

*The*  
GREEN LIGHT



BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION  
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

WINTER 2011-12



# The GREEN LIGHT

LV No. 4

WINTER 2011-12

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*Meetings are generally scheduled for the first Monday of the month and are open to Association members. Please call Beth 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: Drawing by Jane Hence.

## HELP WANTED POINT PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Roads & Sidewalks  
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Please contact: Beth Cullen*



*In this era of change (climate, economic, etc.), we have chosen to focus this issue on continuity. The seasons flow one into the other. On the bay, tourist boats make late season visits and so does the transport ship that "taxies" yachts south, only to bring them back in the spring. Here on land, the parks are cleaned of summer detritus, bulbs are planted in expectation of the glorious display that will eventually come. Social events follow one upon the other – late summer cocktail parties give way to Halloween. And so the world turns.*

*But there is a very special embodiment of constancy here on the Point – the four-legged one. We have chosen in this issue to highlight above all the wonderful dogs that are so much a part of this neighborhood all through the year – true friends all, friends that immeasurably enrich the lives of Point residents and visitors alike.*

*We wish them and all our readers a happy holiday season*

*Alice*

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

From Hurricane Irene to the Navy's wind turbine presentation, the Point has been whirling with activity. Before we settle our brains for a long winter's nap (to paraphrase 19th century Newport summer resident Clement Clarke Moore) I'll take a moment to tell you about it.

In September, the executive committee hosted a New Member's cocktail party here in my home. Meeting new neighbors, and catching-up with fellow board members over a glass of wine and a cup of chowder is always fun. Please consider asking new neighbors and folks you meet along the way to join the Point Association. We are the oldest and perhaps most active neighborhood group in Newport. New members keep the organization vibrant with their new ideas and helping hands.

Point people greatly value their gardens, parks and waterfront. A true sign that we are a purposeful and engaged group came in October when The Newport Tree Society, at their Saplings and Spirits fundraiser, honored us with the first ever Neighborhood Urban Forester Award. Many thanks to Joan & Mike Simons for heading up our beautification committee and organizing the fall park clean-up that took place on October 22. Because of them, and the many who come out to volunteer, our little corner of Newport continues to shine!

On that note, did you miss the Point Plant Sale this year? If so, please consider volunteering. Let me know if you are interested in helping make it happen in 2012!

Parties, parks, and presentations are a large part of what makes the Point such a wonderful place to call home. At our 20 October annual meeting, Jane Hence was elected first vice president. Big thanks to Jane for stepping up. Following the business meeting, Bruce MacLeish, Point neighbor and Newport Restoration Foundation collections director, gave a fascinating overview of the 18th century Townsend and Goddard furniture making families. If you were not able to join us, a video recording of the talk will soon be available on our website; stay tuned.

October wrapped up on a blustery Sunday afternoon as over a dozen local goblins gathered at Battery Park to show-off their Halloween costumes, enjoy hot chocolate, goodies, and each other's company, before parading down Washington Street. This Point tradition, which started in 1994, had been missing for several years. We are pleased to have it return and hope it will carry on for many years to come.

As we settle in to enjoy the holiday season, a few notes of things to anticipate as spring approaches. First, be on the lookout for a blast of color in Storer Park. Thanks to Bridge Street resident Barbara Bessette's vision, planning and hard work, about 1,200 bulbs are now planted throughout the park. This display is something to look forward to, as is our annual Potluck Supper in March.

2012 promises to be very busy on the Point with the return of The Tall Ships and The America's Cup. Alliance for a Livable Newport (ALN) will be hosting a forum this winter on these events. If you are not yet on the Point Association email list, make a point to contact Shelley Kraman to be added. So many things come up between quarterly issues of the *Green Light*, we need you to remain involved and informed, as our spirited group keeps whirling along..

Happy Holidays!



# THE HUNT FOR OLIVER HAZARD PERRY'S SCHOONER *REVENGE*

by Dave Moore

The Point section of Newport is blessed to have had two famous brothers once living here – at least during their boyhood years. It is reported in several sources that Oliver Perry and his brother Matthew lived in the house on 31 Walnut Street at the corner of Second Street. However, Oliver (1785-1819) was nine years older than Matthew (1794-1858) and probably spent less time there than his younger brother.<sup>1</sup> Matthew Calbraith Perry rose in the navy to Commodore status and became famous for negotiating with Japanese officials late in his life to enable trade with Japan. Oliver Hazard Perry became the “Hero of Lake Erie” in a decisive naval victory over the British in the War of 1812. His famous battle report said, “We have met the enemy and they are ours; two ships, two brigs, one schooner, and one sloop.” He also rose to the rank of Commodore.<sup>2</sup>

Oliver’s career, however, was almost ruined when he was a twenty-six year old naval lieutenant. In December, 1811, he was ordered to take the schooner *Revenge* and make a large scale chart of safe anchorages between Newport and New Haven. After a long wait for the foggy weather to clear on the designated day, he was finally able to sail from Newport at midnight. He planned to pass through the Watch Hill Passage and avoid the dangerous currents at the Race between Fisher’s Island and Long Island in daylight. After the schooner had been underway for an hour, the fog set in again. Perry told the pilot that if he had any doubt, an anchor would be ready to be let go and the *Revenge* would be anchored at once.

It normally would take six hours with the existing tide and light wind conditions to make the Watch Hill passage. Perry, feeling comfortable with that, went below, probably to get some sleep. At nine o’clock in the morning, Perry, still below decks, heard the leadsman taking soundings in the fog report ten fathoms. The previous casts were twelve to fourteen. He immediately went on deck and ordered the helm to starboard. The



water was shoaling quickly from five to two and a half fathoms. He immediately ordered the anchor to be let go, but at the same instant, the stern struck the reef. A kedge with hawser was set in the deepest water and pulled tight. The schooner pounded heavily on the reef and was soon leaking badly. Eight of the guns were thrown overboard along with other heavy articles. The pumps were manned continuously and the crew bailed with buckets while distress signal guns were fired. Perry ordered the mainmast cut down and the foremast soon after. In just twenty minutes after she struck, her seams opened in two places and now there was no hope for saving her.

The signal guns brought several boats from shore, but because of the swells, it was difficult to approach the wreck. By sunset, however, all hands made it safely to shore along with the sails, rigging, and weapons. The next morning, the deck and bulwarks had floated off the reef. With the aid of launches that had arrived during the night from New London, Perry went back to the wreck. His plan was to tow the remainder of the vessel and beach it on Fisher’s Island. During this time a vicious Nor’easter pelted down on them. When close to the island, the hawser attached to the wreck parted, and because of the heavy seas, it was impossible to reattach it. The wreck was abandoned and the launches ran into New London to take refuge from the storm.

The jury exonerated Perry in a court-martial for losing his ship; the pilot took the blame. Perry was soon sent to Lake Erie where he earned his fame against the British. Rhode Island built four of the nine war ships used in the battle and 150 officers and men from Perry’s Newport Flotilla volunteered to build and help man the fleet. Perry survived several naval battles and even a pistol duel, but he succumbed to yellow fever at the age of 34. He is buried in Newport’s Island Cemetery.

My sister lives in Avondale, RI, next to the Pawcatuck River. Several years ago she gave her son Charlie (my  
(Continued on page 17)

# TED WILLIAMS AND JOHN F. KENNEDY MEET IN NEWPORT – IN SPIRIT

by Ed Madden

This past Labor Day weekend, Thomas the Train paid a visit to Newport. Thousands of children and their parents were enthralled. So was I – but not because of Thomas! Also on display was a Grumman F9F jet fighter plane. It rested on a flatbed truck missing its jet engine and wings and slightly the worse for wear. The Panther jet fighter was the type of aircraft in which Ted Williams, the renowned Red Sox slugger, made 39 sorties over Korea in that tragic war.

Ted had joined the Red Sox as a rookie outfielder in 1939 and rapidly rose to stardom. In 1941, he batted .406 – the last major league hitter to finish above .400 for the season. No one has reached the .400 mark in the subsequent 70 years!

After that accomplishment he volunteered his services as a Navy fighter in 1943 with America fighting a world war

on two fronts. He returned to the Red Sox after the conclusion of the war in 1945.

In 1952, Ted's marine reserve unit was recalled to active duty in Korea and he left a lucrative baseball career again to serve his country at age 22 years. He was assigned to a marine jet fighter unit and flew 39 sorties over enemy territory in North Korea. On February 19, 1953, on his 39th combat mission, his jet fighter was struck by enemy ground fire and began to leak hydraulic fluid and shake violently. He managed to nurse the plane back to base accompanied by another fighter acting as protective cover. Just before landing, an explosion damaged one landing gear so that he brought his plane down on only one wheel on its belly at 225 miles per hour! He skidded some 2000 feet to the end of the runway before coming to a halt without further impact. He exited his burning plane shaken up but not seriously injured. The plane was foamed down by the firefighter crew. As was to become a Ted Williams trademark, he slammed his helmet on the ground in disgust – much as he subsequently did when striking out with fellow teammates in scoring position in his other life as a Red Sox icon.

The display of the Panther jet at the Thomas the Train extravaganza was to highlight the plans of the Rhode Island Aviation Hall of Fame to restore the jet fighter to working condition and incorporate it in the overall master plan of the R.I. Aviation Hall of Fame. This plan would create a Heritage and Technology Park in Newport County and the pièce de resistance would be the U.S.S. JFK aircraft carrier named after President Kennedy.

*(Continued on page 16)*



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# SARA WHEATON WEISS

(1924 – 2011)

by Jane Hence

Even if you did not know Sara Weiss, her life is of great interest, inherently and also in connection with the history of the Point.

Sara and Dick Weiss moved to their early period house on Walnut Street, a short distance from the corner of Washington, purchased for a few thousand dollars in 1956. Friends declared them “crazy” as the house and the Point were very rundown with many derelict houses; it was considered an unsafe place to live. Certainly there were many parents who would not allow their children to visit any friends who lived on the Point after school.



Before moving to Newport, Sara and Dick lived in Dover, New Jersey, where, in 1949, Sara came down with polio, which was the first case in town. She was pregnant with their son, Richard, at the time. Her courage, energy, passionate interests and enthusiasm never flagged, even when, in 2005, she finally needed a wheelchair. She viewed these inventions as liberating, not confining and always said she “used” a wheelchair and was not “in” one. Typically Sara: ever positive.

The Point Association began in 1955 when a small group of families, whose names have long been familiar to us, such as the Brownells, the Weavers and others got together with an idea (one aspect of which was to promote the planting of trees). Sara was involved from the start, first as Vice-President of the Association and later, when it began, with the *Green Light*, which at the start was pretty much a one-woman show (Sara) and originated as a newsletter which was mimeographed (how many of us remember mimeographing?). Edith Ballinger Price was responsible for drawing the charm-



ing image of the lighthouse which remains as the *Green Light* logo today.

One of Sara’s favourite stories was as follows. After being VP, the nominating committee asked her to be president of the Point Association. However, a decision was subsequently made that it would not be “appropriate” for a woman to be the representative of the Association which would mean “having dealings with City Council and other governing bodies”, thus a man was elected as president and Sara was made first vice-president (to avoid such a situation in the future, one can assume).

Dick has wonderful tales to tell which create vivid vignettes of his and Sara’s earlier years. During the summers when Ike was at the Naval War College, his gig would pass by the MacLeod (Jane Walsh’s family) house on its way to and from the Newport Country Club. The destroyer fleet was then anchored off the Point so, when the wind was right, Sara and Dick as well as others living on the Point were treated to reveille and retreat. They could also watch the sailors’ movies being shown on the fantails.

(Continued on page 13)

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## MYSTERY ROCK

by Liz Mathinos

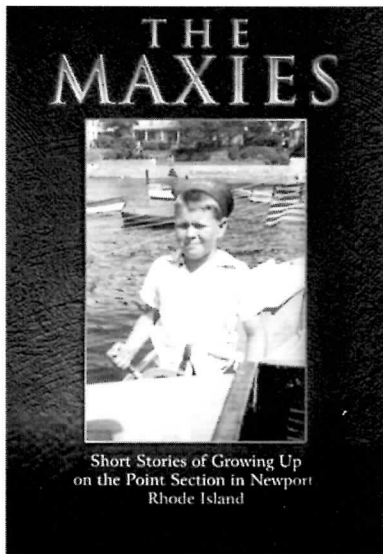
Detectives anyone? Have you seen this rock along the shore north of Van Zandt Pier? Do you know how and why and when the rock's message was carved? (The message reads: IN HOC SIGNO VINCES – in this sign you will conquer – from a legend stemming from Constantine in the 4th century, per Tom Kennedy.)

Please send any information to [lmathinos@att.net](mailto:lmathinos@att.net) or call Liz at 847-3977.



photo by Tom Kennedy

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## ALN TO SCHEDULE A SPECIAL FORUM ON THE AMERICA'S CUP RACE IN NEWPORT

by Lauren Carson

Newport, RI has been unveiled as the final stop of the 2011-2012 AC World Series, which promises to be a dramatic finish to the first season of the new AC45 professional circuit. Designed to expose millions more people to the sport of high-performance racing, the new professional circuit was created to bring the America's Cup experience to top international venues. The dates are June 23 - July 1, 2012.

This exciting event will bring many challenges to the City. ALN hopes to engage the brightest minds and the decision makers for this event to share the plan and strategy for dealing with such a large event.

Watch for the dates in either an email or the next edition of the *Green Light*.




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# ANNUAL MEETING

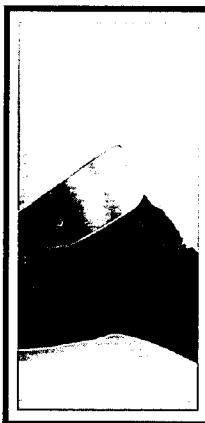
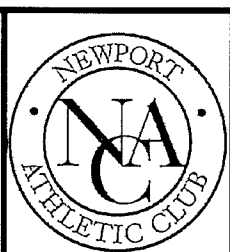
by Tom Kennedy

The annual meeting of the Point Association took place at 7 p.m. on Thursday evening, October 20th, in Harbor House. About 30 people were in attendance and the guest speaker was Bruce McLeish, director of the Newport Restoration Foundation. Beth Cullen, recently elected president of the Association, welcomed the attendees, and began the meeting by taking care of some outstanding business. Tom Goldrick, Treasurer, presented his report which was accepted. Joan Simmons, head of the Beautification Committee, announced that the Point Association won a Neighborhood Forester's Award from the Newport Tree Society for its work in the Point parks and neighborhood. Jack Maytum, head of the Membership Committee, announced that the current membership stood at 334 and asked guests to encourage others to join the Association and to volunteer for activities. Beth then reminded members of upcoming events, including the Halloween Parade and the Cleanup Day. She also mentioned the need for interested members to offer their services as head of the History and Archives Committee as well as the new Public Services Committee. In a

show of hands, most of those in attendance favored the further pursuit of plans for a large wind turbine project on the west side of Aquidneck Island. Jane Walsh, head of the Nominating Committee, presented names of newly nominated officers: Jane Hence for First Vice President, Mary Sarepera and John Ward as new members of the Nominating Committee, Jack Maytum as new head of the Nominating Committee and, returning for a second term, Tom Kennedy as Recording Secretary and Tom Goldrick as Treasurer. All nominees were approved.

Bruce McLeish was then introduced by Beth Cullen and began a very interesting and entertaining slide lecture on "Masterpieces in the Neighborhood: the Townsend and the Goddard Cabinetmakers." He distributed a sheet, which traced the history of both families, and showed slides of the area and some of the buildings which housed these families on the Point. Bruce amused the audience with his wit and educated them by tracing the development of various designs and styles, such as the "ball and claw" and the "block and shell" among the examples of furniture shown in his slides. He noted that in the 18th century there were as many cabinetmakers in Newport as there were in Boston, and that these crafts-

*(Continued on page 13)*

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# STORER PARK BULB PLANTING

by Beth Cullen

On Saturday, November 5th, a very sunny, though rather chilly morning, about a dozen brave souls gathered under the expert direction of Point Association member and Bridge Street resident, Barbara Bessette, to plant approximately 100 dozen spring bulbs.

The list includes:

- 250 King Alfred Daffodils
- 150 Narcissus
- 150 Tequila sunset tulips
- 24 Hyacinth
- 250 Crocus
- 175 Muscari
- 150 Tete a Tete Dwarf Daffodils

Total 1,149 bulbs, 6 buckets of compost, 6 bags of Espoma bulb fertilizer, 3 hours of hard work.

This bevy of bulbs will be at rest through the winter, and come spring, in what is sure to be a spectacular splash of spring color, will burst forth in Storer Park.

A big thanks to Barbara and her crew, including two ladies, not Point members, who came to support the cause from as far away as the 5th Ward and Middletown!



The Point's Storer Park has the best sunsets in town, and now as a result of Barbara's hard-working volunteers, we will have the most beautiful spring bulb display!

## ... AND CLEANING.



*photo by Jane Hence*



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## DOGS ON THE POINT

by Tom Kennedy

Residents of the Point seem to have a special place in their hearts for their canine companions. The abundance and variety of these companions exceed all expectations for so small an area. At all times of the day, one finds numerous Point dwellers out walking their dogs and running into others engaged in this very same activity. Many a friendship has been initiated through this simple human contact. Dogs have thus become the unintended means of promoting good fellowship in our neighborhood.

What follows are portraits of a small sampling of the many friendly faces one meets as one wanders around the Point.



Brown Dog RIP



Breeze



Molly



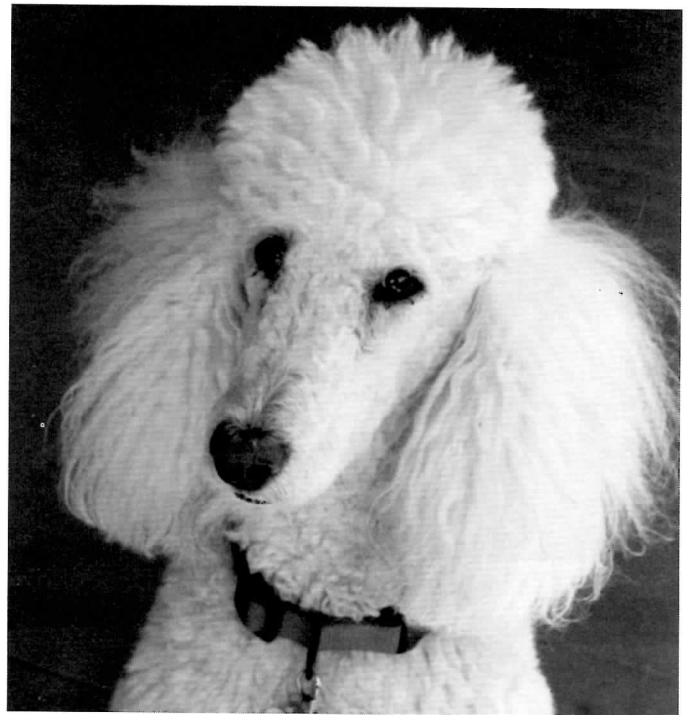
Delilah



Gabby & Jimmy



Ecco



Sasha



Murphy



Lizzie



Milo



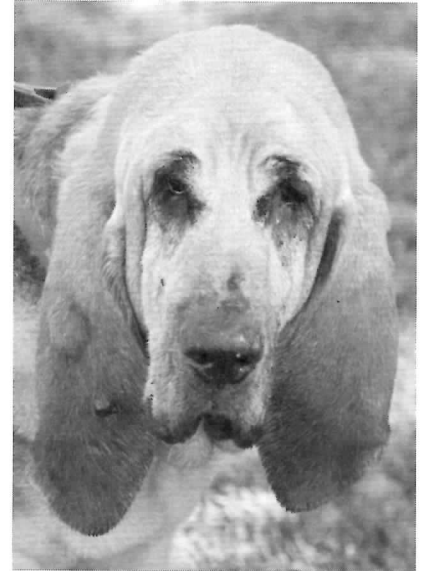
Maggie & Bella



Zoë



Sobaka



Mattie

Editor's note: During the period that Tom Kennedy was on assignment photographing the dogs of the Point, his own dog, Tom's faithful companion for 15 years, passed away. Brown Dog, who had been given to Tom while he was at Portsmouth Abbey, became well known and well liked on the Point when they moved here. We dedicate this photo-essay to him.



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(Continued from page 6)

Another story is of J. J. Martin's store, which was the last shop in Newport allowed to sell both liquor and groceries because it was grandfathered to do so as long as a member of the family carried on the business.

Dick notes that there have been two murders on the Point; one at the Blacklock store, which sold groceries and meat, and was located on Second Street, next to Commander Perry's house. The other occurred on the opposite corner, in the Pineapple House not that long ago.

In the mid-seventies Sara returned to college at RIC where she received her Master's degree with a triple major: history, sociology and anthropology. RIC then asked her to become counselor to students with disabilities and she was also appointed by the Governor to serve on the Developmental Disabilities Council.

Sara's husband, Dick, their son, Richard, three grandchildren, Stephen, Emma and Marcie and great-grandson, Orin, miss her and always will, as do the friends and neighbors who knew her. When Dick and I spoke several weeks ago, I described Sara as courageous, witty, interested in just about everything past and present, with a sunny and enthusiastic outlook every day. He smiled and said, "She was indomitable".

(Continued from page 8)

men also earned money repairing furniture, building architectural elements, making coffins and doing other carpentry work. Despite a brief power outage, Bruce was able to complete his lecture and was roundly applauded by his grateful audience.

## FARMERS' MARKET

A successful season comes to an end

Photos by Beth Cullen



Since 1854, our mission has been the collection, preservation and interpretation of Newport County history.

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Image: Newport Historical Society Collections

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# CHRISTMAS MEMORIES

by Father George Behan

Merry Christmas to All!

I've been asked to write a reflexion on growing up on the Point at Christmas. Since I have lived in this wonderful neighborhood all my life, I guess I can write about what I remember.

I would begin at 5 years old, entering Callendar School in Kindergarten with Miss Gleason. She was a lovely old lady, a wonderful person with whom to begin my schooling. When Christmas arrived that December (1935), I remember the Christmas tree that was set in our room with its glittering lights and bright ornaments. Miss Gleason taught us a carol or two which we sang with great fervor in anticipation of the great day. Most of all I remember the puppet we made. It had moveable arms and legs tied by yarn to the plump body that we were told to color brightly in the proper colors. This puppet was brought home to be placed on the tree there and I must say that I still have that

puppet (75 years later) and place it faithfully on each tree at Christmas with fond memories of Miss Gleason and Callendar School.

I lived at the time at 41 Walnut Street and attended Callendar for the first six years with bright, enjoyable Christmas preparations in each succeeding class there. My grandmother Pike lived at 29 Walnut Street and so memories of the family gathered there add to the festivities of each and every Christmas.

Shortly after the '38 Hurricane (which I saw from my bedroom window), we moved to 95 Third Street where we have been ever since. Thus all my Christmas memories are tied to this fine place. Soon I became an altar boy at the Cenacle Convent and so was part of the Christmas celebrations of Fr. John Murphy, all the Sisters, and many neighborhood boys. Decorating the Chapel, singing and serving Midnight Mass, and enjoying the breakfast and party the Sisters gave us are never to be forgotten.

Of course, the fantastic anticipation of Christmas Eve at home all those years (that we all can remember) is still part of those memories of Christmas on the Point. We began to decorate the house, both within and without, over those years along with neighbors on every side throughout the Point. This attested in bright array the significance of this time of year. Occasionally, there would be snow, and sledding at Dyer's Gate down the street would be part of the vacation from school.

It was always a joyous time, and I cannot walk the streets of this beautiful neighborhood without bringing it all to mind. It still is the place to be for me!

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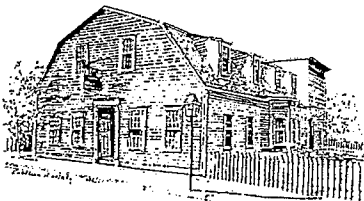
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## POINT READERS

by Jane Hence and Suzanne Varisco

Yes, folks, "The Point Readers" has returned, in response to popular demand. As before, this reading group is open to all, with no formal membership required. We usually meet in one another's homes. And sometimes the host or hostess leads the discussion. With each issue, we will continue to offer two titles, one fiction and one non-fiction, some new, some old, and always available in paperback.

Our non-fiction choice is *J.D. Salinger: A Life*, by Kenneth Slawenski, available in hardcover, paperback (in January), Kindle and audio CD. This biography, seven years in the making, including the author's research, has received 61 reviews (averaging four stars) on Amazon. One reader writes that Slawenski has managed to de-mystify the elusive Salinger and has been able to get "under his skin." We agree and, in addition, feel this is a well-written, pleasant and easy read of considerable interest, as it includes much information not widely known, or in some cases, not previously known at all.



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"If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you'll probably want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don't feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth." So begins our fiction choice, J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, about Holden Caulfield, who has run away from his private school to New York City. This coming-of-age novel has entertained readers of all ages ever since it first appeared, in 1951. At that time, Paul Engle of the *Chicago Tribune* wrote, "The story is engaging and believable . . . full of right observations and sharp insight. . ."

### MEETING TIMES

*J.D. Salinger: A Life*

Tues., Jan. 17, 2:00, Jane Hence, 73 Washington St.  
(rsvp: 847-3767)

*The Catcher in the Rye*

Thurs., Feb. 9, 2:00, Suzanne Varisco, 35 Second St.  
(rsvp: 841-5220)

*Please join us!*

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(Continued from page 5)

The U.S. Navy has promised the gift of the aircraft carrier (which is in mothballs at the Philadelphia Naval Yard) providing that a suitable museum facility can be established here in Narragansett Bay. This is further explained in my article "The Road to Burma" in the 2010 *Green Light*.

The U.S.S. JFK aircraft carrier was the last conventionally powered carrier built for the U.S. Navy. All subsequent vessels have been nuclear powered. It was built in 1967 and served several deployments in the Mediterranean and Indian Oceans and was the flagship of the Red Sea Battle Force commander during operation Desert Storm in 1991. It was decommissioned in 2007 and is awaiting suitable donation.



A museum composed of the JFK aircraft carrier with memorabilia about President Kennedy and a renovated Panther jet fighter with memorabilia about Ted Williams would act as a cornerstone of a remarkable museum complex to complement the already outstanding museums, mansions and architectural delights that Newport has to offer the public. Is there no limit to the amazing things that Newport can do? Can it get any better than this?

Addendum:

There is a catch to the JFK carrier coming to Narragansett Bay, however. That is the ability of a museum being able to maintain the carrier in shipshape condition. Salt water is the great enemy which causes

steady potential deterioration of the ship's hull which is immersed in this fluid environment 24-7. The *Intrepid* aircraft carrier, which is a floating museum in New York City, underwent a \$61,000,000 protective sealing of the hull after being taken out of the water. The U.S.S. *Massachusetts* battleship cost \$31,000,000 to protect it at its Fall River museum. This protective coating is anticipated to last 40 or more years and will then have to be repeated.

The JFK carrier will arrive in tip top shape if it comes to Narragansett Bay. But where will the money come from for its future preservation?

The Rhode Island Aviation Hall of Fame is a non-profit corporation. All donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Its address is P.O. Box 2701, Providence, RI 02908. (401) 398-7087. [www.USSJFKRI.org](http://www.USSJFKRI.org).

Obviously any donation to this worthy cause would be greatly appreciated and would help to move Newport and Aquidneck Island up a notch in the 100 Places to Visit Before you Die!.



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(Continued from page 4)

nephew), a book entitled *Shipwrecks on the Shores of Westerly*. Charlie read about the seventy foot, fourteen gun schooner called the *Revenge* that struck a reef off Watch Hill. It was captained by Oliver Hazard Perry from Newport who is his third cousin, five times removed. Perry had also spent fourteen months supervising the construction of gunboats on the Pawcatuck River near where Charlie grew up. Charlie often thought he should go out and take a look at the wreck site to see if anything was left. Diving is an amateur sport to him. The area he wanted to dive is dangerous. There is a two to four knot current, so you can only dive during slack tide. This gives you only thirty minutes under water.

In August of 2005, Charlie Buffum and his friend Craig Harger took their diving gear and an underwater metal detector aboard the *Blue Moon* and anchored near the reef. They found nothing that day or the day after. They were discouraged that the metal detector had found nothing metallic – not even old fish hooks or bottle caps. During the dive on the third day, he said, “He felt like we were school boys going around seeing nothing – when all of sudden the meter on the metal detector hit ten on the scale.” He yelled into his mask, “We found it! Look at that! We found it!” Hager could see Charlie’s eyes bulge out. There it was, under barnacles, sea grass, and star fish – a cannon! Then there was a second one – and they were in less than fifteen feet of water! Harger, swimming back to find a dive-flag to mark the finding, bumped into a large object and discovered it also was a carronade. The two boys agreed to keep their find a secret along with a third friend, Mike Fournier, who joined them later. They made at least one hundred dives at this spot over the next few years. There were many false hits, but in 2007, the team found six more carronades, canister shot, an anchor, ballast bar and other metallic objects. They decided to share their secret on January 9, 2011, as it was the two hundredth anniversary to the day that the *Revenge* was wrecked. The news was broadcast all over the planet.

The boys are 99% positive that these artifacts are from the *Revenge* as no other war ship was known to have sunk on this reef, and yet one former Watch Hill lighthouse keeper said he witnessed forty-five wrecks on these reefs in his twenty years of service. And I personally watched the eighty foot yacht *Carmac*, owned by the 3M Com-

pany, being torn apart by the seas in 1952. The only way to prove their theory is to have the items recovered and analyzed for markings. The U.S. Navy has the right to salvage their war ships and the boys have contacted the Navy History and Heritage Command which would oversee such operations. If the Navy declines, they hope to raise money for the salvage operation and display the artifacts at a historical society.

#### NOTES

1. In 1817, he and his wife lived in the Jahleel Brenton House on Thames Street. This mansion no longer stands. The present location is the Mary Street parking lot. In November, 1818, they purchased a house on Washington Square (29 Touro Street) but Oliver Hazard Perry lived there only a month or six weeks before he was ordered to the Caribbean and South America.
2. It is interesting that the two Middletown brothers Charles and Michael Flynn recently became the first Rhode Islanders to serve as generals at the same time. Before them, the two Perry brothers served as commodores at the same time.

#### REFERENCES

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Knowles-Perry House, [www.newportrestoration.org](http://www.newportrestoration.org)  
Buliod-Perry House (museum)  
Shipwreck discovered off R.I. coast, [www.necn.com/pages/landing?blockID=387215](http://www.necn.com/pages/landing?blockID=387215).



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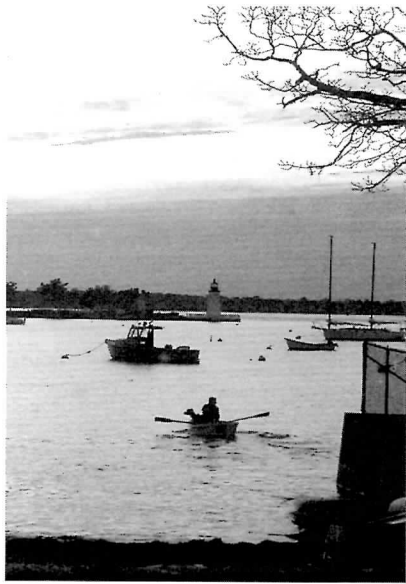
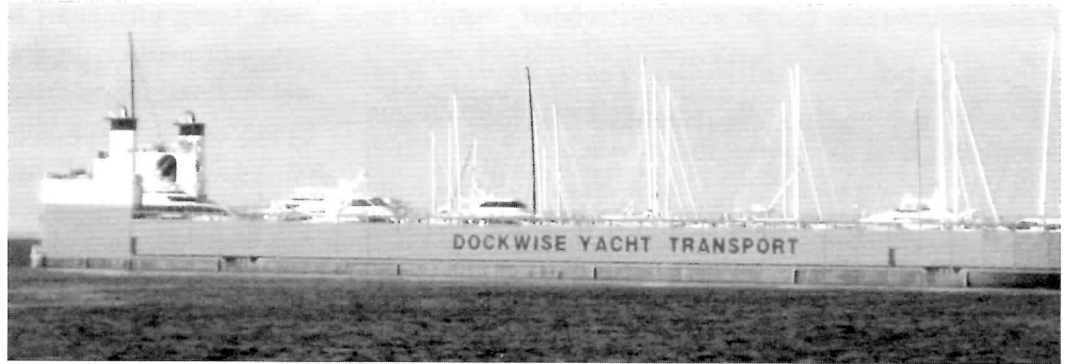
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# AUTUMN ON THE BAY

Dockwise:  
South for the winter  
– photo by Beth Cullen



A man and his dog  
– photo by Juliellen deLucca

The Queen Mary visits  
– photo by Tom Kennedy

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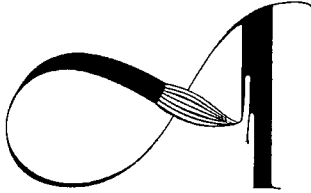
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## THE GHOSTS AND GOBLINS WERE BACK

by Samantha Hines



Amid howling winds and a setting sun, a dozen or more of the Point's youngest and most impressive ghosts and goblins made their way from Battery Park down Washington Street, up Willow Street, and back around in our annual Point Pals Adventure Club Annual Halloween Parade.



A buffet table of delectable offerings greeted Dorothy from The Wizard of Oz, Elmo, Albert Einstein, Darth Maul, a Storm Trooper, a terrifying Dementor from Harry Potter, and several others thanks to the culinary skills of Beth Cullen.



The children played and compared costumes in the park as a prelude to the main event, which began at 4:30 PM on Sunday, October 30th. Mike Cullen led the parade, impressing us all with his ability to pull a wagon, wave to passersby, direct traffic, and ensure the safety of our young participants.

When we returned to the park, the children continued to play, and got to know their neighbors, forming new connections and, possibly, new friendships.

We welcome back the Halloween Parade and look forward to making it a memorable annual event.

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