

THE WILDFOWLER

AUGUST 2017

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

Back Bay Wildfowl Guild Memories *Edgar Tyree Brown November 19, 1932 – June 15, 2005*

Reporters called him. Librarians called him. Anyone who wanted to know something about Princess Anne County or Virginia Beach history called Edgar T. Brown. A lifelong resident of the area, Edgar Brown amassed one of the largest collections of Virginia Beach memorabilia and artifacts. Most of the 10,000 pieces - including postcards, letters, artwork and advertisements - already have been donated for display.

Edgar was born in Virginia Beach in 1932, with family roots dating back to the 1600s. His ancestor John Brown settled on a farm south of Nimmo Church in 1697. In the 1920s, his grandfather was the jail keeper for Princess Anne County, and his father worked for the city of Virginia Beach for 30 years.

Pictured is Edgar with Caroline deWitt Woodley at the Virginia Beach first free standing lending library dedication in 2004.



Often called the “unofficial historian of Virginia Beach,” Edgar T. Brown was a collector and preserver of Princess Anne County and Virginia Beach history. In 2010, his wife, Sue Brown, gave the Virginia Beach library permission to digitize his entire collection and make it accessible via the library’s local history website, www.VBgov.com/localhistory. Since then, library staff have scanned and cataloged thousands of postcards, pictures and more, including contents of 38 binders, 48 books and 36 oral history tapes. He never wrote a book on his own, but contributed to several books by others.

Edgar was a retired senior vice president with Johns Brothers, a Norfolk heating and cooling supplies company, where he worked for 32 years. He also served in Korea with the US Army.





Upcoming Guild Events:

08/01, 08, 15, 22, 29/2017: de Witt Garden Club

10:00 am, at the museum

Meets every Tuesday

Bring your work gloves and tools

08/15/2017: Board Meeting

6:00 pm

09/05/2017 Back Bay Wildfowl Guild

Membership Meeting 7:00pm, Social 6:00pm

Speaker: Tommy Whitehawk

Alton's Keep Wild Bird Rescue & Rehabilitation

09/05, 12, 19, 26/2017: de Witt Garden Club

10:00 am, at the museum

Meets every Tuesday

Bring your work gloves and tools

09/19/2017: Board Meeting

6:00 pm

10/03/2017 Back Bay Wildfowl Guild

Membership Meeting 7:00pm, Social 6:00pm

Program: Member's "Show & Tell"

Bring a carving, painting, photograph or sighting to share.

Save these Dates

09/30/2017 Back Bay Heritage Festival

Beer Tasting at the deWitt Cottage

10/07/2017 Lynnhaven River Now Festival

Brock Environmental Center

3663 Marlin Bay Ct, VB 23455

11:00am – 3:00pm

Volunteer Carvers and Docents needed

10/15/2017 AWHM Fall Barbeque

12/05/2017 Christmas Party

Dine Out for The de Witt 01/29/2018; 02/20/2018; 03/26/2018 & 04/24/2018

Lucky Oyster May 1, 2018



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

On August 1, we were honored to give Mayor Sessoms, City Manager Hansen, Councilman Uhrin and other city officials a tour of the museum's exhibits and carving room. After we provided them with some tasty chicken salad prepared by Al Henley, Lynn gave them an informative powerpoint presentation describing the cottage's history, the museum's mission and the economic impact of historic waterfowling in Princess Anne County. Our museum, like all other museums in the city, cannot operate without the city's financial assistance, so it was important to meet with these city officials and show them this gem of a museum on the oceanfront. Over the years, Barbara Henley and others on city council have been strong supporters of our educational mission. Please mark your calendars for our annual Fall Barbeque which will be held on October 15, 2017. Herb Culpepper has been gracious enough to host the Barbeque on his property in Pungo. As Summer comes to a close, I wish to remind everyone that our monthly membership meetings will recommence on September 5 at 6:30 p.m. at the cottage. Our September speaker will be Tommy Whitehawk who will bring his Red Tail Hawk to the meeting and discuss his wild bird rehabilitation initiative. Tommy spoke to our membership back in November of 2016 and brought a Great Horned Owl. He is a certified Cherokee Indian Medicine Man and does a great program which everyone in attendance thoroughly enjoyed.

2ND ANNUAL FALL BARBEQUE

Our 2nd annual Fall Barbeque which will be held on Sunday, October 15, 2017 from 1:00pm until 5:00pm. It will be held on Herb Culpepper's property, 2041 Indian River Road and catered by Frank Craft, Jr. If any of you have ever been to the Knott's Island Hunter's Feast, then you are familiar with Mr. Craft's beef brisket. He will be providing pork barbeque and beef brisket at our event along with all of the trimmings. Tickets go on sale August 15, 2017. They will be \$40.00 each or \$65.00 for a couple. There are also four sponsor packages available. If you or someone you know would like to be a sponsor, please contact the museum Director at (757) 437-8432 or email him at director@atwildfowl.org. We are also in need of volunteers to help with setup before the event and take down after the event.





On July 25, 2017 our own Guild Member David Shourds lost his uncle and the world lost an important influence on decoy carving,

From an article by Tom Pich

Harry V. Shourds was born July 24, 1930, on the New Jersey coast. He is a third-generation decoy carver. His grandfather Harry Vinuckson Shourds (1861-1920), for whom he was named, lived in Tuckerton, New Jersey, in the Barnegat Bay area. He has been described as perhaps the greatest professional decoy maker in New Jersey at a time when Tuckerton could be said to be the handmade duck decoy capital of the United States.

Though Harry never knew his grandfather, he did recall the stories people told about him. "He gunned (market hunted), shot ducks, picked them, packed them on ice, and shipped them on the railroad in barrels. They would save the feathers and my grandmother would make pillows and feather beds out of them. Everything was used from the duck in those times.... (My grandfather) he'd go down and get a haircut and while in the barber's chair, he'd whittle a duck head. By the time the barber was through cutting his hair, he was finished with the head. And with the decoys he made, he must have spent every spare minute of his spare time just carving." About 90 percent of his grandfather's decoys were Greater Scaup, Black Ducks, Brant, and Canada Geese.

Harry's father, Harry M. Shourds, died when Shourds was 12, so he is largely self-taught as a carver. "My father was a painting contractor, but in the winter he made decoys. Over the years, he made around three or four dozen decoys in the winter. They sold for approximately \$25 a dozen. I remember sitting there watching him make decoys, and I would carve a little with him." Despite that proud family history, Shourds said, "I hate to copy someone else, even if it's someone in my family.... I make my own ducks. And I think each one (in my family) did. You can tell my grandfather's duck from my father's duck, and you can tell my duck."

In describing his own distinctive style of carving, Shourds said, "I use Jersey white cedar, which grows in the swamp, for the wood. It is a wood that's used on boats and shingles. It's a durable wood for outdoor use. The decoys are made in two pieces, the top half and the bottom half. Both halves are hollowed out to make them light, and it gives them air space so they won't crack over the years.... Then, that's put together and caulked, just like you would a boat, so it won't leak. The head is put on separately and nailed from the top in case it is broken with usage.... There's an insert put in the bottom with a chisel where you put lead, about five ounces, in for ballast so that when the decoy is thrown out, if it lands upside down, it will roll over and sit right in the water.... You want it to ride right in the water so it swims like a duck." Once the construction is completed, Shourds adds a "little leather thong on the front of it to tie the anchor rope to" and then seals and paints the decoy to make it ready for use. A working decoy, the type favored by hunters, must behave naturally in the water to lure a passing duck. But Shourds says there's a limit to the realism necessary. "Today, the carvers are getting real ducks. They're getting mounted or frozen ducks, and they copy them feather for feather. It's really model making instead of carving. It's a nice sculpture when it's finished. But I like to put a little dream into it. "Shourds says his own decoys represent "what I think a duck looks like. I don't copy off a real duck, and none of the old-timers did. They hunted duck and sold ducks in the wild and took their memories from them. They worked from those memories." Shourds had been carving full-time since 1962, and over the years he had written extensively on the subject.





BACK BAY BREWING CO.
— at the —



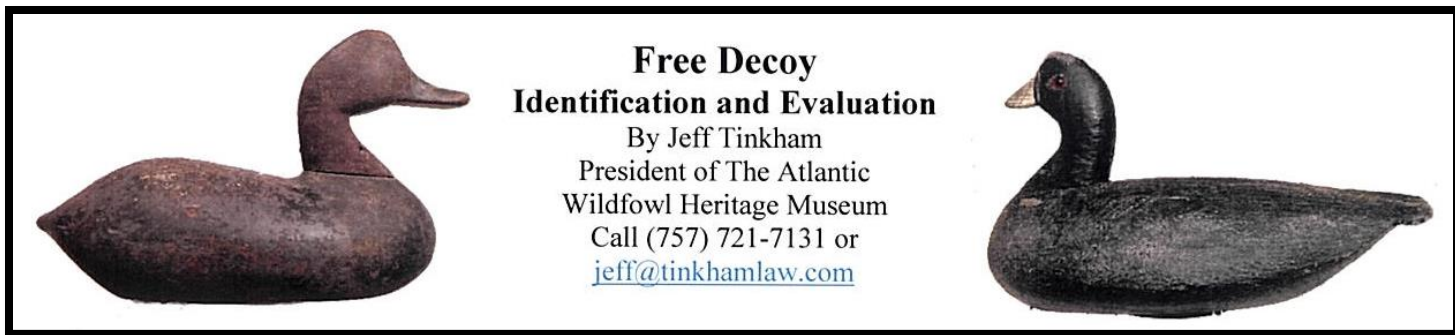
HERITAGE FESTIVAL

ATLANTIC WILDFOWL HERITAGE MUSEUM AT THE DE WITT COTTAGE
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2017 / 2PM TO 8PM
PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT THE THE MUSEUM
BEER TASTINGS FROM MULTIPLE LOCAL BREWERIES, LIVE MUSIC,
SILENT AUCTION, 2 FOOD TRUCKS (THE LUCKY PEACH & CAST IRON CATERING CO.)
TICKETS & SPONSOR PACKAGES NOW AVAILABLE!!
SQUADUP.COM/HERITAGEFEST

FIRST ANNUAL BACK BAY HERITAGE FESTIVAL

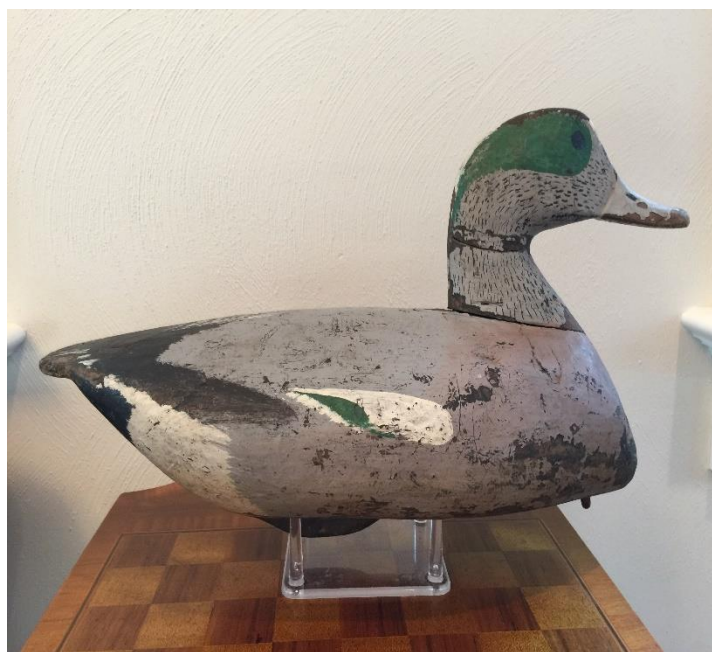
On September 30, 2017 the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum will partner with Back Bay Brewing to produce a first class annual beer tasting event. This event will have Live Entertainment, Dancing, Games, Food Trucks, Several Breweries, and occur on Neptune Festival Boardwalk Weekend. We anticipate a very large crowd. For more information please go to <https://www.squadup.com/events/heritagefest> . If you or someone you know would like to be a sponsor or volunteer, please contact the museum Director at (757) 437-8432 or email him at director@atwildfowl.org .





COLLECTOR'S SHELF

This decoy (below) was most likely made by Anderson Munden (1873-1946) who was a market hunter on Back Bay. As was typical during the early 1900s, it was carved as a canvasback because diving ducks had superb flavor (and consequently brought the most money in the East Coast markets and hotels). It has since received a coat of widgeon overpaint. Anderson and his wife, Ethel Brock, lived on Ragged Island for a short while, but moved to Munden Road after their first child died. I was fortunate to have acquired this decoy at a local estate auction. It is branded "Rocke" and, thus, was subsequently owned by L. B. Rocke who was a Norfolk jeweler and owned a home/club on the Virginia side of Knotts Island.



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

757-724-7131 or jeff@tinkhamlaw.com.

DOCENT CLASSES TO CONTINUE IN JANUARY 2018

Stay tuned for details.



FROM THE MUSEUM DIRECTOR

First I want to apologize for the tardy distribution of this newsletter. I always strive to get the monthly newsletter complete and distributed within a couple of days of the 1st of each month; but, this week was crazy busy. The Board of Directors hosted the Mayor, the City Manager, Councilman John Uhrin (Beach District) and several other City officials here at the deWitt Cottage for lunch on Tuesday. They all seemed genuinely interested in making sure that the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum continues to be successful in the operation of the museum. Then on Wednesday and Friday we had summer youth campers from Oceana Family Youth Services visit the museum. The children seemed to thoroughly enjoy talking with the carvers, watching Donald Duck videos, coloring a mallard duck, exploring the exhibits and dolphin watching from the boardwalk. In the meantime Back Bay Brewing and I have been working on a plan to market and host the Back Bay Heritage Festival here at the deWitt Cottage on Saturday September 30, 2017 from 2:00pm until 8:00pm. This festival should turn into a major annual fundraising event for the operation of the museum.

You will be receiving a membership brochure that highlights the changes to the membership levels of the Atlantic Wildfowl Museum beginning in January 2018. There is an increase in the cost of membership at all levels. This is the result of an increase in operational costs and the need to be able to replace the Virginia Beach City Grant should it not be approved in future city budgets. This is the first increase in membership dues in more than 30 years. Please take time to read the information and feel free to call me with questions.

The museum is in great need of volunteers from our membership for two very important committees. The first committee is the **Telephone Tree Committee**. This committee needs 12 members to volunteer to make telephone calls to our membership list when important news and events need to be relayed to our members. The second committee is the **Silent Auction Committee**. This is a very important committee because silent auctions have become a very significant source of revenue for the museum. This committee also needs about a dozen members to help solicit and select items for our Fall Barbeque Auction, Christmas Party Auction, and Lucky Oyster Raffle. The museum needs your help with these two committees in order to be successful in achieving its mission. Please contact the Director at (757) 437-8432 or director@atwildfowl.org to volunteer.

I am reminded of the fable of the farmer and his lost son. A Kansas wheat farmer was working in the barn on his tractor, when his wife came running out of the house. In a panic she exclaimed that little 5 year old Joey was missing from the yard. He had apparently wandered off into the wheat fields around the house. The farmer ran out of the barn and looked out across the fields of very high wheat. He was unable to see his son and his son was unable to see him because the wheat was about twice as tall as little Joey. The farmer started calling loudly for little Joey with not a sound coming from the wheat fields. His wife ran back into the house and started calling neighbors and town folk asking them to help find her little boy. In about an hour 200 or so people had gathered at the farmer's house to help search for the little boy. They scattered out into the wheat fields looking for little Joey. Soon it became dark and everyone returned back to the farmer's house with no success in finding the little boy. The search was called off for the night. If you know anything about fall nights in the mid-west; you know they can be brutally cold. The next morning nearly twice as many people showed up to help. This time the farmer suggested that the people hold hands and spread out across the wheat fields adjacent to his house. They had only searched for about an hour when they came across the lifeless body of the little boy. The farmer dropped to his knees and held his son close to his breast. With tears running down his face he said, "If only we had joined hands sooner."

I pray that we can join our hands and work together now before it is too late for our museum. You can start by making an effort to come to the September 5, 2017 membership meeting or by volunteering for one of the previously mentioned committees. No one is capable of doing everything; but, everyone can do something!



Save the Date Lynnhaven River Now Fall Festival

Saturday, October 7, 2017

11:00 am- 3:00 pm

**Brock Environmental Center
3663 Marlin Bay Dr, VA Beach, VA 23455**

Hands-on Activities
Fun & Educational Exhibitors
Native Plants **Eco-Friendly Vendors
Artisans**Music**Local Food
Workshops and Vendors encouraging
Sustainable Living

To register as a vendor please visit:

<https://app.etapestry.com/onlineforms/LynnhavenRiverNOW/2016FF-1.html>

LYNNHAVEN RIVER NOW FALL FESTIVAL

The Lynnhaven River Now Fall Festival will be held on Saturday, October 7, 2017 from 11:00am until 3:00pm. It will be held at the Brock Environmental Center, 3663 Marlin Bay Court, Virginia Beach, VA 23455. We have rented space at this festival to demonstrate wood carving and other wildfowling arts. It is an opportunity to tell a couple of thousand people about the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum. If you or someone you know would like to demonstrate a wildfowling art or simply inform people about our museum, please contact the museum Director at (757) 437-8432 or email him at director@atwildfowl.org.





Pictured left is Dorian Stewart; our summer employee, educating the children from Oceana Family Youth Services about wood carving.

Pictured on the right are some of the children from Oceana Family Youth Services coloring a mallard duck and enjoying Daffy Duck Cartoons!



Two really nice items have returned home to the deWitt Cottage in July. The first was given to the museum by Mrs. Ewing Fears Best. It is Paul deWitt's VMI Cadet Jacket. Mrs. Best purchased it at a yard sale here at the deWitt cottage in 1985 for \$5.00. She had it cleaned, pressed and mounted in a frame as a present for her husband who was also a VMI graduate. Her husband recently passed away. Mrs. Fears felt like the jacket needed to come home! It now hangs in the art gallery on the second floor right next to the deWitt family pictures in the second floor hallway.



The second is the decoy pictured to the left, which was carved by Charlie Seidel, owned by Bob Bishop and just sold to Jamie Sigala. It was one of Charlie's first carvings. Mr. Sigala lent the decoy to the museum indefinitely and it will be on display on the fireplace mantle in the Edgar Brown Gallery.



BACK BAY WILDFOWL GUILD

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

MUSEUM CARVERS

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

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Tuesday: OPEN
Wednesday: Archie Johnson 10a-2p
Thursday OPEN
Friday: OPEN
Saturday: OPEN
Sunday: OPEN
Museum Grounds: Nancy Lekberg, Lori Bagley, Lois Stickles,
Jacky Richards, and Lena Lindsay

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
Email: director@atwildfowl.org

You can now pay your dues online at 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!

