



Martin Henry displays carvings of a miniature redhead hen and male and a pair of bluebirds.

## Carver Transforms Wood Into Lifelike Birds

BY BARBARA MILLER

**Lycoming Co. Correspondent**  
**WILLIAMSPORT** — So realistic are Martin Henry's bird carvings that his life-sized models could be mistaken for the real thing. One has to restrain the urge to lift a tail feather or pat a soft fluffy chest to see if the feathers move. Given the opportunity, children have been known to "pet" his birds.

It was just four years ago that Martin Henry became interested in carving birds. To this day he is at a loss to explain why he decided to try his hand at carving. He only knows he's very glad he did.

"I had no burning interest in birds," he confesses. He adds that he's had no art training since elementary school.

But for some reason when his co-worker at C.A. Reed Paper Co., Bob Crane, carver and painter, recommended books on the subject to Martin, he followed through. Since he carved his first bird, a miniature Canvasback duck, there has been a progression of ducks, songbirds, and birds of prey.

In the past two years Martin has captured two second place and one third place in the novice class for his entries in the Ward Foundation World Championship Wildfowl Carving Competition at Ocean City, Md. According to Martin, this is the most prestigious bird carving competition in the country with 800 carvers exhibiting over 2,500 carvings every year. Top prize is \$20,000 with a total of between \$60,000 and \$70,000 of prizes awarded each year.

Beginning by carving ducks such



Martin Henry uses a burning pen to etch the delicate feathers of an owl.

as the bufflehead and redhead, Martin moved on to songbirds two years ago. He has created everything from a house wren to a goldfinch, but his most popular seller has been the chickadee. He

has sold 17 chickadees which require about 25 hours each. He is now attempting to carve more birds of prey and is currently working on an owl.

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Martin Henry has spent approximately 150 hours carving this ruffed grouse which he considers his best piece. The carving won second prize in the novice class of the prestigious Ward Foundation World Championship Wildfowl Carving Competition.

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