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THE VICTORIAN FLY-FISHERS' ASSOCIATION INC.

AUGUST 2012

Organisation No. A0024750J

P.O. Box 18423 Melbourne Bourke Street, Melbourne 3001

[www.vffa.org.au](http://www.vffa.org.au)

## **August Annual Dinner**

**Friday, August 24, 6:30 for 7:00 pm at the Celtic Club**



**Guest Speaker – prominent Tasmanian Angler and Publisher Mike Stevens. Mike is also Chairman of the Australian Fly-fishing Museum.**

(Invitations were included in the July newsletter, and another invitation was posted out by the President to ensure all members have an invitation.

Please RSVP to the Honorary Treasurer, Tony Mitchem, by Wednesday August 15)

# THE VICTORIAN FLY-FISHERS' ASSOCIATION INC.

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## Advance Notice - September AGM

The September meeting is traditionally the Annual General Meeting. It's still a few weeks away, but our President is keen to remind us that all financial members are eligible for nomination and election to the Council. Notice papers relevant to the AGM are included with this newsletter, including the Nomination Form, Appointment of Proxy Form, and the Notice of Annual General Meeting.



*Council hard at work*

The current Council has 16 members, but at a recent Planning Meeting, held in early July, the Council membership was discussed with a view to possibly changing the structure of the Council. A letter from the President to all members explaining the potential changes was posted recently.

Council meets regularly and all the management issues involved in running the Association are dealt with there. Thus the general meetings are given over totally to the advertised activities – guest speakers, auctions, fly tying demonstrations ...

So if you have some experience and talent in management, and a keen desire to see our Association remain strong and vibrant and responsive to the needs of members, please give some thought to nominating for Council. Be assured, meetings are lively and entertaining, and you will be enriched by your participation, as well as contributing your skills and knowledge to the benefit of our Association.

The date – Thursday, September 20, at the Celtic Club.

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## New Members Welcomed ...

We welcome two new members this month – Graham Foxman and Dr Patrick Hughes. We trust that their membership of the Association brings many years of pleasurable involvement and enjoyment.



*Lake Otamangakau – Nancy Tichborne watercolour*

## July Meeting: Peter Hayes - helping us 'Catch More Fish'

(A summary of Peter's presentation at the July meeting is given below. Peter had recently acquired some software that allowed him to summarise all of his notes on fishing onto a series of interconnected screens. He brought his laptop along, and his talk was based on a PowerPoint-type presentation of the information stored in his new software.)

**T**hank you for having me here tonight. It is always a pleasure for me. I used to think that the VFFA was a bunch of old blokes, and now I'm one of you.

I've fished for a long time - about 37 years at many different levels, and the last 18 years as a professional guide. So I like to think that I know lots about catching trout. But you can become complacent! It's a bit like dealing with girls - when you think you have finally got to understand them they go and change all the rules. I can remember an occasion 18 years ago, in my first season of guiding, when I had David Wymond and Ray Ferguson out in the boat and we caught nineteen fish. That night over a few beers we were joking and bragging about how many more we were going to catch the next day. And you know how many we caught? Just one. I thought we had it all sussed, but conditions had changed and we just didn't cope with the change.



I have just purchased this new piece of software, and two nights ago I sat up until 2:00 am working on something that Peter Dixon and I have been mulling over for a few years. I had done some work a couple of years ago with Peter and his Australian fly-fishing team. They were about to head off to the World Championships and Peter had managed to get the Australian Institute of Sport involved in the program. As a result I met an incredible man called Rick Shuttleworth, who was a senior sport scientist. He had not worked with fly-fishermen before, but had done heaps of work with top-level elite athletes. I shared a weekend workshop at Cressy with him, and was very keen to learn as much as I could about coaching people. Rick was heavily involved in training the Australian yachting squad, and he was assisted by an Eastern European yachtsman who had developed a software program to project manage the four-year campaign. A couple of days ago I parted with \$180 to purchase this program. It's on my laptop here, and two nights ago I sat up until 2:00 am putting together as much information as I could think of on catching fish. I want to show it to you tonight. Pick any topic listed on the software and I will talk to it.

What I have here is my take on how to catch more fish. In setting it up I divided the information into three sectors that you need to think about. The first of these is knowledge - a better understanding of your quarry. Of course a comprehensive understanding of trout can't be achieved in one night. It's a knowledge-based thing and you have to get out there. Perhaps ten years of study may help. You need to watch how a fish responds when your fly lands, or how it responds when you start moving your rod around in the air (and then you quickly learn to keep your rod low).

The next sector is about making the correct strategic decisions in regard to the method of fishing. So if you go out with a floating line tomorrow and tie on a size 18 dry fly then you know that it probably

won't work for you. At this time of the year, the middle of winter, you need to fish something under the surface. You need to make some sort of underwater presentation, and a dry fly is the wrong strategic decision.

The third sector is all about the skills necessary to deliver the fly without the fish being aware of your presence. I have seen lots of people deliver a fly to a fish, but the fish saw the angler, or the rod waving around, or the line moving in the air, or heard the splash. I see this every day of my working life.

With this software I can change the relative sizes of the sectors. I might, for example, decide that one area is less important than the others. It depends on your needs. If you are relatively well-off and can afford to fish with guides all the time, then you don't need to know much about the quarry – that's the guide's area of responsibility. Also, you wouldn't need to know about making the correct strategic decision, because again that's the guide's job. But then of course, if you can't present the fly then you might as well hand the rod to the guide too, and let him make the presentation as well. There are some fishing guides in New Zealand who will actually take the rod off you, and there are some fishing guides in Tasmania who will fish beside you and catch 19 trout while you're catching none. But good guides don't do that.

If I was Peter Dixon and in charge of the Australian fly-fishing team going overseas to compete in the World Championships, then to be brutally blunt I would choose anglers to represent our country who knew nothing about the quarry and nothing about making the correct strategic decisions, as long as they were highly skilled in their presentation of the fly.

And then I would employ the best guides in Slovenia, or wherever else they're going, because you might be very skilled at making the correct strategic decisions back here in Tasmania or Victoria, but this would be useless in Europe. You might know heaps about the brown trout in the Tasmanian Highlands, and then you wind up in Italy fishing for stocked rainbows and grayling. So I would rather pick a team of highly skilled technicians and buy in the rest.

In a lot of our fishing situations here, if you are really good at delivering the fly then if you are using the wrong method you will quickly discover this. However if you are bad at the skills of delivering the fly you can be fishing the wrong method for ages and not know it because you are simply scaring fish away.

Let's look at the three sectors. If you want to catch more fish next year what sort of things should be in the section about 'understanding the quarry'? Obviously what they eat, the time of the year, where they are, and some understanding of their habitat. At different times of the year they are in different locations – sometimes they're on the weed beds and sometimes they are on the reefs. It depends largely upon the food. During grasshopper time, for example, the trout are in close to the banks, while at mayfly hatching time they are probably at the bottom of the riffles. Water temperature is also critically important in how it affects their behaviour. So we have two major areas to consider - the fish, and the food supply and environment where they live.

Let's expand these out further. In the 'fish' area we have to know something about the fighting qualities and how they behave when they are hooked. We need to consider their aggressive behaviour, because during spawning time the bigger the fly patterns you use the better, because it is a territorial attack and not a hunger thing that they are responding to. Territorial issues are important. I catch lots of fish because I know they are territorial and I know where they live. I caught one fish five times in the same spot in Arthur's Lake. I know I had the same fish each time because I had put marks on his fin. In the end he had five little marks there.

What about bite characteristics? Sometimes they just pluck the fly very gently, and at other times they attack it aggressively. Feeding patterns are super important, with all sorts of considerations. A

grasshopper feeder will be at your fly before you have even looked up from untangling the line around your reel. (We all know about the problem of line management). So you need to be aware that this is how they feed at this time, otherwise you'll miss fish because you're fiddling with your gear. You also need to be aware that at grasshopper time you can cast to a fish and land your fly three metres from your target and another fish that you weren't even aware of will charge out from under a bank and snatch the fly. That's how they feed during grasshopper time and as an angler you need to be aware of it.

What about their senses - sight and hearing and smell? Flies don't smell, or do they? Our fingers do. Aerogard and other smelly stuff on your fingers is not a really good idea. If you are wet wading in New Zealand and you wade across a river then every fish downstream from you will stiffen up. I have seen this many times. They're still there, but if you go back down to fish for them they are much harder to catch. They've tightened up and their pectorals are out, and the game is up. So smell is definitely a factor.

Another example of this occurred to me about fifteen years ago. The fishing inspector at Miena came to my house in the middle of winter (it was snowing) and said: "Peter, go and have a look at Penstock. The fish there have run up the canal into the fish trap." So I drove down there on a very cold and windy day, and saw thousands and thousands of trout that had come up out of the lagoon. There was a wall there about 4 foot high with a small amount of water running over it. And I'll never forget it - these fish were like footballers coming up for a mark. They would stick their heads up and look at where the water was coming over the wall. Then they would slide back down, and then ... whoosh! They would leap for the little waterfall. They didn't always make it, as many times they hit the wall and fell back down again. Then they'd have another look, and then try again. So all these fish were looking up to see where the water was coming over, then would make a mad charge to get up and over it.

It was sensational to see, so I went home for my digital SLR, went back there again, stripped off my neoprene trousers and I waded out into the water. It was icy cold and I was bending down to try to get a photo at water level. I had this idea of getting some action photos of hundreds of trout heads looking up. As I walked into the water they were bumping into my legs. It was quite unnerving having fish of three to five pounds bumping against my legs, but I pressed on because I had this magazine cover picture in mind - this spectacular photo showing all these fish. However within 20 seconds not one fish was bumping against me, and within 30 seconds there were no heads out of the water. I stood there for three or four minutes and not another head came up. I got out and put my trousers back on and stood there looking back down the canal. Ten minutes earlier there had been hundreds of fish in the pool below the weir and thousands back down the canal jumping and splashing, and now there was not one trout there - all because I got in the water. I drove home and the fishing inspector asked how I'd got on, and I said, "no good". He said, "You didn't get into the water did you?" I have seen this same thing at Liawenee Canal. There are thousands and thousands of fish coming up the canal at spawning time, but if you bend down and put your hand in the water they all nick off. And the reason they do this is because they are scared of bears. At least that's what I reckon. They are salmonids and they sense that there is a 'bear' upstream and that they need to go around him. So smell is also really important.

(At this point Julian Newton-Brown made the observation that women often catch more fish than men, and it was possibly due to their different pheromones. Peter responded with an observation, based on his years of guiding experience, that when the macho guy gets into the boat with the Simms waders and the Orvis vest and the new Sage rod, and he's done it all before and his wife has just come along for the ride, if Peter talks the wife into having a go and she catches the first fish, then it's all over for the bloke. And the harder Macho Man tries, the more likely it is that she'll catch the second fish, and then it really is all over. Peter doesn't doubt that the harder you try in fly-fishing the worse you often go. He's not sure whether it's karma or pheromones, but you just need to back off and relax.)



*Peter Hayes drew a big audience*

So where were we? Let's talk now about 'making the correct strategic decision'. You need to know all of your tackle options, because if you don't you probably won't make the best choices. For example, in wet fly fishing you need to be aware of Polyleaders that sink, and fluorocarbon leaders that sink even faster. And there are tungsten beads that sink faster than brass beads, so you need to understand your tackle. A 6' rod is a much better choice than a 10' rod in small creeks, and a rod for Czech Nymphing should be no heavier than a 3-weight and should have a really soft action.

And knowing how to fish and where to fish are both vitally important. If you get the 'where to fish' decision wrong and you fish in an area where there are no fish then none of the rest matters. The geography is important in terms of the third dimension. You need to know about gutters and weed beds and drop-offs, and reefs and ripples and pools and glides – all that stuff is important. The depth is too, as the depth you fish today might not be the depth you should fish tomorrow. If you fish the Ballarat Lakes tomorrow (mid-winter) should you be fishing on the surface? Probably not. Should you be fishing mid-water? Probably not. It would probably be best to fish down near the bottom.

The light is also important. Sometimes you should fish in the sun and at other times you should fish in the shade. I remember taking David Martin to the Lake River two or three years ago, and he sat on an Esky because he had just had his hips done. At the end of the morning session all the fish caught by my clients had been caught in the shade under the tea trees. I asked David how he had got on, and he told me he had caught six browns, and they were all in tight under cover. He knew what he was doing.

Sometimes significant changes in the light can be as simple as clouds going across the sun. I know that when I was chasing smelters in the Victorian lakes when I lived here, if it was a bright day and a cloud came over then the fish would start belting the smelt patterns. Perhaps they could see the smelt better in those conditions. As soon as the cloud moved away and the sun came out again the trout stopped coming into the shallows. Water conditions and water levels make a difference, as does the clarity of the water.

Local knowledge of course is paramount, and I reckon that local knowledge in terms of where to fish needs to be a very big component in our sectors.

Food availability is critical to knowing where to fish. It is much easier to catch fish that are feeding than it is to catch fish that aren't feeding. So if you can find where there is lots of food then you'll find lots of fish there, and you'll catch lots of fish. Note, too, that if there is a lot of food around they are easy to catch. I'm thinking now of worm feeders on the Great Lake. Some fourteen years ago there were lots of worms around and the fish would come right into the shallows to feed on them. I can remember one fish that swam between the legs of my client, quite oblivious to us. The fish had worms coming out of his mouth like trailing spaghetti and he wasn't at all worried about us. If they have plenty of feed they don't care about anything else.

What about the wind and how it affects where to fish? Up in the Tasmanian lakes my job is to understand the wind. I don't like to fish if there is no wind, because then it's really hard to catch them. The water is too calm, and they can see the leader and they can see the angler.

I don't care about the current wind, but I do care a lot about the wind on previous days. My job is to know where the wind was yesterday and the day before, because that tells me where I should be fishing today, on the lakes anyway. Sometimes it's obvious – there are foam lines or wind lanes. But sometimes it's not so obvious. Let's say we're fishing on the Great Lake when it's calm. That doesn't mean anything to me other than that the fish are going to be harder to catch. But if there has been two days of a northerly then I know exactly where I'm going to fish. You get out of your car in calm conditions and see it as easier for casting, but I get out of my car and ask, "Where was the wind yesterday and where was it the day before? Yes, two days of a northerly blowing into Tod's corner. So I'll fish Tod's, and go right into the bottom of the bay there because it has been really stirred up for two days. You wouldn't have been able to cast there for two days, but now you can and the fish will still be there." So where the wind was a day or two earlier is the factor that matters to me.

Let's discuss the skills needed to deliver the fly. I see casting as the most important part of it, along with line management. Hundreds of times a season I see anglers make a perfect cast, but their line is wrapped around the reel, or around the petrol tank, and they're looking down to undo the tangle while a fish has taken their fly. Line management is really important.

Sometimes you need to stalk closer to the fish, so wading skills become important. Hamish, for example, waded up a very gentle pool on the Lake River, but it had an uneven bottom because that's what rivers are like. Now Hamish is fine when he's walking up and down Collins Street, but on the Lake River he sent a couple of tsunami waves up the pool, and the four fish that were rising at the top of the pool just stopped rising. Ask Hamish to cast while he is stumbling over greasy bowling balls on the river bottom and he finds it difficult. Peter Dixon will tell you that Joe Riley is the best wader in Australia. He is strong and big, and if he needs to get to the other side of the Meander River he will wade across those big slippery rocks with the water pushing against him so that there are bow waves bouncing off his chest, and he can still cast without missing a beat. Unbelievable. Joe wouldn't catch all those fish if he didn't have those wading skills.

And I am not saying that you have to have those wading skills. Hamish's skills, for example, are in handling a boat and that's where he shines. He could spot a fish sipping on the edge of a wind lane on the Great Lake and he could slide his boat up alongside that sucker within casting range and the fish wouldn't even know he was there. But some of you blokes would be banging the oars together or revving the head off the motor.

Learn to use stripping baskets. If you are in a competition you can't risk tangles, so you need to be able to competently use a stripping basket. Also learn to coil line in your hand. I can retrieve ten strips of line and hold them as ten separated coils in my hand, then walk around to the next pool, wade out and then cast those ten coils in the right order so they don't tangle on the cast. If you want to catch more fish then you need to learn that stuff. What about hand retrieves - can you figure-eight? Ask David Featherstone, who is a beautiful figure-eighter. But it comes from years of practice.

Changing the fly quickly is important to me. I know it doesn't sound much, but if you get a refusal how long does it take you to pull your fly in, change to another fly, and then get it back out again? I can do it really quickly, because that's my job and I'm doing it all the time. Again, if you want to get better at it you have to practice it.

'Delivery timing and angle of attack' - what does that mean to you? I reckon that for any fish I see, when I let go that fly there is a two second window for me to cast the fly and do the job. For some fish this might be on second number one and second number two, and for other fish it might be second number eighteen and second number nineteen. And for yet other fish it might be four minutes and three seconds and four minutes and four seconds. But for any fish you see there is always a two second window for you to decide "now". If the fish is coming towards you and you are wading the Great Lake it is NOW, because if you don't do it 'now' the fish will be on you and under your rod in no time at all. But on the North Esk River when you are fishing to a backwater cruiser it's certainly not second numbers one and two, because that fish is going to keep returning to that backwater today and probably also tomorrow. So it's more important to learn where that fish goes. Is there a better spot to cast from? Is the fly I have on now the right fly for this fish? Should I be taking time to add some heavier tippet as the backwater is located near a large log jam? These are all the sorts of factors we should be considering, and if this trout is a backwater cruiser he'll be returning every three or four minutes, so we have time to get it right.

I was on the Brightwater in New Zealand the other day. Anna and I went to New Zealand for my fiftieth birthday, and we went to the Brightwater on the upper Mataura and there was no one on it. There wasn't a cloud in the sky, and those fish were out rocking and rolling. I put my fly to the first fish we spotted four or five times and he didn't take it. Then on the next cast I caught him, and Anna said to me, "Do you think it's about when the fly went over his head?" and I said, "Absolutely! You need to get the fly to drift over the fish at the precise moment he is ready to come up again."

I spent two days with Lefty Kreh in America three years ago. At the end of the two days I said to Lefty, "What single piece of advice is the most important piece of advice I could pass on to a group of fishermen?" He said, "Oh, that's simple Peter." He could have said learn to cast better or hire a more expensive guide, or sharpen your hooks. Instead he said, "The biggest single thing that could make a difference to catching fish is to never attack the fish with your fly." What he meant is this - most anglers will cast their fly beyond the fish so that when they retrieve it they are actually pulling the fly towards the fish. So the fish sees this tiny little food item coming straight at him, which is not normal behaviour for prey. Trout will rarely take a fly that is coming at them. And this applies to saltwater fly-fishing too. I once scared a metre long barramundi in an impoundment in Queensland with a tiny fly that was racing towards him. The fish had never seen that before in his life, as small items of food always flee away from predators. So, the concept of the angle of attack matters.

Power and distance are important in casting. If you want to fish a heavy fly then you need to apply more power to your cast, and if you want to catch fish in a wind lane then you have to cast longer distances. Accuracy goes without saying, though sometimes it is not so important to throw the fly to within a foot of the fish, but rather to cast it precisely 20 feet up ahead so that the fly ends up in the right place.

What about presentation? I did some work recently with a client and we discussed 'splash down affects'. How does your fly land and how does your fly line land? I can cast really gently, but if the line is coming from the wrong angle it doesn't matter how slowly it travels through the air it will splash down and I can count twenty seconds of ripples. Now that cast might catch a fish in deep water on an overcast day, but it certainly won't in shallow water in bright conditions. I can also cast with huge line speed and yet within two seconds the ripples will have completely died. So how does that work? How can you cast with heaps of line speed and get virtually no ripple, but make a very gentle cast and get twenty seconds of ripple? It's all about stopping the line and killing the energy, as well as

getting the trajectory right. It's about getting the cast to completely straighten above the water and then allowing a gentle gravity drop.

Do you want that sort of cast at grasshopper time? Of course not. You want the fly to splash down so that you get a round concentric ring. But you don't want the whole line sending out sets of parallel ripples either. Someone asked me earlier tonight about 3-weight rods. I would never have said this 20 years ago, but one of the great advantages of using lighter rods, such as a 3-weight instead of a 6-weight, is that the fish are less likely to hear the line landing. And one of the advantages of using longer and longer leaders is that the splash of the line is well away from the fish and they don't know about it. The top European anglers are now using lighter and lighter gear and longer and longer leaders, and they are catching more fish because they don't scare fish so much. In Tasmania the average rods used on the lakes are now 6-weights (and a few years ago they were mainly 7-weights), and anglers are using GPX lines, which are a 6½-weight line. This gear might be fine for chasing sharks out on the Great Lake on a windy day, but it's no good for fishing to tailers at Little Pine at 4:30 in the morning when the sun is coming up, and it's dead calm and you're fishing in really shallow water using a commercial leader which is only 9 foot long. You're not going to catch much, because you need a leader that is at least 18 to 20 feet long. How it lands is really important.

And what about casts? Less false casting gives more time in the water, covers more area, gives less chance of tangles, gives less chance of spooking fish, and is less tiring. It's a no-brainer. Line speed is also important. On windy days and in urgent situations you need to move the line faster. But if you start moving the whole thing faster and don't understand what you're doing you're going to wind up with tailing loops and tangles. So loop shape is important too. You want wide open loops if the wind is behind you, and also for casting heavy flies or with multiple flies. You want narrow loops when casting into the wind, or when casting into tight spots that need greater accuracy.

Casting repertoire – all the different casts at your disposal. The reach cast is the basic cast on any moving water. It gives longer drag free drifts in streams or running water, and is very useful in saltwater too. It can be used to avoid obstacles or go around them, or give a better angle of attack. I use it to change the direction the fly moves, or to avoid lining a fish. You also need to be able to quickly shorten the delivery length. Let's say you've got 60 feet of line out in a cast, and suddenly the fish rises 20 feet away. You have to shorten the line by dragging it back while it's still in the air. Don't drag it back across the water surface.

Important slack line casts include the wiggle cast and the pile cast. And don't forget the Belgian cast, which is a circular wide loop cast for casting flies with any weight. In making a normal overhead cast with a heavy fly there is a good chance of hitting your rod or the back of your head. A Belgian cast climbs around without a stop and then shoots out. It is a constant tension circular cast, and is the best cast to use when you have weighty flies. A Galway cast is useful for when your back cast is venturing into tight corners. If you have to slot your back cast between two trees, for example, it's not smart to just hope that you won't catch in the foliage. In a Galway cast you turn around and actually throw a forward cast (more accurate than a back cast) into the gap, and while the line is unrolling you turn back and throw another forward cast out over the water. So this cast consists effectively of two forward casts, and provides a way to avoid catching up in obstacles behind.

The Snap T and snake roll casts are also very useful. The snake roll cast is the fastest and smoothest change of direction cast there is. It is used typically on rivers after your line has washed downstream and you need to get it back upstream again. Most people would use a number of false casts to achieve this, potentially scaring fish in the process. The snake roll is much quicker. You simply draw a circle in the air with your rod tip, which sucks the line toward you, and then you throw. It's instant and it's done away from the fishing zone. It's not hard to learn and it's a super important cast. So just Google 'snake roll cast' and you'll learn it in five minutes. Likewise the snap T - a sensational cast for changing direction by 90°. It is mainly used on rivers, but can be used on lakes for a quick change of direction too.

Other casts to know include the steeple cast, the half-back cast, and the extended bow and arrow cast. The curve cast is also handy, both in rivers and on lakes. It might be used on a lake, for example, to run the line around a weed bed, or to present the fly to a fish so that the leader doesn't go over the fish's head.

Roll casts are very important of course - both the static roll cast and the dynamic roll cast. The dynamic roll cast is a more powerful cast, giving greater distances or for casting heavier flies. Roll casts have a quicker casting cycle than overhead casts involving false casts. A roll cast is obviously used when there is no room for a backcast, but is also excellent for raising a sinking line prior to recasting it. It's a good cast in windy conditions, because the fly doesn't go past your body. It's also good with multiple fly rigs because you can cast it with a big open loop, and it can also be used for unsticking a caught fly. If you roll cast beyond the fly, the line will pull the stuck fly free.

In a static roll cast you lift the rod back, pause and hold everything stationary, and then complete the cast - typically of 40 - 60 feet. However a dynamic roll cast can throw a whole fly line - up to 90 feet. The difference between these casts is that in the dynamic roll cast you cast backwards with about a third or half power. It's not a normal back cast because the line doesn't go far back behind you - say 20 feet. The leader is still stuck on the water surface, but there is now 20 feet of loop behind you providing lots more weight to load the rod, and you can chuck it a mile. It is a beautiful cast and a very useful cast to learn. It forms the basis of all the Spey casts, and the snake roll cast is really a type of dynamic roll cast.

Other uses of the roll cast include setting the hook when a fish is very close to you, and removing slack line. If you have 30 foot of line out in front of you and the wind blows it back into ten foot of space, then you can't pick up the 30 foot of line because there is now too much slack. But if you make a roll cast it will organise the slack for you. Also, if you have air resistant flies like poppers these can be difficult to draw into a back cast. The roll cast can be used to pop them up into the air so that a clean back cast can be made.

So there you have it. This is my overview of what I think is important in fly-fishing. But keep in mind that this was all put together in a couple of hours the other night. There are countless books and DVDs on all the various aspects of fly-fishing, but I don't think that I have seen 'how to catch more fish' put together in one place like this. And the interesting thing is that most of this material has come from times when I have been invited to talk to clubs and groups, and countless ideas and suggestions have come back to me from the audience. I've then gone away and put all these new thoughts together. I'll do a good job on this by the time I'm finished, but remember - most of the material has come from people like you. So if any of you guys here tonight can think of some more stuff that should be added, please send me an email.

### **Some Responses to Questions:**

You have to go where the fish are so you have to know where the fish are, but if you've got the wrong method for trying to catch them, or if you can't cast very well, then you still won't catch many fish. I can take you to where the fish are and can show them to you, but you still need those presentation skills. For example, if we went to Lake Burbury on the right morning I can show you thousands of fish to cast to, but just try to catch one if you're not skilled enough to present the fly correctly.

What are my thoughts on Czech Nymphing? At the conclave in Tasmania last year we passed the hat around and presented some money to Joe Riley as a gesture. Joe was a member of the Australian team. He rang me the next morning and said, "I've got the day off and I'm happy to take anyone out fishing with me - Czech Nymphing on the Meander River." So we went over there Czech Nymphing with Joe. At the end of the day we asked: "Who wants to fish that way?" No one put a hand up. Even though Joe catches bags of fish using this method, nobody else wanted to fish that way. If I've got a couple of hours to go fishing there is no way I would want to spend the time Czech Nymphing. I don't like it.

The fish are under the water and you can't see them. However, if you want to catch a lot of fish then go Czech Nymphing. It's deadly. Joe fished a stretch and he caught a fish every second or third cast. He got up to the head of this pool and it was the best water, so I said: "Don't cast there. Let me come out." So I waded out and tied on a dry fly, and I put that fly perfectly through every part of that patch of water - and I caught one fish. Then Joe had a go and he got five. So you can't compete. You wouldn't get into the Australian team if you couldn't Czech Nymph in that manner. Peter Dixon makes the point that the numbers of fish caught in competitions in recent years have increased dramatically through the use of these methods, but all members of the Australian team would still much prefer catching fish on a dry fly. So we each have to face this question - do you want to go fishing, or do you want to catch fish? There is a difference.

In conclusion, Peter pointed out that as a guide he has to know about all of these methods, but we amateur anglers don't need to. What we do need to do is to take from this material that which is relevant and important and useful to us personally.

(Thank you Peter – a great presentation.)

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## The August Annual Dinner – Friday, August 24

This year's Annual Dinner, on Friday August 24, will feature Mike Stevens as our guest speaker. Mike has been a member of the VFFA for many years. He lives in Launceston, Tasmania, and is a keen, accomplished and very knowledgeable angler. However perhaps his most important connection with our Association is as a prominent publisher of fly-fishing books and magazines. He is publisher of the *Tasmanian Fishing & Boating News* magazine, and published our VFFA *Geehi to Great Lake* Anthology and, more recently, our official history – *The Country For An Angler*.



He has also published a number of other fly-fishing books, including those by authors such as David Scholes, Noel Jetson, John Brookes, and Roy Dean.

Mike is very busy in fishing and boating affairs. As well as being Managing Director of Stevens Publishing, he is also Chairman of the Australian Fly Fishing Museum, Chairman of the Anglers Alliance Tasmania, and a board member of both the Inland Fisheries Advisory Council and Marine and Safety Tasmania.

He is a lively and energetic speaker, and will undoubtedly provide a very entertaining and thought-provoking contribution to our Annual Dinner. He is planning to talk on the significance of fly-fishing in Australia and the establishment of an Australian Fly Fishing Museum (which will open on May 4, 2013, on the banks of the South Esk River in Tasmania). Many of us may think fly-fishing started around 1864 with the introduction of trout, but it was much earlier – around 1833.

Mark it in your diary – Friday, August 24, at the Celtic Club.

# President's Message

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Firstly I need to thank all the members who have supported the move to Celtic Club. We have been achieving very good attendances to all of our functions. It is gratifying to get such very positive feedback and helps to reinforce Council's decision-making process. All this bodes well for the upcoming Annual Dinner. The main thing now is to finalise numbers for catering, so if you haven't already, please make your booking as soon as possible.



We were fortunate to have Peter Hayes to speak at the last meeting and the members who attended really enjoyed a wonderful discussion session. You will read more about his superb presentation elsewhere in this newsletter. To top it off a dozen members were treated to a great session on casting on the following Sunday. It wasn't your normal casts Peter was teaching but "casting to catch fish". Those members who booked early were able to get valuable personal assistance from Peter to improve their casting and reduce their bad habits, hopefully. I had to knock back quite a few late callers. I hate to see members missing out on these training sessions, so if I find enough interest being expressed I will see if we can get Peter back again before the season gets into full swing.

DPI Fisheries is organising a fishing day event at Mt Baw Baw in November. I am about to attend some meetings to determine how the VFFA can assist or participate. I will provide more information when I get it, but you can also check the websites and magazines as well.

Make sure you read the letter you received in the mail for information applicable to the AGM in September. If you want to have a say in the running of the Association or you are happy with the way Council is running things, this is your opportunity to have a vote or be counted or give your opinion on the important issues.

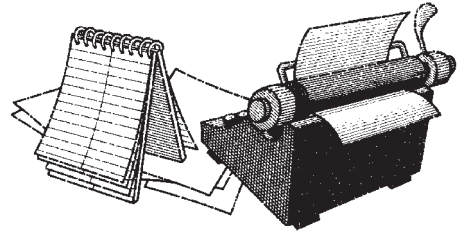
To be able to do this you will need to ensure you are financial, and if you can't attend, fill out the Proxy form and appoint another member in your place. I will be stepping down at the AGM, having completed my two years as President, so all positions will be vacant and need to be filled.

I will pre-empt some of the work slated for next year by saying that I would like to see a structure of sub-committees to attend to many of the tasks that previously fell to a hard-working few. This would allow members who are not elected to use their skills in assisting councillors to be more efficient and effective. If you have some time and are willing to see the VFFA advance let us know you are available.

I am looking forward to a fantastic end of season and then a new and exciting beginning to the next.

Tight Lines, *Rick Dugina*

# From the EDITOR'S DESK



That brother of mine gave our parents some moments of real consternation. He completed a degree in engineering, worked for a couple of years with a large Melbourne company, and then resigned, bought a truck, and started moving pianos for a living. His reasons were essentially economic – his hourly rate for shifting pianos far exceeded that for a junior engineer. You see pianos are diabolical things to move. They're difficult to get into the boot of the average family sedan, and carrying them upstairs is guaranteed to produce mangled knuckles and busted backs. So most folk wanting a piano moved are eager to pay someone else to suffer the pain. But Webb Junior had thought about it, and had devised an easy way to load pianos onto trucks and a very effective and painless process for getting them up the stairs. He lived by a mantra that he constantly repeated: "There's a better way to do this – let's find it."

I've recounted this trivial piece of family history because it strikes me that fly-fishing perfectly epitomises my brother's slogan. Fly-fishers have been seriously at it now for a few centuries, and the addiction has spread. Fly-fishing for a variety of species is now universal, and with all those eager and thoughtful anglers out there using fly-fishing gear it's no wonder that all sorts of 'better ways' have been devised.

Some years ago I asked Mick Hall how to tie dry flies with the tail fibres spread wide. In no time at all he had demonstrated half a dozen clever techniques, and I was duly impressed and convinced. When it comes to the proliferation of ways to dub a body or add a parachute hackle the bookshelves groan with explanatory tomes. Then you get to tie your fly on – take your pick from the profusion of possible knots, all with their proponents. The tippet connects to the leader, and again there are choices. Peter Hayes is excited about his new Japanese flat-butt leaders, while Phil Bailey prefers the Italian-style connected with perfection loops, and Chappie Chapman in New Zealand assures us braided leaders are definitely the way to go. And there are multitudes more to pick from. As for fly lines and rods and reels, the choices are overwhelming as companies strive to develop new equipment that will be a 'better way of doing it'. And we haven't yet poked around among the varieties of waders and vests, and all those other bits and pieces.

I have personally accrued a pile of visual aids. Like most of my colleagues of similar age, tying a small fly onto a fine tippet is now impossible without some optical assistance. Thus I have acquired bifocal polaroids, Reject Shop 2x readers in long narrow metal cans, magnifiers that clip onto the peak of my hat and others that clip onto my glasses, a couple of pairs of those large 'welding glasses size' Mr Magoo polaroids that can be worn over normal specs, and others I've simply forgotten about. I keep rotating through all these options, trying them in turn to determine the best.

Peter Hayes' presentation at the July meeting was superb, and a great example of a clever and thoughtful angler looking at all aspects of fly-fishing in an ongoing search for 'better ways'. If he did nothing else, he stimulated all of us there to think more about our trout tactics and techniques. But he did plenty else – providing us with a pile of ideas and suggestions for catching more fish.

Phil Bailey must carry similar genes, because he's another angler who is constantly trying new ideas and techniques. In an exchange of emails recently he has made a brave attempt to get me started with the Italian style of casting. Yes, the Italians are right into fly-fishing for trout and grayling, and their rivers are often grievously overgrown, so getting a fly into those awkward places where the trout are hiding requires very precise casting with incredibly tight loops. I'm sure Philip's article in next month's newsletter will spark some interest and stimulate your thinking too.

And that's good, because I guess one of the objectives of our newsletters is to keep readers abreast of the new ideas, the latest trends, the innovations that make catching more fish easier and more enjoyable. Undoubtedly the search for 'better ways' will continue, and that's a good thing.

Tight lines

*Lyndon Webb*

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## Howard Scrivenor – a Tribute

Howard Scrivenor passed away on Thursday, July 26, at his daughter's home in Cairns. His family was present. He was 90 years of age.

Howard was a member of the VFFA for close to 30 years, and in 2008 was awarded the Jack Ritchie Medal for his very significant contribution to trout fishing in this state over many years. He was a tireless worker who dedicated countless hours to advancing the cause of trout fishing.



He was a foundation member of the Victorian Fisherman's Advisory Council, which went on to become VicFish, the precursor to VRFish. He was also a foundation member of the Australian Freshwater Fisherman's Assembly. He was involved in the early days of Southern Fly Fishers, where he was a committee member, and served as secretary and president at various times. During his time at Southern he became heavily involved in trout politics and environmental issues, preparing and presenting numbers of briefs and reports to government and peak bodies.

Howard then went on to become a foundation member of the Council of Victorian Fly Fishing Clubs, where he again served on the committee and as president. As president he was a regular contributor to various fishing magazines on matters relating to the environment and trout politics. He also spent many days fishing in the Ballarat area, where he worked with the Ballarat Acclimatization Society and the Ballarat Hatchery stocking trout into Lake Wendouree.

During his time at the Council of Victorian Fly Fishing Clubs he became great mates with Jack Kelly and Jack Ritchie. He joined the VFFA, and made many lifelong friendships with other Association members. David Featherstone is one such friend who will miss Howard, as they were great fishing mates to the end. Dick Clark was another who enjoyed a close friendship with Howard.

Howard Scrivenor spent 65 years of his life working to ensure the sustainability of our environment and fighting for the Australian Trout. He has earned and deserves the highest esteem and respect from us all. Well done Howard!

# A Report from the Inland Fisheries Service Tasmania

(John Diggle, Director of Inland Fisheries. John has very kindly offered to provide us with some regular reports on the Tasmanian fishery)

The brown trout season commenced on August 4 this year, and the outlook is very good following continued wet conditions in autumn and early winter.

It is amazing to see the ongoing recovery of fisheries that were suffering from the extended drought leading up to the middle of 2009. Major waters, including Great Lake, Arthurs Lake and Woods Lake were very low, with others such as Tooms Lake, Lake Dulverton, Lake Leake, Lake Crescent and Craigbourne Dam approaching empty. Many rivers including the Macquarie, Break O' Day and South Esk were showing signs of stress and we were all wondering if the tough conditions would ever end. The challenging conditions had resulted in more effort on smaller waters, particularly Penstock and Little Pine lagoons, and the near Western Lakes with these waters suffering to some degree from the increased fishing pressure.

The turnaround has been great to see with good lake levels and strong river flows in most catchments across Tasmania. The opportunities for anglers at the start of the 2012/13 season are many, with Four Springs Lake, Tooms Lake, Woods Lake, Arthurs Lake, River Derwent and Brumbys Creek likely to see the largest number of anglers for the opening. If crowds aren't for you then waters such as Lake King William, Lake Echo or Lake Burbury all have plenty of water, space and most importantly - fish!



*The new boat ramp at Bronte*

The Inland Fisheries Service has been busy working to improve the fishery for anglers with a host of projects completed in 2011/12 and more planned for 2012/13. The Service in partnership with Hydro Tasmania, Marine and Safety Tasmania and angling groups has undertaken a range of projects including road upgrades, infrastructure developments, targeted stocking programs and access projects. Some of the more notable projects were a concrete ramp and pontoon at Bronte Lagoon, a breakwall at Woods Lake ramp, a jetty and ramp widening at Four Springs Lake, upgrade of the Woods Lake Road and advisory signage, Anglers Access, established on the Tyenna River. In 2012/13 work is planned for the Cowpaddock Road at Arthurs Lake, improved access tracks along the western shore of Great Lake, boat ramp upgrades at Woods Lake, Brandums Bay (Great Lake), Lake Burbury and Anglers Access for the Mersey River.

If you have ever thought of a Tasmanian fishing trip, then 2012 is shaping up as the year to give it a try. The fishery is experiencing the best conditions since the mid 1970's and the facilities available for anglers have never been better. If you do decide to come and have some suggestions, just want to know more or simply want to pass on your experience then visit the website ([www.ifs.tas.gov.au](http://www.ifs.tas.gov.au)), ring or email on 1300INFISH or [infish@ifs.tas.gov.au](mailto:infish@ifs.tas.gov.au), as we sincerely value your feedback.



*Tyenna River access*



*Tyenna River – a very neat stile*



*Waipahi River – Nancy Tichborne watercolour*

# Top End Adventure

(by Ian Sambell)

Australia offers some of the best saltwater fly-fishing in the world, especially at the top end where the fly-fisherman has an abundance of choices to pursue his passion. Weipa, on the western side of Cape York Peninsula, is just one such destination and offers remote, rugged beaches, and river and creek systems where the fishing is exceptional.

My fellow Piscators, who included John Worrell, Peter Gadd, Graham Seeger and Charles Bradley, enjoyed a fabulous six days in early May having our lines stretched every day by big, hungry, fast fish.

Our tally by week's end was 40 species, and best of all most were caught on white clouser minnows. There's no need to think about what flies to use each today, just get a white clouser in front of a fish and you're almost guaranteed a thrill.

The fish this year were larger than previous years and in top condition. This can be attributed to the explosion in the jelly prawns, which are a major food item for all species.

Our group has an annual booking with Weipa's best guide, Alan Philliskirk, who accommodates his clients in the lodge at the caravan park. The lodge has eight rooms, all with ensuites and air conditioning, and a live in housekeeper/chef who ensures you never go hungry. The large communal dining table is the first place you sit in the morning, contemplating the new day's adventure over bacon and eggs and hot filtered coffee. It's also the last place you sit at night, whilst reminiscing over the battles won and lost during the day, over a three course meal and whatever beverage takes your fancy.

The guides collected us each morning at precisely 7:00am, and it's then just a short drive to the boat ramp where the boats are quickly launched. Once onboard the guides run through a safety check, pointing out where the Epirb, life jackets and flares are kept. Then it's hang onto your hats as they take off at full throttle.



*A fabulous start to the week*



*The smile on Ian's face says it all*

The guides' boats are approximately 5 metres in length with casting decks front and rear, and handle any conditions you are likely to encounter. They will travel up to 60 – 70 kilometres from Weipa and it's your choice whether you want to fish the rivers, the beaches, or the open sea. Tides play an important part in where you fish and you must rely on your guide's experience. They know the area backwards and because they're guiding every day they know where and what is fishing best.

Our first day was spent along the beaches because the guides had seen lots of Manta Rays in recent weeks. A group of Mantas were spotted in along the shoreline after a short trip down the coast, and the boat was quickly positioned for the first casts of the trip. I must admit I didn't know what to reach for first - the camera or the rod - because it is truly an amazing sight to watch these huge fish gliding along the surface funneling down the jelly prawns. Often they are oblivious to boats and will swim right alongside and present the perfect target for a well placed clouser. Of course we're not trying to catch a Manta (although it can happen), but the fish that follow them sweeping on the prawns that frantically leap in all directions. The Manta is the perfect FAD (fish attracting device) and I've yet to see one without something following. You cast towards the back of the Manta, let the fly sink, give a few quick strips, and bang you're on. Line management is very important at this time because once hooked up line is peeling off the deck so fast it will wrap around anything sticking out, including the butt of your rod if you're not careful. If it's a jumper such as a Giant Herring, Queenfish, or Blue Salmon you're in for a visual spectacle.



*Another magnificent tropical catch*

Once landed the vital photos are taken to confirm your ‘impressive’ catch and the fish quickly released. Then it’s onto the next one. This continued for a couple of hours before the Mantas moved out into deeper water, forcing us to concentrate on the rocky headlands along the coastline.

It’s amazing that when there is a ‘hot’ bite it’s easy to fish through until mid-afternoon before someone suggests it’s time for lunch. Out of the cooler comes the pre-made salads which are quickly consumed, and then it’s back to the fishing. Plenty more fish were caught throughout the falling tide, and by the end of the first day we had recorded 17 species.

The guides’ day finishes at 5:00pm and they generally have you back at the lodge by 5:45pm where Dave, the chef, has prepared hot and cold entrees (sashimi and spring rolls) which are enjoyed on the expansive deck upstairs facing the sea. As the sun sinks below the horizon and the sky turns a brilliant red you feel yourself slowly succumbing to the rhythm of the tropics. Dinner is always enjoyable and enjoyed with suitable wines and cheerful conversation.

The following days were all very similar, although Charles opted to fish for Barramundi and Saratoga in the river one day with great success. The Longtail Tuna offshore provided plenty of excitement, with sizzling runs and an unyielding obstinacy to come to the boat. It was also a battle to keep them away from the huge Bull sharks that were following the tuna schools for an easy meal.



*A great way to finish the week - a Barramundi!*

The last day came too quickly, but we had planned it to coincide with the perfect tide to allow us to navigate one of our favorite creeks some 70 kilometres from Weipa. This is Barra country and it requires precision casting to get your clouser right in under and towards the backs of the mangroves. A few slow strips and in many cases you will see the Barra follow the fly before engulfing it. Once hooked its sole focus is to break you off amongst the mangrove roots. If you can apply lots of pressure and drag the fish from its cover then you have an excellent chance of landing it. I personally love catching Barra on fly. They are the supreme sports fish - aggressive, powerful, energetic, acrobatic, and they look fantastic. There is absolutely nothing that compares to a Barra leaping from the water shaking its head trying to dislodge your fly.

The creek mouth also proved a fishing bonanza and gave up metre long Queenfish, Golden Trevally and Blue Salmon.

By week's end we had all enjoyed fabulous fishing and great camaraderie. Each of us had our own special memory of what constituted the highlight of the trip. For me it was my last cast for the trip that resulted in a 90 cm Barramundi off the beach. A truly magnificent fish that took me right into the backing and etched a moment into my memory that I will treasure forever.

### Technical Details

Rods: 8 -9 weights are ideal

Lines: #8-9 (to match the rod)  
intermediate lines with a  
floating running line and  
plenty of backing (200 –  
400 metres)

Leaders: 6' – 9' of 20 – 40 lb mono  
or fluorocarbon.

Flies: Clouser minnows #2/0 in  
white, white & yellow,  
white & chartreuse



## *Fly-fishing at Weipa, May 6 – 12, 2012*

### Anglers:

Charles Bradley, Peter Gadd, Ian Sambell, Graham Seeger, John Worrell, Alan Roberts

### The 40 Species Caught:

Barramundi, Pikey Bream, Flathead, Finger Mark Bream, Giant Herring, Butter Bream, Wolf Herring, Tarpon, Broad Bar Queenfish, Black Spot Cod, Mangrove Jack, Morgan Cod, Coral Trout, Wire Netting Cod, Swallow Tail Dart, Gold Spot Cod, Talang Queenfish, Spanish Mackerel, River Queenfish, Grey Mackerel, Golden Trevally, School Mackerel, Cale Cale Trevally, Barracuda, Diamond Trevally, Parrot Fish, Big Eye Trevally, Archer Fish, Brassie Trevally, Blue Salmon, Tea Leaf Trevally, Scat, Longtail Tuna, Remora, Giant Trevally, Long Tom, Cobia, Stripey, Blue Tusk Fish and Saratoga

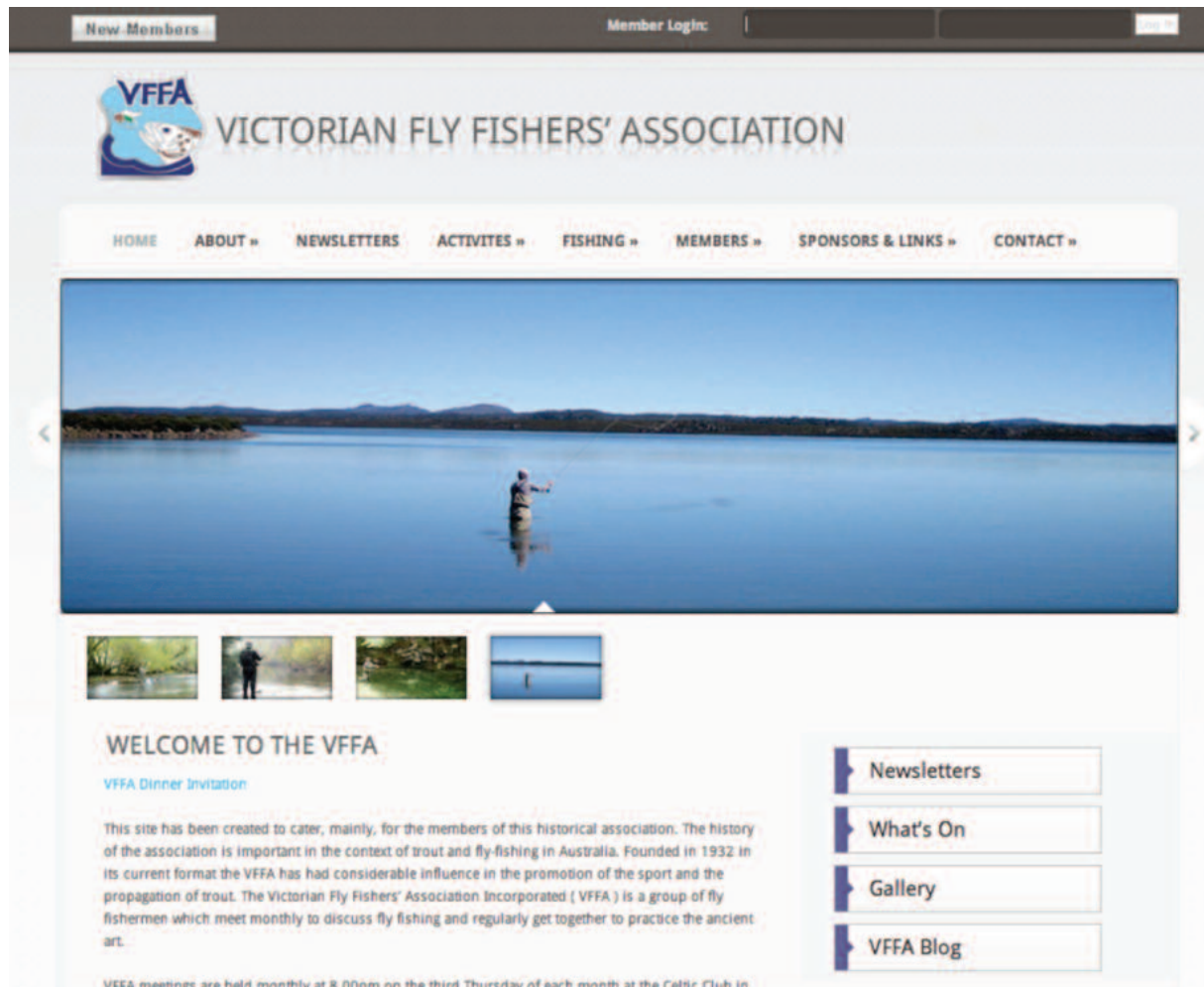


*Hakataramea River – one of Hubert Reichelt's favourites. Nancy Tichborne watercolour*

# New VFFA Website

(from Kevin Finn, VFFA Website Administrator)

A new Website was launched early in July 2012. The new Website shown below has new clean graphics and features the latest software to drive it. See example of the new home page below.



The objective of the new format was to assist existing members and attract new members. The following are some of the features:

- Increased Content
- Regular content updates
- New easy to navigate format with the latest web software
- Gallery of events and reports expanded
- VFFA calendar that can synchronise with your own computer / device calendar

- Fishing location links in VIC / TAS / NSW / NZ that provides detailed information about freshwater locations in these areas
- Fishing Gear Reviews - Video format
- Including existing web site popular items, like the Newsletter and Fly of the month, with their respective archives

We are sure you will enjoy the new site; those members who are not registered should sign in and enjoy this new Association facility.

The following outlines some of the sites major features:-

Large express buttons (shown below) take you quickly to popular subjects like, what's on? Newsletters and gallery of events



Also the top stories of the month are at your fingertips to click on, highlighted below.



A quick next 3 events reminder box (shown below) changes each month for those top 3 events and can like you to the calendar which will synchronise with your computer / device calendar.

A handy live link, to very detailed fishing information for the regions of Victoria, Tasmania, New South Wales & New Zealand, see screen image on Victoria below.

## Fishing Locations

The following maps and links are intended as a helpful reminder to the extensive fishing location choices we have in Victoria, Tasmania, New South Wales & New Zealand.

### Victoria



#### Victorian River Basins



The map shows various river basins in Victoria, with Glenelg highlighted in green. The basins include: Mallee, Avoca, Loddon (North), Broken, Kiewa, Upper Murray, Millicent Coast, Wimmera, Loddon (South), Campaspe, Goulburn, Mitta MITTA, Snowy, East Gippsland, Hopkins, Werribee, Moorabool, Yarra, Thomabo, Tambo, Corangamite, Moorabool, Bunyip, La Trobe, South Gippsland (West), Otway, South Gippsland (East), and Portland.

- [AVOCA](#)
- [BARWON](#)
- [BROKEN](#)
- [BUNYIP](#)
- [CAMPASPE](#)
- [CORANGAMITE](#)
- [EAST GIPPSLAND](#)
- [GLENELG](#)
- [GOULBURN](#)
- [HOPKINS](#)
- [KIEWA](#)
- [LA TROBE](#)
- [LODDON \(NORTH\)](#)
- [LODDON \(SOUTH\)](#)
- [MALLEE](#)
- [MARIBYRNONG](#)
- [MILLCENT COAST](#)
- [MITCHELL](#)
- [MITTA MITTA](#)
- [MOORABOOL](#)
- [OTWAY](#)
- [OVENS](#)
- [PORTLAND](#)
- [SOUTH GIPPSLAND \(EAST\)](#)
- [SOUTH GIPPSLAND \(WEST\)](#)
- [SNOWY](#)
- [TAMBO](#)
- [THOMSON](#)
- [UPPER MURRAY](#)
- [WERIBEE](#)
- [WIMMERA](#)
- [YARBA](#)

Live link for details to each of above locations

### Gear Reviews

Tackle & Tools to take fishing



Share More info

Video's on gear reviews of popular fly-fishing related subjects, below image on tackle and tools.

## The Warrnambool Annual Dinner

Saturday, July 28, was the date for the Warrnambool Fly Fishers' Annual Dinner, held again at the Brauer–Ander Park Pavilion. And as in previous years Chef Robert King and his team served a delectable meal to the sixty members and guests who attended.

This year's menu commenced with Hors D'Ouvres of deep-fried crumbed abalone, followed by four entrees – game soup; hare and duck terrine with Woodford quince paste; smoked trout and smoked eel with Bluefin tuna; and finally coconut redfin fillets with cucumber salad.

The main course was grilled kangaroo sirloin with roasted vegetables, this being followed by a cheese platter with tea or coffee. All rather different fare, but very tasteful to the palate and presented tastefully by Robert and his team.

During the evening two annual trophies were presented. The Arthur Hogan Memorial Trophy for the largest trout from a local water went to Phil Hoey for a 2.25 kg brown from the Moyne River. The Geoff O'Brien Memorial Trophy for the best selection of flies tied by a WFFC member went to George Burrow.

Our congratulations again to the chef and the hard-working members of the Warrnambool Fly-fishers for another excellent Annual Dinner.



*Phil Hoey receives his award from President Adrian Jacobs and George Burrow won the trophy for some superbly tied flies*



*Great food, fine company, and a prize or two to be won*

# ATF Report

Members will be pleased to hear that the ATF is still busy and working on behalf of trout anglers. At a recent committee meeting the following reports were presented:

## **Lake Fyans Fish Gates**

Mick Hall had spent some fishing time at Lake Fyans and had been concerned to discover that the protective gates, put in many years ago as a barrier to prevent trout from escaping into the surrounding channels, were badly rusted and no longer effective. Since then Project Manager Merv McGuire has organised for new gates to be installed. The photo shows the new gates now in place.



*The new fish gates at Lake Fyans*

## **Projects in the North-East**

The ATF was heavily involved in recent years in projects to improve angler access to the rivers running into Lake Eildon. Anglers heading towards some of North-East Victoria's most productive trout fisheries now find access a whole lot easier. Fisheries Victoria Executive Director Anthony Hurst said more than \$67,000 had recently been provided from the Enhanced Recreational Fishing Program for important access work. "The funding will allow the Australian Trout Foundation to deliver access improvement projects on stretches of the Delatite, Howqua and King rivers," Mr Hurst said. Much of this work has now been completed, with some further projects under consideration.

### **Howqua River:**

**ATF Project** - Spraying and clearing of Miners Track between Running Creek Reserve and Tobacco Flat:

The track has been sprayed and cleared and is now operational and passable, the signage washed away in recent floods has been replaced, ongoing maintenance of the track is now being under-taken by DSE Forests, and an interpretive sign has been installed at Running Creek Reserve.

**ATF Project** - Establishment of additional recreational fishing access points on the Howqua River between Four Mile and Eight Mile flats:

Improved access to the river has been achieved in this area by extensive and repetitive spraying of blackberries and other noxious weeds, and clearing of dead canes and debris, thus creating open access fishing areas along the river banks. Signage has been installed in various locations along the river.

**Jamieson River:**

**ATF Project** - Access / Facilities Project from Granny's Flat to Wren's Flat on the Jamieson River:

Access to these rivers in this area has been greatly improved, and facilities have been installed at various locations on both rivers, including tables, seats, and fire pits with swing barbecues. To assist anglers signage has been installed at a number of locations, and signage has been installed at Jamieson Reserve on the Jamieson River and Skipworth Reserve on the Goulburn River.

**Delatite River:**

**ATF Project** - Increased recreational fishing access to the Delatite River between Pinnacle Valley and Mirimbah:

Improved access to the Delatite River has been achieved by the extraction of overgrown undergrowth of blackberry and other noxious weed and the clearing of built-up debris. Access signage has been installed in various locations along the river to assist visiting anglers.

**Some Additional Proposals:**

**ATF Project** - Upper King River, between Sandy Flat and Top Crossing:

The objective here is to enhance the access for fishing opportunities for a wider group of anglers, and to provide suitable facilities at the two popular camping and fishing areas.

**ATF Project** - Jamieson River, from Brocks Road / Low Saddle Road junction for approximately 8 km east to Cairns Creek Flat:

In this area the objective is to enhance the fishing access to the Jamieson River, and to provide suitable camping facilities and increased fishing opportunities for a wider group of anglers.

**ATF Matters:**

At the recent Committee Meeting it was decided that the AGM for this year would be held in November. Members will be formally notified of the AGM, and the required Nomination, Proxy vote, and AGM Notices and agendas will be distributed in good time. All paid up members are entitled to attend and vote.

The opening of this year's Trout Season, on September 1, will be marked by a "Goulburn Fishing Festival" on Friday, August 31 and Saturday, September 1. Representatives of the ATF will be in attendance.

Finally and unfortunately this year's AGM will see the retirement of President Rod Barford and Secretary Tom White, two of the driving forces in the ATF in the past two years. We thank these two very hardworking and committed men for their significant contributions to trout fishing in this state. They will be very hard to replace.

# FLY OF THE MONTH

## *Mick Hall's Beadhead Brown Nymph*



Last month we presented David Martin's wonderful dun pattern – the Detached Body Shaving Brush. It is undoubtedly a very effective fly, but is quite an intricate pattern to put together. This month we're at the other end of the scale and presenting a fly which is extremely easy to tie and very effective too.

Some years ago I was watching Mick Hall constructing nymphs to use in his teaching classes on nymph fishing in the Thornton area, typically on the Rubicon River. He was turning them out at a great rate of knots.

Is this fly successful? I can personally guarantee it. I have tied heaps of these little wonders (their degree of difficulty nicely matches my fly-tying skills) and have caught numbers of trout using it in the rivers around Victoria. So it has two highly commendable features – it is simple and quick to tie, and it's a very effective trout catcher. Give it a try.

### **Tying materials:**

- Hook: Mick was tying his on Mustad Model R72 hooks, sizes 12 - 16
- Tying thread: Brown 6/0
- Tail: A few fibres from a ginger cock hackle
- Bead: Gold bead, 2mm - 3mm, depending on the hook size
- Body & thorax: Spirit River dubbing – Diamond Bright Chocolate Brown

These are the materials that Mick used, and his fly works fine. The Diamond Bright dubbing material has an attractive sparkle or flash that undoubtedly adds to the appeal of the fly.

Like with any fly, fly tiers can't resist the temptation to fiddle a bit with the original. I hope Mick forgives me, but a couple of variations that I have found useful include using a black bead (which worked well in New Zealand in their very clear South Island rivers), or a tungsten bead for when I need to get down quicker in deep water. I also find that the Mustad R70 hook had a wider gape which I think helps in the smaller sizes.

While I'm certain the particular Spirit River dubbing that Mick chose was part of the attraction of his pattern, there are lots of other Spirit River Diamond Bright colours that may work well too. What about dark brown seal's fur? Seal's fur is springy and a pain to dub, so many references suggest cutting it fine and mixing it with an equal amount of wool of the size colour. In fact, a recent issue of the UK Fly Fishing & Fly Tying magazine carries a letter from a reader extolling the virtues of wool as a tying material. Wool absorbs water, so nymphs made with wool sink well. And in regard to its translucency, 'light transmitted through wool fibre has a much more intense colour than any synthetic fibre, ... and for colour transmission it is second only to seal's fur.' Wool is also very easy to dub, and 'a small amount blended with seal's fur makes the seal's fur easier to handle.' So it looks like I'm off to Spotlight for some Chocolate Brown wool. (Just a thought).

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## Warrnambool Season Opener Weekend & Dinner

It's on again – the Season Opener to Warrnambool and District on November 9 – 11. Following a magnificent visits to Warrnambool and district over the past two years we will do it all again for this year's opening weekend.

Accommodation has been booked at the Surfside Holiday Park. This complex is very comfortable and in a great location. The accommodation has been booked in cabins from arrival on Friday, November 9, until departure on Sunday, November 11.

We will fish a number of local rivers including the Merri, Hopkins, Mt Emu and Moyne.

These rivers offer a wonderful variety of fishing - both wet and dry styles, depending on the height and clarity of the water.

The President and members of the Warrnambool Fly Fishers will again guide us, and host a dinner at Jim Blakeslee's Winery on the Saturday evening. Jim and his wife Trish will be our hosts.

Members will each share the cost of this meal and provide their own drinks.

This will be a great weekend, so reserve your spot now by contacting Hugh Maltby on:

Mob - 0423 283 079 or by email - [redntag@hotmail.com](mailto:redntag@hotmail.com)





## LIBRARY NEWS

All members should remember that the Mick Martin Memorial Library is one of the most extensive collections of fly-fishing literature in Australia. It is valuable in its own right but is a great asset to members wishing to expand their knowledge or who simply enjoy sitting by the fireside and vicariously enjoying the exploits of others. In addition, the library boasts a number of videos on trout fishing. Our librarian Marty Rogers will be available prior to each general meeting to assist members wishing to borrow books or videos.

The library is divided into three parts.

Part 1 Books available for loaning to members.

Part 2 Books available for reference only and not to be taken from the library.

Part 3 Books bequeathed to the Association and not to be taken from the cabinet.

## OVERDUE BOOKS

Our librarian reports that a number of members have failed to return library books on time. Could all those book loving members who have failed to return books promptly do so.

## V.F.F.A. ITEMS FOR SALE

The Association has the following quality items for sale:

Book "The Country For An Angler" (the History of the VFFA).....	\$70.00 each
Book "Geehi to Great Lake" .....	\$45.00 each
Columbia Shirts .....	\$70.00 each
Polarfleece jacket with VFFA logo.....	\$40.00 each
Association ties (blue or maroon).....	\$35.00 each
Cloth badges.....	\$7.00 each
Diaries \$2.00 each	
<b><i>The Australian Trout by Jack Ritchie.....</i></b>	<b>\$20.00</b>
<b><i>(Special offer – buy one, get one free!)</i></b>	
V.F.F.A. car stickers.....	\$2.00 each

Members wishing to purchase any of these items should contact Hugh Maltby prior to the monthly General Meeting on telephone 0423 283 079.

### VALUED DONORS

#### The following made donations for the raffle at the 2011 Annual Dinner:

- Armadale Angler • Aussie Angler • Australian Fishing Network • Bernard Holbery
- Compleat Angler, Box Hill • Fly Life Publications • Hookup Bait & Tackle,
- Ferntree Gully • J M Gillies • Lowes Furniture • Mayfly Tackle • Mick Hall •
- Michael Steven's Publishing • Millbrook Lakes Lodge • Nick Taransky - Bamboo
- Rod Maker • Peter Hayes, Cressy • Pro Angler Fishing Tackle • Ray Brown,
- Onkaparinga Flies & Cane Rods • The Flyfisher, Melbourne • Vision Fly Fishing

## VFFA Meetings & Activities

### August 2012

- 5 Sunday Casting - 10:00am to 2:00pm at the Red Tag Pools
- 10 – 12 Annual Bullen Merri trip (Convenor - Hugh Maltby)
- 12 Sunday Casting - 10:00am to 2:00pm at the Red Tag Pools
- 19 Sunday Casting - 10:00am to 2:00pm at the Red Tag Pools
- 24 Annual Dinner: Speaker – Mike Stevens – Publisher of Fly-fishing books and magazines**
- 25 President's Casting Day - 10:00am to 3:00pm at the Red Tag Pools

### September 2012

- 12 Council Meeting – 7:00 pm at the Celtic Club: preparation for AGM
- 20 General Meeting - 8:00 pm at the Celtic Club: AGM**
- 26 First Council Meeting for the new Council – 7:00 pm at the Celtic Club

### October 2012

- 18 General Meeting - 8:00 pm at the Celtic Club: TBC but probably Safety and First Aid for Anglers**
- 24 Council Meeting – 7:00 pm at the Celtic Club

### November 2012

- 9-11 Opening Weekend Trip – to Warrnambool again this year, with Hugh Maltby looking after the arrangements. (Phone Hugh on 0423 283 079, or email him on [redntag@hotmail.com](mailto:redntag@hotmail.com))
- 15 General Meeting - 8:00 pm at the Celtic Club: Speaker to be confirmed, but possibly Gavin Hurley from Pro Angler**

### December 2012

- 5 Council Meeting – preparation for Christmas Dinner
- 15 Christmas Dinner – 6:30 pm for 7:00 pm at the Celtic Club**