

The
GREEN LIGHT
BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND
FALL 2018



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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.

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

Cover photo by Lisa Stuart.



"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven..."

Last spring, with the departure of Donna Maytum for a new life in California and her impending resignation from the *Green Light's* staff, and with the approaching completion of a 13-year stint as editor of this journal, it occurred to me that that "season", too, must have an end. Times change, communities change, and so do their institutions.

I announced my decision to resign as editor of the *Green Light* to a small group of people, including, of course, Point Association President Tom Hockaday, who would be left with yet another problem to resolve. My apologies to him... but with the reminder that when one "machine" breaks down, the opportunity arises to either repair or replace it and make it useful again.

I want to thank all the many people who have contributed to the success of the *Green Light* over these 13 years (and to the success also of our 50th anniversary book). It has been a pleasure working with so many dedicated, knowledgeable and creative people. The friendships that grew out of that collaborative work will, of course, last.

All good wishes go out to my collaborators on the *Green Light* these many years, to our readers, and to the residents of the Point who have participated graciously and lovingly in "the Point experience" throughout the years.

Alice Clemente

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

As this edition of *The Green Light* is going to press, the Point Association has wrapped up another exciting summer of activities and events for our neighborhood. As we announced at our spring meeting, we planned a summer of activities to highlight and build on our commitment to our neighbors and the Newport community.

We were excited to serve as the overall sponsor of St. John's Church **Music on the Lawn**, a wonderful series of neighborhood concerts that brought together families and friends at four outdoor concerts. We also volunteered at the Newport Gulls game as part of our efforts to raise funds for our newly-created Point Association Charitable Fund; planned block parties to bring neighbors together; hosted the annual neighborhood cocktail party; and held our first "Patriotic Point" celebration that urged residents to decorate their homes with flags, bunting and patriotic decorations for Newport's Independence Day celebrations. We are proud to announce that all of these were a great success and showed our community why the Point is a great place to live and work!

As we enter the fall, we are also actively involved in the important issue of the proposed alternate plans for the Pell Bridge approaches to Newport. In early August, we held a neighborhood meeting featuring representatives of the Rhode Island Department of Transportation to give residents an opportunity to learn more, ask questions, and offer opinions on the various proposals.

Over 100 of our neighbors attended this important meeting to show the city and state that we value our historic neighborhood and urge plans that will not have a negative impact on the neighborhood. We ask that you follow these efforts over the next months and watch for updates in the Points of Interest as to how you can continue to be involved.

Thanks again for all your hard work for our neighborhood and community!

Best regards,

Tom Hockaday

P.S. We hope you can join us for our fall and winter activities. Check the "Save the Dates" in this edition for the Fall Membership Meeting, Christmas Tree Lighting and Caroling at Storer Park, and our Annual New Year's Party.

Best regards,



Tom Hockaday
President

EXTENSIVE NEIGHBORHOOD INTEREST IN PELL BRIDGE PROJECT

by Tom Hockaday

The Point Association hosted a meeting with the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) on August 13 to discuss the proposed plans to reconstruct and reconfigure the Pell Bridge approaches in Newport. This project is very important to the Point and our city, and since the Point is an abutter to the proposed work, the plans can have a huge impact on our neighborhood.

Over 100 residents of the Point attended to learn more, ask questions and give opinions. RIDOT representatives gave a brief overview of each proposal, followed by discussions on each of the plans. In this discussion period, residents asked thoughtful questions, shared their observations, and gave input to RIDOT on the seven proposed plans.

Many residents expressed concern about the potential of increased traffic through our historic neighborhood. In all of the proposed plans, there were questions about new or expanded streets, and how the traffic flow would work via proposed roundabouts and intersections with traffic lights and signs. They also expressed a desire to know more about the proposed Bike and Hike Trail, how the proposed train shuttle on the existing tracks would work with a parking lot on the north end of the rail tracks, and how a remodeled train car would bring visitors into the city. All are important questions for our neighborhood.

This project is critical to the city and the Point neighborhood. It is important to stay informed about the proposed plans. It will be a long process, and will require all neighbors to continue to be involved. The Point Association plans to work with RIDOT, the city, and our state and local elected officials to ensure that the final plan is good for the city – and does not have a negative impact on our neighborhood.

We urge you to stay up-to-date on the progress of the Pell Bridge project. If developments warrant another Point Association meeting, you will hear from us. Here is information on how to stay informed and to share your thoughts and concerns:

- RIDOT has prepared a website on the Pell Bridge Project: <http://www.pellbridge-ea.com/>. This site has information on the project, a copy of the presentation given by RIDOT at the Newport

public meetings, and links to the various options and alternative plans for the bridge approaches and entry to Newport.

- RIDOT has asked for the public's input on the proposed plans. Please submit your comments, concerns and suggestion to RIDOT via their online forms. Online forms are located at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PellBridgeApproachesAlternatives>

- Please send the Point Association a copy of the comments and input you send to RIDOT. That will help us as we work with RIDOT and the city to ensure that your thoughts and concerns are addressed. Send a copy of your input to a special email address we have set up to track comments: PellBridgePointComments@gmail.com

WELCOME TO NEW POINT ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

We are happy to welcome our new members this summer (some are people who have moved away & returned ~ others have moved here for the first time) There are many important changes taking place in Newport that will have a direct impact on the Point. All voices will be needed to keep our community the beautiful place it is. Please give a welcome when you see these neighbors.

Name	Street
Pat Bestoso	Ayrault St
Kate Cook	Elm St
Lisa Kasap	Poplar St
Sheila Lash	Rhode Island Ave.
Jann Medeiros	Thames St
David Nathanson	2nd St
Olivia Nuzzo	Willow St
Patti Savitzky	Poplar St.
Ken Snyder	Willow St.
Dick Svelta	Van Zandt Ave.
William Therrien	Poplar St.

ALN TO SPONSOR CANDIDATE FORUMS FOR FALL ELECTIONS

Ann McMahon (Point Liaison to ALN)

The Alliance for a Livable Newport will sponsor a series of public forums this fall before the elections for candidates for Newport City Council and the Newport School Committee. The forums are an excellent way for citizens to learn more about each candidate and their positions on the various issues facing our community.

The three scheduled forums are:

- School Committee Candidates:
October 16th, Pell Elementary School
- City Council At-large Candidates:
October 18th, City Council Chambers
- City Council Wards 1 and 2 Candidates:
October 23rd, City Council Chambers

In addition to the public forums, ALN will provide candidates' answers to written questionnaires that were sent to all candidates for City Council and the School Committee. Most of the questions came from the Newport community. The candidates' questionnaires are available for viewing online at the ALN website, www.newportalliance.org.

2018 Candidates for City Council and School Committee
Newport City Council At-Large

Jamie Bova
Marco Camacho
Hugo Deascentis

Justin McLaughlin
Jeanne-Marie Napolitano
Wick Rudd
Susan Taylor

Newport City Council Ward 1

James Dring
Angela McCalla

Newport City Council Ward 2

Liam Barry
Lynn Ceglie
Valerie Larkin

Newport City Council Ward 3

Kate Leonard (unopposed)

Newport School Committee

Louisa Boatwright	Rebecca Bolan
David Carlin III	Karlie Cesarini
Sandra Flowers	Raymond Gomes
Robert Leary	Kelly Lohrum
Aida Neary	Kathleen Silvia

A "Patriotic Point" for Independence Day!

This year, the Point Association sent a call out to all residents to help "show the flag" and decorate their home with flags, bunting, and other colorful and patriotic materials as we celebrated Independence Day on the Point and in Newport. Our historic neighborhood wanted to join in with the other patriotic celebrations across the city -- and as you can see from the photos below, it was a great success! An informal holiday count showed 203 of our neighborhood homes resplendent with the red, white and blue. The Point was very festive -- and a great celebration of Independence Day! Thanks to Cynthia Lafferty and Ann McMahon for their vision and work to make this happen. We look forward to continuing this celebration next year. To see more colorful photos of homes decorated for the 4th, visit our website: www.thepointassociation.org.



TAKING A LOOK BACK AT OLDPORT DAYS

By Nancy Abbinanti

Can you imagine a day on the Point where you can listen to chamber music at Villa Marina, take the kids on pony rides, enjoy strolling minstrels, watch folk dance demonstrations, shop for antiques, watch a band led parade and tour historic houses? Wait, this list of activities isn't over yet. You can even participate in a sidewalk painting show and costume parade that provides prizes. The day continues with exhibitions and craft demonstrations such as, candle making, spinning, quilting and knot tying. Don't forget dancing on Washington Street, historical reenactments and replicas of old-time boats.

These were just a few of the activities available to the public on the Point at a fund raising fair for historical home restoration. The "Oldport Days" were held in 1929, 1932, 1936, 1938 and various years during later decades. Each fair had as its goal to bring Newport's earlier days to life. In 1986 Virginia Covell wrote an article celebrating the 50th anniversary of the 1936 "Oldport Days" that lasted for three days. It was one of the most memorable fairs in "Oldport Days" history. She included in her article the information that the name "Oldport days" came from a book of essays titled "Oldport Days" written by Thomas Wentworth Higginson. According to Ms. Covell, he was the first to name the colonial section of Washington Street and nearby areas as "Oldport". In 1957 the attendance at the "Oldport Day" hit one thousand according to the *Newport Daily News*.

Fortunately, the History and Archive Committee, as part of the Point Association, has pictures and fair advertisements in their files. Here are just a few to give perspective on how special the efforts of earlier individuals and groups living on the Point were to support historical home restoration and a sense of community.



The "Oldport Days" 1932 fair even had a dedicated poem written by Elizabeth Covell based on "Twas the Night before Christmas" by Dr. Clement C. Moore.

OLD PORT DAY

'Twas the night before "Oldport" and all through the town
Each white power'd wig and each old fashioned gown
Have been brought from the chests where we'd laid them
with care

In hopes that on Wednesday you all will be there.

For we'll tell you again, as in "books you have read",
That old Newport yet lives, and the past is not dead,
"And mama in her kerchief, and I in my cap,"
Will put good old Water Street back on the map.

For Washington Street, in the old long ago
Was Water Street called, as of course you all know,
And the harbor will bear, as harbors should do,
The S-boats, the T-boats, the Triangles too.

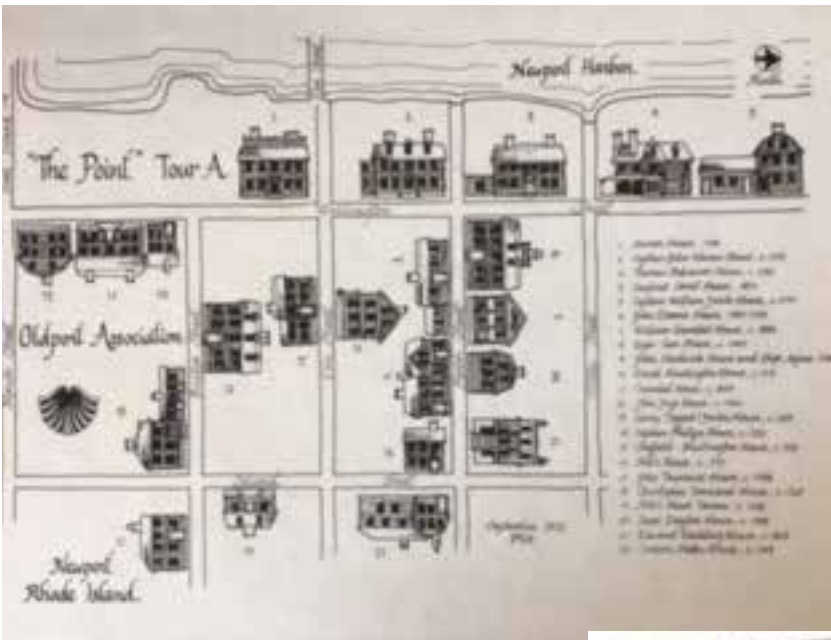
Come "Penguin", come "Olive," come "Vindex" and
"Polly",
Come "Murmur," "Gisela" and "Twinkle," how jolly!
Sail past old Fort Greene, and its gray granite wall.
"And dashaway, dashaway, dashaway all!"

And while they are sailing, off there in the blue,
We'll stroll down the street the old houses to view,
We'll see in the play, just as Washington saw,
Newport boys, Quaker dames, pretty maids as of yore.

And we'll hear of the days, I think 'twas the 80's
When poets, and painters, and history makers,
Brought here to our town their wit and their fun
And found a reward for their good work well done.

For the breezes still blow, and the sky is still blue,
And the grass and the trees give an emerald hue,
To our old island town as it sits by the sea,
And it sends you this greeting, "Come hither all ye

And help us to save from the haste which is ours
The old homes, old gowns, old books and old flowers,"
And we'll hear them exclaim, if we listen a right
That "Newport is Oldport, for one day and night."



ADOPT A PLANTER

There were no “orphan” planters on the Point this summer. All cement planters were “adopted”, that is, planted with light-appropriate plants and kept free of debris. Volunteer caretakers were:

Mark Tagliabue
Ann McMahon
Tom Hockaday
& Bill Martin
Richard &
Nancy Abbinanti
John Ward
Barbara Bessette
Kathy Ward
Beth O'Shea
Joy Scott



Thanks to these volunteers for helping keep our planters and parks beautiful in the summer!

OUR ANNUAL PLANT SALE~~ ANOTHER GREAT SUCCESS!

by Ann McMahon



The annual Point Association Plant Sale once again had a wonderfully successful event! This year's sale raised over \$2,000 for the Point Association and its beautification work through the sale of plants, garden tools and ornaments, baked goods and, for the first time this year, a raffle of beautifully wrapped baskets of goods donated by local merchants.

A bountiful variety of plants from neighbors and friends' gardens were offered again this year. “Best sellers” included perennials from Newport's famed “Blue Garden” and Justin McLaughlin's legendary potted dahlias. In addition, owners of a Bellevue Avenue estate garden donated two huge show-stopping urns that were sold within minutes of their delivery. Local artists, weaver Kathy Ward and goldsmith Candace Sherman, set up a canopy selling

their handmade creations, and generously donated a percentage of sales to the Plant Sale. Shoppers could also purchase large bags of Rhody Gold – farm fresh compost made right here in Rhode Island.

An army of dedicated neighbors once again volunteered throughout the planning and preparation, as well as on the actual day of the sale. The Point Association Beautification Committee, Chairman Rich Abbinanti, and Plant Sale leader, Mike Conroy, all spent many hours collecting plants and artifacts, marking prices and re-potting plants. Committee members and volunteers not only helped acquire the plants (even offering to dig up donated plants!), but also solicited items for the popular raffle and baked the delicious treats that were for the sale. A lot of work – and that doesn't even count the set-up at dawn, and the long day of working the plant sale to make it a success!

The following deserve a great big “Thank You” from the neighborhood and the Point Association:
St John the Evangelist Church - Clergy and staff
Maplewood Farm - Judy Carvalho
Third and Elm Press – Ilse Nesbitt

Gift Basket donors:

Cottage and Garden
Gurney's Resort Hotel & Marina
Hooley Re-Sails
Liberty Donuts
Marriott Hotel – MainSail Restaurant
Newport Restoration Foundation
Newport Shipyard
Point Wine and Spirits
Preservation Society of Newport County
Yankee Candle

Volunteers:

Richard & Nancy Abbinanti	Barbara Bessette
Kitty Beard	Ray Bliss
Michael & Trudy Conroy	Larry & Casey Farley
Robin Gardner	Doris Geary
Beth O'Shea	Susie Powers
Bill and Joan Rauch	Marlene Schinto
Nancy Scott	
Mary Shean	
Candace Sherman	
John Ward	
Kathy Ward	



UPDATE ON CURBSIDE COMPOSTING

by Pamela Kelley

Food Cycle's cargo bike can be seen every Monday morning as they exchange the black buckets of subscriber's kitchen waste for clean ones. This Monday it was Bronwyn Bennet who pulled up to my house for the weekly swap. I must report that it's been a smooth operation and from my point of view, I've easily filled the 5 gal container every week. Last night it was the lobster shells and corn cobs that filled it up. My bucket, with its screw-on lid that effectively deals with any possible smells, fits under my sink and I confess to being pleased to help do my part in recycling.

Food Cycle, a start-up compost collection business headed by Jason Spitalnik, was designed for small, tight-knit communities such as ours with narrow streets and restricted traffic flows. He has partnered with The Compost Plant, a Rhode Island commercial composting company that processes the collected wastes into compost. Jason reported he has signed up 10 subscribers so far and has been surprised at the low number of participants as higher participation would certainly help to spread costs over a larger base. He hopes to continue the 25 week pilot this winter as well as sign up new subscribers, so please contact him if you are interested at aquidneck-foodcycle@gmail.com or 401-714-6111. The monthly charge is \$30/month plus \$20 to purchase the bucket. As an additional incentive, after 6 months, subscribers will each receive a 1 cubic ft. bag of the Compost Plant's Rhody Gold, an all-natural premium compost. And if you refer two additional subscribers, you'll get an additional bag!

Jason is also working with Rhodeside Revival and another

er pilot project for collecting compost in the Off-Broadway area for a grant to offset some of the startup costs of the organizations which should be announced the end of August.

Food composting will extend the life of Rhode Island's landfill by 10 to 20 years as our landfill will be full in 12 to 15 years. Outsourcing garbage to another state will be very expensive and will certainly impact our taxes. And as they say, there's no longer any "away" in "throw it away".



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A NEW EVERGREEN TREE FOR STORER PARK – AND FOR CHRISTMAS!

by Ann McMahon

The Point Association is proud to collaborate with the city in one more way to beautify Storer Park. Traditionally, the Point purchased a free-standing evergreen tree for the annual Christmas Tree lighting celebration. When a large pine in Storer Park blew down in one of our early spring storms, the Point Association Beautification Committee and Board decided to help with replacing the lost tree and provide a living evergreen for the celebration. Working with Newport's Grounds Supervisor/Tree Warden Scott Wheeler, the Point Association paid for a new tree, and committed to maintain it with water, fertilizer and pruning as needed.



Our Beautification Committee searched nurseries near and far for a beautifully shaped and healthy tree that could stand up to high winds and salt spray. The hand-picked white spruce evergreen was delivered and planted by City workers Charley Ridolf and Mike O'Brien on June 9. The new evergreen will be

used for the annual Storer Park Christmas Tree Lighting and Caroling on Thursday, December 6th. Save the Date and join us for this annual holiday celebration!

Neighbors have long shown their appreciation for the beauty in this neighborhood park in many ways. In addition to the cleanup in spring, Point homeowners also planted and continue to maintain "Hosta Alley" on the park's northern edge. Also, volunteers have "adopted" the cement planters in this park and other locations on the Point. Association members continue their work to help make our neighborhood a beautiful place to live.



Point Association Charitable Fund

For 60 years the Point Association has been true to its mission of preserving, enhancing and protecting our beautiful neighborhood by the Bay.

At the same time our Point Charitable Fund was established to support the broader Newport community and help make our city a better place to live for all citizens. City-wide initiatives include financial support for Clean Ocean Access, Alliance for a Livable Newport, The Daffodil Project, The Newport String Project, The Choir School of Newport County, the Women's Resource Center, The Newport Historical Society/Touro Park Tower Project, The Newport Opera House Theater and Performing Arts Center and Friends of the Waterfront, to name a few. We were also a sponsor for Newport Restoration Foundation's timely seminar, "Keeping History above Water."

The most important focus for our charitable fund is helping less fortunate neighbors in our community.

This includes an annual drive in support of the outstanding work of our neighbor, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center. During the past four years we have donated more than \$30,000 to this worthy cause.

Through our fund, we **make it a Point** to help our community continue to be a special place to live.

AD RATES: 4 issues

1/8 page \$100/yr
1/4 page \$180/yr

Call: Bill Rauch 401-835-8313

POINT VOLUNTEERS RAISE MONEY FOR CHARITY

John Broughan

On Wednesday night, August 1st, our Point Association joined forces with our always-popular summer neighbor at Cardine's Field, the Newport Gulls.



Our neighborhood sponsored the exciting final game of the season. (Unfortunately, the Gulls lost in the ninth inning to Mystic, ending their chances to reach the playoffs.) In addition to welcoming guests and taking tickets from the more than 2,000 fans in attendance, the Point volunteers conducted the traditional 50/50 raffle resulting in a \$220.00 donation for our ever-growing Point Association Charitable Fund. Each fan was provided with a special welcome flyer describing the good works your association accomplishes through this Charitable Fund.

Many thanks to those who spent the evening working with the Gulls, who continue to provide wonderful summer entertainment to all of us in Newport:

Chuck Berlinghof
Lisa Brew
John Broughan
Winnie Broughan
Bill Farrell
Susan Farrell
Robin Gardner
Tom Hockaday
Kevin Hyman
Bill Martin
Mike Patota
Bill Rauch
Joan Rauch
Mark Tagliabue



POINT NEIGHBORS WIN PRESTIGIOUS AWARD IN NEWPORT FLOWER SHOW

"An exuberant display of whimsy!"

by Ann McMahon

It was a busy summer for gardeners on the Point this summer. In addition to our plant sale, Secret Garden Tour, and planter adoption programs, Third Street resident Barbara Bessette and former Historic Point Thames St resident Elizabeth Stetson won not only the blue ribbon in the Newport Flower Show 'Creative Outdoor Container' section, they also won the Mrs. Samuel M. V. Hamilton Award. This award goes to "the most creatively original and whimsical presentation of plant material in any container".

The "Up-scaled Shabby Chic" entry was a child's Adirondack chair that was aged and weathered and had beautiful lichen all over it. It was filled with annuals, vines, and perennials to create a colorful, cottage type garden with a variety of plant textures and shapes. The Judges' comment was "An exuberant display of whimsy!"



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NEWPORT FOG IN THE FIFTIES

by Shelby Coates

The fog comes
on little cat feet.

It sits looking
over harbor and city
on silent haunches
and then moves on.

This was as poet Carl Sandburg sensed it one day in Chicago over a hundred years ago. Not so “silent,” however, in the era of the basing of the Navy’s Atlantic Fleet destroyers at Newport. In conditions of fog the medley of horns and whistles from out on the Bay was pervasive and, to most, soothing and soporific during nighttime. According to Sarah Bradford, a biographer of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, the young girl had a fondness, and even homesickness, for “the foghorns blowing at night” heard while she was growing up at Hammersmith Farm.

For me, as a naval officer aboard the Navy destroyer USS PRESTON during 1953-1956, fog had a quite different facet at certain times. One Coast Guard officer, who had served aboard the Buzzard Bay Lightship, opined that: “Of all the scourges of the sea, fog is by far the most contemptible.” Below, I recount two happenings illustrating some hazards of low visibility when underway and a commensurate need for caution.

Episode No. 1

We had left the Charlestown Naval Shipyard near Boston and were returning to Newport via the outside route (an alternative to the Cape Cod Canal) around the elbow of Cape Cod. At 3:45 a.m. I arrived on the ship’s Bridge to relieve the Officer of the Deck and to assume the navigational and piloting duties for the upcoming 4:00-8:00 a.m. watch.

It was dark and the fog was dense. The officer I was to relieve sought to explain that the ship had just rounded the Nantucket Lightship and we were safely headed for Newport. Looking at the radar scope, all I could see illuminated was a cluster of little white “pips”, some obviously representing fishing boats, and it was impossible to know which “pip,” if any, was the Lightship. The nautical chart showed Nantucket Shoals just to the north, well known to mariners, historically, as “the Graveyard of the Atlantic.” (The tanker ARGO MARINER famously grounded there in 1976, spilling all of its cargo of heating oil.)

Being uncertain as to our geographic position, I had the ship’s fathometer activated and then plotted the depth readings on a translucent sheet of paper and, after sliding the paper over the nautical chart to match up my recordings with the depths indicated on the chart, and being reassured by the results of that process, I was able to say to the O.O.D. who was anxious to get off watch, “I relieve you.”

Newport, as we approached, was found to be “socked in” by the same dense fog conditions. The buoy we were seeking as our mooring had disappeared in our radar “sea return” when we got close to it. (Sea return is a form of radar scope “clutter” which occurs in the area closely surrounding the ship and can mask “targets” within that area.) Opting for an alternative means for finding our mooring, we activated our echo ranging sonar and, “pinging” off the underwater portion of the metallic buoy, made our final approach and moored successfully. (I have since read that, in World War II, our Navy destroyers would use sonar to navigate by and through underwater mine fields laid defensively by our own naval forces.)

Episode No. 2

Our then Captain, hereinafter simply referred to as “the Skipper,” had grown up on an offshore Maine island and, having taught the course of Navigation and Piloting at the U.S. Naval Academy during an earlier duty assignment, rightfully considered himself a whiz at the subject. He was the second, chronologically, of the PRESTON’s three skippers during my three-year tour of duty and he was new to us at this time.

Having completed a shore bombardment training exercise at the island of Bloodsworth in Chesapeake Bay, the PRESTON was at anchor owing to the arrival of a “pea soup” fog. Impatient and undeterred, the Skipper ordered the ship to General Quarters (normally a “battle stations” order) but as customized by him for



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navigational purposes. The Main Gun Battery Director was manned and our Gunnery Officer was instructed to “lock on” to a lighthouse with his fire control radar and to feed the Bridge, where the Skipper was supervising the “conn” of the ship, a stream of continuous ranges and bearings. An officer was stationed on each wing of the Bridge (outside of the Pilot House) just to listen for, and report, fog signals of others. I was assigned to the Surface Search Radar in the Pilot House and was to report all projected C.P.A.s (Closest Points of Approach) of other vessels, anchored or otherwise.

Then we took off at 15 knots outboard down the narrow Chesapeake Bay channel. When we got to the open sea, the Skipper directed that our steam turbine engines be put on “All Ahead Flank,” an order which brought our speed up to 25 knots. We were bound, through the unrelenting fog, for Newport, our home port.

For purposes of doing this article, I checked the laws then applicable to speed – not very different from today in spite of the advent of G.P.S. (Global Positioning System) and A.I.S. (Automatic Identification System) electronic aids to navigation. I turned to a case in the early sixties that I, when a young admiralty lawyer, had worked on which involved the collision in fog of the Steamship MATTHEW LUCKENBACH and the Motorship FRANCISVILLE in Buzzards Bay. Federal Judge Thomas F. Murphy found both ships blameworthy for, among other reasons, having proceeded on their reciprocal courses at about 15 knots in the dense fog. In particular, he cited a 1957 court opinion for the proposition that “radar is not a substitute for moderate speed nor does it serve as an excuse for noncompliance with the rules.”

Why this daring and risky exhibition by our Skipper of his navigational skills (we wondered)? Why the rush? When we reached the Breton Reef Lightship, declining to enter Newport’s fogbound harbor, the Skipper had the ship anchor and his gig (a Captain’s private boat) launched. With his Coxswain in charge, the little motorboat proceeded into the mist, headed north toward the mainland. Shipboard “scuttlebutt,” never later proven, was to the effect that the Skipper had been anxious not to be late for a cocktail party in Newport. The expectations and power of an awaiting lady, perhaps?

Brought to mind is the sage thought of a salty and seasoned Boatswain’s Mate: “There are old skippers and there are bold skippers, but there are no old bold skippers.

Nina Lynette

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NEWPORT'S SECRET GARDEN TOUR – A SPECIAL WEEKEND EVENT AND COMMUNITY TRADITION!

by Ann McMahon

Signs that the Newport's Secret Garden Tour is approaching are always easy to spot. Leading up to this special three-day event, neighbors on the Point are working in their gardens in anticipation for the weekend when hundreds of residents and guests tour the gardens that are featured – and walk through our beautiful and historic neighborhood. Preparations are even more earnest for owners of the 14 gardens that are featured on the tour itself. Coaxing plants to bloom precisely in time, trimming and pruning, and pulling the last stubborn weeds are just some of the many preparations those on the tour prepare for. Even those gardens that are not on the tour, but are listed as a "Peek-a-Boo garden for viewing over the fence", are also hard at work getting ready for the weekend.

There are many things unique to this garden tour, including seeing wonderful gardens in the neighborhood while supporting a worthy cause. Funds raised from the tour are donated to the "Benefactors of the Arts", where the money is used to benefit Art Education in the public schools on Aquidneck Island. This year's tour was another huge success with over 750 tickets sold and another 150 tickets "earned" by the army of volunteers needed for this event. The second half of the annual Secret Garden Tour will be held September 7-9 in the southern end of the Island.

The number of gardens participating in the tour is larger than most other garden tours, as one garden is an easy walk to the next. Organizers of the event are also proud that these gardens are largely designed and maintained by the homeowner rather than a professional landscaper. One of the special features of the weekend tour is the restful setting and lunch available at St John's Church and gardens.

Donna Maytum, organizer of the Secret Garden tour, is retiring this year. The annual tour has grown and blossomed under her leadership, and Newporters have ben-

efited from her inspiration and hard work. Donna has been involved in the event in many capacities since its inception in 1983, and she will be missed!



The Garden Tour's Board has announced that Justin McLaughlin, a long-time gardener and city leader, will serve as the new director. Donna is excited about the future of the show as Justin and his board of Joanne Hoops, Amy Hoag and Michelle Leys are bringing lots of energy and new ideas. Mary Riggs, long time board member continues to serve on the Board and brings great historic perspective as well as her garden.

There are many homeowners who generously offer their garden for the tour – some for multiple years. One special example is Mike and Trudy Conroy's garden on Third Street, which has been on the tour for several years. Mike and Trudy can be found in their garden during the tour, talking to visitors throughout the day. The Conroys have said that there is always a mix of people who come to view the garden: master gardeners who share stories about their own gardens, others who are more interested in the hardscape and landscape features, and those who just enjoy seeing the range of plantings in gardens across the Point.

Generous homeowners like Ilse Nesbitt, whose gardens have been on since the 1980s, are just one of the keys to the Garden Tour's ongoing success. The tour's large cadre of volunteers work hard to make the three days a huge success. Volunteers sit at each garden, and are always quick to welcome guests and answer questions about the garden and the tour.

We encourage other neighbors on the Point to consider being one of the gardens that are open during this weekend. As long-time supporters have observed, some of the best tours are those that have a mix of old and new gardens. If you are interested in participating in the next Secret Garden Tour, either by opening your garden or volunteering to work during the three days, please contact the Garden Tour Board. They always appreciate new gardens, and even more important, new volunteers that wish to participate! You can email info@secretgardentours.org or call (401) 439-7253.

“FAST AS A CAT”

CATBOAT BUILDERS AND CATBOATS -

Parts II and III

by Lisa Stuart

This article completes the study of catboats begun in the Summer, 2018, issue.

II. Fishing, Racing, Transportation. Recreation

FISHING

Boats with wide beams that were half the length of the cockpit were used by fishermen in Newport from the early 1800s. They were gaff-rigged and the lines fed back to the cockpit so they could sail alone. They had a shoal draft which was critical for shell fishing. Their design resulted in them slipping sideways when they sailed. To overcome this, a barn door rudder with retractable centerboard was developed. Some of the fishermen added motors to the boats.

The stable platform of the boats allowed fishermen to fish different fish from it in different seasons. The cockpit provided space for traps and fishing equipment.



In 1915 John Mathinos built many catboats for the Greek fishing community. The Greek fishermen would put away money and bring their families over from the little island of Skathos. Many settled on Marsh and Bridge Streets. Catboats built by Mathinos included *Alaska*, *Areanthe*, *Olympia*, *Texas*, and *Posidon*. His shop was on Marsh Street up in the corner where the bridge had been located. Tom Giones joined him in building boats. John's sons worked for Newport Shipyard and are also credited with building catboats.

Parthenon, whose builder is unknown, was also part of the Greek community fishing fleet. *Texas* was a lobster catboat. She left Newport in 1934.

J. T. O'Connell helped the Greek fishing community by providing financing of the boats and their outfitting. If the debt was not paid, he would take ownership of the boat. If unable to immediately sell the boat, O'Connell would have someone use it for fishing for shares. His fleet of fishing catboats included *Osprey*, *Susie* and *Ursula*. He also owned *Cygnnet* which was largely used for fishing by Dan Larsen for shares. Ultimately the boats aged and were sold.

RACING



Catboat Regatta, Castle Hill, 1885

Edward Burgess, the boat designer, first raced catboats in Newport in the 1860s. With lots of sail and no draw they were “fast as a cat.”

The Albro brothers built a number of the race boats including *Hummingbird* which was raced by Josiah Albro and *Ursula* which was raced by Charles Albro. Charles Fairchild, of 94 Washington Street, commissioned a race boat he named *Cygnnet* from the Albro Bros. It lost to *Catspaw* in 1897. It was purchased by J. T. O'Connell in 1907 and eventually was purchased by a Greek fisherman and taken to Brooklyn. By then she leaked and didn't last long.

Despite an increased interest in racing catboats, the boat builders were unwilling to take the risk in building racing boats and continued to build catboats for pleasure and for fishermen. This was a good decision given that Herreshoff 15S one-design soon replaced catboats as a favorite for racing. 1904 saw the end of most of the catboat races.

FERRY AND PLEASURE



Elm Street Pier

During the late 1800s there were many catboat parties. “The outing in the catboat was a principal summer amusement for Newporters. The women, swathed in seven thicknesses of veils—suntan was considered unbecoming then—would loll at ease on cushions in the cockpit, while the men in the straw hats would perform the simple business of tiller and main sheets.” (*Newport Daily News*, September 14, 1950)

T.B. O’Connell ran a livery fleet and purchased four 22’ boats built by John Barker from the estate of William B. Groff. He named them after his daughters: *Margaret*, *Ella*, *Theresa* and *Mary*.

III. Catboats owned by Pointers



View of the Point from Newport Harbor, Rhode Island
Photograph Collection, Providence Public Library, Providence, RI.

Falcon was built by T. D. Stoddard for Edward and William Smith of Washington Street. Unfortunately, *Falcon* stuck a reef off Aquidneck Island in a summer gale in 1893. William Smith and sculptor Edmund Stewardson were drowned.

Twinkle was owned by Emilia Belknap Cresswell and sailed by her during her childhood summering at her family’s home Belnapoli. (Belnapoli, now gone, was located on the southwest corner of Washington and Cherry Streets.) *Twinkle*’s sail was too big and often had to be reefed. As a result she went backwards as much as forward.

Gisela was owned by Mrs. Cathrine Jenckes Knox who lived in the house across from Battery Park (now 107 Washington Street). *Gisela* was then owned by Harold

Arnold. She was wrecked in the 1938 hurricane. The Arnolds owned several other catboats including *Indian* which he raced in many of the catboat regattas.



As noted in a wonderful article written by Jane MacLeod Walsh in the *Green Light* (Winter, 2008-9), many of those who lived on and around Washington Street owned and sailed one of the big heavy 19th century catboats that were built in Newport. “At boat launching time in the spring (usually around Memorial Day), both the Willow Street and Poplar Street driftways were hives of activity. All the old salts, boat owners and boat lovers would congregate whenever word went out that one boat or another was due to be re-launched for the season. Everybody pitched in and helped each other.”

Kingfisher II was built on Long Wharf by the Barker Brothers. She was owned by the photographer Edward Smith (Fud Benson’s grandfather). He made many of his photographs from the boat. She was traded to Lars Larson. Larson rebuilt her with a ruddy cabin and vertically staved coaming to serve as a day charge boat. She was renamed *Margaret*. Henry A. Wood Jr., nephew of Edward Smith, purchased her from Larson’s estate. Fud took possession of *Kingfisher II* in 1968 and sailed her off the Point until 1975 when he donated her to the Mystic Seaport.

Penguin, originally called *Hattie*, was built for the Sakonnet River Fish Company and was the last of the old cats built at Long Wharf by Stoddard. It was used as a watch boat and to set traps. The name was changed to *Penguin* by John Howard Benson when he purchased her in 1936. She was sold in 1954 and eventually burned because she was falling apart.

These are just a few of the Catboats of the Point. For a complete list, please see the Point Association Website’s History and Archive page. <https://www.thepointassociation.org/page-1789953>. For photos: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/146411860@N03/albums>

Each of the catboats of the Point has a story to tell. If you would like to add to the Stories of the Catboats of the Point or have corrections, please contact the History and Archives Committee at HistoryandArchives@thepointassociation.org.



A LITTLE BIT OF HEAVEN! POINT ASSOCIATION SPONSORS ST. JOHN'S “Music on the Lawn”

by Ann McMahon

The Point Association was proud to serve as the overall sponsor for this summer's “Music on the Lawn” Concert Series at St. John's Church. These wonderful neighborhood concerts and family-friendly events were a perfect way to enjoy a lovely summer evening!

Families, couples and “strollers-by” all sat at tables, lawn chairs or on blankets as the music wafted down Washington Street and beyond. The façade of St John's acted as a natural amplifier and even the church bells chimed in at some humorous and timely moments!

There was one “reversal of fortune” as it were. At one concert, the food truck broke down on the way to the concert and was unable to come. Those looking forward to the food trucks for their dinner at first seemed to be out of luck. But in the spirit of this neighborhood gathering, a group of concert attendees from the MLK Community Center ordered pizza to be delivered and shared

with the crowd. What a great example of why these concerts are a favorite of neighbors on the Point -- and others across the city!



A variety of music was presented by The Strattones, the Larry Brown Swinglane Orchestra, Mike Warner and the Ubiquitones and Doug Wolverton and the Groove Merchants. Individual concerts were sponsored by Point corporate supporters, including: The Newport Shipyard,

Sardella's Restaurant, The Marina Pub, Caleb and Broad Restaurant, Point Wine & Spirits, and Pasta Beach Restaurant. Thanks to these businesses for their support of Music on Lawn and this wonderful neighborhood activity!



Those of us “manning” the Point Association Membership and Information Table at the concerts at St John's this summer were very proud that the Association had been the overall sponsor for these concerts. We welcomed a number of new members as a result.

Thank you to all the sponsors and volunteers who made these events possible.

SOME NOT SO SECRET GARDENS: MIDSUMMER SIDEWALKS ON THE POINT

A PHOTO ESSAY

by Tom Kennedy



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

Please check membership status: ___ Renewal ___ New Member

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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
___ Membership ___ Event Planning ___ History & Archives ___ Public Services

Thank You !

SAVE THE DATES

Saturday, September 8, 2018: Point Neighborhood Block Parties

Thursday, October 4, 2018, 6:30 PM: Point Association Fall Membership Meeting, St. Johns Church Guild Hall

Tuesday, October 16, 2018, 6:00 PM : Alliance for a Livable Newport
Candidate Forum for School Committee Candidates, Pell Elementary School

Thursday, October 18, 2018, 6:00 PM: Alliance for a Livable Newport
Candidate Forum for At-Large City Council Candidates, City Council Chambers, City Hall

Tuesday, October 23, 2018, 6:00 PM: Alliance for a Livable Newport
Candidate Forum for City Council Candidates in Ward 1 and Ward 2, City Council Chamber, City Hall

Tuesday, November 6, 2018: Election Day

Thursday, December 6, 2018, 6:00 PM: Point Neighborhood Christmas Tree Lighting and Caroling in Storer Park

Monday, January 7, 2019, 6:00 PM: Annual Point Neighborhood New Year's Party, Newport Yacht Club

