

*Merry Christmas*

from Martin, Rick,  
Gary, Butch, & Boots

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**...local conservationist (cont'd)**

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Fluttering flags by weathered tombstones set in neatly manicured oak groves attest to its status as a Revolutionary War shrine. Until three years ago, however, the Donegal was anything but a proper trout stream—not that it was polluted, nor, thanks to the springs, had the water temperature become too high. But it was badly silted. Current-deflecting boulders, rocks, and gravel beds were long since covered by eroded soil. The flow lacked sufficient aeration to furnish trout necessary oxygen. And the dearth of gravel rendered aquatic fly life virtually nonexistent. Spawning beds were nil.

Restoration of much of the Donegal to its pristine state resulted from the vision, dedication, and labor of Ken Depoe. A dedicated angler and fly tyer, Ken, like most of his fraternity, felt constrained to win converts to it. His vocation presented a built-in opportunity. As an extracurricular course—with no remuneration to himself—he started a fly-tying class at his high school. It was an immediate success.

The logical next step was to develop budding fly anglers. But where to use the flies? Trout water was too distant for class members under driving age—the vast majority. Ken knew enough about stream improvement to think the Donegal might be his answer, but an improvement project would take a lot of time. His duties teaching and as wrestling coach left him precious little. So he huddled with the fly-tying class, and as a result each boy enthusiastically volunteered for year-round stream work.

“...Owners of land bordering two contiguous miles of stream consented. The primary objective was the creation of a channel with sufficient current to promote flushing action. Silt could then be washed from the stream bed. A series of gabions (wire-encased and anchored rock piles that jut at angles from bankside), dams, and stone deflectors were planned to accomplish the flushing action.

Within two weeks came the first in a series of gratifying phenomena. Along the mud-clogged bottom of the developing channel a streak of yellow-ocher appeared and widened by the day. Here was gravel—the key to the stream's rejuvenation. There was hope now for increased aquatic fly life and, as the clearing action reached bankside shallows, for potential spawning beds for the trout.

During the initial stage an adequate supply of rocks was found along the

stream, while logs for dams were scrounged from neighbors and friends. But as the job recommenced the following year, it became obvious that the need for materials dictated a major panhandling effort. Ken Depoe, Sam Hall, and interested friends sought contributions from area businessmen whose trade answered a specific need. Of crucial help, for example, was a local quarry. Not only was much needed rock supplied; it was transported to streamside in company trucks.

Throughout another summer Ken and his faithful crew sweated at their back-wrenching, knuckle-scraping job. More silt was rinsing away, and the current deflectors were aerating water. Glides whispered over shallow log dams and broke on gravel beds into singing riffles that gurgled into eddying pools against the jutting gabions and deflectors. The Donegal was beginning to look and sound like a trout stream again.

Still, the patience of teenagers can be short-lived. Ken's group had put in many consecutive months of drudgery. Ken thought that interest might flag should the wetting of their flies be too long delayed. His rumination bore an idea certain to give his boys their second wind, however: They would raise their own trout!

The class chipped in and bought 300 brown and rainbow trout fingerlings. A farmer friend of Ken's permitted his springhouse to be used for trout rearing. Cared for by the class, the fish averaged 9 to 11 inches in nine months' time, thanks to an amazingly rich natural food supply in the spring's raceway—shrimp, sow bugs, and aquatic insect

life. The trout were distributed in the improved stretch, and new fingerlings were bought for the springhouse.

“...During the summer of 1967 a group of area trout angler—conservationists formed a chapter of Trout, Unlimited and elected Ken Depoe president. Fittingly, it was named the Donegal Chapter of Trout, Unlimited. Using the Donegal project as a guide, the group has begun another stream reclamation project in southeastern Pennsylvania.

The Pennsylvania Fish Commission eventually named the two miles of reclaimed Donegal Creek a Fly Fish Only stretch and included it in the state stocking program. On Memorial Day, 1967, Governor Shafer visited the project, congratulated the Donegal Conservation Association and received an honorary life membership.

Those present at the ceremony might have pondered that this stream, like Scrooge's Christmas, had been possessed of three ghosts—in this instance one of a delightful past, another of uncertain present, and finally one of a promising future. Its first two ghosts represent, in microcosm, the lives of too many American trout streams. Like the Donegal, they once flowed clear, strong, and deep. Now, encroaching civilization renders them clouded, weak, and flat. But if they are not hopelessly polluted—many aren't as yet—and if they possess springs cool enough to maintain temperatures no higher than the low 70's, they do have the ghost of a bright future. All that's needed to conjure it up is more people like Ken Depoe.”

**...local author**

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the Dutch Country” as well as two printings of a previous guide to good eating.

With his wife Grace, a professional artist, as dining partner, Steinmetz encountered such diversions as a 1928 Packard in one restaurant's lobby, a big splashing mill-wheel in another, and a dining room lined with color photos of wild mushrooms. Colonial dames, Dutch girls, English toffs, and a Union Army sergeant served them. Oddities include a pizza made without tomatoes, a liqueur laced with flakes of real gold, and an Apple Daiquiri served up in a real Mason jar.

The author observes that many people who once would have considered a restaurant dinner just as a

curtain-raiser for an evening at the movies or the theatre or a sports event now enjoy making an entire evening of dining-out. Also, they like making a trip of it sometimes, so the distance to a restaurant may be an attraction rather than a deterrent. Ron Steinmetz believes today's generation of kids reared with the “let's eat out” habit will be moving up the restaurant scale as they grow older.

The 1977 **Restaurant Guide** is published by Entertain, Inc., 8 East Lemon Street, Lititz, PA.

**NOTE**

The borough of Mount Joy informs us that the borough office issued a sign permit to the Everything and Plus store on Sept 14, 1976.



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and a Happy New Year*

from Gary & the Gang at

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