

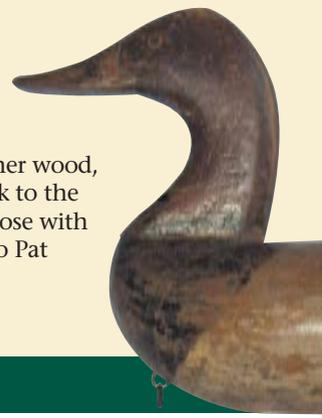
What *is a* Decoy.

**Exhibit
Now Open**

**Offering an
interactive experience**

From the moment you step in the front door, you are swept into the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum's newest exhibit. "What Is A Decoy" offers visitors a unique learning experience tracing the evolution of decoys from simple gunning tools to treasured works of art.

"What Is A Decoy" reinforces for all museum visitors the decoy's role in American society as an ever-changing folk art. The key message conveyed by the exhibit is that all of the decoys displayed in this dynamic exhibit gallery, whether wood, cork, plastic or decorative, "have a powerful link to the old bay man who knew his birds from living close with them," and who made his decoys, according to Pat Vincenti, "because he needed them."



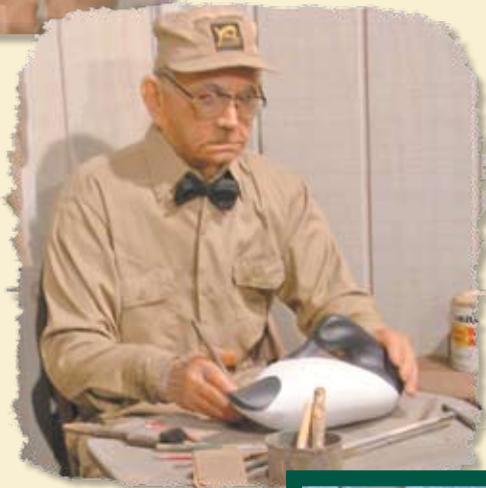


‘What Is A Decoy’ contains some of the museum’s finest artifacts integrated into a chronological story of the decoy’s artistic and historic transitions. The gallery starts with the Frank ‘Home Run’ Baker rig featuring over 200 Holly, Barnes, McGaw, Graham, Gibson, and Mitchell decoys displayed with an old gunning boat made by Havre de Grace decoy maker Dick Hipple.

The exhibit evolves into an explanation of the types of decoys using such examples as a Mannie Haywood canvas whistling swan and a Jim Currier canvasback. This section is followed by a description of how decoys are a carver’s reflection of waterfowl and a survey of decoy making styles from all of the major North American flyways. A nice roothead coot made by Jimmy Rowe of Chincoteague, Virginia, and a pair of elegant pintails made by the famous aviator Lt. Gen. Jimmy Doolittle, are displayed in this exhibit area depicting regional styles.

Visitors can then interact with Charlie Joiner’s sinkbox model and decoys made by some of the Susquehanna Flats great decoy makers like Sam

“The museum’s purpose is to tell the story of decoys,” commented museum vice-president Pat Vincenti, “and the new exhibit helps us present decoys past, present, and future in a very dramatic fashion.” ‘What Is A Decoy’ was conceived over 15 years ago and the museum was only able to create this gallery thanks to a major grant from the Chesapeake Bay Gateways program. Significant support from the museum’s major donors such as the R. Madison Mitchell Endowment Fund and constant contributions from its membership enabled this project to move forward. “The museum is so fortunate to have so many great patrons,” Ed Watts reflected. “Even though we still have a few more dollars to raise, ‘What Is A Decoy’ has set the standard for the museum’s future exhibit improvements.”



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Barnes, William Heverin, and Leonard Pryor as they learn about Upper Bay decoys.

Perhaps the exhibit's most meaningful lessons are found in the displays detailing how decoys once were made.

Interactive videos express carving techniques enabling patrons to place into context iconic objects like Steve Ward's chopping block, Madison Mitchell's lathe, and Paul Gibson's band saw. The lathe, which was used by both Mitchell and Gibson, is the gallery's largest artifact. Restored by decoy maker Bobby Jobes, the lathe tells how decoy making changed through the use of power

tools. The paint section, however, clarifies how each decoy was a unique expression of the maker.

'What Is A Decoy' concludes with its final chapter — a presentation of factory made decoys and decoratives. The 'fancy duck' episode of the 'What Is A Decoy' story features such beautiful birds as a canvasback miniature by Sam Barnes, a pair of Ward Brothers flying green-winged Teal, and a mallard hen by Jan Calvert. Maps, murals, carving tools, and gunning memorabilia enhance all of these wonderful decoys. The large photo panels and unique decoy placement, created by the award-winning design team of Capitol Exhibits, John Quarstein, and Chris White, beckon visitors into the gallery's experience.

The 'What Is A Decoy' gallery is one of several experiences visitors can enjoy at the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum. The museum is open daily from 10:00 am — 5:00 pm. For more information, call 410-939-3739. 