



General Secretary's 2024/25 Report

Another year over, an awful lot of same old same old as far as the role goes.

Renewing the insurance, Check! Although as the company we insure with forgot all about our renewal (And several other sporting club renewals!) so we didn't get our certificate until the end of March. They assured me, we were fully insured at all times. I am so glad we didn't have a claim to test that statement. I have already sent them a reminder asking for this year's quote. This amount is based on the number of active branches relying on our insurance as well as the total number of members.

Each year in December I send out a branch information form. Check! By the 1st of February we had replies to this request for details of branch officers and the branch programme from just 15 branches. I have had to chase a further 13 branches for those details. Some have responded. Unless I receive updates from the other branches by 17th Feb I will assume they do not want the Guild Branch Insurance and renew accordingly. This will possibly save us around £400 unless premiums have substantially increased. Equally well without current and up to date information we cannot maintain the website which is where a lot of branches pick up their members.

Correspondence has been relatively low this year although I have had several requests for help in disposing of deceased member's and ex member's fly tying and fishing equipment. Much of this has been donated to the Guild and indeed some, such as the Ian Elder capes have been shared out amongst interested branches this weekend.

We have had several committee meetings both by Zoom and meeting in person and the hosting of these remotely makes life so much easier for all but does take away a bit of the camaraderie which is a bit of a shame.

It is a long time since we increased our membership subscriptions 11 or 12 years I believe. In this period, we have seen the cost of everything increase, our biggest increases being in the cost of printing and posting out Flydresser. We propose to increase rates at this meeting and I would ask all members to remember the substantial benefits you get from the Guild beside Flydresser before cancelling membership for the sake of an extra £5. One purchase of £50 from a trade member offering 10% discount offsets this instantly. If 50% of Guild members encouraged one other person to become a member of the Guild we would possibly not have to increase rates for another 11 years.

On the subject of trade members, I have also managed our relationship with trade members, much of which is done at the BFFI. We continue to offer a good range of discounts as well as receiving other benefits such as raffle and competition prizes. Thank you to all our trade members for their support and generosity. We have added Renomed Scissors to our trade members list and will find out this weekend what they are offering.

A role I fulfil outside of the Secretary's remit is running the Guild Fly Tying Competition. Clearly I'm not very good at this as I haven't won anything since I started doing it. There are two recurring issues with the competition both of which come through members not reading the rules. Of the first 30 entries I received last year only 3 managed to complete the entry

forms correctly. I already know the name of the chosen fly but surprisingly I can't name all 1,000 or so members from their membership numbers alone. Please take a bit more time. The second moan is with entrants not putting their guild membership numbers on the flies. Just the membership number, not name and address (Which should have been on the form) otherwise we can't have an independent and anonymous judging.

Thirdly and this is a plea not a moan, the number of entries is not very high given the membership and the quality of fly tyers out there. Come on, have a go, if nothing else it will improve your own tying.

As I stated in Flydresser this will be my last AGM as Chair as I intend to stand down in February 2026. I will probably not be at that meeting and hope that whoever takes over will receive the same wholehearted support I have had over the past 13 years. I am happy to remain on the committee of the FDG for the foreseeable future and will obviously offer help and advice if needed.

I am pleased that the rest of the committee have taken on their roles with such gusto and the FGD is no longer a one man or even three-man band. Sharing the responsibility makes everyone's life so much easier. Thank you to each and everyone of you.

Chris Reeves
General Secretary
The Fly Dressers' Guild.

Treasurer's 2024/25 Report

The Guild suffered an excess of Expenditure over Income of just under £2,000 for the financial year ending 31 August 2024.

Membership, in common with many other angling related organisations, is on a reducing trend and expenses are, inexorably, increasing.

The Guild is in the fortunate position of having significant reserves however the committee is committed to continuing their careful scrutiny of expenses and finding ways to reduce these in the future.

At the same time the committee is examining ways to increase membership by improving and extending our offerings and increasing our exposure to younger audiences and to develop other sources of income including through merchandising and advertising.

The Guild continues to depend on the significant unpaid work of the editorial committee of the Flydresser.

If our efforts to restrict expenditure and increase income are not successful it may be necessary in future years to recommend an increase in subscriptions.

John Butler
Treasurer
The Fly Dressers' Guild

Fly Dressers Guild

Income and Expenditure Account		Balance Sheet as at 31st August 2024	
2023	2024	2023	2024
16,100 Membership Subscriptions	15,567	26,191 Members' Accumulated Fund at 31st August 2023	25,168
563 Sale of merchandise	1,219	1,023 Deficit for the year	1,881
-255 Less: cost of sales	-619	25,168 Balance at 31st August 2024	23,287
825 John Watts/Elinor	365	Represented by:	
-778 BFFI	-215	23,473 Bank and cash balances	26,273
Other	477	280 Debtors	
16,455 Total Income	16,794	1,415 Stock	1,173
12,650 Fly Dresser	13,430	Creditors	-4,159
2,299 Insurance	2,485	25,168 Net Assets	23,287
537 Trophies/awards	280		
540 Postage/Stationery	517		
365 Internet	793		
1,087 Other	1,170		
17,478 Total Expenditure	18,675		
-1,023 Excess of Expenditure over Income	-1,881		

These accounts correctly show the assets and liabilities of the Fly Dressers Guild and the excess of expenditure over income for the period.

John Butler

Membership Secretary's 2024/25 Report

Membership has slightly increased this year and now stands at 945.

Please support your local branch and if there is not one, consider setting one up. There is no substitute for the one-to-one tuition and advice to be gained at a branch meeting. Please contact the Guild for more information on setting up a branch. I can contact other members in your local area to see if there is interest in forming a branch.

Members are reminded that renewals are due in September of each year. Some members have standing orders set up for different times of the year. It would be appreciated if these could be amended to 1 September yearly. If you have not yet renewed, please can you do so as soon as possible. If you are attending BFFI this year, please come along to the FDG stand to renew.

Members are reminded that the Members' Area on the website can be accessed using the details on your membership card. Username is the name on the card without the title (Mr, Mrs, Miss, Dr, etc.) and your password is your membership number.

David Richards
Membership Secretary
The Fly Dressers' Guild

Guild Awards Secretary's 2024/25 Report

This last year saw a good number of candidates make their submissions for an Award. In most cases the candidates were successful, with just a few who fell short of the mark, and would urge that they should try again. I'm sure that with just a little patience and concentration would result in a pass. Remember, we are here to help, and will try in every way for you to obtain your goal.

For the candidates that were successful, there were 16 Bronze Awards, 9 Silver Awards and 3 Gold Awards.

There were no submissions for the Grayling Award, so please, while we are still in the dark days of winter, for those that are eligible, have go.

There were more individual members making submissions, than there were from the Branches. Unfortunately I have no answers to this situation at the present time. I will be asking members at the AGM as I feel this the best way to obtain some feedback. Again, please contact me if you need advice or help.

Those individual members are more or less making their efforts alone and successfully, however many have sought help, and many thanks to those members who have taken on the role of mentors. Distance learning is not an easy task. Their patience and professionalism have shone through.

The Awards are very important part in what we do. It gives us a greater understanding of our craft, the techniques and materials management. The end result being, that as fly dressers, we are more skilful.

I therefore urge that our Branches and individual members, both home and abroad to get involved with the Awards, and remember, make it enjoyable.

I look forward to seeing friends old and new at the BFFI.

Bob Lomax
Guild Awards Secretary
The Fly Dressers' Guild

Fishing Competitions Secretary's 2024/25 Report

My 2024 year started with arranging our Elinor Bank fishing competition which we held on 21st April. The weather was kind to us & the fishing was great. We had our after competition meal & prize awards in the neighbouring barn accommodation like we did last year, this has been really popular but unfortunately I believe it is being rented out long term now so we will have to make other plans this year. Brad & Jo do a fantastic job running the fishery & I'd really like to urge more members to come to join in at our Elinor comp. It is a very friendly day out with some brilliant fishing. This year's Bank competition is being held again at Elinor on 18th May.

As soon as the Dust settles from Elinor I get cracking organising our John Watts Competition & this was a very special event for our Guild being the 50th anniversary of the competition. We were really pleased that Jill Watts & Son Adam came to award the Prizes. I'm sure John Watts would of been delighted that his fishing competition is still going strong after all these years.

Due the very sad closure of Draycote we ventured back to Grafham which was great. There had been a massive fish stocking on the north shore so the fishing was frantic. Everyone seemed to have a great day despite the torrential rain. The new catch & release element of the competition seems to be very popular.

The John Watts comp is a very friendly day out where anyone new to loch style fly fishing can be teamed up with an experienced member. This year's competition will be held on 23rd August. We are hoping to return to Draycote as the majority of participants have said they prefer it. Anglian Water are taking on Draycote but I believe they are still wrestling with solicitors.

Thank you very much to all the Guild members who enjoy taking part.

Lee Hooper
Fishing Competitions Secretary
The Fly Dressers' Guild

Merchandising Officer's 2024/25 Report

Merchandising since my last report (January 2024) has seen a big upturn. This was due to (in my opinion) a good presence at the BFFI And more importantly, a leaflet going out with every other issue of Flydresser.

The embroiderers and polo, fleece and baseball cap suppliers are very accommodating and will accept small orders and turn them round with embroidery very quickly.

Modern bookbinders ceased trading at the end 2024, so we ordered a double lot of binders that was due for delivery at the end of January 2025. Hopefully, I'll be reporting safe delivery of these at the BFFI.

Moving forward, if there is anything members would like to see in the merchandising selection, please let me know by email merchandising@flydressersguild.org.

Phil Varney
Merchandising Officer
The Fly Dressers' Guild

Flydresser 2024/25 Report

Much as I enjoy working on Flydresser, 2024 proved a really difficult year to find the time and energy to do so, given additional responsibilities and stresses at my real job. My apologies for the long delays with the Spring and Summer 2024 issues.

All became a LOT easier after we approached Semperfli for support – their amazing Pro Team have produced a number of interesting and relevant articles and made it so much easier to get the Autumn and Winter issues out, and to start work on the Spring 2025 issue which is well on its way. A huge thank you to Semperfli and their team.

But also to other members, Trade members and other contributors – without this community of supporters, the magazine would not have the vibe it does.

And ultimately, Flydresser would not be the publication it is without the patience, encouragement and guidance received from Jon Ward Allen at The Medlar Press and our printers, WPG.

In my last year of leading the editorial efforts for Flydresser, I would love to connect and reconnect with as wide a pool of contributors as possible, to hand over a healthy contact list and pipeline of articles to my successor. Anyone interested in finding more about the role, please do get in touch on editor@flydressersguild.org.

Caroline Emmet
on behalf of the Flydresser Editorial Committee
The Fly Dressers' Guild