



Capt. Bob Massey, Bill's father, in his duck hunting blind on Ice Island, around 1930.



Three generations of Whistler (Goldeneye) hunting decoys made and used by the Massey family between 1880 and 1960.

Storyteller

Bill Massey

(1914-1997) Waddington, St. Lawrence County, NY

St. Lawrence River Guides, Decoy Carver &

Bill Massey was one of the last of the St. Lawrence River guides and traditional decoy makers. He has always lived close to the water. He was given his first boat at the age of six so that he could commute to school from the family's island home in Chippewa Bay. Massey learned the art of carving decoys from his grandfather and father, as well as from the great Alexandria Bay carver, Chauncey Wheeler. For more than 70 years, Massey has carved countless decoys, both for hunting and for prized decorations. He uses no photographs as models; instead, he relies on his vast knowledge of St. Lawrence River birds, gained through first-hand contact. Over the years Bill Massey has participated in many exhibitions and competitions, often winning prizes for his carvings or his sharpshooting skills. He participated in the National Folk Festival in Vienna, Virginia, in 1980 and was nominated for the prestigious National Heritage Fellowship in 1991.