Summer 2001

Down Willow Street by Tom Deininger
GREETING LIGHT

XLVI No. 2 Summer 2001

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Walking on the Point .......................................... Kay O'Brien

Greetings,

Your Green Light editorial and writing staffs have been very pleased to receive so many kind words from our readers about our first group effort on the Spring issue. It was exciting to tackle and lots of fun to do. Now, with our second issue, our team is settling into place, ready to march into summer's activities. While all of our columns, news articles, reports, and photos represent significant achievements and lots of hard work, I would like to call your attention to five items of special interest in this issue. A new feature is Ed McKeown's Report from Goat Island. Erik Dahl continues to take the research prize with his success in finding materials and interviewing former students of the Potter School, and Tony Gill's enjoyment shines through in his article about fellow artist Tom Deininger's work. Yeoman of the Year Award goes to our City Liaison John Spohn, who can always be counted on to be there and do a good job of it. On a quieter note, everyone who knew and loved Mary Rommel will be charmed by Kay O'Brien's memories of her. Finally, be sure to read the letter from Julia Conley, as she reminisces about her childhood on the Point. Wouldn't you like to write us a letter? Please do.

Suzanne

The Green Light
THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Neighbors:

It has been said that the only certainty in life is change. For us, the residents of the Point, change is of particular importance because there are many issues facing us that have the potential to change the very essence of our neighborhood.

In my previous letter I alluded to several projects (in various stages of planning or implementation) that have the potential to change the complexion of the Point. These projects are the result of the never-ending process of change initiated by individuals, businesses, organizations, and governments to implement their own agendas.

Ask yourself, how should we address the inevitability of change? It seems to me there are three choices—we can evaluate and take action to influence the change (including prevention), we can accept the change without modification after careful consideration, or we can accept the change without consideration of its consequences.

When the stakes are high, I believe the only sound approach involves careful evaluation and, if necessary, action to either modify or prevent the change. If you agree, where does that leave you and the Point Association? Well, the Point Association can't speak for you—unless you make your position known. And the Point Association can't take effective action, when necessary, without your involvement.

So, please take a little time from your busy schedule and make it your business to find out about the issues that can change the Point. Give a call to any of the Point Association volunteers who are serving your interests. And if asked, please consider giving a little of your time in support of one or more of the many activities conducted by the Point Association to conserve the Point as a very special place to live. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mary Rommel Remembered

Catching the sun against a south wall, the first flowers of spring always bloomed in front of 77 Bridge Street, home of Herb and Mary Rommel for many years. Mary died this spring, before all her flowers were out, but she will be remembered for her many Point activities. In charge of our Point beautification program for many years, Mary was responsible for our tree planting program, our parks, and our gardening contests. She was always a gracious hostess for Herb's iris parties. Everywhere there are many reminders of Mary Rommel's long hours, hard work, and many talents. Appropriately, this year's Secret Garden Tour will be dedicated to her.
Report from City Hall

On April 26, 2001, Point Association President Rich Carrubba, First Vice-President Al Lowe, Cozy Cab owner Paul Miller, and I attended a meeting in Providence at the Department of Transportation (DOT) for a presentation by Chief Engineer Ed Parker and Assistant Director Joseph Brady on the status of projects with potential impact on the Point. The session gave us a better handle on the stages involved in these projects, which are part of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). At the most basic level, TIP is a list of transportation projects that the State of Rhode Island intends to implement, using federal highway and transit funds.

The first phase in the TIP is the Study and Development Program, which brings projects to 30% design status. These highly-ranked projects are assessed, scoped, and developed with community input, in preparation for the design/construction phase. Examples include Connell Highway, Admiral Kalbfus Rotary, Pell Bridge ramps, Newport Transportation initiatives, and Aquidneck Island Passenger Rail/Bike Study. These projects would include roadway reconstruction, drainage improvements, utility relocation (ideally underground), signage improvements, possible elimination of a bridge ramp, traffic flow improvements to the Pell Bridge approach road, and passenger rail service. There have been no dates for implementation, and the funding sources are yet to be determined.

Other projects with timetables identified are Pavement Striping, with improved epoxy markings, on Adm K, America’s Cup from Farewell to Memorial, Farewell at Van Zandt to America’s Cup, and the Goat Island Connector to Washington Street, starting in June 2001. Also scheduled are arterial improvements on America’s Cup and Farewell: upgrading signal lights at 8 locations, adding a right-hand turn lane at Farewell/America’s Cup Ave. intersection, and upgrading sidewalks and landscaping. These projects will begin in Fall 2001, with a completion date of Fall 2002.

As always, if you wish to speak to me on these or any issues of concern for the city in general and the Point specifically, call me at 847-5202 or 847-9122, or e-mail rickfirstward@aol.com.

Rick O’Neill,
Representative, First Ward

Report from Goat Island

Goat Island is divided into three lots. Lot 2, the Hotel Lot, encompasses the Hyatt Hotel and most of its parking area. Goat Island Marina and several commercial buildings are located in Lot 3, the Marina Lot. Lot 1, the Condominium Lot, is by far the largest. Goat Island South Condominium is a group of 154 residential units in three groups: America, 46 units; Capella South, 89 units; and 19 individual Harbor Houses. Each of the 154 unit owners is a member of the Goat Island South Condominium and all unit owners share the common facilities.

The Newport Regatta Club is also located on the Condominium Lot. Prior to its groundbreaking in 1998, residents of Goat Island South and the Point voiced objections to this proposed development during several hearings before the City Council. These objections failed to sway the Council, however, and Tom Roos and IDC were granted licenses and permits to proceed with construction.

In 1999, the three associations of Goat Island South Condominium filed a lawsuit against Mr. Roos and IDC, contesting his right to construct additional commercial buildings on the Condominium Lot without the approval of the 154 unit owners. On March 30, 2001, Superior Court Judge Melanie Thunberg handed down a decision, which stated that Roos’s development rights on Goat Island expired at the end of 1994. She also ruled that his attempts to extend these rights were flawed because he did not obtain the unanimous consent of the unit owners.

Tom Roos has stated that he will appeal Judge Thunberg’s decision, so this dispute will not be finally decided for some time. Unit owners are sanguine about their case. With the strong decision by Judge Thunberg, they feel it is just a matter of time until this is resolved in their favor.

Ed McKeown, Vice-President,
America Condominium Association
Report on the City

Nearl
y a month after the fact, I'm still a bit
dowed over by the city's presence at our
Spring Membership meeting. How extraordinary it
was to have nearly the entire city government show
up at a meeting of a neighborhood association, not
the other way round!

The chiefs of Fire and Police, the City Manager,
and heads of 15 departments and sub-departments
made presentations on their areas of responsibility
and current projects affecting the Point. While they
spoke about five minutes apiece, the number of
presentations threatened information overload. It
was a shame not to have a longer Q&A period,
but—left unchecked—it could have gone on till
midnight. Although not distinguished by revelations
about the Gateway Center, Potter School, bridge
camp redesign, or other projects of interest, the
evening was impressive in demonstrating the sweep
of activity undertaken every day on our behalf by
these very folk in front of us and the unseen dozen
or more behind each of them.

Report: History & Archives

We're meeting monthly, and we welcome all
new members who are interested in our ac-
tivities. Call Kay, 847-7311, for more information.

Kay O'Brien

These "hard hat" members of the History and Archives Com-
mittee are checking out the progress at Harbor House. Left
to right: Bill Hall, Nancy Quattrucci, Rowan Howard, Gail
Gunning, Mary Lynn Rooke, and Kay O'Brien.

It is easy to think that government is at best lethar-
gic and at worst inept. While sometimes unavoid-
ably accurate, that impression is usually the result
of focusing on a single issue. As an example, we
question how is it that so many people work for
the city, yet the curbs in No Parking zones go unpainted so long that they become literally un-
painted. These presentations projected the 'big
picture' that keeps everyone busy and forces diffi-
cult decisions between competing interests every
day. Now if we can just get them to understand the
gravity of the situation with the Van Zandt bridge...
Hats off to City Manager and Point neighbor Mike
Mallinoff for taking the initiative and to Councilor
Rick O’Neill for his support of this fine outreach.

On another note, Rich Carrubba and Al Lowe re-
presented the PA at an April meeting at the Depart-
ment of Transportation headquarters (See Rick
O’Neill’s report for details). Thanks to Rich and Al
for attending this weekday meeting on our behalf.

John Spohn
City Liaison

Report: Underground Wires

Some small good news to report on the wires
front. In February, Jim Stanek learned that the
phone company planned to put a new guy wire in
front of his house on Pine Street. Opposed to this,
Jim called the company's vice president, who was
sympathetic. As a result of Jim's effort, the wire is
not going in. A small victory, but nonetheless an
important one. It seems we're more likely to achieve
success in small increments like this, rather than in
large ones.

Similarly, Peter Martin, a new Point Association
member, has provided a valuable bit of informa-
tion regarding telephone wires. If you have mul-
tiple telephone wires going into your house, you
can request that they be replaced by a "six-pair
wire," which consolidates six services in a single
wire. The phone company will replace the wires
for a fee anytime. If there is ever damage to your
current home service, they will provide this service
without charge!

Al Lowe, Chair
Underground Wire Committee
Report: Membership

Renewals. Wow, what a great response to the dues renewal message in the last Green Light. Thank you one and all. Renewals in the Sustaining Member and Patron categories are listed below. If you would like to see your name in one of these groups, please use the form on page 19 to let us know.

New Neighbors. Also, if you know of a new neighbor who would like to become a member of the Point Association and receive the Green Light, please call and we’ll send an application. We do try to approach all our new neighbors, and we need everyone’s help to do that.

New Members. Several new members gathered for the New Members’ Reception in Patricia and Richard Carrubba’s home on Sunday, March 25, to meet

Patrons
Joan Bartram
Fran & Bryan Babcock
Sharon & Paul Barton
Sandy & Lee Briggs
Al Castonguay
Carol & Gary Cummins
Nancy & Michael Curran
Rowena & Don Dery
Bart Dunbar & Lisa Lewis
Thelma & Paul Ebbitt
Donna & John Flynn
Diana & Peter Gonzalez

Bill Hall
Mr. & Mrs. G. Carl Hepting
Mr. & Mrs. John Howard
Ms. Leila Jenkins
Pam & Brendan Kelley
Lois & Jack Kessler
Marcia & Coles Mallory
Roe & Kenneth Moldow
Captain Herbert Rommel
Thomas C. Sturtevant
Suzanne & Dominick Varisco
Mr. & Mrs. George Vranesh
Gretchen & Stephen Weiss
Marion C. Wilkinson

Sustaining Members
Kristina & George Baer
Mrs. George Behan
Karen & John Benson
Bill Boatwright & Louisa Holt
Vija & Guntis Bole
Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Chilton
Myra DuVally
Roxy & Claire Emsberger
Joe Fortunato
Vance & Ted Gatchel
Sarah & Tony Gill
Capt. & Mrs. Benjamin Gilson
Isabel Griffith
Rosalys Hall

Executive Committee Hostess Marcia Mallory (center) greeting new Point Association members Karen and Robert Thompson

one another and our Executive Committee. It was a lovely afternoon. Listed below are all new members who have joined us since the March issue.

Judy Leet,
Membership Chair

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS
Martha Allen
Michelle and Robert Drum
Eleanor Flowers
Christine Hoffmann
Captain Jay F. Jacot
Linda & Charles Kiderer
Kristen & Alexander Lanio
Lynn A. Rodman
Karen and Robert Thompson

Bill Hall
Mr. & Mrs. G. Carl Hepting
Mr. & Mrs. John Howard
Ms. Leila Jenkins
Pam & Brendan Kelley
Lois & Jack Kessler
Marcia & Coles Mallory
Roe & Kenneth Moldow
Captain Herbert Rommel
Thomas C. Sturtevant
Suzanne & Dominick Varisco
Mr. & Mrs. George Vranesh
Gretchen & Stephen Weiss
Marion C. Wilkinson

John Hartman
Christine Hoffmann
Mr. & Mrs. Curtiss James
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Kelly
Daniel Kinder
Pat & Al Lowe
Patty & Bruce MacLeish
Dorothy & Ed Madden
Pierre Merle
John Nimmo
Mrs. Eugene O’Reilly
David Paisner & Wendy Withington
Jennifer & Darryl Paquette
Carole Peterhansel
Capt. Richard & Toni Peters
Clark Poston & Maggie Vale
Roger W. Prouty
Nancy & Paul Quatrucci
Marie-Claire & Jean-André Resz
Anne Reynolds
David Robbins
Mrs. Louise Sherman
Bev & Joe Silvia
Dr. & Mrs. D. A. Sutherland
Mr. Bowen & Marguerite Sweet
Barbara & Robert Vanderhoof
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph P. T. Vars
Kit & Ralph Weiss
Jay Wilson
Margot Winger

The Green Light
About 30 neighbors, of all ages, spent Saturday morning, April 21, cleaning up Storer Park. Weeds were pulled, flowers planted, bulbs split and replanted, and two truckloads of wood chips spread around the trees. Employees of the Hyatt Hotel joined the work crew. Hyatt crews also painted the basketball backboards and will be placing plantings on the Causeway median strip. Refreshments were provided by Bagel Boys and McDonalds. Our special thanks to the Adventure Club and to the Katzman Place group who came out to work with their neighbors.

We specifically worked on the area by the fence next to the Hunter House. We did a lot of weeding, and separated some of the lilies. Right now the area looks quite good. We would appreciate any efforts of Point volunteers to keep it weeded during the summer. Thanks,

Coles and Marcia Mallory
Beautification Co-Chairs

Determined, the young men of Katzman Place approach a mountain of mulch

Another Spring Cleanup

On April 21, while the Storer Park cleanup was going on, another cleanup activity was taking place just a few blocks away. The 125th Transportation Battalion of the US Army Reserve was assisting the Old Colony & Newport Railroad in clearing the tracks from Poplar Street to the Van Zandt Avenue bridge. Headed by Donald Elbert, the Old Colony & Newport Railroad regularly provides hands-on experience in train operations to this reserve group.

On this day, workers hauled a flatcar loaded with debris out of the area. The next day, they returned to do track maintenance. In the following weeks, a team led by Joe Medeiros of the Narragansett Electric Company will bring equipment onto the tracks to remove at least five unused utility poles, averting a potentially serious problem.

Another area of concern regarding Point area track maintenance is illegal dumping by nearby residents of leaves, branches, and other debris. This practice constitutes a severe fire hazard in this neighborhood of very old frame houses because of the steady winds that come up the track from the south end. For this reason, neighbors are encouraged to contact the Department of Environmental Management Police with questions and concerns.

Peter Martin
In the Heart of the Point

September will mark the fifth anniversary of Newport Public Library service to the Point via its Bookmobile, staffed by Coordinator Mary M. Barrett and assistant, Kelly McKenna. Through the support of the Rev. Jonathan Ostman and the Vestry at St. John’s Church, the Bookmobile has a jewel of an off-street parking spot in the church’s lot on Willow Street. This convenient space provides visitors safe and open access, coming and going. The added plus of free parking makes the Willow Street stop a very popular one.

A mini-version of the library’s main building on Spring Street, this popular vehicle provides a range of services and carries approximately 3,000 items on board at all times. About 60% of these are books for adults, including new titles and traditional favorites in fiction and non-fiction from the library collection. Most of the remaining 40% are books for young readers from picture books for pre-schoolers to a variety of titles for middle-school children. Mary and Kelly also issue library cards, take reserves on books, and assist visitors with reference work.

The Bookmobile appears at Willow Street every Wednesday fall through spring, 4:00 to 4:30, and summer, 11:00 to 11:30. The library’s Shut-In Service (847-8720) is available for Point readers needing assistance.

Mary Barrett

Harbor House Greets Prospective Residents

More than fifty people gathered on the last Saturday in April for an informational meeting presented by Star of the Sea in St. John’s Guild Hall on Poplar Street. Many came to learn about a possible new home at Harbor House for themselves, a family member, a neighbor, or a friend. What they saw were colorful drawings of floor plans, building exteriors, and parking areas. What they heard was that individual units will be private—if on the small side—and that common areas totaling 10,000 square feet will provide many opportunities for the kind of cooperative, yet independent, living that founder Ade Bethune has always envisioned for this historic site. What they received were informational brochures and forms to fill out as an expression of interest.

Questioners learned the following:
- A resident committee will establish rules.
- Smoking will be limited to individual rooms.
- Pets that are small, quiet, and confined to private quarters will be welcome.
- The noon meal—cooked off premises—will be served daily in the main dining room.
- Residents will be chosen by lottery, if applications exceed available space.
- Applications will be available in July.
- The target move-in date is December 1, 2001.
- Questions should be directed to Donna Jakubowski at Phoenix Property Management.

One last note of caution. Tours will be announced as soon as construction is complete. At present, however, hard hat rules are still in place, and only workers are permitted on site.

After the meeting the Green Light learned from Steve Ostiguy of Church Community Housing that the building project is still on schedule.

SRV

The Green Light
Forum Visits the Point

The orange signs with large black letters carried a clear message to travelers from near and far: “VAF SITE.” The Vernacular Architecture Forum had come to town. This year’s program, entitled “The Early Architecture and Landscapes of the Narragansett Basin,” included presentations of scholarly papers, dinners and receptions, and tours through a variety of structures throughout Aquidneck Island and beyond, including public buildings, museums, houses of worship, businesses, and private residences. Of the 50 sites opened for conference participants, 35 were in Newport, some of which are well known: the Customs House, Friends Meeting House, Redwood Library, and Touro Synagogue.

Ten signs adorned houses on the Point, two of which are open to the public: Nicholas-Wanton-Hunter House at 54 Washington, maintained by the Preservation Society of Newport County as a museum, and Milton H. Sanford House at 72 Washington, a privately run inn. Four are Newport Restoration Foundation (NRF) houses: Knowles-Perry House, 31 Walnut; Howland House, 6 Bridge; Solomon Townsend House, 51 Second; and Johnson-Braman House, 18 Thames St. The remaining four are privately owned: Captain Peter Simon House, 25 Bridge; John Frye House, 35 Second; John Goddard House, 81 Second; and Thomas Robinson House, 64 Washington.

All who opened their doors to conference goers received invitations to scheduled events and a three-volume set of books, in which building histories and floor-plans are outlined. Hosts reported between 50 and 150 visitors, who toured attics and cellars, checked out architectural details, and expressed sincere appreciation for this opportunity to see some of Newport’s treasures. All in all, a memorable experience.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sirs:

A relative sent me the latest issue of the Green Light, and I really enjoyed reading all about the Point people, the ads, and especially the reunion of LaSalle Place families. While I didn’t recognize any of the names, I do remember Lawton and Chapman families living there, and of course, Pa Tripp’s little grocery store building at the corner of LaSalle Place and Third Street. It seemed so tiny the last time I saw it.

I spent childhood summers on LaSalle Place with my uncle, Bill Maney, and his wife, Louise. We used to walk in our bathing suits over to Van Zandt Avenue Pier to swim and often fished there. Summer evenings we went to Battery Park to listen to band concerts, probably by the Municipal Band, in which my uncle, John McPhee, played.

I also remember the Cenacle building.

I was born at 27 Elm Street many years ago. (I think my red house is still there.) If I remember, the Point natives were called “Point Hummers.” As a youngster (1916?), I remember seeing men on bicycles early in the evening turning on the gas lights and then going around and turning them off in the daylight. That would be on Third Street. I suppose they had them on other streets, but I don’t know how long they used them. There’s an old expression, “He runs like a lamplighter,” so possibly they did it by runners way, way back! Hope you enjoy these tidbits.

Sincerely,

(Mrs.) Julia Conley
Riverside, Rhode Island

SRV
The Potter School

The Potter School on Elm Street has been closed since the early 1960s, and in recent years the building has served as offices for the City of Newport's Welfare Department. But it has been in the news again recently because the city is planning to turn the building over to other uses, such as residential development. A look at the history of the school, and at some of the memories of Point residents who went to Potter, reveals a part of local history that might otherwise be forgotten. For example, while the Point has been home to quite a few schools over the years, it is unlikely that any has been named for a more colorful figure than Simeon Potter. Equal parts pirate and patriot, rascal and revolutionary, Potter played an important role in the early history of Newport and Rhode Island.

As Louise C. Sherman described in an article in The Green Light in July 1963, Simeon Potter was born in Bristol in 1720, and by the mid-1700s he had made a fortune as a privateer—a legal pirate, sailing from Newport to plunder Spanish, French, and other shipping in the name of the King of England. He became the wealthiest man in Bristol, but was involved in many lawsuits, including one in which he was convicted of attacking the Reverend Usher, the 73-year-old pastor of St. Michael's church. Potter was also an early patriot, however, and took part in what has been described as the first American action against England that led to the Revolutionary War. In 1772, in his own longboat with a crew of Bristol boys, he rowed up Narragansett Bay to participate in the burning of the British revenue cutter Gaspee. Later, when a British squadron sailed from Newport and began a bombardment of Bristol, Potter walked out to the water's edge and single-handedly arranged a truce. Near the end of his life Potter became a philanthropist, and among the recipients of his largesse were the Trustees of Lon Wharf in Newport, who had held a lottery to raise money in order to build a free public school. He donated land and a house at the northeast corner of Marsh and Washington streets, and in 1814 the first Potter School was opened in that house.

That school existed until 1832, when other public schools were then available and the house was sold. The Lon Wharf Trustees remained active in education, building a school at Third and Willow in 1862 that later became known as the Callender School. In 1880 the Trustees purchased a lot on Elm Street, and in August 188 the Potter School we think of today was dedicated.

The Potter School was a vital part of the Newport educational system for 80 years. Many Point residents, attended Callender School for most of the
elementary grades and attended Potter for only one or two years. That may be the reason why, for some, memories of Potter School are decidedly mixed.

"I can remember that I was unhappy to be going there," said Glenn Sherman, who went to Potter for sixth grade after spending first through fifth at Callender. "Everyone was" added his mother, Louise, who recently reminisced about the fourth grade she spent at Potter in 1921.

"We had to cross the railroad tracks to get there, which was a long way for a youngster," Louise Sherman said. "I really have bad impressions of Potter School," she added, probably in large part because it was hard coming in to a new school for just one year. After the fourth grade, she returned to Callender for the remainder of her elementary school years. Mrs. Sherman has a tattered photo of her fourth grade class, which shows a very large group of students—51 in the picture. "That is a heck of a class," exclaimed Glenn, looking on as his mother tried to identify her classmates, bundled in winter clothes.

Although we tend to think of large class size as a modern day school problem, Potter School is an example of how some things may not have been very different in the past. Sydney Williams, who was archivist for the Newport schools until a few years ago, said that the original design of the Potter School appears to have included about 53 students per classroom.

Louise Sherman's photo indicates one interesting difference between elementary school then and now. A close look at the picture shows several taller, much older students in the fourth grade class. She remembers them as "grown-up students," who had missed school in their earlier years, possibly working for their families, and who were making up the fourth grade. Louise's teacher was Margaret Wilcox, who is not shown in the photo. But Louise remembers her: "She was an awful teacher, I'm telling you!" Miss Wilcox appears to have been a formidable presence in the classroom. Carrie Ericson, who described her school memories in the October 1968 Green Light, wrote that Miss Wilcox "ruled with an iron hand." She also wrote that she had attended Potter from the fourth through the seventh grade, from about 1905 to 1908. She remembered Miss Friend teaching the fifth grade, Miss Tilley in Sixth, and Harry Alger, the principal, teaching seventh. She recalled Mr. Alger as a very stern Quaker, who "didn't hesitate to crack your hands or legs with a rattan," if you misbehaved.

In a later article in the Green Light, Gladys Bacheller Booth wrote that, if pupils were caught chewing gum, Mr. Alger "called them to his desk, forced a piece of paper in their mouth, and made them sit beside him for the rest of the morning or afternoon." She recalled that Miss Wilcox was also strict, but gave the students a party for Halloween and Christmas.

Arthur Spooner also shared some of his memories of Potter School in previous editions of the Green Light. After attending Callender through the third grade, he then went to Potter for the next four grades. He remembered walking to school in all kinds of weather, and in 1969 wrote, "nowadays there are buses for the pupils. They get so soft riding that the schools require gymnasiums to keep the pupils in condition."

Irene Butler, who attended Potter for only the sixth grade, said that one of the things she remembers most was the walk to school. Students from the main part of the Point, on the west side of what is now America's Cup Avenue, had to cross not only the railroad tracks, but also a small stream that used to flow near the tracks. "It was a great temptation when you were going home from school to dip your feet in the water," she said.

The first Potter School is remembered today by a plaque on the house at the intersection of Marsh and Washington, near the causeway to Goat Island. We might hope that, whatever the future brings to the more recent Potter School on Elm Street, it will still be remembered, not only as a tribute to a pirate and a patriot, but for the important role it played in raising generations of Newport children.

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Tom Deininger, A Love Affair with the Point

In more ways than one, local artist Tom Deininger is in love with the Point.

As an accomplished landscape painter, Tom can often be found with his painting sidekick, John MacGowan, capturing the early light along Washington Street or down by the water's edge. Tom gives much credit to the local residents of the Point for the obvious pride they display in keeping up their homes—this is reflected in his canvases. He says, "It's hard to paint a bad picture around the Point. If it weren't for the overhead wires, you could capture an authentic 18th century neighborhood that probably doesn't exist anywhere else in America."

Tom's other love is also on the Point, living on Poplar Street. Marcella Raphelle—soon to be Mrs. Deininger—shares Tom's environmental concerns, and, in partnership, they run an outreach program, which educates and informs school children about the importance of recycling and its effect on our lives. And Tom recycles in another way.

Part of Tom's artistic expression takes the form of larger-than-life installations and assemblages, created entirely from non-biodegradable trash, often resulting in stunningly beautiful works of art. Last year's one-man show at the Newport Art Museum, a result of winning the previous year's Best of Show award, typified his Recycled Pallet with his awesome twelve-by-twenty-five-foot landscape of the Rocky Mountains, entitled "Plastic Paradise." Tom went on to create larger-than-life "nests" on First Beach and a show devoted to the heart at Bodi Galleries and St. George's School.

Tom says he's inspired in his art by artists such as Andy Goldsworthy, Bill Woodrow, and David Mach; and he credits Dan Ludwig of Salve Regina, where he graduated cum laude, as his teacher and mentor in fine art (painting). This brings up the question, are his "found object" assemblages his art or is it his painting? Tom's explanation is that painting is a craft, while his installations are but one expression of his personal vision and beliefs. Both are valid. Both are Tom Deininger. The message may well lie in the medium. You be the judge. In Tom's artist statement, his last sentence sums it up, "My work is not
a solution; it is an opinion or option of how people can witness and understand the material and visual world." It seems to this writer that this philosophy applies to both sides of Tom’s work. Surfer, thinker, activist, teacher, artist, and soon-to-be husband Tom embodies all that makes living on the Point that much more interesting.

Tom is represented in Newport at Art on the Wharf, a new gallery at number seven Bowen’s Wharf.

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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.

For information about rates and availability please call:
848-7603 or 846-9276
Newport and the America Cup: A Short History

The next America Cup contest in Auckland, New Zealand, will mark the 20th anniversary of the historical defeat of the American twelve-meter Liberty by Australia 2. In US hands since 1851, the Cup had been successfully defended twenty-five times, and so it was a stunning defeat.

The 1983 final started well for the New York Yacht Club, with Dennis Conner building a three-to-one lead and needing only one more win to keep the trophy. Although skipper John Bertrand was less experienced, the faster Australian boat evened the score at three-three, and it all came down to one final race. On a gray September day, as Liberty was being towed toward the starting line, I got the distinct feeling that we were at a funeral. Conner used every trick in the book, but Australia 2—with its revolutionary keel—was just too fast, passing Liberty in the last downwind leg to win by 38 seconds!

Conner, who won the Cup back in 1987 and lost it again in 1995 to New Zealand, has not been held in high regard by the NYYC since his 1983 defeat. However, after two disastrous attempts on their own, the Club has announced that Conner ("Big Daddy") will be in charge of their challenge effort for the 2003 Cup. Organizational skills and the ability to raise money seem to have healed old wounds.

Getting the race back in Newport waters seems unlikely. Even if the NYYC wins in 2003, the next Cup will be put out to bid and awarded to the city with the best "package." This is probably not such a bad thing. The America Cup is now a huge commercial event, and—for us on the Point—the resulting noise and congestion is not, in my opinion, worth the privilege of having it back.
Many Point residents at one time or another, perhaps while digging in their gardens, have accidentally uncovered bits of old ceramics and pottery. I have a few of these “potsherds” at home myself, discovered during my years of living on the Point. They are the refuse of past owners, deposited in trash piles and privies. Perhaps carried to Newport from distant places, like England, Holland, and China, these fragments tell the story of Newport’s dominance as a seaport and sometimes contain a wealth of information about the lifestyles and social and financial status of the people who discarded them—provided one knows how to read them. But amateur archaeologists beware: it takes years of training and experience to interpret these artifacts. There is a vast variety of styles and types of ceramics, each with a different point of origin and period of popularity. The depth of the object in the soil, its exact location, and its position in relation to other objects can also be important pieces of information in truly understanding an object and providing it with meaning. Archaeologists are trained to understand this context. Also, fragile artifacts (even ones that do not appear fragile, like coins) brought to the surface can quickly decay if not handled properly. Finally, homeowners (and metal detectors) should be aware that there is a host of local, state, and federal laws designed to preserve historical sites and artifacts and to protect people from the dangers of underground utilities.

For people with an insatiable archaeology bug, this summer the excavation of the Wanton-Lyman-Hazard House will continue. There will be at least one opportunity for the public to examine the site and observe the techniques of the archaeologists.

POINT OF FACT

Aside from potsherds and glass, the stems from clay pipes are probably the artifacts found most commonly during archaeological excavations at colonial New England sites.

Favorite Recipes

Scallop Salad for Patio and Picnic Time

Poach 1 lb. of scallops (or more depending on appetites). When they have cooled, mix in the following ingredients:
- 1 cup shelled peas
- 2 oz. chopped prosciutto
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 3 chopped scallions (white part only)
- 3 sprigs of fresh dill

Season with salt and pepper. Add 1 tsp. celery seed to strawberry or raspberry vinaigrette. Dress and toss gently. Serve on a bed of lettuce, top with a little dressing, and garnish with sliced avocado and strawberries. Serves 4.

Note: Scallops can be replaced by halibut, salmon, or sword fish (which should be grilled); the dressing and garnish of your choice can replace the vinaigrette, avocado, or strawberry.
Walking on the Point
by Kay O'Brien

Mother Nature's Clock

Gray skies and chilly winds have hung around too long, but an old Indian saying is always a reminder of things to come: "Walk lightly in the spring; Mother Earth is pregnant." At last the grass is green and growing, buds have swollen and burst, and our neighborhood is alive and colorful. Suddenly walkers, dogs, children, leaves, and flowers are out, as are skateboards and scooters. Squid and fishermen appear at the causeway. In our parks, planters and benches are filling up, and—shortly—boats will be bobbing in the bay. There's someone to talk with as everyone wants to enjoy the outdoors at this vibrant time of the year.

On Washington and Battery streets the renovation and restoration of Harbor House may still look raw but is attracting much interest. On your walks, also check what's going on at the state pier, the shipyard, and Eastern Resorts. As you glance across the bay, you will probably see the Newport-Providence ferry coming and going on its summer schedule. Plan to take the ride and see the Point from the water. The sights and sounds of the season are all around us. Spring is a teaser that awaits your discovery of its delights, and summer's soon. Enjoy.

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Pointers in the News
by Liz Mathinos

A Newport Daily News article about Alison Kennedy-Benson, whose parents live on Elm Street, reported on her eight-month internship at the Fossil Rim Wildlife Center, in Africa, to study the endangered black rhino. In June, she will assist a wildlife veterinarian at Kruger National Park and will attend a conference on wildlife diseases.

John "Fud" Benson, winner of a Pell Award for Excellence in the Arts, appeared in the People section of the Providence Journal and the front page of the Newport Daily News. Benson was honored at a formal reception and dinner in April.

The International Yacht Restoration School's final lecture in the "Bleeding Edge" spring series on Tuesday, May 1, featured Jean-Pierre Mouligne, who spoke about his eight-month solo race around the world.

Pattie Murphy's garden at the Willows was featured in the Homes section article on the Secret Gardens of Newport, a weekly half-hour series on Home & Garden Television (HGTV), which airs Sunday afternoons at 3:30.

Howard Newman was one of the artists highlighted in the Newport This Week review of the Art League of Rhode Island's Founding Members' Show, "The Art/The Artist," at the Bristol Art Museum.

At the Fort Adams Trust annual membership meeting in Salve Regina's Ochre Court, on Friday, May 4, 2001, Kay O'Brien received the congratulations of Senator Jack Reed, when she was honored as the Trust's Volunteer of the Year.

Rita Rogers was featured in a Newport Daily News article about the opening of her exhibit at the Premier Etage Gallery on April 14. The opening reception was one of the major events of the Newport art scene, and Rita's abstract paintings were reviewed beautifully by Sylvia Smith in Newport This Week.

An oblong grand piano, made by J. W. Vose & Co. of Boston, has been donated to the Seamen's Church Institute and is surplus to their needs. It requires some TLC. Inspect it at 18 Market Square. Make an offer of a suitable donation.
Three new Point families caught the eye of this photographer—the Eagles, the Jacksons, and the Lowes. We welcome them to our neighborhood, and we hope they enjoy their stay here.

Marian and Al Lowe (above) on move-in day at the Pineapple House

Ben and Amity Jackson beside their new garden gate

The Annual Summer Fair at St. John's Church

Saturday, July 21
10:00-2:00

white elephant sale

crafts table

baked goods

gourmet foods

plants

books

clothes

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Special Events

Potluck 2001
Sunday evening, March 18, found Point neighbors gathered for our annual potluck supper in St. John’s Guild Hall. Once again, Donna Maytum did a great job of organizing the troops, and everyone who attended qualified for membership in the clean plate club. Cheers to Donna!

Spring Membership Meeting
On Thursday, April 5, department managers met with Point residents and City Council members for an informational meeting. There was standing room only as 70 Pointers attended at the Hyatt Hotel. See John Spohn’s report for details. Our thanks to John for another job well done.

Potluck Chair Donna Maytum and her all-purpose assistant, Jack

The Gill Family enjoying Pot Luck (“Oh, what fun!”)

New members Reception, see Membership Report, p. 6.

Spring Cleanup in the Park, see Beautification report, p. 7

May Day
Adventure Clubbers in the news! Again! On Sunday, May 5, the youngest Pointers delivered flowers and good cheer to the older ones. It was a beautiful day, befitting the beautiful spirit of the occasion.

Alden Lowe (above) delivers flowers to his grandparents in their new Point home.

Rowan Howard greets three visitors, as they deliver a May basket to her door. L-r: Ollie Gill, Aidan Toohey, and Austin Toohey

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The Green Light
Passalong Plants

A favorite garden book in my library was given to me by essentially a non-gardener, but a very good friend—Passalong Plants by Steve Becker and Felder Rushing, with a forward by Allen Lacy. "The book is about old plants, old people, young people, memories, shared experiences, shared plants, feelings, history, advice, opinions." With our gardening rush to embrace the new and exotic and to copy English, French, and Italian gardenscapes, it is refreshing to find applause for all the old fashioned favorites of my grandparents. Passalong plants are easy to propagate and grow. Usually they are not available in the marketplace, considered passé, I guess. Confederate Rose, night blooming cereus, and hardy alstroemeria were all in my mother's garden. The old roses actually smell like roses . . .

There are many passalong annuals, perennials, bulbs, and tubers:
- Achillea, yarrow or sun fern
- Alstroemeria pulchella, peruvian lily
- Artemisia, ludoviciana
- Begonia grandis, hardy begonia
- Belamcanda chinensis, blackberry lily
- Cleome hasslerana, spiderflower
- Consolida ambigua, larkspur
- Cosmos bipinnatus, cosmos
- Crinium, angel lily
- Iris germanica, bearded iris
- Lathyrus odoratus, sweet pea
- Mirabilis jalapa, four o'clocks
- Phlox paniculata, hardy phlox
- Physostegia virginiana, obedient plant
- Ruellia, petunia
- Oenothera fruticosa, sundrops
- Polianthes tuberosa, tuberose
- Saponaria officinalis, soapwort
- Tradescantia virginiana, spider wort
- Zinnia, old maid

Whenever I gain a Passalong plant for my garden, I defy all nomenclature and just call it by the name of the giver. Hence, I have JoAnn, a very tall rudbekia; Ann is a lovely Malva Mosch; my chives are called Rowan; and a lavender is Julie. My Alstroemeria, peruvian lily, is simply Mom.

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The Point Association Membership Form

Please make check payable to The Point Association and mail with form to PO Box 491, Newport, RI 02840. A subscription to the Green Light is included with all memberships.

___ Individual $10    ___ Family $15    ___ Sustaining $25    ___ Patron $40

Name ________________________________________________________________

Phone: ________________________ Fax: __________________________ E-Mail ________________________

Mailing Address: _______________________________________________________

Second Address (if applicable): ____________________________________________

Committees and Activities

Your participation is needed. Please check the categories of interest to you.

___ Beautification    ___ Harbor Watch    ___ Green Light    ___ Plant Sale    ___ Membership
___ Program/Event Planning    ___ History and Archives    ___ Children's Adventure Club
___ Neighborhood Crime Watch    ___ Underground Wires    ___ Publications/Communications/Web
Point Picnic ............................................................... Thursday, June 28
Bring your supper, chairs, and tablecloth and join your neighbors on Anne Reynolds' lovely harborside lawn at 88 Washington Street at six.

St. John’s Summer Fair ................................................. Saturday, July 21, 10:00 – 2:00
See page 11 for more information.

Blackburn Cathedral Choir at St. John’s ................................ July 20 – 29
See page 8 for details.

Paint the Point
Check your Spring Green Light for details or call Tony Gill, 847-2189.

  First session .......................................................... Tuesdays, May 15 - June 19
  Second session ....................................................... Saturdays, June 15 - July 21
  Exhibit and Sale of Work ............................................ Tuesday, July 31, 5:30 – 7:00

Members’ Cocktail Party ............................................... Thursday, August 23
Enjoy this annual late-summer gathering at the Sanford-Covell Villa Marina at 72 Washington Street.

THE GREEN LIGHT
The Point Association
P.O. Box 491
Newport, RI 02840

Christa & Erik Dahl
42 Third St
Newport, RI 02840