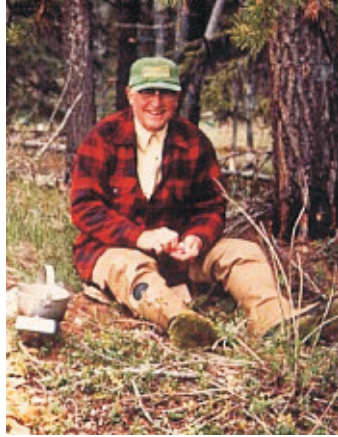


Clearwater Fly Casters

Who Were Ben Collins and Steve Allured?

Written by George Hinman - January 2004



Ben Collins



Steve Allured

Clearwater Fly Casters awards the Steve Allured - Benton Collins Memorial Award annually to a club member "in recognition of outstanding contributions to the activities of the Clearwater Fly Casters, conservation, and the sport of fly fishing."

But who were Ben Collins and Steve Allured? Enough time has now passed so that most current members did not know them and do not know what role they played in the history of the club. Ben and Steve were charter members of the club, present at its formation in 1970. They were active members for the rest of their lives, and both would have deserved the award themselves for the generous contributions that they made to club projects and activities.

Ben Collins' business was farming; his ranch was near Kamiak Butte, but when he wasn't farming, he was fishing. He fished the local streams and lakes with many club members, especially with his close friend Andy Tidrick. He also was a regular traveler to more distant waters like the streams in British Columbia and the rivers of western Oregon and Washington.

Ben was a strong supporter of the club from its beginning. When Sherman Lowell felt somewhat burned out after three terms as the first president, Ben took over as president in 1973 and brought a strong spirit of leadership during his year and afterwards. He was an organizer, promoter and supporter of club activities. He helped teach the flytying classes and once enrolled in a

WSU flytying class as a student so that Dave Engerbretson would have enough students to teach the class. He helped organize the community clinics that we had for the public in those days. He was involved in setting up the famous club trip to Lake Hi Hume in 1972 where 20 club members, including one member with his wife and a dog, occupied one cabin. He was the cook (the early predecessor of Bill Hendrix) at the annual club spring outings at Loren Schroder's place on Badger Lake. We all spent the mornings fishing the lake to provide the fish for Ben and Andy Tidrick to cook as the main course for the evening dinner. Ben organized the auctions where Dave Engerbretson and George Johnson were auctioneers before the arrival of Dave Tharp. He helped organize the hybrid fish experiments at Lake Lenice and built two prams for club members to use at the lake. Overall he was a vital force in the club through the 1970s and was very highly regarded by all. Ben suffered from heart trouble. I remember fishing with him on the Grande Ronde when he had to stop fishing and lie down to recover from a painful episode. He died from a heart attack in October 1980.

Steve Allured worked as an artist in the Publications Department at WSU. His principal responsibility was to create illustrations for university publications, but he did some special projects with a wider audience. He had some part in rendering the

WSU cougar logo although he apparently did not originate it. He painted the Ferdinand scenes on the walls of the old sales room at Ferdinand's Dairy in Troy Hall.

Steve contributed generously of his talents to the club. He was a superb flytyer and often taught the local class. He had his own version of the Carey Special, a popular fly of the day. His version was made with moosehair and bore no resemblance to the Carey Special that the rest of us tied, but he insisted that his was the real Carey Special.

Steve offered his artistic talent to the club on many occasions. He created the masthead for the Tippet that was used from March 1973, when the name was still Creel Notes, until December 1999, when it was finally replaced. He designed the first membership card, the first club patch, the first club stationery, and the first club membership pin. He created the certificate that we still give to our speakers, signed by the Prevaricator Supreme and the Second Biggest Liar. He created the ivory bolo tie that passes to successive club presidents for their year in office. He and Dave Engerbretson, created the display of members' sample flies that was for many years available at every club meeting but that seems to have disappeared. Steve was an expert at scrimshaw in the days when ivory was still acceptable, and at auctions in the 1970s a scrimshaw bolo or other creation by Steve was one of the star attractions. I

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have a beautiful carving that he did and that I finally won after a spirited bidding contest with Fran Lowell. I felt bad about it later.

Each summer in the late 1970s Steve invited club members to come to his cabin in northern Idaho near Bonner's Ferry to fish on the Moyie River that flowed through his property. Sherm Lowell and I regularly participated along with several others. We used to sleep on the front porch of his cabin and fish for two days. I remember one day I was fishing and glanced across the river, which was only about as wide as Marble Creek. There was a bear getting a drink and watching me. I have never forgotten that moment although the bear made no

aggressive movement, and I moved to another spot. Steve never would agree to hold any office in the club, but club members all recognized his outstanding contributions. Steve died in December 1979.

In December 1980 President Walter Becker appointed a committee of Sherm Lowell, Ivan Sayles, Mark Kuipers, George Johnson, and Chuck Fredericksen to suggest ways that the club could commemorate long time members such as Ben Collins and Steve Allured. After a considerable hiatus, Sherm Lowell received the first Steve Allured Benton Collins Memorial Award in March 1989, and the award has been given each year since except for the year 2000.

We now have apparently missed making an award in 2003 as well, and memory of this way to recognize service to the club is fading away. I believe that it is a worthwhile club tradition and hope that it can be continued with the annual recipient noted in the Tippet. The club needs to establish a regular procedure for making the award and record it in the Tippet as well as the club history.

The Steve Allured Benton Collins Memorial Award is given in recognition of outstanding contributions to the activities of the Clearwater Fly Casters, conservation and the sport of fly fishing (3/89 Tippet).

Allured - Collins Recipients

- 1989 Sherman Lowell
- 1990 Dave Engerbretson and Chuck Fredericksen
- 1991 George Johnson
- 1992 Marv Slind
- 1993 Andy Kleinhofs
- 1994 Bill Hoge
- 1995 George Hinman
- 1996 Denny Cartwright
- 1997 Leroy Hyatt
- 1998 Gene and Natalie Clark
- 1999 Dave Tharp
- 2000 Bill Hendrix
- 2001 *Not given*
- 2002 Joe McGurchin
- 2003 *Not given*
- 2004 John Read
- 2005 Bob Harwood and Jim Palmershiem
- 2006 Dave Yonge
- 2007 Shirley Engerbretson
- 2008 Tim Cavileer

CFC Fly Plate

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1) Bucktail | 8) ? |
| 2) Golden Spinner | 9) Willow |
| 3) Bucktail | 10) Light Helgamite |
| 4) Shoemaker | 11) Coachman |
| 5) Coachman | 12) Ginger Quill |
| 6) White Miller | 13) Black Helgamite |
| 7) ? | 14) Willow |

