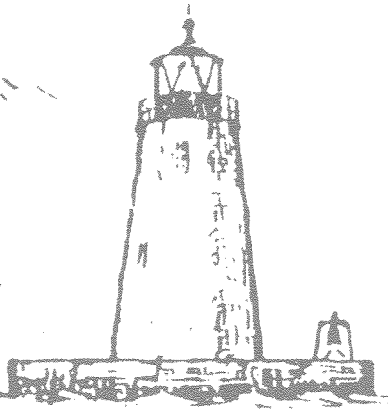
The GREEN LIGHT



BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

Spring 2000

Breakwater Lighthouse – October 1922

The
GREEN LIGHT

XLV No. 1 Spring 2000

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Copies of the *Green Light* may be purchased for $1.00 at the following stores:
Bucci's Convenience Store – Poplar & Thames
Aidinoff's Liquor & Gourmet Shop – Warner Street
Book 'Em –Thames Street

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The Point Association is a group of neighbors working together to improve the quality of life in our neighborhood by getting to know each other • preserving our historic heritage • maintaining the Point's residential character • beautifying our parks, streets and piers • promoting public policies that strengthen all of Newport's neighborhoods.

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Vacancy

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Martha Marie Grogan (847-4443)

Publicity/Communications/Web
Vacancy

Underground Wires
Al Lowe (847-5853)

Board meetings are generally scheduled for the first Monday of the month and are open to Association members. If you have a concern you would like the board to address, please call Suzanne for time, date and location of the meeting.

The President's Letter

Dear Members, Near and Far,

My friends and neighbors here on the Point are a continuing inspiration to me, as they go about their daily lives, helping one another and improving this community we all call home. Recently, for example, about 65 Point residents gathered at Eastern Resorts to discuss Harbor Point, proposed by Ade Bethune's Star of the Sea Corporation for 21 Battery Street, between Second and Washington. Perhaps you received a blue or yellow flier, announcing this event, at your door. Organized by Second Street resident John Spohn (my personal choice for Mayor of the Point or, at the very least, Citizen of the Month), an informative panel was assembled. Representatives from Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation, Church Community Housing, and Star of the Sea answered many questions and clarified much misunderstanding about this plan. We all learned a great deal about the project's goals, changes, potential success, and neighborhood impact.

We learned about the evolution of this venture, which was originally conceived as cooperative housing, with individually owned units. Subsequently altered to provide primarily market-rate rental units of assisted living, the project now features mostly subsidized units of independent living. Each change, we discovered, was dictated by the shifting realities of available funding and the conditions upon which this sometimes elusive, but essential, support is based. We also learned that the three additional units, the subject of Star of the Sea's request before the Newport Zoning Board, are necessary to the initial success and the long-term financial health of the facility. In its present form, Harbor Point promises to be a collection of 37 small, private bed-sitting rooms with kitchen and bath, surrounding a variety of common areas where social interaction will be encouraged.

Panel participants were forthcoming with lots of facts, including the current occupancy rate at similar residences (95% or better, with waiting lists); available services to the tenants (many, as needed, for a fee—just like at home); parking and traffic predictions (moderate); initial purchase and renovation costs (several million dollars); and potential alternative uses of the property, should opposition forces succeed (condos, hotel, time shares, or—least likely—a single owner with much deeper pockets than most Point residents). Perhaps most surprising to many were two facts about taxes. First, the new plan reduces the potential city taxes only slightly, less than ten percent. Second, Star of the Sea has chosen to pay city taxes, despite its tax-exempt status as a non-profit organization. Since the property has been off the tax rolls for many years, this is significant.

Finally, we learned about the goal of historic restoration for this fine old property, the funds for which are assured by the project's planners. From her home beside the harbor, Ade Bethune has looked across the avenue at this Victorian enclave for many years, concerned about its growing deterioration and dreaming of a new life for these grand old buildings, once they are restored. The life she dreams of here includes the privacy and dignity we all treasure, combined with the community we all welcome. This life will enable elderly people to continue learning and growing, while assisting one another in the tasks of daily living, without "depend[ing] on the kindness of strangers." One attendee seemed to sum up the thoughts of many in the room, when he avowed that this beautiful place, with its promise of renewed possibilities for its residents, would be a welcome addition to the Point.

Yes, it was a successful meeting. Only six weeks earlier the Point Association leadership had requested a continuance from the City, explaining that time was needed to learn and understand the many facts of this ambitious project. Thanks to John and his generous panelists, and thanks to everyone who kept asking good questions, we have accomplished this objective. As a result, the Point Association Executive Committee has decided, by majority vote, to continue our tradition of support for this project by endorsing its most recent request before the City. Once again, there was a job to be done, and once again Pointers stepped forward. You are, indeed, an inspiration.

With pride and gratitude,

Suzanne

Star of the Sea's petition was scheduled to go before the Zoning Board on Monday, February 28.

Association Announcements

There have been several changes in the Point Association leadership since last October's membership meeting.

After many years of service, Beth and Mike Cullen have resigned from the Board. For the last few years Beth has been indefatigable in handling the responsibilities of membership and also much of the publicity work for the Association. Mike has served in several positions on the Board, most recently as First Vice President. While many of us stayed home, he tirelessly attended City Council meetings, zoning hearings and public workshops to keep the Point Association informed about issues affecting us.

Due to other commitments, Special Events Chair Bob Peck has needed to resign as well. Bob was instrumental in arranging the free cruise on the *Aurora* last summer as well as the Ham and Bean Supper at Halloween. He says he'll be available to help out anytime though. The Board sends sincere thanks to Beth, Mike and Bob for all of their hard work.

There has some been movement within the Board. History and Archives Chair and Second V.P. Nancy Espersen has taken on the coordination of the ***Green Light*** until a new editor can be found. She has given up her V.P. duties in order to handle the other tasks at hand.

And Martha Marie Grogan will now coordinate Programs in addition to her responsibilities with the Neighborhood Watch.

Joining the Board are some new faces. Judy Leet is enthusiastic and ready to put her energy into the task of Membership Chair starting April 1. Our new Vice President is Richard Carrubba, a real estate professional who brings a great many ideas and skills to the job. And new Second V.P. is none other than the retired editor of this publication, Kay O'Brien, who has lived on the Point for over twenty years and will be a shining light of wisdom for the rest of us. In the newly created position of City Liaison is John Spohn, who coordinated the information meeting for the Star of the Sea issue. And, Al Lowe has taken on the big task of studying what it would take to put overhead wires underground. Our members have expressed much interest in this as our neighborhood contains one of the largest concentrations of historic homes in the country.

The Board has changed very quickly but the new leaders will invigorate the whole Association. Everyone is looking forward to a great year!

A complete listing officers and committee chairs can be found on page 2.

Point Association's Pot Luck Supper

St. John's Guild Hall ~ Use Willow St. Entrances

Sunday MARCH 5TH 6 pm

Again This Year — A True Pot Luck — Call 849-4395 if you are coming

Beverages (Coffee, Tea & Milk) will be provided

You may bring your own wine, beer, cider etc.

EVERYTHING SHOULD ARRIVE PIPING HOT WRAPPED IN NEWSPAPER & PAPER BAGS ~ Every container and server should be labeled

In order to assure some variety and some of everything we ask the following:

If Your Last Name Begins With **A-F** Please Bring: GREEN SALAD which serves 12

If Your Last Name Begins With **G-L** Please Bring: A DESSERT which serves 12

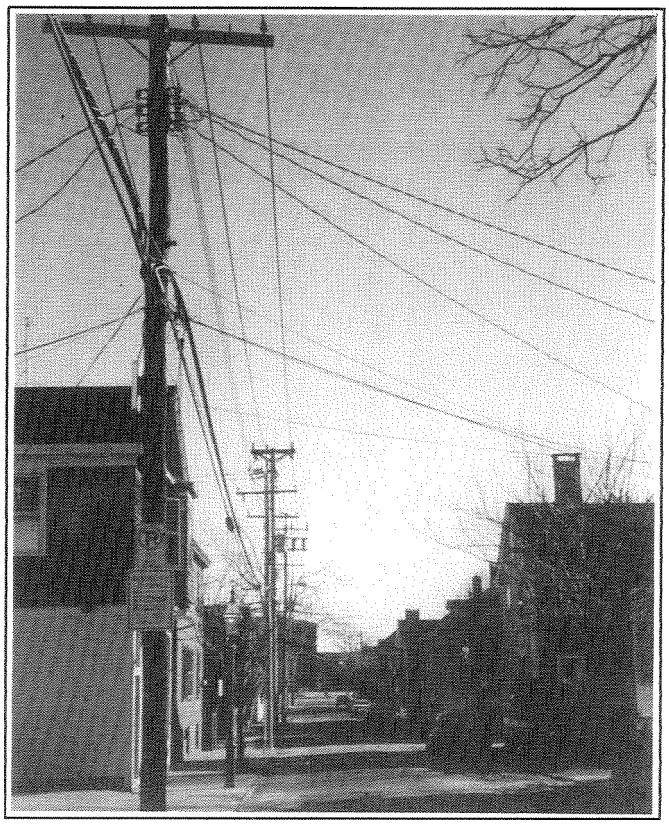
If Your Last Name Begins With **M-O** Please Bring: VEGETABLES which serve 12

If Your Last Name Begins With **P-Z** Please Bring: A MAIN COURSE which serves 10

If you're coming ~ Just call and leave a message on my machine at 849-4395 and tell us how many & what you plan to bring ~ THANKS, Donna Maytum

The Point's Unsightly Overhead Wires

Look... up in the sky. It's a bird! It's a plane! No, it's more wires than you can possibly imagine! Telephone wires. Cable wires. Power lines. Buzzing transformers.



Yikes! And this is supposed to be a pristine colonial area, where visitors to our city can appreciate our lovely 18th and 19th century architecture. Imagine the photographs people must go home with. Pictures of famous historic buildings – with wires all over them. It's an appalling thought.

An even more appalling thought is that there may be new construction at the Gateway Center requiring yet more wires.

The simple fact is that anybody who has eyes in his or her head can plainly see these wires should go underground, just as they are along Bellevue Avenue. Just as they are in a good many suburban communities.

To that end, the Point Association is forming a committee to try to get this done. We welcome help from anyone who has any information or knowledge that would be useful in this cause – technical, historical, political – whatever. What's more, we could use the support and signatures of everyone who objects to looking at all these wires.

If you're interested in lending your support or voicing your opinion, please drop me a line with your name, address, and telephone number and a brief note stating that you'd like to see the wires in this historical section underground. (Plus whatever else you want to say.) Mail it or slip it through my mail slot: Al Lowe, 67 Bridge St. Newport, RI 02840. Thanks for your help.

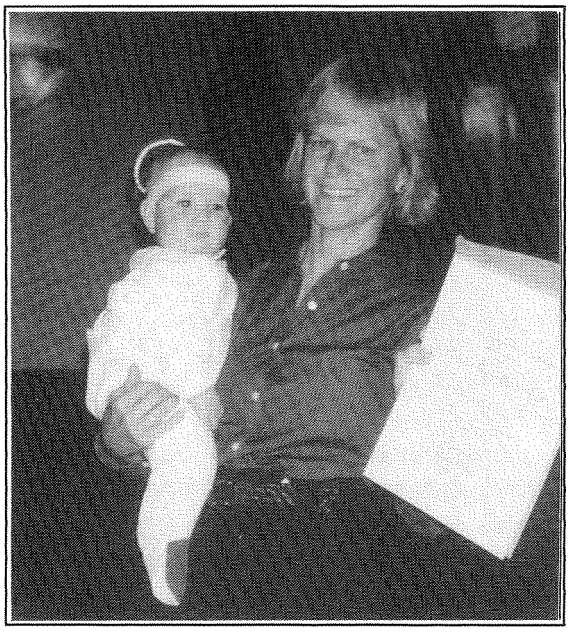
History and Archives

The dining room table at 27 Walnut Street has been piled high with newspaper clippings and papers as members of the History and Archives committee have been at the task of organizing and filing the Point Association's collection. Presently six filing boxes have been filled and our goal is to have an index available at the spring membership meeting. The papers have been grouped by subject (plant sale, picnic, Storer Park, etc.) and it is hoped that this system will allow us to retrieve information quickly. This is a project that will continue to grow and expand, but we feel that we have made good progress this winter.

We have also been coordinating the *Antiques "Rhode" Show* portion of the Spring Membership meeting on Sunday, April 9. When Association president Suzanne Varisco first presented the idea of our own version of "Antiques Roadshow" here on the Point it was met with a great deal of enthusiasm by our committee. This will be your opportunity to bring that item you always wondered about for Mike Westman and his team to appraise.

As well as working on projects, we found time to go on an outing. Eighteen committee members and guests toured the Samuel Whitehorne House Museum on Thursday, January 27. Located at 145 Thames Street, the beautiful Federal style mansion is home to Doris Duke's collection of Newport furniture. The tour gave us an appreciation of the craftsmanship and beauty of the 18th century furniture created here on the Point.

Our meeting schedule is: March 8 at 18 Chestnut Street, April 5 at 71 Washington Street, and May 10 at 19 Chestnut Street. Meetings start at 10 a.m. but working sessions can take place any time – morning, afternoon or evening. Contact Nancy Espersen at 846-2907 or nespersen@home.com and join us.

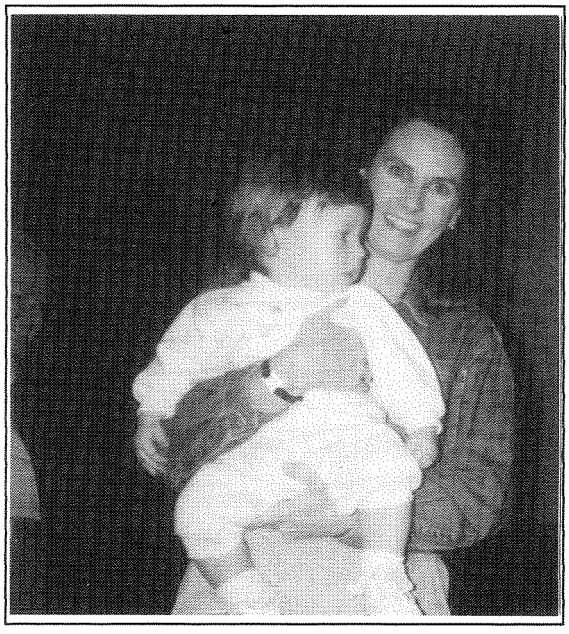


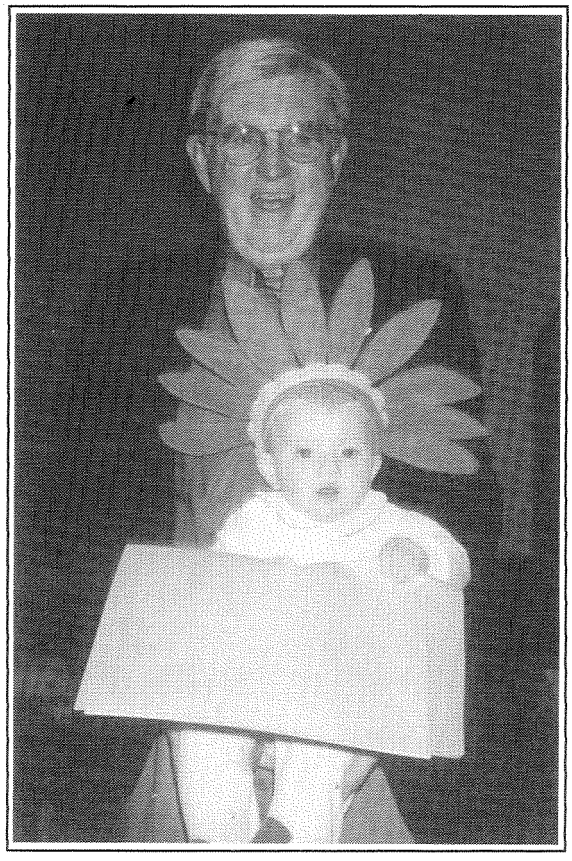
Receiving their Born on the Point certificates at last October's Membership Meeting:

Victoria Alcorn Boatwright with her mother Louisa *(left)*

Natalie Rose Mallinoff with her mother Laura *(below, left)*

Margaret Lynn Lewis Dunbar with her father Bart *(below)*





Spring Membership Meeting and Antiques "Rhode" Show

Sunday, April 9 - 2:00 p.m.

St. John's Guild Hall - 61 Poplar Street

Following the Association's business meeting,
join us for the Point version of the popular television program.
Bring that item you have always wondered about,
and have appraiser Mike Westman tell you its story and value.
There will be a $5 donation to have two items appraised.

Point Association Board Retreat

On Saturday, February 12th, the Board retreated to Salve Regina University for a day of discussion about the many current topics affecting the Point. While meetings are held monthly, recent events necessitated taking an entire day to work on Point issues. President Suzanne Varisco presented a full agenda that was worked through in Salve's beautiful Trustee conference room. Current and new members present were Suzanne Varisco, Richard Carrubba, Kay O'Brien, Betty Cares, Loretta Goldrick, Hillar Sarepera, Ellen Secrest, John Spohn, Nancy Espersen, Judy Leet, Coles Mallory, Martha Marie Grogan and Al Lowe.

For the first session, our councilor Rick O'Neill spoke about Point related issues. He discussed zoning, the defeat of the "weekly rentals" proposal, the city parking study and new changes in Bed and Breakfast regulations. Information about the proposed hotel at the Gateway Center and the expansion of Eastern Resorts on Long Wharf was given. Mr. O'Neill said that he was available to hear any concerns.

For the remainder of the day, priorities for the coming year were set. Many exciting projects resulted, including the creation of a new Publicity Chair who will also develop a web site for the Association. In addition, discussions were started on the bylaws, last updated in the late 1980s. Many good ideas and fellowship resulted from the day. It is likely to become a yearly event.

Point Association Board members at the end of their day-long retreat.
(l. to r.) Richard Carrubba, Suzanne Varisco, Nancy Espersen, Betty Cares, Al Lowe, Kay O'Brien, Coles Mallory, Loretta Goldrick, Judy Leet and Hillar Sarepera.
Not pictured: Martha Marie Grogan, John Spohn and Ellen Secrest.

Did You Know?

In the early days of the Point Association, the membership dues structure was $1 for Active, $5 for Sustaining and $10 for Patron. Advertising in the *Green Light* (which came out monthly) was 25 cents per issue.

Beautification Committee Report

Tiny green shoots are peeking through the snow in some of our gardens - a sure sign that beautiful spring days are coming! This year the Beautification Committee is scheduling our Spring Cleanup for Saturday, April 29. Here's your opportunity to get some fresh air and exercise while spending an hour or two in Storer or Battery park. Join us at 9 a.m. with your gloves, rake and leaf bags. We'll pick up litter, gather up twigs, rake leaves...and who knows...maybe we'll find some interesting "treasures" that have washed up on the beach. Come meet your neighbors, have some coffee and donuts, and help us get our beautiful parks ready for spring!

Glenn and Ellen Secrest

New Members . . .

Bryan C. Babcock

Christopher & Jill Babcock

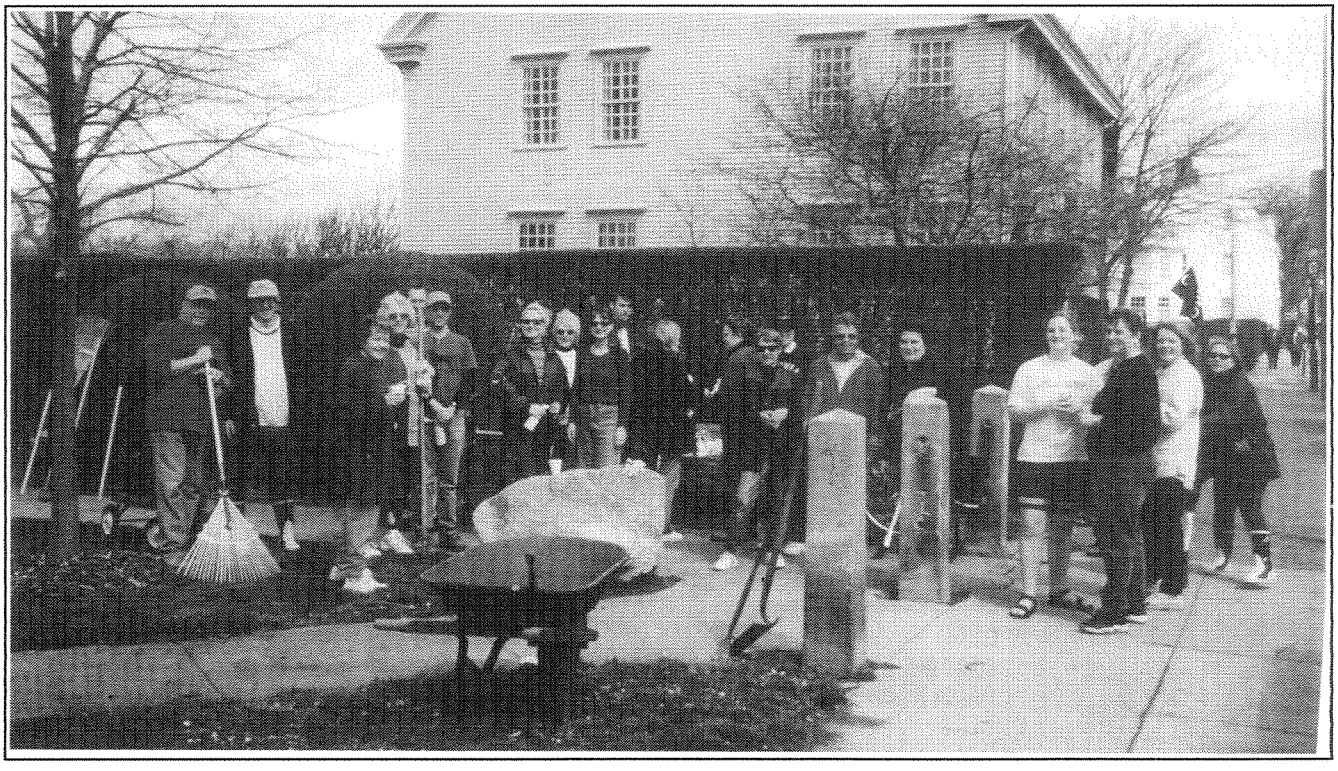
Christa & Erik Dahl

Ethel Hanos

Michele Ritter

William G. Sherman

. . . Welcome!



Join the group at the Annual Spring Cleanup

Saturday, April 29 – 9 a.m. at Storer Park

Point Association's Annual

Plant Sale

Saturday, May 20

9 a.m. to noon

101 Washington Street
(corner of Washington and Pine)

For more than forty years avid gardeners have enjoyed the Annual Plant Sale. Originally a plant exchange, the sale is now a major source of funding for the Point Association's beautification projects. It is the unique history and special character of plants from our neighborhood gardens that draw patrons from throughout Newport.

The success of this fundraiser is due to plants provided by our members. It is easy to contribute:

- We will pick up your plant donations. Please call 846-6920 and leave a message.
- Volunteers will come to your garden to dig, divide and pot your plants for the sale.
- Donations of garden tools, garden decorations and garden books are also appreciated.

Thank you for making this year's Plant Sale a success!

Susan Powers (846-6920) Anne Reynolds (847-2009) Martha Marie Grogan (847-4443)

Helpers Needed!

Are you interested in working on the Plant Sale? The tasks are varied – digging and potting plants, distributing fliers, contacting local nurseries and florists for donations, setting up the sale the day before and helping the day of the sale with advice, refreshments or cleanup.

See something you would like to do? Please come to the planning meeting on:
Wednesday, March 8 - 5:00 p.m. at 88 Washington Street

If you have questions, or would like to help but can't come to the meeting, call Nancy at 846-2907.

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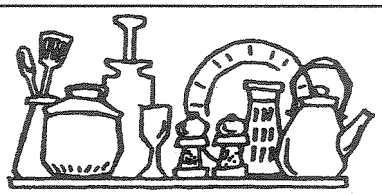

kitchen pot-pourri

Sandra Crane • Proprietor

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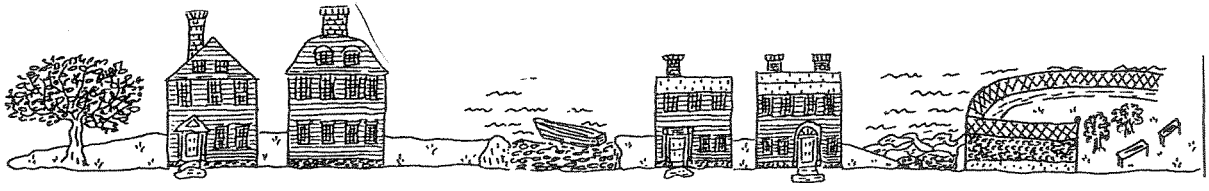
Historic Preservation



Preservation has been an important part of the Point Association since its founding in 1955. The following is an account by one of our members describing the processes and challenges involved in the study of Historic Preservation.

"What exactly is it?"

This would be a "look," more than a verbalized question, that I would receive when I responded to a question about my course of study. It is actually a title covering a broad field of subject material relating to the preservation of America's physical and cultural heritage. The love of history attracts students to this area of study, and living in this historic area heightens the desire to preserve that history.

The undergraduate program at Roger Williams University offers two concentrated areas of study: Preservation Planning and Architectural Conservation. A preservation planner is qualified to conduct architectural surveys, research and planning for urban areas, landscapes, rural environments and small towns. This may include neighborhood initiatives for revitalization purposes, i.e., the Washington Square Advisory Commission and the Broadway Task Force, or conserving open space, as does the Aquidneck Island Land Trust's creation of the Sakonnet Greenway. The Architectural Conservation component focuses on technical training and analysis of conditions of historic structures in order to conserve them. The conservator needs a detailed knowledge of the composition, character, and uses of traditional building materials and appropriate ways in which they can be analyzed, tested, and treated. Students in this program have recently enjoyed on-the-job training in many local projects, from the Quaker Meeting House in Newport to the Rhode Island State House in Bristol, and many others in between. A Bachelor of Science degree is awarded to graduates who have completed studies and hands-on experience in both concentrations of the program.

The Point is home to one of the greatest "placemakers" of Newport, the Green Light. Not the periodical by the same name, but the small lighthouse in Newport harbor that is more a beacon for travelers across the Newport Bridge than the boats entering the harbor, but nevertheless a landmark of note. When writing a paper about this well-known "placemaker," I was privileged to speak with Fisher Benson about the significance of the Green Light and learn about a lifestyle that existed on the Point in the early 1900s.

A course in documenting buildings – measuring and drawing – took me to the Samuel Hopkins house (ca.1750) at 46 Division Street. The owners, Vance and Ted Gatchel, allowed me access, and Kay O'Brien assisted me in this seemingly overwhelming task. The experience was instructive and informative of the building techniques of the 18th century – knowledge that could not have been gleaned from the printed page.

Beyond architectural drawing, students are introduced to building materials, paint analysis, and

LAURA JENIFER MALLINOFF
Attorney At Law

Estate Planning, Family Law & Personal Injury

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appropriate methods to restore them. This technical study culminates in a Group Project undertaken in the third or fourth year of study. Our class of nine students undertook the replacement of the doors of the dairy barn of Ferrycliffe Farm, the gentleman's farm that comprised the land of today's RWU Campus. The dairy barn is the last farm structure, which exists much as it did in 1850. Our class was charged with documenting the doors, their hardware, and rebuilding them in similar fashion. Although we were allowed to use some power tools (rotary saw and drill), we fashioned the mortise and tenon joints with hand chisels. Our class had little-to-no carpentry skills, which challenged the project's completion by end of semester. The doors were completed, but not hung. Perhaps that will be a seminar for an Alumni Weekend in the future.

Preservation Planning curriculum includes courses in the study of the philosophy of historic preservation, and the law and finance component of preservation. Adaptive reuse of historic structures ensures their survival. In our Preservation Law and Finance class, a team of four students prepared and presented a proposal for the Potter School on Elm Street in Newport as condominiums. This building, owned by the City of Newport, is occupied by a state agency, and this lack of proprietary ownership has caused its maintenance and upkeep to be neglected. Interviews with neighbors revealed that our plan for condos was acceptable and compatible with the neighborhood. A copy of our proposal was given to City Manager Michael Mallinoff to review. Our course in Rural/Small Town Preservation involved study of the "Main Street Program." This program was devised by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as a means for small towns to revitalize and develop their downtowns to lure their audience back from the "big-box retailers" located on their outskirts. They have a four-point plan for restructuring their revitalization: 1. Organization 2. Design 3. Promotion and 4. Economic Restructuring.

An internship is a required segment of the curriculum and I was fortunate to fulfill this at the Providence Preservation Society during the summer of 1998. Working with their "Ten Most Endangered Properties" list, I experienced firsthand the difficulties and complication involved in finding buyers for abandoned buildings containing hazardous waste; working with state agencies with strict guidelines and endless paperwork; and city planners whose baseline is economic feasibility, not preservation of historic structures. I learned the challenges facing historic district commission in reviewing cases for design changes and accommodating the private property owner as well as the restrictions they protect. I learned about "in the trenches" preservation work that entails attending evening meetings and maintaining vigilance to ensure a successful conclusion.

The annual Rhode Island Statewide Historic Preservation Conference is a vital forum to professionals and citizens alike. Sponsored by the Rhode Island Historic Preservation and Heritage Commission, the 2000 conference will be held on April 8 in Woonsocket. It is a great opportunity to further survey preservation activities around the state and help answer that question - What exactly is historic preservation?

Mary Beth Smith

Ed. Note. Mary Beth is a graduate of the Roger Williams University program of Historic Preservation. Currently, she is Executive Assistant to the Director of Fort Adams, Anthony M. Palermo.

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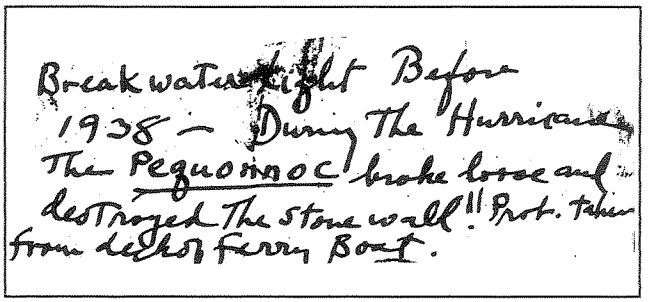
From the Cover -
The Breakwater Light: We Know It As The Green Light

The History and Archives Committee, while going through the Association's papers, found the picture on this issue's cover. The caption calls it the Breakwater Light, but we know it today as the Green Light, the "placemaker" that Mary Beth Smith talks about in her article on Historic Preservation.

It is thought that William King Covell took the picture, though no name was on it. This is the caption found on the photograph:

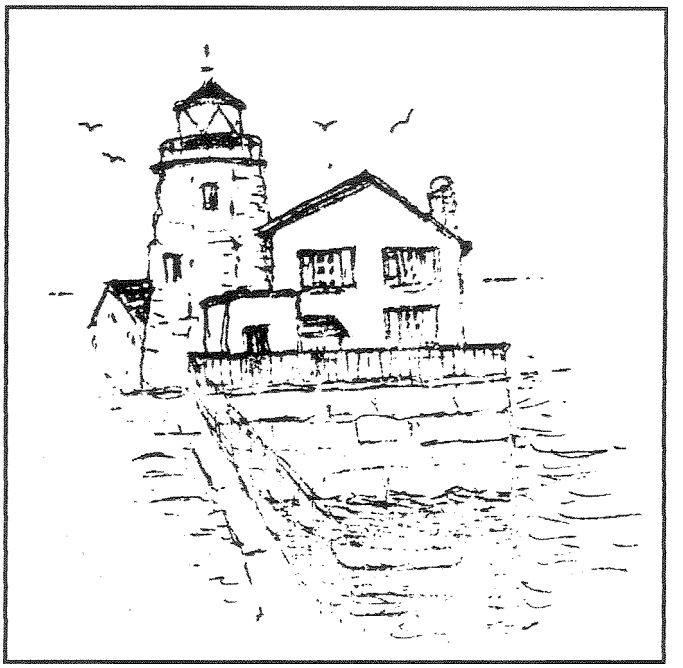

Breakwater Light Before
1938 – During The Hurricane
The Pequonnoc broke loose and
destroyed The stone wall!! Prot. taken
from deck of Ferry Boat.

In June 1990, Dorothy Sanschagrin wrote the following history of the Green Light. One note – the Sheraton Islander she refers to in her article is now known as the Doubletree Hotel.

"The Green Light lighthouse has been known as the Newport Light, and the Goat Island Light. An early mariner's report states that the light was

> 'Built in 1823 with a white stone tower.
> Rebuilt in 1922, the edifice is at the
> north end of the breakwater.
> Latitude 41 degrees 29'25"
> North Longitude 71 degrees 19'37" West
> Height 33 ft. Vis. 11 miles Bell
> The 2500 candlepower beacon has a fixed
> green light. Fog horn every 10 seconds.'

The original tower was built in 1823 where the Sheraton Islander is today. An article from *Newport History* states that on New Year's Day of 1824, keeper Samuel Watson set aglow the first light, a whale oil lantern. Seafarers soon saw the need for a new light on a sandy reef at the northern tip of Goat Island. In 1838 a new lighthouse appeared at the end of the northern breakwater. The original 1823 structure was dismantled and moved to Prudence Island in 1851.



In 1865, the tower was replaced with the white octagonal lighthouse now in use. This tower had a more powerful beam visible for 11 miles, with a fixed white light that flashed intermittently. The tower had a keeper's dwelling attached. In the 1920s this was damaged so severely by a Navy submarine that it had to be razed. After this incident, the light became electrically controlled, eliminating the need for a resident tender. Captain Charles Schoeneman was the last keeper, and at one time the lighthouse was referred to as 'Schoeneman's Light.'

When the Sheraton Islander was developed, the breakwater was filled in, and a park now gives easy access to the Green Light.

For those who ponder over the recent increase in the intensity of the light – the Coast Guard, which maintains lighthouses, gives us this reason – Earlier this year, the light was cleaned and the windows covered with green plastic, intensifying the beam.

As the sun sets in a colorful sky the green glow appears, a friendly beam welcoming seafarers and warning that a sandy reef is there, as it has been for over 150 years."

Kay O'Brien, The Point's Goodwill Ambassador

She is the neighbor we all wish we could have – preferably next door, so that when we hit a bump in the road, we could seek out wisdom and counsel in her kitchen.

Katharine Sutherland O'Brien, Kay to her friends and neighbors, graduated from Pomona College during World War II. The Whittier, California native traveled east to work in Boston, where she met Donal O'Brien, then an officer in the U.S. Army Veterinary Corps. She remembers her first trip with him to a somber, wartime Newport on a bone-chilling winter's day and, after choosing her engagement ring at a jewelry shop on Thames Street, making the long snowy trek to Prairie Avenue to meet his family. "Newport wasn't very impressive," she remembers. "It was quite grim."

At the end of the war, Kay and Donal moved to Middletown and five acres of woodland on Wapping Road, where his veterinary practice would be located in a barn. Kay was occasionally called on to lend a hand in caring for the animals. "But," she says, "I wasn't comfortable with it." In 1980, when they moved from Middletown to the corner of Battery and Second streets, they brought with them the sleek operating table that now stands in her kitchen and serves as a buffet.

After raising their daughter Margaret, Kay taught second grade. Her love of trees led her to give each of her students a sapling to take home and tend. Even now, she still runs into former students who tell her all about their success with the young trees and invite her to come see them.

Members of the staff take a break while working on the Green Light *in the early 1990s.*
(l. to r.) Kit Hammett, Anita McAndrews, Florence Archambault, Anne Reynolds and Kay O'Brien.

Always one of the first to volunteer for the annual spring cleanup at Battery Park, she and her pruning shears are formidable. Errant branches of Rosa Rugosa or overgrown seedlings are lopped off with great intensity and enthusiasm.

Nothing much gets past her discerning eye. She knows who is back in town for the summer and who has moved away, noting particularly newcomers to the neighborhood. One couple recalls their delight at seeing Kay at their door with a warm, welcoming loaf of bread just two days after their arrival. To many of us she is a familiar figure. These days she can be glimpsed, the tassel of her woolen hat bobbing up and down, as she takes a brisk winter walk along our windy streets.

Although she claims she was just a gofer, Kay brought this same zest and enthusiasm to the *Green Light* staff in 1981. "Kay did more for the *Green Light* than anyone will ever know," a colleague said recently. Working alongside Virginia Covell, Fisher Benson and other "extraordinary women with long ties to the Point and its history," she coordinated everything. Since the early days of publication she has sold ads, arranged clip art, proofread, taken copy to the printer, put on mailing labels and carted the finished product to the post office, to name just a few of her contributions. After 18 years of working on the *Green Light* Kay felt it was time to turn to other things. The Winter 1999-2000 issue was her last official contribution, but she continues to assist behind-the-scenes.

At the Point Association annual meeting in October, this very modest woman was given a sustained standing ovation, a well-deserved tribute from grateful members, friends and neighbors whose lives have been made richer and more informed by her presence among us.

To further honor her, a garden will soon be planted at the northwest corner of Washington Street and the Goat Island Connector Road. There, on a late spring or summer morning, it's a safe bet that you'll find Kay, busy watering, pulling weeds, tending "her" garden, and making it a beautiful tapestry for all of us to smile upon.

– Loretta Goldrick

Isabel Eccles: Artist in a Garden Hat

Fifteen years ago Isabel and Henry Eccles left Newport for their new home in Needham, Mass.

For over 30 years their home had been 101 Washington Street, and there were very few aspects of life on the Point in which they were not involved. Their crowning achievement was the purchase of Storer Park, toward which end Henry rallied the neighborhood, commercial interests, foundations and philanthropists. Isy did her share, organizing house tours and special exhibits, and by designing and overseeing the construction of beautiful quilts, raffled off to benefit the Point Association. The couple was in constant demand for counsel, historic notes, perspective on a troubling development or just plain good company.

Isabel was widowed shortly after their move north, but she still carries on in her cheery way, pictured here with her sketchpad and pencil and her enchanting smile. She will be 99 in September.

People and Places

A smiling **Carol Cummins** was pictured presiding over her final Zoning Review Board meeting in January. She has retired after sixteen years of dedicated service on the board. (*Daily News*, 1/4/2000)

A five-foot cast stone sculpture by artist **Roberto Bessin** will be a part of the marine facility at Perrotti Park. It will feature silicone bronze seals diving up toward an eight-foot pastel green plate in the center of the park. (*Newport This Week*, January 20-26, 2000)

Point resident **Alberto Coll** returned to his native Cuba this past fall and was invited to meet with Fidel Castro. Alberto immigrated to the United States at the age of thirteen, became a U.S. citizen in 1976, and is now a dean at the Naval War College. (*Daily News*, 12/14/99)

The **Doubletree Islander** on Goat Island is for sale. The Hyatt Hotels Corporation has expressed an interest in the hotel, which has been operated by Doubletree for almost ten years and before that by Sheraton. (*Daily News*, 1/13/2000)

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May Day!
Don't Forget Your Parking Sticker

A reminder that sticker parking is enforced on most Point streets between May 1 and October 1, from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. For those of you who plan ahead, parking stickers will be available at City Hall starting in March. A valid car registration, your driver's license and proof of residency must accompany an application. Your $2 sticker will be issued to you at City Hall or may be obtained by mail. Call the Collections Office at City Hall for further details.

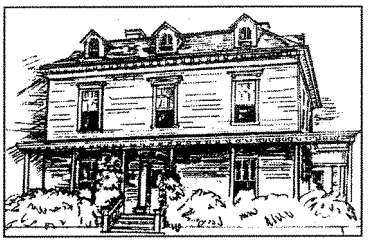
Bookmobile Service

Have you been avoiding the Newport Public Library because you haven't wanted to deal with the messy construction going on there? We have a solution for you! Every week the library comes to the Point, in the form of the bookmobile. Just call the library and request that they include a book you want on the bookmobile for the Willow Street stop. At 4:00 on Wednesday afternoon, it will be waiting for you at St. John's parking lot on Willow Street. Librarians Mary and Kelly will be happy to assist you with any of your library needs.

Walnut Market Closes

A Tag Sale on a Saturday in February announced to the neighborhood that the Walnut Market and Savoir Fare Catering would not be reopening this spring. We will miss Marybeth Hunte's smiling face and wish her all the best as she brings her expertise and experience to Plantation Catering.

THE NINA LYNETTE HOME



For information about rates and availability please call: 848-7603 or 846-9276

The Nina Lynette Home, founded in 1905, is a private non-profit boarding home for elders. Room, Board and Housekeeping are provided in this stately Victorian home in Newport's historic "Point" neighborhood.

While Walking on the Point

Half of winter was mild and half was wild – fresh snow lovely, salt and sand messy, winds penetrating and some pipes frozen.

Now as days grow longer a stronger sun stirs sap in trees and also raises our hopes for spring's arrival SOON. Gardeners wonder what has survived but the promising bright yellow of witch hazel can be seen in a few yards and everyone knows that dandelions always reappear.

At the corner of Third and Elm a house has disappeared and a new residence has taken its place. For months a long white yacht hull lay along the shipyard pier. Now it has sprouted three tall masts and looks eager to be off. The shipyard dry dock cradles a large ferry sprucing up for summer passengers. At the State Pier lobster pots are neatly stacked in piles so lobsters must be safe a little longer. Work progresses at the chilly corner of Long Wharf and America's Cup where the State hopes to have a marine terminal ready for this year's tourists. The windswept waters of the bay don't look too inviting now but will come alive for summer 2000. Before long we'll all be chatting as we clean our sidewalks and feel good about getting outdoors again in our great Point neighborhood.

-- Kay O'Brien

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Roses Are Easy ~ With A Little Know-how

The subject is roses. An impassioned plea to replace dull hybrid teas with grandifloras, floribundas and small shrub roses is my intent. Disease, drought, viruses and bugs are all constant problems for the hybrid tea rose gardener. Enter floribundas and grandifloras. Unlike the tea roses' June bloom, they flower over a longer period of time – sometimes all summer! They are sturdy plants, requiring no spraying and much less dependent on constant care.

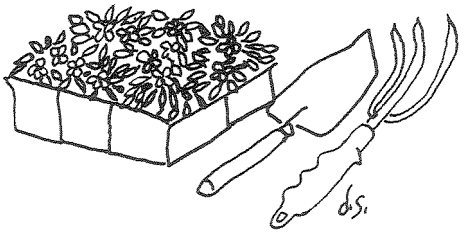
John Hall, a Newport rosarian, has some of the best advice on early care and feeding of roses. When the forsythia blooms, using a broomstick as a dibble, make a hole on either side of a rose bush stem, about 6-7 inches deep. Pour into one hole 1/2 cup lime and into the other 1/2 cup super phosphate. Work 1/4 cup Epsom salts into the dirt around each trunk. Let the rains do their thing. Starting in May, at 6-week intervals, add 1/2 cup systemic granular rose food. John's roses are magnificent. Think how my grandifloras and floribundas would perform with this early care!

Roses should be pruned now. Prune back by 2/3's or to 10-12 inches, to 3-5 healthy stalks, leaving the center of the bush open, with no crossing canes. Cut at a 45-degree angle above an outfacing bud. This is important!

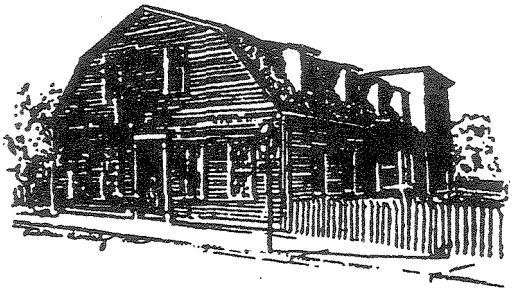
Some roses for you to consider: Candelabra (coral), Iceberg (white), Morden Blush (pink), Royal Wedding (peach), Pat Austin (copper), Tradescant (dark red), Outrageous (light yellow-orange), Sorbet Bouquet (pink with yellow reverse), and French Lace (apricot-ivory). These range in height from 2 1/2 to 4 feet.

You will find wonderful selections in our local nurseries. Happy "dirty digits"

– Toni Peters



Rhumbline Restaurant



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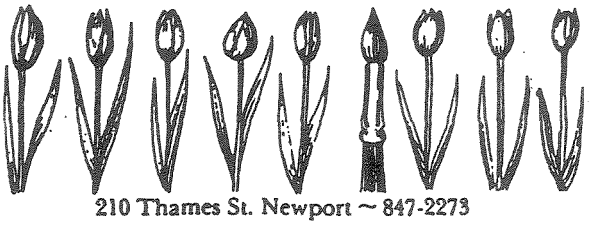

210 Thames St. Newport ~ 847-2273

First Ward Councilor - Rick O'Neill

It is my distinct honor and privilege to serve on the Newport City Council representing all residents of the First Ward. Thank you for your overwhelming support as I start my first term.

When the new Council met at its first planning meeting, it was apparent that the major goal during our term is fiscal stability for the city. I believe that we are committed to attaining that goal. At my first council meeting, January 12, 2000, I took steps toward implementing that goal by sponsoring a resolution calling for a Property Tax Study Committee to explore creative ways we can raise revenues and reduce expenditures in the city budget. The resolution passed unanimously.

As your voice on the City Council, I am committed to an open and accessible city government. Your City Council meetings are now being taped and will air on Cox Cable local access channels. Additionally, I will host neighborhood outreach meetings to brief you on projects impacting the First Ward. My plans are to begin in the Point during February 2000.

Newport is a great city. Working together we can certainly maintain the unique charm and character of our neighborhoods. I welcome your telephone calls at 847-5202, or e-mail me at rickfirstward@aol.com. Or stop me in the street for a chat.

The Third & Elm Press
Ilse Buchert Nesbitt
29 Elm Street, Newport
846-0228

Secret Garden Tour

The Benefactors of the Arts is pleased to announce Friday, June 23 – Sunday, June 25 as the dates for the 2000 Secret Garden Tour. Proceeds from this walking tour of fifteen private gardens on the Point support arts education in Aquidneck Island's public school systems.

Tickets will be $20 and include the walking tour, a copy of the book ***Secret Gardens of the Historic Section of Newport***, reduced price admission to the Hunter House, and a plant sale. For tickets or information, please call our business office at 847-0514, or visit our Internet site at www.secretgardentour.com.

Hosts and hostesses are needed for the Secret Garden Tour

Volunteers greet visitors, check tickets and point out things of interest in the gardens. A four-hour commitment is requested for the Friday and Sunday shifts and a three-hour commitment for the Saturday shifts. Volunteers receive a complimentary ticket for their services. For more information or to sign up, please contact Jeanette Bessinger, 848-9405. Thank you in advance for your generous support.

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Winter Lecture Series

The Newport Historical Society's Annual Lecture Series kicks off on March 23 and will run through the middle of April. This year's series is titled ***Weathering Changes: the History of Climate and Storms in Newport and New England***.

From the "mini ice-age" encountered by Newport's early settlers to the Great Gale of 1815, which destroyed Newport's shipping empire, to the Hurricane of '38 which forever changed the landscape of New England, weather has remained a daily focal point in the lives of Newporters and New Englanders. Newporters prosper in the benevolence of weather and suffer for its rage. Weathering Changes will examine the impact of weather on Newport's and New England's history through lectures, panel discussions, slide shows and readings.

For more information contact Ingrid Hattendorf, Director of Education, at the Newport Historical Society, 846-0813.

Fort Adams Update

From 1824 to 1950, Fort Adams housed generations of our soldiers. Today it stands ready for your enjoyment. Visit this architectural and engineering masterpiece to see where the soldiers lived, and climb the bastions for breathtaking views of Newport Harbor.

Opening Day is set for May 13 with a WW II Military Vehicle Display and other active military units showing their expertise. June 3-4, Fort Adams will host a Revolutionary War Encampment and Reenactment culminating with the reenactment of the Battle of Bunker Hill on Sunday, June 4. The Newport Irish Music Festival & Pipe Competition will be held June 17-18 and a Civil War Encampment and Reenactment will take place July 15-16. Make Fort Adams a "must-see" for your visitors to Newport!

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Membership Update

The Point Association is comprised of 527 member households as of February 7, 2000. The membership breakdown is as follows:

40%	Individual
30%	Family
12%	Sustaining
11%	Patron
1%	Other (over $50)
2%	Advertisers
4%	Complimentary

Though 74% of our membership base hails from Newport County, our geographic reach is very broad. *The Green Light* is mailed to 28 states, two U.S. Territories, as well as England and Hong Kong.

Despite natural attrition and the active real estate market, the Association maintains a steady membership count.

The Point, a neighborhood with four centuries of history, continues to be an extraordinary place to call home.

If your mailing label does not read "2000" you have NOT renewed.

Please renew today by completing the membership form.

We want to continue sending you *The Green Light*!

✂

The Point Association Membership Form

***Please make check payable to* The Point Association.**
A subscription to The Green Light ***is included with all memberships.***

☐ **Individual: $10.00** ☐ **Family: $15.00** ☐ **Sustaining: $25.00** ☐ **Patron: $40.00** ☐ **Other: $_____**

Name: _____

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Committees & Activities

Please check the categories of interest to you.

☐ **Adventure Club** ☐ **Beautification** ☐ ***Green Light*** ☐ **History & Archives**

☐ **Membership** ☐ **Neighborhood Watch** ☐ **Plant Sale** ☐ **Programs/Special Events**

☐ **Publicity/Communications/Web** ☐ **Underground Wires** ☐ **Waterfront**

Spring Calendar

March 5	Pot Luck Supper 6 p.m. – St. John's Guild Hall 61 Poplar Street
March 8	History & Archives 10 a.m. – Sarah Gilson 18 Chestnut Street
	Planning Meeting for Plant Sale 5 p.m. – Anne Reynolds 88 Washington Street
April 5	History & Archives 10 a.m. – Nancy Quattrucci 71 Washington Street
April 9	Spring Membership Meeting and Antiques "Rhode" Show 2 p.m. – St. John's Guild Hall 61 Poplar Street
April 29	Cleanup 9 a.m. – Storer Park Corner of Washington & Bridge
May 1	Sticker Parking Begins!
May 10	History and Archives 10 a.m. – Eleanor Weaver 19 Chestnut Street
May 20	Point Association Plant Sale 9 a.m. to noon 101 Washington Street (Corner of Washington and Pine)
June 23 - 25	Benefactors of the Arts Secret Garden Tour

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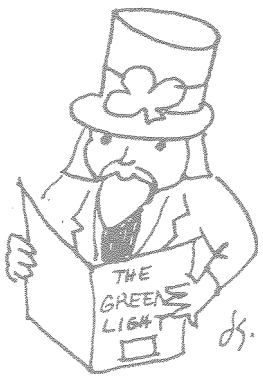
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