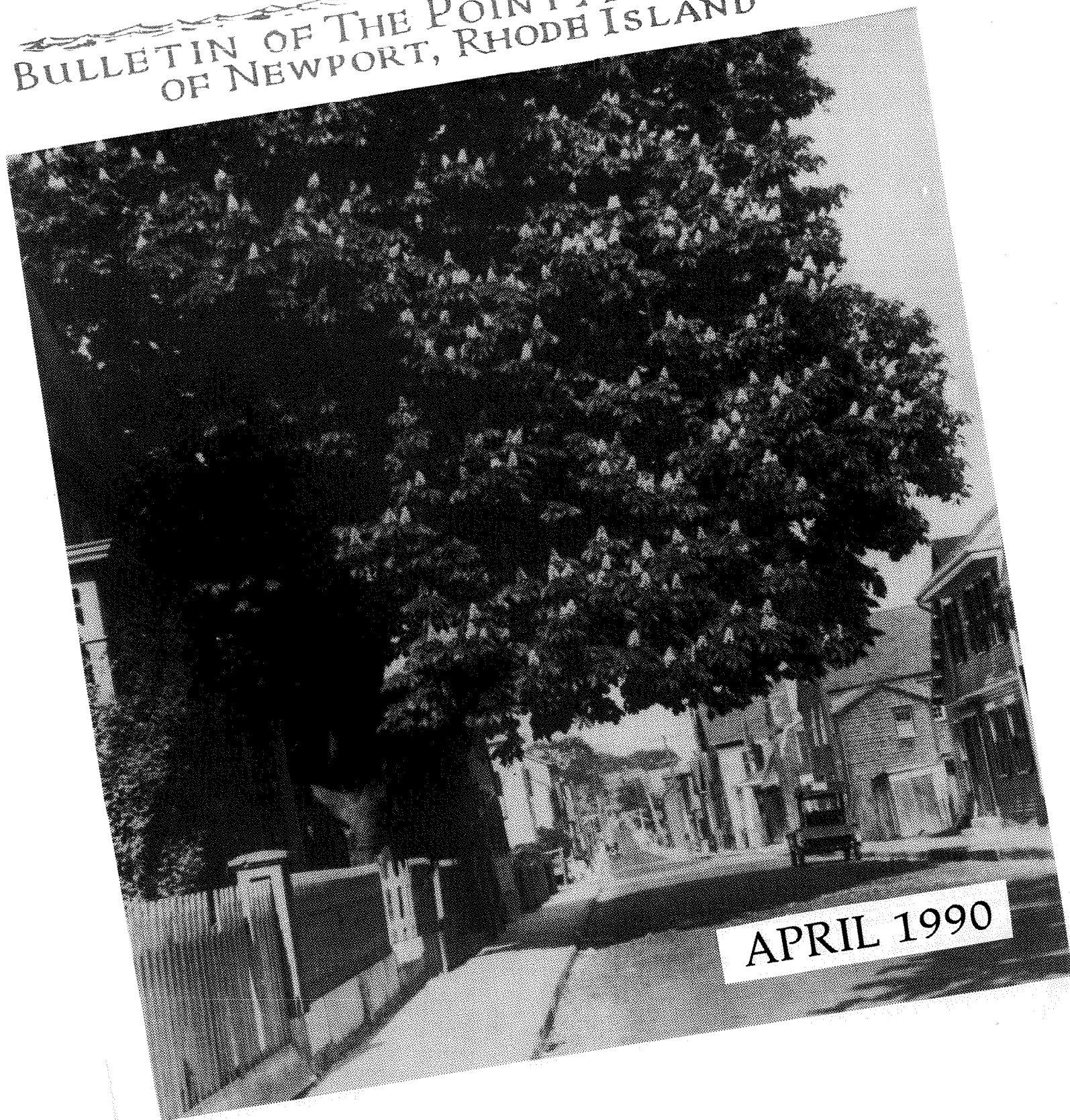


The  
GREEN

F  
LIGHT

BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION  
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND



APRIL 1990

# The GREEN LIGHT



Vol. XXXV - No. 2

APRIL 1990

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## CALENDAR

Thursday, April 19th: 7:30 p.m. General Meeting. St. Paul's Church  
Thursday, April 26th: Colony House Evening. John Hopf lecture. "Newport, Now and Then." (Watch papers for time.)  
Saturday, April 28th: 10 a.m. at Storer Park. Clean-up on the Point.  
Saturday, May 26th: 10 a.m. Point Plant Sale. 101 Washington Street.  
Saturday, August 18: Day on the Point Fair.

Copies of the **Green Light** may be purchased for \$1.00 at Bucci's Convenience Store, Poplar and Thames Streets and Aidinoff's Liquor and Gourmet Shop on Warner Street.

COVER PHOTO: Washington and Poplar Streets

## THE RATIFICATION BICENTENNIAL



When I read in the papers that there were no plans to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the ratification of the U.S. Constitution by Rhode Island, I was appalled. The event occurred on May 29, 1790.

I then thought I would go to the newspapers of 1890 and see how the 100th anniversary was celebrated. Imagine my chagrin to discover that then no formal recognition was given the date either.

There was a notice in what we could call the local briefs of the time on May 31, reading "It is just one hundred years since Rhode Island came into the Union as the thirteenth state. The act was passed in the Second Baptist Church in Newport."

To the city's credit it should be noted that that particular week there were a great many other observances going on.

The Soldiers and Sailors Monument on outer Broadway was dedicated on May 23rd. On May 27th the 254th Annual 'Lection Day was held and Governor Davis was inaugurated at Newport. Then on May 30th the annual Memorial Day observance was held complete with a parade and decoration of the graves. It's no wonder that the city fathers didn't attempt to sandwich in another activity that week.

Rhode Island has the dubious distinction of being the last of the states to ratify the Constitution, making it the thirteenth state to enter the Union. Why was this?

It all came down to a matter of states' rights. The final capitulation was tied in with commerce. The state did not intend to renege in providing her share of monies to liquidate the national debt but rather objected to Federal taxation on the grounds that it was not the function of Congress to tell the States how to raise money.

Pressure brought by the national government through tariff restrictions and the threat to treat Rhode Island as a foreign nation finally changed the picture and again commerce was the cause of Rhode Island's bending to the will of others.

Both houses of the General Assembly, meeting jointly in Newport, elected Joseph Stanton, Jr., first senator, and Theodore Foster, second senator, to represent the state in the Congress. The first Senator to be elected in Rhode Island by popular vote instead of by action of the General Assembly was Peter G. Gerry, Democrat of Warwick, who in 1916 defeated Henry F. Lippitt, the well known textile manufacturer.

It is interesting to note that Rhode Island never did ratify the 18th or so-called prohibition amendment but that didn't prevent many bootlegging and racketeering problems here.

Florence Archambault

# PRESSURE POINTS

## STELLA MARIS

The Zoning Board of Review has granted approval for an eight-room guest house at the former Stella Maris property. Dorothy and Edwin Madden, the new owners, can also have two separate apartments; one will be the living quarters of the Maddens.

The wonderful news is that the Maddens plan no changes to the exterior of the house or to the landscaping.

## THE MARINE TERMINAL

Recommendations from the Air and Marine Subcommittee (DOT/Parkway Study):

"that an increase use of waterborne traffic...be made by the proper utilization of the docking area west of the Gateway Center.

**Action Plan:** Purchase 30,000 square feet of land on the South Pier or, as an alternative, purchase property at the Newport Off-Shore Facility.

Construct heavy duty dock or floating docks at the locations to accommodate ferry cruise ships and harbor tour services.

Repair approximately 150 feet of bulkhead on the southern portion of the parcel to allow access from water to land, for passengers and vehicles.

Coordinate ticketing, scheduling and passenger operations at the Gateway Center; parking to be provided at the Gateway.

Dredge waters just off South Pier parcel.

Construct a 30-foot right-of-way along the northern border of the Pier #9 as an access road."



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## MORE ON ELM STREET PIER

Mrs. Bolhouse sent a wonderful article about the proud history of the Elm Street Pier. It says in part:

Circa June 1882, the pier was largely used by the steam launches from our own ships and the French vessels when here. Since it was well arranged, clean and in a good neighborhood, the pier was the landing place for all fashionable boating. Two or three carriages of summer residents from the Avenue would wait at the head of the pier for parties returning from their yachts. Being in the Upper Harbor was a decided advantage. Away from the hustle and bustle of the old landings at Kingsley's and Ferry's Wharves, "ladies and young children, even if unattended, were not exposed to the risk of personal annoyances" in stiking contrast to the other wharves.

How unfortunate that Elm Street Pier is now so neglected.

Liz Bermender

## POINT CLEANUP

It's time to spruce up our neighborhood once again. Please come along and help us on Saturday April 28. We will meet at Storer Park at 9 a.m.

We will get together and pick up litter and when it's all done around midday we will have lunch together... compliments of the Point Association.

We particularly would like to see more kids involved this year. Bring along a pair of gloves. We look forward to seeing you then.

Taff Roberts

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Save the date and invite your friends for this big weekend on the Point -- the "Secret Gardens Tour". It's Friday, June 8th from 1-4 p.m. and Saturday, June 9th from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with a tea on Saturday from 2-4 p.m. You can get information and tickets by calling the Benefactors For the Arts -- 847-0514. We'll have more details in the June Issue.

## VOLUNTEER ALERT

A breakfast meeting was held for prospective volunteers on January 27 at the home of the coordinator Marylynn Rooke. Much enthusiasm was expressed, and we were happy to have several additional names to add to our committees.

In case some of our readers who could not attend the breakfast would like to work with us, we are again printing the names and phone numbers of the various committee heads.

ANNUAL FAIR Melanie Aguiar - 849-3821

BEAUTIFICATION Mary Rommel - 847-7779

CLEAN-UP Phil Burnett - 847-0925

GREEN LIGHT Virginia Covell - 846-1479

MEMBERSHIP Roberta Majewski - 846-6194

PARKING Marylynn Rooke - 846-6849

PROGRAM & ACTIVITIES Taff Roberts  
849-5525

PUBLICITY Ilse Nesbitt - 846-0228

RAFFLE Lesley Faria - 846-7054

TELEPHONE Laura Pedrick - 846-6228

TRAFFIC Ade Bethune - 847-5428

In addition, we have five new volunteer jobs which we outline here in the hope that some of our readers will be attracted!

1. The Holly Tea: We need help in putting on this popular event on a Sunday afternoon in December. Dede Elster, 847-0563.
2. Plant Sale: We can use help to gather the donations of plants and containers and to set up for the sale. Rosalys Hall, 846-7566.
3. Representative at Planning Board meetings: We need someone to attend these meetings who would let the Board know if any topics come up that we should be aware of. Pete Peters, 849-2362.

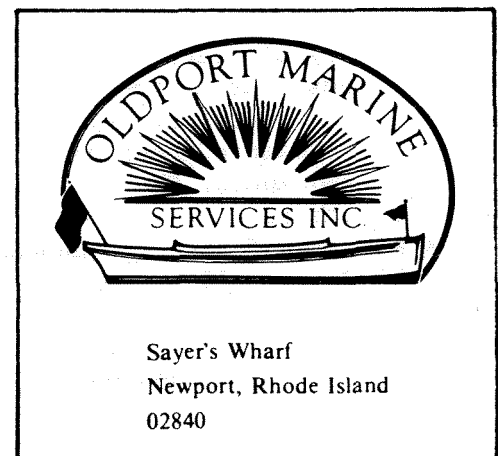
4. We have two booklets that are sold through Newport bookstores. We need someone who would deliver these when called for by the stores. The booklets are stored in a convenient place in St. Paul's Church. Virginia Covell, 846-1479.
5. Calling on new neighbors: We would like to have someone who could be alerted when a new family moves to the Point. He or she could pay a welcoming call on the newcomers, tell them about the Point Association, and give them a complimentary copy of the **Green Light**. Marylynn Rooke, 846-6849.

## POT LUCK SUPPER

Weatherwise, Sunday February 4th was not the best of days. There appeared to be a slight coat of ice on the roads and it was feared that this would cause many to remain at home. Indeed, at quarter before the hour there were not too many people in St. Paul's Hall but by 6 p.m. enough intrepid Pointers had come through the door to fill the tables.

As usual everyone had put their best foot forward and the buffet table was laden with culinary delights. Ranging from sumptuous salads to delicious main dishes the food soon disappeared. And then --- came the delectable and sinful desserts. Not an evening for anyone determined to remain on a low calorie diet!

A short business meeting followed and those in attendance all agreed that it was a worthwhile evening. Many thanks to Donna Maytum and her committee.



## TREES ON THE POINT

The planting and replacement of trees on the Point has been and is a continuing asset in many respects. Esthetically the trees have added beauty; environmentally the trees have been a buffer from noise, wind, and snow. They provide shade to our streets and houses, food for the birds, and above all, pride in our neighborhood. One notices immediately, in the spring and summer seasons, how our homeowners care for the trees in front of their homes. Small fences protect plantings of blooming annuals, while hardy perennials do well on their own. They all seem to be planted with pride and pleasure.

In front of my home, an unusual "Empress" tree blooms profusely in the early spring; it is covered with pale lavender, bell-shaped blossoms. After they have inspired inquiries and smiles to all who see it, the tree sends forth its broad leaves for summer shade. This tree is a cousin to the favorite Jacaranda of Mexico; I believe there are only three in Newport.

The subject of trees in Newport and on Aquidneck island is an on-going love affair. Richard Champlin's published accounts of trees on the Island have been widely read. The Newport Tree Committee, a newly-formed organization, whose goals are to survey, categorize and help maintain our vast inventory of trees, promises to become an aggressive and necessary group to protect our trees from destruction and disease. It will also promote the proper city legislation for the benefit of the community.

The activities of Arbor Day, which many of us have long forgotten or overlooked, bring the subject of trees and the environment to our school children and help make them aware of the value of their arboreal surroundings.

The directory of trees planted here on the Point reads like a "Who's Who" of arboretum delights: Catalpa, Mulberry, Camperdown Elm, Sycamore, Mountain Ash, Meta Sequoia, Crab Apple, Cherry, Gordin Rain, and many others.

A look at some of the tree-named streets on the Point will be considered in a future article.

Joseph P.T. Vars

## THE NEWPORT TREE COMMITTEE

The Newport Tree Committee continues to work with the City Administration toward its short term goals of drafting a Tree Ordinance and instituting a 100% tree survey as the first step toward better maintaining Newport's public trees.

April brings with it many causes for celebration...among them Earth Day and Arbor Day!

Arbor Day is Friday, April 27. As part of this year's celebration, the Newport Tree Committee is sponsoring the distribution of over 2000 tree seedlings through the State Department of Environmental Management's Earth Day Seedling Program. About 1400 tiny tree seedlings will be distributed to students at Newport schools. Schools participating in the program will be: Carey, Coggeshall, Cranston-Calvert, Sheffield, Sullivan, Underwood, and Thompson Jr. High, as well as St. Michael's and Cluny. Each school has its own plan for the seedlings, but all will be using them as effective teaching tools for environmental awareness. Extra seedlings will be available to the general public, distribution to be announced.

In addition, through several generous donations (donors to be announced), we will be providing six larger trees (4-6 feet) to be planted by students on the grounds of certain schools at their request. Abutting the Point, Sullivan School will be planting over 100 seedlings along a boundary fence, and both Coggeshall and Sullivan Schools will be planting a larger tree on their school grounds!

Arbor Day or any day this spring is a great day to plant trees!

Lillian R. Dick

*The Waters Edge Flowers*

264 BELLEVUE AVENUE  
THE BELLEVUE PLAZA  
NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND 02840

TELEPHONE 847-1111

# A GLOBAL PROBLEM

## Electric Power Lines: A Carcinogenic Risk?

In 1989, a study by a leading epidemiologist at Johns Hopkins University, "found a statistically significant link between cancer and human exposure to electromagnetic fields from the network of electrical wires that crisscross this nation" (AP November, 1989).

The power lines give off magnetic field radiation. These magnetic fields can penetrate wood, stone, concrete (no matter how thick), and people. The closer the wiring is to a home, the stronger the magnetic field.

Studies across the nation have shown a relationship between exposure to magnetic field radiation and an increased risk of certain cancers - notably leukemia, lymphoma and brain cancer. Particularly at risk are babies and small children.

### THE LOCAL PROBLEM

In 1988, the voltage on the power lines running along Third Street and parts of Elm and Second streets was service for the residents of the area at 4,160 volts. In the fall of 1988, the voltage on the lines which service residents was increased to 13,800 volts. In addition to this, on the same large poles are carried 23,000 volts to service the Marriott, parts of the town of Jamestown and additional planned facilities. This is an enormous increase to the voltage along our streets and has alarmed several local residents. Perhaps it also alarms you.

It is not known exactly how dangerous the power lines are. It is also not known how high the magnetic fields are within our homes. However, in other areas that have been studied, the level of magnetic

radiation in homes farther away from power lines which carry less voltage than those in our area was sufficient to cause a statistical increase in the rate of childhood leukemia. It is clear that the health of the children in our neighborhood is at risk.

A proposal to the Newport Electric Company is being drafted on the possibility of insulating the existing wires and changing some of the wiring design to protect us from the magnetic field radiation emanating from these lines.

Elizabeth Eames

## BIRDS ON THE POINT

I suspect that the happiest little bird on the Point is the goldfinch (*castragalinus tristis tristis*). Country people used to call them wild canaries as they flew freely over fields and hedges singing their "PER-CHIC-O-REE".

In summer the breeding plumage is lemon yellow, black crown and forehead, black wings and tail. In winter, this happy flyer turns up at our bird feeders looking for thistle seed, its favorite meal; but they will snack on goldenrod, mullein, burdock, chicory, and dandelion seeds.

During the warm summer months, the goldfinch heads towards Middletown, Jamestown, the Ocean Drive, or wherever there is an abundance of thistle. They spend most of their time during hot weather, relaxing--unlike other species who are busy building their nests and starting a family.

Goldfinches wait until the thistle is out and line their nests with thistle down in August and September, even as late as October. The nest, a cup-like affair, often built in a maple tree at a fork near the end of a branch, usually holds five or six bluish white eggs.

Goldfinches also eat insects; during the Spring they gobble up young grasshoppers, plant lice, and the Hessian fly.

This past winter, we had 16 of them turn up at our feeders one snowy morning in January. I must say I enjoy listening to their high-pitched twitterings and will miss them when they leave town for the summer.

Taff Roberts

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## ARTIST ON THE POINT

The paintings and drawings of Helen Ritche Hegnauer express more than placing paint or pencil on a surface. These are composed of design, form, line and color—not in that order, but altogether. She has an unmistakable style—a quality that identifies her work as hers. Usually the subject is trees or landscape. She loves roofs and the design components they involve. A painting of roofs looking down on a passage through dwellings is a design treat, with triangles and rectangles creating space and plasticity.

Another painting of a marsh, **PAMET MARSH**, at first glance is an explosion over the surface of tree limbs; then one finds the abstract form under the surface. In **SNOW SQUALL COMING** luminous, moody clouds meet a grayed landscape in tones suggesting an oncoming squall.

Helen uses a palette knife to lay paint - a drawing is overlaid with washes, then colors of paint are applied with a knife. This technique adds to a three-dimensional quality in her work.

She studied in London at Heatherleys School of Art and later at the Royal Academy Schools. Her early training was classical with traditional concepts of drawing from the model and landscape.

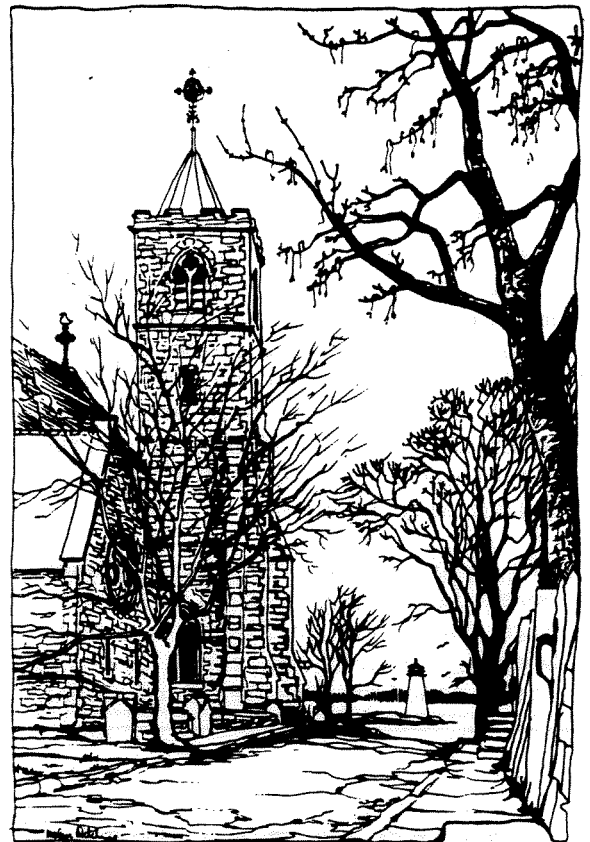
Helen has sketched and drawn people. With the USO during World War II she pencil-sketched GIs, doing fast portraits. She drew many children, turning to pastel as a new medium.

Joining a workshop where Carl Nelson taught, her work matured. Under his guidance she developed in design, form and abstract awareness. Helen studied at the workshop for a number of years, continuing to grow. All this sketching and studying led to her teaching on the faculty of Walnut Hill School near Boston from 1958 until 1972.

Throughout the years she worked at her art, snatching moments from a busy life to draw trees and rocks and landscapes. At Georgian Bay on Lake Huron where her family owns an island, she has painted scapes of the island and lake. Their years at Georgian Bay have been delightful with woods, marshes and beaches to call on for subject material.

In 1981 Marve Cooper, then curator at the Newport Art Museum, persuaded Helen to have a retrospective show there. There were 58 paintings and drawings taking the viewer through 50 years from the time when she was a student. It was a collection from many sources. The bulk of the work came from the years at the workshop with Carl Nelson.

The viewer experiences a significant pleasure from Helen Hegnauer's work. Her personal pleasure is evidenced by her dedication to Art as a painter and teacher.



**FROM MY DOORSTEP** is a drawing showing the Green Light off the foot of Willow Street where Helen lives. Here the moods of the Green Light are clearly visible to her, surrounded by her congenial neighbors of the POINT.

Dorothy Sanschagrin



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## ST. PATRICK'S DAY LAUNCHING

A wonderful way to spend a winter afternoon is to listen to Bob Jackson's sea stories. Bob's memory, at 93 years, is better than mine, and it was great fun to recall the 1946 St. Patrick's Day launching of the **Maureen**, a boat built by my father, Ernest Mathinos.

He had built the 50-foot dragger type fishing boat for J.T. O'Connell in a shop on Long Wharf during the winter months. My father took great pride in his craftsmanship and would gladly tell anyone that each double-oak rib was steamed to shape and set with utmost care so that each plank would fall smoothly into place.

Designed for deep sea fishing and equipped with a swordfish rig, the boat had a 14-foot beam and 7-foot draft with an open cockpit and was observed to be the largest fishing boat built in Newport since 1906.

Now on this chilly March day, the boat sat proudly on the ways at the City Yard waiting for its launching on St. Patrick's Day. The boat was flying the American flag amidships with the Irish flag to honor J.T. to port and the Greek flag to honor my father to starboard.

Bob reminisced.

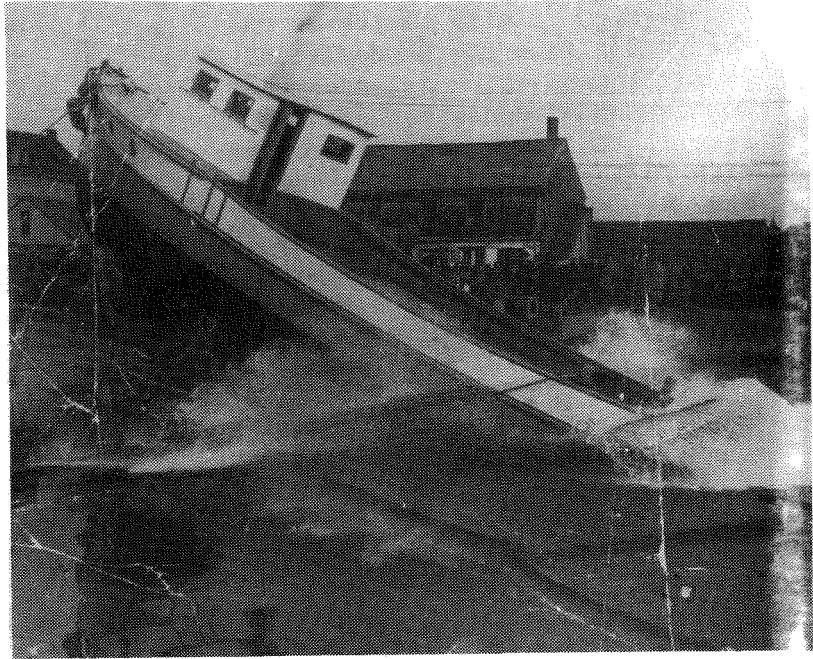
"Your father knew exactly what he was doing. He was a bit of a showman, you know. Getting the boat across the street tied up traffic for hours, but it also reminded everyone that a big launching would take place the next day.

He waited for a moon tide. He needed a high tide. It was a six foot drop to the water off the City Yard. He was launching the boat stern first--backwards!!

People came from all over Newport. You and a little friend were there in your Sunday clothes. Crowds packed the dock and stood along the Long Wharf seawall. Half were for Ernest; half were against him, hoping for a disaster.

But he was watching the tide and knew exactly when to go."

Joseph Messing had presented a bottle of champagne, and it was used by J.T.'s daughter, Elizabeth Rooney, who christened the boat, **Maureen**, named for J.T.'s granddaughter.



The boat started slowly down the ways and hesitated on the dock's edge.

"Tommy Priest was there with his truck, and when the boat teetered on the edge, Ernest turned to Tommy and said, "Give her a push." and with a slight nudge from Tommy's truck, over she went, and the **Maureen** was launched.

The crowd cheered and clapped as she righted herself in Newport harbor. You'll never see the likes of it again. A bit of cheer was enjoyed on board, afterwards."

By August of that year and for many years after, the **Maureen** was used for Sunday fishing expeditions with J.T. and his guests, my father as Captain and Bob as first mate.

"Thar she blows" the age old call of whaling echoed over the **Maureen's** deck on many voyages. On one trip off Block Island, a 300-pound broadbilled swordfish and four big tunas were landed.

Late Sunday afternoons were always interesting when the **Maureen** came into Long Wharf. Often a huge Hammerhead shark was strung up on a wooden pole, or a huge ray with a cigar stuck in its mouth by my father amused or astonished us. A reminder of an exciting day at sea!

Robert Jackson and  
Elizabeth Mathinos Bermender

## A CHURCH DEDICATION IN BRAZIL

Barbara Wright of Upper Thames Street represented Trinity Church as one of a delegation from the Rhode Island Episcopal Diocese which attended the dedication of a new cathedral in Recife, Brazil. This account tells of her visit with former Pointers, the Reverend and Mrs. Marston Price.

- - - - -

Among the many places on our Earth where Paradise could have been, Brazil ranks about on top. I was truly blessed to always be with friends and to experience both the beauty of the land and its people.

My flight from New York to Rio on Varig Airlines was my first surprise, for it was perhaps the nicest airline trip I have experienced for a long time. The quality of the service and food was impeccable. Rio de Janiero (River of January - so named because of its founding date, January 1, 1502 by the Portuguese) was introduced to me on an especially clear, coolish, smog-free day in all its glory.

I was met by my dear friend Sharon Price, who with her husband the Reverend Marston Price and their family has been living in Recife, Brazil for three years. Both of the Prices are commissioned as missionaries by the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island and by Trinity Church. They were sent to Recife, the seat of the Bishop of Northern Brazil, to build the new cathedral and its parish. This diocese is the companion foreign diocese assigned to Rhode Island by the National Episcopal Church. Both of the Prices had lived in Brazil previously and speak Portuguese fluently, and the Reverend Price was an architect before entering the ministry, making them an ideal couple for this position.

Sharon, the old Brazilian hand, guided me so very well throughout my two-week stay. How fortunate I was! We

"did" Rio; Sugarloaf Mountain at sunset, watching the sun go down behind the western mountains, the blue-green sea and gold sands turn to silver, the Christ on Corcovado lighted as darkness came in, and the lights come on in Rio itself - beautiful, peaceful and quiet from above. We drove through the Tijuca Foresta nature park in the center of Rio, to Corcovado, the steep peak with the famous statue on the top. We shopped, and ate beautiful food; the many exotic fruits were delightful. We walked the lovely streets near the Copacobana where we stayed in a charming old hotel. We saw Rio at its best, and while driving, at its worst - its favelas (shantytowns) some of the worst in the world. The population of Brazil is divided into approximately these percentages: 5% very rich, 15% middle class, 80% poor, so there are great extremes. I was fortunate to be able to experience each of these, to a degree, by virtue of being a guest of the Prices.

Salvador, where Sharon took me next, is a large city north of Rio. We flew, as virtually everyone must, for the narrow two-lane highways are not kept in repair and distances are so great. This is an old historic city, founded by the Portuguese in 1549, and captured by the Dutch for a time. Descendants of African slaves give this city a distinctive and different look from other parts of Brazil. It is a city rich with the music, art, and crafts of a kind and pleasantly happy people. The Colonial architecture is beautiful, and amidst the historic buildings is the oldest medical school in the Western Hemisphere.

Finally, north again to Recife and to the home of the Prices, which is a condominium, and like every home in their situation, it is in a locked compound. A lovely view from their housetop of a beach lined with palm trees, was to be only that, as it is not a safe place for walking. That proved not to be a problem, as I found little time to walk.



## STORE TO OPEN UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP

One of my reasons for coming at that time was for the dedication and consecration of the new cathedral, the Church of the Good Samaritan. A small delegation from Rhode Island as well as the Bishop had come to Recife, and we joined together, to experience as closely as we could, the Prices' life in this northern Brazilian community. We were able to visit some museums, old churches, beautiful historic towns nearby, to see some of its arts and crafts, to listen to its wonderful music and to see colorful and exotic dancing.

But also, we met and enjoyed various members of the congregation of the Church of the Good Samaritan, unique in Brazil because its parishioners are from all classes of people. It is situated in a wealthy part of the city, on the edge of a shantytown. We were entertained in beautiful homes, and in the homes of the shantytown. We visited pre-schools in a favela and an orphanage run by the Episcopal Church in Brazil. We visited the sick in a government hospital, in which the patients had to be mostly cared for by family members, and of which "primitive" is a fair description. One of the most interesting and touching was a class that Sharon and four Brazilian women taught in a women's prison which was in a convent run by nuns. Those women were most fortunate to be where someone cared!

Importantly, I found within the Brazilian people whom I was fortunate to meet and to be associated with - rich and poor - an ability to find joy and beauty, love and caring in their lives, and in the most complex or simplest of those lives they strove to share them with others.

As I always think when I return home, how fortunate I am to be an American and to live in America. However, I do not want to forget those Brazilians whom I met. In an often dark world for those who live there, there shines through that darkness many wonderful bright lights!

Barbara Wright

It's been a long time coming. But within the next week or so the old Martins Brothers Variety & Liquor Store will be back under new ownership to service the Point residents.

John and Pauline Burgess, owners of the property at the corner of Third and Walnut, have reconstructed the century old building from the inside out. "We knew the roof was ready to cave in," said John Burgess, "but we had not anticipated having to tear out the second floor and basically reframe the entire structure from behind the existing exterior walls."

Complete new heating, plumbing and electrical systems have been installed and the building now contains three modern apartments upstairs, in addition to the two stores on the ground floor.

The project has been costly and the Burgesses are trying to recoup some of their investment by operating Third Street Liquors themselves.

"Business is slow," says Pauline, "but the neighbors have been supportive and very encouraging. We feel confident that when more people know we're open and the variety store is fully operational, we should have a busy corner here once again. I hope so, we love the Point."

The "Walnut Street Market" will be owned and operated by others and while the Burgesses do not want to spoil any grand opening announcements by the owners, Pauline says, "It is going to be a first class operation, complete with deli counter, specialty foods and full catering service."

The market owners are local people and the two stores complementing each other plan to offer whatever Pointers require to satisfy their food and beverage appetites. Stand by for more details!





## PLANT SALE

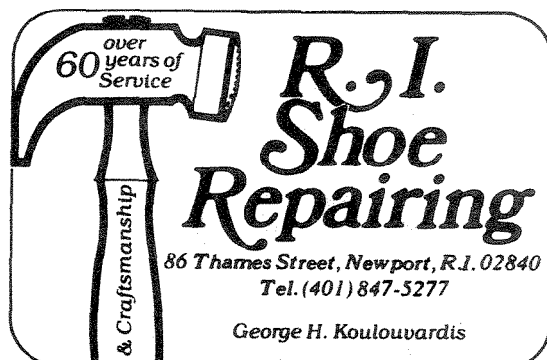
How happy we are that Anita McAndrews has again graciously consented that the Plant Sale be at her home at the corner of Pine and Washington streets on May 26th! We love to have it there. I want to especially thank Thomas McAndrews, who worked so hard last year to make the grounds look their best, words of gratitude long overdue.

On our new committee, we have people who have promised to gather potted plants and all sorts of flowers. PLEASE! If you have but one plant to offer do let us know. It will be infinitely precious to someone. The number to call is 846-7566. Come and join us in this neighborhood affair.

If you'd like something dug, we'd be happy to come, any time before the 26th of May. We can make larger pickups, with a van, on Friday, May 25th, but if possible let us know in advance, for we shall be out on our rounds.

On the Point, spring is already gladdening our hearts. What lovely gardens you have! HINT. Those clumps will be all the better for being split. The Point Plant Sale is a pretty affair. See you there. SEE YOU THERE!

Rosalys Haskell Hall  
(Posy)



## AN INVITATION TO POINTERS

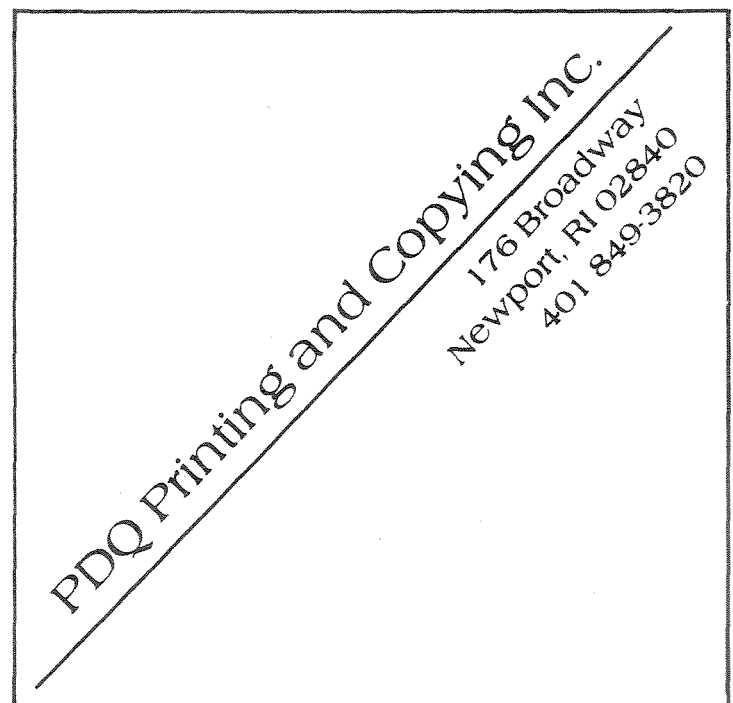
The Hill Association invites us to join them at the Colony House on the evening of April 26th to hear an illustrated lecture by John Hopf. He will speak on his book, **Newport, Then and Now**. Watch the paper for time.

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# LIVING OFF THE LAND

The first warm sunny day of the year. In my old garden in Newport little creatures will be emerging from their winter hide-aways. Ants will be scurrying around in ant activity, cabbage butterflies hovering where they think broccoli ought to be, while a lone bee, finding the apple tree branches still bare, disappears into the depth of a crimson tulip.

Here at North Hill the same primordial instinct has brought the resident gardeners, armed with trowels and rakes and new packages of seeds, to the neatly separated plots down below my balcony.

Gardening became a new way of life for Henry and me when at last we had our own home, our own bit of land. We read books on gardening when Burpee's seed catalogue arrived early in the year, we studied it carefully before sending for our seeds.

On graph paper we made our new plan each year for the vegetables in the only space where the tall surrounding trees did not prevent the sun from shining all day. In the shade nearby Henry made a compost bin. To this every pea pod, potato peel, egg shell and coffee ground was carried and covered with sand or soil. Like imaginative gourmet cooks we added special ingredients -- bits of seaweed brought home from swimming, crushed oyster and clam shells and, rarest of all, the brown balls our granddaughter Lydia brought in a gunny sack when she came to visit, a contribution from her own little horse, "Sprite". In this pile earthworms and night crawlers worked unceasingly, turning it into wonderful fertilizer for Henry to mix with the soil when he turned it over in April.

When it was raked, and string strung across to the stakes on either side, the distances between having been exactly measured with my yardstick, Henry used his seaman's eye to gauge the depth of the ditches he made for me to drop the seeds into.

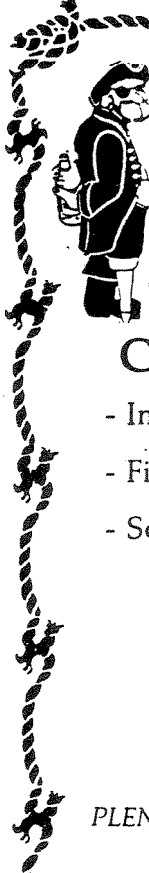
We rested from our labor in lounge chairs beneath the old apple tree with its lumpy trunk riddled with lines of holes made by the Yellow Bellied Sap Sucker on his yearly spring visits. In this shady corner grew tall ferns, Solomon Seal, Jack in the Pulpits and wild flowers I had brought from the woods.

A week or so after planting, seeds sprouted and then the battles began. Our ground force was an Army of toads, their uniforms camouflaged in the color of the lumps of earth they so closely resembled. The Air Force was made up of hundreds of praying Mantises, descendants of the ones that hatched from the round nest I found in the thicket bordering the fairway as I searched for the golf ball my hooked drive had landed there. Their long thin bodies, transparent wings, and green color made them inconspicuous among the leaves, but their big sharp eyes and powerful jaws demolished our enemies in short order. The lady bugs wore no disguise but they grew fat under their black-dotted, bright red coats as they feasted on the aphids hidden under the leaves.

These are the thoughts the sight of my fellow-residents bring to mind, and I remember with pleasure those 38 years when we had the smug sense of satisfaction of feeling that we were "living off the land."

Isabel Eccles

From **THE HILLTOP**, a Publication of the North Hill Residents



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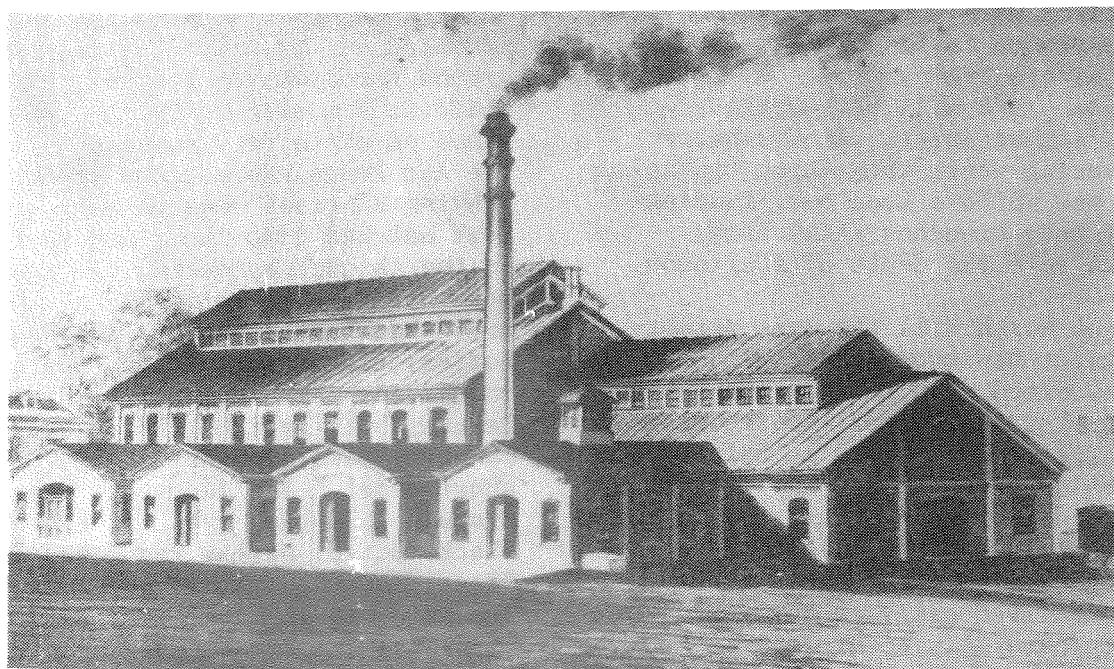
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## THE BRASS FOUNDRY/NEWPORT WATER WORKS



There was once a large building on the south side of Marlborough Street, near Thames, which was demolished in the 1960's; some may remember it as the Newport Water Works, but not many in this generation are aware that it was built for an entirely different purpose: a brass foundry. It all happened longer ago than our memories can reach -- 1871.

In that year, according to the Newport Mercury, the estate next to Engine House No. 3 was sold to a group of Newport citizens among whom were Benjamin Finch, William Bliss, John Engs, and others. The group, calling itself the Newport Manufacturing Company, made arrangements to erect a foundry, partly two stories high and partly one story high; over all there was to be a 60-foot high chimney

The architect was George C. Mason, and the foundation was laid by William Irish and Henry Wilson; the brickwork, including the chimney, was done by the contractor and brick mason, John Freeborn, an old-time Pointer. (He lived on Bridge Street near Third in a building that later housed a small clock store.)

The site was located on the Basin, and plans were made to fill in the land surrounding the foundry; then Engine House No. 3 would be relocated on the filled land. It was hoped that the railroad company would fill in the remaining section so that when Marlborough Street was extended and the "Cove" street opened, the entire area would be more

attractive. (It was strange to read of the Basin as a nuisance in the 1870's; for so many years in the previous century it was the lifeline of boat builders and sea traders' ships.)

Later that same year the Mercury reported that the company would be ready to begin casting by January 1st. In September, 1872, they wrote "The Newport Manufacturing Company is beginning well." The payroll amounted to \$4000-\$5000 per month, a significant enterprise in Newport's economy.

In spite of the optimism, the location of new land, the excellence of the brickwork (said to be one of the finest examples in the country) a few years later the company was deeply in debt. It was forced to sell its land and buildings, in addition to all its equipment, in order to avoid bankruptcy. Although there was no "Chapter 11" at that time, the company went through a similar process, paying off agreed amounts to creditors, hoping to start up again. It never did.

Early in the 1900's, the building was sold to the Newport Water Works, and it is in this capacity that many of today's Newporters remember it. In spite of many efforts to salvage the 19th century landmark, it was torn down in connection with Newport's downtown redevelopment.

Virginia Covell



Angela Vars' "B & B" (Bed and Breakfast enterprise) at Merritt House on Second Street was one of five Rhode Island Guest Houses that were featured in A February Food Section of the **Providence Journal**. The article stressed the breakfast offerings as well as giving brief descriptions of the facilities. A photograph of Angela's breakfast table, set with stemware and china and servings of eggs Benedict and muffins, highlighted the article, which also included a photograph of Angela in the Victorian dining room. Admittedly prejudiced, we'd say Angela "stole the show"!

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In our February issue we told about Anita McAndrews who reported in **Newport This Week** on first impressions of Panamanian friends about the invasion of Panama. These were reactions of people who had lived through those December days. Anita herself took off for Panama, as soon as travel was permitted, to visit her Panama City home of 30 years. In a report sent back to **Newport This Week**, she told of her arrival in the limited airport area, of the overwhelming sight of looted stores and buildings, of the sadness of learning that the National Museum had been broken into and valuable collections stolen, of empty streets after dark, and of the lack of city police protection. U.S. soldiers were on guard in many areas, and their courtesy was remarked upon by everyone. There are many problems -- economic, political, personal, and social. The new government, businesses, and the people have great need of help from the United States and other countries.

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Florence Archambault's **Green Light** article "A Turn-of-the-Century Wedding on the Point" (June 1987 issue) was reprinted in **Newport This Week's** special Bridal supplement in March. It told of the wedding of Ellen French and Alfred Gwynne Vanderbilt in St. John's Church in 1901.

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Esther Fisher Benson is the author of an article "John Howard Benson and the John Stevens Shop" which comprises the entire issue of the Newport Historical Society's Winter 1989 Bulletin, published in March of this year. The article is a fortunate combination of her husband's use of his many creative talents, such as sculpture, writing, teaching, designing, and calligraphy, and of his reclaiming of the John Stevens Shop and stone cutting. The article chronicles the many facets of this creative artist, and is illustrated with many photographs of him at work, and of his various works.

The Bulletin also lists many JHB items that are preserved in the Society's museum, including photos of sketches, coins, monuments, and the engraving plates for the "The Flags of the Old State House."

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Barbara Wright, of Upper Thames Street, was listed in a **Providence Journal** article as a member of a delegation from the Rhode Island Episcopal Diocese and Trinity Church which traveled to Recife, Brazil recently to attend the dedication of an Episcopal cathedral. Former Pointers, the Reverend and Mrs. Marston Price, formerly of Trinity Church, who have resided in Recife for three years, were commissioned to build the new cathedral and its parish. (See page 10.)

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Another Upper Thames Street resident, Nancy Raposo, is currently training for her second **Race Across America** by bicycle. A news item in **Newport This Week** described her preparations for this arduous feat which will take place in August. The trip will be a 3,000 mile/nine day event. See Page 16.)

Kit Hammett

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### YOU ARE INVITED!

TEAM RAPOSO RAAM '90 invites you to a fund-raising reception for Nancy Raposo, the Newport cyclist who is going to compete in the 1990 Race Across America bicycle race. Please join us,

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Meet and chat with super cyclist, Nancy Raposo and her support crew. Watch the special edition video on the multi-screen televisions.

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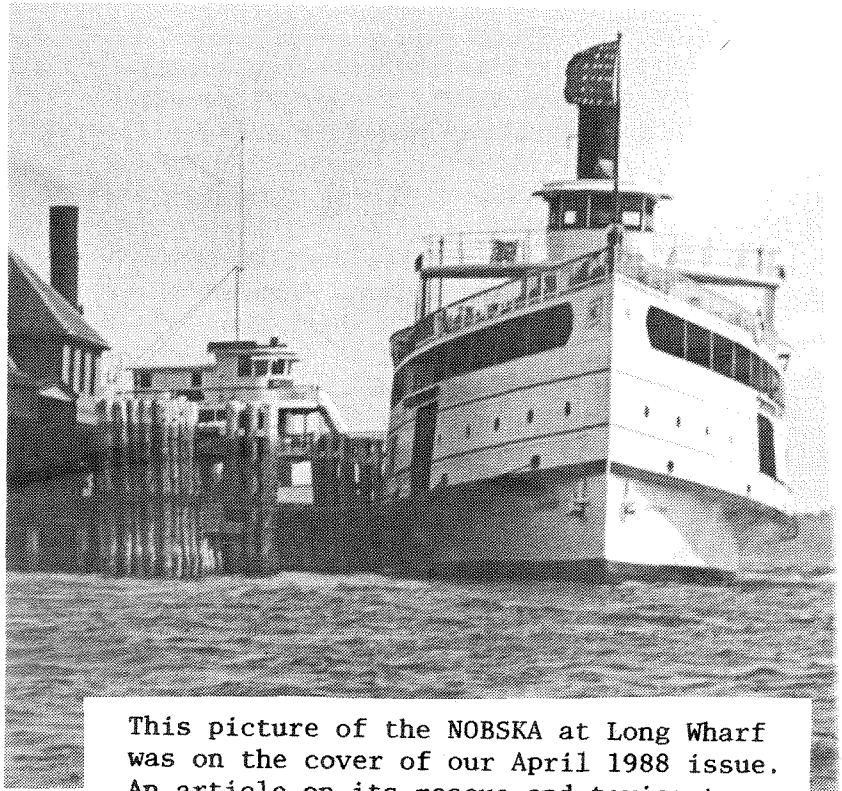
## NOBSKA

May 14, 1988 was a red letter day for the members of Friends of NOBSKA. On that date the last surviving tall-stacked steamer on the East coast reappeared in Narragansett Bay. Yes, she was under tow; yes, she appeared old and tired but there she was!! That May afternoon, nearly two years ago, was the point where FON's dream of returning a tall-stacked steamer to New England waters turned into the reality of ship ownership. Now the dream was before their eyes--210 feet of peeling paint, gutted interiors and a priceless 4-cylinder triple expansion steam engine.

Since that fateful day in 1988 FON has made some impressive strides. Over 2500 volunteer hours have been donated to the preservation of this historical vessel. Workers from age 7 through 80 have removed soaked particle board, chipped and scraped stanchions and bulkheads, painted raw steel, cleaned, oiled and turned her engine and painted her hull. Travelers over the Brightman Street or Braga bridges are amazed to see a shining Fall River Line family steamer sporting black and white livery proudly riding the tide by the Coca Cola pier.

"A lot has been accomplished in two years but there is still much more to do," said Robert Cleasby, president of the Friends. "We are starting to schedule our work crews for the summer months. Volunteers do not need any special training--just a willingness to work and a desire to be a part of a local grass roots restoration effort. Anyone who donates a full day--or more--to NOBSKA's preservation will receive one of our coveted crew hats at the annual Members' Day in the fall.

Just restoring the NOBSKA as a fully operational vessel representative of the heyday of steamer travel isn't enough. An important part of FON's goal is education. We need to educate people under the age of 50 about the place of the coastal steamer in our maritime history. To that end FON has developed an entertaining 45 minute multi-media presentation entitled **NOBSKA: A Grand New England Lady**, which is presented free of charge to historical societies, church groups, civic organizations and youth groups.



This picture of the NOBSKA at Long Wharf was on the cover of our April 1988 issue. An article on its rescue and towing to Fall River appeared on Page 7 of the same issue.

Work crews normally work on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 or 4 p.m., but anytime the large American flag is flying from the stern visitors are welcome to come on board for a personal tour. Those interested in volunteering for a work crew, or in arranging for a **Grand New England Lady** presentation should call or write me at 167 Overfield Road, East Greenwich, RI 02818, 401-885-2381.

This ship, designed in Newport for the island service of the New England Steamship Company, is the sole surviving member of the Fall River Line family of steamers and as such, has close ties to Newport. Her restoration and return to service will be of paramount interest to Newporters interested in the preservation of their city's considerable heritage.

Cynthia Chase  
Director of Volunteers

## COOK'S CORNER

Sitting here at the computer composing this issue's Cook's Corner, I am aware that in less than six hours it will be Spring...at least on the calendar. Looking out the window at a dull, grey and damp day, I have my doubts.

Nevertheless, we should be thinking Spring about now and looking forward to some of those ingredients which are usually only available at this time of the year, one of which is rhubarb.

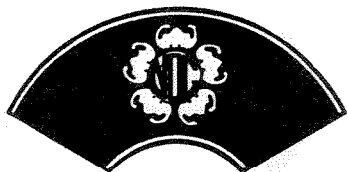
Botanically, rhubarb is a vegetable, but we cook it as a fruit. It originated in southern Siberia, around the Volga River. In the late 1700's, a Maine gardener brought rhubarb to America from Europe, and soon it was growing in all parts of New England.

The most common use of its crisp pink stalks is in pies. It is also popular stewed. This is very good used warm as a topping for vanilla ice cream.

Here are two different ways to utilize this plant. Remember that only the stalks are safe for human consumption...the leaves contain enough oxalic acid to make them poisonous and should never be eaten!

### RHUBARB MUFFINS

- 3/4 lbs. rhubarb, tops removed
- 2 1/2 c. unsifted all-purpose flour
- 1/2 c. chopped walnuts or pecans
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1 c. firmly packed light-brown sugar
- 1 1/4 c. buttermilk
- 1/2 c. vegetable oil
- 1 large egg
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract



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1. Heat oven to 375 degrees. Grease 18 2 1/2" muffin-pan cups. Trim off ends and any remaining leaves from rhubarb; wash stalks carefully; coarsely chop.

2. In large bowl, mix flour, nuts, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and nutmeg.

3. In small bowl, beat brown sugar, buttermilk, oil, egg, and vanilla. Stir into flour mixture just until moistened (batter will be lumpy). Fold rhubarb into batter. Spoon batter into greased muffin cups.

4. Bake 18-20 min. or until cake tester comes out clean. Cool in pans 5 min. Serve immediately. Store extras in airtight container and reheat before serving.

### RHUBARB AND RED BEETS

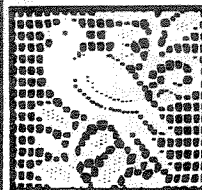
- 1/2 lb. rhubarb, tops removed
- 1 16-ounce can sliced beets
- 1 TBS. cornstarch
- 2 TBS. sugar
- 1 TBS. cider vinegar
- 1/8 tsp. salt

1. Trim off ends and any remaining leaves from rhubarb; wash stalks carefully. Cut into 1/2-inch pieces. Drain beets, reserving 1/4 cup liquid. Stir cornstarch into reserved liquid.

2. In 3-quart saucepan, combine rhubarb and cornstarch mixture. Heat to boiling over high heat; reduce heat and simmer until rhubarb is tender.

3. Stir drained beets, sugar, vinegar, and salt into rhubarb sauce. Heat to boiling; cook 1 minute. Serve hot. Serves 6.

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Another harbinger of Spring is the lowly and maligned dandelion. As soon as I find them poking up in the back yard I am out there digging them up. One way we like them is simply cleaned and washed and tossed with a vinaigrette dressing and a lot of fresh ground pepper. They are also good sauteed in a little olive oil with a hint of garlic.

Here is a recipe from **The Frugal Gourmet**, using them in a soup.

#### SPINACH AND DANDELION SOUP

6 c. Chicken stock or broth  
3 c. fresh dandelion greens, chopped  
3 c. fresh spinach, chopped  
3 green onions, chopped  
1 glove garlic, crushed  
Salt & pepper to taste  
Pinch of nutmeg  
2 eggs, hard-boiled and chopped

To the soup stock, add the dandelion greens and spinach. Add the green onions, garlic, salt and pepper. Cook until the greens are tender, and offer in bowls with the nutmeg and eggs. Makes 6 servings.

The most difficult part of any dandelion recipe is cleaning the greens but it is worth the trouble both nutritionally and economically. Enjoy!!

Florence Archambault



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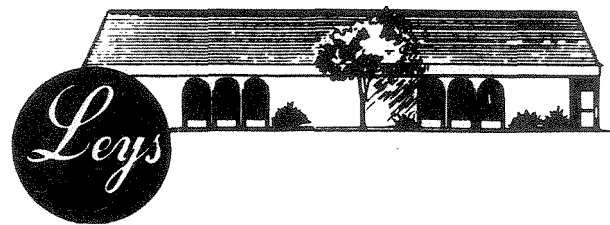
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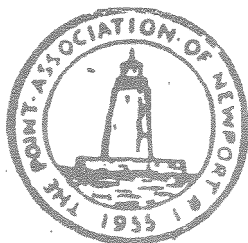
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