



West of the Left Edge:
Trolling with the Cannon Beach
Dory Fleet

I was called Peter after Simon Peter, my namesake, the fisher of men's souls. My family's life has been inextricably linked with fishes and water. Never have I lived further than a mile from the sea, and my life, like Norman Maclean's, has been "haunted by waters": streams, lakes, boats, fishes, the sea. Thoreau said, "Time is but the stream I go a fishing in." I understand that. I have never been a hunter. Hunters confront their quarry eye to eye. I prefer penetrating that shimmering envelope that separates fish from fisher, known from unknown. I like fishing the void, hoping to land answers to elusive questions. I would like to tell you something of the nature of fishing the "Upper Left Edge" from a dory boat in the late 1970's.

Our coast line once supported a substantial industry based on the commercial harvest of troll-caught salmon. Commercial salmon trolling, like the species sought, has become something of an anachronism. In 1978 I joined the commercial dory fleet, grasping at the industry's flukes as it took its final dive.

Stealing winter hours from teaching duties, I outfitted the bare hull of a 20' Clipper Craft lapstrake dory. The Clipper Craft is a typical "West Bank" dory with a square stern. "East Bank" dories have long fished the East Coast of the U.S. for cod. Both bow and stern were pointed; hence their designation as "double enders." Most were rowed. West Coast "West Bank" dories generally rely on the square stern for attachment of motors or outdrive propeller units. The addition of a 70 H.P. outboard motor or more potent Volvo engine gives the "West Bank" models the power needed to punch through surf.

Please join me for a short day trip working the 29 fathom line just west of Tillamook Lighthouse. We'll target the June coho salmon, huge silver ribbons of fish streaming toward coastal rivers. As my reader, you can make the trip in your mind's eye and avoid seasickness. Like Eddie Beers I often fished alone. "Pack a big lunch," he'd say to occasional passengers, "and I'll eat it when you throw up." He virtually guaranteed seasickness. After his dory's run to the fishing grounds, he would slow to troll speed and commence sucking on a frozen herring like a popsicle.

The Cannon Beach Dory Fleet traditionally launches its boats just south of the Needles. Before first light, the fleet's trucks and boat trailers - scruffy, rusty, and scabrous - collect at Haystack Rock for launch preparation. Troll polls are lowered and motors tested. Hot tips on where "the bite" is expected

are shared and considered. Lure discussions follow. Should we rig up "Dory Demon" hoochies with "Glow-Glow" centers or pink spoons? Testimonials touting one lure or another and fish talk continue on the beach and persist all day over C.B. radios on board each boat - a practice called "radio fishing" by the best fishermen (highliners).

As dawn arrives, the dories are cast from their boat trailers into the surf line, and the dicey business of negotiating the skittish flat-bottomed vessels through the surf commences. Many dory trips begin and end with this launch into the breakers. For many years, dark dreams plagued me after my boat, the Schmedlow, swamped at the outside Needle. Two eight-foot green waves collapsed on my boat and flooded the vessel to its rails. Even now my pulse quickens at the recollection. Once the short surge through the surf has been negotiated, the boat begins its run to Tillamook Lighthouse. The trip of several miles is accomplished rather quickly in a dory. Dories are tenacious sea vessels, hardy and durable.

My most successful trolling occurred in rip lines formed up just outside the lighthouse. Long currents dredge up phytoplankton from the depths in lines that extend for miles quite distinctly. Fish feed voraciously in rips. Here we dorymen lowered cannon ball weights and a multitude of "spreads" (leaders and lures attached to four stainless steel lines). Thirty or more lures flip and flash through the water at various levels from surface to twenty or thirty fathoms below. Most dory trollers affix bells to the tips of their two trolling polls that jingle when fish hook themselves.

All day we ply the waters on a north-south tack, tiny midget-fly boats hatched on a June sea. At dusk perhaps 35 or 40 silver salmon (Coho) and a "smiley" (Chinook salmon) or two nest in the fish box.

We pull our gear and head for the beach, Haystack Rock prominent to the southeast. From the sea west of Cannon Beach, the verdure of the foothills tumbling to the beach beggars description. The land reclaims us until tomorrow's launch.

I would like to extend my regards to all dorymen past and present. Thank you for prized memories. May you have fair winds and a following sea.

by Peter Lindsey

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Stream of Consciousness Travel Information from the Source...

Oregonians traveling south feel good about Highway One south of San Francisco eroding red gray green cliff walls spiral road system high speed nature viewing as far as Californians are able to tolerate the stuff with great contrast in viewing styles high speed impressionistic and VW realism represented south through many small communities off shore breezes and unriden glassy free rides no paddle with a surprising lack of development or sense of competition friendly people and careless types roam quake damaged Santa Cruz in the heavy brussels sprout aroma sedating outlying harvesting types into an early to bed early to rise schedule catch the low tide liquid wind mill in warmth relative to northern region experiences of similar time frames and drives going south through dry hard water hard smooth abrasive hills without baguettes or double cream brie and coffee that kills northern strays until five o'clock hits L. A. gridlock freeway seventy five mile an hour shut down pile up jump the median sanity style in a rusted out beach mobile reflection off the 560 SL passing light flashes rest when you get the chance with a cousin in a dorm room hit the surreal Disney glossed computer photo of yourself at splash mountain before the lines adrenal bad coffee resonated system overload talk radio reality whisks one off to the LAX red eye red eye to San Jose Costa Rica and better coffee more air per breath and malaria see you soon.

soup

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So, men have become tools of their tools.
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MR. BASEBALL

MR. BASEBALL WAS ON VACATION
LAST MONTH

WE ARE NOW FIERBLY MAD THE BANKED COALS OF THE DECEASED "HOT STOVE LEAGUE" WHERE ENIGMA FEVERED OPINIONS AND FIERY INTUITIONS FLEW LIKE SPEARS AMONG THE BANKED COALS OF THE DECEASED FK OF THE OFF SEASON TRADES, WAIVERS, AND INJURIES, HOT IN THE WINTER OF OUR DISCONTENT I WROTE THIS, SECURE IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT BAD JOURNALISM IS MORE AN ASSURANCE, MAKE THE MANAGEMENT IS A DISASTER.

BASEBALL IS IN DISARRAY. TO PUT IT IN ORDER WOULD BE A TASK BEYOND ANY OF US. I WANTED TO BE NOTHING BUT A DISTRACTION. THUS, I WILL NOT BITCH ABOUT:

- 1) THE LOCK-OUT; OWNERS PLEAS-ING POVERTY, WHILE STAMPEDES
 - A) GENE SMITH - 1 YR. \$17 MIL.
 - B) CHRIS BASS - 1 YR. \$2.5 MIL.
 - C) MEX (SMITH) - 2 YRS. \$12 MIL.
 - D) SPALDING - 2 YRS. \$11.7 MIL.
- 2) MARGO SCHMIDT - AND HER ENT. HEADS, TOOK SIGNED ATTITUDE TOWARD THE YEAR THAT MADE HER RICH, AND THE RECORD OF ONLY JUDY A WITNESS. ABANDON HER; AND BLOODY ROLL ON HER LITTLE DOG, TOO.
- 3) THE STATUS OF THE COMMISSIONER.
- 4) TELEVISION CONTRACTS - BULLSHIT.
- 5) MINOR LEAGUES - A SHAME.

I HAVE NO ANSWERS, WRITERS, & I WILL PRINT I CAN DO NO MORE.

THESE WERE NO WINDS
LAST TIME

WHY AM I?

- 1) I WAS THE LAST (ONE ONLY) PITCHER TO WIN 27 MY LAST YEAR. A SINGLE.
 - 2) I WAS A SOUTHWEST HULLER, MOSTLY FOR THE SENATORS & TIGERS, MORE GOLD GLOVES THAN ANY OTHER PITCHER. ANOTHER SINGLE.
 - 3) I'M FIRST IN WINS, ALSO IN LOSSES; MY TRUE NAME WILL WIN YOU A DOUBLE.
 - 4) MY WORLD SERIES RECORD? CHECK IT OUT. FIRST IN W, L, G, GS, IP, H, BB, (K).
 - 5) I LED THE LEAGUE IN HITS, RUNS, B.A., HR's, RBI's, & SA. I WAS THE LAST NL TRIPLE CROWN WINNER.
- BONUS - I GAVE UP A GAME WINNING P.B.I TO DAVE HENNINGER IN THE ALL CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES. IT DETERMINED SO SO EARLY I COMMITTED SUICIDE A YEAR LATER.

LAST MONTHS ANSWERS:

- 1) PHIL (THE VOLUNTEER) REGAN
 - 2) GUYAN BURKE
 - 3) THE CHUCK
 - 4) BUCK RICHMOND
 - 5) RED SCHENBERG & YES, JOHN, IT WAS PIANO LESS HICKMAN
- SPECIAL BONUS - SAMMY BYRD