

# **The Flydressers Guild**

## **Sussex Branch**



### **Newsletter**

**April 2021**

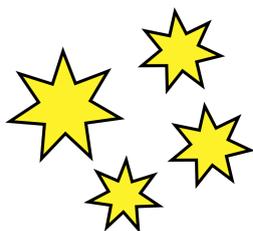
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Flydressers Guild

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### **Important Announcement**

Roy Gurney has announced that he is standing down from his various duties with the Sussex Flydressers Branch of the Guild. This no doubt will allow Roy to spend more time on his other interests.

Thank you Roy.

Paul Bond, with the help of Allan Middleton has put together the following article about Roy's activities with the club.

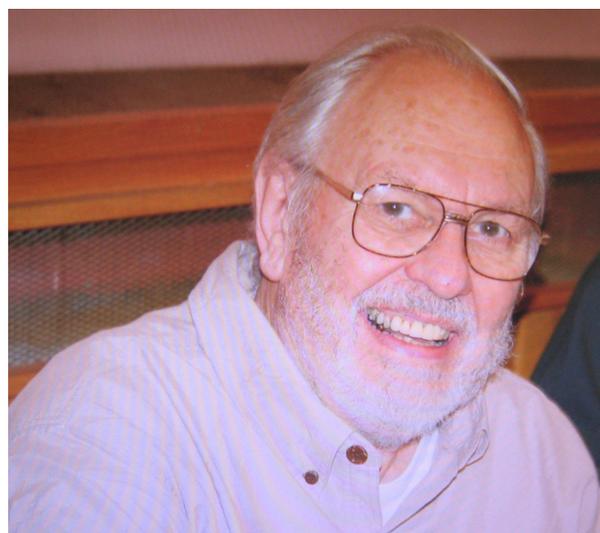
### **Roy Gurney**

**and**

### **Sussex Fly Dressers Guild**

**by Paul Bond**

When I joined the Branch back in the late 1990's, one of the first people to introduce himself was the then Chairman, Roy Gurney. Roy was then, and always has been a stalwart and massive part of the Sussex Branch life.



Having settled into the beginners tying classes, over the early weeks I began to get to know Roy more as he would collect the subs each week, and then would come and rob me of money towards the rod raffle tickets that we all know and love! Things did not get better either, because there were club competitions or outings to be paid for, Roy would again extract money in the nicest possible way. And so, I settled into Branch life, having money extracted on a regular basis!

Roy was a big part of the Branch. He had been involved in its activities throughout the 1980's, and became the first point of contact for most people introduced to the Branch, becoming Chairman in 1996. At the time, membership was around the 40-50 mark. He arranged the shows we participated at, sorting out volunteers and kit, at committee he was a sound voice making the

running of them smooth, he mediated the discussions and decisions. He was the engine room, smooth running with no vibration.

For my sins, and perhaps novice experience of fishing larger waters, during my first year with the Branch, I signed up to the Bewl Charity Pairs, being paired up with the then Secretary. Somehow, I agreed to become the Branch Secretary and following that year's AGM, this led me to see another part of the Branch, and Roy, at Committee meetings.

Roy stepped down as Chairman to become editor in 2001, superseded by a number of well-known faces from our Branch – Alan Middleton, John Plowman and our current Chair, Tony Woolnough. He was however back into the officer role of Treasurer within a couple of years, whilst maintaining the editor role that he has retained until very recently, providing an essential means of contact for Branch members and the wider contacts. The treasurer role he did until 2017 keeping check (no pun) on our books for many years.

Its fair to surmise that the Branch owes a great deal to Roy, who is without doubt so passionate about it that he would do anything to ensure all matters were dealt with as they arose. Its also fair to say that some committee meetings would get a little excitable to times! One of our most important milestones was when we had to relinquish the use of the Sportsman annex at Withdean, Roy was instrumental in finding a new venue, and managed to not only get us one of the first shouts on the newly built Patcham Community Centre, but also joined the centre committee to ensure we were at the front of all things about this new venue and its development

Anyone who has joined the Branch will without doubt know of Roy and perhaps seen his influence of the greatness it became. His stepping down after all these years should be recorded in the Branch archives. The Branch would not be what it is today without the massive influence of Roy Gurney.

## Chairman's Chat

I am a climate "look warmer" i.e. undecided. Two things worry I) we are coming out of a small ice

age and 2) sea level rise, given that the sea is not level.

By co-incidence I was asked to carry out an investigation into sea level change on the Sussex

coast to inform the design of sea defences ( another story).

I found a number of problems:

1) How can static sea water levels be measured ? What records are there ?

2) The sea slopes; The highest recorded sea levels were found to be 2.7 m OD (metres above ordnance datum) at Southampton and 0.7 m at Pevensey both compared to Newhaven. So the sea level slopes from Southampton to Pevensey by 2.0 m !!

3) Secular variation (SV) – the reaction of the UK land mass (going down in Sussex) following the melting of the ice at the end of the last ice age, which is still going on.

4) Spring tides

5) Surge due to metrological conditions (low air pressure)

6) Large waves caused by the distance waves have travelled (the fetch).

7) Swash heights – the height of waves running up the beach (breaking).

Like me, I expect many of you reading this have already given up your will to live, anyway after combining all these factors (which in itself is very complicated) and identifying the factors which can coincide – the answer is – as they say on the TV, **the sea level is "rising" 4 mm pa in Sussex** mainly due to SV. Note - no mention of global warming.

**Tony W**



and I had some squarer bits of foam which I found easier to handle than the round edged booby cord. Hope this is of some use for anyone tempted to tie with the ducks arse stuff. I'm just hoping I finally get to use the loads of grayling flies I tied, sometime later this year.



Alan Wells

### Hackling Hacks.

One of the things I find enjoyable about Alan Middleton's tying demonstrations on a Thursday night is his healthy & hilarious cynicism for what he sees as "fashionable" trends in fly tying and their exploitation. He has recently reserved a fair amount of this invective for the use of CDC and the extortionate prices charged for gear to deal with it, particularly by the likes of Marc Petitjean. I did manage to find some cheaper ways around his £40 "magic" sets used to create dubbing loop materials, when I was attempting to tie small grayling flies with CDC dubbed collar hackles last autumn, before a sadly cancelled outing to the Lower Itchen. As always a trawl of the internet is usually worthwhile in these situations and this was no exception. You can get away with using simple office bulldog clips to clasp CDC fibres as shown in this Youtube clip by Dave Downie <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5voux4zD3e0> – be patient and wait beyond the huge pike fly he starts with, as the later part of the video is more useful for trout flies

However, I did find that having a **see through** clip did have its advantages in judging the length of fibres you had managed to trap, so I did invest in a Stonfo dubbing clip but this was far better value at around £8.99 .



Dave's use of a booby foam cylinder to trap both sides of a CDC plume together is a good wrinkle

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**Bewl bank fishing.**

Now that Arlington has closed the opportunities for reservoir fishing are limited. Several years ago I was a regular bank angler at Bewl. The reservoir is so large that walking around it is not an option so you must choose your location wisely at the start of your day.

With this in mind the following are my recommendations depending on wind directions.  
 -Wind NW TO NE. Seven pound Creek.  
 -Wind N to E. Rosemary lane to Goose Creek and beyond or Rosemary lane to Tinkers Marsh. On the dam when fishing is allowed  
 -Wind SE to S. Ferry point to Nature Reserve. South bank at Rosemary lane.  
 -Wind SW to W. Dunsters Bay to Ferry point.

All of the above are easily accessible from anglers' parking places. The rest of Bewl banks require more of a walk to reach them.

These local names will probably mean nothing to you so have a map of Bewl in front of you and I will describe them.

Using Google maps locate Bewl with the A21 road running diagonally across the top right corner  
<https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@51.0637623,0.3803411,13.5z>

You will see that the reservoir has a dam top right and three arms of water. These are ; Hook Straight on the left; the nature reserve in the centre; and Bewl Straight on the right. At the extreme right you will see a minor road crossing a causeway over the reservoir. This is Rosemary Lane. Parking is available on the causeway. Moving westwards along the north bank from Rosemary lane there is a large inlet with a stream entering. This is Goose Creek. There is deep water around the southern end of Goose Creek. Much of the reservoir bank west of Goose Creek is inaccessible due to bankside trees.

Moving westwards on the south bank from Rosemary lane is fishable for a short distance to the entrance to Tinker's Marsh. This corner can Driving along Rosemary lane southwards you meet the B2087. Turn right and then take the next right turn along Tinkers lane to "Three Leg Cross". Here turn right again back towards the reservoir along Huntley Mill Rd. Keep on this road until it ends.

On your right you will be at an anglers car park called "Dunsters" (If you enlarge the Google map all these details will be visible).

You are now at Dunsters Bay. Walk around the bay by keeping to the path. At low water it is tempting to wade across the end of the bay.

**DO NOT !! IT IS DANGEROUS.**

When you reach the west side of Dunsters you now have some of the best bank fishing of Bewl when the wind is cooperating. You can walk and fish all the way to Ferry point and then into the nature reserve. There is a line of buoys that mark the no fishing area of the reserve.

Finally, Seven Pound Creek. Park in the main anglers' car park and walk westwards along the bank. The first fishable bank you come to is Seven Pound Creek. It shows on the map as a finger of water pointing to the west. All the north side is good fishing and you can walk around to the point on the south side and fish on along the north bank of Hook Straight. The south bank of the creek is not fishable.

Tickets can be purchased at the fishing lodge or on line if you do not wish to visit the lodge before fishing.

When you enter the main gate you will be asked to pay an entrance fee. Simply tell the gatekeeper that you are fishing. You will not be charged.

When you are parking at Dunsters or Rosemary lane please remember that your car will be left for a long time in a secluded place perhaps until after dark so make sure it is secure and no valuables are visible.

Tight lines and please contact me if you need any more help or even company at the bankside.

**John Plowman**  
**email: [johnfplowman@gmail.co](mailto:johnfplowman@gmail.co)**



**Zoom and all that**

Because of the lockdown during the covid pandemic we were not allowed to have our regular Thursday evenings together at Patcham, so in an attempt to keep the spirit of the branch alive during the winter months it was decided that we would embrace technology and embark on a series of "virtual" meetings via the Zoom platform. From the end of September through to Christmas we had weekly meetings of fly tying together. The format was fairly simple. We tied three flies each evening, one directed at beginners, from the bronze syllabus, one for intermediate from the silver syllabus and finally one for the more advanced from the gold syllabus. The sessions took about 90 minutes in all and everyone was encouraged to tie along.

This format seemed to be well received with a regular group of members logging in to each session. Some weeks we had 16 members logging in to watch or participate

The downside of it all was the quality of the images and the lighting around the camera, which was just a bog standard web cam. At this point Mike Guest came onboard to assist. Mike is responsible for the branch web site and is very knowledgeable on all things video. As we progressed through the sessions we did manage to improve the quality each week but we never achieved what we wanted. We recorded the sessions to keep a record of our efforts.

After the Christmas break we had a change of tactic in that instead of tying specific flies we concentrated on techniques. Each week we looked at a different aspect of tying a fly. One week we just did different types of tail, the next we did hackles and so on. Again we recorded the sessions but there was no significant improvement in the quality.

Mike and I tried a short experiment using my High Definition Camcorder. This produced a much better image but we could not link the camcorder to the Zoom system. We then embarked on repeating the technique sessions using the camcorder and a better lighting system to produce a respectable image.

When we had assembled all of the clips Mike then edited the videos and did a lot of post

production work to produce a finished article.

Now we have finished the on line sessions we have published the finished videos for all to see.

Just log on to you tube on the web; type in **sussex flydressers guild** and you will see a series of videos we have produced.

We hope you will enjoy them and even get some benefit from them.

My thanks go to Simon and the committee for financing the Zoom licence and to Mike who turned an amateur home video into a Hollywood blockbuster.

**Alan Middleton**



#### **Non Fly Tying highlights of Thursdays Zoom meetings**

While Alan has talked about the Zoom meetings in the article above . Our thanks goes to Alan Middleton who was able to offer us a fly tying programme for the winter period. As well as learning about fly tying we were treated to some spectacular views of the Aurora Borealis thanks to Sally and Roy who joined us every week from Caithness, wood working tips from John Plowman, and a range of scenic backgrounds that Phillip Ellis used.

It is hoped that with relaxation of the Covid rules and regulations, our normal meetings will restart in September.

**Simon Rickard**

## **I would like to wish everyone a very**



## **Happy Easter and lots of fish. Tight lines.**