

The Canvasback

HAVRE DE GRACE DECoy MUSEUM

Spring 2018
Vol. 28 No. 2

37TH ANNUAL

\$3.00

Decoy & Wildlife *Art Festival*

MAY 4-6, 2018

FRIDAY 6 pm - 9 pm

SATURDAY 9 am - 5 pm

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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.

THE MUSEUM WAS INCORPORATED IN 1981 AS A 501(c)(3) TAX-EXEMPT ORGANIZATION TO COLLECT, DOCUMENT, PRESERVE, AND INTERPRET WATERFOWL DECOYS AS A UNIQUE FORM OF FOLK ART.

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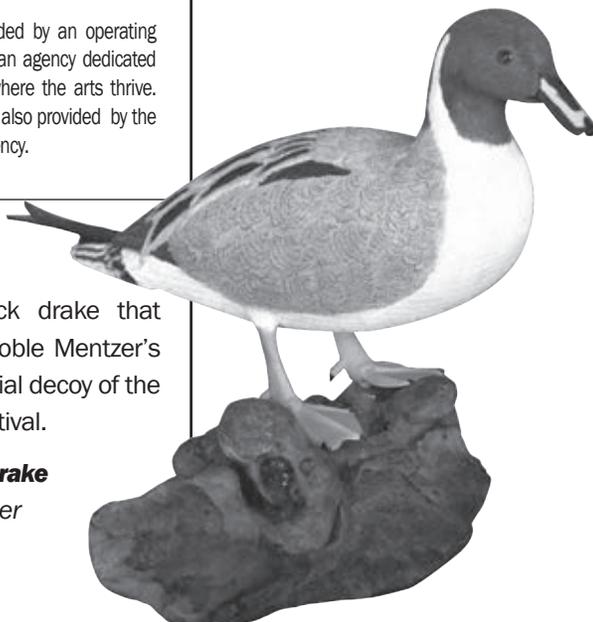


The Havre de Grace Decoy Museum is funded by an operating grant from the Maryland State Arts Council, an agency dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive. Funding for the Maryland State Arts Council is also provided by the National Endowment for the arts, a federal agency.

ON THE COVER

The finely-rendered wood duck drake that graces the cover is one of J. Noble Mentzer's proudest creations. It is the official decoy of the 2018 Decoy and Wildlife Art Festival.

Northern Pintail Drake
by Noble Mentzer



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From the President...

Dear Museum Member:

We have been busy getting ready for the 37th annual Havre de Grace Decoy and Wildlife Art Festival on May 4th, 5th, and 6th. Mark your calendars! This year's honorees are J. Noble Mentzer from Havre de Grace and John Hostetter from Aberdeen. Both are close friends and key supporters of the Museum who have helped us for many years and in more ways than you can possibly imagine.



The Festival is our key fundraiser, and it also brings a lot of visitor traffic – and tourist dollars – into Harford County. Special thanks to Mayor Bill Martin, the Havre de Grace City Council, Middle School principal Jamie Johnson, and the Harford County Public School System for their unwavering support.

The past few months brought some sad news with the deaths of carver Bill Streaker in December and both local waterman John Simperts and devoted Museum volunteer Elly Coale in January. For years, Elly has been the last person to proofread *The Canvasback* before it has gone to press.

The 11th annual Susquehanna Flats Vintage Hunting & Fishing Collectibles Show on January 27th at the Level Volunteer Fire Company set another record in terms of both exhibitors and visitors. This show just keeps getting better, thanks to the efforts of volunteers from both the Level VFC and the Decoy Museum. The 25th annual R. Madison Mitchell Endowment Trust banquet on Friday, March 9th was another sell-out, and it was great to see many new faces.

In January we added three new exhibits: Noble Mentzer's entire personal collection of his own carvings, the collection of Carteret County, North Carolina decoys that were the subject of the winter issue of *The Canvasback*, and a sampling of Bob Gregg's extensive collection of decoys by Dan Carson who was featured in the fall issue of *The Canvasback*. We plan to have a large collection of Lem and Steve Ward's spectacular carvings on display by the end of April, courtesy of collector and Decoy Museum supporter John Collier.

Executive Director Kerri Kneisley is busy preparing applications to renew Harford County's annual tourism-related grant and another for the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority. A big "thank you" goes to County Executive Barry Glassman who has been a key supporter of our efforts to take the Decoy Museum to a new level.

The spring raffle has four great prizes, so don't forget to buy your tickets before the drawing at the Festival on Sunday, May 6th. Thanks for being a member of this great museum and for your loyalty. Please consider being a volunteer – we have lots of little things where we could use some help!!

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- Complete auction coverage
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- National calendar of all decoy shows
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11th Annual Susquehanna Flats Vintage Hunting & Fishing Collectibles Show

Jim Trimble



(l to r) Maryland vendor/collector Vernon Bryant and Maryland collector/carver Bruce Eppart



Maryland vendor Carolyn Trimble with a Jenny Mullen's 1976 bluebill.



Pennsylvania vendor/collector Mike Stump with brass prop and fox mount.



Pennsylvania vendor/collector George Wilmont holding a fine early pair of Roe Terry buffleheads.



Virginia vendor/collector Jim Trimble with Maryland collectors George & Betty Juergens holding Casey Edwards' dead hanging carvings of a ruffed grouse and two wood cocks.

This annual show jump-starts the new year of decoy shows for the mid-Atlantic collector. Mother Nature provided mild sunny blue bird skies that reached into the mid-60s for the 11th annual Susquehanna Flats Vintage Hunting and Fishing Collectibles Show that was held Saturday, January 27th at the Level Volunteer Fire Hall, just outside the town of Havre de Grace, Maryland. The show date was a concern as it was the last day of the Maryland duck hunting season. Apparently, with the nice weather, the ducks were not flying. Large crowds arrived early, filling the parking lot for the 8 AM opening. Their quest for ducks was not for the migrating ones; but for the vintage wooden counterfeits, along with waterman artifacts, oyster stuffs and fishing collectibles that filled 100 tables inside the fire hall. The crowds were constant throughout the day with seasoned Maryland show sponsor/vendors Chuck Usilton and Pat Vincenti expressing delight. Vendors, as well as visitors, were primarily from the five state area of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. This show is a fund raiser for the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum and the host Level VFC, who split show proceeds. Wives Lynn Usilton and Jeannie Vincenti collected the money and ran the show drawings with winners announced throughout the day. These seasoned collectors run a good show with emphasis on VINTAGE.

Both Usilton and Vincenti's tables were filled with vintage collectible decoys that had floated upper Chesapeake Bay waters. Usilton's table featured a wonderfully sculpted Sam Barnes goose in nice old gunning paint with strong wing patterns. While examining the goose, Vincenti introduced me to Richard Barnes, a great-nephew of decoy maker Sam Barnes, and commented about how this show was good for the community "as it drags out old dogs from the comforts of their homes, like Richard Barnes." Pennsylvania vendor/collector Mike Stump displayed hunting and fishing collectibles

as well as oyster stuffs and nautical items. His table display also included a fox and ram's head mount. We were all pleased to see Capt. Harry Jobs on hand helping his son Bob with his table that included old gunners. Capt. Harry greeted well-wishers who stopped by to say hello. Lloyd Sheats had many fine decoys on his table, including a fine pair of original paint Taylor Boyd hi-head canvasbacks and a fine pair of original paint Miles Hancock pintails, among others. Virginia auctioneer Zeb Barfield displayed about 20 decoys for his forthcoming Sportsman Decoy Auction to be held February 23-25. A 1970 Ward finely detailed snow goose from the Wilkerson collection was one of the featured items as was a Verity bluebill. Several Joiner decoys were also featured. My daughter Carolyn, who has an artisan's eye, worked my vendor table. She also walked the isles of tables several times acquiring vintage "salty stuff," most of it from two or three different vendors. Maryland collector/vendor and restorer Rod Schwarm's table featured many old Chesapeake gunners. Among the mix were four or five circa 1950 bluebills made by Southern Maryland decoy maker Charles Herbert. The decoys all sold to the same collector with the birds returning to their southern Maryland environs. Schwarm also uses this venue to return and to pick-up ducks in need of restoration.

The vendors that I spoke with all seemed pleased with the large crowds and show activity, as it seemed to be a buying crowd. It was also a chance to gab and catchup with like minded collectors.....and especially after a month of harsh weather (single digit temperatures, freezing rain, snow, ice, etc.) that had preceded the show. Our thanks to the show sponsors and the host Level VFC for providing this fun and well run show to the mid-Atlantic decoy collector. Many/most of these same vendors will participate in the East Coast Decoy Collector's forthcoming April 6th & 7th show to be held in St. Michaels, Maryland.



Spring 2018 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:

Harford County
Canvasbacks Print



Fourth Prize:

Scaup Drake
by Harry Jobes



Second Prize:

Red-breasted Merganser Pair

by Jim Pierce



Drawing May 6, 2018. For tickets call **410.939.3739**

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



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THE 25TH ANNUAL R. MADISON MITCHELL ENDOWMENT TRUST BANQUET

The 2018 R. Madison Mitchell Endowment Trust banquet was held at the Bayou Restaurant on Friday, March 9th. Mr. Mitchell was a driving force behind the creation of the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum and the Decoy and Wildlife Art Festival. He established the Endowment Trust as a permanent, long-range source of support to aid the Museum's acquisition, interpretation, and preservation of decoys, waterfowl artifacts, and other appropriate projects. To date, the Endowment has raised over \$1 million.

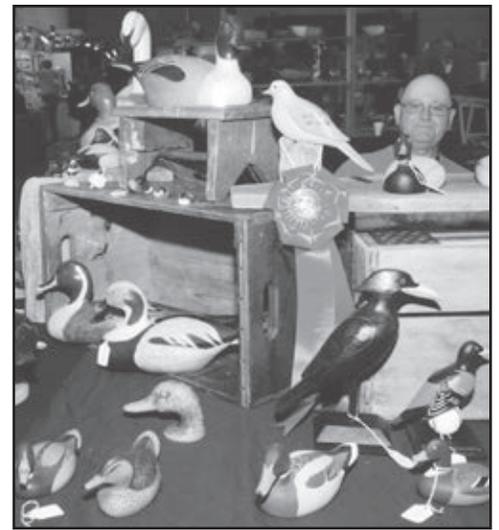
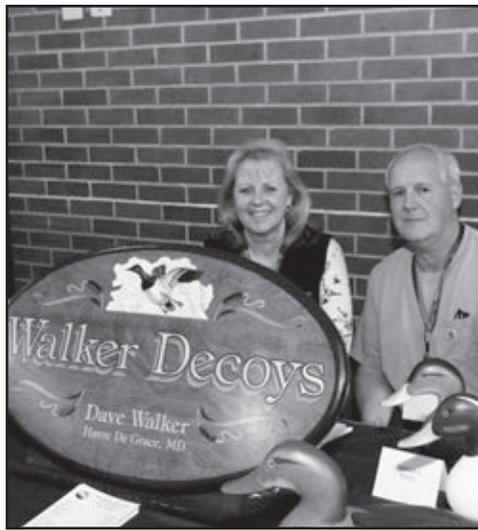
This great event – always a sell-out – is the primary source of funds for the Endowment Trust and enables our supporters to renew and strengthen ties and to have a wonderful and memorable evening in the process.

The evening's program applauded many supporters who have made important contributions to the Trust and the Museum. Delta Waterfowl has always been a key supporter in many ways of both the Endowment and the Museum, and this year was no exception with a generous \$3,000 donation. This year's lottery provided 25 quarter-size wigeon drakes by Capt. Bill Collins and 15 cast iron bookends made from R. Madison Mitchell canvasback heads. The silent auction, live auction, and raffles also gave all supporters a chance to go home with something special.

The Endowment is vital to the future of the Decoy Museum, and we are very grateful to everyone who made the banquet another successful fundraiser: Pat and Jeannie Vincenti, the other officers and directors of the Trust, their many volunteers, Lou and Terry Ward and the Bayou staff, and all of our generous and loyal supporters who came from far and wide.

Photography by Terri Shepke-Heppner





Festival Exhibitors

Linda Amtmann
MS 106, 107

John Collier
MS 031, 032

Joe Engers
Decoy Magazine
MS 037, 042

Bob & Debbie Jobs
MS 093

Larry Appleton
MS 053

Capt. Bill Collins
Capt. Bill Collins Decoys
MS 005, 006

**Dave Feinstein
& Kanda Harp**
Catch of the Day Designs
MS 170, 171

Charles Jobs
MS 101, 102

Josh Blanchette
Blanchette Decoys
MS 098

Bill Cowen
Acute Art Reflection
MS 179

Joyce Gagen
Art Ala Carte
MS 177, 178

Walter Jones
Flyways Decoys
MS 055, 056, 057

Bryon Bodd
MS 061, 065, 066

Laura DeNardo
Laura DeNardo Studios
MS 022

Oscar Haines
MS 099, 100

Mort Kramer
MS 159, 160

Lloyd Cargile
MS 069, 070

Shannon Dimmig
Shannon Dimmig Carvings
MS 191

Robert Hayes
Mainely Loons Wildlife Carvings
MS 181

Oliver Lawson
MS 003, 004

Nelia Cheney
Round Hill Art
MS 103, 104



Rob Leslie
MS 182, 183

John Meredith
MS 062, 063

Bill Hickson
Wildfowl Carvings
MS 064

Richard Moretz
Moretz Decoys
MS 081, 082

Jeremy Houser
Old Working Decoys
MS 007

Harry T. Morrison
H.T. Morrison Wildlife Art
MS 180

Joey Jobs
MS 085, 086, 088

MS = Middle School



Festival Exhibitors

Ron Orlando
Wildlife Art Studio
MS 023, 024

Bill Schauber
Counterfeit Ducks
MS 152

Mary Lou Troutman
Mary Lou Troutman Art
MS 141, 142

David Walker
Walker Decoys
MS 013, 014, 015

Charlie Packard
MS 051, 052

Allan Schauber
MS 153

Upper Bay Museum
MS 164, 165

Ed Wallace
*Wildfowl Carving
by Ed Wallace*
MS 060

Chris & Joe Pagano
Walnut Street Studio
MS 138

Mike Smyser
Mike Smyser Decoys
MS 139, 140

Chuck Usilton
C & L Antiques
MS 094

Walter Williams
*Wings Over the Beach
Decoys*
MS 016, 017

Jim Pierce
Pierce's Decoys
MS 166, 167

David Sproates
MS 018

William Veasey
MS 001, 002

Ellis C Porter
MS 187

Henry Stansbury
Stansbury Decoys
MS 067, 068

Patrick Vincenti
Vincenti Decoys
MS 038, 039, 043, 044, 045,
046, 047, 048

Chris Worch
MS Gym Stage Right

Karen C Pruitt
Karen C Pruitt
MS 184, 185

Al Stickney
A. B Frost Collector
MS 174, 175

Marshall Purner
MS 049, 050

C. John Sullivan, Jr.
*C. John Sullivan Historic
Decoys*
MS 071, 072

Tom Reed
American Sporting Classics
MS 040, 041

Mary Ellen Terziu
M. E. Designs
MS 172

Dick Robinson
Robinson Decoys
MS 058, 059



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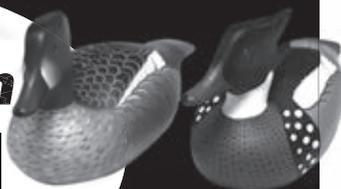
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J. Evans McKinney Old Decoy Contest

The 16th annual J. Evans McKinney Old Decoy Contest will be held on Saturday, May 5th at the Middle School Gym in conjunction with the 2018 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.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1 Best Upper Bay Teal or Ruddy | 6 Best Delaware River |
| 2 Best John Graham | 7 Best Mid Bay/Eastern Shore Diving Duck |
| 3 Best Holly Family | 8 Best Virginia Puddle Duck |
| 4 Best Art Boxleitner Decoy | 9 Best Non-Factory Shorebird |
| 5 Best Susquehanna "Up River" | 10 Best Unknown |



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 (waived for Best Art Boxleitner Decoy). 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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Festival Program



Admission
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Honorary Chairmen

J. Noble Mentzer of Havre de Grace, Maryland
& **John Hostetter** of Aberdeen, Maryland

Locations:

- Havre de Grace Decoy Museum
- Giles Street (DM)
- Havre de Grace Middle School
- Lewis Street (MS)

FRIDAY, MAY 4TH EVENT SCHEDULE

- 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm**
Carvers, Exhibitors, and Vendors
(see posted schedules)
- 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm**
Carving Competition Registration

SATURDAY, MAY 5TH EVENT SCHEDULE

- 7:00 am – 10:00 am**
Carving Competition River Gunning Events
Registration
- 8:00 am – 10:00 am**
Carving Competition Registration
- 9:00 am – 5:00 pm**
Carvers, Exhibitors, and Vendors
(see posted schedules)
- 10:00 am**
Old Decoy Contest Registration opens stage
- 10:00 am – 3:00 pm**
Raptors
near rear admission entrance facing the Activity Center
- 10:00 am – 12:00 pm**
Silent Auctions
Hallway by front admission entrance facing Revolution St.

Photography by Terri Shepke-Heppner

May 4th, 5th & 6th



10:00 am until complete
Atlantic Flyway Classic Carving
Competition Judging (S) grounds

- River Gunning Decoy Division
- Ed Watts Gunning Rig Division
- Tandem, Single, Pairs Competition

10:30 am until complete
Atlantic Flyway Classic Carving
Competition Judging (S) grounds

- Decorative L/S Floating Division
- Decorative L/S Non-Floating Division
- Decorative Miniature Division
- Whitey Frank Decorative Slick Division
- Decorative L/S Fish Division
- Youth Gunning Division
- Gunning Decoy Division
- Shorebird Division

12:00 pm & 2:00 pm
Retriever Dog Demonstrations (S) grounds

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm
Old Decoy Contest (S) stage

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Silent Auctions (S) stage
Hallway by front admission entrance facing Revolution St.

SUNDAY, MAY 6TH EVENT SCHEDULE

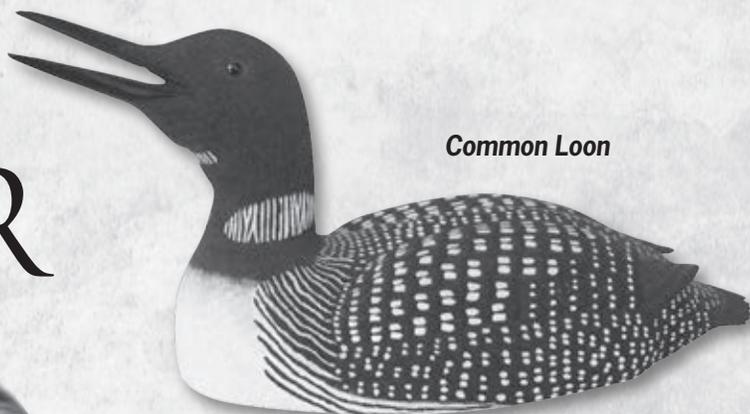
10:00 am – 4:00 pm
Carvers, Exhibitors, and Vendors (S) (S) stage
(see posted schedules)

3:30 pm
Festival Raffle Drawing (S) stage
Lobby front admission facing Revolution Street

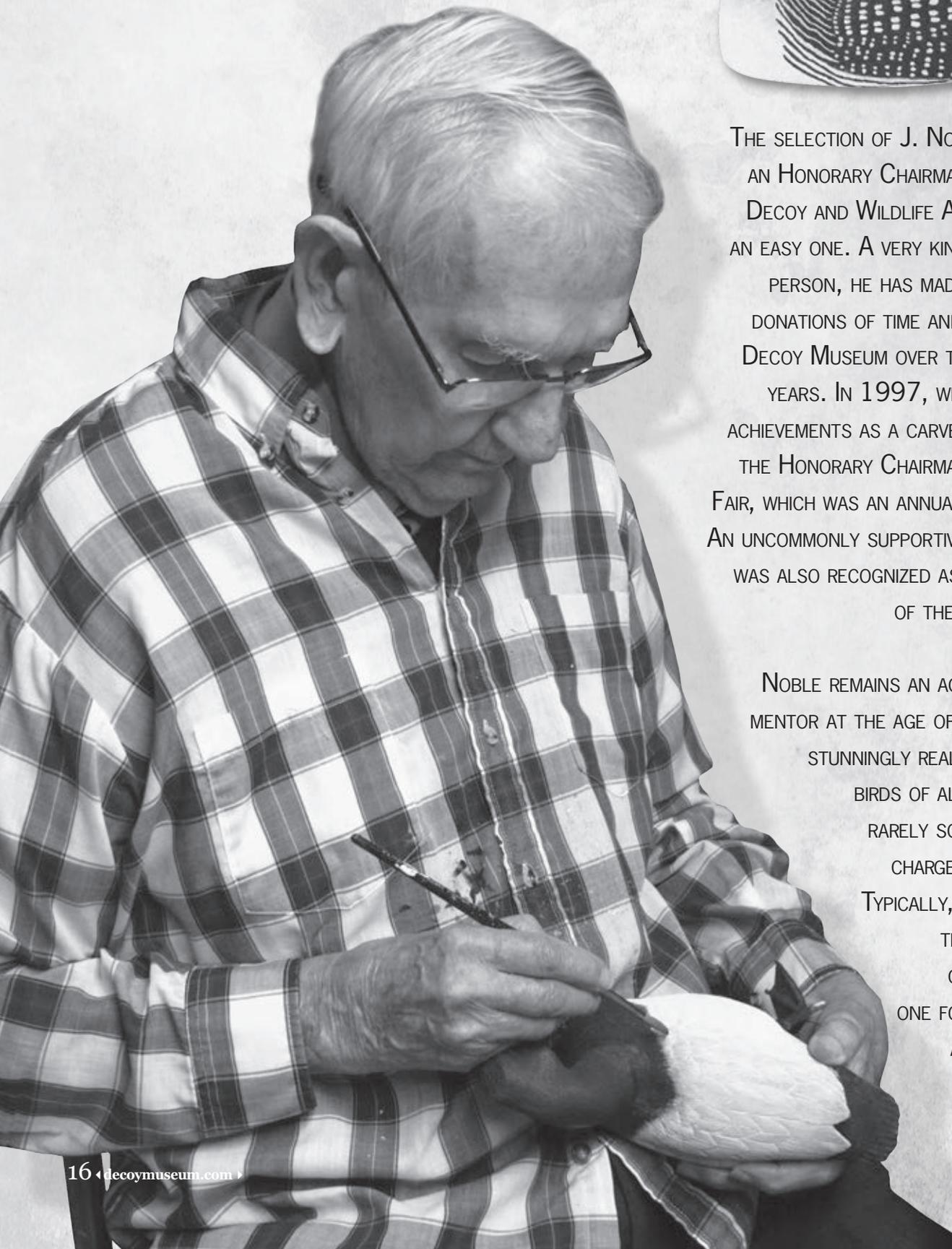
4:00 pm
Festival Closes



NOBLE MENTZER



Common Loon



THE SELECTION OF J. NOBLE MENTZER AS AN HONORARY CHAIRMAN OF THE 2018 DECOY AND WILDLIFE ART FESTIVAL WAS AN EASY ONE. A VERY KIND AND GENEROUS PERSON, HE HAS MADE EXTRAORDINARY DONATIONS OF TIME AND SERVICE TO THE DECOY MUSEUM OVER THE PAST 30-ODD YEARS. IN 1997, WE RECOGNIZED HIS ACHIEVEMENTS AS A CARVER BY NAMING HIM THE HONORARY CHAIRMAN FOR THE DUCK FAIR, WHICH WAS AN ANNUAL AUTUMN EVENT. AN UNCOMMONLY SUPPORTIVE VOLUNTEER, HE WAS ALSO RECOGNIZED AS THE VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR IN 1999.

NOBLE REMAINS AN ACTIVE CARVER AND MENTOR AT THE AGE OF 90 AND CARVES STUNNINGLY REALISTIC DECORATIVE BIRDS OF ALL KINDS. HE HAS RARELY SOLD A CARVING OR CHARGED FOR A LESSON. TYPICALLY, HE CARVES ONLY THREE OF A KIND — ONE FOR HIS SON, ONE FOR HIS DAUGHTER, AND ONE TO KEEP FOR HIMSELF.



Oriole



Bluejay



Goldfinch



Raven

Noble served as a docent at the Decoy Museum for many years leading countless adult and senior tours, offering insights on carving and wildlife that only a talented carver and Havre de Grace native can do. But Noble has been at his best when working with groups of children and giving them a memorable and positive experience. In past years, he was responsible for the children's miniature decoy painting booth at the Decoy Festival and the Duck Fair. His patience and gentle heart could enthrall a class of easily-distracted second graders – not an easy task – as he explained the three classes of ducks and the basics of carving. Carving as he spoke, Noble would draw the children into the lesson by asking them questions and allowing them to handle some of his birds.

Upon meeting Noble, one of the first things one notices is his hat, which boldly states "Combat Veteran – Korea". He is quick to express how proud he is of his military service, but in the next instant he adds in a somber tone of voice, "But I don't talk about it." That says it all. We move on.

Noble is the second youngest of five boys in his family, all of whom served in the military in World War II and afterwards. Of the five, he proudly notes that three of them served in the Army and three served in the Navy. As that odd fact slowly sinks in, the corners of his mouth turn up in a sly smile. Noble laughs and explains that he served two years in the Navy from 1948 to 1950, stayed in the reserves, and was called back to active duty in

1952 for the Korean War – but this time in the Army! Go figure. So, five brothers and six tours. The math works after all.

Noble was born in Elkton in 1927 and grew up during the Depression years on Otsego Street in Havre de Grace amid the city's waterfowling traditions. In addition to his four brothers – James, twins Ralph and Roy, and Bill, the youngest – he also had two older sisters, Irene and Betty. Their mother Clara, was a homemaker for her family of seven, and their dad John worked for the Standard Oil Company (now ExxonMobil).

In 1949, Noble married Dorothy Jones, the love of his life, his high school sweetheart, and his next-door neighbor. Their marriage produced a son Mark, a daughter Eileen, four grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren. Dorothy's death in 2009 left a "void that can never be filled" – one that is even more painful for Noble to discuss than his wartime experiences.

"Within two or three days" after returning from the Korean conflict, Noble went to work at Aberdeen Proving Ground. Except for a few years working for the Post Office, he remained at APG, climbing the management hierarchy until his retirement in 1983. He says his philosophy in life has always been to "treat people the way I want to be treated; I want to make people happy."

Through the years, he has made time to be active in many local organizations, often attending two meetings in an evening. Noble says, "I worked hard

in my community." A Christian, he has been devoted to his church and found particular satisfaction in youth programs and teaching Sunday school. His spirituality is also expressed in his participation in the Masonic Lodge. Noble served as president of the Parent-Teacher Association and has been active with the Boy Scouts.

He is a lifetime member of Havre de Grace's volunteer fire company, which he joined in 1954 and rose to become president. Noble's great pride in his military service is exemplified in his dedication as a member of both the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion.

In 1972, Noble developed atrial fibrillation and recognized that as a warning to slow down. So, he began to consider hobbies. Dorothy was an active knitter, so he regarded that as a possibility. He figured if professional football player Roosevelt Grier could knit as a stress reliever, he could too!

But Noble's brother-in-law invited him to come along and observe a carving class taught by Pete Taylor. That was all it took. "I fell in love with carving and couldn't get enough of it," he says. He took instructions from Pete for two years, and his first carving was a little cardinal. Additional local sources for instruction and inspiration were Bill Veasey and Bill Weaver, and he learned to refine his painting style from Jan Calvert.

Upon retirement from APG in 1983, he built a small workshop behind his house

and began carving on his own. The rough and dirty tasks of woodworking are confined to the workshop, and Noble does all of the painting in a workspace in his basement where he also has a small library of reference books to make sure his depiction is accurate.

Even as he was learning, it should come as no surprise that Noble was also developing a teaching style. Through the years he has generally had an apprentice or protégé working with him, and he discovered that he was pretty good at teaching the art of carving birds. He loves to instruct and mentor new carvers – adults and children alike – and says that he learns as much from his students as he does from the experienced carvers who are his own teachers. In teaching left-handed people, he had the idea to set up a mirror in the shop to enable a southpaw apprentice to observe the inversion of Noble's right-handed demonstrations.

His reputation as a very talented artist grew, and people began to approach him to make specific pieces for them. But he quickly realized that the stress of trying to accommodate other people's expectations and timelines was counterproductive to the original motivation for getting into carving as a stress-relieving hobby! Consequently, Noble abandoned the idea of carving as an income source and does it strictly for the personal satisfaction.

About 18-years ago, local nurse anesthetist Jack Hitchens approached Noble with an incomplete wood duck that his late father had made and that he wanted to learn how to finish. That was the beginning of a relationship that continues to this day. Noble and Jack start a new project in January and finish it in time for Christmas. Their family members receive a carving from that project.

Canvasback Drake & Hen



Lesser Scaup Pair Drake & Hen



Snowy Owl



Cinnamon Teal Drake



Canvasback Nest



Blue-Winged Teal Drake & Hen



Northern Shoveler Drake



Atlantic Puffin



Ruddy Duck Drake



Green-Winged Teal Drake



Green-Winged Teal Hen



Greater Scaup Drake



Noble tries to make his carvings as lifelike as possible, and his ability to create realistic feathering and coloring is truly exceptional. He prefers to work with basswood (aka linden), which “has a nice grain and is an easy-carving wood.” Noble also uses some paulownia (aka empress tree), and his workshop stores many interesting pieces of driftwood that he has found along the banks of the Susquehanna and the Bay, which can be incorporated into some of his projects.

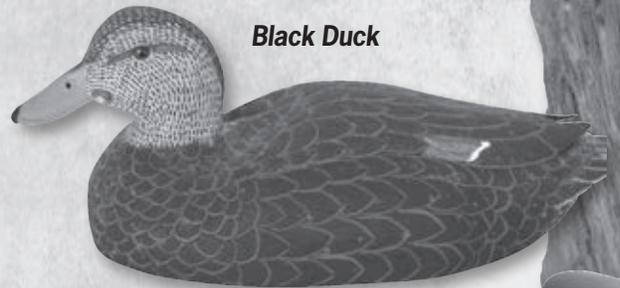
The fine detail of individual feathers is added with a wood burner. Painting is done with acrylics, and he dilutes the paint one-part paint to 10 or 20 parts water. Feather by feather he applies multiple very thin coats – sometimes as many as 20 to 25 coats – to achieve soft and realistic coloration while at the same time preserving the detailed veining in the individual feathers. His fine carvings can take months to complete.

Jack Hitchens has diligently cast and molded some of Noble’s smallest carvings, retaining the fine details of the original. Some are traditional miniature decoys, and others are beautiful duck pins. Noble paints these reproductions and hands them out to people as a special treat. He says, “People are so happy to receive them, and that makes me feel good.”

In 1996, Noble donated to the Decoy Museum a magnificent pair of decorative wood ducks, which we placed in a stand-alone case in the second-floor Carvers’ Gallery. Recently he very generously contributed his entire collection of magical carvings to us, and we also have them displayed prominently in the Carvers’ Gallery. Come see them!

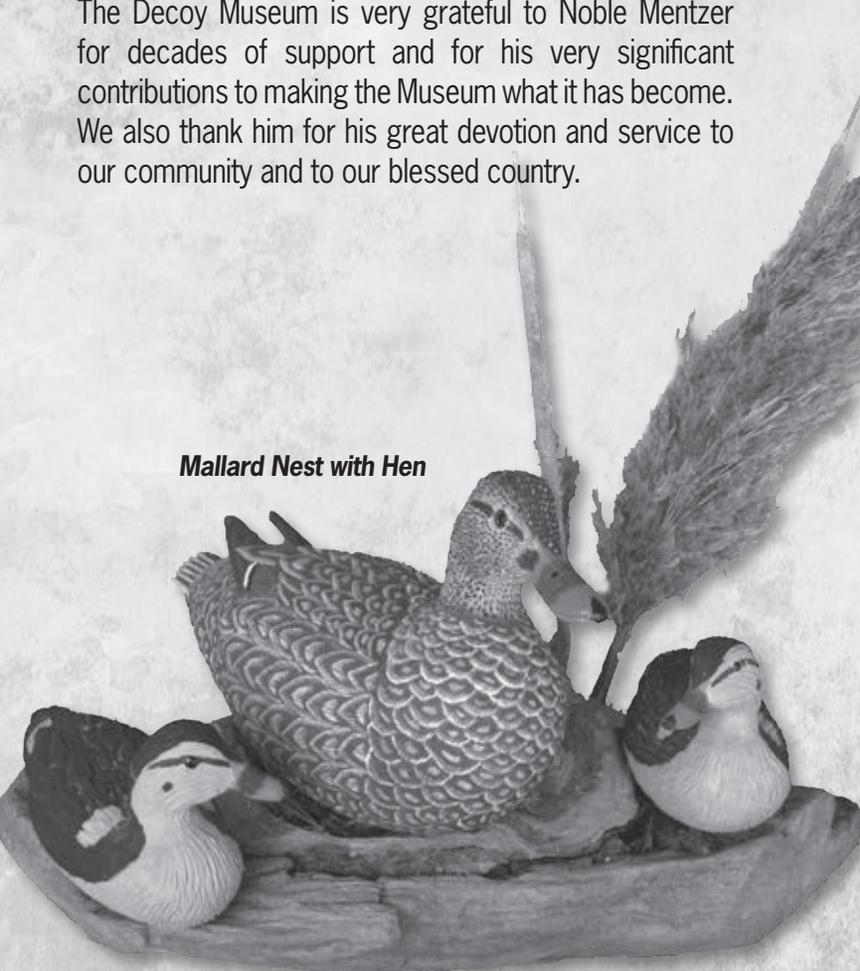


The Decoy Museum is very grateful to Noble Mentzer for decades of support and for his very significant contributions to making the Museum what it has become. We also thank him for his great devotion and service to our community and to our blessed country.



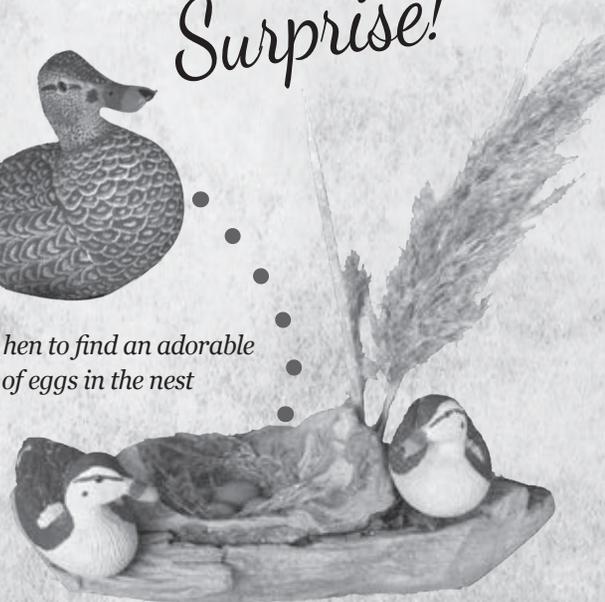
Black Duck

Mallard Nest with Hen



Surprise!

Remove the hen to find an adorable clutch of eggs in the nest





Mallard Flying Drake



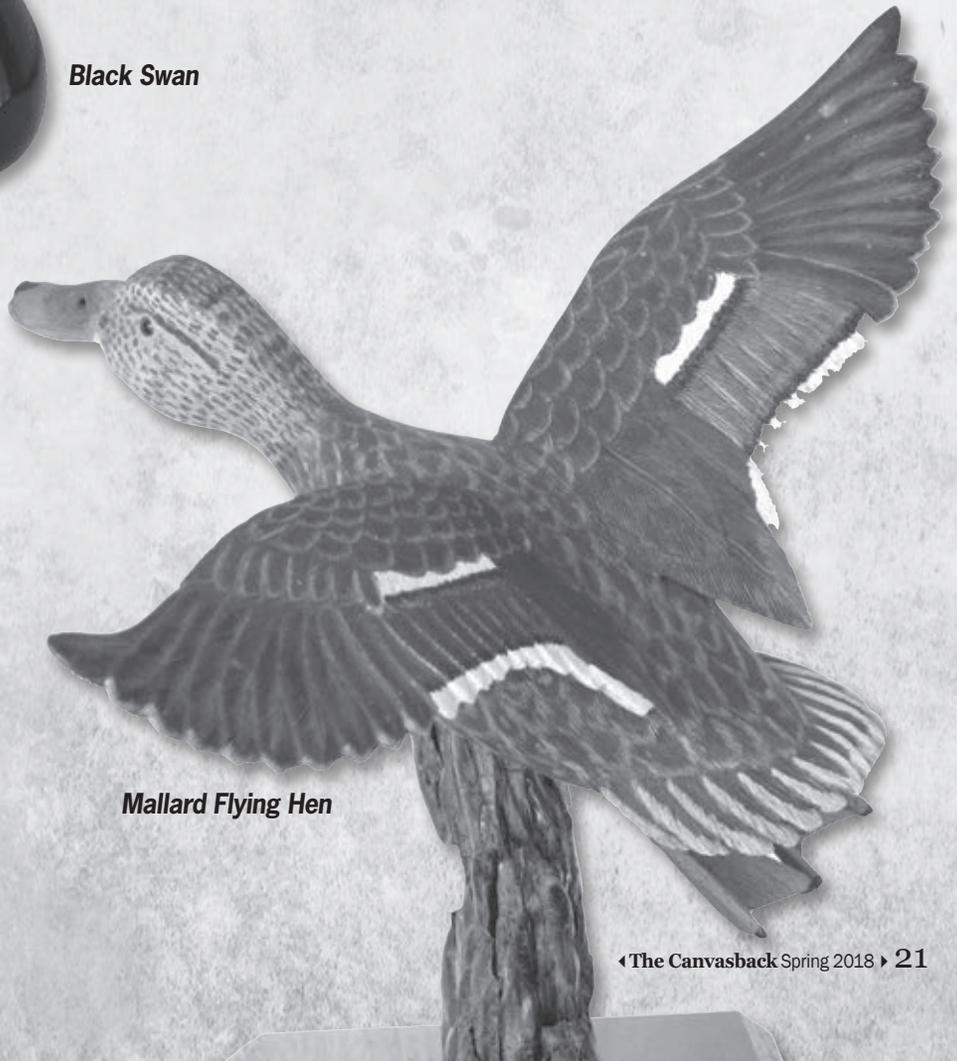
Canada Goose



Black Swan



Mallard Drake



Mallard Flying Hen



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Eagle
 by Noble Mentzer

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Museum News

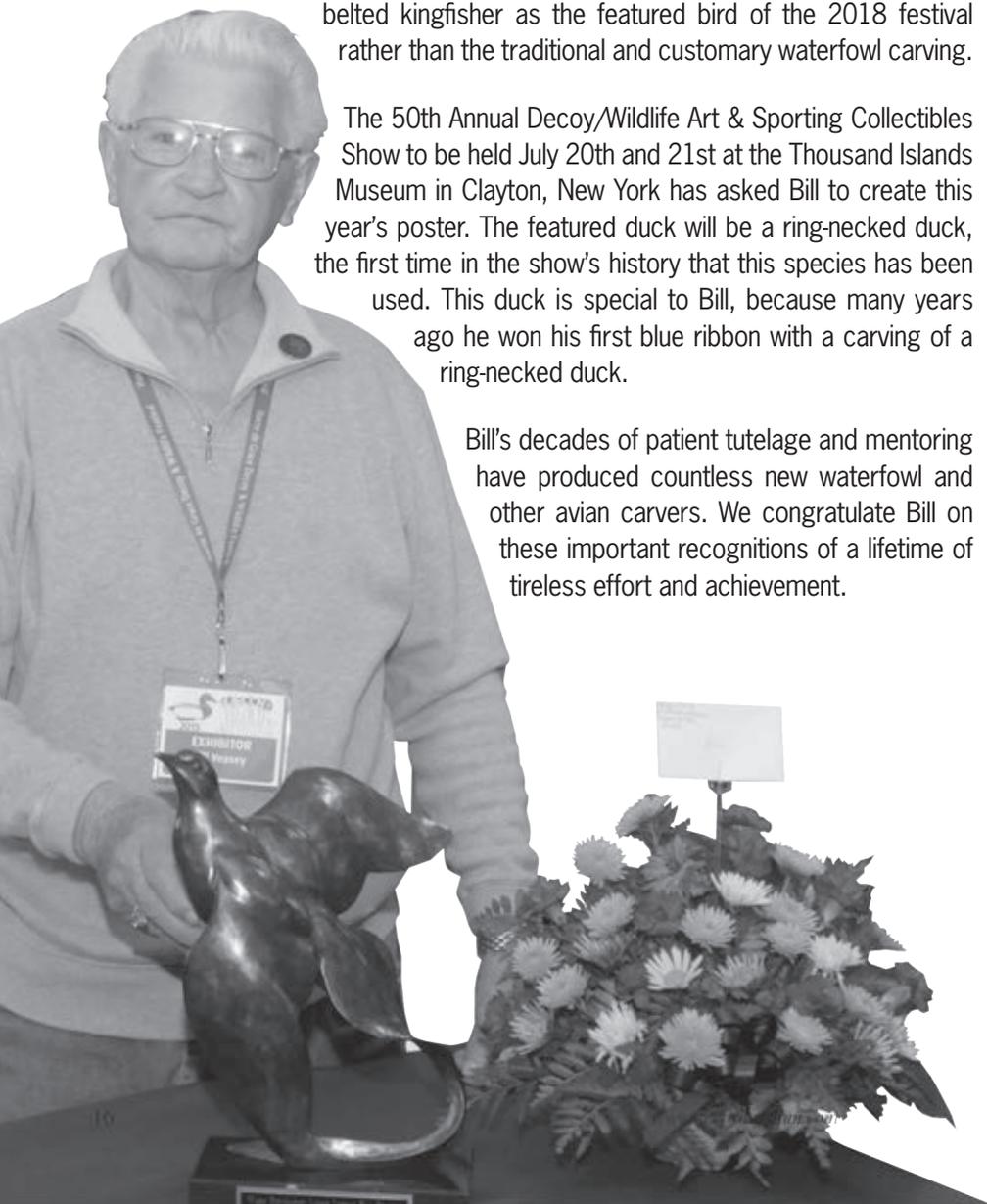
BILL VEASEY

Former Decoy Museum board member Bill Veasey has recently received some high praise and honors! The University of Delaware Library has requested a complete set of his books for their Special Collections Division archive. The University of Delaware is a colonial-era school that is by most measures the sixth-oldest in the country. The library boasts a collection of 2.8 million books and journals dating from the from the 15th century to the present day. Bill's life work is now secure and in good company.

The Core Sound Decoy Carvers Guild at Harkers Island, North Carolina has chosen Bill as the 2018 Featured Carver for its 31st annual Core Sound Decoy Festival to be held the first full weekend in December. By special request, Bill will be making a belted kingfisher as the featured bird of the 2018 festival rather than the traditional and customary waterfowl carving.

The 50th Annual Decoy/Wildlife Art & Sporting Collectibles Show to be held July 20th and 21st at the Thousand Islands Museum in Clayton, New York has asked Bill to create this year's poster. The featured duck will be a ring-necked duck, the first time in the show's history that this species has been used. This duck is special to Bill, because many years ago he won his first blue ribbon with a carving of a ring-necked duck.

Bill's decades of patient tutelage and mentoring have produced countless new waterfowl and other avian carvers. We congratulate Bill on these important recognitions of a lifetime of tireless effort and achievement.



New Carving Room Chairs

We have been increasing the number of classes in the Carving Room, especially among the Cub Scout and Boy Scout groups. But the condition of the old stools had become a problem that made the learning experience uncomfortable at best and perilous at worst. Our great friends and supporters Dan and Cindy Lee at MacGregor's Restaurant came to the rescue. We now have 19 brand-spanking new stools in the Carving Room that are adjustable for every possible size and shape of learner. What a MAJOR improvement!

But one look at the new stools begged the question of how we could keep them looking so nice. Patty Smith, wife of Decoy Museum board member Steve Smith, solved that problem! Patty is a very serious quilter, so knocking out 19 new washable seat covers on her special sewing equipment was a piece of cake for her.

We are very grateful to Dan, Cindy, and Patty for making a big difference with their volunteer efforts. Please return the favor. For lunch, a night out, or catering a special event, try MacGregor's. If you are looking for a custom quilt, call Patty. Among other things, she makes great sentimental "memory quilts" out of special tee shirts and other apparel.



From the Executive Director...

While the winter months are typically a bit slower in terms of visitation to the Museum, we have been very busy completing other projects and gearing up for a very busy Spring! Our staff and volunteers have completed a thorough inventory of items in our Museum Store and are working hard to clean up our membership records. We are also gearing up for our new Field Experience for third-grade students, which is scheduled to occur in late March, and for multiple other elementary school visits which will occur in April and May. It is always a blessing to have our local children visiting and learning the heritage of waterfowling and decoy carving!



And speaking of children, we are ready for another large (hopefully!) group of families to join us on March 31st for our new Easter Scavenger Hunt and Craft Time! This event will mark the re-opening of the R Madison Mitchell shop for 2018, so stay tuned for announcements regarding the Spring/Summer schedule of carvers!

We began a new social media initiative in February, sharing the history of individual carvers on our Facebook page. This initiative has been very well received and we are thrilled to see so many sharing photos and stories of their own in response to our postings. If you haven't already, please Like our page and Share our stories!

Finally, we have been in full-swing planning for our 37th Annual Decoy & Wildlife Art Festival and are looking forward to another successful event. Please plan to join us for this exceptional weekend! If you have a bit of spare time and would like to help us out in some small way during the weekend, please give me a call.

Best,

Current Exhibits @ the Museum

- **A new exhibit in the library from John Collier's extensive collection of carvings by renowned Crisfield carvers Lem and Steve Ward, including the legendary Lem Ward eagle.**
(coming in late April)

- A rare exhibit of Carteret County and Core Sound, North Carolina decoys, courtesy of Kroghie Andresen and the Carolina Decoys Collectors Association.

- The breathtaking decorative carvings from the personal collection of master carver and 2018 Festival honoree J. Noble Mentzer.

- A unique collection of North American songbird carvings donated by 2018 Festival honoree John Hostetter, Jr. in memory of his parents, John Sr. and Edith Hostetter

- A sampling from Bob Gregg's extensive collection of Dan Carson decoys.

- The Potomac Decoy Collectors Assoc. stunning collection of nearly seven-dozen colorful and elegant wood ducks in the Carvers' Gallery.

- The Home Run Baker rig and bushwhack boat.

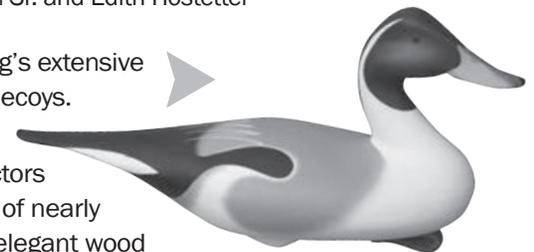
- A traditional tule decoy in the centuries-old "Lovelock style" by Paiute decoy maker Joe Allen.

- A teal carved in the 1930s by Joseph Coudon of H, a gift from Pat Doherty.

- A beautiful decorative eastern blue bird carved by master carver Barb Wachter

- A lifelike rockfish (striped bass) carved by master carver Lee Tate, Sr.

- The extraordinary pair of "Daddy" Holly canvasbacks, a gift from the Michael family.





Museum News

OBITUARIES

John Edward Simperts, Sr. of Havre de Grace passed away on January 21, 2018 at the age of 73. John was the son of Elmer and Ethel Warner Simperts. He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Florence Simperts, and his daughter Lisa Michele Simperts. His son John Edward Simperts, Jr. predeceased him.

John served in the Army National Guard from 1963-1972 and worked at Aberdeen Proving Ground testing artillery. He loved baseball and being around the kids at Havre de Grace Little League where he was an umpire for 46 years. He was also an avid reader, a Fox News fan, and a true American patriot who always supported his country and the military.

Most of all, he was a passionate fisherman, crabber, and hunter who shared many great times on the Susquehanna River, the Chesapeake Bay, and its many tributaries teaching friends and local youth the ways of the water. A true waterman, his exploits have become the stuff of legends. Everyone has a story about John Simperts, or knows someone who has a story, and through those tales he will live on.

Eleanor Duvoisin “Elly” Coale passed away peacefully at her home in Havre de Grace on January 26, 2018 at the age of 91 after a brief illness. For devotees of “House of Cards”, Elly’s lovely home starred as President Underwood’s “Gaffney house” in the many episodes filmed in Harford County. Elly grew up in Baltimore, attended the Park School, and graduated from the College of William & Mary. She was married to lifelong Harford Countian Henry Cole for 30 years until his death in 1988.

Elly worked at Johns Hopkins Hospital and later Harford Memorial Hospital. After her retirement, she became active with the Lions Club in addition to being one of the Decoy Museum’s most devoted volunteers. Elly was a familiar face at the front desk greeting our visitors. She helped to organize the “No-Bake Bake Sale”, which was always a financial success (with no calories), and she was the 2002 Volunteer of the Year. But Elly was also a force behind The Canvasback, and hers were the last eyes to review the proofs before they went to print. Not many typos escaped her sharp eyes. Elly was wonderful, and we will miss her terribly. She is survived by her loving sister Grace Bell, nieces, nephews, grandnieces, grandnephews, cousins, friends, and her beloved (but sometimes irascible) gray cat, Stella.

William Albert “Bill” Streaker, Cecil County decoy maker and an active member of the Upper Chesapeake decoy community, passed away on December 15, 2017. He was 81. The grandson of a North East, Maryland market hunter, Bill grew up with a love for the history and traditions of his native Susquehanna Flats.

As a young man, he made a few decoys for his own gunning use and began carving miniatures in the 1960s. Early visits to the shops of Madison Mitchell, Paul Gibson and the Ward Brothers only fueled his interest in crafting his own decoys. Inspired largely by the work of William Heverin and the Lockards, Bill used a duplicating lathe made for him by Howard “Ducky” Foreaker to turn his bodies but finished them and carved his heads entirely by hand. There was intentionally a great degree of variety in his carving style over the years.

Upon retirement from DuPont in 1992, Bill grew his hobby of carving into a full-time business. His first show as an exhibitor was at the Cecil-Harford Hunters’ Association at the Elkton Armory in 1969. For the next three decades, he was a fixture at the Upper Shore Decoy Show and the Havre de Grace Decoy & Wildlife Art Festival, among others. Bill was an active member of the Upper Bay Museum, serving as museum secretary for five years and frequently involved in volunteer efforts to expand public education on decoys and Chesapeake Bay conservation. He was honored by Delaware Ducks Unlimited as the group’s 1995 Carver of the Year and was profiled in the spring 1998 issue of The Canvasback. Bill was a kind, talented and generous man. He will be greatly missed. *(courtesy of Chad Tragakis)*



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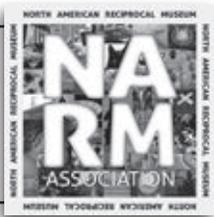
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John Hostetter

was born in the Cecil County village of Rowlandsville, along Octoraro Creek, and has grown a successful insurance agency in Aberdeen over the past 40 years. Very community minded, John has always been an avid and generous supporter of the Decoy Museum and was a long-time Board member. He recently made a very significant donation



of songbird carvings in memory of his parents, John and Edith Hostetter, which are now on display in the Carvers' Gallery. He has once again generously supported the Decoy Festival and is the leading sponsor for 2018. We are very grateful to him in more ways than we can count.

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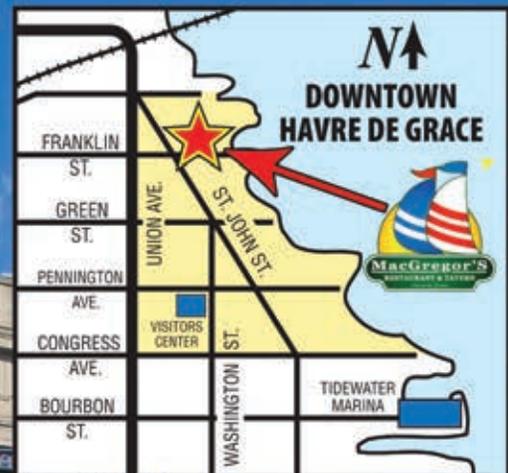
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