

BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

SUMMER 2017



The GREEN LIGHT LXI No. 2 SUMMER 2017

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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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The Point Association

The Point Association is a group of neighbors working together to improve the quality of life in our neighborhood by getting to know each other; preserving our historic heritage; maintaining the Point's residential character; beautifying our parks, streets, and piers; and promoting public policies that

strengthen all of Newport's neighborhoods.

Cover photo by Tom Kennedy

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



The *Green Light* is the product of many "hands": writers, photographers like Jane Hence, Tom Kennedy, Beth Cullen, and Lisa Stuart who time after time add visual interest to the text, the distributors and business people who work more often than not without recognition. This time, however, we have chosen to highlight and thank the creator of the clip art whose work helps resolve spatial challenges while at the same time adding a whimsical note to the journal's visual appeal, Dorothy Sanchagrin. You will find a collage of her work on page 15 and samples throughout.

Otherwise, this issue gives a fair amount of attention to our neighborhood's history as usual, but focuses also on projects destined to enhance the community's living experience in the near future: the renovations taking place on Goat Island and, on a larger scale, the work being done throughout the city to beautify and preserve our exceptional shoreline. Thanks especially to the stewards of our coasts.

May your summer be a good one in every way.



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

Greetings! It looks like our long winter has come to a close and spring has arrived. Daffodils have come and gone, and perennials are beginning to pop up all across the Point.

Our community has had an exciting welcome to spring and the summer season in Newport. The annual week-long Daffodillion Festival, one of the beginning events of the season, was another success in celebrating spring and the beauty of Newport. Nearly 700,000 Daffodil bulbs have been planted in Newport and enjoyed every year by all. What a great example of neighbors joining together in working to make our city more beautiful!

Speaking of flowers and plants...the Point Neighborhood is proud to be a leader in ongoing beautification efforts for our city. Not only is the annual Plant Sale a popular event in our neighborhood, but our Point Association's beautification efforts help keep our neighborhood filled with plants and flowers. If you have some time, please volunteer to help with our planters and other beautification efforts in our parks. And don't forget Newport's annual Secret Garden Tour featuring many of the lovely gardens on the Point. The Garden Tour is a great way to spend the day – and help a good cause!

We always like to remind our neighbors of the various events around the city. This year again features many exciting activities. Newport Restoration Foundation and the Newport Historical Society have great walking tours throughout the summer ... Newport's Independence Day celebration in Washington Square is a great July 4th event for families... and the wonderful three music festivals featuring great Jazz, Folk, and Classical Music are a treat for those who want to see world-class performers -- just to name a few!

We look forward to seeing you this summer at one of the many activates around our neighborhood and our city!

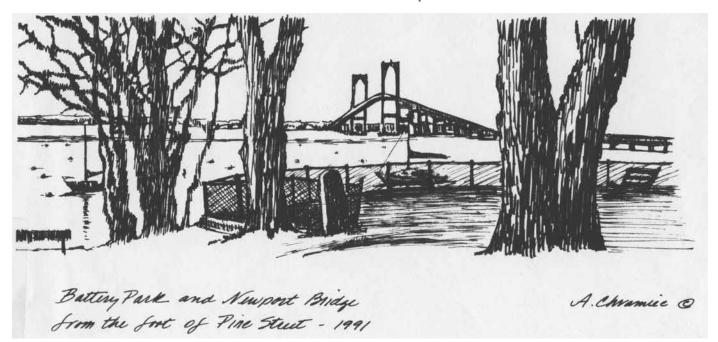
Warm regards,

Tom Hochaday

THE ARTISTS OF BATTERY STREET

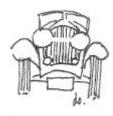
by Lisa Stuart

When my husband and I purchased our home on the Point, people would often ask me if we were the people who lived in "Annette Chramiec's house." Everyone who asked had a smile on their face as they remembered Annette. Being an amateur history buff, I set out to find out about this beloved member of our neighborhood. During the process I discovered the Battery Street artists. at RISD. The students were inspired and spent much time in the school's art room, but longed for more. When they heard they could rent a studio on Battery Street for \$5 month, they decided that if they could find enough students to chip in, it would be theirs. There was a great response among the students and the studio became a reality. The space was located on the second floor of the carriage house. The bottom floor was being used as a parking garage for cars. Frankie Church, a recent RISD graduate, became the Studio Club's director. They hired a model, Harold Flynn, who was a wrestler and the Studio Club was officially formed.



First, a brief history of Battery Cottage, 107 Washington Street. The house and carriage house were built around 1878 by William H. Mayer, one of Agatha Mayer's sons, after she died. The house was built on the land containing the orchards and gardens of Agatha's beloved home Blue Rocks/Stella Maris. Around 1931 the servants' quarters was separated from the main house, moved east and became 16 Battery Street. The carriage house, located east of 16 Battery Street, became a garage with a studio on the second floor. Later it was converted into a house.

In 1938 the carriage house was home to The Studio Club. Mary Harvey, a teacher at Rogers High School, introduced her students to dry-point etching and block printing. She encouraged them to pursue an education The Studio Club students spent their evenings drawing, swimming off Van Zandt Pier and then off to Capitol Restaurant on Washington Square for something to eat. The Studio Club lasted through spring and summer. In the fall of 1938 several of the members received full scholarships to RISD. The Studio Club crowd hung together throughout the years. Their story has a story book ending—Frankie and Harold married. (*Newport this Week*, January 2, 1981)



Edith Ballinger Price (1897 to 1997) purchased 16 Battery Street in 1955 and lived there until 1966. Edith was a well-noted author and illustrator of children's books. She founded the Brownie Scouts. You may have seen one of postcards that she called "Histori-cards"—illustrations of the history of Newport. Many included scenes from our neighborhood. Edith was also very active in the Point Association and was an early editor of the *Green Light*.







For 29 years Dorothy Holt Manuel lived in the house on the corner of Battery and Second Street. From her earliest years, Dorothy was interested in drawing and painting. She attended RISD where her talents were nurtured. She often painted old houses from unusual angles giving them an interesting quality. Dorothy liked to climb to the top floor or even a roof and draw or paint the picture looking downward.

During World War II Dorothy was a Navy draftsman at the Naval Torpedo Station. A year after the war, she married Edgar Manuel. In 1950 they moved to 12 Battery Street. She was frequently seen around the neighborhood with her easel. Sometimes her students were clustered around her. Her paintings and water colors of Newport scenes were well-received. The US Post Office selected her illustration of the Touro Synagogue for their commemorative stamp in its honor.

Annette Chramiec lived in the house on the corner of Battery and Washington Streets (the main house section of the house built by William B. Mayer). Annette's wonderful drawings of scenes of the Point include many of Battery Park. Pointers recall her warmth and the great fun they all had when her house was used as "Mrs. Cranston's Boarding House" in the movie *Mr. North* in 1987. Annette was also very active in the Point Association.

When I sit on my porch and enjoy the colors of the sunset, I often feel the spirit of the artists of Battery Street—and that of Ade de Bethune who lived across the street. We are so fortunate that these artists captured the beauty of our neighborhood for posterity.

NEW ADDITION TO OUR ARCHIVES

The following letter was recently submitted to our Archives by John Shea.



NEWPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

82 Touro Street, Newport, Rhode Island 02840 Tel (401) 846-0813 Fax (401) 846-1853 www.NewportHistory.org

58 WASHINGTON STREET NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND (Preliminary report)

This waterfront cottage was built between 1850 and 1856 possibly by Harriett Murray, widow of John Thomas Murray. Its original name was Rock Cliff Villa. After 1863 Harriett had left Newport and the house was occupied by employees of the steamship company. Throughout the 1870s the house and adjacent properties were owned by the Bay State, Narragansett and Old Colony Steamship companies as they evolved through mergers.

In 1877 Dr. Horatio Storer of Boston moved to Newport and purchased the property from the steamboat company for his home. He was an eminent physician, scientist and reformer who was in the forefront of women's reproductive rights. In 1881 he purchased Hunter House, across the street, and moved there, later selling the cottage to his daughter Agnes in 1899.

Agnes Storer also was an activist and community leader. She died in 1945 and the property was sold to Donato D'Andrea, building contractor and also a community leader. After his death in 1975 the building was divided into apartments and ultimately converted into condominium units.

Bert Lippincott 8 March 2013

Resource & Education Center • Seventh Day Baptist Meeting House • Museum & Shop at Brick Market Great Friends Meeting House • Wanton-Lyman-Hazard House • Colony House

RENOVATIONS CONTINUE AT GOAT ISLAND HOTEL

by Isabel Griffiths

Have you noticed the new appearance of a small section of the first two floors facing the Point from the old Hyatt Regency on Goat Island? That new color is "Newport Yellow." When Gurney's Newport Resort and Marina has its grand opening on Memorial Day the entire hotel will be that soft shade of yellow with white accents. New foundation landscapinag should further soften the façade we see from Washington Street.

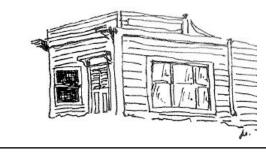
On May 1st your Point Association Board was treated to a personal tour and information session with the new owner of Gurney's, George Filopoulos, who with business partner Lloyd Goldman also owns Gurney's Inn and Residences in Montauk, at the eastern tip of Long Island, NY. Asked about how the two Gurney's differ, Filopoulos mentioned extensive beaches surrounding the Long Island hotel but seemed to think the biggest difference might be the people. "Montauk is more New York suburban. Here in Newport you're in New England."

As for the eighteen million dollars of renovation now underway, the current footprint of the hotel will remain the same although the appearance of the inside and outside spaces will be different – more wood and less metal. The lobby will be more spacious with a small open coffee bar serving take away food on one side and new glass sliders on the other. And, those huge mirrored columns will be gone! There will be lighted signs atop the hotel but they will be more subtle than the old Hyatt signs.

Gurney's Newport Resort and Marina will keep the same management and operation and most of the same staff. The spa will continue to be an attraction, as will Pineapples with expanded service outside. Filopoulos intends to market the City of Newport with emphasis on Gurney's as a venue for destination weddings, conferences and group meetings. The ballroom has a fabulous view of Narragansett Bay!

A new Scarpetta's Restaurant on the ground floor will face the Point with seating inside and outside. The now completed 22-slip marina is in front of the restaurant. Although the marina is solely for the use of hotel clients, Filopoulos said he intends to have more extensive seating available in the ten acres of grounds surrounding the hotel and lighthouse. Goat Island will continue to be a great walking destination for Newporters chasing the perfect sunrise or sunset.

For more information about the new Gurney's check out this article from the *New York Times*: https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/25/realestate/commercial/gurneys-newport-rhode-island. html?smprod=nytcore-iphone&smid=nytcoreiphone-share&_r=0





The Green Light

A CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF RONALD BARR: ADVENTURER AND POINT NEIGHBOR

by Lisa Stuart

All of us who were privileged to know Ron will miss his wit, his charm and his friendship. Ron contributed so much to our beautiful neighborhood serving on many committees and sharing the position of Recording Secretary of the Point Association with his wife Nancy. Many of us remember his wonderful store "The Armchair Sailor." His spirit of friendship will always be part of our neighborhood.

Selections from the Eulogy given by his lifelong friend Tony Atkins

I have been asked to say a few words about Ron and his life, but how do you encapsulate his skills, his driving ambition, his achievements, his erudition, his charm, his warmth, his love of family and his great ability to make long, lasting friendships?

Basically he was a magician. Not of the conjuring and juggling type, but he had that magic skill which allowed him to respond directly with those he met to form a unique bond based on that person's personality, their needs and their shared experiences. There was no "onesize fits all." Each friendship was tailored to that individual which they could value immensely. And we did.

I first met Ron on a train going to Germany in 1951. We were newly commissioned lieutenants in the British Army doing our National Service, tasked with keeping the Russians out. How we were to do this was not really explained but implied that we waved our swagger sticks threateningly and kept a stiff upper lip.

On returning to England, Ron joined the Taylor-Woodrow construction company and I went to Uniand had considerable drive, but the prospects of promotion were poor and the atmosphere in Britain at the time seemed to stifle his adventurous spirit. So what did he do? He came to America on the Queen Mary and loved it!

versity but we kept in touch and

have done for

the best part of

60 years....Ron

ambitious

was

After initially working in a construction company he set-up a small enterprise in the building products industry with a colleague and never looked back. He married and had two great children, Denice and Stephen.

The sea and the oceans called to him and this became his life. After smaller boats, he went bigger. He bought "Snowshoe" a lovely wooden 47 foot Sparkman & Stephens cruising boat and crossed the Atlantic via the Azores.....Ron spent the next few years a Charter Skipper, first on "Snowshoe" and then on his 65 foot yawl "Cibolar" in the Caribbean and Central America. ...

The next stage was settling here in Newport where he set up his bookstore "The Armchair Sailor" with its happy and dedicated staff. It was a mecca for book lovers and sailors. He made many friends and got thoroughly involved in Harbour life and the preservation of the unique environment of Newport.

After he sold the store he went through a quiet period. But then he met Nancy, a true soulmate. ... They



completed some wonderful cruises on their 42 foot Hatteras Trawler "Lady Brookhaven" and set out to travel extensively around the world. Ask them where and their reply would be "Everywhere."

Life in Newport was good for them both -- being very happy living in the Point and having some wonderful neighbors. He also appreciated the close contact and regular visits by his children, Denice and Stephen, and their families and took great interest in how his grandchildren were developing and coping with the challenges of young life.

And he took immense pride in being able to officiate at the wedding of Josh and Cara. He also kept in regular touch with his sister June and visited her whenever he and Nancy could.

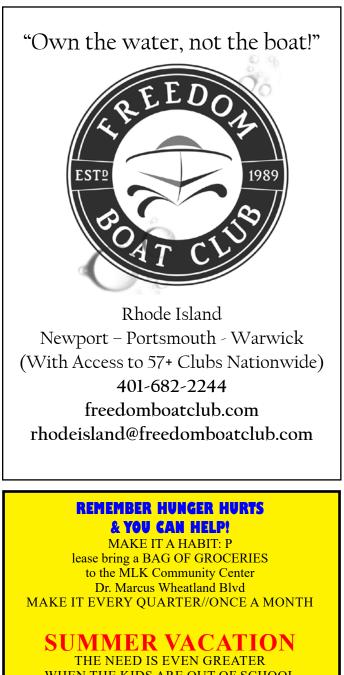
Although naturally we all feel sadness at this time, we should also celebrate his life and the fact that it has touched ours. In doing so it has made us so much richer for the experience. A wonderful person.

Selections from Remembrances from His Son Stephen Barr

I want to reflect for a moment on my relationship with my father and how some of the silliest things he did with me and my sister were some of the best. Yes he was always teaching us how to sail, how to navigate a boat, how to coil a rope on a boat, how to clean a boat, or how to reef a sail in when the wind was blowing hard, and as you can see a lot of younger life revolved around boats and chores, but the time we spent with him sailing on the boat was more than just the routine things we did on the boat. The boat was a means for him to enjoy and adventure with himself and he wanted to share it with me and Denice.

When you are young you really don't realize how many of the little things in life that your dad or mom did will shape you as a person. Reading a book together, skipping stone, and even the chores on the boat. The time spent on my dad's boat wasn't always long enough for me. The things he taught me without me even knowing it I will cherish. The book that he read to us, *The Wind in the Willows,* is a perfect reflection of how my dad had led his life. And he wanted me and Denice to see this as well.

Yes, Dad, I get it and thanks for the life lessons. Love you.



WHEN THE KIDS ARE OUT OF SCHOOL There is no Breakfast or Lunch Program THINK: Cereal, Tuna, Peanut Butter. . .

ADOPT an ELDER: One bag a wk: Cereal, crackers, Tuna, Spam, Pasta & Sauce, Peanut Butter, Jam, Pudding & a treat

SUMMER 2017

THE BUSIEST DAY AT THE NEWPORT NAVAL HOSPITAL (HOSPITAL CLOSED BY THE NAVY IN 1993)

By Dave Moore

I visited the Fort Adams State Park a few days ago and noticed many names on a brass plaque mounted on a granite monument that I had not seen before. My curiosity led me to this story:

Wednesday, May 26, 1954, U.S. Navy Corpsman, Charles Whitman started off his morning routine at the hospital located on Third Street. About 11:00 a.m., an emergency call came in about an explosion on a ship, and the hospital was told to get ready to receive many injured. Two floors were cleared for action. Twenty year old Whitman had no idea what was going to take place.

Helicopters started to arrive about 11:00 a.m. and landed in a vacant lot next to the hospital. The corpsman was working in the orthopedics ward when dozens of cases in different stages of injury were brought in. Some were in serious condition and were moved to the convalescing wards. Others were sent to five or six other wards in the main building, and it wasn't long until the entire hospital was filled.

Whitman had never worked so hard nor seen so many severely injured people in one place at one time. At the end of the day, a total of 82 patients, sixty-four by helicopter and eighteen by boat, were brought to the hospital. Only eight had not suffered burns. The remainder had burns covering anywhere from 2 to 100 percent of their bodies. As tired as he was, his energy level spiked as he worked with the bravest men he had ever met. They had suffered so much, and yet they were trying to cheer him up to keep working. Several arriving patients died on site, and it upset Whitman terribly. He did not want to lose a single one.

Soon more help arrived as helicopters brought in additional physicians and corpsmen. Whitman could now afford a break and, with a friend, asked one of the helicopter pilots if they could get a ride to the stricken ship moored at Quonset. As they approached the ship, they looked down and saw the 872 foot long, slanted deck air craft carrier, the USS Bennington. Ambulances and hearses were waiting on the pier while rescue helicopters landed on the flight deck. News helicopters were flying overhead.

WHAT HAPPENED AND HOW?

May 26, 1954 began as any ordinary day aboard the USS Bennington (CVA-20). She was underway near Nantucket on a smooth and glassy sea, seventy miles from Narragansett Bay. Most of the ship's crew was having breakfast in two mess halls – one located in the forward part of the ship and one towards the stern. At the same time (0600 hours), she was in the process of launching some pilots for carrier qualifications in preparation for a six month cruise to the Mediterranean Sea.

Captain William "Red" F. Raborn, Jr. was on the bridge watching the flight deck and catapult crews preparing for the aircraft take offs. A relatively minor malfunction occurred almost immediately on the first launch attempted at the starboard catapult. It was shut down, and all further launches were switched to the port catapult. Shortly after the thirteenth launch, at 0610, white smoke was seen coming from Hangar Bay Number One. Captain Raborn immediately sounded the General and Fire Quarters alarms. Almost immediately, fire was reported in the forward auxiliary machinery room. Before the damage report could be made, three violent explosions erupted. The first, at 0611, made the ship shake to her keel as fire, smoke, and explosive concussions swept through the passageways and vents below decks.

Twenty-two year old William A. Collins was the only sailor from Newport out of 2800 men on board. He worked in the V2 Division which was responsible for the ship's catapults and arresting gear. Breakfast in the after mess hall had just been finished, and he was now sitting on a metal table in a repair room below the flight deck when the first explosion occurred. He felt the ship shake from the blast, but he didn't know what it was. He thought "we hit a wave."

Collins climbed up to the flight deck and out on a catwalk to find out what was happening. There he couldn't believe the surreal scene unfolding below on the hangar deck. He heard there was a fire burning in the forward compartments and watched as crewman carried the dead and wounded from that part of the ship to the hangar deck. He spotted a priest bent over the casualties offering prayers and administering last rites. Further below him, ammunition and shells were being jettisoned. It occurred to him that he might be on a floating time bomb. Collins was fortunate to have had breakfast at the after mess hall, far from where the explosion and fire occurred. His shipmate who slept in the bunk below his had had breakfast in the forward mess hall, where he was killed. He was also thankful he had not been on duty in the catapult room. Just before the first explosion, a cry had been there: "This thing is going to blow, let's get out of here!" Tragically, the blast left no survivors in the catapult room.

Captain Raborn immediately changed course and headed back to Quonset. All the aircraft able to be launched without the assistance of a catapult were flown off to clear the flight deck for helicopters. "We got off about 60 planes; we lost no planes" he said. At 1025 hours the first helicopters from Quonset Point landed on the moving ship to pick up the most seriously injured. The *Bennington* arrived at Quonset at 12:33 p.m., and five tugs came along side to assist in the berthing. The damage in the forward part of the ship was conspicuous. She was down by the bow due to the weight of the seawater that had flooded the forward compartments to extinguish the fires. Sadly, a few sailors were trapped in their work rooms and drowned as the compartments flooded.

The explosions seem to have been caused by a slow leak of catapult hydraulic fluid. This led to a mixture of air and oil under extremely high pressure in the piston, causing it to act as a diesel engine. As a result, the normal 3000 psi pressure in the pistons soared to 5000 psi, blowing off the relief valve and pipe. The hydraulic fumes vaporized, creating a combustible mist of oil and oxygen-rich air that spread through the forward part of the ship. It only required a spark to ignite this mist and explode. The *Bennington* had sustained the worst non-combat, single ship, naval disaster in military history. There were 102 dead and 118 injured. This disaster made the Navy change all the hydraulic catapults to steam driven.

It was Collins who came up with idea for the granite monument at Fort Adams Park inscribed with: "As long as there is one left whom your memory remains, you are not forgotten"

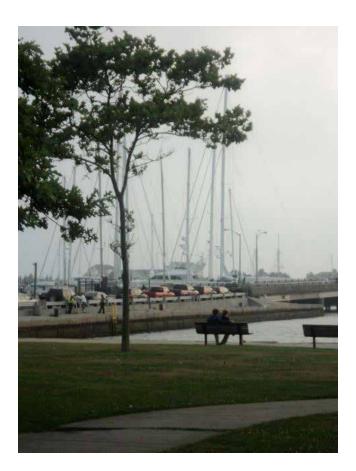
Ref:

Callahan, M. Catherine, *Newport Daily News*, USS Bennington 2004 Memorial.

Crimminger, William Ray, "USS Bennington Crew Stories", *The Lancaster News*.

"Fire Down Below," U.S. Naval Institute, Feb. 2011, vol. 25, number 1

Whitman, Charles E. Added Memories of the explosion in 1954, "USS Bennington Crew Stories".



POINT HUMMERS

by Tom Kennedy

The "Point" part of the "Point Hummers" is usually attributed to the name of lands originally purchased in 1644 by Nicholas Easton, which became known as "Easton's Point." When Easton died, his widow married another original settler, John Bull, and the land became known as "Bull's Point" for a time. Eventually, after much of the land was resold, the name of the area dropped its familial reference and became known as "The Point." (See: *GL*, Feb. '91- 11 and *GL*, Feb. '86 – 13, 14)

We find several competing stories relating to the origins of "Point Hummers." Gladys Bacheller Booth, writing in the *Green Light* of April 1963, p.3, offers the following."For almost a hundred years the folks who have lived in this part of town have been called 'Point Hummers.' Although there is no record of how this name originated, my mother, who is nearly 92 and was born and lived on the Point for most of her life, says it was the name of a boy's club that Willie Hamilton organized in the early 1880's. He lived in a house on Bridge Street that is still standing almost opposite the old fire house." Gladys then proceeds to quote an old ditty that was sung or shouted by the Point boys at the time:

> Up town bullies, Down town brats, Over the Point gentlemen, And Long Wharf rats.

To which the uptown boys replied:

Over the Point bullies, Down town brats, Up town gentlemen, And Long Wharf rats.

To which the Long Wharf boys replied:

Long Wharf gentlemen, Up town brats, Over the Point bullies, And down town rats. The down town boys then took up the chant thusly:

Down town gentlemen, Over the Point brats, Up town bullies, And Long Wharf rats.

Kit Hammett, another contributor to the *Green Light*, tells of two other explanations for the "Hummers" in an article which finds its source in a column by Leonard Pannagio in the *Newport Daily News*. Connie O'Neill's uncle, "Boney" Devlin, and other men from the Point, "used to run on Washington Street and gather on Brigg's Wharf to fish, to relax and to sing or hum songs. They were referred to as the "Point Hummers." In the same article Kit relates that Gloria Goulet says "that many years ago there was a bridge on what is now Bridge Street. Many pointers used to meet on the bridge to socialize and to sing – thus the "Point Hummers." (*GL*, June '93 – 17)

In August of 1993 the Green Light held a contest to find the best definition of "Point Hummer." The winner was Elise G. (Kelly) La Parle, who wrote a lengthy and rather poetic account based on her own experience. She described Hummers as neighborhood men. "You might call them a fraternity - of sorts - all sharing, exchanging ideas of their mutual love and passion for their shore. They were a close group... They hummed in perfect harmony - each one singing his particular part to the tune ... " They were boatmen. "Their skiff tenders were pulled up on the driftways or attached by pulley lines to King Covell's pier. Their oars were kept under King Covell's porch where the next generation of young, very active boys held their own secret Maxi meetings." The "Maxies" were another Newport phenomenon portrayed in Thayer Donovan's book The Maxies, (Xlibris Corporation, 2009). Elise reminisces about her father, Ray Kelly, a Hummer, whose "ashes were spread from Benson's pier over the waters of his beloved shore," a practice which Hummers sometimes opted for. For Elise "Point Hummer is much more than a term describing who is in residence and for how long on the Point....A Point Hummer is one who has fallen in love with HER, The Point". (GL, Oct. '93 -10-11

Eileen Nimmo, in her book *The Point of Newport*, *RI*, (J&E Publishing, Newport. 2001), has a simpler explanation of Point Hummer. "If you have been fortunate enough to have the Point as your birthplace, you will be given a certificate by the Point Association stating that you have been 'Born on the Point.' Being a resident of the Point gives you the privilege of being called a 'Point Hummer.' Many have questioned, 'What is a Point Hummer?' The name goes back to the time when a group of men would gather at the Elm Street driftway in the evenings and spend the twilight hours humming their favorite tunes. They never sang, they just hummed. Thus evolved the name 'Point Hummers' It became a by-word." (p. 5)

Although the exact origin of the term "Point Hummer" remains somewhat vague, it was and is used often to describe residents of the Point, who have a special relationship to the area and a history of community involvement. Through the years it has also been used frequently in obituaries and articles on long term residents. Beginning in the 20s and 30s, the "Point Hummers" was used as a name for softball, baseball and basketball teams in various municipal leagues. I'm sure we find the names of Point Hummers on plaques





401-845-VETS (8387)Dr. Deb Harris, DVM42 Spring Streetwwww.kittycornerclinic.comOpen Monday 8-8, Tu-Fr 8-5

on park benches. How much longer the term "Point Hummer" will survive is anyone's guess, but it has not faded into oblivion yet.



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- Private rooms, meals, and housekeeping services
- A staff of friendly professionals
- Situated on the Point in Newport overlooking Narragansett Bay



Please call for additional information.

Your inquiries regarding rates and availability are always welcome.

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THE WORLD PRODIGY'S STUMBLE: A SEQUEL

by Shelby Coates

In my article in the Spring issue of the *Green Light*, with which this one assumes familiarity, I limited the account to just the results of the grounding, saying that the "lapses" that led to the event were "beyond the scope" of that short article. A curious reader has suggested that I fill on that void.

My home *SAILING DICTIONARY* states the usual causes of a vessel's grounding as including "damage, heavy weather, inaccurate navigation, or misjudgment of seas, tidal ... currents or wind strength." Maritime history and ancient lore are replete with varying examples of these and other causes.

In 1588 much of the Spanish Armada, after rounding Scotland from the English Channel and seeking to retreat toward Spain along the western coast of Ireland, got smashed ashore by North Atlantic gales. That titan of yachting journalism, John Rousmaniere, in researching his 1980 *FASTNET FORCE 10* book, found evidence of some 540 wrecks in just the area of the Isles of Scilly off England's Land's End. It has not always been the shipboard navigator's involvement, however.

The United States was sued by Indian Towing Company owing to the Coast Guard's failure to keep a lighthouse light on Chandeleur Island, near New Orleans, lit with resultant loss of a grounding barge's cargo of phosphate. This litigation, renowned among admiralty law pratictioners, went all the way up to the United States Supreme Court in 1955. The essence of the Court's holding was that the Coast Guard, having induced reliance, should have performed its "good Samaritan" task in a careful manner.

One naturally wonders why the WORLD PRODIGY strayed to the easterly and wrong side of a navigational buoy in conditions of excellent visibility, light winds, and calm seas. Rather prosaic "human factors" seem to have been the cause. There was also an element of unanticipated fortuity.

It was a Friday and the shipowner's agent's office in

Providence was about to close for the weekend. What were needed from the vessel were certain "draft and trim" calculations required for dealing with the Providence oil terminals which were to receive the cargo; and a telex was sent to the ship at 4:20 p.m. urgently requesting that information. The Captain of the WORLD PRODIGY, who had been "conning" the tanker, went to the chart table in the rear of the Navigation Bridge to do the calculations and rush the response. Generally aware of his position from radar ranges (distances) and bearings (directions) taken with his Raytheon radar equipment from the 87 feet tall Brenton Reef Light tower, the paperwork task nevertheless distracted the Captain and he failed to order the helmsman to put on sufficient left rudder at the moment it was crucial to do so. The approaching pilot boat warned the WORLD PRODIGY, via radio, of its precarious location and course - but it was too late. The tanker ran aground at 4:38 p.m., just minutes before the Providence agent sought to close up shop.

The pivotal fault of the Captain was allowing himself to be unduly rushed by the Providence agent and focusing on the paperwork rather than coastal navigation. He should have simply instructed the agent to "wait" and concentrated on getting the pilot aboard, turning the "conn" of the ship over to that local expert, and only then performing the "draft and trim" calculations. The Captain, the shipowner, and presumably involved marine insurers, paid dearly for the consequences of the aberrant seamanship and negligence of a seemingly competent seaman. Keeping an alert lookout and maintaining vigilance were the preeminent needs on approach from the ocean to Narragansett Bay.



SUMMER 2017

The Green Light



CLEAN OCEAN ACCESS ENTERING 2ND DECADE OF SERVICE ON AQUIDNECK ISLAND

By David McLaughlin

Clean Ocean Access (COA) is off to a great start in 2017 with active programs addressing marine debris, water quality, and shoreline protection. What started as a group of surfers in 2006 with a sincere concern about public access to the shoreline and water quality issues at Easton's Beach, is now an island-wide community efforts that is working year-round to advocate for solutions, and performing education and outreach to foster environmentally

responsible behaviors.

COA has three core programs and each has made huge advances for environmental protection, positioning Aquidneck Island as a leader for environmental stewardship. The CLEAN program focuses on eliminating marine debris from the shoreline and changing human behavior to improve ocean health. Since 2006 we have performed 449 coastal cleanups and removed 94,487 pounds of debris from the shoreline. These herculean efforts

are only made possible because of the strong community support and 7,609 volunteers who have contributed 13,667 volunteer hours. In addition to marine debris removal, we successfully advocated for an island-wide ordinance prohibiting smoking on the shoreline, recreation areas and cliff walk. In 2016, we implemented 2 trash skimmers in Newport Harbor. The trash skimmers are highly effective at removing marine debris and aide in improving water quality by collecting oil sheen and other pollutants. In 2017, we are expanding the trash skimmer program with a unit at Fort Adams State Park in partnership with Sail Newport and a unit at New England Boatworks in Portsmouth. Finally, we are leading the efforts with a community-based datadriven movement to eliminate single-use plastic bags, with an action plan to address balloons, straws and single-use water bottles into 2018.

The OCEAN program focuses on improving water quality for permanent year-round clean water from healthy watersheds to marine ecosystems. Since 2006 we have collected over 6,000 water samples monitoring for bacteria and nutrients and established the only weeklyyear-round water monitoring program in New Eng-



land. Our efforts to improve water quality have led to the City Newof port and Town of Middletown to take significant measures to reduce the impacts of stormwater runoff and address illegal dis-

charges. COA recently finished field work for a Narragansett Bay Estuary Program funded project to determine the source of bacteria impacting Easton's Beach, Newport RI. As that project ends in the summer of 2017, efforts will focus on the multi-year Island Waters Project funded by the Environmental Protection Agency working with the island municipalities for large-scale structural improvements to improve water quality on the island.

The ACCESS program focuses on working to protect,

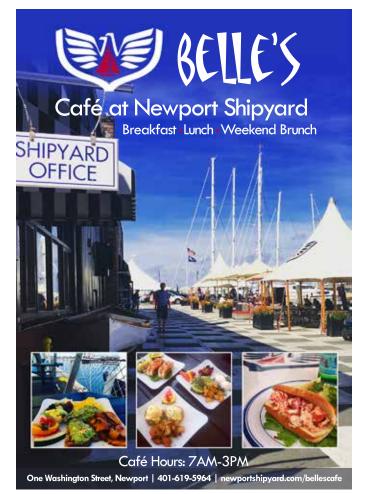
preserve, and expand shoreline access for residents and visitors. As the saying goes "If you can't get to the ocean, how can you enjoy it?" Our efforts monitor all 50 public rights-of-way to the shoreline on Aquidneck Island including shoreline surveillance for access obstructions, erosion, invasive species, and ecosystem connectivity. We led the efforts to protest the overengineered plans for Cliff Walk restoration projects in order to protect the natural beauty and primitive ruggedness of the Cliff Walk, and are currently supporting all efforts by Friends of the Waterfront, and working with the City of Newport to resolve the encroachment issue near Bailey Beach.

While boots on the ground citizen science volunteer work remains the foundation of our environmental efforts, and the source of valuable data to influence change, we recognize that environmental protection requires a long view. Starting in 2017 we are activating the Aquidneck Island Experiential Environmental Education (AIEEE) initiative to leverage the highly successful decade of COA environmental science programs with our more recent environmental education



efforts to create an experiential environmental education opportunity that sustains long-lasting benefits for the entire island, and develops the next generation of ocean stewards. We will expand our efforts to engage the children of Aquidneck Island into hands-on problem-based activities to develop student awareness, sensitivity, understanding of their affective relationship to the natural environment, and how to manage behavior and ecosystems to live sustainably. Children have a natural curiosity and desire to engage in the natural environment, and the AIEEE initiative aims to capture this interest before it fades or has been transformed into apprehension or fear.

Our current efforts and future goals are only possible because of people acting now. As a non-profit, we rely on the community we serve to help us deliver our mission. You can help our efforts by donating today to fuel our efforts to continue into 2017 at www. cleanoceanaccess.org. For the latest news on volunteer opportunities with COA, please visit us at www.cleanoceanaccess.org



ANNUAL SPRING MEMBERSHIP MEETING - April 19 ST. JOHN'S GUILD HALL

by Tom Kennedy

Members and guests started arriving around 6:30 p.m. and enjoyed refreshments and conversation until about 7:00. Then Tom Hockaday, Point Associa-



tion President, called the meeting to order and greeted the more than fifty people who were in attendance. He introduced Fr. Humphrey of Saint John's parish, thanking him for the use of the hall and praising the clergyman's active role in the community. Fr. Humphrey

made some announcements and listed some upcoming events at the church. Susan Taylor, City Council representative, spoke about legislation regarding single-use plastic bags. Tom Hockaday then listed some highlights from the P.A.'s efforts during the recent past, noting especially the New Year Celebration at the Newport Yacht Club and the successful fund drive for the Martin Luther King Center.

The brief Business Meeting which followed featured

a report from treasurer. the Bill Rauch, and updates from Beautification Committee head, Rich Abbinanti. A change in the P.A. bylaws was approved, after a presentation by John Broughan.



Two recently deceased members, Ron Barr and Jack Lafferty, were then briefly eulogized, followed by a moment of silence in their honor.



Trudy Coxe, chief officer executive of the Preserva-Society of tion Newport County, then presented a slide lecture on the history of Hunter House. She stressed the role of

Katherine Warren as the original moving force behind preservation in Newport, and pointed out that the house was nearly lost in 1945 before Mrs. Warren raised funds to buy it and begin its restoration. The subsequent history of the house and its many owners proved to be very lively and colorful. Its expansion by famed Newport architect, Peter Harrison, and its use as a dormitory by a steamship company, a shelter for unmarried pregnant women, and a convent reflect the house's rich and varied history. Ms. Coxe then discussed some of the recent activities of the Preservation Society, including the proposed Welcome Center at the Breakers, the new "Beneath the Breakers" tour, the society's accreditation by the American Association of Museums, the upcoming event with famous couturier, Pierre Cardin, the outreach program to the neighbors of the society's properties, and the free admission policy for residents of Newport. Enthusiastic applause greeted the speaker at the end of her lecture. Ms. Coxe remained in the hall for questions and further discussion. The meeting was adjourned a little after 8 p.m.

A raffle was then held. There were two winners of tickets to a special event on May 5 at Washington Square, celebrating the restoration of the Opera House. Refreshments were again served and many of those present stayed a while longer to mingle with their fellow members.





THE POINT ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please mail this form to: PO Box 491, Newport, RI 02840, with check made payable to: The Point Association

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

____ Individual \$10 ____Family \$15 ____Subscriber \$25* ___Patron \$40*

*Subscriber & Patron levels support The Point Association's continued efforts to beautify and protect our special neighborhood.

Please check membership status: _____Renewal _____New Member

Name:		
Mailing Address:		
Phone:	Primary Email:	

POINT COMMITTEES & ACTIVITIES

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

____ Beautification ____ Waterfront ____ The Green Light ____ Plant Sale ____ Communications

____Membership ____Event Planning ____History & Archives ___Public Services

Thank You !



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