



Lynn Morrow, John Boats & Riverways Collection (R1523)

Collection Number: R1523

Collection Title: Lynn Morrow, John Boats & Riverways Collection

Dates: 1809-2012, bulk 1871-1930

Creator: Morrow, Lynn, 1946-

Abstract: The Lynn Morrow, John Boat & Riverways Collection contains research, correspondence, maps, photographs, slides, newspaper clippings, published articles, interviews, and memoirs about the Missouri Ozarks with a particular emphasis on the origins of the John Boat, including the name itself and the emergence and lasting popularity of float fishing and hunting/fishing clubs at the turn of the 19th century in Missouri. This collection also includes extensive postcards and ephemera related to boating, hunting and fishing in Missouri.

Collection Size: 2.5 cubic feet
(109 folders)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research but may be stored offsite. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society Research Center-Rolla](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at rolla@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

Restrictions on Use: The donor has given and assigned to the University all rights of copyright, which the donor has in the Materials and in such of the Donor's works as may be found among any collections of Materials received by the University from others.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Lynn Morrow, John Boats & Riverways Collection* (R1523); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Rolla [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Rolla].

Donor Information: The papers were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by Lynn Morrow on August 8, 2023 (Accession No. RA1741).

Related Materials: Additional materials related to the Lynn Morrow, John Boats & Riverways Collection can be found in the following collections:

[Lynn Morrow Papers](#), (R1000)
[Richland Hotel Collection](#), (R0625)
[Don & Pauline Yantis Oral History](#), (C3966)
[Merritt F. Miller Collection](#), (C3921)
[Schaberg Family Papers](#), (C3665)
[Robert S. Wiley Collection](#), (R0521)

Processed by: Processed by Ashley Weaver, August 21, 2024

Biographical Note:

Lynn Morrow was born in Mexico, Missouri, in February 1946. He holds a bachelor's (1975) and master's (1980) degree in history from Southwest Missouri State University (now Missouri State University). Morrow held the position of research historian at the Center for Ozarks Studies, Southwest Missouri State University from 1977-1982. During that time Morrow met and married Kristen Kalen in October 1981. The two together operated a historic preservation consulting firm from 1983-1990, they conducted cultural resource management surveys and prepared nomination applications for the National Register of Historic Places in several counties in Missouri. In 1990, Missouri created a Local Records Preservation Program at the Missouri State Archives. Lynn Morrow was the supervisor of that department, now a national model for federal and state records programs, until his retirement in 2012.

Morrow has published profusely on the history of Missouri, particularly on the Ozarks region of Missouri and Arkansas in many scholarly journals (see R1000 for a full journal list). This collection focuses on the history of the John Boat, hunting and fishing clubs, and float fishing as a recreational pastime in the Ozarks area of Missouri and Arkansas. Publications of Morrrows in this collection include *Missouri's Gerald Massie: The State Photographer on the James River* (*White River Valley Historical Quarterly*, Fall 1992, 3-8), "The Jon Boat," *Hootentown (blog)*, December 19, 2011, and *True Sportsmen, Float Trips & Ozark Ripley's Johnboat* (*Ozarks Watch*, Fall/Winter 2019, 48-57). Morrow also gave presentations about John boats at local historical society meetings and was often quoted in other works in which the John boat was discussed.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged into the following 5 series with 9 subseries:

Research Files

- Watercraft
- Float-Fishing
- Camps & Resorts
- River Industry
- Ozarks
- Hunting & Fishing

Personal Papers

- Publications
- Correspondence
- Interviews

Postcards

Photographs & Slides

Scope and Content Note:**Research Files**

This series contains a concentrated sampling of Lynn Morrow's research on varying aspects of boating in the Ozarks. The section on watercraft has newspaper and journal articles, dictionary and encyclopedia entries, and reference materials wherein johnboats, flat bottom boats, skiffs, pirogues, and canoes might have been mentioned. There is a particular focus on the origins and history of the different types of watercrafts in the Ozarks, the research focus includes how they transitioned from one type to another, like from dug-out canoes to frame-built boats, and what the John boat was called in different areas of the Ozarks before it became widely known as a John boat. Morrow also gathered information about personal uses or industries in the Ozarks that necessitated boat modifications, including mussels, oystering, gigging, timber, and fish hatcheries.

Morrow's research also explored the earliest John boat builders on the White, James, and Current Rivers. These builders most commonly ran float-fishing businesses, each outfit provided boats and supplies, and often guided tourists down the picturesque rivers of Missouri at their respective locations. In the early 1900s, hundreds of hunting and fishing clubs/camping resorts populated the Ozarks and the greater Missouri area. Morrow's research never identified the origins of the term John boat, nor could he credit its advent to Missouri, he was however able to determine that Missouri could be credited with the creation of float-fishing as a leisure vacation archetype and tourist attraction. This series contains photographs, articles, advertisements, maps, and financial documents from Hunting and Fishing clubs, float fishing resorts, and boat companies across the state.

Morrow's research contains additional information that covers the Ozarks more generally, though within these items there is usually a mention of the John boat or float fishing as recreation. The information includes Missouri folk art, the origins of Ha Ha Tonka State Park, articles about the riverways and landscape of Missouri, and some articles about the history of the Mississippi, Ohio, and Kentucky Rivers.

Personal Papers

This series contains Lynn Morrow's publications, presentation notes, correspondence, and interview transcripts about the John boat. The publications and presentation notes resulting from Morrow's extensive research on the John boat can be found within this series. The presentation he created was often given at Historical Society meetings across the Ozarks. The correspondence in this series are letters and queries that did not have additional research information found with them, those are in the folder with the research information. The interview transcripts stand alone, it is unclear how they contribute to the overall research.

Postcards

This series contains original postcards from about 1900 to the early 1950s. They depict images of watercraft of all kinds, including excursion boats, steamboats, pleasure boats, pontoons, houseboats, canoes, and skiffs. It also contains pictures of camps, both stationary and traveling camps. The traveling camp setups were used when float fishing and were photographed at various river locations, stationary camps refer to permanent river camps and hunting & fishing lodge headquarters. Also pictured are the dock and marina at Lake Taneycomo, advertisements

for boat companies, general river scenes, popular stopping points along famous river floats, overlook points from the vantage points at hunting and fishing resorts, and images of Missouri Governors.

Photographs & Slides

This series contains copies of reprinted photographs and their original slides. The subject matter consists of all manner of boats, watercraft, river scenes, and many different types of river industry including timber floating, oystering, musseling, gigging, hunting and fishing, tourism, and river recreation. Also included in these photographs are map images of counties known for the river industry, maps of the rivers, maps of prominent floats, maps of railway lines, and advertisements for some of the industry, these areas include but are not limited to Branson Landing, Lake Taneycomo, and the James, White, Current, and Big Piney Rivers. This series also contains photographs of famous Missouri men of the period doing outdoor leisure activities, documenting their vacations, and hunting or fishing. Folders 84 through 109 contain 35 mm negative slides.

Container List:

Research Files

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	f. 2	“The Authentic American John Boat” by Larry Dablemont, 1978
	f. 3	“The Ozark John Boat: Its History, Form and Functions” by Dana Everts-Boehem, 1991
	f. 4	“The Ozark Johnboat,” ed. Ellen Gray Massey, 1985
	f. 5	Canoes, johnboats, wagons articles, 1809-2010
	f. 6	Canoes, articles and photographs, 1971-1995
	f. 7	Flatboats, articles and correspondence, 2006-2012
	f. 8	“Origin & Development of the MS River Fishing Craft” by Malcolm Comeaux, 1978
	f. 9	“From John Boats to Carnival Floats” by Ned Hemard, 2015
	f. 10	“Ghost Boats on the Mississippi” article and correspondence, 2002, 2005
	f. 11	“Waterways of Western Expansion: Tho Ohio River & its Tributaries,” by Archer Butler Hulbert, 1903
	f. 12	History of Ozarks Watercrafts, 1973-2006
	f. 13-23	Float Fishing
	f. 13	Articles, advertisements, directories, origins, 1881-2007
	f. 14	Boat clubs & companies, histories, articles, 1899-1993
	f. 15	References to Float Fishing in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, 1898-1900
	f. 16	Articles, 1933-1994
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	f. 18	Jim Owen article by Townsend Godsey, 1977
	f. 19	Guides, maps, advertisements, photographs, 1885-2006, bulk 1885-1932

- f. 20 Advertising by Missouri Pacific Railroad, Photographs and articles about the James and White River floats, 1925
- f. 21 Governor Herbert Hadley's float trip in the Missouri Ozarks, 1909-1911
- f. 22 "Some Recollection of An Ozark Float Trip Guide" by Ted Sare, 1997
- f. 23 Current River Float Fishing Articles, 1891-1933
- f. 24-32 Camps & Resorts
- f. 24 "Glimpses of Meramec Highlands: St. Louis' Only Exclusive Health & Pleasure Resort," by James F. Baker, 1995
- f. 25 Cedar Park in the Ozarks, White River, 1912
- f. 26 Camp Ozark, White River, 1911-1913
- f. 27 Shadow Rock Camp & Fishing Lodge, White River, 1920
- f. 28 Cedar Grove Bungalow Hunting & Fishing Club, White and James Rivers, 1908
- f. 29 Bill Rogers Motel & Resorts, James River, 1960
- f. 30 Camp Hideaway, James River, no date
- f. 31 Camp Yocum, James River, 1916
- f. 32 Limberlost Club, Galena, Missouri, James River, no date
- f. 33-37 River Industry
- f. 33 Bureau of Labor Statistics Report for Boats & Floats in the Ozarks, 1901-1928
- f. 34 Fishing, hatcheries, 1981
- f. 35 Timber floating, 1880-1903
- f. 36 Musseling, Pearling, Oystering, 1930s
- f. 37 "History of Oystering in the United States and Canada" by Clyde L. MacKenzie Jr., 1996
- f. 38-44 Ozarks
- f. 38 "Art & Heritage of Missouri Bootheel: A Resource Guide" ed. By Ray Brassieur & Debrah Baily, 1995
- f. 39 "Land of a Million Smiles," National Geographic, 1943, The Missouri Magazine State Commissions, 1937
- f. 40 Ha Ha Tonka State Park, origins, 1921
- f. 41 "Making Niagara's in the Ozarks" by Robertus Love, no date
- f. 42 The Commerce of Louisiana During the French Regime, 1699-1763
- f. 43 "A Journal, Remarks, or Observations in a Voyage Down the Kentucky, Ohio, Mississippi Rivers" by John G. Stuart, no date
- f. 44 "Look at America, the Midwest," by the editor of Look, Boston, 1947
- f. 45-48 Hunting and Fishing
- f. 45 Articles, notes, float fishing & hunting trips, 1913-2003 (bulk 1913-1938)
- f. 46 For Fisherman Ony Pamphlet, c. 1950
- f. 47 "American & Canadian Sportsman's Encyclopedia of Valuable Instruction," Francis H. Buzzacott, 1905
- f. 48 Fish Commissioners Report, 1881

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| f. 49 | “Missouri’s Gerald Massie” by Lynn Morrow, 1992 |
| f. 50 | “The Jon Boat” by Lynn Morrow, 2011 |
| f. 51 | “True Sportmen, Float Trips, & Ozark Ripley’s Johnboat,”
by Lynn Morrow, 2019 |
| f. 52 | Presentation about Arlington, Mo & Other Resort Areas,
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| f. 55 | Bob Newman, 2004 |
| f. 56 | Bess Allman, 1945 |
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| | f. 76 Clifton Johnson, Highways & Byways of the Mississippi
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| | f. 77 Colonel John T. Crisp & C. H. Roseberry, no date |

- f. 78 Harry Hawes, Charles H. Hutting, Sam B. Cook, E. W. Stephens, Norman J. Coleman, no date
- f. 79 Fish & Game Department, 1905-1926
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- f. 93 East St. Louis, fishing clubs, maps, no date
- f. 94 Shepard of the Hills, float trips, gigging, 1903-1926
- f. 95 St. Louis Globe-Democrat "Rod & Gun" Column, 1896-1909
- f. 96 Urban Sportsmen biographical info, 1897-1927
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- f. 104 John Viessman, Jerome, Missouri, scrapbook, no date
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