

# F.A.T.C. NEWS

Florida Antique Tackle Collectors Newsletter

Volume 25, Number 3



**Ralph L. Miller and his Leaping Lena**



**Jack Hopkins A Cast to the Past**

**MUST HAVE LICENSE**

**The Florida Surprise Minnow - Part 2**



**THE BEST FISHERMEN**  
Use Bergmann's Coast to Coast Tackle Co. Lures. Handled by Meggett Hdw. Co., Stuart.  
**COAST TO COAST TACKLE CO.**  
William Bergmann  
512 El Parado — West Palm Beach  
P. O. Box 1616 — Phone 9613

**Coast to Coast Tackle**

*Roughing it Smoothly*







# FATC St. Augustine Beach Summer Show

Thanks to show hosts, Mike Hall and John Zimpleman



Club President, Larry Lucas



Show Host, Mike Hall



Chuck Heddon presents Malanie Mallard with a ribbon for her lure display.



Paul Snider accepts the "Best Topical" award for his Crazy Crawlers.



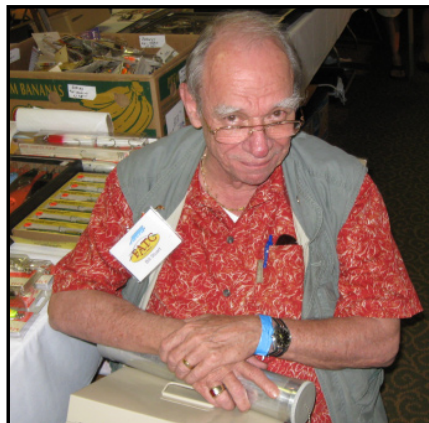
Rol Steinhauser with the "Best Educational" award for his South Bend display.



A St. Augustine show scene.



Ed Bauries receives his "Best Florida Display" award.



The sage Bill Stuart.

Also recognized for outstanding displays were:  
Jim Duncan  
Roth Kemper  
Mike Mais  
Susan Mais  
Jacob Mais  
(minnow)  
Rob Mallory  
and Larry Lucas.

# FATC Awards Criteria

It has come to our attention that many of our FATC members are not aware of the various benchmarks used to judge the exhibits at our FATC shows. The following is a synopsis of the criteria used to reach our decisions:

- Educational Information
- Identification & Labeling
- Rarity
- Completeness
- Condition
- Overall Presentation
- Uniqueness and/or Originality

An exhibitor who wins a major award at one show is not eligible to win another major award for the same or similar exhibit for a period of one year. This exhibitor however, may win a major award within this time period if they display an exhibit that is entirely different.

Exhibit cards with the name of the exhibit and the owners name should be displayed prominently on their exhibit. These cards can be obtained at the registration desk.

Thanks you,  
Awards Committee – Chuck Heddon & Ed Weston

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FLORIDA LURE BOXES, LURES OR  
LITERATURE**

**Frank Carter, Tallahassee, FL  
850-574-9718 email: fandi@comcast.net**



## F.A.T.C. NEWS

**The Newsletter of the Florida  
Antique Tackle Collectors, Inc.**

September 2011 Volume 25, No. 3

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Email: [info@centralfloridafishing.com](mailto:info@centralfloridafishing.com)



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## President's Message An Ode to the Writers

by Larry Lucas



I would like to dedicate this issue to the writers in our club. As you can tell, this is a big issue. There are more stories and compilations of tackle history than in our normal publications. Why? Because our members felt inspired to write. I am so grateful and in awe of the abilities of our membership. I can't write worth a darn. For the past four years, I have had the benefit of two talented editors to turn my chicken scratch into something legible.

We all possess knowledge that would be valuable to other tackle collectors. It is wonderful when you take the time to put your thoughts and passion on paper to share with others. Members Norm Pinardi, Johnny Garland, and Lewis Townsend have written books on the areas of collecting they are passionate about (Lewis' Pfeffer book will be out soon). And we can't forget the Florida Lure Makers and Their Lures, written by Doug Brace, Bill Stuart and Russ Riddle with contributions by many of our members. What incredible reference material these books are, and no Florida collector should be without them in his or her library. None of these club authors write about our hobby for the money. Most don't make a dime for their efforts. They do it to share their knowledge and passion for the hobby with others. A very noble cause, indeed.

Not all of us are writers, but we all have information to share. Take some time to put your thoughts on paper or email and send it to our editor, Gary Simpson. He'll polish it up, make you look good and put it in the newsletter. You'll gain respect from your peers and help to preserve the history of tackle collecting for future generations.

In this wonderful issue, you will find feature articles by Doug Brace, Jesse Furman, Bernie Schultz, Capt. Ed Slane, Ed Weston, and Doug Williams...and the regular contribution from Dick Braun.

A big 'thank you' goes out to Mike Hall and John Zimpleman for hosting the June St. Augustine show. Everyone in attendance will attest to a great show and a wonderful time. See the award winners inside this issue.


I am really looking forward to our next show in Tampa, Oct. 7th, 8th and 9th. Scott Watkins and Bobby Blizzard have put a lot of work into this event. It's going to be a big show with a large volume of advertising to the public. We were able to negotiate a great rate with the beautiful Tampa Crowne East hotel for rooms (only \$89 per night) and on the showroom which has allowed us to offer tables at only \$25 each. At the time I write this, we have sold over 75 tables and I'm certain we will go over 100. I hope to see you there.

...continued on page 5



Plans for our Daytona Show are well under way. We have over 225 tables sold so far, leaving just over 100 available. We will have a special area at this show for collections of Jim Pfeffer lures. I have set aside 33 tables for the display of Pfeffer and Pfeffer-related pieces. Over 20 have been spoken for so far and I'm sure they will all be filled. We are even bringing in extra security for this area of the big ballroom. This will be a once in a lifetime gathering of the finest Jim Pfeffer collections in the country. Imagine being able to compare thousands of these lures all in one place. Lewis Townsend will be releasing his book on the Lures of Jim Pfeffer at this show, adding to the experience. If you have any appreciation for the lures from this legendary central Florida maker, this is a show that can't be missed.

I'm happy to report that long time club member and current V.P., Ed Weston has agreed to run for President in February. Of course, if any member is interested in running, please let me know before Jan. 1st and we'll have an election. I am also happy to announce our newest Board Member, Director at Large, Butch Carey. He is taking the place of retired Member at Large, John Mack. This position is usually reserved for an out of state member. Butch is from Key West, so I guess that counts as out of state. Maybe out of the country...

That's all for now...except to thank you for your continued support of the Florida Antique Tackle Collectors. 

## Editor's Notes

by Gary Simpson

One thing an FATC News editor likes to see is plenty of material arriving for publication....and has there ever been plenty of material arriving! Count this as a supersized issue with fun-to-read and enlightening content, thanks to the willingness of members to contribute. We all appreciate the effort.

In this issue Doug Brace acquaints us with a little-known Florida tackle company, Jesse Furman takes us on a vintage Florida fishing license find—in Maine(!), and Doug Williams' exhaustive and impressive study of a famous Miami lure maker reveals a wealth of never-before-published knowledge. Bernie Schultz offers a glimpse of Florida's coastal sportfishing past through the recollections of a great angler from the sunshine state's wilder days—and nicely ties that angling heritage with the present day. The wise Ed Weston provides us with the complete history and production numbers of a rare and beautiful Florida lure; and Ed Slane takes us along on an epic trip by FATC members to Alaska.

In his regular column, That-Zebco-Guy, Dick Braun reveals yet another Zebco collectible that most of us probably didn't know existed.

I didn't remind Johnny Garland of our deadline for this issue in time for his Bagley Bait Company piece—he was off on vacation—but we will look

forward to his regular article appearing again in our January issue.

Again, we must say goodbye to two club stalwarts; and happily pay tribute to a third with an Honorary Member Citation.

It's bad enough when a member is inadvertently left out of the club directory or off the mailing list. When a club officer is omitted, that's really rough. And we apologize to our wonderful club secretary, Sheila Quinn, for the omission. Please add to your directories:

Sheila Quinn  
3514 SW Coco Palm Drive  
Palm City, FL 34990  
772-287-0001  
sheilamquinn@comcast.net

If you, too, were left out of the directory, let us know. We'll make it right as best we can.

And, again on the pleasant subject of the flood of story submissions, I ask that you, our members, keep it up! As Larry mentions in his Presidential Address, every one of us has stories to tell and knowledge to share. With increasing participation, the Florida Antique Tackle Collectors grows stronger.



# Ralph L. Miller and Oceanic Tackle Shop

by Doug Williams

July 17, 2011: The information presented here was gathered from and by Bill Stuart, Doug Brace, Doug Carpenter, Russ Thorne, and Matt Young. Thanks to each of you for contributing to my knowledge, to my collection, and to the body of knowledge of all collectors of vintage fishing tackle.

Ralph Miller was a fisherman and a guide out of Miami in the 1920's, 30's, 40's, and 50's. Miller owned and operated the Oceanic Tackle Shop in Miami, which according to anecdotal reports, was opened around 1928. The earliest ad that has been located with any mention of the shop appeared in *The Southern & Central Florida Fishing Bluebook of 1938*. This book was edited by Stewart Miller, not related, and was published by Eastern Airlines. The ad noted that the shop had available tackle and supplies and specialized in tackle repairs and was located at 334 N.E. 2nd Avenue, Miami, Florida. The ad also noted that Oceanic Tackle Shop were the "manufacturers of the famous **LEAPING LENA - SALT AND FRESH WATER LURE - THE BAIT THAT CATCHES THE FISH**". The LEAPING LENA was a high quality wooden lure made for tarpon, snook, trout, redfish, and similar southeastern Florida game fish.

Oceanic Tackle Shop's Leaping Lenas were initially made in 2 sizes; S#300 and S#400. The #300 series has a pointed nose and the #400 series has a blunt nose. These lures were designed for salt and brackish waters to catch tarpon, redfish, trout, snook, etc.. The S#700 (TIDBIT) and S#800 (RIPJACK) were designed for spinning and light casting rods. The only color chart I have been able to locate advertised that the S#300, S#700, and S#800 baits were available in the following colors:

COLOR #	COLOR DESCRIPTION	S#300	S#700	S#800
02	Red head (RH), white body (WB)	Yes	Yes	Yes
03	RH, WB, tinsel	Yes	Yes	Yes
04	RH, WB, tinsel and yellow band at head	Yes	No	No
07	RH, tinsel, red and yellow bands	Yes	Yes	Yes
08	RH, green back, tinsel, yellow belly	Yes	Yes	Yes
11	RH, yellow body, tinsel	Yes	Yes	Yes

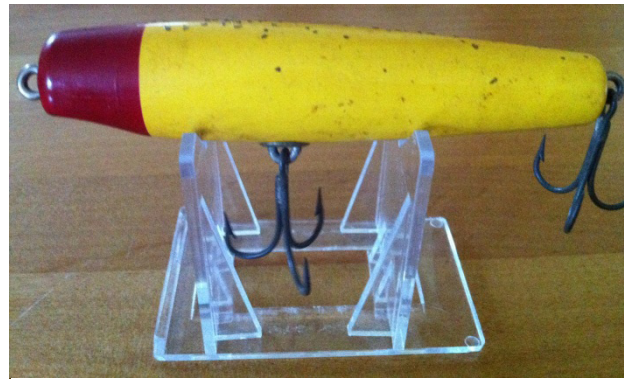
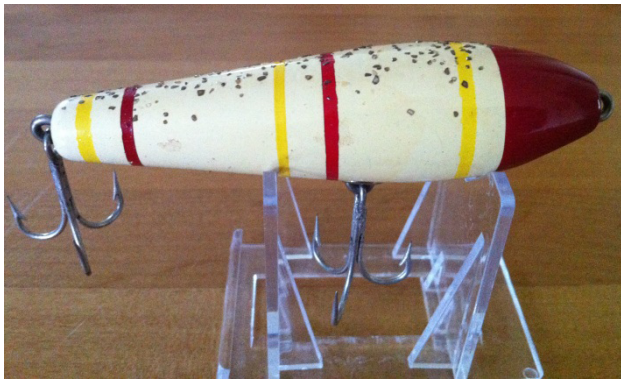
I am assuming that the S#400 was made in the same colors as the S#300, but do not have proof of that. The S#400 was not included in this color chart; it may have been discontinued by the time this catalog was produced (Southern Tackle Distributors - 1955). The year after this color chart was produced, the BLUEBOY was advertised. I believe that it was given color #05; blue back, tinsel, white belly. The 1955 catalog also noted that a large mouth bass weighing at least 19 pounds was caught on a Leaping Lena #302 and that the #700 and #800 series were designed for spin casting with light casting rods.

I have several variations of the catalog colors, un-catalogued colors, un-catalogued lures, prototype lures, variations of hooks, and variations of hook hardware in my collection. These, along with variations observed by experienced collectors, have been included as "observed variations". The following tables summarize length, weight,





hardware, standard colors, collectability rankings, and observed variations:



LEAPING LENA S#300
Length: 3 3/4"
Weight: 2/3 oz.
Hardware: ne, cup rig, 2T – 1/0 hooks
Colors: 02, 03, 04, 07, 11
Collectible ranking: Common
Observed variations: Blue back white belly tinsel blue boy (introduced 1956), Red head black body (4.25"), Red head gray back with black stripes white belly (painted eyes and smaller body than standard S#300 with same length), Red head yellow body, Red head gray band at head white body tinsel red sides, Red head yellow body tinsel no silver streak, Red head white body multicolored tinsel, Red head white body tinsel red and yellow bands wide silver streak on belly, Red head yellow body gray on bottom with glass eyes, Red head green back yellow belly special rear hook, Red head gray back red sides, Red head yellow band no tinsel white body silver streak on belly, Red head red and yellow bands white body no tinsel silver streak on belly, purple head, orange head yellow body.

LEAPING LENA S#400
Length: 3 7/8"
Weight: 2/3 oz.
Hardware: ne, cup rig, 2T – 1/0 hooks
Colors: 02, 03, 04, 07, 11
Collectible ranking: Uncommon
Observed variations: None

In a 1948 ad, the address of the Oceanic Tackle Shop changed to 240 S.W. Seventeenth Court, Miami, Florida. The building at this address was built in 1920 and is in use today as a rental residential property. Here is what the former Oceanic Tackle Shop looks like today:



A 1950 ad from the *Goin' Fishin' in Florida* magazine is the earliest mention of the TIDBIT, which was branded as one of the LEAPING LENA BAITS. The ad notes that the lure was designed especially for salt and brackish waters – in colors for every condition. It is interesting that this particular ad does not mention Oceanic Tackle Shop and that the TIDBIT "is available at all tackle stores". Ralph's salt water flies were available through Southern Tackle Distributors, Inc. in this same time frame, so maybe Ralph was looking for new ways to distribute his lures.

In the same issue of the *Goin' Fishin' in Florida* magazine the "all time records" of the Leaping Lena Casting Plug are listed, along with the claim that the Leaping Lena was winner of "more Rod & Reel & Metro prizes last 12 years than any other lure." I contacted the Miami Beach Rod & Reel Club in hopes of getting pictures of some of those winners, but was told that the archives had been destroyed.

**LEAPING LENA  
BAITS**



Designed Especially For  
Salt And Brackish Waters  
In Colors For Every Con-  
dition.

*Ask the Guides Who Use Them  
to Get the Big Ones*

ABOUT

— TIDBIT —

*The Best Spinning and Casting  
Lure Ever Made for  
Florida Waters*

*Proved On Bonefish—Tarpon*  
AT ALL TACKLE STORES

**RALPH MILLER**  
Phone 2-2328  
240 S.W. 17th Court  
MIAMI FLORIDA



*Manufacturers of  
The Leaping Lena Baits*

**OCEANIC  
TACKLE SHOP**  
240 S.W. Seventeenth Ct.  
MIAMI, FLORIDA

ALL TIME RECORDS

Leaping Lena Casting Plug holds Miami Beach Rod & Reel Club Tarpon Record—#77; Miami Metropolitan Fishing Tournament Tarpon Record—#102½, Channel Bass Record—#29¼, 1947 Metro Tarpon—97.

Winner of more Rod & Reel & Metro prizes last 12 years than any other Lure—

Designed especially for general salt and brackish waters. An all around plug with a reputation.

*Ask The Boys Who Lose 'em  
to the Big Ones*

RALPH L. MILLER  
Ph. 2-2328

The #700 series was available in both a double hook version and a single hook version. Length, weight, hardware, colors, collectability rankings, and observed variations are summarized in the following table:



LEAPING LENA TIDBIT S#700 Double hook version	LEAPING LENA TIDBIT S#700 Single hook version
Length: 2 5/8"	Length: 2 5/8"
Weight: 3/8 oz.	Weight: 5/16 oz.
Hardware: ne, seh and sfh, 2T - #2 hooks	Hardware: ne, seh and sfh, 1T - #2 hook (on tail)
Colors: 02, 03, 07, 11	Colors: 02, 03, 07, 11
Collectible ranking: Scarce	Collectible ranking: Scarce
Observed variations: Blue back white belly tinsel blue boy (introduced 1956), Red head green back yellow belly, Red head white body assembled with center hook on top, Red head white body rigged by fisherman with slide, 711 with non-cup hardware, 708 with non-cup hardware.	Observed variations: Red head yellow body, Red head green back yellow belly, Red head yellow body tinsel all over weedless hook, Red head white body tinsel all over.

The lures were sold in two box sizes: 3 9/16" x 1" x 1 7/8" and 4 7/8" x 1" x 1 7/8". The printing on the box remained the same through several color changes: "Oceanic Tackle Shop; Miami, Florida: LEAPING LENA; A PROVEN SALT WATER LURE".

There were at least six variations of the large box. Large box colors included brown, yellow, off-white, and light wood grain. One box (believed to be the first), was yellow with blue lettering with a green jumping tarpon and background fishing scene. The fishing scene is two men in a small boat, fishing in front of an island with palm trees on it. Of course, the jumping tarpon has been hooked by a LEAPING LENA. Another box was off white with blue lettering and green graphics, with variations in font style, size, and orientation of the side panel "Leaping Lena" printing. Another box (believed to be the final box), was light wood grain with both the lettering and graphic in green. The S#400 may have been packaged in a box especially made for that series lure; the color and printing on the boxes for that lure series is unlike any of the other boxes that were produced. Here are a few pictures of some of these box variations.



There may have been counter displays or some other packaging for Leaping Lenas, but the only other packaging I have been able to find is this "one of a kind" dealer box





that holds a dozen of these wonderful baits.

To the right is that dealer box, full of S#303 Leaping Lenas. This is probably something that you will not see anywhere else.

The LEAPING LENA RIP-JACK (S#800 series) was introduced in 1955 and featured a single belly hook located well to the rear of the normal belly hook placement of the #700 series. Length, weight, hardware, colors, collectability rankings, and observed variations are summarized in the following table:



LEAPING LENA RIPJACK S#800
Length: 2 5/8"
Weight: 5/16 oz.
Hardware: ne, sfh, 1T - #1 hook – tail pin
Colors: 02, 03, 07, 11
Collectible ranking: Scarce
Observed variations: None

A 1956 ad in *The Salt Water Sportsman* announced the newest "LEAPING LENA", the "Blue Boy", stating "it's murder in blue water!" This bait claimed "fast, erratic surface action for the ocean spin caster".



This ad also advertises the Oceanic Tackle Shop, at the 240 S.W. Seventeenth Court address. The ad uses the phrase, "\$1.00 postpaid if your dealer can not supply you", which indicates that other stores in the area reached by the ad were stocking the Leaping Lena family of lures.



Ralph Miller was well known for his guiding, fly tying and fly fishing skills, as recorded in the publications: *Fur-Fish-Game*, *How The Sport Began*, *Fly Fishing in Florida*, *Salt Water Game Fishing* and *Saltwater Fly Fishing*.

One of Ralph's fishing exploits with big game tackle was published in the July 1948 issue of *Harding's Magazine Fur – Fish – Game* (number 7). That particular expedition was a trip to the Bahamas aboard a 46 foot Matthews (The Miamian), owned by Captain Lloyd McNeil, to catch marlin. The author of that article, Robert Page Lincoln, gives us the details:

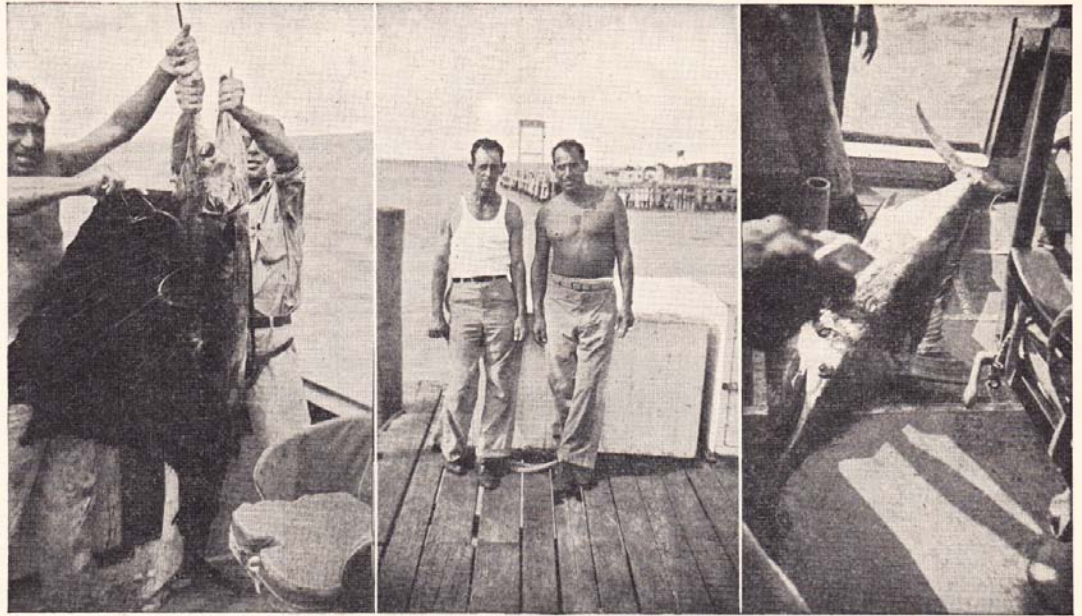
*"On our expedition Judge Vern Ledgerwood had picked the Miamian, a boat owned by Captain Lloyd McNeil. This was a 46-foot, Matthews (sp) stock cruiser, sufficiently large to handle four if necessary. It was a splendid boat, as sturdy as they make them and there were many times on our trip when we had cause to comment on its stability plus maneuverability. In our party were also Archie Ledgerwood, Ralph Miller and Johnny Morris. Not to forget the first mate and director of fishing*



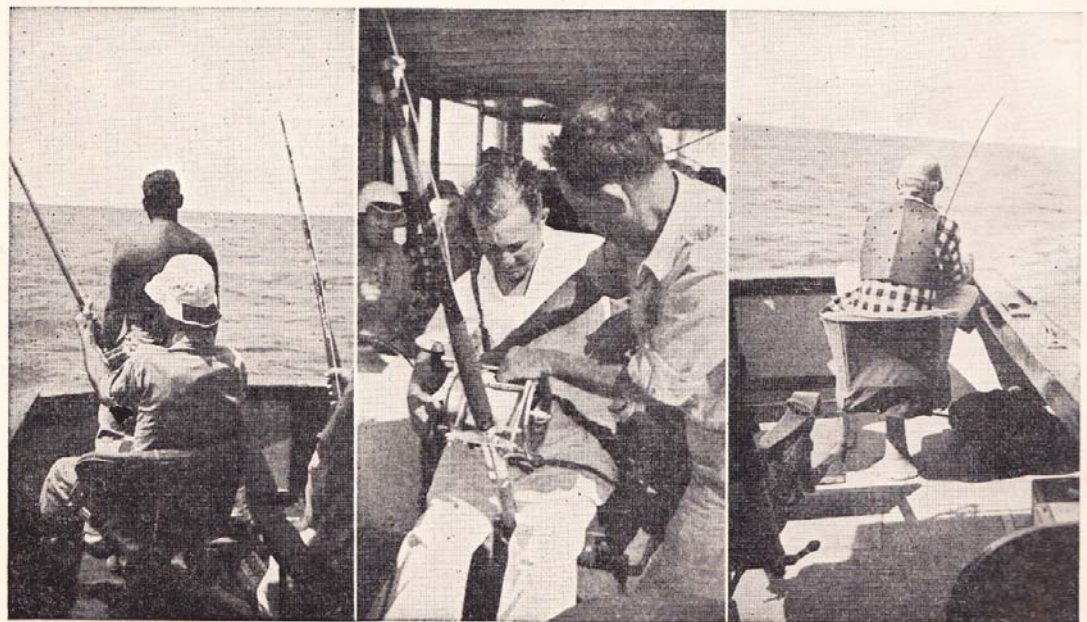
activities, Max Friedman whose knowledge of fish was limitless and who saw fish and named their species where apparently there were none.....On this trip we took a number of fish including one large sailfish that fell to Ralph Miller."

Enjoy the pictures that were taken on that trip, thanks to Mr. Doug Carpenter (NFLCC member), who was kind enough to loan me his original copy of the July 1948 issue of *Harding's Magazine Fur - Fish - Game (number 7)* so that I could have a copy of the story and these great photographs.

In *Fly Fishing in Florida*, the author states that it was



Left: Note huge dorsal fin of Sailfish landed by Ralph Miller. Center: Capt. Lloyd McNeil and his right-hand man, Max Friedman. Right: Marlin caught by the Judge.



Left: A Sailfish looms up. Ralph Miller ready with Max Friedman watching. Center: Johnny Morris getting some rod and reel instructions from Capt. McNeil. Right: The Judge in action.



Judge Ledgerwood comes through with a Blue Marlin taken off of Cat Bay.

Ralph Miller who taught the famous Florida Key's guide Captain Bill Smith how to tie salt water flies. Captain Bill Smith was married to Bonnie Smith, who had moved from Georgia in the mid-1930's with her two sisters, Beulah and Frankee. In *Saltwater Fly Fishing*, author Jack Samson provided the following insight into how Ralph Miller helped shape the saltwater fly-fishing scene in the 1950's:

*"Bonnie got into fly fishing when the excellent fly-rod guide Preston Pinder taught her about fly rods and reels and how to cast a fly. Bonnie took to the fly rod like a duck to water and proceeded to teach her two sisters the art. All three women eventually became accomplished fly fishers and all also married guides. When these guides went off to World War II, the women took over*





*their husband's guiding businesses, and by the time the men came home the wives had earned names for themselves.*

*Bill and Bonnie Smith helped Joe Brooks buy a house in Islamorada, and Joe set off on a quest to catch with a fly rod nearly everything that swims. It was here, after the war, that Joe – fishing with Keys guide Captain Leo Johnson, Bill and Bonnie Smith, Joe's wife, Mary, and Miami tackle-shop operator Ralph Miller – set out on his quest to catch a permit on a fly. It took him a couple of years, but finally, at Content Key, Joe Brooks caught a five –pound-ten-ounce permit using a Johnson Golden Minnow fly-rod spoon. Joe considered it the first permit caught on a fly rod, but he wanted to catch one on a fly – not a fly-rod spoon. The following year (May, 1951), guided by Bonnie Smith, Joe Brooks succeeded in catching a twelve-pound-eight-ounce permit at Content Keys, using a white bucktail fly on a #1/0 hook."*

Fishing with fly's and plugs in Florida waters was very popular with northern anglers in the 1950's. In his article published in the Chicago Daily Tribune (January 8, 1950) *Pack Fishing Equipment for Florida Trip*, by Erl Roman, he says:

*"However, you'll probably want to add a few special lures that have been found to work best in Florida. These can be obtained after you arrive in the Sunshine state. A careful check-up reveals that the best plugs for plug casting in Florida are the Leaping Lena, Zaragossa, and the Pikie Minnows in white and red, orange with red dots and silver flash finish. Baby Leaping Lenas and other "baby" size plugs weighing from one-quarter to one-half ounce are preferred by some of the spin casters."*

Mr. Fred Kerr (former FATC and NFLCC president, deceased) knew Ralph Miller's only child, Jack Miller. Mr. Kerr was general manager of Southern Tackle in Miami during the 60's and 70's and Jack Miller worked for him in the 70's. Later, Jack moved to Marathon and operated Miller's Bait and Tackle, which was located on the Atlantic side, opposite the Coast Guard Station. The local post office was located on the same property, along with a few rental cottages. Mary Bartz (holder of numerous bonefish records) and her husband worked for Jack Miller for several years.

Mr. Kerr was in charge of FATC patches at the time of the Miller's Leaping Lena patch (1999). Mr. Kerr was mistakenly credited the lure to the "Famous Florida Keys", rather than Miami, perhaps because he knew Jack and Jack lived in the Florida Keys. The FATC – 1990 patch was made from a picture of the #308 that is now owned by Doug Williams of Miami, Florida.

The following photographs are from my personal collection of Oceanic Tackle Shop lures.







**FLORIDA ANTIQUE TACKLE COLLECTORS  
FALL SHOW  
TAMPA, FLORIDA**

**OCTOBER 7, 8, AND 9th 2011  
THURSDAY NIGHT SET UP 5 PM  
Fri. 8am - 6pm Sat. 8am - 6pm Sun. 8am -12 pm**

**SHOW LOCATION: TAMPA CROWNE PLAZA EAST  
10221 PRINCESS PALM AVE., TAMPA, FLORIDA 33610**

**ACCOMMODATIONS: TAMPA CROWNE PLAZA EAST 813-623-6363**

Room rates \$ 89.00 per night. Single double bed. Booked by Aug 24, 2011 to receive the special F.A.T.C. rate discount.

**TABLE AND REGISTRATION: Registration is \$ 15.00 per member.**

8 ft. tables, \$ 25.00 each, wall or aisle. Membership dues must be current to register.

**QUESTIONS: Contact Scott Watkins (show host) by phone at (813) 951-3492 or by emailpfefferking@verizon.net**

**REGISTRATION FORM AND SHOW HOST INFORMATION:**

**PRINT OUT THIS PAGE, Please make checks payable to F.A.T.C and mail to:**

Bonnie Saliba  
1038 Riverside Dr.  
Holly Hill, FL 32117

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # and E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Guests Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Registration \_\_\_\_\_ at \$ 15.00 each for a total of : \_\_\_\_\_

I would like \_\_\_\_\_ Tables at \$ 25.00 Each for a total of \_\_\_\_\_

Please Specify Wall or Aisle tables \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Requested table location \_\_\_\_\_



President: **Larry Lucas**, 386-527-4338, porterman@cfl.rr.com  
 Vice President: **Ed Weston**, 561-301-9062, enotsew@hotmail.com  
 Secretary: **Sheila Quinn**, 772-281-0001, sheilamquinn@comcast.net  
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<b>F A T C  A D  R A T E S</b>	<b>Classified "Tackle box" ads</b>	<b>\$3.50 1x</b>	<b>\$10.00 3x</b>	<b>E F F E C T I V E  2 0 1 1</b>
	<b>Business Card ads (black &amp; white)</b>	<b>10.00 1x</b>	<b>29.00 3x</b>	
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## Florida Antique Tackle Collectors, Inc.

A NON-PROFIT EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION  
 DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF OUR ANGLING HERITAGE

Florida Antique Tackle Collectors, Inc. (FATC) is a non-profit, educational corporation, incorporated in the State of Florida. The purpose of FATC is educational through the collection and distribution of historical and technical data regarding fishing equipment, its development, its inventors and manufacturers from the earliest times through the present day, and to assist other groups and individuals having a similar purpose. In order to enhance the knowledge of these subjects, the collection and preservation of examples of fishing tackle is to be encouraged for the benefit of present and future generations.

FATC was founded in 1987. The founders felt that a state-wide organization would provide additional opportunities for residents of Florida and others to learn more about the history of angling in Florida and elsewhere. FATC sponsors four exhibitions, open to the public, annually at different Florida locations. At the exhibitions members display their

collections, interact with the public, and engage in other activities in keeping with the purpose of FATC. FATC publishes a newsletter tri-annually, and an annual membership directory. FATC is not affiliated in any way with the National Fishing Lure Collector's Club (NFLCC) or the Old Reel Collectors Association, Inc., (ORCA) but encourages FATC members to support those organizations.

FATC annual membership dues are: \$35 domestic, \$40 Canada, \$45 Foreign or \$700 (Domestic) Life Membership, \$800 (Canada) Life Membership, and \$900 (Foreign) Life Membership (20x annual dues). Please direct membership inquiries or applications (with your dues) to the FATC Secretary listed below. For membership applications visit our web site at: [www.fatc.net](http://www.fatc.net)

One time ads will be given a 3% discount for prepayment.



# COAST TO COAST TACKLE

## William Bergmann – West Palm Beach

by D.J. Brace

### THE BEST FISHERMEN

Use Bergmann's Coast to Coast Tackle Co. Lures. Handled by Meggett Hdw. Co., Stuart.

### COAST TO COAST TACKLE CO.

William Bergmann

512 El Prado — West Palm Beach  
P. O. Box 1616 — Phone 9613

To date, the earliest account of Bergmann's **COAST TO COAST** tackle business appears in the 1937 edition of the *STUART FISHING GUIDE*. The address in the ad, 512 El Prado, is Bergmann's residential address.

The scope of the business is revealed a few years later in a *Palm Beach Post* newspaper article. The article, dated "Sunday Morning" November 12, 1939, informed the reader about varied products produced by local firms. The article states "*Bergmann manufactures artificial baits used by anglers along the entire length of the Atlantic Seaboard*".

Bergmann's COAST TO COAST TACKLE, was thought to be primarily a salt water jig manufacturing business. A 1943 advertisement indicates the business was then located at 1501 South Dixie Hwy., West Palm Beach. The ad states Coast To Coast is the manufacturer of "Bergmann Feathers" and also offers rods, lines, reels, and wire to anglers.

Bergmann wasn't alone in the jig production business. Less than 5 miles to the North, was John Kramer's "NO-ALIBI LURES". No-Alibi would later become the Nation's oldest, continuously operating jig manufacturer! On Florida's West Coast, "Baracuda Brand" tackle offered a varied array of jigs and continued to do so for many years.

One side of this 3-1/2 jig body is stamped C.C.T. CO. The other side is stamped W.P.B. FLA.PAT. PEN.



Within a few years Bergmann relocated his business to 6306 Georgia Ave. His facility was a large metal Quonset hut. It was here two friends, Eddie Pearce and "Frenchy" Croteau (Vol.III pg.765 *Florida Lure Makers and Their Lures*), worked for Bergmann. At night, the two friends would pour hot lead into Bergmann's various lure molds. During the daytime, the almost all-female workforce would complete the jig production process. Pearce recalled the firm's products were sent all over the country.

Bergmann also supplied area tackle shops.

Made in Florida		Manufactured for Fishermen by Fishermen
Buy America First		
<b>COAST TO COAST TACKLE CO.</b>		
WILLIAM BERGMANN, Proprietor		
SUPPLIES FOR COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN		
Manufacturers of "PROVEN LURES"		
6306 Georgia Ave.—Phone 5270	P. O. Box 1646	West Palm Beach, Fla.

From: Polk's City Directory - 1947

George DeBay, a local sport shop owner (Vol. II pg.516 *Florida Lure Makers and Their Lures*), recalled doing business with Bergmann. Years ago DeBay commented "*Bergmann copied every jig I made, especially my patented Swimmer Feather*".

In one of Bergmann's most interesting advertisements, COAST TO COAST TACKLE is linked to SOUTHERN BAIT CO. of Lake City, Florida, another fishing lure maker. How this came about

or the reasons for the business decision remain, as yet, unknown. The ad below appears on pg.17 of the 1946 September issue of *The FLORIDA SPORTSMAN* magazine.

The association with SOUTHERN was likely a short-lived venture. In early 1948, one of Bergmann's female employees discovered Bergmann, age 55, shot to death. Subsequently, two local males were charged with the crime. Reportedly, the slaying resulted in Bergmann's refusal to lend a sum of money to the relative of an employee. A Miami Daily News article

reported the two criminals were indicted April 28, 1948. In an ugly turn of events, the Circuit Judge who handed down the sentences, Judge Curtis Eugene Chillingworth, (Florida's youngest circuit court judge) would become a murder victim himself, seven years later.

**Manufacturers of "Proven Lures"**

WILLIAM BERGMAN  
All Salt and Fresh Water Lures



**COAST TO COAST TACKLE CO. AND  
SOUTHERN BAIT CO. OF LAKE CITY, FLORIDA**

P. O. Box 1646
6306 Georgia Ave.
West Palm Beach, Fla.

## Minutes from FATC Board of Directors

HOLIDAY ISLES, ST. AUGUSTINE BEACH, FLORIDA • JUNE 10, 2011

Members present: Dennis McNulty, Ed Weston, Jim Duncan, Mike Hall, Chuck Heddon, Larry Lucas, Paul Snider, Norm Pinardi, Sally Jett, Ed Pritchard

President Larry Lucas called the meeting to order at 4:01 PM.

Secretary's Report: Minutes of February 26, 2011 Board of Directors meeting were presented. A motion was made by Norm Pinardi and seconded by Dennis McNulty to accept the minutes as presented. The motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Sally Jett presented the Treasurer's Report. Motion made by Norm Pinardi and seconded by Dennis McNulty to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. The motioned carried.

Upcoming Shows: Chuck Heddon volunteered to host the fall show in Altamonte Springs, Florida around October 22, 2011.

Larry Lucas reminded the board that the Daytona show has been moved back next year to March 3, 4 and 5. It will be a Jim Pfeffer theme with an area set aside for Jim Pfeffer displays. Larry also pointed out that Ron Gast and Ed Pritchard are willing to host shows.

Old Business: On-the-spot auctions - There will be on the spot auctions for this show where the seller has the right of refusal.

Paul Snider reported on the advertising rates for the newsletter. After much discussion Larry Lucas entertained a motion to leave the rates as they are for now. It was seconded by Paul Snider. The motion carried.

The newsletter was discussed and we are seeing a reduced cost.

New Business: Norm Pinardi thanked the club for the article on his stolen reel and he hopes it would deter anyone else from stealing at a show.

Melanie Pleasant will meet with the board members tomorrow morning. She represents different hotels and will present possible sites for hosting FATC shows.

The FATC would like to recognize Don Morrow for his many years of service to the club. A plaque will be presented to Bette, his wife, to honor Don.

Bill Stuart asked FATC to give an honorary life membership to Ken Bay. Ken has been a long time member of FATC and is a nationally known Florida fly tier and fly fishing author. This request was unanimously approved.

A discussion was held on Dick Braun's suggestion to have FATC business cards included in an edition of the newsletter. Ed Pritchard and Paul Snider are going to review this further and submit their recommendations.

Paul Snider wondered if the FATC would like a show in Pensacola, Florida. Larry will email members for their opinions on a Pensacola show.

With no further business, President Larry Lucas adjourned the meeting at 4:58PM.

Respectfully Submitted, Sheila Quinn, Secretary



## JACK HOPKINS, A CAST TO THE PAST

by Bernie Schultz

My first introduction to Jack Hopkins came through the pages of Florida Sportsman Magazine, in a feature titled **Jack Looks Back**. Carefully crafted by Mike Connor, the article recounts Jack's angling exploits as a younger man in his prime, fishing in southeast Florida during the 1940-60s.

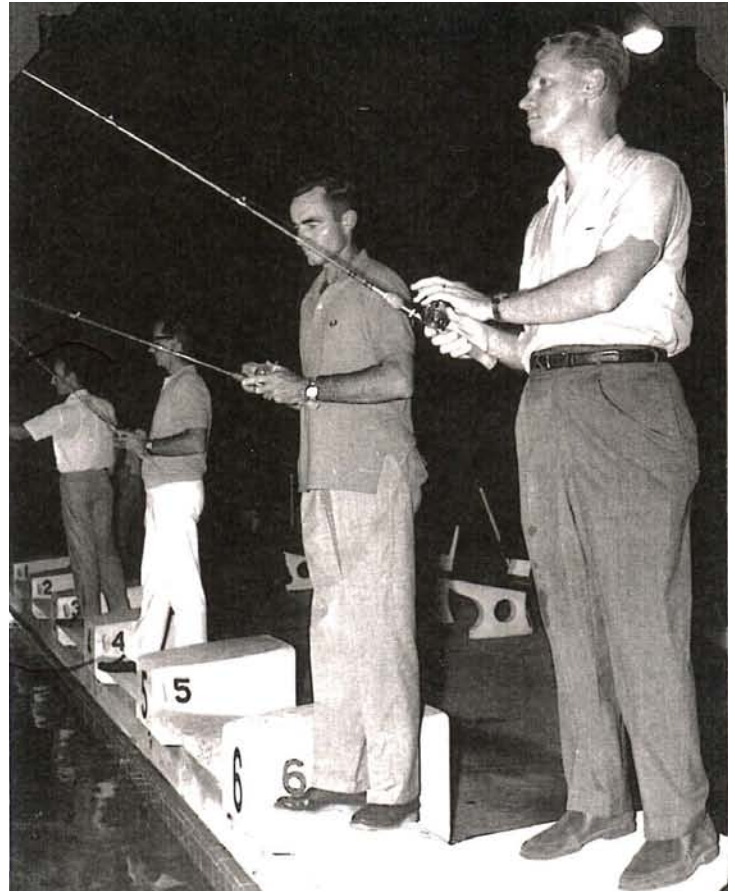
In the story, Jack references a man named John Oltmer, owner of Oltmer's Hardware in West Palm Beach. Hopkins frequented Oltmer's Hardware, as did many local anglers, to purchase fishing supplies and seek out advice on what and where the fish were biting. According to Jack, "John Oltmer was an outstanding snook and trout fishermen, and he taught me a lot about fishing back then. He was my friend and mentor."

Although the article was engaging, what hit home for me was the fact that John Oltmer is my wife's late grandfather, and great grandfather to our two sons Daniel and Trevor, both of whom love to fish. Until then, we knew very little about his fishing background. Jack referred to John Oltmer as "a true pioneer—a dedicated fishermen who explored the shorelines of Palm Beach County, back before there were seawalls." Wanting to learn more about our family's fishing heritage, I pursued Jack.

That first meeting was memorable to say the least. Jack is quite the character, gruff and to the point. Regardless of the subject, he tells it like it is. And I like that. Through years of dialog, Jack shared countless stories about himself and John Oltmer.

Like most collectors, I value the historical accounts of those who lived in the period. Jack's stories are priceless. In fact, his angling memoirs have been published in a book titled **50 Years of Piscatorial Prowess in Southeast Florida\***. Through its pages, Jack recounts his most memorable catches—among them, a 38 1/2-pound snook caught from Palm Beach Inlet using a Heddon Zaragossa.

Besides being one of the great inshore anglers in the area, Jack was also a competitive skish caster and member of the West Palm Beach



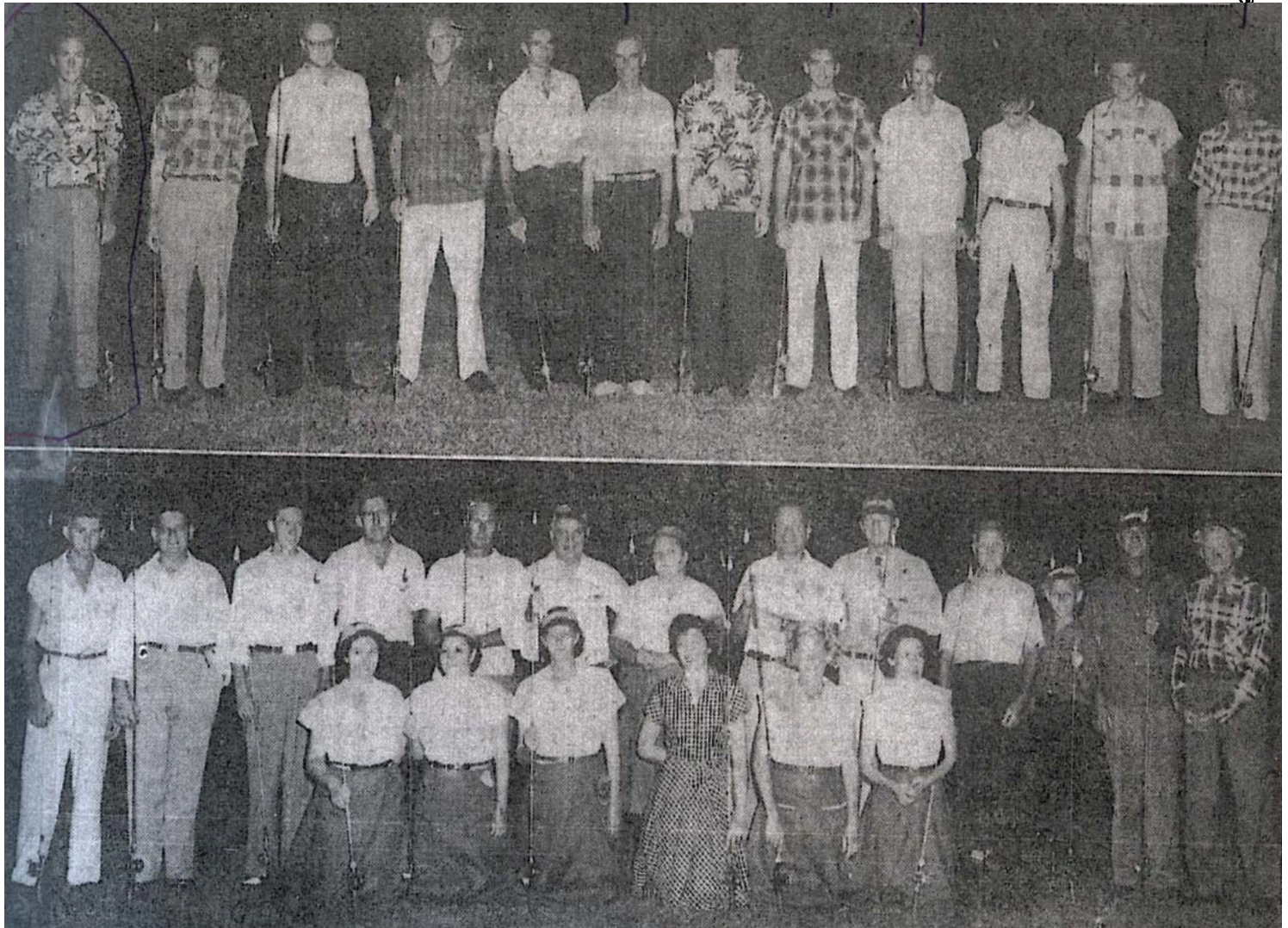
Jack Hopkins (far left) in competition.

Casting Club. He won many skish and accuracy tournaments throughout the 1940-60s, when the sport was popular. At that time, celebrated anglers like Al Foss and Pat Woodall also competed. Jack knew Woodall well, and says he was a good caster. Knowing Jack like I do, that's high praise.



John Oltmer's Hardware & Fishing Tackle Store.





*West Palm Casting Club (top) vs Miami Casting Club (bottom). Jack Hopkins at far left, Pat Woodall 4th from right (top photo).*

As the record will show, Jack was also a “good” caster. During the final round of competition at the 1957 Miami Sportsman Show—an event sanctioned by the Pan American International Rod & Gun Club—Jack was challenged by Texas champion, Ewell Parker. Both men scored 99 of 100 possible points, which led to a cast-off. In the second round, Jack faltered by just one foot on the closest target, which left the door open for Parker. His challenger never looked back. Scoring another 99 of 100 possible points Parker took the trophy back to Texas. The loss still bothers Jack to this day.

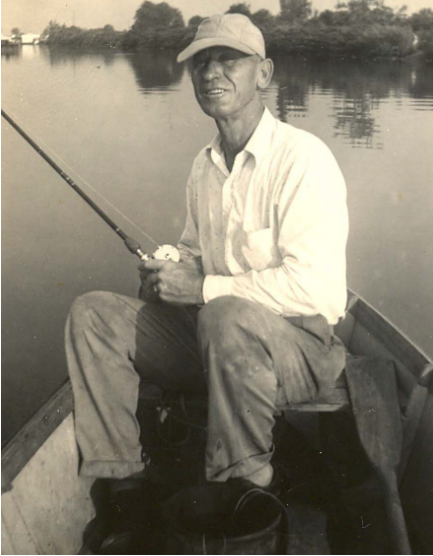
During a recent visit to Jack’s home in Stuart, we discussed his casting days in greater detail. He spoke from a favorite chair, surrounded by his many casting medals and trophies resting on the shelves behind him. For Jack, each award summons fond memories, like the photos of his many trophy snook and trout.

He explained the basics of skish and accuracy casting to me. Essentially, the course is set up with five casting stations, each side by side, manned simultaneously by the contestants. The targets, one per station, vary in lengths ranging from 40 to 80 feet. Each target measures 30-inches in diameter and is overseen by a judge. Each contestant is allowed two casts per target. Once both casts are completed, the competitors advance to the next station, until each has had two passes over the entire course.

As each contestant completes an individual target, his points are recorded; six possible points per target on the first pass, four on the second. A perfect score would total 100 points.

In the accuracy competition, the courses are the same, but the scoring is actually reversed. Each casters begins the course with 100 points, and deductions were made based on the number of feet they miss the target. According to Jack, if you





*John Olmer (Jack's mentor and friend, Kim's grandfather)*

missed too often or by an embarrassing distance, you were asked to take a seat. Jack was never asked to take a seat. In fact, he consistently scored in the upper 90s—an outstanding feat to say the least.

I asked Jack about his equipment.

Proudly, he stated his best outfit

consisted of a 5'6" Langley fiberglass rod and tournament edition Shakespeare Model PK level-wind reel. The medium-action rod featured a deep, recessed reel seat, which was unique to the straight-handle versions used by his competition. The reel sported a narrow spool and ultra-light nylon gears, specifically designed for skish casting. Instead of normal reel lubricants, he used Hoppe's gun oil, claiming it gave him an advantage.

Jack preferred 9-pound test Dacron line made by Cortland under the Assinippi brand, saying it was ultra smooth and performed well for accuracy and distance. To the end of his line he tied the required 3/8 or 5/8-ounce (depending on tournament rules) wooden casting plug fitted with a metal cap and set screw.

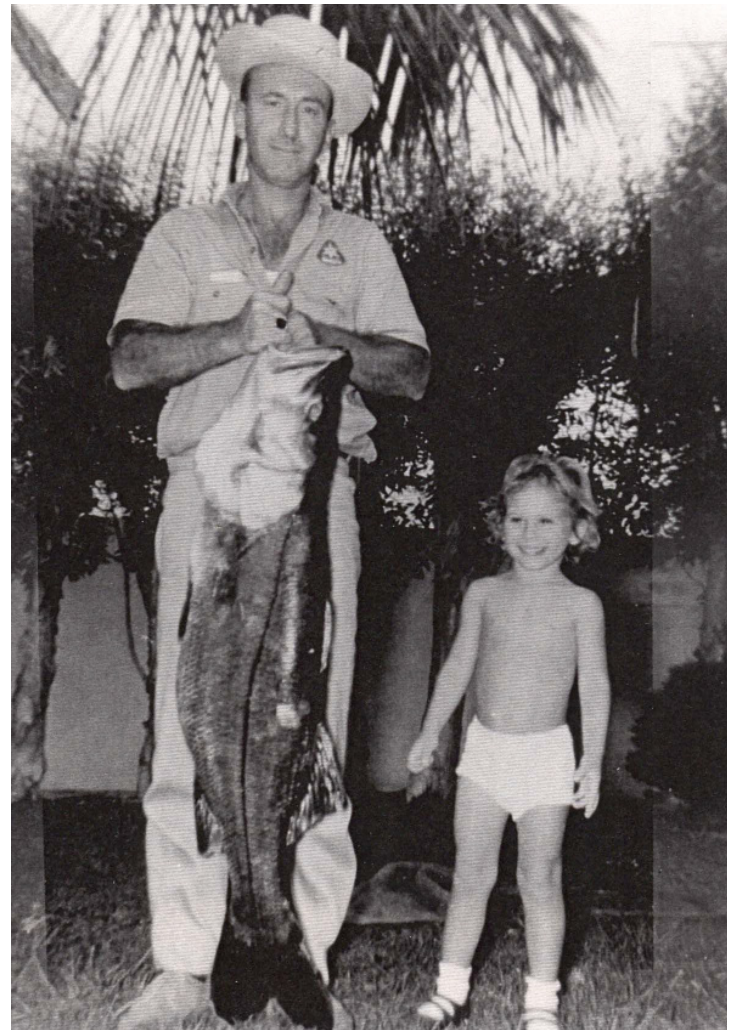
Jack's earliest days of skish casting began at Howard Park in West Palm Beach. The course was set on dry ground. Competitors were stationed side by side on an elevated mound from which they would cast to round plywood targets at varying distances.

Later, the club used the city's public pool for its course. The pool not only offered a watery arena, which seemed more suitable, it also provided bleachers for spectators and starting blocks for the contestants (the same ones used by swimmers). Regulation targets were formed from hollow aluminum hoops measuring 30-inches in diameter, and were anchored to the bottom of the pool. Because the venue offered good lighting, competitions were most often held in the evenings.

As Jack's skills improved, he began to seek out statewide competitions in towns like Orlando, Daytona, and Miami. Additionally, his club would often challenge other clubs one-on-one. Most notably, they competed against the prestigious Miami Casting Club, which was much larger and included a women's team.

Sadly, by the early 1960s, skish casting lost popularity. Although the Florida Outdoor Writers Association still holds private competitions for its members, there are no other known organized events held in our state. Like many things old, progress has pushed them to the side.

There may be some hope, however. Nowadays, young anglers have the opportunity to compete in nationally sanctioned casting events. Sponsored by B.A.S.S., **Casting Kids** gives America's youth the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of casting, and to compete at various levels, including local,



*Jack Hopkins with his daughter Stephanie and giant snook.*



regional, state and national. Top casters in each age group are awarded college scholarships.

When they were young, my two sons won their respective divisions in a regional competition. Certainly Jack should find favor with those accomplishments, especially since they are the great-grandsons of his late friend and mentor, John Oltmer.

Strange how things come full circle.

\* 50 Years of Piscatorial Prowess in Southeast Florida, Jack E. Hopkins author. Published in 2009 by Create Space, Scotts Valley, CA

*Willow Springs Road Station, Micanopy, Fla. 1957*  
 FAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL ROD AND GUN CLUB - SKISH DIVISION - SCORES  
 Palm Beach Club  
 DATE Feb. 11, 57 Mens Accuracy  $\frac{88}{98}$  INDIVIDUAL ACCURACY

NAME	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	TOTAL
1 Bruce Thomas	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	96
2 Bob Harris	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	98
3 Dick Harris	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	96
4 Jack Hopkins	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	99
5 RAY Lindsey	0	1	1	3	0	1	1	0	2	3	88

*First Round, Old behavior E. Parker, Texas + Jack Hopkins - 99 out of 100*

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DATE Feb. 11, 57 SHOOT OFF Mens Accuracy - INDIVIDUAL

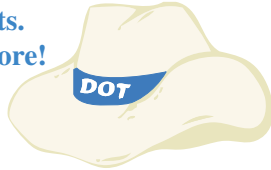
NAME	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	TOTAL
1 E. Parker	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	99 I
2 Jack Hopkins	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	96 II
3 Lou BRINSON	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	96
4 BOB Harris	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	98 III

*6 E PARKER - TEXAS  
 7 JACK HOPKINS - W. Kalam Beach  
 8 Lou Brinson - Micanopy  
 9 Bob Harris - W. Palm Beach*

*Final shoot rest of tie - Parker shot a 99 Hopkins shot a 96 - Parker 1st Place Hopkins 2nd Place*

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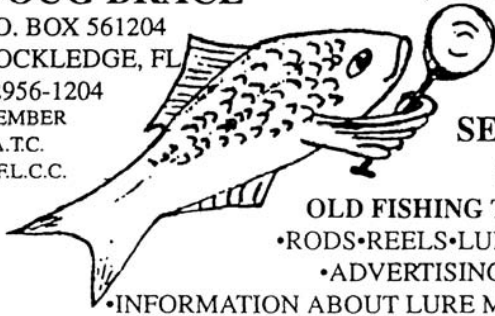
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