Decoy, Wildlife Art, & Sportsman Festival

Spring 1998 Vol. 7, No. 2 **Havre de Grace Decoy Museum**

- \$5 - The Canvasback

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Paul Gibson	1983				
deceased					
Charles Bryan	1984				
No Chairman	1985				
Robert Litzenberg	1986				
Charles Joiner	1987				
Captain Harry Jobes	1988				
Captain Bill Collins	1989				
Captain Roger Urie	1990				
James Pierce	1991				
James Currier	1992				
deceased					
William "Bill" Schauber	1993				
and					
Allan Schauber					
Robert McGaw	1994				
deceased					
J. Evans McKinney	1995				
Harry V. Shourds II	1996				
Ronald Rue	1997				
Lem and Steve Ward	1998				
Honorary Artist					
Louis F.X. Frisino	1993				
Durant Ball	1994				
Christopher White	1995				
Paul Shertz	1996				
No Honorary Artist	1997				
Rob Leslie	1998				

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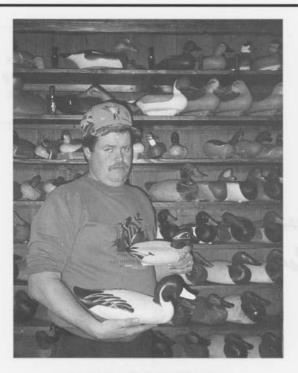
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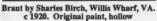
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Hollow Brant by Shris Sprague, Beach Haven, N.J. c. 1930. Fine original point



Rare hollow goose from the "Gooseville Gun Club" in NC. c. 1920, ice dip groove, orig. paint. A fine North Carolina decoy

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Havre de Grace Decoy Museum



can•vas•back (kan'ves bak'), n.,pl. -backs, (esp. collectively) - back. 1. A north American wild duck, the male of which has a whitish back and a reddish-brown head and neck. 2. A style of decoy made famous by carvers of the Susquehanna Flats region. 3. A quarterly publication of the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Spring is here! Why does this seem to be such a joyous statement? Is it what spring stands for? I think so. When I think of spring, what comes to mind is watching the earth come alive, seeing green in the fields, overflowing rivers, spring flowers, Easter, and of course, the Decoy, Wildlife Art & Sportsman Festival. The spring weather and the knowledge that winter is over somehow energizes me to tackle goals and projects that were planned in early 1998.

Some of the goals that have been started at the museum are a new museum website with many pages of information. The museum will also have access to the Internet. Over the next few months if you visit the site of www.decoymuseum.com, you will find more and more information about the museum. There are plans to have not only basic information on the museum but information about carving classes, membership, and gift shop items.

A goal for the museum's gift shop is to have a point of sale system to track the museum's inventory. The gift shop committee has been selecting many new items for our customers. Make sure to stop in during the Festival and look for tremendous sales at the gift shop. I am sure something will catch your eye.

The committee for the Decoy, Wildlife Art & Sportsman Festival has worked very hard during the past nine months to bring you a quality show with some new events and activities. This Festival issue is a wonderful guide for the Festival weekend. We look forward to seeing you at the Festival.

ON THE COVER

The Festival duck, a Ward black duck, sits in front of unfinished decoy birds.

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1998

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Advertising Mary Jo Murphy

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The Canvasback

Havre de Grace Decoy Museum 215 Giles St., P.O.Box 878 Havre de Grace MD 21078 (410) 939-3739 TDD From the President



Dear Museum Member,

It is the time of year we anticipate our annual Decoy, Wildlife Art & Sportsman Festival on May 1, 2, & 3, 1998. This remains the major fund raiser for the museum. Several changes in the carving competition and new features such as living history performances, Festival mugs and Festival T-shirts lead us to believe that this will be more entertaining than ever. Hopefully, our new mode of advertising will bring even more people in to visit. As much as we encourage new visitors to attend, our main hope is to have full participation of the museum membership during the Festival.

Dr. Mort Kramer's presentation on the lives and history of the Ward Brothers at the Carvers Day celebration was outstanding. His collection of Ward Brothers decorative decoys remains in display on the museum's first floor gallery. This alone is worth a trip to the museum.

Copies of Ward Brothers birds by contemorary carvers will be offered for sale at the Festival auction on Saturday, May 2. A competition among the carvers was held and the winners were selected April 4, 1998 at the formal opening of the R.M. Mitchell Shop.

Basic structural repairs continue on our building and seem to be successful. Preliminary planning with the architect for our long anticipated addition to the museum has started.

The Board and the staff look forward to seeing you at the Festival and the museum.

Sincerely,

John A. Carriere, M.D.

President, Board of Directors

Tax deductible contributions can be made to the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum. The museum was incorporated in 1981 as a non-profit organization which exists to document and interpret waterfowl as this art form applies to the social and economic life of the upper Chesapeake Bay region.

Festival Program

Dates

May 1, 2, 3, 1998

Locations

Havre de Grace Middle School, Lewis Lane (MS)
Havre de Grace High School, Congress Avenue (HS)
Havre de Grace High School Cafeteria, Congress Avenue
(HSC)

Havre de Grace Decoy Museum, Giles Street (MUS)

1998 Honorary Chairmen

Lem and Steve Ward

1998 Festival Bird

Blackduck

Admission Price

Decoy Festival Tickets are \$5.00 each per day. \$8.00 for a weekend pass. Children under 12 are admitted FREE.



From left to right, Joey Jobes, Capt. Bob Jobes, and Charles Jobes stand behind Capt. Harry Jobes at the 1997 Festival.

FRIDAY EVENTS, MAY 1

Show 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

SATURDAY EVENTS, MAY 2

Show 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

6:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. Exhibitors Breakfast at the Bayou Restaurant, 10:30 a.m. Carving Competition (HS Aux Gym)

Decorative L/S Floating Division
Decorative L/S Non-Floating Division
Decorative Miniature Division
Gunning Decoy Division



A belted kingfisher by James Hazeley at the 1997 Festival. Photo by Leo Heppner.

11:00 a.m., Noon, 1:00 p.m., & 2:00 p.m. Retriever Demonstrations (MUS)

11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., & 3:00 p.m. History Alive (MS Aux Gym)

12:00 Noon Auction Preview (HS Auditorium)

12:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Honorary Autograph Session (MS Library)

1:00 p.m. & 3:00 p.m. Silent Auction (HS Lobby)

4:00 p.m. Auction Bidder Registration (HS Auditorium)

5:30 p.m. Decoy Auction (HS Auditorium) Sponsored by Hostetter Agency, Inc.

SUNDAY EVENTS, MAY 3

Show 9 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

10:30 a.m. Carving Competition Judging (HS Aux Gym)

Youth Gunning Division
Decorative Slick Division
Decorative L/S Fish Division
Decorative L/S Wall Mount Division
Decorative Miniature Fish Division
Interpretive Fish Division

11:00 a.m. Gunning Rig Division (MUS)

Noon Cocktail Division (HS Aux Gym)

12:30 p.m. Pyrography Division (HS Aux Gym)

11:00 a.m., Noon, 1:00 p.m., & 2:00 p.m.

Retriever Demonstrations (MUS)

11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., & 3:00 p.m. History Alive (MS Aux Gym)

1:00 p.m. Head Whittling Contest (MS Stage)

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1:00 p.m. & 3:00 p.m. Silent Auction (HS Lobby)

3:00 p.m. Black Duck Painting Contest (MS Stage)

3.00 p.m. Black Duck I among Contest (1415 Stage

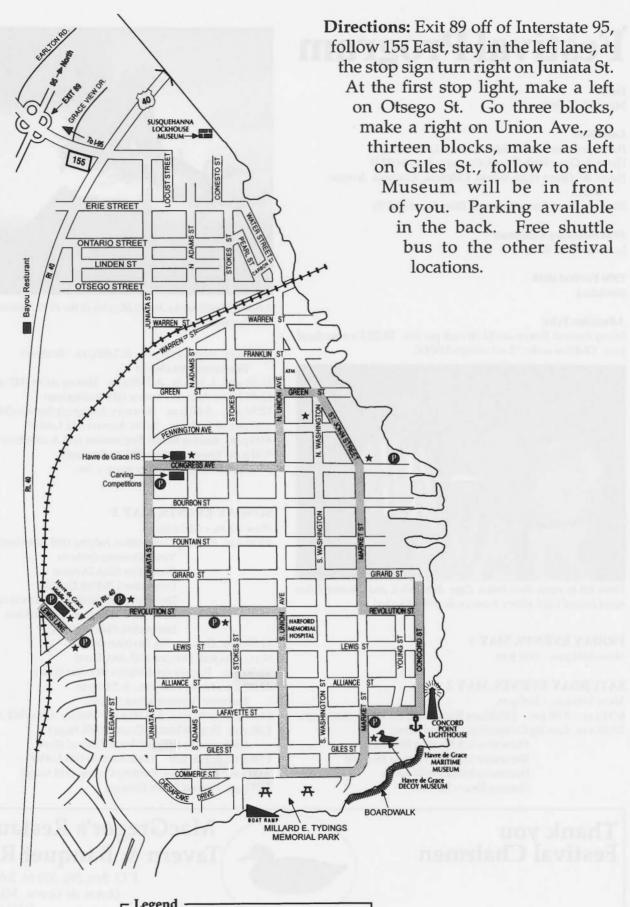
3:45 p.m. Festival Raffle Drawing

Thank you Festival Chairmen



MacGregor's Restaurant Tavern & Banquet Room

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Legend

* Bus Stop

P Parking

Solid Box is festival location Shaded area is bus route

Dear Visitors and Exhibitors:

As Mayor of the City of Havre de Grace, I welcome you all to the Seventeenth Annual Wildlife Art and Sportsman Decoy Festival. We are proud of all the volunteers who make this happen each and every year.

We hope all will enjoy the exhibits that are guaranteed to provide excellence in artwork. Above all, however, we hope you will have a great time at the Festival, enjoying the very finest in wildlife art.

Please, don't forget, though, to also visit our Decoy Museum during your visit to our beautiful City. Enjoy yourselves, have fun and don't miss the Promenade, other museums and our local businesses. We're all ready to make your visit to Havre de Grace a memorable one.

With best personal regards, I am

Sincerely.

Philip J. Barker

Mayor

Dear Visitors

Welcome to Havre de Grace. We are proud to be called "The Decoy Capital of the World." The 17th annual Decoy, Wildlife Art, and Sportman's Festival is an event involving our entire community. We hope the festival and Havre de Grace both exceed your expectations.

Please take advantage of the many things our town has to offer. Enjoy the promenade, the many museums and the small-town atmosphere and friendliness in our numerous fine restaurants and shops.



Stop by the Chamber's office at 224 N. Washington Street to learn about future events in Havre de Grace. Have a great visit and please come back again.

Sincerely,

Peggy T. Cecchine

President, Chamber of Commerce

1998 Honorary Chairmen

The Ward Brothers

Mort and Carol Kramer

Our relationship with Lem and Steve Ward began about forty years ago, when old Ward decoys in original paint were \$20 to \$25 and new miniatures were \$20 a pair. The Wards became extended family, andafter our first meeting we began visiting at least once a month. As with family, we shared good times — birthdays, Lem's grandson's high school graduation, the annual crab derby, arrowhead hunting with Steve on Watts Island, and bad times: Thelma's death in 1966 and Lem's medical problems, including bouts with psoriasis. One of our fondest memories is of the time Lem and Steve came to Baltimore for our wedding in 1968, a truly rare occurrence for the

Wards to put on shirt and tie and cross the Bay Bridge.

When our children were old enough, we took them for visits with the Wards, year after year, and they began to think of Christmas as being with Uncle Lem, Uncle Steve and Aunt Ida. The childen took an annual photograph with Aunt Ida near her Christmas tree and certainly their most vivid recollections of the holiday center around the Ward family. At each visit, Thelma, and later Ida, prepared sumptuous feasts — soft crabs, crab loaf, fried oysters, corn pudding, plate cake, and fresh greens, some of which came from Steve's garden.

Mort acted as family doctor for all the Wards. When



Steve and Lem Ward.

Pollitt Signs

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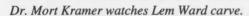


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303-307 St. John Street Havre de Grace, MD 21078 (410) 939-2313 Carol Kramer stands nearby as her two children sit on Lem Ward's lap.

specialized medical care was required, we saw to it that appropriate referrals were made and brought the folks from "down neck" to our Baltimore hospitals. We stay in touch with Ida, and although the visits are less frequent, we value our friendship with her.

Steve Ward was the philosopher of the two, a decoy maker and a poet, but also a practical man. Beginning with a block from the bandsaw, his next and most important tool was a plumb hatchet with a short handle. His only other tools were a pocket knife and sandpaper. For most of the in working decoys, Steve did the carving and Lem did the painting. He wrote many poems, some of which were printed in the *Morning Sun* in Baltimore, and others which he kept on cardboard or odd scraps of paper.





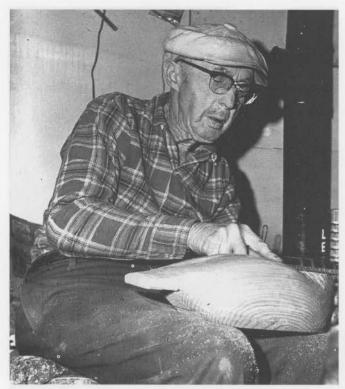


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Steve Ward.

Although a year older than his brother, Steve never seemed to mind that all the attention went to Lem; he was content to be the Bro. of L. T. Ward & Bro.

Lem Ward was a born artist. There was greater detail in his decoy painting than in any other of the decoys produced in this period. He was the first to put "life" into his birds, which had turned heads and unusual poses. It has been said about his decoys that their eyes seem to follow you as you move. Lem was also an innovator in the creation of decorative works. He was one of the first to carve preening birds, birds with outstretched wings and was in the forefront in carving birds on legs with feet, often standing on oak burls. We often heard him say that he did not believe in wood burning or setting in of feathers, even in decorative carvings. He loved to experiment with shape and color. For a time he used acrylics, to compare them with oils, but soon went back to using only oils. Always the artist, his recreation was in painting canvases with oils, often using scenes of marshes near his home.

Although it was their friendship we most treasured, we love the decoys we collected. W were happy to help by

exhibiting their prized pieces since they never saved or collected their own work. There were some of their works on exhibit at the first Chestertown show in 1965, the first Salisbury show in 1968, and in more recent years, as part of the artifacts section in the display at the Waterfowl Festival in Easton. We were always flattered when authors used the Ward decoys from our collection in their books, and talked to us about our experiences with the Ward family. It was a pleasure to work with Byron Cheever, Glenn Lawson, Bob Ridges, and Ron Gard in the preparation of their books about the Ward brothers' decoys.

Through exhibits we are continuing to promote the Ward Brothers' name at the Havre de Grace Museum. It is gratifying that the Havre de Grace Museum has seen fit to recognize Lem and Steve Ward as the great innovators and patriarchs of decoy development that they truly were. We will always be grateful for having known the Wards who led us into the world of carvers and decoys, and we feel privileged to have the opportunity to talk about them and to exhibit their works.



Lem Ward.

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When you visit you will find . . . Festival memorabilia.



items for the kids,



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Gift Shop hours during the Festival are: Friday 11am - 9pm, Saturday 9am - 5pm and Sunday 9am - 4pm



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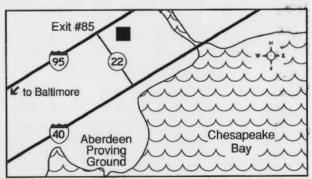
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Festival Exhibitor

BILL STREAKER

"SEEING AND DOING HIS OWN WAY"

Arlene Grace

Back in the Spring of 1994, Karla Mattsson, our former curator, and I had the occasion to visit the Upper Bay Museum. As employees of the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum, we had heard various comparisons and contrasts to our museum, so we were curious to see how they fit into the decoy scheme of things.

I personally had three vivid memories of that visit: the museum itself (I liked the feeling of being in a hunter's shed), Bob Litzenberg's double sinkbox, and a set of miniatures made by a carver by the name of Bill Streaker. I even wrote his name down and thought it worthy of future reference by giving it magnet space on my refrigerator. Now, at last, I had the chance to find out more.

My recent visit on a cold rainy day found a warm, homey, inviting shop. I discovered that this was one of two shops; this one being the paint shop and the other being the carving shop. The paint shop was covered with memorabilia from various hunting shows, exhibits and carving articles, reminders of his years with his avocation.

Bill Streaker has spent his sixty-two years in the North East area. He was employed by DuPont for twenty-eight years until five years ago. Early retirement afforded him the opportunity to devote to full-time carving.

As with many carvers, his earliest recollections are with his grandfather, hunting and fishing. Though he did some deer hunting, Bill's greatest love was waterfowl hunting, especially canvasbacks and redheads. His grandfather repaired decoys and fishing nets and he learned these skills from him. Although his grandfather repaired decoys, he never carved his own. However, decoy carving



Bill Streaker surrounded by some of his finished products in the painting shop.

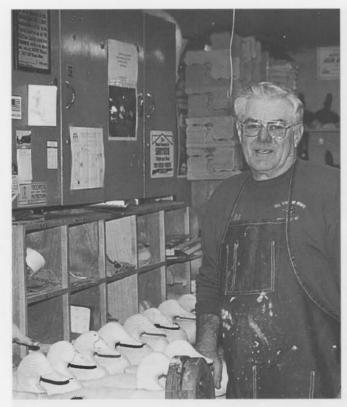
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Bill with his current work in progress. These birds are to be mallards.

legends were plentiful and Bill was quite familiar with the shops of Mitchell, Gibson, the Ward Brothers, and many other renowned carvers. . . they gave him a taste for decoys.

Bill carved miniatures almost exclusively when he first started in 1967, and for the first ten years, they were his mainstay. Now they comprise only about twenty percent of his work. The manipulation and dexterity to paint them has been increasingly harder to achieve, as well as his recognition of the demand shifting from miniatures to full size birds.

With all the information he has garnered from carvers of many different areas over the years, Bill has created his own carving style as well as his own patterns. He tailors his patterns after the "Cecil County" style, though from no specific carver. He especially likes the Heverin and Lockard styles, but borrows from many sources and incorporates what he likes into his birds. Since he has not had any formal decoy carving training, he has not formu-

lated any specific mindset. He can vary the appearance of his birds at will. He showed me two differently styled canvasbacks to illustrate this point. There was a marked contrast in the birds; something I have not seen commonly done. Most people will carve a certain style and not deviate much from it. I find this quite an attractive feature. That is why his twelve to fifteen "production" birds may all end up with very different body interpretations. Bill also likes to "see" how to do things rather than "read" what to do. Of course, he has witnessed the best.

He does not consider himself a prolific or production style carver, though his preference is to work on twelve to fifteen birds of one species at a time from start to finish. After those are completed, he will do another species in the same manner. However, he does intersperse his routine with special projects and orders. Of the 2500 total birds he estimates he has made, 1500-1800 have been made since he retired five years ago.

In the carving shop, the bodies of the birds are turned on a duplicating lathe, but not just any lathe. Bill's pride and joy is one of only four duplicating lathes made by Howard "Ducky" Foreaker. The heads are all hand carved with a hand knife; no draw knifed heads. He admits that this is the "slow" way, but prefers this method. He also does tail treatments to make them his signature birds. Finishing touches include caulking around the weights (which gives a nice polished appearance) and little brass nameplates. His favorite bird to carve is the beloved canvasback. These birds are all meant for a comfortable shelf rather than a cold watery home. However, his shelves of ribbon winning gunning birds reveal that Bill is quite aware of what constitutes a good working decoy.

His painting style is bright and concise. That is what first attracted me to his Upper Bay miniatures. Very much the traditionalist, his overall style is hard to pigeonhole. He does not like to do a great deal of burning or featherwork detailing. His painting style would best be described as decorative slick, though again, Bill brings his own ideas to the table to create a bird that is unique.

As far as exhibiting his birds, he has been involved with shows for about thirty-one years. In the early days, he would do one show a month. Now he limits himself to five shows a year. His first show was with the Harford/Cecil Hunters' Association in 1969 at the Elkton Armory.

Ontario Printing Company

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Welcome to the Festival!



Bill's "Ducky" Foreaker duplicating lathe in his carving shop.

Apparently, this has been a memorable event for many carvers I have met. According to Bill (and others), the best aspect of the shows back then was the fact that there were so many old collections on display. The whole emphasis was on demonstrations, old collections, hunting paraphernalia and many educational opportunities for the visitors; there were very few vendors. Now, the old carvers are passing away, large collections are diminishing and/or being dismantled, the waterfowling knowledge is slowly disappearing just as surely as the canvasbacks.

This has changed the make-up of the shows. Today's shows have had to emphasize vendors and revenue generating events which are used to operate facilities like the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum. Our two yearly shows are our biggest income producers, yet we should never forget that the fun of the shows and the mission of the museum are one and the same, to educate the public in decoy history.

Bill related this story of his young grandson. Though surrounded by decoys all of his life, his grandson was surprised and distressed when at a competition, he witnessed his grandfather's birds being thrown into the water. Bill had to explain to him that they were meant to be in the water, not on shelves. This illustration indicates that there are new generations that need to learn about decoys and waterfowling history. To continue the folk art of decoy making this knowledge must be passed on; even though we may know the history it is our responsibility to share it with others.

Bill has surely done his part to keep waterfowling alive. Though he hasn't the heart or inclination to hunt as before, he has been an active member of the Upper Bay Museum (Secretary for five years), is involved in area educational programs, belongs to Ducks Unlimited, is a

member of the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum, and a Weekend Carver, and has long been an exhibitor at our May Decoy Festival (visit him in the Middle School Cafeteria). His biggest honor has been being selected as 1995's Carver of the Year presented by Delaware Ducks Unlimited.



Bill's feline supervisor overseeing his work.



is a proud sponsor
of the
1998
Decoy, Wildlife Art
& Sportsman Festival

Milton Watson's

Bushwhack Boat Restoration

Larry Ortt

Milton Watson,1911-1985, was one of the renowned working decoy makers of the Susquehanna Flats whose work is highly appreciated and sought after by collectors. During his retirement years, Milton turned his considerable talents to producing decorative decoys and miniature bushwhack boat models. These creative endeavors were offshoots of his trade as a ships' carpenter, through which he made his living for many years.

In the Winter 1994 issue of *The Canvasback*, there is an article entitled "1930's Bushwhacking, Family Style, A Reminiscence" in which I relate a story told to me by Morrison Watson, Milton's brother. In this story, there is mention made of Milton Watson's restoration in 1930 of the rotting hulk of a classic bushwhack boat, built years before by the famous decoy maker and bushwhack boat builder, James Holly of Havre de Grace, Maryland. Milton Watson rebuilt this boat along its original lines.

It seems that many builders of bushwhack boats down through the years patterned their craft after those produced by James Holly. This was because of the swiftness under oar and general seaworthiness of boats using this design. These bushwhack boats, although built by various makers, came to be locally referred to as "Holly Boats."

Milton Watson rebuilt a bushwhack boat that was actually constructed by James Holly for Nelson Price Whitaker, operator of the foundry at Principio Furnace. Whitaker resided on the Bohemia River side of Town Point, the location where Milton found the subject of his restoration. According to Morrison Watson, the rebuilt boat served the Watson family's gunning and fishing endeavors well over the next twenty years, but by 1950, a replacement was in order for the time worn relic.

Milton Watson, being a master craftsman of his trade, beached the old boat and removed the lowermost side board next to the bottom. He then proceeded to build a



This is what it looked like before work began. Photo by Larry Ortt.

new bushwhack boat exactly replicating the original in size, dimension and appearance. He used the lowermost side board from the original boat as the pattern to determine the exact pitch for the keel and the precise degree of bevel to duplicate the "flare" of the side boards.

Milton used the resulting new "Holly Boat" for sev-

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After all timbers and cross members had been replaced. Photo by Larry Ortt.

eral gunning seasons during the early 1950s. As a result of the decline of canvasback ducks, curtailment in the length of the gunning season, and limits on the numbers that could legally be taken, he became discouraged in his pursuit of the work intensive hardships associated with the sport of bushwhack gunning. He sold the bushwhack boat, the launch "Winifred," and his stool of decoys to Read Benson, who in turn re-sold it later to Charles Cooling, Sr.

Charles Cooling, Sr. and his son, Charles, Jr. utilized the boat in their net fishing and hunting pursuits through the 1960s and 1970s. They implemented the appropriate repairs necessary to keep an old wooden boat afloat through the years.

For a couple of summers, Charles, Jr. entered the boat in the Northeast Water Festival bushwhack boat sculling races. He performed well, but was up against tough competition with Allen Purner sculling a "Thompson Boat." By 1990, the old bushwhack boat was hauled up in the woods near Charles, Jr. and Mary Kitty Cooling's home at Court House Point on the Elk River. Charles, Jr. always had it in mind to one day restore the boat; but it was not until near the end of his time here on this Earth, that he put these plans in motion. He did replace several sets of timbers and cross members and installed a new bow stem.

Mary Kitty wanted the boat's refurbishment completed. She approached Allen Purner in the hope that he would consent to take on the project. Allen's disabling knee problems made his involvement impossible, but he agreed to search for a restorer. This is when I got involved, as Allen described the situation to me during a conversation at the Havre de Grace Decoy Festival.

Soon after, my old friend Morrison Watson and I visited Mary Kitty to see the boat. I was appalled. Except for the work that Charles had accomplished, the remains of the boat were extensively rotted and termite damaged. Morrison, being an experienced hand, saw greater possibilities. He said that he would see me through the restoration if I would agree to take it on. Mary Kitty said that we could have the boat for the price of an invitation for her to see it after it was fully restored. The deal was struck.

A summer long learning experience began after my son Dana and I transported the boat by pickup truck to the field next to our home near Chesapeake City. Morrison diligently began work, using antique hand tools of the wooden boat builders trade, such as bevels used to measure the angle of the timbers, the use of which is fast



A new stern made of whiteoak was installed. Photo by Larry Ortt.

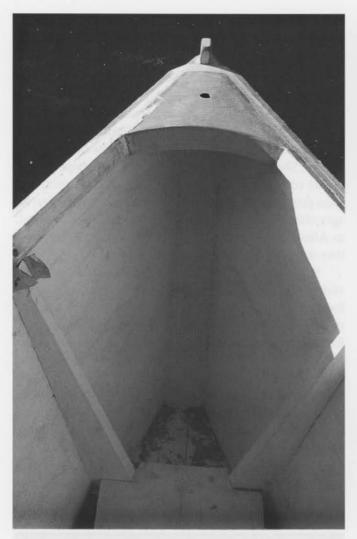
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Morrison Watson fashioned and installed a new breast plate in the bow. Photo by Larry Ortt.

becoming a lost art today. We decided that this restoration would be accomplished using period methods, tools, and materials. Soon we were traveling the Eastern Shore searching for wooden boat building materials such as green whiteoak strips in over twenty foot lengths for the gunnel rub rails.

My brother, Chris Ortt, contributed white oak planks to replace the stern. These planks had been cut locally and

The bottom is ready for caulking and painting. Photo by Larry Ortt.



Larry Ortt clamps down a top board. Photo from Larry Ortt.



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Morrison Watson, in boat, and Larry Ortt at the re-launching.

dried on chocks by my Uncle John Schaefer years ago, for use in building the wooden boats that he used for changing pilots on the ships passing through the C & D canal at Chesapeake City.

Often, specialized tools had to be acquired for the restoration effort. A set of large C-clamps were loaned by Bob Litzenberg. It seemed like everything we needed to rebuild a wooden boat was either not readily available or not even made anymore. For instance, such small items as copper rivets for the gunners and oakum for the bottom seams were hard to find. We relied on Ken Dean of Howard and Dean, Inc, Architectural Millwork, in Chesa-



Left to Right: Morrison Watson, Mary Kitty Cooling, and Larry Ortt inspect the finished product.

peake City to finish rough lumber and make precise cuts.

One of the final details was the acquisition of a set of "block loom" oars. The blocks are located adjacent to the rowers hand grips. The weight of these served to counterbalance each downstroke of the oar. Having failed to find a manufacturer of these items still in business today, my brother, Phil Ortt, ships' carpenter at Schaefer's Pilot Transfer Service, hand-crafted exact reproductions.

The accompanying photographs record our progress on this restoration project from the beginning through the re-launching ceremony, and yes, Mary Kitty came to inspect the rebuilt Milton Watson "Holly Boat."

You may view this boat at the Festival outside the Havre de Grace Middle School.



Chris Ortt, at the oars, and Morrison Watson test the restored bushwhack boat out for seaworthiness. Photo by Larry Ortt.

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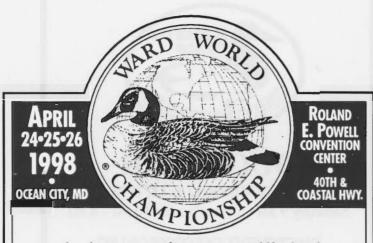
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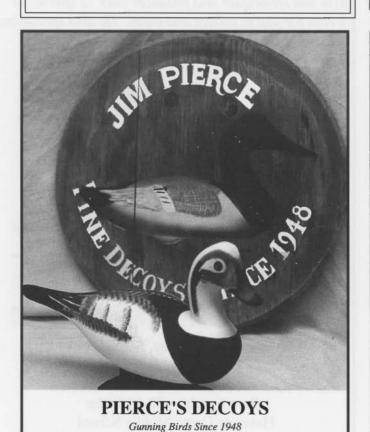
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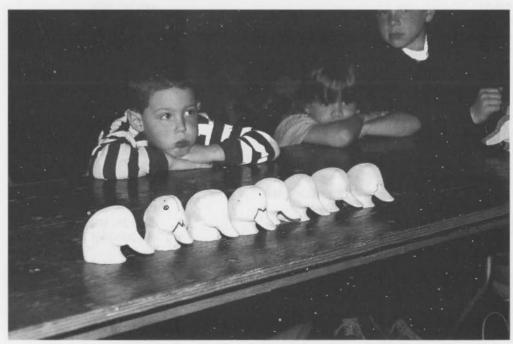
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Kids look at the whittled heads. Photo by Leo Hepner.

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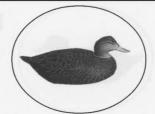
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Exhibitor Nick Sapone talks to visitors at the Festival. Photo by Leo Hepner.

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Remember to visit the Decoy Museum during the Festival. Photo by M. Murphy.



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DECOY AUCTION

Saturday, May 2nd at 5:30 pm High School Auditorium Preview starting at Noon



1998 Honorary Chairmen Lem & Steve Ward

> 1998 Festival Bird Black Duck

1998 Honorary Artist Rob Leslie

For information contact

Havre de Grace Decoy Museum

PO Box 878, 215 Giles Street Havre de Grace, MD 21078-0878 Phone: 410-939-3739

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CLOSED FOR BUSINESS

The Writings and Poetry of Steve Ward Reviewed by Bill Smart

No doubt the readers of this book review will have heard of the famous Ward Brothers from Crisfield, Maryland. The contributions of Steve and Lem Ward to the art of decoy making have been a significant enhancement to the popularity of decoy collecting, and have led to them being honored at the 1998 Havre de Grace Decoy, Wildlife Art & Sportsman Festival.

Lem and Steve Ward were two humble and yet talented gentlemen, who associated as easily with the men of means and wealth as they did with their hard-working watermen neighbors. Their artisitic decoy making talents, wit, and wisdom, were complimented by their painting, drawing, and poetry abilities. Lem, the more serious of the two, was the creator of their artisitic decoys and artwork, while brother Steve enjoyed and excelled at poetry. This book captures Steve's writings.

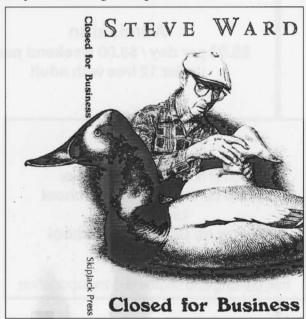
The combined efforts of three admirers of Steve and Lem made this publication a reality. Steve's niece, Ida Ward Linton, collected her uncle's writings after his death in 1976. No easy task. She found his thoughts, verse, and quips all over the shop and written on anything available when Steve wanted to capture his thoughts. Don Briddell, who was influenced early in his life by these two barbering brothers, helped to pull this dream together. The third contributor, wildlife artist Jack Schroder filled this book with wonderful illustrations.

The reader will find several of Steve's poems familiar as many have been published in Maryland newspapers and

in national periodicals. 'The Bard of Crisfield,' as Steve was known, wrote about the dreamy Eastern Shore, ducking and decoys, and the hopeless romantic in addition to providing verse and poetic commentary.

I enjoyed the wit, wisdom, and character of Steve's writings and poems. Moreover, I was left with a feeling that I would liked to have met both Steve and Lem, and shared the opportunity to experience their perspective on the world first hand.

<u>Closed for Business</u> is sixty-seven pages long, and was published by Skipjack Press, Inc., Ocean City, Maryland. This publication is available at the Havre de Grace Deocy Museum's gift shop for \$14.95.

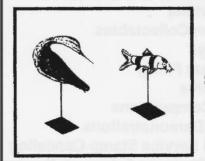


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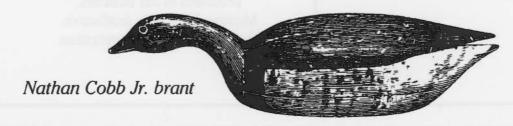
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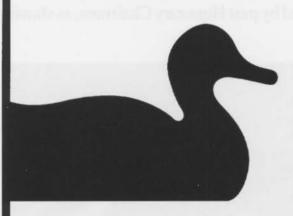
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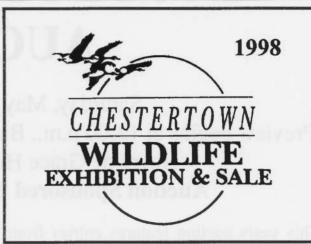




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1998 DECOY FESTIVAL AUCTION

Saturday, May 2, 1998, 5:30 p.m.

Preview begins at 12:00 p.m., Bidder Registration begins at 4:00 p.m. Havre de Grace High School Auditorium

Auction Sponsored by Hostetter Agency Inc.

This years auction features entries from the Festival sponsored *Honoring The Masters Competition*. The contest called for contemporary Ward Brothers reproductions, and prizes were awarded to the top entries. Prior to the auction preview on May 2nd, the entries were placed on temporary display in the museum.

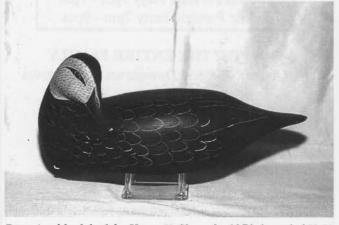
Additional auction highlights include decoys carved by past Honorary Chairmen, as shown in the following photographs:



Pair of wood ducks by Bill Schauber, signed and dated 1987.



Pair of pintails by Jim Pierce, 1975, branded J P.



Preening blackduck by Harry V. Shourds, 1970, branded H. V. Shourds.



Pair of high-head canvasbacks by Bob Litzenberg, signed and dated 1990.



Cork Canada goose by R. Madison Mitchell, signed and dated 1968, branded LANGAN.



Dove by R. Madison Mitchell, signed and dated 1972.



Pair of canvasbacks by Captain Roger Urie, signed and dated 1991.



Brant by Charlie Joiner, signed and dated 1989.



Pair of mallards by Captain Bill Collins, signed and dated 1995.



Pair of widgeons by Evans McKinney, signed and dated 1989.

1998 Decoy, Wildlife Art & Sportsman Festival Poster Winners

The Decoy Festival Artist Committee is pleased to announce the 1998 winners in the Decoy Festival Poster Contest. In keeping with the strong artisan tradition in Havre de Grace, the top three entrants were students at Havre de Grace High School. First place honors were presented to Michelle Hawkins. Michelle is a sophomore who won the hearts of the judges for her rendering of mallards in a marsh scene. Michelle was awarded a ribbon, \$100, and a certificate. Second place was awarded to junior Joe Schiavi: Joe entered a drawing of a preening pintail and received a ribbon, \$75.00 and a certificate. Third place was awarded to senior Isaiah Willis. Isaiah received a ribbon, \$25.00 and a certificate for his drawing of an eagle. Other entrants each received honorable mention ribbons and a certificate.

The three winners are students in the art class of Ms. Jenna Yasalonis. Our congratulations go out to all the entrants in the 1998 contest. Many outstanding works of art were entered, making the selection process a difficult task.



Michelle Hawkins, Terran Miller, and Dr. John Carriere. Photo by M. Murphy.

The '98 Festival Poster, made from Michelle's drawing, will be on sale Saturday during the autograph session in the Middle School library.

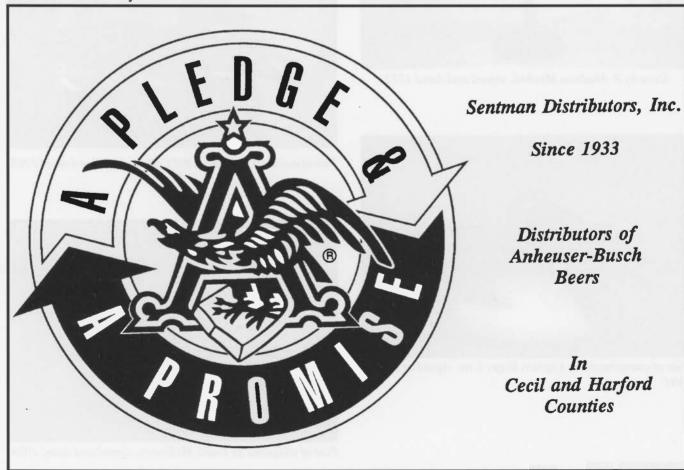


Exhibit Update

Lem Ward Decorative Carvings

The featured exhibit in the museum's main gallery is an extraordinary collection of Lem Ward decorative carvings. Placed on loan to the museum by Dr. Mort and Mrs. Carol Kramer, several of the carvings have never before been on public display. The carvings are a must see for all festival attendees.

Honorary Chairmen Collection

This year's Honorary Chairmen's collection is on permanent exhibit in the museum's Carvers' Gallery. The collection features both working decoys and decorative carvings, as well as tool used by the Ward Brothers.

Preserving the Ward Brothers on Paper

On display in the museum's library are archival documents, photographs, and prints that relate to the Ward Brothers and their carvings. Of special interest are two letters, one from National Geographic Magazine and one from the Shelburne Museum in Vermont, praising the Wards work.



One-of-a-kind decorative yellowlegs carved by Lem Ward out of a single block of wood in 1965. On exhibit in the museum's main gallery.

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Ruddy Ducks	\$50 ea
Shovelers	\$40 ea
Snow Geese	\$65 ea
Species	Price
Common Mergansers	\$130pr
Red-Breasted Mergansers	\$130pr
Hooded Mergansers	\$150pr
Swan -Flat Bottom	\$350ea
Swan -With Keel	\$400ea
1/2 Swan	\$75 ea
Wood Ducks	\$350pr
Canada Goose	\$80 ea

CALE NDAR

April

24-25

National Antique Decoy and Sporting Collectibles Show. Held at the Pheasant Run Resort Mega Center on 4051 East Main Street, St. Charles, Illinois.

Admission \$5.00. For more information call Herb Desch at (630) 444-4300.

24-25

The World Championship Wildfowl Carving Competition, held at the Ocean City Convention Center, in Ocean City, Maryland. One thousand carvers from countries around the worldcompete for world class titles and for awards totalling over \$90,000. New this year is the fish carving competition.

Contact (410) 742-4988, ext. 106 for further information.

May

1-3

17th Annual Decoy, Wildlife Art & Sportsman Festival. Held at the Havre de Grace Middle and High Schools. 250 wildfowl carvers and artists on exhibit, IWCA sanctioned decoy and fish carving competitions, retriever demonstrations, decoy auction, silent auction, and "History Alive" programs.

Hours: Fri. 6pm - 9pm, Sat. 9am - 5pm, DECOY AUCTION at 6pm. Sun. 9am - 4pm. Admission \$5.00 per day or \$8.00 weekend pass.

Sponsors are County Bank, WXCY, J.M. Huber,

Hostetter Ins. Agency, Pepsi, Sporting Collectors Monthly, Upper Chesapeake Health Systems, Bel Air Construction, Crothers Ins. Agency, Four Points Hotel, Harford Alarm, Metro Office Supplies, Peake Promotions & Printing, The Piedmont Group, Mitchell-Smith Funeral Home, Wildfowl Carving & Collecting.

For more information call (410) 939-3739.

July

17-19

30th Annual Clayton Decoy and Wildlife Art Show. Decoys, artists, auction, and raffle. Held at the Recreation Park Arena, Clayton, New York.

Call the Clayton Chamber of Commerce for more information (315) 686-3771.

18

5th Annual Yard Sale. Everything and anything! Held on the lawn of the Bayou Condominiums and the Decoy Museum from 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. Still accepting donations of quality items.

Call (410) 939-3739.

September

12-13

11th Annual Duck Fair. Free Admission. Held outside on the Decoy Museum's lawn and the Bayou Condominiums. Exhibitors, demonstrations, food, carving, artists, and kid's decoy painting, and Duck and Goose calling.

Call (410) 939-3739 for more information.

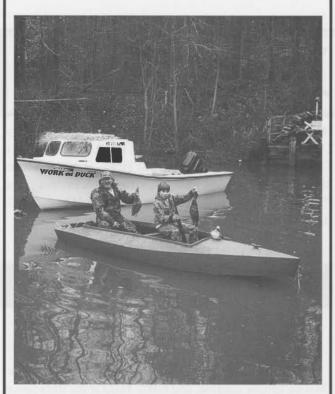
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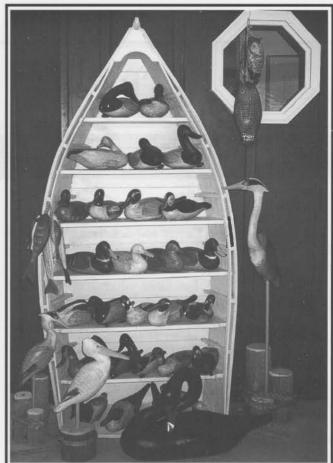
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Vernon Bryant Jr. & Rick Bouchelle After a successful morning hunt.

Vernon, Rick & "Jake" will be returning to the show again this year with last year's gunning rig for sale.



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Santa Claus Carving Class at the Decoy Museum

Carve and complete a Santa in one class!

Classes will be held on Sat. July 11th, 18th, and 25th. from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

\$50 per class.
Includes <u>all</u> supplies.



Call (410) 939-3739 to register. Limit 7 per class.



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\$1 off admission with this ad

info: Midwest Decoy Collectors Association 630-444-4300 - hdg

1998 Festival Artist

Rob Leslie



Mary Jo Murphy

The Decoy Museum is pleased to announce that Rob Leslie is the 1998 Decoy, Wildlife Art & Sportsman Festival Artist of the Year. In 1996, the Festival's artist committee reviewed Rob's work and found each painting to have not only wonderfully composed waterfowl scenes but each painting captured the mood and the light exceptionally well. The committee then nominated Rob to be the Artist of the Year; Rob accepted and started to work on a special piece of artwork for the 1998 Festival. Aware



"JUST LAYIN' AROUND" by Rob Leslie.

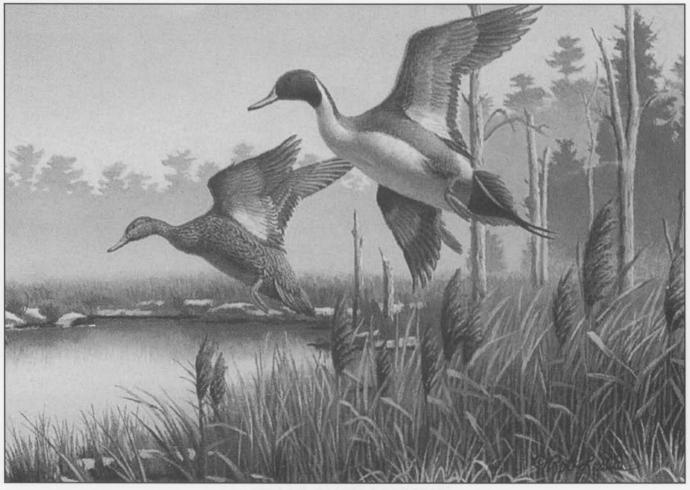


"WOODDUCK TRIO," by Rob Leslie.

that the Ward Brothers are the Honorary Chairmen for the 1998 Festival, Rob selected a Ward goose decoy to place in the composition with four live Canada geese. Rob notes that, "It is nice to incorporate an old decoy into a major piece." The setting of the painting is a calm autumn day, when the Canada geese are headed south. The live birds are at ease with the decoy floating nearby. The evening sun glimmers off the reeds and even off a leaf floating on the water. This official Festival painting is called "Autumn Resting Place." Production of this full color 14" x 19" oil painting is limited to 500 prints.

Rob Leslie resides in Turnersville, New Jersey with his wife and daughter. This is quite a bit away from his home state of Wisconsin where growing up, Rob would hunt with his dad and brothers in a duck blind on Lake Poygan. Little did he know that a few years down the road his career would involve painting the subjects he spent so much time watching as a youth. I had the chance to speak with Rob about his work and ask him how someone could just jump into a painting career without having much experience with painting. Rob said, "I had seen what the other artists before me had done and I have always loved

the art of Maynard Reese, David Moss, and Owen Gromme; the guys that had done waterfowl before me, and I looked at it and said, 'I wonder if I can do that kind of thing?' and so I gave it a shot. Those were the guys that originally inspired me, having been out in the wild and seen what it was they were painting about." After working eight years as a medical supply salesman, at age thirty-eight, Rob dove head first into making a living as an artist and has not looked back. Unless it is of course to list all of the awards he has won. Since 1985, he has designed thirteen state duck stamps and prints. Rob has won twice in the states of Delaware, North Carolina, and New Jersey, as well as the '87 Pennsylvania, and '87 Idaho "First of State" contest. The other state duck stamps include North Dakota, Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee, and Connecticut. Recently, Rob was the 1996 International Ducks Unlimited Artist of the Year with his painting, "Just Layin' Around." Painting duck stamps led Rob to, "do a lot more close ups of the birds themselves, which originally I hadn't thought to do that, but getting involved in the duck stamp business I started doing paintings that were birds sitting on the water . . . "When asked what his first



"PINTAILS EASING IN"by Rob Leslie.

painting looked like Rob laughs, "Well, the first water-fowl painting is hanging at my father's house. It was a little rough . . . it left a little to be desired." Well, not anymore, Rob's paintings and prints capture the essence of the waterfowl. In his print "Woodduck Trio," Rob has two male woodducks and a female woodduck stepping in the muddy marshes. Each woodduck has a slightly different position. You can see they are listening for any noise, these shy birds. This too is a beautiful painting which captures the brilliant colors of the wood ducks. However, Rob doesn't paint just waterfowl. Every fourth or fifth painting is a subject other than waterfowl such as pheasants, deer, or grouse.

Rob will spend many hours in the great outdoors, sketching for the background scenes, taking photos of the waterfowl, and just studying the habits of waterfowl. When asked what it is like spending so many hours outdoors, Rob says, "That's the good part. That's the reward, being able to take off and say this is my job to go out and explore and play, get in your car or boat and just

go with your camera. It's always an adventure." After all of this research Rob will, ". . . develop ideas by doing sketches, [first] doing a rough sketch and then on the things that I like I'll take into a more detailed sketch and after completing it, I will hang it on my wall and live with it for awhile and see how I feel about it, and the ones that I really like usually go to the next stage which is the painting."

Rob attends several shows throughout the year, staying mostly on the East Coast. These shows have enabled him to meet many people and expand a list of supporters for his artwork. You will find this ten-year Decoy Festival veteran in his usual spot in the High School gym, table numbers one and two, on May 1, 2, 3, 1998. We are pleased and honored to have Rob Leslie as the 1998 Artist of the Year.

The offered 1998 print is on sale at the Decoy Museum's gift shop, and during the Festival it will be available at the Decoy Museum's gift shop tables in the High School gym and in the Middle School's hallway.

Decoy, Wildlife Art & Sportsman Festival Print



"Autumn Resting Place" by Rob Leslie

The 17th Annual Decoy Festival is pleased to feature Rob Leslie as the 1998 Artist of the Year. Leslie, of Turnersville, NJ is an exceptional artist who served as the 1997 Ducks Unlimited International Artist. Leslie has been commissioned to do a tribute to the work of master carvers Lem and Steve Ward. His 1998 festival print features a unique blending of live Canada Geese with a Ward Brothers Canada Goose decoy. Production of this full color 14" x 19" print has been limited to 500 copies. The print will be available to the public during the Decoy Festival. Advance orders for remarque and standard prints may be made by contacting the Decoy Museum.

Prices are as follows:

Original Oil Painting	\$4,500.00
Signed print with flying Canada Goose remarque*	\$225.00
Signed print with Canada Goose decoy remarque*	\$225.00
Signed standard print	\$80.00

To order, contact:

Havre de Grace Decoy Museum PO Box 878, 215 Giles Street Havre de Grace, MD 21078 Phone: 410-939-3739 Fax: 410-939-3775

*Remarque prints are numbered 1 - 20. Prefered numbers subject to availability.

CLASSIFIED

For our members we offer free classified ads to buy, sell, and trade decoys or related objects. For non-members, it is \$5.00 for 15 words. Mail your classified ads to: Decoy Museum, P.O. Box 878, Havre de Grace, MD 21078.

ATTENTION VA, MD, & DC Decoy Collectors: The Potomac Decoy Collectors Association (PDCA) will hold its next three meetings April 21st, May 19th, and June 16th. PDCA members meet once a month to socialize, examine decoys, exchange information on makers, history, care and preservation, buy, sell, & trade decoys and related items, and just plain talk ducks! For more information, please call Tom East at (703) 866-1735, or Chad Tragakis at (703) 768-2949.

WANTED: Charles "Buck" Crawford miniatures. Contact Lou Nolan, 1123 Penshurst Lane, Penn Valley, PA 19072 or call (610) 664-5938 FOR SALE: R. Madison Mitchell Collection for sale. All ornamental decoys "Christmas Birds." Call Bakers Decoys (410) 586-4670.

FOR SALE: R. Madison Mitchell full-size swan. Signed and dated 1955. Call Deborah at (410) 939-1843.

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NOTICE: *free Decoy List* New red list, Masons, Evans, Canada & East Coast decoys. Send SASE to: John Freimuth, 12123 S. 71st Avenue, Palo Heights, IL 60463. (708) 361-4343.

FOR SALE: Fiberglass sneak boat. length 12', 4' beam, 15" transom height. Minn Kota autopilot. Power drive motor. Highlander galvanized trailer. Great marsh gunning boat. Call (610) 286-6465.

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Annual Membership Level:

Student: \$15 -Individual: \$20 -Family: \$35 —

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Please mail this form with your check or money order to: Havre de Grace Decoy Museum, Membership

Havre de Grace, Maryland 21078

