seal plants at the Plant Sale and I'm sorry I did not have this information at the time.

Solomon Seal is a very hardy plant, grows in shade, semi-shade or sun. Underneath the beautiful, long, graceful spikes hang many pale yellowish white little bells. Solomon Seal multiplies well and soon you will have a large clump. It is adaptable to any soil but of course a shot of 5-10-5 won't hurt. The long leaves are a very rich green and in the Fall the flowers develop into little red berries for the birds.



HENRY COLLINS was born March 25, 1699. His father, the eminent silver-smith Arnold Collins, had married Governor Thomas Ward's widow. Henry had thus older half brothers and sisters and the warm-hearted, intellectual Wards made him one with them. Whereas many of them went into politics - Richard Ward, son of Thomas, and Richard Ward's son Samuel in their time became governors - Henry Collins his father determined should go into business. The very young boy, as was the custom, was sent to England to be educated and to be trained in his career. This was no usual boy. He made the most of the opportunities that were spread before him; the young man who eventually returned was a cultivated gentleman indeed. He quickly became a most successful merchant, and as such a patron of the arts and a leader of the city.

The literary and philosophical society he and kindred spirits formed was the earliest in the colony and probably one of the earliest in America. Its membership included men from Massachusetts and Connecticut. It was probably Collins who proposed a library association; at any rate, when a library was to be built he donated the lovely, spreading "bowling green" on the heights of Newport for the site. Abraham Redwood gave a handsome sum toward the buying of books, and there were contributions from all the gentlemen. Redwood Library stands today as a treasure house of books, well taking care of people of our splendid Services and others of wide interests, but one of its unique contributions is displaying a gentlemen's library of the Eighteenth Century. This is thanks to Henry Collins and his friends. Henry Collins was among those making the happy choice of Peter Harrison as the architect for the Redwood Library, his first public building. A Seventh Day Baptist, Collins was on the committee for erecting their exquisite house of worship, now in the Newport Historical Society.

Where might art be seen in those days? Scattered, a few here, a few there, in gentlemen's house, if an invitation might be wangled. Collins set out to form an art collection. Smibert, coming over with the eminent Berkeley, stayed on in America when the idea of a university had to be given up, painting for Henry Collins and others to whom he introduced him. He painted Collins and this earliest patron had him do the venerable Clap, the pious Callender, Berkeley -- (Mrs. John Howard Benson, in talking of the fine portrait collection of the Redwood, explained that before mechanical reproductions, such as photography, artists were often asked to do the likenesses of famous men) Henry Collins was the patron of Alexander (the Scotch artist who to help him took the young Gilbert Stuart abroad to study), of Tocke, Feke and many another. His collection of paintings was something friends and distinguished visitors to Newport were proud to be shown.

Collins built and enlarged the beautiful house, standing then on Washington Square, we know and love as the Pitts Head Tavern. It is said he gave it to the Flaggs as a wedding present. Richard Ward's daughter Catherine married a Flagg. Ebenezer Flagg was Collins' partner in the firm of Collins & Flagg.

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Literature - art - architecture - he gave to talent wherever he found it. He gave quietly to those in need, often seeking out those who had met with misfortune.

In every way, Henry Collins went about trying to enrich and beautify his native city. He is often declared to have been at the head of every public improvement for years in Newport. The extension of Long Wharf and the building of the Brick Market are two examples. The Brick Market or Granary, built after the Ionic order, in 1763, used Peter Harrison once more as architect. In all one sees the good taste of Henry Collins.

The generous host, liberal patron and public spirited citizen expended himself to the utmost of his fortune. The ever more straitening laws and rules of England led to ruinous losses for him, as they did for so many others. Henry Collins went to live with the Flaggs now, while the villainous George Rome, agent of his English creditors, seized his fine house on Washington Street for himself. Rome entertained there, his guests doing themselves little honor, until with the years Rhode Island and Providence Plantations little Rhody, told England, "Enough!" George Rome had to flee on the Rose. The house was confiscated by the Patriots, and when the French arrived was occupied by their Navy Artillery. (Alas, it no longer exists. It stood between the Hunter House and what might be called the Warren House or be more famously known as long the home of John Howard Benson)

But Collins had died, about 1770, leaving his collection to ~~be~~ speak his legendary good taste, leaving a city more beautiful and more culturally rich for his being.

CONCERNING THE FRENCH

What a wonderful people they were and are! Please read George Woodbridge's description of Rochambeau's contribution in Newport History, for Winter 1980, No.177. It is possible Mr. Woodbridge and the Newport Historical Society might have granted some use of it. The whole is so well done, carries such conviction, it should be purchased for every Newport home. I refuse to weaken the portrait of a great man so well depicted.

The gallant Lafayette we do remember. "Lafayette, we are here." He was one of the young flower of France granted commissions in our army, by our agent there, which could not possibly be honored since it placed them over their American counterparts. Lafayette won himself a place in the end, as did de Kalb. Two young men, the Chevalier de Fayolles and Monsieur de Valernais, died, the one without serving, the other serving so briefly. Give them honor. They never saw France again and died for us.

The Marquis de Lafayette stayed in Portsmouth, I understand.

Who stayed on Washington, then called Water, Street? Capt. de Lagrandier was at Francis Brinley's. Chevalier de Lombard was quartered at Christopher Townsend's. de la Vicquettes was quartered at John Townsend's. It has been said, the Navy Artillery were in the confiscated house of George Rome but Berubé, who had an old coat of arms, was at 62 Washington,

Vicomte de Noailles, lieutenant colonel of the Soissonais, stayed in the Robinson House. Deborah Lutman's enchanting evocation of those days The Lacquer Box, appeared in The Green Light and is in the soon-to-be-published collection NOW AND THEN ON THE POINT. There is much to tell about de Noailles. He never forgot his days on the Point, keeping in touch with the Robinson family, and especially Molly, always.

He was the second son of the Marechal de Mouchy, head of the younger branch of the de Noailles family. They were of the best of the old French aristocracy. In one of the family memoirs, the Vicomte is called "the heroic descendant of a warlike race, of which he showed himself so worthy." He married his cousin, Mlle Louise de Noailles, daughter of the Duc and Duchess d'Ayen, and sister of Mme de Lafayette.

We have an account of his stay on Washington Street, with the Robinson family. First appearing in The Green Light, it will be in the new collection Now and Then on the Point. The title is The Lacquer Box.

So then those thousands of our French allies marched South to do battle. In the long march from Newport to Yorktown, in all 756 miles, some of the officers walked for the sake of example, among them was de Noailles. At Yorktown he had several times the chief command of the work on the trenches, and Washington several times praised his courage and intelligence.

From L'Independance Americaine by Faucher de Saint-Maurice. "It was he (de Noailles) who on the sixteenth of October, at four o'clock in the morning, bore all the weight of the furious attack of Colonel Robert Abercrombie, at the siege of Yorktown. At the head of 400 men, Abercrombie threw himself upon two redoubts which the French had not completed. Taken by surprise they sounded a retreat. The enemy had just taken seven cannon with their bayonets. The Vicomte de Noailles learning of it rallied his few troops to the cry of "Vive le roi!" carried them along, routed the enemy, unspiked the cannon, turned them against the assailants, killed eight of them, took twelve prisoners, and at the end of two hours opened a fresh fire upon the town." When Cornwallis surrendered, de Noailles, representing the French army, was one of the men chosen by the Generals to arrange the terms of capitulation.

Later, de Noailles was to be sent as Ambassador to England, to announce to Lord Weymouth the recognition of the independence of the thirteen American states.

It has been recounted many times, how his wife sent the Robinsons an exquisite Sevres tea set, still in the possession of their descendants.

There is the sad account of the noble ladies of his family during the violence of the French Revolution, how de Noailles sought to set up a safe refuge for the royal family. Happily many generations later, there were still de Noailles descendants. Perhaps that is enough about de Noailles here.

Louis, Baron de Closen, was one of the Aides of Rochambeau. He calls Rhode Island "perhaps one of the prettiest islands on the globe" and further tells us that "nature has endowed the ladies of Rhode Island with the handsomest, finest features one can imagine; their complexion is clear and white; their feet and hands usually small."

Rochambeau, in the Vernon House on Clarke Street, must have had many of his officers close by. Two of his Aides de Camp, Axel von Fersen and the Marquis de Damas, were quartered in the Robert Stevens house there.

May The Green Light have any names, bits and pieces, anecdotes, traditions, even supposed-to-haves, you know about the French in Newport, please! Contributions will be placed in the October issue. Frenchmen stayed on and have descendants. One of them was Berubé. Some sleep in the Common Burying Ground. Too little is known for the record keeping places were destroyed, the men who kept them long away.

NOW AND THEN ON THE POINT _ the Point Association presents their new collection. It has the beloved pictures of the Point done by Edith Ballinger Price. Our president contributed the sketch of his house. There is John Howard Benson's 62 Washington, and that last sketch Dorothy Manuel did of the Friends Meeting House. Good in this year of the French to have the charming account of Rochambeau and Washington meeting on Long Wharf, to have The Finch House; Simeon Potter; The Claggett Enigma; The Liberty Tree - Some circumstances early P.A. writers regretted have been completely changed. While regretting what was lost, this new collection replaces such material with stories from the some nineteen years since - and a hard choice it was among so many! There is The Unfortunate Hannah Robinson; Foggy Night, June; The Faisneau; The Lacquer Box; Opening Up 62 Washington Street; The Dyers; Lizzie Borden. The Book Committee - Virginia Covell, Betty Stephenson, Fisher Benson, Rosalys Hall and our President - had one reason only for not including Southwick, and many another = space. William Fullerton has put himself behind this publication all during his presidency and before. Thanks, Bill. You all will recall he was an early president of P.A. so it means twice as much.

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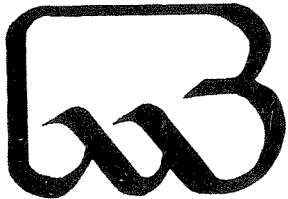
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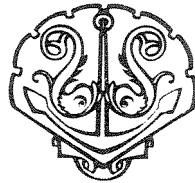




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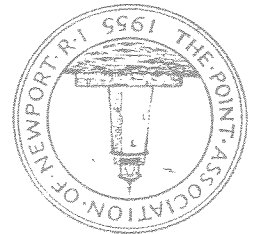
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