

The
GREEN

LIGHT

BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

SUMMER 2006



The GREEN LIGHT

LI No. 2 SUMMER 2006

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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 at Thames.



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 Images: This photograph found in our archives was taken from the tower of St. John's Church. In the foreground we can see the house by the Chestnut Street driftway. (See article on page 16). A small portion of Bel'nepoli - home of Admiral & Mrs. Belnap and their daughters (including Rowan Howard and Emelia Cresswell) which was taken down in the 30s. There is no bridge of course and the training station can be seen off to the north.



Readers of *The Green Light* will note the absence this time around of Kit Weiss's witty and eminently useful recipe column. The word is that Kit and her husband Ralph have sold their house on the Point and moved to Middletown. The staff (and, I am sure, our readers) would like to thank Kit and Ralph for all they have done for the community and for our publication. We thank Kit for her recipes and other contributions and Ralph for his informative and well-researched historical writings. *The Green Light* wishes them well in their new life. They will be missed.

Alice Clemente

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

The "Dark House" Syndrome

Donna and I frequently walk the Point. In all seasons and at different times of the day we can feel the pulse of the neighborhood more accurately than careening down the street in an automobile. Recently we sensed a visible indicator of a changing lifestyle among area residents. Many of the houses we passed along Second and Third streets were dark – not a porch light, a night light, or the blue emission from the eternally glowing TV set.

We've noticed this phenomenon often enough to determine that many of these houses are unoccupied; not abandoned, but definitely not lived in on a permanent basis. We've also noticed the dark house syndrome at times when working folk would normally be home from the office, but prior to bed time for most residents – say around 9 PM. No doubt some Point residents work at night, in restaurants and other tourist-related businesses, especially during the summer months. However, even when these factors are considered, it seems that the Point harbors many empty homes.

What effect might this circumstance have on our neighborhood? Is it necessarily a negative indicator that we're morphing into a part-time neighborhood, where second-home owners visit here on weekends or during the summer season? It seems that there are pros and cons. Part-time residents probably won't get involved in Newport activities since they may be too busy with work or schools in the community of their primary residence. We may not be able to take advantage of talents part timers may have developed in other locations. On the other hand, part-time residents pay Newport property taxes, but don't make full use of Newport amenities, such as schools or trash collection. And what effect does this have on crime? Could obviously empty houses be a beacon to burglars?

We can't dictate how residents should display their property when they're out of town. Still, it's eerie to walk past a block of very expensive houses on Third Street and not see so much as a candle. At least they could leave the porch light on for us regulars.



President

WESTALL'S ICE CREAM STORE

by Marti Williams

Many of us newcomers on the Point have never heard of this ice cream store, but it used to be a destination of not only the Point neighborhood, but all of Newport. It is not clear how long it existed, but it was probably there for at least 30 years. The store was opened some time in the last quarter of the nineteenth century by Simeon Westall who lived between 1843 and 1911. Mr. Westall was born in England and spent his early years as a sailor. He first came to Newport as the captain of a schooner. He liked the city so much that he decided to stay and opened his ice cream shop on Bridge Street. He and his family lived above the store.

The store soon established quite a reputation on the Point and even became "the pride of the Point, known for miles around", as Miss Carrie Erickson described it. She lived at 43 Washington Street from 1893 to 1977. In an oral history done in 1965, she described shelves full of big glass jars filled with various candies such as pink hearts, cinnamon bark, licorice and rock candy. There was also a case of penny candy, as well as another case of an assortment of cigars. Ice cream could be purchased in any sized containers. The store "even had an ice water cooler". She described passing through red velvet portieres into the ice cream parlor, full of many white marble tables, where "the most delicious ice cream" was served in glasses.

The store was such a success that Mr. Westall built more ice cream stores at the Newport and Jamestown ferry landings, as well as in other parts of the state. His son, also named Simeon Westall, worked with his father and later ran the ice cream businesses after his father's death.

Obviously, for quite a time, Westall's ice cream store brought great pleasure to all who visited it, especially those living on the Point. If anyone reading this knows more about Westall's, or better yet experienced it first hand, please contact *The Green Light*. Maybe we have the makings of an ice cream party to share!

IN MEMORIAM

GIL BRADFIELD

His real estate ad, which appeared in *The Green Light* for years, proudly noted: Born on the Point. Gilbert Bradfield, who grew up on the corner of Cherry and Third, passed away suddenly earlier this year.

He was the son of John Bradfield, a Manual Bros. Moving Company employee, who spent summer evenings along with other "park bench philosophers" watching sunsets over the Bay while settling the affairs of city and state. In memory of his father, Gil had a tree planted along that Washington St. area.

After serving with the U.S. Army in occupied Japan, and graduating from college, Gil settled in New Jersey, marrying and raising three sons there. In recent years, he and his wife retired to R.I. where he became a realtor. Devoted to his family, Gil loved travel and had planned a trip to China this Spring. We mourn his passing, and extend our sympathy to his wife, sons and grandsons.

ROSALYS HASKELL HALL

A former editor of *The Green Light*, Rosalys Haskell Hall passed away on April 17, 2006, at the age of 92. Rosalys Hall, also known as Posey, was a member of a distinguished family, with ties to Roger Williams, Maud Howe Elliott, and Julia Ward Howe, author of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic". Like many other members of this family, she was a writer — the author of seventeen children's books. She was for twenty-five years an editor at Longmans Green and for some years a nursery school and French teacher.

Rosalys Hall loved dogs and was well known for providing a home for many of them. She also loved her community which she served diligently and generously, whether it be assisting with the Point's annual plant sale or as a Director of the Redwood Library. In the August, 1993, issue of *The Green Light*, Florence Archambault ended an article on Rosalys (Posey) Hall with these words: "She has done many things for the Point Association including a stint as editor of *The Green Light*. She can often be seen walking the Point with her dogs. We are deeply grateful to Posey for her dedication. Thank you, Posey!"

SHANTIA ANDERHEGGEN, HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLANNER

by Isabel Griffith

At a well-attended Point Association membership meeting in April, Shantia Anderheggen, Historic Preservation Planner, spoke about her work with the Newport Historic District Commission and answered questions from the audience. "I want Newport to be at the forefront of 'best practices' in restoration issues," said the native Rhode Islander. With a BA in Art History from URI and an MA in Preservation Studies from Boston University, Anderheggen is a highly qualified historic planner whose experience includes 14 years as an architectural historian for the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities in Boston. She grew up in South County and now lives in Kingston. "I have the long view of the past four decades on Aquidneck Island," she told her audience.

After about three months on the job, Anderheggen describes herself as the staff liaison to the Historic District Commission who will be the first and prime contact for applications to the Commission as well as a major resource for Commission members and property owners in historic districts. Anderheggen urges people to come to her first, when they are beginning to think about making changes to a property, before contacting an architect or builder. She will visit the site, investigate the possibilities, and ask questions. "My goal is to help owners frame applications that will be approved," she explained. She will go out on every inspection, complete the inspection report and provide guidance and clarification for both the owners and the Commission. Her intervention should speed things up because everything will be in order before it goes to the Commission.

Anderheggen expects to address issues that should increase the quality of Commission decisions, such as the need for development of formal guidelines for both applicants and commission members and the need for a fact sheet summarizing laws that affect properties. "I would like to help people understand what it means to be in an historic district."

In response to questions, Anderheggen expressed a willingness to act as a resource to neighborhood organizations such as the Point Association. When asked if she would help with a plan for getting the Third Street wires buried, she replied, "I don't know how you might do it, but I'd be willing to find other places where it has been done and how they did it." Regarding our piers, parks and seawalls, she explained that they are outside historic districts, but they do impinge on such districts. Cultural landscape study for historic districts is possible.

There were a number of questions about the desire of the Newport World Heritage Committee to have Newport considered for World Heritage status. Anderheggen said the nominations have been carefully written around very specific themes, such as religious tolerance. Only individual properties that address these themes would be named for designation, and most of these would be institutional properties. It would surprise her if the Point were given World Heritage status.

Asked about her new job and working in Newport, Anderheggen answered, "There are examples of every architectural style starting with the earliest colonial times. There is no other place like it."

SPRING 2006

SECRET GARDEN TOURS

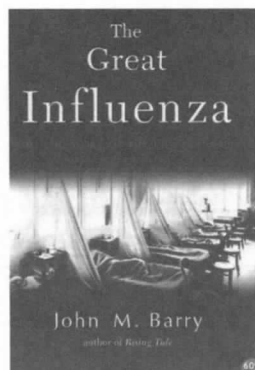
Explore the private gardens of our own neighborhood. People come from all around New England to see gardens in the Point! To purchase ticket(s) in advance and save \$5, call (401) 847-0514 or go on-line to secretgardentours.org. If you order early enough tickets will be mailed to you. On tour days, turn your ticket in at 33 Washington Street and you will be given a program with a map and directions to each of the gardens. Your ticket will be honored on any or all days of the tour: June 16, 12 to 5; June 17, 10 to 5 & June 18 12 to 5.

If you wish to volunteer you may do so on-line or by calling 847-0514. Remember all funds raised by The Secret Garden Tours go to support the Arts in the public schools on the Island.

THE BOOK LIGHT

by Suzanne Varisco

For some Pointers, reading books is not just fun—it is essential. With this in mind, the *Green Light* is introducing a new column about books. We begin with two choices, both available in paperback.



Our non-fiction choice is *The Great Influenza: The Epic Story of the Deadliest Plague in History* by John M. Barry (Viking 2004), which chronicles the 1918 influenza pandemic. The *New York Times* described this work as “easily our fullest, richest, most panoramic history of the subject,” and the *Chicago Tribune*

adjudged it as “not just a masterful narrative of the events of 1918 but also an authoritative and disturbing morality tale of science, politics, and culture.” For *Newsweek*, given the potential approach of avian flu, “the lessons of 1918 couldn’t be more relevant.” (Paperback, Viking Penguin 2005, ISBN: 0143036491)

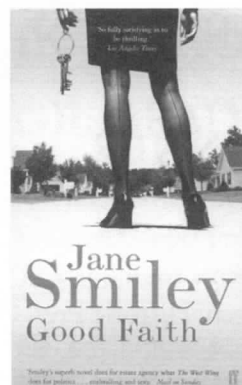
Good Faith (Knopf 2003), a comedic novel about real estate development by Jane Smiley, of *A Thousand Acres* fame, is our fiction choice. *Book Magazine* called *Good Faith* “a fable reminiscent of the works of F. Scott Fitzgerald,” and the *Washington Post* compared Smiley to Dickens: “Her imagination is prodigious, her observations exact, and the wealth of fascinating people inside her head a national treasure.” The *Los Angeles Times* found this book to be “a cautionary prequel just right for our times. And great fun, to boot.” (Paperback, Random House 2005, ISBN: 0641695055; Hardcover large print, 0375432779)

The Great Influenza

Wed., July 19, 7:30 p.m., 22 Walnut Street
Hostess: Isabel Griffith, 849-6444

Good Faith

Wed., Aug. 9, 2:00 p.m., 121 Washington Street
Hostess: Marcia Mallory, 849-5659
See you there!



In future *Green Lights*, book choices will reflect reader requests, include fiction and non-fiction, vary from serious to silly, and, we hope, always be worth your time and effort. Meanwhile, if you would like to gather for lots of fellowship and a little refreshment while exchanging ideas about one or both of these two books, please join us.

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CITY COUNCIL NEWS

by Louisa Boatwright

As the Point Association liaison to the City Council, I find that the big news is "too many city expenses and too little revenue". We have all read that the vast majority of the city's funds go to salaries and benefits, but what has this done to our assets? Our physical structures – buildings, roads, schools, sewers and our waterfront – continue to take a back seat.

Our current City Council and School Committee are working hard to address both assets and compensation and this is why we are hearing about bonds. It may, however, be well-advised for the city to allocate funds to maintain structures so that they do not require complete overhauls. A recent comment on personal finance noted that banks expect up to 28% of income to be allocated to capital, like your home. We need to consider this comment.

As there are so many piers, seawalls and drift-ways abutting the Point and most need repair, the Point Association is considering helping the city create an action plan to address these assets. We will work with the Waterfront Commission, Friends of the Waterfront and other concerned groups to try to create a long term plan and hopefully some potential funding source(s) to fix our waterfront before it fails like the area behind the Hunter House. Any interested parties please email louisa.boatwright@verizon.net or call 847-4956 to assist in this effort. We are planning a 1st Annual Waterfront Awareness and Fundraiser this fall, 2006; the Green Light restoration will surely be one of the highlights of this event.

Another piece of encouraging news is that Newport's Parks and Recreation Department applied for a grant to fix the Van Zandt Pier. Please be advised that if they receive the grant, there will be a rush for meetings and action at that time will be limited.

Kudos to the City of Newport's Sticker Parking Division for this year's mailing of the parking stickers. It really worked!

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THE POTTER SCHOOL

by Deborah Mulcare

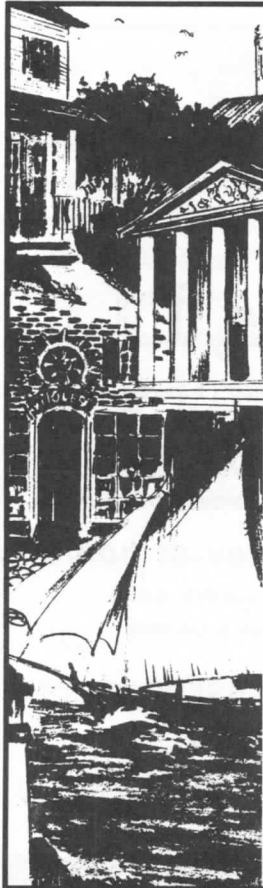


Following the Revolutionary War, the citizens of Newport looked to the Trustees of Long Wharf for Newport's mercantile reconstruction. Few realized that these same trustees would end up shaping Newport's future public education.

During the Revolution, the Trustees of Long Wharf and Public School were instituted by an act of the State Legislature. The goal of the legislation was to build a wharf and a hotel whose rents would provide a public school or schools for the boys of Newport. Twenty-five thousand dollars to build the hotel and wharf were raised through a lottery.

On May 6, 1795, Simeon Potter was so impressed with the idea of running a lottery to fund a school that he gifted his estate, located on Easton's Point in Newport, to the Trustees of Long Wharf.

Simeon Potter was a wealthy man who made his fortune as a privateer during the American Revolution. He went on to become a patriot who participated in the burning of the British schooner *Gaspee* and finally a philanthropist through the donation of his land for a school. He also donated money and books for the founding of a public library in Bristol.



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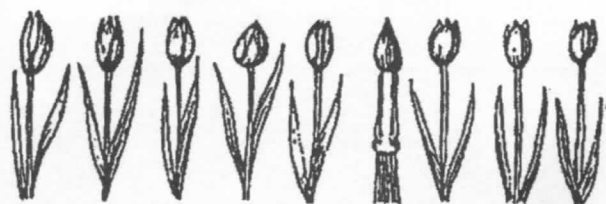
Prime
Properties

On August 19, 1814 the Trustees of Long Wharf appointed five trustees to become the first school committee. The Trustees decided to rent Potter house to a suitable person who would run it as a school where a number of boys would learn reading, writing and arithmetic. In 1834, as a result of poor attendance, Potter house was sold and the proceeds were put into the bank.

In 1862 a lot of land, located on the corner of Willow and Third streets was purchased by the Trustees of Long Wharf. Architect George Champlin Mason was hired to design a new schoolhouse at an estimated cost

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of \$9,000. The dedication of the Willow Street School, now called the Callender School, took place on May 20, 1863. Renovations and enlargement of the Willow Street School took place in 1909.

In 1880, the Trustees decided that a second school warranted construction. A site was secured on Elm Street for the sum of \$3000 and architect William Crandall was hired to draw up the plans. The new school was to be a three story Colonial Revival building constructed of brick with a hip roof. In 1881 contracts were awarded to Perry G. Case and Co. to construct the new school.

On August 30, 1882, the new school, named the Potter School in honor of Simeon Potter, was dedicated. Renovation of the building took place in 1935 and, just as in 1834 when Potter House closed due to poor enrollment, so did the Potter School. In 1962 the school committee decided to use Potter School as the central supply building for the City of Newport. In

1963 the Public Welfare office moved in and that office remained there until 2001. On July 23, 1985 the school was sold to the City of Newport for the sum of \$185,000 and in 2003 the City of Newport sold the school to developers. It was converted to 7 condominiums and reopened in August, 2004.



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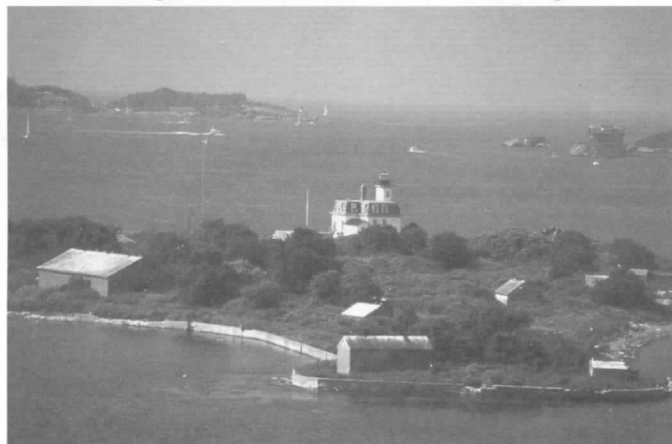
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THE REEMERGENCE OF FORT HAMILTON ON ROSE ISLAND

by Charlotte Johnson

Generally recognized and appreciated for her beautifully restored lighthouse, Rose Island lies offshore about a mile west of the Point in the shadow of the Pell-Newport Bridge. While the bridge made the lighthouse obsolete, it is from this vantage point that most people get the best view of it, past the impenetrable thicket that now covers much of the island. It took about seven years for the Rose Island Lighthouse Foundation (RILF) to restore the Lighthouse, while it has taken Mother Nature 60 years to reclaim the rest of Rose Island's dilapidated structures and open space, transforming them into valuable bird nesting habitat.



View of Rose Island from the Pell-Newport Bridge

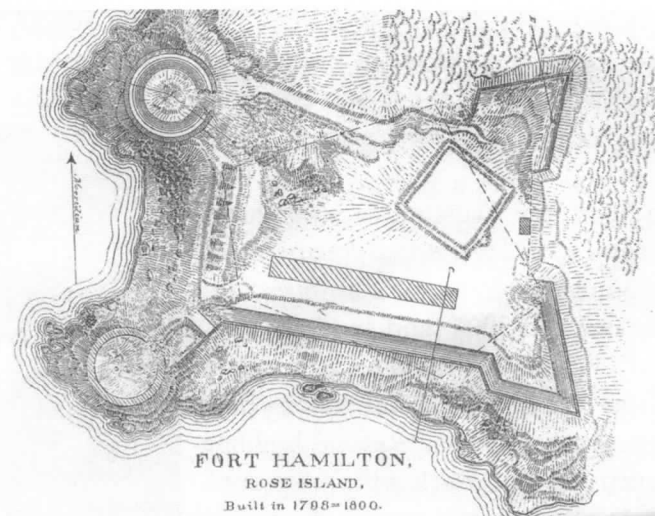
Of course, during World Wars I and II the grass was kept short, for back then Rose Island was considered by the War Department to be the ideal munitions storage facility for the Naval Torpedo Station's



World War II Navy file photo.

millions of pounds of explosives, as Rose Island was considered to be a safe distance

from the populace - well, safer than Goat Island, anyway. In addition, there already existed two large "bombproof" buildings the Navy could easily convert into magazines. Few people today know they were the



1819 drawing of Ft. Hamilton from the National Archives, Washington DC.

barracks and northwest circular bastion of Fort Hamilton, originally constructed from 1798-1800.

In 1999 RILF purchased the Navy's 16+ acre lot from private owners who were unsuccessful in their attempts to develop a large marina-condo complex there (thanks to the tireless efforts of many Point residents for more than 15 years). Today, RILF's vision is to create a practical balance between protecting the island's environment while uncovering and restoring its precious 200-year old historic structures.

A \$50,000 grant from the van Beuren Charitable Foundation jump-started RILF's work to reclaim the NW bastion.



Removing the iron roof beams from the NW circular bastion began in March 2004.



A backhoe was purchased to remove the cement supporting the roof and the earth that covered the exterior stone wall. March 2006

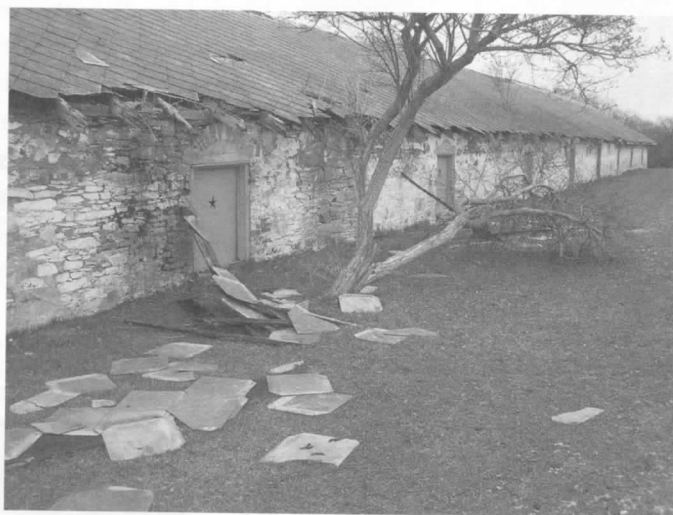


While the nesting birds have this area to themselves this summer, we will be gathering estimates and raising the funds to complete the stonework that will begin again in the fall.



This 1895 photo by Edward W. Smith reminds us to keep our eyes on the prize.

As for the 212 foot long “bombproof” barracks with its 9 vaulted rooms, work to replace its roof began this spring with funds from a State Preservation Grant and the Prince Charitable Trusts - and not any too soon! Back-to-back storms in December with hurricane force winds ripped the roof open. We’re calling it Mother Nature’s in-kind contribution to the demolition work!



Storm-damaged barracks roof - January 2006

When restored, these two magnificent structures will be safely and legitimately accessible to the public for the first time in history! In the meantime, we invite you to visit Rose Island as well as our website to see our ongoing work as Fort Hamilton’s 200 year old structures re-emerge!

More information at
<http://www.roseisland.org/>

AUTHOR:

Charlotte Johnson is executive director of the Rose Island Lighthouse Foundation.



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PARK CLEAN-UPS / EARTH DAY

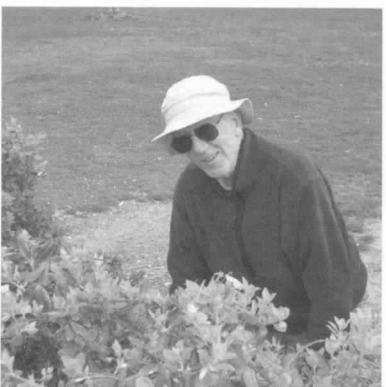
Photos by Larry Kraman



Amy Garrison



Elaine Jolley & Kay O'Brien



Coles Mallory

On Saturday, April 22, several of our members worked to clean up both Battery and Storer Parks. In celebration of Earth Day, the city contributed leaf bags, gloves and water bottles to our efforts. Because of the Earth Day publicity, we also had help from outside our neighborhood. Thanks to our efforts last fall, we've had a beautiful display of daffodils and small flowers this spring. We did a lot of fertilizing and hope the bulbs will continue to thrive.

Coles and Marcia Mallory
Beautification Co-chairs



Isabel Griffith



Michael Murray



Shelley Kraman, Jack Maytum
& Peter Tea



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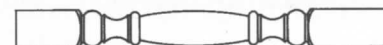
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ESSENCE AS IMAGE

an interview with

Kristina Baer and Ilse Nesbitt

by Jane Hence

A serendipitous meeting on the Point over twenty-five years ago resulted in the book *Best Friends* (1985), a continuing friendship with an underlying commonality of love for gardening, garden lore and trading advice and plants, and now another book.

This new collection, *Captured Views: impressions of ten gardens*, with woodcuts by Ilse Buchert Nesbitt and poems by Kristina Baer, to be published in July, has led me, on a glorious day in early May, to meet with the creators of this calm and lovely book full of sundry delights. We all sit in Ilse's comfortable, welcoming living room where French doors frame the garden of blooming tulips and other green things pushing up. I knew neither Kristina nor Ilse, which is my misfortune, but after our short hour full of quick conversation and bounding thoughts, I feel I now have many little treasures of knowledge, including the story behind *Best Friends*, a tale written by Kristina about Ilse's two sons and their teddy bears.

In arabesques of box and yew,
a seasonless mastery of form
defies time's passage,
while colors exuberant
in counterpoint
rejoice in the momentary.

I have taken this stanza from "Pan in the Afternoon" (Formal garden) which conveys two points of view about the French formal garden. In her woodcut with its "seasonless mastery of form", the artist depicts the form and shapes of the garden, evoking memories of Courances and Villandry. In her description of the flowers planted in the garden's parterres, whose "colors...rejoice in the momentary," the poet recalls a joyous summer afternoon spent strolling through them.



Ilse's woodcuts are intended to capture the essence of each type and kind of garden, without documenting a specific one. Kristina's poems describe a moment in each one. While each of the poems locates the observer in a particular garden through a combination of observation and memory or association, "Border passages" (Herbaceous border) is the only one for which the artist has provided explicit seasonal references.

These floating images of mind and time seem to be caught forever on the pages of this beautiful book, which is a pleasure for the mind, the eyes, and the hands to hold. The final form of the book was arrived at through lengthy discussions of how best to approach this much loved subject: how to portray the physicality of the place; whether to use an accurate prose description of the particular spot versus a poem to evoke it. The solution also typifies this working relationship between friends and between the visual artist and the writer. Each person remains true to the original inner notion she had and the book therefore carries two quite different philosophies and creative ideas melded together seamlessly.

On Sunday, July 9, from 2:00 to 5:00 in the afternoon, in the upstairs gallery at The Third & Elm Press, there will be a coming out party for Ilse and Kristina's *Captured Views*. It will be a rare treat to meet the authors while also discovering the book in which "Ilse created timeless space of garden and Kristina walks in".

GARDENS IN VIEW

by Kristina Baer

In July, in celebration of its 40th anniversary, the Third & Elm Press will publish a new limited edition, *Captured Views: Impressions of ten gardens*. *Captured Views* is a compilation of 10 original poems by Kristina Baer with 17 woodcuts in several colors by Ilse Buchert Nesbitt. Printed on Rives paper in an edition of 100 signed and numbered copies, the text was set in Monotype Bembo. The woodcuts were printed from the block and the printing was done on a 19th-century Golding platen press.

Complementary yet independent, the poems and images express an experience of being in a garden at a particular moment—how it looks and feels, the memories or dreams it stirs, the associations it calls to mind. For garden lovers and collectors of fine printing, *Captured Views* offers a heartfelt appreciation of a garden's most precious gift—the essence of life itself, ebbing, flowing, in perpetual transition.

Some of the pieces draw on well-known gardens, such as the Japanese Garden in Portland, Oregon (“Morning mist, weeping cherry”) or the formal gardens at Courances and Villandry in France (“Pan in the Afternoon”). Others are inspired by gardens closer to home (“Border passages,” “Earthly delight,” and “Storm’s

end.”). “For comfort, for love,” evokes the Hanging Gardens of Babylon; “A dream of Eden” recalls the garden of Eden. Here is a complete list of the poems and the gardens, in the order in which they appear:

A dream of Eden (Garden of Eden)

For comfort, for love

(Hanging gardens of Babylon)

Morning mist, weeping cherry (Japanese garden)

Be praised (Cloister garden)

Pan in the afternoon (Formal garden)

Stourhead in view (English park)

Earthly delight (Kitchen garden)

Border passages: Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall
(Herbaceous border)

Urban renewal (Community garden)

Storm's end (Window box with mantis)

By day or by night, in any season, a garden invites us to pause and observe, to surrender to the moment. Then and there, we recognize one of its most precious gifts—the essence of life itself, ebbing, flowing, in perpetual transition. In *Captured Views*, artist and poet collaborate in this vision, sharing their experience of each garden with the reader.

The book which is 32 pages, measures 9 1/2 by 12 inches and sells for \$350.00 at The Third & Elm Press.

BORN ON THE POINT

by Bill Hall

The Born on the Point program recognizes newborns and others who were Point residents at the time of their birth.

Certificates were prepared in April for five members of the Quarry family of Third Street and Lasalle Place.

They are: Letty Quarry Champion

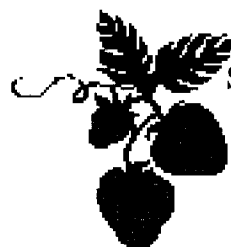
Ann Quarry Desjardin

Patricia Quarry Dresser

George J. Quarry

Stephen Michael Quarry.

The next round of Born on the Point certificates will be readied for the October 2006 membership meeting. Anyone interested in information or an application may contact Bill Hall at 846-4159.



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86 WASHINGTON ST. REVISITED

The house at 86 Washington St. has long been a subject of interest on the Point, for the house itself but perhaps even more for the succession of fascinating people who have made it their home. *The Green Light* has featured it on numerous occasions. Due to the curiosity aroused by its current renovation, in passersby and workmen alike, we have decided to “reprise” some of that history.

In 1988, Virginia Covell begins her account: “On Washington Street, just south of where Chestnut comes in, stands a large stucco house, number 86. In the early days of this century it was owned (and probably built by) Mr. and Mrs. Guy Norman. It is Victorian in style; the cross-gabled roof has rounded arched windows beneath the gables. It has a commodious glassed-in porch on the water side.”¹ Eileen G. Nimmo also believes that Mr. and Mrs. Guy Norman built the house. In her book *“The Point” of Newport, R.I.*, she states further: “It is known that they raised the former small house up one story, added to it and covered it with stucco so that it was quite different.”² Yet another writer in *The Green Light* tells us that the Norman house had steps going down with huge granite slabs on each side “and the children slid down those slabs until they even wore out their clothes.”³

Virginia Covell tells us more about these earliest residents: “Mr. Norman died when he was comparatively young, during World War I. His wife, the former Louise Palfrey of Boston, was a summer colonist who preferred the Point to the Bellevue Avenue area. She continued to live in the Washington Street house until the 1930’s. In addition to her own beautiful garden,

she frequently bought up house lots and planted a garden in the empty spaces; she even moved a house to use the land in this way. When the hotel-boarding house known as the Faisneau was moved, she bought that lot, and soon a beautiful garden was flourishing in that spot. The Point certainly “bloomed” under her residency!

...Mrs. Norman had a sizable household staff, most of whom lived in a building on Second Street. She went in bathing from her pier every day, and her butler preceded her down, always carrying a broom which he



used to clear her path. Of course she was attired in the appropriate costume of the day – a long, black bathing dress with long, black stockings!

On the floor just above the basement is a small rectangular extension to the house; this Mrs. Norman built to contain her coffin at the time she would be laid out. This was not thought to be very irregular in the days before the advent of the “funeral parlor”. However, Mrs. Norman died in Boston in 1935.”⁴

The most recent owner of 86 Washington St. was Suzanne M. Aubois. Born in Lyon, France, in 1913, Mme. Aubois came to the United States as a young girl

to study at what is now Philips-Andover Academy in Massachusetts. She returned to France during World War II, worked with the French underground, and on June 6, 1944, with her family, she heard General Eisenhower announce the invasion of Normandy on a short-wave radio hidden in their attic. On August 21 of that same year, they welcomed the army of General Patton as it arrived to liberate their village outside of Paris.⁵

Mme. Aubois earned a Bachelor of Science degree at the Ecole Normale Sociale and in 1949 returned to the United States, now a young widow with three small children. "They came to investigate Newport, a town Suzanne remembered from history of the French army and navy assistance during the Revolutionary War," Anita McAndrews tells us in her *Green Light* article. With her sister and her children, she moved into Hunter House, at that time undergoing restoration by the Preservation Society, and after two years moved to 86 Washington St. She earned her Master's Degree from Rhode Island College and became a much-loved teacher of French at Portsmouth Abbey School, Elmhurst Academy, and Vernon Court Junior College

and of French cooking at Swanhurst School of Arts. Upon the death of Suzanne Aubois on February 7, 2005, Jane MacLeod Walsh gave testimony to Mme. Aubois as an inspirational teacher and cultural ambassador who inspired her to major in French at Smith College and become herself a teacher of French.⁶

In the years between these two extraordinary women, the house was owned by Eugene O'Reilly. In a later issue we will tell his story and bring this history of 86 Washington St. up to the present.

¹ Virginia Covell, "86 Washington Street" *The Green Light*, October, 1988, p. 13.

² Eileen G. Nimmo, "*The Point*" of Newport, RI, Newport: J & E Publishing, 2001, p. 82.

³ *The Green Light*, October, 1966.

⁴ Virginia Covell, op. cit.

⁵ Anita McAndrews, "French Charm and Courage", *The Green Light*,

⁶ Jane MacLeod Walsh, "Adieu to Madame Aubois", *The Green Light*, Summer, 2005, p. 12.

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20 Years in Business 1984-2004 On the Point

FAVORITE RECIPES

Celebrate the Fourth with Salmon, Potatoes and Peas

by Liz Mathinos

Celebrating my brother's birthday on July 4th was always special, for his wife, Bertha, carried on the old New England tradition of cooking salmon, new potatoes and peas, which her family had enjoyed down through the ages on Nantucket. Here are some recipes, copied from *The Newport Cookbook* by Cecil Dyer, for that traditional salmon dinner.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 2 cups water | ¼ teaspoon peppercorns |
| 1 cup dry white wine | 4 8-ounce salmon steaks, about 1 inch thick |
| 2 tablespoons lemon juice | Rich Cream Sauce (see below) |
| 1 small white onion, peeled and sliced | 1 hard-cooked egg, sliced |
| 1 teaspoon dill seeds | chopped parsley |
| 1 teaspoon salt | steamed new potatoes and fresh peas |

Combine the water, wine, and lemon juice in a deep 9-inch or 10-inch skillet. Add the onion, dill seeds, salt and peppercorns. Let simmer for 30 to 45 minutes. Add the salmon steaks. Cover and poach for 15 minutes, or until the salmon flakes easily when tested with a fork.

Remove the salmon with a spatula. Let drain over the skillet, then place on a warm serving platter or on warm plates. Keep warm.

Strain the cooking liquid and reserve 2 cups for the Rich Cream Sauce.

When ready to serve, ladle the Rich Cream Sauce over the salmon steaks and garnish each serving with the egg slices and chopped parsley. Surround with the steamed new potatoes and fresh peas. Makes 4 servings.

RICH CREAM SAUCE

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 2 tablespoons butter | ½ cup light cream |
| 2 tablespoons flour | salt |
| 2 cups strained salmon cooking liquid | freshly ground pepper |
| 2 egg yolks, lightly beaten | 1 teaspoon lemon juice |

Melt the butter in a saucepan (not aluminum) and stir in the flour. Slowly add the strained cooking liquid, stirring with a wire whisk as it is added. Bring to a boil and cook, stirring often, for about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat.

Beat the egg yolks into the cream and add this to the first mixture, beating constantly with a wire whisk. Return the mixture to a low heat and stir until thick and smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Remove from the heat and stir in the lemon juice. Makes 4 servings.

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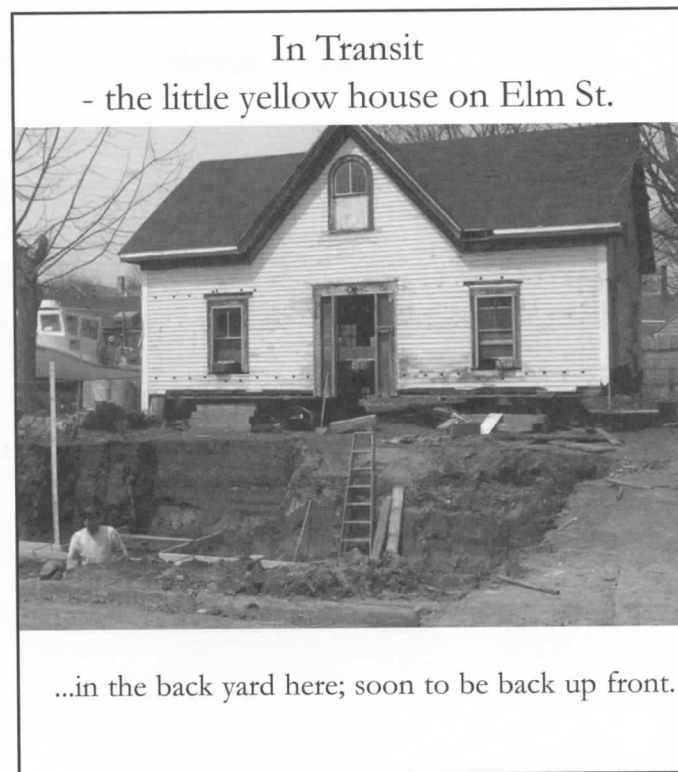
by Isabel Griffith
Marcia Mallory

On a perfect May day we held our most successful plant sale in recent years. The new location turned out to be perfect. "You should advertise that it's in a beautiful secret garden." The quality of the plants made all the difference. Point gardeners really outdid themselves; there were donations for every taste. Even the "invasive corner" was a hit. "Will these plants spread? Perfect!"

Jennifer Hall did a superb job soliciting donations from local merchants and her volunteers braved the Friday deluge to pick them up from all over the island. Marcia Mallory and I would like to thank everyone who helped us. You make it all possible.

Ralph Padula, Bruce Howe, Bill Hall, Sally MacKay, Gusina Powell, Merry Preston, Joy Scott, Claire Ernsberger, Ilse Nesbitt, Susie Powers, Herb Rommel, Laurie Shaw, Joan Simmons, Sarah Kessler, Lisa Elliot, Roger Devlin, Marty Williams, Sarah Gilson, Bruce Long, Jane Tipkin, Lisa Lewis, Deb Kelsey, Larry

Kraman, Beth Cullen, Kit Weiss, Diane Quint, Kay O'Brien, Ruth Shor, Trish O'Connell, Connie Heird, Patty MacLeish . . . and the mysterious "elves" that leave plants for us every year without ever being seen.



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.

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SAVE THE DATES

Point Association Picnic - June 14, 6:00 p.m., 62 Washington St.

Secret Garden Tours - Friday-Sunday, June 16-18

Harbor House Strawberry Festival - Saturday, June 17, 2-4 p.m.

Members Cocktail Party - August 16, 6 to 8 p.m. - Villa Marina

Book Discussions:

The Great Influenza, Wednesday, July 19, 7:30 p.m., 22 Walnut St.

Good Faith, Wednesday, August 9, 2:00 p.m., 121 Washington St.

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