

A NEW YEAR MESSAGE *By Manley Price, Chairman*

The year 2011 was a great season on the Miramichi River! It is certainly a positive note to leave behind one extraordinary fishing season and enter into a

New Year with the same hope for similar results. There is one major message I want to convey: that is to express gratitude for all the support received from our members, the MSA Board of Directors and staff for the work well done to help in sustaining a healthy river and a plentiful resource. However, we cannot take for granted that good runs of salmon and grilse will continue this year or into the years ahead. I ask for your continued support as we face our common conservation goals together. Membership Chairman Bob Kenny is doing a superb job in bringing renewed life into the membership campaign and we benefited from that effort in seeing a substantial number of new members join last year – but membership in the MSA still has great potential to grow. One of the main strengths of any organization is the size and spirit of its volunteer force, and so we must constantly build to make our voice as strong as possible.

However, simply growing in size is not enough. We want the Miramichi Salmon Association to reflect all aspects of the culture and the character to be found within the Miramichi salmon angling and conservation community by taking strong action. In particular, a couple of very serious issues remain MSA priorities – the Atlantic salmon resource in the Miramichi River is seriously threatened by the risk of smallmouth bass escaping from Miramichi Lake into the river. Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) has implemented an eradication plan and has committed to do so for one more year. Yet another priority is the Northwest Miramichi situation where the Miramichi Watershed Management Committee has proposed a management plan to ensure that the annual salmon run to the NW

Miramichi River system is sustainable into the future while maintaining an Aboriginal and recreational fishery. An additional concern which has evolved over the last months, and to which MSA has recently struck a sub-committee, is to research and prepare a Land Use Policy Statement to be made public over the coming weeks confirming the stand that MSA takes in these regards.

It would not be fitting to reflect upon the mission of the MSA without looking back at its history. 2012 marks 59 years in salmon conservation for the Miramichi Salmon Association. It is a time to acknowledge all the men and women who volunteer their efforts to ensure that the MSA remains true to its mission, as well as to honour those who have gone before us. We were saddened to lose three very good friends last year. A Director of the MSA Board since 1996, Dr. Jack MacKay was not only an icon in the medical field throughout his career in Fredericton, NB, but he put his stamp on the continuing campaign to recruit new members and to renew the commitment of existing ones for the MSA. As one of the founders of the Kenmore Club, a few miles upriver from Boiestown, it is here where he accidentally passed away on June 23rd doing what he loved, fishing the Miramichi. Another tragic loss on July 7th was that of Richard Oland of Rothesay, NB, whose vast experience in so many business and community affairs brought valuable assistance to the MSA's Board of Directors, where he served for five years, and later as Honorary Director up to the time of his passing. He was a sports enthusiast and took great pleasure in sailing, riding and skiing almost as much as fishing at the Miramichi Fish & Game Club, of which he was a member. A key organizer of the Annual Saint John Dinner and of MSA's Development Committee, his experience and determination were valuable to MSA's fund-raising initiatives. A third long-time MSA Honorary Director, and a continuous MSA member since its incorporation, Bill Boyd passed away December 15 after a lengthy illness. Most of his life was enjoyed on the Miramichi with his father at Boyd's Fishing Lodge. It is with the deepest respect, and on behalf of all of Jack's, Dick's and Bill's friends and colleagues, that I convey sincere sympathy and condolences to all who knew and cared for them, especially the members of their families. Their memory will forever be with us in the Miramichi Salmon Association.



A NEW YEAR MESSAGE CONTINUED

We will be busy over the winter months implementing programs and planning strategies. Always in the fundraising mode, as has been our MSA custom, the year will begin with the Salmon Symposium and Annual Boston Dinner in Burlington on February 4th and we hope many of our members will join us. This year, we are pleased to bestow well-deserved honour to Debbie Norton on this occasion (see separate article in this issue). This is a great gathering that provides a break in those long months of cold and snow, and a bridge to those warm summer fishing days ahead! Our role in the coming months, and in the years to follow, will be to work together for preservation of the wild Atlantic Salmon, and for the protection of its habitat in the

Miramichi watershed. To all those in the MSA who have helped to pursue this mission over the past year, I express sincere appreciation. To all those who will be continuing that mission in the year ahead, I wish to encourage spirit and resolve for the tasks we have to tackle. There is no doubt that the Miramichi Salmon Association will continue to distinguish itself among the conservation movements of the world!

Happy New Year to you and yours!

Manley Price

TRACKING KELTS IN THE MIRAMICHI RIVER AND BEYOND....

by Jenny Reid, MSA Biologist

The Miramichi Salmon Association has been partnering with the Atlantic Salmon Federation for four years tagging kelts on the Miramichi River to determine their survival, migration timing and routes and where the losses of kelts are occurring.

Again in 2011, 50 kelts were angled and tagged, 27 on the Northwest and 23 on the Southwest Miramichi. An acoustic tag, which emits a unique signal that can be picked up by a receiver that records the location, date and time when a fish passes by, is inserted into the abdominal cavity of the fish by an incision. Kelts are released after they recover to migrate out of the river. Kelt survival out of the river was very high in 2012, as 94% made it through Inner Miramichi Bay to the barrier islands. Of the 47 kelts that made it through the outer array, fifteen kelts passed through the Strait of Belle Isle and two kelts were picked up on the Ocean Tracking Network receivers in Cabot Strait on their way to Greenland and five kelts returned back to the Miramichi River, to spawn in 2011. The kelts that exited the river in 2011 and returned to spawn again in the river in 2011 are consecutive spawners, which recondition in the ocean for a few months and return the same year to spawn again. The kelts that left the river and traveled through the Strait of Belle Isle and Cabot Strait on their way to Greenland spawn in alternate years, and will hopefully return to spawn in 2012. The kelts that exited the estuary but were not picked up by the receivers at the Strait of Belle

Isle may have exited through the part of Cabot Strait not covered by receivers, may be reconditioning in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence or may have died at sea.



Unfortunately, due to the limitations of the equipment, we do not know where these fish are travelling and feeding in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Where fish are travelling and feeding have implications for their survival as it could influence the chances of by-catch through another fishery, predation and food resources. In 2012, we plan to use satellite tags,

which records and stores the location, temperature and depth fish are travelling through, and transmit the stored data to a satellite at a designated time, in addition to the acoustic tags. By doing this, hopefully we will gain more insight into where salmon losses are occurring at sea.



DEVELOPING A NEW SALMON TAGGING SYSTEM FOR NB

by Mark Hambrook



Many salmon groups in New Brunswick, including the Miramichi Salmon Association, have recognized that there is a need for change to the salmon tagging system in New Brunswick. The current system allocates 8 tags per angler with the purchase of a seasonal salmon retention licence. The tags can be used to harvest grilse on any salmon river in New Brunswick, where the retention of grilse is permitted. This currently allows an angler to retain grilse from the Miramichi River northwards to the Restigouche River, including many small rivers in between. For those anglers that harvest grilse, this system allows the flexibility to angle and retain grilse from a variety of rivers or from a single salmon pool on a favorite river. The weakness in this system, however, is that

some smaller rivers may be over harvested, especially if it is easily accessible to the public. The New Brunswick Salmon Council, with 30 affiliates across the province, has been examining the current salmon tagging system and has adopted a position that harvest should be related to fish abundance for all users of the resource. The major question is how can this be accomplished in New Brunswick?

Several options for allocating grilse "based on abundance" were examined by the Council. The system that seemed to be the best fit for New Brunswick is similar to the program used in Newfoundland using a river classification system. This system would require that all New Brunswick Rivers be classified according to the size of the salmon population estimated to be in them and a harvest plan developed for each river. The rivers would be classified into one of five categories - closed to salmon angling, catch and release only, red indicating low harvest (1), yellow indicating moderate harvest (4) and green indicating normal harvest (8). The classification system requires that three different colored tags be issued with a season retention licence consisting of 4 green tags, 3 yellow tags and 1 red tag. In a designated red

river only a red tag can be used, in a yellow river only yellow or red tags can be used and in a green river any colored tag can be used. This system would ensure that smaller rivers would not be over harvested, yet anglers would be able to use their full tag allotment, if they wanted to, by angling in rivers with more salmon such as the main stem of the Southwest Miramichi or the Restigouche River. As in Newfoundland, each river would be reviewed annually to determine if the classification should change based on the strength of the runs. The current NB system only allows for the retention of the full 8 grilse or no grilse at all, which restricts the number of rivers that are permitted to be open for harvest. This system may allow some rivers to reopen for the harvest of one grilse that may have been previously restricted to catch and release or closed.

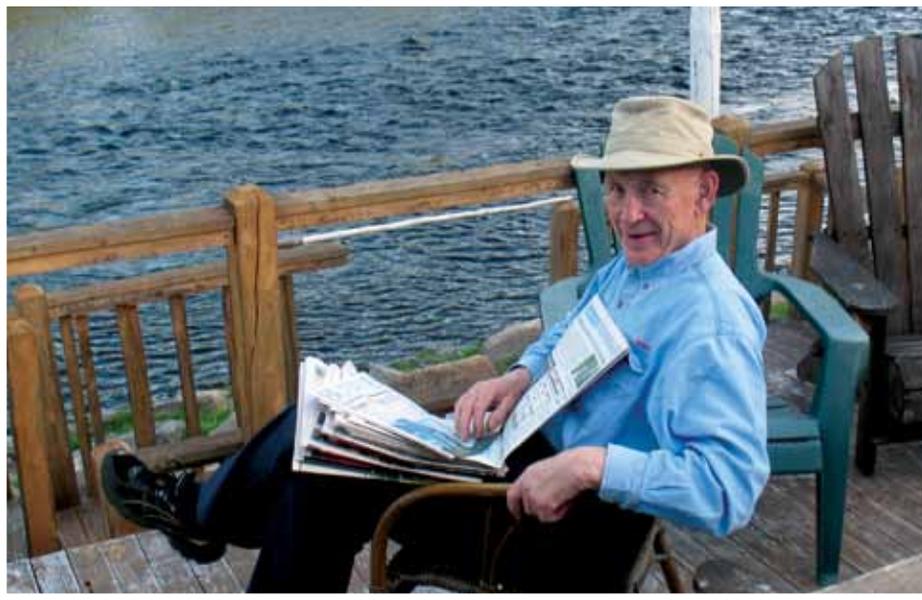
Two other important components of the Newfoundland system are the unique feature of the tags, which are paper based with a plastic attachment and on the special paper, is listed the months and days. When you affix the tag to the fish with the plastic attachment, you must snip-out the month and day the fish was caught with your clippers, which makes

it virtually impossible to reuse. The other component to their system is the mandatory use of pinched barb hooks in salmon designated waters which has been in place for nearly a decade, with very little opposition.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans has begun its "Salmon Management Framework" discussions in preparation for the next 5 year management plan, starting in 2013. To implement this system will require careful consideration by the provincial and federal governments and may not be ready for 2013, if they decide to move forward. However, a recent report hailed the Newfoundland licence and tagging system as being easy to understand, a way to protect smaller more vulnerable rivers and has gained the full support of anglers. The fundamental principle in salmon management is that if we want to harvest salmon, it must be linked to abundance to ensure that enough fish make it to spawn. There are other licensing and tagging systems that could be used to achieve this objective, but this one works in Newfoundland and hopefully will work equally as well in New Brunswick if our governments were to adopt it.



A LIFETIME COMMITMENT TO SALMON CONSERVATION



Bud Bird enjoying the deck at Slate Island on the Main Southwest Miramichi

The Atlantic Salmon Federation, the Miramichi Salmon Association and the New Brunswick Salmon Council jointly hosted a dinner and auction in Saint John on November 2nd, honouring J.W. Bud Bird, an individual with a lifetime commitment to salmon conservation. On this occasion, Bud Bird was recognized for his many contributions over the years, particularly his favourite cause, the MSA of which he continues to serve as Chairman Emeritus.

The conservation world is fortunate to have the benefit of Bud's presence on both the ASF and MSA Boards, and with that comes his expertise, enthusiasm and devotion. He knows only too well that despite many decades of dedicated conservation activity throughout the Atlantic salmon world, the returns of spawning salmon remain relatively low in relation to the number of smolts migrating to the ocean each year. The smolt leaving the river for the

ocean are simply not returning in the abundance to be expected, and the mystery of the mortality at sea continues to be a research challenge for scientists from all salmon-producing nations. We all have been encouraged by the run in 2011, but it remains only a portion of what it should be.

Also a Commissioner for Canada to the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO), Bud has promoted the program Salmon at Sea (SALSEA) that collects and co-ordinates all the research being done about salmon in the ocean. Given his extensive involvement as an advisor and advocate to protect and conserve wild Atlantic salmon populations at the local, national and international levels, we are pleased to present the following remarks which Bud Bird delivered at the Saint John Dinner:

This tribute means a great deal to me, especially coming from friends,

colleagues and fellow anglers who have together shared the conservation mission for the wild Atlantic Salmon over the past many years.

In fact, it has been an honour enough simply to have been able to work with so many Salmon champions as I have been privileged to do. My thoughts go especially back tonight to men like Jack Fenety, who led the MSA, and Wilf Carter, who led the ASF, both of whom were truly world champions for Atlantic Salmon in the early years of conservations. It is inspiring that they have been followed in more recent times by new leaders who are also worthy world champions in the persons of Mark Hambrook and Bill Taylor who have together unified the Salmon conservation movement more firmly than ever before.

For many of us here tonight, perhaps most of us, conservation of the wild Atlantic Salmon has become a way of life. The Salmon is not merely an exciting resource for our own recreation and enjoyment, but is even more a virtual symbol of the environmental world around us. There is the unmistakable feeling in our bones that if the Salmon is in trouble, then likely so also are the other natural elements in our world; conversely, if we can make successful efforts to preserve the Salmon's existence and hopefully nurture its abundance, then we have the sense of fulfilling a meaningful purpose for the whole earth, and making our lives count for something very important in doing so. That is why, for example, many Salmon conservationists hardly fish for Salmon at all; they take satisfaction in simply donating time, talent and money to help save the wild Salmon because they know it to be a direct contribution to preserving the natural quality of our wider world.



A LIFETIME COMMITMENT TO SALMON CONSERVATION CONTINUED

I feel we can all take some cautious pride in the conservation results for wild Atlantic Salmon which have been achieved over recent decades. There was a time almost forty years ago when Salmon runs to North America numbered more than 900,000 fish making the journey from Greenland to their native rivers. During the intervening years, however, that number dipped precariously below 100,000 fish, a decline of almost 90%.

In those earlier years there was a vigorous commercial fishery and, apparently with no application of scientific knowledge then, the nets were sized to let only the grilse (the so-called "young fish") survive, on the premise they would grow up to become the source of future Salmon populations. This was also convenient business wisdom at the time, because it allowed the nets to capture virtually all the mature adult Salmon, thus enhancing the commercial bounty of the harvest. As most of us will well remember, almost all our great Salmon rivers became populated primarily with grilse, and it was a rare site to even see a large fish roll to the surface. It was a great day indeed if a mature Salmon actually rose and took your fly.

But slowly and surely during the last quarter of the 20th century, conservation efforts began to turn the tide. Through the direct and intense efforts of Salmon champions in both the MSA and the ASF, governments were persuaded to eventually buy out and close the commercial fisheries in both the Maritimes and most of Newfoundland and Labrador. Salmon began to be counted by individual numbers, instead of by tonnes or truckloads, and tagging systems helped to make illegal Salmon possession clearly visible, thus diminishing the potential black market for poaching and even for the so-called incidental commercial catch. The favourable results of all these actions have commenced to be seen in our rivers over recent years, and especially during the season just ended.

The dividends from closing the commercial Salmon fishery were not realized immediately, but the seeds were being sown for recovery once the large female Salmon began to reach the spawning beds. It had become abundantly clear that the population potential was carried in the eggs of those large fish. Steadily, the abundance of juvenile stocks (fingerlings and parr) commenced to increase, and each spring larger runs of smolt were going to the ocean. The health of our rivers has continued to improve, as has the percentage of bigger fish in the total run. So the spawning balance in most rivers is becoming more sustainable (with some exceptions, such as the Northwest Miramichi now

being managed towards improvement), and there is a new spirit of confidence that we shall be able to sustain the juvenile abundance and the healthy run of smolts to sea each year.

However, there remains a bitter irony and a cause for caution because, even as our rivers seem to have stabilized and improved their Salmon populations, the situation in the ocean continues to be one of mysterious and substantial mortality, with continuing declines in Salmon runs to all North Atlantic countries. For example, those annual numbers still average less than 150,000 fish each year, so there continues to be a momentous scientific and management challenge to ensure that spawning runs can be sustained over the long term. Obviously, if sufficient mature female fish do not get from the ocean to our rivers, minimum spawning thresholds will not be achieved, and the dividends we gained from earlier actions will be lost to mortality at sea.

That challenge is being vigorously addressed by Salmon scientists from around the world, including notable experts right here in Atlantic Canada. A "wild Salmon summit" was held in France just two weeks ago which received scientific reports from the recent five-year SALSEA program conducted under the auspices of NASCO. Those reports help to identify and confirm the mortality dilemma, but so far no solutions have been advanced to unravel the mystery or cure the cause of it.

We can take some comfort from the unified scientific approach among all countries in the wild Atlantic Salmon world, but there is a profound need for even stronger conservation diligence on every river. We must work to sustain or improve current smolt runs to the ocean each year, while also maintaining utmost pressure on our scientists and our governments to address every potential cause for the disappearance of Salmon populations as they reach saltwater, whether in the estuary, the bay or the open sea.

The wonderful attendance and support displayed at the dinner is strong evidence that our Salmon conservation force is up to these challenges, and I am confident will prevail successfully. I am very pleased to remain a player on your team, and deeply appreciate the generous recognition and honour you have conveyed to me tonight. Again, thank you.

Bud Bird



HELPING SALMON REACH INACCESSIBLE HABITAT

By Jenny Reid



Tyler Coughlan notches a beaver dam so that salmon can swim upstream

Beavers can block off access to salmon spawning areas by building large dams or building dams in culverts or fish ladders. The effect of beaver dam blockages can be pronounced during a fall season with little rainfall and low flows, which do not afford Atlantic salmon enough water to jump over the dams. Salmon will congregate below the dams and if they cannot access the additional habitat in time, they will dig nests on top of each other which can kill the eggs in the underlying nests. This reduces the number of juvenile salmon that will hatch the following year. Areas that fish cannot access for spawning become devoid of juveniles, do not contribute to the production of salmon on the river nor provide food for wildlife (ie. eagles, otters). Beavers typically build dams on smaller streams which are excellent rearing areas for juvenile salmon due to the habitat quality, fewer numbers of large predators and cooler stream temperatures.

Notching a beaver dam means creating a 2'x 2' hole in the dam that affords the salmon enough water to swim through. The notch is repaired in the next few days by the beaver with no harm to the beavers, but in the mean time provides a way for salmon to migrate over these obstacles during the fall spawning run. The notching takes place just prior to the peak of spawning when the majority of salmon would be moving upstream to spawn in that particular brook.

The MSA has had measured success in the past in increasing juvenile production on Betts Mills Brook by notching beaver dams and removing the beaver dam located in the fish ladder. In 2006, the beaver dam blocking the fish ladder, as well as 21 additional beaver dams, were notched/removed on Betts Mills Brook which resulted in access to more than 50,000m² of spawning habitat and fry

being found in the brook the following year. Annually, the MSA notches dams on Betts Mills brook and our electrofishing surveys have shown increasing juvenile numbers on that brook.

The Cains River is one of the warmer tributaries of the Miramichi River and has lower juvenile production relative to some other tributaries on the Miramichi. Therefore, we decided to focus on the lower section of the Cains River because there are large brooks (ie. Six Mile and Sabbies Rivers) with spawning and juvenile habitat and the brooks had beaver populations which blocked the upstream migrations of salmon in the fall. In addition to the Cains and Betts Mill Brook, the MSA also notched beaver dams on Porter Brook.

The rivers and brooks on the Cains that were surveyed included Blue Rock Brook, Ten Mile Brook, McKenzie Brook, Mahoney Brook, Trout Hole Brook, Six Mile Brook, Muzroll Brook, Sabbies River, Little Otter Brook and one other unnamed brook. In total 92 km of brook was surveyed on the Cains River and 17 km on Porter Brook and Betts Mills Brook. In total, 100 dams were notched so that salmon could migrate upstream, with approximately two thirds having active beaver colonies. Interestingly, salmon were observed immediately below dams on Sabbies River and Porter Brook and likely made their way upstream after crews notched the dams.

We sincerely thank MSA Director Brad Burns for his fundraising efforts on this project and the other MSA members and Cains River camp owners who donated to this project.



Tyler Coughlan marks the location of a beaver dam with the GPS.



MSA ANNUAL BOSTON DINNER HONOURS DEBBIE NORTON

Saturday, February 4th, 2012

Please join us at the Miramichi Salmon Association's Annual Boston Dinner and Symposium on Saturday, February 4, 2012 at the Marriott in Burlington, Massachusetts (near Boston) and share in bestowing well-deserved honour to MSA Director Debbie Norton. Since joining the Board of Directors at the Annual Meeting in May 2003, Debbie has been a major force in the affairs of the MSA, and we benefit greatly from the broad base of knowledge and experience that she brings to the table. We are proud to recognize the important work and contribution she makes to not only the conservation mission of the MSA, but also to the Northumberland Salmon Protection Association of which she serves as President; the Miramichi Watershed Management Committee as President, and the New Brunswick Professional Outfitters and Guides Association as Secretary. Most recently, Debbie was appointed as Secretary Treasurer of the New Brunswick Salmon Council. Debbie is truly a Miramichi Salmon professional. Together with her husband Dale, they operate Upper Oxbow Outdoor Adventures which has been in her family since 1823, situated on the banks of the Little Southwest Miramichi.

We sincerely hope you can be with us on this occasion. MSA needs your support now more than ever to help with its conservation efforts. The only MSA fundraiser in the United States, the Boston Dinner is essential to our conservation goals. Goods and services typically exceed \$80,000 in value and include original art, prime Miramichi angling trips, guided saltwater excursions, fishing gear and outdoor clothing. Check the MSA website soon for listing of auction items; you will then be able to set your bidding strategy for all the angling opportunities being offered at this year's auction. During the evening, you will also have the opportunity to contribute to the Kelt tracking program that supports the Ocean Tracking Network effort. Also, be sure to attend the Saturday afternoon Symposium for the latest updates pertaining to the Miramichi River and other important angling topics.

Please make dinner reservations or get additional information by calling Jo-Anne Linton at the MSA Fredericton office at 506-457-2220. If hotel reservations are required, please call the Boston Marriott Burlington at 781-229-6565 (Toll Free 1-888-442-0396). Call by January 13, 2012, indicating you are with the MSA group, in order to get the reduced rate. Looking forward to seeing you there!

SECOND ANNUAL FIRST CAST MSA REWARDS MENTORS AND APPRENTICES

MSA is pleased to report a total of fifteen eager mentors and apprentices graduated from this year's 2nd Annual First Cast MSA weekend held July 23 & 24. The program took on a particularly strong contingent recruited by New Brunswick's Dewey Gillespie, an esteemed man of the river and well known for his tireless efforts to encourage local youth to appreciate and enjoy the wonders of the Miramichi River watershed.

The Saturday morning portion was hosted once again by our partners at the Atlantic Salmon Museum in Doaktown showing a Power Point presentation prepared by MSA's Jenny Reid, and delivered by the Museum's Bev Gaston. Following this was a tour of this wonderful facility that regales in the cause of salmon conservation. Our common goal is to lend a thorough understanding of our beloved Miramichi to eager newcomers which leads to their taking

ownership of our resource and to acquire a concern about its future. The afternoon saw all of the mentor-apprentice pairs given the opportunity to learn and practice actual casting while wading in the home pool on the museum grounds. Each attendee first tried the Wulff Fly-O yarn rod tools, followed by personal instruction from Vince Swazey while casting in the river. Additional follow-up attention from our reliable corps of volunteers was provided in our "bull pen" on the adjoining grassy grounds.

The following day allowed for fishing from a member's camp on the Miramichi at Gray Rapids. Ages of the apprentices ranged from 10 to 34, with mentors ranging in age from 19 thru 76, including an entire family of husband, wife, daughter, and young son. The full opportunity to experience river etiquette and to enjoy just how easy it is to become absorbed into the Miramichi environment



SECOND ANNUAL FIRST CAST MSA REWARDS MENTORS AND APPRENTICES CONTINUED



First Cast MSA 2011 participants.

while fly fishing was encouraged by our reliable cadre of volunteers. Particular kudos go to Dr. Jim McQuaid from Miramichi for his outstanding efforts to keep the program both well attended and well organized. Fellow MSA member Hillary Howes provided sharp assistance to all of our attendees in and out of the river, along with Vince, Jim, Dewey,

and myself. A great lunch in camp provided, compliments of Denise Valeri. All graduates of First Cast MSA are rewarded with a one year membership into our MSA ranks.

We are particularly pleased to announce that we plan to continue to partner with the Atlantic Salmon Museum as well as Dewey Gillespie in our future First Cast MSA endeavors.

While we know that Dewey is eager to expand invitations to more and more locals, we always shall welcome and urge fellow MSA member attendees to consider becoming a mentor and introduce their own new blood to our sport. As always, we work to encourage the return of all graduates as often as possible to the river, as it naturally strengthens their mentor-apprentice relationships while experiencing first-hand what being on the river is all about. An enhanced presence of conservation-minded fly fishers on the Miramichi works to preserve our intentions to protect the Atlantic Salmon species. Most notably too is the over arching emphasis throughout First Cast MSA, which is to stress the experience to fly fish for Atlantic salmon on the Miramichi has little to do with the actual catching of fish, and plenty to do with how to appreciate our environment as we learn to protect the Atlantic Salmon within the Miramichi River system.

Paul Valeri
First Cast MSA Chair

A SALMON'S STRUGGLE

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He raised his hand and plucked the fur and feathers from his vest,
Then stepped into the pool, and waded water to his chest.
Stripping line, he falsely cast the fly-hook through the air,
And let it drop behind a rock for what was waiting there.

The reel is screamed out loud, "She's hooked!" The bamboo rod it bent.
The salmon thrashed, the water splashed as through the pool, she went.
The river's face exploded, she shook with all her might,
And cursed the iron Demon in her jaw that held her tight

She dived into the depth below, she crashed against the rocks.
She slipped, she slid, although she did to free herself, could not.
In hurried pace she ran, she raced, she circled round and round,
And searched the river's bottom, but no freedom could be found.

The reel it whined the tightened line held fast against her run
As she dragged the awful tether in a bid to come undone
The bamboo rod with nylon line through eyes of tempered steel
Held fast the mighty salmon to the tether at the real

She glistened 'neath the mid-day sun, she choked from lack of air.
Her mind it fought the horrid thought, "Does death await me here?"
"Oh! Say will I, will I be denied on my journey home from sea?"
"Will I not go on? Will I n're again spawn in the bed of the Miramichi?"





CHECK OUT THE MSA ITEMS FOR SALE



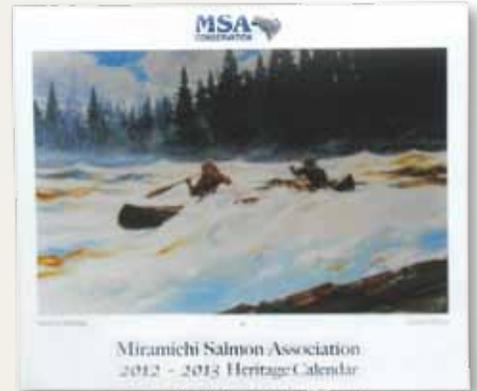
Inflatable Personal Flotation Device – \$95.00.

This “horse collar” type life vest is comfortable, non-bulky, light in weight and bears the MSA logo. It fits nicely over your fishing vest – in fact it almost looks like fishing gear. In case of emergency, pulling the toggle will inflate the vest. After being inflated one time, the cartridge must be replaced – we also have those in supply at a cost of \$10 each – in order for the vest to be used properly a subsequent time.

Also, check out our website for other articles of clothing and prints for sale: miramichisalmon.ca

MSA Heritage Calendar – 2012/13 - \$15.00.

The MSA has created the 5th edition of the Heritage Calendar that not only highlights what’s wonderful about this sport of fishing, it has become a collector’s item. For those who love to fish – or just come to the Miramichi watershed to see it – this calendar will get you through the winter months and help keep track of the season ahead. The calendar is just one of MSA’s initiatives to generate revenue to help with its many programs. The sponsors pay for the production of the calendar, so all sales go directly towards the activities of the MSA. We express appreciation to the artists – 13 are featured in this calendar, including a First Nations artist from Eel Ground, NB, and to the co-operation and support of organizations that own certain of the artwork, namely the Woodsmen Museum in Boiestown and the Atlantic Salmon Museum in Doaktown.



PLEASE HELP US!

The Miramichi Salmon Association respects the long history of the Miramichi River with its precious resource, its people, its heritage and its landmarks. It is a legacy heaped with memories of long ago and we strive to keep those wonderful recollections alive. We ask you to please submit copies of your old photos so that we may use them for purposes of a photo album on our website and to feature in future MSA Calendars.

Please be sure to provide a little background information on the subjects in the photo, the location, etc. A picture does speak a thousand words, but we do like to have accurate details to share with our members and readers. As well, please provide your name and address and we will be sure these prized possessions will be returned to you in due course.

Thank you for your assistance in this regard.



FLY CASTER'S ELBOW *By Squirrel Tail Vickers*

"No fishing for me this year. I can't haul the line off the water!"

This sad state of affairs is usually due to lateral epicondylitis (tennis elbow or fly caster's elbow). Anglers between 40 and 70 years of age are its victims. It is characterized by pain about the lateral aspect of the elbow. The pain is made worse by activities that require rotation of the arm and extension of the wrist. Lifting, especially if the palm is facing down, increases the pain. Picking up a coffee cup can be painful. Repeated muscle activity in the forearm and wrist causes small tears in the tendons of the muscles. Until healing is complete, the inflamed tissue will remain tender and painful. You can make the diagnosis. Bend your elbow to 90 degrees and place it across your abdomen with the palm facing up. Next apply pressure one fingerbreadth below the lateral or outside bony prominence of the elbow. This will reproduce the pain.

Activities that cause the pain should be eliminated. This doesn't mean the end of fly-fishing!! Sure, you can take Motrin or have a steroid injection into the inflamed area. A simpler, less invasive answer is the two-handed rod. If you are a right-handed caster, grip the rod with your right hand at the base of the rod and place your left hand 4-6 inches further up the cork. Cast off your left shoulder. Yes, it will require a little practice, but soon you will be casting a line that is at least as long as your best one handed cast. Casting will be a joy and you will be pain free. For one week on the Miramichi, I replaced my Trident TL, 9ft. for a two-handed Trident TLS, 14ft. Eleven Atlantic salmon later, I was singing its praises.

A NOTE OF THANKS

On behalf of Nola Chiasson and myself, I take this opportunity to extend our thanks to all MSA members and directors for the cooperation we receive in doing our jobs to help fulfil the objectives of the Miramichi Salmon Association.

We are here to serve and work with you, and we always welcome your comments, ideas and recommendations. By working together with you – the members, the MSA Board of Directors, Mark Hambrook and Jenny Reid, we believe that our combined efforts will achieve the best conservation results for the Miramichi River and its Atlantic Salmon Resources.

We enjoy meeting MSA members whenever we have the chance to do so. Please always feel free to drop in or contact us (Nola at the South Esk office at 506-622-4000 or Jo-Anne at the Fredericton office at 506-457-2220) or email us any time. Wishing each and every one of you a Happy New Year and tight lines for the coming season!

Regards,

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