



The Wildfowler

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

February 2024

Upcoming Events

The de Witt Garden Club

Meets every Monday at 10:00am at the museum.

Thursday, February 29th: **Ducks Unlimited Bourbon and Cigars Event** at Murphy's Irish Pub 6:30PM [Click Here](#) for more information and to purchase tickets.

Friday March 8th 5pm - 8pm and Saturday, March 9th 9am to 4pm: **Back Bay Knotts Island Waterfowl Festival** at Creeds Ruritan Club 1057 Princess Anne Rd Virginia Beach, VA 23457 Volunteers Needed! [Sign Up Here](#) to volunteer.

Tuesday, March 19th 6pm at AWHM - **AWHM Board of Directors Meeting**

Tuesday, April 2nd – Friday, April 5th 9:30am – 11:00am: **"Who's in Your Neighborhood" Children's reading and craft Program** at AWHM pavilion 1113 Atlantic Ave Link to register coming soon.

Saturday, April 6th 12pm – 5pm – **KINFEST** at Mount Trashmore Park benefitting the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum.



Please join us for the Back Bay & Knotts Island Waterfowl Festival on **March 8th 5pm – 8pm and 9th 9am – 4pm** at the **Creeds Ruritan Club Barn**. This event celebrates the rich waterfowl heritage of this area. There will be about 50 vendors set up in the main barn. Buy, sell, and trade of decoys and other waterfowl related antiques and collectables. Wildlife Artist, Call Makers, Decoy Magazine, Ducks Unlimited, and Delta Waterfowl will also be on hand. We've got vendors coming from as far away as Maryland, Delaware, and South Carolina as well as many from Virginia and North Carolina. Admission is \$5 per adult and children under 14 free. Proceeds benefit the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum.

Collector's Shelf

By Larry Davenport and Mark Cromwell

Henry Whitwell (1819-1887)



Photos captured by Nathan Beck

Before talking about Henry Whitwell, we should briefly discuss Beacon Street in Boston. Beacon Street is as old as Boston itself. Upon their arrival in 1630, the original Massachusetts Bay Colony settlers (John Winthrop, et al) initially located just outside of what is now Boston. The original settler of what is now Boston was one William Blackstone. Blackstone enticed Winthrop to relocate the colony to the vicinity of Beacon Hill in today's Boston, so named for the beacon constructed at its top, which would be lit as a warning to residents when hostile ships entered Boston Harbor. In fact, being able to observe the harbor from Beacon Hill was the reason the colony moved. From Beacon Hill, a street—Beacon Street—was formed along the Charles River, which became the location of homes and businesses for the colonists. Over the centuries, Beacon Street became the preferred, upscale location for Boston residents and businesses. In particular, the Boston Brahmin families, to include our Gilded Age Lighthouse Club members, either acquired or built their homes on Beacon Street. Today, Beacon Street remains the quintessential location in Boston. So why would we preface Henry Whitwell with a discussion of Beacon Street? Read on...

We have the one previously mentioned decoy bearing the stamp/brand "WHITWELL." The Lighthouse Club Score Book tells us this was Henry Whitwell. Henry was the son of Samuel (1786-1871) and Sophia (1787-1867) Whitwell. He was the brother of Frederick Augustus (1820-1912), Sophia L. (1822-1903), and Samuel Horatio (1823-1904) Whitwell. We know little else about Henry other than that he, with his brother and business partner Samuel Horatio Whitwell were active real estate dealers and developers in the most luxurious neighborhoods of Boston. On the website *Back Bay (in Boston) Houses*, the Whitwell's are mentioned numerous times as the builders and/or sellers of properties. We know that virtually all of his fellow Lighthouse Club members acquired their homes on Beacon Street from Henry and Samuel, and we believe those real estate dealings are what brought Henry into the Lighthouse Club. We could find no evidence that any of the Whitwell siblings married. We do know that Sophia and Samuel lived with Henry at a Beacon Street address. Lastly, we know that when Henry died in 1887, he left his entire estate to his siblings, presumably meaning he had no wife or children.

DECOYS WANTED

WE BUY WOODEN OR CANVAS DUCKS, GESE, 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.

Interested in Volunteering?

AWHM Volunteer Opportunities

Building and Grounds Volunteers

- **de Witt Garden Club** meets every Monday at 10:00am. All interested volunteers are welcome. Email Director@awhm.org or Click [here to Sign Up](#)
- **Library:** We are looking for a volunteer or intern to assist with organizing books and other publications that are currently being stored in the library and in the boathouse.
- **Docent/Gallery Guide:** Help to facilitate tours for the general public.

Outreach and Events Volunteers

- Assist with greeting visitors, providing information and manning the AWHM Membership tables and more.
- **Back Bay Knotts Island Waterfowl Festival Saturday, March 9th 9:00am to 4:00pm** (time slots available) We are looking for volunteer carvers willing to provide a carving demonstration along with volunteers who are willing to assist at the AWHM outreach table.

Email Director@awhm.org



Carving a Legacy: Honoring Tradition in Decoy Artistry in Virginia Beach

Last month, AWHM carvers assisted participants during a paint and learn event for Virginia Beach's Winter Wildlife Festival Thursday workshop series. People of all ages gathered to delve into the history and techniques of decoy carving, a cherished form of folk art. Ed Morrison expertly led the group and is excited to help lead another workshop at the museum in the summer. The carvers captured in the photo alongside Ed - Roy Carlson, Gentry Childress, George Walker and Ben Purvis- continue to uphold the century-old skills of this treasured art, passed down through the generations. Through their dedication, our region's proud waterfowl tradition lives on.

**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

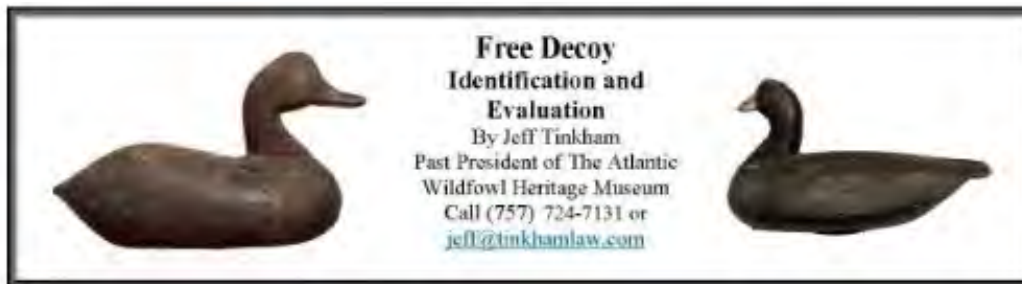
___ Other Amount \$ _____

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 or click on the donate button below or
text WILDFOWL to 44-321

Thank you for your support!



From The Museum Director

Dear Members and Friends of the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum,

Many of you have either renewed your AWHM membership for 2024 or become new members - we sincerely appreciate your support for our mission. Your contributions are crucial in not only sustaining AWHM museum operations but also in enriching education, fostering engagement, and preserving the deep-rooted history and waterfowl heritage in our region.

I want to express my heartfelt appreciation to everyone who made a contribution to and/or attended the Winter Cocktail Party benefitting AWHM on February 10th. A very special thanks to Mark and Margie Cromwell for graciously hosting this event in support of the Museum. Rarely do we get to see the unveiling of a beautifully hand-carved heron by the talented Eastern Shore Carver himself, Mark McNair.

Witnessing Mark and his son Ian share their passion for this cherished folk art inside the historic de Witt Cottage was a truly exceptional moment. The setting at the historic De Witt Cottage with its view of the Atlantic Ocean, rich in waterfowl history, while enjoying Steinhilber's iconic shrimp just added to the magic of the moment. These kinds of moments are truly one-of-a-kind.

To all our members and supporters, whether longstanding or new, thank you for your unwavering support.

Respectfully,

Emily Bodsford
Director

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.