

The
GREEN LIGHT
BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND
WINTER 2019



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Meetings are generally scheduled for the first Monday of the month and are open to Association members.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OFFICERS:

President: Tom Hockaday, 619-3424

president@thepointassociation.org

First Vice President: Tom Tobin, 619-4359

vicepresident1@thepointassociation.org

Second Vice President: Mark Tagliabue, 848-0703

vicepresident2@thepointassociation.org

Corresponding Secretary: Pamela Kelley, 849-2857

corrsecretary@thepointassociation.org

Recording Secretary: Nancy Scott, 619-1505

recordingsecretary@thepointassociation.org

Treasurer: Bill Rauch, 835-8313

treasurer@thepointassociation.org



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.



NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Ann McMahon. Editor "pro tem"

Janus, the ancient Roman deity, was the god of transitions. The Point neighborhood could use his blessing as we evolve from a neighborhood of mostly year-round residents with young families to a more diverse neighborhood, many of whose Point abodes are "second " homes!"

The Point Association is looking closely at all of the existing avenues of communications – the PA website, the Green Light magazine, the Points of Interest emails - as well as expanding the use of social media such as Facebook, Next Door and Instagram. As you know, strong and effective communication is important to our goal of protecting and maintaining our beautiful neighborhood and to enhance the close sense of community for which we are known.

The Association has enlisted the help of Mark Marosits and Maureen Cronin who own Worldways Social Marketing. As well as being neighbors on Third St, this couple's company specializes in assisting organizations in just this sort of thing - the development of strategies for effective communication. Their committee has begun an across-the-board assessment of all Point Association messaging.

This study will include a survey where you, our members, will be asked your experience with our existing vehicles and for your ideas as to how to improve the discourse. I am hopeful that you will share your thoughts.

The Point Association is immensely grateful to Alice Clemente, Donna Maytum and Marcia Mallory who recently retired from their leadership positions on the Green Light. Their years of service to the association and our neighborhood is honored and appreciated.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

Greetings! The Point Association capped off a busy 2018 with a number of exciting winter activities, projects and events. We are proud of our work for our neighbors, and our commitment to the Newport community!

Top of the list is the success of our fifth annual fundraising drive for the Dr. Martin Luther King Community Center. We raised \$15,240 this year on behalf of one of Newport's most valued organizations. Over the past five years, we have raised \$48,575 for the Center, a wonderful example of our commitment to our community. A special thanks to John and Winnie Broughan for this inspiration five years ago, and for once again leading this valued effort!

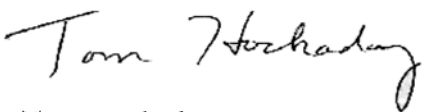
Our activities and service to the community is what the Point Association is all about. We pride ourselves in taking proactive measures to make our neighborhood a better place to live and work. Many of these activities are highlighted in this edition of *The Green Light*. I hope you will join me in celebrating our service to the neighborhood and community.

Recently, the city-wide gas outage made it a tough week for Newporters. But in the tradition of the Point, our neighbors bonded together to help neighbors and the community. Whether it was checking on a neighbor, lending a space heater, volunteering at warming centers, food pantries, or at community pot luck dinners, neighbors on the point stepped forward where needed and reinforced what is wonderful about the Point. Let's keep it up!

Last fall's elections brought changes to the city council and school committee. Congratulations to Susan Taylor, our former Ward 1 Councilwoman, who was elected to an at-large council position and has been selected by her peers to serve as Vice Chair of the Council. Susan continues to be a great help and resource to the Point and to our community. Angela McCalla, our newly elected Councilwoman for Ward 1, has a strong record of working in our community on behalf of our citizens. Congratulations are also due to Louisa Boatright, our neighbor and active Point Association member, for her election to the Newport School Committee. Louisa's commitment to our schools and their students will be invaluable to her work on the committee. We look forward to working closely with Susan, Angela and Louisa on the important issues facing Newport.

As we await the upcoming spring, thank you again for your support of the Point Association. We hope you will join us this year as we continue our work on behalf of the neighborhood and the community. Please check out our "Save the Dates" for a listing of some of the upcoming activities and events, and ways you can be involved. I look forward to seeing you around the neighborhood!

Best regards,



Tom Hockaday

FAREWELL TO THE OLD *GREEN* *LIGHT* GANG

by Isabel Griffith

On Saturday, December 15th, the Point Association hosted an elegant luncheon at the Safari Room at Ocean Cliff in honor of Alice Clemente, Marcia Mallory and Donna Maytum the three “enablers” for the Point’s *Green Light* bulletin for the past thirteen years. Marcia was in charge of mailing the print copies, Donna was responsible for the layout and Alice was the Editor – all superb volunteers driven by their dedication to our neighborhood community.

From the Introduction Alice wrote for *The Green Light*, 1957 – 2007, *History of the Point Association Bulletin*:

“As Newport’s oldest neighborhood, founded by the city’s first settlers in the 1600s, the Point had fallen on hard times by the mid-20th century. But the neighborhood’s spirit was alive, waiting only to be ignited by the right spark. That spark came from the idea to form a neighborhood association to restore the Point to its former beauty and charm. The Point Association was formed in 1955 and embarked on an initiative of creative and responsible stewardship that continues to this day.

By 1957, the Point Association leaders were meeting on a monthly basis and working to engage the entire community in their cause. The first mailing of the minutes of their meetings went out in April of 1957. Within a short time, those minutes evolved into the more broadly-based newsletter/journal that it is today – *The Green Light*.”

I remember when Alice became editor in 2005. An already seasoned editor, she brought writing skills, publishing experience and a killer “can do” attitude. As President of the Point Association when Alice suggested we write and publish a history of the *Green Light* I could only respond, “Anything you say, Alice.” And so we did. If you don’t have a copy there are still some available through the Point Association.


Since its origin in 1957 the *Green Light* has seen months of “limping along” for lack of commitment from writers and volunteers needed to get out the issues. The past thirteen years have seen the publication mature and thrive. What is the future of *The Green Light*? I am writing this article for the next issue. A new set of volunteers will decide some important questions: How many issues a year? Can we afford to continue to get out print copies? Where will new writers and photographers come from? What will they write about? In our electronic, text-ridden present,

does anyone care about *The Green Light* enough to work on it? Stay tuned.....



Front Row left to right - Isabel Griffith, Alice Clemente, Marcia Mallory
Back Row left to right – Beth Cullen, Jane Hence, Tom Hockaday, Jane Walsh, Shelby Coates


Missing from this picture: Lisa Stuart, Loretta Goldrick, Tom Kennedy, Ed Madden, Dave Moore, Suzanne Varisco and especially Donna Maytum, now living in California with her husband, close to grandchildren.






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Membership - Always the People

by Gail Thatcher, Membership Committee Chair

When I was asked to take on the responsibility as membership chair of the Point Association, my initial reaction was one of mild trepidation. Clearly this was an opportunity to become more integrated into the Point community and broaden my circle of acquaintances. I was hopeful it was not also an opportunity to rise to the level of my own incompetence! With the gracious assistance I have received from other Point Association Board officers, Pam Kelley and John Broughan, I have every hope to be able to respond to questions and issues presented by our members and to help build a strong sense of community in our neighborhood.

My experience as a professional fundraiser at the Met Opera in Manhattan, Brown University and St. George's School taught me the importance of membership and that it is always the people that make the best outcomes possible. I'm sure it will be no different here in Newport and at the Point Association.

The Point Association is proud to have your support and membership in our neighborhood organization. Your membership allows us to continue working to protect, preserve and beautify our special neighborhood. Many have asked how they might help with our membership efforts. We can always use volunteers to help with our membership programs and activities. If you would like to participate and volunteer for the Membership Committee, please email me at membership@thepointassociation.org.

In addition, since membership dues fund the programs and activities of the association, another good way to help us continue with our work for the neighborhood is to become a Patron Member of the Point Association. At this time, 82 of our members have chosen to join at this level, and we thank them for their support!

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ALLIANCE FOR A LIVABLE NEWPORT ANNUAL MEETING

by Ann McMahon - Liaison from the PA to ALN

In keeping with its mission of being an unbiased resource for information on the issues of importance to the community, the Alliance will host members of the Rhode Island Legislature who represent Aquidneck Island at its annual meeting on Monday, April 8th. The exact location and time are to be announced.

The meeting is open to all members of the community. Although you do not have to be a dues-paying member of ALN to attend the meeting, only dues-paying members will be able to vote in the annual election for at-large ALN Directors.

Attendees should come prepared to ask questions regarding issues important to those of us in our Aquidneck Island communities.

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Ice Skating on the Point!

by Tom Hockaday

This year, Newporters welcomed a new winter “neighbor” to The Point when Gurney’s Hotel on Goat Island became the new home of the Newport Ice Skating rink!

This is the first year for Gurney’s to host Newport’s ice skaters for our city’s winter tradition. The Newport Skating Center, which was located on Commercial Wharf for the past several winters, was unable to host the rink because of plans to construct a new hotel on the site. Gurney’s Hotel stepped up and offered to host this winter’s ice skating to ensure a wonderful Newport tradition was continued.

Gurney’s constructed the ice skating rink on the north end of their property next to the lighthouse. This new location allows for the continuation of a holiday tradition -- one with lovely views of Narragansett Bay,

the Newport Bridge, the Newport Harbor Lighthouse, and the Point neighborhood!

“We heard it was not going to happen and wanted to keep the rink open for Newport as it is such a wonderful venue for the city,” Resort Manager David Smiley told the Newport Daily News. Gurney’s intends to continue to offer the ice rink yearly and Gurney’s workers will staff the rink. “We’re very excited to bring jobs to the area in the winter months,” Smiley said.

The skating rink has provided Newporters a beautiful place for families and friends to enjoy a winter skate. Thanks to Gurney’s for their efforts to maintain a wonderful and family friendly event for our community!

Gurney’s photo north – David Smiley, photographer



A Successful Fundraising Campaign for the Dr. Martin Luther King Community Center!

by Tom Hockaday

Point Association raises \$15,240 for the Center in 2018; \$48,575 over the last 5 years

The Point Association capped off our 2018 year of activities and events with our fifth annual year-end fundraising campaign to benefit the Dr. Martin Luther King Community Center in Newport. This fundraising campaign was chaired by John Broughan, who has wonderfully led this fundraising effort for the last five years.



The neighborhood association collected over \$15,240 in donations from its members and neighbors on the Point to help the MLK Center. Since initiating the holiday fundraising campaign five years ago, the Point Association has raised more than \$48,575 to help the MLK Center continue and expand the services offered to Newport neighbors in need -- \$4,608 in 2014, \$6,864 in 2015, \$8,423 in 2016, \$13,440 in 2017, and \$15,240 in 2018.

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We were proud to show our support of the MLK Community Center by presenting the neighborhood's donation at a meeting with Heather Hole Strout, Executive Director of the MLK Center, and Alyson Novick, Director of Development.

"We're amazed by the impact of The Point Association on this community," said Heather Strout, Executive Director of the Center. "Year after year this group of neighbors comes together to create positive change. We will put this generous gift to work helping those in need in our community."

The Point Association is deeply appreciative of our members and neighbors who generously came forth with their enthusiastic support for the MLK Center and the fundraising campaign. The MLK Center is a valued friend and neighbor to the Point, and we are excited to raise funds for an organization that does so much for our community. We know that every dollar raised goes right to work for those in need in our community—feeding the hungry, providing high quality educational programs for children, engaging seniors, and much more. We look forward to continuing our work and support for the MLK Center and their programs in 2019.

A special thanks to John and Winnie Broughan for launching this initiative over five years ago—and for their leadership and great work each year to make it a success!

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Winter on the Point

by Ann McMahon

Quiet? Yes. Dull? Definitely not! Point residents had a lot of options for activities and events this winter without going far from home.

Point Association Tree Lighting and Caroling

Over 60 Point residents gathered for the Point Association's Annual Tree Lighting and Caroling as we kicked off the neighborhood holiday festivities on December 6, 2018. This year the tree was a live (and beautifully formed) evergreen purchased by the Point Association last spring and planted by Scott Wheeler, City of Newport Buildings and Grounds Supervisor and Tree Warden, and his staff. It was a wonderful winter night where neighbor could greet neighbor and enjoy the delicious refreshments -- hot chocolate donated by Rich Willis of Caleb & Broad Restaurant and the Point Wine & Spirits, and delicious goat shaped cookies donated by Gurney's Hotel. These local businesses are great neighbors indeed!

Along with a goat wrangler, Gurney's Hotel Manager Dave Smiley himself walked the Goat Island mascots, Cornelius and William, across the Causeway. The animals were a delight to all, especially the children and very excited dogs!

Point Association President Tom Hockaday introduced guests and welcomed all to our annual event. The city was well represented by new Mayor Jamie Bova who gave remarks and was presented with a gift of Newportopolis by Father Nathan Humphrey from St John's Church. That "customized" game is used as a fundraiser for the Choir School of Newport County. Also attending were city council members who represent the Point neighborhood: At Large Councilwoman and Council Vice-Chair Susan Taylor, and our newly elected Ward I Councilor Angela McCalla. Neighbors enhanced the holiday spirit by gathering toys and food items for the Dr. Martin Luther King Community Center. Donations from our neighbors filled several wagons and boxes to overflowing with gifts and food.

A new tradition was started this year as our neighbor Laura Pedrick brought greetings from Touro Synagogue and read the story of Hanukkah. After her reading came the "all join in" countdown to the actual lighting of the tree. Richard Abbinanti, Chair of our Beautification Committee, and his volunteers worked in Storer Park earlier that day trimming our perfectly shaped tree. They also hung lights to add to the festive decorations.

Accompanied by St. John's Church Music and Choir Director Peter Berton on his electronic keyboard, the voices from the St John's Adult Choir and Professional Choristers as well as the Children's Choir filled the night

air. Again this year they sang the unique carol written in 1958 by then Point Resident William King Covell, "Christmas on the Point", with lyrics by Edith Ballinger Price.

One could enjoy a real "Point" moment with the sound of children's voices filling the air and a view across the water of the glimmering "String of Pearls" on the Newport Bridge. Brightly lit rows of trees stretched all the way up to the Goat Island Lighthouse with its **Green Light!** A perfect start for the Point holiday season!



Tree Lighting Volunteers: L to R Volunteers for the event were: Kathy Ward, John Ward, Richard Abbinanti, Bill and Joan Rausch, Nancy Abbinanti, Kitty Beard, Bonny Willis and Ann McMahon.



St. John's Church Concerts and Events

St. John's Rector, Father Nathan Humphrey, often refers to St. John's as the "Church on the Point". We agree! St. John's continued its tradition of neighborhood activities, services and events for the Holidays with several concerts for neighbors. This year, neighbors and members of the community enjoyed the "Advent Lessons and Carols" on December 2nd, with music and song by the combined choirs of St. John's and Emmanuel Church. After the concert, the Humphrey family hosted an Open House at the Church Rectory. On December 13th, St. John's performed their annual "Christmas on The Point Concert" with special lighting and a reading of the Christmas story—followed by sing-along favorite carols. We thank St. John's for being a great neighbor and partner in many of our neighborhood activities!

Santa and Decorations

Later in December, Santa rode through the Point neighborhood along with his reindeer and one green-garbed elf. Newport Fire Department and Police Vehicles escorted the sleigh with sirens blaring. At least one Third St porch was filled with small children and older partygoers who were thrilled to get a wave from Santa as the reindeer "flew" right by their house!



Decorated Doors

In their city-wide Christmas Door competition, Christmas in Newport awarded an honorable mention to Anne Ritterbush's Cherry St. home for her elaborate window boxes and front garden décor. It must have been a difficult decision as many Point houses were dressed in elaborate Christmas finery. Congratulations, Anne!



Annual New Year's Party

It was a mild winter even up to the Point Association's annual "After New Year Party" at the Newport Yacht Club. A flat calm on the harbor reflected the twinkling decorations up since the early December Boat Parade.

John and Winnie Broughan organized the event with assistance from Joan Rauch. Winnie herself cooked many of the delicious appetizers and dips while Yacht Club Chef Charlene Minnerly and her staff served sandwiches and other goodies. The club's Event and Business Manager, Lynn Kelly, had the club festively decorated in red and gold decorations – bringing additional warmth to the party!

Among the 70 attendees at the party were new members Mike and Susan Cunningham from Lexington, Mass, now living on Third St. Also taking advantage of a chance to meet her neighbors was new member Maggie Thomas moving to Willow St. from Little Compton.

The Point Association has already begun planning for this year's winter and Holiday Festivities. Stay tuned for details of the Holiday events we will be doing this year!



*Top row KittyBeard, Scott Beattie
Bottom row Don Mang, Mary Mang*

CURBSIDE COMPOSTING WILL CONTINUE

by Pam Kelley

The 6 month pilot picking up compost every week in the neighborhood by FoodCycle came to a successful end on November 26 wherein we diverted **957 pounds of food waste**. As a result, a compost 'coalition' has been created with multiple organizations, to accelerate food waste diversion on Aquidneck Island. The companies involved are FoodCycle, Clean Ocean Access, Aquidneck Community Table, Rhodeside Revival and The Compost Plant. They were just awarded a very generous grant from 11th Hour Racing that will help bring the successful Phase One up to Phase Two. Looking to the future, this will extend the life of the last landfill in Rhode Island. The initiative is called Healthy Soils, Healthy Seas, Healthy People.



Rhodeside Revival will continue to pick up food scraps and swap buckets, at curbside beginning in the spring: once a week pickup (\$25/month) or twice a month (\$18/month). If you would like to continue the service you will have to go to Rhodeside Revival's website and sign up there. Here is the link: www.RhodesideRevival.com. Newport hasn't been added to the website options yet but they'll have your information and contact you in April when the service starts. This composting project, like the last, will accept table scraps of all varieties as the same company, The Compost Plant, will be handling the back ends and does commercial composting on a large scale.

POINT BLOCK PARTIES

A great gathering for neighbors!

by John Broughan

What is better than a neighborhood block party? Four of them held simultaneously throughout the Point on blocked off streets! That is, indeed, what occurred the first weekend in September.

With welcoming hosts on Bayside, Cherry, Willow and Bridge Streets, Point Association members and neighbors



arrived with food and beverage to share while visiting with old and new friends. Dick and Sheila Desrochers even brought out their grill and dozens of hot dogs

for all to enjoy. Everyone who attended the various parties agreed that it was great fun and unanimously voted to repeat the "good times" again this year. A special thanks to the many volunteers and hosts who helped make our block parties a great success!

Last year's original plan for a late July Sunday afternoon had to be changed when a weekend storm necessitated the postponement of the parties until early September. Learning from this experience, the block parties in 2019 will be held during the summer on a late Saturday afternoon -- with a rain date for Sunday should Mother Nature dampen the Saturday plan.

Be on the lookout for the invitation to join with your neighbors at one or more of our 2019 Point Block parties this summer. Ask anyone who attended last year and they will enthusiastically advise you to be there!

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ALL ABOARD! THE HISTORY OF THE RAIL ROAD ON THE POINT

by Lisa Stuart

The railroad has been part of the fabric of the Point since 1863 when Old Colony & Newport Railway Company's first passenger train arrived in Newport. It connected us then to Boston, Providence and New York. Over the years the train and tracks became part of every-day-life on the Point. After passenger service to Newport stopped in 1938 the freight train continued to operate. Eventually the freight service also stopped. Rail Road enthusiasts rallied to preserve and operate historic railroads and conduct tourist rides. Here is an overview of the extensive history of the railroad on the Point.

On April 9th 1861 The Old Colony was authorized to build and operate a railroad from the end of its track in Fall River southward to a line in Rhode Island in order to connect with a railroad that was to be built from Newport to the state line of Massachusetts. In 1862, the Fall River line was extended under a corporation known as the Newport & Fall River Railroad.

In July 1863 The Colony and Fall River Railroad merged with the Newport & Fall River Railroad and changed its name to Old Colony & Newport Line. Stock was issued. Way stations, bridges, tracks and equipment were purchased. The railroad tracks to Newport were built. The Cove was filled in to create a railroad yard and passenger depot. This forever changed the topography of the southern part of the Point.



Long Wharf (right) to Bridge Street (left) at the turn of the century.

Regularly scheduled service of the Newport Line began in 1864. The Newport Station was at West Marlborough Street. Passengers arrived from New York, Providence, Boston and many other locations. For many years the Newport Line was served by a handsome express train known unofficially as "The Dandy Express." It included a parlor car for first class clientele. "The Dandy" was a morning train from Newport to Boston with a later-afternoon return back. Travel time was under two hours.



The Newport Train Station circa 1900

In 1872 the Old Colony and Newport Railroad merged with the Cape Cod Railroad and the two companies were consolidated forming a new Old Colony Railroad Company. In 1893 the New Haven Railroad leased the Old Colony & Newport Line for 99 years. Train travel flourished and hit a peak around 1912. Twenty-four trains arrived and departed Newport daily between 5:55 am and 11:03 pm. Two freight trains also arrived daily. Several tracks were used for private cars for private charters and for Bellevue Avenue "cottage" owners.

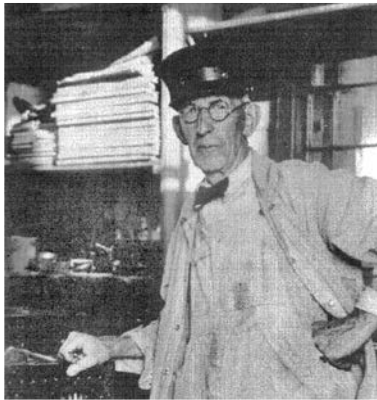


The railroad became part of life on the Point. In a 1969 *Green Light* Carrie Ericson recalled that in the early 1900s "...the railroad depot with its covered platform was a busy place with passengers boarding the trains and the baggage being loaded. There was a newsstand with papers, magazines and candy where we stopped to put a penny in the gum machine for a square of gum. There was a waiting room, with ticket seller Dennis O'Brien in a caged office. Next came the freight and baggage room with Charles Brice in command. He lived on Third Street, was patient, friendly, happy and never too busy to weigh us kids on the big black scales (none of us weighed over a hundred pounds)."

For 54 years Charles Edgar Brice worked in

Newport on The Old Colony and later the New Haven and Hartford RR. He started at age 12 as a “halter holder” — holding the halter of patrons’ horses while they conducted business inside the station. He rose to the position of “Baggage Master.” His favorite saying was, “By their baggage they shall be known.” By 1933 train business was down due to the increase of travel by automobile. Brice wrote to his daughter “We have hardly anything to do with passengers. Freight is fair, but not

any too good.” (*Green Light*, Summer 1999)



Charles Edgar Brice

The Newport Line was the source of financial issues for the New Haven Railroad. In 1935 the bankrupt New Haven Railroad attempted to default on its lease and return ownership of the Newport line to the

Old Colony stockholders. However, The Old Colony had not operated trains in over 30 years. This move drove them into bankruptcy in one day. The courts forced the New Haven Railroad to operate the trains with a provision that if losses exceeded a certain amount they would be allowed to abandon the line.

The final financial blow came in 1938 when the Railway Mail Service contract to Newport was terminated. The last passenger train from Newport to Boston left without fanfare. In 1939 the Newport train station was razed and replaced by a freight house.



Manuel Family Album: Train #9 special diesel engine coupled to passenger cars 1949

The freight trains continued to use the Newport line delivering freight to Long Wharf. By 1968 The New Haven Railroad was bankrupt and taken over by Penn Central System. Two years later the Penn Central System

was in receivership. Consolidated Railroad Corporation took over and filed for abandonment of the Newport line. The State of Rhode Island purchased the line.

During this time period the Point was going through a redevelopment period fueled by the City’s urban renewal plans for Newport. Esther Fisher Benson reported in the June 1991 *Green Light*:

“During the redevelopment period, there was much attention paid to the train tracks. It was suggested at that time that the railroad tracks be taken up, in this way providing all the space for America’s Cup Avenue saving many houses that were slated to be condemned. Others, however, felt the tracks should stay that the railroad might be needed at a later date and once lost could never be regained. From this concern an association of railroad buffs was organized called The National Railroad Foundation and Museum. The purpose was to preserve the line and keep it open, and to enable young children to know their heritage. Two pieces of rolling stock were acquired by the Foundation, and short trips were run up and down Aquidneck Island. Neither platform nor station existed forcing the passengers to step right down on the heavy grass by the old McKenzie and Williams feed and grain store.”

From 1969 to 1971 The State D.O.T. worked to save homes in the Point neighborhood. The engineers refined their design and reduced the loss to 40 dwellings. A further dozen could be saved if the tracks were condemned.

It was suggested that the abandonment of the rail service through the Point would result in 200 employees of J.T. O’Connell’s being deprived of their livelihood. However there was no real certainty their jobs would be lost. At this time Pointers noted that the train comes by once a week on Thursday.

500 to 600 residents petitioned the City Fathers to abandon the half-mile railroad spur through their homes. The Penn Central Railroad had paid no tax to the City in 12 years. The projected loss in property taxes from the houses was conservatively estimated at \$500,000.

Mr. Herbert F. DeSimone, Secretary for Environmental and Urban Services declared that “dual modes of transportation should be retained.” According to reports, DeSimone did not seem to know that the road did not currently exist and that the passenger train was not in operation. His declaration resulted in houses being razed, America’s Cup Avenue being built and the train tracks being maintained despite the neighborhoods opposition.



America's Cup Avenue being built

(An interesting side note is the story of the current Newport Train Depot. Colonel Long, Chairman of the National Railroad Foundation and Museum, caught sight of a small building behind 18 Elm Street as he drove through the Point. He thought it was a line shack once used by the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad. It had not been. It was originally an office built in the early 1900s by the Cottrell family whose business abutted the Island Cemetery. The Cottrell sold their land to Douglas O'Neil of D and D Fence Company who did not want the little house/office and sought to tear it down. Christine Smith came into the picture and purchased the little house and moved it to the back of 18 Elm. The National Railroad Foundation purchased the office and moved it to its current location. Rogers High School students provided labor for repairing it, completing it in 1983)roa.

In the late 1970s Old Colony and Newport Scenic Railway leased the railway line from the State. In 1984 they participated in a demonstration of the BRE-Leyland Railbus, an innovative passenger rail vehicle. It made its debut in Newport on July 18, 1984. British built, the vehicle was a bus body mounted on a railway vehicle undercarriage. It ran on railway tracks. Its maximum speed was about 75 miles per hour and traveled 7 miles on one gallon of fuel.

The railbus was demonstrated for two months in Newport carrying commuter and holiday passengers between Newport and nearby points along the track of the Old Colony & Newport Railway. It then went on to other cities in the US. Without any interest for purchasing it shown in the United States, it returned to the UK in 1986.

In 1988 the Sakonnet River Railroad Bridge was damaged. It was removed in 2007 cutting off the Newport line from the national line.

In 1989 The National Railway Foundation and Museum a 501(c)(3) which operated the new Old Colony and Newport Railway Foundation leased the station to

the Newport Clipper Dinner Train. In a 1989 *Green Light* Anita McAndrews tells about her trip on the Star Clipper Dinner Train. While eating a delicious meal prepared by Chef David Marx, they traveled along the changing shoreline. They passed the Naval Base, the Direktor Shipyard and an apple grove where they were told the engineers for the freight trains would eat their lunch before proceeding to Newport's docks. The last mile and a half revealed a pretty seacoast and fields of shrubs and wild flowers. At the northern end of the island the train reversed its direction. Anita described it as a luxurious experience "taking one back into a time when Pullman travel was a real treat".

In 1997 the Newport Dinner Train/OCNRR began sharing the line. Bob and Pat Andrews and their family owned and operated the Dinner Train (Ice Cream Train and the Polar Express). The tourist ride took 2.5 hours and went 22 miles up and back from Newport into Portsmouth along the Bay.



The Ice Cream Train

In 2014 the Dinner Train was sold to Eric Moffett and rebranded as Newport and Narragansett Bay Railroad. The Old Colony and Newport ceased operations in early 2015 and eventually merged into the Newport and Narragansett Bay.

Editor's note: As of this writing, the railroad from the Naval base to the Gateway Center is being considered as a "rail and trail" path as part of the RI Department of Transportations project for realignment of the Pell Bridge ramps. The goal is to reduce traffic congestion in the city by providing a satellite parking lot where people could leave their cars and walk or ride into Newport on an as yet to be determined type of railed "people-mover".

This article is intended only as an overview of the extensive history of the railway on the Point. Additional photos and links to additional resources can be found on The Point Association's Flickr Account <https://www.flickr.com/photos/146411860@N03/albums/72157673138414713>

Living on the Tracks

by Paul Manuel

My great grandfather Edwin Manuel bought 7 Walnut Street as a wedding gift for my grandparents, Elton and Abbie Manuel. The house was located right up against the train tracks and as close to the wooden Walnut St Bridge as you could get. Never mind that the Braman Cemetery was also on the property line. So we always said we had the best and quietest neighbors. Not everyone would agree about it being quiet, though. Some friends were creeped out about having the cemetery basically in my yard, but what they really noticed was all the noise from the passing trains and the cars rumbling over the rickety wooden bridge that was right outside my bedroom window. As the planks were so loose, for fun we would sometimes stand on the bridge as cars went by so we would get bounced in the air. My father Allan was raised in the house and as all young men of that time, he had a fascination with trains. Why not? they went right by our windows. Dad took many photographs of the different trains that went by: freight trains, passenger trains and different types of engines. In the 1940's and early 1950's, model trains were quite popular, especially the O gauge Lionel trains. There were hobby clubs around town and my Dad had quite a collection.



I also grew up in this house and had the same views of the train tracks and the trains that went by. I knew nothing about trains but the tracks were an extension of my backyard. Jump the fence and you could spend an entire day playing down there. You could occasionally find the blue insulators that fell off of the telephone poles. We would play in the gullies that ran along both sides of the tracks. It was filled with water most of the time so frog and toad collecting was a favorite pastime. In the winter you could sled down the embankment and across the tracks. In the summer, the embankment was covered in Black Eyed Susans. Of course, the tracks were also our highway to get around. Why walk on the streets and sidewalks if you could just walk the tracks? You want to go to Cardines Field? Take the tracks. Go out to Hunter Field? Take the tracks. FYI, under the Van Zandt Bridge you could find the best salamanders.

There were, of course, the daredevils who would jump onto a moving train and ride it to who knows how far. I never tried this (I still wouldn't be able to sit if my Mom had ever caught me jumping the train). Most of the kids I saw doing this would jump on under the Walnut St. Bridge. It was tight down there and a little flat spot made it easier than where the gully was. But then there were the crazy ones who would actually jump off the top of the bridge and land on top of the train. These kids were nuts.

One spring morning in 1971 I was playing in my backyard when a stranger came up to our fence and called me over. When I went to talk to him, (not the best of choices but I was 10), he asked me some questions about the tracks, such how far they went and stuff like that. Then he left, jogging down the tracks toward Van Zandt. A few minutes later a police officer came along the tracks on a strange little vehicle (a Cushman car). He stopped at our fence and asked me if I had seen anybody. I told him about the man I spoke to, and he continued along the tracks in the same direction. Later on I heard about a man named Robert O. Lewis who was on trial for murder. He had escaped from the courthouse and got away. I don't know for sure that it was him and I'm not sure my parents believed my story, but I think I had a brush with a murderer on the tracks that day.

Jerry Plumb, who is a descendent of Barkers (an old Point family), sent this terrific photo about the Rail Road on the Point. Jerry is also the son of Sarah Plumb who wrote the cooking column for the GL for many years and was active in the Point Association.



William H. Barker

After he came back from the Civil War, my great grandfather was a boat builder and home builder. He built, mostly by himself, 26 Third St. He raised his family there. In his retirement he worked as a gatekeeper at the Elm St. Crossing.



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SAVE THE DATES

April 13-21, 2019: 6th Annual Newport Daffodil Days Festival. www.newportdaffydays.com

May 7, 2019: Point Association Spring Meeting, St John's Church Guild Hall

May 25, 2019: Point Association Plant Sale, St John's Church Guild Hall

June 14-16, 2019: Newport Secret Garden Tour (featuring gardens on the Point). www.secretgardentours.org

July 1 - 7, 2019: Patriotic Point Celebration. Show the flag!

July 13, 2019: Point Association Neighborhood Block Parties. (Rain date set for July 14, 2019).

August 22, 2019: Point Association Annual Cocktail party, Villa Marina, 72 Washington St.