



Oconaluftee Streamside News

The Newsletter of the

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Fly Fishing Museum of the Southern Appalachians

Fly Fishing Museum Opens in Cherokee, N.C.

As Cherokee NC's newest attraction, the museum is open daily (off-season schedule may vary). The museum is centrally located in Cherokee - next door to the Visitor Center, and across from the Fairgrounds and the Museum of the Cherokee Indian. The back deck of the museum building overlooks the Oconaluftee River; and the Museum is within walking distance of Oconaluftee Islands Park. Cherokee is the home of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and some of Western North Carolina's most acclaimed trout waters and adjacent to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Through exhibits and videos visitors will learn about past fly fishing legends, regional fishing waters, and the history of fly fishing in the Southeast. The museum is the recipient of start-up grants from the Cherokee Preservation Foundation and tremendous support from the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians. Two other large donations include a grant for the Tailrace Exhibit from Tennessee Valley Authority, and a \$20,000 donation by Southern Trout Magazine. "We're pleased that [Southern Trout](#) has been so generous in its support of the museum," says curator Alen Baker. "The donation is largely in the form of advertising, which is great for the museum as the magazine is well-read by fly fishermen."

The museum is also home to the Cherokee NC Chamber of Commerce & Area Information Center as well as a Gift Shop with Cherokee and museum logoed water bottles, caps, jackets, t-shirt hoodies, umbrellas, camp fire mugs, water-proof maps, waterproof holders, fishing maps, locally-roasted special blend coffee, and much more. Free wifi is available. The website, www.FlyFishingMuseum.org, has directions, hours of operation, and exhibit information, as well as membership and donation opportunities.

Grand Opening on June 6 and Casting for Hope Fly Fishing Tournament –on June 7, 2015

Over one hundred twenty participants gathered as Principal Chief Michelle Hicks made a short, welcoming speech and cut the ribbon. The tribal council renovated the building and repurposed the facility with a lease to the Cherokee Chamber of Commerce and as the home of the Fly Fishing Museum of the Southern Appalachians for the next 25 years. Everyone enjoyed local BBQ for lunch and spent time viewing over 40 exhibits including the first built and operated drift boat in the southeast, an exhibit sponsored by TVA. The museum sponsored a casting clinic while Casting For Hope conducted their registration for the next day fly fishing tournament to raise funds.

Trout Derby on August 2015 – The Trout Derby included a fly tying demonstration at the museum. From twenty-five to over one hundred visitors walk through the museum daily, many leaving a donation as a sign of approval. Museum Gift Shop business is steady and promising as one of the means of funding the ongoing operation of the museum. Bob Nanney and Dick Morgan have been helping me back-fit the cataloging of museum items.

Project Healing Waters on October 9, 2015 - Every year, the retreat attracts and returning anglers. This year, 37 participants signed up. The weekend included fly tying and casting clinics, guided and individual fishing and a reunion banquet. Both the skills and the camaraderie are important, and Healing Waters participants tied innovative fly patterns while making camp among the fishing memorabilia at our new museum in Cherokee. The vets all agreed that getting out was a rush, even as they faced a forecast of rain for their annual get-together.

Fly Tyers Weekend, Townsend, Tennessee on November 7-8, 2015 – The second annual museum fund raising benefit occurred as part of the annual Fly Tyers Weekend in Townsend, Tennessee. The Tremont Lodge and Resort, Little River Outfitters and the Southeastern Council of the International Federation of Fly Fishers sponsor the event. By invitation, the Fly Fishing Museum of the Southern Appalachians joined in for fund raising.

Founding and Charter Members

Over sixty Founding Members and more than eighty Charter Members donated funds for our original costs. Most of the chapters and state councils of Trout Unlimited and the International Federation of Fly Fishing made major contributions. Many of the Southeastern fly shops and independent guides provided items or guided trips for our major fundraiser in November 2014. Many also contributed again in November 2015. The regional fly fishing family truly engaged with us to make this museum become a reality.

"I want to recognize everyone that provided the initial support for the Fly Fishing Museum of the Southern Appalachians. The Founding Members list consists of organizations including Armstrong Fly Casters - Chris and Annette Holler; Biltmore House; Casting for Hope; Cherokee Chamber of Commerce; Cherokee Preservation Foundation; Community Foundation for Greater Chattanooga; Davidson River Outfitters and owner Kevin Howell; Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians; EBCI Division of Commerce; EBCI Fish and Wildlife; Edgemont Club, Ltd.; Georgia Women Fly Fishers; Hilltop Fly Tyers and Glover McMurray; Hunter-Banks and owner Frank S. Smith; Nat Greene Chapter of Trout Unlimited; North Carolina Council of Trout Unlimited; North Carolina Wildlife Federation; Resource Institute; Rocky River Chapter of Trout Unlimited; Rocky River Split Cane Rods and owner Richard Teeter; Saint Clair Mapping and owner Fred Turner; Smoky Mountain Meadows Campground and owner Terry Houghton; South Carolina Council of Trout Unlimited; Southern Trout (Online) Magazine; Swain County Chamber of Commerce; Temple Fork Outfitters and Captain Gary Taylor; Tennessee Valley Authority; Triangle Fly Fishers; Tuckasegee Fly Shop and owners Dale Collins and Bobby Bennett; Upper Creek Angler and owner John Zimmerman; West Virginia Council of Trout Unlimited; and, Wildscape and owner Kathy Stout; and individuals including David, Meta and Sally Armstrong; Alen D. and Scottie S. Baker; Gene and Kathy Barrington; Ronald R. and Christine W. Beane; Guy F. and Yvonne M. Bradley; Jim Childers; Bob Cogan; Joyce Cooper; Peter Croes; Cecil L. and Gale E. Dills; Paul Duffy; Gary W. Frey; Sharon and Ron Gaddy; Mark Gasior; Ronald F. and Elaine D. Gmerek; Scott Haires; Edward T., Jr. and Dorothy B. Hinson; Mary Jenkins; Cameron and Joyce Keels; Bobby Kilby; Jim and Sheila Mabrey; Joe D. Manley; Ricky and Betty McCarver; John McDevitt; Bob Nanney; Amy and Forrest Parker; Robert R., Jr. and Lisa P. Rollins; Hank and Mary Schmulling; Tonia and Alan Sheppard; Capt. Michael "Squeak" and Connie Smith; Douglas and Carron H. Suddreth; Joseph T. and Mary L. Summer; Wanda Taylor; Scott Wagner; Brad and Michelle Walker; Tim and Terri Wilhelm; and, Ray E. and Teresa Williamson.

The Charter Members list consists of organizations including Appalachian Anglers; Bass Pro Shops; Brooking's Outdoor Village Anglers; Carolina Mountain Sports; Casting Carolinas; Casting for Confidence; Casting for Recovery; Cataloochee Chapter of Trout Unlimited; Caylor Flies; Chad Bryson Fishing; Chattooga Chapter of Trout Unlimited; Choo Choo Coffee; Clement Law Office; Endless River Adventures; Fly Fishing the Smokies - Eugene Shuler; Fontana Guides; Headwaters Outfitters; Indian Creek Campground - Bill and Heather Murphy; Jesse Brown Outdoors; Kentucky Council of Trout Unlimited; Little River Outfitters; Macintosh Law Firm; Mid-Atlantic Council of Trout Unlimited; Mountain Tenkara, Bob Ivins and Lance Milks; Nantahala Outdoor Center; Northern Kentucky FFF; Outpost Mountain Outfitters; Popular Springs Farm Shooting Preserve and Kennel; Project Healing Waters; Rabun Chapter of Trout Unlimited; RiverGirl Fishing Company; Rivers Edge Outfitters; River Through Atlanta; Saluda Valley Guides and Barrens Fly Shop; Sequoyah National Golf Club; Smoky Mountain Host; Smoky Mountain Outdoors Unlimited; Smoky Mountain Railroad; Table Rock Angler - William Bo Cash; Tuckasegee Chapter of Trout Unlimited; and, Unaka Chapter of Trout Unlimited and Bobby Hand; and individuals including Tom Adams; R. Gary Baker; Beau Beasley; Dr. John M. Benbow; Dr. S. Walker Blanton, Carol Bracewell; Alan Briggs; Denny Burries, post humus; Jim Casada; Marvin Cash; Broderick and Michele Crawford; Carl Davis; Captain Bryan DeHart; E. Bruce Elliston; Jim Erik; Bill Everhardt; John G. Fuller; Dr. Charles D. and Nancy Hershey; Phil and Bessy Hinton; Bobby Hogan; Noel Hudson; Paul and Amy Issacs; Laura Kennerly; Mike Kesselring; Roger Lowe; Edward W. McLean; Justin Mickens; John Miko; Johnathan Miller; The Mortensen Family – Eric and Glenn Mortensen; Duane Ravers; Mickey Reavis; Shelley Reynolds; William J. and Georgia Ritter; Ron Robinson; W. H. Bill Stuart, Jr.; Bob Tupper; Stanley Tuttle; Kenneth Walker; W. Brad Weeks; Jim Willey; and, Rex Wilson; Jr.

On behalf of the museum board, thank you for your support!" - **Alen Baker**, Museum Board Member 704.507.6191

The Fly Fishing Museum of the Southern Appalachians, which is also home to the Cherokee Chamber of Commerce, is open daily and situated along U.S. 441 in Cherokee.

Winter hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Summer hours are 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

The address is 516 Tsali Blvd, Cherokee, NC 28719 and, for now, admission is free. Phone number is 828.788.0034.

