

bailey-john-2016-01-28.mp4

[00:00:12] I have so many stories Sharon but I think that maybe that the person who having grown up my father just where he actually learned to trap fish I have no idea. He grew up in Kentucky they and after he had died I took my wife down there still some relatives left and they said that when he got to the end of the field he spent the whole day on the street but there wasn't any fly fishing and where he learned that I never knew. He taught at Bennett springs in Missouri and he got his masters that lay high which would be a lot of trout fishing there.

[00:01:01] He was in New York fishing in the Catskills before you moved to Montana but where he learned to fly fish never heard anyone mention. Never heard it mentioned. It was just one of those interesting things. But I've just grown up in a fly fishing world. So when did I learn what I don't know. The first person who spent my father. He'd just go fishing and I'd follow along what would have been Joe Brooks who were actually spent time. He's a good very good friend of my father. He he actually spent time teaching me to class and this and that. I've just been around so many of the greats. You learn you know just watching to. Well I think the the giant was Joe. He was a showman type and bigger you know. He was a bigger in life form and he thought the interesting thing about him was he grew up in a well-to-do family in Baltimore. And they didn't approve of him fishing. One night while he was a baseball player. And they didn't like it he was a gutter drunk at one time and he came and Mary broke 20 married her and he got into the fly fishing thing. But he was he was the giant of all. But he was somewhat of a showman too. I mean me and people followed him all over the world. To appear and they just all arrived here. He was he was that you know. Lee Wolf they're all you know. But he was really the big giant. I can't say that. I mean.

[00:02:59] Anybody who walks through the door is interested in fishing catch.

[00:03:03] There are an awful lot that just come in the sea because they've heard about it.

[00:03:07] I mean they wouldn't have heard about it and wouldn't have resonated with them if they weren't interested in fishing. So. All right people driving off the interstate all the time just to see is sure of that. Yeah. Sometimes I worry that we've become more of a museum than a shop.

[00:03:29] It used to be the mother was all of sly for everybody. But. We've expanded beyond that so much and then the. You know nip fishing and a dead drift net fishing has just taken over. A lot. They just. But in this area. There is such a diversity of water. From the Yellowstone to spring creeks to. The Boulder. Meadows streams whatever that.

[00:04:00] Most people live in they have a stream to fish. And then you can say oh this is what you know. Here we have sincere diversity. I don't have an answer to that question. To me. If I go to someplace I might end it time here I'm going to have a specific fly. You know if it's cold it's going to be nymphs. If it's a summertime late summer hoppers earlier. Mean you just know here there's so much but there's so much diversity. And. You have year round fishing. Mm hmm. What. Sure. A lot of people don't have. Are there flies that it that by Sizer or the flies that are more difficult than the flight to tie than others or. Well. Some people think that but I mean if you've tied them.

[00:04:49] Let's I mean I think spinning hair for a lot of people. Difficult. You know. Weaving would be difficult but like a George Grant. That's that's really difficult. There are appear and mean people can imitate what he did.

[00:05:15] Oh there are so many now. I mean you know by buy more by specific kind of patterns that the tie visa versa. And George. He never liked my father because my father got more press and he did and he knows that the newcomer walked in on the old timers.

[00:05:42] Well I think it's great because the only other place I'm really aware of doing much is you know back east. But we have so much fishing here. Why don't we have it here. I mean I think it's a wonderful. I was really happy when they started to do that because we're in the heart of the best trout fishing in the world with diversity and there's certain places it may have bigger trout or whatever but there's no place that has the diversity of fishing that we do.

[00:06:14] Do you think it is.

[00:06:16] I mean there's a lot of things that make fishing in Montana and the Rocky Mountain West special is the diversity of the species available is that what kind of jumps out to most species but also streams and street types.

[00:06:29] You have spring grips you have the big Yellowstone River. You have a boulder. There's still water. The Smith There's just so many types of streams.

[00:06:42] And I love that diversity. Yeah. Fishing this. I mean I love the Yellowstone. I had to pick one it would be the elephant. But even winter fishing when you have midges coming off your fish it almost like a spring break. What a tie you have to use. You know it's just a whole different thing. But there's only one major river left that's on dammed that's true.

[00:07:09] I'm sure not there almost wasn't that I guess. Yeah I will see that right back behind you.

[00:07:15] There used. There was proposed three dams on this river at one time.

[00:07:19] Oh yeah yeah yeah yeah I knew about the one.

[00:07:24] Yeah well there were two others do I have the big I have the big map of that one or something.

[00:07:33] Yeah I mean and when that when the Ellensburg bird dam concept really died is when the Teton dam broke earthen dam earthquake fault both Livingston is what two miles or two and a half mile below the dam. So now would it really better you know but after that I remember Montana Power they they said it'll never be built now.

[00:08:01] Yeah well that's a good thing. Except. Chris Afilly.

[00:08:06] In Glen dive who sells water pumps for irrigation or when he was the last time it came up he wanted a dam so they could pipe water in eastern Montana and then the 70s. Well the interesting thing about the dam the 70s it came up. Because they wanted to dam it and then run the water down and mix it with coal and pipes and send it to the Middle East.

[00:08:35] So coal flurries and that actually I had just come back from college and that's when we got in stream flows in Montana because water had no right to be an inch stream only had a right to be in a ditch then in stream flows came about. I think Dorothy Bradley. She'd be a good one day because she was up in Hill on all that. So the environmental stuff that got passed in really but in stream flow was it's huge because now water had a right to be an inspiring.

[00:09:19] Instream flow you know now you can have water or stream has right to be there. So now another state can't. There's a right they can't pull it out. I mean you.

[00:09:34] I mean I suppose if we were in a big enough disaster anything can happen. But I don't I think you have a hard time.

[00:09:43] If you want to dam the yellowstone. Oh I think so too. I think you're right. And Brad Pitt also brought a lot of women to fly fishing. Yeah yeah that's I mean that was really a fascinating piece.

[00:10:05] You know and my wife said that Brad Pitt was just a young Robert Redford at that time which was an interesting and I think somewhat.

[00:10:12] She was right. Yeah. But he brought women they saw the beauty of fly fishing.

[00:10:20] And you remember that when we were filming that that they said I'm going to make my summer Darby said I'm going to make Montana look like it did in the 80s 90s.

[00:10:33] I didn't tell him I wasn't sure he'd want quite what looked like an 80s 90s.

[00:10:38] I think it's fairly nude because it was really over Grace and whatever but you know he was assuming it was better. And I think we're better now because we have better a lot better policies.

[00:10:50] That's one of the about bringing women in the sport. That's one of the things Joan Walsh mentioned was that film in particular.

[00:10:55] Oh yeah. It really. But it was Brad. Hmm. The bright. But they saw the beauty. I mean that was spectacular. They saw that beauty of that. And it was it brought me. Well I think the river runs through it brought women in. I mean you've got a lot of women guides now. I mean yes it's very good.

[00:11:25] Yeah I think that really changed that landscape. Yeah yeah reverse city blacks Hispanics.

[00:11:35] We're seeing some.

[00:11:39] But can we change how they grew up. I'm not sure. I'm not sure.

[00:11:44] I mean I've not. I mean diversity is great. I don't have any issue with that.

[00:11:50] You don't see too many Hispanics. Well at least I haven't.

[00:11:54] What about in your experience in terms of bringing youth into the sport. I know a lot of times when I go to conclaves and stuff like that it's it's older guys that are generally. Yeah.

[00:12:04] But they have some youth programs and there's some others around. There's a great thing going on and Livingston and that's.

[00:12:17] And I actually gone there and spoke to it started years ago in middle school.

[00:12:26] They started in science they started testing freshman creek that ran through learnings that it was a dump. I mean they were all cars and it was a mess. They got all this data and from the data they got to the city God and city and county you got this big grand and Fleischman Creek they cleaned it up and put the meanders back in it the tune gravel and I they they had a thing just last week. These kids come up and they make them give speeches in front of them. But they're working on the streams and I went and congratulated him because I said you know.

[00:13:06] You got data. And look what he did. They they're so young now. It happened. They think that's why it's always been the same wasn't up.

[00:13:15] I mean it was embarrassing.

[00:13:17] And now in their fish spawning in it you know it's really and I said no matter where you ever live somebody is going to want to spread around the water.

[00:13:27] You said where's the data you've got data. And you could do so and I said somebody is always trying to screw with it but find out where the data is because they won't have it if they are trying to screw it that they don't have it. That was my view. That's got to do is.

[00:13:43] But here these kids you know and they're still working on that stuff you know and it's great to see but it's watershed. They're looking at watersheds. That I dug out some stuff the early nineteen hundreds. I mean they wanted to put pipes in Elsa Lake and run it to.

[00:14:02] California.

[00:14:05] Sitting right there on the divide it has. You know there's just this all this history and they've been trying to screw this thing up forever. Yeah.

[00:14:23] Well we have so many streams here.

[00:14:25] Bad time of year. I mean I love the Yellowstone romance here. You can fishing it around but even fishing in the winter you get Midge hatches. And then in the fall you'll get some badass and this spring you'll get some bait as you can almost fish it like a spring break.

[00:14:49] But then it gets big and run off. You've got the salmon flies.

[00:14:54] That's a big river. It's always been unarmed. It's never really the same. And each day you have this as those levels change a fish move and you you really learn to read a river fishing these streams here because they're. But yeah I mean if I had wanted to

be the Elson what we've got so many streams spring creeks there I mean there are a lot of people would only want to fishes for Frank creeks they just like that type of. I mean I like them all. That's weird. And living here and not enjoying them all as sort of you know. And in the late summer fishing in Boulder or some of these streams with the hot I mean they're just it's just there's so many opportunities not to utilize them all as sort of the same but there are a lot of people that only fish one place all the time. I like them all.

[00:15:51] So and different times a year. And you know with hydro grass and you can see that on you can see what flows are you can. Oh yeah. Time to go fish. Yes or no. When I was younger you couldn't get that one available.

[00:16:13] I used to I haven't recently but in the last the last few years my wife's been sick so I only fished once this last year. Some I'm not. It's not a complaint it just she needed help. Sure. So. But yeah. But. One problem. I don't like a lot of people when I'm fishing. So. The park has gotten a little art for that.

[00:16:38] It seems like you really got to get get back there a bit. If you don't want to see another guy with a line in the water.

[00:16:45] But do we as I say we have so much water. Usually.

[00:16:53] Hope you said you kind of grew up fishing in the park or you fish there quite a bit when you're younger.

[00:17:00] As like fish there a lot. I mean. Over your course. I mean I came back got I got out of college in.

[00:17:08] 69 and then went in the last draft that the U.S. had and so I back in the fall of 70 I think so I've been here permanently then. Yeah I mean used to go up to the opening of. Yellowstone River you know it's one of those things you did every summer.

[00:17:25] His 15th of July. His fishing in the part changed in the last 40 years.

[00:17:33] Well yeah. Congratulations. You went to you know they were feeling garbage cans full of cutthroat. Mm hmm. Then they went to catch and release. Them. Lake trout you know there's always change.

[00:17:48] Has it got anyone who thinks there isn't change. They're not looking. Sure. Has it gotten better worse or whatever. You've got water years low water high water and so I mean.

[00:18:01] You get more recoument and then you know the lake trout really change the recruitment on the.

[00:18:07] So late. How do you what's your thoughts on how they're doing with the late try. Do you think that's a battle that can be won.

[00:18:16] His winning getting rid of them all. That's impossible. I don't know what winning is the. They're getting better recruitment on the cutthroats. So.

[00:18:29] Do you think the fishing for the cutthroats. Well I've just had friends have told me that they fish the park in the 70s and even in the early 80s and they said that especially

in Yellowstone Lake like it was that it was incredible the cutthroat fishing and that now it's just it's us you know just a fraction as good as it used. Yeah and.

[00:18:50] But can you ever get back to what you were. I think I think you gotta look forward. Sure.

[00:18:57] Looking back I mean rivers are the water quality so much better now. I mean used to have return irrigation going in everywhere now you know dirty water coming in you don't see that they're just I mean the landowners also know how valuable the streams are. And with that you get subtle changes.

[00:19:23] I mean you might have an old timer that's not you know but they might. You don't hear that much anymore.

[00:19:31] You've heard a lot of that in the 70s 80s with a lot of that changed. I mean I think management of the streams and the values have gotten so high that people predicted more better. Good point.

[00:19:49] Probably my father be good yes I mean I love that joke Brooks. I mean spent time I was young.

[00:19:57] He was really an amazing and he was a showman you know. He was a professional baseball player and he met time. But I've been around so many people just.

[00:20:10] Fishing off people who are good you learn.

[00:20:14] They don't teach you. Just watch me pick up a lobster. If I had a big one I guess it would be at. But. But again you know in the summer in the rural corners of the rainbow we're in there. That's great. You know that. You know it's just here you just you sort of know you fish different water for different trout species to check and then you know this we're seeing it cutthroats coming back. And that's good.

[00:21:07] Well to oversimplify Trout Unlimited is more in habit path.

[00:21:13] And if it is more in education that's oversimplification.

[00:21:18] They both get involved. I think the biggest threat is demographics. Are no young people fishing. Have you seen those statistics.

[00:21:30] I have. Yeah I'm aware of them. I mean that's there's your biggest threat. Yeah and you can see the representation of it at at events. And yeah I think so.

[00:21:42] You know if there are any people who care we're going to lose it all.

[00:21:45] We lose the resource. Do you think that's just part of people not passing it down dirty. Do you think that there's just so much others stimuli for it for four young girls I tell people said well why aren't there more kids right.

[00:22:03] Well when I was in college the bill came out I think maybe that had a big effect. Now control made sure you know I just because you got this huge population medium reproduce as much did it. There does seem to be somewhat of a generational shift as well as you know people my fountain fish but I don't want my grandfather to fish but he has the

same problem. Yeah that is true. Yeah. I mean so yeah. What comes of it. I don't know. Will there be. But hunting has access issues. A fishing in Montana. With the Supreme Court thing that gave us the high watermark. We have a lot more fishing access now than we did and fish and game got really serious about my fishing access sites. So fishing and hunting are really different but you still have the same demographic. How important is that. I mean the public waterway seems to me to be paramount in the States and especially in Montana. I know other places where it's a high watermark. How huge of an impact has that have versus states like Wyoming where were you idea. That's why I mean I believe where you can own private water. Yeah but in Wyoming you can't even put an anchor on the bottom of the street. Yeah yeah they own actually my own right. I mean so you just. Yeah. That's why we have the people. I mean we you know we have fishing here. It's just it's a fascinating you know they're two states totally different concept.

[00:23:45] Yeah yeah I think that's one of the things. While I guess in the new world in general I think that we got right in comparison to to Europe like fishing in England or a lot of places like that. You have to be a member of a private club and make up for it. I'm still amazed that these rich people come in and they go back to the Supreme Court and they lose every time. Yeah I guess some attorney just. Can't seem to think they can win. I don't know. I mean it's so clear cut. I don't understand why people keep challenging what they do. Yeah they always lose. I think access. I mean the Supreme Court thing in Montana was just the biggest things I think what we're losing is we don't have young people enough young people fishing. So that may cause a loss of whatever. Who knows. I don't know if you can understand what that might be. Yeah that's hard to put. You know it takes people you can't. Government can only do X people out on streams when they see something that's wrong can report. We can't expect the government to do that. So if you have less people I think you can start having more issues that won't get picked up as soon as ever. Yeah I think one of the great things about anglers I've talked to one of the subsets of this is national parks and fisheries biologists and again and again they talked about how invaluable anglers are in collecting data and you know in so many boots on the ground to be able to determine where a species is or are you know invasive species or what I think. But Lily and I both agree that we think the bark doesn't want any fisherman we're strongly. And if you watch what they try to regulate and stuff they're trying to do that. We it was a year was a year two years ago. I think great stuff came out on the park. I call Bud Louie up and I called the superintendent of the park up and we went and met him. Dalton what we thought.

[00:26:06] Dan I'm guessing I'm not. And then they had a lot to do with Lamar. We're just you know all you had to kill rainbows. Yeah. And I said you know the people fishing there are all catch your release. They are going to kill. Well they have to they can enforce it. I mean and people aren't blaming God. And. You just can't. That's government dictating something. I mean. I Well and I know the parks in general have a mandate to preserve native species that are there is no problem with that. How do you think that that play. I said Why don't you put words you say you know you keep the other crowd. No you have to kill them. Fishermen do that. I mean I think one of the most amazing things to me was to watch when Bud was really instrumental when they started catching at least on Madison. I mean they had so much fishing there and it's it's become the norm. It's not mandated by the government. It's the norm. Now you you on the outside. People used to keep stringers official. Sure. You hardly see anyone keep a face. It's not mandate just. I never expected to see that. I mean I grew up with people keeping fish all the. Mm hmm. You just don't see it.

[00:28:00] Just go develops but people which people aren't fishing for food now it's sport. There's a big shift there are a lot of people a lot of poor people and Louisiana. The railroad town you know. I mean they used to go out and catch 100 white fish a day and smoke. Nobody does anything more now. It's just that changes. But but it's generational. But the left does say the next generation smoke. What's gonna happen. Yeah that certainly has been a cultural shift that's something that I've thought about a little bit as well. I've had opportunity to set travel and fish for five years ago. I went to Vietnam. Allow us and our I'm sorry Cambodia and Thailand and fished over there and that's what you see there is people I mean they're not it's not sport they're catching up right. Yeah. I mean that's that's the biggest change I mean and that just happen.

[00:29:07] I mean as they get older and older they subconsciously want us. I mean I don't know what that driver is. I'd say you're absolutely right. I mean I've seen it in my lifetime. The difference between when I was a kid and we went fishing it was yours. You kept it. You know I mean it was just something I did. And now when I go fishing with my friends we never met once in a while for somewhere where the bookies are they call it Brit bookies for dinner or something. Beyond that it's not just a maze back. Just an amazing thing to watch. It's a huge shift in things in general. You in Montana. Montana I mean Montana. I mean I think with all the way laws are and depreciation for water about land is why having water on your land is so valuable. And look at the big hole. I mean water leasing you know there are lot of things going on so it would be hard to think we go backwards. I'm. Not going to happen in my lifetime. I just I mean I guess if there's a national disaster of some magnitude. Then anything could happen. I don't see that. I just don't. People care too much. I mean you just it's amazing to me. Yeah. Yeah I know. One of the things that I had people come up with answers is the spread of invasive species is tough sometimes to control anywhere and whether or not that'll be a threat. But it's like with the lake trout in Yellowstone. Or what have you. But that's something that's really hard to predict to what's going.

[00:31:13] Yeah but in a lake they have a better chance. Might another please. That's true. I mean you know we thought whirling disease got to see. Yeah. Then we found out that you know a high water dilutes it. It. Became a non-issue. Yeah. I mean look how fast that died on. Sure yeah but again. But. Because we have good data. You can you know you can deal with these things fairly quick and get rid of the noise. That may not get you anywhere and deal with the issue. It's the kind of the science versus the emotion. Yeah. I mean on this I mean. I mean a disease. I sure do. Well you have high water dilutes it. Well we have high water every year here we have a dam. Luckily we don't have man. On the Yellowstone the rest of the streams with the dams can you know the dam operator has too much power then.

[00:32:13] Anything could happen to the stream. Sure. But I think that's hard. Now it's just too much recreational fishing. But when we get to the generation where we don't have enough fishermen. I'm not sure. He was that kid or is that an older person. I'm not.

[00:32:42] A young guy walked in walked in your door and said You know I really want to I don't know anybody who fly fishers but it looks interesting me I'd like to give it a go what would you recommend.

[00:32:58] You know if they've got a Friends of fish to fish with them I mean that's the first thing you could say. You'll get that intimate knowledge or you've got to find somebody you know. Or hear.

[00:33:10] There are enough people fishing just walk on and watch them so you'll learn a lot of stuff.

[00:33:16] You know casting becomes and you've got the federation here you've got people teaching. There's a lot of opportunity here. You don't you think you get that question which you don't much.

[00:33:31] Yeah I've heard people say similar things. Join a club.

[00:33:35] Yeah. Maybe it isn't. Doesn't happen much. Sure yeah. Why. Why didn't I. I'm not sure. Maybe they've already found something. I don't know. But if they've come here they're going to go fishing check. Yeah. We're not a big city. That's true.

[00:34:00] Well for me it's one that you can go and go fishing and not see him all day and then see the end of the day. But you know there's so much fluff fishing now that you're with people all the time. So.

[00:34:21] The best part is people I've met from the world.

[00:34:25] That's it's an easy fishing. Yeah I mean fishing is great but it's the social world that you know.

[00:34:35] There's certainly been incredible. So many people. I mean I know people all over the world. And what. Whatever. What else can you do to get that kind of diversity. I'm not sure. Yeah. I mean maybe if you're a great basketball player or tennis player or something.

[00:34:55] In terms of the business at you things seeing things change for for better or worse more radical.

[00:35:04] I mean I put computers into this business. Sure you know everything was written down or whatever and brought a lot of product on the market as the gear.

[00:35:20] Got in better books or better. I mean.

[00:35:26] Radical change looks really old mustard days.

[00:35:35] HOOKS I mean Rod actions graphite and what they're doing now. It's so much easier to learn to cast with these rods and Neil cane or thin glass. That slow action. I mean these are there quicker.

[00:35:51] If somebody's beginning. That's. The graphite was a big big thing tail made a lot easier for people that lost. You know that's a good point. You know people look. We've had it so long and they don't know that. But it was a big big changes. Well around here I mean if you're buying one thing most people buy a nine foot.

[00:36:22] More than that person. That's a good way to get.

[00:36:27] The Nine is a little easier for me to cast in shorter storage. But it's more universal here if you want a new face. Right. I have a water rise in the kitchen. Sure I'm fussy about my rods. What I'm fishing. But I can imagine. Well I mean I think the big name you know.

[00:36:52] They're all making their right. That's right they're not in graphic.

[00:36:56] And arcane Toronto. Yeah yeah. What about some of the game bamboo rods.

[00:37:04] Where would you say Who are some of the best folks out there.

[00:37:07] Have a math teacher well you know what. So they're doing it now. Yeah. Right. It. Really it's. Made.

[00:37:15] More work. I know for any I mean there really aren't any now available commercially. I mean they're individual Yeah big.

[00:37:25] No only getting better and better. Do you have any new ones. I have a lot of good old industry pains and Leonards. Listen I got. Your my favorites of Leonard Catskills 7 foot 3 wait. Which I use on the sprinkler. Excellent efficient. Use it anywhere else I'm afraid I'll break it.

[00:37:54] Yeah one of those things you can go out and buy. But I grew up on cane so