

Island Opinion

• EDITORIAL •

Your help needed with 350th bash

Three hundred-fifty years ago the colonists purchased Conanicut Island from the Narragansett Indians. A major island-wide celebration is being planned this summer to commemorate the historic event.

A committee has been formed to oversee what is shaping up to be a week-long celebration. If all goes well there will be a number of community happenings staged from Aug. 11 through Aug. 19.

Already on the schedule is the Chamber of Commerce's Night at the Light, which will be held at Foxhill Farm on Aug. 11 to raise money for the restoration of the Dutch Island Lighthouse.

On Aug. 18, intrepid sailors will take to the water at East Ferry for the Jamestown Yacht Club's annual Fools' Rules Regatta, which will observe its 30th anniversary this year.

It is hoped that many of the island's community and civic organizations will stage their own events during the celebration week. Some of the ideas include a parade, fireworks, a family picnic and kite-flying day, and a possible dedication of the new Town Hall. Other suggestions include a garden tour or flower show, a sailing regatta, an art exhibit, and music concerts.

All ideas and events are welcome! Be creative. All island organizations are invited to send a representative or two to the next meeting of the 350th anniversary committee at 7 p.m. on Thursday, March 15. The group will meet at the Jamestown library.

— Jeff McDonough



Exploring the ocean's depths

Just wanted to let you know that a Jamestown resident (me – David Robinson) is going to be working on Dr. Robert Ballard's upcoming Secrets of the Gulf expedition of research and discovery in the Gulf of Mexico.

I will be making the first of the expedition's dives in the U.S. Navy's nuclear-powered deep submergence vehicle, NR-1, and serving as watch leader for the remainder of the research cruise on board the SSV Carolyn Chouest.

You can learn more about the project, see photos of the NR-1, and read a pre-project interview of me by visiting www.immersionpresents.org, and clicking on the Se-

crets of the Gulf icon (manta ray). On this website, you can also watch nation-wide broadcasts and follow the expedition online by visiting the website from March 4-9 at 11 a.m., 12 p.m., 2 p.m., 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. These broadcasts will use state-of-the-art "telepresence" technology to enable students, educators, scientists and the general public back on shore to follow the Secrets of the Gulf expedition 24/7 in real-time. These broadcasts are being presented daily at the URI-GSO Narragansett Bay Campus all week as well.

My employer, the Public Archaeology Laboratory (PAL), and its Educational Programs department, is

a project partner/sponsor (along with the U.S. Navy, NOAA, National Geographic, URI, UConn, the Institute for Exploration, and others). I will be representing us on an interdisciplinary team of scientists who will explore the fascinating undersea landscape of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary (FGBNMS). One of the 13 U.S. national marine sanctuaries, the FGBNMS is located approximately 115 miles off the Texas/Louisiana coast. Named for its colorful corals and sponges, the sanctuary was targeted for exploration because of its unique geology and biology. PAL's part of the project revolves

around the sanctuary's geological history, which also makes it a viable location to search for evidence of early human habitation that would predate current evidence of North America's first inhabitants.

The project will use two ships — the U.S. Navy's NR-1—the nation's only nuclear-powered submarine dedicated to underwater research, and the 238-foot SSV Carolyn Chouest, which will tow the remotely operated vehicle Argus, to explore coral reefs, brine seeps, mud volcanoes and ancient shorelines.

This deep water expedition is a unique collaboration between the U.S. Navy, the National Marine Sanctu-

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• LETTERS •

Write a Letter

The Jamestown Press welcomes letters to the editor about timely topics. Letters may be up to 700 words and will be published as space permits. The editor reserves the right to reject letters or edit for clarity, brevity, good taste, and accuracy. Letters must be exclusive to the Jamestown Press. No letter-writing campaigns, please. Writers are asked to limit submissions to one letter every three weeks. Include your name and address, and a phone number where you can be reached during the day.

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

100 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, February 27, 1907

The members of the J. G. T. Club enjoyed a sledding party at Mr. George W. Peckham's place on Beavertail road last evening.

The northerly wind has brought large fields of drift ice down the bay today, delaying the ferry somewhat during the forenoon trips, on several of which she encountered over a mile of drift ice. The incoming tide prevented the ice from going to sea and in consequence it has collected in large quantities along the Dumpling shore.

From the Newport Daily News, March 1, 1907

With the annual town meeting only a little more than a month away, very little is heard of politics, and unless the "outs" are working quietly the prospects are for a quiet election.

75 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, March 5, 1932

A letter was read (at the Jamestown Board of Trade meeting) from the fire department, giving permission from the body to construct a park on the land east of the engine house. The several organizations in Jamestown were invited to cooperate in the efforts of the Board of Trade, to beautify, by the planting of flowers and shrubs, the plots of ground that have been neglected, owing to the absence of owners from the island. The parking space at the east end of Narragansett avenue was one of the places discussed, and the suggestion made that that the board bring to the attention of the town council the condition

This week in Island history

Compiled by Sue Maden
Week of March 1



of the ground, and the irregular way in which machines are parked, and ascertain if parking regulations could not be established, the ground graded, thus making the spot an ornamental as well as useful asset to the town.

50 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, March 1, 1957

More than 200 parents, friends and Scouts attended the court of awards and the Cub Scouts annual Blue and Gold Dinner at Grange Hall in Jamestown last night. The dinner was to observe the 47th anniversary of Scouting.

The annual Jamestown Chapter Red Cross drive with a goal of \$2,303 got underway yesterday.

From the Newport Daily News, March 4, 1957

The arrangements committee for the celebration of Old Home Week, in connection with Jamestown's celebration of its 300th anniversary next August, met last night at the Recreation Center.

25 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, March 2, 1982

A record budget of \$3,267,984 was approved Monday night at a relatively quiet financial town meeting. The budget provoked very little discussion from the 300 voters who attended the meeting in the school gymnasium. It only took

an hour and a half to pass the major portion of the budget and almost as long to vote on Resolutions 7 through 12. The town's voters set the tax rate for the coming fiscal year at about \$44.90 per thousand of assessed valuation. The appropriation of \$31,800 for the purchase of land and buildings from St. Matthew's Church raised the discussion of what the town was going to do with the property. Town Administrator, Robert Sutton, said the town was buying the land for possible expansion of the Town Hall.

15 years ago

From the Jamestown Press, February 27, 1992

The Jamestown Taxpayers Association will call for cutting about \$600,000 from the recommended \$7.9 million budget at next Monday night's annual financial town meeting.

The Town Council Monday night voted 4-1 to send a letter to the Department of Environmental Management saying that the state's plans for the cross-island highway "do not conform to the requirements" the council described in a resolution last October.

10 years ago

From the Jamestown Press, February 27, 1997

The original nickel-plated bronze eagle has been returned to be replaced atop the Jamestown Volunteer Fire department's antique steam fire engine from where it was taken some 40 years ago. Fire Chief Art Christman and Capt. Ken Caswell, who serves as the department's historian, last week traveled to Quincy, Mass., where they were presented the eagle and several other island artifacts by Betty Siegel.

Voters will be asked to approve town and school budgets totaling \$10.6 million at the annual financial town meeting next Monday.