

The Wildfowler

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2008

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Sep 2
Guild meeting, 6pm social, 7pm
meeting/program: speaker
Deni Norred-Williams

Sep 8
Board of Directors meeting,
AWHM, 7pm

Sep 13
BBBC at Back Bay NWR, tram
ride 9am

Oct 1
Donations for auction DUE!

Oct 6
Guild meeting, 6pm social, 7pm
meeting/program

Oct 11
BBBC birdwalk, Back Bay NWR,
8am

Oct 14
Museum Management Committee
meeting, AWHM, 1:30pm

Oct 31
Set-up auction at church, 8am-
5pm

Nov 1
Set-up auction at church 8am-
5pm

Nov 1
de Witt Cottage Annual Auction,
Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox
Church, 6pm

Nov 3
Guild meeting, 6pm social, 7pm
meeting/program

Nov 10
Board of Directors meeting,
AWHM, 7pm

Nov 27
Thanksgiving, Museum closed



Tom Beatty

FROM THE DIRECTOR

It's hard to believe, but as I write this the summer season is about to come to an end. Even

with the high gas prices the visitors to the Museum seem to be steady and on par with previous summers. Among our visitors were many who were repeat guests from previous years. It is always a pleasure to see return customers and even better when you remember their names. We couldn't have the informative and friendly atmosphere that draws many of these folks back, if it were not for our volunteers. Whether in the gift shop or carving room, each volunteer provides the visitor with a history of the cottage, the area, and wildfowling in their own special way. This year we were fortunate to have members volunteer for the busy summer months in the gift shop, carving room and library. A special thanks to those individuals.

I'm sure most of you know that the de Witt Cottage is listed in the National Register of Historic

Places, the Virginia Landmarks Register, and the Virginia Beach Historic Register. Soon we hope to have plaques mounted on the Cottage so visitors will know the historic significance of the oldest structure on the Virginia Beach oceanfront.

Our visitors do come from all parts of the world, but some of the lighter moments have come from visitors from here in the United States. On one occasion a woman was looking out over the oceanfront and asked is Guantanamo Bay was close by. I said no, it's located in the Caribbean Sea. She said, "Isn't that the Caribbean Sea?" "No", I explained, "it's the Atlantic Ocean". On another occasion a young man visiting said he was on his way to Florida and asked how long it would take from Virginia Beach. I didn't give him an exact time, but he was under the impression Florida was just below Virginia. I told him it was below Virginia, but he had to go through North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia first. And finally a group of teen age girls visited recently. They toured the Museum and visited with the carver. On the way out one girl

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stopped and looked at the mural showing the Atlantic Flyway. Prior to leaving she said, "I've got a question. Where do ducks go in the winter?" I explained the migration cycle and she asked, "How do they get here?" I said, "They fly." She replied "Oh, I learned something new. I thought they walked." So, we do provide some geography along with our historic information. It's a great place to work!

—Tom

GUILD NEWS

A reminder to all members that we are about to resume our monthly Guild meetings and the September meeting is going to be on TUESDAY, September 2nd. Our speaker will be Deni Norred-Williams and her topic will be about Thalia history. As is the custom in previous meetings, the social hour will begin at 6pm and the meeting/program will begin at 7pm. We hope you will be able to attend.

It is a pleasure to report our organization continues to gain new members. Traditionally, January through March has been the period when the vast majority of members renew and new members join. However since our last newsletter we've had 5 new members join. Rose Wells was the first to join and she now volunteers in the gift shop on Thursdays. Bob Bishop, a member years ago, has rejoined and volunteers in the gift shop on Tuesdays. Jeff & Denise Tinkham, along with Spencer &

Clay joined on their last visit to the Museum. Spencer is an excellent carver who won the Ward Museum Youth Carving Championship in Ocean City this year. Hugh Travis has rejoined and we welcome Russell & Pam Walsh and family. It's always good to have another Walsh in the Guild.

As our organization becomes better known through visits to the Museum or putting on events like the November 1st Auction, I think we'll see and increase in the interest in membership. My thanks to those recent members and those who have joined the past year. Let's keep the momentum going.

SPECIAL NOTE

Herald E. Ritter, a long-time member of the Guild, passed away in late July. He was active in the early years of the Guild and participated in many of the Wildfowl Festivals.

MEMBERSHIPS

Rose Wells
 Russell & Pam Walsh & family
 Hugh Travis
 Bob Bishop
 Jeff & Denise Tinkham & family

DONATIONS

Pete M. Hayes Estate
 Elaine Polizos
 (in memory of Scott Spruill)

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 The Back Bay Wildfowl Guild, Inc.
 (A not for profit organization)

De Witt Cottage Annual Auction Update

All Guild members living in close proximity to Virginia Beach received a very detailed letter informing you about our auction scheduled for November 1, 2008. The letter was explicit as to times, dates, location, auction items received to date and listed individuals and their area of responsibility. November 1st may seem to be a date off in the distance but it is not. For this event to be a success we need your help and we need it NOW! If you have the talent and skills to solicit donations from private companies, organizations, businesses, banks, etc. Alice Walsh wants you to contact her (498-9410), but don't put it off! If you want to donate something, call Alice or Ann Verhaagen (587-7281) to get exact information about where to deliver your item(s). Your donations might focus on baskets featuring different themes such as: gardening (tools, gloves, birdhouses, etc.), car emergency kit (jumper cables, first aid kit, flairs, flashlights, etc.), scrapbooking or any other ideas you have that could be contributed and added to by other members. Most of the above information was in the letter you received in early August, but it didn't seem to prompt much activity within the Guild. We want this auction to be an annual event. We can ill afford to continue to put on events that take hundreds and hundreds of man hours to prepare, only to break even or lose money. We can have successful events but they require your help and ideas. Don't let this event pass by without you participating in some capacity. There are numerous ways in which

you can be of assistance. Please call to learn more. Advance tickets are available at the museum, Guild members \$8 and all others \$15. Please encourage all your friends and relatives to purchase tickets early. The more bidders we have the more successful our fund raising will be. KEEP UPDATED BY CHECKING THE WEBSITE - WWW.AWHM.ORG AND CLICK ON THE AUCTION BUTTON

HELP SAVE \$\$ FOR THE MUSEUM

If YOU are reading your newsletter that was delivered to your mail box and would like to help us save money, you can now choose to have your newsletter emailed and save us printing and mailing costs. All you need to do is contact the following email address : atlanticwildfowl@cox.net and state your name, email address (if different from the one you sent the message with) and tell us to begin sending your newsletters electronically. ****Make sure you also put our newsletter email address into your contact area so your newsletter doesn't end up in your spam folder.**

BACK BAY BIRDING CLUB

The BBBC will be kicking off another birding season and this year we are doing things differently! All of our club sponsored birdwalks will be at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Please check the refuge website for entry fee infor-

mation (www.fws.gov/backbay). We will offer two guided walks and two tram trips.

Sep 13, 2008 –BBNWR – tram ride *

Oct 11, 2008 – BBNWR – meet 8am in Welcome Center parking lot

Apr 18, 2009 – BBNWR – meet 8am in Welcome Center parking lot

May 16, 2009 – BBNWR – tram ride *

- The tram seats 24 and leaves the Welcome Center parking lot at 9am and is available FIRST COME FIRST SERVE. When you enter the refuge at the fee booth you will inform the attendant you wish to get a number for the tram ride. * It is recommended we arrive between 8-8:30 to better our chances of getting a seat. The tram goes to False Cape State Park. We can hike around the area or relax at the visitor center. The tram returns to BBNWR Welcome Center at 1pm. The tram is an OPEN vehicle (no heat/ac) and costs \$8 per person, \$6 children & senior (62+) Exact change is recommended.

The BBBC will also be volunteering our services at "The Window" at BBNWR between November and March on the weekends. The Window is a new facility located north of C-Pool. C-Pool and everything south of it was closed in the winter months when migrating birds were on the refuge. The Window is an enclosed structure suitable for viewing the area without disturbing the wintering waterfowl. BBBC will be on hand to help with identification for anyone who stops in at the window. I am working on a

schedule to present to BBNWR to let them know when we can be available. I am still looking for volunteers...that includes you duck hunters!

Other birdwalks available: the VSO's annual Chincoteague trip on September 5-7, the annual Eastern Shore Birding Festival on September 18-21 and the annual Wings Over Water on the Outer Banks, NC on November 4-9.

The annual VSO Virginia Beach weekend will take place Dec 5-7. As you recall we (BBBC) host the VSO on Friday evening after the birdwalk scheduled that day. We offer light snacks and beverages while members tour the Museum and usually view a slide show upstairs. Please mark this date on your calendar as we will need YOUR help with hosting and refreshments.

—Karen Beatty

backbaybirdclub@aol.com

WWW.AWHM.ORG

Parking is available at the Raven Restaurant across the street and the Newcastle Motel next door for members during meetings and gatherings at the cottage.