The GREEN LIGHT

XLIX No. 2 Summer 2004

Contents

Letter From the President 3
Membership Report 4
New Members' Cocktail Party 5
The Pot Luck Supper 6
Storer Park Clean-Up 7
The Plant Sale 8
Waterfront Notes 9
Newport Design Charrette 10
The Potter School Report 10
Mosquito Fleet 11
America's Cup Racing 11
That Was Then 12
How To Explore on a Rainy Day 14
Walking on The Point 15
Wells on The Point 16
Harpsichord Concert 17
Favorite Recipes 18
Nostalgic Moment from Our Scrapbook 19
Save the Date 20

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Board meetings are generally scheduled for the first Monday of the month and are open to Association members. Please call Jack for time, date, and location.

Copies of *The Green Light* may be purchased for $1.00 at Bucci's Convenience Store, Poplar St. at Thames, and at Newsbreak in the Ocean State Job Lot Plaza on East Main Road.

The Point Association

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; and promoting public policies that strengthen all of Newport's neighborhoods.

Cover Image: *Combining the old and new -- a digital photo of the old train station converted to a watercolor-style image. Courtesy of Richard Carrubba.*

Dear Pointers,

As this issue goes to print, summer is fast upon us, and I find myself wrestling with many competing demands on my time. Among them are filling Eileen MacKrell's shoes—and those of her distinguished predecessors!—as your new *Green Light* editor, getting acquainted with my new daughter Cora, bringing order to the house and yard after a biting winter and long-enduring rainy spring, and, of course, my job as a Navy Commander on the teaching faculty of the Naval War College. I have to admit that baby Cora has first priority!

This issue provides a sampler of items that will, I hope, whet your appetite for the coming summer on The Point. Whether it's watching America's Cup sailboats or Tall Ships, pondering whether that eternal (or infernal) dampness in your basement is some remnant of a long lost well, enjoying a good read on a rainy day, or simply walking through our beautiful neighborhood, there should be something in this issue for everyone.

Finally, just to reaffirm that life goes on even in biting winter and rainy spring, this issue also highlights some of the local news, events, and activities that occurred on and around The Point over the past several months. They all serve to remind us of the importance of being good neighbors, having close friends, and relishing the occasional special guest. Enjoy!

Alan

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we move into June the thoughts of Point residents naturally turn to flowers, seaside picnics, and – traffic. Much of Newport's economy is based on summer-time tourism, yet we try to ignore the fact that tourists bring along their cars when visiting our city. Avoiding roadway gridlock and scouting available parking spaces have replaced the America's Cup races as Newport's primary summer sporting events.

The current traffic status quo is a lose-lose arrangement for visitors and residents alike. Our policies are often counterproductive and nonsensical. We require mid-town commercial developments to provide parking spaces and thereby increase an already unsustainable level of traffic through our colonial streets. We've spent hundreds of thousands of dollars and over a year to have the RIDOT dig up America's Cup Avenue to synchronize traffic signals without accommodating irregular pedestrian crossings and the occasional disoriented tourist.

Even more large scale disruptions are looming on the horizon. For several years the RIDOT has been planning a major reconstruction to the approaches to the Newport side of the Newport Bridge. The initial construction of this roadway has left us with a monument to poor planning in the "ramp to nowhere" which is a clear reminder to all of us who traverse the Van Zandt Bridge on a daily basis that such construction scars can last a generation.

Fortunately, the DOT's planning group this time around includes the participation of several Newport residents, including Point Association board member and past president Rich Carrubba. Rich has been reporting to the board on a regular basis about the group's progress. The sentiment of the planning group seems to be shifting. The conventional thinking was that new roadways should be constructed to move the maximum number of vehicles through roadways as quickly as possible. Now the DOT may be more receptive to the idea of satellite parking facilities for tourists coming to Newport and appealing mass transit options for when tourists have been separated from their cars. While actual ramp reconstruction is still probably years away, we should all pay close attention to this strategic project.

Coles Mallory, current Point Association board member and chairman of the Newport Neighborhoods group, has persuaded City Manager Jim Smith to allow three Newport residents to join the city's Internal Traffic Committee. The ITC determines the need for local traffic improvements such as stop signs, speed bumps, and other roadway improvements. I will be serving as one of the new members. If you have any questions or suggestions about how our traffic predicament can be improved, I'd like to hear from you.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT
by Patricia and Rich Carrubba

Welcome to New Members!

Evelyn Downes
Lee Houle-Madden
Loretta Marchese
Patricia O'Donnell
Muriel Valdes

The Point Association sends a special "Thank You" to the following members:

PATRONS

Bryan & Fran Babcock
Stephen & Merry Preston Barker
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Alson Castonguay
Lyn & Peggy Comfort
Ann & Derek Coulton
Michael & Nancy Curran
Don DeAngelis
Don & Rowena Dery
Will Dewey & Don Desrosiers
Myra DuVally
Thelma Ebbitt
Rose Lee & Roy Fitzherbert
John & Donna Flynn
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Diana & Peter Gonzalez
Jim & Gail Gunning
Bill Hall
Richard and Nancy Harris
Mr.& Mrs. G.Carleton Hepting
David & Susan Killebrew
Andy La Varre
Bruce & Leslie Long
Robert & Virginia Maar
CAPT Eileen Mackrell
Patti & Bruce Macleish
Coles & Marcia Mallory
Peter Martin
Bob & Lace Milligan
Kenneth & Roe Moldow
Ted & Sally Murphy
Mark & Linda Narbey
Patricia O'Donnell
David & Laura Pedrick
Kip Bergstrom & Marilyn Piurek
Paul & Nancy Quattrucci
Herbert Rommel
Hillar & Mary Sarepera
Jape Shattuck
Margaret & George Vranesh
Gretchen Weiss
Margot Winger

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

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Dr. & Mrs. Charles Bauer
Mary Berlinghof
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Robert & Margaret Bonney
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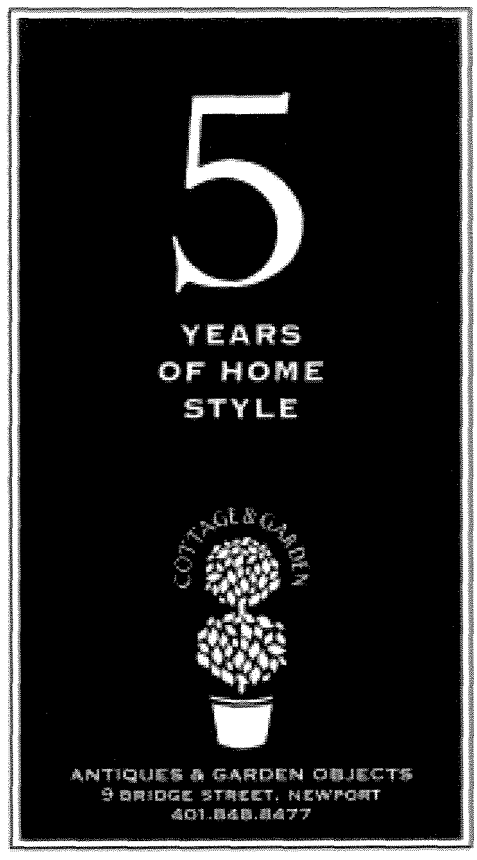
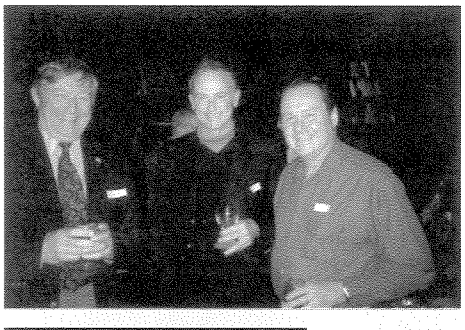
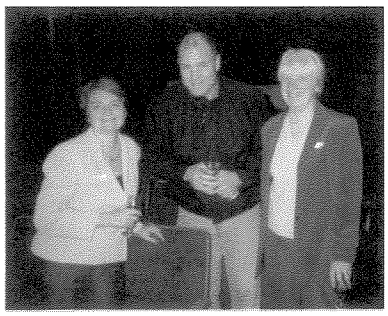
Francis & Christine Frost
Dr. & Mrs. Richard Gallagher
Thomas Emmett & Amy Garrison
Ted & Vance Gatchel
CAPT & Mrs. Benjamin Gilson
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas D. Goldrick
Isabel Griffith
Rosalys Hall
Patrick & Marilyn Hayes
Ray & Elena Herrmann
Leslie Henry & Charles Hripak
Mr. & Mrs. Curtiss James
Leila Jenkins
Deborah & Kevin Kelsey
Sara Lyn Kessler
Lois & Jack Kessler
Alex & Kristen Lanio
Bill & Sally MacKay
Dorothy & Ed Madden
Ian & Ward McIntyre
Pierre Merle
Constance Metcalf
Anna Wood Murray
Child & Family Services of Newport County
Eileen & Eugene O'Reilly
Rev. & Mrs. Jonathan Ostman
Wendy Withington & David Paisner
Carol Pardee-Havican
Mr. & Mrs.Stephen Perdreaux
Maggie Vale & Clark Poston
Anita Rafael
David Robbins
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas A. Rodgers
Mary Jane Rodman
Joe & Bev Silvia
Thomas Sturtevant
Don & Jody Sutherland
Bowen Sweet
Robert & Karen Thompson
Robert & Barbara Vanderhoof
Suzanne & Dominic Varisco
Ralph & Kit Weiss
CDR & Mrs. Walter Whitley
Court and Jane Wilson
Jay & Brenda Wilson
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Yawney



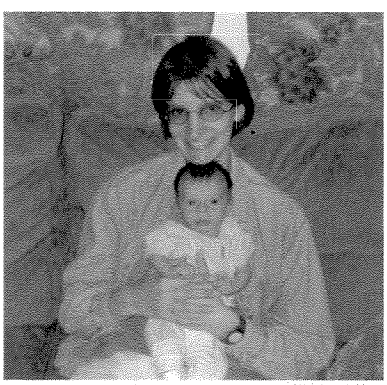
NEW MEMBERS' COCKTAIL RECEPTION . . .



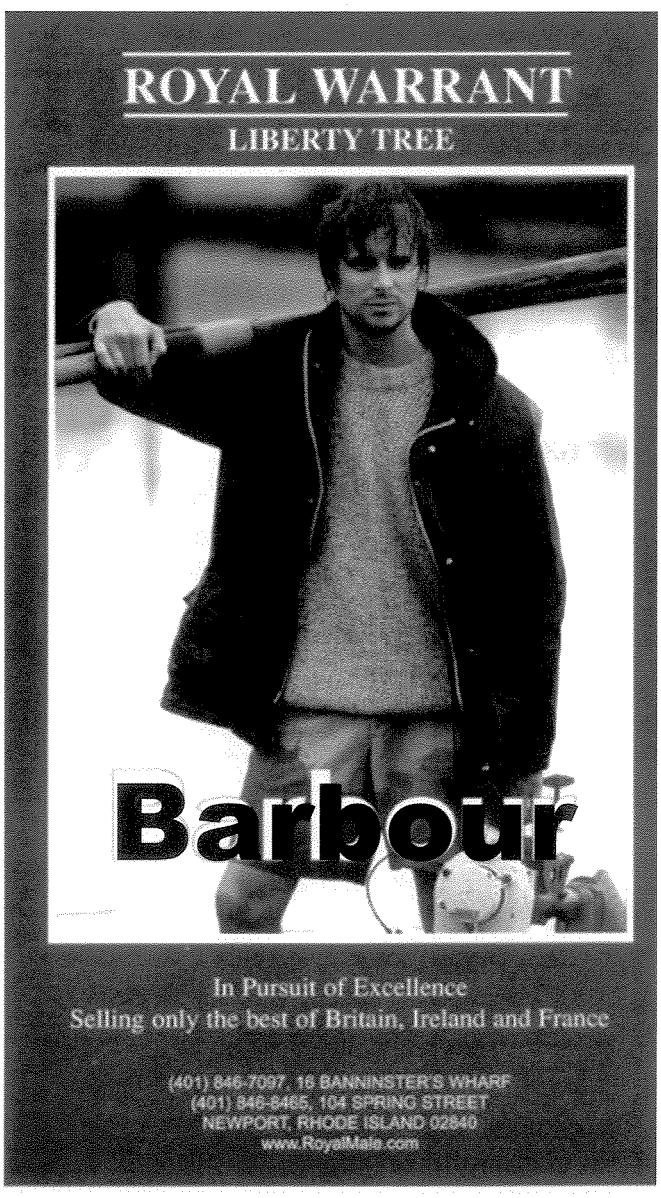


but few NEW members came. . . so the Board had a fine time at Firehouse Theater.

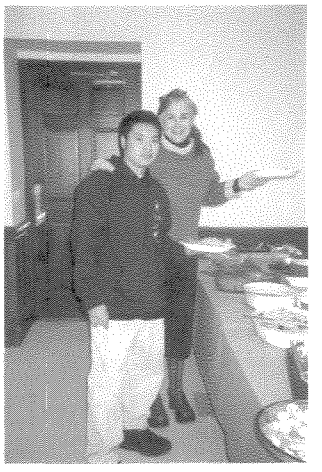
BORN ON THE POINT



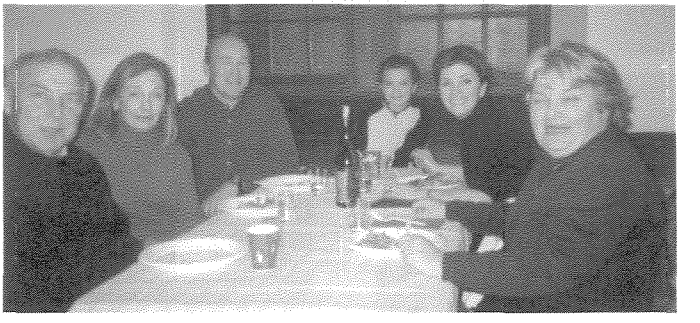
The newest member, 5-week old Cora Wall, and her mother, Martha.



POTLUCK SUPPER



Pointers enjoyed good food and excellent company at the spring Potluck Supper on March 28th at Harbor House. Special thanks go to Donna Maytum for organizing this year's get-together. Many people asked for the Brussel Sprouts recipe which appears on this page. Thanks to Betty Cares for sharing her recipe with us.



Brussel Sprouts with Pine Nuts

Think you don't like brussels sprouts? Think again: These are pretty irresistible.

3 tablespoons butter
1/2 cup pine nuts
1 1/2 pounds fresh brussels sprouts, halved, or 1 1/2 pounds frozen brussels sprouts, thawed, halved
1 cup canned low-salt chicken broth
2 shallots, minced
1 tablespoon chopped fresh marjoram
1/3 cup whipping cream

Melt 1 tablespoon butter in heavy large skillet over medium heat. Add nuts and stir until golden, about 3 minutes. Transfer nuts to small bowl. Melt 1 tablespoon butter in same skillet over medium heat. Add sprouts; stir 1 minute. Add broth; cover and simmer until sprouts are almost tender, about 7 minutes. Uncover and simmer until broth evaporates, about 5 minutes. Using wooden spoon, push sprouts to sides of skillet. Melt 1 tablespoon butter in center of same skillet. Add shallots; sauté until tender, about 2 minutes. Stir in marjoram, then cream. Simmer until sprouts are coated with cream, stirring frequently, about 4 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. (Can be made 4 hours ahead. Cover and chill. Stir over medium heat to rewarm.)

Transfer brussels sprouts to serving platter. Mix in half of pine nuts. Sprinkle with remaining pine nuts.

Makes 8 servings. Bon Appétit November 2001

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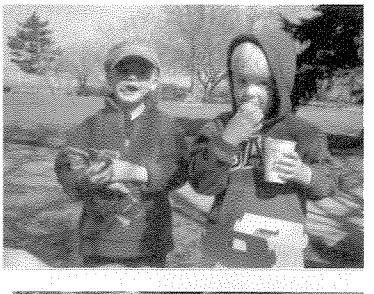
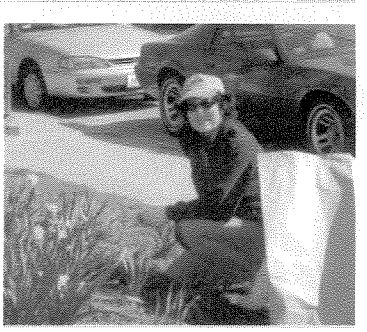
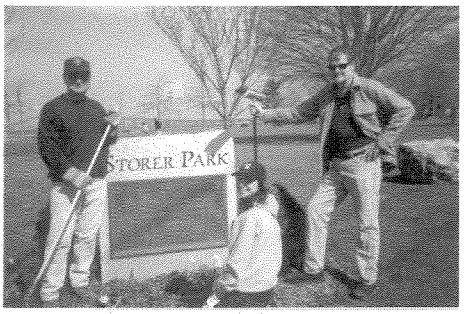
THE STORER PARK SPRING CLEAN-UP

This spring's clean-up was on Saturday May 1.

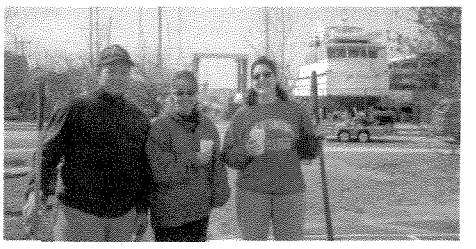
A beautiful morning, a hard-working crew, and rewarding refreshments resulted in a revitalized Storer Park.



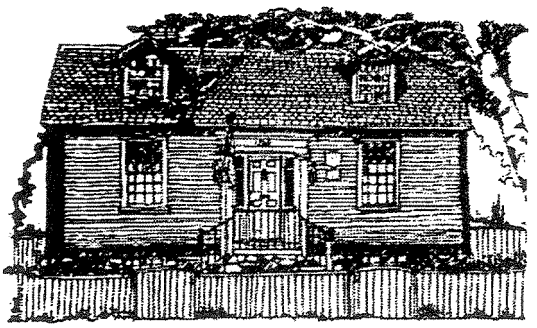




Special thanks go to Bruce and Leslie Long for their continued support of Storer Park, and to Marcia and Coles Mallory for organizing the clean-up. Hyatt employees Paul Jones, Andrea Garland, & Susan Sondheim came out to lend a welcome hand. Many familiar faces made appearances and lended hands to make the job a little lighter.



The Michael Moulton House *c.1711*



For reservations contact: Sarah Gill at
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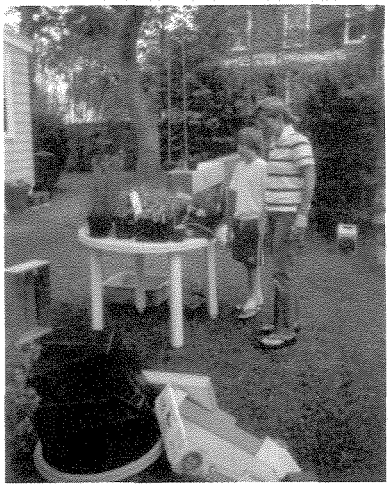
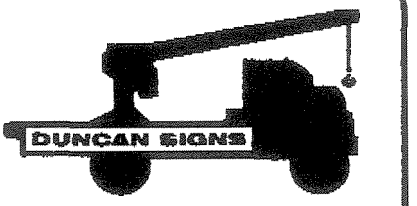
PLANT SALE

Plant lovers converged on the driveway at 101 Washington St. for the annual Point Plant Sale on May 22. Cool, misty weather did not deter these green thumbs from getting a good bargain.





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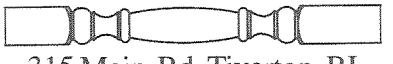

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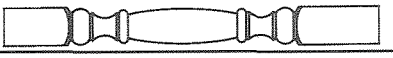


WATERFRONT NOTES by Liz Mathinos

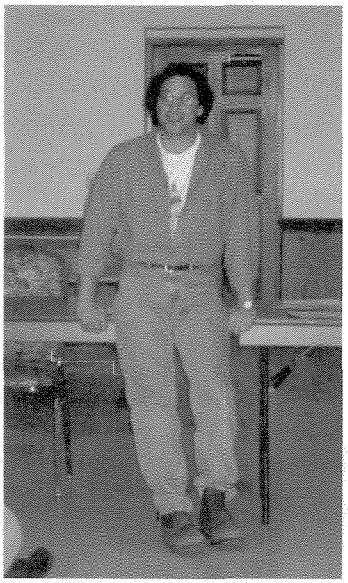
WHAT'S THAT HOLE UNDER GOAT ISLAND?

Of interest to Point residents is the serious problem of a hole *under* Goat Island. Walkers have probably noticed the sinkhole that is cordoned off in the parking lot on Goat Island. Also in danger of imminent collapse is the raised section of the roadway near the Viking Tours ticket office. Pictures of the deterioration of the bridge under the roadway were shown to the Waterfront Commission in March, and the potential for a collapse was vividly described by Mr. Blake Henderson of Northeast Engineers, hired by the Hyatt Hotel. Mr. Henderson explained the need to speed up the permit process to facilitate the repairs that are needed immediately. In the December 1992 issue of *The Green Light*, the article "The Hole at Goat Island" reported on the repairs done to the concrete beams and metal underpinnings that were disintegrating at that time. Now twelve years later, another emergency repair has to be done. The sea reclaims filled land, it seems, because a major shoring up of the foundation at the Inn on Long Wharf also was completed this past year at considerable cost. When and at what cost the private owners of this section of Goat Island will be able to complete the repairs will be a subject of future discussion, especially with the busy yachting season coming up this summer.

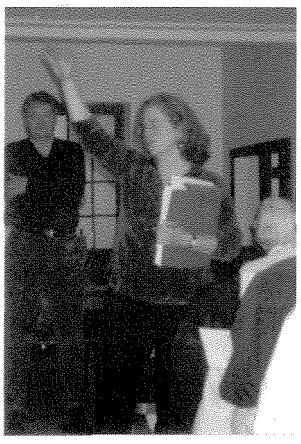
BLOCK ISLAND FERRY AT DANA DOCK?

At the April meeting of the Waterfront Commission, Harbormaster Tim Mills reported a request for the Block Island Ferry to dock overnight on the north side of the Dana dock south of the causeway. With the level of boating activity in our packed inner harbor, there will be much discussion about this request in this "tight" area of the marina/shipyard and causeway. If an agreement were reached, it would generate revenue for the city since the city has the rights to use the north side of this pier.

THE SPRING MEETING

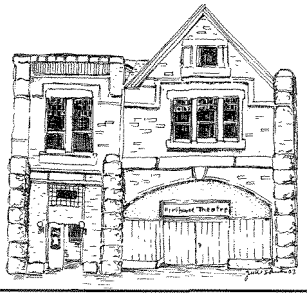


Our guest speaker, Robert Cagnetta, of Heritage Restoration, Inc., talked about restoration of historic homesand the pros and cons of various techniques that have been used over time.



Laurie Shaw gave a report on the electric power wires on Third St.

LIVE THEATER ALL YEAR 'ROUND
FIREHOUSE THEATER



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CENTRAL NEWPORT URBAN DESIGN CHARRETTE

by Liz Mathinos

charrette - n. A final, intensive effort to finish a project, especially an architectural design project, before a deadline. (Webster's). Alternatively, a design workshop. (Newport Daily News)

To build on the city's excellence and to make Newport a year-round destination for tourism, merchants, architects, developers, waterfront advocates, and citizens turned out to attend a charrette April 2nd and 3rd to redesign the "heart" of Newport from Long Wharf and Washington Square to Queen Anne Square. Facilitator Dan Burden of Walkable Communities, Inc., began with a slide presentation that illustrated examples of traffic roundabouts, facades for parking garages, and other attractive solutions to problem areas in other cities. With these ideas in mind, attendees then voiced opinions and voted on what were the most important assets to preserve or areas to improve. Voted number one was "Preserve historic assets." Two and three were "Harborwalk" and "Visual access to water/ walkability." Others in the top ten were to put utilities underground, create attractive parking, improve greenscapes, enhance visual beauty, decrease traffic, build bicycle paths, and increas toilet facilities.

On Saturday, April 3rd, following a walking tour in a steady rain to view the Gateway parking area, Long Wharf, and Queen Anne Square, attendees divided into nine teams to independently outline the improvements needed for the future. Significantly, a Harborwalk was included in all nine plans. Other major proposed changes were to totally redesign the Gateway parking area, convert the parking lots on Marlborough Street and Mary Street into garages with attractive facades, eliminate two lanes on America's Cup Avenue, and add traffic roundabouts to enhance traffic flow.

This excerpt from the article "The History of Long Wharf" by Esther Fisher Benson in the June 1992 Green Light is an apt reminder: *"Change, however, began to overcome the city's inertia. The Age of Steam had arrived, taking over many services. Passengers from up and down the Sound, cargo of all kinds, businessmen, and visitors used the steamships, travelling to and from Boston, Providence, Fall River and New York. Newport began to bloom again. In 1857, a Dr. Jackson proposed turning the Cove into a park, with grassy lawn, flower-beds, shaded walks, a pool and fountain; not unlike the park now topping Washington Square.* ***Nothing came of it.***"

Once again another plan goes forward in this Age of Tourism, and what will become of it? Where will the money come from for this major redesign? With the level of interest by this great cross-section of Newport residents, perhaps there will be some follow-through, leading to significant improvements in traffic flow, parking, and safe walking in our future. Taylor and Associates will summarize the plan to be presented to the Redevelopment Agency, and a presentation to the City Council will follow in June.

POTTER SCHOOL REBORN

by Mary Beth Smith

How exciting to see an idea come to fruition! While a student in the Historic Preservation program at Roger Williams University, I worked on a class project about adaptive reuse of historic buildings. We chose the Potter School on Elm Street, Newport, to be renovated and restored as condominiums. Therefore, it was a pleasure to visit the "work in progress" a few weeks ago and see the vision of Newport Collaborative Architects, Inc. Of the seven units in the building, four are already spoken for. This is a compatible application for a formerly public building in a residential neighborhood. Good job!

Courtesty of The Newport Collaborative

THE MOSQUITO FLEET

The Naval War College Museum is currently hosting a traveling exhibit titled "The Mosquito Fleet: A World War II P.T. Boat Exhibit", which features the collection of Frank J Andruss, Sr., of Massachusetts. The exhibit is on display until July 1. It includes materials and photos about the Navy's P.T. boat training school, which was located north of us in what is now the Melville Marina District in Portsmouth. The museum's continuing exhibits covering the history of the Navy in the region are also well worth exploring.

Some Pointers may be unaware of this tiny gem of a museum located just a few minutes away from our neighborhood. The Museum is located in Founder's Hall, just up the hill from the main gate (Gate 1) of the Navy base. While access is not quite as simple as it once was, the general public can still visit the museum. All it requires is a call to the museum at least 24 hours in advance. Museum hours are Monday-Friday 10 a.m.-4 p.m., and in June Saturdays & Sundays, Noon-4 p.m. Call 841-4052 to arrange your visit

AMERICA'S CUP RACING RETURNS TO NEWPORT

by Barbara Lloyd Baker

Those of us who live on The Point know that we reside in an idyllic section of Newport somewhat apart from the usual bustle of summer in the city. But this June, we will be neighbors to more hubbub than usual, so here's a way to make the most of it.

For the first time in more than two decades, an international regatta among state-of-the-art America's Cup Class sailboats is scheduled for Newport. Slated as the UBS Trophy regatta, the week-long series begins June 19 between two 74-foot yachts: Team Alinghi, the Swiss group that won the America's Cup from New Zealand last year, and Oracle BMW Racing, the San Francisco team that also challenged New Zealand for the Cup last year.

This regatta involves as many as two races per day beginning at 1:30 P.M. on Narragansett Bay. Organizers from Team Alinghi and from the RI Sailing Foundation are encouraging spectators to take a picnic lunch to Fort Adams State Park for the best race viewing.

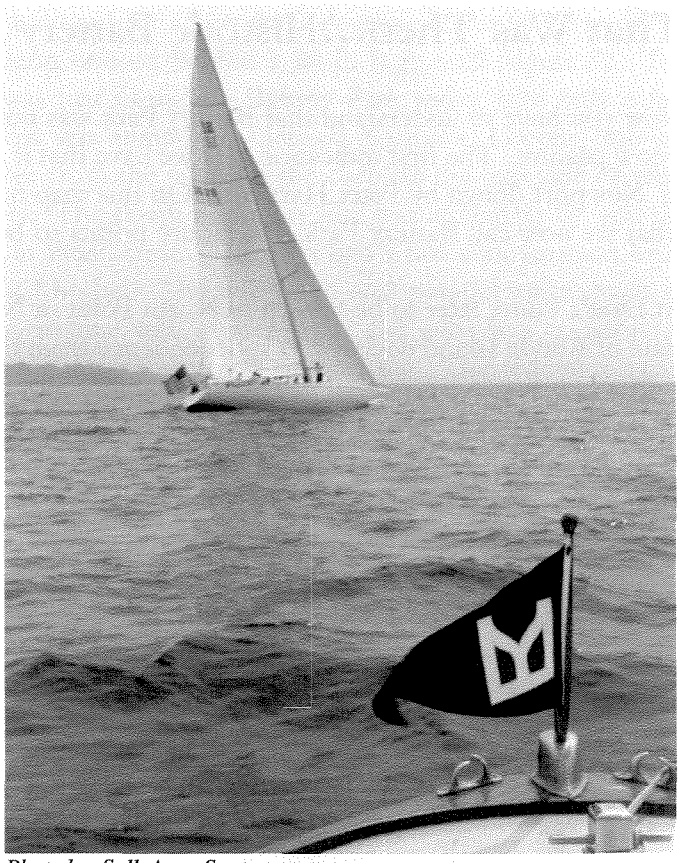


Photo by: SallyAnne Santos
Courtesy: Museum of Yachting, Newport, RI

Depending on wind direction, the racing each day will start near the park. Rounding marks are expected as far south as Castle Hill and as far north as Rose Island. The competitions also will be broadcast live by local radio station WADK. For those of us on The Point, another alternative for viewing is Goat Island, a destination that may be troublesome for parking but easily reached by walking.

Better still, we are close to Newport Shipyard, where the two race boats will be docked each day. Volunteers from the community are expected to be on hand there to guide visitors around the site so as not to interfere with on-going yard work.

Editor's Note: *In addition to the America's Cup regatta, most Pointers were undoubtedly excited to read the April 30th* Newport Daily News *front-page story announcing the return of the Tall Ships Festival to Newport. Ten tall ships will reportedly be berthed at the Goat Island Marina during the July 15-20 festival. The Point will undoubtedly provide an excellent vantage for the ships' arrival during the Parade of Sail and, as Barbara notes above, Goat Island is an easy walk from The Point. For those of you who have never seen a Tall Ship up close, I encourage you to take advantage of this great opportunity!*

That Was Then... Historic Battery Park by Ralph Weiss

Now you have to understand that Battery Park was not always a battery or a park. In fact, prior to 1776, it was a cow pasture. The first indication that we have that it might be used as a fortified position is on the 1747-8 map of Newport drawn by Peter Harrison. On this map he shows a fort on Goat Island, "a battery for 12 guns," at what we now call Battery Park, and future points to be fortified at Brenton's Point and Rose Island.

At Dyer's Point, later to be known as North Point or North Battery, a salute was fired on May 4, 1776, when the state of Rhode Island declared its independence from the British Crown. The first time that the site was used for military purposes is recorded in a very old manuscript now in the Newport Historical Society. On April 7, 1776, a Colonel Babcock of the Rhode Island militia brought cannons from the headquarters in Middletown and set up a battery on the site. The location had two distinct advantages. One, it looked directly southwest to the mouth of the Bay and, second, it was at 20 feet elevation above mean low water. In a hastily thrown up redoubt, he housed one 24 pounder and three 18 pound cannon. The first active engagement of the enemy from this site occurred early morning on April 11, 1776. The cannon fire from North Battery helped drive off the HMS Scarborough, with the net result that colonial forces recovered a brig previously taken by the HMS Scarborough.

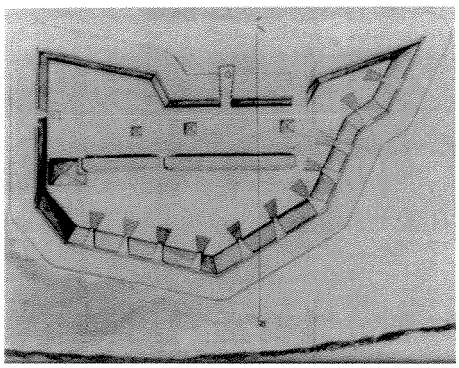


Figure1

Captain Abraham D'Aubant, chief engineer, British Army, who was with the occupying forces in December 1776, developed the first formal Fort. The Fort consisted of a headquarters, a hot-shot furnace, a magazine, and guard-house (figure 1). A stepped redoubt ran from north to south along Water Street, which is now known as Washington Street. The 1777 Blaskowitz map gives a reasonable likeness of the Fort's outline (figure 2). The Fort is clearly shown on all major maps of the Point area after May 1777. Captain D'Aubant's August 1777 plan called for 44 soldiers to be assigned at this strategic location, which was the northwest flank of the British inner defense line. By August 8, 1778, the position had ten cannon. According to American, French and German maps of the 1778 Battle of Rhode Island, the British used North Battery to keep the French fleet from taking Newport. This is the second documented time that the Fort was used in combat. Records show that the British also fired upon the French fleet as it left the Bay in August 1778, which was the third documented time that the Fort was used to repel the enemy.

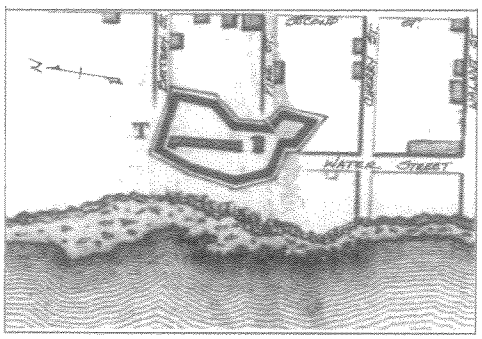


Figure 2

Prior to the British evacuation of Newport in October 1779, they pulled down the walls and destroyed the buildings in the Fort. In late October 1779, the American forces occupied the North Battery area until the French arrived in 1780. After Rochambeau's initial inspection, he commented on how poorly the Fort had been constructed and he ordered it rebuilt. However, it did not play a major role in the French plan for the defense of Newport.

In 1781, the French left Newport for Yorktown, and the Fort was turned over to the Americans again. The Rhode Island General Assembly fortified the position because it was feared that the British would attempt to take the French stores that were left behind as well as the ammunition magazine at Providence. After the surrender of the British army at Yorktown, the Fort fell into disuse. It was not used again during the American Revolution.

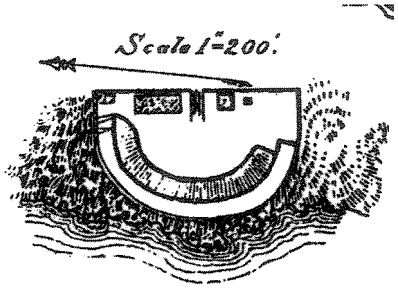


Figure 3

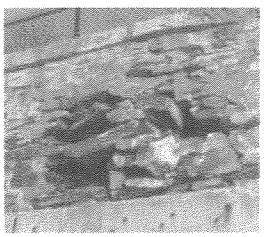
In 1798, North Battery was used for a new fort. A semicircular fort was developed with 12 to 13 cannon housed behind a 20-ft. high wall (figure 3). The shape of the new fort was just as we see Battery Park today with only a few exceptions. This new fort was named for General Nathaniel Greene, and encompassed an acre in area from the water to the curb on the east side of what is now Washington Street. The north boundary line was at Battery St. and the southern boundary was at Pine Street. The Fort had a hot-shot furnace, brick barracks, and brick guard house. The west wall and parapet were made of brick and stone and the original west platform for the guns was constructed over a brick catacomb that housed a bombproof magazine, storage area and prison area. The federal government acquired the site officially in 1799. The Fort was not manned until the War of 1812, which was the last time the site was used as a fortification.

In 1853, Washington Street was extended to Fort Greene and, by 1859, was extended again to Battery Street. Photographs taken in 1865 show the remains of Fort Greene completely fenced in and in a caretaker status. The original brick barracks and guardhouse were removed to make way for the Washington Street extension.

In 1884, U.S. Senator William Sheffield started the plan to transfer Fort Greene to the city of Newport. In 1887, this was accomplished by means of revocable license. By August 1891, action had been taken to start dismantling the Fort to turn it into a park. The progress was slow as the brickwork inside the outer wall was made of lime mortar and had turned to solid rock. The wall, which was 21 ft. thick and 20 ft. high, was removed down to the gun platforms and the cavity under this area was filled. The outer wall was capped with stone and a fence mounted, which is the west wall that we see today.

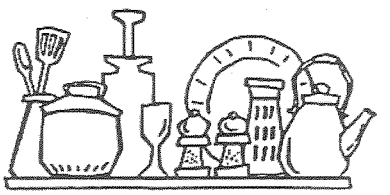
Figure 4

In 1926, the U.S. War Department sold the area outright to F. P. Garretson, who then gave Fort Greene Military Reservation to the city of Newport to be used as a park. Today, Battery Park provides residents and guests with a quiet haven to relax on a park bench, enjoy sunlight and shade, and contemplate expansive views of the Bay. On a fall day just after the first frost, however, one can still see the six gun rails outlined in the grass on the west side of the park just behind the benches (figure 4), a quiet reminder of the site's historic past.



Significant damage is visible to the north face of the fort.

Editor's Note: Those of us who live on The Point regularly enjoy Battery Park, and Ralph Weiss' article gives us an appreciation of the history of what was once known as Fort Greene. Many, however, might be unaware that the stone face of the fort is deteriorating, and could be in danger of falling into the Bay. I encourage you to contact your local government representatives and express your concern about the need for repairs. Help keep this historic site intact for all to enjoy for another hundred years.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HOW TO EXPLORE ON A RAINY DAY

by Kay O'Brien

Curl up with a book on a rainy day, head to the unknown, and get home safely. Two hundred years ago, in May 1804, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark with 44 members of the Corps of Discovery set sail up the Missouri River in search of a route to the Pacific. Some of you may have seen their travels on Ken Burn's PBS Special or at IMAX. We're hearing much about this rugged trip during its anniversary, but did you know that before this more publicized adventure, a sea captain from Tiverton, Robert Gray, ventured around Cape Horn to collect furs to trade in China and in the meantime discovered and named the Columbia River in 1792? Esther Fisher Benson reviewed the book *Captain Robert Gray in the Pacific* by Cross and Perkins, Jr., about this ground-breaking trip in the December 1989 issue of *The Green Light.*

Want to join the U.S. Exploring Expedition of 1838-42? Their goal was to investigate the Pacific Ocean from "top to bottom". A young Lieutenant Charles Wilkes commanded six sailing vessels of 70' to 127' with large crews that included botanists, geologists, mapmakers, and biologists. (An earlier assignment had Wilkes surveying Narragansett Bay while his family settled in a Newport cottage.) Reading *Sea of Glory* by Nathaniel Philbrick can take you on this fascinating and frightening four-year journey. Top to bottom surveying of the Pacific meant two trips to Antarctica, as well as visits to dozens of uncharted islands, the Columbia River, and the Northwest. The thousands of specimens and artifacts collected by the Expedition scientists became the foundation of the Smithsonian collection. When watching ships offshore this summer, compare life aboard the 1838-42 ships and today's high tech craft.

In July, Newport will be celebrating the Black Ships Festival with Shimoda, our sister city in Japan. In 1853-54, 150 years ago, Commodore Matthew Perry led several naval vessels to Japan, leading to the signing of the Treaty of Kanagawa and the opening of Japan. Perry, a Newporter and Pointer, lived in the house at the northeast corner of Walnut and Second Streets, now owned by the Newport Restoration Foundation. Now a fascinating new book, *The Great Wave* by Christopher Benfey – subtitled *Gilded Age Misfits – Japanese Eccentrics, The Opening of Japan* – is full of surprising New England and Newport connections with Japan.

The just-published Journal of the Newport Historical Society, titled—and focused specifically on— "The French in Newport", goes back to Revolutionary War days and relates how the French helped us achieve our independence. Congratulations on this historical treat, which reminds us of our French Connection on the Point, and nearby, where so many of the French were housed during their Newport stay!

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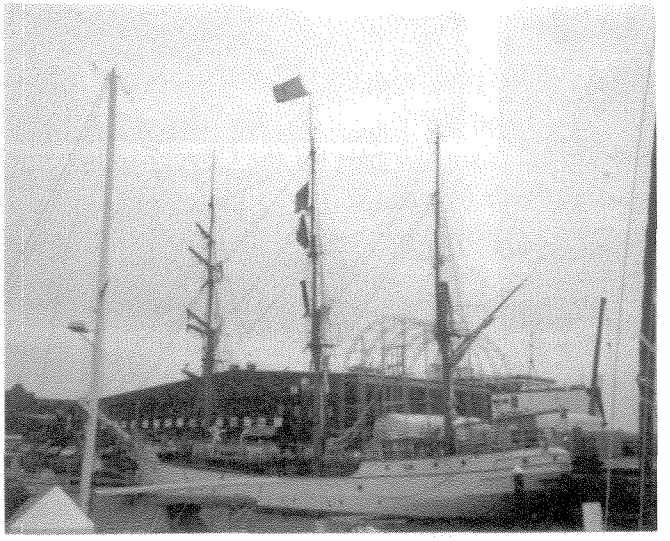
WALKING ON THE POINT

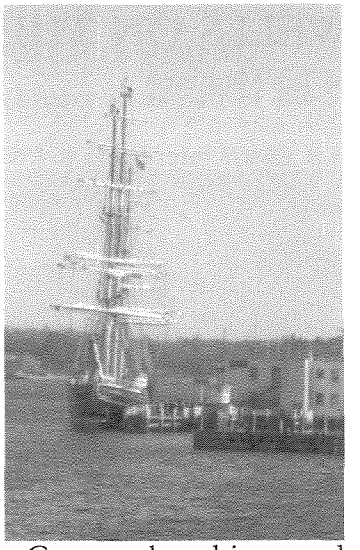
by Kay O'Brien

What a difference a season makes. For too many months, walkers were scarce, bundled up, heads down watching for icy patches, and no neighbors to meet. Canadian geese were seen taking over the parks, ice was forming on the bay, a deer was spotted on a driftway, and a coyote walking on Washington Street. The jet stream, cold ocean temperature, and wicked winds joined forces to plague us.



The Tall Ships STAD AMSTERDAM (above) and EUROPA (right) during recent visits to Newport

Now that fresh air is invigorating, and inviting color is back, neighbors are outside. We can wake to birdsong and enjoy long evenings. Gardens bring surprises as most favorites have survived and appear almost on schedule. Every walking day is different with time to check changes large and small on land and sea. The bay has been empty but will be filling up fast with all kinds of craft. A favorite spot to watch the action is the shipyard and the public walkway south of the causeway. Years ago, before the causeway was built, boat traffic could enter the inner harbor from either end of Goat Island. Now it is one way in and out, and soon we'll be hearing about congestion on the water. A new 80-foot dinner boat under construction is to be docked at Bowen's Wharf. More cruise ships have scheduled Newport stops and the Providence ferry will be back. In a surprising development, the Parade of Tall Ships has been moved to Newport, and Pointers will have a front row seat.



Earlier tall ships in Newport were the 250' Dutch luxury clipper STAD AMSTERDAM, stopping at Goat Island, and the 131' sail training ship EUROPA at the shipyard. Check out the Simeon Potter colonial at the corner of Washington Street and the Gladys Carr Bolhouse connector road. This house with a long history has undergone a beautiful restoration. At the Gateway, bus drivers and riders must be happy to get their terminal parking lot completed. Around the corner on Long Wharf, one wonders what is going on with the tall cranes and barge – hopefully, a space for a public walkway, part of Harborwalk.

We're all energized and excited as the Point has come alive again. Enjoy the great outdoors in a walk along our waterfront!

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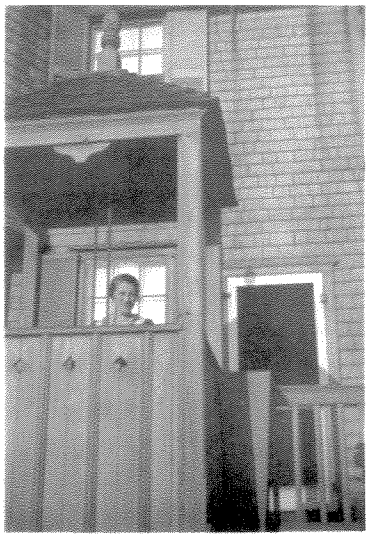
WELLS ON THE POINT

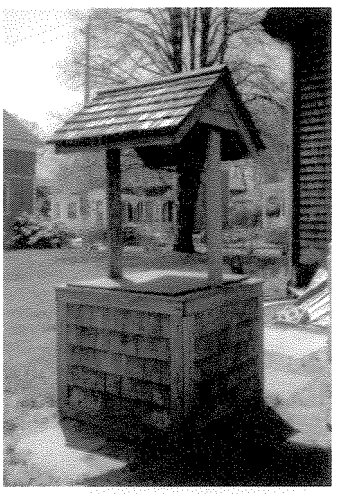
by Liz Mathinos

It is always interesting to know how stories in *The Green Light* lead to other stories. Imagine meeting Point resident Mrs. Ruth Barton in the doctor's waiting room and getting into a conversation about wells on the Point! Ruth commented on how much she had enjoyed reading Herb Rommel's story (in the Winter 2003-2004 issue of *The Green Light*) about digging a new well to find water for his garden and getting salty water instead. Since I had become curious about old pictures from the 1920s that show a well in the backyard of Quaker Tom Robinson's house at 62 Washington Street, my ears perked up!



A covered well circa 1928 at Quaker Tom Robinson's House

Ruth Barton related the story of how they checked the well in their backyard after purchasing their house at 49 Third Street. (Records show that a John Caswell owned most of that block from Walnut to Cherry in 1852. And Caswell Place is the original name of the street now named Katzman Place.) This same house is reputed to date from colonial days, and with a coin from 1737 found by John Mazza in his garden just north of this area, which was also a victory garden during World War II, one can surmise that this was fertile ground watered from the nearby wells. Muriel Zammer added to the story about the well being used continuously up to 1940 while her great-aunt Elizabeth "Lizzie" Case lived there.



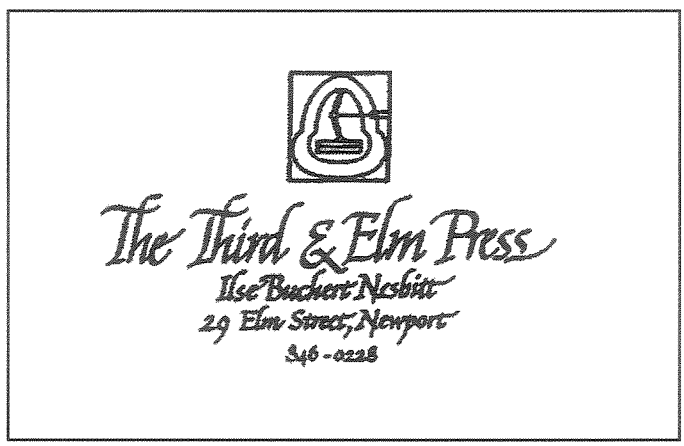
A covered well in the backyard of 49 Third St

In 1958, the Bartons cleared the deep well, which was beautifully constructed. To test for fresh water, they offered the first bucket to their dog, who licked it up enthusiastically! The Bartons used a bucket and rope to bring the clear, ice cold water up to water their garden. So one working well indicated that there could be more wells on the Point, and the search for others began.

A great walker in the neighborhood, Gene Potts, reported on several other wells, now covered, in that immediate area, on Chestnut Street, and three on Walnut Street.

Finally, a June 1992 article of *The Green Light* about Long Wharf and the filling of the Cove in the 1850s mentions "This smaller part [of the Cove] had become a muddy marsh (hence, Marsh St.) *fed by a fresh underwater spring* [emphasis added]. It had to be pumped out and filled with good sound dirt....[After the filling of this northeast corner of the Cove]... Several freshwater *wells* were dug deep into the bottom, to provide freshwater to both trains and steamships...This reconstruction of the old Cove gave Newport a commercial success it had not achieved for many years."

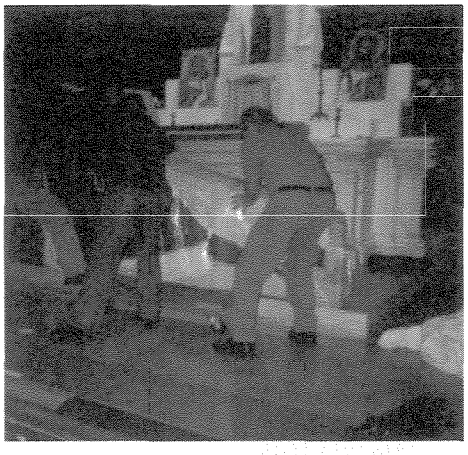
With this historical information about a freshwater spring and wells being dug in the Marsh Street area, it is not farfetched to believe that the well was operational at the Robinson house at Washington and Poplar also. Unfortunately, time did not allow me to check with the Newport Historical Society about additional wells, but if anyone has more information and will share, we'll have another story for a future issue of *The Green Light*!

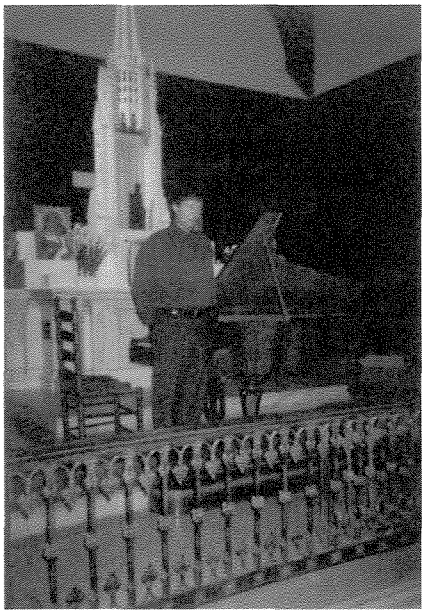


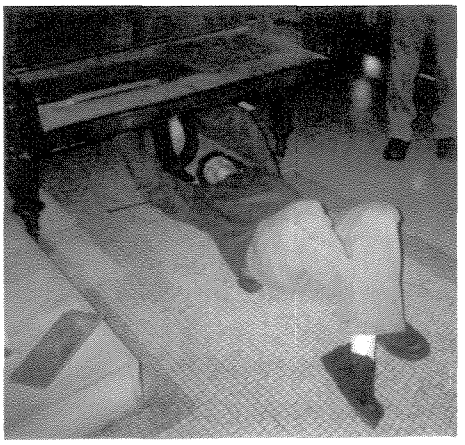
THE HARPSICHORD It came. It was assembled. It sounded grand.

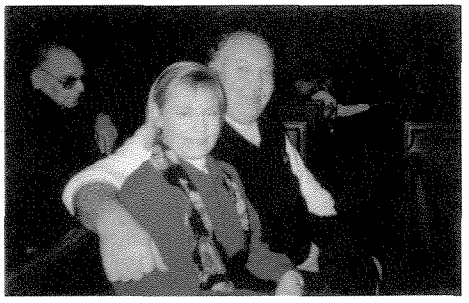
German harpsichordist Michael Bahmann performed at Harbor House Chapel on February 14 as part of the Ade Bethune Memorial Concert Series. A delightful way to spend Valentine's Day.

Thanks to Isabel Griffith for oranizing all the concerts at Harbor House.









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To start:
- 24 foil baking cups
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Topping:
- ½ pint of sour cream
- 4 tablespoons of sugar
- 1 tablespoon of vanilla

Filling:
- 3- 8 oz. packages of cream cheese
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 5 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Finishing Touch:
- 1 small can of cherry pie filling

Heat oven to 300°. Place a foil cup in the muffin pans; place one wafer in the bottom of each foil cup.

In a mixing bowl, blend cream cheese with sugar. Add eggs and vanilla and beat until smooth. Pour filling on top of wafer in each foil cup.

Bake 40 to 45 minutes or until wooden toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Place on wire rack to cool.

While cheesecakes are cooling, prepare the topping. Mix together sour cream, sugar and vanilla until smooth. Spoon about a tablespoon onto each cheesecake (just enough to cover the filling). Cook again for 4 to 5 minutes.

Chill. When the cheesecakes are cool, place one cherry with a bit of cherry sauce in the center of each cheesecake.

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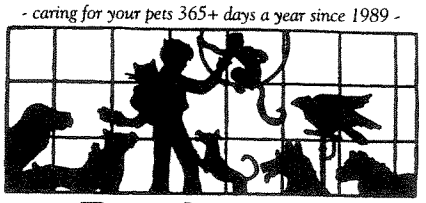

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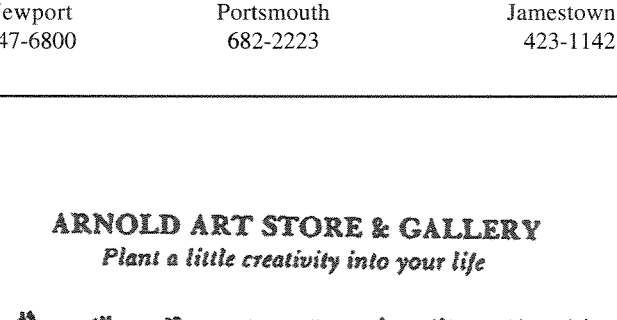

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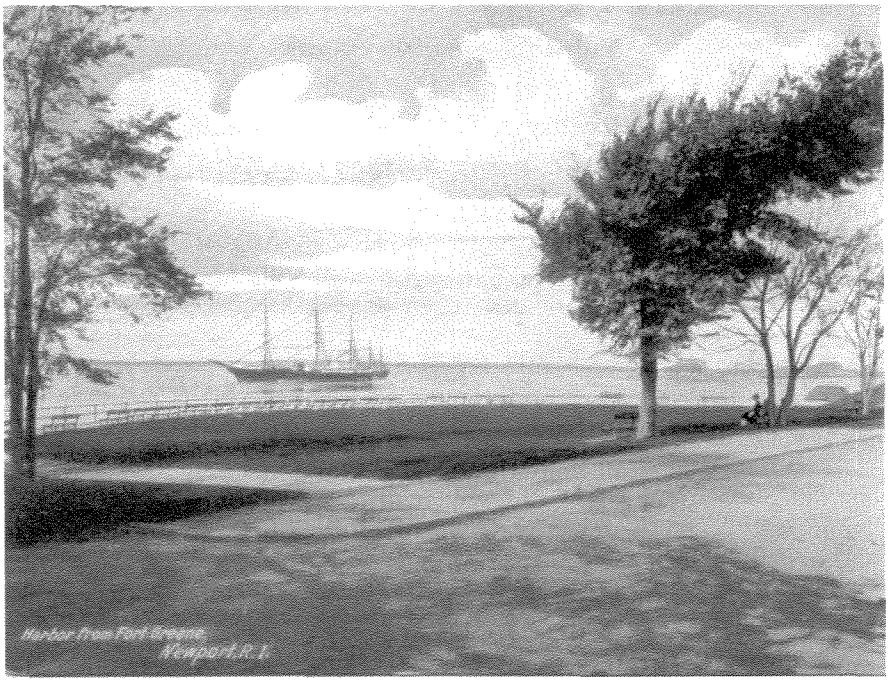
Nostalgic Moment from Our Scrapbook



This undated postcard of Battery Park from the Point Association archives is labeled "Harbor from Fort Greene, Newport, R.I." Just visible in the distance through the trees is the Naval War College. Of interest to some might be the postage stamp block on the reverse, which contains the following: "Place the Stamp Here. One Cent for the United States, and Island Possessions, Cuba, Canada, and Mexico. Two Cents For Foreign." Does anyone remember those postage rates?

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*

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

Save the Date

Point Association events

Point Picnic	Wednesday	June 30	6 p.m.

Join your neighbors at the home of Lyn & Peggy Comfort at 62 Washington St.

Members' Cocktail Party	Thursday	August 12	6 p.m.

Enjoy this late-summer gathering at The Sanford-Covell Villa Marina at 72 Washington St.

Other great events

Secret Garden Tour of the Point	Friday-Sunday	June 18-20	Hours vary.

Call 847-0514 for information.

St. John's Summer Fair	Saturday	July 31	10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Bristol Cathedral Choir at St. John's	Thursday-Sunday	July 22-25

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