

# The Flydressers Guild Sussex Branch



## Newsletter December 2023

Published by the Sussex Branch of the  
Flydressers Guild

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### Key Dates for the Diary

**December 3<sup>rd</sup> Xmas  
Competition, Brick Farm**

Please let Peter Winder know if you will be  
attending

**December 7<sup>th</sup> – AGM - 7PM**

This will be taking place on the 7<sup>th</sup> December  
2023, at the Clayton Village Hall. Snacks will  
be provided. There will be no fly tying that  
evening

### 'First Brown Trout' or 'The Journey There and Back Again'

Great excitement this summer with a job offer:  
I was coming out of retirement and returning to  
wonderful New Zealand for three months. So  
what did I need? What should I pack?.....

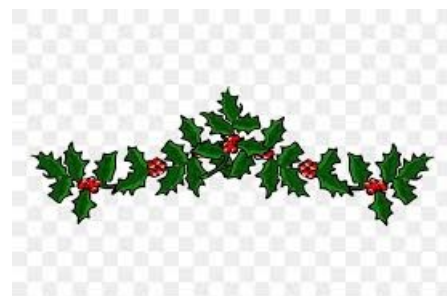
#### Packing List:

1. Travel fishing rod
2. Reel
3. Fishing vest and  
attachments.....

On my first weekend in New Zealand a visit to  
Bag End and a beer in the Green Dragon  
confirmed that there were brown trout in  
Hobbiton and by implication in New Zealand  
too, albeit the size was somewhat  
disappointing. Having said that Bullroarer  
Took no doubt had a fight on given his relative  
size compared to 'Old Brown'.



Bag End getting ready for Bilbos' 11-1<sup>st</sup>  
birthday





*Hobbiton - The Shire*



*The Green Dragon*



However, one can travel in hope but arrive to disappointment. A visit to 'Hunting & Fishing'<sup>i</sup> to get some local flies<sup>ii</sup> revealed the worst case scenario: it was generally the closed season for fishing! ☹

But all was not lost. Hunting and Fishing gave me details of the Auckland Flyfishing Anglers

Club Inc. So I tramped off to their monthly meeting to be met by friendly fishermen, and quite a few fisher women too, a 'sausage sizzle' and a beer. Indeed, I got along to three of their well-attended meetings which included interesting talks and videos of what they and other fisher folks were up to. I was amazed that even the presentation of their annual accounts at the AGM was interesting! I've now proudly pinned their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary badge on my Sussex Fly Dressers' Guild sweatshirt.

A be  
trou



Best of all though was that they organized trips to waters that were open for fishing. ☺

However, actually catching a fish was another story.

There was a good turnout for the day trip to the Waipa River and I got a lift with John the organizer and Pete the president so I caught up on all the gossip, whilst chilling out in the back seat. It was just lovely to get 'out and about' as I had been working nine to ten hours a day, six days a week staring at computer screens.

As for catching fish?.... Well it was good to walk by the river and practice my casting.





*Waipa River*



*A trout, but not as big as Bullroarer Took's  
'Old Brown'*

There were fish though and some people seemed to have either the right spot, the right fly or the right technique and / or all of the aforementioned and caught a few. However, they were more fit for a starter rather than a main course....(the voice of jealousy speaking?)

Well, all good things come to an end and it was back to the office and computer and making a few Kiwis happy by settling their storm and flood insurance claims, then packing up and long hauling it back to Blighty. It was fifty hours from the time I got out of my bed on Saturday morning until I got in my bed back home in England. As much as I love New Zealand I will have to rest up for a bit before I ever consider doing the trip again.

Back to fishing. I was in search of a 'big one' and catching my first brown trout would have been a bonus too.

Once recovered from jetlag I took my long suffering wife, June, off to Plymouth for a few days so that she could visit the museum in Looe and get some ancestors' details on her father's side. Perhaps I should have left the fishing to her too. No surprise that coming from Looe there were various fishermen in her family line and there was even a 'Revenue man' turned smuggler. His notoriety was such that he received a mention on the museum wall!

The next day, however, was a fishing day for me with my friend Tim, who was down in Plymouth overhauling his boat, whilst June was talking family history on her mother's side with a second cousin from Tavistock. I met Tim<sup>iii</sup> at a fly tying and fishing equipment auction some years ago and he has been patiently coaching me, albeit I'm a terrible student as I rarely find the time to practice.





*Lovely 'Indian Summer' day by one of Tavistock Trout Fishery's lakes*



*Tim relaxing with a 'brew' on the terrace*

So off we went to Tavistock Trout Fishery<sup>iv</sup>. It was a lovely calm 'Indian Summer' day and based on Tim's recent experience was a good place to catch. The site, Abigail and the staff are lovely too. There are a number of small lakes, a tackle shop and a lodge with overflowing tea and coffee and a place to sit out and watch the world go by. However, I was on a mission!

Off to the first lake and the second lake...a coffee to cheer my spirit... and the third lake.....and maybe a sandwich....and off to the fourth lake.....maybe another coffee.... as nothing was happening. ☺

Indeed, nobody was catching other than one fellow, although he admitted it was a tough day, who had caught three fish. He said he just kept moving and changed his fly every

seven casts. Well if it worked for him, why not try it?

A few flies later and in an awkward position with overhanging trees and little room for a back cast I thought I'd try a 'parachute Adams'. The next thing you know "Wham!" not even time to strike, but I had something solid firmly hooked. It wriggled and turned and dove here and there, albeit it was not madly jumping out of the water, but at the same time it was not a happy fish. The problem was that when I got it into my net it was so big it flipped and fell out again and I had to re-net it and quickly get two hands on the net-handle once it was in!

My first brown trout and what a beauty, at 6lb! ☺ ☺ ☺. I've even got a mention on the fishery's Facebook page as I had the biggest brown so far this season!



*That is the sight of a very happy fisherman. Don't worry it didn't bite off my left index finger, that's on the other side of the fish.*

Now it so happens that my Mrs wants to follow up a bit more on her family tree, so a return to Devon and Cornwall could well be on the cards. I have a feeling we won't be staying in Plymouth though as there are some lovely looking lodges at the Tavistock Trout Fishery.

What could I possibly do with my time whilst June is researching her family tree? 🤔

**Tony Ryan, Burgess Hill, UK,  
October 2023**

### **Authors notes**

1. *Whilst we have 'Marks & Spencer' and 'Boots' in just about every town in England, New Zealand have a 'Hunting & Fishing' in every town. They have the right idea!*
2. *I never took any flies as New Zealand Boarder Control are very careful about not introducing biological hazards. When you arrive you must declare all fishing gear, boots, outdoor equipment etc. otherwise you get fined. Equipment should be spotlessly clean, or else they will take it away for cleaning. That's okay if you are not in a hurry, but one time, when I was working on the 2011 earthquake, I almost missed my connection to Christchurch as there were a couple of bits of dirt in the deep treads of my walking boots. They did, however, come back spotlessly clean!*
3. *Tim is based near Plymouth, Devon, but also spends quite a bit of time in Sussex. See: [angling-coach.net](http://angling-coach.net) if you want to know more of what he's up to, or you want some personal coaching, or want to arrange a corporate event, such as 'catch and cook'*
4. *Tavistock Trout Fishery: [Tavistocktroutfishery.co.uk](http://Tavistocktroutfishery.co.uk). I even get my picture, with brown trout of course, on their Facebook page 😊. See 7<sup>th</sup> October 2023*

### **South of England Show 2024**

We will be attending this show as usual, and require some volunteers to man the stand. The dates where we need help are 5<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> June 2024, which will also cover the

putting up and taking down of the equipment. For more information please contact Tony Kaatze.

### **Tying Sea Flies**

Peter Winder has advised that he is willing to teach anyone interested how to tie sea flies, particularly those required for catching Mullet. Please contact Peter direct to let him of your interest. The tying will take place on a normal Thursday evening meeting.

### **Trophies**

**If anyone has any club trophies from last year, and has not yet returned then please would they do so ASAP. Thank you.**





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