



Sussex Branch Newsletter



NOVEMBER 2003

The British Fly Fair 2003



Our Chairman, Alan Middleton, shows his skills

The Flydressers' Guild attended the first British Fly Fair, which was held at Trentham Gardens near Stoke on 18–19th October. The two-day event was dedicated to fly tying and fly-fishing and attracted some of the top fly tyers in Europe.

The guest tyers were on raised platforms down two sides of the hall, which made watching them tie flies very easy. The show was well attended by both the public and the trade, and there was plenty for everyone who had an interest in tying flies. Examples of both fresh and salt water patterns abounded - everything from size 20 nymphs to fully dressed salmon flies on size 4/0 hooks could be seen. The trade stands were fully equipped with all of the latest materials for those who wanted to imitate the techniques on display.

The standard of the guests was truly awesome; it was really amazing what can be done with fur feather and thread. These were craftsmen of the highest order and they held the viewing public spellbound for the whole of the two days.

This show has set a new standard in this type of event. Just to have been there was a pleasure and when it is repeated, as it must be, you are well advised to be there. All of the hard work of Steve Thornton and Steve Cooper was amply rewarded with a memorable weekend.



Keen interest on the North-West Group stand

Report by
Alan Middleton

CHARLES JARDINE 20th November

Our speaker this month is the renowned writer, artist, fisherman – what else is he?? - Charles Jardine, who will talk about some of his fishing experiences and demonstrate the tying of some of his famous patterns. It promises to be a memorable evening, and Tony Herbert has agreed to provide a screen projection of the tying demonstration so all can see clearly.

Change of speaker for December

Due to an unexpected call to fish in South America, Malcolm Greenhalgh has had to postpone his projected visit in December. He is now planning to come in March and we are also trying to fix for him to hold a master class possible following our dinner when that date is

known. Fortunately **TERRY GRIFFITH** has agreed to be our guest on **December 11th** and we look forward to an entertaining evening with him, hearing of his fishing adventures and no doubt some of the trials and tribulations of being editor of the "Flydresser". Apart from fishing and editing, Terry is a superb photographer, and is responsible for the splendid display boards evident at our stands at various shows.

AGM – 4th December

With this newsletter you will receive notice of the AGM and the minutes of last year's AGM. Please make every effort to come along as this is your opportunity to voice your opinions on the running of the Branch and requests for future activities.

Following the AGM will be quiz to enable you to air your knowledge and perhaps win a prize!

SUBSCRIPTIONS –WARNING !!!

If you have not paid your subscription by the end of November, no further copies of this newsletter, the "Flydresser" or other information on the activities Guild or Branch will be sent to you.. A letter and renewal form is enclosed for those who have not yet paid, and we hope that you will keep up your valued membership.

You are reminded that voting at the A.G.M. is restricted to paid-up members, but those paying on the night are eligible, so bring it along with you!

Similarly, participation in Branch competitions, outings, etc, are also restricted – except, of course, "open" events such as the Auction and speakers' evenings.

FISHING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

by John Plowman

With both of us having just reached age 60 my fishing friend Ian and I booked a fishing holiday in British Columbia for the last week of August 2003. Our travel company was called "BC Fishing Ltd." whom I had contacted after seeing an article in this newsletter. After a long flight in a big plane and a shorter flight in a much smaller plane we arrived at Campbell River on Vancouver Island in the late afternoon.. Other members of our party had arrived earlier from different airports in the UK. There were eight of us in total. We were to fish two rivers: the Campbell and its tributary the Quinsum. Both rivers are gin clear, fast flowing but not especially deep when we were there. The Quinsum could be fished easily without wading but in the Campbell waders gave access to much more water as many of the banks were tree lined. Although shallow, the speed of the Campbell made wading into more than two feet of water hazardous. The rivers both had beds of large round stones from tennis ball size to small boulders.

In addition to rainbow and cutthroat trout, three species of Pacific salmon were available: Pink- up to 6lb, Coho- up to 15lb, Chinook (or King) - up to 50lb. We asked the chap in the fishing shop what happens if you hook a Chinook on a fly in the river? "You lose all your tackle" was his reply!

On our first morning we were taken to the Quinsum hatchery where they rear 12 million salmon each year. Here was our first chance to appreciate the quality of the fishing for in the stream leading into the hatchery were salmon in their hundreds simply waiting for the sluices to open. These upper reaches of the Quinsum seem to hold more fish than water!

After about 30 minutes we had all had enough of watching fish, so a quick drive downstream to the fishable parts of the river and out came the rods - and the first salmon about 10 minutes later! The first, and only, bear crossed 15 yds downstream about 15 minutes after.

A 4lb pink salmon once downstream will put a serious bend in a 9 weight rod and a fighting butt is essential.

The week went on like this. If you really tried you could catch 30 salmon a day easily. We chose not to be quite such fishmongers and would take one or two from a section of river and then move on. On the fourth day Ian and I were fishing the lower reaches of the Campbell having success with Pinks when I hooked into an obviously better fish. I kept screwing down the disc drag on my System 2 but eventually I had no more drag to apply and the fish did not even slow down. Away went all the fly line and probably 80 yards of Orvis backing before it turned, this time to repeat the line stripping process upstream. A third run back downstream had the fish below Ian who was about 50 yards below me. The tired fish turned once more upstream but came very close to Ian who put down his own rod and grabbed its tail. It was a fine fresh run Chinook 34.5 inches long and estimated by a local angler to be around 20lb. We photographed and returned it to the river. It turned out to be the best fish of the week by our party although another Chinook was hooked but this time the fish won.

The rest of the week continued in a similar way. Ian hooked a good Coho but mostly we caught Pinks. The Coho and Chinooks run up the river later in the season. Truly a holiday of a lifetime and like someone said before "I'll be back".

Warning 1. The Campbell eats flies. You need to put the fly



Ian on the Campbell

in front of the fish which are lying on the bottom. This requires a very fast sink tip line made from a WF9 floater with 5ft of lead cored trolling line followed by a 2ft leader of 10-15lb nylon. It is a pig to cast but casts of more than 15yds are rarely needed. The flies are generally egg patterns tied on very heavy single barbless hooks. If you did not lose 10 flies a day then you were not fishing deep enough!

Warning 2. Expensive thin-walled lightweight rods break. On the first day a Sage and a Hardy were both snapped by fish. My big fish was caught on an old 9 weight Daiwa with a Kevlar wrap - I even managed to break this on the last day when pulling a small Pink upstream on the Quinsum. Eight anglers managed to break four rods in a week on fish that generally did not exceed 5-6lb. Similarly with lines; with such short leaders it is easily possible to snag the end of the fly line under a boulder. Result: the fly line snaps. Fortunately it was a John Norris cheapo but it had served me well.

Ian and I are planning to return in 2005 and if anybody else wants to sample Canadian fishing then I'll be happy to help. I estimate the total cost was £1600 each for our seven days. Most of this was the air fair and extra days would probably cost less than £100 per day. Very good value compared with salmon fishing in Scotland or Ireland. Is there anywhere in the UK where you can catch more than 100 salmon in a week?

For further info, contact John Plowman on 01825 762975 or Email: beehives@btinternet.com

King Salmon



p.m on the Campbell



CHARITY PAIRS

One of our members, Jim White, has a 6-year-old niece called Milly (holding no. 6 in the photo), who had a brain tumour successfully removed at the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital at the age of two. When she recovered, she was sent to Lapland by the charity When You Wish Upon a Star. This year our donation of £103 raised by this event has gone to these two charities, thus taking the final total to over £6000. Most of this money was raised by a sponsored walk, and the family has been overwhelmed by the support of everyone concerned, and would like to thank John Cooper and all members who took part in the Bewl Charity Pairs Competition.



AUCTION REPORT

This year's auction was attended by some 55 persons, and we welcomed several non-members to this event. Mike Humphreys again masterfully extracted - painfully at times - bidders' cash, which seemed to be reluctant to leave their wallets! However there were some good bargains to be had, with prices in general disappointingly low.

Despite the rush to get set up on time, due to the restrictions of hiring times and lack of suitable tables for display, the evening went well and we were able to finish within reasonable hours.

The turnover for the evening was in excess of £1425, with a nett profit to the Branch of over £145. Many thanks to all who helped, especially Mike and the untiring efforts of the porters and clerks. It is a lot of hard work for modest financial return, but a very enjoyable event.

Maybe the recent upheaval over venues had some effect on numbers - last year there were over 75 attending - or the change of dates. Now we are in our new headquarters, we can make it a regular date and utilise the better facilities.

ROD RAFFLE

Throughout the tying season we invite members to participate in a raffle for a top quality rod, plus many other high quality items of tackle. The draw is made at the Annual Dinner in April. Tickets are £1 a go, and Jack Jupp will be pleased to relieve you of your dosh every tying night!

SPREADING THE WORD

A number of our members enter - and often win! - competitions such as Troutmasters, etc. It has been suggested that when they enter, they acknowledge membership of Sussex Flydressers to raise the profile of the Branch. Now go out and win the lot!!!

Chairman's Chat Lines

Our annual auction was another triumph for the branch. A lively evening was had by all and it made a fitting end to our tenancy at Withdean. I have not the final figures but I understand that about £1500 changed hands during the course of the evening. Thank you to all those who worked behind the scenes and to those who contributed to the sale of goods.

Our next special event is the AGM, another riveting evening, although it should improve once the business is completed as we hope to hold a short quiz for those who attend. We repeat this on several occasions but it cannot be emphasised too much when we say that this is your opportunity to have your say on the running of the branch. All of the officers are volunteers and are anxious to have feedback from the membership. The AGM is not the time to sit tongue-tied at the back of the room and then to grumble because it has not delivered what you want.

If you care to review the accounts for the previous year you will see that we have recovered from a loss in the year 2001/2002. This means that the branch has a healthy basis with which to go forward. I am sure that Phil will elaborate on this matter at the meeting.

Our classes have successfully transferred to the Patcham Community Centre. The Beginners' Class is once again well attended but we could do with more involvement in the other classes. We have produced a complete syllabus for the Intermediate and Advanced classes and are somewhat disappointed with the response. Maybe we have got this wrong. Tell us about it at the AGM!!

We continue to invite top line speakers to the branch and indeed I am asked by a number of the speakers on the circuit when they can come to Sussex. Our reputation for the support given to these events is nationwide now. Paul Bond has been working hard to book only the best for us in the coming months.

See you at the AGM - and that is definite!

BIG FISH TROPHIES

Still time to get those entries in! Paul Bond is anxious to get his records straight, so let him or Roy Gurney have your entries now.

The categories are:

Best fish from Sussex water (Peter West Trophy)

Best fish from Sussex reservoir, including Bewl Water (Members' Plate)

Best brown trout from any Sussex water (Brown Trout Trophy).

Best brown trout from any Sussex reservoir or river.

Entries with details of weight, venues, date caught and witness to Paul Bond or Roy Gurney. The season for brown trout is March 1st to October 31st and the rainbow season ends December 31st.

COOKING THE CATCH!

It has been suggested that it might be of interest to some to have favourite recipes passed on for the enjoyment of all. As a starter (of the series that is), Aubrey Wooton suggests:

Piquant stuffed trout (serves two)

2 medium trout (or more likely one of the size we catch) gutted and cleaned

15 g (½ oz) almonds, coarsely chopped

50 g (2 oz) fresh white breadcrumbs

1 tablespoon chopped parsley

Grated rind and juice of half a lemon

1 egg, beaten

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

150 ml (¼ pint) white wine

½ teaspoon dried tarragon

25 g (1 oz) flaked almonds

15 g (½ oz) butter

Place the trout in a shallow ovenproof dish. Mix the chopped almonds in a bowl with the breadcrumbs, parsley, lemon rind and juice. Bind together with the egg. Season to taste and use to stuff the cavities of the trout.

Mix the white wine and dried tarragon together and pour over the trout. Fry the flaked almonds in a small pan in the melted butter and sprinkle over the trout. Cover with greased aluminium cooking foil and bake in a moderate oven (180-350°), gas mark 4) for 20 minutes. Remove the foil and cook for a further 10 minutes.

Aubrey adds that you can also use trout cutlets (*and therefore presumably fillets? – you can tell I'm no cook - Ed.*)

Bon appetit!

BRANCH CLOTHING, etc.

Jim White, our Equipment Officer, has some stock of clothing with the Branch logo. The following (all size XL) are available from stock, subject to prior sale, but other sizes and patterns can be ordered. More caps (one size fits all) are on order at £10 – very popular, so place your order now!!

Red T-shirts	£ 9
Black Fleece	£23
Bottle green Polo Shirts	£12
Navy blue Polo Shirts	£12
Sweatshirts (Red, Navy, Green)	£18

If you require a different size, or perhaps a different design from the catalogue, with our logo, let Jim know with payment and he will place orders with the supplier.

Also available are Guild car stickers, buttonhole badges etc and, subject to prior sale, Wheatley fly-boxes @ £7.50 each – more can be ordered if required – and Griffiths dubbing boxes at £8.50 each – great value!

—AND FINALLY—
**HAVE YOU RENEWED
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?**

“CLASSIFIEDS”

Let us have your ads !!. Just ring Roy on 01273 506184 or e-mail at roygurney@ntlworld.com to place your ad.

Several years' back numbers of *Trout Fisherman*, *Trout & Salmon*, *Fly Fishing & Fly Tying*, etc. Rather than throw them away, is anyone interested? (You don't have to take them all!!). Ring Roy on 01273 506184

Gazebo for hire: The Branch has acquired a gazebo, 10' x 10' (or 3m x 3m if you have gone metric!) with four walls, two with windows. If any member wishes to use this for a week-end for a garden party, barbecue etc, it can be hired for a £10 a time donation to Branch funds. It goes without saying that it is subject to return in the same condition as it started. Contact Alan Middleton (in whose care it is) or Roy Gurney if you are interested – at least one member has taken advantage of this offer to date.

Architectural Services – RIBA Chartered Architects .

Contact Robert Saunders or Sue Elsom on 01273 727366 .

VIDEO LIBRARY

For the benefit of newcomers (and to refresh the memories of older ones) we have a fishing video library available to all members, free of charge. See Jack Jupp who brings a huge suitcase full of some 32 titles on tying nights.

GAME FAIR 2004 – BLENHEIM

A reminder that Paul Bond is arranging the usual coach trip to next year's Game Fair at Blenheim Palace on **24th July 2004**. Make a note in your diary and register your interest and/or book now with Paul on **01273 420410**.

Footnote:

Delighted to hear from one of our long-serving members and ex-treasurer, John McBride, and especially that he is recovering from last year's bout of ill-health. He relates that going to the post one day in Preston Road (not one of the best shopping centres!) he saw displayed in a shop window a pair of men's braces decorated on the broad straps with fly-fishing flies. Naturally he dashed in and paid his £8.99 for something he was looking for any way, but it remains a mystery why a showroom of a timber merchant has braces displayed in its window devoted to brass handles, door furniture, etc! An ideal present for the fisher who has everything, however, so go along to Alsford's in Preston Road!

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Chairman:	Alan Middleton	01273 493473
Secretary:	Paul Bond	01273 420410
Membership		
Secretary:	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

