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and tell us how many guests & what you plan to bring

if you would like to RSVP via email please send your name, number of guests &

menu item to: potluck@thepointassociation.org

Thursday, 18 April, spring membership meeting, 7pm

Saturday, 25 May, plant sale -- time?

and add, Spring Concert...stay tuned for details!

Back cover: standard format for calendar – delete time? and add. I don't have that info

THE GREEN LIGHT

The Point Association

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BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

SPRING 2013



CONTENTS

President's letter3

Civic Concerns of Newport in the
Early Twentieth Century4

A Renaissance Man Comes to Lunch.....5

Alliance for Livable Newport Update.....6

ALN Plans Forums for 2013.....7

Memories of Goat Island.....7

Crime Prevention Strategies9

Who Was John Clarke and Why We
Should Care 10

Rhode Island's Royal Charter of 1663,
Newport's John Clarke, and a 350th
Anniversary Celebration..... 11

A Letter from our New City Councilman 16

A Tribute to Our Councilman 18

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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.

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Bucci's Convenience Store, Poplar at Thames Streets.



promoting public policies that strengthen all of Newport's
neighborhoods.

Cover:
Photo by Jane Hence



After a brutal winter like the one
we have just experienced, birds, gardens, sail-
boats on the Bay are always a welcome sign of a
community that has weathered the challenge and
come back to life. But this year there is some-
thing more on the horizon.

As some of our readers may realize, we are fast
approaching the 350th anniversary of Rhode
Island's Royal Charter of 1663, negotiated with
England by two great Americans, Roger Williams
and Newport's Reverend John Clarke. In this
issue we are pleased to report on early plans for
a year-long celebration and to urge you to play a
part in bringing them to fruition. To whet your
interest, the *Green Light* is reprinting a fine article
from the Winter, 2010, issue by Jane Marchi on
the Reverend John Clarke and the genesis of our
remarkable founding document, as well as its
place at the very heart of the American experi-
ence. We hope to see you at the upcoming events.

The Point Association

The Point Association is a group of
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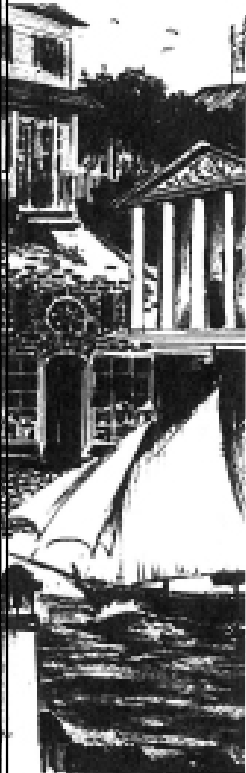
Thank You !



A TRIBUTE TO OUR COUNCILMAN

To Honor Charles Duncan, longtime Councilman for Ward I, the Point Association had a party for him early in January at Sanford-Covell Villa Marina on Washington Street. What a wonderful event it was! Everyone had a hugely happy time, especially the guest of honor. As a reflection of Charlie's reputation people gathered from all over Ward I and beyond, including most of the City Council, other city administrators and State Representatives. We will miss his wisdom at Council meetings but we count on Charles Duncan to help us understand important issues and how to do the right thing! Thank you, Charlie!






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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hello Point People...

Today, as I write to you in early February, the weather forecast is ominous. Winter Storm, Nemo, purported to be a blizzard of great magnitude, with two powerful storms approaching from the south and west, is heading right for southern New England. TV meteorologists are warning of up to 40 inches in the Boston area, with coastal flooding and high winds. With luck, by the time this edition reaches you, the groundhog's foreshadowing of an early spring has become a reality...and your crocus and daffodils are emerging in your yard.

I best carry on and offer you a bit of Point news, before the storm hits and my power wanes...

Many good things have come to be in 2012, all thanks to the efforts of the Point Association's hardworking, creative, and caring Board. With over 400 on the rolls, our membership roster is growing, thanks to our neighborhood canvassing and survey efforts; our web site has become a useful membership management, information sharing, and event planning tool; we've developed stronger relationships with our government leaders; Nextdoor, the ever-growing social media platform, now connects 20% of our Point households; our parks and open spaces are beautifully maintained; we have enjoyed several terrific social gatherings; our finances are healthy; our by-laws are updated; and, we have applied for the reinstatement of our 501c3 status! I'd say 2012 was a very good and productive year, indeed!

On 10 January, many Pointers and folks from all across our city, came together at Villa Marina, to thank and toast Charlie Duncan for all his hard work over the years as our City Council representative. At this cheerful and well attended social gathering, Charlie agreed to continue his civic involvement as an adviser to the Point Board. With his efforts, our neighborhood will continue to be the well-connected, cared for, and enjoyable place we proudly call home.

As we look ahead in 2013, we will be actively monitoring the development of the North End Plan, including the disposition of the Navy Hospital property, the wind turbine project on the Navy base, and the reconfiguration of the roads and the state-owned properties adjacent to the Connell Highway rotary. Our newly elected Ward One councilman, Marco Camacho, has vowed to be sure to include us in all decision making efforts.

Personally, I plan to continue reaching out and encouraging more people to take part in our events, meetings and work sessions. The vitality of our neighborhood is only as strong as those that are willing to step up and make things happen. Please, as you read through these pages, take a moment and think about how you, in as small or large a way you wish, can help sustain our neighborhood, and community as a whole. Why not recruit a friend to join you on one of our committees? There is always a place for you at our table. Not one to participate in meetings? No problem, just give me a call or send me an email, and I will connect you with a person who will point you in a fitting direction that will be of benefit to all.

As always, thank you for the privilege of being a part of such a spirited and purposeful group! Working with you is a truly rewarding experience! Please invite a friend to join us at one of the upcoming spring events. See you there....

With warm regards...

Beth Cullen

CIVIC CONCERNS OF NEWPORT IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

by Tom Kennedy

A hundred years ago automobiles were beginning to have an impact on Newport's streets. The city had not yet adjusted to the transportation revolution that was underway. In October of 1907 the following article appeared on page 2 of the Civic League Bulletin of Newport, R.I.: *Is it Possible for Newport to Have and to Enforce a Driving Law?*

"There can be no question as to the necessity for some definite driving regulations. Only last week, what might have been a fatal accident occurred when two automobiles collided at the intersection of one of our side streets with Spring street; and minor accidents, which rarely get into the papers, happen frequently.

The usual thing is for each driver to claim that he was in the right and that the other should have given way; a statement which would admit of no question were there a definite right of way in either direction.

It seems reasonable that the three almost parallel highways of Thames street, Spring street and Bellevue avenue, having certainly the most continuous traffic in the city, should also have the right of way; and that the duty of looking out should fall principally upon those who try to cross these streets by any of the highways running at right angles. Yet so far as can be discovered, there is no city regulation of the subject. A law covering the desired points should readily be framed, and would

probably be passed by the City Council: but the enforcing of it would almost certainly fall upon Newport's citizens and her visitors. The police force has no officers to spare for this purpose, and it would take a large number of men were one to be stationed at every dangerous corner. A good deal has doubtless been done by the painted placard boards now to be seen in several places about the city; and much more might be accomplished if we had a real Driving Law, and if the authorities would have it published several times a year in the local papers. The attention of drivers of all kinds of vehicles would be drawn to it, and what at present threatens to be a serious source of danger to the public might be sensibly lessened."

In 1908 the motion picture was rapidly capturing the imagination of the American public. The women of the Civic League of Newport saw some dangers in the novel form of entertainment, expressed in an article on page 3 of the Civic League Bulletin of May 1908. Clearly the communication revolution was underway.

Cheap Amusements

"For some weeks the 'Motion Picture' theatre recently opened on Thames street has been liberally patronized, and now preparations are being made to convert the premises formally occupied by the Five and Ten Cent store into another moving picture show, while rumors are abroad that still a third estate on Thames street is to be turned into a similar place of amusement. Is it not time for the authorities to stop and consider how far such an increase in the number of places of cheap amusement is for the good of Newport, and whether some limitation should be put upon them?

The moving picture show has won its way into popular favor with incredible rapidity. In greater New York, for example, the number has grown in a few years to more than six hundred and the average daily attendance of adults and children is estimated at four hundred thousand. Giving, as it does, representations of historic events, scenes of life in strange countries, and current happenings of importance, the nickelodeon furnishes instruction in history and geography, and a knowledge of present day people and things. In a certain sense it has become a people's theatre, where entire families may enjoy an entertainment of the most

varied interest. ...

All that is claimed, however, for the moving picture show can be realized only when a high standard is maintained in its repertoire; and the fact that often pictures of questionable taste and morality form a part of the exhibition must not be overlooked. But grant, for the moment, that there are no indecent or immoral pictures shown and that no valid objection can be raised against these places of amusement in this respect; there is a grave danger lurking in their very cheapness. The alluring cry of 'Only a nickel,' or 'Only ten cents,' can not be resisted and these small sums are spent day after day, without a serious thought of how much money is being diverted from the purchase of necessities. A reckless indulgence in amusements beyond the limit of one's income, whether reckoned in hundreds of dollars or in dimes, is to be deplored for its effect on the business life of the city, as well as on the moral standard of the citizens. It will be a difficult matter to impress upon the children the importance of thrift and economy and honest business methods if we increase the places of amusement which are an ever present temptation to them to spend all their earnings and in some cases even to steal the money for their admission. For the court records show that many cases of theft among juvenile offenders are traceable to the desire for money for the cheap theatre.

It is, therefore, especially in the interest of the younger portion of the community that a plea is made for some restriction in the matter of cheap amusement places. Putting aside all questions of health – and yet much might be said against the injurious effect upon the eyes of the constant watching of the moving pictures, and also of the danger of spreading contagion in the closely crowded and often badly ventilated, small theatres – and admitting that the motion pictures offer a clean and wholesome form of entertainment, let us be influenced by the economics and business aspects of the case. 'Nothing in excess' is as good a motto for the present day as for the ancients and should dictate public policy in this matter of licensing amusement places. The State law already forbids the admission to public places of amusement of boys under fourteen and girls under sixteen unless accompanied by an older person. But still further restrictions are needed. If it is not possible to limit the number of cheap theatres, at least let us have some limitation upon the number of daily performances allowed."

As the Civic League Bulletin notes on page 6 of the June 2013 SPRING

1909 issue, even bathing was a controversial issue at the time.

School Baths in Providence

"About three years ago school baths were introduced as an experiment into the America street school in Providence, a school in a crowded district where 90 percent or more of the children enrolled are foreigners. Since that time three other buildings have been provided with shower baths and three new building are also to have baths as a part of their equipment. Now the school committee has voted to keep these school baths open during the summer that the children may have the bathing privileges continued in the long vacation.

At first it was a difficult matter to persuade the children to use the baths, but after persistent efforts a few were made to understand that a bath was not necessarily fatal, and the reform was started. The bathing was voluntary and very soon a matter of distinction, so that the room which had the greatest number of bathers to its credit for a month received a red star. The parents, however, proved much harder to persuade than the children, and often it was impossible to obtain their permission for the children to have a bath. Several of the mothers were invited to watch the bathing and when they found that the children were not in immediate danger of drowning they were ready to give their consent. There are still some parents, firmly convinced that bathing is harmful, who beat their children if they find they have taken a bath. One small boy was heard to say: - 'I'll get a licking when my father finds I've had a bath – but it's worth it'..."

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A LETTER FROM OUR NEW CITY COUNCILMAN

If you told me 20 years ago that I would be representing The Point as your City Councilman, I never would’ve believed it. To grow up in Newport was truly a blessing. From snowball fights in winter to daily summer swims off the Van Zandt Pier, we were never bored. Who needs video games when you have Newport to entertain you!

One of the things that makes our city so special is that we are truly an all ages community. I can’t think of a better place to be raised in, raise our children in, and spend the twilight of our lives in. I ran on a campaign of bringing young professional families back to Newport. Here are a few ways we are making that happen together:

Investment and Redevelopment:

At the state level, we are seeing a willingness to develop a better pro-business atmosphere to attract much needed jobs to RI. The newly formed North End Commission will help spearhead this endeavor locally. On our agenda is the redevelopment of the 10-acre former U.S. Navy Hospital and lands adjacent to the Pell Bridge ramp intersection. Acquisition is anticipated to occur in 2014. We are clearly a future “growth center” for our island and our state. The 21st Century businesses we attract will bring back many of my generation’s talent that left for better opportunities in technology, engineering, and sciences in other states.

This is also a prime opportunity for us to address much needed infrastructure improvements. The Blizzard of 2013, and previous storms that hit our area in the last couple of years, exposed the need to move our great city towards a modern Smart Grid system as well as boosting high-speed telecommunications efforts. The Department of Defense is also moving towards more sustainable energy alternatives right here at Naval Station Newport. I firmly believe that we can find a compromise solution with the Navy that will both guarantee the success of the proposed wind turbine project and preserve our historic Newport skyline for current and future generations.

Education:

We are now one step closer as a community to having even greater school choice for our children. As a graduate of Rogers High School (class of ’95) I recognize and appreciate the value a public education plays in shaping our lives, regardless of social or economic background. Newport County STEAM Academy will add another free educational option for Newport. This healthy competition will strengthen the quality of education in our existing public as well as private institutions. All will be compelled to raise the bar of success if they do not want to lose their best and brightest to the new STEAM school. Additionally, there is no quicker way to get families back to Newport than to offer highly ranked, high quality, free education to their kids. This will have an immediate economic and social impact on the property values and quality of life in our neighborhoods.

I will be pushing hard to ensure that Newport County STEAM Academy remains right here in Newport. We have a surplus inventory of school buildings, any one of which can be repurposed for STEAM.

An added benefit to our existing Newport Public Schools will be the annual savings of having fewer brick and mortar locations. I am an advocate for reinvesting those annual savings right back into our children, and it shouldn’t just be grades K thru 12. Let’s use these funds to reach children and families at an even earlier age. Dr. Charles Shoemaker in his capacity as both School Committee Chairman and President of Baby Steps can put those funds to the greatest of use by maximizing our per-child investment.

While other city governments across our nation are stuck managing their economic and community decline, we in Newport are setting the conditions for prosperity. I thank all of you for giving me this opportunity to represent you on City Council.

Sincerely,

Marco T. Camacho

A RENAISSANCE MAN COMES FOR LUNCH

by Ed Madden

Once a month there is a noontime lecture at the Newport Art Museum entitled “Lunch with the Artist.” The host and lecturer is Richard Tyre, a truly Renaissance man. My wife and I have been attending these talks for several years and make it a point, if possible, to never miss one. Sometimes we attend without knowing what the lecture is about. But it doesn’t matter. Whatever Richard has chosen for his topic – be it Pablo Picasso, Frieda Kahlo, or ancient cave paintings in Southern France – it is bound to be fascinating and instructive.

Richard Tyre always comes prepared with several art books having multiple earmarked pictures to describe the topic at hand. He also passes out a half-dozen or more art prints of the subject – one for each member of his audience – to discuss and then take home. His modus operandi is to give a brief biographical sketch of the subject for discussion and then challenge each one of his “pupils” to “challenge him” about the veracity of his didactic statements.

“Don’t believe anything I tell you without verifying it for yourself,” he cautions. Then he proceeds to tear apart many myths, falsehoods and half-truths related to the subject under discussion. This often topples some entrenched beliefs and leads to vigorous audience participation.

The lecture is scheduled for one hour as a bring-your-own-brown bag luncheon. It never ends in less than an hour and a half and more frequently two! The talks are open to the public (free for museum members) with a modest stipend for all others. The real insiders know to come early because it doesn’t take long to fill up.

So just who is Richard Tyre? He was born in 1927 in Santa Monica, California, and attended Stanford University. By the time he finished his studies, he had accumulated three degrees with additional certificates from Harvard and Yale. There was also a stint in the U.S. Army and multiple teaching and academic positions in prep schools and colleges from the West to the East Coast. He eventually wound up in Rhode Island, taking up residence in James-

town with his wife Lisa who happened to be a Nazi holocaust survivor from World War II. Over the years, she has been involved in teaching courses at Newport’s Circle of Scholars. In the last five years they have lived in a retirement community in Canton, MA, but they still faithfully return for their monthly educational sojourn to the Newport Art Museum.

Richard became the New England Director of the Uncommon Individual Foundation, a national group involved in mentoring business men and women and young promising students. He also taught music, art, and literature courses for the Barrington Community School. In his spare time he became a master gardener with the URI horticultural program, wrote two books on Robert Frost, and numerous articles on literature and non-verbal communication, picking up an additional PhD from the University of Pennsylvania on this esoteric subject.

And if this isn’t enough and you catch him in the right mood, you may get him to read your palm. He is still available on occasion to lecture to groups on mentoring, hand writing analysis and the mysteries of palmistry. See you at the Newport Art Museum!

“Own the water, not the boat!”



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ALLIANCE FOR A LIVABLE
NEWPORT UPDATE

by Isabel Griffith

As many *Green Light* readers already know, Alliance for a Livable Newport has begun a monthly survey on issues of interest to Newporters. Here are results from January:

“What plans would you support to insure safety in public schools?”

Locked doors; armed security guards – 16.67%; Mandatory defense training for teachers and staff – 16.67%; Outlaw automatic weapons, assault rifles and magazine clips holding more than 10 rounds – 51.67%; Other – 15% Almost 60% would NOT be interested in a public forum on this issue.

So, given justifiable fears about safety in public places, the next question: “What percent of Newport’s property taxes do you think goes to public safety?” 53.15 percent said less than 30%; 24.32 percent said 30% - 40%; 12.61percent said 50% - 60%; 9.01percent said greater than 60%.

Here are the facts - In Newport’s Fiscal Year 2013 Budget the allocations to the Police Department and the Fire Department are \$17,633,054 and \$17,089,520 respectively, totaling \$34,722,574. That represents 53.42% of the City’s tax levy of \$64,998,671. There was another allocation of \$2,300,000 to Other Post Employment Benefits (mostly health benefits) which covers the Police Department, the Fire Department and the School Department, but that was not broken down into department shares. So we can assume that the actual total public safety allocation is closer to 54%.

In answer to the third question, “If the legislature prevents tolling on the Sakonnet Bridge, how should funds be generated to maintain all bridges leading to Newport?”

Less than 5% wanted higher tolls on the Pell Bridge; 43.65% approved of raising the gas tax; but over half had their own ideas.

“Toll all roads coming into RI and lower the sales tax to 4%.”

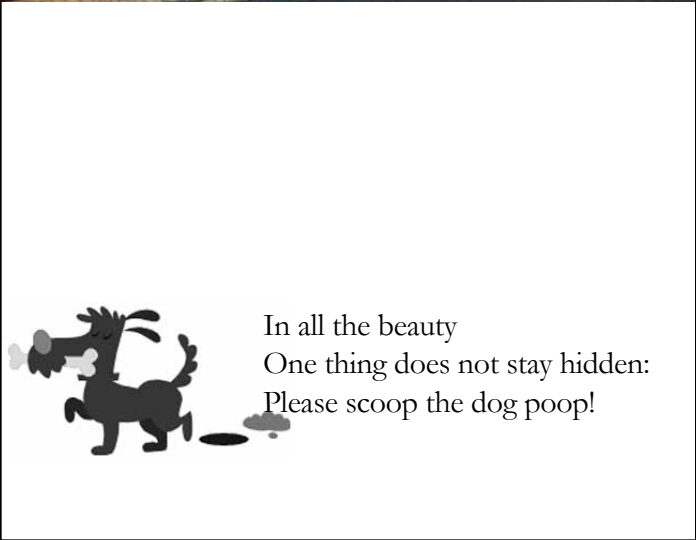
“Reduce the size of the state government.”

“It’s not fair for the Pell Bridge to pay for all the other bridges.” This was a popular comment.

“Increase the car tax.”

“Put a toll on the new bridge; leave the old bridge in place with free passage for users who don’t believe they should pay anything. Anyone using the free bridge when it collapses will be barred from suing the state.”

Would you like to see and respond to the next survey? Go to the ALN website <http://newportalliance.org/> and fill in your email address on the screen at the right. It’s free!!



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(Continued from page 8)

Today, almost this entire tiny twenty-acre island is covered with resort activities: The Hyatt Hotel, marinas, restaurants, and condominiums. The one noticeable exception is the iconic 35 foot salt shaker-style light house on the northern end of the island near where the pirates were buried in 1723. It is called the Newport Harbor Light (built in 1842) and sometimes called the Schoeneman's Light after the keeper who tended it for 39 years.⁴ Seven years ago the flashing white light was changed to a fixed green light with a visibility of eleven miles. This gave us the masthead of the magazine that you are now reading.

It is amazing that the Newport Redevelopment Agency purchased the island from the federal government for only \$207,000 – less than the price of a Goat Island condo today. But this pales in comparison to the price Benedict Arnold, Jr. paid for three islands: Goat, Dutch, and Coasters from the Indians in 1658 – \$12.00 in today's money.

Today, I often enjoy dinner with my friends at the Marina Cafe & Pub on Goat Island – especially sitting outside in warm weather on the pebble stone patio. The view of the marina, the harbor, and shipyard is spectacular. You

¹ The causeway bridge to the shore was built eight years later in 1964.

² You may view the internal “plumbing” of a WW II torpedo at the Navy War College Museum. It is a Walter Mitty nightmare - of gears, sensors, tubing, pipes, oil and air pressure tanks, levers, etc. The complexity is amazing and boggles the mind how they built it and at what cost.

³ Fleet landing was near where the State Pier is located.

⁴The keeper's house was removed after submarine N-4 crashed into the foundation walls in 1921. In 2000, the Coast Guard leased the lighthouse to the American Lighthouse Foundation.



ALN PLANS FORUMS FOR 2013

by Lauren Carson

The first of our 2013 forums would feature the City Council and the School Board. Mayor Winthrop and School Board chair Charlie Shoemaker have already accepted our invitation. The exact date is April 16 at the library starting at 6pm. We envision this being a brief 5 minute update from our guests with the remainder of the time spent on Q&A's. I encourage the PA Board to brainstorm a set of questions and comments that are of concern.

The second and third town hall meetings would feature three city commissions/boards each. The first one would have the HDC, the Planning Board and the Zoning Board, with ten minutes each to briefly describe their functions with the balance of time open for questions from the audience. The third meeting, with the Waterfront, Cliff Walk and Beach Commissions, would follow the same format as the second. All three meetings would run at least an hour and possibly up to one and a half hours depending on the volume of questions.

At the request of the Point Association, ALN will also host at city wide meeting, inviting Board members of the neighborhood organizations, sometime this summer. Isabel Griffith and I are organizing this meeting. Details will follow.

MEMORIES OF GOAT ISLAND

by Dave Moore


A few weeks ago, I was waiting for a launch at the Goat Island Marina. Tied up alongside the pier was a beautiful new 150 foot motor yacht with five staterooms and a crew of six. It reminded me that fifty-six years ago I was also tied up at this very same spot on a destroyer escort that was twice as long with a crew of 200. The famous two-masted schooner *America* was also moored here a century and a half ago. She was used as a mid-shipman's training ship when the Naval Academy was moved to Newport during the Civil War.

My ship would spend thirty days here every other month of the year. The rest of the time was spent at sea on station off the Grand Banks. We were part of the Distant Early Warning or “Dew” Line where we used our radars to intercept any possible incoming enemy aircraft or missiles. It was pretty boring miserable duty – often in very rough seas for a month at a time.

It was not always easy to bring a big ship like ours alongside at Goat Island. We once rammed a navy tug boat tied up in front of us that left a noticeable dent in the tug's stern. After we got here, the only way to get into town was by a gray-painted Navy ferry which only ran once an hour up to eleven PM.¹ Pity the sailor who


(Continued on page 8)






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(Continued from page 7)

missed the hourly run. I remember one of our overweight cooks who tried to jump to the ferry's stern as it was leaving. He didn't make it and he became the butt of out jokes for a long time.

When I was at the island, there was nothing except deserted concrete buildings that were once used during WW II to manufacture torpedoes. At that time there were 100 buildings on the island and 13,000 men and women were employed there. Many of these early torpedoes had problems, as one out of three direct hits on enemy shipping would not explode. There were also problems with their gyros. The torpedoes were running too deep and would wander off course. To correct the problems the torpedoes were test fired from Gould Island located further up the Bay. These non-explosive torpedoes were retrieved in an underwater net and then refitted with explosives.² People are still talking about a particular one that missed the net and changed course into Newport Harbor. There, at full speed, it headed toward the beautiful manicured lawn of Harbor Court - the then residence of John Nicholas Brown and now the summer home of the New York Yacht Club. This unexpected visitor plowed well up on the lawn, its propellers spinning wildly, and terrifying two gardeners working there.

After a month at sea our sailors were ready to spend their pent up energy and money ashore, and the number of bars along Thames Street were obliging them. It was amazing how much trouble our crew got themselves into. As a result, we held special court martial trials, almost weekly, aboard ship in the ward room next to a long table covered with a green cloth. I had no previous law experience, but was the designated Defense Council at the trials because I had seven weeks of Military Justice School at the Naval Base. Imagine my surprise at the very first trial when my instructor walked in and announced he was the prosecuting attorney. I was not a Perry Mason and lost that case and sadly many more for my "clients." Most were sentenced to extra duty aboard ship, but in some cases were sent to serve three days in the brig at the Base. There they were fed only bread and water.

One day the Admiral decided to hold a fleet "Sadie Hawkins Day" dance party on Halloween Evening. It was a party where women could ask the sailors for dates and it was held at a gymnasium on the Base. I received

a message that I was to be the shore patrol officer at Fleet Landing³ I had never done this before and was ordered to take two petty officers with me to maintain order at the landing. Early in the evening everything went well, as sailors, in their best uniforms, arrived in the launches from their ships moored out in the bay. The three of us stood there bored with nothing to do while the party was going on.

Things changed drastically about ten o'clock. A flood of extremely intoxicated and riotous sailors arrived. They threw pumpkins at each other and some through store windows. Fights broke out, and it soon became a "bar room type brawl." I was worried that some would be thrown off the pier. My two petty officers asked me if they should use their billy clubs to try to stop it. I held off at first, knowing we were greatly out-numbered, and that it might inflame them more. But then some of the mob starting punching my two helpers and I told them to defend themselves. Whack! Whack! went the clubs and down went the worst offenders. Slowly, the sailors sullenly boarded the waiting launches, some carrying their bleeding buddies. There were shouts from the drunks in the boats: "We will get revenge!" Fortunately, I didn't recognize any from my ship. As far as I know there was never a fleet party held again.

There is a lot of history associated with the island, but the story I like best is that the first shot of the Revolution did not occur at Lexington, or at the Gaspee. It was here in 1764 when thirteen shots were fired against the 65 foot, eight cannon, British schooner, St. John. The overzealous British Captain had stopped the town's molasses trade. Their crew had also stolen some pigs and chickens from the citizens. The St. John escaped but only after several shots had cut the flag halyards and pierced both the main-sail and foresail.

(Continued on page 14)



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(Continued from page 12)

before he would finally succeed in this goal? In the meantime he had to find a way to maintain himself and his wife at his own expense, through loans, mortgaging his property, and various (unsuccessful) attempts to tap into monies from his wife's inheritance. While the colonists were supposed to send aid to reimburse him for his London expenses, they never did, then or later. Clarke allied himself with some of the Baptist churches in London, wrote petitions on behalf of the hoped-for charter, and recruited both political and legal help in what appeared to be his never-ending pursuit of a favorable hearing. It was not until the death of Oliver Cromwell (1658) and eventual restoration of the monarchy under Charles II (1660) that he began to achieve some recognition at court. John Clarke was largely responsible for writing the charter's petition in its final form, in which it promises "to hold forth a lively experiment, that a most flourishing civil state may stand and best be maintained...with a full liberty in religious concerns."

King Charles II eventually granted the colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations its new royal charter on 8 July 1663, finally freeing John Clarke to return home and try to pick up the threads of his former life. We owe him so much: not just for Rhode Island's charter to exist as a separate colony, but also for legitimizing the principle of separation of church and state, a benefit that we still enjoy as a nation down to the present day.

[Sources: Asher, Louis Franklin, John Clarke (1609-1676: Pioneer in American Medicine, Democratic Ideals, and Champion of Religious Liberty. (Dorrance Pub., c 1997); James, Sidney V., Religion and Laws in Colonial Rhode Island 1638-1750. (Penn State U Press, c 1999; Wikipedia]



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(Continued from page 10)

What was Clarke’s role in all this? While not as wealthy as some of the others (Coddington, Easton, Brenton, or Coggeshall), he was an educated man, trained as a physician, which was no doubt of value to a fledgling community, holder of a sizable farm (about 150 acres in what is today’s Middletown) besides laying claim to a good-sized lot in the town itself. He organized and led the Newport church, where he preached along what we might think of as more liberal Puritan lines. While he believed in predestination, he accepted those who did not. While he supported church attendance, he felt it should be voluntary rather than mandatory; he also opposed mandatory taxation to support the church, feeling donations should be voluntary. As a result he had to make his living in other ways, as a physician and/or by farming. He also came to accept the practice of adult baptism, or baptism (usually by immersion) upon the profession of faith, as a more valid symbol of belief in a relationship with God than the more orthodox practice of infant baptism espoused by the Puritans.

In most respects John Clarke was not rigid in his beliefs, whether by necessity, given the diversity of views and practices among his parishioners or by a personal inclination to accept all who professed a belief of some sort is not clear. He appears to have been a pragmatic, even-tempered man, willing to explain and reason with those who differed, though unwilling to compromise his own beliefs in the process, and to serve the community as and when he could, but without any great ambition for higher position.

These turned out to be very useful traits in the early years of a growing settlement of varied and diverse opinions. There were arguments about government. In 1641, the official electors (property-owners) announced their new political structure as a “Democracie, or Popular Government; that is to say, it is in the power of the Body of Freemen orderly assembled, or the major part of them, to make or constitute Just Lawes...” (Asher, p. 37). Coddington, as governor, was not happy with this state of affairs. In 1649, he went off to London to secure a charter from the Parliament (which had just deposed the king) that would make him governor of Aquidneck and Conanicus Islands for life. This push to consolidate his position so enraged the citizens he left behind that it soon produced a backlash.

While Coddington was gone Clarke found himself embroiled in an unintended confrontation with the Puritan authorities in Boston. He was invited, in 1649, to go to Seekonk, together with a fellow pastor from Newport, to baptize some adult members there. Two years later, in 1651, he was invited to go to Lynn, another town that fell under the jurisdiction of Boston, to discuss believer-baptism, accompanied by a John Crandall and Ezekiel Holmes, one of those baptized in Seekonk. This was too much for the outraged Puritan magistrates, who insisted that the three men be arrested and brought to Boston for trial. Clarke, Crandall and Holmes were found guilty and fined. As a matter of principle, all three declined to pay. A friend paid Clarke’s fine, over his objections, and he returned to Newport. Crandall protested, left, returned to protest, and finally just left. The third, 70-year-old Holmes, absolutely refused to pay and was severely whipped. At stake was the right to worship as one pleased. A further consequence was that the entire episode provided Clarke with the basis for his “Ill Newes from New England, or a Narrative of New England’s Persecution,” published two years later, in which he argued for religious freedom.

Clarke’s return from Boston coincided with the return from London of William Coddington, who had succeeded in obtaining his charter for a lifetime governorship. Coddington’s success shocked his constituents back in Newport, provoking a resolve to send their own representatives to England to cancel it. Thus it was in November 1651 that Roger Williams, representing Providence, and John Clarke, representing Aquidneck and Conanicus Islands, set sail for England with instructions to secure a new charter for the Rhode Island colony.

While in London Clarke wrote and published (1652) the “Ill Newes” report (1652) of his Boston experience, as part of his campaign to influence public opinion and present the Rhode Islanders’ version of events before the Boston government could send reports that might tarnish their reputation. By 1654, Roger Williams had succeeded in getting the Coddington charter revoked and felt free to return to Providence, leaving John Clarke behind to continue the campaign to obtain a new charter for the colony of Rhode Island.

How was he to know that it would take another ten years

(Continued on page 13)

NEED TO GET SEAL

Crime Prevention Strategies

While it is busy and full of activity during the summer, Newport becomes a quiet and hushed city during the colder months of fall and winter. Many citizens leave their local homes and businesses to spend time in warmer areas of the country. Criminals use this knowledge to their advantage, vandalizing and breaking and entering into these “dark homes” while they are unoccupied. There are many useful strategies to prevent this type of criminal behavior, even simple measures such as locking your windows and doors can have a major impact. By initiating these and many other types of defensive procedures, your property will remain safe and secure while you are away.

To ensure the safety of your property while you are away, it is important to take these necessary precautions. In addition to all front and back doors being securely locked with a deadbolt, windows and sliding doors should be reinforced as well. This can be done as simply as placing bars on the windows and wedging a piece of wood in the tracks of the sliding doors. Most criminals want to spend as little time as they can breaking into a residence and so it is important to thoroughly check all your doors and windows.

As well as appropriately locking up your house, it is also essential that you make any attempts to defer the criminal away from your property. If you create the image of an occupied home, an intruder may think twice about entering it. If he/she suspects that there is someone occupying the dwelling at the present time, they are less likely to go through with the robbery. Useful actions such as leaving the lights or T.V. on or leaving a talk show radio station playing quietly will make it seem as though someone is inside, causing the thief to shy away.

Other than these individualized prevention strategies, it is also a good idea to enlist the help of your neighbors. Having your neighbor watch your property uses the collaboration between law enforcement and the community to alter a criminal’s behavior and motivation to commit theft, larceny, and robbery. Besides neighborhood watch programs, installing a home monitoring system will aid in deferring the criminal away from your home. An alarm will decrease the amount of time an intruder has inside the house and could potentially save thousands of dollars in losses.

By initiating these defensive measures, you and your family’s possessions will remain safe and secure while you are away. These types of preventative strategies will increase the safety of your unoccupied residence.

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WHO WAS JOHN CLARKE AND WHY WE SHOULD CARE

by Jane Marchi

Any of you who may have recently found yourself traveling along Spring Street, where it turns behind the Old Colony House on your way towards Broadway, would have found yourself passing in front of a prototypical austere white New England Church with a high steeple: the United Baptist Church, John Clarke Memorial.

Who was John Clarke and why should there be any memorial to him? A short answer – that he was one of Newport's earliest Baptist ministers, if not the earliest – explains his significance to the church. However, a longer answer would have to pay tribute to his importance to all of us here in Rhode Island and to how he has affected our lives to this very day.

John Clarke was born in England in 1609; when he was in his mid-teens, Charles I succeeded to the throne with ambitions, among others, to unite England with Scotland and Ireland domestically, as well as to take an active part in the Thirty Years War on the continent. Over the next ten years, while Clarke was growing up and training to be a physician, both of these goals brought the king into conflict with Parliament over the need to obtain the financing required to achieve these ends – a conflict that had ramifications for dissenting Protestants, for supporters of parliamentary rights, as well as for patriots of the three nations and to the English Civil War.

It was in this atmosphere that John Clarke, like many another young Protestant of the time, emigrated from England to the new colony in Boston. It was his fate to arrive there in November 1637, just as the Puritan magistrates were putting Anne Hutchinson on trial for challenging their orthodox practices and beliefs. Basically the Puritan hierarchy held that communication between God and man had to be mediated through the church, mainly through mandatory participation in worship services, through preaching by its ordained ministers, who alone were allowed to administer such sacraments as marriage and infant baptism, and via private devotions based on scripture. Anne Hutchinson had come to believe that true believers, like the apostles in the book of Acts, could communicate with God directly. For this her-

esy, among others, she was tried, found guilty, imprisoned and sentenced to banishment. The newly arrived Clarke immediately sided with Hutchinson and her followers, a decision with far-reaching consequences for his future.

A prime task for her followers, Clarke now among them, was to determine a place for their new settlement. Taking a boat around Cape Cod and into Narragansett Bay, they consulted with Roger Williams, already located in Providence, who suggested the possibility of Aquidneck Island, provided it did not fall under the patent of the colony at Plymouth. When a trip to Plymouth revealed the island to be free and available, the Hutchinson group, Clarke still among them, negotiated its purchase and chose today's Portsmouth as their future settlement. Anne Hutchinson, with her family and followers, moved there in May 1638.

This proved to be a strong-minded group. Though united when opposing the Puritan hierarchy, the group soon began to fall apart once they were on their own and divisive views could emerge: some differed over religious interpretations, some over land allotments, some over governance. William Coddington, one of the wealthier members and major purchasers, initially assumed leadership of the group, but he was increasingly challenged in the months to follow. Within a year the group split. In May 1639, a group of nine, including Clarke, left to explore the southern part of the island, where they located a new settlement: Newport. By June, John Clarke was part of the committee formed to survey and apportion land to the new settlers. In December, he was deputized to write to England to ask for a new charter for the two Aquidneck Island settlements (both Portsmouth and Newport), to be separate from either Providence or Massachusetts. In the spring of 1640, both communities united into one government under William Coddington. *(continued on p. 12)*

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RHODE ISLAND'S ROYAL CHARTER OF 1663, NEWPORT'S JOHN CLARKE, AND A 350TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The 350th anniversary of one of this country's most precious documents has put James Wermuth and the John Clarke Society at the center of a busy year-long commemoration. The Project Worksheet Wermuth has shared with the *Green Light* organizes projected events into a number of categories, local, national and even international. The latter category includes the possibility of recreating a Runnymede counterpart in Newport; declaring Westhorpe or Ipswich, Suffolk, UK a Sister City; interfacing with the Leiden Pilgrim Museum, the London Museum, and the Ipswich National Archives. Charter Day would be declared a State Holiday.

The Newport-focused part of the celebration could include local restaurants' tribute to 17th-century fare and even a "John Clark" answer to "Sam Adams" brew by one of our own micro-breweries. The music component might include a special program in 17th century music for 2 violins, viola da gamba, harpsichord and alto created by Paul Cienniwa; vernacular secular music from the 17th-century Bay Hymnal; and a Calliope Concert at Colony House as part of the July 15th Charter Day program. A musicological lecture on 17th-century music would round out the music offering.

Education would be the backdrop for the entire celebration. Some possibilities: a Newport County essay contest in the public schools; a history curriculum centered on the Royal Charter; lectures for the broader community, along with a panel discussion on the centrality of Rhode Island's Royal Charter to the very notion of democracy, in this country and around the world, with its core principle of religious tolerance.

Community-wide activities might include a July 15 parade; a Water Fire event replete with Morris Dancers, fife and drum units, and artillery; a reenactment of the Charter's arrival on Long Wharf; joint programming with the *Oliver Hazard Perry*, our new Tall Ship. Potential dates for these

events would be July 14-15 (Charter Day), October 5 (John Clarke Day), November 23 (arrival of the Charter).

This exciting and ambitious project is being spearheaded by the John Clarke Society of Early American Democracy, a 501c3 non-profit educational organization, Salve Regina University, the Newport Historical Society and Governor Chafee's Charter Commission. At this time, the John Clarke Society is looking for volunteers and supporters "interested in brainstorming, planning, contacting and working with creative organizations and individuals who might participate, determine the most effective calculus to make it happen, and, as always, the best means to fund the continuing lively experiment." (James Wermuth, Executive Director) Interested parties may contact the Society at JohnClarkeSociety@cox.net or at 401 847 3459.



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