

The American
Fly Fisher

Journal of the American Museum of Fly Fishing



WINTER 2015

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Tackle



Gordon M. Wickstrom at his tying bench at home in Boulder, Colorado. Photo courtesy of the Wickstrom family and Boulder Flycasters.

AS COMPANIES DEVELOP technology to advance fishing tackle—attempting to give us the best tools with which to hone actual skill, and possibly even affecting the ways that we fish—our fascination need not lie solely with the end product, but also with how it came to be. What drives change? What is the interplay between materials and ideas?

A couple of articles in this issue touch on this. In “Forward Thinking” (page 3), Hoagy B. Carmichael explores how tournament casting and its competitive personalities pushed the development of weight-forward lines, from spliced silk to—after World War II—synthetics like nylon and PVC. Then, in “Made by Hand: The Books of John Betts” (page 21), Andrew Herd reviews the form and substance of Betts’s published works, many recently reissued by Reel Lines Press. Betts is known for having at some point or other made every bit of tackle by hand: not only rods, reels, and flies, but also lines and even hooks. His books, says Herd, are “nothing if not works of art, written *and* illustrated by Betts.” Herd claims that each of Betts’s books is an attempt to solve a problem—which sounds suspiciously like tackle itself.

Of course, wanting to continue to fish makes us want to tackle certain environmental problems. About twenty-five years ago, Ronald F. Lasko moved to Cape Cod and began fishing and studying its rivers. In 2013, he published a book about fly fishing on the Quashnet and Mashpee rivers, and the sea-run brook trout that are now limited largely to these waters (*A Tale of Two Rivers*, Schiffer Publishing Ltd.). A chapter from that book, “The Trout,” is excerpted here (page 15).

What’s winter without a little art for art’s sake? In spring 2013, James D. Heckman discovered an old *New Yorker* cover sporting a fly fisherman. He was inspired to collect all seventeen covers on the subject, and here, in “Fly Fishing on the Covers of the *New Yorker*” (page 8), he describes seven of these and their artists. Heckman has donated his collection to the museum and is working with staff on a display for the library. Our own cover features a painting from our collection, *Late Summer on the Battenkill*. Read more about the artist in “George Van Hook: A Balance of Form and Light” (page 2).

It’s been a busy fall. We awarded Ed Jaworowski the museum’s first Izaak Walton Award (see page 23) and congratulated Paul Schullery, trustee emeritus and former executive director, on his induction into the Fly Fishing Hall of Fame (page 25). We held events at the museum, traveled to participate in others, and welcomed new staff (see Museum News, starting on page 25).

In September, the fly-fishing community lost Gordon M. Wickstrom, one of the museum’s most loyal and enthusiastic members and among the most frequent contributors to this journal. We mark his passing on pages 19 and 20 and include words from his friends and fellow fly-fishing thinkers John Betts and Harry Briscoe. If fly fishing itself is a tool that can help us tackle pain and problems in our lives, let us use it well, and may we honor those anglers we miss with every cast.

KATHLEEN ACHOR
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ON THE COVER: Late Summer on the Battenkill, an oil painting by George Van Hook. From the collection of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

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George Van Hook: A Balance of Form and Light

J. M. Stringer Gallery



Van Hook in his home.

Sara Wilcox



The artist prepares to sign his artwork with his signature red paint.

GEORGE VAN HOOK is an avid angler who is passionate about nature. He is also an accomplished plein air painter, one who is deeply inspired by his surroundings and his desire to balance form and light in all of his works.

Van Hook grew up in the Philadelphia area and became interested in art at a young age. Taking full advantage of his home region, he studied the masters on display at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Pennsylvania Impressionism artists of Bucks County, and the Brandywine art traditions from the early twentieth century. Van Hook attended Oberlin College and graduated from Humboldt State University with a bachelor's degree in art. He eventually moved to Cambridge, New York, an upstate town that attracts and inspires artists of every medium.

This artist has accomplished a great deal throughout his forty-plus-year career. Van Hook has been featured in cover articles (1989 and 2001) of *American Artist* magazine, has participated in numerous single- and multiple-artist exhibitions in the United States and abroad, has received best-of-show awards throughout the country, and is included in many private and museum collections, including the American Museum of Fly Fishing. Van Hook has also become an integral

part of the New York/Vermont region and is recognized by many as they drive past farm fields, streams, and wooded sections along the road; he is often there wearing his paint-stained apron, focusing on his canvas and his subject.

George Van Hook has been an enthusiastic supporter of AMFF for many years. Besides donating the beautiful *Late Summer on the Battenkill* (2010.039.001) to our permanent collection (currently featured above our fireplace in the museum and on the cover of this journal), Van Hook has consistently participated in our annual Angling & Art benefit art sale, donated and provided paintings for use in our benefit auctions, and volunteered his time demonstrating plein air painting at our public programs. His arrival at our offices—whether to just say hi or drop off some artwork—is always positive, upbeat, and accompanied by his genuine smile.

Thank you, George Van Hook, for supporting AMFF and bringing happiness to those who watch you paint, purchase your art, and appreciate your uncontainable enthusiasm!

CATHI COMAR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Forward Thinking

by Hoagy B. Carmichael

AS FLY ANGLERS, our generation is very spoiled. We have an ever-increasing selection of graphite rods in a dizzying array of lengths, weights, and colors, most of which can deliver a fly line with little effort. Quality waders breathe, stretch, and—if nature beckons—a waterproof zipper offers many of us relief without having to dismantle jacket, vest, and suspenders. Lightweight large-arbor reels, in dime-store colors that look like Swiss cheese, are very efficient and machined from materials that, until recently, didn't exist. Extruded fly lines, made from synthetic polymers, some with microscopic bumps that reduce friction as the lines pass through the guides, too have made casting for many anglers easier and more enjoyable. Computer technology is responsible for much of it, and lines today are formulated to complement the advantages gained by new synthetic rod materials and designs, none more so than the ubiquitous weight-forward line.

It was not until the fifteenth century that the author of the *Treatyse of Fysshynge wyth an Angle* referenced that a line was used in the growing sport of fishing with a fly. Lines were made from horsehair, usually taken from the tail of a white stallion, dyed to suit, and then hand twisted with a loop on one end that was attached to the top of a wooden rod. One could taper the line by decreasing the amount of hair used, and the end to which the fly was attached was often left in its natural, undyed state. Reels were not yet in fashion, and if one were lucky enough to hook a nice trout, the rod was often thrown into the river so that the trout “played” the weight of the rod in the water until the fish tired and both were retrieved. Horsehair lines (later a combination of twisted silk and horse hair), or those made of linen, cotton, or hemp did not stay afloat long but, because floating flies were rarely in use, they matched well with the colorful wet fly patterns that tempted trout in many English streams.

By the mid-nineteenth century, several British companies had developed a process that braided strands of silkworm gut that, when coated with oils and var-

nish, had a smooth outer surface (unlike the broken loose ends of a used horsehair line, known as “pinking”) that traveled through the flop-ring rod guides with relative ease. Even when dressed correctly, silk lines floated well for only several hours, so anglers usually brought several reels to the river, each loaded with a dressed, dry silk line. Over time, one could buy level or tapered silk lines of various designs and combinations of materials that were created to more effectively load fly rods so that the angler could pass (shoot) a portion of the fly line through the ring guides on the forward cast. H. Cholmondeley-Pennell wrote in 1887 that among his favorites was the almost indestructible “cable-laid” lines made of fibrous hemp by the Manchester Twine Cotton Pinning Company as early as 1870.¹

The first recorded in-print reference to a line that was the precursor to the weight-forward line can be attributed to Cholmondeley-Pennell, who as early as 1884 had given some thought to how to reliably make casts in inclement weather “while his neighbor, less perfectly equipped, will find his flies ‘blown back into his face.’” Cholmondeley-Pennell designed a tapered line that, in his words,

“is to ‘swell,’ or double taper, the casting-line—like the thong of a whip—at a point so near the ‘casting-end,’ that the whole of the ‘swelled part shall usually be between the rod and the fly.’”² Cholmondeley-Pennell patented the idea under the name of Whip-Lash Line, and he had them made and marketed by his agents, Messrs. D. Foster, of Ashbourne, Kent, in England.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CASTING COMPETITIONS

The sport of tournament casting has its origins in America in the 1860s. The first plug-casting tournament for distance and accuracy, organized by Dr. James Henshall, was held by the National Rod and Reel Association in New York in 1884. Not long thereafter, distance fly-casting competitions sprung up in other cities, such as Chicago and Kalamazoo, Michigan (home of the William Shakespeare Jr. Co.). As the sport grew, other casting clubs across the country were united in 1907 by what became the National Association of Scientific Angling Clubs. Soon the Lincoln Memorial reflecting pool and a lake in the Bronx’s Van Cortlandt Park were used for competitions.



Anglers’ Club member I. H. Bellows competing in the Third International Championship Fly and Bait-Casting Tournament on the Van Cortlandt Park lake in August 1909, held under the auspices of the Anglers’ Club of New York.

A version of this article first appeared in the *Anglers’ Club Bulletin* (2013/2014, vol. 87, no. 2).

Important fly tackle makers Reuben Leonard, Hiram and Merritt Hawes, and Thomas B. Mills were among the leading competitors, as was Edward R. Hewitt, George M. La Branche, and David T. Abercrombie. The Anglers' Club of New York was, when originated in 1906, a group of like-minded men who organized a casting tournament in New York. A centrally located platform was erected by the city Parks Department in 1911 on a Central Park tributary pond near West 100th Street known as Harlem Mere. It was built for the exclusive use of the club with a fence around it, and each club member had a key. Men stood on the wooden planks with their silk lines carefully coiled next to them, casting single-handed split-bamboo rods that required both muscle and good timing, all in pursuit of the elusive 100-foot mark.

Several men who often took home the distance-casting cups had been secretly developing line configurations that would help them in competition. While there was undoubtedly some concealment involved (one hears of men holding their lines in sacks until just moments before the contest), by 1910, Abercrombie & Fitch's Reade Street emporium offered "tournament casting lines" under their Imperatrix label of imported English braided-silk fly lines. Early Anglers' Club of New York member Lou S. Darling is credited with designing the lengths and dimensions of these lines. In their 1910 catalog (page 368), A&F introduced another enameled silk tournament line, the Touradif, known as the Mansfield (finished in "water color") that was 115 feet long.³ Together, these were the first weight-forward lines to be offered commercially in America or the United Kingdom. Hardy Bros. Ltd. marketed the "Filip" Special Tapered Salmon and Trout Lines in the thirty-ninth (1912) edition of their soup-to-nuts *Hardy's Anglers Guide*. The lines in this case were conceived with the cooperation of, and named for, Philip F. Chenevix Trench, Esq., of Dublin, the celebrated sporting watercolorist. Hardy's claim, this time well founded, was that "a longer [fore-line] can be thrown when shooting, owing to the special form of the



Twenty-two-year-old Buddy Powell, on the left, with Marvin Hedge at a casting competition in 1935. Photo courtesy of the Powell family.

back taper, and the fact that the principal weight of the line is nearer the fly."⁴ Forward-tapered lines had come out of the closet, and anglers were buying them. Tournament casters needed much heavier and more aggressively tapered lines, all of which were homemade and remained cloaked in secrecy.

One such casting enthusiast was Stanley Forbes who, in 1915, showed up at the World's Fair tournament held in San Francisco. He, and others, discovered that one could increase the distances by hand-splicing additional silk fibers into the forward portion of a store-bought line. Each competitor had his own shooting-head formula, and the length of the head and the weight of the forward portion still were well-guarded secrets in the very competitive world of tournament casting. The various dimensions of his home-spliced forward-tapered line were only a part of the secret that he displayed to the admiring crowd. Forbes won the all-around championship in the nine events

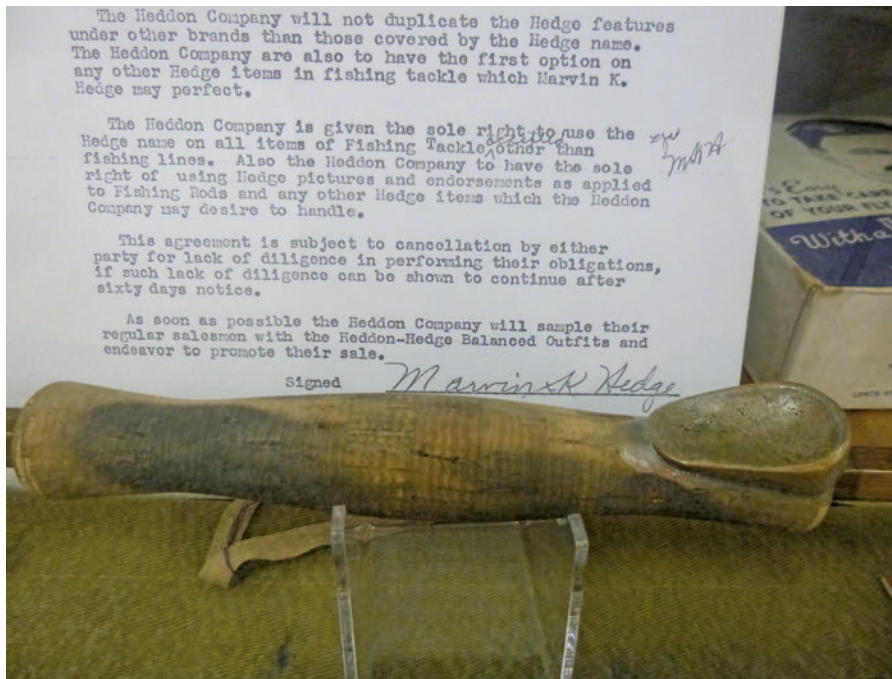
that he entered using his unique line and a version of what he called the delayed double pull. For most, it was the first time that anyone had seen the double pull, an early version of what is today known as the double haul.

The Golden Gate Angling & Casting Club in San Francisco was loaded with guys who could cast farther than their 200-foot-long cement casting ponds. Ben Rice—all 5-feet, 5-inches of him—could easily clear the water while standing at water's edge. Some members (possibly first tried by Lou Guerin) were splicing thin strands of size-G level running line into the bulked-up forward portion of their lines as early as 1920, which, when loaded correctly, pulled the lighter running-line coils off the platforms almost instantly. It was the dawning of the new shooting-line concept, soon known as the torpedo taper. Tournament caster J. C. Kenneth worked to perfect the techniques in the 1920s, but few bamboo rods in those days could withstand the strain put on them by the weight of the lines and the speed that one could generate by using a well-timed double pull. Rods exploded and could not be counted on to stay together, so the new tech-

nique was rarely used. It was not until 1933 that Lew Stoner of the R. L. Winston Rod Co. in San Francisco first made rods with a semi-hollow, fluted rod design. They began to build strong, lightweight bamboo rods so that tournament casters could once again reach for new distances, now armed with sophisticated torpedo-line tapers, thin running line, and the split-second timing of the aggressive double-haul technique.

MARVIN HEDGE DESIGNS A BETTER LINE

By the early 1930s, men such as Portland, Oregon, native Marvin K. Hedge (1891–1971) and Californian Jim Green (1920–2004) were breaking distance records with their own specially constructed silk lines that were unique to tournament casting, using bamboo rods that were specially made for tournament work. Hedge, along with his mentor,



The hand grasp of one of Marvin Hedge's casting rods showing the thumb rest and a portion of the agreement with Heddon, signed by Marvin Hedge. Photo courtesy of the Heddon Museum.

Walter Backus (Backus & Morris Sporting Goods Co.), first used a tournament casting line competitively in 1918 designed by Backus called the Oregon Special.⁵ Hedge was a large man who, unlike everyone else in the casting game, placed his right foot about 18 inches in front of his back foot and drove the cast with a muscled arm and a wrist like a jackhammer, with added power generated by his trailing "off-foot." In 1934, Hedge brought several innovations to the national fly- and bait-casting nationals held at Forest Park in St. Louis. He used the double-pull technique learned three years earlier from Portland Casting Club guru and professional fly tier Maurice "Mooch" Abrams, much to the delight of the crowd, most of whom had never seen it in action. Using a 9-foot bamboo rod made by Oregonian John Wilson, which somehow stayed together, and the "left-hand pull," as he called it, Hedge produced a cast that broke the eleven-year distance record of 125 feet by 22 feet! He used one of his carefully spliced shooting-head lines⁶ with a coating of graphite dust (with which he polished the surface of the silk line to a smooth finish).⁷ For Hedge—and the fly-fishing community—the event thrust him into the national spotlight and soon put the weight-forward line in stores everywhere.

Not long after his celebrated win in St. Louis, Hedge saw the opportunity to capitalize on his newfound renown. In 1937, none other than the famed James

Heddon's Sons Company made an exclusive deal to manufacture a line of bamboo fly rods, lines, line dryers, and other equipment using Hedge's name. The rods were not semi-hollow in design, but they were powerful and usually had his patented elevated thumb rest, which was glued onto the forward end of the cork hand grasp. In 1938, Hedge used a 10-foot Winston rod made by Lew Stoner (that

weighed slightly less than the 5¾-ounce weight limit) to break the world fly-casting record by 36 feet, and Hedge's name became ubiquitous in angling circles.

After more than two years of development, Hedge patented the Hedge 7 Taper Anti-Fly Splash fly line in 1941. It had seven precisely tapered sections of unequal length and weight built into the forward section and 48 feet of running line. These lines were first made of braided silk for Heddon by the S. A. Jones Line Company of Norwich, Connecticut (later they were made by the Rain-Beau Products Company), with the claim that each line was coated with twenty thin coats of dressing. Much was made of the patented black section: 18 feet of line painted black so one could see it easily. Hedge designed the lines so that when the angler was prepared to make a "perfect cast," the entire length of the black section was off the water and just ahead of the top guide before the back cast was made. The lines were innovative and, until World War II came along, they were sold in America and Great Britain as fast as the Heddon Company could make them.

"ALL ABOUT SPLICING"

Joan Salvato Wulff's father, Jimmy Salvato, a dealer of Shakespeare tackle in New Jersey, gave his daughter a three-piece, 8-foot, 6-inch bamboo rod when she was only ten years old. In 1937, at the age of eleven, she began to enter tournament-casting events based on accuracy. By 1947, Wulff was competing in dis-



One of the Hedge 7 Taper silk lines made for British tackle retailer Ogden Smith. Photo courtesy of the Heddon Museum.

tance-casting competitions as a member of her local Paterson Casting Club. She traveled all over the western world to casting events, competing at the highest level. "In 1947, I was in Los Angeles," she remembers. "I was in Marvin Hedge's hotel room, and the floor was covered with fly lines. They were dark brown, and he was putting graphite on them. That was what made them shoot. Anyone who was in tournament casting was into splicing lines. They had their own recipe."⁸

William Taylor, who made bamboo rods and was a beautiful distance caster as well, was also a member of the Paterson Casting Club. Although a variety of weight-forward lines were now available, distance casters usually worked with longer shooting heads that were about 50 feet long and had a 1½-ounce weight limitation. Taylor handmade a silk shooting-head line (as well as a stiff tournament rod) for Joan Salvato that was ⅛ ounce lighter than the maximum allowed by the rules, and she cast 161 feet in 1960, against an all-male field, with Taylor's homemade outfit. "It was all about splicing," Joan recalled as we sat on her porch in the Catskills. "It was short sections of silk line. The guys who came up with the best tapers were winning the events. Mr. Taylor spliced my lines when I wasn't watching."⁹

THE DAWN OF SYNTHETIC LINES

Those who made fly lines from silk fibers seemingly had little to fear. Although they were costly to produce and had seen few innovations other than new tapering ideas, silk fibers were the material of choice. By 1935, the DuPont Company had developed and patented the polymer known as nylon and introduced it to the public in the form of ladies' stockings at the 1939 New York World's Fair. Lines made of braided-silk fibers were still the only fly-line material on the market until the summer of the World's Fair, when the Ashaway Line & Twine Company, who first made silk lines in 1906, began to sell nylon fly lines made from DuPont nylon "yarn." They made level lines in seven weights, single- and double-taper lines, as well as a torpedo-head style, in five sizes, all of which came in a handsome Bakelite coiling box. After three years of expanding sales, Ashaway, in their 1942 catalog, stated that "tests have proved them to be the equal of—and in some ways even superior to—Ashaway's finest silk fly-casting lines."¹⁰ In the summer of 1941, the American government placed an embargo on the importation of Japanese silk,



Joan Salvato at the National Casting Tournament in Warren, Michigan, in 1960, her last year of casting competition. Photo courtesy of Tom McNally with permission of Joan Wulff.

and within weeks Ashaway had to suspend production of twelve of their fourteen fishing-line products, including their popular Soft Finish silk fly line. Two fly lines made of nylon stayed on the market, albeit in limited production.

Within months after the end of World War II, many of the products that were developed and used almost exclusively for the war effort (such as tents, parachutes, tires, ponchos, and rope) were introduced to consumers. Those, and hundreds of other products, began to fill retailer's shelves, and line makers began experimenting with new ways to manufacture and coat nylon fly lines. Nylon monofilament (12-pound test) was commercially available in quantity for bait-casting and new forms of spinning tackle (first introduced by the French company, Luxor, for Pezon et Michel in 1940), which replaced conventional casting reels and made casting for distance easier. American tournament casters like Jim Green and Phil Miravalle began experimenting with the thin, smooth-to-

the-touch "mono" as a new form of shooting line that they carefully attached to their homemade 50-foot-long silk shooting-head lines. Several tournament-casting records were soon broken using the new material, but it was not until the war was over and nylon became readily available that line makers like Gudebrod, Rain-Beau, Gladding, and others were able to make and market new lines that would benefit the growing number of weekend fly anglers.

The Cortland Line Company introduced a nylon multicolored fly line in 1948, inspired by their work in World War II, called the Cam-O-Flage line. In 1952, Cortland began to market their famous light-green Cortland 333, the Non-Sinkable Top Water braided-core nylon fly line made for dry-fly fishing. One of the two products in their new-items-for-1953 price list was the Rocket Weight-Forward line. The cost was 9 dollars; a hefty price when you consider that one could buy a new E. F. Payne trout rod for less than 100 dollars.

FLY CASTING LINES

Correctly CURLED LIABILITY EASILY

Stay on the Job STRONG TO BEGIN WITH IMMUNE TO BACTERIA HOLD THEIR STRENGTH

ing and also withstands wear from guides and top. The thinner, lighter casting end helps more delicate casting and effective floating of the fly.

Packed in 30-yd. coil on a kink-preventing coiling reel. Taper on one end only; choice of either of two lengths of taper in each of three weights of lines—10 ft. (wet fly) and 15 ft. (dry fly). This makes a choice of six different lines, 30 yds. HD—10 ft. HC—10 ft. GB—10 ft. HD—15 ft. HC—15 ft. GB—15 ft. Price 4.50 4.50 4.50 4.50 4.50 4.50

DOUBLE TAPERS

Lengths 30 yds. in patented bakelite coiling box. Standard double-tapered design with long belly or center section of uniform size and tapering down on each end. Permits reversal of line when desired. Length of tapered sections, 15 ft. to 21 ft., according to belly size.

30 yards	HEH	HDH	HCH	GBG
Price	6.50	7.00	7.50	8.00

TORPEDO-HEAD STYLE 3-DIAMETER TAPERED SIZES

Wherever there is opportunity for full enjoyment of the sport of fly casting, almost any caster can readily realize the advantages that are his—and his rod's—in fishing with an Ashaway torpedo-head style tapered line. Its help is felt in starting the line towards you as it lies on the water, for there is less rod strain. The same help is felt in lifting the line from the water. In the air, there is casting weight to work the rod at its best. When you shoot your line out, at the end of your cast—how freely it runs! You constantly have easier casting, which is especially noticeable in a wind. You have better control—more accuracy, more delicacy. You are casting with a line that is made with as much scientific knowledge, skill and care as your fine fly rod. Equally important as the rod, it is truly indispensable to the highest enjoyment of casting for, luring and taking game fish.

Length 40 yds. in patented bakelite coiling box. Front taper about 4 ft.; belly about 15 ft. (or with 25-ft. belly in HCE, GBF or GAF on special order); back or shooting line about 85 ft. Extra backing for GBF and GAF light salmon lines, 100 yds. nylon spliced on if requested.

Size	HEG	HDG	HCE	GBF	GAF
Price in coiling box	6.50	7.00	7.50	9.50	10.50
Price including backing				8.00	9.00
Price without backing					

Modern Improvement in Equipment

13

A page from the 1942 Ashaway Line & Twine Mfg. Co. catalog introducing their new nylon torpedo-head fly lines.

Another DuPont product, Dacron (a polyester fiber introduced in 1952), soon became the choice for the braided inside core because it was very tough and did not stretch. New machines were in development by Leon Martuch of Scientific Anglers that applied a variable thickness of plastic coating to their braided core with a polyvinyl chloride (PVC) finish in varying design thicknesses and colors over a level inner core. Scientific Anglers introduced the Air Cel 1 floating line in 1954, and reliable high-riding weight-forward lines were in the stores.

Today, we have a seemingly endless array of lines, made for all fishing situations, that feature an increase in the taper near the front end of the line. The Skagit, Torpedo, Switch, WindCutter, VersiTip, Scandi VersiTip, Pike, Tropic Plus, Indicator, Atlantic Silver, Compact

Switch, Bonefish, Trout Boss, PowerSpey, classic Cortland 444, and the effective Wulff Triangle Taper are only a few. There are so many offered now that it is impossible for most anglers to try even a small percentage of them. There is no more need for hand-splicing and solitary late-night experimenting. Companies worldwide manufacture and sell myriad lines that are made to help anglers shoot a fly to a target. The secret of weight-forward lines has been out for years, and millions of anglers all over the world have benefited.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks to Jim Adams, Steve Crandell, the Heddon Museum, Nate Dablock, Per Brandin, and Joan Wulff.

ENDNOTES

1. H. (Henry) Cholmondeley-Pennell, *Modern Improvements in Fishing Tackle and Hooks* (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1887), 98–99.
2. *Ibid.*, 100–01.
3. W. D. Mansfield (president of the San Francisco Fly Casting Club, the second-oldest casting club in America, founded in 1894) set a national record for a cast of 111 feet in 1897 in Chicago, then set a record with a 5-ounce rod of 129½ feet in 1902. It was his record of 124 feet that was broken in 1934 in St. Louis by Marvin Hedge with a cast of 147 feet.
4. J. L. Hardy, *The House the Hardy Brothers Built* (Ashburton: The Flyfisher's Classic Library, 1998), 193. On the same page, author James Leighton Hardy makes the spurious claim that Trench's designed lines were "the first commercially produced forward tapered lines."
5. In a twenty-page letter to writer/angler (and eventually fishing editor of *Field & Stream* magazine) Ted Trueblood in 1948, Marvin Hedge notes that he first used the Oregon Special fly line in 1918 for the purpose of fly-fishing only. The line was designed by Walter Backus and offered to rod maker and tackle dealer Perry Frazier in 1917 and manufactured and sold by the Perry Frazier Line Co.
6. Hedge developed three line variations that he matched with three different rods. The rods were placed on the casting platform, and he used the rod of his choice depending on the wind and weather conditions.
7. Albert "Buddy" Powell was the oldest of E. C. Powell's three sons, and he too worked in the Powell rod shop making hollow-built, fast-action rods under the E. C. Powell name. He was a very accomplished tournament caster and easily broke Marvin Hedge's new record the following year (1935) in San Jose, California, by 13 feet, 8 inches. The slight, 140-pound Powell extended his own record to more than 167 feet, 10 inches just months before he was tragically killed in a car crash in 1936.
8. Interview with the author, summer 2010.
9. *Ibid.*
10. The 1942 Ashaway Fishing Lines catalog (no. 16), 12.



Fly Fishing on the Covers of the *New Yorker*

by James D. Heckman

FLY FISHING HAS been depicted, documented, and displayed in more ways and in more forms than perhaps any other sport. The American Museum of Fly Fishing alone contains more than 5,800 books related to the sport,¹ and hundreds of artists have attempted to capture its essence in many styles and media. From 1936 through 1954, fly fishing was periodically shown on the covers of the *New Yorker* magazine. During that narrow eighteen-year segment of the magazine's ninety-plus-year life span, seventeen covers (out of a total of more than 4,500) drawn by some of America's greatest cartoonists were devoted to fly fishing.

The *New Yorker* was founded in 1925 by Harold Ross as a weekly humor magazine similar to *Judge* and *Vanity Fair*, its predecessors.² It was published with Ross's goal of creating a "smart humor magazine that would appeal only to a sophisticated and educated elite and in a narrowly circumscribed geographical area."³ However, Ross was so adept at attracting and retaining the best humorists of his time (Dorothy Parker and other members of the Algonquin Round Table, E. B. White, Clifton Fadiman, and James Thurber, to name a few) that the weekly surged in popularity, not only among its intended audience in Manhattan, but nationwide. In *The Smart Magazines*, George H. Douglas noted that "by the mid-1930s the *New Yorker* . . . was an acknowledged leader in American journalism through its excellent short stories, its regular departments . . . its splendid theater and book reviews."⁴

Ross planned that "the *New Yorker* will be a reflection in word and picture of metropolitan life. It will be humor. Its general tenor will be one of gaiety, wit and satire but it will be more than a jester."⁵ He also wanted it to be "so entertaining and informative as to be a necessity for the person who knows his way about or wants to."⁶ Ross remained editor from the inception of the magazine until his death in 1951, and Mary Corey noted in *The World through a Monocle: The New Yorker at Midcentury*, "the magazine was widely read and widely talked about and

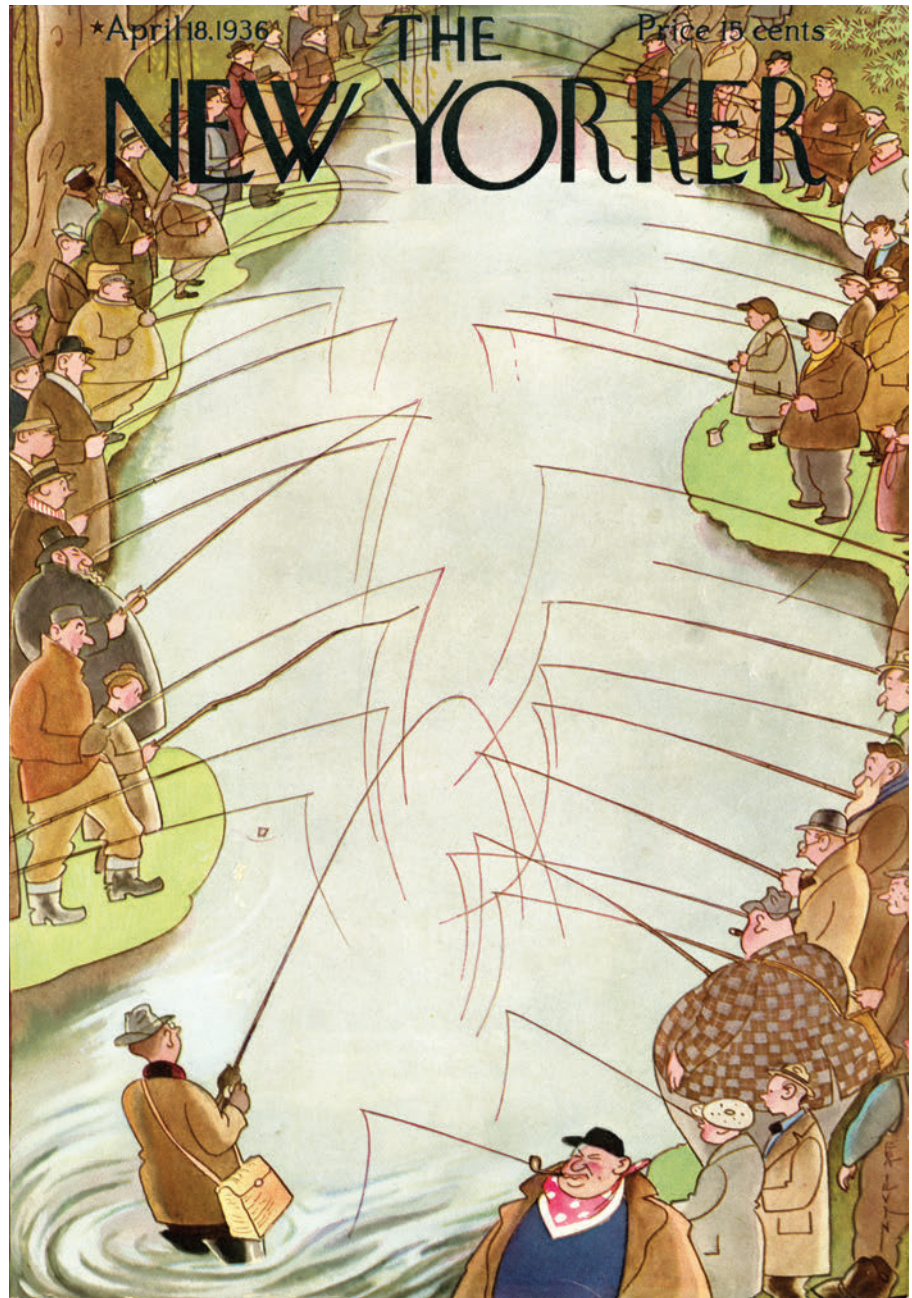


Figure 1. *New Yorker* cover from 18 April 1936 by Rea Irvin. Permission for reproduction from Molly Rea, Jamie Noehren, and Christie Fernandez.

came to have serious social cachet."⁷ She also noted that "Ross created a distinctly modern magazine that altered the style and content of contemporary American

fiction, perfected a new form of literary journalism, established new standards for humor and comic art, and shaped numerous social and cultural agendas."⁸ During



Figure 2. *New Yorker* cover from 23 April 1955 by Abe Birnbaum.
 Permission for reproduction from Condé Nast, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

that era, the *New Yorker* became a standard setter and social arbiter for the emerging wealthy upper middle class and, as J. W. Krutch noted in the *Saturday Review* on 30 January 1954, its readers “took their every cue from its pages.”⁹ This included identifying and promoting the “right” recreational pursuits for its avid readers, and in the 1940s and 1950s, fly fishing fit the bill.

One of the most effective ways that the *New Yorker* found to influence thinking and behavior was through the use of cartoons, both on the cover and throughout the magazine. Its covers in particular came to clearly portray Ross’s “picture of metropolitan life.” During the first decade

(1925–1935), sporting activities (golf, baseball, hunting, and especially boating of all sorts) were frequently depicted at a rate of three to four covers per year. These sports reflected—or perhaps were chosen to define—the interests of the “sophisticated” *New Yorker*. The appearance of fly fishing as a cover topic began in the spring of 1936 and returned frequently—typically each April, concurrent with the opening of fishing season—throughout the 1940s and 1950s, reflecting the rising popularity of the sport during those two decades, particularly among the magazine’s intended audience.

Paul Schullery documented in *American Fly Fishing: A History* (1987) that the

sport, and particularly eastern stream fishing, became the interest of many upper middle-class men (and a few women) who became financially successful following the Great Depression.¹⁰ He notes that during those years, several important books on the subject were published, starting with George Leonard Herter’s *Professional Fly Tying, Spinning and Tackle Making: Manual and Manufacturers Guide*, which, although originally published in 1941, was reprinted nineteen times over the next fifteen years and reportedly sold more than 400,000 copies.¹¹ In 1947, John McDonald published *The Complete Fly Fisherman: The Notes and Letters of Theodore Gordon*,



Figure 3. New Yorker cover from 21 June 1947 by Rea Irvin. Permission for reproduction from Molly Rea, Jamie Noehren, and Christie Fernandez.

and Art Flick published *Streamside Guide to Naturals and Their Imitations*, which Schullery concluded “made life simpler for countless eastern anglers.”¹² Soon thereafter came John Atherton’s *The Fly and the Fish* (1951) and Ernest Schwiebert’s *Matching the Hatch* (1955). With these robustly informative resources, many individuals seeking leisure-time pursuits were emboldened to try this heretofore relatively esoteric sport, and they were reminded each spring by the *New Yorker* covers that this was a sport worthy of pursuit. The *New Yorker*, on the other hand, did not promote many other sports; for instance, my perusal of all *New Yorker* covers from

1925 through 1989 revealed only two related to bowling (29 March 1941 and 7 March 1942).

Almost as quickly as fly fishing’s popularity rose after World War II, it faded with the development of spinning tackle and other technical advances in the 1950s. Schullery points to the substantial growth of outdoor recreation in the United States during that decade and emphasizes that “the spinning craze brought many to fishing who had no knowledge at all of the traditions of fly fishing; all they wanted were the most efficient fish-catching tools possible, ones that could take the abuse given by many clumsy beginners.”¹³ Not

only was the fly reel replaced by the spinning reel during this time, but bamboo rods were replaced by fiberglass and later graphite ones, flies were replaced by spinners, and silk line was replaced by one made of synthetic materials. As a result, fishing became available to everyman, the highbrow allure of traditional fly fishing faded, and, after 1959, fly fishing was only depicted twice again on a *New Yorker* cover (in 1970 and 1972).

This disappearance of fly fishing from the magazine’s covers may not have been only because the sport had lost its allure to the sophisticated set. Some (most notably John Updike¹⁴) have noted that with the

arrival of the 1960s, Vietnam, the civil rights movement, and other cultural changes in America, the tone of the *New Yorker* changed to reflect the impact of these events and focused less on being a social standard setter and more on the serious issues of the times. In the foreword to the *Complete Book of Covers from the New Yorker 1925–1989*, Updike remarked, “It is almost as if, during these troubled and contentious Sixties and Seventies, the *New Yorker* protested, on its covers, by means of withdrawal . . . into a world of vanished sentiment.”¹⁵ In the years following 1960, fewer *New Yorker* covers have depicted people in pursuit of any enjoyable or recreational activities. Through my

very rough perusal of all of the covers, in the early years (1925–1935), sporting activities (besides fly fishing), especially various forms of boating, were common cover subjects, occurring three to five times per year. From 1936 until 1972, sporting topics, including the seventeen on fly fishing, appeared four or five (and as often as seven) times annually. After 1972, by my count, sporting activities of all types (mostly baseball and boating) have appeared at the rate of only about two per year, and no more covers have depicted fly fishing specifically.

During that narrow window of time from 1936 to 1954, when fly fishing was a relatively common cover subject, a couple of

recurring themes were seen. Because many of the covers coincided with the opening of fishing season, several of them depicted an opening day “combat zone” seemingly with more fishermen than fish (Figures 1 and 2). A second theme focused on the hopeful but inexperienced angler being outwitted by the denizens of the wilderness (Figure 3) or frustrated by the challenges of pursuing a trout (Figure 4). Finally, several covers actually got it right by portraying a couple of hours of serenity away from the big city with the fly fisherman enjoying a day on the stream or pond with perhaps the chance of catching a fish or two (Figures 5 and 6) or by capturing the anticipation of the upcoming season (Figure 7).



Figure 4. *New Yorker* cover from 19 April 1952 by Perry Barlow. Permission for reproduction from Condé Nast, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Over its nearly century-long existence, the *New Yorker* has had a relatively small stable of cartoonists who have provided the bulk of its illustrations. Among these were a few who, in addition to depicting many other subjects either on the cover or inside the magazine, contributed one or more fly-fishing cover illustrations.

Rea Irvin (1881–1972) was hired by Harold Ross as the first art editor in 1924.¹⁶ He created Eustace Tilley, the dandy who adorned the inaugural cover on 21 February 1925 and has reappeared on the cover of each anniversary issue since (with the exception of 1994). Between 1925 and his retirement in 1958, Irvin created 169 *New Yorker* covers, including the first one on fly fishing (see Figure 1) and two others spoofing the

hopeful but ineffective fisherman (see Figure 3). He also created the distinctive typeface still used today for the magazine's nameplate and the masthead of the informative "Talk of the Town" section. Irvin remained as the art editor until 1951 and contributed his last cover in 1958. His vision for the magazine blended well with that of Harold Ross; Lee Lorenz, in his book, *The Art of the New Yorker: 1925–1995*, concluded that Irvin's "central importance in creating the graphic armature for Ross's vision remains unchallenged. Without Rea Irvin as midwife, the *New Yorker's* style would never have been born."¹⁷

Abe Birnbaum (1899–1966) contributed frequently to the *New Yorker*, painting close to 150 covers and contributing nearly 500 cartoons to the

magazine over a career spanning from the 1930s to the 1960s. According to his obituary in the *New York Times*, his distinctive style (see Figures 2 and 5) "represented people and objects in their most uncomplicated terms."¹⁸ Stephen Becker, in *Comic Art in America*, noted that Birnbaum had "one of the surest lines in the business—firm, strong, unmistakably emphatic."¹⁹ His cover from 28 April 1951 seems to capture the serene spirit of the sport, suggesting perhaps that he had spent some time himself on the water.

Perry Barlow (1892–1978) provided cartoons to the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Collier's*, and the *New Yorker* over a career that spanned more than thirty years and included more than 200 *New Yorker* covers. M. A. Farber, in Barlow's obituary in the *New York Times*,²⁰ described Barlow's

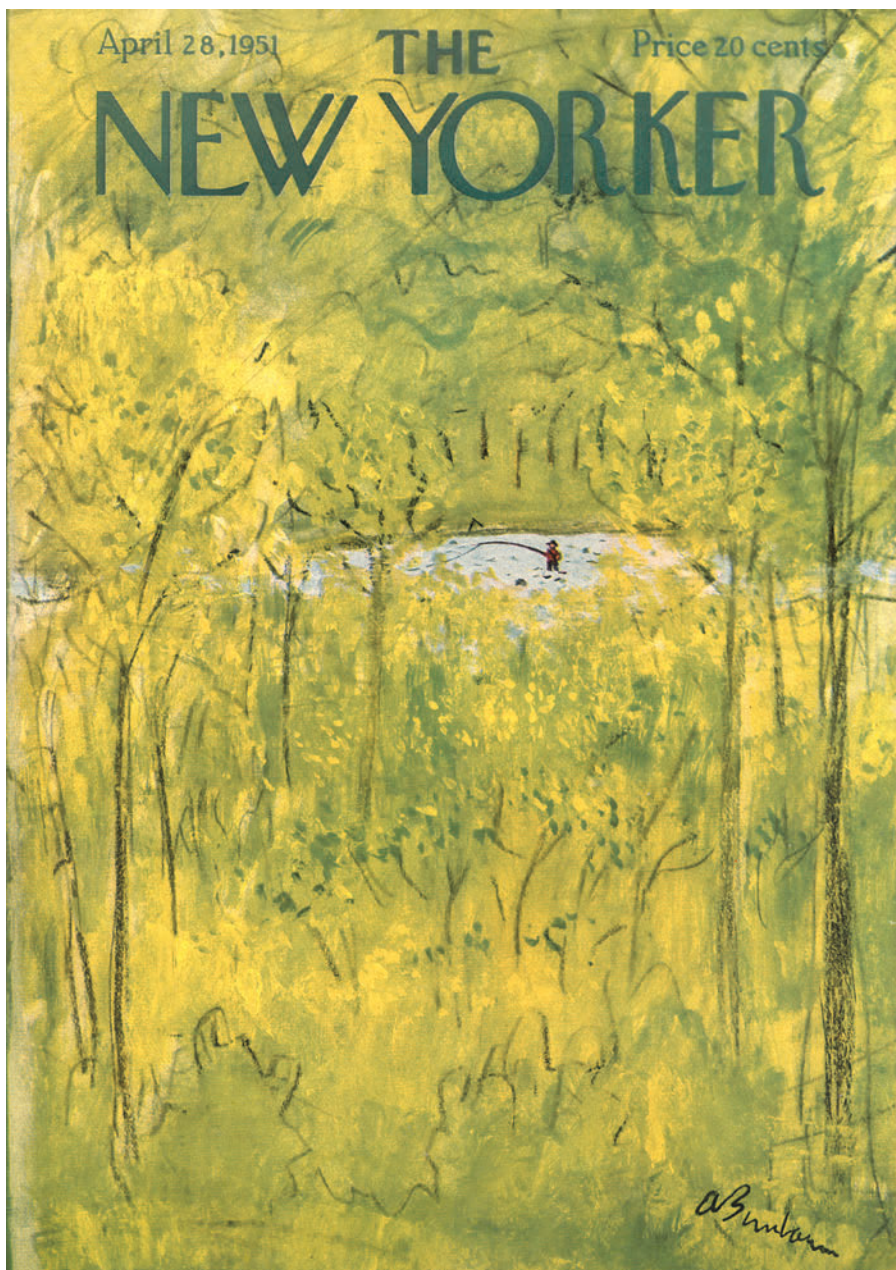
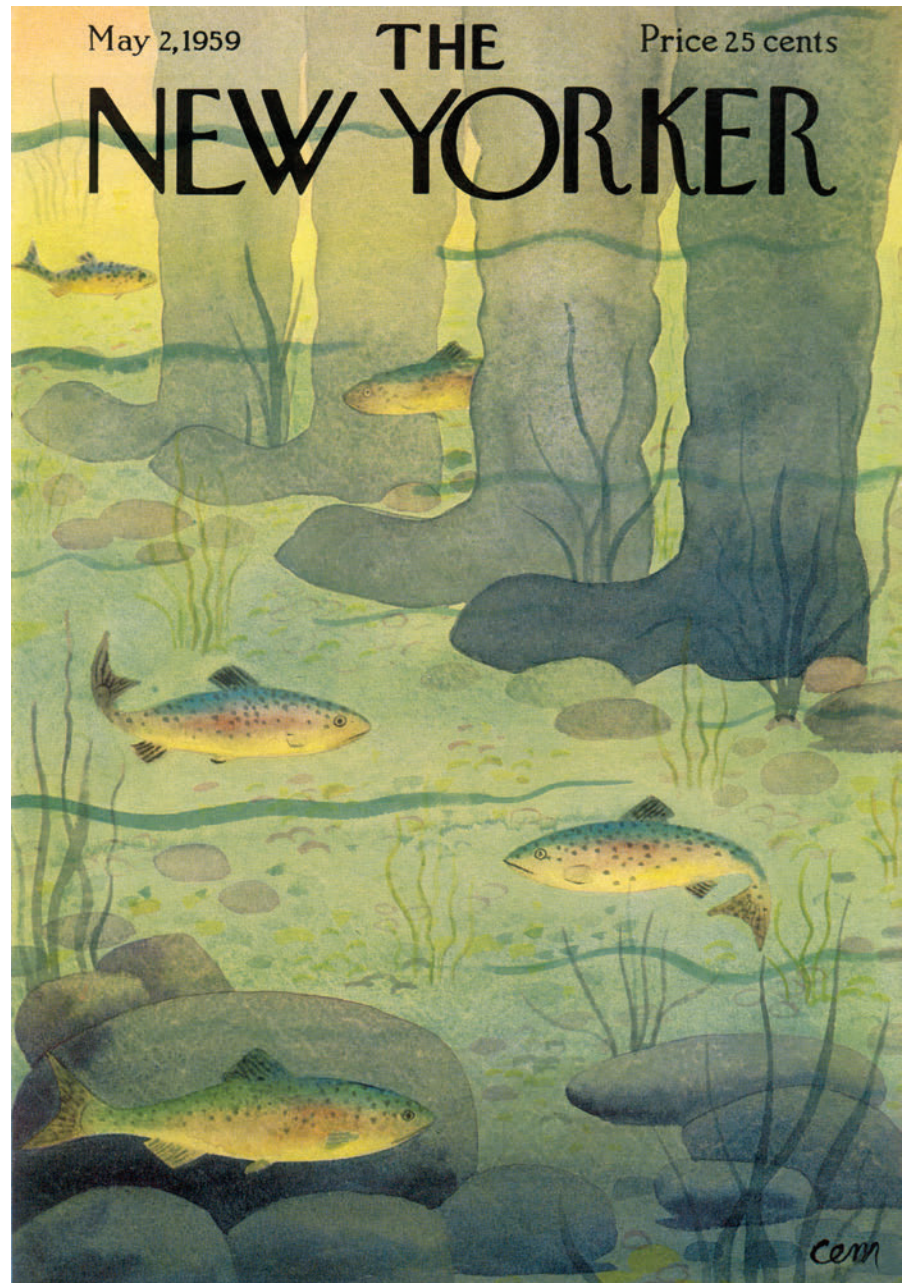


Figure 5. *New Yorker* cover from 28 April 1951 by Abe Birnbaum. Permission for reproduction from Condé Nast, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Figure 6. New Yorker cover from 2 May 1959 by Charles E. Martin. Permission for reproduction from Condé Nast, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



cartoons as warm, realistic, and often involving children. In that obituary, William Shawn, editor of the *New Yorker* at the time of Barlow's death, was quoted as saying that Barlow "was one of the gentlest and most humane of comic artists" and that Barlow "was amused by the everyday predicaments people found themselves in, but he was always on their side."²¹ This is reflected in his cartoon of the intrepid angler in Figure 4. James Geraghty, the *New Yorker's* second art editor from 1939 until 1973, described Barlow as a "quiet, shy, aloof man";²² hence, it is not too surprising that Barlow is the one who chose to depict an older man busy at his fly-tying desk in early spring 1948, preparing for the upcoming trout season (see Figure 7). One interesting fact about Barlow is that he was

color-blind, and his wife, Dorothy Hope Smith (a portraitist of children and the artist who created the iconic Gerber baby), colored all of his ink drawings.²³

Charles E. Martin (1910–1995) produced 114 covers for the *New Yorker* over a career that spanned five decades.²⁴ After a few years as a set designer at Boston's Little Theater, he moved to New York in 1932 and worked as an art teacher and supervisor in the federal government's Works Progress Administration (WPA) until his first cartoons were published in the *New Yorker* and other magazines. During World War II, he was in charge of creating publications containing political cartoons and other propaganda that was air-dropped behind enemy lines in the European theater.²⁵ His cartoons and covers in the *New*

Yorker, all signed *CEM*, focused heavily on common New York City sights and scenes with an understated, almost minimalist, tone. People were rarely featured in his covers, and he only occasionally portrayed sporting scenes. Thus, his cover from 2 May 1959 (see Figure 6) with anglers standing in the stream is different from his other works, and its unique underwater perspective anticipates the work of more contemporary artists, such as Mark Susinno.

Besides these four artists, others contributed covers relating to fly fishing (addressing themes similar to the ones presented here) during the 1940s and 1950s, including two by Ilonka Karasz and one each by Roger Duvoisin, Bella Dankovsky, Leonard Dove, and Garrett Price.

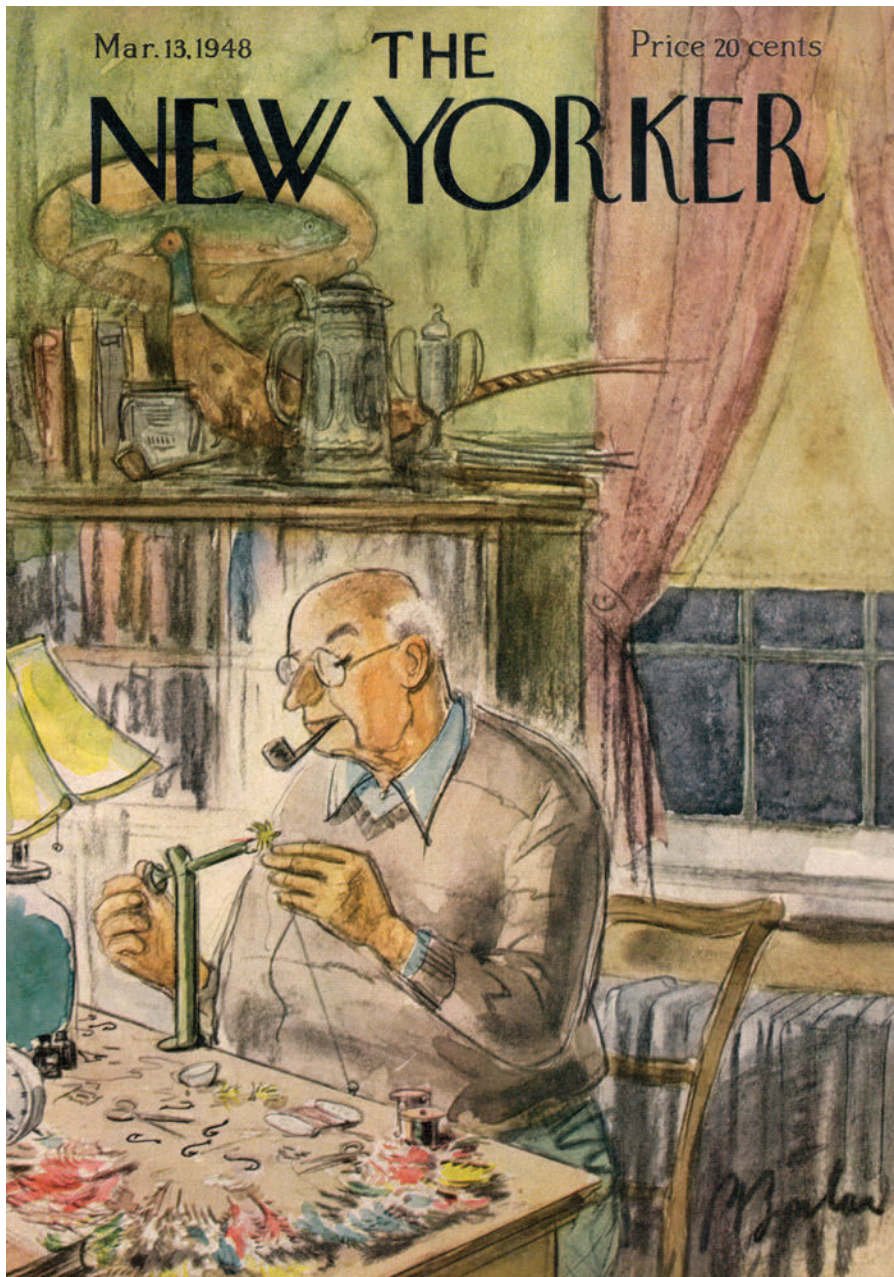


Figure 7. New Yorker cover from 13 March 1948 by Perry Barlow. Permission for reproduction from Condé Nast, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

These covers captured a special time in the annals of eastern stream fishing, and although the sport continues to thrive, other subjects have supplanted fly fishing. Maybe someday soon an artist will remind the current generation of *New Yorker* readers of the beauty and serenity of the sport; perhaps one might capture a saltwater angler casting flies within the shadows of skyscrapers just off the island of Manhattan.

ENDNOTES

1. E-mail to author from Yoshi Akiyama, deputy director at the American Museum of Fly Fishing, Manchester, Vermont, 3 July 2014.
2. George H. Douglas, *The Smart Magazines* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1991), 129–73.

3. *Ibid.*, 139.
4. *Ibid.*, 167–68.
5. Dale Kramer, *Ross and the New Yorker* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1951), 61.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Mary F. Corey, *The World through a Monocle: The New Yorker at Midcentury* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), x.
8. *Ibid.*, 3.
9. Joseph Wood Krutch, “The Profession of a New Yorker,” *The Saturday Review* (30 January 1954), 15.
10. Paul Schullery, *American Fly Fishing: A History* (New York: Lyons Press, 1987), 183.
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*, 194.
13. *Ibid.*, 207.
14. John Updike, foreword to *The Complete Book of Covers from the New Yorker, 1925–1989* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), v–vii.

15. *Ibid.*, vii.
16. “The Art of the *New Yorker* Visits the Brandywine River Museum,” *Brandywine River Museum News*, www.brandywinemuseum.org/news_print/newsoo4_print.html. Accessed 20 August 2014.
17. Lee Lorenz, *The Art of the New Yorker: 1925–1995* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), 74.
18. “Abe Birnbaum, 67, Illustrator, Dies,” *New York Times* (20 June 1966), 30.
19. Stephen Becker, *Comic Art in America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959), 152.
20. M. A. Farber, “Perry Barlow, 85, a Cartoonist on the *New Yorker* for 30 Years,” *New York Times* (27 December 1977), 38.
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid.*
23. *Ibid.*
24. Wolfgang Saxon, “Charles Elmer Martin, or CEM, *New Yorker* Artist, Dies at 85,” *New York Times* (20 June 1995).
25. *Ibid.*

A Tale of Two Rivers: The Trout

by Ronald F. Lasko

All photos and illustrations by Ron Lasko



The upper Quashnet River, restored from cranberry bog to wooded valley. Trout Unlimited volunteers brought spawning gravel and riverbed rocks in by hand buckets to recreate this riverbed. They planted trees above newly log-reinforced banks. Today, trout are found below the overhanging foliage and in the undercut banks. Courtesy of Ron Lasko and Schiffer Publishing.

WHEN THE LAST great ice age retreated, it had piled and left behind huge mounds of sand creating the peninsula of Cape Cod. Heavy deposits of glacier ice were buried in the sand over an underground freshwater aquifer. As the ice melted, the waters created lakes and ponds that were recharged by the aquifer. Many lakes and ponds overflowed and created rivers to the sea, while others, called kettle ponds, had neither inlets nor outlets, their evaporation loss being recharged by springs and lenses through the aquifer. The char, known today as our sea-run brook trout, ranged between the glaciers and their free-flowing, cold, freshwater drainages and the salt water. When the glaciers dissipated about 12,000 years ago, the sea-run brook trout remained behind and populated the freshwater rivers and lakes.

They utilized the saltwater estuaries, bays, and the sea to become fat on the abundant marine foods, spawning in the rivers and the headwater lakes to create a new cycle of offspring. As conditions dictated, they learned to feed and grow in both fresh and salt water, depending on water temperatures, seasons, predators, and food availability. The char or brook trout that became trapped in the kettle ponds without inlets or outlets adapted and used the gravel spring beds for spawning.

Before man inhabited Cape Cod, the trout's predators were the larger fish at sea, seals and otters in the bay, and fish-eating ducks, osprey, and herons in the estuaries, rivers, and lakes. The native American Indians—the Wampanoags of Cape Cod—fished for these brook trout but never took so many as to deplete their numbers. In fact, all through the thousands of years following the ice age, both the Wampanoags and the brook trout flourished in these waters.

In 1620, another predator arrived on the scene—the pilgrims of Plymouth

Colony, who discovered the brook trout to be of both the size and quantity to be taken as a steady food source. These settlers, however, depleted sea-run brook trout not just by eating them, but by building dams and millraces on nearly every free-flowing stream. There was timber to cut and corn, wheat, and barley to grind. Water power was used to run the mills' waterwheels, and that required dams. Dams are a death sentence to any anadromous fish population, whether they are shad, herring, eels, salmon, or trout. Our sea-run brook trout, for the first time in more than 10,000 years, found themselves unable to ascend the rivers from salt water to utilize the rivers for food, protection, and spawning. Thus began their decline, which continues today. Although now most of the dams have either been removed, circumvented by fish ladders, or fallen into decay due to the 400 years of losing river-specific gene pools, the trout have almost vanished and survive in just a few rivers.

Ronald F. Lasko's book, *A Tale of Two Rivers*, was published in 2013 by Schiffer Publishing Ltd. (www.schifferbooks.com). This excerpt, "The Trout," is one of its twenty chapters.

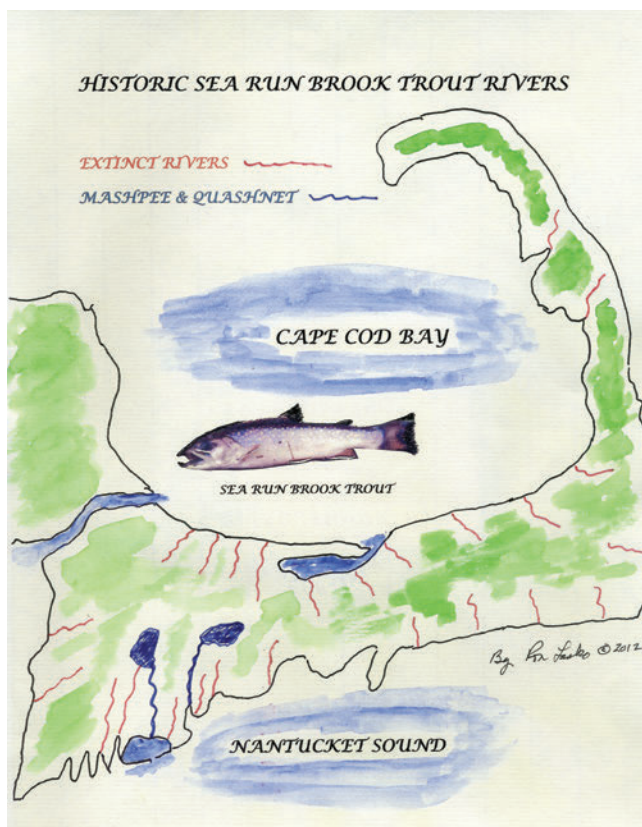
We did not, however, stop at overharvesting the trout and blocking their river access alone. We cut down the forests that provided trees and shade that cooled the rivers, allowing them to heat up intolerably for brook trout. We dug wells into the lenses of the aquifer, resulting in diminishing and even drying up the spring flows, which in turn reduced the volume of the little rivers and further warmed them. Our agricultural practices bulldozed the river valleys, altered the course of the rivers, and destroyed the riverbeds that harbored aquatic insect life and spawning gravel. Then we poisoned the land with fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides, which drained into the aquifer and into the springs, ending in the rivers, where they added their pollution and poisonous effects to the trout food and the trout themselves. Then we cut a channel known as the Cape Cod Canal and destroyed its two largest sea-run brook trout rivers in the process, forever creating this island-peninsula. Then we built a giant military base and, through deliberate dumping on open soil, allowed all sorts of chemicals, gas, and oil to drain into the aquifer, and from there, via springs, into the rivers. Our dump grounds add to the leaching of harmful chemicals—as do the road tars and motor vehicle emissions and our power plant—making the rivers more acidic from rainwater and further inhibiting the trout’s survival ability. But we are not through yet. We have added our own septic waste leaching. We want greener lawns, so we add more nitrogen, fertilizer, and pesticides to achieve the manicured lawn look of suburbia, but ignore that our land is made up of sand and that these things end up in the aquifer and runoff waters. Then we add even more chemicals through our large recreational fields for golf and other sports.

The Cape Cod brook trout had vanished entirely from most rivers, were marginal, at best, in others, and only maintained small populations in a handful by 1900. Man rationalized that we could resurrect the Cape Cod river fisheries using stocked hatchery trout. Over the last 100 years, we have stocked these rivers with hatchery brook trout that lacked the genetic disposition to survive these waters. We stocked exotic hatchery trout such as the West Coast rainbow trout and the European brown trout. These stocked trout were oversized for the little rivers. They tend to be overly aggressive toward and competitive with the native brook trout, further diminishing them.

Most of the bays, estuaries, and rivers of Cape Cod are now devoid of brook trout. They have been eliminated by all



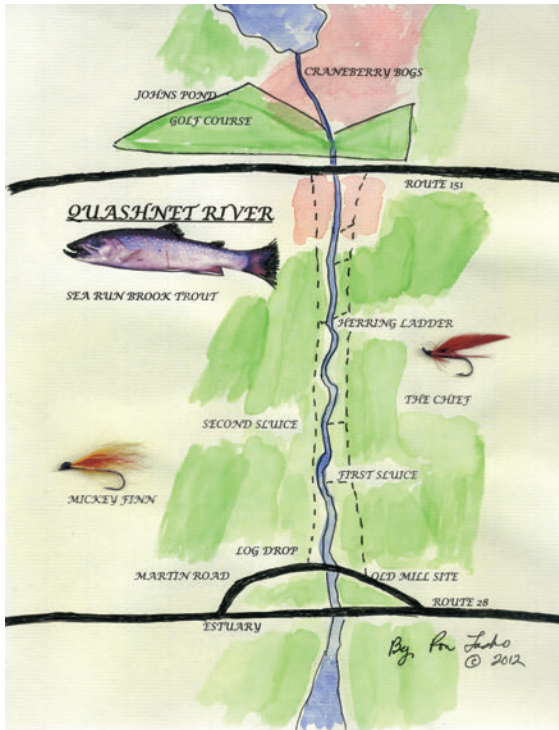
A 10-inch fresh sea-run brook trout from the lower Mashpee River near the brackish saltwater estuary, caught and quickly released by the author. These silver-blue brook trout will turn their regular colors within days of entering fresh water. Courtesy of Ron Lasko and Schiffer Publishing.



The red lines represent former sea-run brook trout rivers where they have been extirpated, although several of these rivers have rare remnant populations. The blue lines represent the self-sustaining fishable populations found in the Mashpee and Quashnet rivers. Courtesy of Ron Lasko and Schiffer Publishing.

these practices. There are only two rivers on the peninsula where sport-fishable populations of brook trout continue to hold on: the Mashpee and the Quashnet. They have withstood the onslaught of mankind, the dams, the pollution, ignorance of the natural world, the planting exotic species, and the arrogance toward

this incredible species of trout. They have, in recent years, withstood the burgeoning populations of bluefish and striped bass and increasing numbers of heron and osprey. But housing developments and strip malls at their doorstep have encroached on their habitat, so the full effects still remain to be seen.



A map of the freshwater section of the Quashnet showing access trails. The pink areas are inactive cranberry bogs. These bogs need to be acquired, placed in conservation preservation, and replanted into forest land. The riverbed needs to be reconstructed and restored. Courtesy of Ron Lasko and Schiffer Publishing.



A 12-inch wild tiger trout caught and quickly released by the author in the willow bend run above First Sluice on the Quashnet. These hybrid sterile trout occur in the wild when brown and brook trout share the same spawning beds. Courtesy of Ron Lasko and Schiffer Publishing.

A strong, healthy, 12-inch brook trout from the restored woodland upper Quashnet River. This is still a rare trout, but they are more frequently found than twenty-five years ago. The rod is the author's restored Catskill-style 7-foot, 6-inch 1950 South Bend fitted with an Orvis reel. Courtesy of Ron Lasko and Schiffer Publishing.



Why have the sea-run brook trout of the Mashpee and Quashnet rivers survived when man and nature have been so set on destroying them? I asked this question of a former member of the Fish and Wildlife Division who had been a proponent of stocking European sea-run brown trout in our Cape Cod brook trout rivers. He acknowledged that in retrospect, they had made a mistake. They had undertaken numerous studies in the first half of the twentieth century that indicated that the Cape Cod sea-run brook trout were doomed. Their studies concluded that they simply were not tough enough to withstand man's destructive forces and that

only the exotic European brown trout could. They wrote off the brook trout's survival, figuring the sea-run brown trout would fill the niche. They were wrong. After a thirty-year program of stocking sea-run hatchery brown trout in numbers and sizes greater than the brook trout populations of the Mashpee and the Quashnet, it is the brown trout that has not survived in the Mashpee, and they are now nearly entirely gone from the Quashnet. Fortunately, the stockings of brown trout in the Mashpee and Quashnet rivers ceased in 1993. The resultant growth in both the size of individual brook trout and in their populations has become obvious since.

Our Massachusetts Fisheries Division does an outstanding job of raising our necessary hatchery trout for Cape Cod's trout ponds, and they should be commended for their excellent management of these thirty-plus trout ponds and lakes, whose brook trout were netted out during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and eradicated. Today, we enjoy a little-known world-class lake and pond trout fishery here on Cape Cod, thanks to their efforts. They should also be commended for changing their views on the sea-run brook trout, as they now fully support maintaining the unique strains of the Mashpee and Quashnet through

habitat restoration and maintenance. Our fisheries management is also studying ways to use these strains to expand the fishery to other historic rivers in order to resurrect those long-destroyed and depleted waters. We can all agree now that Cape Cod's remaining sea-run brook trout are tough. After all, they have been subjected to more than their share of obstacles and adversity, and they have survived. The absolute keys to successful sea-run brook trout fisheries on Cape Cod are protecting existing habitat, creating new habitat, keeping the springs running cool and unpolluted, and practicing catch-and-release, thereby allowing nature and the trout to do the rest.

It is my belief, and that of others, that the thousands of years of genetic development have made these trout micro-habitat oriented in that they utilize every aspect of the environment to their advantage. They use the sea, the estuary, the river, and the lakes at different sea-

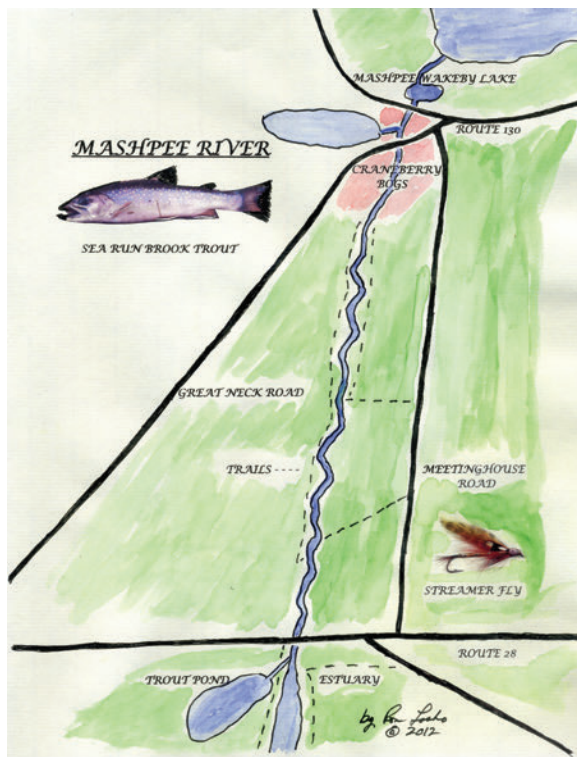
sons for different purposes. They are not aggressive toward each other and tolerate their brethren. They regularly share prime holding and feeding areas without harassing one another. They are prolific in creating offspring. During the warm summer months, I have even observed them grooming one another of parasites by nipping bloodworms and leeches from each other's fins and gill plates. I have observed these trout tolerating the presence of herring, eels, and other fish life. During the heavy three-month herring runs up and back down these rivers, I have observed a stocked hatchery brown trout drive itself to exhaustion as he harried the migrating herring that temporarily occupied his holding area. Conversely, our sea-run brook trout calmly accept these adult herring and even migrate along with them upriver and down, using them as cover and feeding alongside the herring without being threatened.

Another unfortunate occurrence during the heavy brown trout stockings on these rivers was the successful hybrid mating of brown and brook trout, because they spawn at the same time of year using the same riverbeds. Resultant hybrid offspring are called tiger trout and are sterile. Such sterile fish occupied space that should have been taken by reproducing brook trout. Fortunately, with the end of the brown trout stockings in 1993, such instances no longer occur. We must remain vigilant so that such ignorance by anglers and fisheries personnel is never repeated.

And so, as you fish these rivers and catch these colorful and lovely brook trout, give thought to their 10,000-year history, their survival abilities, and the obstacles they continue to face, and release them gently back to the stream to grow and continue to add to their race.



*The lower Mashpee River's brackish upper estuary at high tide.
Courtesy of Ron Lasko and Schiffer Publishing.*



*A map of the freshwater section of the Mashpee showing access trails. The pink areas are abandoned cranberry bogs. As with Quashnet, these bogs need to be acquired, placed in conservation preservation, and replanted into forest land, and the riverbed needs to be reconstructed and restored.
Courtesy of Ron Lasko and Schiffer Publishing.*

Gordon M. Wickstrom

26 April 1926–18 September 2014



Linnea Wickstrom

Gordon M. Wickstrom at the London Flyfishers' Club in 2009.

AN EDITOR SHOULDN'T play favorites; still, within weeks of my taking temporary assignment of editing the *American Fly Fisher*, Gordon Wickstrom became one of mine. Once he got used to me, he insisted that at his age, he couldn't face another regime change, and he practically ordered me not to abandon my post. Nineteen years later, I'm still here.

Besides working on manuscripts together, Gordon and I carried on a lively correspondence, first through the U.S. mail and eventually via e-mail. We very occasionally spoke by phone. I had all but given up on meeting him in person when I was invited to attend a dinner that he and G. William Fowler were hosting in Denver on behalf of the Flyfishers' Club of London. At last, my husband and I were able to meet Gordon and his lovely wife and daughter, and we all had opportunity to make good on Gordon's and my long-standing promise to indulge in a martini. (He graciously, if reluctantly, tolerated my preference for a twist.)

The obituary that ran in the *Boulder Daily Camera* on September 21 so well summarized Gordon and the things that mattered to him that I include most of it here. His friends John Betts and Harry Briscoe, fellow fly-fishing thinkers, also pay tribute.

—EDITOR

Gordon Minton Wickstrom died at the age of eighty-eight on 18 September 2014 after fighting cancer since the preceding April. He was born on 26 April 1926 in Boulder. Wickstrom was professor of theatre at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, from 1971 to 1990 and department chair from 1976 until his retirement in 1990 as Alumni Professor of

English Belles Lettres and Literature. Upon retirement, he and his wife, Betty Jane Smith Wickstrom, also a Boulder native, returned to Boulder. They have lived since then in a house built on the backyard of the family home on Bluff Street, where both his grandparents, of Boulder City Bakery, and his parents lived.

Wickstrom was a master fly fisherman and fly tier who began fishing at age twelve with a rod and reel that his mother and father, Thelma and Percy Wickstrom, gave to him for his birthday. His knowledge of Boulder Creek and the watersheds of the mountains surrounding Boulder, combined with his fishing and his consummate expertise in the theatre—especially the plays of the Irish Renaissance, of Bernard Shaw, and of Shakespeare—developed into many forms of writing and publication to which Wickstrom was devoted. He is the author of two books: *Notes from an Old Fly Book* (University Press of Colorado, 2001) and *Late in an Angler's Life* (University of New Mexico Press, 2004). He made many contributions to the distinguished *American Fly Fisher*, the journal of the American Museum of Fly Fishing. With illustrations from John Betts and graphic design from Michael Signorella, he published a graphic history of fly fishing, along with a unique dramatic piece, *The Great Debate*. For more than ten years, he published two gazettes, cherished by readers across the country and internationally: the *Boulder Creek Angler* and the *Boulder Creek Actor*. He also wrote for his blog, *The Boulder Creek Angler* (<http://boulder creekangler.blogspot.com>), posting his last essay, "The Fisherman," on September 5. He said that in the blog he wrote on "all matters of art, life, love and angling." He was a member of the Boulder Flycasters and the illustrious Flyfishers' Club of London.

Wickstrom was a World War II veteran who served in the U.S. Navy from 1944 until 1945. He received his degree from the University of Colorado at Boulder in English literature in 1950, funded by the G.I. Bill of Rights. Subsequently, Wickstrom began his teaching career at Powell High School in Powell, Wyoming, where his two children, Linnea and Maurya, were born, in 1951 and 1959, respectively. While in Powell, Wickstrom pioneered in the theatre, directing the plays of the European avant-garde of the time, such as those by Samuel Beckett. In 1966, the family moved to Palo Alto, California, where Wickstrom earned his Ph.D. at Stanford University, with a dissertation on the Deidre plays of three Irish playwrights.

Over the years, Wickstrom directed more than 100 plays, including directing and acting at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival. Upon retirement, and with J. H. Crouch as partner, he founded the Shakespeare Oratorio Society of Colorado in 1995. Each winter, the society produced one of Shakespeare's plays in their radically different "oratorical" format. Wickstrom played King Lear for the third time in the maiden production of the society. Wickstrom's brother, Phillip, played Gloucester and became a regular with the company.

He was ever, and remained to the end, a convinced and practical Democrat.

Wickstrom asked that his friends be directed to Shakespeare's Sonnet 73, and, in the spirit of Dean John Donne of St. Paul's, think on death as the most interesting, exciting, mysterious, and disastrous thing that can happen to us.

A MAN OF AND FOR ALL SEASONS

THE NOTE IN MY April mailbox was typically short, and to the point. "Harry, I am seriously unwell and not likely to recover. We surely cannot go east for Easter. It's been a notable week."

Here now, six months later as I write this, and he's gone. We have lost a unique individual. Gordon M. Wickstrom's obituary—reprinted above—is perfect, describing an exceptional and elegant man with talents and interests in arenas well beyond the pastime of fly fishing. For the majority of his working life, he was a professor of theatre, letters, and literature at Franklin and Marshall College, that history explaining the exceptional writing skills with which we fly fishers are most familiar. Gordon was a prolific thinker, and to our good fortune, he was a prolific writer of that which he thought. After his retirement from university life, Gordon began to produce two quarterly newsletters, little mailings that he sent around to anyone who would have them. The *Bouldercreek Angler* and the *Bouldercreek Actor* became the outlets through which he shared his talents. Those newsletters evolved into his two published books and other works, and in recent years, into his online blog. These archives document a significant talent. He had a remarkable ability to write concise and direct essays, often with unexpected and thought-provoking conclusions. You won't get much "conventional wisdom" or "me and Joe went fishing" from reading Gordon Wickstrom, but you will be impressed, and you might find yourself thinking a bit more deeply. His work, always sensitive and eloquent, deserves a much broader audience than it has received.

Gordon and I met at a fly-fishing trade show in the mid-1990s. Ever a traditionalist, he was impressed with our (Hexagraph) fly rod, and he wrote a nice review. With that, we became friends, and I came to know his work. We developed a relationship of frequent communication, and now, among my treasures, are a great many things he sent me: handwritten letters, e-mails, and the like. In the weeks since his passing, I have found comfort and satisfaction in those files. I remember our many telephone

calls and his booming baritone voice. He had a stage presence, and there was a sense of theatre in most of what he did. Despite our primary mutual interest in fly fishing (and we discussed that a lot), I find my own memories reach into areas beyond the stream.

Gordon loved many things: history, theatre, opera, concerts, movies, the progress of the seasons through the year, and the celebration of holidays. He lived for Christmas. He was literally giddy with the approach of Halloween, of St. Patrick's and St. Valentine's days. He was beyond excited to report that a neighbor had given him a goose for Christmas (which he insisted on hand-plucking himself, to gain the full value) or an antelope or elk steak for the grill. He loved the house that he and Betty built in Boulder, and he was beside himself when showing us his library or while making martinis for my wife and me when we'd visit. He'd write pages on his garden—the flowers, the gooseberries, the rhubarb—and always with a thought of the "significance" of it all. Every time I sent him a message with a thought on some random item, he'd come right back with something tangible to educate me further on the topic, most often with a related story of personal experience involving the meeting with some famous actor or diva. He used words like *grand*, *swell*, and *glorious*, and phrases like *Oh, boy!* or *We'd show 'em, we surely would!*—not for the theatre of it, but for the fact that such was exactly what he meant or wanted to say. And, from Gordon, it was the perfect fit. He looked for reasons (even in his last weeks) to dress properly in a fine tie and coat because it made him feel more presentable. He was a gentleman, with values learned like so many in his generation—arguably the Greatest Generation. Gordon lived his life fully and broadly, but simply. He celebrated everything. We should all be so aware with our own. I'll miss him greatly. Fly fishing, and much more, has lost a gem.

—HARRY J. BRISCOE
KINGWOOD, TEXAS

A REMEMBRANCE

GORDON AND I met more than twenty years ago. From then, there have been hundreds of phone calls, notes, and letters on subjects ranging from sixteenth-century art and culture to the most recent political flap. All of this was liberally salted with face-to-face conversations and occasional local fly-fishing trips.

From the time I met him, I never wrote a word for a book or article that I didn't privately run by him—"What would Gordon think of this?" His presence was in some way part of every effort I made. His guidance was always appropriate, and avoided at my own peril. He had a significant amount of knowledge on many subjects, including fly fishing, and he was an adept angler and fly tier.

He did not abide censorship, regardless of its source, and was expressive in denouncing it. He knew a lot about the world and always sought to learn more. He did not assume that what he saw would turn out to be what he had been looking at.

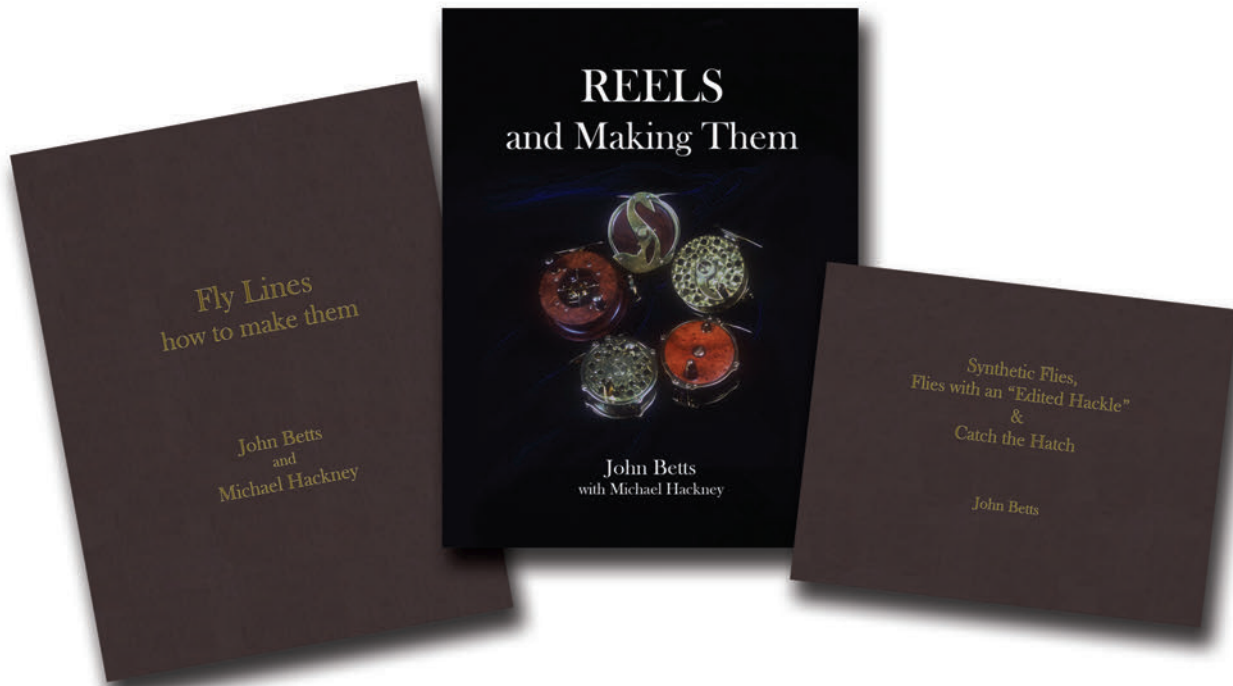
He was never afraid of going the long way round, with all that that required. Thoroughness was the hallmark of his learning and friendship.

He never lost sight of the fact that at the core of what he could do was his family. He truly celebrated Christmas and all that goes with it. My wife Betsy and I were often privileged to be part of that. For their kindnesses to us, Gordon and Betty will always be in the heart of what we do.

—JOHN BETTS
WINDSOR, CALIFORNIA

Made by Hand: The Books of John Betts

by Andrew Herd



THERE IS A MOST extraordinary collection of books—most of which have been recently published by Michael Hackney’s Reel Lines Press—that constitutes part of the tremendous contribution that John Betts has made to fly fishing. Betts should be familiar to readers through his articles in the *American Fly Fisher*, which are listed at the end of this piece. If you have never read his contributions, please take advantage of the journal’s archive on the museum’s website, because Betts is one of our sport’s most original thinkers.

Betts approaches problems from a different slant by taking a hands-on approach. For example, while the rest of us theorized about how Thomas Barker’s reel might have been built, Betts sat down and made one. When you couple his practical skills with his inherent artistry and the fact that he has kept journals for many years that detail the outcome of his every experiment, good or bad, then you have some idea of the measure of this most extraordinary man. Those journals span many decades and are nothing if not works of art, written and illustrated by Betts. Some of their nature has distilled its way into his books, but we will come to that in a moment, because one of the things that Betts has always been about is sharing information for the benefit of all.

It is a part of Betts’s character that every one of his books represents an attempt to solve a problem, *Fly Lines: How to Make Them* being a fine example. The origin of *Fly Lines* lay in Betts’s dissatisfaction with commercial products back in the early years of plastic-coated lines. I well recall one line made during this period—an intermediate, only because some parts of it floated and some parts of it sank. The product’s chief dis-

advantage was that the line came off the reel in an attractive, if slightly frustrating, spiral. I spent many (wasted) hours trying to straighten that line. By contrast, Betts locked himself in his workshop and set out to design something that cast as well as silk, floated like the best plastic, and lasted longer than either, and he succeeded in doing so. Betts’s method for building fly lines works just as well today as it did when he first worked it out, and now that the book is in print, you can tap into the soul of a pioneer and build your own lines for just a few bucks.

Then again, there is *Synthetic Flies*, first published in 1980, in which materials like Zelon, Zing, and artist’s brush bristles (a.k.a. Microfibbets) were introduced to fly tiers. Betts was a pioneer of synthetics, and he took some serious heat over his use of them, which sounds astonishing today, when patterns that are tied mainly (or entirely) from such materials draw hardly any attention at all. Thanks to Betts, I long ago erased the boundary between “natural” and synthetic materials from my thinking, and today I use them interchangeably as conditions demand, much as everybody else does. The existence of this book is a small reminder of how much we owe Mr. Betts for blazing the trail, and it contains some very useful patterns and techniques.

Betts’s innovation and his determination to share his knowledge didn’t end there, and he went on to publish *Flies with an Edited Hackle* in 1982. Written by someone who could not only talk the talk but walk the walk, having tied hundreds of thousands of flies both privately and commercially, the book was a response to the then-pressing problem of how to deal with the mismatch between demand for high-quality

fly-dressing hackle and supply, which was woefully short at that time. Most of us just shrugged our shoulders and used whatever we could beg, borrow, or steal, but true to form, Betts sat down and took a new look at the problem. The end result was a complete recasting of how trout flies might be tied, discarding tradition and prejudice in favor of logic and experiment. Looking back at it, it is hard to see why we didn't realize that we had another William Blacker in our midst, but then again, if such an idea had been put to Betts at that time, or now, he would only deny it.

Eight years later came *Catch the Hatch*, which was an accordion-folded pamphlet aimed at helping anglers recognize the most common species of mayflies found in the United States and Canada. Designed to fit in a shirt pocket, *Catch the Hatch* was a compact and focused key to identifying mayflies on the water. There were more comprehensive guides available, but because Betts honed in on the species that really mattered, this little booklet still serves as a fine example of practical entomology.

In 2007 came *Making Strip-Built Fly Rods from Various Woods on a Lathe*, which Betts self-published as a spiral-bound softback before Frank Amato rode out of the sunset and published it in a sumptuous hardback edition. To this day, I cannot decide which of the two editions I treasure most, except that I guess this is one of the few opportunities I will ever get to thank Amato for stepping in and making a truly useful volume widely available. If you buy this and Garrison and Carmichael's *A Master's Guide to Building a Bamboo Fly Rod*, you really don't need anything else except willpower and an ability to learn from your own mistakes. Why did Betts publish the book? Well, he had built rods on a private and professional basis for many years, and although much has been written about building with split bamboo, hardly anything had been set down about making them out of other kinds of woods. So Betts took out his journals again and distilled all his experience into 150 pages or so, illustrating just about every page with his own drawings.

I forgot to mention Betts's tremendous skill as an artist. One of the defining characteristics of his books is that they are not only written (none are typeset, which I believe is unique for such a body of modern volumes) but they are also illustrated by their author, and Betts's art is every bit as good as his writing. In the upstairs hall of our house, I have a print of one of Betts's watercolors, *The Bubble*, and every time I walk past it, I wonder how so much talent ended up being concentrated inside one man. Betts has a sense of color and form that is incredibly engaging, and the reproductions of his paintings are memorable—in my opinion, very few artists have ever captured the spirit of what it means to fish quite so vividly.



A close-up look at a portion of John Betts's *The Bubble*. Watercolor, 1997.

Articles in the *American Fly Fisher* by John Betts:

- "Some of Marbury's Favorite Bass and Fancy Lake Flies" (Winter 1998, vol. 24, no. 1), 11–19
- "Fly Lines and Lineage" (Fall 2000, vol. 26, no. 4), 17–21
- "Truly Hand-Tied Flies" (Spring 2001, vol. 27, no. 2), 18–25
- "George La Branche: 'A Very Beautiful Fisherman'" (Fall 2002, vol. 28, no. 4), 12–19
- "Robert Venables's Experience as an Angler" (Fall 2003, vol. 29, no. 4), 12–24
- "Some Notes and Comment" (Fall 2004, vol. 30, no. 4), 16
- "Gore Creek: A Love Story" (Spring 2005, vol. 31, no. 2), 20–24
- "Building a Barker Reel: Improvisation Then and Now" (Summer 2010, vol. 36, no. 3), 2–8

After Betts published his books on making flies, fly lines, and rods, we all held our breath, because he surely wasn't going to publish a book on reels—but he did. *Reels and Making Them* was published in 2011 by Reel Lines Press in association with the Whitefish Press, and it marked the beginning of Betts's association with Michael Hackney, who has done the great service of bringing Betts's earlier titles back into print, thereby triggering this review. *Reels* is a massive book that makes a fantastic primer for anyone who is considering taking the ultimate step and building his or her own reels out of wood and metal.

What else can I say? Betts is sui generis in that no one else has ever contributed in so much depth to the four major areas of fly and tackle development. If you aspire to think in new ways, then I would suggest that the quiet charm and practical nature of these books will prove hard to resist. Michael Hackney has taken the imaginative step of reproducing Betts's early books, as well as *Reels and Fly Lines*, just as the author set them down, in neat penciled longhand on blue-lined paper. This alone makes the books very different; and it means that you will have to have a good light when you read them. Betts would maintain that because form follows function, his books are best read as they were written, but I would extend a small plea that those of us with less than perfect vision would appreciate seeing at least some of his magical books typeset, even if it was with a cursive font. John, my friend, I salute you.



The following books by John Betts are available in softcover from Reel Lines Press (www.ReelLinesPress.com):

Reels and Making Them, with Michael Hackney (2011, 450 handwritten pages, 500+ color photographs and illustrations, \$55)

Synthetic Flies, Flies with an "Edited Hackle," & Catch the Hatch (all in one volume; 2013, 118 pages, handwritten and illustrated, \$35)

Fly Lines: How to Make Them, with Michael Hackney (2014, 138 handwritten pages, 100+ photographs and illustrations, \$35)

The following book is available from Frank Amato Publications (www.amatobooks.com):

Making Strip-Built Fly Rods from Various Woods on a Lathe (2007, 178 pages, color with black-and-white drawings throughout, \$19.95 softcover; \$125 limited-edition hardcover)

Ed Jaworowski Receives 2014 Izaak Walton Award

Photos by Carley K Photography



Honoree Ed Jaworowski (center) with event Chair Bob Moser and Executive Director Cathi Comar.



Honoree Ed Jaworowski with his wife, Michele Jaworowski, and the Izaak Walton Award.

ON NOVEMBER 13, the American Museum of Fly Fishing honored Ed Jaworowski with the inaugural Izaak Walton Award at the Merion Cricket Club in Haverford, Pennsylvania. The museum established the Izaak Walton Award in 2014 to honor and celebrate individuals who live by the *Compleat Angler* philosophy. Their passion for the sport of fly fishing and involvement in their angling community provides inspiration for others and promotes the legacy of leadership for future generations.

Jaworowski is an international fly-fishing authority whom Lefty Kreh has called “the best teacher of fly casting I have ever known.” He is writing his fifth book, has served as editorial consultant for another, and is working on a casting DVD in conjunction with Kreh. Jaworowski’s books and hundreds of articles, appearing in more than twenty different periodicals, have been published in the United States, England, Spain, Norway, Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Italy, and Japan. He is also a widely published photographer and has served as consultant to several large fly-tackle manufacturers. Jaworowski currently works as a consultant/advisor to Temple Fork Outfitters (Springbrook Trading Ltd.), testing and assisting with the design of rods and other products. In 2005, he retired from Villanova University, where, as a classical studies professor and department chair, he

taught Latin and Greek literature and Roman history for more than forty years.

This award celebration would not have been possible without the support of event Chair Bob Moser and event committee members Chuck Cutshall, Darrell DeMoss, Bill Grim, Jamie Holt, Ted Leisenring, and Jeff Vincent.

We would like to thank Senior Vice President Sam Freeman from Freeman’s auction house for donating his services and making the auction a great success! Also appreciated are those who supported and donated items for the live and silent auction: Jack Pittard with Bone Ami, Dennis W. Menscer of Little River Rods, Susan Richards, Mark Susinno, Umpqua, Gordon Allen, Jim Heckman, Gloria Jordan, Beau Thebault of Vermont Paddleboard Outfitters, Pennsylvania Paragliding, Luther Hall, George Van Hook, John Swan, Pearl Street Slate, Temple Fork Outfitters, Darrell DeMoss, Chuck Cutshall, Bob Moser, Jamie Holt, Yards Brewing Company, Ron Lasko, Ted Simroe, Ed Jaworowski, Eleanore Hayes of LunaMoth Designs, and Kharlovka Company Limited.



(event coverage continues on page 24)

(Izaak Walton Award continued)



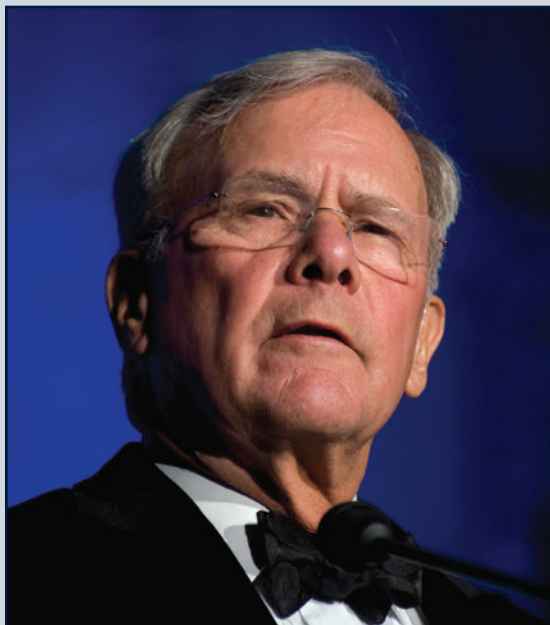
Honoree Ed Jaworowski, Monique Marks, Michele Jaworowski, Joanne Moser, and Event Chair Bob Moser (from left).



Auction items donated by Susan Richards in memory of the late John Richards, an avid AMFF supporter.



Sam Freeman, senior vice president of Freeman's auction house, volunteered his services for the evening.



Heritage Award Event

Please join the American Museum of Fly Fishing and Honorary Event Chair Lefty Kreh for our annual Heritage Award Event honoring 2015 recipient

Tom Brokaw

Friday, April 24, 2015

Racquet & Tennis Club
New York City

Updates available at www.amff.com

Museum News



Former Executive Director Paul Schullery, who was inducted into the Fly Fishing Hall of Fame in October. Photo supplied by the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum.

Schullery Inducted into Fly Fishing Hall of Fame

On 11 October 2014, former AMFF Executive Director Paul Schullery was inducted into the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum's Fly Fishing Hall of Fame.

Schullery began his career in history, conservation, and fly fishing as a ranger-naturalist in Yellowstone National Park. From 1977 to 1982, he served as the first executive director of the American Museum of Fly Fishing and was the editor of the *American Fly Fisher* from 1978 to 1983.

Schullery went on to write eight books on the history, culture, lore, and natural history of fly fishing, and cowrote several others. He has published in dozens of magazines and technical journals, ranging from the *New York Times* to *BioScience* to *Outdoor Life*, and including most of the fly-fishing magazines. He has been regularly honored as an influential writer and thinker on natural resource management and national parks, and has served on many advisory boards for conservation and educational groups.

Schullery is the author, coauthor, or editor of more than a dozen books about Yellowstone National Park. He has been the recipient of a number of prestigious literary and professional awards, including honorary doctorates from Montana State University and Ohio University; the Wallace Stegner Award from the University of Colorado Center of the American West; and the Roderick Haig-Brown Award from the Federation of Fly Fishers. He has spoken on conservation issues in the national media, including on the *Today Show* and on PBS, World Monitor News, the History Channel, NPR, and others. He wrote and narrated the award-winning 2002 PBS/ABC feature film, *Yellowstone: America's Sacred Wilderness*. He served on the advisory board for the Ken Burns 2009 PBS series *The National Parks: America's Best Idea* and appeared frequently in

the film. Since 2009, he has served as scholar in residence at the Montana State University Library in Bozeman, Montana.

According to the Fly Fishing Hall of Fame, "Paul Schullery, fly-fishing's preeminent historian, has been a pioneer of the study of the cultural foundations of our sport and the values upon which it depends. As a lifelong professional conservationist, he has effectively championed the scientific management of a host of natural resources, all of which relate to the protection of the fly fisher's world. As a writer, he has published path-breaking literary and scholarly explorations of the richness of the fly-fishing experience."

Since its inception in 1985, the Fly Fishing Hall of Fame has inducted seventy members who have significantly enhanced the culture of fly fishing. This year's inductees also included Joseph Bates Jr., R. B. Marston, and Bob Popovics.

Nardini Joins Museum Staff

Our new communications coordinator, Peter Nardini, joins the museum from the great state of Massachusetts. Peter was previously the social media manager at Boston Ski and Tennis and received his bachelor's degree in 2011 from Endicott College in Beverly, Massachusetts. Never far away from a stream or a mountain, Peter enjoys skiing, biking, kayaking, and attempting to golf in his free time. Peter has settled into the Manchester area and is excited to make the museum a major player in bringing fly fishing into the digital age.



Sara Wilcox

Peter Nardini, the museum's new communications coordinator.



Sara Wilcox

A members-only event, the Rare Rod Rendezvous, was held on September 6 at the museum. A special thank you to Bob Shannon of the Fly Rod Shop, Tom Zemianek of the Orvis Company, Jim Becker of Becker Rods, and museum Deputy Director Yoshi Akiyama for their rod expertise. A members-only event is among the many ways we like to thank you for your support! Stay tuned for the 2015 members-only event, the Rare Reel Rendezvous.

In the Library

Thanks to the following for their donations of the titles that have become part of our permanent collection (published in 2014 unless otherwise noted):

Coch-y-Bonddu Books sent us Henk van Bork's *Salmon Flies Past and Present*. Reel Lines Press sent us John Betts's *Reels and Making Them* (2011); *Remarques* (2012); and *Synthetic Flies, Flies with an "Edited Hackle"* & *Catch the Hatch: A Compilation of*

Three Works (2013). They also sent us John Betts and Michael Hackney's *Fly Lines and How to Make Them*, Michael L. J. Hackney's *The Reelsmith's Primer: The Art of Hand-crafting Fly Fishing Reels* (2012), Thomas C. Kerr's *In Search of Samuel Phillippe Rods* (2013), and Andrew Marshall's *The History and Evolution of the Trout Fly, Part 1* (2013).

Skyhorse Publishing sent us Jay Cassell's *Fisherman's Bible: The World's Most Comprehensive Angling Reference* and Raymond Coppinger's *Fishing Dogs: A Guide to the History, Talents, and Training of the Baildale, the Flounderhounder, the Angler Dog, and Sundry Other Breeds of Aquatic Dogs* (*Canis piscatorius*).

Recent Donations to the Collection

Thomas MacLeod of Minnetonka, Minnesota, donated two fly rods (maker unknown) to be sold to benefit the museum. **Jim Hardman** of Dorset, Vermont, gave us a collection of fly-tying materials and tools. For a detailed list, contact the museum.

Al Barnes of Johnson City, Texas, donated his 24-by-36-inch oil painting, *Will They Eat?* Rev. **David K. Chase** sent us a photograph taken on 13 May 1956 of a trophy tarpon caught by W. Rowell Chase, along with his guide, Cecil Keith, at Islamorada, Florida. And **Jim Heckman** of Manchester, Vermont, gave us a copy of the 18 April 1936 issue of the *New Yorker* and a copy of the cover of the 21 June 1947 issue.

Joe Beelart of West Linn, Oregon, donated two books that he edited by Lew Stoner: *The Lew Stoner Winston Letters* (The Whitefish Press, 2012, limited edition no. 96 of 125) and *The Lew Stoner-Ted Trueblood Letters* (The Whitefish Press, 2014, author's proof no. 8 of 12). Beelart also donated a two-volume boxed set, *Howells* (Whitefish Press, 2013, limited edition no. 16 of 25): Volume 1, which he edited, is *The Letter and Correspondences of Gary H. Howells*; Volume 2, which he wrote, is *The Bamboo Fly Rods and Fly Fishing Legacy of Gary Howells*.

Upcoming Events

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

February 7

Gallery Program
Fit to be "Tyed"
12:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

March 14–15

First Annual Deborah Pratt Dawson Conservation Symposium

March 26

Izaak Walton Award Event honoring Tom Davidson
Key Largo Anglers Club
Key Largo, Florida

April 4

Gallery Program
Spring Training
1:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

April 24

Heritage Award Event honoring Tom Brokaw
Racquet & Tennis Club
New York City

April 25

Board of Trustees Meeting
The Anglers' Club of New York
New York City

May 25–September 7

Blue Star Museums Program
Free admission for active military personnel
and their families

July 1–31

Angling & Art
Benefit Sale and Public Programs

July 19

Celebrate National Ice Cream Day!
Fly-fishing activities and free ice cream
1:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

August 8

8th Annual Fly-Fishing Festival
10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

September 12

Members-Only Event:
Rare Reel Rendezvous
1:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

December 5

Gallery Program
Hooked on the Holidays
1:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

Always check our website (www.amff.com) for additions, updates, and more information or contact Christina Cole 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.



Sara Wilcox

The museum welcomed Maple Street School students on October 3 for a tour of the exhibit and the creation of clown flies!



Sara Wilcox

On December 6, the museum welcomed the community to our annual Hooked on the Holidays event. Community members, families, museum trustees, and local artist George Van Hook joined us for an open house to color fish ornaments, decorate trout cookies, craft Christmas cards, tie clown flies, put together a practice rod, make s'mores, enjoy some hot cocoa, and take advantage of free admission to our latest exhibition, The Wonders of Fly Fishing. Thank you to all of those who shared this special time of year with us and to program sponsor TD Bank.



Jacob Burns Film Center/Sam Van Der Meer

In October, Board President Richard Tisch and Executive Director Cathi Comar participated in a panel discussion at the Jacob Burns Film Center in Pleasantville, New York. Following a screening of Eric Steel's Kiss the Water, the discussion—part of the center's 2014 Focus on Nature film series—featured the history of fly fishing.



Sara Wilcox

With a grant from the Mount Laurel Foundation, the museum worked with the Community Support Program of the United Counseling Service of Bennington County (Vermont) to develop a program to interest developmentally disabled adults in the history and sport of fly fishing. Combining fly fishing's healing and therapeutic properties with the UCSVT focus on teaching new wellness skills, the program, held in November, included an overview of the history of the sport and the museum, an exhibit tour, a film, fly tying, and casting instruction and demonstration (seen here).

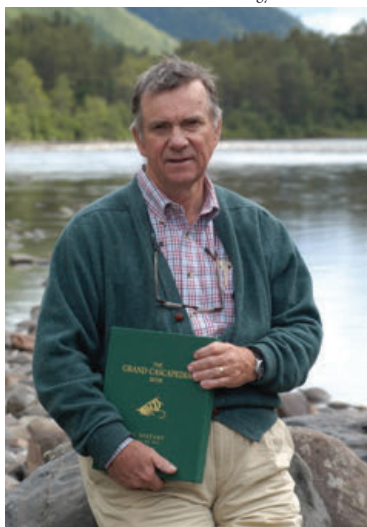


Korky Podmaniczky

The Friends of Corbin Shoot returned in October 2014 and was a resounding success. At the end of this two-day event, each participant is given a chance to win an original painting by sporting artist (and AMFF Trustee) Peter Corbin. This year Justin Evans was the fortunate recipient of Marking the Covey. AMFF is deeply appreciative of the efforts undertaken by so many to generate programming funds through this event, including Peter Corbin, Korky Podmaniczky, Peter Kellogg, George Gibson, and the staff of Hudson Farm and Griffin & Howe.

C O N T R I B U T O R S

From the collection of Hoagy B. Carmichael



After a career in television and films, **Hoagy B. Carmichael** turned his attention to bamboo rod making. He wrote *A Master's Guide to Building a Bamboo Fly Rod* (1977) with Everett Garrison, produced a film chronicling Garrison's work, and recently donated the entire Garrison-Carmichael rod shop to the Catskill Fly Fishing Center. Carmichael is a leading expert in the field of antique fishing tackle and has fished for trout and salmon for more than forty years. In later years, he has concentrated on trying to catch a few fish on the Grand Cascapedia River while helping to develop their fine museum. His book *The Grand Cascapedia River: A History* has been published in two volumes (2006 and 2012). Between those volumes, he published *8 by Carmichael* (2010); a new book, *Side Casts*, will debut in 2015. Carmichael is also working on a musical that features many of his father's well-known songs. His most recent contribution to this journal was "Chauncy Lively: An Innovative Fly Tier and Consummate Fly Fisherman" (Spring 2009).

James D. Heckman is a semiretired orthopedic surgeon who lives in San Antonio, Texas, but summers in Manchester, Vermont, where he enjoys fishing the small local streams for trout. He has been a museum trustee for seven years, and he completed four years as president of the board in November 2013. (Here he is admiring a custom-made Jim Becker bamboo rod, which was presented to him by the trustees upon his retirement as board president.) Heckman has a fascination with cartoons, and in the spring of 2013, he discovered a *New Yorker* cover depicting an intrepid stream fisherman. Subsequently, he has collected all seventeen original *New Yorker* covers on this subject; the article in this issue describes seven of these and their artists. He recently donated all of the covers to the museum and is now collaborating with staff to create a display of the entire collection for the library.

Sara Wilcox



Donna Lasko



Ronald F. Lasko is an independent writer, author, and lecturer who grew up fly fishing for trout in the Catskill and Adirondack mountains. As an executive, he resided in Hartford, Boston, Atlanta, and New York, traveling and fly fishing for trout from New England to Georgia. Over the last twenty-five years, he has resided on Cape Cod, and his fishing and studies have been focused on its sea-run brook trout. Lasko resides on a trout pond, minutes from the rivers, where he has written *A Tale of Two Rivers* (Schiffer Publishing, 2013). He recently completed his first novel and is at work on future fly-fishing books. Lasko has been interviewed on author TV programs, and his book was reviewed in Trout Unlimited's *Trout* magazine and the United Kingdom's *Flyfisher Magazine*. He has given presentations at annual shows around New England (the Marlborough Fly Fishing Show, the Bear's Den Fly Fishing Expo, and the Fly Tying Demonstration in Sudbury, Massachusetts), as well as at the

American Museum of Fly Fishing. In addition to writing from his Trout Cottage on Cape Cod, Lasko instructs fly fishers, gives presentations, and supports restoration of trout waters.

With the Autumn Comes Change

Sara Wilcox



A classic bass fly sits on a leaf at the edge of the museum's casting pond.

THE 2014 ANNUAL AMFF Members Meeting took place on 18 October 2014 in beautiful Manchester, Vermont. The leaves were falling, but the enthusiasm for the museum, its programs, and its overall direction was soaring!

Seventeen current trustees were presented for next-term reelections. At AMFF, trustees serve three-year terms. It is astonishing to note that three trustees were elected to their ninth term: Arthur Kaemmer, Woods King III, and Leigh Perkins. We are fortunate to have such strong and continued support from these passionate anglers! All officer positions and committee chairs will remain the same for the next year.

Five new trustees were welcomed onto the board, including Peter C. Bowden (Texas), Jim Lepage (Michigan and Vermont), Anne Hollis Perkins (Florida, Wyoming, and Vermont), John Redpath (New York and Vermont), and Martin E. Zimmerman (Illinois and Montana). We are looking forward to working

with each of these new trustees as they begin to serve on committees and ad hoc work groups.

We must also report that four trustees have rotated off the board. The museum truly appreciates the time and efforts of Michael Bakwin (served 1996–2014), John McMahon (served 2008–2014), Kristoph Rollenhagen (served 2004–2014), and Philip Sawyer (served 2008–2014). Throughout their tenures, each has added tremendously to our mission and fund-raising efforts. Happily, all will remain AMFF supporters and ambassadors.

As we continue to work toward our never-ending goal to fulfill our important mission, the staff moves forward knowing that our board and members are strong in their conviction and their support. Thank you one and all!

CATHI COMAR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Catch and Release the Spirit of Fly Fishing!

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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.

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 Sarah Foster at sfoster@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.

JOIN

Membership Dues (per annum)

Patron	\$1,000
Sponsor	\$500
Business	\$250
Benefactor	\$100
Associate	\$50

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 Samantha Pitcher at spitcher@amff.com.



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collection online!