

# Island Opinion

## • EDITORIAL •

### Keep the waterfront open for everyone

Spring arrives next week. The days are getting longer and warmer. The fishing and boating season won't be far behind. So it was a relief to many locals when the Town Council voted recently to keep the East Ferry wood pile pier open for fishing.

The pier is an excellent example of the changing nature of our island's shoreline. The original 167-foot section was constructed with federal funds in 1974 to be used for "public outdoor recreation." Most have interpreted that to mean fishermen, transient recreational boaters, and people who just want to walk down the dock.

In the 1980s the town added 140 feet to the pier with no limits on the types of uses. In the 1990s the touch-n-go float was added with town, state, and commercial funding.

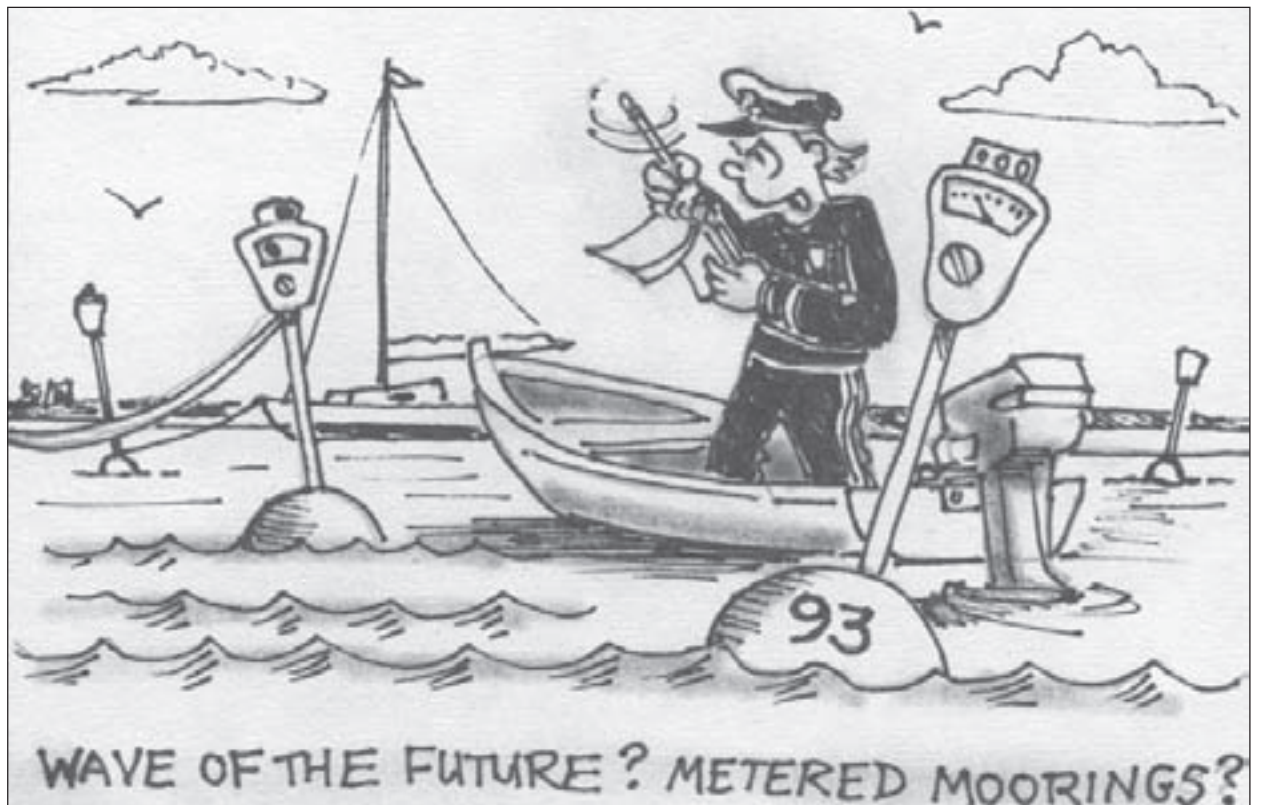
The shared usage of the wood pile pier has been an uneasy truce over the years. There have been reports about the fishermen blocking boaters from the touch-n-go float and leaving a mess. People complain that the commercial lobster boats block the dock with their traps and smelly bait barrels. There has been mention in the past of doing away with the fishing and commercial uses of the pier.

On the flip side, the fishermen and commercial guys argue that the casual strollers get in their way.

Last year's rules for the pier seemed to work well. Swimming and diving from the pier were banned. Nighttime fishing was allowed. Island police added the pier to their nightly patrols. Rest rooms were opened and refuse receptacles were provided.

It has been proposed that the pier be lengthened so everyone has more space. Whether or not that ever happens, we should strive to maintain the pier as it is — shared waterfront for everyone. East Ferry should remain a working waterfront.

— Jeff McDonough



### Theatre offers thanks for success

This is a brief letter of thanks to all those businesses and individuals who contributed to the success of the Jamestown Community Theatre's recently concluded production of *Your's, Anne*.

Thank you to those locations that served as ticket-purchasing outlets for the show. This list includes Baker's Pharmacy, the Conanicut Ship Store and the Secret Garden here in Jamestown, as well as Midnight Sun and Pleasant

## • LETTERS •

Surprise in the neighboring communities of Wiickford and Newport.

In order to also provide beverage and baked goods refreshments during intermission, the theatre relies on the generous support and contributions of numerous island businesses, such as, McQuade's Market, Cumberland Farms, Grapes & Gourmet, and the Bay Voyage Inn. Tasty donations were also provided by BJ's Wholesale Club in Middletown and Stop & Shop in

Newport.

A debt of gratitude is also due Kathryn Palen, the staff and the congregation of the Central Baptist Church for their gracious offering of the church's sanctuary, great room, and basement facilities to make this winter JCT production possible. Their patience and help with the repeated erecting and striking of the set is most appreciated.

Needless to say, the caliber of offerings by the JCT

is always reliant on the unselfish efforts of the theatre board, cast and crew, parents and community volunteers who so generously give of their time and energy to make these theatrical presentations a reality.

Well-deserved kudos to all of you for bringing this compelling story to the stage of the Jamestown Community Theatre.

Sincerely,  
Kevin A. Somerville,  
Jamestown Community Theatre

See "Letters" on page 8

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, March 12, 1907

Mr. J.K. Sullivan is shipping weekly large loads of bale hay from his place here to his Newport stable.

A number of trawl fishermen are setting their gear today in the east bay.

##### From the Newport Daily News, March 13, 1907

More poultry has been kept on the island this winter than ever before, and fresh eggs are being shipped daily in large quantities.

##### From the Newport Daily News, March 14, 1907

Mr. Alton Head has received a portion of his spring supply of fertilizer by rail and is carting it to the island by the ferry.

##### From the Newport Daily News, March 15, 1907

A party from here attended the play at the Newport Opera House last evening, returning by launch.

Steamer Leander Wilcox discharged a load of fertilizer on Ferry wharf this morning for Mr. A. L. Peckham.

The bids on the ferry service contract for Fort Greble, which were to be to be opened today at noon, were not opened, as orders had been received from Washington to delay the matter until further notice.

##### From the Newport Daily News, March 16, 1907

With a few more days similar to yesterday and today, the roads will be settled enough to make teaming possible. Already the macadam roads are improving in condition.

#### 75 years ago

##### From the Newport Daily News, March 12, 1932

The entertainment at the Thomas H. Clarke school Friday evening, given for the purpose of raising funds for the annual school educational trip, was a decided social and financial success.



## This week in Island history

Compiled by Sue Maden  
Week of March 15

##### From the Newport Daily News, March 14, 1932

At a business meeting on Thursday evening at the Central Baptist Church it was voted to place stained glass windows in the auditorium of the church.

At the Colonial tea to be held at the home of Miss Elizabeth Clarke on Narragansett Avenue on Thursday afternoon, Miss May Stenhouse of Newport will sing Colonial songs.

##### From the Newport Daily News, March 17, 1932

The meeting of the committee appointed to place stained glass windows in the Central Baptist Church was held at the home of Miss Lena Clarke Tuesday evening. Plans were perfected for financing the project and several people have signified their intentions of placing memorials in the church very soon.

#### 50 years ago

##### From the Newport Daily News, March 15, 1957

Governor Roberts said today he would refer study of the disputed Jamestown oil refinery to the advisory commission of the Rhode Island Development Council.

##### From the Newport Daily News, March 16, 1957

Bills creating a police commission and a traffic court in Jamestown were filed in both branches of the General Assembly yesterday.

The annual St. Patrick's Day entertainment at St. Mark's parish in Jamestown will be presented tonight and tomorrow night at the recreation center.

#### 25 years ago

##### From the Newport Daily News, March 16, 1932

The Town Council received some unpalatable facts Monday from Town Administrator Robert Sutton. Sutton

told the Council that present income from water and sewer users will not be enough to operate the department for fiscal 1982-83.

##### From the Newport Daily News, March 19, 1982

Gary Galkin, chairman of the Beavertail Advisory Committee, told the Rotary Club recently of work planned for Beavertail State Park and the lighthouse area. Some of the work has already been done. Galkin, a naturalist and conservationist, said a new loop road was installed at Beavertail to spread out foot and car traffic. The old road concentrated traffic on the point and erosion was becoming a problem. Gates have been installed at the start of the road so the point can be closed if traffic becomes heavy during special events, such as Tall Ships. The sum of \$48,000 has been earmarked for historical renovation to the exterior of the lighthouse. The assistant lighthouse keeper's building will be turned into a museum with a focus on shipwrecks that occurred off the point.

#### 15 years ago

##### From the Jamestown Press March 12, 1992

Despite cool, damp weather, about twice as many island voters as expected went to the local polls to cast their ballots in the Super Tuesday presidential primary. Jamestown has 3,345 registered voters. About 22 percent voted Tuesday.

The Town Council voted Monday night to establish a seven-member committee that will select a new town administrator. Current Town Administrator Robert Sutton, who has held the position since its creation 17 years ago, will step down from his post Sept. 1.

#### 10 years ago

##### From the Jamestown Press, March 13, 1997

The Town Council is considering building a new public works garage on the sewage treatment plant site at Taylor Point.

A suit brought against the town by the second-lowest bidder on a pier-repair job at East Ferry has been dropped, but the starting date for the project has now been pushed back to late fall.