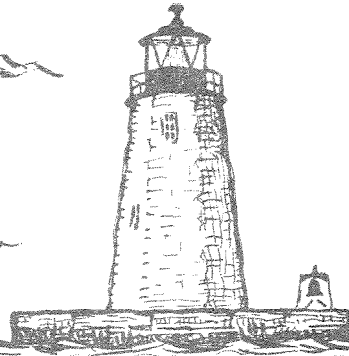


The GREEN

LIGHT



BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

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No. 2

APRIL GENERAL MEETING.

The April general membership meeting of the Point Association will be held at Mumford School on Thursday, April 29th, at 8 o'clock.

The slides of Point gardens taken by King Covell, with the help of Marion Galvin, will be shown at last. Many of us have been looking forward to seeing them for a long time, but we'll be amply rewarded and inspired by these beautiful pictures. After this, several groups of young singers, gathered by impresario Jimmy Douglas, and including the Sandune Singers and the Wanderers, will give a Hootnanny. We are sure everyone will enjoy them.

APPLE BLOSSOM MORNING COFFEE

Once more Mrs. Henry Eccles is having an apple blossom coffee hour in her garden, probably on May 20th. As the date depends on when the apple blossoms will be at their most beautiful, this may have to be changed, but we shall let everyone know in plenty of time. We are hoping to have a plant sale, and all plants, cuttings, or little seedlings our gardeners can bring, will be much appreciated.

JANUARY GENERAL MEETING

The January General Membership Meeting was held at Mumford School on February 4th, postponed because of a scheduled meeting on Redevelopment.

The reports of the Secretary and Treasurer were read and approved.

The auction on August 7th was mentioned -- see special notice.

On June 26th the Preservation Society will have a tour of six or seven Point houses.

Mrs. Weaver asked that letters be

sent to the City Manager and the refuse collector about moving barrels to the middle of the street for collection, where they are often tipped over. Mrs. Weiss moved a letter be sent to the City Manager complaining about the derelict cars abandoned in vacant lots.

Mr. Richard Sheffield gave his views on redevelopment.

Finally Ade Bethune gave an enlightening talk on trees -- how to plant them and how to prune them, with many beautiful slides of Point trees; also how to improve and protect them, and how to shape them by pruning to encourage one strong shoot upward. She had drawn clear diagrams to show what to avoid, and what to develop, and most of us were amazed to see what could be done, and how superior the results were.

TREES

The question of trees to be planted has become quite controversial this year, as we all agree there should be more along the streets, but there are many different

ideas of the best way to do this. First -- what kind of trees should we plant, as several kinds of maple will flourish, also linden, locust, or ginko. Then, should we try to get permission to plant some trees in peoples' yards next to the widewalks instead of in the sidewalks? The city would not plant them then. They do not have enough room to grow well on the sidewalks, and they are hit by cars and carved up by children until it is a wonder they grow. But many peoperty owners would not be willing to have them in their yards at all. The trees could be placed where the wires would not interfere with their growth. So each side has advantages and drawbacks. This will be discussed at the general meeting, and if people could think it over beforehand, it should be a help in deciding.

OLD FASHIONED AUCTION

Our summer project this year will be an auction, held on August 7th on the lawn at Mrs. Benson's house, 62 Washington Street. The co-chairmen will be Mrs. Francis Carr and Mrs. George Weaver. They will be glad to collect any treasures you find in your spring housecleaning -- just call one of them. Also they are hoping to get volunteers to help them, and will welcome all assistance, so let them know what you would like to do.

OPERATION CLAPBOARD

If we assume that, for the record, spring is here, Operation Clapboard seems to have weathered its first winter in good shape. We have managed to place all the houses we held except one, and the time is drawing near when we must make ourselves presentable for the warm months. Since the Green Light report we have changed very little in physical size. The two small houses on Second Street between Elm and Bridge (west side) have been sold, and the Cozzens house (corner of Warner and Farewell) has been placed. As to the acquisition of more houses, Operation Clapboard is going to proceed with caution. We now represent quite a block of real estate, and our aims for the time being are to make presentable what we have. Toward this end things are beginning to show. The John Stevens house at 30 Thames Street, owned by Mr. and Mrs. C. William Wharton, is almost completed; it has had a full renovation inside and out, and will be ready for occupancy within a matter of weeks. The Dr. James Keith house at 44 Thames Street, owned by Mr. Clarkson W. Potter and Mrs. Margaretta W. Potter, has had much structural work done, including two new sills and a partially rebuilt foundation. This is now essentially completed, and the way is clear for exterior refinishing.

The two houses owned by Mrs. Nadine Pepys at 24 and 26 Thames Street, the old Braman property, are both progressing. The smaller of the two has required a new roof, new plumbing, and new heating, and work will begin on the bigger fairly soon.

Ensign and Mrs. Ted Carman have moved into the Samuel Nichols house at 31 Elm Street, where they are starting to do the interior.

Lieutenant Commander and Mrs. Walter Whitley are making great progress with the Sheffield-Huntington house at 43 Elm Street. Many partitions have been removed, and the very handsome mid 18th century paneling is now exposed and being refinished.

The Kings Arms Tavern, 6 Cross Street, owned by Mr. William Wood Price, is undergoing extensive architectural studies by Mr. Eugene McNulty, who is trying to establish original size and shape. The Newport Historical Society has now documented the building back to 1720.

The Cozzens house, 57 and 59 Farewell Street, owned by Mr. Olcott D. Smith and Mrs. Emily Clark, is about to undergo complete exterior restoration. Some of its later additions are already being taken off.

Mr. Robert Foley, owner of the Peter Simon, John Gardner and Captain Weaver houses, is beginning a program of exterior work which should make his already unique property even more handsome.

Mrs. Hope Goddard has restoration underway on the Townsend House at 74 Bridge Street, which includes turning it back into a single family dwelling, putting in new plumbing and restoring the interior detail.

The Crandall house, Operation Clapboard's one Victorian building at 57 Poplar Street, is being restored by its new owner, Mrs. Elizabeth Smith.

In the planning stages with work to begin soon are: the house at 6 Sanford Street owned by Mr. and Mrs. Donald Koslow, and the Thomas Weaver house at 27 Willow Street, owned by Captain and Mrs. Arthur Hewitt.

All these, together with the Pitts Head Tavern project, of which much has been said, and the small park at Cross and Thames Streets, which the city is beginning to work on, comprise the current status of Operation Clapboard. We have 25 houses to date. Although we have slowed down a bit in one way, we have no intentions of stopping. Rather, we hope to move on more strongly than ever, and see the Point become what it has every right to be.

Tom Benson

BRIDGE STREET 1908-1909

How nice that the group called Operation Clapboard is interested and going to restore some of the old houses on the Point.

In 1908 and 1909 Mumford School was not built or was in the process of being built, so I attended the eighth grade at Townsend Industrial, and the ninth grade at Cranston-Calvert School. Therefore I ran four times a day the length of Bridge Street. It runs from east to west, or from Thames to Washington Street, and was a well kept residential and business street. It was before World War I, in the days when the ladies wore black taffeta and carried parasols, in the days of oil lamps, coal stoves, and the horse and buggy. Everywhere there were lovely little gardens, rose bushes, lilacs and fruit trees; there were picket fences, and the vine covered criss cross lattice fences that separated the front and back yards, and hid the outside water-closet.

Let us start at the north side, at the corner of Bridge and Washington. Here stood a big white square house with the front door on Bridge Street and the yard on Washington Street. The red stone steps, the kind you ran up one side and down the other were important, as it was there we played jacks. In the front hall was the crooked narrow stairway, and in the downstairs kitchen was the big chimney with the quaint bake oven. It was a two tenement house occupied by the Walsh and the Fitzpatrick families.

Next to this was an immense big house moved at an earlier date from Washington Square. This was 91 Bridge where I was born. The front door was in the center with a store on both sides. There were two or three flights of stairs leading to the upper floors with big hallways dividing the house. I lived on the east side and remember well the fancy moldings, high mantelpieces, and beautiful high paneling that extended around the entire room -- also the window boxes that set outside on the ledge over the store. On the west side lived Mrs. Kitty Sullivan, an old lady who ran a rooming house. Downstairs was a lively place where Mr. Albert Groff and his son ran a combination meat market, grocery store and bar-room. In the front store could be found everything imaginable from glass lamp chimneys, pilot crackers, pickle barrel, molasses barrel, oil barrel to corn beef. The sugar, flour, beans or meat were weighed on a swinging scales, and the potatoes, onions, etc., were measured out in round wooden boxes by the quart or peck. Leading out from the grocery store was the bar-room where the men enjoyed their foaming glasses of beer. In the rear was a room where the men from the steamboats, fishing schooners, and other customers played cards. On Saturday nights, Mr. Groff made and served them either fish or clam chowder with their pilot crackers and drinks. He was a kind man, and when a customer paid his bill, he was rewarded with a corn beef dinner. The other side store was used as a store room for the beer kegs.

Next was a big house set back from the sidewalk, and the two front yards were divided with a high lattice fence. These large houses had long hallways. One side was occupied by Mrs. Tobin and her daughter Mary, and they conducted a boarding house for the steamboat men. Later there was a Swedish Hand Laundry here. Mrs. Annie Smith also lived here, and still later it became commercialized by Mr. William Quigley who sold coke and kindling wood. On the other side for many years the Sutlers, Jones, and

Little families lived here. At the present time all this land is vacant -- perhaps Operation Clapboard could make use of it.

The next house now standing was flat on the ground with a little store -- I think a barber shop. Later it was occupied by an old lady, whom everyone called Sweet Sixteen or Trilby as she had long grey bouncing curls. In the store window she had all sorts of jars and bottles filled with herbs. The other part of the house was occupied by Mrs. Ringleader and her daughter Julia. For many years Julia lived as a companion for the Green family, who lived across the street. Other tenants were a Mr. Bootly who drove the police patrol, also a Hawkins family. The Point always had a lot of odd characters, and in the rear lived Mr. Richardson, whom everyone called General. He blew a brass horn calling attention that he did white washing, as cellars and fences as well as ceilings were white washed in those days.

On the corner of Second Street was another white house with picket fence and in the yard were pear trees. This was owned and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Reed and a family named Honeywell. This is now an empty lot.

Crossing Second on the opposite corner stood another big house with stone steps, and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Sullivan, parents of the late City Solicitor Jerry Sullivan.

Where Egan's Laundry is now, once stood the barrel factory owned and operated by Mr. Henry Thorndike. Here barrels were made for the fishing trade. Mr. Thorndike moved his business to New Bedford, but returned to Newport to live after his retirement.

Next came a store where paint, varnish and glass was sold by Mr. Frank, who with his family lived above the store.

On the corner of Third stood another grocery store, conducted by Mr. Carr who the year around wore a straw hat. He also lived with his sister above the store. Here again could be found all the family needs. On the counter was the brown wrapping paper and bags and on the end stood the big coffee machine where the coffee was ground by hand. This building has recently been demolished and is now a big hole in the ground.

Crossing Third Street was the corner barber shop run by Mr. Young and later by Mr. Gibe. Here all the shaving mugs were neatly lined up on the shelves. The entrance to the house was in the yard.

Mr. Bob Hamilton lived in the next big house, with the big barn in the rear, where his horses were kept. He owned the grocery store at the corner of Third and Poplar Streets.

Next to Hamiltons lived Mr. Lawton and his sister Mary. He baked and sold beans and brown bread, and Miss Lawton painted china. Attached to the big house was a lovely little shop similar to the gift shoppes of today, and here Miss Lawton sold her paintings, china and glassware. There was also a barn in the rear.

The next house had a long front piazza, and here lived a family named Nightingale. Another family named Yoseff lived here and carried on a fashionable dressmaking trade.

Next to the car tracks at the Bridge Street crossing was a very busy place -- Armour's Meat House. Here, the meat and ice was unloaded from the freight cars onto a platform and stored away in the ice house. The men were kept busy loading the big wagons and distributing the meat to the various stores throughout the city. This, too, has disappeared, and is now J.T.O'Connell's lumber yard.

As the crossing gates are down, we will retrace our steps and go back to the corner of Bridge and Washington Streets, and take the south side of Bridge. Of all these lovely old houses on the north side only three remain standing -- the south side fared better.

In the empty corner store was a very fashionable meat market and grocery store known as Gladding's Meat Market, and at this time it was run by Mr. Henry St. Clair. Here was the well scraped meat bench, the fresh sawdust neatly raked, and the big ice-box where the choice meats were stored. There was a glassed-in office where Mrs. St. Clair did the bookkeeping. Up over the store lived Captain Brady and his family, and what a magnificent view of the bay there is from here.

The next two houses were owned by Mr. Thomas James and still remain in the James family. The old house still has the quaint old doorway.

George Eddy's house comes next with its lovely yard and grape arbor. At this time there was no piazza on the house, but high stone steps led up to the front door. In the rear the little cottage was occupied by the family of Charles Dewick, and he operated a fish market on Long Wharf.

The next house with the big yard still looks the same and was the property of the Freeborn family.

The house on the corner of Second was known as the Green House, and here lived the Green ladies; it was rumored they lost their fortune when a bank failed. This house still has its nice doorway, and attached to it is a store with a big yard in the rear. I believe it has just been bought and is being restored by Mr. and Mrs. Goddard through Operation Clapboard.

Crossing Second on the corner was another smaller grocery store run by Joe Brown, and later Mrs. Gilson. Above the store and in the rear lived Edward James and his family. The yard was on Second Street.

The next house was the property of Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Lawton, and here lived Miss Clara and her brother George. It still has its narrow crooked stairs, and lovely fireplace in the front room. The Point had little gardens and in this back yard was a beautiful bed of lily-of-the-valley. Between this house and the next was an alley-way which ran through to Marsh Street, and here the tall sunflowers grew.

Next was the Barlow property. Mr. B. Kohn had a cobbler shop, and up over the store lived a Nelson family, and Fred Groff lived downstairs. Adjoining this was another store run by Mr. Bucky Spencer. He, with his wife and daughter Kitty, lived in the rear and over the store with the entrance to the front door on the side. A little bell rang when you entered the store, and Mrs. Spencer, her hair up in little kid curlers, came out to wait on you. They sold notions, penny candy and medicine. Bucky was a thin cranky man, and would always lick the glass bottle stops when you went in to buy fifteen cents worth of syrup of squill. No child loitered here. As I said, "the Point had some odd characters." Mr. Thorndike across the street was big and jolly and would play jokes on Bucky, and provoke him by whistling loudly "Here she comes, there she goes," and Bucky would chase him with a broom.

The pride of the Point was Westall's Ice Cream Parlor, known for miles around. Here you bought any size box of ice cream you wanted. On the shelves were the big glass jars of the various candies -- pink hearts, cinnamon bark, licorice or rock candy. There was a case of penny candy and a cigar case. In the corner stood the ice water cooler. You passed through the red velvet portiers into the ice-cream parlors. There were many white marble-top tables, where the most delicious ice cream was served in glasses. The Westall family lived above the store. Now times have changed -- this is the Lobster Claw.

On the corner of Third was a little cottage occupied by Mr. Frank James and his family. The entrance was on Third Street. Later the corner room was made into a store where Mr. Bruno had a cobbler shop.

Crossing Third Street, now a vacant lot, once stood the old Number 2 Firehouse. Everyone knew Mr. Henry Tripp and his horses, and sometimes he would let the children slide down the brass pole. There was a long side room where you went to vote, and at this corner torch light rallies were held.

Next to the fire station was the Standard Wholesale establishment, now an express office, and this building looks the same. From Bridge Street, running through to Marsh Street, was a roadway, which we called Mud Alley, and on the east side was a big iron drinking fountain for the horses. There were many barns in the neighborhood.

Next to the car tracks, and opposite Armour's was another busy place. Here was John M. Friend's lumber shed and yard, now the property of J. T. O'Connell.

As the gates are going up, we will continue on our way.

Carrie Ericson

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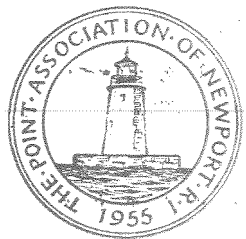
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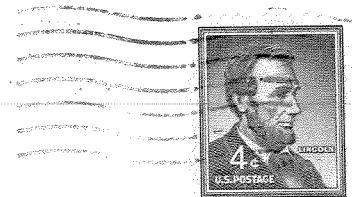
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