



• REGISTERED BY AUSTRALIA POST: PUBLICATION NO. VBH 2899 •

VOL. 59 NO.9

THE VICTORIAN FLY-FISHERS' ASSOCIATION INC.

JULY 2011

Organisation No. A0024750J

C/- The Kelvin Club, 14-30 Melbourne Place, Melbourne 3000

www.vffa.org.au



July Meeting –

**Thursday, July 21, 8 pm at the
Kelvin Club -**

*VFFA Auction Night – with
Marty Rogers wielding the
hammer.*

The Auction will be preceded
by Dinner at the Kelvin Club,
commencing at 6 pm. All
members invited.

Please make your booking by -

Phone: 9654 5711 or Email – bookings@kelvinclub.com

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Advance Notice - July Meeting: VFFA Auction

Yes, the July meeting will be another of those wonderful VFFA auctions, with the magnificent Marty Rogers wielding the hammer.

Marty has also taken over the preparations for this event, and is preparing the Catalogue and numbering the lots. A draft of the Catalogue is included as an insert, though members need to be aware that the final list of lots may be larger, with possibly some 100 items to be sold.

VFFA auctions are wonderful entertainment, whether you are there to purchase an item or two, or to just enjoy the occasion. And there's always some great bargains to be had, so bring along some cash – just in case.



Marty taking bids on a fine rod



June Meeting – the Australian Trout Foundation

Unfortunately our guest speaker for the evening, Rod Barford, had suffered an injury to his knee and was unable to attend. However he had emailed us his PowerPoint presentation and speaking notes, so we went ahead in his absence and saw and heard what he had intended to say.

His topic was the Australian Trout Foundation, and his presentation gave the following:

The Australian Trout Foundation is an independent, non-profit organisation, dedicated to ensure that all Australians can enjoy trout fishing now and in the future. It is the sole dedicated voice for trout in Australia. All trout anglers should support their own trout fishery by supporting the ATF via membership – as everything we do is devoted to improving trout fishing for all Australians.

How did it all begin? It began one weekend at Mick Hall's shack at Welshman's Reef near Maldon, when a party of trout anglers gathered to discuss ways of influencing government policy in regard to trout fishing in Victoria. It didn't take long to realise this had to be a national affair, and over a lot of food and liquid refreshments, laughter and merriment, what emerged was the Australian Trout Foundation. The anglers present at this historic gathering included Bill Classon, Mick Hall, Philip Weigall, Philip Bailey, Mike Blasco, Rod Barford, and others that Rod couldn't recall.

The current ATF Committee is comprised of some very enthusiastic and dedicated trout fishermen who have a passion for their sport, along with the natural environment that trout inhabit. The depth of skill, expertise and enthusiasm of this committee is impressive, and is producing some great results for the trout angling public of Australia.

The members of the Committee are Rod Barford (President), Mick Hall (Vice President), Tom White (Secretary), Merv McGuire (Projects Officer), Stuart Rees (Stocking Officer), Lyndon Webb (Newsletter), Mark Fraser (Treasurer), and Ken McMaster, Bill Tilley, Daryl Foulds, Nick Calder and Geoff Churcher (Committee).

Since we are the *Australian* Trout Foundation, it is imperative that we expand and establish ATF chapters in NSW, Tasmania, South Australia and West Australia. The goals of the ATF are simple but important, and will involve our dedicated team for the foreseeable future:

- To ensure the sustainability of Australia's recreational trout fishery and habitat.
- To establish a national network of chapters with statewide regional branches to ensure the goals of the Foundation are protected, enforced and enhanced.
- To be the independent voice of trout fisheries throughout Australia, promoting common goals via a national network and our extensive media connections and website.
- To identify and undertake specific environmental projects to enhance or repair recreational trout fisheries.
- To secure permanent classified trout waters using a river-basin-by-river-basin Fisheries Management Plan in all trout holding regions

The Association's achievements over the past seven years are very impressive, and Rod paid tribute to the efforts and dedication of those who have sat on the committee in previous years. The list below represents some intense campaigns and bitter fights, but today is a new day, and we have a much brighter future. We now have a Fisheries Department we can actually work with, and not against. Our efforts and enthusiasm can at last be focused on getting the jobs done.

Some of our Achievements over the last 7 Years include:

- Membership increasing from about ten to well over a thousand.
- Successfully stopping the use of Rotenone in our streams and rivers.
- The inclusion of "Classified Streams" into Government policy.
- Participation in "Inland Waters Classification" committee.
- Inclusion of "Adopt a Stream" into Government policy.
- Establishing of affiliation between the ATF and Native Fish Australia.
- Successful execution of North East Rivers' access projects.
- Industry acceptance of the ATF as the "Voice for Trout."
- A 'balanced' voice in the "Removal of Willows" campaign.
- Successfully blocking EPBC nomination to remove trout from Australian inland waters.
- A permanent position on the "Round-Table" advising Government policy.
- A permanent position on "Fish-Stock Victoria" Forum (formerly CONS).

In recent times we've had to contend with drought, major bushfires and flooding rains. These events have presented their own problems and challenges, but have also changed the landscape to some degree. The other major change has been in the political landscape, and with it a number of subtle changes in the way we interact with Fishery managers and politicians. Rod believes we have been fortunate in that the new leaders appear to be on our side and are easy to work with.

The ATF has been actively involved in assisting fire and flood affected businesses and people, including purchasing a shed for the Buxton Trout Hatchery, assisting with the erection and concrete floor for the Buxton Trout Hatchery, assisting with the erection of a trout barrier at Marysville to protect and endangered native species, and establishing solid working relations with Native Fish Australia. On Saturday, June 19, 2010, ATF members worked side by side with scientists from DSE, the Arthur Rylah Institute and the Murray Darling Basin Authority to reconstruct the bushfire affected area around Leary's Creek, which runs through Marysville. This was an ideal project to showcase cooperation between Government agencies, trout anglers and other like-minded groups while providing real protection for a rare and threatened species – an Australia Galaxiid species.

The past year has also seen a significant involvement in assisting angling clubs with major environmental projects. Many clubs are now availing themselves of funding revenue from angling licence fees. Thus the ATF became involved in such projects as Brook Trout for Purrumbete, re-snagging of Cudgewa Creek, stocking of the Lower King River, the

Bairnsdale FFC's Cobungra River Fish Habitat Improvement Project, and Corryong Angling Club's Nariel Creek rehabilitation.

The ATF was the voice in the wilderness arguing for a more sustainable way of removing willows, rather than the wholesale massacre that was occurring along parts of the Goulburn River. We argued the scientific case, and won the day. We also alerted Fisheries and other agencies to the Shire of Yarra Ranges' plan to stop trout stocking in Yarra Ranges rivers, including the Yarra.

We are currently preparing a case for an earlier close to the trout season in Victoria, as well as an earlier opening to the season, along with the reintroduction of a minimum size limit for both trout species - something we believe intrinsically important to good fishery management.

Hepburn Lagoon has been the beneficiary of an increased stocking allotment courtesy of the ATF. Our stocking manager Stuart Rees was responsible for this bonus for trout anglers. Already the 2010 year stocking is producing promising results, and it will be only a matter of months before some very sizeable fish are taken from this rich waterway.

Other significant stockings were dropped into Ballarat's Lake Wendouree, Greenhill Lake near Ararat, Lake Beaufort, Cairn Curran Reservoir, Teddington Reservoir, Newlyn Reservoir, Deep Lake at Derrinallum, Barkers Creek Reservoir at Harcourt, Rocklands Reservoir near Balmoral, and Tullaroop Reservoir at Carisbrook.

Improved Access To N.E. Streams

To quote a DSE Memo: '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.'

The Delatite received \$22,550, the Howqua River between the Six Mile and Eight Mile Flats received \$20,950, and the King River attracted \$23,650 for works to improve access between the Pineapple and King Hut Flats. The three rivers are highly regarded as recreational fisheries for self-sustaining populations of brown trout. The projects involve working with land managers to remove noxious weeds and vegetation, create river access points and fishing areas as part of the clearing activities, and place large interpretive signs promoting recreational fishing in the region and outlining these access points.

Howqua walking track project involved reopening a dilapidated and largely unused walking track along the Howqua River, and was completed by the ATF in 2010. Recent flood damage has been repaired, and the track is providing access to parts of the Howqua previously hidden by blackberry and English broom infestations.

Rod emphasised that we have some pristine waters to fish, and they should be kept that way. And joining the ATF will help do just that. The Association will accomplish more with a higher membership, and more projects can be undertaken.

Many Gippsland streams suffer from low angler visitation, and this allows negative forces to come into play - poaching, gill netting, over-fishing, pitch forking, etc. All of these occur in

many of these remote waters, especially at spawning time. We need to have eyes on the water, and the best way for that to happen is for all trout anglers to be in regular contact with both ATF and Fisheries (especially through using 13FISH to report criminal offences).

The North-East is a region dear to all our hearts, and suffers accordingly. Everything from erosion to over-fishing, depending on where you look. And again it helps if we have people around who care and are prepared to act. There are huge numbers of opportunities for anglers and clubs to become actively involved in the preservation and improvement of favourite streams via ATF assistance in establishing projects. As an example, Corryong Angling Club plans to start a habitat improvement project on the Nariel Creek, and the ATF has been assisting in getting this started.

The Goulburn is of course the heart of the Victorian trout fishery for most Melbourne-based anglers, and naturally it suffers all manner of ills. It is an amazing aquatic organ, producing quality fishing in the face of intense fishing pressure and many polluting sources (trout farms being one of the worst). This river has spawned many an enthusiastic trout and fly angler, some of whom are probably in this room tonight. Given its proximity to over 4 million people, it is a tribute to the hard work and dedication of its devotees and supporters that it continues to fish well, despite temperature fluctuations, flow fluctuations that would kill most other fisheries, trout farm pollution, agricultural spray drift and runoff, littering by so-called anglers, and general wear and tear by an army of visitors and outdoor enthusiasts.

More recently, the problem of over-use by kayakers and canoeists, largely for the profits of several large commercial groups who have a stated objective of increasing canoe traffic down the Goulburn to a thousand craft every week(!!!). In fact Rod was run down by a flotilla of such craft, and while picking himself up off the bottom of the river was told, “We own the river, so get used to it!” So the fight begins. It has been tabled at the roundtable forum and is currently being investigated by DPI with the objective of getting these people to a table where we can discuss this issue as a matter of urgency.

In conclusion, the ATF is working towards more and bigger trout in waters that can support them. Improved environmental conditions means better fishing, so JOIN THE ATF NOW!

Rod Barford, ATF President



President's Message

The unsung heroes of the VFFA, your councillors, have been hard at work and the last month has seen the fruition of some of the tasks undertaken recently. The purchase of some very fine crystal glassware consisting of both whisky and red wine glasses, carrying the VFFA logo, will be available for supply very soon. Get your orders in early to secure some. The production of a new leaflet has been completed and is currently being printed. These will be distributed to tackle shops and fishing shows to give interested parties a very modern look at the VFFA.



We were given a pleasant surprise recently on receiving a parcel from Japan. It contained a book and some colour-plates that were a translation of Alfred Ronald's classic book on entomology. The author, Noboyuki Kawano MD, in his accompanying letter, expressed his thanks to the members of the VFFA and in particular, Mick Hall, who he says "helped him a lot". He also says he is hoping to visit Australia and do some trout fishing. I am replying with my thanks and an invitation to visit the VFFA and sample Victoria's fly-fishing.

The July meeting will be another winner for VFFA members when Marty Rogers will again wield his gavel for the Book and Tackle Auction. This is an opportunity for members to purchase books formally owned by the late Dudley Lee, VFFA member and stalwart of the Bairnsdale FFC. There are also several items of equipment going under the hammer and while the final Catalogue (enclosed with this newsletter) is now close to 100 lots, it will not be a late night. Members are urged to come to the dinner prior to the auction and enjoy the company of other members. Please ring the Kelvin Club, by the Tuesday prior, to book a seat and make sure you get a meal.

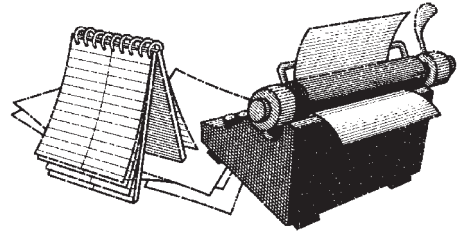
The annual Cane Day was again a resounding success. There were many new rods to be trialled. I was very impressed with a couple of rods from a new maker, Graham Foxman. Yes, I did get his card and won't be showing this newsletter to my wife. I was also very impressed with a new line that I tried, this being a 444 Sylk. These are currently hard to obtain in Oz, but anyone with a cane rod should try one. Many thanks to Choco for organising this event and to Hughie for manning the BBQ. Great food and great wine, and two very impressive tackle displays by Bernard Holbery and Peter Campbell as well. Thanks to Bernard for donating an umbrella to the VFFA, which I am sure will be most useful.

Check your diaries for the upcoming Annual Dinner and AGM. I urge members to support both of these events as they are the main events for the year. Members should also give thought to nominating for Council. We have many talented members with much to contribute, and I am sure their skills would be very handy.

The New Zealand trip is in planning and I have had a few members suggest that we consider other locations as well as, or as alternatives to, the Mataura River area. If you are interested in attending then please ring me to discuss. I will need to confirm accommodation and guiding asap so don't delay. I will go with a smaller group if I don't hear very soon. Everyone knows I love staying at Nokomai Station and I have already been emailed about limited availability there again this year.

Tight lines, *Rick Dugina*

From the EDITOR'S DESK



Yes, we all revel in the delights of the breath-taking surroundings and glorious, awe-inspiring beauty of our rivers and streams. But I'm still very comfortable with the thought that the underlying purpose of fly-fishing is to catch some fish. John Geirach tells us that the secret to catching trout is in the 'timing', by which I think he means being in the right place at the right time with the right know-how and the right flies to accommodate the inscrutable demands of our speckled friends. Hopefully this month's issue will help us along the way with this.

Those of us who fish Tasmania and would like to know the right places to go in that wonderful State will be delighted to hear that the latest edition of Greg French's guide to the *Trout Waters of Tasmania* is imminent, and will on sale sometime in August. This tome is mandatory bedside reading for anyone with an interest in fishing those superb Tassie lakes and rivers. This edition is a complete revision of Greg's previous guides, and provides up-to-date information, improved maps and lots of superb photographs.

We've also included in this issue a review of Philip Weigall's latest book, also on sale in the next few weeks. I was the fortunate recipient of an advance copy and found it a great read. Philip has been fishing for trout for 40 years, and has been guiding and writing about it for 20 of those years. He would fish on more days on more waters in a season than most of us would manage in a couple of decades, and is a highly skilled angler with years of experience. So when he puts in print the strategies and techniques that underlie his approach to catching trout you can be sure that it includes a wealth of practical and helpful advice. And indeed it does. I find all of Philip's articles and books both informative and enjoyable, and am confident that this latest addition will be seen as one of his best. Again, highly recommended.

We have also included another article by Jeremy Lucas on the French Nymphing, or 'leader-to-hand' technique. It's a fascinating account and one that I suspect will raise some eyebrows and controversy. In recent decades we've seen many innovations and advances in our fly-fishing. Cane was replaced by fibreglass then graphite. Lines have improved immeasurably. Breathable waders are great, and the latest polaroid glasses are so much better. For tying flies we have beadheads for our nymphs, and access to high quality genetic hackles and fabulous new synthetic materials. Our fishing methods have been helped along with new approaches to polaroiding, loch style fishing, and, more lately, Czech nymphing. And now we have 'leader-to-hand' – fly-fishing without a fly line, but using long soft rods to cast very long leaders which provide incredible subtlety and sensitivity. Controversial? I suspect it will be. Effective? All the reports suggest so. Ray Brown, who loves his dry fly fishing on those Tassie rivers, tells me in a recent email of occasions when he's fished an attractive run and caught nothing, and then watched while a colleague, kitted up with this new method, has fished the same run and removed from 6 to 10 trout. Those sorts of reports certainly get your attention. This new technique is not for everyone and all occasions, but it certainly deserves some thoughtful discussion.

And what about having the right fly? Last February I fished Tasmania for a week with Bob Loch and Jim Blakeslee from Warrnambool. The weather and conditions were a long way short

of ideal and consequently Bob and I managed quite modest returns for our efforts. Jim, on the other hand, just kept pulling them out. Despite the conditions he averaged five or six fish each day. Of course his success is due to a very high level of skill and a lot of Tasmanian trout fishing experience. But he also had an emerger pattern he had developed and was using, that seemed on occasions to have every fish in Little Pine queuing up for a look. It was really quite deadly, and Jim has kindly consented to revealing the details in this issue's Fly of the Month. Tie some up – I can promise you this one really works.

Finally, for many issues we've enjoyed Philip Bailey's UK reports. Always interesting, and providing some fascinating insights into the fishing in Britain, particularly in the Yorkshire area. However Philip is now living away from Britain for a while, so we won't be seeing any more of his regular UK reports. We wish him all the best and thank him for his many fabulous contributions.

Tight lines, *Lyndon Webb*

Advance Notice – Annual Dinner

This year's Annual Dinner, on Friday August 26, will feature Charles Wooley as our guest speaker. Those of us who watch *60 Minutes* on Sunday evenings will be very familiar with his presence.

Charles is a very well known Australian journalist, reporter and writer. Born in Launceston, he moved to Hobart at age 16, where he gained an honours degree in history from the University of Tasmania. He returned to Launceston in 1970 to work as a cadet with *The Examiner*, and two years later joined ABC Radio and moved to Perth. He soon moved to television, working on *This Day Tonight*, *Nationwide*, and *Four Corners*. He later served as the ABC's European correspondent based in London.



In 1985 Charles joined the Nine Network's *Sunday* program. In 1991 Charles he left *Sunday* and worked briefly for *A Current Affair*, before joining *60 Minutes* in October of that year. In January 2006 he became the host of a new regional morning program, *Charles Wooley Across Australia*. As well as presenting his radio show, Charles continues to work on a casual basis for *60 Minutes* and also narrates some television programs for Channel 9. He is the author of several books, including an up and coming guide to walks in and around Hobart, Tasmania.

In 1999, Charles moved his family back to Tasmania where he is able to live a more peaceful life - and indulge his passion for fly-fishing.

We look forward very much to hearing about Charles' passion for fly-fishing!

What Happened After The “Fatman” Sang?

(Andy Hodson continues his tale of travels on the West Coast of Tasmania by that intrepid party of four anglers in October 2010.)

To continue on from our pleasant stay at Corinna, the convoy crossed over on the Fatman barge and on through Zeehan – again paying our respects to the second hand shop there. We took the road south towards Strahan and were soon pulling up on the bridge over the Henty River (about 20k from Zeehan). If you’re travelling this road for the first time I hope you will be impressed by the views over the Henty dunes just to the north of the river. There is a reasonable boat ramp there, though it does have a difficult drop off if you back your vehicle down too far. There’s plenty of room to park, though there are recurrent reports of theft from this relatively isolated area, so be prudent with valuables and lock them up. It was here we met up with a Park Ranger who was friendly but short on fishing knowledge.

Boated up, we proceeded downstream in high anticipation. The river here is full of snags, so slow and careful navigation was in order. The bordering hills and forest soon gave way to marram-covered sand dunes, and the river spread out into sandy-bottomed wide lagoons. At this point we could see vehicles parked on the southern side. These have come in from the highway at a turn-off about 5 km south of the bridge. On a previous solo scouting trip some years earlier I had enquired locally about this access point, but was greeted with blank looks or dire warnings of quicksand. It all looked very fishy in the lagoons, but none were spotted.

After about 2 km of this the river re-organized itself into a sandy channel running behind the main beach for a further kilometre, before taking a right angle turn to cross the ocean beach into the southern ocean. On this trip the outlet was at the southern most point of the beach, but apparently it can change according to floods. The southern side was composed of impressive dunes which at one point had a large whalebone poking out from a sand cliff. The northern aspect opened on to the vast expanses of the ocean beach.

A couple of fly-fishers from the parked cars mentioned earlier were patrolling this southern bank, though it would have been hard work with the sand cliffs rising steeply behind them and the sea breeze strong in their faces. This channel was about 40 metres wide and 2 metres deep, with excellent water clarity. Hearts began beating somewhat faster when we spotted lots of activity on the ocean beach side, hard in on the bank. We could see pods of silver torpedoes lined up along this edge, but lots of vigorous casting resulted only in frustration. One eventually fell to the streamer patterns we had been using, and then our lack of success was explained. It was a mullet! Not just any ordinary mullet though – a good pound of strong sea mullet.

After a bit of head scratching we opined they were feeding on sand fleas or something similar which were disturbed from their home in the sand by the outgoing tide. As each wave surged up the river the activity would increase. A trial of a chironomid pupa pattern soon gave way to a willow grub pattern (size 16), and that seemed to do the trick. The take is subtle and the mouth is soft, so careful playing was very much in order. Let the fish run and ease it back when it shows an inclination to head your way. Jim’s “half pound pressure” needed to be re-calibrated to “half an ounce”! Only about a quarter of those hooked were eventually landed. Some of us got out of the boats and tried from the shore – delightful with

rolled up trousers and sleeves, as it really was a very balmy day. Those remaining in the boats however seemed to fare better, as the shore anglers' shadows played havoc with the fish.

All in all it was a very pleasant session. The fish were challenging, gave an excellent account of themselves, and required a lot of finesse to land. We were in good spirits then when we headed back to the boat ramp to load up for the journey back to Miena. A pleasant stop at the coffee shop at Linda (the only shop at Linda – another old mining outpost) had us refreshed for the long drive back. Sustenance that evening was an outstanding feed of fresh mullet in a lovely beer batter. We felt like kings!

So – what would I do again or differently? If afforded the luxury of time that youth seems to take for granted then one might consider taking the month of November to explore the West Coast more. Load up the 4WD with some comfortable camping gear and hitch on a 4.5 metre dinghy. Hop off the boat at Devonport and turn right towards Smithton. Keep an eye out for local produce and especially the cheeses near Burnie. Stanley and its famous Nut, and Woolnorth and its wind farm provide a pleasant detour. Even Marrawah beach may surprise with its hardy surfers tackling the West Coast giant swells. Your first major camp would be at Arthur River, with its small shack village and single shop. It is home to some cray fishers (and the season should be open so fresh cray will be on the menu). The camping ground there seemed pleasant enough, though with a bit of prior searching one may find a shack to rent. A few days' exploring the Arthur should get things going. We did remember to put in a couple of bream-type rods so some estuary bait fishing could ease any quietness on the trout front. A good surf-spinning rod may also bring up a few cocky salmon on the beaches.

After getting the hang of things, and perhaps taking a quick trip back to Smithton to restock, it would then be down the Tarkine loop road to Corinna. It is a pleasant drive where the 4WD gives a feeling of security. Take the hiking boots out a few times and explore some sidewalks to see what all the fuss is about. Then on to Corinna for a few days, with the option of a cabin for a few nights if the tent is getting cramped. This is also a convenient place to catch up on the washing!

After our fill at Corinna we headed down to the Henty. Here I'd put the boat in at the road to lighten the trailer load and meet up with colleagues at the camping area in the dunes – having remembered to fill up the water containers! The boat could again be used to explore or just deposit anglers on the far shore.

If you're still seeking salty salmonids it may be worth dropping in to Lett's Bay area near Strahan, to see if there have been any escapees from the farms. This wide shallow bay can be dotted with nets from locals 'in the know' and is very pleasant to wade. By this time the feeling of salt grime will be reaching the annoying phase. So, time to head for the hills and explore the midge fishing at Burbury. If not permanently addicted, then press on to the Mecca of Miena in time for the duns!

Not a bad way to 'waste' a month!

French Nymphing - The 'Leader-to-Hand' Revolution

(by Jeremy Lucas)

(The following is an edited version of an article first published in *The Fly Fishing Point*, in May of this year. In our June newsletter we published an article on this subject written by Jeremy in October of last year. As will become obvious, after some months of experimentation and trial, Jeremy is now convinced that this emerging new method – 'leader-to-hand', or fishing long leaders without a fly line, represents a significant breakthrough in fly-fishing methods.)

In England we have been very slow in taking to fishing very long leaders for nymph and dry fly fishing on rivers, and most anglers here are rather suspicious of French Leader techniques. Some of our top competitors have been very quiet of late, however, and I happen to know that there are perhaps half a dozen English (competitive) river anglers who have made the breakthrough and discovered the enormous advantages of fishing without a fly line. Unfortunately, there has been a lot of nonsense spoken and even published about this method, voiced by those who simply do not understand it. It has nothing to do with cheating; indeed the FIPS-Mouche rules (for international competition) are very strict and would very quickly preclude the use of any method that approached anything that might be deemed as underhand in any way. It does not make fish capture a simple process, because it is difficult to master (see below), though it does offer outstanding presentation possibilities and is the most supremely elegant form of fly-fishing ever devised, in this observer's humble opinion. And pragmatically, if Australia or any other team are going to compete seriously with the crack teams on European rivers, then they will have to take all this on board.

Since 2005 I have been experimenting with variations on the central theme of very long leader presentation, but it has been comparatively recently that I have become comfortable with this, and gone beyond. Now, I am perfectly happy living without a fly line at all, enjoying the incredible sensitivity and compounded advantages that a long leader presentation gives us. For several years now, ever since the French river masters came up with their spiral indicator in a leader which was very long (and in some cases avoided the use of any fly line), we have been striving towards finding the right tackle in terms of rod and the leader itself. We simply cannot extrapolate or extend the use of more conventional tackle, though this is what we did for several years, and therefore missed the whole point. We either had to make do with fairly soft action 10 footers, such as the excellent Greys Streamflex, or explore the esoteric areas of long, custom-built Hends and French blanks to give us the absolutely essential soft action and light weight at a reasonable length. Some of the Eastern European anglers have taken this to the FIPS-rule-limit of 12', with custom-built tools that have been excellent for presenting nymph, either single or double, out to the all-important 10 metre range, but near useless for anything else.

Now, however, Hardy Greys have come up with the definitive, all-round river rod in the design of the Streamflex XF2 11' 3-weight. I claim that this rod is the best river tool ever built, whether using conventional fly line techniques or the modern leader-to-hand approach. This rod defines the river benchmark of the decade. Without a doubt, it has, along with leader-to-hand, changed the way I fish, and for someone so notably 'conservative' about

these things that surprises even me! I believe, further, that it has taken us to the cusp of a radical change in the river sport.

For some years, most of us viewed French leader as a way of presenting very small nymphs in low, clear flows to wary trout and grayling. For this, the sensitivity of the method was ideal and in this application it has, I think, become something of a mind set, because most practitioners do not see any potential beyond such presentation possibilities. After all, it does take a huge amount of practice to acquire sufficient skill with this format of leader-to-hand, and the desire is often not there to explore further. The arrival of the above-mentioned Streamflex rods, however, in conjunction with leader constructions that are much better designed have considerably expanded the options.

I have been asked many times about the advantages of the leader-to-hand approach, but it is much easier to describe the limited advantages of using conventional fly line, of which there are only two of significance. The first, and lesser, is the ability to cut across the wind at slightly increased, up-wind angle than is possible with leader-to-hand. One learns, however, to compensate for this and more appropriately to choose an angle on a target fish with careful reference to the wind direction. It soon becomes instinctive. Secondly, it is much easier to attain a high degree of accuracy with a fly line than it is with leader-to-hand. This is a direct consequence of a fly line having sufficient mass to load a fly rod and thereby leading to that fly line following the path of the rod tip. Energy dissipation in a leader-to-hand rig is rapid, and accuracy suffers. Again, one learns to improve this (with the prerequisite of a soft rod), and in any case, one of the many and great advantages of leader-to-hand comes into play here in the form of the extreme delicacy of the long leader and feather-light touch down on the water's surface which almost completely avoids spooking even very wary trout and grayling. Repeated casting has minimal damaging effect. The result of these features is that on small streams with overgrown banks, and restricted casting room, a fly line and short leader approach has the edge. In *all* other circumstances leader-to-hand is superior, sometimes considerably so, both in terms of presentation and control.

Key advantages of leader-to-hand include the avoidance of the sag between rod tip and tippet, or indicator section, such that with the long, soft rod you can achieve remarkable control at greater range than is possible with fly line. The sensitivity of the rig is unparalleled. With nymphs the 'hold time' is very long indeed. Fish will hold on to nymphs presented on these relatively drag-free leaders for much longer than when they take against the mass of a drifting fly line. Sometimes one has the impression that a fish picks up your nymph and simply carries on feeding. The indicator drifts away and you merely carry on with the passage of the rod's motion as the leader is tracked downstream, such that the fish seems to grow on the end of the line! This is an extraordinarily common observation while presenting small nymphs on a properly constructed leader-to-hand rig. The effective range – where presentation and control is as good as is possible – is increased from the 6-10m effective range of conventional fly line presentation: 12m is entirely realistic (all instances of range refer to the distance between the angler's feet and the fly, not the rod tip to the fly). Indeed, when fishing in a downstream wind, and therefore presenting downstream, 15m of drift is possible, and productive. A consequence of the soft rod and lack of heavy mass in the form of fly line is that very few fish are lost. The uninitiated believe that a lively trout must take a long time to get to the net (or hand), but this is simply not the case. I am convinced that the soft rod and low mass of the leader rig result in fish being dealt with faster and more

efficiently. Certainly this is the case in my experience. I have landed many big grayling and large wild trout using this method that I know would have shed the hook-hold against a stiffer rod or merely the inertia of fly line in the water.

It is with dry fly and leader-to-hand, however, that I have experienced one of the biggest revelations in my fishing career. The gentleness of the touch down and lack of drag over a long drift, with silent lift off and therefore the possibility of repeated presentation in the same area, all result in a vast increase in effectiveness. If you add the greater range at which superb presentation can be achieved (largely because of the reduced mass and line sag effects) then we appreciate that leader-to-hand offers a leap in development in the river craft. One is also much more engaged in the 360° river surrounding the angler, because you can more effectively approach fish lying downstream because of the lack of fly line disturbance on the water, and moving through the air) which so easily spooks fish on such an approach. Leader-to-hand allows much closer approach of downstream-lying fish (with respect to the angler) than a fly line and short leader - and the long rod further aids this. We no longer need to concentrate on the segments of river upstream or across from one's position, but are liberated into the entire river space, effectively in a dynamic circle of 30 metres diameter, where the angler is central.

The leader rig is crucial, because if this is wrong, as with the rod, then only frustration ensues. After long experimentation, which included the fairly good Cameo French Leaders, I have developed the following: 12m of Greys 30lb copolymer line connected to a tapered copolymer leader (I have used FM and Hardy copolymer leaders and they are both excellent – just avoid very shiny copolymer), which is connected via a well-tightened, two turn Water Knot with the tails cut flush to the knot. It does not matter what diameter or breaking strain the tapered leader is, because one cuts this down at the tippet end so that it corresponds roughly to 10 lb (5kg) breaking strain. Here we attach a short 9" (20cm) braided nylon section (braided nylon backing of about 20 lb (10kg) breaking strain), which is looped at each end. Note that this section can be dispensed with if you need to conform to FIPS-Mouche rulings and one can use, instead, a spiral indicator (coloured or colourless), connected to the tapered leader section. I like colourless braided nylon for this section because it takes Mucilin so well and thus remains buoyant, which is absolutely vital for good presentation with either dry fly or nymph. Spiralled, or even straight, copolymer is reasonably buoyant, however, so long as it is kept well greased. A word of warning: if you use the fashionable fluorescent spirals (or level, uncoiled indicator section), you will undoubtedly spook a lot of fish in low, clear water, and also necessitate an over-long tippet section if you are fishing dry fly. Coloured indicator sections are rarely required in practice, because colourless greased nylon or copolymer is adequately visible.

The tippet section itself ranges from a metre with single nymph to two metres with double nymph, and up to four metres for dry fly. Overall length of the leader and tippet is thus in the region of 15 metres. With the soft rod and lack of fly line inertia, it is quite feasible to use very fine tippet sections with very small flies. We are frequently down to 0.10 – 0.08 mm tippets and sub-size 21 nymphs and dries, particularly in the challenging low waters of high summer and autumn.

The casting of the described rig is dominated by overhead (or side) casting, using high stop points and very fast rod movement between those stop points. This is one reason why the

soft rod is essential (with 2 weight and 3 weight rods being the standard), because the mass of the described rig is actually sufficient to load the rod for a conventional overhead to be accomplished (though because of the slow movement through the air of the leader and fly, this is where accuracy is lost). Very calm air gives the greatest problems, because even the slightest wind will aid in the forward cast turn-over and accuracy (always casting with or across the wind). Spey and roll casts are seldom possible, because of the low surface tension and mass of the leader compared with fly line, though the constant tension or 'switch' cast, changing the direction by 180° from downstream to upstream, is perfectly possible while nymph fishing.

One further observation concerning leader-to-hand with nymphs: most of the Eastern European river masters tend to lead the nymphs through a drift such that the braid or indicator section is under some tension. In my experience I find this most effective only when fish are very actively feeding on nymphs and gammarus (a European species of tiny amphipod crustacean) in the flow. At all other times a dead-drift, as with dry fly, has been more effective. I like to set the braid, and nymphs, at the top of the drift and then to do no more than keep contact with the floating section, ideally with an elevated leader, so as to achieve a dead-drift for as long as possible, or until a fish takes.

I think that leader-to-hand is revolutionary for our river sport, giving huge potential for development. Fly line manufacturers should take note of this and see the opportunity for producing lines for the purpose; surely technologically trivial nowadays. The river paradigm has altered, driven by a vanguard of European competitors. The rod to cope with this advance is with us, though the line and leader system is lagging behind. Team Australia is undoubtedly one of the top 10 in the World. In my view, in order to establish the team in the top six within realistic sight of the podium, on European venues at least, will require this change of mind set, which will come only from considerable practice with leader-to-hand.

(Editor's note – for members interested in pursuing this topic further, the Streamflex XF2 11' #3 rod mentioned by Jeremy sells in the UK for about £225 = \$A345, and Google is a wonderful resource for searching out Hends products and other equipment and articles on leader-to-hand fishing.)



Another superb Nancy Tichborne watercolour

Fishing And Other Pursuits With Jim Allen

(Julian Newton-Brown)

The first time I fished with Jim was at the end of October 1978, just before the Melbourne Cup weekend. My wife and I were holidaying in Melbourne and I had called in to the Compleat Angler in McKillop Street, where I discovered that John Hayes and his wife, with Allan Klieman and his wife, were to join Jim for four days at his recently purchased shack at Miena. I was keen to make a similar purchase, so Jim invited me along too.

Jim's shack was very small, with four bunks and a divan. I don't remember how we all managed to sleep, but we did. Jim also owned a little yellow Suzuki 4WD, and on our first day he took me out to Lake Ada. We fished in a lagoon where the water flowed into the lake. The trout were tailing, and Jim caught some while I watched and observed, having only once seen tailing trout before.

Clouds were building up and the threatening rain duly arrived. Fortunately we both had our wet weather gear, as the heavy rain was accompanied with plenty of thunder and lightning. A huge lightning bolt struck the ground very close by and Jim scrambled under some scrub, yelling, "I'm a coward, I don't want to die. I'm a coward!" I burst out laughing because he was only semi-serious, but I must say we were both a bit worried. I, too, got down as close to the ground as possible. Fortunately the storm passed and the trout once again began to tail.

Bill Cock and his wife spent each weekend in a shack adjacent to Jim's. They lived at Sheffield where Bill worked as a linesman for Telstra. On being made aware of my interest in buying or building a shack there, he directed me to a vacant block further along which had a magnificent view and was sheltered from the prevailing westerly winds by a large cliff. The block was owned by Peter Thiessen, and when I later arrived home in Falls Creek (where I lived then) I rang Peter to indicate my interest, as he had not at the time managed to legally sub-divide the land.

On the second day of my stay with Jim we again fished the Western Lakes, but the evening saw us back on Little Pine Lagoon. I'd previously had some success near the river mouth, so made my way there. Further up the river there was a bridge of sorts, consisting of two logs. Someone had felled two huge trees and dragged them down to span the river. Originally pieces of pine had been nailed across them to provide some footing, but most of these had fallen off. So it was tricky to cross over, as you needed to place a foot on each log. On your first step your weight flexed the first log and then your next step flexed the other log, so progress was a sort of slow waddle. The middle bit was the worst.

Once over I walked around and prospected with a dry and a nymph but had no luck. Dusk approached and the light merged into darkness, so I prepared to leave in order to negotiate the wobbly log bridge while I could still see what I was doing. Then I saw a fish rise. I cast and covered it as it rose again and again, but it ignored my fly. So I reverted to my old evening favourite - the Dunny Brush. It was promptly eaten by a three pounder, which I eventually managed to beach after some spectacular aerial gymnastics. Then I spotted another trout, which I also caught.



Jim Allen's bag from Lake Fergus

By this time it was quite a bit darker, and the return trip over the logs was very scary. Fortunately I succeeded without falling in for an unwanted swim. I was keen to repeat the exercise on the following evening, but had been delegated to drive Michelle Hayes to Launceston airport to catch a 7 pm flight.

On my return home to Falls Creek Peter Thiessen told me he would push the trees on the block over with his bulldozer, so I rang Bill Cock frequently to find out if this had been done. I had committed myself to travelling across the following Easter (in 1979) to start building. However, about a month before this date Bill rang to tell me that a shack just opposite was for sale, and this would save me all the trouble of clearing and building.

So I rang the owner, who lived in Launceston, and made the purchase for \$4,500. 'Miena Mansion' was far from a mansion, but was superior to most of the others. I enjoyed many happy times there until it burnt down in 2005. I rebuilt it soon afterwards, and the new shack, again no mansion, was vastly superior to the old one and happy times were had again.

Late in 1979, just after the snow season, I spent a week in the shack to make some improvements, but could not resist going back to the river end of Little Pine for the evenings. I caught frog feeders in the flooded shallows on each outing. Later on Jim introduced me to Lake Botsford. This water had recently been stocked with adult browns and they had grown very well. It took me some time to learn the tricks in catching these easily-spooked fish. Unfortunately in recent years the IFS has put too many fish in each year, so they do not gain in size as they once did.

Another remarkable water Jim introduced me to was Lake Fergus. Years before he used to camp at Lake Kay and would walk from there to Fergus for a day of magic fly-fishing. However with our little Suzuki four-wheelers we could drive in there and polaroid on sunny days. One of those trips was memorable and we each caught our bag, as the two photos show.

Then there was the polaroiding in Penstock, which in those days had clear water. I didn't manage to master Penstock then, and do not really like it much today.

Lakes Flora and O'Dell came into prominence next, and we had some memorable times there. Then came our folly. One evening I told Jim about the time I had spent in the old pub near the dam wall of the Great Lake. There were always a few anglers in the bar there, and another pub was certain to succeed. He promptly told me that if I decided to do something



Julian did well too

about it I could count him in for 10%. The site where the pub now stands previously accommodated a high-tension power line tower. It had recently been removed and the location appealed to me as a good position for our pub. My application to the Lands Department produced an immediate response, and building started on March 15, 1983. I was very busy in the months that followed, as I was still running the lodge at Falls Creek whilst making frequent trips to Miena to direct proceedings. As it happened, 1983 was a year of poor snow, and the snow at Falls Creek was all gone by early in September. So I wasted no time in returning to Tasmania. We opened on the last Saturday of October of that year.

I managed the pub, but came home to Melbourne for Christmas. As the New Year approached we needed to decide on future management. I still had commitments at Falls Creek and a young family, so I suggested to Jim that we take turns in managing the pub at Miena. Jim eventually made an offer to buy my share, which I agreed to, and he then put in the hardest and loneliest year of his life until he persuaded Rex and Anne Moody to take over that responsibility.

Jim was disappointed in not being able to make his annual trip to Bermagui to fish for Yellowfin Tuna. I told him I would go in his stead, and did so too. In the following years we did these trips together and enjoyed the halcyon days when large Yellowfin were caught on a regular basis.



Coming Events

Warrnambool Fly Fishers' Club 2011 Annual Game Dinner

On behalf of the members of the Warrnambool Fly Fishers' Club, I am extending this invitation to VFFA members to attend our annual Game Dinner, to be held on July 23, at the Brauer-Ander Park Running Track Pavilion, adjacent to Brauer College, Caramut Road, Warrnambool.

The Dinner is a BYO wine and beer night. There is no bar at the venue. The cost of the dinner has been set at \$60, the same as last year. The Chef is Robert King. Before dinner drinks with canapés will begin at 6:00 pm. We will sit down for the first course at approximately 7:00 pm for the start of what should be another night of fine food and company.

Because of the size of the venue, the total number attending this year is limited to 60, so it would be appreciated if VFFA members would confirm their intention to join us for dinner as soon as possible, and certainly no later than July 20 by calling our President, Adrian Jacobs, at 0437 620 972.

Sincerely,

Jim Blakeslee – Secretary
Warrnambool Fly Fishers Club Inc.

Bullen Merri Fishing Weekend & Dinner

Date – July 29 - 31

Richard Goodall is organizing the VFFA's annual weekend fishing in the Camperdown area, with a dinner on the Saturday evening at the property of Caroline and John Menzies.

The Dinner is a BYO wine and beer night, as there is no bar at the venue. The cost has been set at \$60, the same as last year. The Chef is Robert King. Before dinner drinks with canapés will begin at 6:00 pm. We will sit down for the first course at 7:00 pm for the start of what should be another night of fine food and company.

Please don't miss this wonderful weekend. Recent reports from our Warrnambool correspondent Jim Blakeslee indicate that Lake Purrumbete is now fishing particularly well. The water is high and clear, and Fisheries has stocked a huge number of both browns and rainbows in the past 12 months. Jim reports catching several around the 2 lb mark (last year's release).

For all enquiries please contact: Richard Goodall on 9888 9514



*A piping hot meal at the
Menzies*

VFFA Casting with Peter Hayes

Sunday September 25, 2011

Commencing at 10 am and finishing at 4 pm. The cost is \$125 per member, with BBQ Lunch & Drinks provided.

Venue: the Fairfield Casting Pool.

Come along and learn the techniques that Peter has perfected from over 20 years of competing in casting and fishing competitions. This year's class will be a 'Tune Up Your Cast' with a real focus on what is required for a more successful fishing experience; smoother rod loading - for tighter loops, better tip control - for greater accuracy, specialty casts - for tricky situations, Presentation Casts - resulting in more takes, and line management - for less frustration.

Please bring your favourite casting rod, matched with a bright coloured easy to see fly line, a chair, and some eye protection (i.e. sunglasses).

To book your spot contact: Hugh Maltby on - Home Phone: 9459 2241.



*Hayes and Elms –
the Master Casters*

New Zealand 2011 Southland Trip

Late November / early December (dates to be finalised).



*Terry Rogers with a
magnificent Mataura trout*

Expressions of interest and bookings are now being taken for this year's New Zealand trip. Call or email Rick Dugina asap on phone: 0401 963 601, or

email : edugina@bigpond.com

The actual locations and areas to fish will be determined by the expressed interests of those who phone Rick and confirm their intentions to join the group. Possible locations discussed thus far include Athol, the McKenzie Country (Twizel), Lake Wanaka district, and the rivers around Nelson.

Get in quick... Call Rick

A 2012 Tasmanian Trip Bookings

A VFFA contingent will again travel to Cressy to spend a week at Hayes on Brumby's next year. We have booked to arrive on Saturday, February 18, 2011, and to check out on Friday February 24. Accommodation, breakfast and evening meals will be included in the cost. We all share kitchen duties.

Peter Hayes and/or one his excellent guides will be available to introduce you to fine trout in lakes, streams or weirs. You will be responsible for arranging travel to and from Tasmania and sharing a car for the week with another VFFA colleague. If you are interested in joining the group please contact Hamish Hughes on 9822 6811 or 0418 108 686.



Boating the Macquarie

Report From Way Out West

(Report from Jim Blakeslee)

It's mid-winter, and of course since the Queen's Birthday weekend the upper sections of the Warrnambool rivers have been closed to trout fishing. Before the closure, WFFC members were casting large flies into the runs and hooking into some nice browns on the upper Merri, Hopkins, Mt Emu and Moyne, in spite of rain, murky water and wintery conditions. Still, we are fortunate here in that we have a number of lakes, as well as the lower sections of the rivers, that remain open all year round to trout fishers.

One interesting recent report was that of an 8 – 10 lb rainbow which was hooked and sadly lost in the reeds at Lake Pertobe (that's right - the 'lake' on the Warrnambool foreshore) by a local angler. Maybe that's an angler's exaggeration, since Fisheries has only been stocking the lake for the last few years (hence they figure a 6 lb fish is more likely), but since there have not been any trout released in Pertobe since year dot, and it is full of tucker, who knows what the growth rate could be during that period? Anyway, for those VFFA members coming to Warrnambool for the Annual Dinner on July 23, make sure you pack your fly rod, waders and maybe a float tube and give Pertobe a try. It's actually a series of shallow lakes a stone's throw from the caravan parks on the foreshore.

At Lake Gilliar anglers have seen browns rising to midges and midge emergers morning and evening when conditions have been calm. A few nice fish have been hooked using large Matukas. During the day redfin perch in the 1½ - 2½ lb range have been taking large flies near the bottom fished with a sinking line from a drifting boat. They have been full of spawn, for those of you who like to eat redfin caviar. The fish themselves have produced some tasty fillets to be served at the Annual WFFC Dinner.

Unfortunately, Lake Aringa north of Port Fairy is still affected by a blue-green algae bloom, so we will leave it to rest until it clears, hopefully in Spring. Lake Cartcarrong at Winslow looks good and is full of trout food, but we have been leaving it alone to let the fish (only liberated last October) grow to decent size. It has not been stocked for a few years as, sadly, it dried out during the drought. Anyway, we are looking forward to some exciting fishing there in a few months' time. In fact, with high water levels for a change, Fisheries has reported that all the local lakes have been stocked recently, so things are upbeat for Warrnambool anglers for the upcoming season.

Those of us who have been prepared to drive 45 minutes east to Camperdown and Lake Purrumbete have been treated to the highest water levels in years (the Caravan Park boat ramp is back in action), along with crystal clear water, resurgent weed beds and rainbows, browns and redfin on the bite. The best way to cover the lake is by boat. If you have one, use it. It's worth a try.

JB

They Cane, They Saw, They Liked!

(Report by Dermot O'Brien)

The VFFA Cane Day continues to grow in popularity. This year, despite a bitterly cold day and several stalwarts away, Cane Day blossomed with several displays and the unearthing of a new talent in cane rod building. Bernard Holbery set up a fly-fishing display focusing on the magnificent art of cane rod making, his display also including books, reels and silk lines. Peter Campbell also set up a display highlighting his skills at refurbishing cane rods and building wooden landing nets.

The rods ... Oh the rods! It was a blur of varnish and cane beside the pool. Naturally every rod was cast and re-cast and then handed around and solemnly discussed. This year the rods on display were by makers including Taransky, Waggoner and McKean. There were also older rods by Hardy, Gillies and Turville. Bernard Holbery had several beautiful rods made by French maker Dominique Lucas. Peter McKean arrived with several of his rods. His 8 ft 6 weight - absolutely magnificent!



Bernard's Booth

And, a new (new to me anyway) rod maker, Graham Foxman, turned up at our special day. From Southern Fly Fishers, Graham makes about 10 to 12 rods per year. His is self-taught and works part time, making exquisite rods, which he sells, with two tips, for \$850.

Despite the cold weather, Hugh Maltby had the barbecue up and running and kept up a constant supply of hot snags. As the afternoon wore on the snags were consumed with enthusiasm, and were washed down with a glass or two of fine red wine. About 50 fly fishermen enjoyed the day, many promising to be back again next year.



Top Chef Hugh Maltby



Wayne, Choco and Jon

David Grisold, the man who got the first Cane Day up and running, made sure that everyone had plenty to eat and drink. He also ensured that all the rods had a solid workout. It is good to report that the Cane Rod Makers' Day, held the previous day, was also a huge success.

'Fishing Sense' – Philip Weigall's latest Book

Philip hardly needs any introduction. A VFFA member for over 20 years, he is without doubt one of our most prolific, best known, and respected Australian writers on all matters relating to trout fishing. He has written several books and countless articles, and is the editor of *Flyfisher* magazine. He is also a fly-fishing guide and instructor at Millbrook Lakes. He has fished for trout for 40 years, and his travels have taken him to lakes and streams in several countries.

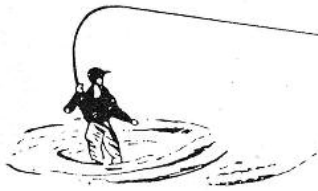


So when Philip puts in print the ideas, principles and strategies he uses to catch trout, you can be sure there is a wealth of wisdom here for all of us. As the dust jacket says: "It's a fact of fly-fishing that there is no prescriptive manual for ensuring success. It is an activity that defies simple evaluation, with enough variables to leave even the 'experts' scratching their heads from time to time. For example, why is it that a trout will respond to a certain fly one day, but ignore it entirely in identical conditions on another day?" Philip attempts to answer such questions and many more in his new book, *Fishing Sense*, in which he outlines his 'fly-fishing truths' - the collection of techniques, ideas, concepts, knowledge and equipment that, to the best of his objective observations over many decades, honestly seem to matter when it comes to catching trout.

So if you would like to hear what he has to say about how and where and when to fish stillwaters and streams, the best times in the day to fish, best retrieves on lakes, the significance of temperature and air pressure, conditions and light, effects of water level, micro-presentations, planning trips and a host of other very practical issues that will determine your success, then this is where you will find it. (You will be surprised on a few occasions, too, when Philip's findings run counter to some of our commonly held beliefs and 'articles of faith').

Philip writes well – he has a relaxed and easy to read style, well-polished over 20 years of prolific writing. His ideas and suggestions are delightfully illustrated with stories of his encounters with trout in a variety of locations and venues. It was pleasing to note that these included some of our favourite local waters - the Steavenson, the Delatite, the Howqua, the Goulburn, and the lakes in the Grampians.

Fishing Sense is very similar in appearance and presentation to Philip's previous book – *Fishing Season*, and is published by the same company – Exisle Publishing. It is beautifully illustrated by Trevor Hawkins, and would make a delightful gift, although there is no way I'll be giving my copy to anyone. It should be available for purchase by the end of July.



NOBUYUKI KAWANO M. D.



May 12, 2011

Dear members of the Victorian Fly Fishers Association:

Many of you may already know that I have been trying to translate Alfred Ronalds' "The Fly-Fisher's Entomology" to Japanese for publication, and finally, its Japanese version has been made and published by Kawano Books which is a small private publisher run by myself. In the process of its translation, Mr. Mick Hall helped me a lot.

Now I feel happy that many Japanese fly fishermen can read Ronalds' monumental achievement.

I think the association members will be very proud that the Ronalds' book has been translated to Japanese to be read by many Japanese fly fishermen.

Please note excellent printing of the color plates! We, myself and printing company, tried many times to reproduce original illustrations of the book. They are finally done beautifully, I believe. So, I decided to make the reprints of the color plates as an additional gift to the readers. The reprints will be nice when framed and put on the wall.

By the way, I am thinking to send a copy to the Flyfisher's Club of London. They must be pleased that a British book has been translated to other language.

Some day, I wish to visit Ballarat and Wendouree area to visit Ronalds' grave, and to do some trout fishing.

With Best Regards,

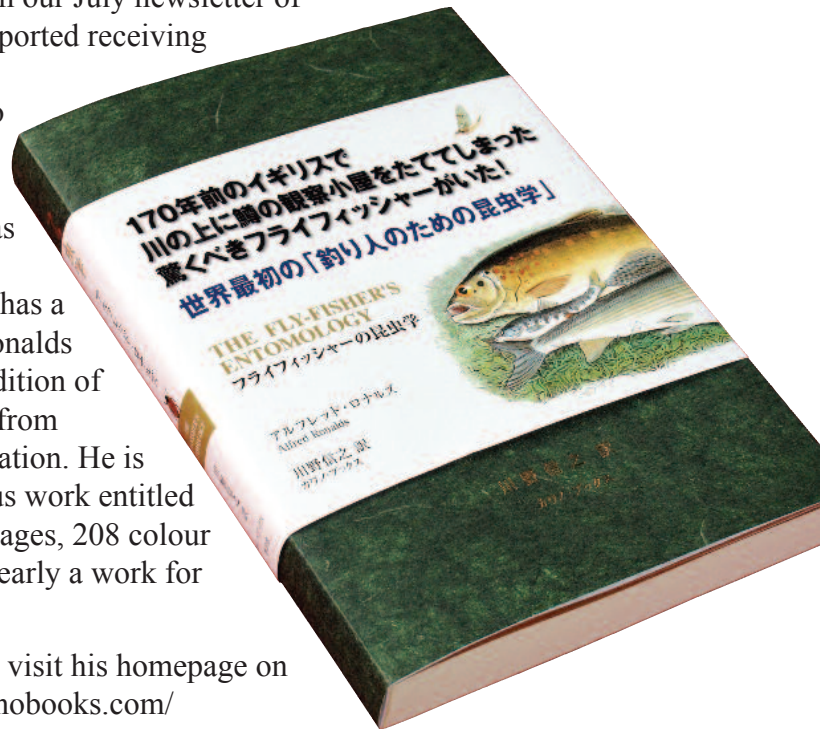
Nobuyuki Kawano M. D.

941 Isobe, Minami-ku, Sagamihara, Kanagawa, 252-0327 JAPAN
TEL: +81-046-293-0133
e-mail: nkawano@jcom.home.ne.jp

P.S. I started sell the book in Japan last week, and it sells rapidly!

Alfred Ronalds – for Fly-Fishers In Japan

Members may recall that in our July newsletter of 2009 John Pilkington reported receiving a donation from Dr Nobuyuki Kawano, a neuro-surgeon who practices in Japan. Dr Kawano is also a very keen fly-fisher, and his donation was towards the Alfred Ronalds Memorial Appeal. The doctor has a particular interest in Alfred Ronalds and was translating the fifth edition of *The Fly-Fisher's Entomology* from English to Japanese for publication. He is also the author of a voluminous work entitled *Fly Fishing Dictionary* (684 Pages, 208 colour pictures, 153 illustrations) - clearly a work for the serious Japanese angler.



Members may be interested to visit his homepage on the internet: <http://www.kawanobooks.com/>

The doctor is now in his sixties and whilst he is currently Brain Tumor Pathologist, President of Isobe Clinic, and Guest Professor of Neurosurgery at Kitasato University School of Medicine in Japan, he claims that his 'primary occupation' is that of a fly-fisherman.

The doctor has completed his translation of *The Fly-Fisher's Entomology*, and has very kindly presented a copy to the VFFA. It arrived via Mick Hall, who apparently helped the doctor with his translation. The translation (a beautiful book with a magnificent set of colour plates) was given to President Rick Dugina at the June meeting. Dr Kawano's letter to the VFFA is shown on page 24.

Dinner with Partners on 9 June 2011

(Report from Colin Morrison)

On a freezing cold night, twelve couples braved the weather to attend the Kelvin Club to enjoy an evening of great fellowship. Our President, Rick Dugina, welcomed members and their attractive guests, after which we proceeded to enjoy a three course meal, followed by Chocolatier chocolates. Needless to say, an excellent time was had by all.

This was the seventh Partners' Dinner that has been held annually since 2005, and each one has been most enjoyable. If you have not attended yet please make a note to be there in 2012.

That Sinking Feeling

(Rod Barford)

(In the notes in last month's newsletter introducing Rod Barford, he tells how he grew up in Nagambie, and the capture of his first trout, a fine 3 lb brown, led to a long-time friendship with the local doctor, Dr Bill Coates, and the Shire Engineer & Surveyor, Bill McGrath. Both were dedicated fly men with a wealth of gear and a willingness to share with young Rod. Dr Coates loaned Rod a copy of McCausland's classic *Fly Fishing in Australia and New Zealand*, and Rod used the colour plates as a guide to his fly tying. Rod had a long association with Dr Coates and Bill McGrath, and enjoyed some great times fishing with them. Here is his account of one of those outings.)

Dr Coates was a very 'English' type. He always fished in either jodhpurs or plus-fours, with a pork-pie hat perched up on top, and Harris Tweed jacket and green woollen tie. He was quite the Englishman in appearance and very traditional with his Hardy gear, including a Perfection rod and Perfect reel.

Now my Uncle Ray had a property out on the Goulburn Weir, and in those days it sported some very nice trout in crystal clear waters with not a carp to be seen. When the good doctor discovered this, he badgered me to take him out there to borrow uncle Ray's 14' clinker boat and chase a few.

So, on a fine sunny day, I think about our 5th outing, we were hot on the trail of a very nice brown of around 4 lb that the doctor had missed on two previous attempts. The fish was a beat riser with a very predictable path, slurping down beetles on the water which had been deposited by the previous day's gusty northerly. The doctor stood up on the rear seat, while I of course rowed. There he was, perfectly erect and properly decked out, rod bent in his typical rhythmic casting action, pipe in mouth, and between gritted teeth urging me furiously "Faster boy! Faster!" I was flogging my arms off rowing this great heavy timber craft as hard as I could, trying to keep pace with a fast-moving trout which was finding a beetle every 20 feet or so among the drowned timber.

Now the boat's rowlocks were enormous circular affairs, and the oars only half filled the rings, so they rolled around loosely as I rowed, making it so much more difficult. The next thing I knew, the left gunwale was dipping alarmingly. A very long, pointed and slender snag had speared its way up into the left rowlock, and the momentum of this heavy boat did the rest, sliding us down the snag and under the water.

Naturally the trout chose this very moment to accept the doctor's well-presented Cochybondhu. The fish tore off, stripping yards of line from the reel. The doctor just managed to turn him before he reached the deep water, as the boat began to settle and sink. Now the river was only about 5 foot deep here, but the doctor, quite short in stature and still struggling with a very lively trout, sank to the bottom with the boat. There he was, arms raised high and still playing the fish, pipe in mouth, and screaming out "The net, boy! For heaven's sake get the net!"

It was total pandemonium, him shouting and giving line, me duck-diving in the freezing water for the net, and his silk line whistling loudly through agate guides as the fish careered

off again. I eventually found the net and netted the trout. Dr Coates snatched it from my hand and commenced the most ridiculous round of self-congratulation - he was so proud you'd think he'd swum underwater and seized the fish by hand.

Fortunately it all ended well. Uncle Ray came to our rescue, retrieving the boat and the rest of our gear, and building a huge fire near the jetty so we could dry out. The doctor's wife came out in answer to a phone call and drove us back to Nagambie. But not directly to the doctor's surgery or to home. Oh no! It was immediately around to the Shire Offices where he marched proudly into the Shire Engineer's office holding his prize in his hands. The many gaping stares from council staff and a few ratepayers at the spectacle of a wet and bedraggled local doctor bothered him not a bit; he was on a mission to gloat. To cap off a perfect day, Bill McGrath simply snorted in derision at this puny specimen and reached into a back room, where he produced a magnificent rainbow of 6½ lb that he'd caught that morning in the Goulburn a few miles upstream from the Hughes Creek confluence. They both laughed hysterically, and from somewhere nearby a bottle of liquid refreshment rapidly appeared so they could toast their successes. I of course stood mutely by and received not a mention for my sterling efforts, with the exception of a hostile and frosty glare from the doctor, who clearly considered it my fault that we had ended up on the bottom of the Goulburn. Bill McGrath was wiser though, and threw me a sly wink or two.

Bill McGrath passed way in 1974, and much of his fly-fishing and fly tying paraphernalia was given to me by his wife. His collection of Hardy and Pezon-Michel cane rods, however, stayed in the family, along with an incredible collection of Hardy reels that included eight Perfects, some of which had never been used.

Dr William Hicks Coates, OBE, became director of Tropical Diseases for the WHO stationed in Nepal. He passed away in 1996 after a short illness. I found out in later years that his wife kept his McCausland book aside to give to me, but when she herself became ill, the book became irrelevant. But I will always remember the generosity of spirit of these two men who took me under their wing in those early days, and shared with me their passion for fly-fishing.

Eildon Report

(... from Mick Hall)

With the rivers now closed, the only fishing available in the Eildon area is that provided by the Pondage and the lake itself. Mick tells us that while the Pondage is receiving large stockings of fish, the water level is high and it is thus difficult for the fly-fisher to fish. On the other hand the lake itself is producing some excellent fishing. The level is creeping up and covering new grass in many areas. Mick was recently travelling through Bonnie Doon and he saw fish rising everywhere, taking midges. However his final words of advice were – fish the lakes in the West (Newlyns, Hepburn, Fyans, etc) as they are more likely to reward the enthusiastic fly flicker.

FLY OF THE MONTH

Hare's Fur & CDC Mayfly Emerger – from Jim Blakeslee



Mayfly emerger patterns seem to be all the rage these days. Here is another one to add to your collection. Give it a try if your usual offering is not producing for you.

I've had a lot of success with this one, fished dead-drift in the surface film, in Western District lakes and in Tasmanian lakes such as Penstock, Little Pine and Kay during the last couple of years. As you might expect, it works best at the start of a hatch. But sometimes I will stick with this fly right from the time I see the first fish bulging at the surface for nymphs, then throughout the height of the hatch when fish are making splashy rises, and continuing on until the hatch ends and the last of the flotilla of duns sails down the lake to the safety of the shore.

You can vary the size of the hook and the colour of the body material to match the emerging mayfly nymphs in your area. In my case, I've noticed that the nymphs of Tassie Highland Duns and Penstock Duns tend to have a greenish-brown colour that I represent with a blend of olive-green and natural hare's fur, along with distinct body segmentation that can be represented by wrapping the body of the fly with wire ribbing. I use red copper wire, but you can use gold or regular copper wire if you prefer. The "balloon" of twisted, then folded over, CDC feathers form water-resistant wing buds that help to float the thorax end of the fly in the surface film, while the tail and abdomen sink below it. All in all, this makes a nice representation of an emerger – a tasty morsel that, I hope you will find to your satisfaction, tempts many an Australian trout.

The larger mayfly nymphs rising to the surface and then "emerging" in Mainland and Tasmanian lakes can usually be represented by a size 10 or 12 fly pattern. So, any lightweight dry fly hook of this size made by your favourite manufacturer will do.

Materials:

- Hook: Mustad 94840 Dry Fly Hook, or similar
- Thread: Brown 6/0
- Body: A blend of equal amounts of olive-green and natural brown hare's fur dubbing
- Tail: A small bunch of brown possum fur guard hairs
- Rib: Fine red copper wire
- Wing buds: Three CDC feathers twisted together and folded over

Tying Method:

1. Whip the shank of the hook with the tying thread from the eye to start of the bend.
2. To represent the "tail" of the nymph, tie in a small bunch of soft possum fur guard hairs, extending approximately half the length of the hook beyond the bend.
3. Tie in a short length of wire ribbing material.



4. Wind the thread forward for 2/3rds the length of the hook. Then tie in the butts of the three CDC feathers on the top of the hook, with the tips of the feathers facing forward over the eye.



5. Twist the three feathers together, loop them back and tie down to make a "balloon" of CDC fibres to represent the wing buds of the emerger.



6. Wind the thread forward to the eye, wax the thread, then dub approximately 10 cm of the thread with the hare's fur blend.



7. Wind the dubbing around the shank of the hook from in front of the CDC bud and finishing the dubbing at the tail of the fly.

8. Spiral the thread forward over the dubbing, finishing in front of the CDC bud. Then, spiral the red copper wire forward, following the path of the thread, ribbing and "segmenting" the abdomen of the fly. Secure the wire with a half hitch, then trim off any excess wire.



9. Dub on a small amount of fur and wind in front of the CDC bud to create a thorax a bit thicker than the abdomen.
10. Wind the thread around the shank to build up a small head behind the eye of the hook. Whip-finish the head of the fly and add a drop of head cement to secure the thread.

11. To finish the fly, use a bodkin or needle to pick out fibres of hare fur on either side of the thorax to create a leggy-fuzzy appearance.



12. Go fishing. Remember: "A day spent not fishing is a day wasted." JB



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	
<i>The Australian Trout by Jack Ritchie.....</i>	\$20.00
<i>(Special offer – buy one, get one free!)</i>	
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 9455 9017.

VALUED DONORS

The following made donations for the raffle at the 2010 Annual Dinner:

- Armadale Angler • Aussie Angler • Australian Fishing Network • Bernard Holbery
- Compleat Angler Box Hill • Compleat Fly Fisher Melbourne
- Daniel Hackett, RiverFly, Tasmania • Fly Life Publications • 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

VFFA Meetings & Activities

July 2011

- 3 Sunday Casting - 9:30 am to 12:30 pm at the Red Tag Casting Pools (Joe Haslauer 9555 4059)
- 10 Sunday Casting - 9:30 am to 12:30 pm at the Red Tag Casting Pools (Joe Haslauer 9555 4059)
- 17 Sunday Casting - 9:30 am to 12:30 pm at the Red Tag Casting Pools (Joe Haslauer 9555 4059)
- 21 General Meeting – 8:00 pm at the Kelvin: Auction – Marty Rogers (9481 1501)**
- 23 Warrnambool FF Club Game Dinner – contact President Adrian Jacobs for details (0437 620 972)
- 24 Sunday Casting - 9:30 am to 12:30 pm at the Red Tag Casting Pools (Joe Haslauer 9555 4059)
- 27 Council Meeting – 7:00 pm at the Kelvin Club
- 29 – 31 Bullen Merri Trip. Convenor Richard Goodall (9888 9514)
- 31 Sunday Casting - 9:30 am to 12:30 pm at the Red Tag Casting Pools (Joe Haslauer 9555 4059)

August 2011

- 7 Sunday Casting - 9:30 am to 12:30 pm at the Red Tag Casting Pools (Joe Haslauer 9555 4059)
- 14 Sunday Casting - 9:30 am to 12:30 pm at the Red Tag Casting Pools (Joe Haslauer 9555 4059)
- 17 Council Meeting – 7:00 pm at the Kelvin Club
- 21 Sunday Casting - 9:30 am to 12:30 pm at the Red Tag Casting Pools (Joe Haslauer 9555 4059)
- 26 Annual Dinner – 6:30 pm for 7:00 pm at the Kelvin. Guest Speaker: Charles Wooley**
- 27 President's Casting Day - 9:30 am to 2:30 pm at the Red Tag Casting Pools

September 2011

- 7 Council Meeting – 7:00 pm at the Kelvin Club
- 15 General Meeting – 8:00 pm at the Kelvin: VFFA AGM**
- 21 First Meeting of the Council Meeting – 7:00pm at the Kelvin Club
- 25 Peter Hayes Casting Day – 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Red Tag Pools (Hugh Maltby – 9459 2241)

October 2011

- 20 General Meeting – 8:00 pm at the Kelvin: Guest Speaker – Andrew Mossman (Fly development)**
- 26 Council Meeting – 7:00 pm at the Kelvin Club

November 2011

- 4 – 6 Opening Weekend Trip – (to be finalised)
 - 17 General Meeting – 8:00 pm at the Kelvin: Guest Speaker – to be finalised**
 - 23 Council Meeting – 7:00 pm at the Kelvin Club
- (Last week of November – first week of December - New Zealand trip. Rick Dugina – 0401 963 601)

December 2011

- 7 Council Meeting – 7:00 pm at the Kelvin Club
- 15 Christmas Dinner – 6:30 pm for 7:00 pm at the Kelvin: Guest Speaker – to be finalised**