



Sussex Branch Newsletter



AUGUST 2018

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Yes, it's that time of year again! Subscriptions for both the Guild and Branch are due on **1st September**, and a renewal form is enclosed with this newsletter. However, it is **not** necessary to complete this if your details have not changed – just let Roy Gurney have your subs ASAP!!

Don't forget - our new season starts with a speaker on

Thursday 7th September

This is the first night of our weekly meetings at Patcham Community Centre commencing every Thursday at 7.30 pm.

All welcome

STILLWATER CHALLENGE

Due to a surprising lack of numbers we were unable to close the fishery for the first time in decades, but the other anglers seemed to enjoy our company and showed a great deal of interest in our competition. Last minute entries did raise our numbers to 12, including the organiser, who had not intended to fish.

Despite the tropical heat, seven members managed to get their limit, with only yours truly blanking, to the disappointment of his partner in the pairs competition, Martyn Gray, who had a potentially winning bag of 8 lb 15 oz!

Best fish of the day went to Paul Davis, who landed a beautiful 3lb 12 oz brownie, narrowly beating Howard Dodsley's 3 lb 7 oz rainbow.

Best bag for the day was shared – 9 lb 10 oz each for Howard Dodsley and Paul Davis.

The Jim White Pairs also figured the above "heavyweights", with Paul pairing with Ray Burt to take the honours with a total bag of 18lb 9 oz and Howard partnering Peter Winder with 16 lb 15 oz. Mention should also be made of the other double figure total by Tony Harrison and new member Hugh Tanton with 14 lb 12 oz.

This was Hugh's first outing with the Branch, having joined only a few weeks ago and we warmly welcome him to our ranks. He even volunteered to run the barbecue at a week's notice, but for the reduced numbers it did not seem worth the effort – but for next year.....!!

Once again many thanks to Ally for looking after us on the day, and to Darren for forgiving us for messing him around.

It may have been bringing the date forward from the usual which caused some to stay away – we will try to get the later date next year – but it YOU who must support our outings.

RHG

iFISH 2018 Cancelled

Due to circumstances beyond our control it has reluctantly been decided to cancel iFISH this year. We fully expect to be up and running again for 2019, so be prepared!

A Real Royal Family – Day 1

by Alan Middleton

There are occasions when we actually meet the "good and the great". Over the years we have worked for members of both houses of Parliament as well as both Houses of Congress. Despite rumours, these are just ordinary people; they have two arms, two legs and speak much the same language. We have been with "new money" and "old money" and I can tell you there is a difference there!

Some years ago our still water fishery was taken over by a family. The fishery can accommodate up to 25 clients with accompanying guides and instructors; there is a casting platform on one of the lakes together with a large wooden lodge, complete with cooking facilities, fridges and the usual hygiene provisions. The fishery was booked for the whole weekend, which I guess must have been an expensive couple of days.

I was charged with looking after this party for the weekend and was under strict instructions to be on parade prompt at 9.30 on the Saturday morning, having cleaned the lodge and removed any debris from previous clients. The weather forecast was good with no rain and the occasional sunny interval and temperatures should be in the high teens or low twenties, so all looked fair.

The weekend arrived, and I was present, complete with clean official shirt and jacket awaiting the arrival of the family. I was told to expect a family of four, father, mother and two sons with a daughter arriving possibly after

lunch. 9.30 came and went. At about 10.45 a large MPV drew up in the car park and out descended the expected group. The chauffeur remained in the car.

I had assembled all the fishing tackle that they would need as I had been warned that they would not have brought any of their own. The head of the family apologised for the delay in arriving but the traffic from London had made the journey longer than they had anticipated. Tea and coffee were ready for them in the lodge and we all proceeded to the fishery. The two sons were both teenagers and very keen to get started. Both the father and elder son were quite accomplished anglers and could cast a good straight line, whilst the younger son did require some assistance in order to get his fly on the water. Mother was not so keen to rush into the fishing and decided to sit on the balcony of the lodge and just "chill out".

The fishery had been stocked a few days prior to the weekend and as it is not a typical commercial fishery it had not been fished for several days. The water was clear, so the fish could easily be spotted. This added to the excitement and anticipation of the boys who threw themselves into the casting, and on more than one occasion almost threw themselves into the lake. As there were plenty of fish we had a couple of good rainbow trout on the bank by lunch time.

Father approached me on the lake side and said that we would break for lunch at 1.00 and they would like to eat the trout they had caught. This was not a problem as we had a BBQ and all the equipment on site; I was also requested to lay the table for them. They had brought some wine to accompany the fish together with a large bag of "nibbles" but had nothing else. Word was then sent out to the chauffeur in the car park that extra provisions were required and he was sent on his way to the local supermarket to acquire the necessary salads and soft drinks.

Lunch was taken and warmly appreciated. I had lunch in the MPV with the chauffeur, who filled me in on the family and its history. This family was one of the oldest in England and the father, Jeremy, could trace his ancestors back to Elizabeth I. He was a member of the House of Lords, although this was soon to be terminated as the hereditary peers were being phased out. The family lived in London but their "seat" was in Yorkshire, where they owned a large estate. The chauffer, whilst based in London, was frequently dispatched to the north for shooting weekends. Like most of the household the family had employed him since he was a boy.

After lunch the family resumed fishing with mother now taking part. Once the BBQ had been cleaned and the crockery and cutlery washed and tidied away I rejoined them by the lake. The afternoon went well, with everyone catching fish on a regular basis, so I was kept

busy unhooking and dispatching fish, untangling leaders and generally pointing them in the right direction,

About 3.00 the daughter arrived. She attended a local private school and had been to extra lessons on the Saturday morning. She did not wish to fish but just to lie on the grass in front of lodge as the sun was now quite warm. Shortly after 3.00 we stopped for tea and cakes, a rich fruit cake which mother had made herself.

During the refreshment break I suggested that as we had had a late start to the day's fishing that we could fish on beyond the usual finishing time of 6.00. I was not going home as we were together for the weekend. My caravan was in the car park, so I had no travelling to do and all I needed to do was to wander to the local chip shop for my evening meal. A pint on the way home and Saturday evening was complete.

By about 5.00 there was something of a family conference the result of which it was decided that it was indeed time to go. They had had a great day's fishing in a wonderful setting and an invigorating soak in the bath before dinner would round off the day perfectly. Their hotel was about 30 minutes' drive from the fishery and they had booked dinner, it being the weekend at a popular venue.

As they were loading up the car I suggested that, as they had only fished for part of the day, why did they not start a little earlier the following day? I was staying on site, so it did not bother me. They thanked me for the offer and thought it was a good idea as they were going back to London the following evening. A picnic lunch had been ordered for the Sunday from the hotel, so the BBQ would not be required again.

So, at 5.50 prompt, they swept out of the car park and on their way to their hotel, delighted after a day in the countryside. All we had to do now was pray for some decent weather the next day and I could consider the weekend a success.

(to be continued)

AM

AUTUMN AUCTION

Thursday 18th October

Doesn't time fly! We are already nearly full of lots for the next Auction, which will be at our Patcham HQ as usual on Thursday evening 18th October, and the catalogue is already under way with some tasty lots from donated material.

If you haven't already sent your entries in, please don't be offended if they are declined for this auction as there is not a lot of space left!

If you have entries, these should be sent to Roy Gurney but if they are unable to be included this time then we should be able to include them in next Spring's auction.

You can download an entry form from the website www.sussexflydressers.org.uk or get one by ringing Roy on 01273 581519 or e-mail fdgsussex@gmail.com.

Chairman's Chat

Good news - I don't have a lot to say this month. What with struggling at Carp on the Fly and the hot weather, things could have been better.

On the bright side, the weather ensured that we would not be interrupted by rain at the Children's Day at Ardingly. Thanks to the sterling work of Barry Markham, Dave Walker, Brian Hendry and Phil Ellis, it all went well, with many of the 2,500 children enjoying our presentation.



Dave Walker giving them the spiel

We got the children (and teachers) tying knots in pheasant tail feather fibres to represent the joints in the legs of Daddy Long Legs (Crane flies - frustration all round !

Anyway the day was a great success; the children enjoyed it as did our team. We even had time to criticise our colleagues on the S & T display, right in front of us.

Why not have a go yourselves next year; the kids are an enjoyable audience with lots of interesting questions ?

Tony W

And here is another take on the report in the Chairman's Chat from Phillip Ellis:

Connect with The Countryside

Every year the South of England Agricultural Society organises an invitation for a group of pupils aged 10 from each school in the region to come to the showground for a day in July to be introduced to the countryside. This is a very well organised event for two and a half thousand children! They are led around the showground in groups for each school and not just left to run anywhere. We get no opportunity to look at all the demonstrations shown to the children, but we can see Birds of Prey, Hedge Laying, Horse Riding and Gun Dogs. Perhaps the most enjoyable event for them is the "Sheep Show" which is pure entertainment!

The SEAS are a charity and arrange a number of events each year.

Our branch supports this event each year and we have a small stand, talking to the schools explaining how our flies catch fish and imitate the natural insect.



This year, branch members demonstrating were Brian Hendry, Dave Walker, Phillip Ellis with our chairman Tony Woolnough keeping an eye on the children. Brian does a brilliant job explaining in a few minutes what we are and we explain the insect we are imitating, Daddy Long Legs being the favourite. We do get a few amusing questions - "Is it real?"- and many children want to stroke our capes.



Next to our stand is the Sussex branch of the Salmon & Trout Conservation UK who explain fly fishing and some of the basic elements of casting in about 10 minutes for each group, letting a few have a go.



A busy day but very rewarding which ended with a light meal for all the volunteers in the Norfolk Pavilion.

PE

Letter (and photo) to the Editor from Aldo Orlando , one of our Italian fly-tying friends who support us at iFISH

This morning I read the newsletter and it was with deep sadness I became aware of Brian's decease. I clearly remember my first trip to Wherwell when Paul arranged for me a meeting with Brian in Brighton. The travel with Brian was pleasant and when we finally meet with Paul on the water we enjoyed a day together as good old friends (note was the very first time we three meet together!). My memory of Brian is of a man who enjoyed deeply the outdoors, the company of other persons, being quiet and emotional at the same time. He will be dearly missed by me too. From the deep of my hearth,

Aldo Orlando



**CONGRATULATIONS!
to JIM HARRIS**

who has been awarded Runner-up in the Prize Winners' trout fly tying competition of the Flydressers' Guild, the fly being the Kingsmill, designed by T.C. Kingsmill Moore.

A belated "Thank you"

Thanks to lack of space (and the failing memory of the Editor!) Tony Harrison has been frustrated in getting his article published which expresses his gratefulness to all the helpers at the Spring Auction. He particularly wishes to thank Mike Humphreys, who made a round trip of some 200+ miles despite recent surgery, to support us and our vendors, and helping to boost our funds. The main source of the substantial contribution to the Branch funds came from a combination of generous donations of items from members and non-members, together with some judicious purchases by Tony – plus many hours of sorting by Tony into lots.

He would like to thank the following donors for their astonishing generosity and support: Paul Davis, Wayne Duerden, Roy Gurney, Graham Gunter, Ted How, Bill Smith, Ian Macgregor, Bill

Mephram, Tony Standen, Alan Wells and Nathan Winter – you made a real difference.

Just in case you think Tony has the rest of the Summer off, he is already working on the Autumn Auction, with nearly 200 lots to date!

Carp on the Fly

Saturday 21st was a very warm sunny day but carp, unlike trout in these conditions, still seem to want to feed. The morning session was a little slow, although Tony W & Bill Smith seemed to have the method taped, using cork flies of exquisite design to haul in 5 or 6 each before midday! The rest of us gradually started catching up, with Brian Hendry doing well up in his quiet corner and Andy Wood using a novel technique of a Zulu fished amongst biscuits to hook a good number of fish.

After a lunch punctuated by modest commentary on the 'scores' from Tony and Bill, we resumed the fray with the carp becoming a little less reticent. Wayne gradually sorted his technique out and ended the day with 16 fish including two over 11 lb. Bill Black also ended the day in double figures and Brian H followed closely with eight.

However, all this numbers talk belittles the main point about the day, which was that it was great fun, with plenty of banter and fantastic weather. Thanks to Keith for keeping his fishery and his fish in great condition.

Alan Wells

(N.B. – due to lack of space, photos will be in next newsletter – Ed.)

Grayling Fishing on the Test

So far we have only **two** showing interest, so we have not yet booked anything. We are still hoping to get a party organised – **BUT WE NEED YOUR COMMITMENT!** Once we have a few more takers, a date can be firmed up.

This is a wonderful opportunity to experience the most prized chalk stream fishing for the bargain price of £45..

Get in touch with Roy Gurney on 01273 581519 or e-mail fdgsussex@gmail.com as soon as possible.

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