Dear Pointers,

Here we are deep in the holiday season already—where did the fall go? I hope all of you had a pleasant Thanksgiving and are looking forward to the holiday festivities to come. One you won’t want to miss is the concert on December 20 at Harbor House. See Isabel Griffith’s article for more details. There will be additional concerts at Harbor House through the winter, so stay tuned.

This issue of the Green Light also features an in-depth article on Eleanor Weaver, who passed away recently. As Suzanne Varisco details in this excellent piece, Eleanor played a huge role in the preservation of the historic district here on the Point; in fact, she was one of the eight founding members of The Point Association. So when you pour yourself a cup of Christmas cheer, be sure to raise a glass to her memory.

As I recently dodged a threatened deployment to Iraq, I’ve stopped trying to teach myself Arabic and am starting to plan the next issue of the Green Light. In the spring issue we plan to cover some aspects of real estate on the Point, and how the neighborhood has changed and is changing over the years. I’m particularly interested in any old photos any of you might have that show your house or street say fifty or eighty years ago (or more, if you have them!). If you have photos you wouldn’t mind lending to me, please drop me a line—mackrell@nwc.navy.mil or emackrell@hotmail.com. And in the meantime, have a wonderful holiday!

Cheers, Eileen
FROM THE PRESIDENT

12/1/03

Welcome to the winter edition of the Green Light. It’s always nice to have some good reading just before hibernation season. But before we pile the fire with kindling and pull the covers to our chins, let’s briefly review some recent items of interest and plan ahead for the spring.

Our association’s annual meeting on October 16th was well attended, filling the meeting room at Harbor House and collectively addressing two important issues: development at Storer Park and the Navy hospital complex on Third Street.

On the first issue, the association unanimously approved the motion to support the city council resolution to halt all future commercial development in Storer Park and keep the park in its current condition. The association has a vested interest in Storer Park. An example of the dedication of Point residents to the park can be seen in these pages with photos from the fall’s park clean-up. Let’s hope that our action is noted by those who might still seek to commercialize this oasis.

Paige Bronk, Newport’s City Planner, made a presentation at the meeting on the current status of the Navy’s plans to dispose of the hospital complex. It appears that the Navy now plans to sell the seven acres on the bay outright to a developer rather than lease the facility in exchange for in-kind services, as was originally proposed. Paige stated that the city has no authority or influence on the property until the sale is finalized, at which time the developer would have to comply with existing municipal zoning requirements. This project, in conjunction with RIDOT’s bridge access plans, could have the biggest impact on the Point since the development of Goat Island and bears close watching.

There have been some recent changes to the association’s board. At the annual meeting, long-time treasurer Hillar Serapera moved to the position of 1st Vice President and new board member Mike Simmons has been appointed to replace Hillar as treasurer. Volunteer Recording Secretary Diane Quint was officially appointed to that position. Barbara Lloyd Baker has taken on the quest for underground utility wires and Mary Mang is now managing our neighborhood watch effort. Bart Dunbar, our city council liaison for the past several years, now has a schedule conflict and would like to be relieved. Any Point Association member who would be interested in reporting on city council activities should contact a board member. Any member is welcome to attend our board meetings, which are held on the 1st Monday of each month at 7 PM in the library of the Harbor House, 111 Washington Street.

The Point Association will also be joining with the residents at Harbor House to present the Ade Bethune Memorial Concert Series, beginning December 20th and running through March. Resident John Lingley, together with board members Isabel Griffith and Bill Hall, have arranged for the concerts. Call events coordinator Sarah Gill for reservations (847-2189). Ade was a founding member of The Point Association. Other founders were Eleanor and George Weaver, about whom Suzanne Varisco has written a wonderful history in this edition of The Green Light.

Jack
NEW TO THE POINT

Mr and Mrs Bradley Dutkanych and their son Bradley
50 Second St

Erika, Bradley and their fifteen-month-old son Bradley John moved to Second Street this summer in a remarkably complicated manner. When they arrived in Newport from Florida, they were greeted by an empty house, which remained empty for two weeks. When the furniture finally arrived, the moving van parked at the Marriott and every belonging was carried the five blocks to their new house in the middle of the night (van arrived at 11:30 PM).

However, despite this inauspicious start, the Dutkanychs are greatly enjoying living on the Point. Erika has spent all her life until now in Florida and her husband is originally from Connecticut. He is in the Navy and is currently a Combat Systems instructor at Surface Warfare Officers School. The Dutkanychs expect to be in Newport for three years.

Isabella Madarang and Duane Harsh
48 Second Street  (Sorry, no picture)

Isabella and Duane had lived in Newport for a year, on Bliss Road, before moving to the Point. They rented and sold the first house when they found what they wanted here, on the Point, where they had originally wished to live. Before moving to the East coast, Isabella managed an auto racing team and a race car driving school. Duane was manager of a flight school in Colorado. When they decided that they were ready for something new and because they had always wished to live by the ocean, they resigned their positions, moved and embarked on entirely new ventures.

Isabella now works for the Navy in housing, which is quite fitting as houses are of great interest to her and she is in the midst of redoing her new one on Second St. Duane founded “One Handy Guy,” an enterprise that will undertake practically any service or small project and will come where and when needed. He, of course, is the perfect complement in the redoing of their house.

BORN ON THE POINT

W. Macallan Peck, at 5 months. Son of Bob and Brynne Peck

Michael Albert “MAC” Cullen at 4 months.
Son of Beth & Mike Cullen.

Grandfather Brian
Grandmother Fran
Chris. Jill and
Madeleine Babcock

Kate, Brian
and Brian Ty Babcock
Underground Wires REPORT

The issue of underground wiring for Third Street took a new twist recently with information that underground conduits may already be in place.

A retired engineer for Newport Electric, the city's former electric utility company, revealed recently that he was in charge of a crew that buried clusters of four-inch PVC pipes the length of Third Street — from about Marsh Street to the Navy base — nearly 40 years ago. He said that his employer at the time decided to abandon the underground plan once the project was finished. The result today is a high-tension wire — as much as 23,000 volts — running on overhead poles through our historic neighborhood.

Barbara Lloyd Baker, a Point resident who has taken over the underground wire effort from Al Lowe, met with city officials recently to discuss the conduit possibility. At the meeting, City Manager James Smith said he would contact a current electric company official about the new information. Mr. Smith indicated later that day that a representative of Narragansett Electric has agreed to look into the matter, and would report to the city manager later this month.

Summary of TPA Survey
as of October 15, 2003

Thanks to all those who responded to the recent Point Association Survey, as well as to all the volunteers who distributed the survey to more than 983 homes.

The numerical results are as follows:

983 homes delivered
106 respondents - approximately 11%, pretty good for this type of mailing
43 new members
86 owners or 82%; 20 renters or 18%
88 full-time or 83%; 18 part-time or 16%
77 single family and 52 multi-family units
32 0-20 year olds, 125 21 to 60 and 69 over 60
24 homes less than 2 years; 29 homes 2-8 years; 36 homes more than 8 years (24 years avg.)
23 people/homes interested in joining the Neighborhood Watch Group
17 interested in discussing the Newport Schools &/or Volunteering
64% previously owned vs. 82% today; 37% previously rented vs. 18% and 4% built as new.

Comments on what The Point Association does well:
Clout with the City 23
Friendliness & interaction of neighbors 15
Information, informed 15
Preservation & protecting 12
Green Light 10
Storer Park — as non-commercial, tranquil spot 9
Underground wires 8
Cleanliness 5

Some things to do better:
New members — call or visit new residents. Post a sign of our history & how to join, reach out! 7
Need to have neighbors cut back shrub intruding onto sidewalk 5
Noise, Elm St. Pier & fast cars in the summer 6
Add more gas lamps & trees on Point streets 4
Get people involved / listen to input via email, web-site, etc. 3
Address book of neighbors 2

You'll note that many responders thought we should do more to reach out to new residents moving into the Point. This is very much a goal of the Point Association, and WE NEED YOUR HELP! When you notice a new neighbor moving in, please let Patricia or Rich Carrubba, the membership folks, know about it!

The Point Association Board would like to thank all who contributed their time and thoughts. If you have any additional feedback on this survey please call Louisa Boatwright at 845-6608.
All reports are that the October meeting of City and State officials with Mr. Arny, Under Secretary of the Navy, in Congressman Kennedy’s office went well. FT Adams housing and the Navy Hospital are the sites of concern. This meeting to voice the City’s concerns was timely, because a representative of Navy Region Northeast said in mid-October that nothing was happening with the Navy Hospital site and that Mr. Arny had not made a decision whether to sell instead of lease. If the decision to sell through the excess process were approved, the city of Newport would be in a better position with respect to zoning and tax issues.

According to Rich Carrubba, Point Association representative to the RIDOT plan for reconfiguring the bridge ramp, future development of the Navy Hospital site has indeed been factored into the redesign plans.

The City Council defeated a request that the city abandon the section of Washington Street, north of the bridge, which was accompanied by an offer to purchase the land for an estimated $90,000 by three abutters, Ms. Reagan, Mr. Moy and Mr. Walaska. A day after this defeat, Mr. Moy received a call from City Hall that suggested a lease agreement that was approved by the City Council at their next October meeting. There is a request for a pier at this site before the Coastal Resources Management Council.

As of early November, there has been no information from Congressman Kennedy’s office about possible funding for restoring Van Zandt Pier and Battery Park.
Winter is the Perfect Time for Stripping
(Weather-stripping)

If windows are the eyes of your house and the eyes are the window to the soul, then doors are... a darn fine way of getting in and out of the house. I'm not feeling particularly poetic on this go-round so let's talk weather-stripping. The cracks around the door are going to start letting in the cold... don't turn the page, it's important stuff and this is the time to see if your weather stripping is still doing its job.

The humble weather-stripping on your door has a tough task: It keeps the cold winter drafts at bay, it rubs against itself or the door (or gets pounded by it), it gets kicked, scraped and otherwise abused, and it is exposed to the extremes of the weather. In addition, wooden doors expand and contract. In the summer humidity you may need a well-placed shoulder to shut the door and in the winter the cat could squeeze under the giant space that has appeared at the bottom. Most old houses have pine doors and between the extreme weather conditions of the seasons, these doors migrate in their frames like a flock of ducks. On rarer occasions, doors were made of hardwood, which is much less prone to move in extremes of weather than are softwoods. The good news is that with age even softwoods gain a little more stability and are a little less prone to move, which is a very good reason to keep the old door.

Testing your weather-stripping is easy. Simply pass your hand around the perimeter of the door about a half-inch from the surface. If you feel a strong draft then you need to do something about it. If you want to get a little more sophisticated in your testing (or really impress the heck out of your spouse), do the same thing with a lit match (be careful) or a lighter, and see if the flame flickers a lot.

So you need to replace the weather-stripping? As is so often the case, the options can seem bewildering but the general principle on which the weather-stripping works is simple. No door, even a new one, creates a perfect seal with the door frame, so weather-stripping is designed to fill in the gaps, blocking out both the wind and the cold and if it does its job properly, having a happy effect on your heating bill. The principle options are based on two systems. The first is the interleaving metal type, which is dealer-installed and expensive, but very durable, and quite functional as long as you have a door that doesn't move too much. If you have a door that really expands and contracts, this type is not generally recommended. The second option involves some sort of flexible and expandable strip (usually foam or vinyl) that crushes as the door closes, thus filling any gaps. This type is very effective and is easily installed by the homeowner. Although it is considerably less expensive, it is also much less durable and will probably have to be replaced within a few years. Any good hardware store will have several choices available. Follow the instructions and install the product. It shouldn't take more than a couple of hours.

'Tis the season, so get cracking (pun intended).
THIS FALL’S CLEAN-UP

Sweet (if temporary) victory over the leaves....Susan Sondheim, Laurie Labrecque, Yvett Eichner, Sierra Eichner, and Deb Saunders survey a leafless Storer Park.

Don Dery about to start de-leafing Storer Park.

Coles Mallory carts off a wheelbarrow full of leaves.

Bill Hall wields a rake in Battery Park.


Adam Cox, Will Catlin and Don Violette team up to clean up Storer Park.

Hyatt employees Stacy Panagakos-Coates and Stephen Edes at work in Storer Park.

Patricia Carrubba and Isabel Griffith pause for coffee after cleaning up Battery Park.

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How fitting that the entrance to the residential Point neighborhood shall now carry the name of a former official Newport Historian par excellence. The Gladys Carr Bolhouse Road was dedicated on Saturday, October 4th with a full contingent of City Councilors, State officials and numerous relatives attending. Her great grandson, Councilor Steve Waluk, did the honors, tearing away the covering of the new street sign at the corner of America's Cup Avenue. Renaming this section of road, which continues to the corner of Washington Street at the entrance to the Causeway, for Mrs. Bolhouse is a fitting tribute to a dedicated historian and former Point resident.

Gladys Carr Bolhouse was born on October 2, 1899, to a family that traced its origins to our founding fathers, Nicholas Easton, Caleb Carr, and John Coggeshall. Working with the Historical Society from 1946, Gladys Bolhouse's extensive knowledge of Newport's history naturally led to her selection as official city Historian in 1984. Ms Bolhouse died in 1995; her three children, Daniel Bolhouse, Jane Connerton, and Mary Gainey, her 14 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren carry on the tradition of service to Newport, working in schools, serving on City Council, etc.

The first concert will feature the Swanhurst Small Chorale on Saturday afternoon, December 20, with holiday music. Other monthly concerts will include the List Academy of Music faculty and students; Michael Bahmann, harpsichordist, who gave a splendid performance this summer at the Redwood Library; and the Wheeler School Bell Ringers. We are well along with our planning; postcards will be sent to Point Association members as a reminder for each concert. We don't plan to do much advertising, as seating is limited. The concerts are free, but donations will be gratefully accepted at each performance, or at any time, to help underwrite the series. To become a sponsor, send a check made out to The Point Association with a memo "for concert series," to: The Point Association, PO Box 491, Newport, RI, 02840.

For more information, call Isabel at 849-6444.
That Was Then . . .

by Suzanne R. Varisco

Eleanor and George Weaver, a Team

Begin at the Beginning

It's called Weaver Cottage, and the story of how this unique Point landmark came to be is also the story of two people in love. But we're getting ahead of ourselves.

We'll begin with George Duncan Weaver, whose ancestor Clement Weaver arrived in 1639 to take possession of his new estate (most of Aquidneck Island's western half), granted to him by the King of England. So, as you see, the Weavers were native Newporters . . . and then some.

Known to his friends as "Dunc," young George was a hometown wonder—all-star athlete in three sports for three successive years at Rogers High School: baseball, basketball, and football. After school, when sports, homework, and part-time jobs permitted, he sometimes joined his friends at the Coffee Corner on Broadway.

As luck would have it, working in a nearby grocery store was another Newport superachiever, former schoolmate Eleanor Sperling, who had already graduated from Rogers at the age of 15. It wasn't long before Eleanor noticed the handsome redhead in the crowd and confided to her friend, "One day I'm going to marry that boy." Her determination was rewarded: the two met later that year and indeed became sweethearts.

When George received his diploma in 1938, he was approached by a Boston Red Sox scout, but, believing that he was needed at home to help support the family, he declined the invitation to try out, embarking instead on his 25-year career with the Newport Fire Department. As we'll see, these themes of determination, responsibility, and achievement, combined with love, will appear again in our story.

George Weaver and Eleanor Sperling were married on March 19, 1942, just before he shipped out to North Africa, where he served as an instrument specialist in the Army Air Corps for four years. Although not a flight crew member, he frequently volunteered for missions over Germany. Meanwhile, Eleanor found herself in Washington, employed as a cartographer by the U.S. Office of Coastal and Geodetic Survey. Here, she worked on maps of Germany, to be used by those very same Air Force flight crews.

The war over, Eleanor and George returned to Newport, where he resumed his work as a firefighter. Soon, he saw the need for a union, founded the Newport branch of the International Association of Firefighters, and became its first president. During the struggle leading up to this accomplishment, a city councilor warned, "George, if you go through with this, you'll never rise above the rank of private." George was undeterred. He also had other interests.

The Point

The year 1949 was an important one for the Weaver family. Having read an article about the formation of historic Williamsburg in Virginia, George looked around his native city with the realization that a treasure trove of historic architecture was right here and in danger of being destroyed. Immediately, he began reading about architectural restoration, visiting historic sites, and talking to authorities in the field.

When he and Eleanor made their move, it was to purchase a house on the Point at the corner of Second and Chestnut. Steven Dennis Weaver was born that year, and the family of three lived in just one room at first, while they began the process of restoration. As we'll see, these themes of determination, responsibility, and achievement, combined with love, will appear again in our story.

Still, it was an adventure. George's younger brother Joe remembers the day an old fireplace was discovered, hidden behind a wall. Tucked in a narrow space was a pair of 18th-century ice skates and a Revolutionary War uniform. This was beginning to look like fun, and soon after that, Joe and his wife Ann decided to make this leap also, purchasing a house one
As the restoration progressed and the family grew, Eleanor and George enlisted the help of Steven and then his younger brother, Matthew Duncan Weaver, who joined the family in 1954. But it wasn't just about houses. Matthew remembers the lesson his mother taught him about the trees for which their brother, Matthew Duncan Weaver, who joined the family in 1954, was named, while she helped him plant one in the yard the year he was three: "I think it may be the only chestnut tree he would perch, waiting for his dad, so they could walk home together. Matt, now a musician and organic farmer in northern Maine, remembers the kitchen. "My mom had magic dust when she cooked," he explains. "Everything was so delicious that I never wanted to eat at a friend's house."

With one successful restoration accomplished, Eleanor and George purchased a second house, restored it, and sold it: a process they were to repeat 25 times, including the Fife and Drum, a Catherine Street inn, which they operated as a family enterprise for several years. (There were also the Loom in Bermuda and the Wee Cottage in Charleston, S.C., but this is a Newport story.)

To keep pace with this family industry, George assembled a crew of craftsmen and traveled throughout New England looking for old houses that were being destroyed, buying everything he could transport, and bringing it back to Newport for storage and re-use. Eleanor maintained the household, also helping to supervise construction in George's absence and keeping the books.

Steven remembers the shared hours working on many Point houses. When several brick buildings were razed on Farewell Street to make way for senior housing, for example, he loaded up the truck many times, carting used bricks to new building sites, where they were then unloaded, sorted, and re-cycled, "hour after hour, day after day."

In a parallel venture, the Weavers opened the Corner Cupboard at Bridge and Second, where they sold furniture they had restored in their workshop across the street. Down the block in a vacant lot, George renovated an eight-bin garage to store his historic finds: mantles, doors, windows, flooring, and more. Occasionally, he would find something particularly interesting and set it aside for a special future use. More about this later.

P.A.N.

Another important year in our story is 1955, the year Point newcomers Janet and Ned Brownell approached Eleanor and George about forming an association to protect the neighborhood from the destructive twin forces of commercial expansion and city hall neglect. Within a few weeks, they founded the Point Association of Newport (known in those early days as P.A.N.) with the help of George's brother and sister-in-law, Joe and Ann Weaver; Eleanor's sister and brother-in-law, Tama and Dave Nemitzow; and two more neighbors, Betty and Dave Smith.

The new group immediately went to work recruiting members and contacting city and state authorities about the need to preserve historic Point architecture and beautify neighborhood streets. Within a few years, Newport's first neighborhood association had planted over 100 trees on the Point, saved Storer Park, and—perhaps most importantly—established a productive working relationship with city government. This accomplishment, which became a nationally recognized model, combines an abiding concern for restoration with yet another theme in our story: government participation. But it's still about responsibility and determination. And love.

The City

Eleanor Weaver is remembered fondly today by family and friends alike as vivacious, outspoken, positive in her outlook on life, and extremely talented. She also had a fine mind, which she applied to everything she attempted: co-founder and first president, Newport League of Women Voters; member, Newport Planning Board; member, Newport Zoning Board; member, Newport Board of Review; member, Newport Charter Review Commission; and member, Newport Comprehensive Development Plan. For a few years, Rhode Islanders could hear her hosting a talk show on WADK, and all of Newport enjoyed her drawings and poems in her now-familiar blue book, Newport: City by the Sea (1980).

George, while the quieter partner, was no less accomplished. It's indeed true that he never rose above the rank of private in the Newport Fire Department. He did, however, go on to other roles of distinction: chair, Newport Democratic Committee; member, Historic District Commission, member, Newport Personnel Appeals Board; First Ward Representative, Newport City Council; and director, Newport Restoration Foundation (NRF).
George changed uniforms, rolled up his sleeves, and went to work at this new job without a backward glance, continuing to do just what he had been doing with Eleanor for so many years, albeit on a far grander scale: traveling throughout New England in search of architectural elements from abandoned houses and supervising five crews of nearly 80 carpenters and painters throughout Newport. “Everything was going so quickly,” says NRF archivist Robert Foley. “Newport had never seen anything like this.”

By this time, Matthew Weaver was also on the NRF carpentry team, first to volunteer when the opportunity came to join the crew at Prescott Farm in Middletown. He stayed there, working for his dad for three years: “We ground corn in the windmill and grew wheat, rye, and barley; I even planted the herb garden.”

After assuming the job of director, George advised Ms. Duke that the area in front of Trinity Church should be opened up. The result of this suggestion is Queen Anne Square. Mr. Foley remembers George during that time as a quiet, unassuming fellow who went about his daily tasks with authority and courtesy, still keeping his sense of humor—witness many NRF records from those days signed without a flourish, “George D. Weaver, Clerk of the Works.”

At the same time, both George and Eleanor were active in Democratic party politics, working tirelessly to support local, state, and national candidates, including Claiborne Pell and John F. Kennedy. Not surprisingly, neighbors would see signs announcing support of candidates on the Weaver lawn very early in each pre-election season. Through it all, they worked as a team, remembers Joe: “They thought in tandem.”

“It was never about money,” says Matthew. They weren’t into things, and they never wanted credit for what they did. They just loved Newport and the Point, and all their efforts were devoted to the common good of this place and its people.” And those who benefited from this generosity don’t forget. In fact, Matt says the family still hears from people wanting to share their stories of how much they were helped by Eleanor and George Weaver.

The last item in this list merits a bit of explanation. When Doris Duke sought out a new director for her struggling young foundation, she hired Francis Comstock, a recently retired Princeton professor of architecture, whose scholarly knowledge and national reputation were crucial to the organization’s survival. Professor Comstock quickly discovered that the city’s foremost expert on 17th and 18th century Newport architecture was a self-taught high school graduate, who was about to retire from the city’s fire department. He wasted no time in enlisting George Weaver, first as a consultant and then as his assistant.

Do you remember the eight storage bins, and the selective saving away of a few prized elements now and then? Well, these elements and many more, each very old and lovingly restored, were now ready to be a part of George and Eleanor Weaver’s “new” house, Weaver Cottage.

The Cottage

It was a beautiful lot, right on Washington Street—shielded from winter winds, yet with a view of the harbor and plenty of space for a garden. On this spot, George and Eleanor set about planning their new house. Imagine, you might say. Two people whose lives have been devoted to preserving old houses are about to build a new one. But not just any new one.

In their retirement years, George walked about the neighborhood, exploring the fruits of his labors and chatting with friends about shared experiences. Eleanor, always known for her wonderful baking, entertained friends and neighbors over tea. One of her guests, Kay O’Brien, remembers her gracious hospitality, her fine china, and her delicious scones. Or, as Eleanor’s niece Jann Dean puts it, “She was the Point’s ultimate elegant hostess long before Martha Stewart. And what a wonderful smell.”

The cottage stands empty now, ready for its new owners. At the formal signing over of her beloved cottage, Eleanor expressed pleasure that its new owners loved it also. “Oh Eleanor,” I told her,” said Nancy Quattrucci recently, “it will always be your house.”

And so it will be: a fitting memorial to a remarkable team—determined, responsible, generous, accomplished, and involved—who loved their city and their neighborhood, and who were so influential in saving it just in time. “They were amazing people,” says Matthew, “really the ultimate of what we all ought to be.”

This love of place, however, was more than matched by a love for each other that weathered good times and bad. As Matthew describes it, “They had the biggest love for each other. You can’t find this kind of love in books or movies. We’re all so happy because we know they’re together now.”

And what a cottage! Everyone who saw it praised this job well done. One such visitor, who worked for Hallmark Corporation, asked if he could return with a camera crew. Today, Hallmark still issues the “Cottage Card,” which features a welcoming fire in the large fireplace, always an important part of a Weaver home.

The Cottage Card, which features a welcoming fire in the large fireplace, always an important part of a Weaver home.
A White Christmas?

Tradition holds that joy follows if it snows on Christmas Eve. We have celebrated twenty-five plus Christmases in Newport. Some were indeed "white". The two that stand out in my memory were those of 1979 and 1982.

In 1979 we had a house full of relatives from Florida and California. The weather certainly cooperated as far as cold. Ten straight days of 15-20 degrees with the wind blowing hard from the northeast made for frozen pipes in the third floor bathroom. The furnace couldn't keep up and since 53 Washington Street had five fireplaces, we used them all every day and banked the fires at night. Pete and I had to drag our memories back to high school years to accomplish that. We both grew up on farms.

Elm Street and Poplar Street driftways had a THICK buildup of ice on their sea walls. Wow! We were impressed. Our house guests went shopping. Fall River Sweater Mill was their destination. Seven hours and many bags of sweaters later, they were at last WARM. What they did with all those sweaters when they returned to Jacksonville and San Francisco, I never asked. It warmed up enough to snow December 27th and we were open for Christmas in Newport. People thought the fires in all the grates were "charming".

In 1982, it was incredibly WARM. Our Christmas Dinner then was Christmas Eve as we usually had an Open House on Christmas Day. Pete cleaned up, put the presents under the tree, left the carols on and went to bed, as he cooked breakfast the next morning. Tony, Jason and I went to Midnight Service. It was so foggy we decided to walk to Trinity. Walking in the thick fog with horns from the Newport Bridge, Point Judith, Green Light, Castle Hill breaking the silence at regular intervals was eerie. Add two rather irreverent teenage sons and you can imagine my state of mind. Newport, Christmas Eve, as we walked to church in the dense fog, was lovely. Each corner was a special surprise with homes and businesses decorated with greens and lights. By the time we reached Trinity Church we were totally awed by the evening and the weather. Walking home blanketed by even thicker fog, we spoke of past Christmases. "Remember, Mom, camping on the beach Christmas Day at San Clemente?"

Everyone has their own traditions at Christmas and one of the best is "Remember, Mom?"
A motley crew of pirates, witches, and princesses gathers for the Hallowe’en party.

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The Green Light Winter 2003
Pointers in the News

by Kay O’Brien

Recently the Newport Daily News featured the cleaning and restoration of 14 stained glass panels, depicting the Stations of the Cross, at St. Joseph’s Church. Rita Rogers and Charles Duncan were featured in this labor of love, and here’s some background on our neighbors. Rita is a painter who came to the Point in the early 1980s. A well-known artist, Rita has restored paintings at the Preservation Society, Redwood Library and for private collectors.

Twenty years ago, Charlie was elected President of the Point Association. He grew up in Kentucky and Pennsylvania and at 18 set off on the Mississippi River as a deckhand. As he viewed this cross-section of America, he worked his way up through the license ladder from mate to pilot to the top. Charlie came to the Point in the 70s and set up his Duncan sign business. Recently he resigned from the Zoning Board after 13 years service, two as Chairman.

Both Rita and Charlie are parishioners of St. Joseph’s and have enjoyed the adventure and challenge of bringing the stained glass panels back to life. Now you know whom to contact with your questions about restoring paintings and glass.

Harbor House residents are bidding farewell to John Byrne, their manager, who helped them off to a good start in a new phase of their lives. His property management company is now sending him to Warwick to oversee 500 condominium units. We wish you well, John, and hope you’ll stop by occasionally as you cross the bridge.

A special thanks to Bernie Leduc, the Harbor House maintenance man. Bernie worked for the contractors on the renovation project, so knows every space inside and out. He loves working outside, and neighbors have watched the property respond to his tender loving care.

Speaking of TLC, the Christopher Columbus statue loved it, too. Howard Newman, our award winning sculptor, managed with the help of Charlie Duncan, to lure weatherworn Columbus to his studio on Farewell Street for a cleaning and restoration. Christopher was back on his pedestal on Memorial Boulevard/Bellevue Avenue in time to greet his admirers on Columbus Day.

Congratulations once again to Myra Duvally and her Benefactors of the Arts. For many years, Point gardens have been open in June for many visitors. A rare treat this fall was the First Bellevue (and nearby) Garden Tour arranged by the Benefactors.

Gone (to Portsmouth) but not forgotten are Angela and Joe Vars, for many years, official host and hostess for almost all Point Association activities. This year they have been partying all year long to celebrate their 50th anniversary – happy times for all involved.
In July a big, fancy well-digging rig appeared in the orchard at Bridge and Second Street, and here's the story.

HERB ROMMEL DIGS A WELL

By Herb Rommel

City water with sewer charge costs one cent a gallon. You pay for the sewer when you water the garden. I thought I would like to have a well for the garden. I wanted it in the back yard, but the drilling machine would not fit under the trees, so it is in the orchard.

Wellworks who dug the well said that the Point was virgin territory with no other wells. He did not know how deep he would have to go or what he would find. The contract specified, “Quality and quantity of water not guaranteed.”

So I entered into an open-end agreement to pay $8.50 per foot plus an additional $8.50 per foot for a casing which would be needed until we struck bedrock. It took only three hours to drill the well, which is 245 feet. We hit bedrock at 22 feet. I was hoping for fresh water that we could all use like the old Middletown pump. Unfortunately, it came up a bit salty, five and a half gallons a minute. John Grosvenor is designing a pump house, which will be attractive

The well digging machine. No wonder it wouldn't fit in the back yard. We're surprised it fit in the orchard!
History & Archives REPORT

Do you know about the Gallows at Gravelly Point?

"In 1723, a year in which eighty-two pirates climbed the gallows stairs throughout various Atlantic seaports, twenty-six rogue seamen were executed in Newport, at the end of Long Wharf, in just one day."

If you want to know more about the history of this story, check out the Fall issue of Newport Life.

This story and others are in the Point Association archives, material collected by members over the years and used for Green Light articles. If you have an interest in working with History and Archives, please call Bill Hall, 846-4159.

Winter 2003 The Green Light
Crème de Menthe Brownies

These brownies are a holiday favorite requested by my family and friends every year. The pretty green and chocolate miniature confections, placed in a decorative mini-muffin cup, make a statement on every table. They are the perfect dessert to take to a holiday party as they travel well, arrive in bite size pieces and serve about 25 people. Decorate the plate with a few red raspberries and mint leaves to create an elegant red and green presentation. Happy Holidays!

**Bottom Layer:**
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla

Cream butter and sugar. Mix in eggs. Sift in flour and salt. Stir in Hershey’s syrup and mix at medium speed until smooth and evenly blended. Bake in ungreased 9”x13”x2” pan at 350° for 30 minutes. Cool and refrigerate.

**Middle Layer:**
- 2 cups of powdered sugar
- ½ cup of butter
- 4 tablespoons of green Crème de Menthe

Cream the sugar and butter together. Add the Crème de Menthe. Spread completely over cooled brownies and refrigerate until hardened.

**Top Layer:**
- 6 tablespoons of melted butter
- 1 cup chocolate chips

Melt the butter and chocolate chips together. Spread on the top of the middle layer. Refrigerate until serving time. With a sharp knife, cut into small one-inch squares and place in mini-muffin cups. Makes 50 to 75, depending on the size you cut them. Freezes great.
Nostalgic Moment from Our Scrapbook

Eleanor Weaver took this photo of a Point Christmas carol rehearsal in the Sanford Convell House in December 1957.

The Point Association Membership Form

Please make check payable to The Point Association and mail with form to PO Box 451 Newport, RI 02840. A subscription to the Green Light is included with all memberships.

- Individual $10
- Family $15
- Subscriber $25
- Patron $40

Name: ____________________________________________________________

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Mailing Address: __________________________________________________________________

Second Address (if applicable): _________________________________________________________

Committees and Activities

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

- Beautification
- Harbor Watch
- Green Light
- Plant Sale
- Membership
- Program/Event Planning
- History and Archives
- Children’s Activities
- Publications/Communications/Web
- Neighborhood Watch
- Underground Wires

Winter 2003 The Green Light
Concerts at Harbor House
December 20 (Saturday)
January 25 (Sunday)
February 14 (Saturday)
March - TBA
April 18 (Sunday)

DON'T MISS
December 20 Swanhurst Small Chorale concert at Harbor House 4:00 pm
Followed by Cookie Swap at Harbor House at 5:15 pm

SAVE THESE DATES
March 28 Pot Luck Supper
May 22 Plant Sale

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