

# The Canvasback

HAVRE DE GRACE DECOY MUSEUM

Winter 2017  
Vol. 27 No. 1

\$3.00

## Gunning *the* Flats *in* 1900





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## ON THE COVER

This particular image from the collection of amateur photographs is one incredible rarity upon another – first and foremost, that it could have survived 116 years as an amateur snapshot. It depicts not just a sinkbox, but a double sinkbox... in use... with a full rig deployed... and hunters in position. In the lower right corner is a canvasback sleeper decoy – almost unheard of for 1900. Lastly, this scene has been captured using emergent technology without blurring where both the photographer and the subjects were in motion on choppy water.



FUNDED IN PART BY

**Harford County • City of Havre de Grace  
Maryland State Arts Council**

The Havre de Grace Decoy Museum is funded by an operating grant from the Maryland State Arts Council, an agency dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive. Funding for the Maryland State Arts Council is also provided by the National Endowment for the arts, a federal agency.



The Museum was incorporated in 1981 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization which exists to document and interpret waterfowl decoys as this art form applies to the social and economic life of the upper Chesapeake Bay region. Contributions made to the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum Tax may be deductible.

## 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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## In This Issue:

*The Kodak #1 snapshot camera was introduced in 1888, and amateur photography was still in its early days in November of 1900 when this magical collection of candid images was taken. These "sports" from New York captured something we have rarely witnessed in this way – gunning the Flats.*

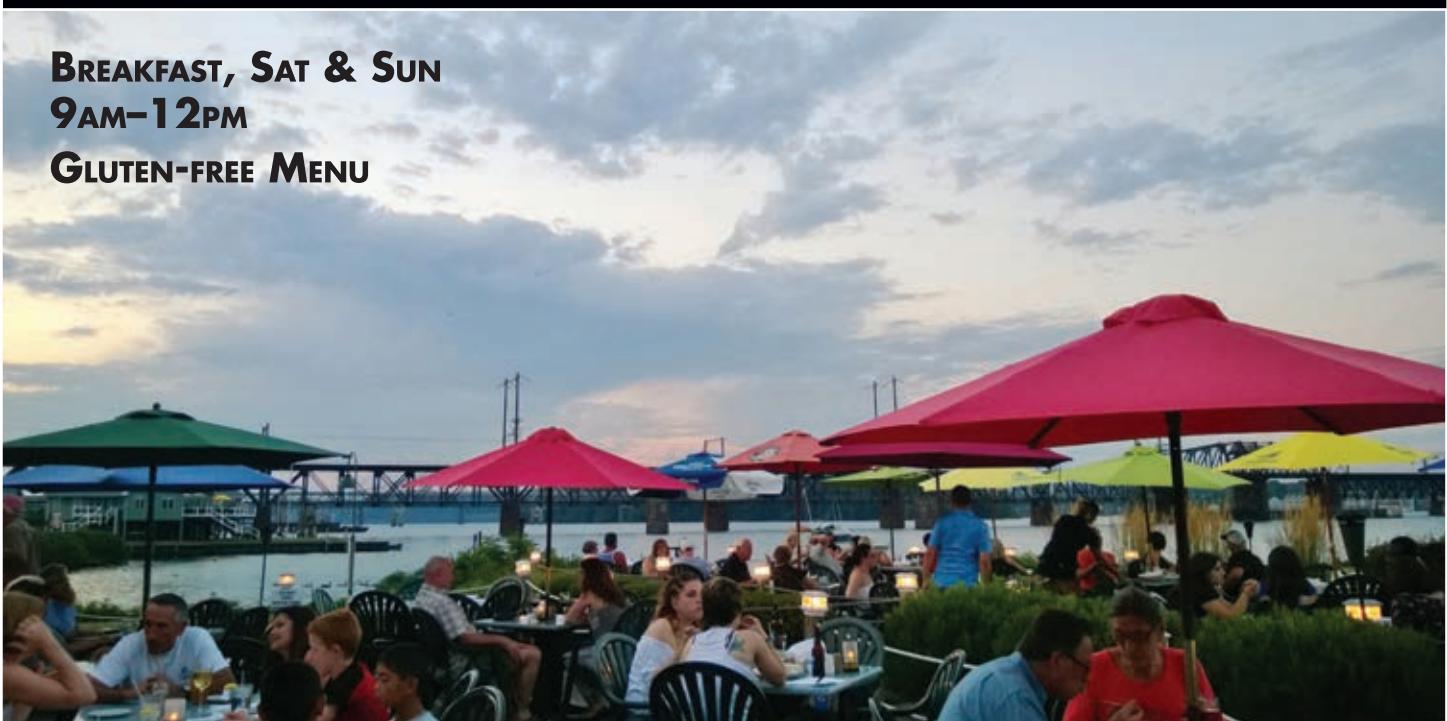
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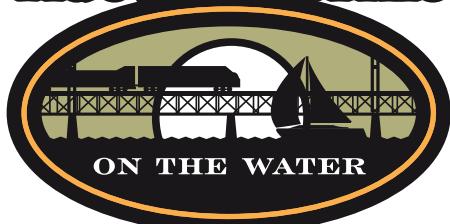
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All correspondence should be sent as above.

## From the President...

Dear Museum Member:

I hope you and your families enjoyed a wonderful few months with Thanksgiving, Christmas, and other holidays that you may celebrate during this season. The Decoy Museum has been appropriately decorated, and we have lots of visitors whose delight has made the efforts rewarding.



The fall raffle was a success and the Annual Appeal is currently underway. Please give us a call if you have a decoy or other waterfowl art to donate to the Museum for future raffles and other fund raising efforts. You may be able to take a tax deduction for the contribution.

Visit Harford! has been a tremendous source of support for us, and we are reaching out to other organizations to increase tourist visits by partnering with them in ways both small and large. The first annual Fish, Fowl, and Folk Festival (F<sup>3</sup>) in August was a three-way partnership with the neighboring Concord Point Lighthouse and Maritime Museum. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation very kindly let us reprint some of their articles and photos in the previous issue of *The Canvasback* to provide some context for an article and a popular new exhibit on cormorant carvings.

We have had success as a community partner by hosting more events in the Decoy Museum, which has the dual benefits of providing another revenue stream as well as showcasing the Museum. The response we frequently get is – WOW! – and those visitors leave and talk about their experience here. We have much to make the community proud – even Havre de Grace Mayor Bill Martin and the City Council have had a special Council meeting in the Carver's Gallery.

The Decoy Museum's 30th anniversary will be celebrated with an open house on Saturday, January 28th – the same day as the Susquehanna Flats show at the Level VFC. Our big fundraising event – now in its 24th year – is the R. Madison Mitchell Endowment Trust banquet on Friday, March 10th. The banquet is the primary source of funds for the Endowment Trust, which Mr. Mitchell established exclusively to aid the Museum.

The 36th annual Havre de Grace Decoy and Wildlife Art Festival will be held on the first weekend of May, as always, and that is keeping us busy. This year's honorary chairman will be longtime friend of the Museum Bill Hickson of Cordova, Maryland whose lifelike waterfowl carvings are amazing.

We have recently established business memberships with special advertising rates to reach out to local businesses. We will also continue to be relentless in seeking new members and in reminding and encouraging our members to renew and upgrade. Save the dates! The Level show and 30th anniversary on Saturday, January 28th, the Endowment Trust banquet on Friday, March 10th, and the Decoy Festival the weekend of May 5th – 7th. Please be active and introduce your friends and family. Your support keeps us strong, and we are grateful for your loyalty. See you soon!

Sincerely,

Pat Vincenti



# Museum Members

Thank you and welcome to the following members and businesses that recently renewed their membership or newly joined us. Your continued support and contributions are essential to the overall success of the Decoy Museum:

## **FAMILY**

Kathy & Harry Acker  
Charles & Nadine Anderson  
Josh Blanchette  
Harold & Marcia Boccia  
Jim & Sue Brackbill  
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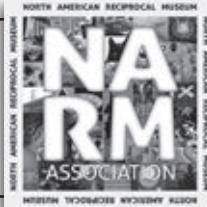
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The North American Reciprocal Museum (NARM) Association<sup>sm</sup> is one of the largest reciprocal membership programs in the world with 841 arts, cultural, and historical institutions along with botanical gardens, children's museums, science and technology centers that offer NARM-qualified members reciprocal benefits.

# *Get in the FORMATION!*

**Our members are a very close-knit and loyal community!**

**Help us spread the word and fulfill our mission.**

A Decoy Museum membership provides financial support for museum exhibits and programming, as well as offering individuals special benefits and opportunities. All members receive a membership card, free admission year round, and a subscription to ***The Canvasback*** magazine, invitations to special events, and discounts in the Gift Shop.

**Not a member? Join Now! — Already a member? Tell a Friend!**  
**Go to [DecoyMuseum.com](http://DecoyMuseum.com) or call us at 410.939.3739**



# Promote Your Business

## by Supporting the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum & Harford County Tourism

The Decoy Museum's new Business Memberships are coupled with advertising in ***The Canvasback***.

### Business Members Receive:

- Advertising Space (four quarterly issues)
- A Subscription to ***The Canvasback***
- Updates on Events & Attractions
- Special Discounts for Facility Rentals
- Complementary Admission Tickets to the Decoy Museum  
*Each ticket entitles the holder to a 10% discount in the Museum Gift Shop – give them to your employees and business associates.*

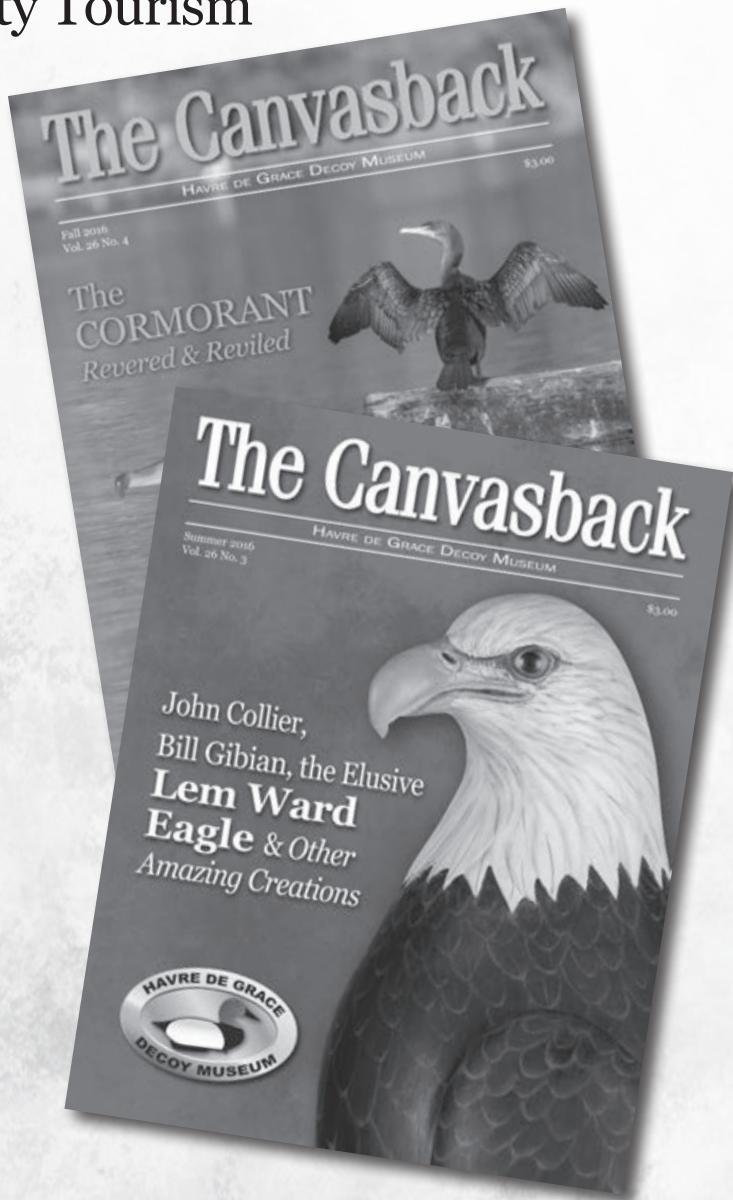
Supporter	\$175	Business card ad 5 admission tickets
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Patron	\$625	Half-page ad 20 admission tickets
Benefactor	\$1,200	Full-page ad 40 admission tickets

*The membership rates quoted are for grayscale ads. For color ads (Patron and Benefactor only), please add a 40% surcharge. Graphic design services are available for an additional charge.*

### Circulation:

The Canvasback has a mailed distribution of 1,000 copies each quarter with a concentration in the Havre de Grace area.

Harford County ..... 35%  
Cecil County ..... 8%  
Elsewhere in Maryland ..... 21%  
Pennsylvania ..... 10%  
Delaware ..... 7%  
Other states ..... 19%



## Subscribe!

Non-advertisers can also support the Decoy Museum as a Subscriber

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*Always have the latest issue of The Canvasback in your break room, waiting room, or reception area.*



# Downsizing? Changing your collection?



If you have decoys, wildlife art, and waterfowling memorabilia packed away in closets, attics, garages, and basements that you just do not know what to do with — please consider donating these items to the Museum.

The Decoy Museum can turn your unwanted items into much-needed operating revenue. In-kind gifts will be gratefully received by the Museum and will help preserve history for generations to come.



Call us at 410.939.3739

We will be happy to make any necessary arrangements.

*You may be able to take a tax deduction for the charitable donation. IRS regulations prohibit us from appraising donated items.*



# DECOY MAGAZINE

- Carver profiles
- Features on carving regions, fish decoys, and sporting art
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# The 24th Annual R. Madison Mitchell Endowment Trust Banquet

Friday, March 10, 2017 at the  
Bayou Restaurant  
Route 40, Havre de Grace, Maryland

Cocktails at 6:00pm • Dinner at 7:00pm • Program at 8:00pm

*The banquet is always an early sell-out,  
so make your plans soon!*



R. Madison Mitchell was not only one of the most prominent and prolific decoy carvers of the past 200 years, he was also a driving force behind the creation of the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum and the Decoy and Wildlife Art Festival, now in its 36th year.



The 2017 R. Madison Mitchell Endowment Trust banquet promises to be another great evening to meet and greet other Museum supporters, decoy makers, decoy collectors, and waterfowlers.

Lou and Terry Ward always serve an excellent dinner that is preceded by a cocktail mingle with lots of tempting finger food. The silent auction, live auction, and raffles give all supporters a chance to add something special to their collections while at the same time having a wonderful and memorable evening and contributing to a cause dear to everyone's heart.

The Endowment Trust is vital to the future of the Decoy Museum, so please join us on Friday, March 10th and make the banquet another successful fundraiser for both the Endowment Trust and the Museum.

**Tickets are \$55.00 per person**  
and are available at the Decoy Museum & Vincenti Decoys, by calling 410.734.6238, or visiting [www.RMadisonMitchell.com](http://www.RMadisonMitchell.com)

*The R. Madison Mitchell Endowment Trust, a 501(c)(3) charitable corporation, was established by Mr. Mitchell before his death in 1993 to provide a permanent, long-range source of funding for the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum. The Trust exists solely to aid the Decoy Museum's acquisition, interpretation, and preservation of decoys, waterfowl artifacts, and other appropriate projects. Mr. Mitchell's original goal was to raise \$50,000 to support the Museum's mission. He thought that would take about seven years – but it only took three – and the Trust has now raised over \$1 million. Mr. Mitchell would be enormously gratified by the success of his modest ambition.*



John M. Kelley - Capt. Lewis at  
Ches. City, Del.

# Gunning the Flats in 1900:

A Photographic Tour  
through the C&D Canal  
to Havre de Grace

By C. John Sullivan, Jr.



Since the 17th century, the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal had been recognized as a sorely-needed alternative to the long journey between the Chesapeake and Delaware Bays around the tip of the Delmarva Peninsula, especially for commodities moving between the ports of Baltimore and Philadelphia. There has always been a bridge at Summit, starting with a covered wooden bridge when the canal opened in 1829.



**I**t has been over thirty years since I first saw a really good and honest Susquehanna Flats preening decoy. Most of the early preening decoys were re-heads, where the new head was simply attached in a preening position. Many times, they appear out of alignment or ill fitting where attached to the body. This is particularly obvious on those decoys that wear a shelf for the neck to rest upon.

My late decoy companion Henry A. Fleckenstein owned a good, honest John B. Graham canvasback preener hen. Not only was it a preener, the head was carved in a fashion that it both turned and twisted at the same time. This attitude adds a lifelike appearance to a 130-plus-year-old decoy.

It was at about the same time that Henry shared with me his preener that another of my great friends and decoy historian Captain Larry McDaniel arrived on the scene with a group of extremely rare photographs. Captain Larry, like Henry, is a true devotee of the wooden fowl. He had been buying some great early decoys from a family in Chestertown, Maryland.

*Old Capt. Bill & the boy.*



On one of his visits to buy decoys, the family pulled out a group of photos from a New York family. The images documented a trip from New York to the Susquehanna Flats. One of the images, which upon my first viewing became my instant favorite, clearly shows two hunters posed in a double sinkbox. Each hunter is holding his shotgun at his shoulder as if to fire. The sinkbox is surrounded by a large rig of decoys. In the immediate foreground of the photograph rests a canvasback drake decoy.

The position of the decoy in the water, its rounded back, and paddle form tail insist that I call it a John B. Graham decoy from Charlestown, Maryland, but without question its best feature is the preening position of its head. The likelihood of ever discovering such a photograph is one in a million. Sinkbox shooting photos are extremely rare, those showing a double box are even more rare, and this image is the most rare of them all.





We believe that the notation "E. J. Gianinni" identifies Eugene J. Giannini

(1866-1923) who served as the renowned rowing coach and director of athletics for the New York Athletic Club for 25 years and had scores of victories to his credit. He was the sport rowing coach at Yale University from 1914 to 1915 and was named sport rowing coach for Columbia University for the 1919 season to rebuild their struggling team. He was the author of the book "Rowing" (ca. 1901).



***Continued on page 18***

*Dan Bradley & E. J. Giannini*



YOU'RE INVITED  
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FOR THE  
*Havre de Grace Decoy Museum*  
SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 2017

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# A Lesson in Decoy Attribution

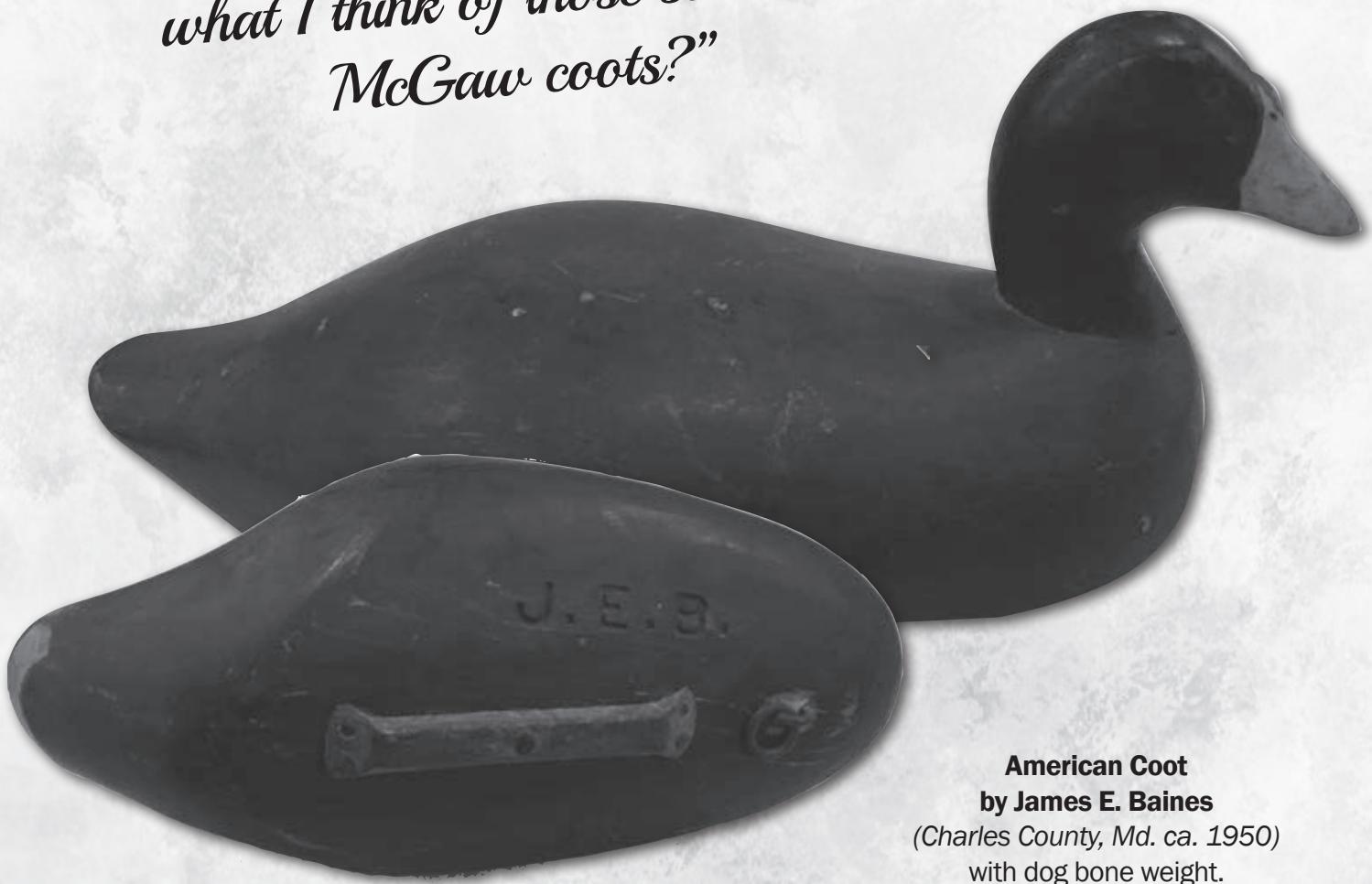
By C. John Sullivan, Jr.

At the 2nd annual Havre de Grace Decoy Show, one of the local carvers approached the tables that the late decoy historian Henry Fleckenstein and I shared. He was carrying a coot on what appeared to be a small plush pillow. He maintained that its provenance was renowned carver Robert F. McGaw based on his signature dog-bone shaped lead ballast weight. He had a price tag of over \$2,000 on the bird – a shocking figure in those days. He asked our thoughts, but Henry had little positive to say.

Following that show, Henry asked me to come to his shop in East New Market. He was closing that shop and moving to his new home on Morris Neck Road in Cambridge. In the back room of his antique shop he had piles of great decoys – many hundreds of wonderful old birds piled up on the floor in no apparent order.

He would pick up a decoy, toss it across the length of the room, and I would stack it on the growing pile in the back of his pickup truck. There came a moment when the speed of the tossing became just a tad bit more reckless. Henry said, “Do you want to know what I think of those so-called McGaw coots?” As if to underscore his disdain, he threw eight of them across the room to me in a rather hasty fashion. (I caught them all, no mishaps.)

*“Do you want to know  
what I think of those so-called  
McGaw coots?”*



**American Coot**  
**by James E. Baines**  
(Charles County, Md. ca. 1950)  
with dog bone weight.  
From the author's collection

Several years later I purchased a great-looking pintail drake carved by R. Madison Mitchell. That pintail wore the same distinctive dog-bone weight on its underside (an indication that Bob McGaw had perhaps helped make that decoy). I took the decoy to Mr. Mitchell's shop to ask him about the weight. Mr. Mitchell led me to a corner of his shop, and there sat a bucket filled with McGaw weights. Mr. Mitchell said that he acquired the weights when McGaw stopped carving and closed his shop.



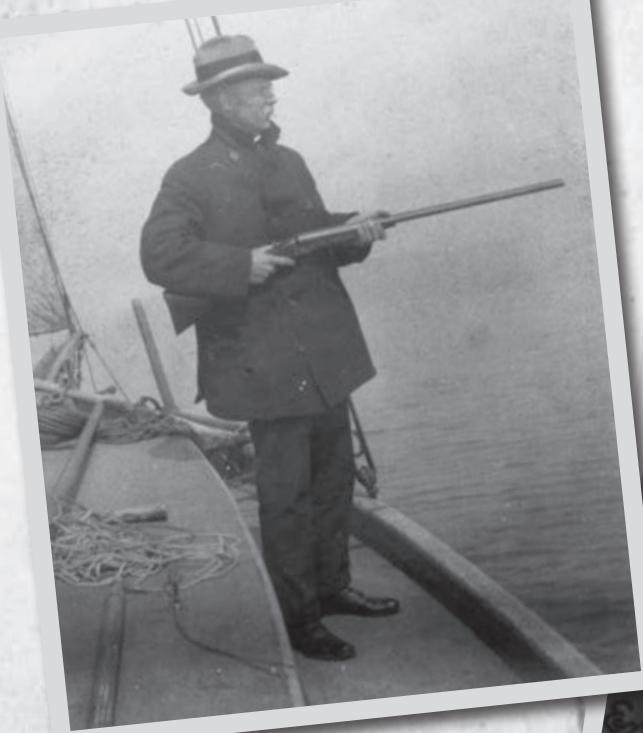
The point of the story is that we are all tempted from time to time to rely on just one part of a decoy to determine attribution, but one must consider the entire fact pattern. It was obvious that the "McGaw coots" were turned on a lathe in Havre de Grace –there were several – and the decoys were certainly painted in the style of all the coots that came through Havre de Grace. But several hands could have participated in the final product. The dog-bone weight itself was clearly not the only factor to consider for a positive attribution.



The sinkbox was a very effective means of harvesting waterfowl. Appearing on the waters around Long Island, New York as early as 1838, it had been established on the Chesapeake Bay prior to 1849 when the Maryland Legislature first took action to limit its use in certain areas. Last used on the Susquehanna Flats, it was finally outlawed by Federal regulations in 1935. Sinkboxes were little more than a broad platform or deck about six by ten feet with a coffin-like accommodation for the hunter sunken into the center, flush with the deck. The entire apparatus was typically weighted down by cast-iron decoys so that little was visible above water level.

Continued from page 13





The photographic archive of E. J. Gianinni (whose name appears on one image) and his associates totals 20 images. Some of the photos include captions written on the bottom of the image, while others are without notations. An image is included that clearly depicts the span of the Summit Bridge over the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal opened for passage. The landing at Chesapeake City shows various activities in incredible detail. A wonderful photograph of the gunning scow "Nancy Hanks" is truly unique. The sinkbox photos and a precise date of November 1, 1900, add to this treasure trove of waterfowling history. The rarity of this archive is unparalleled.



Houseboats or gunning scows were common on the Susquehanna Flats and served as floating hunting camps for the wealthy and powerful "sports" who came to gun the Flats. The crew provided for the comfort and success of their clientele. Per the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, a "Nancy Hanks" with a schooner rig was built in Oriole, Md. in 1892 with a length of 52.5 feet, width of 14.2 feet, and a draft of 3.2 feet. In 1902 her home port was Tappahannock, Va. In 1912, John Wesley Brewer in Accomack County, Va. conveyed a "Nancy Hanks" in his will. Odds are these all refer to the boat pictured.



"Nancy Hanks"



# 10th Annual Susquehanna Flats Vintage Hunting & Fishing Collectibles Show

January 28, 2017

8:00 am– 4:00 pm

Level Volunteer Fire Company Hall

3633 Level Village Road

Level Village (near Havre de Grace), MD

Decoys ■ Ammo Boxes ■ Guns ■ Powder Tins  
Oyster Cans ■ Rods ■ Reels ■ Fishing Lures  
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**410.734.6238 or 410.378.3528**

*All proceeds benefit the  
Havre de Grace Decoy Museum & the Level VFC*



# Museum News

## From the Desk of...

I trust that everyone had a joyous holiday season! Here at the Museum, we very much enjoy creating a festive environment and assisting our visitors in selecting the perfect gifts for their loved ones. Our participation in the Annual Havre de Grace Candlelight Tour, held on an appropriately chilly December 10th, was a success. Our 12 Days of Christmas social media campaign, designed to spotlight many of our gift shop items, brought visitors and sales throughout the month of December. It was a busy season indeed.



Thanks to the grant funds received earlier in 2016 from the Maryland Heritage Areas Program, the Museum has now added three new display cases to the second-floor Carver's Gallery. These cases will be utilized for revolving, temporary displays which will keep the gallery fresh and exciting for our members and friends. We are currently working to prepare our first exhibit, with hopes for an unveiling at our 30th Anniversary Celebration. Speaking of which, please join us for this momentous occasion on January 28th at 6 p.m.!

I have just completed an application to the American Alliance of Museums' (AAM) Museum Assessment Program. If accepted, I and several members of the Board will embark on a 6-month journey to review our policies and procedures and establish best practices for the Decoy Museum. This process should place us in a very good position for accreditation – a goal I seek to achieve for the Museum in the next two years.

We are also in the final stages of our website re-design – spearheaded by Scott Moody – and I anticipate unveiling this new site in early 2017. What an exciting way to begin the new year! Finally, as you've read, we have some new faces on our Board. I am anxious to work with each of them, and the entire Board, to continue to do great things for your Museum.

Best,

22 • [www.decoymuseum.com](http://www.decoymuseum.com) ▶

## Ray Whetzel Honored

Longtime Decoy Museum supporter and Canvasback contributor Jim Trimble alerted us that the Potomac Decoy Collectors Association honored Ray Whetzel at its September meeting. PDCA President Chad Tragakis said, "We wanted to celebrate the man as well as his fine carvings."

Pictured at right are Ray and other PDCA members holding some of his fine carvings (left to right): Ray with a white egret, Tom East holding a Ward World Championship carved flicker with a blue ribbon, Chuck Dilla holding a peep shorebird, and Doiley Fulcher holding a red drum fish wall-hanger.



## A New PDCA Exhibit Coming Soon

The entire PDCA membership are among the Museum's most loyal and ardent supporters, for which we are profoundly grateful. Their amazing bufflehead exhibit left the Decoy Museum in October, but we have been promised another fabulous collection by the end of January. There is no official word on the subject matter yet, but wood ducks have been rumored!

# Museum News



## Current Exhibits @ the Museum



Ray is a renowned craftsman of contemporary carvings with many top honors to his credit. His recently-carved decorative wigeon hen in calling position – shown opposite at upper left with his black-bellied plover – won first honors at that PDCA meeting.

Ray was one of the founding members of the PDCA in 1997 and was the subject of the cover story in the winter 2009 issue of *The Canvasback*.

## ERRATUM

The fall issue of *The Canvasback* failed to give proper credit to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation for kindly permitting us to reprint their wonderful article "Cormorants: The Miraculous Comeback of a Misunderstood Bird" by Tom Pelton. That article, taken together with their other articles and photos, provided the perfect context for *The Canvasback's* main photo feature on cormorant carvings as well as our popular new exhibit of Gary and Terri Sargable's entire collection. We apologize for the oversight and thank Jen Wallace and the CBF for their support. We all love the Bay!

- **Don't miss Gary and Terry Sargable's collection of cormorant carvings by some of the most talented and well-known carvers. Leaving January 30th!**



- Two new displays near the front door of Susquehanna Flats wing ducks and miniature carvings by Captain Jimmy Wright of Massey Md. courtesy of C. John Sullivan, Jr.



- John Collier's collection of Bill Gibian's carvings.
- The extraordinary pair of "Daddy" Holly canvasbacks, a gift from the Michael family.



- A traditional tule decoy in the centuries-old "Lovelock style" by Paiute decoy maker Joe Allen.
- The "Gunning the Flats" exhibit



- The "What is a Decoy?" exhibit
- "Pop" Sampson's homemade duplicating lathe for making miniature decoy bodies
- Coudon Teal carved in the 1930s, a gift from Pat Doherty.



- A beautiful decorative Eastern Blue Bird carved by master carver Barb Wachter
- A beautiful decorative canvasback family made by master carver J. Noble Mentzer
- A lifelike rockfish (striped bass) carved by master carver Lee Tate, Sr.
- The Home Run Baker rig and bushwhack boat.

# Spring 2017 Raffle

A chance to win ONE of four valuable prizes. Four tickets will be drawn.

**Tickets are \$5.00 each • 6 for \$25.00 • 10 for \$40.00**

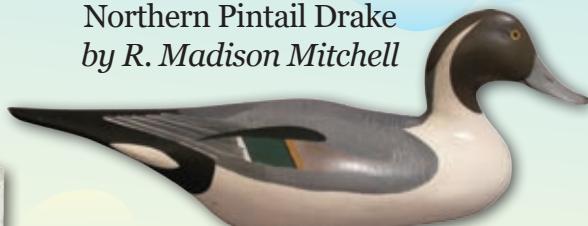
## First Prize:

\$500 Cash



## Third Prize:

Northern Pintail Drake  
*by R. Madison Mitchell*



## Second Prize:

Canada Goose  
*by R. Madison Mitchell*



## Fourth Prize:

American Coot by Charlie Bryan



Drawing May 7th. For tickets call 410.939.3739

or email [information@DecoyMuseum.com](mailto:information@DecoyMuseum.com) (additional tickets will be available at the Museum)

# Fall 2016 Raffle Results!

## First Prize:

Harold Boccia



## Second Prize:

Don Daniel



## Third Prize:

Jim Brackbill



## Fourth Prize:

Jim Augustus

# J. Evans McKinney Old Decoy Contest

The 15th annual J. Evans McKinney Old Decoy Contest will be held on Saturday, May 6th at the Middle School Gym in conjunction with the 2017 Havre de Grace Decoy and Wildlife Art Festival. Joe Engers, Editor and Publisher of Decoy Magazine will head up a three-member judge's panel. Entries will be accepted at the stage area from 10:00 a.m. until judging commences at noon. Competition decoys will be kept in a highly visible roped-off secure area and will not be handled by the public. At approximately 1:00p.m., the public will be invited to review the roped-off and secured tables once the judges have made their selections. A blue ribbon will be awarded for each of the following ten category winners, and the judges will also select a best-in-show winner. Winners will be requested to display their decoys and ribbons at the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum for three-months following the Festival.

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>1 Best Taylor Boyd</b>             | <b>6 Best Eastern Shore (non-Ward) Diving Duck</b> |
| <b>2 Best Jim Currier</b>             | <b>7 Best Ward Bros. Puddle Duck</b>               |
| <b>3 Best Cecil County Bluebill</b>   | <b>8 Best Virginia Goose</b>                       |
| <b>4 Best Harford County Bluebill</b> | <b>9 Best Shorebird</b>                            |
| <b>5 Best Rock Hall Puddle Duck</b>   | <b>10 Best Unknown</b>                             |



#### Rules:

There is a competition ban, regardless of category, on last year's winning birds. Participants must make their best efforts to ensure that all decoy entries were made prior to 1950. Matched pairs entered in other than a Matched Pair category will be considered as one entry. There will be no restrictions as to those who can participate or number of categories entered; however, each decoy will be limited to only one competition category and participants are restricted to no more than three birds per category. Competition issues will be resolved at the sole discretion of the competition chairman and/or competition chief judge. Any questions, please contact contest chairman **Jim Trimble at 703-768-7264 or potomacduck@cox.net**

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# Welcome to our two newest Board members!

## STEPHANIE GIORDANO

is a native of Bel Air, where she now lives, and graduated from Harford Community College. She has worked at MacGregor's Restaurant in Havre de Grace for 15 years and is presently the Assistant General Manager. Her broad responsibilities as part of the core management team involve the general day-to-day administration of the restaurant, staff training, menu writing, financial management and analysis, payroll, and sales taxes. Forward-looking by nature, Stephanie is heavily engaged in community outreach, all promotions for the restaurant, and the planning and costing for upcoming events. She manages the events and promotions from the concept stage through to implementation and does all post-event review and analysis. One of her key areas of interest is in finding creative ways to connect with children, youth groups, and school groups and to inspire their interest and involvement. Stephanie has built relationships throughout the community and has recently been appointed to the Havre de Grace Tourism Advisory Board.

## MICHAEL EUGENE TARQUINI

is a lifelong Havre de Gracian with 34th years of service at The JM Huber Corporation where he is currently Director of New Business Development for Huber's Nutrition business. Starting as a research chemist, he progressed into market development, sales, new product development, and mergers and acquisitions. Mike earned a BS in chemistry at Washington College in Chestertown, Md. and a Ph.D. in inorganic chemistry at the University of South Carolina. He is a former Eagle Scout with a long history of community service. Mike was a volunteer fire fighter with the Level Volunteer Fire Company from 1987 to 1999, later served as its President and a Director, and remains an honorary member. He was honored in 1992 as "Firefighter of the Year" by both the Level VFC and the State of Maryland. At home on the Chesapeake Bay, Mike is a member of the Maryland Watermen's Association and holds both a USCG 50-Ton Master's License and a commercial crabbing license. He also enjoys fishing and, when ashore, golfs and collects decoys!

**Both Mike and Stephanie have work experience, interests, and skill sets that touch some of our most important ongoing needs, and they both will be great resources for us.**

Rory G. White  
Financial Advisor

**Edward Jones**

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# **Bill Hickson is the Honorary Chairman of the 36th Annual Havre de Grace Wildlife Art Festival!**



Bill is a retired farmer from Cordova, Maryland who grew up hunting in Talbot County where his family has lived for generations. Bill started carving nearly 40 years ago, with early instruction from Ed and Esther Burns in nearby St. Michaels, Maryland. He still has his first effort from those classes – a tiny bufflehead that he attributes more to the efforts of Ed and Esther than his own. Nevertheless, it sits proudly on a shelf in his home some four decades later.



After that formal instruction, Bill set his own course in the world of wildfowl art and is largely self-taught. He developed his own style of carving and painting – always decorative birds – and has turned out some real masterpieces, including “lots of miniatures.” Asked for a favorite, Bill instantly pointed to the pair of green-winged teal that adorn this year’s poster.

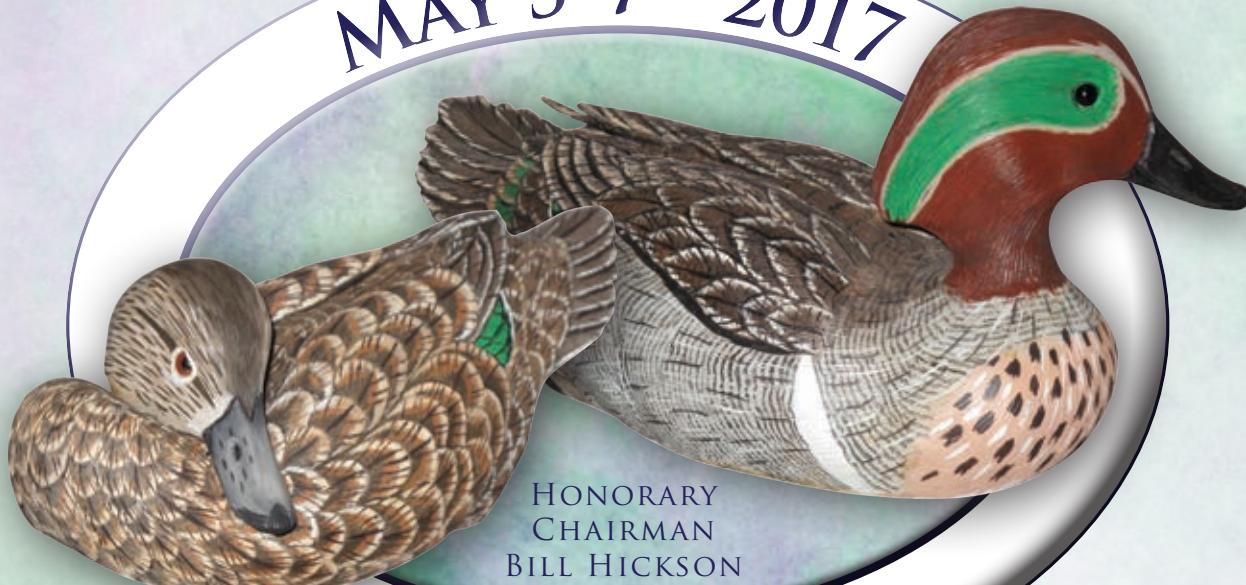
**This sampling of Bill’s work is just a teaser.  
We will take a closer look at Bill and his wildfowl art in  
the spring issue of The Canvasback.**



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*Carving Competition  
Gunning Decoys*

# Got time to spare... time to share?

*Get involved with the Decoy Museum.*

We are grateful for the generous support  
of our volunteers.



## What do you like to do?

Can you lead tours, explain decoy making and the history of the Flats, present programs for school children, greet visitors at the information desk, assist in the gift shop, help our curator on special projects, provide carving demonstrations, plan events, maintain IT systems, do exhibit signage and creative work, assist with fundraising and membership, organize chaos?

**Contact the Decoy Museum Today to Join the Flock**

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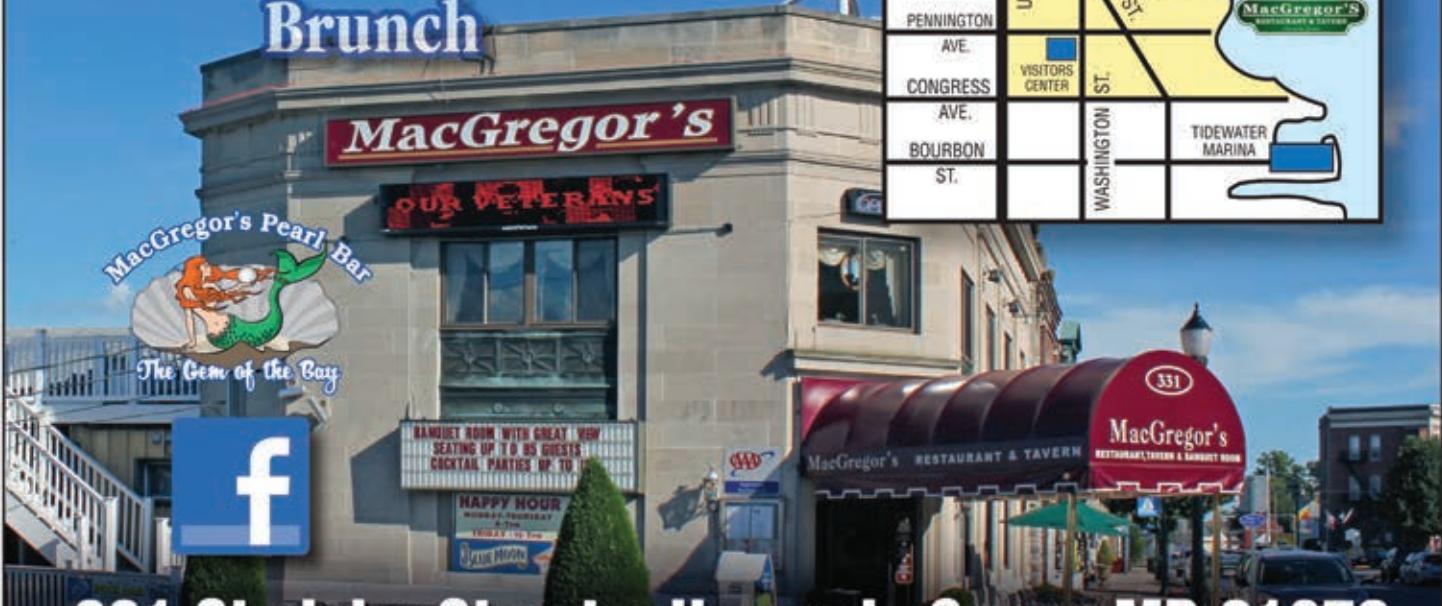
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