

# Goldeneyes

## of the Thousand Islands





Chiming Wings: watercolor by Allan Brooks

## Goldeneyes (whistlers):

Goldeneyes are usually listed in bird books as the common goldeneye or American goldeneye, but are also known locally as whistlers due to the high-pitched whistling sound made by the wing feathers of the mature ducks. They are members of the sea duck tribe (Mergini), and are closely related to the bufflehead, a common St. Lawrence River species, and the Barrow's goldeneye, a more western species. They are cavity nesters, typically using hollows in trees, and unlike the bay or puddle ducks, do not breed until they are age-2 (3<sup>rd</sup> year of life). The immature males have a different plumage pattern more closely resembling the hen, but with a white and brown mottled cheek patch.

Hunters often used a variety of names for the ducks they pursued. The mature black and white males were sometimes called "buck whistlers", the hens were called "brownheads", and the immature drakes were called "he-grays". Some decoy makers painted a few of their goldeneyes using the pattern of the immature drake ("he-gray"), and because they are uncommon, they are highly desired by collectors.



Rosh Douglas, Ogdensburg (1878-1962)



Roy Conklin, Alexandria Bay (1909-1967)



Sam Denny, Clayton (1874-1953)



Chauncey Wheeler, Alexandria Bay (1862-1937)



Frank Coombs, Alexandria Bay (1882-1958)

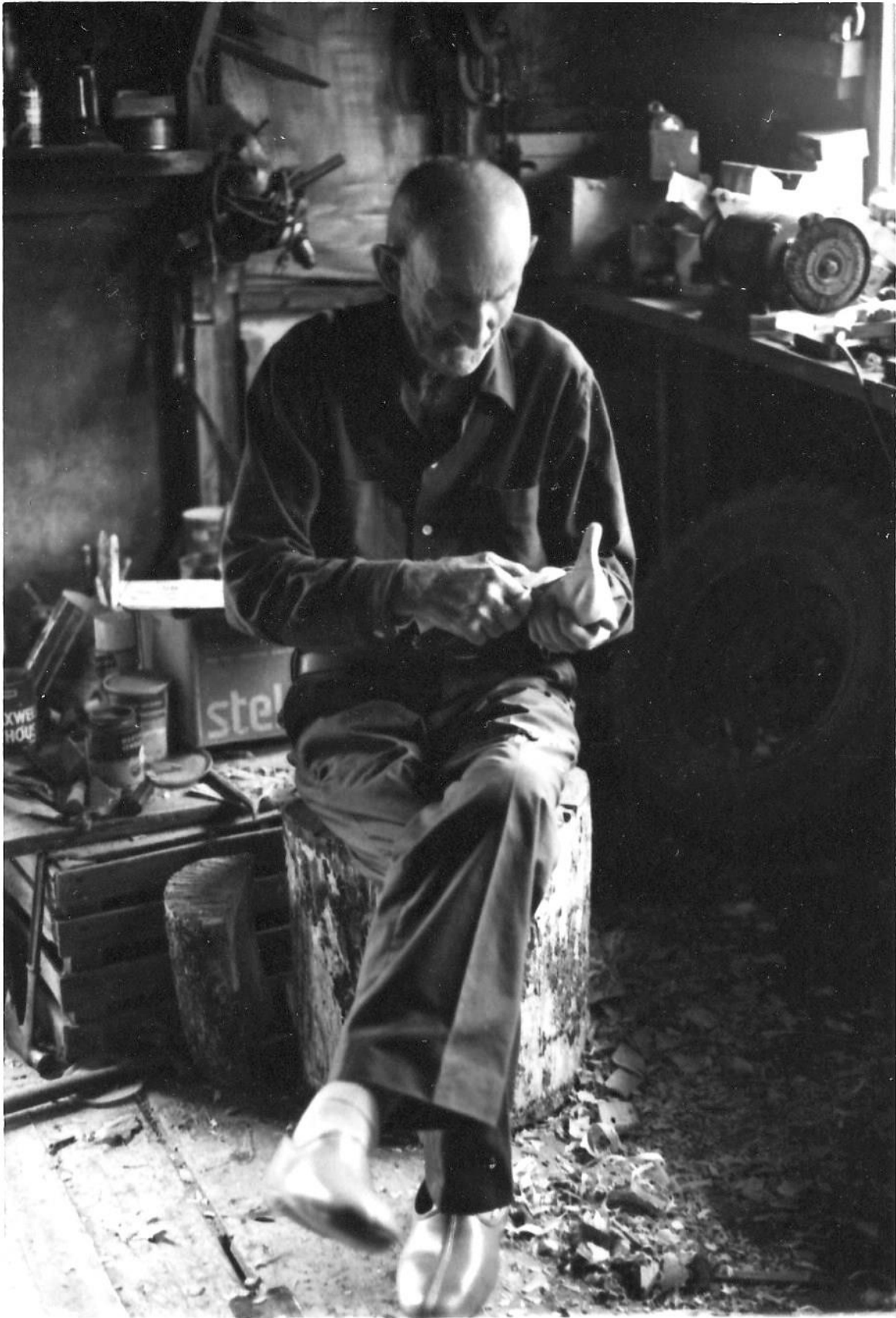




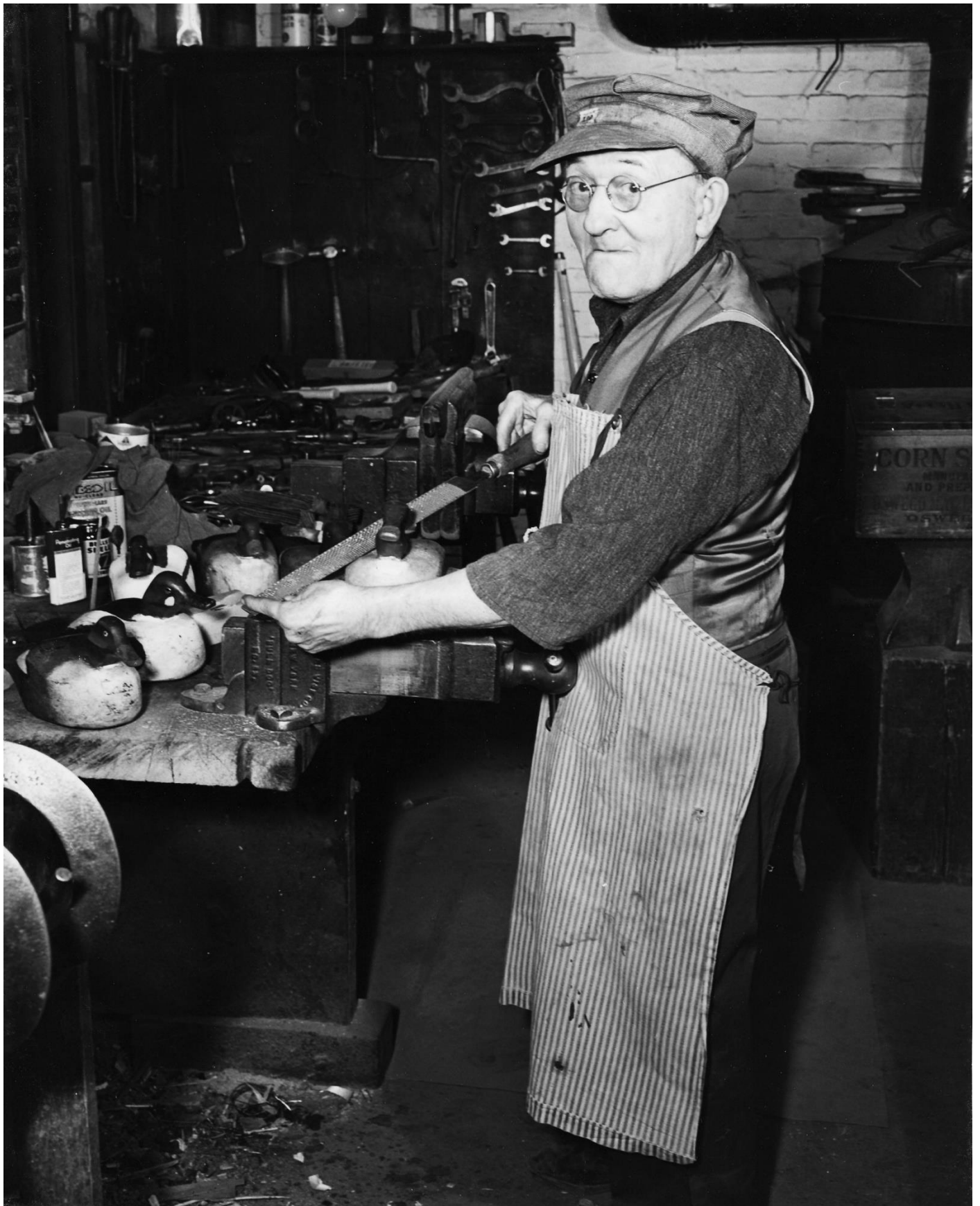
Ken Harris, Woodville (1905-1981)



James Stanley, Cape Vincent (1855-1927)



Chancy Patterson, Wellesley Island (1904-1994)



Frank Louis, Ogdensburg (1878-1964)