

The GREEN LIGHT



BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

SPRING 2012



The GREEN LIGHT

LVI No. 41 SPRING 2012

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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: Photo by Jane Hence.



March is a quiet month on the Point normally. The holidays are in the past, spring, with its gardens, sailboats and balmy breezes is still in the future. In the interim this year, as we look forward to those pleasurable days, the Green Light has chosen to highlight the neighbor to our north, the neighbor that has had and continues to have a unique impact on our neighborhood: the U.S. Navy, its museums and related cultural activities, its role in protecting our beautiful bay – and now plans for wind turbines and the reuse of the old hospital. It is not by chance that the Point has long been home to retired Navy officers.

In the same spirit of inclusion and although the Green Light rarely notes the passing of those not technically residing on the Point, we are again making an exception. Since his return to Newport, Len Panaggio has been an invaluable source and inspiration for those interested in recording the neighborhood's history. We will not soon fill the void left by his passing.

Alice

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Even after living on the Point for 20 years, I still get excited every time the *Green Light* arrives in our mailbox. Thanks to Alice Clemente's terrific editing, the artful skills of Donna Maytum, and all the many contributors, our vibrant community, surrounded by immeasurable beauty, and filled with so many interesting people and things, comes to life on the pages. With spring in the air, it is time for neighbors to put away those underemployed snow shovels, dust-off our gardening tools – and join fellow Pointers at the many upcoming association events.

So, calling all nature lovers, both youngsters and seniors! Come spend a little time in April having some “rake-ish” fun as we spruce things up at the annual spring parks and driftways clean-up. Whether you are prepared to bend and haul, or just sit and supervise, it is a great way to catch up on all the winter tales. Let's get our common areas ready for those longer days and sunset strolls along the Point's historic streets and waterfront.

While you are at it, as you putter in your own gardens, be sure to set aside some perennials to share at the Point Plant Sale. As is always the case, we need YOUR help to make this much anticipated event happen. Contact us if you wish to participate, in any capacity. The plant sale takes a cultivated team effort.

Have you noticed the trees in Storer and Battery parks sporting tags? Join us on Thursday, April 19th at our spring membership meeting when we learn all about how the tags came to be and get much more news from the leaders of the Newport Tree Society.

We also have some exciting news from your executive committee. After much research and discussion, the board has selected an online membership management service called Wild Apricot. This will mean more fluid communications and easier membership renewals. Once we launch this service, you will be emailed a reminder and will be able to pay your dues online. Also, Wild Apricot will give us the flexibility to easily customize our website to keep you better informed of “goings on” in between issues of the *Green Light*.

As we all know, life is busy and volunteer hours are valuable. With Wild Apricot's tools, many tedious back office tasks will be minimized. Your board, committee chairs, and loyal group of industrious helpers (including many new volunteers who have recently stepped forward) will be freed to spend more time on important tasks like planning social gatherings, researching and reporting on our rich history, beautifying our parks, talking with city leaders, tracking infrastructure projects, and generally improving the livability we share on the Point. With tools at our fingertips, there is little excuse for us not to become an even more engaged, healthy and productive neighborhood group! Please be sure to email us your most current contact information!

I am looking forward to seeing you at the annual Point Potluck dinner. This year, please make it a point to bring a neighbor or two with you! Together, here in our special corner of Newport, we will rejoice and welcome spring's arrival!



A NEW MANAGER AT HARBOR HOUSE

by Joan Rauch

Harbor House residents are happy to welcome newly hired Property Manager, Aileen Flath. Mrs. Flath began her work in mid-December and reports that she has been thrilled with her new responsibilities, particularly grateful for the kindnesses and patience of all the residents who have been “nothing but kind” towards her. The new Property Manager happily took a few minutes of her very busy day to allow us to get to know her.



Please tell us about your geographic background.

Mrs. Flath came to Harbor House after a very recent move to Jamestown from New York. Yonkers had been her home for her entire life, and that is where she married and was raising her three daughters. The desire to have a peaceful summer home led the Flath family on a weekend trip to Rhode Island in the summer of 2010, and in Jamestown, the family fell in love with the area. Realizing that the family could make a home in Rhode Island, in the early autumn of 2011, they decided to move permanently to a new home where they have found life to be more peaceful than their previous life in New York. They appreciate the freedom for their young teen daughters to walk to many of their activities which allows for more time to devote to work. To have such a major physical move and lifestyle change work out so perfectly convinces Mrs. Flath that she is “supposed to be here”.

What is your academic and work experience background?

Aileen earned two undergraduate degrees, a Bachelors of Arts degree in Business and a Bachelor of Science degree in Health Care Administration. Her professional career included her work as Employee Manager of a 273 bed hospital in Yonkers and work in senior housing for the previous four years. The skill set acquired from those two jobs makes the transition into Property Manager at the Harbor House a relatively easy one. While raising her young children, Mrs. Flath volunteered doing civic work as a member and chair of the Charter Revision Commission and participating in political campaign work.

What attracted you to the position at Harbor House?

Mrs. Flath reports that she was not actively looking for employment while she was settling into her new home and helping her children transition. She purchased a newspaper on a given day, happened to see the classified ad and decided to explore the possibility; the rest is history! Aileen will soon be dividing her responsibilities between Harbor House and Belleville, a new senior housing facility in North Kingstown. The variety of duties at each of the facilities was attractive. Harbor House offered a unique historic aspect, and Aileen was endeared by the relationship between the tenants and the management. “The view is not horrible either,” says Aileen with a smile!

Are there any changes forthcoming at the Harbor House?

When a business is operating like a well-oiled wheel, there is no need to make major changes. There are now, however, two opportunities each month for communal dining. Mrs. Flath is chief cook every other Wednesday offering a pancake breakfast for residents, and once a month, lunch is being brought in from a local restaurant, a restaurant chosen by the residents.

What do you see as your challenges both in the immediate and the future?

“My challenge is to keep the tenants content and happy in this environment, ensuring that they feel secure in their homes.” On a business level, Mrs. Flath sighed

(Continued on page 17)

THE LATEST ON THE NAVY HOSPITAL PROPERTY...

by Beth Cullen

Recently, The Aquidneck Island Planning Commission (AIPC) took on the duties of the Property Reuse Coordinator for the accessed Navy Hospital property. Former coordinator, Julie Oakley, who had served as the Property Reuse Coordinator for the Aquidneck Island Reuse Planning Authority (AIRPA) since 2010, has moved on to a new position in Massachusetts. AIPC Executive director, Tina Dolen, is currently the Interim Property Reuse Coordinator.

Ms. Dolen reports, "This year's work will be done under a different committee, known as an implementation local redevelopment agency. It will be called the Aquidneck Island Reuse Implementation Authority (AIRIA), and must be authorized by vote of each municipal Council. The AIRIA is in the process of being formed. Two representatives and an alternate from each community will be appointed. AIRIA will work with a consultant to prepare an infrastructure analysis, a business plan and will create an "Economic Development Conveyance" plan for negotiations with the Navy regarding property acquisition. Properties cannot be released until the Navy completes its environmental cleanup and deems the land ready for transfer. All island-wide parcels will not advance simultaneously.

The Navy Hospital, at this time, is still characterized as it was in the redevelopment plan: basically a mixed use development with public access to the bay. The new implementation phase, under the AIRIA, will further define how best to maximize the development of that property based on the consultant's recommendations, the City of Newport's plans and Council approval. This year's phase (the implementing phase) will produce a more detailed assessment of the infrastructure needs and cost, resolving the developability of the buildings, the projected economic return to the city, negotiation strategies for use with the Navy, potential fiscal outcomes from the conclusion of the those negotiations, and many more considerations."

The Point Association will continue to monitor developments. Anyone interested in joining the Public Services Committee, please contact Beth Cullen.

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THE HUNT FOR U-853, "THE TIGHT ROPE WALKER"

by Dave Moore

On May 4, 1945, only four days before Germany surrenders, Admiral Karl Doenitz radios the following orders: "ALL U-BOATS. CEASE-FIRE AT ONCE. STOP ALL HOSTILE ACTION AGAINST ALLIED SHIPPING. DÖNITZ"



Several of the 49 boats at sea do not receive the message because they are submerged. One of these is the U-853. Her previous orders were to patrol the waters off the northeast coast of the U.S. along with six other U-Boats to harass coastal shipping in an operation code-named: "Sea wolf." They hoped that renewed attacks on American ships could lead to better surrender terms for Germany.

U-853 is a snorkel-equipped boat, 252 feet long, well-armed with anti-aircraft machine guns, a deck gun, and six torpedo tubes. The fifty-five man crew calls her *Der Seilt-aenzer* – "The Tightrope Walker" for her narrow escapes.

A year earlier, U-853 came under rocket attack by three Swordfish aircraft from the British ships *HMS Ancllus* and *Empire MacKendrick*. The sub fought off the attack with AA fire and escaped undamaged. It hit all the aircraft during the attack and forced one to crash land. A month later, two Wildcat aircraft from the U.S. escort carrier *USS Croatan* made repeated strafing attacks on U-853. The boat dived and escaped before the Avenger dive bombers arrived, but had to abort the patrol due to the loss of two men killed and twelve wounded.

Eleven days before Doenitz's message, U-853 escaped nine depth charges dropped from the destroyer *Selfridge* off Cape Elizabeth, Maine. The sub had just sunk a 200-foot patrol boat that killed 54 of its crew. The destroyer picked up only thirteen survivors.

After the attack, U-853 patrols down the New England coastal waters. At 1015 in the morning of May 5, 1945,

an Avenger torpedo bomber pilot spots her just east of Montauk Point and reports it to Quonset.

Later that day, U-853 enters the waters off Newport. Twenty-four year old captain, Oberlieutenant Helmut Fromsdorf, knows there is a strong Naval Base in Newport – the home of Cruiser and Destroyer squadrons, and it is protected with submarine nets across to the entrance to the bay. German hero, Gunther Prier, however, piloted his boat U-47 through the submarine nets at Scapa Flow, the main British naval base, and sank two British battleships. German submarine captains are known as the most daring and reckless officers in their military – some bordering on insanity.

The day starts with heavy fog, but as it clears Fromsdorf spots a large cargo ship off Point Judith. It is streaming on a north eastern course. After maneuvering U-853 in position, he orders the firing of an acoustical seeking torpedo.

The *S.S. Black Point*, an aging 1918 cargo ship, is completing an uneventful voyage from Newport News, Vir-

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CodeRED

by Mike Cullen, cullen@cox.net -- 401-848-2945

Many Newporters are likely to recall the untimely January 2006 death of Belcourt Castle co-owner Mr. Donald Tinney who wandered away from his Bellevue Avenue home and was found dead the next morning on rocks at the end of Ledge Road. Unfortunately, a similar situation has happened on our side of the city. On February 8, 2012 Mrs. Brenda Batts wandered away from her Third Street home and was found dead the next afternoon next to the railroad tracks under the Van Zandt Bridge. Mrs. Batts died from exposure and drowning.

While the police have promised to review their response in the latest case, there are many in the community who believe that the general public should have been alerted to the at-risk missing person using either the city's formal CodeRED system or informally using email distribution lists.

Last Fall, Newport police tapped the power of the Point Association's email distribution list to tell our neighborhood about armed robberies that happened on Chestnut Street. Thankfully, through hard work and planning of the police, and collaboration with local fast food businesses, the crimes were solved when the police executed a "sting" operation, nabbing the robbers in the act.

Following the recent death of Mrs. Batts, there have been some initial discussions about organizing a local, citizen searcher "capability" that could move into action at the request of local agencies. By using the city's newly acquired CodeRED phone dialing system, a neighborhood association's email list, social media, and word of mouth, a group of volunteers might be able to mobilize quickly enough to help in a search and rescue effort.

Unfortunately, situations where at-risk persons wander away are bound to happen more often. As our population continues to age, more people will suffer from Alzheimer's/dementia. Additionally, since Newport is a popular vacation destination that attracts four million visitors a year, the odds are good that an elderly visitor or a young child will go missing. You can help our community find at-risk persons alive by making sure that you are registered for CodeRED — fill out the brief form at bit.ly/newportcodedred — and by keeping your contact info current with the Point Association.

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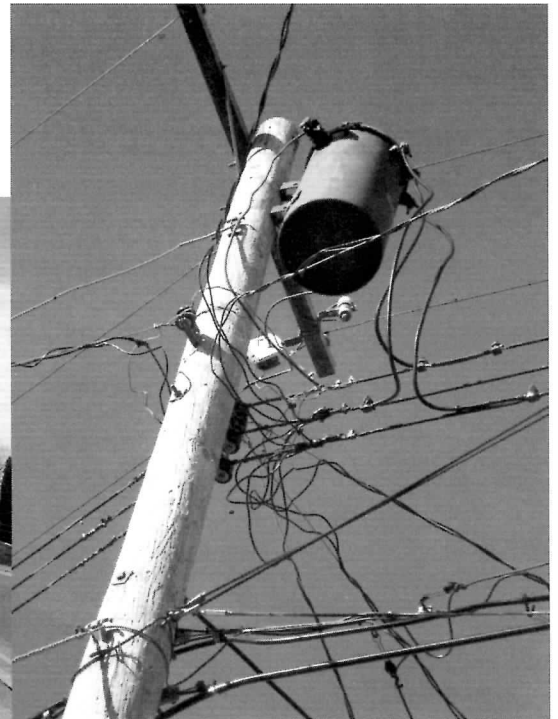
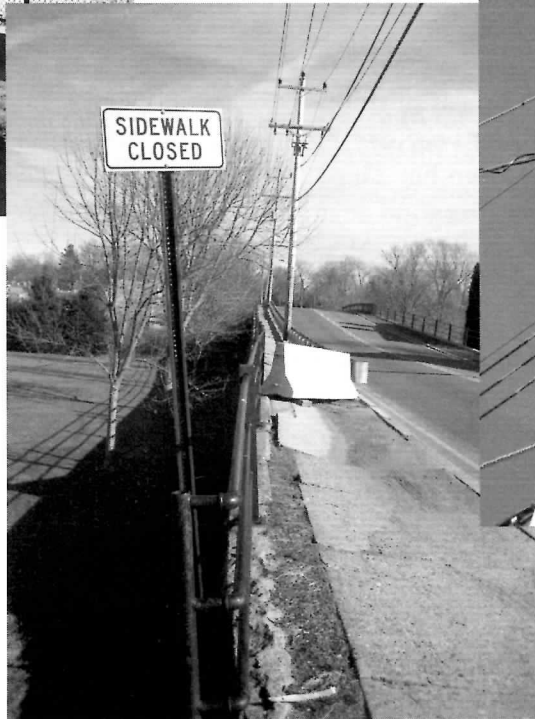
by Beth Cullen

Guide:

The Good: Washington Street
Bumper Guards

The Bad: Van Zandt Bridge

The Ugly: Overhead wires



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THE QUONSET AIR MUSEUM

by Ed Madden

Rhode Island's magnificent Narragansett Bay is a delight to natives and tourists alike. As I was thinking about its natural boundaries, it occurred to me that one East-West demarcation zone could be the southern end of the bay defined by the historical heritage of two great museums: the southeastern perimeter embraces the U.S. Naval War College Museum on Coasters Island (see article in the winter, 2009, edition of the *Green Light*). The southwestern perimeter embraces the Quonset Air Museum based at Quonset Point and founded in 1991 on the grounds of the U.S. Naval Air Station.

The military history of Quonset Point begins in the Revolutionary War, when a guard station was established there by the Americans to watch for any British warships that might attempt passage up the bay to Providence. In the late 19th century, a state campground for the R.I. Militia was established there. This organization was the precursor to the R.I. National Guard. During World War I, the area became a training base for the U.S. Army.

In May 1940, prior to World War II, Quonset Point was established as a training site for a Naval Air Base. The original 996 acres was expanded to 1256 acres by the Construction Battalion, the famous Sea-Bees of World War II. This became their home port and the birthplace of the famous Quonset Hut.

Throughout World War II, the Naval Air Station trained many land and carrier based airplane squadrons. Emphasis on anti-submarine was productive of many German U-Boat kills in the Western Atlantic. British and Canadian pilots were rotated through this training program

along with the American airmen. A research facility for radar and electronics was also established on the base along with a primary overhaul and maintenance facility for aircraft. The Navy's Antarctic Support Squadron for Operation Deep Freeze utilized the facility from 1956 to 1973.

From that time onward, the base was essentially closed until 1991 when R.I. Governor Bruce Sundlun became instrumental in establishing the Quonset Air Museum. Sundlun was a World War II B17 pilot whose Flying Fortress was shot down over Belgium by the Germans on his 13th bombing run. Four members of his nine man crew were killed. He parachuted to safety and managed to avoid capture by the Germans. He eventually joined up with the French Resistance – and participated in several of their guerrilla attacks on the Germans. Ultimately he escaped to safety and rejoined his squadron. After the war, he was awarded the Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur by the French government, along with honors bestowed by the U.S. government. It was Bruce Sundlun's love of aircraft that inspired him to help make the Quonset Air Museum a reality.

The museum occupies 50,000 square feet of Painting Hangar #488 – one of only 3 existing specialized wood and brick hangars built in World War II. There are currently 28 aircraft on display in this vast hangar, including a variety of military craft, as well as some civilian and prototype planes dating from 1944, representing various eras of aviation history. There are some 300 members of the museum and the work staff is entirely volunteer. Airplanes are sent to the museum to be overhauled and maintained.

Visitors can walk throughout the hangar getting up close and personal with all the aircraft – even climbing in some cockpits to fantasize to their heart's content. Volunteer retired Air Force mechanics might well be at work at one or more of the planes and are more than happy to explain the intricacies of their craft.

The role of the Quonset Air Museum is to preserve, interpret and make available to future generations the knowledge of the large part that Rhode Island has played in aviation history. The collections, research, education and exhibits all combine to make the visitor's stay quite memorable. In addition, a delightful

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THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER U.S.S. FRANKLIN, THE NAVAL CHAPLAIN FATHER JOE O'CALLAHAN, AND THE MACHINIST MATE BILL NOTT

by Ed Madden

The day was March 19, 1945. The place was the Pacific Ocean and the time was that of the last great battle with the Empire of Japan, i.e., the invasion of Okinawa. Task Force 58 constituted the invasion fleet conducting the landing on Okinawa. Task Force 58.2 involved the modern Essex class aircraft carrier *Franklin*, affectionately known as Big Ben

by her crew, another carrier and several support heavy cruisers and destroyers to provide naval and air cover for the invasion fleet. They were stationed approximately 100 miles from the islands of Japan to prevent any reinforcement of the Japanese troops on Okinawa as well as protecting the invading American forces.

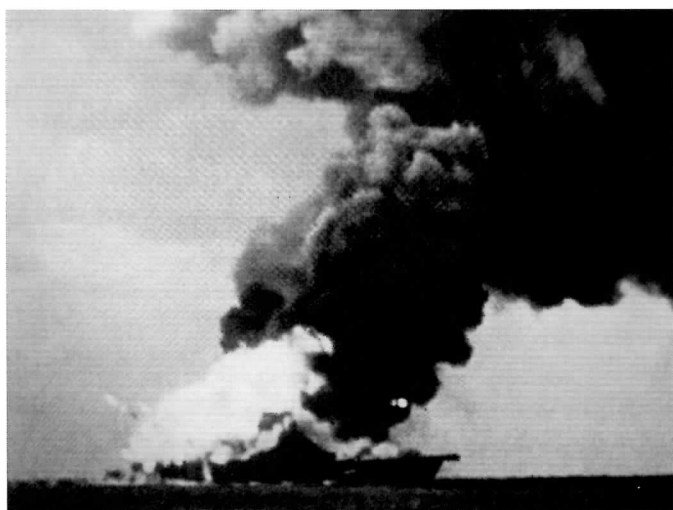
Before dawn on March 19, the first fighter group of 45 airplanes left the flight deck of Big Ben heading north toward Japan. Once the flight deck was cleared of aircraft, a second group of 31 planes was brought up from the deck below onto the flight deck to be fueled and armed for takeoff. Pilots and deck crew were manning their planes when a single Japanese bomber, undetected by radar, came out of the clouds and flew right over Big Ben dropping two 250 kilo semi armor piercing bombs on the flight deck. The time was 7:00 a.m.



Two major explosions followed and they in turn triggered a constant repetitive series of bombardments with 30 tons of aircraft ordinance exploding, along with a firestorm from 36,000 gallons of high octane aviation fuel. The 31 planes on deck, along with their pilots and deck crew were incinerated. The explosions extended to the deck below the flight deck and exploding weaponry in these areas continued the non-stop mayhem. Below deck, the ventilation system was overcome by thick clouds of dense black smoke making breathing impossible in many cases. Asphyxiation was common.

For 5 hours a continuous series of explosions wracked the ship with flash fires everywhere. Hundreds of men trapped below deck were unable to escape. Damage control parties were at work throughout the ship. Electric power and water coolant systems in the four separate boiler rooms failed, causing the boilers and engines to gradually fail, leaving Big Ben dead in the water without propulsion. Ocean currents began to cause a slow drift towards Japan! She was a sitting duck for any Japanese bombers or torpedoes. Fortunately none appeared.

Initially there was pandemonium among the crew. The average age of non-commissioned sailors was 21 years and they were terrified. A significant number of crewmen were Catholics and the Catholic chaplain was Fr. Joseph O'Callahan. "Fr. Joe", as he was called, was well known and admired by the sailors. A 40 year old Jesuit, he had taught mathematics at Holy Cross College in Worcester, Mass. before volunteering for the Naval Chaplain Corps. His first duty station at sea began in May 1941 on the aircraft carrier *Ranger*. This ship was assigned to the At-



lantic Fleet for German UBoat patrol, initially, and then later for ferrying fighter aircraft to the American landings in North Africa. *Ranger's* home base on several occasions was Quonset Point and Fr. Joe enjoyed shore leave there because of the proximity of his home in Boston. He was transferred to the *U.S.S. Franklin* in early 1945 and this began his true odyssey.

Father Joe's calm demeanor and take-charge attitude helped to settle down the nervous crewmen. He helped organize fire brigades and work crews to assist the wounded who were everywhere. Many of the dead were horribly burned and disfigured. He and the Protestant chaplain were instrumental in collecting the bodies and preparing them for burial at sea. This chore went on for days and would leave a psychological scar on both chaplains for the rest of their lives. The Captain of Big Ben, observing the work of Father Joe, described him as "One of the bravest men I have ever known."

The above two stories were related by John Satterfield, a retired Naval Reserve officer and historian, in his recently published book, *Saving Big Ben – the USS Franklin and Fr. Joseph T. O'Callahan*, published by the Naval Institute Press, 2011. John recently gave one of the 8 Bells Lectures at the Naval War College Museum, talking about his research for the book and reading selected passages. About 60 people were in attendance. N.B. – if you don't know about this lecture series, I would highly recommend it to you. There are one or two lectures a month by authors introducing their recently published books. The theme has to do with events naval and military but not exclusively. And it's FREE!

At the conclusion of his talk, the author asked if there were any questions from the audience. A pleasant looking, older man raised his hand, stood up, turned to face the audience, and said, "I was on Big Ben when this happened!"

The audience was stunned—several gasps were heard, goose bumps ran up and down my spine and John was momentarily at a loss for words. He then asked the gentleman to identify himself and tell his story. Our new "guest speaker" identified himself as Bill Nott, a Portsmouth, RI, resident. A brisk 87 year old raconteur, he told of being a machinist mate/petty officer 2nd class assigned to the boiler room of Big Ben.

There were four separate boiler compartments and two engines and each in turn failed from loss of power and malfunction of water coolant systems. Normally a warm environment, the boiler room became increasingly inhospitable as heat and smoke added to the confusion. Bill and his mates worked ceaselessly to restore power and were eventually able to restart one boiler. By this time Big Ben had been taken in tow by a heavy cruiser to reverse its drift towards Japan and once the single boiler kicked in, some reasonable headway could be made. Several offers from other naval ships recommended evacuating Big Ben, thinking that it was hopelessly lost but the Captain adamantly refused.

Needless to say, Bill's story was much more than icing on the cake! Many of us in the audience purchased John's book on the spot and had not only him but Bill Nott inscribe it as a memento of a very unique and unforgettable occasion.

Epilogues

1. The *U.S.S. Franklin*

Big Ben was able to make way to a safe anchorage in the Caroline Islands nearby. Emergency repairs there allowed her to proceed to Pearl Harbor for additional refitting. Then she sailed back to the U.S., came through the Panama Canal and up the East Coast to the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Planned repairs to Big Ben, with the possibility of her rejoining the active Naval fleet, were cancelled upon the conclusion of World War II. She ultimately was sold for scrap to a salvage company in Virginia for \$228,000. Her original cost to build in 1944 was 57 million dollars!

Out of a crew of 3450 on the *U.S.S. Franklin*, including 100 members of the air group, the casualty figures numbered 832 dead and 270 wounded. The final approximate figures for the battle of Okinawa were 140,000 dead Japanese and 15,000 dead Americans.

2. Father Joseph O'Callahan

Fr. Joe remained on Big Ben until arriving in New York. The saga of the ship and crew and Father Joe's exploits were picked up by the national press and media coverage became intense. The *Franklin's* crew be-

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(Continued from page 11)

came the most decorated of any crew in naval history. There were:

- 233 letters of commendation with ribbons
- 115 Bronze Stars
- 22 Silver Stars
- 19 Navy Crosses
- 2 Medals of Honor
 - one to Lieutenant Donald Gary
 - one to Fr. Joseph T. O'Callahan, Commander, US Navy Chaplain Corps.

Father Joe became the first chaplain to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor. He returned to Holy Cross College to follow his religious calling on leaving the Navy. His physical and mental condition left much to be desired. He was suffering from what was then called "Combat Fatigue" and is today called Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. A close boyhood friend, on meeting him after the war, said that in all probability "he would never again in life enjoy adequate health to carry out professional duties." He suffered a severe stroke that affected his speech and mobility so that he had to give up classroom teaching. He faced his difficulties with courage and patience, never complaining. Death came on March 18, 1964 at the age of 59 via a massive stroke.

3. Bill Nott

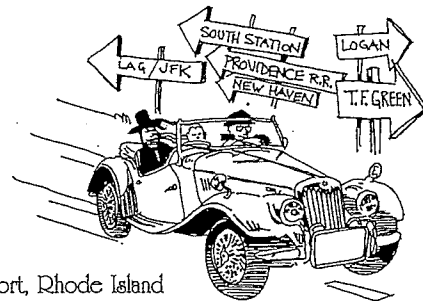
Enlisting when he was 17 years old, Bill joined the crew of Big Ben when he was 19. He remained with her until she was berthed at the Brooklyn Navy Yard at the end of her career. He received a Bronze Star for his military service and exploits on Big Ben. Leaving the Navy in 1968, Bill took up residence in Portsmouth, RI, having married in 1953. He fathered 5 children. Bill wore many hats as a civilian being involved in the construction of the new Roger Williams University campus in Bristol. He was: 1. the superintendent of construction; 2. the Director of the Physical Plant; and 3. the head of security—juggling all 3 jobs flawlessly with skills obviously learned in the Navy. Retiring from those jobs in 1988, he then worked for Viti Mercedes, registering cars, until 2002. He is now a gentleman of well-deserved leisure.

(Continued from page 9)

gift shop is almost impossible to walk through without bringing home a memento or two.

The museum is open daily in the summer and weekends October through June. Admission is quite reasonable and a yearly membership is always welcome. Phone: 401-294 9540. Email: www.THEQAM.org. So "Off we go into the wild blue yonder".

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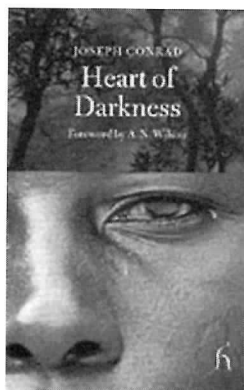
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POINT READERS

by Suzanne Varisco

We're pleased to announce that our first meeting of the newly revived Point Readers—topic: *J D Salinger: A Life*—engendered record attendance. So now, onward and upward! As usual, our next two choices, one fiction and one non-fiction, are both available in soft cover.

Our fiction choice, this time around, is Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, a 1903 novella that is a tense and exciting story within a story. Of this modern-day classic—inspiration for Francis Ford Coppola's 1979 film *Apocalypse Now*—author Joyce Carol Oates has written, "This parable of a man's 'heart of darkness' . . . transcended its late Victorian era to acquire the stature of one of the great, if troubling, visionary works of western civilization."



ing crisis, instead of merely weeping openly at your A.T.M. balance, 2009 was a very good year. Bookstores were filled with volumes that, with expert 20-20 hindsight, explained how capitalism went to hell. . . . But here's a prediction: Few if any of these books will be as pleasurable — and by that I mean as literate or as wickedly funny as [this one]." This is the best book we have read on the subject, and we will discuss three or four chapters ("Enter the Geniuses," "The Mistake," "Funny Smells," and "The Bill,") or maybe the whole book!

Heart of Darkness,
Host Claire Ernsberger,
119 Washington—846-1687,
clairrox@cox.net—Thursday, April 12, 2:00 p.m.

IOU, Host Isabel Griffith, 22 Walnut—849-6444,
igriffith38@verizon.net—Thursday, May 10, 2:00 p.m.

Please join us, and remember to notify hostesses so we know how many tea cups to set out. Till then . . .

I. O. U.: Why Everyone Owes Everyone and No One Can Pay, by John Lanchester (2009), is our nonfiction choice. Writing in the New York Times, Dwight Garner said, "If you wanted to try to make sense of the global bank-

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WASHINGTON ST. EXTENSION

by Liz Mathinos

The Washington Street Extension (WSE) case resumed on February 9th in the Supreme Court in Providence. A show cause hearing was held, with the City's brief presented by City Solicitor Joe Nicholson, followed by a short rebuttal by Attorney Joe DeAngelis. Because of past case ruling, the City is in a good position to win the case. WSE is and will remain a city street, which will be maintained by the City.

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(Continued from page 6)

ginia, to Weymouth, Massachusetts. She is loaded with a cargo of 7,500 tons of soft coal. Her captain considers these waters free of enemy submarines.

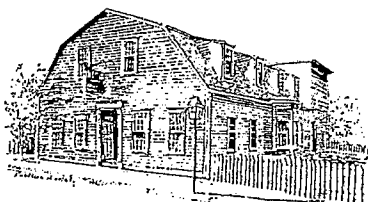
U-853's torpedo homes in on the *Black Point's* propellers and blows away the back third of the ship containing the crew quarters. At 1755, just fifteen minutes after the torpedo struck, the *Black Point* settles by the stern, rolls over to port and disappears in 95 feet of water. Ships soon converge upon the area and rescue 34 crew members, but twelve men lose their lives in the sinking. One of these ships is the *S.S. Kamen* that sends an SOS report of the torpedoing.

A lookout at Point Judith witnesses the sinking and notifies the naval authorities. The Navy is quick to organize an ad-hoc "hunter-killer" group. The only anti-submarine unit at sea in the immediate vicinity is the destroyer *USS Ericsson*, and destroyer escorts *Atherton* and *Amick*. The Coast Guard also assigns the frigate *Moberly* to the group. All, except the *Ericsson*, arrive near the sinking at 1930 hours. Taking stations 3,000 feet apart, they begin their search heading toward deeper water.

At about 2000 hours, the *Atherton* makes a sonar contact five miles east of Block Island and identifies it as a submarine moving due east. *Atherton* goes into the first attack at 2029 and drops 13 depth charges. After the third attack she loses contact with the target. The *Ericsson* soon arrives in the area and the *Amick* is relieved for convoy duty. Turning toward the last known position of the U-Boat, *Atherton* again regains contact. At 2341 hours, she unleashes another hedgehog and depth charge barrage. This attack is more successful. Air bubbles are rising to the surface along with large quantities of oil, life jackets, pieces of wood and other debris.

Navy's sonar soon shows the sub moving east again, and the attacks resume. The *Moberly's* explosions of her 13 depth charges at 0130 render her own master gyro, radar and steering gear inoperative. In a matter of minutes, everything is back to normal. On the next attack *Moberly* fires a full hedgehog pattern instead of depth charges in an attempt to avoid the previous predicament. After the detonations, sonar still shows the target heading east at a speed of 2 to 3 knots but it soon comes to a stop on the bottom at the depth of 75 feet. At 0530, *Moberly* fires another full salvo of 24

(Continued on page 18)



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WIND TURBINES ON NAVY PROPERTY

by Beth Cullen

On November 17, 2011, Point neighbors met at the Newport Officers' Club with Naval Station Newport's commanding officer, Captain Vorboril, to be briefed on the Environmental Assessment conducted on the base, which studied the impact of the potential installation of up to 12 wind turbines on Navy property on Aquidneck Island. Over 35 attended and many others shared their opinions via email. All comments were reviewed by the office of Edward Sanderson, RI Historic Preservation Officer. Mr. Sanderson stated in a December 19 letter to the Naval Station Newport commanding officer, "The responses were generally in favor of a wind energy project, however, there were concerns expressed, mostly about the southernmost sites, including multiple single turbines versus one or more clusters, and the potentially out-of-scale relationship between the turbines and the built and natural environment of the area." He went on to say, "...we have made a preliminary determination that the installation of wind turbines ...will have a visual effect..."

Despite the comments from the Rhode Historic Preservation and Heritage Commission, the Navy continues to investigate the project. Lisa Rama, Naval Station Newport's Public Affairs Officer, in a February 3 email said, "We are currently in consultation with the Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission and remain very optimistic that we will be able to reach an agreement regarding the view shed and our way ahead. The Navy has mandated renewable energy goals and we are ideally situated here in Newport to take a lead on locally reducing our energy costs while doing some-

thing positive for the environment. I know I speak on behalf of the Commanding Officer and the 5,000+ employees who work here daily when I say the support of the community is very much appreciated."

President Obama, in his January 24 State of the Union Address, expressed the need to work towards renewable energy, "I'm directing my administration to allow the development of clean energy on enough public land to power 3 million homes. And I'm proud to announce that the Department of Defense, working with us, the world's largest consumer of energy, will make one of the largest commitments to clean energy in history - with the Navy purchasing enough capacity to power a quarter of a million homes a year."

This is not only a very important local project that touches the Point directly, it is a national concern that puts Naval Station Newport in the forefront. Newport is the "Sailing Capital of the World" for a reason -- the winds. Controversial wind turbine discussions continue.

If you would like to get involved in this topic, as it affects our neighborhood and the entire island, please contact Beth Cullen

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(Continued from page 4)

that keeping up with ever-changing state rules and regulations is always challenging.

What is your vision for Harbor House in the next few years?

Generally speaking, Mrs. Flath sees that her responsibilities need to include maintaining the integrity of the Harbor House for its historic value and maintaining a good relationship with the community. She particularly enjoys that tenants personalize their individual entrances and Harbor House common areas. She will continue to encourage that personalization.

Are there any plans for celebrating the 10th anniversary of Harbor House?

There will definitely be a celebration, though details are not available at this time. The celebration will honor and commemorate those who had the vision to create this community. Look for future information in community papers.

What do you enjoy in Newport and the area when you are not working?

Aileen loves to explore the area, learning about all the secret treasures that Rhode Island has to offer. Cooking and entertaining are passions, decorating her home is enjoyable, as well



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IN MEMORIAM LEN PANAGGIO

by Ed Madden

I first met Len in the Fall of 2010. I was a fan of Len's Grist Mill column for the *Newport Daily News* and thought a story about him would make interesting copy for the *Green Light*. I introduced myself on the phone and received an invitation to his home that afternoon. With paper and pen in hand, I arrived to meet Len and his charming wife, Monique.

For the next three hours, I was regaled with stories of his life, featuring his participation in the American invasion of North Africa and Casablanca, where he met Monique, to Sturbridge Village, then finally on to R.I. and his birthplace, Newport. He took me to his office and showed me his vast file collection of items snipped from newspapers and magazine – fodder for future Grist Mill stories. I guessed there was probably enough material there for the remainder of the century!

I had been in somewhat of a recent funk about my approaching 80th birthday until I sat and listened to Len who was ten years older than I was but twenty years younger in spirit, zest for life and insatiable curiosity. He was truly an inspiration and became a treasured mentor to me in my journalistic quest. As for my funk – I could just imagine him telling me to GET OVER IT!

At Len's funeral Mass, there was a very poignant conclusion to a reminiscence about him: "We will all miss him/But we will never forget him."



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(Continued from page 15)

hedgehogs, just as two blimps, K-16 and K-58, arrive from Lakehurst, New Jersey. The blimps are told to locate and identify oil slicks and mark them with smoke and dye markers.

At 0655, *Moberly* makes another depth charge run, and four minutes later the *Ericsson* does the same. The K-16 blimp drops a sonar buoy on a spot where oil is still rising to the surface. The sonar operators in both blimps now hear the sounds of metallic hammering coming from the submarine. About ten minutes later, they hear a long shrill shriek. The blimps, using 7.2" rocket bombs, make an attack on this spot

Throughout the morning, the ships alternate between attacking the suspected position of the U-Boat and retrieving the debris that floats to the surface. At 1225 hours the battle is declared over. Over 200 depth charges have been dropped. The explosions have been loud enough to cause the windows on the houses at Block Island to rattle. A marker buoy locates the place bearing 099°. True, 14,000 yards east of Sandy Point Light on Block Island.¹ A diver descends 130 feet to the ocean floor and finds the submarine's conning tower smashed, a great split in the side, and bodies strewn about. The Navy vessels head for port with brooms at the masthead, the Navy's symbol for a clean sweep.²

U-853 is the last U-Boat sunk in the war, out of a total 783 U-Boats lost. Seventy-five percent, or 30,000 sailors out of their 40,000-man U-Boat fleet, died in action. Victory, however, comes at a huge cost: 3,500 Allied merchant ships and 175 warships sunk. Some 72,200 Allied sailors and merchant seamen also lost their lives.

1. The War College Museum has the two propellers from the U-853 that will be on display on the lawn outside of the museum soon.

2. Ten years after this battle, my Newport destroyer was the first ship to do anti-submarine-warfare exercises with the new nuclear powered submarine, Nautilus. We soon learned that our WWII sonar and operating tactics had become obsolete.

References:

New York Times, May 15, 1945

Long Island Chapter SAR, Vol. 102, March 2011, pgs. 4, 5

Ralph Dicarpio, "The Battle of Point Judith" — <http://www.de-sausa.org/>

Michael Salvarezza, "On Final Attack — the Story of the U-853" — <http://www.ecophotoexplorers.com/u853.asp>

STATE SWITCHES FROM "DUAL RECYCLING" TO "SINGLE STREAM" ON EARTH DAY 2012

by Lauren Carson

Every day, approximately 175 trucks deliver roughly 380 tons of material to the Rhode Island Municipal Recycling Facility or the MRF, located at the Johnston Landfill. Both residential and commercial recyclables are processed at the Johnston MRF. Currently Rhode Island's MRF is known as a "dual stream" facility, implying that recyclables are sorted before they are actually recycled for reuse. This means that recyclable paper is kept separated from the bottles and cans throughout the sorting process. The paper is processed in one section of the building and the bottles and cans are processed in a different section. This separation helps to maintain the quality of the finished product.

However, this April, on Earth Day 2012, Rhode Island will launch its new "single stream" recycling facility. What is single-stream recycling? How will that affect recycling in Newport?

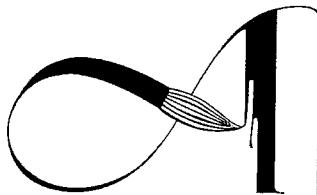
Single-stream recycling is a system in which all recyclable materials — fiber (newspaper, cardboard, mixed paper, catalogs, magazines and junk mail) and containers (glass, steel, aluminum and plastic) — are placed, unsorted, in one recycling bin and sorted by state-of-the-art processing equipment at a regional recycling center. The RI recycling center is located at the Johnston landfill. Rhode Island's decision to switch to single stream collection goes along with the Rhode Island Resource and Recovery Corporation (RIRRC) expecting to realize a 20-40 percent increase in its recycling program participation with the installation of the new MRF. RIRRC manages the landfill and the state recycling program.

It's an easier way to recycle. Newport residents, as well as all Rhode Island residents and collectors, will no longer be required to separate paper and containers, making curbside recycling much more convenient.

Watch for more information on "single stream" recycling in newspapers, on television and in flyers in the mail outlining how the programs will work.

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ALN Public Forum: America's Cup and Tall Ships, Thursday, March 8, 6pm, CCRI Auditorium

Point Pot Luck Supper: Sunday, March 25, 6pm, St. John's Guild Hall
Details on page 14 ~ note LOCATION

Earth Day Clean-Up: Saturday, April 14, 9 am, Storer & Battery Parks, rain date, April 21

General Membership Meeting: Thursday, April 19, 7pm.
Newport Tree Society presentation, contact Beth Cullen, bethcullen@cox.net for details.

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