The 1983 winner of the Buz Buszek Award, Art Flick, was a quiet, unpretentious man from Westkill, New York. Known to most of the international flyfishing community because of his books (a streamside guide and a fly tying guide), Art is eminently qualified to receive the award.

Born August 3, 1904 in New York City, Arthur Bernard Flick did his first fishing with a hand line off the 133rd St. Pier. He used sand worms for bait and a 10 oz. sinker. Most common catch was the tomcod, or as Art said, Tommy Cod”.

His first fly fishing was in 1917, or 1918. Art had moved to Kingston, NY about 90 miles north of New York City. He worked at a Beck Hazzard Shoe Store right across the street from the county court house. The judge serving the court was a Circuit Judge, which meant he traveled exclusively on trains. One day he asked Art if he'd ever fished for trout with a dry fly, knowing full well that Art owned an automobile. That's how it started, and it's good for all of us that it did.

"I started tying flies in the late '30s or early '40s," recalled Art. "Preston Jennings got me started, and Chip Stauffer helped me too." All of which was predated by Art's moving to Westkill in 1934. Get out an Atlas and you'll find Westkill at the northern end of the famous Catskills.

"I take credit for inventing the Red Quill and Black Nose Dace Bucktail patterns," said Art modestly, "and I made some slight changes to some of Jennings' patterns like the Gray Fox and the Dunn Variant. I made changes in materials, but they're still his patterns."

Friends and acquaintances say Art could rightfully take credit for all of the flies mentioned, as well as the Hendrickson Nymph and the Blue-Winged Olive Variant. These Same Flick Supporters say he's being too modest in not taking credit for significant dressing changes on Jenning's American March Brown, Grey Fox Variant and Cream Variant.

Art was active in conservation causes for over 50 years. He served on the advisory committee for four Conservation Commissioners in the N.Y. State Conservation Department. Like Lee Wulff, he considers his influence in affecting attitudes and legislation creating "fishing for fun" in "No Kill" areas as one of his largest accomplishments.

"Fishing pressure is a minor problem when you talk about the fishing getting poorer," said Art. "It's the deterioration of the streams that's the real problem. And bad land use is the main culprit there. People buy land by a stream and then they get a bulldozer in there and move the gravel around. They're just sending a bigger problem down below."

While all the watersheds around Art's home are controlled by the city of New York, Art felt the trout in the Esopus, Delaware and East and West Braches of the Delaware have all benefited from reservoir releases.

"When streams around here get lower, the water gets warmer," explained Art. "The cold water release from the reservoir has helped. But we've got a lot of problems still ahead of us."

Both of Art's sons worked with conservation and they both are retired now. Of his wife Lita, Art said simply "We've been very happily married for 58 years." (this interview was in 1983.)


When you talk to Art for the first time, as I did at the 1983 Conclave, you realize that this living legend is just as real as any other legend. He's human. And age brings on human frailties. But Art handles them like he's handled other difficult challenges in his life, with good humor and quiet
determination. Perhaps the best compliment you could have given Art would have been to note that he went fishing while he was at Conclave '83, and he was excited and concerned as any fly fisherman was on his first fishing trip.

Art Flick enjoyed fishing - especially for trout. He was a good man to know when conservationists were fighting to maintain resources. He wrote quality books which are easily read and studied by the thousands. He tied a good quality, "fish getting" fly. He even "invented" a few of his own along the way. And, he had the distinction of being both the Buszek winner and the keynote speaker at FFF's 1983 International Conclave. Art died in ????