

# The GREEN LIGHT

BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION  
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND  
Summer and Fall 2020



The “Washington Street Yacht Club” as it appeared in the 1970’s.



# The GREEN LIGHT

LXIV No. 2

Summer/Fall 2020

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## R.I.P. Tillie Thompson.

*LaSalle Court resident was the first Newporter to die from Covid 19 in spring, 2020. Fun loving with many friends world wide, she is shown here with her friend Avram Dorfman. We miss her.*

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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.



## FROM THE EDITOR

It is usually a difficult task to choose which event to feature from the abundance of events that take place on the Point. This summer of Covid-19 was entirely different. In spite of not having any organized events, those of us who live here had a good season thanks to the proximity of our beautiful Harbor and Narragansett Bay. Another source of sanity was tending our gardens. Always a delight in this part of town, I thought the window boxes and gardens were particularly spectacular this year.

This was the summer for outside entertaining. Many backyards, decks and porches were spiffed up and used for properly social distanced good times.

We realized like never before how a bit of interaction with other human beings can make all the difference in preserving our good mental health. See you 'round the 'Hood.

Ann McMahon

[Greenlight@thepointassociation.org](mailto:Greenlight@thepointassociation.org)



Cover: David Sharp: Washington Street YC c. 1979  
 Watercolor on paper,

Back Photo: Ann McMahon: Denizen of Maitland Court  
 Fred McGowan poised for action.

# PRESIDENT'S LETTER

**Dear Neighbors,**

Greetings! It has been a difficult year for everyone on the Point and our community. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed our lives and how we work as a community and neighborhood organization. Even in these challenging times the Point Association has continued to work hard on your behalf. The virus required cancellations of our popular annual events: our Spring Membership meeting, the Plant Sale, our Block Party, and the Summer Cocktail Party. Although we have missed the opportunity to socialize with neighbors, we have continued to work hard on behalf of the Point.

The Membership Services Committee has continued welcoming new residents and recruiting them to become involved in the Association. It also sponsored our third annual "Patriotic Point" celebration, with over 200 homes participating and decorating with patriotic flags, bunting and decorations. A wonderful July 4th neighborhood celebration!

Our volunteers and the Beautification Committee charged ahead with ensuring the planter boxes and garden beds along Washington Street were maintained and filled with beautiful seasonal flowers. The planter boxes and "Hosta Alley" (the garden bed along the north side of Storer Park) have never looked better!

Our communications team didn't let the pandemic stop their work of keeping neighbors informed of the latest news. This year, we restarted our Facebook page so we can expand on real time sharing the latest information and events. Please go to our Facebook page and begin following us. Our volunteers have continued with our regular "Points of Interest" eNewsletter for additional updates and information, and in publishing The Green Light. We hope you enjoy this latest edition! The History and Archives Committee have continued to work from their home archiving and digitizing records to help preserve the history of our very special neighborhood.

The good news is that the pandemic will not affect our annual year-end fundraising drive on behalf of our friend and neighbor, the Dr. Martin Luther King Community Center. The MLK Center has been a stalwart for the community and for those in need during this challenging year. We are proud to continue our work on their behalf. Watch for more information on this important fundraising drive and how you can participate this year.



It's been a long year for all, but the Point Association is proud that our volunteers and neighbors have all worked hard to stay involved and keep you informed. It's one of the many reasons that the Point Neighborhood is such a special place to live.

We look forward to returning to a more normal schedule of activities and events soon, but in the meantime, please stay safe!

Warmest regards,

*Tom Hochaday*



# BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE- GREEN THUMBS UP!

By Maureen Cronin

This year's Point Plant Sale may have been cancelled but the Beautification Committee has been very hard at work! Committee members and other volunteers have nurtured planters in our neighborhood parks, expanded care of Hosta Alley, and are working with the City of Newport on improvements to Storer Park.

This year planters and planting beds are thriving in our neighborhood parks. Hosta Alley has been divided into four zones, with volunteer crews tending each of them. The City is nearing completion of its Storer Park construction work, including the greening of the former Navy pier, new walkways connecting the park with the Elm Street drift way, and more. The City is working closely with members of the Beautification Sub-Committee to plan additional improvements and amenities. Stay tuned for information on this coming soon.

Green thumbs up to the neighborhood members for their contribution to our neighborhood!



*Point Association Volunteer Sue Powers created the display and tends the garden in Storer Park near the Causeway.*

## Thank These Folks!

The Beautification Committee



The northern border of Storer Park is called Hosta Alley and was planted by volunteers from your Point Association. Even more importantly, these same people do the hot sweaty tasks of weeding and picking up litter. These are Larry and Casey Farley, Mike Conroy, Tom Hockaday, Bill Martin, Fernando DaSilvia, Joan Marasco, and John and Winnie Broughan.



The planters in Storer, Battery and Martins Parks and the Van Zandt Pier are planted and maintained by "green thumb" members: Kathy Ward, Beth O'Shea, Joy Scott, Lisa Brew, Barbara Bessette, Karen Caprara, Pam Quinn, Rich and Nancy Abbinanti, Ann McMahon and Tina Lewis.

Even better than thanking these folks is to join in with maintaining your own section of Hosta Alley or creating your own planter. Get in touch with beautification chairman Maureen Cronin [mcronin@e-worldways.com](mailto:mcronin@e-worldways.com) to reserve your spot for next season. .



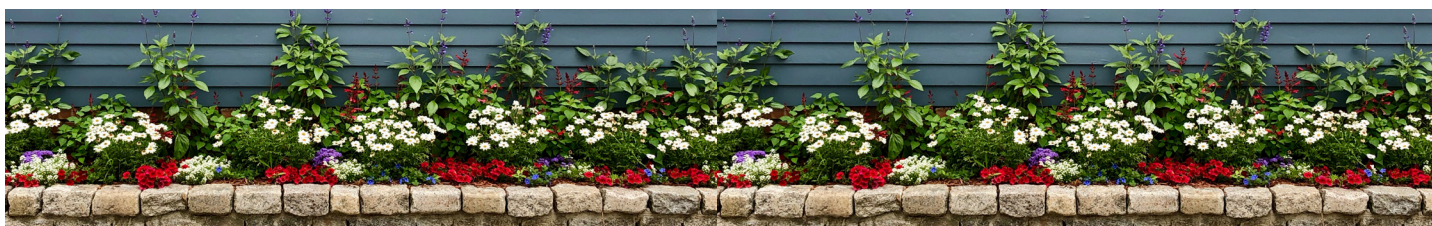


## Welcome New Members

We are happy to welcome the following new members.

Zachary Amann	Third Street
Peter Denton	Washington Street
Siobhan Doherty	Third Street
Nancy Flynn	Third Street
Tonya Grootendorst	Willow Street
J. Hasman	Spring Street
Suzanne Lessels	Washington Street
Justin McLaughlin	Kay Terrace
Deborah Clinton Peixoto	Shawmut Ave Central Falls

Joseph Pugliares	Third Street
Annette Raisky Leidermann	Willow Street
Tina Rivkees	Third Street
Martha J. Ruest	Walnut Street
Nicholas Savage	Poplar Street
Richardson Schell	Capella S
Bernice H. Waddell	Second Street
Pauline Wallace	Marsh Street



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# The Washington Street Yacht Club

by David Sharp

When I first met George he was semi-retired and had moved back into his family home, a large Victorian on the water-side of Washington Street on The Point. Narraganset Bay was in his backyard and the house had full-length verandas facing the water on two floors. This was the perfect setup for a yacht club, and that's what it, very unofficially, became. In every season but winter there was a row of "Washington Street Yacht Club" (WSYC) members' dinghies moored behind the house with retrieval lines running out from the seawall to offshore anchors. BYOB cocktails started around sunset on the verandas, and George said that if he ever locked his front door, half the neighborhood would have broken noses.

In addition to being a social center and dinghy dock for the neighborhood, the house was used by many boating transients who were acquainted with a member of the Club. This included sailors visiting Newport on their way somewhere else, visiting race participants, folks who lived out of town but had a boat moored in Newport....there was quite a variety. Unfortunately, some guests considered the house more of a seamen's shelter than someone's home. George and Brenda were really good sports and liked company, but a few instances, usually involving alcohol, did eventually result in the suspension or cancellation of some Club memberships!

One summer George built a pier extending out about 40-feet from the southern corner of the seawall. The offshore end of the pier was supported by a rock-filled crib made out of railroad ties held together with rebar. George had seen plans for this design somewhere and did most of the work himself with occasional help from WSYC members if they happened along and felt guilty enough. The dock was much used at high tide, but was a bit dicey at low tide, and plans to extend it into deeper water were often discussed, but never quite materialized.



*The Washington St. Yacht Club c. 1978 as seen from the pier.  
That's me on the far left and my apartment was on the first floor,*



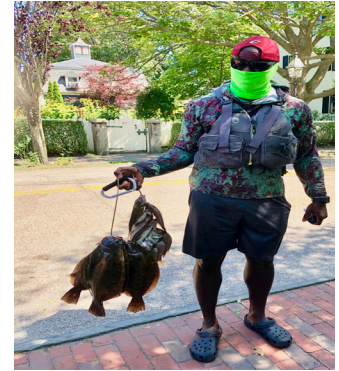
## The Washington Street Yacht Club (continued)

A few years into this era, George and Brenda had the kitchen moved from the ground floor to the second floor of the house (the first floor from the street side) and they converted the old kitchen into a one-bedroom apartment. I became the first tenant in their new apartment, which was a nice step up from living on my boat in a marina. The apartment looked out on the Bay and had a big covered patio which was perfect for parties and watching sunsets over the water. I was living in a “yacht club” with my boat moored right offshore and my skiff tied to the seawall, and life was good!

When George and Brenda sold the house, the WSYC was finally dissolved. No comparable institution took its place on the Point, and I doubt that one ever will! The pier George built was eventually destroyed by winter storms and the only sign of it today are the rocks that filled the crib and now form a reef off the south corner of the seawall - a memorial to the WSYC!

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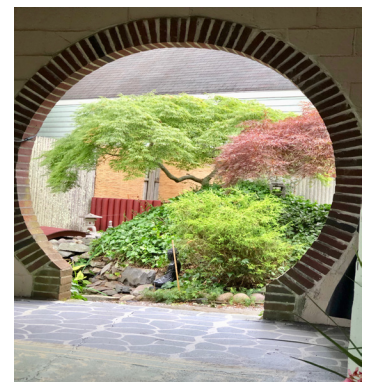
## What We Did Last Summer



On and in the water



In the Garden

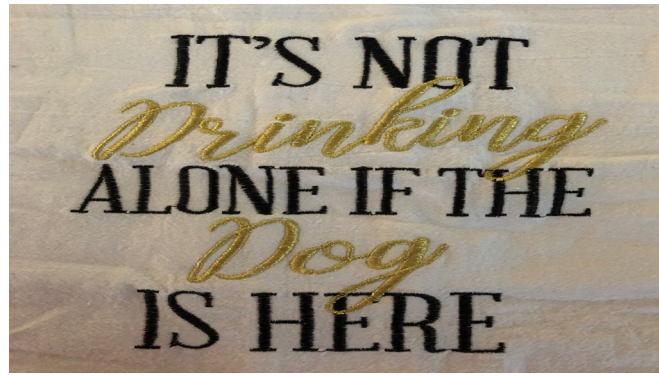




One thing for sure, the pets loved every one being at home



Lacie with Scout, Mochie and Elenor



Oliver and Mochie



Winston Schinto



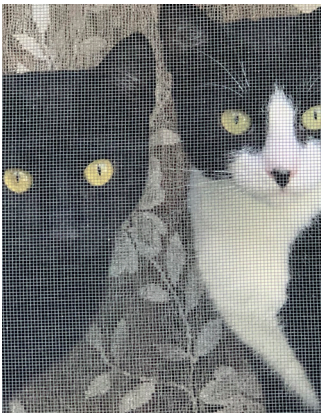
Faith Fogg



Charlie Perkins



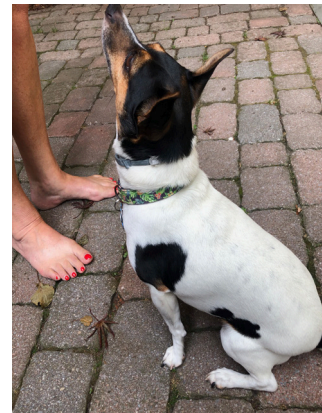
Bosley Sepinski



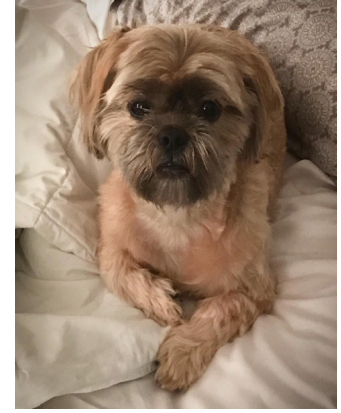
The Watchers



Molly Munich



Kris Pedro



Tuckerman Senini Mahoney



Fred McGowan



Scout Reynolds



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# Nuns on the Point

by Lisa Stuart

During the 1900s there were six orders of nuns who lived on the Point and were part of the fabric of our neighborhood. In addition to religious training they provided classes on everything from sewing to music. They took care of convalescents and also hosted retreats. Their stories are tied to the stories of several well-known Point houses.

## Sisterhood of the Holy Nativity, St. John's Episcopal Church

The Sisterhood of the Holy Nativity was founded in 1882 in Boston by Reverend Grafton and Sister Ruth Margaret. The "Charisms", which were the undergrid of their lives, are Charity, Humility, Prayer and Missionary Zeal. Their work involved them with children's ministries such as Sunday School, Summer Camp and Vacation Bible School.

The Sister's convent was located at 55 Washington Street which was built in 1850 and originally stood at Washington and Elm. It was one of the many houses moved by Sarah Kendall when she built her house at that location. Kendall moved the house to 55 Washington (at Poplar) after moving the Captain Philips house first from that location. In 1915, 55 Washington was sold to the Smith Family. They initially used it as a summer cottage, but shortly after purchasing it they rented it to the Sisterhood. After Ester Smith died in 1943 it was sold to the Sisters. In 1955 the house was put up for public auction.



The Sisterhood of the Holy Nativity was associated with St. John's Episcopal Church. They participated in the Church's annual summer festival, the Christmas sale and the Christmas pageant. They also oversaw the annual musical. Sister Veronica of the Providence Order shared that the Sisters would teach church school and visit the ill.



*On the left, Paul Manuel shared with us this wonderful card the Sisters sent to his parents when they wed.*

Terry Grosvenor, who owned the house in the 1970s, shared this memory:

"When I moved back to Newport in 1976 and inhabited the second floor at #55 Washington Street, my living room was where the chapel with leaded windows had been. It was located at the front of the house, which faced west. While lying on the sofa reading one evening at dusk, I experienced a ghostly vision. Three nuns

passed through the chapel and entered a small side room to the right that was filled with bookshelves. It was very non-threatening, almost peaceful, and has always stayed with me."

## Sisters of the Cenacle and Christi Carmelites, Convent of the Cenacle

John and Elizabeth Auchincloss built their home at 111 Washington Street (then numbered 103 and now part of Harbor House) in the late 1850s as a summer cottage. When Elizabeth died in 1902 her son John Dudley Auchincloss Jr., who built and lived at Hammersmith Farm, rented the house out for several years. In 1905 he deeded the property to Agnes Storer and Marie Cisneros for \$1. Not wanting anyone else to live in the house since “no one could ever be as happy in the house as our family,” he sold the house to William B. Manuel with the stipulation it be moved by November 1, 1905. Manuel often purchased homes for salvage. It appears that although Manuel salvaged material from the house he left the boiler in the cellar and left part of the building.

In 1906 Agnes Storer gifted to estate to the Cenacle Sisters. Boston architect Charles Bruen Perkins designed a wooden building, with a plaster outside, giving the effect of stone. In their paper on the Auchincloss Family in Newport (Newport History, Vol. 83, Issue 271, Fall 2014) Richard Lundgren along with Hugh Auchincloss III and Maya Auchincloss compared the design elements and surmised that the convent was built around the core of the Auchincloss House.



The Cenacle Sisters were founded in 1826 in La Louvesc France by Saint Theresa Couderc and Father Stephen Terme. Many pilgrims came to Saint Teresa’s village to pray at the shrine of St. Regis. Since there was no suitable place for women pilgrims to stay many slept in the Church. Saint Theresa created a hostel for the women. While staying at the hostel the women would also participate in prayers. This led to a program of retreats for women.

In 1892, Sisters came from France to New York City. The order grew and spread throughout the United States. The Sisters came to Newport to provide retreats for women and later expanded to include retreats for teenagers. After showing success in the first year, the St. Francis Guest House was built to house retreat attendees. In 1914 The Order of St. Regis added the Nun’s Annex, The Cenacle Chapel and the Chaplain’s Cottage.



*Two sisters having fun in the convent kitchen*





The Sisters of the Cenacle held bazaars and garden parties. They also gave lessons in French, music and catechism. Children were rewarded with a cookie after religious instruction. The Sisters were all well educated. They maintained a circulating library on the Point. Other instruction included embroidery, quilting and china painting.

In a Green Light article Joan Marren Calcutt recalled that each weekend carloads of Catholic women came for the weekend retreats. She prepared the meals and three local girls acted as waitresses. The menu was always the same: Friday night was salmon loaf, Saturday was hot dogs and beans and Sunday night had Baked Alaska for dessert.

Anita "Nina" Peter Johnson recalled in another Green Light article, "My mother died when I was four years old, but I had so many other "Mothers" who loved me spiritually. Mother Deceraux and Mother Manning were two people I remember at the convent."

The Newport Daily News reported that in 1943 there were 27 retreats scheduled there. But by 1955 the number of Sisters of the Cenacle had dwindled and the nuns gave up the Cenacle to consolidate in Middletown, Connecticut. The Cenacle was sold to the Christi Carmelites, an order which also conducts retreats. That order is from Trinidad and was founded in 1908.

The first week the Carmelites took possession of the Cenacle they hosted a retreat that had been previously arranged by the Sisters of the Cenacle. In addition to retreats the Nuns hosted Navy functions. The Chaplin House usually housed a Navy Chaplin.

In 1990 the Carmelites closed the Cenacle. Sister Jane Frances of the Christi Carmelite Sisters shared: "We were saddened by a shortage of sisters to carry on retreat work."

### **The Sisters of St. Joseph's Church, Hunter House**

In anticipation of establishing a hospital for women, Dr. Horatio Storer purchased Hunter House in 1881 and named it Shore Haven. His plans were halted when he cut his hand during an operation. It became badly infected ending his days as a surgeon. He instead began to champion ethical causes related to women's health.

In 1916 Dr. Storer and his daughter Agnes opened Shore Haven as a place for women who were discharged from the hospital but still required time for convalescing. They noted that a few patients would be received at rates usually charged in such high-class institution, but those of moderate means would be received also.

Within the year however they closed the convalescent home. In a letter to the Newport Mercury Dr. Storer wrote, "The year's experience has proved the existence of the need we have endeavored partially to fill, through the good offices of Miss Bergin R.N. and Miss Latchford R.N. and our intentions remains unaltered, but the country's entrance into the war delays its fulfillment. We hitherto have held ourselves in readiness to respond to any sudden demand from the Red Cross or the naval service. These demands seems to us, will be adequately met..."

Feeling the Red Cross would not need Shore Haven for their work, Dr. Storer determined the greatest possible good to the greatest possible number would be to gift the house to St. Joseph's Church on Broadway as a home for their nuns. The nun's current convent on

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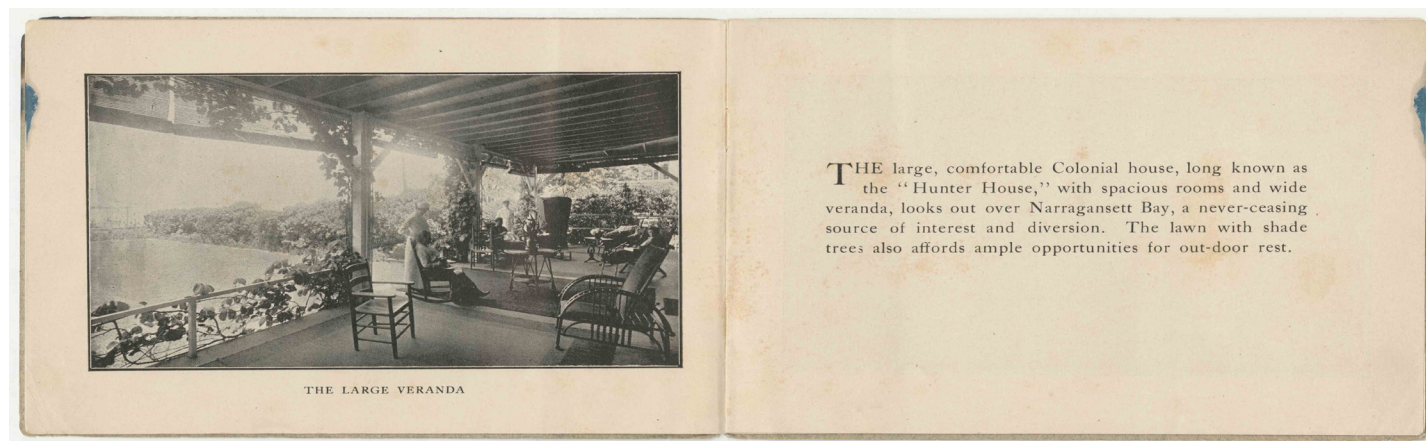
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**(Nuns, continued)** Mann Avenue was overcrowded—a situation made even more dire since Nuns from several of the other orders often stayed with them.

The nuns taught at St. Joseph's School. Concerts were held at Shore Haven/Hunter House. The pupils sang and played instruments to the delight of their friends and relatives. The nuns lived there until the early 1940s when they decided to move closer to the church. The Nuns put Hunter House up for sale.



THE large, comfortable Colonial house, long known as the "Hunter House," with spacious rooms and wide veranda, looks out over Narragansett Bay, a never-ceasing source of interest and diversion. The lawn with shade trees also affords ample opportunities for out-door rest.

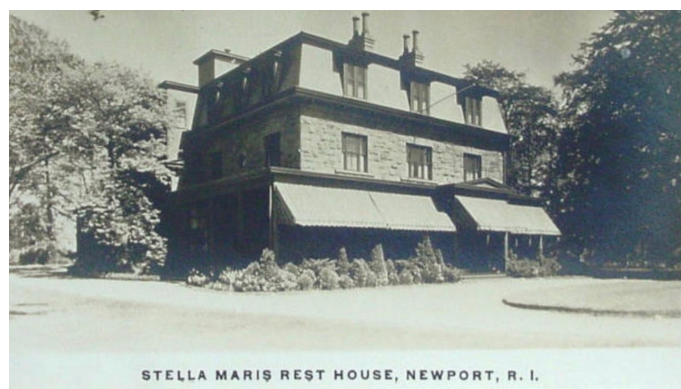
The renovation movement by individuals was just taking hold on the Point at this time. John Perkins Brown, having restored several houses, was one of the leaders of the movement. Concerned that Hunter House would be razed if the nuns were unable to find a buyer he persuaded three local men to purchase the property, one of them was George Henry Warren. George was asked if he would become president of the three-man preservation group. He declined, but said his wife Katherine would take his place and thus was the beginning of the Preservation Society.

### **Daughters of the Holiday Spirit and the Sisters of St. Joseph's of CLUNY, Stella Maris**

In 1926 Agnes Storer purchased Stella Maris, 96 Washington Street which was built by Edward Mayer for his wife Agnes in the 1860s. Here, under the auspices of the Catholic Diocese of Fall River, Agnes established the convalescent home that her father had envisioned many years ago. The facility was presented to Bishop Hickey and staffed by the Daughters of the Holy Spirit. The Sisters were often called The White Sisters since they wore long white robes.

The order is a Roman Catholic Religious Congregation founded in Brittany, France in 1706. The first Daughters chose to live together and serve the poor, the ill and children. According to The Newport Daily News (August 7, 2013) the first White Sisters arrived in Newport in 1909 to care for the poor and needy.

Meeting a very real need in the community, the organization flourished. In 1946 The Church revealed plans to raze Stella Maris and build a new facility that would combine the convalescent home with the aged women's home at St.





**(Nuns, continued)** Clare's Convent on Thames Street. The intention was to house discharged patients from the hospital. The Point neighborhood objected due to the size and scope of the project. Fortunately for the Point, the plans were put on hold due to the cost.

In 1966 Stella Maris was found to not conform with state regulations for convalescent homes and the operation was closed down. Like many other orders, the number of Daughters of the Holy Spirit was shrinking. The last two Daughters who had served in Newport retired in 2013 to Provincial House in Putnam, Connecticut.

For a brief period in the late 1960s the Sisters of St. Joseph of CLUNY took up residence at Stella Maris while establishing their school. The Sisters of St. Joseph of CLUNY are a Roman Catholic religious institute founded in 1807 who devote themselves to missionary work and providing education to the poor.

The nuns on the Point are fondly remembered by many Pointers. If you have a story to share, we'd love to hear it.

KATE  
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*Sales Associate*

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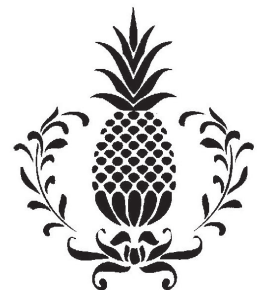
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## Newport In Bloom Awards

The winning garden for Area I Residential from NIB belongs to Joe and Barbara Tortellini. 52 Third St.

Other winners are Ann McMahon of 7 Guerney Ct and Sarah Bullock of 17 Chestnut St.

Best Overall Garden was won by Pat and Gary Gaddy at 6 Pine St.

Carol Nagle won best containers at 63 Third St.

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## Recent Home Sales on the Point

(May 1 - September 30, 2020)

### SINGLE FAMILY HOMES

88 Washington St. (3 bedrooms/2 baths)	\$3,580,000
101 Washington St. (7 bedrooms/4.5 baths)	\$2,850,000
67 Bridge St. (4 bedrooms/3.5 baths)	\$2,075,000
91 Washington St. (14 bedrooms/13.5 baths)	\$1,750,000
58 Poplar St. (4 bedrooms/4 baths)	\$1,480,000
39 Elm St. (4 bedrooms/2.5 baths)	\$1,106,000
21 Elm St. (4 bedrooms/2 baths)	\$885,000
32 Walnut St. (4 bedrooms/2.5 baths)	\$755,000
17 Cherry St. (3 bedrooms/1.5 baths)	\$726,000
114 Second St. (4 bedrooms/1.5 baths)	\$725,000
10 Sunshine Ct. (2 bedrooms/2 baths)	\$720,000
26 Third St. (4 bedrooms/1.5 baths)	\$680,000
74 Bridge St. (3 bedrooms/2.5 baths)	\$650,000
91 Third St. (5 bedrooms/2 baths)	\$614,500
88 Third St. (2 bedrooms/2 baths)	\$610,000
16 Poplar St. (3 bedrooms/1.5 baths)	\$550,000
15 Willow St. (2 bedrooms/2 baths)	\$540,000
12 LaSalle Place (3 bedrooms/1.5 baths)	\$532,500
1 Maitland Ct. (3 bedrooms/1 bath)	\$355,000

### MULTI-FAMILY HOMES

19 Third St. (2 units/5 bedrms/2 baths/2 half baths)	\$780,000
26 Poplar St. (2 units/5 bedrooms/4 baths)	\$750,000
17 Cross St. (2 units/4 bedrooms/2 baths)	\$745,000

### CONDOS

110 Second St. (2 bedrooms/1 bath)	\$325,000
------------------------------------	-----------

If you are thinking of selling - or buying - a home on the Point, no one knows the distinct charms of your neighborhood quite like Gladys Barbosa.

With over 15 years of experience in the luxury real estate market, combined with family ties going back more than 6 generations on the Point, it seems kind of pointless to look any further!

For a free market analysis of your home's current value, contact Gladys...

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## Save the Dates

There will be a **Holiday Tree Lighting** outdoors at Storer Park in December. Stay tuned on FB for the exact date and time.

The **Annual Fund Raiser for the MLK Center** will take place this year. You will be able to donate online or send a check. The Point Association was awarded the prestigious honor of *"Keeper of the Dream"* last year for past donations and service on behalf of this agency. It is more important than ever to support this agency. Watch our FaceBook Page and Points of Interest for more information.



### More Ways to be "In The Know"

**By Mail:** The Point Association. P.O. Box 491 Newport, RI 02840

**Points of Interest:** a Monthly eNewsletter to your E-mail

**Our website:** [Thepointassociation.org](http://Thepointassociation.org)

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Join us Monday, Tuesday and Wednesdays for our dinner special two entrees from a select menu for \$19 and add a bottle of select wine for an additional \$13.

For reservations call 401 849 6312.



Imbriglio's Pizzeria Napoletana 32 Memorial BLVD. West

Specializing in authentic Neopolitan Pizza. Available for dine-in or take-out seven days a week from 5 to 10, and open for lunch on Saturday's and Sunday's 11:30 – 4.

For take-out call 401 849 6312.

## THE GREEN LIGHT

The Point Association

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*Photo: Ann McMahon*

*"Fred" McGowan rides his skateboard every chance he gets.*

*You can meet his owner and publicist Tom McGowan at the end of Maitland Court*

*To see him in action, click this link or view The GreenLight on line.*

<https://thepointassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/FredtheBulldogonSkateBd.mov>

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