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The
GREEN LIGHT



BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

AUGUST 1991



*Battery Park and Newport Bridge
from the foot of Pine Street - 1991*

A. Christie ©



The GREEN LIGHT

Vol. XXXVI - No. 4 AUGUST 1991

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

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

The Secret Garden Tour, as we all know by now, was a tremendous success. Many comments were heard while Angela and I worked on that Saturday. "What a lovely area!" "Everything is so pretty." Of course, we had no control over parking when we heard, "Where do we park?" We were certainly proud when we heard, "It's so clean here." Thanks in no small measure to your continuing efforts to sweep up. Now it's time to pull sidewalk weeds as well as sweeping up. There are still many more visitors strolling the streets of the Point...not to mention the Day on the Point Fair on September 14 in Storer Park.

Christine Montanaro is our Fair Chairperson and has undertaken a monumental task, and with committee heads and subcommittees, has molded this fundraiser into an anxiously-awaited event. Gale Gunning, Raffle chairperson, is ready with another batch of tickets when you call her. So sell, sell, sell! Roberta Majewski is your "white elephant table" contact. She even has storage space for large items. Please call her now with items you feel will benefit "other buyers". Amy Weintraub is our Publicity liaison disseminating information about the Fair given her into articles of interest for possible publication. Sophia Pendergast, from the Walnut Street Market, is familiar to all of us. She will be planning interesting and delicious picnic boxes. Save your appetites and join friends at the Fair for a lovely summer lunch.

Children attending the Fair will not take a back seat but a prominent spot under a tent, due to the "tent efforts" of Ralph Rooke. Bring the young and the "young at heart" for activities of interest under the tent. (Perhaps this will lead to other Point fairs for them.)

Mary Lynn Rooke's enthusiasm, ideas, support, input and dedication to this major project is most certainly worthy of note. Beside every good woman is a good man and Philip Moser is Christine's...thinking together, planning, working in many departments, smoothing rough edges, making contacts and arrangements for the success of the Fair. Please respond to Carol Marinan when she calls for goodies for the bake table. Identify and label your offerings. A special "thank you" to all with no intent to overlook anyone on the various committees and subcommittees...we're all working for the same goals...the Fair and the Point.



IN APPRECIATION - The Point Association board has accepted with regret the resignation of Donna Flynn as recording secretary of the board and wishes to express their appreciation for her nearly four years of faithful service recording the minutes of the monthly board meetings. We also thank her for the many other services she has rendered to other activities of the Point Association.

THE POINT PICNIC

June 19th made up for the weather that cancelled the June 12th picnic date. It was a lovely summer evening at Anne Reynolds' Washington Street home. The garden was beautiful. The view of the bay included blue water, white sails and the Green Light. There were families with small babies and toddlers, and many Point neighbors, making for much good fellowship.

Sophia Pendergast, program chairperson, supplied coffee to supplement bountiful picnic baskets. Anne gave "tours" of her lovely garden...Herb Rommel took photos. Our thanks to them.

Another happy get-together for Pointers!



WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Ann Carroll	Cora Fine
John Hines	Linda Robinson
Capt. Hellar &	Ellen F. Wilson
Mary Sarepera	

Members who have questions about dues or addresses, should call me at 846-6194, or send a card to Membership, Point Assn., Box 491, Newport RI 02840. I have the membership file and can check on dues or addresses for Association mailings.

Dues for the year October 1991 - October 1992 are payable in October 1991. Early payments are welcome. See Page 19 for categories.

Roberta Majewski
Membership Chairperson

NEW MEMBERS' COCKTAIL PARTY

Thursday - September 12th
7-9 pm
Sanford Covell House

Come and bring a prospective member.

WELCOME TO NEW RESIDENTS OF THE POINT

John Evans of 26 Third Street
Myra Lewis of 93 Second Street
B. Cowles and Marcia Mallory of
121 Washington Street
Hugh and Christine Mally of
55 Washington Street

Gail Gunning

BEAUTIFICATION REPORT

The Point's Own Garden Contest

The last two weeks in August herald that time of year again when the judging of gardens from Sycamore to marsh Streets and Washington to farewell will occur. The gardens must be visible from the street. There are many categories including window boxes, hanging baskets, and sidewalk and street plantings. Keep sprinkling, spruce up and we'll be around.

Remember the "Newport in Bloom" competition entries close on August 17. See the **Newport Daily News** for details.

Trees

A crabapple tree was donated by Mrs. Gloria Dennis Goulet and planted by David Aguiar in the Connector Road divider between Second and Third Streets. David Alexander donated a pear tree and planted it in the divider. We have planted geraniums in the containers at Storer and Battery Parks. Our president, Joe Vars, presided at the planting of a Hawthorne tree in Battery Park donated by two "Born-on-the-Pointers", Emily James and Sarah James Gillette.

If you live near the trees...they need watering!

Mary Rommel

Come to the Day on the Point FAIR

Sat. Sept. 14, 10am-5p.m., Storer Park

The excitement is building. Pointers are searching their recipe files for grandmother's favorite for the Baked Goods Table. They are planning their guest list in case they win the cruise for eight aboard the 60-foot ketch, **British Steel**... one of six fabulous raffle prizes. They're packing their picnic blankets for a trip to Rose Island. They're looking forward to seeing the wares of the new crafts people who are coming as a result of meeting Chairperson Christine Montanaro at fairs all over the state. They're dusting off their dancing shoes for the free outdoor Contra dance, but most of all, they're looking forward to seeing each other at the annual celebration of neighborhood spirit -- **A DAY ON THE POINT**.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 10:00 - 5:00 Fun begins with crafts, art, white elephants, home-baked goodies.
- 11:00 - 3:00 Launch ride to Rose Island. Gourmet box lunches available.
- 11:30 - 1:00 Children's Activities. FREE!
- 4:00 Raffle. Six great prizes. Tickets sold all day.
- 4:00 Contra dancing outdoors to live music. FREE!

POINT FAIR CAFE

Not only will steamers and corn be served seaside along with the traditional hamburgers and hot dogs, but we will be dining with a view of the harbor. From the tables on the pier we can watch Point friends embark for Rose Island with their gourmet box lunches. We still need volunteers for prep and cooking. If you can help, call **Sophia Pendergast at 846-8850**.

POINT BAKE SALE

When you've finished those steamers, sample something rich and delicious from the bake sale table. Carol Marinan thanks everyone who has signed up to bake their most delectable recipes. Why not enclose the recipe to share with others? Carol will be out knocking on doors the first

week of August. Should she miss you, and you would like to contribute your talents, call **Carol at 841-5106**. She will pick up your donation the afternoon before the Fair. She asks that you label your confection, so we know what a wonderful dessert you have made. If you can't bake, don't miss the opportunity to take your neighbor's goodies home. You might even find the "lost" recipe that Granny used to bake.

WHITE ELEPHANT SALE

"It's not too soon to call me with your donations," says Roberta Majewski, chairperson. She still needs everything from rocking chairs to stuffed elephants. Call **Roberta at 846-6194** to pick up your treasures. And thanks, she says, to everyone who has already promised their junk.

TENTS & THINGS

Ralph Rooke has been busy measuring and planning for tents, chairs, tables, but he can't put them up by himself. Call **Ralph at 846-6849** if you can help him the morning of the Fair between 8 and 10 am.

DAY ON THE POINT RAFFLE

"The response to our raffle prizes has been fantastic," Gail Gunning, Raffle chairperson says. To those of you who have already returned your ticket receipts and money, she sends her sincerest thanks. If you cannot get out to sell your tickets, keep in mind that a donation to the Point Association Raffle would be greatly appreciated and your returned tickets can be used for future sales. Let Gail know if you need another book or two and she will deliver. There's still plenty of time to sell more. Gail will be selling tickets at two locations in Newport just prior to the Fair, and needs volunteers to work a two-hour shift. If you need more tickets or would like to help, call **Gail at 849-0812**.

Compiled by Amy Weintraub

THE FAIR'S ORIGINS

"At this time of year, when we are all busy planning the Day on the Point Fair, do we ever consider how it began? Looking back through the **Green Light** files we have found a 1958 write-up of "An Exhibition of Arts and Crafts on the Point, Past and Present", held on August 9 and 10 in St. John's Guild Hall. We are reprinting this informative article. It will take you back to our beginnings, and renew your belief in our present.

ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION

The Exhibition of "Arts and Crafts of the Point, Past and Present", held on August 9 and 10 in St. John's Guild Hall, drew an attendance of 600 persons, grossed \$600, and was acclaimed as one of the most interesting and unusual collections ever shown in Newport. Rare pieces of Colonial craftsmanship made on the Point and owned there for two centuries vied in interest with lively demonstrations of stone-carving, silversmithing and bookbinding, carried on by hand in the old tradition. The immensely varied productions of some 40 exhibitors - all Pointers - including boat-building, exquisite needlework, ceramics, textiles, stained glass, hooked rugs, weaving, unusual quilts, paintings, illustrations, apple-head dolls, sculpture, photography, interior decoration and cabinetwork, would require many pages to describe in detail, so varied and unusual were the examples shown.

Refreshments on the lawn added greatly to the pleasure of the visitors, many of whom extended their stay in consequence.

Mrs. Henry E. Eccles, chairman, was the moving spirit of the affair and her zeal and attention to detail resulted in a smoothly running whole. She was assisted by Miss E.B. Price, who designed the flyer; Mrs. Harold Watson, publicity; Mrs. Susanne AUBOIS, food sale; Mr. and Mrs. S. Joseph Weaver, snacks; Mrs. Edwin Brownell, tea; Mr. W. King Covell, treasurer; Mr. William H. Fullerton, traffic - assisted in turn by their committees and by a number of helpful teen-agers. Nearly \$160 was realized by the sale of chances on the unique "Green Light" rug made and donated by Miss Carrie Erickson, and won

by Mrs. William Fitzpatrick of 96 Second Street. The door prize, a copy of "The Arts and Crafts of Newport, Rhode Island" by Ralph Carpenter, was awarded to Mrs. William Weisberg of 242 Eustis Avenue.

All in all, the Point may feel justly proud - not only of its notable past, but of its talented residents of today, both amateur and professional."

THE PLANT SALE

Before I attempt to thank some of the caring people who made the Point Plant Sale on May 25th possible, I want to say, I prayed that it remain a neighborly affair...and it was!

Donations were dug from so many gardens, potted from generous clumps from so many gardens in pots donated for the sale. Precious garden produce poured in from all over the Point and places beyond. My first thanks go to EVERYBODY.

The co-chairperson was Ilse Nesbit. The committee was Julie Adams, David Aquiar, Susan Bowen, Sally McKay, Bill and Sheila Reardon, Anne Reynolds, Mary Lynn Rooke, the gracious hostesses at the coffee table, and Joan Stickley. Douglas Stickley was our cashier.

As always, our good president, Joseph Vars, served the sale as if he had nothing else to do.

What a happy thing that the John Howards could bring Isabel Eccles and that she could say. "The sale is just as it was since I remember it first...smaller in the beginning...but always with the neighbors bringing their things to share."

The Point Association's thanks go to Bruce Howe for this year's van load of garden beauties. Note: Bruce Howe came himself and saw how pretty we were, with Anita McAndrews' own garden embracing us and blue skies above. We thank also Bill and Sheila Reardon for the special and successful trip to their Nursery friends.

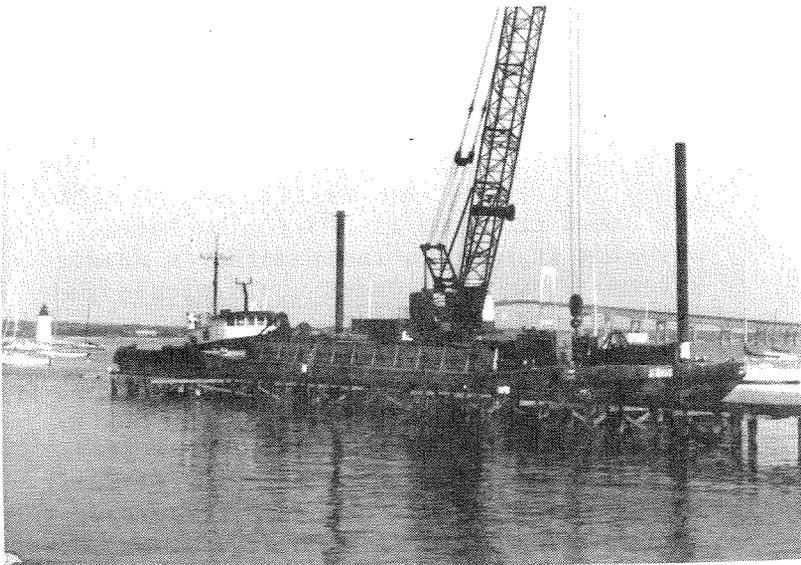
The Plant Sale is one of the great meeting times of the Point year. It was a great morning, wasn't it?

Rosayls Hall

ELM STREET PIER



The Elm Street Pier is now back in business for use by swimmers, boaters and strollers. It was sad to watch age and vandalism destroy this Point landmark. It did look strange to see just the pilings standing as the damaged pier was cut off, but then it was interesting to observe the rebuilding. A tug and a barge with a crane were put in place to help the workmen, and now the pier looks sturdy. It should prove useful for many years...if treated with tender loving care.



THE GARDENING CORNER

A dead-head is a non-paying passenger so "to dead-head" is the gardener's term for removing faded flowers before they form seeds. Seeds are Nature's signal to the plant that its work is over for the season, when, in fact, our warm weather continues late and our warm Fall lets us enjoy flowers long after inland plots are browned by frost.

Now is the time to cut back all those annuals I warned you about...petunias, alyssum, browallia, dahlias; even the trusty impatiens will be strengthened and renewed by a good haircut.

Midseason plants will respond gratefully to a good washing. Drench them with water to chase away spider mites and float slugs hiding in the cool soil just under the plants. Do weed carefully at this time as weeds use up scarce water.

Build compost with your undiseased garden shearings and unseeded weeds. Compost is a damp, heat-producing bacterial "fire" which changes refuse into health-giving humus for future gardens. Just layer soil and disease-free plant material with fat-free kitchen wastes in a shady heap or a tidy barrel to make good soil for healthy, insect-resistant plants.

And please don't use insecticide... call it fauna-homicide instead.

Anne Reynolds

 **Book Bay**

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THE JAMES SISTERS RE-VISIT THE POINT, THEIR BIRTHPLACE

The James sisters, Emily James and Sarah James Gilette, both born on the Point, were recent guests of the Joseph Vars, 57 Second St.

Emily and Sarah, born two years apart, in 1908 and 1910 respectively, were delighted to be back in their birthplace, and even more pleased to find their family home at 18 Chestnut St., "perfectly" restored by the present owners, the Benjamin Gilsons.

Angela Vars hosted a delightful tea party during which the James sisters regaled the guests with stories of the Point in those early days.

There were five children in the James family; Sarah, Emily, Martha, and two brothers, Arnold and Vincent.

Sarah spoke of a summer hotel, the Fanau, on Chestnut and Washington Sts. She and Emily remember a German dance band on the hotel verandah, and being allowed to watch the dancing there. This hotel was eventually moved to Bridge St. where it is presently owned by the Weavers. There is a small plaque on this house that states it was once a hotel.

The hotel owned 17 Chestnut St. which they rented out during the summer. A Bostonian, Miss Emily Sever, with her companion Madelaine Revel, was often in this house. It was Miss Sever who taught the young James girls to knit, and to play Backgammon. Miss Sever's maid, Katie, served Cambric tea, and Sarah remembers a French doll, all porcelain and lace, that she was allowed to touch while her younger sister could only watch.

Emily spoke of the lamplighter on Chestnut St., and the present Nina-Lynette House, which was then called the Old Ladies' Home.

The Point was composed of large houses belonging to tradespeople and sea captains. Emily recalled the Cunningham family in the Stella Maris house who owned an electric car, steered by a tiller. This car had its own room in the Cunningham stable, built to house the pony cart and pony.

In those days, there were more vegetable gardens than there are now. The James sisters remember the wonderful taste of the



raspberries in their own garden, and the beauty of the huge rust-colored dahlias.

Many families had sailboats. Mr. James would sail his family, in his cat-boat, to Taylor's Point for a picnic or a clambake. Both sisters learned early to sail, to row (each of them her own skiff), and to swim. The James children fished for mackerel, bringing it home to their mother's summer kitchen where Mrs. James would pickle the fish to keep for winter.

They walked everywhere, winter and summer...Battery Park and the Blue Rocks, to Childs' Candy Store, to the Boston Store, the Bee Hive, or to Popples for new shoes.

Church was an important part of their lives. The James sisters were members of the Girl Scouts, St. John's Church. It was Rowan Howard's sister, Gene Belknap, they remember, who taught Sarah the skill of tying knots.

In those days, in the winter months, ice was thick on the bay. The children ice-skated and, once, Emily remembered, a boy fell through the ice, and Clyde James rescued him.

There were few excursions away from Newport. The James family did make occasional trips on the Fall River Line to visit their grandmother who lived in a house on the Hudson River. This journey was made entirely by water and the James children found it always exciting.

Mr. Guy Norman owned the big house on the water, at the end of Chestnut St. There was great excitement when Mr. Norman said he would fly flags from his pier when World War I was declared. "The flags are flying!", the children cried, racing home to give their parents the news.

There were picnics on Easton's Beach, and stables to explore near the house at Second and Walnut. This house had a tennis court, and the James sisters remember watching the games.

Both Emily and Sarah told us that they are pleased that the Point looks much the same. There is the same tranquility, they said, the same gardens and tall trees. No hurdy gurdy and no lamplighter now, but the knife and scissor sharpener man still passes by, and children still swim at the Van Zandt pier.

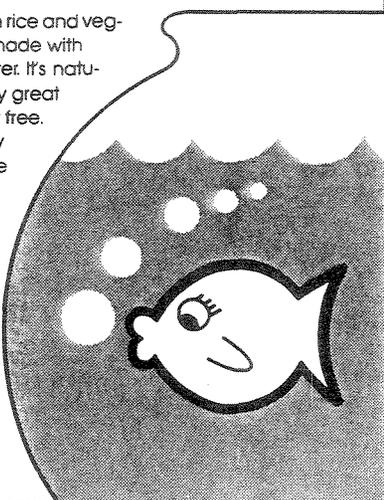
So many memories...beloved parents, brothers, the family home and the street much the same, evoking a past that seems just like yesterday. Emily and Sarah are arranging that a tree be planted in Battery Park, in memory of their family, the A.H. Jameses. The family left the Point in 1921; both sisters grew up to be nurses.

Tea was over too soon; we didn't want to say goodbye. Angela Vars presented both Emily and Sarah with handsome Born-on-the-Point certificates. Photographs of the Point in the 1900s and information about the families residing here then were promised.

Anita McAndrews

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POINTERS-IN-THE-NEWS

In the October 1990 **Green Light**, the fantastic bicycle feat of Nancy Raposa of Upper Thames Street was reported, with a map showing the nearly 3,000-mile route across the U.S. from California to Georgia. In this race, conducted by the Women's Division of the Race Across America (RAAM), Nancy was the winner...one of only six women in the world to have accomplished this feat.

Nancy received much publicity for her experience, and continues to do so. A highlighted feature about her appeared in the May 1991 issue of **Vogue** magazine, titled "Going the Distance". The article describes the event as "the longest and most grueling bicycle race in the world." It contains an interview with Nancy, featuring the long term training for this race as well as the lesser competitions in which she participated prior to the RAAM.

This year Nancy is reported to be in training for a 750-mile contest to be held in France in August. Nancy is sponsored by Ten Speed Spokes, the Point's Bike Shop.

St. John's Episcopal Church on Washington Street was recently featured in the **Newport Daily News**. Emphasis of the article was on the church's annual sacred music series. For the seventh summer, professional singers and musicians are presenting a series of eight masses. The first were presented in July, and will continue through August. Featured this year is Mozart in honor of the 200th anniversary of the composer's death.

W. Robert Foreman, who is pictured in the article with Georgette Hutchins, one of the singers, is the organist and choirmaster.

The music is included in the 11 a.m. Sunday service. The Rev. Henry C. Turnbull is the rector of St. John's.

Kit Hammett

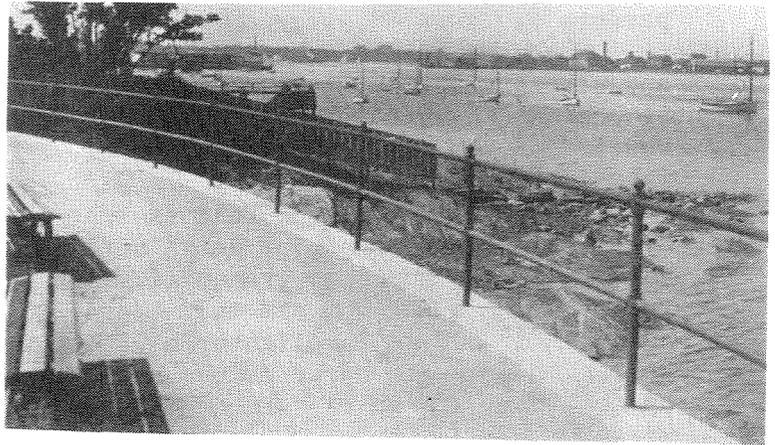
BATTERY PARK - 100 YEARS OLD

In the last two issues of the **Green Light** we have given you the history of Fort Greene, where Battery Park is now located.

Eileen Warburton in "In Living Memory" tells us "In the late 1880's officials began a program of developing parks in the residential sections. With help from the summer colony, Morton Park was created on the site of the Izzard Field polo grounds in 1889. In that same year the junction of Thames and Farewell was set aside as Ellery Park, and in 1891 old Fort Green on the Point was relandscaped into Battery Park."

The transfer of the property from the government to the city for park use took several years. The Act of Congress was approved February 23, 1887 but not ratified until July of 1891. A **Providence Journal** article dated August 9, 1891 tells us that in 1884, a bill was introduced in the United States Senate by William P. Sheffield to transfer Fort Greene to the City of Newport for park purposes. In 1886 Mayor Powel of Newport announced to the City Council that he had received information that all the necessary steps for turning the fort over to the care and custody of the city had been taken by the War Department, and only the final passage of the bill was necessary for the transfer. It was not until February 1887 that the act was finally passed by both houses of Congress and became law. Conditions prescribed by the Secretary of War included that when the Secretary of War shall elect and give notice of such election to the public authorities of the City of Newport, the use of the property shall cease and be terminated, and upon such termination the U.S. may lawfully enter and occupy the same. The Council adopted a resolution authorizing the Mayor to accept the grant of Fort Greene upon the conditions imposed by the Secretary of War. The Board of Aldermen, however, declined to concur in the action taken, on the ground that the expense of repairing the badly crumbling walls and putting the old fort in a suitable and safe condition for use as a public park, estimated as some \$1,200 to \$1,500, was greater than the value of the spot to the city for such purposes. This lack of concurrent action disposed of the subject for the time being. At a meeting of the City Council in July 1888, a resolution authorizing the Mayor to accept the grant upon the conditions formerly named, was presented, and readily accepted by both boards. The committee on city property at a meeting of

the City Council asked for an appropriation of \$1,500 to place the grounds in suitable condition for public use.



So we find that in July 1888 the plans were formulated to renovate the fort for park use. However, it is not until August 22, 1891 that we read in the **Newport Daily News** that:

"The work of changing old Fort Greene from an ancient shore battery into a battery park is progressing rapidly under the charge of the committee on parks and public property. The old fort was found to be much more substantial than was at first thought. The light outer wall of brick, supposed to be the only masonwork in the defense wall, was found to be merely a facing to a substantial stone wall, laid in lime mortar, which made it nearly as solid as a rock. About ten feet inside of this was another mortar wall, the space being filled with dirt, which was nearly as dry as that seen on streets that have not been sprinkled. The roof of the magazine, into which so many generations of Newport boys have wished to peep, was also a very solid structure, evidently able to keep out any of the missiles of those days. The wall has been cut down and the hollow in the fort filled up about on a level with the old gun platforms, and the edge of the parapet will be capped by a stone curbing and an iron railing. After the place is sodded, it will make an attractive spot."

As was related in our last issue, the park was put on the auction block by the War Department on July 22, 1926 and purchased by Frederick P. Garrettson, who then presented it to the city on September 30, 1926.

In its early days, Battery Park was a meeting place for many Pointers. Men came and sat in conversation, children played on

the grassy knolls, and families gathered at the bandstand for the band concerts. The candy store which appeared each Spring was a favorite spot. Now all that remains are some benches and the iron railing but the magnificent sunsets will always be there.

In the early days public baptisms were held at the Blue Rocks adjoining the park. "Newport, A Pictorial History" by Judith Boss, tells us: "The Blue Rocks were the site of all public baptisms. Adult baptism was the principle tenet of the Baptists, who had established a church in Newport in the mid-17th century. After a ceremony at the church, the candidates and congregation, regardless of the weather, would file down to the Blue Rocks where the candidates would be immersed in the chilly waters of the bay."

Today there are no baptisms but many brides and grooms have discovered the beauty of the park enhances their wedding photos and on weekends can be seen posing there with Newport Harbor and the bridge as a backdrop.

Florence Archambault

BATTERY PARK REMEMBERED

Gloria Dennis Goulet responded to our appeal for Battery Park reminiscences with the following: "I was raised by my great-grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dennis of Third St. My great-grandfather took care of Battery Park, as well as the Elm Street pier in the 1930s. He was known as the "Keeper of the Pier." It was his job to raise the flag every morning at Battery Park and take it down in the evening. He did this for a number of years. He also kept the park clean of litter and saw to it that the kids didn't go too near the edge. The city took care of the grass.

Sometimes the recruits from the Naval Hospital would help with the flag and stand at attention when it came down. If I had been good that day he would allow me to help fold the flag.

I remember the candy store and the band concerts. They were very well attended and my uncle, Joe Dennis, played in the Newport Municipal Band there.

Gladys Bolhouse remembers the band concerts also. She says, "They were held twice a week in the summer on Tuesday and Thursday nights and rotated between Washington Square, Touro Park, King Park and Battery Park. The Municipal Band

played and we kids used to call it the Multiplication Band. Of course, being kids we didn't pay too much attention to the music. We mostly wandered around. Some of the older people used to bring little camp stools to sit on. The view of the New York Boat and the battleships with their searchlights on the harbor was a wonderful sight. We didn't go to the concerts when they were held in the other parks. In those days you stayed in your own neighborhood."

Eleanor Peckham remembers the penny candy --- five pieces for a nickel. She says, "You don't get candy that tastes that delicious anymore...especially for a penny a piece." She wasn't allowed to go to the park very often. "I go more now to sit and catch the breeze."

Louise Sherman has fond memories of the Fourth of July celebrations there. The Fourth was her brother's birthday and the Artillery would bring the cannon to the park and shoot them off. She says, "All the little kids used to race around and collect the pieces that came out of them. We could hear the concerts from Gull House where we lived but it was more fun going to the park. We did think it was great fun to see the people rushing to get home when it rained. One of the first things the little folks learned to do was to step and jump from bench to bench. There were 20 or so there at that time."



Battery Park in Winter

ONE SUMMER - 91 WASHINGTON STREET

In 1951, a plaque was affixed to the Brooklyn Bridge on the 75th anniversary of its opening. The plaque is dedicated to Emily Warren Roebling, wife of Washington Roebling, Chief Engineer, known, due to his Civil War exploits, as the Colonel. Its inscription reads in part: "Back of every great work we can find the self-sacrificing devotion of a woman."

When her husband suffered two attacks of the "bends" as the result of working underwater with his men, Emily Roebling, a convent school graduate, undertook the study of engineering. Knowing how much the Brooklyn Bridge meant to "her Colonel", she managed to convince the bridge trustees that he was still capable of overseeing the work.

Emily prepared herself for the business of negotiating with construction firms; she would also conduct on-the-site inspections. She was not aware, at the start, that there were those in Washington who wanted to see Roebling removed as Chief Engineer.

By 1883, the bridge had neared completion and Emily decided that she and the Colonel could summer in Newport. She chose Newport in part because of its proximity to Brooklyn, and because her brother, General Warren, supervisor of the construction of the Block Island break-water, resided there.

The Roeblings looked forward to a real vacation. They would travel to Newport on the Old Colony Steamship Line. Emily chose the Meyer cottage at 91 Washington St. (now Stella Maris) because it was near the steamboat wharf.

Soon, after settling in, the Colonel was summoned to appear before the bridge trustees. He refused, stating truthfully that he was not well enough. Henry Slocum, one of the trustees, insisted that the Colonel, as an employee, must obey his superiors. Slocum had the support of Seth Low, the mayor of Brooklyn, and other politically-ambitious board members. These latter said, if the Colonel could travel to Newport for the summer, he could attend a trustees' meeting.

The Colonel not only refused the board's summons, he seldom deigned to submit reports on the bridge's progress. At last, Seth Low decided to confront the Colonel face to face, to demand monthly reports on the bridge. During the interview, Low threatened to fire the Colonel. No decision was reached, and Low stormed from the house.

It was Emily's job then to soothe her husband. More than ever, she was go-between and mediator.

Emily's beloved brother, General Warren, died suddenly that summer. A military court had been investigating his involvement in an action of General Sherman's during the Civil War. For the remainder of her life, Emily worked to restore her late brother's reputation.

She hid her grief as best she could to stand beside her husband in the increasing ferocity of the battle to unseat him. The arguments raged and bridge construction was constantly delayed. Emily spoke up, again and again. Later she would remember how "cruely" her comments were ignored.

There were interminable delays. The **Newport Daily News** noted the dissatisfaction of politicians in New York and Brooklyn. When would the bridge be completed? If the Colonel could summer in Newport, wasn't he well enough to visit the Brooklyn project?

In September the newspapers were predicting the Colonel's removal. Emily wrote letter to Ludwig Semler, a new member of the board of trustees, offering to go to Brooklyn herself. She knew Semler was one of the few who had defended her husband.

Semler, however, came to Newport. He was immediately aware that the Colonel was truly ill. He was impressed though, he would tell the press, with the Colonel's lucidity of mind.

Pleased with Semler's report, Emily received a reporter from the **New York World**. During the interview, the Colonel denounced the gubernatorial aspirations of the board. Emily asked the reporter not to quote her husband. The man promised, then broke his promise; the Colonel's statements were quoted verbatim.

The Colonel might well have lost his job then if Emily had not written to Willie Marshall, the only non-political member of the board. She defended her husband, saying he "never did anything for the sake of policy." Marshall was so moved by Emily's eloquent defense that he continued speaking on behalf of the Colonel. He blamed the bridge delays on the actions of the board trustees.

Emily and her "Colonel" composed a letter in his defense: "I have made every possible arrangement to prevent a work of such magnitude being exposed to the vicissitudes of my health."

In the end, the Colonel won. He was vindicated and praised. No mention was made, even then, of Emily. It was not until the Brooklyn Bridge was opened, May 24, 1883, that Congressman Abram S. Hewitt spoke of Emily's role in the project. Hewitt said that "the bridge was an everlasting monument to the self-sacrificing devotion of a woman, and of her capacity for that higher education from which she has been too long debarred."

Anita McAndrews

(Subject matter for this article: Bulletin of the Newport Historical Society, Vol.56, 1983, #191. Marilyn Weigold: Brooklyn Bridge, Newport Scenario)

SECRET GARDEN TOUR - 1991

House Beautiful spoke and hordes of garden pilgrims jumped on jets to see Newport gardens. Two visitors from Tennessee hadn't heard of Newport, RI until they read the **House Beautiful** piece and were amazed by our city's other attractions. Look to your laurels, ye Old Stone Mill!

School programs are being considered for the coming school year, and Secret Gardens will take part in this year's Newport Winter Festival.

We are trying to set up or nail down volunteers who know about flowers to help on next year's tour. If you think you will be interested in working next June, call the office at 847-0514 or any of the gardeners whose gardens were on the tour.

Anne Reynolds

DEADLINES

Deadlines for committee reports, articles and notices are generally the 10th of the month before publication, e.g. the next deadline would be September 10 for the October issue. In order for the **Green Light** to be typed and proofed in a timely manner before paste-up day, it is imperative that this deadline be met. Therefore, the staff respectfully requests that this deadline be observed. Thank you.

THE STAFF

I REMEMBER! I REMEMBER!

The next installment of The Newport Historical Society article "The Point, 1925-40" by L.F. Gracey will appear in the October issue of **The Green Light**.

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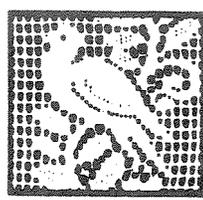
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SAVANNAH, GEORGIA - THE NEWPORT OF THE SOUTH

For about 50 years, Newport has been my home; any other place, however nice, was strange country. A prolonged illness brought me to Savannah, Georgia where I recuperated in my daughter's care. I've had the opportunity to compare the two cities and I was surprised by their similarities.

Their geographical positions are certainly alike. Located on an arm of the Atlantic Ocean, Newport on Narragansett Bay and Savannah on the Savannah River, the early settlers of both colonies saw the possibilities of trade, and not many years after their founding, a brisk coastal and European commerce developed. It was this trade which determined what the settlers would grow agriculturally, and here we depart from likenesses to differences. Georgia, with its long, hot summers, grew rice, cotton and indigo; none of which were possible to grow in Rhode Island latitudes.

Both colonies had a try at raising silk; a sad failure in each place. In Newport, a one-man endeavor; in Georgia, it was a more substantial effort. A group of settlers, known as the Salsburgers, took to raising mulberry trees and following the tedious process of silk making. Some of the material found its way to England where King George the Second's Queen had it made into a court dress. By 1764, over 16,000 pounds of silk had been produced, but, from this point on, the craft declined steadily. The colonists found that the same amount of land and labor devoted to rice or tobacco, for instance, was much more lucrative.

The founders of both colonies, Roger Williams of R.I. and James Oglethorpe of Ga., were men of good will who treated the Indians with consideration. They both bought Indian land instead of annexing it. The result was that both Georgia's Savannah and the Rhode Island colonies connected with Roger Williams were spared the devastating Indian raids that plagued so many settlers of the American colonies.

As the 18th century progressed towards the break with England, there were other similarities. The English occupied Savannah for four years, although there was much greater Tory sympathy in Georgia than in New England. It seems strange, but in 1776 there were still some of the original settlers living in Georgia. They were elderly, but they accounted for some of the distaste for revolting against the king.



A view of Savannah Harbor

As in most of the New England colonies, there was a vociferous group of Whigs who had come down to Georgia to keep things stirred up. There was a Liberty Pole (similar to Newport's Liberty Tree) around which the Liberty Boys gathered, and it was here, on August 10, 1776, that the Declaration of Independence was read.

As the Revolution wore on, other names, familiar to both Savannah and Newport, appeared. Count d'Estaing, with his fleet, tried unsuccessfully to take Savannah from the English. He was wounded there three times, but recovered and returned to Paris where he was guillotined.

In 1782, General Nathaniel Greene was sent by General Washington to clear the British from Savannah. He was successful because hostilities between England and America were being terminated. Also the Continental Congress seconded the demand that the British leave.

In present-day Savannah, there are many names reminiscent of their histories; Bull Street, Memorial Boulevard, Washington Street, Hunter House. There are also many activities and organizations like those in Newport. There is the Savannah Historical Foundation, which is much like our Preservation Society. There are frequent house tours in both cities. Savannah citizens, who have bought old historic houses, are busy restoring them. This year, as our Brick Market prepares for renovation, the Frederick Bull House on Columbia Square in Savannah was open for a house tour so people could see its half-finished restoration. There is a Secret Garden Tour in Savannah, much like Newport's, only the secret is that one doesn't know which houses will be open until the day of the tour.

Finally, another instance of two things common to both cities is a statue



**"The Leaving Girl" by
Felix de Weldon**

in downtown Savannah sculpted by Felix De Weldon. Although an entirely different subject from our Blue Jacket near the Seamen's Institute, it is recognizable as his work. Titled **The Leaving Girl**, it was done by Mr. De Weldon in 1971. It memorializes a lonely young girl, Florence Martus, who lived on an isolated island, and waved at ships as they entered and left Savannah Harbor. She waved a white cloth by day and a lantern by night; she kept up her vigil for over 40 years. The ships responded with a blast from their whistles. Her fame continues, as many ships still blow their whistles as they pass her island. In 1931, she and her brother, the keeper of the lighthouse on the island, had to leave. Florence and her collie dog were only a memory until immortalized by this River Street statue.

With so many reminders of Newport, I felt very much at home in Savannah.

Virginia Covell

WELCOME BACK TO NEWPORT, VIRGINIA!

We are so glad to have Virginia Covell here on the Point again. She is at the Nina Lynette Home at 87 Washington St. She "gets around" with a cane and the stairway's electric chair. She welcomes brief visits or phone calls. Her phone number is 849-9426. She is happily consulting on Green Light matters!

COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOW FACILITY

What an impressive tour we had of the new CSO Facility on June 23. After a brief overview of the construction which began in April 1989 and an introduction of dignitaries, one of the project managers gave us a tour of the spanking new buildings. As you step over the threshold, you can look down through a filigree of open-grillwork metal stairs, three stories deep! This tall building is built mostly underground.

The machinery that operates the plant is surreal, larger-than-life. My neighbor, Bob Jackson, was intrigued with the "fan-like" devices that suck up the water for dispersal. He exclaimed at the size of each pump and commented that now he'd seen every size and shape of pump.

A series of three holding tanks are enormous. At times of small storms, one million gallons of storm-water will be stored in these tanks until it can be pumped to the treatment plant on Connell Highway. During a large storm like a hurricane, water will be released through the overflow pipe under the Causeway.

Colors are used throughout to differentiate "good water" from "flushing water". Chlorine tanks and the caustic soda used in cleaning the tanks are clearly marked.

Every safety precaution seems to have been considered. Routinely, each day, someone will check the plant; only at times of storms will the facility be manned.

As we proceeded down to the lowest level, the dampness made one realize that we were below sea level. I reflected that it was two years ago when the hole was dug which quickly filled with 3,000,000 gallons of contaminated salt water. It was interesting to note that the pumps held that water at bay so the buildings could be built to hold more water that will eventually, after treatment, be pumped back into the Bay!

To see the Facility completed and ready to go to work was a relief, and it certainly looks like we got our money's worth.

Thanks to Senator Chafee's assistance in getting federal money, only 8.4 million needed to be funded by a city bond issue. And as Mayor McKenna commented during the

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from preceding page)

tour, we got the federal grant money just in time; there are no grants available today.

Now we have to wait and see how efficiently and environmentally-friendly this CSO will be in full operation.

GATEWAYS TO THE POINT

Work was completed recently on a new "entrance" to the Point...the overhead railroad crossing lights and the roadbed near the Connell Highway rotary. This modernization is a welcome addition and looks like a fine new "Gateway" to Third Street and the Naval Base.

At the southern end of the Point, restoration of the Brick Market is underway. Because the boundary of the Point is Long Wharf to Thames and Farewell Sts. northward, this handsome building and future museum is our southeast corner-stone. Let's support its restoration.

Our support is also needed at our southwest corner at South Pier. Money is needed for the development of the Marine Terminal. In the past, this was a marine terminal for the Fall River Lines and for the military during World War II.

As long as adequate space is provided for the fishermen/lobstermen, a dock for cruise ship launch service would be excellent. While primarily fulfilling a practical service to our marine industries, a tourist attraction could be promoted, too. Perhaps a mini-museum with historical info about fishing/lobstering/boatbuilding industries! A walkway for public access to view how men "work at sea" and a few picnic tables would encourage families with children to come and see the waterfront firsthand.

WHAT'S A HEALTHY DISTANCE

Concern with the danger of electromagnetic fields as a health problem continues. In a recent magazine article, Dr. Nancy Wertheimer, an expert in electromagnetic fields, states, "There's no reason to be overly alarmed...by exercising a little caution, you can minimize potential risk. The basic rule to follow: If it stays on, stay away." The article also says that walls do not shield low-frequency magnetic fields.

The question is, if you are not shielded by the walls of your home, exactly how dangerous are those GIANT TRANSFORMERS and multiple power lines outside a bedroom window on Third Street?

Continued opposition to these high tension wires/transformers should be voiced. It is important that the Comprehensive Plan state that "upgrades" and future installation should be underground and adequately shielded.

WE'RE GRATEFUL

Thanks to the watchdogs of the Point who followed the blasting and scraping of paint on the Newport Bridge. They made many telephone calls and asked many questions regarding pollution. There are no easy answers, but we're grateful to those who are alert to dangers to our air, water and soil.

Liz Bermender



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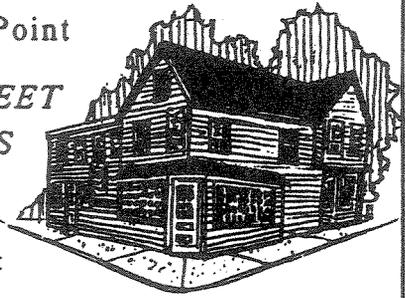


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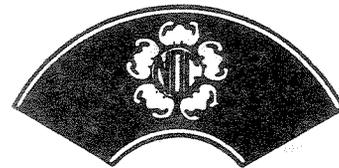
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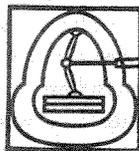
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COOK'S CORNER

When this issue of the **Green Light** arrives we will be into the hot, hot days of summer. Who, among us, wants to be laboring over a hot stove? Not me! This issue I thought we would try some recipes that will not only keep us cool during their preparation but also cool the palate.

One of the most cooling beginnings to a meal is a cold soup and there are many simple recipes available for these. The main ingredient is a blender or food processor. The rest is up to you.

CHILLED MELON SOUP

2 ripe cantaloupes (about 1 1/2 lbs. each) pared, seeded and coarsely chopped.
1 cup orange juice
1 cup sour cream
2 TBSP. fresh lemon juice
6 thin lemon slices for garnish

1. Process all ingredients except lemon slices in blender on high speed until smooth. Refrigerate until cold, at least 30 minutes. 2. To serve, ladle into chilled bowls and garnish with lemon slices. Serves 6.

CHILLED SPINACH SOUP

1 pkg. (10 oz.) frozen chopped spinach
1/4 cup chopped scallions
2 tsp. curry powder
2 cups buttermilk
1/2 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. freshly ground pepper
1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
2 TBSP. finely chopped tomato for garnish

1. Thaw spinach. Place in food processor or blender and puree. Add remaining ingredients except tomato and process or blend until smooth. Transfer to mixing bowl and refrigerate at least 30 minutes. 2. To serve, ladle into bowls and garnish with tomato. Serves 2.

When you have no time or patience to cook, try this sneaky cold soup recipe: Blend one can (10 3/4 oz.) condensed tomato soup and 3 cups buttermilk. Serve chilled and garnished with grated lemon rind, and accept all compliments with grace.

Here's an elegant dessert which takes little time and energy.

PEACHES AND KIWI WITH AMARETTO CREAM

Whip 1/2 cup heavy cream and 1 TBSP. sugar in mixing bowl until soft peaks form. Gently fold in 1/2 cup sour cream and 3 TBSP. amaretto liqueur. Refrigerate until cold.

Peel, pit, and slice 4 peaches, toss with 1 TBSP. sugar, 1 TBSP. fresh lime juice, and pinch ground cinnamon in second bowl.

Pare 4 kiwis and slice crosswise. Arrange kiwi slices in circle on each of 4 chilled dessert plates.

Arrange peach slices on kiwis. Dollop cream mixture in center and sprinkle with crushed amaretti cookies. Serves 4.

If you would rather start your meal with a cooling salad instead of a cold soup, this easy recipe is for you.

KIWI FRUIT SALAD

Allow one kiwi fruit per person. Thin mayonnaise or salad dressing with a little milk and add either orange marmalade or peach jam. Peel and slice kiwi onto a lettuce leaf, top with thinned dressing. If the fruit is ice cold this is a very cooling beginning to a meal.

This next recipe was taken from an 1874 Nantucket Receipt Book and tastes just as good today.

COLD BLUEBERRY PUDDING

Layer alternately sliced and buttered white bread (with crusts removed) with berries, which have been sprinkled with powdered sugar. (This can be plain blueberries, strawberries, or raspberries, or even a combination.) End with the top slice being bread. Cover with a heavy plate, weighted down with something heavy, and refrigerate for 24 hours. This is extra nice served with a liqueur which has been poured over the pudding and allowed to sit and soak in for a few hours.

Florence Archambault



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