



ALWAYS BETTER TOGETHER

The notion that there's strength in numbers caught on from the very beginning, but the purpose of coming together in 1933 was not specific to our industry.



Who was the American Sportfishing Association's "George Washington?" Arthur Benson, president of the W.W. Mildrum Jewel Company, was most responsible for the success of the fledgling organization. He was the longest-serving president, from 1936-1953, as well as co-founder of the Sport Fishing Institute, the association's sister organization for fisheries conservation established in 1949.

As part of nationwide economic recovery efforts during the era of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, two similar organizations (the Fishing Tackle Manufacturers Association and Fishing Tackle Manufacturers Institute) merged to become

the Associated Fishing Tackle Manufacturers. The new group was similar to entities created to oversee many different industries and help them survive the Great Depression.

Once the United States entered World War II, manufacturers turned their factories

and their focus toward the war effort, making military supplies and other essential defense material. It wasn't until the more stable economic climate in the post-war period that a trade association as we know it emerged more fully.



The group that founded the American Sportfishing Association's original organization on June 30, 1933, in Washington, D.C.



CULTURE OF CAMARADERIE

As their network grew stronger, businesses realized they shared interests and goals they could work on more successfully together.

We've always been an industry that's driven to keeping a passion for fishing alive and growing. Whether it's to pursue peace or exhilaration (and how many sports offer both?), we're compelled to share the sensory surge and heart-racing rush of catching fish with others. It's what inspires our ingenuity more than anything.

Fishing blends so many things we value—far beyond the prosperity of our businesses or the economic strength of our nation. It's what gives us a chance to reflect, refocus, and rejuvenate in our outdoor sanctuaries. It's the lesson plan for helping our children discover the wonders of nature. It's our go-to source of fun during our off-time with family and friends. It's at the heart of our most meaningful experiences because it's what returns our attention to what matters most.

These values are what kept many early industry stalwarts tinkering in their garages at dawn or dusk, persisting against all odds. And it's a huge part of what has sustained us through the years.

Fishing companies traditionally have been family businesses. Many companies from those early days have now passed on their businesses through three or more generations. Even staunch competitors have formed lifelong bonds of friendship and camaraderie. A strong sense of community is undeniable anytime a group of us joins together for a common purpose.

Today, consolidation in the industry is bringing people and companies together in much different ways, and this trend is likely to continue. Acquisitions and mergers are bringing into the mix diverse expertise, perspectives, and approaches to all aspects of business operations.



For much of the American Sportfishing Association's history, the industry was dominated by family businesses often passed on through the generations.



SEVEN HUNDRED STRONG

Over 80 years, we've evolved into a more complete trade association in our representation. Today, the American Sportfishing Association unites not only manufacturers but every sector of the industry, from independent dealers and distributors to rep groups, cataloguers, and big box stores.

We're now 700-strong—and growing.

As always, the American Sportfishing Association is uniting our industry and leading the way for sportfishing's future. We are poised for a new era, mindful of what has kept us together through eight decades of change, and extending our outlook over new horizons of hope.

“Our trade association not only represents us and protects our interests, it's also a collective opportunity for all of us to give back for all that we've been given. It's allowed us to make a living in something we love to do, and because of that we've been able to support ourselves, our families, and enjoy a great life. ASA and KeepAmericaFishing™ are giving us a way to make sure the resource is there for our sons and daughters and grandchildren.”

—Gary Zurn, Senior Vice President—Marketing, Big Rock Sports, LLC

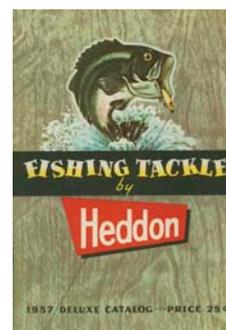


Every Member Counts

Throughout the American Sportfishing Association's history, individual members have had equal opportunity to influence the organization's activities and direction through involvement on the Board of Directors and committees. Board members are elected by the membership to represent different geographic regions and serve two-year terms. Scores of members also volunteer to serve on nine committees that focus on important issues such as the annual trade show, member services, and government affairs.



Courtesy: Duncan Garrett



Today the American Sportfishing Association represents every sector of the industry, as well as other businesses with broader consumer markets in the outdoors arena.