

The American Fly Fisher

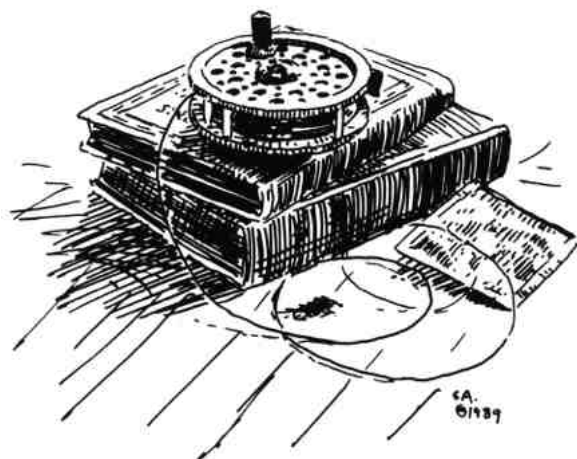
Journal of the American Museum of Fly Fishing



SPRING 2013

VOLUME 39 NUMBER 2

Fishtories



CATCH AND RELEASE
THE SPIRIT OF FLY FISHING

Our Mission:

The American Museum of Fly Fishing is the steward of the history, traditions, and practices of the sport of fly fishing and promotes the conservation of its waters. The museum collects, preserves, exhibits, studies, and interprets the artifacts, art, and literature of the sport and uses these resources to engage, educate, and benefit all.

FISHING: ART, LITERATURE, philosophy, and other stories naturally spring up around it. For some of us, fishing stories—the ones we hear, the ones we tell others, the ones we tell ourselves—shape identity and personal history. In this issue, for example, a man remembers his beginnings on the water; another describes the end of his fishing days. One discusses fishing's connection with the spiritual realm; another shares a bit of the humor in the sport.

Like streams in so many urban and suburban areas, Miller Creek in Minnesota doesn't look exactly as it did when Harry L. Peterson was a boy growing up by its banks. Residential and commercial development have brought with them the usual suspects: runoff, erosion, and higher water temperatures. Efforts are being made to salvage and restore Miller Creek. Peterson recalls his fishing beginnings on this water—as well as his first fishing buddy, Gordie—in “A Boy's Trout Stream” (page 9).

Gordon M. Wickstrom, like most of us, wants last things to be beautiful and fulfilling. However, as he notes, “Last things tend to be down and dirty, tough and ugly.” In “The End,” Wickstrom faces his own aging, and, in his infinite wisdom, suggests that anglers prepare for the end of their angling days “and come to it with a good grace—and on their own terms.” In fact, he proposes a ceremony of the end, a taking control of one's own rite of passage. His advice begins on page 12.

For we twenty-first-century anglers, the idea of finding God in nature is a familiar one. But into the nineteenth century, many religious types held that it was Satan who lurked both in the wilderness and in leisure time. Joining the nature writers and social reformers promoting wilderness retreat were three Protestant ministers whose work added to the burgeoning catalog of

fishing literature: George Washington Bethune, Henry Ward Beecher, and Henry Van Dyke. Their promotion of solitary communion with nature and of fly fishing as contemplative and soul-searching sport influenced today's American nature ethic. Brent Lane offers up a brief history in “Piscatorial Protestants: Nineteenth-Century Angling and the New Christian Wilderness Ethic.” It begins on page 2.

Among the leading cartoonists of London's humor magazine *Punch* was Henry Mayo Bateman, whose works depicted many aspects of London life, including sport. A small volume published in 1960, *The Evening Rise: Fifty Years of Fly Fishing*, recounted many of his fishing experiences in word and illustration. In “H. M. Bateman: Cartoonist Extraordinaire and Fisherman for Life” (page 14), James D. Heckman introduces us to this prolific cartoonist and shares some of his favorite Bateman cartoons with us.

Lefty Kreh was the museum's honoree at this year's New York City dinner; coverage of that event can be found on page 20. And turn to page 19 to meet our new Junior Committee, a group recently established to raise awareness of the museum and its mission among people in their twenties and thirties.

We were saddened to learn in February of the death of fly-fishing writer and editor John Merwin, this museum's second executive director. Cathi Comar, our own executive director, pays tribute to him on page 21.

Each spring we try to thank everyone who worked to make the museum a success during the previous year, donating money, resources, and time to continue the preservation of fly-fishing history. A list of our 2012 donors begins on page 22. Thank you.

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ON THE COVER: *H. M. Bateman, The Last Trout. From the Tatler, c. 1930.*
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Piscatorial Protestants: Nineteenth-Century Angling and the New Christian Wilderness Ethic

by Brent Lane

AS HISTORIANS OF American sport like John F. Reiger have noted, recreational anglers became a driving force in the late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century conservation movements and helped usher in a new respect for the American wilderness.¹ Influential men of the nineteenth century, though perhaps not always noted primarily for fishing prowess, understood the reverence with which gentlemen anglers held nature. From nature writers and social reformers such as Washington Irving and Henry David Thoreau to politicians like Daniel Webster and Theodore Roosevelt, scores of American notables experienced New England trout fishing firsthand. Outside of random notes in journals and innocuous defenses of the sport, few American piscatorial works existed before the 1800s, but the genre took off after the turn of that century and generated a trend in wilderness retreat. Emulating this development, three influential Christian ministers—George Washington Bethune, Henry Ward Beecher, and Henry Van Dyke—personified the Reformed Protestant contribution to this new wilderness ethos through streamside musings and reflections that even now capture the archetypal angler's affection for nature.

By the 1870s, angling literature flew off American presses, and participation in the sport increased as hordes of city dwellers flocked to the backwoods to practice the “gentle art.”² While American intelligentsia discovered the benefits of countryside fishing—fresh air and exercise of both mind and body—disciples of the Enlightenment began to develop a maxim regarding modern commercialization: materialism affected humanity's morality, and industrialization often negatively

affected the purity of the wilderness. With the future of society's principles and the American frontier hanging in the balance, a source of unity to temper the effects of modernity emerged in the increasing popularity of “truehearted” angling.³

Initially, although some evidence indicates that nearly all men in seventeenth-century New England fished, Puritan culture did not readily associate angling with righteousness like genteel British society often did in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁴ Before American sportfishing reached its zenith in the last few decades of the 1800s, this would change as even polite New England society became immersed in trout lore. The emergence of sporting periodicals such as *Spirit of the Times* and *American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine* related the joys of angling to cosmopolitan readers in the 1830s.⁵ Irving and other Romantics, “completely bitten with the angling mania,” helped further erase some of the stigma of incivility associated with sportfishing.⁶ Reverend John J. Brown published *An American Angler's Guide*, a seminal work on American angling, in 1845; Reverend George W. Bethune's edition of Walton gained notoriety in 1847; and Charles Lanman produced *An Angler in Canada, Nova Scotia, and the United States* in 1848. By the following decade, when Henry Ward Beecher encouraged readers to join him “a-fishing,” the brand of the vulgar fisherman had been erased to a small but significant extent.⁷ Transcendentalists supported the escape to the woods, and Thoreau posited that fishermen were “often in a more favorable mood” for observing nature than “philosophers and poets even, who approach her with expectation.”⁸ Beyond secular arguments, moral justification for

fishing in express response to Puritan concerns appeared most often in the works of Puritan descendants themselves.

Protestant ministers represented the most visible vanguard of popular angling for gentlemen in America. They forged a new image of the respectable, masculine, and, above all, pious fisherman. Along with perceived righteousness, the Christian angler experienced God through the open book of nature. In “A Discourse at Amoskeag Fall,” published in 1743, Anglican missionary Reverend Joseph Secombe tendered a religious vindication of angling that emphasized the way that fishing “enlivens Nature [and] recruits our Spirits.”⁹ Historian Charles Goodspeed asserted that this was likely a direct response to the Puritan disapproval of amusements that prevented Christians from furthering the message of the Gospel. Goodspeed suggested that fishing was popular enough among ministers to warrant censure, and “A Discourse at Amoskeag Fall” became the first significant American dialogue on transcendent angling.¹⁰ In 1846, John Keese, an innovator in black bass angling, offered that “as a Christian I certainly say that, in some of my solitary rambles, or boat-excursions, with my rod, I have been favored with the most devout and grateful emotions of the heart in contemplating the beauties of creation; and, looking up from the works of my Maker around me to Him who made them all, my meditations on the divine goodness have been most sweet.”¹¹

An 1847 *Christian Inquirer* editorial stating that “angling is, without contravention, a highly honorable calling, promoting good health and spirits, just what Americans need” signaled that by mid-

century, prevalent religious crowds recognized the meditative nature of the sport.¹² Throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, heavyweight Protestant ministers and theologians actively advocated the benefits of angling and outdoor adventures. Serious scholarship on angling and

religion generally confirms the adage that among its adherents, “angling was a sign of grace, of membership of a ‘brotherhood’ of pious and peaceable men.”¹³ Both Bethune and Beecher—the former quite orthodox and the latter anything but—laid a foundation for men of Van Dyke’s ilk to establish a newfound nature

ethic built on religious principles practiced through fly fishing. The works of these important clergymen confirm that through the pursuit of the contemplative man’s recreation, fishermen discovered more than simply fishing by experiencing God in nature and wholly embodied the essence of the complete angler.

GEORGE WASHINGTON BETHUNE (1805–1862): MODEST ANGLER

Among out-door recreations, none has been a greater favorite with studious men . . . because none is more suited to quiet habits, fondness for retirement, and love of nature, than angling, not in the sea, but in brooks or rivers, where the genus *Salmo* abounds.

George Washington Bethune,
Orations and Occasional Discourses

Few angling ministers of the nineteenth century enjoyed the same widespread literary success as Reverend George Washington Bethune. Regarded as an outdoor pioneer in the “golden age of clerical etiquette,” he shook off “its choking cravats, imperious black coats, and long faces” and created an image of rugged, masculine piety “years before the muscular school of Christians came into vogue.”¹⁴ Possessing what he considered the most complete collection of angling literature in the world, Bethune’s passion for fishing was perhaps superseded only by the pursuit of knowledge about it. Bethune edited a celebrated edition of Walton’s *Compleat Angler* and became one of the earliest American theorists on fly design.¹⁵ A self-described “modest angler” despite a deep interest in the sport’s history, he remains a forerunner in the chronicles of American fly fishing and symbolizes the enormous change wrought in mainstream Calvinistic nature attitudes in the nineteenth century: that nature was reserved for utility and that Satan lurked in the sinister wilderness, demanding that God’s stronghold lay in the city.¹⁶

Angling afforded Bethune much more than mere toleration of suffering to secure an evening’s supper—it allowed escape from the city and the rigorous obligations of a clerical profession. Echoing the Transcendentalist’s call to turn to nature for refreshment, Bethune insisted that upon returning to the city from an angling adventure, the minister resumed his duties “sturdy in body and happy in spirit.”¹⁷ Every activity of the present life was preparation for spiritual immortality, and business, science, and even leisure time could be virtuous if used correctly. When pursuits of life turned into a “hum of anxious voices” and a “clamor of incessant toil,” a break was often required.¹⁸ Relief, however, could not be found in “the crowded saloons of water places . . . or the haunts of hackneyed resorts,” but rather in a breaking away from crowds and a turning to the birthplace of man “amidst trees, and herbage, and flowing waters,” where “there are the works of God.”¹⁹ As a minister during a period of widespread migration to cities, Bethune found his clerical responsibilities more demanding and thus his leisure time more important. Like Thoreau, he felt that nature offered essential respite:

He, who is pent up in a town, vexed by the excitements of the day, and driven, in spite of himself, to late and irregular hours, could get profit every way, if at times he would seek the purer air, free from the city’s smoke, and with his rod as a staff, climb the hills, and ply his quiet art in the brooks that wash the mountain side, or wander through the green valleys, shaded by the willow and the tasseled alders.²⁰

The consummate student of the sport’s history, Bethune understood the most important aspect of angling: rest from the wearying modern world. Having been a member of an immensely successful fishing club in New York, he recognized the significance of the sustained habitat and wilderness setting in which he plied his “quiet art.” Although the terrifying prospect of the erosion of American wilderness remained decades away, the reverend implored educated and literary men to seek the tranquil setting of the mountain stream in pursuit of transcendent escape of the “insatiable craving[s] of the human heart”: materialism, commercialism, and the accumulation of wealth.²¹



George Washington Bethune. From the collection
of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

HENRY WARD BEECHER (1813–1887):

TRANSCENDENTAL ANGLER

Perhaps one's experience of "fancy tackle" and of fly-fishing might not be without some profit in moral analogies; perhaps a mountain stream and good luck in real trout may afford some easy side-thoughts not altogether unprofitable for a summer vacation.

Henry Ward Beecher, *Star Papers*

Henry Ward Beecher led a group of romantically inclined authors in suggesting that angling inexorably drew men into a transcendental relationship with the natural world. Although more renowned for his efforts in the antislavery movement and theatrical preaching style, he combined an inclination toward high taste and proper society with an unparalleled passion for the rugged outdoors. Beecher's angler rose before daybreak, delighted in early-morning birdsong, and "as soon as the meadow was crossed, the fence scaled, and a descent begun, all familiar objects were gone."²² His angling outings often found him resigning to lay aside the rod and enjoy the



Henry Ward Beecher, ca. 1860. Photographer unknown. Brady-Handy Photograph Collection, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, LC-DIG-cwpbh-03066.

wilderness solitude, claiming that his most memorable excursions included plenty of lying down.²³ The river, which afforded Beecher "the greatest amount of enjoyment among all natural objects," set the angling experience apart from other wilderness adventures and distinct from every other event in life.²⁴ Christ, who "had a peculiar habit of drawing instruction and knowledge from the symbolisms of nature," taught his disciples to "fish for men," and Beecher enthusiastically used the knowledge of angling to forge his own style of ministering.²⁵ Nature showed Beecher how to pray, but angling taught him how to preach.

Beecher's focus on flowing waters revealed part of the aesthetic attraction, and through his descriptions of trout streams, he turned transcendental in his approach to nature. Central to his awe for the river was its power to shock the angler from the comfort of experiencing nature and bring him into a wholesome being as *part* of nature, a position he defended in the essay "The Mountain Stream":

This rush of wild waters about your feet; this utter lawlessness of power and beauty, so solitary, with such instant contrasts, with the sound of waters beneath and of leaves above, and you, alone and solitary, standing in the fascination until you seem to become a part of the scene. A strange sensation steals over you, as if you were exhaling, as if you were passing out of yourself, and going into diffusive alliance with the whole scene!²⁶

The river itself was alive, and he heard it whisper songs of both joy and melancholy. He perceived its enticing call to the angler and rejoiced in its babbling paeans to the creator, wondering if there was "ever a better closet" for prayer.²⁷ Waterfalls became scenes of "raging power covered all over with a robe of perfect beauty . . . down below there is a suppressed thunder, as of an organ playing beneath the uplifted song of a thousand voices."²⁸

Indeed, intimacy with God in nature proved the best explanation for why Beecher went fishing. He offered supplementary justifications of health, worldly knowledge, and sublime experiences, but in his response to public condemnation of his gentle art, his defense was simple. Angling reminded Beecher that he was a child of God and that his Heavenly Father spoke to him frequently on the banks of the trout brook:

There is that incomparable sense of freedom which one has in remote fields, in forests, and along the streams. One who believes that God made the world, and clearly developed to us his own tastes and thoughts in the making, cannot express what feelings those are which speak music through his heart, in solitary communions with Nature. Nature becomes to the soul a perpetual letter from God, freshly written every day and each hour.²⁹

The call from God into nature encouraged Beecher to promote early ideas regarding conservation, and it led him to consider himself a "protector" of natural beauty.³⁰ The "perpetual letter from God" was written not merely for utilitarian or scientific gain, but for sustained gratification in the pursuit of God through nature.³¹

HENRY VAN DYKE (1852–1933): TRUEHEARTED ANGLER

'Tis not a proud desire of mine;
I ask for nothing superfine;
No heavy weight, no salmon great,
To break the record, or my line:

Only an idle little stream,
Whose amber waters softly gleam,
Where I may wade through woodland shade,
And cast the fly, and loaf, and dream:

Only a trout, or two, to dart
From foaming pools, and try my art:
No more I'm wishing old fashioned fishing,
And just a day on Nature's heart.

Henry Van Dyke, *Little Rivers*

After George Perkins Marsh published the classic conservationist manifesto *Man and Nature* in the 1860s, Americans merged the emotional aspects of transcendental natural awe with the practical temperance of science. Scores of influential men associated with the roots of late-nineteenth-century environmentalism solidified their activism with the righteousness that they found in the wilderness. John Burroughs demanded the preservation of nature, William H. H. Murray endorsed the benefits of retreating to it, and Gifford Pinchot praised the economic profit of using it wisely—and all three were notably skilled anglers. In the midst of the emerging popularity of retreating to nature, Presbyterian minister Henry Van Dyke, the country's consummate angling sentimentalist, combined aspects of conservation with an endorsement of going a-fishing to reconcile modern man to nature. He authored several anecdotal fishing books like *Fisherman's Luck* and *Little Rivers*, held various positions in conservation clubs, and preached that connections with nature led to spiritual rebirth and that angling provided the quintessential vehicle to experience the divine in the wilderness. His approach hailed the rejuvenating physical benefits of time spent in the woods and used traces of Bethune's piety with a dash of Beecher's sublime transcendental experience of the divine.

Just as his revision of the Presbyterian catechism claimed notoriety, Van Dyke's prowess as a hunter and fisherman landed him on the *Illustrated Outdoors News* top-ten sportsmen list of 1906, which included both Charles Hallock and Theodore Roosevelt. Although lauded as an excellent shot with the rifle, Van Dyke eventually shelved his firearms for the exclusive pursuit of fish with the fly rod.³² At the height of his fame, he chose to focus his mettle on brooks and streams and penned popular expositions on the discovery of nature's God and the deliverance of humanity through angling.

Ultimately, Van Dyke offered four impulses that drove him in pursuit of fish: "First, because I like it: second, because it does no harm to anybody: third, because it brings me in touch with Nature, and with all sorts and conditions of men: fourth, because it helps me to keep fit for work and duty."³³ The rewards that fishing encouraged, both to body and soul, echoed the same benefits that his angling clergyman predecessors promoted. Human nature in the modern city demanded "intervals of rest and relaxation," and Van Dyke celebrated the vigorous pursuit of good health and exercise while angling's setting supplied him with the sport's greatest joy: intimacy with nature.³⁴ To him, the true angler was "ever on the lookout for all the various pleasant things that nature has to bestow upon you."³⁵

Much like other romantically inclined sentimentalists, Van Dyke eloquently expounded on the joys of experiencing God

through nature, and his creation of *Little Rivers* placed him in a flourishing group of American nature writers that included John Burroughs, Charles Dudley Warner, and John Muir. Throughout the book, he movingly contemplated the wonders of the wilderness and its flowing waters—the river offered insights into the mysteries of nature, and he marveled at how cheerfully angling "lures you on into the secrets of field and wood, and brings you acquainted with the birds and the flowers."³⁶ He opened the book agreeing with Robert Louis Stevenson that rivers quiet a man down "like saying his prayers" and that "there is, after all, no place like God's out-of-doors."³⁷ With the publication of *Little Rivers*, Van Dyke cemented nature through angling as a muse for what would be one of the most highly respected literary careers in American history.

Like Beecher, Van Dyke made it clear that the best part of fishing relied on its surroundings. He suggested to Boy Scouts that a good fisherman "should remember that it is not all of fishing to fish, but that the pleasant memories and close observations of nature which he brings home with him from a day's outing are really his best reward."³⁸ Nature offered him proof of God's grace, and as he drew closer to nature, Van Dyke felt he became more like Christ who was more sensitive to "the rhythmic element in nature" than any other man.³⁹ He also related stories from his own childhood in which nature's scenes became more vivid "when the . . . boy who walks among them carries a rod over his shoulder."⁴⁰ He recognized that man's experience of those wild scenes demanded treks from the city to visit the "God of the Open Air":

For men have dulled their eyes with sin,
And dimmed the light of heaven with doubt,
And built their temple walls to shut thee in,
And framed their iron creeds to shut thee out . . .
And thou hast wooed thy children, to restore their fellowship
with thee,
In peace of soul and simpleness of mind.⁴¹

A recurring theme of nearly all American angling literature of the period required experience removed from modern cities, and Van Dyke supported the charge in frequent condemnation of the ways in which modern man habitually turned away from nature to commerce and materialism. To look beyond the soothing enchantments of nature and "see and hear the handwriting and the voice of God" lay at the crux of his philosophy.⁴² Van Dyke felt that the restoration of man lay in fellowship experienced beside the flowing waters of the trout stream.

"The stream can show you," Van Dyke mused, "better than any other teacher, how nature works her enchantments with

color and music,” and it was the brook that ultimately drew him to angling.⁴³ Like Beecher, Van Dyke’s eloquence regarding the rivers where he fished approached a distinctly transcendental air, yet he sounded a more mature tone that seemed as practical as it did emotional. Waters called men from lives of toil to moments of rest, from politics and markets to quiet interludes of meditation. His favorite streams lured him “away from an artificial life into restful companionship with nature.”⁴⁴ Religious imagery shrouded the idyllic trout brook, and like his angling forebears, Van Dyke devoted scores of lines to the spiritual nature of flowing water. He cherished the “rivers of God” for their image of renewed strength, and he believed that swift waters, emblems of “violent and sudden change, of irrevocable parting, of death itself,” symbolized baptism, repentance, and restoration of fallen humanity.⁴⁵ The connection to nature was important, but separation from civilization and rehabilitated energy played an equally pleasant role predicated on the cheerful surprises of streamside fly fishing.

Van Dyke believed that “the earth, as God created it,” was “full of comfort for all who have a quiet mind and a thankful heart,” which angling helped to cultivate.⁴⁶ In *The Ruling Passion*, Van Dyke suggested that fishing developed the quiet mind and promoted patience, a vanishing trait in the modern world, and assured readers that there was no better method to “unlearn” haste.⁴⁷ As modernization strained sincere relationships, friendships “formed beside flowing streams by men who study to be quiet and go a-fishing” forged the sturdiest of all connections.⁴⁸ In *Little Rivers*, Van Dyke guaranteed that frequent nature experiences beside soft waters aided greatly in relieving the tensions of the modern world:

If we can only come back to nature together every year, and consider the flowers and the birds, and confess our faults and mistakes and our unbelief under these silent stars, and hear the river murmuring our absolution, we shall die young, even though we live long . . . and carry with us into the unseen world something which will make it worthwhile to be immortal.⁴⁹

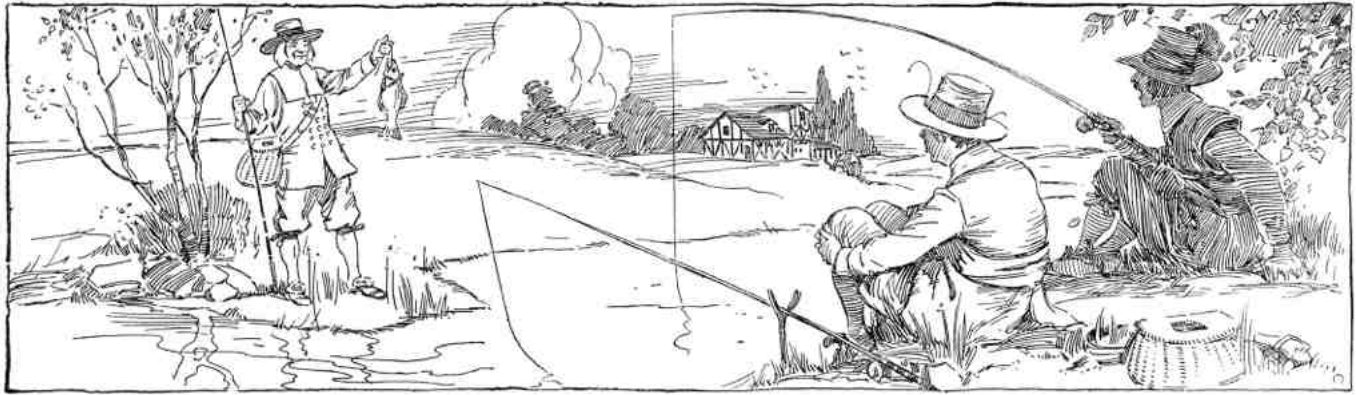
Van Dyke relished the uncertainty in angling that contrasted with the increasing predictability of modern life, and the calm temperament that it encouraged drew him from his city dwelling into nature. In *Fisherman’s Luck*, he addressed a revelation of human nature that suggested an important reason that contemplative men go a-fishing: “The attraction of angling for all the ages of man, from the cradle to the grave, lies in its uncertainty. . . . There is nothing that attracts human nature more powerfully than the sport of tempting the unknown with a fishing-line.”⁵⁰ He labeled angling fate “Fisherman’s Luck,” but recognized that good or ill fortune constituted part of “distributions of a Wisdom higher, and a Kindness greater” than man, and that purpose and meaning lay in the blessings of God.⁵¹

The natural setting, the observances of nature, and the spiritual tug of the wilderness prompted Van Dyke to promote the wise and proper use of the natural resources of which he was so fond. Few ministers promoted organized conservation outright, although, like Beecher, they endorsed temperance in all activities. Van Dyke, however, earnestly petitioned for the preservation of fish and game populations and natural habitat. As early as 1883, and in the same vein as Reverend William H. H. Murray, he pleaded with the public through the *New York Tribune* for the preservation of the Adirondacks.⁵² Memberships included the North American Association of Honest Anglers and the Advisory Board on Educational and Inspirational Functions of National Parks, and he is credited with influencing the foundation of the Izaak Walton League of America.⁵³ Van Dyke never undermined the anthropocentric nature of Christianity, yet he consistently maintained that faith fashioned his passion and reverence for the outdoors:

We are nearer heaven when we listen to the birds than when we quarrel with our fellow-men. For since his blessed kingdom was first established in the green fields, by the lakeside, with humble fishermen for its subjects, the easiest way into it hath ever been through the wicket-gate of a lowly and grateful fellowship with nature.⁵⁴



A photo postcard of Henry Van Dyke conducting the Mount Rubidoux Easter Sunrise services in Riverside, California, on 23 March 1913.



From *Field and Stream*, April 1920, p. 1129. Bound volume 1919–1920, Vol. 24.

NEARER TO NATURE, NEARER TO HEAVEN

Roderick Nash claimed that “the literary man with the pen, not the pioneer with his axe” initiated the American obsession with the wilderness.⁵⁵ Perhaps nowhere is that sentiment demonstrated better than in the words of American clergymen. The works of early Protestants like Jonathan Edwards and Cotton Mather proclaimed the evidence of God in nature, but seldom did church fathers promote withdrawal to the wilderness before angling pioneer George Bethune’s suggestion in 1846 that Christians go fishing and “gather the incense-cups of nature.”⁵⁶ These were literary men indeed, and undoubtedly they shared the Transcendentalists’ appreciation for nature because none were economically attached to it. From the days of John Calvin, Protestants believed that nature revealed divine purpose and viewed the study of nature as a unique manner of worship, initially only available to the upper classes to which Bethune, Beecher, and Van Dyke belonged.⁵⁷ Without time and resources affording frequent intervals from town duties, ostensibly none of them could have held nature in the regard that they did. Nevertheless, as the Industrial Revolution brought affluence to new classes, ministers like these did in fact promote retreat from commercialism into the frontier to help modern man keep morality in perspective.

As early as Bethune’s first days at the pulpit, with American industrialization still sinking its roots, modern commerce and materialism became objects of scorn from both secular and religious reformers. The elimination of poverty and destitution and the spreading of the gospel to un-Christianized peoples had generally been considered worthy goals in most American Christian societies, but by the middle of the nineteenth century, con-

cerned Protestant ministers recognized a dearth of morality in the increasingly flourishing American city. All three ministers understood the importance of returning to the wilderness in search of spiritual reconnection with the creator in the same manner that Christ did.

Despite theological differences, many ministers agreed on the paramount wilderness activity that provided the best retreat from modernity. Although Puritan society, it seems, did allow for some profitable recreation, religious adherents often criticized leisure as an idle waste of time, compelling promoters of fishing to justify the morality of the “gentle art” as quality time spent with both Creator and His creation. Invariably they concurred with Walton’s estimation that “God never did make a more calm, quiet, innocent recreation, than angling.”⁵⁸ Bethune surmised modern man could “get profit in every way” by finding sanctuary and “putting every muscle into full action” during an outing on the trout-stream.⁵⁹ Beecher admitted that when he was forced home from angling, he was always full of “a certain sadness” that he was leaving the friends that he found in solace, silence, and communion with God.⁶⁰ Van Dyke built upon the transcendental qualities of both and found that almost all pleasures associated with the sport had an unplanned and sublime characteristic attached to a day’s fishing. Above all, each understood that fishing put the Christian in a meditative disposition to immediately experience God in nature.

These three ministers emerge unmistakably in line with progressive efforts at promoting a return to wilderness as a catharsis for modern society. Their anecdotal musings blended with theological reflections maintained the spirit of nature writing that long defined angling literature. Because nineteenth-century American Protestants in general supported utility, these three might have represented a bit of a departure from

Romantic-inspired preservation, but each seemed to understand that the rise of industry, and subsequent desire for commercial gain, threatened the soul of the modern Christian *and* the cherished American wilderness alike. Perhaps this plays a large role in their neglect by historians of conservation and sport, whereas Romantics like Irving and Transcendentalists like Thoreau are given a preponderance of credit for qualifying nature appreciation with a mystical touch. But certainly men such as Bethune, Beecher, and Van Dyke, through a wealth of angling literature, contributed to the spiritual attachment that fly fishers experience in untouched wilderness and ultimately established a strong case for founding the origins of the modern American nature ethic.

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A Boy's Trout Stream

by Harry L. Peterson



Brookies, Mayfly, and a Sense of Wonder. 2009. Full-color woodblock print by Betsy Bowen. From an edition of 250. Image courtesy of Betsy Bowen. <http://woodcut.com/>.

MOST FISHERS have a home stream: the stream they go to first, or on certain days, or with special friends. Usually it is close, accessible, and friendly. They have favorite, secret places on those streams, although they may not be so secret and others probably know about them. My boyhood home stream in the late 1940s and early 1950s was Minnesota's Miller Creek.

Actually, it was my only stream because it was close to home. It had brook trout—a beautiful fish whose decisions about what might be good to eat are not always discriminating and whose approach to eating is sometimes described as “eager.” Brook trout are usually not hard to catch, even for a boy fishing with a casting rod and worms. Brook trout and boys are made for each other, although that would probably not be the perspective of the trout.

In the Midwest—although we like to think we are at least as evolved as those who live on the coasts—flies came late for most us. We started out as worm fishers. I have concluded that worm fishermen are fly fishermen in the larval form. Thus, although I have fished with flies for more than thirty years, that is not how my friends and I began what has become, for some of us, an obsession.

Miller Creek begins northeast of the Duluth Airport and flows into St. Louis Bay in Lake Superior about 10 miles downstream. I lived just off the Miller Trunk Highway on Arrowhead Road, about a mile and a half from the stream. When I visited it a few years ago and measured the distance from my home to the stream, I was amazed how close it was.

It was far enough away that my best friend Gordon Engberg and I, from the age of nine, would sometimes hitch a

ride with strangers down Miller Trunk Highway when we did not walk to the stream. That was not advisable then or now, but I never had any problems and met some people I would never have encountered otherwise. A few of them did not drive well, a few drove too fast, a couple had been drinking, and one of them tried to convert me to his religion. I did not tell my mother.

Gordy and I would begin our fishing as the stream went under the Miller Trunk Highway. The water was clear and cold throughout the stream, but it was deeper on either side of the bridge. We didn't have any waders, so we fished from the bank. Worms were our bait. We did not have any flies, and had neither the fishing equipment nor the skill to use them if we had. In truth, we didn't even know anyone who had fly-fishing equipment. That all seemed exotic and far away,



The author as a young teen with the fishing rod he used on Miller Creek. Photo courtesy of the author.

certainly far away from Hermantown, our community. Everyone we knew fished for walleye and northern pike in the many lakes in the area, as we did when we did not go to Miller Creek.

We knew about such fancy equipment, though, because we read about it in *Outdoor Life* and *Field & Stream*. The cover story on those magazines seemed to invariably feature a picture of a charging bear and a terrified hunter who had only one shot to bring it down, according to the pages inside. (Or maybe it was just that those were the cover stories that were the most memorable.) The back of the magazine featured a full-page ad for Eveready batteries. The ad was always a story about some guys camping or hunting and getting lost or hurt. They needed the batteries for their flashlight to last through the night or they would not be found and would surely die. Just as the hunter on the cover of the magazine always shot the bear, that flashlight always lasted an amazingly long time. In each issue, both the bear hunter and the lost campers survived.

Gordy and I read the stories inside the magazines about exotic adventures in

Canada and other places we could only dream about. We also read the ads, the most exciting being an ad for a Pflueger Supreme casting reel, the top of the line

from that company. I think it cost about \$35 in the late 1940s, a huge sum of money for young boys—but maybe we could get one when we were adults. The Pflueger Company, I note, still uses the Supreme model designation for several of its reels, no doubt taking advantage of the lure of that label for older customers buying for their grandchildren. Now, however, those reels are spinning reels—just another of the many things about which Gordy and I knew nothing.

We caught some brook trout in Miller Creek. They were always beautiful and invariably small, and we would bring them home for our mothers to cook. Once, and only once, in the spring when the water was high and roily, I caught a 12-inch brook trout, just in front of the bridge. Although it was an enormous fish, in my excitement I almost pulled it over my shoulder as I yanked it from the water. Usually, though, it was Gordy who caught the most fish and the biggest fish. He was a real outdoorsman who had his own trapline for ermine (although we knew them as weasel). I would walk the traplines with him through the woods, harvesting the occasional catch and helping him reset his traps.

Gordy did not exceed me in persistence, however. When fishing, I did not give up. On one occasion, while fishing alone, I was gone so long that my mother came to the stream to retrieve me. After all, it was dinner time. But the fish were biting and biting hard. These were not trout but chubs, and they loved the worm. The mosquitoes were so thick that I had to breathe through my nose so I would not swallow them. There was a mosquito cloud around not only my

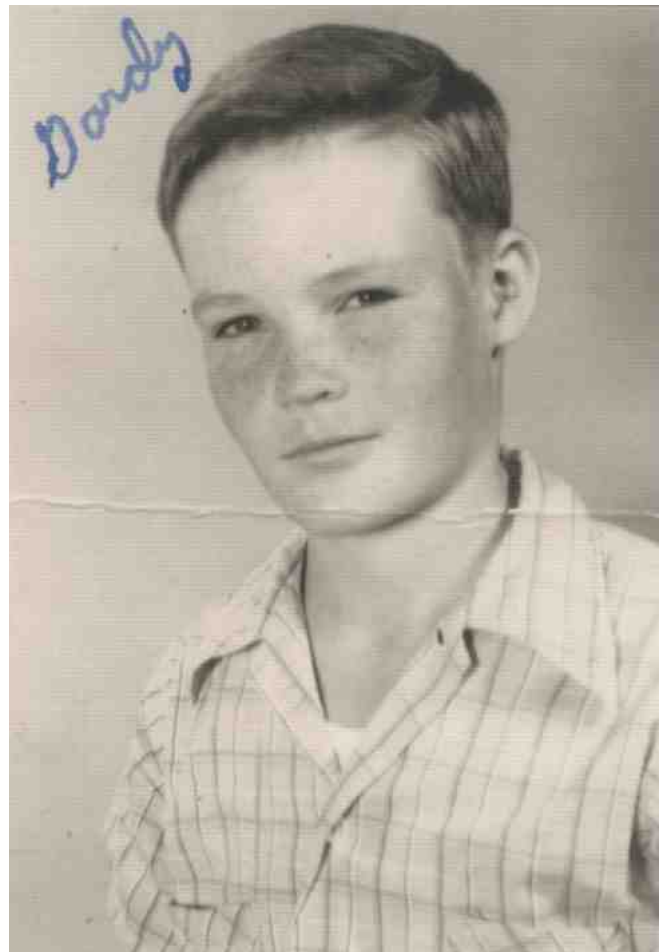
Harry L. Peterson



Miller Creek, October 2012.



*Above: Gordy Engberg at age eleven with his brothers (Jerry, age nine, and Ken, age three).
Photo courtesy of Darlene Engberg Akey.*



*Right: Gordy Engberg in an undated school photo.
Photo courtesy of Darlene Engberg Akey.*

head, but also around my mother, who was patiently waiting at the side of the road. Many chubs later, she persuaded me to leave, and we walked home.

Duluth, although only a few miles from our homes on Arrowhead Road, seemed quite far away to us. Gordy's family and mine only went to the city a few times a year. In the sixty years since I lived in Hermantown, that community has become a suburb of Duluth, and Miller Creek has become what the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources describes as a true urban trout stream. Hermantown's population has increased from fewer than 1,000 in 1950 to about 9,500 in 2010. The pressures are great on the stream and its brook trout; they are the fish that require the cleanest and the coldest water of all of the trout and are the only trout native to the Midwest.

Because of those human population changes, the challenges facing Miller Creek are now far greater than any threat that two young boys ever posed to its trout population. A stream that flowed almost entirely through rural fields and woods now winds near and through residential and commercial development. Parts of the stream have been straight-

ened, and another section goes through a pipe on its way to Lake Superior. Its neighbors include Kohl's, Target, and JCPenney, as well as a shopping mall. The commercial and residential growth in the watershed and the importance of that little stream to the area is revealed in the names of the businesses: Miller Garden Center, Miller Lawn and Landscaping, Miller Creek Townhomes, Miller Creek Medical Center, and Miller Hill Mall.

Residential and commercial development means more houses with fertilized lawns, more roads, and more parking lots. The increasing presence of concrete and asphalt, salt from the nearby roads, and the removal of shrubs and trees along the stream have deteriorated the water quality, increased erosion, and raised the stream temperature. There are fewer trout.

There are people who care about Miller Creek today, just as two young boys did more than sixty years ago. To fix something, you first need to understand it. The DNR describes Miller Creek as perhaps the most studied stream in the Duluth area. People have learned from those studies and are acting on what they have learned to try to save the stream.

Will efforts to salvage and restore Miller Creek be successful? Will it be there for future generations to fish? I don't know. The development and commercial pressures are great. It will take continued support to provide restoration and monitoring. It will also require the careful attention of local people who love Miller Creek and consider it their home stream. It will be worth it. Trout streams are not cheap, but they are precious, and no one is making them anymore.

My family moved from northern Minnesota in 1952 when I was twelve. My friend Gordy Engberg drowned in 1960 at the age of twenty, when his boat capsized while he was duck hunting on Rice Lake.

I took up fly fishing more than thirty years ago and have lived near and fished some of the best trout-fishing streams in this country and, occasionally, other countries. The fish are bigger; the equipment is modern and far superior to what I used in my youth.

Still, I miss Miller Creek when I think of that huge 12-inch brook trout and when, on visits, I drive over that bridge on Miller Trunk Highway. And I miss Gordy.



The End

by Gordon M. Wickstrom

Mark Leffingwell

ON A FINE AFTERNOON this past autumn, I drove up Boulder Canyon to my favorite and secret stretch of water. I looked it over for rising fish and found them exactly where they should be. Everything was just right. Yet I turned to home and did not fish. Fishing seemed too difficult, even impossible. The altitude, at nearly 10,000 feet above the seas, had suddenly become too high. The creek banks too difficult. The rocks too dangerous. The currents too treacherous.

I've reached that time of life of unsteady legs and breath that comes too short. I stumble along, panting; I struggle not to fall down. My arm grows weary, and my casting, oh, my casting: from bad to worse—disgracefully so.

How did this happen? How can I have grown so clumsy and inept in little more than a season or two? I could always before cast as well as the fish required. And I could tough it out for most of a day. Now my good old rods feel like clubs in my hand. I struggle with knots I used to tie almost instantly. All too soon, I begin to think of going home. Is this the end?

I had always wanted, planned, and intended to kill my last trout. I had killed the first one in a beaver dam out east of Boulder, more than seventy years ago. That day had been a marvel. Now this terrible day on the creek may have been the one for me to kill that last trout. I may have missed the moment of ceremony.

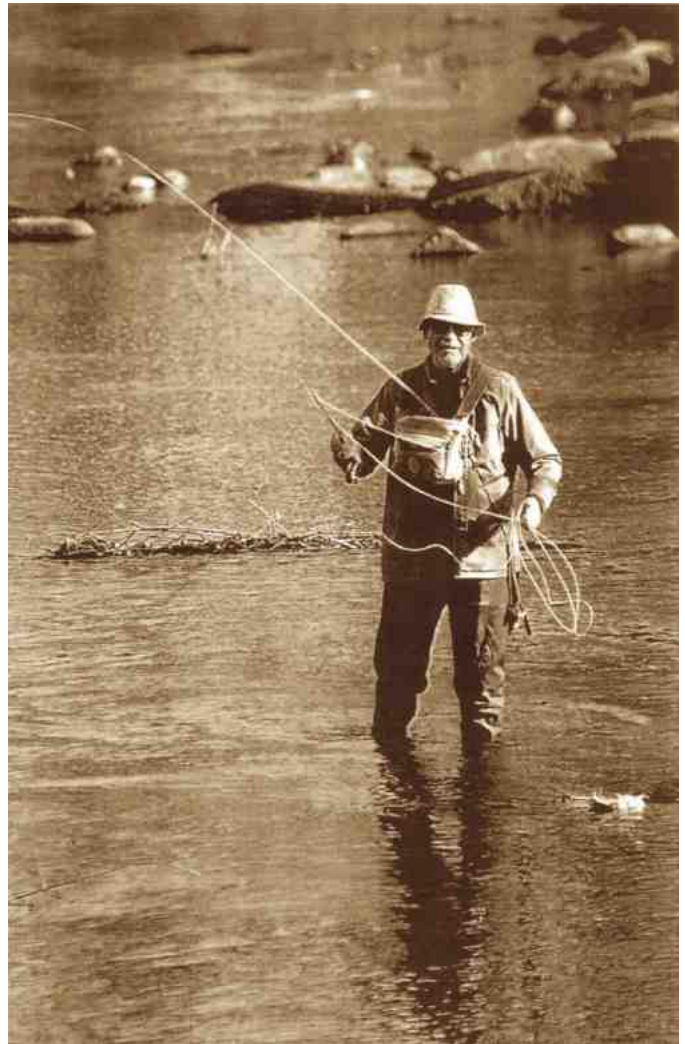
We commonly imagine that last things will somehow be beautiful, fulfilling. We all want to ride off into a gorgeous sunset. But it is not always so. Last things tend to be down and dirty, tough and ugly.

Will I go back up the creek to fish again? In my peripheral vision, right now, is my fly-tying vise with all of its rich and traditional impedimenta. On the floor is my tackle, ready and waiting, like an arthritic old bird dog, waiting to be hauled up to the car. To go again.

I've written that we ought not to scorn the old folks with old dogs whom we see sitting at their forked sticks, in their folding lawn chairs, lakeside, spinning out generous hunks of bait to whatever fish may swim by and take a look. With a good lunch, a good friend, and lots to talk over, it may not be a bad way to live; and I'm surely qualified to join them.

So, on that day, I had a right-down regular rite of passage! Not just one of those silly "senior moments" that the elderly always allude to, but a downright final turn of the screw. Theologists call it *eschatology*. In dudgeon, I say it's what I deserve and to hell with it!

And furthermore, this way I can at last be free from the gruesome troubles of catch and release. I believe that while it has saved much of our fishing, catch and release has, over the long haul, so denatured fishing that for me giving it up will be a relief. Too often, watching a released trout struggle back to life—perhaps later to die—ruins the experience of catching it. I think back to the old days, of catching a fish, dispatching it



The author fishing on Boulder Creek in 2001.

with a sharp blow of a knuckle to its brain pan, stuffing it into a split-willow creel, at the end of the day gutting it at stream-side, and then, home, to the kitchen sink and refrigerator. That was the scheme of things—and properly so.

Now it's the end. The end of all that for me.

Can there be any consolation?



There used to be a bit of consolation from this little fellow who lived deep down inside my Mac computer. He was a thumbnail-sized e-angler perpetually casting without letup,

double hauling his tight loop to trout of the imagination. He was superb, left-handed, with his feet just right for punching his cast out there into cybernetic infinity.

I used to open him up, check on him, see how he was doing. He was always in fine fettle, casting stylishly, tirelessly. He wanted only to cast—perhaps wishing (if wish he could) that he might be allowed to set the fly down for a good float over a good fish. But no, it was not possible. Like the figures of lovers in pursuit of love on John Keats's famous Grecian urn, in his great ode, this fisherman was designed to go on and on and on—forever casting, forever young and hopeful.

Compared with his poetic e-perfection, I'm an old wreck. This e-angler's presence, in the deep recesses of my Mac, was my solace. In him lay the model of the possibility that I could go on and on probing the angling experience, enjoying its virtual pleasures, and writing about them. Writing is the coefficient of angling. The other side of angling is writing about it.

Now my man has disappeared—as suddenly as he came. I can find him nowhere. Is he casting in some other computer, pushing out that perfect cast everlastingly?

I miss him.

What shall I do?

I shall issue a proclamation.

I wish to proclaim to young anglers that if they are as fortunate as I, and if in their turn they should become as old an angler as I, that they prepare for the end and come to it with a good grace—and on their own terms.



A drawing by John Keats, believed to be of an engraving of the Sosibios Vase, ca. 1819.
Keats-Shelley Memorial House, Rome.

I proclaim to them that regardless of what in their youth they may do today to try to prevent or avoid it, their legs will give out, their balance will become uncertain, their breathing hard, and their eyesight dim. Their arms will weary and their backs hurt. They will quickly get stiff and cold and yearn for the comforts of home.

I, therefore, propose a *ceremony of the end*. I propose that when we must, we deliberately end these important matters under our own power, while we are still in power. My wife and I have already ceremoniously passed on our dearest and secret fishing hole to an equally dear friend. That secret is now his blessing—and ours in the passing it on.

Lest I seem to be making too light of all this, making it seem too easy, there lies undoubted grief, a deep sense of loss, under it all. I shall loose my access to the mountains where great rivers head and trout inhabit. And there's the exquisite, the sensual pleasure of holding a good rod as it bends to the line. Dear heaven, how I shall miss that! And the delicate harmony of those mornings fishing with my wife, my best fishing partner.

These reflections, lit by the dawn, in the quiet, with my coffee, these reflections may be enough to recompense me for what the younger anglers, still in the glory of their prime, must see as my awful loss.

I reside in the companionship of these words. After all, a human life comes down to just a pile of words, of language and its organization into the memory that defines a life. I can fish these words seemingly forever; for fishing is the most thinking-writing-and-reading-about-it of all sports. It is the most word driven.

In the beginning was the word and the water

I am grateful that I know the *words* as well as the scenes of my fishing, as well as the verses of John Keats. I know the words of my past, I struggle with the words of my present, and I seek the words to come of my ending, to help me know just who this person is—or was. I who advertise myself as a fisherman who taught school and staged plays. Who is he, this "he" who did these things and is now to fish no more? I trust the words to tell me.

I am grateful for all that good old tackle resting in its place of honor close by. I love to look at it as I do the books in my modest angling library (or my complete Keats with his "Ode on a Grecian Urn"). All that worthy gear is now tired, showing insidious signs of neglect. I no longer can muster the ministrations of heart and hand to bring it back to life. But in the inspiration of all those books and fly boxes, in conversations with old angling friends, there remains much to sustain me—and keep me writing myself.

I am most grateful of all, therefore, for the good old English language. What is there for me to do but to try to hold on as best I can to the luster and precision of those magical words in the hope that I can earn credits toward the fulfillment that Izaak Walton held out to anglers and be *complete*?

In the meantime, I wish to be a model to the young—a sign that this ending of things must and will be theirs, too. It is what we have most truly in common. I want to proclaim the rights and privileges of my old age and remind the young that theirs is inescapable. Like me, they will falter. Let me suggest to them that they set a strategy for the old age that is riding down upon them. Let them plan how to withdraw cleanly and deftly from the disappointments of their bodies. Let them carry on with the pleasures of that angling stored deep in memory and good for all time. We must all try to make a good show of it and cling to its strange excitement of the spirit.

I proclaim these things—and the end of them.

H. M. Bateman: Cartoonist Extraordinaire and Fisherman for Life

by James D. Heckman



Figure 1. The Last Trout. From the *Tatler*, c. 1930. ©H. M. Bateman Designs, www.hmbateman.com.

IN THE EARLY decades of the twentieth century, news publications and magazines were the primary means of disseminating information to the public. They served to keep everyone (who could read) abreast of the latest developments in government, politics, finance, and even entertainment and sports. Their editorial content informed the public and often promoted the political interests of the publication's ownership. Many cities had several daily newspapers and weekly magazines that varied in quality, content, and political perspective. London was such a city, and one of its most influential and enduring humor magazines was *Punch*, or the *London Charivari*, published weekly from 1841 through 1992. In the early years, its cartoons and editorials championed many causes in support of the poor and lower working classes, but after the turn of the century, it focused more on issues of interest to the growing middle class who made up its primary

readership. To that end, it often teased or even ridiculed the upper classes, promoted middle-class values, and, on occasion, even chided the monarchy. One of the leading *Punch* cartoonists was H. M. Bateman (1887–1970) who, almost every week, published cartoons depicting many aspects of London life.¹

Henry Mayo Bateman was born in Australia (where his father was a cattleman) on 15 February 1887.² Apparently his mother's fear of the harsh Australian outback led the family to move to London only eighteen months later, and it was there that Henry grew up and was educated while he avidly read weekly comic magazines such as *Funny Folks*, *Comic Cuts*, and *Punch*. In his biography of Bateman, Anthony Anderson notes, "From an early age, he was always drawing, and producing, perhaps as many children do but with greater consistency, funny drawings that told stories."³ In his autobiography, Bateman described him-

self as having "been scribbling from the time I was first able to hold a pencil,"⁴ and he noted that "drawing was beginning to run strongly through every phase of my young life. At every available moment I was drawing something and every fresh experience served as a subject for a sketch."⁵ Having made a clear commitment to this field—and with strong encouragement from Phil May, who has been described by Anderson as the greatest living English cartoonist and to whom Bateman's mother had sent a selection of his early works to critique⁶—he enrolled in art school at the age of sixteen. At school, he worked diligently to hone his artistic skills, and he became an accomplished artist, but his passion remained the drawing of humorous scenes of everyday life, which filled his personal sketchbook. In 1904, his first cartoon work appeared in the *Tatler*, which published him frequently for many years (Figure 1).⁷



Figure 2. A Vital Mistake. From H. M. Bateman, *A Mixture* (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1924). ©H. M. Bateman Designs, www.hmbateman.com.

Figure 3. Fishing. From H. M. Bateman, *More Drawings* (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1922). ©H. M. Bateman Designs, www.hmbateman.com.

Bateman enjoyed sport of many kinds. In his youth, he was an avid boxer, often challenging friends and even recent acquaintances to a friendly sparring match. He loved to play golf, and he took up fishing as a young man. He pursued both of these sports throughout his life, and both served as the basis for many cartoons. Although not a particularly distinguished fisherman, he clearly enjoyed his time on the water, and it stimulated his creativity. With regard to fishing, he noted, "Whilst fishing I have often had some good inspirations—a little sport is very stimulating to the imagination."⁸ Bateman's cartoon, *A Vital Mistake* (Figure 2), captures for many of us the soul of our fishing experiences even though, were he fishing today, he probably would have released the trophy trout back into the stream to be caught another day. In *Fishing* (Figure 3), Bateman depicts how easy it is to get entangled in the streamside vegetation and how efforts to become disentangled probably only compound the snarl of his fishing line. Just as today many good fishing spots can be overwhelmed by too many anglers, according to one of his earliest published cartoons, *The Last Trout*, the same must have been true in England in the 1920s (see Figure 1).





Figure 4. The Colonel Fills His Waders.
From H. M. Bateman, *Colonels*
(London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1925).
©H. M. Bateman Designs,
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One of Bateman's favorite characters, whom he portrayed over and over again, was "The Colonel." After the Great War, England was populated by many men who had served their country admirably, and the retired officers were often prominent members of society, respected for their military accomplishments. But they were also considered by many, including Bateman, to have risen somewhat higher on the social scale than perhaps was warranted. In his social satire, Bateman frequently depicted the colonel as a bit of a buffoon, engaging in activities beyond his ken simply because of his new social station. One such activity was fly fishing, and Bateman seemed to enjoy depicting his protagonist in some particularly awkward moment on the stream (Figures 4 and 5).

In 1960, near the end of his career, Bateman wrote and illustrated a small book titled *The Evening Rise: Fifty Years of Fly Fishing*, in which he recounts many of his fishing experiences. It is clear that fishing trips inspired him with an atmosphere conducive to creating cartoons, and in the book he states, "At one period, many of my best known and most successful drawings were done, or commenced for future consideration and finish, in hotel bedrooms or riverside [fishing] lodges."⁹ As a keen observer of others, the human insights he discovered enlightened his drawings. He



Figure 5. The Colonel Strikes. From
H. M. Bateman, *Colonels* (London:
Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1925).
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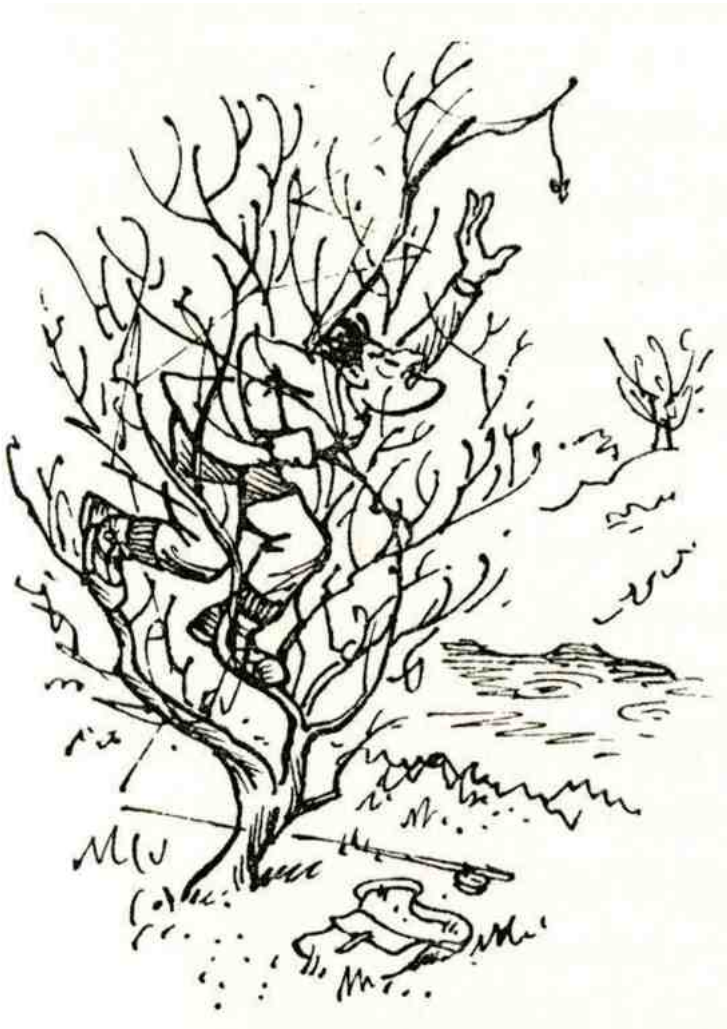


Figure 6. One Hand Clawing for the Fly. From H. M. Bateman, *The Evening Rise: Fifty Years of Fly Fishing* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1960), 23.
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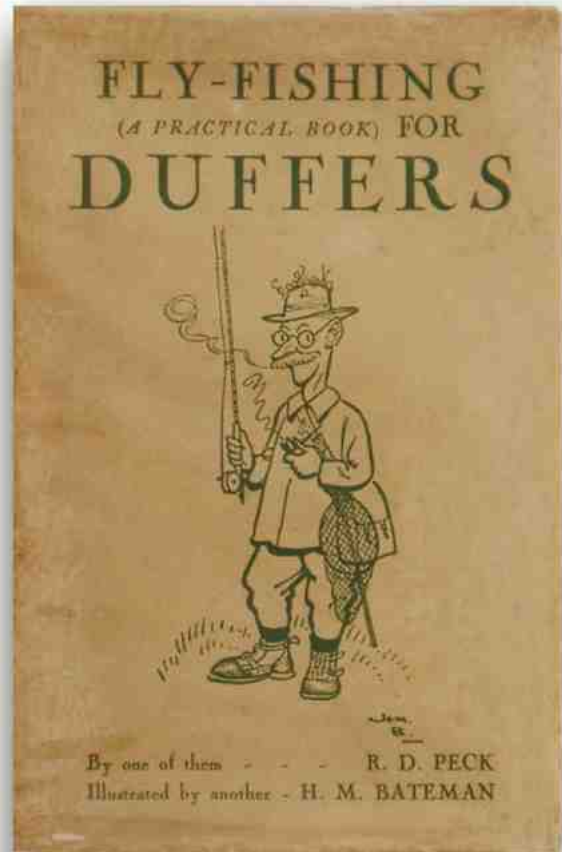


Figure 7. Cover of the 1944 reprint of R. D. Peck's *Fly-Fishing (A Practical Book) for Duffers* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1934).

tells the story of the absentminded professor who had wandered far away from camp on his fishing beat when, in the midst of a mighty cast, the fly became securely embedded in the back of his coat. No matter how much he wrestled, he could not free the fly and disentangle himself. He therefore walked the 2 miles back to camp to seek assistance, only to be told that he simply could have taken off the coat "on the spot and freed it then and there."¹⁰

He acknowledges that "fly fishing can be very irritating at times. What is more inductive to a burst of rage than the fly held up on a branch, probably only just

out of reach, when you are on the likely spot" (Figure 6).¹¹ Bateman understood frustration:

Most of us have done some climbing, about and above the stream, at some time or another, to save breaking a cast. If we are in waders, it isn't always so easy—they are not so helpful as a pair of climbing irons. There was one fellow with a big determined chin who was to be frequently seen, in his waders, well up into the middle of the thorn-bushes, which happened to be plentiful on his beat, one hand clawing for the fly one bare inch out of his reach, and using expletives to match the situation.¹²

Despite his frustrations at times, his love for the sport endured and grew throughout his life. He also clearly enjoyed sharing this love with others. This became manifest in his collaborations with authors whose texts he frequently illustrated. Of particular note is a delightful introduction to fly fishing, published in 1934, titled *Fly-Fishing (A Practical Book) for Duffers*,¹³ the cover of which noted "By one of them: R. D. Peck" and "Illustrated by another: H. M. Bateman" (Figure 7).

Like many of us, Bateman was a fishing snob. He enjoyed both trout and salmon fishing, using dry flies and wet,



Figure 8. The Man Who Mentioned a Minnow on the Test. From H. M. Bateman, *The Evening Rise: Fifty Years of Fly Fishing* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1960), 17. ©H. M. Bateman Designs, www.hmbateman.com.

ENDNOTES

1. Philip V. Allingham, "Punch, or the London Charivari (1841–1992)—A British Institution," *The Victorian Web: Literature, History, & Culture in the Age of Victoria*, www.victorianweb.org/periodicals/punch/pva44.html (accessed 5 August 2012).
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3. *Ibid.*, 10.
4. H. M. Bateman, *H. M. Bateman by Himself* (London: Collins Clear Type Press, 1937), 25.
5. *Ibid.*, 26.
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7. Bateman, *H. M. Bateman by Himself*, 38.
8. *Ibid.*, 98.
9. H. M. Bateman, *The Evening Rise: Fifty Years of Fly Fishing* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1960), 18.
10. *Ibid.*, 21–22.
11. *Ibid.*, 22.
12. *Ibid.*, 23.
13. R. D. Peck, *Fly-Fishing (A Practical Guide) for Duffers* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1934).
14. Bateman, *The Evening Rise*, 15–16.
15. *Ibid.*, 136.

and fishing in "smooth, clear, quiet flowing . . . chalk streams" as well as "the quick-running, livelier rivers, in rougher, less cultivated districts."¹⁴ Figure 8, however, shows that he had little regard for the bait fisherman.

Throughout his life, fly fishing was important to Bateman as an inspiration for his cartoons but also as a source of serenity and personal satisfaction. At the close of his book *The Evening Rise*, he depicts himself as an old man walking in the rain on his way to a favorite fishing spot (Figure 9), and he concludes the book with this passage:

The day wanes—the shadows lengthen. It looks like being a lovely evening. Only the faintest of breezes is stirring, and that too will soon die down. In half an hour the sun will be setting behind the hill, the light fading, and a wonderful stillness will ensue, when the only sound to be heard in the valley will be that of running waters, which is a sweet music all of its own. A perfect evening for fishing, and I am going out. Hand me the rod, start up the old helicopter and put me down beside the river, perchance to catch a trout—and maybe two—during that most magical hour, beloved of all true fly-fishers—the evening rise.¹⁵

Clearly, Henry M. Bateman captured the spirit of our sport, and through his words and artistic skills, he shared that spirit with the world.



Figure 9. The Evening Rise. From H. M. Bateman, *The Evening Rise: Fifty Years of Fly Fishing* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1960), 136. ©H. M. Bateman Designs, www.hmbateman.com.

The American Museum of Fly Fishing Junior Committee

THE JUNIOR COMMITTEE of the American Museum of Fly Fishing (AMFF) was established in 2012 to raise—in individuals in their twenties and thirties—awareness of the museum and its mission through events, outreach, and education, as well as through engaging in fund-raising activities. The Junior Committee is a diverse group of young professionals and fly-fishing enthusiasts whose lives have been inspired by fishing in some way. All are united by a desire to spread the mission of the museum, the passion for fly fishing, and the reverence for nature and the outdoors to colleagues and future generations.

We look forward to the support and participation of these future leaders and are excited to welcome the following Junior Committee founders:

Co-Chairs

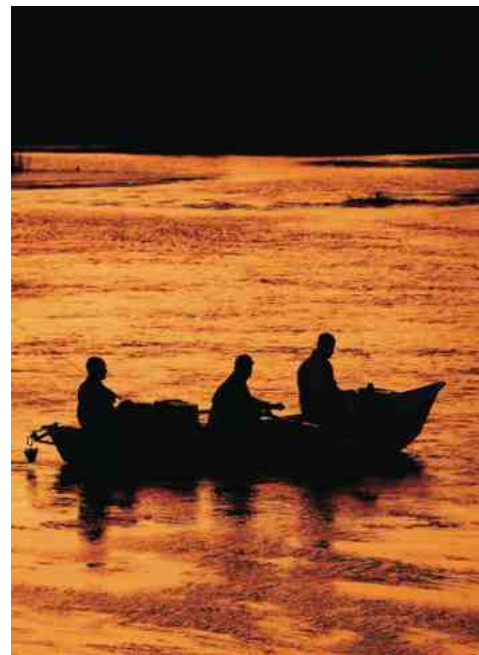
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Jeff Yates, Wilton, Connecticut

Advisor

Simon Perkins, Manchester, Vermont



*Bighorn River Fort Smith, Montana.
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PLANS FOR 2013

The committee has begun to lay out its plans and activities for 2013. Members have a special interest in the promotion of fly fishing through films and the use of the Internet and social networking to further the museum's mission. Some of their immediate plans include:

- Special annual Junior Committee event
- Work in collaboration with the museum's Saltwater Project Initiative
- Additions to the museum website (www.amff.com) to improve global access to the permanent collection
- A fly-fishing film festival gathering and benefit in New York City (spring 2013)

As dates are made final, activities will be posted on our website, where you will also find updates on the committee's new ideas and initiatives.



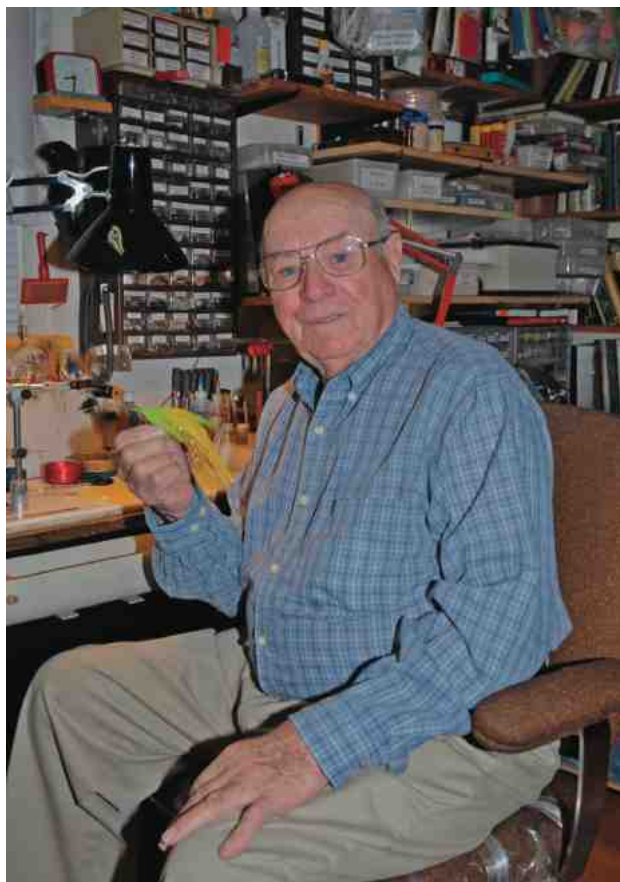
I think the Junior Committee is a great step forward for the future of the AMFF, and I am honored to be involved. We are focused on helping the museum reach and appeal to a broader group of anglers. I am excited about the potential of our group and the museum.

—Parker Corbin,
AMFF Junior Committee Co-Chair

I'm so excited to be part of this new chapter at the AMFF. We have a tremendous group of individuals who are committed to reaching out to the next generation of anglers and introducing them to the museum and its mission.

—Casey Knoll,
AMFF Junior Committee Co-Chair

New York City Dinner Honoring Lefty Kreh



Lindsey Anderson

Above: Lefty Kreh is introduced by Trustee Richard Tisch at the museum's annual spring dinner in New York.

Left: Lefty Kreh at his tying bench, holding a Deceiver. Image courtesy of Lefty Kreh.

ON MARCH 6, the American Museum of Fly Fishing hosted its annual spring dinner at the Harmonie Club in New York City. The event celebrated fly-fishing legend Bernard “Lefty” Kreh for his iconic and innovative contributions to the world of saltwater fly fishing and the angling industry as a whole. Lefty is a recognized fixture in both the fresh- and saltwater communities and is the originator of the popular Deceiver fly pattern.

The museum’s annual spring dinner in New York City is an intimate gathering of members, patrons, and new friends for an evening of fellowship and fund-raising. It was established to pay tribute to select leaders in the fly-fishing community who have played a role in furthering the museum’s mission and vision and to raise critical funds for the museum’s exhibitions and programs. Always the entertainer, Lefty captivated the crowd with his warm smile and charming jokes, helping to make the evening a great success. Thanks to Lefty and to all who participated, the dinner and auction far exceeded our goals and expectations.

The museum would like to thank the dinner committee for their support: Rob Ceccarini, Tom Colicchio, Jane Cooke, Henry Cowen, Guy Davies, Jonathan Fisher, Karen Kaplan, George Gibson, David Nichols, William Platt, Fred Polhemus, John Rano, Kris Rollenhagen, Gary Sherman, and Andrew Ward.

We greatly appreciate Nicolas Dawes’s donation of his services for the live auction. The museum thanks the following supporters for their donations of items for both the live and silent auctions: Jerry Botcher of the Hungry Trout Resort, Robert Cochrane, Collaborative Creations of Vermont, Columbia, Peter Corbin, Henry Cowen, S. V. Fay, Austin Francis, FlyWays, George Gibson, Rupert Gresham Jr., Claude Guillaumin, Luther Hall, Lefty Kreh, Carmine Lisella of Jordan Mills Rod Co., Jim Lepage, David Nichols, Oliver White of Nervous Waters, the Orvis Company, Ian Pet, Fred and Cassie Polhemus, Puntacana Resort and Club, Roger Riccardi and E. & J. Gallo Winery, South Holston River Lodge, Kris Rollenhagen, Tom Rosenbauer, Emily Sherman, Gary Sherman, Mark Sherman, Stackpole Books, Richard Tisch, and Jacques Torres.



John Merwin

(1946–2013)

JOHN MERWIN, executive director of the American Museum of Fly Fishing from 1983 to 1988, died on February 20 in Dorset, Vermont.

Merwin was born and raised in Connecticut and began to fish at an early age. He attended the University of Michigan to become a newspaper reporter, and when he moved to Vermont in 1970, he brought his passion both for writing and fishing to his new home state. During his life, Merwin made countless literary contributions to the fly-fishing community, serving as managing editor of *Fly Fisherman* magazine, launching *Rod & Reel* (now *Fly Rod & Reel*) magazine and *Fly Tackle Dealer*, authoring *The New American Trout Fishing*, and contributing to and serving as fishing editor for *Field & Stream* magazine. He embraced his role as a mentor and casting instructor to thousands.

For a five-year period, Merwin served as the museum's executive director and "led the museum through a pivotal period in its history," according to former executive director Paul Schullery. Shortly after accepting the position, Merwin was given the task of finding a new location in Manchester for the museum to house its offices, collections, and programs. Once he identified, secured, and moved the operations to Seminary Avenue, the museum changed its name from the Museum of American Fly Fishing to the American Museum of Fly Fishing to better reflect its mission. Merwin organized the museum's first capital fund to raise revenues to pay off the mortgage on the building and to make necessary upgrades to the space; he successfully raised more than \$250,000 to accomplish these goals.

Under Merwin's leadership, the museum produced its first traveling exhibition, *Anglers All*. This exhibition, an overview of the history of fly fishing, brought our outstanding collection to thousands of people across the country. The exhibition was launched in 1985 at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco and continued on to the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences (1987), the Denver Museum of Natural History (1988), and five other venues into the early 1990s. An important museum publication was published during his administration: Paul Schullery's *American Fly Fishing: A History* (1987), a book that is still considered one of the most significant references for the American fly-fishing story.

John Merwin was also responsible for laying the groundwork for the museum's accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), formerly the American Association of Museums. Any American institution applying for accreditation



John Merwin (right) and Don Zahner, founding editors of *Fly Fisherman* and *Rod & Reel*. From Paul Schullery, *American Fly Fishing: A History* (New York: Nick Lyons Books, 1987), 226.

must undertake a series of complicated peer and self-reviews that often lead to organizational changes to meet stringent industry standards. Merwin's first step was to apply for and receive a Museums Assessment Program I grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Based on the MAP I evaluation, the museum implemented the following initiatives: creation of a formal collections policy, standardization of the processing and cataloguing of permanent collection acquisitions, the hiring of professional staff, the improvement of exhibition space and exhibition techniques, and the implementation of annual financial audits. Merwin's work led the museum to its AAM accreditation application in 1991 and its accreditation award in 1993.

The American Museum of Fly Fishing is grateful to John Merwin for his vision, passion, and leadership.

CATHI COMAR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Museum Donors



The museum gratefully acknowledges the outstanding support of our 2012 donors. This year we have included the names of everyone who has contributed to our mission, including the attendees of our many fund-raising events. Please accept our apology if any name has been misspelled, placed under the incorrect contribution heading, or inadvertently excluded.

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Museum News



Photo courtesy of Leon Martuch



Leon L. Martuch.

Martuch Is 2013 Heritage Award Recipient

The museum is pleased to announce Leon L. Martuch as the 2013 Heritage Award recipient. Martuch used his background as a chemist to develop, produce, and patent fly-fishing equipment innovations that revolutionized the sport. He also worked with his father, Leon M. Martuch, at Scientific Anglers to produce the original Air-Cel and Wet-Cel fly lines. Martuch has also devoted much of his time serving on the boards of Trout Unlimited and the American Museum of Fly Fishing to preserve and promote the sport for generations to come.

Anderson Joins Museum Staff

Born and raised in North Carolina, the museum's new coordinator of events, Lindsey Anderson, made the trek to Vermont in 2007 to attend Bennington College and never left. Working to support herself throughout her school years as an art teacher and program coordinator at a local community arts center, Lindsey eventually graduated with a bachelor of arts concentrating in memory studies. A resident of the area since graduation, Lindsey is excited to have recently added her work

at the museum to her repertoire. She still spends time teaching and developing programming centered on Alzheimer's care for both individuals living with the disease and their caregivers. We welcome her to the staff.

Sara Wilcox



Lindsey Anderson, the museum's new coordinator of events.

Austin W. Hogan (1936–2013)

In January, the museum received word that Austin W. Hogan, son of Austin S. Hogan, had passed away. Austin S. Hogan became the museum's first curator in 1970 and founding editor of the *American Fly Fisher* in 1974. During the 1960s and 1970s, each time Austin S. saw Austin W., he passed things along to him: copies of chapters he was writing, notes, and fly books and boxes. Austin S. also mailed flies to his son when Austin W. was working afield near good streams. Austin W. collected his father's things in a trunk, the contents of which he donated to the museum in 2011.

Austin W. Hogan, whose schooling, army years, and career as an aerosol physicist kept him close to rivers throughout his life, had contributed to this journal recently, including "On Some Philosophies of Collecting: Provenance of the Austin S. Hogan Collection" in Winter 2011.

Yellowstone Goes to Manchester

Where the Yellowstone Goes, a feature documentary film from award-winning filmmaker Hunter Weeks, was screened at the Village Picture Shows in Manchester Center, Vermont, on February 10. Led by fly-fishing guide and fourth-generation Montanan Robert Hawkins, two boats drifted north on the freestone waters of the Yellowstone River—the longest free-flowing river in the contiguous United States—from the gateway to Yellowstone National Park in Gardiner, Montana, to the confluence of the Missouri River at historic Fort Buford, North Dakota. A portion of the proceeds from ticket sales of this showing benefited the American Museum of Fly Fishing. The museum wishes to thank promoter Garry Harrington for his efforts to bring this film to Manchester.

Recent Donations

Dennis Swope of Burney, California, sent us a two-piece, 9-foot graphite Fenwick fly rod (HMG GFF 9010). **Jason McKlemurry** of Key West, Florida, gave us a two-piece, 8-foot fiberglass Shakespeare Wonder Rod and a Martin Mohawk 49A automatic fly reel. **Rupert N. Gresham Jr.** of San Antonio, Texas, donated his collection of sixty-three fly rods; for a detailed listing, contact the museum.

Pat Ford of Miami, Florida, gave us a photograph and short biography of Nick Smith and Marty Arostegui. **Arthur Shilstone** of Redding, Connecticut, donated his original watercolor, *Strike Near the Mangrove*, and **Michael Stidham** of Sandy, Utah, donated his original oil painting, *Watching the Sink-Permit*.

Gerald M. Gibbs of Cumberland, Maine, gave us a collection of saltwater flies, an "Ultimate" big-game leader, a spool of integrated fly line, and a diagram of a line setup used by tournament distance fly casters. **Lefty Kreh** of Hunt Valley, Maryland, donated flies that he tied himself (large and small Lefty's Deceivers and large and small Bendbacks) and flies tied by Bill Gallash (a White Bomber and a Skipping Bug).

Doug Symington of Altona, Manitoba, gave us a first edition of Doug Underhill's *Salmon Country* (Goose Lane Editions, 2011) and a second edition of Paul C. Marriner's *Modern Atlantic Salmon Flies* (Gale's End Edition, 2011).



Laura Napolitano

Thank you to everyone who stopped in on Saturday, December 8, for our annual community open house, *Hooked on the Holidays*. Nearly sixty guests enjoyed cookies, cider, and a variety of seasonal activities that ranged from painting fish ornaments to tying clown flies!

Upcoming Events

Events take place on the museum grounds in Manchester, Vermont, unless otherwise noted.

April 6, 13, 20, and 27

Movie Madness

1:00–3:00 P.M.

May 4

Members Exhibit Preview

The Wonders of Fly Fishing

June 18–July 7

Angling and Art

Benefit sporting art sale

June 22

Meeting of the Board of Trustees

June 22

The Wonders of Fly Fishing

Opening reception

August 10

Fly-Fishing Festival

September 18

Heritage Dinner

New York City

October 1

Online Auction

Always check our website (www.amff.com) for additions, updates, and more information or contact Lindsey Anderson at (802) 362-3300 or events@amff.com. "Casting About," the museum's 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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Back issues are \$10 a copy for nonmembers, \$5 for members.

To order, please contact Laura Napolitano at (802) 362-3300 or via e-mail at lnapolitano@amff.com.

CONTRIBUTORS



Roger Buchanan

James D. Heckman is a semiretired orthopedic surgeon who lives in Manchester, Vermont, and enjoys fishing the small local streams for trout. He has been a museum trustee for six years and is currently serving his second term as president of the board of trustees. Making numerous trips to Great Britain over the years, including one most satisfying spring day fishing on the River Test (see photo), he became familiar with the cartoons of H. M. Bateman, and over the years he has collected several of them. One day, when looking to add to his collection, he came upon Bateman's "The Colonel Fills His Waders," which led to an investigation into Bateman's enduring love of fly fishing. Jim has donated to the museum's permanent collection Bateman's book *The Evening Rise*, as well as original prints of the cartoons depicted in this issue of the journal.



Bregitte Lane

Originally from Jackson, Mississippi, **Brent Lane** lives in Anchorage, Alaska, with two angels, Rosemary and Caroline, and his amazing wife, Bregitte. The article in this issue stemmed from work on his MA thesis at Appalachian State, a paradise tucked away in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina that will forever remain a piece of his heart. He currently works in the frigid Arctic oil field, an occupation that allows him to ply the "gentle art" whenever temperatures allow.



Harry L. Peterson, shown here at age eleven with a snowshoe rabbit, is an active fly fisher who ties flies, makes rods, and collects fly-fishing books. He is president emeritus of Western State College of Colorado and was a college and university administrator for more than thirty years in Wisconsin, Idaho, Minnesota, and Colorado—all states with good trout streams. Peterson received his PhD in educational policy studies from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. When he is not fishing near his cabin in southwestern Wisconsin, home to many spring creeks, he continues to be active professionally and provides counsel to college and university presidents. He is author of *Leading a Small College or University: A Conversation That Never Ends* (Atwood Publishing, 2008). Peterson welcomes correspondence from readers and can be reached at hpeterson@tds.net.



Todd Hosman

Gordon M. Wickstrom of Boulder, Colorado, holds a PhD from Stanford University and is a professor emeritus of Franklin and Marshall College. He has written for *Gray's Sporting Journal*, *Fly Tyer*, *Anglers' Journal*, the *Art of Angling Journal*, and *Wild on the Fly* and is a regular contributor to the *American Fly Fisher*. He has published a linear display of the chronology of fly fishing. He blogs at bouldercreekangler.blogspot.com.

Wickstrom's *Notes from an Old Fly Book* was published by the University Press of Colorado in 2001. *Late in an Angler's Life* was published by the University of New Mexico Press in 2004. His *The Great Debate: A Fantasia for Anglers* was produced on stage and published in 2006 and is available from the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

A Thank You to Those Behind the Scenes



The museum staff. Standing, from left: Sara Wilcox, Yoshi Akiyama, Tish Russell, Lindsey Anderson, Kathleen Achor, Cathi Comar. Seated: Diane Mahaney, Laura Napolitano, Sarah Foster.

IN THE SPRING ISSUE, we thank the many people and organizations that support the American Museum of Fly Fishing. This includes the board of trustees, volunteers, members, companies, and foundations that offer their time, resources, services, and expertise to help the museum advance its mission. There are others who also need to be thanked for their continued efforts: the dedicated museum staff members.

Our team consists of full-time and part-time employees as well as long-term contractors, all of whom work together to organize programs, events, publications, and exhibitions for the enjoyment of the public. The following is a brief glimpse into their work and how they contribute to the operations of the museum.

Deputy Director Yoshi Akiyama works with all researchers, writers, and scholars who need access to our collection, and he answers all general inquiries about fly-fishing history. He organizes and maintains the collection storage areas, new acquisitions, and the collections database. When you see an AMFF exhibit, either in Manchester or abroad, Yoshi is the design talent behind the display. He is also an accomplished fly tier who developed a technique to teach children the art of tying our beloved clown flies.

Director of Visual Communication Sara Wilcox may be best known for her design and production of this journal, but she is also the talent behind many of the photographs published, printed, and posted by the museum. Sara also designs our event invitations, advertisements, catalogs, brochures, flyers, and website slideshow. She is responsible for the entire production of our recent publication, *A Graceful Rise*.

Development Assistant Sarah Foster coordinates our new development program. Sarah accepted this position last year and has worked closely with Jill Alcott, our development consultant, to implement initiatives that promote support for the museum. She also works with the newly formed Junior Committee, which will advocate for the participation of younger generations. Sarah always has a smile and a welcoming

attitude for anyone who calls or visits the office. We have yet to find a way to combine her horse-riding skills with her office responsibilities, but we will keep trying!

Coordinator of Membership Laura Napolitano joined the staff less than a year ago, but quickly recognized the importance of our membership program. She goes above and beyond to welcome new and renewing members and is always ready and available to engage in conversation when people contact us with membership questions. Laura also handles the administrative operations in the office and has our computer technician on speed dial in case of emergency.

Gallery Assistant Diane Mahaney greets our weekend visitors. Diane is a passionate angler who enjoys learning and teaching others about fly-fishing history. The weekends that we host a program or event are her favorites.

Coordinator of Events Lindsey Anderson is the newest member of the staff. She is currently organizing our 2013 events and program schedule, as well as handling all of the logistics in preparation for our annual New York dinner event.

There are three long-term contractors who perform very specific roles at the museum. Account Manager Tish Russell keeps our financial matters straight, organized, and current, and she often supports the museum by volunteering at many of our events. Copy Editor Sarah May Clarkson works from afar while reviewing all articles that appear in this journal. Editor Kathleen Achor is the center of this journal. Kate works with every author to review, edit, and prepare each article for publication. It is through her perseverance and ability to keep contributors on schedule (even staff members!) that the museum can boast about the *American Fly Fisher*, our most significant method of outreach.

To the staff of this revered institution, thank you for sharing your talents.

CATHI COMAR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The American Museum of Fly Fishing

4070 Main Street • PO Box 42
Manchester, Vermont 05254
Tel: (802) 362-3300 • Fax: (802) 362-3308
E-MAIL: amff@amff.com
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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, exhibitions, and public programs provide documentation of the evolution of fly fishing as a sport, art form, craft, and industry in the United States and abroad from its origins to the present. Rods, reels, flies, tackle, art, books, manuscripts, and photographs form the basis of the museum's collections.

The museum provides public programs to fulfill its educational mission, including exhibitions, publications, gallery programs, and special events. Research services are available for members, visiting scholars, students, educational organizations, and writers. Contact Yoshi Akiyama at yakiyama@amff.com to schedule a visit.

VOLUNTEER!

Throughout the year, the museum needs volunteers to help with programs, special projects, events, and administrative tasks. You do not have to be an angler to enjoy working with us! Contact Laura Napolitano at lnapolitano@amff.com to tell us how we would benefit from your skills and talents.

SUPPORT!

The American Museum of Fly Fishing relies on the generosity of public-spirited individuals for substantial support. Please contact us if you wish to contribute funding to a specific program, donate an item for fund-raising purposes,

or place an advertisement in this journal. We encourage you to give the museum consideration when planning for gifts, bequests, and memorials.

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The museum is an active, member-oriented nonprofit institution. Membership dues include four issues of the *American Fly Fisher*; unlimited visits for your entire family to museum exhibitions, gallery programs, and special events; access to our 7,000-volume angling reference library; and a discount on all items sold by the museum on its website and inside the museum store, the Brookside Angler. To join, please contact Laura Napolitano at lnapolitano@amff.com.



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