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Summer 2010

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Made Here

Companies on the Cape and islands creating beautiful products for the home

BY JACI CONRY



Inherit the Wind

In his Vineyard Haven studio, **Anthony Holand** crafts weathervanes that go beyond the functional to become cherished family heirlooms.

WEATHERVANES—THOSE ANCIENT AND ENDURING SYMBOLS of our dependence upon wind and weather—appeared in this country as early as the 1600s and became popular during the second half of the following century. America's first documented weathervane maker was Deacon Shem Drowne, a Boston coppersmith most famous for creating the grasshopper weathervane atop of Faneuil Hall. Hand forged in 1743, the grasshopper still turns in the wind after two-and-a-half centuries.

Weathervanes have held onto their popularity right up to today, but few manufacturers still employ the meticulous hand techniques Drowne used.

Anthony Holand is one of those few, sculpting the iconic instruments entirely by hand at his Vineyard Haven studio. Holand owns Tuck & Holand Metal Sculptors, a storied establishment on Martha's Vineyard. Opened in 1974 by Travis Tuck (whose first weathervane made an appearance in the movie *Jaws*), the business quickly gained renown, and Tuck was soon working on commissions for private owners and





businesses all over the world.

Holand joined the company in 1998 as an apprentice after graduating from Washington State University. By 2002, he and Tuck had formed a partnership; sadly, shortly thereafter, Tuck passed away and Holand became the sole owner.

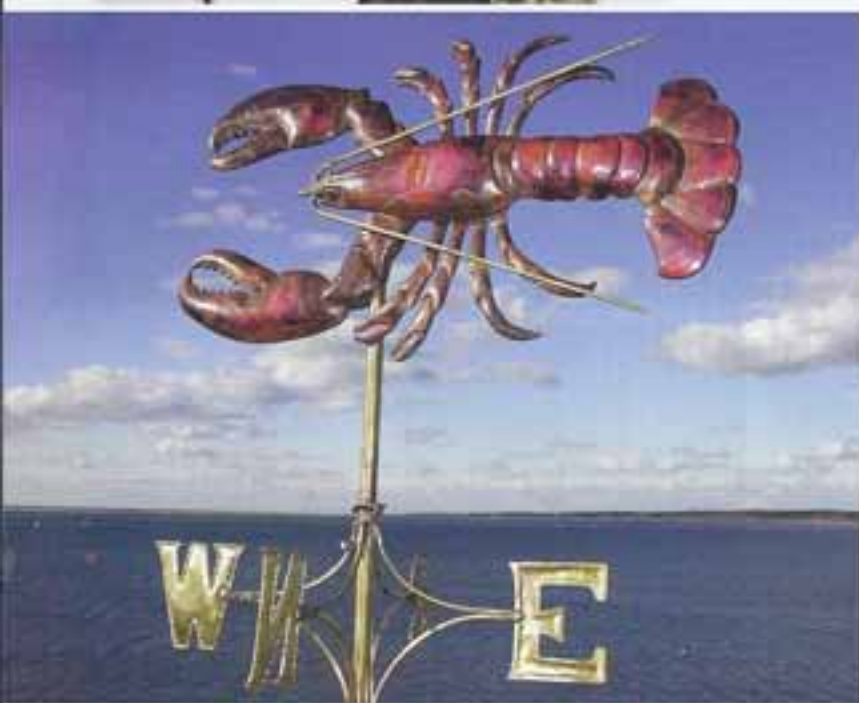
These days, Holand is a one-man operation, and his designs are so popular customers have been known to wait up to three years for a one-of-a-kind weathervane of their own. His designs run the gamut from the classic (roosters, eagles and mermaids) to the bizarre (a pterodactyl holding Raquel Welch, based on a scene from the 1966 movie *One Million Years B.C.*) He creates surfers, antique vehicles and animals, from black labs to a Brangus bull he recently made for a farmer in Texas. "I can make whatever a client wants," he says. "No matter what it is, it can be executed. I've scratched my head at some requests over the years, but I get it done."

Tuck & Holand's other commissions have included a four-foot copper likeness of the velociraptor dinosaur from the movie *Jurassic Park* for Steven Spielberg as well as the world's largest full-bodied weathervane: a Nittany Lion that weighs more than 2,000 pounds for Pennsylvania State University's football stadium. Holand has also designed works for Bill and Hillary Clinton, Carly Simon and James Taylor.

**Tuck & Holand
Metal Sculptors**

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www.tuckandholand.com



The artist relishes both the design phase and the manufacturing process for each weathervane he creates. "I sit down and talk to the client about their families and their lives. I want to create something that is special to them and expresses who they are," he says.

He builds most of his weathervanes of copper, though he crafts some out of brass or bronze, too, all materials that resist rust, require little maintenance and can last well over a century. He finishes some with gold leaf, also a hardy material but one that needs to be revitalized after three or four decades.

After sketching out a design the client signs off on, Holand creates a two-dimensional paper pattern, transfers it onto a metal sheet and heats the sheet to make it pliable. Using the hammering technique called *repoussé*, he works the metal into its three-dimensional design. From start to finish, a custom weathervane takes a month or so to finish, and prices start at \$12,000. Holand also offers a few numbered editions based on reproductions of his original patterns, which begin at \$4,000. "Yes, the prices are high," he admits. "But handmade things are worth more. You're buying something that won't ever have to be replaced, a family

heirloom that your grandchildren will enjoy."

And clients seem to embrace that concept heartily. "I think weathervanes appeal to people because of their history, longevity and uniqueness," Holand says. "They can tell a story about a family."

The fun of designing and crafting is matched by Holand's enjoyment of his customers' reactions. "I love making things by hand, creating something tangible that will make others happy," he says. "When people come in to pick up their weathervanes they get so excited, it's really enjoyable. They aren't just buying a product on a shelf, it's an experience."

Tuck & Holand Metal Sculptors is open to the public, serving as a studio and gallery all in one. "I want people to come in and visit. You can't go see where things are made anymore, but here you can come in and watch and learn how a weathervane is made according to the old ways," says Holand. "I think that makes us special." •

