



NATIONAL SPORTING LIBRARY & MUSEUM

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“HONORING THE POINT: THE GWYNNE MCDEVITT SPORTING DOG COLLECTION”

Opening April 12 at the National Sporting Library & Museum

MIDDLEBURG, Virginia – March 26, 2024 – Opening April 12 and on view until September 15, 2024 at the National Sporting Library & Museum (NSLM), *Honoring the Point: The Gwynne McDevitt Sporting Dog Collection* and an accompanying catalogue highlight Gwynne Garbisch McDevitt’s (1931–2022) inspiring life and stunning bequest of 84 works, representing revered 19th and 20th century American, British, and French sporting artists, to the NSLM. Among them are Robert Kennedy Abnett, Antoine-Louis Barye, John Emms, Marguerite Kirmse, Edmund Henry Osthaus, and Percival Leonard Rosseau.

Born Gwynne Chrysler Garbisch, McDevitt was the child of Col. Edgar William Garbisch and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch and the granddaughter of Walter P. Chrysler, the founder of the Chrysler Corporation. She grew up with fond memories of her family’s famed 18th-century Georgian-style retreat, Pokety Farms on the Little Choptank River in Maryland. There, she was surrounded by the world-class American naïve artwork the Garbisches collected. Her days were spent horseback riding on the property and wingshooting shooting on the preserve first established by her grandfather.

Grounded in her roots, McDevitt pursued her love of field sports and art throughout her life. She is remembered as a generous, intelligent, and loyal person who was a dedicated field trial competitor and equestrian in addition to being a thoughtful sporting art collector.

McDevitt amassed much of the art collection under the advice of William Secord, the founding President of the AKC Museum of the Dog, longtime owner of the Manhattan-based art gallery specializing in canine subjects bearing his name, and a recognized author. He became her trusted friend and encouraged McDevitt to bequeath her collection to the NSLM. From 2014 until her passing, she was an NSLM member, and, in 2017, generously loaned a painting to the exhibition, *Side-by-Side with Gun & Dog*, which was featured on the cover of the accompanying exhibition catalogue.

The landmark fine art exhibition will be on view in the Museum and extend into the Library's Forrest E. Mars Sr. Exhibit Hall. This gallery will feature a dozen examples of 19th and 20th century works on paper (drawings, watercolors, and prints) by artists such as: Edwin Landseer, Reuben Ward Binks, Marguerite Kirmse, and S. Edwin Megargee, Jr.

These artists' works reflect the era's wide-spread fascination with specific dog breeds and also attest to the exponential growth of the sporting dog art market. Their popularity attracted the attention of sporting book publishers, who eagerly sought their talents to produce outstanding illustrations—many examples of which are conserved in the NSLM's F. Ambrose Clark Rare Book Room. There is much to be learned from the McDevitt Collection's representations of field sports and animal portraits and from the caliber of the works and artists. The magnitude of this compelling collection in the Museum and Library galleries is not to be missed. McDevitt's collection provides a remarkable opportunity to display these books and historic titles on sporting breeds alongside the works of art, underscoring the rich interconnected history between art and text.

Coffee with the Curator will be held at the NSLM on Saturday, April 13, 2024 at 10 am.

The National Sporting Library & Museum is located in Middleburg, VA, the heart of beautiful horse country. Founded in 1954, the renowned research Library and fine art Museum highlight the rich heritage and tradition of country pursuits. Angling, horsemanship, shooting, steeplechasing, foxhunting, flat racing, polo, coaching, and wildlife are among the subjects one can explore in the organization's general stacks, rare book holdings, archives, and art collection. The NSLM offers a wide variety of educational programs, exhibitions, and family activities throughout the year, and is open to researchers and the public. There is no admission fee to the Library. The Museum charges \$10 for adults, \$8 for youths (age 13–18), and \$8 for seniors. NSLM members and children age 12 and under are admitted free of charge. Library & Museum hours are Thursday–Sunday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

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Robert K. Abbett (American, 1926-2015), *Gwynne at Doubledee Farm, 1989*
oil on board, 23 7/8 inches
Estate of Gwynne McDevitt, 2023



Percival Leonard Rosseau (American, 1859-1937), *Gordon Setter*, c.1900, oil on canvas, 13 1/8 x 23 3/8 inches, Estate of Gwynne McDevitt, 2023.



Percival Leonard Rosseau (American, 1859-1937) *English Setters Drinking from a River*, 1920, oil on canvas, 38 x 28 1/4 inches, Estate of Gwynne McDevitt, 2023.



Edwin Penny (British, 1930-2016), *Bobwhite*, n.d., watercolor on paper, 28 1/4 x 20 inches, Estate of Gwynne McDevitt, 2023.