

THE WILDFOWLER

FEBRUARY 2023

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

Back Bay Wildfowl Guild Memories

John “Archie” Johnson

August 23, 1922 -December24, 2022

Archie Johnson has been an active member of the Back Bay Wildfowl Guild, Inc. since 1976, has served on its board of directors, and was the Guild’s president in 1987. A Virginia Native, Archie grew up in Norfolk, Virginia, and has resided in Virginia Beach since the 1960s. He graduated from Maury High School (*Class of '40*) and attended Virginia Polytechnic Institute. His college education was interrupted by World War II. He served in the United States Army as an airplane mechanic on the Boeing model B-29 Superfortress.



Upon his discharge from the Army, he returned to school at the prestigious Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania where he earned a master’s degree in Business Administration. He co-founded Cavalier Clothes with his father and worked as a traveling clothing salesman. By the early 1970s Cavalier Clothes evolved into a screen--printing business in which Archie and his son, Johnny, incorporated as Cavalier Sportswear and to this day is still a successful family business.

Archie’s most notable contributions to the local Virginia and North Carolina areas are within the waterfowl communities. Stemming from his time working on his high school yearbook and newspaper, his passion for photography eventually showcased various waterfowl, the areas in which they live, and the people who pursue them. He became interested in Waterfowl photography in the 1970s which developed into an interest in hunting with a camera as well as with a gun. His waterfowl and hunting photographs have been displayed for many years at the Waterfowl Festival in Easton, Maryland; the Mid-Atlantic Wildfowl Festival in Virginia Beach, Virginia; and at the Currituck Wildlife Festival in Currituck, North Carolina. Archie’s photography, photo essays, and/or articles on vintage decoys have appeared in Decoy Magazine, Ducks Unlimited magazine, Gray's Sporting Journal, Virginia Wildlife, Wildfowl Art magazine, Wildlife in North Carolina, and in newspapers and museums in Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. Archie and longtime friend, Bud Coppedge, wrote and published Gun Clubs & Decoys of Back Bay and Currituck Sound in 1991. A few years later Archie wrote and published Canvas Decoys of North America. Both books represent the great knowledge and respect Archie had for antique decoys and the culture within duck hunting that is unique to our local area. In addition to his photography, Archie also enjoyed collecting and restoring antique decoys. Many of his refurbished works have made their way to decoy collections all over the country. Archie was 100 years old.





Upcoming Guild Events:

02/04/2023 – Cocktail Party
de Witt Cottage
5:00pm till 8:00pm

02/06, 13, 20, 27, 2023: de Witt Garden Club
10:00 am, at the museum
Meets every Monday
Bring your work gloves and tools

02/21/2023: Board Meeting
6:00pm in-person and Virtual

03/06, 13, 20, 27, 2023: de Witt Garden Club
10:00 am, at the museum
Meets every Monday
Bring your work gloves and tools

03/07/2023 Back Bay Wildfowl Guild
General Membership Meeting
Social at 6:00pm Meeting at 7:00pm
Program: Cameron Evans,
Eastern Shore Photographer

03/21/2023: Board Meeting
6:00pm in-person and Virtual

Save these Dates

Monday, March 13, 2023 Dine Out for deWitt at 501 Kitchen
Monday, April 3, 2023 Dine Out for deWitt at Oceanfront Eats
Tuesday May 1, 2023 Lucky Oyster Virginia Beach, VA 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.

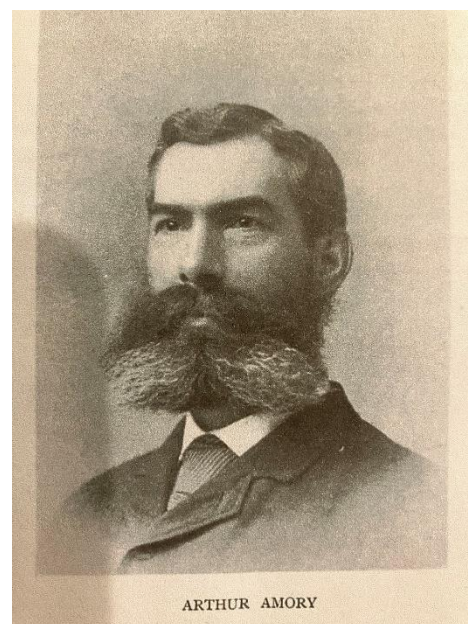
COLLECTOR' SHELF

Lighthouse Club Chronicles

Arthur Amory by Larry Davenport

Over the next number of months, I will chronicle the fascinating history of the Lighthouse Club on Currituck Sound (Corolla, NC), through its founders and members. I will begin those installments with the story of club founder Arthur Amory, whom I perceive was a “Great Gatsby-esque” figure for this sporting and social institution.

The Lighthouse Club was founded in 1874 by six sportsmen residing at the time in New York City: Arthur Amory, George Richmond Fearing, Theodore Burnett Baldwin, Charles G. Francklyn, Gilbert Russell Payson, and Charles Edward Strong. These individuals and the subsequent members of the Lighthouse Club came from prominent, wealthy families (mostly Boston families termed “Boston Brahmins”), lived notably interesting lives, and shared much in common, all of which these chronicles will reveal in these newsletters over the next several months. There is an extensive list of names and families, many of which were related by marriage, all with interesting stories of their own. They were descendants of and/or connected to original settlers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, our country’s Founding Fathers, U.S. Presidents, other prominent politicians, and even British royalty. Most, also, were Harvard graduates and members of the Porcellian Club, that school’s most secretive and exclusive campus group, founded in 1791. Some of the “Porc Club’s” most notable members include Theodore Roosevelt and others of the Roosevelt family (but distant cousin Franklin D. was not “punched”—i.e., accepted for membership), Richard Henry Dana, Jr. (author of *Two Years Before the Mast*), renowned Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., William Henry Fitzhugh Lee (son of Robert E. Lee and who had an interesting connection to and Civil War encounter with one of the Lighthouse Club members), Henry Cabot Lodge (congressman, senator, and diplomat), Union Gen. George Gordon Meade, and many others more renowned during their day.



Notably in more recent times, none of the Kennedy family were punched for Porc Club membership. Lighthouse Club members also were members of New York City's exclusive gentlemen's Union and Knickerbocker Clubs. The Union Club was founded in 1830. The Knickerbocker Club was founded in 1871 by Lighthouse Club founder Col. George Richmond Fearing who was a member of the Union Club at the time, but who faulted the Union Club for relaxing its membership standards. Nevertheless, these two exclusive clubs still exist today in New York City.

With so much to be shared regarding the Lighthouse Club's membership, a logical beginning would be a decoy (photo attached) originally owned by club founder Arthur Amory (1841-1911). This decoy, along with several others owned by Lighthouse Club members, was acquired by Mark Cromwell as part of a considerably larger lot from an elderly gentleman whose family had hunted waterfowl on Back Bay and Currituck Sound for generations. All of these Lighthouse Club decoys have members' names branded into the bottom and were used in the late 1800s, making them 120+ years old. However, it's likely we would know nothing about any of them had Arthur Amory's full name not been branded into his decoy. That decoy became the Rosetta Stone—the key to learning the owners of the other decoys (which only had a last name or an initial and last name) and the fascinating histories of the club's founders and members.



When I acquired the Amory decoy from Mark, he suggested I research the name branded on the bottom. Eventually, I picked up my copy of Archie Johnson and Bud Coppedge's *Gun Clubs & Decoys (of Back Bay & Currituck Sound)*. The index revealed the name "Amory, Arthur"...and the door opened. I ultimately then



made it to a publication entitled *Universities And Their Sons* from the 1800s. There I came upon bios of two Lighthouse Club founders: Arthur Amory and Gilbert Russell Payson (more about Payson in a subsequent installment), two Boston Brahmin 1862 Harvard graduates. Amory's bio provided a bit about his lineage, which I will discuss in further detail below, his 1862 graduation from Harvard and membership in the Porcellian Club, a scientific

expedition he made to Greenland, several other associations and club memberships, but, perhaps most notably, his membership in "...the Lighthouse Club of Currituck Sound." It also noted that Amory founded the Harvard Club in New York City, which exists still today and is actively frequented by Harvard graduates living and working in the city. Additionally, I learned that both Amory and fellow-founder Payson were fitted for college at the Dixwell School, described as, "...the finest private school in Boston... Any graduate who bore Mr. Dixwell's [Epes Sargent Dixwell] hallmark was sufficiently guaranteed without further question." Between 1851 and 1872 when Mr. Dixwell retired, almost 500 of his scholars matriculated from Harvard. Amory (and Payson) was included in that number. In an interesting aside, Dixwell students in 1860 formed the Oneida Football Club, the first organized team to play what evolved into American football. This likely occurred just after Amory and Payson had moved on to Harvard.

From here, a good question to pose is, "What does Arthur Amory have to do with the Boston Tea Party, the well-known Middleton Plantation of Charleston, SC (which is actively visited today), and the telephone, among other things. Let's start with Arthur, himself. He was born in Boston in 1841 to James Sullivan Amory (1809-1884) and Mary Copley (Greene) Amory (1817-1892). Mary Copley Greene was the daughter of Gardiner Greene (1753-1832), a wealthy cotton planter and merchant from Boston who conducted business from Greenfield, his plantation in Demerara, Guyana (on the coast of South America between Venezuela and Brazil). In 1800, he married his third wife (the first two having predeceased him), Elizabeth Clarke Copley (1770-1866),



whom he met in London. She was the daughter of John Singleton Copley, famous colonial-era artist, the sister of Baron Lyndhurst (Lord Chancellor of England), and was Mary Copley (Greene) Amory's mother. Elizabeth's grandfather was one Richard Clarke, the merchant to whom was consigned the tea destroyed in the Boston Tea Party. A great-granddaughter of Gardiner (and, therefore, distant cousin of Amory), one Mabel Gardiner Hubbard, married Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone. In 1803, Gardiner bought an estate in Boston on Cotton Hill, where he built "The most conspicuous and elegant garden [in Boston and] one of the early green-houses...with fruit and ornamental trees from foreign lands." The garden and green-house were guarded by "...a fierce mastiff, Pedro [no doubt, a South American name], whose fur Gardiner's daughter made into mittens!"

Establishing the connection to the Boston Tea Party and the telephone, we re-focus on Arthur, himself. As noted above, his father was James Sullivan Amory, a son of Jonathon Amory (1770-1828). In 1801, Jonathon married Mehitable (Sullivan) Amory (1772-1847), daughter of James Sullivan (1744-1808), Arthur's father's (James Sullivan Amory's) namesake and Attorney General and 7th Governor of Massachusetts. Jonathon graduated from Harvard (in 1787) and pursued a mercantile career.

Jonathon (1770-1828) was the son of Thomas Amory (1722-1784) and Elizabeth (Coffin) Amory (1741-1833). Elizabeth Coffin was the cousin of Admiral Sir Isaac Coffin of the Royal Navy, which likely explains her and Thomas's loyalist leanings during the Revolutionary War. Thomas, Elizabeth, and her family (the Coffins) removed to Quebec during the war, before returning to Boston where Thomas rejoined the Amory family merchant business.

Thomas (1722-1784) was the son of, also, Thomas Amory (1682-1728) and Rebecca (Holmes) Amory (1700-1769). He was born in Dublin, Ireland to also another Jonathan Amory (1654-1699). That Jonathan was born at Bristol, England to also another Thomas Amory (1608-1667), one of that city's "Merchant Adventurers," who took the family to Ireland. From Ireland, Jonathan (1654-1699) took his family to Barbados (1683) and then on to Charleston, SC (1685), where he became Speaker of the Assembly, Advocate-General, and Public Treasurer of South Carolina. Jonathan (1654-1699) had two children, the previously-mentioned Thomas (1682-1728) and Sarah (Amory) Middleton (1690-1722), who married South Carolina Royal Governor Arthur Middleton (1681-1737). Thomas (1682-1728) was sent to England for education, returned to Charleston, was sent on business to the Azores, and then in 1719 moved to Boston, where our decoy owner Arthur Amory (namesake from Arthur Middleton?) was a lineal descendant four generations later.

Meanwhile back in Charleston, Thomas's sister Sarah (Amory) Middleton and Governor Arthur Middleton gave birth to Henry Middleton (1717-1784), whose first wife was Mary (Williams) Middleton (1715-1761). It was through Mary that Henry acquired the same Middleton Plantation which is a much-touted tour destination today in Charleston. Henry served as 2nd President of the Continental Congress and was one of the wealthiest landowners in the colonies, at one time possessing 20 plantations of some 50,000 acres, to include Middleton Plantation. Henry's and Mary's son (also) Arthur Middleton (1742-1787) was a signatory of the Declaration of Independence along with his brother-in-law South Carolina Governor Edward Rutledge.

So with Arthur Amory we begin to get a flavor for the men who founded and subsequently joined the Lighthouse Club. Much of what I have been able to learn was a result of gaining access to the daily logbook of the Lighthouse Club, which exists as an exhibit at the Whalehead Club in Corolla, NC. Again, these were socially, politically, and professionally prominent individuals with distinguished family lineages. In subsequent months, I will chronicle additional Lighthouse Club founders and members. We will see connections to the earliest colonial immigrants, prominent politicians, military leaders, Founding Fathers, U.S. Presidents, and even an English monarch. At least some of us are aware of the prominent Americans who hunted at waterfowl clubs on Back Bay and Currituck Sound. My recent research on the Lighthouse Club will demonstrate that this could arguably have been the grandest club of them all. The one decoy branded with Arthur Amory's name made it all possible. Stay tuned.

Larry Davenport



FROM THE MUSEUM DIRECTOR



Hello Everyone,

We are excited to announce the installation of our new President, Aimee Rhodes. Aimee is a Virginia Native, born and raised in Virginia Beach. She has recently served on the Back Bay Wildfowl Guild's Board of Directors and stepped up to fill the president's vacancy when retiring president Phil Davenport stepped down. She has dedicated the past 20 years of her life to giving back to the community of Virginia Beach. 5+ years as Chair: Surfrider Foundation Virginia Chapter, 7 years Executive Board Member: Life Rolls On Virginia Beach, 3 years Vice President: Surf For The Cure Foundation, 2 years Secretary: Virginia Beach International Surf Museum Foundation, 11 years Event Volunteer Coordinator & Member Wahine Surf Club. All of these organizations are creditable and valuable non-profits serving our community. Her experience in the non-profit world will be a wonderful and meaningful asset as we continue our operation here in deWitt Cottage. Please help me welcome Aimee to the Back Bay Wildfowl Guild and the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum.

Coastal Virginia Magazine has nominated the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum for three Reader's Choice Awards under two categories. First, under Arts and Entertainment, we have been nominated for "Best History Museum". Then under Travel and Leisure, we have been nominated for, "Best Local Attraction" and "Best Place To Take Out Of Town Guests". Now it is up to you our supporters to keep our winning streak alive. Voting starts on February 6, 2023 and ends on March 6, 2023. For more information and to cast your VOTE for the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum go to: [Vote Vista](#).

The start of the New Year is like starting a new chapter in the book of your life. It's the chance to reflect on the past 365 days while also setting goals to propel you towards happiness. Maybe in the past year you survived a pandemic, helped a cherished family member or friend, enjoyed a vacation, or simply spent time with loved ones—whatever it may be, now's the time to cherish the memories you made, and think about what could make the next year even better. 2023 kicks off a new opportunity to grow our membership. We have some exciting plans to reach out to our community and invite them into our organization. But the best recruiting tool for new members is you! By reaching out to people you know and encouraging them to join, you can have a positive impact on the growth of our organization. If every member can find just one new member to join, we can double our current membership in 2023!

Lynn Hightower
Director

	<p>Free Decoy Identification and Evaluation By Jeff Tinkham Past President of The Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum Call (757) 724-7131 or jeff@tinkhamlaw.com</p>	
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello Members and Friends of Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum,



I am humbled and proud that you have selected me to lead your organization into 2023. We have made some significant progress towards making the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum a sustainable operation in the last year; but, we still have a substantial distance to travel. With the completed construction of the Gazebo on the deWitt property, we are in a very good position to book many events as Spring approaches. Our gift shop does a very brisk business in the summer season and our signature events (oyster roast, cocktail party, and Beer and Bourbon at the Brickhouse) raise substantial and much needed revenue. Where we struggle as an organization is with our membership; it is dwindling away. We need your individual help to grow our organization by reaching out to your friends and family to encourage them to join. The deWitt Cottage is a very special and unique place physically and historically. We should be proud to ask others to join our organization. I firmly believe the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum is sustainable with just a little bit of work on the part of all of our members.

I see so much more potential in our future operation. I want to build some educational programs for youth and veterans. There is great opportunity to teach both groups how to carve and paint. We have a beautiful garden and a very active garden club. We should be using these resources to educate people about conservation and the unique variety of native plants we have growing right here at deWitt. By giving back to our community in this way, we will substantially raise awareness of the museum and the deWitt Cottage. I have three daughters, who have grown up working alongside of me and share my same passions. I take care of my elderly mother, who you will see here and there at some of our events. I promise that I will work tirelessly to support and improve the work and mission of the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum.

We have our first general membership on March 7, 2023 here at deWitt Cottage with a very special guest speaker. Cameron Evans from the Tangier Island, VA. He is a graduate of Virginia Wesleyan University and the Vice-Mayor of Tangier Island. He is also an accomplished photographer, wildfowler, and waterman all at the age of 23 years old. He has a positive outlook for the future of Tangier Island despite all of the doomsday forecasts about Tangier one day disappearing into Chesapeake Bay. If you would like more information about Cameron, you can follow him on Facebook at: [\(20+\) Cameron Evans Photography | Facebook](#) or on Instagram at: [Cameron Evans \(@cameronevans242\) • Instagram photos and videos](#). I look forward to meeting all of you on Tuesday, March 7, 2023 at the general membership meeting social at 6:00pm.

Sincerely,
Aimee Rhodes
President



BACK BAY WILDFOWL GUILD

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

MUSEUM CARVERS

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

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

Please understand that we depend on every dollar to operate the museum. If you have not yet paid your 2023 dues, please give serious consideration to sending them into the museum right away. Beginning January 1, 2023, 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.

2023 DUES

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

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



BACK BAY WILDFOWL GUILD
2023 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

NAME: _____ AMOUNT PAID _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____ [CELL] _____

January 1, 2023 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!

