



TIGHT LINES

August 2019 Newsletter of the Rabun Chapter (522) Trout Unlimited

The mission of the Rabun Chapter of Trout Unlimited is to conserve, protect, and restore Northeast Georgia's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds.

[CLICK HERE](#)

to visit our Award Winning Website!



*Welcome to this Special Edition of Tightlines:
A Tribute to Doug Adams*

There are no Chapter activities planned for August, 2019. Therefore this issue of Tightlines will be a special edition dedicated solely as a tribute to the memory of our dear friend, Doug Adams.

[Meriwether Douglass Adams](#), age 83, of Rabun Gap, GA, went on around the bend on June 19, 2019. Doug was a founding member of the Rabun Chapter Trout Unlimited and a friend to many.

Chapter members and friends have contributed their thoughts, memories, stories, and photographs and are included in this issue of Tightlines.

We all know how Doug loved to tell stories, even if we didn't have to believe it if we didn't want to! By sharing these stories, we help to keep the memory of our friend going on forever... [like starlight](#).

We hope you will enjoy this special edition of Tightlines:

A Tribute to Doug Adams.

"When a man's stories are remembered, then he is immortal."

Daniel Wallace, *Big Fish: A Novel of Mythic Proportions*





Crickets

Russ Tyre

As you know, The Old Man and I shared adventures and stoked many campfires together. The story I can think of at the moment, which might be enjoyed by folks outside our little fishing/camping group goes as follows:

Many years ago, when Doug and I were still in high school, we decided to go fishing one weekend on a small tributary of the Chestatee river near Dahlonega. It was early Spring and the days were cool, but the nights were cold. We piled into Doug's 52 Ford panel truck (our camper) and drove up a narrow two-rut road that ran parallel to the stream for a way. We found a suitable spot, stopped the truck and made camp. It was late in the afternoon, so we built a campfire, hung our fishing gear on a couple of trees near the camper and prepared our evening meal.

I must digress here, briefly to tell the reader that back in those days, Doug and I scoffed at the idea of using artificial flies to catch trout. We used Georgia Nymphs (Crickets) exclusively and they worked wonderfully well. We had purchased five dozen crickets for our trip that weekend.

Well, back to the story. So I hung our cricket cage on a tree limb next to the fishing gear, not realizing that I had dislodged the top of the cage. Doug and I then enjoyed our meal around the campfire, reminiscing of trips gone by and those we planned to make in the future. It was getting much colder as the sun had long slipped behind the mountain and the fire had subsided to embers. We decided to get some sleep and arise early the next morning.

As we prepared for bed, Doug said to me "Better bring those crickets in the camper tonight, it's going to get too cold to leave 'em outside". So, dutifully, I retrieved the cricket cage only to discover that they had escaped...there were no crickets! I showed the empty cage to Doug and tried to explain what might have happened. For a moment he just looked at me and then what he said will not be repeated in this narrative. The crickets were gone! Our trip was a bust! That was all that mattered.

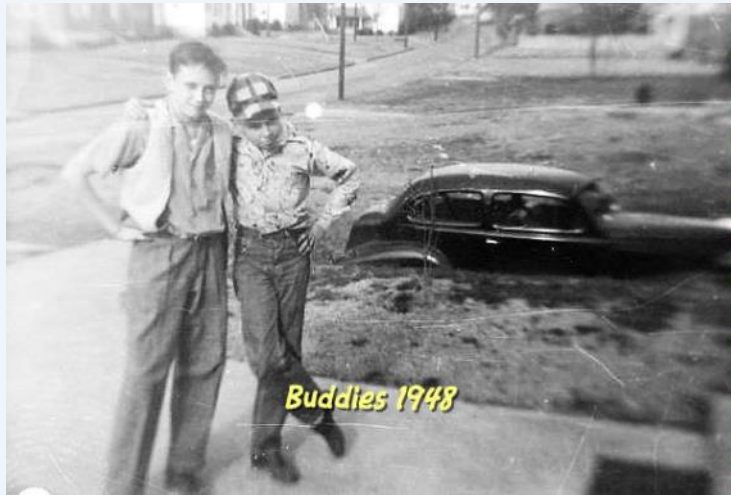
Needless to say, not a word passed between us for the rest of the night. Well, we did arise early the next morning only to begin packing up for the trip back. Doug said to me "Better make sure that fire's out before we leave, so down to the stream I went for a bucket of water. I trudged back up the hill and just as I was about to douse the embers, I saw something move. I looked down in disbelief.

Crickets! Five dozen crickets! Neatly arranged around the remains of that campfire, lethargic, but alive, were our lost crickets. We carefully returned them to their cage, once again unpacked our gear and had a great weekend on the stream.

I don't remember much about the fish we caught, but I sure remember those doggone crickets!

Now you have to believe this, even if you don't want to, because it's true.

Some Pictures Russ Tyre



So it begins....



This is one of my favorite photos of Doug. He and I agreed that this was one of the most colorful Rainbow's we had caught on the Nantahala. We named him "Mr. Rainbow" and released him.

Sorry to hear the news. He was a great guy and a true conservationist.

**Scott James
Rabunite**

I Believe

I believe that imagination is stronger than knowledge.

That myth is more potent than history.

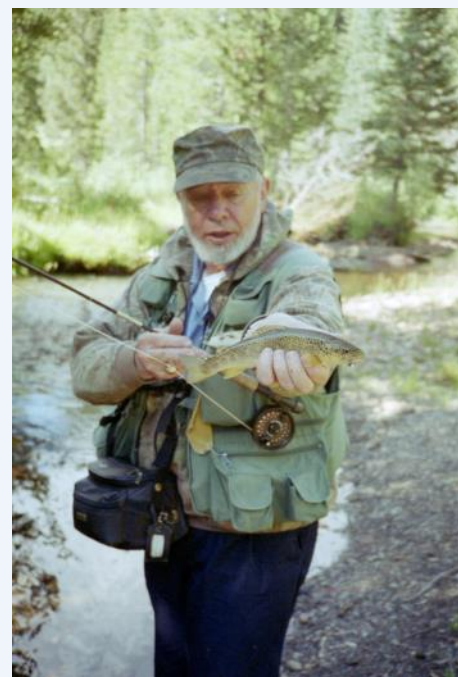
I believe that dreams are more powerful than facts.

That hope always triumphs over experience.

That laughter is the only cure for grief.

And I believe that love is stronger than death.

Robert Falghum



Memories Pat Hopton

I first met Doug Adams in 1986, shortly after I moved to Rabun County. Jim Kidd had taken me on my first fishing trip to the Chattooga River, and we met Doug at the parking area of the Turnpike Trailhead. He opened the back of his 80 pickup truck with camper shell, and I was amazed at everything he had back there: sleeping bunks, drawers with food and supplies, and racks to hold his fishing rods. I was in awe. Doug took his trout fishing seriously.

He invited me to attend the annual Klondike Enterprises campouts at the Double Bit Camp. It was there that I was introduced to the Rabunites, bluegrass music, campfire stories, high jinx tricks, and dark thirty fishing. Doug loved a good campout.

That same year he took me on my first Western fishing trip. Me, Doug, Jim Kidd, Kyle Burrell, Tom Nixon, and Jim Darnell went to Colorado where I was introduced to cutthroat trout, alpine lakes, sparkling streams, and a certain spot dubbed “The Center of the Universe”. Doug exposed me to the “Rocky Mountain Fever”, for which I now need annual treatments.

At a Double Bit campout, Doug proposed forming a local chapter of Trout Unlimited. He thought that outsiders were having too much say in the management of the Chattooga River and by forming a Chapter we would have a seat at the table. He was right, of course, and the Rabun Chapter continues to this day as a result of his hard work and dedication.

In 1994 my Daddy died a sudden and unexpected death. To my surprise, Doug and Eedee came to the funeral in Atlanta. I don’t know how they knew about it; I hadn’t told them. He did the same thing when my Momma died in 2007. Doug truly cared about people.

After a difficult and unsettled time in my life, during which I did not fish or attend Rabun Chapter meetings, Doug got back in contact with me. He got me back on my feet again just by taking me fishing. I tell people that Doug Adams got me through my Dark Times.

I would go on to take 13 trips with him “Out West” to fish and camp. Several of those trips were just Doug and I, but most were with other friends. I can’t even begin to number the trips we took to the Chattooga River or to his camp on the Nantahala River. I continually look at the photos and relive the memories of each and every one of those trips.

Doug, Eedee, and Allison came to Colorado for mine and Tammy’s wedding. He took us to the trailhead where we backpacked in to the Center of the Universe for our honeymoon.

The picture to the right, cherished by Tammy, shows Doug taking me aside and giving me fatherly advice before our hike.

There are so many memories.... I still can’t believe he is gone. He loved fishing, The River, his family, his friends, and a good story. I miss you and love you, Old Man.



The Naming of the Double Bit Campsite As Recalled by Doug Adams

It was in April thirty-plus years ago. Spring flowers were blooming and the caddis flies and mayflies were once again hatching on the Chattooga. Jim and I decided to take a day or two of vacation from the carpet plant (a place where we worked - - ahhh, I mean a place where we were EMPLOYED between trout fishing forays). We needed to go survey THE RIVER.

It was early on a beautiful Sunday afternoon when we pulled out of Rabun Gap and headed up the Highlands Road. Our plan was to cross-over the divide at Scaly and go down the Hale Ridge Road and then the Overflow Road with a brief stop at Bailey Branch to gather some crispy critters for supper later that evening at camp on Reed Creek.

After a successful foray at Bailey, we headed out on the Overflow Road towards John Teague Gap. About halfway between the Billingsley Creek Road turnoff and the Gap on a sharp right turn, the rear end of the '67 Chevy pick-up lurched to the left and came to a wheel-dragging stop. I was downhearted when I saw all of the lug bolts holding the left rear wheel had snapped off. But good fortune arrived just a couple of minutes later. A car pulled up and it was Woodrow Blalock out showing the countryside to a couple of folks. What a stroke of good luck!

He gave Jim a ride into Clayton. I went off down the side of the mountain to Holcomb Creek to harvest a few more trout, - - which I did! What a stroke of good luck!

When Jim got to Clayton, he went to a pay phone and called Carlton Junior (on his unlisted phone number I had written down on a scrap of paper). Carlton was home. He agreed to meet Jim and open up Jones Auto Parts. He gave Jim a set of lug bolts and nuts. What a stroke of good luck!

From there Jim called Frank of Darnell Mechanical at home. Frank's brother Yank happened to be visiting there. Jim told Frank what had happened and that it "broke all 5 lug bolts" and would he please come with tools and help get the truck repaired. Frank said "Doesn't Doug's truck have 6 lug bolts?" Jim said "Ahhh - - Yea, that's right - all 6." Yank said, "Frank, I wouldn't go if I was you - them boys is up to something." But Frank ignored his brother's advice. What a stroke of good luck!

Frank picked Jim up in town, drove out to Holcomb Creek and replaced all 6 lug bolts. Jim and I were on the road again and arrived at our chosen Reed Creek campsite after dark. What a stroke of good luck!

We made our usual pre-camp walk around with flashlights. Just checking the lay of the land, where to place the truck, where to string the tarp, where to set the stove and table, and so forth. While we were doing this we began to discover our camp was almost already set. There was a table made between 2 trees, a stove stand, a lantern hanger, a pile of firewood, a stack of lighter wood, and a **double bit axe**! What a stroke of good luck!

I said "Jim, with all this good luck we are having today, just keep looking." Jim asked "Why?" I replied, "Because I know there must be a bunch of money laying around here someplace!"

We didn't find the money, but we did make wonderful memories. And we named the campsite **"Double Bit"**.





Fishing Friend's Gone Around the Bend

Jeff Durniak

Can one man make a difference? Rabun TU founder Doug Adams sure did! We just lost Doug, but still have his **legacy of accomplishments** to be thankful for.

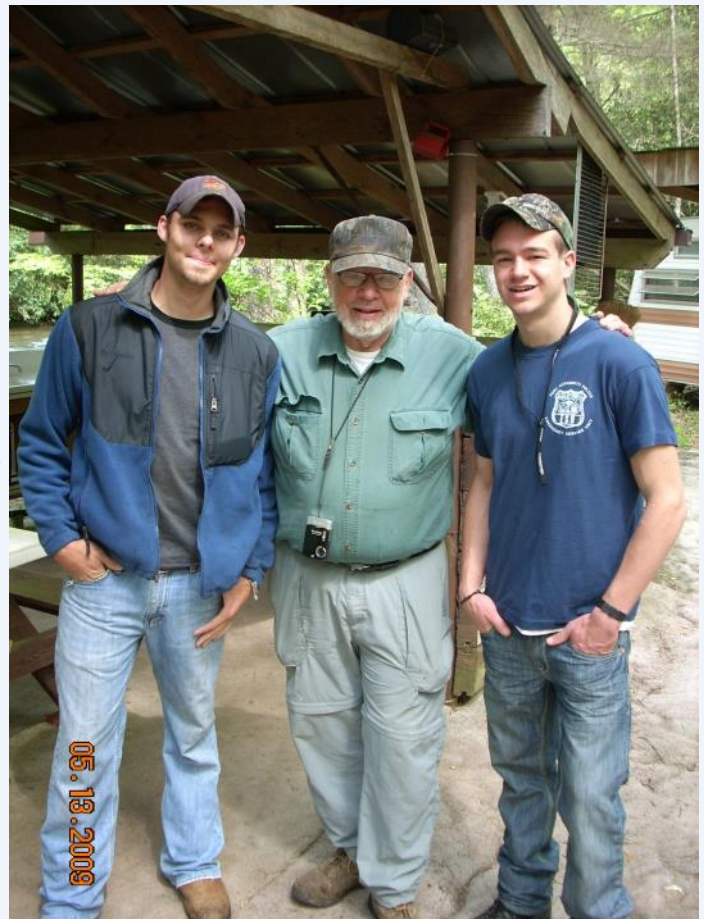
Here's a partial list of his coldwater kudos: Rabun chapter president and newsletter editor, lobbied NC DEM to designate Chattooga River headwaters as Outstanding Resource Waters, TU leader in our **cooperative research and improved trout management of the Chattooga River**, led USFS/TU habitat work projects in Rabun trout streams, represented anglers and coldwater habitat in National Forest management **planning and development of recreation plan** for the upper Chattooga River, **guest columnist** in GON magazine, helped USFS acquire trout stream mitigation from the Smithgall estate during its trade for Dukes Creek (if you ever fished Cooper Creek Scenic area, you have Doug to thank), participant on GA TU's team to support **Amicalola Creek (Forestar Tract) acquisition** by DNR. He started the famous **Rabun Rendezvous at Dillard House**, with those banquet revenues going far and wide: Rabun TU stream work projects, Project Healing Waters, Casting for Recovery, TU-National Embrace a Stream program support, Chattooga copter stocking, GATU Trout Camp for kids, and the Smithgall Woods youth education program. He was given TU -National's Distinguished Service Award in 2004.

On the personal front, Doug mentored many anglers, including WY/Hooch guide Kyle Burrell, **Unicoi Outfitters owner Jimmy Harris**, author/photographer **David Cannon**, and even the Dredger. Doug taught us all how to **speak Rabunite**, decipher bug hatches, wait on the coffin flies, catch more fish, and marvel at the tiny lights of fairies and twinkies **during our pitch-black hikes** out of His River. He and buddy Bill Kelly even piled me into their pickup truck for my first "out west" trout trip in 2000.

Doug opened his fish camp every spring break for my young NJ buddy, Patrick, and helped Pat overcome the loss of his 9/11 hero dad.

Doug Adams showed us all how to fish, conserve aquatic resources, live life to its fullest, and pass on a love of fishing, family, friends, and life to those young folks who follow in our footsteps. May my "friend around the bend" now find great fishing with his reunited buddies. And may each of us continue Doug's legacy by helping out a new angler and getting involved in the conservation of our Georgia trout waters.

Tight lines, Ole Rabunite. Tie on your favorite fly, *an Adams dry!*



A Honeymoon for Six!

Kathy Breithaupt

When Charlie and I first met in 2001 he was already very involved in the Rabun Chapter of Trout Unlimited. Over the next two years I also became involved with the Chapter, so when we married in 2003, it was not as strange as it may sound that we decided to spend part of our honeymoon on a Rabun Chapter trip to the Davidson River in North Carolina!

Tom and June Landreth, Eedee and Doug and Charlie and I set up our camp right on the banks of the Davidson. The fishing was OK and the catching was just mediocre at best – we did have to dodge some pink innertubes! Tom and June made all 6 of us a wonderful “wedding dinner” of Cornish hens!

The next day the weather did not cooperate so on that rainy afternoon we all piled into Doug and Eedee’s motor home and headed for the Cradle of Forestry to visit the exhibits there. Doug was driving of course and took those curves like a Mountain City moonshiner.

I can’t think of a better way to begin a new and happy life – not just with my new husband and best friend – but with a crowd of favorites!



West of Hiawassee aka the Rocky Mountains

Charlie Breithaupt

Doug made lots of trips west, over 60 I believe. He just said he was going “west of Hiwassee” so no one knew where he really went. I was fortunate to make two of these trips, the first with Terry Rivers along and the second one with Russ Tyre, Doug’s boyhood and life-long buddy.

The trips were planned by Doug to the last detail. We were each allowed 5 hangers (wire type) of fishing clothes and one grocery bag of socks and underwear. All meals were planned in detail; all groceries purchased before leaving. We shared in the cooking, under Doug’s supervision, of course.

There was a secret code letter by each meal which Terry and I could not figure out. The day before we left, Kathy ran into Doug at Ingles with his clipboard and shopping list and he told her what the code meant. It identified the “watershed” where we would eat the meal. She never shared that secret but Doug finally told us.

We traveled at night so as to not interfere in “fishing time” and no identifying of locations was allowed. The trips were full of great fishing, fellowship and making memories. Every minute was enjoyed and every detail remembered.

A Casting Lesson I Really Needed

Charlie Breithaupt

It was back about the year 2000 and we were camped out at Double Bit, probably for a Klondike gathering. Somehow I wound up at what I believe was the East Fork Pool, way up the Chattooga, with Doug. As darkness approached a hatch started coming off. Doug was deftly casting to rises and I was near by, flailing the surface and putting down every fish in the pool.

In total darkness we climbed out of the pool and, after I was admonished for not having a flashlight, we headed back with me walking very close behind Doug who did have a light, of course. Somewhere down the trail Doug stopped and said “can you get away one night next week; we’ll go fishing?” My chest swelled with pride at the invitation and I replied “sure.” Then he turned over his shoulder and growled.. ”I’ll help you with your casting!”

Sure enough, the following week we headed for the Nantahala, with Eedee bringing along supper, and Doug showed and explained to me how to make a gentle presentation by aiming about 4 feet above the surface so the fly could just land softly. He was a patient and encouraging teacher and my casting did improve, the only direction it could go. That lesson has served me well ever since. Thanks Doug.....



The Apple Fell Right Under the Tree

Charlie and Kathy Breithaupt

We started the Georgia Trout Camp back in 2004 and Doug was a huge part of all we did.. planning, teaching and mentoring. In later years he had to step back but was always there in spirit.

This year, 2019, Avril Adams, Doug and Eedee’s granddaughter, attended camp. She is an excellent caster and fly tier and caught her share of trout.

On the last day of camp we presented the Julie Stal-naker Award, given in memory of Julie who did so much for Trout Unlimited and trout fishing. The recipient is chosen based on the qualities of Julie...positive attitude, intelligent, and a helpful spirit toward others.

It was no surprise when the announcement came that this year’s recipient wasAvril Adams. There was a real proud family in the audience, including her granddaddy. Way to go Avril. Keep moving it forward!



My Memories of Doug Tammy Hopton

I remember the first time I met Doug Adams. I had been invited to a TU Christmas party by Pat Hopton. I knew that Doug was important in Pat's life and I wanted to make sure I got to know him and Eedee. He was polite and engaging but it was a crowd of strangers and I was quite uncomfortable.

As time went by, I got to know him better. I realized he was kind, considerate and very generous. I know he appeared grumpy and rough from the outside but there was more to him than that. He took great interest in others. As an example of that characteristic, I had posted a photo of my Dad holding a brown trout with me in the background when I was about 1 year old. I remember sending the photo to Doug just as a point of interest. He devoured it. He asked questions about the old panel truck behind us, the fish itself and of course had many questions regarding my Dad. I had thought he might have been interested in seeing the photo but I never imagined how he delved into the details. I loved this conversation with him. I can imagine that maybe he and my Daddy had fished many of the same rivers and creeks in north Georgian and North Carolina. They may have actually crossed paths. I savor the thought of Doug and my Dad on a creek bank, talking about the one that got away.

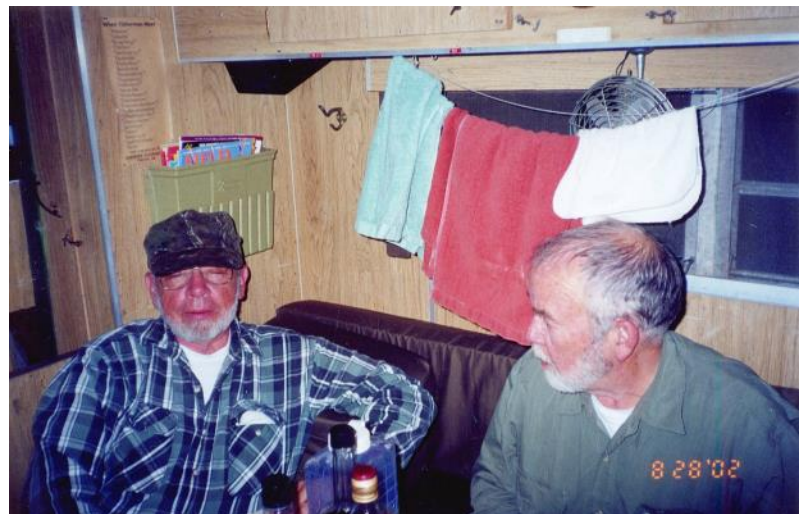


He was a great story teller. He knew just when to pause in the story and how to lead up to the good part. I loved hearing about his early trips out west with his friend Sonny. I could just imagine how pristine and remote those mountains must have been in the fifties.

Later when I began fishing more, he helped me with my casting and gave me pointers on flies and the importance of enjoying the time fishing. After fishing one of my favorite creeks I came back to his camp to give him the details of the trip. I smile now when I think about the belly laughs he would give when I told him about my Grade 7 fall into the creek and the questions he would ask regarding how many times the fish jumped, what fly I was using and the address of the long line release. He would study the photos on my camera while he listened to my story.

Doug was a great man beyond fishing, I don't think I realized how amazing he was until now he is gone. He inspired me to not only be a better fisherman but more importantly, to enjoy life to the fullest. I miss him very much.





My Friend Doug Art Shick

It was a dark and stormy night ----- nah, it wasn't. It was a clear afternoon atop Ford Mountain in North Georgia. I saw an announcement for a gathering of TU'ers meeting to discuss the health of the Chattooga River and the trout living there. Little did I know this meeting of dedicated lovers of the River would change my life. This recent Yankee transplant (intentional) to South Carolina was about to meet and become good friends with Doug Adams and the Rabunites!

The gathering at a cabin on Ford Mountain was the first, or second, of what was to become, the Rabun Rendezvous. It was there that I was with some suspicion, (I was a Yankee remember) welcomed to the cohort of Chattooga River lovers. From that time on Doug was always there for physical and organizational assistance on anything that had to do with his beloved Chattooga.

To give an idea of Doug's influence to anything Chattooga, let me site a few examples: support for the fledgling chapter on the other side of the river (Chattooga River Chapter); instrumental in the establishment of the Chattooga Coalition; "bug pick-in" (microinvertebrates) from countless trays of samples taken from the Chattooga river bottom. I still fondly recall the labor and the fine fellowship between the GA and SC TU'ers, GA and SC Forest Service and DNR's. Then there were the Camp outs at Double Bit. The work days on Reed Creek. The list goes on.

I recall some of the day trips fishing with Doug on the Chattooga and how he delighted in instructing me on the names of specific spots, rocks, and other features. The hoots and hollers emitting from deep down, as Doug would recount the practical joke that brought about the naming of the "Nugget" just upstream of the island. From the "Long Bottom Ford," "Adam's Point," "Cougar Pool," and on to "Nooks and Crannies," Doug had a story for each and loved to tell them.

One story of note: My friend Fred Marcinak (from Walhalla) and I met Doug at the parking lot on the GA side at Burrell's Ford. It was 5:30 pm and we hiked down to the "Cougar Pool," then fished up through the "Upper Steps" to the "Island". Now the water was a bit high but very fishable. For the first hundred yards or so we were concerned more with our footing than where the fish were. Doug would say, "walk out along that ledge, see that crack in the rock, just beyond it you can step over the shelf and there will be a rock about a foot under the froth." He was always right. Fred and I always knew when Doug had a fish on. The 'WAAaah WHOoooo' echoed through the valley.

Many times, at a Chattooga Coalition annual meeting someone would ask what the brown trout stocking numbers were some years back compared to this year. Doug would more than likely respond with the data off the top of his head; but, in the rare instance he didn't, he'd reach down for the briefcase next to his chair and retrieve the appropriate document that would reveal the correct statistic. Amazing!

Cont.

Cont.

There's an old American back-country tradition I intend to apply in Doug's memory this year. When a hunter, fisherman or mushroom gatherer was separated from his group and wanted to communicate his intentions, he would find three round, flat rocks of decreasing diameter, stack them on the trail to let the others know He Went Home.

So, when you 're walking down the Chattooga River trail and see the stack of rocks, just think of Doug and smile.



How I Met Doug Mike Charnoky

I met Doug at last year's 2019 Rabun Rendezvous after he was introduced to me. Doug sat at the table next to me. It was a pleasure meeting another founding member, and to hear Doug was so highly liked and respected. Doug and I talked about him as a founding member and naming the Rabun TU chapter, that he did not want to name it after a local river. Doug also had a cool walking stick I just had to get a closer look at. Since then I have heard several comical stories of how organized Doug was, and his thorough planning and preparation. I don't laugh too much, because my wife says I am the same way... but that's the Boy Scout still in me. And I know I am in good company with Doug since we think alike. Rest in peace Doug.

Thanks for letting me know about the Memorial Gathering. Unfortunately, I will not be able to come, but perhaps in some meaningful way it happens that I will be in Yellowstone that day and perhaps I can catch a fish for Doug.

**Gordon Fowler
Rabun TU Member**

**Cecil Greene
Raleigh, NC**

It was my good fortune to meet Doug through my wife Polly. She was a high school classmate of Doug's. As I understand it, she was also responsible for introducing Doug to Ee-dee. What a pleasure to visit with the Adams in Rabun Gap! Through Doug, I became a member of the Rabun Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

On visits to their home, Doug would always include a "trip to the stream." On one such visit, Doug was instructing me on the "techniques" of fly fishing, a sport which was new to me.

We were "way off the main roads", in fact out where there was no civilization as I could tell. There was just the two of us, when I suddenly heard a voice from the woods....-"hello there Doug Adams!" It was the game warden who was totally invisible....I said, "man, I never knew he was there!" Doug's response was, "Well, you would have if you had not released that trout you just caught!"

Doug was a very special and unique person and friend who we miss!



Eedee dropping us off for a few hours of fishing

Bear Dog in Camp Terry Rivers

We were camping at Doug's fish camp in N.C. Me, Doug, Russ Tyre, Tom Landreth, and Bill Kelly. Tom Landreth was sleeping in his van that he used to travel to his art shows. For those of you who never met him, Tom was a big supporter of TU. He has over the years donated so many of his paintings to TU chapters thru out Ga. for their fundraiser the numbers would shock you.

Well also many of you know that Doug was a bit of a prankster. He loves to get something on you and I've had my share of them, believe me. But back at camp on this trip one evening a bear dog puppy with tracking collar and all had took up at camp. After supper we had a few cocktails under our belt and probably one too many. We had also had fed the dog up real well and he had stretched out next to the fire and he was not leaving.

Well ole Tom always had a saying especially to Doug "you will never pull one of your tricks off on me". Well those who knew Tom knew he was first to bed and first to rise. After crawling in his van on his cot Doug has an idea , "I think I can pull one on him" so after a good hour and a few more drinks it happened.

Doug said "Terry see if the van is unlocked". It was and Doug was thrilled. So when we decided to turn in, we opened the van door and the bear dog made himself a home under Toms cot. We were crying from laughing so much.

Well Tom was up when we got up the next morning. The only thing he could say was "Dang it, Doug, you got me". And that was not his last time Doug got him!

We tried to pull it off again the next night but the doors were locked.

The happy ending was when the bear hunter finally located his bear dog, which was still a puppy in training, he asked us where was we were from. We told him Rabun County. He said you know, I've not named that pup but now I'm calling him RABUN.

Thanks for the memories, Doug. I've had some great ones with you. Going to miss you.





I was glad to have seen Doug at both the 2019 Chattooga Coalition meeting and the Trout Unlimited SE Regional meeting in May. Both events gave me the opportunity to thank him in person for his long contributions to our trout waters and forests in his area, including as one of the founders of the Rabun Gap Chapter of TU and the Chattooga Coalition, and as the long time "Tight Lines" chapter newsletter editor. The newsletter which still continues his tradition of excellence is so important in communicating the wonder of clean free flowing waterways and healthy fisheries, and the work and importance of the many chapter volunteers over the years.

Doug sincerely loved those natural resources and left a wonderful legacy of a lifetime of volunteer work to protect them working with fellow TUsers and our resource agencies in so many different ways. I followed those efforts through the years from SC since the 1980s when we first met when I was in my first term as the SC TU Council Chair and always appreciated his character, devotion, and tireless efforts.

And I will always remember a few days on stream with him and his enthusiastic holler with each trout hook up...

Malcomb Leaphart
SC TU Member

Doug was always so good to me. He welcomed me into the Rabunite circle. What a fine man.

David Edens
Rabunite

I will not be to attend the celebration for Doug. I will be landing in Atlanta about 8PM on the 10th of August. I will be coming back from a fishing trip to Colorado.

Doug would be happy that I'm doing the thing he enjoyed so much.

Larry Vigil
Cohutta Chapter TU

I am sad to hear of Doug's passing, he is definitely worthy of a life celebration. Thank you for informing us.

Mike Bamford
Whitesides Cove, NC

Making Memories with Doug Michele Crawford

I knew of Doug Adams, long before I got to personally know Doug Adams. As an avid lover of the outdoors I had been among others at times who shared stories about Doug Adams. I knew of his love for the river, his dedication to youth in Rabun County and of course his love of fly fishing. Among many that talked about Doug, he probably never knew it, but he was greatly admired and somewhat of a legend.

Later, Doug started coming into the gallery working with my husband and I on items that the Rabun Chapter would donate to other Georgia TU chapters. We had several good conversations about the river and his trips out west. Then one spring, he invited us to come along on a dark thirty fishing and Chattooga Fairies trip with him and Pat Hopton. We were thrilled to go, but just as friends and observers. Work had kept us off the river that year and we had never got our poles ready at all. Watching the two men interact on the river was a treat. Years of fishing together had created a great bond of friendship. That evening I took a photograph that I have always considered one of my favorites. To me the photo captured the friendship and bond created by both gentleman's love of the river, the fishing, and the mutual respect of shared time among fishing buddies.

In the spring of 2013 while newly serving on the Rabun TU board, Pat asked me if I was willing to start doing the newsletter. Doug had been doing the letter for 8 years and was now ready to pass that task on to someone else. I did indeed agree to do the newsletter. I was nervous about stepping in to fill the position because I didn't have 1/10th of the time on the river fishing as Doug had nor his knowledge. Through all the stories I had heard, and a little time I had got to be among Doug's presence, the one thing I greatly admired about him was his passion for trout fishing and conservation. Especially protecting the Chattooga River. My favorite newsletter writing by Doug was in March of 2012, rafters were after more time and space on the Chattooga River and his piece "Beware of the Camel's Nose" really hit home for me on his passion to protect the outstanding remarkable values of backcountry solitude and remoteness. Though my hands would never hold as many trout and my legs would never stand in as many miles of rivers, I understood. I wanted to help.

Unlike many of his friends, I only got to sit creekside with Doug just a few minutes. But for those few minutes I will always be grateful that our paths crossed. And like many others, any time spent on the river will be moments that the name Doug Adams will come to mind.



Remembering Doug Adams Doug Hickman aka “Banker”

One of my most vivid memories of Doug occurred some years ago when I was fishing with him on the Nantahala during Green Drake time. Late in the afternoon, we were fishing together up a long run below a big pool that Doug wanted us to work up to for the Grand Finale a.k.a. Coffin Fly spinner fall. While watching Doug work a section just across from me, I made the mistake of wading without paying attention to where I was stepping and stepped off an underwater ledge into deep water up to my neck.

Embarrassed because I had always prided myself on my wading skills, I crawled up on shore to empty water out of my vest and take inventory of my fly boxes hoping that I hadn't left any vest pockets open. That's when I saw Doug looking at me and holding up four fingers on both hands. Thinking that was some sort of hand signal for “do you need help”, I waived him off and went on with my business of getting my wits back together.

Later when we met up on the big pool where he wanted us to finish, he commented “I haven't seen a Class 8 fall in quite some time.” Then I understood what the hand signals meant and just had to ask “if that was a Class 8 fall, what would a Class 9 or Class 10 fall look like”, to which he replied “a Class 9 fall is when you go all the way under and a Class 10 fall is when you go all the way under and your hat starts floating down river.”

Now for the rest of the story – while fishing the Coffin Fly spinner fall that evening, Doug pointed out a particular holding lie that usually held a big brown. Spotting a rise, I put the fly right on target and hooked a very large brown that I fought for over 15 minutes before breaking off as Doug moved in to net him for me. The words that came out of Doug's mouth after that are not appropriate to repeat at a family gathering.

See ya “around the bend that never ends” one day, my friend.

Jimmy Harris Unicoi Outfitters

A good friend, mentor and the most dedicated conservationist I've ever known slipped around the bend last night, peacefully in his sleep. Doug Adams was my hero.

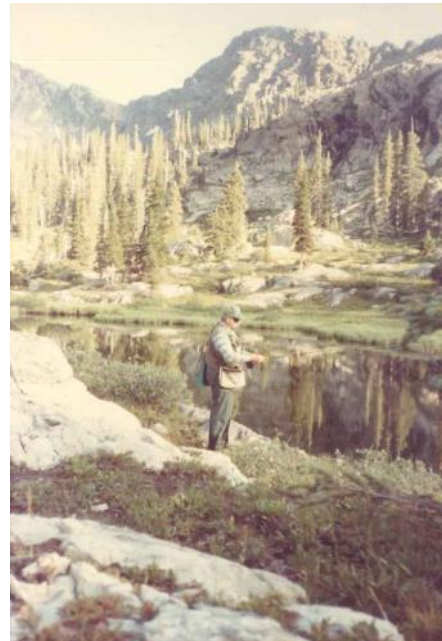
In the 1950's after graduating from Georgia Tech he purposefully took a job in Rabun County so he could be close to the Chattooga River. For over half a century he was as instrumental in the protection of the river as any one person could possibly be.

There are so many stories of Doug centered around trout fishing and conservation that I hope someone writes a book one day. Doug Adams will be missed by a lot of folks whom his life impacted. I'm just one of them.





I'll pack my grip for a farewell trip....
Jimmy Rogers



Lisa was not here when we put Tom's ashes in the Chattooga, so the next year when she came Doug was so kind to take us to The River so she could wade and have a few minutes to reflect. She retrieved a special small stone which she took back to Slidell with her. On the way out to the River, Lisa was in the front seat with Doug and he filled her in on so much of the history of the area and the activities that TU does routinely. Made it very special for LISA and for ME!!

That stone is now with a plaque under a huge Live Oak tree in a Slidell, LA park that has been adopted by Lisa and family!

June Landreth
Rabunite

I remember the first time I ever watched Doug fly fishing. I was about 13 years old. He took the Boy Scouts camping and fishing on the Chattooga and we camped at the East Fork confluence. I remember Doug out in the river casting to rising fish in the tail of the East Fork Pool at dusk. I sat on the bank and watched. I thought it was the most awesome thing I had ever seen. He was my Hero... and always will be.

Kyle Burrell
Rabunite



We'll see you around the bend, Old Friend. Waaa Hooooo!!