

## Chapter 1 : Books by Travis Morris (Author of Untold Stories of Old Currituck Duck Clubs)

*Currituck Memories and Adventures: More Tales from a Native Gunner [Travis Morris] on calendrierdelascience.com*  
*\*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. Currituck County, North Carolina, is famed as a place where hunters count down every hour until the opening of duck season.*

From there, the distance to Monkey Island is four miles, and the ride normally took about twenty minutes. We saw large rafts of coots, which are locally known as blue peters, in the middle of Currituck Sound feeding on milfoil. He is a one man operation at his Currituck Realty office up there in Coinjock. The author of seven books on the history and life of Currituck County, he is, if there is such a thing, the embodiment of the 20th century of the county. And, he was the last manager of the Monkey Island Club. Named for the Pamunkey Indians, who used it as a hunting camp, the island is a jewel that sits in the middle of Currituck Sound. Even overgrown with rotting tree stumps and branches littering the ground and the steadily encroaching waters of the Currituck Sound, there is a beauty that is breathtaking. The island is no more than five or six feet above the surrounding waters, yet there is a gentle slope to the shoreline and the view is unobstructed in all directions. Walking the island, memories of a different way of life seem to seep through the earth, for at its heyday, the Currituck hunting clubs were the playground of the richest and most powerful figures of 19th and early 20th century America. Before the modern tourist era of the Outer Banks, the seasons were reversed and summer was the slow time of the year, when farmers would tend their fields and just about the time they got the harvest in, the first of the ducks and geese would arrive, followed closely by the rich and elite of Philadelphia, Baltimore, New York City or Washington, DC. Monkey island circa History of the Club When the club closed its doors for the last time in , a chapter in the history of the Outer Banks closed with it, for at one time the Monkey Island Club rivaled all the hunt clubs as a place of wealth and privilege. It was never as ornate or opulent as the Whalehead Club, yet its membership represented some of the most wealthy and powerful figures of its day. Sometime soon after that, although no one is exactly sure when, a clubhouse was built. The remnants still remain, and the fireplace in the main room still looksâ€”as if it was cleaned out and the flue clearedâ€”it could warm the room on an Outer Banks night. It changed hands a number of timesâ€”probably as an investment until a group of tobacco executives bought the property in and incorporated the island and surrounding land as the Monkey Island Hunting Club. Pennâ€”who is largely credited with developing the Lucky Strike brand of cigarettesâ€”bought into the club. Original fireplace, dating from the s. Mostly humor, he also was also an editor, and wrote a couple of screen plays. In fact, he and Cobb collaborated on a number of books, which is why they were probably on Monkey Island about the same time. Then there was Roland Clarkâ€”perhaps the pre-eminent wildlife artist of the mid 20th century. It was a short-lived venture. The nation was mired in recession in ; there simply were not enough hunters coming to Currituck to make a go of it and the Penn family was forced to buy the property back. Finally in , the Penn family sold the property to the Nature Conservancy. It was during this time that Travis Morris managed the club. After the doors closed After buying the property, the Nature Conservancy donated the property to U. Although now abandoned, Currituck County had a chance to turn Monkey Island into a center for education in the s. In the county traded 54 acres of marshland for the rights to the island. A few educational trips to the island occurred in the first few years, but in the island was unsafe for use and considerable maintenance was required. Although grants to repair and upgrade the buildings and dock were offered, county officials, concerned that ongoing maintenance would be too expensive, refused the grants. It is not a pleasant or safe place to visit in the summerâ€”cottonmouth snakes have the run of the grounds and there is nothing to control them. Yet birds still flock to Monkey Island. The north end of the island has become a rookery, noted for the extraordinary diversity of birds. And in the raucous cry of all those birds is the tale of the Currituck Sound. The books of Travis Morris:

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