

GEORGE BURLEW SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



The George Burlew Scholarship Program was first awarded in June 1979 in honor of Captain George Burlew, who was a club member and a pioneer of sport fishing out of the Manasquan River. Captain Burlew was a well-known fishing guide and a long-time owner of Burlew's Anchorage in Manasquan (Robinson's Anchorage today).

He was recognized as one of the best captains in the business and was a master at rigging ballyhoo and mullet baits for marlin. Outdoor journalist Henry Schaefer, an honorary member of the MRMTC, fished with George Burlew in 1960 on a pioneering trip to the Hudson Canyon. The boat was owned by Finn Magnus, a well-to-do angler, who made a fortune in manufacturing harmonicas and later electric organs. Magnus had made headlines by catching numerous white marlin and yellowfin tuna, and brought the first longfin albacore to the docks in Brielle.

Schaefer, who had never caught a white marlin, described his first billfish catch with George Burlew at the helm. *I had him to the boat in 15 minutes and Burlew grabbed the leader, but the marlin made another dash for freedom and Burlew promptly dropped the leader so the fish would not break the line. I soon had the fish back to the boat and young Kenneth Magnus gaffed him while Burlew held the leader. The white was 8 feet long and weighed 87 pounds. The marlin was mounted by Fred Huber of Belmar.*

Burlew was born in Keyport, New Jersey in 1897 and died in Florida in the spring of 1987 at the age of 90. He operated his own charter boat, the **Gloria II**, out of Hoffman's Anchorage, and besides running the Magnus boat, he was also captain of the boat owned by founding club members Maurice and Carolyn Meyer of Elberon, New Jersey.



On left, Captain George Burlew and Maurice Meyer, Jr., with 262-pound tuna, second largest of 1947.

He lived near Matawan Creek, where in 1916 a well-known attack by a great white shark occurred while several young boys were swimming. Lester Stillwell was the first victim. While diving with his friend, Stanley Fisher, in an attempt to recover Stillwell's body, Burlew felt the wake of the great white as it passed close to him and attacked Fisher. Although Fisher successfully fought off the attack he succumbed to his wounds eight hours later in the hospital. George Burlew hated sharks and never fished for them.

The club's scholarship program was named in honor of this outstanding captain and his pioneering accomplishments for the club and to sport fishing. During its early inception, the grant was awarded to high school students as well as college students. Today, the scholarship is only awarded to full- or part-time graduate students pursuing marine related studies. Several of the recipients of the grants have been studying marine fisheries in the northeast and have done significant research to increase the scientific knowledge of our local gamefish, including bluefin tuna and striped bass.



Scholarship recipient Clare Ng of Rutgers presenting a summary of her research project at the 2006 MRMTC Spring Kickoff event.

Ms. Clare Ng of Rutgers University was a recent recipient of the George Burlew Scholarship Grant and her work is indicative of the valuable scientific work the MRMTC has encouraged. She developed a tagging study of striped bass in the Mullica River/Great Bay Estuary in Southern New Jersey waters that resulted in many interesting findings about the movement of striped bass in coastal estuaries. Titled *Habitat Use, Site Fidelity, and Movement of Adult Striped Bass in a Southern New Jersey Estuary Based on Mobile Acoustic Telemetry*, and co-authored with Kenneth W. Able and Thomas M. Grothues at the Marine Field Station, Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences of Rutgers University, the study tracked the seasonal and daily movements of striped bass.

The study used individually coded acoustic transmitters and tracked adult striped bass with a mobile hydrophone from July 2003 through July 2005 in the Mullica River and Great Bay. The study found that striped bass preferred deeper water near shorelines and were found at the same location 56.6% of the time. When fish were moving, their pattern was characterized by sporadic swimming followed by long periods of little movement. Seasonally, movement in the estuary was highest in April, followed by two secondary peaks in October and December. Daily movement was highest around sunset. Mobile telemetry demonstrated important dynamics in habitat use, site fidelity, and estuarine movements that were not detectable by a parallel study using a fixed array of omnidirectional hydrophones. This data is important to fisheries managers as they design comprehensive regulations and management plans that assure the long-term health of gamefish populations.

Ted Glicksman, MRMTC member and chair of the scholarship program from 1987 through 2002, noted that over \$50,000 in grants have been awarded to students to further their education and research.