

The GREEN LIGHT

BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

Winter 2022 to Spring 2023



Photo by Vickie Morro

Trudy's Shed at the Second Street home of Mike and Trudy Conroy is a favorite spot on the Point's *Secret Garden Tour*, July 7-9, 2023

The GREEN LIGHT

The GREEN LIGHT LXVII No. 1
Winter 2022 to Spring 2023

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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

I am particularly proud of this issue. History and Archives leader Lisa Stuart's article about the Point during the American Revolution highlights the significant contribution Rhode Island in general and Newport and the Point in particular made in the birth of our nation.

Lisa also contributed a story of Historic Music on the Point. It focuses on the music that was played on the luxury steamships of the Old Fall River Line. These New York - bound liners were second only to the Navy in terms of commerce in Newport, as Long Wharf was lined with businesses providing the means for food, repairs, upholstery and other needs.

I grew up in Fall River and this song was the "pep rally tune" for the local high school.

On the old Fall River Line (Repeat)

I fell for Suzy's line of talking and Suzy fell for mine.

Oh! We fell in with the parson, and he tied us tight as twine,

Now I wish, oh Lord, I fell overboard

On the Old Fall River Line.

See you 'round the 'hood.

Ann McMahon Greenlight@thepointassociation.org

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President's Letter

Dear Neighbor:

While it may still be cold and grey as I write this letter for the Green Light, knowing the new issue is under way is a sure sign that spring is too! And with spring comes another exciting season of neighborhood events which I know we look forward to all winter. Speaking of events, we enjoyed quite a few great ones since my last letter to you that I'm happy to share.

August's highlight was no doubt our annual summer cocktail party, this year graciously hosted at Hunter House by Trudy Cox, CEO of The Preservation Society of Newport County. Turnout was fantastic and a fun time was had by all, including a special thank you presentation to Ann Covell for her many years of graciously hosting previous years' cocktail parties at Villa Marina. Plans are already under way for the 2023 party which will again be at Hunter House.

September's Membership Meeting featured a presentation from Scott Wheeler, Superintendent of Parks about the upcoming restoration/renovation of the Pine Street drift way. Speaking of drift ways, the Point Association Board supported the City Council's resolution to eliminate parking on the unpaved Walnut and Chestnut Street drift ways which passed unanimously. This has already improved public access to the water via these drift ways as well as keeping the view unobstructed. We look forward to additional landscaping improvements to those drift ways as well.

The September meeting also featured the announcement of our Storer Park Flag Pole project, spearheaded by Rich Abbinanti, Chair of the Beautification Committee. The flag pole is already in place thanks to the nearly 150 people who've donated via the "buy-a-brick" program. The expensive electrical work is done and the flag pole is already lit nightly in anticipation of flag installation this May in time for the War College's Memorial Day remembrance event. What a wonderful addition to our largest neighborhood park.

Halloween brought our very first Kids & Pets Halloween Parade and Costume Contest and what a fun time was had by all! I'm excited for its return this year which, by popular demand, will include a costume contest for adults as well!

While the annual Holiday Tree Lighting was as frosty as ever, the crowd was warmed by hot chocolate courtesy of Rich Willis from Point Liquors and Caleb and Broad, holiday cookies from French Connection (thanks to our History and Archives Chair, Lisa Stuart), and an especially fun performance from the Choir School of Newport County accompanied by Peter Berton's Tesla which provided flashing lights and musical backup.

The final event of 2022/first event of 2023 was our return to the Newport Yacht Club for a sold out New Year Kickoff celebration. It was so nice to be back after a several year Covid pause and best of all, John Broughan proudly shared the record breaking results of our 9th annual MLK Center fundraising drive - \$23,000!!! Since starting in 2013, the Point Association MLK Center drive has raised an astounding \$122,000. A huge thank you to our many members for their generous contributions to such a worthy cause.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our Spring Meeting, scheduled for May 16th and at our many events again this year. Please be sure to visit our website thepointassociation.org and watch for Points of Interest emails for the latest info on dates and events! And if you have any thoughts or suggestions you'd like to share with me about the Point Association, I'd love to hear them. Please feel free to email me at president@thepointassociation.org.

Sincerely,

Ken Snyder



MLK Community Fundraising Drive... Neighbors Helping Neighbors

by Lisa Elliott

As the holidays begin each year, life gets hectic: traveling, hosting, attending family and social gatherings and managing what can be a very expensive time of the year.

In short, it's a very challenging time, but that doesn't stop many of the Point Association neighbors from participating in the annual PA fundraising drive for the Martin Luther King Community Center (MLKCC).

Each year, donations come from year-round and seasonal residents who donate to the MLKCC holiday drive. Since the start of the drive in 2013, Point neighbors have generously increased donations each year with donations totaling more than \$23,000 in 2022 and \$122,000 since its inception.

Over the years, many neighbors have learned about the truly impressive amount of work that is being done less than a mile away by a small but tireless MLKCC team. Almost two dozen programs critical to serving local children and families in need are offered. These include: an after school program, meal programs, food delivery to the homebound, books for kids, mobile food pantry, Santa's workshop (toy/gift help) and summer camp, to name a few.

John Broughan, who has chaired the Holiday Drive has shared that every time he has taken neighbors for a tour of the MLKCC, they say, "Wow...I had no idea".

You might expect that a community organization like the MLKCC would be primarily funded by government entities, but only 2.4% of the Center's budget comes from federal, state or city funding, making the private donations contributed by the PA neighbors even more important!

Heather Hole Strout, Executive Director and the entire MLKCC team couldn't be more grateful for the funds and the relationship with the PA neighbors. As Heather shared, "I can't imagine the MLK or Newport without the Point Association. They are a community of neighbors who care deeply about this special place we call home. Members give to the Center, volunteer in our programs, and attend our events. They're a committed group who make our community a better place for all of us.

At right: John Broughan, Point Association Holiday Fundraising Coordinator, presents a check to Heather Hole Strout, Executive Director and Alyson Novick, Director of Development at MLKCC



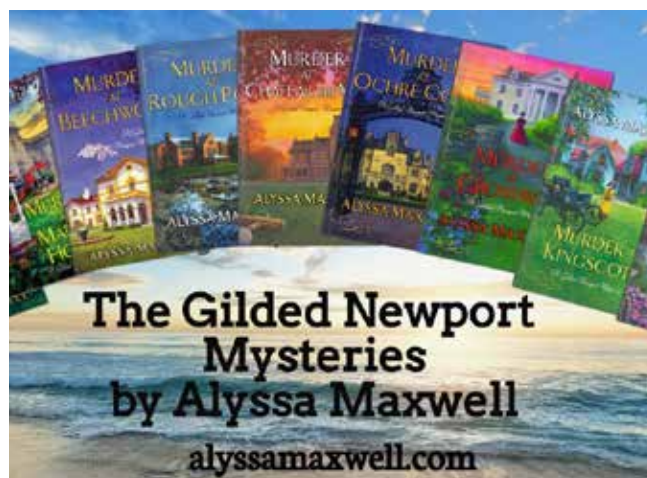
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Ramp Realignment and What it Means for the Point.

by Ann McMahon

Thanks go to Representative Lauren Carson for instigating the well attended meeting at CCRI held in March 13, 2023. The impact of the changes on residents of Newport was explained by Jody Richards, Project Director for the RI DOT Pell/Newport Bridge Ramp Realignment Project. You can see the excellent maps and at: <http://www.dot.ri.gov/projects/pellbridgeramps/>

The key to navigating all of these changes is to be sure you are in the correct lane for where you want to ultimately go. This is especially true when you are navigating the smaller rotary.

For Point drivers in particular: The first off ramp to Downtown will be gone. Point residents now will travel a bit further east on the Bridge, staying in the left lane on the ramp now called Halsey Boulevard to a left turn onto a connector road to merge onto Farewell Street and then take the usual right at VanZandt.



Sheltie "Ray" Brandon surveys the new path.

One also has option to travel to the end of the Halsey Boulevard Ramp choosing the far left lanes to travel west to the Rotary and then beyond to the traffic light at Third Street and Training Station Road. Travelers could also keep to the far right lanes on Halsey Boulevard and travel east up to Malbone Road and travel home that way.

The existing "Road to Nowhere" will be torn down and a new straight road will go from the signals at Farewell and VanZandt north to the Rotary with vehicles having a speedier route along JT Connell Highway up to the intersections of East and West Main Roads. These changes are expected to eliminate a lot of traffic from cars and trucks that currently use the Point as a cut through to the Navy Base. That will be most appreciated by those living on those busy streets.

Affecting many people living on or close to the 'Courts' on the Point is a new Shared Use Path for bikes, pedestrians and, eventually, a bus or rail shuttle. This Path will eventually connect with the new bike paths further north and run along the tracks between the Point and the Braman and Old North Cemeteries and end at the little Bridge Street train depot.

Good news for dogs: there will be a new dog park around where the Newport Playhouse is now and Fido will have a nice walk to and from the park to romp with his or her friends. There is also a planned 250 vehicle "Park and Ride" lot near there. The hope is that it will eliminate some of the auto congestion in downtown Newport.



At right, the shared use path veers to the left and runs alongside America's Cup. This was necessary to preserve the Walnut Street bridge abutments because they are considered historic structures.

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Kick-off to 2023 at Newport Yacht Club in January



Neighbors at the Newport Yacht Club watch as the check from the Point Association is given to representatives of the MLK Community Center



Mary and Don Mang enjoyed themselves at the Newport Yacht Club event.





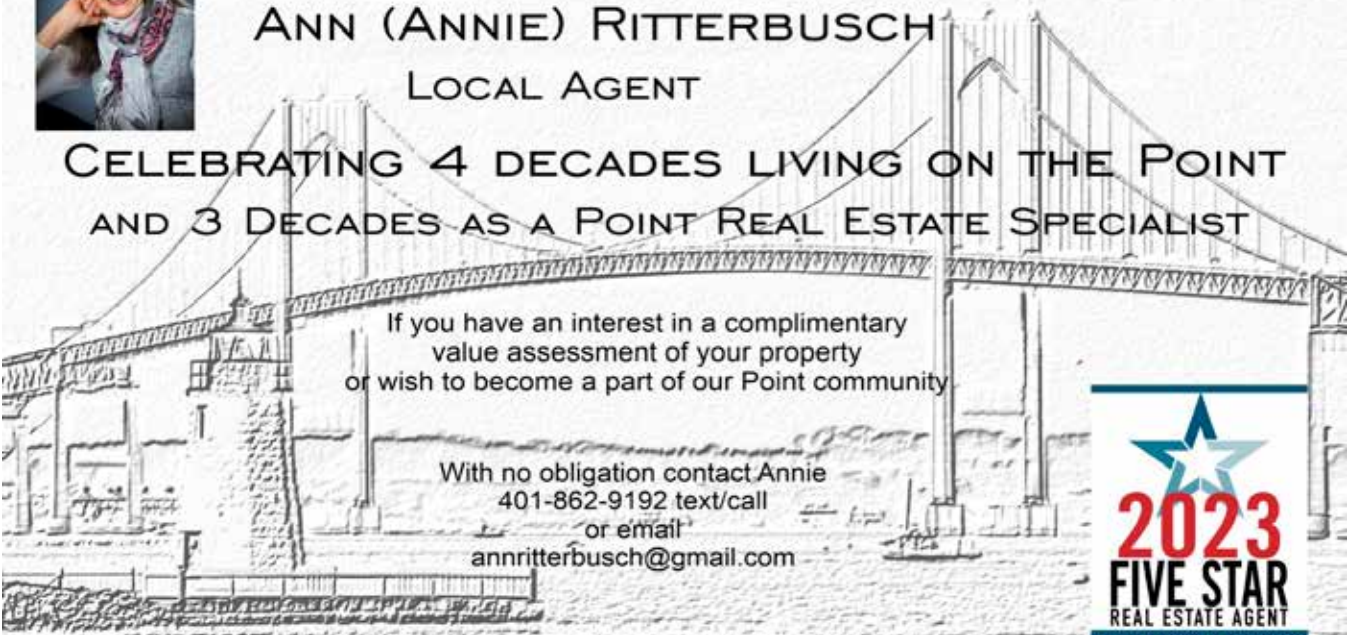
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Holidays on the Point

Volunteers hung the wreaths donated by Leigh Gallagher (thank you Leigh!) on the old fashioned lamp posts. L to R: Rich Abbinanti, Beth O'Shea, Nancy Scott, John Ward.

Homes from upper left clockwise: 51 Third Street, 31, 39 Second Street, 30 Walnut Street, 38 Second Street window box, Barbara Bessette's Holiday tree in planter at Battery Park, 47 Poplar Street. Nina Lynette Retirement Home is a beacon on the Point.



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63 Years of Plant Sales on the Point

by Susie Bowen Powers

I have been reviewing *the Green Light* archives to learn about the beginnings and growth of the Point Plant Sale. Although there were street fairs in the late 1980s and 1990s, the sale was and still is the work horse for raising funds for the Point Association.

The first 'sale' was an informal gathering of friends who came for coffee and brought plants to share. A basket was available for donation money and the profit was \$35. These humble beginnings were in 1959 at the home of Henry and Isabelle Eccles at 101 Washington St. and remained there until Anita McAndrews (last owner) passed away in 2005.

The crew that I joined in 1987 included Anne Reynolds, Ilse Nesbitt, Muriel Case, and Mrs Robert Frye - I was listed as Sara Bowen (sigh). It was chaired by Rosalyn (Posey) Hall. Posey's cousin Bruce Howe had greenhouses at his large home on Ocean Dr. in which his gardeners grew many plants for the estate. He brought us the extra plants each year until the late 1990s. To our benefit also, on the day of the sale, Herb Rommel would arrive with a single, freshly dug and rather sorry looking Iris in his hand. His Irises, however, were prized and folks bid for the honor of having a Herb Rommel cultivar.

The Beautification Committee planted trees and, in 1988, was responsible for the placement of large planters in the parks. This was mentioned in the Newport Daily News and shortly thereafter, the geraniums were looted from the planters. This makes me smile as the practice continues, sporadically, to this day. In 1980, Jack Martins (who ran the Third St Liquor Store and Market) started a formal spring 'clean up' on the Point. I mention these 2 additional endeavors as they are now rolled in with the Plant Sale under the capable chair head Richard Abbinanti.

During the 1980s I was lucky enough to have rented on the 3rd floors of two Washington St homes. While living there I formed a close relationship with Anne Reynolds who lived in the "bee hive oven" house on 88 Washington St. She taught me much about gardening. She had extensive knowledge as well as strong opinions; I miss her. We would all go to Posey's home for our pre-sale meetings. Anne said we ate 'cat hair quiche' (Posey's eyesight wasn't the best). Some of you will remember Posey as the dog lady. She would walk her 5 or 6 dogs - the little ones in a grocery cart and the big ones all on leashes wrapping 'round her legs in a cat's cradle. But I digress.

In the 1990s, Anne, Posey, Ilse, Joan Stickley, and I shared being co-chairs. The profits were approaching \$1400. During that decade there were street fairs, new stop signs, recycling, and activism, One year we all wore buttons with the prohibition symbol for "no noise" in order to put constraints on Goat Island's outdoor entertainment desires. Sorry - another digression. Donations of plants from local 'green' businesses - florists, garden centers and wholesale nurseries and from gardens of Point residents were a staple which continues to this day.



In 2001 Isabel Griffith took over as Chair. She and Marcia Mallory continued the sale at 101 Washington until it transitioned to Isabel's backyard in 2006 and from there to St. John's Churchyard. The baton was passed from Mary Berlinghof to Laurie Shaw. When Laurie moved away, Richard and Nancy Abbinanti took the reins. Mark Marosits and Maureen Cronin came next and in 2022, the responsibilities went back to the Abbinantis. We worker bees know our duties by heart and enjoy each other's company so 'if the good lord willin' and the creek don't rise', the Plant Sale will continue.

Plant Sale committee members in the 1990's are:
(l to r) Betty Cares, David Aguiar, Judy Leet, Christine Montanaro, Martha Marie Grogan, Melanie Aguiar, Anne Reynolds (seated) Sally Mackay, Susie Powers, Ilse Nesbitt, Anita McAndrews (hostess), Kay O'Brien and Nancy Espersen (Your Photographer)

Plant “Bad Boys”

by Susie Bowen Powers

I know it's a bit early to think about plants, though I think about them all the time, but I wanted to inform you all regarding 3 plants that have decided that the Point is a dandy place to proliferate. It has been said that a weed is just a plant growing in the wrong space. *But* if you choose to live with these bad boys, it is good to be knowledgeable about them.



Aegopodium (I know it's a mouthful) This plant is also called by the common name **Bishop's Weed** or **Gout Weed**. Its bloom looks like an anemic Queen Ann's Lace. It is a ground cover that knows no boundaries. Plantsman Alan Armitage states "It is invasive and jumps and frolics through the garden." This is an accurate statement, but I would take issue with the word *frolic* - bull in a china shop comes more to mind. Ask the folks who tend Hosta Alley in Storer Park what they think of it. If you like this plant, fine. But if you want to *try* to get rid of it: don't hand pull or use a trowel or cultivator; this weed just multiplies when the root system is broken. Use a shovel, flip the contents over and look for white traveling roots... that's the bad boy. Gently remove them *all* from the soil, then repeat. Don't compost- trash 'em. If he's ensconced around your privet- you might as well give him a name because he is part of your family now.



Matelea The common name for this plant is also a mouthful. **Carolina False Vining Milkweed** is a vine with lovely dark green leaves, a weeny (1/8 inch) dark purple flower with a yellow center, and a seed pod that looks like a milkweed pod. The big bummer with this plant is that the Monarch butterfly thinks it *is* a Milkweed (*Asclepius*) and lays eggs on it. The caterpillar will starve because it needs to eat *Asclepius*, not this counterfeit. It's not supposed to be hardy up this far north, but no one told *Matelea*. To get rid of it, take a dandelion weeder and dig under the stem. You should pull up a white hand-like clump of roots. Don't hand pull the stem or it will come off at ground level and it will "be back" kinda like the Terminator.



Ranunculus ficaria or *Ficaria verna* The common name is **Lesser Celandine**, **Fig Buttercup**, or, my personal favorite, **Pilewort** (we won't discuss what the colonials thought it would cure). Folks around here mistakenly think they have Marsh Marigold growing in delightful patches in their lawn or around the privet. *Oh, non, mes amis*. True, they are similar and bloom in early spring, but Marsh Marigold *Caltha palustris* grows in moist marshes, wet woods, and swamps (and is beautiful).

Pilewort (sorry- I can't help myself) comes up before other spring plants. It loves moist areas. It has 2 ways to reproduce: above ground bulblets, and tubular roots. Pilewort dies back when the ground dries and the plant goes dormant for 6 months. It is labeled a noxious weed by USDA. To get rid of this bad boy, you need to dig down till you see the swollen tubers of roots (see photo at lower left) The whole plant needs to go, so don't hand pull and don't compost.



Above - tubular roots of pilewort

Needless to say, these 3 are *not* sold at the Point Plant Sale. We would love your other plants, however, for the sale. Please think of dividing, digging, potting, and sharing as you get ready for spring in April. And thank you in advance.

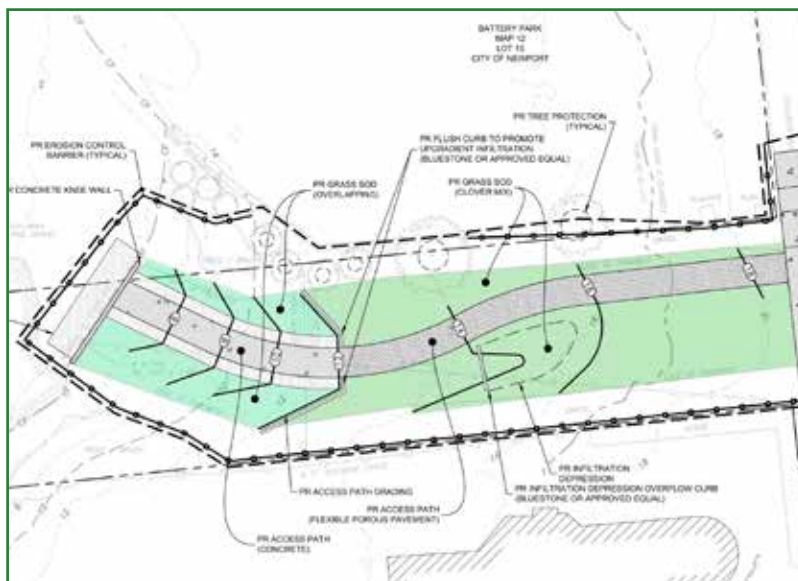
This year's Plant Sale will be held on Saturday, May 27, from 8 to 12 at the parking lot of St John's Church. Donations of plants are requested and can be dropped off at the driveway of 30 Second St after May 1st. Pots and soil are available there if needed. Your help will contribute greatly to the success of our Sale.

Fall Meeting Had a Few Surprises

by Ann McMahon

About 50 people gathered at St John's on September 20 for the PA Fall Meeting. The first order of business was to officially vote in President Ken Snyder and Recording Secretary Nancy Abbinanti.

Extremely interesting to the attendees was a presentation by Scott Wheeler, Superintendent of Parks, Grounds & Forestry or the City of Newport. He presented a draft plan for changes for the Pine Street Driftway which goes down to our beloved Blue Rocks. The goals are to ameliorate the flow of stormwater into the Harbor and to make the area more accessible to shoreline viewing and activities. He mentioned that Battery Park, considering its relatively small size, was among the most utilized parks in the City.



Beautification Committee head Richard Abbinanti presented a plan for the Point Association to provide a large American Flag for Storer Park. The City has provided a 250 foot flagpole. Abbinanti explained that if the flag was lighted, it would not need to be taken down at night. He announced a plan to pay for a trench to be dug to provide underground electrical cables for the light. The project will be financed by the sale of bricks that can be inscribed by the purchaser.

A very creative wreath appeared on the Walnut Street driftway this winter. Both the Walnut and Chestnut Street drift-ways will become “pocket parks” this spring in order to preserve access for all Newporters and visitors to the water view and to the little beaches below. Parking is not allowed on *these particular* driftways. In the past, cars and trucks three abreast often blocked the way to these unique scenic spots.



Photo by Ken Snyder
The Green Light

Photo by Ann McMahon

Halloween Parade

It was hard to tell how it would go. October's bright blue sky was promising but as this was the first time for this event, the volunteers were worried. Refreshments were in place, orange and black balloons were tied down and the kid's Creative Table was in place but at 5 minutes to start time, only volunteers were there. It happened fast though – at 5 after 2, Storer Park was swarming with Point residents and their pets, many of them unrecognizable in their artistic costumes. Hard to say who had the most fun – the kids, the dogs, the grown ups or, quite possibly, the cat!



Reports of Queen Elizabeth's death, like Mark Twain's, were greatly exaggerated, as here she was! She had an uncanny resemblance to our own Chris Smith from Second Street



Alisa Anthony and Xay Khamsyvoravong had the most creative ensembles, she as an astronaut and he as the geeky rocket scientist. Alisa carried their cat in its own space capsule from which he looked at the dogs below with disdain.

Volunteers were Mary Beth and Peter Jenkins, Jennie Zuerner, Susan Pedro, Deb Arnold, Maggie Thomas, Ann McMahon, Ken Snyder and Gladys Barbosa.



BlackJack, a Bernese Mountain Dog, owned by Ed Remington and Sheila Viveiros from Pine Street, was quite a mouthful of hotdog!

Daffodillion Volunteers

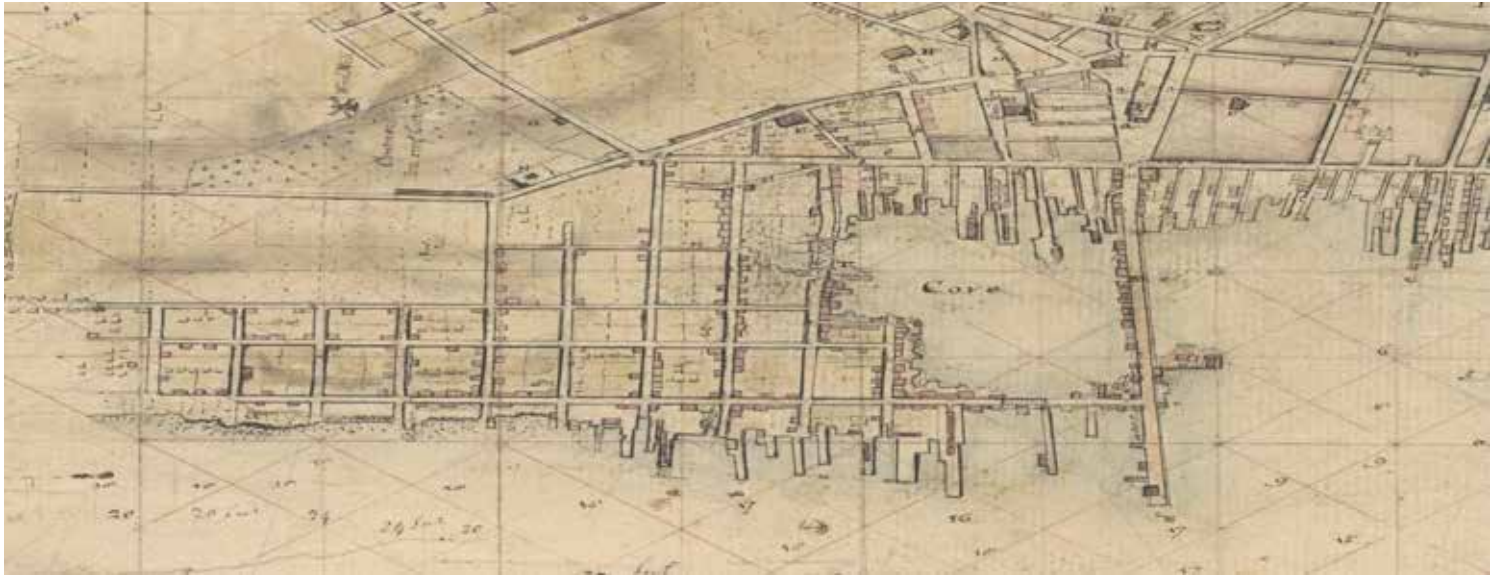


You have these folks to thank for the welcome sight of daffodils blooming in Storer Park. These volunteers planted them one cool October day last fall. From Left: Nancy Abbinanti, Beth O'Shea, Kathy Ward, Larry Farley, John Ward, Mary Shean, Scott Beattie, Nancy Keyworth. Richard Abbinanti, Beautification Committee Chairperson, took the photo.

The Point During the Revolutionary War

by Lisa Stuart

During the first half of the 1700s, the Point was a hub of commerce. The John Stevens' Shop opened on Thames Street in 1705. Long Wharf was filled with boatbuilders, ship owners and merchants. Grand Colonial houses lined the harbor. Pointers enjoyed intellectual and social activities. Our neighborhood thrived. ¹



1773 Map of The Point. Photo: University of Michigan

By the mid 1700s the Point saw early political activities.

In 1768 Solomon Southwick purchased a printing press and the Newport Mercury from James Franklin, the brother of Ben Franklin.

“During the eight years leading up to the War, while Southwick conducted the newspaper regularly and headed a growing household and shop, he increasingly produced pamphlets and books in support of the American cause against slavery.

As a government printer, he regularly issued the Colony's laws and proclamations. He was also the printer...of the first Declaration of Independence anywhere in America, enacted by the Rhode Island Assembly proclaimed in May of 1776 and published that month.”²

With the passing of the Sugar Tax the rebellion of the Colonists escalated. In 1765 the Stamp Act was passed by the British Parliament as a direct tax on the colonies. It required that many printed materials in the colonies be produced on stamped paper from London which included an embossed revenue stamp. William Ellery, who later signed the Declaration of Independence, lead protests which included hanging effigies of the three stamp distributors on Long Wharf.²



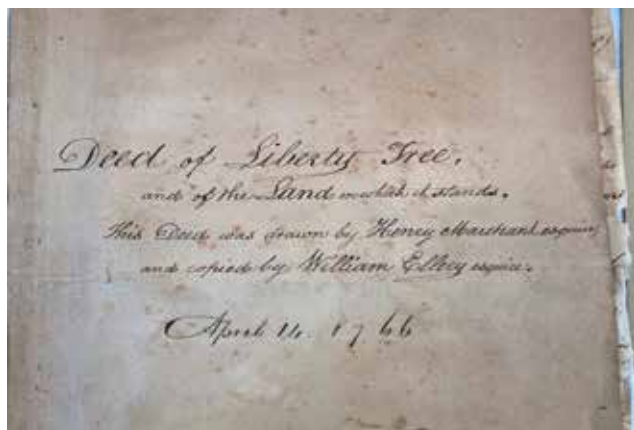
Southwick's Franklin Printing Press (which is on display at the NHS Museum of History on Long Wharf)

1. Once Upon a Time in Rhode Island, Katherine Pyle d. 1938 National Society of the Colonial Dames of America. Rhode Island, pp 87-98.

2. Phelps, C. Deirdre (2008) “Solomon Southwick, Patriotic Printer of Revolutionary Rhode Island,” Newport History: Vol. 77 : Iss. 259 , Article 2 pp. 1-2, 20-24.

The Point During the Revolutionary War (continued)

The Stamp Act was repealed in March 1766. To celebrate, Newporters planted a “Liberty Tree” where Thames and Farewell St meet. The land and tree were deeded to the Sons of Liberty. The tree was felled by the British in 1775.³



The Deed of the original Liberty Tree



The Liberty Tree, planted in 1897 still stands (but moved to Ellery Park)

At this time Newport was the fifth most important city in the Colonies with over 9,000 residents.³

A massive British invasion fleet of British and Hessian troops arrived on December 7, 1776 with the hope of strangling commerce to the extent that the Colonies would stop their rebellion. The fleet faced no opposition. Although many fled, between 2,000 to 5,000 residents remained. Many merchants hoped the occupation would result in Newport returning to the golden age of commerce.

On July 20, 1776, Ellery wrote to the Reverend Ezra Stiles regarding the proposals for “accommodation” recently offered by Britain, “... the door is shut ... We have been driven into a Declaration of Independency & must forget our former love of our British brethren. The Sword must determine our quarrel.”⁴

Prior to the war there were only two significant fortifications in Newport: *The Battery* with twelve guns on the north side of Easton’s Point and Fort George (later called Fort Liberty) on Goat Island. Additional sites were planned for Rose Island and Brenton’s Point. At the outbreak of the war, Fort George was occupied by American forces and was called Fort Liberty. The fort mounted 25 guns. By 1777 the British occupied the fort and it resumed the old name.



Plan of the town and environs of Newport, Rhode Island exhibiting its defenses formed before the 8th of August 1778 Photo: University of Michigan

3. Moore, Dave, “The Point’s Liberty Tree and Pole,” *The Green Light Summer*, 2016 pp. 18-19

4. Descendants of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence <https://www.dsdi1776.com/signer/william-ellery/>

The Point During the Revolutionary War (continued)

Sometime before August 1778 the British built a battery on Rose Island. Earthworks were built under General Sullivan by American forces in 1778 during the Battle of Rhode Island and a French fortification was constructed under Rochambeau in July of 1778.⁵

As the British occupied Newport, Pointers were divided. Loyalists such as John Wanton, owner of Hunter House, and other merchants hoped the British would restore active commerce. Others such as Ellery led the colonists in rebellion. In retaliation the British sought his house and burned it down. Others had their properties taken over by the British and suffered great economic losses.

Jonathan Easton, who owned property on Washington Street between Willow and Walnut Streets, stated he had 2 acres of turf put into the fort, three houses burnt, one house pulled down, a good orchard cut down, eight hundred trees burnt, and near 2,000 rails burnt. The only house left housed British Troops for nearly 3 years. He reported the British stole his cattle, hogs, poultry and almost everything else outdoors. The situation did not improve for him later when the French arrived. The French encamped on his property and kept their cows and horses in his meadow.⁶

With the wealthy having their orchards and livestock taken by the British, the war created an instability of social classes. The war also impacted gender roles. Women, being able to move more freely than men, took on new roles. The upheaval also produced a number of opportunities for enslaved adult males to liberate themselves.^{7,8}

The British Fleets stationed in the harbor were attacked from the sea by privateers and commerce vessels. The seamen that the British captured during these attacks were put in the prison on Marlborough Street. It soon overflowed. To deal with the overflow, prisoners were put on the transport ship Lord Sandwich (called Earl of Pembroke and later the Endeavour). It carried a Hessian regiment and was docked in Newport Harbor. The conditions on the prison ships were deplorable; poor and scanty food, lack of fresh air, lack of fresh water, crowded condition, and unsanitary handling of human waste. Disease was rampant. A smallpox hospital was established on Coaster's Harbor Island (current site of the Navel War College) in an effort to stop the spread of the disease.⁹

Southwick reported "there are many in Newport who can scarcely get a single mouthful of bread for several days together. Great deal of sickness."

Civilians were imprisoned for their patriotic sympathies. In October, 1777 the Continental Army mounted a major campaign to attack the British in Newport known as "Spencer's Expedition" after Major General Joseph Spencer. During Spencer's Expedition, the British ordered numerous local residents to be jailed, presumably out of concern the they would assist the "rebel" invasion. Among those imprisoned was furniture maker John Townsend. Knowing the dangerous conditions of starvation and disease on the prison ships, the wives and relatives of civilians pleaded for their release. The requests were met with contempt, but the civilians began to be released on November⁹.



British ill treatment of prisoners during the Occupation of Newport was notorious.

5. Johnson, Charlotte Eschenheimer (1986) "A New Perspective on Rose Island: The Evolution of its Fortifications and Defenses," Newport History: Vol. 59: Iss. 201, Article 2. pp. 1-7

6. Weiss, Ralph, "That Was When...Historic Battery Park II," The Green Light, Spring 2006, p. 14

7. McBurney, Christian M. (2017) "Freedom for African Americans in British Occupied Newport, 1776-1779," Newport History: Vol. 87: Iss. 276 Article 2.

8. Johnson, Donald F. (2015) "Occupied Newport: A Revolutionary City under British Rule," Newport History: Vol. 84: Iss. 272, Article 3.

9. McBurney, Christian M. (2010) "British Treatment of Prisoners During the Occupation of Newport, 1776-1779: Disease, Starvation and Death Stalk the Prison Ships," Newport History: Vol. 79: Iss. 263, Article 2.

The Point During the Revolutionary War (continued)

The Hessian soldiers also suffered from a lack of food and clothing. Some froze to death in their unheated guard booths. Hessian soldier Johann Conrad Dohla reported in his diary:

“December 31, 1778 Here in Newport the provisions are very small because all the storehouses have been empty and nothing more can be brought here because of the French Fleet.”

“March, 1779 An epidemic of scurvy, or so-called scarlet fever, broke out in our regiment, so that many troops had to go to the hospital.”¹⁰

The Campaign of Rhode Island, the first joint French and American campaign of the war, took place on July 29th 1778. The French naval squadron sailed into the entrance of Narragansett Bay. The British captains scuttled or burned many of their vessels to block the harbor and also to avoid capture by the French. French Admiral Comte d’Estaing set to sea to engage the British, but his scattered fleet was hit with a great storm and was forced to retreat.¹¹

The Colonial army under General John Sullivan was stranded on Rose Island and a battle with the British ensued. Although a failure for the French and American alliance, it was the beginning of the end of the war.

By late 1778 and early 1779 the conditions began to improve for the Colonists. Likely the biggest reason was that they no longer used prison ships in Newport Harbor as most of them had been sunk during the Campaign of Rhode Island. Additionally, there were more prisoner exchanges taking place.¹²

On October 25th, 1779, British occupation ended. Fort George was evacuated, reoccupied by the Colonists and re-named Fort Liberty. Hessian Soldier Joann Conrad Dohla wrote in his diary:

“At one o’clock in the afternoon we were withdrawn and all of Rhode Island, including Connanicut was completely vacated. ...Everything was embarked that it was possible to bring away... On our march out of Newport all the houses were locked...to prevent desertion....therefore, in Newport, it appeared as if the entire city had died. Our fleet consisted of 102 sails, including two warships and three frigates as escorts.”¹³

Loyalists, including John Wanton, fled with the British. In May 1780 the Admiral de Ternay and General de Rochambeau arrived in Newport. Admiral de Ternay used Hunter House as his headquarters. Tom Robinson, who had housed the British during the war, was informed that he would now give quarters to the French and Viscomte de Naoille who then lived with him for nearly a year. The French Troops departed in 1781.^{14,15}

In 1783 when hostilities ended, a group of young men planted a new Liberty Tree. During the War nearly 500 houses had been destroyed in Newport. There were no trees visible within five miles of the harbor. Only six ships remained of the 140 before the war. Newport’s infrastructure was destroyed opening the door for Providence to become the hub of commerce.

Photos for this Revolutionary War Article were provided by the Newport Historical Society.

10. Johann Conrad Dohla, *A Hessian Diary of the American Revolution, 1750-1820* (1993) University of Oklahoma Press

11. McBurney, Christian M. *The Rhode Island Campaign, The First French and American Operation in the Revolutionary War*, 2011, Pennsylvania, Westhome Publishing LLC pp 148-169.

12. McBurney, Christian M. (2010) "British Treatment of Prisoners During the Occupation of Newport, 1776-1779: Disease, Starvation and Death Stalk the Prison Ships," *Newport History*: Vol. 79 : Iss. 263 , Article 2 pp. 16-20.

13. Johann Conrad Dohla, *A Hessian Diary of the American Revolution, 1750-1820* (1993) University of Oklahoma Press p.96, p 103.

14. Powel, Miss M.E. (2003) "A Few French Officers to Whom We Owe Much -- A Paper read before the Society, August 15th, 1921," *Newport History*: Vol. 72 : Iss. 249 , Article 3.

15. Wood, Anna Wharton (2003) "The Robinson Family and their Correspondence with the Vicomte and Vicomtesse de Noailles -- A Paper Read before the Society on August 21, 1922," *Newport History*: Vol. 72: Iss. 249, Article 4 pp. 1-9.

The Revolutionary War Walking Tour of The Point

The Liberty Tree. William Ellery Park. This fern leaf beech tree was planted in 1897 and is the fourth Liberty Tree.

The site of William Ellery's House. 9 Thames Street. Ellery was a signer of the Declaration of Independence. The British burned his house down. The Colonial-style house currently on the site was built in 1979.

North Battery. Now called Battery Park

Rose Island Battery. View Rose Island from Battery Park

Jonathan Easton's Property. Washington Street between Willow and Walnut Streets. The property was occupied by the British and then by the French. The Easton House is no longer there.

Robinson House, 64 Washington Street. Robinson housed the British during the war as well as the French and Vis-comte de Naoille in 1780.

Hunter House. 54 Washington Street. Owned by loyalist John Wanton. The house was used as the French Admiral de Ternat's headquarters when Wanton fled with the British.

Fort George. Later called Fort Liberty. Goat Island. View from Storer Park

The John Townsend House. 72-74 Bridge Street. Townsend was a civilian who was imprisoned during the Spencer Expedition, an attack by the Continental Army upon the British occupying Newport. He was released a month later.

Franklin Printing Press. Museum of Newport History, Old Brick Market, 127 Thames Street. Solomon Southwick printed the Newport Mercury, government publications and the Declaration of Independence on this Printing Press he purchased from James Franklin, brother of Ben Franklin.



Newport's Solomon Southwick printed the first "broadside" in America on the Franklin Press that can be seen at the Newport Historical Society in Brick Market at the foot of Washington Square.

Welcome Becca Bertrand

New Executive Director of Newport Historical Society

by Ann McMahon

The Point Association is delighted to welcome Becca Bertrand, new Executive Director of the Newport Historical Society. Becca and Lisa Stuart, Chair of the Point's History and Archives Committee, are working to foster a closer alliance between these two organizations. The Point Association goes back 63 years and has a wealth of historic information. All can be viewed at: <https://thepointassociation.org/history-archives/> including every issue of the Green Light over from the start of the Association. Look under the Menu "Our Neighborhood" for all information plus photos and oral histories. Use the Google search engine embedded there. Reach Becca at rbertrand@newporthistory.org

Becca Bertrand has impressive credentials. She has held positions as the Executive Director of New York Yacht Club Foundation for Historic Preservation, Executive Director of newportFILM and worked at the Newport Art Museum. Becca holds a B.A. in Cultural and Historic Preservation from Salve Regina University and a M.A. from the University of Delaware's Winterthur Program in American Material Culture. She is thrilled to work closely with the Point Association and looks forward to connecting with neighbors in our historic neighborhood at the Spring Meeting on May 1.

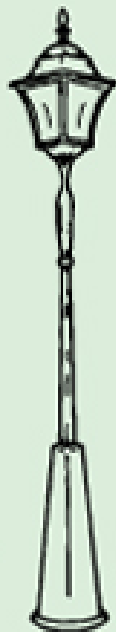


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Welcome to New Members

You have come to the right place! We are happy to welcome you and look forward to meeting you at the Point Association events. The official welcome to new members - Coffee and Mimosas - will be held on June 10. Be sure to stop in.

Amy Acampora	12 Elm St
Lindsey & Peter Allen	77 Third St
Robert Alogna	151 Tremont St, Boston
Diana Bardoff	18 Chestnut St
Richard Berlinsky	32 Bayside St
Tina Brownell	32 Bayside St
Kristin Cady	36 Poplar St
Myla Castegner	1 Sunshine Ct
Angela Downey	1 Sunshine Ct
Susan & Alan Clark	6 Guerny Ct
Kara DiCamillo	7 Chestnut St
Kyle Reichman	7 Chestnut St
Alexander & Ecaterina Fraioli	78 Third St
Julia Gail	22 1/2 Third St
Phillip Stockton	22 1/2 Third St
The Greaves Family	2 Katzman Place
Elizabeth Green	38 Second St
Kellan & Colleen Hegedus	5 Third St
Janey Howlett	33 Elm St
Mary & John Keenan	131/133 Washington St
Susan and Ron Ladd	12 Cherry St
Beth Ludwig	75 Third St
Kathy Leonard	33 Osprey Ct, Mdltwn
Bill Lewis	1312 Capella South
Susan Moradian	1312 Capella South
David MacLean and Rosaland Vaz MacLean	1517 Capella South
Laura Maldjian	66 Third St
Fraser Maloney	39 Washington St
Callum & Alexa McLaughlin	44 Thames St
Charles Pattavina	33 Poplar St
Heather & Buster Pike	7 Maitland Ct
Kenneth & Susan Richardson	57 Second St
Sharon Singer	1303 Capella South
Niall Tarrell	1303 Capella South
Jim & Brittany Souza	32 Third St
Kay Winston	26 W Narragansett Ave



Recent Home Sales on the Point

(September 1, 2022 - March 1, 2023)

Single Family Homes

17 Chestnut St (4 bedrooms/4.5 baths) \$3,250,000
 57 Second St (3 bedrooms/3.5 baths) \$2,490,000
 77 Third St (6 bedrooms/3.5 baths) \$1,950,000
 61 Second St (4 bedrooms/2.5 baths) \$1,475,000
 32 Third St (2 bedrooms/1.5 baths) \$950,000
 33 Poplar St (2 bedrooms/1.5 baths) \$805,000
 1 Sunshine Ct (3 bedrooms/2.5 baths) \$803,000
 36 Poplar St (3 bedrooms/1.5 baths) \$780,000
 12 Cherry St (2 bedrooms/1.5 baths) \$735,000
 4 Chestnut St (2 bedrooms/1 bath) \$670,000
 6 Katzman Pl (3 bedrooms/1 bath) \$650,000
 7 Maitland Ct (3 bedrooms/1 bath) \$561,000
 5 Cherry St (3 bedrooms/2 baths) \$550,000

Multi Family Homes

8 Cross St (7 bedrooms/3 baths) \$1,150,000

Condos

110 Second St (3 bedrooms/2 baths) \$649,000
 11 Willow St (2 bedrooms/1.5 baths) \$600,000

The Point is STILL on fire!!!

*Homes are continuing to sell in record time and
for record prices.*

For sellers - the time has never been better!

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 18 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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gladys@edgerealtyri.com
www.EdgeRealtyRI.com



THE SECRET GARDEN TOUR

by Vicki Morro

The Secret Garden Tour (SGT) in the Point is scheduled for July 7-9. There are thirteen confirmed gardens so far! The Tour is thankful that gardeners support this wonderful event that provides resources for Art Education in the public schools. Throughout this current school year the SGT has donated nearly \$19,000 to public schools on Aquidneck Island.

Whether a large garden or more compact, all the gardeners are creative and spend endless hours beautifying their gardens to perfection so guests from near and far can enjoy our beautiful neighborhood. Gorgeous plantings, water features and décor tucked behind homes, many hidden by a gate, lend an air of mystery to the unique spaces that showcase plants for shade, sun or a combination of both. Many “Peek-a-Boo” gardens in front and side yards add to the Tour.

This year we have some gardeners/gardens that have re-joined the Tour, some newcomers and our many beloved regulars. Many are award winners from *Newport in Bloom* and a few have received awards from the *Christmas in Newport* Doorway contest. These awards are a testament to the pride the gardeners take in making our neighborhood beautiful. Prize winners participating in this year's SGT are: Lisa Elliott, Beth Castiglia, Karen Capraro, Ann McMahon, Alicia and Brian McGowan and Ann Souder. I can't wait to see what is in store this year! Tickets are already on sale at secretgardentours.org and will be limited so buy them early so as not to miss out.

To make the SGT a success it takes a lot of coordination and volunteers. If interested in volunteering, send an email to volunteers@secretgardentours.org. If interested in having your garden part of the SGT send an email to vamorro@gmail.com



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The Music of the Fall River Line

by Lisa Stuart



Thanks to *Historic Music of Newport*, we can now listen to the music played on the grand steamships of the Fall River Line that docked on lower Washington Street on the Point. The steamships were part of the fabric of our neighborhood from 1847 to 1937.

Although a newly formed non-profit, *Historic Music of Newport's* founder Mark Stickney's adventure collecting Newport's music began in the early 2000's. While working part-time for the Preservation Society, Mark wondered what music was played in the mansions. Hearing of a march that was played at a party at the Chateau-Su-Mer in 1957, Mark set off on a hunt for it. This turned into a lifelong passion of finding and sharing the history of music that have roots in Newport.

Mark shared, "I founded *Historic Music of Newport* to look into the musical history of the city, but I had no idea how much music I would find and how many musicians I would discover. The search continues every day for more musical history."

Although Mark never found the Chateau-Su-Mer march, over the next 20 years he found over 800 pieces of music and biographical information on over 600 musicians. The list spans over 120 years of Newport's history. Fortunately for us Pointers, it includes the music of the Fall River Line. All of which is shared on their website: historicmusicofnewport.com

The Fall River Line

The Fall River Line was Newport's main transportation link with both New York and Boston. They ran daily and were docked on lower Washington Street. In the summer Pointers would often stroll down the wharf to see the 9:00 pm steamship headed for New York. The steamship's shimmering lights on the water created a dazzling effect.

Daniel Snyder Jr. noted (Newport History: Vol. 62:Iss. 216, Article 3) "The trip of the Fall River Line was a pleasant, even romantic experience, for the boats were beautifully fitted out with excellent dining facilities and sleeping quarters." These "floating palaces" had grand interiors. There would be an evening orchestral concert in the grand salons. After the concert most of the passengers lingered either inside in one of the many public rooms and cafes during the winter, or outside under the stars on deck during the summer."



This aerial view of the Point shows the Fall River Line's Priscilla arriving with steamship Plymouth and the freighter Pequonnock at Long Wharf where the Louis L. Jagschitz State Pier is now. Train tracks went all along Long Wharf. Cardine's Field is visible in lower left.

Fall River Line ships were repaired in docks at what is now Storer Park between what was to become the Causeway and the Elm Street Pier seen east of the ship that is underway.

Goat Island is at top and our beloved Green Light is just visible at far right.

The Music of the Fall River Line (continued)



“During its run, the Fall River Line featured some of the best musicians of the day. These musicians would come from all over the world and from all walks of life. Much like the circus bands of the time, the steamship bands were a close knit group of musicians who took their craft seriously,” Mark noted.

Please join me in listening to these pieces on the Historic Music of Newport’s YouTube Chanel:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLFyhsXbFFSsPDmbkkN9NdksFhgivmeYPD>

The Fall River Line March was composed in 1882 by Rounseville Williams, and arranged for piano by E.M. Bagley. Williams wrote the march for full military band and it was performed on the Steamer *Providence* by Hooper’s 3rd Regiment Band.

Priscilla March and Two-Step Tom Clark composed this march in 1895. The March was composed for band and orchestra and arranged for piano by the composer. The *Priscilla* was a steamship of the Fall River Line, running between Boston and New York City.

“*On the Old Fall River Line*” was written in 1913. Harry von Tilzer composed the music. Words were written by William Jerome and Andrew Sterling.

All photographs were provided by the Providence Public Library except for the sheet music for the Priscilla March which was provided by Historic Music of Newport

Read more at historicmusicofnewport.com



Belmont Chapel Party

by Ann McMahon

If you have a taste for the avant-garde, you would have loved the party held at the Belmont Chapel on a crisp December evening. Coming up to the large chapel doors, you would not know that anything was going on but open the doors... cocktails, candlelight, jazz piano playing – a great little party celebrating the progress on Phase 2 of the Belmont Chapel. If you can't make it to Cannes this year, come to the next unusual celebration. Attend the Belmont Stakes Cocktail Party June 10 at Belmont Chapel Circle. Learn more at their website: <https://www.belmontchapelfoundation.org>



Funded by the McBean Charitable Trust and the van Beuren Foundation and many generous individuals, Phase 2 work is underway with all stained glass windows removed to the Serpentino studios for full restoration, the cleaning and repointing of the interior mortar and replacement of brick work, installation of security systems, repair of wooden doors and finishes, and design and installation of interior lighting. The decorative plaster and paint has been analyzed and reinstallation will be part of this phase.

In case you are wondering, there are still gravesites available. Be buried with the notables from the 18th & 19th centuries. Get in on the “ground” floor, so to speak.



Save the Dates

April 22, 2023 9 AM: **Cleanup for Earth Day.** Meet at Storer Park

May 16, 2023, 6 to 7:30 PM: **Spring Meeting,** St John's Guild Hall

May 20, 2023, 11AM to 12 Noon: **Neighborhood Dedication of the Storer Park flag pole**

May 27, 2023 8AM to 12 Noon: **Plant sale** St John's Parking Lot

May 29, 2023: **Memorial Service** at the Storer Park Flag Pole, a VFW & War College Event

June 10, 2023, 9:30 to 11 AM: **New Members Coffee & Mimosas** Welcome

June 10, 2023, 4:30 to 7:30 PM: **Belmont Stakes Cocktail Party.** Island Cemetery

June 17, 2023, 6 to 8 PM: **Block Party** Walnut St - east of Third St

August 24, 6 to 8 PM: Hunter House **Cocktail Party**

September 19, 6 to 7:30 PM: **Fall Meeting,** St John's Guild Hall

October 29, 2023, 2 to 3 PM: **Halloween Party** at Storer Park

November 30, 2023, 4:30 to 7 PM: **Tree Lighting and Reception** at St John's Guild Hall

January 8, 2024, 6 to 8 PM: **New Year Kickoff Party,** Newport Yacht Club

Please check the thepointassociation.com and Points of Interest for updates to times or dates of these events.



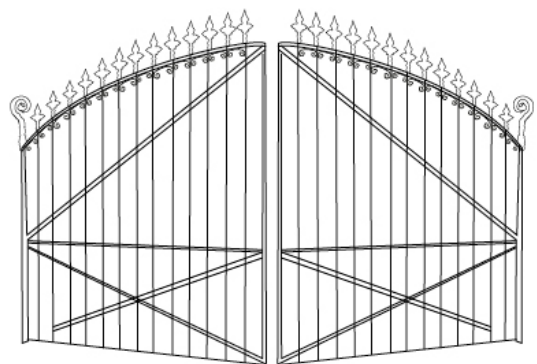
The Newport Historical Society has many Historic Walking Tours, Tours of Historical Properties they own and Self Guided Historic Tours.

For more information go to the events page of Newport History: <https://newporthistory.org/events/>

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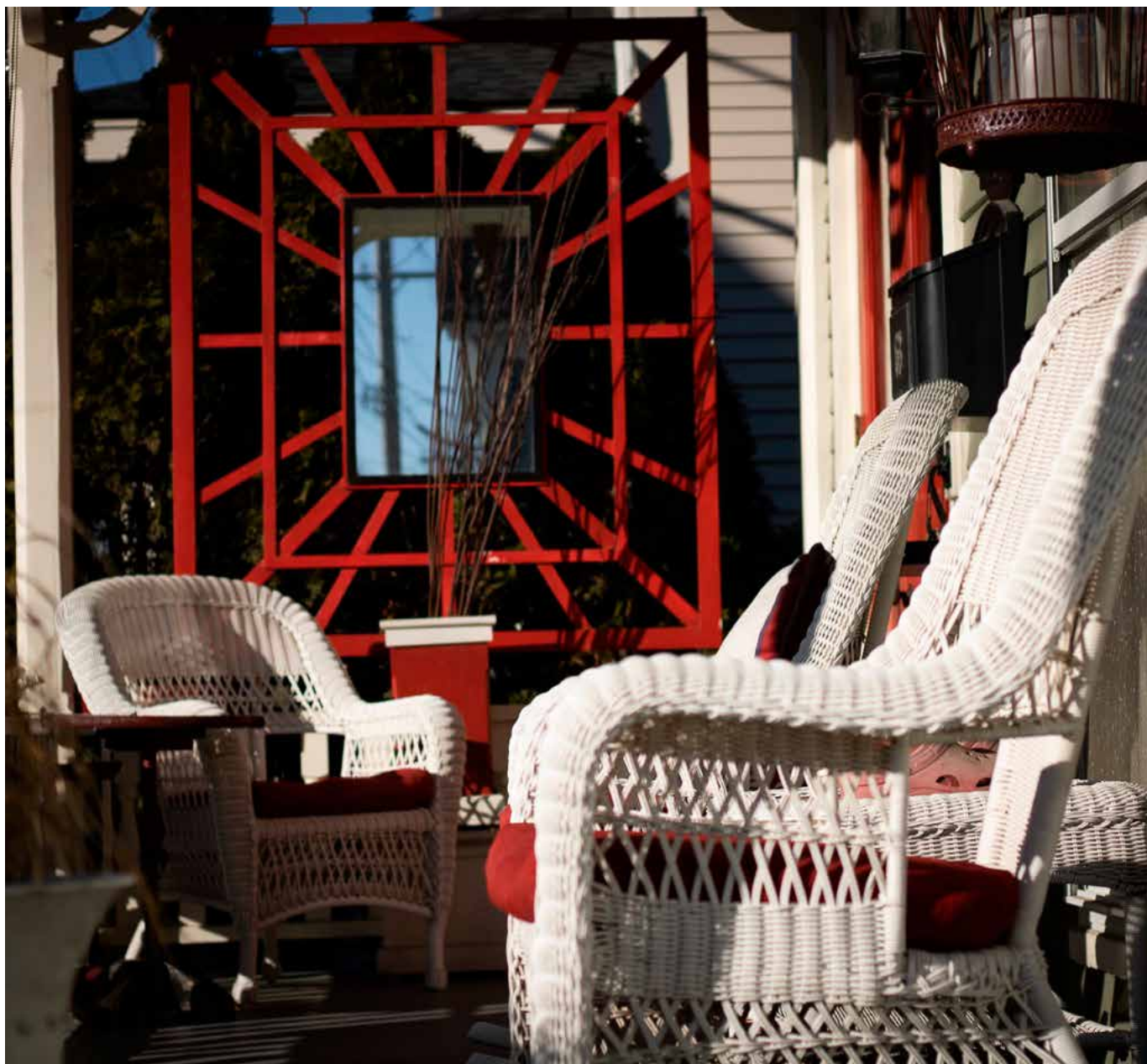


Photo by Patty Weiss

Inviting in any season is the Newport Porch of the Nagle Family on Third Street

The Green Light has been published continuously since 1957. To read this issue and all archived issues or to Google references to your house or street, or people or events on the Point, Go to: <https://thepointassociation.org/>

The Green Light