

Joe Smith and Stanley H. “Bud” Seaman

2026 Hall of Fame Awardees

By Pat Johnson

This is the third year for the Michael T. Mangum Hall of Fame Award, given to the people who contributed to the creation and success of the Old Time Barnegat Bay Decoy and Gunning Show. This year’s awards are being given posthumously to Stanley “Bud” Seaman and Joe Smith.

Joe Smith was the Park Manager of Tip Seaman County Park from when it was Tuckerton Lake County Park before the County named it after Bud Seaman’s Father, Stanley H. “Tip” Seaman. Mangum remembers the early days of the Decoy and Gunning Show, “The New Jersey Decoy Collectors Association predated the Decoy show; they approached Smith and Mangum with the idea of having a tailgate picnic and decoy swap, sale and buy affair at the park. After discussion, probably at Tips Hardware, it was decided to make it a decoy and gunning show.



Stanley H. “Bud” Seaman

Bud Seaman was the proprietor of Tips Hardware in West Creek along with and after his father Tip passed away. The hardware store was the unofficial meeting place for area baymen and local residents said Mike Mangum, retired director of the Ocean County Parks and Recreation Department and local resident. “It was an old school hardware store with everything you needed for



Mangum (L) with Joe Smith (R).

Photo courtesy of Mike Mangum

going out in the bay—boat hardware and paint and clam rakes. If he didn’t have it, he was famous for saying, ‘I’ll have it for you Tuesday,’ but he never said which Tuesday! That was a running joke.” Ocean County Commissioner and former longtime Little Egg Harbor Republican committee member Ray Gormley, was brought up in Parkertown, just down the road from Tips Hardware in West Creek. While he didn’t know Joe Smith, Commissioner Gormley has fond memories of Stanley “Bud” Seaman and of his father Stanley “Tip” Seaman. Tip Seaman and Commissioner Gormley’s father, James “Jim” Gormley, were good friends and worked together for the benefit of Little Egg Harbor, said Commissioner Gormley. His father Jim was a Little Egg Harbor Committeeman for many years while Tip Seaman was an Ocean County Freeholder.

Commissioner Gormley’s first memories of Bud and Tip were visiting the hardware store in summer, where every kid would get a free soda. “They had one of those old-fashioned Coke machines with the glass bottles. It was great. I always looked forward to it.” The store was a gathering place for locals—coffee and donuts for the

grownups. “I don’t think they made much money, I think they just liked to be around people,” said Gormley. “They were both kind-hearted, very special people.”

“Buddy had a great collection of decoys—some of the best, early decoys. That’s how he knew so many folks to invite to the show (Old Time Barnegat Bay Decoy and Gunning Show). And here’s something not many people know, Buddy’s second passion was he had a semi-pro softball team—Tips Hardware Softball. They played around the state and parts of the country. I played on the secondary team—Bert Beebe’s Kids. We were the younger guys and Bud would pitch for us! He loved to pitch.”

“Both Bud and Joe were instrumental in getting the show together,” said Mangum. “Through his connections, Bud knew the names of collectors and vendors important to the show. He was also always making up show hats and shirts and giving them to the show and he would donate prizes for the contests.”

You might say he was the heart and soul of the show.”

“Joe Smith was great with getting things done. The first year we had great weather for the show but year two we had a nor’easter. The Tuckerton Library Association wanted to set up in the park and Joe knew the retired general of the (New Jersey) National Guard and he was allowed to get a tent from the armory that used to be on Route 9. Well, we go to get it and it’s a World War Two vintage tent. We were setting that thing up in the pouring rain and wind.” Joe also promoted the show all over the state, said Mangum, putting posters in rest areas on the parkway and in sporting goods stores.

“I’m glad Bud Seaman is getting the award,” said Commissioner Gormley, “If you didn’t know him, you missed a great person.” Mangum emphasized the statement, adding Bud Seaman and Joe Smith really made the Old Time Barnegat Bay Decoy & Gunning Show what it was in those early years.
