

heintz-bud-2017-08-05.mp4

Bud Heintz [00:00:10] OK. Fishing is, has been a big part of my life. Especially after I retired. But even before. I've been at it, like, 44 years plus. And met a lot of great people. It's a really good pastime. It's a good hobby. I enjoy the camaraderie, and I like the fishing part of it. I have friends. We do a lot of fishing together. And I enjoy, you know, the scenery even. People ask me, "How's fishing." I always say, "Fishing's good." "Well, what'd you catch?" "Nothing. Fishing is always good."

Bud Heintz [00:00:59] When I was about 9 years old, my dad owned some property up in Trinity County, in California. And we went fishing. And small trout and so forth. I can't remember who, I know I was using a fly rod and reel. Cause I had an automatic reel, and remember that, that was funny. But it started there. My dad and I did a lot of hardware bait fishing. For catfish, and stripers and stuff like that. My father-in-law and I enjoyed a lot of hardware fishing. And then I got into fly fishing. And the reason I, how I got into it, was a friend of mine talked about. Well actually, my boss, I tied my first fly with my boss, because he asked if I was interested, because he was a hardware fisherman. "How about fly fishing?" "...Yeah." So we we looked at these materials, and so forth, and I said I'd tie the fly. He showed me how. And then I started working with a gentleman by name of Maul Rose, out of Modesto. And use an old timer, he offered up tying lessons for fifteen dollars. And back, this was about 1972 or '73, we made like three dollars an hour working, so we said, "Yeah I'd do it." And a bunch of guys said no, they didn't want to spend the money. And he was purchasing all the material, and everything. So, he says "OK we'll, everybody'll bring a six pack of beer and we'll sit down and talk. And tie flies. I'll show you how." So we did that. Well that was a lot more cost, a lot more costly than the fifteen dollars original, of course. And he really stocked this refrigerator up. And, which was kind of funny, and but he was a really good teacher, very patient, and he took us fishing after about three months of tying. And I went on from there. And a few years later I started working with the Buzecks. And he got me directed to the Buzecks, for materials and so forth. And I, I started tying custom flies for dude ranches, for Virginia Buzeck and Micky Bell. And I just went on from there. And we did a lot of specialty tying, a lot of specialty tying, it's not that run that the mill stuff. So we had a funny story. He had me tie a redtail road royal coachman. And so I tied it, and he says, "No, no, no. Two white cool wings on each side." And I've never tied it like that, but I'd never seen them like that. But it was the specialty tie. So I had, by the time you got back to me, and they were pretty slow by getting back at that time. And I had about six sets of them, put them in a box, and eventually gave them to a lady on Deer Creek, up by Mt. Lassen. And her, and she came by with a cane rod. And an old reel and fly line and she was (unintelligible) and that just lights my rockets. So I says, "Hey, why don't you use flies?" "Oh, you know my dad used specialty flies." "What was that?" "It was a royal coachman." I says, "Well you can buy those anywhere." Oh no. The, hers, his had a red tail, and then the ones now or are not red tailed. And I says. "OK." So I'm thinking, the lights go off. We've got this little box of 6 dozen flies in there. And I walked over to her motor home, and I gave all to her. And she just what crazy. But I gave them to her with a condition, that she would not use potskies on a rod anymore. But there's a, there's a lot of good camaraderie in fly fishing people, and, for the most part, are very helpful. And we really try promoting the sport. And I belonged to the Federation for a long time, and, because I believe in what they're doing. So, there's a lot of trials and tribulations in any organization. But it's worked out pretty well. I think they're in the right direction.

Bud Heintz [00:05:47] I was 9 years old. So, I'm 70. Sixty one years ago. And it's, it's been enjoyable all along. I treasure the time with my father, and I was an only child. So we got to spend some time, I remember, I think the last time I went to Trinity County I was either

nine or 10. And I loved that place. I loved the place. But it was just not to be, because it was a long trip. We had little older cars in the, you know, 1940s and '50s models. And we drove up to Trinity Canyon which had a long haul, from a little town called Gustine, where I lived. And it's in the San Jaquin valley in California. So I, you know, that was the indoctrination of getting out there and enjoying myself. And we were always outdoor people. Even though I was only child, my dad and I did a lot of things outside. Fishing hunting so I enjoyed it.

Bud Heintz [00:07:07] Everything, [laughs]. Because what we're seeing, is you're talking about fish size. Everybody's always talking about, "Oh, the fish used to be bigger." Early on and everything. That's true. That's true. But back then there's a lot more take, than put and take. So, I mean, not put and take, but catch and release. And so it one of those situations where, people ate more fish that they caught. And they always worked on the limit. And it's no longer true. Conservation is now. And the fish are small, smaller. And most places were, when I used to fish. The fish were larger than they are now. In the last 40 years. And it's been, it's kinda disappointing, in some cases. Some cases, the environment has been a big factor. The other thing is, you know, the years of drought we've had. Then we get this, this deluge of water and snow and high flows, and so there's all this variation on climate controlled. And so, you know, the global warming thing is a, is a real factor. And should be considered. And we, the fishing, the habitat is different. I think people didn't discard things like they used to. Used to, they didn't they didn't discard at all, they picked up after themselves. But today, I'm always picking up stuff, along the rivers and so forth. So the environment and then the logging. And then the fires. Fires throw a lot of ash and they change things, change aquatic life, and so forth. I found the aquatic life has diminished in some areas I used to fish when I was younger. And it's been, there's a lot of change. There's a, there's a lot of change, it is a change on quality control, as far as the water flows. The water flows or are not being, I don't think, are being controlled as well. And that's why some of the salmon runs on some of the valley streams and rivers in California have diminished. Because of irrigation districts and so forth. The big pools flow to get salmon in, the salmon take and spawn. And then all of a sudden, they're dropping, dropping in the levels of the water. So the eggs are sitting up there, and, you know, they die. So diminishing, there's a diminishing return. So I'm seeing it. And then this year, we have all this water and snow, and a lot of the streams in California are still like litter streams lot of color they're not fishable, too high. And it looks like maybe in this fall, maybe September, October, is going to be our window.

Bud Heintz [00:10:46] Well, in the future, if we don't control the water better. I know Montana, especially, I fish Montana, at least once a year. And the situation with Montana, they get big snowfalls later. So sometimes you're, it's like a big pulse flow, and it goes from an average of 2500 second feet or 4000 or 5000, to 10000 and above like the Big Horn this year. And what happens is, is the guide service and the businesses. They don't fare very well. Because the water's too high, the people arent catching the fish, they hear the water's high. They don't get the guides. You know. It even goes down to the tying. Because, oh they don't tie as many flies, so they don't buy as many material. And so it's just a, just a combination of, it kind of snowballs. So I think controlling flows of water and so forth, like in California this year, we had a big rainfall. And a lot of people got flooded. They haven't gotten flooded in many, many, many, many years. And they have a lot more controls up, there's more dams and so forth. And they're talking about more. But then we've got this pipeline thing in California. Talk about going to L.A. and I don't think that's a good idea, because the delta saltwater is going to intrude, more, and then the farmers rely on the water. So it has, everybody has to think conservatively. And the farmers, as well as the water districts. And we're seeing a lot of subsidence of ground, because we're

pumping water out of the aquifers. So I just kind of worry about where we're going, and where it's going to, it's going to cease. Or not cease, but it be controlled more. I mean I get involved in it, because I was in the government. I was a government worker, I was, did civil engineering work. So the situation is, I got on the inside of the water districts around my area, and worked with them a lot. And the way they do business, and the way I would have done business, of course is different, because I don't have any control over them, you know? But some of things were pretty drastic. And we're paying for it now.

Bud Heintz [00:13:36] Well right now, in California, and in Yellowstone, they don't plant anymore. They used to plant by air, and so forth. They don't plant anymore, so it's pretty much on conservation is how their habitat is going to change, or not. I mean as far as, you know, we have slot limits, we have we have limit changes on, for some people who take fish. And the big controversy was, should we plant fish or should we not plant fish? And thing about planting is, outside the park, was if you planted around the campground, they would stay there. People would stay there. But if you didn't, they would venture outside. So the native fish would get caught, no matter what size, and get eaten. So I think that diminishes the size, and it diminishes, diminishes the numbers of fish. And that goes for The National Parks and everything. Now National Parks are pretty much catch and release. And I don't think there's any slot limit anymore, I haven't, I haven't fished in a park for quite a while.

Bud Heintz [00:14:59] Oh, absolutely. It's always a challenge. I think it's the challenge part of it. Because as a fly tier, I take it, I look at it as, 'Okay I do something and I use something to catch fish.' So it's, the gratification is the catching and releasing. And as long as you can... Practice the catch and release. And as long as you show other people how it's beneficial, I think we'll be all right. But it's leaving people alone, and letting them, you know. Some people feel that they spent 40, 50, 60 dollars, whatever a year. That's how many piles of fish they want in the freezer. Well, you have to change your mentality. And I think it's being changed. I really do, I really think it has been changed. And I think that the conservation people have to live your conservation strongly.

Bud Heintz [00:16:10] Wow....Well, like I told you on the way over, I says, when I respect the people who got me started. The boss, Maul, and got me started into it. I appreciate the materials we had, back then. Dave Witlock, at all these other people, Art Flick, had materials out there we could see. A step-by-step in a book. So it kind of provided the information, because there wasn't a lot of tyers around. There were some, but not a lot. And today and oh! And as my evolution of tying, and so forth, goes; the Buzecks, they gave me the opportunity to tie, and people say, "Oh well I bet that was a lot of work." Well, it was a lot of work, but it made you a better tyer. You tied a lot more. You were scrutinized heavier, and you became a better tyer. Dan Byford, from the IFC show, he got me started doing the theater. And, and, and just general tying, at the fly fishing shows. Ben Forinski. We do the fly fishing show in, used to be in San Rafael, now it's in Pleasanton, California. And Darwin Aktins got me started. Mostly got me started with the Federation, and starting tying at conclaves. And I've been doing it now for 25 plus years.

Bud Heintz [00:17:52] It's essential. Matter of fact, I'm going to tell you a quick story. I made balsa wood poppers, and so forth, and bass fished a lot. And I met this guy, Jerry Randoff. So I came across him on Facebook, and I sent him a few flies, and I'm not putting two-and-two together. Well the other day, we had breakfast with Chuck Collins, and I saw him at breakfast. Chuck brought him over. First time I'd seen him 25 years. And he looked at me, I looked at him, he said, "Boy, it's been a long time," and I says, "Yeah man." So he, and he's African-American. And so I have taught older people, in their 70s, like myself. I

have taught children, down to, oh, eight or nine. And I've taught everybody everybody in between. I taught at the junior colleges, for adult education, and we get a big cross-section; Hispanic, African-American. Women make the best tyers, I was telling a lady today, I said "Women make the best tyers!" The reason is, is because their dexterity in their hands is a lot better than mine, because I got big hands. They're more meticulous, and they're more creative. And I says, "And they can focus on things, where the guys want to get it done." So ladies make really good tyers. Well, John Bailey and Dan Bailey can attest to that, because they had ladies tying flies for them. For years.

James Thull [00:19:33] Probably better casters too.

Bud Heintz [00:19:36] Better casters, there you go. And yeah, they're just more focused. Youngsters, it's hard. I was involved in the first... Youth... Programme for the Federation, in Calgary, Canada. It's the only time they ever brought it out of the United States, I believe. And we had, we had children--18 of them--from 8 to 18. And it was hard to keep their focus, at a young age. The older kids, it's hard to keep their focus, because they have other things on their mind. And, you know, the in-between, you think, 'Well I hope I got the point across.' By golly, I says, a few years later, I'm getting some of those kids that I had there, they're going on vacation, they call it holiday, holiday, and they were going to Yellowstone. They had to come by and see me in, in Kalispell. 'Cause I was going to be there. So I got the point across. Now, the year after we did that, and we had a great turnout, I mean the kids were really, really good. And the next year, we were in Livingston, Montana. And we had 100 youngsters there, from 18 to 100. And we took care of them. And after that, I went to Kalispell. Some young ladies were in the class, some young girls, talked her dad into coming over and seeing me. So he came over, sat out talk for a little bit. I've made friends internationally. England, Norway, Australia, just, you know. Japan, Canada, South America, everywhere. You know, and you get to meet their families. And that's essential too. But there's all kinds of, there's all walks of life. You don't have to have the best of everything, and you have to be, and you have to be giving. When you're a, belong to the federation, or you're a club member, or whatever. I always tell people that are starting, "Go to your local club. Go to your local fly fishing shop. They have lessons. They're willing to help you. You don't have to buy the best of everything, unless you can afford the best of everything, and keep the costs down. Go into the sport easy." So, especially on the tying end, the tying end can be very expensive. Just like playing golf. Just doing a lot of other sports. But the age thing, you mentioned a big thing, the age thing is really tough. When I go into the federation shows, or the they have one in Albany, have a show in Albany, in Oregon. And there were a few young people in there, that were phenomenal tyers, teenagers. But that's a rarity. The youngest one who's, well I normally see is, hmm, maybe just about to break 50. You know what I mean? So, that, and then that's youth, you know, any anymore. Because here we are, I'm 70 years old, and I says, you know there's all kinds of people in their 50s 60s and 70s and some in their 80s, like bill Blackstone. 84 years old still putting out flies. Great guy. You know, very personable. And we try to, try to welcome everybody. All nationalities, it's doesn't make any difference. It's all for the sport. Love of the sport.

Bud Heintz [00:23:32] Well, every year we go to, go out to the Bighorn. And, my buddies and I, and there was four us. And everyone has to be congenial. They have to be understanding. So if one of the guys doesn't feel well, he doesn't want to go that day, nobody puts the pressure on him to go. Or if someone can't walk five miles. Well then, you do one day, they do, they go alone, or go with somebody else. I usually don't like to go alone anymore, and, or they come with you, and enjoy the day. So we're all there to join in, and enjoy the experience. And that, that goes for families. I've gotten booed off the stage,

almost, because I told this was a family sport. Honestly. And this is years back, but then what I told them, I says, "How many times-" the guys were in there, I says, "How many times does your wife say, 'are you going fishing again. Why are you doing fishing?' Take her. Have her bring a book if she doesn't like to fish, whatever. Enjoy the day outside. Then she understands why you go, and she won't ask you that as much anymore." There won't be the conflict, or whatever. And the kids too. I mean, the kids the, usually the youngsters don't have the train of thought. You know they can't be at it for a long time. And so then. But some are. Some are really focused. So you're gonna need that big old cross section, you really are. Boys and girls. I got two daughters, they both got into it. Don't do it now, they're raising their families. But my wife got into it, got her into the fly fishing thing and they enjoyed it. And now my granddaughters are asking me to take them. So I promote that, I promote youth, I promote the ladies, the ethnicity. I promote everything. Because it's a great sport, an enjoyable sport, and it's good to get away from the hustle and bustle.

Bud Heintz [00:25:57] Well, like I said, if a person really is interested. And wants to get in fly fishing. Visit your local shop, look for a local club. Usually, they'll take you under their wing. And they'll make you a fly fisherman, or make you a fisherman, or make you understand what the outdoors, enjoying the outdoors, is all about. And I think that that is the biggest part. It's not all about money, but it does take money to get into the sport. But it's not all about money, what you have, what the other guy has, keeping up with the Joneses, or anything like that. That's not what it's all about. It's all about camaraderie, the enjoyment of the surroundings, where you're at. And, and other people, enjoying them as well. The camaraderie with your buddies, but then also the family thing. If they bring their wives or children, whatever. It's all like a big family. And we really enjoy that. I think people enjoy that a lot. And if they find out that it's not a good ole boys sport, it's, what it's really all about is about enjoying the outdoors.