



# JONATHAN BAYLISS SOCIETY

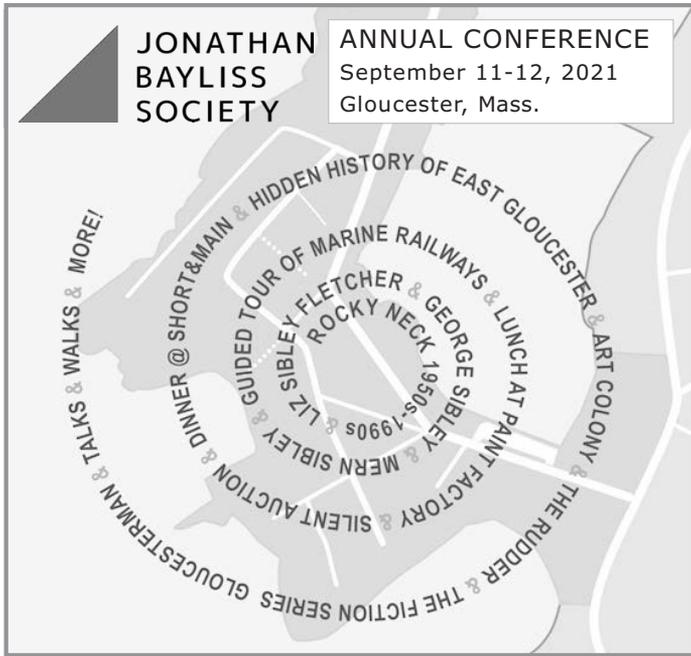
Third Annual Conference, September 11-12, 2021

## Talks

Texts of brief talks delivered at the Jonathan Bayliss Society's Third Annual Conference in Gloucester, Massachusetts, are published here. Some talks were extemporaneous and not available in writing, though recordings are available from links at [jonathanbayliss.org/events](http://jonathanbayliss.org/events). The talks were delivered at the Rocky Neck Cultural Center and the Cape Ann Museum on September 11, 2021.

The major conference theme was Rocky Neck in the mid- and late twentieth century. When Jonathan Bayliss arrived in Gloucester in the late 1950s, he spent time on Rocky Neck visiting his friends Bill and Peggy Sibley. Later, from 1968 to 1991, he lived on Rocky Neck in a rented cottage on Bickford Way. Many Rocky Neck places are recognizable in his four novels called *GLOUCESTERMAN*.

Another conference topic was the Oratory of St. Mary and St. Michael, located on Ledge Road near Rocky Neck in the late 1950s. Father F. Hastings Smyth and the Society of the Catholic Commonwealth were headquartered there, and Bayliss worked for them briefly as a business consultant. Father Smyth makes a fictionalized appearance in Bayliss's works.



We include the talk that John Day gave about the Renaissance playwright Robert Greene, whose play *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* is alluded to in Bayliss’s writing. Scene VI of the play was read for amusement at the conference dinner by Karl Frank, Martha Oaks, Mern Sibley, Judy Walcott, and Susan Weber.

The program handout, with information about the speakers, is included at the end of this document. Also included there is a map of “Mother’s Neck” showing places described in Bayliss’s novels.

The Jonathan Bayliss Society thanks the speakers for permission to share their words and photographs here.

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The conference opened at the Rocky Neck Cultural Center with “Rocky Neck Memories,” introduced by Susan Oleksiw and featuring short talks by three siblings: George Sibley, Liz Fletcher Sibley, and Mern Sibley. Their parents, Bill and Peggy, were well known on Rocky Neck and are fictionalized as Wat and Teddi Cibber in Bayliss’s novels. The talk by George Sibley is presented here. The recording, including all the speakers and capturing the question and Answer session, is available on the Jonathan Bayliss Society YouTube channel

## Rocky Neck Memories

*George Sibley*

1.

A dear friend of mine, Ken Riaf, was also friendly with Jonathan. Some of you may have seen a piece Ken wrote in the most recent *Bayliss Society Notebook* about his experience in interviewing Jonathan toward the end of Jonathan’s life. As I think is the case with at least some of us, Ken found Jonathan’s books somewhat discursive. A number of years ago Ken told me of buying Jonathan’s newest book. He then sat down and opened it up to page 1. He read steadily for over an hour. Then he turned to page 2.

2.

I knew Jonathan as a friend mostly of my mother’s. They were part of an intellectual coterie here in Gloucester in the 1950s and early 60s. They’d voted for Adlai Stevenson against Eisenhower, of course, and even for Stuart Hughes when he ran against Ted Kennedy for US Senate in ’62.

As I recall, besides Jonathan and my mother the gang included Charles Olson, Vincent Ferrini, Father Smyth, a young Peter Anastas; certainly there were a few others.

My Dad—Jonathan’s Wat Cibber—was not part of this group. I think my father viewed them, with amusement, as people removed from the practicalities of life.



3.

My father's crowd were his friends who gathered at his workshop here on Rocky Neck. The "official headquarters" that Jonathan describes in *Gloucestertide*, with "battered easy chair" and "overstuffed rocker." Each of these items was something lashed together by my Dad from scraps of this and that. Jonathan was, in my observation, only on the fringe of this group. It's telling that Wat is described as "the only native marooner among [Caleb's] friends." A member of this group, the writer Joe Garland, remarked at Dad's funeral that my father "Had time for a fool, but none for a faker." Jonathan echoes this when he has Wat say of himself "I may have great regard for the regardless, but I've got little use for the useless."

One thread of my Dad's persona was playing the colorful local denizen, prone—as Jonathan writes—to "patently idiosyncratic expressions," springing from some "distant Wessex ancestry." My father was a first-generation American, his father having come over from England in the 1890s. It occurred to me that Jonathan may have devised Wat's last name from the sound of our family name and the name of Colley Cibber, the 18th-century English actor who was also known for playing Malaprop.

The other locus of my Dad's group was the coffee shop across the street from his workshop. It's called Spartan's in *Gloucestertide*, and was run by young Peter Anastas's father, Peter the elder. Here they would have coffee and lunch; and sit, and sit.

4.

Rocky Neck was a working-class to middle-class neighborhood in the 1950s and through the 60s. Art galleries, restaurants, and boatyards (which my Dad's place was, of a sort) lined the Argo Cove side of Rocky Neck Avenue. (Argo Cove is another fascinating Bayliss renaming.)

The interior streets were pretty much residential. The Paint Factory at the end of a very bumpy Horton Street, the Rocky Neck Marine Railways at the end of Rocky Neck Avenue, and the Rockaway Hotel at the top of Fremont Street were hubs of activity, as was Peter's coffee shop. The art galleries and restaurants added a bit of a cosmopolitan flavor to the neighborhood. (The Studio Restaurant with its piano bar was perhaps the only gay bar in town, though decidedly closeted.) The homes on Rocky Neck were occupied by a homogeneous population; Anglo-Saxons—Yankees, I guess they could be called. No Italians or Portuguese (though the central part of Gloucester had many, there were only a very few even in greater East Gloucester).

5.

In closing, I'll leave you with a couple of my Dad's aphorisms which no doubt inspired Jonathan.

With a show of somewhat feigned disgust, my father would eye me or some other earnest lad and say "I've shown you everything I know, and you don't know nothing."

And my particular favorite, paraphrasing what my Dad himself had been told as a youth by an old, hard-bitten fisherman: "I feel sorry for you young fellows; you got so many years of suffering ahead of you."

“Rocky Neck in Three Dimensions: Art Colony, Marine Railways, and the Rudder” was an hour-long program of brief talks at the Cape Ann Museum on Saturday afternoon, September 11, 2021. Free and open to the public, it was a joint project of the Cape Ann Museum, Jonathan Bayliss Society, and Rocky Neck Art Colony. After a slideshow displaying photographs from the Bradshaw family’s archive, Sally Bradshaw and Suzy Kadiff were the first speakers, talking about growing up in the art colony.

## Rocky Neck in the 1950s

### *1. Sally Bradshaw*

Probably my first memory of Gloucester would be the fresh smell of the sea air when we reached the A. Piatt Andrew bridge each June, traveling by car from our home in Central New Jersey where our Dad was an art professor at Rutgers (Douglass) University.

Our summer home was in the West Wharf Studios near the end of Rocky Neck Avenue. Formerly the Wonson Family Fish Company, it was a large series of buildings extending from the street almost to the middle of the harbor toward the Coast Guard station. One night in the late 1950s half of the studios on pilings slid into the water, but miraculously, no one was killed. The rumor was that a fishing boat hit it. Our building on firm ground housed at least six families, one of many havens for artists.

When we arrived at West Wharf, my older brother Bruce would be out of the car first. He always headed to the Lufkin house—which overlooked the Marine Railways—to reconnect with his summer friend Rollie Lufkin. Oh, the stories they could tell about their early years!

I would search out Suzy O’Hara. My younger brother Jody wasn’t born yet. His future stories involving the MacPhail kids Bruce Jr., Robin and Laurie, and Suzy’s younger brother Bill would be fun-filled, interesting, or hair-raising as well.

When Jody was a toddler, we loved to take him to the Rail-

ways. We would usually pass Emile Gruppe and a group of his art students setting up their easels, then go under the boats and pilings to look for treasures, worms to use for fishing later, or horseshoe crabs at low tide. At high tide, watching the boats being hauled out was very exciting!

Our grandfather, G. A. Bradshaw (primarily an etcher), would be there with his friend Gordon Grant. They would sketch schooners, fishing boats, fishermen, dockworkers, etc., for future paintings or etchings. Our Dad, R. G. Bradshaw, would go with them sometimes—that's if he wasn't off sketching and photographing with Bruce MacPhail or Tom O'Hara.

Sailing for our fathers was also a common occurrence. Both Dad and Bruce MacPhail had small sailboats, and Tom would come along, if he wasn't out rowing his dory. Both Mom and Marianne MacPhail, Bruce's wife, loved sailing, as well as singing at all hours!

Art, music, social events with endless stories and laughter swirled around us.

In the morning, when the Schamas lived in the next studio, we could hear Edie Schamas singing. She sang in the Metropolitan Opera Company chorus. Her husband, Sampson, was a New York artist originally from Frankfurt, Germany, and a survivor of the Holocaust.

Once my five-year-old brother Jody asked him what the "tattoo" (numbers) were on the inside of his arm. Edie broke down in tears, and my Dad had to explain it to Jody later in the day.

Our days were filled with other interesting people: artists like Ben and Jane Eisenstadt and their kids from Philadelphia, and Nap and Elsa Setti from Rockport.

Nap worked in stained glass and his artistry includes the rose window in Washington Cathedral. There were always George and Gert Aarons. George's sculpture studio on the Back Shore was another playground for us, and he loved our

picnics on Niles beach. My Mom used to say the beach was the best babysitter. It certainly gave the adults time to talk and laugh without us kids getting under foot.

Our parents visited and entertained people like Doris Hall (who did incredible enameling), Theresa Bernstein and William Meyerowitz, Nell Blaine, Mary Shore, and Tibor Gergely, well-known for his illustrations of countless children's Golden Books such as *Scuffy the Tug Boat*, *All About the Sea Shore*, and *The Golden Book of Dogs*, to name just a few. He and his wife stayed at the Harbor View Hotel at the head of Rocky Neck on Wonson Cove, or, as we called it, Sheedy's beach. Tibor asked our parents if we would come and play on the lawn of the hotel overlooking the cove so that he could use us as models for his children's books.

Other illustrators included Suzy's grandfather Newell Keyes, and my grandfather G. A. Bradshaw. The playwrights we knew included Clayton Stockbridge, who wrote *The Gloucester Story*. He and his wife Agnes played bridge with my grandparents occasionally.

And, of course, there was the poet Vincent Ferrini.

Mainly, we hung out with the O'Haras and MacPhails, all artists and musicians. We were such a clan that Bill Sibley coined the phrase "The O'Phailshaws" because it was too confusing to sort us out.

When we roamed the Neck in the evening, there was always music and singing coming from the Studio piano bar. The Rudder restaurant, with its owner Evie Parsons and daughters Paula and Susan, provided humor, music, storytelling, and hospitality.

Sometimes Evie would form a Congo line at her restaurant and lead people down to and through the Studio Restaurant, and back to the Rudder.

At the same time, there were always artists displaying their works on the long board set up across from our studio, or

doing live demonstrations well into the evening hours.

The Artist Ball was one of the highlights of the season, and we loved watching the grownups get ready. The parents always went as a group, designing their own costumes in the theme of the year. The costumes were usually brilliant, thanks in no small part to Jean O’Hara, who was a designer for the American Repertory Theater in Cambridge. Years later, Richard Leonard of Bananas fame joined them. The day after the ball we kids would dress in their costumes and parade around the Neck.

Each and every person who lives or visits Rocky Neck has unique memories; ours are mostly happy, but some are tragic. Billy O’Hara and Laurie MacPhail, who were so much fun, were gone way too soon and our clan was diminished by their passing.

My memories of summers on Rocky Neck were so strong, that I couldn’t wait to live here full-time. After finishing my schooling, I began a 33-year career as a Gloucester Public School teacher, landing right here on Rocky Neck—as did, in time, the rest of the family.

It was a magical place to grow up. It’s different today. Now there are new artists, writers, designers, photographers, and galleries, and many memories yet to be made. My wish is that Rocky Neck will always be a welcoming place full of open-minded individuals who appreciate its rich history and embrace all people of good will.

## *2. Suzy O’Hara Kadiff*

My father was Tom O’Hara. He was a professor at the Mass. College of Art and Design. He was also a NASA artist and his work is included in the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum. He went on painting assignments for all branches of the military and that work is included in their collections and museums.

My father and Sally's father, Robert Bradshaw, met when my father was young and working as a bellhop at the Harbor View Hotel. The hotel was just around the corner from Rocky Neck on Eastern Point Road facing Wonson's Cove or, as we called it, Sheedy's beach.

Like Sally, I remember coming to Gloucester and Rocky Neck every summer. Rocky Neck was an affordable place for artists and writers to live and work. It was a special place where year-round residents and artists would join together and support each other. It was a magical place for a kid to spend the summer.

My parents, Jean and Tom O'Hara, would pack up our car to the roof, including the cat and a bird in a cage. As soon as we came to the bridge, our cat would come out from under the seat and sniff the air. My mother would sniff the air and say that it was like recharging your batteries and that Gloucester was like a bungee cord that lets you stretch so far and pulls you right back.

The first place we stayed was West Wharf, a group of buildings near the end of Rocky Neck and the Railways. Many artists lived in the larger building over water. We were in the smaller building on land. We lived in one of three studios on the second floor that were next to each other. The Bradshaws and MacPhails lived next door in the other two.

It was across the yard from the Rocky Neck Art Group exhibit board. We were right over the Doris Hall Gallery. My parents were gallery sitters and my father exhibited his paintings there. This is where they met Vincent Ferrini and Peter Anastas. My father also did some illustrations for the *Four Winds* magazine that was sold in the gallery.

From my bedroom window at night I could look down at the street and see painting demonstrations and crowds of people going in and out of the galleries, shops, and restaurants. The artist Nell Blaine lived in the larger building over

water. I remember she came to our studio during a hurricane. She and I made a dollhouse out of a cardboard box to keep us busy during the storm.

All three studios, the O'Haras', the MacPhails', and the Bradshaws', were full of artists, friends, and kids. The kids one time had an indoor picnic at the Bradshaws when it was raining. My mother used to call it rainy day fun.

All three fathers were members of the Rocky Neck Art Group. Everyone who was a member took a turn watching the exhibit board. I remember sitting with my father and grandfather Newell Keyes who was also a member, when it was their turn.

Our fathers were involved with other groups and events on Cape Ann. They belonged to a Rockport group called the Cape Ann Society of Modern Artists, or CASMA. It was a group started in the mid-1940s to give a place for more artists to exhibit if they weren't accepted by the local art association. The group included William Meyerowitz, Theresa Bernstein, Albert Alcalay, Nap Setti, George Aarons, Kalman Kubinyi, Mary Shore, Elias Newman, Nathaniel Dirk, and many more. As a kid I went to many painting demonstrations and art openings at the gallery.

They were also involved in the Cape Ann Art Festival that was held at Gloucester High School. Clayton Stockbridge, who lived across Smith Cove from Rocky Neck, wrote a play for the first festival called *Gloucester Story*. It was performed at the Gloucester School of Theater on Rocky Neck. I was able to go to the performance and loved the fact that I could hear the water under the building while watching the play. My father painted the details of the city on the scenery.

The next place we lived was Parker's Studios. It is now called the Accommodations of Rocky Neck and owned by the Fahertys. We lived in a small cottage next to the walkway which led to a large building over the water. My grandparents Newell and Dorothy Keyes lived in that building. I remember

picking wildflowers for two of the older women who lived in one of the buildings and they paid me a quarter each time. As a kid we would go next door to Elsie's for ice cream and comics and across the street to Bertha's for penny candy. There was always something happening on the deck outside our house. Everyone from all the buildings would gather for parties, picnics, and chatting. The kids were always running in and out of all the activity.

The next place was the old yacht club on Wiley Street. It was a fun place for kids, with a beach at low tide and outside fire escapes for the kids to climb on. We lived in the basement studio under the pilings. My bedroom had a half wall which was next to the living room. I would peek over at night to see the company. My father had a rowboat which we used to row out to Ten Pound Island.

Next we stayed in a cottage that had been the studio of the artist John Henry Twachtman. It was part of the Harbor View Hotel. Outside on the front lawn was a plaque with a short history of Twachtman. We were the last people to live in the cottage before it was torn down. The winter before, a hard freeze had taken off the back porch. Our cat had her kittens there and insisted on having them in my brother Bill's crib. Bruce MacPhail and his family were also living in a house that was also part of the hotel. It was a fun place to live. Sometimes I got to eat in the hotel's restaurant with the owner's daughter. There were many interesting people staying there, including the children's book illustrator Tibor Gergely and his wife. Our parents would visit with them on the lawn and he would sketch Sally and me and use us for his models.

There was another artist named Reggie Grooms, who would get all the kids together and do a magic show including making rollup newspaper trees.

The hotel had a ballroom where we would have a kids' ball in our parents' costumes the day after the adults' ball. I also remember Ronnie Sheedy, who lived across the cove, would

row over and climb up our back outside porch. A group of us would play cards out there.

I have a postcard my father illustrated for the hotel that shows our cottage.

At the end of the summer my mother cooked bacon to lure the cat in who didn't want to leave.

Somehow my father always found a place to paint. The hotel let him have an unused space in the Flying Jib building.

After the Harbor View we lived at the Sibleys' at 17 Rocky Neck Avenue. The building had a railways running along one side of the house where Bill Sibley and other people would pull up their boats for repair. The launch off the railways was always a fun event. There was always a big group of his friends to help. One time a boat was being lowered into the water and our cat popped out from inside the boat. They stopped the launch and the cat was able to jump back to the house. Joe Garland was one of the other people who pulled up his boat.

My father bought Bolger's Gloucester Gull dory from him. It turned out to be his favorite boat. He loved rowing around Smith Cove and the harbor.

My mother ran a gallery and shop in front of the house. It was a combination of my father's painting and my mother's crafts, and Peg Sibley had a section with her books before she moved across the street to the other Sibley building. The house was across from Whit's End, which is now Sailor Stan's. I worked there one summer. We didn't have a phone and if we got a call on the phone booth outside, someone from the restaurant would come over and get us. The sculptor George Aarons would go pick up his paper across the street and come over to our house to visit. Sometimes the artist Nell Blaine would come and paint from the house and sometimes we all played cards together. The house was always full of people. My father's journal noted that one day there were thirty-one people in and out.

I feel so lucky to have been able to be part of Rocky Neck. Later my husband and I and our two daughters were able to carry on the tradition.

I have many scrapbooks with newspaper clippings, programs and posters, photographs, and memorabilia that both my father and I collected from our love of Gloucester.

Following the talk about Rocky Neck's art colony, a video was shown of the Gloucester Marine Railways, which Viking Gustafson then discussed as follows.

## Gloucester Marine Railways

*Viking Gustafson*

A poet reviewer of Bayliss's writing said, "The hero of his work is PLACE."

Having heard my short editorial on the Railways in the video [shown before the talk began], I introduce Archimedes, of the Greek outpost of Syracuse, actually located on the west coast of Sicily, his Principle:

A body immersed, partially or wholly, in a fluid, experiences a buoyant force equal to the weight of the fluid it displaces.

As a boat is dragged out of the water, the fluid it displaces changes and its stability is a moving target.

As a seasoned mariner once told me, and I did not forget: Weight does funny things around the water.

Sebastian Junger described the Railways this way:

Most boats are repaired at Gloucester Marine Railways, a haul-out place that's been in business since 1856. It consists of massive wooden frames that ride steel rollers along railroad tracks up out of the water.

The Railways are surrounded by the famous galleries and piano bars of Rocky Neck. Tourists blithely wander past machinery that could rip their summer homes right off their foundations.

So what is the foundation to which the Railways are pinned? The granite of Rocky Neck, blasted and carved out to accommodate two sleds, a veritable Dogtown sleighride.

Now, Jonathan Bayliss describes it in *Gloucestermas* this way:

[Caleb] turns right to reach Simons Point Marine Railways ... That prospering industrial establishment is the one uniquely magnetic attraction on any survey of the artificial pres-isle ... he paces slowly the briney ambiance of two hauled-out boats ... a local dragger and a tug ... whose deep uptilted bows ... tower above the yard's pavement like the fore-bodies of scaffolded whales, their keels and rudders visible under their spines in the open air at the bottom of their inclines between sheltering piers ... [He passes the] long spindle of flowered "wheels" ... mostly bronze, varying in diameter more or less to about four feet, strung like a [giant] necklace along twenty feet of horizontally suspended pipe: screw propellers of two, four, even five blades ...

Elsewhere in that novel: "Tessa believed that even cultivated intelligent men ... never entirely transcended their apparently innate fascination with dynamic artifacts."

The Railways trades in dynamic artifacts, and I liken our best workers to athletic squirrels, hanging by their toes, scribing on those scaffolded whales. And the best and longest serving of those squirrels was Harry Cusick, for whom the new pier that looks out over the entire Dogtown Harbor is

dedicated. He is memorialized by a capstan, taken off an old tugboat named MARS. He was Jonathan Bayliss's contemporary on Rocky Neck for his entire writing and civic career. He was born two days before Bayliss in the year 1926, and Cusick served the Railways from the day after his discharge from the Navy of WWII, until shortly before my tenure. He helped me. He encouraged me. When I read about Caleb slowly pacing the briney ambiance of the Railways, I picture Harry.

And I invite you to wander out to the Cusick Capstan and admire the work of these two great persons of PLACE, Rocky Neck.

As for myself, my first trip to this place was in 1978, when I worked on a passenger boat from Boston, and tied up at the Studio Restaurant every summer day. During that summer, on my scheduled engine room check, off Newcomb's ledge, I discovered an engine room fire. The vessel was wooden. I quickly arrived at the pilot house and announced to the captain my discovery. He said, "How bad is it?" I said, "We don't



have time for this.” I gathered every fire extinguisher and made my way past the passengers ... “excuse me, ... excuse me, ...” and hooked up the scuba tank, and had at it. By the time the boat tied at the Coast Guard Base, and the Gloucester Fire Department ran down, it was out. They pulled me out of there and said, “THAT, ..... was STUPID.” Perhaps confused, and certainly embarrassed, it would not be the last time I have been humbled in the face of daunting circumstances in the marine environment. I am humbled to represent the Gloucester Marine Railways here today.



The program “Rocky Neck in Three Dimensions: Art Colony, Marine Railways, and The Rudder” concluded with talks by Paula Parsons and Susan Baker, daughters of Evie Parsons, proprietor of the famous Rudder restaurant on Rocky Neck. Here are their notes for the talk.

## Evie Parsons and The Rudder

*Susan Baker and Paula Parsons*

“Evie” was born at the top of the hill, turning right from Rocky Neck and onto Eastern Point Road, to Orrin and Sarah Douglass, a dory fisherman and homemaker. Evie loved to cook and as a preteen she cooked meals for the elderly on Rocky Neck.

As her children, we really didn’t appreciate her Armenian stew, clams casino, and cream of mushroom soup. In 1957 Evie finally convinced our Dad that she needed to follow her life-long dream of opening her own restaurant: The Rudder.

Her cousin Edison Parker owned the building across from Peter’s Luncheonette that was at the location that Sailor Stan’s now occupies. “Peter” was father to Peter Anastas, whom many of you may be familiar with. Edison rented the space to Evie, allowing her to pay rent at the end of each month rather than at the beginning! The space was previously occupied by Le Coq Rouge (gift shop gallery) that had moved to where the Goetemann gallery is now and was called “La Petite.”

Evie had saved \$39 to start her new restaurant business so she called friends and relatives to ask for any old tables, chairs, dishes, pots, pans, and utensils they didn’t need or want. Next she purchased a gallon of paint and a case of beer for the painting helpers to drink. The remaining dollars were used to purchase the food on opening day.

The Rudder became known for Evie’s traditional fish or clam chowder (never thickened), her BBQ hot dogs, char crust T-bone steaks, and angel cake with hot blueberry sauce.



One of her first waitresses was Emile Gruppe's daughter Emily as well as her niece Sally, who still lives right across from The Rudder on Sumac Lane.

Evie hired "Teedy" (Edith) Cleveland of Wonson Street and Artemesia "Artie" Mehlman, who owned five properties on Rackcliffe Street and was Evie's bookkeeper.

After five years being successful at 19 Rocky Neck Avenue, a daily customer (Alden Bryan) offered to move Evie and her Rudder to 73 Rocky Neck Avenue, which was once the Edgren studio, and he would set her up to expand her business; he would be her silent partner. (They never established a formal partnership and yet they remained partners until 1983, when she bought him out, purchased the building, and The Rudder finally became "Evie's Rudder.") The sign that hangs today is the original sign!

In 1963 The Rudder was granted an all-alcohol seasonal liquor license. The front door opened to an intimate seven-seat bar with approximately six tables, 24 seats, and piano!



But when Evie purchased The Rudder from Mr. Bryan, the wall separating the bar area from the dining and porch area was knocked down and an additional eight bar stools were added to extend the length of the bar. The piano was moved into the dining area and a large deck was added to the porch.

The Rudder was known for Spontaneous Entertainment! Customers were encouraged to perform or participate! Some of our regular skits included:

1. Evie's backwards rendition of Prinderella and the Cince
2. Susan's famous invisible baton twirling act
3. Evie-Susan-and-Paula's marching parade to John Philips Sousa
4. Susan-and-Paula's human puppet show to "It's Raining Men"
5. Susan's toe dance ballet in the dining room

When Evie passed in July 1997 we had a memorial service in September at "Poo Park." We had a parade down Rocky Neck Ave. to The Rudder and partied from noon to midnight. Evie always said she would come back as a seagull! A seagull sat on the waterside peak of The Rudder roof that day into the dark of night.

At the Cape Ann Museum on Saturday afternoon following the “Rocky Neck in Three Dimensions” program, Bishop Terry Brown joined the conference by Zoom from his home in Hamilton, Toronto, to discuss the history of the Society of the Catholic Commonwealth. Jonathan Bayliss briefly worked as a business consultant for the Society in the late 1950s, when it was headquartered in Gloucester. Bayliss’s fictional character Father Duncannon is based partly on Father Smyth. Before Bishop Brown spoke, the audience was treated to an audio recording of Father Smyth taped during the late 1950s,

## F. Hastings Smyth and the Society of the Catholic Commonwealth

*Terry Brown*

### 1. How I first heard of Fr. Smyth and the SCC

While I was in the U.S. Army in Japan, I attended worship at the Anglican University in Tokyo, the Rikkyo, and a Japanese priest there, Fr. Christopher Yazawa, gave me some pamphlets written by Fr. Smyth (*The Kingdom of God in Time and Eternity*, etc.). This was 1968-69 and the SCC had already officially folded but there was still a de facto SCC group in Japan. I heard of a Canadian missionary priest in Japan, Dr. Cyril Powles, but I did not meet him.

After I returned to the U.S., I eventually went on to theological school at Trinity College, Toronto, where Cyril Powles was now teaching church history in the Divinity Faculty and Japanese studies at the University of Toronto. I learned that he had been a member of the SCC. Fr. Smyth and the SCC emerged in the curriculum in areas of Anglican social thought, Christian socialism, Anglo-Catholic socialism, “slum priests,” etc. I began reading Fr. Smyth’s major works (*Manhood into God*, *Discerning the Lord’s Body*) and started writing about him. I was eventually ordained in New Brunswick and met Fr. Elmer Smith, the last Superior of the SCC, who, after the demise of the SCC in 1966, moved to Prince

William, New Brunswick, as a parish priest, bringing the SCC archives with him.

Just as I decided to do research on Fr. Smyth and the SCC, I took the Solomon Islands theological education position. I started research by correspondence with family, friends, and former SCC members. I visited Fr. Elmer on my 1978 furlough and again in 1980; I also visited former SCC members in Japan and Korea. I came back to Canada in 1981 by way of England and conducted interviews there. In 1981, I entered graduate school at Trinity College, Toronto, and decided to write my doctoral dissertation on Fr. Smyth and the SCC under the supervision of Cyril Powles. Fr. Elmer gave me permission to access the F. Hastings Smyth archives, about fourteen document boxes stored in the attic of a well-heated poultry house on a farm in his parish. Eventually I brought the archives back with me to Toronto.

## 2. What attracted me to the SCC and the writings of Fr. Smyth?

I was raised a Presbyterian, but in university I was very attracted to the Episcopal church, especially to the Eucharist and sacramental worship. I felt it was more embodied and participatory compared to sermon-centered Presbyterian worship. I also had many Episcopal friends. In 1967, when I was a graduate student at Brandeis University, I was confirmed as an Episcopalian by Bishop John Burgess at St. Paul's Cathedral, Boston. By that time, it was clear to me that I felt a call to study theology and be ordained. But I did not have good support from the Bishop of Michigan, so was drafted, went to Japan, returned home, attended Wayne State University in Detroit for a year, then went on to Canada. I had always been on the political left, interested in social justice issues, anti-Vietnam War, etc. I found that Fr. Smyth's theology brought together my liturgical and social justice issues, indeed, integrated them. The Eucharist was a call to do justly,

and the presentation of work for justice at the altar, then receiving the sacrament, then sent out to minister. As I learned about the English “slum priest” tradition, I realized that that was what I wanted to be. (St. Stephen’s, South Boston, might be an example of an Anglo-Catholic parish working in a socioeconomically poor urban area, but there were many more in Victorian England.) Even though I ended up in ministry overseas, that was still the model of priest I wished to be, working for justice in situations of injustice.

### 3. Background on F. Hastings Smyth and the Society of the Catholic Commonwealth

Smyth was born in 1888 of an upstate New York wealthy Episcopal family, from Utica and Clinton, NY. He was an only child, privileged and spoiled. His father died when he was young, and his mother was devoted to him. The Smyth family money came from a paint business they owned that produced the red-brown rust-resistant paint used on barns, iron bridges, and box cars. He was a brilliant student at Hamilton College in Clinton; classmates included Alexander Woollcott and Ezra Pound. Coming from a family of scientists, he earned a Ph.D. at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in physical chemistry. (Two of his cousins became chemistry professors at Princeton.) During World War I, he served in the new Chemical Warfare Service in Washington, D.C., designing their insignia. After the war, he did research in physical chemistry at the Carnegie Institute in Washington. However, he lost interest in science. He briefly enrolled at General Theological Seminary in New York City but did not stay. Upon the death of his mother, he inherited the family business which he briefly managed. However, he decided to make a break and move to Europe to be (in his own words) a “dilettante,” doing whatever he desired, supported by his family wealth.

Smyth moved to Rome and lived with a young American he had befriended, Ethan Allan Brown, whom he eventually

put through medical school. He learned Italian. At one point, he interviewed Mussolini and became interested in Italian fascism. He also got to know some Italian Modernist theologians who had a more critical view of Italian politics. Bored of Italy, he took a job as amanuensis to the English scientist Sir Almroth Wright and moved back to England. He began to travel in Anglo-Catholic circles and think about the relationship between post-Newtonian physics and theology (e.g., the Heisenberg uncertainty principle, quantum mechanics, etc.). He was also exposed to Anglo-Catholic Socialism and Marxism, especially Fr. Conrad Noel, who in his parish in Thaxted, Essex, famously hung the flags of the Russian and Irish Revolutions in his church. (Like Smyth, Noel was from a privileged family background.) Smyth began to consider a career as a theologian, developing a new apologetic based on Catholic faith, the new understandings of science and, eventually, Marxism, including Marxist dialectics. He befriended T. S. Eliot during this period. He was taken on as an ordinand by Bishop George Bell of Chichester and studied at Chichester Theological College. (Bell famously criticized Churchill for the carpet bombing of Dresden and, as a result, was later passed over for the position of Archbishop of Canterbury.) Smyth was ordained a priest by Bishop Bell in Chichester Cathedral. He served a curacy at a large Anglo-Catholic parish in a poor area of Brighton, St. Martin's, and began giving lectures on theology and science.

In 1933, Fr. Smyth decided to return to the U.S. He did not see much future for himself in England, and the money was running out. He approached Hamilton College about starting a small Oratory (place of prayer) adjacent to the campus, to give instruction to students on religion and science. At first the College agreed but soon regretted the decision. The College had just freed itself from a relationship with the Presbyterian church and many faculty members feared that an Episcopal alignment was emerging. As the radical political

content of Smyth's teaching became public, hostility increased, especially among the Republican college trustees. When Smyth did not desist, they built a fence between the Oratory and the campus. Smyth had also alienated the local Episcopal parish, St. James, Clinton, which did not like the competition. It was clear he could not stay in Clinton.

In September 1936, Fr. Smyth moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, and founded the first of three successive Oratories there. Their locations, dates, and foci were:

(1) Quincy Street, almost on the Harvard campus, near Memorial Hall (1936-1938). Here Fr. Smyth planned to concentrate on attracting and ministering to Harvard students, as he had planned to do at Hamilton College. However, Harvard authorities were concerned about his politics and drawing Harvard students into activism, so they refused to renew the lease.

(2) Putnam Street, in a working-class area of Cambridge (1938-1946). Fr. Smyth moved to the area hoping to have more relations with the working class. This was the time of his maximum involvement with radical politics and action and the Communist Party. At one point, the Oratory basement was the headquarters for a taxi strike. Fr. Smyth participated in various united front group campaigns and activities. On 4 October 1939, Fr. Smyth and three others took vows as members of the new Society of the Catholic Commonwealth at the Oratory. The rector of Christ Church Cambridge received the vows but the relationship with the parish soon lapsed. However, Smyth continued to be licensed as a priest in good standing annually by the Bishops of Massachusetts, beginning with Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill, who knew the Smyth family. (Three of the four original members of the SCC soon left. One was more interested in political organizing; the other two were more interested in the conventional religious life. Fr. Smyth was left as the only "regular" member of the SCC.) From 1941, Fr. Smyth and the Oratory came under FBI

investigation. They read his writings, interviewed those who knew him, and sent an FBI agent pretending to be an inquirer to interview him. Fr. Smyth was aware of the surveillance but did not take it seriously. (I obtained a copy of his redacted FBI file through a lawyer friend.) In the end, the FBI's conclusion was "more odd than dangerous." During this time, Fr. Smyth wrote his two major theological works, *Manhood into God* (1940) and *Discerning the Lord's Body* (1946). He continued to welcome Harvard students and faculty. He attracted a few members of the Communist Party but attracting the Cambridge working class was very difficult. They were often Portuguese or Irish Roman Catholics, and they were not attracted to the Oratory's very English ethos.

(3) Washington Avenue, a large house in a middle-class section of Cambridge (1946-1955). Here Fr. Smyth settled into a somewhat quieter life of study, writing, advocacy, building up the SCC membership, and celebrating the Anámnesis (the SCC rite of the Eucharist). He published SCC newsletters and his third book, *Sacrifice* (1953). He still welcomed Harvard staff and students and working-class members. He developed two types of SCC membership: (1) religious members who took conventional monastic vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and (2) secular members, who could be lay or ordained, married, single, men, women and/or couples. The secular membership grew and expanded in the U.S., Canada, England, Japan, and Korea and gathered for an annual Chapter meeting, often at the Oratory. For most of the time, Fr. Smyth was the only regular member of the SCC. However, in 1948, a recently divorced lay person arrived, Don Johnston. He took his first vows as a regular member in 1950; the SCC sponsored him for theological studies at Harvard Divinity School and he was ordained a priest in the Diocese of Massachusetts. During this time, Fr. Smyth became much more critical of Soviet Marxism, especially as the human rights abuses of Stalin became more public. He

welcomed Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin. He was also outraged by the U.S.S.R.'s espousal of the anti-evolutionary views of the Soviet geneticist Lysenko, who maintained that acquired characteristics could be incorporated into an organism's genetic make-up and inherited by the next generation. As a scientist, Fr. Smyth knew this was not the case and disliked its incorporation into Marxist dialectics. In the mid-fifties, Fr. Smyth began to have health problems, with a heart attack and intestinal surgery. The house was too big, and he had only Fr. Johnston to help him, who was frequently away. He noted that the community life was moving from an Oratorian to a Benedictine model, with much more emphasis on quiet, study, and the recitation of the daily offices. He did not need to be in Cambridge.

#### 4. The Gloucester Oratory

The Gloucester Oratory. Attracted by the quietness of Gloucester, in September 1955, Fr. Smyth sold the Washington Avenue house and took on a heavy mortgage to buy the Ralph Adams Cram house in Gloucester. Frs. Smyth and Johnston moved to Gloucester. Fr. Smyth wrote to SCC members, that it is a "much more retired environment and more quietness everyway." They were welcomed by the town, and both assisted at St. John's Episcopal Church. Oratory life took on a much more liturgical focus, with less political activism but still much correspondence, especially with SCC members around the world; an annual Chapter was held most summers at the Oratory, often including whole families.

In the early fifties, Fr. Johnston had trained and begun to work as a stockbroker, initially managing the Oratory's endowment, later taking on others' investments, using the Oratory's tax-free status to gain an advantage. He was eventually licensed to trade on the New York Stock Exchange and hired staff to assist him. Fr. Smyth saw him as a stockbroker



“worker priest,” although the Bishop and many SCC members were wary. (The SCC had at least two worker priests in working-class situations, following the French Roman Catholic model of worker priests: Fr. John Rowe in a brewery in London and Fr. Don [Dan] Heap in a cardboard-box factory in Toronto. Fr. Johnston was an odd third.)

Life at Gloucester was initially quiet, though Fr. Smyth worried about who would succeed him. But Fr. Johnston’s bipolar disorder also governed his investment decisions and although Fr. Smyth and SCC members thought the Oratory was extremely wealthy, all the wealth was on paper and of dubious legality. In 1958, a fire damaged the Oratory’s furniture and library. Fr. Smyth had another heart attack and was put on a rice diet, difficult for someone who was a fine cook and took pride in the Oratory’s food as a sign of the fulness of the Incarnation. Fr. Smyth died on Easter Eve, April 1960. SCC members came from around the world for his funeral. The Bishop of Massachusetts, Anson Stokes, read the burial office.

As he was the only regular member of the SCC, Fr. Johnston was elected by Chapter as the new Superior of the SCC.

However, he was not very functional. He tried to remove all mention of Marxism from the Society's publications (a move successfully resisted by the Canadian and English members) and continued his manic investment activities, including buying land in Spain. Concerned, the Chapter chose Fr. Elmer Smith, the parish priest of St. Peter's, Portland, Maine, to be supervising vicar. One of Fr. Elmer's strategies was to exercise no supervision over Fr. Johnston's investment activities; he let him lose all the funds as he thought the investments were "dirty money." Fr. Johnston imploded in a breakdown, renounced his holy orders as an Episcopal priest, became a Roman Catholic, and went back to Spain, where he died in 1967. (Fr. Smyth had called Fr. Johnston "Father Economist," a name picked up and used by Jonathan Bayliss in his novels.)

As the Gloucester Oratory was now financially unsustainable, in 1963 Fr. Elmer allowed the bank to foreclose on the mortgage and in May 1963 moved the Oratory to a small house in Newburyport, Massachusetts, purchased with a smaller mortgage. However, even there, funds were scarce as most SCC secular members were parish priests or lay people with low incomes and the new mortgage still could not be met. A major discussion took place on 5 August 1967 in Varennes, Quebec, among SCC members; they decided that the SCC would dissolve. The last Anámnesis was celebrated at the Newburyport Oratory on 13 August 1967. The house was sold, and Fr. Elmer moved to New Brunswick, where he had spent many years salmon fishing. Canadian Customs questioned the enormous trailer load of SCC furniture, library, archives, etc., but after he threatened to make a big bonfire and burn everything, they allowed him to enter.

## 5. Why didn't the SCC survive?

Fr. Smyth was a charismatic, almost irreplaceable leader. The whole Society was centered on his beliefs and his brilliant defense of them. The strange structure of the SCC with only

one or two regular members and dozens of secular members, but only regular members constitutionally qualified to be Superior, meant it was very difficult to find a replacement. Fr. Johnston proved not to be appropriate. There was also a major change in Anglican/Episcopal theology in the sixties: away from traditional dogmatic theology to theological liberalism, for example, Bishop J. A. T. Robinson's book, *Honest to God*, "de-mythologizing," the "death of God" movement, etc. The sixties were marked by a decline of trust in authority, with student movements, student riots, sexual liberation, etc. Fr. Smyth's Thomist realism seemed very old-fashioned. Dr. John Wild's paper on human freedom given at the 1959 Chapter (mentioned favorably by Fr. Smyth in the tape recording) was an attempt to move from Thomist realism to Existentialism as a theological base for SCC theology but privately Fr. Smyth was dubious.

## 6. Research for the thesis and conclusion

There were about fourteen banker's boxes of archival materials from all periods of Fr. Smyth's life and that of the SCC. I conducted correspondence and interviews with people who knew Fr. Smyth in all periods of his life, including all the former members of the SCC. Almost everyone was cooperative. I found one tape recording, Fr. Smyth commenting on the 1959 Chapter for SCC members in Japan, part of which you have heard. Almost all former SCC members were still positive about their experience of Fr. Smyth and the SCC, although they had gone in many different directions. One had become a member of the Canadian Parliament. I regard the theology as still significant and, in the dissertation, I argue that Fr. Smyth's theology was a forerunner to Latin American Liberation Theology in its use of Marxist social analysis to describe situations of injustice. The SCC theology has also shaped my own life and theology. For example, I often

thought that my open and hospitable Bishop's House in the Solomons was the heir of the Oratory.

## 7. Question and answer session

A few additional points were raised after my talk. It was asked whether the SCC might have survived if the constitution were changed to enable a secular member to be Superior. The difficulty was that almost all the secular members were married, usually parish priests with a wife and family. If the Society could not afford to support one or two regular (single) members living at the Oratory, a whole family would have been impossible. One puzzle is why Fr. Smyth did not attract more regular members. One problem was that he was not easy to live with. He had a slight Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde personality. He could be immensely charming but if there was major disagreement (especially theological) he could send you packing fast. I also noted that after his death, Fr. Smyth's ashes were placed under the Oratory altar, as was the custom with medieval Catholic saints and still a Roman Catholic practice. The ashes went with Fr. Elmer to New Brunswick, stored in a closet, but were eventually buried in the family lot in Clinton, New York. Finally, Fr. Elmer willed the archives to me; they are on deposit, along with all my FHS/SCC research papers, in the General Synod Archives at the national office of the Anglican Church of Canada. Researchers need my permission to consult them. I have willed them to the General Synod Archives, so their future is secure.

Finally, thank you to the Jonathan Bayliss Society for giving me an opportunity to speak and write about Fr. Smyth and the SCC. It has been many years since I have done so, and it has been a refreshing exercise.

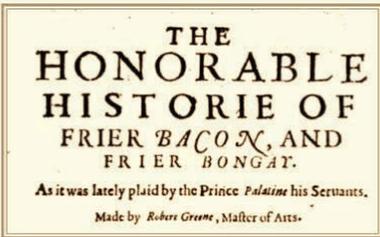
As an entertainment for the conference dinner, John Day organized an amusing reading from Scene VI of the Renaissance play *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. Some of it was captured on a smart phone and is available at [jonathanbayliss.org/events](http://jonathanbayliss.org/events). Here is John's introduction.

## Introduction to Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*

John T. Day

### 1. Connection with Bayliss

I don't know why Jonathan Bayliss was interested in Robert Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. Maybe some of the Bayliss scholars or avid readers have an idea. In any case, in *Gloucestertide* the members of the Stone Barn Company of Mummers consider putting on the play for their next production. One of the issues they will need to confront is how to cast the play: there are more male roles than female roles, but more female actors than males in the company. You will see how we deal with that issue.



**THE  
HONORABLE  
HISTORIE OF  
FRIER *BACON*, AND  
FRIER *BONGAY*.**

**As it was lately plaid by the Prince *Palatine* his Seruants,  
Made by *Robert Greene*, Master of Arts.**

Friar Bacon, a scholar of Oxford University, has earned a reputation for being the foremost sorcerer of England, and perhaps all of Europe; his big project is to construct a giant talking brass head which will teach him all the secrets of the universe.

Meanwhile, Edward, the Prince of Wales, has fallen in lust with maid Margaret (daughter of a gamekeeper), and sends his best friend Lord Lacy to court her on his behalf; but Margaret falls in love with Lacy instead!

**A Reading from Scene VI  
Cast (in order of appearance)**

Friar Bacon	Judy Walcott
Edward, Prince of Wales	Martha Oaks
Margaret (Peggy)	Karl Frank
Friar Bungay	Susan Weber
Lacy, Earl of Lincoln	Mern Sibley
A Devil	John Day

## 2. Elizabethan Drama

The later part of the 16th century was a great age for drama in England. For most of us, Shakespeare outshines all of his contemporaries. Among these other playwrights were the so-called University Wits, men educated at Oxford or Cambridge who decided to write plays for the thriving theater scene. And Robert Greene was one of these University Wits, along with John Lyly, George Peele, Thomas Nashe, and Christopher Marlowe.

## 3. Robert Greene

Robert Greene himself is an interesting character: a popular author, an older contemporary of William Shakespeare, with degrees from both Oxford and Cambridge. Rather than pursue the ministry or law or medicine, for which his education prepared him, he moved to London to try to make his living as a writer, one of the first to do so. He was amazingly prolific in his short life, producing over twenty-five works in prose, some of which were the immediate sources of Shakespeare's plays, and six of his own plays for the London stage.

Greene was known for his riotous living and dissipated life: he deserted his wife and child for the sister of a notorious underworld character. As Stephen Greenblatt describes him, he was "larger than life, a hugely talented, learned, narcissistic, self-dramatizing, self-promoting, shameless, and undisciplined scoundrel." Abandoned by his friends, Greene fell ill after a dinner of pickled herring and Rhenish wine, and was taken in by a poor shoemaker and his wife who paid for his winding sheet and burial.

Shortly before his death in 1592, aged about 34, Greene wrote a work well known to Shakespeare's readers, his *Greene's Groats-Worth of Wit*, in which he complains about an actor—new to the scene—who thinks he can write as well as university-educated playwrights:

... for there is an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers, that *with his Tiger's heart wrapped in a Player's hide*, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you: and being an absolute Johannes Factotum, is in his own conceit the only Shakescene in a country. [The italicized line is a paraphrase from the True Tragedy quarto and the Folio version of *Henry VI*, Part 3]

#### 4. Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay

The play *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* compares favorably with Christopher Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*, written at about the same time. Greene's mixes the pastoral and the romantic, he depicts a resourceful heroine, he weaves potentially serious issues into a comic world, and he juxtaposes and mingles multiple plots, thus anticipating in these ways the work of Shakespeare.

#### 5. Plot Summary

Friar Bacon, a scholar at Oxford, is regarded as the foremost sorcerer in England, perhaps in all of Europe. His big project is to construct a giant Brazen Head, a talking brass head that will teach him all the secrets of the universe.



Meanwhile, Edward, Prince of Wales, has fallen in lust with Margaret, the Maid of Fressingfield. Edward sends his best friend Lord Lacy of Lincoln to court Margaret on his behalf; but Margaret falls in love with Lacy instead. We will present one scene from the play which combines two of the major themes of the play: magic and love.

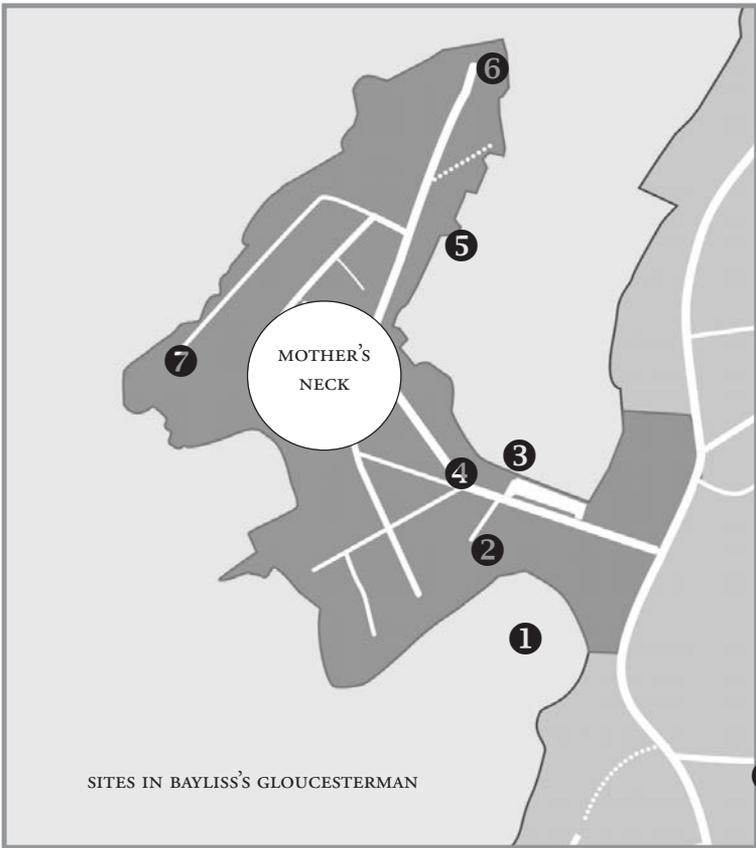
## 6. Scene VI

The scene opens with Prince Edward in consultation with Friar Bacon. Prince Edward wants Friar Bacon to help him in his pursuit of Margaret, the Fair Maid of Fressingfield. Edward is infatuated with Margaret, he—in the modern parlance—has the hots for her. Previously Edward has sent his friend Lacy, the Earl of Lincoln, to woo Margaret on his behalf. And now he wants Friar Bacon’s help, too. Bacon uses his magic glass to show Edward how Lacy has proceeded in his wooing of Margaret.

Through the glass we, like Edward, first see Margaret in conversation with Friar Bungay. Lacy enters and in soliloquy reveals that he has fallen in love with Margaret. He rationalizes his position—after all Edward wants to bed Margaret, not marry her. After some active wooing he persuades Margaret to marry him; Margaret for her part has fallen in love with Lacy.

As they proceed to the chapel with Friar Bungay, Friar Bacon intervenes with his magic—but I won’t give any more away. The plays the thing.

Note: For the text of the play and the plot summary used here, see the Robert Greene entries in the website [elizabethandrama.org](http://elizabethandrama.org). Stephen Greenblatt’s *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare* was helpful to me in preparing this introduction.



**① Swanson's Cove**

*Wonson's Cove*

Protruding from the middle of the beach a whale of rust granite and two or three sucklings were half buried in the mud-colored bottomland, never totally submerged by the flood. Twice a day the tide did engulf and conceal three large boulders clustered midway across the mouth of the inlet where the sea god had rolled them to hinder Champlain and Smith, but now they were high and almost dry, their dark sea-worn hue blackening bottomward, at an edging frontier of ripples from the outer harbor just beginning its reflux under their skirts. (*Gloucestertide*, p. 388)

**② Swanson's Way**

*Bickford Way*

But first, for two seconds of hesitation, he glances to his left with a sharper pang of nostalgia, for he's also abreast the foot of a dead-end dirt lane called Swanson's Way, always attractive to his eyes despite its unaltered immobility. In a cottage on its ridge not sixty yards from where he stands his benefactor Rafe Opsimath lived for many years, in summers looking down at high tides upon a family of swans until it destroyed all the eel-grass and chose some other cove or pond for its intra-Cape migrations. (*Gloucestermas*, p. 192)

### ③ **Wat Cibber's Headquarters**

*17 Rocky Neck Ave.*

So it was toward Wat's "official headquarters" on Mother's Neck at the head of the cove that they wended at last, hoping that the small workshop's battered easy chair opposite Wat's overstuffed rocker would not be preempted by some fisherman or parlor historian. With luck, if the host wasn't still out harrowing the bottom of the sea, the wayfarers could expect a can of beer and a pan of water before returning to their inland attic. (*Gloucestertide*, p. 162)

### ④ **Spartan's lunchroom**

*Sailor Stan's, 1 Wonson St. (formerly Peter Anastas Sr.'s luncheonette)*

Rafe was glad that at least he'd been introduced to the solid breakfasts at Spartan's. The lunchroom, situated on a V where the principal streets of the Neck divaricated from the main stem of the causeway, was no more than a cable-length from his own underused kitchen, and only across a narrow one-way street from Argo Cove on the inner-harbor side where Wat received visitors in the atelier next to his private little marine railway. (*Gloucestertide*, p. 390)

### ⑤ **Starboard Gangway**

*The Rudder, 73 Rocky Neck Ave.*

Suddenly his solitude is hailed by a level feminine voice of the rare quality that he prefers whenever occasionally at his limited opportunities to consider rejoining the evolution of our species.

"Hello, grandpa! You look a bit seedy."

Its breathtaking apparition stands in the half-opened doorway of the otherwise boarded-up Starboard Gangway to his port, a waterside lobster house and piano bar a step or two below street level. (*Gloucestermas*, p. 205)

### ⑥ **Simon's Point Marine Railways**

*Gloucester Marine Railways, 81 Rocky Neck*

Over there at Simon's Point Marine Railways, on the inner tip of Mother's Neck, working boats were hauled for repair; and many of the city's largest draggers tied up at its piers whenever they weren't fishing or unloading. At the extremity of its broad wharf, directly opposite the Apostle's, stood a similar crane, like the other foot of Colossus. The function of that tetrahedral machine was to raise and lower not the sybaritic craft of fair weather but heavy marine engines, large masts, whole assemblies of superstructure, pilings, and other necessary fabrications of the productive economy. (*Gloucesterbook*, p. 558)

### ⑦ **Dogtown Net & Twine Manufactory**

*Ocean Alliance, 32 Horton St. (formerly Tarr & Wonson Paint Manufactory)*

The small gabled factory of framed wood and brick, painted red by day, had survived the demolition of its 19C ropewalk but retained its own ad hoc irregularities beneath a tapering square brick chimney-stack. The building was planted only a few feet above high water on a base of living rock at the end of Mother's Neck, guarding the entrance channel of the inner harbor like a blockhouse on the Rhine. (*Gloucestertide*, p. 53)

### ⑧ **Laboratory of Melchizedek and the Mesocosm, Moor Rock Hill**

*7 Ledge Road*

Above gray walls of roughhewn granite, Tudor stucco and half-timber adorned parts of the sunniest levels. Disregarding the pruned pines and cultivated shrubbery sown upon Moor Rock since the extermination of forests you could easily imagine the house as a comfortably fortified strong-point commanding from its hump of ledge the rockboned tail of the Cape known as the Foreside. (*Gloucesterbook*, p. 317)

## CONFERENCE PRESENTERS

**Susan M. Parsons Baker**, an East Gloucester native, served as cook and hostess at the Rudder, where she also created and performed the famous “invisible baton twirling act.”

**Sally Bradshaw**, a retired Gloucester school teacher, grew up in New Jersey and spent summers in the Rocky Neck art colony with her brothers, parents, and grandparents. Her father and grandfather were artists and teachers, and her mother taught music.

**Terry Brown** is retired Bishop of Malaita and archivist of the Anglican Church of Melanesia. He recently retired as Bishop-Rector of the Church of the Ascension, Hamilton, Ontario.

**John Day** had a career in higher education as an English professor and academic administrator after studying at Holy Cross and Harvard. He volunteers at a number of Cape Ann cultural organizations and roots for the Red Sox.

**Liz Sibley Fletcher** grew up in East Gloucester and moved to Mason, New Hampshire, in the 1970s, for affordable space in the woods. Since then she’s been making and sometimes teaching clay sculpture, among other endeavors in the land conservation field.

**Viking Gustafson** began a career in commercial marine operations in 1978, including passenger vessels, shipping services, island operations, and shipyard management. She was raised in Chautauqua County, upstate New York.

**Suzu O’Hara Kadiff** retired at the end of 2020 from managing the student costume and prop stock at Harvard University’s American Repertory Theater in Cambridge.

**Susan Oleksiw** is a writer, editor, and teacher who grew up on Cape Ann.

**Paula Parsons** owned and/or operated four well-known Gloucester businesses: the Rudder, Grange Gourmet, Last Stop Variety, and Scroo Cookin’. She was also food service manager for Pathways for Children.

**George Sibley** is a Gloucester native. He operates the MTG Wharf and Low Tide Marina on Rocky Neck.

**Mern Sibley** was born and raised in Gloucester, then lived in the Midwest for a long time, where the plants grow tall in the black earth (especially the weeds). She finally came back to the old East Gloucester neighborhood in 2002. She has been pursuing biology most of her life in various ways—as a researcher, teacher, and gardener.

**Judy Walcott** is retired from a career in education focused on reading. She taught at the Adult Learning Center at North Shore Community College and the Gloucester Public Schools.

## CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Catherine Bayliss  
Liz Sibley Fletcher  
Victoria Bayliss Mattingly  
Susan Oleksiw  
Jonathan Parsons

## “ROCKY NECK IN THREE DIMENSIONS”

Cape Ann Museum  
Jonathan Bayliss Society  
Rocky Neck Art Colony



The Jonathan Bayliss Society was formed to promote, perpetuate, and enhance the study and appreciation of the literary work of the American writer Jonathan Bayliss (1926-2009) and to encourage scholarship relating to his life, philosophy, and historical and literary context. The Society is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, EIN 83-1891575.

Correspondence may be addressed to [info@jonathanbayliss.org](mailto:info@jonathanbayliss.org) or to Jonathan Bayliss Society, 11 Rocky Pasture Road, Gloucester MA 01930 USA.

Jonathan Bayliss was born on September 7, 1926, in Arlington, Massachusetts. His parents, Henry and Lois Henderson Balos, divorced in 1932, after which Lois—adopting the name Bayliss—raised her three children alone. She moved the family frequently during the Great Depression. Jonathan and his younger sister and brother attended public schools in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Arlington, Vermont. Later Jonathan won a scholarship to the Newton School, South Windham, Vermont, where his jobs included felling trees for lumber and milking cows.

Bayliss enrolled at Harvard in 1943, served in the U.S. Navy toward the end of World War II, and finished his A.B. at the University of California at Berkeley in 1949. Bayliss and Doris Sturtevant married in 1948. Two daughters were born in Oakland, California. The family moved East in 1953, living first in Newton Corner, Massachusetts, and then in Gloucester starting in 1956. A son was born in Gloucester in 1960. The marriage ended in 1966.

While writing his *Gilgamesh* plays and the *GLOUCESTERMAN* novels, the work of a lifetime, Bayliss earned a livelihood in positions involved with sales analysis, accounting controls, and management, beginning in 1950 at a Berkeley bookstore.

In the 1960s, as controller at Gorton's of Gloucester, the frozen-fish processor based in Gloucester, Massachusetts, he was a pioneer in developing integrated business applications for the IBM System 360. Working closely with the architect Eduardo Catalano, he also supervised the design and construction of a new Gorton's headquarters building.

After leaving Gorton's in 1972, Bayliss devoted the next five years to full-time writing, with the help of a literary grant from the Massachusetts Arts and Humanities Foundation. Later, after the grant funding ran out, he worked for the City of Gloucester as an executive aide to the mayor and as city treasurer. In 1985 he resumed full-time writing.

Bayliss was putting the finishing touches on his final novel, *Gloucestermas*, when he died in 2009 at Addison Gilbert Hospital, Gloucester, at the age of 82. Cause of death was a cerebral hemorrhage. Bayliss's ashes are buried in Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, in his mother's family's plot.

Bayliss's manuscripts and papers are in the collection of Houghton Library at Harvard University.