

The GREEN LIGHT

BULLETIN of the POINT ASSOCIATION

NEWPORT

OCTOBER 1959

RHODE ISLAND

THE ANNUAL MEETING

of The Point Association of Newport, Rhode Island, will be held on
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28th
ST. JOHN'S GUILD HALL, Poplar Street
8:00 P.M. SHARP!

ANNUAL REPORTS

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

OLD-FASHIONED MUSIC

by Members of The Middletown Community Orchestra

REFRESHMENTS

When taking in your house-plants, if you have any "extras" please bring them to the Meeting and we will have a Plant Sale !

We have 392 members - let's see how many will be there !

A MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER

Our 128 new members, gained through the August drive, have already paid dues which will carry them to October 1960. A number of old members renewed at this time, also, or have sent in their dues since then.

HOWEVER, a large proportion of memberships fall due at the time of the Annual Meeting. Those who joined or paid dues prior to June 1st should also renew. Our fiscal year is now October to October.

THEREFORE - if there is a membership blank attached to this copy of The Green Light, it means that - according to our records - your dues are now payable. We sincerely hope that every one of you wishes to continue membership in The Point Association, and that you will send your dues promptly to

RICHARD S. WEISS, Treasurer
42 Walnut Street, Newport, R.I.

A PLEA FROM THE EDITOR

YES ! Please, PLEASE be prompt in your renewal of membership ! The mailing-list for The Green Light must be kept up-to-date at all times. The Editor has troubles enough without wondering just how long to keep on sending the Bulletin to people whose membership has not been renewed. We're sure you intend to - but please do it NOW ! Our big circulation is very exciting. We want it to grow even bigger.

But we just CAN'T send out The Green Light for free !!

SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING:

The Executive Committee met on September 16 at the home of the President, E.H. Brownell, but as a quorum was lacking, no votes were taken and discussion was informal.

OCTOBER BOARD MEETING:

On Oct. 8 the Executive Committee met at 16 Battery Street.

PROTECTION: Dr. David Nemtzow reported further improvement to 53 Poplar St; an old shed removed, and a picket fence with brick posts being installed.

There was a lengthy discussion of the increasing vandalism and related problems, and plans were made for exploratory measures.

TREES: Mr. J.L. Murphy reported all the new trees weeded and tended, at a cost of \$20. Mr. Brownell has gone over all trees with the Tree Warden. There will be 12 replacements and 5 new trees this fall.

MEMBERSHIP: Mr & Mrs. S. Joseph Weaver reported 128 new members, to a total of 391. Mrs. Geo. Leary has volunteered to mail out letters to prospective members.

CLEAN-UP: The President named Mrs. Geo. D. Weaver, jr. chairman of a permanent Clean-up Committee, and she was allocated \$25 as an interim sum to begin a pictorial record of areas needing drastic attention. Under mandate from the general membership, funds may be provided for a continuing clean-up campaign, to receive priority. Mrs. Weaver plans a large committee, to cover the Point block by block.

PROPERTIES; Some 18 or 19 available old houses are listed, and others known. Interested persons are desperately needed!

BULLETIN: The Editor read letters from the American Ass'n of Museums and the Winterthur Museum, expressing interest in receiving The Green Light for their files.

ANNUAL MEETING date was set, and it was confirmed that members of the Middletown Community Orchestra will play old-fashioned music.

RANDOM COMMENTS:

SEAWALL: Work is progressing on the Washington St. seawall, with an outer facing of concrete being put over the existing wall. \$10,000 has been appropriated for the work, which presumably will be completed before winter. Fortunately, no hurricane has as yet hit these shores, to undo the patching.

STREETS: Cherry, Chestnut and Pine have received an elegant coat of black-top. We can't help wishing that the main access streets, Poplar and Eridge, had been on the list. Next year, perhaps ??

TREES: Mr. Murphy engineered a fine job in pulling up all the grass and ragweed. Wouldn't it be wonderful if each person fortunate enough to have a tree in front of his house would do this himself?

PAINTING: Lots of painting is going on all over the Point - and don't the houses look NICE? Congratulations to the painters!

SMOKE: So it is the Ferryboat Jamestown which has been the main culprit all summer! Surely we all agree that the soot has NEVER been so bad. The boat is in ill-health and is going to dry-dock. We learn with some dismay that these new boats, instead of being diesel as we supposed, have reciprocating engines which burn #6 bunker oil. We have a feeling that the ferries blow their tubes too close to this side of the Bay. Just west of Rose Island would, with our prevailing wind, carry the smoke directly up the Bay, hitting neither the Newport nor Jamestown side.

The Point Association intends to press its efforts in all three directions - to the Ferry Division, the Newport Electric Corp., and the U.S. Navy at Goat Island.

It is fantastic that a small non-industrial city by the sea should have more air pollution than modern Pittsburgh. Unchecked, the situation may drive residents away from the area.

++ ALMOST AN OBITUARY ++

When Jonathan Easton sorrowfully took stock after the Revolution, he sharpened his quill and wrote as follows:

"To the gentlemen assessors for Y^e town of Newport, 1781: memorandum. One acre Y^e turf taken off, about two acres in sellars and heaps and cannot be replaced without great expense. I had 3 houses burnt, one pulled down, a good orchard cut and upward of eight hundred trees cut, new two thousand rails burnt, Y^e only house left crowded with British troops for near three yeares, they stole my cattle and hogs and poultry and almost everything outdores. I owed 2 thousand silver dollars when Y^e British came here, and obliged to borrow money to support my family. The July after there departure, the French encamped in the meadow before it was mowed. Laid both meadows and pasture common, the town cows and hoarses to the number of forty to sixty every day. I was obliged to put out part of what little stock I had, and Y^e remainder almost starved. Ye French kept there cows and hoarses in Y^e meadow the whole time they staid. Gentlemen, as it is impossible to give a detail of Y^e losses for near four yeares, shall rely upon you gentlemen to do what you shall think just, as my case is almost singular, make no doubt that you will make such deductions as you shall think equitable. If your Honors should think anything exaggerated, I am ready and willing to give every proof called for. From your assu'd friend and most Distressed Petitioner -- JONATHAN EASTON *

Newport, June 9, 1781 "

That "only house left" which was "crowded with British troops" is the sad relic now to be found at the corner of Cherry Street and Guernev Court. Originally it stood where part of the Covell property now is - and the mind's eye may reconstruct the "Water" Street of that day, with the Hunter, Collins, Warren, Robinson, Goddard, Easton and Finch houses in an unbroken line along the harborside. In February of 1781, Easton conveyed this house to his son John, in consideration of natural affection and the sum of five shillings, together with all the Ways, Waters, Rights, Liberties, Privileges, Improvements & Appurtenances whatsoever.

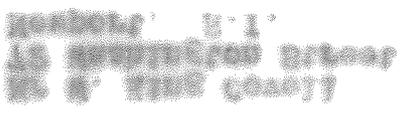
This house - the last of the Easton houses - stands quietly dying beneath its mantling wisteria vine, looking out sadly through broken windows at its alien surroundings. It is not quite too late to save it; its sturdy bones are still intact. (Rounded beams with the bark on) It is sound enough to move, and there is a place to which to move it. It remembers the tramp of the redcoats; the sight of the French fleet at anchor in the harbor; the prosperity before and the desolation after the Revolution. If it could cry out with the creaking voice of the hinge of its unlatched door, it would whisper,

"Help me, Your Honors . . .
save me . . . "



HELP !

* Newport Historical Magazine, July 1881, Vol. 2, No.1



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