



NEXT MEETING

Saturday, Nov. 21
Rockland House
1:00 PM

Demonstration By: Ralph Hoffman

Expect a very interesting presentation about tying and fishing wet flies. Bring your stuff and tie along.

Peacock herl, brown hackle, black hackle, goose quill, turkey side tail, hooks - 3906 #12

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS:

Dec. 19 (R. House) - Allan Podell on tying comparaduns.

Jan. 16 (R. House) -

Jan. 23, 24, 25 - Fly Fishing Show, Somerset, NJ.

Feb. 21 (R. House) - Material Swap. See page 2.

Mar. T.G.F. Show, Mahwah, NJ.

Mar. (tba) (R. House)

Meetings at the Rockland House start at 1:00 PM

A Special Note Of Thanks

I want to thank everyone who has contributed articles, letters, ideas, cartoons, poems or anything for use in this newsletter. If I haven't thanked you individually, I want to do so collectively. What you submit is extremely important and appreciated. It's what makes this newsletter possible.

Please continue to 'keep those cards & letters coming'. Also, feel free to express your opinions (nicely), even those that may raise some hackles and stir up a little controversy. AP

HELP WANTED

Tyers are needed to help with our table at the Fly Fishing Show in Somerset, NJ. This is a three(3) day event so we need tyers willing to spend several hours at the table tying flies and explaining to visitors about the Guild. Tyers at this show must tie 'Catskill Flies' only! The Guilds working definition of a Catskill Fly is: "***a fly that originated in the Catskills for use in Catskill waters***". Obviously steelhead, salmon and saltwater flies do not fit this definition.

Please contact Bill Leuszler at (914)733-6759 if you want to volunteer.

SUBJECT: Pavilion Tables at CFFC

On Oct. 17th, the following Guild members and friends helped build the almost 7 picnic tables at the CFFC. Denise Conway, Ken Kobayashi, Ken Mears, Dick Smith, Al Ampe, Art Port, Floyd Franke, Burt Franke, John Harrington and Judie Darbee Vinciguerra.

So far the following fly tyers have been honored with a table in their name: Elsie Darbee, Art Flick and Theodore Gordon. Beamoc and Manny Zanger have not said who the fly tyers are that they are honoring. Next year, the Guild will do another one in Harry Darbee's name. Other tyers who will be honored are Rube Cross, Herman Christian, William Chandler, Ray Smith, Preston Jennings, Edward Hewitt, George LaBranche and Roy Steenrod. Walt and Winnie Dette will be honored with tables sponsored by Dick Despommier. The Roscoe Campsites also want to sponsor two tables.

The tables will be stained and plaques, the design for which is yet undecided, will be attached in the spring. JDV

'MATERIAL' SWAP AT FEBRUARY MEETING

Our annual 'material' (and anything else) swap will take place Sat., Feb. 21st at the Rockland House. There will be contests, different types of prizes and surprises in addition to the normal (yeh, right - hahaha) bartering for items.

All members are encouraged to attend and bring whatever tying materials, tools, hooks, books, rods, reels and/or anything else they may have excess of, no longer use and/or are willing to swap. The best situation is that you will find something you've been looking for, that you need, will use and are able to obtain through a trade. Worst case scenario is you go home with what you brought. You can't lose! So bring lots of stuff. You never know what unlikely treasure you'll find or what you have that someone may consider treasure.

Doors to the Rockland House will open at noon for participants that have to set up tables for their stuff. At 1:00PM the doors will open for all other participants, browsers, friends of the Guild and visitors.

Help make this year's 'swap' a big success. Come and bring: 1)all that you can, 2)a friend who has stuff to swap, 3)an open mind, 4)your sense of fair negotiations (this is not the N.B.A.), and 5)your sense of humor. Finally, will someone please bring a tube of Overton's Wonder Wax to trade (just a personal plug)?

More information about the swap to follow. AP

IN DEFENSE of THEODORE GORDON

In the CFTG Newsletter: Vol.1, Issue #5, Sept. '98, Bill Leuszler makes several comments regarding John McDonald's, The Complete Fly Fisherman. He states that, "He (Gordon) never understood entomology in a formal sense", that, "it (the collection) is not all that focused", and finally that, "The material is not concise." With this I must take issue. It is a false cast short of heresy.

To begin with, thank you very much John McDonald for recording this vital link of angling

history, that for all intent and purposes would otherwise have been lost or destroyed.

Gordon fled the city and chose to lead a life of undeniable Catskill hardships in a time period when rural life could hardly be considered convenient. His notes and letters were written from year-round personal observation, not the fantasy world of an armchair in a Victorian mansion. His studies and writings of trout flies and flytying on Catskill waters paved the way for notable Catskill flytyers such as Rube Cross, the Darbees, and the Dettles. Gordon also taught Roy Steenrod how to tie flies.

It does not take an entomologist to tie flies and catch trout. It takes good powers of observation and the ability to know how to analyze fishing situations. In this respect Gordon was a master. He could identify insects in his mind and transfer these thoughts onto a hook. He was impressionistic in his flytying and realized, like most experienced tyers, that exact imitation is impossible and in most cases unnecessary. (The bare hook will ALWAYS betray you.)

His pivotal fly, the Quill Gordon, was and still is 100 years later, a good taker-of-trout. In fact, with the exception of the body, this fly spawned a series of patterns tied by others, (the Hendrickson, the Red Quill, etc.), which are still important fly patterns today. They have survived the test of time.

It might also be worthy of note that in my conversations with Herman Christian, one of Gordon's friends, it became quite obvious that his feelings for Gordon were genuine. He always had reservations for anglers he knew, both the skillful ones and the braggarts. Yet every time I questioned him about Gordon, there was reverence. Gordon, although secretive, could tie flies very well and knew how to use them. Years ago, I had the opportunity to finger some of Gordon's flies that Elsie Darbee had in her possession. They were first-rate in every sense of the word.

Contrary to your message, Mr. Leuszler, I would suggest that anyone who (cont., pg 3)

(In Defense ..., cont.)

has a copy of Gordon's Notes and Letters read it, and read it again, until you absorb what has been written. You will always find something you overlooked with the previous reading.

And finally, I would hardly suggest that this book should be borrowed from the library and returned. It should be the FIRST BOOK any Catskill flyfisher should own.

Roger Menard
West Shokan, NY

Thanks for sharing your knowledge and opinions about Mr. Gordon and this book. AP

YOUTH OUTDOOR EXPO - GRAHAMSVILLE

The Expo was held on Sept. 19th at the Grahamsville Fair Grounds. Although it did not seem that attendance was as strong as the year before all of the instructors were kept busy. Everyone was good and tired by the end of the day. I would say we gave instruction to over 100 kids.

In attendance were: Paul Hoyt, Dick Smith, Judie Vinciguerra, Hank Rope, Bob Osburn, Dan Popernik, Ken Mears and yours truly (I hope I didn't forget anybody). I really would like to thank everyone who took the time to be there and represent the Guild. Ralph Hoffman was there helping out another group.

Thanks to the Catskill Fly Fishing Center for the equipment they loaned us for the day.

Bill Leuszler

NOTES FROM THE NEVERSINK - BOOKS

REVIEWED: By Bill Leuszler

1) John Atherton's book, THE FLY AND THE FISH, is a real sleeper. I picked it up this year in a used bookstore figuring that I would sell it and make a few bucks. The price was right for that. Sorry guys it's not leaving my house ever! I have gained so much from reading this book. He was an artist and reflected on a number of important subjects. The chapter 'Flies and Im-

pressionism' provides the strongest support for the Catskill style that I have ever read. He fished the Neversink a lot. He knew Hewitt too. The book gives a pretty good description of his fishing experiences with spiders and variants.

There is a good deal of information useful to fly tyers. His ideas have already had an influence on my pattern construction. I can't praise this book enough.

2) Leonard Wright has written the most about the Neversink of any author that I know. His book, FLY FISHING HERESIES, was one of the first books I read on fly fishing. I have read every book he has written on fly fishing and fly tying. I learned a great deal from him. I fondly remember his tying demonstrations at the Fly Fishing Museum. Most of his books are available in paperback. His book, NEVERSINK, is a good read but not the one I would suggest as being his best. NEVERSINK is a good one to get out of the library or borrow. His books, SUPERIOR FLIES and STONEFLY AND CADDIS FLY FISHING are my two favorites. Both of these books have a wealth of information related to fly construction and fly selection. SUPERIOR FLIES is a book that I would suggest for a beginner, in combination with two other books, A.J. McClanes THE PRACTICAL FLY FISHERMAN and Art Lee's FISHING DRY FLIES FOR TROUT.

3) Larry Koller lived in Orange County, NY and is reported to have fished the Neversink a great deal. I would imagine from his writings that he fished more of the lower part of the river than most of the other writers noted. Koller's writings may be of some interest to Guild members. He knew many of the great Catskill tyers: Cross, Dettes, Steenrod and Darbees. His approach to fishing has a healthy balance. He seemed to be interested in having a good time when he fished. Nowhere do I get a sense that he is preaching, or in any way stuffy. His book, THE TREASURY OF ANGLING, is my favorite of his. I have not read his, TAKING LARGER TROUT because it is fairly tough to find and is pretty pricey when you do. Most of his other books can be had for next to (cont., pg 4)

(NOTES ..., cont.)

nothing. His book SHOTS OF WHITETAILS is my all time favorite book on hunting.

(more NOTES coming in the Jan. issue)

MATERIAL SELECTION: By Dave Catizone

In tailing Dry Flies, a fly tyer is becoming hard pressed to obtain enough tailing material to tie large quantities of fishing flies. Look for suitable tailing material just as you would for a neck. You need both when tying Dries. I have found that 'spade' hackle may be the suitable feather. They are usually very stiff and have a sheen to them. The length of most 'spades' will be enough to cover most Dry Fly hook sizes. and they are an excellent choice for tying the longer tails required for the 'Variant' type fly style.

Save any and all 'spade' hackle as the expensive rooster neck does not provide enough adequate tailing. The use of small India necks may, in fact, provide suitable tailing material. The neck feather barbules are long and the necks come in the prime colors needed for most fly patterns. India necks are underestimated in total feather value.

As an added thought, these India necks were abundant when I first started out tying years ago. They are still to be found and they provide a multitude of uses. Some of the rare colors needed in some streamer wings can be found on these necks. I've found some very useful round tipped feathers as well.

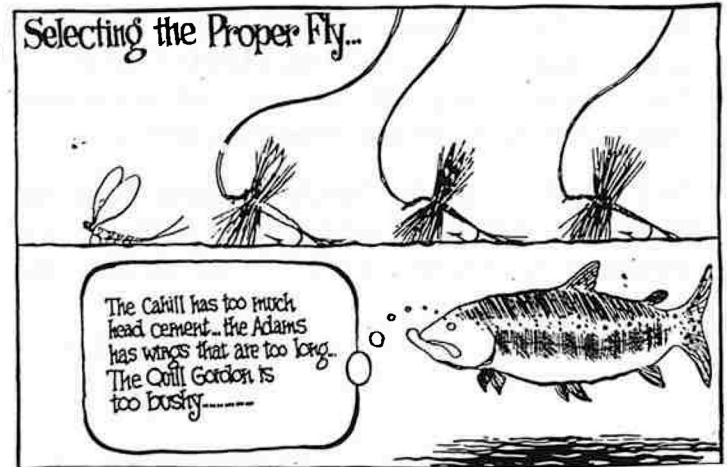
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from *FEAR OF FLY FISHING*
By Jack Ohman

GUIDES' WEATHER REPORT: By Irwin Small

An incident the other day struck me as rather comical -- in effect a "Guides' Weather Report" -- you can decide.

The other day I was talking from the shop to one of our guides. It was early afternoon and a warm, light rain had just begun to fall. We had talked about conditions generally and the still very fishable but rather low water, in his favorite stream. "Are you getting some rain?" he asked. I agreed it had just started to sprinkle. Since the guide lives 10 miles or so west of town and I expected the rain coming in would be hitting him first, I asked him if it was raining at his place. "You could catch fish in it." was his response "Is it raining fairly hard?" I asked, trying for further clarification. He said, "Well, hard enough to sink a Blue Winge Olive, if it hit it right."

I knew for a warm, cloudy afternoon like this, that he was referring to a size 16 - 18 dry BWO and from that, to expect the rain to become somewhat heavier as the storm moved in. Very descriptive, I thought.

(Irwin is retired and now lives in Grayling, MI., works p/t at 'The Fly Factory' and occasionally writes poetry. See Sept., '98 issue -- ED)

The NEVERSINK SKATER

Historical prospective and tying instructions - A. Podell

Because I spent the summers of my youth fishing the lower Neversink I have a deep seated affection for that river. I enjoy reading about its history and fishing it, which is not often enough. The Neversink has a colorful history which includes being home waters to some of the most famous figures in fly fishing and fly tying. Included is Edward Hewitt. Among his numerous and substantial contributions he created a unique style of fly. It is seldom seen today but, I believe if it was used correctly, it would be deadly (excuse the phrase). That fly is the Neversink Skater.

Hewitt did not specifically reveal what the Skater imitated or exactly how to tie it. Maybe it's a large fluttering moth, butterfly or caddis as it skitters (skates) across the water surface? Back in September I watched as a large trout chased a white moth(?) that was being blown across the surface of a flat pool. The trout literally jumped out of the water at least 3 times trying to catch the moth but missed. The insect finally flew off safely.

Hewitt did not let on that he had a few secret methods of tying this fly and Vince Marinaro has been credited for solving this mystery. Additionally, there is one other problem with its construction. You have to use extra long very stiff hackle. These are not easy to find because the barb length on today's genetically bred roosters is simply too short. Assuming you can get the hackle, here's the recipe and the tying directions:

Hook - Dry fly, extra short shank, t.u. eye, size 14 or 16

Hackle - Color of your choice, although a light/medium color with some barring may be best. Hackle barbs should be at least 3/4", preferably longer. Spade hackle may be your best bet.

Thread - Unwaxed, color to match hackle.

NOTE: Tightly secure hackle with as few turns as possible.

Step 1: Apply some dubbing wax to the hook shank.

Step 2, 'Secret' #1: Tie in unwaxed thread at bend of hook.

Step 3, 'Secret' #2: Tie in hackle with the butt along the shank and the dull side facing the eye. The butt faces the eye and the tip of the hackle extends back over the bend. Trim butt.

Step 4: Wind hackle toward eye. Each wind should be alongside the previous one. Go about 1/2 way. Secure and trim tip.

Step 5: Wrap thread with open winds to 1 eye length of eye.

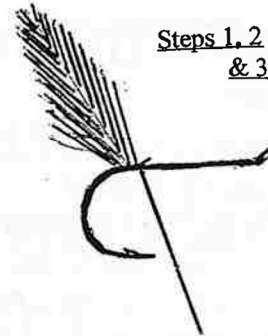
Step 6: Tie in hackle with the butt along the shank and the shiny side facing the eye. The butt faces the eye and the tip of the hackle extends back over the bend. Trim butt. Tie in so that the 1st wind of this hackle is directly against the front of the rear hackle(s). Bring the thread to 1 within 1 eye length of eye.

Step 7: Wind this hackle towards eye in open winds. Tie down. Trim tip. Whip finish.

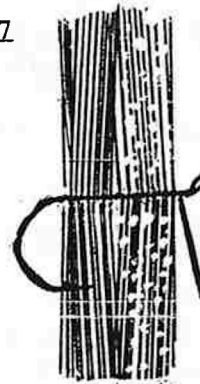
Step 8, 'Secret' #3: With the thumb and forefinger of your left hand at the bend and your right thumb and forefinger at the eye, slowly apply even moving pressure so that the hackles are pushed together towards the center. You may have to use your nails or a hair stacker. Be careful not to bend or break the hook or stab yourself! If everything is done correctly, the barbs will form elongated triangular shapes above and below the shank.

Step 9: Secure with another whip finish and complete the fly with a small drop of head cement.

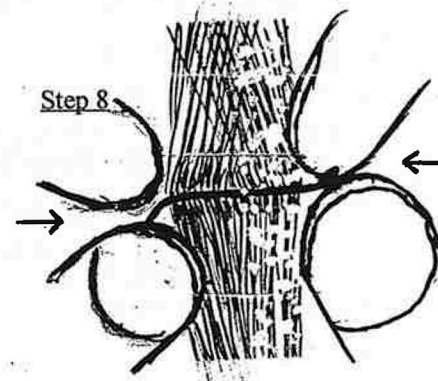
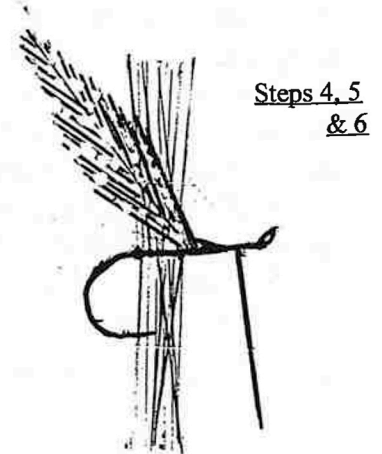
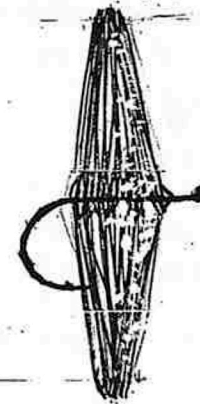
If you want a heavier hackled fly use 2 hackles in 'Step 3'. Wind 1 hackle then the 2nd through the 1st in 'Step 4'.



Step 7



Step 9



I know what flies I'd choose for this column, but what about you? What flies of historical interest have grabbed your attention and why? We'd all like to know and learn about them. Simply submit a: 1) brief history of the fly; 2) its original recipe; 3) its modern recipe (if different); and, 4) why it's a favorite of yours. Although it would certainly be helpful, you don't have to describe the tying method or include any drawings unless you feel a need for it and want to do so.