

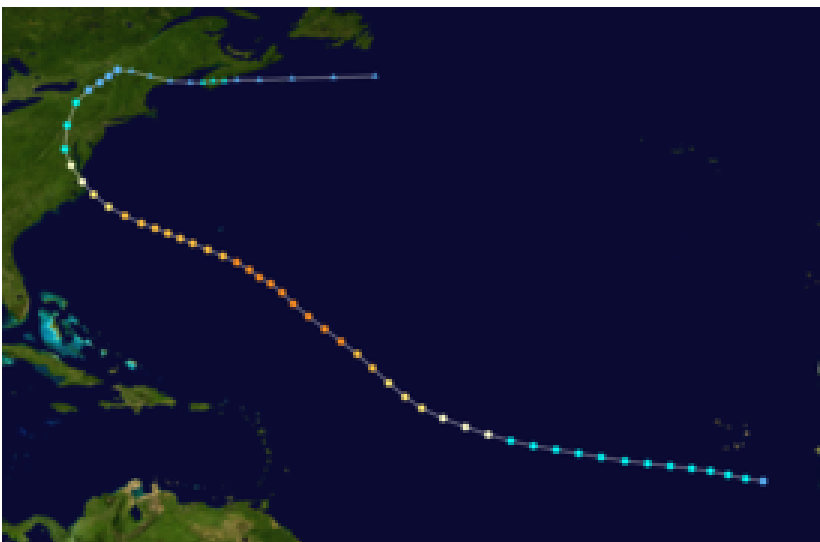
THE WILDFOWLER

MAY 2021

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

Bay Back Wildfowl Guild Memories: Hurricane Season is Upon Us!

With Hurricane Season now less than a month away it might be good to review our history and look at some of the most destructive hurricanes to strike the Mid-Atlantic States starting with Hurricane #6 in 1933.



The **1933 Chesapeake–Potomac hurricane**^[1] was among the most damaging hurricanes in the [Mid-Atlantic states](#) in the eastern United States. The sixth storm and third hurricane of the very active [1933 Atlantic hurricane season](#), it formed in the eastern [Atlantic](#), where it moved west-northwestward and eventually became a [Category 4](#) on the [Saffir-Simpson hurricane wind scale](#).^[nb 1] A strong [ridge](#) over [New England](#) allowed a continued northwest course, bringing the storm south of Bermuda and later toward the middle coast of the eastern United States. Advance warning allowed hundreds of people to evacuate ahead

of the hurricane making [landfall](#). It did so in northeastern North Carolina on August 23 with winds of about 90 mph (150 km/h). Soon after, the [eye](#) crossed over [Norfolk, Virginia](#), the first time that happened since [1821](#). The hurricane weakened into a tropical storm over northern Virginia shortly before passing near [Washington, D.C.](#), becoming the worst tropical cyclone there since [1896](#). Curving northward, the storm moved through Pennsylvania and New York before losing tropical characteristics on August 25. Now [extratropical](#), the former hurricane moved across [Atlantic Canada](#), dissipating on August 28.

Across the eastern United States, the hurricane left widespread damage amounting to over \$40 million (equivalent to about \$0.8 billion in 2020^[4]) and causing at least 47 deaths. Although the storm struck North Carolina, damage in the state totaled only about \$250,000,^[nb 2] largely to crops and transport. The storm produced [100-year flooding](#) from its [storm surge](#), setting records that remained for 70 years. In Virginia, flooding covered downtown portions of Norfolk in the southeast and [Alexandria](#) in the north. Damage in the state was estimated at \$17.5 million. Similarly heavy damage occurred in Maryland, including over \$7 million to crops. High waves along the coast eroded beaches and created a new inlet at [Ocean City](#). The highest rainfall associated with the hurricane was 13.28 in (337 mm) at [York, Pennsylvania](#). In the state, the rains flooded several rivers which forced thousands to evacuate. In neighboring New Jersey, high waves wrecked boats and destroyed a fishing pier, while in New York, flooding caused traffic jams. In Atlantic Canada, heavy rainfall assisted firefighters in combating wildfires, and the associated winds caused isolated power outages.



Continuous weather records for the Hampton Roads Area of Virginia began on January 1, 1871 when the National Weather Service was established in downtown Norfolk. The recorded history of significant tropical storms that affected the area goes back much further. Prior to 1871, very early storms have been located in ship logs, newspaper accounts, history books, and countless other writings. The residents of coastal Virginia during Colonial times were very much aware of the weather. They were a people that lived near the water and largely derived their livelihood from the sea. To them, a tropical storm was indeed a noteworthy event. Learning from the past will help us prepare for the future. Please prepare now for the coming storm season.



Upcoming Guild Events:

05/03, 10, 17, 24, 31/2021: de Witt Garden Club
10:00 am, at the museum



~~05/04/2021 Back Bay Wildfowl Guild
Membership Meeting 6:00pm
Lucky Oyster Spring Celebration~~



05/09/2021 – Mother’s Day

05/18/2021: Board Meeting 6:00 pm
In Person at The deWitt

05/25/2021: Celebration of life
Memorial Service
Sculpture Garden, Outside
7:00pm - 8:00pm

05/31/2021: Memorial Day
Museum begins operating seven days a week
10:00am – 5:00pm

06/07, 14, 21, 28/2021: de Witt Garden Club
10:00 am, at the museum

06/15/2020: Board Meeting

SAVE THE DATE

Oyster Roast – October 17, 2021 – deWitt Cottage Garden
Halloween – October 31, 2021 – deWitt Cottage Ghost Stories
Christmas Party – December 7, 2021 – Location TBA
Gingerbread House competition – November 25, 2021-December 18, 2021
December 11, 12, 2021 - Santa Claus at the deWitt Cottage



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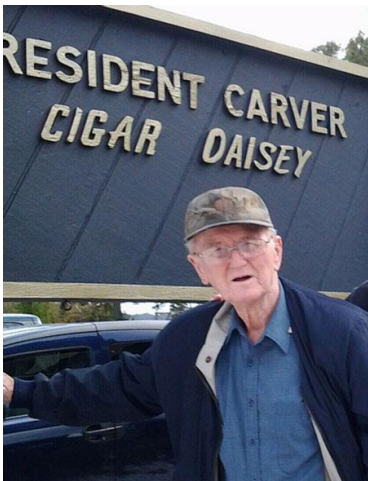
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BY MARK CROMWELL
(757) 721-2746
Member North Carolina Decoy Collectors Assoc.

COLLECTOR'S SHELF



Delbert Lee "Cigar" Daisey

March 6, 1928-April 19, 2017

Delbert "Cigar" Daisey, born on Chincoteague Island, was one of the last surviving island residents who had made a living as a market hunter.

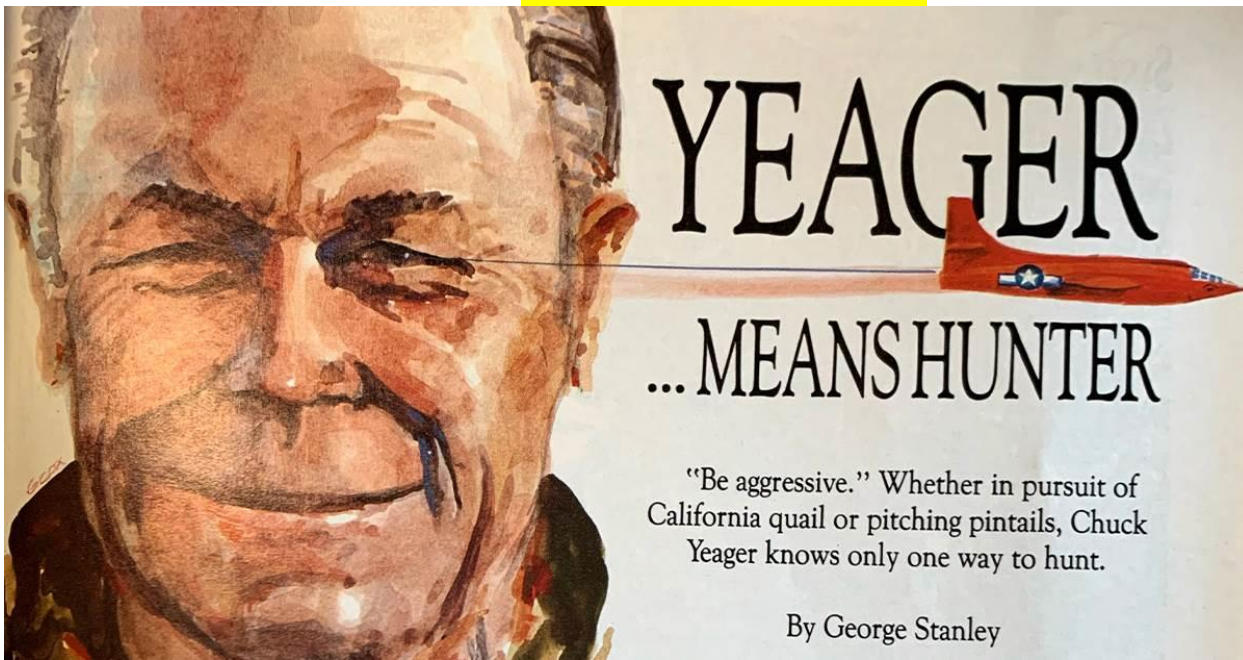


known as "**Cigar**" Daisey, was an [American waterfowl wood carver](#) and [decoy](#) maker. He was the son of Herbert Lee Daisey and Emma Jane Daisey.^[3] He was born, lived and worked in [Chincoteague](#), Virginia, and was the resident carver at the [Refuge Waterfowl Museum](#).^[4] His decoy carvings are recognized for both their artistic value and functionality as working pieces

for [waterfowl hunting](#). His works include [black ducks](#), [mallards](#), [redheads](#), [ruddys](#) and [red-breasted mergansers](#) and often crafted in drake (male) and hen (female) pairs. He had carved about 1900 ducks in total and he generally used cork or wood as his medium. He carved his first duck out of balsa wood in 1940 at his father's wood shop. The [Smithsonian](#) has his works in their collection. He was given his nickname in 1945 by John Buckalew, Federal Game Warden and first manager of the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge because Daisey would leave cigar butts to taunt game wardens while poaching ducks on [Assateague Island](#). Later in life, Daisey was an avid [conservationist](#).

One of the most valuable pieces he ever made was a [pintail](#) in 1973, as a present for his wife. That was the only fully decorative decoy he had ever made, and was featured in [National Geographic](#) magazine, June 1980, page 826. The decoy was estimated to be worth \$150,000.





This story about Chuck Yeager the conservationist was originally published in Ducks Unlimited magazine in 1987 as part of a special issue commemorating the organization's 50th anniversary.

An array of game is taken during the German winter drives, he explains—deer, boar, rabbit, pheasant. Afterwards, the game is laid out in the snow, according to rank, with the big stags coming first, then the roebucks and so on. An evergreen twig in the shape of a cross is placed by the mouth of each animal as a "last bite" offering in honor of St. Hubertus, the patron of hunters. (Hubertus, it is said, passed up a shot at a great stag and dedicated his life to Christ after seeing a flaming cross appear between the animal's antlers.) After the last bite, the jägers lift their horns in a final call to the forest. "It's a beautiful thing," Chuck says. "I fell in love with it."

He returned from Germany with an awakened appreciation for wildlife conservation in his own country. "We're heading toward the same kind of system, eventually," Yeager says, unwittingly echoing a piece of graduate school research recently completed at the University of Iowa. In her 1985 master's thesis, "Built on Honor to Endure," Sharon Kaufman traced the profound "land ethic" of Aldo Leopold and his children—the first family of American wildlife management—to their inheritance as descendants of German hunters.

"We're still a very young country," Chuck says. "But I hunt in a lot of states and every one of them has a good game management program. With the work that's being done by the state agencies and by organizations like Ducks Unlimited, our wildlife will still be here hundreds of years down the road."

WHY? It's drizzling outside Chuck's Blazer. You've just finished lunch and are awaiting the hunters you'll shoot quail with this afternoon. "Quail hunting is how I get my exercise," Chuck says. He happened to be chasing quail in the foothills near his house the previous morning when he fell and skinned his face. He brushes a hand over the cut above his eyebrow. "I should've got some stitches," he says. "But it'll heal." Yeager is intimately familiar with his body's healing powers. He fractured his back in 1943 while bailing out of a burning plane during flight training. Just five months later, he jumped into enemy territory from another disintegrating plane, a gash on his forehead and flak in his hands, legs and feet. Two freshly broken ribs from a fall off a horse would surely have prevented him from flying the X-1 faster than sound on that fateful fall morning of 40 years ago had he not succeeded in concealing the injury from his superiors. A helicopter crash during a 1950s fishing trip tore open his scalp in five places; it took 138 stitches to close the wounds. Yet even those cuts seemed like



scratches compared with the injuries he suffered in 1963 after the rocket plane he was piloting skidded out of control at a sub-space altitude of 104,000 feet. Yeager ejected for the third and final time in his Air Force career, but as his parachute lines streamed out, the ejector seat became tangled in them, its rocket still burning. The chute opened and yanked Yeager up. At the same time, the seat was jarred loose and fell down. It crashed through his faceplate and stuck there, engulfing his head in flame and smoke. Frying and suffocating, Yeager tried to scoop air into his helmet with a gloved hand; the glove caught fire as well.

He hit the ground and managed to wrestle the helmet and burning glove off. Hunks of two fingers fell off with the glove. Second and third degree burns covered his face.

To save Yeager from horrible disfigurement, a flight surgeon scraped the scabs off his healing face every four days for more than a month. The face healed fine. But scar tissue replaced the skin on his neck, and his hands are severely wrinkled. His two shortened fingers still function; they look normal at even a short distance.

"As long as you walk away—that's what counts," Yeager says, shrugging. But many of his closest friends didn't walk away during the gory glory days of flight testing at Edwards Air Force Base. "Most of the guys from my time are dead," he says. The ones who managed to survive generally left the service as young men for safer, more lucrative careers. A pilot of Yeager's unmatched skill could have made tremendous money under far less strenuous conditions by flying for private industry.

But he remained in the Air Force until 1975, when he was forced by law to retire after 35 years of active military duty. In the forties and fifties, then the father of four young children, he risked his life day after day for meager military wages. In the sixties, he served as wing commander of five fighter-bomber squadrons in Vietnam and often flew on the missions himself.

Why? His autobiography suggests it was for the sheer love and excitement of flying. That passion would explain why he continues piloting the Air Force's hottest jets, for no pay, 12 years after his "retirement."

A 1955 biography of Yeager, *Across the High Frontier*, suggests that he was driven by both his love of flying and his desire to do his best at the only job he knew. *The Right Stuff* suggests that Yeager's life as an Air Force test pilot was fueled by pride and a fiercely competitive warrior spirit.

But Yeager is a more thoughtful, serious person than you would expect after reading the books. You sense there's something more to the answer, to his willingness to accept whatever challenge the Air Force offered him. You ask him if he still experiences nightmares of fire in the cockpit—terrifying dreams that left him clawing at the bedroom windows during the X-1 project.

He shakes his head. "I was tired then," he says, his voice subdued. "We'd had three fires in three flights, and you start to think, 'Something's going to happen with this thing.' Besides, the X-1 wasn't all that I was flying. There were other experimental planes that we didn't have time to get to know. Guys were dying; there weren't enough test pilots; we were putting in 18-hour days." The nightmares robbed him of badly needed rest. "Finally, I said, 'Hey, you might get clobbered. There's nothing you can do about it.' It's like war—you have to block it out. And with the mental discipline I have, that was it. I haven't had the dreams since." Talking freely now, the old fighter pilot reveals himself as a person with strong opinions, solid convictions and a singular dedication to duty.

Sense of duty to country put Yeager in an airplane over Europe when America needed combat pilots. That same sense of duty kept him rocketing over the California desert when America needed research test pilots. Who else could push those planes to their limits and survive? Even in surviving there was duty—to his family. He studied his jets until he knew every potentially important detail about their mechanical, electrical, and emergency systems. He packed his own ejector-seat charges. He quit test flying the day he thought the odds were catching up to him.

But he stayed in the Air Force to train younger pilots. Then he led them into battle in Vietnam. "I think most of the guys that went to Vietnam are proud—not because of the war but because they did what their country asked them to do," he says. "The soldiers should not have been criticized. Soldiers never fight where they want to. They fight where their country needs them." Yeager plainly states his disgust for those he feels have shirked their responsibility. "When you're raised in the military, with such a strong sense of duty, it really makes you mad, really disappoints you, to see politicians putting their party or themselves ahead of their country," he says. As examples, Yeager points to congressional criticism of the Grenada invasion and the bombing of Tripoli.



"Congress doesn't have a sense of duty," he says. "The media doesn't have it." Yeager—the ice man—is working up a head of steam. He's ready to stop talking and start walking. But first he must endure a guided tour of the 4,500-acre Saddleback Ranch from host Wen Moe.

THE DUCK GURU

A one-time catcher for the New York Yankees, whose baseball career was shortened by injury, Wen Moe, 56, can talk as fast as Chuck Yeager can fly. He's as excitable as Yeager is steady—arms flying this way, then that, as he points out one fantastic piece of scenery after another. Wen's frantic, gesturing ways amaze the General. "Will you just let us get out and walk?" Yeager keeps asking, as Moe drives from one quail cover to the next, chattering away, hoping to flush birds so they can be tracked down. Finally, Wen stops and grants the quail hunters their freedom. They hike around a large hill that overlooks a vast marsh network teeming with ducks. They find no coveys but do get to watch a pair of bald eagles soar at tree-top height down a narrow valley between two hills.

Back at the lodge, Wen makes no excuses. "I'm not a quail guru, I'm a duck guru," he says. "You'll see what I mean in the morning." An hour before dawn, over a cup of coffee, Chuck tells Wen about the wood ducks that hatch each spring on his 1½-acre pond. Moments later, Wen is overheard telling someone else about the General's three-acre duck pond. Those who know Moe well say that you should cut any number quoted by him in half if you want something resembling the truth. Except for duck numbers, they say. Those you should double. Wen probably prefers to underestimate his duck populations because he has been accused more than once of stockpiling most of the birds in the Pacific Flyway on his prime wintering wetlands. This morning, he tells you, the ranch is holding about 500,000 ducks. Knowing you can't possibly count them, you take his word for it. You head out to a pit blind on one of Moe's marshes, then wait with him and Yeager for legal time. A pair of pintails zips past as it arrives. "Shoot!" Wen says. Chuck spins for a difficult over-the-shoulder shot at the birds going away. He looks amused by this initial miss. From that point on, whenever he raises his barrel, you hear one shot, a brief pause, a nearby splash. Though he has plenty of opportunities, Chuck never tries for a double. "I'm used to hunting quail without a dog," he says. "I shoot, then go right out to get the bird."

Wen checks out of the blind early and sends over DU Regional Director Steve Schultz to fill his vacancy. While Steve gets settled, Yeager pops a pintail drake and hops out of the blind to retrieve it. As Chuck heads back toward the blind with his bird, Schultz topples another pintail. Yeager fetches that bird as well.

Schultz beams. "This is the first time I've ever had a general for a retriever," he says.

By 8:30 a.m., the blind has produced four five-duck limits. It is one of those rare days when the hunters spend far more time plucking and cleaning the birds than they did collecting them.

After the plucking party, the hunters at the club sit down to a Sunday luncheon. As the men eat, they chat about the business of the upcoming week. Club co-owner Ned Spieker asks the retired fella what he'll be up to.

Yeager says he'll be setting a new distance-speed record on Wednesday in honor of the 83rd anniversary of man's first powered flight. The most celebrated pilot since Orville Wright says he'll fly a Piper Cheyenne 400—"the hotrod of turboprops" from Edwards Air Base in California to Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

"We're going to average 449 miles per hour," he says.


Lunch ends and the weekend fun is over. The hunters shake hands and head their separate ways.

Four days later, you're passing by a newsstand when you spot a photo of a hunting buddy on the front page of USA Today. The story is headlined: "The Wright's Stuff: Yeager Sets Record Flying to Kitty Hawk." It reports that General Chuck Yeager flew 2,361 miles in five hours, 15 minutes and 11 seconds.


His average speed, the article said, was 449 miles per hour. Yeager was quoted as calling the flight "a piece of cake."

Yep, you think, smiling to yourself. That's Chuck





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Past President of The Atlantic
Wildfowl Heritage Museum
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FROM THE MUSEUM DIRECTOR

Again, this year (2021) we would typically be preparing to have dinner at the Lucky Oyster on May 4th, to celebrate the renewal of the Spring and Summer seasons. But like everything else since March 9, 2020 the celebration has again been cancelled. I look forward to seeing everyone on May 3, 2022 when, with God's blessings things can return to some sense of normal!

Now for some good news! We will begin opening our events and celebrating together again on October 17, 2021 here at the deWitt Cottage. That will be the date for our Annual Oyster Roast. There will be music, food and beverage, an auction, vendors, and oh yeah Oysters; lots and lots of Oysters.

On May 25, 2021, Tuesday, at 7:00pm, We will have a Celebration of Life, for all the people we have lost way too soon, in our sculpture garden at the deWitt Cottage, 1113 Atlantic Avenue, Virginia Beach, VA 23451. The service should run for about 30 minutes and everyone is invited. I would suggest bringing a lawn chair for your comfort.

2021 Membership dues were due on January 1, 2021. We typically collect the dues through April of each year and then begin sending invoices to unpaid members in May. If you have not paid your membership dues, then I simply request that you please pay them if that is at all possible. All memberships run for 12 months from the date your payment was received. Your new membership card will have a date on it that is your membership expiration date.



BACK BAY WILDFOWL GUILD

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

MUSEUM CARVERS

Monday Elaine Polizos
Tuesday: Open
Wednesday: Roy Carlson & Ed Morrison
Thursday: Open
"The Boathouse Boys" Carving Club: Al, Jamie, John, Pete
Friday: Susan Moritz
Saturday: Open
Sunday: Open

Carvers are not demonstrating due to Covid-19

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

Tuesday: OPEN
Wednesday: OPEN
Thursday OPEN
Friday: OPEN
Saturday: OPEN
Sunday: OPEN
Museum Grounds: Jacky & Tom Richards, Martha Davenport

MUSEUM STAFF

Lynn Hightower, Director Joe Leo, Operations Mgr.

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
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 yet paid your 2021 dues, please give serious consideration to sending them into the museum right away. Beginning January 1, 2021, Membership cards will have an expiration date. Each member will receive an invoice from the museum director requesting payment of their annual dues after the expiration date. Memberships run for 12 consecutive months from the date annual dues are paid

2021 DUES

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

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



**BACK BAY WILDFOWL GUILD
2021 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM**

NAME: _____ AMOUNT PAID _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____ [CELL] _____

January 1, 2021 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!

