"Daddy, Do You Know Me?"

A Story of Legacy and Love ... and the Island That Holds It All

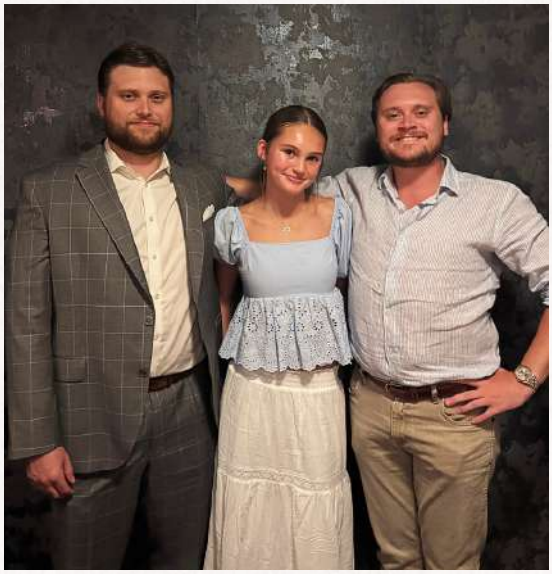
By Sheree Vaickus

There's a moment in every parent's life—one so tender, so searing in its simplicity—that it forever shifts the way we see our role in this world. For Doug Witcher, that moment came early one morning on the peaceful shores of Bald Head Island, when his son, Christian, looked up at him with wide blue eyes and asked, **"Daddy, do you know me?"** That one question became a mirror—and a mission.

Doug didn't just answer with facts (his son's favorite colors, best friends, favorite things to do); he answered with presence. He had listened. He had remembered. It was Doug's habit to keep a journal, chronicling life not just as it happened, but as it felt. And then, he turned the question around: **"Christian, do you know me?"** Like so many children, his son could only answer in part. Not because he didn't love his father, but because children know what they're shown—and too often, life shows them only glimpses. Parents usually educate their children on what to do for safety, wellness, and nutrition. But do parents share what makes them truly soar and thrive, what makes Mom or Dad *human*? That day, Doug vowed to show his three children, Spencer, Christian, and Kinsley, *more*. To create a space where memory lives—not just in photographs or furniture, but in stories, shared moments, and the peaceful preservation of place. **That place is Bald Head Island.**



The book *Daddy, Do You Know Me?* by Doug Witcher is coming soon to a bookstore near you.



Christian, Kinsley, and Spencer

For Doug, BHI is more than a vacation spot. It's a living album layered with meaning. He remembers when there were only a few homes dotting the shoreline. He recalls keeping a sailboat in Southport in the '80s, and the uncanny day when a construction project uncovered ancient graves near the golf course—**moments that grounded him in the island's history and sacredness.**



Doug Witcher and family

A part of that sacred history is the Whale House, a home not just purchased but also protected—a house born from the dreams of another family and tenderly preserved by Doug. Where some might see grandeur, he sees responsibility to honor the design, keep its story intact, and make it sing with his family's memories, while respecting the ones that came before. His choice not to alter its essence is more than aesthetic—it's an act of reverence. That's what Doug, who helms the philanthropic Doug Witcher Family Foundation, understands better than most: **Legacy isn't about what you own. It's about what you keep alive.**

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His decision to take summers off from work, to walk away from the grind and walk toward his children, is a radical act of love in a world that glorifies busyness. His choices remind us that preservation isn't just about the dunes or the tides. **It's about preserving the peace we find in each other and in our hearts. It's about choosing stillness over status. It's about giving your children not just things, but *you*—your stories, your joy, your attention.**

When we asked Doug what he would have done differently, he responded "Nothing but embrace every twist in my journey gracefully, because every setback, every lesson, and every mentor has forged who I am today." Today—*all* days—Doug is a person who chooses to cherish the people he loves, who remembers that it's not about the empire he's built, but being present, on purpose, and at peace with those who lifted him up while building it. It's about knowing in his heart that he's exactly where he's meant to be.

So when you walk the island and see a man writing in the margins of a book, know that he's not just journaling. He just might be archiving his life story, making sure that the people who matter most will know who he truly was. And when you pass the Whale House and its generations of memories, let it remind you to pause and ask your loved ones all your questions ... and then, embrace the power of vulnerability and share the story of who *you* are for each other.

"BHI, I love you for bringing me the peace I need to answer many questions with God's grace and love."

~ Doug Witcher

