

Coming Events

Tuesday November 19
Monthly chapter meeting at the Rock House.

Tuesday December 17
Christmas Party at the Dillard House.

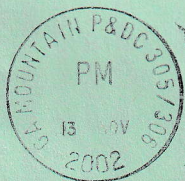
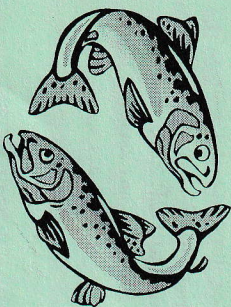
Saturday January 25
RABUN RENDEZVOUS!
At the Dillard House

*Chapter meets the third Tuesday of each month
at the Rock House in Clayton. Fellowship at
6:30, meeting at 7:00 PM.*

newsletter editor—Kathy Sparks

ELECTION TIME

At our meeting on Tuesday, November
19th we will vote on officers for our
chapter.



**Trout Unlimited
Rabun Chapter
194 Kitchens Lane
Clayton, GA 30525**



256144056 SR 11/30/2002
Doug Adams
PO Box 65
Rabun Gap, GA 30568

TIGHT LINES...

**Rabun Chapter of
Trout Unlimited
November 2002**



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

As you may know, our chapter
receives a rebate of \$5 from national
for each membership that is renewed
through our chapter. Please send your
Membership Renewal Statement and a
check for the correct amount to our
chapter treasurer.

**Russell Johnson
78 Weatherlane Lane
Lakemont, GA 30552**

Rabun County, Georgia

News from the President.....

Charlie Breithaupt



Enjoy Doug's story—it says it all....

Just Another Day of Making Memories on THE River

He looks at the thermometer: 29 degrees. "It's going to take a while for the water to warm up today," he thinks. His wife has plans to go to the shopping mall with her sister this morning. As she heads for the car, she asks, "Do you want to go with us?" "He says to himself, "Yeah, right," but wisely says aloud, "No thanks, think I'll go fish THE River again this afternoon." She knows which river is THE River.

"What section?"

"The DH*," he replies.

"Will you be home for supper?"

"Yeah, about an hour after dark."

"Have fun," she quips.

"You, too."

He takes care of a few chores around the house and then leaves about 11:15. A quick stop at Wendy's for a 'burger in a sack' and he pulls a cola from the icebox in the back of his Explorer. Only twenty minutes to THE River. He eats while driving out Warwoman. The "Sony Houston" bluegrass tape is playing. What a beautiful day! The leaves are at their peak of fall glory. Since his first trip to THE River when he was twenty years old, he figures he has driven out this road over three thousand times, but no trip was any prettier than today.

Three other anglers are gearing up as he arrives in the parking lot on the South Carolina side of the bridge. He quickly changes into his waders, fills his water bottle, puts an Almond Joy in his vest pocket, leaves his bifocals on the dashboard, picks up his 'homemade' Sage 8' 9" fly rod already rigged up, locks the Explorer, and leaves the parking area while the other three are still gearing ready. It is a routine he has perfected over the years.

He walks the trail upstream. He always savors this path away from the highway and vehicles, away from the 'civilized world.' For him, it starts as a walk back in time as he thinks of the Cherokee village that occupied this beautiful land 250 years ago. He thinks about Ira Nicholson, the first 'white' homesteader of 190 years ago, for whom the fields, the branch and the old river ford are still named. As he passes the old cabin ruins, he tries to imagine what it must have been like to grow up as a boy here during the depression. He climbs the hill at the head of the fields, again noticing the remnants of asphalt from where this stretch of steep grade was paved in the 1950's so that the "weekenders" could reach their USFS leases with two rustic cabins that sat on stilts facing the river just below the bend. They were torn down thirty or so years ago. No trace remains. Now it is all returning to a natural state under the protection of the National Wild and Scenic River Act.

He pauses briefly to examine a hemlock bough. It is not infested—yet. He walks up the trail in the bed of the old Nicholson Ford Road for 30 minutes to the pool where he "finished up" the day before. He thinks briefly about what his friend Nugget had told him years ago, "You shouldn't ever go back to the same stretch 2 days in a row, give the fish a rest." Finally, he enters THE River. He looks both ways, not another soul in sight. Surrounded in his personal envelope of solitude, he basks in the backcountry experience. The fall colors are stunning at the beginning of this second week of November with clear blue skies and bright waters. Reed Mountain to his right, Oakey Top straight-ahead, and Brack Hill on the left. He is on his home waters, again. It feels so comfortable. After all these years and visiting hundreds of other streams and rivers from coast to coast, he still believes this is the most beautiful trout stream he has ever seen. He takes a water temperature reading: 45 degrees. They'll be deep again today.

As he stands there, memories from days long ago fill his mind. He remembers, when his son was only three years old riding in a kid carrier on his back, wading this pool casting to rises. When the father would hook a trout, he would hand the rod over his shoulder to the son. He recalls a few years ago when his daughter was dealing with her divorce. She called and said "Daddy, I need to go fishing." They waded this pool together that cold winter day. He assembles his rod and straightens out the line, still rigged for deep fishing from the day before. Crossing the gentle current in the pool tail-out, he is always watchful for insects on the surface or the flash of a spooked fish. Easing his way towards the dark water at the head of the pool, he casts up and into the far edge of the current. He raises the rod for a dead drift through the 'sweet spot' then lowers it again in the rhythm of the stream flow. On the third time through, the line hesitates and he instinctively sets the hook. A minute later he reaches down and lifts a rainbow out and holds it next to the measurement marks on his rod. It's thirteen inches—a "nice fish," as flatland buddies would say, or a "really good'un," in the local jargon. He eases the hook out and lowers the trout back into the clear waters. With one brisk whip of the tail, the trout disappears into the dark water.

He thinks he should try to get down quicker and deeper, so he adds another split shot. On the same cast and same drift line, it hesitates halfway through. He sets the hook and sees a flash about the size of a handsaw deep in the dark water. The shape runs down the pool stripping out line, then turns and runs back up right by him and up the shoal at the head of the pool. It dashes into the next pool, where it turns again and rushes back down the shoal. As the huge trout thrashes on the water's surface, he raises his arm and allows the flexible tip of the 3-weight fly rod to protect his 5X tipped. Finally, after about fifteen minutes, the big fish turns on its side, and he slides the landing net over its head and down its massive body.

Holding the net up in his left hand and his fly rod up in his right hand, he stands up and tilts his head back. With unmitigated joy and excitement, he emits a thunderous Rabunite "YAHOOOOOOOO!" He quickly lowers the net into the water and moves to the left bank. He removes his 35 mm camera from his vest and its protective Ziploc plastic bag. Laying the trout in the moss next to the measurement marks on the rod, he snaps two quick photos. Gently lifting the huge fish with both hands, he eases it back into the river. Cradled upright in the angler's hands with its nose into the current, the huge trout begins regaining its strength. A few moments later the trout swims out of the angler's hands. He straightens up and with a grin, he watches the trout swim in a circle through the slack water between the current and the bank then slowly disappear into the dark water.

In his forty-seven years of fishing THE River, the largest trout he had ever landed there was 22" long. Now that has changed. His second trout today was a lovely, heavy, 24" rainbow.

" - - Then he realizes that life is just a collection of memories, - - and memories are like starlight, - - they go on forever."

by C. W. McCall from *Aurora Borealis*, "Wilderness" album.

Retirement is Good and the Chattooga DH* is a GREAT Success! DH* - Delayed Harvest

"By golly, you don't have to believe it, - - if you don't want to!" by W. T. Kelly - from 1967 on