



The National CALLMAKERS & COLLECTORS Newsletter

www.ccaacalls.org

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COLLECTABLE CALLMAKER, TOOL MAKER, COLLECTOR

Talented callmaker has passion for tools and other callmakers' work

by Ed Glenn

It's unusual for one person to combine callmaking, tool making and collecting interests. But as usual it was Steve Boyles' love of duck hunting that brought out his skills and interests in all three aspects of the duck call art.

With his father, Steve began to hunt when he was only nine years old. In 1976 Steve and his father hunted Swan Lake National Refuge hunting geese and ducks. Steve now hunts mostly public lands like Fountain Grove Conservation Area. Over the years, Steve's love for waterfowling has never changed.

Like most of us, as a young man Steve was faced with the necessity of earning a living and his training and skill

as a tool and die maker has served he and his family well over the years. The hands-on skill of his profession has lapped over to woodworking, resulting in the design and construction of several woodworking projects including a hunting boat which he still uses.



Steve Boyles breaks away from callmaking to take his youngest hunting partner, Zack, along on early morning hunt.



Steve's CCAA Fancy Call winners: from left: 2005 1st place laminated division and Best of Class; 2006 1st place checkered division, 2006 2nd place open division and 2004 1st place laminated division and Merit Award.

Callmaking

Throughout these years of dedicated duck hunting, Steve dreamt of "calling 'em in" with a duck call of his own design and construction. Just three years ago, he combined his occupational skill and pastime woodworking to make his first duck calls. At first his calls would be called "working calls" intended to be used in the field. And of course, with the precision built into each, these calls were

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President's Corner

Reelfoot show the best one ever

Hunting season is now in full swing across the country. It's time to put that turkey, goose, duck or predator call that you bought with anticipation just a few weeks back to work. That's how my days have been since getting back from the best Reelfoot Waterfowl Show I have been to. With over 50 call makers selling from booths or just walking around, I was in collectors' heaven. I want to thank Joel Harris and the other committee members for putting on such a fine show. I was able to add over 30 calls to my collection.



James Bennett,
CCAA President

The first Working Class Duck Call Contest was at this year's show. Jim Dester organized the contest and the call maker participation exceeded our expectations. The judges did a great job and a very special thank you to Randle Flowers for taking the time to blow every call for the judges.

One little known activity going on was the unveiling of the Worlds Longest Duck Call. Billy Hays of Milan, TN made the duck call and submitted it to the Guinness World Book of Records for the Longest Working Duck Call. Ed Glenn, Jim Fleming and myself were asked to participate in the authentication process. It should be official by now, so a big congratulation to Billy Hays.

The National Metal Reed Duck Calling Contest and the Grand American Duck Calling Contest went on as scheduled with enough entrants to last well into late afternoon on Sunday.

Mark your calendars for the upcoming National Wild Turkey Federation Show, Feb. 22-25 2007 in Nashville, TN. This show has become the premier show for call makers to strut their stuff. Hundreds of turkey, duck, and other game calls are sent in for a show and then sold in a live or silent auction. There are also many other activities and displays to see. If you would like to participate in this year's show, you can contact Mark Warmath at 931-358-5936.

If you have not been to our web site please do. Jim Dester has out done himself to make the site something that all members can be proud of. The site also has the entire contest results and pictures of most all the calls. You can find our web site online at www.ccaacalls.org.

Yours in service,



James Bennett, President

In this Issue

- Talented Callmaker, machinist and collector Steve Boyles of Chillicothe, Missouri, is featured on the cover of this issue.
- Redbeard, in his homespun way, tells about a near "lull" in his nearly 20 years of "streaks" in the turkey woods, beginning on page 4.
- Read about Billy Hays' attempt to set a new World Record for the longest duck call on page 6
- Meet the winners of the CCAA's first Working Call Contest held at Reelfoot Lake Waterfowl Festival, page 7.
- Some photos of people who attended the Waterfowl Festival cover page 8.
- Mike Joyner announces publication of *Hills of Truxton* on page 9.
- Some coming events are also listed on page 9.
- Collectable Callmaker Mike Fixter is profiled in an article by Steve Ribeau, CCAA Secretary, beginning on page 10.
- Donald and Sarah Clark, of Sheridan, Arkansas, truly artists in turkey call media, are featured on page 12.
- James Bennett starts a multi-part series on E-Bay, the first is Buying for Beginners on page 13.
- CCAA membership application form and note about multi-year dues savings can be found on page 14.
- The Editor's Commentary appears on page 15.
- Be sure to check the Trading Post items on page 16.
- The 2005 CCAA patch is included in this issue to CCAA members and the bi-annual membership directory will be published next spring.

The National CALLMAKERS & COLLECTORS Newsletter

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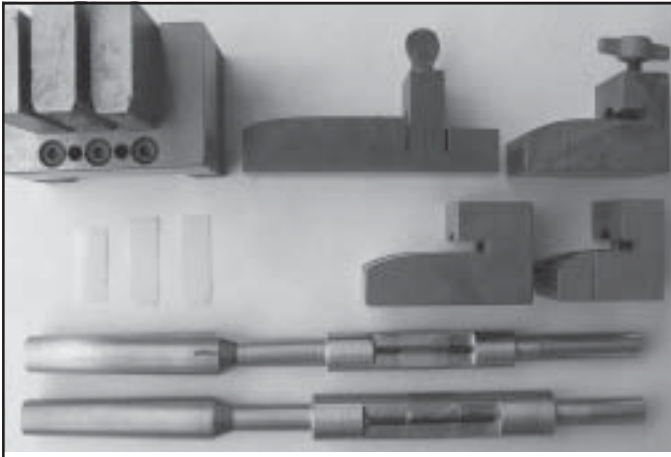
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well accepted by those who are lucky enough to own one.

Steve continues to make field grade calls, but has shifted his emphasis to fancy calls, with some considerable success. In 2004 Steve won the laminated call division and Award of Merit in his class at the CCAA Fancy Call Contest in St. Charles, Illinois. In 2005, he repeated the First in laminated division, moved up to Best in Class and added a First place in matched set and a Second place in the miniature division.

By the time of the 2006 competition, Steve had developed skills in other forms of fancy call construction and won First in the checkered division to go along with Second place ribbons in miniatures and the open division.

Steve makes about 25 calls a year, mostly of the collector and competition grade. Most are made for specific customers, a truly “custom” call.



Steve offers a variety of callmaking tooling including toneboard jigs, reed cutters and mandrels. Most are machined to customer specs.

Toolmaking

As Steve developed, researched and worked toward a functional duck call, he recognized the need for specialized tooling. Having developed tooling for his own callmaking, it was a logical extension of the new hobby to offer tools to other callmakers. Toneboard jigs, mandrels and reed cutters are the mainstay of Steve’s tool offerings, a branch of the art that keeps him as busy as callmaking. While these tools are also “custom” items, made specifically for a single customer after considerable collaboration, Steve also offers jigs of his own design for callmakers just starting out or who have unusually effective tuning skills and techniques.

Mandrels of the ‘pin-lock’ style complete with MT shanks and reed cutters with multiple cutters in a single fixture are also available, all made specifically to a customer’s specifications.

Collecting

Steve’s interest in duck and goose calls began when he used them years ago. Logically that led to making his own

duck calls, which led to using his professional skills to making tooling for other callmakers. What was not so logical, however, is Steve’s penchant for building a collection of calls made by other callmakers. As a few opportunities to trade calls arose, (which it does for most callmakers), Steve began to develop a fascination with the work of others and a desire to collect examples of their work.

After consulting with collector James Bennett, Steve has built his collection to more than 270 calls from nearly as many callmakers, both antique and contemporary. Most of his contemporary calls are a result of at least a phone acquaintance with the maker and many represent stories of new and continuing friendships. In many instances, Steve considers those friendships more important than the call in his collection.

Family

Steve Boyles was born, reared and still lives in Chillicothe, Missouri. He has three sons: Chad, 18; Travis, 15; and Zackary, 6, all of whom love to hunt with Dad. Steve and his wife, Smokey, (an elementary school teacher) are often found at duck call shows and competitions. Smokey is the principal webmaster of the family website: www.quackerstackerduckcalls.com.

Contact Steve through his website or by calling 660-646-7021.



Steve’s collection “wall” includes some fine examples of the state of the art as shown in the few spotlighted above.

Do “Steaks and Lulls” really apply to hunting the most challenging game?

by Redbeard aka Dean Mundhenke

There’s a sporting term that I pondered upon and realized I’ve never actually heard that term in association with the sport of wild turkey hunting.

Lull: relaxed vigilance. Commonly used as a beg off for a hitter’s slump, perhaps could even be applied to a golfer’s lack of accuracy or to a racer’s lack of wins. Surely though, it never could be applied to the chase of the most challenging game on earth.

Got to thinking about my storied 20 year career in wild turkeebird hunting and dang if I didn’t come up with at least two consecutive years which one may describe as a lull. Although one of those years wasn’t really a lull in the sense of relaxed vigilance. More like the complete opposite, as there wasn’t a string of relaxed moments to lay down even a minute, the entire season. Nevertheless, perhaps it could be described as a lull, as it was during that two year period that the turkey gods worked on my very soul. Challenging me at every turn, doing their best to break a 14 year streak of slingin’ bird, Redbeard style.

I’d come across one of those uncanny gobblers that could read minds, see in the dark, and fly quicker than any wood duck you’ve ever witnessed lift off from a tree lined stream. ‘Twas only one morn, the first hunt for this confounding tom I named “Orville Wright – The *&^(*&^ Flying Tom”, that I had him in gun range. The most infinitesimal movement of my gun barrel sent him scurrying in and out of the thickest swampland you can envision, lickety split he was gone.

The only consistent habit this bird had was roosting in the same swamp, day after day. A field, above a rise in land adjacent to the swamp, made for some easy selection of setup, most morns. It was either there or just as close to his roost as I dared. It really never mattered though, as without regard to where I sat up, nor how early I sat up, call or no call, the wisest bird I’ve ever dueled would always head the opposite direction.

If I sat up on the edge of the field, he would merely drop his lard arse directly off the limb. If I dared enter the swamp, without fail, he’d be airborne at first light. Wouldn’t stop either til he crested the hill and sailed completely outta site. While he loved to be heard, he didn’t care too much for being seen. Sides that first encounter, only time I ever gazed upon him was when he did his fly bys.

Never did whip that ol’ monarch and if not for the wisdom of an ol’ timer telling me I could waste my entire season on such a bird, I’d went birdless that season. Took his advice one morning and killed me a stupid bird but thoughts of Orville quickly returned and I spent my remaining season hunting that tormenting tom.

One’s better than none and I had completed another season with turkey in the fridge. A good thing but I’ll never forget “Orville Wright, the *&^(*&^ Flying Tom”.

The next season was even worse. Had plenty of excuses for this year, though. My Dad had passed from this world the winter prior and I spent most Saturday and Sunday morn’s up against an old oak with thoughts and remembrances of our joint quest for the slam.



Redbeard breaks a two-year “lull” and begins a new “streak with this bird taken with a vest full of calls, many of his own making.

I’d had to relinquish my self employed lifestyle of 14 years and take a real job with real bosses. No longer could I hang up the keyboard and take all of April off. Weekends would have to do. Still though, the passion had waned. Was I in a lull? Would the streak end?

Even missed a few weekends, opting to stay at the house with the little woman and the kids. Imagine that! Turkey hunting is a sport that captures the soul, the mind, the very heart of any man that has experienced the true challenge and success at calling and taking of the wild turkey. It generates a magnetic force that pulls us to the woodlands every spring. It releases that chemical that makes your heart stomp your chest.

Heart thumping so hard and fast when that big ol’ gobbling tom is upon you, so fiercely that you’d swear he could peck your thumper clean outta your chest and stomp it three toed flat, robbing you of your precious life. It’s you or him

and you waste not a moment in praising the Lord above when the game works in your favor.

It was a blue bird day, May 15th, the last day of spring gobbler season in Georgia. The office was hot, my neck swelled in discomfort, I squirmed in my seat. I was six months on the “real” job. It was my 15th year of hunting the wild turkey. That year, I had zero birds to my credit, never even had a challenge. My forehead started sweatin’, face flushed, shoulder’s slumped.

“How ya doing, Dean?”, my boss asked.

“Ok I guess, but I, uh, gotta a doctor’s appointment I gotta make here shortly.”, the lie slipped from my lips easier than poop from a newborn babies behind.

“Well, ya better get going, might as well just call it a day with the hour so late.”, my most gracious boss said.

Never knew a Dodge could sprout wings but you’d swear mine did that day, as I covered a normal two hour trip to Culloden, GA in nothing flat.

Vest of calls, trusty 10 at my side, I set out for every “lucky” spot I’d ever had on those 800 some odd acres. It was 4pm, I figured I had 4 hours to try and make it a successful season and keep the streak alive.

After several no-response setups, I came upon a comfy 40 to 50 year old pine on the gas line and got comfortable. I decided I’d pull out every call in my arsenal and give ‘em a try before headin’ to the Blondie Tree in the big woods. An easy chair oak with considerable turkey tippin’ history including my first on this land, a blonde tipped bearded gobbler.

The Lynch Jet Slate of Mississippi heritage came first. I counted the notches of seven, remembered the birds. Most fondly the second gobbler in my career, one I nicknamed “The No Wipe Gobbler.” A series of its high pitched hen yelps left me for an uneventful sit of 30 minutes or so.

An old Primos cedar Super Slate with notches up and down both sides was next and I let out a cuttin’ series of hen talk. Loud and bodacious is what it was but again I was left sitting with seemingly deaf ears, contemplating what’s next?

Cuttin’, cacklin’, long series of yelping from a Kelly Cooper diaphragm sounded good to me but left the afternoon air as if nothing more than gypsy smoke.

Do you believe in the Gobbler? Do you believe in spirits? Do you believe in help from the unknown? Do you believe in magic? I do, especially now.

I pulled my last call from its snug pocket of a well worn vest. It’d been there several years, mostly due to its rarity and respectability. Darkened with turkey dirt, yet still pristine in sound. Its sides no longer turkey shop clean, it’d been used as intended. Although yet without nary a single notch of success. Carefully, I pulled out my one and only Neil Cost, “The Gobbler”, box call. Number 6 of 12

and One for the state chapters of the NWTF.

I read its script, ran my hands along it’s sides. Felt its worthiness. Guided it into yelpin’ position, felt a bit apprehensive, as box calls aren’t my forte. With only one bird attributed to a Quaker Boy box call in earlier years, confidence in my box callin’ wasn’t strong. I recalled the sound that the Quaker had produced to get that shock gobble late one morn.

As if my strokes were guided by “The Gobbler” himself, three of the sweetest hen yelps I’ve ever heard came from that box. Before they could echo down the line, they were answered by a most raucous gobble to my left and just below the hillside. Not one but two strong gobbles convinced me the game had begun.

Box call carefully placed down and a little butt twitchin’ to get in that gobbler going down form, I was spying a vibrant red head crest that hill in nothing flat. Bead on, safety flat, the roar of the big 10 rushed the lull right outta my life. Up and ready for the dead bird rodeo, I rushed to the bird. Fisted turkey legs and lifted up that little ol’ jaker of a wanna be boss high to the heavens and praised the good Lord above for my blessings.

The earth could have dissolved, beneath my Russell’s, right then and there. I’d left this world with the smile of a lifetime. Reflections of the day, the spirit’s around me, the luck of it all, filled my mind as I returned to my set up and notched my Cost call with my proudest gobbler of all.

The passion was fired again and has burned brightly ever since. Lull: relaxed vigilance? Nah, ain’t no such thing in wild turkeebird hunting.



Redbeard's well-worn vest holds a variety of calls, and the full array was required to break a "Lull" that he now knows wasn't relaxed vigilance.

Billy Hays claims World Record for longest functional duck call

by Ed Glenn

At 36 inches long, Billy Hays' duck call looks more like a wading staff than a duck call. But you'll never find a wading staff that sounds more like a duck.



Billy Hays of Milan, TN, demonstrates the calling ability of what he claims is the World's longest duck call.



J.W. Hays, left, started making duck calls in the 1950's but his son, Billy took up the art years later and is self-taught. Today the two join forces and offer calls at www.duckwhisperers.com.

Billy turns duck calls together with his 81 year-old father, J.W. Hays with calls displayed on their web site: www.duckwhisperers.com. While today they are a father-son team, it was not always that way.

J.W. Hays started turning duck calls in the 1950's but by the time he was old enough to take up the art, Billy says "I lived a county away, and had to learn on my own." After all, J.W. was in a decades long hiatus and Billy is proud of his self-taught skills. It was only after Billy began turning calls that J.W. took up the art once again.

Billy hit on the idea of a World Record with a unique barrel boring system that includes use of standard bits, bit extenders and precision bushings all used in straight grained black walnut. He worked up to the longest duck call with progressively longer barrel lengths, building confidence



Jim Fleming, left, and James Bennett, right hold the tape measure against Billy Hays' 36-inch long duck call while Billy holds an earlier, shorter version of only 30 inches. Your Editor captured the photo.

in the technique.

With the 36-inch long duck call finished, Jim Fleming (author of *Custom Calls, Duck and Goose Calls from Today's Craftsmen*); James Bennett (President of the CCAA) and I had occasion to examine the call, hear its ducky sound and write letters in support of Billy's application to the Ginnus Book of World Records for recognition. His application is still pending, more news will follow.

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Reelfoot Working Call Contest a great success - 45 entries in 3 classes



Above: Bob Wiseman of Winchester, TN, made the first place call in the Acrylic division which scored a whopping 215 points out of a possible 288 maximum, the highest total score of all entries.

Not pictured: John Lipscome of West Chester, OH, placed both 1st and 2nd in the Metal Reed call division, with the only two Reelfoot style calls entered. Imagine that: Only two Reelfoot style calls at a Reelfoot Lake show and they came from Ohio!



Above: Benjamin Lyle of Adams, TN, shows off a collection and his first place in the "All Wood" division of the Working Call Competition. Benjamin's 1st place wood call was also judged Best of Show from among the 1st place calls in each division.

At left: Lyle's Best of Show call. It's easy to see why this call may have placed high in the 25% non-sound section of the judging criteria.



Above: For Matthews Game Calls it could not have been an accident to place 2nd in both the All Wood and Acrylic divisions. The family team: from left: Wendy Bayless and her brothers Nathan, Mark and James Matthews all participate in making game calls. Mark is the principal tuner and Wendy occasionally tries her hand at taxidermy.



Above: Working Call contest judging underway. Judges from front left: Jim Fleming, Ray Carroll, and Ross Destefano. Facing at center, Mark Warmath and back to camera William Bailey. The Caller was Reelfoot Lake guide Randy Flowers. At far left is Jim Dester, CCAA show coordinator. In the background, Christine Cody prepares to aid with score tabulations.

People at the Reelfoot Lake Waterfowl Festival net work and show off



Julie (left) and Ken (foreground) Hubbard share their Saturday morning breakfast table with Yvonne and Herb Ohley and Earl Marks (far left) before heading out to the show grounds.



CCAA Call Coordinator Jim Dester is pleased with the Working Call contest display set up after judging until Sunday afternoon.



Among the nearly 50 callmaker booths, Bernie and Sharon Forte displayed what was judged the Best Booth at the Reelfoot show.



Scott Shroder, left, Ed Glenn, (the guy who dared to wear a fish shirt to a duck call show) and Justin Arbuckle (right) keep an eye on the camera while Tye Black makes music with an antique call from his pocket.



Joel Harris, President of the Reelfoot Lake Callmakers and Collectors Association, stands by at left while Fred Weeks and Benie Forte examine on of Joel's fine duck calls.



Late Sunday afternoon, Keith Allen of Oran, MO, (right) walked away with \$2,000 and the the Grand American duck calling title. Mike McKemore presented the check and plaque.

Just published: "Hills of Truxton"

by Mike Joyner

With all my enjoyment of the outdoors, and culmination of experiences, I toyed with the idea of writing a book for some time. After purchasing a book from Tim Herald "Gobblers I Have Known", it inspired me to go the next step. My efforts were to share what I have observed and enjoyed each season, as opposed to being a "how to" book.

The title of the book reflects the experiences I have had in and around an area that I have spent many seasons hunting deer, turkey, and small game. It is a hilly area due east of Cortland, New York. I have had the privilege and in many cases still do have the permission to hunt many areas in and around the town of Truxton, New York. In the summer of 2000, Lee & I purchased 138 acres just outside of Truxton. This is a property I have hunted many years and it holds lots of memories as well as abundant populations of wildlife.

It is hard to recount these memories without including experiences from different areas of the country that I have been able to enjoy. I include some ramblings on other topics such as calls, gear, NWTF, record systems, and others. I do hope you enjoy the book as much as I have enjoyed writing about the outings and hunts that I have experienced.

Hills of Truxton can be purchased online at Amazon Books: www.amazon.com or direct from the author. For more info go to www.hillsoftruxton.com



Mike and Lee Joyner show off copies of *Hills of Truxton*, Mike's first published effort at writing memoirs about hunting, calls and such.

Coming Events

January 13: 2007 Midwest Turkey Call Competition, Wisconsin State Chapter NWTF Convention. Earl Duckett 715-755-2114 or 612-877-3690 Email: ducknest@century-tel.net

February 22-25: NWTF Convention and Sport Show Gaylord Opryland Resort, Nashville, TN, www.nwtf.org/special_events/convention.html

April 27 & 28: Midwest Decoy Collector's Show and CCAA Fancy Call competition, Pheasant Run Resort, St Charles, IL. www.edecoy.com/

In Memorium

Benny Rinke

Call maker Benny Rinke was born March 6, 1925 in Little Rock, Arkansas. Ben was a WWII veteran and received the Purple Heart. Ben started making calls in the early 1990s. Ben died unexpectedly on May 16, 2006. He was 81.

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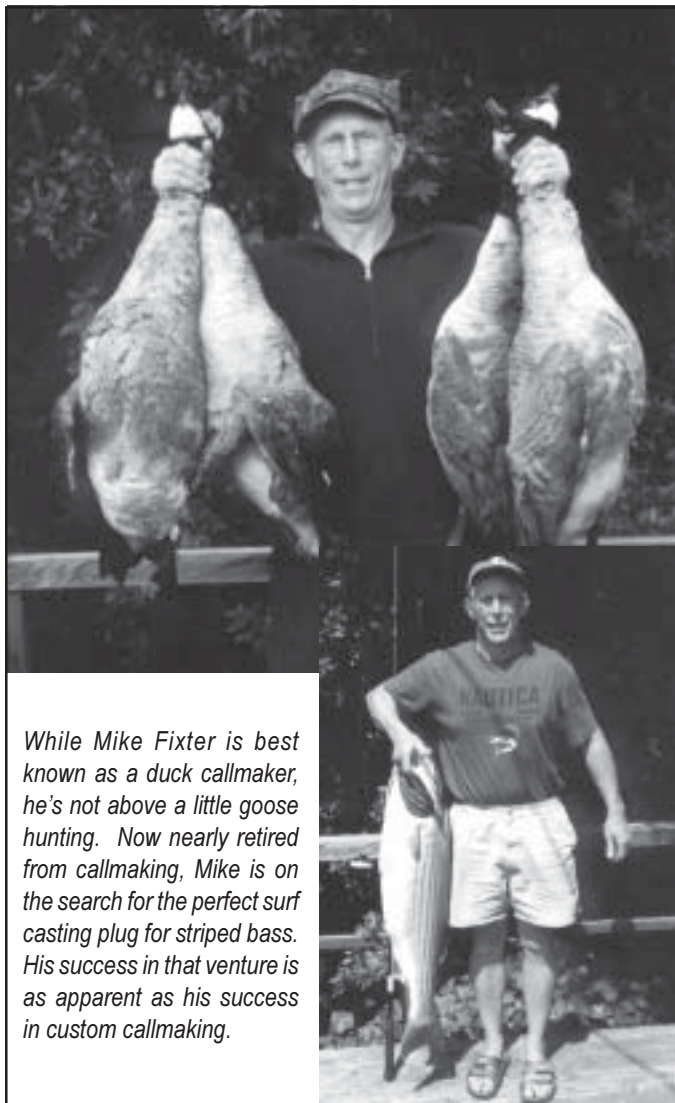
COLLECTABLE CALLMAKER

Mike Fixter noted for laminated duck calls turns to fishing lures

By Steve Ribeau

California is not known as the home of many custom call makers. A few great masters such as E. V. Iverson, Cecil Wellborn and Pop Pickle, are now being joined by a new crop of yet to be recognized masters such as Joe Lares, Audie Murphy and our subject for this article, Mike Fixter. John Michael Fixter was born in Hilo Hawaii in 1946, is married, has two daughters and has lived in Santa Cruz California since 1950. Mike was a career firefighter 1969-74, a fire captain 1974-99, with the Central Santa Cruz County Fire Protection District.

This area is famous for its surfing and fishing. As Mike grew up, the exposure to the outdoors lead to surfing, duck hunting and fishing. Being a consummate water fowler for more than 36 years, Mike, early on, took his duck calling a little more seriously than most. While he started playing around making his own calls, he also used other makers'



While Mike Fixter is best known as a duck callmaker, he's not above a little goose hunting. Now nearly retired from callmaking, Mike is on the search for the perfect surf casting plug for striped bass. His success in that venture is as apparent as his success in custom callmaking.



Three of Mike Fixter's laminated calls. In years past he often entered the laminated divisions of CCAA Fancy Call Contests.

calls as learning tools. Mike feels that Wendell Carlson's instructional tapes and tutoring by Scott Vix, laid the foundation for his success in both calling ducks and competition calling.

While he was experimenting with calls of all makes, he won both the 1993 California State Hunter division and Semi-Pro division, blowing his own calls. In 2004, he and his partner Steve Coley placed first in the Grasslands Regional Team effort, again using his one of his own Arkansas style ebony calls. Mike has also placed third in an open division contest. Some of Mike's favorite call makers include: Sharpy Shaw, Johnny Marsh, Bill Clifford, Larry Hickenson, Sam McCoone, Bog Pettibone, Wendell Carlson, Joe Lares, Tim Grounds and Emery Mitchell.

Mike all along was also experimenting with various makes of field calls that had a great influence in his own custom calls. He received tips and advice from several makers such as Jim Ludwig, Sam McCoone and locally, Emery Mitchell of Iverson calls. His research was endless and he made calls using different features in order to obtain the tone and sound he was seeking. The first calls he made were of the Paul Kenyon style double reed, while the plastic reed Arkansas style was the one most often produced. He also made some flat tone board Reelfoot style bent brass reed calls and a combination bent brass reed

with an Arkansas style cork retainer.

Experimenting and trying new ideas, he was always seeking the just right tone, the perfect sound so to speak. Mike's call production is not a commercial endeavor and he does not use a cold or heated stamp to imprint his calls. Usually he writes his name and creation date in ink on the light colored woods, on darker woods he uses an engraving tool.

Mike was, in my way of thinking, very much an artist, in that he created individual pieces, with no intention of making a bunch of calls that even looked alike. I always got the impression that he was never satisfied with where he was with his creations. Only on one occasion did I ever see a hand full of calls that looked the same and that was at a Ducks Unlimited Convention held in Monterey just south of his home. Mike made 40 commemorative calls for a calling contest with bent brass reeds and they were gone in minutes.

From the photos accompanying this article, you will become aware of the creativity of this call maker. If you had sent him a sketch of what you wanted he would make it for you. Every call he made was a one-off – totally freehanded on his lathe out in his garage, tone boards and reeds, all done strictly by hand.

When it came to finish, it was second to none; he has his own formula for some woods. He likes a French polish and uses a clear coat for his combination wood creations. An advanced woodworker prior to taking up call making, he had more than a casual understanding of the application of tools to wood. His tools were not elaborate, a table saw, wood lathe and basic hand tools are what he used to produce his jigs and calls.

Mike dominated the CCAA fancy call contest in the laminated divisions for several years, that is, until he stopped entering. He is best known for his laminated calls and for good reason, the quality and finish was unmatched. If a collector was to add a Fixter call to his collection, it should be a laminated call. His laminated calls have been made in any of the four reed/tone board styles he makes, however most have been of the Reelfoot style metal reed and the metal reed with a cork stopper. The problem is that he doesn't make many anymore.

You may have noticed while reading this article I have been writing in a past tense. Mike has been following his desire to fish and has not produced many calls at all in the



Above: An example of a Reelfoot style duck call made by Mike Fixter.

Left: Mike dominated the laminated division of the CCAA Fancy Call competition for the several years he entered, until recent years when he's been working on the perfect surf casting plug.

past few years. His love for surf striped bass fishing and his new quest to build the perfect lure has taken him away from call making.

Mike has been using all of his available shop time trying to make the perfect striped bass surfcasting lure. So he has also added to his skill library the ability to paint, the demand far exceeds the ability to supply, the quality and catching ability has been built-in.

The last time I spoke with him he had only two calls left, both were laminated beauties, but I don't know if they are still available. You may contact him at 256 Sheldon Ave. Santa Cruz CA 95060 or by phone at (408) 426-0606

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COLLECTABLE CALLMAKER

Donald and Sarah Clark create turkey calls with an artist's touch

Turkey hunting has been a passion for Donald and Sarah Clark for many years. Donald killed his first turkey when he was 12 years old and Sarah had a joint venture killing her first turkey with Donald and her father-in-law James Clark years later. This method of hunt is one of the distinguishing Clark ways, it is referred to as "Clark-en it." It consists of several Clark family members getting together and surrounding the bird. This is how Clark-It



After 34 years of marriage to each other, Donald and Sarah Clark of Sheridain, Arkansas, are still a team in crafting fine turkey box calls.

Calls got the name. Donald and Sarah's team work has become a love they both share.

Donald started making box calls in a serious way only four years ago. Several years ago he attempted to make one but "chunked" it, but always had the goal in mind of making a call that would call up a gobbler. His first calls were glued together, but the tones were just not good enough. After several more "chunking of the calls" he now makes a solid box call.

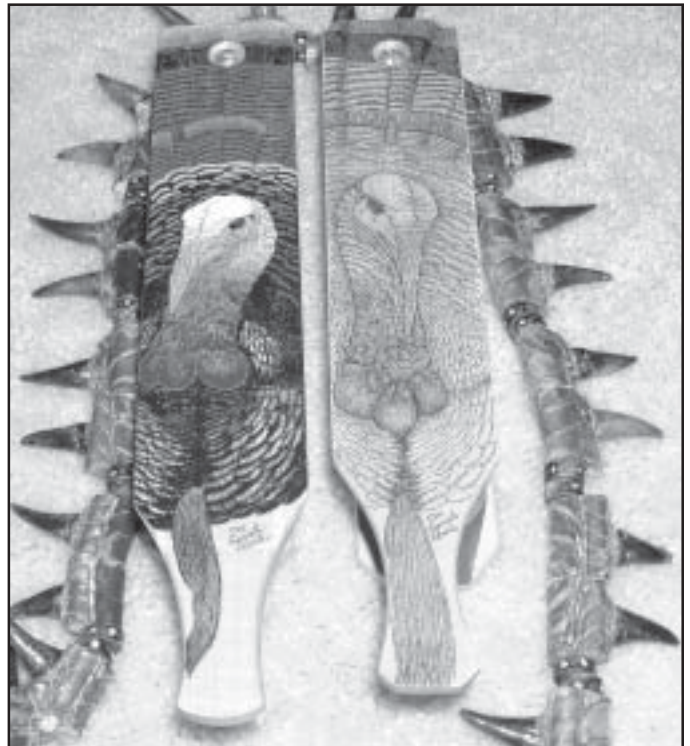
Short box, long box, and one-sided box calls are all part of Donald's new skills. He has also made a few wing-bone calls but has never sold any.

Winning 4th at the 2002 NWTF Convention in the Hunting Division-One-Sided Box Call Category, Donald now strives to beat his good friend, Mike Lapp, in one of several categories at next year's NWTF Convention. At the 2006 NTWF Convention Mike and Donald won 1st & 2nd place in the Decorative-Division- Painted Category and 3rd & 4th place in the Woodburn Category. They could talk for hours if there was not such a long distance be-

tween them.

Donald loves to use different types of wood and is like a kid at Christmas when he receives a box in the mail from one of his buddies (Randy Carswell, Gary Herd or Mike Lapp) with some new or different woods. Some of his favorites are Cedar, Walnut, Persimmon, Chinkapin, Sassafras, Maple, Bois D' Arc, Poplar and Purpleheart. He loves to find the history of a block of wood and has said that "old wood has personality." When he makes that first stroke on each call after completion, he resembles a fine instrument maker with his eyes closed anticipating a sweet beckoning tone that he hopes any gobbler would run to.

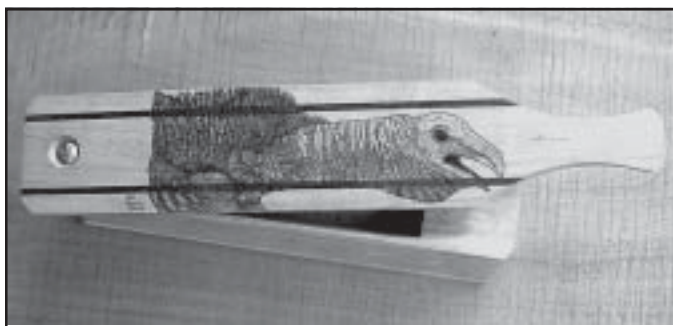
Sarah started adding her talent soon after Donald started making the turkey calls. Anything he's interested in she usually becomes interested in as well. Her addition to this "calling" is the artwork. She has always enjoyed drawing but had never drawn any wildlife. Her love for hunting made it very compelling to attempt the wildlife drawings.



With the same artwork, Sarah Clark decorates two calls, one in color the other with wood burning. She often works from photos or ideas supplied by their customers. Donald says "old wood has personality."

Sarah draws turkeys or a hunting scene on the lid with a pencil first, then either woodburns or paints over it with acrylic paints. They tell a customer to send a picture of what they would like. Sarah and Donald will do their best

to replicate it. No two calls are alike, even if the same picture is used. Sarah's favorite source for pictures and scenes' of turkeys is the "Turkey Call" magazine.



This short box is an example of Donald Clark's solid block call making style and Sarah's artwork. They acknowledge God's help with their combined talents.

Some people have requested other things on calls such as an Arkansas Razorback, a LSU fighting tiger, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission logo or an elk. Sarah loves a challenge! To her, working for hours seems as if it has only been a few minutes of work.

Usually all calls will have a woodburnt feather or tracks

Tips and Techniques

E-Bay - Part I - Buying for Beginners

by James Bennett

In the quest to find new and old calls most of us can't just get in the car and drive to a waterfowl or hunting show, a callmaker's home, or check out all the local antiques stores, and expect to find that one call that we can't do without. If you are able to go online and check out Ebay, you can find 1000's of calls for sale at any moment. Turkey, Goose, Duck, and Predator calls are only a bid away from ownership. For some, it's as easy as buying from a person standing in front of you. For others, it can be a frustrating and not a pleasant experience. I have put together a few simple rules (suggestions) that I follow when buying calls on Ebay. They may work for you or at least save you some aggravation in the long run. You may also add your own rules to fit your personal needs.

1. Know what your are bidding on.

Chances are, if you think you know what it is, you are more likely wrong then right. Unless you live in a bubble, you should always do some checking around. There are a number of books and collectors that you may want to consult. I always get an opinion on an expensive call before I shell out for it. I feel a whole lot better not bidding on a call because I didn't know anything about it than winning a call I later find out I paid way too much for.

2. "Rare, Old, Vintage, Only One Made," etc., Mean

on the side of the call along with Clark-It Custom Calls & Arkansas Diamond that are chiseled on the side. The wood is described in detail on the back of the call. Each call is dated, numbered, and signed, and may also be personalized. Every call also bears the Christian fish symbol because it is important to them to give God the honor and glory. They are both well aware that He is the reason for their success thus far.

They love a satisfied customer and want to hear feed back when their call has been used successfully in bagging a turkey. Their motto is "If you like- tell others, if you don't -tell us."

The Clarks have been married for 34 years and reside in Sheridan, Arkansas. Their daughter Dusty is married to Justin Denney of Sheridan, who have two children, Clark and Claire. All are members of Immanuel Baptist Church and have many family and friends who encourage them with their hobby.

Donald and Sarah Clark are listed in Earl Mickel's third book "Longbeards, Callmakers, and Memories" and Sarah wrote a story for the book. "The Hard Rock Gobbler" was also published in "Real Hunter" magazine a couple of years ago.

nothing!

Even the person listed as the maker could be wrong. Look at it, ask for other pictures, and ask about markings. Sometimes it is easy to identify a call. When it is NOT, don't rely on the information given by the seller to make your final decision. Do some checking and always ask questions.

3. Check Seller's Feedback.

Sometimes I get more involved with the call and not the seller. Always read the negative feedback. It may save you big time in the end. I would not buy from someone with any "sent payment never received item" type feedback listed. Also, don't be so afraid to buy from a new seller. We all started with "0" feedback.

4. Know the Shipping Charges.

Most sellers list the shipping charges. If not, ask before you bid. I don't mind paying a high shipping charge if I know before I bid and I factor it into my bidding price. You should expect to pay \$5.00 minimum on any call. You should also expect the call to be in a box and wrapped to avoid damage. Always get insurance on any call over \$50. It will pay for itself one day. Trust me on that one.

5. Watch and Bid Once.

If you can, put the item on your watch list and bid on the last day or even the last minute if you can. You should

bid the most you want to pay for the call the first time and as close to the end of the auction as possible. I never feel bad about losing a call if I bid the most I was willing to pay for it.

6. Send Payment Promptly.

Send your payment out within the next day or two. If you don't have one, a Paypal account helps a lot when buying online. Most sellers accept it. Also, don't be afraid to send a personal check. I have had too many money orders lost in the mail, and no good way to get my money back without spending more money. The seller may have to wait for the check to clear. You're not buying an organ for transplant - you can wait a few extra days for playing it safe.

7. Always Leave Feedback

This helps both you and them. If the item checks out, leave positive feedback. If you have a problem, email the seller and try to work things out. I have had well over 1000 transactions on Ebay and have never had any buyer / seller

problems. I'm not lucky, I just always use rules 1 through 4. (I can't say I have always been lucky with the post office.)

8. Check with Seller for more calls.

I always ask if the seller has more calls to sell. I have found a few good deals this way. The seller also saves time and money by selling the call to a repeat buyer. If it is a person who goes to sales and antique stores, ask them to keep an eye out for calls; if they find any, you would be interested in buying them. I have had sellers email me months later with a call they found. Never hurts to ask. Mom always said that to me. She was right.

That's it. Buying calls should be fun and feel like Christmas every time you get a package in the mail. Part two will deal with selling your calls. If you have any questions about Ebay, I go by MALLARD222 on Ebay or email me at Jamesbjr@aol.com.

[Editor's note: While the author specifically refers to purchasing calls, the principles above also apply to purchasing wood, tools and other supplies for making calls.]

**Application for Membership
Callmakers & Collectors Association of America**

New Member Renewal Date: _____

Name (Please type or print) _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Phone: (____) _____

Are you a callmaker? ___ Yes ___ No

I am a ___ Custom Callmaker ___ Call Manufacturer

I make: ___ Duck ___ Goose ___ Turkey ___ Predator ___ Other

Are you a collector? ___ Yes ___ No

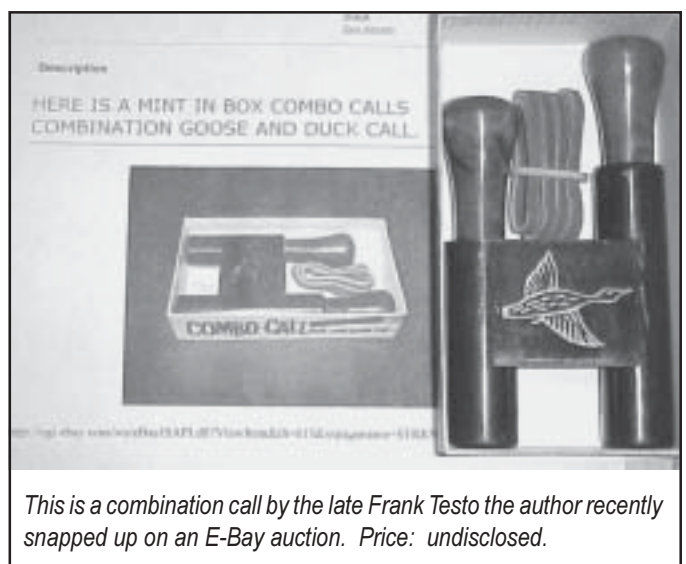
My interests are: ___ Antiques & Classic ___ Contemporary ___ Competition

I collect: ___ Duck & Goose ___ Crow ___ Turkey ___ Predator ___ All Game Calls

Specify type or maker: _____

RECRUITING MEMBER; _____

All new members dues start the following month they join CCAA at the rate of \$2.00 per month thru December of that year. New members joining in December would pay the full membership fee of \$25.00 for the coming new year. Circle month joined and send \$2.00 for the remainder of the year. JAN. FEB. MAR. APR. MAY JUNE JULY AUG. SEPT. OCT. NOV. DEC. Upon receipt of dues, new member will receive a membership list and a copy of the latest news letter. All old members dues expire December 31, of the present year. New year starts January 1, with a two month grace period. If dues are not paid within this time period, your name will be omitted from the CCAA membership files. Reinstatement is welcome at anytime with full \$25.00 membership fee. we appreciate your interest in call collecting. **Send application with membership fee of \$25.00 in US Dollars only to: William R. Bailey - 137 Kingswood Drive - Clarksville, TN 37043 Make checks payable to: Callmakers & Collectors Association.**



Save on Membership Dues

Beginning in January, 2007, you can save yourself a few dollars and save the CCAA a little bookkeeping by renewing your membership for more than a year at a time:

- 1 year (U.S. addresses) \$25.00
- 1 year (outside U.S.) 28.00
- 3 years (all) 70.00
- 5 years (all) 115.00

Remember, all members' dues are now due in January, 2007. By renewing for 3 or 5 years you will help yourself and the CCAA.

Commentary

Organizations, publications and the internet spread Callmaking skills

by Ed Glenn, Editor

Callmaking is like a continent between two oceans. On one ocean sail the outdoorsmen, a great flotilla of hunters: duck, turkey, predator, and big game. On the other ocean are to armadas of woodworkers: loggers, sawyers, cabinet makers, and wood turners.

As outdoorsmen take to the land of callmaking, their calls emphasize the music: practical, functional tools to aid in the pursuit of wild game. On the opposite shore, wood turners used their skills to create artist game calls through wood selection, lamination, decorative turning features and finish. Somewhere in the midlands, the two met and shared and began to make game calls of both function and beauty.

Early on, this meeting in the midlands required travel and the continent was wide. But two things have made the land mass of custom callmakers seem much smaller.

Just 20 years ago, 30 or so folks interested in duck and goose calls – callmakers and collectors – came together to organize the Callmakers and Collectors Association of America. Soon they began publishing a newsletter to share information. Through these two decades, nearly 80 issues of the National Callmakers and Collectors Newsletter have spread the art and skill of game callmakers.

This issue aptly illustrates the point. Duck callmaker Mike Fixter of Santa Cruz, CA is profiled on page 10 and Don and Sarah's turkey calls, made in Sheridan, Arkansas are featured on page 12. Perhaps we could say Chillicothe,

Missouri, Steve Boyles hometown, is somewhere in the midlands. This issue goes to nearly 500 CCAA members from the Puget Sound area of Washington state to Florida and from southern California to Maine.

Other organizations contribute to the spread of game callmaking expertise. Ducks Unlimited, the National Wild Turkey Federation and the recently organized Custom Callmakers and Collectors Guild all play a role as do other periodicals.

Then followed the books. In 1988, Howard Harlin, for 20 years the CCAA newsletter editor, published *Duck Calls, an Enduring American Folk Art*, and _____ McGrath authored the now out-of-print *Duck Calls and Other Game Calls*. Only 11 years ago, James Fleming published *Custom Calls: Duck and Goose Calls from Today's Craftsmen* and in 1994 Harlan added *Turkey Calls, an Enduring American Folk Art*.

At the same time organizations and publications were spreading the state of the art, the Internet came into common use. Callmaker web sites began to spring up like a fall migration of green heads.

Collaboration between me and co-author Greg Keats would not have been possible without nearly daily e-mails between Oregon and Maryland over the six or eight months we worked on *Turning Custom Duck and Game Calls*.

Just as significantly has been my two or more visits to Custom Calls Online. What a wonderful way to keep up with the state of the art of game callmaking!

RALPH



Trading Post

Books for Sale: *Duck Calls – An Enduring American Folk Art*, Harlen and Anderson, with 1992 price guide, \$55.00; *Duck Stamps and Prints – The Complete Federal and State Edition*, 1st Edition, 2nd printing, \$60.00; *Duck Stamps and Prints – The Complete Federal and State Edition, Revised Edition*, \$70.00; *The Great Book of Waterfowl Decoys*, edited by Joe Fengers \$70.00. Call (215) 679-9681.

Goose Calls for Sale: Chris Faulkner: Canada goose flute calls all banded, the band engraved “Faulkner.” Available: Claro walnut, Maccasser Ebony, Bastonge walnut, Blackwood, burl myrtlewood, and English walnut. All highly figured woods. Mint condition. Each \$75.00. All six \$400. Call (215) 679-9681.

Wanted: J.C. Higgins duck calls; pheasant, quail calls. Tony Scott 316-729-5970.

Notice: Someone sent me a Trading Post item, and I appear to have lost it. Please send it again and I’ll try again. Ed - the Editor.

Duck and Goose Calls for Sale: Over 90 calls including the following callmakers: Kelly and Jerry Weatherford, Robert Reeves, Dahrl Wright, E. L. Quinn, Alan Hammond, Gene Parrish, Ben Rinke, Don Dennis, James Keith, J. T. Bucher, Tom Condo, Steve Johnson, Glynn Scobey, Chris Faulkner, Don Johns, Bob Hill, Tim Grounds, Ron Weinke and Sean Mann. Will sell as a collection, individual lots, or individual calls. Most are one-of-a-kind items from highly figured woods. Complete call list and photographs available upon request. Call (215) 679-9681.

**The National
CALLMAKERS AND COLLECTORS
Newsletter**
www.ccaacalls.org
105 Laurel Lane, P.O. Box 428
Boardman, OR 97818



The C.C.A.A. was formed in 1987 as a non-profit organization for callmakers and call collectors. The primary objectives are to further an awareness of call collecting as a hobby, assist members in the location, identification, and trading of collectible calls, and to promote and encourage the perpetuation of the art form through contemporary callmakers.

Officers and Editorial Staff

President James Bennett
Vice President Len Goldman
Treasurer Chris McDonald
Membership Chair William Bailey
Editor/Publisher Ed Glenn
Show Coordinator Jim Dester
Contributors James Bennett, Dean Mundhenke,
Mike Joyner, Steve Ribeau,
Don and Sarah Clark,

Important notice to CCAA members

All CCAA membership dues expire at the end of December. You’ll receive dues reminders but now is the time to take advantage of the multi-year discount - see page 14. Included with this issue is the 2005 CCAA membership patch pictured below.



Trading Post

Duck Calls For Sale:

Dahrl Wright: Myrtlewood barrel with Macassar Ebony toneboard, signed “Dahrl Wright on barrel - \$50.00; Potassio Nut barrel and toneboard, banded, signed “Dahrl Wright” on barrel - \$50.00; Zircote barrel and toneboard, signed “Dahrl Wright” on barrel - \$65.00; Macassar Ebony barrel and toneboard, signed “Dahrl Wright” on barrel - \$65.00; Twelve more Dahrl Wright Duck Calls available, highly figured woods, must see photographs to appreciate these calls.

Glynn Scobey: Matched set of three all wood Arkansas style duck calls. Claro Walnut barrel and toneboard, Bodoc barrel and toneboard and Curly Maple barrel with Bodoc toneboard. All three barrels have two painted Flight Drake Mallards and are signed “Glynn Scobey.”

Robert Reeves: Burl redwood barrel, banded with bodoc toneboard. Stamped “RMR” on collar. Metal reed Reelfoot style. Mint condition. \$85.00

Thirteen more Robert Reeves metal reed duck calls available. Highly figured woods. Need to see photographs to appreciate these calls. Call (215) 679-9681.