



Newland or “Zip” was well-known for his “Sheep Fly”



Stream Blazer Newland Saunders 1922-2010

Lost Cove and Dugger Creek, Lenoir, North Carolina

Newland was always tying flies and experimenting to create new fly patterns. In 1950, Newland created and was the first who tied the sheep fly. The fly imitation was smaller than the common horse fly, so he simply named it the “sheep fly.” He claimed this fly appeared realistic enough to fool a hornet that had pestered him. In the process of swatting at a hornet one day, he dropped his fly box and the hornet swooped down, picked up a sheep fly and flew away. A lot of fish have also been fooled by this fly.

Newland met his future wife, Kathleen (Kathey) Puett in church, flirting with her by throwing spit wads. He was 18 years old when they eloped to Johnson City, Tennessee and were married on May 24, 1941.

In 1944, Newland and four of his brothers joined the Navy and remained in the armed services until the war was over in 1945. He was a Fireman First Class, assigned to the LST-828, which served in the South Pacific.

After the war, he and family moved back to Lenoir and began working at Lenoir Hosiery Mill where he earned the nickname “Zip,” because everything he did was “zip-zip-zip.”

One of his greatest passions was fly fishing. In 1971, along with Stanley Tuttle, John Turner, and Pat Bohler, he traveled to Three Forks, Montana to fish. They fished the Madison and Jefferson Rivers but spent their nights in Three Forks. Stanley Tuttle said that Newland fried fish for meals three times a day on that trip. Stanley finally got so tired of fish that he started going to the A&W Root Beer for his meals and was later joined by Pat Bohler for his meals also.

Newland always told you what he was thinking and never minced any of his words. He was unbelievable as to what he could do and the pain that he could endure. His last battle was colon cancer and one of his last sayings was “I’ve had a good life.” - ***Brenda Saunders, daughter***



Fried Chicken

Fishing with my Uncle Newland was always an exciting day...I never knew what the day would bring. I would go over to his home early in the morning to meet him and he would have fried chicken wrapped in tin foil for our lunch stacked neatly in a brown paper bag. As a boy, he took me in and taught me to fly fish and tie flies, so I cherished all the good times I had with him to this day.

He had a side business where he sold Tote Goat motorcycles. The bike had one gear, big balloon tires with huge mud grips. You could ride two people on it and if you could hold the front end down, you could go anywhere.

One day we loaded the motorcycle in the back of his pickup and headed to Wilson Creek to fish. The old logging trail to the Bill Crump place had eroded to jagged rocks and gullies. We came to Cary Branch where he stopped the bike, told me to hang on (Like I wasn't going to!). He goosed the throttle a little too strong and stood that bike up like a bucking bronco. I came off, falling back-first into the coldest water ever, with the creels, rods and that brown paper bag of fried chicken. Once he got control, he turned to see if I was okay. Looking at him through very cold water droplets in my eyes and still gasping for air, I heard him say, "You came out of that water so fast you saved the fried chicken."

- *Gary Saunders, nephew*



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