

Island Opinion

• EDITORIAL •

Happy New Year!

News organizations reflecting upon the events of the past year have become a tradition. So we are presenting this "Year in Review" issue of the Jamestown Press.

The past year has been far from boring. During 2007 we reported on many notable accomplishments. The highway garage finally found a home when voters approved financing for a facility adjacent to the Newport Bridge, ending years of feuding over its location. Two island properties were preserved as working farms with the town's purchase of their development rights.

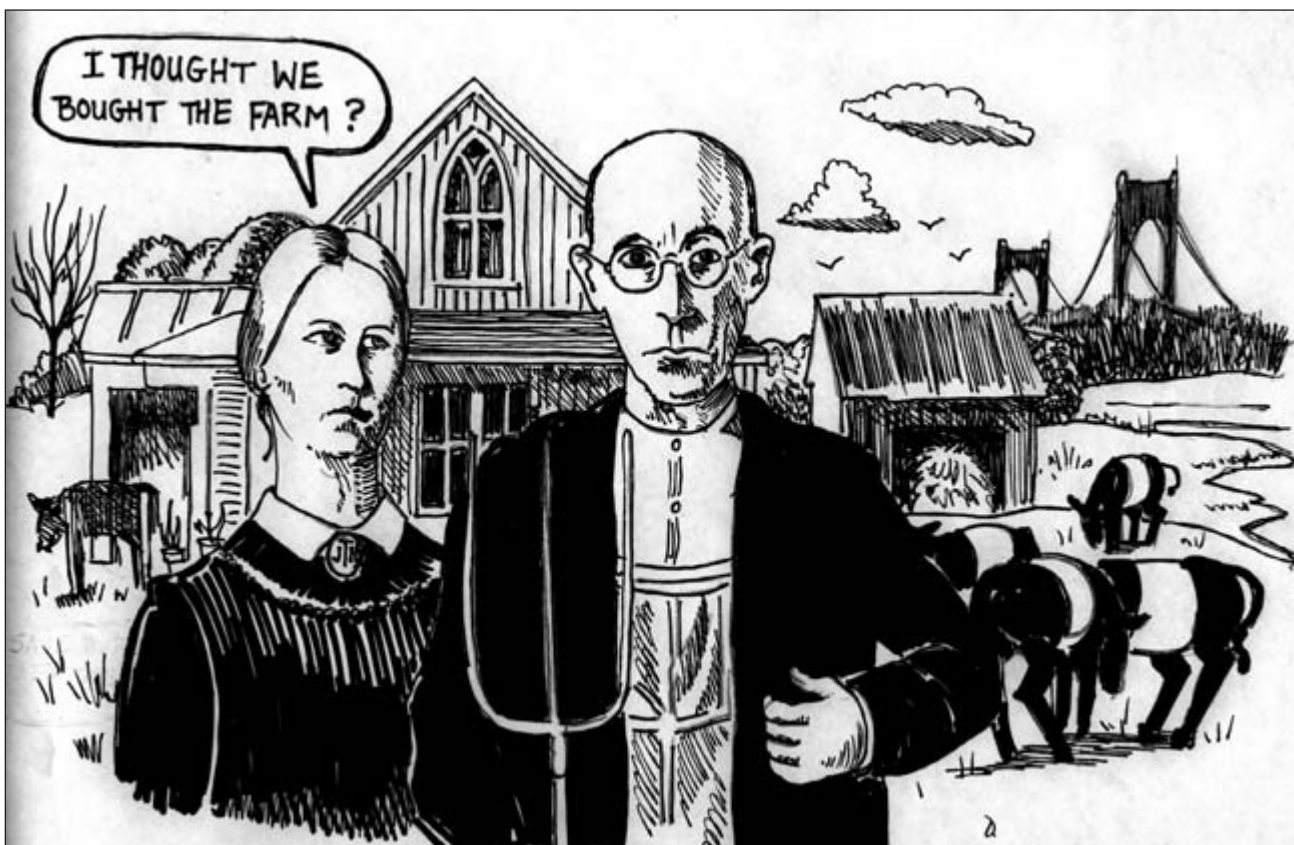
There was a bit of history revisited during the year. Jamestowners celebrated the purchase 350 years ago of Conanicut Island from the Narragansett Indians. And, the Tall Ships returned to Narragansett Bay, recalling a time when those majestic sailing vessels were state of the art transportation.

Islanders also looked towards the future during 2007. Public input was gathered on the vision for the future of our downtown. Now the Town Council must provide the necessary leadership in drafting new zoning regulations that will keep our village attractive and economically healthy in the years ahead.

The new Town Hall was dedicated in 2007, completing another project that has been long discussed. The town also established a new Teen Center, giving our kids a home away from home.

As we count down the days until 2008, we'd like to wish our readers and advertisers a happy and healthy new year.

— Jeff McDonough



An enhancement to the historic district

As members of this community whose roots go back generations, we would like to voice our opinion concerning the Clancy Design Studio on North Main Road.

With all due respect to Mr. Anthony, Mr. Wright and Ms. Enright, we find ourselves on the opposite side of the issue. We do not believe that this 1.9 acre property surrounded by hundred's of acres of protected property is any threat to the so-called "windmill hill historic district." In fact, we believe it to be an asset both to the "hill" and to the town in general.

As a former board member of the Jamestown Historical Society, I find it appalling that certain

• LETTERS •

members of this group have acted with so much hate and intolerance toward the Clancys. And, speaking of hate, the woman who physically and verbally accosted the Clancys at the recent Town Council meeting might want to get to an anger management class before she ends up in jail.

The historical society had the chance to buy the miller's house in 1996 when it came on the market, but failed to do so (so much for protecting the "hill"). The Clancys bought the miller's house, restored it and changed it to suit their needs as was their right. The barn studio was constructed by Andy Shrake, the same man who restored the windmill. The barn is a post and beam

structure which was painted to match the windmill. The Clancys have kept the rural character of the area and at the same time have made the property uniquely theirs.

Jennifer and David Clancy are hardworking, talented artists who are trying to make a living producing beautiful handmade art glass. They are a fine example of young people preserving the historic craft of glassblowing. With a little research, I discovered that glassblowing began in America 400 years ago in, ironically, Jamestown, Va. We have on "Windmill Hill" our own piece of living history. The magic, mystery and artistry of glassblowing

continues on.

Retail sales are not new to North Main Road, nor to other parts of Jamestown outside the commercial district. Retail items are sold at the farms, at the bait shop and at museums. As far as we know, customary home occupations are defined in the Jamestown Zoning Ordinance. The Clancy studio is not a retail outlet. The only saleable merchandise is what they have produced in their studio—nothing from China, all American made.

Recently, three members of the Jamestown Zoning Board agreed to allow retail sales on a limited basis from the Clancy studio. The studio would be open for sales from June to December, with limited hours. The Jamestown Town Council

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Write to us

LETTERS: Send your letters to: Editor, The Jamestown Press, 42 Narragansett Ave., Jamestown RI 02835. Our fax number is (401) 423-1661.

Our e-mail address is news@jamestownpress.com. Please include your name, address, and a daytime telephone number for verification. Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication. All letters must be limited to 700 words or less.

The news of 10 and 15 years ago is from the Jamestown Press. The news of 100 years ago came from the collection of the Newport Historical Society.

100 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, December 24, 1907

A large fleet of schooners, mostly limber laden, are in Dutch Island harbor awaiting better weather outside.

From the Newport Daily News, December 27, 1907

Mr. Seth Pierce has bought from the Bay View Company the stable and several smaller buildings on Knowles court. The buildings are to be moved to Mr. Pierce's place near the West ferry.

75 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, December 23, 1932

Exercises were held at the Community Christmas tree on the village green Thursday evening, a large number of the town's people attending. Christmas carols were sung, led by the "Singing Mothers."

From the Newport Daily News, December 30, 1932

A New Year's celebration will be held Sunday evening at the Holy Ghost hall, when the Torpedo Trade School basket ball team will play the Jamestown team. There will also be a game between the Jamestown girls' team and the Fishman Store team of Newport. The games will start at 9 o'clock and continue until midnight, at which time souvenirs, novelties and noise-makers will be distributed and dancing will be held until 3 A.M. Monday. Music will be furnished by the Racketeer orchestra. There will be a boat to Newport after the dance.

From the Newport Daily News, December 31, 1932

At a special meeting of the town council ... it was voted that the town of Jamestown request the state unemployment relief commission for a loan of \$2,750.89, for the relief of the unemployed, subject to the act passed November 24 (sic), 1931, Voted, to hire a supervisor for the unemployed working under the state unemployment



This week in Island history

Compiled by Sue Maden
Week of December 28

relief program, wages to be paid from the dirt road appropriation. Voted that the president of the town council be appointed supervisor of all work under the state unemployment relief program.

50 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, December 24, 1957

The Commerce Oil Refining Corp. plans to build a park around its proposed 150,000,000 gallon reservoir at the northern end of Jamestown and to erect a marina in the vicinity of Carr's Lane. ... Geller compared the park to Central Park in New York. This will surround the reservoir Commerce expects to build for its own auxiliary fresh water supply. About 75 acres of the company's 700 acres will be devoted to the reservoir and park. The marina, Geller said, is planned for the younger boating group in Jamestown. A road will be cut through from the main road to near Carr's Lane where the marina will be made available to the townspeople.

From the Newport Daily News, December 26, 1957

Two large ferries from Virginia will be added to the Newport - Jamestown ferry run for service next summer. ... The agreed price, the governor said, is \$100,000 for the two. Included in that price are spare equipment and extra parts valued at \$35,000.

From the Newport Daily News, December 30, 1957

Dr. William W. Miner, Jamestown Protective Assn. president, has termed as "more pie in the sky" the proposal of Commerce Oil Refining Corp. to create a "Central Park" and marina in Jamestown.

25 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, December 27, 1982

The eighth annual community Christmas pageant was held Christmas Eve on Shoreby Hill Green. It was sponsored by the Conanicut Island Art Association. A large crowd gathered on a foggy night to watch the nativity play and sing carols.

From the Newport Daily News, December 28, 1982

The Town Council agreed to appoint members to the Design Review Committee suggested by W. Edward Wood, director of the Department of Transportation. (The council) accepted the bid for revaluation of taxable property from Better Valuation Data of East Greenwich, the lowest bidder at \$68,500.

From the Newport Daily News, December 30, 1982

Work was stopped on the 140-foot extension to the town's wooden pier at East Ferry this morning when 12 union men from Operating Engineers Local 57 set up a picket line at East Ferry.

15 years ago

From the Jamestown Press, December 24, 1992

The Jamestown School Committee decided Thursday for the second time this month to delay voting on turning over school property for permanent recreational use.

10 years ago

From the Jamestown Press, December 23, 1997

Town officials are expected to ask the state Department of Transportation for \$21,500 the town spent on design work for the defunct steel pier extension project at East Ferry.

Tomorrow is Christmas Eve and once again islanders will come together in song on the green at Shoreby Hill to witness the annual re-creation of the nativity. Over 30 islanders have been chosen to participate in this year's Christmas Pageant.