**West Wilts Fly Fishers Guild**

**Wednesday 12th January 2022 7.30pm Leigh Park Hotel, B-on-A**

**Present:**

Jon Jonik, Roger Henderson, Andy Greatwood, Gerry Barnes, Tim Pullen, Simon Steel, Neil Soni, Jonathan Owens, Robin Sewell, Paul Marchant, Tom Marchant, Mick Marchant.

**Part 1**

1. **Apologies:**

Colin Burbedge, Robert Eadie, Peter Marshall-Bailey, David Edwards, John De Cesare, David Little, John Sheppard, Malcolm Bond, Russell Bond,

1. **Minutes of November Guild meeting and matters arising.**

Accepted without amendment. No matters arising

1. **Review of Guild events:**
* **Guild Dinner Fri 26th November**

This had been a very successful & thoroughly enjoyable occasion and the Hotel was thanked for hosting our annual dinner under the difficult circumstances imposed by Covid on the hospitality industry. Particular thanks were expressed to Mary (and Robert) Eadie for the Table Quiz which, as ever, was a great ice-breaker.

The results of The Big Raffle were:

1st prize – Fly-rod – Jon Jonik

2nd prize – £50 Angling Direct Voucher – Gerry Barnes

3rd prize – £25 Angling Direct Voucher – Robert Eadie

Jon was thanked for organising The Dinner and was asked to thank Sarah for the room & table Christmas decorations.

* **Christmas Hamper Competition Sun 21st November**

Jon said that with 22 participants this was the best turn-out for a Guild social fishing day. The facilities at Manningford are very good and plenty of fish were caught. Excellent weather too. Congratulations to Gerry Barnes for winning The Hamper for the heaviest bag of four fish (11lbs 6oz) and Francis Ash for winning the bottle of wine for the heaviest individual fish (Rainbow 5lbs 9oz). Jon was thanked for organising the day.

1. **Annual General Meeting Wed 9th February**

Jon informed the meeting that at the AGM the Guild subscription for 2022 will be agreed and the level of any subsidy agreed for Guild social events such as those in 2021. Jon said the current Guild reserve of £5,572 was

as expected and planned for in 2021. Members are encouraged to attend.

The 2021 Trophies will be presented at the AGM. See attached list.

1. **River Frome bank management Sunday 20th February**

Roger said the intention is to carryout coppicing of bank-side trees to allow sunlight into the river to encourage weed growth, clear debris resulting from winter flooding and clear access points & paths of brambles etc. It is also a good opportunity to cut back any casting obstacles such as over-arching branches. All this must be done before the main bird nesting period starting at the end of February. The most useful general tools will be loppers (esp. long-reach) and bow saws. Time - 9am (meeting on the Packhorse Bridge) till 1pm, as a rough guide, but any help during that time greatly appreciated. ‘Come when you can leave when you need to’.

Roger will email all members with details including the Guild’s Health & Safety Risk Assessment, available on our website, which he asked members to read. It contains detailed rules for the use of powers tools in particular, such as pre-requisite for certificated training and use of correct safety gear.

1. **2022 Guild Programme**

Jon gave an update on potential guest speakers with whom he has been in contact inc representatives of the West of England Forestry Commission, Wild Trout Trust, Wilts Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency and an expert on Arachnids.

Roger will ask Malcolm – Manager of Manningford Fishery if he will make a return visit to talk about river fishing.

1. **Membership renewal process**

Jon will bring membership cards to the AGM on 9th Feb in anticipation that members will want to renew. Ideally members will pay subscriptions by bank transfer to simplify the process, but payment can be made by cash or cheque.

An email will be sent with full details.

1. **AOB**
2. **The Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat)**

The new Strategic Policy Statement (SPS) for Ofwat, which sets out the government’s strategic priorities for Ofwat’s regulation of the privatised water and sewage industry in England and Wales will be published early this year.

Several Guild members had written to their MPs before Christmas asking them to support amendments to the Bill regarding the release of untreated sewage into rivers. As a result of this and complaints from other local anglers (Wilts Times) Devizes MP Danny Kruger has set-up a parliamentary Rivers Group with five other local MPs including James Gray (North Wilts) and Andrew Murrison (Southwest Wilts).

It was also noted that Surfers Against Sewage have been very effective in raising public awareness of this issue as has Feargal Sharkey (of The Undertones) now Chairman of Britains’ oldest angling club, who has been in the press and on TV (most recently last week) calling for action to clean-up rivers.

Robin Sewell recommended watching the video RIVERCIDE now available on YouTube, which had a public showing by *Friends of The River Frome* in November. The video shows the devastating effect of sewage pollution on The River Wye.

**Fly-tying - demonstrations and hands-on**

Andy Greatwood led a session of demonstrating tying a pheasant tail nymph with hands-on for members, several of whom were new to fly-tying. It was a fascinating and very enjoyable evening, and we are very grateful to Andy for sharing so many hints & tips as well as generously providing the materials for members to use.

Part 2 will be on 9th Feb after our AGM when Andy will demonstrate tying a palmered hackle fly.

Members who did not attend Part 1 but would like to join-in the 2nd session on 9th Feb are very welcome. Again – please let Roger know if you need some kit – vice, tools etc.. Email roger – rogerhenderson@hotmail.com

**Date of Next Meeting and Annual General Meeting - Wednesday 9th February 2022 – 7:30pm**