

Wildlife Afield

BY JIM DEAN

I have been wondering recently whether my children and grandchildren will look back on this part of the century and dream about days gone by. More to the point, if they do, what will they miss?

Will the whiff of burning diesel fuel send them into flights of nostalgia? Will the roar of a four cycle, internal combustion engine be savored like the lonely whistle of a steam locomotive?

What will they buy at flea markets, assuming they still have flea markets? Will they collect plastic Clorox bottles or 50-year-old cans of hair spray? Will they pay several hundred bucks for a first edition of *Jaws*? Will they laugh at old photographs of The Rolling Stones? Will antique toilet fixtures be displayed in museums? Will they think of the Soaring Seventies as a time "when life was simpler; when people had real values?"

Well, obviously, I don't have the answers to these questions, but if I had to guess I'd say that some—if not all—of this will be the object of a good deal of sentimental eyewash.

I suspect the automobile may be our most "collectible" legacy. Kids will build models of 1974 vans, and form clubs to collect old bumpers and hubcaps. Old-timers will be asked again and again what it was like to drive one of Ford's "better ideas."

But to be perfectly serious, there are some things that I hope my kids will not miss. For example, I hope the thrill of catching a wild brown trout in a crystal mountain stream will never become an object for nostalgia.

I hope that my children and their children will still

know the excitement of walking winter's brown fields behind a couple of good bird dogs and seeing the spontaneous explosion of a covey of quail.

I hope they will still be able to find a clear spring on the side of a mountain and drink out of it with cupped hands.

I would like to believe that they might still fall asleep at night listening to the summer sounds of tree frogs and crickets.

I hope the turkeys still gobble on the ridge and the doves still whistle out of the north every September.

I hope the bluefish still run at Cape Hatteras and the ducks and geese ride the sleet across Currituck and Mattamuskeet. I hope there will still be oysters for stew after a cold day in a blind.

I hope there are still plenty of cypress-rimmed lakes and blackwater rivers where someone with a cage of crickets can catch a mess of robin and bluegills.

I hope there are still wild places in North Carolina where it will be possible to renew the spirit and touch base with the ghosts of our heritage.

I think the future for many of these things is fairly secure because those of us who love them are not going to give them up without a heckuva fight.

Also, this is a pretty durable world we live in. But parts of it are very fragile, and it seems that some of the best things are those which are most fragile; things like wilderness and trout streams and solitude.

I hope our great-grandchildren do not learn about them in American history class.



Brooms. . . .

Ralph H. Gates demonstrates his broom-making and displays his many brooms. He is from Asheville, apprenticed under "Pop" Ogle of Gatlinburg, Tennessee, and has his own craft shop which he calls Friendwood. Ralph has had his crafts displayed in Florida and Pennsylvania. This year will introduce him to the Mt. Mitchell Crafts Fair.



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BOOK CORNER

BY Mrs. Gladys Coletta

JERICHO, THE SOUTH BEHELD. By Hubert Shuptrine and James Dickey. 1974. Pp.165.

In spite of all the controversy over the recent book, *Jericho, The South Beheld*, by Hubert Shuptrine (artist) and James Dickey (poet), as to whether it represents the old South or the new South, one thing remains clear: it is a one-of-a-kind book. This can only be understood by reading and digesting its contents.

Truly, *Jericho* appeals to the five senses as no other book does. The sight of so much purple sage in Texas is beyond one's wildest dreams. We almost feel the nakedness of the naked woman in Oklahoma, as she gardens with the dirt all over her, even in her hair, which is gummy with clay. We hear the bluegrass music of Tennessee, and the haunting "blues in the night" from the Delta. We almost smell the wood smoke on the clothing of the hunter in Texas, who absorbed it from his campfire. And we taste with delight a truly Southern supper of black-eyed peas with ham hock, fried okra, country cornbread, and sweet potato pie.

By the same token, the constant array of tender paintings throughout the book stresses the beauty of simplicity in the drab things of life in the South (*Jericho*). From shoeing a horse in Highlands to sculling home at Wassaw Sound, or the charm of a country churn at Williamsburg in contrast with the jug of moonshine in Mullins Cove—all attest to the fact that the old South (*Jericho*) is still with us today. Both the poet (Dickey) and the artist (Shuptrine) insist that the Southernism of *Jericho* is a reality too elusive to be explained, more like a song or an

emotion. Although "Joshua fought the battle of Jericho and the walls came tumbling down", in the new *Jericho* (the new South) the walls are tumbling up, with the inheritance of the past interwoven with the progress of today, to achieve a *Jericho* which will be the Promised Land of the future.



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