

“MEMORIES OF BUCK PERRY”

“Knowledge is the key
to fishing success.”

Buck Perry



Buck Perry started the modern era of fishing. His discoveries are the basic foundation of knowledge for all of fishing today. He is enshrined in the **National Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame** with their highest honor, along with Izaak Walton, James Heddon, Dame Juliana Berner, Ole Evinrude, James Henshall, and others. He was one of the first to design and build an **electronic depth meter** for sport fishing. Over 50 years ago, this pioneer established concepts and terms about fish and their behavior that are still being “discovered” by others today. All fishermen today owe him a great debt and yet most do not even recognize his name.

Elwood L “Buck” Perry was **born** in Hickory, North Carolina on July 10, **1915**. As a young boy, he was keenly interested in fishing, and spent much time fishing with his father. His **early observations on fish behavior** and how they relate to their environment were very advanced for any age. As Elwood grew, he was attracted to the study of science, math, chemistry, and physics, and graduated from Lenoir Rhyne College of Hickory, NC. . In **college** he was a **star Quarterback** at 155 pounds and played college **baseball** in 2 positions. He then did graduate work at North Carolina State University and became a **physics and math teacher**, as well as a **college Physics Professor**. During World War II he found himself **teaching Diesel Engineering** to Navy officers. In 1945 he went to Europe as a Lieutenant Colonel and supervised the unloading and assembly of barges used in unloading ships. He returned home in 1946 and decided to **devote his life to the teaching of fishing** instead of returning to the academic world.

For 16 years from **1928 to 1944** Buck Perry had spent considerable time in **intense observation of fish** and their behavior doing countless experiments. These experiments were often done by diving underwater or observing from a glass-bottomed boat. All his basic principles and discoveries were completed by 1946. These were the observations of a keen mind trained in scientific methods. He explained to others that every fact about fish in his written material he had experienced over 1,000 times to verify it. He had also **designed “tools”** to most effectively utilize the knowledge he had discovered to catch numbers of large fish from all sections and waters of the USA, Canada, and Mexico. These tools included properly designed rods, lines, and lures. In **1946** he started **Bucks’ Baits** in order to teach fishing and to supply those interested with the proper tools. With apparent ease he would catch numbers of large fish from thousands of lakes all around the United States and foreign countries. To confirm his findings, he fished all major waters in all states except Rhode Island. He selected many lakes known to be “fished out”, trying to teach fisherman the knowledge he had discovered. Over many years he astounded

sportswriters including Ray Bergman, Tom McNally, Grits Gresham, and Joe Stearns with his **huge catches of big fish**, appearing in hundreds of newspaper articles. Buck Perrys' best catch of fish was **33 consecutive bass on 33 casts**, all over 3 pounds! His method worked on all species of fish and in all lake types, rivers, and oceans. He took many celebrities fishing, including Bobby Jones, the famous golfer, several Governors and Cabinet members. He received a call from the White House one day: "We want you to take President Carter fishing". Bucks' reply was, "no way, I didn't even vote for him". He has been a guest on many local and national **TV shows**, his favorite was one he did with Dick Van Dyke. **Articles** about him have appeared in **Outdoor Life, Field and Stream, Sports Afield, In-Fisherman, Bass Masters, and Fishing Facts** magazines. He was the author of many articles in Fishing Facts Magazine and served as their Educational Editor for many years. He wrote "**Spoonplugging-Your Guide to Lunker catches**", a 300 page book that condenses his discoveries and is often referred to as the "bible of structure fishing". Spoonplugging was a term he used because the lure he designed was a cross between a spoon and a plug. It encompasses the whole body of knowledge he discovered, not just the lure. Later he produced an expanded **9 volume Study Guide** that is considered by some to be the most complete work on fishing ever written. His material could well be used in a college credit course on fishing. It is pure study material, unlike many writings in fishing today which are written mostly for entertainment.

The biggest problem encountered in teaching his material was that **most** fishermen were **looking for a "magic lure"** and not interested in studying about fish behavior and how to use proper tools. He would take out resort owners or local "experts", proceed to catch large numbers of fish, and then be told: "we just don't fish that way". He sold numbers of lures, but they would often be used improperly because the knowledge needed with them was not acquired.

Mr. Perry owned and operated a factory **manufacturing sleeping bags, golf clubs, custom parts, and fishing equipment** which was very successful financially.....except for the fishing part. One story that he related in his seminars was when he was five years old. His father spent much time at a boat livery, and Buck would come along and fish. When the panfish weren't biting, he would get bored and jump from boat to boat for something to do. He soon discovered that, after these disturbances, the fish would often start biting! This resulted in him later stating the fact that sometimes, rather than sneaking up on the fish, we may have to wake them up and get their attention before they will bite!

Buck Perry lived a long, productive life and **passed away in 2005 at the age of 90**, the same age that Izaak Walton lived to be. This indicates that there may be more benefits to fishing than just catching fish!!

For **more information** about Buck Perry and Spoonplugging, check on the Internet at: buckperry.com (Bucks' Baits), nsoa.org ("National Spoonpluggers" newsletter), spoonpluggerfilms.com (videos), and spoonplugger.net (Spoonpluggers Forum).

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