The American Fly Fisher

WINTER 1992  VOLUME 18  NUMBER 1
A Many-Roomed Mansion

With this winter 1992 issue of The American Fly Fisher, we present a long-overdue Collective Index that covers the last six years of publication, from 1984 to 1990. Those who look forward to reading the articles in this journal may be momentarily disappointed, but let us reflect briefly upon the purpose of an index.

An index is the reference source that scholars, writers, researchers, and the merely curious can turn to when seeking information. In a way, this index is one of the very reasons fly fishing is so multi-dimensional. As the Museum and this journal build upon accumulated research, layer upon layer is added to our body of knowledge about the history of this sport, industry, and art form.

If you'll imagine our current world of fly fishing — and the centuries stretching behind it — as a many-roomed mansion, these careful, periodic indexes form an integral part of the superstructure that holds up the building. Just look at the subject index contained within these pages. You will instantly see just how comprehensive and varied are the topics covered in the pages of The American Fly Fisher — everything from the recorded effects of acid rain and the use of figs as bait, to a unique formula for insect repellent and a reference to the wonderfully named, but short-lived (1880-1895), Peekamoose Fishing Club, on the Rondout, in the Catskills.

For those interested in obtaining back issues of The American Fly Fisher, most are available for purchase from the Museum. See the member box on cover 3 for more information.

For researchers' convenience, the index is organized into three separate indexes: by author, by table of contents, and by subject. This detailed and complex task was undertaken with enormous capability and enthusiasm by Gerald Novesky, who has been a free-lance writer, editor, and photographer for 10 years. Currently the editor of the Catskill Center News, the newsletter of the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development in Arkville, New York, he lives within casting distance of some of the best water on the upper East Branch of the Delaware River. Jerry did the index and bibliography for Jim Brown's A Treasury of Reels.

Jerry is also a master computer person, and anyone who has read this editorial page over the last year will understand my complete and grateful admiration for such a whiz. For this issue, Jerry helped solve the maddening puzzle of how to conduct a global computer search to code each numeral so that it will appear in old style figures, in which a standard 7 dips down gracefully below the line of type, like so: 7. If you page through this Collective Index, you will see just how many numbers Randall and I would have had to code manually. One by one by one.

Need I say more?

Margot Page
Editor
The American Fly Fisher
Journal of The American Museum of Fly Fishing
WINTER 1992  VOLUME 18  NUMBER 1

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Gerald Novesky

ON THE COVER: The photograph from the 1985 San Francisco exhibition of “Anglers All: Man and His Environment Through 500 Years of Fly Fishing” illustrates our largest traveling exhibit. Now in its seventh venue at the Catawba Science Center in Hickory, North Carolina, “Anglers All” will travel in 1992 to the Wildlife Art Museum of the American West in Jackson, Wyoming, the Peabody Museum of Natural History, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, and the Rochester Museum and Science Center in Rochester, New York. Three million people are estimated to have viewed “Anglers All” since 1985.

The artifacts from the American Museum of Fly Fishing’s collection identified in the photograph (clockwise from pipe in foreground) are: Bing Crosby’s pipe; Atlantic-salmon flies circa 1835; early nineteenth-century leather fly book; fly rod that belonged to Zane Grey; rubber-bodied, mayfly-imitation circa 1935; seventh edition (1759) of Walton’s Compleat Angler; engraving of noted statesman and angler Daniel Webster; brass fly reel as commonly used circa 1820; small Hardy fly reel belonging to Herbert Hoover; original 1874 patent-model Orvis reel; early twentieth-century text on angling entomology with modern imitative dry fly; and a handwritten poem discovered in the contents of an early nineteenth-century tackle container. Photograph by William Cheney.

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Illustration or caption information is in italics.
Articles, art, poems, or short stories are in quotation marks.
Books, magazines, and foreign language words are in italics.
[Bracketed information] is not included in source.
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References are by volume(number):page.
“n” indicates the reference is to a note on the page.
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is pleased to announce the publication of

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Jim Brown is a librarian who lives and works in Stamford, Connecticut. He is an avid fisherman and collector of antique fly tackle who has written extensively on the history of fly reels. His first book, Fishing Reel Patents of the United States, 1838–1940, is now accepted as a standard reference work in the field. He is an active member of the American Museum of Fly Fishing as well as numerous other angling and conservation organizations.

Bob O'Shaughnessy is a Boston-based photographer who has worked in the advertising business for the past thirty years. He has been a dedicated salmon fisherman for at least as long, and regularly fishes in Canada and Maine. He is past president of the New England chapter of the American Society of Magazine Photographers, as well as a member of the American Museum of Fly Fishing, the Fly Casters of Boston, and the Atlantic Salmon Federation.

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I don't know about you, but I like to dream. There is an anonymous quote I've had taped to my mirror at home since I was twenty or so. It reads, "The permanent temptation in life is to confuse one's dreams with reality. The permanent defeat in life comes when one's dreams are surrendered to reality." There is an inherent danger, I think, in not following one's dreams.

The same axiom can apply to a museum like ours as well. I don't think any of our officers, staff, or volunteers are interested in the status quo. Growth is important, and even though many museums around the country, especially here in the Northeast, are feeling the effects of the recession and are cutting staff and trimming budgets, our museum continues to progress. And we continue to dream. Not vague, middle-of-the-night dreams that are rarely brought to fruition, but dreams that are, as T. E. Lawrence noted in his classic Seven Pillars of Wisdom, acted out with open eyes in the clear light of day. Dreams of substance, dreams that through perseverance, passion, and a sense of joy become the stuff of reality.

Nineteen ninety-one was a very fine year for our museum. We completely renovated and then expanded our spaces, created new in-house exhibits and exhibitions, opened large educational exhibitions in this country and abroad, added full computerization, improved the look and content of this journal, and much more. Along the way we all learned a great deal about our capabilities (and our weaknesses); about professionalism, dedication, and creating — through trial and experimentation — the special atmosphere of this Museum.

In the process, we've come closer to realizing accreditation through the good offices of our friends at the American Association of Museums. But even more importantly, we've been able to show that a museum is more than a collection of inanimate objects. We've been able to excite awe and wonder, stimulate thought, inspire new ideas, open the doors to new knowledge, educate, and entertain. We've been able to present a broad view of the artistry and ingenuity of the sport, art form, industry, and lifestyle we call fly fishing.

And so we enter 1992, the Museum's twenty-fourth year of operation. In a museum-sense, we're come of age. And because we've learned so much over the years, we enter our majority with the knowledge that we have new responsibilities and duties. We are also intimately aware of a newfound strength and a redefined sense of purpose. In essence, we have redefined ourselves to building that world-class museum we have all dreamed of. And, like Lawrence's "dreamers of the day," this is a dream that will, in time, become a reality.

Wishing you all a joyful 1992.

DON JOHNSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
The American Museum of Fly Fishing was established in 1968 to preserve and exhibit the treasures of American angling. As the only national nonprofit educational institution of its kind, the Museum serves as the repository and conservator to the world's foremost collection of angling and angling-related objects, including more than 1,500 rods, 800 reels, 40,000 flies, 2,500 books, as well as manuscripts, photographs, periodicals, and other related items. The Museum's growing collections provide students, authors, teachers, writers, and all members of the public with thorough documentation of fly fishing as a sport, art form, craft, and industry in the United States and abroad from the mid-sixteenth century to the present.