

GAZETTE

August, 2003

UPCOMING EVENTS & SCHEDULE:

1) GUILD PICNIC, Saturday, Aug. 16, 2003,

from 12 to 4 pm. at the Darbee Vinciguerra Pavilion at the Catskill Fly Fishing Center, Livingston Manor, NY. Refrigeration and restrooms are available. Hotdogs, hamburgers & condiments will be provided by the Guild. You must notify Judie that you are coming and if you want hotdogs or hamburgers. Whatever you prefer, we plan on two. *BRING YOUR OWN PLATES, SILVERWARE, BEVERAGE AND A DISH TO PASS.* Feel free to bring guests. Please call Judie at 607-498-6024 or email darbee21@juno.com

Casting Contests: Gary Sweet is going to be in charge and there are many prizes to be won!!

"I have a number of ropes that I use to define a "stream" for casting and several wooden fish cut-outs. I have rope hoops 1 and 2 feet in diameter for casting, rope "standing lines" for people to stand behind when casting that are attached to the ground. I also have a vertical hoop that is about 3 ft in diameter similar to what was tried last year for a hook cast. It has it's own stand and is self-supporting. I've always used it for demonstrating casting loop tightness. I'll see that I have enough of the casting flies prepared so that everyone gets to use the same thing and nobody tries to use a cut off hook with any metal that is exposed.

There will also be a distance casting event." - GS

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2) SUMMERFEST - August 30, 2003, Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm at the Catskill Fly Fishing Center. The Guild will have a booth under the pavilion. We'll need help manning the booth. Come talk or tie, an hour or two will help. We will start selling our Rendezvous Fly Plate tickets to the public at this event.

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3) YOUTH OUTDOOR EXPOSITION, Saturday, September 6, 2003, from 9:30am to 3pm. At the

Grahamsville Fairgrounds, Route 55, Grahamsville, NY. Free activity day for children. Teach 100 - 150 kids to tie a fly. We need help so everyone gets a break!! Give a couple hours or more! Food Available. Sponsored by the Federation of Sportsmens Clubs of Sullivan County, Sullivan County Democrats and the Fish & Wildlife Coalition for Youth of the Hudson Valley Catskills.

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4) The Guild has been asked by staff to do something for the men at the Sullivan County Infirmary. Bill Leuszler agreed to do the fly tying and Manny Zanger some fly casting. This might be something we could do a couple times a year for them. Any volunteers?

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5) International Fly Tyers Symposium,

Doubletree Hotel, Somerset, NJ. November 22 & 23, 2003. 9:30 - 6 pm and the next day 9:30 - 4:30 pm. Contact Paul Murphy if you can talk or tie at the booth any hours.

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6) World of Fly Fishing, Danbury CT., January 2, 3 and 4, 2004.

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7) The Fly Fishing Show, NJ Exhibit Center, Somerset, NJ, January 23, 24 and 25, 2004.

We need to provide at least 3 door prizes for this show so that we may continue to get free space. Fly selections are suggested and definitely appropriate for the Guild. If you have any flies to donate, please see that Judie DV Smith gets them when convenient but before January 1, 2004. Please label them "Show Donation". You probably should place a toe tag on each fly with pattern name and your name.

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Tentative Guild Meeting Dates:

Sept. 18, 2003 (Thurs) @ 7 pm, at CFFC
Oct. 16, 2003 (Thurs) @ 7 pm, at Rockland House
Nov. 15, 2003 (Sat) @ 1 pm, Rockland House
Dec. 20, 2003 (Sat) @ 1 pm, Rockland House

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CATSKILL FLY TYERS GUILD

FLY PLATE

RAFFLE

One of a kind. Forty-One (41) flies from the fly tyers who tied at the 1st Rendezvous held on April 12, 2002. Limited to 200 tickets @\$5.00 each.

Available to members only until the Summerfest (Aug. 30, 2003) at the Catskill Fly Fishing Center. Remaining tickets will be sold until January 25, 2004 or until all tickets are sold, whichever comes first. Drawing will be on January 25, 2004. Please mail your check for \$5 per ticket to Judie DV Smith, Catskill Fly Tyers Guild, PO Box 663, Roscoe, NY 12776-0663 and mark envelope "Fly Plate". Your numbered ticket stub will be mailed to you.

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NEW HOME FOR GUILD FLY TYING MATERIALS

CFFC has agreed to allow us to build a 'corner' for our materials which seem to be filling Dick & Judie's basement. As soon as it is secured, everything will be moved to the new location where it will be safe and accessible when needed.

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THANK YOU:

Thanks to all Guild members who helped make our first fly tying class a success. The students enjoyed the classes, but more importantly, they increased their fly tying skills greatly.

I am hesitant to mention individual names but three must receive a special thank you. They are: Doc Fried, who got the concept off and running, Poul Jorgenson, who took the time from his busy schedule to attend every class and Ralph Graves who selected the patterns covered in the class. Ralph did such a good job that he has been asked to select some patterns for an advanced course we will offer this fall.

All members are urged to attend the 'Youth Day' in Gramhamsville. The date and time is found elsewhere in this newsletter. We normally have a good turn out for this project and I hope this year will be well attended. Passing our knowledge on to others is one of the most significant things we can do as Guild members....Bob Osburn

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ITEMS FOR SALE OR WANTED:

1) For Sale:

As some of you know I quit smoking awhile ago. Too many Oreos and Dairy Queens later, this stuff won't fit. I am not kidding myself that I will loose the belly any time soon. So, here goes: Hodgman Nylon Waders, Stocking foot, Size S (no leaks) \$35; Cabela's Canvas Wading Shoes with Rubber Soles size 8 (ideal for dirt, wet wading and the River) \$25; Streamline Nylon and Rubber Shorty (tan) Raincoat, Size S, \$25; Like new, Hi Tech Gore-Tex Cabela's (teal green) Rain Coat, Shorty, Size M \$75. Contact: Mike Hogue, 622 W. Dryden Road, Freeville, NY 13068, phone 607-347-4946 or email: Mike@eflytyer.com

2) Wanted:

Scientific Angler (SA) System I, model 45-6 fly reel. Reel must be gray with silver trim on spool. Contact Bob Osburn at 845-294-5813.

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THE MONTHLY FLY SWAP – IS IT DEAD?

It used to be that members who attended Guild meetings or events would bring a pair of the same flies to swap. Usually there would be a dozen or so swappers involved. However, this activity seems to have become extinct. WHY? Is it apathy, laziness, are members dissatisfied with what they got or is everyone just too busy to tie 2 flies? If it is dead then let's admit it. If it's not then bring your 2 flies to the next activity (the Picnic). By the way, all of you members can participate whether you attend meetings or not. Just mail your flies to me. I will do the swap and mail you the new flies. (editor)

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FUND RAISING: by Mike Hogue

Anytime the subject of fund raising comes up in any of the non-profit groups I have ever been associated with, there are usually some disagreements. In another club I was a director and raised several thousand dollars a year and we never spent the money! Getting these folks to part with the cash was next to impossible. What was troublesome was that the money was raised for conservation, education and for programming. "Well if we spend our money, we won't have or so the story went." Let's not repeat this same sort of logic. Members donate money, time and things so that the club can operate and participate in various events.

The Guild is one of the most unique groups in the world! We are one of the few actual fly tying only clubs around. We also are not affiliated with any larger group or national organization which in my book is a positive thing. We are also a regional and national club. Our members come from across the US and are mostly centered in a 4-5 state region of the Northeast. The Guild has a special purpose of preserving the heritage of the region and the things which all of us love and treasure - Catskill flies and fly tying.

Let's keep a few of those goals in mind when we look at spending some cash and raising some money. Very shortly we will have a new source of revenue, proceeds from a very nice shadow box. This box contains flies tied by tyers from the first Rendezvous and it will raise a nice small sum for us. Obviously, we have a few bills to pay like printing tickets and the framing, after that we have some extra funds available. This also is a lot of work selling tickets, getting the box made, collecting the flies, etc.

I have several proposals I'd like the membership to consider and perhaps you may find some of them useful..

1) We buy materials. Tyers who attend the shows, do demo work for the club and teach classes for the club, shouldn't have to use their own stuff. The club should provide that. What I don't want to see happen is someone loading up their closets with club stuff or stocking someone's boxes, etc. at

club expense. The idea is, if you tie and you donate time, the club will provide the materials.

2) At times we have a hard time getting folks to participate at shows. If you attend and work for the club, you should get free admission for the days' event. I am reminded that the club has offered this for some time. I think we should continue this program. By the way, if you travel and spend your money on hotels and mileage, this is tax deductible since you are voluntarily donating services to a non-profit organization.

3) If you tie at a show you get a ticket for a drawing. At the end of a time (say at the Rendezvous for example) we toss all the tickets in a bucket and draw 5 names. If you tied 5 times you get 5 tickets. We draw for good stuff like a set of tools, vise or a complete set of hooks or something else nice. We can have a grab box full of goodies for the meetings and an annual drawing of the really good stuff. That way every time you participate, you can win! Sounds corny but I know one group that exists completely by doing JUST this. We can also sell tickets for stuff to draw at each meeting as an incentive to attend meetings.

4) We create a complete set a club set of tools and materials. We already have some vise kits. We use some of the money to have say 10 vise kits with all the tools. These you could check in and out and club members could use these for classes or programs. If you checked out a complete set, the complete set gets checked back in or YOU pay for the missing stuff. This is an excellent way to have enough tools and materials to go around. Many times finding enough tools for a class is very hard.

5) Maybe the club wants to work on a web site and have their own web space. We can use the funds for that too. The fees for the web site would be modest. I think it costs \$35 to register a name, and \$20 to a month to maintain, I might have a place we can store it for free. I will be happy to maintain the site, I don't want to write the content. We can also upgrade our own magazine and newsletter.

6) I also think we need to collect and maintain a collection of flies for the future. We should make an effort to collect flies from demo tyers and from time to time, get a club shadow box made and have these boxes on display. Some flies alone, from members which have passed away, are very valuable, rare and hard to locate. By preserving the current history we are making a difference for the future. We can display these at the museum and lend them to museums (there are several others beside our own CFFCM we could lend these to, such as the International FF Center in Livingston, MO and the American Museum of FF in VT).

7) Upgrade the show display. Several professional companies can create a display for own club. Since we go to quite a few of these, we can get a very nice display made. Several people have complained about carrying stuff around for the shows. A professional display is usually light, easy to pack, load and transport. Many backdrops are designed to be carried on airplanes. They make the presentation more professional.

8) Fund the start up of some T-Shirts and Caps, etc. Lots of folks collect this stuff and it might be fun to have caps and

such made for the club. Trouble is it costs money to maintain an inventory and someone has to keep it, sell and such. Maybe caps might be a better choice since they are small.

Well, I started the ball rolling. You can write me, Hank, Judie or Allan and we will start a dialog of your ideas etc.

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EDITORIAL: ARTICLE IN 'FLY TYER' ASKS, "ARE CATSKILL FLIES OBSOLETE?"

Part 1:

An article by Morgan Lyle in the current issue of FLY TYER magazine asks the question, "Is the Catskill Dry Fly Obsolete?" In it, the author quotes a few renowned people and cites a few sources to yield a quasi-positive response to the question. Allow me to respond to just about all his sources, his citations and his overall slant on the topic – BOGUS!

Now that is a response you'd expect from a member of the CFTG but I am prepared to back it up and show the fallacies of the authors examination of the subject.

Trout do not have the capacity to learn, teach or remember. They react. Therefore, under the right set of circumstances, patterns or styles of flies that worked 10, 50, 100 or more years ago will continue to work with a good presentation.

- The author quotes Al Caucci (who I highly respect). "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 Caucci also wrote (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". Swisher also wrote (Selective Trout, p24) "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, I guess they must die laughing when they see, regardless the imitation, a fly with the clearly visible bend, point and barb hanging from the back section. By the way, anybody use a Swisher/Richards 'no hackle' recently? Didn't think so.

- Sales volume as a gauge? What nonsense! Since when does sales have to do with the effectiveness or even the popularity of any pattern? Trout don't read sales reports and how many times has it been said that 'flies are tied to catch fishermen'?

- In the article AK Best is quoted 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.*"

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 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, fly fishers like 'new' toys and are fad addicts. They can be 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', 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 intended, it will do 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: *an obsolete expression.*" So is the Catskill style 'obsolete'? Hardly. Are there other styles that work? Of course. 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 it is able to think and learn, the Catskill style fly will lose some of its effectiveness. Until then this style will continue to fool fish and it will continue to fool them long after today's 'fad' flies are long forgotten. (A Podell)

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Part 2, by Mike Hogue

The most recent issue of Fly Tyer magazine contains an article which basically asks, is the Catskill Dry Fly Dead? After reading the story I have a few useful observations. Like most things made and designed by man, Catskill flies were designed to be used in a certain place during a certain period of time. Many designs reflect the technology, the tools, the materials and the designer's choices whenever something is created whether it is a car, computer or a fly.

Let's take a look at the Light Cahill. In the places which these were fished, the rivers are largely Freestone, which required a fly to be dressed heavily in order for it to float well. This fly solved several problems and it acted to define a series of other flies. If you look at the actual patterns, the original was more sparsely dressed (than flies by today's standards) and it had fine long tails and narrow wings. Today most often you see this fly with fat wings, stumpy tails and a ton of dubbing to make the fly appear fatter, shorter and over dressed. In other words things evolve and change over time.

Whereas, flies such as the Compara dun were created for totally different kinds of water reflecting a need to have fly which behaved very differently under completely different circumstances. Fishing the flat water of the Delaware is very different than the Beaverkill which Steenrod fished when he created the fly. In the early days of the river there were many small dams and lots of deep pools with lots of broken water, today the river is much more open, is wider and has a different character than it did. So while one pattern may have been

effective, the place also changed requiring the tyers to change.

Morgan also talks about bin sales of fly shops. Trying to compare bin sales of flies at stores makes little or no sense, since hatches, sizes, colors and water conditions usually dictate the sorts of flies which are sold and used in a location or region. Much like me using a giant Michigan hex fly in the middle of our sulphur hatch it is almost impossible to compare the Catskill dry flies to AK Best's hackled flies. About all these flies really have in common is that they are used for trout fishing and they are tied on a hook.

I think what we should do is look instead at the context of where, when, how something is used. Consider this: One really hot fly out west last season was called the DOA Royal Wulff. It basically is a royal with a soft poly wing which isn't divided, the wing is doubled over and the rear half is clipped short, creating an emerger wing. The tail is antron. So what we are doing here is updating a classic by using contemporary materials.

Is the Catskill dry dead? Hell no! I caught 10-15 fish during a recent hatch in 3 hour period using one of these antique gems. I tried more "modern" flies and the fish didn't take any of them. Using the same sort of logic as Mr. Lyle these must have been really old fish, right?

WHAT'S YOUR OPINION? DO YOU THINK THE CATSKILL STYLE OF FLY IS OBSOLETE? THE NEXT NEWSLETTER WILL BE DEVOTED ENTIRELY ON THIS QUESTION.

Send your opinions and/or comments to: Editor, 100 Glen Ave., Elmira, NY 14905 or email: apodell@stny.rr.com

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LITTLE THINGS MEAN A LOT: Al Himmel

As maturity sets in, most fly fishers reach an equilibrium condition whereby the travel urge and the stay at home necessity become reconciled. The urge to fish world famous trout waters, where huge trout eagerly accept day long hatching mayflies, becomes balanced with the realization that a week long trip may not provide such idyllic conditions, and the season long attraction of much smaller local streams is, not only a necessity, but may in fact present more challenging situations, only on a smaller scale. Ten inch wild brook trout, taken from a small creek, test the mettle of any devoted purist. It is the time in life when long drives, heavy waters and excessive expenditures are devoutly to be avoided. Perhaps one forced to admit that it has been the challenge and not the size which produces the euphoria of success on a trout stream. The ten inch trout, taken on a size #24 trico imitation during an early morning spinner fall, is far more rewarding than those float trip fish caught with strike indicators and hoppers slammed against distant shorelines.

The realization of this equivalence, creates satisfaction when the invisible trico imitation is inhaled without a visible rise, but and acquired instinctive lift of the rod tip, makes the connection. The ensuing battle can easily equal that of a Missouri River gulper, since overhanging brush and behind the back trees create ample opportunity for the fish and the fly to es-

cape unscathed. Home waters can provide season long satisfaction once the size inversion has been etched firmly in one's mystique. Small waters, small flies and small trout create symmetrical ambiance which is perfectly attuned to piscator age, budget and a mature realization that big is not always better. One such local stream, is so heavily loaded with wild brook trout that it offers an opportunity for instant connections almost without regard to conditions. Who could ask for anything more?

Once equilibrium has set in, one must find ways to counteract the many difficulties small streams present. Seven foot rods and three weight lines with twelve foot leaders become "de rigour", and 6x tippet goes without saying. Casting technique must be upgraded to allow for low and overhanging fly snatching bushes. Wading becomes a serious deterrent to the denizens of the deep and so must be minimized and if possible eliminated.

Insect identification may be the final arbiter of the day's activities. Therefore, collection and selection become the order of the day. Insect identification can be best accomplished using a key, such as that created by Caucci and Nastassi in their "Streamside Identification" classic. Additionally, and perhaps more concise, is to collect and photograph indigenous species to create a hatch chart applicable to only relevant categories: small(3-7mm), medium(8-12mm) and large(13-30mm). Locally the three groups are represented by: small: baetis, pseudocloeon and tricos; medium: subvaria, fuscum, vicarium and canadense; and large by ephemera gutulatta, varia, simulans, with an occasional potamanthus thrown in. Thus, by creating your own home waters chart, you will be able to tie realistic imitations without wasted energy using flies that have no relevance to your situation.

Finally, rest assured that your skills will be enhanced when the invisible rise, to an invisible trico imitation, produces a sixth sense reaction in which a delicate lift, completed the hook-up without stressing a 7x tippet. Assuredly, both you and the fish will have been hooked. Maturity has its own rewards.

It's too bad I couldn't include a copy of the photos that accompanied this article. One was of a 4 inch wild brookie and the other looked like a 24 inch brown. - editor)

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NEW MEMBERS: If any new members have not received their copy of "Favorite Rivers, Favorite Flies", please contact Judie DV Smith.

The Catskill Fly Tyer's Guild GAZETTE is issued 5 or 6 times per year to members. Membership is only \$10 per year. New, first time members also get a FREE copy of the booklet "Favorite Rivers, Favorite Flies" as well as discounts on Guild patches and pins. WANT TO JOIN THE GUILD or GIVE A FRIEND A Great GIFT? Just complete this form, mail it and a check to: CFTG, PO Box 0663, Roscoe, NY 12776-0663. REMEMBER, memberships renew in February. Newspaper contacts:
Allan Podell, 100 Glen Ave., Elmira, NY 14905. (607)734-6257. Email: apodell @ stny.rr.com
Judie DV Smith. Email: Darbeel @ juno.com

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone #: _____

(optional) email address: _____

