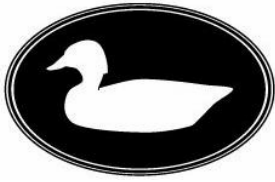


The Rig

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



Volume 21 Number 2

Fall 2016

President's Message

From Laurin Garland



We hope all have been enjoying, or at least surviving, what in the Ottawa area has been a sizzling summer coupled with no shortage of gale force winds. Quite a combination, which makes fishing from the canoe problematic. The motor boat is not much better. We have found the only solution to be rising at the crack of dark in order to be on the water by sunrise. That gives a few hours of catching bass before the extreme temperatures and winds begin. If that is the worst of our complaints, however, life is not too bad. It certainly beats freezing rain.

Before we see the inevitable season of freezing rain, we have our show to enjoy. It will be held this year on October 21 and 22 at the Ramada Beacon Harbourside Hotel in Jordan. A wonderful location on the south shore of Lake Ontario.

As we noted in an earlier Rig, the Sunday auction has been removed from our schedule for this and future shows. Room-to-room trading will continue on Friday, as will the show on Saturday. The directors considered moving our Annual General Meeting and cocktail party to Friday, but, decided that would conflict with the room activity, so left it on Saturday afternoon. For those of us staying over to travel home on Sunday, or those who live close enough to return home in the evening, it will provide a pleasant wrap up for the weekend.

We had comments after our 2014 show that some folks found the lack of an elevator troublesome. We have assurances from the hotel that they will reserve as many ground floor rooms as possible for our members. This will help, but, you should note that there are roughly twenty rooms on the ground floor and we typically take up forty, so if you want a ground floor room (lobby/parking lot level), book now and specifically request that floor. If you don't have a preference for a ground floor room, please let the staff know.

Access to the hall used for the show, which was also a source of comment, can be accomplished without stairs. There is an exterior ramp which will accommodate large vehicles. This leads directly to the rear entry door for the hall. Some folks used that in 2014. Unfortunately, not all members were aware of it.

Our show this year will feature a display of west coast Canadian decoys, that those of us east of the Rockies rarely get to see, along with a display of Niagara area birds. We are all familiar with Dunnville's Ken Anger, but, there are many other less well known carvers from the Niagara region. This will be the perfect location in which to view birds from these makers.

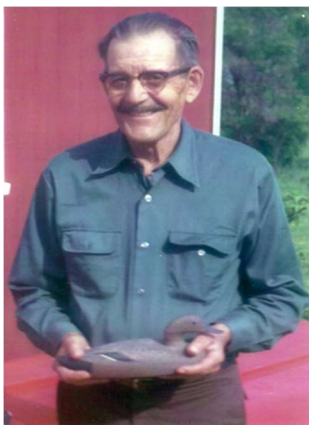
It is also an excellent location for antique shops and wineries. Many of the area's wines are world class. Arrive early or stay over Sunday and make a mini-vacation out of the trip. Summer crowds will be gone, so access to the numerous fine restaurants and vineyards will not be a problem. Weather in the balmy Niagara region can be excellent in October.

Now a call for help. You may remember our rant against unpaid show attendees after 2014's Jordan event. We need some responsible volunteers to take shifts at the show door to collect cash. As the entry is \$5, making change is straightforward, and membership sales/renewals will not be a requirement as that will be handled at a table inside the show. Anyone willing to assist, please drop an e-mail to lgarland@explornet.com.

See you in October.

Boyhood Memories of Jack Reeves

From David Ferris



As a youngster, I had the privilege of growing up at the Long Point Company, one of the most prestigious and exclusive duck hunting clubs in North America. My father, Norman Ferris, managed the club year round as did his father before him and his father before him. Although little involvement by others took place in the winter months, there were only two other

employees who worked for my father the rest of the year. One of those was Jack Reeves (pictured here).

When the ice went out of Long Point Bay, Jack was one of the first people to return to the Cottages to assess the winter damage, begin repairs and participate in the annual fur trapping and commercial fishing activities.

When summer arrived, Jack was always busy with carpentry work, painting, repairing skiffs and loading in firewood for the approaching cool fall weather and the wood burning cook stoves.



In the fall, Jack served as one of the most respected and requested hunting guides at the Club. (Shown here with then Governor-General Roland Michener.)

When you think of Jack Reeves, you think of a very prolific, third generation master carver of decoys who followed a very special and recognized talent and family tradition. When I think of Jack, I think of a mustache, glasses, green hunting cap, pencil behind the ear, a crossword puzzle book, Matinee cigarettes and the ever-present folding wooden ruler.

Thinking back as a youngster, the fascinating thing to me is that I never associated him with carving decoys. Mainly because I never actually saw him doing any carving during our months together at the Club. He practiced his carving in his shop at home during the winter months when his obligations to the Company had been fulfilled. When I visited his shop in the basement of his home (his son Charlie was one of my playmates), it became more apparent that he had another interest.



Teal



Pintail



Redhead

The Rig – Published by the Canadian Decoy and Outdoor Collectibles Association, c/o 66 Texas Avenue, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, P6A 4Y8, as a club newsletter intended for the enjoyment and entertainment of its members and friends. CDOCA's missions are "to promote, share and maintain interest in decoys and other outdoor sporting collectibles". Annual memberships are available for \$30 Cdn or \$75 for three years. US rates are also \$30/\$75 in US funds



Miniatures (all known species represented)



Miniature punt boat

To me, Jack was the kind and gentle man with a great sense of humor who was always willing after a full day of work, to pull me around the inner and outer Long Point Bay on water skis until the sun went down. He was a special man with a very special carving talent. I am proud to have known him, to have shared my youth with him, and like many of you, have grown to greatly respect his work as a carver of decoys.

2016 CDOCA Show

Show

The 2016 annual show will be held on Friday, October 21 and Saturday, October 22 at the Ramada Beacon Harbourside in Jordan, Ontario. There will be room-to-room trading on Friday evening with the show on Saturday in the main ballroom. Following the show, there will be the annual general meeting and social for all members.

For hotel reservations, use the direct line at 905-562-4155. Room bookings before September 15 will enjoy a special rate arranged by our Association. Refer to the attached flyer for all show details.

Contest Categories

Decoys:

1. J. R. Wells hollow decoy
2. Cliff Avann decoy

Outdoor Collectibles:

1. Working – Hand-made fishing lure/decoy
2. Decorative – Carved Wooden Animal – Not a Duck

Contest Rules

General:

1. Only current CDOCA members and spouses may enter the contests.
2. Absentee entries will not be accepted for any category.
3. No previous winning entry (1st, 2nd, or 3rd) in any category from the 2014 or 2015 shows may be entered in the 2016 contests.
4. Winners will be announced and ribbons awarded at noon on the day of the show.

Decoys Categories:

1. Entries must be accepted by the convener as eligible for their given category.
2. Maximum of 2 items per member per category; a pair counts as 2 items.
3. All decoys must have been made prior to 1970
4. All decoys must have been intended for hunting use and not be decorative carvings.
5. Winners will be determined by public vote conducted during the show.
6. Ribbons will be awarded in each category for 1st, 2nd and 3rd.
7. Additional ribbons will be awarded in the case of ties for 2nd and 3rd only.

Outdoor Collectible Categories – Working and Decorative:

1. Items made anywhere prior to 1950 are eligible.
2. A maximum of 2 items may be entered per member.
3. Entries will be judged by a panel of 3 experts.
4. Ribbons will be awarded in each sub-category for 1st, 2nd and 3rd.
5. Additional ribbons will be awarded in the case of ties for 3rd only.

Note: Plato Auctions are having an Antique and Nostalgia auction at nearby Rockway Hall in Vineland, Ontario on Saturday, October 22. A number of decoys have been consigned and will be auctioned early in the auction for interested parties. The preview is at 8:30am and the auction

starts at 10am. This gives time to visit both the show and the auction. Further details are available on the Plato website.

Peter Brown Collection

Back in the 1980s, Peter Brown, a Vancouver, B.C., businessman, had already acquired important artwork by Group of Seven and Haida artists. He had other collections, too. But, hand carved decoys were different.

"I'd never seen a great decoy before, and I thought: 'these are really something,'" says Brown. "There's no question they were works of art."

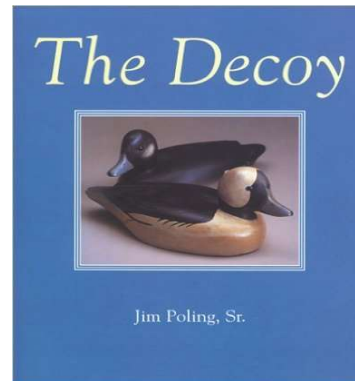
"As I got more interested, I thought it would be fun to put together the definitive collection of Canadian birds, pursue each of the great carvers and try to get as many of the species that they made that I could. We ended up with a few thousand birds."

Drawing from the sheds, boat houses, duck clubs and collections across Canada, over time, Brown would work with Bruce Malcolm and others to amass the remarkable collection of decoys ranging from mint condition to gunning repaints. Most of the birds are working decoys carved in the late 1800s and early 1900s, including a pair of Ivar Fernlund pintails recently appraised at \$260,000.



"Peter liked all decoys, not just the best," says Malcolm. "He had a passion for them. It was not about investment and money. He would interrupt a board meeting or stock trading session to take my call about a possible new acquisition. He had a powerful, positive influence on Canadian decoy collecting in the 1980s."

In 2001, Jim Poling Sr. published the book The Decoy, which tells the story of these celebrated artifacts from their earliest native inventors and their impact on European commerce, to their place in folk art and their status of a prized collectible.



As beautiful as it is informative, The Decoy includes 65 exquisite full-color images, photographed by Kim Stallknech from the private, and a never-seen-before decoy collection. Now known to be the Brown collection. The book also includes an important chapter on how to conserve our waterfowl legacy. An attractive and engaging chronicle of these beloved artifacts, the book will please hunters, sportsmen and decoy collectors alike.

Now, at the age of 75, Brown has taken the unprecedented step of divesting his decades-long pursuit. In May 2016, Peter Brown donated 1,000 antique duck, geese and shorebird decoys, appraised at \$1.5 million, to DUC. In turn, DUC is offering the majority of the collection to the public through auction by Guyette & Deeter, Inc., the world's largest decoy auction firm based in Maryland. DUC will be the beneficiary of all proceeds from the sale.

The majority of the decoys will be sold beginning April 2017 through the auction house at the Mid-West Decoy Association show in St Charles, Illinois. However, some are now being offered on Guyette & Deeter's weekly online auctions at www.decoysforsale.com.

At Brown's request, a portion of the collection will remain in Canada and displayed at the Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre in Manitoba, site of DUC's national head office.

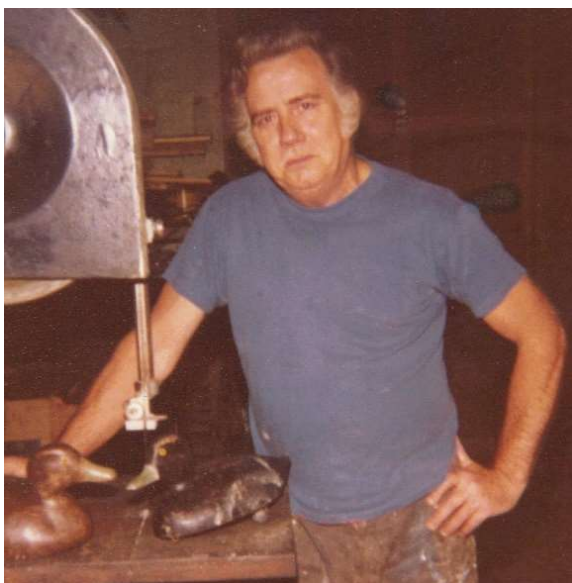
(with notes from Guyette and Deeter, Inc. and Ducks Unlimited Canada)

Snapshots

A continuation of carver photographs from the Spring newsletter.



Wragg and Burrell



Cliff McCutcheon circa 1978



Harold Nichol



Bob Kerr with his 1967 Centennial beard



William Loney



George Warin



David Nichol and Milt Code



Reeves family – There is some confusion on the attribution, but, it is believed that the hunters are Charles Reeves, unknown, Phineas Reeves, John R. Wells, Monty Fitzmorris, Henry Reeves (aiming gun) and Frank (or a Charley) Reeves – circa 1890

Thanks go out to Paul Brisco, Dave Ferris, Bernie Gates and Art Philp for their assistance gathering and dating a number of these photos. If anyone has any other carver photos they would like to share, please forward them onto the editor for inclusion in a follow-up article.

Mid-West Decoy Collector Association - St Charles, Illinois

There was a big change to the layout of the 51st annual show in St. Charles, Illinois this past spring. The Pheasant Run Resort is in the midst of renovating, demolishing and upgrading their facilities. This resulted in moving many of the members into new digs in the Golf Wing, as well as, opening up the Tower area to the room-to-room trading and dealing throughout the week.

This appeared to be a very positive move! There was certainly less walking involved and less confusion to ensure that you see all the rooms that were open. Many attendees reported great sales and/or found new birds during the show.



I know of one Canadian member that enjoyed a very successful show. In space of 30 minutes, several Ontario geese, a Toronto shorebird and a number of ducks left his room with new and very happy owners. He certainly had a lighter suitcase for his trip home.

The 2-day Guyette & Deeter, Inc. auction grossed nearly \$3 million dollars. The top seller was a Gus Wilson merganser bringing in almost \$150,000. Canadian decoys did well in the auction which was held prior to the scheduled weekend show. The top sellers are shown below in US dollars and figures include the buyer's premium. The auction appeared to be lightly attended, but, there was a lot of bidding action on the phones and through the internet. As in the last few years, prices appeared to be strong for birds with good structure, paint and provenance and weaker on the ones with not as good a pedigree.



Canvasback pair – St Clair Flats – maker unknown



Bluebill pair - Quebec - Orel LeBoeuf



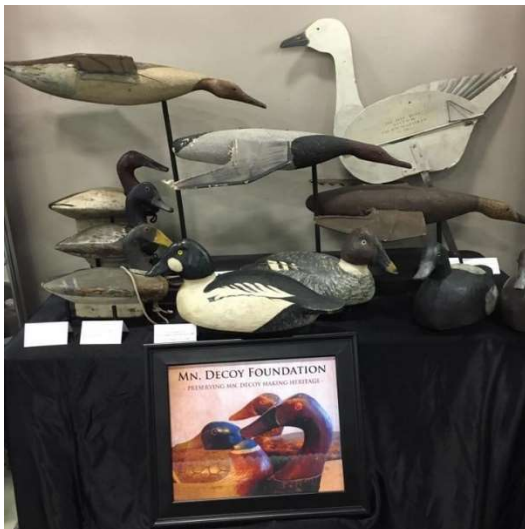
Merganser hen - Belleville, Ontario – William Chrysler

A watercolour sketch, A Marshy Blind by Ogden Pleissner, was painted at Long Point shooting club in 1955. This study was used to create a full size work entitled Canvasbacks Over Long Point.



The North American Vintage Decoy and Sporting Collectibles weekend show had approximately 300 exhibitors in the Mega Center. Also included were displays of Minnesota hunting decoys with an accompanying seminar by the author of the definitive book on these makers, one and two piece shotgun shell boxes and vintage Minnesota spear fishing decoys. All were excellent displays!

And continuing from previous years, the Association invited a contemporary carver to display. This year's featured decoy maker and folk artist was Ben Heinemann. His display included working decoys to decoratives, from flat art to dimensional plaques and more. A very talented artist.



(Auction results and photos were provided by Guyette & Deeter, Inc.)

Dealer versus Collector

Interesting insight into the mind of a collector/dealer Barry Friedman. While his specialty is furniture, particularly German pre-war, I found his thought process applicable to our collecting interests. To summarize:

As to stepping up to purchase a great piece, the investment is part of his collector's mentality. "Many people say that you can't be a dealer and a collector, but I think if you have the mind of both you can be a winner at both ends. Many times when I buy I'm not so concerned if there's not enough room to make a profit. I'm more concerned with having a good piece. I learned from the great dealer-collectors that you must step out and buy something if it's great and not think about an immediate turnover. I couldn't always afford to think that way, but now that I'm in a position where if I can't sell the piece, I'm left with something to cherish."

Friedman has never been afraid to venture into the esoteric and the rarefied, or the artist or movement unblessed by a museums imprimatur. His eye is fundamentally instinctive, but it is supported by knowledge and experience. Because he is self-taught, Friedman delights in exhuming overlooked works of art before the historians do and watching them adjust their opinions. Names mean little to him. He believes that some are unjustly ignored because they are isolated themselves from the mainstream. His gallery shows "interesting, unusual and important pieces, not just what they think will sell".

William Loney

It seems it is unusual to see decoys or folk art works by William Loney of Prince Edward County at any time. In June, at a Tim Potter auction, a number of paintings and handwork by Loney were up for grabs.



Decoy and Outdoor Collectibles Show



Jordan, Ontario

Room-To-Room – Friday, October 21
Show – Saturday, Oct. 22 -10am to 3pm

50 tables of vendors w/decoys, fishing tackle, books, & outdoor collectibles.

Admission \$5, Children with parent free

Displays of Canadian decoys, wildlife carvings, folk art & outdoor collectibles

RAMADA BEACON HARBOURSIDE
2793 Beacon Boulevard
Jordan, Ontario

ROOM RESERVATIONS
905-562-4155 - Mention the Canadian Decoy Show before 15 September for special room rate

www.canadiandecoy.com for more information

TABLE RENTALS:
m_harding@outlook.com
or call Mark at 613-985-8736

If you have any interesting articles, items or photographs that you would like to pass on to the membership, please email it to The Rig editor at dness@shaw.ca