

Fly Fishers' Club of Pittsburgh -by Jack Hess

The Fly Fishers Club of Pittsburgh was founded in the late 1940's or early 1950's by a group of like-minded individuals with a love of fly fishing. It's the oldest, still-active organization for the fly fishers in the Pittsburgh area.

The idea for the club was introduced by Mr. Bob Runk, who became the founding member. The concept was patterned after the Fly Fishers Club of Harrisburg of which Mr. Runk was a member prior to his move to Pittsburgh to work at Westinghouse.

The club has no dues, no officers and no political agenda. This approach appealed to many local fly fishers who attended the early meetings to gain information about fly fishing techniques, fly tying, fly rods and tackle and good local streams on which to practice the art.

Everyone was welcome: young or old, novice or veteran, all with the common bond of an interest in fly fishing. To become a member one only had to show up at a meeting, and that's still true today. Meeting may last several hours as members bring questions or new gizmos to discuss.

Fly rods were cast, fly tying materials were shown and shared, and fishing trips were re-lived. More importantly life-long friendships were made, secret spots were shared, and good times were had by all.

Many members of the Fly Fishers Club of Pittsburgh have left their mark on the history of Pennsylvania fly fishing, Bob Runk, Chauncy Lively, George Aiken, Mike Sajna and Bob Lancaster have been inducted into the Pennsylvania Fly Fishing Museum located in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Others have contributed to the sport in significant ways. An example is Chuck Furimsky who has organized hugely popular fly fishing shows featuring vendors and educational talks all across the country.

October 24, 2021 marked a turning point for the Club. Long-time, very dedicated leader Jack Hess passed the baton to Scott Loughner, his able assistant for the past decade or so. Jack joined the club in 1987 and will continue to attend meetings and outings. Scott will bring some fresh ideas including a website to keep members up to date on the meeting schedule and attract other fly fishers who are not currently members.