



Sussex Branch Newsletter



DECEMBER 2004



A.G.M. – 9th DECEMBER 2004

The Annual General Meeting was held on 9th December with some 40 members attending. The new constitution was approved (everyone received a copy with the last Newsletter) and reports of the officers accepted. The Chairman warmly thanked all the Committee and others who had helped the Branch run smoothly and asked for more volunteers to man shows, etc – an ideal opportunity to meet up with others in the fishing and other field sports communities. The Secretary asked that members gave him a lead on what sort of speakers were wanted, and welcomed any ideas for new ones.

The accounts were healthy, and the Chairman suggested that some of our surplus be spent on acquiring video display equipment for demonstrations, and the meeting agreed to go ahead.

All the officers other than the Competitions Organiser, agreed to stand again, and were duly re-elected. After some years of service, John Cooper and Jim Harris resigned from the committee and were replaced by Bill Smith and John Plowman (who volunteered after the meeting!). A Competitions Organiser is now urgently required for next season's events.

A discussion was held about the declining numbers attending the annual dinner. It was thought by some that a buffet-style event would be more acceptable to those who do not like more formal dinners (though ours could hardly be more informal). John Burt will continue to organise events, so let him or any committee member know what you would like – maybe a buffet get-together at the beginning of the tying season in, say, October and keep the dinner in March/April? Any ideas for speakers? A suggestion was made that some salt-water fishing outings could be arranged, and the Committee will discuss with Ron Nicholson on this, with Ian Foster.

Finally, the Jonathon Glover Trophy for the member who has contributed most to the well-being of the Branch over the past year was presented to **Brian Hendry** whose ever presence at shows and demonstrations and tireless efforts with the Intermediate Class over several years earned him a just reward.

Finally, Alan Middleton presented a quiz to end the evening, and many thanks are due to him for his hard work in preparing this.

SPEAKER - JANUARY 13th OLIVER EDWARDS

We are very pleased to welcome back that master of imitative fly-tying, Oliver Edwards, who has fished around the world, represented England in the fly-fishing team, and written the "Flytyer's Masterclass" – a bible for those who want flies to look realistic.

Ollie will be demonstrating and giving an illustrated talk, and, provided that we can overcome our technophobia, we hope to have live projection of his tying techniques, using the new equipment which the Branch have acquired.

Note this date in your diary now for this great opportunity to see a master in action.

Where to Fish? CANADA

Vancouver island with BC Fishing of course!



September 2005

Fantastic opportunities to catch 5 species of wild salmon from 5 to 50 lbs with single barbless hooks on single or double handed rods. This is the kind of affordable salmon fishing that everyone dreams about!

Outstanding fishing for Wild Pacific Salmon, including Pink, Coho, Sockeye, Steelhead and King Salmon, stunning scenery, fascinating wildlife and some of the cleanest and most unspoilt rivers in the world.

Come and Join Us

Can you afford not to?

With a price of **£1600** per week, Sunday to Sunday, which includes: Freshwater licences, Premier Class Flights, Accommodation, Transfers and all transport whilst fishing.

The Fishing is organised with all the information and assistance you may need. Loads of fish for the catching but don't be fooled, it is extremely challenging, exciting and highly rewarding!



For a brochure or more information, please contact: Ian Davis on: 01835 850 788. Or email to: imcdavis@aol.com
You can visit our website at www.bc.fishing.co.uk for further details

AFFORDABLE QUALITY CHALK STREAM FISHING

A half-mile stretch of river this side of Winchester is up for a new lease arrangement. Hugh Smith is trying to get together about eight people (fishing every week of the trout and grayling seasons) to share the cost of lease and maintenance.

The cost of a share will be subject to final numbers and the level of stocking etc which members agree upon. This is not a new fishery and therefore there is a history already for the costs of maintenance (weed-cutting etc). Anyone interested in this rare opportunity should call Hugh on 01273 834044 to find out more.

WORDS OF COMFORT

By Brian Hendry

Some years ago, when the Sussex Branch of the FDG introduced their own stylised logo for their clothing, I was unsure it was appropriate, particularly as the Guild had a clear and well recognised image already. But of course it did not stop me from buying a couple of sweatshirts and a hat!

I've worn these at a number of shows and fairs and found that the Branch logo sometimes needs a little explaining, and have felt that the addition of a short quotation, under the stylised fly, might help our presentation and have pondered this at some length. I eventually realised that I have heard the ideal quote used on a number of occasions at our own tying evenings; let me explain.

Peter and Ian have made the beginners' class their own and, when they eventually hang up their vices (*tying that is - Ed.*) will be and extremely hard act to follow. During this time they have built up a repertoire of stories relating to the difficulties some beginners have experienced, but these tales are never told with malice or ridicule. They are always related with good-natured admiration for those peoples' dedication in the face of often a formidable challenge and whose perseverance is to be applauded all the more for it.

Nevertheless it has led to Ian and Peter developing a masterly skill in diplomacy over the years with a whole range of reassuring and constructive comments covering most situations. But even they are very occasionally confronted by a fly-tying so alien that they are momentarily lost for words. It is at this time that what I now think of as the Branch motto comes into play. The sequence always follows a similar pattern - a short intake of breath, then a long and meticulous inspection of the offending beastie, held up to the available light to assess its full potential. Sometimes, in moments of dire stress, a comforting arm encircles the tyer's shoulder and the magic words are uttered - **"That'll still catch fish!!!"**

All we need now is for somebody to embroider it on all our sweatshirts!

B.H.

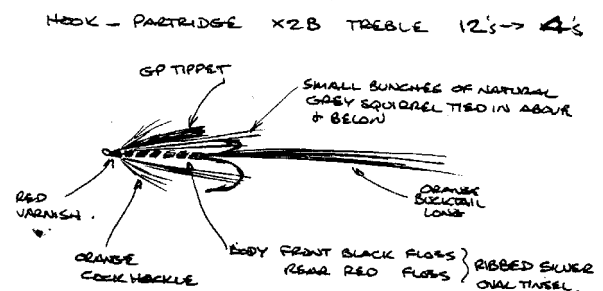
THE TRUE ALLY'S SHRIMP

Albert Horne, our ever youthful expert on salmon flies (and master tyer of all the others too!) showed me a letter he had received from the originator of the above famous salmon fly, Alastair Gowans, regarding variations which have been made to the original. He says:

"Tyers are simplifying the dressing by putting the grey squirrel only on the top and using an all-red body. My original dressing is as shown on the attached drawing and can be produced in a variety of colours, although the original orange is best with red and purple, perhaps followed by black.

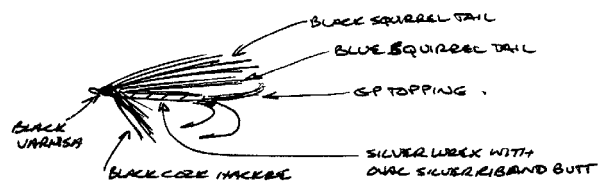
I have enclosed a sample which may be useful, although I do not consider myself to be a fly-tyer - just a fisherman."

ORIGINAL DRESSING ALLY'S SHRIMP.



Albert had also asked about Blue Elver and Alastair replied that he had never had any success with it here (i.e. Scotland) and didn't know anyone who had, except in Iceland. However he suggested that if he couldn't get feathers he suggested collie dog's - they're probably better anyway!. He then says:

"I have just got another dressing which may be an alternative - the **"PATSEY MARY"**



Now here's a challenge for tyers in Sussex Branch - how about seeing who can tie the best of the original Ally's Shrimp AND the Patsey Mary? To standardise tyings, I suggest a size 10 double for each. I am sure Albert would be only too pleased to give advice and we might even find a trophy for the winner! If interested, let the Chairman or Secretary know, and get your entries in by Thursday 31st March (together with your entries for the other categories, of course!!)

BIG FISH COMPETITION

Have you got your entry in yet? The brown trout entries closed on 31st October, but there is still time for you to enter that monster rainbow (or even catch it, perhaps!) - remember it has to be from a Sussex water (which does include Bewl, of course).

A BOOK FOR CHRISTMAS?

By Phillip Ellis

Many of you may have read reviews of his new book "The Trout Flies of John Goddard" in the Guild magazine and angling press recently. Being impressed by the reviews I obtained a copy and can report that it is surely a "must have" book! He describes 35 of his successful patterns with notes on each one's creation. Many of his patterns are available commercially and will be for many years. Not only is John a first class angler but also an entomologist and from this knowledge he created these patterns over many years and, with innovation, has added trigger points that he believes attracts fish. John, I am sure, will go down in angling history with Skues, Halford and Sawyer as one of the greatest.

Alan Chamberlain and I fished the Test for grayling last month where John Goddard also fishes. The river keeper told us that John recently caught a hundred grayling in a day and, would you believe, is able to pick out the bigger fish from a shoal! That is something to be admired for a man now in his 81st year.

The book is not perhaps one for novices but for those more experienced needing inspiration to create their own patterns with that little bit extra. We are getting near Christmas and perhaps you can ask for one to be put in your stocking if it is not too late!

At £25.00 not cheap but a long-term investment. For a copy contact the publishers: Merlin Unwin Books 01584 877457. (Or try amazon.co.uk where it is £17.50! – Ed.)

ARLINGTON & BARCOMBE

The annual end of season social evening was held at Arlington in the new extended lodge, and as usual several members of our Branch were in attendance. Also becoming "as usual" was Jack Jupp collecting the Brian Strong Trophy for the heaviest brace of the season from Arlington, which included a fish of 4lb 7oz – now three years in a row for Branch members! Also John Burt collected the trophy for best fish from Barcombe – a fine specimen of 6lb 8oz.

As far as the fisheries are concerned, there will be some changes for 2005 – the 2 fish ticket will be reduced to £11, and the current 6 fish ticket upgraded to 8 fish at no extra charge for members, but up by £1 to £20 for non-members. The four fish ticket is unchanged.

Next year Arlington will close from 1st July, re-opening on 1st October, due to the diminishing angler returns (in turn due to low catch rate). The season will extend into November, but if weather conditions permit, then the above dates may well be altered. Flexible is the watchword!! The point was made however that 2300 fish were stocked in Arlington in September, but only 230 caught by the end of the season – should be some fine overwintered specimens!

One problem at Arlington is the fact that it is also a nature reserve so culling cormorants is rather unlikely to be allowed. Consequently the plan is to continue using scarecrows and introducing "islands" incorporating an underwater cage structure, giving cover for fish and preventing predator access.

FEBRUARY SPEAKER

Due to unexpected work commitments, Simon Ward has had to cancel his visit to us in February. Paul Bond is trying to find a replacement speaker, but in the event that it is not possible, then alternative arrangements may be made – e.g. another evening to tie those competition flies, or an opportunity to ask your questions of the instructors on particular problems you may be having. You will be advised in the next newsletter and on the web-site.

BRANCH FLY-TYING COMPETITION

The branch has obtained a copy of "The Trout Flies of John Goddard" from the publishers that will be presented as prize in the next round of the branch tying competition.

STEVE COOPER

Our November speaker was Steve Cooper of Cookshill Tackle, supplier of fly-tying materials and tools, and breeder of genetic capes, etc. Steve confined himself this time to talking about the various types of capes and hackles available, and the difference between the genetic and natural feathers. He gave the scenario for the near future of heavily genetically engineered birds providing ever longer hackles, which then get spoilt by dragging on the ground, necessitating further breeding to get longer legs to avoid this, etc etc!

His advice on selection of hackles, capes and skins was very well received, as without the help of such expertise, many of us are "in the dark" when choosing what can be a major investment.

As usual he brought with him a selection of his high quality items, and a brisk trade ensued (inevitably yours truly spent a fortune in purchasing a superb cape and partridge skin which will provide sufficient material to last his and his heirs' lifetimes!)

Last, but by no means least, take heed of his advice on keeping your precious fur and feather safe from bugs – keep airtight in re-sealable plastic bags, keep dry, and above all keep from contamination by untreated material.

MEMBERSHIP

One thing that was not pursued at the AGM was the question of unpaid members. To date we have 113 names on our list, of which eight are new members who may or may not join, one has paid his subs. to the main guild but not the branch, and 73 have paid up. That leaves 31 old members who have not yet renewed.

I realise that some will not do so due to various reasons but most are hitherto active members who participate in our activities, especially during the summer.

If you are one of these, please, please let Roy Guney have your subscriptions NOW, as the branch can ill afford to lose your contribution to our running costs – speakers, newsletter, arranging outings etc. I am sure the majority of you still want to enjoy the benefits of membership – which includes third party insurance!

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT LINES

Another year and another AGM. Why do they come round so often? The branch continues to prosper under the firm control of our treasurer although this year in a moment of weakness he has relaxed his grip on the purse strings for us to buy some electronic projection equipment. This will increase the enjoyment of all attendees at future fly tying demonstrations. Whilst it constitutes a considerable expense it was felt that the money should be spent on items which would bring maximum benefit to the members.

After our Christmas break we hope to provide light refreshments at each of our tying evenings, teas, coffees and biscuits to ensure that there is no lack of energy in the dark evenings. The modest charge will help to swell the branch funds.

At the recent AGM there was some discussion on the format of future dinners and your views will be sought in the first couple of weeks in January so that the committee has time to make any arrangements. The Annual Dinner in its present format is enjoyed by all who attend but the numbers have declined recently, hence the reappraisal.

January sees the competition season in full swing. We shall be tying both branch entries and national entries in the coming weeks. A number of our members have been successful in the national competitions and we hope to build on this success. The standards of the novice and open categories are not beyond the scope of all of you. Just remember that most of the members of the Guild are just like you. No one has three hands in this game so your entry will be well received.

It just remains for me to wish you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. I look forward to seeing you again each Thursday in January.

RECIPE FOR THE MONTH

GRAVLAX – a Scandinavian recipe for sugar cured salmon or trout

2 - 3 lb pink fleshed trout

1 large bunch dill (or 2 big tablespoons of dried dill)

¼ cup coarse sea-salt

2 oz castor sugar

2 tablespoons crushed white peppercorns

Method

Clean and bone the fish leaving the fillets joined together. Mix all the other ingredients together and sprinkle a quarter on to a large glass dish. Place the fish skin down, then sprinkle half the mixture over the flesh, close up the fish and sprinkle the remainder over the top. Cover with foil and place a heavy weight (say a brick covered in foil) on top of the fish. Refrigerate for 48 hours, turning the fish over once a day. To serve, remove the fish and wipe off the marinade. Place skin side down on a board and cut thin slanting slices. Serve with fresh dill garnish and a spicy mustard mayonnaise, or **Sauce**

Aoli:

1 clove garlic

7 oz boiled potato

1 egg yolk

1 tablespoon lemon juice

Salt and pepper

5 tablespoons olive oil

Method

Place the ingredients, EXCEPT the olive oil, in a blender and puree till smooth, gradually add in the olive oil until a rich sauce is produced.

A coarse granary or rye bread best accompanies this dish.

FOR SALE

A 6' X 4' CAR TRAILER, COMPLETE WITH TAILBOARD AND LIGHTS AND TARPAULIN COVER - £110 O.N.O. CONTACT ROY GURNEY ON 01273 506184



Published by the Sussex Branch of the Flydressers' Guild

Chairman: Alan Middleton 01273 493473

Secretary: Paul Bond 01273 420410

Treasurer: Roy Gurney 01273 506184

Editor: Roy Gurney, 7 Eldred Avenue, Brighton BN1 5EB

Phone: 01273 506184

Fax: 01273 881209

E-mail: roygurney@ntlworld.com

Visit our web site
sussexflydressers.org.uk