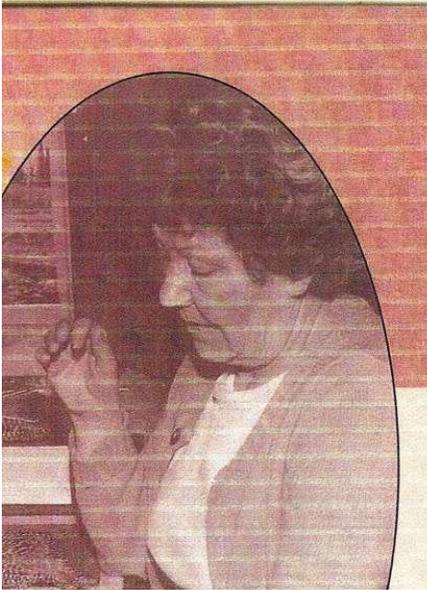


Ann Schweigert



Ann M. Schweigert (1910-2005) was born Ann Marie Popp, in Saginaw, Michigan. It was here she was raised and here she met and married Jack in 1929. They honeymooned in a tent, on the banks of the Au Sable River.

In 1939 Jack & Ann opened their first tackle shop in Luzerne, Michigan. Ann, under Jack's tutelage, became the shop's fly tier, while Jack guided fishermen on the river. Although Ann did most of the tying, Jack also did some tying during the winter months. Within a few years the two of them opened a shop in Roscommon where they would remain until Jack's death.

Ann was a modest, well liked woman who did not socialize a lot, but her prowess as a tier went unchallenged. Some even said that she "was the best tier in the United States." She had regular customers from as far away as Japan. Her flies were highly respected for their durability. In the 70's Ann was charging as much as \$2.00 for some of her flies, much more than the surrounding shops, but her public gladly paid the price. The patterns she tied were a little fuller than the typical fly dressings of the area. She used only natural materials and scoffed at the idea of using any artificial materials that were rapidly becoming popular in the 1970's. She has been credited with tying upwards to a million flies during her some 40 years as a tier. She was an innovative tier who always wanted to please her customers. She modified many patterns to fit their needs, tying over 62 variations of the standard Hexagenia patterns alone.

There is a lot of controversy surrounding the patterns that Ann has been given credit for creating. Over the years the sports magazines, newspapers and other publications were more than generous to Ann, attributing her with the creation of many different fly patterns: Hansen's Drake, the Au Sable King, the Herring Drake, the Houghton Lake Special and others. One source even credits her with the creation of 'glider flies' (parachutes) and also claimed that she was the first to tie with deer hair.

I consulted Mr. Jerry Regan, a recognized authority on Michigan flies of the Au Sable and Manistee Rivers. Jerry knew Ann Schweigert personally. His comment to me was; "Ann was an accomplished tier but, there is nothing that makes me believe that she ever created a fly pattern." Ann, herself, was never quoted saying, "I created this fly."

Ann retired from fly tying in 1978, under doctor's orders, because of poor vision. A man by the name of Dan Gerard from the Roscommon area took over the tying in the shop.

When Jack died in April of 1985 Ann decided to auction off the contents of the store. The auction was held on Friday, July 12, 1985. She did not attend. Ann's fly tying bench sold for \$17.50. Soon after, Ann Schweigert moved in with her daughter, Dottie Little in Las Vegas. Ann passed away on May 26, 2005 at the age of 95.

Tom Deschaine
~Westland, Mi.~
