

Bill (William) Palmer passed away on April 12, 2023. A memorial celebration of his life will be held June 8, 2023, from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm at the Willow Retreat (former clubhouse) at Oak Hammock Marsh Wildlife Management Area.

Bill Palmer was a mainstay and vital part of the Manitoba bird carving community for over three decades. His influence on the art form has been profound, touching the hearts and minds of thousands of carvers and folks who admire birds in art.

Growing up in Dryden, Ontario Bill was smitten by the wonder of nature at an early age- a latent feeling that would come to express itself when he visited the first Prairie Canada Decoy Carving Championship in Winnipeg in 1987. Soon after that he caught the carving bug and fell in with a group of carvers who met in the basement of fellow carver Carol Dempster. Mastering the art form in short order he started teaching carving in numerous locations in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Minnesota and North Dakota.

An accomplished bird carver, Bill won numerous awards in carving competitions in western Canada and the northern states. He was the feature carver at Minnesota's Lake Bronson Woodcarvers Festival for two years. A generous individual who believed in giving back to the carving community, he served on the board of Prairie Canada Carvers' Association for 20 years- sitting as chairman for six of those years. He also sat as vice-president for Les Gens de Bois for a stint and served as president of the Oak Hammock Marsh Carving Guild for a number of years. He judged carving entries at Saskatoon's Reflections of Nature Wildlife Art Competition and the Oak Hammock Marsh Decoy Carving Competition for many years.

Those of us who have been around for a while will fondly remember his carving supply business, Wing Bang Carving Company, which operated

from 1991 to 2004. During that period Bill sponsored Prairie Canada's slick duck purchase award. Over the years most of us bought basswood from Bill and his carving knives are scattered wide and far throughout the continent.

Bill is remembered for his enthusiasm for the art form. Fittingly he was awarded the Prairie Canada Carver's Award of Excellence in 2007 for his dedication in promoting and engendering the art of bird carving. In 2019 he and John Frye were awarded the Prairie Canada Carver's Community Service Award for advancing the Oak Hammock Marsh Carving Guild. He is also remembered for his kindness and willingness to help others. He is missed by all who knew him.