# The Canvasback

HAVRE DE GRACE DECOY MUSEUM

Summer 2021 Vol. 31 No. 2

# Cleveland Canvasbacks

and the second second

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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.

### FUNDED IN PART BY







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### ON THE COVER

Bernie Bodt explains the use of the battery gun and sneak boat in the days of waterfowl market hunting. *Cover photo by Mike Tarquini. Decoy photo by John Henry.* 

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# The Canvasback

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# From the President...

As of this writing, COVID seems to be retreating, vaccinations are on the increase, face mask requirements have been relaxed by the CDC and the State's positivity rate has dipped below 1%. All measures point to some return to normalcy. It has been a tough and unusual fifteen-months for everyone. Hopefully, it is all behind us now and our focus can turn to enjoying life as we once knew it.



Despite having to change our format, the 39th Annual Decoy & Wildlife Art Festival was by all accounts very successful. The event got off to a great start with our annual carvers' reception on Friday evening at the museum. An estimated one hundred-fifty guests attended to witness the dedication of our outdoor artwork by Harford County Executive Barry Glassman, congratulate Jim Pierce and Allen Fair on earning their prestigious honors as Harford Living Treasures, greet Honorary Festival Chairman Captain Jeff Coats and honor legendary carver David Blackiston as the museum opened an exhibit of his fine work. On Saturday, forty-six exhibitors took place in an outdoor tailgate event that attracted hundreds of patrons. Our exhibitors indicated that traffic at their tables was steady throughout the day, and sales were strong. The contestant pool was again vibrant at all three of our decoy competitions as carvers vied for recognition as "The Best in Show." In 2022, the 40th Annual Decoy & Wildlife Festival (April 30 – May 1) will again return to its traditional two-day format and take place at the new Havre de Grace Middle/High School. We are proud to have Charles Pierce serve as our Honorary Chairman.

As the annual Festival ended, the focus at the Museum turned to preparing ourselves for post-COVID life. As the percentage of the population obtaining full vaccination approaches 70%, the museum is experiencing an up-tick in visitation and calls for information about our program offerings. This is true testimony that tourism is bouncing back and that it is time to get the museum prepared for what is ahead. To that end, we have increased our staff and begun to extend our reach by planning a presence at local events promoting the museum. Be sure to stop by our table at local events and say hello to our cheerful staff members who will be there to share museum happenings with you.

Inside the museum, we have been focused on improving our gift shop offerings, re-organizing our unrestricted donations, refurbishing our carving classroom, and sorting through thirty-five years of files. Through the generosity of DXI Construction and the City of Havre de Grace our front parking lot has been graded and repaved. This completes our two-year effort at improving the entrance area to our museum and hopefully serves to attract additional guests to explore all we have to offer.

We hope to see each and everyone of you as it again becomes safe to leave our homes and explore all that the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum has to offer.

Mike Tarquini Board President 40th Annual

# Decoy & Wildlife Art festual

Gave the Date!

Bluebill Drake by Charlie Pierce



Honorary Chairman Charlie Pierce

# April 29, 30 & May 1 • 2022

April 29 Exhibition Set-up & Carvers Reception at Museum

April 30 & May 1 Decoy & Wildlife Exhibition New Havre de Grace Middle/High School



Mindy Elledge

On Missing Mindy

By Lloyd & Ginny Sanders

Mindy Elledge, a 21-year member of our Museum's management team, has retired effective June 30, 2021. Mindy was an extremely valuable asset to the Museum and will be missed by lots of people and for a variety of reasons. She was involved in nearly every aspect of the Museum's progress and evolution throughout the last two decades. When a significant



project was underway, Mindy was there to ensure that it was done correctly, and under-budget.

The Board of Directors will miss her professionalism, financial expertise, dedication, mild-mannered demeanor and get-it-done management style. Whether it involved systems to manage our finances, decoy collection or point of sales to manage the gift shop, Mindy was insistent that our Museum adopt only state-of-the-art management tools and procedures.

The staff and volunteers will miss the incredible and seemingly irreplaceable amount of institutional knowledge that Mindy developed. Questions from staff members were always welcomed and answered with a smile.

Perhaps the peo

The Decoy Museum gives Mindy a proper send-off.

Perhaps the people who will miss Mindy the most are the inquisitive Museum visitors who will unwittingly benefit from her hard work and enjoy the Museum for many years to come.

We would like to express our sincere thanks for a *Job Well Done*, plus extend best wishes and every happiness to Mindy as she begins a new chapter in her life. She will definitely be missed!

Mindy & Susan - the changing of the guard. Photo by Mike Tarquini

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# Fresh air never fett so good!

By Dan Thanh Dang

Photos by Kyle Presnell

# 39TH ANNUAL DECOY & WILDLIFE Internet of the second second







Buoyant smiles and heartfelt fist bumps welcomed returning duck enthusiasts to the 39th annual Decoy & Wildlife Art Festival in Havre de Grace in April after a long, soul-sapping Covid 19 pandemic shut down festivities and all social activities last year.

Held at the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum, the festival boasted a welcoming cocktail party to open the ceremony on April 30, followed by a tailgate party, 46 exhibitors and several different decoy competitions that took place outside under sunny skies the next day.

While the event was smaller compared to years' past when the festival was held at the Havre de Grace middle and high schools, this year's outdoor event was a refreshing break for visitors who had been cooped up at home in isolation during the global coronavirus health threat.

"I am really happy to be here since a lot of shows have been canceled," said John Eichelberger of Lancaster, Pa., who was overjoyed to bring his decoys to the show. "A lot of these are my Covid birds because I had a lot of time on my hands to carve while I was stuck at home."

For the Decoy Museum, the festival is a major fundraiser that attracted hundreds of collectors, carvers, hunters and the inquisitive from the Chesapeake Bay region, and served as a highly anticipated economic boon for the selfproclaimed Decoy Capital of the World. For everyone else, the event was a fusion of art, history, nature and Americana at its best.

"If you love any of those things, you'll find something to love about decoys," said Chad Tragakis, president of the Potomac Decoy Collectors Association. "If you love all those things, you'll love everything about decoys."

With Captain Jeff Coats serving as honorary Festival Chairman, a cocktail party kicked off festivities as guests congratulated Harford Living Treasure Award Winners Allen Fair and Jim Pierce. The celebration also honored 92-year-old Chestertown carver David Blackiston, whose family was in attendance to support the opening of his own exhibit showcasing beautiful roundbottom and flatbottom decoys produced over 34 years.

Cool, sunlit skies greeted guests at the tailgate on the first morning of May as exhibitors began setting up their tables with all things duck and bay, from paintings and decoys to duck calls and fish carvings.

Walking the grassy path down the exhibitor aisle, one could overhear 83-year-old carver Bill Schauber of Chestertown as he reminisced about the first Canvasback decoy he purchased for a dollar and the first decoy he made in 1966.

One could also eavesdrop on snippets of banter between collectors as they boasted their latest and greatest find in dusty attics and old garages.

And, where else could you bump into 87-year-old decoy maker and local historian Jim Pierce, who was lamenting about seeing fewer and fewer of his peers at the show?

As with prior years, the average age of festival guests skewed older and grayer.

But, if Luke Taylor is a hopeful sign of the future, the young 18-year-old carver traveled all the way from Warsaw, Va., with his father, Rich, to take in the spectacle and marvel at the Madison Mitchell decoys entered into the Old Decoy competition.

"When he was really young, the older guys were tickled to see someone so young enjoying the show," said Rich Taylor, who sparked his son's interest through hunting.

The younger Taylor nodded and said, "Some of the first ducks I shot, I wanted to mount them. My dad said you should take that money and buy decoys. So, I started buying them, but then I wanted to learn how to carve.

"A lot of people hunt, but they don't know the history of it and how it got started," he added. "I love the history of it."

That history stretches back to Indigenous Americans who handcrafted decoys out of reeds or bird skins mounted on floats or sticks, according to scholar Robert Shaw's "Tools of Deception: A History of American Bird Decoys."

According to Shaw, Americans began carving wooden birds in the late 1700s and the decoy as we know it came into being, starting first as work tools to attract flocks of birds for hunters. It was New York architect Joel Barber, however, who began collecting decoys in 1918 and became a tireless promoter of decoys as fine works of art to be admired on one's mantel.

That rich heritage is what brought people like James Sharpley from Cape May, NJ, to the festival to sell and find prized waterfowl from various regions, such as hollow, light-weight Jersey birds.

"You meet the greatest people in the decoy world," said Sharpley, a third-generation carver who brought an impressive display of decoys to sell, including a John Blair bluebill.













Inside the museum, collectors and carvers – still wearing masks as a precaution from spreading the still circulating virus – lined up to enter their prized possessions into competitions that included River Gunning, Carving and Old Decoys divisions. All winners were awarded ribbons corresponding to the species and categories for which they were entered.

Judges in each category deliberated on qualities such as individuality, condition, aesthetics, rarity, paint and pose. A complete list of winners can be found at www. DecoyMuseum.com

For David Walker, a lifelong Havre de Grace resident and carver, the return of the festival was significant since Covid canceled the event last year. "I was 12 when I started riding my bike down to Jimmy Pierce's place," Walker said. "I got tired of waiting for him to make me a decoy and so I painted them myself. He said, 'That's how you learn.'

<sup>44</sup>It's been a rough year," Walker added. "Some of these people I haven't seen in two years and this is the only time you get to see them. This festival is a local Chesapeake Bay and Havre de Grace tradition. It used to shut the town down with thousands of people. I haven't missed a show except for last year, so it's good to be back.<sup>99</sup>

# Quality & Variety Abound in the 2021 Evans McKinney Contest

By Chad Tragakis

One of the featured events at the 2021 Havre de Grace Decoy Festival was the 18th annual J. Evans McKinney Old Decoy Contest, named in memory of the late J. Evans McKinney, an early collector of Upper Bay Decoys and the author of "Decoys of the Susquehanna Flats and Their Makers." Over the years, the contest and resulting display of the winners has become one of the highlights and focal points of the festival.

The Havrede Grace Decoy Museum and Decoy Magazine co-sponsored the contest, which was coordinated once again by the Potomac Decoy Collectors Association in close partnership with museum curator, Ginny Sanders. The PDCA has a 20-year relationship with the museum, holding meetings and events there, making regular financial contributions, providing volunteers, and serving as guest curators for a rotating series of special exhibits.

Mike Daley and Joe Walsh were selected as this year's judges, and they were especially well-suited for the job. Mike recently published "Waterfowling on the Susquehanna Flats," and Joe recently published a special edition of his father's classic book, "The Outlaw Gunner." The contest drew 52 outstanding entries from 15 different collectors in the 10 contest categories. Selecting the winners from such a broad and remarkable field was not easy, but they dove in with gusto and determined the following entries to be the most deserving:



Virginia "Ginny" and Lloyd Sanders staffing the registration table for the J. Evans McKinney Old Decoy Contest.

PLACE	CATEGORY	OWNER	DECOY ENTERED
Best in Show Second Best in Show Third Best in Show		. C. John Sullivan, Jr. Collection . Richard Daggett Collection . Chad & Christy Tragakis Collection	0
Judges: Mike Daley & Joe Walsh	Best New England Decoy Best Shorebird Best Talbot County Decoy Best Potomac River Decoy Best Virginia Black Duck Best Crisfield Diving Decoy Best High-Head Decoy Best Susquehanna Flats Green-winged Teal	Kevin Peel Collection Don Kirson Collection Henry & Judy Stansbury Collection Chad & Christy Tragakis Collection Chad & Christy Tragakis Collection Richard Daggett Collection Don Kirson Collection C. John Sullivan, Jr. Collection C. John Sullivan, Jr. Collection	Joe Lincoln brant Ira Hudson lesser yellowlegs Capt. Frank Newnam redhead Albert Campbell ruddy duck Unknown black duck Unknown black duck Unknown black duck Charles Nelson Barnard canvasback Charles T. Wilson from the Mackey collection

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American Coot by Ralph Hockman

Belted Kingfisher by Scott Moody



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Wild Turkey by Nick Merrill



Black-crowned Night Heron by Ralph Hockman

Canada Goose & Goslings by Scott Krieger



Blue-winged Teal by Scott Moody



Gosling by Scott Krieger

Green Heron by Ralph Hockman

Bufflehead by Scott Moody Great Blue Heron by Ralph Hockman

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Red-winged Blackbird by Scott Moody

> Wood Duck Hen by Ralph Hockman



The proud owners of the Cleveland Canvasback decoys that participated in the Upper Bay Decoy Collectors Club event. Pictured from left to right (back row): S.R. Smith, Jim Lockard, Gary Armour, Lou Nolan, Bill Streaker (front row): Don Comegys, Paul Shertz, Kevin Peel. Photo courtesy of Jason Superczynski.

# A Step Back

n the shores of the North East River just a short distance from the famed hunting grounds known as the Susquehanna Flats lies Charlestown, MD, a quaint little town with a vast history of water fowling lure. vintage decoy makers, ducking clubs and fisheries dating back to early 1800's. On a cold April day, a small group of men and women from Harford and Cecil counties known as the "Upper Bay Decoy Collectors Club" hosted a unique event at Veterans Park that featured a collection of Cleveland canvasback decoys, a sink box demonstration, the firing of a battery gun, a tour of the famed Barnes Ice House (see accompanying article "The Barnes Ice House.") all followed by a brief program at the historic Wellwood Club. The event would draw approximately one-hundred onlookers from as far away as Washington DC. After nearly two years of planning, the club was able to float vintage decoys that are believed to have been made one hundred and forty years ago for US President Grover Cleveland (1837-1908) to gun over on the Susquehanna Flats.

#### **SETTING THE STAGE**

The day began with Club members launching an authentic sink box dating back to the late 1800's, once owned by the H.L Harvey Brothers (on loan from the Upper Bay Museum, North East, MD). The tide was extremely low because of steady winds coming out of the North leading up to the event. The air temperature was a chilly 25 degrees by the water's edge. As the truck and trailer carrying the sink box was slowly backed down the sandy beach front, it was evident this would be no easy task. With the help of six men, the sink box was successfully placed into the water, floating once again after all these years. With both anchors set to secure it in place and the four wings deployed, the mission was accomplished. *For additional information about sink boxes, see the accompanying article "The Sink Box."* 

The focus was now on putting out a rig of canvasback decoys in the river to add realism to the battery gun exhibition. Bryon Bodt worked diligently getting dozens of decoys in place that would serve as the backdrop for his dad's (Bernie Bodt) planned demonstration of the use of a sneak boat and battery gun. Once the decoy rig of over one-hundred birds was established, it was time to launch the sneak boat equipped with the battery gun.

The battery gun used for the demonstration was built by Bernie Bodt and consisted of five 8-gauge barrels mounted to a walnut base on a small skiff's bow. Complete with a kerosene lantern to shine on the raft of ducks at night, the sneak boat was quietly paddled toward the target. The battery gun was outlawed in 1918 due to the devastating effects they had on the canvasback and redhead duck populations. Battery guns were the little brother to the punt gun which was more commonly referred to as the big gun. Both guns were used for one purpose, killing ducks. *For additional information concerning battery guns, see the accompanying article "Battery Guns."* 

As Club members scampered about the waterfront area readying the stage for the big show, visitors were treated to tours of the Barnes Ice House, located on the property known as Veterans Park. The Ice House was built in 1890. It was originally a place where fish were stored. It was also used to store ice that was taken from the North East River during the winter months.

Nine Cleveland canvasback decoys were staged and on display under the pavilion situated near the waterfront patiently awaiting their opportunity to float again near the headwaters of the Chesapeake Bay. Attention turned to the actual "Cleveland" decoys. Nine decoys in total including a rare wooden sink box decoy and one lone redhead would make the journey from the pavilion to the waterfront. Club members carefully set them into the water for the first time in over one hundred years. For additional information concerning Cleveland canvasback decoys, see the accompanying article "Cleveland Canvasbacks."

The stage is set, the Battery gun is loaded, the decoys are out as well as the sink box and the Cleveland decoys have been deployed. It was time to give attendees what they came to see.

#### **SHOW TIME**

Bernie Bodt's battery gun slowly became visible from behind the bulkhead. Laying prone with the help of two small paddles, Bernie slowly sculled his skiff and gun in a stealth like fashion towards the stool of decoys set out earlier to simulate a sleeping raft of canvasbacks. As Bernie closed the distance to within a few yards, he signaled by raising one arm and within seconds the five-barrel gun roared to life, first the clear sound of one barrel, then another then the final three barrels sounding like one final shot. Within seconds it was over, all five barrels had discharged. A plume of white smoke drifted across the water- the gallery that assembled on the shoreline erupted in cheer and applause. One's imagination could only wonder how many ducks would have been left lifeless floating on the water if this were the real deal.

The attention shifted to the sink box surrounded with nine original Cleveland canvasbacks and one redhead decoy sitting almost motionless in the nearly still water as small waves lap at the shoreline. Club member Kevin Peel adorned in a vintage wax coated jacket and hat carrying his 1907 Winchester pump and seven rounds of 12-gauge blanks begins his journey towards the sink box. He wades into the Cleveland canvasback decoy spread and he climbs into the coffin of the sink box. The sink box is now resting almost level with the water with his added body weight. The audience on the beach waits silently like waiting for a championship winning putt at the Masters. Kevin lays motionless in the coffin box. In one seamless motion, he leans forward out of the box, raises the old Winchester, takes aim, and fires. He racks the pump action chambering a new shell. He fires again and again, three times in all. The powder smoke from the old Winchester drifted through the air, the crowd cheering and cell phone cameras raised taking photos of the memorable event. Kevin is perhaps now the only man that can claim that he shot out of a vintage sink box over a small rig of Cleveland canvasback decoys. Although highly effective, the sink box





was outlawed in 1934 due to its effectiveness of killing ducks. When it was in use, it was surrounded by as many as fivehundred or more wooden decoys carved by local makers along the Susquehanna Flats.

#### **THE AFTER PARTY**

After the demonstrations had ended, the event moved to a large tent set up across the street at the famous "Wellwood Club". The Wellwood was once a hunting and fishing club that was visited by several US Presidents. As one entered the space, nine Cleveland canvasback decoys were on display for all to see sitting on a large platform at the front of the tent on white table-cloth clad shelves supported by wooden crates -a fitting setting for such historic decoys. For additional information concerning the Wellwood Club, see the accompanying article "The Historic Wellwood Hunting Club."

A short program ensued with a welcome from Gary Armour, President of the Upper Bay Decoy Collectors Club. Lou Nolan, President of the Delaware River Decoy Collectors Club, addressed the crowd next and shared information about the famed Cleveland canvasback decoys. Larry Metz, owner the Wellwood Club, spoke about the history of the Wellwood. Finally, Kevin Peel shared some additional history of the Cleveland canvasback decoys. The formal program was short, but very informative for all that attended.

By any standard of measure, the event was a success for the Upper Bay Decoy Collectors Club and clearly achieved its goal -to educate all in attendance about Cleveland canvasback decoys, demonstrate the use of a sneak boat equipped with a battery gun and the use of a sink box.

Become a member of the Upper Bay Decoy Collectors Club and follow them on Facebook at "The Upper Bay Decoy Collectors Club."

The information for this article was obtained from Gary Armour, President of the Upper Bay Decoy Collectors Club, and Mike Tarquini.

### Cleveland Canvasbacks

Classic in form, rich in history, layered in mystery – they are the handsome duck decoys once gunned over by President Grover Cleveland, thusly dubbed by collectors the "Cleveland canvasbacks." Of all the "unknown" decoys to come from the Susquehanna Flats, it is these birds, of which about a dozen or so are known, that have captivated, beguiled, and delighted collectors more than any other.

The decoys, which date to about 1880, reflect the smaller, more compact dimensions of the earliest Susquehanna Flats canvasback lures. There is some variation among them in terms of size due to their handcrafted nature, but they typically measure about 14½- inches from bill to tail. The wonderfully sculpted bodies themselves measure 12-inches long, 6-inches across at their widest point and 3-inches deep. The rounded, smooth-flowing form to the bodies, ending in a stubby paddle tail, is contrasted by the angular, serious look to the heads, unusual in that the corners are square, not rounded, and the sides of the back are straight, not curved. The heads, not quite 4-inches high and attached directly to the body with no neck shelf, have a straight forward and downward tilt.

The Cleveland cans feature a simple stylized paint pattern, broadly representing the black, white, and maroon feathering of the canvasback. They were originally outfitted with leather lineties but many now have the later ring and staple hardware for line attachment. They also originally featured 3-inch by 2½-inch rectangular pad lead ballast weights but, on most examples, an additional 3-inch long Upper Bay style cast lead weight was added later, right over top of

the pad weight.

For more than 75 years, students of Upper Chesapeake Bay decoys have examined the photos (and the decoys themselves when possible), compared their characteristics and come to their own conclusions, some making their own educated attributions. Many collectors believe the rig of "Cleveland cans" was gunned at the prestigious Wellwood Club overlooking the North East River in Photo courtesy of John Henry

Charlestown, the Cecil County, Maryland community that was home to five of the Susquehanna Flats' most esteemed carvers, including John Graham.

Because of their basic similarities, some have attributed the decoys to Graham, but there are simply too many characteristics unique to these birds to support that assertion. Given their similarities, however, it is easy to believe that another member of the Graham family may well have crafted them. Many collectors and historians justly theorize that John learned the craft from his father William and grandfather Zachariah. The elder Grahams were woodworkers, cabinet makers and undertakers by trade, so making decoys would have come easily to them and would certainly have been a welcome source of additional income as demand from local waterfowlers grew.

To date, about a dozen full-bodied Cleveland canvasback drakes have surfaced, along with two canvasback hens, one canvasback wing duck and two redhead drakes. Most of the decoys are unmarked, but some have a 1<sup>3</sup>/4-inch by 1-inch block letter "E" or a 3/8-inch-long serifed letter "X" branded into the rear of their back, just before the tail. Others also exhibit the initials "AD" carved into the underside. This suggests there may have been more than one rig of birds by the maker, or the marks may simply indicate different gunners who all used them at the Wellwood Club.

Of all the hundreds of special decoys in Joel Barber's vast collection, something about the Cleveland canvasback really spoke to him, for even though he could never put a name on it as to the maker, it was one he consistently exhibited and featured in his published works. Barber (1876-1952) the undisputed father of decoy collecting, featured them five times in his pioneering 1934 book, *"Wild Fowl Decoys."* 

Evans McKinney (1913-2000), the foremost scholar on Flats decoys, considered the Cleveland canvasbacks in his collection to be among his finest decoys. He pictured and discussed them in his book, *"Susquehanna Flats Decoys and Their Makers,"* and proudly featured one on his own business card. Barber and McKinney knew a thing or two about decoys and they both knew just how special the Cleveland canvasbacks truly are. The one thing they did not know was who made them. But they recognized greatness when they saw it.

This article was excerpted from CLEVELAND CANVASBACKS, The Ultimate Susquehanna Flats "Unknowns" by Chad Tragakis. The article appeared in the May/June 2016 edition of Decoy Magazine.

Lou Nolan proudly displaying his Cleveland canvasback decoy. Photo courtesy of Jason Superczynski.



### The Sink Box

The Susquehanna Flats, affectionately referred to as "the Flats," are formed by a confluence of many rivers -the Susquehanna, North East, Elk, and Bohemia form a 15-square-mile delta-like area. These rivers carry with them fertile soil from a broad Upper Shore basin and empty their richness onto the flats, ensuring luxurious plant growth for waterfowl.

Here thousands upon thousands of ducks once concentrated in their ancestral winter home. The mighty canvasback probably gathered here in greater numbers than any place on earth and offered some of the world's best duck hunting.

This bonanza of open water required a highly specialized method to harvest its waterfowl. It is here that the sink box reached its finest and final hour. Though this method was widely used throughout the bay Country, the marriage of the flats and the sink box was best known and loved by all. Sink boxes were variously made but, for the most part, resemble a coffin in their construction. The boxes were made for single or double occupancy in a sitting or lying position. They are therefore properly referred to as single or double "lay-down" or "sit-down" batteries.

Fixed to the box were encircling wooden wings known as platforms. Flexible burlap- or canvas-covered wings were hinged to the platform to squelch the waves. The head of the box, which caught the heaviest seas, had three of those wings, while one sufficed elsewhere.

The fact that the box could be sunken nearly flush with the water was the secret of its success and gave the device its name. Extra 40-pound weights, as well as metal wing decoys, were used to "take her down". One double sit-down sink box near Bell's Island, North Carolina took more than two tons of extra weight. These weights were fitted in a waist compartment about the box.

The surface of the box was made to appear natural with flat-bottom wing decoys. The avidly sought 25-pound metal wing decoys went on the wooden platform. Because of their weight, they could not be used on the canvas wings. Flat-bottomed wooden decoys were used here and are exceptionally rare. These unique decoys were weighted at the bottom and anchored with a small line that passed through an opening in the material. This vent had the auxiliary purpose of allowing air trapped under the wings to escape.

In most instances a 15-knot wind could be tolerated in a sink box, but a real danger of swamping existed in heavier seas. With increasing wave action, a hunter could help himself by getting rid of some weight, raising the encircling lead collar, or retiring to a more sheltered area. At best, gunning with a sink box was wet, cold, and punishing work. Many factors had to be considered in putting out the decoys. It took nearly an hour to "set-up" the customary three-hundred decoys. The decoys were arranged to hide the box and pull the ducks down so they could not see the hunter. A right-handed man can swing to the left better than to the left -with this in mind, most decoys were placed to the left of the box in an egg- or diamond-shaped pattern. Approximately two-thirds of the decoys were at the foot of the box and the remainder close about the head.

Sink boxes were outlawed in Ohio in 1852, New Jersey in 1879, Michigan in in 1897, and Maryland and North Carolina in 1935.

The sink box information presented above was excerpted from the "The Outlaw Gunner" (2nd edition) by Dr. Harry M. Walsh with permission from Joe Walsh.

### Battery Guns



A battery gun mounted to the bow of a sneak boat. Photo courtesy of Mike Tarquini.

Battery guns were used in the same fashion as the larger punt guns but were not as popular. They were multibarreled, muzzle-loading guns arranged to shoot in series and connected to one stalk.

Basically, they were composed of old muzzle-loading shotguns, which had also been outlawed. But it was the new breechloaders with white-powder shells and not the law that replaced them. The evolution of these guns is interesting. The first were merely a row of individual guns fixed at the stock and barrel. A series of wires led to a single trigger halyard that fired them all. On later models, the stocks were removed, and the individual barrels fixed in a large wood or cement block. Each barrel (except the first and last) had two small holes drilled into the powder chamber. On one side was the sending vent, and on the other the receiving vent. A small trench extended from one barrel to the other. Firing the first barrel sent burning gas across to the second, and the process was repeated.

The barrels were set close together and spread to cover a wide area. The shot pattern from each barrel was set to eclipse those of its neighbors.

Any number of combinations of barrels were used, with three two-gauge guns or four four-gauge guns being very popular. There was one known battery gun with twelve twelve-gauge barrels near Smith Island.

In the open-trench style, the magazine area was covered with canvas or leather to keep the gas and particles from the explosion out of the hunter's eyes. The fumes from the black powder soon permeated the hunter, and it was not difficult to tell who had been shooting a battery gun.

For a right-handed man, the trigger assembly was on the right, and the firing order proceeded from right to left. For a left -handed man the mechanism worked in the opposite direction.

To ensure proper firing, fine powder was either placed directly into the trenches or jarred from the barrels in loading. Even so, ignition was not always reliable. This led to double-loading, as well as "hang-and-miss" firing.

To overcome these problems, the better and later guns had a connecting nipple between each barrel, usually made from an old .22 rifle barrel and threaded into position. If the vents were too large, the gun lost power. If too small, they misfired.

The average battery gun would open a ten-foot-wide pattern at 30 yards -the big punt guns could do about half that. When the fowl were spread out transversely, the battery gun was a little better. However, if the fowl were distributed along a more linear route, the big punt gun was superior. Hunters who shot both preferred the big punt guns.

The battery gun information presented above was excerpted from the "The Outlaw Gunner" (2nd edition) by Dr. Harry M. Walsh with permission from Joe Walsh.



The exterior of the Barnes Ice House. Photo courtesy of Mike Tarquini.

The Barnes Ice House was built in 1890 by Perry K. Barnes. Barnes and his half-brothers were fishermen. They also owned and operated the largest fishery in Cecil County. It was located on Carpenter's Point near the mouth of the North East River.

Fishing in Charlestown, MD had been a major industry since colonial times. Herring, shad, perch, and rockfish were caught in tremendous numbers. On June 11, 1880, history states that Perry Barnes made the largest recorded catch of rockfish in the Susquehanna River. He caught 12,000 pounds. Fish were packed in barrels and boxes with ice, taken to the Charlestown railroad station, and shipped to the larger markets in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York. Being such a successful fishery, one can see why he needed an icehouse.

Besides being fishermen, the Barnes brothers were also market duck hunters. Ducks were harvested on the North East River and the Susquehanna Flats by the thousands from 1850 until 1918 when hunting limits were established. These ducks were also packed in barrels, carted to the Charlestown railroad station and shipped to the larger markets in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York. Having a supply of ice on hand was very important -not for human consumption as we use it today, but for packing the fish and ducks for market.

In Perry Barnes' time, ice was chopped with axes or cut with saws and stored in the icehouse. The icehouse walls are boarded inside and out. In between the boards cork or sawdust served as insulation. It was a big job to fill the icehouse, but a necessary one.

# The Barnes Ice House

When refrigeration became available in the 1920's, the Barnes Ice House became a storage building. There are many artifacts left inside related to hunting and fishing.

The icehouse changed hands several times throughout its history but always remained in the Barnes family. When Perry K. Barnes died in 1919, the icehouse was taken over by his son, Harry Barnes until his death in 1954. The ownership of the icehouse transferred to Cranford "Cran" Henry whose mother was Emma Barnes Henry (Harry Barnes' sister). The Barnes Ice House was taken over by the town of Charlestown, after Elizabeth "Dolly" Henry's death 2011. The Barnes family owned the building, but the town of Charlestown always owned the property on which it was built. The Barnes family leased that property from the town of Charlestown.



Artifacts on display within the Barnes Ice House. Photo courtesy of Mike Tarquini.

The Barnes Ice House laid dormant for years after Elizabeth "Dolly" Henry's death and served primarily as a storage facility. It was not until Jeannette Armour, Oliver "Sonny" Diamonte and the Armour children lobbied the town of Charlestown in 2019 to lead an effort to restore the historic structure did things begin to change. According to Jeannette Armour, "the overall goal of the effort is to convert the Barnes Ice House into a museum to educate the younger generations about the history and importance of the North East River to the generations that preceded them." For the most part funding for the restoration has come from the Armour – Diamonte families.

The information for this article was obtained from Jeannette Armour and Oliver "Sonny Diamonte.

# The Wellwood Club, a Brief History

By Gerard W. Wittstadt, Jr., Esquire

The Wellwood Club today. Photo by Jim Carroll.



Known today for its delicious crabs, seafood, fine and casual dining- with an exceptional view, located on Lot 10 in historic Charlestown, Maryland, the Wellwood Club was originally a private hunting and fishing club known as "Ye Olde Homestead." Its founders, who had unofficial ties to the Republican Party of Philadelphia, had honorable intentions, establishing one of the finest gunning clubs in the United States. According to one of its founders Louis H. Eisenlohr, the Club was to be "an organization of optimist and humanitarians in the broadest sense. Its purpose is to promote the happy habitat, to reduce the friction of life to a minimum and increase the pleasure and existence to the maximum; to discourage strife and promote good fellowship."

During its heyday as a world-class gunning club, the Wellwood hosted presidents, governors, and members of Congress on a regular basis. President Grover Cleveland, who often hunted the Susquehanna Flats, occasionally stayed at the Wellwood, and Presidents Calvin Coolidge, Theodore Roosevelt, and John F. Kennedy are also included in the club's guest lists. In fact, President Roosevelt made a gift of a carved wooden eagle on one such stay. According to a sales listing in 1947, President Roosevelt also brought from the White House a gift of the Ebony Bar in one of the cocktail lounges in the Club. President Cleveland, one of the most sporting of all the presidents, had a special rig of canvasback decoys made for his trips to the North East River. Many speculate that the unknown carver was Charlestown resident, John B. Graham, but that claim has never been conclusively established. These decoys have become some of the most famous and sought-after group of decoys, called the "Cleveland canvasbacks."

In the 1920's, the Club undertook the renovation of the original building, by adding a second floor and expanding the building to accommodate its expanding membership roles and eventual transformation to a private country club. By this time, it became known as the Wellwood Country and Yacht Club, which included a nine-hole golf course, a duck pond, a swimming pool and a three-story dormitory called the "Cuba Inn" or "Cabana Inn."

This author has published a book on Charlestown, entitled *Maryland's Charles Town, 1742 and Beyond, a Pictural Tour of its History*, which contains a chapter dedicated to the Wellwood Club and includes many historically significant photographs, amongst them are a series of five images of the Wellwood, circa 1950 and courtesy of its current owner, Larry Metz. Those images include two plaques located inside the club at its entrance and over the fireplace. Those plaques respectively read "Who Crosseth This Threshold Is At Home" and "This fire will warm your body; it will not warm your heart." Today, those plaques can still be seen at the Club.

Today, the Wellwood is owned by Larry Metz and is the destination for travelers by land or by boat. It is a beautiful water view venue that delivers elegant dining for special occasions. Known locally for the best crabs in Cecil County, it is within 1 hour of Baltimore and 45 minutes from Wilmington. The Metz family, for the past 50 years, have done an incredible job in keeping those parts of the property historically significant, while ensuring the modern comforts are available. A short 10-minute detour off Interstate 95 is well worth the stop to have a glimpse and spend some time at the sole survivor of the Cecil County ducking clubs.



Postcard. Wellwood Country and Yacht Club, circa 1945. Author's collection.

# JOHN CASE









# Celebration of Life

~ By Jim Carroll

On Saturday, May 22nd, the Decoy Museum welcomed the friends and family of John Case for a celebration of his life. John was a former officer and director of the museum and Editor of this Canvasback magazine for many years. His obituary was featured in the spring issue. The museum was a special place to John, and he was a special person to us. His family could think of no more appropriate venue than the Carvers' Gallery, and we were delighted to help. Mother Nature also helped with a spectacular spring day so we could throw open the doors onto the deck enabling everyone to enjoy an incomparable view over the Flats and down the Bay. It was a perfect day and place for everyone to share their loss and say farewell to a wonderful man.

~ Photos Ethan Reynolds

# **Parking Lot Project**

By Mike Tarquini



The old surface was removed and the entire surface was graded to achieve the proper drainage.



Mark Dolan, DXI Construction project foreman (orange bordered safety vest) ensures that the new pavement will have the fall to enable proper drainage

n mid-2019, the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum embarked on a significant effort targeted at vastly improving the overall appearance of our main entrance. To that end, we re-landscaped the front of our property with Maryland native plants, installed an outdoor sculpture of flying geese and canvasbacks to honor the many men and women who have contributed to the museum's growth and success and installed lamp post banners to dress up the surrounding area and promote our branding. It was only after we completed all the above-mentioned work that we realized how much our parking lot was in dire need of attention. The lot contained potholes, low spots and did not drain properly creating puddles after each rain event.

At this point in time, COVID had reared its ugly head, visitation to the museum had declined, and revenue suffered as a result. It did not seem plausible to undertake such an ambitious project such as replacing the parking lot. After consultation with our close partners at DXI Construction and the City of Havre de Grace, the museum forged ahead with the ambitious plan to carry out a complete replacement of our parking lot. DXI Construction agreed to provide the paving equipment and labor at no charge and the City of Havre de Grace provided the blacktop. Realizing how important this project was to the museum, DXI scheduled the re-paving early in their 2021 paving schedule to get it done in a timely fashion.

DXI sent paving foreman Mark Dolan to meet with museum officials to size up the job. It was then that we realized that a simple milling and re-paving was not practical. The damage to the lot was extensive and to do things right it was



decided to completely tear out the blacktop, grade the lot properly, and then re-pave the area. Under Mark's guidance, DXI spent a day's time removing the old surface and grading. The new pavement was put down the following day. The parking lot was re-striped after a few days to give rise to a complete transformation in appearance for the Decoy Museum. Special thanks to Gregg Lenane, VP of Project Management for DXI Construction who oversees all paving projects at DXI. Gregg's support for the project is appreciated.

It is necessary to mention that both DXI Construction and the City of Havre de Grace were instrumental in the re-landscaping effort back in 2019. Dianne Klair (City of Havre de Grace Planning) worked with the museum and Eagle Scout Liam McKaig (Troop 238) to choose the Maryland native plants and ensured that the effort followed the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area guidelines. DXI donated equipment, materials, and topsoil to the effort. Pat Dixon, VP of Operations at DXI Construction, personally enabled our success by supporting the project and making sure we had what we needed, when we needed it.

In summary, the Decoy Museum was able to address a dire need with the help of two outstanding partners, DXI Construction and the City of Havre de Grace. Without the continued support from Mayor Bill Martin, Patrick Sypolt, Director of Administration; Tim Whittie, Director of Public Works and DXI Construction owner Shaun Pyle, projects like the ones mentioned above would have had significantly longer timelines if they were even possible at all. I would be remiss if I did not mention that DXI Construction employee J.K. Pierce, who served not only as a volunteer for this entire effort but also acted as a conduit between the museum and DXI Construction making them aware of our needs and helping to get things coordinated. It is truly remarkable what good partners can accomplish while working together in the toughest of times.

Thanks to all who enabled our success.



3rd Prize: R. Madison Mitchell Print by Paul Shertz

Common Merganser Pair by Jim Pierce

2nd Prize:

1st Prize: \$500 Cash

> 4th Prize: Black Duck Drake by Pat Vincenti

Drawing: Saturday, December 11, 2021 • Havre de Grace Decoy Museum

For tickets call **410.939.3739** or email: information@DecoyMuseum.com (additional tickets will be available at the Museum)

# WOOD DUCK

### Part II - Population Studies

"The beauty and genius of a work of art may be reconceived, though its first material expression be destroyed; a vanished harmony may yet again inspire the composer, but when the last individual of a race of living things breathes no more, another heaven and another earth must pass before such a one can be again."

🗱 William Beebe, scientist /explorer

Photo by Joe Subolefsky.

# **CANVASBACK NATURALIST**

Each edition will feature a natural history topic relating to the mission of the museum. The author, **John Hughes** is a retired science teacher from the John Carroll School (1972-2015). His subject areas included Chesapeake Bay Studies, Ecology (freshwater and marine) and Environmental Science. As a naturalist, John helped to develop natural history programs for a myriad of environmental organizations and schools. As a field educator and canoe guide, he led trips throughout the Eastern United States (especially the Southeast), Central America and the Caribbean. He presently serves as a member of the Museum's Board.



Photo by Scott Moody

hen European settlement of North America began in 1607 with the beginning attempts at a secured colony in Jamestown, Virginia, the continent was largely a wilderness of untapped resources both living and nonliving. Although Native American resource management of some living resources was in place, European values of unlimited resource exploitation would in a few hundred years replace the potential sustainability practiced by the natives. Not having the gold and silver experience of the Spanish in Central America, Europeans in North America after an adjustment phase, saw the possibilities offered by an undeveloped new world filled with agricultural paradise and in time the rise of an industrial mecca. A continent of land for the taking, natural resources for developing, wealth for the making was present as the continent was conquered. All was available in a land without aristocratic limitation if an individual was willing to commit his/her ingenuity and energy to make it happen. Over the last four hundred years, the dream became the reality for so many as America became the wealthiest nation-state in the world. Unfortunately, the price of this experience was rarely addressed and was quite high regarding our living resources. Extirpation and endangerment of so many species of wildlife (e.g., Labrador duck, passenger pigeon, ivory-billed woodpecker, etc.) led to a diminishment of what once were robust wildlife numbers. Traditions of unique cultural and economic lifestyle relating to human use of wildlife were challenged and lost. Our environment in general suffered.

This should not be considered as an indictment of our past, but as an often-overlooked part of our history. Fortunately, over time, efforts at conservation and management of our living heritage developed through better understanding and knowledge of it. A sense of awe, respect, and compassion for wildlife and nature seems to have arisen at a critical time and intensified today. The survival of the wood duck provides one such case in point.

In 1607, wood ducks were found throughout North America in habitat which can be characterized as "wooded wetland." Their population then by today's numbers would be considered high and sustainable. Early hunting for wood ducks was opportunistic and provided a source of sustenance for the hunter. Wood ducks were a potential sighting for most Americans in



the first three hundred years of our history anytime they visited swampy waterways. A visit to a beaver dam pond proved to be the ultimate habitat, and since the majority of eastern North America was forested, wood ducks were common waterfowl. Remember, their two major requirements for success were tree cavities for nesting and good food sources, especially acorns. Throughout this period from the early 17th century to the turn of the 19th century, there were two intensive, negative pressures on wood duck populations: 1) loss of nesting and foraging habitat and 2) hunting and overhunting of the birds. This period in our history saw massive amounts of deforestation and wetlands' drainage, elimination of keystone species associated with wood ducks such as beavers and Ivory-billed woodpeckers, and direct human pressure in the form of sustenance, sport, and market gunning.

By the turn of the 20th century, it would have been more and more difficult to commonly observe the wood duck or actively pursue it as game, especially in the eastern and central portions of its range. Although many scientists and ornithologists at the time were alarmed at its decline, many others felt it had just flown somewhere else or its dwindling numbers were limited to specific areas. Endangerment and possible extinction were concerns directed by some observers to the wood ducks' plight at that time. In 1901 famous biologist George Grinnel commented "Being shot in all seasons of the year, they are becoming very scarce and are likely to be exterminated before long (Bellrose). In 1908 Knight commented, "It seems only a question of time when the wood duck will have followed the great auk, Labrador duck, and others to the land of extinction (Hoch).

Fortunately for us today, passage of governmental acts such as the Lacey Act which outlawed market gunning in 1908 and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1919 which eliminated all wood duck hunting until 1942 enabled the population to recover, stabilize, and reach a point of sustainability. Today most of us can find and observe "woodies" in their natural habitat and hunters are able to harvest it for table fare, trophy, or sport. How had habitat loss and destruction and overhunting led to the decline and near disappearance of wood duck populations? How did scientific knowledge and understanding lead to both management and regulation for sustainable numbers of wood ducks today? Beyond professional science, how have citizen activists been able to commit their enthusiasm and energy to maintain and, in



many cases, increase wood duck numbers so that all can enjoy an observation of "wondrous woodies"?

In consideration of the reasons for decline, habitat loss and destruction were a primary detriment. Over 70% of the forest cover and 90% of the wetlands in North America have disappeared in the last four hundred years. Forests were cleared for timber value in a rapidly developing nation and to make agriculture possible first on a basis of a Jeffersonian small farm patterns then progressing to modern industrial farming of huge scale. Wooded wetlands were drained and cleared for timber but also for a soybean boom in the Central flyway. As mature trees disappeared so too did the necessary cavities for wood duck nesting, acorns for food, and keystone species such as the beaver and the ivory-billed woodpecker which complimented wood ducks. Beavers provided ideal habitat for wood ducks as their dams created slow-moving water and ponds that flooded mature forest. Ivory-billed woodpeckers and pileated woodpeckers found trees large enough and old enough to meet not only their energy needs but to provide them with nesting cavities. Lose the trees of the forest, lose the flooded wetlands with woody growth, and lose the keystone species and the results were detrimental consequences to wood duck success.

A second major factor leading to decline in wood duck populations was over hunting of the species. Early on subsistence hunting would have had minimal impact on sustainable numbers, but with increases in both human population and the necessity for hunting to support greater numbers of Americans, greater impact on the decline of the species occurred. Wood ducks have always ranked in the top three species of waterfowl harvested. With no seasonal limits to harvest the ducks, they were hunted throughout the year. Improved methodology in hunting also enabled greater yields. Market hunting further maximized downward population trends. Note that wood ducks were never the primary species of marker hunters, but they were still taken in large enough numbers to lead to decline as the hunter attempted to supplement his income. In most cases, waterfowl hunting never intended

to threaten any species but was a consequence of unregulated and unmanaged conditions. A "Tragedy of the Commons" resulted in wood ducks and to waterfowl and other living resources in general. By the end of the 1900s and the turn of the 20th century, wood ducks were in trouble.

At about this time scientists, concerned hunters and citizens sounded the alarm. Governmental acts such as the Lacey and Migratory Bird Treaty Act were passed and applied. As scientists provided more and more information on the biology and ecology of wood ducks, management, and regulation of both hunting and habitat began to control the duck's downward spiral. Over the last 100 years, learning to count duck populations, banding of birds, migratory studies, etc. have all led to regulation of hunting techniques and limits to harvest. Programs to save forests and to protect wetlands with no net loss have occurred. One significant idea has been the use of artificial nesting boxes to replace tree cavities. The widespread use of these boxes by government, private institutions (e.g., Ducks Unlimited), and many activists, and citizens in general over the last 75 years has led to increased wood duck numbers. These cavities, when correctly applied, give greater nesting potential to the population.

Nationwide and throughout the continent, concerned individuals are giving their time and energy to enhance wood duck nesting possibilities using boxes. I recently interviewed a number of these folks to get to know their motivations and overall reasons for involvement. These rarely recognized, dedicated, and a myriad of people all have one common characteristic - a love of wood ducks. They have a great desire to be in the outof-doors as often as possible regardless of the weather. Most started as youngsters with an older person serving as a mentor. (One even had his grandfather help him put up boxes for his Eagle Scout project.) All enjoyed getting up close and personal with the duck either collecting data or practicing photography. Through their efforts, they seem to gain pleasure and a commitment to something greater than themselves. Time seems to have been the factor which most limited their efforts. I found these "boxers" to enthusiastically be willing to share information and their experiences. None were in search of personal notoriety or fame. I felt proud to have been able to interact with these individuals who were working to make a glimpse of the

wood duck available to all. As I consider environmental problems and issues in general, these are the type of individuals I want on my team.

As a side note, it should be mentioned, there are those who argue wood duck nesting boxes have minimal impact on their population's success. Even if data should prove this true, the enthusiasm and efforts of the "boxers" to generate a positive outcome seems worth it.

To conclude, the history of wood ducks, their decline and recovery is a case study like so many other living resources in our nation's history. Living resources are often taken for granted until they are almost gone. This is also true for our environment in general. Of course, volumes have been written on this subject. The presence of "wondrous woodies" gives hope for a future in which all wildlife and environment can be respected and sustained, wood ducks provide awe and wonder to the world. They make life richer and more fulfilling. To those who make their presence possible, thank you so much.... and if they can be sustained and appreciated, even loved then maybe William Beebe's thought on extinctions will be a challenge met.

Please drop a comment or question to the Canvasback Naturalist at the Decoy Museum in Havre de Grace. Maryland.



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### **PDCA Reports Best Annapolis Show Yet**

he Potomac Decoy Collectors Association was delighted to host what is believed to be the first indoor decoy show held in over a year. The oneday show kicked off at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, June 6 at the Annapolis Elks Lodge in Edgewater, Maryland, and ran until 3:00 p.m.

Since the Annapolis Decoy Show is free to the public, as part of PDCA's mission and focus on public education, the group doesn't have an exact tally of visitors. But based on a headcount taken early in the day during what was the show's busiest period, they estimate that there were well over 300 attendees throughout the day, and probably many more than that.

This year, the show hosted more than 45 exhibitors with 70 tables full of decoys and other items for show, sale and trade. In addition to the exhibitors and dealers, the show also featured representatives from the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum, the Upper Bay Museum and the Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art, as well as the Upper Bay Decoy Collectors Club. Throughout the show, Decoy Magazine and PDCA also provided free evaluation and appraisals on several dozen decoys, and several informal but spirited "decoy roundtable" discussions were held.

In a post on the club's Facebook page, PDCA president Chad Tragakis shared the following thank you on behalf of the club to everyone who made the 2021 Annapolis Decoy Show the group's very best ever: "We want to thank all of our exhibitors—those who have been with us every year and our new friends—for their great support. We thank all of the dedicated collectors who came out to buy, sell, trade and socialize with their fellow enthusiasts. I don't know of a better group of people than our awesome decoy collecting community! And, I especially want to thank our PDCA club leaders whose volunteer efforts and support made the show possible: David Farrow, Bruce Eppard, Jim Van Ness, Steve Dudley and John Henry."

Based on feedback heard during and after the event, almost every dealer reported having their best Annapolis Show yet, and we have seen pictures of many of the treasures that came home with those attending the show posted on the various decoy collecting Facebook pages. The PDCA extends its tremendous thanks to all and hopes they will see everyone back at the Elks Lodge for the sixth annual Annapolis Decoy Show on Sunday June 5, 2022. By Chad Tragakis

Photos by Mike Tarquini



# 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:

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### Our members are a very close-knit & 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 or call us at 410.939.3739

# **Museum Events 2021**

As a result of the COVID pandemic of 2020-2021, the events, which had been scheduled by the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum, were mostly cancelled. With this edition of The Canvasback, an updated program of events for the remainder of 2021 is announced. Please consider joining us for an entertaining and educational evening out at the museum. Discover and enhance your knowledge of Havre de Grace, the Upper Chesapeake Bay, waterfowl, and the traditions of decoy making.

### The Pulaski Saga

Monday | September 13 | 7 PM

Join author Robert Lackey as he discusses the Pulaski family history in Havre de Grace and the Chesapeake Bay from his tenth and final book of the series. This historical fiction follows the events of US history and puts the setting in Havre de Grace as the Pulaski family determines its destiny. Author Lackey will present an overview of the entire series as well as specific considerations of the Pulaski's final saga. Audience questions will be welcomed. Bring your books or buy a copy at the bookstore for autographs. Mr. Lackey is also donating a complete series for raffle on the evening of his presentation. Refreshments provided. *Cost:* \$20/ \$30 per family.

### **Like Father Like Sons**

Sunday | October 10 | 7 PM

An evening with legendary carver Jimmy Pierce and his sons Charlie and JK. The evening will consist of a directed discussion of the Pierce decoy-making tradition from one generation to the next. Refreshments provided. *Cost:* \$20/ \$30 *per family.* 

### **Wetlands and Waterfowl**

Wednesday | October 20 | 6:30 PM

A visual presentation on wetlands and their association with ducks, geese, and swans. Local naturalist John Hughes and Tom Trafton will present the key aspects of wetlands and their value to avian wildlife. Refreshments provided. *Cost:* \$10/ \$15 per family.

### **Waterfowl Study Trip**

Saturday | November 6 | All Day

An exciting, day-long tour of the Upper Chesapeake and Delaware Bays at Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge, Port Mahon, and Furnace Bay. This field trip will provide a search for the waterfowl of this region in early fall. Topics will consider the value of wetlands to waterfowl distribution. Trip led by John Hughes and Tom Trafton. *Cost: Free.* 

### **Evening with Patrick Vincenti**

Sunday | November 21 | 6 PM

Havre de Grace Decoy Museum's meet the Carver series continues with a directed discussion with Patrick Vincenti. Mr. Vincenti will share his history as a carver, his decoys, and his association with the museum. Refreshments provided. *Cost:* \$20/ \$30 *per family.* 

### **The Annual Candlelight Tour**

Saturday | December 11 | 4-8 PM

An open house at the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum as part of the annual Candlelight Tour of Havre de Grace. The program is sponsored by the Lockhouse Museum. *Candlelight Tour fee applies.* 

### **Culinary Waterfowl Preparation**

Wednesday | December 16 | 6:30 PM

Local chefs share their creativity in the preparation of duck and goose dishes. Full sampling will occur. The program is still under construction: more details TBA. *Cost:* \$25/ \$35 *per family.* 

Note: The three-evening course entitled "Chesapeake Bay and Its Waterfowl Tradition" will be rescheduled during the winter of 2022.

For more information on these 2021 events and for reservations, contact the website at www.decoymuseum.com or call 410-939-3739.

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Many Thanks

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