

swisher-sharon-2016-02-05.mp4

James Thull [00:00:10] Did you go?

Sharon Swisher [00:00:10] My father. Well actually we fished as a family. Not Fly Fishing necessarily. My my first fly rod with my dad actually, and my brothers, we got a willow. My dad put leader on it or some kind of line. And tied a fly on it and we fished a lot of the little streams here around the Bitterroot and over in eastern Montana. And then gradually as as I got older we started spin fishing and then occasional fly fishing but it was mostly spin fishing and lake fishing and then when I met Doug, I loved fly fishing.

James Thull [00:00:57] That's great. So what were you when you're fishing with that that piece of Willow. About what years would have we been talking there?

Sharon Swisher [00:01:04] Oh my gosh that's a hundred years ago. Probably.

Sharon Swisher [00:01:12] I would say oh in the fifties.

James Thull [00:01:16] OK great.

Sharon Swisher [00:01:23] For its beauty I would I would disagree with Doug about the veil. The hardest most difficult fly that I think I've ever tied is his double parachute Hopper. And I tied many many many of those I used to tie for Five Rivers Lodge over in Dillon and, they were always calling me and saying we're running out of Hoppers but that that was my most difficult. I think some of the more modern synthetic material that we've been using probably has more beauty than some of the, natural material flies, although, you know a lot of those turned out real pretty too.

James Thull [00:02:08] Sure.

Sharon Swisher [00:02:08] But yeah I like a lot of the synthetics that are easy to tie with. And, actually we we just have some new ones that are really bright and we're anxious to try those because we really haven't fished them. We've just gotten into some of the new material. That's bright, colors, you know, you kind of think of fish, more adult, you know. You think trout fishing is black and brown and olive you know and and stuff as far as streamers. And we found last summer, we fished some flashy olive. It was really quite bright and flashy and we couldn't believe the number of fish we caught at the lake.

Sharon Swisher [00:03:04] Well I am very much anti killing fish now. And we, on the Bitterroot River, now have some catch and release areas which I think is helping our river a lot. More people are getting into Catch and Release. You know Doug always says why kill our sport? And that's true.

James Thull [00:03:30] You know, that's a great point, yeah.

Sharon Swisher [00:03:31] But when, when, when I was raised we caught fish to eat.

James Thull [00:03:35] Sure.

Sharon Swisher [00:03:36] And that's the way most people did you know. And now that's changing a lot. And I think that's great.

James Thull [00:03:44] So it's kind of something you evolve in to maybe as an angler, would you agree?.

Sharon Swisher [00:03:47] Oh yeah. Oh yeah right. Yeah. Because. Well the little fish that we used to catch on the some of the streams you know I mean we're talking little tiny fish.

James Thull [00:03:56] Sure.

Sharon Swisher [00:03:57] You know we always release them. But yeah I think that's one of the biggest things that that strikes me as being progressive. Y'know?

James Thull [00:04:08] Sure.

Sharon Swisher [00:04:09] It's so great to see and talk to people who who put those fish back you know you can catch him another somebody else can catch him another time.

Sharon Swisher [00:04:25] Well I tell you what. Right after we started right after they opened up the Big Hole--Big Horn-- River, we started fishing it and it was just awesome. I mean there were so many fish and big fish and that was my favorite place to go for years and I took my vacation always two weeks in the fall and we went to the Big Horn River and spent those two weeks.

James Thull [00:04:58] That's great.

Sharon Swisher [00:04:59] And then they didn't put any regulations really on it. I mean I think it was five fish but you would see people coming in with stringers of fish. They, you know I know they can't afford to have enough game wardens out there to check everybody but and then people more and more people more and more people you know and so we quit driving that far to fish and started going to the Missouri. And the Missouri River is an absolutely awesome river to fish. We love to fish that. I I would love to go back to Alaska and fish some salmon up there but that's a long ways too and we're getting up there so. But now we're mostly into lakes and we love the Georgetown Lake and some of the other lakes that we've fished and so anyway we love our kick boats.

James Thull [00:05:58] That's what Doug was saying that you like fishing from the kick boats those worked out pretty well for you?

Sharon Swisher [00:06:02] Yeah. They do. That way you know if I want to fish on one side and he wants to fish on the other there's no problem.

Sharon Swisher [00:06:16] Well it depends on how old she is. Y'know, because I think you can, I think you can kind of turn off kids by pushing them too much.

James Thull [00:06:29] Sure.

Sharon Swisher [00:06:30] I would say give her a little a little rod and take her with you and let her fish a little while she wants to.

Sharon Swisher [00:06:41] Don't push her into fishing longer and practice practice practice and have an actual instructor help her at first so she gets the rhythm and everything right. As far as fly fishing. Oh gosh. I just like to catch 'em all.

James Thull [00:07:10] That's fair. It's like picking your favorite child I guess right?

Sharon Swisher [00:07:13] Yeah, y'know, I mean you get excited when you catch a brown and you get excited when you catch, you know. I've not ever fished for some of the, I've fished for bluegill but I and I've never fished for a lot of, some bass. But we don't have a lot of bass fishing right here in this area so. But that's fun too.

Sharon Swisher [00:07:39] Yeah. Did he tell you about my time?

James Thull [00:07:42] He mentioned it. But not, he didn't really get into the story or anything. He just mentioned it.

Sharon Swisher [00:07:46] Actually I caught, I would say a medium size. I don't remember weight you know approximate weight but I caught that tarpin and he was you know really a pretty nice sized tarpin on a fly I tied and that was that was really exciting. We love to fish saltwater around Naples and I caught a really nice redfish and a really nice snook down there. Two years ago actually almost three years ago now on flies that I had tied and that's exciting it really is. You know to get those big guys like that I mean there's nothing like catching trout but to go on vacation and be able to catch some of those big guys. That's,

James Thull [00:08:41] Is that? that's a special experience I imagine catching a fish on a fly that you tied kind of the whole cycle of it.

Sharon Swisher [00:08:49] Right. Right right.

Sharon Swisher [00:08:50] Yeah. It was a lot more special back when I was first learning how to tie but it still you know because the fly that I caught the fish on I developed myself.

James Thull [00:09:04] That's wonderful.

Sharon Swisher [00:09:04] It wasn't it wasn't somebody else's tie that I know that I tied. So yeah that was a lot of fun.

Sharon Swisher [00:09:17] You know I have to say Doug Swisher. I really haven't tied around a lot of tiers. We kind of have done our own thing you might say.

James Thull [00:09:33] Sure, no, that's fair.

Sharon Swisher [00:09:35] I used to love to go watch people at the conclave and there's just not a lot of big names that I've watched tie. Dave Whitlock I've watched and there's a few others.

Sharon Swisher [00:09:54] I love to watch Dick Nelson when he was alive tieing. but yeah there's just not a lot of other tiers that I've had the opportunity to watch. And I'm I'm terrible because we went on a cruise in New Zealand and I can't think of the guy's name and it's terrible. But he's he was a very well known tier and he's he's passed away now. But I enjoyed watching him too. I'm sorry I don't know I can't think of his name.

James Thull [00:10:31] That's great, that's fine.

Sharon Swisher [00:10:38] You know I think to bring more youth in is going to have to pretty much come from their parents, some schools now though are, we have here anyway, some schools that are teaching fly tying in school as well as fly fishing. And we have a friend actually in Stevensville who teaches classes in Missoula on fly fishing every year. And I think he teaches like three or four different classes. I don't know the age group and I and I'm not sure how long the course is. But I think that's great if more schools got into something like that and gave the kids the opportunity and they don't say it has to be for the boys or it has to be for the girls. Anybody that wants to can go and otherwise you know if kids aren't around it they're not going to learn to want to do it. And so I think parents are or friends maybe. But as far as women you know the women are getting so that they have casting clubs also. And you hear somebody talking about it and you think oh gosh that might be something I'd like to do. You know and encouragement from other people but yeah it's it's really hard to nail a way to really get more women in so many women go "ew, I would want to touch a fish." Oh my gosh.

James Thull [00:12:33] Probably got a ton of 'em, right?

Sharon Swisher [00:12:34] Well you know I guess it's because we fish separate you know a lot of fishing special fishing stories or like where is he I want a picture.

Sharon Swisher [00:12:52] We were fishing on the Big Horn River one time with a really good friend from California.

Sharon Swisher [00:12:57] And it seems like we're not ever really close together y'know. One goes one way and one stays here and the other goes down the other way. And I got this huge brown on the Big Horn River and. He. Ran.

Sharon Swisher [00:13:14] She whatever anyway ran upstream so far I had to crawl through a fence. I don't know how I managed without catch or without losing that fish. I finally got the fish in it was at least 24 inches. I mean I don't care. I didn't you know I don't carry a measuring tape but. Possibly even bigger. And then there was nobody there to take a picture. So anyway. But. I guess I guess probably some of the fishing that I did two years ago in Florida is probably. We hired a guide and, he took us Doug's shoulders were hurting really bad that day. And so he didn't really want to fish that much he just didn't feel like he could. So this guide took me, well we were both in the boat, side fishing for snook. And course down there you know they get up on their big towers. And.

Sharon Swisher [00:14:25] He's up there and he says, "OK. 40 feet. From the bough to the left" so many degrees you know and stuff and I'm going oh my gosh. And so I cast and he says OK that was good cast but you need to go about 10 more feet. And I went and I got that snook on and it was so big I couldn't control it. And. And the guide is pulling and he's backing up as fast as he can pulling and I'm trying my darndest to keep that snook from taking more line. It's a wonder I didn't break him off. But he you know the guide had it tied really well. That snook got to the mangroves and got off. But luckily my fly was still there. That happened to me three times that day. The snook was so big I couldn't get him in. And finally the fourth one headed for the mangroves and there we go oh no I lost him again. And I felt so bad because this guide is working hard to get me into these fish. And so he pulls up to the mangroves so he can get my fly because it's probably stuck in the mangroves. And there was the snook laying there with the fly still in his mouth. The guy picks up the snook and we got the picture. I didn't really catch him but it was sure fun.

James Thull [00:16:08] Yeah, that's great.

Sharon Swisher [00:16:10] Well, consideration. Vulgar, vulgarity. There's been around a lot of people when they lose a fish that you know. I think. Just being considerate to each other taking turns and enjoying each other.

Sharon Swisher [00:16:34] I think that probably is what I would say.