



# *It's Time to Celebrate!*

The 40th Anniversary of the Museum  
of Hounds and Hunting North America  
& Huntsman's Hall of Fame Induction

By John J. Head

On Memorial Day weekend 2025, come and enjoy a full picture of fox hunting history at the Museum of Hounds and Hunting North America. As we celebrate our 40th anniversary, we welcome you to visit our two locations in Virginia, the original site at Morven Park in Leesburg and the new location in Middleburg at The Duffey House. Of course, many out-of-town fox hunters can also enjoy a virtual visit on our website ([mhhna.org](http://mhhna.org)). It's the perfect way to stay involved and check out exhibitions and archives between visits.

Our Collection, amassed by individual donations, centers on the history of fox hunting, and includes paintings, bronzes, silver trophies, books, tack, clothing, diaries, photographs, and decorative arts. The preservation of these hunting artifacts is an important aspect of the Museum's mission.

Over the past 40 years, the Museum has featured a wide variety of exhibitions. Display cases in each gallery have featured collectible China settings with fox hunting themes, classic fox hunting books, and personal hunting dairies, as well as documentary photo albums. Drawings, such as the historic portraits of the fox hounds Mountain and Muse, and aquatints by Franklin Voss and Paul Brown have been exhibited on gallery walls, along with original hunt territory maps.

The American Artist's Series, exhibitions larger and more comprehensive in scope, have each featured a single sporting artist of renown. Over the years, numerous collectors of sporting art have lent paintings from their homes for our Museum to share with the public. Artists featured in this Series include Franklin B. Voss, Paul Brown, Richard Newton, Jr., Wally Nall and Sam Savitt.

In our larger main gallery, exhibitions have included a unique collection of children's rocking horses, and a show featuring a photographic group portrait of the landscape of the home hunt country, every fox hunting club in the MFHA. Our exhibitions, large and small, historically have opened during the Memorial Day weekend, coinciding with the Virginia Foxhound Club Show at Morven Park. The annual Members' Reception on Saturday evening remains a popular way to enjoy the exhibits and the camaraderie of fellow fox hunters.

As the Museum marks 40 years of preserving one of Virginia's most cherished traditions, with two locations and a priceless collection to steward, your support is more important than ever. We invite you to celebrate this milestone by becoming a member. Learn more on the Museum's website: [www.mhhna.org](http://www.mhhna.org).



MHHNA Collection, Franklin B. Voss, aquatints, 1939. *Hunting in America*, Derrydale press 1939. Set of 4. Paintings by Franklin Voss, MFH.



## Huntsmen's Hall of Fame Inductees 2025

One of the highlights of the Memorial Day activities for foxhunting enthusiasts is scheduled for 3 pm on Saturday, May 24th, when the latest inductees into the Museum's Huntsman's Hall of Fame is celebrated with their families and hunt club members in attendance. Plan to join us for the commemorative speeches and the reception following.

Learn about the contributions made to hunting and hound breeding by the forty-four nationally important huntsmen that have been selected for the honor previously on the Museum's website, [mhhna.org](http://mhhna.org), under the heading, Huntsman's Hall of Fame, where you will find biographical summaries and portrait photographs of each of the members. Collectively, their contributions have shaped our American sport into a well-respected one that is recognized internationally.

Initially, only huntsmen with years of service between 1907 and World War II were selected, in order to ensure that the stamp of history confirmed their record.

The 1907 starting date for the Hall of Fame coincides with the founding of the Masters of Foxhounds Association by six distinguished American MFH's, one of who was Westmoreland Davis, MFH Loudoun Hunt, and the owner of Morven Park.

The Huntsman inductees for 2025 continue the tradition of being career huntsmen, held in the highest regard by the members of their hunt clubs, as well as by the Museum's Hall of Fame selection committee, KT Atkins, ex-MFH, Andrew Barclay, Tommy Lee Jones and Dennis Foster.

**Thomas H. Jackson, ex-MFH (1945–2015)**

Sewickley Hunt Club, Pennsylvania,  
Ottawa Valley Hunt, Canada  
Mission Valley Hunt Club and  
Coal Valley Hounds, Kansas

**Donald Philhower (1953–present)**

Golden's Bridge Hounds and  
Millbrook Hunt, New York

**Larry Pitts, MFH (1949–present)**

Eglinton and Caledon Hounds, Canada,  
Potomac Hunt, Maryland and  
Bedford County Hunt Club, Virginia



*Tommy Jackson calling going to ground.  
Photography courtesy of Julie Honsinger.*

**Tommy Jackson**, as a young man in the countryside around Sewickley, Pennsylvania, worked on Fitzgerald's Dairy Farm to help his family make ends meet. Tommy later served in Vietnam, where he was awarded two Bronze Stars by the United States Army.

After discharge from the Army in 1967, Tommy worked in the horse stable at the Allegheny Country Club, which was affiliated with Sewickley Hunt Club. Eager, personable, and kind, Tommy began working his way through the hunt club ranks, ultimately serving as huntsman from 1973-75.

Tommy then furthered his skills serving as huntsman at the Ottawa Valley Hunt, Ashton, Ontario, Canada from 1976-1984. After eight years, America beckoned, in the form of the Mission Valley Hunt Club in Louisburg, KS, where Tommy served with distinction as huntsman for the next twenty-five years. This quarter-century mark was eclipsed when Tommy was selected Master and huntsman at the Coal Valley Hounds in McCune, Kansas in 2002. He ended his career as Master and huntsman of Mr. Jackson's Oxford Hounds, later called Mr. Jackson's Flat Creek Hounds, in Bucyrus, KS. Tommy Jackson's career as a huntsman spanned over 40 years.

Tommy Jackson was passionate about hound breeding and strove to breed the best hunting hounds for his country. He traded hounds with good friend Jim Atkins, a 2017 Hall of Fame Inductee, both aiming to create 'the best of best' hounds, which they then shared with other hunts. Kennels benefiting from Tommy's and Jim's generosity through the gifting of quality hounds were Fort Leavenworth HuntClub, Bridlespur, Moingona, North Hills, Gamble Hills, and Harvard Hounds.

Proudly bearing an Irish heritage, Tommy knew how to make and win friends. Talented with the hunt horn, he won the "Horn Blowing Contest" one year at the Pennsylvania Hoses Show, among strong competition, we are told. Years of practice clinched it.



*Donald Philhower with the Hounds, High Mount.  
Photography courtesy of Capturing Moments by Carol Pedersen.*

**Donald Philhower** was nine years old, living in the countryside around Peapack, New Jersey, when he first heard the thrilling sound of foxhounds hunting as pack. As he recalls, when asked, it was a moonlit night and the voices, as he says, "stuck in his blood ever since". A few years later, he became immersed in hounds and kennel life, when his father began working for William (Buster) Chadwell at the Essex Fox Hounds, established in 1912. Buster Chadwell hunted 43-years with Essex. In 1997 he was inducted into the Huntsman's Hall of Fame.

These beginnings at Essex, observing Buster's quiet manner and insight into houndbreeding, served Donald well. He advanced from kennel work and hound exerciseroutines, in his summer vacation time from school, to the position of second whipper-in at Essex, after high school graduation

In 1973, Donald's first riding teacher at Essex, Harvey Styer, was selected huntsman at Golden's Bridge Hounds and invited Donald along to North Salem, New York, as his first whipper-in. Three years later, in 1976, senior MFH Reggie Fox promoted Donald to Huntsman, a position he held for 30 years. Penn-Marydel hounds were Donald's choice for success in the Golden's Bridge country, where nose and drive were combined with deep voice for following in the woods and gullies.

In 2004, the Millbrook Hunt became the capstone to Donald's hunting career. Upon succeeding huntsman Betsy Park, Donald earned accolades over the next fifteen years for himself and the hounds he bred. Chief among them are Best Pack in 2013 and again, in 2014, at the Bryn Mawr Hound Show in Pennsylvania.

In 2018, the MFHA selected Donald as a "huntsman of sound character who has made outstanding contribution to the sport of fox hunting" for their Ian Milne Award. Nancy Stahl, ex-MFH Millbrook Hunt, remembers their early years working together, "when Donald came to us, it was right on the heels of our dealings with Leishmaniasis and our pack was fragile at best. Donald is responsible for rebuilding our pack and brought in some of his Penn-Marydel breeding which invigorated our hounds added incredible cry, perseverance, nose and a what I like to call deliberateness".

Drawing on the skills he developed as a boy learning from the Chadwell family, Donald developed his pack for the Millbrook territory. Summarizing what it's all about in the kennel, in the December 2018 issue of Millbrook's Main Street Magazine Don said, "Breeding fox hounds is a combination of science, art, and luck". Donald's Millbrook pack was always a favorite part of the Millbrook Community Day parade.





*Larry Pitts enjoying a fine day out with the Hounds.  
Photography courtesy of P. Michael.*

**Larry Pitts**, hunted hounds at the Potomac Hunt in Boyd, Maryland for 35 years, retiring in 2015. Growing up on a family farm near Reidsville, North Carolina, bordering southern Virginia near Danville, Larry began his career as kennelman and whipper-in at the Sedgefield Hunt for Ian Milne.

"Ian saw something special in Larry and recommended him to William Brainard MFH Old Dominion Hounds" recalled Vicki Crawford, ex-MFH Potomac Hunt, in *Equi* in 2014. Larry served as whipper-in to huntsman Ray Pearson. Mr. Brainard kept an American and an English pack in his kennel at Glenara, allowing Larry to "learn the traits of different breeds."

Canada came next, when Mr. Brainard recommended Larry for a position with Major Charles Kindersley MFH, Eglinton and Caledon Hounds in Ontario in 1976. For the next four years, Larry observed Kindersley's high standards in the kennels and in the field. The Major hunted the pack himself, and, as MFH Crawford further notes, "always put hounds first, a tradition Larry continues".

Four years later, Larry's career as huntsman began when Tommy Dowd, MFH Potomac Hunt acted on Major Kindersley's sound recommendation. The story goes that Larry inherited a deer running pack and "spent hours and hours," and ultimately the next three years of breeding, to achieve a level and honest pack.

Skip Crawford, ex-MFH Potomac Hunt, has observed, "Larry continued the established Potomac Hunt tradition of breeding the Virginia type straight American foxhound," adding, "this breeding program continued with quality found in hounds such as Potomac Jubilee, a five-time American Foxhound Champion.

To further his breeding program, Larry selected Old Dominion Apollo. Mr. Crawford notes the hound's importance: "from this line came Applejack and then Apple, who was the first American foxhound to be overall champion at the Virginia Hound Show. Other strong American hounds Larry bred were Preacher, Topsy, Tansy and Krypton, and the most well-known, Potomac Jefferson, the Centennial Hound in 2007".

Retiring from the Potomac Hunt after 35 years in 2015, Larry moved to the western side of the Blue Ridge Mountains, where he continues his life's interest, as he shares his talents as huntsman and MFH of the Bedford County Hunt 