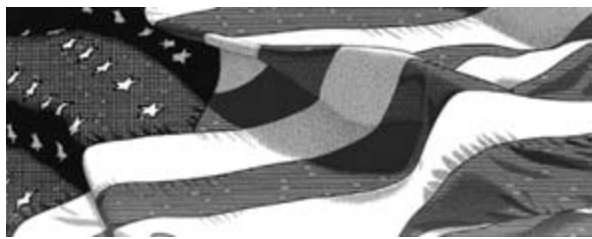


# Island Opinion

## • EDITORIAL •



## There's more to the Fourth of July than fireworks and parades

Tomorrow we'll celebrate the Fourth of July. What a great holiday! This year we get to celebrate with a three-day weekend. There will be the annual parade on the North End on Friday. The Rocket-Hogs will stage their first fireworks display at the Mackerel Cove town beach on Saturday evening.

Summer in Jamestown couldn't be better.

July 4th is called Independence Day. It is our nation's birthday. If you will recall your history lessons from school, a group of radical colonists were chaffing at the King of England's rule. Relations between the colonies and Great Britain were strained.

These men established the Second Continental Congress and approved an act on July 4, 1776, which became known as the Declaration of Independence. The document to which they signed their names was eventually read aloud publicly throughout the 13 colonies.

We now refer to these radicals as the fathers of our country. They were committing treason. They said that the 13 colonies were "free and independent states." They wanted "all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain . . . to be totally dissolved."

This, of course, was the pre-cursor to the Revolutionary War. If today's news media were covering the rebellion that followed the Declaration of Independence that was approved on July 4, 1776, the armed colonists would probably be referred to as insurgents.

The colonists fought for freedom. They later drafted the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. I wonder what they would think about our country if they could see it today?

Wave the flag. Enjoy your picnics and backyard cookouts. Have fun at the parade and the fireworks. But remember those radical men and women who made the Stars and Stripes what it is today.

Above all else, be safe this holiday weekend.

— Jeff McDonough

## Send us your DMV stories and we'll publish them

I've received lots of comments from readers about last week's editorial detailing my family's futile attempts to obtain the title and registration from the state Department of Motor Vehicles for a small boat trailer.

My frustrations hit a home run with many readers of the Jamestown Press.

Folks have shared with me similar woeful tales about their DMV experiences. One gentleman — a native Rhode Islander — told me he has found that the DMV has always been impossible to deal with. "A person could get elected governor simply by running on the platform that the DMV would finally get fixed," he said.

So we're going to take this DMV angle one step further. Send us your DMV experiences as letters to the editor and we'll publish them in the newspaper under a special heading.

You can e-mail your DMV letters to me at [jeff@jamestownpress.com](mailto:jeff@jamestownpress.com) or simply drop them off at our 42 Narragansett Ave. office.

Maybe someone out there wants to run for governor?

— Jeff McDonough



## The village looks great!

Three cheers for the impressive village "make-overs" that have recently flourished along Narragansett Avenue.

Most notable are Jamestown icons, Tim Baker's Pharmacy and the new owners of the unsinkable Narragansett Café. Both of these renovations look fantastic.

But that's not all. There are new coats of paint at

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Tricia's Tropigrille and the Jamestown Oyster Bar; vivid blue umbrellas at Steve and Maria's Slice of Heaven; a new stone wall across from the Fire Station. And let's not forget Phyllis Bedard's ever-inspiring floral arrangements along Tratoria Simpatico's sidewalk. This summer, her vibrant

hues of red, yellow and orange welcome visitor and resident alike.

Could it be that the rejuvenation along Narragansett Avenue was sparked by our beautiful new town hall, with its recent landscaping (thanks to the tree committee, tree warden, Quonoquott Garden Club and

DPW workers), mirrored by the revitalized Historical Society Building across the street?

Maybe. But it really doesn't matter. The reality is that the village has never looked better and we can all thank the downtown business owners who have made the effort to improve upon an already wonderful place to live.

David J. Long  
20 Schooner Ave.



## This week in Island history

Compiled by Sue Maden  
Week of July 3

*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, July 6, 1908**

The amateur fishermen are having considerable sport evenings spearing weakfish, which swarm along the shore about sundown after the schools of little minnows. Armed with an eel spear and a lantern, good catches are being made by the more expert. The record catch of weakfish is 25. A few eels and flounder are being caught in the same manner.

**75 years ago**

**From the Newport Daily News, July 1, 1933**

(At the Town Council meeting) Samuel F. Smith, dog constable, reported on his inspection of the pound, stating that he found the pound to be in a very dilapidated condition and that quite a sum of money would be necessary to repair it for use.

It was voted that a special committee be appointed to keep in touch with the Recovery Act in regard to the construction of public roads and a sewerage plant.

**From the Newport Daily News, July 5, 1933**

The holiday passed very quietly with no casualties reported. The sounding of an alarm from box 34 was for a fire at the Carr farm on the East shore when a firecracker ignited a pile of lumber and set fire to a garage, burning it to the ground. A truck belonging to G. C. Carr was burned, but an automobile was taken out intact. The stormy weather prevented outdoor activities and very few were seen on the golf links and at the beach.

**50 years ago**

**From the Newport Daily News, July 2, 1958**

The Jamestown School Committee last night awarded contracts for fuel, oil and taxi service for the 1958-59 school year. The contract for furnishing the fuel oil was awarded to E. R. Vieira Co., the only bidder, whose price was \$.0941 for No. 5 distilled grade. Jay B. Whitehead,

the lone bidder for gas, was awarded the contract at a price of \$.0625. Mrs. Whitehead received the taxi contract for trips in addition to the regular school bus trips. The only bidder, she asked \$1.25 for a trip to Beavertail. \$1 to the Naval Facility, \$.75 to the Carter house on Beavertail and \$.50 to the easterly end of Getty Road.

In the discussion the committee frowned on wearing dungarees and bouffant skirts during school hours believing that a certain relationship exists between the type of dress children wear and behavior problems in the classroom.

**25 years ago**

**From the Newport Daily News, July 6, 1983**

Time is running out for the town to decide how to ship its trash off Conanicut Island, the town administrator and the Solid Waste Management Committee told the Town Council. The Town Hall's old pendulum clock tick-tocked slowly but loudly on the wall Tuesday night, while committee members and Town Administrator Robert W. Sutton Jr. made their pitches for Jamestown's joining a regional rubbish disposal system based in South Kingstown . . . But councilmen were not about to rush into anything. They scheduled one more work session on the issues for July 18, to be followed by a public hearing.

**15 years ago**

**From the Jamestown Press, July 1, 1993**

Following a closed executive session, the Town Council Monday voted 3-2 to purchase the Jamestown Professional Building on North Main Road for use as a senior activities center.

The Town Council Monday voted unanimously to hire two temporary police dispatchers on a permanent basis. . . . The department now has 16 members: nine patrol officers, two sergeants, a lieutenant, and a chief.

**10 years ago**

**From the Jamestown Press, July 2, 1998**

Finance Director Maryanne Crawford, an island resident, has been hired as Jamestown's new town administrator.

Once just the vision of a small group of islanders, the restoration of the area surrounding the historically significant Conanicut Battery is becoming a reality with the signing of a nationally recognized planning firm that will design the 22-acre, town-owned Prospect Hill area. Landscapes of Westport, Conn. And Charlotte, Va. is the planning and landscape design firm hired by the Friends of the Conanicut Battery under the auspices of the Jamestown Historical Society.