

The GREEN LIGHT



BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

FALL 2010



The GREEN LIGHT

LV No. 3 FALL 2010

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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:

Photo by Jane Hence



In the brutal heat of the summer of 2010, it hardly seems possible that we are already talking about fall, and yet plans have already been made for October and the beginning of a new era for the Point Association. Our Annual Meeting has been scheduled for October 21. Tina Dolan has been asked to speak and a slate of new officers has been drawn up. (See list printed elsewhere in this issue.)

The beginning of a new era is always – and many times reluctantly – the end of an old one. In this case, the negative is the end of the presidency of Isabel Griffith. Throughout her years in office, Isabel has been a dedicated, dynamic and forward-looking leader, with many accomplishments to show for her wise and tenacious efforts on our behalf. We will miss her and take this opportunity to thank her for her devoted service to our community.

Alice Clemente

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

The Van Zandt Bridge is closed to vehicles and pedestrians. Ideally, it would reopen in time for school but I would not be surprised if it remained closed through September. We have all made adjustments for travel into and out of the Point and some streets that have born the brunt of "shortcut" traffic to and from the naval base are enjoying temporary peace and quiet. There has been an increase in the use of the Poplar and Elm routes across the railroad tracks. I was amused to see a couple of cars waiting for the dinner train to pass by, their drivers impatient and fuming at the minute it took to clear the tracks.

When I was a child in Texas one of our treats was to be taken to the RR crossing a few blocks from our house to see the big steam locomotive, boxcars and caboose pass by. We knew when it was coming because a man would walk out of a small booth with a stop sign and stand in the middle of the street blocking cars. The engineer always waved at us. Maybe that's why I love trains. The years passed and technology eliminated the man with the stop sign. RR crossings were marked by big double flashing red lights and barrier arms that came down across the tracks after the classic "ding, ding, ding, ding" warning bell. The sound of the bell gave motorists a few seconds to beat the barrier and many did because once the crossing was closed a freight train could stop traffic for five, ten, even fifteen minutes.

Traveling by car across the south and southwest provided lots of opportunities to sit quietly, watching the boxcars as they went by. They all had identifying "flags" printed on the side so you could tell which railroad they belonged to. In Texas the most common carrier was the Missouri, Kansas, Texas line (MKT), better known at the "Katy." But there were always boxcars from other lines – the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe had a big red "Santa Fe" shield. Spotting flags from California or Canada was a little thrill. But the most prized sighting was a boxcar belonging to the Chessie System. It had a sleeping black kitten on a bright yellow background. The glamour days of railroads are long gone and some of us miss them. Curious? Nostalgic? Go to www.american-rails.com and click on "fallen flags." There you can see pictures of all the old boxcar markers and maps of the routes their trains traveled.

This is my last letter as President of the Point Association. It's been almost four years since I stepped in front of one hundred people packed into the great hall at Harbor House ready to battle RIDOT about the proposed road for cars along the RR tracks on the Point. The Point Association is in sound shape financially and has expanded its interests to include broader issues confronting Newport. Our speaker at the October Annual meeting will be the Executive Director of the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission who also happens to be a resident on the Point. I do worry about maintaining our membership* numbers and attracting new volunteers. We have a newly constituted Membership Committee that will be exploring ways to make the Point Association more visible, welcoming and "user friendly" to the neighborhood. We are not an exclusive, elite group! We welcome new members and are beginning to attract people from other Newport neighborhoods who love the Point as much as we do. Huge thanks to the Executive Committee.

** Your membership expiration date is on the mailing label for the Green Light, just above your name.*



THE LNG DEBATE

In light of the many questions about environmental impacts and public health and safety issues raised by the recent events in the Gulf of Mexico, the debate over a more local energy project, the proposed LNG terminal in Mt. Hope Bay and its potential environmental and public safety impacts, may well merit renewed attention by Point residents. To that end, we have decided to summarize here the positions of ALN and Save the Bay concerning this issue. The proponent's views can be found at www.weaverscove.hessingsites.com.

The proposal is briefly described in ALN's newsletter dated March 15, 2010:

Hess Oil Company/Weaver's Cove Energy has proposed the construction of an LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) off-shore terminal in Mt. Hope Bay. Supplying the facility would require LNG tanker ships to transit from the Atlantic Ocean through approximately 26 miles of Narragansett Bay to reach the unloading terminal. Construction of the terminal would require the dredging of three million cubic yards of material for the channel and turning basin for the ships...

ALN followed up its newsletter article with a forum in April at which the CEO of Hess and a number of adver-

saries – environmental advocates and representatives from area businesses – debated the issues. On May 5, 2010, ALN issued a position paper on the LNG proposal reviewing the pros and cons and concluding that “there are some points that stand out”:

- There is no proven need in New England for the LNG the proposed facility would bring to the region.
- The dredging required for the project would most likely have a significant negative environmental impact upon Mt. Hope Bay and possibly on the sea bed where the dredged material is deposited.
- LNG tanker transits will have a noticeable impact on use of the Bay, with the potential for serious impact if some accommodations cannot be realized.
- LNG tankers will have a significant impact on commuter use of the Pell and Mt. Hope Bridges.
- While the risk of a horrific event caused by accident or terrorist attack is almost immeasurably small, it does exist.

ALN concluded with the following thoughts:

That leaves the weighing of a significant short term economic boost and a much smaller long term economic boost along with an unsubstantiated possibility of a reduction in area energy costs against the impacts and risks noted in the last four bullet items above.

(Continued on page 17)



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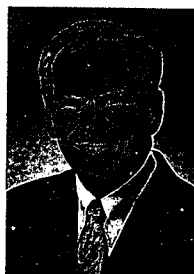
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TRAFFIC ON THE POINT: THREAT TO RESIDENTS' QUALITY OF LIFE AND TO HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE

by Libby Houlihan

Newport is known for traffic problems. The problems result from many things, including narrow, often one-way streets, insufficient parking, and dangerous driving habits. While some see traffic as merely a part of city life, for others it is an assault on their everyday right to enjoy their homes and to feel safe as they walk or drive in their neighborhood.

Point residents between Farewell Street and America's Cup Avenue are forced to deal daily with illegal, excessive, and speeding traffic. These problems were recognized in the 1990s but were not thoroughly dealt with. The problems have worsened since then simply because traffic to, and in, the city has increased.

In the 1990s, when a city transportation study was done, in which residents from this neighborhood participated as members of an ad hoc committee, heavy vehicles and a heavy volume of traffic were recognized as problems for two reasons:

EILEEN NIMMO

The *Green Light* notes the passing on June 5 of Eileen G. Nimmo at the age of 91. Born on the Point, she was the daughter of Bill Bowley, Newport's blacksmith for over 50 years, and wife of "Point Hummer" William Nimmo, Jr.

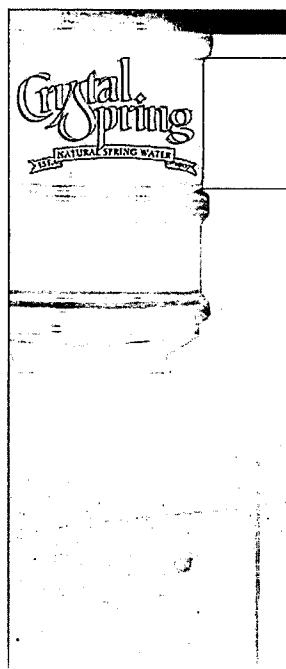
A life-long resident of the Point, Mrs. Nimmo developed a more than ordinary interest in the neighborhood's historic houses and residents. That interest culminated in her book, *The Point of Newport, R.I.* (2001). The book does not purport to be a learned history but rather a labor of love. With its publication late in life, she has assured for herself a distinct place as a Point neighbor "with those who lived here in the past as well as those who live here in the present." She would be pleased to be remembered that way.

This is a neighborhood of narrow streets with buildings at the sidewalk's edge, with on-street parking making the streets even more narrow.

It is a neighborhood with many colonial homes, including NRF houses. More importantly, this area contains not just Newport's but the country's largest collection of intact colonial houses on their original loose stone foundations. These foundations are fragile, and traffic vibrations are detrimental to them. (Two maps of the exhibit at Rough Point highlight this unique historic architectural collection.)

At the time of the study, upper Thames Street, primarily residential, was labeled a "local street", defined as providing "access to adjacent land". It was not an "arterial" street; that is, upper Thames was not to be used as a through street. Farewell Street was described as "already overburdened" by traffic, and Bridge Street, narrow and two-way, was deemed not suitable for through traffic.

The solution arrived at then for limiting through traffic was signage. To limit heavy traffic, signs prohibiting
(Continued on page 16)



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THE BEST SHOW ON THE POINT

by Ed Madden

The Newport Shipyard is at the southern end of Washington Street—literally in the backyard of the Point. There are two locations to view it: one from the footbridge alongside the Goat Island Causeway, giving a bird's eye view, and the other from within the belly of the beast, entering just south of the bridge. This is the up close and personal tour that I took just recently with Charles Dana, the owner. We hopped on his golf cart outside of Belle's Café and explored nearly every nook and cranny of the shipyard.

I only wish that I had a tape recorder to process the data that flowed from Charley's non stop monologue. He highlighted many of the magnificent boats on land and in the water, enumerating the names of the owners and captains, their nautical history and their wonderful stories. There were frequent interruptions in the narrative to chat with crew and visitors, all on a first name basis, go over work plans with his employees and even stop to police the grounds, picking up stray pieces of paper!

We visited the carpentry, machine and paint shops and the environmentally healthy waste water collection and recovery system for power washing the bottoms of the boats.

The Dana family has owned the shipyard since 1998. That is when it was purchased as a foundering remnant of the previously successful steamship repair yard which did the maintenance on ships of the Fall River Line during its heyday in the early part of the 20th century. Charley and his wife, Rose, and four children have all been intimately involved in the day to day workings of the yard. Charley is the president of the organization. He has three trusted

managers who are co-equals, handling all the varied aspects of this bristling enterprise. Son Eli, age 29, who has been six years on the job, is being groomed for eventual succession to the presidency. But after spending the better part of a morning with Charley, I don't see this dynamo hanging up his measuring tape and clip board any time soon

He showed me the three gigantic lifts that do the yeoman's work in moving around the expensive merchandise entrusted to his care. A 70 ton lift is the lightweight of the group. The "Atlas" is the 330 ton lift acquired in the year 2000 and a new 100 ton lift that was just recently purchased. All three lifts are being consolidated on the south side of the yard. Charley said that the largest boat that the yard has handled is 300 feet in length. His core work force comprises some one hundred loyal workers of varied technical skills. Recently I spent a fascinating hour watching the 330 ton lift and its handlers move a huge yacht across the yard and into the water—all the operations were controlled from a hand held device! The job appeared deceptively easy, made so by the skill of the workers.

A large marine railway extending several hundred feet into the water was inherited with the purchase in 1998. With the ability of the three lifts to handle all manner of boats, the railway has become superfluous and its footprint is being turned into much needed dock space.

All of the above is meant to whet your appetite to visit the Newport Shipyard. As an innkeeper, for years I have been encouraging my guests to pay the yard a visit. I tell them that one of the most fascinating

(Continued on page 15)

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LEN PANAGGIO – A MAN OF ONE THOUSAND AND ONE STORIES

by Ed Madden

On a recent morning, I met with Len Panaggio in his comfortable ranch style home in Newport for this interview. We sat in the living room with bookshelves chockablock full of books and magazines. A nearby office contained filing cabinets and his faithful typewriter, but nary a trace of a computer or other electronic gadgets of the E-age.

Our conversation roamed the world and its inhabitants. He is Newport born and raised, growing up on Spring Street and attending local grammar and high schools.

After the outbreak of World War II, he was drafted into the Army Air Corps. He was subsequently assigned to the air base in Casablanca, Morocco, arriving 5 weeks after the U.S. invasion of North Africa. He found the city to be very interesting and the surrounding countryside to be agriculturally fertile.

As a non-commissioned officer, he was initially the supply squadron chief clerk. Then he was assigned to the local air force hotel, which accommodated visiting Air Force officers and dignitaries. In the course of his duties, he met his soul mate/life mate, Monique Rouger, and they were married in Casablanca.

While at the air base, Len edited the local weekly Air Force newspaper, winning honorable mention in a competition for all military newspapers throughout the U.S. service areas.

After the war, Len and Monique departed Casablanca for Newport, R.I. Len trained in historical research on his G.I. Bill at the Newport Historical Society and then took a job at Old Sturbridge Village which was just getting off the ground as a bona fide living museum. He became the first publicity director in 1948 and remained on that job for 4 years with attendance increasing from about 30,000 to around 100,000 visitors per year under

his stewardship. He lived in a restored house on the museum grounds, next to the grist mill, with Monique and their two children. Their daughter, Madeleine, was often featured as a model in publicity photographs of the village. Their son, Len, was my wine expert in the Spring, 2010, *Green Light* article entitled "The Days of Wine and Roses – an American Songbook".

Len used his public relations experiences at Old Sturbridge Village to become a sought after guest speaker at multiple events, extolling the advantages of tourism. His tenure lasted 4 years and then Rhode Island beckoned. Both he and Monique became involved in promoting tourism here. She took the job of publicity director of the Preservation Society of Newport County and remained in that capacity for 42 years! Len became involved with the R. I. tourism bureau as director of tourism promotion from 1952 until his retirement in 1983. He "retired" as a freelance writer, becoming involved with the *Newport*

Daily News as a columnist, producing the Grist Mill, a popular local biweekly column, for the past 20 years. His love of historical research never wanes and at age 91 years, he continues his writing which he finds endlessly fascinating.

As a former professor of mine told me a long time ago, "You have to have a reason to get out of bed every morning – or else you don't get out of bed." Needless to say, Len never sleeps late. Q.E.D.



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THE STORY OF "UP"

by Jane Marchi

Once upon a time, in one of my previous incarnations, I found myself teaching English to foreign students. However, it soon became apparent that they found the standard textbooks inadequate. "Teach us American slang," they would ask, somewhat to my bemusement.

What slang? What vintage? Slang in the United States appears and vanishes with startling rapidity. While even I know that "twenty-three skidoo" is long gone, does anyone still use "rad" and "bling"?

It gradually became apparent that what students were really after was what I soon learned to call "two-word verbs": those colloquial expressions that we native speakers grow up using from earliest childhood, i.e. a construction of some basic English verb in combination with one or more prepositions. And the English language has a lot of prepositions (I once heard an estimate of at least thirty-six), more than many other languages.

I discovered this by chance when I asked a student one day how she got along with her roommate. Got? Along? With? I could almost hear her brain clicking over the dictionary equivalents of this odd combination. What did I mean? As I labored to explain, I began to comprehend the difficulties inherent in comprehending some of the expressions we most take for granted, since they are among the earliest used in daily conversation and thus almost invisible to us as unusual in any way. To heighten your awareness, I would like to share with you the following "Story of UP."

It is easy to understand UP, meaning toward the sky or the top of the list, but when we awaken in the morning, why do we WAKE UP?

At a meeting, why does a topic COME UP? Why do we SPEAK UP, and why are the officers UP FOR election and why is it UP TO the secretary to WRITE UP a report? We CALL UP our friends and we use the word to BRIGHTEN UP a room, POLISH UP the silver, WARM UP the leftovers and CLEAN UP the kitchen. We LOCK UP the house, and some guys FIX UP an old car. At other times, the little word has a real special meaning: people STIR UP trouble, LINE UP

for tickets, WORK UP an appetite, and THINK UP excuses. And while it is one thing to be dressed, it is another to be DRESSED UP.



Sometimes this little word can be really confusing, as when a drain must be OPENED UP because it is STOPPED UP; or when we OPEN UP a store in the morning but CLOSE UP at night. You might even say we are a little MIXED UP about UP.

To be knowledgeable about its proper uses, LOOK it UP in the dictionary. In a desk-sized dictionary, it TAKES UP almost a quarter of the page and can ADD UP to almost thirty definitions. If you are UP TO it, you might try BUILDING UP a list of the many ways it is used. It will TAKE UP a lot of your time but, if you don't GIVE UP, you may WIND UP with a hundred or more.

When it threatens to rain, we say it is CLOUDING UP. When the sun comes out, we say it is CLEARING UP. When it rains, it WETS UP the earth but when the rain stops, it starts to DRY UP. This could go on and on so it is probably time to WRAP UP the subject. When our TIME'S UP, we need to SHUT UP.



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DE TOCQUEVILLE IN NEWPORT

by Tom Kennedy

Alexis de Tocqueville's two volume *Democracy in America* is, perhaps, the most famous and revered study of the United States by a foreigner. It is still read for its keen observations and judicious, even-handed analysis 170 years after its original publication in French. Tocqueville, a 25 year old nobleman from Normandy, and his close friend and traveling companion, Gustave de Beaumont, left Le Havre, France, on April 2, 1831 aboard the American-built sailing ship, *Havre*, destined for New York. Tocqueville and Beaumont were on assignment from the French government to study the American prison system with a view to making changes in the penal institutions of France.

As the *Havre* approached the harbor in New York the wind shifted and blew directly against the ship, making a landing impossible. The captain decided against waiting for a favorable wind, since supplies were getting low after more than a month at sea. He opted, instead, to travel eastward and let his passengers ashore at Newport, where the *Havre* docked on May 9th, and

Tocqueville and Beaumont first put their feet on American soil. (Damrosch, 14)

In letters home, Tocqueville relates his first impressions. "We went to visit the town, which seemed to us very attractive... It's a collection of small houses, the size of chicken coops, but distinguished by cleanliness that is a pleasure to see and that we have no conception of in France. Beyond that the inhabitants differ but little superficially from the French. They wear the same clothes, and their physiognomies are so varied that it would be hard to say from what races they have derived their features. I think it must be thus in all the United States." (Reeves, 30) Beaumont was pleased with the casual and friendly manner of the customs officials. "They inspected our baggage with very little attention, and it's evident that the customs officers in Newport bear no resemblance to French ones." (Damrosch, 15) Apparently French bureaucrats had a bad reputation. The two French noblemen also noted immediately the hard-nosed capitalist bent of the American economy. Beaumont wrote: "The race is entirely commercial. In the small city of Newport there are four or five banks..." (Reeves, 30)

After spending a day touring Newport, the young travelers booked passage to New York. "Excitement awaited in a huge steamboat, the *President*, that would carry them to New York. The steamboat was an American invention that was barely beginning to catch on in Europe, and Tocqueville was astonished at this behemoth. 'It's impossible to give an idea of the interior of this immense machine,' he wrote to his mother. 'Suffice it to say that it contains three great saloons, two for men and one for women, where four, five, and often eight hundred people eat and sleep comfortably.'" (Damrosch, 15) Beginning in 1847, the Fall River Line

(Continued on page 12)

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PONT-CLAGGETT HOUSE

Sea-foam green with fence

by Jeff Marshall

59 Second Street, on the southeast corner of Chestnut and Second Streets, is a two-story, gabled roof house with Greek revival detail. It stands on lot #150, and was sold by the proprietors of Eastons Point to Edward Thurston. Isaac and Mary Gifford acquired it before 1743, the year they sold lots #149 and #150 to John Pont and William Claggett, Jr. In 1758 Stiles shows a one-story house here and Thomas Claggett owned the property in 1771. It reverted to the Proprietors after the revolution, and in 1799 John Faxon sold it to Giles Slocum. It belonged to Clarke Weaver in 1850, and was still in the Weaver family in 1907. Clarke Weaver may have rebuilt the one-story house shown by Stiles into the present structure.*

Downing & Scully,
Architectural Heritage of Newport, RI, pp. 491-492

* Ezra Stiles.

Created a manuscript map of Newport, 1758.

Stiles later was President of Yale.

He made a similar map of New Haven.

Why did the property revert to the Proprietors (Quakers) after the revolution? The owners were loyalists who lost their property according to the Confiscation Act. The record above does not say who the owners were at that time.

We, Laura and Jeff Marshall, purchased the house in 2001 from the estate of Robert and Leonor Elster. Mr. Elster was deceased and Mrs. Elster was under care in a nursing home, so we never met them. Pointers from the 80s and 90s will recall Mrs. Elster who organized old fashioned days and did her dressmaking up a narrow set of stairs in the attic, a very well lit sewing room thanks to two skylights, decidedly not of colonial vintage.

The Victorian era – a lean to, a room addition was added. The front section of the downstairs has 13 ½" pine floor boards. The middle section and the upstairs have 2" oak boards, probably reflecting Victorian tastes. It was not unusual for some houses to have the old-fashioned wide pine flooring taken up and replaced indicating the owner had money to afford the latest styl-

ing. We have since put 9" wide pine flooring in the kitchen and the rear one-story lean-to.

When we did our first repainting in 2001 we carefully removed 6 or 7 layers of paint from the doors and window frames, all distinctly different colors. The last coat, the original coat, turned out to be the same shade of green we had selected for our new old house. We were pleased to be returning the rooms to the original color.

The sign reads:

GEORGE GIBBS

Baker

1734

As I go down our stairs in the morning and note this sign on the house across Chestnut Street, I try to catch the aroma of fresh bread. Once a squirrel was perched on the outside electric wire right at eye level and read my mind. The squirrel told me to "catch up with the times, this is not colonial America, old George was not baking bread this morning, we have electricity now and bread is mass produced in factories." If we put the wires underground maybe we could get some home baked bread again for the neighborhood?

The ghostly chair mover

After we settled in for a few years, we began to see the traces of a silent visitor.

Seems a small wing back chair was regularly being moved apparently to afford someone a better view of Second Street and anyone walking by on the sidewalk. Both of us found the chair sideways square to the window and kept moving it back about a foot and to a 45 degree angle in the corner of the living room.

I asked Laura why she kept putting the chair flush up against the window. I thought it looked better back a little and at an angle towards the center of the room. It seems that she had the same preference and also kept moving the chair back at an angle.

Now we were intrigued. How did the chair keep moving? Had an old resident of the house come back to watch for someone on the sidewalk? Was this a sad story or perhaps a quiet vigil to welcome good news? Was our silent friend male or female? From what era?



We decided to consider the chair mover a welcome occasional guest, however mysterious.

After at least a year of these visits, and dozens of moves, one evening while taking a nap on the living room couch, I heard Turbo the Cat, a 15 pounder, come charging in from the dining room and saw him perform a running leap onto the chair. Sure enough . . . Turbo was the ghost who slid the chair across the bare old wide floor boards right square up against the window.

We are a little saddened that our mysterious friend evaporated. The good news is that we have reached an accommodation with Turbo that he can move the chair to his window perch any time he wants.

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AN ADDENDUM TO TOM KENNEDY'S ARTICLE IN THE SUMMER ISSUE

"The Bigelows, Mrs. Howe, and the Town and Country Club"



This is a sketch of Bayside, the nineteenth-century residence of Mr. and Mrs. John Bigelow and meeting place of the Town and Country Club. The following, omitted from the summer issue (it would be paragraph 3 of that article), tells a story from the Club's early days.

Julia Ward Howe, in her *Reminiscences*, describes the occasion which led to the formation of the Town and Country Club. "Our usual place of meeting was the house of a hospitable friend [Mrs. Bigelow] who resided on the Point. Both house and friend have to do with the phrase 'a bully piaz,' which has erroneously been supposed to be of my invention, but which originated in the following manner: Colonel Higginson had related to us that at a boarding house which he had recently visited, he found two children of a Boston family of high degree amusing themselves on a broad piazza. The little boy presently said to the little girl: - 'I say, isn't this a bully piaz?' My friend [Mrs. Bigelow] on the Point heard this, and when she introduced me to the veranda which she had added to her house, she asked me, laughing, whether I did not consider this a 'bully piaz.' The phrase was immediately adopted by our confraternity... The same house contained a room which the owner set apart for dramatic and other performances." (*Reminiscences*, 402-3)

Maud Howe Elliot, Julia's daughter, adds some telling detail to this story in *This Was My Newport*.

(Continued from page 16)

would provide the most luxurious and commodious steamships to New York for the following 90 years.

After an 18 hour voyage Beaumont and Tocqueville arrived in New York to begin a nine month journey through Jacksonian America, which would take them to the farthest corners of the (then) 24 states. "The Americans were flattered! French commissioners had come across the sea to learn from Americans. Within two days Beaumont was writing to his mother: 'Everyone here overwhelms us with courtesy and services... We have a thousand letters of introduction we could do without entirely, to such an extent are our wishes anticipated...'" (Reeves, 35) After their return to France and the submission of their report, Tocqueville wrote his classic work on America and Beaumont wrote a novel, *Marie*, in which he used his American experiences to enhance the plot.

WORKS CONSULTED

Damrosch, Leo. *Tocqueville's Discovery of America*. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux. 2010.

Reeves, Richard. *American Journey. Tocqueville in Search of Democracy in America*. New York: Simon and Schuster. 1982

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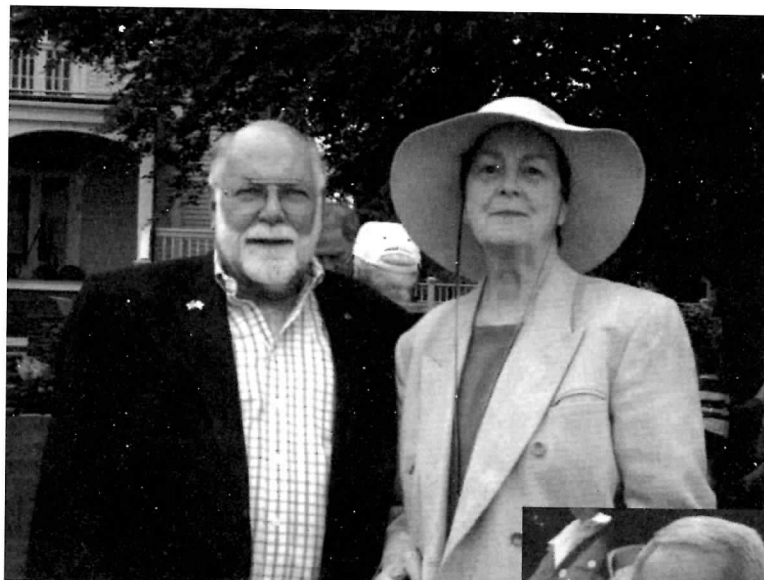
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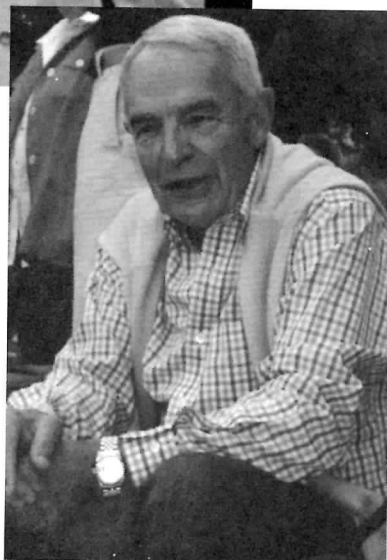
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THE ANNUAL PICNIC JUNE 17th

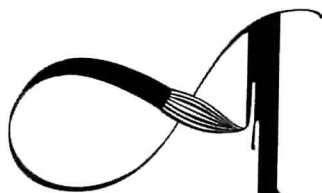
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Photo by Peter Tea

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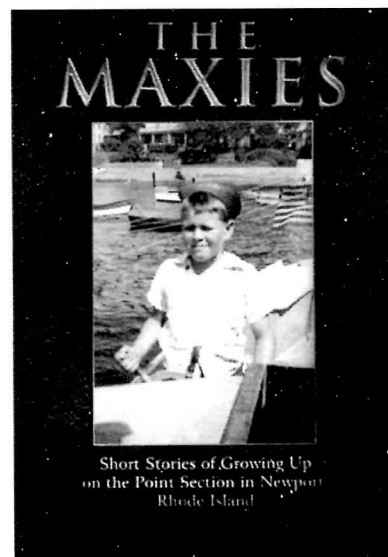


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(Continued from page 18)

locations for lunch is Belle's Café, right in the heart of the action. You can have your cake and eat it, too – enjoying a delicious meal and a fabulous vista followed by a walking tour of the yard. A recent guest of mine, who is a member of the Royal Canadian Yacht Club at Toronto, Canada, was astounded when viewing the boating scene. He couldn't believe the number and diversity of nautical craft!

I think we on the Point are extremely fortunate to have such a magnificent vista at our fingertips. I, for one, never tire of the nautical majesty that awaits a very short walk to view what I believe is the Best Show on the Point – and arguably on all of Aquidneck Island. I wonder how many of my neighbors have never taken that walk?

N.B. An interesting article, "Ten Years and Sailing On", by Loretta Goldrick in the fall, 2008, issue of the *Green Light*, relating the story of the shipyard and the Dana family, was helpful in the preparation of this article.

Q.E.D.

THAYER DONOVAN'S NEW BOOK,

*The Maxies – Short Stories of Growing up on the Point
Section in Newport, Rhode Island*

Thayer Donovan's book is a collection of seven stories. "King Covell's Land of the Maxies" chronicles a Huck Finn/Tom Sawyer-like saga of boys growing up on the Point in the 1950s with a "clubhouse" in the basement of King Covell's home, now known to us all as Villa Marina. "Two Boys and the Chuck Walla" tells of the salvage/restoration of a wooden dory by two of these boys; learning to sail on it, hit or miss; and then, wonder of wonders, becoming triumphant racers, winning 21 out of their 22 races in that salvaged boat. "A Night on Gull Rock" and "Carol, a not-so-nice Lady" recount two of the more hair-raising incidents in their young lives, in the second, unexpectedly riding out Hurricane Carol in a small boat. "Rabbit Hill" and "The Red Barn A.K.A. the Golden Rooster" record varied cherished memories in sites that now live on *only* in memory, the former now a shopping center, the latter sacrificed to the Pell bridge. The last story, "The Treasure Map" is not a Point story strictly speaking but the story of a Point family's adventurous trek to New Hampshire.

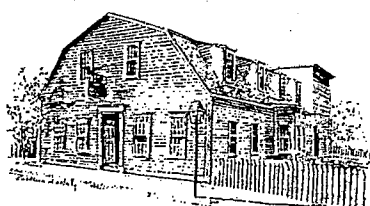
All in all, the seven stories give the reader a charming view of a more innocent time and, in a certain sense, of another place.



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In Business Since 1984 On the Point

(Continued from page 5)

commercial trucks and buses over 5,500 lbs. were erected at both ends of Farewell and on Poplar and Bridge at America's Cup. Several stop signs were also installed.

The truck/bus signs were, and are, routinely ignored. These streets are used as through streets by tractor trailers, car carriers with six cars, tandem trailers, dump trucks with gravel or sand, longbed tow trucks, cement mixers, landscaping trucks with trailers and equipment, trucks hauling boats, and tour buses, not to mention personal recreational vehicles that may also weigh over 5,500 lbs. With narrow streets and on-street parking, drivers regularly drive on sidewalks to avoid hitting parked vehicles. Still, vehicles are sideswiped and mirrors knocked off. Sidewalks and curbs are broken. Houses and fences have been hit, several times each. Enforcement of the signs has been minimal, inconsistent, and ineffective.

Stop signs are also regularly ignored. Drivers of the commercial and noncommercial vehicles described above regularly speed on these neighborhood streets and regularly speed through stop signs, some while talking on cell phones or texting. Safety – or the lack of it – is an everyday fear factor for residents. The presence of large, heavy vehicles and drivers who ignore the speed limit and stop signs heighten the possibility for an accident or fatality, particularly at the neighborhood's two three-way intersections. Pedestrian traffic is heavy in a neighborhood with a playground, senior housing, and two dog parks, and narrow sidewalks provide little protection from dangerous traffic.

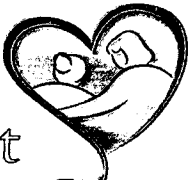
With little enforcement and no other solutions in over a decade, the through traffic on these narrow historic streets has been allowed to reach highway proportions. These are year-round problems, not seasonal and not road-construction related.

The reality of life in this neighborhood of small historic streets contrasts sharply with the vision projected in the city's Comprehensive Land Use Plan, adopted in 2004, which stresses the importance of quality of life, "especially within residential neighborhoods", and of "pedestrian friendly streetscapes". "Quality of life" for residents here often seems unattainable. These are not people who expect the quiet of country living. Activity and some traffic are givens in a city and area of closely packed buildings. However, a volume of

through traffic, much of it over the weight limit, and speeding traffic bring into question the duty of government to provide for the safety of its citizens and destroy the "neighborhood cohesiveness and attractiveness" mentioned in the plan as zoning benefits. In addition, the negative effect of this traffic on the historic architecture, especially structures on loose stone foundations, is in opposition to the fact that historic preservation is central to the city's economy. And it is in opposition to the fact that intact neighborhoods are the backbone of the city.

For over a year, a coalition of neighborhood residents, supported by the Executive Committee of the Point Association, has been working toward an end to these problems. With a petition of over 100 signatures and a stack of ongoing traffic logs to accumulate data and document the problems, residents are meeting monthly with the city's Interdepartmental Traffic Committee and with other city officials, and they will remain at the table until a permanent solution is reached. The residents know that neighborhoods are strong and lasting when neighbors work together to promote a safe, livable environment.

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(Continued from page 4)

Given the information presently available, it is our opinion that the proposed LNG facility for Mt. Hope Bay and Weaver's Cove should not be built

In July, Save the Bay weighed in on the debate in "A Note from Jonathan Stone". Does it make sense, they asked, to:

Destroy vital fish habitat at the very moment hundreds of acres of this same spawning ground are being restored to health through pollution control investments at Brayton Point and in Fall River totaling nearly \$700 million? *The 8,500-member Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association is asking the same question.*

Construct an LNG terminal in a vital and productive river recently designated "Wild and Scenic" by Congress under the federal "Wild and Scenic Rivers Act"? *The National Park Service is asking this same question.*

Locate a terminal, pipeline and storage facility for a highly combustible fuel (LNG) in a major city? *It's not just us; the mayors of Fall River and Boston are asking the same question.*

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Image: Newport Historical Society Collections

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Employ a novel, untested, unproven pipeline technology along a densely populated coastline that falls outside the scope of existing federal regulations? *The US Department of Transportation is asking these same questions.*

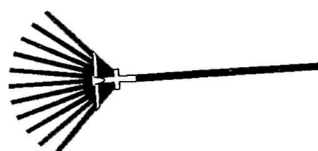
Build a fifth LNG terminal serving the New England market when the four existing terminals are expected to be significantly underutilized for the next 30 years? *The Massachusetts Office of Energy Resources is asking the same question. And a review of an April 15 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission report on the state of the US natural gas market raises the same point.*

Disrupt and restrict public access to Narragansett Bay, one of the nation's most intensively used recreational waters, by the transit of LNG tankers that require exclusive and prohibitive safety and security measures? *The General Assembly, the Rhode Island Bridge and Turnpike Authority and the US Coast Guard also raise use-conflict and safety questions.*

Threaten our state's economy, and its most valuable economic asset, Narragansett Bay, for the sake of what will ultimately be a scant few permanent jobs at Weaver's Cove LNG? *The Rhode Island Marine Trades Association, the Newport County Chamber of Commerce, and many other business and community groups are asking this same question.*

Save the Bay concluded that none of these made sense. The Newport City Council seems to agree. On June 23, the Council approved a resolution opposing the plan "because 'tanker transits will permanently degrade the character of Narragansett Bay,' undermine businesses along the shores, and pose environmental and safety risks." (*Newport Daily News*, June 24, 2010).

We hope that this information will better enable our readers to participate in the debate when the formal approval process begins.



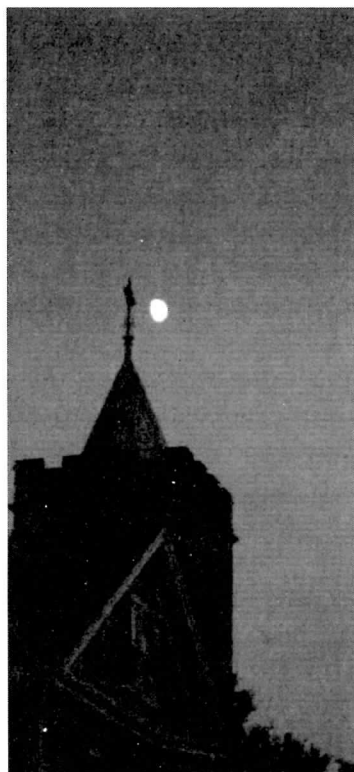
WASHINGTON STREET EXTENSION DECISION

by Liz Mathinos

Victory at last! On July 16th, Judge Stephen Nugent ruled that the Washington Street Extension is city property. For too many years, this former city street had been under siege, leading to a contentious lawsuit. Many years ago, when the abutters first tried to purchase the land for \$90,000, Friends of the Waterfront (FoW) President Darryl Paquette wrote a letter stating that the city had never considered abandonment. When the City Council refused the purchase, an agreement was crafted and implemented immediately by tearing up the street, planting grass and adding a barrier of Belgian blocks. Many citizens were outraged at this agreement and the potential loss of city property. Spearheaded by Charles Laranjo and then-FoW President Martin Douglas, citizens lobbied hard to bring attention to their concern that this city property was being lost. The lawsuit followed in 2005, and five years later, the decision is history.

Signage and memorial benches to preserve a public access look to this city property would be most welcome.

Big question: Will there be an appeal?



On the way home
from Villa Marina
August 19, 2010

by Jane Hence

POINT ASSOCIATION ELECTIONS

The Nominating Committee of the Point Association respectfully submits the following list of candidates to be voted on at the Annual Meeting in October.

President – Jeff Marshall

1st Vice-President – Beth Cullen

2nd Vice-President – Peter Tea

Corresponding Secretary – Shelley Kraman

Recording Secretary – Tom Kennedy

Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the meeting. We hope to see you all there.



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17 Willow Street	\$375,000

Active Listings

17 Single Family Properties
3 Multi-Family Properties

Source: RI Statewide MLS – as of July 23, 2010

This information is deemed reliable but is not guaranteed

THE POINT ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM

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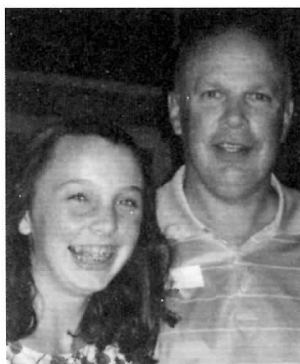
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SAVE THE DATES

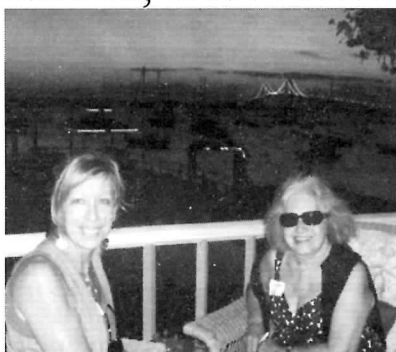
Point Association Annual Meeting
Thursday, October 21 – Harbor House – 7:00 p.m.

Fall cleanup – Saturday, October 23

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