

# Provincetown Portuguese

*Festival & Blessing  
of the Fleet*

1948 Special 75th Anniversary Edition 2022

*Sharing the Heritage*

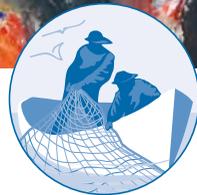


"Talkin' Fish" by Salvatore Del Deo

Courtesy of Berta Walker Gallery & Del Deo Foundation for the Arts

Celebrating the heritage and the future  
of the community we serve

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**The Festival Committee extends its most sincere gratitude to those who have so generously shared wonderful family histories, fascinating information, beautiful paintings and priceless memories with us**, especially David W. Dunlap, Building Provincetown, whose expertise and knowledge of the history of our community, its people, its buildings and its fishing heritage has been invaluable, and his willingness to share it with our readers; Seamen's Bank for their continued and generous support; the Lion's Club, The Knights of Columbus, St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church, Bishop Edgar M. DaCunha, S.V.D.; Frank Gaspar; Mel Joseph; the Provincetown History Preservation Project; Cape Cod Standard Times, 1948; The Provincetown

Advocate Archives; Katy Ward, Provincetown Banner, 2017; Mary Ann Bragg, Cape Cod Times, 2007 and 2012; Jim Gilbert, Provincetown Advocate, 1978; Andrea Tasha, 2015; Chris Racine for the Festival Lighting Display on the Pilgrim Monument and Provincetown Town Hall; Kathie Meads & Maureen Hurst; Salvatore & Romolo Del Deo and the DelDeo Foundation for the Arts; Berta Walker Gallery; Lisa King; Salvador Vasques; Carol Leonard LeDuc; Paul Schulenberg, Mary Jo Avellar; Betsi Corea; Fran Coco; Beverly Dwyer & Family for the continued use of their property for the Festival Warehouse; the Provincetown II; Provincetown's Pier Corporation, and the Town of Provincetown and its Boards for their support of the Portuguese Festival and Blessing of the Fleet through the years.



Street Painting  
The Portuguese Rooster  
"Faith, Good Luck & Justice"

Share the 5 Heritage

# 26th Annual Provincetown Portuguese Festival 2022

## 75th Blessing of the Fleet

Sunday May 15th

2-4pm Red Inn Event with Provincetown Artist Salvatore Del Deo

Thursday, June 23rd

5-10pm Seamen's Bank Opening Night at the Provincetown Inn

Friday, June 24th

10am-4pm Local Crafts Fair in Portuguese Square on Ryder Street

12-2pm Fishing Derby at MacMillan Pier

12-3pm Soup Tasting at the Bas Relief Park, 106 Bradford Street

12-5pm Face Painting in Portuguese Square on Ryder Street

2-4pm Portuguese Writers & Poets featuring poet, novelist and professor Frank Gaspar at the Crown & Anchor on Commercial Street

5-7:30pm Live Music with The Capitalistas in Portuguese Square on Ryder Street

8-10pm Entertainment by Nelia in Portuguese Square on Ryder Street

9pm-1am Homecoming at Bubala's Restaurant, 185 Commercial Street

Saturday, June 25th

10am-12pm Field Games at Motta Field

10am-4pm Commercial Fishing Demonstrations and more from local fishermen in Portuguese Square on Ryder Street

10:30am-2pm Portuguese Folklore Dancers in Portuguese Square on Ryder Street

11:30am-7:30pm Lions Club Food Court in Bas Relief Park on Bradford Street

10:30am-2pm Entertainment in Portuguese Square on Ryder Street

3-5pm Festival Parade on Commercial Street

2-5pm Toe Jam Puppet Band for Kids in Portuguese Square on Ryder Street

6:15-7:15pm Comedy by the Portuguese Kids at Provincetown Town Hall

7:30-9:30pm Live Fado Concert at Provincetown Tall Hall

9-11pm Samba Band Live in Portuguese Square on Ryder Street

Sunday, June 26th

10:30am Fisherman's Mass at St. Peter the Apostle Church

12-1pm Procession to MacMillan Pier after Mass

1pm 75th Blessing of the Fleet at MacMillan Pier with the boat procession led by the historic Coast

Guard boat CG-36500 from the 1952 USS Pendleton rescue

12-4pm Delicious Tasca at MacMillan Pier and the Discovery Academy Child Dancers

4-5pm Band Concert at Provincetown Town Hall

[ProvincetownPortugueseFestival.com](http://ProvincetownPortugueseFestival.com)



**Provincetown Chapter established February 1932**

**Bert H. Paige**   **Sivert J. Benson**   **Myric C. Young**  
President                      Secretary                      Treasurer

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# Provincetown Portuguese Festival

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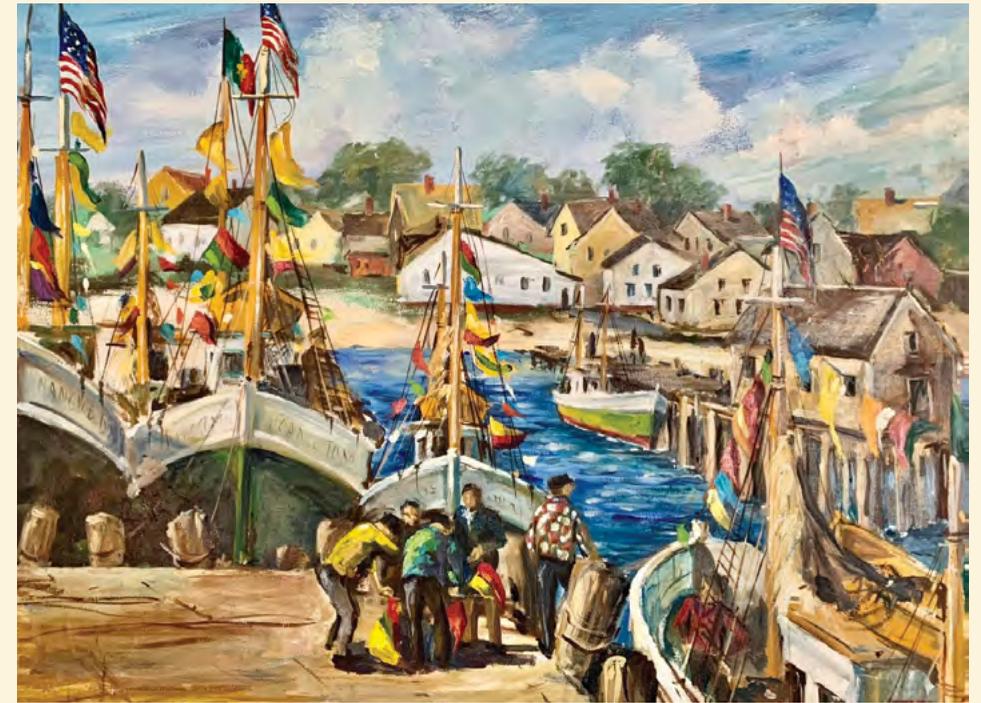


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President                      Secretary                      Treasurer

*Perhaps some day, your name will be here*



*Nancy Whorf, 1959 Courtesy of Provincetown Knights of Columbus*

## *A Message from Our Past*

### **Greetings:**

*“Provincetown, first landing place of the pilgrim fathers, port of the pilgrims, mecca of artists, craftsmen and writers, vacationland supreme, fishing port extraordinary, welcomes all...”*

*Whether they were born here, came here to live, or only spent a few days or hours visiting, thousands of people, young and old, throughout the world, consider Provincetown “home.”*

*It is to you, our friends from near or afar whose hearts remain here and who return today to renew old friendships, to visit familiar scenes or merely to relax in this colorful fishing village, that we dedicate this day.”*

John C. Snow  
A lover of the sea and a friend of the fishermen  
13th Annual Blessing of the Fleet  
June 26, 1960



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**We are proud to  
Share The Heritage  
and**

**Congratulations Blessing on your 75th year!**



*In 1998 Rose Steele and Mark Silva were all smiles as Governor Paul Celucci proclaimed the month of June Portuguese Heritage Month while Shirley Gomes and Henri Rauschenbach looked on.*

*26th Annual*  
**Provincetown  
Portuguese  
Festival 2022**

**Portuguese Festival Team**

Susan Avellar, Liliana DeSousa, Beverley Ferreira  
Maureen Hurst, Chris King, Lisa King  
Jill Lambrou, Susan Leonard, Carol le Duc, David Mayo  
Tim McNulty, Donald Murphy, Michela Carew Murphy  
Mike Potenza, Shannon Sawyer, Paul Silva  
Nancy B. Silva, Charles Souza, Rich Waldo

Cover: *Talkin' Fish* by Salvatore Del Deo  
Courtesy of Berta Walker Gallery  
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Editorials and historic photos: Nancy B. Silva

**Provincetown Portuguese Festival**

P.O. Box 559, Provincetown, MA 02657  
ProvincetownPortugueseFestival.com  
facebook.com/ProvincetownPortugueseFestival

*Mark Silva's Introduction for  
the 50th Annual Blessing of the Fleet, 1997*

The following words were written by Mark Silva at a point in time when the fishing fleet and the celebration of the Blessing of the Fleet in Provincetown began a sad decline. According to his life-long friend Joe Farroba, Mark was the perfect choice to organize and revive the 50-year-old tradition, "so in 1997, with the help of Paul Seeley, Cathy Henrique, Lori Meads, Rose Steele, Paul Silva and Susan Avellar, the event was expanded to the present four-day celebration."

"Mark also had the ability to rally friends and townspeople to get involved. Mark loved people, and people loved Mark. Mark's strong family and

community ties, along with his great sense of humor and big personality made it difficult not to get involved. Mark had a great sense of civic pride."

Joe continues to say that "without a doubt that you could take Mark out of Provincetown, but you couldn't take Provincetown out of Mark."

Mark's words in the 50th Annual Portuguese Festival Booklet, written twenty-five years ago in 1997, are as true today as we celebrate the 75th Blessing of the Fleet and the 26th Portuguese Festival, under the long-time leadership of Donald Murphy and the Festival Team of volunteers.

*Welcome to Provincetown's 50th Annual Blessing of the Fleet, a fifty-year tradition that is rooted in the church and our fishing fleet.*

*In the early day and for the majority of fifty years, this celebration was organized and executed by the fishing fleet. Unfortunately, with the decline of our fleet and the transformation of the fishing industry in general, the number of participating boats has dwindled.*



*Approximately 5 years ago, the Blessing was in danger of extinction. If not for the hard work of Joy McNulty, Steve Roderick and the entire McNulty family, this celebration would have died and would not have reached its golden anniversary.*

*This year's Blessing is enhanced by the First Annual Provincetown Portuguese Festival, a four-day celebration of the Portuguese heritage of the town. We have put together a full calendar of fun, exciting, and inspirational events to honor the Portuguese fishermen and their families that were for so many years the economic, social and cultural backbone of the town.*

*We welcome all our guest and hope you will enjoy the festivities as well as learn something about the Portuguese of Provincetown and how their hard work and dedication to their vocation of fishing have shaped this town and made us what we are today.*

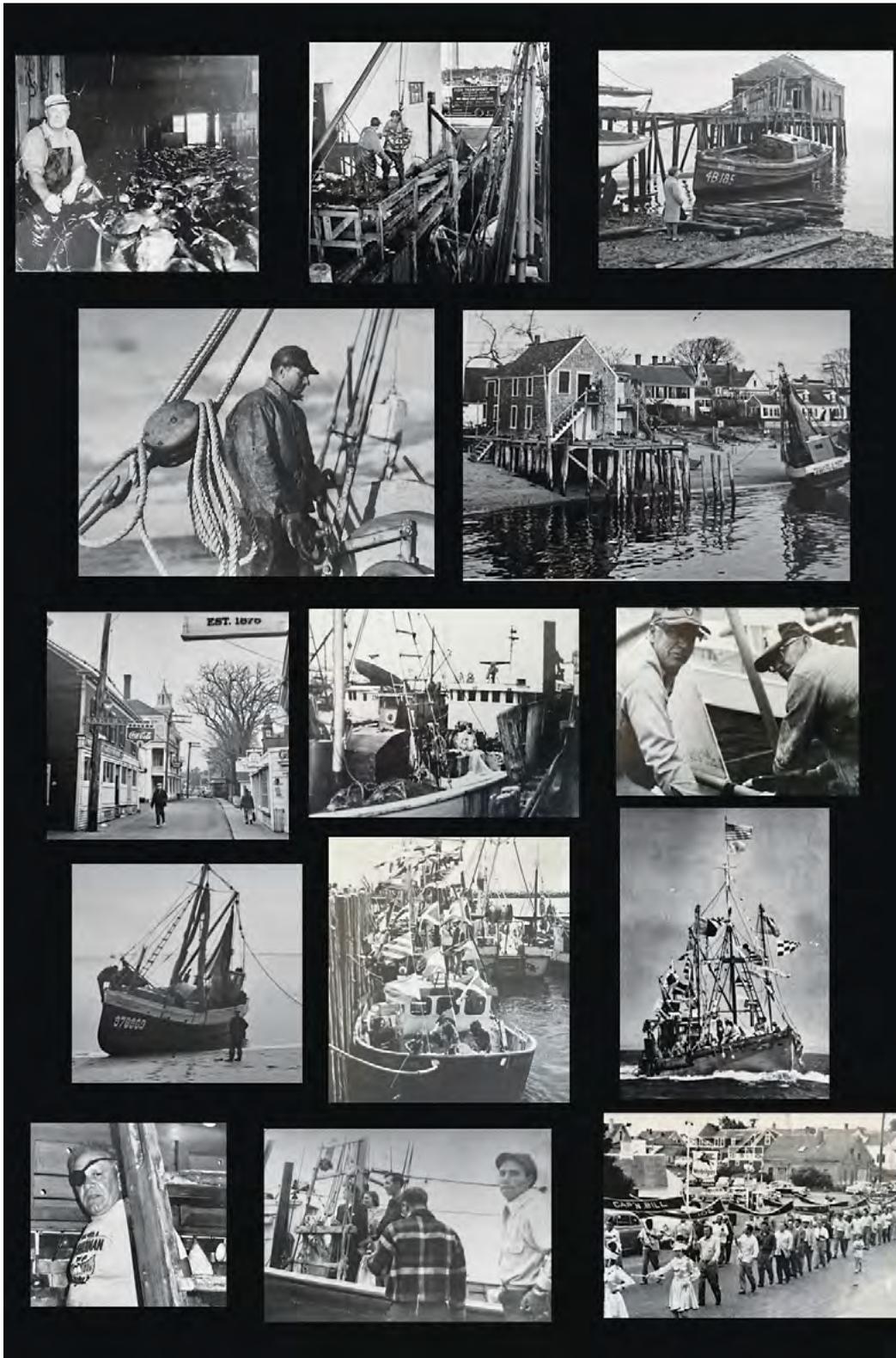
*We, the people of Provincetown, thank the fishermen for all their past efforts and vow never to let the memory of the Provincetown Portuguese or the fishing dragger industry be forgotten.*

*Enjoy your stay, have fun, and please remember to respect the town and its people.  
Warmest regards,*

*Mark R. Silva*

**Felix Festival Portuguese!**

# Treasures from the Festival Warehouse



## A Note to the People of Provincetown and Our Visitors Festival Booklet, 2003

When I was asked to chair this year's Portuguese Festival, I was honored. Little did I realize what an honor it is. Each day, as I worked on the Festival, the interest in and enthusiasm and support for this celebration continued to amaze me. From the people who stopped me in the A&P, on the street, e-mails, and the post office wanting to be informed, to the people in Town Hall who wanted to be sure I haven't forgotten anything, they made me realize what an honor it really is to be part of this 56th Celebration of Provincetown's rich heritage.

While this booklet identifies the many people and businesses that support the Festival with money and services, it cannot adequately recognize the spirit of hundreds of people, their love for the town, and the Portuguese Festival. They are the inspiration for the Blessing of the Fleet and Portuguese Festival Team.

On behalf of the Festival 2003 Committee, I want to thank everyone for their inspiring support, and it is our hope that you enjoy this Celebration that you all so richly deserve.

Provincetown Portuguese Festival  
Don Murphy, Chairman



Paul Silva  
Susan Avellar  
Susan Cook  
Liliana DeSousa  
Cathy Henrique  
Maureen Hurst  
Lori Meads  
Steve Roderick  
Paul Seeley  
Mark Silva



Donald and Margie Murphy

A special thanks to Betty Costa and Capt. Luis Ribas for their support.

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*"Fishing is much more than fish. It is the occasion when we may return to the simplicity of our forefathers."  
Herbert Hoover, 31st President of the United States*



*26th Annual*  
**Provincetown  
 Portuguese**  
*Festival and 75th Annual  
 Blessing of the Fleet*



*Festival T-Shirts will be available for sale at the Fire Station Pumper #3 next to the Town Hall on June 10, 11, 12 (Fri, Sat, Sun) 10am-4pm, and at the Festival Booth in Portuguese Square, corner of Ryder and Commercial Street by Town Hall on June 24, 25 and 26 (Fri, Sat, Sun).*

*T-Shirts will be for sale at Seamen's Bank in Provincetown and Truro.*

***ProvincetownPortugueseFestival.com***

***<https://www.facebook.com/ProvincetownPortugueseFestival/>***

**Sharing The Heritage**



*Ernest Carreiro building a Grand Banks dory for the Provincetown Portuguese Festival, May 31, 2006  
 Today the dory can be seen at the Highland House Museum in North Truro.*

**Remembering Ernest 'Ernie' Carreiro, Future Teachers of America Educator of the Year**

The Festival Team would like to take a moment to remember Ernie, who was an integral part of all the Portuguese Festival and Blessing activities throughout its many years. Ernie was community minded, and as a Lion's Club member, took charge of the Portuguese Festival Food Court at its inception, and was well-known for his famous squid stew, cooking being only one of his many talents, and an educator being another. A man of technical

expertise, he built a beautiful replica of a Grand Banks fishing dory which was used for many years for fund-raising purposes for the Portuguese Festival. Ernie was warm-hearted and caring and was always ready with a smile or helping hand, to anyone and everyone who was fortunate enough to know him. He was dedicated to his wife Judie, and his family of four children who were raised in Provincetown, Robin, Kim, Larry and Stephen. 🌊



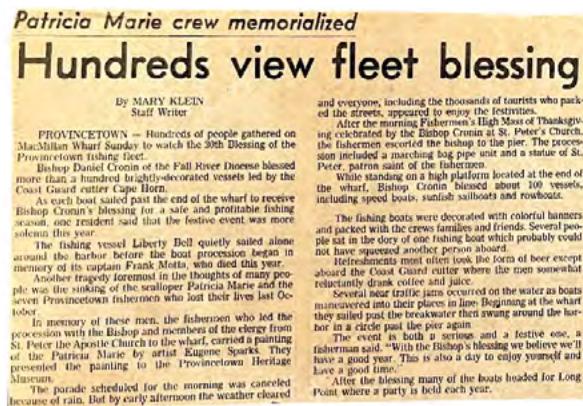
*Ernie pictured with Paul Silva and Ernie's son, Larry.  
 Festival Warehouse photo.*

# The Blessing of the Fleet ~ A Provincetown Tradition

Newspaper clippings from the Festival Warehouse



Read full story on following page



# Provincetown Fleet is Blessed by Bishop

## Display Unites Heroic Customs, Church Rituals

Cape Cod Standard -Times Monday, June 28, 1948

4,000 Hear Prelate Praise Fishermen's Industry and Skill

### Provincetown, June 28 –

Heroic, century-old customs of Europe, blended with solemn service of the Catholic Church, yesterday unfolded new pageantry on the real-life canvas of picturesque Provincetown.

Dragger masts and halyards fixed trim crosses against the deep blue sea and gray sky altar. On shore, the cross of the Church of St. Peter the Apostle stood behind the Most Rev. James E. Cassidy, Bishop of the Fall River Diocese, who blessed the fishing fleet.

Vessel after vessel, fresh-painted hulls above the water line and decks scrubbed sea-white, passed before bunting-decked Town Wharf. Bright colored flags fluttered in the wind, and as the draggers, dories, and trap boats slowed to pass the pier and receive the blessing, the flags seemed to bow, while families and friends of the crews blessed themselves. The fishing craft then turned out to sea.

### Bishop Commends Men

*You have left families and friends in Europe, perhaps never again to see them. You have come to this great land that with Portugal stands for peace, order, and guidance in the world.*

*We have come here to bless these good men in their adopted land, and to bless the instruments of their living.*

*There is no law of supply and demand that works for the seas. Few persons want to go to the harvesting at sea, for there is hardship, danger and weariness in it.*

*I say to you that the 'harvest is great, but the harvesters few.' Bishop Cassidy quoted the New Testament. 'Launch out into the deep and let down your nets.'*

Bishop Cassidy warned the fishermen to beware of superstition, and not risk their lives in their work, defying the will of the Almighty, but to rely upon prudence and watchfulness.

### Men and Ships Pray

Here was solemn rite and festival, lusty sea-hearts and quiet prayer from the souls of men and their ships, united in the blessing.

Bishop Cassidy, before his benediction of the thousands of spectators and 400 fishermen said, "It is not you who are honoring me in my presence here, but it is I who am honored to associate with the men whom Our Lord chose to build the foundation of the church.

"He chose St. Peter, a fisherman, as a leader and founder of His church, and although there were a few money lenders and carpenters and others in various trades in that company, fishermen were picked by Him."

Bishop Cassidy told the fishermen he held great sympathy for those who earned their fare by the sea and declared great pride in the men whose families had settled here and had taken from the rich American fishing banks the wealth of the sea.

### Mass is Sung

"I congratulate you on your place in life," the bishop said. "I am a bishop today by the fisherman's ring seal impressed on the document appointing me."

"I bless you and your boats, with all my love of the sea."

The Blessing of the Fleet climaxed weeks of preparation, and a full day of celebration among the Cape-end fishermen. At 10:30 a.m. the fishermen marched to the Church of St. Peter the Apostle led by members of Bishop Feehan Assembly, 4th Degree Knights of Columbus. High Mass was sung by the Rev. John A. Sylvia, with Bishop Cassidy presiding at the service. At 2:45 the parade to Town Wharf began.

Nearly 4,000 spectators crowded close to the roped-off pier's end, and thousands more lined the route of march from the flag and bunting-draped buildings and streets.

*“I bless you and your boats, with all my love of the sea.”*

Bishop Cassidy

International code flags bordered the entrance to Town Wharf and extended its entire length. Children splashed color above the heads of the crowd with their balloons bouncing against the wind.

The draggers, dories and trap boats massed along two sides of the pier, lashed side to side, and the excursion boat Steel Pier, stood by with spectators at her rails.

### Band Leads March

Aboard the fishing vessels, families and friends of the fishermen gathered to put to sea with the ships to receive the blessing.

Pink-cheeked girls, wearing shiny blue dresses, and sitting close by their mothers, waited with weathered veteran grandfathers of the fleet. Fathers shouted encouragement to their sons who followed them up the rigging

Spectators opened ranks as the Santo Christo Band of Fall River marched down the wharf led by 30 fishermen and followed by others of the fleet.

Flags of the United States and Portugal were carried behind the band. Members of the 4th Degree Knights acted as an honor guard for the Bishop. Their sabers were drawn, and the scarlet folds of their blue capes were brilliant against the backdrop of the crowd as they marched in double file.

The Fire Department stood by with Engine 5 at the head of the wharf, and police handled the overflow of traffic along the line of march and in front of the speaker's stand.

Respectful spectators heard the Bishop's message and bowed before his blessing of the throng. Chaplains to the Bishop, the Rev. James A. Coyle of Fall River, and the Rev. Emmanuel DeMello of Taunton, assisted in the service.

National Anthems of Portugal and the United States were sung and the choir of the Church of St. Peter the Apostle offered “Full of Glory, Full of Wonder,” to open the service on the pier, and closed

with the processional, “Hail Thou Star of Oceans.”

Strengthened spirit of the Fishermen found voice in the trumpeting of their dragger whistles, sirens and bells as the fleet pushed out into the harbor, to circle in, one by one, for the blessing.

Attending the Bishop on the speaker's stand were the Rev. James A. Gleason, Fall River, Chancellor of the Diocese; the Rev. John A. Silvia, Provincetown; the Rev. Leo Furtado, Somerset; the Rev. Armand Gauthier; the Rev. Phillip LeBlanc, M.S., East Bridgewater; the Rev. Francis X. Wallace, Sandwich; the Rev. Francis M. Coady, Provincetown; the Rev. Leonard J. Daley, Buzzards Bay; the Rev. George E. Sullivan, Sandwich; the Rev. John J. Casey, Woods Hole; the Rev. James E. Lynch, Orleans; the Rev. Jerome Lane, SSCC, Wellfleet; the Rev. Dennis J. Spykens, SSCC, Wellfleet; the Rev. Thaddeus Bonhuysen SSCC, West Harwich; the Rev. Jose W. Avila; The Rev. James A Dury, Provincetown; the Rev. Thomas J. McLean, Hyannis; the Rev. Joseph Cabral, Fall River; The Rev. Walter J. Buckley, Osterville; the Rev. William F. Morris, Buzzards Bay; and the Rev. John J. Murphy.

### Consul is Present

Also present on the speaker's stand were Commander Henrique Jorge, Naval attaché, Portuguese Embassy, Washington, and Dr. Deodato Cavalho, Portuguese Consul, Boston.

Altar boys marched in the procession from the church to the end of the pier included Thomas and John Perry; Robert and Walter Welsh; Richard Segura; Francis Aresta; Dennis Aresta; and Emmanuel Jason, acolytes; Harold Brown mitre bearer; Manuel Ferreira, crozier bearer; Manuel Jason, Richard Silva, James Ferreira, Wilfred Costa, cross bearer; Stephen Simmons, Leo Morris and Ernest Carreiro.

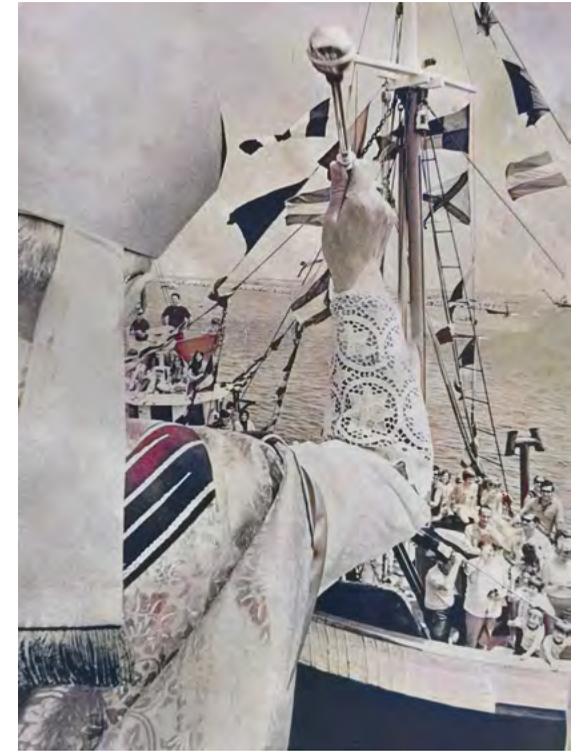
The dragger, Three of Us, Provincetown Captain Ernest Tarvers, beside the dragger Reneva, Captain Salvador Vasques, of New Bedford Registry, but

operating out of Provincetown, were first to be blessed by Bishop Cassidy, followed by the Victory II, Captain Manuel Macara, and the rest of the fleet.

The Bishop said “Good Luck,” as he sprinkled Holy Water on the boats, which slowed when close to the wharf. Altar boys in white and scarlet surplices formed an unofficial line beneath the platform looking toward the sea.

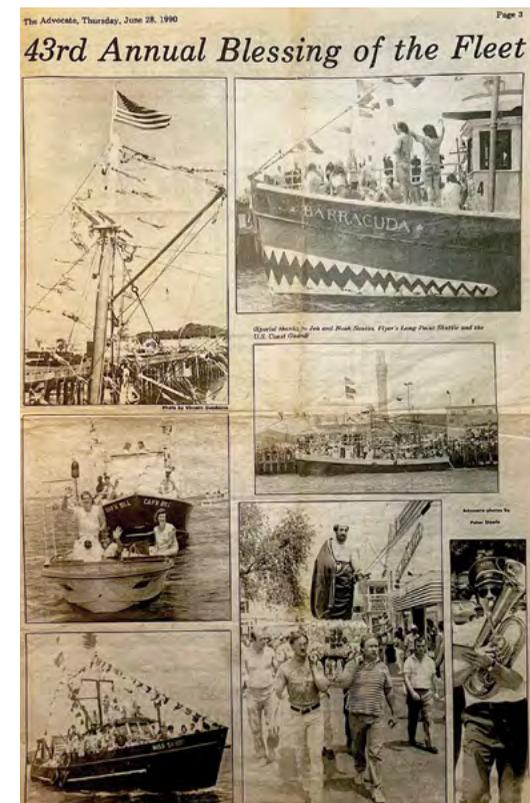
The band played during the individual blessing of the boats and followed with a short concert. As the boats left their dock berth before the individual blessing, they circled the harbor, an inspiring sight from the dock when they formed a complete circler around the harbor. The boats, maneuvering for the individual blessing, moved around the harbor in a counter-clockwise direction and approached the wharf from the East.

Three hours elapsed for the blessing of the boats and the celebration extended into the night, after fishermen had docked and gathered to sing and dance and carry on the customs of their seafaring fathers. 

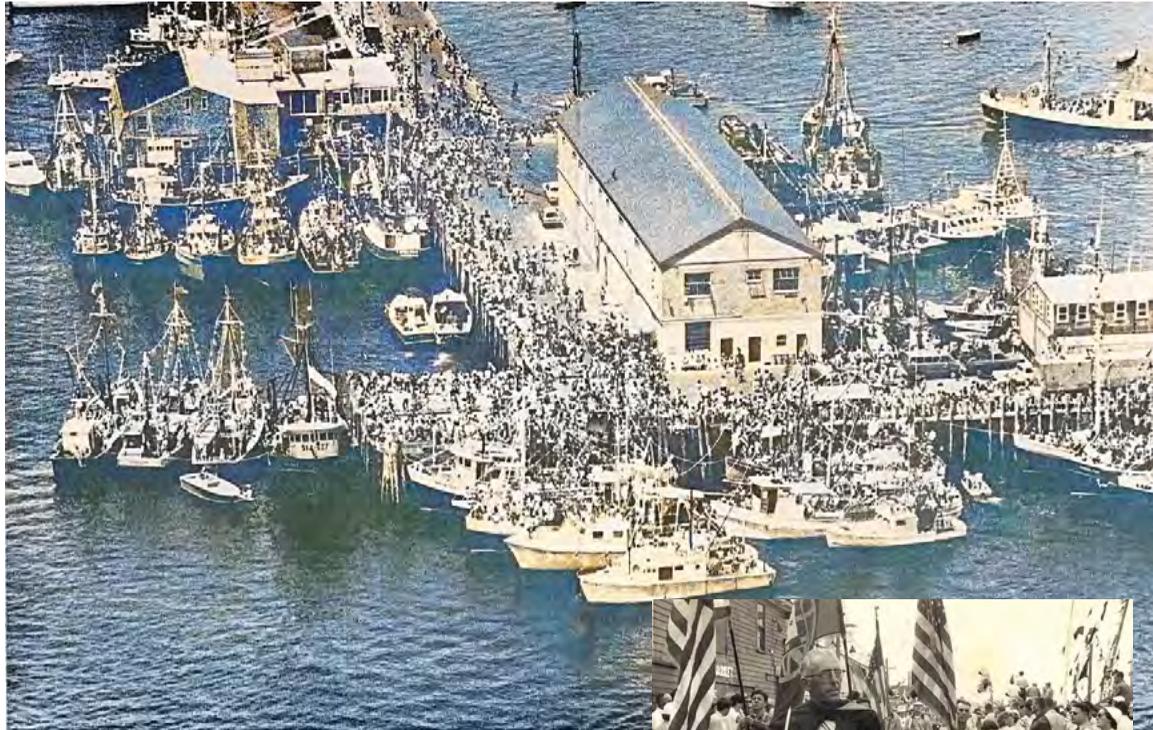


Auxiliary Bishop James J. Gerard of Fall River administers the divine blessing to Capt. Frank Motta's “Liberty Belle”, the lead ship in the 25th Annual Blessing of the Fleet.

WILLIAM L. SMITH, CAPE COD ILLUSTRATED



## *In Keeping with Tradition*



The fishing fleet of bygone days.

### *A Blessing History*

BY YVONNE DESOUSA, 2004

In 1947 there was no Blessing of the Fleet in Provincetown. Unless you were over the age of five in 1947 that fact may be incomprehensible to you. This celebration has been so integral to the very existence of our seaside community for so long, picturing the summer season without it is unimaginable. But in the year of 1947 two local men heard about a ceremony dedicated to supporting and blessing its fishermen and they knew they had to check it out as Provincetown was a community that definitely supported and blessed its fishermen. The fishing

fleet was the community. It you weren't a fisherman or a family member of one, you were a friend or a neighbor of one. You were fed by them, you went to Church with them, you drank with them, you worried about their safety and prosperity in difficult times.

So, in 1947 Domingos Godinho and Arthur Bragg Silva visited Gloucester's celebration and within a year, a Provincetown tradition was born. Godinho and Silva formed a committee and brought the idea to the local Church, the fishermen, and the town. All

were in agreement that this ceremony had to begin here. When was the last time an idea arose, and the entire town supported it? The committee chose the last Sunday in June as it was fairly close to St. Peter's feast day. St. Peter, the patron saint of our Catholic Church, had been a fisherman. They then put out a book to sell ahead of time to help financially insure the event. Activities were planned, boats were painted and brightly decorated, and food was prepared. The entire town stopped functioning for the day and to say



Arthur Bragg Silva

that the First Annual Blessing of the Fleet was a success would be such an understatement that it would almost be insulting.

On June 27, 1948, fifty-five vessels were blessed by the Most Rev. James E. Cassidy, Bishop of the Fall River Diocese. He told the assembled crowd of hundreds that "Though fish are abundant, there are few who have the hardihood to find them, for the sea offers dangers, weariness, and hardships. Though the harvest is great, the harvesters are few."

In addition to Bishop Cassidy, in attendance were Rev. Leo J. Duart, Pastor of St. Peter the Apostle Church, two Chaplains, twenty other Reverends from all over the Fall River Diocese, one representative from the Portuguese Embassy in Washington D.C. and Dr. Deodato Carvalho, Portuguese Consul, Boston. The altar boys were young men of the town whose names most of us would recognize today. The U.S. and Portuguese anthems were played. Appropriately, the title of the Portuguese National Anthem is Herois do Mar, which translates as "Heroes of the Sea."

Over the next ten years the event continued to grow. Captains had stately blue and gold banners made with the name of their vessel. These banners would be carried by Captain and crew during the procession to the Church and from the Church to the town pier. Large donations came in from all over including the fish buyers in New York and Boston. Boats were painted yearly, nets and fish

boxes were washed and stacked to be used for seats. Weeks in advance, wives would place their food orders from Nelson's market. Each family contributed hundreds of sandwiches and Portuguese sweets. Also necessary for the celebration were sardines, linguica, and ice, tons of ice. Each boat required two barrels of ice, one for the beer and one for the soda for the kids. Families and friends (some from very far away) would work with the wives on preparing all the food. The preparation was a party in itself with music, reminiscing, and tall tales. The weekend would be filled with festive events. The



The Bishop on his way to the pier

most raucous would be the clam feed with music by the locally famous Linguica Band whose members included Loring Russell, Anthony Russell, Frank Aresta, and Joe Trovato to name a few. This was without a doubt THE party of the year. The town also hosted games in and over the harbor. Over the harbor was the Grease Pole- horizontally suspended over the water and off the pier. The winner was the talented and possibly foolish soul who could walk to the end of the pole and back. For those who

even dared to consider it, the position of the tide was a huge factor. It could be a fun sport at high tide but somewhat terrifying at low. In the harbor were the dory races, less a competition than a mark of pride. At that time, boats tied up at moorings and the man who could row to his the fastest carried that honor for a long time. Since the breakwater wasn't built until 1952, there was a lot of room to maneuver the race in the early years. The other lucky winner was the person whose name was called during the raffle. Chevrolet would sell the committee a new car for half of its cost. The car

would be placed in the square for weeks in advance and tickets would be sold. The raffle was drawn at the Fishermen's Dinner. The dinner took place at the Provincetown Inn and was a formal event for the men and their wives only. For many in the Fleet, it was the only time of year they would put on a suit. Also taking place during the weekend was the Breeches Buoy demonstration by the Coast Guard. Chief Boatswains Mate of the Wood End Station, John C. Coreia, was a local who had been

a fisherman himself. He knew the importance and the spiritual gains of participating in the event. He, himself, would make sure the motored wooden lifeboat was blessed alongside the fishing vessels.

The Mass on the Sunday was standing room only and after mass, the clergy, St. Peter and the fishermen made their



*The Knights of Columbus proudly march on Commercial Street*

way from church to the pier in majestic fashion. While the Mass was solemn, the activities were festive. Lighter business was the boat party after the actual blessing. Once the food and beverages were loaded, families and friends climbed aboard. After that, anyone so inclined could hop on as well. Most boats could carry fifty to seventy people and the captains often took out special insurance policies for the occasion. Total strangers who knew a good time when they saw it were invited. The boats were blessed in a colorful procession at sea and then they would head out to Long Point for a feast and a good time. Sometimes the local priests would come out as well. At some point someone

would get thrown in and once one person was thrown in, many others would go over as well, willingly or not. Many tourists didn't know what they were in for when they hopped on board. Often there would be over one hundred people in the shallow, but still cold June water off Long Point.

This was how the party went

until the Blessing of June 30, 1957. The 10th Annual Blessing of the Fleet began with bright skies but as the vessels began lining up, a very black storm cloud moved in. The Most Rev. James L. Connolly, Bishop of the Archdiocese of Fall River cut short his sermon by stating "He hoped the Good Lord would be good to the fishermen and spare them from unfortunate accidents and return them from their fishing trips in good health and spirits." Before he could bless each individual vessel, a fierce early summer storm hit with torrential rain, thunder, lightening, and high winds. Boats that hadn't been blessed yet tied up to the pier but many had already moved out and chose to

wait out the storm in the shelter of the Point. It was estimated that there were fifteen to twenty thousand people in town for this weekend and many were on the boats in the harbor, boats that were swaying dramatically with the winds. Some people panicked and crews moved some to the fish hold for their safety but to also get them out of the way. The story of this day offered a divine message for the locals and visitors- it may look like a party but there is a real reason and a real need for this ceremony. It seemed an appropriate way to mark the first ten years with an unexpected storm and the marvel that no one was hurt. The Lord provided protection, the captains and crews brought skill and seamanship, and all walked away from the experience with an even greater respect for those who made a living at sea.

In the years since, this sacred rite has become so huge that it touches all of us directly or indirectly. When I was old enough to appreciate it (and that was probably by the age of five or six), I didn't know the daily toll of fishing within my own family. My grandfather's had long since retired from it (one to his hometown of Olhao, Portugal and the other to run a guesthouse on Johnson Street) and my father and uncles had gone the way of land careers. But our family history and growing up here gave me an appreciation for the way of life. I learned early that the only weather report you could trust was from Captain Salvador who lived across from me on Arch

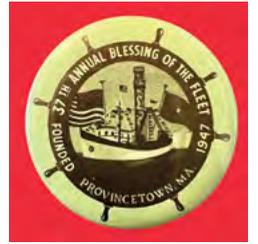
Street. I knew that on Christmas Eve our friend Raymond would tell the best stories of being out at sea. I knew that my parents' friends would often bring fresh fish to the door. I knew the family stories of waiting by the radio during bad weather and I knew that many of my friends often waited for their fathers and brothers as well. I knew the names of all the boats in the fleet and witnessed the grief of the entire community when three tragically did not return from voyages. And I knew the greatness of the Blessing of the Fleet - even as a child nothing compared to the dignity of the procession and the joy of going out on friend's boats for the celebration.

Now all these years later, some things remain the same about the event. St. Peter still makes his grand way down the pier, whether he is carried or driven. Boats line up to be blessed and thousands come to our small pier to witness it. Mass is said, the town is decorated, and parties, games and celebrations go on all over town all weekend long. You can't walk downtown without seeing the distinctive Portuguese flag everywhere and the week before all the differing cultures among us are suddenly craving kale soup, linguica, trutas and a damn good

*For their time and memories thank you to  
George Adams, Mary Beck, John C. Corea, Raymond Duarte  
Hamilton Kahn/Provincetown Banner, Leona Mendes  
Jeffery Morris/Provincetown Pilgrim Monument and Museum  
Provincetown Public Library, Louis Rivers, Clem Silva, Ursula Silva  
and everyone else who shared their personal histories*

clam feed. The committee still breathes a huge sigh of relief the Tuesday after the weekend. That lasts about one week and then preparations begin anew for the next year. Friends return every year to be a part of this live energy and Provincetown's sons and daughters return home with new loved ones in tow. It wouldn't surprise me to learn that more people come home on this weekend than they do on December 24th. This tradition hasn't stopped for fifty-seven years although at times it slowed a bit, only to be revived the following year. Eventually it became what it is today, a Portuguese Festival highlighting the Blessing of the Fleet and honoring both our Portuguese backgrounds and history at sea.

Consistently drastic fishing regulations, competition with much larger vessels, high insurance premiums and boat maintenance fees, and the ever-fluctuating market prices make this way of life a labor of love. It has been a long time since it was a labor of love and a labor of profit. In addition, our small fleet faces disputes over pier management and dock fees. Boats and crews are smaller. Everything about fishing seems smaller except the regulations, the fees, and the power of the



*Festival Pins  
Warehouse Collection*

great sea. Our fleet may not be as grand as it once was and for this reason, it needs its community's blessing and support more than ever. In a 1997 Provincetown Arts Magazine article titled *Faith, Toleration, Diversity*, Stephen Burgard wrote "To insure its future, the town must pay homage to the contributions that family, custom, and tradition have made as foundations for its flourishing." For your spirit, for your heritage, for a local industry that arises from the very lifeline of our history, come out and celebrate the Blessing of the Fleet and the Portuguese Festival this year. It may not be quite what it once was, but its ours and its importance to the community should continue to grow as each vessel leaves our safe harbor in the search for livelihood. 🌊



Sarah's father Beau's fishing vessels Kahuna and Glutton at MacMillan Pier



Sarah with her father Beau Gribbin



Kathleen & Beau Gribbin



## *I Am From Rubber Boots*

BY SARAH GRIBBIN, 2017

I am from rubber boots, from grundens oil gear and baseball hats.

I am from the salty air, and coarse sand on your feet

I am from the rolling waves, the beach grass covered shores.

I am from the Blessing of the Fleet and Laughter from Tio and Tia,  
The Gribbins and the Tasha's.

I am from the beach walks and beach rides.

From "Be kind" and "Don't forget."

I am from humble backgrounds, and faith in mother nature.

I am from Portugal to Malasadas and ameijoas a bulhao pato.

From the Fishing vessel Celtic in Alaska where my father explored  
his love for the water, the words "Don't Forget" on that vessel, that  
are now permanently written on my arm, meaning don't forget  
where you came from, and the old T-shirts representing Bo-Co  
construction.

I am from the old photo albums of each boat, to each year of my life.

The scallop shells from each tow, and the sea glass from each walk.

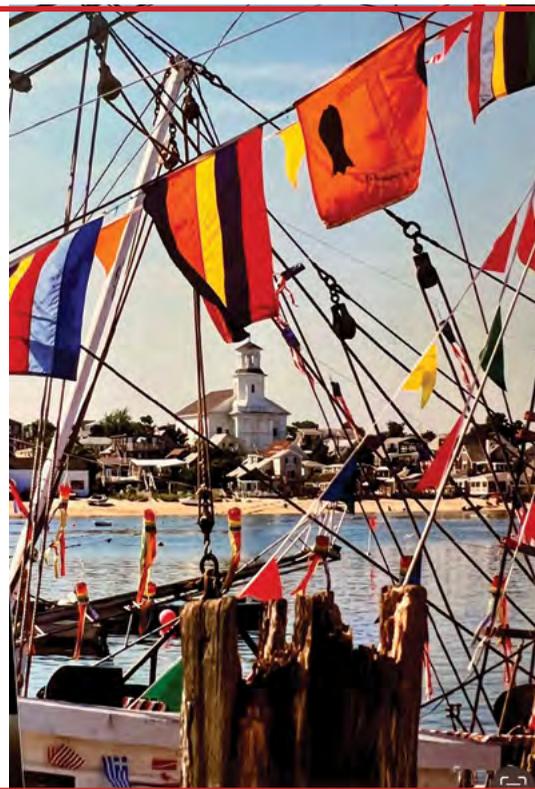
The years of sailing and the oceans around me.



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*Why We Walk...*

KATHIE MEADS, 2012



Kathie Meads and Maureen Hurst are holding the banner for the family boat of their childhood home. The boat is named for their mother, Alice Joseph. (l-r) Gretchun Ciluzzi with her children, Kathie Meads and her sister Maureen Hurst. Photo Courtesy Brenda Murphy

When I first heard of this idea I did not quite grasp what my resistance was to resurrecting that old boat banner. I believed there were more reasons to bury those memories than to celebrate them. It was not until I saw the grouping of the banners and the vessel names on those old, stained drapes of cloth that it started to make sense to me and perhaps now it will to you.

**And so, we remember...**

There were hard times, very hard times. You may not have shipped out on that vessel with your father, or brother, son, or grandfather, but you knew the hard times, too. Theirs were dangers, real physical dangers faced every time the phone rang at 3 a.m. and they had “orders”.

The light went on in the kitchen, you could smell the coffee brewing, and then the door would shut and you heard footsteps on the front steps, never really allowing yourself to fully wake or to think in any detail about what they might be facing that day. The hard times were different for all of us...physical danger, poverty, uncertainty...weather, finances, boat gear repairs, loss of limb or sadly, even life. But we understood that the whole family was in this together.

**And so, we remember...**

Checking the wharf to see if the boat was in. Watching the flags on Monument Hill as the gale warnings were posted. Wondering if they will get in tonight. The tall steel flag tower

now signaling a hurricane...two red squares with black square centers whipping straight out in the wind from the halyards, the loud clanging of the rigging calling out a warning to the town. A knowing deep in the pit of your stomach telling you they should be in by now not still out at sea.

**And so, we remember...**

No settlement this week. No meat on the table. We'll need more credit at the food market. Time for new shoes but they will have to wait for a better trip. Looks like scallops again for another week. How many ways did your mother cook scallops? How many times did lobsters arrive in a wire bushel basket at the door? It would take hours to cook them all, filling the house

with that heavy, salty stench. Some homes had a special clothesline just to hang out the “scully joes” so the laundry wouldn't smell like salted cod.

**And so, we remember...**

Our recognition that fear and heroics live side by side on the water. We were taught to respect the power of the sea. Men were called upon by captains and shipmates to do whatever they could in so many dangerous situations. Only the fit would climb the rigging; not because they wanted to but because they had to. You might lose gear to save a man's arm. The powerful doors hauling back could kill you in the flash of a moment. The winch could easily suck you into its grip. The fishing boots with goosefish gnawing and clamping through them to the leg bone were a regular menace. The

boots would be patched with rubber bicycle tire repair kits, always kept on board for just that purpose. We still love those catfish vinha d'alhoes, but when a catfish was spotted in the net coming aboard, the crew would yell out, “catfish on deck”. They have such powerful jaws that they can bite clear through into your leg. Fishermen would taunt the catfish with a glass Coca-Cola bottle and the fish would bite right through it. Oil gear made in Canada was better than anything here in the States, but they had to grease their arms with linseed oil and olive oil at night so that the sleeves would not stick to their arms and chafe their skin. They feared contacting gurry poison, an irritation that could cause a severe life-threatening infection in the arm. In the winter they cut off the oil gear

sleeves above the elbow because the sleeves would freeze in the extreme cold, once they became wet. A frozen sleeve meant you couldn't move your arms freely... so critical for any fisherman.

**And so, we remember...**

Fishermen fed the families of anyone waiting on the wharf. No cell phones, and no ship-to-shore radio communication at times, “Yes, we saw your husband or father's boat. Won't be home for two more days.”

Or, “They put in at New Bedford or Block Island until the weather breaks, but they are ok.”

It was a duty, a code of the sea to make sure Provincetown families would be fed until their men returned. They expected no payment for this. St. Peter would know, and that would be enough. Later, fishermen would gather to tell their stories. Stories that they



The man holding the banner in his right hand is Anthony Joseph, Kathie and Maureen's father. The man with the cap is Joe “Bucky” Cabral.

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seldom related at home. It was their ritual, this venting and the releases found in the recounting of their days out at sea; a way to clear the head and make ready for the next trip, a way to face it all again.

**And so, we remember:**

Our town- is a fishing community where virtually everyone was connected with the fishing industry in some way. Your neighbors and friends furnished the fishing gear, welded the scallop rakes and doors, painted and repaired the vessels, sold the paint and supplies you needed on a daily basis. They cleaned the fish, packed it in ice, and drove it to market. The food markets sold the “grub” and waited until the end of the fishing trip to be paid. The bankers loaned you the funds that literally

kept the fishing fleet afloat It took everyone in isolation here at the tip of the Cape to sustain the fishing way of life we lived in Provincetown.

**And so, we remember...**

The deaths and funerals of our loved ones and friends. The losses you endure when life is so closely linked to the sea. The poignancy of our memories of the celebration of life as we recall holidays, especially Christmas... the box of shrimp and a bottle of whiskey from the captain arriving at the door; the minho Jesus, the Linquica Band and Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. On the Feast of St. Peter in June, the Blessing of the Fleet was held. The vessels were decorated with gay strands of colored flags and proudly displayed their boat banners in a parade as they passed

by the Bishop. Finally, a time to be with family and friends in celebration and ask the Blessing of the Holy Spirit and St. Peter the Fishermen to protect and guide our fleet back to their own safe harbor, and to their families waiting and watching for them to ‘round Long Point...

**And so, we remember...**

What it was to be a fishing family. Ever dependent on the whims of the ocean for everything we had. Ever grateful to our fishing ancestors for everything we have in life now, for where we live, for what we have become, for this heritage that was their legacy to us...left for us to respect, to safeguard, and to share.

*And so...we walk.*



Proud fishermen carry their boat banners

# Hand in Hand ~ A Wondrous Connection

BY YVONNE DESOUSA, 2008

In 1852, there was no Catholic Church or Portuguese community in Provincetown, Massachusetts. By 1880 both had not only developed, but were thriving. The fact that each established itself simultaneously is no coincidence. And one would be hard-pressed to picture one without the other in the sea-faring heyday of twentieth century Provincetown. Portuguese descendants and our Catholic community are at the very core of our history in the early 1900's, and at the heart of two events we will celebrate together this June, 2008, the dedication of the new St. Peter the Apostle Parish Church (re-built after a devastating fire in 2005), and this year's Portuguese Festival and 61st Annual Blessing of the Fleet.

Prior to the 1860's, there was

a small group of Irish settlers in town and their religion was Catholicism. The local diocese priest sent a priest to town three to four times a year to hear confessions, perform marriages and baptisms, say Mass and offer blessings to this small devout group. They would gather in the homes of parishioners to conduct the services. The 1860's brought the first large immigration of Portuguese settlers. With them came their lucrative yet dangerous fishing and whaling professions and their extreme faith. Our community by the sea was conducive to their lifestyles but the lack of a main parish was not. As careers at sea were flourishing, they could afford to generously support their faith and they did. The building of St. Peter's began on October

11, 1874. Most Reverend Thomas E. Hendrickson, Bishop of Providence, Rhode Island dedicated the new church. From here the connection continued aided by our first parish priests with Portuguese ties.

Father James Ward served from 1880-1886. He had studied in Portugal and was fluent and had the ability to communicate directly with the new settlers which was greatly appreciated. The next three priests are well known in our parish history, made great contributions to our church, and were all of Portuguese heritage. The first, Father Manuel C. Terra, served from 1893-1924, was much beloved by his parishioners, and was known for being an integral leader in St. Peter's Aid Society. This group helped local families with



Bishop Cassidy blessing fishing boats during the first Blessing of the Fleet, 1948



Fr. Leo J. Duart leaves St. Peter's Church to bless the fishing vessels at the end of MacMillan Wharf



Fr. Coady leads the procession followed by Fr. Duart and the Bishop

sickness, as well as funeral and living expenses after the death of the family patriarch, usually at sea. While this was a time when fishing was prosperous, most of these settlers didn't understand insurance and when the ultimate tragedy struck, they were often at a loss as how to fend for themselves financially. As the heads of households generously contributed to the church, St. Peter's Aid Society, with Father Terra at the forefront, would in turn generously help the families. The saddest moment of Father Terra's service here was during the flu epidemic of 1918 when he was forced to bury forty members of his parish in only three months. He was known for being very generous and dedicated.

Next came Father John A. Silvia, who many locals still remember. Also of Portuguese

heritage, he had studied in the Azores. While it was under Father Silvia that a few extraordinary additions to the parish came about, it was also he who served during the racial intolerance of 1923. At that time, the Ku Klux Klan came to Provincetown to protest Portuguese immigration. While actual violence was fortunately minimal, the hatred expressed by burning crosses marked a sad period in a community known for welcoming all. Instead of dividing the town, however, it made the community stronger and was the force behind the establishment of the Knights of Columbus, a society of Catholic men, dedicated to the total protection of their church, faith and parish. The society exists today. Father Terra was proud to see three locals enter the vocation during his

time.\* In September of 1951, he dedicated the shrine to Our Lady of Fatima honoring the Blessed Virgin's appearance to children in Fatima, Portugal. This shrine was donated by the Provincetown chapter of the Catholic Daughters and local fishermen. The dedication ceremony included a living rosary. The greatest act of Father Silvia, however, was establishing our local Blessing of the Fleet tradition. Approached by Arthur Bragg Silva and Domingo Godinho to form the event after witnessing one in Gloucester, Massachusetts, a committee was formed and Father Silvia, Silva, Godinho, and other fishermen with names reflecting their Portuguese heritage began the planning process. The first Blessing of the Fleet took place in 1948. To this day, it is hard to imagine a June without this

beautiful, heartwarming custom.

While I am not old enough to have personally known Father Leo J. Duarte\*, but just hearing his name and the stories that linger of him, brings a sense of warmth. He is spoken of very fondly by many current members of the parish. He assisted Father Silvia for a bit but became the parish's main priest in 1951 and served over twenty-three years. He was responsible for renovating the church itself, the grounds, the cemetery, and being responsible for the building of the Parish Hall, the short-lived parochial school and the cemetery chapel. He commissioned local artist Eugene Sparks to create the church's famous mural of St. Peter. While he was parish priest, the St. Vincent DePaul Society was formed, and local youth Manuel Ferreira, entered the priesthood. Father Ferreira was ordained in Fall River in 1960, and a large contingency from Provincetown made the trip to be present during the ceremony. "Father Manny" visits often and has presided over mass many times at St. Peter's, including marrying his cousin Gordon Ferreira to his wife Beverley shortly after being ordained in 1960. Father Duarte was so well known that I remember a young local boy who was learning the Lord's Prayer for the first time, insisting that the first line was "Our father, Duarte in heaven..."

While these three priests did their great part in keeping the Portuguese connection alive, the townspeople did so in their own right as well. Current Pastor



*Procession of Bishop Cassidy and his entourage on Town Wharf, 1948*

Rev. Henry J. Dahl, says, "The gifts the early Portuguese settlers brought with them from their homeland remain today; a love of their faith and a strong family life." They brought their spirits and their customs, too. In the 1930's, settlers from the Azores celebrated the San Miguel tradition Santo Christo which included a procession for and with Christ the King, a procession similar to the manner in which we carry our statue of St. Peter to the pier for the Blessing today.

On Christmas Eve, the custom of honoring Meninho Jesus would take place. Families would put a candle in their window and set up an altar in their living rooms. The altars would be decorated with sprouted wheat (to celebrate the living body of Christ), candles



*Rev. Henry J. Dahl*

(to represent the Resurrection and the Light), as well as flowers and family heirlooms. In the center would be the family's personal statue of the Baby Jesus. Visitors would go from door to door singing carols, sitting with friends and strangers alike, and honoring the Baby Jesus.

More than their customs, however the Portuguese

community, with its numerous descendants, supported the center of their faith in many ways, ways that included the changing of the times. Take the Ferreira family, for example, Gordon grew up next to St. Peter's Church, was an altar server, and followed in his father's footsteps in the position of ringing the church bells. At the age of seventeen, he became a member of the Knights of Columbus and is an active member to this day. Beverley Ferreira, along with Alice Cook became the first female lectors in the early 1970's. The irony is not lost on Beverley that while she is very proud that all three of her grandchildren became altar servers, her granddaughters were also the first female altar servers in our church. Both she and her daughter Tracey taught the First Communion religious Education Class at different times for 6 years. When the Ferreira family had their restaurant, Stormy Harbor, it was they who annually served a grand meal to the Bishop after the Blessing of the Fleet.

Florence Corea Alexander has made it her mission to decorate St. Peter for his annual procession to the pier for the last six years now, taking over for her friend Florence Menangas who had the role as far back as most can remember. When Maria Lomba and her family came to this country in the 1970's during a cold, snowy winter, it was the church who first welcomed them. St. Peter's was her home in the new world and Maria was so grateful that she made it her mission to decorate the altar with

fresh flowers. Even when times were tough, she would find a way to give back in this way. Today she is a Eucharistic Minister and gives communion both at mass and to the homebound.

These are just some examples of ways the church and the community has continuously supported each other. We turn to the church and our many dedicated pastors for worship, faith, and spirit, and they are there for us, good times and bad. They turn to us for support in many ways, and we are humbled in our response. Over the years, change occurs and often we are not happy about it. St. Peter's Aid Society and the Catholic Daughters are no longer in existence, but in their place, we are extremely fortunate to have St. Vincent de Paul and the Kitchen Angels doing work similar to these societies of the past in the way the current times needs them. When the first Blessing of the Fleet came about after the fire, it was a shock to think of holding the mass anywhere but our church. The wounds of the fire were only just beginning to heal when the time to plan the 2005 event came about. How could we have a Blessing of the Fleet mass without Saint Peter walking on water depicted on the altar mural? The Cabral family generously donated their wharf and warehouse for the mass, and with the back doors of the building open to the bay and the tools of the fishing trade in the wings, the setting couldn't have been more appropriate on that beautiful Sunday. With our

own Father Dahl at the helm, and under magnificent Saint Peter's eye, that ceremony was more relevant than ever.

The connection of those first Portuguese settlers is so strong that it will remain forever in our history in the form of present and future generations. Many of the volunteer firefighters who fought the massive fire at St. Peter's so bravely in the bitter cold on January 25, 2005, had Portuguese names. When the parishioners gathered in the icy parking lot as the flames were extinguished, the names mattered less. As we hugged and cried together, we were a family of faith, no matter our heritage. The rich Portuguese history is so strong that it will, thankfully, be with us always. As in the very nature of Provincetown itself, we are a community first, no matter our origins.

The first mass in the new Saint Peter's Church will be the Fishermen's Mass to celebrate the 2008, 61st Blessing of the Fleet. We will pay our respects to the old, welcome the new, and be very glad for the inspiration of our ancestors. 🌿

*\*The Provincetown High School Class of 1947 produced three graduates who would go on to the priesthood, Father Manuel Ferreira, Father Louis J. Joseph, and Father Leo Murphy. – St. Peter the Apostle Church History*

*\*Father Leo J. Duarte's name is correctly spelled without the letter "e", according to church records.*

## *Bishop Edgar Moreira da Cunha and the Blessing of the Fleet*

Provincetown was settled by seafarers. Many of those seafarers were fishermen who came from Portugal as dory men, a particularly perilous form of an already dangerous but necessary profession. In 1947, two local men learned of a ceremony in Gloucester, Massachusetts that supported and honored the fishing community. Domingos Godinho and Arthur Bragg Silva vowed to bring a similar celebration to Provincetown.

Thus, the first annual Blessing of the Fleet took place in 1948 and has been going strong ever since. The crux of the event is a Mass followed by a procession to

Macmillan Pier lead by a statue of St. Peter carried on the shoulders of four fishermen. At the end of the pier, each boat is blessed for a safe and prosperous season.

While the dynamics of the town and its industry change, this celebration continues and evolves. From parades, parties, feasts, dances and concerts, the weekend of the Blessing of the Fleet is a community event, but it is always anchored by the Mass and the blessing of local vessels. From the most Reverend James L. Connolly, who presided over the first Blessing of the Fleet, to our current Bishop, the Most Reverend Edgar Moreira da

Cunha, several bishops have joined our parish to offer blessing.

The Fisherman's Mass is held on the last Sunday in June and has become a call home to many who grew up in Provincetown and Truro. This Mass continues to be filled with descendants of fishermen of long ago, families and individuals working the current fleet and many, many visitors whose only connection to the ceremony is an appreciation of hard work, history, faith and support of those who have gone before us and those who rely on the sea. 🌊



Bishop DaCunha with Fr. Mick. Courtesy of Jennifer Rorro Eldredge



Pictured above after the Blessing of the Fleet in 2017 (l-r): **Father Manuel Ferreira (Father Manny)**, a beloved priest and graduate of Provincetown High School in 1947 who was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Fall River and lived out his ministry in Portuguese parishes of that Diocese. Provincetown was his birthplace, and the place of his up-bringing, where he was part of a large and loving community, and where he shared most of his life with family

and friends. "Oh, yes, Provincetown, I remember it well, what it was, what it is. My memories of her are precious, as are those with whom I shared them and treasure them as blessed happenings of days gone by. Yes, here in Provincetown, - where I wish to be laid to Eternal rest."

Fr. Manny is seen here with His Excellency, the **Most Reverend Edgar Moreira DaCunha**, S.D.V. of the Fall River Diocese, who was born in

Nova Fatima, Bahia, Brazil, and was appointed by Pope Francis as the eighth bishop of the Diocese of Fall River. He shepherds a community of faith in 82 parishes throughout Southeastern, Massachusetts, Cape Cod and the Islands. Bishop DaCunha has come often to Provincetown to bless the town's fishing vessels, a tradition meant to secure a safe and bountiful season for the fishermen, who risked their lives on the seas to provide for their families.



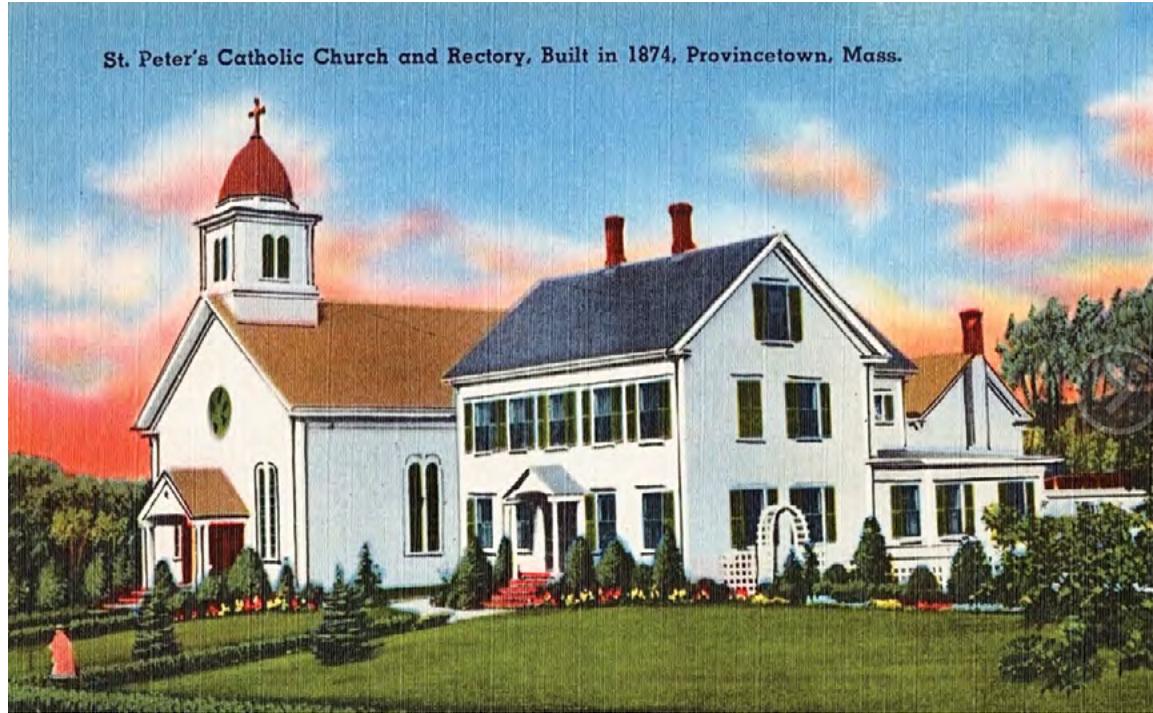
Father Hugh McCullough (Fr. Mick)

**Father Hugh McCullough (Fr. Mick)**, served the Catholic community for ten years, from Provincetown to Eastham in two churches connected spiritually, St. Peter the Apostle Church in Provincetown, and Our Lady of Lourdes in Wellfleet. During the pandemic when the Blessing of the Fleet was unable to take place, Fr. Mick donned a life vest and rode in the harbormaster's boat in order to bless the fishing vessels tied to the pier. Fr. Mick has retired to a family cottage his parents purchased in 1984. He said he had not lived in his family home on any continual basis since he left the seminary in September 1968.

**Reverend Philip Hamel (Fr. Phil)** was recently appointed by the Diocese of Fall River and welcomed into the parish at St. Peter's. He will be the 16th pastor of St. Peter's. (not pictured)



Reverend Father Manuel P. Ferreira



## Monsignor John A. Perry

BY NANCY B. SILVA



The Sanctuary mural is the fine work by the noted seascape artist Eugene Sparks, painted in 1967. The two-part mural shows, to the left of the altar, St. Peter attempting to walk on water and, on the right of the altar, the saint receiving keys to the kingdom. The rock represents the church of which St. Peter was the first Pope: "Thou art Peter and on this rock I will build my church."

There haven't been many priests in our community who have married as many generations as our beloved Father Perry. In the years he was the pastor at St. Peter's Parish, he often married young couples and then continued through the years to marry their sons and daughters.

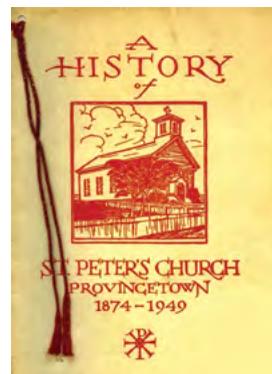
A native of Pawtucket, Rhode Island, Msgr. Perry attended Attleboro Public Schools and studied for the priesthood at the former Cardinal O'Connell Minor Seminary and St. John's Seminary. He was ordained a priest in 1963 by Bishop James L. Connolly in St. Mary's Cathedral in Fall River. He was assigned as parochial vicar in Oak Bluffs, and subsequently to St. Peter the Apostle Parish in Provincetown.

In 1999, Fr. Perry was named Chaplain to his Holiness, a papal honor, by Pope John Paul II with the title of Reverend Monsignor. He was also bestowed the honor of being named Protonotary Apostolic by Pope Benedict XVI, the highest

honorary title awarded to a priest. In 2003, Bishop Coleman appointed him to serve as vicar general and moderator of the curia for the Fall River Diocese. As such, he has since assisted the bishop as his deputy in the administration of the diocese.

In addition to his pastoral assignments, Msgr. Perry has been through the years, a chaplain at UMass-Dartmouth and Bishop Stang High School, a member of the diocesan College of Consultors and Presbyteral Council, diocesan secretary for Ministerial Personnel, and dean of Cape Cod and Islands Deanery.

Msgr. Perry has always made time for Provincetown in his life. He often attends the Blessing of the Fleet and has continually met the community's spiritual needs in many ways. Msgr. Perry has had the honor many times of bestowing his blessings on the fishermen and their fishing vessels and of spreading his blessings on the community he has loved for so long.



Florence Alexander and Florence Menangas decorate St. Peter for the Blessing of the Fleet procession.



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## Talkin' Fish

AS TOLD BY SALVATORE DEL DEO TO MAUREEN HURST AND KATHIE MEADS



Salvatore Del Deo in his studio. Photo courtesy of Lisa King

*My studio is my church – my safe haven. This is where the mystery meets the romance.*

It's a cold winter night as we approach Sal's door – a fresh bucket of clams dropped off by a friend waits patiently in the doorway- another tradition of the town he loves and the life he has fostered here. Inside Sal's waiting: three glasses sit on the table with a bottle of his own home-made wine. Beside him the painting rests on the back of a chair. He pours us each a glass, his eyes twinkling with an alert intensity. It's obvious to Maureen and I his

mind is awash in memories and reflections that hold great meaning for him. He's ready to start "talkin' fish".  
"With all my heart I love those guys," he begins. "I knew I needed to do this, you know Girls, to be a part of this- the 75th celebration of the Blessing of the Fleet because it's my 75th year here, too. I've experienced it all and loved this fishing town most of my life. Josephine and I began our lives together here and made

it our home. We never regretted that decision.  
" My family emigrated from Ischia, Italy to Providence, Rhode Island where I grew up. My Father was a plumber in the US but in Italy he made copper lanterns and lanterns from old olive oil cans. We actually had some of his lanterns hanging in the restaurant I had with Ciro. My older brother Silvestro was a very talented guy. He, sadly, died at the age of 19 but before his death, when



August 1946 Henry Hensche painted this portrait of Salvatore Del Deo the month he turned 18 years old. It hangs in his studio where Sal still paints at 93 years old. [Del Deo Family collection]

I was only about eleven years old, he took a trip to a fishing village in Massachusetts with Edgar Corbridge his employer. He was so taken by the beauty of the place, he told me that night when he returned, 'Someday you go!' Years later I found an essay he had written: A Fisher's Town, A Painter's Town. It was about Provincetown. All those years later I had never realized it was Provincetown he had visited.

"I found my own way to Provincetown in 1946 while I was attending Vesper George School of Art in Boston. It was there I was introduced to Henry Hensche and learned about his school of art here in Provincetown. That summer Charlie Cooper and I enrolled and came to town. I fell in love with the place immediately and knew from the start I would stay. I painted whenever I could and took many odd jobs just to get by. For awhile I worked at a small Italian Restaurant

called Scotti's in a basement on Commercial Street. I cut grass at the Provincetown Art Association that first year and then worked with Bruce McKain repairing windows on the building. It was then I first began making my way to the wharf for free fish. The fishermen in those days would place fish in a barrel as they unloaded their catch. It was free for the taking. Their belief and custom was to share the catch unselfishly in the name of St. Peter the Fisherman. For many years my family was the grateful recipient of this generosity as were many here during the lean winter months. I've always wanted to be where people worked for their food and brought it home to their families. I love that way of life and I knew then I had found it here in Provincetown. So much so that when I asked Josephine to marry me I put a caveat in my proposal: 'If you agree to marry me, we stay here.' She answered me, 'I'm here for the same reasons you are, Sal. Of course, we stay.' Our feelings never diminished.

"Money was difficult to come by especially during the winter. We raised chickens and had goats. Later when I had the



Josephine Del Deo at her shack in the Cape Cod dunes, 1965. Salvatore Del Deo

restaurant we had a few pigs, too. For a while before I opened Sal's Place, I did fish to supplement my income. My first site was fishing with Manny Zora around 1961 or '62 on his boat called the Sea Horse. This was many years after the days of the Sea Fox. Manny got that name, you know, because they all said he was smart as a fox out on the water and he was.

He told me himself the story of how he convinced his brother Nascimento to buy a gasoline engine for their boat. But his brother, who was born in Portugal and straight off the boat from the old country, did not want to change to the modern ways. One day, at Manny's urging, they fished way off the back shore with that new engine on the boat. Sure enough, the engine failed. Manny could not get it going no matter how hard he tried. So Nascimento



I grew up on Point Street so I've known Sal for over 50 years. The painting Sal and I have been working on for almost 3 years now. He wanted to paint me in the Rubenesque style.

-Lisa King

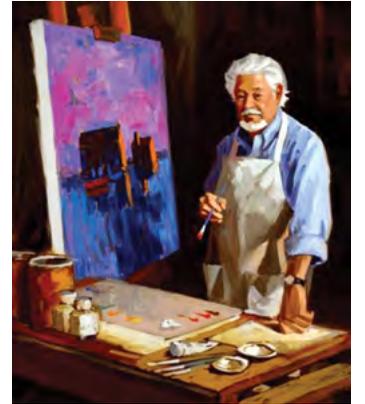
grabbed the sledgehammer he kept on board and smashed the newfangled engine to pieces. Then he made Manny row them all the way back to shore. JB's cousin Sherman watched out for me on the boat. I still remember the damp winter cold. When the skipper rang a bell you had to leave the foc'sle and come on deck to crack and chip away ice from the gear. A hard life but I enjoyed it when I was young. I told Josephine then, 'If I wasn't a painter; I would stay fishing with Manny.' But I wanted to paint.

"Later I fished with Charles Bennett for a while on his boat the Cormorant. Then, in 1963, I opened Sal's Place in the West End. Upstairs above the restaurant I had my studio. I loved looking out on the water and observing the ballet of the fishing fleet. There was a rhythm to their day; the boats heading into the pier at Consolidated Fish Co. with the gulls following them in. The men would heave the lines to the pier, each with his own particular stance; legs and arms coordinated by the memory of their repetitive daily motions. There was a small little train that ran on wooden planks clickity clacking all the way down its track to the fish house. You could smell the dripping fish juice from the trucks all the way up Franklin Street. The West End was alive then and full of characters. These men were all such individuals with their own peculiar physical adaptations to their work. You could tell any one of them from behind as they stood on deck or walked along Commercial Street.

They learned how to stand onboard a rocking boat – legs apart, weight balanced on their booted feet. They wore heavy gear, too, so where they placed their arms and hands was all a part of it. Sometimes the way they cocked their heads too. Yes, it's all a part of the choreography learned at sea. I wanted to capture that in the painting. It's so unique to each fisherman almost like their individual fingerprint."

"Once I asked Manny Palheiro to sit for me in my studio above the restaurant. Manny was always chewing gum. He liked to offer a stick to any pretty girls around the restaurant. 'Ok, Ok,' he said. 'I sit for you, but I go home at 12 o'clock every day'. And he did. When I finished the painting I wanted to show it to him. 'No, No, No' he said. I tried to insist but he kept saying, 'No, No. Bad Luck.' He never did see his portrait. That same painting went on to win the first ever national competition at the Provincetown Art Association. It was judged by Alice Neal, a very well-known artist from New York. The painting is now part of the permanent collection of the Art Association. And, no, he never laid eyes on it."

"So many fishermen's homes had lovely paintings from local artists hanging on their walls. There was a real barter system that existed here in town for many years. Fish was given freely and, in return, many struggling artists would give a fisherman a painting or sell it to them for a reduced price. Most of the



Painting by Paul Schulenberg

families tended to like the more realistic painters. Jim Parr was very popular here in town. But underneath it all was this culture we all shared - the communality of living on the edge and without a paycheck most of the time.

"My studio is my church – my safe haven. This is where the mystery meets the romance. The artist and the fisherman share in that mystical connection. They both have an intimate knowledge of nature as it exists for each of them individually on their own terms. The result is a culture that created the physical and spiritual basis of this community and our unique heritage. It's the place I call home."

With the glasses now emptied and our evening coming to a close, Maureen and I once again pass the bucket of clams left in the doorway: it's the symbol of, not only an old town tradition, but also of a life come full circle.

You once made your way to the wharf.

Now, dear Sal, the wharf is coming to you. 🌊



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## *The Town According to Mary, Rose, Kay and Ruth*

YVONNE DE SOUSA, 2005



Mary Avellar, Rose Martin, Kay O'Donnell, and Ruth O'Donnell

On a sunny March Sunday, I had the privilege of attending the Fado concert upstairs at Napi's Restaurant. The artwork of Napi's, the delicious food, and the beautiful music combined to make for a joyous afternoon.

One of the highlights of the day was the honoring of four local women in attendance. Rose Martin, 94, Kay O'Donnell, 94, Mary Avellar, 93, and Ruth O'Donnell, 91.

As I watched them enjoy the afternoon, I realized that I see them at many events supporting and appreciating the town. As this year's theme of the Portuguese Festival is "Share the Heritage", I thought I could learn exactly what that means from these women.

So, on another sunny afternoon, I was fortunate to sit

and talk with these fascinating locals.

While Ruth, Kay and Rose were all born here as daughters of trap fishermen from the East End of town, descendants from the Azores, Mary travelled here as a tourist in 1928.

She was 16 years old and came alone on the Ferry as no one in her Boston circle liked boats. Once here, she fell in love with the town, most especially the beautiful gardens in the Commercial Street homes. She began visiting regularly and was soon here to stay, working at Turner's Candy Store. Starting as a teenager, Rose worked for Rear Admiral Donald B. MacMillan and his wife Miriam for 38 years. For \$6 a week, she would clean the four-story house by herself, as well as cook for the couple who became like parents to her,

taking her on trips to Boston and Maine, although never on an arctic voyage. Rose would walk from her Conant Street home to the MacMillan house on the corner of Bangs and Commercial Streets, work all day, walk home to rest then walk back in the evening to serve dinner when the MacMillan's had guests. Walking everywhere was a way of life (Ruth learned to drive at the age of 66) and all the women laugh when they hear kids complaining about walking now. They didn't have much, but they were grateful for what they had. With no cars, bicycles, electricity or indoor plumbing, (Kay remembers how all the kids in the family would bathe in one big tub in the kitchen on Saturday, with hot water added to the bath slowly if they were lucky), they managed to have fun as children.

And they worry that today's local kids are missing out on such joys as learning to swim at the breakwater while wearing regular clothes (no one could afford bathing suits), playing jacks and marbles, picking blueberries, ice skating (usually with just their shoes as it was a luxury to have skates), and sledding. Back then the kids had double-runner sleighs that 8-10 kids could pile on. Water was purposely poured down Bradford Street Hill to freeze, giving the kids a sledding treat. Even with not having much, the community helped each other as one. According to Kay, "no matter how little you had, there was always someone who came to your rescue if you needed it."

It is this spirit of help and appreciation that made the town, and even though there were differences among various segments of the community – East End and West End, Azorean and Lisbon families, captains and crews, fishermen and artists – all were there for each other when necessary. Fishermen fed artists; artists painted fishermen. Ruth has a portrait of her father-in law in his gear, painted by a student of George Elmer Browne who was a tenant in her guest house. The picture was rescued by a family member just before the artist was about to scrape the canvas as he couldn't afford the canvas for his next work. Rose posed for artists and remembered them painting on the beach. She believes the art community really gave Provincetown a boost. All four fondly remember the

Beachcombers Ball at Town Hall. They would stand outside, and watch artists arrive in grand style, much like how the town watches the Junior Class march in now for the annual high school Prom. Mary says, "Friends and neighbors you made in Provincetown in those days were true people, fascinating, everybody helped each other." Ruth, who had nine children in her family, has nine grandchildren and fifteen great grandkids, tells new people she meets, "I'm related to everyone in town, so you'd better not talk badly about anyone to me." Working brought people together. Kay worked for several years as a Nurse's Aide at the old Manor and this position helped her keep speaking Portuguese and to treasure the many stories of its residents. She still enjoys sitting on the Town hall benches and hearing old stories. Ruth worked for Ciro and Sal's restaurant for many years and the family spirit there is best described in the telling of a recent birthday story. A friend from the restaurant took her out to lunch for her birthday and it seemed like a very long lunch to Ruth. When she was brought home, she immediately noticed someone had been in her kitchen. Several seconds later she noticed a brand-new stove that the Ciro's crew had bought her as a birthday gift. The new stove was in place, the old one was gone, and her friends came out of their hiding placed in her home. When she asked why they had bought her a new stove they told her, "So you'll keep cooking for us!" This new stove went into a home Ruth and

her husband purchased in 1943 and that she's lived in ever since. At the time, her husband was fishing and bringing home half a cent for a pound of haddock. The home purchase price was \$2500, \$200 more than a second choice they looked at, but this home had a rental property and Ruth's mother had the foresight to predict the benefit of a rental income. Six months later, the war began, and former Police Chief Cheney Marshall bought the home across the street for \$5000.

I ask these four why it is so important to be out supporting town events. While they agree the town has changed, there are more buildings and more newcomers, they also agree that "it is still ours and we would never want to live anywhere else." Ruth points out the town's incredible beauty and that the town "is just a part of us, we're not going to stand still just because we're getting old, right?" You have to take part in the different things going on, in the Church, whatever." Rose adds, "I want to stay here and enjoy it as long as I can." Mary has a friend from New Jersey who remarked that everyone on Cape Cod lives to an old age, and Mary told her, "It's because of clean living!" Ruth adds that it is also because of hard work. All point out that they are not the only ones who feel it is important to celebrate Provincetown at any age. At the Lobster Pot Fundraiser for the rebuilding of St. Peter's Church there was a table of Provincetown Seniors in their 90's, and Mary could count at least 12 town

seniors 90 or over. A look at the annual census brings that number closer to 30.

Spending the afternoon with the four of them made me realize that while things in town have changed greatly, the main thing that makes a town a community have stayed the same. As we Share the Heritage at this year's Portuguese Festival, we also share the same themes of beauty, history, art, hard work, community, and appreciation that Mary, Kay, Ruth and Rose talk about remembering as they were becoming women here in the 20's and 30's. Lucky for us that we have folks like them to share their stories and wisdoms with us. 🌿

*Thank you to all of Provincetown's Seniors, especially Rose Martin, Mary Avellar, Kay O'Donnell, Ruth O'Donnell, and those of all ages who love our town.*



*F/V Alison Marie on Taves Boatyard runway*

### *The Advocate Reports About Taves Boatyard, March 2, 1944*

...Frank Taves now has a marine railways permit from the Department of Public Works and is going ahead with his original plans for a suitable railway for heavy craft. This little shipyard is fast becoming a busy spot and between repairs to Provincetown fishing boats and the possibility that he will get lumber for building other crafts at the Taves yard is a going concern.

#### PROVINCETOWN ADVOCATE

"Bishka" Taves is smiling these days and so is his father and so are others up the in the West End because the little marine railway which has been his dream so long and which is only partially materialized after much hard work and the surmounting of many obstacles is to be pushed to completion on a considerably larger scale than planned, by the Navy. There will be two tracks and a switch and considerable activity is expected at this little boatyard - Provincetown's only one. Time was when four heavy marine railways had more work than they could handle with the big fleet of the Cape End. It is a most encouraging sign because once an activity like this gets started it just naturally attracts more activity. Although Navy men will be on hand to work on the service craft, "Bishka", father and son aren't anticipating many idle moments ahead.



The joy of jumping off of MacMillan Pier has not been lost with today's youth! And according to Mel Joseph in "The Town that 'Grew Me'", this pier activity has become tourist entertainment, and a local kid's fun-filled employment. "Don't be shy, don't be cheap, Chuck your nickels so I can eat." Chuck a nickel 'ovah'...



Savana Vida, Jill Lambrou and Shannon Sawyer paint roosters on the street

Gabrielle Rilleau

In Memory of Bruce Corea

## Diving for Money

FRANK X. GASPAR

The coin cuts  
The air and leaves  
Its fast trace of light.

As the thing touches your skin  
And your fingers close  
around it.

You must never move  
Your eyes from it:  
Thrash with your hands  
Your feet, watch

How the surface is like  
a perfect sky  
when seen from here,  
How you rise to it  
On your beating legs.

How it enters among  
The grains of sunlight  
Splashing on the flat water.

Over and over  
It is all there for you,  
All you could ever want:

The water pushes you up,  
The air in your lungs  
Makes you fly  
Here in this green world.  
You fight to stay down.

They reach into their pockets  
And stars fall around you.  
You scoop them from the world  
While the quiet longing

Your hair rises like soft weeds,  
Your hands cup  
In rigid prayer;  
Your heart falls to your throat,  
And sings, *Breathe,*

Comes to you, aching deep  
In the lobes of your chest.



Diving for coins, Railroad Wharf, Provincetown  
Postcard courtesy of the Pilgrim Monument and Provincetown Museum

## Liliana De Sousa brings Fado to Provincetown's Portuguese Festival

KATY WARD, PROVINCETOWN BANNER, 2017



Liliana De Sousa



Provincetown's Historic Town Hall



PROVINCETOWN- Liliana De Sousa remembers listening to the distinctly melancholy sounds of her sister-in-law singing fado to her brother when they were children living in the small town of Olhao in the Algarve region of Southern Portugal.

"I was maybe five years old, and I used to lie in bed and have these wonderful memories of her singing," de Sousa says. I didn't know at the time it was fado. I just remember loving it...its Portuguese blues and the expression of Portuguese soul. Traditional fado talks a lot about the Portuguese men going off to sea, it talks about love and how women felt when their lovers left them behind. I think its very sorrowful, but I think its beautiful music."

Fado artists sing about the hard realities of daily life, balancing resignation with hopefulness that its torments may come to an end. It is often described by using the Portuguese word *saudade*, which

means "longing" and feelings of loss, usually a loss with long-term consequences.

For DeSousa, fado was personal. Her father emigrated to the United States from Portugal as a fisherman and net maker. She remembers the sadness and uncertainty her family felt when he left.

"Some man that owned a shrimp boat down south went to Portugal looking for net makers," de Sousa says. "My father and a few others jumped on board and went to Louisiana to work. They were living in warehouses and one night there was a fire... He was in the hospital for three months and nearly died. When he was released, they were going to ship him back to Portugal."

DeSousa says her father knew just one English word: "Provincetown," thanks to his great-grandfather, who had spent a season here fishing for cod. My father couldn't speak a lick of English," she says. He kept showing people a piece of paper

with the word 'Provincetown' on it. Eventually he made his way here in 1955.

In 1963, when DeSousa was 12 years old, she moved to Provincetown with her mother and brothers.

I will always call Provincetown my home. That's where I tell people I am from," she says, adding that the annual Blessing of the Fleet became an exciting time of the year for her family. I remember getting all dressed up with my parents. We would go to the Blessing, go swimming and have picnics on the ocean. It was a very special experience as a child," she says.

But as DeSousa got older, she noticed that the festival was losing its Portuguese spark that had once been so central in her early life. "With the decline of the fishing industry, people weren't interested anymore. The Blessing started to become smaller and smaller," DeSousa said. It was sad for me.

DeSousa decided that she



Fado concert at the old Fishermen's Wharf, now Provincetown Marina



At the Town Hall



Napi, a long time supporter of the Portuguese Festival and Blessing, enjoying Fado at his restaurant.

could not let that happen and joined the Portuguese Festival Committee in 2000. She now lives in Lynn but commutes back and forth to work on the festival.

The Portuguese Festival is unique to Provincetown. It's not just Portuguese, it's the Provincetown Portuguese Festival," she says with emphasis on Provincetown. "It's third and fourth generations. I felt like the Portuguese part was being watered down a bit, so I felt I had to bring that back a bit."

Her first idea was to organize a fado concert. The first year I was involved with the committee, we had a few local fado singers and we had a little dinner at the Surf Club Restaurant, and there must have been about 10 or 15 people," she says, "But over the years we have grown tremendously. Last year we had nearly 500 people. Many of them were Americans and did not understand the words, but they

loved the music."

Over the years, de Sousa has flown in various fado artists to perform in town, mixed with local women and men of Portuguese descent. Singers traditionally wear a shawl, passed down by "godmothers."

The tradition supposedly started with Maria Severa Onofriana, also known as Severa, who was considered the first fado singer to have risen to fame in Lisbon, Portugal. She was very poor and some called her the "fallen woman," DeSousa says. "She always wore this shawl when she sang. She died quite young, and now out of respect, singers wear black shawls."

Fado is accompanied by special instruments, such as the 12-string Portuguese guitar and the viola. Now, DeSousa says, other instruments are added to the mix to make it more current and to appeal to younger people.

"There's no dancing," DeSousa

said. "You feel fado. Its about longing and about missing people and love. It can be emotional. You are not supposed to speak during fado. They will tell you, 'Silence', and stop singing if people are talking. It's about respect."

DeSousa says fado dates back centuries but is generally thought to have originated in the early 1800's in Lisbon. Fado is usually sung in "fado cafes" of "fado houses" in Portugal. Twice a year, de Sousa returns homes and attends daily fado shows.

This year's Provincetown fado concert is sponsored by the Provincetown Banner. The event is free and open to the public. This year's performance is Celia Maria, Tania da Silva, Josefina Couto, Jeremias Macedo, and Carlos Furtado.

The words are just so wonderful," de Sousa says. "You either love it or you hate it, but I personally love it." 🌿

1974

## Liberty Belle

“The only two things moving on Provincetown harbor and they run into each other,” was the way Wharfinger Stanley “Pidge” Carter described Saturday’s collision which sank the Liberty Belle.

Advocate, November 1974

George Valentine said, “It was a very frightening experience to see the metal hull (of the 85’ Gloucester fishing boat, Cape May), heading for us. I jumped for a winch to hold onto so I wouldn’t go overboard.” George has been fishing for 25 years, 19 on the Liberty Belle. “That boat was a second home to me,” he said.

Advocate, November 1974

*Like so many families tied to the sea, the Valentines have known great sorrow. In 1941, George’s father, Antone Francis Valentine, died when the trawler Mary E. O’Hara sank in Boston Harbor. His father Manuel Valentine and brother Manuel Jr. had perished 41 years earlier on the Grand Banks aboard the schooner Cora McKay.*

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Laura Jonasse

Marylou Morris

1975

## Raising the Liberty Belle’

JOHN BELL, PROVINCETOWN ADVOCATE, 1975



### Saved from a watery grave

Raised Saturday from the waters of Provincetown Harbor, the trawler Liberty Belle rests on the flats of the harbor’s west end at low tide. Coast Guard personnel and members of the fishing boat’s crew patched the hole which caused her sinking Nov. 23, after a collision with another boat. After pumping out the remaining water, the craft was taken up on the railway of Flyers Boatyard in Provincetown for repairs. (Staff Photo by Neil G. Nickerson)



L-R, Capt. Bernard “Sonny” Roderick, his son Bernard Jr., Francis “Barshi” Santos and fisherman-diver Marc Thomis follow the activity (below). Flyer Boatyard workers begin repairs to ‘Liberty Belle,’ which was almost cut in two by steel-hulled Gloucester dragger November 23 (Right).

Volunteer workers joined together a few days before Christmas to bring the sunken dragger “Liberty Belle” ashore, patch and refloat her and haul her out for repairs.

Liberty Belle, sunk November 23 after colliding with a steel-hulled Gloucester dragger, lay on her starboard side 60 feet under water a few minutes after the impact. Captain Frank Motta Jr. and crewmembers Ernest Deschene and George Valentine were picked up by the Gloucester men.

Hard hit by the accident, since his insurance recovery was far less than the cost of a new boat, Capt. Motta bought the salvage rights from the insurers, hoping to cut his losses. Skin divers James Codega and Marc Thomis brought up what they could and at Capt. Motta’s request, probed the deep mud around the vessel,

finding undamaged planks near the keel. Realizing the keel might not be broken, Capt. Motta began to hope his boat could be saved.

Capt. Joseph J. Roderick of dragger Jimmy Boy thought it was worth a try. Other fishing captains offered to help. Captains Motta and Roderick made two cable straps buffered with rubber hose long enough to pass under Liberty Belle’s stern from each side and loop over her stern bitts. On Thursday, December 19, Codega and Thomis forced a hole through the mud under Liberty Belle and pulled the cables through. The free ends of the cables were buoyed at the surface.

“Then,” said Francis “Flyer” Santos later, “everyone prayed for a calm Friday.” The next day came in with light northeasterly winds and partly sunny skies.

Draggers Cap’n Bill, Capt.

Ralph Andrews, and Shirley & Roland, Capt. Bernard “Sonny” Roderick, were picked to haul on the stern cables because both boats have broad buoyant bows. The divers hooked the Jimmy Boy’s two towing cables onto Liberty Belle’s forward bitt. Joining the towing effort later were Victory II, Captain Kenneth Macara; Johnny O, Capt. Louis Rivers; and Sarah Lynn, Capt. Anthony Thomas. All carried full crews and had volunteer helpers aboard.

### Out of the Mud

At low tide Friday morning, the three boats attached to the sunken dragger hauled their cables taut and waited. About an hour later, the rising tide pulled Liberty Belle barely free from the mud, and Jimmy Boy began towing her toward Flyer’s



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Her stern supported by draggers 'Cap'n Bill' and 'Shirley & Roland,' the 'Liberty Belle' is towed into shoal water by three other fishing boats (Story, page 5/photos, page 14) (Photos by John Bell)



'Liberty Belle' drawing by John Woods from cover of 1971 Provincetown Annual Reports marks spot on harbor chart where dragger sank after last Saturday's collision.

Drawing by John Woods

Boatyard. "The idea was to gentle her along on the bottom, not trying to raise her off," said Flyer.

About 2 p.m. when the rising tide enabled the three boats to pull Liberty Belle up an underwater bank, her masthead came above the water. Victory II and Johnny O added their towing power, pulling in tandem, with Sarah Lynn working alongside Victory II. They were soon in shoal water, nearly aground but Liberty Belle's upper works were out of water and the ten-foot gash in her hull clearly visible.

By this time, however, the northeast breeze had steadily pushed the group westward of their target into an area studded with moorings. These concrete blocks and old engines could rip the planks out of any boat.

Then Francis John "Grassy" Santos, put his outboard skiff alongside the Coast Guard 44-foot patrol boat, which had been standing by, and asked BM/2 Kenneth Couto to put a

tow line on the lead boat and pull northeast. Having twin propellers, the patrol boat could maintain any course. Couto, with crewmen MK/3 Herbert Lawler, BM/3 Kelly Conaty, and Seaman Frank Scanio quickly put their crafts 640 horsepower to great use.

With this help, and "almost by a miracle," said Capt. Joe Roderick all the boats missed the underwater hazards. Just before high tide, with Liberty Belle resting on the West End Shoals where low water would leave her nearly dry, the first phase ended.

Trap fisherman Louis Cordeiro, watching from the shore, went home. He had offered the use of his trap scow and had stood by all afternoon in case it was needed.

Workers were at the boat at first light on Sunday morning. Capt. Joe Roderick, Grassy Santos, Larry Meads and Dennis Jones brought plywood and canvas from Flyer's Boatyard for a patch, and welding and

welding torches to cut away the ragged ironwork around the hole. Joseph "Barao" Andrews brought a pump from Tave's boatyard and stayed to run it. New Bedford Edison district manager, mason Kenneth Crawley, Philip Cabral of Cabral's Market, Anthony "Junior" Leonard from the Jimmy Boy, and Michael Coelho of the Charlotte G. offered their help. Ernest Carreiro sent hot coffee and doughnuts from his Portuguese Bakery to warm the gang.

Together Capt. Motta and Mike Coelho removed boxes of fish from the hold, part of the 15,000 pounds caught before the collision. All the catch had rotted into a "stinking, jelly-like mess," said Gil Martin. (More than a week later the workers said they could still smell it in clothes that had been washed repeatedly.) This slime was shoveled into large containers that were hauled and dumped overboard by Todd Motta and

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James Santos. Other volunteers shifted fishing gear from behind the wheelhouse to the portside to help right the boat.

When the tide had risen enough, the Coast Guard patrol boat, commanded by Seaman Charles Gilliss and crewed by Fireman Robert Kirby and Seaman Luke Lomeland, came in and helped pump Liberty Belle dry. They found a new channel leading across the flats to her, apparently dredged by the propellers churning the bottom the day before. Gil Martin estimated its depth at five to six feet.

Emptied and patched, Liberty Belle floated again. Nursed by the patrol boat, she entered Flyer's

Boatyard cradle at 5 p.m. More than a hundred workers and spectators watched "the patience, the care, the final edging her in line with the railway." As one observer put it. "And the looks on the watchers' faces! Mostly sea-going men who knew what they were watching. Talk about a love-in!"

The community effort continues. Builder John Meads has spent much time helping at the boatyard. James Roderick has offered his rubbish truck for disposal of wreckage. Monday, December 30, when Liberty Belle was relaunched and taken to MacMillan Wharf for the removal of her engine, winch, fuel tanks and mast (to be reconditioned and later replaced), Warren "Pinky" Silva brought his travelling crane for the hoisting. Again, Philip Cabral and Kenny Crawley showed up to help Capt. Motta, Ernest Deschene, Grassy Santos and Larry Meads.

The equipment was loaded onto Seafood Packers' flatbed trailer and taken the next day to New Bedford where the fuel tanks will be cut open, steam-cleaned and reclosed. The engine will be renovated at Kelley's Yard, the winch at Hathaway's. Libert Belle was returned to Flyer's railway for the 10-week job of repairing the damage.

Meanwhile, Codega and Thomis, when they took the hoisting cables down to the Liberty Belle, had not come up empty-handed. They brought up the boat's radar, loran, and depth-finder – all expensive electronics, all easily damaged by salt water. Friends of theirs at the North Truro Air Force Radar Base spent hours of their free time reconditioning the instruments.

*'Liberty Belle – Up from the Deep' ...*



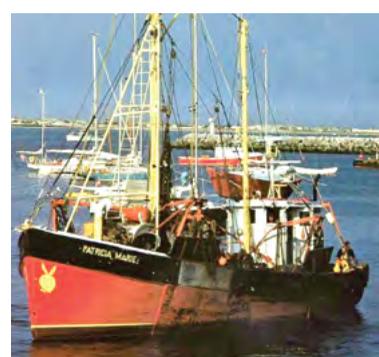
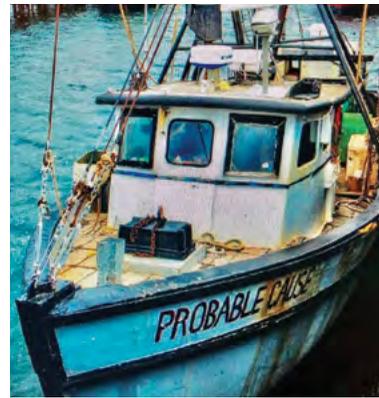
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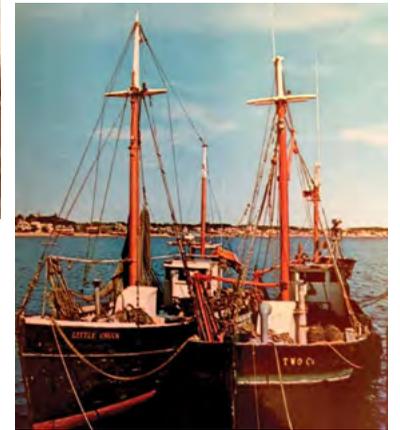
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Additionally, by working with other European countries in many of its activities in Portugal, the Foundation has become recognized as a leading contributor to a constructive U.S.-European dialogue on many policy issues.

The Foundation is a private, non-profit, grant and loan-making foundation, whose purpose is to contribute to Portugal's growth and development by supporting the actions of an economic, scientific and cultural nature.

The United States is the Foundation's principal partner in carrying out its wide range of programs. In general, the Foundation has focused its programs in the following areas:

### Education, Science and Technology

### Culture and Portuguese American Heritage

### Public Policy and Administrative Reform

### Civil Society and Innovation

Over time, the Foundation's program strategy has evolved to emphasize policy research and debate, human resources development, joint research projects, and building lasting institutional interactions.

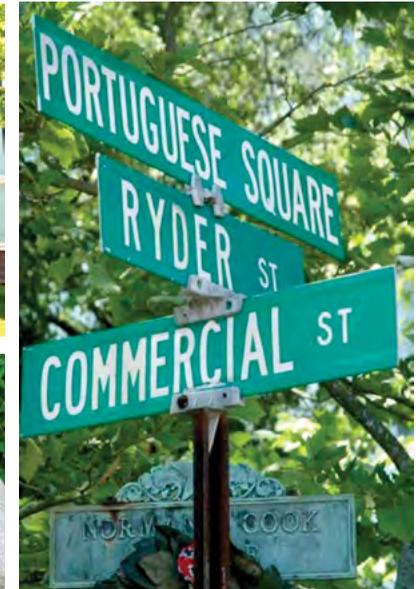
**A growing focus area today is the strengthening of ties with the Portuguese American communities in the United States. These communities honor the Portuguese cultural heritage and seek new ways to expand contacts with Portugal and its institutions. Since the inception of the Portuguese American Citizenship Project, the Foundation has approved grants to Portuguese American communities in California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Rhode Island.**

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## Bring Life to Ryder Street



*Bishop DaCunha blesses the memorial plaque in honor of our fishermen lost at sea.*



**JUNE 21, 2007** In a letter to the Board of Selectmen in 2007, the Festival Team presented their vision to expand the Festival's Ryder Street activities. To achieve this goal, a major improvement in lighting and electrical power was proposed. Based on this goal, and a desire to thank the community of Provincetown for the strong support of the Festival and Blessing of the Fleet it had received for the past sixty years, the Festival Team developed a plan to Bring Life to Ryder Street, and when complete, gift it to the town. The proposal was reviewed and received with support from the Police Department, the Department of Public Works, and the Provincetown Chamber of Commerce. The Festival Team was proud to be able to continue with their plans which would not only enhance their activities but would be an attractive asset to residents and visitors alike.

Five decorative lamp poles would be installed along the west side of Ryder Street, equally positioned between Commercial and Bradford Streets. The light poles would establish an attractive walkway toward the VFW Memorial, and the Bas Relief, and provide pleasant illumination in the evening for the benches. The plan was for the lamp posts to be equipped with electrical and telephone outlets. Public safety services would gain immediate access to electrical power on Ryder Street, as well as eliminate the need for the Portuguese Festival to install and remove power for each event. The Team's hopes were to make an overall long-term improvement to Provincetown that could be enjoyed year-round by many of the town's community organizations.

Today, this area is referred to as Portuguese Square in honor of the

town's rich history. Ryder Street forms the heart of Provincetown and is used as a location for many events, with music, dancing, and live entertainment, welcoming people from around the world who come to celebrate our Portuguese culture and seafaring heritage.

In 2007, the Portuguese Festival Team and the community of Provincetown remembered its fishermen tragically lost at sea with the lighting of the lamp posts on Ryder Street, during the 60th annual Blessing of the Fleet. A dream had been realized.

This year, 2022, the Blessing of the Fleet will celebrate its 75th anniversary, and we are proud that the lights in Portuguese Square continue to burn brightly in honor of our fishermen who risked their lives everyday in their perilous livelihood.

**Obrigado, Provincetown!**



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## Grace Gouveia Collinson

EXCERPTS BY MARY JO AVELLAR



The death at year's end brought to a close one of the most remarkable stories in the history of Provincetown. Grace was 89 when she died and her story, like those of so many other immigrants to Provincetown's shores is not only remarkable, but also a story of the power of the human spirit to succeed in a time when opportunities for women, especially the foreign born, were few and far between.

An immigrant girl of 7 when she came to the United States from Olhao, in the Portuguese Algarve, Grace's intellect was extraordinary. She not only learned to speak English with alacrity, but she also learned other languages as well. She was twice double promoted in school, graduating with highest honors, from American International College in Springfield and Mount Holyoke.

An activist all her life, Grace undertook, when most people were retiring, the cause of senior citizens. She founded the Council on Aging and was instrumental in acquiring the old Cape End Manor building for its headquarters. She was Provincetown's original 'Gray Panther', and campaigned tirelessly for the rights of the elderly, long after she'd earned the right to retire on her laurels.

In the long colorful muu muu's she wore in her later years, Grace cajoled, pled and advocated endlessly for senior citizens much the same way she advocated for children when she was a teacher.

In 1984, her devotion to Provincetown was rewarded when the old manor building was renamed the Grace Gouveia Building. Modest about her accomplishments, Grace couldn't believe a building would be named for her while she was still living.

Grace had a flair for the dramatic, an unparalleled love of learning and willingness to take a chance when those around her hesitated. She was a personality and a character, but most of all she was a teacher and a friend to everyone who crossed her path. Her willingness to take people on and to share her knowledge and extraordinary intellect were gifts the community the likes of Provincetown will never see again.

## *Consider Well the Men Who Go to Sea*

GRACE GOUVEIA COLLINSON, 1980

Consider well the men who go to sea  
Consider well the tales they have to tell  
Which often touch the heaven top  
Or deeply strike the pits of hell

I tell the tale of Peter Santos  
A captain brave of noted skill and rank  
Who sailed his schooner "Mary C. Santos"  
On her twentieth trip to Georges Bank

With twenty-three all seasoned men aboard  
Who planned to bet their meager stake  
And dreamed and talked of things they wanted done  
And extra projects they might undertake.

Jules F. had plans to build a shed  
Joseph C. to make a fence with railroad ties  
Antone G. to visit his family in Portugal  
Joseph S. to operate the cataracts in his eyes  
Manuel F. to buy a house on Pleasant Street  
Remizo N. to marry the widow Anna Doane  
Frank A. to send his son to an academy  
Bento V. to have a gasoliner all his own.

Each day they lowered the ten dories down  
Two men assigned to each to set and pull the trawl  
Aboard the ship remained the captain and three men to cook and chore  
All trained on what to do should come the sudden fog and squall.

Then came that Friday morn at eight o'clock  
When southeast breezes burst swiftly and swiftly turned to hurricane  
With twists of winds aswirl and disastrous ocean swells  
To make a three hour sweep of ill and awesome evil reign.

Then followed fast the sudden shift to gale northeast  
To make the mountain waves and valleys troughs to churn  
And pull into the ocean fold - the ocean fold - the boats, the men, the trawl  
Another hour would have sealed the point of no return

As fast as it had come -so fast it did subside  
To leave the mother ship with battered deck and her sail all torn  
And the captain terrorized for the twenty men out there  
Made frantic calls by bell and conch and horn.

Seven men did hear, and seven men were saved  
And three additional days were used to scour the sea for more  
But nothing showed; no boats, no men, no bits of life astray  
But empty sea, and absent bird and shark to zero in the score.

The men voted to return and blessing the ocean grave  
They left the fishing grounds and thirteen flags to the half mast  
Captain Santos' hair had suddenly turned white completely white  
His crew of ten all in suspended shock and spirits deeply cast.

And Jules F. built no shed,  
Nor did Joseph C. buy his railroad ties  
And Atone G. took no trip to Portugal  
Nor did Joseph S. save his weakened eyes  
And Manuel F. bought no home on pleasant street  
Nor did Remizo N. marry Anie Doane  
And Frank A. no son to school  
Nor Bento V. a dory of his own.  
Twenty parents were left to mourn,  
Seven widows were left to weep  
And thirty-one children made fatherless  
For town and church and God to keep.



Capitan Peter Santos



Schooner "Mary C. Santos"

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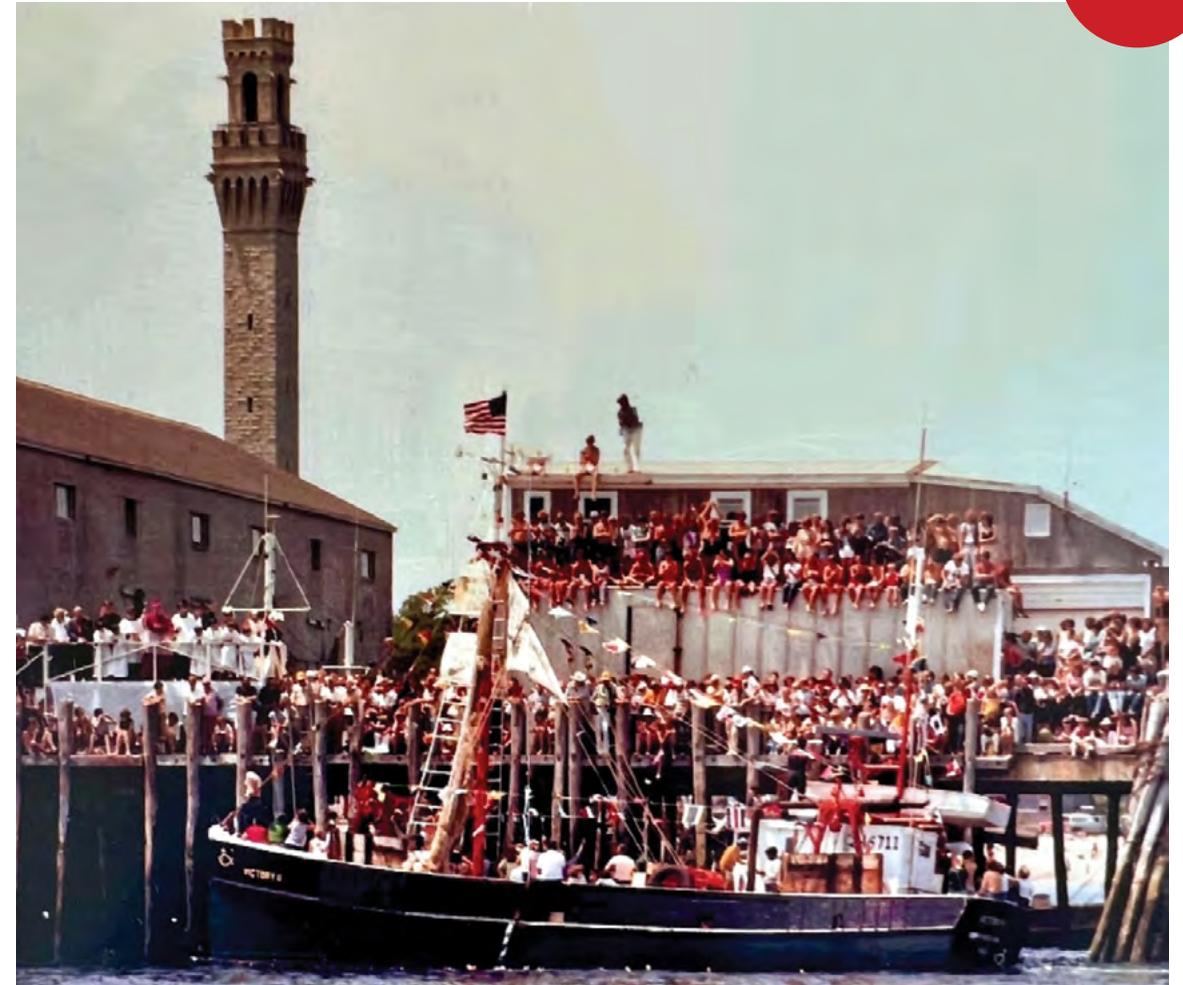
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Victory II, Blessed in 1981

## *Lost at Sea*

BY MARY ANN BRAGG, CAPE COD TIMES, 2012

On May 13, 1984, the dragger Victory II was found sunken in thirty feet of water off Billingsgate Shoal, when a Wellfleet fishing vessel snagged its nets on the submerged 56-foot boat. It had last been seen May 1, 1984. The three crew members, all of Provincetown, who died in the incident were Capt. Kenneth Macara II, 28, Ben Fernandez, 33, and John "J.D." Dorff, 36. The boat's nets which were being dragged along the side, became

entangled in a chain attached to an abandoned concrete sinker on the ocean floor, according to the 1985 Coast Guard report. The crew was hauling in the nets and had pulled up the chain to within ten feet of the boat, the report said, but what happened next is unclear, although it is believed the boat rolled on its side and sank.

-Mary Ann Bragg,  
Provincetown's Tragic Losses,  
Cape Cod Times, 2012

Although Kenneth Macara, Sr. who had turned over the stewardship of the Victory II to his young son Kenny, continued to fish on his new boat the Ruthie L., he said, "No one will ever know what happened that day, but all I know is that it was the worst day of my life." ☹

\*A full account of the tragic sinking of the Victory II, *Life and Loss at Sea* by Nancy Burch Silva, can be accessed on [provincetownportuguese festival.com](http://provincetownportuguese festival.com)

# Provincetown Chamber of Commerce

2022-2023 Visitors Guide



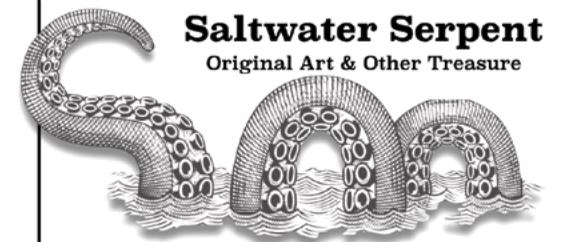
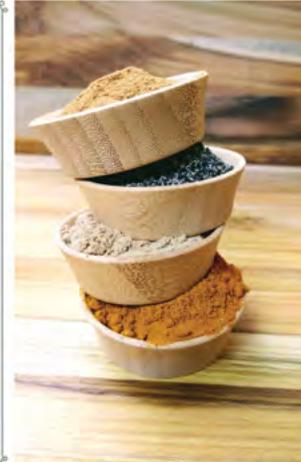
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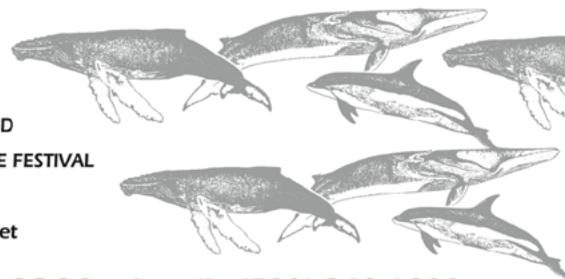
*In Loving Memory of our Dad  
Richard J. "Tarts" Meads*

*- Richard & Jeremy*

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Capt. Josie & Amelia Silva



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Captained by Kenneth Silva  
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Charley "Chaplin" Thomas  
Alfred "Long Legs" Souza  
Gilbert "Bretanha" Souza

There was a wonderful sense of pride in the fishing community of Provincetown many years ago, which still exists today. Family, friends, and fishing were an integral part of every day life, especially my life. I am grateful for all of the years that I lived and worked here in Provincetown, on the land and on the sea, where I developed a deep appreciation for all that existed in the ocean. I have no fonder memory than being born and raised in this wonderful Portuguese fishing village, and growing up to be a fisherman for my entire life. My family and I are grateful that this heritage is still being kept alive by the Portuguese Festival and the Blessing of the Fleet Committee, and their efforts and determination to preserve and to **SHARE THE HERITAGE** every year. It is a privilege and an honor to be a part of it all to this day, and I will always be grateful for the opportunities that this community has given to me and my family.

Ken Silva  
Bob & Eleanor Silva



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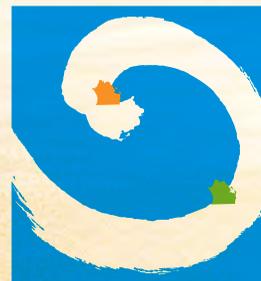


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**F**RANK X. GASPAR was born and raised in the West End of Provincetown. Frank's parental grandparents immigrated from the Island of Sao Miguel, and his maternal grandparents from the island of Pico, both in the Azorean Archipelago. His ancestors were traditionally whalers and Grand-Banks fishermen, sailing out of the Islands and then Provincetown. Frank himself went to sea with the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam War and served for three and a half years, including two tours on the aircraft carrier USS Hornet (CV-12), and aided in the recovery of Apollo 11 space module.

When asked in the Portuguese American Journal interview by Millicent Accardi if he spoke Portuguese, Frank said, "I can speak very little, enough to get around, get fed – basic survival, I guess. I grew up hearing it in the house. Everyone in my mother's generation was fluently bilingual. Many of the older folks, the great-aunts and grandparents and so forth, spoke English only haltingly and with heavy accents. This was the West End of Provincetown, of course. We kids were not allowed or taught. There is the story that a particular priest, or perhaps the teachers at school, wanted us to assimilate and so told the parents, 'Nao permita que as criancas a falar Portugues. Nao e bom para elas!' There's no way to tell if that's true or not, but the fact remains that no one I grew up with was brought along in the language. We heard it, of course, and picked up words, but this was New England, Provincetown, Azorean, and many of the words we kids used don't seem to be known by true

speakers of the language. And the sounds are different than what I hear from educated Portuguese people.

Being Portuguese, and growing up in the town that I did, in the West End, which was so heavily culturally Portuguese, has shaped probably every facet of my life. Certainly, growing up hearing Portuguese at home and on the street and in the markets and so forth; and then hearing the Latin of the Catholic Church, allowed me to attune to the language of music of language irrespective of meaning. In town, growing up, we always called ourselves simple 'Portuguese.' Actually, we, and the old ones, too, always used 'Portagee'. Everyone was proud of it. When I'm home in Provincetown with my Townie friends, we use 'Portagee' all the time, lovingly, happily, heartily. We were the Portuguese. We made up probably 80-90 percent of the town's population, so it was vaunt to say so! The majority, at any rate. The town is no longer like that, but there are stalwart Portuguese who hold a four day festival each summer to commemorate the glory days when fishing was king, and the Portuguese language was on many lips." - Millicent Accardi, Portuguese American Journal Interview, 2012

\*Frank Xavier Gaspar is an American poet, novelist and professor of Portuguese descent. A number of his books treat Portuguese American themes or settings, particularly the Portuguese community in Provincetown. Frank has won fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the California Art Commission and received three Pushcart Prizes.

Frank is the author of 5

collections of poetry and 3 novels. His work has appeared widely in periodicals, including *The Nation*, *The New Yorker*, *The Harvard Review*, *The American Poetry Review* and others. As a Portuguese American Frank is dedicated to showing his presence and contributions to American mainstreams of literature and the arts.

He taught in the Department of English at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth as the Endowed Chair Professor in Portuguese Studies. Gaspar graduated from the Master of Fine Arts program and University of California at Irvine and is an emeritus faculty member at Long Beach City College, in California and has also taught in the graduate writing program at Antioch University in Los Angeles. For the past two summers he has taught a writing course specifically for students of Portuguese descent, called "Writing the Luso Experience at the Disquiet International Literary Program in Lisbon, Portugal. Currently Frank is teaching at the MFA Writing Program at Pacific University, Oregon.

Frank Gaspar's most recent novel is *The Poems of Renata Ferreira*, Tagus Press, 2020.

***The Blessing of the Fleet and Portuguese Festival Committee is honored to have Frank return to Provincetown this year, for our Portuguese Writers and Poets Read in celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the Blessing of the Fleet.***



Frank at a Festival Event at the Red Inn



Nancy Whorf, MacMillan Wharf, Red Dory, 1992  
Courtesy of Berta Walker Gallery



Frank has always dreamed of playing the bongo drums on stage at the Festival!

## *Harbor in Winter*

FRANK X. GASPAR

The white harbor  
a mother's story or dream  
given to us as a token of loss:  
nothing could ever be that way again,  
nothing ever quite so good, so  
cold, so white. The picture  
she gave us stood hard as a mirror  
ringed in a heavy arm of snow,  
and they came down, she said,  
from the top of Franklin Hill  
on double runners past the house  
and wharf and out on that great ice,  
skidding halfway to the weirs,  
piled two and three on their brilliant sleds.

Like so much of what we wanted,  
What we believed, it never was.  
The slick, white hyperbole,  
The purity of all that ice and snow,  
The sound of runners trembling hard  
On the thick harbor, the tide's pulse  
Brutally still under that bright table  
All came from a woman's lips,  
A voice hollowed to its own beliefs.

Nothing could ever be that way,  
nothing. In my last year there  
The weather came down from Canada,  
and the pipes froze on a night in February.  
I walked the harbor's edge and watched  
the icy stars go out. The snow  
came next, scudding white in the wharf's pale lamp,  
and the harbor, harbor once  
of glazed crystal, of dashing sleds,  
of that woman's lilting story  
hissed under the winter sky,  
swallowing light and sound.

## Provincetown Prepares to Honor 14 Fishermen Lost at Sea

BY MARY ANN BRAGG, CAPE COD TIMES, JUNE 21, 2007



Patricia Marie  
Courtesy King Family



Cap'n Bill  
Courtesy of Seamen's Bank



Victory II  
Courtesy of Seamen's Bank

The morning after the scalloper Patricia Marie went down, Chris King went to school as usual. He confided in his football coach. Then from a window overlooking the harbor, King watched for the Coast Guard boat that would bring his father home from the sea one last time.

Capt. William W. King, 44, and his crew of six died when the Patricia Marie sank suddenly, only three miles off the coast of Eastham in October 1976. The crew members who perished along with Capt. King were Morris "First Mate Mot Joseph "Joseph, his son Alton, "Buddy" Joseph, Walter Marshall, Richard



The Cap'n Bill. This image was taken from a postcard of Michael Coelho's, a Provincetown fisherman, who said he carried it with him all the years he was in the Navy.

Oldenquist, Robert "Bobby" Zawalick, and Ernest Cordeiro. It is still remembered as one of the worst marine disasters to strike at the heart of the small, tightly knit fishing community in Provincetown.

Two years later, another fishing boat and crew would be lost to the elements, this time the Cap'n Bill, a 63-foot dragger, with a crew of four on February 9, 1978 went down. Captain Ralph E. Andrews, 57, as did Robert Sullivan, 32, Edward Hoenig, 21, and 19-year-old Ernest Tasha.

Six years after that loss, another Provincetown boat, the Victory II, went down taking

with her a crew of three young men. Capt. Kenneth R. Macara II, who was at 28, the youngest man aboard; John Dorf, 36, and Benjamin Fernandez, 33.

The 14 men who died at sea, doing the kind of work that defined their families for generations will be honored in a ceremony tonight that begins at 6 p.m. as part of the annual Portuguese Festival. "These were three huge tragedies in Provincetown", said Maureen Hurst, a festival organizer. "My dad is a fisherman, and my grandfather came from Portugal when he was 19. I knew all of the people from all three boats," she said.

To some, this yearly event might seem all about revelry, pageantry and the always popular Blessing of the Fleet. For others, it is a poignant reminder of the inherent danger working the seas

and the slowly disappearing way of life among Portuguese families who have called Provincetown home for generations. Little more than thirty years ago, about seventy percent of Provincetown residents were of Portuguese descent, according to local estimates. Today, fewer than 25 percent of the town's population can make the same claim. A 1985 consultants report described thirty draggers anchoring in Provincetown Harbor as home port. Today, the local fishing fleet includes seven draggers, according to one town official. Changes in fishing regulations and escalating land prices are two reasons given for the decline of the fishing fleet, once dominated by Portuguese fishermen, local sources said.

The Blessing of the Fleet, now in its 60th year in Provincetown, has its origins in European fishing communities where a priest's blessing was meant to ensure a safe and bountiful season. Over the years, religion has certainly played a strong role in the lives of many fishing community families. "We stay around 450 families," the Rev. Henry Dahl of St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church said of his year-round parish population. "I would say most of them, about 60 percent, are of Portuguese heritage. We certainly have had a decline in marriages and baptisms."

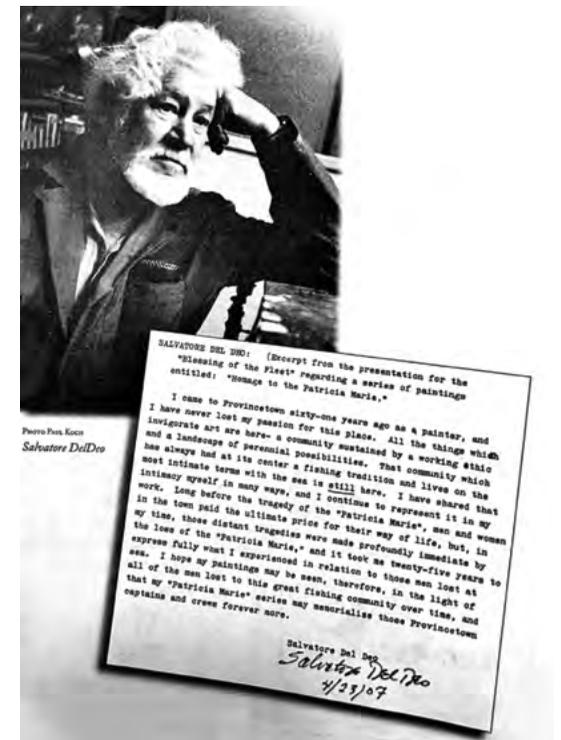
King, who was 14 and the oldest of 6 children when his dad perished, said the summer before his father's death was a heady time. The Patricia Marie, named for King's mother, was

newly outfitted for scalloping. His father often took the crew to fertile grounds at Pollack Rip, about 12 miles off Chatham. They'd leave on a Sunday, and return on Thursday, King said. He made \$5,000 that summer, a big sum of money for a teen-ager. King has become a businessman

and fisherman, and the memory of his father and the lost crew is never far from his mind. About a year ago, King took his boat to the site where his father's boat sank three decades ago. "He said, "Let's see if we can get something from the old man's boat," King said. 



Painting by Sal Del Deo from the series Homage to the Patricia Marie, 1976  
Courtesy of Berta Walker Gallery



Article from the July 1, 1948 issue of the Advocate

To Fellows and Friends Afar and Abroad...

## THE THREE OF US

“Folks in town are still talking about the dramatic ceremony of last Sunday when Bishop Cassidy blessed the fishing fleet for the first time at the Cape End. It was the most spectacular event of many years. It was unfortunate at the last minute, that Captain Ernest Tarvers of the dragger, THREE OF US, which was to have led the procession of the boats around the harbor, couldn't get his engine to turn over. So, the RENEVA, Captain Salvadore Vasques of New Bedford, took her in sisterly tow, and side by side, made their way to the Bishop's platform. To Arthur Bragg Silva goes much of the success of the event, and he with his committee worked long and hard on the hundreds of details. When the procession of boats seemed to approach the wharf at too slow a snail's pace, Arthur, in tux and 4th Degree K. of C. cloak, boarded a speed boat and went out to jazz up the column. 🌊



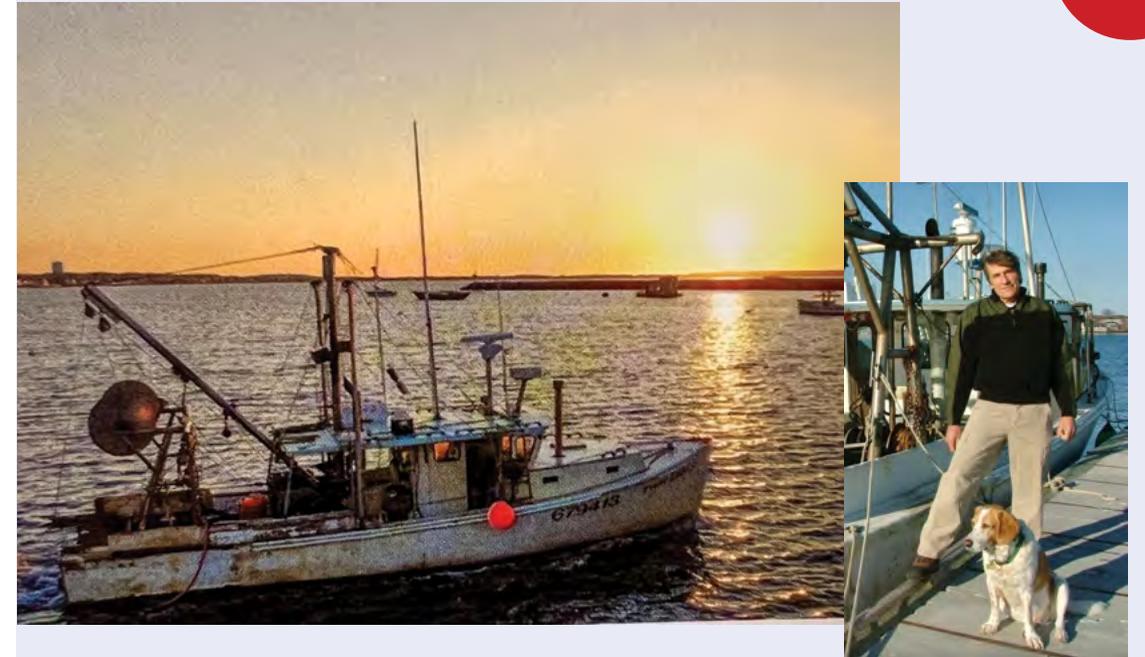
The dragger Reneva, captained by Salvador Vasques, loaded with friends and family at the first Blessing of the Fleet.

Young Sal sits atop the pilot house.



**THE 63' DRAGGER CAP'N BILL** was reported missing February 12th after failing to return after four days at sea. The sunken vessel was found when the Provincetown dragger Jimmy Boy, captained by Joe Roderick snagged the Cap'n Bill wreck in 137 feet of water. Divers went down to the wreck the next day to no avail. No trace of the crew was found until February 1980 when the dragger Triumph out of Provincetown netted an object that tragically identified Capt. Ralph Andrews.

\*A full account of the tragedy of the sinking of the Cap'n Bill by Jim Gilbert (Provincetown Advocate) can be accessed in the 2018 Festival Booklet on [provincetownportuguesefestival.com](http://provincetownportuguesefestival.com)



Captain Jean F. Frottier and friend

## Twin Lights

On Sunday, November 18, 2012, Captain Jean F. Frottier of Wellfleet, a commercial fisherman and a commercial diver, was out scalloping on his vessel *Twin Lights* with Eric Rego, about two miles north of Race Point, when the scallop rake became entangled underwater shortly before noon. Capt. Beau Gribbin of the *Glutton*, who was within visual range, described the scene to Kaimi Rose Lum of The Banner: “There was a big easterly swell, and Jean was towing to the east when he got hung up on bottom. He came around to the west, which would be down sea, and he tried to straighten out the situation he had, and it just went bad... the boat just rolled over immediately.”

At first, the *Twin Lights* stayed afloat, though

upside down. Soon however, all that remained above the waves was her bow. Captain Gribbin and one crew member of the *Glutton* managed to rescue Rego by using a life sling, while another member - in a dry suit - swam over to *Twin Lights* and knocked fruitlessly on the hull, seeing if he could raise Captain Frottier within (chillingly recalling the efforts 85 years earlier to communicate with the crew of the sinking *S4* (<http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/sh-usn/usnsh-s/ss109.htm>) submarine.) After 40 minutes or so, the scalloper sank in about 190 feet of water. The Coast Guard suspended its search for Captain Frottier on Sunday night.

-DAVID W. DUNLAP, BUILDING PROVINCETOWN

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## T-shirt Art Through the Years



## Retrospective on the 35th Blessing of the Fleet

BETTY VOLTON COSTA, 1982

With this the thirty-fifth annual Blessing of the Fleet, it is almost inevitable to wax nostalgic. Over the years, the fishing industry has changed greatly, as has every other facet of our lives.

When one looks at the modern steel boats with their sophisticated electronic equipment, it is difficult to remember the earlier days of smaller wooden boats and less scientific methods of finding, catching, and processing fish. Yet, coming down to the basics. Is the name of the game really that different?

The element of risk is always present, and the weather is still the supreme arbiter. Science has no way of protecting the hardy faces from the chill winter winds as the fishermen haul in their nets. There is no way to keep the ice from entering the harbor and locking the fleet in for days or weeks.

Then there is the human factor. Wives and families, the unsung heroes of the fleet, still worry when the boats are overdue, or when the winds pick up quickly. Marine radios are on as they people await word of the arrival of the boats, and dinners are put on hold.

Another thing has not changed. The indomitable spirit of the fishermen prevails. It takes a certain kind of individual



Betty Costa, the "historian" for the Blessing of the Fleet, stands in front of the fishing fleet at the pier.

to endure the rigors of this life. While each of these vessels is a tremendous investment, and the cost of operation, maintenance and repairs is escalating constantly, each is vulnerable to the elements, to the other boats berthed next to it, and to the courtesy of the captains and crews of neighboring boats. And, how often have captains docked thinking they had a good day's catch only to find that the

price of fish had plummeted? Only the intrepid choose this life.

Over the years, the fishermen have become one in the face of tragedy. While fiercely independent, when a brother fisherman or his boat is in trouble, they rally. This year, the common cause is the deteriorating state of the pier. Vital to the industry, the wharf is also a major tourist attraction, visited by thousands of people annually. We hope the townspeople will join the effort to remedy this situation speedily and efficiently.

The annual rite of blessing the boats has also changed a good deal in in thirty-five years. From modest beginnings it has grown and blossomed. A tremendous effort goes into the planning of this event. It attracts tourists from near and far and has something to offer for



Fr. Duarte and Fr. Mayhew lead the procession with altar boy Wesley Medeiros and others on Town Pier.



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each age group.

For the youngsters there are fishing contests plus games, prizes, and refreshments at Motta Field. The fishermen and their guests enjoy softball games and a quahog party. The Senior Citizens Ball has been a special event for townspeople and tourists alike, and younger folks listen enthralled, as tales of the old days abound.

There have been arts and crafts fairs, marathons, regattas, visits from foreign ships, and other colorful additions to the traditional celebration. Fishermen, their wives, and guests also enjoy a cocktail party and dinner dance.

The culmination of these festivities, is, of course, held on Sunday. Marching bands, contingents from the armed services, a group from the Cape Cod Shriners Club, an honor guard of Fourth Degree Knights

of Columbus, Cub Scouts, and others meet the fishermen for the march to St. Peter's Church. The traditional statue of St. Peter, the patron of fishermen everywhere, which has been lovingly and painstakingly decorated, is carried aloft. It is impressive to see four generations of one family in the parade.

Bishop Daniel A. Cronin is the main celebrant at the mass of thanksgiving. Fishermen who have been lost at sea are remembered, as those who spent their lives in the industry, and are no longer with us. The prayers are in thanksgiving for a year without tragedy, and for a coming year of bountiful catches and safety for the men and their boats.

After the mass, the Bishop joins the procession to the wharf where the colorfully decorated boats are blessed individually as they pass the reviewing stand.

Many of these boats then go out to anchor off Long Point for a picnic.

With all the pageantry of the event, it is easy to miss the profound meaning of this celebration. An old-world custom, brought here by Portuguese immigrants years ago, the Blessing of the Fleet is a simple and direct admission that the lives and fortunes of these men are in the hands of the Almighty. Let us not lose sight of this fact and join in with the true spirit which the Blessing of the Fleet deserves. 🌊

*\*In her lifetime, Betty and her husband Warren were dedicated supporters of the Blessing of the Fleet and the Portuguese Festival. Betty was a prolific writer, and many of her wonderful stories have been printed in the Festival Booklets throughout the years.*



*Fishermen march in the Blessing of the Fleet parade  
Courtesy of Salvador Vadques, Collection of Jackie and Anna Rivers*



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**DESIGNING THE FESTIVAL T-SHIRT 2015**

BY ANDRÉA TASHA



I come from a local family of fishermen and artists and I have always loved Provincetown's Blessing of the Fleet. The fishing and art communities have long been the heart and soul of this very special place we call Home, and having the opportunity to design an image in honor one of our Fleet makes this connection feel really tangible.

For each of the last 68 years, a vessel in the Provincetown fleet has been honored to lead the procession of boats in the Blessing ceremony. This year the Pamet, a scalloper and dragger, takes it's turn. It is a beautiful vessel, changing colors over the many years it's been in the fleet.

Honoring a fishing vessel is really about honoring the people who rely on that vessel to sustain families and communities. Fishing is a dangerous, physically and mentally demanding undertaking; a very difficult way of life. My drawing tells a story, of a boat, yes--but more about the hard work done on that boat, of families onshore watching the horizon for a familiar silhouette, of fishermen generously giving away fish as they unload their catch at the pier. The Blessing of the Fleet is a tradition of hope—for a bountiful harvest, for good fortune, good health, and mostly the hope that the fishermen will always find their way home to us. — *Andréa Tasha*

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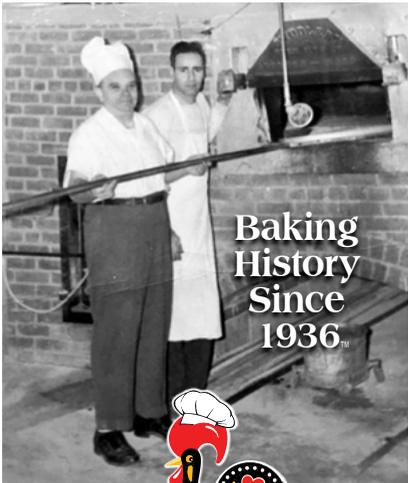
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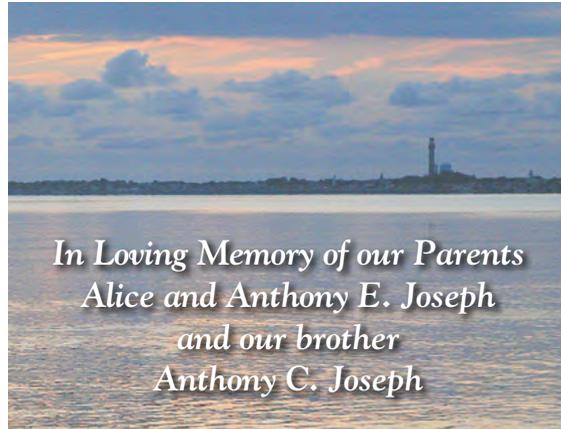
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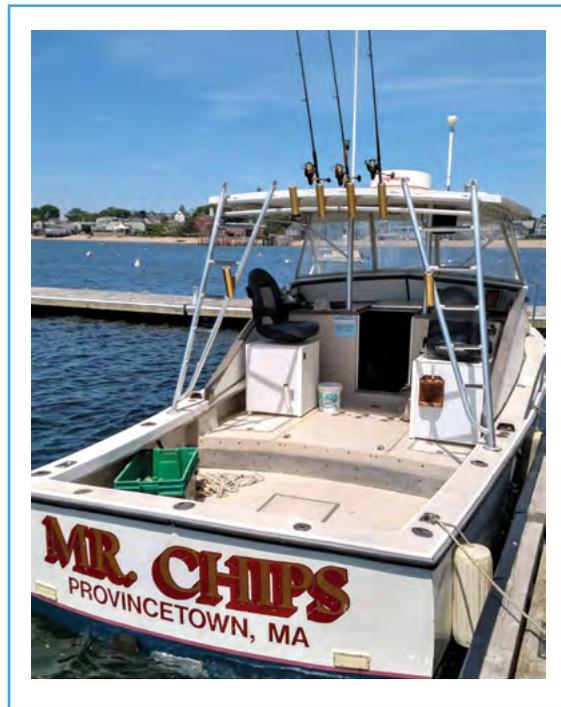
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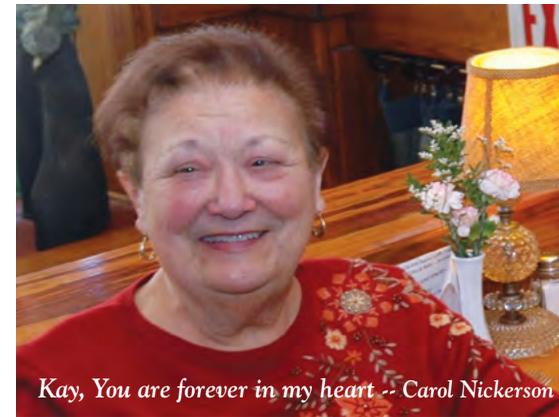
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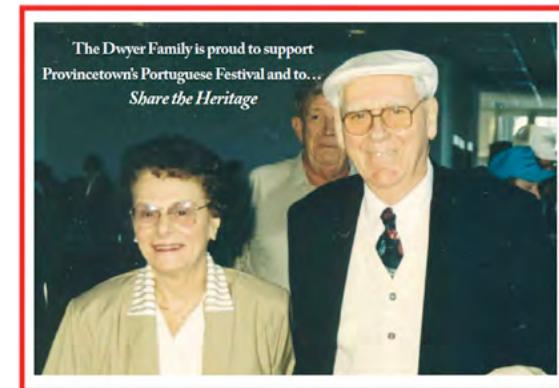
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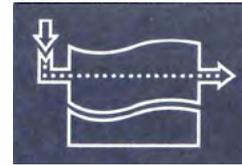
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*Ray Nadeau will be missed*



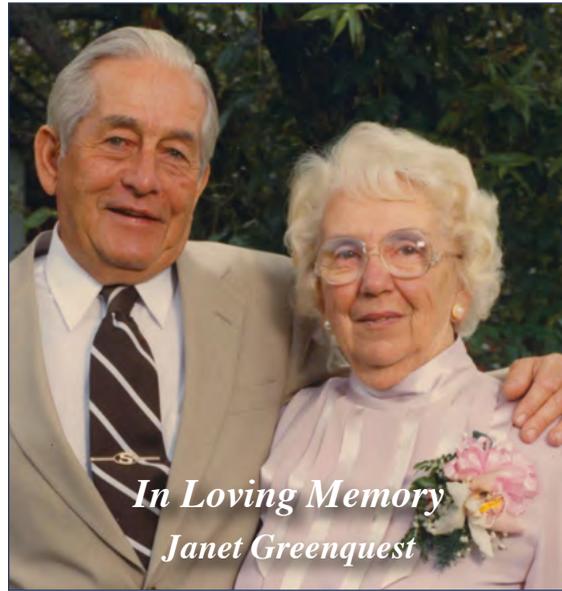
For many years Ray looked forward to driving the Bishop back to St. Peter's rectory after the last boat was blessed



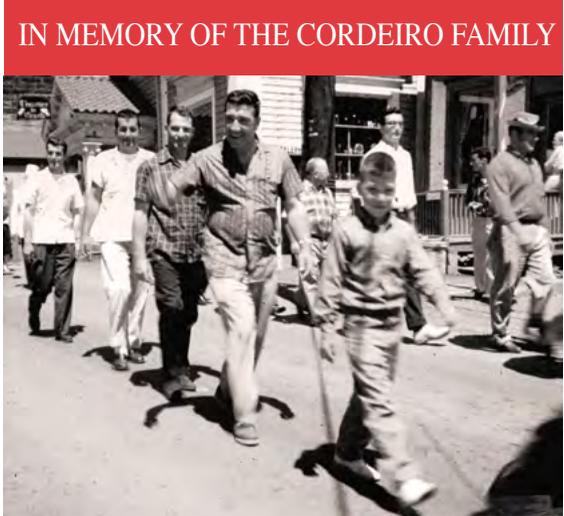
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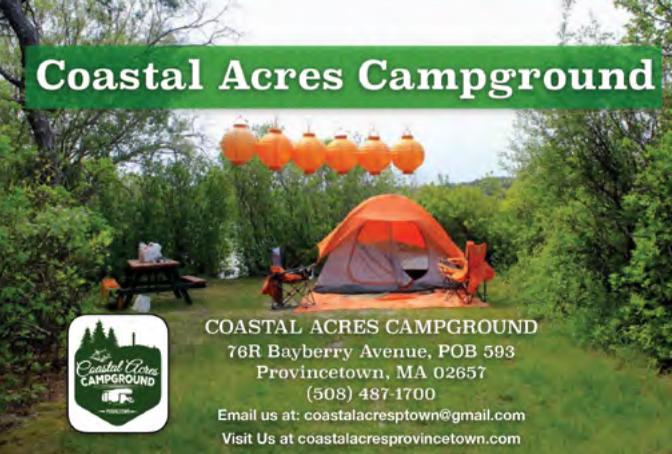
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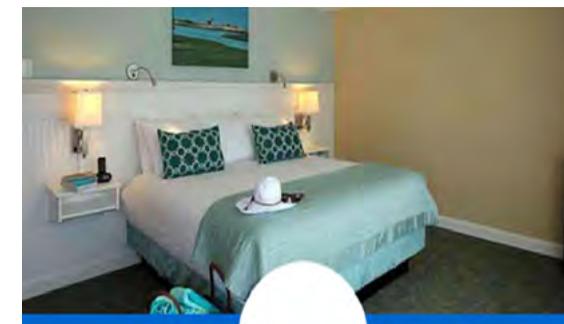
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*26th Annual*  
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Marion, Aunt Ruth, Aunt Kay, Aunt Rosie, Mom, Flo.  
In front, Beata & Dad, Howard - Courtesy of Nancy



RUTH RAMOS LITTLEFIELD was born in Provincetown in 1918, in the house she lived in until her passing. She spent her childhood navigating from the front seat of her father's busses that were piloted up and down Commercial Street, a two-way street, by her brothers. Ruth was proud of her Portuguese heritage and the sacrifices her family made. Both her grandfathers were rugged fishermen from the Azores who were lost at sea.

By admission, Ruth was "feisty" and flamboyant when she wanted to be. She was someone who could be truly called "her own person". Ruth was a prolific writer of thought-provoking sonnets about growing up in the West End of Provincetown, and the ironies of life.

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In loving memory of  
 Charles F. Welsh

## Memories of Our Fishermen

RUTH RAMOS LITTLEFIELD, 2006

In her Sky	We knew	We'd hand down
She Wears	Today Was	Our Bucket or String
A Halo of	Fish Day	The Fishermen would
Heavenly Blue	We Watched for	Fill up our buckets
Studded With	The Boats	String up the fish
Brilliant Diamonds	To Appear Along	All for
An Aura of	The Bend	The Asking
Rainbow Colors	At Long Point	All Required was
Envelop	When They Came	A Thank you
Her Sunsets	Into Sight	There was Never Ever
From The Sand Dunes	Down Commercial Street	Any Reason For
A cloak	We'd Run	Anyone to
Of Sand	We had a Date	Go hungry
Graces her Being	At Skarloff's or	in Provincetown.
Her endless Refreshing	Railroad Wharf	Provincetown fishermen
Salt Water	As the Boat Neared	Took Care of
Quenches her thirst	The Wharf	Their Own
Our Beloved	Rope was tossed	In gratitude
Provincetown	Over the Side	We Remember
All who	On to the Pier	In the early
Grew up here	Securing the Boat	Morn
Were fortunate	Standing on the Deck	When You Put Out
To Be Amongst those	Of their boat	To Sea
Provincetown called	After a Hard	Standing Beside you
Her Children	Day's Work.	On the Deck
Fishermen knew	Braving High Winds	Of your Vessel
Many Kids in Provincetown	Rough Seas	"The Big Fishermen"
All Kids Knew	Heat or Cold	Will
The Fishermen	Fishermen	Always Be
When our mothers	Broadly Smiling	God Speed.
Handed Us A	Happy to be	
Bucket or A String	In Port	

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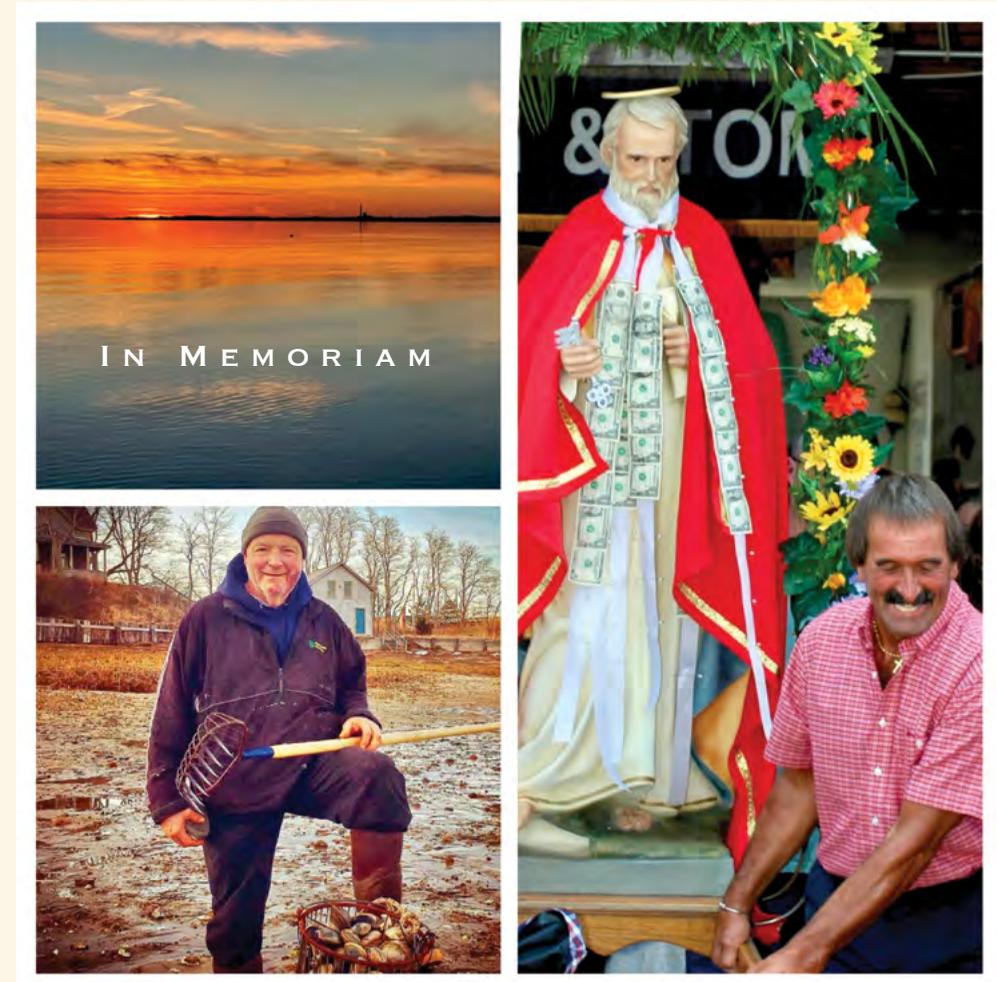
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Frank and Janice  
Hallaman

Betty Krier

Robert Allison



**Stephen Ryan**

**Thomas L. Thomas "T.T."**

*Let not the waves of the sea separate us now,  
And the years you have spent in our midst  
become a memory.  
You have walked among us as a spirit,  
And your shadow has been a light  
upon our faces.*

*Kahlil Gibran*

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**Boas  
Festas!**



Photo Sue Harrison

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