

The Catskill Fly Tyers Guild



GAZETTE

August 2006

The Annual Catskill Fly Tyers Guild Picnic will be held on Saturday, August 19, from noon to 4:00 P.M. at the Elsie and Harry Darbee and Matthew Vinciguerra Memorial Pavilion at the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum, 1031 Old Route 17, Livingston Manor, NY. Bring a dish to pass, your own plates and silverware, and your own beverages.

There will be a casting contest! Also, bring two flies that are alike—one to trade and one for the guild—if possible, in separate film containers.

Please let us know whether you want hamburgers or hot dogs and how many will be coming. Guests are welcome, as long as we can plan for them. Also, let us know what dish you plan to bring.

We could use some help with the cooking, the casting contest, and the fly swap. For more information, to volunteer, or to RSVP, contact Judie DV Smith. She prefers to be e-mailed at darbee1@juno.com, or you can call (607) 498-6024.

Flood Strikes Catskills, Antrim Lodge Burns

On June 28–29, 2006, days of rains culminated in severe flooding throughout the Catskill region and upstate New York. Water five feet deep inundated the Roscoe Free Library, destroying much of the library's holdings, its computer resources, and its heating system and requiring the walls to be gutted to the water line. Guild members who would like to contribute books or other resources to help rebuild the library's collections can contact the library's director, Judy DV Smith, at darbee1@juno.com or send contributions to the Roscoe Free Library, 85 Highland Avenue, P.O. Box 339, Roscoe, NY 12776. In addition to angling books, the library needs all the titles that a good small-town library should have, from children's books to up-to-date reference works.

Then, on July 18, 2006, fire gutted the upper three floors of the Antrim Lodge, a Roscoe landmark that opened in 1890 and that for generations of anglers was at the center of the Catskill fly-fishing experience, especially under the stewardship of former owner Doug Bury and his late wife, Anna Mae Keener. The lodge was being renovated by its new owner, Dave Beveridge, a former New York City attorney, who had stayed there on fishing trips with his father in his youth. The structure also had suffered damage to its lower floors during the flood. Beveridge and his wife have said that if at all possible, they will rebuild.

For an appreciation of the Antrim, see Eric Peper's reminiscences in this issue of the *Gazette*.

Obituaries: Robert F. Morse

Robert Francis Morse, a founding member of the Catskill Fly Fishing Center in Livingston Manor, died on Tuesday, May 6, 2006, at Cohasset Knoll Nursing Facility in Cohasset, Massachusetts. He was eighty-three years of age.

After graduating from Wells High School in Southbridge, Massachusetts, in 1940, Mr. Morse served in the U.S. Army Air Corps as crew chief and flight engineer for B-17 and B-29 bombers. After the war, he studied engineering at Brown University and held numerous engineering positions, most notably at Pratt and Whitney Aircraft in Hartford, Connecticut.

Memories of the Antrim

By Eric Peper

I felt as if I'd lost a friend when I first heard the Antrim had closed, and the loss was magnified when I first saw the closed doors in person. I was thrilled when I heard the grande dame was going to be rebuilt and rehabbed. Now I am close to tears having heard of the recent fire. I hope the word that the current owners are committed to going forward with the rebuild will soon be made manifest.

When I think of the Antrim of "my" Catskill years (the late '50s through the mid '70s), memories come flooding back in clouds that converge one upon the other. It's hard now to sort specific recollections from the mass, but I'll try.

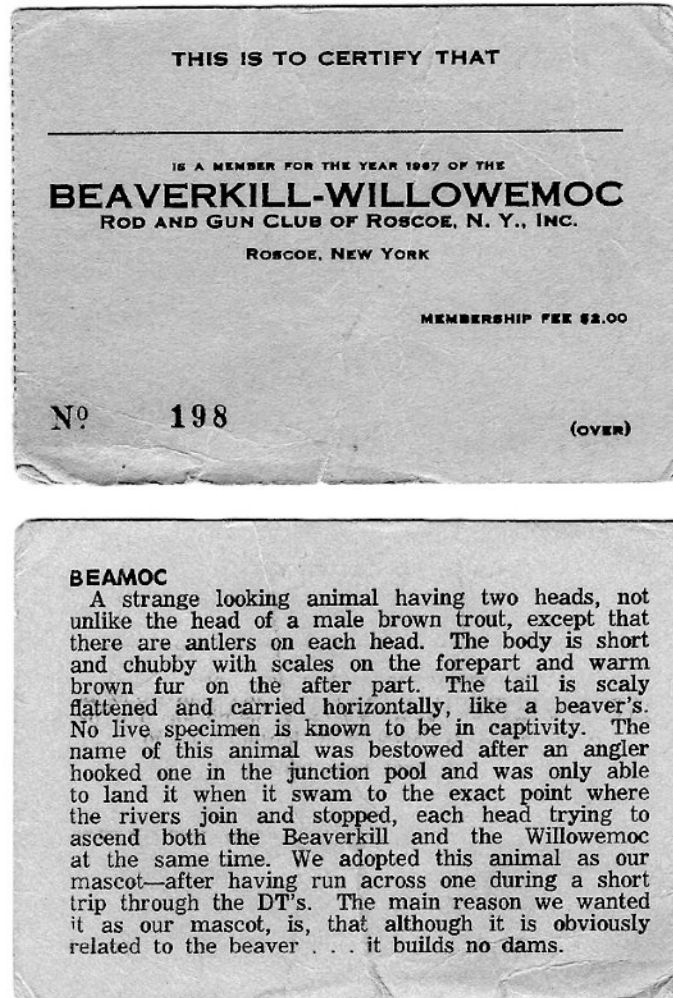
First and foremost, I thought of the wonderful downstairs bar and dining room as a place that would always provide refuge from either the penetrating cold of spring or the debilitating heat of summer. The consistent presence, or so it seemed in those years, of Doug Bury at the left-hand corner of the bar was a source of constancy and solidity that was welcome to the occasional visitor. The bartender in those years, whose name I never learned, had a way with a martini that placed him in the pantheon of the "Ten Best," even by my standards today. Finally, it seemed there would always be someone at the bar whom you knew, either from that day on the river or from another.

Perhaps my most vivid specific memory of the Antrim is a dinner shared there with Al McClane in about 1974. In the course of a couple of martinis, a delightful entrée, and perhaps one or two postdinner libations, I learned more about trout and trout fishing than my own fumbblings had taught me in the preceding twenty years.

That Al was a "Catskill regular" by adoption, if not by residence, made the evening all the more memorable. I still can say with honest conviction that I believe Al McClane had forgotten more about trout and fly fishing for trout than anyone I've spoken with or whose works I've read since could ever learn. That he imparted his knowledge with class, grace, and humility made the man all the more impressive.

I have an amalgamation of Antrim memories of evenings spent after either the hatch or the spinner fall had waned, when the cold beer and wonderfully stuffed roast beef sandwiches were the fuel for longer evenings still, filled with stories and camaraderie of a sort that could not be found in the same delicious flavors anywhere else in the Catskills.

In short, my memories of the Antrim ensure that for me, it will never be the same, just as my memories of the Beaverkill ensure that the river will never be the same for me. It is, however, my fervent hope that like the river, the Antrim just may become and be the basis for memories for the generations to come.



Scan of 1967 club membership card courtesy of Glenn Overton

Porcupine Extended-Body Comparadun and Spinner **By Allan Podell**

This style of fly is a composite of two others. First, it makes use of a porcupine quill for the extended body. I'm not sure who should be credited with this idea, but its use is described in at least one of Vince Marinaro's books. Second, it uses deer hair or grizzly hackle for a Comparadun wing. I guess you can attribute this to Fran Betters or Al Caucci and Bob Nastasi. The result is a large-bodied fly that's lightweight, reasonably aerodynamic, and works well—so well, in fact, that I used a Green Drake dun, tied in this style, to catch a 20-plus-inch brown at the recent Roscoe Fish-In.

A big question about this fly is its durability. I did not have a chance to examine the fly after I released the trout, because I cut the fly off at the tippet, so it might be a “one and done” style.

The style can be applied to any large dun or spinner by altering the size and dyeing the quill to match the color of the natural. I can't recommend the use of a permanent marker because when I tried to color the quill with one, the color rubbed off. I may have used the wrong type.



Porcupine Extended-Body Green Drake Dun

Hook: Dry fly, size 12 or 14 short shank or size 16

Thread: White, pale yellow, or pale green, 6/0 or 3/0

Tail: 3 microfibbets or dark hairs for dun, 2 for spinner

Body: Porcupine quill dyed to match the dun, or white for spinner

Underbody: Dubbing, same color as the body

Wing: For the dun, mottled deer hair; for the spinner, Hi-Vis Antron or hackle trimmed top and bottom

Thorax: Dark brown or black for both the dun and the spinner

1) Prepare the quill body and tail by carefully cutting off the sharp point of the quill. Now cut off the very tip of the white section, the end that was closest to the skin. Take a sewing needle and stick it about one-half inch into the hole in this tip to clear out some of the pulp and make it possible to embed the tailing material. Even out the tips of the tailing material and trim the butts to an appropriate length. Place the tailing material all the way into this hole. Hold the quill with tails up and place a drop of CA glue at the base of the tailing so that it wicks down into the quill. Separate the tails—use something other than your fingers, or you'll glue them together. Hold the tails in place until the glue dries, then put aside for now.

2) Lay down a layer of thread from the eye to the bend of the hook. Dub a small amount of fur onto the thread and apply this, going no more than halfway toward the eye. Continue wrapping the thread to the thorax area, where the wing will be tied down.

3) *For the dun*: To mount the wing, cut a bunch of deer hair and comb out any short hairs and underfur. Even the tips in a hair stacker. Hold the hair above and slightly on your side of the shank, with the tips pointed over the eye. Hold tightly with your fingers at the tie-in spot and make two wraps of thread. The first should be snug. As you make the second, tighten it as you bring the thread around and toward your body. Make this as tight as you can. Then carefully move your fingers toward the bend while making successive and adjoining wraps in that direction. Do not wrap all the way to the dubbing. Do not release the hair. Cut off the butts of the hair at an angle. Now make several more adjoining wraps toward and up to the dubbing. (*See step 5 for spinner wings.*)

4) Notice the angle at which you've cut the deer hair and make a similarly angled cut in the porcupine quill. Where the cut starts will determine the length of the body. Butt the cut quill over the cut hair and tie down with successive wraps going toward the eye. Try not to have the wraps pile up on top of each other. This step can be made easier by applying a little contact cement or applying CA glue to a short portion of the thread. Stop wrapping the thread a wrap or two behind the wing. Place a drop of CA glue along the wrapped quill section and allow to dry.

5) *For the spinner*: To mount the wing, hold the wing material perpendicular to the shank and tie in with figure eights. When done, cut to length and place a drop of CA glue where the shank and wing material meet. Grasp the ends of the wings and pull gently. This should cause the glue to wick a little and stiffen the wings at the shank. They won't fold back as easily. Alternatively, tie in a hackle, wind it, and trim it top and bottom.

6) *For both the dun and the spinner*: Apply dubbing to the thread. I prefer plain dyed rabbit. Wrap the dubbed thread in figure eights around the wing, then behind and in front of it. As you do this on the dun, grasp the deer hair and manipulate it so that it flairs 180 degrees and stands straight up or leans a little backward. Do not be afraid to be rough with the hair. The dubbed thorax should be wider than the body. When done, tie off with a whip finish. Trim any fibers that have strayed below the shank. Apply head cement, if you wish.

Dollar Store Bargains

By Gary Sweet

Among the many places that a fly tyer can pick up things that can be useful, one that's sometimes overlooked is the local "dollar store." I like walking through the aisle that has all the tools and hardware and have picked up some pretty good deals. Supplies for tying flies, though, aren't limited to the tool aisle.

Poly bags for freezer storage from the sandwich size up to a gallon size can be used to store many accumulated materials. Usually you can find mothballs at the dollar store, too. Not all the mothballs or crystals sold today use the old paradichlorobenzene that was so effective, though. Yes, para crystals do have a strong odor, but storing the box in a sealable plastic storage bag can help keep the odor to a minimum. One of our local dollar stores now has a display of "pest strips." You can cut these up into small pieces and put the pieces into the plastic bags that hackles come in, or a fly storage box, or the plastic bags you use for storing other furs, feathers, and materials that insects love to lay eggs in and eat.

Tweezers are something we all can use. The tool aisle in many of these stores has a four-pack of tweezers that contains various designs useful in a traveling tool box for tying and on your regular tying table. Tweezers can make it a lot easier pick up and sort flies and hooks or

beads. My favorite tweezers are the fine-pointed, curved type. I use them not only for picking things up, but to compress dubbing and spun or stacked hair on the hook shank.

Sewing needles? There are two kinds you might want to try. The bigger ones can be inserted and epoxied into the end of a thin, short dowel or other handle for use as dubbing needles. Even the smaller or thinner needles can be used that way. They also can be used for many other tying jobs, as well. I just picked up two packs of fifty needles of assorted sizes for only a buck apiece. Also check out the small, narrow sewing bobbins used to hold thread. These are great for portable or travel tying kits.

Tubes of cyanoacrylic adhesives such as Krazy Glue are certainly useful for many things in fly tying. Gluing foam together on some bodies is necessary, whether you are making ants, crickets, grasshoppers, poppers, or whatever. Other glues, such as the various Goops, are sometimes found in these stores, too.

Tools such as long-nosed pliers can come in handy for pinching down the barbs on hooks or bending the shanks of hooks, when necessary. Dykes (wire cutters) of various sizes and styles are good for cutting hard and heavy things such as wing quill center stems and hook shanks.

In addition to tweezer sets, another tool kit that is commonly found in these stores is an assortment of very fine (jewelry) screwdrivers. One nice tool in these sets is a small awl. An awl is a fine-pointed tool used to punch holes in things. I use this type of awl for spreading apart the beads from a bead chain. When one bead is cut off and the point of the awl stuck into the empty hole, the bead will split apart if pressure is applied to the awl. A hook shaft can be placed in the split, then the bead can be squeezed back together with a pair of long-nosed pliers. This allows you to get the bead onto the hook shank without bending the hook barb down. Insert glue into the bead and it will not be as buoyant, and the glue will help to hold it in place where you want it on the hook shank.

The section that has the personal-hygiene products will usually have several sizes of nail clippers. In the same place you can find the clear nail polish that lots of fly tyers use for head cement. Also look for metal or sandpaper-style nail files. If they are durable enough, they can be kept in your fishing vest and be used to sharpen hook points.

Do you like to keep track of the water temperature when you fish? I have seen various thermometers in the personal-hygiene section, too. Also look for combs and small brushes. Toothbrushes can be used to brush out materials. Plastic combs can be used to keep knots and snags out of poly yarn and to hold pairs of bead-chain eyes that you want to paint and don't want set down on a surface while the paint dries. Just paint the eyes and insert the wire joining the pair between the tines of a comb to hold it in place. This is also one of the uses for the tweezers: Use them to hold the pairs of bead eyes while they are being painted and then to insert them between the tines of a comb.

One other place to look for combs is in the pet supplies. Usually, there are all-metal combs used to groom pets. The metal combs with short tines and long, pointy handles are great for combing out poly yarn and other synthetic materials. Look for metal or wire brushes in the tool aisle, as well. These are bigger than a toothbrush, but the same shape. Commonly they are sold in assorted packages of nylon and wire bristles. Sometimes each type is sold separately.

Sometimes the saying that you get what you pay for is more than true, but sometimes you just need an inexpensive pair of scissors. In the personal-hygiene section, look for small cuticle scissors. If the label indicates a manufacturer you feel comfortable with, go for it. If you are

putting a tying kit together for teaching kids to tie flies, it might be cheaper in the long run to use a less expensive set of scissors, since they are easily and inexpensively replaced. Even inexpensive scissors will hold up for quite a while if all they are used for is cutting thread, hair, and feather fibers. If they are used for less fragile items such as wire and large feather stems such as the stems in primary and secondary wing feathers, you can certainly expect them to wear out more quickly.

Keep your eyes open for the enamel paint used for model cars and airplanes, too. This works well for painting heads and eyes on bugs, bucktails, and streamers.

If you find steel wool or heavy copper or stainless steel scouring pads, try jamming some into a plastic film container and punching a hole in the top. Use these as keepers for your dubbing needles and even for your scissors. They'll scrub off the glue or paint that can accumulate on them.

Disposable razors can be useful for trimming spun deer hair. Take them apart, and the two or three blades do just as well as one of the old-style double-edged blades broken in half. Sometimes you can find the razors packaged with up to six of the razors per pack. After you have the razor taken apart, put the blades in a film canister for safety.

Also keep your eyes open for the small plastic boxes used for storing small items such as buttons. These can be used to store flies or various tying tools.

The tool aisles commonly carry a twelve-inch steel ruler. Sometimes you'll find a miter gauge with a steel ruler. The ruler itself is worth it.

The razor-type utility knife with replaceable blades found in the tool section may not be the best for a full-time working professional contractor, but it can certainly be useful to a fly tyer for all kinds of cutting chores. Single-edge razor blades are also sold in these stores. I have seen boxes of twenty blades or so for a buck.

Some stores have craft supplies such as Craft Fur. When working with kids, these are an inexpensive substitute for bucktail and other similar materials. The underfur can be used for dubbing, and it sometimes has a nice sparkle to it.

Once I even picked up a small, battery-operated blender or mixer—for a buck! I use mine for mixing or blending dubbing—not margaritas. Using this tool has helped keep peace in our house, since I don't have to use the kitchen blender anymore.



➡Volunteers Needed◀

The International Fly Tying Symposium will be held on November 18 and 19, 2006, in Somerset, NJ. Tyers who volunteered at the last show will be contacted before October 10—we are continuing our policy of giving them preference. We always have a few slots left open and would encourage any member who has not tied there previously to consider volunteering. The symposium offers an opportunity to meet and tie with the world's very best tyers. As usual, the Guild will provide a pass for each tyer on the days they tie. Contact Paul

Murphy: E-mail pmurphy100@patmedia.net or by mail at 50 State Park Road Chester, NJ 07930.

We also need volunteers to teach kids to tie flies at the **Sullivan County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs annual Youth Day** in Grahamsville, NY, on Saturday, September 9, from 9:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M., an event we support each year. Please call (845)439-3738 to help.

The Catskill Fly Tyers Guild *Gazette* is issued six times a year to members. Membership is only \$10.00 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, then mail it and a check to: **Bob Osburn, 3 Good Time Court, Goshen, NY 10924** and indicate if it is a new membership or a renewal.

*****Remember, memberships renew in February.*****

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Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone #: _____

E-mail address: _____

Would you be willing to accept the *Gazette* via e-mail?

Yes (please provide) _____

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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, BBynack@cs.com or 69 Bronxville Road, Apt. 4G, Bronxville, NY, 10708, (914) 961-3521.