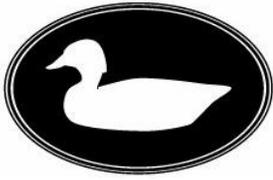


The Rig

*the official journal of the
Canadian Decoy and Outdoor Collectibles Association*

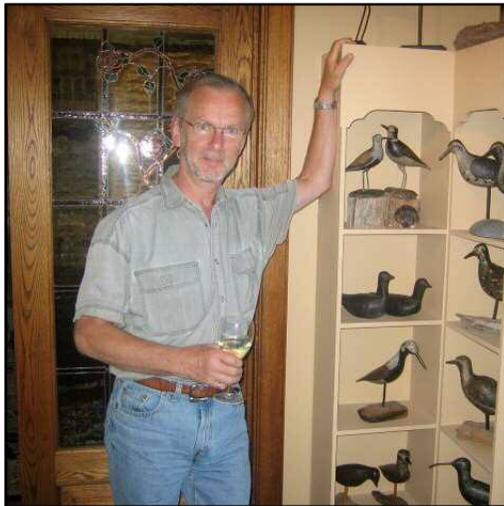


Volume 21 Number 3

Winter 2016

President's Message

From Laurin Garland



So another year passes. Legions of physicists have been struggling through the years to define and explain time. We can save them the effort. Time is subjective and it passes more rapidly the more experience we amass (read - the older we get). At least in the amassing of experience, we managed to include October's show in Jordan. A truly excellent event.

Many thanks to Pete Munger who carried the the load on this one. As he is our only member and director in the Niagara area, all local organization falls onto his shoulders. Thanks also go to Pete again and to Blair Ledingham for the two excellent displays which are detailed later in this publication. Robin and Carol Craig successfully stickhandled the contests (winners covered later), Mark Harding managed to completely fill the venue with table sales for a remarkable total of 50, and we had a gratifying 164 folks through the door.

There was a significant attendance at the Saturday evening AGM/cocktail party which was once again sponsored by the decoy auction firm of Guyette and Deeter. Our thanks.

During the AGM, we announced the retirement as directors of two of the founding members of the current version of the association. Keith Avann and Jim Stewart both have decided not

to let their names stand for re-election. Kudos to both of them for their efforts in reconstituting the club fifteen years ago and for their many years of service since. Following the meeting, we also have accepted the resignation of Jim Growkowski. We thank him for his many years of efforts on behalf of the association.

The show was not without its interesting moments. Belying my assertions in the previous Rig, that "Weather in the balmy Niagara region can be excellent in October", it put on an amazing display of wrath outside the windows of the ballroom. We witnessed the rescue by the Coast Guard of a large sailing ketch which was wallowing in the heavy Lake Ontario waves without apparent engine power and drifting directly towards the lee shore in front of the hotel – a sailor's worst nightmare. Not only is he (or she) about to go aground and do some serious, possibly fatal damage, but he has a large, comfortable audience. Having put in some considerable hours sailing in rough weather, we sympathise, but, also have to wonder why not one of the many sails on bord was unfurled to let the wind do its work.

A local power outage in part of the hotel, apparently brought on by the extreme wind and rain, caused some confusion for anyone awake in the middle of the night, however, all was right by breakfast.

The Niagara area as usual provided some great antiquing and some fine meals and your directors had a meeting attended by all save two of the then current complement – an unusual occurrence given the geographical challenges posed by our membership. Another sign of a great show.

We sold some items and came home with yet again another east coast brant decoy which we managed to pry away from David Dauphinais. It is a wonderful oddity with a solid body and a very detailed neck and head made from stuffed sailcloth or canvas. A great addition to the growing flock.

Planning is already well underway for our October 2017 event which will be held in Kingston, once again at the Ambassador hotel. See you there.

A Master Craftsman

from Brian Short

I first met Charlie Neidermayer after an article appeared in the Winnipeg Free Press about a man and his unique knife-making abilities. After expressing an interest to my wife in acquiring one of these knives, she promptly arranged to meet Charlie and purchased me a knife as a Christmas present. Fifteen knives later, it is easy to say that I am hooked.



A dedicated family man, Charlie and his lovely wife Christine reside in Pine Falls, Manitoba. His dedication to the outdoors are reflected in his many talents. He is a master blade smith and carver. At age 87, his steady hand is one that others much younger would be proud of. It was Charlie's great respect and love for the outdoors that brought him to the craft of knife making.

Almost 50 years ago Charlie made his first knife and has since found his knives in demand around the world including Africa, Germany, New Zealand, Scotland and the Arctic. His knives are used as organizational fundraisers and are always in demand. He donates a knife to the Manitoba Big Game Association for their silent auction at every awards banquet and it is always the most popular, sought after item. Local companies purchase them for special employee retirement presentations.

Charlie's skills have allowed him to create his handles from a variety of materials including antler, musk ox horn, ivory, bison

horn, jaw bones, oosiks and exotic woods from around the world. After finally hanging up his old hunting jacket a year or so ago he even found a means to use the material to make a unique handle for a couple of knives. I am proud to have one of these in my collection. His sheaths are all hand cut leather, hand sewn and adorned with various outdoor themes and animals. Special handmade sheath inserts ensure that his knives are safe from escape and potential loss. It may be unusual to refer to a knife as a "work of art", but, his creations fall comfortably into that category. As he has told me on numerous occasions, he wants his knives used whether they are in the bush dressing out an animal or just around camp. That is why he creates them. Not to be put on a shelf.



This man's talents don't rest with his knife making. He loves to carve. He has won numerous awards with his carvings as a member of the Prairie Canada Carvers. A life sized sand hill crane in the corner of his living room has made me do a double take on numerous occasions with its realistic features. I have a prairie chicken and a gull carved by Charlie in my collection and



was fortunate to get a carved moose antler that he finished just this past winter. This antler carving includes 3 big horn sheep and a resting bull moose. The uniqueness of his antler carvings in part is the paintwork that brings out the detail in each animal. This antler

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was from a moose that Charlie himself shot exactly 50 years prior. It hung in his patio until just this past winter. That antler, the carving and Charlie's stories about that hunt are a small piece of history. History that will last forever.



Over the years, Charlie has had no restrictions to his creativity and seems willing to take on any task. His works have included taxidermy, paddles, snowshoes and even jewellery. He gave my wife, Janice, a beautifully crafted bolo tie made of amolite that she wears proudly.

There is no better way to spend an afternoon than looking through some of Charlie's new knives, listening to his stories



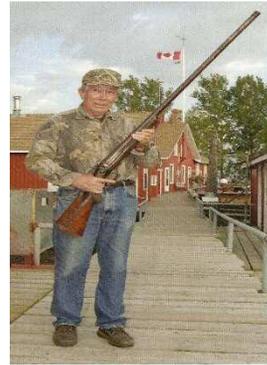
and enjoying the home baking of his wife and partner Christine. Charlie is always quick to point out during our talks of the unwavering

support Christine provides and that he would never have been able to pursue his crafts without it. He says that he has no inclination on slowing down and for all of us who so enjoy his work that is a great thing to hear.

Charlie Neidermayer is a true Manitoba icon and a good friend.

Leroy Long – In Memorial

Yesterday, I lost a dear friend, and the decoy community a member, whose love of the outdoors and knowledge of duck and turkey hunting was without equal.



Leroy Long with 4 gauge punt gun - 2007

Leroy Long, husband, father and grandfather lived an outdoor life that would be the envy of even the most accomplished hunter. For the past 23 years, following his retirement from the family lumber business in Langton, Ontario, Leroy has guided, or punted as is the more familiar terminology, every fall for members of the Long Point Company at their private marsh on the north shore of Lake Erie.

A regular at CDOCA shows, Leroy's primary collecting interest has always been decoys and outdoor artifacts from his native area, Long Point Bay, and more particularly, the 150-year-old Long Point Company. A carver of exceptional gunning decoys himself, with a passion for Long Point history, labs, art, model 12 Winchesters and wild turkeys, time spent with this kind and gentle man and, his ever-present sense of humor, was never enough. I shall treasure these moments forever. Rest in peace my friend.

Art Philp
December 6, 2016.

2016 CDOCA Show

The annual show held the weekend of October 21st and 22nd in Jordan, Ontario was a great success! One of the most successful shows the club has had in some time. It was well attended with plenty of activity room-to-room on the Friday evening followed with lots to see, trade and/or purchase in both decoys and sporting collectibles at the Saturday show.





Contest Winners

Always a fun part of the annual show, the decoy and outdoor collectibles contests bring out some interesting items for members to view and vote as favorites.

Cliff Avann decoy:



- 1st place – Blue-winged teal – Paul Brisco (R)
- 2nd place – Black duck – John Battaglia (center)
- 3rd place – Black duck – John Hyatt (L)

J. R. Wells hollow decoy:



- 1st place – Canvasback – Mark Harding (center)
- 2nd place – Canada goose – Blair Ledingham (R)
- 3rd place – Blue-winged teal – Bruce Malcolm (L)

Handmade fishing lure or decoy:



- 1st place – Delaney fishing lures – Paul Brisco (L)
- 2nd place – Charlie Meloche fish decoys - Paul Brisco
- 3rd place – Tom Brayshaw steelhead lure - Blair Ledingham (R)

Carved wooden animal (not a duck):



- 1st place – Le Gros Gris by W. Loney - Jim Stewart (R)
- 2nd place – Moose carving by C. Volrath - Robin Craig (center)
- 3rd place – Deer carving – Jim Orton (L)

West Coast Decoy Display

Blair Ledingham assembled a fine and representative display of hunting decoys from west coast British Columbia. It is not often that these decoys are seen in collections in this part of the country.

Notable examples of hunting decoys included carvings by Wilf Beck, the Reifel family rig, Harry Holloway, Frank Hosie, Tru Oliver, Dave Leary, Aubrey Kent, Rokosuke Maeda, Allan Mills and Percy Bicknell.



Frank Hosie – Beach Grove Split – Brant



Wilf Beck – Fraser River delta / Pitt Lake - Canada goose and mallard



Percy Bicknell - Fraser River delta - Brant with early and late model pintails



Harry Holloway – Fraser River delta – Pintail

Niagara Peninsula Decoy Display

from Peter Munger

Most collectors are familiar with Peter Pringle and Ken Anger who are considered the “father and son” of the Dunnville school of decoy makers. Much has also been written about the makers from the Burlington (Hamilton) Bay school. But there is a void to be discovered in the area between these two regions which is the Niagara Peninsula.

Peter Pringle made a limited number of decoys for his own use displaying both his knowledge of the ways and looks of



waterfowl he was familiar with. He incorporated the skills of an experienced commercial artist to create

true works of art that are today coveted by collectors.

Ken Anger followed Pringle in design with his early decoys showing many of the Pringle characteristics. So much so that there is some debate about the true maker of some of Kens' early work (or are they, as some construe, some of Peters early stolen rig). Angers early decoys exhibit such details as the cut in rear of the wing pocket, the “Y” delineation of the wing tips and other details that are similar. He used to borrow a Pringle mallard on occasion from Merle Franklin, returning it later with a comment like “I was getting off track again”. As demand for his work, and at the same time as he had evolved his trademark “hourglass” wing / back cuts, some of the other details fell by the wayside as he focused on the quality and simplicity of a good working decoy. The resulting production found wide acclaim and was so well liked was often copied. Seasoned collectors know where to look to separate the genuine from the “close cousin”. This is a good reason for new collectors to find a veteran mentor who are willing to help.

Merle Franklin of Dunnville met Pringle during his teen years. They become lifelong friends sharing the dual interests of native archaeology and duck decoys. Franklin told me one time that the mallard Peter Pringle gifted him had spent many years in a burlap bag along with the rest of his father’s rig. He stated that “we didn't think of it anything more than a tool”. It remains with the Franklin family.



Rokosuke Maeda – Fraser River delta - Pintail pair



Unknown maker – Fraser River delta - Magnum snow goose



Reifel family rig – Westham Island – Immature snow goose

Franklin was a student of Pringle, but, turning out his own decoys. He opted for smoothness in bodies as opposed to the



rasping texture technique. The canvasback displayed at the show was a gift to one of his sons, Andrew. Franklin made two decoys

of different species each year which he donated to local charities for fund raising. One year he told me he was amazed they had sold \$600 worth of tickets for the draw on the one for the annual Mudcat Festival!

Franklin is probably best known for the flyers or, as he called them, "wall plaques" of pretty much every species of waterfowl and some other birds, such as, terns. He kept meticulous records of his production. Ken Anger, I believe, started the idea by making black and mallard pairs. Franklin expanded on the idea with his own creations.

Merle Smith, a mechanic and garage owner in Dunnville, hunted over Anger decoys until they started to catch the



interest of collectors. At this point, he shelved them after making himself a rig of a similar design. There are a few early Anger decoys out

there that were restored by Franklin. He also made several, very creative decorative bird carvings.

Years ago, I acquired a neat little Bufflehead that was an obvious Anger clone but no information about the maker.



Some years later I stumbled on an article in an old 1970's Ontario Angler & Hunter magazine about waterfowling in Gravelly Bay at Pt. Colbourne. There was

the author pictured holding the exact decoy. Tracking him down, and when asked, he stated "Oh ya, Milo Crumb made that decoy". Unfortunately, that was all the information that he could tell me about the decoy.

Moving east to Ft. Erie we come to a Dr. Reid who made this fine magnum canvasback much in the style of Ken Anger, but, almost twice the size. I have seen a few of these and understand he made a rig of a dozen birds. The story goes that Dr. Reid was a friend or an acquaintance of Anger's, but, I cannot verify this. Canvasbacks winter in the upper Niagara River by the thousands, so, these were likely used there at that time of year. I am sure a dozen like this would be enough to "pull-em" into range.

The Niagara River, the upper river specifically, can be a rugged environment for a decoy. Especially when they had to contend with ice that had broken away from the shore and floated into the rigs in late season hunting, a very common occurrence. A large boat with a good motor are a must for this demanding sport so the weight of the decoys was not a primary concern. For these reasons, Niagara River decoys are invariably solid bodied with thick necks. Here are some of the makers of the area that have been identified (though I am sure there are many more to be uncovered).

William "Red" Hill was a well-known river man of the late 19th and early 20th century. One of Niagara's Daredevils having



"shot" the whirlpool in a barrel and earning several life-saving awards during his early life. He once revived several swans that had gone over the

Falls and took them to Jack Minor in the hope they would migrate further west. The birds returned to Minor's sanctuary for several years along with their offspring. "Red" made canvasbacks and bluebills, the primary birds hunted on the Niagara River.

Red's three sons Red Jr., Major and Wesley (1930- 2006) also made decoys with their father and it is hard to tell which



member of the family made what, but, the family characteristics are distinct. Most of their decoys were

made from timber recovered in the spring at the bottom of the Falls, generally, the remains of docks and such that had been destroyed by ice and winter storms along the upper river and

Lake Erie. Wes told me the Maid of the Mist hired them to clear all the drift wood from around their docks in the spring which they piled up into 40 foot bonfires to dispose of it. He also had quite a collection of decoys he had recovered from the base of the Falls, usually minus their heads. Many of these he re-headed and were added to his rig. These were probably lost by hunters from as far away as Long Pont or, even, Lake St. Clair. Many of the decoys were from the Mason and Dodge factories, some of which I was able to purchase from him.

Bernard Paquette (1931- present) is another local Niagara Falls duck hunter who made great decoys. He made canvasbacks, bluebills, mallards and a few blacks.

Harry Mathews hunted with Paquette and made some pretty folky decoys. The whistler displayed at the show is a great example.

Dave Belme (1955-present) has hunted the same location as his father and uncle.



Collectively, the family have hunted there for nearly 80 years. Belme made the whistler pair

displayed. They have great character to them.

Walter "Wally" Mocniak and his brother Ed, both of Niagara Falls, made some great decoys back in the 1950's. Ed's work



(confirmed by Wally) used the C.I.L. patterns that came with a case of their shells. Wally made his own

designs and his whistlers have an appealing "attitude" while his canvasbacks have very nice raised wing detail. Both brothers made canvasbacks, bluebills and whistlers which was the main fair on the Niagara River.

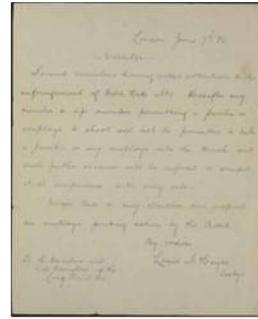


These are just a few of the local makers of the Niagara Peninsula and I know there are more out there in the back of garages, in attics and barns. Good hunting!

Membership Fees

Your membership expiration is shown on the newsletter mailing label. To stay current, please send cheque, money order or e-transfer to club treasurer/secretary John Battaglia.

Long Point Company Correspondence



This Long Point Company circular was an interesting find! The notice was penned by Louis N. Hayne club member and the club's Secretary-Treasurer from 1886 through 1906.

The interpretation of this circular to all club members and life members from June 7, 1886 reads:

Circular

Several members having called attention to the infringement of Field Rule No. 1. Hereafter any member or life member permitting a punter or employee to shoot will not be permitted to take a punter or any employee into the marsh and such further measures will be enforced to compel that compliance with every rule.

Under Rule 4 any Director can suspend an employee pending action by the Board.

**By order,
Louis N. Hayne**

For background information, the pertinent club's Field By-Laws, as of October 31, 1901, were:

I - The shooting on the property of the Long Point Company is limited to shareholders holding five shares, the representatives of shareholders, life license-holders, other license-holders and guests. The word "member" in the Field By-Laws shall mean any of those persons to whom the shooting is limited.

V - In case any member shall violate any of the foregoing rules or by-laws, the President, or in his absence, any Director, shall inflict a fine upon the offending member of not less than two dollars nor more than ten dollars for each offense. All fines are to be paid into the treasury of the Company. During the period any such fines or fines remain unpaid, the offending member's name shall be posted in the office of the Company.

It would appear the by-laws were modified in the period between 1886 and 1901 to include a new provision to the rules. This resulted in the creation of by-law V.