



Archery Icon



The Official Newsletter of The Archery Hall of Fame & Museum, Inc.

Volume 6 • Number 1 • Spring - 2013

Wing Archery Founder

Bob Lee

Becomes Newest Member of The Archery Hall of Fame

An active lover of archery his entire life, Bob Lee was recently chosen as the newest member of the Archery Hall of Fame. Bob will be inducted in three categories, Bowhunter, Influence on the Sport and Contributor to the Sport at the next AHOF Induction Ceremony scheduled for spring, 2014. Bob now joins the 72 men and women who came before him that make up the prestigious Archery Hall of Fame.



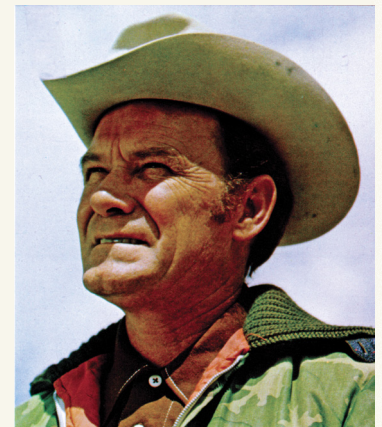
Bob's fascination with archery began over 65 years ago and in 1951 he formed an archery manufacturing company known as Wing Archery, which, at its peak, produced 300 bows per day.

In 1963, Bob pioneered and produced the first three-piece detachable limb bow on the market, the Wing Presentation II take-down. His three-piece bows have become the most popular design of traditional bows in the archery world to date.

Always having had an intense love for bowhunting, in 1959 Bob lobbied successfully for an archery-only hunting season and later with others assisted Glenn St. Charles in forming the Pope and Young Club.

Bob Lee's immeasurable contributions to archery and bowhunting span six decades. The Bob Lee legacy is still evolving through his partnership and collaboration with son Rob as they continue to produce custom, American-made, top-ranking bows.

At the age of 84, Bob still works full-time in the business that carries his name, designing and building his hand-crafted bows.



From The President

By M. R. James

My Friend, Don Clark

It started with a phone call more than 40 years ago. "You must be a bowhunter," said the voice on the other end of the line.

"Guilty as charged," I admitted.

Thus launched a long friendship and eventual business partnership that would last until March 17, 2013, when my good pal Don Clark died at age 79 from complications of pneumonia. Back then I was the brand new Communications Manager at Magnavox's Government & Industrial Division in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Don was an engineer in the Anti-Submarine Warfare department. He'd called my office shortly after seeing a cover photo I'd chosen for the Magnavox Management Club's monthly newsletter. It showed a woodland scene of a camouflaged bowhunter

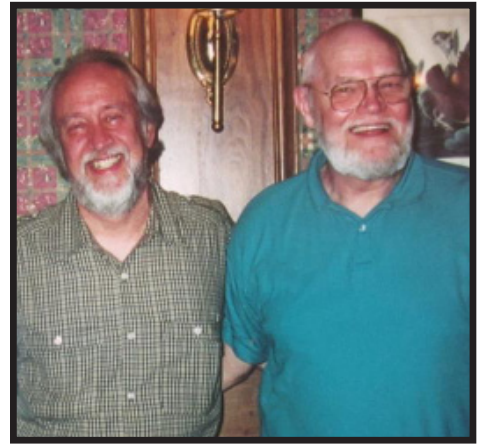


ready to release an arrow at an unseen deer. "Don't Miss the Management Club's Next Meeting," advised the headline accompanying my photo.

An avid archer himself, Don and I soon met. He introduced me to his good friend, co-worker Bob Schisler, another engineer in the Magnavox ASW department. We three shared a common passion, shooting and hunting with our bows and arrows. We were all members of the Indiana Bowhunters Association and soon formed a field archery club for Magnavox employees, with tournaments held at the Isaak Walton Club grounds north of Fort Wayne. That same archery club later evolved into the Tisepe Bowhunters, one of northeastern Indiana's oldest bow clubs. In due time, Don, Bob, and I all became honorary life Tisepe members.

But Don's phone call and friendship resulted in an even more enduring monument to archery. In early 1971,

Don, Bob, and I – along with Magnavox graphic artist Steve Doucette – founded Blue-J, Inc., Publishers. In August of '71, after months of careful planning and preparations, *Bowhunter* magazine was born. Its initial press run was 15,000 copies distributed mostly on newsstands in Midwestern states where deer hunting is popular.



I was Editor, Don and Bob sold ads and handled circulation/subscription chores; Steve laid out each issue for printing. It was a winning team, made even stronger when Fred Wallace, an Ohio bowhunter and salesman, joined us a couple of years later. Saying *Bowhunter* was a successful special interest publication is a gross understatement. At its peak of popularity, the paid circulation hit 220,000 with bimonthly copies and three special issues printed and read by legions of devoted fans. What started as a part-time business became a multi-million dollar publishing company built on friendship and a shared interest in bows and arrows.

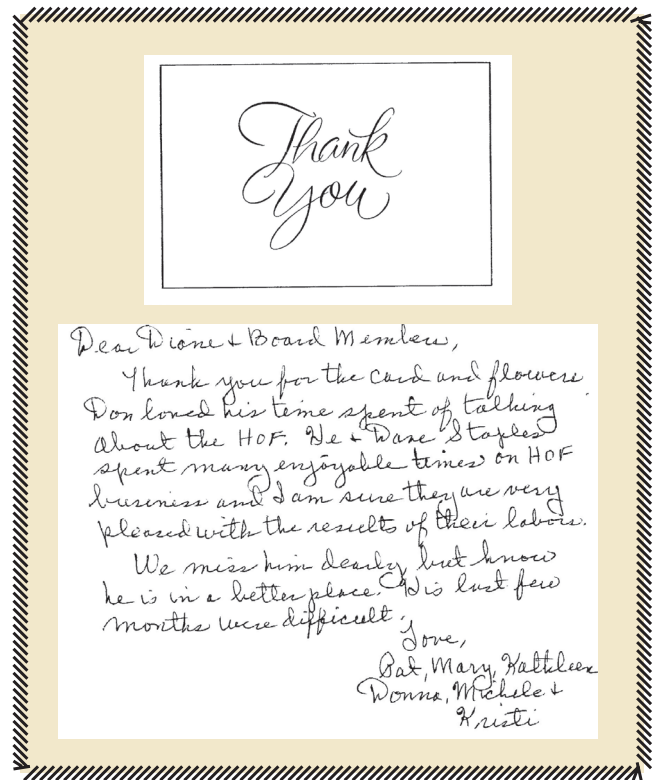
Don Clark's contribution to the magazine cannot be over-emphasized. For years Don and wife Pat were the public face of *Bowhunter* magazine, attending countless clinics, trade shows, archery shoots, industry gatherings, and club events. They traveled widely and routinely manned the *Bowhunter* booth, selling magazines, books, calendars, and a variety of other *Bowhunter* items to the crowds attending these events.

Don later played a leading role in the Archery Hall of Fame, working with Dave Staples to help make Dave's dream of a permanent AHOF home and museum come true. I was especially



pleased when my old friend did honors at my own Hall of Fame induction ceremony in 2003. Remembering that special evening and the many bowhunts Don and I had shared, was golden, as were the multiple Pope and Young Club conventions we attended starting in the 1970s, and the fun times spent together in the company of our growing families.

After we finally sold *Bowhunter*, Don realized his and Pat's dream of



building a lakeview log home on their rural property near Angola, Indiana. There Don enjoyed hunting in his woods and watching the deer and other wildlife, spending his retirement years in the company of family and friends.

Not that there weren't troubling times along the way. For a big, bearded, gentle giant of a man, Don seemed plagued by a variety of health issues. He underwent the first of two heart bypass surgeries in his late 40s and was a cancer survivor. A couple of late life surgical mistakes resulted in more serious problems, and Don also suffered from Parkinson's disease. Worn down by these physical ailments and advancing age, he died peacefully surrounded by the people who loved him most, his wife Pat and daughters Mary, Kathleen, Donna, Michele, and Kristen. Married for 52 years, Don and Pat were the proud grandparents of Zach and Lily.

Standing beside the plain wood casket containing my friend, I was struck by the look of peace on Don's face. Dressed comfortably in jeans, a flannel shirt, and a favorite leather vest – wearing his familiar turquoise bolo tie, oversized belt buckle, and complementary jewelry, he was the outdoor-loving Don Clark I remembered. A favorite Bear take-down recurve bow lay atop the pine coffin. A quiver and hunting arrows, leather arm guard, shooting glove, and bow stringer were all within easy reach at Don's side.

How fitting, I thought, that these well-used personal items would spend all eternity with an outdoorsman and serious archer whose love of bowhunting will transcend death. They'll be readily available for the new adventures awaiting Don in that perfect hunting grounds beyond the stars. So rest easy, old friend. While we'll miss you, we take comfort in the knowledge that you're finally at peace and in a far better place.

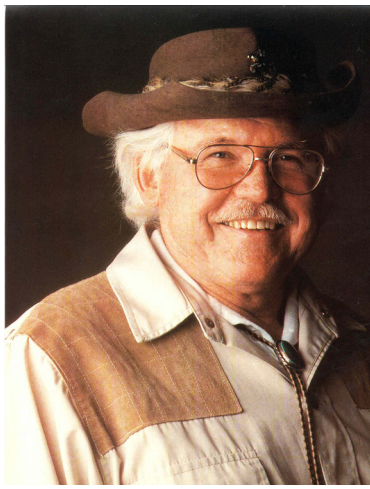
I'll see you again somewhere down the trail.



ARCHERY HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM MISSION STATEMENT

“It is the Mission of the Archery Hall of Fame and Museum Inc., to honor those Outstanding members of the Archery Community through the process of induction into it's Hall of Fame. As an integral part of it' existence, the Hall seeks to preserve the history and tradition of Archery and Bowhunting for future generations.

“To educate and inform” those persons wishing to pursue their interests in Archery and Bowhunting, the Hall maintains and operates a museum in Springfield, Missouri as a repository for memorabilia, literature and research material related to the Sport of Archery for the public to view.”



Remembering Tom Jennings

1924 - 2013

written by
Sherwood Schoch

Tom Jennings, 88, a pioneering Icon of the archery world passed away quietly February 25, 2013, in Columbia, Missouri.

Tom, a visionary, a pioneer, a creator, an evolutionist, saw promise in another man's invention and quickly recognized the potential of the compound bow, the archery tool that was to sweep the country and changed the face of the industry.

In the 1950s and '60s Tom was a world class bowyer with the talent to produce high performance recurve bows so exceptional that his Citation won a world championship, and many others won high level tournaments.

In later years, Tom's identifying Mississippi Gambler hat, as he liked to call it, personified his adventurous and sometimes gambling personality. Upon testing the new sample compound bow, he immediately discontinued producing his decades-old bow line and surged into improving and developing the compound bow. It was a gamble but an intelligent gamble. Tom felt it was not a gamble at all, it was a sure bet. Tom Jennings thought that way.

Many other national bow manufacturers had passed over the invention of the newly patented bow but Tom's genius saw differently, thus, Jennings Compound Bows Corporation was born.

Tom always believed that form preceded art, so he was not concerned with the presence of cables and wheels, he believed that the superior performance would quickly attract and appeal to serious bow shooters, and he could not have been more correct. What he did affected the entire industry and all others who skipped over this product soon got on the band wagon because the guy in California, Tom Jennings, was winning followers everywhere.

Part of Tom's personality was to not be concerned with patenting his own innovations, rather he simply stated "we will keep ahead of the competition and by the time they catch up to our idea, we will be on a new one." Although he passed up the opportunity for more patents, he did have seven patents, but he always said his failing to apply for the cable guard patent, which he developed, was a company mistake. Probably his most utilized patent was the adjustable draw length wheels, cams and eccentrics, currently offered on about every compounded bow being manufactured.

Tom was not only a creative mind, he was an avid archery shooter and fan of it. For him it all started as an 11 year old Boy Scout and the bug bite lasted his lifetime. He logged hundreds of hours of flight time as a licensed pilot, attending bowhunts, archery events, and tournaments. He truly loved the game and never tired of shooting his own creations. Tom truly loved the sport and dedicated his life to it. He was deservedly inducted into the National Archery Hall of Fame in 1999.

Without Tom Jennings' early pursuit of the compound bow, it quite likely may have taken decades longer for it to enter the market and maybe never would have swept it as the Jennings Compound bow did in the 1970s. In that period bowhunting license sales escalated quickly, and much of the reason for that was the higher performance of the compound bow, which produced higher harvest ratios in the bowhunting world. Tom believed success breeds motivation and he proved it by providing an industry changing product, sought by all bowshooters.

Tom attended hundreds of archery events and never turned down autograph requests. He was a simple but highly dedicated man, with an intelligence that seldom comes along. Tom Jennings had a very large following and his bows of 30 and 40 years ago are still seen in the hands of bow shooters around the country. He had thousands of fans and was rightfully loved by all. Those who touched Tom and knew him well all had the highest respect and regard for his integrity and honesty, he was a one-of-a-kind with few peers. Tom went where there was no trail and he left a path.

