



Chenoa Library Presents



A Duck & Decoys Program

with

Fred Lippincott on

Sunday September 15

2:00 at the United Methodist Church in Chenoa

204 S Division St.



*Fred, the World
Champion Goose
Caller will bring
his duck calls,
decoys and
expertise*

*All are welcome
to this free event
sponsored by
YOUR Chenoa
Library*

Fred Lippincott displays one of the many duck decoys he has collected over the years.

Lippincott, who has served as a duck guide in the Hennepin area since 1970, collects decoys and duck calls and makes his own decoys as well. (Putnam County Record photo/Dixie Schroeder)

The art of luring ducks to the blinds

By Ken Schroeder - kschroeder@putnamcountyrecord.com

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HENNEPIN – Known to many in the area as “Weedo the Guide,” Fred Lippincott has been a duck guide since 1970 in hunting regions throughout the state. He was featured in an article in Ducks Unlimited magazine in 1992 and is a collector of duck calls and decoys, as well as a carver of decorative decoys.

“There’s two kinds of collectible decoys,” Lippincott said. “There’s the old-fashioned kind that saw some usage in their time, and the decorative ones that were built just for display.”

Lippincott has several of both types, including a decoy carved by George Cunningham, one of the first guides in Hennepin around the beginning of the 1900s. Lippincott estimates the decoy to be close to 110 years old.

“Most decoy and duck call carvers were also guides,” Lippincott said. “Cunningham was a great shooter.”

While some of the older decoys look a bit rough, Lippincott notes they’re the most collectible.

“Once a carver’s gone, there’s no more coming from his collections,” he said. “A decoy keeps its value as long as it’s not repainted by someone other than the original carver. I’ve seen original decoys go for \$20,000 and up.”

Lippincott has a large collection of duck calls, with the ones on display under lock and key. Most of the calls he has are hand-carved from various woods, many of which were once very plentiful in the Illinois River valley.

“Many of these were carved from basswood or red cedars because they grew along the river,” he said.

He also has duck calls made from materials ranging from polycarbonates to acrylics.

“The acrylics they use today, they make calls in all sorts of colors — reds, clear, striped, you name it,” he said.

New acrylic duck calls are the most expensive, with prices ranging up \$100. However, that’s a drop in the bucket compared to the older calls.

“I bought this call for \$800,” said Lippincott, indicating an intricately-carved mahogany call. “Today, it’s worth about \$1,500.”

One of Lippincott’s favorite calls is one carved by Bob Hicks in the style of Charles Perdew’s calls. It’s made of walnut and shows some of the intricate carving Perdew was famous for.

Perdew is a name that Lippincott holds in reverence, as do many other collectors. Perdew was a carver in Henry whose work is still prized as some of the best from the region. His decoys are sold at art galleries around the world, commanding prices up to \$10,000 or more.

Like decoys, duck calls also increase in price after the carver dies or the company goes out of business. Last year at the Guyette, Schmidt & Deeter auction house’s 27th annual spring decoy auction, one of Perdew’s calls sold for more than \$15,000.

Lippincott was featured at the Hennepin branch of the Putnam County library. His program covered duck calls and their different designs as well as the history of duck decoys in and around the Illinois River Valley. He displayed a map showing all of the hunting areas in 1890, including the fertile duck grounds of Lake Hennepin before it was drained early in the 20th century.