

The
GREEN

LIGHT

BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

SUMMER 1995





The

GREEN LIGHT

XXXX No. 2

SUMMER 1995

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GREEN LIGHT

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Copies of the *Green Light* may be purchased for \$1.00
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Streets; **Aidinoff's Liquor and Gourmet Shop**, Warner
Street; **Clipper Wine & Spirits**, Third Street and
Walnut Market, Third and Walnut.

SUMMER 1995 CALENDAR

June 10	Rose Island Lighthouse <i>Rose Garden Party</i>
June 16 - 18	Secret Garden Tour
June 22	Point Picnic
July 29	St. John's Fair
August 24	Members' Cocktail Party

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

The late winter and early spring were filled with events that helped to identify this association as one that remains active and committed. We celebrated the opening of St. John's Guild Hall with the ever successful Pot Luck Supper. While quarters were a little tight, as over 175 people were in attendance, we were able to enjoy each others' company and homemade favorites. Once again, we thank Donna Maytum and her efficient committee for making the event go like clockwork.

The Spring General Membership Meeting was the first time we joined with the Hill Association to host an annual event. Our speaker was William Mc Kenzie Woodward, Architectural Historian of the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission. His slide presentation of restoration efforts across Rhode Island was delightfully informative and inspirational. Thanks go to Peg Comfort, the new Program Chair, and to her committee for their preparation and hard work.

The Spring Clean-Up was well attended and well organized. Deb Herrington and her Co-chairs, Nancy and Paul Quattrucci, have worked hard to make the Beautification Committee continue without skipping a beat. Carol Marinaran has helped with the transition. We applaud them all.

Finally, one of our favorite events, the Plant Sale proved its reputation once again as a must for people from all over the island hoping to reap the benefits of the Point gardeners. Co-chairs Joan Stickley and Anne Reynolds and their ever faithful committee deserve our gratitude and praise.

While our events helped mark time through the past three months, Board members continue the behind the scene commitment to city issues. The American Shipyard Task Force completed its report to the city for the development of the land use plan. The Executive Summary highlights the following:

- Restrict the division of the property by sale into smaller parcels of land.
- Continue the operation of the shipyard, centered on the marine railway.
- Restricted development of a large-vessel repair complex off the west face and in the North Basin.
- Any retail activities be strictly limited as required by the Traditional Maritime Zoning law.
- That a standard restaurant not be permitted on the property.
- That the City develop an adequate traffic plan for the surrounding neighborhood prior to any development of the site.
- The City must consider a future tax incentive plan for the development of this and other waterfront property.
- The plan must provide for meaningful public access.

Finally, I was able to attend a History and Archives Committee meeting headed by Anita Rafael. At the meeting I was able to catch a glimpse of what makes the Point Association so unique. It is the reverence for our past by all generations who share a commitment to the future and the permanence of an Association whose vision can never be outdated.

Christine Montanaro

This winter and spring there have been repeated break-ins on the Point. Anne Cuvelier has formed a Citizens Watch that will be active. Anyone interested in being involved should contact Anne or Christine. More information will be available at the Point Picnic.

Introducing . . .

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Deborah Herrington has joined the Board as the co-chair of Beautification. She moved to the Point a year and a half ago, and has been busy spending most of her time, energy and money on the restoration of her home on Poplar Street. Deborah quotes, "It's always been my dream to own and enjoy an original Colonial home, so when I saw my house for the first time I knew I was home." As the sales representative for Fujitsu Personal Systems, Inc., she has found that living in Newport allows her easy access to each of the six New England states, for which she is responsible. Deborah's latest house project is converting her small yard into brick walled gardens and brick patio. She invites you to come visit her there, as for the balance of the summer she will be found outside planting and tending the gardens whenever the weather is fair.

Paul and Nancy Quattrucci have recently volunteered to serve as Beautification co-chairs with Deborah. They first saw the Point while on the Secret Garden Tour in 1993 and knew this was the place they wanted to live. In March 1994, they moved from the suburbs of Worcester, Massachusetts, to 39 Elm Street, where they have been working on the renovation and conversion of their 18th-century colonial home into a bed and breakfast inn. In addition to their duties as innkeepers of The Corner House, which opened for business in July 1994, they enjoy gardening and participating in activities associated with the Preservation Society of Newport County and the Newport Historical Society.

Peggy Comfort joins the Board as the chair of Programs. She and husband Lyn came to Newport originally for the wonderful sailing conditions - Newport's waters were much better than Long Island Sound. What started as a summer venture ended up as a decision to change their lifestyle and move here permanently. She states that much of it had to do with a lucky choice of location, the Point. Three years ago Peggy and Lyn opened the Music Hall Cafe, at 250 Thames Street, a south-western-style restaurant, and enjoy running into many of their Point neighbors there.



The Point Association's Annual Members' Cocktail Party

*Thursday, August 24, 1995
from six to eight in the evening*

*Villa Marina
72 Washington Street*

SEPTEMBER CRUISE

Please mark your calendars now for Sunday, September 10 for the Point Association's September Cruise on the *Spirit of Newport*.

Last year's cruise was such a success that we decided to repeat it again this year. We will once again have a silent auction, refreshments - and this year we are adding live music.

Anyone wishing to work on the cruise committee, call Roberta Majewski at 846-6194.

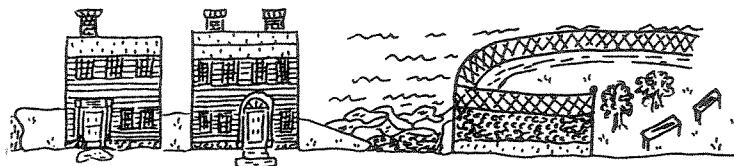
COMING THIS FALL

Harbor Cruise
Sunday, September 10

Wine Tasting
Sunday, September 24

Ghost Stories
Sunday, October 29

Puzzle Party
November date
to be announced later



POINT ASSOCIATION PICNIC

Thursday, June 22
6 p.m.

Anne Reynolds' Yard
88 Washington Street

Come join the fun with friends and neighbors

Bring a picnic supper
and folding chairs or
blanket to sit upon

Coffee will be provided

Rain date: Thursday, June 29



SECRET GARDEN TOUR

Sixteen Point gardens will be open June 16 - 18 for the 11th annual Secret Garden Tour sponsored by the Benefactors of the Arts. You can enjoy this popular event by volunteering or coming with friends.

On Saturday at St. John's Church there will be a morning coffee and plant sale. Box lunches will be available for those who order in advance.

The Benefactors fund cultural events for children in Newport and surrounding areas.

Secret Garden Tour Schedule

June 16 - 18

Friday 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Saturday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Sunday 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Advanced Reservations: \$12

On tour day: \$15

Call the Benefactors of the Arts
847-0514

for tickets, lunch orders and more information.

To volunteer call Nancy Corkery at 683-5347

BEAUTIFICATION

Spring is here and that means the Point Association has been hard at work cleaning up the parks and streets. On Saturday, April 29, a crew of about twenty showed up at Storer Park with rakes in hand, ready to remove dead leaves and debris left by winter. Thirty bags later our crew stepped back to admire our clean parks - Storer and Battery, and our clean streets on Washington and Marsh. Thanks to all who helped with this effort!

Don't forget to keep your eyes posted for our new look in both Storer Park and on the Marsh Street island. With the help of the Doubletree Hotel, Goat Island and Newport's Tree Warden, we'll soon see the results of our long-time plans and fund raising. As a part of Phase I, new trees will soon be planted to add to the beauty of our parks. Later in the season, we'll plant bushes and spring-blooming bulbs in the Marsh Street island - this stretch of land will become a beautiful welcoming sight to those entering the Point.

Deborah Herrington

POINT ASSOCIATION COMMITTEES

The activities of the Point Association are varied and wide ranging. We welcome you to take part. If interested contact:

Beautification

Deborah Herrington 848-9735

Paul and Nancy Quattrucci 846-2434

Green Light

Florence Archambault 846-9024

Kay O'Brien 847-7311

History & Archives

Anita Rafael 846-0609

Rowan Howard 847-8428

Kay O'Brien 847-7311

Membership

Nancy Espersen 846-2907

Nominating

Jane Holdsworth 847-2161

Programs

Peggy Comfort 847-3261

Publicity

Dick and Cheryl Poholek 849-3411

Telephone

Open

Traffic

Ade Bethune 847-5428

NEWPORT MARINE FACILITIES UPDATE

A Public Scoping Meeting was held Tuesday, May 9, 1995 at Newport City Hall to discuss the above mentioned project. The purpose of the meeting was to solicit input and generate a list of issues that the public would like to see discussed and evaluated in the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) that the Department of Transportation is beginning to formulate at this time.

The EIS evaluates two broad areas:

1. Impact on Human Environment
 - Traffic
 - Visual considerations
 - Cultural resource (historic/archaeological)
 - Neighborhoods
(communities/business/employment)
2. Impact on Natural Environment
 - Air/Noise
 - Water Quality/Wetlands
 - Endangered Species

This process is very detailed and the expected time frame to completion of a final draft of the study is one and one half to two years. The committee will be holding regular public hearings during this process and will be creating a Community Advisory Committee to help formulate issues of concern including all those mentioned previously. They are an information gathering committee and have no say in decision making.

It was stressed to those in attendance that public input and experience has the greatest impact and consideration in planning and decision making for the final draft. There is consideration for several sites and the possibility of more than one site as well as a no-build alternative.

The federal ISTEA monies that have been allocated for this project are specifically earmarked for water transit and marine facility, the emphasis being on transit systems. Of the three million tourists that visit annually only about 50,000 arrive by cruise ships so the main goal is for ferries and commuter craft.

I will continue to attend public meetings that are open to all and will report any information to the Point Association members. This process will be a long and hopefully thorough one but I feel more comfortable that it is being studied in a conscientious and all inclusive manner.

Donna Segal
Marine Task Force

Welcome to Our New Members

Sue Bowen and Jon Powers
Denise Drapeau
Joan and Vic Farmer
Helga and Christine Ganger
Paul and Gerri Kairis
Jacqueline T. Mei
Carole Peterhansel
Edward A. Sherman
Agnes M. Torbett
Stephen Walk
Jeffrey D. Wilson

ADVENTURE CLUB NEWS

The Adventure Club is gearing up for another fun summer, full of activities. Once school is out, the group will meet weekly for a morning activity followed by a picnic lunch. Activities are chosen by the families who organize the outings on a rotating basis. Usually, the "adventurers" explore the Point neighborhood, but occasionally a trip is planned, such as last year's outing to the Potter Animal Shelter. Children of all ages are welcome to participate. For more information, contact Beth Lloyd at 849-8071 or Jill Spohn at 849-2155.

HISTORY AND ARCHIVES

Next Meeting
Monday, June 19, 1995
6:30 p.m.
Nina Lynette Home
87 Washington Street
Please use the Cherry Street entrance
Come join us as we sort through photos,
newspaper clippings and memorabilia of the Point.
Call Rowan Howard 847-8428 or
Kay O'Brien 847-7311
for more information

At St. John's this summer . .

A CELEBRATION OF BRITISH CATHEDRAL MUSIC

In a city known for its many festivals, the Point will be host to a unique musical experience this July. The week of July 18th through 23rd, our neighborhood will be transformed into a British village with its own cathedral during *A Celebration of British Cathedral Music*. The 30-member Gentlemen and Boys' Choir of All Saints' Church, Northampton, England, on their first U.S. tour, will be in residence at St. John's singing daily services after the manner of the great Cathedrals of the British Isles.

The schedule of the *Celebration* is as follows: twice-daily services at 9 a.m. and 6 p.m., Tuesday through Friday; a candlelight service of Compline sung to plainchant at 10 p.m. on Friday; Sunday services at 9 a.m. (Mattins), 10 a.m. (High Mass), and 3 p.m. (Evensong). Each service will include four separate choral works, a psalm sung to Anglican chant, and sung responses either to plainchant or specially composed music. Every service is absolutely open to the general public; a freewill offering will be taken at each service.

On behalf of Father Ostman and St. John's Vestry, I would like to extend a special invitation to all our neighbors on the Point to attend any or all of the events of the *Celebration*. Whether you belong to St. John's, another church, or no church, this is an event that you **SHOULD NOT MISS!** We hope to see many of you in July.

Brady Johnson
Organist & Choirmaster

Saint John's Church Fair

Washington and Willow Streets
Saturday, July 29
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Food, white elephant, silent auction, crafts
and more!

POINTERS-IN-THE-NEWS

Ilse Nesbitt of the Third and Elm Press made the news twice the beginning of May, first for the opening of her exhibit at the DeBlois Gallery on Bellevue Avenue. Her show is called *Recent Woodcuts* and features sailboats, docks and piers and other water-related Newport environments. She also was a participant in the third Elderwoman Symposium held at Swinburne School on May 7, where she spoke about her work and life. The symposium honors older women and offers their wisdom to younger generations.

* * * *

Ade Bethune was featured in April on the locally produced program *Crossed Paths* on the local access cable Channel 8. She discussed with the producer and host, Charlie Berluti, the plans of the Star of the Sea Corporation to renovate the Cenacle on Battery Street.

* * * *

Anita McAndrews, her daughter Kate Sweet and Kate's son Drake were featured in the Clearwater Martial Arts Academy newsletter in Florida. Anita is taking Tai Chi and her daughter and grandson are enrolled in the Martial Arts program.

* * * *

Pointer John Mazza, 89, has once again competed in the Fourth Annual Aquidneck Island Nursing Homes' Senior Olympics. He is now at the Grand Islander Health Care Center in Middletown but keeps in shape by practicing his shadowboxing of younger days.

* * * *

The May 11 issue of *Newport This Week* featured two Point gardens. Rowena and Don Dery's garden at the corner of Washington and Bridge Streets and Toni and Pete Peters' at 53 Washington Street are scheduled to be on the Secret Garden Tour in June.

* * * *

Florence Archambault, co-editor of the *Green Light*, was the Rhode Island entrant in the 41st National Chicken Contest held in Atlanta, Georgia, last April. She didn't win the \$25,000 first prize, but her eyes were opened to a whole new world of cooking contests. Her appetite and talent are whetted by more to come.

* * * *

We hope that you have noticed that the Point Association has been in the news recently with the monthly articles which are appearing in *Newport This Week* in commemoration of the Association's 40th anniversary.

Living With Ghosts!
LIFE ON GOAT ISLAND

The first Americans (the ones who inhabited this area for centuries before the European immigration) called it *Nante Sinunk*. On May 22, 1658, they sold the beautiful little island of pasture land to a group of Newport colonists for six pounds, ten shillings, and threw in Dutch Island and Coasters Harbor Island too. What a bargain for the settlers; we can only hope it was for them, too.

Now it's called *Goat Island* - beautiful once again, but only after purposeful planning and hard work following three centuries of multiple changes to the peaceful harbor plateau. Some people think its name originates from its shape, though even an aerial view can't convince me of that; others say that early settlers grazed their animals there to keep them from wandering off. That sounds good to me.

But there are ghosts everywhere - faint, shadowy traces of life that used to be and is no more - some of it openly apparent, and some of it you have to dig for (figuratively speaking, of course, although I would love to be turned loose with a shovel!).

About to begin my second year on "the Goat," I have met those ghosts face to face through reading, listening to stories from people who seem to know what they're talking about, and seeing for myself. They are many and varied. Explorer Giovanni da Verrazano wrote about the island in the sixteenth century. As early as 1697, King George II took measures to explore the value of the island as a fortification for defense of the area (little did he know that his investigation would ultimately turn on him and threaten his very crown); and in 1702, the General Assembly provided that a battery be built and charged to the colony.

The result was a stone structure assuming the name of **Fort Anne**, after the reigning monarch. It changed names through the years: **Fort George**, after King

George; in 1779 it was occupied by American troops and called **Fort Liberty**; on May 29, 1790, then known as **Fort Washington**, named for the Commander in Chief of the American Army, it fired the first salute to celebrate Rhode Island's entry into the thirteen United States; in 1798 it became **Fort Wolcott** after Governor Wolcott and his son, the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury. One can only imagine the busy activity stemming from the fort through the years.

When the gulls fly over and yachts abound in the bay, I sometimes think of the pirates who were hanged and then buried on the island. I think of Samuel Carr and his thirteen-year-old daughter, Wait, of Newport, who died of smallpox and were buried there too. I sense the presence of British ships fired upon by brave young Americans and then burned in the harbor.

The biggest ghost, of course, is that of the Torpedo Station which dominated the island from just after the Civil War through World War II. The war between the states had established the island as a strategic part of the Navy's operation, through World War I, and then into the Second War when 15,000 people were employed there. By the early 60s, only ghosts remained once again.

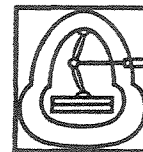
Now the island is rich in natural beauty, and appreciated by those who love the ocean, the vast and open sky, fresh air, peace and quiet. The stanchion platforms have become the foundations for gazebos for the gathering of picnickers or just reading a book on a lazy summer afternoon. An occasional artifact washes ashore now and again as a reminder of bygone ages and activities, and of ships and cannons and treasures that lie at the bottom of the bay and harbor. The ghost of war bombards on holidays with fireworks at the other fort, **Fort Adams** - reminiscences of countless skirmishes and all-out battles; but then the Jazz, Folk,



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The Third & Elm Press
Alexander Nesbitt Ilse Buchert Nesbitt
29 Elm Street, Newport

and Rhythm and Blues festivals add to the excitement and pleasure of peacetime. Canada geese have replaced the goats, and unlike the goats, come and go as they please. The splashing of the outdoor pool replaces the whirring of machinery, and flowers and lush green grass cover a thousand yesterdays like a blanket.

One day last summer, my archeological interests sparked my curious nature to investigate some digging that was going on. By the end of the day there was a large "junk" pile on ground-top to be hauled away in a few days. I knew immediately that some past treasure had been resurrected. I was right. There it was, a big assembled pile of old rusty, twisted pipes, tubings, wires, chunks of steel and iron, all entangled into a work of art truly suited for display on the lawn of the Newport Art Museum. It was the ghost of war, of defense, of struggle for liberty, of hope for freedom. It was the ghost of sadness that the hell of war had been necessary in the first place; but it was the ghost of promise that once again the island is a place of tranquillity, symbolizing the peace that will come eventually to the whole world. Our faith in that is what made and makes the struggle worthwhile.

So, the island is home to me now. And I can't think of anyplace else I would rather live, surrounded by the ghosts that haunt me everyday and make me grateful to be the citizen of a great nation and the resident of this wonderful "City by the Sea." And, by the way, from here the view of the Point is spectacular!

Robert M. Mitchell



WALKING TOURS

Looking for something interesting to do when company comes this summer or perhaps you just moved here and would like to find out more about Newport and the Point. A walking tour might be the answer.

During the 1 1/2 hour tours, you get a glimpse of Colonial life, learn about architecture and come away with a new appreciation for this area. Even long-time Point residents have discovered something they hadn't seen or heard before.

Newport on Foot tours leave daily from the Gateway Visitors Center on America's Cup Avenue. Anita Rafael offers tours on a variety of subjects including historic Newport and graveyards. Call 846-5391 for a schedule of topics and times.

Tours of the Point are being offered this summer by the Newport Historical Society. They will leave from the Newport Museum of History the first Saturday of the month at 10 a.m. If interested, call 846-0813 for more information.

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HISTORY ON POST CARDS

The *Reina Mercedes*

On May 25, 1901, the *Newport Daily News* announced that the *Reina Mercedes*, the only warship captured by Admiral Sampson's fleet at Santiago de Cuba during the Spanish-American War, would be coming to Newport as a training ship.

The vessel was built in Cartegna, Spain in 1887. Soon after being commissioned she was sent to Cuban waters. She had a displacement of 3,090 tons, was 278 feet long and 42 feet wide. When first commissioned by the Spanish she was capable of making 17.5 knots.

The *Reina Mercedes* acted as flagship of the Spanish naval forces and served as a harbor defense ship at Santiago de Cuba from the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898. On the 3rd of June a party under the command of Lt. Richmond Hobson attempted to run the U.S.S. *Merrimac* aground in the shallow water at the harbor entrance to block the channel. The *Reina Mercedes* opened fire along with other Spanish ships and shore batteries in defense of the harbor and sank the *Merrimac* before she reached an obstruction position. Lt. Hobson and his seven men were taken aboard the *Reina Mercedes* where they were treated kindly.

During the remainder of June and into July, U.S. Navy ships frequently bombarded Spanish positions at Santiago de Cuba, damaging the *Reina Mercedes* on eight separate occasions. Following the destruction of Admiral Cervera's squadron on July 3, 1898, the Spanish scuttled the battered cruiser in the channel to prevent U.S. ships from making an entrance.

She was towed to the mouth of the harbor late that evening, but her movements were discovered by the U.S. fleet. The battleships *Texas* and *Massachusetts* both fired upon her, causing heavy damage but not preventing her from sinking in the intended location. A chance shot, however, cut her mooring line so that, as she settled, she swung out of the main channel and came to rest in shallow water with her upper works still visible.

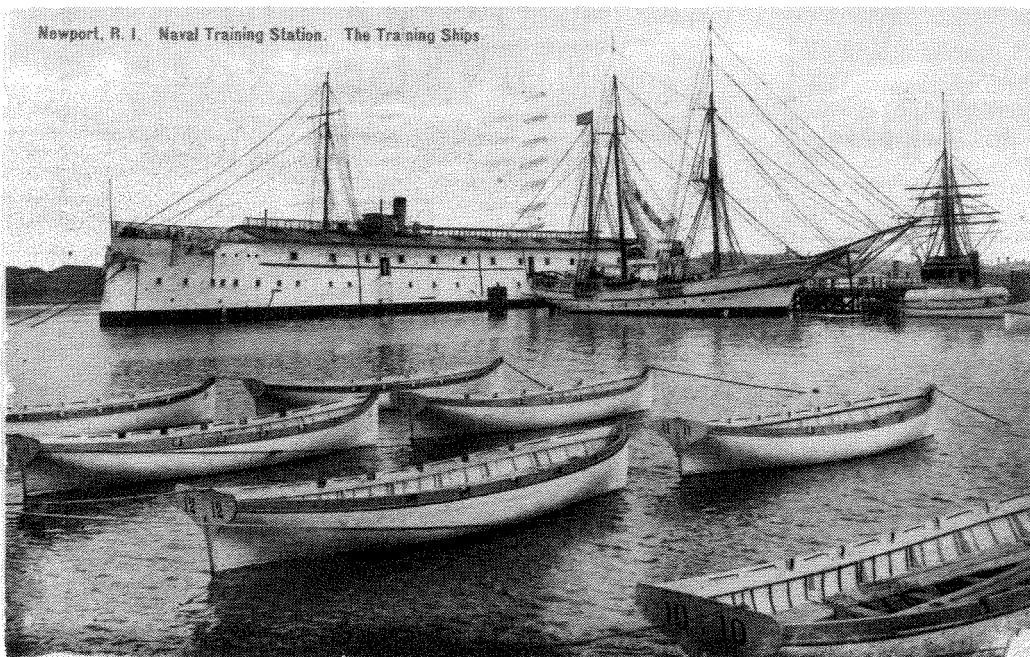
When the Spanish defenses at Santiago de Cuba surrendered on July 17, the U.S. Navy decided to salvage the vessel and the Merritt & Chapman Co. was engaged to raise her. The work began in January of 1899 and she was afloat on March 1. Leaking considerably, she was towed to the Norfolk Navy Yard for temporary repairs and sent to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, for conversion into a training ship.

It was first planned to convert her into a seagoing training ship, but, after much delay, the Navy Yard received orders on December 10, 1902, to convert her into a non-self-propelled receiving ship.

It is not until 1904 that we hear of her again. She is still in Portsmouth being refitted and we are told that she is expected to come to Newport under an order of two years ago that had never been rescinded.

On May 1, 1905, the *Daily News* reported the following:

"Former Spanish cruiser *Reina Mercedes*, which has been converted into a receiving ship



This post card shows the training ships at the Naval Training Station in the early 1900s. The *Reina Mercedes* is on the left.

at Portsmouth navy yard, was floated out of the stone dry dock yesterday, after a thorough overhauling, which has covered a long period. She is now ready to go into commission and will come to Newport, where she will be used as station ship at the Training Station. It is expected that the *Constellation* will be moved to the new wharf on the west side of the island, (Ed. note: Coasters Harbor Island) opposite the new barracks, and that the *Reina Mercedes* will be placed in the *Constellation's* present berth, on the east side, near the bridge."

Finally on Saturday, May 20, a crew left the Training Station for Portsmouth to bring the cruiser to Newport. The vessel left Portsmouth on Sunday at 2:30 p.m. under tow by two tugs and arrived in Newport 24 hours later.

The ship is described as looking like a large houseboat, being completely housed over from stem to stern, with spar masts for signal service and no smoke stacks, her engines having been removed. She is painted white.

She had been in Portsmouth for almost five years and her repairs cost over \$145,000, but she was said to be one of the best-equipped receiving ships in the U.S. Navy.

Another article in the *Daily News* of May 23, 1905, tells us:

"The new station ship, the *Reina Mercedes*, has been tied up at the old dock at the Training Station, in the place where the old *New Hampshire* lay for so many years. The new brig *Boxer* is just outside, tied to the new portion of the dock, while the old *Constellation* still occupies her old berth. The tides just now are favorable to her being taken around to the island, but it may be some time before this is done and the new ship takes her place.

"The *Reina Mercedes*, upon close examination, shows many a battle scar though she has been five years under repair. The most conspicuous scars are the many patches in her

plating, which cover the wounds made by American shot and shell. One of the features of the ship is her electric lighting plant. She is supplied with two Scotch-type boilers for power and heat and from these two electric generators are run, having a capacity to put the whole ship in a blaze of light within and without. Last evening she was illuminated, and presented a much better appearance than she does by daylight."

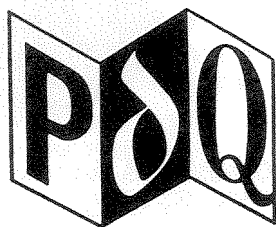
But for a visit to New York and Boston in 1908, the *Reina Mercedes* served as a training ship at Coasters Harbor Island until 1912. In early September she was towed to the Norfolk Navy Yard for a major overhaul. On September 30 she arrived at the Naval Academy in Annapolis to serve as station ship there. In 1920 she was designated as an unclassified auxiliary vessel.

Until 1940 it was considered customary for midshipmen serving punishment to live and take their meals on board the old ship for up to two months at a time. She was never considered a "brig", for the midshipmen continued to attend all drills and classes afloat and ashore.

Her main function after 1940 was to serve as quarters for enlisted personnel assigned to the Naval Academy and for the Commander of the Naval Station, who was also captain of the ship. Because her commanding officer was provided with quarters aboard for his entire family, the *Reina Mercedes* was the only U.S. ship in which dependents were allowed to reside.

In 1920 she had a brief moment of glory when she displayed her former flag as a gesture of friendship when the Spanish battleship *Alfonso XIII* called at Annapolis. On only five occasions (in 1916, 1927, 1932, 1939 and 1951) did she leave her pier for refitting at the Norfolk Navy Yard. In 1957 necessary repairs were estimated to be so costly that she was ordered broken up. Struck from the navy list on September 6, 1957, the *Reina Mercedes* was decommissioned November 6 at Annapolis and sold to the Boston Metals Co. of Baltimore, Maryland, for scrapping.

Florence Archambault



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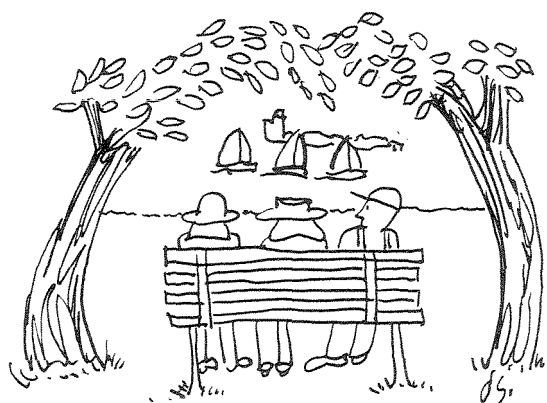
SUMMER ON THE POINT

Point Association member Sue Maden found this article while doing research at the Newport Historical Society. What was written in 1885 can still be said today.

A delightful place in which to summer, especially if one prefers boating and driving and comfort to display, is on "The Point," where a colony of boarding-houses has sprung up latterly. There are a few handsome summer residences there, and several cottages with fascinating balconies and delightful piazzas, with no boarding-house air about them, where rooms can be obtained at a price neither high nor low, but reasonable enough. The life there is much less conventional than on Bellevue avenue: the sunsets seen across the water are magnificent: some of Newport's historic houses are in that vicinity, and I have never known any one who has lived on Washington street who was not charmed. I do not like to hear people say that Newport life is too fashionable or too expensive, or that it takes too large and handsome a wardrobe to summer at Newport. There is a life independent of Casino balls and four-in-hand breakfasts that is not extravagant, that requires no elaborate dressing, that is restful and delightful. One may come here as to any seaside resort, having, in addition to the shore life elsewhere, the beauty of villas and lawns to look upon. Of course, to one who is made unhappy by seeing others dressing more showily, driving four horses to his one, giving great entertainments while he is so situated as to give none, there is no temptation in this other life at Newport. But bathing, fishing, sailing and rowing, the Cliff walk, the ocean drive, the Casino music, the cool climate, the loveliness of all Nature here, are as free to the boarder at fifteen dollars a week as to the cottage owner, and there are many who enjoy picnics as well as others enjoy dinner parties in summer time.

Margery Deane in Boston Transcript

Newport Journal and Weekly News - June 27, 1885
From the Collection of the Newport Historical Society



FISHERMEN'S MEMORIAL

The Fishermen's Memorial at Brenton State Park dedicated over Memorial Day weekend carries the names of many men associated with the Point who made their living from the sea and had roots here. Jesse Dennis and his wife Marie, formerly of Marsh Street, lost two sons, Chris and Mike, in November 1987 when their 65-foot lobster boat *Reliance* sank off Nantucket. Chris's youngest son was born the day after his father's boat was reported missing. The family has chosen the northeast corner of the 400-foot-square patio of engraved granite bricks for their sons who were lost in that 1987 nor'easter. When they celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary last November, Mr. and Mrs. Dennis donated any checks received to the memorial to help provide more bricks for others. As you travel to Brenton State Park this summer, visit this fitting memorial, read the names, and look over the water in remembrance of those who have lived, loved, or died by the sea.

Kay O'Brien

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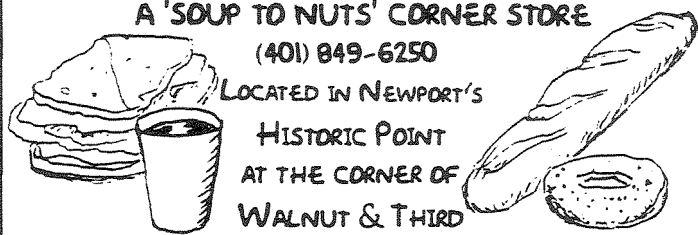
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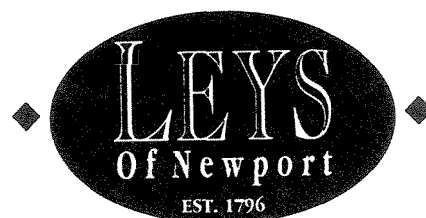
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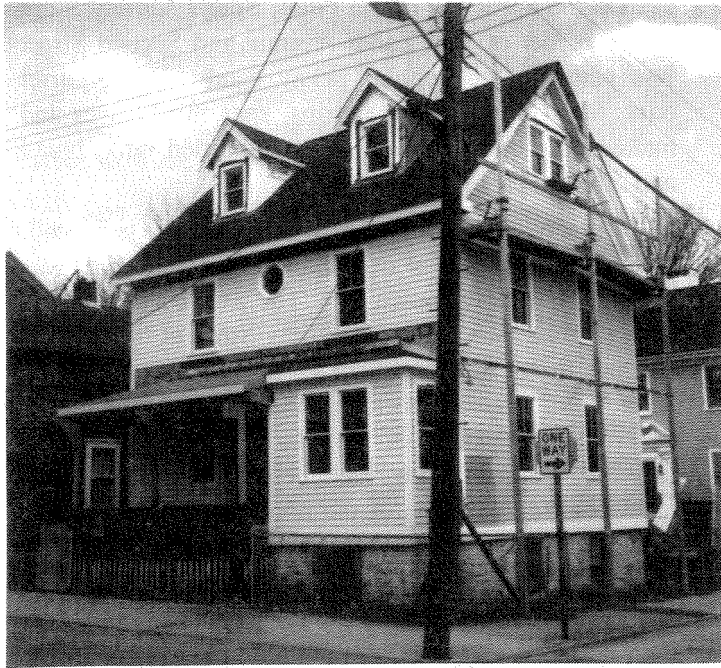


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A NEW LOOK AT SECOND AND WILLOW

Charlie Wiseman from Kentucky and South Carolina has been in and out of Newport on Naval duty but now is here to stay. He and his wife Janice, who like antiques and old houses, have decided that the Point is where to enjoy both. They have just sold their home in Charleston, South Carolina, a city which has much of the ambiance of Newport but not the cooling breezes. Charlie is stationed at the Surface Warfare Officers School and is in temporary quarters.



But after hours he can be found at 45 Second Street. You have probably seen him and what he is doing at the northeast corner of Second and Willow, the former Hackett homestead. Their first plan was to rehab the house built at the turn of the century and they stepped through the permit process with the Historic District Commission and the Office of Planning and

Zoning. As the project began, bit by bit was exposed and the pile of lumber in the backyard grew and grew. Before long it became evident that with so much structural damage there was not much worth saving, so back to the planning and permit stages again. Charlie found the Historic District Commission most helpful as together they worked out the details of rebuilding to save the character of the neighborhood. It was back to the original foundation, which had to be made level for a new sill. It has been a lot of work for Charlie and fun for all the sidewalk superintendents. A contractor helped with the framing during the cold winter days and some help will be needed with the electrical and plumbing work, but basically this will be the house that Charlie built. Rehabing several houses in various parts of the country has given him experience. He is preserving the exterior plan (although raising it seven feet) and the interior floor plan. The original flooring is piled up inside to save and doors are being restored and rehung. The clapboards are new with perfect caulking seams at their butt ends. Although it may slow down work at times, Charlie seems happy to answer questions and have cheery greetings from his Point neighbors. Welcome Charlie and Janice!

Kay O'Brien



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A FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY DO YOU REMEMBER?

Forty years of Point Association news and articles raises questions regarding the various businesses on the Point and within the boundary of what is considered the Point area. How many remember Westalls Ice Cream on Bridge Street next to the current Rhumblin restaurant, and McLaughlin's Candy Store on Chase Court with its wonderful candy sticks, lollipops, spearmint candy? And how unfortunate that Mr. Langley passed away without leaving his great recipes for future generations.

Did you pick up or have your ice delivered from the ice house at the corner of Bridge and Second Streets? (Old Nat's property, now belonging to the Kirbys.) With my little red wagon I'd pick up the ice and then any items my mother needed from the First National Store on my way home up Third Street. That same First National moved to Bridge and Thames Streets, then closed, leaving the other stores of that time, Toppa's Market, Integlia's Market, the Weaver Drugstore, Vincent Esposito's Barber Shop (then Sonny Ruggeiri's). Mr. Marks, Sr. had his plumbing shop on Upper Thames Street but I don't recall exactly where. The "new" block of red brick stores at the Arnold Park location housed Nass T.V., Mr. Kelly's Pet Store and another shop since forgotten (help!).

As we (Angela and I) continue to recall these memories, we can't help but ask questions. Like, what is the oldest business on the Point? Who were the owners? Did they live on the Point? What was the furniture store that was on the corner of Thames and North Baptist Streets? (Now Bruce and Lois Dickison's yard.) There was the old Point Market and Liquor Store on Walnut Street at Second Street. Did Mr. Katzman own that? Originally it was the Matthew Calbraith Perry house. Since the demise of the market it has since been restored to its original beauty and is a source of admiration for the many Japanese who come here during the Black Ships Festival.

There is even more history on the Point with the nationally recognized John Stevens Shop where the Bensons carved the J.F. Kennedy Memorial for Arlington Cemetery as well as other important works around Aquidneck Island. Nationally recognized as well is the Third and Elm Press, creatively printing remarkable notepaper, invitations, cards, etc., with flowers, herbs and Newport scenes.

On the north end of the Point, Spiers Variety Store on the corner of Van Zandt Avenue and Second Street was home to the popular penny candy, like Squirrel bars, Mary Janes, licorice strips, spearmint leaves and malted milk balls, as well as glass-bottled milk, bread and other staples.


Three other stores on Third Street escape my recall. Across from the corner of LaSalle Place and Third was a small store now known as "The Stock Market." A similar store was Gange's Variety Store at the head of Thames Street next to Bucci's. It was later known as Jo & Vi's. Angela remembers many trips to that store on errands for her mom. Popular for many years, the squeaky floored store has been replaced by the handsome reproduction of the home of William Ellery, Newport's signer of the Declaration of Independence.

We shouldn't overlook the Leary Oil Company, the Rhode Island Shoe Repair, the large fruit and vegetable market which stood at the location of CODAC on the corner of Thames and West Marlborough Streets. As the Irving Berlin song begins, "I'm either too young or too old" to remember all the stores and shops on the Point, their owners or their endings. If someone will write in with more information and memories of the businesses in the Point area and help make a list of entrepreneurship here, I will offer an arrangement from the Waters Edge Flowers, our shop on Memorial Boulevard (which originally started on Marlborough Street in 1970).

Joe Vars

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NEWPORT PRESERVATION ALLIANCE TO SURVEY BUILDINGS IN HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Newport is renowned for its unparalleled collection of historic buildings illustrating virtually every type of American domestic architecture from the 17th century through the end of the 19th century. Not surprisingly, Newport has the largest collection of historic buildings in the State of Rhode Island. Yet, of all the towns in the state, Newport, despite its fame, has the least well-studied and catalogued buildings. In order to take the first steps toward developing a comprehensive plan for deciding what should be preserved in Newport's historic fabric and properly adapting it to effective modern use, the Newport Preservation Alliance believes that Newporters must first have a clear understanding of what we have.

The Alliance is a consortium of groups that are already committed to preserving the historic heritage of Newport. The members include the Point Association, Hill Association, Newport Historical Society, Preservation Society of Newport County, Rose Island Lighthouse Foundation, Fort Adams Foundation, and Salve Regina University, with representatives from the Newport Historic Commission. These organizations are currently all represented on the Board by their presidents or executive directors, with John Hattendorf as the Alliance's first and current president.

Several years ago, Point residents were involved with a very successful project sponsored by the Newport Historical Society, surveying around 1,650 buildings on the Point and on the Hill. This information was entered into a computer data base that is readily available to the public at the Historical Society. With this successful project in mind, the Alliance took the initiative and applied for a grant to survey the approximately 1,500 remaining historic buildings in Newport, initially seeking funds from the Rhode Island Historic Preservation and Heritage Commission.

This spring, the state awarded the Alliance a grant of \$10,000 for a "broad brush survey" that will provide only the addresses, plat number and a photograph of

every structure in the following National Register Historic Districts: Kay-Catherine-Old Beach Road, Bellevue Avenue and Casino Historic Districts, and the Ocean Drive Historic District. The Alliance has contracted with Public Archeology Laboratory, Inc., to undertake this "broad brush" survey work.

This work is essential to the Alliance's broad goals, but, for Newporters, less interesting and useful than having detailed historical information about each house, including such information as date of construction, architect, design features, and historical associations. Several key organizations have come forward and made donations to promote this detailed survey work.

The Preservation Society gave the first seed money for this work, followed by the Point Association, Salve Regina University and the Hill Association. The Prince Charitable Trust has now matched these funds. In addition, Salve Regina and the Historical Society have also generously offered student and staff time to the project. The Alliance will be obtaining assistance from a volunteer coordinator.

The Alliance has identified the Broadway area lying between the Point and the Hill as the area to begin the survey. This will immediately complement the current work of the Broadway Improvement Association, later expanding to other areas of the city. In order to gain this information and have it available in a readily accessible way in Newport, the Alliance will need volunteers to undertake this work. Over the summer, the Alliance will be making preliminary plans and beginning to organize the effort. The actual survey work will start in September. Surveyors will be required to undergo some basic training before they begin work. Point Association members who are interested in volunteering to undertake some of the survey work should write to: The Newport Preservation Alliance, P.O. Box 1139, Newport, RI 02840.



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SUMMER GARDENING

Pruning & Butterflies

Trees and shrubbery are pruned to maintain a pleasing shape and to keep the plant young by inducing new growth. The "rule of three" says to cut one third of the largest shoots to the ground. The sensible time is right after blooming.

As some dog owners tend to do an ear-to-tail exam whenever their dog approaches, so gardeners walk their property with clippers in hand to "nip in the bud" any diseased or buggy tissue before the infestation gets worse. Slug and snail inspection is a part of this activity. I put such stuff in a plastic bag with the kitchen trash.

Buddleia or summer lilac is a good plant on which to practice pruning skills. It thrives whether you cut it to the ground in spring (neglecting the rule of three) or let it have its way at eight or more feet.

In the dog days of heat and dusty drought, when spent summer flowers need deadheading and the mums and asters aren't ready, the butterfly bush (Buddleia) erupts in a fountain of purple, white, or pink lilac-look-alikes.

I fret a lot over the seaswept windtorn part of my garden. Only the hardiest plants survive the cold wind

and wet salt air and the hot sun. Purple and pink hardy geraniums and yellow coreopsis, deep-rooted balloon flower, phlox and lilies - we call it a harlequin garden - slips of this and that make a thicket of unrelated orphans. Inevitably what stops me in my tracks are butterflies. They dart and hover according to their species' habit, and just one butterfly lured to a straggle of Beebalm or a rusty stemmed asclepias (called Butterfly weed) can take the stage in a virtuoso duet that showcases one flower and one insect in a moment of memory unbroken by the rag-tag and bobtail.

I've seen lists of plants that attract these insects. Some are favorites: zinnia, marigold, sweet william, lantana, verbena, phlox, cone flower, cosmos, asters, shasta daisy, and heliotrope. Even impatiens attracts and nourishes various species according to nature's plan.

A word of warning. Those wonderfully mobile white ones that flutter and glide through their pretty dance are probably wrecking your cabbage plants. Their squashy translucent larvae are not attractive at all. The monarchs are stripey green and yellow monsters that strip the parsley. The pesticides you use to kill "bad" insects kill butterflies as well.

Anne Reynolds

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A NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS

Although George Koulouvardis was told by his father that when you have your own business you can always lock the door and leave, George is almost always at the Rhode Island Shoe Repair Store at 86 Thames Street. Many of you know of the warm welcome you receive as well as the fine service. George can tell of the many changes in Newport especially those of redevelopment days when America's Cup Avenue cut through the heart of downtown. His father, Harry, left Greece in 1916 after serving with the Greek cavalry in three wars against the Turks and Bulgarians and then for the Allies in World War I. He moved to Newport in 1920 and started a shoe repair business, moving in 1947 to the current site on upper Thames Street which had been occupied by a butcher shop. George served in the Navy and worked at several other jobs until his father took ill in 1962. Then he took over the business he had learned over the years. There were 22 shoe repair shops in Newport in the 40's and now there are only two. Although footwear has changed over the years, the many rows of shoes in George's shop show there's still a demand to make that pair of comfortable shoes look like new. As for the friendly atmosphere, you will have to experience that for yourself.

Kay O'Brien

THE BELLS ARE BACK!

The familiar sound of St. John's church bells chiming the hour has returned to the Point.

The problems with the bells have been going on for some time and finally, in mid-March, they fell silent. Because replacement parts could not be found, St. John's was told that a whole new mechanism was needed to repair them. Estimated cost: \$10,000. With all of the other renovation and repair work going on at the church, the bells were given a low priority.

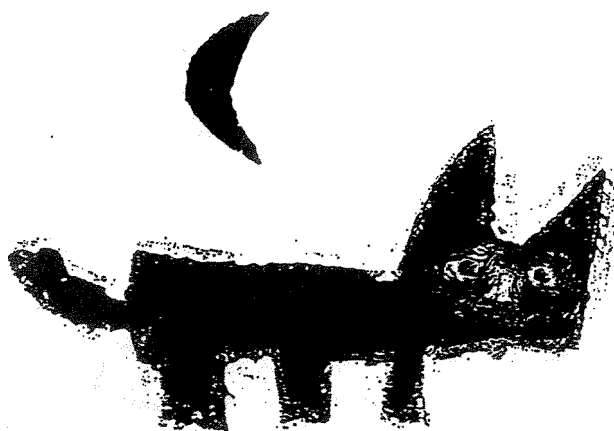
Then, on Sunday May 14, Bill Serth, a Washington Street neighbor, stopped by the church. He said how much he missed the bells, and with his background in engineering perhaps he could take a look at them. Bill found a fuse box that was shorting, repaired it and the bells were once again ringing. According to some at St. John's, it is truly a miracle.

Nancy Espersen

FOUND

A camera at the Pot Luck Supper in March
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Cook's Corner

Pot luck suppers are fun and the one held at St. John's Guild Hall last March was no exception. The variety of the dishes exceeded all expectations. Always there is one of which we all say "I want to get the recipe for this one!" This year it was Fran Babcock's Rosemary Chicken Pasta so the *Green Light* asked Fran for the recipe and she kindly gave it to us. She says she made it after she had it in a restaurant. You may want to play with some of the amounts of the ingredients but here is how she made it for the pot luck.

ROSEMARY CHICKEN PASTA

2 TBSP. olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
3 large chicken breasts, diced
1/2 lb. sliced mushrooms
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1/4 c. butter (1/2 stick)
3 cups heavy cream
1/4 c. grated Parmesan cheese
1 c. shredded Monterey Jack cheese
2 TBSP. rosemary (more if fresh)
1 lb. cooked Ziti pasta
salt and pepper to taste

Sauté garlic in olive oil, add chicken. When almost cooked add mushrooms and onions. Cook until tender. In separate pan, melt butter, add cream and both cheeses. When cheese is melted and sauce has thickened, add chicken mixture and rosemary. Simmer 15 minutes. Add to cooked pasta.

Enjoy!

It will soon be time for the annual Point Picnic and we will be trying to find something different for our picnic baskets. The Victorians made an art of their picnics. The ones in Newport hosted by Ward McAllister were usually organized on the spur of the moment and featured champagne and the best dishes of the cooks employed by the participants. In this day of diet and health consciousness those menus would hardly be tolerated.

There are ways to have elegance as well as good taste and a healthy diet in your picnic fare.

- Bake or microwave your chicken instead of frying it after marinating it in low fat Italian dressing.
- Dress your salads with low fat and low calorie dressings.
- Enfold your sandwich ingredients in pita bread.
- Substitute fruit for dessert instead of high calorie baked goods by making a fruit compote flavored with a bit of Japanese Plum wine or fruited brandy.
- Stir fry some veggies, season with low calorie salad dressing and place in pita bread at the picnic.
- Try thinly sliced Vidalia onions and tomatoes, moistened with a low-fat Blue Cheese dressing on 40-calorie a slice bread.
- Bring a plastic container full of salad and add dressing there. Water packed tuna or chicken added to a salad is both nourishing and low cal.

There are numerous possibilities. Above all, have fun!

Florence Archambault



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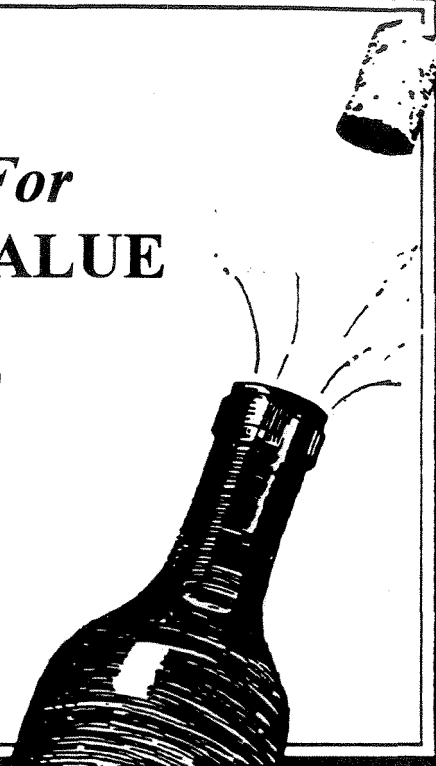
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