

Dave McNeese

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SPEAKERS

Dave S, Dave M, unknown speaker...



Dave M 00:00

But the grizzly course Grizzly is the most popular hackle there is I sold tons of it. And the Supreme Court judge in Oregon thought I was selling grizzly bear, and that's really bad. You can't sell grizzly bear. And that's what they charged me for. So I got a felony.



Dave S 00:23

That was Dave McNeese telling a crazy story about how he got busted for acquiring illegal animals for his flight time. You've got to stick around here the full story today on the west fly swing fly fishing show.



unknown speaker... 00:38

Welcome to the wet fly swing fly fishing show where you discover tips and tricks and tools from the leading names in fly fishing. today. We'll help you on your fly fishing journey with classic stories covering steelhead fishing, fly tying and much more.



Dave S 00:54

Hey, how's it going, everyone? Thanks for stopping by the fly fishing show today. Dave McNeese, one of the great flight tires And someone who has made a life in the fly fishing

business. Dave gives us some insight into the clandestine life of Sid glosso breaks down the how tos of material dying and talks about how he ran a successful fly shop, mail order business rod building, real making and a whole bunch more until he was totally shut down by a fumbled investigation. We're gonna we're going to get into that. A quick word from our sponsor. God fishing calm is your trusted source for information with access to the world's best fishing trips. You can head over right now to wet fly swing comm slash got fishing and sign up so you get updated when the next fishing trip is available. Got fishing COMM The easiest place to start your next fishing adventure. The Fly fishing and tying journal has an exceptional fall edition out right now. Head over to F TJ angler calm to support the great work Craig and the gang have created just for you. That's FDJ angler dot com. Let's just jump into it. Without further ado, here is Dave McNeese. How's it going, Dave?



Dave M 02:08

Pretty good. Good. Well, cool. It's nice and cool. cloudy and cool.



Dave S 02:14

Yeah, yeah, no, it's, it's, it's pretty cool. We're kind of getting close to mid August and the great thing about this as these shows is that you know, it could be the person listening right now it might be five years from now right in December. So it's, it's kind of a, it doesn't really matter but for us it does because it's it's August and I'm, I'm thinking about steelhead, or you know, that's on my mind summer steelhead, and you've done some steelhead fishing right over the years.



Dave M 02:39

Oh, yeah. Wow. That, in fact, I've been tying steelhead flies for people going to candidate and, of course, they they're not going to go up there this year. But they they'll take the flies, because they'll go up next year if it's open.



Dave S 02:57

That's right, the COVID the COVID thing, so you're still You're still doing some flight time?



Dave M 03:02

Yeah, quite a bit.



Dave S 03:03

That's cool. That's cool. What is it about the flight time? You know, I mean, obviously there's some money to be made. But ya, you know, after all these years do you continue Time flies is just do you enjoy it that much? What does it come down to?



Dave M 03:16

Well, it's I've got tests, I've got these old customers, unfortunately, a couple of them have gone into their 80s and they can't fish anymore and they bought thousands of flies from me over the years. And, but I still have customers that are, you know, in my age group in the 60s and 70s and are still able to fish and experience you know, the Canadian stuff and they go on guided trips to the Deschutes grand on and, and elsewhere. Yeah. A lot of that courses But at this point, because of all the closures Yep.



Dave S 04:04

But that's cool. Now there is a lot yeah, there's obviously a lot. The code thing is kind of making it a little crazy. I wanted to today get into a little bit you got some big projects going on. One is on a book on say, Glasgow and then you've also got just a bunch of seems like you have a bunch of things going on the material dying is another topic I wanted to dig into. Before we get there maybe can just talk about how you first got into fly fishing and then how you brought that into, I think you you know you've had a fly shop and how that all came to be.



Dave M 04:35

Well, I started you know, going back to my grandfather, he lived in Oklahoma at nesis plumbing and heating and made a fortune doing the oil boom in the 20s and prior to that he would come to Oregon to fish I'm sure he read Yeah. You know, magazines that over exaggerate. With the catch, but



Dave S 05:01

when was he born? I'm just trying to get a picture of when he would have been reading what what magazines what era that was?



Dave M 05:07

Well, he was born in 18. I wonder what 1880s or something like that and but by the time that he was he was coming to Oregon in the teens, he was probably in his late 50s. And he finished the role and and the size line late, correct. And eventually he bought property where he liked to fish because he didn't like to have any thoughts around it. So he would buy sections of the river and of course it was back then the value of land was nothing and he had plenty of money. And then he taught my father. He his only only child, how to fly fish and so my dad is a really good oarsmen. He, I think he was 13 years old when he found the McKenzie boat parade in 1933. And there was a picture of him going through Martin rapids at 13. And the boat is completely out of the water. And the two women in the front of it are screwed. But



Dave S 06:28

is Martin rapids on the on Mackenzie?



Dave M 06:31

On the Mackenzie? Yeah, it's it's the only that's one of the big Big Rapids. It's, uh, it's several hundred yards long. It's changed course over the years. I think it was a class four. And it may be a class three now, but it's, I ran through it last year. And so you get wet. Yeah, and my kids and my kids enjoy that but it's just, we've got four generations of fly Question. People in our family, my kids fly fifth. And I started fishing in 1955. And I remember the first time that I caught up on a fly that I tied was, I think, in 1956. And I just like you know that we had problems with it down close to where Autzen Stadium is. And there were a couple of couple of ponds and we'd go down just as kids and take our worms and go down and catch big bluegill and everyone so I've got a nice bass and I continue to fish pretty much every day in the Mackenzie research right down, hop on the bike and 10 minutes you're on the Mackenzie. And you know, in in later years I've started I've always been at a butterfly class. And when I was in my early teens I started collecting insects with window screens. And but we kept the screens down on the McKenzie and we place them out at different times during the day. And we collect the aquatic insects and, and then an evening, the adult insects and then I'd keep them in vials. And at one time I took them to Oregon State. And then later I sent them off to Dr. Flint. Back back east to examine. And, you know, they, they saw I had a good record of what was what was hatching and then we did. We did sample studies on the trout, stomach samples compared to what we're getting in the screen. And that gives me a real good idea. I was abraded fly tire so it gave me an idea of how to create something that was the trout were feeding on. And later, one of my best experiences was in 1975. And when went to the McKinsey flyfishers conclave, their 10th anniversary at Coursera was the only Walton and each rebirth showed up and I

met Steve great Jeff and do a lot of people there. And I was at the first conclave in 65. But I was just a, you know, teenager and and there weren't a lot of people there but the 75 it was a really good one. And it was funny about Steve Ray Jeff and I were at the bar and Steve was only I think seven years old, but he was a big kid curses but she was a family relative and she didn't You better drink, smiling. And then Ernie came up alongside of us and we both started talking to him and Ernie was talking to Steve about his casting and I mentioned to Ernie that I was going to go back and see the diaries and daddy's in the Catskills in about a week and a half for two weeks. And that was that was one of my most amazing trips of my lifetime was to go back there and, and study the techniques of the Catskill flight tank school and sit there and watch for two weeks watch elfie and Carrie tie flies and go over to daddy's house, the daddy's Well, when he had Barry tie flies in the evening. And you know, just watch the different styles there between the derbies and the third is this style of life. But both of them tied. I mean, every fly that came out of the vise was impeccable. And he couldn't you couldn't you know? They were just unbelievable compared to what was here in Oregon. You know the stuff in Oregon at the time was shinier bodies and wool bodies and a lot of hackle on it big fluffy gear here Wayne says.



Dave S 11:26

Where was that coming from? Where it was that you know that the Catskills thing I mean not sure if you know the history there but that's been of interest to me because I'm not a great dry fly tire, you know. And I'm always interested because those flies are so amazing and beautiful. Where did why was it? I guess it started there and moved out west or where did this guy Catskills thing?



Dave M 11:47

Well, I don't know what kind of moved out west but it took a long, long time. And I remember talking to Clint shop. He says yeah, I probably would have gone back then. Taking some classes, my flies are deck a lot different. But he said, you know, out here, big, bulky, ugly looking flies. That's what we tie out there. And, you know, there were a few people like Andre, Leon's when he started his shop, he was he was trained a little bit in flight tying up a Catskill so his flights were were slender and sparse. And that's the way they tied him back then. And it started with the phaedo. Gordon, it was probably before now. Just a number of remarkable tires. rube Krause. I saw some of his flights and I'm Cisco and I was just Harry Darby was showing me semigroups flies that were tied back in the 30s 30s and 40s. And they were just unbelievably sparse and the hackles were just like rockhard I mean nothing, nothing like we've got today. Right? And so when I was when I was back there, I was able to I was already raising my own bird. So I had I had opened my fly shop at my house in Aegina 1969 and it was called mind flies and it was basically a mail

order. There wasn't many people in Eugene that type flies, even though there was a great history on the Mackenzie and very, very few people knew how to Deb you know like seal for I had lots of seal I shared the Beaver. So I had that diet and different colors and people would come into my, into my shop, which was at my house, it was in a separate building. And they would look at all the people And just be a base because they've never seen this stuff. You know, it's just hardware stores around the gene that sold a little teeny bit of flight time material and it was maybe 10 colors a hackle. And the hacker was just individual feathers stuffed in about an Indian things like that, but



Dave S 12:22

wow. So you, you had your own. I mean, you you had your own animals and birds and basically you were kind of like a, you know, before hairline right was down there. I mean, or whatever you were, you were that for the for the for your area that you were Was there anybody else doing it?



Dave M 14:41

Well, there was another bill that had a little shot. at his house, he was a river died. But it was, you know, basically what he sold was just woolen chenille probiotics. That was all there was. And I was just reading these old flight time books, primarily from the east coast and admiring the beautiful flies at that. So I had this idea and art flick came out with the master flight time died in 73, and I picked that book up in 74. And I was able to get get in contact with art slick and talk to him and then Ted Niemeyer. I sent art supplies, and I'm sure they weren't very good. And I never got a response from him. So later, I came out a couple of my blue den roosters and I sent the clips to him and man I got a phone call and said where'd you get those and I said I raised when he sent he told me he said contact the guy recently. Have a you know, buy some flies for them and study the fly. And then and then Teddy might have said the same thing. I think that was probably Ted. They told me that when he said he studied the flies, and AJ McLean had the flight tank section in the book and I believe that was those flights were more or less the way that Elsie Darby Tiger flies. So I worked on that for six or seven months and I sent Ted some flies. Instead, it's time for you to get back here. And he said, if he could make a trip, he said, everybody's getting old, they're gonna be gone. And you're going to miss out. So after that conclave in Eugene, after I told Ernie, I took off a couple of weeks later toward the end of June and spent two weeks at the Darby Township. And one day, all of a sudden Ernie shows up with this public publisher and watch any goes to And I said, Yeah, I told you otherwise. I said, I'm probably the only person from Oregon that ever came and visited the derbies they go That's That's right. But they influenced a lot of people.



Dave S 17:15

Yeah, no, I've heard I've heard that definitely I know about them. I'd love to. Maybe on another episode I'd love to find somebody and dig into the Catskills and that history there more but you know, for today I did you know, we're talking a little about fly tying here. I wanted to dig in a little bit. And we can swing back around to some of the history stuff because it is interesting with your shop and everything. But on Can you maybe just start us off I you know, for somebody maybe who has never done any material dyeing. Can you talk about you know why you would want to do that and if people are still doing it and maybe just give us a general little quick little rundown of what what it's all about.



Dave M 17:55

Well, today, there's you know, today, there's The wholesale business has really captured pretty much every color. And back then back in the late 60s and early 70s when I was doing feathers, I mean, it was a process I had to do. I was gonna make money. I knew I had to, you know, dye my own materials process, whether it was natural materials. I got furs and feathers from all over the world. And it was basically fun hunters. I met John Capstick. And his brother Pete Capstick was a famous Safari hunter and he he got in contact with his brother and said, What do you want? And he would send me boxes of birds, monkey skins, all kinds of stuff from Africa. And back in those days in check those packages and probably about 1983 Before we had to stop importing that because everything had to be identified by that scientific name. And those guys back in Africa, they didn't want to do that. So I got some good stuff from them speckled Buster and the Getty scans were just gorgeous but all that stuff. I needed to die that for my mail order business. And my business started to grow and I was advertising in magazines. And in that, in my trip when I went back east the first day, Teddy Meier took me to meet his friend Eric Wiser fly fisherman's bookcase. And I was out casting a fly rod in this little pond that had and I noticed when I looked up on the building that I could see a couple of people looking out the window. When I walked in, there it goes. The bus watch upstairs. So I went upstairs and opened the door and Paul Jorgensen was standing there and it goes, Well, are you. He said, You can cast this goodness lefty Cray. I said, Well, I'm from Oregon with like lung cancer. And I was playing around with this little fiberglass rod. And Paul mentioned that he wanted to come out to Oregon and catch a steelhead and compare it with Atlantic salmon. So, unbeknownst to me, he showed up about a month and a half later, I got a phone call from him advance and he goes, get get me out of here. He said, the mosquitoes are biting the hell out of me and told him to meet me at Oak Ridge and I called my wife and said, I've got to go on this trip for a week. I was gone. It was just it was just a turning. I told Paul it was I had two weeks off I'm working in the last two weeks of August. It's kind of inconvenient. But that but that week I watched him tie flies. And we kind of I was doing

these crossover flies from making a steelhead fly into something that was more like an Atlantic salmon fly, you know, a classic, you know, using polar bear and seal for the, the bodies and that's that's where I started the beginning of redesigning flies and designing my own flies with my colors that I die. Now get back to dine. It's it's not a hard process. Typically, these articles I've written for the flight time journal, this You know, acidic acid, something that's stronger than vinegar but it's it's a vendor base but it's 30% and that can be purchased at some hardware stores or or purchased online from like Home Depot. You got to wait a few days and now they'll have a read for you but it's just it's a standard acid. That's I use sulfuric on most of my materials but people you know, you're in your house and your wife is screaming at you pouring acid down the sink. Yeah, all it does is cleaned it out. But it's, you know it's temperature. I've taught a lot of people how to die as I've died commercially for several companies. least three three different wholesale companies. I did a lot of dying for spirit river. As I started working down there in 2009, or 2008, something like that, until they sold right in teaching that teaching the different people that how to how to dye the feathers, it's not hard just the water temperatures got to be at about 170 to 180 degrees on certain materials hundred and 60 on materials that might you would get some burning if you went much, much more at most, most materials 170 is a good, good fit, so you need a good thermometer and the acid and the dyes now are easy to get on online. Just look at protein dyes and there they are. And they're not They're not too expensive. And in small sizes, I usually buy guys. Some I get by the pound. But when I was when I had my warehouse in this fly shop, I was buying dyes in five and 10 pound containers. And that way the dye was really inexpensive, even though it costs quite a bit it was in usage. It was inexpensive, but it was just dying. I could get any color that I wanted to get through the rainbow, and especially using agents that would brighten their feathers and then fluorescent and that's what I've been doing for probably 45 years at least. So almost everything even even my natural birds That I raised, I break those feathers and fluorescent dance gingers, vislink whatever. I always done all that stuff. And then I put Abilene oil on the feathers and then storm. And that way I don't even have to ever use flights.



Dave S 25:22

Oh, wow. That's a good. That's a good tip. So. So like you said the fly fishing and tank journal. You've written some articles. And the cool thing is they're a sponsor of the podcast here. So it's always good to give give them a shout out Craig and the crew there. So if they wanted to dig into, you know, if somebody wanted to do this, they could pick up that article and kind of get more details on it.



Dave M 25:45

Yeah, there's the last couple of issues and then that this coming issue will probably be the last one I've done and it's about olives, olives and browns, and the That those, those last couple of inches will give a person a real clue on on this steps because everything is written right there



Dave S 26:13

just for future just for future those that are listening in the future. Right now. It's August 2020. So we're talking about the summer edition and the fall edition of the fly fishing time Journal.



Dave M 26:25

Well, it was, it was, it would be I think it's the winter of 2019. And then the spring issue of 2020. And then this article will come out in the fall edition. Perfect because I had to skip one because I was taking care of my mother while moving and I just told Greg, I said, I just can't finish this article, right? Yeah, yeah. Just real business getting moved out of taking care of money. Brother in law for a year and a half after my father in law passed away and so we just got her down to a senior center needs moving, got her comforted and trying to get this household cleaned up. And then once that's done in a couple of weeks and I can go fishing, yeah.



Dave S 27:18

How are you doing all the sale? Are you doing the cleaning of the selling of the house?



Dave M 27:23

Well, we've got a real event but my twin sister came down and we had a big garage sale here in a week ago and that was after four days of cleaning the house. We had a 40 yard dumpster and Phil bat, three hours, three and a half hours. So 45 years of living here. So



Dave S 27:48

how's the market the how's the market in Albany right now? That's pretty pretty good seller's market.



Dave M 27:55

yesterday. We put the house up for sale Monday afternoon. And yesterday, it was nonstop. Until 830. Wow. Nine, nine o'clock in the morning till 830 it was nonstop everybody that came by went by. Amazing because it's a beautiful It's a beautiful acreage upon topic going north all but as soon as this here and there's 15 acres behind it, so I've got some monster blacktail no 10 bucks that I see every day. I mean really big. They're just magnificent. Yeah. along with all the other critters,



Dave S 28:35

that's cool. What are you? I'm just curious. I'm kind of in the housing market, too. I'm just curious prices. What is that three acres. What do you guys sell on that for 550. Guys, that sounds like a pretty good deal, actually, for some of the places



Dave M 28:51

Well, we've got we've got to make a quick sale because we need with the test. It costs \$4,000 a month to keep betting That tumor center



Dave S 29:02

right right so we



Dave M 29:03

need we need to get the text out of here quit so we decided to get their sellable property in the front where they can build like between four and six homes so they want to buy that. Oh wow. And then the back to acres it's all Woods wow it's a pretty place it's good house too. Yes, I just finished painting but



Dave S 29:31

dang you're doing some serious work



Dave M 29:34

now we had to get it done.



Dave S 29:37

Nice well let's uh let's bring it back to the you know, we're talking about the die so so we've got a resource the flight fishing time journal has some of the stuff that you know we're not going to go into here I mean, what else would you you know talk about you know, with material dying is what why would you want to do it now if all the wholesale companies are there still people doing it other than yourself?



Dave M 29:56

Oh, there's a lot of people that that are And they just have fun with it. But it's it's, you can get colors. You can get shades of reds or purples and blues that aren't available. And it just by mixing colors and when you're in for example, when I when I dyed materials for the wholesale companies they have samples and you've got to be bad on those samples or they just they just they don't want know that colors just move too far off and I go Come on, give me a break. Wow. No, it's it's it's a little different. It's different. You know, most people don't tie flies, they don't fish. They're just workers. But it's it's tough to match certain colors from companies that So, one night I went in there and I pulled the sample cards off and put new sample samples of much stuff in it. You don't know what dyes they were purchasing these materials from another company, and you don't know what type of dyes are using. Yeah. So it's, it's hard to match but when you're dyeing materials for those companies, I like to blend colors. Usually two or three up to five different colors. That's five is kind of uncommon, but purple shades I usually do. Two or three, maybe four colors. It's It's fun, it's fun. It's not real expensive, because you can purchase dyes now over the internet. And some of them cost that you know, an ounce of dye cost \$5 and announce a dye crop probably died three or four pounds have been terrible. In certain colors that darker colors need especially like black, you need more. as a as a shades get darker, you need a little bit more dye. But most of the time I'm I'm only using an eighth to 16th of a teaspoon for the Fed feathers and furs that I need. You know, I just do small quantities for myself. And then when I do bulk it'll be a teaspoon or a tablespoon of dye. That's why we buy large quantities. You know, poundage wise, but for the for the guy at home. They can purchase all this stuff online and there's lots, there's lots of videos on dine. Most of the videos that I've seen, they use just vinegar, white vinegar, and you can use that but you have to use key You got to bring the temperature up 170 to 180 degrees to set the die. And it really doesn't set that well. And so that's why I tell people to try to try to get acidic acid. At least that and if they can get muriatic acid, which they can get at the bricks dollars and, and paint shops. That's, you know, hydrochloric that really sets a dime, you just need a few drops of that in the water. You know, maybe a quarter of a teaspoon or something like that, that boasts the color blues don't work well with it because it turns them green but mostly other colors, oranges, yellows, orange, reds, purples in black. That's the way to

go with that stuff. And it's not that expensive.



Dave S 33:52

Yeah, yeah, gotcha. Okay, so, so let me run through this just to make sure just to roughly the process, you know, Correct me where I'm wrong but so I mean you basically let's say I have this chicken you know I've got some feathers hackle cape or whatever I can mix that in with you got some like a 30% vinegar mix with sulfuric acid and then the die and then mix those together and in on like me throw it in a pot on the stove to 160 degrees and then toss in your feathers and leave him in there for a few minutes or is that kind of what we're talking about here?



Dave M 34:26

Yeah, you don't you don't need to mix acid you're either gonna use you're even gonna use Nero muriatic acid for example, or or vinegar base acid so you don't need to mix the two. I use stainless steel and because he acid to affect aluminum especially you're out of town so it'll start you'll see the bubble start coming out of the out of the aluminum It'll just eat right through it. Wow. So I use stainless steel and I tell people I said you know go to Goodwill, they got lots of stainless steel pots, they're typically I use a two gallon pot. Doesn't matter how much water you put the diet and it's going to be absorbed in the material. And what what it takes two minutes or 15 minutes, the dyes going to be absorbed no matter no matter the size of the pot, you know, quart size pot or half gallon sized pot. I use when I do just small amounts of fur or a dozen feathers or maybe a golden pheasant Crescent I want to die a certain color and those those words so I got a I got a lot of stuff. And as far as stainless steel because I'm like I said I've been dying for feathers For 45 plus years, it's probably 50 years.



Dave S 36:05

Right? Right. So so so you get the stainless steel pot and then when you have your hackles, remind me again what what the steps are just kind of quickly what are the steps. So you have well



Dave M 36:16

what do you get when you get your materials you want to I use Darren to wash them off. So you got to wash your materials off wetting them, and then heat your water, you got to have a good thermometer and bring your water up to I put the acid in first especially male

attic, you've got to put that in cold water. You don't want hot water, but I usually in the two gallon container, I put that a gallon of water in there, add my acid, and then I bring the temperature up once it's past like 130 and then 30 140 degrees when it's kind of hot to the finger. Then I'll add my Die. And I'll start for like a minute. Make sure it's all dissolved because it's powder, powder die, there's some liquids that you can use, like red. And then once I get up to 160 165 degrees, I'll put my materials in there and start stirring them and then check the temperature. When it gets to about 170. Done, I'll shut the stove off and store the materials every couple of minutes. And of course, like black, anything black out, bring up to about 180 and let that sit for a half hour, take the materials out, and then I'll usually do it another time. Add a little bit more black dye, heat it back up with the materials in there. So it doesn't have a brown brown. Green tinge to it. But that's about the only color that is the blacks probably difficult in getting it done on the first time for for amateurs. So I usually just tell people I said Do it, do it twice,



Dave S 38:18

twice and then and then once they've been in there for a certain amount of time and they're looking, I mean, how do you know when they're ready to be pulled out,



Dave M 38:26

you know, yellows and easy colors. So you know, you can look in there, it's yellow in three minutes or five minutes, you can get a deeply yellow if you leave it in there for 15 or 20 minutes Orange is the same way. It's the same way. You know, you can pull out individual feathers, put them through a paper towel and shake them around and within a minute this while they're drying, he can look at him. Well is that red really deep enough for that might take a little bit longer. So you can just read Heat, you know, turn the stove back on and bring the temperature of the water back up and then just let it soak is once you figure out the amount of dye per inches of feathers, and like I said if there's, say six inches of Sterling saddle hackler net tackle, only use an eighth of a teaspoon. At at most. That's not very much. And when you get these ounce containers, you're probably getting maybe 12 to 15 eight of us bowls in there. So it's, you know, it's inexpensive. And like I said, I play around like one of my purples I'll use hot pink, blue and then purple. And I get a really beautiful color, especially on this thing as I get. All those colors are on the neck, you'll see pink, you'll see the blue streaks and you'll see the purple. I just don't let it sit in purple. All that long, maybe a minute.



Dave S 40:17

So that's, that's the thing is the longer you last set, the longer it the dye takes effect. And then once you're finished and you think you have the right color when you pull it out, what do you do? Do you just set it on some paper? How do you dry it?



Dave M 40:28

Well, you rinse, yeah, you rinse it off. you rinse it off and warm tap water. And then I just like on capes, I just hang them. I've got a I've got a clip wire and I just hang them, let it dry. And once I let them dry for about for about a day and then I press them in between a phone book so they're nice and flat. That's uh, you know, we used to use cardboard and put But Brits on them with a fan. And that would that would draw them out real good to one of one I did hundreds of at a time. You know, we laid boards or, you know, something heavy on these cardboard.



Dave S 41:16

So it sounds like a pretty, pretty fun process. You know, I mean, it's like, you're kind of like a little mad scientist in there making your own, you know, color and Oh, yeah. And you can, you know, that's a good thing is although the wholesale market has tons of colors, I mean, you could still come up with something that's unique. And it's just like flying, right? I mean, you're tying your own flies. And this is like, one step further to creating the colors and being part of the whole process. Right.



Dave M 41:42

Well, in that in a sense, that's why people purchase supplies from me because the colors that I use, I mean, their cash rate went way up. And I tell him, I said it's it's probably the style that they If you didn't use jumbo caulk, you know, you bought flies that didn't have gentle caucus, that's that's real important for me all the steel that flies at least because those are really essential on pretty much all the patterns that I've developed. I've just seen of, you know, 10 or 20% increase in the number of fish taken on a fly and when you've got customers, that's a good thing about having a fly shop. You can experiment in these customers, your your experiments, they go out and they come back and they say, God that fly work and so it's going to be in the box. I developed a lot of flies that didn't, didn't catch hardly anything or nothing. And then there's just every once in a while you hit a you hit a fly that just starts hammering the steelhead or trout.



Dave S 42:55

And that's cool. I you mentioned that the shop I wanted to bring it back to that just quickly. Because you talked about I think it was it was 1969 right you started the shop my flies and you're kind of at your house I mean can you take us through where to go from there Did you actually open up eventually? Because I remember Shui talking john show he was on the past episode I remember him talking about you know hanging out your your shop and stuff. And so did you have did you move that store into bigger place and then and then what happened over time?

D

Dave M 43:25

Well, what what happened? I went it was it was primarily there was no business in Eugene just like Bill hunt, the Old River guide center. So I I started a mail order business and it started growing probably 70 to 73 studied that climb. And I ran some ads in flight magazine and STS, which were real bad. And so I started getting a customer base and it was 200 And then 400 people in when Paul Jorgensen came out to fish with me on the north on pa in 1975, he brought the owner of fly fisherman's bookcase with him and the Vice President and Vice President. Sound Melbourne and Phil. A few months later, after they were looking at all the stuff in my shop, and of course, I had three acres behind my house. And I had these flight pins with all these roosters and my neighbors hate my neighbors hated because those birds just corrode all the time. But Sam came out unbeknownst in October, and he just had a blank check knocked on the door that 730 at night and open the door and Harry's standing there and he's got this blank check. He said I'm buying the out And so he looked at all the materials and he said we can sell all the stuff because he goes even though we process our own materials, and we got nothing like this, and so we boxed it all up the next day and he wrote me a check and I signed this contract that I couldn't compete in the mail order business for a couple of years. And it was a it was a big chat. And so I I stuck that money in savings and the next year I flew back. I knew where some prominent wholesale failures were. So I flew back to New York and went out on Long Island and went to this for a year and I just couldn't believe it was massive 10s of thousands of skins in there, and I bought Kava stuff and then I went down to Canada. Got a bunch of Chinese capes that just come into America for the first time. So I bought 700 or some 750 of those and I just started the I bought a bunch of seal 40 pounds to seal I bought a couple of polar bear heights and probably had those and I bought 100 Jungle Kok max. And at that time they were, they were almost, you know, super difficult. And then I got into salmon fly tying materials in a little bit after I met Jorgensen. And it took it took time for people to get this stuff started. So in 1977, I opened the shop up in Salem, Oregon. And And then from there, I went back and once my contract was up, I went back The mail order business. And that was the only way that that supply shop could last. And I built thousands and thousands of fly rods over the years, and then eventually in early 90s, and I started making my own flight rails and I had a

warehouse got a 2000 square foot warehouse where a process materials had a rod room upstairs, so I did. Can I did Ken fly rods every day, six days a week.



Dave S 47:33

Wow. And you did a lot of so that was your thing. You were a custom. Just like with the materials. You were building custom rods custom and that way



Dave M 47:44

you had to make you had to make money. Yeah. No, I had. I don't know. I had 556 employees and he had to bank money. Oh, wow. Yeah. The rods the rods were the you know, every every rod that I sold per day, and like I said I was selling. I was selling way more than 10 rods a day. I just couldn't build it fast enough.



Dave S 48:09

No kidding. Who is your Who were your or what was the name of the fly shop?



Dave M 48:13

Was macneice's fly shop



Dave S 48:15

macneice's. Okay. And in Salem, that's the one shoot I think was talking about. And then who were the six employees?



Dave M 48:21

Oh, they're just various people over the over the years. Yeah. Brad burden I he was one of my favorite employees. And then I had George tuki, who was a retired school principal. And he was always dependable because he would show up for work on time. Some of the other employees were always late.



Dave S 48:49

It was the other official.



Dave M 48:52

Well, wasn't that was always but sometimes they're without fishing. But getting back to the fishing point. When I opened that business and 77 there wasn't much of a steelhead run yet in the North santiam. But the next year in 78, it was 15,000, almost 16,000 fish Kamal limit falls in that river was loaded. And that that really helped my bottom line because I was making no money in that shop. Because I had to wait another year before I could, I could actually sell mail or gas, right. And because that's, that was the only way there wasn't enough anglers in the Willamette Valley that support a fly shop. Unless you were mailorder.



Dave S 49:46

Right.



Dave M 49:47

Wow, that just it was just real, real hard. I think over the years, it must have been at least four or five fly shops that failed sale.



Dave S 49:56

No kidding.



Dave M 49:58

Yeah, there's and they're all gone.



Dave S 50:00

Yeah, there's Are there any shops right now and saying



Dave M 50:04

no. Hmm.



Dave S 50:06

Is that because the well I guess it's just a tough you don't have Yeah. What why is that you

think Salem and there's one in Corvallis?



Dave M 50:13

Well Well, there's one. There's a shop here in Albany. Oh, I go, I go in there. What's up every, you know, every couple of weeks at Twin Rivers, a nice little shop. Yeah. But it's, it's, you know, I sold everybody in Salem, I sold him rods, reels, lines. And before my shop, I sold my shop at 1994. My wife had cancer and she passed away so I sold the shop and just maintain the warehouse. So I did materials, the rods and the reels out there. for another four years and then then I went into the landscaping business, no kidding Portland and did that for 10 years and then kind of kind of dropped off a bit. And then finally retired here a couple of years ago and still have I still have a couple of landscaping accounts just to keep money rolling in so I could buy some more cane rods.



Dave S 51:36

So the landscape out of everything you've talked about since date to whatever its bed 65 here, you know, landscape that seems like the outlier. Why landscaping?



Dave M 51:46

Well, I just love it. I'd love to work hard. I mean, that's the one thing and the fly shop. I had a discussion at one of Ed Rice's sports shows but he wanted me to speak and there were all these fly shop owners there. And I said, the problem with you guys is I said, how many people work 18 hours a day? Nobody does that. Well, you know, I know Craig Yeah. Craig Matthews. You know, I I haven't been back there for a long time. But I would go in the back room and you know, he was stirring the soup just like Bob Borden and hairline used to do. And Bob worked long hours. I mean, it was he wanted he wanted nearly 100% stock. You know, back orders don't make you money. So you got to work long hours. Well, what I built can rods a day, imagine how many hours that takes to build 10 rods.



Dave S 52:50

No kidding. Have you always been a you know, 18 hours a day? And with that, I mean, how many hours are you sleeping? Has that always been your thing?



Dave M 52:58

Well, I wouldn't say every day With 18 hours, but the longest the longest times were

probably that but 1010 or 12 hours was pretty much an average day. And you know, I skipped out a little bit. I'd go bass fishing. I had some property on the Willamette and John Chewy would go, Oh, you're down at the bar. Or, you know, you're out bass fishing, and I said, Well, I got to get away for now. Because I love the bass fish. That's one of my favorite things. Just from childhood, fishing the ponds. They're awesome stadium.



Dave S 53:40

And now a quick word from our sponsor. Here you go. F TJ angler has a great fall edition that's out right now. You can find Lucas Stevens who visits Winston fly rods in the fall edition for an insider look at any rare interview with writer Ted Leeson. Someone I hope to have on the podcast soon. Patrick Wall pays homage to Harry the mirrors tied in hand Atlantic salmon flies displayed in the Margaree Sim Museum boutique and takes us to the pond with a masterclass in Stillwater. Dennis Dobble travels to Scotland in search of Atlantic salmon. Plus F TJ deputy editor Henry Hughes with a mysterious fly fishing story and Nora SC with her poem, no business which I actually tried to read unsuccessfully a few podcasts ago. I'm not sure if you remember hearing that so stay tuned till the end. I'm going to try to read this one again and see if I can come through come through with the win here. I'd love it. If you could press pause right now head over to F TJ angler calm and subscribe so you get the next issue delivered right to your inbox. That's F TJ angler.com. God fishing calm can be your trusted source of information with access to the world's best fishing trips. Their sole purpose is to help you plan the most authentic fishing adventure while making sure it fits within your budget. If you want to find out which have our trips we have available right now you can head over to wet fly swing comm slash got fishing and enter email and you'll get updated when the next trip is available. And you can see we have gone there. We have pretty amazing Yucatan trip coming up here in the not too distant future. So if you're interested in and heading out for some sign in salt, head over there and sign up for the email there. Brian, the crew definitely have us covered here at fishing. You can also give them a call if you have any specific questions at 208-630-3373. Okay, back to the show. JOHN shoe he was. I mean, I think mentors and things like that. It seems like you were a pretty big mentor for John early on. He's become kind of a big name right in the fly fishing space.



Dave M 55:52

He was just a kid. It was like several. There is at least there was at least for these four or five young teenagers it needs to come in the shop and all of them went into fly fishing business one way or the other some. One, one became a guide, one word for gamakatsu. And that's how I got my fly hooks, which we haven't talked about. That's how I got my flight books. The Blue Heron spade hooks, is because I knew Doug was working there and

he he said, Yeah, let's get this going. And guy full heart. He became a fishing guide, guided in the lodge in Alaska where I got it out of and then eventually he went to camp Chaka, and then to the Bahamas. And John Hsu he was, you know, he was probably 1415 when this parent when his mother would bring him by the shop, just drop him off. He was just a little he was just a little pest all day long. But I taught him you know, he learned to tie flies and that's why these flies look very similar to mine. You know, real good, polite tire knowledgeable guy. And we chat. We chat, often. Text often.



Dave S 57:23

Do you still you still talk to John quite a bit?



Dave M 57:26

Oh, yeah. Yeah, he texts me a number of times per month. He's out, out and about and they'll see a butterfly and take a picture of it. He goes, What's this and in fact, this is a funny story last last year, he came down to the house and he goes up, he was looking at materials and stuff because I want to see your butterflies and he had no idea. And I, I opened up my metal containers which are which I hold 24 drawers and start opening up John calls. Oh my god. There's thousands of butterflies. Here I go. Let's go upstairs. He's like took him upstairs night started open up. Pick it up,



Dave S 58:15

right.



Dave M 58:16

Good. I got John. I've got I've finally got it. 40,000 butterflies not more than Wow. That's so I said I didn't tell anybody because it's kind of like a nerd thing. Yeah, but when I went out fishing that's, you know, my kids, Mike. My kids have really enjoyed collecting. And I raised nine, nine kids for a while, you know, over the over the years and five of them are kind of stepchildren. Yeah. But they're all real. They're all real great. We get together and have our birthdays. And the boys want to learn how to hunt during their 30. So that's cool. That's one thing I can say. Fishing was one of my subjects, butterflies were another subject. And hunting was the other thing that I did bird hunting. And so why did bird everything? Yeah, they gave deer and antelope and and yeah I hunted, hunted extensively. I got it up in Alaska.



Dave S 59:31

Oh, wow. Wow. And that all comes back. Yeah, I mean obviously you at the start you talked about I think it was your grandfather right that was that the person that kind of got it? Yeah. Is that who you when you look at how they got you started in the outdoors is that that was the person.



Dave M 59:46

Well, he passed away just before I was born. Okay, but the one thing he left, the one thing he left was his tackle. Oh and grandpa. I mean, there was on the scene. of the garage. There were all these cane rods. And nearly I mean they were huge cane rods, they're cheap what Leonard's or pains or anything like that, and he bought them. Remember, it was some hardware store in Wichita, Kansas, and he would buy him by the desert, and then go down to the Rogan. Almost all these rods were broken. The tips were broken. So he apparently caught some. I don't know if he jerked too hard or that he apparently caught a lot of fish and I saw pictures of my father when he was young on the McKenzie with my grandfather, and he had a permit to catch 250 trout. I believe it was a week to feed the poor people during the Depression at church. in Eugene, and there was a photograph of a rope going between the tents. He just had a permanent tent camp up above. Rainbow on Mackenzie River, way up the Mackenzie. And these these fish there was tinned fish and it said 70 pounds plus and that's the kind of trout that Winona Mackenzie and I got to I got to see him in 5960 and then they just started disappearing. You couldn't tell trout over 14 inches, so I don't know why these big trout disappeared. Somebody was killing him. Yeah. Crazy. And I there was a general side Perkins that lived up above Mackenzie bridge and I I caught worms for him and he gave me 20 bucks for a gallon of worms and I went up and stayed at his house his cabin for a couple of days and he went out there with the bobber and slipped the worms out and put about four or five worms on a big hub. And I saw this trap that was laying on the shoreline. It was as big as the steelhead. And it swam out grabbed the worm foam 25 inch fish 2526 inches. They were there, especially on the South Fork and McKenzie,



Dave S 1:02:28

what he said Do you still have any of those old? Any of your old grandpa's cane? Roger any of that stuff?



Dave M 1:02:35

Yeah, there's still some hanging around. And I got the neat thing is I've got a lot of his

rocker replies. I sent a picture to John Chewy a couple of months ago. And I said look at the heads on the slides. I mean, they the heads were just huge, unless the use of three feet of Nine Mile thread. I mean, it's a small size. Double, you know, rojgar special and it's got this. They're all that's that's a style back then. And that was what Harry Lumir was telling me when he did the flies for Trey Combs. But he said, Well, Frank Amato wanted big heads on the fly. So I just wrapped a bunch of thread on that. And then you see, said, you know, hate to say glass. So then you see sick glasses twice. And you go, Whoa.



Dave S 1:03:31

Yeah. Yeah, I'm glad you. I'm glad you brought up Sid, Glasgow, Glasgow, because I we had I want to touch on that a little bit. But before we do, I had one comment or one question on here. I wanted to get back to you just it's one that I've been wanting to ask you about, you know, and this I and I asked this because I think it maybe helps people understand a little throughout, you know, kind of the industry and kind of things and I'm not sure exactly the breaking the law or how I think you got the Do you get in trouble importing or something like that? Can you talk about that? I'm not sure where I heard that from but is there any truth to that to that whole story?



Dave M 1:04:08

Well, I took up I was hunting, I was getting a trip in Alaska, and I took a Boone and Crockett caribou. And we got stuck. We had Mount Katmai erupted so we were stuck out in the on the Aleutians for three or four extra days. And I brought my cape in, brought it down to Salem, and the guy centered off of the cape came back and the hair bunch of hair was gone. So the next year I was doing a Busan in caribou Hmm. And I stopped by a taxidermist and he said he could get me a real nice cape, so I gave him 250 bucks. And I happened to ask him, I said, Do you get any polar bear hides in? I mean, legal stuff. Yeah. And he said, Well, every once in a while, so a couple of weeks later, I got a phone call from a couple in English and they had a hide for sale, but it was \$10,000. And I, you know, it's a head clause and I said, No, I can't do that. And then shortly after that, I got a call from another guy. And he said, Well, he said, My brother's got this tape. And he goes, I'm a guide, and when I go to the Brooks Range, 200 all sheet. I'll pick the Kpop and, and bring it back and send it to you. So we talked a little bit. My wife was basically dying of cancer at the time, but you know, but anyway, I told him after, after my wife passed away wasn't interested in I was thinking about this close everything happened. And we had a five year old daughter just taking care of her. Anyway, he sent me the cake. Unbeknownst I just walked into the warehouse and there this box was at the at the doorstep. So I opened it up and I go this is a real scam, because it's a fresh, freshly killed bear. And so the next day that the fence showed up nine, Rick showed up. And they they had a search warrant just

for that one box. And I said, there it is. And the guy looks at the box and goes, whoa, you didn't cut it up or anything. And I said, No, that's an illegal scan. And so they ended up taking everything out of the warehouse, either nine Suburbans. They took all my wreck. They destroyed my guess for my customer list. And the guy goes out of business as of today, really. And later, a year later, they found that there was no that I didn't do anything wrong. So they just dropped it. And they didn't charge me for anything. And I said, Well, you destroyed my business. For no reason. You didn't even have a warrant to take all this stuff. You took all my files, you took everything and you destroyed him to see and, but two years, well, a year and a half later, all of a sudden I started getting phone calls from my customers. And they were really upset. And they said these agents came into our house, they just tore our house apart. lays So what I found out here not many years back, I had a Supreme Court Judge retired that fly fishes and he brought a polar bear half a polar bear head over to my house to die up and it was a real real old one and it was a brain scan scan so it didn't tie up very well I had to pin it to a screen and and soak it, soak it in a tank and and then let it dry but it was real gummy and tacky. And anyway, he said, Give me your records on that. And about two weeks later, after I got the job done, he came over to the house and he said, these are the records that they withheld. And they, you know, federal agents, even though the Fish and Wildlife they couldn't identify anything in the shop. I mean, they don't know anything about those, those nine guys They know anything about wildlife. They didn't know anything about feathers. They didn't know anything about deer here, elk here. I said, geez, you should hire me. I know all this stuff. But they said I was selling Grizzly, which was Grizzly hackle. And they and eagle and Eagle that we sold was just great turkey Marabou, natural turkey Marabou dyed yellow for the eagle Atlantic salmon flies. Very seldom did I ever sell that I just added in the catalog. But the grizzly course this is the most popular hackle there is I sold tons of it and the Supreme Court judge in Oregon thought I was selling grizzly bear and that's really bad. You can't sell grizzly bear. And that's what they charged me for not being an eagle. So they try got a felony



Dave S 1:10:00

They charge you for selling grizzly bear but you never sold grizzly bear you sold Grizzly hackle



Dave M 1:10:07

Yeah. And I didn't know this until a few years ago.



Dave S 1:10:11

Wow.



Dave M 1:10:12

In my, my daughter said, Well, we've got to get we've got to get an attorney and and get this expunged. Yep, you know, your felony experience and I said, you know, it's too late here I am almost seven years old. I said, you know, I'm not going to travel the world.



Dave S 1:10:28

No.



Dave M 1:10:30

And, you know, spend thousands and thousands of dollars getting this retracted. Nope, not worth it.



Dave S 1:10:39

Crazy. So you have a felony conviction because of grisly which they basically it sounds like the people that were on your case were totally were not knowledgeable and they just kind of hacked hack their way to kind of ruin your business.



Dave M 1:10:54

Well, I looked in. I looked in the catalog, I had a cat. I've got an old catalog. One of my mail order catalogs and I looked in there, you can see the grizzly hackle. But of course it says Grizzly on it. And this woman that was the lead lawyer for the government. They never, she never handed those the paperwork over at all. So I got nothing. We had my attorney sat there. He was crying in front of the judge. And then the judge told him to leave. And then the judge. Yeah. And so they, you know, took him out, and he just chewed me out. But he didn't. He said, you're going to you're going to suffer. I'm going to make you suffer and boy, did he make me suffer? Well, I didn't do well, too. I had to work. almost full time. Two years. For cleanup crews. Well, I don't know what to tell you. What I do is bad. Yeah, that judge wanted me in prison and boy, he he did everything 111 particular day, which was at the end, I was getting really close to having like 1600 hours in I think I was like 1585 or 1590 or something like that. And I was working at the Salem penitentiary

pruning trees since I'm a landscape. And they shut they shut the prison down just so I wouldn't get through that day's work. What year was this? 9097 through 99



Dave S 1:12:43

Yeah, this is long time ago. So 2000 So yeah, this is over 25 years ago. Gotcha. So Oh, yeah. So basically, I just, I mean, it seems crazy. Dave. I mean, you you It sounds like you just got totally screwed by I mean, again, the government right? I mean, you got screwed by this thing. And I mean, what is You're out of all this stuff. What What is your What is your take on? I mean, what is your take home for us or anybody listening here? I mean, what's the message here? Is there any? Is there any good? Is there anything to learn from this?



Dave M 1:13:10

Well, I was in the papers all over the United States. I mean, that's, that's what they that's what they wanted. They wanted. They wanted people to know, you know, it was like, you know, a couple other businesses were hit over the years. But this this was a major thing. I mean, I had people calling me from all over the United States. Jesus saw your name in the paper or on the news.



Dave S 1:13:39

Wow. How does how does all this feel you know? How did it feel that how does it feel now for you all that stuff that's gone down?



Dave M 1:13:49

Well, I don't I mean, it doesn't bother me anymore. I mean, it did. It did. When I was working, because I knew I knew the judge was on my back. He would call the parole people. In fact, they became my friends. And so it was it was kind of a this is such an odd odd deal.



Dave S 1:14:15

This is such a crazy story because I mean literally, it's almost it's funny now because I mean, it's fly fishing, right? I mean, literally, we're talking about tying flies and you're talking about selling fly tying materials. I mean, you're not talking about you know what I mean, some very harm. It's just crazy thing and the fact that you have a felony charge

isn't that blows me away?



Dave M 1:14:37

Yeah, yeah. It I mean, it's, in a sense, it hurt but you know, I was I had my landscaping business at the time and I mean, that's the reason why I got out of the fly fishing business. 97 I just said, You know, I was still I still made reels and rods and did did some material. Work for Some of my old clients over the years but I decided, man, I want a new career. No kidding. And I always took care of my yard and so I saw a job opening in Portland and went to work for this company. And six months later, I was the foreman and and we had wonderful big huge mansions and worked up there for a couple of years and they decided to go on my own. And so I got some great accounts and did that for 10 years or 10 years at least 10 years and then just slowly you know, slowly move to one account away another kind of way and yeah,



Dave S 1:15:48

that's, that's what it comes down to. And then he hired you basically went into the the outdoor into the landscaping base because of that, that whole felony thing. I mean, that got you that surge Yeah, that makes a lot of sense.



Dave M 1:16:01

Yeah, that was kind of uh, well,



Dave S 1:16:04

all right. Well, I appreciate you Dave clear in the air, or at least explaining that because you know, when you hear things out there, I can't remember who I talked to about it. But somebody had mentioned that and I'm glad I, I've got the story documented from your side, you know, on audio. I've had a, you know, this show, I did



Dave M 1:16:18

both. I mean, there's, there's sides to the story. But yeah, I was shocked when, when this retired judge came, and he had here I've got a half inch of paperwork, and he comes with an inch, you know, probably 45 pages. In it, I'm going through it and he's got this. He's got his highlight. marker, and he said, this is what they charge you for. And I was looking on it a lot.



Dave S 1:16:48

No kidding. You had any laughs



Dave M 1:16:52

Yeah. Any laughs and he said, That's real serious stuff. But like I said, you know, way, way back Yeah, so there's no reason to even move and do anything about it. Now there isn't. Well, let's get on with glass. Oh,



Dave S 1:17:06

yeah. There you go. You see, we were thinking like, you know, I've been thinking about Sid for a while. So yeah, let Tell me about let's start off just with, you know, I mean, you're writing a book about his book, right? I mean, to tell me about maybe just start us off with the book. How did that come to be? And why said because he's not well, Jean guy, right.



Dave M 1:17:26

Yours. You know, I met Sid back in 1975. And it was just later, probably 77 when I started my business, and that was when I started getting those materials from Africa. Sid didn't have a lot of stuff. A lot of materials, and you go to his house. And it was spotless. And you wouldn't tell he was a fly fisherman except he had an African painting on the wall. And that was it was



Dave S 1:18:01

it was mostly Africa. What is the painting?



Dave M 1:18:03

Well it was it was Atherton who was a real well known fly fisherman and fly tire and and he had painted a picture for the anglers club and they did the prints and in said had this and of course a friend of mine in Colorado has it sitting above this flight time desk now. beautiful picture of Atlantic salmon lane across fishing that that's the only thing you could see in SIDS house. Everything was put away. Everything was spotless. And very few of I know there's only a couple of people that ever saw him tie apply. He was kind of a neat guy. I was warned. from West drain, who has a good friend of his West said, Don't ever ask for anything, don't ever ask for a fly. And he said, you know, be real truthful with him. He

said, If you want to give him materials, give him materials, but just don't ask for a flyer or anything like that. He said, If he wants to give you something he'll give it to. And so I would take materials up to him. Every, every year, I'd go to this Ed Rice's sports show in Seattle. And I would always stop by, you know, I'm up there for five days. So I'd stopped by SIDS house once or twice during that time. And we just sit and chat until one o'clock in the morning about materials. And then after he passed away, he wrote me a letter, a little note card just a few days before he passed away, thanking me for the materials and You know, friendship is just a short little, little note. And, and by the time I got it, I'd already gotten a call that said, passed away and not that guy just wrote this in. But it was about 2005, I started calling his young friend Wentworth and I started chatting with him. And so I was recording what Dick was saying, about set. So I started a little notebook, and I'd call him about every two weeks and we talked for an hour, I thought I should, I should either write some articles or write a book. And then I remember this thing that in the same way said, because you don't want to write about somebody that died for 10 years or 20 years and maybe even 30 years is better. And of course, now it's 30 536 years since he passed away in 83. And so I started putting together as much material and of course, most of his friends are gone. Except for the youngest ones like myself and a couple of younger guys that that knowing much better than I did, because I lived right there. But I try to gather as much information and as not a lot of sit in most of the stuff that's been on the internet for years is not true. You know, it's misconceptions. And the one good thing I got was dick Wentworth got pretty much all of SIDS collection, it's rods and reels, it's flies, and I was able to attain several hundred cities fly so that was the reason why I want to do the book. I want to show people just just how different his flies are. I mean, his orange Heron the orange Heron that's in tray comes book of 76. As is totally different from an orange Heron, he would have tied 1980 I mean, if you know like when you catch a butterfly, you put the type locality down and all that. And you've got subspecies, and I just figure SIDS, orange Heron, soul doc and some of the other stuff. They're just there's a whole bunch of subspecies. He changed those flies around with the materials. And just like dick said, we didn't have a lot of stuff back then. And so we had to alter. He said, sometimes we use teal for the throat or orange hair. Sometimes we use Guinea. If we had other times, we use other stuff. Cindy is Sold back. The original fenders that he used for that were quite seagull flank feathers they did pick up on the beach and he diam yellow until I got no other other materials like slopping or something like that. Gotcha. Wow. And he, you know he'd pick up hair and feathers and I got up another one of his friends said he had ordered Karen from Mussina which is a company that vineyard acquired back in the 60s but he said here's an order for 3000 and feathers 1955 1957 19 59.3 every two years is orange Heron came out in 15 And he went up on Deer Creek and Al Knutson was watching him fish now out candidates and told me the story said, Now watch this guy sits down to the really top five steelhead. He said that was something back in those days for a guy to catch five steelhead and then said said handed him a fly. He said I never seen anything

like this before and that's when Trey comes, was doing his first book, steelhead trout 19. He started that book probably in the mid to late 60s. And he contacted Knutson and afternoons and if there was somebody else that he knew that was a really good slide tire that he needed to interview or get flies from. An algos. Yeah, there's a guy up in forks, Washington and he He ties his incredible flies, never seen anything like it. And that's how I've got the letter, though, that the correspondence between Sid and Craig comes back to 1966. And it's interesting. When I talk to my talk to pray about obtaining glasses, flies, there's a different story between what Glasgow told me and what Trey told me. Because Glasgow didn't want to pay the price for the book, because it goes, I don't sell flies. And I know if my flies are in a book, people are going to ask me about buying flies. I don't do that. And ruin my hobby. But there's a there's a lot of history.



Dave S 1:25:52

In the book you're putting together are you covering like, what is it like his whole life or is it just like a section?



Dave M 1:25:59

Well, there's a There's not a lot that I really know. You know, I'm just going to have a short chapter about us about himself and his life. You know, his family, his father, his mother, his grandfather and they came out right at the turn of the century from Norway, and his dad got a job at this private Fish Hatchery there in Washington and that's, you know, that's where said caught his first deal. It was we were laughing because I told I told him I said, I caught my first steelhead. When I was. I caught two steelhead one. When I was six years old. Six years old. I just turned six. And said goes well, I beat you. I caught my first steelhead when I was five. There you go. And with that, it he was he was a really he was a gentleman. There were people They didn't like him. All right. I was talking. I was talking to a couple old gents. And they all he was an arrogant that, you know, he didn't he didn't come out. I mean he had when he walked into a room, people came to attention. I mean, he was an important figure. But he was kind of a recluse. I mean, people didn't really know it.



Dave S 1:27:37

When did he so the period where he was really? Well, I mean, I guess there was multiple decades there. I mean, he's known for his flight patterns. I mean, what do you think what makes his patterns unique? It seems like he stands out over everybody else. And why do you think that is?



Dave M 1:27:52

Well, it's a slimness of his patterns. It's like the Catskill tines. I mean, it's it's the fly set. were sold in stores back then we're big, thick, shinier body. We're wool body flies. And then all of a sudden here you see these, these little key toothpicks. And you go, Wow, why would a fish even hit that? can't even see it. It's so thin. Yeah. Now Oh, I got mama deer coming up for food. Oh, cool. Yeah, we got deer 13. Okay, get out here and pet him.



Dave S 1:28:31

Yeah, I wish we had I wish we had this video so we could see the deer you're feeding. you're feeding out of your hand there.



Dave M 1:28:37

I'll send I'll send you a picture one that I'm pedic scratching his neck echo. Anyway, the remarkable. I mean, you can imagine the stuff in this collection of flies. There's some of the neatest stuff in it. If you don't have the feathers in hand, you could you couldn't figure out what the hell feathers he used on this flight there was a middle and I was looking at it, it's close. It's just a silver body and it's got a little bit of white polar bear. And then it's got a couple of black feathers on top of it that are kind of like teeny mini ostrich plumes. And of course I knew what it was because I got a hooded merganser skin. And it's the it's the head feathers from put in an organza. And there's you know, they're white and black but at the very back of it, all the feathers are black and he put that on top this flight so I took the fly down to the McKenzie put it in the water guy just beautiful. But it's it's so slender. And then, you know, said the neat thing is I there's not very many flights, maybe five flies that he tied in the Before I move to forks and they resemble the colors, you know, yellow was a real popular color back then. So they resemble yellow with red, yellow and orange. And they resemble what you see in his soul doctor some of the other flies and they were tied with polar bear. On on see the hooks and once he got two forks in the late 40s he changed his hooks to vineyards and I believe all cop made the vineyard hook. And that's what he's stuck with the rest of his life. He's, I've got his diaries and one one of the dives is his hooked diary. So he's got all the hooks in there and he being the school teacher He takes real critical notes. So he's got what pound of leader for each size and hook that he uses. But looking at his flights when he when he moved to forks, he obtained a couple of books on Atlantic salmon flies. And when he saw cross fields flies in there and some others, he goes, then this is something he told me. He said, When I saw that, that fly right there, in this book, he goes, I can do that. It may be better. And one of the one of the greatest photographs of SIDS flies is in Bates's Linux at last Atlantic salmon book that came out and there's a picture of Preston Jennings, I think that's lady three day Caroline's,

but there's no it's a purple spade that they've got in there. And it's pressing the Jennings glass Oh, and Oh God, the English guy. And they're all just gorgeous.



Dave S 1:32:27

That's cool. What did he, what did he teach? What grade What? Do you know what he did there?



Dave M 1:32:37

When he left, when he left the valley in Washington to go to forks, he, he taught social studies and I think math, and then he went back to he went back to school. I checked with the college up there at Lutheran college and he'd gone back like three, four times. He became vice principal. I talked with a schoolteacher here about probably 10 years ago. And she said I was 23 when I got there. And she goes Mr. glass glass Oh was really strict. And he didn't want to cross that man, when even the kids even said that, because he had a paddle. And he had Well, he wasn't afraid to use. But he was he was vice principal at the time, but he's still, you know, it's a small school. Small Town. You know, there's a few thousand maybe 3000 people there at the time. Yeah. And probably, you know, I would imagine that would range from 700 to 1000. Kids.



Dave S 1:33:50

Right. On the flight tank, I mean, he was obviously one of the greatest slide tires that we know of. I mean, did he have any mentors? How did he learn to do no was it all self taught?



Dave M 1:33:59

No. He was he was self taught. I mean, he looked at those photographs on the book, as well as other people. I mean, not a lot of those great tires from the Catskills. They were self they were self taught or or they got a fly from rube cross and they take it apart and see how he tied it. That's how a lot of people that have been looking at looking at some of the early flies, you know, everybody's slices when they first start tying aren't very good. But today, you know, we just see these unbelievable tires that just pop out of nowhere. And it doesn't take them very long. No, and it you know, it took probably four or five years and then got into this style.



Dave S 1:34:51

What is his style? What would you say his style is? I mean, it's it's low profile low. Is there a name for I guess it's just his Well, it's it's It's it's minimalistic in a sense it's



Dave M 1:35:06

everything is slender you know it's tight he he didn't tie with a bobbin he's nine model which was a thick thread back then but it was like floss when you Polly rosborough use it and a lot of lot of tires. Use it because it was the only you know they didn't use IMO back east they use silk but out here they use nymo I don't know how you can tie up size 16 dry fly with nymo but they did. But he his his heads had a unique shape to it. And they were they're perfectly tapered. And then when Danville came out he got that, of course without a bobbin Danville just wrapped like a teeny teeny thread of floss in his heads. reduced by 20 or 30%. And but comparing the flights that were tied at that time, Sid was just way, way ahead of his years. Maybe 20. Yeah. 2025 years ahead of everybody.



Dave S 1:36:22

Was he fishing for I mean, these flies were for mainly for winter steelhead, or what were the what was he going for?



Dave M 1:36:29

Well, some, you know, when looking, looking at the diaries, they didn't catch. The rivers would come up. The steelhead would move in the pond back out, they caught a lot of the ton a lot of spoon fish, they didn't catch very many fresh fish. It was it was tough, you know, develop that part of that line, and it gave him an idea. 1980s that was in 1948 and it's a lead paint the things on boats and he would, he would paint it on on a silk core, silk line core and make the shooting cuts. It's all written up he's not really good details about shaking hands. He's got his tapered leaders in the hook sizes for every pound test and his wonderful eyes were typically size one on one on one channel had a lot of other appliances that he fish for when a steelhead at Dick's Dick's diaries are really funny. His expressions of of failures and and some of the dates that were were good and you know, one year he said I only caught three steelhead the whole year in a in a bunch of spots. And that was typical. That was typical. They didn't have sinking lines until the 60s.



Dave S 1:38:07

Gotcha. So with those flies since flies or were they more designed for for winter steel or summer steelhead or both?



Dave M 1:38:15

Well both both he fished you know in the in the summer like lucky was saying in this direction and told me he said you never knew what you're going to catch this sea run cutthroat, a jack salmon or a small steelhead and he said the steelhead or summer fish up here small and he said seldom did they get to be four pounds. So he said I like my I like my eight and a half foot pain. And so his summer flies are very sparse, rather unique in all their characters. And then he's got his winter flies which are big, you know, there's no lead on them. There They're just pretty much the same. They've got that arc yellow tag in the in the back from the from the tag forward about a third and then he opens up the floss and then puts a little seal in the air then spin some floss or acid up the body. And so that's that's what most of his slides look like. Okay, and he didn't he didn't very he didn't very much. He's got some big royal coachman's close everybody fish, world coachman's back then because it was the most popular fly in the world. He's got variations of the, you know, variations of the world coach. He's got flies that look like a royal coachman, but you know, they're different colors.



Dave S 1:39:49

Yeah. What's your what's your go to fly for summer steelhead, if you had to pick one for fishing.



Dave M 1:39:57

Well, the one I pretty much used one Time is my purple polar bear. machuca Oh,



Dave S 1:40:03

yeah, yeah, you sent me. That's right. You gave me one of those. You didn't send it You gave me when I met yet the the Albany show? Yeah, I still have that. That's a good



Dave M 1:40:11

yeah, that's, that's Yeah, that's the fly that I fish most of the time.



Dave S 1:40:15

That's it. What's your style of flight time? Would you say I mean if you had that we did talk about Sid style was kind of a minimalist. What would you say your style is? And who was your biggest influence?



Dave M 1:40:30

Well, it you know, I studied that like after 10. I say just flies. And I actually got a set. I got a set of his flies from two different people back in them in the 70s and took photographs of them and then send them back. I guess. I mean, that's the reason why I made my own fishhooks. I didn't like it. Unlike the Partridge flat Flat clips, the flat chain so I took and reformed the shank and then I met Ellen Bramley at Partridge he came out to the shop and say the 1978 and showed him these hooks because they fit the style they would make the fly look better, at least in my in my mind and other people's mind. It was just a slight change in the in the shape of the hook, you know in the shank. Just a little bit, just a little bit more better banned, banned there. And you know, but I used golden pheasant crests for tails. I started dyeing those back in the late 60s all different colors, I bleach them out. So they were getting, you know, pretty close to white and then diam off Different colors. People had never seen that stuff before. But I couldn't even you know, it. I couldn't even sell the stuff when jargon came. When Jorgensen came to the, to my house after our fishing trip with him on the north Umpqua. He was just looking at this stuff and he was gone holy crap. And so he grabbed a whole bunch of stuff, you know, but he grabbed a bunch of steel and, and crashed and took them back with him back to New York.



Dave S 1:42:30

Yeah, that's cool.



Dave M 1:42:32

But you know, this, this style is it's kind of hard to explain it just, I just got I try to fly one day and look really good. And I think that might have been with Paul. He was helping me out with a little bit of stuff and I was watching him type Linux salmon flies that, you know, in the on the unquiet artist, she just finished Daybreak and you fish the dark and the rest of time. It was 95 degrees. And we're out there underneath the trees on a picnic table and he's got all of these Atlantic salmon fly tying materials laid out. He's sitting there cranking up his Atlantic salmon flies and he said someday I'm going to do a book. And these flies will be in the book. Of course I never work is improved on his time substantially. By the time it's salmon fly book came out five or six years later but I got I got some good

methods from him. Yeah. And then watching Harry Darby title for for Atlantic salmon flies and they were beautiful. And I looked at that and then I started collecting salmon flies from England. And that, that just changed the shape of you know, I quit. I quit using Waller chenille and it was mainly floss and feel for the bodies and nice hair. Also, you know different shades of echo said I died and polar bear for the wings or Apple tips for the wings. And most always general



Dave S 1:44:11

What about you ever put any flash in your crystal flash or flashabou in your flies?



Dave M 1:44:16

If I do, it's mainly just like two strands. Yeah, underneath the wing. There's a flag called McNeese madness. It's one of the few that I've ever named after me. And it's, it's got a really good fly for that it shoots and we've got like for this it's got like four to six strands of of two strands of purple and four strands of crystal petal per lesson underneath the white, purple polar bear when Oh wow.



Dave S 1:44:52

That's cool. What's the polar bear? What's the equivalent? You know, you can't get polar bear but what's the closest thing we have to polar bear?



Dave M 1:45:00

Well probably the probably one of the better sets to kiss is the point here on a skunk



Dave S 1:45:07

on a skunk.



Dave M 1:45:09

Yeah, it's it's real similar. It's real similar in texture. And it's still you know, if you get a white one it's still got it still has a sparkle, but it's it. It's the texture. I bought a lot of arctic fox tails years years ago when I first opened my shop, and it was nice on the fly, but that stuff collapses on the body just there's no bounce to it. I mean, it doesn't, it just collapses and it

just kind of the gist of white Halo. And back in those days, we couldn't die up. You know now now you can die it because they've got colorful hair dyes that will penetrate that hard enamel on them.



Dave S 1:45:54

Oh, yeah. Yeah. Huh. So Scott Can Can you get skunk? Pretty easy without just you know, Is that available?



Dave M 1:46:01

Well there's Moscow there's Moscow throws in Idaho and they usually have a dozen or 20 stunk skins there. There's other for years, some Yeah. You just have to look and look up the different failures and go down to the list. And I mean there's a lot of things you know, sometimes they have a damaged audio skin and auto hair courses. One of the, it's probably the best dry fly material there is because of the density and it's in the stuff easy to bleach out. And then dye different shades and mix the shades together. Like I told people, I said, insects aren't just cream. You know, there's a whole bunch of different colors. So when I die up of like tail stuff, I put in, you know, all in blue, little bit of orange, a little bit of pink blues along with differentiate the yellow and then the cream and wind it all up.



Dave S 1:47:05

Cool. Well, Dave, we're gonna get out of here pretty quick this is it's been a great conversation. I'm not sure you know, I know we always leave stuff on the table here but before we get out of here anything I guess a couple questions I have for you one thing would be we talked about a lot of stuff here from you know, all the butterflies we never got into but anything you're kind of most proud of and, you know, things you've done, kind of in the fly fishing and tying space.



Dave M 1:47:31

Well, I you know, I was talking to Joe Rosano here who's doing he's doing some work on the book, a chapter in the book and Intel was saying, Well, you know, you're flies that you hadn't trade cons book, and I said, You know, I wish that book would have come out a decade earlier when I was a better tire. You know, I think the flies were Part of you know, a big part of what people remember some of the anglers that bought my fly reels that was that was one of the, one of the more difficult challenges in my life to bring out a fly reel.

And and, you know, that was a lot of hard work. You know, buffing and everything, everything on that. No, I did that for 10 years and that was a lot of work, but you machined your own reels. Well, we had a CNC setup, and they would program it most the first the first ones I did. But after that I just I had my program and I had these private. I had this private man with his machine shop in his garage, and he did all the good all the friends and schools and step for me. That's and then I would go I'd go pick them up. I just didn't I mean, there's it's really hard to make any money when you're just doing one reel that they don't make it a reel at a time. It's got to charge twice as much as my reels. Yeah. Because it takes so long you know the CNC just boop boop boop and they're, they're done.



Dave S 1:49:24

How many reels of your of your reels are out there in the world?



Dave M 1:49:29

Less than 2000



Dave S 1:49:31

Okay, well, it's Yeah.



Dave M 1:49:33

There's not there's not very many in the United States. I sold. I sold almost all the real to Japan. Not only sold a couple of hundred. Yeah, I had a contract with the company over there. From 94 to 97. They wanted 60 reels every 45 days. So I was cranking And that was long hours. Yeah, you know, I was still still building a 10 or 15 rods a day and still doing materials and and that's why in 1997 the economy in Japan fell. The guy decided I could still sell the reels, but we did business differently in Japan. So he said, I'll take another 200 or three, I think it was 300 reels, and then we're done. So I did those reels for him. And then that's why I closed my warehouse and went into the landscaping business was because of that. Yeah, and the fact that you know, I had a, my wife had passed away and my daughter is now eight years old. I, you know, want to be with her more and more. And yeah.



Dave S 1:50:53

Well, Dave in the next, anything coming up for you, it sounds like the book in the next six to 12 months in the Anything new you want to give a shout out to?



Dave M 1:51:03

Well, I'm cranking on it. Once I get out of this, my mother in law's house, which will be this month in August. I'm going to be home and writing. And I got, I got five new clean rods from Steve Govan over the last year. I haven't even finished one up. I talked to him. I talked to him a couple of nights ago and I said it's it's really horrible. I just sit there and look at the rods on my bed. I don't even go out. I don't have time to go out fish. Wow. It's it's really sad. That in June, it was probably the third week of June, I went up to my favorite pool on the McKenzie and I've done this for a couple of years and I go where all the bugs there's no insects. And when I was a kid, there was 10s of thousands of them. And there's nothing



Dave S 1:51:57

like caddis and stuff. I



Dave M 1:51:58

thought now there's nothing No, no. Yellow stones? No. No Lily, oh, mayflies. No, no. In June. Everything's kind of a yellowish color. There was nothing. Maybe a couple of bugs. I saw one little trout jump. That's it. And I and last year, a woman walked up to me and I was sitting on the sitting on the rock. And she goes, boy, you look really sad. And I said, Yeah. Look at, there's no insects. Same time last year, different pool. Something's happened. I don't know what it is. So it was just like, I took my kids. I took my kids down on a really expensive float trip, the four of us and we didn't catch one single fish. I didn't fish that much. I just wanted my kids to fish and they were casting their flies out there. We didn't get a single rise the



Dave S 1:52:50

whole day on the Mackenzie.



Dave M 1:52:53

Oh, yeah, I'm in McKenzie. Wow.



Dave S 1:52:56

That can be that can be pretty hot in there. Right? dry



Dave M 1:53:01

well there's some places that I wish we could have fished we went up kind of high and I wish would have just a little bit further down just east of Springfield and run run that water but too few guides run that area. Oh gotcha and it's all wild trout you know the guides want to plant these hatchery fish and learn the hillforts boys. They've had seven boats, 14 people from Pinal woolen Mills they didn't catch one fish



Dave S 1:53:35

and Helfer Chan heard about those guys wow well, as always a there's a bunch of stuff I would I would have loved to get into but I think this is a good start. I think officially This is the longest episode of the podcast so I think we just broke the last record Kelly Gallup I believe had the the longest prior to this. So we did get there.



Dave M 1:53:54

Well, thanks for Thanks for everything and and hopefully they're submitted. Payment here.



Dave S 1:54:01

Yeah, no, I think it is. I mean, I think we talked about the material dying, which for people that don't know about that, I think that's cool, SIDS history, we touched on that and, you know, just your history right. You've been there since a long time and seen a lot. So I appreciate you coming on and sharing all your knowledge and, and the history and if people want to get in touch with you, they can just that they can call you right 503-798-5790 they have any questions for you?



Dave M 1:54:26

Yeah, that's fine.



Dave S 1:54:28

Okay. All right, Dave. Well, thanks. Again. I'll let you know when this gets ready to roll and we'll look forward to keeping in touch with you.



Dave M 1:54:37

Okay.



Dave S 1:54:39

So there you go. If you want to find all of the show notes with all links we covered just go to [wet fly swing.com slash 155](http://wetflyswing.com/slash155). Thanks again for stopping by to check out the show today. I'm looking forward to catching up with you soon hope maybe see you online or on the river. And actually, before we get out of here, I'm going to leave you with that poem that I have talks about so so here you go. light hits water and fractal flashes math everywhere ripples trail line on surface tension foliations like river sand, try again don't drop your tip. The continuity of casting tended to the Metrodome of horrors drifting now discussing form the way we're shifting flash tips slow bend fish, weeds more likely check the fly taken by the wind a cast pulled straight again the rods parabolic keep tension strip, steady pressure line through guides and fingers arc of trout. You got it you got it raised the net, a tessellation of scales pink green painting when through cattails plays discordant tones, water drums the whole lower the lattice wait nudge, pause, pulse gone.