

*The Arts  
of  
Fly Fishing*

2005/06 Exhibit  
*Paul and Mary Ann Ford  
Fly Fishing Collection*

Special Collections  
WWU Libraries

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***The American Fly Fisher.*** Issued quarterly with some exceptions, Volumes 1 through 31—approximately 120 issues (we lack some issues); first published in winter of 1974 as the official journal of the Museum of American Fly Fishing. The Museum, founded in 1967 and situated in Manchester, Vermont, was to collect and preserve the artifacts, art, and literature of American fly fishing from its origins through the present and into the future. The Museum has become repository for the world's largest collection of angling and angling-related objects—including items from abroad and dating from the sixteenth century.

The journal is unique. For decades during the middle and late twentieth century American sportsmen read glossy-covered *Field and Stream*, *Sports Afield* and *Outdoor Life*. These magazines were filled with “how to do it” stories, true stories of “how I caught my big fish,” some fiction and plenty of practical advice from the likes of “Gadabout” Gaddis and “Tap” Tapply. *The Fly Fisherman*, a magazine of high quality technical-type writing, appeared in the 1960's. Replete with gaudy rod, reel line and bait makers' ads, these magazines were the wish-books of generations. Today, there must be several dozen “fishin' magazines. You can buy them at most newsstands. But there is nothing like the journal.

Its cover is simple, without glare. Its content is “a mixture of past and present, vintage remembrance and modern research,” about America and abroad. You will read a Mashpee Indian chief's description of Daniel Webster's lecture to a large Cape Cod trout about its stupidity for falling to the good Senator's fly. You will begin, and perhaps not finish a research piece written about how many times a reference is made to fish or fishing in James Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake*. You will find few ads. The journal is available only to Museum members.

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Schullery, Paul. ***Royal Coachman.*** Simon and Schuster, New York, 1999. Pp. 220. Art by Eldridge Hardy. New, dust jacket, signed. Schullery was executive director of the Museum of American Fly Fishing and has spent a lifetime in natural resources management, especially in the Yellowstone region. He is a prolific writer about American fly fishing history. Here he writes about the lesser known places and people of fly fishing and what it takes to be considered a “trout bum.”

### About Bamboo Fly Rods

American fly fishers have had a longtime romance with the bamboo fly rod—its design, construction, fishing qualities and probably, most of all, with its beauty. Special Collections has John Gierach's book about the bamboo rod (*Fishing Bamboo*). Several other titles are now added.

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Garrison, Everett, and Carmichael, Hoagy B. ***A Master's Guide to Building A Bamboo Fly Rod.*** Meadow Run Press, Far Hills, New Jersey, 1999. 8 ½ by 10 ½ . Pp. 296. Sixth printing. New. Signed. This is book number 4 of a deluxe limited edition of 36. The book has endpapers made from bamboo and its boards are of green linen. A separate portfolio made from bamboo paper includes a letterpress printed essay about Carmichael's association with Garrison written and signed by Hoagy Carmichael. Another part of the portfolio contains a picture of Garrison with his wife and daughter; another photograph is of Carmichael at his workbench. Two letters written by Garrison

to his mother in 1918 are included. The book is housed in a tan and green linen drop-spine case lined with bamboo paper. The device on the bookcase spine is a variation on the Mandarin symbol for bamboo. Garrison, a genius rod designer and builder began his work in 1927, having become "unemployable" because of damage done to his central nervous system while undergoing training in the U.S. Army in 1916 and 1917. Young Carmichael became his friend and student and completed work on this book.

..... *A Master's Guide to Building A Bamboo Fly Rod.* Meadow Run Press, Stone Harbor, New Jersey, 1994. 8½ by/10 ½. Pp. 296. Third Meadow Run Press printing. New in Slipcase.

3a

..... *A Master's Guide to Building A Bamboo Fly Rod.* Martha's Glen Publishing Company, Katonah, New York, 1977. 8 1/2/ by 10 ½. Pp. 296. First edition, second printing. Fine.

3b

Spurr, Dick, and Jordon, Gloria. *Wes Jordan, Profile of a Rodmaker.* Centennial Publications, Grand Junction, Colorado, 1992. 8 ¾ by 11 ¾. Pp.192. This is number 23 of a deluxe limited edition of 23. New. Signed. Leatherette cover with gold lettering. Wes Jordan was born in 1894 and became a great rod designer and builder whose career peaked when he became chief of rod making and vice-president of the world famous Orvis Company of Manchester, Vermont. This book is filled with testimonials to Jordan's proficiency as a rod builder and fisherman. Mr. Jordan built a rod for Paul Ford in 1972 and it is displayed with this year's fly fishing exhibit. The book is an interesting and quick read.

4

Marden, Luis. *The Angler's Bamboo.* Lyons & Burford, New York, 1997. Pp. 88. First edition, new in dust jacket. This is the story of Tonkin bamboo—a plant that grows in China's Kwantung Province and practically nowhere else. It is the history of how split bamboo fly rods came to be made of this plant. Nicely illustrated.

5

Howell, Jack. *The Lovely Reed.* Pruett, Boulder, Colorado, 1998. Pp.191. First edition, new in dust jacket. Signed. This is an enthusiast's guide to building bamboo fly rods. Most fly fishers today use graphite or possibly boron rods. Despite that fact, a small cottage industry of bamboo rod builders now thrives and is growing, despite the hefty cost of these handcrafted gems.

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### About the East Coast

Bates, Joseph D, Jr., line drawings by Milton C. Weiler. *Streamer Fly Tying and Fishing.* The Stackpole Company, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1966. Pp. 368. First edition in dust jacket. Fine. It is said that the advertising on the dust jacket's back board authenticates that this is a first edition and first printing. Bates, an Easterner, traveled extensively, fishing both fresh and salt water. The book is filled with stories and techniques that depict a master of prose and practice.

7

Leiser, Eric. *The Dettes A Catskill Legend.* Willowkill Press, Fishkill, New York, 1992. Pp. 267. First edition, first printing, fine in a dust jacket. Signed. This is the trade edition of the deluxe limited edition already held in Special Collections. It is the story of an inventive and highly productive trio of Eastern fly tyers whose genius graced the

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period from 1927 into the 1980's. The Dettes were known as "the first family of fly tying."

9

Francis, Austin. *Catskill Rivers: Birthplace of American Fly Fishing*. Winchester Press, Piscataway, New Jersey, 1983. Pp. 258. Maps by John Manikowski. 8 ¾ by 10 ¾. First edition, first printing in scuffed dust jacket. This is a beautifully written, easy to read history of land and water; men and fish; rods and flies. Large maps display fabled rivers and locations of fabled fishing clubs and camps. Great personages of our fishing history appear in these pages.

10

Harvey, George and Shields, D. *George Harvey - Memories, Patterns and Tactics*. DLS Enterprises, Lemont, Pennsylvania. 1998. Pp. 102. Limited edition, number 37 of 325. New. Fine in slipcase. This is a story of Pennsylvania's incomparable trout streams and a gentleman and scholar who was expert in inventing, tying and casting flies. It spans the period from 1917 through the 1990's and introduces some of the most famous trout streams and fly fishers the country has known.

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Salmon, Richard. *Trout Flies*. Sportsman's Edge Press, New York, 1975. Pp. 30. Introduction by Arnold Gingrich. 8 ½ by 10 ½. Number 353 of 529. Signed. New in slipcase. Richard "Dick" Salmon, a New York City businessman and fly fisher, created a book, all of which is printed in his script, and Gingrich's introduction reproduced in his own hand. The book is unusual and even extraordinary. Its contents tell about how various trout fly patterns are created—but the pages include tastefully pasted-in examples of each material used. The book is an art piece.

12

Zern, Ed. *To Hell With Fishing*. D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., New York and London, 1945. Pp. 87. Cartoons by H.T. Webster. First edition, first printing in dust jacket. Fine. The author was a successful New York businessman who traveled extensively in pursuit of fish, and so it would seem, funny stories. He wrote these stories for the leading sportsmen's magazines of the mid-twentieth century. The cartoons that accompany the stories are, in themselves, reason enough to buy the book. The first chapter of this book is titled, "How to Dispose of Dead Fish." 'Nuff said!

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----- *How To Catch Fishermen*. Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc. New York, 1951. Pp. 118. Cartoons by the author. First edition, first printing in dust jacket. Fine. The Dedication reads: "According to the most reliable scientific information available, fish are on the lowermost rung of the intelligence ladder, being surpassed in stupidity only by garter snakes, cherrystone clams and stuffed owls. This book is respectfully dedicated to those millions of Americans who spend a large portion of their leisure time in an effort to outsmart fish." E.Z.

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----- *Are Fishermen People?* Harper & Brothers. New York, 1955. Pp. 119. Illustrated by the author. First edition, first printing in dust jacket. Fine. More good humor!

15

----- *A Fine Kettle of Fish Stories*. Winchester Press, New York, January 1973. Pp. 122. Illustrated by the author. First edition, second printing in dust jacket. Fine. Here are lots of funny stories, but with just a few illustrations. His casting arm must have gotten tired of making those pen scratches!

## Words from the West

Russell Chatham of Livingston, Montana, is a one-of-a-kind. I have watched him lure three steelhead to a dry fly in the course of twenty minutes on a Wenatchee River drift where even the most expert are lucky to take one fish on a dry. His writing has achieved national repute. And his painting—with its soft seductive yet modest rendering of the out-of-doors graces even the White House. His paintings, captured in a book titled *Russell Chatham, One Hundred Paintings* (1990), tells the story.

Here are most of Russell Chatham's books about the angling life:

Chatham, Russell. *Striped Bass on the Fly*. San Francisco Examiner, San Francisco, 1977. Pp. 96. First edition, first printing. Paper. New. Chatham did his own simple artwork. This was Chatham's second published piece—done when he was a very young man—and while it shows his promise as a fly fisher and writer, it is a bit boring. Nevertheless, this title is difficult to find.

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----- *The Angler's Coast*. Doubleday and Company, Garden City, New York, 1976. Pp. 158. Illustrated by the author. Introduction by Thomas McGuane. First edition, first printing. Fine in dust jacket. This is of Chatham and Chinook salmon, in California and Oregon and his tutor and pal, Bill Schaadt—who taught him about deep sinking tips and lines—real deep! Occasionally a steelhead sneaks in. But there is a serious tone here, too. McGuane says, "Chatham knows everything has gone to hell just as well as you do." But don't let it get to you. "Take shots at bigger things, but keep your standards...."

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----- *The Angler's Coast*. Clark City Press, Livingston, Montana, 1990. Pp. 163. 8 ½ by 10 ½. Deluxe limited edition. This is number 16 of 26. Matching slipcase. New. Lots of photos and new copy were added to the earlier edition. The author/illustrator has included his separate pencil drawing of a striped bass and signed and numbered it 16/26; it is enclosed in a special onion skin wrapper.

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----- *Silent Seasons*. E.P. Dutton, New York, 1978. Pp. 204. First edition, first printing in dust jacket. Fine. Chatham admires certain outdoor writers—many of whom happen to be intellectual and/or social rebels. This anthology includes the writing of Tom McGuane, William Hjortsberg, Jack Curtis, Harmon Henkin, Charles Waterman, Jim Harrison and Chatham.

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----- *Dark Waters*. Clark City Press, Livingston, Montana, 1988. Pp. 205. First edition, paper. Fine. Front cover is a painting by Chatham. A deluxe limited edition of this was published in 1991. This book is of Chatham's passions for fishing, hunting, wine, women, song and other seductions. In his foreword to the book, Nick Lyons says, "He likes privacy and companionship, stillness and camaraderie. Chatham is a voluptuous pilgrim, reveling in his senses."

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*Comment:* I once asked Russell why he had stopped writing. He said that he couldn't afford to write—that he couldn't make enough money. Rather, he loved his painting and besides, paintings would pay the bills.

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Chatham, Hugh and McClain, Dan. *The Art of the Creel*. Blue Heron Publications, Ennis, Montana, 1997. Pp. 196. Signed. Photography by Gretchen Duykers. 10 ½ by 10/1/2. New in dust jacket. This is an absolutely beautiful book of photos and prose about the history of the creel. It is a must read for those interested in American creel making.

The four books noted below are by the gifted and prolific John Gierach—a Colorado-based angler, fly tyer, artist, bamboo rod-builder and writer.

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Gierach, John. *Trout Bum*. Pruett, Boulder, Colorado, 1986. Pp. 227. Introduction by Gary Lafontaine. First edition, fourth printing, fine in dust jacket. A trout bum is an otherwise intelligent person, who could be successful in many occupations, but who makes the commitment to give up all else to pursue fish; the trout bum is almost always a person of modest income. *Trout Bum* is an early Gierach book. The stories are fresh and rich and we visit the uncommon in fly fishing.

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----- *The View From Rat Lake*. Pruett, Boulder, Colorado, 1988. Pp. 193. First edition, first printing, fine in dust jacket. The view from rat lake is really the author's view of life and specifically the fly fishing life. The Rockies frame much of this scene. The stories are of homespun fish and fishers. There is no pretension here, just a lot of witty wisdom.

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----- *Where The Trout Are As Long As Your Leg*. Lyons and Burford, New York, 1991. Pp. 84. First edition, first printing, new in dust jacket. "The secret places are the soul of fishing," say Gierach. Secret places are important to the fisher because they contain special fish and because the secret, in itself, is so cherished. Oh, how fishers love their secrets. Gierach provided the artwork, called Gyotaku, for this book. This artwork is an ancient Japanese form in which prints are created by inking a fish and pressing rice paper on it. The art presentation in this book is stunning.

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----- *Even Brook Trout Get the Blues*. Simon & Schuster, New York, 1992. Pp. 223. First edition, first printing new in dust jacket. Signed. Illustrations by Glenn Wolff. Here are more entertaining stories about the fishing life—including Gierach's childhood experiences with pond fish and, of course, more of trout in the Rockies.

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----- *Another Lousy Day in Paradise*. Simon & Schuster, New York, 1996. Pp. 233. First edition, first printing, new in dust jacket, signed. Gierach and his favorite bamboo rods travel in search of salmon and carp and grayling. His essay on solitude is fascinating in-as-much-as Gierach fishes mostly in the company of a friend or two. But, he remarks that even when fly fishing with others, one fishes alone; that statement is telling and true.

### A Gem

Writer-publisher Paul Schmookler and photographer Ingrid Sils produced at Millis, Massachusetts, three of the grandest pieces of prose and photography concerning rare and unusual fly tying materials (1994 and 1997) and forgotten flies (1999) ever to meet the eye. But the fly fishing world's early reception of these over-sized, scholarly, and elegantly illustrated books was at best, reserved. But, then, for whatever reasons

move collectors, individuals began to snap up these books. Now they are in great demand with enormously inflated prices. Special Collections has the three volumes and in new condition. But, for a while, the public seemed unaware that Schmookler and Sils had done an earlier book. This book now becomes the possession of Special Collections.

Schmookler, Paul. (ed.), and Sils, Ingrid. *The Salmon Flies of Major John Popkin Traherne (1826-1901): Their Descriptions and Variations* as Presented by George M. Kelson in *The Fishing Gazette, Land and Water* and *The Salmon Fly*. The Complete Sportsman, Millis, Massachusetts, 1993. Pp. 122. Special edition. Number 194 of 300. Quarter bound in tan calf with marbled boards and gold fore-edged pages. Matching tan linen slipcase. New. George M. Kelson was one of England's most renowned 19<sup>th</sup> century Atlantic salmon fly fishers. His essays are about another great English salmon fisher, Traherne. Schmookler has edited Kelson's essays, tied flies to imitate those of Traherne to which Kelson alluded; and finally Sils has photographed the flies. The edited essays and flies comprise this book.

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This book is included in a collection of Americana because Americans produced it and some of Traherne's flies are used for our Atlantic salmon and for steelhead. The book, largely ignored for years, now fetches a very significant price, though it is nearly impossible to find this gorgeous work of art.

### Two Pictures

The water color of a fly fisherman and leaping trout in a gushing creek was done by James Milton Sessions (1882-1962). Born in Rome, New York, he lived most of his adult life in Chicago. After graduating from the Art Institute of Chicago, he supplemented his meager art earnings with jobs as a wheelsman on Great Lakes ships. Much of his art was dedicated to out of door subjects.

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This American Museum of Fly Fishing poster celebrates the Museum's place in preserving America's fly fishing heritage. Created under the supervision of Joseph D. Bates, Jr., the poster depicts an Atlantic salmon fly. Bates wrote a score of books about fly fishing for trout and salmon. His book, *The Art of the Atlantic Salmon Fly*, issued in trade, limited and deluxe limited editions (1987) is considered by many to be the crown jewel of modern writing about the Atlantic salmon.

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*Annotations by Paul Ford*

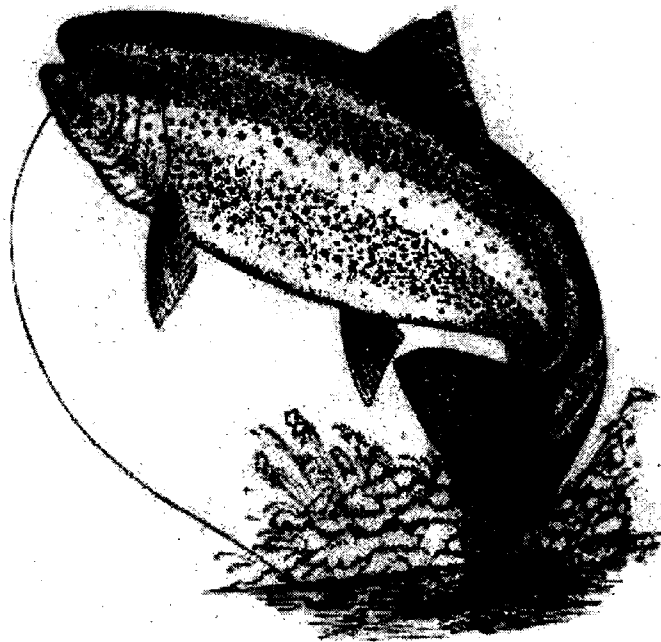
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*Fishing, in my estimation, is not a hobby, a diversion, a pastime, a sport, an interest, a challenge, or an escape. ...It is a necessary passion.*

Russell Chatham, *Dark Waters* (20)

*Fishermen are born honest, but they get over it.*

Ed Zern, *To Hell With Fishing* (12)



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