

In Memoriam

Robert Sean Brazil



I am saddened to report the death of Robbie Brazil, co-partner in the Elizabethan Authors web site. A born jester, but no fool, he wore his motley with the pride of one who believes in his mission; a born teacher but no pedant, he helped others to bring out the best in themselves. As the web site grows, he will be deeply missed.

Robbie was beyond description, but the following messages will give you an idea of what his friendship meant to some of those who knew him best.

Barb Flues

Hello,

Robby and I grew up together, and were close friends during our childhood. He had rheumatic fever at five years old, and wasn't supposed to run - so we spent most of our time running up and sliding down staircases when no one was watching. We played games that were so imaginative that it would be impossible to describe them, they were multi-layered and wildly funny. We acted in our first Shakespearean play together, "A Winter 's Tale " when we were both nine years old. It was a beautiful homespun production and Rob was a star. Robby, the child, was the most joyous boy. Although he had a weakened heart, and although he was supposed to be cautious and careful, he danced, ran, played and bounded with the strongest heart in the world. Maybe he should have been scared, but he was fearless. Maybe he should have been quiet, but he was full of giggles and roars. Maybe he should have protected himself, but he threw his heart wide open. His creativity and far reaching conceptual imagination was boundless and his spirit was funny, smart and loving and tender. Our friendship set the bar for silliness and creativity very high -- I will never forget it. We truly knew what fun was, and we had more than our share. Rest in peace, my partner in laughter and crime—I wouldn't have missed it for the world.

Kind regards,
Janice Parker

I am at a loss just now to express my feelings for the loss of sweet/tetchy Robert Brazil. Irony strikes (or slaps) me upon re-reading the e-mails below, which I don't think Robert would mind me forwarding at this point, since they are somewhat informative of Robert's condition. (Although, please pardon the sprinkling of nasty language here and there.) My final well-wishes for my fellow traveler didn't pan out as hoped. Well, it is what it is, Goddamnit. We'll catch up with you soon enough, Robert. But as long as this machine is to me, I will miss you, my friend.

Xopher Paul

From Robert to Chris:

Here's to your health!

I've had a tough couple of months myself. I have liver/kidney disease. Now they are calling it what it is: cirrhosis. But I quit drinking eight years ago, and stopped aspirin, and am ever-increasingly vigilant about my diet. I make all my own meals. I have been thoroughly checked out repeatedly by my gastroenterologist, Dr. Muerte Thanatos, who can't fathom how I'm not dead, and my condition is under control, i.e., not getting worse. "This f---er keeps telling me I need to get on a transplant list "just in case." They are only happy when you get sicker and need them more and they make even more money. Your results may vary. That's just my cynical view, today. But I do appreciate the lab tests and ultrasounds so i can come to my own conclusions about whether I am dying or not, thank you very f---ing much.

Your partner in grime (or time)

Robert

Hi Robert,

Thanks for your reply...

Hey, I knew you were dealing with some pretty serious health issues, Robert, but don't think you'd given me any specifics before now (or if you did please forgive, my short term memory has not exactly been thriving, no, nor arriving). At all events, my sympathy & empathy reach out to you, sincerely. I'm glad you're taking care of yourself and indeed hope your own conclusion after so much testing is that you are not dying, at least of cirrhosis! My final wellwishes for you, fellow traveler, is that you pass away Ver-y peacefully in your sleep once you've achieved Ver-y ripe old codgerdumb (or should that be codgerhood?), Ver-ily, dreaming on things to come... oh to bloody hell with Oxford--upon your exit from this stage of fools I hope you'll be dreaming of the hottest f--- you ever had in your sweet bird of youth; and time (or grime) enough (well, there's never enough time, but plenty of grime) for Ned-deVer till then, comrade ;)

Yours and mind, with all withered humor, however hoary, though hardly without hope, thus, happily--let us both hang in there, or be hanged!


X

Dear Christopher Paul

I know of you only through Phaeton and Nina Green and I only knew of Robert Brazil here and through the internet. I hope I am not being impertinent when I say that your wonderful final letters to Robert convey an incomparable flavor, nutty and sharp and piquant like a fine vintage single malt whisky, and I found them most poignant heart-rending and a marvelous farewell to someone who clearly was a remarkable man and a true friend.

Thank you very very much for sharing them with us.

Warmest regards
Heward Wilkinson

Edward de Vere: <i>The Complete Poems</i>	 <p>Elizabethan Authors 2009 Texts, Resources & Authorship Studies</p>	Anon: <i>Willobie His Avis</i>
Arthur Golding: Trans. Ovid's <i>Metamorphosis</i> and the play <i>Abraham's Sacrifice</i>		Thomas Watson: <i>Hekatom- pathia</i>
Arthur Brooke: <i>Romeus and Juliett</i>	Robert Greene: <i>Pandosto and Alphonis</i>	Richard Edwards: <i>Damon and Pithias</i>

This website, produced through the partnership of Oxfordian scholars Robert Brazil and Barbara Flues, provides scholars of the Early Modern period with important Elizabethan works in both modern and original spelling and punctuation, emphasizing authors central to the authorship controversy.

Each provides notes of comparable texts found in other Renaissance works, a glossary of now rare words or meanings, and a table of word creation choices in the use of prefixes, suffixes and compound words. Visit our site for a complete list of available titles.

www.elizabethan authors.com

I read, with great sadness and full support, your welcomed tribute to Robert. He was, indeed, a creative source. Marking his presence with his varied priceless contributions.

I was blessed to meet him on several memorable occasions. Not least at White Plains where we all spoke on the same bill. His beautiful presentation and publication on Angel Day's *English Secretary* was truly exceptional.

I have, at hand, a magical photograph of Robert, with his guitar in hand, which I took many years ago at one of the many memorable SOS Conventions. If you—or anyone—would like a copy please let me know your mailing address, when I will gladly send you one. Robert is in a far-away reflective pose. ...

Derran Charlton

Nina, et al:

Just to confirm that later today I will post copies of my photograph of dear Robby with his guitar, to all readers who have requested copies, ... Hopefully, they will arrive, by airmail, late next week.

As my tribute to Robby, I can only quote the splendid speech, by Mark Antony above the fallen Brutus:-

His life was gentle, and the elements
So mixed in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world 'This was a man!'

Amongst my happiest memories, I recall Robby proudly telling me that he had 'Yorkshire ancestors'. I should have known! You never have to ask anyone from Yorkshire where they come from, for they will have already told you. Not unlike Texans.

Derran Charlton

Gerit, thanks for all this. And for reminding me about the debate at Symphony Hall. Boy, was Robbie mad as hell at those guys, Alan Nelson and Irv Matus, on the other side. He couldn't stand it that they were wiggling and twisting and etc etc right there in front of the audience, and while I was speaking he whispered to me, "I 'm gonna get 'em" and so on, while I, of course, took the high road and spouted poetry. Near the climax of the whole thing Irv got very upset at the notion that Polonius and Ophelia, not to mention Hamlet himself, might have real-life counterparts in Burghley, Anne Cecil and Edward de Vere, and he yelled something like, "I don't want my Hamlet taken from me! "At that point if I recall we started giggling and one of us, I forget who, replied that he could have Oxford and his Hamlet to boot. In the audience was John Shahan, who already had a draft of the Reasonable Doubt declaration, and later during that same conference that you, Gerit, organized so extraordinarily well, there was our dear friend K.C. Ligon who sat listening to Robert talk about the publishing world of the 16th and 17th centuries -- this was 2003, and I, one of those nights, drove Dan Wright down to Ground Zero where the World Trade buildings had been, and today all that and much more comes together in some chaotic swirl for me...

Hank

I've written to Robert's son David asking for any obituary materials including a photo that he could send on, by Email and/or regular mail, and also for word of any kind of memorial service. I told him these were for our online forums and sites as well as for our newsletters and other print outlets, and that I'd keep him informed of any gatherings to remember his dad. I told him of our condolences and of our grief over losing such a valuable friend and colleague. And I'll make sure to send on any materials and/or information that I receive.

At one point in the early 1990s Robbie lived across the river from my town of Nyack NY, in Tarrytown, and we'd take the train down to Grand Central and walk over to the Public Library on Fifth Avenue and Forty-Second Street. Once we were set on finding out if Oxford had skipped town in 1604 and got to the Isle of Man -- much fun, reading about the legend of an Elizabethan nobleman who lived out his days there, and reading of Elizabeth Countess of Derby becoming governor (?) of the Island at some point.

Early on Robbie wrote up a thick book proposal about "the royal story" of Shakespeare, filled with PT scenarios. Of course he later dropped that and, much, much later than that, blasted my book *The Monument* on elizaforum (and probably elsewhere:-). He knew that his criticisms might hurt but could not disturb our friendship and, in fact, we laughed a lot about our differences. At the White Plains conference a few years ago, he surprised me with some unsolicited compliments, for which I'll always be grateful.

I should explain that in my life Robert was one of those friends who tell the truth about the way he thought about things and spoke it to your face. He did not care for polite avoidance of the truth of what he felt or knew. And for me this was a source of merriment. One night I drove from Nyack to where he had moved, about an hour and a half north, and there was a terrible storm, but we got to a restaurant he knew, and I recall that much of our talk was not about Shakespeare but about writing and publishing and, in particular, some short stories he was writing or had written. We also talked about acting on stage and, as I recall, more recently he appeared upstate in a community theater production of *The Tempest* -- which Marie probably knows about.

I am one of the many proud owners of an inscribed copy of *The True Story of the Shake-speare Publications, Volume One: Edward de Vere & the Shakespeare Printers*, by Robert Sean Brazil, copyright 1999. And of course we have the remarkable Elizabethan Authors site that he and Barb Flues created, not to mention elizaforum, and his site with various images, as well as his many written contributions for the Oxfordian publications over the years.

I'll always savor Gary Goldstein's remark of yesterday: "He was this bearded wonder of energy, talk, and drama. He was ambitious to do things—to get not just the research out into circulation but to provide everyone with the literary context of the entire era so that redundancy of effort could be avoided for Oxfordian scholars." That gets it right.

Back on April 1, 2010, addressing Roger Stritmatter on Elizaforum, Robbie wrote in part: "I have no idea why it is my peculiar fate in life to be the pin that goes around bursting balloons, but this is too often the case. He also wrote, "And let it not be said that I am simply the person who says, 'NO.'"-- as he went on to demonstrate this by sharing some new information he had gotten by long and diligent research before raising his hand.

He worked like hell at this stuff. He was different than the mainstream (whatever that might be!) and he knew it and he was not about to change for anything or anyone. The truth made him laugh and I recall, laughing with him, that Edward de Vere would have enjoyed his lack of b.s. and found him good company.

Well, that's it for now. I miss him.

Hank

Dear Colleagues

I am still in a state of shock at hearing from Robert Brazil's son David a few minutes ago that Robert passed away this month on the 11th of July following a period of acute liver disease.

David's email address is dzbrazil@yahoo.com and I am sure he would like to hear from anyone. He wrote to me:

... "because i was unable to find contact information for various of Robby's friends and colleagues, I' be very glad if you would do me the favor of passing this news on to folks that you know, who knew robby. "

...My friendship with Robert goes back to 1991 or so and this comes as complete news to me, although I did wonder about not hearing from him for a while. I'm deeply saddened to say the least. This is the best way I know to reach as many people as possible at the same time.

Hank

Hank, thank you. This is a perfect portrait of his personality. & Chris Paul 's "sweet/tetchy Robert Brazil ".

I was thrilled to have you two on the Oxfordian side of the debate in NYC-03. Chris Durang said Robert reminded him of Peck 's bad boy & he was persuaded to the argument to the point where he mentions it in his latest play. Robert came with me to see my friend in *The Syringa Tree* in Ithaca a few years ago & at dinner after we discussed his performing in *Tempest*. We agree on that point. There's something that happens when you perform this stuff; you can feel a ping in your body when it's "real" & we discussed whether a performance workshop at one of the conferences might be of some use. When I came home on the 11th, I noticed the ivy had fallen down in my room & remembered Robert's comment about its feng shui purposes—he knew a little, or a lot, about everything it seems.

I have missed his voice on the forum these last few months & even more so now that we will never hear it again.

I think Eliza & EA should go on, although I'm not sure how right now.

Yours in sadness,
GQ

I'm so glad I was able to see, and hear, Robbie's mind at work one last time at the SOS conference in White Plains a couple of years ago.

I can imagine the conversation going on now between Robert and Verily Anderson, both waiting in the heavenly anteroom for further assignment. If so, I envy him the opportunity to hear what she knew. Maybe Andy's still there

too, and K.C. Maybe they'll be finding out some of the things we still don't know. I hope so.

Stephanie

Like everyone here, I have just read this news and am stunned. I had no idea that Robbie was even ill. He will be missed.

I hope someone will be able to continue his work with elizaforum and the Elizabethan Authors web site.

Bill

My heart and mind go out to Robert's family and friends. He was an inspiration to us all, and I had nothing but the highest regard for his work, and like everyone else, expected for it to long continue, and for it to continue to be one of the best lights we could offer anywhere. I never had the pleasure of making his acquaintance but always thought the opportunity would present itself someday, and that he and I would rant, rave, cajole, laugh, cry, and arm or thumb-wrestle, and otherwise ultimately happily agree upon everything. He was a force, and I hope he continues to be one. His contributions to this cause will never be forgotten, and if anyone here or elsewhere has a plan to respect and continue his legacy, please, by all means, count me in.

Again, many heartfelt prayers for his family and friends. I can count on one hand the number of people in this thing that have meant as much to me.

Mick

You do look, my son, in a moved sort,
 As if you were dismay'd: be cheerful, sir.
 Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
 As I foretold you, were all spirits and
 Are melted into air, into thin air:
 And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
 The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
 The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
 Ye all which it inherit, shall dissolve
 And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
 Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
 As dreams are made on, and our little life
 Is rounded with a sleep. Sir, I am vex'd;
 Bear with my weakness; my brain is troubled:
 Be not disturb'd with my infirmity:
 If you be pleased, retire into my cell
 And there repose: a turn or two I'll walk,
 To still my beating mind.



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Derran Charlton (Photo)

In Memoriam

Verily Anderson Paget

1915-2010

It is with the deepest regret that I notify readers of the passing from nature to eternity of Verily Anderson Paget, aged 95.

Verily died at home, in her own bed, of a suspected heart-attack. Truly a blessing.

I was speaking to her only the day before. Verily was as fit as a fiddle. She explained that during her upcoming medical her doctor would “probably congratulate her on her excellent good health!”

Verily was extremely robust, always travelling abroad. She recently returned home from singing with her local choir at the Hermitage, Russia. Prince Charles awarded her a cycling award for her charitable works, and Charlton Ogburn, Jr., gave her the Charlton Ogburn Award for her many contributions to Oxfordianism. One of Verily’s many enthusiasms in life was to walk her guide-dog Alfie, most days, half-a-mile down the drive to Templewood, and through her glorious ancient woodlands.

Verily must have been the oldest surviving Oxfordian, having been introduced to the cause by her first husband over 70 years ago; in fact her beloved husband, a playwright, poet, player, and play-producer had been a close friend and ardent supporter of John Thomas Looney (1870-1944).

Verily’s close friends ranged from Royalty, the Queen and her family, Princess Diana, Prince William and Harry named in honor of William Shakespeare and King Henry V. Her immediate relations included Archbishops, Statesmen, Military Leaders, Lord Lieutenants, Poet Laureates, International musicians, winners of Victoria Crosses, and Nobel Peace Prizes. Her second husband, Paul Paget, was the Surveyor of St. Paul’s—a position previously held by Sir Christopher Wren. He was also the restorer of many of Wren’s churches following the 1939 war. Her first-cousin was Scot of the Antarctic. Charles Darwin was her g.g.g. uncle. Florence Nightingale was a g.g.g. aunt. One of her cousins, now living in Castle Hedingham, owned the Elizabethan manor-house that originally belonged to Horatio Vere, at Tilbury-Juxta-Claire. Her ancestors included the Duchess of Derby, as portrayed in the film *The Duchess*. Verily’s traceable family history dated from 932.

Verily, together with Sir Derek Jacobi, were the joint-Patrons of the D.V.S. She was also a prolific writer, having written 53 published books and films, including her Oxfordian endeavor *The de Veres of Castle Hedingham*.

Only two days ago, she told me that she had just completed her 53rd book *A History of Herstmonceaux Castle* (where she had lived following the war) for the University of Canada.

Verily leaves four daughters and one son Edward, who was deliberately named in honor of Edward de Vere and christened in the same 1563 church in Stoke Newington where Edward’s son Henry had been christened.

Her sudden death has come as a tremendous shock to all who were truly blessed by her extraordinary life and personality.

A true Renaissance Lady has passed our way.

We are all deeply inspired and most grateful for her life.

Derran Charlton