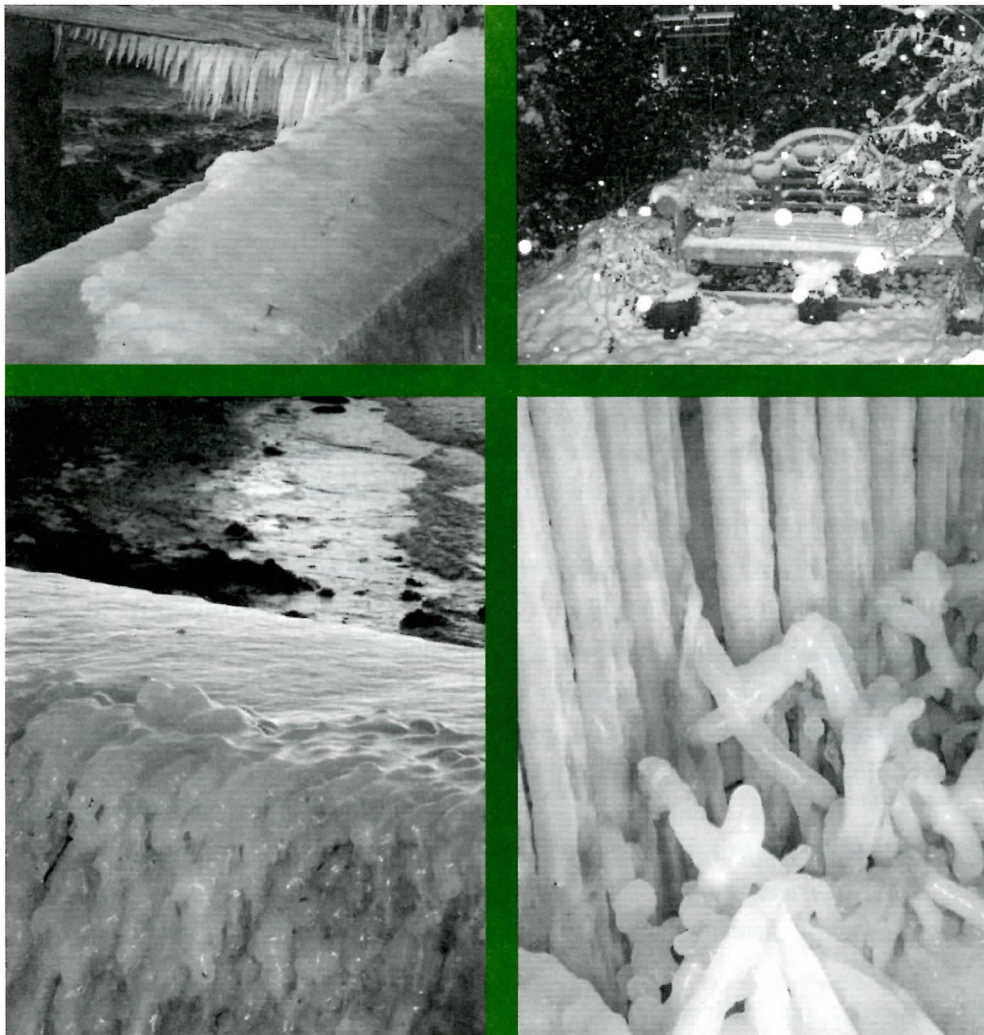


The GREEN LIGHT



BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

WINTER 2009-10



The GREEN LIGHT

LIV No. 4 WINTER 2009-10

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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:

Washington Street Winter, by Jane Hence



One of the issues that have drawn the attention of the Point Association's Executive Committee at recent meetings is a decline in Point Association membership. A number of explanations have been proffered, none of them satisfactory but all unsettling. To counteract this decline in small measure, I would like to call our readers' attention to the membership expiration date noted on our address label. Renewals will be greatly appreciated — *as would any effort to bring in new members.* An updated membership form can be found further along in this issue and can be used by renewing and new members alike.

As editor of the *Green Light*, I hope that this issue will remind our readers of the superb services provided by the Association's dedicated volunteers, whether they be in beautifying the neighborhood, intervening with city and even state officials on behalf of its residents, or indeed in putting out the *Green Light* itself. I for one thank them all from the bottom of my heart.

Happy holidays to you all.

Alice Clemente

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

I'm writing this in November before the first freeze. You will be reading it in December, when we may already have had the first snow of the winter. Lately I seem to be experiencing some sort of "civic duty overload." Maybe it's the "summer of the sewer pipes syndrome" or, just too many meetings. So let me tell you about my best spider.

She established her web just outside the big paned window in the kitchen and I watched her for two months before she disappeared in late October. Her webs were splendid and she made a very good living in her chosen spot, catching lots of small winged creatures and quickly wrapping and devouring them. I keep an eye on the most obvious spiders in my garden – the big ones with webs that otherwise I would crash into as I walk and work there. She was the best spider of them all and the biggest by the end of summer.

Fascination with spiders goes back to a childhood in Texas where the big garden variety (much bigger than Rhode Island spiders!) were gorgeously striped in black and bright gold. In the summer there would always be one or two webs strung on the bushes just outside the back door of the house where the porch light could shine on them. My dad taught us how to catch grasshoppers and throw them into a spider's web...quickly, before the grasshopper spit "tobacco juice" on us. We loved watching a spider wrap them up as they struggled to escape. Bloodthirsty children we were, but we learned a lot about nature and became curious rather than afraid of snakes, worms, and various bugs and insects, some of which were poisonous. It was good that I could recognize a baby copperhead snake when many years later a student brought me a live one into the classroom. She had managed to scoop it up in a cookie tin and close the lid!

Another memory from Texas is of my mother, crawling out the "dog door" (we had BIG dogs) to take aim with her trusty shotgun at a crow in the pecan tree. Crows are notoriously hard to hit and she missed. She did shoot the corner off the porch roof. But that's another story.

As I mentioned at the Annual Meeting in October, it's extremely important for Point residents to call the police department immediately in case of disturbances or suspicious incidents. We had some problems with vagrants and loud drinking parties in Storer Park this summer. Unfortunately, although some people are conscientious about reporting, most of the residents in that area do not bother to call the police. In a summer meeting with our Councilman, Charles Duncan, and the Chief of Police, I learned that the police record every complaint called in even if they don't respond immediately. Nothing much gets done in Newport unless people act!!



POINT ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS SEPTEMBER TO NOVEMBER 2009

A group of Farewell and upper Thames Street residents met with the Executive Committee in September to present information on and request assistance in dealing with a problem with trucks and tour buses traveling through their neighborhood. Noise, vibration, and damage to fences, foundations and car side mirrors as a result of this traffic were described in detail. Isabel Griffiths and Libby Houlihan, one of the presenting residents, later met with city officials and agreed to create a petition by means of an official form which each of the complainants will have to complete.

Another traffic problem discussed at the same meeting was the matter of pedestrian safety at the corner of Sycamore and Washington Streets. Recommendations included placing a sign and crosswalk there and also at the corner of Washington and Van Zandt.

The Beautification Committee reported on plans for this fall and continued to discuss the procurement of a new water fountain for Battery Park. Vandalism and the fountain's weather resistance were considered and it was decided that Joan Simmons would discuss with Scott Wheeler the parameters of the installation: appropriate dates, handicap accessibility, and required cutoff devices.

This fall Isabel Griffith and Charles Duncan met with Chief of Police McKenna to discuss vagrants using Storer Park as well as the abuse of the Elm Street Pier by others partying at that location. Chief McKenna encouraged residents to call the police immediately upon observing such abuses. *Calls must be made to 911 but the caller must immediately state that it is not an emergency.* The police have been responsive to recent calls of this kind.

WATERFRONT NEWS Washington Street Extension

by Liz Mathinos

On October 22, Attorney Chris Behan representing the City in Solicitor Joe Nicholson's place, and Joe DeAngelis, attorney for the Washington Street Extension abutters, appeared before Judge Stephen Nugent, who set the trial to begin on Monday, January 25th. Judge Nugent replaces Judge Edward C. Clifton who presided over the case, initially.

For those citizens who have been following this lawsuit, there are several important facts to remember:

1. The City never formally entered into an abandonment, which is a legal process with very specific steps.
2. When the City Council refused a payment of \$90,000 for the street from the abutters, an agreement was suggested by someone in City Hall in Mayor Sardella's administration.

3. When this Agreement went before the Council, Councilors Jeanne Marie Napolitano, James Baccari, Richard O'Neill, and Mayor Sardella voted for it.

4. The City had the right to rescind the Agreement at any time, for any reason, which the City Council did when citizens protested angrily.

5. In August 2008, Judge Clifton who heard the preliminary arguments in the lawsuit ruled that the abutters have the right to present their case.

So the trial goes forward with the abutters seeking to obtain property and damages, valued at approximately \$300,000. Please let your voices be heard on this issue and attend the trial on January 25th in Superior Court.

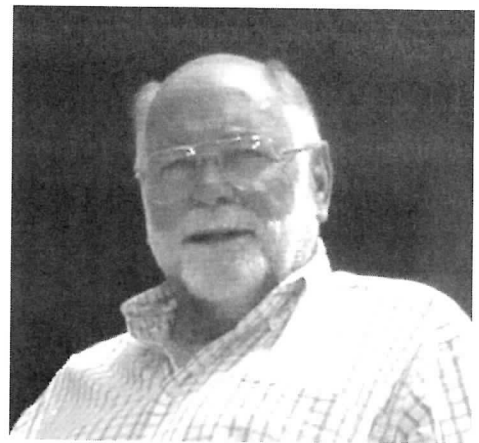


POINT ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING OCT. 22 - HARBOR HOUSE

by Tom Kennedy and Andy Lavarre

The first part of the meeting was concerned with business. Isabel Griffith opened the meeting by encouraging members to provide the Association with their e-mail addresses, which will enable them to receive messages in a timely fashion concerning upcoming events. A Treasurer's Report was circulated and Jeff Marshall encouraged those present to help bolster membership by speaking to their neighbors about joining the Point Association. Isabel mentioned the P.A.'s role in tidying up the driftways and in providing additional benches on the Van Zandt pier, and encouraged members to get involved with committee work and to support beautification projects. The upcoming bulb planting in the waterfront parks was advertised. Three new officers were formally proposed and elected: Jeff Marshall as 1st Vice President, Andy Lavarre as Recording Secretary, and Tom Goldrick as Treasurer.

Peter Martin, the State Representative for the 75th district and a Point Association member, was the guest speaker for the second part of the meeting. He reflected on his



experiences as a freshman representative at the age of 68. He is on four sitting committees: the Judiciary Committee, the Municipal Government Committee, the Separation of Powers Committee, and the Veterans Committee. Unlike most other representatives, Peter has the luxury of devoting all of his time to this venture, since he is not otherwise employed. His attendance at meetings has been perfect.

Peter has learned to stay focused, to distinguish between municipal, state and Federal issues. If it is municipal or federal, he refers it to the city council or the congress-

(Continued on page 16)

Nina Lynette

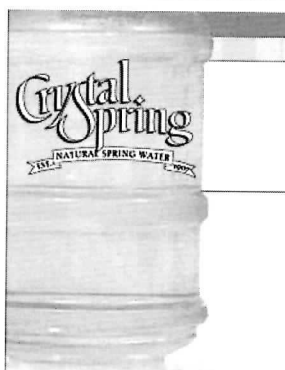
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POINT VOLUNTEERS RECEIVE "NEWPORT IN BLOOM" AWARD

by Isabel Griffith

Undaunted by the wettest summer in over twenty years and even enduring the theft of some of their plants, volunteers from the Point Association planted and nurtured flowers in a dozen planters in parks and piers along Washington Street. Their dedication even included carrying water-filled containers from their homes to the planters. Their labor was rewarded this year with an award from the organization "Newport in Bloom". As you will see from the pictures taken by Jane Hence, each site has a different display, based on its location and the "whim" of the gardeners. Three people missing from the volunteers' photo are: Joan Simmons, Constance Metcalf and Beth Cullen.



Back row Left to right: Marcia Mallory, Patricia Carrubba, Merry Preston, Isabel Griffith, Bill Hall

Front row seated: Kay O'Brien, Elaine Jolley, Mary Berlinghof, Claire Ernsberger

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BULB PLANTING IN THE POINT'S PARKS

by Jane Hence

The project was scheduled for Saturday, October 24, which was a very rainy gray day, but not especially cold, and also on Sunday, which was a sunny day. The majority who came to plant on Saturday arrived bundled up and spent the morning on hands and knees with garden tools and good spirit. We were all cheered by the generosity of Leeanne and Charlie Langston, not Pointers but Extension Street residents who read about the scheduled planting in the newspaper and decided to come down to the Point to help plant 500 grape hyacinth bulbs in Storer, Battery, and Martins parks. There was hot coffee and doughnuts and pleasure in doing the job well in both rain and shine.



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GENEROUS POINTERS HELP SAVE THE SNOWY OWLS

by Jane MacLeod Walsh

Dear World Wildlife Fund:

For two days, we sat outside collecting money for snowy owls. We were in Newport, Rhode Island. We were visiting our grandmother. We gave people sea glass that we collected from the shore when they gave us money to help snowy owls. One lucky day and one afternoon we collected \$50! We collected \$88 all together. We also donated \$62 of our own money that we've been saving up by ourselves.

We really like owls. We saw snowy owls on your endangered animals chart. We hope you like this picture of us collecting money for snowy owls.

Sincerely,

Caleb (age 9) and Lucas (age 6) Sherman
Seattle, WA

This letter and picture were sent to the *Green Light* from Seattle by my niece, Holly Barker Sherman, who was in Newport in August for a visit with her family at the MacLeod homestead on Washington Street. She wants to thank all the kind neighbors and passers-by who so nicely contributed to her sons' project to help save the snowy owls



These owls live mainly in the Arctic tundra but their range also includes Canada, the northern US, Greenland, Scandinavia and Russia. They feed primarily on lemmings, but when there are fewer lemmings in the Arctic, they migrate southward to feed on other small ro-

dents, rabbits, birds and even fish. They're the heaviest, northernmost and most unusually patterned of all the North American owl species. Their wing spans are generally around 41/2 feet, but sometimes even more. The males get whiter and whiter as they age, but the females have a brownish pattern.

Snowy owls are unusual enough in this area that a sighting often engenders some coverage in our local papers. Some of our readers may remember a visit by one of these impressive creatures to Aquidneck Island in November of 2001, which produced a full-color portrait of the feathered visitor on the front page of *Newport This Week*, perched serenely on a balcony on Ocean Avenue in broad daylight. Unlike most owls, the snowies are diurnal rather than nocturnal. I saw one (probably the same one) on the beach and rocks at Graves Point, near Brenton Point, that same week. Maybe he was looking for a fish dinner.

My only other sighting was in a different year at the Sachuest Point Wildlife Refuge in Middletown. The word had spread among nature-lovers that a snowy owl was visiting there. My sister and I went out to see if we could spot him and, sure enough, there he was in plain view out in the middle of a field, sitting motionless on the ground as he guarded whatever prey he had caught between his heavily feathered front feet, staring straight ahead with his bright yellow eyes.

Harry Potter fans will probably remember that the owl named Hedwig that figures so prominently in the series of books (and now movies) is a snowy owl.

There are several threats to the survival of these magnificent owls, most of them caused by humans. Although they're protected both federally and globally by a migratory bird act, it hasn't stopped people from killing them illegally for their eyes and feet, which are prized in Asian markets. Human encroachment into their natural habitat has caused problems for them in the Arctic ecosystem, and collisions with automobiles, airplanes, utility lines, etc., as well as gunshot wounds, have caused many deaths.

Thank you to all the Pointers who were kind enough to help two young boys with their charitable campaign, thereby hopefully saving a few more Arctic owls from an untimely end.

THE POINT AND ITS BOOKENDS PART II: THE NAVAL WAR COLLEGE MUSEUM

by Ed Madden

After the Civil War, the U.S. Navy decreased in numbers and capability because there was no pressing need to maintain its strength. There were 92 ships – 32 in commission – with 8000 officers and men. The British Royal Navy by comparison had 359 ships with 63,000 officers and men. France was a close second with 329 ships and 48,000 officers and men.

In 1884 the only U. S. vessel classified as a first rate ship was a wooden steam frigate, the *Tennessee*. This was the flagship of the North Atlantic Squadron and senior officers felt it had neither the armor, speed, or the weapons to survive combat with a foreign man-of-war. The blame was placed in part with the Secretary of the Navy and his colleagues who were perceived as running a cumbersome, ineffective and inefficient organization. Congress, in 1884, appropriated money to build 4 steel warships, the nucleus of the New Navy. Older wooden warships were scrapped rather than being repaired.

In 1884 the Naval War College was established in Newport. This was in response to the perceived need for in-depth education in technical and scientific expertise of the officers' corps. There already had been a naval presence in Newport starting with the temporary movement, for security reasons, of the Naval Academy from Annapolis during the Civil War. There was considerable enthusiasm to keep the Naval Academy permanently in

Newport after the war but political pressures returned it to Annapolis.

Admiral Stephen Luce, one of the most capable officers in the Navy, had established a Naval Training Station on Coasters Island, Newport, in 1883. The apprentice trainees were housed in the *U.S.S. New Hampshire*, a three-masted man-of-war, berthed at the island.

In 1884, Admiral Luce proposed founding the Naval War College, locating it on Coasters Island which he felt was an ideal location for a professional educational institution for naval officers. There were opposing recommendations to the location of the War College. Some wanted to have the College located on the campus of the Naval Academy at Annapolis and others advocated locating it in Washington, D.C. as part of the Bureau of the Navy.

After much discussion in varying committees, both military and political, Admiral Luce's vision for Newport became a reality in 1884. One impetus for action was the various "War Schools" that the Army had established. These had been enthusiastically received in Washington. The existence of the Torpedo Station School on Goat Island along with the training squadron aboard the flagship *U.S.S. New Hampshire* moored at Coasters Island helped sway the choice of Newport for the Naval War College. The Navy purchased Coasters Harbor Island and then the Newport Asylum for the Poor from the city of Newport in 1881. This building, which sits on a grassy knoll with a majestic view of Newport harbor, became the first home of the War College. It was later named Founder's Hall and in 1978, with extensive remodeling, became the War College Museum.


Admiral Luce was appointed the Superintendent of the College and he set to work to build its infrastructure. Only a few, most inadequate buildings were initially available for classrooms and housing. A sparse faculty was established and the college courses were opened to all officers above the grade of naval cadet. The initial class of 21 officers assembled on September 4, 1885. There was very little monetary appropriation for books, classroom furniture, room and board, etc. To top it all off, Admiral Luce, the founder and godfather of the College, was reassigned to command the North Atlantic Squadron in January, 1886. He had

(Continued on page 12)

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THE CASWELLS OF EASTON'S POINT

by Jim Caswell

I remember the Newport of my youth, now half a century ago, as quite a different place than it is today. The auto traffic was sparse and leisurely without Newport's western bridge and generally with one car per family. Those same streets teemed with children, playing stickball on their pavement during warm summer evenings or staking out a sidewalk territory for winter "school's-out!" snowball fights.

From a youngster's perspective in the 50s and 60s, those streets formed neighborhoods and these were in turn compiled into districts that were proudly represented in sporting competitions by the adolescent inhabitants of each. Basically, one was identified by one's elementary school or playground. "North-enders", such as the Caswells, attended Sullivan, Coggeshall, Cranston Calvert or Sheffield schools and congregated at Vernon playground by the hundreds. "Fifth-warders" came from Carey, Lenthal, or Underwood and played at the city's southern-most Richmond playground, affectionately known as the "Rich". Children of the Point attended Potter, Callender and Mumford and had Hunter Field. My dad, John Caswell, was a principal in those days, first at Callender and later Mumford, so I knew many of the Point students as well as the inside of those buildings. Hunter was not much in size compared to Vernon and the Rich, but we sometimes played tennis, softball and lineball there with "Point" friends.

The real Point attraction to me was its waterfront. I loved fishing and was one of the countless kids who gathered at the Washington Street piers in season to witness the huge annual fish migrations that barely exist today. I recall a feeling of excitement as the calm waters off Van Zandt pier erupted with hundreds of minnows leaping to escape the predatory mackerel schools rising from the depths. They would attack in dense waves, and we wouldn't bother to cast until the whole school suddenly flashed a rainbow of colors en masse. Then there was frenzied action. Shoulder to shoulder, we would cast shiny lures, hook a prize, and raise our poles to exchange positions as the fish crossed and

tangled lines. If the fishing was slow, tide high, and the day hot enough, some boys would leap into the clear bay waters off the pier railings or even from the rusted, creaky metal roof.

Since childhood, I have known our family's north end history. My dad was born in the Caswell family home on Vernon Avenue in 1922. His grandfather, William Bacheller Caswell, owned the house right next door. For decades, I was proud to be a North-ender. Only recently did a study of my family's colonial Newport roots reveal to me that the Caswells were residents of Easton's Point long before they migrated north. After nearly three years of investigation, a two century, complex, multi-generational web of families on Easton's Point became evident from records of the Newport Historical Society, Redwood and Newport libraries, Mayflower Society, genealogy texts, and numerous internet sites. Some of these "Point" facts and events which may be of interest to local residents will come out as they relate to the Caswells of Easton's Point.

Job Caswell was the first of his family to settle at Easton's Point. He migrated from Plymouth Colony around 1720, when he was baptized by Reverend Clapp of Newport's First Congregational Church. Deed records at NHS indicate he bought his first property on the Point in 1725. The NHS owns an original Easton's Point Proprietors' plat map that delineates the area's lots by number. Close examination of this document in comparison to Job's deed record identified his first lot to be 50/100 feet on the northwest corner of Elm and 2nd Streets. Mayflower Society records indicate that Job lived there with his wife Lydia (Peckham) and children until 1748 when it was sold to Adipas Hathaway. Job came to Newport with housewright skills at a time of local prosperity that involved much construction. He was later followed by three





younger brothers, Joseph, Jared, and Timothy. Job prospered in his adopted colony, being admitted as a freeman in 1727 and serving as a captain and a member of "The Council of War" for the Newport Artillery Co. in 1743. Job's military and business interests merged with his partial ownership of a privateer vessel, the *Reprisal*, during King George's War in 1748. Included in that list of *Reprisal* owners was future Governor and signer of the Declaration of Independence, Stephen Hopkins.

William Caswell, a first cousin of Job, is recorded as a 1747 resident of the Point. NHS deed records indicate his contiguous north/south lots as numbers 99 and 85. Best estimate of this location, based on the Proprietors' map, is fronting the north side of Bridge Street, between

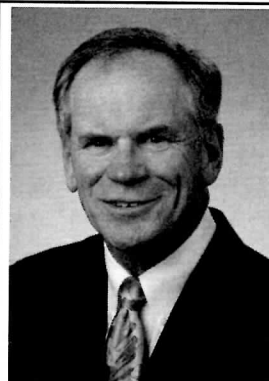
3rd and 2nd, just west of the property identified today as the Martha Pitman House. William's father, William, and his brother Peter, are the first in Caswell history to visit Rhode Island. They are both recorded as Plymouth Colony soldiers who, along with Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut Colony armies, invaded the Narragansett Indian winter stronghold near Kings Town (Great Swamp Fight) in December, 1675. William, Jr. later left Newport to become South Kingstown school master.

Job and Lydia Caswell parented 14 children, not all surviving to adulthood. Many Caswell tombstones can be seen at the Point's Farewell Street Common Burial Grounds, but all that I have discovered are descended from Job's son, John. John was a 34 year-old blacksmith in 1776. It is he, specifically, whose life I have spent over two years attempting to reconstruct until his death in 1779 at age 39. John's wife, Hannah (West), was first cousin to Brig. Gen. William West who led the Rhode Island Militia at the 1778 Battle of Rhode Island. He also headed the Anti-Federalist movement after the war. Hannah's mother was Mary Southwick, sister of Solomon, owner of the *Newport Mercury* and resident of Washington Street at the junction of Walnut (1904 text reference).

To shorten the story, my studies indicate that John Caswell, like perhaps as many as 1000 Newporters in 1776, took to the sea to fight the British, mostly in privateer vessels. The first ship in U.S. Naval Records for John was the *USS Alfred* that sailed from Newport on Nov. 1, 1776 under the command of John Paul Jones. John served aboard several vessels, was captured in 1778 and sent to English prison. He was pardoned in a prisoner exchange, only to die from cannon fire months later engaging the enemy off the east coast of England.

One 1853 historical reference claims as many as 500 Newporters died in this maritime service, the majority failing to survive cruel captivity. A subject of study for me today is the identity of those 1776 Point residents who left Newport to escape the British invasion and never returned. The following were listed as English captives by the *Providence Gazette* in 1779: William Grinnel, James Tew, Samuel Hayward, Jonathan

(Continued on page 17)



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(Continued from page 9)



the foresight to engage the services of Captain Alfred Mahan before he left. Mahan was to be a lecturer on naval strategy and tactics and became the guiding light in the birth and nurturing of the College after Luce departed. He would become the most famous member of the War College in its early years and was instrumental in founding the "war gaming" for which the College became world famous. Mahan's definitive textbook, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783*, became one of the most respected naval text-books of its time.

A further detailed rendering of the life and times of the Naval War College would consume the remainder of this issue of the *Green Light* and then some. For those who are interested, *Sailors and Scholars – The Centennial History of the U.S. Naval War College, 1884-1984*, by Hattendorf, Simpson III, and Wadleigh, is a fascinating read which fills in all the gaps.

But to get on with the War College Museum – in my opinion this is one of the best kept secrets on Aquidneck Island. Everyone knows about the Preservation Society and its stable of thoroughbred museums. The Tennis Hall of Fame, the incomparable Cliff Walk and Ocean Drive, the wonderful beaches, restaurants and homes are on everyone's must-do list. But the War College museum seems to be off the radar screen for many of the visitors and I dare say many of the natives.

The three-story white stone building became available for a museum after the construction of the definitive campus for the War College. The museum building was renovated with two floors having a total of six galleries. It was dedicated as the Naval War College Museum in May, 1978. The theme of the museum is the depiction of the history of naval warfare and the navel heritage of Narragansett Bay.

There are permanent exhibits, including fascinating primers on development of the torpedo and its home on Goat Island and on the P.T. boats of World War II. Extensive photographs, with reading material, detail the origin of the War College. Handsome ship models and paintings adorn the rooms. In addition, special exhibits changing every 4 to 6 months cover a multitude of interesting topics such as war gaming and the Great White Fleet. A museum store is operated by the Naval War College Foundation and has a variety of historical and nautical books plus clothing, accessories and mementos. When your feet need a rest, there is an instructional video that can be watched from the sitting position.

My only slightly negative comment involves the difficulty of getting on the base (which is justifiably necessary since 9/11). The Pass Office is your first stop where, upon presenting a picture ID (your license), the registration for your car, and proof of valid car insurance, a slight delay is necessary until everything is processed. However, once you are inside the museum, all is forgotten and forgiven, as you spend several fascinating hours enjoying the Naval Pride of Newport.

An added bonus is that the Museum, like all its Smithsonian relatives in Washington, D.C., is absolutely FREE! Not many other Newport destinations can make that claim. So *Anchors Aweigh* and *Semper fi*.



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OUR DRIFTWAYS – A SUCCESS STORY WITH A HAPPY ENDING

by Isabel Griffiths

Unique to Newport, driftways are the western end of streets crossing Washington Street and ending at or in the water of Narragansett Bay. Located in the City's historic Point neighborhood, driftways offer access to the Bay, at least in concept. Per city ordinance, responsibility for maintaining the driftways falls to the City's harbormaster, charged with keeping the driftways clear of all obstruction so as to allow access to the water – an impossible task given the vague wording of the ordinance as it existed until this past summer.

Stories about derelict boats on the driftways had grown to become "urban legend" with long-time residents claiming to remember certain offending boats sitting in the same place for a decade or more. The problem of the driftways had been obvious to residents, the harbormaster and other interested parties for many years, but the perceived complexity of the situation was daunting. Nevertheless, the Waterfront Commission (WFC) chose to address the issue, beginning in the fall of 2008, after several concerned residents attended WFC meetings to complain about the driftways.

The WFC has adopted the process of collecting data and information (e.g., number of dinghies, exact ordinance language, State laws that apply, comparison with other towns) to give them an objective profile of a potential project. They also try to get perspectives from users or those affected by the project. These perspectives always clarify the nature of a problem as well as define criteria for alternative solutions.

It is not always easy to get "stakeholder" perspectives early in the game. The WFC asked the Point Association for help in working on the driftway situation and complicated related issues. According to the Chair of the WFC, Point residents' insights and ideas made a tremendous difference in the resolution of the problem.

- The WFC received an Issue Review and Project Scope report in December, 2008. This report, put together by WFC members, defined the issues and presented data regarding obstruction of the driftways. For example, during the weekend of September 5-7, 2008, 104 boats were stored in the driftways at Pine, Cherry, Chestnut, Walnut, Willow and Poplar Streets, all in the Point area.

- The detailed report prompted the WFC to invite a representative from the Point Association to the meeting where serious discussion began. Friends of the Waterfront as well as the Harbormaster were already involved.

(Continued on page 15)

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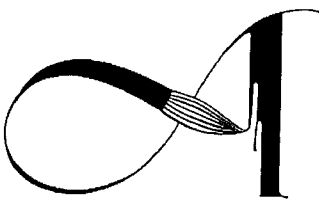
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GRANDMA'S APRON

Author Unknown ~ Submitted by Kay O'Brien

I don't think our kids know what an apron is.

The principal use of Grandma's apron was to protect the dress underneath. Because she only had a few, it was easier to wash aprons than dresses and they used less material. An apron also served as a pot holder for removing pans from the oven.

It was wonderful for drying children's tears, and on occasion was even used for cleaning out dirty ears.

From the chicken coop, the apron was used for carrying eggs, fussy chicks, and sometimes half-hatched eggs to be finished in the warming oven.

When company came, those aprons were ideal hiding places for shy kids. And when the weather was cold, grandma wrapped it around her arms. Those big old aprons wiped many a perspiring brow, bent over a hot wood stove.

Chips and kindling wood were brought into the kitchen in that apron. From the garden, it carried all sorts of vegetables. After the peas had been shelled, it carried out the hulls. In the fall, the apron was used to bring in apples that had fallen from the trees.

When unexpected company drove up the road, it was surprising how much furniture that old apron could dust in a matter of seconds.

When dinner was ready, Grandma walked out onto the porch, waved her apron, and the men knew it was time to come in from the field to dinner.

It will be a long time before someone invents something that will replace that "old-time apron" that served so many purposes.

REMEMBER:

Grandma used to set her hot baked apple pies on the windowsill to cool. Her granddaughters set theirs on the windowsill to thaw.

They would go crazy now trying to figure out how many germs were on that apron.

(Continued from page 13)

- Two categories of issues were identified: 1) Management of dinghies and watercraft on the driftways – clearly under the jurisdiction of the Harbormaster and WFC. 2) Parking, obstruction and other encroachment of the driftways as public access – a much more complicated issue lacking clear definitions and jurisdiction.
- The WFC chose to concentrate first on the watercraft problem. A small committee of interested Point residents was formed and encouraged to provide as broad a perspective as possible. *Newport This Week* provided good publicity in an article by Tom Shevlin who attended the WFC meeting in April, 2009
- The WFC hammered out appropriate language and the “boat sticker” rules to give the existing ordinance the “clout” necessary for enforcement.
- With very little discussion, the City Council approved the amended ordinance, unanimously, in the late spring, 2009. It has been successfully implemented by the Harbormaster.

Why did this work so well?

- a) Residents brought their concerns to the appropriate Commission.
- b) The WFC conducted a detailed study of the problem and encouraged broad public discussion.
- c) The WFC clearly defined the scope of the issues most likely to be solved and developed simple, appropriate language and rules to do it.

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SWIMMING WITH MARCO POLO

by Ed Madden

I recently was working out in the swimming pool at my environmentally-challenged, dysfunctional health spa. There were four pre-teen females full of vim and vigor playing the game of "Marco Polo". For those of you fortunate enough *not* to have been subjected to this auditory punishment, let me explain the game rules. Two or more combatants can play. One is "Marco" and is "it". He or she is supposed to keep his/her eyes shut and holler out "Marco". All the other players are "Polo" and must respond to the call of "Marco" with a vigorous call of "Polo". The idea is for Marco to attune his/her auditory G.P.S. to the location of a Polo and tag him/her, thereby no longer being "it" and becoming instead a Polo. The tagged him/her is then "it" and the game then continues ad nauseum and ad infinitum. The unwary, uninvolved but captured noncombatant swimmer is thereby subjected to a constant cacophony of endlessly repetitive noise. This unwary swimmer then has four choices:

1. Join the game
 2. Quit the pool
 3. Pray that the players will become hoarse (never happens)
 4. Try to blot out the noise with pleasant thoughts.
- For me, this option never works and I am in danger of becoming brain dead, unless the parents of these hellions also are verging on madness and order all the players out of the pool!

A backstory to the above incident involved a pre-teen boy who desperately wanted to be invited to join the Marco Polo game but was ignored. Some time later when the girls had gone and only he and I were left in the pool, he sidled up to me and in a plaintive voice asked me "Do you want to play Marco Polo?" What would you have done?

(Continued from page 5)

man, respectively. He doesn't get to vote on those issues and he needs to stay focused on things he does get to vote on. Some issues with which he has been involved are the flex bus service in Newport, the E-Z Pass introduction, the call for the construction of a sound barrier to protect the residents who live near the Pell Bridge, and the protection of children from being used and targeted by internet pornographers. Peter compared his time as a legislator thus far to a graduate education. He has been pleasantly surprised at the high quality of his fellow legislators. For the most part, they are hard working colleagues and upstanding, concerned citizens. Also surprising was the fact that less than one third of them are lawyers. Peter took questions at the end of his remarks. The subject matter of the questions included the Kilmartin Bill, term limits, and a discussion of Gordon Fox as a candidate for majority leader.

In Peter Martin's mind, his most valuable asset is that he is available. So talk to him. He prefers no "you" messages: "You always...", "You never..." A better contribution is facts and explicit recommendations. He can be reached at <http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/Martin/>.

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(Continued from page 11)

Lillibridge, Sion Arnold, Robert Webb, Jonathan Langworthy, William Munro, James Stanly, George Smith, John Conner, and James Tyler. Perhaps a reader will recognize one of these as a Point resident.

This study indicates strongly that the families of the Point became more interconnected as time passed, both by blood and through marriage and business interests. Evidence of these relationships is demonstrated repeatedly in the location of residences. Job Caswell's house on Poplar Street was diagonally across the 2nd street intersection from that of Caleb Peckham, who according to Mayflower Society records was Lydia (Peckham) Caswell's sibling. One morning at the City Hall, I discovered an 1812 document in which two children of the deceased John Caswell were transferring shares of their father's estate to their eldest brother, William. I compared the Proprietor's lot number to the deed and realized that I had identified the home of John and Hannah Caswell in 1776. I traveled to Willow Street looking for number 10 and – Behold! – there was John Caswell's colonial home, meticulously restored. The owner graciously invited my family and when my father entered, I figured that he was the fifth John Caswell to pass through

the doorway of 10 Willow Street since John, the blacksmith, left forever in 1776. Numerous Caswells, Southwicks, and Bachellers, all blood-related lines, are listed within a one or two block radius of 10 Willow Street on a 19th century map. The study of these colonial Point homes, family relationships and individual histories is like assembling an almost infinitely immense jigsaw puzzle. I walk the streets of Easton's Point with an ever-increasing sense of wonder and patiently sift through very old records for the next piece of the puzzle.



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A HOLIDAY RECIPE

by Alice Clemente

While browsing recently through Ceil Dyer's charming and informative review of Newport's gastronomic history (*The Newport Cookbook*, New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1972), I came across the menu for a Christmas dinner that might have been served by the author's Dyer ancestors or by the colonial-era owners of Hunter House. (The author reminds us that George Washington was received here.) I suspect that such sumptuousness is long gone from the Point, along with the gracious Holly Tea that later marked the Christmas season, but hospitality is surely alive and well here.

For those readers looking for something new to serve this holiday season, I offer a recipe from my own ancestral heritage. The Point connection? Actually, the ties between Portugal and Newport reach back to those colonial days, in part because of the whaling captains' practice of taking on the bulk of their crew in the Azores and then abandoning the men to fend for themselves on New England's shores once the ships were back in port – a questionable practice but ultimately a beneficial one for most of the "victims". A second colonial era link grew out of one of the darkest chapters in Portuguese history when the forced exodus of Sephardic Jews from the Iberian Peninsula brought some of those fleeing persecution first to New York and then to Newport. A significant number would make their fortune among the merchants then prominent on the Point. One of these, Aaron Lopez, originally from Lisbon and in time reputed to be among the wealthiest men in the American colonies, would lay the cornerstone for the Touro Synagogue.

This recipe for *Almond Cake* is from the Algarve region of Portugal where, before the invasion by international tourism, almond trees abounded.

1 cup sifted all purpose flour	1 egg
$\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup buttermilk
$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. baking powder	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. vanilla
$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. baking soda	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup cooled melted butter
$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt	$\frac{2}{3}$ cup sliced almonds

Preheat oven to 350. Sift flour, sugar, baking powder, soda and salt into a bowl.

In another bowl, beat egg, buttermilk and vanilla together until smooth. Stir in butter, add flour mixture, and mix until nearly smooth. Pour into a buttered 9-inch pan (spring-form pan works best). Bake 35 minutes.

While cake is still hot, cover top with sliced almonds. Slowly pour almond syrup (see recipe below) evenly over the almonds, allowing it to seep into the cake. Broil about 6 inches below heat source until almonds are toasted. Cool completely before releasing cake from the pan.

Almond syrup: $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar 6 tbsp. water $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. almond extract
Combine sugar and water in a saucepan and boil until syrupy (220 F. on a candy thermometer). Remove from heat and stir in almond extract.

A Typical Newport Christmas Dinner

Roast Beef	Roast Pork
Roast Turkey with Corn-Bread and Oyster Stuffing*	
Roast Goose with Chestnut-Apple Stuffing†	
Boiled Mashed Turnips	Creamed Onions
Baked Winter Squash	Winter Succotash
Celery	Cranberry Sauce
	Cucumber Pickles
	Plum Cake
Rum Pumpkin Meringue Pie‡	
Raisins	Apples
	Nuts
	Oranges
	Christmas Punch



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