

The Catskill Fly Tyers Guild

GAZETTE

Dec., 2003

NEXT MEETING

Saturday, Dec. 20th,

1:00pm at the
Rockland House

Dave Brandt will discuss and demonstrate the
Gray Ghost Streamer:

Hook – Daiichi 2370 or Mustad 3665A, size 4 or 6

Threads (2) - a white and a black mono, 3/0 or 6/0

Tag and Rib - thin flat silver tinsel (mylar)

Body – orange floss

Underwing & Throat – golden pheasant crest

Wing – white bucktail, fine peacock herl and 4 dun

Hackles (2 shades of dun)

Cheeks – silver pheasant and jungle cock

Bring your stuff and tie along if you like!

CATSKILL BOOK LIST

As mentioned in a previous newsletter, we are developing a list of books that have a significant amount or important reference(s) to fly fishing in the Catskills or Catskill flies. Appreciation goes out to all who participate in gathering and submitting the information contained in this list which will continue to grow as long as new titles and reviews are submitted.

The Complete Fly Fisherman. The Notes & Letters of Theodore Gordon. John McDonald, Charles Scribner's Sons 1947
Self-explanatory.

The Speckled Brook Trout. Louis Rhead, R.H. Russell 1902.
A chapter "An Angler's Notes On The Beaverkill". Lists flies and time to fish them among other comments. Book has been reprinted in paperback-Derrydale Press.

Remembrances of Rivers Past, Ernest Schwiebert. The MacMillan Co. 1972.

A chapter, "Song of the Catskills". Experiences and tales of fishing the world. Catskill chapter, notes on the rivers and the personalities connected to them.

Fly Patterns & Their Origins, Harold Hinsdill Smedley. Westshore Publications. Muskegon, MI 1942

Listing of flies and original tyer, background notes. Some Catskill, Gordon, Steenrod, Hewitt, Darbee.

American Angler's Book. Thaddeus Norris

E.H. Butler & Co. 1864

Describes fishing on the Beaverkill and Willowemoc, as well as mentioning Chester Darbee, Harry Darbee's grandfather. Much on fly-fishing in mid 19th century.

The Compleat Brown Trout, Cecil E. Heacox. Winchester Press 1974

Chapters "Tackle" and "Tactics" mainly relate to Catskills, tyers and fishermen. Color plate.

Streamcraft. Dr. George Parker Holden, Stewart Kidd & Co., 1919, D. Appleton & Co. Revised 1927

Interesting miscellany of both bait and fly fishing techniques. Primarily focused on Catskill waters. Has tying instructions and patterns for Catskill style flies, as well as what I believe to be the earliest published photographs of Catskill School dry flies. On page 113, (both editions) and page 222 in the First Edition, and page 226 in the Revised Edition, are shown dry flies tied by Herman Christian. One appears to be a Gordon Quill. Theodore Gordon is mentioned on pages 110-112 in both editions, and the dressing for the "Blue Quill Gordon" dry fly on pages 112-113.

The Angler's Guide and Tourists Gazetteer, William C. Harris, The American Angler 1884

Travel guide mentioning several towns and rivers in the Catskills as angling destinations.

How the Experts Catch Trophy Fish. Heinz Ulrich

A.S. Barnes & Co. 1969.

Contains a chapter about Harry Darbee and his fishing techniques.

The Compact Book of Fisherman's Tricks, Tips and Hints, by Harry Darbee, Edited by Ray Ovington, Illustrated by Francis Davis, J. Lowell Pratt & Co., 1967

Discusses all methods of fishing including fly, bait, lure, ice, bow and snagging! Shows Darbee's method of tying dry and wet flies, and bass bugs.

Ye Gods and Little Fishes

Eugene E. Slocum, Dodd, Mead & Co. 1927

One of my favorite books! Stories of Slocum's fishing experiences in the Catskills in the early 20th century. The story "Footprints of that Demon, Rum" is priceless.

McClane's Standard Fishing Encyclopedia

A.J. McClane, Editor, Holt, Rinehart & Winston 1965

Details the fly tying methods of the Darbees, and contains 10 color plates of trout and salmon flies tied by them. These are the only published color plates of Darbee flies that I know of.

American Dry Flies, and how to Tie Them. Edgar Burke, MD, The Derrydale Press 1930

Private Printing, The Angler's Club of New York 1931

A rare little book that details tying lightly dressed dry flies.

The Speckled Brook Trout, Louis Rhead, Editor and Illustrator, R.H. Russell, New York 1902.

Contains the chapter, "An Angler's Notes on the Beaverkill", by Benjamin Kent. Also illustrations by Rhead titled, "The Willowemoc", "Dashing Down Stream" (Beaverkill), and "The Mongaup" at De Bruce.

American Angler's Guide, John J. Brown, D. Appleton and Co. 1876. Contains the illustration and this poem:

"Trout-Fishing In Sullivan County"

We break from the tree-groups, a deep glade with grass;
The white clover's breath loads the sense as we pass.
A sparkle – a streak – a broad glitter is seen,
The bright Callikoon, through it's thickets of green!
We rush to the banks – it's sweet music we hear;
It's gush, dash, and gurgle, all bent to the ear.
No shadows are drawn by the cloud-covered sun,
We plunge in the crystal, our sport is begun.
Our line, where that ripple shoots onward we throw,
It sweeps to the foam - spangled eddy below,
A tremor – a pull – the trout upward is thrown,
He swings to our basket – the prize is our own!

Art Flicks Master Fly Tying Guide

Art Flick, Crown Publishers, NY 1972

Contains chapters on insects & Flicks methods of fly tying.

PRODUCTS REVIEWED:

Occasionally members of the Guild are fortunate in that manufacturers sometimes provide us with materials and/or equipment to 'test' and render our opinions. Your experience with these products may lead to a different opinion. Regardless, we appreciate those manufacturers who have allowed us the opportunity to preview their products and

placed trust in us to do an honest, albeit subjective, evaluation. If any members have performed a review for a manufacturer and would like to share the results, we'd like to hear from you.

Dr. Slick 'Razor' Scissors, Reviewed by Mark Romero

First, let me tell you that back in the early 90's when I first started tying flies, Dr. Slick's were the first good pair of scissors I had ever bought. At that time I got the pair with the finest points I could find, and I later found out that at that time they were the finest they made. I was in heaven because they were much sharper than others I had tried. I could cut deeply into tight places where before I was unable to do so. I used them constantly and made sure never to use the tips to cut anything that might dull them, or damage them. I used them so much that the gold plate on the finger holder rings wore off. Eventually they did get a bit sprung, or out of whack off center, but they still performed fine, and always had. I had simply "used" them to the fullest. Then, recently when I saw the new ones, with the "super" fine points, I knew I had to have them.

I've been using them for about two months and they are even better than my old ones. The points are so fine that I can now get into places I never could before. And that, for me, is VERY important. Because I am tying more and more Salmon Flies, (especially a new design/style called Salmo-head flies), it is very important that I'm able to trim down the head area as I go, in order to end up with a nice neat head at the end. And these new Dr. Slick's are the ticket. Of course one blade is serrated and that is always a nice feature. I still try not to use the finest part of the tips for the rough stuff, (synthetics, wire, etc.) but for natural materials, I can get down in there and cut out everything if I want to. Additionally, the finger holes are large enough for you to keep the scissors on your hand at all times while tying. In my humble opinion, they are the best inexpensive scissors made for fly tying. They also come with a nice travelling case so that they don't get damaged. I recommend you look around at the shows this winter and spring to see if you can find a pair. You won't regret it. Mark

The - 'I HATE TO REPORT DEPT.'

**** Wildlife Author Dies Doing What He Loved,**
By BROWN Chronicle Staff Writer. Belgrade

Anna Proper stood out her back door overlooking a sprawl of 60 acres south of Belgrade, which she and her late husband bought in 1987."Sometimes he grabbed me and gave me a big hug," Proper said. "He then pointed and said, 'Do you see that?' He showed her wildlife, trees and plants, which blanket the couple's property. That was Datus Proper's way: to pay attention to detail. And, with wit and charm, he shared nature's details with his

family, friends and readers. Datus drowned Sunday evening while fishing Hyalite Creek. An author of four books, Datus also was a regular contributor to Field & Stream magazine and a former U.S. diplomat. He was 69. He grew up in Yellowstone National Park, before driving his Indian motorcycle to Cornell University in New York to get a degree in English. He then served in the Foreign Service in Angola, Brazil, Portugal and Ireland, where he met Anna.

Monday, Anna and friends of Datus huddled in the author's office, where many of his books line the shelves and antique fly rods -- along with several flies -- hang on the wall for display. He loved the outdoors, children and his dogs," said longtime family friend Tammie Jaumotte. "He had a lot of dignity. He had an aura around him that was so different from other people."

David King, who called Datus his best friend, said the writer "worked at every sentence, so each was packed with extra layers of thought." Along with fishing books, Datus wrote about pheasants and a travel guide for Portugal dubbed, "The Last Old Place."

He trained German shorthair pointers and two of his old dogs, Huck and Trooper, are buried on his land under a tree next to a winding stream. Anna said Datus often fished the stream called Thompson's Creek, but he referred to it as Humidity Creek in his writings. He never went to a stream and said I want to catch a lot of fish," Anna said. "Instead, he just loved figuring out what the fish were taking."

King, who was fishing with Datus on Sunday when the author apparently slipped on the rocks on Hyalite Creek and drowned in the shallow water, said he didn't see what happened." My best guess is he slipped on the rocks and hit his head," King said.

"While standing out her back door, Anna said every time she begins to cry about losing Datus she remembers the last thing he was doing. "That's what I think about," Anna said. "That when he died he was doing what he loved. "Datus Proper finished a rough copy of a book on hunting before he died. His wife, Anna, said she is hoping to publish the writer's fifth book. Along with Anna, Datus leaves behind a son Scott Proper, 26, who is attending Oregon State University.

** Gene Trump wrote: I have very sad news for me personally and the flyfishing community in general. Dave Engerbretson passed away today after battling diabetes and a heart condition for years. Dave was a dear friend of mine that I met on the Internet. We called or e-mailed each other on a daily basis. Dave Engerbretson was a fly anglers angler. An outdoorwriter, field editor for F.F.M, photographer, casting instructor, master rodbuilder and co-host of a PBS fly tying series. He was also a loving father and one of the best fishing friends you could ever have. There is now a large hole in my world. Dave talked to me a day or so ago and promised he'd meet me on the other side so I should be sure and bring my rod. .His usual sense of humor even toward the end. I miss him already and have a tough time accepting he is gone.

** **ALBERT R. CARPENTER SR.** Shinhopple, N.Y. Albert R. Carpenter Sr., 78, passed away suddenly on Tuesday evening, November 25, 2003 at his home and business in Shinhopple, N.Y. He is survived by his best friend and wife of 56 years, Beulah (McQuiston) Carpenter; his son, Albert R. Carpenter Jr. of Downsville; his daughter, Diane Carpenter Crews of Berkshire; his grandchildren, Sarah A. Crews of Downsville and Stephen D. Crews of Ephrata, Pa. and Aleida M. Crews of Berkshire, N.Y.; caregiver, Donna Meola; numerous in-laws, nieces, nephews and friends. Al was born on August 20, 1925 in Plattekill, N.Y., the son of Russel and Ethel (Dingee) Carpenter. He was a US Navy veteran of World War II. Although paralyzed by polio in 1952, Al never lost his zest for living or his ambition. Al was an enthusiastic, lifelong outdoor sportsman who enjoyed hunting and fishing. First in business with his brother, Russel D. Carpenter and father, Russel G. Carpenter, as Carpenter's Gun Works in Plattekill, Al moved his family to Shinhopple in 1963. There he built Al's Sport Store, expanding the successful family business to Downsville in partnership with his son, Al Jr. in 1983. In recent years it became a fly-fishing specialty shop with the help of his granddaughter, Sarah, skilled at both tying and fishing. This continued the family enterprise as Al's Wild Trout Limited on the banks of the East Branch of the Delaware River. Al was an honest and outspoken man of high integrity. Known to several hundred avid trout fisherman around the United States and the world as the author and website publisher

of his weekly stream report (last edition within recent days). Al was an active political and environmental advocate on behalf of his beloved Catskill Mountain fresh water fisheries. A Memorial service will be held on opening day of trout season, April 1, 2004 at his business. Expressions of sympathy may be directed to the NRA Institute for Legislative Action, 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030-9400 or the Downsville Emergency Squad, Downsville, NY 13755.

**** Peter Heller** had surgery following a heart attack. According to his brother Bob, Peter is recovering and doing well.

**** Paul Morrissey** had some heart problems and had a pacemaker put in. He couldn't come to the Int'l. Symposium show but he is recovering at home.

FOR SALE

ORVIS Fly Rod – Silver Label TL 864, 8'6" length, 2 pc for a 4 weight line. Has an ORVIS 8.0 mid-flex action. Brand New Condition with rod bag and case. Catalog value \$250. For sale at \$185.00 + shipping
Contact:
Jack Pangburn (516)333-6079 or Grzlyjak @ netscape. Net

SEVERAL BAMBOO FLY RODS:

I have been asked to list these rods by a friend. Prices are somewhat negotiable.

1. Montague 'Manitou': 9 foot, 3/2, slow action for a 5 or 6 line. Deep Dark Cane. Good condition. \$300
2. Orvis 'kit': 7-1/2 foot, 2/1, medium action for a 5 or 6 line. Very dark cane. Very good to excellent condition. \$500
3. Orvis '99': 8 foot, 2/1, medium action for a 6/7/8 weight line. Very good condition. \$650
4. Orvis 'Madison': 8 foot, 2/1, medium action for a 6 weight line. Very good condition. \$800
5. Orvis 'Madison - Limestone Special': 8-1/2 foot, 2/1, slow action for a 5/6 weight line. Slight set in tip otherwise very good condition. \$800
6. Orvis 'Battenkill – Shooting Star': 8-1/2 foot, 2/2, medium fast action for a 7/8/9 line (bass to light salmon). Very good to excellent condition. \$1,200.

Buyer will pay actual shipping and insurance costs. 3 day buyer inspection If interested in any of these rods,
Contact:

Allan Podell, (607)734-6257 or apodell @ stny . rr . com

MORE LETTERS ABOUT CATSKILL DRY FLIES AND THEIR OBSOLESCENCE

****** They will never be obsolete!

****** The statement about Catskill flies is dead wrong. I have had more success with them than comparaduns or parachutes. I guess the fish I catch are obsolete too! (-:

****** If they catch 'em, they are not obsolete.

****** Not in the least. When all is said and done, Catskill flies are the backbone for most of the flies we have today. Fads and trends come and go, but what works, works and Catskill flies work as well today as they did 100 years ago.

****** The Richards & Pobst video, 'Super Hatches, turn me off of collar hackles years ago. With cdc & foam my rooster necks are just collecting dust. I use micro turkey flats for tails.

****** Obsolete? Probably never really obsolete. Generally speaking though, for local streams here, parachutes or comparaduns seem to be more effective.

****** Letter from Dave Plummer, Editor, TU Upper Susquehanna Chapter Newsletter. This issue was raised in the Summer, 2003 edition of Fly Tyer Magazine. You asked our opinion. "He who holds the pen" ---- as they say---- and you have given me the pen so here goes.

It is my understanding that the dry fly style originated in England and was adapted to the "white water" of the free-stone Catskill streams by Theodore Gordon. Gordon saw the value of flies that could be fished on top of the riffles without being submerged. He also fished wet flies and was devoted to no particular style whether dry floating, wet floating, partially or totally submerged. He fished all ways, probably as conditions of the day and the lay of the trout required.

Because there are so many more people on the stream today, we are often forced to fish various types of waters fast or slow or else go home. The prime feeding lane below the rifle isn't always available to is when it is clogged with anglers. Avid fishermen seek and find ways to make the catch happen in all types of waters. The high floating dry fly in fast water which allows us to follow its drift and see the strike is probably the most exciting aspect of fly fishing. When we move into slower waters we find that the Catskill dry doesn't always work as well, especially in the flats where the trout have more time to look it over. Some of these fish have seen every fly in the catalog and have had a few traumatic experiences with catch and release.

In order to catch fish and retain the euphoric 'fix' of seeing the fly and the strike we have adopted at least two innovations which we have slotted between the Catskill dry and the invisible traditional wet, these being the comparadun and the parachute. Both have wings or spikes which are beacons to be seen by the fisherman with good eyesight and have bodies which lay low in the film to be seen by the trout as helpless

insects in the film. Wary trout don't have to expose themselves as readily when taking these semi-dry flies. A strike may be simply the sudden disappearance of the wing from the surface.

Old fashioned as the Catskill dry is, I can't foresee that it will ever be obsolete for its purpose. Let the innovators come up with a more exciting fly, say, one that actually hovers an inch above the water so that the trout has to leap a bit to catch our fly in the air. Some have written that this only happens in calendar pictures. Nonsense! I've personally seen rainbows leap a foot out of the water in an attempt to catch a fly in the air.

Thank you for asking our opinion. Dave Plummer

** LETTER TO FLY TYER MAGAZINE

This is the entire letter sent in August to David Klausmeyer, editor, Fly Tyer magazine

Dear Mr. Klausmeyer,

In the current (summer) issue of FLY TYER magazine, an article by Morgan Lyle asks the question, "Is the Catskill Dry Fly Obsolete?" At first I thought this question was a joke but then Mr. Lyle begins to get serious. He quotes a few renowned people and cites a few sources to support his inquiry and yield a quasi-positive conclusion to the question. Allow me to respond to his premise, his effort, the way in which he used most of his sources, his citations and his overall slant on the topic – WRONG!

Now, since I am a member of the Catskill Fly Tyer's Guild and serve as the editor of its newsletter, that is a response you would expect. However, I've spoken to many fly fishers and tyers about that article. Some of the people I've spoken to are members of the Guild but many are not. My response is representative of the response almost everyone had to the question posed by the author and the entire article although more constrained. My opinion, as well as the similar view held by people I've spoken to about the article, is more than an emotional reaction. Here are some facts to support my(our) view and show the fallacies of the author's attempt at examining the subject.

Trout do not have the capacity to learn, teach or remember. They do not pass knowledge to their off-spring. Trout do not learn about artificial flies within the confines of cement hatcheries. At best, wild or released trout acclimate themselves to the environment and react to stimuli and situations. Therefore, all things being equal, patterns or styles of flies that worked 5, 10, 50, 100 or more years ago will continue to work today.

- The author quotes Al Caucci (who I highly regard). "If you cast one (*Catskill dry fly*) on glassy-smooth flat water, it just doesn't look like a real insect. And it doesn't look vulnerable enough." However, Al was comparing the effectiveness of different flies in different conditions. Within the same paragraph, he(Caucchi) went on to write (Hatches, p290), "If a dun is being skittered across the surface by gusts of wind or if it

is constantly struggling on a surface that is relatively broken, the choice should be a *hackled pattern*".

- The author quotes Doug Swisher. "Hackle is a ridiculous imitation of legs". However, in *Selective Trout*(p24), Swisher also wrote, "But stop and think: if you can tell the difference (*between a natural and an imitation*) thirty feet away, the trout three inches away must be having hysterics". Well Mr. Swisher, if trout are that observant and can differentiate an imitation versus a real insect, they must simply die laughing when they see, regardless the imitation, a fly with the clearly visible steel bend, point and barb of the hook hanging down from the base of the tail. By the way, anybody use or see being used, a Swisher/Richards 'no hackle' fly recently?

The author even tries to use 'Sales volume' as a gauge. What nonsense! Since when does sales have to do with the effectiveness or even the popularity of any pattern? Besides, the popularity of flies cannot be measured in the same way that a marketer would measure and evaluate the popularity of autos or other consumer goods. Those items must be manufactured, distributed and sold at a retail level. Flies on the other hand are often made by a fly fisher for his/her own use and/or given to other consumers. Because of this mode of production, fly style popularity and use is not easily measured. Besides, trout don't read sales reports and how many times has it been said that 'flies are tied to catch fishermen'?

- The author quotes AK Best as saying, "I guess it depends on the individual and his needs ... And if I see a rise, I'm going to tie on a hackled fly."

- Even in the article, Jim Brungardt, manager of Yellowstone Angler in Montana, says, "Yeah, these fish are going to need exact representations. But those patterns, the Adams and Cahill, still work in a lot of places, but they've just gone out of favor, I think. *It's not that they don't work; it's just that they've gone out of favor.*" (In all likelihood Mr. Brungardt was referring to his area where, for lots of reasons, other styles may be more appropriate)

Now admittedly, the Catskill (style) fly is not for every situation. It was designed for specific use on certain type(s) of waters. Specifically, small/medium size moving mountain water. However, regardless of how it was first intended, this style of fly has proven it can take trout on foreign, unintended waters and under various conditions. Can the same be said about the other styles mentioned in that article? Let's see how a 'no hackle' or comparadun does on some quick flowing mountain stream or heavy pocket water.

The simple fact is that many fly fishers enjoy playing with 'new' toys and some are fad addicts. They are attracted to new models of rods, reels, lines or a new style/pattern of fly. How often have you seen catalogs describe new fly patterns with phrases like 'must have', 'killer pattern', 'can't miss', etc? Yet most of those patterns will be conspicuously missing from the same catalog the following year.

The Catskill fly has been around and catching trout for over 100 years. That's no fad. A properly tied Catskill style fly is as versatile as flies come. In the right hands, and in its intended setting, it will do better than, or as well as, any other style of fly. Even in circumstances for which it was not in-

tended, it will often do quite well. What other style can make all those claims? Obsolete generally means “no longer in general use; fallen into disuse; of a discarded or outmoded type: i.e. *an obsolete expression.*” So is the Catskill style ‘obsolete’? Definitely not. Are there other styles of flies that work? Of course there are. However, **the Catskill style of fly is as effective today as it was over a century ago.** Maybe when a trout’s brain evolves and the fish is able to think, learn and transfer knowledge, the Catskill style fly will lose some of its effectiveness. Until then this fly style will continue to fool fish and it will continue to fool them after today’s ‘fad’ flies are long forgotten.

It’s too bad FLY TYER bothered to print Mr. Lyle’s article. It’s too short on substance and full of so much rhetoric. By its inclusion, the magazine appears desperate for articles and willing to publish something, anything to fill space. Fly Tyer magazine would be better off re-printing articles from 10 or more years ago especially those that appeared back in the late 70’s and early 80’s. Those articles provided valuable information to all levels of tyers, offered positive encouragement and every article had substance. Many of today’s generation of fly tying enthusiasts missed a wealth of excellent information in those articles. This one by Morgan Lyle does nothing to assist the fly tyer or enhance your magazine’s reputation and tradition of quality.

I sincerely hope that fly fishers respond and voice their opinions to that article and this subject. Hopefully you will print, or at least offer a summary, of those letters. Over 100 years ago the Catskill style of dry fly started an American angling tradition. Just as significantly, this style of dry fly continues as a popular and functional piece of today’s fly fishing arsenal. Obsolete, not even close!

Sincerely,

Allan Podell, Editor – Catskill Fly Tyer’s Guild

From Jack Pangburn:

1) It happened on the Beaverkill at the Sunoco Pool and I tied this fly up in a hurry. The hatch appeared puzzling because they were some of the largest Cahills, #12 – 14 of a bright, almost lemon yellow body color with white wings and two long distinct tails that appeared clear or transparent white. The parachute was employed because the light was disappearing fast. A quick release was my only action but my buddy netted a nice 14” brown while fishing right next to me. (Editors note: the sample fly Jack sent had dun hackle)

2) Historical reports, by Mary Orvis Marbury, indicate the flies of choice for the men who worked during the 1880s as market fishermen and river guides were the same patterns listed. They were the top “go-to” working flies of the period and also offered success to the sportsman. These 120 year old patterns have induced many fin propelled creatures to sample the feather dressed hooks.

All of these flies are durable in name as well as body and still catch fish. Today, however, many of the old offerings are weighted with tungsten, dressed in polyester, Antron, poly-

propylene, Flashabou or Krystal Flash and are held together with epoxy and Soft Body.

The flies: 1)Brown Hackle; 2)Montreal; 3)Coachman; 4)Scarlet Ibis; 5)Professor; and 6)Grizzly King.

Smooth wraps and good fishing – Jack

Your Help Needed:

IN & AROUND THE SHOWS: by PAUL MURPHY

The Symposium is behind us. We signed up 12 renewals and/or new members, sold some tickets on the fly mount from the Rendezvous and had an opportunity to talk to people about the Guild and it’s mission. Unfortunately the attendance on Sunday was light and all of our sign-ups were Sat. We need tyers to help out at The FLY FISHING SHOW in Somerset, NJ. The dates are as follows:

Fri. Jan.23rd, 10:30 to 6:30

Sat. Jan 24th, 9:00 to 7:00

Sun. Jan. 25th, 9:00 to 5:00

We will ask tyers for 3 hour slots and will try to accommodate their preference for dates and times.

Tyers, please contact me at:

pmurphy100@patmedia.net, or by phone at:

(908)879-7829 in the evenings between 7:00 and 9:00. Let me know if you can tie and when. Happy Holidays to all.

MORE UPCOMING GUILD EVENTS:

December Guild Meeting – Sat., the 20th

Fly Fishing University – Danbury, CT, Jan 2 – 4th

January Guild Meeting – Sat., the 17th

Demonstration by Tom Mason

The Fly Fishing Show – Somerset, NJ, Jan 23 – 25th

February Guild Meeting – Sat., the 21st

March – Annual MATERIAL SWAP & SALE

Sat., the 20th

April – 3rd Annual FLY TYERS RENDEZVOUS

Sat., the 17th (see special page)

**REMEMBER:
'FLY TYERS RENDEZVOUS'
FLY PLATE**

Only 200 tickets will be sold. They are \$5 each. Send \$5 for each ticket wanted to Judie DV Smith, 16 Park Avenue, Roscoe, NY 12776; Please write, 'FLY PLATE' on the envelope. Ticket stubs will be sent to you. The drawing will be on Saturday, Jan. 24th at the Fly Fishing Show.

Rube Cross - Fly Tier, Fisherman and Boyhood Idol: by Earl M. Pomeroy

Edwin Johnson asked me to write down my memories of Rube Cross to share with you. My memories of Rube are from 75 years ago when Rube was my boyhood idol. No fact I mention here is intended to denigrate my idol; these are just my memories of him when I knew him. I didn't know Rube in his later life, so my memories are from my boyhood days.

In the 1920's, we lived an eighth of a mile from Rube's house, in Neversink, NY. Rube was a fine neighbor and friend. He was always so good and kind to me. His wife, Bessy, was an outstanding person. She was the one who financially supported their home by doing housework for others, trying to make a living so they could even eat when Rube was tying flies or fiddling with one piece of junk or another.

I can see Rube going by the house yet when that little Neversink brook would come up. He'd stop out in front of the house and he'd be talking with me and he'd say, "Now you never go fishing unless you put at least four fish worms on the hook. You have to have at least four fish worms on the hook if you're fishing bait." So I followed that counsel for years and years-I always had to make sure I counted out four. Well sometimes those fish worms were so big that you couldn't put four on a hook, but somehow I had to make sure that I had four on the hook because Rube said that's the way you fish.

The best times were when Rube would come ask my mother to let me go fishing with him. Rube

used to say to her, "I wonder if I could get Earl to go with me? I've got to do a little fishing." You can imagine how excited I was to hear that! He would take me to his house and fix me up with a fly rod and line. He had a stocked pond outside his place where he would turn me loose. I remember him standing behind me and I can imagine the charge he got out of watching me.

Rube and I would often go fishing together on the Neversink River. My grandfather owned about 300 acres of farmland on what was called the Big Bend of the river. To this day I can remember my grandfather's dog, Dewey, keeping track of the cows in the unfenced fields and herding them to the barn. Others, including a man named Hewitt (I'm unsure of the spelling of his name), later purchased the property. Rube Cross also had dogs. They were bloodhounds and I remember times when his dogs would be used for tracking. I seem to remember them once being called to do tracking in the area of Slide Mountain.

When you speak of Rube Cross, you're speaking of one of the greatest fly tiers in this country. I remember Rube's hands were huge, the size of hams, yet he spent all his time fishing and doing the minute art of fly tying. I remember him working in the dim light of either a lantern or lamp before they had electricity in that house. He'd have that little light and he had his clothespins set up so that he could put his fly hooks on the clothespins and tie his flies there. I've spent many, many hours watching him tie flies. I'm ashamed to say that I never took to the art myself, though I had every opportunity to learn from the best in the world. I remember another fly tier named Bandler, nicknamed "King of the Black Diamonds," whose daughter and I were very close. Although I didn't tie flies myself, I had a lot of flies that came from England and a lot that Rube tied and some others that were very expensive ties for those days, probably 35 cents.

Rube Cross was known by the nickname "Moonface." And it was appropriate because if you looked at the face of the Man in the Moon, you'd see Rube's face. The resemblance was exact. One memory of "Moonface" is bittersweet. The flash-floods used to come in the Neversink from the Claryville area. In Neversink, the sun would be shining on a beautiful day and someone would

come driving in from Claryville and they would warn us, "Get ready-a flood's coming." That's how they would hit there. Neversink wouldn't get a drop of rain, but we would get the heavy flash-floods. In 1928 the flood took our family home.

I remember one flood when a car washed down the river against some trees. The water hadn't risen too terribly yet, but there were two women trapped in the car. Rube put on his waders and waded out and carried those ladies in one at a time to dry land. That was a great thing to me, a boy of five or six, to see a man wade through that water and bring those women in to shore. So I bragged to my grandfather about it. "Grandpa," I said, "that Rubas, he's one awful strong man! Did you ever see him? He picked those women right up just like nothing and carried them in," I said. "He's a strong, strong man." Well for some reason unknown to me, my grandfather evidently didn't idolize Rube the way I did. He turned around and said to me, "Well, he ought to be strong. He's never used his strength for anything but tying flies." You know that hurt me so very deeply, and I've learned from that to be very careful what you say around children because they may have an idol that you don't realize and you can hurt them and their relationship.

After we lost our home, I lost contact with Rube. Then, many years later, in the late 1930's or early 1940's, he came to my house. I had a couple Colt revolvers and he wanted them very badly and asked to trade me a big old camera he had for those two revolvers. I knew they were worth a lot more than the camera, so we didn't make the trade, but that was my last encounter with Rube.

I'm 81 years old, so these memories are 75 years old, but hopefully they are still accurate. Anyway, this is the way I remember my boyhood idol, Rube Cross. If I've brought forth some memory that will stir your own, or that you can relate to, it's worth spending this time to record them. If I've stirred some memories or questions about Rube, I'd enjoy discussing them with you.

Later I hope to write about Mr. Hewitt, who bought my grandfather's land, and also about a man named Herman Christian.

Thank you for allowing me to put these memories into print, and I hope we can continue doing this together.

Mr. Pomeroy,
WE SINCERELY THANK YOU!!!

HUMOR OR HUMORLESS:

* I noticed an acorn on the end of a log floating in the water. When a squirrel ran out to the end of a log to get the acorn, the biggest bass I'd ever seen jumped out of the water and grabbed the squirrel. It was quite a sight, but I didn't think much of it until the bass swam back to the end of the log and replaced the acorn. Tight loops and drag free. **James Smith**

* An Arkie and an Okie were fishing in a small boat on a pond. They were catching fish but it was getting late. The Arkie says, "This is a good spot; we should mark it." So the Okie leans over and marks a big X on the floor of the boat. The Arkie says, "Oh thats real smart. If we don't get this same boat tomorrow, we'll never find this spot." I know. Sorry. **flytrapper**

* Two old fisherman are talking about their most unusual catches. Cletus starts, "I's fishin' a lil pond, t'weren't mor'n a good sized puddle really, and I hooked into a bass that nearly broke m'rod. Faught that thang for 40 minutes afor I landed him. Had to use both hands to lift 'im, he was ever bit of 12 pounds. And caught him in water so shallow his back was sunburned."

Jethro fires back, "That's nuthin'. I's up to Dead Man's lake catfishin' when I got a hit so hard, my Coleman lantern went over the gunnel int the drink. That monster broke me off, but an hour later I got anuther tug, I pulls it up and it twas m'lantern. And you know that thang was still lit!" Cletus pauses and says, "I'll knock 6 pounds off that bass if you'll blow out that lantern." **fishlux**

* An old man and a young man were fishing opposite sides of a stream and both were having great success landing fish after fish, when a Funeral procession approached down the road beside the stream. The old man reeled in his line and removed his hat and stood quietly while the hearse and the cars passed. When they were up the road he replaced his hat and continued casting. The young man was moved by the solemn display and called out to the man "That was a great show of respect" " You must have known the deceased?" "Ah Yup "the old man drawled, "Was married to that women fer pret'near 45 Years" - Cheers, **Duffin Boy**

One evening, Tim rushed home extremely late -only to find his wife hopping mad. "Where were you," she demanded. Tim, looking down, replied, "I'm very sorry honey. I stopped off at the way home at a bar, met a beautiful young girl, and we made love for hours." "Bullsh-t!" his wife replied, "You were fishing again, weren't you?" **Steven**

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