

BOB RUTTER

Bob Rutter considers Tuckerton God's country. He particularly enjoys looking out over the meadowlands, especially Stories Island and Sheepshead Meadows.

Born and raised in Tuckerton, he carves decoys in the Barnegat Bay style, and has built gunning boats from Jersey cedar for practically all of his life. He and his brother learned the craft from their father, Chester, who was a carpenter.

Bob has built a dozen garveys, the first one at age 16. His square-sided gunning "sharpies" for waterfowling come to a point in the front, a design Bob likes because they are easier to camouflage with grasses. The racing garvey had another design; it was v-bottomed for speed. Several men would get together, Joe and Pat Heinrich, Mason Price, Bob Rutter Sr. of West Creek and Bert Courtney, to see who had the fastest boat. In 1950, Bob built his first houseboat, which was a base for hunting and fishing for all their meals.

Other types of boats which he has built are gunning boxes large enough for two or three men to gun from, and pond boxes, made for one man to sit or lie in on the meadows. Men in the pond boxes covered themselves with grass to lie in wait for incoming waterfowl.

Bob and his gunning partner, Carl Hewitt, gunned together for 20 years at Sheepshead Meadows, but seldom had the type of experience they remember from one foggy, dark and drizzly night. Bob was captain, and yelled for Carl and Dick Parker to get down because he couldn't see. That didn't help. The next thing they knew, they were fast aground in the meadows. They spent the next few hours nursing bruises.

Another time, when he kept a 26-foot garvey that he had built, the boat broke loose at Great Bay Boulevard in a northeast storm. It was found in Oceanville at the Brigantine Wildlife Preserve.

Bob is a member of the Eveready Gun Club, and guides for them. He also gunned Crab Island. His decoys are puddle ducks, divers, geese, brant and miniatures.

A Navy veteran of World War II, he served on the U.S.S. *Texas*. He worked as a lineman for electrical contractors and is a charter member of the West Tuckerton Fire Company.

In addition to duck hunting, Bob also hunts deer and considers himself very lucky to have his wife, Betty, share the interests with him. They have two daughters.