

The American
Fly Fisher

Journal of the American Museum of Fly Fishing



WINTER 2010

VOLUME 36 NUMBER 1

The Chill Is On



From *Lucy Larcom, Childhood Songs* (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1875), 179.

AS WE AT THE museum put the winter issue to bed, trout season has just closed in Vermont, and we are entering the dark time. When these words at last reach northern hemisphere readers, you will be well into embracing winter in your own way. Some of you will be thigh-deep in a river, snow flurries swirling around you. Some of you will be traveling to warmer climes to escape just such a scenario. Some will be tying flies to replenish a vest, some building new fly rods. Others may simply hibernate or redirect angling energy toward skiing, snowshoeing, or sipping scotch by the fire.

A choice few of you, I predict, will be reading about a private fishing club in Pennsylvania, an Osgood-made rod, and the recent activities of a certain small museum in Vermont.

The Bright Creek Park Association, founded in 1890, was one of the early private fishing clubs in the Poconos. After decades of open fishing, timber felling, and destruction of streamside habitat, it was clear that without conservation measures, wild fish populations were in trouble. The development of private fishing clubs was one response to these problems. According to Jim Collins, a longtime member of the BCPA, “The desire to preserve their sport by acquiring sections of watershed pulled together like-minded anglers of a certain means, and the movement toward private water protected by clubs gathered momentum.” Collins offers us “A Brief History of the Bright Creek Park Association,” beginning on page 2.

In the early 1970s, Charles W. Fleischmann acquired at auction a 9-foot, three-piece bamboo rod with OSGOOD & OSGOOD, NEW YORK, MAKERS marked on the nickel/silver reel seat. This was an unfamiliar name; in fact, he could find no one else who had heard of it. The rod was stored away for several decades, but questions about this

unknown rod maker nagged at him. Several years ago, he dove into research. Fleischmann uncovered a good deal of information about Edwin S. Osgood and his long work relationship representing Kosmic rods through employment with A. G. Spalding & Brothers, U.S. Net & Twine, and Abercrombie & Fitch. In “Edwin S. Osgood, Osgood & Osgood, Makers: One Man, One Rod, and He Only Fished with a Kosmic” (page 8), Fleischmann offers up some of Osgood’s personal and work history, as well as a theory as to who built this single rod marked OSGOOD & OSGOOD.

It almost feels as if we’re presenting two Gallery features in this issue. In the feature actually titled Gallery, Trustee Jim Hardman offers us a bit of background on one of the museum’s favorite pieces: a veteran (and fully operational) line-braiding machine from the Cortland Line Company. Turn to page 18 for some history, photos, and an invitation to see it in action. Then, by featuring an incredible donation to our library, this issue’s Notes from the Library appears to be doubling as a Gallery piece. Gerald Karaska reviews a deluxe edition (one of only twenty-five) of *Dry Flies in the Sunshine: J. W. Dunne and His Dry Fly Patterns*, by Terry Griffiths, Donald Overfield, and John Knott, with flies tied by John Smith. I’ll let Jerry give you the details, starting on page 20.

The museum has been busy with its regular events (see Museum News, page 25), but we’d like to draw particular attention to two: the *Anglers All* dinner featuring two-term Vice President Dick Cheney and a dinner held to honor fly-fishing legend Mel Krieger, who passed away in October 2008. Details can be found on pages 22 and 24, respectively.

Read. Stay warm.

KATHLEEN ACHOR
EDITOR



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Preserving the Heritage of Fly Fishing

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ON THE COVER: *The signature Osgood & Osgood engraving on the reel seat of an Osgood rod. Photo by Charles W. Fleischmann.*

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

The American Fly Fisher (publication number 0084-3562) is published four times per year (Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall). Editor is Kathleen Achor. Complete address for both publisher and editor is The American Museum of Fly Fishing, P.O. Box 42, Manchester, VT 05254. The journal is wholly owned by the American Museum of Fly Fishing. Total number of copies: 1,825 (average number of copies of each issue run during the preceding twelve months; 1,900 actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date). Paid/requested circulations (including advertiser's proof and exchange copies): 1,480 (average; 1,580 actual). Free distribution by mail: 0 (average; 0 actual). Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, and counter sales: 0 (average; 0 actual). Free distribution outside the mail: 120 (average; 120 actual). Total free distribution: 120 (average; 120 actual). Total distribution: 1,625 (average; 1,700 actual). Copies not distributed: 200 (average; 200 actual). Total: 1,825 (average; 1,900 actual). Percent paid and/or requested circulation: 92.5% (average; 92.5% actual).

The American Fly Fisher (ISSN 0884-3562) is published

four times a year by the museum at P.O. Box 42, Manchester, Vermont 05254. Publication dates are winter, spring, summer, and fall. Membership dues include the cost of the journal (\$40) and are tax deductible as provided for by law. Membership rates are listed in the back of each issue. All letters, manuscripts, photographs, and materials intended for publication in the journal should be sent to the museum. The museum and journal are not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts, drawings, photographic material, or memorabilia. The museum cannot accept responsibility for statements and interpretations that are wholly the author's. Unsolicited manuscripts cannot be returned unless postage is provided. Contributions to *The American Fly Fisher* are to be considered gratuitous and the property of the museum unless otherwise requested by the contributor. Copyright © 2010, the American Museum of Fly Fishing, Manchester, Vermont 05254. Original material appearing may not be reprinted without prior permission. Periodical postage paid at Manchester, Vermont 05254; Manchester, Vermont 05255; and additional offices (USPS 057410). *The American Fly Fisher* (ISSN 0884-3562) EMAIL: amff@amff.com WEBSITE: www.amff.com

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The American Fly Fisher*, P.O. Box 42, Manchester, Vermont 05254.

A Brief History of the Bright Creek Park Association

by Jim Collins



Members by the bank of the home pool, Stapler Dam, in the late 1890s.

FLY FISHING ARRIVED in northeast America sometime in the early 1800s. The New England, New York, and mid-Atlantic streams and rivers held trout and salmon. It was a fly fisher's paradise: waters open to all, no licenses required, and fine fishing. But problems were to come. Without conservation measures, the wild fish populations declined. Too many fishermen counted their daily bag in the hundreds.¹ The felling of tracts of timber and destruction of streamside habitat had a major impact, too. In consequence, the Catskills and the Poconos both suffered the same decline in their respective fisheries for essentially the same reasons. In the course of a relatively few years, the trout fisheries declined, with the result that some fly fishers sought to protect their sport by acquiring water and protecting it. Several fly-fishing clubs were formed in the Pennsylvania Pocono region and in New York's Catskill Mountains.² The desire to preserve their sport by acquiring

sections of watersheds pulled together like-minded anglers of a certain means, and the movement toward private water protected by clubs gathered momentum. In the Poconos, Bright Creek Park Association was one of the early clubs founded by a small group of men who had noted the decline in the Brodhead stream(s) fishery and sought the privacy of waters less crowded.

PENNSYLVANIA'S POCONO REGION

What made the Poconos attractive to sportsmen and -women was their remoteness and topography, with a wilderness aspect thrown in for good measure. The Pocono region—formed during the Devonian Period (365–405 million years ago) and shaped by the Wisconsin glaciation of northeastern Pennsylvania approximately 16,000 years ago—is a rolling plateau with elevations of 1,100 to 1,800 feet. The glacial till left a substrate of red sandstone, gray shale, black shale, flagstone, limestone, and chert with silica sand and clay.³ The morphology of the

land suited the native brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*): cool temperatures, extensive evergreen and hardwood forest, and a catchment area that included numerous lakes, ponds, bogs, and streams.

The early settlers arrived in the area by 1750 in the wake of Penn's Walking Purchase, which took much of the land formerly occupied by the Leni Lenape Indians. In the late 1700s, land warrants were granted for a number of 440-acre parcels. Those who tried to farm these rock-strewn parcels bore names such as Chambers, Utt, Waln, and Brodhead.⁴

THE TREND TO POCONO CLUBS AND PRIVATE WATER

The first fly fishers are reported to have arrived in this area in 1836, and they stayed at the Henryville Hotel to fish a major tributary of the Brodhead.⁵ The word of the fishing spread to New York and Philadelphia. But within a period of a decade or two, the fisheries were degraded, and concerned anglers sought to protect their sport by acquiring private water. The move toward private

Photos and map courtesy of the Bright Creek Park Association.

water and clubs began, and a number of clubs were founded over the next forty years: Blooming Grove Hunting and Fishing Club in 1870, the Forest Lake Club in 1882, Bright Creek Park Association in 1890, Easton Anglers' Association in 1891, and Pohoqualine Fish Association in 1894. The Brodhead fishery saw the founding of Parkside Anglers, the Brodhead Flyfishers, and the Brodhead Forest and Stream clubs. Along the Delaware River, the Egypt Mills Club was founded in 1910 on Toms Creek; in the same year, Pocono Lake Preserve was founded at the western edge of the Poconos. Each of these clubs had or has its own charm. The railroad lines from New York and Philadelphia had opened access to them. From the station in Cresco, fly fishers were taken by a six-seated, double-team buckboard to the Albert House in Canadensis (weekly rate \$7, no bath en suite). From this location, they could access the upper reaches of the Brodhead and its feeder streams.⁶

The number of members in each club was relatively small and restricted to those of like interests and backgrounds. In the Pocono clubs, members generally came from Philadelphia, New York City, or the Allentown and Easton areas. There has been little change over the years. Membership turnover is low, but openings do exist as members resign or pass

on. Women members are elected to membership in at least one Pocono club. Although it is not yet the case that women may be eligible for membership at Bright Creek Park Association, women fly fishers *are* welcome. A number of members' wives and daughters fish Bright Creek regularly.

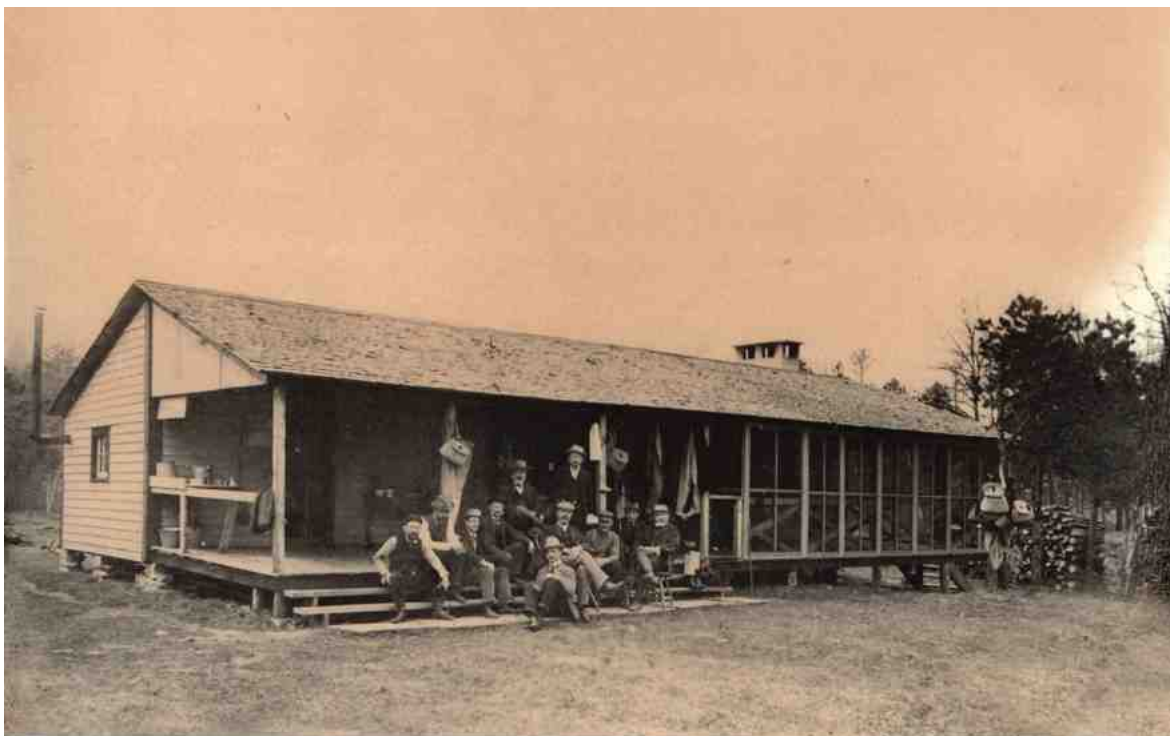
THE FISHERY

In Munroe and the southern part of Pike County, the primary fishery is the Brodhead watershed, the discharge of which flows into the Lehigh. East of the Brodhead is the other major watershed, the Bushkill, which discharges into the Delaware River near Marshall's Creek. Bright Creek is a western tributary of the Bushkill, formed by the junction of two second-order streams: Mud Run and Little Bright Creek. At the time of the club's founding, it was known as the Little Bushkill. In 1890, there were no roads to Bright Creek, and the journey to it was very time-consuming and arduous. Still, as the number of fly fishers increased on the Brodhead waters, a few sought a quieter wilderness. These few were the founders of the Bright Creek Park Association, men willing to make the trip by buckboard and foot while being mindful of the numerous eastern timber rattlesnakes.

THE ASSOCIATION'S FOUNDING AND LAND ACQUISITION

On 21 February 1890, the Bright Creek Park Association for the Protection of Fish and Game was formed at a meeting in Philadelphia. Philadelphians all, the first president was William W. McClure. Other officers and directors were Edmund H. Frishmuth Jr., Richard M. Hartley, Charles H. Spooner, Henry S. Townsend, William F. Davis, and Theodore Cramp. Elected to membership were also John D. Bliss, Collins W. Walton, and Dr. W. H. Greene. In 1891, an additional ten members joined the association. Annual dues were set at \$15.

The original membership immediately began to acquire the Bright Creek watershed. In March 1890, the Jacob Utt and Elizabeth Smith tracts of 800 acres combined were purchased for a consideration of \$1,500 in delinquent taxes. This secured the lower part of Bright Creek and included most of the best pools. In 1891, a member, J. Penrose Collins (no relation to the author), began buying tracts in Pike County to secure Mud Run and Little Bright Creek. These were the Waln, Plumstead, and Gurney tracts, each 439 acres, dating from their warrants in the 1790s. The Hutchinson tract of 415



Brookside Cabin in 1897.

acres was acquired in 1893 for \$1,200. Two years later, 106 acres, on which Mud Pond and the upper falls on Mud Run are located, were purchased.

In its first nine years, the association had acquired 2,638 acres, securing much of its entire watershed. In 1900, the members accelerated their efforts to obtain the balance of Bright Creek's catchment area. Between February and March, the balance of the Waln tract (330 acres) around Mud Pond was acquired for taxes of \$66.86; the entire 405-acre Ann Brodhead tract to the east of Bright Creek was purchased for taxes of \$24.20; and the Moses Chambers tract of 402 acres was acquired for \$402, securing much of the property between the entrance to Bright Creek and the stream. By June 1900 and the end of its first decade, the association had acquired 3,780 acres.

The members continued to acquire land, securing the southeastern part of the watershed and several hundred acres to the north of the old farmhouse adjacent to the association's entrance. By 1927, 4,800 acres had been assembled from those old 1790 land-grant warrants.⁷

CARETAKER SUCCESSION

To provide security for their new holdings, in 1891 the association retained the services of a twenty-seven-year-old local man, Daniel Meinweiser. This would prove to be a major strategic step: 117 years later, a fifth-generation Meinweiser is managing the property, the fifth consecutive member of his family to so do. Daniel's son, Frank, succeeded his father in 1927 and retired in 1967. His son,



Vivamus Cabin, built through the generosity of William Greene, a member, in 1897 and donated to the club in 1900.

Frank Jr., replaced him and retired in 1999. Frank Jr.'s son, Jim, took the position after his father retired and held the job until his untimely death at age thirty-nine in 2005. In that year, the fifth generation succeeded to the position of property manager: a new Daniel Meinweiser, Jim's son. Daniel's son, Nathaniel, may be the sixth at some point in the distant future. This succession in the same family, if not unique, is certainly noteworthy.

In 1892, the association built a house for Dan Meinweiser so that he could live on the property—a requirement that has carried on through the history of this position. The next year, a second cabin for the members was built and named Owl Cabin. Locals, unhappy that Bright

Creek was now posted, retaliated by burning down Dan's home. Undeterred, the members rebuilt and added an addition. It was named Brookside and eventually would become the association's main lodge. Years later, in 1950, a new Brookside would be built overlooking the home pool. Joseph Brown's old farmhouse, which stood near the entrance to the property, was destroyed in a forest fire in 1899. It was replaced and became the home of Frank Meinweiser and his family. Behind the farmhouse, a pond was created, fed by Stony Run, which supplied the association's ice. Dan Meinweiser cut the 12- to 15-inch-thick ice every year until his death in 1920. The old farmhouse still stands today but is uninhabited; the current Meinweiser family resides in a new home the association provided in 1993. In 1910, seven members donated a small sleeping cabin in the pine grove south of Brookside. Called the Doghouse, it has six beds and a single bathroom. In 1897, a member, William Greene, underwrote the construction of a small lodge, which he named Vivamus. In 1900, he donated the lodge to the association. It was lost to a fire in 1902, and after the burned debris had been removed, the site remained vacant for almost one hundred years. In 2000, the members, responding to a small increase in membership, donated a new cabin on the old site and named it Owl Cabin in remembrance of the first sleeping cabin.



The first Owl Cabin in the late 1890s.

MEMBERSHIP

Until 1990, membership had remained stable at twenty members. With that decade, however, dawned the realization



Members on the porch of the old Brookside Cabin before World War II.

that inflation would eventually require substantial increases in the annual dues. In 1992, two members took the lead and developed a long-range plan for the association. In the course of developing the plan, a utilization study was made, and it was determined that the association's facilities had a low rate of use. Consequently, the members voted to increase the membership to a total of thirty. The initiation fee was increased substantially and the revenues derived therefrom invested in a long-range stream maintenance and habitat improvement program. The increase in membership was done over five or six years; the members did not wish to see the culture altered too quickly by a sudden membership increase. The plan's execution resulted in a substantial improvement to the association's fishery, facilities, and financial condition.

Bright Creek's culture has always been low key: informal but in good taste. In all, a sense of stewardship for the land and its fishery prevail and influence the association's operational decisions. The primary purpose of the association is fly fishing, and prospective members must have some experience. Our fishery is challenging in the summer; stealth, fine presentations, and knowledge of the stream are required for success.

Brookside sits in a wilderness. From the porch one may see black bear, wild

turkey, grouse, bald eagle, beaver, otter, deer, and the eastern timber rattlesnake. There are no roads bisecting the association's lands; only the sound of the occasional small aircraft overhead disturbs the quiet.

Meals are served family style. There is no bar—one brings one's own. Our small staff of property manager and housekeeper are family, and members are expected to treat them with respect and courtesy.

Like its long line of caretakers, Bright Creek membership sometimes spans generations as well. There are two three-generation families and three two-generation families with current members. The oldest serving member joined in 1944; I am the second-oldest serving, having joined in 1962. Membership turnover is very low. For the past four years, there have been no openings, although there are two as this is written. Proposed members are usually friends of current members.

A LINK WITH THE PAST

In the 1990s, I spent a winter morning in my fishing tackle closet. In the process of sorting through a lifetime's collection of fly-fishing gear, my father's and father-in-law's cane rods were resurrected. Neglected for forty years, they were in need of restoration. Looking at them, the idea emerged to bring my fly-fishing

nephews and son-in-law into the joint histories of Bright Creek, a grandfather, and fly fishing in the Poconos. The rods were taken to Art Weiler (now of Kunkletown, Pennsylvania), a well-known cane rod maker and restorer. Fortunately, they were still sound, and thus a Leonard Tournament, two F. E. Thomases, a Halstead, and a Goodwin Granger Champion were restored. All had been fished at Bright Creek fifty years before and at other rivers before that.

Restored rods in hand, their cane gleaming under new coats of varnish and the German silver rod hardware polished, a way to involve my nephews and son-in-law in some fly-fishing history came to mind. In 2000, we formed the Bright Creek Cane Brigade. Membership was restricted to fly-fishing Collins family members, who pledged to fish at least once a year at Bright Creek with the cane rods now in their possession. Each has one of the cane rods with its provenance engraved on a small pewter plaque attached to the rod case. These circa 1920 to 1930 rods now make an annual appearance at our Bright Creek family outing. Two of them have accounted for brown trout in the 16- to 18-inch range. The three nephews never knew their grandfather, who died too young, and the tangible connection to a stream he loved and to him has made for some fine family fly-fishing history.



The new Brookside Lodge built in 1950.

BRIGHT CREEK'S FISHERY

The fishery comprises the main stream—Bright Creek—and its two second-order tributaries, Mud Run and Little Bright Creek, which descend from the highlands to the northwest and the northeast. These two high- to medium-gradient streams are wild brook trout habitat. The association does not stock either stream. The main stream, which is almost 4 miles in length, is a managed fishery. Approximately 1,600 brook, brown, and rainbow trout are stocked annually. During the past five years, as the association's catch-and-release culture has gained traction, fewer stocked fish have been required. An effort to promote a wild trout fishery is meeting with some success among the members. Bright Creek is a low-gradient stream characterized by large natural pools and a number of log-and-plank dams (Hewitt ramps), which provide pool and riffle habitat over its reach. Predominantly a sinuous stream, the watercourse has remained stable over many years. Both wild and stocked trout have twenty large pools with depths of 3½ feet to 10 feet in which to find cover. Boulders and large woody debris have been introduced over the years to improve habitat, too.

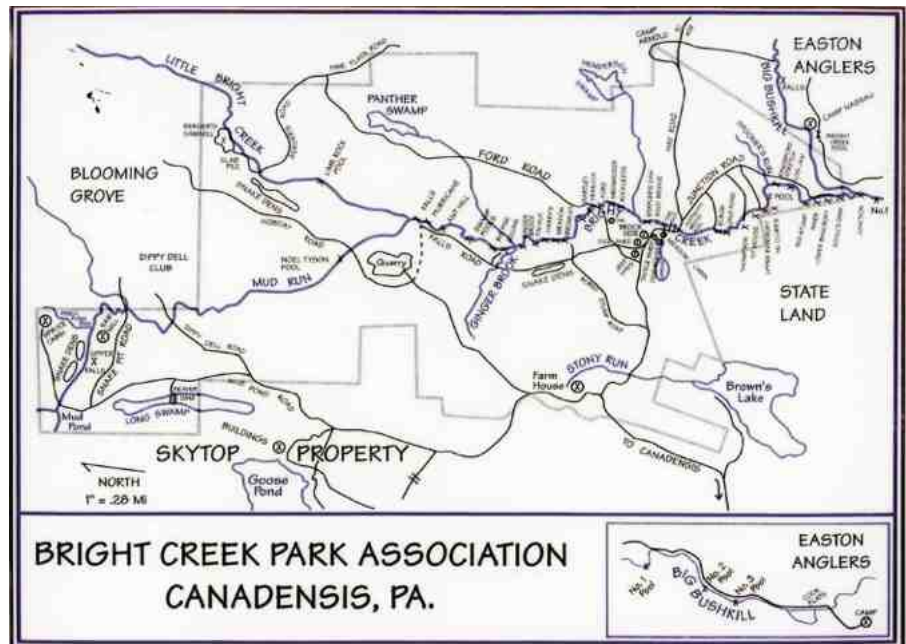
In 1890, the association's logs recorded wild brook trout of up to 16 inches in length. No fish were stocked until 1901, when ten thousand fry were released in the spring. Then, in 1910, five thousand 3- and 4-inch trout were stocked. The years of killing the large limits had finally diminished the wild brook trout. Stocking of brook trout then continued each year until the early 1990s, when 250 brown trout were also included. Browns

are now stocked on an annual basis. In 2003, the first rainbows were stocked, when a trial of one hundred were introduced. They proved successful, and a small number are now stocked each year. Mindful that the introduction of large numbers of stocked fish would affect the stream's food supply, a feeding program was initiated in the early 1990s. This has been successful in terms of maintaining and improving trout conditions and holding them in the major pools.

Improvements to the fishery were begun in 1937 with the first plank dams at Thompson and Long ponds, two of the

major pools downstream of Brookside. Six more plank dams were added in 1952. Toward the latter part of the 1960s, additional small log dams were tried but found unsuccessful and removed. Hurricane Agnes in 1972 damaged some of the 1952 plank dams, and these were rebuilt on the model Edward Ringwood Hewitt used on his Neversink waters. Then, in the early 1990s, an assessment was made of the fishery and a long-range plan developed to improve the habitat. Aquatic Resource Consulting of Saylorsburg, Pennsylvania—a firm that provides consulting services for trout stream monitoring and habitat improvement—was retained to aid the Fish and Stream Committee in preparing the plan and acquiring the proper permits. The improvements included the placement of large boulders in current lines, stabilizing banks, installing channel blocks, placing large woody debris in the stream, and rebuilding the older plank dams to the Hewitt ramp model. A number of large pine and hemlock trees (*Tsuga canadensis*) overhang the stream, and their exposed roots were protected against additional bank erosion and ice damage by the placement of boulders upstream and under the exposed root systems. The association's property has much of the material ready at hand: many large boulders, gravel pits, and blue clay.⁸

Monitoring the stream quality was also reinstated with an electrofishing survey of two downstream pools in 1999 and another two pools in 2008. A macroinvertebrate study was completed



Map of Bright Creek Park Association, created and printed by member Harry A. Trautmann in the late 1960s, showing its relation to other clubs in the twentieth century.

in 2004–2005. The latter indicated excellent biodiversity of Ephemeroptera, Trichoptera, and Plecoptera.⁹ Because the association has owned its watershed for more than a century, the stream and its two major tributaries have not been subject to the detrimental effects of development and the runoff from impervious surfaces. Nor has the water table been tapped by wells or abstraction for agricultural or other purposes. Our stream temperatures range from 38 degrees Fahrenheit on opening day to a high of 70 degrees at midday on a bright August noon.

The major change to the fishery has been the result of a change in the culture to catch and release, the introduction of the feeding program, and the stocking of brown trout. During the past decade, the percentage released has risen from 45 percent to 83 percent.¹⁰ The brown trout are holding over to a degree, as we release a number of large browns each year.

(Several 11- to 12-inch wild browns are also caught each season.) Feeding has improved condition factor, and by season's end, our 14- to 15-inch brook trout weigh 1½ pounds and our 17- to 18-inch brown trout will weigh 2 to 2½ pounds. Improvement to the habitat appears to be agreeing with a few larger wild fish. In September 2004, I released a hook-jawed male brown of 3½ pounds, and in May 2006, a 4-pound brown was released by a guest, a past president of the Anglers' Club of New York.

Today the association is thriving. We are thirty members dedicated to preserving what Dana Lamb referred to as "some silent places still."¹¹ Our members run the not-unusual spectrum of excellent fly fishers to those with some experience. For the latter, Bright Creek poses a challenge after mid-June, when water levels drop and our glass-smooth pools require a fine presentation: 15-foot leaders with 6X or 7X tippets. Because a

number of our pools are quite deep, facility with a nymph and dropper are often required when the trout are well down in the water column. The nymphs are usually in sizes 16 or 18, if success is to be had. Late in the season, when the major mayfly hatches are essentially over, it is not unusual to see the big browns sipping Diptera on the surface. This is Griffith Gnat time—no. 20 or 22, please—or occasionally a no. 20 Blue-Winged Olive.

The association cannot know what the future will bring, but the dedication is there to preserve for those who follow our Bright Creek watershed. The association has survived the Depression, two world wars, hurricanes in 1955 and 1972, and the loss of its founding members, who had the foresight to put it all together in the first place. Bright Creek Park Association has learned to survive adversity and recognizes the privilege it is to be a part of this piece of wilderness, its history in the Poconos, and the early years of fly fishing in America.



The spillway at Stapler Dam, the home pool.

ENDNOTES

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10. James C. Collins, *Bright Creek Park Association: 2007 Fish & Stream Report* (unpublished typewritten report to the members, 2007), 1.
11. Dana Lamb, *Some Silent Places Still* (Barre, Mass.: Barre Publishing, 1969).

Edwin S. Osgood, Osgood & Osgood, Makers: One Man, One Rod, and He Only Fished with a Kosmic

by Charles W. Fleischmann



Figure 1. The photograph of Edwin S. Osgood that appeared in the 22 June 1907 issue of *Forest and Stream*.

AN OBITUARY IN the 15 June 1907 issue of *Forest and Stream* reported the death of “Edward”¹ S. Osgood on May 28 at his brother Henry’s home in Pittsfield, New Hampshire at “about 60 years of age.”² The following week’s issue contained his photograph (Figure 1) and noted that his death had been announced the previous week.³

Who was this man, and why did *Forest and Stream* find it newsworthy to report on his death? Of course, one might also wonder why I have an interest in Mr. E. S. Osgood a century afterward.

In the very early 1970s, I acquired at auction a 9-foot rod, in three-piece configuration with two mids and two tips, all of full length; it is fully rounded and fitted with English (reverse) twist guides and full intermediates.⁴ The tips are contained in a bamboo tip tube, and all parts fit in a heavy canvas hooded bag.⁵ Figures 2 and 3 show the Osgood rod, tip tube, and bag. One of the mids, the darker one, has not been stripped. More detail can be seen in Figure 3.

Photographs by author unless otherwise noted.

The rod is marked on the nickel/silver reel seat, with carefully engraved jeweler’s script, OSGOOD & OSGOOD, NEW YORK, MAKERS. The script engraving, shown in Figure 4, remains in fine condition and has not been worn by age or polishing. For a period of several decades, the rod remained with the others acquired at the auction, resting peacefully in a succession of basements. But the question as to the identity of Osgood & Osgood of New York nagged at me. As either a retailer or maker, it was not a familiar name.

Within the last several years, my interest in answering this question found renewed vigor. As a member of an Internet classic rod forum,⁶ I sought comment and advice. Although not one of the members could answer who Osgood & Osgood were, or had in fact heard of the name, speculation by a few was that the rod was possibly made by Fred Thomas or perhaps another of the Kosmic group, Eustis W. Edwards or Edward F. Payne. So my search continued. One early clue came from a marked Kosmic rod retailed by H. A. Whittemore & Co. of Boston; although the Kosmic is larger and has the Ivoroid

handle, a comparison of the finishing details and proportions of the Osgood and Kosmic reel seats and sliding bands appeared to my eye as identical, as did the knurling and winding check. The hooded cup, for example, that holds the reel foot is placed up the seat from the butt as with a Kosmic and has the same knurling as the Kosmic. The Osgood and Kosmic reel seats are shown in Figures 5 and 6.

In March 2007, I was able to visit the American Museum of Fly Fishing, join up as a member, and view the display. Before doing so, I had requested—and soon thereafter received—Mary Kefover Kelly’s excellent article on Kosmic.⁷ Two clues about this puzzle emerged. The museum had on display a marked Kosmic rod with a nickel silver reel seat, and I sensed immediately that it was identical to the Osgood.

When Kelly’s article arrived, it provided the history of the sale by A. G. Spalding & Brothers to United States Net & Twine Co. of the Kosmic name and rod business.⁸ But it also provided, for me, a new piece of potentially important information. U.S. Net & Twine, upon acquisi-

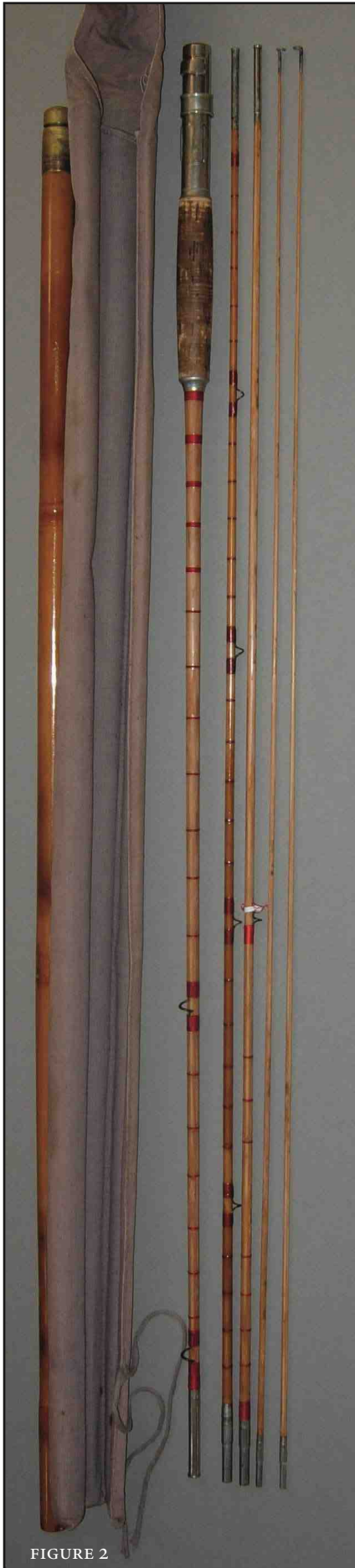


FIGURE 2



FIGURE 3



FIGURE 4

Figure 2. Osgood & Osgood rod, bag, and tip tube, in midst of restoration.

Figure 3. The Osgood rod.

Figure 4. The signature engraving on the reel seat.



FIGURE 5

Figure 5. Osgood (top) and H. A. Whittemore & Co. Kosmic (bottom) reel seats.



FIGURE 6

Figure 6. Kosmic (left) and Osgood (right) butts.

tion from Spalding in 1894, proudly announced that Mr. E. S. Osgood, the former Spalding retail tackle manager, would be assuming responsibility for tackle retailing at its New York store.⁹ I also learned how briefly U.S. Net & Twine continued the business before, essentially, closing down its operations in 1899.

Kosmic rods were, however, subsequently sold with the marking of H. A. Whittemore & Company of Boston, Massachusetts. In addition, the 1903 and 1904 catalogs of Abercrombie & Fitch, then located at 314–316 Broadway, New York City (the former New York location of U.S. Net & Twine Co.) list a variety of Kosmic rods with no reference to H. A. Whittemore. From this I concluded that Osgood had access to both the makers and the components of Kosmic- and Isaak Walton-grade rods for a number of years. But, for now, more about Osgood and the results of further research.

E. S. OSGOOD: BEFORE NEW YORK

Kelly's article included a note of thanks to the New York Historical Society for its help in searching a directory of New York partnerships, and I sought the same assistance to see if there had been a listing for Osgood & Osgood between 1899 and 1905.

About three weeks later, I received a kind e-mail response that no such listing existed; however, the researcher had looked elsewhere and found a June 1907 obituary notice for Mr. *Edward S. Osgood*, the contents of which suggested he had been associated with U.S. Net & Twine. I was advised that a copy would arrive in the mail. Upon its arrival, I learned that Mr. Osgood had died at his brother Henry's house in Pittsfield, New Hampshire.¹⁰

Further research revealed Edwin S. Osgood was born in Pittsfield, New Hampshire, on 26 August 1844. One of Edwin's brothers, Henry, was also a merchant and an early and well-known photographer in Pittsfield. In 1871, E. S. Osgood was a merchant in Pittsfield and brother Henry a photographer.¹¹ E. S. held the same occupation in 1874.¹² By 1904, Henry was a photographer and sold flour, corn, furniture, and sewing machines. Brother Frank sold groceries and meat.¹³

Edwin had married Martha E. Allen,¹⁴ known as Lizzie, who died in 1889 at age forty-one; the couple had a daughter, Alice, who predeceased them at age eight in 1884. Edwin, Lizzie, and Alice now rest together in his brother Frank's plot in Floral Park Cemetery in Pittsfield.¹⁵

Several bits of information suggest that Edwin Osgood may have had at least

some exposure in his youth to outdoor pastimes. His brother Henry, the photographer, was reported to have killed (presumably by shooting) as many as five saw-whet owls and to have mounted a snowy owl.¹⁶ Edwin's brother, Frank D. Osgood, in whose plot he rests, was elected to the New Hampshire House of Representatives in 1909 and was appointed as "the busy clerk of the exceedingly busy committee on fisheries and game."¹⁷ So we know that Osgood's brothers, at least, were familiar with fish and game.

I do not know when or exactly why Mr. Osgood first came to New York. He, Lizzie, and daughter Alice are listed in the 1880 United States census as living in Winchester, Massachusetts, with his occupation as "Merchant—manuf. of silk threads." His daughter Alice died in Lowell, Massachusetts, and his wife Lizzie, we know, died in 1889. A small article in an 1887 *Forest and Stream* under the heading "Indiana Angling" notes, "[O]ur anglers are awakening to the pleasures of fly-fishing, for which we are indebted to Mr. E. S. Osgood, of Boston, a gentleman who travels through here, and who took from our stream seven black bass in thirty-two minutes using a 3/4 oz. rod."¹⁸ I can only conclude that Osgood was a salesman, perhaps traveling to Chicago.

I speculate that possibly through a silk thread connection he had become ac-

quainted with one or more rod manufacturers and the tackle business, and perhaps the loss of his daughter and wife led to his move to New York.¹⁹

OSGOOD'S KOSMIC CONNECTION

It was in very early 1890 that Eustis W. Edwards and Loman Hawes applied for and were issued the two patents that formed a foundation for the advent of the Kosmic rod, produced through the financial backing and trademark of A. G. Spalding.²⁰ This, of course, is when these two rodmakers, along with Fred Thomas, left the employ of Hiram Leonard; after Hawes died or departed, the remaining two were joined by Edward F. Payne. I cannot say when Osgood first came under the employ of Spalding, but he certainly did, and he had come to make a name for himself in New York fishing circles. In June 1890, it was reported in an article about fishing in Maine that five trout from Rangeley had been on display in the window of Spalding's on Broadway.²¹

The reports of Osgood fishing are, with few exceptions, all tales of his fishing at Upper Dam in Rangeley, Maine. The earliest such report, written in 1892, is of a fish he appears to have caught in 1890 while using a Kosmic rod. (The various reports demonstrate some confusion over the actual date that the fish was caught.) I strongly infer that he was working at the A. G. Spalding store in New York by this time.²²

This fish became the subject of much of what was written about Osgood. The first report I found appeared in October

1892. The *American Angler* reported, "Mr. E. S. Osgood, of A. G. Spalding & Brothers, would seem to be 'high hook' in killing the largest trout ever taken with the fly. It was accomplished last season with a trout weighing slightly over nine pounds. This year he took one on a six and a quarter ounce Kosmic rod that weighed eight pounds two ounces, which, so far as we know, is the largest trout killed on a fly during the season of 1892."²³ The *American Angler*, edited by William Harris, whom Osgood apparently came to know, published two subsequent bits about Osgood and the fish. In January 1893, an inquiry from a reader was published as to the largest trout caught on a fly. The editor replied, "Mr. E. O. [sic] Osgood caught on September 18, 1892 at Upper Dam, Me., a red-spotted trout that weighed nine pounds two ounces. It was taken on a six and a quarter ounce Kosmic rod and a Whitney 'B. Pond' fly. This we believe to be the largest *Fontinalis* ever taken on an artificial fly."²⁴ Osgood quickly submitted a correction; it is the first written word of his I have found. "In the statement in the last number of *The Angler*, relative to the large brook trout taken by myself at the Rangeley Lakes, permit me to make the following correction: It was two years ago, 1890, I killed the 9 lbs. 2 oz. fish. (As a matter of fact it weighed 9 lbs. 3 oz.) Last season I killed another weighing 9 lbs. 2 oz. and one of 8 lbs. Other large ones of between 3 lbs. and 6 lbs. 10 oz., I also killed. With these corrections the article is correct. E. S. Osgood."²⁵

It should be remembered, as the name of Osgood starts to appear with refer-

ence to the Kosmic rod in the sporting press of the day, that preparations were well under way for the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago and that none other than Cornelia "Fly Rod" Crosby was well acquainted with Mr. Osgood.²⁶ She reported to the *Bangor Industrial Journal* by post of 15 April 1893:

We were in New York recently and had the pleasure of spending several hours in the fishing tackle department of Messrs Spalding's store, which is in charge of Mr. E. S. Osgood, whose record as a fisherman is hard to excel. We wish we could give the journal readers some idea of this collection of rods, thirty-two in number, all of split bamboo, which have been made under the immediate instruction of Mr. Osgood and are wonders of mechanical art. The lightest rod is a most dainty affair; it weighs about 1¼ ounces, is 7 feet 3 inches in length, and is of split-bamboo with solid gold mountings. The finest one in the collection cost \$500. The grasp is of ivory with solid gold mountings, part of which is in a sort of lace work, while in the butt is set a crystal, on the under side of which is etched a Professor No. 12 hook, so perfectly that it seems as if a fly had been placed there. This was done in Paris, the only place where such work is executed. There are several others with gold mountings, and also in solid silver, each different, and of beautiful design. The grand salmon rod is 15½ feet in length and weighs 22 ounces.

Among this collection of split bamboo rods are those as perfectly round and smooth as wire, while the general plan is hexagonal.²⁷

As is made clear by a contemporaneous article describing Fly Rod's trip, her visit with Mr. Osgood was to "the factory where the 'Kosmic' rods are manufactured . . ." and the special group of rods she viewed were made for the Spalding exhibit at the "World's Fair" in Chicago, also known as the Columbian Exposition.²⁸

Not only did Fly Rod come to visit with him, but the written record tells us in detail of another such visit. William Senior, who sometimes wrote under the nom de plume Red Spinner, was a prolific English angling writer who was editor-in-chief of the *Field* from 1899 to 1909. In 1920, the year of his death at age eighty-one, Senior published *Lines in Pleasant Places*, including a chapter devoted to "Hasty Visits to America."²⁹ Senior tells of his visit to the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893.³⁰ After his description of alligators freezing in outdoor ponds and the variety of strange fish he saw, he returns to the story of a large mounted *Fontinalis* trout he had seen. What follows is a multipaged



FIGURE 7

Figure 7. B. Pond fly tied by Royce Stearns according to Mary Orvis Marbury description. Photo by Royce Stearns.

description of his conversation with none other than Mr. Osgood. Osgood tells him in great detail how one traveled from New York through Boston and up to Maine to fish the pool at Upper Dam. Osgood's words read like a wonderful nineteenth-century travelog with "lovely fish," flower beds, a veranda, the hotel, and "[t]his is the anglers' camp, and the happiest hours of my life have been spent there."³¹

And then the story really begins with, "And now we come to September 18 last year. It was Sunday, a day upon which I seldom fish. . . . So I went out at the most favorable hour—five in the afternoon, with my 10-ft Kosmic rod, weighing exactly 6¼ ounces. I like myself to fish a single fly . . . The fly was the B. Pond, so called because it was a favorite on a lake of that name, and as you will see, it was a 2 per cent Sproat hook." The fish was hooked and fought "for an hour and five minutes. . . . The fish was there and then weighed and measured, and there and then entered on the records. Weight 9 lbs. 2 oz., length 27½ in., girth 17 in. She was a most handsome Fontinalis, and we counted ninety-three vermilion spots on one of her sides."³²

Royce Stearns was kind enough to furnish me with a replica of a B. Pond fly, shown in Figure 7. It is tied on an appropriate hook with correct materials.

Senior then wrote, "After this story, from an experienced angler, whose word is never doubted," that Osgood had the

mounted fish, the fly, and the rod together with him in Chicago. The description of the fly was given,³³ and Senior said the rod "[w]as just as small as described, and certainly a masterpiece of work."³⁴

Next, in his "Hasty Visits to America," Senior traveled from Chicago, through Niagara Falls and Albany and the Catskills, and returned to New York City. "Mr. Osgood, the slayer of the big Fontinalis, had been round the country, and I found him amongst his fishing tackle in New York, showing rods and flies to an admiring trio of anglers."³⁵ This clearly appears to have been Senior showing up at Spalding's store to visit again with Osgood. Senior expressed disappointment in not being able to fish in the United States before his departure in three days for England, so Osgood, after some thought, took Senior over to introduce him "to Mr. Harris, the editor of the *American Angler*."³⁶ Harris penned a letter of introduction to his club in New Jersey: "Mr. Osgood kindly allowed his business to slide for a day or so,"³⁷ and the two of them traveled off by train to what Senior believed to be New Jersey, where they stayed at the Quaspeake Club³⁸ in the house pitched close to the Demorest brook. Osgood likely knew William C. Harris from the earlier notes in and his letter to the *American Angler*.

Fly Rod Crosby wrote again about Osgood in 1895. Her article contained a photograph of him and another of his mounted brook trout. I believe the

"mounted" trout to be the one depicted in Figure 8. I have been unable to locate its present whereabouts if it still exists. The photograph of Osgood, with cigar, appears in Figure 9. Crosby wrote:

There is another gentleman of piscatorial fame—who is considered authority on fly fishing and tackle, who can cast the fly as far as anyone, and with as much skill—that well known angler, Mr. E. S. Osgood, of New York City. Each season Mr. Osgood passes a part of his vacation at Upper Dam. No wonder the Kosmic rod takes the lead when Mr. Osgood, who uses no other, has taken, besides hundreds of small trout, two that weighed 7 pounds each, one 8 pounds 2 ounces, one 9 pounds 2 ounces, and one 9 pounds.³⁹

Osgood was also referred to frequently in the *New York Times* for his fishing prowess.

Fly fishermen the world over watch eagerly the reports of big fish that take the fly at Upper Dam pools, as nowhere in the known world have such large square-tailed trout been taken.

E. S. Osgood, an angler well known in New York, who several summers ago took from these waters a nine-pound-eleven ounce brook trout on the fly, arrived Friday night. His tackle case being delayed, he had only a three ounce fly rod with him. Early Saturday morning Mr. Osgood was in the pool sending the fly over the water "just for

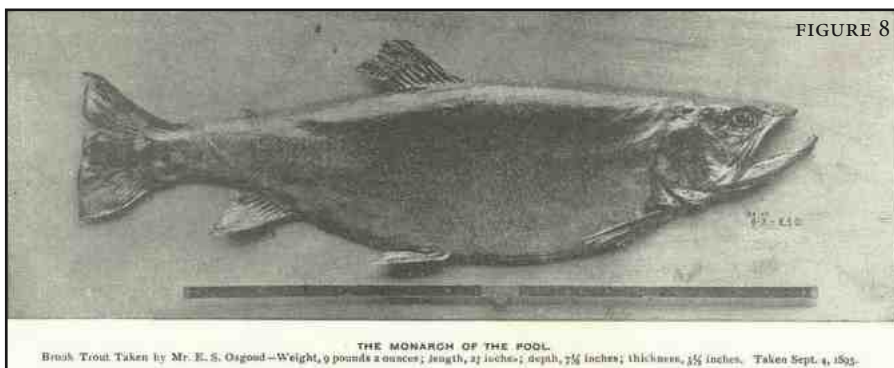
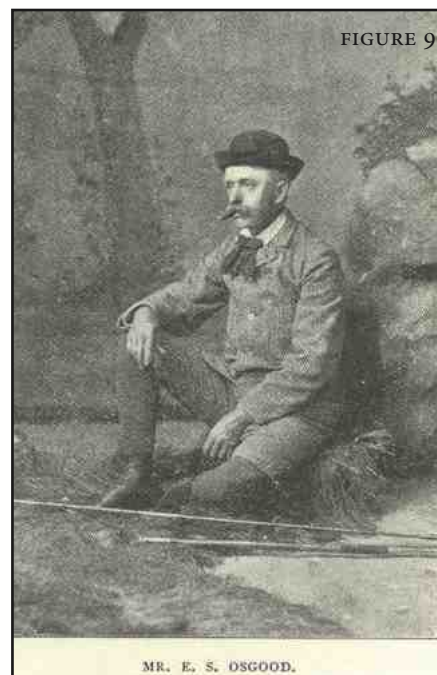


Figure 8. Osgood's mounted Upper Dam brook trout. From *Shooting and Fishing* (Christmas 1895, vol. 19, no. 9), 186.

Figure 9. E. S. Osgood, circa 1895. From *Shooting and Fishing* (Christmas 1895, vol. 19, no. 9), 185.



THE KOSMIC ROD

THIS IS THE ONLY SPLIT BAMBOO ROD MADE
WHICH DOES NOT BREAK AT THE END OF THE FERRULE.

The best bamboo, german silver, and skillful labor only, is used in its manufacture. | Every Rod is fully warranted as represented, or the money will be refunded.

—WE ALSO HAVE A—

KOSMIC BRAND OF FISHING TACKLE Which is of the highest grade in every particular, the prices for which are no higher than those usually charged for medium grade goods. We warrant every article we sell to be equal to the representations made. This department is under the management of a practical angler (E. S. OSGOOD), who considers it a pleasure to personally reply to all communications concerning matters of interest to anglers.

UNITED STATES NET & TWINE CO.,

Send for Catalogue. . . . 316 Broadway, New York

FIGURE 10

Figure 10. United States Net & Twine Co. advertisement for the Kosmic Rod noting Osgood as department manager. Shooting and Fishing (20 February 1896, vol. 19, no. 18), 379.

practice, you know,” and he hooked a two and a half pound trout, one three pounds ten ounces, and a salmon three pounds thirteen ounces.⁴⁰

Two weeks later, the paper further reported:

Sunday evening, E. S. Osgood of New York was casting with a light rod and the fly was tied on a number 12 hook when a salmon of six pounds 14 ounces struck. Mr. Osgood was alone in a boat in the pool, but holding his rod in one hand while the salmon made a wild run, he changed the position of the boat, then gave his attention to the fighter in the pool. The guests came down from the hotel and for more than an hour eagerly watched the skillful manner in which Mr. Osgood played the fish and at last netted him. Three other good salmon, one 6 pounds 1 ounce, one 6 pounds, the other 3 pounds 6 ounces has this lucky fisherman got during the past week, and yet he has fished only an hour or so each day.⁴¹

And one week later the paper reported he had another 7-pound trout to his credit.

Kelly wrote that Osgood’s employment with Spalding ended when Spalding ended its interest in the Kosmic rod. But he immediately picked up where he had left off with U.S. Net & Twine,⁴² and his new employer was pleased to use his name in its initial announcement and subsequent advertisements.⁴³

For example, the advertisements by U.S. Net & Twine Co. for the Kosmic rod that appeared in an 1895–1896 issue of

the *American Angler* stated, “This department is under the management of a practical angler, E. S. OSGOOD, who considers it a pleasure to personally reply to all communications concerning matters of interest to anglers.”⁴⁴ The advertisement, which appeared in several issues, appears in Figure 10. Osgood’s name was prominently capitalized.

The March 1896 Second Annual Sportsman’s Show at Madison Square Garden in New York was reportedly well attended with a large number of exhibitors. Fly Rod Crosby arrived in a snowstorm, and one of her log Maine camps was erected and attended by a number of well-known guides. U.S. Net & Twine Co. exhibited its Kosmic rods, reels, and wading boots on the Fourth Avenue side of the building. “The exhibit is under the efficient charge of Mr. E. S. Osgood, who is an expert fisherman and well qualified to manage the business of such an enterprising business corporation.”⁴⁵ The exhibit included a Kosmic combination valise rod with four tips, two for bait and two for fly with reversible grip. Also of interest was the exhibit of a rounded Kosmic rod, 8½ feet, which weighed but 2 ounces and one of the rods, fitted up with gold and ivory, that had been exhibited in Chicago in 1893. Finally, two remarkable rods were on display that had been made for Mr. D. A. Heald, president of Home Insurance. One rod was 8 feet, 1 inch; the other 8½ feet. Their weights were 1½ and 2½ ounces, respectively.⁴⁶

By at least January 1898, Osgood had achieved further recognition when the second annual casting tournament of the National Sportsmen’s Association was held in Madison Square Garden.⁴⁷ This tournament included a remarkable group of people as contestants and judges. Among those present in competition were D. Brandreth (for whom the Brandreth fly was named), Edward R. Hewitt and his brother Peter Cooper Hewitt, Reuben C. Leonard, Hiram Hawes, Cora Leonard, H. R. Harris, John Landman, young Eddie Mills, T. B. Stewart, Fred Mather, Chancellor Levinson, Fred N. Peet, and F. Divine.⁴⁸

Osgood was not a competitor, but he was selected to serve as a judge. For the black bass fly-casting contest, he served as a judge with T. B. Stewart, and the referee was Fred Mather. The order of the first three finishers was R. C. Leonard, Hiram Hawes, and P. Cooper Hewitt. Osgood also served as a judge for the single-handed bait-casting event and the “switch or Pritchard style [roll casting],” with the order of winners being Hiram Hawes, P. Cooper Hewitt, and R. C. Leonard.⁴⁹ It was a remarkable group of casters he was called upon to judge. He served as a judge at the New York Sportsman’s Show with David Abercrombie in March 1902, judging casters such as Eddie Mills and Edward Ringwood Hewitt.⁵⁰

Finally, Osgood’s subsequent employment with Abercrombie & Fitch was noted by *Forest and Stream* in April 1903 in the “Publisher’s Column,” which discussed the firm’s new location on Broadway, the same space that had been occupied by U.S. Net & Twine. “[T]hese quarters are daily thronged with sportsmen. Mr. E. S. Osgood, for many years with the U. S. Net & Twine Co. has charge of the fishing tackle department, and many of his old friends who have not known of his whereabouts will be glad to learn of his present connection.”⁵¹ I take from this that he was likely out of work for a period of time after U.S. Net & Twine went under, and his whereabouts, to me as well as to *Forest and Stream* during this period, remain unknown. The 1903 Abercrombie & Fitch catalog also takes note of the “new and convenient location at 314 and 316 Broadway” and refers to the manager of the tackle department as a person with “wide knowledge of an angler’s needs, not only from an angler’s standpoint but from a long connection to the trade.”⁵²

Although Osgood was with Abercrombie & Fitch in 1903, this affiliation was short-lived. It is known that Lou S. Darling, an angler and tournament caster, became employed by Abercrombie & Fitch.⁵³ The 1906 Abercrombie & Fitch



FIGURE 11

Figure 11. From left: Kosmic; Osgood; Edward F. Payne; Schoverling, Daly & Gales (“Our Special”); and Jim Payne rods.

catalog, which notes a new address on Reade Street in New York, states in its introduction to fishing tackle that the Touradif rods were being made under the direct supervision of their employee who was both “a fisherman of wide experience and a well known Tournament winner.”⁵⁴ This is a description of Lou Darling—Osgood was gone.

The 1915 catalog for David T. Abercrombie Co. (Abercrombie’s Camp) at 311 Broadway has an introduction in which Abercrombie stated that he “organized and became President of the Abercrombie and Fitch Company in 1904 and left in 1907.”⁵⁵ Osgood knew Abercrombie, but perhaps was not as close to Ezra Fitch, who may have been more of the businessman.

This is what I have learned of Osgood in New York. I will likely never learn exactly the circumstances of when and why he left New York and how he came back to his brother’s house in Pittsfield, New Hampshire, where he soon died.

THE OSGOOD & OSGOOD ROD

Remarkably, I also learned from the *Forest and Stream* obituary that before his death, Osgood had recently visited the offices of *Forest and Stream* to show them a rod he said he had recently made. Perhaps, always the salesman, he retained hope for the future. Indeed, it was reported in his obituary:

He was best known in New England as an enthusiastic fly-fisherman and for a great many years he was one of the first visitors to the Rangeley Lakes in Maine. When the United States Net and Twine Company was at 316 Broadway, New York City, he was its manager, and although sporting goods were carried, Mr. Osgood paid particular attention to high grade fishing rods. More recently he solicited orders for rods and tackle and filled them in the trade, and the last time we saw him he came in to show us an eight-strip fly-rod which he said he had made himself from bamboo so small that the finished rod appeared to be perfectly round and its form could be noticed only by turning it in the

fingers. Mr. Osgood was then as enthusiastic as a boy over his work, and was always ready to assist beginners. He had promised to write for *Forest and Stream* a series of articles on fly-rod making for amateurs, but was so fully occupied with other work that he never got to it, as he said, but hoped to write it “some time.”⁵⁶

The rod I have is, upon close scrutiny of six-piece construction, carefully rounded. The reel seat and winding check are those used by U.S. Net & Twine in the manufacture of Kosmic rods, and the ferrules are perhaps Isaak Walton rod ferrules (details can be seen in Figures 2 and 3).⁵⁷ One examiner of the rod thought the ferrules looked “Payne-like.” The grip is unlike most Thomas grips and approximates some early Payne grips and the Kosmic grip. Figure 11 shows, from left to right, several early rods: Kosmic; Osgood; Edward F. Payne; Schoverling, Daly & Gales; and Jim Payne. All these rods have full intermediates. The hooded butt caps on the Kosmic and the Osgood are placed up from the end of the butt demonstrably more than the other rods. The Osgood grip seems most similar in style to the two Payne rods. The winding checks on the Kosmic and Osgood are distinctively different than those on the other three rods.

I conclude—reasonably, I think—that the rod I have is in fact the rod that Mr. Osgood “made” in an effort to stay in the game of selling high-end fly rods during the difficult economic times that existed both nationally and perhaps for Osgood himself if he found himself suddenly unemployed. The fact that it is of six pieces and not eight seems to me immaterial because it is almost impossible to find the glue lines for any sections. He was said to have directed the production of Kosmic rods and fished, according to Fly Rod, only with a Kosmic.

The tips of the rod are cased in a Kosmic tip tube, and the butt, two mids, and tip tube fit into a heavy fabric hooded bag. In the lightest of pencil, written in the center of the inside of the hood, appears 9%. On the outside of the bag, also in faint pencil, appears the single word OSGOOD. The bag is distinctive. The opening curves up, and a single blue thread line runs down the length of the bag. I also have a different rod that has the identical bag, save the number of openings for sections. It is of heavy material with the exact curve to the opening and the exact hood. It also has a single blue thread stitched down the length of the



FIGURE 12

Figure 12. From left: Rod bags for Schoverling, Daly & Gales; Kosmic; and Osgood.

bag, which seems almost a signature, as it can serve no other purpose that I can discern. Most remarkable, however, is the fact that this bag also has handwritten in faint pencil, and certainly by the same hand, 9/2 (the handwriting can be seen in Figure 12). The bags show marked similarities. This bag came with an unusual rod obtained at auction by a collector. It houses a 3/2 rod marked OUR SPECIAL and SCHOVERLING, DALY & GALES, a New York sporting goods dealer. I and another collector conclude this second rod was likely made by Fred Thomas, perhaps circa 1900. The 1909 catalog of Schoverling, Daly & Gales describes the Our Special rod in the following glowing terms: “as near a perfect hand-made rod as it is possible to build. The hand work on this rod is done by the same workmen who have built up the reputation of a celebrated rod in this country, and who do not know how to turn out an inferior article.”⁵⁸ Is this perhaps a reference to the Kosmic?

Nonetheless, the actual maker of the Osgood rod remains unknown. I conclude that it was either made by Edward F. Payne—and I lean toward Payne—or Fred Thomas. At least one other possibility exists. The U.S. Net & Twine Co. exhibit at the 1896 Sportsman’s Show in New York displayed a “round” Kosmic rod, and although I have not seen such a rod, it remains possible that Osgood reworked old stock in having his rod assembled.

One further clue leans toward Ed Payne. With thanks to Hoagy B. Carmichael, it has been learned that in 1903, Edward F. Payne advertised that he was

“the sole maker” of the Kosmic rod and that H. A. Whittemore & Co. was the sole agent.⁵⁹ This fact, coupled with the rod bag, inclines me toward Ed Payne as having been the maker of the single Osgood & Osgood rod. Certainly Osgood had known him from when Payne joined Thomas and Edwards and while Payne continued with Fred Thomas after Edwards went west. By 1899 or a bit earlier, Thomas was back in Maine, and Payne was working in Highland Mills to make a living for his family. Payne would have been the geographically closest rodmaker well known to Osgood. Furthermore, it seems remarkably coincidental that in 1903, when Osgood was mentioned in print as returning to the tackle business with Abercrombie & Fitch, Payne was simultaneously advertising that he was the sole maker of the Kosmic rod, a rod that Abercrombie & Fitch was then retailing. The fact that the Osgood & Osgood rod is rounded, unlike most Kosmics, could have been the result of Osgood trying to make a rod that was distinctive, albeit in a sort of retro manner, or Payne insisting the rod not be identified with the actual maker. Alternatively, the rod could have been a reworked rounded Kosmic.

I suggest further that the OSGOOD & OSGOOD marked on the rod was the combination of Edwin and his brother Henry. Henry, a well-established photographer in Pittsfield, had an interest in the outdoors. He contributed, in 1876 or thereabouts, a photograph of a bird to the American Ornithologists’ Union, founded by George Bird Grinnell, the prominent editor of *Forest and Stream*, and he was later elected a member of the

union. Henry was also involved in various manufacturing enterprises, acting as an agent for the Love brand of sewing machine in the late 1800s and as a manufacturer of picture frames and looking glasses in Pittsfield.

The sparse historical record of Osgood suggests, nonetheless, that he, like I, was taken by fly fishing, its tackle, and its people, and in his case, the Upper Dam region of Rangeley, Maine. I hope that this modest quest to uncover information about a single fly rod will give Mr. Edwin S. Osgood’s otherwise forgotten life a modest, but I feel deserved, place in the history of fly-fishing tackle.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My gratitude to the following for various contributions from their own research, their observations, comments, critique, and encouragement: Jeff Knapp, Tom Kerr, Dave Howell, and Dr. Todd E. A. Larson. Any errors in fact or opinion (and there is a lot of opinion) are mine.

ENDNOTES

1. *Forest and Stream* indeed wrote “Edward.” Nonetheless, almost uniformly elsewhere he was referred to only by his first and middle initials and last name. Osgood’s death certificate indicates that his first name was in fact Edwin and states that he died May 29. I do not know if this is in error; the town clerk also provided a certificate indicating the year of birth as 1844 and the year of death as 2007, clearly a scrivener’s error. The date of interment is stated to be 31 May 1907. The Pittsfield Historical Society has confirmed his birth in 1844. He is buried in Floral Park Cemetery in Pittsfield in a lot owned by his younger brother Frank (1850–1919).
2. “Recent Deaths,” *Forest and Stream* (15 June 1907, vol. LXVIII, no. 24), 936.
3. *Forest and Stream* (22 June 1907, vol. LXVIII, no. 25).
4. This Boston auction, which I could ill afford at the time, included in a single lot perhaps a dozen rods, including round “pool cue” rods, landlocked salmon trolling rods, a Kosmic (regrettably traded for a Leonard 50DF), a John Krider, and a C. F. Nason net.
5. I was younger then and undertook a “restoration” that included stripping the poor varnish, remaining wraps, and corroded guides. Fortunately, the ghosts of the original wraps remain, and one of the mids was left alone. The rod is now undergoing a more correct restoration.
6. The Classic Fly Rod Forum: <http://clarksclassicrodforum.yuku.com>.
7. Mary Kefover Kelly, “Spalding and the Kosmic Connection,” *The American Fly Fisher* (Summer 1984, vol. 11, no. 3), 2–7. I must express my gratitude to this author for her thorough and painstaking investigation and docu-

A FINAL REMEMBRANCE

In 1900, A. Nelson Cheney contributed the following words under the title "My Little Girl" in the March 31 issue of *Forest and Stream*:

Not long ago a friend was writing me about rods, their power, weight, manufacture, etc., for he is a mighty angler with the light rod and artificial fly, and has to his credit one of the largest brook trout ever caught with fly in fair angling, and he said: "My little girl captured a 3-pound 5-ounce trout on a 2-ounce rod last fall in the pool below Upper Dam. It required a lot of fine work to land the fish, as the water was very swift and her line only 35 feet, and H at that. She was dangling the fly over the 'gunnel' when the trout took it, and almost took her fingers at the same time. It was an ugly male."

Think of it. A little girl with a 2-ounce rod, 35 feet of line and swift water playing and landing a trout of 3 pounds and 5 ounces!

There is no way of expressing exultation with a stub pen, but as I read the letter I had no difficulty in imagining the pride in the father, for I have a big girl of my own who was once a little girl and a friend's little boy went trout fishing in charge of a young man, while the fathers of the two children took a day off from fishing to look over tackle, etc. A heavy storm came up on that warm summer's day, and the father of the little boy walked the floor and bewailed that his child should get wet, and hoped the storm would not raise the water and spoil the fishing, for he knew beyond peradventure that his little girl would not show a yellow streak because of a thunder shower, and when they all came back wet and draggled, but happy and rosy, and the little girl had caught the only trout taken that day, her father took her up in his arms in all her wet clothes and mused his boiled shirt front just under his chin. I know something about little girls myself.

I see that I have used the expression "one of the largest brook trout ever caught with fly in fair angling," and I must confess that I did it inadvertently, but the mention of Upper Dam carried my thoughts back to a time when I witnessed attempts at that place to catch trout with an alleged fly that was not fair by any manner of means, but *Forest and Stream* exposed the whole thing long ago, and as I am writing of Mr. E. S. Osgood of Brooklyn, and his little girl, it would not have been necessary to say fair angling had I mentioned his name at the beginning.

So here we have Mr. Edwin S. Osgood. Not just a salesman, but a father and a fisherman. He rests in Pittsfield with his little girl, Alice, and I hope he is not now forgotten. When I take my little granddaughter fishing in a few years, I will think of him.

mentation of the relationship between the various companies associated with the Kosmic name. The relationship with H. A. Whittemore & Co. remains unexplored (or at least as of now unwritten).

8. Kelly writes that the first documented reference she was able to find to the change from Spalding to U.S. Net & Twine was a 7 April 1894 announcement in the *Field* relating to U.S. Net & Twine, announcing the opening of its store at 316 Broadway in New York and its ownership of the "complete [Kosmic] plant and factory" (Kelly, "Spalding and the Kosmic Connection," 5). Nonetheless, a few days earlier, in the *New York Times* (4 April 1894), an advertisement appeared by U.S. Net & Twine for its store at 316 Broadway with its "entirely new stock of Fine Rods and Fishing Tackle" and that it was "Headquarters for the Kosmic Rod." I have, in addition, an October 1894 United States Net & Twine letterhead with a stamped address change at the top from Fulton Street to 316 Broadway, demonstrating both the move and its frugal use of stationery.

9. Kelly, "Spalding and the Kosmic Connection," 5.

10. "Recent Deaths," *Forest and Stream* (15 June 1907, vol. LXVIII, no. 24), 936.

11. *New Hampshire Register, Farmer's Almanac and Business Directory for 1871* (Claremont, N.H., 1871), 165.

12. *New Hampshire Register, Farmer's Almanac and Business Directory for 1874* (Claremont, N.H., 1874), 174.

13. *New Hampshire Register, Farmer's Almanac and Business Directory for 1904* (Claremont, N.H., 1904), 208–9.

14. Correspondence to the author from Richard R. Osgood of Wolfboro, New Hampshire, Osgood family genealogist, 23 July 2007.

15. Correspondence to the author from Larry Berkson, society historian, the Pittsfield Historical Society, 30 September 2007.

16. N. Dearborn, *A Preliminary List of the Birds of Belknap and Merrimack Counties New Hampshire* (Durham: New Hampshire College, 1898), 17.

17. G. A. Cheney, "The Legislature of 1909–1910," *The Granite Monthly* (vol. XLI, no. 3), 101–2.

18. "Indiana Angling," *Forest and Stream* (6 January 1887). My thanks to Dr. Todd E. A. Larson for providing this source.

19. Osgood did, nonetheless, remarry on 9 March 1894 in New York. His new bride was Emma Jaeger. At the time of their marriage, she was but nineteen; he was then forty-nine

and, as will be seen, quite successful and well known in his angling niche. The 1880 census tells us that Emma was the daughter of Gustave and Mary Jaeger; Gustave was a railroad clerk. How they met and why they married, except of course for love, remains to me a mystery. He was still married to Emma at the time of his death.

20. Edwards, E. W. 1890. U.S. Patent 427,162, filed 27 January 1890 and issued 6 May 1890; Hawes, L. N. 1890. U.S. Patent 428,755, filed 26 February 1890 and issued 27 May 1890.

21. "Fun for the Fishermen: Finney Game Unusually Plentiful This Week," *New York Times* (28 June 1890), 8.

22. I certainly mean no disrespect by noting that all the reports of his fishing in Maine are of just that—fishing—and none suggest that he was a guest of any of the more notable fishermen or socially connected families who visited Rangeley. Whether his trips were underwritten by his employer, in part to demonstrate tackle and have the tackle reported in the news, is unknown but a reasonable hypothesis.

23. *The American Angler* (October 1892, vol. 22, no. 1), 25.

24. William Harris, editor, *The American Angler* (January 1893, vol. 23, no. 4), 144.

25. E. S. Osgood, letter to the editor, *The American Angler* (February 1893, vol. 23, no. 5), 187.

26. For more on Crosby, see Julia A. Hunter and Earle G. Shettleworth Jr., *Fly Rod Crosby: The Woman Who Marketed Maine* (Gardiner, Me.: Tilbury House), 2000. One photograph of Fly Rod in this interesting biography shows her holding a rod that appears to have an Ivoroid reel seat. Although this seat would have been appropriate for certain Kosmic rods, it also might have been found on a Wheeler (and he gave her several) or on a John Landman rod.

27. Cornelia "Fly Rod" Crosby, "Some Wonderful Fishing Rods," *Bangor Industrial Journal* (21 April 1893).

28. *Bangor Industrial Journal* (21 April 1893).

29. William Senior, *Lines in Pleasant Places* (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1920). Senior apologizes at length in the introduction for the fact that he had promised his publisher a new book but, in fact, most of the material had appeared previously in several earlier publications, and the book was a compilation that he also referred to as "Aftermath of Red Spinner." This is certainly the case; I have found that the *Fishing Gazette* of London published extracts of Red Spinner's articles as published in the *Field*. See reproductions in C. Netherton, *History of the Sport of Casting: People, Events, Records, Tackle and Literature Early Times* (Lakeland, Fla.: American Casting Education Foundation, Inc., 1981), 116–99.

30. Senior, *Lines in Pleasant Places*, 251.

31. Senior, *Lines in Pleasant Places*, 261.

32. *Ibid.* Because 18 September 1892 was, in fact, a Sunday, it would appear that Osgood caught a 9-pound, 3-ounce fish in 1890 as reported in the *American Angler* and the 9-pound, 2-ounce fish in 1892.

33. Senior describes the fly as follows: "I handled the fly (what at least was left of it), and can describe it. B. Pond was really a fair-

sized salmon fly—turkey wing, orange body, and claret hackles, with the gold tip of the Professor. The collar was of picked medium gut stained black” (Senior, *Lines in Pleasant Places*, 263). This description does not correspond to the B. Pond pattern as described by Mary Orvis Marbury. My communications with Royce Stearns, an extremely accomplished West Coast tier who graciously tied an exemplar of the B. Pond for this article, indicate there are likely typographical errors. For example, the collar would not have been of “picked medium gut” although “gut stained black” would make sense.

34. Senior, *Lines in Pleasant Places*, 263.

35. Senior, *Lines in Pleasant Places*, 265.

36. *Ibid.*

37. *Ibid.*

38. The club was, according to the *New York Times* (“Too Early for the Trout—But Not Too Early for a Day with the Quaspeake Club,” 2 April 1891, 8), actually located in Rockland County, New York, although the border between the two states was difficult to know. Harris was, in addition, a founder of the club.

39. Fly Rod Crosby, “The Giant Rangeley Trout,” *Shooting and Fishing* (Christmas 1895, vol. 19, no. 9), 185.

40. “With Anglers in Maine Woods,” *New York Times* (16 August 1903), 22.

41. “Wet Weather Helps Anglers: Fine Catches Reported from the Rangeley Lakes,”

New York Times (30 August 1903), 27.

42. The move of U.S. Net & Twine Co. occurred sometime before 8 October 1894; I have a letterhead of that date from the company with the old address of 219 Fulton Street stamped over with the new address of 316 Broadway.

43. Kelly, “Spalding and the Kosmic Connection,” 5.

44. *The American Angler* (December/January 1895–96, vol. 26, no. 1), viii.

45. “Second Annual Sportsmen’s Exposition,” *Shooting and Fishing* (19 March 1896, vol. 19, no. 22), 453.

46. *Ibid.*

47. C. Netherton, *History of the Sport of Casting*, 288–95.

48. C. Netherton, *History of the Sport of Casting*, 292–93.

49. C. Netherton, *History of the Sport of Casting*, 288–95.

50. *Forest and Stream*, 15 March 1902 and 29 March 1902. Again, my thanks to Dr. Todd E. A. Larson.

51. “Publisher’s Column,” *Forest and Stream* (25 April 1903).

52. Abercrombie & Fitch Co. catalog (New York: 1903), 90.

53. Ed Van Put, *Trout Fishing in the Catskills* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2007), 291.

54. Abercrombie and Fitch Co. catalog

(New York: 1906), 22.

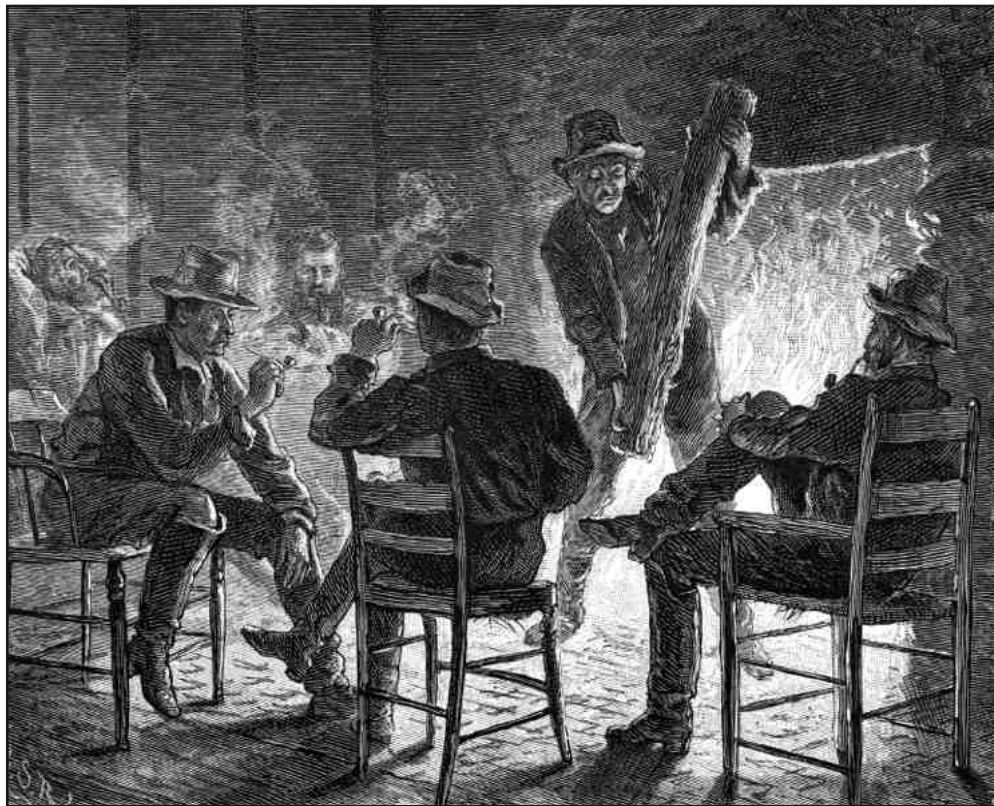
55. David T. Abercrombie Co. (Abercrombie’s Camp) catalog (New York: 1915), introduction.

56. “Recent Deaths,” *Forest and Stream* (15 June 1907, vol. LXVIII, no. 24), 936. Whether Osgood actually made the blank or in fact even finished the rod is, in my view, not open to debate. True, Henry P. Wells had written about making rods, and rounded rods at that (*Fly-Rods and Fly-Tackle* [New York: Harper & Brothers, 1885 and rev. 1901]), and no doubt they knew each other from New York and likely Maine. There is no doubt that Osgood had spent time watching Hawes, Thomas, Edwards, and Ed Payne make Kosmic and perhaps Isaak Walton rods. However, it seems highly unlikely to me that he undertook to obtain the culms, forms, tools, and tapers to start such manufacture from scratch.

57. The relationship between Kosmic and Isaak Walton (not “Ike Walton”) rods has previously been established and written about at some length.

58. Schoverling, Daly & Gales catalog (New York: 1909), 42.

59. The advertisement, which Hoagy B. Carmichael obtained from one of Jim Payne’s daughters, appeared in the 1903 *Atlas of Orange County, New York* by J. M. Lathrop, C.E., with *Representative Merchants, Manufacturers, Professional Men and Farmers*.



From Alfred M. Mayer, *Sport with Gun and Rod Vol. I* (New York: The Century Company, 1883), 361.

Line-Braiding Machine: Ingenuity in Manufacture

Photos by Jim Hardman

MOST OF US with gray hair grew up fishing braided lines. From fly-line cores and backing line to casting lines, we fished braid. Younger anglers likely caught their first sunfish or bluegill on nylon monofilament—that was the “standard” for many years. It is interesting that braided lines are growing in popularity again. Years of changing technology have brought braided lines to a whole new level of performance.

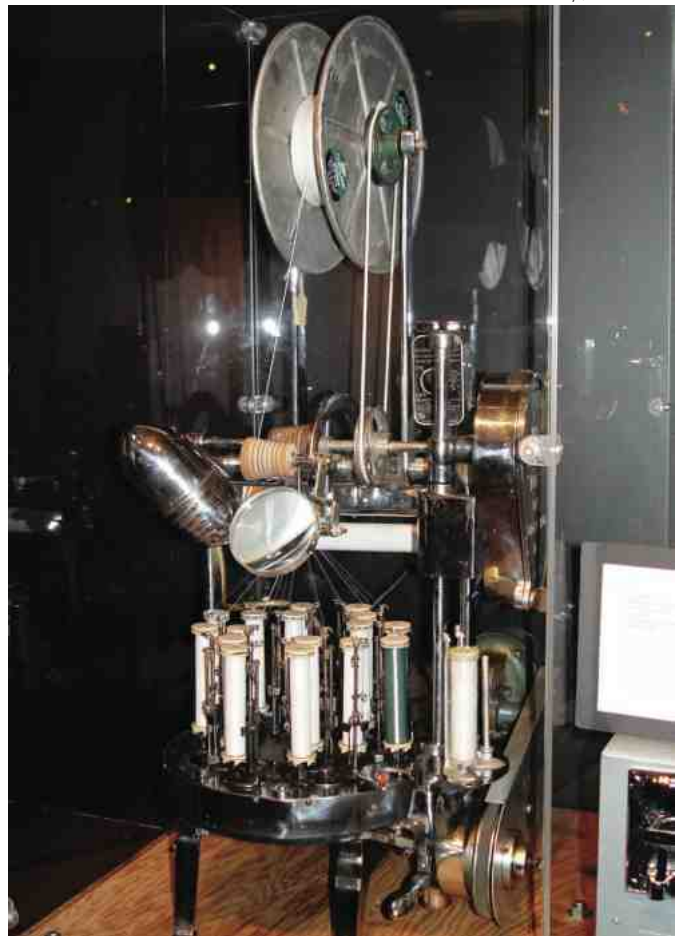
My first fly rod, an 8-foot Heddon Black Beauty, was clearly marked *HEH* or *F*; I knew that the wealthy folk opted for tapered lines, but for my beloved bluegill, a level *F* line cast my tiny cork poppers just fine. My friend Richard tried tapering his level fly line, stretching it unmercifully in an effort to thin the tip. His effort failed, and we learned that the braided core under the flexible coating just wouldn't stretch.

During World War II, nylon was unavailable. Most of my early fishing was for bass, casting old wooden plugs along the rocky shores of Greenwood Lake in New Jersey. We read about nylon monofilament, but our hardware store had little to offer—just a few old spools of braided-silk casting line. As abrasive as it was on the guides of my rod, I was fortunate indeed to fish good braided line.

Your museum has a wonderful machine on exhibit: a veteran line-braiding machine from the Cortland Line Company. Manufactured by the New England Butt Company of Providence, Rhode Island, this machine dates from the 1930s. Running sixteen spools of Dacron filament, it produced about 15 yards of braided fly-line core per day. Newer machines are slightly more productive but still look much the same; pictures on the Cortland Line Company website show a long row of similar machines in current production (<http://www.cortlandline.com/content.asp?ID=747>).

Plan to watch this machine operate on your next visit to the museum. The spools of Dacron filament follow machined tracks, moving in and out, weaving the advancing filament into braid. The track layout determines the style or pattern of the weave, and tensioning devices control the tightness of the braid. An overhead spool collects the finished braid, storing it in preparation for packaging or for fly-line production.

So much can be done to vary the physical properties of braided line! The choice of the filament polymer (or mix of various filaments), the diameter of the filaments, the pattern of weave, the number of contributing spools, and the tension applied to the filament all add up to control line flexibility, degree of stretch, breaking strength, abrasion resistance, resistance to long-term memory, diameter, weight, color, taper, and, ultimately, the cost to the consumer.

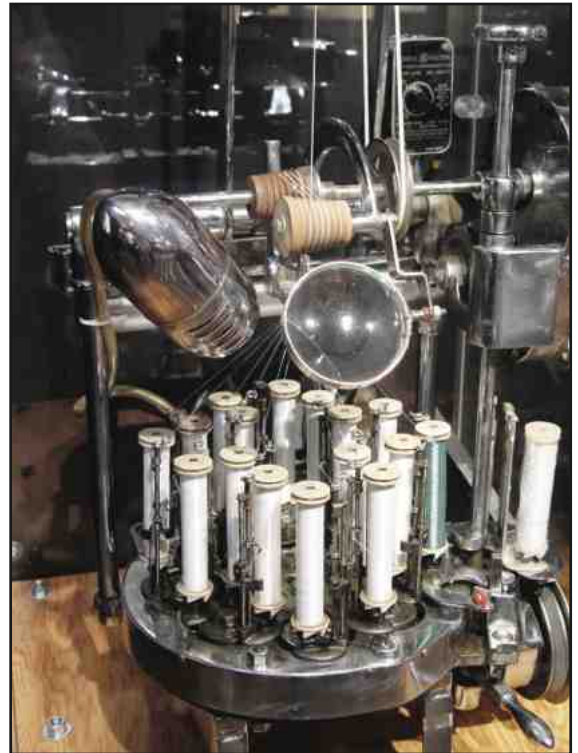


Line-braiding machine, manufactured by the New England Butt Company of Providence, Rhode Island, circa 1930.

It is a complex process, steeped in experience and know-how. We take a lot for granted in our lives. We wade into the river and trust that our tackle will perform as anticipated. Marvel not only at your line and braided-leader performance, but at the ingenuity of the men who designed the manufacturing equipment. Many thanks to the Cortland Line Company for this exhibit.

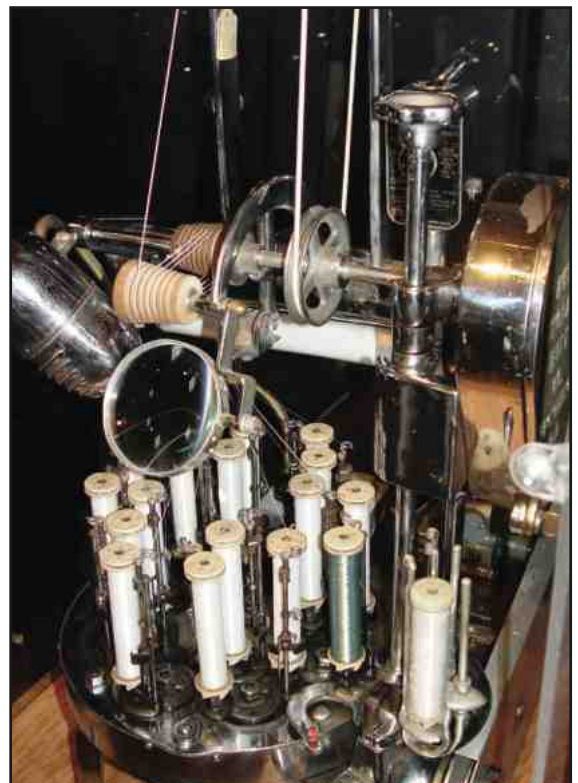
JIM HARDMAN
TRUSTEE

Right: The choice of filament (Dacron, nylon, etc.), the diameter of the filament, and the tightness of the braid all influence the ultimate physical properties of the line, including tensile (breaking) strength, flexibility, and stretch.



Above: Sixteen spools of filament weave in and out, creating the finished braid. The track layout determines the braid pattern; spools of colored filament can introduce coded stripes or product markers.

Right: Modern, higher-speed braiding machines are currently available, but for finer denier filaments, these older-style machines are still in production and are said to produce a better product.



The museum is grateful to the Cortland Line Company (Cortland, New York) for sponsoring the presentation of this machine in our *Gadgets and Gear* exhibit.



RONALD STUCKEY RECENTLY donated a beautiful book that is an incredible addition to our library: *Dry Flies in the Sunshine: J. W. Dunne and His Dry Fly Patterns* by Terry Griffiths, Donald Overfield, and John Knott (flies tied by John Smith). A deluxe edition, one of only twenty-five published in 2008, it is bound in goatskin and boxed with three volumes, which contain the text and twenty mounted flies.

It has been a very long time since the patterns of Dunne's fly dressings have been published. And the result is magnificent. The book is especially significant because Dunne's "sunshine flies" have long been considered irrelevant and basically unusable. In 1924, when Dunne published *Sunshine and the Dry Fly*, his patterns were considered revolutionary, especially as they challenged the dogma of the popular Halford patterns. G.E.M. Skues, in a letter that he sent to A&C Black Ltd., his publisher, on 31 December 1923, wrote, "I consider Mr Dunne one of those bright and ingenious minds which appear once or twice in a century who give to the art of fly-fishing and fly-dressing the means of a definite advance" (quoted in the introduction, p. 23). Dunne's book was a call for the fly fisherman to wake up and look at the dry fly in its natural elements.

Dunne successfully addressed translucency so that the flies looked lifelike in strong sunlight. He used especially blended colored silks to produce the body he wanted on white-painted hooks. Further, he was one of the few who used mathematics instead of art: each part of his patterns had a number. This was a reflection of his education in mathematics and engineering.

But there were also some serious problems. For one thing, the flies lost their translucency when a cloud passed; and, of course, in Great Britain, so we are told, there are many days when the sun does not bless the angler. Also, Dunne's silks (from only one supplier) became unavailable. And, most seriously, those silks were very fragile, so the flies were quickly and easily ruined.

The Dunne innovations were abandoned.

Today, in this book, John Smith has dressed twenty flies (fifteen of the day fly and five of the mayfly pattern) to show just what a Dunne fly should look like. And they are truly beautiful.

In the introduction, Terry Griffiths provides some insightful comments on Dunne's history. John (Ian) William Dunne was an infantryman, pioneering aircraft designer, aviator, philosopher, and children's book author. There is a picture of Dunne at the controls of his D8 biplane in 1906 (reproduced here). "Not only was this the first military aeroplane built in Britain, its use of swept wings—a technique not fully exploited until several

decades later—gave the aircraft stability. For fly-fishers, this wing configuration bears remarkable similarity to those which Dunne used on his mayfly patterns" (p. xiv).

In another chapter, the authors survey a series of letters to the editors of the *Fishing Gazette* following Dunne's book publication. The arguments, pro and con, were fervent, mostly because Dunne's enthusiasm was infectious, and the idea of transparency was most appealing.

In a final chapter, John Knott tackles the question of what materials Dunne really intended for use in his dressings, solving the issue that has been the constant source of speculation over the years. The text provides very detailed information on the Dunne patterns, including tying instructions as well as the past history and current availability of the materials.

Although this research and history is certainly valuable, the beauty of the publication is the presentation of the magnificent sunshine flies tied by John Smith, skillfully mounted in the exquisite binding.

Terry Griffiths revealed in an e-mail to the museum that he plans on publishing pictures and instructions of Dunne's dressings in a variety of forums, especially in the *Flydresser*, the journal of the Flydresser's Guild. Perhaps the issue of translucency will witness yet more debate.

—GERALD KARASKA

Terry Griffiths, Donald Overfield, and John Knott
Dry Flies in the Sunshine: J. W. Dunne and His Dry Fly Patterns
Flies tied by John Smith
Haslemere, Surrey, Great Britain: Creel Press, 2008



J. W. Dunne in the cockpit of his biplane. From *J. W. Dunne, Dry Flies in the Sunshine: J. W. Dunne and His Dry Fly Patterns* (Surrey, Great Britain: Creel Press, 2008), xiv.



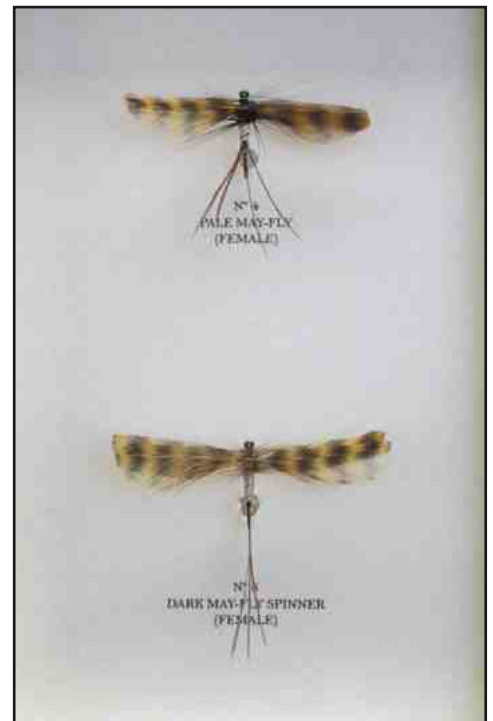
Photos by Sara Wilcox

Clockwise from above: Five of the day flies and the box set's publication information from the Dayflies volume of Dry Flies in the Sunshine: J. W. Dunne and His Dry Fly Patterns.

The fifteen day flies tied by John Smith.

A closer look at two of the mayflies in the Mayflies volume.

The five mayflies included with the boxed set.



A Capital Evening

Photos by Kim Murphy



David Nichols, member of the Board of Trustees and chair of the Collections Committee, listens as Mr. Cheney describes a fishing trip taken with the rod and reel he donated to the museum.

AS TROPICAL STORM Ida's misty breezes swept over the nation's capital, a Grand Hyatt ballroom was filled with enthusiastic museum supporters gathered to welcome ardent fly fisherman and former two-term vice president of the United States, the Honorable Richard B. "Dick" Cheney. The mood inside was bright, and this was the first museum dinner anyone knew of at which a guest of honor's Secret Service detail mingled silently among attendees and hotel staff.

This year's *Anglers All* event celebrated the museum's American Statesmen collection and those leaders who sought respite from the demands of public life with a fly rod in hand. On display was Mr. Cheney's donation to the collection, a 9-foot, 9-weight Sage Graphite III rod with its accompanying Hardy Sovereign reel. Attendees were able to view this recent acquisition along with tackle once belonging to Daniel Webster, Grover Cleveland, John Quincy Adams, Herbert Hoover, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Jimmy Carter, and George H. W. Bush.

Several attendees had the opportunity to engage in pleasant conversation with Mr. Cheney before dinner, and one could immediately sense his unbridled enthusiasm toward the sport we share in common. His familiar reticence gave way to gleaming eyes and bright smiles as he discussed the people and places of fly fishing. A quick thumb through any of

the major Cheney biographies will show numerous references to fishing and how it was an integral part of this highly accomplished man's life. It's fitting that his Secret Service code name was Angler.

Mr. Cheney was introduced by three-term U.S. senator and fellow Wyomingite Alan K. Simpson, who had delighted the assembly throughout the course of the evening with numerous jokes and anecdotes about his longtime friendship and political association with the former vice president. Senator Simpson also noted that in their decades of public service life and mutual campaigning for each other, neither man had ever lost an election. Other speakers, who are keen fly fishermen and friends of Mr. Cheney, included the current U.S. senator from the Cowboy State, Michael B. Enzi, who succeeded Senator Simpson, and journalist and political commentator Tucker Carlson.

By far the most rousing ovation of the evening came when special guest Retired Navy Capt. Ed Nicholson introduced a group of wounded servicemen who had participated in a Project Healing Waters fishing retreat. It was moving to see the smiles on the soldier's faces as everyone stood to recognize them and the sacrifices they made on our nation's behalf.

When Mr. Cheney took the podium, he paid tribute to the museum and its mission, and thanked all for inviting him to be part of the event. He shared a relat-

ed fact unknown to most: that when Mrs. Cheney was in the process of publishing one of her children's books, *We the People: The Story of Our Constitution*, she had contacted the museum for details on eighteenth-century tackle for an illustration depicting President Washington taking a fishing break during the Constitutional Convention.

He continued with a humorous account of his experiences with Senator Simpson and the consequences of the senator's losing his fly in the parking lot at the start of the Jackson Hole One Fly event. He closed by commending the museum for being a remarkable organization and with the warm words "I'd like to also thank our wounded warriors who are here tonight. One of the great afternoons I spent when I was vice president was when the captain brought his class down to the vice president's residence and we spent an afternoon out there on the lawn casting and practicing. There's no better group, nor more worthy group, and I really appreciated it."

The American Museum of Fly Fishing looks forward to welcoming wounded warriors to Manchester, Vermont, to try our new casting platform on the museum's pond. For more information on the Project Healing Waters, please visit www.projecthealingwaters.org.

—JOHN MUNDT
TRUSTEE



Mr. Cheney and museum volunteer Rose Napolitano.



AMFF Board of Trustees President Jim Heckman presented an engraved bowl to Mr. Cheney commemorating the Anglers All presentation.



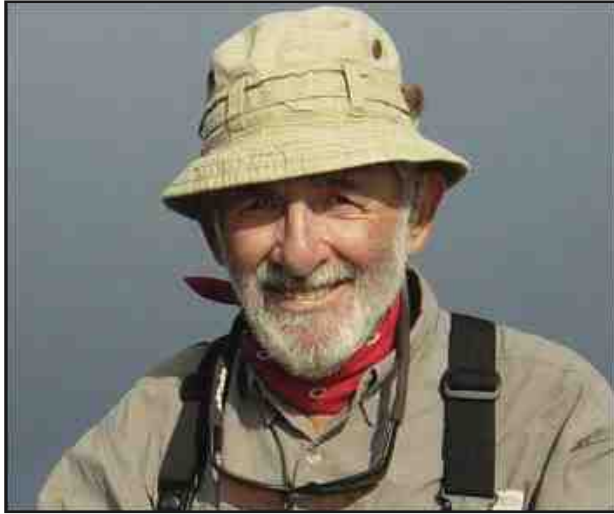
Alan Simpson, retired senator from Wyoming, acted as emcee for the evening.



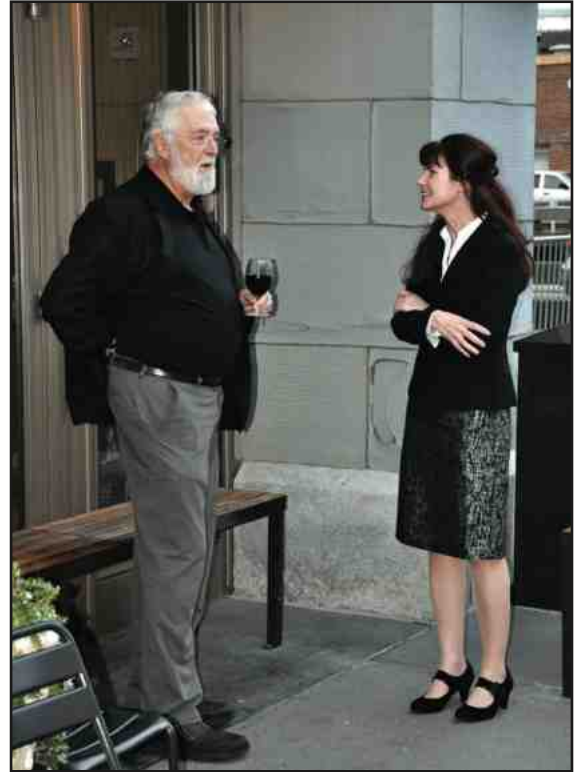
Tucker Carlson, journalist and political commentator (left), and Wyoming Senator Mike Enzi (right) were featured speakers.



The Museum Honors Mel Krieger



Kim Murphy



Kim Murphy



*Top left: The late Mel Krieger.
Photo courtesy of Fanny Krieger.*

Left: Fanny Krieger is surrounded by friends as the AMFF honors Mel Krieger on September 24.

Above: Ben Blackwell visits with Executive Director Cathi Comar before sharing his memories of Mel Krieger.

IT WAS AN EVENING of wine and song—or in this case, stories of Mel Krieger—as seventy people gathered at the MarketBar in San Francisco on September 24 to honor him and support the museum.

“Mel was one of those few people who . . . was able to reach out from the screen, grab each viewer by the throat and insist ‘watch and listen to me—I have something important to show you that will help.’ And he did, and still does,” said Jeffrey Pill in his recollection of Mel. Pill was joined by Ben Blackwell, Rob Portil, and Fanny Krieger, who all shared remembrances and showed us all how Mel could not only reach out from the screen, but also influence and touch more than just the viewers of his infamous casting videos.

It was our first time to visit San Francisco, and we couldn’t have been more pleased with the warm reception. Thank you to all those who came to raise a glass with us, as well as to those who couldn’t attend but were gracious enough to send a donation on behalf of Mel Krieger: Peter and Judith Brown, George and Mary Chapman, Deborah Fitzpatrick in memory of Jerome Fitzpatrick, Albert Haas Jr., David Johnson and Nancy Reid, Franklin Johnson Jr., Kathryn Supple Kelly, Scott Patten, Steven and Sherry Raffin, and D. S. and Lillian Reardon.

Thank you to the speakers and to Val Atkinson, who was unable to attend but whose beautiful slide show provided the perfect backdrop.

An auction is impossible without the generosity of auction donors. Thanks to following individuals and businesses for supporting the evening’s auction: Bill Lowe, Bob Selb of the Classic Fly Fisherman, Bogle Winery, Brendan McCarthy of urbanflyguides.com, Bryan Goulart of nysaltfly.com, Chateau Montelena Winery, Cloudveil, Columbia Sportswear, Fanny Krieger, the Thomas Fogarty Winery, E. J. Gallo Winery, Glenn Legrand of the Québec Salmon Lodge, the Hard Rock Café, Hardy, Henrik Mortensen, Jason Borger, Jonathan Fisher of the Urban Angler, Kevin McKay and maineflyfish.com, Leland Fly Fishing School and Ranch, Mary Kay Callaghan, Mike Michalak and the Fly Shop, the Orvis Company, and Scheels Sports.

The museum would like to especially thank Philip Sawyer, Roger Riccardi, and Erik Oken, our trustees, whose guidance and support made the whole event possible.

We are already looking forward to next year’s visit to the area, which will feature special guest speaker Russell Chatham.





Museum News

Kim Murphy



Nearly forty people visited the museum on October 17 for our Appraisal Fair, many of them with their arms piled high with potential treasures. The museum would like to thank our two guest appraisers for sharing their time and knowledge with us. Above: John Ganung, owner of Lang's Sporting Collectibles, examines a vintage Orvis bamboo rod.

Right: Jim Schottenham, president of the Old Reel Collector Associates, delicately lifts an old creel to get a closer look.

Kim Murphy



Report on Annual Members Meeting

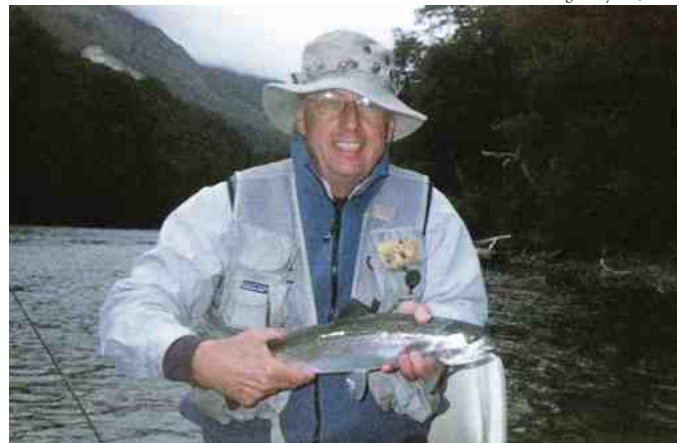
On Saturday, October 17, the museum held its annual members meeting. Our host was Hildene, the Lincoln Family home, in Manchester, Vermont.

We are pleased to announce that James D. Heckman, MD, has been elected as president of the board of trustees and has begun to serve his two-year term. Dr. Heckman has been on the board since 2004 and has most recently served as vice president and as chair of the resources committee. "I am honored to serve the museum and work with our staff and the board of trustees to convey our love of this wonderful sport to as many people, young and old, as possible," he said.

Other elections include Stephen Peet and Richard Tisch, vice presidents; James Woods, secretary; Charles Eichel, clerk; and Robert Scott, treasurer. Several trustees were reelected to additional three-year terms, including Christopher Garcia, John Mundt Jr., Peter Corbin, Foster Bam, and E. Wayne Nordberg. Dr. E. Bruce DiDonato has been elected as a new trustee.

The museum wishes to thank George Gibson for his guidance and wisdom over the past two years while he served as president of the board. During his tenure, the museum accomplished many exciting projects, such as the exhibition and catalog *Ogden M. Pleissner: The Sporting Grand Tour*, the introduction

Miguel Ayerza, MD



Newly elected President of the Board
Jim Heckman fishing in Argentina.

of gallery programs, the resurrection of the Fly-Fishing Festival, and the reaccreditation award from the American Association of Museums.



Gary Sherman unveiling the sign at the opening of Sherman Bridge.

Dedication of Sherman Bridge

On Friday evening, October 16, the board of trustees and staff reopened and dedicated the bridge at the museum's casting pond. The newly named Sherman Bridge, as noted on the nearby sign, is dedicated to the memory of Ben and Murray Sherman, "brothers who truly appreciated that the world of fly fishing embodied 'the sweet mystery of life.'" Gary Sherman, museum trustee and son of Ben, spoke at the ceremony of his father's and uncle's passion for fly fishing and the importance of sharing that passion with younger generations.

The repairs to the bridge were made possible through the generosity of Trustees Gardner Grant and Gary Sherman.

Recent Donations

Ronald Nickerson of Hailey, Idaho, donated a letter written and signed by Grover Cleveland. **Jeannine Dickey** of Rangeley, Maine, donated Gertrude Jungmann's journal and photographs of fishing trips taken to New Brunswick during the 1960s.

Richard Shelton of Newmarket, New Hampshire, donated a bamboo bait-casting rod made by A. B. Shipley & Son. **Carmin Lisella** of New City, New York, donated a Hardy L.R.H. light-weight fly reel with L-shaped line guide.

Keith Harwood of Clitheroe, England, donated a book by Sir Herbert Maxwell, *Memories of the Month* (Alexander Maclehouse & Co., 1931) and a salmon fly, the Sir Herbert, tied by the donor.

Museum Trustee **James Heckman** of Manchester, Vermont, donated a collection of Sportsman Cigarette packaging, Mitchell's Angling Tobacco Cards (a complete set of twenty-five), a copy of the 2 March 1942 issue of *Life* magazine, and a collection of books (for a detailed list of the books, please contact the museum).

In the Library

Thanks to the following for their donations of recent titles that have become part of our collection (all titles were published in 2009 unless otherwise noted):

Headwater Books sent us Mike Valla's *Tying Catskill-Style Dry Flies*. **Sporting Classics** sent us Michael Altizer's *The Last Best Day: A Trout Fisher's Perspective* (2007).

Skyhorse Publishing sent us Tom Rosenbauer's *The Orvis Guide to Beginning Fly Fishing* and Ted Leeson's *Inventing Montana: Dispatches from the Madison Valley*.

Bleak House Books sent us autographed copies of John Galligan's fly-fishing mysteries: *The Nail Knot* (2003), *The Blood Knot* (2005), and *The Clinch Knot* (2008).

BACK ISSUES!

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Back issues are \$10 a copy for nonmembers, \$5 for members. To order, please contact Sarah Moore at (802)362-3300 or via e-mail at smoore@amff.com.



The American Museum of Fly Fishing wishes to thank the J. Russell Jinishian Gallery in Fairfield, Connecticut, for hosting a sporting art exhibition, Fins & Feathers, to benefit the museum. More than two hundred works by twenty-three artists were offered for sale during the month of October, and a portion of the proceeds were donated to the museum. An artists' reception was held on October 3, and many museum members stopped by to visit with Executive Director Cathi Comar. The event was coordinated by Trustee Fred Polhemus and gallery owner Russell Jinishian.



The Summer 2009 issue of the *American Fly Fisher* was a delight. Adrian Latimer's excellent history of trout and trout fishing in Argentina and Samuel Snyder's thorough analysis of the effort to preserve wild trout in New Mexico were instructive. Likely, the wily Madam Editor placed them back-to-back in order to highlight their contrasts. Their disparate messages create a quandary of sorts for me.

In my photo albums is a shot of a 14-inch Rio Grande cutthroat lying briefly in the wet grass beside a backwoods stream high in the outback of northern New Mexico. From another time, a picture shows me with a 34-inch sea-run brown from the Rio Gallegos, far south in Argentina. The cutthroat did not weigh a half-pound, but those spectacular purple hues complementing the dozen or so other colors in his aura, and the knowledge of his provenance and pluck, make his portrait one of my favorites. The brown weighed 19 pounds and was simply spectacular, in all regards—enough said. My brain contains detailed memories of the two encounters that brought these fish to me, details that far exceed the record of the photographs. One of these fish is the product of intentional "nativism." The other is a result of what could only be described as "exuberant" importation. Those two trout are as unlike as they could possibly be, but each is uniquely special. Even with deep thought, I could not decide which of these two memories was most spe-

cial. My only conclusion was that the absence of either, at the expense of the other, would be a personally significant loss. The irony of the dichotomy of the stories, and the implications suggested, intended or implied, is substantial.

I applaud the general notion that supports the preservation of the "native" trout. Years ago I was thrilled to hear of the rediscovery of the long-lost Colorado greenback. I am sorry to read of those species no longer with us, among them the yellowfin cutthroat and the true giant Lahontan cutthroat. Among my remaining personal missions are trips to try and locate and catch each of those fourteen or so native species that remain, in whatever remoteness they occupy: the Gila, the Apache, and the rest. That same wish list of trips also includes expeditions to many more locales in Patagonia, and also to New Zealand, Tasmania, and South Africa, all destinations whose only trout are aliens.

Today, I wonder if a century from now the Rio Grande cutthroat will still survive. I also wonder if the then-residents of Argentina will have become "educated" enough to decide to restore Patagonia to its "native" state. I hope not.

In the meantime, I will be thankful for each opportunity to pursue—and preserve—the natives. But I will be equally grateful to the enthusiastic pilgrims of the past who brought their sport with them as I enjoy this wonderful pastime in regions of the world where it would not have existed without them.

Harry J. Briscoe
Kingwood, Texas

Peter Corbin



Gianna Allen and Stephen Myers, enjoying the eighth annual Friends of Corbin Shoot to benefit the American Museum of Fly Fishing. Hudson Farm in Andover, New Jersey, hosted the October 29–30 event, which found donors participating in flurries, sporting clays, and fly fishing, as well as duck and pheasant releases at this 3,000-plus-acre shooting facility. Many familiar faces returned for this year's activities, and we were pleased that several new participants joined us. The culmination of the event was the drawing for an oil painting by Peter Corbin, Driven Shooting/North Yorkshire. We appreciate the assistance of Korky Podmaniczky, Peter Corbin, Peter Kellogg, George Gibson, and the entire staff at Hudson Farm; they made this important fund-raiser a great success.

Upcoming Events

February 13

Fit to Be Tied: Fly-Tying Fun for All Ages
The American Museum of Fly Fishing
Manchester, Vermont

March 4

Anglers' Club of New York Annual Dinner
The Anglers' Club
New York, New York

March 27

Gallery Program
The American Museum of Fly Fishing
Manchester, Vermont

April 29

Heritage Award Dinner
Honoring Casting for Recovery
New York, New York

May

New exhibit opens
Memories on the Water: A Photo Journey of Fly Fishing's Past

Always check our website (www.amff.com) for additions, updates, and more information or contact Kim Murphy at (802) 362-3300 or kmurphy@amff.com. "Casting About," the museum's new e-mail newsletter, offers up-to-date news and event information. To subscribe, look for the link on our website or contact the museum.

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"The Uncaged Woman"

CONTRIBUTORS

Peter Tyson



Following his graduation from the University of North Carolina in 1952, **Jim Collins** served in the U.S. Navy and then spent thirty years in several manufacturing businesses, where he led several turnarounds. For the past twenty years, he has provided professional director services to a number of mid-market manufacturing and distribution companies. In 1962, he joined the Bright Creek Park Association, where he has been active in riverkeeping. He is a member of the Atlantic Salmon Federation, Trout Unlimited, and the Anglers' Club of New York.

Marty Fleischmann



Having spent most of his many years in southern New England, **Charles W. Fleischmann** still practices law in Connecticut and in his spare time fly fishes in fresh and salt water by himself or often with his son, Mac (also shown in the accompanying photograph). The fish, he notes, were legal and were dinner for the family. Fleischmann has been fishing for more than fifty years and continues to research details of both well-known and obscure craftsmen who were rod makers in our past. This is his first contribution to the journal.

We welcome contributions to the *American Fly Fisher*. Before making a submission, please review our Contributor's Guidelines on our website (www.amff.com), or write to request a copy. The museum cannot accept responsibility for statements and interpretations that are wholly the author's.

CORRECTION

The following Friends of the Museum were mistakenly omitted from the masthead of the Summer 2009 issue of the *American Fly Fisher*:

- Alan Airth
- Donald Christ
- David DiPiero
- John Kaiser
- Greg Wheeler

We regret the error.

Reflecting on the Year

Sara Wilcox



The museum's newly repaired bridge.

THIS PAST YEAR POSED many challenges for nonprofit institutions across the country. From store sales to funding sources, decreased revenues forced museum directors to make tough choices. Many, if not most, had to eliminate staff positions and cut back on public programs, and some unfortunate museums closed their doors.

Although it was certainly a challenging time at the American Museum of Fly Fishing, 2009 was also a remarkable year of accomplishments. We began the year with the introduction of our new gallery programs, which focused on various aspects of our exhibition installations. *Fit to Be Tied* was followed by *Conversations on Cushner*, then *It's A Bug's Life*, our program with the Vermont Institute of Natural Science. Most recently, we held an Appraisal Fair. These informative programs were well attended by both members and visitors just passing through. Amazingly, all of the program participants volunteered their time, knowledge, and supplies.

After binders of paperwork and an on-site review of the staff and facilities, we were officially reaccredited by the American Association of Museums. This was a major accomplishment, and your museum is one of fewer than 800 in the country that demonstrates and practices the high museum standards outlined by the AAM.

We managed to install a third exhibition in our gallery last summer. *Gadgets & Gear: Twentieth-Century Innovations in Fly-Fishing Equipment* is a fun overview of patent drawings and innovations created to improve the fly-fishing experience. After reviewing our permanent collection, we selected patent drawings, patent models, and final products that have rarely been seen. During the month of August, we created a panel display that was seen by thousands of people making a stop at the Guilford (Vermont) Welcome Center. Our plans for the 2011 exhibition featuring the contributions of women in the sport of fly fishing began to take shape with an exhibition outline and a discussion panel that met at the museum. *A Graceful Rise:*

Women in Fly Fishing Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow will highlight pioneering women and how they continue to inspire today's generation.

Our beautiful casting pond has undergone a transformation. The bridge has been repaired and dedicated as the Sherman Bridge in honor of brothers Ben and Murray Sherman. Construction began on the handicap-access platform on the southwest edge of the pond. Next year, the path leading to these structures will be installed. We have plans to work with organizations who use fly fishing as therapy to present a program that combines learning to cast with learning about fly-fishing history.

The museum continued to publish our very popular quarterly journal. We received a wide range of submissions for review and possible publication, and presented jewels of research for your learning pleasure. As this journal is one of our major means of communicating with our members, we continued to cover museum events, programs, and news within its pages. *Casting About*, our recently created monthly e-mail newsletter, is another tool that helps us stay in touch with those interested in the museum's progress. If you haven't already sent us your e-mail address, please contact the office or visit www.amff.com to join the list of recipients.

We rose to the challenge to increase our offerings in 2009 by calling on our devoted volunteers to participate in programs, hosting additional fund-raising events in new locations (as well as returning to Cleveland!), carefully managing our operating funds, and featuring our permanent collection in the exhibition program.

The staff is looking forward to a new year and a new set of challenges that will help us improve the American Museum of Fly Fishing! We hope you'll continue to be a part of it.

CATHI COMAR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The American Museum of Fly Fishing

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THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF FLY FISHING, a nationally accredited, nonprofit, educational institution dedicated to preserving the rich heritage of fly fishing, was founded in Manchester, Vermont, in 1968. The museum serves as a repository for, and conservator to, the world's largest collection of angling and angling-related objects. The museum's collections and exhibits provide the public with thorough documentation of the evolution of fly fishing as a sport, art form, craft, and industry in the United States and abroad from the sixteenth century to the present. Rods, reels, and flies, as well as tackle, art, books, manuscripts, and photographs, form the major components of the museum's collections.

The museum has gained recognition as a unique educational institution. It supports a publications program through which its national quarterly journal, the *American Fly Fisher*, and books, art prints, and catalogs are regularly offered to the public. The museum's traveling exhibits program has made it possible for educational exhibits to be viewed across the United States and abroad. The museum also provides in-house exhibits, related interpretive programming, and research services for members, visiting scholars, authors, and students.

JOIN!

Membership Dues (per annum)

| | |
|------------|----------|
| Associate | \$50 |
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| | \$10,000 |

The museum is an active, member-oriented nonprofit institution. Membership dues include four issues of the *American Fly Fisher*. Please send your payment to the membership director and include your mailing address. The museum is a member of the American Association of Museums, the American Association of State and Local History, the New England Association of Museums, the Vermont Museum and Gallery Alliance, and the International Association of Sports Museums and Halls of Fame.

SUPPORT!

As an independent, nonprofit institution, the AMFF relies on the generosity of public-spirited individuals for substantial support. We ask that you give our museum serious consideration when planning for gifts and bequests.