



BYRON BROOKS

1906-1978

Artist - on line catalogue

Brooks was active as an artist during the 1950s-70s. He sold oil paintings from a gallery at his home in East Gloucester, Massachusetts. His subject matter included pastoral landscapes, still lifes, seascapes, maritime scenes, and vistas of Gloucester and greater Cape Ann. Brooks was a WWII veteran and served in the Coast Guard. He worked for the City of Gloucester.

About Byron Brooks (1906-1978)

Byron Brooks was born and raised in Manchester, Massachusetts. Directories indicate that his family lived on School Street and that he was one of eight siblings. Brooks worked as a “chauffeur” and moved to Gloucester. He married Gladys Gertrude Lawson from Gloucester in 1928 and continued as a driver for a laundry business. Gladys was a clerk for a fish company. Later Brooks was employed by the City of Gloucester in the highway department. They had no children and a long marriage. His residential addresses were: 12 Stage Fort Avenue (Gloucester), 12 Willet Street, and 2 Davis (Gloucester).

Brooks was a WWII veteran and served with the Coast Guard.

Gladys died in 1974. Bryon married Marjorie (“Margie”) S. Harding O'hearn, another Gloucester gal, in 1976, a second marriage for both. Brooks was a member of the Manchester Art Association at the time of his death and his work was on display at the medical center according to the Gloucester Daily Times obituary. As of 2018, there is one work on display at Addison Gilbert which was gifted by Marjorie, a retired medical secretary, perhaps with an affinity there herself.

Catalogue

Courtesy photos unless otherwise indicated

Byron Brooks is not listed in any artist biographical compilations. The index card sketch below mimics the format as *if* he were listed in *Who Was Who in American Art*:

BROOKS, Byron *[Painter]* b. 1906, Manchester, Mass | d. 1978, Gloucester, MA.

Addresses: 12 Stage Fort Avenue and 2 Davis St in Gloucester; MA

- **Studied:** *not known*
- **Member:** *Manchester Art Association*
- **Exhibited:** *1961*, Tenth Annual Cape Ann Festival of the Arts, Visual Arts Exhibition, Section VIII, Balcony Show. Painting, “*Rock Clipper Ship*”. Emily Anderson chairman (curator); *1960* Ninth Annual Cape Ann Festival of the Arts “*New England Snow Scene*”; *1957* Sixth Annual Cape Ann Festival of the Arts, “*Cottage by the Sea*”, Group SP (Sunday Painters section), curated by Emily Anderson
- Gallery owner: **Brooks ran a gallery from his home*
- **Work:** *collection of Addison Gilbert Hospital*
- **Sources:** C. Ryan, Good Morning Gloucester; private collectors; Good Morning Gloucester readers
- **Employment:** *Driver-Delivery; employed by City of Gloucester Highway Dept*
- **Veteran:** *WWII veteran, served in the Coast Guard*

1. Byron Brooks Untitled

Description: wharf and harbor

Medium: oil on canvas

Date: ca.1955-60

Date acquired: ca.1961-65

Dimensions:

Private collection, New York



2. Untitled

(still life- forced bulb lily with flamingo)

Medium: oil on canvas

Date: ca.1961

Date acquired:

Dimensions:

Private collection, Massachusetts

(friend of Kate Foley)



3. Byron Brooks Homeward Bound

Description:

Medium: oil on canvas

Date: n.d.

Date acquired: bequeathed after Brooks death

Dimensions:

Signature LL

Addison Gilbert collection

Gift: *"Homeward Bound in memory of Byron L Brooks
given by his wife Marjorie"*





Detail of signature

From Homeward Bound



Detail of picture label

For Homeward Bound: "*Homeward Bound in memory of Byron L Brooks given by his wife Marjorie*"

4. Byron Brooks Untitled

Description: (winter pastoral)

Medium: oil on canvas

Date: n.d.

Dimensions:

Private collection D. Wolcott



5. Byron Brooks

Untitled

Description: (*colonial home at the end of a driveway. Heavy snow everywhere, a very beautiful painting!*)

Medium: oil on canvas

Date: n.d.

Dimensions:

Private collection

--Photo coming--

6. Byron Brooks Harvey House, West Gloucester

Description: red home in winter

Medium: oil on canvas

Date: n.d.

Date of Acquisition:

Dimensions: 22.5" x 26.5" framed

Signature: LL

Private collection, MA



7. Byron Brooks Wingaersheek Beach

Description: foreground winter dunes;
view to opposite shore across strip of
water

Medium: oil on canvas

Date: n.d.

Dimensions: 27" x 31" framed

Signature: LL

Private collection, MA



8. Byron Brooks Lobster Boat Rockport

Description: beached lobster boat; 1
gull; grey sky

Medium: oil on canvas

Date: circa

Dimensions: 32" x 37" framed

Signature:

Private collection, MA



9. Byron Brooks Autumn Essex, MA

Description: New England home at bend; fall leaves and grounds; blue sky

Medium: oil on canvas

Date: circa

Dimensions: 29.5" x 41.5" framed

Signature: LL

Private collection, MA



10. Byron Brooks Surf Magnolia

Description: surf at coastline

Medium: oil on canvas

Date: circa

Dimensions: 22" x 26" framed

Signature: LR

Private collection, MA



11. Byron Brooks Restless Sea

Description: Surf and rocks

Medium: oil on canvas

Date: n.d.

Dimensions: 16.5" x 20.5" framed

Signature: LR

Private collection, MA



12. Byron Brooks After the Storm Bass Rocks

Description: Bass rocks, surf, wave & sky

Medium: oil on canvas

Date: n.d.

Dimensions: 24.5" x 28" framed

Signature:

Private collection, MA



13. Byron Brooks Stormy Waters Bass Rocks

Description: crashing surf and foam at
Bass Rocks

Medium: oil on canvas

Date: n.d.

Dimensions: 22.5" x 26" framed

Signature: LR

Private collection, MA



14. Untitled

Description: (wharves)

Medium: oil on canvas

Date: n.d.

Dimensions:

Private collection

--photo coming--



Detail of Byron Brooks stacked signature

From Untitled (wharf and harbor scene) private collection, New York

Biography

Byron Brooks - Biographical details

- 1906 Born Byron Lloyd Brooks March 6, 1906 Manchester, Ma
- 1910-1920 Brooks parents, Wade and Ida Brooks, were from Nova Scotia. His dad was from Yarmouth. Byron was one of 8 kids. There were five sons and three daughters: Harold, Josephine, Ruth, Revere, George, Roland, Byron, and Annie. The family lived on School Street in Manchester, MA. On the 1910 and 1920 census his dad was employed as a caretaker for a private estate. Brooks worked as a driver and moved to Gloucester.
- 1928 Byron married Gladys Gertrude Lawson on January 28, 1928. She was born and raised in Gloucester, daughter of Henry Lawson and Amanda Frieberg (both born in Sweden).
- 1930 census- Bryon continued working as a chauffeur, for a laundry company, and Gladys was a shipping clerk in a fish company. They were both 24 years old. They lived at 12 Stage Fort Avenue (razed), near Barrett Camps
- *1940 census and 1942- They were living at 12 Willet Street. He worked for the City of Gloucester, "at the highway department" confirmed by one co-worker's family via Ken Joyce: "My mother said that Byron worked with my Uncle Bill at the Highway Department before the war (WW2)."
- WWII veteran, served in the Coast Guard

Biographical details continued

- 1960 census - They were residing at 2 Davis Street
- 1971 they're still listed at 2 Davis Street
- 1974 Gladys G. Brooks died December 14, 1974 at AGH
- 1976, January 10th, wedding- Byron, 69, retired, 2nd marriage (for both) to Marjorie S. Harding O'Hearn, Gloucester, 66, Medical secretary
- 1978 December 5, 1978 Brooks died from a heart attack (acute myocardial infarction) at Beverly Hospital, Dr. Grush attending. Obituary in the Gloucester Daily Times was titled "Byron Brooks, Artist". Brooks was Interred in Pleasant Grove Cemetery, Manchester, Mass., nearby School St where he grew up. Two couples, Brooks and Murphy, are buried side by side in the plot: the two Lawson sisters, and their husbands, brother in laws, both WWII veterans. A grave marker for Brooks brother Raymond is nearby



NOW former Brooks residence Gloucester, MA

Brooks lived at 12 Stage Fort Avenue which is no longer there- razed. Location was up this street, across from these homes.

David Collins, GMG reader, responds to the 2018 photo, approximating location of what had been 12 Stage Fort Avenue

*"I visited this Byron Brooks on-line catalog site you mentioned and two things struck me. First, while the sign at the foot of Stage Fort Avenue is correct (with the photo view being toward what was, when I was a kid, **Strong's Gas Station** which was across the street from **Barrett's store** where our school bus stop was), I seriously doubt the cute little country cottage pictured to the right was ever 12 Stage Fort Avenue, which was a 2-story home.*

Fun fact, Brooks had lived on School Street in Manchester and one of the families that moved into the 2nd floor of 12 Stage Fort Avenue while we lived there (they had a daughter who was good friends with my sister) later moved from Stage Fort Avenue to School Street in Manchester. We'd visit them there often." - David Collins, July 2018

David then spent time looking for a contemporaneous photo of 12 Stage Fort Ave, and found some! (next slides)

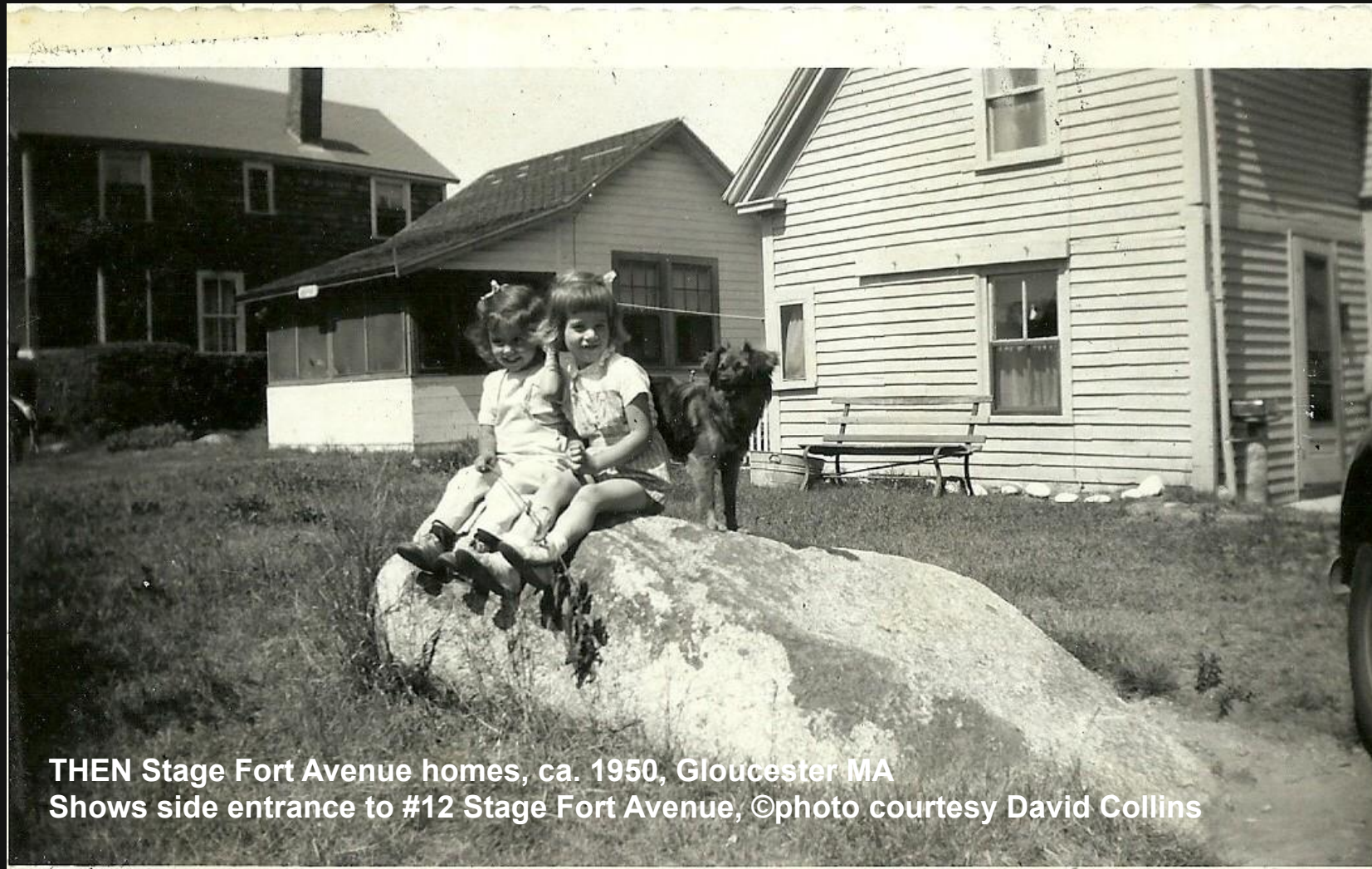


THEN 12 Stage Fort Avenue, Gloucester MA
ca.1947 photo courtesy David Collins



THEN 7 Stage Fort Avenue, Gloucester, MA

Photo courtesy David Collins. "Our house (the then #7 in color) taken ca. 1957-67. I think we may have moved away by then and my aunt and uncle were living there."



THEN Stage Fort Avenue homes, ca. 1950, Gloucester MA
Shows side entrance to #12 Stage Fort Avenue, ©photo courtesy David Collins



About this photo- David Collins gives a peek of Stage Fort Avenue and Barrett Camps with vivid details

"This one is of my sister and the girl (and her dog) who lived upstairs at 12 Stage Fort Avenue for several years while we lived on Stage Fort Avenue and then moved to School Street in Manchester. Her father, originally from Rockport, was a 7th cousin of Byron Brooks but I doubt he knew. The girls are sitting on a rock outside the side entrance to downstairs #12, the one the people we called Auntie Evelyn and Uncle Emerson (Ralph Emerson) Bradstreet (both cousins of each of my parents) probably used most often. It led into their kitchen. The doorway at the stairs in front (in the other picture I sent you) led into a hall, with stairs running up to the 2nd floor apartment and also a door at the left into the downstairs apartment.

The building behind the girls and to the left was, at least at one time, a Barrett camp. I think sometimes people bought them and made them more permanent homes even if they didn't live in them year-round. The family's name sounded like Brown-eyes but I don't remember how it was actually spelled. Oh, I do remember: William and Irene (Douglas) Brauneis. Irene Douglas' brother (a close friend and fishing buddy of my uncle) and his wife and family and his parents lived in the large house at the top of the hill behind the camps that was not a camp. I think the Brauneis family lived in theirs, maybe even full time eventually, long after we had moved.

The next home which looks altogether different was rented out in the summer, too, but I have no idea who lived in it. In the next camp to that one, not in the picture, a Mrs. Morrison spent the summer and her daughter and family, the Kilroys, would join her for a few weeks. Mrs. Kilroy had grown up in Gloucester. I hung around with daughter Carol and brother Robert the part of the summer when they were in town...Henry and Pauline (Osmond) Garvey and family lived in the Barrett camp that abutted our property on (what was then) Stage Fort Avenue. Great family. They would summer there from Tuckahoe, New York, but both had been brought up in Gloucester." - DAVID COLLINS, July 2018



"I couldn't find any pictures of a Barrett camp. (The houses) definitely looked very different from one another, even back in my time." - David Collins

THEN Stage Coach Inn vintage postcard shared by David Collins

Stage Coach Inn, Stage Fort Avenue, Gloucester MA. Example of area saltbox home (razed). Family Diana Bell lived there for a time recalls David Collins. His sister played with Diana.



NOW former Brooks residence Davis Street (now extension)

Brooks lived in (then) 2 Davis Street, confirmed by Mary Ann Boucher, who knew this kind man, a family friend and neighbor. [Several sweet contemporaneous homes remain on this block. Decades prior to Brooks residing at #2, #5 and #7 were rented by artist Oscar Anderson.]



Artist business card

Oil paintings by Byron Brooks- Business card remains on back of contemporaneous frame detailing address 2 Davis Street and contact information

OBITUARY *Gloucester Daily Times* December 6, 1978

“Byron L. Brooks, 72, of 2 Davis St., husband of Marjorie (“Margie”) Harding Brooks died last night at Beverly Hospital.*

He was an artist and a member of the Manchester Art Association. Some of his paintings are on display at the Cape Ann Medical Center.

Mr. Brooks was born in Manchester March 6, 1906, son of Wade A. and Ida May (Peters) Brooks.

He was a veteran of World War II, having served in the Coast Guard.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by a sister, Ann Mathews, of Manchester, and several aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews. His funeral will be in the James C. Greely Funeral Home, 212 Washington Street, Friday morning at 10. Burial will be in Pleasant Grove Cemetery, Manchester. Visiting hours will be tomorrow 7 to 9pm.”



Use in the street: Edmund Vester of the Department of Public Works' water division surfaces for a trench of a water and a canal bed around

Council reaffirms Foster revocation

By WENDY OLIVER
The City Council voted last night unanimously and expeditiously to reaffirm the decision last August to revoke the license of Foster's Tavern, 100 State St., to serve alcohol.

The decision was made by a 10-0 vote, with all council members in favor of the revocation.

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30-cent gasoline hike expected soon

By BILL CABEL
A survey of several service station owners indicated that the gasoline market is expected to see a 30-cent increase in the near future.

The increase is expected to be due to a combination of factors, including a rise in the price of oil and a decrease in the supply of gasoline.

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Truck parking will continue at harbor

By TIM HULLIVAN
In defiance of earlier decisions, the Harbor Authority last night agreed to allow truck parking at the harbor.

The decision was made by a 10-0 vote, with all council members in favor of the revocation.

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Square dancers thwart holdup

A Gloucester man was arrested last night after trying to hold up a square dance.

The man, who was 30 years old, was arrested after he was caught in the act of trying to hold up the dance.

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Truckers held up at harbor

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Obituaries

Byron Brooks, 72, artist

Byron Brooks, 72, of 100 State St., died last night after a long illness.

Mr. Brooks was a well-known artist and a member of the Gloucester Art Association.

He was born in 1906 and spent most of his life in Gloucester.

Funerals

Funerals for the late Mrs. Mary Morris will be held at 10 a.m. on Friday at the St. Mary's Church.

The funeral will be officiated by the Rev. Fr. John J. O'Connor.

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George Brown, retired general

George Brown, 72, of 100 State St., died last night after a long illness.

Mr. Brown was a retired general and a member of the Gloucester Art Association.

He was born in 1906 and spent most of his life in Gloucester.

COMMUNITY NEWS



Trainer Brad was provided one happy day on the way back

Training, methods superior

Training methods were shown to be superior at the Gloucester Community Center.

The training was conducted by a group of experts who were invited to the center.

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Wednesday / Dec. 6, 1978

25 years

Remember, on the Front of Lights, was observed at Temple Church.

The 25th anniversary of the Front of Lights was celebrated with a service at the Temple Church.

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A party was held for the Gloucester and City Hall last night at the Gloucester Community Center.

The party was attended by a large number of people, including children and adults.

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December 6, 1978 Obituaries Dec 6 1978

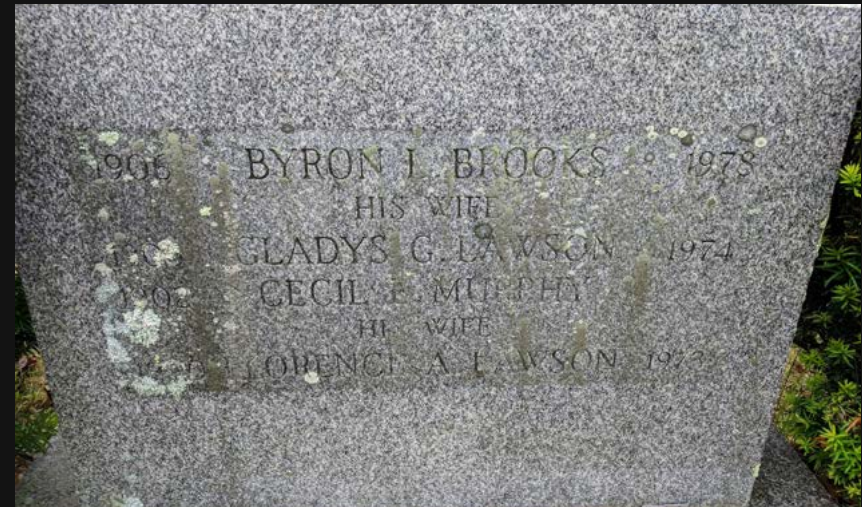
Gloucester Daily Times, front page, Wednesday, December 6, 1978. Retrieved from microfiche reels Sawyer Free library



Pleasant Grove Cemetery, Manchester, MA
Byron Brooks grave ©c ryan , 2018



Raymond Brooks



1906 BYRON L. BROOKS 1978

HIS WIFE

1906 GLADYS G. LAWSON 1974

1902 CECIL E. MURPHY

HIS WIFE

1905 FLORENCE A. LAWSON 1973

Grave- Byron Brooks (1906-1978) his wife Gladys G. Lawson (1906-1974); (1902-)Cecil E. Murphy his wife Florence A. Lawson (1905-1973) Pleasant Grove Cemetery, Manchester, MA ©C Ryan



**Raymond Brooks
grave
(Byron's brother)**

**Byron Brooks
grave**

Pleasant Grove Cemetery, Manchester, MA, annotated to show location of Raymod Brooks in relation to GRAVE for brother Byron Brooks (1906-1978) ©C Ryan, 2018

In the News

Inquiry from Kate Foley for a friend-- posted on Good Morning Gloucester-- led to research into artist Byron Brooks, active in Gloucester 1960s

- [Searching for artist? Byron Brooks! \(Part 1\)](#) November 3, 2016
- [Searching for Artist Byron Brooks Part 2](#) June 28, 2018
- [Searching for Artist Byron Brooks Part 3](#) Aug. 15, 2018
- [Searching for Artist Byron Brooks Part 4](#) Aug. 15, 2018
- UPDATE Searching for Artist Byron Brooks Part 5 February 2021

Good Morning Gloucester reader comments help to fill in details

Mary Ann

"Hello All.....Byron Brooks was my neighbor on Davis Street for many years. Byron loved painting and did have a small gallery in his home next to the East Gloucester Elementary School. He also loved hunting and had german pointers in his outdoor kennel in the yard. Sometimes he would even take our yellow lab, Taffy with him. He was a very sweet man who just loved to paint. My brother and I own a few of his paintings..They were wedding gifts to us from Byron. I don't believe that Byron had any children. I know that he was married twice. His first wife died and he later was married to another sweet lady named Margie. Sad to say, I can't remember what her name was prior to marrying Byron. If I had to guess, I would say that most of Byron's work was done from the early 50's through to the late 70's. I got married in 1979 and Byron gave me a seascape painting as a wedding gift. I don't think he painted much in his later years."

Ken J.

The one that I have is a winter scene of a colonial home at the end of a driveway. Heavy snow everywhere. A very beautiful painting!

Sharon D.

I also have an original oil painting by Byron Brooks – a beautiful painting of fisherman's wharf. The signature on the painting matches the lily painting above, but no date. On the back it reads "*Draggers Byron Brooks Fisherman's Wharf.*" It is clearly that motif and has three older style boats 2 in green and one in blue. It is framed in wood with fabric, then in a beautiful 2 1/2" weathered frame with 4 hammer hits on each side of the corners.

Steven

My dad worked at Sears in Gloucester mass from 1960 to 1965. We have 4 of his paintings and all were bought in 60 to 65. 2 are ocean scenes, 1 is 3 fishing boats in the harbor and 1 is a clipper ship on the high seas.

Debbie

I have inherited two of Byron's oil paintings. One is a small winter scene and the other a larger, waterfront Wharf scene.

My grandparents really liked his work and purchased them on a trip they made to the area. I'm not sure of the timeframe but thinking it was in the late '50's or early '60's.

Debbie

I have 2 of his paintings inherited from my grandparents. One smaller winter scene, the other a larger dock scene. The winter scene actually had his business card stapled onto it. I am also trying to find out more about the artist and the value of the paintings. My grandparents loved them. Posting this on 12-5-17.

Karen

Hello, My family has several paintings. Byron was my great uncle.

DAVID COLLINS

“Hello, Catherine, Here is a little more information on the artist Byron L. Brooks, in case you are still interested. I have attached a family tree for him. It does also have some information on his two wives that I know of. I am not a professional genealogist, so don't take the information as gospel. I grew up at what was then **7 Stage Fort Avenue** (no "Park" in the address) in the late 1940s, 50s and early 60s in the house that is now 1 Anchor Lane, I believe. We moved to Connecticut in 1961 the week I turned 16. **The house Byron lived in, 12 Stage Fort Avenue, was, back when I lived there, a 2-family house.** Most of the other houses in that part of the neighborhood were, or had been, summer camps. Stage Fort Avenue Y-ed at our house and both parts, one going on to one of the Park's parking lots and the other going past us to **Barrett's Camps**, were named Stage Fort Avenue. The house in front of Byron's, the address was 10 Stage Fort Avenue back then and is now 7 Stage Fort Avenue, didn't exist - at least not in the large form it is in now. **Sam and Marion (Kerr) Johnson** lived there. I think the house burned down in about 1975.

Ralph and Evelyn (DeCoste) Bradstreet lived in the downstairs part of 12 Stage Fort Avenue and several families lived upstairs over the years. Byron must have lived in the neighborhood a while before my family did. I think my folks moved to #7 about 1939 or so. I don't know when the Bradstreets moved into #12. That said, Byron Brooks was my mother's 2nd cousin. They share Ephraim Brooks [1818-1905] and Ruth Ward [1816-1892] of Nova Scotia as great-grandparents.

However, I had never heard of Byron until your 2nd *GoodMorningGloucester* article. I even collect art by people who called Cape Ann home - Charles Movalli was my best friend growing up. I also have an extensive family tree that I have worked on for many years. Still, I had no idea Byron existed! Of course, I had his parents in my mother's part of our tree. I have now added information on him and his many siblings because of your articles. Thank-you! Hope this helps you, in return.” 7/1/18

David Collins put together
and shares a Byron Brooks
family tree

[“Ancestors of
Byron Lloyd
\(artist\) Brooks.pdf](#)

