

# THE WILDFOWLER

OCTOBER 2019

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

## *Back Bay Wildfowl Memories A Half Century Institution; The Raven has Closed (1968-2019)*



Reprinted from a Pilot Online Article By:  
[Matthew Korfhage](#) The Virginian-Pilot

The ballad of Ricky and Bobby is nearing its end. [The Raven](#) restaurant closed in Virginia Beach after service on Friday September 27<sup>th</sup>..

“It’s over, the party’s over,” says co-owner Ricky Dunnington, with characteristic flair.

When the Raven closes, it will take a lot of history with it. Few spots on the Oceanfront have maintained their essential character so completely for so long. For 50 years, the bar and restaurant has been a boozy fixture, stretching back to the days when people from Portsmouth

had to drive up on Sundays to get a drink. Twin brothers Bobby and Ricky Dunnington founded the Raven after their Navy tours during the Vietnam War.

“We had the money from Vietnam,” Ricky Dunnington remembers. “If you’re single, you get paid, you get money. But it stays on the books because you don’t need any money; they feed you.”



"I think we had about 70,000 bucks between us after two years in the military, and so we opened up a beer joint."

When the Raven opened in November 1968 at 1200 Atlantic Ave., tenderloin steak dinners were \$1.60 and draft beer was a quarter. Cans of beer cost 35 cents.

Even as the bar has expanded its footprint multiple times, opening out an enclosed patio and a dining room — and the kitchen moved from a trim space behind the bar to a much larger space at rear — the menu has remained much the same as when they opened it. There's a burger, a steak dinner, some crab cakes and herculean stalks of broccoli with hollandaise sauce.



Generations of military recruits and tourists have made the place a beer-soaked home away from home.

"We had a number of good years," Ricky says. The walls by the entrance are filled with pictures of boat races contested by the Dunningtons, along with pictures of the bar's more prominent guests: boxers, military heroes and a former prime minister of Norway.

Buying a T-shirt from the Raven has become a Virginia Beach rite of passage — and as news of the bar's closing traveled, customers have already bought out most of the merchandise store, leaving only a few stacks of shirts in colors like pink and lime green.



### ***Raven Burger with Steak Fries.***

Ricky Dunnington says he's just glad the pair were able to sell the building before closing the place — it had been on the market for a year. Otherwise, he's not sure what kind of retirement they'd have.

"We didn't have an exit plan," he says. "Most people, they work a job for 30 years, they retire. We just aged out. We opened a bar when we were 21. We wake up one day and we're 70."

Ricky and Bobby have always been great supporters of the museum and the deWitt Cottage. They would frequently cater an event at the museum and then refuse to accept any money for the food and service they provided. For 25 years they allowed our patrons for meetings, events, and social gatherings to use their parking lot, when parking was a premium at the oceanfront.

We will miss the Raven and we pray that the Dunnington Brothers won't be strangers in the future. Happy Retirement Fellas!

### ***Raven Wings***





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

10/ 07, 14, 21, 28/2019: de Witt Garden Club  
10:00 am, at the museum  
Meets every Monday  
Bring your work gloves and tools

10/12/2019 Lynnhaven River Now Festival  
**Saturday, October 12, 2019 from 11 am - 3 pm**  
Mount Trashmore Park located at  
310 Edwin Dr, Virginia Beach, VA 23462  
**Volunteer Carvers and Docents needed**

10/13/2019 AWHM Fall Barbeque & Oyster Roast  
deWitt Cottage 1113 Atlantic Avenue  
1:00pm until 5:00pm

10/15/2019: Board Meeting  
6:00 pm

11/04, 11, 18, 25/2019: de Witt Garden Club  
10:00 am, at the museum  
Meets every Monday  
Bring your work gloves and tools

11/19/2019: Board Meeting  
6:00 pm

## **Save these Dates**

10/12/2019 Lynnhaven River Now Festival  
**Saturday, October 12, 2019 from 11 am - 3 pm**  
Mount Trashmore Park located at  
310 Edwin Dr, Virginia Beach, VA 23462  
**Volunteer Carvers and Docents needed**

10/13/2019 AWHM Fall Barbeque & Oyster Roast

12/03/2019 Christmas Party

Dine Out for The de Witt January, February, March, and April 2020

Lucky Oyster May 5, 2020



# 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'S SHELF

## William Riley Beasley April 12, 1883-June 17, 1951

Born and raised near Jockey's Ridge (Nags Head) William Riley Beasley was the son of Solomon Beasley who was an early decoy carver. Riley later moved his family to the Sea Gull area just north of Corolla, NC where he became a waterman like his father.

Riley was the caretaker of the Monkey Island Club in Currituck County for twenty years. The club was owned by the American Tobacco Company in 1909.

When Riley retired as caretaker he moved to Waterlily on Church's Island. He made a stand of duck decoys with the help of Rufus Roberts.

The decoys have the look of the Church's Island style with carved out tails and traces of the draw knife used to carve the birds.

Collectors have often misidentified his decoys as those carved by Ned Burgess or Bob Morse.



## LYNNHAVEN RIVER NOW FALL FESTIVAL (VOLUNTEERS NEEDED)

The Lynnhaven River Now Fall Festival will be held on Saturday, October 12, 2019 from 11:00am until 3:00pm. It will be held at the Mount Trashmore Park, 310 Edwin Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23462. 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](mailto:director@atwildfowl.org)



MUSEUM HOURS CHANGING

**BEGINNING ON WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 2, 2019 THE ATLANTIC WILDFOWL HERITAGE MUSEUM  
WILL BE CLOSED ON MONDAYS AND TUESDAYS UNTIL SUNDAY MAY 24, 2020**



**4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL FALL BARBEQUE & OYSTER ROAST**

Our 4<sup>th</sup> annual Fall Barbeque will be held on Sunday, October 13, 2019 from 1:00pm until 5:00pm. It will be held on the historic deWitt Cottage grounds at 1113 Atlantic Avenue. Tickets are available at the museum, you can call to reserve your tickets or buy them online at [covatix.com](http://covatix.com). They are \$40.00 per person and \$70 per couple in advance. Tickets will be \$50 per person the day of the event. There are also 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](mailto:director@atwildfowl.org). We are also in need of volunteers to help with setup before the event and take down after the event.



# Celebrate Trees! Fall Fest 2019 at MOUNT TRASHMORE



- Free & Open to the Public
- Children's Activities
- 50+ Fun & Educational Booths
- Native Plant Sale
- Eco-Friendly Vendors
- Demonstrations & Workshops
- Local Artisans and Crafters
- Games, Crafts and Prizes
- Yummy Food and Drinks
- Community Fun
- Give Aways
- Plenty of On-site Parking

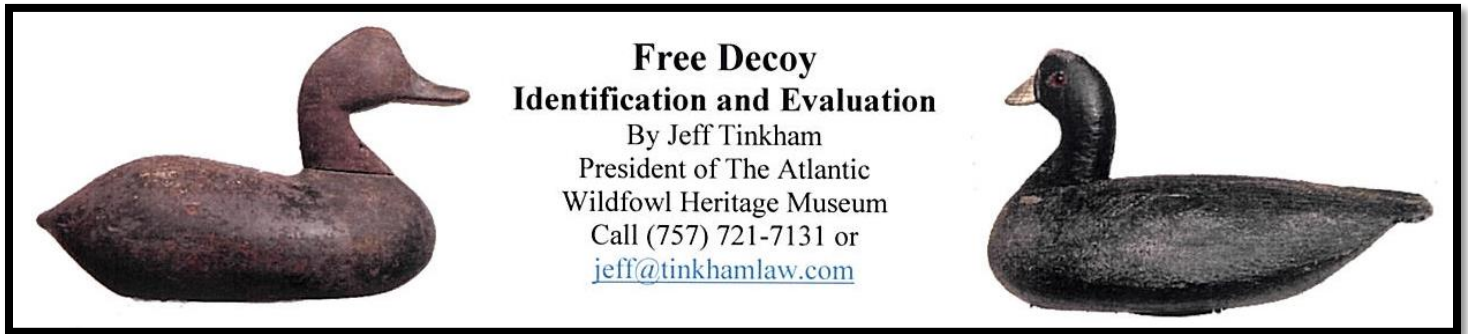
**Saturday, October 12th  
11 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

310 Edwin Drive, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23462



**For more information,  
visit [LRNow.org](http://LRNow.org)  
or email [Terri@LRNow.org](mailto:Terri@LRNow.org)**





#### FROM THE MUSEUM DIRECTOR

I want to thank the deWitt Cottage Garden Club for their tireless efforts to improve and beautify our gardens. They have been named again this year as an Award of Merit Winner by the Council of Garden Clubs in Virginia Beach and the Virginia Beach Beautification Commission for the beautification of our garden.

I need to thank Coastal Virginia Magazine, COVATIX.com, Dominion Energy, Virginia Beach Law Group. And The Surf Rider Foundation for their Sponsorships to help us produce the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Barbeque and Oyster Roast. We are now only 12 days to our Fall Barbeque and Oyster Roast, Tickets are available at the museum or online at COVATIX.com. Tickets are \$40.00 each or \$70.00 for a couple in advance. Tickets purchased the day of the event will be \$50.00 each.



On September 12, 2019 Shore Gallery Seaside Gifts celebrated It's Grand Opening with a Ribbon Cutting Hosted by Retail Alliance of Tidewater and The Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum. City Councilwoman Rosemary Wilson was on hand to assist with the ribbon cutting. A reception followed in the deWitt Cottage.



(Left to Right): Jason Seward, AWHM President; Rosemary Wilson, VB City Council; Kathleen and Sean Rooney, Gift Shop Owners; Ray Mattes, III, CEO of Retail Alliance.



(Left to Right): Sean and Kathleen Rooney, Gift Shop Owners; Rosemary Wilson VB City Council; Ray Mattes, III, CEO of Retail Alliance; Tina Knight, Retail Alliance.



# Ducks Unlimited Member Photo Contest Winners



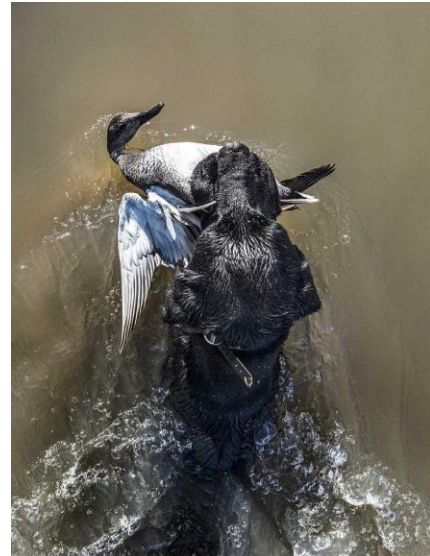
Best Overall, Edward Wall, Lake Ashbaugh, AK



Best Waterfowl, Mark Boyd, Lancaster County, PA



Runner Up Waterfowl, Steve Jasma, Bonner's Ferry, ID  
Best Retriever, Buzz Hayes, Virginia Beach, VA (right)



Best Waterfowl Hunting, Justin DeYoung, Groves, TX



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The start of October typically marks the end of the “tourist season” at our beloved oceanfront. With the closing of this season, we also start to see the “locals” reclaim what is rightfully theirs. October also signifies the harvest season, when farmers reap their harvest, hoping that their crop will provide to be abundant. I hope all of you had abundant summers and are ready for the winter ahead.

At the deWitt, we are ready for OYSTER SEASON! Our 4th Annual Fall BBQ Oyster Roast will take place on Sunday, October 13<sup>th</sup> from 1pm – 5pm at the cottage. We are looking to surpass the success of last year’s event, which proved to be a significant fundraising and “friend-raising” event for the museum. Tickets can be purchased at the museum, online at [www.covatix.comn](http://www.covatix.comn), or at the door the day of the event. Cost is \$40 per person or \$70 per couple. This year will, our friends from H.M. Terry will be providing those savory Sewansecott Oysters and The Beach Bully BBQ will be serving up the beef! Beer and wine selections from Back Bay Brewing and Williamsburg Winery, as well as our friends from Three Brothers’ Distillery with tastings of their Virginia crafted spirits. Enjoy music from the Tiki Bar Band, bid on an item in our silent auction, check out the museum, or visit our partners at Shore Gallery at the deWitt Cottage, plus much more.

On Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup> we are fortunate to have world renown artist Mark McNair offer an intimate experience entitled “The Revelation of the Ruddy Decoy” at the deWitt. Mark will offer a lecture and demonstration of his creative process from start to finish of a “Holland Ruddy”. This experience is being limited to 12 tickets to enhance the experience. Tickets are \$500 and can be purchased through the museum. The decoy will be raffled at the end of the day for one lucky attendee.

I would like to take an opportunity to thank Lynn Hightower for service and dedication to our organization. Beyond compiling newsletters (and chasing me down for my message), daily operations of the museum, head fundraiser, and other director duties, what most people don’t see are the hours Lynn spends doing things outside the expectation to elevate our organization and moving the needle forward. Lynn is our backbone. In addition, I would like to thank Mrs. Martha Davenport for her many contributions in serving as special events coordinator for the cottage. As you will see, Martha is developing a robust schedule of special events that are sure to attract visitors, locals, families, carvers, collectors, and more. We are quickly becoming a premiere wedding destination for Virginia Beach and the “Bride’s Suite” located on the second floor is simply stunning.

Happy fall to everyone. As always, I thank you for your continued support and unwavering dedication. If you would like to get involved more, please contact Lynn for volunteer opportunities at various levels.

Cheers,

**Jason W. Seward**



## BACK BAY WILDFOWL GUILD

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

### MUSEUM CARVERS

Monday      Closed  
Tuesday:      Closed  
Wednesday:      Roy Carlson & Ed Morrison  
Thursday:      Hank Grigolite  
"The Boathouse Boys" Carving Club:      Al, Jamie, John, Pete  
Friday:      Susan Moritz  
Saturday:      Lynn Hightower  
Sunday:      Lynn Hightower

## MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Wednesday:      OPEN  
Thursday      Joe Leo 10:00am-2:00pm  
Friday:      OPEN  
Saturday:      OPEN  
Sunday:      OPEN

Museum Grounds: Jacky Richards, Martha Davenport,  
Nancy Lekberg Cheryl Garvey, Jan McGuire, Evie Fetterolf,  
Mary Ann Biagetti, Tom Richards

### MUSEUM STAFF

Lynn Hightower, Director  
Martha Davenport, Events Coordinator

### MUSEUM CONTACT INFORMATION

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

Telephone: 757.437.8432

Facsimile: 757.437.9055

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 2019 dues, please give serious consideration to sending them into the museum right away. Beginning March 1, 2019, any listed member who has not paid their dues will receive an invoice from the museum director requesting payment of their annual dues*

### 2019 DUES

\$35/YR INDIVIDUAL

\$100/YR BRONZE

\$500/YR GOLD

\$50/YR 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!***

