



THE

BY DARLENE GOSS

GHOST

In the summer of 2017 there was a museum opened in Leland, Mississippi. It is called the Mississippi Wildlife Heritage Museum. It is in a building that once was known as The Joe Turner Hardware Store. Its location is 304 North Broad Street. The person responsible for this museum is Bobby Johnson, also from Leland.

If you haven't been there it is an awesome place that carries you from the past to the present with displays of guns, wildlife mounts, old boats and old boat motors. It is filled with lots of pictures of people that have made the outdoors a great place to hunt, fish, and just have fun in the outdoors, which brings me to the reason of this article.

In the museum there is a section called the Mississippi Outdoor Hall of Fame. They inducted fifteen people into it last year. On June 1, 2018 they inducted 6 more wildlife enthusiasts into the Hall of Fame. One of these people is Bobby Woods, who is also a Mississippi Bowhunters Association (MBA) Life Member. I would like to recognize him for his achievements as a bow hunter.

Bobby started out at a young age as most boys do – hunting, camping, and fishing – just hanging out with the boys. As he grew up, somewhere around 29 years old, he started taking bow hunting seriously.

Throughout Bobby's hunting career he has taken around 50 Pope & Young deer and a Boone and Crockett. A friend of his begged him for years to go elk hunting with him. Bobby told him if you ever go elk hunting, white-tail deer hunting will never be the



Photo: MS Wildlife Heritage Museum

same. Just a few years ago his friend was drawn for an elk hunt and Bobby decided to take him up on it.

He went to New Mexico and came back with a beautiful 6x6 bull elk. True to form he has never been the same. He has not missed a year since his first trip and has been successful in bagging a trophy elk each year since.

He has been a member of the MBA since the 1980's. Bobby was voted Bow Hunter of the Year for four years running. He would win drawings on the Big Buck Contest and The Bow Hunter of the Year and donate it back to a youth drawing so a young person

could experience what the enjoyment of hunting was all about.

In the Museum you will see his trophy mounts on the wall above your head as you enter. Most of these were taken off the Yazoo National Wildlife Refuge. The next display is his first canoe that he used to cross the bayous on the refuge. This canoe is filled with antlers good enough to mount, but he didn't. Then you will get to his Hall of Fame display case. This case is filled with MBA awards, Pope & Young certificates, etc. On top there is a man dressed as they did way back in the day. He has climbing hooks,



Bobby Woods

Photo: Darlene Goss



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a wind walker stand, wader boots, back pack, and a vest with pockets sewn inside for hand warmers. They called themselves the Yazoo Swamp Boys. The waders allowed him access to the swamps. A few local teenage boys dubbed him “The Ghost”. They would follow him to the swamp to see where he was hunting and he would disappear, as if into thin air. He could not be found nor could they figure out where he went, hence the name, “The Ghost”. He would go into the

swamp early and stay late waiting on the big buck to come along. It paid off as you will see by the mounts in the Museum.

So, where is Bobby Woods today? He’s still stalking whitetails in Mississippi and southern Illinois. And, one can still find him on his annual trip to New Mexico on the trail of the elk. In 2019 he has already planned a bear hunt in Canada, a possible turkey hunt in Nebraska, and last but not least, a grizzly bear hunt.

For someone who just turned 70 years old, he is still going strong and loving it. He said when it’s his time to depart from this old world he hopes to be found in a tree or on a mountain with bow in hand waiting on the next opportunity to score big.

So, hats off to Bobby Woods for a job well done and we hope you continue for many years to come. If you haven’t been to this Museum go by and visit. It will be time well spent.