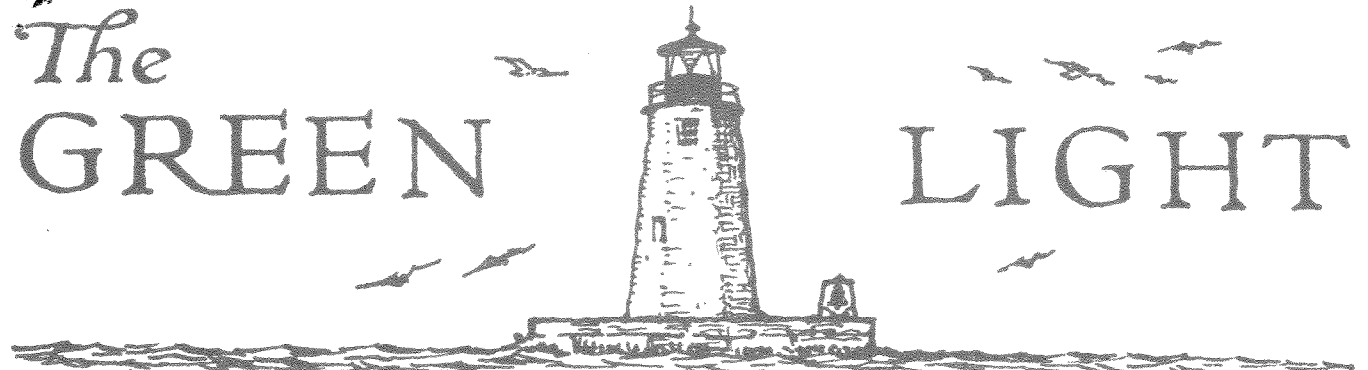


# The GREEN LIGHT



## BULLETIN of the POINT ASSOCIATION

NOVEMBER 1958

### REPORT OF THE ANNUAL MEETING:

The Annual Meeting of the Point Association of Newport, Inc. was held on Thursday evening, Oct. 30, in St. John's Guild Hall, with the President, William H. Fullerton in the chair.

The Recording Secretary, Mrs. Weiss, read the minutes of the last General Membership meeting, which were accepted as read.

Capt. C.J.Harter, who had audited the books for the retiring Treasurer, made the Treasurer's report for Alfred Feiner, who was unable to be present. The report showed \$1530.56 in the savings account and \$118.35 in the checking account, exclusive of over \$400 profit from the Arts and Crafts Exhibition.

A regrettable falling off in membership dues since last year was noted, only about half the previous amount having been received.

Miss E.B.Price gave the report of the Beautification Committee, citing the many delays on the tree program, but noting that on that very day six trees had been replaced on Bridge St. with six more to follow next day, and positions for 28 more marked out. She also reported on the successful Garden Contest, and the planting of a number of rose bushes along the Fleet Landing fence.

Mrs. Henry E. Eccles gave a detailed account of the outstanding Arts and Crafts of the Point Exhibition held August 9-10, with 44 professional and amateur exhibitors showing work of great variety and excellence. The Exhibition attracted widespread interest.

Mrs. Edwin H. Brownell reported that teen-age dances had been held twice monthly during the summer, with an average attendance of 30.

Miss Price noted a circulation of about 200 for The Green Light, and expressed a hope of securing enough advertising to pay at least the expense of mailing. A volunteer to solicit and collect for advertising would be most welcome.

### NEW BUSINESS:

The Nominating Committee presented the slate of officers, and there being no nominations from the floor, they were elected as follows:

- President: Edwin H. Brownell
- 1st V.Pres: Geo. D. Weaver, jr.
- 2nd V.Pres: Mrs. Richard Weiss
- Treasurer: Richard Weiss
- Corr. Sec'y: Miss Marion Galvin
- Rec. Sec'y: David L. Smith -

who was elected pro tem upon the withdrawal of a previous nominee.

Three members of the new Nominating Committee were elected: Wm. H. Fullerton, Mrs. Wm. MacLeod and Dr. David Nemptzow.

The Rev. Alan P. Maynard expressed his hope that the Guild Hall would become more and more a community center for Point activities, and extended a hospitable greeting to the Point Association.

Color slides taken at the Arts and Crafts show by Elbert Holbrook and Harold Watson were shown by Mr. Watson, and cider and doughnuts were served at the conclusion of the meeting.

POINT OF INTEREST  
The John Goddard House

We Pointers - and, for that matter, all Newporters - have grown up in this area surrounded by the visible reminders of our past heritage, and yet many of us seem almost unaware of them. Probably no city in America has as many existing dwellings of such an early period as does Newport. But so many of our old homes dating from the 1700's stand neglected - looking sort of unloved, unwanted, and unappreciated, like faded belles of an earlier era. Probably no Newport area whose boundaries are so easily defined as those of the Point can count so many pre-Revolutionary homes and buildings of historic and architectural value. Yet how many of us truly appreciate them?

A case in point is the home of John Goddard. His shop and house once stood on Washington Street, on the site of the present W.W. Covell house next the Willow Street brow. Now you can find it on Second near Pine, where it was moved in 1869 or thereabouts.

For those who are not familiar with the name - John Goddard was probably the most famous cabinet-maker Newport ever produced, and Newport produced many whose craftsmanship was unexcelled anywhere in the colonies. Actually, John was a member of a whole clan of cabinet-makers, for he was the son-in-law of Job Townsend, to whom he had been apprenticed. From this Townsend-Goddard family came at least six Goddards and no less than fifteen Townsends. Their furniture was spread throughout the colonies, and today, because the existing pieces are of such fine quality in design, workmanship and material, they bring fantastic prices. They are exhibited in museums throughout the country, and collectors who have acquired examples of the beautiful shell-carved pieces wrought by this family group are most fortunate.

A few of the pieces these men created remain right here on the Point in the same homes in which they were originally placed. But for the most part these examples of the creative genius of our best craftsmen have long since left Newport.

Now the sad thing about all this is that although museums and private collectors are willing and eager to pay many thousands of dollars for the best Newport cabinet-work, there is practically no interest shown in the homes in which these men lived and worked. We have the feeling that in almost any seaboard city in America as old as this one, at least some of these houses would have been properly restored, and in some cases would have become shrines where the truly interested would have come to worship.

To our knowledge, only one house in the whole group presents any appearance of being loved and wanted - and that is the Christopher Townsend house and shipwright's shop at the corner of Bridge and Second Streets. It is unmarked, but Restorations, Inc. now occupies the shop.

As for the John Goddard house itself, it probably needs extensive restoration - but when you consider that the existing stair hall with its unusual panelled treatment is quite possibly the handiwork of John himself, as is some of the other woodwork, might it not be worth it?

Few mourned when the shop of John Goddard was torn down a couple of years ago - yet the few who understood what it represented regretted it deeply when the little shop, which had been moved to Smith's Court, fell before the blows of the building wrecker.

At about the same time, what was probably the shop of another of the clan came down - that of Edmund Townsend on Bridge Street; but the homes of Job and John Townsend still stand at the corners of Bridge and Third Streets. The Job Townsend house, appropriately enough, is still the scene of activity in the cabinet-making field, for the first floor is the furniture refinishing shop of George D. Weaver, Jr.

We who live on the Point and love it, and we who have shown so much interest in the Arts and Crafts of the Point as evidenced by our own show this past summer, might be expected to show a little more interest in these old places. As this article goes to press, we find that the John Goddard house is now tenanted, and that much of the basic preservation work is contemplated. Its restoration could spark others, and it is quite possible that like-minded people might be attracted to the Point, to add new vigor and vitality, new ideas and a general enrichment to the whole appearance of the Point.

Old John and the other Goddards and Townsends might well think it a pretty sad joke, when the price of one piece of their best cabinet work would quite easily buy and restore a whole house. If we have any faith in the future of the Point as a center of historic interest and as an attractive magnet for those Americans who study and appreciate the skill and artistry of our Newport craftsmen, we have an obligation to them to show a definite and vigorous interest ourselves.

All this has not been idle romancing over the dead past of the Point, but an expression of hope that the heritage these men left might inspire our own hands and minds and hearts to new endeavors, to the end that the Point may again become the center for craftsmanship that it once was. If a renaissance of the crafts on the Point became a fact because of the heritage left to us by John Goddard and his kind, might it not be one of the best things he and they ever accomplished ?

-- E. H. B. --

LETTER FROM JOHN GODDARD TO MOSES BROWN  
Newport ye 30th of ye 6th mo. 1763

Friend Brown: I send herewith the Tea Table & Common Chairs which thou spoke for with the Bill. the other Work is in good forwardness hope to compleat in a short time. I Recd. a few lines from Jabez Bowen whom I suppose the furniture is for, Requesting me to make a pre. Case of Drawers. please to inform him I shall gladly serve him if he can wate till some time in the fall which will be as soon as I can finish them as I Have but little help. if he inclines to wate for me I would know whither he means to have them different from what is common, as there is a sort which is called Chest on Chest of Drawers & Sweld front which are costly as well as ornimental. thou'll Please to let me know friend Bowens minde that I may Conduct accordingly. till then am thy friend,  
JNO. GODDARD

(Quoted from "This Was My Newport"  
by Maud Howe Elliott)

. . . ONLY GOD CAN MAKE A TREE . . .  
but, lo and behold, we have 16 good-sized maples, set out under the able supervision of Tree Warden Bowman, to replace those on Bridge St. which had succumbed to accident or violence. No sooner were they planted, than they were stoutly staked and well wrapped in burlap by four stalwart Point volunteers, viz: E.H.Brownell, A.G.Carey, W.H.Fullerton and D.L.Smith. Let us hope these trees will have better treatment than their predecessors. Two dozen others are supposed to be planted before hard weather, on Elm, Walnut, Second, and Cypress.

SEA WALL: There is some activity along the north Washington St. shore, as work on the seawall continues. The race with winter will not be won, we fear - but patches are better than holes, and we are grateful for whatever progress is being made.

POINT MEMORIES COLUMN: The Editor would welcome contributions from old-time Pointers; anecdotes and memories of days gone by. A column in The Green Light devoted to such reminiscences would be of great interest. Contributions may be signed or not, and sent to E.B.Price, 16 Battery St. - or phone her at VI 7-3341 and she will gladly drop in and jot down your recollections if you would like to share them. The Point is rich in stories that should not be lost.

CHRISTMAS PLANS: The December issue of The Green Light will carry news on plans for the celebration of Christmas on the Point.

BE SURE to visit the Christmas Sale of The Preservation Society, for the benefit of a new seawall at the Hunter House. The sale will be at the Brick Market, Dec. 1st and 2nd 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Food, white elephants, Silent Auction, and many other attractive items. Chairman of the Committee is Mrs. Harold P. Arnold, 56 Poplar Street.

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING AT HOME IS EASY = WITH BEAUTY COUNSELORS!  
Janet Brownell VI 6-2414

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ST. LEO SHOP VI 7-5428  
Christmas Cards, Crib Sets,  
Religious Gifts, Calendars  
118 Washington St.

+ + + + +

RESTORATIONS, INC. VI 7-5727  
Fabrics and Wallpapers, Slip-Covers, Drapery, Reproductions.  
76 Bridge Street

+ + + + +

THE JOHN STEVENS SHOP VI 6-0566  
29 Thames St. Founded in 1705  
Letter Carving on Wood or Stone

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BOOKBINDING AND REPAIRING  
Initialling on Leather.  
Glenn A. Bissell  
16 Walnut St. VI 7-4340

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INTERIOR DECORATOR VI 7-5163  
William H. Fullerton  
41 Washington Street

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POINT MARKET VI 6-1088  
Groceries Frozen Foods  
Free Delivery  
Walnut and Second Sts.

+ + + + +

CORNER CUPBOARD VI 6-2894  
Antiques. Prints and Frames.  
Furniture Repairing  
58 Bridge Street

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SPIERS CLOVER FARM GROCERY  
103 Second Street VI 7-1668  
Open Daily - both Early and  
Late, for your Convenience.

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"SINGING LESSONS FOR PLEASURES"  
Emma Beldan, Soprano  
Formerly of Philadelphia Opera  
22 Farewell St. VI 7-5225

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"PETE'S CANTEEN" 74½ Third St.  
Bakery, Dairy, and Canned Goods  
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