



Sussex Branch Newsletter



JUNE / JULY 2007

Arlington Evening - 24th May

For once the weather was kind to us for this annual outing – the conditions were, according to the book, as near perfect as could be expected, and it only needed us to prove the pundits wrong!

Some 14 members fished, some just the evening and some for longer. John Plowman was out “top gun” with six fish, but then he did take all day to do it! His successful fly, fished from a boat, was the Wickhams, whereas his nearest rival, Peter Buss took four, all on a Kate Maclaren, again from a boat. John also managed the biggest catch of bream, arriving at the lodge covered in slime, but not getting a lot of sympathy!

A convivial gathering after fishing managed to reduce our residual stock of beer considerably, to the accompaniment of delicious sandwiches, courtesy of the Village Bakery, Patcham.



Peter Winder talks about nymphs to Mike O'Brien and Harry Atkins



Peter with Steve Mustchin

BRANCH OUTING

Don't forget – let Peter Winder have your entry form now for this outing to:

Lakedown Fishery

Swife Lane, Broad Oak
West Sussex TN21 8UX

on Sunday 16th September

Trophies for best bag, best fish, best brown etc, The cost is £52 which will include a first class buffet lunch (already sampled and approved by one of our members) plus one fish from the specimen lake and three from the other three lakes.

Programme correction

Once again your editor has got it wrong!! The dates for the **South of England Autumn Show and Game Fair** are in fact one week later:

Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th October

Please amend accordingly – maybe it frees you up to help???

DUNCTON MILL

Further to the notification last issue that our Annual Branch Outing would not be held at Duncton, I may have given the impression that Martin and Caroline might have been unfair in making their decision. In fact, it had been clearly said when they took over some three years over that in view of their commitment to their young family and their Christian beliefs, they did not feel corporate or club events on Sundays appropriate. They kindly waived their reservations for our event in view of its long standing, but more and more others have pressed them to make exceptions too and they have decided to stand by their original decision.

We fully respect their position, but in view of the AGM decision that the main Branch Outing should be on a Sunday, your Committee had to make alternative arrangements.

Maybe we can arrange a Saturday outing to Duncton in future years – let your committee know if that is what you want. After all, Duncton is still a wonderful spot and those of the Branch who are not members there might welcome an opportunity to wet a line on a Saturday. Another good reason to attend the AGM to get your views known!

HEATHFIELD SHOW

After the heavy rain and Somme like mud of last year the weather was kinder (just!!); we stayed dry but the skies were cloudy and the wind was cold. However Bill Smith and I set up the stall early and waited for the punters. We were not disappointed. A steady stream of anglers and interested others looked and asked questions about anything piscatorial and we did our best to encourage (or at least not confuse). It always amazes me how many people have the time and money to visit their favourite beat on a famous Scottish salmon river, and the number of youngsters that have already caught fish bigger than I ever have: the record for this show was a ten year old girl who had captured an eleven pound rainbow from Lechlade and only last week a six pounder from Lakedown.

Entertainment was provided by the events in the Country Ways arena opposite our tent: horses, falcons, tractors. If you thought computer anoraks speak in jargon you should hear the vintage tractor fanatics with their P237 diesel engines and X568 power take off with combined widge drives etc.

Unfortunately these ancient tractors were built before noise abatement and clean air became necessary so Bill and I were treated to a multi-decibel noise level while being choked by the black exhaust gasses.

While on the subject of noise the organisers have promised us next year that the public address system loud speakers are not based just outside our tent!!

In the afternoon Nic Stenhouse came along to assist which took some of the pressure off Bill and I, and it allowed me to give a casting demo in the arena while leaving the stall in good hands.

Overall a good day with lots of interest and perhaps some recruits for next autumn's tying classes.

John Plowman

BIG FISH COMPETITION

We are still lacking entries for the above. We know there have been some good fish caught, but no-one seems to want to enter them! Get your entries in as soon as you can after you catch it and we will keep a league table running. We are adding a category for Best Brown from a Sussex reservoir or river as the giants at some of the specialist small waters otherwise dominate the scene. In case you have forgotten the trophies are:

Peter West Trophy for the best rainbow from a Sussex water (including Bewl)

Brown Trout Cup for the best brown from a Sussex water (including Bewl)

The John Leitch Brown Trout Cup for the best Brown from a Sussex reservoir or river (including Bewl)

Members Reservoir Plate for the best fish from a Sussex reservoir including Bewl.

SOUTH OF ENGLAND SHOW - ARDINGLY

Following a last minute hitch when the organizer realized that he had no suitable transport to get the gear to the showground, we enjoyed one of the better shows of recent years.. We were rescued by the services of our good friend Phil Waller (whose talks on antique tackle we have enjoyed), who kindly brought his van down from Surrey and took our new tent and kit to the ground, and then proceeded to help erect it too!



Andy and Steve Steer busy on Saturday

The weather was kind enough this year, though hot in the tent as too much draught plays havoc with marabou! There was considerable interest from some thirty potential new members who left their details for further information on joining – we look forward to welcoming them at our meetings starting again in September.

Activity on the casting demonstration and tuition next door was high but once again there was comment from many visitors at the absence of Salmon & Trout Association – let us hope that they will come back next year to complete the game fishing area.



Brian Hendry and Peter Buss do the tying while Jim Harris gives moral support!

Thanks are due to our demonstrators (and erectors) Jim Harris, Brian Hendry, John Plowman, Andy and Steve Steer, Phillip Ellis, Tony Harrison and Peter Buss, as well as Bill Smith who came to collect the gear after the show.

Roy Gurney



Brian Hendry fondles a rare vintage Hardy Sillex Multiplier reel between flies

Match v. Surrey Branch

Our annual match was held on 3rd June at Avon Springs and this year the weather was kinder to us. Surrey had some difficulties in mustering a full team, a most unusual event for them, but due adjustments were made to the sides, meaning a few of our members fished without counting for the team weigh-in.

Best fish of the day was caught by Geoff White of Surrey member at 9 lb, and Peter Buss of Sussex had best bag of 15 lb 13 oz.

Thanks partly to very generous adjustment of teams by Surrey, Sussex retained the trophy by some 101 lb to 85 lb.

The victorious Sussex crew

After getting his bag, Lee Redman fished the river, catching a grayling; whilst playing it in his catch was taken by a fair sized pike, which he then played for some time until it eventually broke his light river tackle! Peter Buss also had some good grayling and brownies on the river. It is one of the bonuses of this venue that after your stint on the lakes, for another tanner you can have some superb fishing on the Avon, which runs through the site.

PARHAM GAME FAIR

Sadly we were not at the show this year – a combination of it being the following week to the Ardingly show and lack of volunteers caused your committee to cancel. Maybe we will get a few more people prepared to give a bit of time next year and make a come-back.

STILL WANTED!

As you are all aware, we attend several shows, etc with our stand to demonstrate the art of fly-tying. More volunteers are needed to spread the load (see the comment on Parham above). You do not have to be a prizewinning tier to do this and we have great fun with other exhibitors as well as getting free entry to the shows! Give John Plowman a call on 01825 762975 – Michelham Priory on 15/16th July and the South of England Autumn Show on 6/7th October are next. Why not volunteer?

TYING EVENINGS

Our Thursday evening meetings at Patcham Community Centre start again on 20th September with a guest speaker. Tying re-starts the following Thursday, 27th September.

Full tying programme for the beginners', intermediate and advanced classes will be sent out with the next newsletter, but you may have some ideas to put forward as to how we can make the evenings even more attractive for those who may just want to come along for freelance tying or just to chat.

If you have any suggestions please contact a Committee member, or e-mail, write or phone the Chairman, Secretary or Editor and the Committee will consider your ideas.

ASHBOURNE

Our now annual outing to this lovely venue came immediately after the South of England Show and a rather jaded organiser found himself struggling on his home water! All bar him caught well, though he did get one in the end! Fortunately, this is not a competitive day and the nine participants had some first class fishing – not too easy and with superb fighting fish.

The main event however was the first class barbecue laid on by Doug Chalmers and Roy, who clearly enjoy the repartee of those attending, or we would never be invited back! As ever, Peter Buss kept us well amused, though it was a pity that his graceful backward flip holding a newly refilled glass of red wine was not on camera due to a battery failure!

Some fortnight later, I had the pleasure of hosting Peter's old partner in arms as instructor, Ian May who has decamped to France, along with Peter and David Coomber, whose Yellowhead Green Nymph is THE killer on this water. Great to see David again - he ties the meanest of buzzers and nymphs. If you haven't seen it, follow the prompt on the "Hints" section of our website. Once again superb fishing and another alcoholic lunch! **RHG**

Chairman's Chat

Now that the fishing season is in full swing I trust you are all catching as well as you hope. One of the delights of fishing is the solitude when one can enjoy the surroundings and day dream as much as you want.

Since my chief fishing companion lives 90 miles away I often fish alone but if I want company there is usually a fellow angler that will tolerate my chatter.

On my last outing with the Guild to Ashbourne, I realised what a delight it is to spend a day with a group of like minded friends and to enjoy the gentle teasing as I miss yet another fish. To all of you who do not regularly attend our outings I can thoroughly recommend them to you. No one expects you to be an expert and although you may not always catch fish you will certainly finish the day refreshed and happy.

Now that the warmer weather is with us don't neglect the dry fly. You do not have to see fish rising before you give it a try. In clear water a trout will move up several feet to investigate a disturbance to the surface film. If you see the water boil near your fly but there is no movement on your line just wait a minute for a trout will sometimes return to look for the drowned fly. Last week I took eight trout from Arlington all on dry fly (claret hopper) while those fishing lures and nymphs struggled.

Tight lines

John Plowman.

EQUIPMENT OFFICER

As you may know, Harry Richardson is departing for the Orient in September, and so has had to relinquish his post as Equipment Officer.

It is with pleasure we welcome his replacement to this post - **Andy Steer**, whose number is **01323 899257** (home) or **07900 003253** (mobile) - in case you want any of our goodies now!



A brass lever wind 2½" trout winch (reel) by Charles Farlow & Co, c. 1890



Dave Coomber's Yellowhead Green Nymph

DON'T FORGET YOUR ENTRIES FOR THE "BIG FISH" COMPETITION



"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.

FOR SALE

Albert Horne has a Clark's swing arm magnifier with lamp that is still in its box, never been used – an unwanted present. He is asking £15 for it – a bargain if there ever was one. Contact him at 01903 765237 if you are interested.

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