

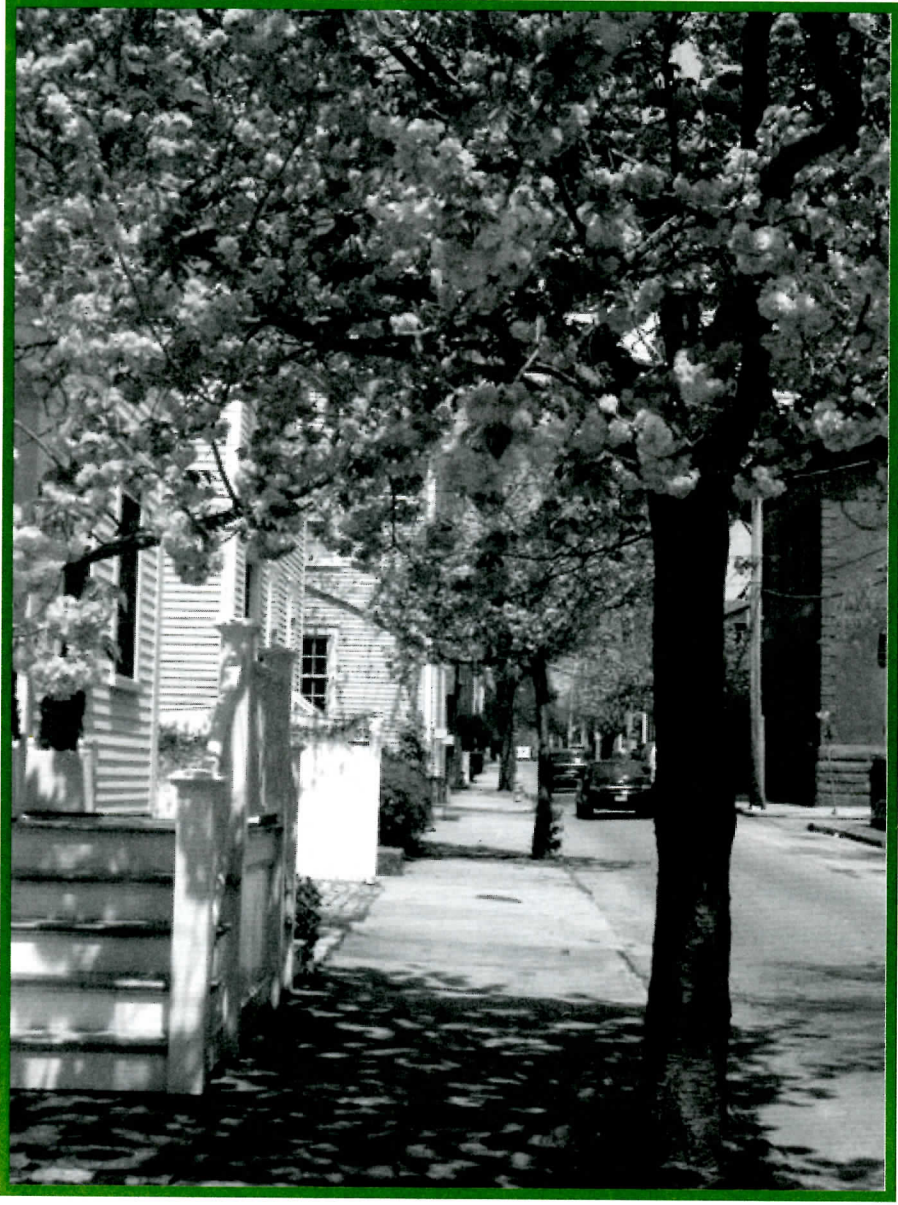
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The
GREEN



LIGHT

BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND



SPRING
2009

The GREEN LIGHT

LIV No. 1

SPRING 2009

CONTENTS

President's Letter	3
Admiral Kalbfus Interchange	4
Louise Sherman's Scrapbooks	5
Howard Newman, Artist and Craftsman	6
Nifty Newport Mini-Olympics	7
Crowns, Cylinders and Bullseyes	8
Charles Y. Duncan, A Man for all Seasons	9
Our Embarrassment of Riches Gets Richer	10
Point Association Meetings	12
Plant Sale	18
Proposed Law Regulates Gas Meters	19

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Meetings are generally scheduled for the first Monday of the month and are open to Association members. Please call Isabel 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: Cherry trees
on the Point by Jane Hence. .



As the days grow longer and we begin to think of gardens, boats, and things, we want to call your attention to plans being made for the revitalized, re-imagined plant sale to be held this year at the St. John's Parish House on May 9. Plans are also under way by various entities in the city to address the problems of our driftways; meetings and discussions will be announced in due time.

The *Green Light* also has a problem: WE NEED PICTURES, old ones, new ones. This may be hard to believe but the most challenging task of putting together this journal is finding pictures. If you have any that you would like to submit, please contact me at aclemente156@cox.net.

May we be blessed with a good spring.

Alice Clemente

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

As I write we are in the midst of a "real" New England winter after two or three years of mild winter weather. We are used to snowfall now and know the drill when a snow "event" is forecast. Rush out while you can and pick up whatever you need to weather the storm: bread, milk, and other staples. For me, the necessary trip is to the library to make sure I have enough books to last a couple of days.

I love Ocean State Libraries (OSL) and feel I have visited all of them although I pick up books when they arrive from only one. Using the online card catalog available through OSL lets me order any book from any library. There are about fifty libraries; they all are a bit different as each has its own style. I have a backlog list of books gleaned from all the reviews I read; OSL seldom let me down. One of the libraries is bound to have the book I want. Check out the website: www.oslri.org; it's a great research resource. Your book wish list can become a reality and it's free!

In bad times, free resources really make a difference. Recent news articles site an increase in library use of well over 25%. Many people use the computers to search for jobs and when they must disconnect their Internet and cable to make ends meet, the library provides free access to email. When I visit the library to pick up books, there is seldom a vacant computer available. I see stacks of DVDs being checked out and many libraries now have their own bookstores, a good place to donate good used books. If you despair at the waste of your tax dollars, walk into a library at 7:00pm on a weeknight. You will feel better, I guarantee.

In January the National Endowment for the Arts reported that for the first time since 1982 when their survey began, the number of adults who said they had read a novel, short story, poem or play in the past twelve months had gone up. (See <http://www.nea.gov/research/ReadingonRise.pdf>.) Nobody really seems to know why and the survey is flawed. It does not count non-fiction reading and has just begun to count online "reading." But it is curious that the increase has been most marked in groups whose reading had declined most in the past 25 years. Even young men are reading more – 25% more in 2002-08. Reading is, after all, not exclusive to the literary elite. Real readers are all around, at every level of education and class. You will see a lot of them at the library.

For those of you still "connected," the Point Association continues to collect emails from members with a goal of shifting some of our communications online. Please send your email address to Shelley Kraman, shelley.kraman@gmail.com



ADMIRAL KALBFUS INTERCHANGE IS KEY TO KEEPING THE FLOW SMOOTH

by David Pedrick

Newport Daily News letter to the editor, published
Friday, January 30, 2009

I am responding to an article and editorial on January 15 and 16 about improvements to the Pell Bridge ramps. These personal views reflect my participation as a concerned Newport resident on the Citizens Advisory Committee for the bridge ramp redesign. Note that the traffic problem at stake has a constituency much beyond the borders of Newport. The Pell Bridge is not Newport's bridge.

The bridge ramps have remnants of abandoned distribution of traffic and circuitous connections for local traffic, which will go away in the state DOT's plan. Connecting Connell Highway as a through road is an integral part of the bridge ramp solution. Local traffic will flow directly between Van Zandt Avenue and the Connell Highway rotary, no longer snaking through the existing bridge ramps about which the editorial complains, even though the solution has been offered.

The editorial also claims that the state has "made a 180-degree turn" in its present recommendation, also misrepresenting the facts. Since at least 2006, DOT has consistently presented two options – one with and one without the Admiral Kalbfus interchange. To reach a final recommendation is not a 180-degree turn, but the conclusion of a thoughtful process of open discussion with city officials and citizens' representatives for a number of years.

The purpose of the Pell Bridge is to serve the transportation needs of the entire Aquidneck Island and points north. The interchange at Admiral Kalbfus Boulevard facilitates traffic flow to the middle, eastern and northern sections of the island without burdening the Connell Highway rotary. It already has a nearly completed on-ramp, so very little work is needed to finish it off. If this interchange were to be eliminated, all the traffic that now doesn't use the rotary would instead be forced onto it. Substantially worsening the flow of traffic through the rotary is an obviously poor way to address the next half-century of inevitably increased traffic load.

The compelling reason for the bridge ramp redesign has come from the RI Turnpike & Bridge Authority, which manages the ramps. RITBA has demanded a solution to the dangerous back-ups on the bridge roadway due to the existing ramp to downtown Newport. When this occurs – regularly in the summer – the other inbound lane keeps speeding in, squeezed between stopped traffic on the right and oncoming traffic speeding out on the left. The deadly configuration is to be resolved by replacing the abrupt downtown exit with a cloverleaf around the current on-ramp, over the newly connected Connell Highway, and merging southbound under the bridge exit roadway.

The consequence of eliminating the Admiral Kalbfus interchange would be to funnel all bridge traffic for the entire island, except for downtown Newport, through the rotary. The fact that this junction becomes over-taxed should come as no surprise. It creates a bottleneck that will only get worse in coming decades.

Drivers traveling between the bridge and the majority of the Island are clearly served by the Kalbfus interchange. So are the users of the rotary to and from The Point and Third Street neighborhoods, the Navy Base and Connell Highway businesses, because they aren't competing with through-traffic that has been distributed away from the rotary by the independent interchange.

DOT's conclusion to keep and improve the Admiral Kalbfus interchange has evolved through years of planning by DOT, its engineering consultants and RITBA, together with municipal and citizens' input from Newport. Conspicuously missing is active input from the affected neighboring communities of Middletown and Portsmouth. At meetings in mid-2008, the Citizens Advisory Committee came to a fairly solid consensus to recommend the RIDOT plan keeping the Kalbfus interchange.

Working against the logic of the bridge ramps as a transportation system is the city of Newport's motivation to acquire public land to augment its tax base. The problem is that it can only do so by permanently throttling both bridge and local traffic flow through the Connell Highway.

When it comes to important, irreversible decisions about such things as future infrastructure for transport-

(Continued on page 17)

LOUISE SHERMAN'S SCRAPBOOKS

by Jane G. Marchi

Among the treasures reposing in the *Green Light* archives are some well-worn tomes referred to as the Louise Sherman scrapbooks or, in more formal parlance, "The Louise Sherman Collection." Who is – or was, for she died a few years ago – Louise Sherman?

Some of you may remember her. She was born on the Point, on what was once called Hawthorn Street, a short two-block thoroughfare that ran from Narragansett Bay to Third Street. It was later extended and renamed Van Zandt Avenue, as we know it today. According to Kay O'Brien, who knew her well enough to become the inheritor of these scrapbooks, she spent her entire life here on the Point, was active at St. John's Church, and delighted in her status as Point Hummer.

Louise was a researcher, writer, and collector of Newport and Rhode Island memorabilia. She spent many hours at the Newport Historical Society copying out early land records from 19th-century volumes before the age of photocopiers and carefully tracing out original maps that documented "the way we were." She loved walking the Point and often carried a camera with her so she could document changes as they occurred. She also loved writing in-depth stories of neighborhood people and places, as well as sharing them with everyone she met.

This life-long passion led her to collect as much information as she possibly could relating to the history of the Point, of Newport as settlement and town, then, in ever-widening concentric circles, anything relating to the history of Aquidneck Island and, occasionally, of the state. She was an indefatigable clipper of articles from local and state newspapers which she then preserved, in eclectic fashion, in several ancient scrapbooks. A close friend of Edith Ballinger Price, the first editor of the *Green Light*, Louise became a staunch supporter of, and assiduous contributor to this publication from its inception.

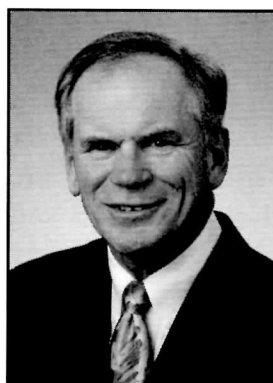
What did she look for in these scrapbooks? What did she think was important? Her tastes were far-ranging, to say the least: the history of Goat Island, story of a "shift wedding" down in Westerly, the location of the original "spring" of Spring Street, a map of the original Fort Greene before it became Battery Park, just to cite a few examples. We thought you might enjoy dipping into these scrapbooks with us to see what they contain, so let us start with an excerpt from an article she clipped regarding the so-called "shift Marriage" of colonial days, as follows:

"Delvers into colonial lore have made much of the shift marriage, a custom which enabled the new husband of a widow to escape payment of his predecessor's debts. ***** What was a shift marriage? Better than descriptions in the published works is an old manuscript in the Westerly Public Library by Nelson B. Vars, which says,

***** The law was in substance this – if a married man died, leaving a widow and unpaid debts, the man who should marry her became responsible for the first husband's indebtedness. But a way of escape was provided if they would comply with the requirement as follows: that the bride-to-be (widow) should be married in the public highway with no other clothing on but her shift (that is, chemise or undergarment) thereby representing "in the figure" that she was a poor wanderer without any home or friends, utterly destitute.

It was also required that the ceremony be performed where at least three Roads meet, that is, at the corners of the roads, showing still fur-

(Continued on page 16)



HERB ARMSTRONG


KELLER WILLIAMS
REALTY

of Newport

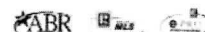
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HOWARD NEWMAN, ARTIST AND CRAFTSMAN

by Tom Kennedy

Everyone delights in finding hidden treasures of any kind, and in old Newport, and particularly on the Point, there is an abundance of historical, horticultural and architectural wonders to discover. How gratifying, then, to chance upon a treasure of a different sort – a neighbor. Howard Newman and his wife, Mary, live in an old house on Farewell Street. Behind the house is Howard's workshop, which brims with curious tools and unique artifacts, attesting to his varied interests, skills and talents, which defy simple classification. Howard is at once an imaginative painter, printmaker and sculptor, and a specialist in restoring and preserving fine metal objects. In all of these fields he makes use of both traditional skills and cutting-edge technology.

Howard and Mary met as students in Miami of Ohio College. He had favored courses in Architecture and Classical Literature, while Mary had taken many courses in the Fine Arts before concentrating in Anthropology, a field where Howard's and Mary's paths crossed. Before graduating from college, and, according to Howard, during final examinations, they wed and began their richly varied and adventurous life together. Peace Corps training in the jungles of Puerto Rico was followed by a year of VISTA (a form of domestic Peace Corps) community service work in Laredo, Texas, a ramshackle and poverty-stricken city, where Howard and Mary made use of their Spanish language skills working among Mexican-Americans living along the Rio Grande.

The scene then shifts to New York City, where Howard considered becoming a lawyer, testing his skills as a paralegal in an anti-poverty agency on New York's lower east side. His work met with some success, but for him, a lesser amount of satisfaction. He was restless and unsettled, and decided to submit himself to a battery of aptitude tests, the results of which, he hoped, would aid him in finding a more fulfilling direction to his life. The outcome pointed to fine mechanical skills, music and art as possibilities. Eventually, Howard entered

R.I.S.D. after taking a summer orientation course for new students, where he met Tom Benson, who lived on Washington Street in Newport, which became the scene of Howard and Mary's frequent visits to this area during the ensuing years. Eventually, Howard and Mary suc-



Howard Newman in his workshop behind his house on Farewell Street.

cumbed to the charms of Newport and took up residence here in 1976.

At R.I.S.D. Howard trained as a silversmith and began sculpting forms from copper sheets. After a Fulbright year in Tuscany and Florence, Italy, where Howard began sculpting in bronze, his horizons broadened to include painting, printmaking and expert restoration work on fine metal objects, sculptures and antique mechanisms. Mary also started a business venture in Newport in the field of design, working mostly for the hospitality sector.

Howard's list of local clients is extensive and includes the City of Newport, the International Yacht Restoration School, the New York Yacht Club, the International Tennis Hall of Fame, the Preservation Society of Newport County, St. George's School, Salve Regina University, the Touro Synagogue, and Portsmouth Abbey School. Howard has rebuilt and refurbished plaques, trophies, chandeliers, Torah finials and breastplates, clocks, locks, sconces, lanterns, compasses, candelabras, cane handles, and the President's scepter at Salve. Howard has also restored the entire metal collection of the Touro Syna-

(Continued on page 15)

NIFTY NEWPORT

MINI-OLYMPICS by Ed Madden

I am sure we were all amazed at the skill and expertise of the athletes from all the nations in the recent Olympic competition from China. In my mind I have established my own mini-Olympics for Newport and have located the competition at my local health spa – which continues to be an amazingly fertile field to plough for environmental topics.

I have appointed myself the sole judge of the competition and have established my judge's chair on the local whirlpool. This site gives a clear view of the playing fields, i.e. swimming pool, sundeck and whirlpool. The competitors are of all ages and genders, although by far the most numerous are the lovely ladies in the 20-40 age group. The competitors are judged on the number of towels they accumulate/consume during their performances.

Since their sporting event may be a little difficult for the novice spectator to understand, I will describe a typical contest. We will again use my lovely lady as the prototypical athlete. She enters the arena in her bikini and takes towels 1 and 2 from the towel racks which are ubiquitous and strategically located throughout the playing fields. She then enters the sundeck area which is the first Olympic arena. Towel 1 is used to drape over the plastic ribbing of the chaise lounge to protect the athlete's skin before lying down. Solar rays then energize the athlete's body. Towel 2 is multipurpose, perhaps covering the feet if the sun is too strong, padding the back of the head, or dabbing away perspiration from the competition. On exiting the sundeck after these time trials, towels 1 and 2 are discarded – to be picked up by the groundskeeper at some later date.

The athlete then enters the whirlpool event and on leaving this area, towel 3 is used to gently wipe down the body before entering the swimming competition. After a vigorous and strenuous workout in the pool, often involving forward and backward walking in the deep, i.e. 4 ½ foot, end, the athlete exits the swimming pool. Here is where the ladies far outdistance the gentlemen. He usually takes towel 4 to partially dry off before retiring to the men's dressing room to shower and dress – using towel 5 to stand on and towel 6 to dry off.

She, however, after using towel 4 for dabbing, uses towel 5 – known as the “turban wrap” – to wrap about the head and towel 6 – known as the “body wrap” – to encircle the body, deftly concealing the bikini. She then, suitably clothed, enters the ladies' dressing room. N.B. The following information was provided for me by a female accomplice.

In the dressing room, all towels are discarded on the floor – to be later removed by the nameless groundskeeper. Towel 7 is used to stand on after showering. Towel 8 wipes down the exhausted athlete's body. Towel 9 partially dries the hair, after which it is fluffed up by the electric hairdryer (which runs on oil from our Arabian friends).

The awards ceremony is nowhere near as impressive as in the real Olympic competition, since it takes place exclusively in my head. The gold medal winner is the outstanding competitor who competes at the one towel level, i.e. one towel is used from start to finish. To date there have been no gold medal winners and no one need worry about the gold reserve at Fort Knox.

The Mecca for the quest for gold is in the state of Vermont. In the town of Middlebury, where my daughter lives and I have frequently visited, the local health spa has a prominent sign in the entrance foyer advising all members to bring their own towel! The management is happy to provide towels at the cost of \$1.00 per towel! It is amazing how this simple rule immediately disqualifies many competitors who might otherwise choose to compete at the silver or bronze levels. The reigning mantra is “One Body – One Towel”.

The silver medal winners function at the towel 2 to 4 level and the bronze medal winners burst across the finish line at the towel 5 to Infinity level. Fortunately, since these awards exist only in my mind, we do not have an acute shortage of bronze – which would certainly be the case if the competition actually took place nationwide.

The bottom line to this bit of doggerel is to consider the amount of water, detergent, energy, labor cost, etc. that is wasted by those participants who inhabit many of the homes in the U.S.A. Do any of them live in your house?

CROWNS, CYLINDERS AND BULLSEYES: OLD GLASS IN YOUR HOUSE

by A. Bruce MacLeish,
Newport Restoration Foundation

Although most 18th century windows are long gone, we are often asked about early glass and some of it still exists. For the purposes of windows it could be made in two ways: crown or cylinder. Crown glass was first blown by mouth from the furnace on a blowpipe until it became a proper sized bubble (limited by the glassworker's breath and arm strength), at which point, the bottom of the bubble was cut open, transferred to a pontil rod and spun hot into a flat disk. This entailed several steps, mostly to keep the glass hot and malleable. The center of this disk was the "crown" of glass. The disk tapered from the center to the edges, but if the worker was skilled, it was at least fairly flat, although curved lines resulting from the spinning may be seen in pieces of crown glass. Cutting usable panes or "quarries" from the disk involved some waste, but cutting small panes wasted the least and is why old window glass is the size it is. Unusable scraps of glass were returned to the furnace. The center of the disk, called the bull's eye, was not as transparent as the rest, and was often used in transoms above doorways, where one would not be able to look out anyway, and some light was admitted and reflected. Now, of course, bull's eyes are much sought after.

The other type of glass was produced by the broad or cylinder method. A large bubble of glass was blown, roughly forming a cylinder, which was cut open along its length and ironed flat while still hot and pliable.

Although cylinder glass could produce larger rectangular pieces than crown glass, it was more difficult to make, and it was not as clear, due to the ironing process; elongated striations may be seen in it.

There are two common formulas for glass. Common glass often known as "bottle glass" is made of silica, lime, and soda or potash. Its color and clarity depend on the purity of the ingredients although it was frequently green from iron content. More expensive flint glass was made by substituting lead oxide for lime. The resulting material was heavy, sparkling, and somewhat softer than common glass.

The construction of window panes was straightforward. Panes were cut from the crown, and often display some taper, due to the nature of the crown itself. Sometimes, lines or smears can be seen in the glass, also as a result of the production method. If cylinder glass was used, those lines may be straighter, but not necessarily. Old mirrors, bottles and other vessels do not change shape over time, and we know that window glass does not, either. Glass does not sag, nor does its surface become wavy as it ages. It cannot become "less solid" unless it is placed in a furnace and melted.

The only change that occurs in old glass – and then, only rarely – is called glass disease. A fault in the original composition makes it vulnerable to moisture. Alkali is leached out of the glass, droplets of moisture might be seen on the surface (hence the expression, weeping glass), and there may be a slight vinegar smell. The glass may become hazy, and develop a mass of microscopic cracks in a condition called crizzled glass. Also rarely, old glass with an excess of magnesium in the mix can develop a purple cast, although today this condition is generally regarded as a status symbol rather than a problem.



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CHARLES Y. DUNCAN

— A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS

by Ed Madden

A Southerner who became a Northerner, a Mississippi boatman who became a Town Councillor, an author and cartoonist who became a sign designer and manufacturer... Not the typical New Englander, eh?

Charley was born in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1934. He spent a few years in grammar school in Pennsylvania. Then he returned to graduate from high school in Louisville. A lifelong love for the water brought him his first job as a deck hand on an ore boat plying the Great Lakes from 1952-1954.

With this experience under his belt, he became a pilot on the Ohio River. His first boat was the *Zachary Taylor*, a passenger vessel. From there, he moved on to bigger game – tow boats pushing varying numbers of barges from the bow (the front for all you landlubbers).

He became a licensed officer in the U.S. Merchant Marine in 1957 with a certificate of his credentials presented by the U.S. Coast Guard. This led to his big time employment on the Mississippi River, as well as the Ohio River and its tributaries.

The enclosed photograph of the *Western* is typical of the tow boats that get behind a string of barges and attach to them with the two upright tow knees at the bow. This was Charley's favorite boat and you can just make out Captain Charley in the pilot house. He has some hair-raising stories to tell about his water born adventures, including getting shot at by a shotgun toting "good old Southern Boy" while passing his land.

In 1980, President Jimmy Carter instituted a grain embargo against Russia in the Cold War. This led to a drastic shutdown of the grain trade along the Mississippi River. The unintended consequences of this policy led to layoffs in the river work force, including Charley's job as river pilot.

But as the saying goes, "When you shut one door, another one can open." Charley's door was opened by a

Pell Grant for a one year course in Boston in sign design and manufacture. Once this trade was mastered, he opened his own sign business in Newport and has



been in this profession ever since. He bought a home here in 1978 and has been a member of the Point Association for many years and at one time served as its president.

Charley says that he always had a desire to participate in community activities and service. In 1987, he began to serve on the Newport Zoning Board and was chairman from 2000-2002. He left at this time to run for and be elected as Newport Councilman from Ward 1. He is now serving his third term in this capacity.

The artistic side of his brain led him to write and publish a book, *Looking at My River*, in 1971. This is a humorous look at the lives of river boatmen. Almost every page is illustrated with wonderful Bill Mauldin-type cartoons, originating from his fertile imagination. Who knows but what another door could have opened back in 1980 and the literary world could have taken him in an entirely different direction. Que será será .



OUR EMBARRASSMENT OF RICHES GETS RICHER

by Jane Hence

I think of the Point as an assemblage of houses, views, corners, glimpses of bay and bridges, gardens and graceful old trees, early morning and sunset walking, as history made visible, but largely as an intriguing and various collection of fascinating, interested and talented people, i.e. an embarrassment of riches.

THE RAISKYS

The Raiskys, who live at the Callendar School on Willow Street, and the O'Sheas, who live in a NRF house on the corner of Walnut and Second Street, this summer became full-time Point residents, after having lived here only part of the time previously.

Annie and Hugh Raisky lived in New York City for forty years and about midway through that time, decided to look about for a summer or week-end place and when they found New-

port, bought the apartment on the second floor of the Callendar School (in 1984) spending various amounts of time there for many years.

In his 20s, Hugh studied painted illustration in LA and eventually, in 1958, drove in his not-at-all-new MG to New York, arriving during a snowstorm with broken windshield wipers. He rented a little place in the Village and set about trying to meet the heroes of the painted illustration world, who were all the fashion then.

Ultimately, Hugh decided to take the scenic designer examination and was one of only three out of 75 who passed and gained his certificate. He did light and set

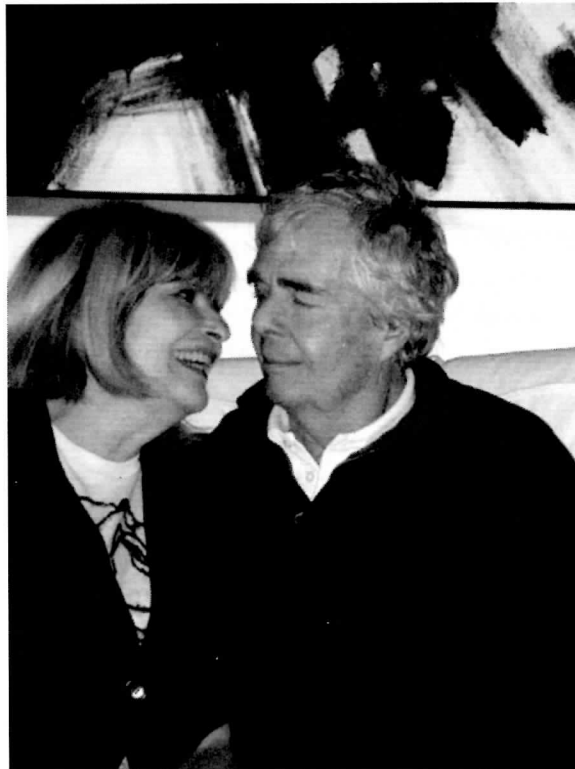
design for film, television, theatre, an idea planted years ago by his fascination with the enthusiasm and skills of his eighth grade teacher, who had gone to the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts, where Walt Disney had studied. Hugh was eventually hired by CBS, first as an apprentice and later as a designer of sets for many of history's most remembered moments, such as the coverage of the Apollo 11 moon landing, interviews in Moscow, the Vatican, Tokyo, and various presidential debates (i.e. Nixon and Dukakis and others).

A native New Yorker, Annie earned a degree in American History, and met Hugh at CBS where for eleven years she was in Sales and Marketing. Later she moved to Cable TV which seemed to have more opportunities for women. Clearly she was correct in this, as she has worked in these areas for ESPN, MTV, VH-1, the Food network, Oxygen, and PBS in corporate fundraising.

In the mid 80s, with the decision to look for something outside of NYC, they explored north and south of the city but were soon enticed by New England for several reasons, Annie's love of American history and architecture and Hugh's memories of his mother's stories of her time, from age seventeen, as chief vocalist for Old North Church and as a student at the New England Conservatory.

Once he became part time in Newport, Hugh spent more and more time painting, both here and in New York, studying at the Art Students League, and spent ever more lengthy periods here while Annie continued her work in the city, coming only on week-ends. They found that it was an easy transition and both became gradually immersed in the life of Newport.

During their part time life, they joined NAM, the Historical Society, and the Museum of Yachting. Annie is also now on the board of NIFF (Newport Int'l Film Festival). Hugh is a painter of maritime scenes, in oil. Annie





is president of her new business, Creative Business Solutions, the guiding idea of which is the question: “where are you getting stuck?”, a question she asks any new client who is in the initial or conceptual stage of forming a new business. Hugh’s paintings can be seen in various places including their apartment at 11 Willow Street.

THE O’SHEAS

Tim and Beth O’Shea, and their ten year old daughter, Madeleine, called Maddie by all, now also live full time in the house everyone knows as “where Rowan lived”. Tim became the head Coach of Bryant University’s Bulldogs this spring, when the basketball team moved from Division Two to Division One. This is just the place he had wished to return to, since he knew it from his time at URI as assistant coach of the men’s basketball team and as coach at Boston College.

He had visited here for summers and his brothers live nearby in Massachusetts; thus over time Newport had exerted its lure. Beth, who has a degree in American History and loves this subject with a passion, had rented a house on Third Street and other places other times. She opened the Newport branch of the Limited during this time.

Tim and Beth met at Café Zelda, married and moved to Athens, Ohio, where Tim was head coach for seven years at Ohio University. Recently and unexpectedly, circumstances changed. Beth’s mother died, the opportunity

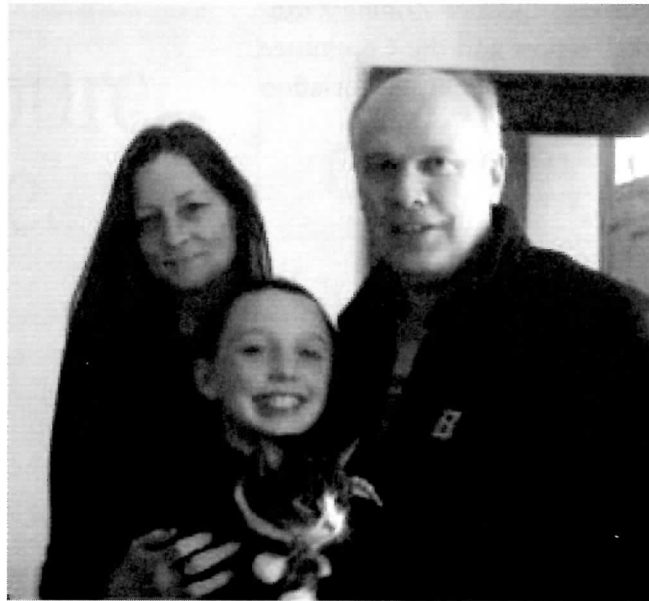
to have an NRF house came up, and so for three years, Tim, Beth and Maddie summered here on the Point. And finally, a stroke of good fortune, several months ago their present house on Second and Walnut became available and they are now happily ensconced, on the Point and in Newport, with plans for a long stay.

Sitting in the living room of their house in early February, the sun shining in, behaving deceptively like spring, with Maddie on the sofa holding Murphy, the cat, I asked her many questions. How does her life here differ from Ohio, or, perhaps it doesn’t? About neighborhoods, schools, daily doings, sports and other kids; things of importance to a fifth grader, I hoped. Maddie’s replies were clear and enthusiastic. As for kids, not much, if any, difference between Rhode Island and Ohio. On school (Maddie is at St. Michael’s) she was very definite about a clear difference in attitude: here there is a noticeable effort to succeed in school, a greater appreciation of the importance of becoming educated, more open enthusiasm and effort to be successful in one’s studies. Not surprisingly, there is more homework assigned and of course, the great advantage of smaller classes and a richer offering of after

school art and sports. Her favourite subjects are history and science.

All the O’Sheas agree that there is much more to do here including the typical Point activity of walking everywhere, and, naturally, sailing and ice-skating outside, unavailable in Athens, Ohio.

Maddie would seem to be truly her father’s daughter, loving sports, specifically the above-mentioned sailing and ice skating, plus basketball and soccer. She goes with her father to all the week-end basketball home games, in part because she loves to go to the Bryant



(Continued on page 14)

BOARD MEETINGS

From the minutes of Dec 2008 – Feb 2009

Gas lamps:

A persistent theme in these meetings has been an interest in procuring more gas lights for the Point. At the December meeting, Jeff Marshall presented a map of existing lamps. The Executive Committee of the Point Association supports obtaining new gas lights. "Populating the area with gas lamps offers a good opportunity for personal contributions as well as memorial contributions. At present the City pays for upkeep and fuel, but residents in proximity to a lamp can offer to pay for the gas. The consensus was that the Association should offer to subsidize citizens that wish to contribute to a new gas lamp. No firm decision but the sense was that since the lamps typically cost approximately \$10,000, a reasonable subsidence would be on the order of \$2000."

Historic Commission's Zoning Ordinance:

The gas lamp matter may have to be considered in relation to the proposed changes in the Historic Commission's Zoning Ordinance. Jeff circulated copies of the "Newport Historic District Zoning Ordinance Review Task Force" report and the Committee then discussed ways in which the Point Association

might play a role in these proceedings. "Our role could come in two ways. A survey will need to be conducted, we could help with manpower, and there will be a cost for this survey perhaps even \$100,000. Our involvement might spark interest with the neighborhood and public, and show support for the process."

Trees:

Trees have been another matter of persistent concern. The City will no longer replace trees on the sidewalks but will provide trees for planting in private yards within 22 feet of the street. The Point Association will get a written statement of the cost of these trees and subsidize half of the cost for residents who agree to maintain them.

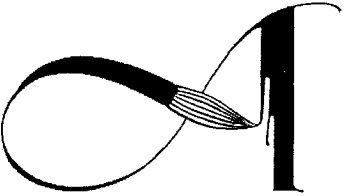
There is a new tree in John Martins Park and a new sign will also be added as soon as all abutters agree to its placement.

Plant sale:

The Plant Sale will take place at St. John's, out of doors weather permitting. The coordinator of the event is Mary Berlinghof and her committee is made up of Sue Brandon, Nancy Scott, Ann Ritterbusch and Annette Raisky.

(Continued on page 13)

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(Continued from page 12)

Other events:

The Pot Luck dinner will be held on March 22 at Harbor House. Help is needed for setting it up. A spring meeting will be held in April or May, perhaps with a speaker who can address concerns of the members regarding the Historic Commission.

Driftways:

A last major area of concern was the driftways: vehicles, encroachment, etc. The Waterfront Commission is addressing these issues, as are other state and city entities. The Point Association should play a supporting role as part of a transparent process that involves the public.

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(Continued from page 11)



cafeteria which has foods typical of places around the world and, in Maddie's words, it is an all-you-can-eat cafeteria (note: she is tall and slim).

Therein is the story of passions for early American history, painting, sports, design, the well-being of new businesses, and interested and interesting people becoming new layers in our rich smorgasbord of valuable things that we on the Point are fortunate to have surrounding us.

RHODE ISLAND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Once again the Society will have a meeting at Harbor House.

April 4, 2009 This is a half day meeting beginning at 1:00 pm.

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(Continued from page 6)

gogue. He is presently leading a team in a mammoth undertaking in the church at Portsmouth Abbey School, restoring and remounting an enormous sculpture entitled "The Trinity", crafted by Richard Lippold. It is a bronze art work using over 20,000 feet of gold wire, which radiates out from points on a crucifix suspended over the main altar in fifteen triangular arrays, extending outward to all corners of the church. The job is complex and challenging, and has involved six months of research and preparation.

Howard's art work appears in numerous venues, ranging from the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. to museums in San Francisco, Oklahoma, New Orleans, South Carolina, Brooklyn and, appropriately, Newport. Visitors to the Newport Art Museum can view Howard's bronze sculpture, Torso #1. In making his prints Howard uses a state-of-the-art process called *giclée*, resulting in precise color match and superior image resolution. Channing Gray, in the *Providence Journal-Bulletin*, noted that Howard's painting "strains to break into the third dimension, where Newman is an undisputed master." (Aug. 3, 1984) A short while ago a picture of Howard, Mary, and their granddaughter, Zora, appeared on the front page of the *Newport Daily News* together with a casting pattern for the new Washington Square horse trough fountain, based on Howard's analysis of the original trough found in old photographs from the Newport Historical Society. If, after reading this account, you would like to see some of Howard's work and learn more about him, the reader is advised to visit his remarkable website, *newmansltd.com*, and enjoy a grand tour through his many accomplishments. I wish to thank Mary and Howard publicly for a warm reception and lively conversation as a guest in their home and in Howard's workshop.



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(Continued from page 5)

ther, figuratively, that she had come thus far and was now at a loss which road to take. She is there met by a man who, seeing her destitute and friendless condition, offers to marry her and take her to himself and his home.

If it were not convenient to find a place where three roads met, then the bride-to-be should walk across the road back and forth at least four times, thereby representing the four corners of the road.

This is the marriage noted by Mr. Vars in South Kingstown:

Thomas Cullenwall was joyned in Marriage to Abigail his wife the 22nd day of February, 1719-20. He took her in Marriage after she had gone four times across the highway in only her Shift and hairlace and no other clothing. Joyned in Marriage per me, George Hazard, Justice.

This is a Westerly record:

To all people to whome it may concern – this may certify you that Nathaniell Bundy of West-erly Took ye Widow Mary Palmeter of sd town in ye highway with no other clothing but shifting or Smock on ye evening after the 26th day of April 1724 – and was joyned together in this honorable estate of matrimony in ye presence of John Coley, Peter Crandall, James Coury, Moses Downing, George Stillman, May Crandall, Mary Hill, and was so joyned together as above sd ye day and year above mentioned per me, John Saunders, Justice.

It seems that during a part of the time when the shift marriages were used, there was some feeling of immod-esty about them. They were, in most cases, performed at twilight. One, at least, was solemnized in the middle of the night, obviously to escape prying eyes: 'David Lewis married widow Jemima Hill where four roads meet at midnight.' *****

(Continued on page 17)



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(Continued from page 4)

tation needs, I like to take a 50-year view. I would hope that the people using the bridge 50 years from now would be grateful for a decision to disperse traffic flow through multiple exits, rather than creating a traffic monster at Connell Highway and Admiral Kalbfus Boulevard. I hope that the Council and Manager of the City of Newport will understand that.

Beyond that, though, a decision to eliminate the Kalbfus interchange is not one that Newport alone should be permitted to make because it has an everlasting effect on the rest of the island. Considering that, I encourage the civic leaders of Middletown and Portsmouth to be concerned about the potential impact of this decision on the use of the bridge by their constituents.



(Continued from page 16)

The inevitable prudency which accompanied the shift marriage for a while, and in some regions, was soon banished by the adaptation of the shift itself. It was, in most of the ceremonies, far from a true symbol of dire poverty. It was long, thick, and at best an awkward garment; but it was often beautifully hand-worked, and at times, perhaps, colorful and becoming.

In practically all the shift marriages on record in Rhode Island, the bride came to the appointed corners already wearing her shift. Only once was there, apparently, something of modern burlesque involved. That was in East Greenwich, where: 'Rebekah Andrews, widow, did personally appear in the highway in sd Towne and the sd Rebekah did strip herself unto her shift and declare yt she left all to take ye sd John Nichols to be her husband and yt said Nichols did take her to be his wife and they were lawfully married the 18th day of June 1721 before me, Tho. Fry, Just.'"

(from "Rhode Island Lore and Laughter," by Devere Allen, undated article, unnamed newspaper, possibly Providence Journal)

But this is only a sample of the kinds of information and especially historical information that interested Louise Sherman. We look forward to sharing more of these snippets with you in the future.



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POINT PLANT SALE NEWS

by Isabel Griffith

I am delighted to be writing about the 2009 Point Plant Sale, now in the planning stages. Mary Berlinghof on Willow Street is the new Coordinator. Marcia Mallory and I were so pleased to be invited to the first meeting for key volunteer Committee Chairs. They include: Nancy Scott, Annette Raisky, Ann Ritterbusch and Sue Brandon. What a creative, enthusiastic, energetic group they are!

With Mary's leadership, plans call for an expanded event; the Plant Sale will be part of a more ambitious production held at St John's parish hall and surrounding grounds. Should it rain, there is plenty of space under cover for cashier's tables and display areas. Parking is convenient and ample. The church will be holding a bake sale and selected artisans will be invited to display their work, much of it with a garden theme.

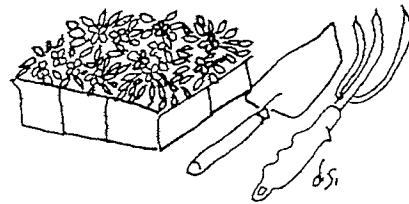
Annie Ritterbusch fondly remembers the Willow Street Fair of many years ago as an extremely popular event on the Point. These wonderful volunteers are not quite ready to close off Willow Street for the occasion, but who knows what the future will bring?

Of course, they need lots more help – with setup, sales, donations – AND they are looking forward to hearing from all who are able to donate plants from their gardens. Pots, potting soil, and suggestions about how to make a beautiful plant for the sale will be available.

For new gardeners not quite sure about how to divide and pot up perennials, there will be expert advice. As usual, proceeds from the sale go towards beautifications of the Point. **Save the date! May 9, rain or shine, the day before Mother's Day - the perfect opportunity to find something lovely for that special person.**

Local artisans who may wish to join the event are encouraged to contact Ann Ritterbusch, Ann_ritterbusch@hotmail.com.

For more information or to volunteer, Please contact Mary Berlinghof, Marye3@cox.net



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PROPOSED LAW REGULATES GAS METERS

A memo recently forwarded to the *Green Light* by Pieter Roos from Edward Sanderson, RI Historical Commission, gives details of a new initiative before the state legislature.

“Over the past two years, owners of historic houses in Providence have clashed with the utility company National Grid as the utility has attempted to move gas meters from inside homes’ basements to the exterior front façade. Homeowners have complained that the gas meters, gas regulators, and gas pipes have been installed without owners’ permission and that the National Grid is defacing historic houses.

Legislators in the Rhode Island General Assembly have introduced bills that would require the utility to give preference to less visually prominent locations for the meters – and to consult with property owners before doing the work. Additionally, in local historic districts, the proposed law would give preservation commissions jurisdiction over these alterations to the streetscape.”

The identical House and Senate bills are numbered respectively H5088 and S0107. The measure, if passed, would have consequences for our own neighborhood.

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