

THE WILDFOWLER

NOVEMBER 2022

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



Gingerbread Extravaganza

The Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum with Coastal Virginia Magazine and the Virginia Beach Restaurant Association are pleased to announce the 2nd Annual Gingerbread House Contest and Exhibit at the Historic de Witt

Cottage.

Contest is open to the general public (individuals), businesses, restaurants and bakeries, Hampton Roads Culinary Institutes, Hampton Roads College Culinary programs, and Virginia Beach High School Culinary programs. Only 50 entrants will be accepted. Additional entrants will be added to a waiting list. Entries must be registered no later than **Monday, November 21, 2022.**



To learn more and register go to:

[deWitt Cottage Gingerbread House Contest & Exhibit
\(thedewittcottage.org\)](http://thedewittcottage.org)

Coastal
VIRGINIA
Magazine





Upcoming Guild Events:

11/07, 14, 21, 28/2022: de Witt Garden Club
10:00 am, at the museum
Meets every Monday
Bring your work gloves and tools

11/08/2022- Retail Alliance
5:30-7:30pm

11/15/2022: Board Meeting
6:00 pm Hybrid
In-person and on Zoom

11/26/2022: Holiday Sidewalk Sale
Shop Small Business
10:00am-2:00pm

12/06/2022 – Annual Christmas Party
5:00pm-9:00pm
At the Museum

12/10/2022: Photos with Santa & the Red Truck
11:00am-2:00pm at the museum

12/01/2022-12/22/2022: Gingerbread House Exhibit

12/20/2022: Board Meeting
6:00 pm Hybrid
In-person and on Zoom

Save this Date

12/06/2022: Annual Christmas Party
5:00pm-9:00pm
At the Museum
1113 Atlantic Avenue

Everyone brings an hors d'oeuvres or desert
Enough to share



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

IF ONLY THIS DECOY COULD TALK! *By Larry Davenport & Mark Cromwell*

How many times have we picked up a decoy having obvious age and wondered what stories it could tell? While provenance is everything, it's rare that we can know anything about who might have owned a decoy and where it might have been used. However, the seven decoys pictured together and the single decoy pictured alone are an exception to that general rule. These decoys were acquired by Mark Cromwell as part of a larger grouping from Mr. Overton of Norfolk who formerly owned the Pocahontas Club. First, some background seemingly unrelated to decoys, waterfowl hunting and a hunt club.



We are all familiar with Harvard University, arguably our country's finest institution of higher learning. Very few of us, however, are aware of Harvard's Porcellian Club, the institution's most secretive and exclusive fraternal-type social organization. Founded in 1791, the club would only accept about eight Harvard students from each of the sophomore, junior and senior classes. At least during the first hundred years or more of its founding, these students were exclusively members of prominent and wealthy families, mostly from the Boston area—a grouping of families termed Boston Brahmins, often tracing their ancestry to the founding of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the early 1600s and prominent colonial immigrants from England. Among the club's membership were President Theodore Roosevelt (distant cousin President Franklin Delano Roosevelt did not make the cut, a disappointment he expressed regret about even late in life; nor did Joseph Kennedy or any of his offspring, something he, too, regretted), author Richard Henry Dana (*Two Years Before the Mast*), Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, William Henry Fitzhugh Lee (son of Robert E. Lee and Major General serving under his father, grandson of Revolutionary War General Richard Henry "Lighthorse" Lee, and great-grandson of George Washington), Senator Henry Cabot Lodge and poet James Russell Lowell. (A history of the aforementioned Boston Brahmins noted that "...the Lowells talk only to Cabots, and the Cabots talk only to God.") Likewise, very few of us are familiar with the Union Club



of New York City, a private social club founded in 1836 and existing today. It, too, had and continues to maintain a very exclusive membership of wealthy and prominent individuals.

So, what do Harvard University, the school's Porcellian Club, and the Union Club of New York City have to do with decoys and a waterfowl hunting club? The answer begins with the single decoy pictured alone. As noted above, all of the eight decoys were acquired in one lot. The seven decoys pictured together appear to have been made by Dodge Decoys, which began production in the 1880s. The single and eighth decoy was made by an unknown carver and is obviously superior in quality to the rest. It is also the Rosetta Stone—the key—to the rest and to our story at large. All of the eight decoys have names of what were obviously the initial owners branded/stamped on the bottom.

In spite of their being at least 100 years in age, those names are still legible. The decoy pictured alone bears the name "Arthur Amory." So who was Arthur Amory? Our first source of information is fellow guild members Archie Johnson and Bud Coppedge's "Gun Clubs & Decoys of Back Bay and Currituck Sound." On p. 95, they note that The Lighthouse Club of Currituck Sound was founded in 1874 by six sportsmen from New York: Arthur Amory, George (Richmond) Fearing, T. B. (Timothy Burnett) Baldwin, C. C. Franklin (perhaps C. G. Francklyn), G. (Gilbert) R. Payson, and C. (Charles) E. Strong. So what more specifically do we know about Arthur Amory? From the publication "Universities and Their Sons (Volume IV, 1900), Arthur Amory of Boston (a Boston Brahmin family) graduated from Harvard in 1862, where he was a member of the Porcellian Club. (It is noted that he married Elizabeth Ingersoll, also of a Boston Brahmin family. Fellow Lighthouse Club founder George Richmond Fearing was also an earlier Harvard graduate and Porcellian Club member.) After Harvard, Amory went to NYC in 1863, where he further pursued his fortune as a merchant. While in New York, he organized the Harvard Club, which exists today. He also became a member of the Union Club. As verified by the Union Club's present-day Historian, other members contemporaneous with Amory included George (Richmond) Fearing (who served a time as President of the club), Timothy Burnett Baldwin, and Charles E. Strong, fellow founders of The Lighthouse Club. While Gilbert R. Payson appears not to have been a member of the Union Club, we believe he was a close friend of Arthur Amory. They attended Harvard at the same time and they both were members of Boston Brahmin families. (Payson's family is descended from one of the wives of Henry VIII.) Quite interestingly, we have communicated with Gilbert R. Payson IV, the great grandson of The Lighthouse Club founder. We learned that the Payson family still owns land on Cape Cod on which they hunted waterfowl during the 1800s and until the latter half of the 1900s when the bird quantities diminished. (By the way, the family still has guns and decoys they used during their hunting days, but firmly expressed no willingness to part with any of them.) We believe a friendship with Payson provided Amory's introduction to waterfowl hunting and the ultimate impetus for the founding of The Lighthouse Club on Currituck Sound with Amory's associates who were men of means in the Union Club.

(Note: We could find no record of C.C. Franklin. However, we did learn of a Charles G. Francklyn (1844-1921), a prominent British immigrant and American capitalist and industrialist in NYC who married into the Cunard family, the Canadian shipping line whose New York operations he ran. Mr. Francklyn and Mr. Fearing were fellow members of the Knickerbocker Club, another gentleman's club in NYC still existing today and considered to be the most exclusive and aristocratic in the United States—Francklyn/Fearing's contemporaneous membership was verified by the Knickerbocker Club's current Librarian/Historian. The Knickerbocker Club was founded in 1871 by members of the Union Club of which, as previously noted, Fearing was a member and served for a time as President. Archie Johnson tells us that his source of information for The Lighthouse Club was a Norris Austin (1938-2017), retired postmaster of Corolla and whose forefathers worked at the club. It is entirely likely that C.C. Franklin was actually C.G. Francklyn, given the connection between Fearing and Francklyn.)

So what do we know thus far? We know for certain that we have one of eight decoys, all of the same lot, branded with the name of Arthur Amory, 1862 Harvard graduate and member of the school's Porcellian Club and the Union Club of NYC. We know Amory's connection to his fellow founders of The Lighthouse Club. From here, we move to the remaining seven decoys. Those seven carry the following brands: Chase, Whitwell, Codman, Cushing, and Lawrence. Save for Whitwell, for whom we have found no information, we have been able to identify a connection between each of these individuals and The Lighthouse Club. It turns out the names Chase, Codman, Cushing, and Lawrence are 1800s Harvard graduates from Boston Brahmin families who were also members of the school's Porcellian Club.



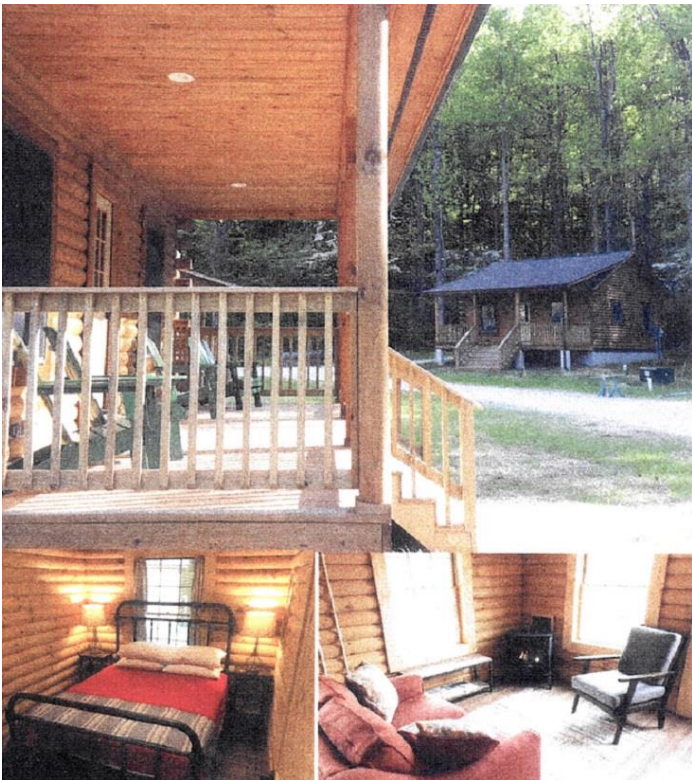
It is obvious to us that these individuals, while not founders of The Lighthouse Club, were later members of the club and gained their invitations through their Porcellian Club connections with Amory and Fearing.

Let's summarize: Arthur Amory and Gilbert R. Payson were contemporaneous students at Harvard and from Boston. Arthur Amory and George Richmond Fearing were members of the Porcellian Club at Harvard. Gilbert R. Payson likely hunted waterfowl with Amory on Cape Cod property his family owned. After Harvard, Amory moved to NYC where he joined the Union Club, whose other members included George Richmond Fearing, Timothy Burnett Baldwin, and Charles E. Strong. George Fearing also shared a Knickerbocker Club membership with C. G. Francklyn. These individuals founded The Lighthouse Club on Currituck Sound to hunt waterfowl. Subsequent membership in The Lighthouse Club included Harvard graduates who were also members of the Porcellian Club and from Boston Brahmin families. The decoys pictured were owned and used by these individuals in the late 1800s to early 1900s, obviously at the Lighthouse Club.

MUSEUM HOURS HAVE CHANGED

**AFTER THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 13, 2021 THE ATLANTIC WILDFOWL HERITAGE MUSEUM
WILL ONLY BE OPEN WEDNESDAY THROUGH SUNDAY 10:00AM - 5:00PM
UNTIL MONDAY MAY 30, 2022 WHEN WE OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK.**

**PRIVATE TOURS CAN BE ARRANGED AT ANY TIME BY
CONTACTING THE DIRECTOR, AT director@atwildfowl.org.**



Close to everywhere you want to be!

Four fully-appointed, 2 bedroom, 1 bath log cabins.
Located 0.8 miles from Devils Backbone and 3.5
miles from the entrance to Wintergreen Ski Resort.
5 miles from mile marker 13 on the Blue Ridge
Parkway and the Appalachian Trail.

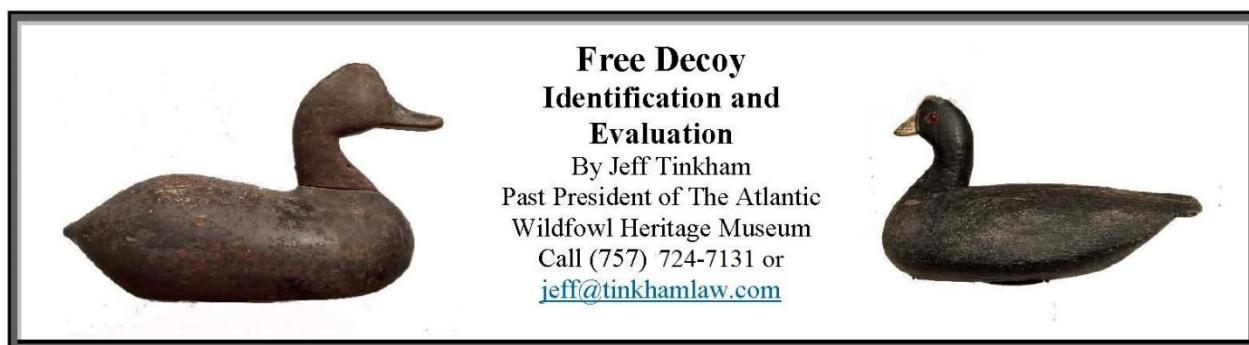
WWW.BEECHGROVECABINS.COM

97 Stars Hollow
Roseland, VA 22967
off of Rte 151 in Nelson County

Reserve your getaway cabin today!

Your hosts, Bill and Becky Evans





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to all!

Our Fall oyster roast/BBQ on October 16 was a huge success with nearly 200 people attending and over \$10k raised. My personal thanks to all our sponsors, attendees, and volunteers.

Our Christmas party this year will be at the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum in deWitt Cottage, December 6, 2022 5:00pm until 9:00pm. Come and revisit the museum, enjoy an evening of food, beverage and fellowship. Everyone brings an hors d'oeuvres or desert; enough to share. All beverages will be provided by the museum. Come and enjoy an old fashion Christmas evening.

As you can see from the attached photograph, the deWitt Cottage is getting a bit of a face lift. New wood siding to replace the damaged and rotted wood; and a new coat of paint. We are very fortunate that City of Virginia Beach Public Works takes care of maintenance and repairs for deWitt Cottage.



December 1, 2022 Kicks off our annual Gingerbread Extravaganza. Visit the museum to see gingerbread houses made by restaurants, businesses, bakeries, culinary students, and volunteers from around the city. It will be a sweet treat; I promise.

Respectfully, Phil Davenport





At deWitt Cottage
1113 Atlantic Avenue
Virginia Beach, VA

Everyone brings their favorite hors d'oeuvres or Dessert
Enough to share
Beverages will be provided

We will see
you there!

Merry
Christmas!



BACK BAY WILDFOWL GUILD

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Phil Davenport, President Parke Atkinson, Vice President
Jim Mehne, Secretary Larry Davenport, Treasurer
Jim Briggs Mark Cromwell
Tom Richards Jason Seward
Jeff Tinkham William Walsh, Jr., Curator
Aimee Rhodes 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: Open
Saturday: Susan Moritz
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

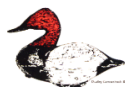
You can now pay your dues online at awhm.org !

Please understand that we depend on every dollar to operate the museum. If you have not yet paid your 2022 dues, please give serious consideration to sending them into the museum right away. Beginning January 1, 2022, 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

2022 DUES

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

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



BACK BAY WILDFOWL GUILD 2022 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

NAME: _____ AMOUNT PAID _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____ [CELL] _____

January 1, 2022 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

