

Buck Creek Fishing Club, Charter Member Armstrong Fly Casters, Fishing Buddy of Cato Holler



Stream Blazer Silas Walker 'Cy' Blanton, Sr. 1904-1976

Silas Walker Blanton, called 'Cy' or Walker was born in Marion on August 6, 1904 and lived in Marion all his life. He had to be a cool dude because he married the prettiest, smartest and sweetest woman ever. His father, kin and friends started the Buck Creek Fishing Club in the 1890s. They leased fishing rights and built a club house on Little Reedy Branch. They would go in by mule wagon, stay long enough to make it worthwhile, live well, and fish. They always took a cook along. Typically they fished a cast of 2 or 3 wet flies. They caught all rainbows, mostly small. Cato Holler was invited along in later years to make sure they had enough trout to eat. My dad learned to fly fish in this setting. He and Cato fished a lot together. They were both in the grocery business, my dad a wholesaler, Cato a retailer, and in close contact. Also, they fished with George 'Cap' Wiese, a great dry fly man and fly tier. They were among the first to start using dry flies in our area. By the time I came along my dad fished dries exclusively. He used an 8-foot, 6-weight Orvis bamboo rod and a Hardy reel. Leaders were gut and had to be soaked. (When nylon came along it was very welcomed.) Fly lines were silk and creels were wicker. In those days lots of trout were eaten.

As a teenager I fished more and more with my dad and Cato, starting with a fiberglass rod and graduating to bamboo. When Cato got a 6-foot one piece Super fine (that was a Lee Wulff idea) I had to have one also. I loved that rod. My dad thought the fad would fade. It was unhandy, although I took mine on a pack trip into the South Fork of the Buffalo River in Wyoming. My dad and Cato fished all over western North Carolina, often camping. They both loved to fish out west and in British Columbia when they went goat hunting. My dad's biggest fish and the only one he ever mounted was a cutthroat from one of those trips. His approach was straight forward, simple, direct, unpretentious, solid, skillful, and easy going ... the real deal...no fluff...solid. He was active with the Buck Creek Club for many years as treasurer. When Cato started the Armstrong club he was a charter member and active as long as he lived. I loved fishing with him until he died in 1976. When I was little he carried me across the creek on his back. Then one day he fell carrying me. Then I was on my own. Years later I carried him across on my back. I still miss him.— **Walker Blanton, Jr.**



A Cy Story by Walker Blanton, Jr.

My dad was a persistent patient fisherman who used lots of relatively short but very accurate casts, casts in hard to reach places such as under over hanging bushes. He could stand still in his chosen spot, not shuffle his feet and make a dozen or more casts, change flies, make more casts, change flies again. Usually he was rewarded. On the last day of August, 1958, he went over to Linville River to close out the season. At one of the very nice but accessible pools where the water poured in through a chute on the far side, he took his position and began casting. The fly was a size 12 grasshopper. After several casts beside the foam he made a miscast and put the fly in the foam. A large brown rolled on it and after a methodical fight he landed a beautiful 22 inch female brown, and proudly brought it home. We skinned the fish and preserved it as best we could. He was proud of that trout. The next year I drove over and was fishing the same pool. A local fellow walked up and said “A doctor from Marion caught a big one right there last year”. I told him the fisherman was not a doctor but I know him very well. He’s my dad. (I did not catch one there.) – **Walker Blanton, Jr.**



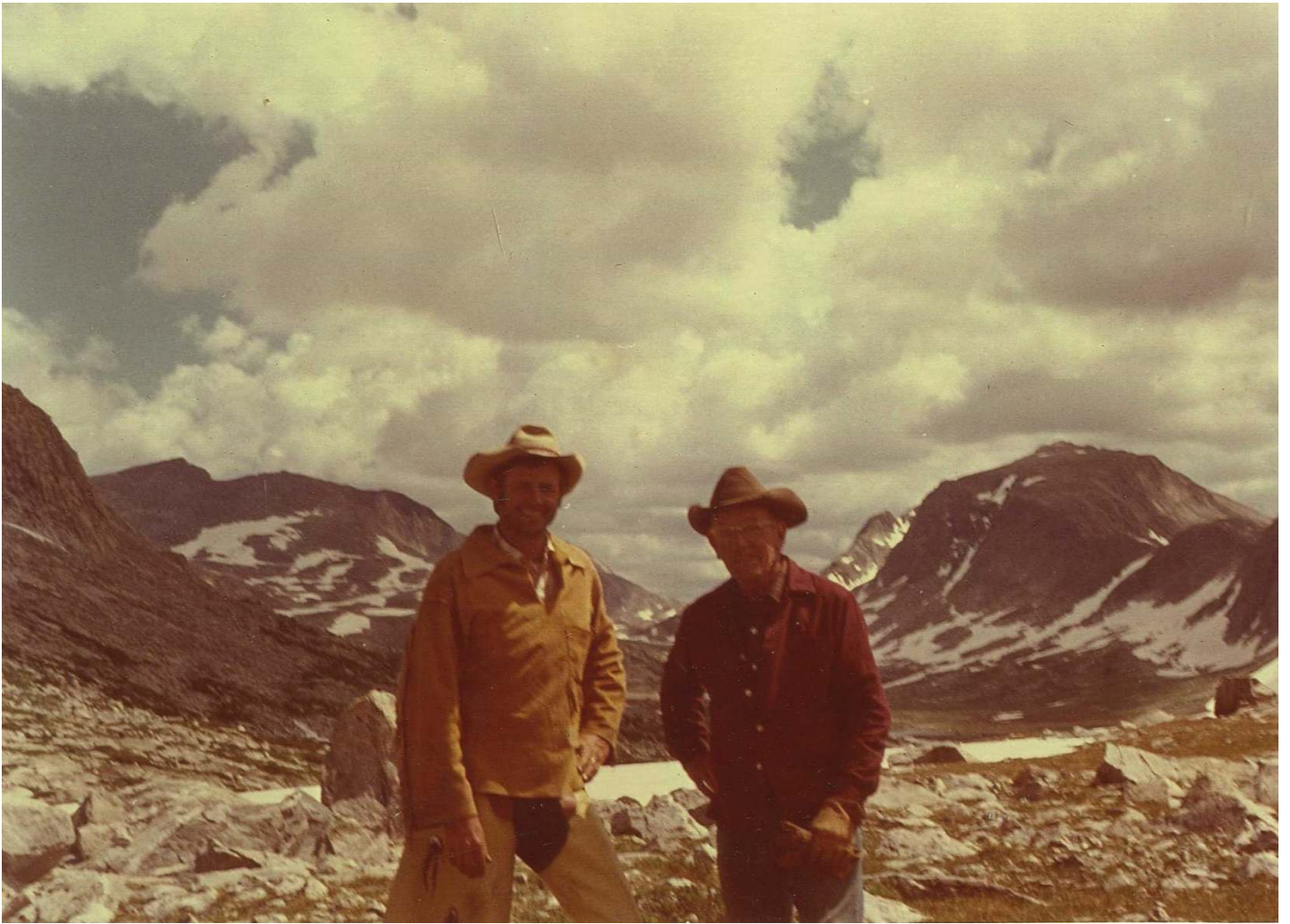
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A cousin of ours owned a stretch of the North Toe River at Newland, North Carolina. He and his friends fished for the big trout in the pools with minnows, but landed few. One day my cousin invited my dad to come over and try flies. Dad put on a clinic. He only used one fly but he picked the pockets, of which there were many. It was the perfect stream for his style. It was one of those magical days when the fish are very active. He didn't spend a lot of time on the big pools but did show them how to land a fish by not "horsing" it. The riffles and pockets were loaded with browns and rainbows so he worked them to the delight of his audience. There was not a flat rock in the creek, nor without silt, so he also treated them by falling in. –
Walker Blanton, Jr.



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Walker Blanton Jr. and Silas Walker 'Cy' Blanton Sr. on a fly fishing trip in Montana.