

# THE WILDFOWLER

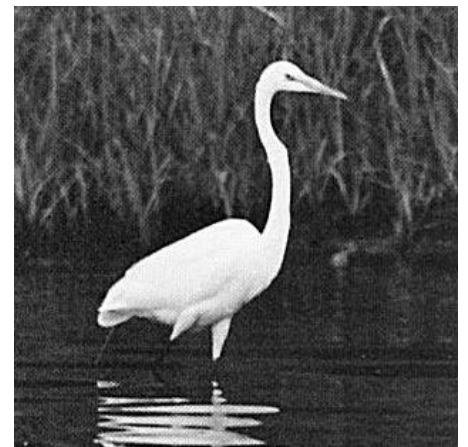
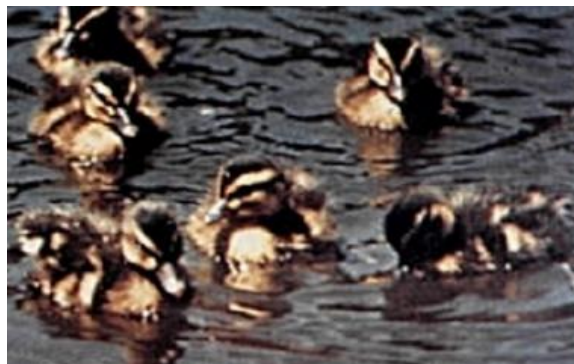
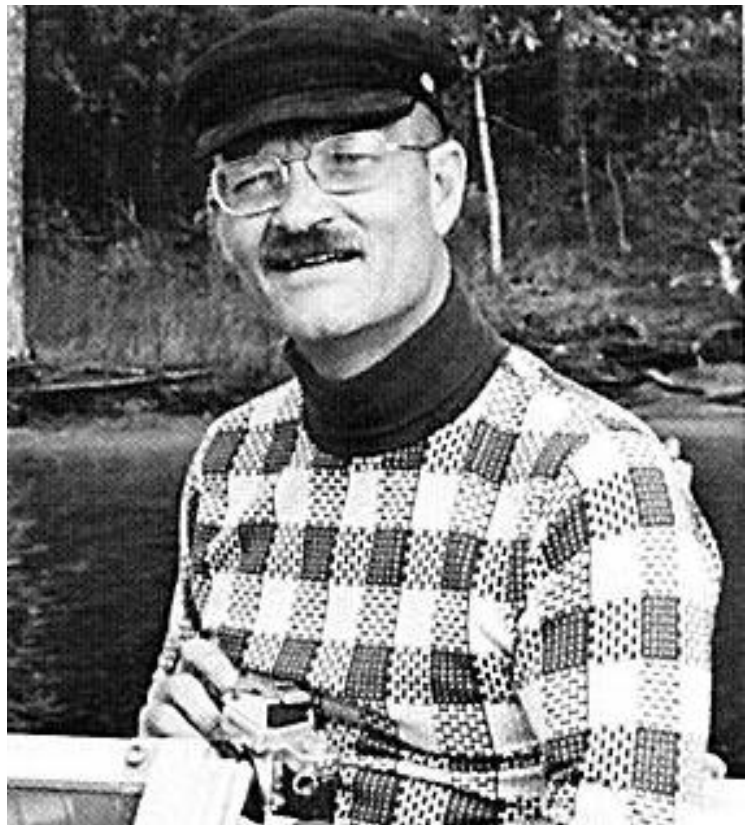
APRIL 2017

A PUBLICATION OF THE ATLANTIC WILDFOWL HERITAGE MUSEUM AND THE BACK BAY WILDFOWL GUILD

## *Back Bay Wildfowl Guild Memories*

### *Dr. John Jay Krueger*

Dr. Krueger was born in Jacksonville, Florida in 1931. He moved to Virginia Beach in 1965 to begin his career as a Pathologist at Virginia Beach General Hospital (Now Sentara Virginia Beach Hospital). He was a skilled medical Photographer and avid wildfowl hunter. He combined these two skills to become a very enthusiastic wildlife Photographer. In 1979 he became the Chairman of Photography for the Mid-Atlantic Wildfowl Festival; a position he held for 16 years. His camera soon replaced his other hunting gear and the hunting scenes were soon supplemented by photographs of birds frequenting Linkhorn Bay near the home he shared with his wife Ola in the Linlier section of Virginia Beach. While being quite skilled at his hobby; John never felt like his pictures measured up to those of his fellow competitors. I will let you be the judge of that! John always loved the fellowship he had with other photographers in the show, especially at the after show parties. He once gave my wife and I some good advice; "Don't let your hand linger too long in the shrimp bowl, these folks are like sharks in a feeding frenzy!" Dr. Krueger passed away in November 1996.





***Upcoming Guild Events:***

04/04/2017 Back Bay Wildfowl Guild  
Membership Meeting 7:00pm, Social 6:00pm  
Speaker: Greyson Chesser– Decoy Carver, Guide, Story Teller

04/08/2017 Gathering of The Guilds  
Historic Frances Land House  
3131 Virginia Beach blvd  
Virginia Beach, VA 23452  
**Need Volunteers to man table  
And Carving demonstrations**

04/11/2017: de Witt Garden Club  
6:00 pm, at the museum

04/18/2017: Board Meeting  
6:00 pm

04/24/2017 5pm-9pm “Dine Out for The deWitt”  
Raven Restaurant  
12<sup>th</sup> & Atlantic Ave.  
Virginia Beach, VA 23451

05/02/2017 Back Bay Wildfowl Guild  
Membership Meeting 7:00pm, Social 6:00pm  
Program: TBA

05/09/2017: de Witt Garden Club  
6:00 pm, at the museum

05/16/2017: Board Meeting  
6:00 pm

05/29/2017: Memorial Day  
Museum begins opening on Mondays



# DECOYS WANTED

WE BUY WOODEN OR CANVAS DUCKS, GEESE, SWANS & SHOREBIRDS...  
WHAT IS YOUR DECOY WORTH? IT COULD BE WORTH THOUSANDS!

WE WILL PAY YOU **CASH** FOR ANY OLD DECOYS AND HUNTING ITEMS



**FREE** DECOY IDENTIFICATION  
AND EVALUATIONS  
*of Single Decoys or Entire Collections*  
**BY MARK CROMWELL**  
**(757) 721-2746**  
Member North Carolina Decoy Collectors Assoc.

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Board of Directors met on Tuesday March 21, 2017 with a special guest speaker, Mark Reed, Historic Preservation Planner for the City of Virginia Beach. Mark met with us to educate the Board about the recommended Historic and Cultural District Designation for the de Witt Property and how it might impact the operation of the museum. The most important revelation from this discussion was that this designation will forever protect the de Witt Cottage and property from ever being developed. After some additional questions and answers we have determined that the new designation will have little to no effect on our daily museum operation. The new designation will be approved by the Planning Commission in April and then likely approved by City Council in May. We are actively putting together an April tour of the historic Drum Point Club property Stay tuned for more information coming in email and snail mail!

### DOCENT CLASSES TO CONTINUE MAY 18, 2017

Docent Classes continued March 29, 2017 in the de Witt Cottage at 6:00pm. We increased our numbers and the learning continued. We dined on chicken with rice Soup; Vegetable Soup; with Ham, Turkey, Pastrami and Cheese sandwiches; while we learned about the history of the City of Virginia Beach. Our next class will be about the local hunt clubs and the people who owned and hunted in them. If you have some time during the summer to help visitors at the de Witt Cottage to enjoy and learn more about the cottage, Back Bay, the de Witt family, local hunt clubs, decoys, carving and Virginia Beach history then you will want to attend these fun and educational classes. Come out and enjoy friends, soup, sandwich, and drink. All while learning more about your Back Bay Wildfowl Guild Heritage. It's still not too late to participate. Let's see how many docents we can train this winter. Email [director@atwildfowl.org](mailto:director@atwildfowl.org) or call (757) 437-8432 if you are interested.





### FROM THE MUSEUM DIRECTOR

I want to thank the Thursday carvers who assisted with the visit of 37 middle schoolers from Princess Anne Middle School on March 23rd. The kids worked in three groups; one learning how to carve with Hank Grigolite; another group painting a miniature canvasback decoy with Al Brandtner, Jamie Champe, and Pete Taylor; while a third group toured the museum with me. The kids and the teachers had a great experience. See the picture below. We will continue to “Dine out for The de Witt” on Monday night April 24<sup>th</sup> at the Raven Restaurant, 12<sup>th</sup> and Atlantic Avenue, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23451. This is a really great way for our guild to raise \$1000 to \$2000 dollars between Christmas and Memorial Day! It is also a great way to recruit new members by simply asking a potential new member to have dinner with us! So get up off the couch and come out for a great evening with good friends! March 8, 2017 at 6:00pm started a new chapter in the history of the de Witt Cottage. It was the first meeting of the de Witt Cottage Garden Club. The ladies were at the cottage on Wednesday March 29<sup>th</sup> preparing the gardens for spring. If you enjoy gardening then you will not want to miss this opportunity to garden by the sea! Please contact the Director at Email [director@atwildfowl.org](mailto:director@atwildfowl.org) or call (757) 437-8432 if you are interested.



## *The First Decoy Hunters*

### *American Indians?*

Deception: A cruel word for many aspects of life, but one more fondly looked upon when researching the history of waterfowl hunting. To achieve deception, early hunters crafted lures or fakes that would ultimately deceive passing waterfowl into believing that a floating raft of statues was in fact friend rather than foe. In the beginning these decoys were simplistic, hand-woven floating



imitations that to the modern eye resemble something seen at a craft bazaar rather than in the duck blind. Since then, decoys have transitioned from woven reeds to hand-rasped wood, then to lathe-turned wood, and now into injection-molded replicas that can fool even the keenest eye. While this transition has taken more than a hundred years, decoys are certainly the singular key component to the revolutionizing of modern waterfowl hunting.

Envision a hunter crouched low amidst the tule marsh of centuries ago. The survival of his band depends on his skills as a hunter. In the early morning sky, flocks of ducks and geese fly by. His arrows cannot fly high enough into the sky to reach the flocks passing by, so he sets his best creative weapon on the water, the tule duck decoy. This is an ancient hunting tool used by his people from time immemorial. The floating tule duck brings the flock within reach, just a few yards away from his hide. As a large canvasback drake spreads his wings and sets his feet into the water; the hunter lets his arrow fly from his bow. It pierces the duck through and through leaving it lifeless on the surface of the water. That's right you hotshots with your fancy shot guns; this hunter was skilled enough to kill the duck with a single shot from a bow and arrow. Did this really happen? It is plausible; but, there is no recorded history of anyone witnessing such a display of skill. Instead it is much more likely that the decoys were used to lure the ducks into a net or snare

At the roots of waterfowl hunting, the need for decoys was clear. Without black powder weaponry, Native American hunters learned that using decoys to bring birds into range often made their efforts more successful. By using their natural abilities to turn grasses and reeds into lifelike fakes, now, instead of attempting to stalk into birds that would often spook before a reasonable opportunity, ducks could be lured into range for their bows, snares or nets. This allowed for better success and made hunting ducks a more plausible means to gather food that wasn't available otherwise.

Forget the reality show, the real "Duck Dynasty" unfolded several thousand years ago along the shrinking remnants of ice age lakes in Northern Nevada. There, the patient hands of hunters shaped tule rushes and feathers into decoys unmistakably made to lure canvasback ducks. A cache of them was discovered in Lovelock Cave during an excavation first launched in 1911 by a pair of miners collecting bat guano to sell as fertilizer. Archaeologists were alerted to the existence of the cave, and they found 11 intact decoys stored inside two woven baskets.





It looked like they had been put away for the season by someone who never came back for them, said Gene Hattori, curator of anthropology for the Nevada State Museum in Carson City. “These caves were used as storage pantries.” The ducks had been tucked away for roughly 2,000 years, making them the oldest decoys of their kind found anywhere on Earth. They show real artistry — more than seems necessary just to trick a duck, Hattori said. “They’re functional but very beautiful, too.”

There is some disagreement about who made them. The Northern Paiute trace the decoys back to forebears known as the People of the Marsh, but Hattori said researchers associate them instead with a group known as the Lovelock archaeological culture. The tule duck decoy was named the official state artifact in 1995, though



none of the 11 specimens from Lovelock Cave stayed in Nevada. Hattori said they are all part of the collection at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C.

All the state museum has are some fragments of tule duck decoys from Lovelock Cave and some modern-day recreations. They were handcrafted by Mike Williams, a member of the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe who gathers his own tule rushes, makes his own string and colors his decoys with natural red ochre and black resin from pinion pine trees, the way they would have been millennia ago. They’re not quite the real thing, but they’re convincing enough to easily fool the average duck or reality show star.

Decoys from Lovelock Cave were made from tule reed, a plant species related to bulrush. There are many varieties of bulrush, a round hollow, tall reed which grows around wetlands across North America. Unfortunately, some more resilient European introduced plants like phragmites reed and purple loosestrife have squeezed out many colonies of indigenous plants like bulrush.

Similar floating decoys were undoubtedly made by Native Americans in the East. Today, Cree Indians around the northern Great Lakes make standing goose decoys from flexible tamarack sticks. Chippewa Indians make floating toy decoys, only a few inches in length, from single cattail leaves for their children. The art of making this clever hunting tool is a tradition that has been passed down from hunter to hunter throughout the centuries. Duck skins from earlier kills were stretched over the decoys, making them very lifelike. In even earlier times, the waterfowl’s feathers were woven onto the decoy and tied on with hemp strings. The heads and necks of some were painted to match the colors of the duck species. In doing this, the hunter made the duck decoy appear very real, and the waterfowl would then fly into the zone within reach of his bow and arrow. The tule duck decoy is still being made and used today by Native hunters, especially at the Stillwater Marsh in western Nevada.—Lois George-Kane (Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe of Stillwater) and Vicki Kane (Reno-Sparks Indian Colony), traditional knowledge keepers.





## Free Decoy Identification and Evaluation

By Jeff Tinkham  
President of The Atlantic  
Wildfowl Heritage Museum  
Call (757) 721-7131 or  
[jeff@tinkhamlaw.com](mailto:jeff@tinkhamlaw.com)



### COLLECTOR'S SHELF



George Crosson (b. 1955) made some of the most graceful canvas decoys ever used on Back Bay. He lived in the "County" from 1972 until about 1980. Although George was a carpenter by profession, he was able to unleash his artistic talent to produce geese and swans without equal. One of his Canada geese is pictured on the cover of the book, *Canvas Decoys of North America*.

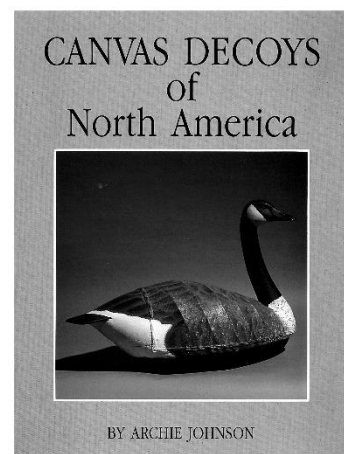


This swan has his signature wooden barrel-shaped rear end.

This unique construction method requires a great deal of extra effort. Most canvas decoy makers make tails by stretching canvas across a wire frame shaped like a tail. George is now living in Maine, and building log homes. This photo shows George (in baseball cap) and his magnificent swans at the Waterfowl Festival (Dome site) when he was about 20 years old (c. 1975).

For a free evaluation or identification of your decoys, contact Jeff Tinkham at

757-724-7131 or  
[jeff@tinkhamlaw.com](mailto:jeff@tinkhamlaw.com).



## BACK BAY WILDFOWL GUILD

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jeff Tinkham, President	Wayne Jarman, Vice President
Jim Mehne, Secretary	Roger Shope, Treasurer
Fletcher Bryant	Werner Seibel
Jamie Champe	Herb Videll
Gentry Childress	Al Henley
William Walsh, Jr., Curator	

### MUSEUM CARVERS

Tuesday:	Pete DiPietro
Wednesday:	Roy Carlson
	Ed Morrison, Herb Videll
Thursday:	Hank Grigolite
"The Boathouse Boys" Carving Club:	Al, Jamie, John & Pete
Friday:	Gary Holt
Saturday:	Gentry Childress & Ben Purvis
Sunday:	Herb Verhaagen

## MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Tuesday:	Bob Bishop 1p-5p
Wednesday:	Archie Johnson 10a-2p
Thursday:	Joe Leo 10a-2p
Friday:	OPEN
Saturday:	OPEN
Sunday:	OPEN
Museum Grounds	Nancy Lekberg

### MUSEUM STAFF

Lynn Hightower, Director	Ann Smith, Gift Shop Manager
--------------------------	------------------------------

### MUSEUM CONTACT INFORMATION

ATLANTIC WILDFOWL HERITAGE MUSEUM  
1113 Atlantic Avenue  
Virginia Beach, VA 23451

Telephone: 757.437.8432  
Facsimile: 757.437.9950  
Website: [www.awhm.org](http://www.awhm.org)  
Email: [director@atwildfowl.org](mailto:director@atwildfowl.org)

**You can now pay your dues online at [awhm.org](http://awhm.org) !**

*Please understand that we depend on every dollar to operate the museum. If you have not paid your 2017 dues, please give serious consideration to sending them into the museum right away. Beginning March 1, 2017, any listed member who has not paid their dues will receive an invoice from the museum director requesting payment of their annual dues*

## 2017 DUES

\$25/YR INDIVIDUAL

\$35/FAMILY

\$200/YR CORPORATE

\$500/YR SPONSOR



## BACK BAY WILDFOWL GUILD 2017 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT PAID \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ [CELL] \_\_\_\_\_

*January 1, 2017 kicked off our Annual Membership Campaign. Each member is encouraged to find one new member to join the Back Bay Wildfowl Guild. Our very existence depends on growing the membership of the Guild. Please encourage everyone you know to become a member!*

***Please pass this newsletter on to any potential new member!***





*The Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum would like to  
Thank the following people for their generous donations  
During the first quarter of 2017!*

W. Leigh Ansell	Caroline Jacobsen
Steve & Cindy Barnes	Wayne & Linda Jarman
Mary Reid Barrow	Archie Johnson
Robert Bishop	Johnny & Judy Johnson
Debra & Norman Blanco	Janice Johnson
Al & Rita Brandtner	Bobby Jones
Jim & Lynda Briggs	Charlie Malbon
Jim & Suzanne Brown	Cotton Markert
L. Clay Camp, Jr.	John & Mary Mazach
James H. Capps	Jim & Linda Mehne
Marian & Gentry Childress	Jim & Janet Ramsey
Mark & Margie Cromwell	Ann D. Reed
Charlie & Chris Ellin	Wayne & Theresa Sawyer
Bill & Will Evans	Dr. & Mrs. Werner Seibel
Paul Fisher	Roger & Barb Shope
David Forkner	Bill & Margaret Simkins
Stephen Harris	Ann Smith
Joseph Hawa	Pete Taylor
Albert & Ann Henley	Dr & Mrs. Ashby Taylor
Lynn & Sheila Hightower	Jeff & Denise Tinkham
W. Bogart Holland	Andrew Vakos
Helen B. Howcott	Bill & Alice Walsh, Jr.
Frank Hudgins	Wilson Wigeon
Nick Indra	

