

#### PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Note: PIFs are prepared by applicants and evaluated by DHR staff and the State Review Board based on information known at the time of preparation. Recommendations concerning PIFs are subject to change if new information becomes available.

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) \_\_\_\_\_134-6037\_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. General Information

District name(s): <u>Gunning and Hunt Clubs of Princess Anne County (Multiple Property</u> Documentation)

Main Streets and/or Routes: <u>(various)</u> City or Town: <u>Virginia Beach</u>

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: Virginia Beach

#### 2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: N/A

Setting (choose only one of the following): Urban \_\_\_\_\_ Suburban \_\_\_\_\_ Town \_\_\_\_\_ Village \_\_\_\_\_ Hamlet \_\_\_\_\_ Rural \_\_\_ X

#### Briefly describe the district's overall setting, including any notable landscape features:

The Gunning and Hunt Clubs of Princess Anne County, now the City of Virginia Beach, are primarily located in the extreme southeastern part of the city around the Back Bay and False Cape areas. This region of the city lies along the Atlantic Flyway—a primary route for migratory birds in North America. The north-to-south corridor, which stretches 3,000 miles from Greenland to the Caribbean, encompasses natural areas along the eastern seaboard providing food, water, and habitat for seasonal flocks of migratory waterfowl and other birds. Back Bay, which flows south into the Currituck Sound of North Carolina, is part of the Albemarle-Pamlico Sound watershed and historically has been known as one of the richest ecosystems for migratory waterfowl flocks, including geese, swan, and ducks, and other marsh, shore, and land birds. Made up of discrete bays and marshland, Back Bay is a 25,000-acre [39 square miles], fresh, sometimes brackish, waterbody that is separated from the Atlantic Ocean by the sandy barrier strip of False Cape.<sup>1</sup> The primary defining landscape features of the area are the bay, the ocean, freshwater impoundment areas, wetlands, and marshlands. Recent archaeological investigations also found that many of the islands in Back Bay, and the historic clubhouse sites on them, have undergone significant shoreline erosion and inundation.<sup>2</sup> Historically, wild celery, a submerged aquatic plant

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The size of the Back Bay area equals over 60,000 acres when the marshlands are included. The bay's varying brackish character is a result of natural overwash from the ocean. Historically, there was an inlet from the Atlantic Ocean into the Currituck Sound near the Virginia-North Carolina border ("Old Currituck Inlet"). A storm in the 1730s closed that inlet. A new inlet to the south, "New Currituck Inlet," was opened by another storm, but it also was closed by storm forces between 1828 and 1830. All inlets from the ocean were closed in the early nineteenth century, which resulted in the gradual freshening of the Sound water and the rise in freshwater vegetation, such as wild celery. Orrin H. Pilkey, William J. Neal, and Stanley R. Riggs, *The North Carolina Shore and Its Barrier Islands: Restless Ribbons of Sand* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 139; William Neal Conoley, Jr., *Waterfowl Heritage: North Carolina Decoys and Gunning Lore* (Wendell, NC: Webfoot, Inc., 1982), 2-3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Joseph R. Blondino and Curtis McCoy, *Archaeological Assessment of the Southern Portion of the City of Virginia Beach, Virginia*, 2020:73. "Rising waters in the bay constitute the biggest threat to archaeological sites in that portion [Back Bay] of the study area."

favored by diving ducks such as the canvasback, grew in abundance in Back Bay, but began to decline in the 1960s. Restoration efforts to plant celery are helping to bring back this important plant.

The southern part of Virginia Beach retains its historically predominant rural character with numerous active farms, open fields, woodlands, and sparse residential development. Significant portions of the historical lands of the gunning clubs are now under federal and state land management and include the False Cape State Park, the Princess Anne Wildlife Management Area, and the Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Such ownership and management provide a measure of protection against development in the area. Through these state and federal entities, the City of Virginia Beach, non-profit organizations (e.g., the Back Bay Restoration Foundation and Ducks Unlimited), and private landowner efforts, improvements continue to be made to the surrounding wildfowl habitat, to the water quality of Back Bay, and to flood protection measures for property owners.

#### 3. Architectural/Physical Description

Architectural Style(s): <u>Shingle; Colonial Revival; Vernacular</u>

If any individual properties within the district were designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: <u>None known</u>

If any builders or developers are known, please list here: <u>None known</u>

Date(s) of construction (can be approximate): <u>ca.1890-1960</u>

Are there any known threats to this district? <u>Development; Sea-level rise</u>

#### Narrative Description:

In the space below, briefly describe the general characteristics of the entire historic district, such as building patterns, types, features, and the general architectural quality of the proposed district. Include prominent materials and noteworthy building details within the district, as well as typical updates, additions, remodelings, or other alterations that characterize the district.

The properties proposed for consideration under the Gunning and Hunt Clubs of Princess Anne County Multiple Property Documentation are buildings constructed from the late-nineteenth through the mid-twentieth century as a clubhouse or lodge, or converted for such use, for the principal purposes of seasonal hunting and/or fishing. The buildings also may have served as residences for caretakers or overseers during the off season. Current uses may differ, but the building(s) should retain the majority of their historical appearance and character. Such continued use of the buildings may have resulted in typical alterations including replacement of window units, exterior material replacements, and additions. A review of the known extant clubs informs the following narrative description of the appearance and typical features, materials, styles, and other architectural details associated with this property type. Known extant resources also provide the proposed dates of construction and proposed period of significance for this building type. Additional research may refine those dates.

#### Associated property types

Based on field survey and historical research completed to date, two primary forms of gunning and hunt club buildings have been observed: the **domestic-scaled clubhouse** and the more elaborate **lodge-type**. The domestic-scaled building type generally has the appearance of a typical house form, often a bungalow or other vernacular form and, except for the historical documentation that the building was a clubhouse, might be taken for a single-family rural residence or farmhouse with a rectangular, L-, or T-shaped plan. Typically one to two stories in height, these clubs sometimes included a one-story passage extending to one side or from the rear of

the main building that served either as a hyphen between building sections or held guest rooms. The buildings are of frame construction clad with weatherboard or wooden shingle siding and stand on continuous brick foundation walls or are sometimes raised on a pier foundation. Roofs are gable or hipped in form clad originally with wooden shingle or standing-seam metal. Window units have wooden sashes with multi-paned units or cottage style with multi-panes above and a single pane below. Examples of this form include the c.1910 Kirn Brothers' Lodge (134-0206), the 1907 Horn Point Club (134-5796), and the 1938 Pungo Hunt Club (not yet surveyed).

The lodge-type building was larger and often taller than the domestic-scaled example and generally included a large living room (lodge room/club room) and dining room. Architecturally, the lodges exhibited influence of the Shingle style, a national popular style often seen in seaside communities and may have been preferred by the Northern sportsmen who owned many of the clubs. The gun club examples executed in the Shingle style tend to lack the protruding bays and high-style details seen in seaside homes of wealthy patrons, but the namesake exterior sheathing (wooden shingles) became an important part of the building's image. The building footprints, often irregularly shaped, are covered by a broad gable or hipped roof clad originally with wooden shingles, slate shingles, or standing-seam metal. Lodges may also reflect influence of the Craftsman style or Colonial Revival style. The most notable examples of this form are the c.1931 Pocahontas Fowling Club (134-0171), the 1913 Drum Point Gunning Club (134-0219), and the no longer extant Princess Anne Club (built 1894, became part of Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge in 1936, and was dismantled).<sup>3</sup>

Club floorplans vary, but the domestic-scaled buildings have a typical single-family house arrangement with a living room, dining room, kitchen, pantry, and bedrooms on an upper floor or down a hallway. Lodge-type buildings possess an entrance hall or reception space, prominent center and/or guest-dedicated staircase, lodge room, dining room, kitchen, pantry or storeroom, gun/map room, guest closet room (storage), and individual guest rooms. At the Pocahontas Club, the second-floor U-shaped hall is lined with individual guest rooms that retain the original doors and brass room number plaques and are furnished with individual sinks and washstands. Larger, shared bathroom facilities were present at both property types. Interior woodwork (floor, doors, and wall and ceiling paneling) often was of varnished pine boards.

Distinctive architectural elements of the gunning and hunt clubs include prominent chimneys, which correspond to the large fireplace in the living room or club room. Such an amenity was a necessity since hunting occurred during the winter months (November through January/February); the fireplace also provided ambience when weather conditions were unsuitable for hunting. Covered porches on the front of the club or on the connecting passage wing provided areas for removing hunting clothes and equipment, or simply a covered space out of the elements. Roof dormers, usually gabled, provided additional lighting for rooms on a club's upper floor.

Another element observed on some of the club buildings is a prominent wind gauge (weathervane), which provided information on wind direction so that hunters could determine whether conditions (including wind speed and direction) were favorable for hunting. The metal gauges project from the roof ridge with a mechanism that extends to the club room or living room so that wind direction can be read from the interior. Information from the gauge was often supplemented by a barometer, also usually located in the club room. Such gauges are known to exist at the Pocahontas Fowling Club and the Horn Point Club. Some clubs, especially those located near the water or with an upper floor, also had "lookout windows" or decks that faced the water and provided another way to assess the weather.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The Horn Point Club (1907) is an example of Shingle style architecture. The size of the club, however, is more in keeping with the domestic-scaled building type noted above.

#### Anomalies

Clubs that do not fit into these two types include those that were housed in structures that were adaptively reused. One example of such a club is the Ship Cabin Club (not yet surveyed), which was formed in 1925 and occupied the cabin of an unused ship that was barged to its Back Bay (Red Head Bay) site and continues in use. Research may reveal that former clubhouses have been moved or repurposed in a variety of ways. Local oral history indicates that a club (its original site not yet identified) was moved in the 1940s and repurposed as a restaurant in the Creeds area (134-5816).<sup>4</sup> Some clubs also may vary in architectural character or materials. The exterior walls and roof of the former Ball Island/Newport News Club were clad with slate shingles.

#### Secondary Resources

The gunning and hunt club properties often encompass a complex of secondary buildings constructed for specific activities and tasks. Such club resources generally are associated with domestic activities or recreational activities. Domestic outbuildings could include a laundry, woodshed, smokehouse, water tower, or privy. If the caretaker or overseer did not occupy a portion of the clubhouse, a cottage might be built on site. Recreational buildings associated with the gun club properties may include boathouses, impoundment ponds/holding pens/game houses, and workshops/garage (for wagons and, later, automobiles). A dock, pier, or other boat landing structure also was present at most club locations with water access. Larger clubs might also have had guard houses built in the surrounding marshlands to protect the property from poachers. Some properties originally were equipped with gas lighting or kerosene lights, but later Delco systems, housed in a small frame structure separate from the clubhouse, held batteries that produced electricity for the isolated properties.

#### Alterations

As noted, many of these resources have ceased operations as gunning and hunt clubs and are now private, singlefamily residences. As such, alterations to provide for single-family living, such as changes to floor plans and construction of additions, is likely. Given the harsh climatic conditions in which the buildings are located, changes to exterior sheathing, roofing materials, and window units may have been made over time. The effect of such changes to the historical integrity of the club will be determined on a property-by-property basis.

## Discuss the district's general setting and/or streetscapes, including current property uses (and historic uses if different), such as industrial, residential, commercial, religious, etc. For rural historic districts, please include a description of land uses.

The known extant hunt clubs are located along the western shore of Back Bay and are sited on large acreage parcels that generally include marshlands and stands of woodland. Surrounding acreage tends to be agricultural or undeveloped land. In addition to a primary club building, the properties include garages, workshops, boathouses, docks, and other buildings and structures related to the function of the club for recreational hunting, and also fishing. Historical site features that likely are no longer extant included water towers, cisterns, and ice houses. Because many of the club properties were also used as overseers' residences in the off season, or have become residences, landscapes may include grassy lawns planted with mature shade trees, kitchen gardens, shrubbery, and other, later domestic additions. The buildings may be sited near the shoreline or may stand several yards from the water. Some hunting groups built clubhouses in-land and hunted on marshland in another area.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Mrs. Azalea Prince, former owner of Monk's Restaurant. Document found in collection of the Virginia Beach Public Library, Pungo-Blackwater branch.

#### 4. District's History and Significance

In the space below, briefly describe the history of the district, such as when it was established, how it developed over time, and significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property. Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.) Normally, only information contained on this form is forwarded to the State Review Board.

If the district is important for its architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, or other aspects of design, please include a brief explanation of this aspect.

The following narrative relies on information from *Gun Clubs & Decoys of Back Bay & Currituck Sound* (Archie Johnson and Bud Coppedge, 1991) and the 2020 report *Historic Architectural Resource Survey Update, City of Virginia Beach, Virginia - Southern Half* (Laura R. Purvis, Cultural Resource Analysts, Inc., with Debra A. McClane, Architectural Historian).

The Back Bay and its marshlands have long been a source of subsistence for local and regional residents, who have hunted and fished the area and oceanfront for generations. Located along the Atlantic Flyway, the migratory pathway that extends from Greenland to the Caribbean, hunters historically have harvested numerous species of ducks, swans, geese, and shorebirds in this area. Between 1870 and 1920, Virginians and Northern investors established over 100 hunt clubs along a 100-mile-long stretch of Back Bay and Currituck Sound (NC). Clubhouses were built within the 60,000 acres of marshland on the eastern and western shores of Back Bay, on the islands located in the bay, and on Knotts Island. Back Bay's 39-square miles of open water include six connecting sub-bays (North Bay, Shipps Bay, Sand Bay, Redhead Bay, Half Moon Bay, and Powder Tub Bay). The shallow waters, ranging from fresh to brackish, are an average depth of five feet with the mild salinity from overwash along the Atlantic Ocean barrier islands.<sup>5</sup>

### Historical development

The Gunning and Hunt Clubs of Princess Anne County have their roots in the mid-nineteenth-century market hunting practices of the rural local inhabitants who, unencumbered by governmental regulations, were able to supply the growing demands of Northern markets and restaurants with an unlimited number of waterfowl. Following the end of the Civil War, the Currituck Sound (NC) and Back Bay (VA) areas became well-known to wealthy Northern sportsmen who began to build seasonal clubs there for recreational hunting. The clubs provided important employment to Princess Anne County residents who worked both seasonally and full-time at the club properties. Since many club members were not residents and were relatively unacquainted with the waterways, local hunters possessing wildfowl expertise and knowledge of the landscape were hired as guides. Other in-demand occupations supporting the clubs included cooks, caretakers and superintendents, and decoy makers. The clubs provided supplemental income to many residents who farmed, fished, and raised livestock during the summer months and hunted during the fall and winter. Women and children also participated in the expanding club economy and African-Americans were employed as household workers or as helpers with boats and hunting preparations and activities. The traditions of hunting and fishing have a storied history for many families still living in the Back Bay area and supported generations of guides and caretakers. Family names historically associated with the clubs as guides or other essential positions include Dudley, Etheridge, Henley, Mundy, Waterfield, and Williams, among others. Local carpenters and builders also are known to have been involved in the construction of the clubs.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Archie Johnson and Bud Coppedge, *Gun Clubs and Decoys of Back Bay and Currituck Sound* (Virginia Beach, VA: CurBac Press, 1991), 8; United States Fish and Wildlife Service, "Station Management Plan: Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Virginia Beach, Virginia." [Washington, D.C., 1991], 6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Albert N. Henley, Jr. Back Bay, Virginia: The Great Provider (Virginia Beach, VA: Safe Harbor Press, 2015), 7-8.

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The gunning and hunt clubs drew Northern sportsmen from Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, but also were established by groups of hunters from Norfolk and Richmond. The organization of these clubs included a variety of structures including formal corporations with officers and a limited number of members who held stock in the corporation. Partnership clubs usually consisted of a few friends, who collectively hired a caretaker to oversee the club's property. Other clubs were single ownership clubs, private clubs, or sporting lodges. Some clubs were established on lands owned by timber interests with membership made up of the company's executives. By the early 1900s, public lodges, such as the one on Dudley's Island, began to charge day rates and catered to regional residents. Clubs might own thousands of acres of marsh and high ground, or just a few acres, depending on the pool of funds available. To add to the diversity of this building and land use type, not all clubs built clubhouses; in these cases, members stayed in trailers or at camp sites. Additionally, not all club sites provided direct access to prime hunting grounds. Some clubs located on the western shore of the bay might have a clubhouse or camp at one site and another location within the bay to hunt.

Because of its remote location, travel to the Back Bay area required numerous steps in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Initially, Northern hunters travelled to Norfolk by train, then made connections to trains or wagons to the Pungo Ferry Dock on North Landing River in the vicinity of today's Pungo Ferry Bridge. The hand-operated ferry connected lower Princess Anne County to Norfolk and Currituck Courthouse to the south. During the nineteenth and early-twentieth century, sportsmen traveled from the ferry landing to the club sites by wagon. By the mid-1950s, some clubs, such as the Horn Point Club, had a station wagon or other vehicles that would meet the sportsmen at the Norfolk train station and drive them to the club.<sup>7</sup>

In the late 1890s, the Norfolk and Southern Railroad constructed a 22-mile spurline from Euclid Station in Kempsville to a terminal at Munden Point on the North Landing River waterfront. The line, known as the Currituck Division or "Sportsmen's' Special," ran past Princess Anne Courthouse, Creeds, and Back Bay on its route south to the Munden Point landing. Local market hunters and farmers utilized the train to ship out locally coopered barrels packed with ducks, fish, livestock, and produce.<sup>8</sup> In addition, Norfolk shipping companies, such as the Bennett Lines, Jones Lines, North River Lines, and the Rogers Company, ran steamer boats three times a week between Munden Point and Currituck and other North Carolina landings. The steamers transported both passengers and goods between these points. In 1950, Virginia Beach's first mayor and former railroad executive Bernard P. Holland recalled that the steamers traveled "through the Coinjock Canal…to Hertford, Elizabeth City, Edenton, across the Sound to Columbia and up the Scuppernong River to Creswell, up the Roanoke River beyond Hamilton, and also up the Chowan River."<sup>9</sup>

#### Notable visitors

Back Bay's reputation as a fertile hunting ground drew visits from numerous U.S. generals and admirals; U.S. presidents Benjamin Harrison, William Howard Taft, and Grover Cleveland; Virginia governors, senators, and congressmen; and national sports figures such as baseball legend Ty Cobb. The Norfolk newspaper often reported on visits to the clubs by such famous persons, but also noted visits to the clubs by less famous, but notable, persons of regional social and/or political interest. The Horn Point Club (134-5796) was co-owned by George Eastman, a partner in the Kodak-Eastman photography corporation, and George D. Bonbright, a New York City stockbroker and banker. Alexander Hunter, frequent Back Bay hunter and member of the Virginia General Assembly from Alexandria, was well known for his sports and recreation writing, including *The Huntsman in the South*, which included his account of an excursion with President Harrison to Back Bay's Ragged

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Henley, 14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Laura R. Purvis and Debra A. McClane, *Historic Architectural Resource Survey Update, City of Virginia Beach, Virginia – Southern Half.* Prepared for the City of Virginia Beach, Department of Planning and Community Development, Historic Preservation Commission, 2020:33. Barrel factories were located in Pungo and Back Bay.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Meg Malvasi, *Historic and Architectural Resources of Currituck County, 1790 – 1958*, 2010, Section E, page 54; Bernard P. Holland, Presentation to Town Council of Virginia Beach, Special Meeting, November 9, 1950, 16. Virginia Beach Town Council Minutes, 1950. On file, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Virginia Beach. Virginia.

Islands.<sup>10</sup> The register for the Drum Point Club shows visits from judges, Naval officers, bankers, politicians, and noted sportswoman Marion duPont, whose father, William, appears to have been a stockholder in the club. Ms. duPont's visit is notable since many clubs had male-only memberships.<sup>11</sup>

Over the years, some clubs reorganized and renamed their groups as membership changed; clubs also acquired land from other clubs as they disbanded. Others defaulted on payments for the land that was then sold at auction, which was the case in 1937 for the White Marsh Fowling Club, Inc.<sup>12</sup> Many of Princess Anne's clubhouses became victims of wind, water, and fire, others became part of the newly established government parks or were repurposed. As early as 1937, some clubs were selling to federal agencies, which established protected wildlife refuge areas. The first of these was the Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge (1938), which was followed by the Princess Anne Waterfowl Management Area (1966), and False Cape State Park (1968).<sup>13</sup> The 1960s appears to be the period when most of the clubs closed or were sold for private residences as later generations of families and owners no longer hunted or sought other recreational pursuits.

#### Conservation

The story of Princess Anne County's gunning and hunt clubs provides a study of the intersection between local residents and their market hunting activities and the recreational hunting of sportsmen. Early-twentieth-century observations of diminished quantities of wildfowl, and the lack of regulation on market hunters, led to creation of state and federal laws, including the Lacey Act of 1900, which prohibited "transportation by interstate commerce of game killed in violation of local laws, and for other purposes," effectively ending market hunting.<sup>14</sup> It is the United States' oldest wildlife protection statute.

As hunt club registers and other historical documents indicate, the sportsmen also took now-staggering numbers of ducks, geese, and swans from Back Bay during their seasonal hunts. The register from the Pocahontas Fowling Club documents the decline in the number of waterfowl bagged during the early decades of the twentieth century. During the 1904-1905 hunting season (which ran from September 1904 to March 1905), the average daily take was 16 ducks; by 1948-1949 (when the season ran from November 1948 to January 1949), the take sharply declined to a daily average of 2.5 ducks.<sup>15</sup> Growing concerns over the reduction in the numbers and species of fowl in the area gave rise to national conservation efforts and organizations, including Ducks Unlimited, which was organized in 1937 by Joseph P. Knapp, owner of Mackey's Island and a longtime Back Bay/Currituck Sound hunter.<sup>16</sup> An unintended, but ultimately beneficial, consequence of the large landholding Back Bay clubs was "saving these fragile areas from commercial exploitation until they could be acquired by public and private conservation organizations."<sup>17</sup> The Back Bay area remains fragile and efforts continue to battle loss of habitat to invasive species, sea-level rise, and damaging wind/storm events.

<sup>16</sup> Wayne Jarman, "The Dynamic Joseph Knapp: From Wall Street to Wetlands," *The Old Rig*, Fall 2012:1-4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Purvis and McClane, 31, 32; Alexander Hunter, *The Huntsman in the South* (New York: Neale Pub. Co., 1908); Curtis J. Badger and Rick Kellam, *The Barrier Islands: A Photographic History of Life on Hog, Cobb, Smith, Cedar, Parramore, Metompkin, & Assateague* (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1989).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> In 1922, Edward Collins Knight, Jr., an industrialist and railroad executive, purchased the Lighthouse Club of Currituck Sound in NC after his wife, French-born hunting enthusiast Marie Louise Josephine LaBel, was denied visitation to the all-male club. Knight soon replaced the 1870s structure with an opulent (and exclusive) clubhouse that still stands. Johnson and Coppedge 95-96. The register for the Drum Point Hunt Club is in the archives of the Virginia Beach Public Library.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> "Auctions," *The Virginian-Pilot* (published as *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*), June 8, 1937:14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Purvis and McClane, 45. "U.S. to Purchase Back Bay Area for Game Refuge," *The Virginian-Pilot* (published as *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*), March 7, 1937:15. This article states that the Princess Anne Gunning Club's 4,600-acre property was the initial unit for the refuge.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> United States. Lacey Act (Game). 31 Stat. 187, Ch. 553. Approved May 25, 1900 (and later amended), 16 U.S.C. §§ 3371-3378. Accessed at <u>www.uslaw.link</u> on January 30, 2023 at <u>https://govtrackus.s3.amazonaws.com/legislink/pdf/stat/31/STATUTE-31-Pg187.pdf</u>. "Local Sportsmen Seek Relief for Hunting Problem," *The Virginian-Pilot* (published as *Virginian-Pilot and The Norfolk Landmark*), September 9, 1926:11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Frank Blackford, "Season Opens Tomorrow: Duck Outlaws Rob Sportsmen," Norfolk Virginian-Pilot, November 26, 1950:1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Purvis and McClane, 29; Johnson and Coppedge, 8.

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#### Potential NRHP Significance

The Gunning and Hunt Clubs of Princess Anne County are recommended eligible at a local level under a Multiple Property Document (MPD) with significance under NRHP Criteria A and C. Under Criterion A, the clubs are significant in the area of Commerce for their important and direct association with the economic development of southern Princess Anne County, and specifically the Back Bay area, from the late nineteenth through the mid-twentieth century. As clubs were established, locals found employment as caretakers, guides, and domestic workers, which provided economic stability for rural individuals and families. The rise of the clubs also spurred the extension of the trainline to the southern part of the county, providing both transportation for hunters and club guests and connections to larger markets for the area's farmers and hunters. Under Criterion A, the clubs also possess significance in the areas of Entertainment/Recreation and Social History as distinctive organizations that are associated with the traditions of recreational hunting and fishing and the network of social groups who had the wealth and leisure to participate in such pursuits. Under Criterion C, the clubs are significant in the area of Architecture as resources that reflect a specific architectural form that shows influence of the Shingle, Craftsman, and Colonial Revival styles, as well as traditional vernacular forms. Two subtypes of associated properties are proposed: the domestic-scaled type and the larger, lodge-type. The clubs were often part of a larger complex, which may include domestic and recreational secondary resources. In some instances, a club may qualify for listing under the proposed MPD under Criterion B, for its association with a person important to history in a specific area of significance. The association with the property would need to be demonstrated in an important role, likely as an owner or member of the club, rather than simply as a guest of the club.

Comparable or similar properties have been documented in the Currituck Sound area of North Carolina (e.g., Flyway Club and The Whalehead Club) and on Assateague Island in Virginia and Maryland. Those properties will share similarities of historic context and physical form with the Princess Anne County clubs. Documentation of the Princess Anne County properties will enhance existing information and will provide additional documentation about the economic impact and continuing influence of these important recreational and social organizations. The parallel activity of decoy hunting, which is nearly inseparable from the gunning club history, will be addressed in the proposed historic context. Such carving often took place at the carver's residence or at a small workshop; for purposes of the MPD, this activity will be most important if it historically occurred on the club property.

Present research has identified approximately 18 extant, or presumed extant, Princess Anne County/Virginia Beach gun clubs. Of that number, 7 have been previously recorded in the VCRIS architectural database.<sup>18</sup> Additional field survey is required to determine the condition of the other club buildings, and additional research may determine that still other club buildings remain extant.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> The 2020 Archaeological Assessment of the Southern Portion of the City of Virginia Beach, Virginia identified the sites of three hunt clubs on Back Bay islands: Big Cedar Island Hunt Club (1880-1930) (44VB0032); the Newport News Hunt Club (1905-c.1935) (44VB0424); and Dudley's Island Hunt Club (pre-1910) (44VB0425). The Newport News and Dudley's Island club sites were recommended for further survey, as was site 44VB0428 at the Horn Point Club, identified through historic map projection and/or analysis of aerial imagery. The report noted, "The main building [at Horn Point] and several outbuildings remain extant and in good condition. At one time, the property boasted a water tower, smokehouse, power [battery] house, butler headquarters, school house, laundry house, barn, decoy shed, workshop, and privy."

VDHR No.	NAME/ADDRESS	DATE
134-0219	Drum Point Gunning Club, 1401 Drum Point Road	1913
134-0171	Pocahontas Hunt Club, 6216 Pocahontas Club Road	c. 1931 (replaced earlier clubhouse destroyed by fire)
134-0206	Kirn Brothers' Hunting Lodge, 1345 Mill Landing Road	1910
134-0233	Ma and Pa Lovitts' Lodge, 3910 Muddy Creek Road	<b>c.</b> 1930
134-5788	Blackwater Hunt Club, 6152 Blackwater Road	1952
134-5796	Horn Point Hunt Club, 1089 Horn Point Road	1907
134-5816	Monk's Place, 649 Princess Anne Road	Moved 1940s

#### A note on source information:

The primary source for information on Princess Anne County's gunning and hunt clubs is Gun Clubs & Decoys of Back Bay & Currituck Sound (Archie Johnson and Bud Coppedge, 1991) and Gunning' Birds (Kroghie Andresen, 2008). Albert N. Henley, Jr.'s Back Bay Virginia: The Great Provider (2015) focuses primarily on the Horn Point Club, at which the Henley family served as caretakers for many years. Anecdotal information has been gleaned from period articles in newspapers and periodicals. Documentation of similar resources, including NRHP nominations and historic contexts, in Virginia, North Carolina, and other distinct hunting areas also is under review. The National Park Service's 2004 Historic Context Study of Waterfowl Hunting Camps and Related Properties within Assateague Island National Seashore, Maryland and Virginia (Eshelman and Russell) provides a relevant regional context regarding waterfowl hunting, establishment and architecture of the clubs and lodges, and the social and economic aspects of the clubs.

Other potential sources of study include State Corporation Commission documents (for clubs organized as corporations) and oral history interviews with local residents knowledgeable about the history of the clubs. Thus far, the register from the Drum Point Gunning Club (1913-1956) has been reviewed; other registers are believed to be held privately and may be available for review. These registers provide names of members and guests, dates of visits, hunt results by species, weather conditions, and miscellaneous notes on club activities and ownership. The Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum collection holds the hunt diary of Peter Little (1951-1962), who was a member of the Ships Cabin Hunt Club and owner of the Ram Island Club, which provides insights into hunt conditions, techniques, and results, and species encountered. Other maritime institutions and museums that may be consulted during preparation of the MPD include the Eastern Shore of Virginia Barrier Island Center, the Currituck Maritime Museum (NC), the Outer Banks History Center of the State Archives of North Carolina (NC), the Hagley Museum & Library (DE), the Havre de Grace Maritime Museum (MD), and the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (MD).

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Note: PIFs are prepared by applicants and evaluated by DHR staff and the State Review Board based on information known at the time of preparation. Recommendations concerning PIFs are subject to change if new information becomes available.

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Recommendations concerning PIFs are subject to change if new information becomes available.

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Department of Historic Resources

4/4/2023

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Periodicals

Forest and Stream Virginian-Pilot, The The Wildfowler. Newsletter of The Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum and The Back Bay Wildfowl Guild.

Personal Communication

Larry Davenport, Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum Albert N. Henley, Jr., Virginia Beach Resident Lynn Hightower, Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum Julia Hillegass, City of Virginia Beach, Department of Agriculture Wayne Jarman, Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum Archie Johnson, Author

**5. Property Ownership** (Check as many categories as apply):

Private: X Public/Local Public/State Public/Federal

6. Applicant/Sponsor (Individual and/or organization sponsoring preparation of the PIF, with contact information. For more than one sponsor, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

name/title: Mark A. Reed/Historic Preservation Planner	,
organization: <u>City of Virginia Beach</u>	
street & number: 2875 Sabre Street, Suite 500	
city or town: <u>Virginia Beach</u> state: <u>VA</u>	zip code: <u>23452-7385</u>
e-mail: <u>MReed@vbgov.com</u>	telephone: <u>757/385-8573</u>
Applicant's Signature:	
Date:	

•• Signature required for processing all applications. ••

Preliminary Information Form 12 Rev. July 2020

In the event of organization sponsorship, you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

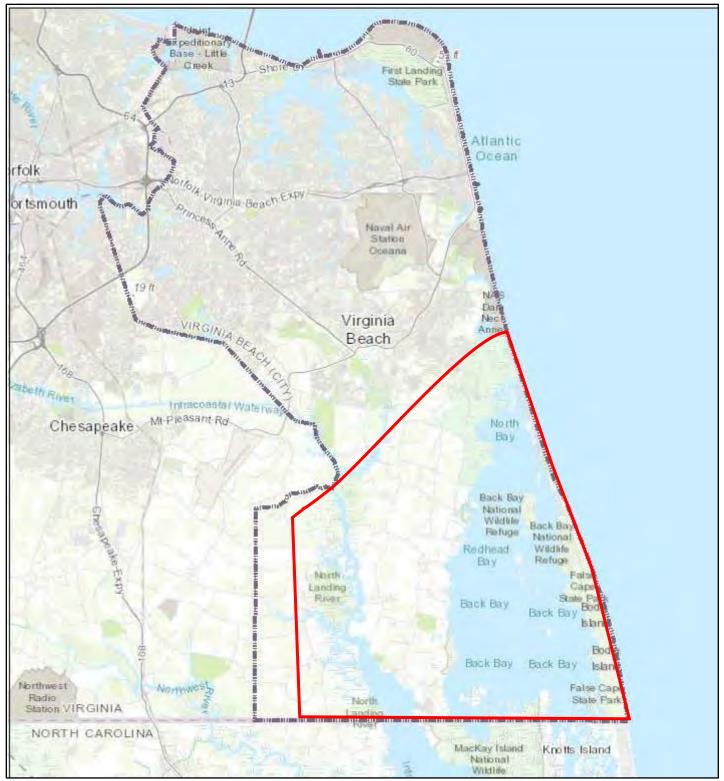
Contact person: <u>Mark A. Reed</u> Daytime Telephone: <u>757/385-8573</u>

organization:Debra A. McClane, Architectural Historian								
street & number:4711 Devonshire Road								
city or town: <u>Richmond</u>	state:VA	zip code:	23225					
e-mail: <u>dmcclane1@verizon.net</u>		1						
Date:	I							

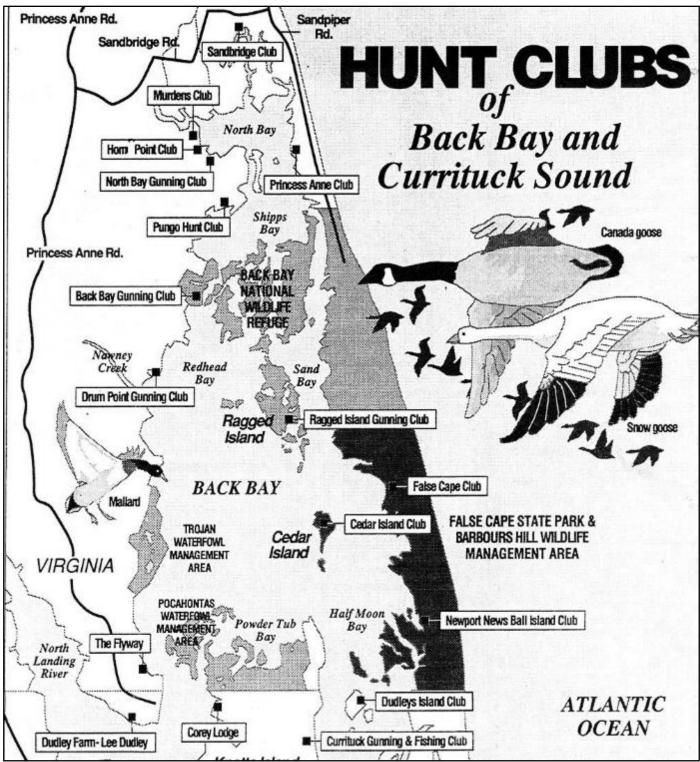
#### 7. Notification

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for DHR to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator, City Manager, and/or Town Manager.

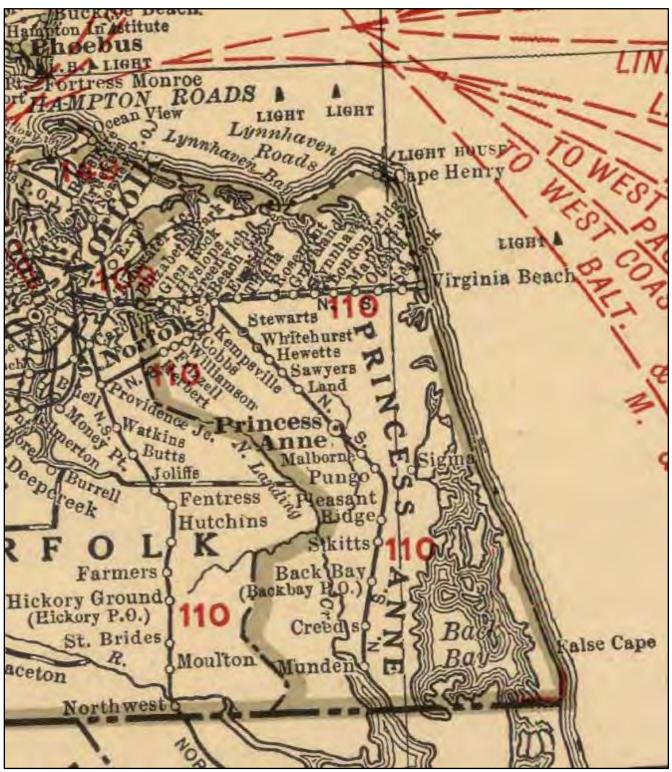
name/title:Patrick A. Duhaney, City Manager					
locality:City of Virginia Beach					
street & number:2401 Courthouse Drive					
city or town: <u>Virginia Beach</u> state: <u>VA</u> zip code: <u>23456</u>					
telephone:757/385-4242					



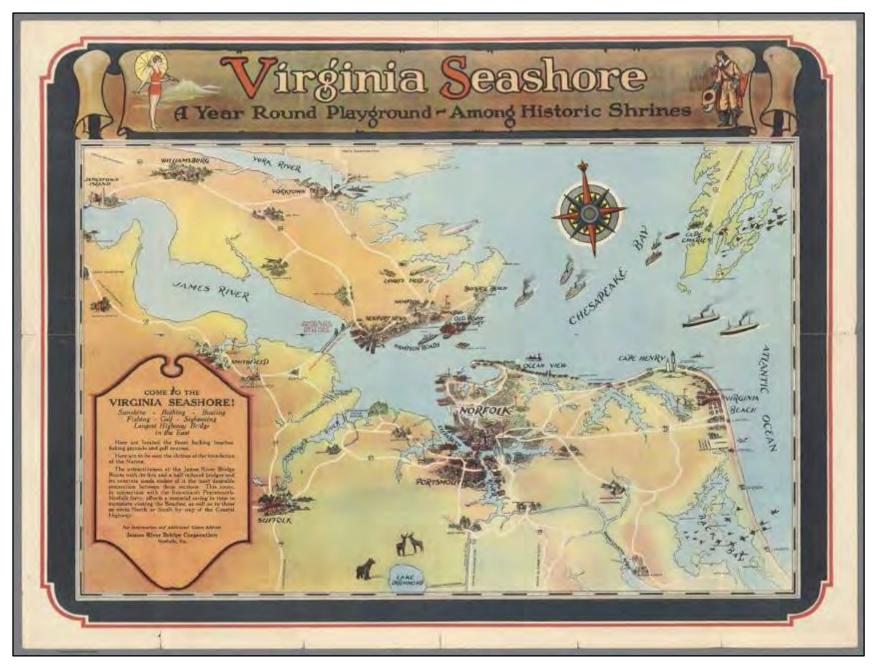
Map of the City of Virginia Beach, VA, indicating general area around Back Bay where gunning and hunt clubs proliferated during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century. Source: Virginia Beach GIS.



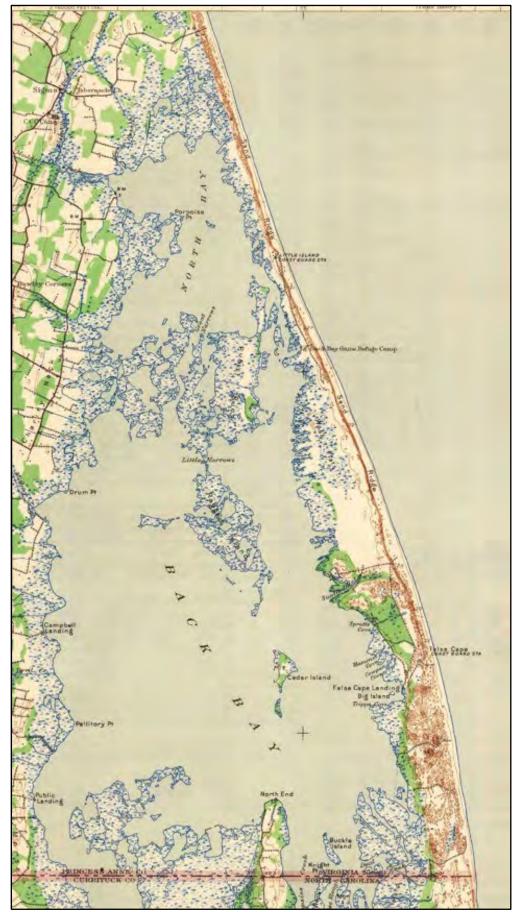
Locations of selected hunt clubs in Back Bay. Source: Johnson and Coppedge 1991. From Purvis and McClane 2020.



Map showing the Munden Point Railroad spur known as the Currituck Division or Sportsmen's Special. Note the stops at Pungo and Back Bay with a post office, which ultimately terminates at the Munden Point docks. Source: Rand McNally and Company 1924. From Purvis and McClane, 2020.



American Automobile Association c. 1930 map of Hampton Roads with Princess Anne County and major roadways. Source: David Ramsey Map Collection 2020. From Purvis and McClane 2020.



Detail of 1943 map showing general Back Bay area of southern Princess Anne County. Source: USGS, Back Bay, VA Topographic Quadrangle.



Historical Illustration of Gunning Clubs of Back Bay (VA) and Currituck Sound (NC) by Rick Romano. Source: Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum.



Pocahontas Fowling Club (134-0171), 2022. This building replaced the original club, which burned on August 20, 1931.



Pocahontas Fowling Club (134-0171), 2022. Lodge room looking south. Note large fireplace and ceiling light fixture with inset wind gauge.



Drum Point Gunning Club (134-0219), c. 1915. Source: Johnson & Coppedge



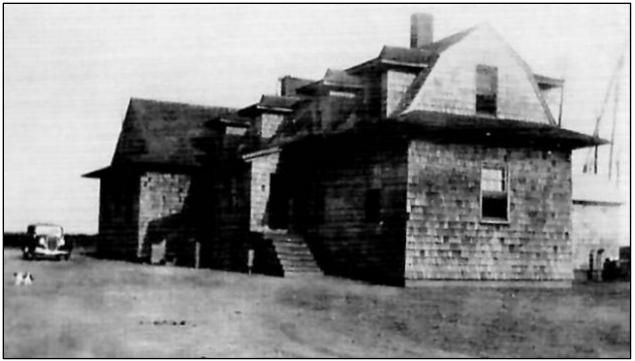
Drum Point Gunning Club (134-0219), 2018.



Kirn Brother's Hunting Lodge (134-0206), 1962. Source: Johnson & Coppedge.



Kirn Brother's Hunting lodge (134-0206), 2018.



Horn Point Hunt Club (134-5796), early 1900s. Source: Henley 2015.



Horn Point Hunt Club (134-5796), 2018. Note water level due to wind-driven tide.



John Williams' Cedar Island Hunt Club (44VB0032), ca. 1890. Williams sold this property to George Gould, son of financier and industrialist Jay Gould in 1914. Source: Henley 2015.



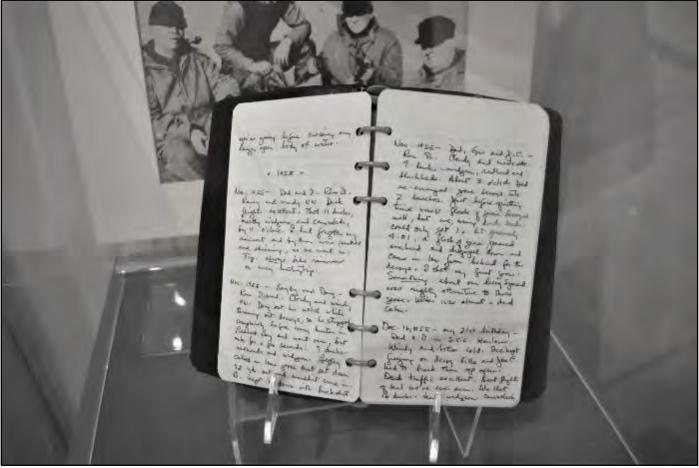
After selling his island property, Williams moved to Munden Point and built a similar house that he also operated as a hunting club. Source: Sally Northcott-Mayes, current owner.



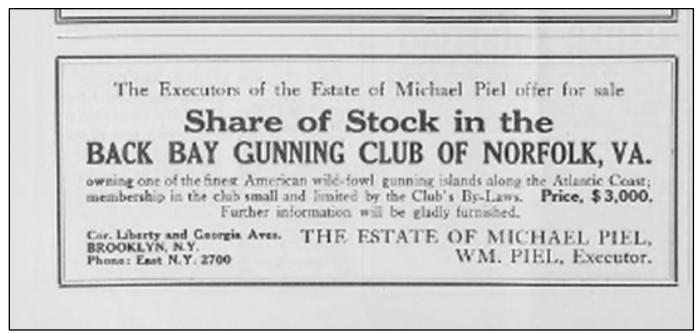
Typical hunter's bedroom. Currituck Shooting Club (NC). Source: Atlamtic Wildfowl Heritage Museum (AWHM).



Mrs. Vivian Henley, caretaker, and son Albert, Jr., in the Horn Point Club Room (ca. 1956). Source: AWHM.



Pages from Peter Little's hunt diary. Source: AWHM.



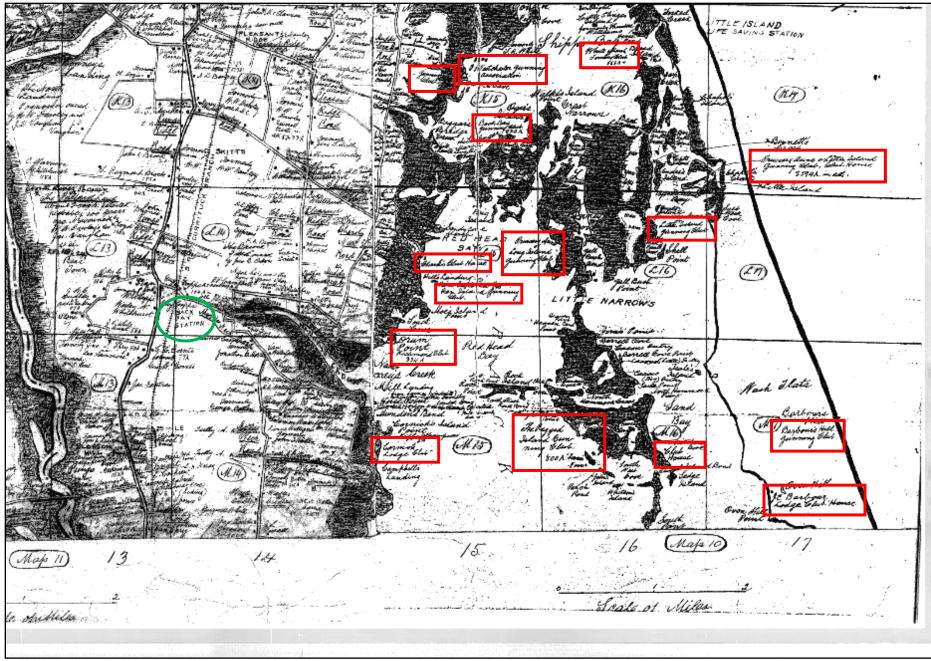
Advertisement from 1916 issue of Forest and Stream. Michael Piel was a German immigrant who lived in New York. He and his two brothers founded the Piels Brewery (1883-1973). Piel is an example of the wealthy Northerners who came to Back Bay/Currituck Sound to hunt waterfowl. The price of \$3,000 for a share of stock in the club is equivalent to about \$80,000 in 2023. Source: Forest and Stream; Larry Davenport, personal communication..



Back Bay train station with barrels of ducks ready to be shipped, ca. 1900. Source: Walsh 1971.



Train station at Munden Point where the "Sportsmen's Special" delivered hunters and fishermen to southern Princess Anne County, 1915. Source: Virginia Wesleyan College Local History Collection.



Detail of 1930 Princess Anne County map annotated with owners names and property information. Note location of Back Bay Train Station (green circle) and various gunning and hunt club and lodge locations along the western shore and on the islands of Back Bay and on False Cape. Atlantic Ocean to the right. Source: Sams Map, City of Virginia Beach.

# **Property for Sale**

We have choice selections and good investments in lots, cottages and business property at Virginia Beach; 293 acres 6 miles south of Virginia Beach, about half-mile of ocean front, known as Atwood Gunning Club; has the reputation for good shooting of wild ducks; adjoining Sand Bridge Club.

We have a large selection and good investments in large and small acreage on Lynnhaven Rivers, Broad and Linkhorn Bays. Now is the opportune time to make your selection in this beautiful section before prices are advanced.

Good investment at Ocean Park. Hotel site, bath house, restaurant, furnished cottage; also 16 boats, bath suits, etc. This property has the best exposure and excellent bathing and fishing. Paid the owner over \$6,000 last year.

We have a large list of farms suitable for dairy purposes, trucking and general farming; 110 acres on Western Branch, good home, \$13,500; 286 acres near Princess Anne Courthouse, 225 clear, old home; 3 barns, 3 tenements, in high state of cultivation. Price, \$15,000; 24 acres on hard surface road near Butts Station; 5-room bungalew. Price, \$6,000.00; 22 acres near London Bridge Station, 8-room house, good out-buildings, variety of fruit, pecan trees, lot of chickens, ducks, geese, horse, cows, pigs and farming implements. All for \$15,000.00.

Virginiz Beach Blvd., large and small acreage and acre lots for sale. Good investment in 260 acres opposite Resement, fronting Virginia Beach Boulevard and Lynnhaven River. This property can be bought at the right price.

#### GAME PROPERTY

Excellent sites and club sites on Back Bay and Currituck Sound; 650 acres on Northwest River and Tull Bay. It has been estimated that this tract contains nearly 1,400 acres. This property has an excellent lot of timber and wonderful marshes and ponds for shooting wild game and snipe in season-\$6,000.00.



1925 advertisement for game property on Back Bay. Price of \$6,000 is equivalent to about \$100,000 in 2023. Source: The Virginia-Pilot.

J. E. BARBOUR 5 COLT STREET PATERSON, NEW JERSET

November 20, 1934

Mr. John Williams Munden Princess Anne County Virginia

Dear Friend Williams:

It has been a long time since I have either seen or heard from you and your letter of the 14th instant was waiting for me when I got home here from Barbour's Hill. I was down there for ten days and never had a shot at a duck or goose, so that I was very much disappointed. As you say, we have had no good shooting there for the last five years as there has been no good feed growing in the Bay.

I have no idea, nor can I find out, why the grass doesn't grow the way it used to - if you could find out I wish you would write me.

Ever since I bought Cedar Island we have had very little shooting on it and there used to be plenty of canvasback shooting there previously. The way business conditions are, if anyone would come along and want to buy Cedar Island I would be willing to let it go cheap.

I congratulate you on reaching seventy-seven years of age and hope you will have many more happy years.

With kindest regards to you all, I am

'Yours very truly,

JEB:FG

Letter from John E. Barbour, owner of the Barbour Hill Club and others, to John Williams, who sold his Cedar Island Club to George Gould, who in turn sold it to Barbour. Courtesy: Wayne Jarman.

SHOO	TING DATI DRUM		THE SEAS					
BACK BAY, PRINCESS ANNE COUNTY								
Dipmont to	(1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1) (1)		RGINIA					
	6. GRUNDY, Presiden	t	J. T.		, Sec'y and Treas.			
NOVE	MBER, 1914.	DECE	DECEMBER, 1914. JANUARY, 1915.					
Monday and Tuesday 2-3	DUPONT, WM., DUPONT, WM., DUPONT, WM., DUPONT, WM., IRVING, E. DuP., JONES, C. APC., CANNON, J. E.,	Thursday and Friday 3-4	MALLORY, D. F., BARTLETT, E. L., ANDERSON, J. T., BRYAN, T. P., MORGAN, S. T., BARRIS, E. D., RRYAN, ST. GEO.,	Monday and Tuesday 4-5	YOUNG, J. H., BARTLETT, E. L., MALLORY, D. F., JOHNSON, R. H., HAGNER, F. R., YUHLE, T. B., WHITEOCE, C. E.,			
Thursday and Friday 5-6	YUILLE, T. B., WHITLOCK, C. E., JONES, A. C., POLLARD, J. J., GRUNDY, B. H., BERRY, O. H., Estate of HOTCHKISS, E. D., Jr.	Monday and Tuesday 7-8	DEPONT, WM., DUPONT, WM., DUPONT, WM., DUPONT, WM., IRVING, E. DuP., JONES, C. AP-C., HOTCHRISS, E. D. Ir.,	Thursday and Friday 7-8	ANDERSON, J. T., HARRIS, E. D., BRYAN, ST. GEO., PATTERSON, J. T., THIOMAS, J. R., BERRY, O. H., Eslate of GRUNDY, R. H.,			
Monday and Tuesday 9-10	KNIGHT, W. O., VANCE, R. CONROY THOMAS, J. R., PIZZINI, W. B., IRYAN, R. C., SCOTT, F. W., HAGNER, F. R.,	Thursday and Friday 10-11	PIZZINI, W. R., JONES, A. G., POLLARD, J. J., YUILLE, T. B., WOOD, W. P., WHITLOCK, C. E., BERRY, O. H., Estate of	Monday and Tuesday 11-12	JOHNSTON, W. R., BRYAN, T. P., ANDERSON, H. W., MODEGAN, S. T., ANDERSON, A. Jr., SCOTT, F. W., VANCE, E. CONROY			
Thursday and Friday 12-13	MORGAN, S. T., HARRIS, E. D., ANDERSON, A., Jr. BRYAN, ST. GEO., PATTERSON, J. T., WOOD, W. P., JOHNSON, R. H.,	Monday and Tuesday 14-15	KNIGHT, W. O., SCOTT, F. W., VANCE, R. CONROY CANNON, J. E., THOMAS, J. R., GRUNDY, R. H., BRYAN, R. C.,	Thursday and Friday 14-15	YUILLE, T. B., HOTCHEISS, E. D. Jr., CANNON, J. E., ENIGHT, W. O., WOOD, W. P., POLLARD, J. J., PIZZINI, W. B.,			
Monday and Tuesday 16-17	YOUNG, J. H., ANDERSON, J. T., JOHNSTON, W. R., MALLORY, D. F., HARTLETT, E. L., BRYAN, T. P., ANDERSON, H. W.,	Thursday and Friday 17-18	YOUNG, J. H., BBYAN, T. P., ANDERSON, H. W., HAGNER, F. R., MALLORY, D. F., BARTLEYT, E. L., JOHNSON, R. H.,	Monday and Tuesday 18-19	DUPONT, WM., DUPONT, WM., DUPONT, WM., DUPONT, WM., JONES, C. AP-C., IRVING, E. DaP, JONES, A. G.,			
Thursday and Friday 19-20	DUPONT, WM., DUPONT, WM., DUPONT, WM., DUPONT, WM., IRVING, E. DuP., GRUNDY, B. H., JONES, C. AP-C.,	Monday and Tuesday 21-22	PATTERSON, J. T., ANDERSON, A. Jr., BRYAN, ST. GEO., HARRIS, E. D., MORGAN, S. T., JOHNSTON, W. R., ANDERSON, J. T.,	Thursday and Friday 21-22	GRUNDY, B. H., BEERY, O. H., Estate o WHITLOCK, C. E., YOUNG, J. H., BARTLETT, E. L., MALLORY, D. F., ANDERSON, A. Jr.,			
Monday and Tuesday 23-24	VANCE, R. CONBOY SCOTT, F. W., THOMAS, J. B., YULLAR, T. B., POLLARD, J. J., BERRY, O. H., Zeinte of HOTCHKISS, E. D., Jr.	Thursday and Friday 24-25	Open Upon Application to Secretary	Monday and Tuesday 25-26	THOMAS, J. R., ANDERSON, J. T., VANCE, R. CONROY SCOTT, F. W., PATTERSON, J. T., BRYAN, ST. GEO., HARRIS, E. D.,			
Thursday and Friday 26-27	HAGNER, F. R., BRYAN, R. C., JONES, A. G., KNIGHT, W. O., WHITLOCK, C. E., PIZZINI, W. E., CANNON, J. E.,	Monday and Tuesday 28-29	BRYAN, R. C., PIZZINI, W. B., WOOD, W. P., POLLARD, J. J., JONES, A. G., CANNON, J. E., HOTCHKISS, E. D. Jr.,	Thursday and Friday 28-29	BRYAN, T. P., JOHNSTON, W. R., ANDERSON, H. W., JOHNSON, R. H., MORGAN, S. T., BRYAN, R. C., HAGNER, F. R.			
Monday 30 and Tuesday December 1	JOHNSON, R. H., YOUNG, J. H., JOHNSTON, W. R., ANDERSON, A. Jr., WOOD, W. P., PATTERSON, J. T., ANDERSON, H. W.,	Thursday 31 and Friday January 1	DUPONT, WM., DUPONT, WM., DUPONT, WM., DUPONT, WM., HBVING, E. DuP., JONES, C. AP-C., KNIGHT, W. O.,					

1914-1915 Hunting Schedule for Drum Point Gunning Club. From the Drum Point Gunning Club Register, VBPL.