

Gone Fishing

Paul Jensen, a local fishing reel and antique motorcycle collector spoke at the club meeting. He owns over 50 motorcycles, most of them built prior to 1927. His oldest is a 1907 Pierce.

Paul works at Bass Pro and teaches fishing seminars. He has been fishing since the 1940s with his father to Minnesota. At that time they would often catch 45-50" Northern Pike. He has since learned that people need to release the big fish like that and keep the smaller ones. The large ones are the ones that produce the most offspring.

Paul's collection of old fishing reels includes over 400 different reels and only includes the better quality reels. Today's reels were invented in England in the 1850s. Jewelers from Kentucky went to England and then started making them in the United States. They cost \$25-\$50 before 1900, the equivalent of about \$1500 today. He has 23 reels made of silver by the Kentucky jewelers.

Around 1900, larger cities had casting tournaments. The expensive fishing lines at that time were silk, but most fishing lines were cotton. When you were done fishing, you had to unwind your line and let it dry so it would not rot.

In the 1920s and 1930s there were three reel companies, Pflueger, Shakespeare, and South Bend. Today most expensive reels are made in Japan. Bass Pro sells one named Johnny Morris, after the owner of Bass Pro. It is titanium plated over an aluminum frame.

Zebco reels were originally made by a bomber company called the Zero Hour Bomb Company. The company changed it's name six months after starting production of the reels to Zebco.