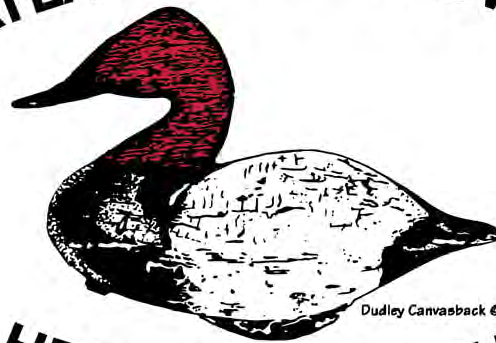


ATLANTIC WILDFOWL



HERITAGE MUSEUM

de Witt Cottage

April 2024

## *The Wildfowler*

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

## *Collector's Shelf*

*By Larry Davenport and Mark Cromwell*

**Bernard Peabody Holland Birds Come Back Home to Roost**



Fellow guild members Mark and Margie Cromwell have acquired the decoys appearing in the attached photos at a recent auction. In doing so, after what may have been a hundred years, the Cromwells have brought these decoys back to their place of origin—the home of the Back Bay Wildfowl Guild.

Guild members are aware that our DeWitt Cottage was actually built in 1895 by Bernard Peabody Holland as a wedding gift for his wife, Emily (Gregory) Holland. Bernard was the first mayor of the newly incorporated town of Virginia, a shopkeeper, and a railroad executive. He was also an avid duck hunter. In fact, Bernard included in the cottage's design the cupola, from which he could observe the hunting potential on nearby Lake Holly. (Lake Holly sits across Pacific Avenue from the cottage.) Later, Bernard acquired land and marsh on Back Bay, where he built a small hunting lodge for his personal use.

According to the waterfowling literary classic *Gun Clubs & Decoys of Back Bay & Currituck Sound* by Archie Johnson and Bud Coppedge, Bernard Holland used decoys made by himself and others.

However, his ownership mark on all of his decoys was the same—the initials “B P H” hammered out in holes using nails. We can readily see Holland’s ownership marks on the Cromwells’ decoys.

One may never be able to map the circuitous travels these decoys made since their days with Mayor Holland, but they have now finally made it back home.

## Upcoming Events

### De witt Garden Club

**Date/time:** Monday at 10:00am

**Location:** the historic de Witt Cottage (1113 Atlantic Ave)

**About:** The De Witt Garden Club meets every Monday at 10AM. Our stunning garden owes its beauty to the dedicated efforts of the club members. Keeping our garden in bloom is a labor of love, and we're on the lookout for volunteers who share our passion for gardening. Whether you're a seasoned green thumb or just starting, we invite you to come, bring your gardening gloves, and share in the joy and fulfillment of gardening with us.





CALLING ALL MIDDLE SCHOOL EDUCATORS. JOIN US AS WE DISCOVER THE HIDDEN TREASURES OF THE HEADWATERS OF THE ALBEMARLE/PAMLICO WATERSHED.

**DATES: JULY 23 - 24, 2024**

# From Bay to Cape Educator Adventure

**Location:** Albemarle/Pamlico Watershed, including Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge and False Cape State Park

## Adventure Highlights:

- **Seining in the Bay:** Discover the rich underwater ecosystem supported by Submerged Aquatic Vegetation.
- **Tram Ride:** Journey down to the enchanting False Cape State Park.
- **Waterfowl Wonders:** Immerse yourself in the world of local waterfowl and the area's rich waterfowling heritage.
- **Kayak Exploration:** Venture through the marshes and along the shores of the bay by kayak.
- **Hiking Adventure:** Trek the scenic trail to Wash Woods and be captivated by its natural beauty.
- **Wash Woods Lodge Experience:** Enjoy a cozy dinner and stay at the historic lodge.
- **Sunrise Viewing:** Greet the day with a breathtaking sunrise over the ocean.
- **False Cape Insights:** Join the park's Interpretive staff for an enlightening trek through False Cape State Park, learning about its natural history and its connection to North Carolina.

## Special Offer:

This unique workshop is completely free, thanks to a generous grant from the Albemarle Pamlico National Estuary Partnership. All expenses are covered, giving you a great chance to explore the dunes and ocean side of Back Bay NWR and False Cape State Park at no cost.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED OR HAVE QUESTIONS, FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO GET AN APPLICATION. **CONTACT:** JODY ULLMANN  
**PHONE:** 757-575-0750 **EMAIL:** JYULLMANN@GMAIL.COM



## MEET OUR CARVERS

- **Wednesday :** Roy Carlson, Ed Moorison, and George showcase their artistry inside the cottage.
- **Thursday:** Jamie Champe, John Mazach, and Pete Taylor, fondly known as "the boathouse boys," gather outside their cottage in the boathouse for their dedicated carving sessions.

- **Saturday:** Ben Purvis and Gentry Childress skillfully handcraft decoys inside the museum's gift shop.



**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.*

## From the Director

Dear Members,

The last few months have been exceptionally rewarding, marked by memorable events that brought together individuals passionate about preserving the rich tapestry of our coastal heritage.

I am thrilled to announce that AWHM's commitment to conservation and education has been acknowledged and supported by a generous grant from the Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership (APNEP). After working closely with Dr. Sara Sweeten, research scientist and proprietor of SAVY Aquatic Restoration LLC, and Jody Ullmann, experienced environmental educator and owner of Mud Puddle Science LLC, is with great excitement that I share our project, **“Growing Wild Celery to SAVe our Wetlands: A Grassroots Collaborative,”** has received a grant of \$30,000 in funding. This generous funding will support the innovative project of growing and planting wild celery, an important food source for migratory waterfowl, in Virginia Beach Public School (VBPS) classrooms, marking a milestone in hands-on environmental learning. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the APNEP Engagement and Stewardship review committee for providing AWHM with this incredible opportunity, and also want to thank all our partners for their collaboration in bringing this project to life.

The Back Bay Knotts Island Festival at Creeds Ruritan Club on March 9th had a record turnout, rain and all! Chris Ludford, a dedicated AWHM board member, has been the mastermind behind organizing this event since 2017. It's like a big family reunion," says Chris, emphasizing the shared passion among waterfowl enthusiasts in our region. This festival is not just a fun gathering, it also supports our mission and raises funds for the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum (AWHM) - a cause that means so much to us.

I am also thrilled to welcome four rising seniors from the Brock Environmental Studies program as interns at the museum for the duration of the summer and the upcoming school year. These students, deeply connected to our southern watershed, are committed to conserving the rich heritage of our region and safeguarding the habitats and natural resources that support waterfowl.

Thank you to all our amazing supporters for bringing our mission to life every day. It's your active participation that fuels our community's vibrancy and preserves our rich history and heritage.


Warmest regards,

Emily Bodsford  
AWHM Director

[AWHM award highlighted in the latest NCEQ press release](#)







**Free Decoy  
Identification and  
Evaluation**  
By Jeff Tinkham  
Past President of The Atlantic  
Wildfowl Heritage Museum  
Call (757) 724-7131 or  
[jeff@tinkhamlaw.com](mailto:jeff@tinkhamlaw.com)

A promotional banner for a free decoy identification and evaluation service. It features two duck decoys: a light brown one on the left and a dark brown one on the right. The text in the center provides the name of the service, the person offering it (Jeff Tinkham), his title (Past President of The Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum), and contact information (phone number and email address).

## Join Us

*Join us at our next event!*

Your presence is more than participation; it's an investment in the tapestry of our community's future.

## Get Involved

If you can't wait until the next event, there are plenty of ways to get involved today:

- **Become a Member:** Explore different membership levels and find your fit within our growing family.
- **Donate:** Every contribution helps us advance our mission and protect our natural resources. [Make a donation](#)

- **Volunteer:** Join us behind the scenes and experience the joy of service within our community. Volunteers interested in helping with outreach and education-- [sign up here](#) or helping here at the museum -- [Sign up here](#)
- **Shop:** Visit our gift shop for unique finds, including stunningly crafted local art, jewelry, decoys and more!

## Contact Us

Questions or suggestions? Reach out to us at the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum. We're more than happy to hear from you.

### Visit Us In Person:

1113 Atlantic Avenue  
Virginia Beach, VA 23451

### Or Online at:

[Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum Website](#)

## Renew your Membership or Become a Member of the Back Bay Wildfowl Guild - Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum (2024 - 2025)

### AWHM Membership Form

*Memberships run for 12 consecutive months from the date annual dues are paid.*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT PAID: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Become a recurring donor:***

Recurring Monthly Amount: \$\_\_\_\_\_

### ***One Time Donation:***

\_\_\_\$35 INDIVIDUAL

- \_\_ \$50 FAMILY
- \_\_ \$100 BRONZE
- \_\_ \$250 SILVER
- \_\_ \$500 GOLD
- \_\_ \$1,000 PRESIDENTS CIRCLE
- \_\_ Other Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum**

1113 Atlantic Avenue Virginia Beach, VA 23451

To pay by credit card, please visit [www.awhm.org](http://www.awhm.org) or click on the donate button below or **text-to-give:** text

WILDFOWL to 44-321

***Thank you for your support!***

**Donate**

With your support, we can continue to work to protect our natural resources, preserve the legacy of wildfowling, promote environmental education, history and the arts through a variety of events and community partnerships.

**Please keep in mind that each dollar we receive plays a crucial role in maintaining the museum's operations.**



**AWHM Board of Directors:**

- Aimee Rhodes, President
- Jason Seward, Vice President
- Parke Atkinson, Secretary
- Larry Davenport, Treasurer
- Lynn Hightower
- Chris Ludford
- Jim Mehne
- Mark Cromwell
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Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum, 1113 Atlantic Ave, Virginia Beach, VA 23451, 757-437-8432

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