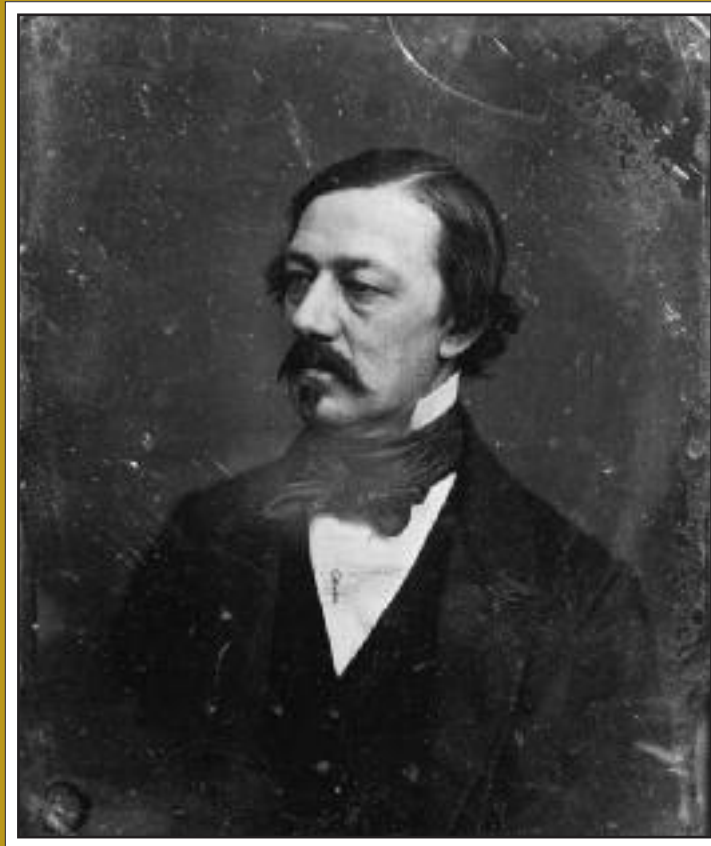


The American
Fly Fisher

Journal of the American Museum of Fly Fishing



SPRING 2017

VOLUME 43 NUMBER 2

Reflection



From Genio C. Scott, *Fishing in American Waters* (New York: *The American News Company*, 1875), 434.

SHOULD YOU NOT toss this journal aside, should you instead venture into its pages, you'll find an issue that reflects not only why people are attracted to the sport of fly fishing, but why they might also be intrigued by its history.

Among our offerings: A mystery more than a century old. The worth of a bamboo rod. The healing power of our sport. We show you artful fly wallets from our collection. We honor a fly-fishing great who has passed on. We host the Iron Fly at the museum. And we thank you for helping us keep fly-fishing history a current reality.

How does an Eton- and Cambridge-educated grandson of the Earl of Carnarvon end up disowned and living in the states, only to become the most widely read "American" sporting writer before the Civil War? For years, John Mundt has been fascinated with the story of Henry William Herbert, better known to most by his nom de plume, Frank Forester. Last year, Mundt had hoped that an encounter with a Herbert family member might lead to more information, but so far the bits of Forester's life shrouded in mystery remain so. This year marks the 210th anniversary of the birth of Henry William Herbert. Immerse yourself in Mundt's fascinating telling of "Finding Frank Forester" by turning to page 2.

Bamboo rod builder and appraiser Fred Kretchman often gets calls from people who, one way or another, are in possession of an old bamboo rod and want to know what it's worth. Kretchman says that there's no single source of accurate information about the monetary value of vintage rods because of the "bouillabaisse of mixed inputs." Sentimental value—which counts for a lot in his book—may not translate into monetary value. In "Bamboo in the Closet: Treasure or . . . What?" (page 12), Kretchman offers up a general primer on the current bamboo rod market, sharing a couple of heartwarming stories along the way.

Casting for Recovery, an organization that provides free fly-fishing retreats for

women with breast cancer, was founded in 1996 in Manchester, Vermont, by a breast cancer reconstructive surgeon and a professional fly fisher. Margot Page was among its founding members. In the new and expanded edition of her book, *Little Rivers: Tales of a Woman Angler*, Page included a chapter about this important organization, her memories of its early days, and the experience of one participant, Carolyn, on retreat. After preparing these pages for publication, we received the sad news that Carolyn passed away on December 23. To read about this important organization and how it affects lives like Carolyn's, turn to page 14.

Our Gallery piece (page 18) highlights the museum's collection of fly wallets that belonged to Robert LaRhett Livingston and his son, Robert Forsyth Livingston. Communications Coordinator Peter Nardini and Director of Visual Communication Sara Wilcox collaborate in words and images to explain why these wallets are so special.

In January, the fly-fishing world lost angling mentor and conservationist Bud Lilly. Arnold Gingrich famously called Lilly "a trout's best friend," and Paul Schullery, at the museum's 1999 Heritage Award dinner honoring Lilly, added that "Bud is also a best friend of the American West, whose landscapes he has done so much to protect and whose very culture he has helped to shape." Another of Lilly's best friends, Bob Jacklin, offers up a remembrance on page 21.

The museum held its second Iron Fly event in February, a fun-filled, fly-tying, standing-room-only affair. Check out coverage on page 26, and join us next time.

Thank you, dear members, for supporting us with your membership. And thanks to you who go the extra mile by donating money, resources, and time. A list of our generous 2016 donors begins on page 22. You reflect how good we can be.

KATHLEEN ACHOR
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ON THE COVER: *Henry William Herbert, in a daguerrotype produced by the studio of Matthew Brady. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, daguerrotype collection. LC-USZ62-109950.*

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Finding Frank Forester

by John Mundt



Henry William Herbert, in a daguerrotype produced by the studio of Matthew Brady. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, daguerrotype collection. LC-USZ62-109950.

Fly-fishing may well be considered the most beautiful of all rural sports. For, in addition to the great nicety required to become proficient in the art, it is also absolutely requisite, for its successful attainment, to study much and long—how to adapt and blend the various materials used in the construction of a fly; how to construct the fly on certain defined rules; and, lastly, how to select your flies, thus carefully and correctly constructed, in accordance with the state of the sky, the color of the water, and the peculiar habits of the fish in different rivers. The two first are tolerably easy to acquire; the last by far the most difficult of all. A lifetime devoted to it would barely render a man decently knowing, for scarcely do two rivers present the same appearance, two skies the same shadows, or the fish of two rivers the same tastes, and consequently no particular rules can be laid down or plan devised which shall everywhere be infallible.

—From *Frank Forester's Fish and Fishing* (New York: Excelsior Publishing House, 1859), 441.



*Henry William Herbert. Photo by P. Stabler. Undated.
From the Yale University Beinecke Rare Book and
Manuscript Library, Henry William Herbert collection,
call number YCAL MSS 573, object number 9998476.*

Frank Forester is an American enigma. Born into the British aristocracy as Henry William Herbert in 1807 London, he emigrated to America as a social exile for still inexplicable reasons, wrote profusely on sport under an enduring pseudonym, and finally ended his own life in a most deliberate and dramatic way in 1858 Manhattan. His story has fascinated sportsmen for generations, and I hope that an answer to the mystery surrounding his exile from British society will one day come to light.

This research was first published for the Anglers' Club of New York *Bulletin* in 2002. In May 2016, Lady Carnarvon of the Herbert family (and now *Downton Abbey* fame) spoke at the Hill-Stead Museum in Farmington, Connecticut, about her life at Highclere Castle. A high-school classmate of mine works at the Hill-Stead, and she hand-delivered the following letter to Her Ladyship on my behalf.

27 May 2016

Dear Lady Carnarvon:

Thank you for taking the time to share the legacy of Highclere Castle and the Herbert family with all of us at the Hill-Stead Museum this past week. We hope you enjoyed your stay in America as much as we enjoyed having you visit with us.

As an amateur historian, I was delighted with my recent reading of *Lady Almina and the Real Downton Abbey*, and was pleased to secure an autographed copy of *Lady Catherine* at Wednesday's event.

Your clear passion for the history of Highclere Castle and the Herbert family legacy inspired me to present you with the

enclosed information about Henry William Herbert. Henry William earned fame in nineteenth-century America as one of our most prolific writers on sport. His pseudonym, "Frank Forester," is still widely known today. The enclosed article I researched for the Anglers' Club of New York summarizes Henry William's fame and the mystery shrouding his emigration to America. *Henry William Herbert and the American Publishing Scene, 1831–1858*, published by Luke White Jr. in 1943, sheds further light on this brilliant and enigmatic person.

Henry William's emigration to America remains one of the great unsolved mysteries in American literature, and it is my sincere hope that your Highclere Castle archivist might be able to shed some additional light on this mercurial life. This is a tragic but fascinating story that forever links the Herbert family with America and its sporting culture.

Yours sincerely,
John Mundt

The secret remains buried, as no reply or acknowledgment has been received to date.

This year marks the 210th anniversary of Henry William Herbert's birth, and I am grateful that the American Museum of Fly Fishing chose to share this Frank Forester story and its mysteries with our membership.

—JM

An earlier version of this article first appeared in the Spring 2002 issue of the *Anglers' Club Bulletin* (vol. 78, no. 1).

MOUNT PLEASANT CEMETERY is an eerie place. It's certainly the eeriest I've ever visited while pursuing an angling-related activity. It was a mild mid-December afternoon, with trees bare and sun shining, and still there were daggerlike shadows cast in every direction from the branches of mature sycamore and oak trees, forbidding wrought-iron fences, and ornate Victorian-era grave markers. Perched high on a hillside overlooking the Passaic River above Newark, New Jersey, it would be the perfect setting for the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come to transport a modern-day Ebenezer Scrooge to ponder the result of his miserly ways.

My father and I were working together in the area that day, and upon my mentioning why we needed to make this brief detour, he gave me that blank stare that all devoted sportsmen have encoun-

tered at one time or another under varying circumstances. As we began to navigate our way through the narrow cemetery roads searching for Section D, Lot 118, I could only roll my eyes when I heard my father replying to someone during a cell phone conversation that, "If I told you where I was right now, you'd think I was out of my mind." After being pressed further, he answered, "My son's driving me around some cemetery in Newark looking for a dead fisherman's grave." I quietly kept driving but at the same time thought that he might just be the only sane person in the car.

My interest in visiting this particular gravesite was certainly not unique. When I placed my initial phone call to the caretaker's office several months before, he said, "Oh yeah, he's buried here. We've had quite a few people ask about him over the years." He gave me the precise location

over the telephone, but added that it wouldn't be easy to find on my own. I soon discovered that he was right.

The caretaker's office was closed when we first arrived, and after driving around aimlessly, we finally met up with a cemetery maintenance worker, Luis Morales, who was holding a broom and dustpan and appeared to be cleaning out a mausoleum. *Why else would a shiny copper coffin be out resting on the grass?*, I thought. Luis went on to tell us that someone had broken into the mausoleum the night before and that he was cleaning up the site now that the police had left. When I naively asked if it had been someone looking for jewelry to steal, his reply was that it was most likely the activity of those who practice the arcane religion of Santería, being that the entire body had been taken. He didn't appear to be shaken over the event and nonchalantly added that this has happened before. Shaking our heads in bewilderment—my father's shaking slightly more than mine—we asked if he could lead us to Lot 118, in section D. Luis said, "Sure, no problem," and took out an old yellowing map of this increasingly bizarre place.

As we walked past many of the ornate mausoleums and century-old monuments into section D, my father and I had now adopted a let's-find-this-guy-and-get-the-hell-out-of-here attitude. After a brief search, I finally located the simple slab of Belleville freestone that read:

TO
"FRANK FORESTER"
BY THE
NEWARK HERBERT ASSOCIATION
MAY 19, 1876
HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT
OF ENGLAND
AGED 51 YEARS

INFELICISSIMUS.
BORN APRIL 7, 1807 LONDON
DIED MAY 17, 1858 NEW YORK

Infelicissimus. The loose translation of this epitaph, offered by a fellow angler who had majored in Latin and Greek, was "very unhappy." One Forester biographer, Luke White Jr., defined it as meaning "the most unhappy one."¹

So there we were, standing at the site where Henry William Herbert—the legendary Frank Forester—an Eton- and Cambridge-educated grandson of the Earl of Carnarvon and, more importantly to me, the father of American sporting literature, was laid to rest. I remembered reading that we would now be just a hundred or so paces from the site where Forester's famous home and writing place, the Cedars, had once stood.



John Mundt

Forester's tombstone in Mount Pleasant Cemetery, Newark, New Jersey.

As I wandered to the edge of the hilltop overlooking the Passaic River, a mental picture of what it must have been like a century and a half earlier began to develop. To my left was Herbert Way, a deep gully road just outside the fence that originally led from Broadway down to the Cedars. To my right was the skyline of Newark, and behind me were acres of tombstones. Herbert's biographers wrote that he chose this place for his home because it was quiet and that the cemetery would create a buffer against encroaching development.

Forester biographer William Southworth Hunt mentioned a legend surrounding Aaron Burr's cavalymen hanging a British spy on that hill during the American Revolution.² There was also reference to an earlier tale about a witch being killed and buried in an unmarked grave on the hillside, who supposedly haunted the area.³

In the 1840s, the cemetery grounds were smaller, and the Cedars was its lone

countryside neighbor. Herbert would routinely pass through a small gate that led from his property and through the cemetery for the 11-mile walk to Newark. After nightfall, he would take a circuitous route back, as he was not fond of graveyards in the evening. This I understood.

As my father and I drove past the caretaker's house and through the towering stone-and-iron gateway back onto urban asphalt, I felt a sense of relief as we entered the world of the living again. The resident caretaker was never going to have to worry about me coveting his job, and I was quite certain that Frank Forester would not have been pleased with the way the old neighborhood had changed.

BANISHED TO NEW YORK

The reader will notice that eighteen years had elapsed from the date of Forester's death to when the Newark Herbert Association stepped forward to erect that simple stone memorial above

what had been his unmarked grave.⁴ The association was formed by a group of friends and admirers to raise funds necessary to mark the site in accordance with Forester's last wishes.

The reason why a highly regarded British noble family had willingly condoned having one of their own laid to rest in an unmarked grave points to a mystery predating Forester's 1831 arrival in New York City.

A short walk from the Bowling Green subway station to number 5 Beaver Street off Bowling Green would bring you to the place where Reverend R. Townsend Huddart's Classical Institute had once stood. Here was where a lonely twenty-four-year-old aristocrat, with the possibility of someday inheriting the earldom of Carnarvon, was promptly offered the position of Greek and Latin preceptor to the privileged boys enrolled there. An initial desire to practice law had been thwarted by his unwillingness to swear off allegiance to the British crown as a final



Henry William Herbert and his sister Louisa Catherine Georgina. From a miniature painting in possession of P. C. D. Mundy. Undated, artist unknown. From the Yale University Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Henry William Herbert collection, call number YCAL MSS 573, object number 9998478.



Henry William Herbert. From a small oil portrait at the Cedars. Undated, artist unknown. From the Yale University Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Henry William Herbert collection, call number YCAL MSS 573, object number 9998482.

requirement for gaining American citizenship. And though he was a lover of Shakespeare and the dramatic arts, friends tactfully persuaded him to forego his dream of playing Hamlet on a major stage.

From Reverend Huddart's school, the man who would eventually become Frank Forester made acquaintances among the affluent sporting families of New York society and embarked on a tumultuous writing career that would give witness to disappointment and pain, but would eventually lead to his unexpected fame as the most widely read "American" sporting writer before the Civil War.

One of Forester's most celebrated angling works, *Trouting along the Catsauqua*, was reissued by the nearby Anglers' Club of New York in 1927 in a private publication of 423 copies by Eugene Connett's Derrydale Press.⁵ The foreword by Harry Worcester Smith provides interesting insight about the complex nature of this celebrated author. Using William Mitchell Van Winkles's bibliography compiled in 1936, *Henry William Herbert: A Bibliography of His Writings, 1832–1858*, as a reference would give the curious reader years of material from which to select.

To me, the most interesting biographical account of Forester's life was found in a personal copy of a small 98-page volume, *Frank Forester: A Tragedy in Exile*, issued in a limited edition of 200 copies by the Carteret Book Club of Newark, New Jersey, in 1933. The author, William Southworth Hunt, undertook an exhaustive level of research that included scouring public records in both the United States and Great Britain.

An 1852 account published while Herbert was alive stated, "In the spring of 1830, Mr. Herbert met with a severe pecuniary reverse, which suddenly reduced him from affluence, and he resolved to try his future in the United States."⁶ Other accounts cite the treachery of a fiduciary trustee.⁷ Hunt's research was thorough and led him to cut to the core of the mystery surrounding Forester's exodus. Hunt uncovered no evidence of a trust being in place until much later, when Herbert's father helped him secure a permanent residence at the Cedars. There was proof clearly demonstrating that the father had settled all of his son's debts, even at the expense of liquidating some of his own property. Furthermore, there was no trace of involvement with any bankruptcy proceedings. And Hunt points out that Forester arrived with letters of recommendation to present on a brief visit to Canada, a country that would not have welcomed him had he been a fugitive from justice. Hunt's conclusion was this:



Henry William Herbert by George Gates Ross. Oil on canvas. Undated. From the Yale University Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Henry William Herbert collection, call number YCAL MSS 573, object number 2012100.

The reason lies deeper, and we sense an offense against the rigorous social code of his class, an offense that no paternal settlement could clear. There is no proof but ample evidence that Henry William Herbert fled debts of honor. Suffice it to say that his life-long abhorrence of cards and all sorts of gambling, carried to extremes by those who knew him; his avoidance of Englishmen of his own station in life; his father's kindness shown to him in all necessities, but with the clear expectation that his son could never be other than an exile; the family avoidance of any recognition of him; and the character of his morose anguish through the twenty-eight remaining years of his life indicate the nature of the offense.⁸

Hunt's distillation of all he had researched likely had merit. According to one of Herbert's students and lifelong friends, Colonel Thomas Picton, "Although originally intended for the Church, for which establishment he ever expressed the highest regard, the young

scholar appears to have committed some indiscretion preventing his prosecution of theological studies."⁹ He also said that "For a few years succeeding his arrival [to the United States], he constantly anticipated a recall to his native land, upon the occurrence of some contingency in family affairs he was loath to explain, for Herbert was ever reticent as to incidents in his past life, and very rarely, and then ambiguously, alluded to his prospects of, or intention for, the future."¹⁰

Whatever the reasons, Henry William lurked on the continent in France and Belgium through the winter of 1830, and early in 1831, with money given him by his father, he sailed for New York. He would not set foot on English soil again.

While performing his research, Hunt had written directly to the Herbert family inquiring about Henry William, but the sitting Earl of Carnarvon communicated through his secretary that there was no knowledge of a Henry William

Herbert ever being in their family. Sadly, the banishment followed him even in death.

When considering what this promising Cambridge graduate could have done to warrant such disdain, I could only surmise that his father's values—reflected in his position as a prominent member of the Anglican clergy—must have demanded a stern response to the offense in question. Conversely, it must have been a genuine sense of Christian compassion that inspired the elder Herbert to offer the varying degrees of financial support that were evidently provided to his estranged son.

A RUT-FILLED ROAD TO FAME

The writing career that eventually gave birth to the pseudonym Frank Forester was initially inspired by an ambition to become one of the great historical and classical romance writers of the age. With bills to pay, but sincerely

believing that he had a reputation to protect, there were frequent anonymous submissions to the mainstream periodicals, as well as quiet employment translating foreign works for an American readership. To him, the name Henry William Herbert was to be reserved for those romance and poetry efforts that were deemed worthy of such attribution. As time moved on, some works were celebrated while others were overlooked.

The volume of writing that emanated from Forester's goose-quill pens was prolific by any standard. Noted bibliophile Jeffrey Norton had amassed one of the finest private collections of Forester works ever brought to auction. His 24 January 2002 auction catalog listed seventy-two volumes by or involving Frank Forester. In it, Norton quotes the authoritative bibliographer William Mitchell Van Winkle:

To what author can one turn and find such an infinite variety of achievements? He was a good poet, a translator of French, Latin and Greek works, a writer of romances, histories and

sports. In his sporting works alone his versatility is amazing, for in addition to writing those masterpieces of shooting, hunting and fishing, "The Warwick Woodlands," "My Shooting Box," "The Deerstalkers," and "The Quorndon Hounds," he also wrote technical books on field sports, on game, on fishing and on horses, all of which are outstanding in their line, even to the present day. In addition he edited and contributed books about dogs, edited magazines and gift annuals and was an artist of no mean ability, often drawing the illustrations for his own works and carving the wood-blocks. I know of no other writer whose record can compare with that of Herbert, and we must particularly bear in mind that all of this was accomplished in the short space of time from his landing in the United States in 1831 until his unfortunate death . . . in 1858.¹¹

Norton added that "it is ironic that his legacy now, nearly 150 years later, are his sporting novels. In these he defined a sporting ethic and was the first to raise the national consciousness about conservation. He argued for stricter game laws

FORESTER FISHING

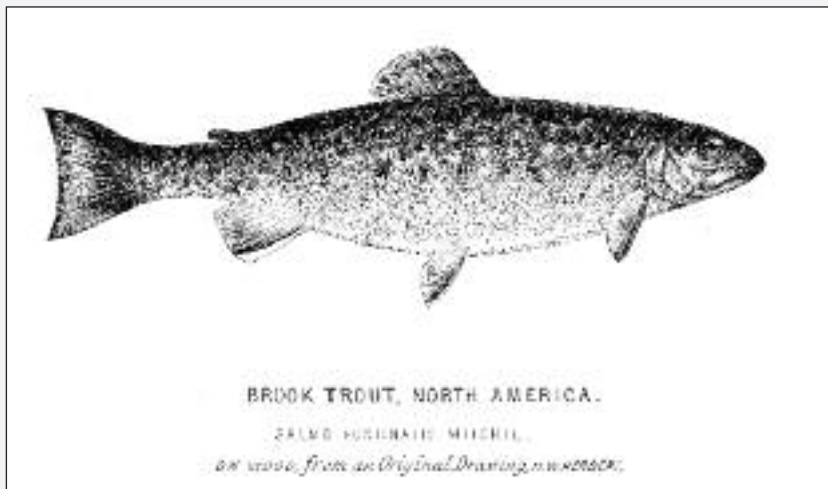
Frank Forester's essay, "Trout-Fishing on Long Island," was a featured contribution to the first American edition of *The Complete Angler* as edited by George Washington Bethune (New York and London: Wiley & Putnam, 1847). His most widely known angling title is *Frank Forester's Fish and Fishing* (London: Richard Bentley, 1849). Here is an excerpt from *Trouting along the Catsauqua* (New York: Derrydale Press, 1927, 38–39).

At one o'clock they paddled leisurely back to the cabin, lunched frugally on a crust of bread and a glass of sherry, and awaited the hour when the hemlock's shadow would be on the white water.

At the moment they were there; and lo! The big trout was feeding fiercely on natural fly.

"Be ready, Frank, and when next he rises drop your fly right in the middle of his bell."

"Be easy, I mean it." His line, as he spoke, was describing an easy circle around his head; the fish rose not. The second revolution succeeded; the great trout rose, missed his object, disappeared; and, on the instant, right in the centre of the bell, ere the inmost circle had subsided, the snipe feather fell and fluttered. With an arrowy rush, the monster rose, and as his broad tail showed above the surface, the merry music of the resonant click-reel told that Frank had him. Well struck, he was better played, killed unexceptionably; in thirteen minutes he lay fluttering on the greensward, lacking four ounces of a six-pounder. The snipe feather and mouse body won the day in a canter. So off they started up the stony brook.



From Frank Forester's *Fish and Fishing* (New York: Excelsior Publishing House, 1859), facing page 86.

at a time when the typical American assumed there was no end to the bounty of his woods and streams. Herbert's sporting works are most highly esteemed and valued; however, for a collector it is his other works that are really hard to find.¹² To add further irony, in the beginning it was his sporting works that Herbert vehemently insisted remain anonymous. In 1839, George Porter, editor of the early American sporting journals *Spirit of the Times* and the *American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine*, suggested the name Frank Forester as a means of providing a fitting nom de plume to an accomplished man of the field who did not want his baptismal name associated with the fledgling genre of outdoor writing. As the Forester writings grew in popularity both here and in England, he would eventually shed the veil of secrecy and take full advantage of

the acclaim he had always coveted. As time has testified, the work of Frank Forester has endured while the name Henry William Herbert has faded into obscurity.

As a person, Forester was an enigma. On the one hand, he was a volatile man engaged in hotly contested quarrels with editors and publishers. There was deep animosity directed toward critics, which included Edgar Allan Poe. Then there were publicized incidents of brawling, duels, drunkenness, and his supposedly firing a shot at one journalist's head before being subdued by the patrons of Washington Hall Ballroom. Money was readily earned but quickly thrown about in the maintenance of a patrician lifestyle.

Conversely, he was admired and loved until the day of his death by the students who had been under his tutelage at Huddart's school. As Hunt wrote, "There

he was a success, for among his few fortunate gifts was the ability to make young men like him and to command the trust and affection of children. There is never anything essentially bad in such men."¹³ There were other references to him being a generous host to all who visited the Cedars regardless of their station in life.

Another biographer, C. G. Hine, spoke with men who had known Herbert. "Those who so remember him rather resent the fact that his brawls have been made so much of and his virtues neglected by such as write of him, for they recall him as an attractive man and pleasant companion with many kindly qualities. . . . He was apt to be brusque with those he did not like, and when 'beyond his depth' through too great conviviality inclined to be ugly when opposed."¹⁴



(Frontispiece.)

*Henry Wm. Herbert
The Cedars*

"Henry Wm. Herbert, *The Cedars*." From David W. Judd, ed., *Life and Writings of Frank Forester, vol. I* (New York: Orange Judd Company, 1882), frontispiece.



(Frontispiece.)

THE CEDARS.

From David W. Judd, ed., *Life and Writings of Frank Forester, vol. II* (New York: Orange Judd Company, 1882), frontispiece.



“Years ago the dwelling burned to the ground, and scarce a vestige remains of a place hallowed in the memory of all American sportsmen. The ruins have been mostly removed to enlarge the cemetery boundaries, and the clinging vines upon the crumbling ruins, and a few cedars, only remain to mark the spot where once lived one of the most versatile, talented, and eccentric authors on the American continent.”

—Fred Pond (“Will Wildwood”), quoted in *The Hitchcock Edition of Frank Forester*, vol. IV: *The Deerstalkers* (New York: Derrydale Press, 1930), 171.

The Cedars. *Lithograph. Undated. From the Yale University Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Henry William Herbert collection, call number YCAL MSS 573, object number 9998516.*

The hand fate had dealt him was most certainly a difficult one, and frustration appeared to lurk around every corner. His first wife, a timid daughter of the mayor of Bangor, Maine, died shortly after giving birth to their daughter, Louisa, who in turn died several months later. Their first child, a son named William, was then sent off to live with the Herbert family in England, from which he never returned. It was horrific circumstances such as these that finally inspired an act of mercy from his clergyman father: Frank Forester was instructed to secure a permanent dwelling of his own to be kept in trust with the Herbert family.

The Cedars was purchased with a fifteen-hundred-dollar allowance. His father was reported to have said that, “Had a safe man like Henry Clay been president of the United States [rather than James K. Polk] he would have felt like investing more.”¹⁵

Forester must have been elated, as can be sensed through the following verse he penned shortly thereafter:

A home, a home! Yes, Yes! Though still
and small,
I have a home where the soft shadows fall
From the dim pine-trees, and the
river’s sigh
Like voices of the dead wails ever nigh.¹⁶

In addition to finally having a home to call his own, another small consolation was that Frank Forester’s writings were being widely read and applauded by American and British audiences during his lifetime. He was earning a favorable income, and solace could always be found with his select group of friends in the quiet fields where fish and game abounded, most of these being within 100 miles of New York City. Such retreats must surely have awakened fond memories of his younger days in the Yorkshire countryside where his sporting ethic was nurtured.

“Frank Forester” was a celebrity role he relished. His walking to and from the Cedars in hunting attire, always with a dog by his side, became a regular sight for those living in the area.

BACK TO BOWLING GREEN

The Frank Forester story had its quiet beginning within a few blocks of Bowling Green at 5 Beaver Street. Its sad ending would take place in the same vicinity at the Stevens House on Bowling Green a quarter of a century later.

Frank Forester’s second marriage was to Adela Budlong on 16 February 1858. His bride was a former actress who had

recently been divorced. Her motives for marrying and shortly thereafter abandoning Forester are based on conjecture. Was she an opportunist enamored by his noble pedigree, only to discover that there was nothing left of it to benefit them when she arrived at the Cedars? Or was he guilty of extreme cruelty, as her divorce filing claimed? It’s difficult to guess either way.

Contemporaries of Forester said that he deeply grieved the loss of his first wife, often staring at a painting of her for hours at a time. Had he finally discovered real love again after all of the tragedies he had endured? On the other hand, he was also known to have suffered severe mood swings and displays of “melancholy” when hosting guests at the Cedars.

The fact is that Adela left the Cedars one day by the cemetery gate under the pretense of visiting some friends in New York. She said that she missed the city and would like to move back. Forester consented, stayed behind to settle some local affairs, and followed a few days later.

Upon his arrival in New York, he took a room at the Stevens House and awaited word from his wife. Reality set in weeks later when divorce papers arrived from Ohio. Herbert was despondent.

On the evening of 15 May 1858, he drafted numerous letters to friends inviting them to a banquet at his room the following evening. His friend, former student, and fellow Englishman Philip Anthon was the only person to accept the invitation. They dined and conversed until 2:00 a.m., when Herbert excused himself, walked to his bedroom, and then fired a single shot into his heart with a pistol. His last words to Anthon were, "I told you I would do it."¹⁷ The suicide was committed exactly three months after his wedding day.

Several suicide notes carried specific statements and requests. Forester wanted someone to care for his dog, to be buried in a friend's reserved burial plot at Mount Pleasant Cemetery, instructions to be followed concerning his tombstone and epitaph, and the same clergyman

who had married him to preside over his funeral. This last request was denied on the grounds of suicide; another member of the clergy, willing to set aside church law, had to be found.

A note to a friend, Anson Livingston, said in part, "The time has come . . . three months since the happiest days of my life . . . home, hope, sunshine, she . . . all is lost forever." And "My life, long, sad, solitary and weary, without an object beyond labor to earn a living for a day. . . of my private history few men know anything . . . no one knows the whole."¹⁸

Herbert's long letter to the press concluded: "If I have sinned and sorrowed much, I have also loved much, more perhaps than I have either sinned or sorrowed. It is the last drop that overflows the golden bowl, the last tension that breaks the silver chord; my last hope is

gone, my last love and my life go together, and so good night to HERBERT. May 16, 1858."¹⁹ His final tragic act extinguished the turbulent life of an American author of British birth.

The contents of the Cedars were allegedly confiscated by a notorious moneylender and were never seen again. The property was then liquidated by the Herbert family, and the house burned to the ground not many years later. The land is now part of Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

THE FORESTER LEGACY

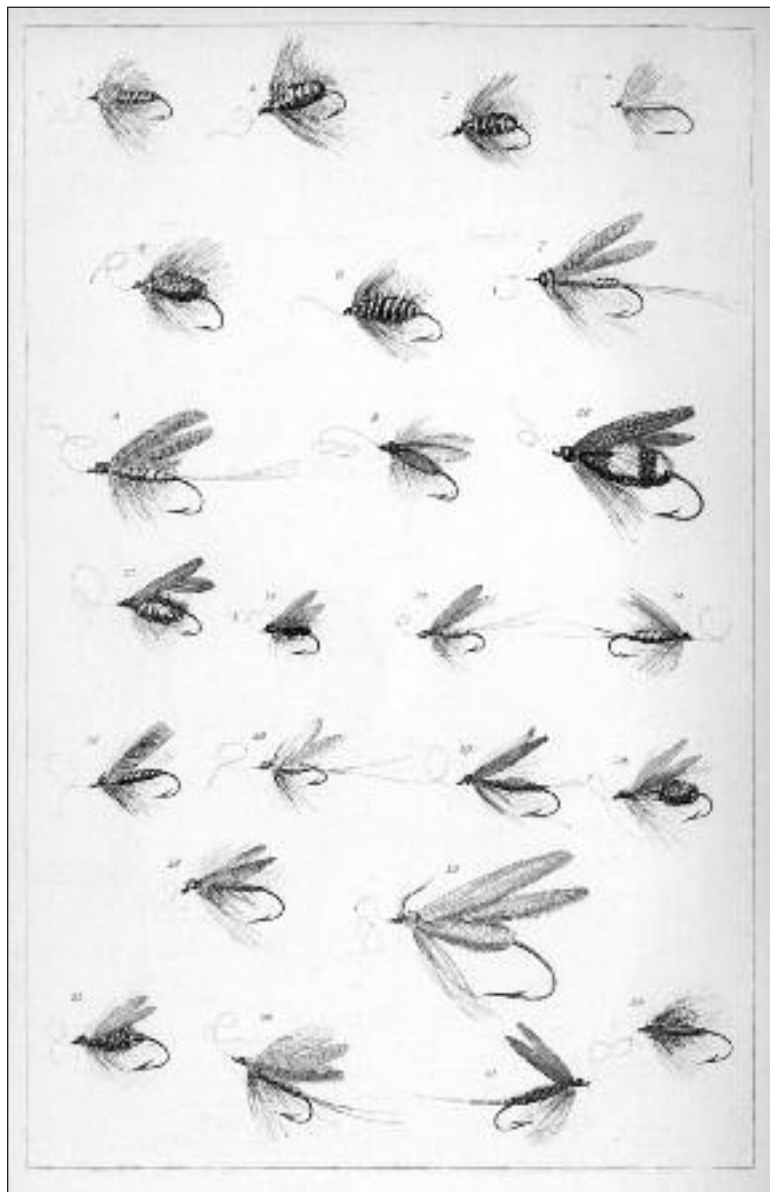
The paradox, for lack of a better word, is that Frank Forester, despite his woes, gave his and future generations some of the most beautiful writing on sport that has ever been printed. Although it can be difficult to follow a style from 150 years ago, those of us who feel contentment while holding a rod or gun in places of serenity can enjoy and relate to Forester's writings today as much as those who preceded us.

We could certainly feel pity for such a tormented man while being grateful that he left us with a clear window into the forgotten world of pre-Civil War sportsmen. Should his unsettled spirit have taken up residence near Bowling Green, we can only assume that he has drifted over to the Anglers' Club of New York on occasion to witness the camaraderie and conviviality of those who have helped keep his memory alive.



ENDNOTES

1. Luke White Jr., *Henry William Herbert and the American Publishing Scene, 1831-1858* (Newark, N.J.: Carteret Book Club, 1943), 66.
2. William Southworth Hunt, *Frank Forester: A Tragedy in Exile* (Newark, N.J.: Carteret Book Club, 1933), 74.
3. Hunt, *Frank Forester*, 74-75.
4. According to David Wright Judd's *Life and Writings of Frank Forester*, vol. I (New York: Orange Judd Company, 1882), "Henry William Herbert was buried in Mount Pleasant Cemetery, a few hundred paces distant from where originally stood 'The Cedars,' the grounds formerly occupied by his house having been incorporated into those devoted to burial purposes after destruction by fire of that edifice. For eighteen years his grave remained unmarked by tablet or stone, his relatives in England refusing to devote any portion of the proceeds arising from the sale of 'The Cedars' towards suitable perpetuation of his memory" (104).
5. *Trouting along the Catsauqua* first appeared in a periodical and is classified as one of Forester's "fugitive sporting sketches." It was published in book form first in Will Wildwood [F. E. Pond], ed., *Frank Forester's Fugitive Sporting Sketches; Being the Miscellaneous*



From Frank Forester's *Fish and Fishing* (New York: Excelsior Publishing House, 1859), facing page 441.

Articles upon Sport and Sporting, Originally Published in the Early American Magazines and Periodicals (Westfield, Wisc.: Will Wildwood, 1879) and later included in Judd's *Life and Writings of Frank Forester*, vol. I (270–300).

6. *The Men of the Time or Sketches of Living Notables* (Clinton Hall, N.Y.: Redfield, 1852), 261. The novelist William Makepeace Thackeray, a contemporary of Forester's, apparently also found life as a student in those days unnecessarily wild. "In February 1829, Thackeray entered Trinity College, Cambridge. Although he strived to be an honors student, he also enjoyed socializing with his literary-minded classmates, hosting and attending popular 'wine parties,' and gambling frequently. Dissatisfied by his low marks, he left Cambridge after the Easter term of 1830. He later wrote, 'I should like to know . . . how much ruin is caused by that accursed system, which is called in England 'the education of a gentleman.' Go, my son, to a public school, that 'world in miniature'; learn to 'fight for yourself' against the time when your real struggles shall begin.'" ("The Adventures of Thackeray in His Way through the World: His Fortunes and Misfortunes, His Friends and His Family. Chapter 1: In Which a Young Thackeray Receives His Education, In More Ways than One." <http://hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/houghton/exhibits/thackeray/chapter1.cfm>. Accessed 7 November 2016.)

7. Hunt, *Frank Forester*, 24.

8. Hunt, *Frank Forester*, 26–27.

9. Judd, *Life and Writings of Frank Forester*, vol. I, 11.

10. *Ibid.*, 79–80.

11. William Mitchell Van Winkle, quoted in Jeffrey Norton, *The Angling Library of Jeffrey Norton* (auction catalogue, sale 235) (San Francisco: PBA Galleries, 24 January 2002), 75.

12. Norton, *The Angling Library of Jeffrey Norton*, 76.

13. Hunt, *Frank Forester*, 41.

14. C. G. Hine, *Woodside, The North End of Newark, N.J.: Its History, Legends and Ghost Stories, Gathered from the Records and the Older Inhabitants Now Living* (n.p.: Hines Annual, 1909), 16.

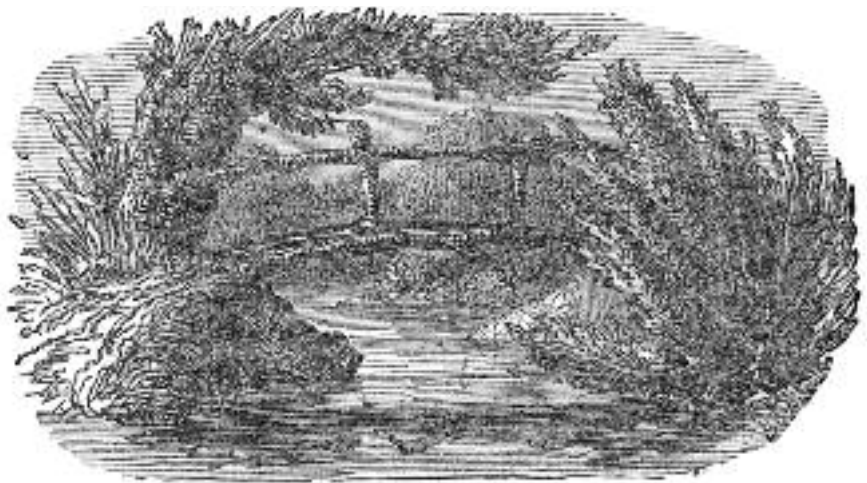
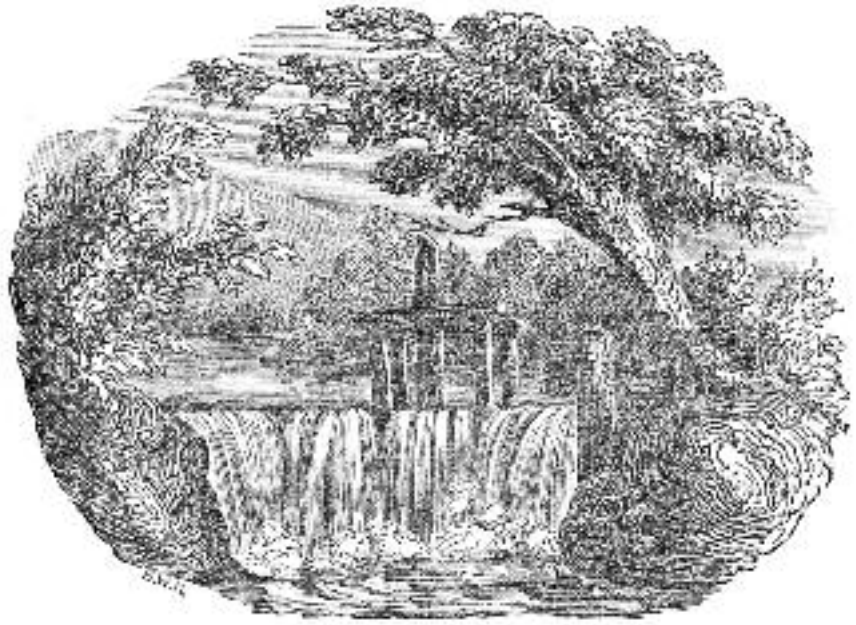
15. Hunt, *Frank Forester*, 71.

16. First published anonymously in *The Literary World*, vol. 1 (New York: Osgood & Co., 1847), 230. Republished with attribution to Henry William Herbert in a letter dated 18 May 1858 by "HELA"—interestingly, the day after Herbert's death—to *The Historical Magazine*, vol. 2 (New York: C. Benjamin Richardson, 1858), 172. <https://books.google.com/books?id=-SSFDDwBBfWC&pg=PA172&lpg=PA172&dq=%22A+home,+a+home,+Yes,+Yes!+Thought+still+and+small%62&source=bl&ots=5tVogHyoIx&sig=q3xZvNefxhnyh4AruEDkWkSs9o&hl=en&sa=X&ved=oahUKEWj27OLXq5LQAhUG8YMKHRUoBO4Q6AEIGzAA#v=onepage&q&f=false>. Accessed 7 November 2016.

17. Hunt, *Frank Forester*, 96.

18. Hunt, *Frank Forester*, 96, 97.

19. The Newark Herbert Association, *The Newark Herbert Association to "Frank Forester," In Memoriam, May 19, 1876* (Newark, N.J.: Ward & Tichnor, 1876), 23.



Woodcut drawings by Henry William Herbert for his book *Frank Forester's Fish and Fishing* (New York: Excelsior Publishing House, 1859), 173, 119, 201.

Bamboo in the Closet: Treasure or . . . What?

by Fred Kretchman

Fred Kretchman



An 8-foot Gillum bamboo fly rod brought to the author for his appraisal.

THE PHONE CALL began with a familiar theme: “Hello, Fred. My name is John. I was referred to you by Bill at North Country Anglers. He said you could help me out. I have my dad’s old bamboo fly rod, and I’m wondering what it’s worth and how I might go about selling it. Can you help me?”

I hear this type of question frequently, often at shows or presentations where I talk about crafting bamboo rods. It seems as though almost everyone knows someone with an old rod (or a bunch of them) in the closet, but few have any clue as to what they have. The value of vintage bamboo rods can be measured in

different ways, financially and sentimentally, so my first questions relate to the history of the rod: Has it been in the family? If so, how long? Is there a maker’s name on the rod? What do you intend to do with it: fish it, display it, or stow it away in the closet?

On the phone, John explained that his father lived in Ridgefield, Connecticut, and knew a man named Gillum who made this fly rod for him in 1962. My ears perked up with that information, since Harold “Pinky” Gillum had a reputation for making high-quality bamboo rods. John said his father rarely fished this rod, so he considered the condition to be excellent. Toward the end of our conversation, I recommended that John bring the Gillum to my shop on his way to York, Maine. I advised him that he not

take any offers on the rod, even if someone offered him \$1,000, because this rod was worth a lot more money than that.

A few weeks later, John and his wife stopped by my shop, 8-foot Gillum rod in hand. It was just as he described: barely any soiling on the cork handle, the original bag and tube with the original paper label intact. What a find! They both peppered me with questions about Mr. Gillum, as well as what I thought of the rod itself. At one point, his wife asked me what it was worth. “Well, I could pick up the phone and make one call right now and sell it for \$4,000.” You should have seen the surprised look on her face . . . it was far more than she figured it would bring. I gave her a few moments to catch her breath, then I said: “But I won’t do that to you. This rod is worth twice that

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amount.” You could have knocked her over with a feather. She was speechless. Because neither of them fly fished, they had no clue as to the monetary value of something that had been hidden in their closet for fifty-plus years. Fewer than forty-eight hours later, I had secured a full-price buyer for their Gillum rod—at \$8,500.

There is no single source of accurate information about the monetary value of vintage fly rods these days: no book, dealer price list, not even eBay can tell you what your vintage rod is worth. That’s because the “market” value is a bouillabaisse of mixed inputs. For example: How scarce is the rod? Was it a higher-quality rod, compared with the competition when it was made? Does it have the original bag, tag, and tube with label? How long is the rod, and what line weight does it cast? Who made it? Was it made by a famous person or shop or someone rather obscure? Are there stories or myths surrounding the maker that would affect how his workmanship is perceived by the public? Has there been a history of astronomically high prices paid in the past for similar rods? How desirable is the rod for fishing? How many other potential buyers are there, and how will it be marketed? What is the condition, and how much of the rod is original?

Anyone who has watched episodes of *Antiques Road Show* on PBS knows how important history and knowledge are in determining the monetary value of an antique. The same applies to vintage bamboo, so here are some generalities that may help you understand whether you have a treasure or something less in your possession.

- Generally speaking, the shorter the rod, the more desirable it is for fishing and the higher its value. Fly rods 8 feet or shorter usually command the highest dollar.
- If it was a high-quality rod when it was made, it will have the same appeal to today’s fly fishers and rod collectors.
- Condition is so important! A high-grade rod in poor condition is worth only a fraction of the value compared with one in excellent shape.
- Don’t buy into the myth that just because a rod was made by a well-known shop or individual, it is a better-quality rod and worth more. For example, Leonard rods varied widely in quality, depending on who owned and managed the company after the fire that gutted the H. L. Leonard Rod Company in the mid-1960s. The exception to

this rule is Payne rods made by either Jim Payne or his father, Ed Payne. They held to the highest-quality standards of any rod maker for more than sixty years.

- Look for quality features on the rod: genuine agate stripping guides (a costly upgrade); perfectly executed silk wraps over the guides; aesthetically pleasing cosmetics; flawless varnish finish; richly blued components; high-quality cork in the handle; straight bamboo sections, all of exactly the same length; and ferules that fit with velvety smoothness all the way. Engraving (not stamping) of any kind usually indicates exceptional quality.
- Originality is so important! Any work that is performed on a rod tends to devalue it unless that work is so close to the original that it is indistinguishable. A totally refurbished rod, especially one refurbished to nonprofessional standards, is worth less than half the value of a similar rod in original condition.
- When it comes to good looks, just because a rod is jazzed up cosmetically is no guarantee that the rod is a great caster. We all cast differently, so when someone pronounces that a particular rod casts exceptionally well, it may not perform the same way in your hands. The best rod makers produced actions that fit the customer with little need to adjust his or her casting stroke.

By now it should be obvious that in order to give someone an accurate appraisal of the monetary value of his or her bamboo rods, it is important to examine the rod in hand. However, I’ve listed below some general value categories of rods, assuming they are in good-to-excellent original condition.

- **High-end rods:** Paynes (made by Jim before his death in 1968), Gillums, Garrisons, Dickersons, “Sam” Carlsons, Paul Youngs.
- **Midlevel rods:** F. E. Thomases, H. L. Leonards (shorter than 8 feet), E. C. Powells (hollow built), R. L. Winstons (shorter, San Francisco made).
- **Lower-level rods:** Heddens, Grangers, Phillipsons, Montagues, South Bends, Shakespeares . . . and many more.

Sentimental value is of course less tangible than monetary value and is totally dependent on the personal significance of an older rod. How would you value an old rod that belonged to your

father or grandfather? It’s his DNA that’s combined with fish slime and dirt on the cork grip. He may have repaired a missing guide with his wife’s sewing thread or overwrapped a fractured portion of the bamboo. Often, one tip is short because it broke—one hopes on a large fish, but sometimes for a less noble reason, such as tugging on a snagged tree branch. These are the types of rods that should be kept in the family and appreciated for what they are: a glimpse into the past fishing exploits of a family member.

These sentimental rods are the ones that I find most exciting—they have stories to tell. For example, residual Mucilin under the guides indicates the rod was used with pure silk fly lines. Heavy downward “sets” in the rod sections indicate heavy pressure from large fish or perhaps from trolling with streamers or live bait. Nicks in the varnish of the butt section may be the result of rubbing on the gunwales of a canoe while trolling streamers.

I recall one time in the late 1990s when I was giving a presentation at the American Museum of Fly Fishing. A local woman brought in several rods that had belonged to her late father. She wanted to fish them and asked me to “make them fishable.” Back in my shop, as I pulled one F. E. Thomas rod from its tube, I noticed a piece of paper rolled up inside the tube. I carefully extracted an old mimeographed copy of a map of a lake in Maine with penciled notes about underwater features such as drop-offs, boulders, and spots to anchor and fish. When I returned the rods to her, I said, “I found something of interest in one of the tubes.” Then I produced the map, and her eyes got, well, a little wet. She revealed the fact that she grew up spending summers on that lake, and those were her dad’s notes on the map. She had no idea this treasure was safely stored inside the Thomas rod tube. It was a precious moment for us both—and I knew she would especially enjoy fishing that rod for years to come.

Twenty years from now, it’s doubtful that our children or grandkids will be saying, “Wow, I have my dad’s graphite fly rod.” However, the same cannot be said about those bamboo rods in our closets. It’s up to us to pass along the history and tradition established by master bamboo rod makers of the past. Let’s pass these sentimental rods along to the next generations.



Note: The American Museum of Fly Fishing does not, as a matter of policy, offer monetary evaluations on any objects.

Casting for Recovery

by Margot Page

SHE WORE A plastic tether running from her nostrils to the oxygen tank that fueled expeditions from bedstead to the brightly painted wooden bench on her porch, and occasionally—if she crawled on her hands and knees—down to her beloved rocky garden that, during New Mexico's three growing seasons, was brilliant with the splashed colors of flowers. It might take her an hour, but she would eventually reach her destination, where she would rest in the good dirt, hot, dusty, and victorious. *One rock at a time*, she always said.

Carolyn is a sinewy, fair wraith of 75 pounds on a good day. Every month of her last thirty years had been a hard-fought battle, first against one very bad cancer, then another very bad cancer, and finally breast cancer. She said the breast cancer was easy compared to the other two, and once detected, she underwent a double mastectomy as a preventive measure. She survived by virtue of her meteoric spirit and steely New England determination, but a few years ago, her body became tired, frail, and could no longer keep up with her courageous heart and vibrant mind. And so, in order to protect her fragile immune system, she was pretty much confined to her home with only occasional forays to the medical center for three-month scans or, a few times a year, out to a restaurant for a change of scene. Thankfully, her husband was an angel on earth and he cared for her completely, devotedly.

But along came a blip on her radar screen. Because she had literally won a lottery, she was making a journey, a journey outside of her limited world, a longer journey than just to her garden—an expedition outside of her pain and exhaustion. She was going to get in the car and drive to a point more than a hundred miles to the east in the mountains of northern New Mexico. All by herself. She was going to leave her pueblo ranch house and her loving husband to have an adventure—her first in the sev-

This is a chapter excerpted from the new and expanded edition of Margot Page's *Little Rivers: Tales of a Woman Angler* (Pawlet, Vt.: Three Winds Media, 2015).



Carolyn (right) with her CfR fishing guide. The third day of the retreat is fishing day, when the participants have a chance to use their newfound knowledge on the water. Photo courtesy of the author.

eral years since her world had shrunk down to the geography of her property.

Carolyn had packed for weeks to prepare herself for the trip. Because she is a creature of imagination and whimsy, her packing pile included a pair of blue faerie wings, a few fancy hats, a motorcycle helmet that she liked to wear to make people laugh, her ukulele, enough outfits to clothe her for two months, and special baked treats for the new friends she would meet at the retreat.

She already knew a lot about the women who would be gathering there, all selected from the same pool of applicants by a national lottery, even though she had not met them yet, because all thirteen others were breast cancer survivors like herself. She knew what matters to women who have traveled that wrenching path. Carolyn had firsthand experience at that—one could say she was a pro, surviving the three grueling cancer episodes over more than three decades.



After arrival and check-in, participants are fitted with waders, boots, and rods. Here, Carolyn gets help with her boots and waders from a CfR volunteer. Photo courtesy of the author.

In addition to the giddiness and excitement preceding her impending departure, Carolyn was also anxious: a little fearful about leaving the safety of her home and husband, nervous about meeting strangers, nervous about the retreat itself. They said she was going to stay at a beautiful place in the New Mexico mountains, that her every need would be anticipated and accommodated, that there would be healthy, delicious meals, that the retreat volunteers were trained and compassionate, and that she would be learning the basics of a completely new activity: fly fishing! *What the heck is that about?* And this entire experience was free, at no cost to her and her strained finances. She just had to get herself there and back.

It sounded too good to be true, but she was reassured by the friendly program leader that this retreat, held by a national nonprofit organization called Casting for Recovery, was entirely real. And so she made a brave leap of faith: she would go.

It had been a long time since she had driven more than 30 miles, so during the nearly three-hour trip to the mountains, she had to pull over several times to rest, in constant cell phone contact with her supportive, but naturally worried husband. Her car was so stuffed with medical supplies—including her portable oxygen tank, clothing for all matter of weather, and necessary accessories like tiaras—that she could barely see out the back window. But as she wound slowly up the mountain road, she began to feel thin layers of her anxiety, restriction, and pain peel off, lifted by the fresh air, the surrounding natural beauty of the mountainscape, and a thrilling, newfound peek at freedom.

When she finally pulled into the driveway of the remote lodge located at an elevation of 8,500 feet in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of northern New Mexico, Carolyn was spent. Before she could take more than a step or two out of the car, she was surrounded by the women volunteers of Casting for Recov-

ery, who welcomed her with warm hugs and cries of hello, carried her luggage to her room, assessed her condition, and encouraged her to rest and snack. Introductions were hardly necessary as Carolyn immediately felt part of a new tribe, and she let herself float on the generosity and caring that was being poured into her.

During the participant check-in, it became clear that every woman's immediate common experience was that they all had shared the same anxieties before coming to the Casting for Recovery retreat: leaving their home for the first time on an unknown adventure, doubts about their ability to interact socially after isolation or to keep up their limited strength during the weekend, reluctance to be parted from family and friends even though it was often an energy drain to protect loved ones at home from cancer's reality.

Now, once they had finally arrived, they could begin to relax. The icebreaker occurred that first afternoon when the fishing gear was handed out to the participants: the fat waders with suspenders, the clunky boots, the fancy fly rods and reels. It was then that the women who had been through hell and back began to laugh.

By the next morning's tasty breakfast, all the participants had rested and were enthusiastically chatting about the weekend's busy schedule, which included seminars on fly-fishing equipment, knot-tying, casting demonstrations and practice, medical information, an evening circle facilitated by a trained psychosocial worker to discuss the emotional impact of cancer, delicious meals throughout, and then on Sunday morning after the spiritual gathering, fishing on the water with their very own guide, followed by a boisterous graduation ceremony complete with a fancy certificate.

Carolyn partook eagerly of each and every offering, though her tiny body was so taxed that during the casting lesson she had to participate sitting on the ground, flicking out beautiful casts with poise and grace after just a few practice tries. She nodded off during one seminar, but after a refreshing mini-snooze, awoke with the same level of excitement as before.

On Sunday morning, the Casting for Recovery participants got to put on their *styling* waders and vests, and use the skills they had learned over the weekend. Excitement and laughter abounded as everyone clumped around in the chunky wading boots and participant and volunteer guide were matched up for the first time. Any shyness quickly disappeared as each pair, survivor and guide, teamed up with a mutual goal: to have fun and NOT think about cancer for a couple of hours.



Casting for Recovery was founded on the principles that the natural world is a healing force and that breast cancer survivors deserve one weekend—free of charge and free from the stresses of medical treatment, home, or workplace—to experience something new and challenging in a beautiful, safe environment. CfR's first test retreat, pictured here, was held in Michigan on a blustery October weekend in 1996. On the second day, the women were given casting lessons and a fly-tying demonstration. After dinner, they gathered around the fireplace to share their stories, receive support, and exchange information. Photos courtesy of the author.



Carolyn mustered enough energy to make it under her own steam down to the water's edge, trailing the oxygen canister tethered to her by its plastic tubing and leading a merry parade of thirteen other victorious women who had defied personal odds, faced the unimaginable terrors and discomfort of a cancer diagnosis, and who were now gathered as a small tribe under the brilliant New Mexico sun, surrounded by wild mountains and caring volunteers who proudly escorted the women to the river, broad smiles on all faces. After the weekend, Carolyn had the sense that the women who surrounded her had always been beloved, dear friends that she just hadn't had the opportunity to meet before.

She said, *This is a dream that I don't want to fade away. The healing and nourishment of this weekend is still unfolding.*



The summer of 1995, I was called by angler Gwenn Perkins who, with Dr. Benita Walton, a reconstructive surgeon, needed help to develop the model for a brilliant idea. Gwenn had already piqued the interest of a national news network who wanted to film the brilliant idea. Trouble was, it didn't really exist yet, so she invited a few advisors in to help make the brilliant idea a reality.

Over the next few years, it was my life privilege to be a member of a small

group of cofounders and advisors, all women, all volunteers, who gathered on Vermont living room couches and at kitchen tables to birth a unique retreat program that used fly fishing as physical and psychological therapy to help women recovering from breast cancer. We named it Casting for Recovery.

Casting for Recovery was founded on the principles that the natural world is a healing force and that cancer survivors deserve one weekend—free of charge and free of the stresses from medical treatment, home, or workplace—to experience something new and challenging while enjoying beautiful surroundings in an intimate, safe, and nurturing structure. The magnificence of the idea lay in the marriage between our gentle sport's therapeutic casting motion, the quality-of-life education and support Casting for Recovery provides, and the overall respite from the rigorous cancer journey, however brief.

For the next four years, the Mothers of Invention, as I like to call our original group of women, refined the Casting for Recovery model. After realizing the tremendous fund-raising burden we would be shouldering, we debated whether or not it should be provided at no cost to the participants.

Eventually we circled back to our original concept born of love: we wanted all the participants to be free of stress and

worry, including financial, for this one weekend. We wanted this to be our gift to them. (I believe that Casting for Recovery is still one of the few survivorship programs that does not charge its participants or profit from a cancer diagnosis.)

We decided to limit the number of participants to twelve (later expanded to fourteen) so as to ensure an optimum, intimate environment for the participants. The Orvis Company became a founding sponsor, providing multiple sets of waders, boots, and tackle. We sought advice from psychologists, counselors, and oncology experts, and decided to accept women at any age and any stage of cancer, even at the fragile stage four—no matter how distant the cancer diagnosis. For the 2½-day retreat, we developed short tutorials on the basics of fly fishing and incorporated psychosocial components such as an evening gathering, professionally facilitated, where women could share their experiences and resources. We delighted as we planned to provide delicious, healthy meals with flowers on the table and comfortable lodging for the participants at no cost to them so they could feel cared for and a bit spoiled. We wanted to be THERE for them.

On the last morning of the retreat, they got the chance to put on the funny fly-fishing gear, walk to a beautiful body of water with their own private volunteer

guide, and try to catch fish for a few hours. Afterward, there was a celebratory luncheon with awards, cheers, and tears, and the participants left for home that afternoon with new friends and new hope. Their families witnessed their smiling return with surprise and grateful happiness, effectively doubling or tripling the impact of Casting for Recovery's efforts. We called this the Ripple Effect.

It was tremendously moving during our early test retreats to witness how local breast cancer survivors received our love for them as we saw the program model working for the first time. One of our early challenges was finding enough survivors on whom to test it; I remember going around to local physician's offices to distribute our homemade brochures. We were so brand new that people looked at us skeptically; the novel concept seemed somewhat crazy. *What is fly fishing?* We didn't care and pushed on. We rounded up eight or so survivors, talked them into participating (stressing the "free food!"), and held test retreats in Michigan and New York State. NBC News came to film the one in New York, and as the film crew and producers followed us around, interviewing the participants and shooting our every move, we knew we were on to something big. There was a thrill in the air. Everyone felt it, even the network folks. The participants nearly levitated that weekend, and so did we.

We found a graphic artist who created an elegant logo for us; I remember our gasps when we first viewed it, and then, when the first large retreat banner arrived, our silent awe as it was unfurled on the long table. We were real! Gwenn led the long, difficult charge to eventually



*The first Casting for Recovery logo.
Courtesy of Casting for Recovery.*

establish us as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. A board of directors was established—Gwenn became president, and I, vice-president—and we all spent way too much time parsing a two-sentence mission statement, which included the bold vision to eventually launch a self-sustaining Casting for Recovery program, run by volunteers, in every state.

We talked about Casting for Recovery at every opportunity, presented slide-shows, and handed out brochures, seeking to explain our unique idea, spread the word, and convince organizations like the Susan G. Komen Foundation to help us. At a Komen conference in Dallas where we were invited to present, I rode a mechanical bull and line-danced with Komen founder Nancy Brinker while we wore cowgirl hats.

With just us volunteers and no paid staff, the first five years were tough—birth is never easy—but powered by a passionate inner dictum and the determination of a circle of strong-willed, dedicated mothers (and, eventually, fathers), we never gave up. Slowly, year after year we added retreat after retreat

in state after state, somehow scraping up the funds to support them, training our growing corps of new volunteers using our carefully honed, professional retreat model, and then finally hiring our first executive director in 1999.

It fills my heart now to write that the basic program model we invented so many years ago is still in place today in Casting for Recovery's greatly expanded and successful programs in more than forty-one states all across the U.S., a model so brilliant that over time it was adopted by other, newer survivorship programs that also treat illness and trauma with the healing power of nature. At this writing, a little more than two decades after conception, Casting for Recovery has served many, many thousands of women across the United States, an impact that is tripled or more if you factor in the Ripple Effect.

Casting for Recovery was deep, powerful magic from the very beginning, and that magic and its life-altering gifts have only increased in scope and power over the years. It remains the pure, thrilling concept it was at the very beginning when a handful of women sat down in a living room, looked at each other, and said, *Now what?*

That's what love can do.



Casting for Recovery—which celebrated its twentieth anniversary in 2016—enhances the quality of life of women with breast cancer through a unique program that combines breast cancer education and peer support with the therapeutic sport of fly fishing. For more information, visit their website at www.castingforrecovery.org.



The second test retreat was held at Orvis Sandanona in Millbrook, New York, in 1997. It was filmed by NBC and featured on the Today show, bringing sudden but welcome national attention to Casting for Recovery. The author is fourth from left, top row. Photo courtesy of the author.

The Glory Days of the Fly Wallet

MEET ACCESSION NUMBER 1991.028.050. This collection of fly wallets belonged to Robert LaRhett Livingston (1844–1907) and his son, Robert Forsyth Livingston (1886–1950). Robert Forsyth Livingston was a resident of Long Island for most of his life, and his enduring love of water led to a career in the marine insurance industry. He also built sailboats, cabinets, and weather vanes, and was a fisherman right up until his death at the age of 74. As Long Island residents, the Livingstons bought most of their tackle at Abbey & Imbrie. In addition to the fly wallets, their collection includes items from local tackle makers such as Empire City (an A & I trademark), Vom Hofe, Leonard, and Kiffe.



When paper was in short supply, the Livingstons sketched on the interior leather of their fly wallet.

Photos by Sara Wilcox except where noted.



An unfortunate angler hangs his fly in a tree in this humorous piece.



The importance of this collection lies not only in the artistry and creativity of the Livingstons, but also in the fact that they were both discerning lifelong anglers who clearly put much thought into purchasing quality, yet affordable, fishing gear. Although they were not by any means famous people, the Livingston collection is one of the most important artifact groups in the American Museum of Fly Fishing. The items that the two men accumulated over almost seventy years present the student of fly-fishing history with an invaluable look at the kind of tackle and equipment owned by the average angler in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

Not solely about the art, the Livingston wallets showcased some handsome flies as well.





The Livingston sketches range from cartoonish characters to stunning natural landscapes.



Peter Nardini

What makes the fly wallets so significant is that the Livingstons chose to inscribe them with memories from their fishing trips. Everything from the big catch to the inevitable fight with an elm tree was captured with incredibly detailed sketches ranging from the ultra-realistic to cartoon-style figures, all between beautiful vintage flies. The Livingstons even went to such lengths to make paper cutouts of their catches, such as the 1896 one shown at right.

—PETER NARDINI
COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR



Bud Lilly

(13 August 1925–4 January 2017)

WALEN FRANCIS “BUD” LILLY, the prominent fly fisher and conservation advocate from Bozeman, Montana, known in the fly-fishing world as “a trout’s best friend,” died in January at age ninety-one.

Bud was one of the early advocates of catch and release. Like Lee Wulff, he was convinced that a wild trout was too valuable to be caught only once. He pioneered and led many conservation groups in the Yellowstone area, including Montana Trout Unlimited, the Federation of Fly Fishers, and the Montana Trout Foundation. He coined the phrase “the total experience” in his promotion of western fly fishing. This total experience became a way of life for Bud and his family, and it served as a business motto for Bud Lilly’s Trout Shop. No longer was the size or the quality of the day’s catch the most important thing—it was enjoyment of the total experience of the Yellowstone region: rivers, streams, and lake after lake, all nestled under snow-capped mountains, with lots of fresh air and the captivating feeling of being out in it. That was Bud Lilly’s warm approach to our western fly-fishing heritage.

Bud Lilly was born in Manhattan, Montana, in 1925. As a young man, he honed his fishing skills during the Great Depression and delivered his daily catch to hungry townfolk. He also had a great passion for baseball and was offered a chance to play for the Cincinnati Reds. But before his baseball career could begin, Bud was notified that he was to report to the Montana School of Mines in Butte to begin officer training in the Navy V-12 program. He served his country honorably during World War II as a lieutenant junior grade on the USS *General R. M. Blatchford* in the Pacific and Atlantic theaters.

After the war, Bud married Patricia Bennett of Three Forks, Montana, and raised his first three children: Greg, Michael, and Annette. In 1952, Bud purchased the original Trout Shop in West Yellowstone, owned by Charles Borberg. He renamed it Bud Lilly’s Trout Shop and was off to a great start.

I first met Bud in the summer of 1967. I was just out of the army after serving for three years. A lifelong enthusiastic fly fisherman and fly tier, I had saved and planned for this western fly-fishing trip during my military service. Right away, I was very much taken by Bud and his family. Bud had a warm way about him and was always in the shop to help and greet the many anglers who came in for his advice. He remembered the name of every person he met. It was a gift.

Bud ran the Trout Shop for thirty years. He put together a small but very nice tackle catalog and handbook of western trout fishing. In 1969, he offered me a great job working in the shop and as a fly-fishing guide and fly-casting instructor. I stayed for three years, moved on to teach for Fenwick’s fly-fishing schools, and eventually opened my own fly shop. Bud ran the Trout Shop until 1982; his wife Pat passed on in 1984. Bud sold his shop, later married Esther Neufeld, and started to raise two more children, Chris and Alisa.



Bud Lilly. Photograph by Larry Armstrong. Courtesy of Montana State University Special Collections.

After selling the Trout Shop, Bud wrote three books with Paul Schullery: *Bud Lilly’s Guide to Western Fly Fishing* (1987), *A Trout’s Best Friend: The Angling Autobiography of Bud Lilly* (1988), and *Bud Lilly’s Guide to Fly Fishing the New West* (2000). He became even more involved in Montana state conservation issues, as well as with local conservation concerns. He was an active leader in water issues while promoting fly fishing and catch and release. Bud also found time to help start several veterans programs, one being the Warriors and Quiet Waters Foundation, which introduces disabled veterans to the art of fly fishing for trout.

As I finish writing this memory of my friend Bud Lilly, I think about what a gift it is to have known him and become his close friend. This July marks fifty years since I first ventured west to fly fish, met Bud, and was introduced to the total experience. The day before he passed away, I visited and talked to Bud, and I read aloud a letter I’d written to him: “Dear Bud: Just a short note to let you know that I am thinking about you and wanted you to know how much I think of you and wanted to thank you again for giving me the chance to be a fly-fishing guide and in the fly-fishing business in Montana. Most of all I appreciate your friendship and guidance over the many years. Thank you!”

BOB JACKLIN
 JACKLIN’S FLY SHOP
 WEST YELLOWSTONE, MONTANA

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*From Louis Rhead, American Trout-Stream Insects
(New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1916), facing page 170.*

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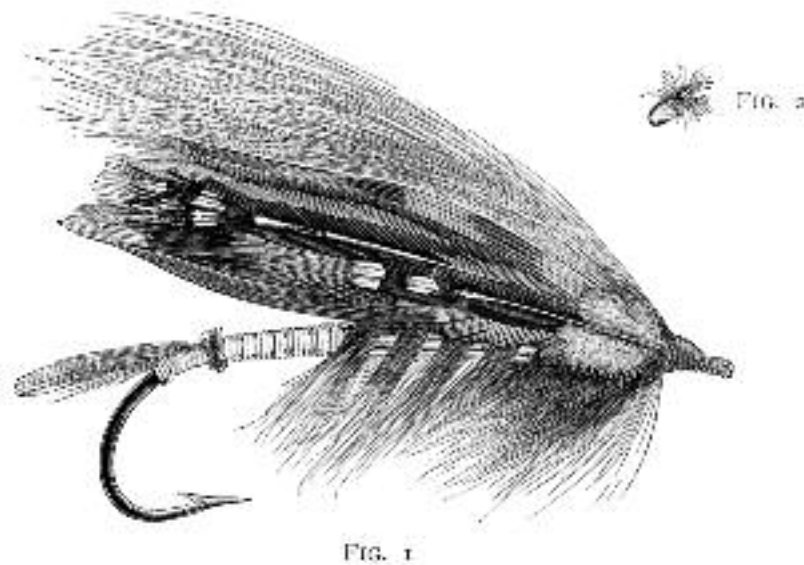
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*From Genio C. Scott, Fishing in American Waters
 (New York: The American News Company, 1875), 483.*



*From The Badminton Magazine of Sports and Pastimes, vol. III
(London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1896), 315.*

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"Fly-Fishing," embellishment engraving for American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine (April 1841), facing table of contents.

Fit to Be Tied Runs into Iron Fly

Sara Wilcox



Paul Sinicki and Kelly Bedford teach a young lady how to tie her first fly.

Sara Wilcox



A gaggle of men gather as Bill Newcombe shows them the art of the dry fly.

Peter Nardini



After finishing his fly, Bill Sylvester looks on as Matt Hart (left) and Michael Page (right) attempt to tie a San Juan Worm blindfolded during the Iron Fly.

Peter Nardini



Nell Bryant ties a fly with tape "mittens" as Piper Price (center) and Genavieve Quetti (left) admire her work.

THE AMFF HOSTED ITS first fly-tying events of the season on February 25. The day began at 2:00 p.m. with Fit to Be Tied, an annual event at which volunteers offer fly-tying demonstrations and lessons to beginners, intermediates, and advanced tiers. Children tied their first fly with Kelly Bedford and Paul Sinicki. Bill Newcombe showcased classic dry flies. Arlington native Bill Sylvester spun deer-hair divers and poppers. And the Vermont Fly Guys gave a tutorial in tying massive flies for pike and muskie.

At 6:00 p.m., the event moved upstairs to the Gardner L. Grant Library, where pizza from Christos' Pizza & Pasta and Otter Creek Free Flow IPA were served. That set the stage for the museum's second Iron Fly Tournament, a standing-room-only event that featured exciting twists and turns: the use of

blindfolds while attempting to tie a San Juan Worm, tying with tape "mittens," and incorporating a piece of a Solo cup into a fly. The event paired novice tiers with experienced ones in a light and laughter-filled evening that is sure to bring a few new anglers to the sport.

The night was dedicated to the late Bill Chandler, a phenomenal fly tier and an even better man. Bill volunteered his time to many AMFF events, including our first Iron Fly last year.

Thanks to Otter Creek Brewing Company, Vermont Fly Guys, Julbo USA, Scientific Anglers, the Orvis Company, Mud Dog Flies, Rock River Rods, Costa Del Mar, Stream and Brook Fly Fishing, Christos' Pizza & Pasta, Berkshire Bank, and the Taconic Hotel for their generous contributions.





Museum News

New York City Reception

AMFF council members and other museum enthusiasts gathered at the home of board member Erik Oken in New York City on January 24. It was a great opportunity for supporters to meet Executive Director Bob Ruley, and Bob enjoyed learning firsthand what makes this museum so special. Receptions like this give our supporters a chance to meet each other and are a perfect way to recognize those who contribute to the museum's ongoing efforts to spread passion for fly fishing. Thank you to Erik and Jennifer Oken for your gracious hospitality; it was a terrific evening! Stay tuned—we plan to visit several other cities in 2017.

Recent Donations to the Collection

Phyllis Herrick of Manchester, Vermont, donated a collection of Bill Herrick's photographs, correspondence, and greeting cards. **John Jennings** of Frenchtown, Montana, sent us a binder scrapbook of articles related to the Bunyan Bug fly and Franz Pott. The **John D. Voelker Foundation** of Lansing, Michigan, gave us a limited-edition reprint of John D. Voelker's *Trout Madness* (Altwerger and Mandel Publishing Co., 1992). And **Jim Heckman** of Manchester, Vermont, brought us a copy of the April 1914 *Field and Stream* (Special Trout Number) issue and a limited-edition 1937 William J. Schaldach etching titled *Sunny Run*.

Martin Barco of Van Nuys, California, sent us a Pflueger Medalist No. 1192 DA fly reel, a South Bend Oren-O-Matic automatic fly reel, and a collection of twenty-two fishing lures. **Richard Tisch** of Rye, New York, donated an Orvis large-arbor Battenkill VI reel, a Hardy Marquis Salmon No. 1 fly reel with an extra spool, a Hardy St. Aidan fly reel with an extra spool, and a set of 121 *American Fly Fisher* journals (for a detailed listing, contact the museum).



Kelsey McBride

Paul Sinicki and Kelly Bedford came by the museum to teach fly-tying classes on March 4. The event focused on novice dry-fly and streamer patterns that are effective on East Coast fish.

Jim Hunt of Williamstown, Massachusetts, donated a hand-tied White Wulff fly tied by Lee Wulff. And **Earl Worsham** of Gatlinburg, Tennessee, gave us collection of thirty-nine salmon flies tied by a Russian fly tier (name unknown) and a "1988–89 Anglers Exchange" patch by Trout Unlimited.

Upcoming Events

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

June TBA

Gallery Program
Canvas & Cocktails

July 1

Gallery Program
Canvas & Cocktails
5:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m.

July 16

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

August 12

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

September 14

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

September 30

Gallery Program
Canvas & Cocktails
5:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m.

December 2

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

Always check our website (www.amff.org) for additions, updates, and more information or contact (802) 362-3300 or amff@amff.org. 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.

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

Bonnie Kretchman



Fred Kretchman has been handcrafting split-bamboo fly rods since 1993. His fly rods are created one at a time in the classic tradition, resembling those made by master craftsmen of generations past. Each rod represents nearly fifty hours of labor, but it is a labor of love that is fulfilled each time a new owner receives a rod and takes it fishing on a favorite stream.

In 1999, Kretchman represented the state of New Hampshire at the Smithsonian Institution's Folk Life Festival in Washington, D.C. For two weeks he displayed his rod-building talents before an estimated 1.5 million visitors. He has demonstrated his skills at various museums, including the American Museum of Fly Fishing and the Fuller Museum of Art in Brockton, Massachusetts. In April 2002, Kretchman received a lifetime achievement award from New Hampshire Governor Jeanne Shaheen.

Kretchman has developed a strong appreciation for the history of bamboo rod making, and his knowledge in the field led him to be chosen in 2006 as the official rod appraiser for Lang's Antique Tackle Auctions (the nation's largest tackle auction house). He enjoys educating the public about the history of bamboo rods and how they are made, and his presentations are popular with museums, local Trout Unlimited chapters, fishing clubs, and other organizations. He is now crafting his classic bamboo rods as a full-time professional in his Kittery Point, Maine, workshop, where he also holds workshops for students who want to build rods themselves.

John Mundt is a former trustee of the American Museum of Fly Fishing and has been a regular contributor to the *American Fly Fisher* since 1991. He was a recipient of the museum's Austin Hogan Award in 1996 for his research on Atlantic salmon fishing in Maine's Penobscot River. A keen interest in the history of the sport and its traditions has led him to some great destinations and into the company of many remarkable people. He is a past president of the Anglers' Club of New York and has served for many years on that club's library committee. John and his family reside in Simsbury, Connecticut, and you can often find him waist deep in the Farmington River during a mayfly hatch.

Patty Swanson



Photo courtesy of Margot Page



Margot Page's three books include the groundbreaking memoir *Little Rivers: Tales of a Woman Angler* (1995, 2015), *Just Horses: Living with Horses in America* (1998), and *The Art of Fly Fishing* (2000) with Paul Ferson. In 1989, she became the first woman contributor to the *New York Times* Outdoors column. Since then, her personal essays have appeared in numerous periodicals and anthologies.

Page, the granddaughter of legendary angling writer and editor Sparse Grey Hackle, worked with renowned outdoors publisher Nick Lyons Books in its early years and as editor of the American Museum of Fly Fishing's quarterly journal, the *American Fly Fisher*. She is a founding member of Casting for Recovery, a national nonprofit organization that provides free retreats around the country focusing on improving quality of life for women with breast cancer through the therapeutic sport of fly fishing. Working now as an independent communications and marketing specialist, she continues to write both nonfiction and fiction from her home in Vermont. Her recently expanded book of essays, *Little Rivers*, chronicles her evolution from reluctant student to passionate angler to married young mother to divorced desk-bound angler.

Weighty Matters

Sara Wilcox



Lefty Kreh's modified Pflueger Medalist reel.

IN A RECENT INTERVIEW, I was asked the definition of fly fishing. Wanting to provide a simple and clear answer, I replied, “The difference is really nothing more than a weighted line propelling a near-weightless lure, rather than a weighted lure pulling a near-weightless line.”

Although technically accurate, my response has been haunting the corners of my mind for the last few weeks.

How on earth can this simple variation in tackle be the impetus behind a significant body of art and literature and—more to the point—a niche museum about to celebrate its fiftieth year of operation and currently suffering from a serious shortage of space for its ever-growing collection?

A walk through our museum or library, a day on the Batten Kill, or a talk with one of our staff or board members will provide insight into this question as the topic moves quickly beyond weighted or unweighted lines into the minutiae of the sport and the many subtle nuances that elevate the *experience* of fly fishing.

As an angler with a fondness for vintage tackle, I was originally drawn to the museum’s large collection of reels and rods, which is admittedly first rate. However, I have recently found myself drawn more and more to the paintings, books, and other accoutrements in our collection that so compellingly tell the other, less obvious chapters of our angling story.

Two of my current favorites in the museum are Lefty Kreh’s customized Pflueger Medalist reel and a painting by the artist Charles DeFeo with a William Cushner shadowbox in the frame.

The reel resonates with me because Lefty’s outstanding book, *Advanced Fly-Fishing Techniques*, includes a photograph of that very reel* and describes how to customize it to increase drag pressure. As a young saltwater angler, I devoured this book and found myself referring back to it frequently when I wondered about leader construction, knots, or flies. I recall propping the book open on the grass in my backyard while I tried to imitate Mark Susinno’s great illustrations of Lefty’s

signature casting style. I also managed to destroy my own Pflueger Medalist with a Dremel tool trying to copy Lefty’s clever upgrades.

The Charles DeFeo painting is simply a wonderful work of both pastoral and sporting art. It has forty-five beautifully tied small, sparse trout flies placed around the canvas whose delicate shadows dance behind them, truly evoking the name *shadowbox* and contributing another intriguing facet to an already excellent painting. The piece achieves that admirable goal of being greater than the sum of its parts. It is not simply a painting about an angler; it is about a stream, a fly tier, a day on the water, and maybe—just maybe—about a large trout lurking somewhere in that stream. Whenever I look at this painting, it sucks me in to the point that I may as well be standing knee deep in that river, casting one of those flies dancing around the edge of the frame to that trout who may or may not be there.

What the DeFeo painting does for me mirrors what we try to do at the museum: offer exhibits that recapture the feelings of being on the water, working with tackle, and relishing time with family and friends. Those greater experiences bring us beyond whether the line moves the hook or vice versa.

This is my first back-cover piece for the journal. I’d like to take the opportunity to encourage all of our stakeholders not only to visit us in person, on our website, and on our Instagram and Facebook pages, but also to reach out to me personally with your ideas, comments, or suggestions for the museum. Drop me a line, weighted or otherwise.

BOB RULEY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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*Note that the photo of Lefty’s reel only appears in the first edition of his book.



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, through a variety of outreach platforms, 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.org to schedule a visit.

SUPPORT

The American Museum of Fly Fishing relies on the generosity of public-spirited individuals for substantial support. If you wish to contribute funding to a specific program, donate an item for fund-raising purposes, or place an advertisement in this journal, contact Sarah Foster at sfoster@amff.org. We encourage you to give the museum consideration when planning for gifts, bequests, and memorials.

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 Kelsey McBride at kmcbride@amff.org to tell us how we would benefit from your skills and talents.

JOIN

Membership Dues (per annum)

Patron	\$1,000
Sustainer	\$500
Contributor	\$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.org.