

The
GREEN

LIGHT

BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

WINTER 2016-17



The GREEN LIGHT

LX No. 4

WINTER 2016-17

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Meetings are generally scheduled for the first Monday of the month and are open to Association members. Please call Tom for time, date, and location.

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Copies of *The Green Light* may be purchased for \$1.00 at Bucci's Convenience Store, Poplar at Thames Streets.



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: *The latest in military stealth technology with the historic Green Light* by Lisa Stuart.

The Green Light is published four times each year: the first week of March, June, September, and December.



This issue of the *Green Light* once again finds the Point Association's History & Archives Committee hard at work recording the history of our Point neighborhood. Again their work is complemented by that of our retired Navy men, documenting the local history of that institution on both broad and smaller scales. It all makes for interesting reading and the *Green Light* thanks them for their efforts. But that's all in the past – history.

Looking forward, what the reader will find here is the promise of a new garden element for Storer Park, one that will hopefully and positively address the well-known problems there. More immediately, the *Green Light* is pleased to announce the revival of two Point traditions: a Christmas tree in the park and Christmas caroling.

Best wishes for a revitalizing holiday season

Alice Clemente

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Greetings!

As we enter the Holiday Season and approach the end of the year, there are many good things to report to our members and supporters!

In October, we hosted our Annual Fall Membership Meeting. Over 100 people were in attendance, including many candidates running for local office. It was a great meeting and program, and reinforced the neighborhood's support for the Point Association and our work. And the strong attendance of the candidates running for office showed that our elected officials recognize the importance of our activities and the leadership role we play in our city.

At the meeting, I outlined the accomplishments of the Point Association and our efforts to keep the Point Neighborhood a great place to live and work. As in years past, our neighborhood association has shown that we are leaders in the community and work hard for our city.

This year, the Point Association has partnered with neighbors and city officials on projects that benefit our neighborhood. From working with city officials on issues important to our community ... to our members serving on city Boards and Commissions ... to the Point Association Beautification Committee working with the city on our parks and open spaces ... to joining in a world class conference on the impact of flooding and sea rise for historic neighborhoods ... and to partnering with organizations across the city, our Association has worked hard for the betterment of our neighborhood and our community.

Once again, the generosity of our neighborhood was reinforced by helping those in need. We have continued to show our strong support for our neighbor, the Martin Luther King Community Center. Whether it is our ongoing work with the MLK Center with its programs and food pantry, or to partnering with St. Johns Church and the MLK Center to help a Middletown family who tragically lost a child and all of their belongings to a house fire this fall, neighbors joined together to lend a helping hand and show their support. And this holiday season we will again embark on an end of year fundraising drive on behalf of the MLK Center to help with the wonderful programs they do.

I'm proud of the work that the Point Association has done this year, and look forward to continuing our leadership in the community in 2017.

Best wishes to all for a Happy Holiday Season!

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom Hockaday". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a long, sweeping tail on the last name.

Tom Hockaday

WE ALMOST WON THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR AT NEWPORT

by Dave Moore

Rhode Island has suffered from its share of hurricanes, but the one on August 13, 1778 almost changed the outcome of the war. It started near the Caribbean and moved up the East Coast, causing damage in the Carolinas, and stalled off Cape Cod.

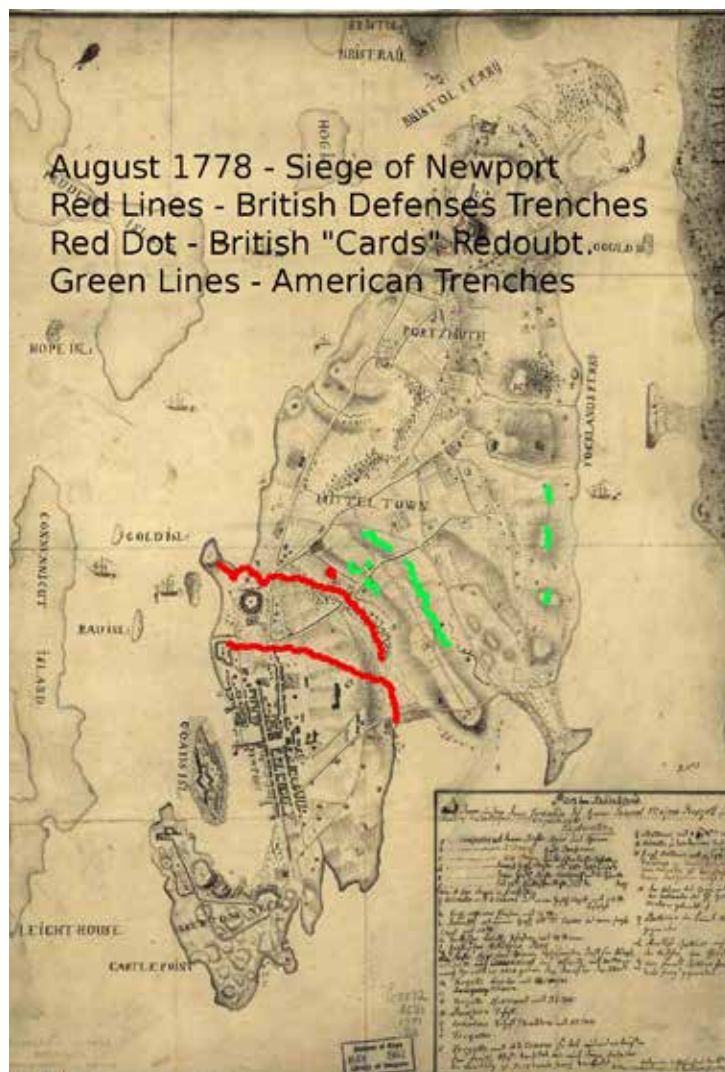
Several months earlier, General George Washington asked his trusted aide, Alexander Hamilton, to meet the French Admiral D'Estaing on his flag ship and discuss the plan of removing the British from Aquidneck Island. The Admiral agreed to support him and provided his 4000 marines.

British forces on Aquidneck Island numbered about 5000 and were under the command of General Pigot. He received a letter from one of Washington's generals foolishly saying: "they were coming to get him." A captured American soldier also told them 20,000 troops were massing for the attack. This information allowed the British almost three months to prepare for their defense.

Pigot immediately began fortifying Newport. He moved his troops from the rest of the island and set up two lines of defense around Newport. The first line was built along the high ground in Middletown on Bliss Hill and from there to Coddington Point. The second, or inner line, was constructed closer to town (from First Beach to Battery Park). Dirt from the trenches made a wall four feet high, six feet thick. An abatis was added 40 yards in front of the lines.

The British, also on a "campaign of burning and plunder," landed at the towns of Warren and Bristol. They confiscated any boats and weapons that could be used in the attack. They also attacked Fall River and burned a saw mill using lumber to build boats and ships. (An aside - My 5th great grandfather, Richard Borden, was the owner of the mill.)

Three days before the hurricane arrived, 18,000 patriotic American troops, under General Sullivan, came across the Sakonnet River from Tiverton to the north end of Aquidneck Island. The abandoned trenches, forts and barracks were thankfully taken over by the



newly arrived Americans.

When the storm finally hit, it flattened trees, corn fields and troop tents. The driving rain lasted for two days, soaking troops, gun powder and supplies. Sullivan now had to wait for things to dry out before starting his attack. His generals also wanted him to proceed with caution, which made him hesitate longer, losing valuable time. It gave the British more time to dig in. In addition, many of Sullivan's troops had signed up for only three week enlistments and time was running out.

The storm also prevented the infantry from attacking from their location on Honeyman's Hill as Bailey's Brook in the valley at the bottom of the hill was

flooded and became a swamp. It made it impassable for them to cross this deep morass and climb Bliss Hill under withering fire of cannons and sharpshooters.

Americans found their 12 pounder guns, having only a 2000-yard range, were just short of the British trenches. They moved six guns closer by digging trenches down the side of the hill at night, out of sight of the enemy. Once in place, the siege began and lasted for three days. Both sides, using their 12 pounders, learned their cannon balls could not penetrate the earthen barriers above the trenches. The Americans soon became very adept at ducking flying and bouncing cannon balls. They could have been successful if they had the French big 36 pounder guns.

General Pigot sent word to Clinton in New York that they might not be able to hold off the Americans and asked for transports to evacuate Newport as they “might have to surrender.” (The British had sunk their transports to block the French from landing.) Instead, Clinton sent the British fleet under the command of Admiral Howe with extra troops to give support.

Lookouts sighted the British fleet off Point Judith and alerted the D’Estaing fleet that had arrived three weeks earlier. Although the French fleet was quite a bit smaller (16 warships against the British 29) they went out to fight them. This was a mistake as it was the same day the storm hit. It devastated both fleets and the battle never took place. The ships were so badly damaged the French had to leave for repairs in Boston and the British left for New York.

During this wasted time many of the American troops deserted and those who had enlisted for three weeks had also left. Morale was very low and from the original 18,000 troops Sullivan now had only 5000. He now decided he would have to wait for D’Estaing’s fleet to return with his troops for he needed their support. He sent Lafayette to Boston to hurry him up. The Admiral at first said he would try, but listening to his ships’ captains, who were now adamantly against a further fight, changed his mind. His ships were outnumbered, had suffered too much damage, and there were too few supporting American troops.

The nicest thing the infuriated Sullivan could say to D’Estaing: “It was derogatory to the honor of France.” Curiously, D’Estaing was to die sixteen years later by guillotine in his own revolution.


Although neither side could claim victory in the battle for Newport, the Revolutionary War could have been won here and saved three years of fighting and hundreds of lives.

When Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, the British Government decided it was not worth continuing the war to save the colony. The same would have been true if the Americans had won at Newport and captured their 6000 British troops, added to the 5900 that had surrendered at Saratoga eleven months earlier.

Ref:

Walsh, Dr. Kenneth - Siege of British Forces in Newport County by Colonial and French in August of 1778 Newport County, Rhode Island | 2015-2016 | GA 2287 -15 - 014

Field, Edward, “Revolutionary Defenses in Rhode Island.”



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ARNOLD PARK, A RETROSPECTIVE

by Nancy Abbinanti

As a member of the Point Association History and Archive Committee, I have become increasingly appreciative of the rich historical area in which we choose to live and work. We cherish our colonial and 18th century houses and never cease to be amazed at how long ago they were built. On walks through the point, we enjoy reading the historical plaques on many houses with dates and names of individuals who lived there. We also enjoy the many green spaces found within our neighborhood and are curious regarding how the area was established and the origin of the park's name.

In this article, I plan to focus on a small park found on the Point at the intersection of Cross and Thames Street. The Preservation Society of Newport County deeded the small triangular parcel of land to the City on December 14th, 1964 with the requirement that the space be maintained only as a park. The park was not actually created and dedicated until seven years later on Thursday, July 22nd, 1971, at 5:30pm. The park dedication honored Harold and Phillipine Arnold for their activities on behalf of the preservation of Newport's historic values. The request to dedicate the park came to the City Council by the Oldport Association. Approximately 150 residents attended the ceremony. The Point Association Beautification Committee had provided landscaping. The Department of Interior designated the park as a registered National Historic Landmark and a plaque recognizing the designation was placed on the same day.

After learning about the park's origin and dedication, I wanted to learn more about the Arnolds. I discovered that their grandson, Brian Arnold, and his family live on the Point on Poplar Street, so what better source of information could there be. My colleague on the History



and Archive Committee, John Ward, and I reached out to Brian who very graciously agreed to meet with us. Brian and his wife Debbie shared stories highlighting the family's long history on the Point and the various contributions to the neighborhood and Newport as a whole. Brian and Debbie's two daughters are 5th generation Arnolds who grew up on the Point. Their home displays various pictures of past family events and recognitions. Highlights included a picture of stained glass win-

dows dedicated to the Arnolds at St. John's Episcopal Church, an article from the *Newport Daily News* dated July 23rd, 1971, describing the park dedication and the Park Proclamation given to the Arnolds signed by then Mayor Fred R. Alofsin.



We learned that Harold and Phillipine Arnold were very active in supporting the neighborhood, Point Association and Newport Preservation Society. Harold Arnold was described as someone who was always willing to help and worked tirelessly for the church, Point

Fairs, Hunter House auctions, quahogging expeditions and boat launchings. He also served the community as a clerk of the Newport Canvassing Authority for 38 years. Phillipine Arnold worked as chairperson of the Preservation Society Activities Committee. On the Point, she served as chairperson of the Point Tour of Period Homes, a fund raising event, and also stimulated interest in restoring historic homes. She also provided leadership to an event called Old Port Days, with open houses and a costume parade with prizes, and was active in the annual Point fair.

We only scratched the surface in discovering what Harold and Phillipine Arnold and their family contributed to our neighborhood. We hope Brian and Debbie Arnold will meet with us again and consider participating in an oral history interview as part of the History and Archive Committee's efforts to capture the stories and recollections of long time residents of the Point. Brian is following his grandparents' community involvement and was honored in 2015 by being chosen as the St. Patrick's Day Parade Grand Marshal.



The Arnold Family appear to have used a drawing of the Park as their holiday greeting one year.

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DECORATIVE LIGHTING: A Collaborative Effort

by Mary Shean

In 1805, David Melville installed the first gas light in Newport at the intersection of Pelham and Thames Streets. On March 24, 1810, he received the first U.S. gas light patent. Over the years the City installed many more gas lights. Currently, the City maintains 187 gas lights.

In October, 2014, Newport activists and representatives from the Preservation Society, Historical Society and neighborhood associations met with City personnel to address the City's lighting maintenance and procedures. The meeting came about from a stir caused by a gas light being replaced with a gooseneck light. The gas light had been situated in front of a historic building. In order to preserve the historic nature of the City, this group worked to produce the "Policy for the Maintenance & Preservation of Decorative Lighting."

Kaity Ryan, Manager of Preservation Policy, at the Preservation Society spearheaded the effort. Frank Marinaccio, Assistant City Engineer, provided the group much guidance as to the City's existing infrastructure and maintenance requirements.

Madeline Berry and Kaity Ryan.



Kaity worked with the City in hiring an intern, Madeline Berry, to work on the project. Madeline started the project by inventorying all the street lights in the City, which numbered 1,142. She entered this information in the City's GIS (geographic information system). With the group's input, Madeline developed a detailed report, which was the basis for the policy.

The city web site contains a summary of Madeline's report, which includes: an explanation of what is decorative street lighting and why it is important; Newport's place in street lighting and development; street terminology; Newport types and styles of street lights; street light terminology; and maintenance issues and relevance.

In August, 2016, at Rosecliff, she presented her findings to the public. The culmination of the group's efforts took place on October 12, 2016, when the City Council unanimously approved the policy. You can review the policy and report at <http://www.cityofnewport.com/home/showdocument?id=15095>.





These pictures illustrate the Point's gaslights Then and Now




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STORES ON THE POINT SERIES: BRIDGE STREET

by Lisa Stuart

I love walking around our beautiful neighborhood with its Colonial and Victorian homes and beautiful gardens. As I walk past homes that have storefronts, I wonder what types of shops were once there. I imagine mothers with baby carriages purchasing flour and milk and chatting with the shopkeeper. I can almost hear the happy sound of children laughing and running to the candy shops after school for penny candy and lollipops. This series will look at stores on the Point during the 1900s. Grocery and variety stores were the heart of our neighborhood—especially since many families did not have cars. Variety stores sold milk, eggs, penny candy, soda and sundries. Families depended on them for their daily essentials. I hope readers will write in and share memories and information to help us put together a complete picture of the changing scene. Often buildings held many different businesses over the years. Some buildings burned down, were moved, torn down or restored back to single family homes.

In a two part article about stores written for the *Green Light* in 1995, Joe Vars shared that there were at least 28 stores on the Point during the early years of this century. He received many letters from Pointers sharing their memories. “The affection and enthusiasm with which everyone speaks reveals the close familiar atmosphere that was here in the Point even in that era.” Irving Katzman, whose father Barney Katzman owned a grocery store at 28 Third Street, shared, “There was a genuine neighborly feeling between the store owner and customer. Everyone knew every one—especially the children, who were often the errand-runners. When the Depression struck the shop owners were most understanding and generous in extending credit and help to their old customers; in many cases this was a lifesaver to people with families.”

“Back in the 40s and 50s, there were at least five convenience stores on the Point. They were very important to the residents...since few people owned cars to take them to the grocery store on Thames Street or the one supermarket on Broadway.” wrote Isabel Eccles in a *Green Light*. According to the Newport Directories, by the 1960s many store fronts in the Point section were vacant. By the mid-seventies some of these buildings had been converted back to single family homes

Bridge Street has a long history of commerce and will be the first street explored in this series. Of all the stores on the Point the one that evoked the happiest memories was Westall’s Ice Cream Parlor which was located at 64 Bridge Street. It was founded in 1876 by Simeon (Joe) Westall. Joe was born in England and spent his early years as a sailor. He came to Newport as the captain of a schooner and liked it so much he opened his ice cream shop on Elm Street where it operated for a few years before moving to Bridge Street. War time restrictions on ice cream resulted in the Westall’s closing and Joe selling the building to American Ice Company in 1943. People came from all over Newport for ice cream at Westall’s. In an oral history conducted in 1965, Carrie Ericsson described the shelves as “full of big glass jars filled with various candies such as pink hearts, cinnamon bark, licorice and rock candy. There was also a case of penny candy, as well as another case of an assortment of cigars.”

Eleanor Gillen wrote to the *Green Light* in 1997 with wonderful memories of an evening stroll down Washington Street to watch the New York boat leave for New York City, and then ice cream at Westall’s Ice Cream Parlor. In a letter to the *Green Light* in 1961 W. J. Layman mentioned that Westall’s had “once-in-a-lifetime vanilla flavor that I have never tasted since.”

Gladys Bolhouse shared a charming story about Westall’s in an oral history conducted by the Newport Historical Society. Her girlfriend had just gotten brand new shoes. They were walking home and it started to rain. They ran into Westall’s to enjoy ice cream and wait out the rain. But the rain came down harder and the wind started blowing wildly. It was the hurricane of 1938! “In those days we had no warning when hurricanes were coming.” They finally made a run for home. “My friend’s shoes were ruined,” Gladys sadly reported.

The building then housed the Lobster Claw which was owned by Theodosius Mangaritis. He sold the business in 1965. Tony’s Pub was there in the seventies. In the early eighties, we welcomed the Rhumbline to the location. The Rhumbline was a neighborhood favorite until it was recently sold and closed—we hope temporarily.

Even after many years and many different restaurants in the location, Pointers still thought of the building as Westall's. Whenever they dined at the Rhumbline, Retired Rear Admiral, US, John Wadleigh and his family would find themselves happily reminiscing about Westall's where "one could get sundaes and sodas and eat off marvel-topped tables."

Across from Westall's was Mrs. Foss' place. She sold yeast. Gladys Bachelor recalled that Mrs. Foss had a parrot that said, "Cent's worth the yeast! Cent's worth the yeast!" That was not the only parrot on the Point who served as an assistant shopkeeper. Pete's Canteen on Third by Van Zandt had one also.

I always enjoy walking past the charming home on Bridge and Second (10 Third) with its beautiful window boxes. Spencer's variety store once occupied the space. Later it was the location of Mello's Market which was purchased by Eleanor and George Weaver. They kept the place as two apartments. The Weavers sold it and the new owners restored it to a lovely single family home. In the 1930s, William Carr's Grocery Store was on the corner of Bridge and Third next to Caswell's Jewelry and Watch Shop.

There was a series of variety stores on the corner of Bridge and Second (72 Bridge). Back in the 1920s, it was Dora Gillson's Grocery and in the 1930s it was Vasilous' Grocery Store. Pointers who grew up on the Point in the 1950s recall it being Addison's and later Nasser's. They recalled Mrs. Addison being very patient as they carefully selected their penny candy. Later it became Steve's Variety in the 60s and 70s. In the early 70s, the building was in complete disrepair and boarded up.

A *Grist Mill* Column from 1964 contains a letter from a reader recalling Stoddard's Grocery Store on the corner of Second and Bridge. And a photo from the Newport Historical Society shows Nasser's Grocery Store on the NE Corner of Bridge and Third Street (53 Bridge Street).

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Dane who owned The John Townsend House located at 70 Bridge Street purchased 72 Bridge Street fearing that it was a fire hazard to their home. 70 Bridge was too expensive to restore

or renovate so it was taken down. The Danes then moved the Topham House from 10 Marsh Street to the lot and attached it to the John Townsend House. Henrietta Dane, who had a degree in architecture from M.I.T., beautifully restored both buildings.



At the end of Washington Street and Bridge where Storer Park is now (92 Bridge) was the location of Henry S. Clair's Market from 1910 to 1930s. The store was then owned by Morris Slom. Since it was located by the Ferry Landing that took workers to the Torpedo Factory on Goat Island, Slom's sold sandwiches to the workers. The workers parked in a lot that was located where the Pitt's Head Tavern is now located. The Arrow Sign Company took over 92 Washington Street in the 1950s.

In the early 1900s Gladding's and Son's was located on the NE corner of Washington and Bridge. The property was purchased by NRF and restored.

Many Pointers remember putting a sign in their window so the iceman knew to deliver ice for their ice box. Ice was delivered once or twice each week. Kids would happily steal ice chips off the truck after the iceman cut the ice to fit the box. American Ice & Coal, which was built in 1914 at the old Thorndike estate, was located on Bridge Street between Second and Third Street (65 and 67 Bridge Street). It had stalls for 16 horses and two large storage units for ice. Wheeler's was around the corner at Third and Marsh. American Ice advertisements note that they are the first to offer artificial ice in addition to natural ice.

A fire gutted the building on April 6, 1951. Dinny's Package Store opened in the space and then Bridge Street Package Store which had a drive-in station. They shared the space with Duro-Crete Company which sold electric tools and building supplies. Duro-Crete closed this location in 1955. In June 1959, E-Con-O-Wash opened adjacent to the package store. They offered washes for 20 cents and dry for 10 cents.

According to information left to the current owner of 67 Bridge Street, Nat Norris purchased the property in the 1960s. He moved "Old Nat's House" from Warner Street to 13 Second Street and moved the last standing colonial house on Old Thames Street to 67 Bridge where he restored it to the stunning home it is today.

Lower Bridge Street near Thames had many types of businesses. An appliance store and a tailor shop were located where Arnold Park is now. City Garage City Taxi was at 9-11 Bridge Street. Razza's which was later Toppa's Delicatessen was located at 12 Bridge Street.

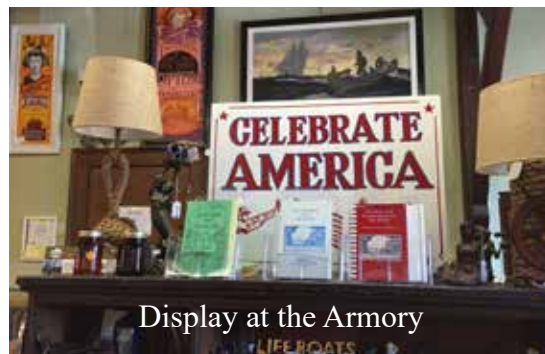
There were also stores that sold only wholesale, including Armour Beef Company.

Providence digital library has a photo of "Polly Lawton's Candy Shop Facing Bridge Street." No street address is given. After some investigative work by fellow History and Archives member John Ward and some digging at Newport Historical Society with help from Bert Lippincott, we found that the building was located at 47 Bridge Street. Newspaper advertisements and Newport Directories indicate that the store was "Miss Lawton's Antique Shop." Miss Lawton died in 1928. The building was then occupied by George Sakris and also used for storage. The building was torn down in 1937.

In the next issue we will take a look at the history of stores on Second and Third Streets. And in the Summer Issue the third and final installment will cover stores on Van Zandt, Washington, Chase and Poplar.

Many thanks to Bert Lippincott, Librarian and Genealogist, Newport Historical Society for his advice, knowledge and insights.

For more photos and links to articles about stores, please visit the Point Association's Website www.the-pointassociation.org and go to the "History and Archives" Tab.



Display at the Armory

Our Cookbook "Holidays and Celebrations on The Point" and our vintage books "Favorite Recipes from Here and There on the Point" and "Now and Then on the Point" are on sale at the Armory for \$10.95 each and make excellent Christmas and hostess gifts.

The new cookbook is also on sale at The Mansion Store on Bannister Wharf and at The Brick Market Shop.

OUR NEIGHBORS TO THE NORTH –THEN AND NOW

by Shelby Coates

The September 16, 2016 issue of the *Newport Daily News* carried a feature article about Portsmouth resident Robert Hurley's lengthy Navy career. When in the Navy's final "boot camp" at Newport in 1951, he says, he spent the last two weeks "clearing out the barracks buildings and preparing them for their new occupants—members of the Navy's Officer Candidate School." The very next year I moved into one of those barracks as a recent college graduate aspiring "OC."

Looking over some old memorabilia, I see that I traveled from my home, Bayville, New York, by train to Providence and then via Short Line Bus to Newport, arriving at the OCS Administration Building out on Coddington Point on October 27, 1952. Loaded down with new uniforms, bedding and some twenty instructional books for our evenings of "homework", we launched into a very demanding curriculum and experience. A *Saturday Evening Post* article of that era observed that the program crammed into sixteen academic weeks the same material NROTC men absorbed in four years at colleges.

The principal subjects taught were denominated as Navigation, Orientation, Operations, Engineering, Weapons, and Seamanship. Subspecialties, that gave me trouble, were celestial navigation, theoretical fire control (shooting, not extinguishing fires), and theoretical damage control, as each was based on trigonometry, a course I had never taken at school or college. Thankfully, a Harvard graduate barracks "bunkmate", Billy Joiner, tutored me on "trig" and I scraped by these subjects. At graduation time, Billy left me a note saying, "Good luck to a Yalie—I hope you can navigate passably now, at least well enough to get to the nearest bar."

We had practical, hands-on training too. In addition to first-aid, close-order drill, pistol shooting at a range, and incessant marching everywhere, they had the infamous USS BUTTERCUP. This was a full-size replica of a ship's compartment which was afloat in a gigantic tank. With a small group of us in the darkened compartment, they would set fires and flood it, leaving it to us to extinguish the fires, plug the leaks, and pump out the filthy water before the compartment listed to a certain degree which was specified as a "sinking" failing grade. This was an exercise in "practical" damage

control. Our section "saved the ship"—some didn't.

Saturday afternoon and Sunday "liberty" were cherished. All I can remember now is an after-football-game party in New Haven, drinks in the Viking's Skoal Bar, and my one and only amble along the full length of the Cliff Walk. I do think there was some socializing at The Mooring also.

Some quit and others were disenrolled owing to too many demerits and/or academic failure. I was grateful to be present at graduation time when Captain Ralph C. Johnson, USN, said to us: You have just completed one of the most rigorous and intensified courses and study existing anywhere in the United States Service Schools." Then, for me, it was on to three years as a deck officer aboard USS PRESTON, a Fletcher class destroyer. Sagely, the Navy assigned me as Communications Officer, not the Ship's Navigator.

The rows of barracks buildings are now gone and it has become a shorter twelve week course. Nimitz Hall is the new dormitory and center for classroom activities. Instead of our "White Hat" sailor uniforms, the cadets you see around town today are more stylishly fitted out in "service polywool khaki" or "service dress blues". The gals? (There weren't any in my Class No. 9.) The website FAQ says they are not required to cut their hair on arrival but they must abide by certain specified "hairstyle and grooming" requirements.

One thing not changed is (according to the website) this: "OCS is extremely demanding; morally, mentally, and physically...The school's curriculum will demand the most of your academic prowess."

I have enjoyed chatting with some of these candidates when encountering them locally during their brief stints of well-earned "liberty".

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CHRISTMAS ON THE POINT REVIVED

by Lisa Stuart

A treasured tradition will be returning to the Point this year. Thanks to a collaboration of the Point Association's Beautification and Event Committees, The City of Newport, The Hyatt Regency Newport, Caleb & Broad, and St. John's Episcopal Church, we will welcome in the Holiday Season with caroling around a lighted Christmas tree in Storer Park complete with cookies and hot chocolate!

The first Christmas hosted by the Point Association took place in 1956, a year after the Association was formed. Carolers sang around a lighted tree in Battery Park. Mr. W. Harry Groff supplied the electricity for the lights and continued to do so for as long as there was a tree in Battery Park. In 1957, carolers under the joint direction of King Covell and Robert Covell gathered around a Christmas tree in Battery Park on Christmas Eve.

In 1958, the City loaned the Point Association a live blue spruce which was placed in Battery Park for the holidays. The tree was lit with red and white bulbs. The "Washington Street Carolers" were led by Elton Man-



uel since King Covell was unable to attend. "Christmas on the Point," our very own Christmas Carol, was introduced this year. Without her knowledge, a poem written by the artist Edith Ballinger Price was set to music by King Covell. Edith was happily surprised when the carolers strolled to her house singing it.

In 1960, the Christmas tree tradition continued with the City installing a temporary tree purchased by the Point Association. St. John's joined the tradition by hosting the caroling. In 1963 two stars replaced our Christmas tree to honor the 30 day mourning period for President Kennedy. In 1969 King Covell was ill with the flu and all were concerned whether there would be any caroling. The junior member of the Point Association came to the rescue and sang the carols.

Sadly, in 1963, vandals cut the wiring of the Christmas tree and smashed the light bulbs. This, however, did not stop 25 carolers from gathering and singing. In 1968 the Point Association decided to plant a Christmas tree on the property of St. John's where people were shielded from the cold.

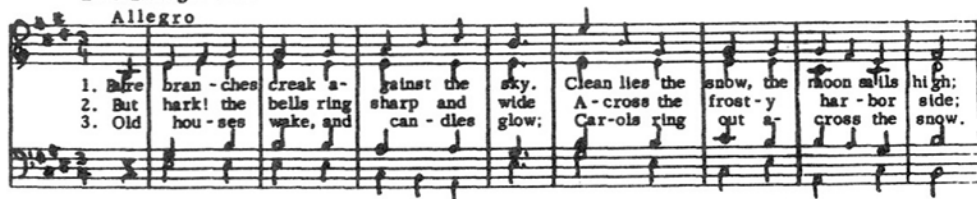
A "human" Christmas tree was formed in 1972. Each person held a flashlight and turned it on as they sang. Although caroling continued to take place at St. John's and at various Point-

CHRISTMAS ON THE POINT

1958

Edith Ballinger Price
Allegro

W.K.C.



ers homes, the tradition of circling around a lighted Christmas tree was abandoned and replaced with a Christmas Pageant. During the 1980s, the holiday celebrations included the Holly Tea, a holiday door decoration contest and a Candlelight House Tour. But by 2005 the Point Association president announced that there would be no holiday activities at all.

This year, our Beautification Committee Chair, Richard Abbinati, suggested we install a Christmas tree in Storer Park and bring back our beloved neighborhood tradition. The Point Association Board unanimously agreed. The City of Newport is providing a pole for the tree and labor for installation. The Hyatt Regency Newport is donating the Christmas tree. The Point Association is paying for the electrical box in Storer Park to light the tree. .



*Rik Blyth, General Manager of the Hyatt Regency;
Brien Fox, Director of Sales and Marketing, Hyatt
Regency; Richard Abbinati, Beautification Committee*

The Event Committee Co-Chairs Joan Rauch and Kitty Beard volunteered to organize a Tree Lighting and Christmas Caroling Event. St. John's Choir and Children's Choir will be leading the caroling. The Hyatt Hotel will be providing cookies for the event. Caleb & Broad will be providing the hot chocolate.

We thank Scott Wheeler, Buildings & Grounds Supervisor / Tree Warden. City of Newport, Rik Blyth, General Manager, The Hyatt Regency Newport, Rich Willis, Owner-General Manager, Caleb & Broad, and Father Humphries and Peter Berton, St. John's Episcopal Church, for arranging these generous donations and helping us bring back this treasured tradition. We hope everyone will join us on December 8th at 6:30 pm for the festivities.

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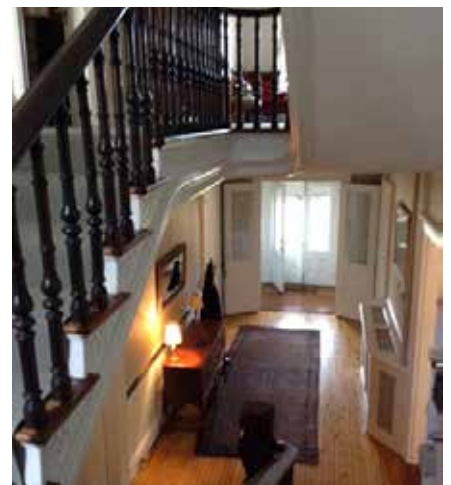
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NINA LYNETTE

by Jane Hence

Nina Lynette, at 87 Washington Street, is an unintended secret to most of Newport. It is a lovely house, built in the mid 1800s, with high ceilings, beautiful detailing, a grand staircase and a view of one of the Point houses and beyond to Narragansett Bay and the Pell Bridge. This lovely place carries with it a sad story that resulted in a happy and successful outcome. Mr. and Mrs. Lorillard Spencer, who lived in Newport at the end of the 19th century, were traveling to Europe by ship, accompanied by their two young daughters, Nina and Lynette, both of whom died tragically while crossing the ocean. Their parents returned home and, with a small



group of friends, bought the house on Washington Street which had previously been a school for boys, though originally built as a generously sized house. After the Spencers' purchase, the building was dedicated to the memory of Nina and Lynette in 1905 and described as a "non-profit home for elderly ladies and gentlemen". It has been serving this purpose ever since. Descendants of the Lorillard Spencers still live in town.

I recently spent parts of several days there with the goal of discovering what life is like for those fortunate few who live there. There are seven or eight rooms, flooded with sun, each with its own bath. The windows are

generous, the floors glow with health and the dining room, filled with vintage furniture, is the setting for three meals a day. There exists a comfortable social life around the long oval table. As I was interested in details on this subject, I asked many questions. Breakfast of one's choice each morning, though it may be changed whenever one's mood changes. Lunch is different everyday, of course, and is delicious and always planned with healthy choices. Dinner offers the same. One's only responsibility for this or any other meal is to let the excellent cooks in the kitchen know in advance if you will not be there. It is possible to ask for special favourites from time to time, but all look forward to whatever arrives.

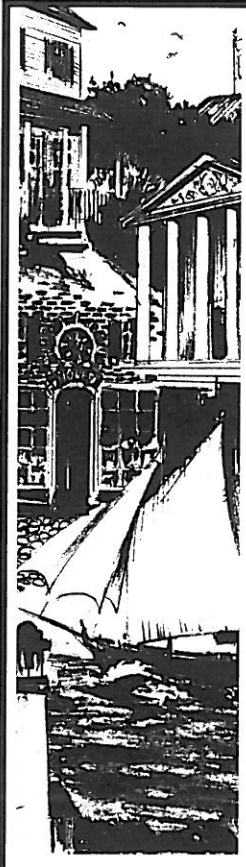
There is a calm and welcoming ambience; clearly everyone there is leading a good life. The upstairs hall, spacious and with a comfortable sofa and chairs, is often used for reading, as is the generous porch.

Two comments, unasked for, serve as a window into

life at Nine Lynette.

One came from a lovely lady who lives there: "It's WARM!!" The other came from a member of the staff, as I was leaving: "This is a wonderful place to work." I asked for some of the reasons she felt this way and she replied that it was a pleasure to be in such beautiful surroundings, to be there with people she is happy to know, and to be part of a welcoming, interesting group. I do not know of a more positive point of view, which everyone seems to share, along with the gardens, the trees, the views and all that Newport offers.

The monthly rent includes room, all laundry, weekly cleaning (bathroom daily), all meals. In short, there are none of the usual routine expenses. Anyone interested in coming to live here can simply come and look, fill out an application, and meet onsite for an interview. See the ad below which provides a telephone number.




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POINT ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

by Isabel Griffith

What makes an evening meeting successful? 1) Have a social hour first with lots of yummy food and drinks laid out beautifully – thank you Joan Rauch and Kitty Beard. 2) Make sure the literary event is interesting: Author Gloria Merchant talked about her book, *Pirates of Colonial Newport*. Some pre-Revolutionary swash-bucklers lived in houses right here on the Point – thank you John Brougham. 3) Be sure the Business Meeting is informative – thank you Tom Hockaday. 4) In an election year, invite ALL the candidates for City Council, School Committee, Senate District 13 and House District 75. Most of them showed up! About 75 people enjoyed lively conversations sparked by new faces we usually don't see at a Point Annual meeting.

Point President Tom Hockaday gave a summary of our Association's successes this year, emphasizing a productive working relationship with City administration, followed by the unanimous approval of new officers:

Corresponding Secretary, Pam Kelley; Second Vice President, Mark Tagliabue. It was also announced that a proposed amendment to our By-Laws will be voted on at our next Membership Meeting in the spring.

Rich Abbinanti brought us up-to-date about the Beautification Committee work and plans. The paving cobble border along the planting beds on the north side of Storer Park is in place and looks splendid. "Where will we get the hostas to fill this bed? From you!" This created a little buzz, what a great idea! We are looking forward to a spring planting event where a hosta alley five hundred feet long will be installed. And Rich announced that this year the Point Neighborhood will have a Christmas tree in Storer Park, with a lighting ceremony on December 8th and Christmas Carol singing led by the St. John's Church Choir – followed by warm (and festive) refreshments. This should be a great holiday celebration for the neighborhood.

A second glass of wine after the meeting sent everyone home with a good feeling about living in a unique and quite wonderful neighborhood. Thank you all!

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DO YOU KNOW?

Again the Archives Team needs your help. Can you identify these people and the occasion? If so, please contact: historyandarchives@thepointassociation.org



A DYK ANSWER

I finally had a chance today to peruse my latest Green Light, and was amused to see the "unidentified item" on p. 5. You may already have an i.d. by now but if not, it's by Mabel Watson who lived for many years (until her death) at 75 Washington St. Mabel loved to paint primitive portraits, and this is one of them, which she apparently used as her 1983 Christmas card. She was a great friend of my mother's.

If you need to know anything more about her, I can probably fill you in.

Best regards,
Jane (MacLeod) Walsh

THE POINT ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM

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If you prefer, apply and pay online at: www.thepointassociation.org

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POINT COMMITTEES & ACTIVITIES

Many hands make light work. Please check your volunteer interests.

___ Beautification ___ Waterfront ___ *The Green Light* ___ Plant Sale ___ Communications
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Thank You !

SAVE THE DATE

POINT NEIGHBORHOOD CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING

Thursday, December 8, 6:30 p.m., Storer Park

Lighting of the tree and Caroling with St. John's Church Choirs

Festive refreshments will be served

