

# THE WILDFOWLER

FEBRUARY 2019

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

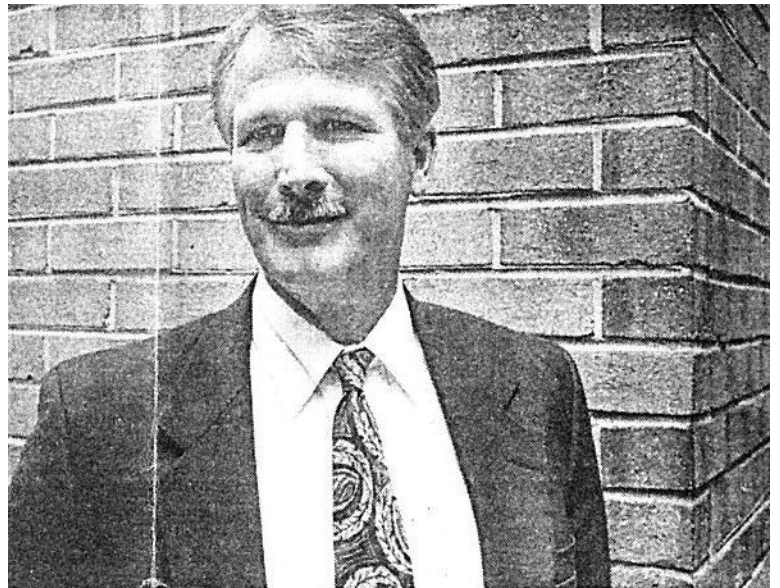
## *Back Bay Wildfowl Memories*

***Fred L. Kochey***

*Lynn Hightower*

From the archives of the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum, The Virginian –Pilot, and Past editions of The Wildfowler,

Fred Kochey is a retired Navy Seal Officer, Vietnam War Hero, Real Estate Broker, Certified Real Estate Appraiser, and the man who saved The deWitt Cottage! Fred was hired by three of the four surviving deWitt sisters, Julia, Katrine, and Harriet to help them preserve their childhood beach front home. He had actually been hired first to sell and preserve the Holland House (aka “Ozone”) across the street from the deWitt Cottage. Both houses had been built by Bernard Holland, the City of Virginia Beach’s first Mayor. A slumping real estate market and dip in tourism at the beach in the 1980s prevented Fred from being able to save the Holland house. The house sat vacant for several years and vandals actually destroyed the structural integrity of the building. It was bulldozed in 1988.



Saddened by the loss of the Holland House, Fred was determined to help the deWitt sisters preserve their home. In 1990 he reached out to the Virginia Beach Foundation (now part of the Hampton Roads Foundation) and some local lawyers. Together they structured a deal with the City of Virginia Beach to insure that the cottage would remain a landmark on the hotel lined oceanfront. The City would take ownership of the property in exchange for an annual stipend to the deWitt sisters of \$87,500. The City agreed to pay the money until the last deWitt Sister passed away. With all four of the deWitt sisters in their 80’s the City felt like they had gotten a bargain. The stipend payments ended in December 2007 when Caroline, the last deWitt sister passed away.





Fred Kochev and Tom Richards

The cottage has since been declared a National Historic Landmark by The U. S. Department of the Interior, A Virginia Historic Landmark by the Virginia Board of Historical Resources, and a Landmark of Our Nation's Beginning by The City of Virginia Beach. In 2017 The City of Virginia Beach designated the cottage and the property a Historical and Cultural District. The deed transferring the property to the city clearly states that the house and property are to be maintained by the city in perpetuity.

I was very fortunate to be able to have lunch with Fred this week at Smithfield Station in Smithfield, Virginia. I was able to surprise Fred by bringing Retired Admiral Tom Richards to lunch with me. Tom & Fred knew each other when they served together in the SEALs during the Vietnam War. Tom currently serves on our Board of Directors for the museum. What a great treat it was to have lunch with these two war heroes and be able to hear several of the stories related to their experiences while serving out their careers with the Navy. The compassion and respect these two men show one another is amazing!

Fred remembers Julia deWitt as the business leader of the siblings, "she was sharp as a tack and knew exactly what she wanted for herself and her sisters!" She wanted some security for them all. Fred was able to provide exactly that for these ladies. The money allowed all of them to move into Westminster Canterbury on Shore Drive in Virginia Beach. Julia passed away in May of 1991 about one year after the deal was finalized; apparently satisfied that she had provided the needed security for her beloved sisters.



## ***Upcoming Guild Events:***

02/05/2019 Back Bay Wildfowl Guild  
Membership Meeting 7:00pm, Social 6:00pm  
Program: Zach Jester  
Carver from Chincoteague Island, VA  
Also: Show and Tell

02/12/2019: Board Meeting  
10:00 am

02/19/2019 Dine Out for The de Witt  
5:30pm – 8:30pm Beach Pub  
1001 Laskin Rd., Virginia Beach, VA

03/09/2019 Back Bay-Knotts Island Waterfowl Festival  
Saturday 9:00am-6:00pm  
Creeds Ruritan Barn 1057 Princess Anne Rd  
**We need Volunteers**

03/16/2019 Ruritan Barbeque and Craft Fair  
Saturday 11:00am-6:00pm  
Creeds Ruritan Barn 1057 Princess Anne Rd  
**We need Volunteers**

03/19/2019: Board Meeting  
6:00 pm

03/26/2019 Dine Out for The de Witt  
5:30pm – 8:30pm Surfrider Seafood Restaurant  
1375 Oceana Blvd, Virginia Beach, VA

## **Save these Dates**

Monday 04/24/2019 The Raven 1200 Atlantic Avenue 5:30pm-8:00pm

Tuesday May 7, 2019 Lucky Oyster 5:30pm-8:00pm





# 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.*

## COLLECTOR' SHELF

### Wilton Ferebee Walker, Sr.

Oct. 9, 1889 – Aug. 17, 1974

From Tulls Creek Area, South East  
of Moyock, NC

Wife Katie Flora - Married 1919 had  
six children

Wilton Walker was a Decoy carver,  
boat builder and a market hunter

Wilton served as a caretaker of The  
Launch Landing Club (1918-1930's)

After serving as a caretaker he  
became a hunting guide and his  
decoys were in great demand.

He made canvasbacks, blackheads,  
redheads and a few puddle ducks as  
seen in the photo.



His decoys have a distinctive style with a flat bottom and protruding tail. The surface is left rough from use of the wood rasp. The heads were also left rough – reason being to dull the paint so it would not reflect onto the water.



## DINE OUT FOR THE deWITT

**Dine out for the deWitt** Continues on **February 19, 2019** at Beach Pub 1001 Laskin Rd. Virginia Beach, VA This is the program where you take your spouse out to dinner and the restaurant donates a percentage of what your meal cost to the museum. Easy peasy; you go out to dinner with your friends, family, or potential new museum member and the museum receives a nice donation. What a great opportunity to introduce potential new members to our organization. Please invite your friends and family to join you! So let's see how many people we can pack into the Beach Pub. Please help us make this a very successful event!

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our program for the February Membership Meeting will be Zach Jester, born and raised on Chincoteague Island. Growing up he was the next door neighbor of Roe Terry, another Chincoteague carver. Zach always had an interest in carving and around 2000, he put on an apron, grabbed a knife, and walked into Roe's shop eager to learn. Zach resides on Chincoteague and his carving style incorporates techniques from the "old school" combined with a fresh eye. Here is a YouTube link to an interview with

Zach: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=cCkp0sS9XqQ>

Thus far this winter, Virginia has not disappointed. One day we are preparing for snow, the next we are in t-shirts and have the windows open. As each day of winter passes, I am reminded that summer is close and so is "busy season" at the oceanfront and at for the museum.



In my message to you last month, I shared the museum's new mission, vision, and core values that will guide us moving forward. On Tuesday, February 12th, the Board of Directors will gather on Knott's Island at the Knott's Island Gun Club, for a full day of evaluation, brainstorming, and planning. We will evaluate where we currently are as an organization but more importantly, create a sustainable game plan (Super Bowl Sunday is this week) for advancing the museum in the future.

All of us will play a vital role in the execution of that plan. From continued financial support, active participation in guild meetings (see everyone on Tuesday, February 5th at 7pm) and other programming, volunteering efforts, bringing guests to witness the museum firsthand, and everything in between. If you have an idea for program or presentation that you have a strong passion for, please contact Lynn.

To summarize, it is an exciting time for the AWHM. As we move into 2019, we look to broaden our fan base as we continue to protect, preserve, promote and provide for our members, our visitors, and our community.

Cheers.

Jason

	<p><b>Free Decoy Identification and Evaluation</b> By Jeff Tinkham Past President of The Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum Call (757) 721-7131 or <a href="mailto:jeff@tinkhamlaw.com">jeff@tinkhamlaw.com</a></p>	
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### FROM THE MUSEUM DIRECTOR

Tuesday, February 5, 2019 will be our first General Membership Meeting of the New Year! This looks to be a very special meeting as we have a very talented carver from Chincoteague Island, VA to demonstrate some of his skills for our membership. His name is Zach Jester. He is a very interesting young fellow. Some pictures of him and his family are below



If you miss this meeting, there won't be another General Membership Meeting until May 1<sup>st</sup> when we celebrate spring at the lucky Oyster Restaurant.

We had a very successful **Dine out for the deWitt** at IL'Giardino's Restorante. We had just over 60 people in attendance! Many of you took the opportunity to invite friends and family, thank you! Now let's turn them all into new members.

I hope to see each and every one of you at the **Dine out for the deWitt** on **February 19, 2019** at the Beach Pub 1001 Laskin Rd. Virginia Beach, VA 5:30 – 8:30pm Please make you plans now to attend and Please bring some guests with you! I will see you there!

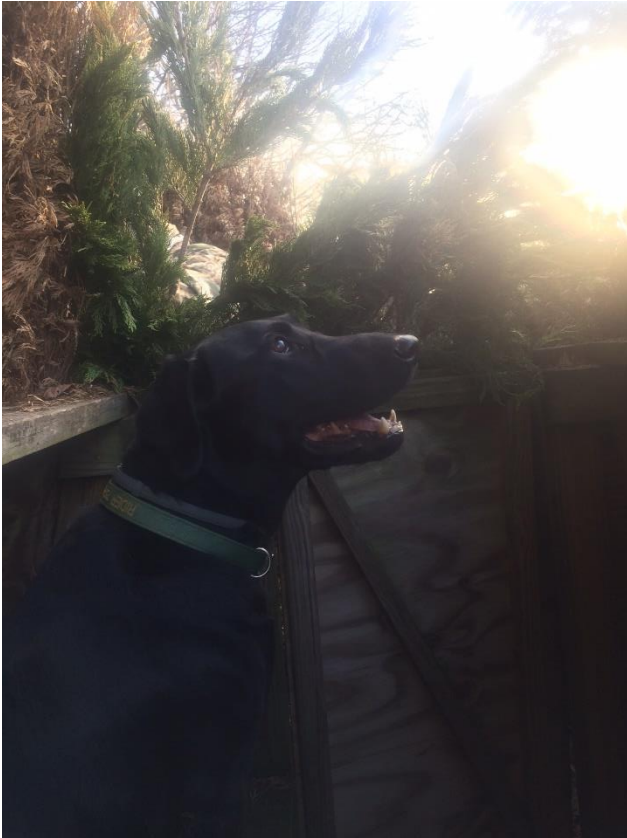
Here are a couple of pictures from the Winter Wildlife Festival January 26, 2019 at the Princess Anne Recreation Center.



January 21, 2018

## Eyes to the Sky

Why, you might ask, is this dog grinning? That's a good question. Let me share the back story with you. Imagine, if you will, you are a four-year-old male black lab retriever, your name is Rider, and you are intact. That is a polite way of saying you have not been neutered. That alone should make you smile, but wait, there's more.



Just a few weeks ago the vet said you were in top notch physical condition, had an excellent fur coat free of parasites, and could actually gain a few pounds. WOW! The vet is a nice lady, smells good, and is tall and thin just like Food Lady, who rates pretty high since she remembers to feed you every night. Sometime she enhances dinner with cheese or bacon fat! A wonderful woman to be sure.

Just when you think things couldn't get much better, surprise! Cousin Tom from Louisville arrives. Tom is a fine guy, is quick to scratch your ear, and makes strange animal sounds. The boss man (El jefe hombre, Rider is bi-lingual) is glad to see him too. You watch suspiciously as shot guns, ammo, and 100

pounds of related gear is loaded into the truck. You fear being left behind with food lady, which isn't the worst thing that could happen, but much to your joy you observe the water and food bowls being packed also. Things are looking up now!

After a long ride north you find yourself in a nice, overly warm hotel room with two beds. Gleefully you jump from bed to bed, trying to decide which one is softer. Looking good!! You don't even mind sharing a bed with cousin Tom, in case he doesn't want to sleep on the floor.

First day of the hunt: Air temp is 11° not counting windchill factor. Retrieved limits of geese for all hunters. This number amounts to more geese than you have retrieved all season. Did not get wet. Did not roll in goose poop. Did urinate on a good portion of the upper Chesapeake Bay. What more do you need to know?

Second day of the hunt: Air temp is 22° not counting windchill factor. In a moment of lax discipline (or maybe he's just having a great time too) the boss man allows you to park your black butt on the bench right beside him, cousin Tom, and your old buddy Wayne "3-B" Jarman. To your left, just outside the blind, stands your guide, David Coleman, three-time national goose calling Champion!!! When Mr. Coleman fires up the goose call, it's like music to your ears. Everyone smiles when he calls geese.

As if that's not enough, the boss man has forgotten his call, the coffee, the dog whistle, and the electric collar !! Things are really looking good now! Suddenly we find ourselves in the vortex of a literal goose tornado. Geese are circling high out front, to the side, and behind us. Mr. Coleman signals "get ready" - we will shoot when they swing around to the front. Etched on the dog's face is that moment of anticipation and excitement, all the while trying his best to sit still as they swing low over the decoys out front and Coleman yells "take 'em!!!" And then the heavy 12 gauge guns start firing.

And that is why this dog is grinning from floppy ear to floppy ear. For Rider the black lab, it doesn't get any better than this!



## BACK BAY WILDFOWL GUILD

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jason Seward, President      Wayne Jarman, Vice President  
Jim Mehne, Secretary      Larry Davenport, Treasurer  
Paarke Atkinson      Jim Briggs  
Mark Cromwell      Tom Richards  
Jeff Tinkham      William Walsh, Jr., Curator  
Fletcher Bryant, President Emeritus

### MUSEUM CARVERS

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

## MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

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

### MUSEUM STAFF

Lynn Hightower, Director, Joe Leo

### 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) !

*January 1, 2019 kicked off our Annual Membership Campaign. A lot of changes in the dues structure have been approved by the Board of Directors for the coming New Year. If you have any questions about the changes please call the Director at (757) 437-8432 or email him at [director@atwildfowl.org](mailto:director@atwildfowl.org).*

### 2019 DUES

\$35/YR INDIVIDUAL  
\$100/YR BRONZE  
\$500/YR GOLD

\$50/FAMILY  
\$200/YR SILVER  
\$1,000/YR PRESIDENTS CIRCLE



## BACK BAY WILDFOWL GUILD 2019 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

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

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

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

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

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

*January 1, 2019 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!***

