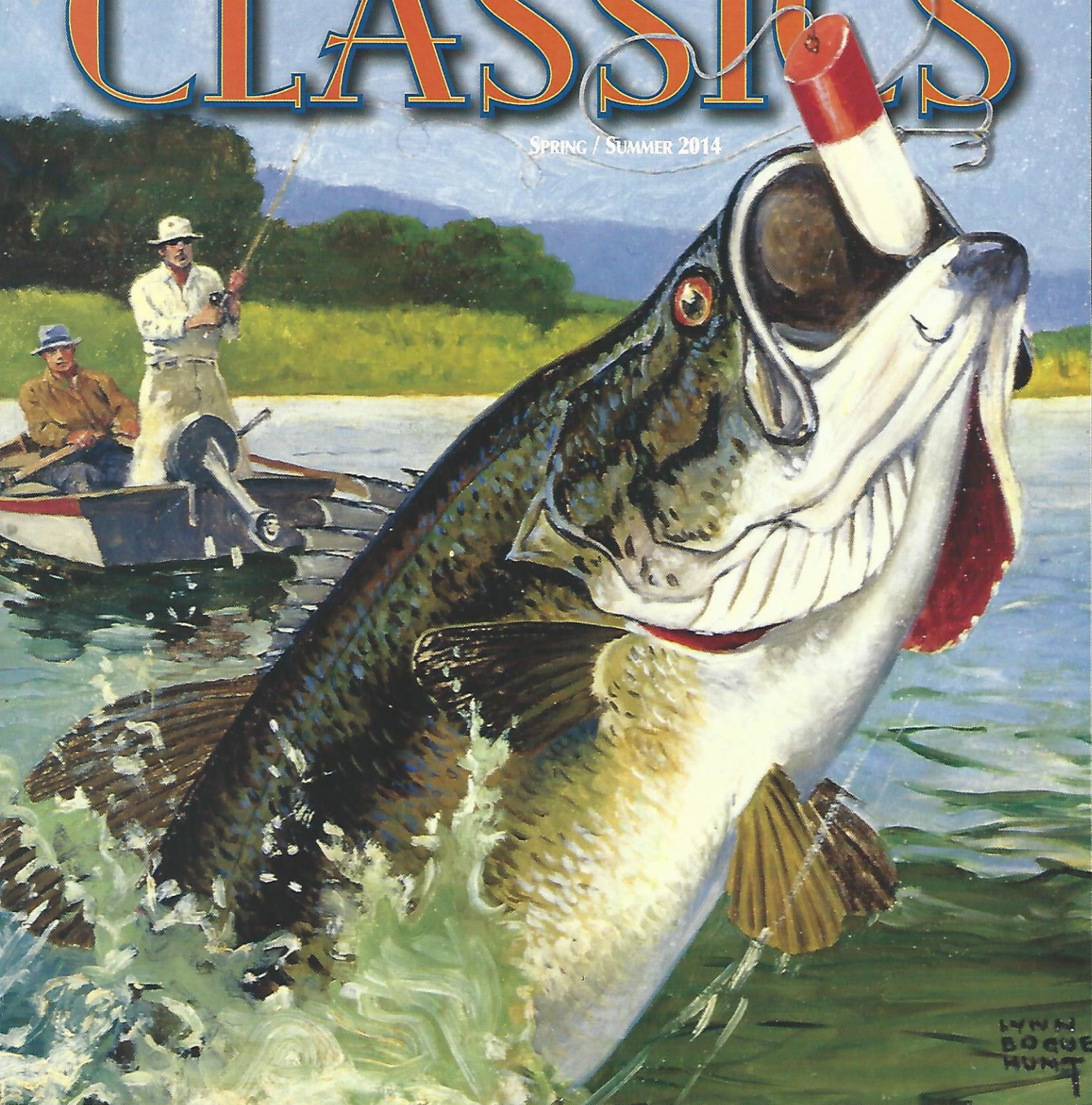


SPECIAL FISHING THE WORLD ISSUE

SPORTING CLASSICS

SPRING / SUMMER 2014



LYNN
BOGUE
HUNT

Travel

John Ross

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Fishing is a lovely excuse for travel,” Ernie Schwiebert wrote when endorsing my copy of his book, *The Traveling Angler: 20 5-Star Angling Vacations*. And when it comes to freshwater fishing, we live in the most fortuitous of times.

Trout and salmon fishing in the U.S. has never been better. Over the last half-century, it has improved steadily. Landlocked salmon abound in the West Branch of the Penobscot, near Millinocket, Maine. Want leviathan browns? Head for my back yard and fish the South Holston east of Bristol, Tennessee. Had I a spacious motor home, I’d park it in a campground along the Bois Brule in northern Wisconsin and fish for salmon, steelhead and lake-run browns till my arms gave out.

Cutthroat are rebounding in

It’s never been so easy to reach good trout waters, to take advantage of excellent equipment, and to travel through time to fish with legendary anglers.

many rivers of the intermountain West. Rainbows are back in many of Colorado’s rivers, thanks to a whirling disease-resistant strain from Germany. Germany? Yep. In the late 1800s, Germans imported rainbows to raise as a food fish. They were reared in waters where whirling disease originated, and over the decades became immune to it.

In 2003 Colorado fisheries biologists imported a bunch of rainbows from the Hofer Trout Farm in Bavaria, found them hardy,

Anglers on Slough Creek in Yellowstone National Park are encouraged to keep rainbows to help bring back the cutthroats.

and began releasing them as a put-and-take species. Hofer rainbows must have remembered their genetics; they’re reproducing naturally in the wild.

Today’s challenge isn’t finding a place to fish, but choosing among so many possibilities. Hardly anywhere in the country is more than a day’s drive from very good trout fishing. Great lodges are the rule, not the exception. Try Flowers River Lodge in Labrador for Atlantic salmon and sea-run char. For more Atlantics, drop down to Camp Bonaventure on the Gaspé Peninsula in Quebec. If you’re after salmon of Pacific stripe and tubby rainbows that feed on the salmon eggs, fly into Alaska Sportsman’s Lodge on the Kvichak River.

Yet opportunities for fishing travel are so much more varied than just those requiring rod and



reel. We have unparalleled access through the web to the angling classics. An inveterate fly fisher, Nick Lyons was working a second job at Crown Publishing in New York in 1969 and wanted a copy of Art Flick's *Streamside Guide to Naturals and Their Imitations*, which was out of print. He secured rights to it, brought out a new edition and reinvigorated American angling literature.

When headed to Terra del Fuego to fish the Chilean Rio Grande and other rivers in Patagonia, I tracked down a copy of Roderick Haig-Brown's *Fisherman's Winter*. In it he recounts his journey to fish remote wilderness streams in the southern Andes in the 1950s. It's available today on Kindle for \$9.99. A used copy of *Trout*, Ray Bergman's 1938 classic, will set you back \$12. If you're of a mind, you can join

Washington Irving on his 1818 jaunt to fish for brookies in the Catskills. It's never been so easy to travel through time to fish with legendary anglers.

While we're thinking about travel, how 'bout the back to the future movement toward fiberglass rods. Shakespeare and Heddon were the big names of the 1950s. Most major rod companies have returned glass rods to their lines. I'm all in favor. I've been using a wonderful six piece 3-weight by the late Dave Lewis for the past six years. It's perfect for small brook trout streams. Why do I love it so? It fishes almost as if it were bamboo. *

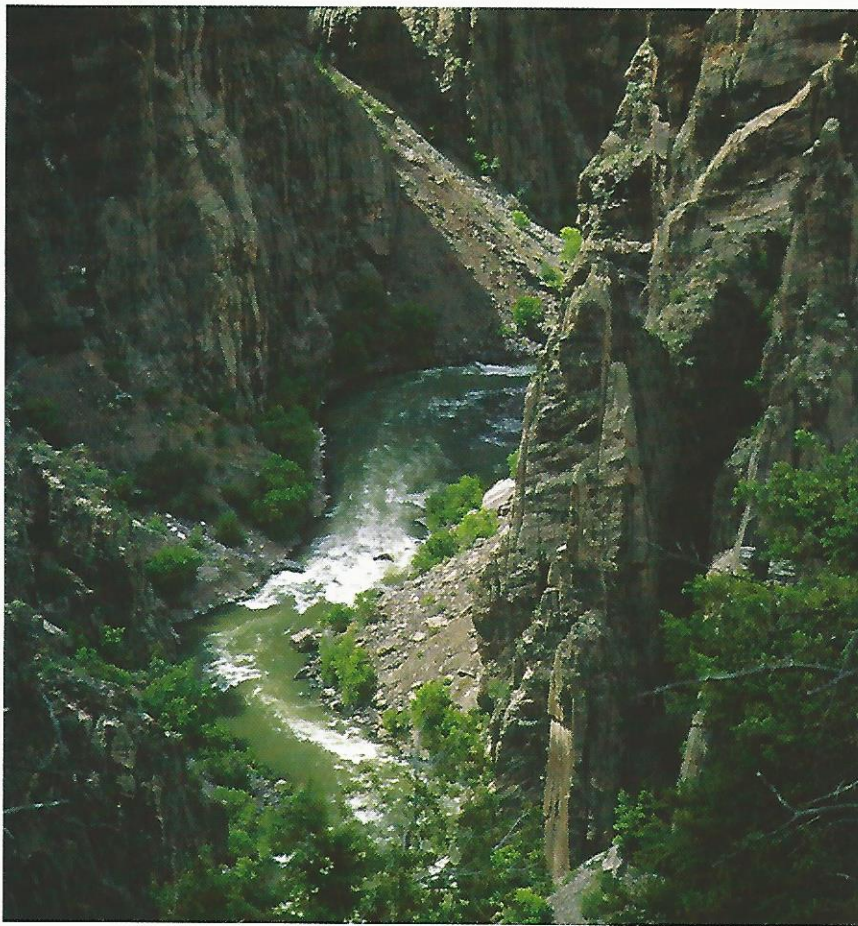
And speaking of which, vintage cane rods by Leonard, Payne, Dickerson, Young, Orvis and others are all readily available thanks to the web. You don't have to spend

\$9,000 for a Dickerson. An Orvis Battenkill from the '60s will set you back about the same amount as a top-of-the-line Winston Boron IIIx.

Pundits more knowledgeable than I am are better equipped to speculate on this return to classic tackle. But I can tell you why it resonates with me. Glass and cane are slower than graphite. The casting stroke is soft and gentle without the sharp snap needed to power their carbon cousins.


George Washington Spears, writing as Nessmuk in the 1870s and 1880s in *Forest and Stream*,

Carol Lee photographs her fiancé, Kirk Otey, and his big brown trout from the South Fork of the Holston River in Tennessee. She gave him the trip as a birthday gift. Opposite: Black Canyon is one of several spectacular vistas on Colorado's Gunnison River, where wild rainbows have been restored.



put it this way: “We don’t go to the green woods and crystal waters to rough it, we go to smooth it.” He believed we get it rough enough in town. Amen.

As I dress my lines, lube my reels and sort out the mess in my fly boxes, my mind wanders to the streams I’ll fish this season and who will join me on them. After losing my wife to cancer four years ago, I’ll be accompanied now by Bett, my fiancée. Raised on North Carolina’s coastal plain by parents who hunted bobwhites and cast for bass, she took instantly to an old Winston 5-weight and has caught her share of browns on the South Holston. Traveling together, we have many streams to fish.

Note: John Ross’s newest book, *Trout Unlimited’s Guide to America’s 100 Best Trout Streams* (3rd edition, Lyons Press), was published last fall. Checkout www.tu.org to read his blog and buy the book. He’s presently writing a volume of angling essays called *The Geology of Trout*. 



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