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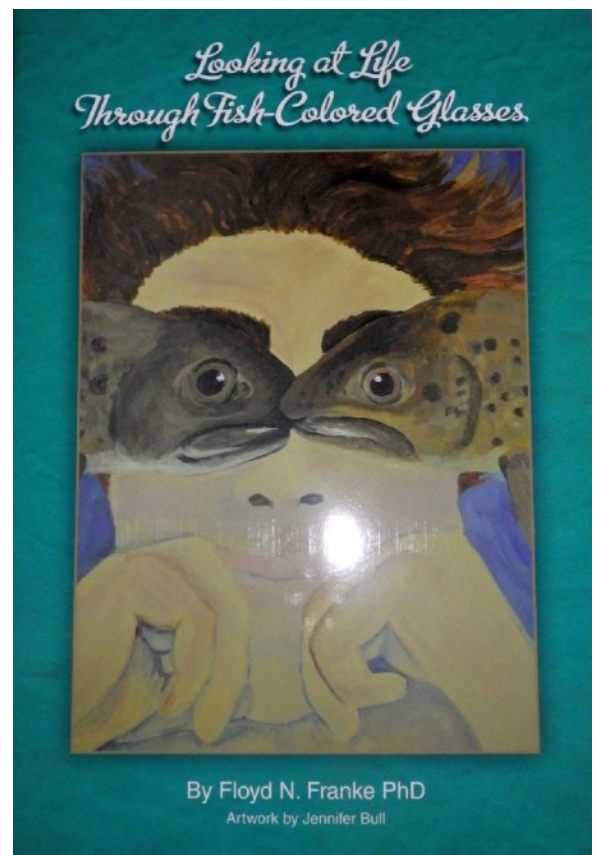
November 2014

There is no November meeting of the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild. Stop by the guild table at the November fly-fishing shows. Check the ads at the end of this issue of the *Gazette* for information about the Danbury Arts of the Angler Show and the International Fly Tying Symposium in Somerset, NJ.

Looking at Life through Fish-Colored Glasses, by Floyd Franke

“This book chronicles my life as an avid fisherman who, over time, discovers the healing powers to be found in the enjoyment of this sport,” the late Floyd Franke writes in the preface to this book, written after Franke, one of the founders of the Catskill Fly Tyers Guild, suffered a massive stroke. “There were times after I left the hospital when all I wanted to do was sit around and bemoan my misfortune. My wife, a registered nurse, was quick to realize that this kind of behavior was unhealthy and if allowed to continue would poison my body and deepen the depression that dogged me. ‘What happened to you was a terrible thing,’ she lovingly said. ‘Time to get rid of your doom and gloom glasses and look on the bright side of things. Think about all the good times you have had with your fishing friends.’ I followed her advice and put on a pair of fish-colored glasses instead of the dark glasses I had been wearing, making it easier to focus on the bright memories of days fishing with good friends in beautiful places. In no time at all, I found the strength to keep on fighting, unwilling to let the stroke take away the joy I have found in my life as a fisherman or the joy I hope is yet to come.”

This inspiring memoir is available for \$17.95, shipping included, from Alberta Franke. Send a check made out to Alberta Franke to her at P.O. Box 629, Roscoe, NY 12776.



Tyers Needed: Danbury Arts of the Angler Show

The Catskill Fly Tyers Guild will have a table at the Danbury Arts of the Angler Show, as usual. The show will be on November 15 and 16, 2014, at the Ethan Allen Hotel in Danbury, CT, Saturday, 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., Sunday, 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. We need a few tyers to augment the core of usual suspects who have already signed up. If you want to tie at Danbury, please contact Ed McQuat, 31 Pine Mountain Road, Redding, CT 06896, (203) 544-8014 or edmcquat@optonline.net.

Tyers Needed: The Fly Fishing Show

If you'd like to tie for the guild at the Fly Fishing Show in Somerset, NJ, January 23, 24, and 25, 2015, contact John Kavanaugh at flymank@optonline.net, call his cell at (973) 219-7696 and leave a message with your contact information or contact him via his Facebook page.



With "Catskill John" Bonasera

Winged Wet Flies: The Original Emergers

As I was standing at the counter in Frank Kuttner's fly shop, my conversation with Frank was temporarily interrupted when the bell on his door jingled. I turned around, and a young man in waders, fresh off the river, stopped by to enhance his fly selection. Frank greeted him in his always friendly manner, and when the fellow asked where the flies were, I stepped to the side to make room for him to look in the fly case. After a minute or so, the young angler asked, "Where are your emerger patterns?"

Frank opened one of the clear lids, revealing the winged wet flies. The customer peered into the bin, looked around a little, and said, "I am looking for emerger patterns—you know, the ones with CDC and the crinkly tails?"

Frank explained to the young man that those classic wet flies *are* emerger patterns, tied to imitate emerging mayflies and caddisflies. He gave a few tips on how to fish them and when you would have the most luck.

I learned a little something that day, too. Since I first started tying flies, winged wet flies were my first love. Bergman's *Trout* and Don Bastian's displays at the winter shows kept me busy behind the vise for hours. Babcocks, Parmachene Belles, Silver Doctors—I loved those fancy wet flies! I had an aluminum clip-style box in which I carried them around, and I fished them, too. I caught a few trout on them, sometimes, but I think I liked them more for the way they looked than for the success I had fishing them.

I still carry a handful of the classic winged wet flies these days, but in more earthy, buggy



shades. I have lots of confidence swinging these during times of mayfly and caddis activity, and the strikes are sometimes so hard they break my tippet. Modern times have seen the classic winged wet fly fade out of popularity, because the new “emergers” are much more lifelike, but they are fished more like dry flies, either in the film or on top.

The *Isonychia* is a perfect hatch for fishing a winged wet fly, because its swimming antics are a natural fit for a swung fly and a twitched retrieve. To imitate the Iso, the Coachman is a great classic pattern. Peacock herl is money when imitating dark nymphs, and trout can't resist it.

Caddis hatches are another time that winged wets excel, since many caddisflies lay their eggs on the stream bottom and rise back to the surface. Trout are more likely to take bugs deeper in the water column, because the depth gives them safety.

It's fun to experiment with this style of fly by tying wet versions of dry flies, too. Many of the dries we fish today started off as wet flies, but reversing the thought process opens up a new and effective way to fish your favorite surface patterns.

Art Flick and the Black-Nose Dace

When the name Art Flick is mentioned, what come to mind mostly likely are thoughts of Schoharie Creek, classic Catskill dry flies, his 1947 landmark work on Catskill hatches and fly patterns, the *Streamside Guide*, and maybe even the Black-Nose Dace.

Flick's little pocket-size handbook was devoted almost exclusively to mayflies. However, he did include a single bucktail: the Black-Nose Dace. This pattern was originated to imitate the *Rhinichthys atratulus* species of minnows. Flick noted: “Of great importance to fishermen is the appeal this little fish has to trout.” Furthermore, “If I were much of a bucktail fisherman, my fly box would undoubtedly contain a larger number of patterns, but because I do so little of this fishing, the Black-Nose Dace is the only one I carry.” He also wrote, “About the only time I fish it is early in the spring, and on days later in the season when I can do nothing with dry flies.”

Flick also remarked that “the Black-Nose Dace is very simple to tie,” and so it is.

Tag: Red yarn, very short

Body: Flat silver tinsel or Mylar

Wing: Polar bear bottom, black bear middle, and brown bucktail top

Thread: black

Hook: Mustad 9575, or standard streamer hook



Fly and photo by Ed Ostapczuk

Flick recommended tying the Black-Nose Dace on several different hook sizes, from 4 down to 10. If you don't have polar bear hair, which is difficult to obtain, substitute white calf tail.

I tend to believe that most fly tyers probably tie this pattern lean and mean on traditional long-shank streamer hooks, however, that might not be what Flick envisioned. On Joe Fox's Sparse Grey Matter bulletin board (<http://www.sparsegreymatter.com/>

Up on the Esopus



[index.php](#)—a great place to hang out and share fly-fishing information and stories) John Simonson, of Wisconsin, started a very stimulating thread on this pattern.

Two pieces of information jumped out at me. First, Art Flick most likely tied his Black-Nose Daces on short-shank wet-fly hooks, and not streamer hooks. In fact, in the first edition of his *Guide*, there is a single color plate of the flies, and his Black-Nose Dace indeed appears to be tied on a short-shank wet-fly hook, although with an extended wing. And Catskill Fly Tyers Guild member Ted Patlen has a Black-Nose Dace tied by Flick that is on a short-shank hook.



Second, there was much discussion about the big head size of Flick's bucktail and why it might have been tied that way. Clearly, Art Flick

was a master fly tyer very capable of tying this bucktails with small heads, if that was his intent. Again, both the example in first edition of Flick's book and Patlen's fly have large heads. Speculation about the head size leaves me wondering if they were purposely tied bulky as a trigger for predator fish and/or to help sink the bucktail.

In memory of Art Flick, whom I knew and greatly admired, I tie and fish his Black-Nose Dace myself. Mostly, I fish this bucktail on the Schoharie Creek watershed, often in the waters of the West Kill and Hunter Brooks for small wild brook and brown trout.

Many thanks to John Simonson and Ted Patlen for their assistance with this column.



Harry Darbee and Deer-Hair-Bodied Dry Flies **By Ed Van Put**

In the September 2014 issue of the *Gazette*, Mike Valla wrote concerning the history of Harry Darbee's Rat-Faced McDougall dry fly and Larry Duckwall's insistence that the story be told that Joe Messenger's Irresistible dry fly "influenced Harry's clipped deer hair body creations." Also that Harry "took the clipped deer hair body idea from Messenger," and "there was definitely a Messenger influence." Mike also uses an excerpt from his book *The Founding Flies* to emphasize what Larry said. However, research would show these statements to be incorrect.

According to Joe Messenger Jr., in an article he wrote in the *American Angler* in 1991, his father created the Irresistible in the *late* 1930s. Harry Darbee began tying deer-hair bodied flies in the *early* 1930s. Harry was tying deer-hair patterns at least as early as 1934, perhaps even earlier.

When Harry and Elsie Darbee began tying under the firm name of E. B. and H. A. Darbee, they published a catalog in April 1935 that introduced a new series of dry flies titled "H. A. Darbee's Special Mayflies." These dry flies were deer-hair-bodied flies and included the Brown May, Grey Drake, Green Drake, Coffin Fly (Black Drake), Straw May, and Yellow May. They were tied on long-shank special mayfly hooks in sizes 10, 12, and 14.

Harry used deer-hair patterns frequently, and in the catalog he stated: “These Mayflies have been worked out after many seasons in painstaking effort to work out patterns that would not only approximate the natural fly in size, color, etc., but that would also float well. The result has far exceeded my hopes; these flies not only look well and float well; but what is far more important they GET THE FISH!”

Harry Darbee did not take the clipped deer-hair body idea from Joe Messenger, nor was he influenced by Messenger. He has written that *his* first introduction to the clipped deer-hair body type of fly was through the pages of Paul Young’s *Making and Using the Dry Fly* (1933) and from observing Philip M. C. Armstrong “actually tie a clipped deer-hair dry fly.” He wrote that the earliest use of clipped deer-hair bodies Harry ever saw was by Clarence Shoff of Kent, Washington, who tied famous deer-hair mice for fly rods and casting rods. Shoff has been recognized as the creator of the clipped deer-hair mouse, filing for a patent in 1930.

As for the origin of the Rat-Faced McDougall, it stems from the same deer-hair-bodied flies listed in the 1935 Darbee catalog. Harry has written that the original Rat-Faced McDougall had as its model the Straw May, and credit for originating the pattern has been shared by Harry Darbee and Percy Jennings, a proficient amateur fly tyer, fly fisherman, and member of the Anglers’ Club of New York.

Jennings has always given Harry credit for creating the fly. He had stopped at the Darbees’ when they were living in Livingston Manor (1935–36) and purchased a couple of the special deer-hair-bodied flies (the Straw May, according to Harry Darbee.) The flies were tied on extralong hooks and appeared as overdressed trout flies; Jennings thought they were “quite large,” and using these flies as models, he tied the pattern on a regular-sized trout hook. Jennings has written that he “took it upon myself to ‘arrange’ them a little” and had just completed tying the fly when a friend of his daughter looked at it and named it the Rat-Faced McDougall.

Harry maintained that the original Rat-Faced McDougall Jennings concocted had a ginger tail, a tannish-gray clipped deer-hair body, ginger hackles, and wings of cream grizzly hackle tips. However, Percy Jennings was an inventive fly tyer and tied many variations of the Rat-Faced McDougall: some were said to be tied with grizzly and brown hackle with grizzly hackle-point wings, like an Adams, and other patterns had a tail of brown bucktail, spun deer hair, and wings of cream or white hackle tips with a dark center. And another had a tail of brown bucktail, a clipped deer-hair body, grizzly hackle tips, and Rhode Island Red hackle.

It should be emphasized that the only similarity between an Irresistible dry fly and a Rat-Faced McDougall is the deer-hair body, but even here, we find that Joe Messenger did not tie deer-hair bodies in the traditional manner, but had a more sophisticated and difficult method that produced a body that was one color on top and another underneath. The Irresistible had a tail and wings of brown deer hair, whereas Harry’s Rat-Faced McDougall had wings of hackle tips and a tail of hackle fibers. In not one instance did the two flies resemble one another. Joe Messenger Jr. recalled that “the original pattern has brown deer hair tails and wings, blue-gray (dun) hair for the back, and white deer hair on the underside. The hackle has a dyed claret or wine color. Later, he offered the Irresistible with a brown back and hackle and ginger back and hackle.”

In the *American Angler* article about the origin of the Irresistible, Joe Messenger Jr. also writes that his father was asked by Art Neu if he had any “new trout-fly patterns” he could send to a friend who was in the hospital at the time. The friend was Ken

Lockwood, a fly fisher and a long-time outdoor columnist of the *Newark Evening News*. Lockwood was hospitalized in January 1940 and was confined for eight months while recovering from complications after an appendectomy.

Writing in the *Newark Evening News* on June 10, 1942, Lockwood mentioned that he used the fly for the first time during the 1941 season and that he and Art Neu tried the “new trout-fly pattern” on New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania streams, then in the Catskills and Adirondacks, and the pattern proved to be successful wherever it was tried. In addition, in this same article, Lockwood stated it was Art Neu who named the fly “The Irresistible.”

Deer-hair-bodied flies are time consuming to tie, but they ride the surface film in fast water exceptionally well and are quite visible. Fly tyers should give them a try—their fullness of body may be an added attraction to trout, because they are certainly more visible. Over on the Delaware and lower East Branch, I have had good success with a deer-hair pattern known as a Flying Caddis Fly when there are no flies on the water, as well as when large mayflies are on the surface. The pattern is somewhat misleading in that its basic shape is not like a caddis, but rather like a traditional mayfly. It is tied as follows.

Flying Caddis Fly

Tail: Grizzly hackle fibers (optional)
Body: Gray deer hair, clipped to shape
Ribbing: Yellow silk floss
Wings: Grizzly hackle tips
Hackle: Grizzly



And for those of you who would like to try something with a little more history, consider Harry Darbee’s original model for the Rat-Faced McDougal, the Straw May. It is tied as follows.

Straw May

Ed Van Put

Tail: Ginger hackle fibers
Body: Gray deer-hair, clipped to shape
Wings: Red-grizzly hackle tips
Hackle: Straw colored or light ginger

Flying Caddis Fly (Fly and photo by



Obituaries

David E. Pabst of Roscoe, NY, died, Tuesday, August 5, 2014 at the Roscoe Regional Rehabilitation and Residential Health Care Facility. He was sixty-seven. The son of the

late Edward and Frances Scharf Pabst, he was born March 7, 1947 in Lancaster, NY. He is survived by his daughter and son-in-law, Tegan and Ed Edgington; three grandchildren, and four siblings. He was an avid fly fisherman and published fly tyer.



A few months ago a fly tyer died. Not many members of guild knew him. He hadn't tied a trout fly in years. His name was Dave Pabst. He was the best Catskill fly tyer of my generation.

Over the last year or so, I have been writing occasional biographies of local tyers. It has been a great experience for me to interview these fellows and to get to know them quite a bit better. I regret never having that opportunity with Dave before he died. And it saddens me to say that I had stopped visiting him at the Roscoe nursing home. That's where he lived for the rest of his life after he had a stroke.

Not many of you knew Dave. You see he wasn't one of those who had a storefront. And as far as I know, he never got much print. He tied wholesale. There have been a lot of tyers in the Catskill community like Dave. Most of them remain nameless. Dave tied for the Beaverkill Angler for a number of years. Judie Darbee Smith tells me that he tied for her parents' shop. There is a chance you might have fished with a fly that Dave tied. If you still have one, go ahead and fish with it. That is what it was meant for. Dave tied a lot of them.

When things are going full bore in the Catskills during the season it's pretty hard for the shops to keep up with the demand. The guys who own the shops can't make a living just tying and selling their own flies. And even if they tried, they could never keep up with the demand. You can't believe the number of flies a shop in Roscoe sells when the conditions are right. That is where tyers like Dave come in. Tying the way he did, for orders made in advance by the shop owner, required that he spend a lot of time at the tying bench over the winter. And then during the season, maybe an order for another five dozen Hendricksons might be needed and needed right now. Don't think that isn't tough work, because it is.

I could never figure out how Dave survived. Sure, he tied a lot of trout flies. But no matter how many he might have tied, I am sure it never translated to big money. Back when he tied, you would be lucky to get \$8.00 a dozen. Most of the guys like Dave have a full-time job. The fly tying is just a little extra. For Dave, it seemed something more. You sensed that when you saw him tie.

For many years, here in the Catskills, we have been really lucky. Almost all of the shops in the area still stock their fly bins with locally tied flies. That is not the case in many of the popular fly-fishing destinations in our country. It's true that the quality of the imported flies in those shops has improved over the years, and the woman who is tying them somewhere in Kenya is putting food on her family's table. But I am still thankful that we still have people around like Dave, constructing something that is unique to our area; a real Catskill fly.

—*Bill Leuszler*



James B. Martin, of Manchester, NJ, died Friday, September 19, 2014, at home. He was employed for the last six months as a Land Surveyor with Partner Engineering and Science Corporation. Prior to that, he was employed by Schoor-DePalma of Manalapan for twenty-four years. A published writer, he enjoyed fly fishing, archery, hunting, and riding and restoring Harley-Davidsons. He was a member of the Orthodox Church of the Annunciation, in Brick. Born in Staten Island, NY, he lived there until moving to Manchester twenty-nine years ago.

He is survived by his loving wife of thirty-eight years, Judy Fraser Martin; a son and daughter-in-law, Christopher and Sarah Martin of Dalzell, SC; a daughter and son-in-law, Tiffany and Andrew Campbell of Phoenixville, PA; and a granddaughter, Payton Faith Campbell.

Book Review

Learning from the Water: Fishing Tactics and Fly Designs for the Toughest Trout
By René Harrop. Published by Stackpole Books, 2010; \$39.95 hardbound.

For over fifty years, René Harrop has been fishing, guiding on, and tying flies for the streams of the Yellowstone area, especially the Henrys Fork. During that time, fly fishing has changed considerably, those attracted to it have changed, and the Henrys Fork and the Yellowstone waters have become heavily pressured international angling destinations. While he's no conservative traditionalist—indeed, Harrop is one of the innovators in the sport, having been one of the apostles of the use of cul de canard (CDC) in fly tying—he's not all that happy about the direction that fly fishing has taken, and in *Learning from the Water*, he takes readers along what he has learned to be a more taxing, but more valuable path.

“While rather indiscriminate in its results, the popular tactic of fishing a weighted imitation beneath a brightly colored strike indicator is nevertheless enjoyable to those who choose to avoid complication in a pastime that does not employ a strict set of rules for participation.” he writes in an early chapter.

“However,” he continues—and you could see that “however” coming a mile away—“there are those who select a more complex and demanding path into a world that does not reveal its secrets without intense study or give up its treasures without sustained diligence and respect.” All texts signal what kind of reader they solicit. That's the kind of reader that Harrop wants for this book.

Most fly fishers realize, sooner or later, that fly fishing is indeed about something more than just catching fish. Harrop is no dry-fly snob, but he firmly insists that there's no joy—and no fooling “heavy” trout—in taking the easy path. That means “selective nymphing,” for example—sight fishing exact imitations of nymphs to feeding trout in shallow water, where they're easy to spook and hard to catch. It means long, fine leaders—14 to 22 feet, with 6X tippetts, and he supplies a formula for tying these that you can actually cast. It means carrying as many as 15 stuffed fly boxes at all times, in order to be ready to match any hatch.

That attitude is both born from and perhaps the best approach to the task of fishing for large, extremely selective trout in shallow flats such as are found on the Henrys Fork, and there is a chapter here of advice on how to make a successful angling expedition to the Yellowstone country. But there's plenty of more general fishing advice in the book, plus fly plates and fly recipes, which feature lots of CDC, as one might expect, and biot bodies. A series that includes CDC Biot Emergers, CDC Biot Paraspinner, and CDC Captive Duns (another emerger–floating nymph pattern) is particularly interesting.

So there's a lot to learn from *Learning from the Water*. Like the path chosen by the sort of angler that Harrop values, however, it takes a certain amount of commitment and overcoming of difficulty to extract it. The book could have used a firm editorial hand to prune and shape what is sometimes a compendium of basic how-to advice, sometimes very specialized advice indeed, sometimes just plain fish stories, and sometimes a collection of patterns and how to fish them, with a lot of the generic “There I was”

introductions (“As dusk gathered, a fish started rising on the far bank” — that sort of thing) that such pieces seem to prompt.

Fly fishing *is* about something more than catching fish. If the path of stern discipline and commitment that René Harrop has trod appeals to you, *Learning from the Water* will help guide you along it. And even if you just want to catch fish, it can help.

—Bud Bynack



This newsletter depends on all guild members for its content. Items from nonmembers are welcome at the editor’s discretion. Without the articles, information, for-sale or want ads, cartoons, newsworthy information, and whatever else is interesting and fun that members submit, this newsletter simply becomes a meeting announcement. Send submissions to Bud Bynack, budbynack@verizon.net or 69 Bronxville Road, Apt. 4G, Bronxville, NY 10708, (914) 961-3521.



The Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum



Presents

The Arts of the Angler Show

At the Ethan Allen Inn,
Exit 4 on I-84 in Danbury, CT

Saturday, November 15, 2014, 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.
Sunday, November 16, 2013, 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

This unique and comprehensive show combines the finest in fly tying, bamboo rod makers, books, and collectibles with the contemporary tackle and destinations most desired today. In addition to offering the best in fly-fishing equipment, tackle, accessories, and collectibles, this show provides attendees with continued exposure to fly fishing and reinforces the importance of the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum and the Catskills. Educational seminars and programs are featured throughout the event.

For more information, go to the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum Web site at <http://www.catskillflyfishing.org/programs-events/art-of-the-angler-show> or contact Erin at (845) 439-4810, or flyfish@catskill.net.

Daily Admission \$12.00. All proceeds benefit the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum



The 24th Annual International



Fly Tying Symposium

November 22 and 23, 2014

At the Garden State Exhibit Center
Somerset, NJ

SATURDAY: 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

ADULTS: \$15.00

SATURDAY

SUNDAY: 9:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

\$12.00

SUNDAY

WEEKEND PASS: \$20.00

This year's theme is "Come on Over, Neighbor." Fly tiers from throughout Canada will join dozens from the United States and Europe. The symposium also will feature the second Super Fly Competition, with prizes awarded in five open categories plus a youth division. Judging will be by show attendees, joined by a team of professional fly tiers including Bob Clouser, Fishy Fullum, Dave Klausmeyer, Enrico Puglisi, Tom Baltz, Charlie Craven, Gary Borger, Ben Furimsky, Theo Bakelaar, Marc Petitjean, John Shaner, Sharon Wright, Bob Mead, and Bob Popovics.