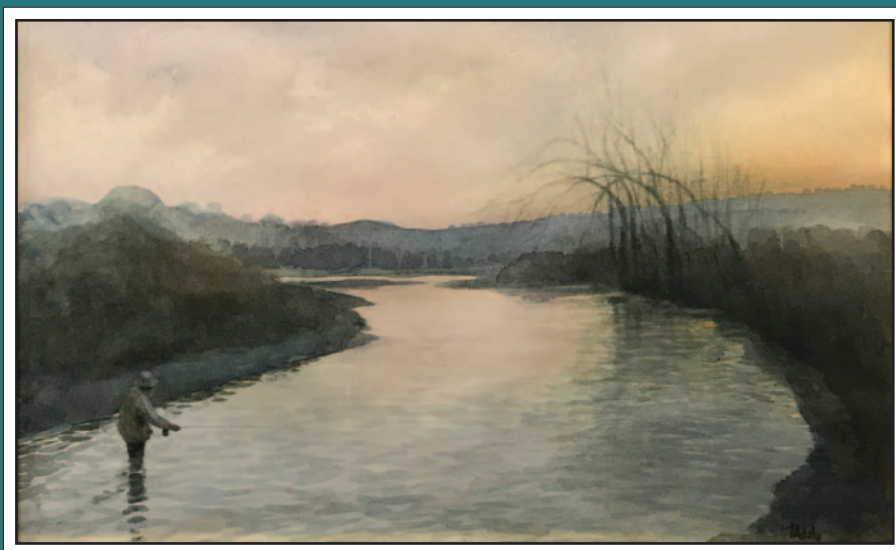


The American Fly Fisher

Journal of the American Museum of Fly Fishing



WINTER 2023

VOLUME 49 NUMBER 1

Traverful



From Genio C. Scott,
Fishing in American Waters
(New York: The American
News Company, 1875), 367.

ALMOST A YEAR ago, this query appeared in my in-box: “Has anyone ever written a definitive history, or at least a fairly detailed account, of the Traver Award, not only about how it came to be . . . but also including a list of which stories won each year, and the names of all the honorable mentions and runners up?” As far as I knew, no one had. So Jody Martin, who had recently received the honor, did.

In 2019, after the folding of *Fly Rod & Reel* two years before, the museum became the publisher of the Robert Traver Fly-Fishing Award, created in 1994 by Nick Lyons and the John D. Voelker Foundation. Martin—with the help of four others who have important connections to the foundation, the award, and its history—gathered and reviewed nearly three decades’ worth of information to present in one place. The result, “The Robert Traver Fly-Fishing Writing Award: An Annotated History,” begins on page 4.

We’re especially pleased to publish that history alongside the 2022 winner of the Traver Award: “A Dog Named Fish,” by Frank Sargeant (page 10). For a list of finalists and a web link to the honorable mentions, turn to page 12, where you will also find a call for submissions for the 2023 award. The deadline for entries is May 31.

The Vermont sporting camp known as Quimby’s, with a claim to being the oldest in the state, has a rich history. Hortense Quimby spent her growing-up summers there, took over the business after the death of her father in 1919, and ran the place until she sold it to a group of guests in 1965. Camp scrapbooks were kept from 1894 through 1938, and, basing much of his research on these, Tim Traver presents a history of the camp and its “sport camp owner, fly-fishing promoter, and conservationist from the wilds of Vermont’s Northeast Kingdom.” In “Hortense Quimby:

Vermont Fisheries Pioneer” (page 14), Traver highlights Quimby’s push for conservation, which necessitated “convincing residents that protecting fish and game and building up the tourism trade was in their best economic and personal interest.”

That Tim Traver’s article should appear in the same issue as the Traver Award is more serendipitous than deliberate. I asked Tim if he was related to the lawyer/novelist. He replied that he used to joke that his own pen name was John Voelker, but the fact that *Traver* was Voelker’s mother’s name was news to him (therefore, the jury’s still out).

One the creators of the Traver Award, Nick Lyons, also contributes to this issue (page 13), remembering his friend, the great Dave Whitlock: “a quiet man with an enormous talent, an artist, fly tier and innovator, writer, and skilled practitioner whose love of fly fishing never flagged.”

Each winter we like to feature a painting from the museum’s collection. In “Water Stories: Two Landscapes by Thomas Aquinas Daly,” Collections Manager Kirsti Scutt Edwards doubles down and offers up two watercolors, one of which, *The Quiet Wiscoy*, can be found on the cover. To read more about Daly and these works, turn to page 2.

In November, the museum headed back to New York City for the first time in three years to host our Heritage Award event. The 2022 award honored the thirtieth anniversary of the film *A River Runs Through It* and featured stories from reunited cast and crew (page 24).

And Curator Jim Schottenham, planning new exhibits, is in search of particular angling artifacts. Maybe you can help. Be sure to take a look at the wish list on page 23.

KATHLEEN ACHOR
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VOLUME 49 NUMBER 1

Water Stories: Two Landscapes by
 Thomas Aquinas Daly 2
Kirsti Scutt Edwards

The Robert Traver Fly-Fishing
 Writing Award: An Annotated History 4
*Jody Martin, David Van Wie, Seth Norman,
 Richard Vander Veen III, and Frederick M. Baker Jr.*

The 2022 Robert Traver Fly-Fishing Writing
 Award Winner:
 A Dog Named Fish 10
Frank Sargeant

The 2023 Robert Traver Fly-Fishing Writing Award:
 A Call for Submissions. 12

In Memoriam: Dave Whitlock 13
Nick Lyons

Hortense Quimby: Vermont Fisheries Pioneer. 14
Tim Traver

Museum Wish List 23

The 2022 Heritage Award:
A River Runs Through It 24

Museum News 26

Contributors. 28

ON THE COVER: The Quiet Wiscoy, watercolor on paper (15 x 20 inches)
 by Thomas Aquinas Daly. From the Trophy Art Collection donated by
 Mike Monier to the American Museum of Fly Fishing. 2019.051.007.

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Water Stories: Two Landscapes by Thomas Aquinas Daly

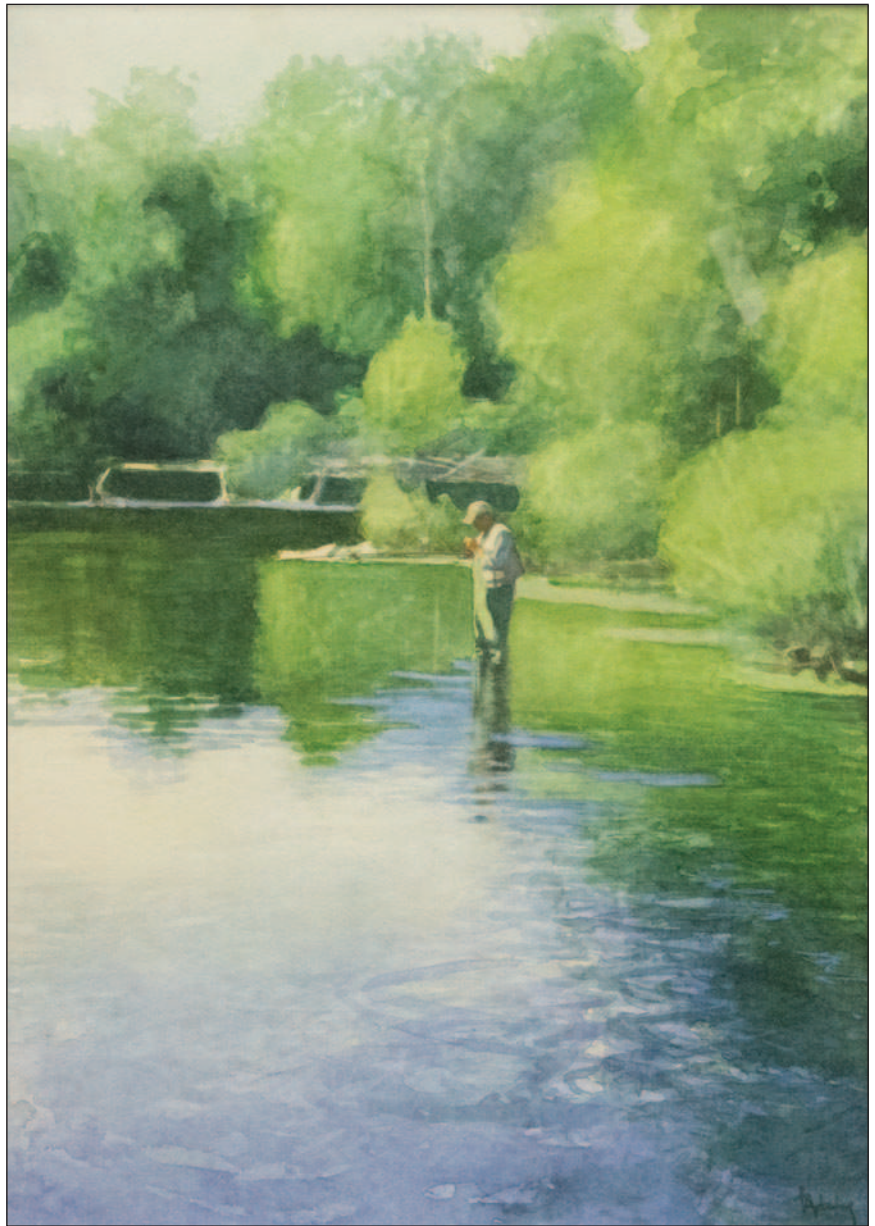
THE ANGLER AND PAINTER retreat to the water for beauty and composition, ritual and contemplation. Water is the setting for both landscape and angling story. When part of the landscape, anglers add scale. When part of the angler's experience, landscape adds story.

Thomas Aquinas Daly creates both landscapes and water stories, having spent much time on the stream and in the artist's studio. Born 27 March 1937 in Albany, New York, Daly received his bachelor of fine arts degree in graphic design from Albright Art School at the University of Buffalo.¹ He spent twenty-three years developing his career as an art director and honing his eye for composition before making a life pivot and devoting his full attention to painting in 1981.²

Watercolor is a fluid and fleeting medium, and Daly works it well. Just as no two days spent on the water are the same, nor are water patterns and the surrounding atmosphere when captured by Daly's brush. The American Museum of Fly Fishing is fortunate to hold two Daly watercolors in the permanent collection.

Some Sunny Day (2012) captures a focused angler, fixing his line along Spring Creek. When he donated the painting to the museum, Daly reflected on the stream.

Spring Creek is one of only two limestone streams in all of New York State, and home to the nation's oldest fish hatchery. From its source in a cluster of rich mineral springs, it runs a scant 2 miles before sliding into the larger Oatka Creek, bound for Lake Ontario. Its consistent cold temperature and extraordinary water quality attracted Seth Green to establish the first fish hatchery in the western hemisphere along its banks in 1864. Twenty years later, a shipment of brown trout eggs



Some Sunny Day, 2012. Watercolor on paper (20 x 25 inches).
From the collection of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.
Gift of the artist. 2012.017.001.



*The Quiet Wiscoy, c. late 1990s–early 2000s. Watercolor on paper (15 x 20 inches).
From the Trophy Art Collection donated by Mike Monier. 2019.051.007.*

from Germany resulted in the first successful introduction of the species to North America. I have been making my way to Caledonia, New York, to fish Spring Creek since 1953. The insect life is abundant and the trout are very difficult to catch—which is how I like it.³

In comparison, *The Quiet Wiscoy* (c. late 1990s/early 2000s) captures a more contemplative angler in the still mist that hangs in the air, trees bending in response to the angler's line. Daly recently wrote about his time spent on this water.

Wiscoy Creek in Wyoming County, New York, has been an integral part of my life and my art for many years. The source of the stream is just over the hill behind our farm. It wends its way through neighboring pastures and cornfields to the Genesee River, which flows north into Lake Ontario at Rochester. The water quality of the stream is outstanding, but the flow can fluctuate significantly with the weather. Since the Department of Environmental Conservation ceased stocking the Wiscoy back in the 1960s, it has supported an abundant population of wild brown and brook trout of all sizes. It hosts all of the mayfly hatches one would expect of a freestone stream, but I particularly enjoy fishing the early-morning Trico hatches in late summer. It requires a delicate presentation along with the challenges of thin water, wary trout, and tiny flies.⁴

Daly's anglers, while secondary to his landscapes, provide more than scale. They anchor the beauty of Daly's compositions, reflect the intricacies of skill and knowledge patiently practiced and cultivated, and convey respect and relationship with place. As the angler becomes a part of the landscape's water story, so too does the landscape become a part of his.

KIRSTI SCUTT EDWARDS
COLLECTIONS MANAGER

ENDNOTES

1. "About the Artist," The Art of Thomas Aquinas Daly, <http://tadaly.com/about.html>. Accessed 3 October 2022.
2. Ibid.
3. Thomas Aquinas Daly, note to the American Museum of Fly Fishing accompanying donation of painting, 12 April 2012.
4. E-mail from Thomas Aquinas Daly to author, 27 September 2022.

The Robert Traver Fly-Fishing Writing Award: An Annotated History

*by Jody Martin, David Van Wie, Seth Norman,
Richard Vander Veen III, and Frederick M. Baker Jr.*

Norris McDowell



*John Voelker fly fishing for brook trout at Frenchman's Pond circa 1990.
Photo courtesy of the John D. Voelker Foundation.*

THE ROBERT TRAVER Fly-Fishing Writing Award is currently the only writing prize given specifically to authors of stories that have as their primary focus the sport of fly fishing. It has been called “the most prestigious outdoor writing award in the nation”¹ and is now administered jointly by the John D. Voelker Foundation and the American Museum of Fly Fishing. So much has been written about the life and times of John Donaldson Voelker, for whom the Traver Award is named, that it seems unnecessary to go into much detail here. But an introduction is at least needed to lay the groundwork for understanding the history of the award that now bears his name—or, more correctly, his pen name. In this article we outline that history, beginning with a brief overview of the life and writings of John D. Voelker, and then list for the first time all winners of the Traver Award since its inception in 1994.

JOHN D. VOELKER

John Voelker (1903–1991) was a successful lawyer, writer, and fly fisherman born and raised in Ishpeming in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. The direct descendant of German immigrants who settled the Upper Peninsula to establish breweries, Voelker was the sixth son of a father who worked as a saloon owner in the village of Ontonagon and learned to speak the Ojibwe (Chippewa) language before English.² Voelker’s mother was a public school music teacher who instilled in him a love of the written word. His father taught him how to fly fish for brook trout in the local streams, a skill that would come to play an increasingly important role throughout Voelker’s life.^{3,4}

John Voelker attended Northern Michigan Normal School (now Northern Michigan University) and then the University of Michigan Law School, where he met his future wife, Grace Taylor. Ap-

parently his start as an attorney was not promising; at one point, based on his poor grades, the faculty at the university advised him to withdraw from the school and apply elsewhere. Voelker requested a reexamination, improved his grades to the point that he could graduate the following year (1928), and later that year passed the Michigan bar. After graduating and passing the bar, Voelker returned to Marquette County and joined a local law firm. In 1930, he moved to Chicago to be closer to Grace (they were married that year and would eventually have four children). He disliked Chicago and all cities immensely (he once remarked that it was “better to starve in Ishpeming than to wear emeralds in Chicago”⁵), so in 1933 he and Grace returned to Ishpeming where he opened his own law office. The next year he was elected prosecuting attorney of Marquette County (the first Democrat to hold that office since the end of the U.S.

Civil War), where he served from 1935 through 1942 and again from 1945 to 1950, while also maintaining his private law practice. A defeat in the polls returned him to private practice in 1950. His practice slowed in the following years, and he ran unsuccessfully for the U.S. Congress in 1954. In 1956, he was appointed associate justice of the Michigan Supreme Court, where he served until 1960. Voelker was a member of the Marquette County Bar Association and served as its president from 1939 to 1941, and he was on several committees of the State Bar of Michigan.⁶

Although interested in writing his entire life (an anecdotal story tells of him writing a story at age twelve titled “Lost All Night in a Swamp with a Bear”), Voelker’s career as a published writer began with the short story “Iron,” which appeared in the February 1934 issue of the *American Scene* (now defunct) while he was working as a county prosecutor.⁸ Fearful that voters might think he was writing novels on company time,⁹ Voelker published his early works under the pen name Robert Traver, adopting the first name of a brother who died of influenza while serving in the Navy in World War I and his mother’s maiden surname. The first of his eleven books written under the name of Robert Traver was *Troubleshooter*, published in 1943.

Whether authoring legal opinions (including dissents, he penned 127 during his brief tenure on the Michigan Supreme Court), courtroom dramas, or fly-fishing stories, Voelker (Traver) was, and still is, nearly universally lauded as a great writer. “You can’t get more than a paragraph into any of Traver’s books without knowing immediately that a stream of pleasing wit awaits you, that behind the words there’s a man with whom to share a stretch of water and, later, a drink and a well-wrought joke, told in the high wry manner of someone who knows that spinning yarns, like fly-fishing, is a kind of legalized deceit.”¹⁰

As a popular writer, he is most remembered for his best-selling novel *Anatomy of a Murder* (1958), based on an actual murder case and later (1959) made into a highly successful motion picture starring James Stewart, Lee Remick, Ben Gazzara, and George C. Scott, with a musical score by the incomparable Duke Ellington.¹¹ The movie is still regarded as one of the best legal thrillers of all time, and it provided Voelker with the financial freedom to devote less time to the law and more time to writing and fishing. Indeed, in late 1959, the same year that the movie appeared, he resigned from the Michigan Supreme Court, telling then-Governor G. Mennen “Soapy” Williams

that “other people can write my opinions, but none can write my books. I have learned that I can’t do both so regretfully I must quit the court.”¹² In early 1960 he stepped down, never to practice law again.

Apart from *Anatomy*, Voelker (as Traver) also published several more books about court cases. One, which he always insisted was his only historical novel, *Laughing Whitefish* (1965), was about a nineteenth-century Ojibwe woman’s legal battle to claim shares in the Jackson Mine promised to her father and became the basis—as well as the initial source of funding—for the Voelker Foundation’s first mission (see below).¹³

Fans of fly-fishing literature know Robert Traver best, however, as the author of *Trout Madness* (1960), *Anatomy of a Fisherman* (1964), *Trout Magic* (1974), and other essays and writings, many of which were compiled (with some previously unpublished works) in Voelker’s twelfth book, the posthumously published *Traver on Fishing: A Treasury of Robert Traver’s Finest Stories and Essays about Fishing for Trout*, edited by Nick Lyons and published in 2001.¹⁴ In his foreword to *In Hemingway’s Meadow* (2009), the first of two published compilations of Traver Award competition fly-fishing stories, Richard Vander Veen III quoted Voelker as saying, “I do most of my writing during the winter months when thick ice covers my favorite fishing spots. There isn’t any good writing; only re-writing. Observe, observe, observe. Then, polish your work.”¹⁵ Vander Veen, who had the honor of knowing Voelker, continued, “His *Anatomy of a Fisherman* and *Trout Madness* have been described as the best fishing books since Izaak Walton’s seventeenth-century *The Compleat Angler*. Voelker’s numerous articles on the joys of fly fishing attest to his great love of the outdoors and established him as the dean of American fly fishing. David Richey of the *Detroit News* wrote, ‘Voelker could put into words the inner thoughts that few trout fishermen can express. He could draw word pictures of rising trout, the slash of a brookie to a fly, and the mystery of what trout fishing is all about.’”¹⁶

In the words of the editors of *Fly Rod & Reel* magazine in 1994, “When John Voelker died at the wheel of his Jeep in March of 1991, at the age of 87, we lost one of the finest wordmasters this sport has ever seen. Few writers equaled his ability to convey the charm and magic of fly-fishing; many think none surpassed him.”¹⁷ A famous soliloquy from his book *Anatomy of a Fisherman* (1964), “Testament of a Fisherman,” has been reprinted so widely that it has become a mantra of sorts for

all who fly fish, adorning the walls of family dens, fishing lodges, and cabins throughout North America.

John Voelker was posthumously inducted into the National Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame in Hayward, Wisconsin, in 1995.¹⁸

THE JOHN D. VOELKER FOUNDATION

The idea of creating a foundation to honor John Voelker and his legacy came from Frederick M. Baker Jr. and Richard Vander Veen III in 1989. Several years before, in 1978, Vander Veen had purchased a copy of Robert Traver’s *Small Town DA* from Larry McMurtry, owner of the store Booked Up in Washington, D.C. Vander Veen, an avid book collector with a special interest in the works of Robert Traver, wrote to Voelker, and by return post received the first of more than 100 handwritten letters exchanged with Voelker, who wrote each in his characteristic green pen on yellow legal paper. Vander Veen and his wife, Sue, met Voelker in 1981. In 1984, Voelker invited Vander Veen to visit him. Vander Veen brought his friend Fred Baker along. The two Lansing attorneys met Voelker at Paulie’s Rainbow Bar in Ishpeming, where Voelker asked them to wait while he played a previously scheduled cribbage match with a miner still red with iron ore dust just coming off his shift. Voelker, who sometimes proclaimed himself the U.P. cribbage champ, came from far behind to win the game on the last hand. Baker recalls:

John’s elation overflowed to produce a further invitation to “come see the pond” [the famous Frenchman’s Pond, a beaver flowage often featured in the Traver stories]. We were struck dumb by our luck and accepted without hesitation. After treating us to a beautiful day of stories, strong old-fashioned, fishing, and exploration at the pond, John saw us off at the Sands crossroad with a wave of his hand and a gentle admonition to “Come again lads, but not too soon.”¹⁹

A few years later, Vander Veen and Baker approached Voelker with the idea of creating an endowment to honor Voelker’s writings and legacy. Voelker was at first less than enthusiastic about creating a foundation named after himself, professing that it made him feel “a wee bit embalmed.”²⁰ After the Voelker Foundation was incorporated in 1989, Voelker donated the right to publish and sell a special edition of *Laughing Whitefish* limited to 300 volumes, which he agreed

to sign. Vander Veen and Baker cosigned a \$10,000 personal loan to pay St. Martin's Press to print it with Voelker's signature bound in, reasoning that, at worst, they would find themselves the owners of 300 books signed by Voelker if they did not sell at the high price necessary to repay the loan and fund the scholarship program that Voelker chose as the foundation's first mission. To their surprise (and that of Grace Voelker, who said, "You boys have got rocks in your head if you think anyone will pay \$200 for a book just because John signed it"²¹), the books sold briskly, allowing them to pay off the note and grant the foundation's first Native American scholarship in 1991.

Early board members included Baker, Vander Veen, literary pioneer Nick Lyons, philanthropist and conservationist John Frey, and the American journalist Charles Kuralt (who referred to John Voelker as "about the nearest thing to a great man I've ever known"²²). The foundation's mission, then and now, is "to pay tribute to John Voelker, the ideals for which he stood, and the values that his life and writings exemplified."²³ According to Baker:

Rich and I asked John to tell us what he wanted us to do with the foundation he had allowed us to create to do "a few good things" with his name. Miraculously, we had cleared enough on the sales of the limited edition of *Laughing Whitefish* that St. Martin's helped us publish (when I called to see if they could produce the limited edition, the editor said, "John built this house—of course we will help") to pay off the personal note that Rich and I had signed to pay for it, and we had some money in the kitty. John was quiet for a moment and then he named three things, in order of importance to him: Create a scholarship to help Native Americans to go to law school, because "right now Indians have to beg to play a little bingo, and they need to be able to demand what is rightfully theirs." Create an outdoor writing prize that will encourage fishermen like him to "spin yarns." And, finally, if there was anything left, he wanted us to help preserve "the environs where trout are found."²⁴

To date, in keeping with Voelker's wishes, the John D. Voelker Foundation has awarded more than thirty Voelker Scholarships to Native American students from Michigan and Wisconsin who want to attend law school, funded primarily through sales of a special edition of *Laughing Whitefish*; has awarded twenty-three Robert Traver Fly-Fishing Writing Awards; and is working with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources,



*John Voelker signing copies of the special edition of *Laughing Whitefish* sold to fund the foundation. Photo courtesy of the John D. Voelker Foundation.*

the City of Ishpeming, Trout Unlimited, and the Anglers of the Au Sable to create the Trout Habitat Program to encourage a love of fly fishing and "the environs where trout are found" by restoring and protecting trout habitat.²⁵

THE ROBERT TRAVER FLY-FISHING WRITING AWARD

In 1994, largely at the urging of Charles Kuralt, noted editor and publisher Nick Lyons worked with new Voelker Foundation and board member John Frey²⁶ to create the writing award that would fulfill John Voelker's original vision. The purpose of the Robert Traver Fly-Fishing Writing Award is "to encourage and recognize distinguished original stories or essays that embody the implicit love of fly fishing, respect for the sport, and the natural world in which it takes place"; submitted stories "must demonstrate high literary values in one or more of these categories: the joy of fly-fishing; personal and philosophic experience; ecology: knowledge and protection of the natural world; humor: piscatorial friendships and fun on the water."²⁷

The award is given to a short work (3,000 or fewer words) of fiction or nonfiction in the English language not previously published commercially in print or digital media. Originally called the Robert Traver Fly-Fishing Fiction Award, the word *Fiction* was changed to *Writing* in 2007 in light of high-quality entries that

were essays or nonfiction.²⁸ The award includes \$2,500 from the Voelker Foundation (increased from \$1,000 in 2000).

The first competition was held in 1994, and it attracted nearly 300 entries from around the globe. In the early years, the bulk of early editing was undertaken by the editors of *Fly Rod & Reel* magazine, notably Jim Butler as one of Traver's earliest and most supportive fans, followed by Paul Guernsey, Joe Healy, and Greg Thomas. These editors for several years received all Traver Award entries, read each, and winnowed them down to their top ten. These were then sent to the judges for review and discussion via conference calls. Early judges included Lyons, Frey, Kuralt, Vander Veen, Baker, and Jim Graves, joined eventually by Ted Leeson, Seth Norman, and other past winners of the award. From 1994 through 2016, the winning stories were published in the summer or annual Reading Issue of *Fly Rod & Reel*, a magazine known for a more literary and philosophical approach to the sport than its contemporaries, which ironically probably helped lead to its sudden demise in 2017. Often other fly-fishing stories were published in the same issue, but it was not always indicated whether these stories arose from the Traver competition. As noted earlier, Kuralt at one point referred to the Traver Award as the most prestigious outdoor writing award in the nation, and the competition and the award have only grown in recognition and prestige over

the years. Two anthologies of Traver-recognized stories have been published to date: *In Hemingway's Meadow* (2009) and *Love Story of the Trout* (2010).²⁹ No award was given in 1999 or 2000; in the words of *FR&R* editor Jim Butler, "Simply put, the well of outstanding fly fishing fiction seems to have run a bit dry of late . . . so we've temporarily suspended our fiction annual so the well can have a chance to fill up again."³⁰ For the same reason, no award was given in 2006.³¹ In 2013, the editors of *FR&R* announced that after awarding more than \$40,000 to Traver-winning writers, the endowment supporting the award was exhausted, and they made a plea for donations to keep the competition afloat.

The end of *Fly Rod & Reel* created something of a vacuum for publication of the Traver Award stories. Writer David Van Wie, in the process of retracing the steps of well-known fly-fishing authors for his book *Storied Waters*,³² had met with Kathleen Achor, editor of the *American Fly Fisher*, at the American Museum of Fly Fishing in Manchester, Vermont. Later, while in Michigan on that same trip, he met Grace Voelker Wood, John Voelker's daughter, and her husband Woody; indeed, the entire *Storied Waters* journey was the result of

an invitation from Grace to visit the Woods in Michigan. In Van Wie's words, "We went to dinner at Rich and Sue Vander Veen's house in Marquette. Rich, who is a founder and president of the [Voelker] Foundation, was lamenting that they were having no luck finding a new partner to administer the Award."³³ Van Wie accepted the challenge, discussed the situation with several possible partners among his contacts in fly-fishing and literary circles, and eventually, with considerable help from the AMFF's Achor, established a partnership between the foundation and the American Museum of Fly Fishing. This partnership ensured that the competition would continue and that future winners would be published in the pages of the *American Fly Fisher* and made available on the museum's website. And so in 2019, after a two-year hiatus, the award was relaunched.

Some of the rules have changed over time. Today, a previous winner may not enter the competition again, but this was not the case in the past, which allowed some excellent writers (e.g., Richard Chiappone, Seth Norman, Pete Fromm, Kent Cowgill, E. Donnell Thomas Jr., and Michael Doherty) to receive recognition more than once. Stories submitted to the

competition today must not have been published previously, but this was not true in past years. Well-written entries that did not win have been variously termed finalists, runners-up, honorable mentions, or given second place in the past; today the categories used are honorable mention and finalist, with the former being published along with the winning entry on the webpages of the AMFF. Additionally, the evaluation process now involves three separate rounds of reviews. There are five reviewers in round one, five different reviewers in round two, and four more in the third and final round, such that fourteen people must independently approve of a story for it to score highly. All entries are treated anonymously in all three rounds. The first published list of all Traver Award winners, honorable mentions, and finalists since the inception of the contest appears on page 9.

GOING FORWARD

Today the Robert Traver Award Committee's goals are essentially unchanged. Announcements for the annual competition are issued each spring on the Voelker Foundation website, in the pages of the *American Fly Fisher*, and elsewhere, and

THE TRAVER AWARD

WHEN JOHN VOELKER died at the wheel of his jeep in March of 1991, at the age of 93, we lost one of the finest wordsmiths this sport has ever seen. Few writers equaled his ability to convey the charm and magic of fly-fishing, many think more compassed him. The fishing titles—*Trout Magic*, *Trout Madness*, *Autumn of a Fisherman*—are familiar to most of us, as is the pen name—Robert Traver. We were even lucky enough to publish a couple of his stories in *Fly Rod & Reel*.

We may have lost the man, but his work still with us. And he and some friends and fishing cronies—who established the John D. Voelker Foundation—have made sure his legacy will continue. The foundation funds a Native American scholarship program, inspired by John's own *Laughing Whitefish*, an historical novel set in the 19th Century, in which a Chippewa woman takes her fight for justice to the Michigan Supreme Court.

Most important for our purposes is the foundation's Robert Traver Fly-Fishing Fiction Award, the first of which is being presented this year. The winner this year is Pete Fromm; in the eyes of the judges (John Frey and Richard Vander Veen III of the foundation, and Nick Lyons and Ted Leeson), and in our eyes too, his "Home Before Dark" rose above more than 100 other entries in meeting the criteria: "A distinguished original work of short fiction that embodies an

implicit love of fly-fishing, respect for the sport and the natural world in which it takes place, and high literary values." Besides the considerable pride that must accompany such accolades, Pete will receive a cash prize and a certificate from the foundation. Congratulations. In the future, we'll publish each year's award winner in the July/October *FR&R*.

Individuals can join the John D. Voelker Foundation and further its good works by ordering the foundation's limited-to-500, slip-cased and signed editions of *Laughing Whitefish* or *Trout Madness* (\$150 each, \$115 of which is tax-deductible), a rare first edition of *Autumn of a Fisherman* (from John's personal library, \$500, \$175 of which is tax-deductible), or an affiliate membership for \$50. All memberships include a subscription to the foundation's newsletter, *The Cup Times*. Write the foundation at PO Box 15222, Lansing, MI 48901-0222.

By the way, in the following pages you also get a bunch of other outstanding fly-fishing fiction, from humor to guffaws, from dysfunctional families to hauntings. Some authors will be familiar, some will be new to you as they were to us. Either way, we're glad to publish their work, along with the fine illustrations by Richard Harrington. Good reading. —the editors

"Home Before Dark" is part of my collection, *King of the Mountains*, which will be published this fall, along with the paperback edition of *Indian Creek Chronicles*, winner of the Pacific Northwest Bookellers 1994 Book Award. I used to do a lot of night floating, sometimes for her, mostly occasionally.

—Pete Fromm



Home Before Dark

PETE FROMM

MY STEPHEN, Gordon, was already in the cafe when I got there, and he poured coffee for me as I sat down. He asked my cream and sugar without asking, though sugar was something I'd given up a long time ago. I stared at him while he stirred the cup. We'd had dinner together the night before, with our wives, but I'd spent the night watching Sandy, my wife, his mom, worried about how she was holding up.

We ordered a quick breakfast and, because I couldn't think of anything to say, I asked, "When's the last time you went fishing?"

"Years ago. Monique isn't much of an outdoorsman. I wish she would have come, though. She was pretty nervous last night, but you'd like her if you got to know her."

"I'm sure of that," I said conversationally, but Gordon gave me a quick glance, a questioning look I remembered. "If you picked

her to stick with you must be a good one," I said, and it sounded as false as it was.

Gordon said, "You're the one who picked well."

"I tried to get your mom to come along. I told him, 'But she thought it would be nice if just the two of us went.'"

"Oh! Time's a'wastin'."

I nodded, though Sandy had stayed home thinking I might get some answers out of him alone. We looked away from each other as the waitress set the food down. After she left, I took a deep breath but wanted only asking something harmless, like "What have you been doing?" or "When'd you and Monique meet?"

And Gordon, responded with the same light chatter. We argued over the bill when it came, and I didn't mention his mother again until we were taking the coffee off the car, when I explained that Sandy and I had run the shuttle the night before. After we settled

the canoe into the river Gordon stood beside it, staring out over the flow of dark water. The autumn dawn was late, and it was just growing light. Scattered flocks of geese, straggled by overcast, barely visible, honking miserably. The air was much colder than it had been the day before, water this ice rimming the stones against the bank.

"Thanks for showing this to me again," Gordon said, shivering, huddling deeper into his coat. If it'd been years and years ago, I would've run my hands up and down his sales, quick and hard, chasing away goose bumps. But I just stood quietly on the bank and watched him shiver.

"Ready?" I asked.

"And waiting," he answered, his old line. I pulled him from the stern, and Gordon was quick to swing out and begin casting. But he was scowling, big, poorly defined, city things, and it was nearly impossible for him



to hold his line. He laughed about it, and I asked if he wanted my fingerless gloves. He shook his head without turning around and said, "I've just got to toughen up is all. I've forgotten about so much." He took off his mittens then and started casting for real. I'd forgotten how graceful he was, and I stopped paddling to watch him quarter the nymph upstream and work it across the current.

"You haven't forgotten a thing," I said.

"That's not what I expected to hear from you," he responded. He did turn then, his old challenging smile held across his face.

"Forgotten a thing about fishing?"

He waited for me to go on, his smile starting to quaver the way it did when he was as much as a kid, trying so hard to show he didn't care. I watched him turn away, picking up his rod, and I told myself again that I was glad to see him, glad to see him hug his

mother again. But I also knew I'd never be able to forget how he'd just disappeared, how he'd left her wondering for six years. During those years I'd never doubted that we'd see him again, and I kept reassuring Sandy, whispering things about adolescent rage, the difficulties of leaving the nest, the whole time picturing that same smile of his, wondering if I'd be able to keep from punching it from his face when he reappeared.

He had a smile then, and I've rarely been so happy to see one. His face lit up, and he tilted the rod tip just quickly enough to set the hook without pulling it away. The trout was a native, a cutthroat, not too big, and it gave up quickly. Gordon dipped his hand into the icy water, freeing the hook, releasing the fish just as I said, "Awful nice pan-fate."

He looked down into the water. "I never liked killing them," he said.

"What are you talking about? We're

stivers of trout. Your mom loves them."

"That was before I knew there were so many ends to things."

Gordon looked at me, and I was shocked by the sterling familiarity of his face. I remembered the odd gold bursts flicking his brown eyes. When he was a boy they'd bothered me. They were a flaw, I thought, somehow orte. They were too light, like sheep's eyes.

Suddenly he squinted, and I knew he was smiling his real smile. "I got the first. The biggest. The smallest. The most. I'm killing you in every category."

I'd forgotten the old contest we'd developed in the years I'd tried to gentle into his father's place. "Give me time," I said, and Gordon stopped in his slack and cast again.

W'e both fished as much as we could, but nothing else struck before the river

Continued on page 59

The first Traver Award winner, "Home Before Dark" by Pete Fromm, as it appeared in the July/October 1994 issue of *Fly Rod & Reel*.

submissions are accepted through the end of May. The closing thoughts of Vander Veen in the foreword to *In Hemingway's Meadow* are still fresh today: "We challenge you, our readers, to join us in contributing to the Traver Award Endowment Fund so that the award is, in fact, perpetual" and to help "thereby protect the environs where trout are found, for future generations."³⁴

(project archivist), John D. Voelker Papers: A Collection at the Central Upper Peninsula and Northern Michigan University Archives, <https://archives.nmu.edu/voelker/papers.html> (accessed 25 July 2022); and the official website for the John D. Voelker Foundation, <https://www.voelkerfoundation.com/> (accessed 5 April 2022).

7. Shaul, "Backwoods Barrister," 84.

8. Richard Vander Veen III, "John Donaldson Voelker (Robert Traver) Biographical Essays and Bibliography," unpublished manuscript, sent to J. Martin and other authors by Vander Veen as an e-mail attachment on 26 April 2022. Information about the story "Iron" and "Lost All Night in a Swamp with a Bear" is found on page 40 of Vander Veen's manuscript. In "Some Reflections on the Rebirth of Danny" (Robert Traver, *Danny and the Boys: Being Some Legends of Hungry Hollow* [Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1951]), Traver writes, "Before I learned to spell cat without a k I began spinning yarns about the place and its heady mixture of peoples, once even winning a prize in sixth grade for a story entitled, of all things, 'Lost All Nite Alone in a Swamp with a Bare.' The prize was three green apples grown in the yard of our teacher, sweet, patient Miss Fisher . . ." (7).

9. Shaul, "Backwoods Barrister," 84.

10. J. Peters, "Robert Traver: Anatomy of a Fisherman," <https://kirkcenter.org/essays/robert-traver/>, paragraph 4.

11. "John D. Voelker," Northern Michigan University, Anatomy of a Murder 50th Anniversary, <https://nmu.edu/voelker/index.htm> (accessed 4 April 2022); and "John D. Voelker," Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_D._Voelker (accessed 21 July 2022).

12. Shaul, "Backwoods Barrister," 85.

13. Robert Traver, *Laughing Whitefish* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965).

14. Robert Traver, *Trout Madness: Being a Dissertation on the Symptoms and Pathology of This Incurable Disease by One of Its Victims* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1960); Robert Traver, *Anatomy of a Fisherman* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964); Robert Traver, *Trout Magic* (New York: Crown, 1974); and Robert Traver, *Traver on Fishing: A Treasury of Robert Traver's Finest Stories and Essays about Fishing for Trout*, edited by Nick Lyons (Guilford, Conn.: Lyons Press, 2001). The last, published posthumously, is an anthology of short stories that had appeared in other anthologies and magazines, plus two profiles of Traver (one by Norris McDowell; one by Rich Vander Veen and Fred Baker).

15. Richard F. Vander Veen III, foreword, in Joe Healy, ed., *In Hemingway's Meadow: Award-Winning Fly-Fishing Stories* (Rockport, Me.: Fly Rod & Reel Books, 2009), v.

16. Quoted in Vander Veen, foreword, *In Hemingway's Meadow*, v.

17. "The Traver Award," *Fly Rod & Reel* (July/October 1994, vol. 16, no. 4), 34. Names of the individual editors who penned that article are not given.

18. "John D. Voelker," National Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame, <https://www.freshwater-fishing.org/inductees-list->

gallery. Accessed 12 April 2022.

19. Personal recollection of Fred Baker Jr., as recounted in an e-mail to Jody Martin and the other authors on 20 February 2022.

20. Baker and Vander Veen III, "John D. Voelker: Michigan's Literary Justice." This quote appears in paragraph 15 online: <https://www.michbar.org/journal/Details/Michigan-Lawyers-in-History--John-D-Voelker-Michigans-Literary-Justice?ArticleID=74>.

21. Personal recollection of Fred Baker Jr., as recounted in an e-mail to Jody Martin and the other authors on 20 February 2022.

22. Shaul, "Backwoods Barrister," 86.

23. The John D. Voelker Foundation, "About," <https://www.voelkerfoundation.com/about/>.

24. Personal recollection of Fred Baker Jr., as recounted in an e-mail to Jody Martin and the other authors on 20 February 2022. The quote "the environs where trout are found" originally comes from Robert Traver, "Testament of a Fisherman," *Anatomy of a Fisherman* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1964), 10.

25. The John D. Voelker Foundation, "About," <https://www.voelkerfoundation.com/about/>.

26. Michigan's John Frey is a well-known philanthropist and conservationist. See the website of the philanthropic Frey Foundation at www.freyfdn.org, where John Frey is currently a trustee emeritus.

27. The John D. Voelker Foundation, "Traver Award," <http://www.voelkerfoundation.com/traveraward/>. Accessed 21 July 2022.

28. As described on page 25 of the November/December 2007 (vol. 29, no. 5) issue of *Fly Rod & Reel* magazine by "The Editors" (no names listed).

29. Joe Healy, ed., *In Hemingway's Meadow: Award-Winning Fly-Fishing Stories* (Rockport, Me.: Fly Rod & Reel Books, 2009). Joe Healy, ed., *Love Story of the Trout: Award-Winning Fly-Fishing Stories, Volume 2* (Rockport, Me.: Fly Rod & Reel Books, 2010).

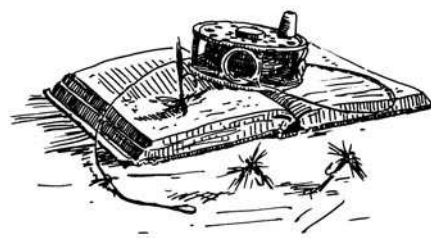
30. Quoted in Paul Guernsey, "Editor's Notes: A Traver Time-Out," *Fly Rod & Reel* (November/December 2006, vol. 28, no. 5), 2.

31. Ibid.

32. David A. Van Wie, *Storied Waters* (Guilford, Conn.: Stackpole Books, 2019).

33. David A. Van Wie, "Return to Frenchman's Pond," Watch Your Backcast, posted 6 August 2019, <https://www.watchyourbackcast.com/post/2019/08/06/return-to-frenchmans-pond>. Accessed 22 April 2022.

34. Vander Veen III, *In Hemingway's Meadow*, vii.



ENDNOTES

1. Quote attributed to American journalist Charles Kuralt on the website of the John D. Voelker Foundation (<https://www.voelkerfoundation.com/>) under the heading "About," accessed on 21 July 2022: "Our late Board member, Charles Kuralt, described this as the most prestigious outdoor writing award in the nation." The quote also appears in Tom Kirvan's article "Alive and Well: Supreme Court Official Keeps Book in Spotlight," *Detroit Legal News* (16 January 2008), <http://www.legalnews.com/macomb/1401223/>. Accessed 21 July 2022.

2. Frederick M. Baker Jr. and Richard Vander Veen III, "John D. Voelker: Michigan's Literary Justice," *Michigan Lawyers in History, Michigan Bar Journal* (May 2000, vol. 79, no. 5), 530–31; <https://www.michbar.org/journal/Details/Michigan-Lawyers-in-History-John-D-Voelker-Michigans-Literary-Justice?ArticleID=74>. Accessed 21 July 2022.

3. Richard D. Shaul, "Backwoods Barrister," *Michigan History* (November–December 2001, vol. 85, no. 6), 84–87; <https://www.superiorreading.com/pdf/anatomy.pdf>. Accessed 21 July 2021.

4. Jason Peters, "Robert Traver: Anatomy of a Fisherman," The University Bookman, <https://kirkcenter.org/essays/robert-traver/>. Accessed 21 July 2022.

5. Baker and Vander Veen III, "John D. Voelker: Michigan's Literary Justice." Quote about Ishpeming and emeralds appears in paragraph 6 online: <https://www.michbar.org/journal/Details/Michigan-Lawyers-in-History-John-D-Voelker-Michigans-Literary-Justice?ArticleID=74>.

6. Additional details of the personal life and legal career of John Voelker are found in the following articles: Baker and Vander Veen III, "John D. Voelker: Michigan's Literary Justice"; Shaul, "Backwoods Barrister"; Peters, "Robert Traver: Anatomy of a Fisherman"; Kirvan, "Alive and Well: Supreme Court Official Keeps Book in Spotlight"; Frederick M. Baker Jr., "An Anatomy of *Anatomy of a Murder*," *Midwestern Miscellany, The Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature* (Fall 2009, vol. 37), 27–41; G. William Fowler, "The Fishing Notes of John D. Voelker, Michigan's Mightiest Piscator," *The American Fly Fisher* (Fall 2016, vol. 42, no. 4), 2–17; "John D. Voelker," Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_D._Voelker; Stephen H. Peters

Recipients of the Traver Award

1994

Pete Fromm, "Home Before Dark"

Finalists:

Scott Waldie, "Take Two"

Mallory Burton, "The Virtual Angler"

Kent Cowgill, "Day of Mourning"

Seth Norman, "Amazing Grace & a Caddis Case"

David S. Warren, "Doc Howe"

1995

E. Donnell Thomas, "Ephemerella"

1996

Harry Humes, "Ghost Pain"

Finalist:

Joel Parkmann, "Uncle Sergei's Madness"

1997

Gary Whitehead, "For Keeps"

Finalists:

Peter Fong, "Letter from Yellowstone"

Kent Cowgill, "Spanish Fly"

Seth Norman, "Hobard's Gate"

Thomas McIntyre, "Greenwell's Glory"

1998

Seth Norman, "Edith's Rule"

Finalists:

T. Felton Harrison, "An Afternoon on Cape San Blas"

David S. Warren, "Looking for Charlie's Hat"

Pete Fromm, "Blood Knot"

1999, 2000

No award given (see text)

2001

Kate Small, "Lateral Lines"

2002

Richard Chiappone, "Opening Day"

Runners-up:

Two runners-up are mentioned on page 36 of the issue, but the link referred to (www.flyrodreel.com) no longer exists.

2003

Keith McCafferty, "Autumn Hope"

Runner-up:

Lyman Yee, "The Headlock Manifesto"

2004

Bil Monan, "The Surrender"

2005

Rhett Ashley, "Tex, Mex, and the Amazons"

Runner-up:

E. Donnell Thomas Jr., "Fortune Cookie"

2006

No award given (see text)

2007

Jeff Day, "In Hemingway's Meadow"

Finalists:

Donald J. Goodman, "Lives of Fly Rods"

Josh Greenberg, "Shake and Float"

Michael Baughman, "Time to Kill"

2008

Michael Doherty, "The Shining Path"

Second place:

Maximilian Werner, "Angler's Ball"

2009

Pete Fromm, "The Land Beyond Maps"

Second place:

R. C. Hooker, "The Secret Life of"

Walter Troutty"

2010

Kent Cowgill, "Two Men in a Museum"

Second place:

John Larison, "A Way Home"

Honorable mention:

Michael Doherty, "The Marble Run"

2011

Michael Doherty, "Seven Great Flies for the Boston Metropolitan Area"

2012

Dave Karcynski, "Awake in the Moonlight: Notes at Hex Time"

2013

Richard Chiappone, "Requiem for a River Bend"

2014

Jerald Hamza, "Prose to Poetry, or Dance to the Music"

2015

E. Donnell Thomas Jr., "Rubies and Amethyst"

2016

Kent Cowgill, "La Bouchon Souris"

2017, 2018

No award given (see text)

2019

Jimmy Watts, "A Wet World That Burns"

Honorable mentions:

Richard Chiappone, "The Honeymooners"

Michael Doherty, "Les Poissons Toxiques"

Finalists:

Cotten Braybrooks, "Osprey, the Fisherman"

Bob Linsenmen, "The Last Brook Trout"

Kristin Millgate, "The Wading Game"

Ben Moyer, "At the Heart of the Hollows"

Frank Sargeant, "Some Fish Make Rivers"

Tim Schulz, "The Manistee River Waltz"

S. Paige Wallace, "Learning to Mend"

2020

Alexander Benoit, "Blue Lines"

Honorable mentions:

David Gray-Clough, "The Best Fish I Ever Caught"

Michael Thane, "Grace Note"

Finalists:

Trigg White, "Caddis Flats"

Robert H. Miller, "Homecoming"

Jon Tobey, "The Mestruot"

Anthony Lavers, "A Small Act of Reverence"

2021

Jody Martin, "Simon's Daughter"

Honorable mentions:

Mike Chalmers, "Solitude"

Paul Kennebeck, "The Lower Squall"

Paige Wallace, "Pretending to Listen"

Finalists:

Andrew Harris, "Eider in the Silence"

Jody Martin, "Fly Fishing with God"

Richard Landerman, "A Priest and a Promise"

Jim Bale, "Metamorphosis"

2022

Frank Sargeant, "A Dog Named Fish"

Honorable mentions:

Sarah Holly Bryant, "Vanity Plates"

Paul Kennebeck, "Western Waters, 2022"

Finalists:

David Gray-Clough, "The Leather Shop Man"

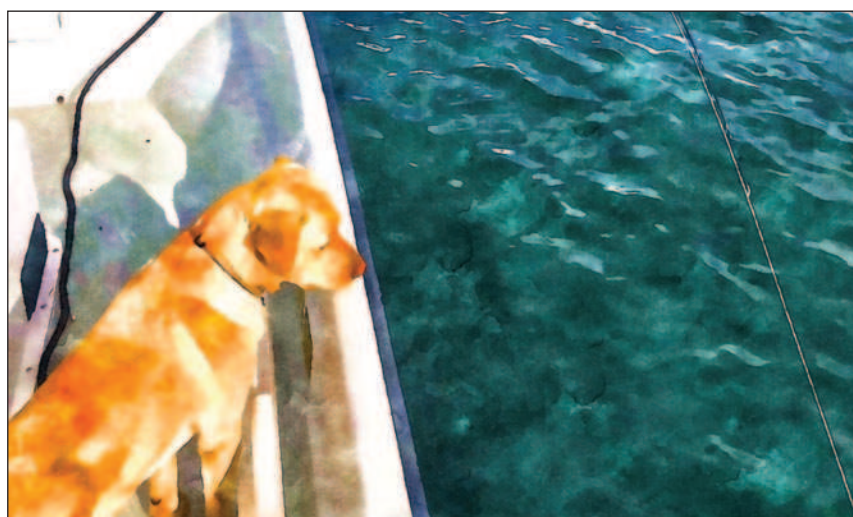
Richard Landerman, "How Bobby Crump's Trout Won the Bronze Star"

Katie MacDonald, "How Many Anglers . . ."

Chris O'Byrne, "The Wedding Planner"

A Dog Named Fish

by Frank Sargeant



Photograph by Justin Gonsalves and artistically interpreted by David Van Wie.

DOGS ARE NOT HUMAN, I KNOW.
They're much more than that.
A human can't smell a tarpon at a hundred yards. Or
know your heart better than you know it yourself.

My Uncle Bob, his skin blackening like an overripe banana,
left eye sagging like the broken shutter on his old house, died
on April Fool's Day.

It was no joke.

He had been "failing" for a long time, as we say in the Midwest.
When you fail long enough, you pass.

There is no remediation class or summer school, apparently.

Bob had never seen a tarpon. Adirondack trout were his
game—the one he taught me—and he would have scorned a
12-weight had he ever seen one.

"F'n broomstick," he would have growled.

But he surely would have loved being on the bow with the
big rod that morning at Chassahowitzka Point.

We drift on water clear as air, 4 feet above a magic carpet of
turtle grass and basket sponge where baby pinfish flash like sil-
ver dollars. Air so calm the splash-plunk of mullet—the fish
that wishes to fly—is clear from a quarter mile off.

The planet spins the rising sun into view, a fat egg yolk ris-
ing out of the sea.

Pistol shrimp fry bacon below the hull.

Why didn't I eat breakfast?

A ray pops out of the sand and scoots off drunkenly, an
astonished remora trying to catch up.

No tarpon for an hour. Who cares? Where would we rather
be? Here is the answer to the question we forget to ask.

An osprey goes by close enough to touch with the push
pole, a writhing mullet in its claws. I can see the eye of the fish,
his dream of flying finally realized.

But now he knows the cost.

At least the osprey is happy. Her wings squeak lightly, as if
they need oil.

If I had a pin, I could hear it drop.

We are the painted skiff upon the painted ocean.

All that suddenly is forgotten when Fish stiffens up into that
little half-point Labs do on game, looking south.

And a tarpon rolls a hundred yards out.

Behind it comes a porpoising silver school longer than a
football field.

It is April 1.

Fish was Bob's dog to start, one in a long line of yellow Labs
that had ridden in his disgraceful pickups to an assortment
of grouse and woodcock coverts, steelhead pools, and occa-
sional night trips to posted streams where monster browns
were rumored. But when Bob saw the final sundown was not
far off, he called me to the house and gave the six-month-old
pup to me.

"She'll make a good dog if you raise her right," he told me.
"No damned shock collars!"

It was the last time I saw him.

I never needed a shock collar for Fish. She was a natural—
but from the start she liked fish better than feathers.

The tarpon were coming fast riding the rising tide, which
runs south to north here.

It was hard to get hooked up on those dead-calm mornings
because they could see you as well as you could see them, but
I liked those mornings best because you could watch every
stroke of the tail and roll of the eye.

You could also hear them coming, even if you weren't look-
ing their way, with their rolling gulps, baloop, a sound no tar-
pon angler ever forgets.

These fish, some of them as old as I am, should know better than to eat a ball of feathers on a hook, but they do it—sometimes, if you're quiet enough and careful enough and quick enough.

Other times they eyeball it like a bomb specialist looking for the detonator.

I was a bit slow to start stripping line off the reel, and Fish rolled her eyes at me and gave a little huff that seemed to say, "They're right there, you putz—cast!"

Bob would have been proud.

Tarpon are the wrong fish in the wrong place, which is what makes them so right for fly fishing.

Giants like these should be swimming with a thousand feet of water under their bellies. Maybe they were when the sea began a hundred miles west of here at the shelf. Now they travel in the shallows at the edge, gulping air. Give or take a few million years, and they'll be crawling on their fins in the mangroves. For now they're in the perfect zone for fly fishers.

And their dogs.

I push out a cockroach pattern on a hook big enough to choke a respectable steelhead. It drops 20 feet in front of the lead fish. Five little twitches make the feathers kick.

Most of the time, the fish are just a little too far. Or a little too deep.

Or a little too damned persnickety, Bob would have said of a brown turning up its nose at his hopper.

Or "hoper" as he called it.

Most of the time your hoppers fail.

But sometimes they don't.

This fish adjusts her route, glides up to the fly, and inhales.

Strip-set 3-4-5 times, pulling the hook into the right corner of her jaw as she turns left. The massive chrome body flashes, a plate-glass mirror catching the morning sun.

Five heartbeats later she's a hundred yards into the backing and comes up in that first furious, world-splitting jump higher than my head, spitting diamonds, and Fish is going crazy with that big, deep bark that everybody within earshot understands; we are hooked up.

Tarpon should perhaps be a controlled substance. They are a pharmaceutically pure addiction.

At least for the first ten minutes.

This one did the usual tarpon thing, an elephant attempting ballet, giving me a chance to examine the bare spool of the reel several times.



Then we settle down to the grunt work, rod tip down, pull her backward—watch that crab trap! Pull and reel and pull and reel.

This is the long part. The part when you remember what you're out there to forget.

We lived in a stilt house a couple miles up Mason's Creek, a hovel that I had cobbled together enough to be habitable by man and dog, though apparently not by women for any extended period. Who knew they were so sensitive to a little leak in the roof, a little sulfur water in the faucets, a large dog sleeping in the bedroom?

When the tarpon run was not on and I had no charters, which was frequent, I was a carpenter's helper, an electrician's apprentice, a store clerk—and now and then a writer, though the checks were spaced almost as widely as the comings and goings of the women.

Fish celebrated with me when a new lady arrived and consoled me when she left. She was noncommittal on most.

Except for one.

One day she stopped eating. When a Lab stops eating, you know they are in deep trouble. Or have an ulterior motive.

I took her to the only vet in Homosassa.

The doctor was a slender woman who wore no makeup but had deep blue eyes into which you could fall—and drown.

Castor oil was the prescription. For the dog, not for me—though I was immediately stricken.

Fish pooped out the problem that night—a mullet head the size of a golf ball.

Fish was better but I was bewitched.

I called the vet and asked her to go fishing.

Six months later she moved in. She had grown up with sulfur water. And she didn't mind a dog sleeping in the bedroom.

"This could be the one," I told Fish.

"Humph," said Fish.

A tarpon season later the vet—Callie—was still there. Fish switched allegiances, riding to the clinic with her every day except in tarpon season. And Callie caught her first fish on fly.

"I could get used to this," she said.

So could I. We married.

Shortly after that we were pregnant. (She more than me.)

Robert would be the name if it were a boy—she was good with that.

"The present is a present," Bob frequently said. "The future is a gift."

Things went well for six months.

We bought a crib. A bassinet. A rocking chair. Everything was right.

"There's something wrong," she said one morning.

We fail until we pass.

Three hours later, our baby was gone.

How can you love something you never had so much? You think it hurts as much for you as for her, but of course it doesn't. The life was not inside you.

"We could try again," I suggested a few months later.

"No," she said. "This was a mistake."

"OK, we can wait longer," I said.

"No," she said, "Not that. This." Her hands enveloped my world.

Two weeks later she moved out.

The present is a present.

Fish never got over it. She searched the house at all hours, found nothing but a leftover hairbrush, a worn-out shoe. She watched the road at 6 every night, looking for Callie's car to pull in.

Sometimes I did, too.

Time flies when you're having fun. And when you're not.

The fish began to tire—she was not a giant as giants go, maybe a buck twenty-five, as tarpon guides like to say, and before long I could stop her surges, then pull her backward by palming the reel.

Thirty minutes later I stuck my thumb in her jaw, no small trick solo but I had wasted a lot of years chasing these fish.

She was warmer than the air—the water was 85 degrees—and her hard side felt almost mammalian. The dark eye, large as a tennis ball, turned to look into mine.

Terror and defeat and sadness in that look.

Now she knows.

You fail until you pass.

It almost makes you want to quit catching them.

But not quite.

Fish came up front and gave her that little nip on the nose she always had to do, sort of counting coup, perhaps, before we sent her on her way.

She headed north, trying to catch up with her school. By July, she'd be a hundred miles offshore spawning. And we'd be alone in the stilt house on the river.

The tarpon seasons came and went. I finished the house, piped in city water from the street. Got a real job, with a steady paycheck.

Twenty-eight dog years flew by.

And Fish lost her appetite, again.

This time castor oil was not the cure.

Nothing was.

First she couldn't see the fish, then she couldn't smell them. Finally, she stopped caring if they were coming or not and simply slept under the console.

One morning she couldn't make it into the boat. I lifted her in. Then back out, and we went to see Callie, still the only vet in town.

"I'm so sorry," she said. "It's called glioblastoma. Maybe three months."

Dog years are no joke.

"Help us?" I asked.

"You know I will," she said.

We launched at first light the next morning, and Callie brought a syringe.

"Pentobarbital, it's called," she said. "It won't be painful."

She was very wrong about that.

I lifted Fish aboard. She seemed a bit better, seeing Callie there. But she went to sleep as soon as the motor started.

The water on the point was flat when we got there, the tide rising, south to north, mullet splash-plunking inshore.

And out just on the edge of the flat, the glint of tarpon rolling in the early sun, baloop.

Fish raised her head, half wagged her tail, and went back to sleep.

I held her in my lap on the bow deck.

The needle went into her left front leg, in a vein just beneath the skin.

She looked in my eyes, then Callie's, and died.

"I have to do this a lot," Callie said, but she was crying, too, slipping an arm around my shoulders. We sat there in the boat and hugged and cried like children for ten minutes.

A pair of tarpon slid by, in easy range.

"They're right there, you big putz," Fish would have said. "Cast!"

We held each other, and watched the fish swim off.

The present is a present. The future is a gift.



THE 2022 ROBERT TRAVER FLY-FISHING WRITING AWARD: FINALISTS

The 2022 competition drew a field of eighty-six stories and essays. Entries were judged anonymously, resulting in seven finalists. In addition to the winner, judges bestowed honorable mention recognition on two entries:

"Vanity Plates" by Sarah Holly Bryant of Dorset, Vermont

"Western Waters, 2022" by Paul Kennebeck of Denver, Colorado

These three stories can be found on the museum website at www.amff.org/traver-winners-2022.

The other four finalists were:

"How Bobby Crump's Trout Won the Bronze Star" by Richard Landerman of Sandy, Utah

"The Leather Shop Man" by David Gray-Clough of North Yorkshire, United Kingdom

"How many anglers..." by Katie MacDonald of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada

"The Wedding Planner" by Chris O'Byrne of Mulberry, Florida

THE 2023 ROBERT TRAVER FLY-FISHING WRITING AWARD: A CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The John D. Voelker Foundation and the American Museum of Fly Fishing are pleased to announce that submissions are now being accepted for the 2023 Robert Traver Fly-Fishing Writing Award (the Traver Award). The award is named after Robert Traver, pen name for the late John Voelker, author of *Trout Madness*, *Trout Magic*, *Anatomy of a Fisherman*, the 1958 best seller *Anatomy of a Murder*, and the historical novel *Laughing Whitefish*.

The Traver Award, which includes a \$2,500 prize, was created in 1994 to encourage and recognize "distinguished original stories or essays that embody the implicit love of fly fishing, respect for the sport, and the natural world in which it takes place." The Traver stories and essays must demonstrate high literary values in one or more of these three categories:

- The joy of fly-fishing: personal and philosophic experience
- Ecology: knowledge and protection of the natural world
- Humor: piscatorial friendships and fun on the water

The 2023 Traver Award will be granted for the winning short work of fiction or nonfiction essay in the English language not previously published commercially in print or digital media. "Short work" means 3,000 words or less. An entry fee of \$25 will offset the administrative costs of the award program. Previous Traver Award winners are not eligible.

The deadline for submissions is midnight on 31 May 2023. The submission form and additional instructions can be found on the Voelker Foundation website: www.voelkerfoundation.com.

The Traver Award winner will be notified in the fall of 2023. The winning entry will be published in the Winter or Spring 2024 edition of the *American Fly Fisher*, the journal of the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

Since 1994, twenty-three awards have been given for the winning entry. Two anthologies of the Traver Award-winning essays were published in two volumes: *In Hemingway's Meadow* (2009) and *Love Story of the Trout* (2010).

For more information, see www.voelkerfoundation.com and www.amff.org.

Dave Whitlock:

A Fly Fisher for All Seasons

(11 November 1934–23 November 2022)

THE MOST VERSATILE of modern fly-fishing masters has died.

Dave Whitlock—a hugely talented and generous man—was the complete fly fisherman. He was a superb entomologist, never pedantic, always with a practical eye for what would truly help anglers understand more. He wrote the important *Dave Whitlock's Guide to Aquatic Trout Foods* (Nick Lyons Books, 1982) and for many years an invaluable column called “Art of Angling” for *TROUT* magazine. His Whitlock-Vibert Box System, which allows salmonid eggs to incubate in security and then to hatch and exit safely into a river, is a major contribution to stream conservation. He was a skilled and avid fly fisher not only for all the trouts, but also for bass, bluegills, freshwater stripers, and many saltwater species—even for carp. He developed a large number of exceptionally successful flies, like his brilliant Dave’s Hopper, bass bugs of all kinds, the lethal Sculpin, his NearNuf series of dry and wet flies, and highly effective patterns for most species catchable on fly. He was a prodigious illustrator, lecturer, photographer, and teacher of all the arts of angling. His illustrations are not just technically accurate but the most joyful, inventive, and genuinely helpful I’ve seen. He illustrated more than twenty-five books, including a new edition of *Selective Trout* (The Lyons Press, 2001). I smiled whenever one of his letters arrived, the envelope brightly painted with a happy leaping trout and his unique calligraphic script.

Dave’s skills were drawn from long and deep research and experience. He studied the inner architecture and life of rivers by putting on a wet suit and visiting the trout’s richly diverse world. He brought his knowledge of what he found there to all he wrote, illustrated, and taught. In every aspect of his professional life, including classes, lectures, and seminars, Dave worked in close partnership with his beloved wife, Emily, when they lived near the White River in Arkansas and then in Welling, Oklahoma, in Dave’s home state.

I was Dave’s editor and publisher for his first and other books, and then his friend. Too often the distances between us were long but I am filled with personal memories: visiting Dave and Emily in Arkansas and fishing the White and Norfolk rivers with him; a long day on Sentinel Creek in Yellowstone Park with quiet talk and Hopper pitching, a lot of laughter, then the hilarious photograph he took of me, proud to be holding high a gorgeous brookie, about 7 inches worth.

When all the awards came to him—from the prestigious Buz Buzeck Fly-Tyer’s Award to eight Hall of Fame inductions, honors for his work in cold and warm-water fisheries, and honor for his conservation achievements—Dave remained the same down-home lover of the joy of fishing.



Dave Whitlock. Photo courtesy of Emily Whitlock.

Fly fishing has lost one its wisest friends: a quiet man with an enormous talent, an artist, fly tier and innovator, writer, and skilled practitioner whose love of fly fishing never flagged. How wonderful that more than fifty years ago, Dave left his job as a research chemist and made a total commitment to what he called the arts of angling and shared his knowledge for our pleasure in a hundred ways.

I miss my friend sorely. I miss his letters, his companionship, his unalloyed joy in all things piscatorial. He was a tireless ambassador, embodying fly fishing’s best qualities, a true and wholly devoted fly fisher for all seasons.

—NICK LYONS
NEW YORK CITY

Nick Lyons was founder and publisher of the Lyons Press, which specialized in fly-fishing books, and an English professor at Hunter College. He wrote books and many articles about his passion for fly fishing. His most recent book is Fire in the Straw, a memoir.

Hortense Quimby: Vermont Fisheries Pioneer

by Tim Traver

All images courtesy of Quimby Country



Hortense Quimby in 1919 (age twenty-nine), the same year she took over ownership and management of Cold Spring Camp in Averill, Vermont.

WOMEN—FROM DAME Juliana Berners in the fifteenth century to Joan Salvato Wulff in the present—have shaped the world of fly fishing in profound ways.¹ A bit further back, some suggest, it was Eve who taught Adam how to cast a fly, possibly using his rib as a convenient rod. Vermont women, in particular, are notable contributors to fly fishing's glory. Mary Orvis Marbury, for example, the daughter of nineteenth-century fishing tackle entrepreneur Charles Orvis of Manchester, Vermont, authored a well-known book of popular fly patterns. In the late twentieth century, Casting for Recovery was co-founded by Vermonter Gwenn Perkins Bogart with Dr. Benita Walton to support women with breast cancer.² A particular hero of mine is Vermonter Mollie Beattie. She liked to cast a fly on

occasion, but she is better known as the first woman director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (1993–1996), opening the door to an agency that had been mostly closed to women. Today, women in Vermont run river conservancies, manage fisheries research programs, and guide. In the political arena they advocate for their waters. Simply put, women are recasting business-as-usual collaborations in the fisheries conservation field, and they are making a difference at every level.

Others blazed new trails into the world of fisheries management and conservation long ago but are little remembered today. One of the most intriguing is Hortense Quimby (1890–1967), sport camp owner, fly-fishing promoter, and conservationist from the wilds of Vermont's Northeast Kingdom.³ Quimby

restored a fishery in part by persuading her guides to switch from live bait to fly and to refrain from killing large numbers of wild fish. She successfully lobbied the Vermont legislature for fish and game laws based on emerging conservation practices of the day. In collaboration with local clubs and state and federal agencies, she helped devise a fish culture system at the Averill Lakes that bolstered diminished native fish populations (but also had negative unintended effects on some native populations), all of which is documented in the camp scrapbooks that were maintained by the family for more than forty years.⁴ She built a life around conserving and restoring cold-water fisheries. “If I am to have a hobby,” she wrote, “as many contend we all should, then the fish are mine, and I will fight for their cause.”⁵

A FRONTIER YOUTH

Quimby was born in West Stewartstown, New Hampshire, in the Connecticut Lakes region, not far from the Québec border and Canadian Eastern Townships to the north, where logging was a way of life. Rough country like West Stewartstown and the neighboring towns of Canaan, Vermont, and Pittsburg, New Hampshire, were, literally, the end of the (railroad) line, and bore all the traits of frontier towns, including unruly drunkenness, violence, and an abundance of colorful characters. Two lumber companies—St. Regis Lumber and the Connecticut Valley Lumber Company—provided most of the jobs and owned large swaths of forestland. For a time in the nineteenth century, the people living west of Indian Stream declared themselves an independent republic.⁶ The hills surrounding West Stewartstown were dotted with small farms, many settled by French Canadians who had moved across the border for work from towns like Chartierville (the Anglo pronunciation was “Chachaville”) and Coaticook, just a few miles north.⁷

Sport fishing developed around the upper Connecticut Lakes region in the mid-1800s. At first, local farmers took in traveling hunters and anglers from points south, fed and housed them, and provided guiding services.⁸ The first fishing lodges began to show up on the Connecticut Lakes around the turn of the twentieth century. Charles Quimby, Hortense’s father, a tin-smith and hardware store owner, saw a sport camp opportunity a bit farther west. He and his business partner Alden Farnham decided to build, in Quimby’s words, “the only Maine-style sporting camp in Vermont”⁹ near the shores of Big and Little Averill Lakes (still referred to as the Averill Ponds on some maps), 10 miles from Canaan, Vermont.¹⁰ The camp, initially referred to as Cold Spring House, opened 1 May 1894. Cold Spring House became Cold Spring Camp in 1907, then around 1929, the name changed to Cold Spring Club.¹¹ After Hortense Quimby sold Cold Spring Club to a group of longtime guests in 1965, the official name of the resort became Quimby Country; it is known colloquially as Quimby’s.

The Averill Lakes were remote: two blue gumdrops in a near-unbroken expanse of

forest, a country of moose, orchids, bogs, bear, bobcat, and large fish. It was also, unfortunately, a country rapidly falling to the axe. The camp sat at the top of two great watersheds. Averill Lake waters flow north to the Saint Lawrence River. Just south of Little Averill Lake, a phalanx of small steep mountains hem in the upper watershed of the Nulhegan River, which empties south into the Connecticut River at North Strafford. The camp itself sits on the shores of Forest Lake, formerly Little Leach Pond, also in the Nulhegan/Connecticut River watershed. Vermont Fish Commissioner John Wheelock Titcomb described the Averills to a local reporter in 1899 as “the best natural breeding ponds in the state.”¹² At more than 100 feet deep, clear and cold, both lakes were oligotrophic.

In the early days, Charles Quimby’s version of a “Maine-style sporting camp” consisted of a lodge (converted lumber-jack bunkhouse) for meals and a row of fancy canvas tents, each with a woodstove and wooden dividers.¹³ “Note carpet,” the caption of one early photo (below) of a tent interior reads. Although the camp wasn’t meant to provide luxury, Quimby



Clockwise from above left: The outlet of Little Averill Lake in 1915, near the site of Vermont Fish Commissioner John Wheelock Titcomb’s trout holding pens built in 1899.

The typical comforts and amenities (“note carpet”) of tent lodging in the early years (1894–early 1900s) before the construction of the present-day cottages.



The Cold Spring House on Leach Pond (now Forest Lake) circa 1898. On the left is the buckboard wagon and horse team used to get visitors to camp from the Stewartstown railroad station.

advertised the high standards of the kitchen, a boardwalk to avoid the mud between lodge and tents, and excellent fishing, augmented by fish stocking so as to avoid “the tragic experience of sport fishing camps elsewhere of being fished out.”¹⁴ From the get-go, Charles Quimby let his clients know of his major commitment to fish culture and stocking.

It was not easy to get to Quimby’s. Visitors from the south took a Boston and Maine train to Lancaster, New Hampshire, then rode the North Stratford Railroad (developed by timber baron George van Dyke) to North Stratford, where they could link with the Grand Trunk Railroad line to Stewartstown. (The Grand Trunk Railroad connected Portland, Maine, to Montreal.) From Stewartstown, it was a rough 10-mile horse-and-buggy ride to the camp. The cost to stay at Quimby’s in the early years was \$2.50–\$3 per day, \$15–\$18

per week; the rail ticket \$1.50 each way. Trunks cost 50 cents, 75 cents, or \$1, depending on weight. Visitors would come and stay, often for more than a month at a time.¹⁵ Eventually heavy logging would decimate the forests of northern Vermont and New Hampshire, not sparing the Northeast Kingdom, but in the early years the old-growth spruce forest around the lakes and mountains was much intact, and the lakes were filled with two species of char: brook trout and golden trout.

Camp became a summer home to four-year-old Hortense Quimby in 1894. The camp’s annual scrapbooks document camp life and hers. The guides, the guests, and the fish are center stage in the early scrapbooks. We meet the fishing guides in the first scrapbook. There’s Denny Roy, an Abenaki and the camp’s first official guide. Other guides include

“Lovely John,” Adeland, Sam Brunelle, and a host of others, many of whom are photographed holding large fish. Hortense Quimby is a constant presence, too. She’s the girl in an ankle-length white dress standing with the wool-clad guides holding a large fish; posing with Pete, a favorite dog; riding in the wagon pulled by her horse Joe through cleared farmland on the way to Coaticook in the eastern provinces of Québec. We find young Miss Quimby tucked into the wood-powered steamboat on the dock with guests getting ready for an excursion around the lake. Images of her sprinkled throughout mark important events, such as the first car in camp, her father’s two-cylinder Cadillac in 1907. There she is at fourteen in the forest, a big smile on her face—like a forest sprite, the spirit of the camp. The brief captions, written in Hortense’s elegant black cursive, catch



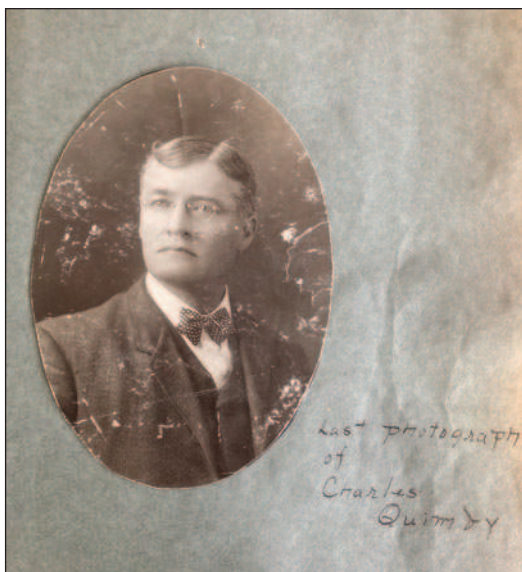
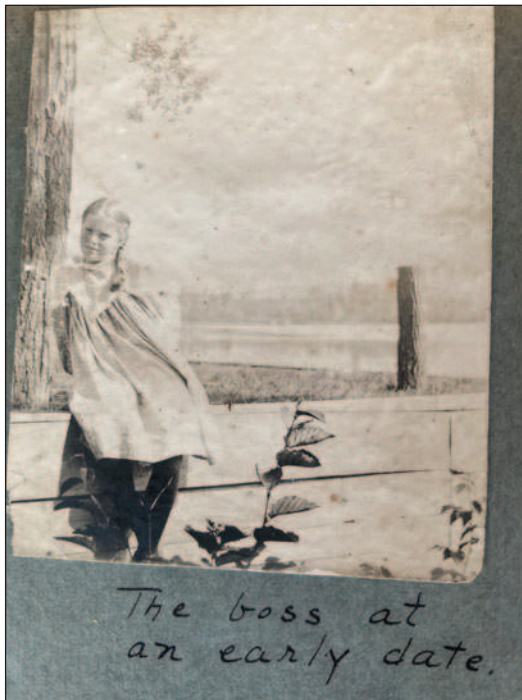
Denny Roy (right, holding fish) is noted as Quimby’s first guide “around 1900” and as an “Indian.” Many of the Western Abenaki people, displaced from their ancestral lands beginning in the 1600s, continued to gain subsistence from fishing and farming. Some served as fishing and hunting guides in the Upper Connecticut Lakes region well into the twentieth century.

The Quimby wood-burning steamer, circa 1900, was used to take Cold Spring House guests on excursions around Big Averill Lake and to pick up guests coming from the west and ferry them to the far shore of Big Averill for the short wagon trip to Forest Lake (about ¼ mile). Identified in the photo are Charles Quimby, Puss Tillotson, and Hortense Quimby.



Hortense Quimby at age twenty (1910) poses on the boardwalk along the shores of Forest Lake.





Clockwise from above left: "The boss at an early date." Hortense Quimby was often referred to as "Miss Quimby" or the "Boss," a title, it is said, she preferred.

Quimby poses here with the guide boats and a spaniel. Quimby loved animals and was often photographed with a favorite dog by her side.

The final photo of Charles Quimby, Hortense Quimby's father, who died in 1919. Hortense Quimby then took over as camp owner and manager. She was twenty-nine.

not only the evolution of camp and fishing but a changing Hortense Quimby.¹⁶ She and the camp grew up together. Over time, as her vision became its dominant force, Quimby (the person) and Quimby's (the camp) become synonymous in the public eye.

She's a strikingly handsome young woman. Newspaper reporters like to comment on her fiery red hair as a match to her spirited personality. One of my favorite photos shows teenaged Quimby in an ankle-length dress sitting on the back of a wooden chair with her feet on the seat while a guide repairs or polishes her high leather boots. In two photos, the caption refers to the girl Hortense as "the boss at an early date." You get the sense that Quimby, even at seventeen, her adored father Charles the titular head of the camp, is

serving as his formidable protégé. She quickly gains a reputation as energetic, determined, and a lover of animals.

An older Hortense Quimby is photographed by the guide boats or in a canoe. There is almost always a favorite dog by her side: Pete, Robert, or Richard. There was an official cat, Flopsy, for a time. The backdrop is large fish: landlocked salmon, lake trout to 25 pounds, 8-pound golden trout, and 4-pound brook trout (eventually rainbow trout, brown trout, and black bass, too). In a world of fish, guides, mostly male guests, and bird dogs, Quimby thrived, shaped by the times and place and uniquely suited for the role she seemed destined to play. In the 1919 scrapbook, which ends with the unexpected death of her father—the final image is the last photo

taken of him—we see a companion photo of Quimby, a schoolteacher, at first in a school in New Jersey and then in Stewartstown, having been trained at the Normal School in Plymouth, New Hampshire. At twenty-nine, she took hold of the reins of the camp, "her job," she notes in a caption, which includes thanking two of her father's business friends who helped her make the transition to business owner.¹⁷ The photo shows a despondent Quimby, kneeling by the boardwalk. She's wearing a sensible knee-length skirt now and has short hair. Much of her face is hidden. Everything has changed.

As the new owner, Quimby faced big challenges. Camp sat on 5 acres of leased land. It appears that her mother, Rose, helped her refinance a large mortgage.

But chief among her challenges was the collapse of the lakes' fisheries. By 1920, what had seemed like a superabundance of native fish that would never run out had all but disappeared. One stark example was the extirpation of golden trout.

A GOLDEN FISH GONE

In a 1935 *Burlington Free Press* article, the writer notes that when Charles Quimby first started bringing fishers and hunters to the Averill Lakes, there were two species they might hope to catch: brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) and golden trout, then with the scientific name *Salvelinus alpinus aureolus*.¹⁸ What exactly golden trout were and who discovered them first was the subject of vigorous debate. The enterprise of collecting, naming, and ordering life back then was a hot mess and, without the benefit of genetics, "protracted and animated."¹⁹ According to William Converse Kendall in *The Fishes of New England*, the fish was first described in 1854 from specimens collected at Rangeley Lake, Oquassa, Maine. The name blueback trout was used by locals, because the back of the fish took on a dark "plum-like" hue.²⁰ Blueback trout were trapped and barreled in the Rangeleys during fall spawning runs and eventually extirpated from there. Around the late 1870s, similar fish were described from Lake Sunapee, New Hampshire, and named Lake Sunapee trout or golden trout, either a little before or a little after

the same fish was described from the Averill Lakes (depending on the side you took at the time). They are classified today together (blueback trout, Lake Sunapee trout, and golden trout) as one of three subspecies of Arctic char (*Salvelinus alpinus oquassa*) isolated in several deep cold lakes in northern New England after the retreat of the last Wisconsin ice sheets.²¹ Sadly, the gold has been dropped from golden trout's Latin name.

Golden trout grew to 8–10 pounds in the Averills, likely thanks to the introduction of rainbow smelt (the same was true for the fish found in Lake Sunapee, where smelt were introduced, although blueback trout in the Rangeley Lakes averaged only 10 inches in size and less than a pound). Anecdotal, golden trout in the Averills were targeted by early settlers of unincorporated Norton using seine nets and setlines, a practice that continued long after it was outlawed.²² Robert Behnke, in his book *Trout and Salmon of North America*, points out that char are "extremely susceptible" to overfishing.²³ Their disappearance from the Averills may also have been encouraged by the stocking of lake trout and Atlantic salmon. Although it's not exactly clear when golden trout disappeared from the Averills, the last time they show up in camp photos is the 1930s.²⁴ Today they only exist there as a kind of ghost fish, with Vermont state biologists looking for morphological clues and sampling mod-

ern lake trout DNA throughout the north woods, curious whether a hint of golden trout might remain.²⁵

A FOUR-PART RESTORATION PLAN

Hortense Quimby's strategy to restore the fishing at the Averill Lakes in the 1920s was four pronged: she actively pursued fish culture as her father Charles had; she lobbied for a two-fish creel limit; she promoted fly fishing; and she advocated building up the warden system. Fishing, particularly in the border country, was a local way of life: fish were an important source of protein. Wardens and bag limits were essential to a successful sustainable sportfishing enterprise, in Quimby's mind, but so was convincing residents that protecting fish and game and building up the tourism trade was in their best economic and personal interest. One writer in 1934 notes that "she succeeded in convincing local guides and property owners that they will get more by encouraging summer visitors, especially fishermen and hunters . . . than by breaking state laws."²⁶

What condition were the lakes in when Quimby took over? In 1943, Quimby describes her take on the fishing at Averill Lakes in a letter to the editor:

[Before 1919] I [had] seen my father burying great piles of beautiful salmon spoiled because fishermen caught more than could be eaten yet were still fishing to catch more. . . . In the years between 1919 and 1925, I saw the automobile drive out of Averill with 200–300 pounds of fish to a car—fine trout, salmon, and lake trout. . . . [Atlantic salmon and lake trout were not native to the lakes in 1890]. The famous fishing in the 1920s was based on fry and fingerling plantings. New species were introduced by those methods alone and magnificent results followed. Then came the automobile and the relentless war on one lake section after another. . . . Averill fishing, like all, went down to a joke, but it did not die. Before long, laws restricting sizes of catch and poundage to be taken away appeared on the books. There is some Quimby in that and for that I am proud.²⁷

Paul C. Howe, editor of the *Bennington Evening Banner*, a friend and admirer of Quimby's and personally familiar with fishing the Averills around the turn of the century, didn't agree with Quimby's assessment. In response to her letter, he wrote, "The fishing at the Averills was pretty well whipped when Hortense's hair was in pigtails. . . . the old wealth of fish and game cannot come back we all



A catch by Governor Billings. Billings and other leading politicians and businessmen were frequent visitors to Quimby's. Franklin Swift Billings, from Woodstock, Vermont, served as Vermont governor from 1925 to 1927.

realize.”²⁸ But Howe goes on to admit that the fishing did improve significantly throughout the 1920s and 1930s thanks to Quimby’s efforts. He suggests that what might be needed is a catch-and-release ethos at the Averills, a practice that was, at the time, taking hold among some anglers in the Rangeley Lakes.

Fish culture and regular stocking were part of Charles Quimby’s plan from the beginning. Fish introductions in the Averills had begun at least by 1900, likely earlier. Vermont Fish Commissioner John Wheelock Titcomb (1860–1932) is described in a local newspaper in 1899 as “putting ‘several thousand landlocked salmon in Little Averill Pond’ . . . and 12,000 trout in Leach Pond.”²⁹ The writer adds that “[Titcomb] now has a pen with 125 trout taken by his men from Leach Pond and Little Averill Pond weighing from ¼ to 4½ pounds for the purpose of collecting their spawn.”³⁰ To provide forage for salmon, rainbow smelt were introduced. Fred Thompson, a guide for Charles Quimby and then a warden in the area, describes in his personal journals gathering smelt eggs on burlap sacks during smelt spawning runs and delivering these eggs to “Miss Quimby” to

release in Averill streams and bogs.³¹ State biologists at the time were making the most of the nonnative fish introductions, including coho salmon at the Connecticut Lakes (they didn’t survive).³²

There were heavy hitters in fish culture science at the time up in those parts. Titcomb eventually became chief of the Federal Division of Fish Culture, U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, and served there until 1909 before coming back to Vermont. He is best known for establishing the first North American salmonid hatchery in South America (Argentina).³³

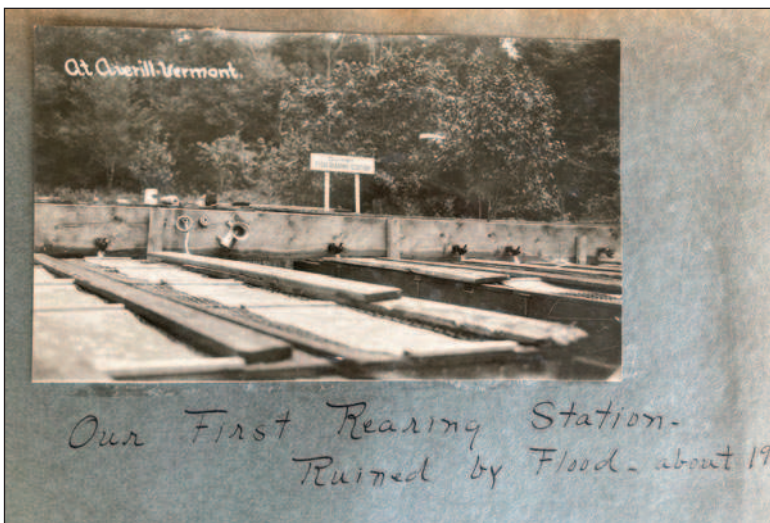
FISH CULTURE AND FLY FISHING

Throughout the 1920s, Quimby enthusiastically pursued stocking fingerling brook trout and Atlantic salmon to the extent that she had a series of concrete rearing pools on the outlet of Little Averill Lake into Big Averill. For that effort, Quimby sought the help of another early luminary in the American fish culture story. Henry O’Malley grew up in Saint Johnsbury, getting his start at the federal hatchery there, and eventually

served as U.S. Commissioner of Fish and Fisheries from 1922 to 1933.³⁴

Quimby’s minihatchery on Little Averill worked. In a report to the Averill Fish and Game League in 1923, she wrote:

In the late fall the state sent a stripping crew to Little Averill under Mr. Rich, Mr. Richardson, and Mr. Tillotson. Salmon eggs have been hard to get and both the state and federal hatcheries have been short the past years. This trip was a success and 86,104 eggs were taken from salmon weighing 3–10 pounds. . . . Little Averill needs stocking with some of our best fingerlings . . . and it needs laws to keep the small salmon from being caught. . . . Some illegal fishing goes on in that locality, although it seems incomprehensible that local people would harm or rob a lake that brings so much good business and real dollars to the locality . . . when one resort alone spends from \$15,000 up in a locality, it is worth keeping it, isn’t it? . . . Perhaps we have not done everything just right, but we have done something and we have gotten things started our way. All of this has been but the beginning of a propagation and a policy that will keep our local waters from the tragedy of being fished out.³⁵



Quimby’s “fish rearing station” at Averill Lake.

Henry O’Malley, shown here stocking fish on the Potomac River, was the country’s seventh U.S. Commissioner of Fish and Fisheries. He served in that position for eleven years (1922–1933). A Saint Johnsbury, Vermont, native, he began his career in fisheries working as a laborer at the federal hatchery in Saint Johnsbury. O’Malley was a good friend to Hortense Quimby. He helped design the Quimby fish-rearing station at the Averill Lakes.





The 1923 four-color Cold Spring Camp brochure. Quimby was interested in marketing and communication and began repositioning the camp in the 1920s to attract vacationing families.

Part of Quimby's conservation strategy focused on fly fishing. Fly anglers, industry friends assured her, were less interested in harvesting trout than the traditional bait angler. An equal or greater number of fly anglers could have less impact on the trout populations of Averill Lakes than bait anglers.³⁶ It took time for fly fishing to take hold. "The average Vermont angler," one reporter wrote in 1935, "was (and still is) yet to be converted to the method."³⁷ To ease the transition, Quimby created a casting club and added special floats lakeside for casting competitions. All her guides could cast 70 feet, and many could cast 100. She placed tying patterns, instruc-

tions, and tying materials in the lodge and assembled a library of fly-fishing books for both the visitors and the guides. Around the same time, she began naming individual cottages after famous trout flies. To this day, there is a framed fly inside the door to each eponymously named cabin. In the 1935 issue of the *Averill Angler* newsletter, sent annually to guests around Christmas, Quimby described casting contests she set up between guides. There were fly-casting contests for the guests, too. She established a guide association and organized a competition on the Connecticut Lakes, at which her guides competed with others in the region.³⁸

ONE BEAUTIFUL RURAL PARK

Fly fishing is a conservation strategy Quimby embraced enthusiastically, but it was part of an overall camp rebranding, too. By 1935, Quimby had long been broadening the appeal of the camp to families. She described Cold Spring Camp as a place where one could go to experience "ranch life in the East."³⁹ She added horses and riding trails. Horse travel had been a part of camp all along until the automobile replaced it. To reach women and children, Quimby emphasized the health benefits of the springs. "Cold Spring Camp," wrote Quimby, "is rapidly gaining the reputation of a health resort. . . . Malaria is unknown in this region."⁴⁰ She added a tennis court, bathrooms to the cottages, guided hikes and campouts for kids, hiking trails, and carriage roads. She added more cottages and an "inn"—a set of cottages on Big Averill Lake. She bought more land around the lakes. In the scrapbooks, the photos of strings of fish give way to families enjoying the outdoors together. They stayed at Cold Spring Camp for weeks at a time.

Over the years, as Quimby's camp evolved, her own reputation and influence grew. She became known statewide as a conservationist and successful businesswoman. Newspapers noted that she was a familiar face in the Vermont legislature, lobbying for changes to fishing regulations and supporting her vision of Vermont as a natural resources-based tourist Mecca. In letters to the editor, she didn't mince words and could be intimidating. She opposed the development of parkways, preferring small-scale tourism to crowds. She wrote in 1935: "Vermont seems bent on parkways. They [her guests] come to Vermont to get away from parkways. Vermont itself is one beautiful rural park with enough roads at present."⁴¹

Although she never served as a commissioner or a legislator, the press wondered aloud why not. The *Bennington Evening Banner* editor, commenting on a 1943 editorial in the *Brattleboro Reformer*, wrote, "The *Reformer* is of the belief . . . that Miss Quimby has been offered a position on the fish and game and conservation commission by three different governors and every time refused. She seems to be one of those fortunate few persons not plagued by political ambition."⁴² She was a trusted ally, a friend to Governor Aiken (1937–1941, then U.S. senator 1941–1975) and other governors, but never herself one. She chaired the Women's Essex County

Republican Party Re-election Committee but never ran for office.⁴³

Quimby was a particularly fierce supporter of the Vermont Fish and Game Department, but not always on the same page with organized angling and hunting groups. She wasn't above savaging certain types of sportsmen: "I have observed plenty to the credit and discredit of Vermont sportsmen. Most of the credit belongs to the Department of Fish and Game—but that could not have been but for the assistance of the finer Vermont sportsmen."⁴⁴ Her vocal support for a department reorganization in 1943 that merged Fish and Game with Forestry (previously part of the Agriculture Department) and Publicity (previously under the secretary of state) under a new Department of Natural Resources with an expanded governing commission put her at odds with much of the hunting and fishing establishment, which felt the merger would weaken the Fish and Game Department—or perhaps their grip on it.

Quimby saw the opposite: an already weak department whose best work was often undone by the legislature. "Always, the fish and game has struggled against odds—never enough money, never enough popular support and cooperation. At each legislative session it has to watch good work being broken down."⁴⁵ Her side saw fish, game, and forest health strongly linked. The destruction of forests had left rivers choked with sediment and prone to flooding. Faster runoff eroded slopes further, reduced groundwater recharge, and made rivers more susceptible to drought. Without shade, rivers warmed and fish died.

In response to Quimby's letter, which was shared across newspapers, editorial staff statewide fired back. Paul C. Howe, editor of the *Bennington Banner*, generally a friend and admirer of Quimby's, wrote that he opposed the new department plan she supported and accused Quimby of being "naïve" when it came to politics.⁴⁶ Some in the press agreed with Quimby, though. The editor of the *Rutland Daily Herald* wrote, "the idea that fish and game do not coordinate with our forests is just plain crazy . . . we will take Hortense Quimby's judgement in this matter."⁴⁷

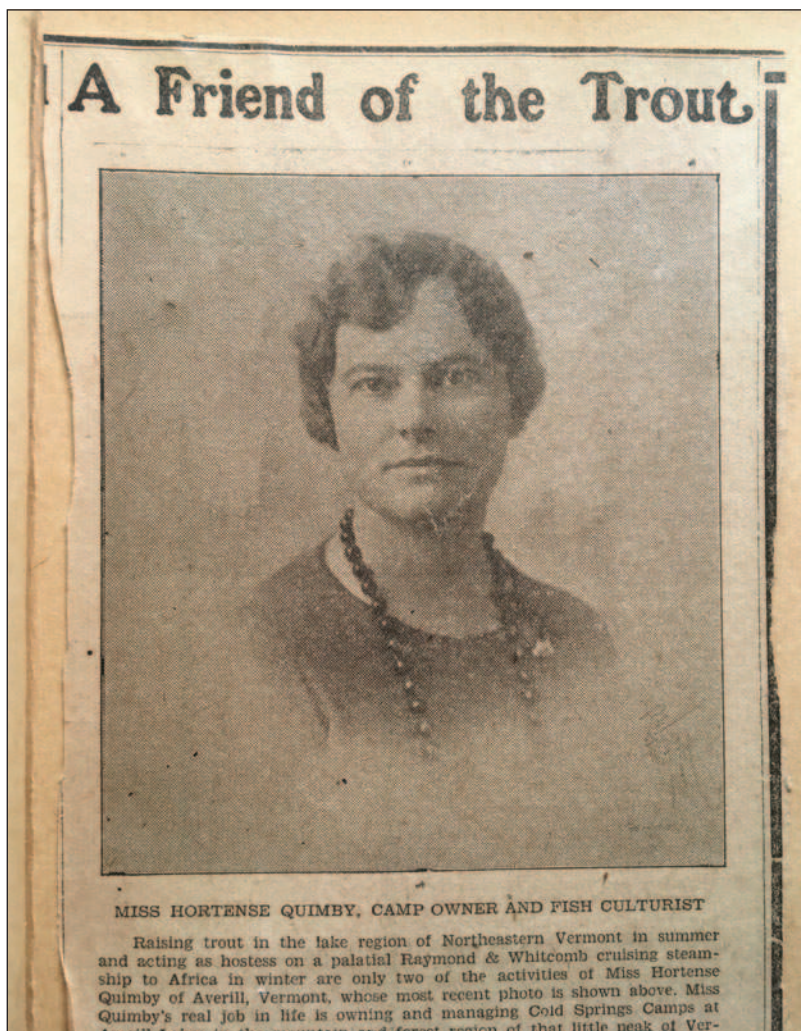
Linking natural resources and publicity/economic development was right out of Quimby's playbook, too. She advocated for a department that could elevate conservation and fish and game restoration efforts statewide and link that with economic development, a department that could stand up to political pressures. She saw the state's natural wealth as its greatest economic draw.

References to pigtails and naïveté notwithstanding, it could not have been easy for a woman working in the realm of hunting and fishing in the 1930s, especially one who didn't suffer fools and who was often ahead of her time. At the National Sportsman's Show at the Grand Central Palace in 1936, a *New York Post* reporter notes that Quimby, who grew up in the wilds of northeastern Vermont, could "easily [be] mistaken for a [sophisticated] Park Avenuer." He goes on to describe Quimby's camp as "one of the most famous angling places in the East," as "Waltonian," and no place for "fish hogs" with a two-fish-per-day limit. He quotes her as saying "Conservation is the only answer to the problem of poor fishing. I wish there were smaller catch limits everywhere."⁴⁸

The confrontational Quimby was known for her directness in camp as well. She could put the fear of God in the children—and adults. And yet there is, to this day, intense loyalty among those who knew her, an admiration bordering on the

worshipful. Quimby never married, but one gets the sense that she was married to the place and to the families that stayed for weeks year after year. She created a kind of big family and served as the mother superior, devoted to others' experience of a cultured outpost in a wild place. She wrote in the 1936 *Averill Angler*, "Remember this: that in your good times, I get mine."⁴⁹

Plainly, Quimby was a rock star, as comfortable in pearls in front of the legislature as flannel in camp. The press reported on all her travels, whether to the Southwest or to Africa, where she served as hostess on steamship trips off-season. When she wasn't on a slow boat to Cairo,⁵⁰ she was making a home for vacationing families in the wilderness and quietly providing financial support to local families and children in need.⁵¹ At a time when few women's voices were heard in the budding conservation movement, a time when a woman might be mocked publicly for signing on to a fishing contest, Quimby remained a true friend to fishes to the end.



An elegant Quimby, shown here in a 1928 feature article in the *Bennington Evening Banner*, had developed a statewide reputation as an ardent fisheries conservationist by the early 1920s.

I suggested at the start of this piece that Quimby's was a forgotten voice, but that's not correct if you consider the "Quimby" in modern fisheries regulations or the shape of the present-day natural resource departments, where problems are viewed from the perspective of complex cultural and ecosystem interactions and solved through collaborative approaches. There is some Quimby in women's progress in the field, too. Quimby's, the place, endures under new, welcoming, and youthful ownership. And that's a good thing.



ENDNOTES

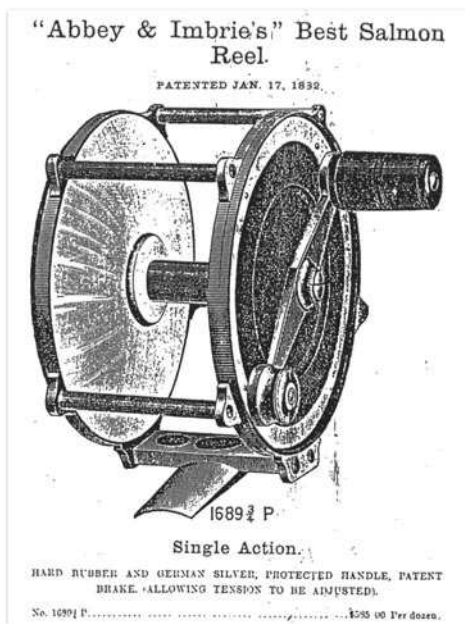
1. Catherine E. Comar, *A Graceful Rise: Women in Fly Fishing Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* (Manchester, Vt.: American Museum of Fly Fishing, 2011).
2. Casting for Recovery's mission is "to enhance the quality of life of women with breast cancer by connecting them to each other and nature through the therapeutic sport of fly fishing." From their website: <https://castingforrecovery.org/>. Accessed 6 May 2021.
3. For a succinct biography of Hortense Adelaide Quimby, see the Quimby Country website's history pages at <http://quimbycountry.com/history/>. Accessed 23 July 2020.
4. Camp Scrapbooks, 1894–1938, year 1923 [page 55]. The camp scrapbooks were put together by Hortense Quimby. They are roughly organized by years, beginning in 1894 (some contain multiple years as years jump books). The pages of the scrapbooks are unnumbered; I have added my own count to these references in brackets. The earliest scrapbook is labeled "Fish." Including photos, brochures, annual newsletters written by Hortense Quimby, newspaper clips, and occasional letters, they give a fascinating portrait of camp life: images of staff and guests, the lodge, cabins and tent sites, fishing guides, early fish catches, and the Quimby family. Scrapbooks are currently kept on a shelf in the lodge and are available for access by camp staff and guests.
5. Quoted in "A Friend of the Trout," *Bennington (Vt.) Evening Banner* (15 June 1928), 3. Unattributed.
6. Robert Pike, *Spike Boots* (Woodstock, Vt.: Countryman Press, 1999), 100–101.
7. Author interview with Lorene "Skip" Young, 14 January 2020.
8. Ibid.
9. Quoted in Alison Thirkield, "Quimby Country History" (unpublished manuscript, 1995), 3. While serving on the Quimby Country board of trustees, Thirkield conducted interviews with older guests. These stories are archived in "Quimby Country History" and available in the Quimby lodge library.
10. Charles Quimby had two business partners, Alden Farnham and Mart Noyes. According to the 21 January 1898 issue of the *Essex County (Vt.) Herald*, "Alden Farnham has sold his interest in Cold Spring House at Little Leach Pond to Mart Noyes, former proprietor of the Diamond Ponds Property, who will continue in partnership with C. M. Quimby" ("Among Our Neighbors, Canaan," 3, unattributed).
11. For a concise history of the camp, see the Quimby Country website's history pages at <http://quimbycountry.com/history/>. Accessed 23 July 2020.
12. Quoted in "Among Our Neighbors, Averill" *Essex County (Vt.) Herald* (17 November 1899), 3. Unattributed.
13. "Press Comment," *Hardwick (Vt.) Gazette* (13 May 1943), 3. Unattributed.
14. Camp flyer, 1895, in the first camp scrapbook, "Fish" [page 12]. "Fish" is its own scrapbook but housed with the other scrapbooks, which are generally labeled by years. See reference 4.
15. Thirkield, "Quimby Country History," 1. There are newspaper references to long lengths of stay as well, especially in the early years.
16. We know that it is Hortense's handwriting because references to "mother" and "dad" in later scrapbooks is the same. This begs the question as to who was doing the scrapbooks—which go back to 1894—before Hortense came of age. I believe that Hortense went back and put the early scrapbooks together using photo archives her father had kept or enhancing scrapbooks he began with more materials from the early days.
17. Camp Scrapbooks, year 1919 [page 49].
18. Bob Angler, "Hortense Quimby Has Made Her Dream Come True," *Burlington (Vt.) Free Press* (28 November 1935), 9.
19. William Converse Kendall, Scientific Assistant, United States Bureau of Fisheries, *The Fishes of New England: The Salmon Family, Part I: The Trout or Charrs* [Memoirs, Boston Society of Natural History, Monographs on the Natural History of New England, vol. 8, no. 1] (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1914), 43.
20. Ibid., 27–37.
21. Robert Behnke, *Trout and Salmon of North America* (New York: The Free Press, 2002), 303–11.
22. Pike, *Spike Boots*, 80–81.
23. Behnke, *Trout and Salmon of North America*, 310.
24. Scrapbook titled "Fish" [pages 55, 65].
25. Interview with retired Vermont State Fisheries biologist Len Gerardi, 16 August 2018.
26. Angler, "Hortense Quimby Has Made Her Dream Come True," 9.
27. Hortense Quimby (portions of her letter to the editor), with response by senior editor Paul C. Howe, "Miss Quimby's Views," *Bennington (Vt.) Evening Banner* (5 March 1943), 2.
28. Ibid.
29. "Among Our Neighbors, Averill" (17 November 1899), 3.
30. Ibid.
31. From the journals of Fred Thompson. Journals are held privately by Thompson's daughter, Lorene "Skip" Young, in Hanover, New Hampshire. The following quote was accessed in January 2020 and is used with Young's permission: "Went up to the 1st [Connecticut Lake] and got Smelt eggs and called Miss Quimby and she came up after them. I got 3 burlap sack cover[s] with good eggs, probably several million and up to the lake in the evening to see about help to plant fish in Scott's Bog."
32. Ibid.
33. "John Wheelock Titcomb, Fish Culturist," Prabook, https://prabook.com/web/john_wheelock.titcomb/1040427. Accessed 8 November 2021.
34. "Former Saint Johnsbury Boy Heads the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries," *St. Johnsbury (Vt.) Republican* (25 May 1922), 2. Unattributed.
35. Report to the Averill Fish and Game League, copy found in Camp Scrapbooks, year 1923 [page 41].
36. Angler, "Hortense Quimby Has Made Her Dream Come True," 9.
37. Ibid.
38. Hortense Quimby, *The Averill Angler* 1935, Camp Scrapbooks, year 1935 [page 48]. Hortense began to send out newsletters around Christmas to camp goers. She titled these the *Averill Angler* and kept copies of them in the scrapbooks.
39. Beginning in the 1940s, this wording was used in the camp brochures found in the camp scrapbooks.
40. Ibid.
41. Hortense Quimby, "Letters from the People, Discussing Summer Visitors," *Burlington (Vt.) Free Press* (20 September 1935), 6.
42. Paul C. Howe, editorial, *Bennington (Vt.) Evening Banner* (14 July 1943), 2.
43. "Essex County Women for Hoover: Miss Hortense Quimby of Averill Announces Her Assistants," *St. Johnsbury (Vt.) Republican* (11 October 1928), 5. Unattributed.
44. Quimby's letter was first published in "Letters to the Editor, Against the Divorce Bill," *Rutland (Vt.) Daily Herald* (23 February 1943), 4. There were at least three published responses.
45. Ibid.
46. Paul C. Howe, "Miss Quimby's Views," *Bennington (Vt.) Evening Banner* (5 March 1943), 2.
47. "Our Editor Says," *Rutland (Vt.) Daily Herald* (9 March 1943), 2. This is the *Rutland Daily Herald's* response to both Quimby's letter and Paul C. Howe's earlier response to the Quimby letter.
48. Leon M. Siles, article covering the 1936 National Sportsman's Show at the Grand Central Palace, *New York Post*, included in the Camp Scrapbooks, year 1935–1937 [page 66].
49. Hortense Quimby, *The Averill Angler* 1936, Camp Scrapbooks, year 1935–1937 [page 55].
50. "A Friend of the Trout," *Bennington (Vt.) Evening Banner* (15 June 1928), 3. Unattributed.
51. Phone interview with Alison Thirkield, 30 August 2021, who, while serving on the Quimby Country board of trustees, conducted interviews with older guests now archived in "Quimby Country History" (1995).

Museum Wish List

The American Museum of Fly Fishing is actively seeking artifacts to enhance planned exhibits, including items from the 1893 Chicago World's Fair/Columbian Exposition and general collection items we feel will enhance our educational displays. These include:

- A Julius Vom Hofe Raised Pillar Salmon Fly Reel, circa 1890–1892
- Albert Angell's patented Angel's Wings lures
- Flies tied by Roy Steenrod
- An Albert Pettengill fly reel
- Any rod fitted with the patented Gilbert Bailey rod mount, circa 1884

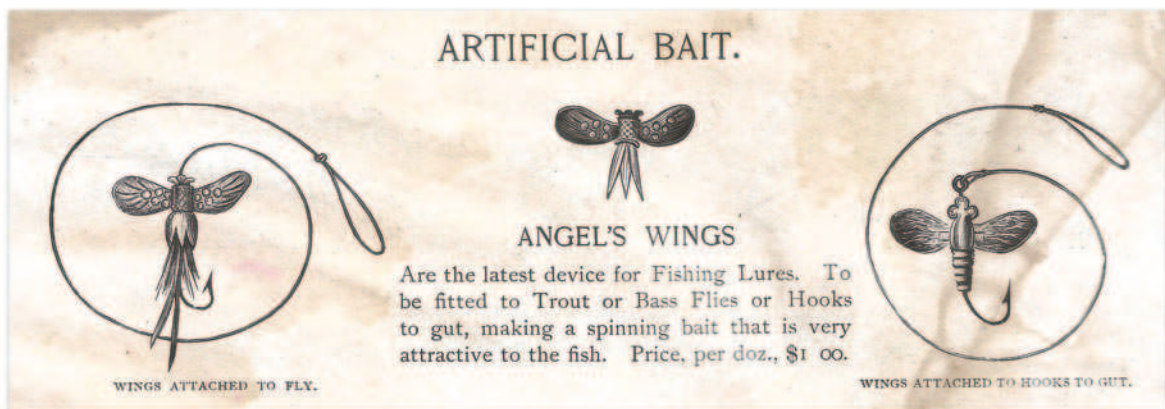
If you have any of the above items that you would consider donating, please contact Curator Jim Schottenham via e-mail at jschottenham@amff.org or by calling (802) 362-3300. Thank you.



Julius Vom Hofe built reels for various retailers, including the New York-based company Abbey & Imbrie, before 1900. These reels can be found with a stamp from the retailer, the maker, or both.



Albert Pettengill received U.S. patent number 361890 for his fishing reel, which can be found in either a side mount or vertical mount in models 1 through 4. These reels are often stamped only with "Mohawk."



Albert Angell received U.S. patent number 456931 for his "Attachment for fish hooks."

AMFF Honors the 30th Anniversary of the Film *A River Runs Through It* with the 2022 Heritage Award



Above: Dennis Aig accepts the Heritage Award from President Fred Polhemus.



Right: Panelists Dennis Aig, Joe Urbani, Paul Ryan, John Dietsch, and Gary Borger recount their experiences during the making of the film.

THE AMERICAN MUSEUM of Fly Fishing hosted its Heritage Award event honoring the thirtieth anniversary of the film *A River Runs Through It* on November 3 at the Racquet and Tennis Club in New York City.

In a return to New York after a three-year hiatus, guests reunited to celebrate the film that is known in fly-fishing circles simply as “the movie.” During a buzzing cocktail reception, attendees were encouraged to guess the number of flies in a vintage Hills Bros. coffee can. After sitting down to dinner, a ten-minute retrospective video treated guests to behind-the-scenes footage of the extraordinary care and attention to detail that went into the legendary fly-fishing scenes. This video is available to view at amff.org/events in the Event Recap section.

Following a lively auction with Nick Dawes, the evening culminated in a panel discussion led by Montana State University professor Dennis Aig, who was on set making a documentary of the film in 1992. Aig was joined by Gary Borger, consultant; John Dietsch, fly fishing production coordinator; Paul Ryan, second unit director; and Joe Urbani, fish-

eries biologist. Producer Patrick Markey was unable to attend but was there in spirit as the group reminisced on the joys and challenges of bringing Norman Maclean’s novella to life. Clips of the panel discussion will be available on the museum’s Instagram account, [@flyfishmuseum](https://www.instagram.com/flyfishmuseum).

AMFF would like to thank our Leadership Circle donors and all those who attended the event and supported the auctions. We are grateful to live-auction donors C. D. Clarke, Nick Dawes, the Delphi Club, Bill Hespe, Lori-Ann Murphy, Robert Rubin, Trout Unlimited, and Winston Rod Company; and silent-auction donors 320 Ranch, Berkshire Rivers Fly Fishing, Mark Comora, Costa, John Dietsch, Paul Dixon, Far Bank, Rachel Finn, Fishpond, Richard Landerman, Ted LeBow, Carmine Lisella, John N. MacLean, Walter Matia, Mud Dog Saltwater Flies, REC Components, Roger Riccardi, Richard Rose, Paul Rossman, Jim Schottenham, Stonecutter Spirits, Sunny Brook Nets, Dave and Emily Whitlock, and Jeff Yates.





Val Kropiwnicki designed and tied this year's Heritage Award, The Heavy in Light.922.GFP.



Joseph Cocarro, Jane Simoni, C. D. Clarke, and Stephen Cocarro catch up before dinner.



Trustee Pat Watson, David Comora, Josh Caldwell, and Executive Director Sarah Foster chat during the reception.



Auctioneer Nick Dawes (right) took a moment to try on Captain Robert McGraw's suit jacket.



Tom Skerritt, who portrayed the Reverend John Maclean, joined the festivities via livestream.



John Dietsch, Dennis Aig, Molly Dietsch, Paul Ryan, Joe Urbani, Colter Urbani, and K. C. Walsh visit as they peruse the silent auction offerings.



Photos by Sara Wilcox



AMFF celebrated its Charles Thacher Book Collection with an event at the museum on October 27. The eponymous donor (above) shared stories of the acquisition of some of his favorite volumes. Thacher was joined by master bookbinder Carolyn Chadwick (right), who advised on the care and storage of rare books.

Open Waters: A Panel Discussion

On October 27, we partnered with Patagonia (Santa Monica) to host a panel discussion and film screening of *Mighty Waters*. Director/producer Shannon Vandivier was joined by a diverse panel of local fly fishers to discuss how they fell in love with the sport and what they are doing to change the traditional perceptions of who fly fishes. AMFF Ambassador Al Quattrocchi was the event emcee, and AMFF's Alex Ford was on hand to promote membership and hand out information.

Recent Donations to the Collection

AMFF welcomed an anonymous gift of a custom engraved reel and collection of photographs and archival material highlighting the accomplishments of Cornelia "Fly Rod" Crosby. **The Estate of Albert D. Lowry** of Charlottesville, Virginia, shared with us an H. L. Leonard Special Number One tournament rod, originally fabricated for Larry Foster during his time as president of the H. L. Leonard Rod Company.

Jane Roth of Leesburg, Virginia, donated three gyotaku prints made by her late father, Frank Havlicek. **Jim Heckman** of Manchester, Vermont, contributed a collection of issues of *Hunting and Fishing* and *National Sportsman* magazines, some of which are currently on exhibit in our library.

Pat Estey of Dorset, Vermont, brought us a galley proof of Austin Hogan and Paul Schullery's *The Orvis Story: Commemorating the 125th Anniversary of the Orvis Company*. And **Neil M. Travis** of Livingston, Montana; **Grigsby Markham** of Dorset, Vermont; and **Jamie Woods** of Cambridge, New York, each donated several titles to our library.

Upcoming Events

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

January 27, 28, 29
The Fly Fishing Show
Edison, New Jersey

February 18
Fly-Tying Workshop
AMFF Gallery at Wonders of Wildlife National Museum & Aquarium
10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. CST
Portions of the event will be livestreamed on social media

March 13–14
Izaak Walton Award honoring Nancy Zakon
March 13: Livestream event
8:00 p.m.
March 14: Reception and Auction
Key Largo Anglers Club
6:00 p.m.

July 6, 13, 20, 27
Kids Clinics
10:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.

August 12
Fly-Fishing Festival
10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

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

Nancy Zakon to Receive the 2023 Izaak Walton Award



Photos courtesy of Nancy Zakon

AMFF is pleased to announce Nancy Zakon as the 2023 Izaak Walton Award honoree. This event will take place online via Zoom on **March 13** at 8:00 PM EST, followed by a celebratory reception on **March 14** at the Key Largo Anglers Club at 6:00 PM EST. The Zoom portion will be the storytelling stage for some of our greatest female pioneers as Nancy is joined by Mary Bloom, Fanny Krieger, Sara Low, Lori-Ann Murphy, and Joan Wulff.

Nancy—as past president of the International Women's Fly Fishers, instructor in Orvis's first women's fly-fishing school, a designer of Orvis's first women's fly-fishing gear, and founder of Juliana's Anglers and Sporting Club of New York City and Bonefish Bonnies of Key Largo, Florida—has been a trailblazer for women in fly fishing.

The American Museum of Fly Fishing 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.

We hope you will join us virtually, in person, or both! Further details at amff@amff.org.



CONTRIBUTORS

Jody Martin (pictured), lead author on the multiauthored history of the Robert Traver Fly-Fishing Writing Award, is a marine biologist at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, has written previously for the *American Fly Fisher*, and is last year's award recipient. **David Van Wie**, author of *The Confluence* and *Storied Waters*, is an environmentalist, writer, photographer, member of the Outdoor Writers Association of America, and board member of the John D. Voelker Foundation. **Seth Norman**, a past winner of the Traver Award and the Roderick Haig-Brown Award for achievement in writing from Fly Fishers International, is well known for his "Master of Meander" column and for the books *Meanderings of a Fly Fisherman* and *Fly Fishing Crimes of Passion*. **Richard Vander Veen III**, president of Mackinaw Power, is developing wind and solar energy projects to protect, in Traver's words, "the environs where trout are found"; he has served as president of the John D. Voelker Foundation since 1989. **Frederick M. Baker Jr.** is a distinguished attorney and former partner at one of Michigan's leading law firms (Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn); he is also a former commissioner of the Michigan Supreme Court and has served as the John D. Voelker Foundation secretary treasurer for thirty-three years. All five authors are avid fly fishers.



Bob Sears

Darla Sargeant



Frank Sargeant, recipient of the 2022 Robert Traver Fly-Fishing Writing Award, is author of ten outdoors and boating books and a regular contributor to a number of outdoors magazines and online publications. He is a former fishing guide—in Homosassa, Florida, where the story takes place—and has owned a number of dogs who were his best friends and fishing companions. Every one of them broke his heart when it was time to let them go.

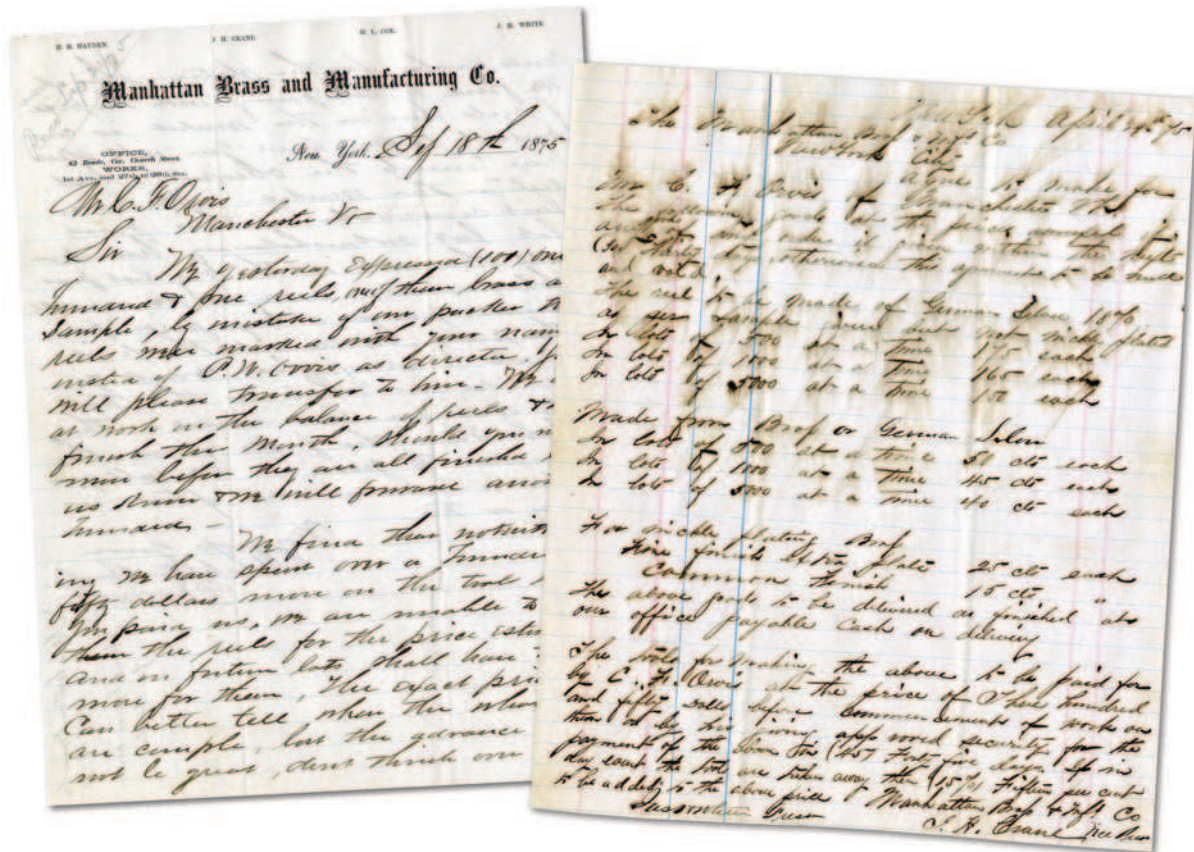
He has an MA in English from Ohio University—the one in Athens, not the one in Columbus.

Tim Traver grew up fishing the saltwater bays, marshes, and rivers of southern New England. He finished graduate studies at the Yale School of the Environment in New Haven, Connecticut, and went on to work in the fields of natural science education, land conservation, and wildlife refuge management. His writing credits include the books *Sippewissett: or, Life on a Salt Marsh*; *Lost in the Driftless: Trout Fishing on the Cultural Divide*; and *Fly Fishing & Conservation in Vermont: Stories of the Battenkill and Beyond*. Tim lives in Taftsville, Vermont, and can be contacted through his website at <https://www.timtraver.net/>.

Author photo



Renewal, Rediscovery, and Reaccreditation



An invoice from the Manhattan Brass Manufacturing Company
for the first Orvis fly reels, dated 18 September 1875.

THE AMERICAN ALLIANCE of Museums (AAM, formerly the American Association of Museums) is the leading organization representing the entire museum field—from art and history museums to science centers and zoos. Since 1906, AAM has been advocating for museum professionals and providing them with the resources, knowledge, inspiration, and connections needed to support excellence. The alliance has a collective goal to better our world through connection to histories, cultures, the natural world, and one another. Its mission is to “champion equitable and impactful museums by connecting people, fostering learning and community, and nurturing museum excellence,” which is achieved in part through their accreditation program. Accreditation offers validation of a museum’s operations and impact and brings forth two fundamental questions: How well does the museum achieve its mission? Does the museum’s performance meet standards and best practices?

AMFF was first accredited by AAM in 1993. Accreditation is our highest national standard of recognition, which is why fewer than 10 percent of museums are accredited. We received reaccreditation in 2009 and will apply again in 2023. The process allows us to scrutinize our policies, our collection, and our overall operations as a public institution.

This important and thorough exercise focuses on public trust and accountability, mission and planning, collections

stewardship, education and interpretation, and financial stability. But the unexpected by-product of this undertaking is the delightful opportunity to revisit pieces in collection storage. Typically, about 95 percent of museum collections are safely preserved in storage—ours is no different. So, which of these hidden gems does Curator Jim Schottenham find most exciting? He’s been poring over an invoice from the Manhattan Brass Manufacturing Company for the first Orvis fly reels. Perched on his desk awaiting further research is an Edward Vom Hofe #3 special order Peerless Reel from 1883. He’s also been marveling at John Kenyon’s personal fly rod from 1887, entirely wrapped in silk, which has been lovingly cared for by AMFF since 1973.

As for me, I’m overwhelmed with a sense of appreciation for all the people who have donated to the museum over the past fifty-five years and trusted AMFF to share this rich history with the world. January always brings a sense of renewal—renewed goals, renewed perspectives, and renewed priorities. As we take advantage of this season to review, regroup, and reprioritize, I hope you will do the same.

SARAH FOSTER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



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