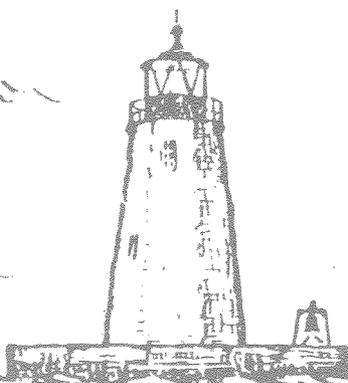


The GREEN

LIGHT



BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

DECEMBER 1988

christmas on the point

Edith Ballinger Price

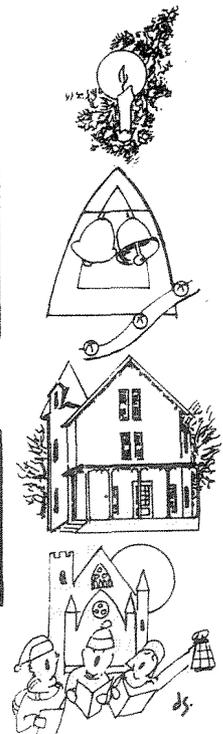
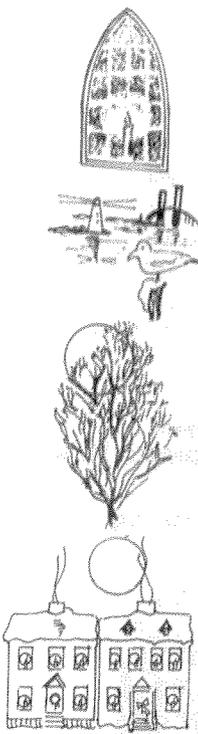
1958

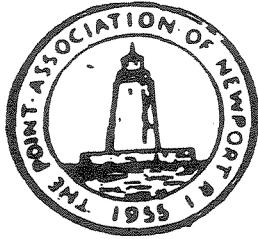
W. K. C.

Allegro

1. Bire bran - ches creak a - gainst the sky. Clean lies the snow, the moon sails high;
 2. But hark! the bells ring sharp and wide A - cross the frost - y har - bor side;
 3. Old hou - ses wake, and can - dles glow; Car - ols ring out a - cross the snow.

(*) And Good Gray in their dreams old hou - ses sigh "The times are out of joint!
 come what may, what e'er be - ill may tide, Its Christ - mas on the Point.
 days shall come, and go: With Christ - mas on the Point.





The GREEN LIGHT

OCTOBER 1988

Vol. XXXIII - No. 6

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The carol on the cover was composed by Pointers Edith Ballinger Price and King Covell, and was sung on many Christmas Eves by Point carolers.

OFFICERS

Richard Peters
President

Mary Lynn Rooke
1st. V. President

Robertta Majewski
2nd. V. President

Donna Flynn
Rec. Secretary

Jeanne Desroisers
Corr. Secretary

John Howard
Treasurer

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Katharine O'Brien and Rowen Howard,
Circulation
Florence Archambault, Typing

Copies of the Green Light may be purchased for \$1.00 at Bucci's Convenience Store, Poplar and Thames Streets and at Third Street Liquors.

Message from the President

Thank you Brenda Gordon. We will miss your wise and considered leadership. I strongly believe you have raised the Point Association to a higher level of civic responsibility and influence during your Presidency. Your sensible and persuasive voice on the issues of importance to the Point has earned the respect of the City Council and the admiration of the membership. Almost singlehandedly you have changed the public's perception of our association toward seeing us as a positive, constructive and public minded force. You have served your neighbors well.

The Newport Circulator Road. Don't hold your breath yet, but it would appear that the message has been sent loudly and clearly enough that even the Director of the Department of Transportation, Mathew Gill, will understand. Newport does not want a four lane inner city highway. Thank you all for the great turnout at the City Council's Workshop November 10. It is essential for us to attend these workshops, tell the Council members how we feel, and show our support for them to the folks in Providence. We do still need the State's help with our traffic problems. The City Council is asking for assistance to improve the downtown intersections, to create satellite parking facilities and to provide bus service instead of the circulator project.

There is one relatively new issue that I believe we need to watch carefully, and that is the proposed new piers for the State owned land at the south end of Washington Street. These piers are designed to extend some 248 feet beyond the current Harbor Line to the west, or approximately one third of the way across the channel toward Goat Island. They would also extend most of the way across the channel to the south of this land. We need to analyze the project to evaluate its merits. More importantly, we need to insure that this project doesn't open the door for every owner on the harbor to also build piers 248 feet beyond the Harbor Line. The Harbor Line was established by the General Assembly and has held the line on development for over 100 years. We should urge great caution to our City Council and the State agencies involved in any planned penetration of this historic line.

Your officers are listed on the facing page. Please don't hesitate to call us with your concerns. Have a happy Holiday Season.

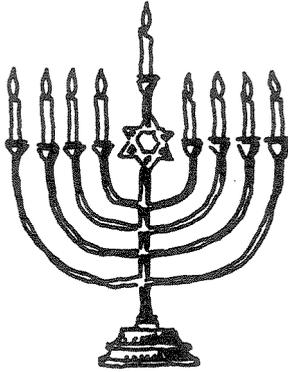


Richard (Pete) Peters

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Welcome to our newest members:

Michael and Elizabeth Alison
Wendy W. Baker
Charles F. Bentley
Lydia F. Bernier (daughter of
a charter member)
Lee Bourque
Eleanor Murphy
Dorothy Palmer
Marion Baxter Reardon
Eva Seigel
Catherine V. Sheehan
Mrs. Reginald B. Stoops
Marc J. Walsh



HAPPY HANUKKAH

GENERAL MEETING

On the 2nd Thursday in October, the Point Association held its Annual Meeting at St. Paul's Church. The main purpose, besides renewing memberships, was to say farewell to the outgoing officers and elect and welcome a new slate. These are:

President: Richard Peters
1st. V. President: Mary Lynn Rooke
2nd. V. President: Roberta Majewski
Rec. Secretary: Donna Flynn
Corr. Secretary: Jeanne Desroisers
Treasurer: John Howard
Chairman Nominating Committee:
Donna Maytum.

There was a good attendance at the meeting, and it included Mayor McKenna and Councilman Crowley.

COCKTAIL PARTY

A very successful party was held September 30 at the Newport Yacht Club. Both old and new members enjoyed the get-to-gether. As usual, our culinary artists outdid themselves in presenting tasty and attractive hors d'oeuvres. Thanks to chairmen, Susanne Reynolds and Suzette Seigel for organizing it and to all those who provided food.

Once again, thanks to so many of you for sending in your dues so promptly - a few have even paid twice! In those cases we have marked paid to October 1990 - and will remind you of that next fall when the dues notices go out.

And once again, may we ask that you let us know of any change of address and the applicable dates. The Post Office has upped the rates for returning the Green Lights and they will not forward them. So we all miss out when they are undeliverable.

In our last fiscal year we enrolled 50 new members - let's see if we can top that this year!

Rowan Howard



TEN SPEED SPOKES
18 Elm Street
Newport, Rhode Island 02840
401-847-5609



CIRCULATOR ROAD

"Let us reject this Circulator Road once and for all" was the message delivered to the City Council at the November 10th workshop.

The workshop was an opportunity for the public to voice their opinion again, before another City Council vote on the controversial road plan, December 14th.

Ade Bethune and John Howard represented the Point Association. Ade spoke of the plan as "a flawed concept...cutting through our ancient city." Her recommendations were for better signs leading tourists to the Transportation Center and directly to the beaches via Admiral Kalbfus Road and Middletown. Improved intersections, upkeep of roadways and satellite parking were other suggestions.

The meeting became emotional when our own John "Fud" Benson directly asked the Council if the Circulator Road would ever be built. At the mention of a class action suit, and with little or no response from the Council, the audience stirred. "You are elected by us" was one woman's reminder to the Council.

COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOW FACILITY

Sealed bids were due to be received at City Hall by November 22nd. In all probability, construction will begin nearly a year late!



Sayer's Wharf
Newport, Rhode Island
02840

NEWPORT OFFSHORE

On November 5th a state and federal effort to preserve the Newport Offshore site for marine-related uses was launched. A petition of approximately 700 signatures had been presented to the Council protesting against the planned condominium development by Capitol Growth. In addition, taxes had not been paid on the property by the Shipyard.

The November 5th announcement caught Capitol Growth, the developer, by surprise. They have plans to develop the site with a 35 million dollar condo/small hotel/small shipyard and have been negotiating with the Redevelopment Agency for a change of land-use.

The pros and cons of both proposals must be evaluated.

SOUTH PIER

A workshop to discuss plans for the multi-million dollar renovation and expansion of the fishing pier was requested. A hearing was scheduled for Monday, November 21st at City Hall.

LONG WHARF HOTEL

And yet another 182-room "first class" hotel is planned for the Long Wharf/Washington Street corner by B.F.G. Development Corporation.

Will the Planning Board and Historic District Commission be more conscious of good design when these plans are submitted?

Liz Bermender



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Tel. (401) 847-5277
George H. Koulouvardis

Gladys Bolhouse - born-on-the-Pointer and ever-ready helper to the Green Light staff - was (once again!) featured in a story in the Providence Journal in November.

Mrs. Bolhouse, at an age long past usual retirement but by no means spending her days in a rocking chair, is the Curator of Manuscripts at the Newport Historical Society. For more than 40 years she has been the oracle for people searching family, organization, government and historical records. As the article states: "if she doesn't remember a specific historical incident, chances are it didn't happen!"

The Green Light adds its appreciation and respect to one of our best-known Pointers.

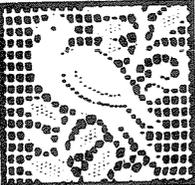
Donald Gibbs isn't a Pointer, but for the 36 years he has directed the Redwood Library, he has been a friend and helper to many Point residents. Donald has recently retired from the directorship, a post he held longer than any former head of the library. Point folks join the many library members of local communities in recognizing the job he has done, and in wishing him well. Recent feature stories in the Newport Daily News and the Providence Journal tell the story of the growth of the library during Donald Gibbs' regime. Pointers wish you happy, leisurely days-to-come, Donald!



Jane Walsh of Second Street was pictured in the Newport Daily News setting a good example of citizenship as she placed her "WE RECYCLE" basket at the curb on the first day of pickup. (Did YOU put out your recyclables?)

Kit Hammett

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Early Days on the Lots Where 88 & 94
Washington Street Now Stand

In September, 1915, my mother, Julia Belknap, bought, from the Fairchilds, the entire block between Chestnut and Cherry Streets, on the water side of Washington Street. The purchase included a large Victorian house on the northern half, and the price was \$11,095.82.

Where Ann Reynold's house is now stood a huge copper beech, which probably came down in THE hurricane. But when I knew it, all the lower limbs had been lopped off, and I and my friends had to jump up to catch a branch in order to climb to a lofty perch. I still remember my astonishment the first time I saw a copper beech with branches sweeping the ground.

There was also a grape arbor paralleling the seawall, and a high board fence along the southern end and the street side of the property, north as far as the privet hedge, which still divides the block north and south. It was a wonderful big, private yard, well suited for games of tag or blind man's buff, or amateur outdoor theatrics. An old, heavy handling catboat named "Twinkle", moored off the end of our dock, provided hours of pleasure on the bay. And my friends Billy McLeod and Betsy Lammers lived just down the street -- he at 78 and she at 75 Washington Street. I was as comfortable in their houses as in my own, and the Bozyans' warmth made their house at #80 another haven. Westall's down on Bridge Street had wonderful ice cream and Hymie Katzman's on Walnut and Second had such a supply of penny candy decisions were hard to make.

I digress. The entire lot, level at the street, sloped sharply toward the water, so there was a level "half floor" in our house on the water side. Down there was the kitchen, with wood stove, and a number of store rooms. My brother-in-law Andy used to store his homemade beer and wine down there, and we would often hear the popping of corks from below.

The house had a covered veranda on three sides, but my father removed the roof on the south side to give more light inside. The remaining rafters provided great beams for Billy and me to practice our balance on. The gutters outside the third floor windows did the same. However, our activities provoked some anxiety among the ladies at Nina Lynette, who would telephone my mother and beg her to get those children inside.

The house had a ballroom to the right of the front door, complete with a canvas mural of graceful maidens in flowing robes. The main hall halved the house and led past the drawing room through French doors out to the veranda facing the bay. The dining room was also on the water side, and served from the kitchen by a dumbwaiter, which also served as a most enjoyable plaything for Betsy, Billy and me.

Across the street was the Faisneau, which I remember as a very long porch and an interior of dark gloomy reds. Imagine my surprise when we "came home" to find the Faisneau down on Bridge and Washington, and anything but gloomy!

Mrs. Norman's gardens included the lot on the southeast corner of Chestnut and Washington, where number 79 Washington now stands. We were never allowed inside, but the garden-er was friendly to us.

The house and northern lot were sold in June, 1931, to Dorothy Tuckerman Draper, and eventually to the Wheelers, who demolished the old house in 1941 and built the one that now stands, #94 Washington Street. It appears that my father sold the lower lot also to Dorothy Draper, but it must have come back to him, because in 1939 he sold it to Miss Agnes Storer, and the rest is Fisher Benson's story.

One thing I note with pride. When my father sold the property in 1931, he put a restriction on the deed. Development on each half was limited to one residence and one garage for 25 years. Not bad thinking for 1931.

Mary Rowan Belknap Howard

The Christmas Crib is called the Creche or Cradle in France. In Italy, the Praesepe or Manger. In Germany, the Krippe or Crib. In Czechoslovakia, Jeslicky. In Spain and South America, the Nacimiento or Nativity Scene.

By whatever name, Kit Hammett probably has one of each. Kit began her collection of nearly 50 manger scenes while in Latin America as a representative of the Girl Scouts.

She already had one made of olive wood from the Holy Land which she had purchased in New York. She says, "I was in Latin America at Christmas time and just began to pick them up. Then, when people found out I was collecting them, I began to acquire them as gifts."

She has tried to acquire scenes that are typical of their country of origin. Her collection contains cribs made from every material imaginable, from wood to ivory.

One from Nigeria consists of authentic African figures. Her only music box she purchased in the town in Germany where "Oh, Come Little Children" was written and that is the tune which it plays.

In Peru, they are called Retablos and are housed in beautifully decorated boxes. Doors on the front stand open to reveal the scene within.

Kit says, "In South America for some reason the baby is the same size as the other figures. I don't know why. In Paraguay, where I was at Christmas, the families put their creche figures in the corner fireplaces. The figures were quite large and, since it was summer, they weren't using the fireplaces anyway."

Many of the figures in the cribs are extremely fragile. One made of spun glass is too fragile to display. Some contain only the figures of Mary, Joseph and the Christ Child while others consist of many figures representing shepherds, wise men and animals.



GUATAMALAN NACIMIENTO

There are dough figures from Ecuador, clay figures from Guatemala, a wooden creche from Ireland and one from Czechoslovakia made with corn husk figures.

The tiniest one is from El Salvador and is contained in a minute wooden egg. There are several stained glass ones from the United States as well as a Moravian putz from Pennsylvanian Dutch country.

Kit's favorite is a highly polished mahogany madonna and child. She says, "I don't know why this one is my favorite. It's very modern and I don't usually like modern things but it was a gift from some friends in Paraguay and I just like it."

Whenever Kit displays her manger scenes this madonna occupies the place of honor and rightly so -- for without Mary we wouldn't celebrate Christmas, would we?

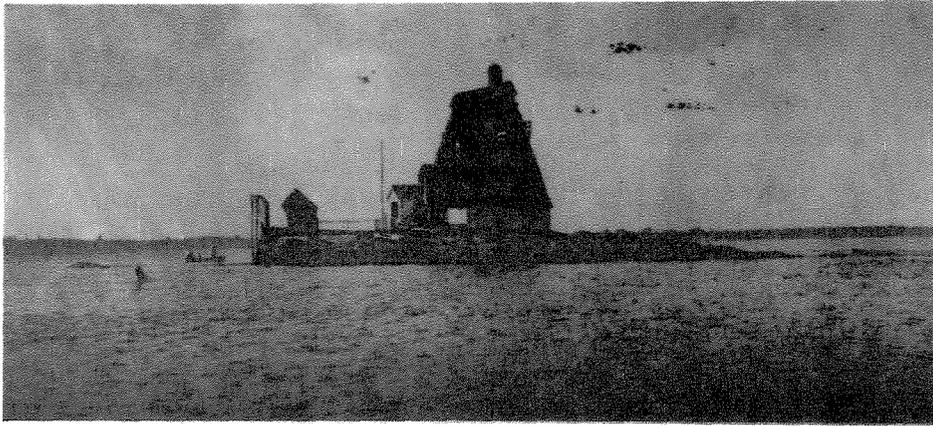
Florence Archambault



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GULL ROCKS LIGHTHOUSE

When crossing the bay to Newport via the bridge, you can see a small group of rocks just north of the bridge and scarcely large enough to be called an island. A concrete platform allows for a small storage shed and landing area. The Gull Rocks lighthouse stood upon this perch from 1887 until 1960. Its only inhabitants now are sea gulls and cormorants.

As a little girl sailing with my father in his cat boat, the KINGFISHER, I was bewitched by this red-roofed A-line house. I was sure that elves lived in it, or some strange creatures; then again, I wanted to live in it by myself, secure and isolated on that heap of rocks. There were doorways in odd places, and the windows were on the straight-up sides of the house not on the sharply-slanted sides.

Much later on, after World War II, my husband John and I came to know one of the lighthouse keepers quite well. Hirsch was his name, and he came from the middle West, never having seen the ocean before his enlistment in the Coast Guard; with him was his wife and a small son.

Once or twice a week they came to the Poplar Street shore in their outboard to do errands and to buy fresh food. They were anxious to talk with us, after being alone at the light. Toward the end of their stay, the wife was expecting a baby, and we worried about how they would manage.

But the service moved him to Beaver-tail light which was a more practical situation. I often wondered how that nice young wife managed to keep her active boy safe on that rocky, water-surrounded place.

Gull Rocks lighthouse was built in 1887 as a family house with plenty of living space on two floors. The top floor was given over to the light itself. The service provided them with fuel, basic foods, and maintenance supplies for the light. The necessary water supply came from the rain, falling down the roof into casks from which it was pumped to the living quarters.

It is said that people walking along the Washington Street shore occasionally came across a hen's egg. These finds remained a mystery until someone realized that the Gull Rocks lighthouse keeper kept chickens. These birds, not being familiar with the rise and fall of tides, laid their eggs where an incoming tide washed them away.

We were sad when this picturesque structure was removed. Of course, it was of little value to the service by 1970, and perhaps it is better remembered in its heyday unlike the now neglected Plum Beach light.

Esther Fisher Benson

I am indebted to the Newport Historical Society Bulletin, Spring 1971, for much of this information.

PART II

We bought 86 Washington Street in the spring of 1940. Among the many features of the house we enjoyed, the one that brings the fondest memories is probably the glass-enclosed porch with its floor-to-ceiling window wall looking out upon the bay. From it we saw such glorious sunsets, especially in the fall. We watched the Providence-New York boat come down the bay, still making its nightly run to New York. It had lasted a few years longer than the Fall River Line. We viewed every one of the 50 destroyers that the United States had given to Britain when they stopped in Newport on their way to Halifax where they were turned over to the British navy. What an uproar Congress would cause if this were to be attempted today!

We have so many great memories of our old home and its neighborhood. With our small children, we sat on the shore next to the house at the end of Chestnut Street with neighborhood families who came to swim there. My wife enjoyed the convenience of pushing our three small children, all in one twin stroller, along Washington Street and Long Wharf to Thames Street, where she did much of her shopping then. She remembers that it was even a delight to hang out the laundry on a sunny day, back before dryers were invented.

A group of our friends met with us for a cookout every Wednesday night in summer, two couples taking responsibility for the food each week, and some of us starting or winding up the evening with a swim. If it rained, we moved inside to the big old original kitchen and servants' dining room in the basement, which was really the first floor on the water side of the house.

One summer evening we let Eileen, who was 18 months old, down from her high chair while we finished dinner. A few minutes later when we looked for her, she was nowhere to be found. We rushed frantically around outside, down by the water and across the street, looking behind bushes and fences and up and down Chestnut and Walnut Streets.

In a few moments a stranger drove up with her and asked, "Is this what you are looking for?" When he had spotted our toddler in front of the Hunter House, dressed in a diaper and undershirt, carrying her mother's pocketbook and wearing a hat, he had guessed that she was perhaps the object of the agitated search he had just noticed as he had driven past us.



Shortly after that we decided reluctantly to leave Washington Street. During those war years, the Torpedo Station on Goat Island was operating around the clock. There was no causeway then. The regular ferry to the island had always docked at Thames Street, but now there was a second one from Brigg's Wharf, just south of the Hunter House. Trucks rumbled along Washington Street to it day and night.

We wanted to have a large family. With the water on one side of us and bad traffic on the other, we felt there would be too many years ahead of having to watch over children of toddler age. Besides that, oil was rationed, and the ration we were allowed for that big old house, that didn't have a zoned heating system, did not keep us warm, especially when the wind blew from the north.

We decided to rent, not sell, the house. Maybe we thought we might someday move back. A Lt. Burke looked at it and wanted to rent it. He was evasive in his answers to my questions as to who would live there. He had no family in Newport, and he wasn't sure how many would be moving in.

I was friendly with CMDR Bob Foote who was in charge of Naval Intelligence in Newport, so I telephoned to ask what he could tell me about Lt. Burke. He didn't know him but said he'd find out. Next day he called and said he couldn't tell me anything about Lt. Burke except that it was all right to rent the house to him.

With this assurance I started to negotiate the rental with the lieutenant. I remember meeting him late one afternoon at the bar in the old Muenchinger King Hotel. We discussed such things as who would be responsible for painting six bedrooms and bath on the third floor that we had never used, and other such mundane details.

Shortly after, a group of Italians moved into the house. As we were still at war with Italy, it was all very mysterious. Margharita Russo, a teacher at Rogers High School, was hired to teach them English. She later married one of those Italian pupils, Alfredo Sciarrotta.

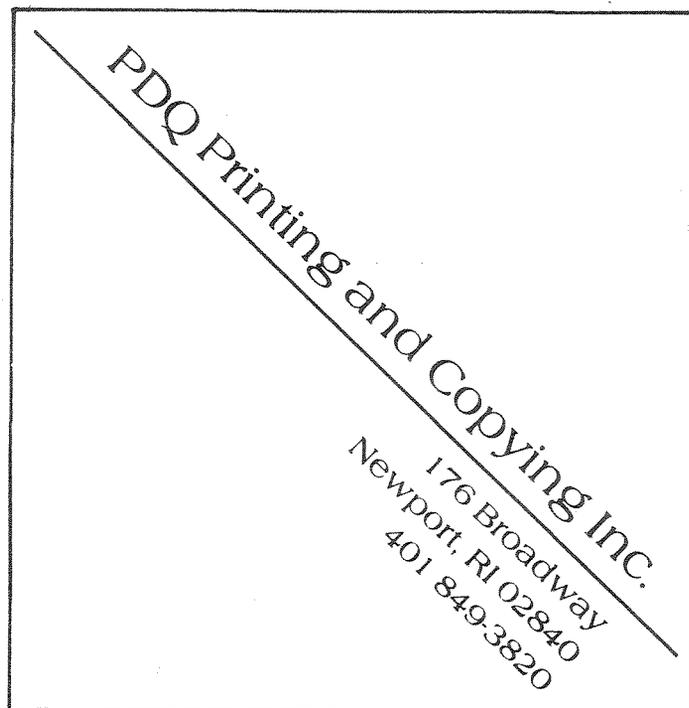
We eventually found out how and why they were here. It seems that Henry Ringling North, of Ringling Brothers Circus, became a Navy lieutenant and operated for the OSS as an undercover agent in Italy. "By chance" he met Alfredo Sciarrotta. Together they developed a team of men who disagreed with Mussolini's war with the United States. It consisted of an admiral, two captains, four engineers and five technicians who were to be brought to Newport to assist with the development of a magnetic torpedo exploder about which the Italians were more advanced than the Americans.

I later read a book by John Hersey telling about the exploits of the OSS, the forefather of our CIA. In it I read about the Americans who had parachuted into Italy to bring this Italian group to Newport. Playing a major part in this daring deed was Lt. Burke. He had jumped into Italy a week or two after we had sat in the Muenchinger King discussing so casually who would supply paint and who would supply labor to paint six rooms. I've often thought how bored he must have been with our conversation.

Alfredo Sciarrotta stayed in Newport after the war and became a renowned silversmith. One of his most distinguished designs was the leaf bowl. He told me he got the inspiration for this one fall day in Newport when he picked up a maple leaf. Over the years, whenever my wife would stop into Alfredo's shop he would introduce her to others who might be there as "my landlady".

We have lived in seven different houses since we left 86 Washington Street, but every fall I'm reminded of those beautiful sunsets we so loved.

Eugene O'Reilly



S. S. PORTLAND

As we watch the evening news, the weatherman alerts us to wild winds on their way. We've had some brisk breezes this fall, but here's a story of a storm not announced by satellite.

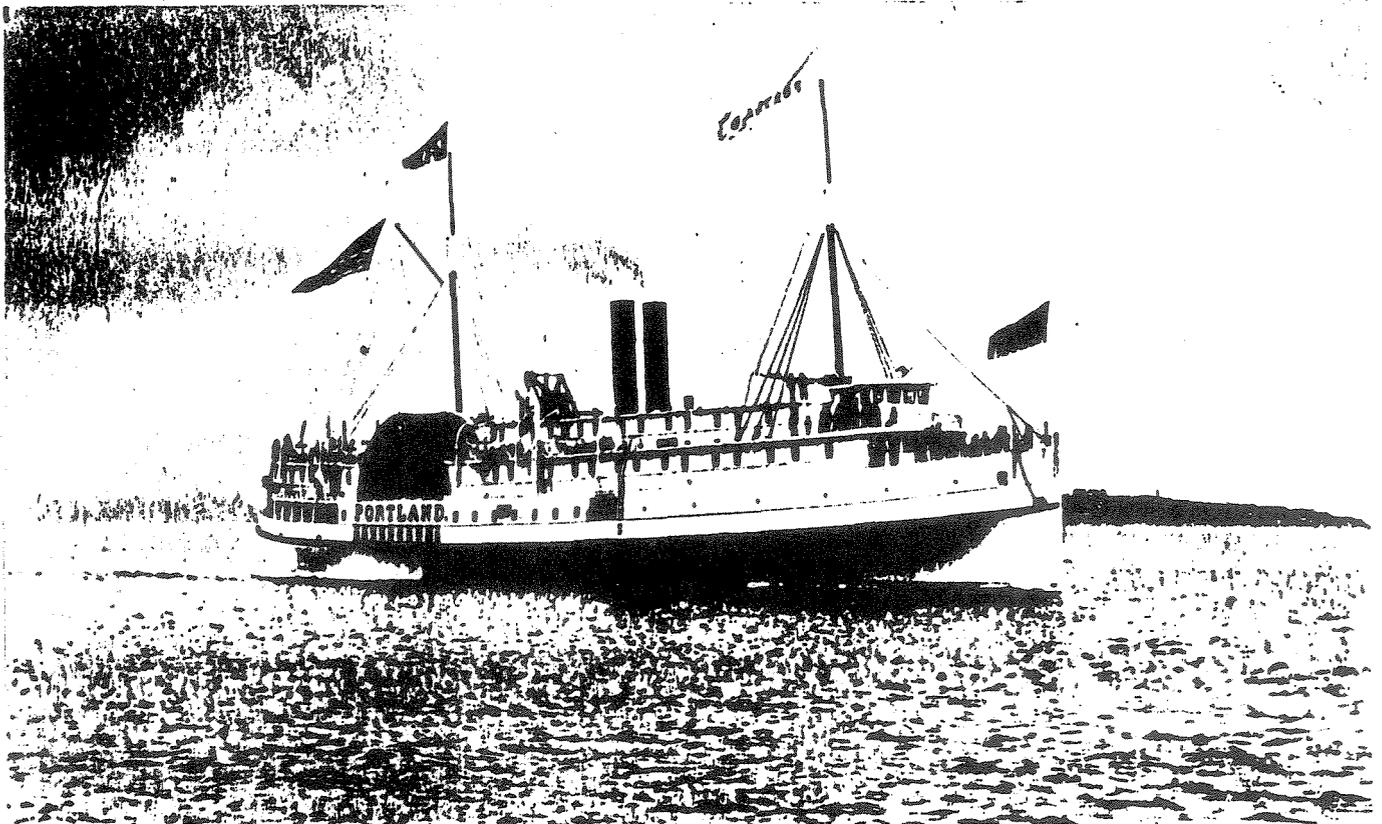
On November 26 and 27, 1898, the New England coast was ravaged by a fierce late fall hurricane which caused heavy damage to shipping at a time when coastwise shipping was more common than it is now. The most severe result of this gale was the loss of S.S. Portland, and this is the name by which the storm is remembered.

"Portland" was a fine vessel. She was a wooden side wheeler which was built in Bath, Maine in 1890 and was 280 feet long with a beam of 42 feet and a draft of 15 feet. Her accommodations were of the best and she was a very popular means of travel Down East from Boston. On her last voyage, in addition to 100 tons of cargo, she carried up to 176 members of the crew and passengers. The number is uncertain as the steamship company had no formal list of the passengers. All were lost in the disaster.

At 7 p.m., the S.S. Portland sailed from Boston. At this time the wind was about 14 knots but in five hours it reached hurricane force and the barometer dropped from 29.70 to 29.44 at Boston. The hurricane had come in with unusual rapidity much like the storm of 1938.

During the day on November 26, predictions were being made of severe weather along the New England coast. At the 7 p.m. sailing time, the weather was not very bad although in New York there were predictions of a northeast snowstorm. The general manager of the Portland Steam Packet Company wanted to hold up the ship's departure until the weather was more certain. However, Captain Hollis Blanchard made his decision based on his experience that he could safely make the 100 mile voyage to Portland before the predicted storm arrived.

As "Portland" proceeded toward her destination, she was sighted by several ships that were seeking safety themselves. At 11:45 p.m. the schooner "Edgar Randall" sighted her 14 miles SE x E of Gloucester which



ould put the "Portland" well to eastward of her course. Seafaring men of the time felt that Capt. Blanchard ran offshore to ride out the gale. What happened after the sighting seems a mystery although a fishing vessel off the Highland light sighted a steamer in the morning, and this might have been "Portland".

All during the next day the northeast snowstorm continued, and at 7 p.m. the Life Saving Service surfman on patrol found "Portland" wreckage between Race Point and Peaked Hill Bars on Cape Cod. By 11 p.m. large masses of "Portland" wreckage were coming ashore. The ship had evidently been driven in a southerly direction by the force of the northeast wind and huge seas.

It was impossible to determine whether the ship had struck Peaked Hill Bars or had been smashed to pieces by the seas, but the masses of wreckage and 20 bodies were clear proof that the back side of Cape Cod was her last port.

Donal O'Brien



The excavations on Bayside Avenue in October had at least one sidewalk superintendent!

The Waters Edge Flowers

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POTLUCK SUPPER

Watch for notice of the annual Potluck Supper early in February. Always a happy event!



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THE BANISTER HOUSE

FORMERLY ON WEST MAIN ROAD

In the Newport Daily News of October 21st there was an account of a house built in Williamsburg, Virginia, for formers Newporters, John and Cathy Millar. Its design was taken from the Banister House, and for our readers who are too young to remember the house, we print this picture, probably taken in the early 1900's. It stood almost opposite the Newport Creamery near the site of the Linden School.

Like the Redwood Library, the exterior was rusticated (wood cut to look like stone blocks). Fortunately much of the interior of the house was saved when it was torn down and bought and set up in the DuPont Museum in Winterthur, Delaware.

The loss of this house to Newport was a real tragedy. It happened before the preservation-minded people came together to exert a "saving" influence; the loss served to emphasize the need for community-based appreciation for our architectural heritage. The work of the Newport Preservation Society, Operation Clapboard, Oldport Association, Restorations, Inc., and Doris Duke's Newport Restoration Foundation followed one another in rapid succession. We now have hopes of preventing a loss of such magnitude in the future.

Virginia Covell

HOLLY TEA

Would you like to spend a leisurely Sunday afternoon in the gracious atmosphere of the 18th century? We offer you tea or coffee, tea sandwiches, homemade cake and fruit cake in a candlelit room served by hostesses in colonial costumes. Soft piano music played by William Fullerton floats in the background. This is the Point Association's Holly Tea on December 18th from 3 until 5:30 in St. Paul's Hall on Marlborough Street. Donation \$1.50 each.

We are asking our talented bakers on the Point for donations of homemade cake or tea sandwiches. If you would like to help that day we would be delighted to have you join us; we need you! Please call Dede Elster at 847-0563.

CAROL SING AROUND THE POINT

Carol Sing Around the Point this year will be on Thursday, December 22nd. We will meet at 7 p.m. sharp at 130 Braman Street. We have the music, but please bring flashlights. If you have any questions, please call Taff Roberts at 849-5525. See you then....

Taff Roberts



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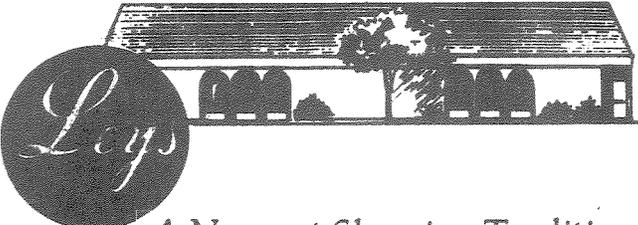


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I REMEMBER! I REMEMBER!

On Christmas Eve 1947, the Washington Street Carolers sang in the cold outside our front door, the first year we lived on Washington Street. The next year we invited them to come inside to get warm and have hot spiced wine and cookies, and we met some of our neighbors for the first time. There were the Covells and Benson families, Ade Bethune, and other artists who worked in the John Stevens Shop; where the Stevens family had carved tombstones for 200 years and which was then owned by John Howard Benson who had revitalized it and made it famous again in the arts of stone cutting and calligraphy. There were Susanne Aubois and her sister, Martha, who were living for a while in the Hunter House before the Preservation Society had completely refurbished it; Edith Price and her blind adopted daughter; Elton Manuel, soloist in St. John's Church choir and collector of Colonial military uniforms, and many others who continued for many years the tradition of spreading joy on Washington Street.

Isabel Eccles



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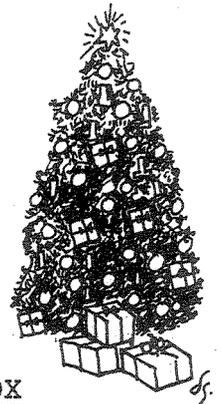
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CHRISTMAS ON THE POINT

- Dec. 13 Giant Gingerbread House Tour and Old Colony Railroad Ride. Newport Marriott. For Martin Luther King Center Day Care Children and all children under 12. Free admission. Tel. 849-1000
- Dec. 14 Christmas Open House & Art Exhibit. Naval War College Museum. Coasters Harbor Island, U.S. Naval Base. 1 - 4 p.m. Free admission Tel. 841-4025
- Dec. 17 Train Trip along West Shore of Aquidneck Island. Benefit of U.S. Marine Corp. Toys for Tots. 1:30 - 4 p.m. Adult \$15 Children \$3.50 Families \$12 Tel. 1-294-4153
- Dec. 18 The Holly Tea 3 - 5:30 p.m. St. Paul's Church Hall, Marlborough St. Donations \$1.50 Other details on Page
- Dec. 22 Carol Singing around the Point. 7 p.m. 13 Braman St. Other details on Page
- Dec. 23 Re-enactment of Col. S. Freebody "Turtle Frolic" of December 23, 1752. Sheraton Islander Inn on Goat Island. 18th century cuisine, English Country Dancing, Dinner reservations required. 5:30 p.m. Adults \$20 Children 10 years and under \$12. Tel. 847-7779.
- Dec. 24 Midnight Mass at St. John's Church, Washington & Willow Streets. 11 p.m. Music before the ceremony by sextet of men's voices. 10:30 p.m.
- Dec. 26 Tour of Houses on the Point: 59 Second Street, 41 Walnut Street, 17 Third Street, 3:30 - 6:30 p.m. Admission \$2.50 per house.
- Dec. 26 Hunter House Open. 54 Washington Street 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Admission \$4.50.
- Dec. 28 Candlelight Tour of Houses: 31 Thames Street, 57 Farewell Street, 44 Thames Street. 3:30 - 6:30 p.m. Admission \$2.50 per house.
- Dec. 29 Judging of Doorway Contest. Everyone on the island may enter. Tel. 847-7779 or 849-2299.



CHRISTMAS BOX

These things I send to you ---

Sunsets by the yard,
Colorful and gay,
Which I suggest
Be hung in the west
And looked at every day.

Stars for your bonbon box
(and maybe a planet or two);
I found them ripe
On a sparkling night,
And picked a bushel for you.

Incense of Autumn fires,
Perfume of April air,
Tales that the west wind writes,
Music that rain indites
Etchings of oak trees bare.

Tied with ribbons of love
Silver and blue;
Wrapped in tissue of snow;
The loveliest things I know -
My gift to you.

Eugene Tudor

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CITY-WIDE CHRISTMAS DOORWAY CONTEST

Following the theme of "Christmas in Newport", doorways should include fresh cut evergreens, holly, boxwood, pine, etc. Also fresh fruit or other accessories, shells, birds, swags, wreaths, garlands, or other ideas may be incorporated. The design should reflect the period of the house -- colonial, victorian, contemporary, etc. Judging will be during daylight hours on December 29th. The "Christmas in Newport" theme includes candles with clear bulbs in the windows and clear bulbs for other lights on evergreens, etc. Anyone wishing to enter the competition may call 847-7779 or 849-2299.

BEAUTIFICATION

The grass strip between Marsh Street and the Connector Road has been planted and is a beautiful improvement for the Point.

Margo Stapleton is donating an evergreen in memory of her parents, Garnie and George Hawes.

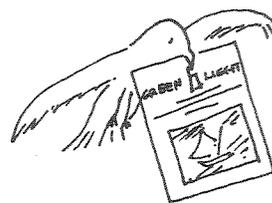
Mary Heins Rommel
Beautification Chairman

CORRECTIONS

We would like to correct two items that were in error in our last issue.

1. Audrey Katzman Wald tells us that the drinking fountain in Storer Park was given in loving memory of both her parents, Hyman and Mary Katzman.
2. In listing the winners of the Point Garden Contest, the winner of ALL AROUND THE HOUSE should have been 5 Van Zandt Avenue (instead of Bay-side) and the winner of PORCHES should have been 121 Washington Street (instead of Van Zandt Avenue).

Apologies from the Editor!

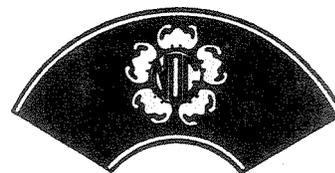


WHERE GO THE GREEN LIGHTS?

Near and far, every two months, copies of the Green Light go in 24 directions -- across the Atlantic to Paris and to the Virgin Islands, north to Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont, south to Florida, Kentucky, Texas, and South Carolina, west to Michigan, Minnesota, Arizona, and California. And, in between they go to Connecticut, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. They go "off island" to members in Rhode Island; of course, the greatest number go to Newport, Middletown, and Portsmouth.

The circulation department is made up of membership chairperson Rowan Howard and Green Light staffer Kay O'Brien. Rowan makes sure the mailing labels are current and accurate, and Kay affixes labels and fasteners, and sorts and mails the more than 400 copies. Not exactly The Reader's Digest, but the staff thinks this is a great record for a neighborhood bulletin!

Kit Hammett



Compliments of Nortons' Oriental Gallery

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WHO? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE? WHY?

Such good response to our October queries! Thanks to the relatives and friends who challenged our "longest resident on the Point", to Mrs. Madeline Westall Haddow of West Scarborough, Maine who sent much material, most of which will appear in future issues, and to Betty Pike Whitten.

OLD TIMERS!

Bob Covell, you are much too young to claim our longest resident title. Challengers have nominated octogenarians as follows:

Muriel Zammer tells us her uncle, Jack Morgan, who was 81 in October is a Born-on-the-Pointer who has never lived anywhere else. He now resides on Second Street. Sorry, Jack - too young!

Jack Mazza, another Born-on-the-Pointer, who now lives in New Jersey, informs us that his father, John Mazza, will be 82 in December. He, too, has lived all his life on the Point, and now resides in Bayside Village on Third Street. A professional boxer, Torpedo Station worker, Bellevue Avenue gardener, and a Newport tour guide in the past, John still has a garden and grows flowers and giant tomatoes. Sorry, John - too young!

Now for the champion, as we go to press. Elton Manuel of Bayside Avenue is now in his 85th year. All of those years he has lived on the Point. Elton has frequently written for the Green Light; he is a researcher, an authority on Colonial uniforms, a stamp collector - to mention a few of his interests and talents. So far, you are the one, Elton!

Have we found the champion?
Any challengers?

Mrs. Haddow remembers the fire that destroyed the barrel factory about which we had a query last issue. Here is her story:

The barrel factory was built and operated by Mr. Henry Thorndike, well before the turn of the century, I think. As the story went, Mr. Thorndike came from a well-known and affluent Boston family who strongly objected to his using the family name on the sign above his business. Being Mr. Thorndike, a gentleman with decided opinions, he defied his critics by having a sign made with letters twice the normal size.

On the night of the fire, there was much more than fire to contend with -- it broke out during one of the worst blizzards in Newport's history. The snow was already deep; the sky was bright red over half the city, and the blizzard carried chunks of burning wood half a mile or more. At that time we lived on Park Street, and mother, my brothers and I were shivering at the scene, wondering whether the embers which landed on our little porch and on the roofs nearby would be snuffed out by the snow. Fortunately, they were. My father had gone to the fire, as he was then superintendent of the Bay State Street Railway Company. He was anxious to check on the power lines. I believe he actually cut the power himself when he arrived. It seems a miracle to me now, as I look back on it, that he ever made that trip on foot. There were very few cars at the time; the fire station on the Point was, I think, at the Bridge Street end, track side of Third Street. I know there were horse-drawn fire engines on one corner, as one day when mother was pushing my brother in his carriage, and I was trotting alongside, a horse-drawn piece of apparatus came dashing from a fire house and nearly ran us down as it took the corner. I can still see those horses -- and that was 80 years ago!

Future Green Lights will tell of the movie "Peril" which was filmed in wartime on a site near the Naval Hospital. We have heard of a "Peril" movie story, which we think must be a second film. Elizabeth Pike Whitten of Quaker Hill, Connecticut writes as follows:

"My father, Robert M. Pike, owned and built a small motor boat called THE VIKING. This boat (and owner) were hired to participate in one of the episodes of Pearl White's "Perils of Pauline", in which Pauline was rescued from one of her hair-raising adventures and escaped to safety in that motor boat.

Father was often joshed about his "movie career" which consisted solely of steering the boat! The time was probably pre-1914. The "Perils" was a serial; episodes were shown weekly (generally Saturday afternoon) at the local theatre amid much hooting and hollering."

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Point Fair _____ Potluck Supper _____
Publicity _____ Raffle _____

Other Interests _____

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The Point Association
P.O. Box 491 Newport, R.I. 02840

QUESTION: Where was Ellery's Ferry Wharf and where did the ferry go?

Send your answers, interesting historical facts or questions to The Editor, Box 491, Newport, R.I. 02840

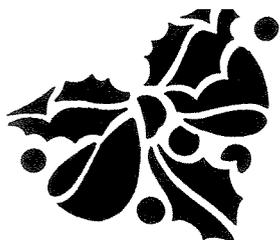
Kit Hammett



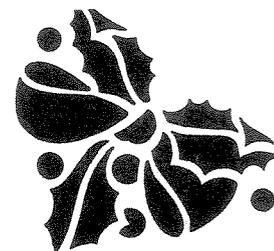
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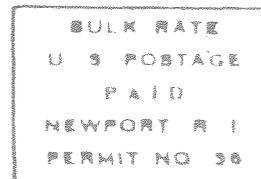
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