



## Sussex Branch Newsletter



FEBRUARY 2018

### A Hard Act To Follow

I thought I would introduce myself to those of you who have not met me at tying evenings or fishing events, as the person who has the unenviable task of following in the footsteps of the inimitable Bill Smith as "Competitions and Events Co-ordinator". When I suggested this idea to our illustrious editor he rather cynically responded with "I await your CV with bated breath!"

So, as they ask at all the "best" job interviews, what can I bring to the post? Well.....

1. Although Bill is much more handsome, I have slightly more hair, albeit mostly on my face. However, in an emergency it has been used for tail material on a JG Emerger.



#### ***Judge for yourself!!***

2. I have passed the Health and Safety course for carrying a loaded clipboard.  
3. I am on a hat-trick at Brass Monkeys. (Unfortunately it's a hat-trick of blanks!).  
4. I have a bedroom with a bureau full of fly tying material, most of which I will never use.  
5. As the father of 2 sons, the survivor of a 43 year marriage and having retired from 36 years teaching secondary school kids, I have developed the rhino skin and rictus grin necessary to deal with most people - without revealing my true thoughts. However, the teaching posts also

encouraged a level of volume likened to the sound of a bull elephant seal when severely aggravated- so be warned!

More seriously I don't see a burning need to change things a great deal in what is quite a packed schedule of events. However, there are a few ideas which have been mooted which bear discussion:

- Last year's Frank Darrah Pairs Trophy at Bewl in May had to be cancelled due to lack of interest. Was this down to problems of the venue? If so would a move to Arlington or indeed another venue be welcomed? Let's give Bewl a chance to deliver this year then decide.
- Another carp fishing venue has been suggested but could we develop fishing for other species e.g. predators like perch, pike, zander or bass?
- The possible inclusion of another competition day against Dorking Fly Fishers- perhaps in September?
- Are there any more ways we can encourage younger people into the sport- someone has suggested a "tie & try day" at an amenable local fishery?

So if you have any views on these or other ideas that I may be able to help with then chat at tying evenings or drop me a line at [wellsywells@btinternet.com](mailto:wellsywells@btinternet.com)

.....and he does catch fish!!



## Chairman's Chat

I am sure that you will agree that this is a very fine house and presumably an old mill. Therein lies the potential problems.



To survey the site we will of course require the owner's permission; we cannot sneak in somewhere in the wilds, bearing in mind that we have no authority to enter as I did when I was employed by the EA.

Talking of permissions, we would also have to obtain the owner's approval to the design, as well as the EA. So what do we do if there is a conflicts between the owners / hydraulics / EA engineers / EA biologists? In the recent past we have had projects where the various EA staff have not agreed between themselves; they never have a spokesman who puts the EA case. Without looking for problems, surveying under the mill (a confined space) would be difficult and expensive; we could have to wear breathing apparatus for Health and Safety reasons, although unnecessary in practice – the Miller did not!

Obviously the design must satisfy the biological specification (in other words, fish must use the pass), we must not exacerbate flooding and, most importantly, the solution must be aesthetically acceptable (to the owner).

We can guarantee that the proposal will not make flooding worse, but that is not to say that the owner would not claim that it has, possibly with massive legal support. Bearing this in mind a heavy claim for damages could result.

Without calculation (at this stage) an obvious solution would be to build a system of weirs at the widest part of the channel (which would have a large flow capacity) which would stop any flooding getting worse and make works beneath the Mill unnecessary.

But would the "consortium" of those who would be required to approve the proposals agree?

On this occasion we declined to tender, better to do nothing than spend days in court!

*Tony W*

## A message to all Why are we losing members?

Dear members,

Following our AGM, the Branch Committee would like to understand the 'Good, the Bad and the Ugly' about what you want, think, expect from your Branch. In order to do this we will be circulating a quick survey (by e-mail to those with email contact and by post with prepaid reply to those who receive by mail).

We would really appreciate a little amount of time to help the Committee direct the Branch in the future.

Your opinions matter and there will be a chance to benefit from your participation as we will be awarding three prizes randomly to those who respond.

It is our intention to circulate the survey over the next month so please take time to give us your feedback.

Many thanks,

Your Committee.

## 2018 FDG ELINOR BANK COMPETITION

The Guild's 5th Elinor bank competition is being held on **Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2018**.

The organisers are glad to say they have been able to keep the entry fee at last year's price of £35. Sussex Branch intends to enter a team, plus individual members if required. If you are interested, contact **Brian Raw** on **01444 456704** or e-mail [b.raw@talk21.com](mailto:b.raw@talk21.com) to arrange entry forms etc.

## FLY-TYING TROPHIES

A reminder of the patterns for this year:

Novice	<b>Gold-head Gold Ribbed Hare's Ear #10</b>
Intermediate	<b>Teeny Nymph #12</b>
Open	<b>Copper John #16</b>
Saltwater	<b>Clouser Minnow #6</b>
Salmon	<b>Ally's Shrimp #8</b>

Three identical samples of each fly to be submitted by Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018 to **Paul Bond** or **Alan Middleton**.

## Boat Seat Wanted

One of our good friends from North Kent (a regular winner at the Charity Pairs) is seeking one of the older type Rutland boat seats (Merlin made) preferably with back rest. If any member still has one in the garage or shed they no longer need and would like to get some money for it, please contact **Ray French** on. **01322 863814**

## FISHING IN FRANCE

Having recently had a welcome visit from Terry Tullett, now firmly ensconced in Normandy, he has subsequently e-mailed as follows;

*Hi Roy, good to see you last week.*

*I have a friend, Phillippe, who has spent his life fly fishing locally. This year he had his best every year fishing for Sea Trout, catching more than 60, the largest 69cms, more than 4 kilos. He attached his GoPro camera to the end of his fly rod and made a video of the trout in the river. The video was taken in the river Valmont, near Fecamp. It clearly shows the trout in spawning mode. Might be interesting to put the link in the next newsletter. To find the video Google YouTube France and in the search box type "phillippe billard la mouche" . No commentary, so no worries for non French speakers!!!!*

*A bientot, Terry.*

*(or try the following link if you are on-line – Ed.)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BjAJ2uv3Ho8>

## 2018 PROVISIONAL FISHING PROGRAMME

Please find the programme lovingly produced by Alan Wells (see page 1) attached or enclosed with this newsletter, together with application forms to be completed and sent as soon as possible to the organisers involved..

## SPRING AUCTION

THURSDAY 19<sup>th</sup> APRIL

A reminder that auction entries should be sent to [fdgsussex@capel29.plus.com](mailto:fdgsussex@capel29.plus.com) (or, if you don't have e-mail access, to Roy at 29 Capel Avenue, Peacehaven, BN10 8NB). Download entry forms from our website [www.sussexflydressers.org.uk](http://www.sussexflydressers.org.uk) or ask Roy (01273 581519) for a hard copy.

**DON'T FORGET TO LET US HAVE YOUR NEWS AND VIEWS – ANY PHOTOS REPORTS AND STORIES (ESPECIALLY IF INFORMATIVE OR UNUSUAL) - ALL EAGERLY AWAITED BY YOUR EDITOR.**

## Avon Roach Project

Some members will know that I fish on the river Avon just below Salisbury obviously for Trout and Grayling, but I am trying my hand at coarse fishing after an absence of many years. Apart from Roach the river holds a good head of Chub and some big Barbel with Pike as well. Some of you may remember Tom Williams the River Keeper on the estate who wrote in the Anglers Mail every week and a book back in the 1960's. However, the river did then hold huge stocks of coarse fish that made the Avon a mecca for anglers, but I understand changes in flows and predation has reduced stocks and decline has been seen further with Roach. As far as trout go a huge stocking of a few thousand fish is made where I fish in the spring to supplement wild stocks. Salmon are found on this stretch in small numbers compared with lower down near Christchurch. The Roach Project was started by a small group of anglers breeding Roach under the banner of The Roach Project, starting in a back garden in 2008 in tanks, and as they grow moved onto stew ponds before eventually stocking the river. It all starts each year with spawning boards placed in the river to catch eggs that are taken to the hatchery. After a year they are put in stew ponds to be grown on until large enough to stock the river.



**1-year fish for the stew ponds**



**The catch!**

The project holds an annual fund-raising dinner in the autumn that I have been fortunate to be invited to attend and what a great evening in a Country Hotel with good food and company. A project that is commendable for the effort being made.

**Phillip Ellis**

## A Gentleman in Alaska

Recently, I had the pleasure of meeting a fine gentleman, Tony Stanton, when Tony Harrison and I met up with him at the “Gardener’s Arms” for lunch. The prime reason was to receive his generous gift of tackle for auction as a donation to the Branch, as time had come for him to sadly give up fishing..

During the course of lunch, conversation came around to the fact that he had enjoyed some wonderful fishing outings in Alaska (like our own Tony).

He told us his claim to fame was that he held two records for Alaskan fishing. The first was that he was fishing in a remote area (where isn’t in Alaska?). accessible only by seaplane, and at the end of the day the pilot was anxious to get away before daylight failed,

It was just at this time that Tony got into a fish after a bleak day’s fishing, and was playing it when the pilot approached him and said “Shake it off – we have to go.” Tony realised, however, that his fish was more than just another run of the mill specimen, and continued to try to bring it to the net, to the pilot’s annoyance and further insistence that they must go. Threats of going without him failed to persuade him to shake off what was now clearly more than just a good fish. It was at this point the prey decided to run toward the bank and came into sight, at which point the pilot shouted “You must land it! Don’t let it go!”

After a lengthy fight, the monster was netted – a magnificent grayling which the pilot reckoned would have been the heaviest of that season.

His second claim to fame was of an entirely different nature. Having been fishing with a single fly, Tony decided to experiment with using a dropper. The winds in Alaska are renowned for their unpredictability and inevitably the worst happened – one fly impaled itself in Tony’s ear lobe. However, worse was to come. Whilst he tried to assess the damage with his rod–tip over his shoulder, the devilish wind blew the other fly with some force on to his other ear lobe, impaling that too! He now had the dubious achievement of have one highly coloured lure in each ear, like ear-rings, all on one cast!

Fortunately, barbless hooks are obligatory in Alaska, so extraction was not too painful.

I trust Tony will not be offended by my relaying this tale, but I thought a “double” such as this is worth sharing.

It remains for me to thank him again for his generosity and wish him well in his further “retirement”.

**Roy Gurney**

## And now for something entirely different!



*Parachute fly*

### Hardy Centenary Set

Two or three years ago at iFISH one of our readers met one of our members who was helping on one of our stands and had a discussion about an item he had for sale – a Hardy Centenary Set. Whoever it was said he had a set he wanted to sell – he gave him contact details which he has subsequently lost. If this item is still available he would be interested in purchasing it and asks you contact Vic at [salmonexpert@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:salmonexpert@yahoo.co.uk)

## RETURN OF TROPHIES

Would all holders of trophies please return them by 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018 on a Thursday evening in order that they can be engraved in time for presentation at the end of season gathering. Initially they can be given to Roy Gurney until a volunteer can be found to take over this task.

### Published by the Sussex Branch of the Flydressers’ Guild

Chairman:	Tony Woolnough	01273 483833
Secretary:	Paul Bond	01273 420410
Treasurer:	Bill Black	01323 763807
Membership:	Roy Gurney	01273 581519

**Editor: ROY GURNEY**

29 Capel Avenue, PEACEHAVEN, BN10 8NB

**E-MAIL: [fdgsussex@capel29.plus.com](mailto:fdgsussex@capel29.plus.com)**

**Visit our web site**

**[Sussexflydressers.org.uk](http://Sussexflydressers.org.uk)**