

THE WILDFOWLER

SEPTEMBER 2023

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

Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum Oyster Roast and Fall Barbecue September 24, 2023, 1:00pm-6:00pm at deWitt Cottage

Reserve this date! It is going to be a great time

Come enjoy an afternoon of Endless Food and Beverage along with the smooth, soulful, dance, oldies and beach music of the Tiki Bar Band.



Get your tickets now for the return of our annual oyster roast. This year's event will take place Sunday, October 16th. Spend a beautiful fall day in the gardens, enjoying cocktails, wine, beer, BBQ, Beef Brisket and Eastern Shore Sewansecott oysters! Sweet and salty, these oysters are always a big hit! Beach Bully will supply the Barbecue and Beef Brisket with all the trimmings. Then close out the afternoon dancing to the tunes of the Tiki Bar Band. Comprised of lead singer Billy Kendra and his partner Mike Binetti, their music is fun and energetic.

Get your Tickets Here:

[Annual Oyster Roast and BBQ Tickets, Sun, Sep 24, 2023 at 1:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)

or contact the Museum Director.





Upcoming Guild Events:

09/05/2023 Back Bay Wildfowl Guild
Membership Meeting 7:00pm, Social 6:00pm
Speaker: **Art Leonard**
Ward Foundation Chairman

09/11, 18, 25/2023: de Witt Garden Club
10:00 am, at the museum
Meets every Monday
We are a hands-on Garden Club
So, bring your gloves and tools.

09/19/2023: Board Meeting
6:00 pm at the Museum

-Sunday 9/24/2023 AWHM Fall Barbeque & Oyster Roast
de Witt Cottage 1113 Atlantic Avenue
1:00pm until 6:00pm

Save these Dates

Sunday, 9/24/2023 AWHM Fall Barbeque & Oyster Roast

Tuesday, 12/05/2023 5:00pm until 9:00pm
AWHM Christmas Party
At deWitt Cottage

12/09/2023 - Photos with Santa & the Red Truck,
and Holiday Craft Fair

12/01/2023 Gingerbread Extravaganza



Back to School!



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

John Gardiner Cushing (1834-1881)



Next, we have more of our factory decoys. These bear the brand/stamp “J G CUSHING,” with one also branded “CODMAN” (see our previous discussion) and another also branded “LAWRENCE.” (Francis William Lawrence will be presented in a subsequent chronicle.) Once again, the Lighthouse Club Score Book tells us with specificity that “J G CUSHING” is the brand of John Gardiner Cushing, another Boston Brahmin Harvard grad (in 1855), where he was, like many of his fellow

Lighthouse Club sportsmen, a member of the Porcellian Club. Mr. Cushing is a somewhat enigmatic figure—we know a bit about him, but considerably more about his immediate family and their descendants. Like other of the club members we are presenting, he is related through marriage to Arthur Amory (making him also related to the others related to Arthur). His wife, Susan Prescott (Dexter) Cushing (1836-1918) was the daughter of Elizabeth Ann (Amory) Dexter (m. George Minot Dexter),



who was the sister of Charles Amory (1808-1898), a distant cousin of our Arthur Amory. (Charles Amory's grandfather, Thomas Fisher Amory (1722-1784), was Arthur Amory's great-grandfather.) However, a closer relationship to Arthur exists through Charles Amory's wife, Martha Babcock (Greene) Amory (Arthur's aunt—sister of his mother), yet another daughter of the previously mentioned fabulously wealthy Gardiner Greene, Arthur's grandfather on his mother's side. Finally, the sister of our John's wife was Mary Louisa (Dexter) Amory. She married Charles Amory (1836-1871), the son of the aforementioned Charles. Once again, we see Boston Brahmins marrying other Boston Brahmins. The vast wealth of these families was rarely diluted by marriage, just shifted around within the group, giving true meaning to the phrase, "What goes around, comes around!"



John Gardiner Cushing was a direct lineal descendant of Deacon Matthew Cushing, born in England in 1588 in the year of the Spanish Armada. Matthew lived the first fifty years of his life in Hingham, Norfolk County, England. In 1638, he left England for Massachusetts with his wife and five children on the ship "Diligent." The cause of their migration was purportedly trouble in church matters, a common theme in England during the reign of Charles I prior to the English Revolution. Their party landed at Boston and proceeded to what then became Hingham, MA.

Skipping forward, our John Gardiner Cushing was the oldest son of John Perkins Cushing (1787-1862). John Perkins Cushing was born into a prominent and wealthy Brahmin family, but was orphaned at an early age. As a result, he was raised by his uncle, Thomas Handasyd Perkins (1764-1854), reportedly a hugely wealthy slave trader and smuggler of Turkish opium into China.

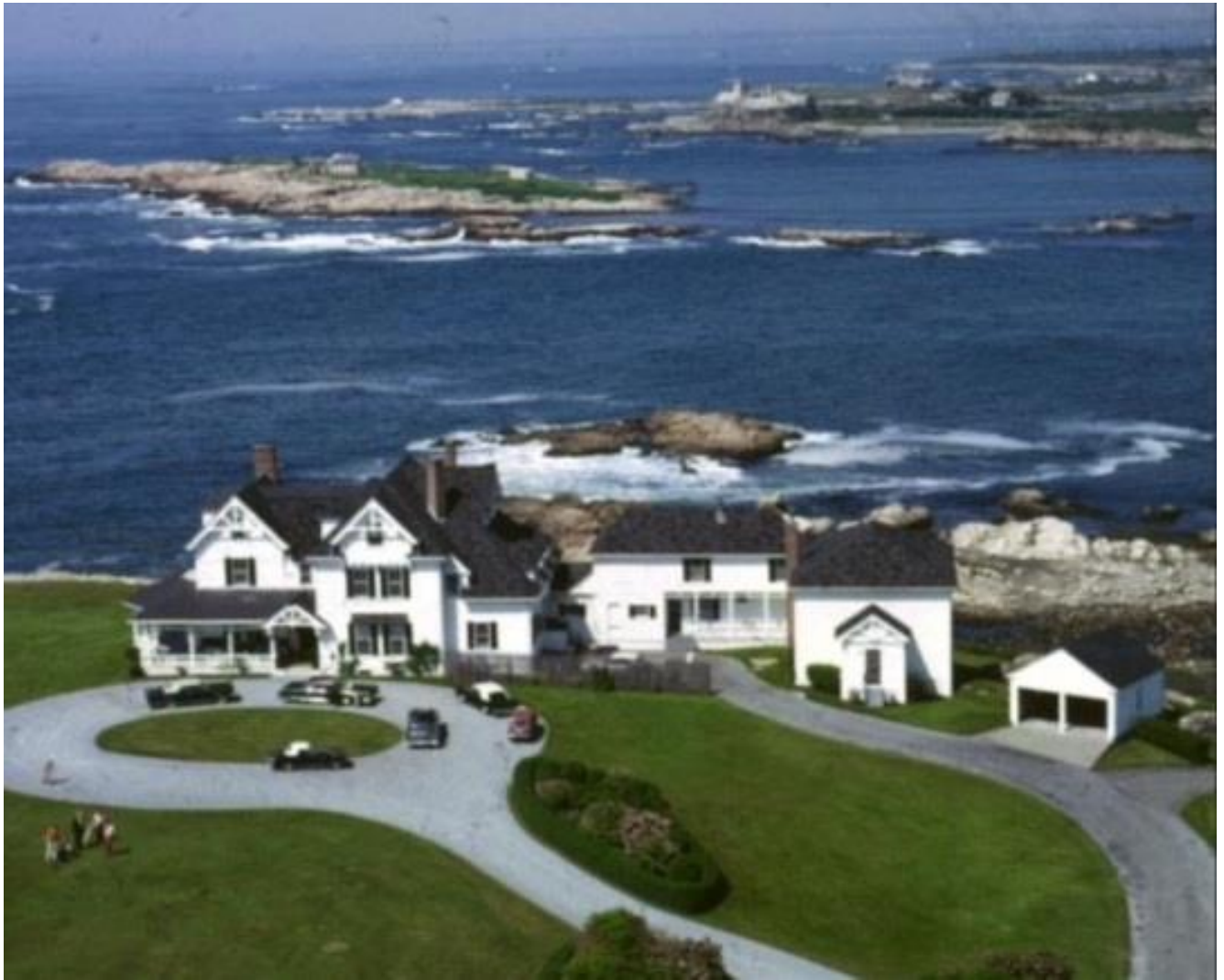


As a teenager, John Perkins Cushing went to China to work for his uncle, where he converted the family business into a legitimate and burgeoning enterprise. However, it is reported that he, too, eventually turned to the profitable opium trade, becoming the most influential foreigner in Canton. After 27 years in China, John Perkins Cushing returned to Boston with his Chinese housekeepers, Chinese manners, and great wealth. He immediately became the most eligible bachelor in Boston, choosing to marry our John Gardiner Cushing's mother, Mary Louisa (Gardiner) Perkins.

In 1861, John Gardiner Cushing and his younger brother, Robert Maynard Cushing (1836-1907), acquired property from the prominent real estate investor Henry Whitwell (whom we will read about later) at 168 and 170 Beacon Street in Boston. Several Lighthouse Club members resided on Beacon St. Recall that our Gardiner Greene Hammond lived at 172 Beacon St. Also, John Lowell Gardner II (1837-1898), another Lighthouse Club sportsman, lived at 182 Beacon St. next to the previously mentioned Somerset Club, of which many of our Lighthouse Club's sportsmen were members. [*In a side note, John Lowell Gardner's sister, Julia (Gardner) Coolidge, married Joseph Randolph Coolidge, whose mother was the granddaughter of Founding Father and U.S. President Thomas Jefferson. Gardner's daughter-in-law, Harriet Sears (Amory) Gardner (1835-1865; m. Joseph Peabody Gardner) was the daughter of William Amory (1804-1888), great uncle of Arthur Amory, and the aunt of Charles Pelham Curtis III's wife, Ellen (Amory) Curtis.*] Real estate investor Henry Whitwell, himself, lived at 79 Beacon St. with his parents, who moved to 161 Beacon St. in the mid-1860s. Beacon St. was obviously an upscale neighborhood where many Boston Brahmins resided.

In 1867, John's aforementioned younger brother Robert acquired property on one of Newport, Rhode Island's most spectacular promontories overlooking the water. There, he built "The Ledges," a stately home overlooking Bailey's Beach which remains today in the Cushing family. Along with George Richmond Fearing (one of the six Lighthouse Club founding members), Robert co-founded the Newport "Casino," a social club that later became today's International Tennis Hall of Fame. While originally built as a summer home, Robert eventually retired at "The Ledges". His son, Howard Gardiner Cushing (1869-1916), made "The Ledges" his home, where his inherited wealth afforded him the opportunity to indulge his passion for painting. He became a prominent artist. Perhaps most interesting of all, however, was Howard's son, Alexander Cochrane Cushing (1913-2006). Alexander graduated from Harvard Law in 1939 and went to work at the U.S. State and then Justice Departments. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, he entered the Navy's first officer training class at Quonset Point.





At the end of the war, he left the service as a Lt. Commander and returned to the practice of law with a NYC firm. But here's the most interesting part: during a 1950s ski vacation to Sierra, Nevada, he visited Squaw Valley at Lake Tahoe. He immediately saw its great possibility as a ski resort. After assembling a group of investors to acquire and develop the property as a ski resort, he began promoting it to the International Olympic Committee as a site for the eighth Winter Olympics. He was eventually successful in his efforts, and Squaw Valley hosted the 1960 Winter Olympics, besting the St. Moritz, Switzerland and Innsbruck, Austria venues. Due to this success, he appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine in 1959. In 1999, he was inducted into the Ski Industry Hall of Fame for his contributions to the sport. He died in 2006 at his summer home in Newport, RI—"The Ledges."

So here we have John Gardiner Cushing and his extended family, yet another view into the Boston Brahmins from the Gilded Age. Again, we are left to wonder what conversations he shared in the blind over the decoys pictured on the next page.





FROM THE MUSEUM DIRECTOR

Hello Members and Supporters,

The biggest item to discuss at the current moment is our upcoming Oyster Roast and Fall Barbeque scheduled for Sunday, September 24, 2023 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM at deWitt Cottage. Please plan to attend and bring your family and friends. Tickets are limited so click on this link: [Annual Oyster Roast and BBQ Tickets, Sun, Sep 24, 2023 at 1:00 PM | Eventbrite](#) and get your tickets today. Beach Bully will be supplying the barbeque and the beef brisket with all the trimmings. The oysters are coming from Sewansecott Oyster Company in Willis Wharf, Virginia. These oysters will be sweet, salty and delicious. The Tiki Bar Band will serenade us all afternoon.



If anyone out there has silent auction items they would like to donate to the museum, please contact the museum director at director@atwildfowl.org or call the museum at 757-437-8432. We will be having a silent auction at the Oyster Roast.

Our venue is becoming more popular by the day. We have hosted eleven events here at the museum since the beginning of the year and we will host five more before the new year. if you would like to host an event at deWitt Cottage, please contact the museum director at director@atwildfowl.org or call the museum at 757-437-8432. Your membership in the museum may entitle you to a reduced or even free use of the venue.

The museum began it's winter hours on September 5th. The museum will be open Wednesday through Sunday 10:00 AM until 5:00 PM. We will close on Monday and Tuesday until next Memorial Day.

We have some great holiday events planned for December. On 12/01/2023 we will kick off our annual gingerbread extravaganza here at the deWitt cottage. We are planning to have several gingerbread houses on





display in our upstairs gallery. This is always exciting for all the children who visit our museum! On Tuesday, 12/05/2023, we are planning to have our annual Christmas party right here at deWitt cottage. On Saturday, 12/09/2023, you will be able to have your picture taken with your family and Santa Claus. You will also be able to shop our Craft Fair for your gift giving needs.

Lastly, I wish to thank each and every one of you for your tremendous support over the past seven years. It has been a very challenging time for all of us; but, we have all demonstrated that we can survive even the most difficult situations. Without the support of the members of this organization we would not be able to continue our operation. I am eternally grateful to each and everyone of you for your support.



Lynn Highttower
Director

Your support and generosity are always appreciated!

	<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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Sunday, September 24, 2023 From 1:00pm until 6:00pm

Annual Oyster Roast And Fall Barbecue

At deWitt Cottage

1113 Atlantic Avenue

Virginia Beach, VA

Advance Tickets \$65.00

Buy Two Tickets for \$120.00 and save an additional \$10.00.

Tickets will be \$75.00 the day of the event

To Purchase Tickets: www.eventbrite.com

FEATURING: Pork Barbecue and Beef Brisket Sandwiches by Beach Bully BBQ, Roasted Sewansecott Eastern Shore Oysters. Live Music from Billy Kendra's Tiki Bar Band, Beer, Wine, and Cocktails - all included with your ticket.

PLUS you will receive a one year membership to the AWHM Museum.



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
Chris Ludford William Walsh, Jr., Curator
Fletcher Bryant, President Emeritus

MUSEUM CARVERS

Monday Open
Tuesday: Open
Wednesday: Roy Carlson & Ed Morrison
George Walker
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,
Sarah Sautter and Elaina Lycas

MUSEUM STAFF

Lynn Hightower, Director Joe Leo, Operations Mgr.
Bailey Rhodes, Gift Shop

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@awhm.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 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!

