



Sussex Branch Newsletter



APRIL 2007

TROUTMASTERS

Congratulations to **CHRIS CROUCHER** who has reached the final of the Troutmasters' competition by winning the Chalk Springs round. Chris's weights were 3 lb, 3 lb, 2 lb and 9 lb 8 oz, totalling 17 lb 8 oz plus a time bonus of 5 lb for finishing by 12 o'clock. We wish him success in the final at Graffham.

PROGRAMME of EVENTS & OUTINGS 2007

Just a few additions/alterations:

11th May Casting Clinic – Patcham
24th September Duncton Day Cancelled

CASTING CLINIC Thursday 11th May

A casting clinic will be held on the playing fields in front of Patcham House (opposite "The Black Lion"). Albert Horne will demonstrate how to cast a full line with what appears to be a mere flick of the wrist, and our other instructors will try to correct all those casting faults you will have uncovered so far this season! We will start soon after 6.30 pm, and continue till the light fades. Just bring your rod and line and improve your skills.

TONY WOOLNOUGH

Our March speaker, being "home grown" attracted a good audience of members, but sadly few guests, who missed a very entertaining and informative presentation on the works carried out by a fisheries engineer. The intricacies of fish-pass design and construction were explained in terms which even your editor could understand and the illustrations of works completed were eye-opening.

Tony's designs are tailor made for each and every situation, and the crowning glory is the unique pass for the Cardiff Barrage – a revolutionary design for a particularly difficult problem, and which must have caused a few heart flutters when it was finally installed – it is not often that a £6 million project uses completely new untried technology. What a testament to Tony's expertise!

Nonetheless we have cause to be grateful for his efforts much closer to home, as half a dozen or more fish passes in Sussex are down to him – Barcombe, Rother and Ouse to name a few.

He also showed very interesting slides of big scale (very, very big scale!) fisheries developments filmed on his bursary visit to USA.

We are indebted to Phil Waller for the following article which we hope will be the first of many

SPRING FEVER

It's now March (or even April!) and we are all thinking about a days fishing! First things first - we make sure all our kit is up to standard and of course all oiled up and ready to go (that's the reels not the fisherman). Just before setting out give a thought to both fisherman of the past and the wild life you may see at this time of the year.

Back in the early 1800's our brothers of the art would have used horse-hair line and a simple brass reel. These old reels may well have been fixed onto the rod with a simple spike and a securing nut. The spike would go through a hole in the rod and then be screwed tight with the locking nut. The line, being made of horse hair, would have to be soaked in a secret tonic to stop it from rotting and of course the lengths joined together. To give the line extra strength it would be twisted with other strands. The great thing is the reel acted as a line store and would only be wound in at the end of the day.

The reel shown is named "Kelly of Dublin" and is in very good condition for its age. So when out fishing give these old chaps a thought.



Now get looking around you and see if you can see the tadpoles swimming about. Last Sunday I saw mother frog in a pond just checking up on her spawn. To see that on a warm spring day gives you

a buzz. So please now get out there and catch a fish or two and send in a photo for us all to see.



Tight Lines

Phil Waller.

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT LINES

Fishing Etiquette

Now that the new season is upon us and boats will soon be out on our local reservoirs it is timely to remind ourselves of the rules of good behaviour. The stocking levels in the larger waters are significantly less than those of small waters so a reservoir angler may have to cover greater distances to find the fish and will need more space to catch them. This is why most reservoir rules suggest that boats do not come closer than 50yds from a bank angler and bank anglers should try to keep about 30yds apart.

When I fish from a reservoir bank I like to cast and move so that I can fish a larger area of water until I locate the trout. This is difficult when an angler starts fishing very close by. - I was fishing at Arlington in February and placed myself about 30yds from the next angler. To my surprise and displeasure two other fishermen arrived and placed themselves between myself and the next angler. They seemed oblivious to my distress.

In addition to being aware of bank anglers, when on a boat please avoid motoring to close to another boat and in no circumstances motor across the drift line of a fellow fisherman. Last summer while fishing from a boat and casting towards the bank from about 40yds an idiot steered his boat between me and the bank. Fortunately I was using a sinking line so was able to plunge my rod vertically into the water and wind in like crazy. It was not until my irate words reached the offender that he even realised what he had done!

On a more positive note this season looks set for a good start with plenty of clean water so I wish you all "Tight Lines!"

John Plowman.

"Fly Tying for Beginners" & "The Fly-tying Bible" by Peter Gathercole

Each published at £16.99, we can supply either for only **£10.00** per copy. Roy Gurney has a small stock, so contact him now for your copies.

JOHN WATT COMPETITION

New members (and some of the old!) may not be aware of this competition held at Grafham Water at the end of August. This is the 32nd year of the Guild's Annual Fishing Competition that will end with a buffet and prize giving in the lodge. The competition is fished from boats by teams of four Guild members, the winners being the team landing the most fish on the day. The first and second teams plus the anglers with the heaviest bag and the heaviest fish on the day will be presented with annual trophies to be held for one year plus permanent mementos.

This year it is to be held on **Saturday 25th August** and Sussex are aiming to enter two teams, so get your applications in to Chris Nunn as soon as possible. The usual pattern is to go up on the Friday afternoon/evening and stay at a local pub. All you pay is the B&B as the Branch pays the entry fee for the competition and fishing. It is a great opportunity to meet members from all over the country and enjoy a friendly day's fishing at one of the country's top waters.

Last year Sussex came a respectable 7th out of 15, but it should be mentioned that we did win it a couple of years or so ago. For the record, last year's details were:

Position	Team	Number of Fish
1	Lakeland A	30
2	Edinburgh	26
3	N. Kent	25
4	London B	24 (57lb 3oz)
5	London A	24 (56lb 9oz)
6	Congleton	23
7	Sussex	21
8	Lakeland B	14
9	Luggiebank	12
10	Swale A	10
11	S. Cumbria	9
12	Wiltshire Chalk Streams	8
13	Swale B	6
14	Ringwood and District	4
15	Chilterns	0

Trophies:

John Watts Trophy – Lakeland A

Falkirk Shield – Edinburgh

Wessex Trophy – P. Hartley (London B) 7lb 8oz
Brown trout

Hertfordshire Shield – P. McDade (Edinburgh) 12
fish 25lb 13oz

LAGOON BAIT & TACKLE

Discount for Members

Peter Winder has asked me to remind all Branch members that they are entitled to a 10% discount on tackle bought from the shop. Just ensure that you mention you are a member and preferably show your membership card.

FLY-TYING COMPETITION 2007

The winners of this year's competition are: -

Novice: Steve Mustchin

Intermediate: Mark Brown

Open: Jim Harris

We are indebted to Albert Horne for judging this competition, and he expressed his admiration for the high standard, especially of the Novice entrants which were very difficult to choose. He also noted the particularly high standard of the intermediate winner's entry, and a satisfyingly difficult choice with the Open entries, where the runner-up was only a smidgeon behind. Numbers of entries are slowly rising – let's have even more next year – I know there are many of you out there who would be in the running!

ANNUAL DINNER

This year we had some 45 members and guests sit down to dinner at the Dyke Golf Club, whose hospitality was once again superb and the meal first class. The atmosphere was as convivial as ever, and it a surprise that more members do not come to this flagship event of the season – you don't know what you're missing!

Sadly our guest speaker, Jane Percy, a member of the England Ladies Fly-fishing Team, had to cry off for personal reasons and so our chairman, John Plowman, gallantly filled the breach

Once again Jim White, ably abetted by Chris Croucher and Ian Dunk, provided a splendid range of prizes for the raffle and boosted the branch funds by well over £150. What a pity the draw was made after the presentation of trophies – the digital camera could have saved the blushes of yours truly who forgot to bring his!

Trophies, including new replacements for the pairs competitions, a pair of superb cups for each event so that each competitor can do his share of cleaning and polishing, were presented after the dinner as follows:

Peter West Trophy Jim White
(best rainbow from Sussex water)

Brown Trout Cup Tony Harrison
(best brown from Sussex water)

Members' Reservoir Plate Chris Croucher
(best fish from Sussex reservoir)

Frank Darrah Trophy Ian Dunk &
(Bowl pairs) Chris Croucher

Charity Pairs Bowl Tim Cripps &
(Bowl Pairs) Richard Lewin

Branch outing at Duncton

Jimmy James Memorial Trophies (best bag)
Winner Ray Love

Runner-up Peter Winder

Plowman Trophy (Best fish) Richard Lewin
Best brown, etc no entry

Stillwater Challenge

Best fish Chris Croucher
Best bag Chris Croucher

“BIG FISH” COMPETITION

Entries have already started to come in, so let Paul Bond or Roy Gurney have details of your prized capture and see if you can out-gun last year's winners (see report on the Annual Dinner).

2007 ROD RAFFLE

This was drawn at the Social for magnificent prizes with a retail value of about £2000+! The first three main prizes were:

1. Sage 4 pce 9' #6 travel rod (Leif Pigott)
2. Diamondback V&R 9'6" #5 fly rod (Richard Lewin)
3. Sierra reel (Jim White)

The other prizes included:

Snowbee Waldron vice with both pedestal base and C-clamp

Orvis Clearwater Classic rod

Guide landing net

BFR reel

And a host of fly-boxes, lines, capes etc, totalling 23 in all.

What a fantastic array of prizes! Thanks to Bill Smith for gathering them from generous suppliers at trade prices as well as his tireless efforts in extracting contributions before the treasurer could collect fees on tying nights! Remember ALL takings go to purchasing the prizes – this year well in excess of £1200.

Congratulations to the winners – commiserations to the rest – better luck next year.

EQUIPMENT



With this newsletter some of you will find the catalogue of items we have for sale – compiled and produced by Harry Richardson, our Equipment Officer. Those of you who receive the Newsletter by E-mail will not have this, so if you require one, please ring Roy Gurney and he will send one out to you. The catalogue has an order form on the back with details of where to send it.

No excuse now for not providing a corporate image!!

A USEFUL TIP

from Ivan Everest

Ivan comes up with a very useful idea (especially for fumbling, short-sighted oldies like me!). He says:

“Tying flies at the waterside when the light is poor and the eyes are struggling can be a pain in the what’s it. The following suggestion may be helpful to others when the going gets tough and the language colourful!

There are special fly boxes available, but why not adapt a standard slitted foam fly box for easy storage? Position the fly at one end of the box and slide the nylon along the slit with the thumb nail, leaving the loop exposed at the opposite end for easy removal.

A useful tip when required is a short snood (*dropper to those ignorant like your editor!*) looped to the tippet for easier attachment.

Makes the fly fishing less strenuous on the day and might be a useful standby when needed.”



Thanks, Ivan – or I should say Bob – well worth a try! And what a neat fly box!

ENTRIES FOR OUTINGS

Do get your entries in for the various outings this summer. Apart from anything else, some are already fully subscribed, but many are not, and you need to get your name down!

The first is on the 22nd April at Bewl – John is very keen to get more entries, especially as he has to book boats in advance, but more can be added at the last moment if necessary.

The next is the match against our friends of East Sussex SATA at Yew Tree on Bank Holiday Monday, 7th May. SATA already have their team of 12, but so far I am struggling with less than half a dozen takers. Come on, give us some support to retain the trophy we won last year – names to Roy **NOW!!**

Bill’s team for Arlington on 13th May is not complete either, so get your diaries out and make his day too. The organizers of these events put in a great deal of time and effort on your behalf – give them a break!

Kevin Clarke

A long time member who recently rejoined us, Kevin has not been able to come to meetings recently, having had major surgery. We are pleased to hear he is about to re-start fishing and is well on the way to full recovery. Look forward to seeing you soon.

Some thoughts for the day:

*Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day.
Teach a man to fish and he will sit in a boat all day drinking beer.*

Nothing is foolproof to a sufficiently talented fool.

*Light travels faster than sound.
This is why some people appear bright until your hear them speak.*

Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.

*The 50-50-90 rule:-
Any time you have a 50-50 chance of getting something right, there is a 90% probability you will get it wrong.*

A flashlight – a metal tube used to store dead batteries.

*A fine is a tax for doing wrong.
A tax is a fine for doing well.*

The shin bone is a device for finding furniture in the dark.

DEMONSTRATIONS Volunteers wanted!!

No, not the banner-waving type, but our stands at various shows where we give tying demonstrations. We need volunteers to man these – great fun as you get free entry to the show and meet a lot of like-minded people. The more we have, the more time spare to look around the show! You don’t have to be a prizewinner to do that, and it gives you a chance to make a few for yourself (or for sale). Give the organiser or Roy Gurney a call and help out at one or two of those on the programme.

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