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THE VICTORIAN FLY-FISHERS' ASSOCIATION INC.

JUNE 2012

Organisation No. A0024750J

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

www.vffa.org.au

**May General Meeting:
Time Plus Communications –
Latest Safety Equipment For Fly-Fishers**

Thursday, June 21, 8:00 pm
at the **Celtic Club**



Personal Locator Beacon

The Meeting will be preceded by Dinner at the **Celtic Club**, commencing promptly at 6:00 pm.

All members are invited, but PLEASE make a Dinner booking by 12 pm (lunchtime) on Tuesday June 19, by –

Phone: 0498 254 497, and leave a message,
Or Email – secretary@vffa.org.au

THE VICTORIAN FLY-FISHERS' ASSOCIATION INC.

(info@vffa.org.au)

PRESIDENT

Rick Dugina

Email:

president@vffa.org.au

HONORARY TREASURER

Tony Mitchem

Email:

treasurer@vffa.org.au

HONORARY SECRETARY

Richard Garvey

Email:

secretary@vffa.org.au

HONORARY EDITOR

Lyndon Webb

Email:

editor@vffa.org.au

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June Meeting: Communication and Safety Equipment



We can't help but be aware that the past few decades have seen an incredible growth and development in communication technologies and these have fundamentally altered the way we live. Networked technologies, mobile phones, satellite phones, GPS units and a host of other very useful items of communication and safety equipment are shaping how we travel, navigate, and survive out in the bush.

Time Plus Communications is a company that has been involved in these technologies for the past 33 years and has established an enviable reputation for their expertise in the range of this type of equipment now available. They are an Australian company dedicated to excellence in the communications field, and are one of the largest suppliers of GPS units in Victoria, selling Magellan, Garmin, Uniden, VMS, OZTopo Maps and Ozi Explorer GPS software.

They have agreed to send two of their representatives along to our June meeting to demonstrate and explain the latest range of communication and safety equipment relevant to us as anglers. Our fishing exploits often take us into isolated areas that are beyond the range of mobile phones, and we are occasionally guilty of fishing by ourselves. Fortunately accidents and mishaps are rare, but the potential is there – snakebite, a bad fall, serious medical emergency – the list is long. Should we suffer one of these misfortunes then a safety device that brings people to our aid quickly is well worth the small investment.

So come along and learn about Personal Locator Beacons, Epirbs, two-way radios and a number of other very useful safety items - Thursday, June 21, at the Celtic Club.

Advance Notice - July Meeting: Guest Speaker – Peter Hayes

Peter has informed us that the topic for his July presentation has the cryptic and intriguing title: “Helping You Catch More Fish.” Now that should get our attention!

And we would be hard-pressed to find a more qualified instructor than Peter to talk on this subject. He has a well-deserved reputation as our pre-eminent casting coach and is one of our most experienced and skilled Tasmanian fishing guides. So whether it's about casting, or presentation, or fly selection, or tactics, or finding fish, Peter has the knowledge and the experience to offer thoughtful and practical advice. We will all be better and more successful anglers after attending this meeting.



The date – Thursday, July 19.

The May Auction

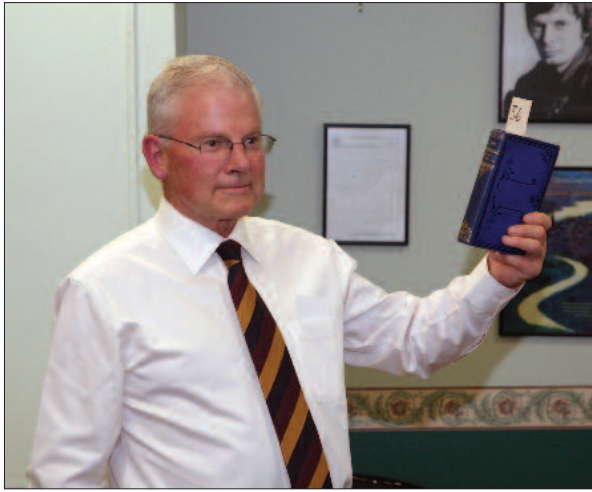
The May meeting was the first at our new venue – the Celtic Club. And it started well, with 40 members coming early to enjoy a meal together in the dining room. The service was prompt and efficient, and the meals (from a wide selection on the Menu) were reasonably priced and very appetizing.

In the meantime Auctioneer Marty Rogers was upstairs preparing the lots for the main event. The attendance at the auction was close to 50 members, and some 89 lots were sold for an overall total of just over \$3,200. As always, there were plenty of real bargains to be had (some absolute steals in fact), while other items saw vigorous bidding and final prices well over \$200. Marty again performed superbly as auctioneer and was given a very generous round of applause at the conclusion of the evening. Peter Boag and Joe Haslauer were Marty's support team, and their efforts were also greatly appreciated.

The 89 books sold at this auction represented about a quarter of R.A. (Tony) Brothers' extensive fly-fishing library, and President Rick Dugina is keen to hold another auction later in the year to sell more books from this first-rate collection.



There were lots of 'Lots' to be auctioned



Peter Boag



Auctioneer Marty Rogers in full flight



Is that Pilks putting in a tentative bid?



President's Message

I recently travelled up to the King River and got in a few hours of casting with a long time friend that I had not seen for some time. We managed to wangle an invitation to a fly-fishing session and wine tasting at Pizzini's Winery, and we certainly made the most of the opportunity. The dinner at the Whitfield Hotel was magnificent and the weather was fantastic. In fact I had to take my jacket off and fish in short sleeves as I was getting too warm. I had not fished that particular area before and was pleasantly surprised to find such a pretty stream. I also managed to catch a nice little brown whilst demonstrating to my friend how to cast a fly.



On the way to this appointment I picked up some tackle in Thornton and was surprised to see the Goulburn in great fly-fishing condition and looking very wadeable. Quite different to the last couple of months.

Whilst driving that long stretch over the hills to Whitfield I found myself contemplating the state of fly-fishing in Victoria and how there were so many rivers that I had not fished, and that it was only this year that I had been introduced to areas that I had not considered or had not been able to get to before. So I have resolved to spend more time in Victorian streams and to become better acquainted with them and my favourite form of fishing. No doubt I'll be heading up some little creeks with my cane rod and some dries. This doesn't mean I will give up travelling to New Zealand or Tassie, but I will certainly make time to investigate the opportunities closer to home. This is a bit of an anomaly, as it often takes longer to travel to streams within our State of Victoria than to go overseas and fish.

I will again mention the upcoming VFFA elections and urge members to attend the AGM and consider nominating for Council. There are some significant changes being proposed to the structure and duties of the Council that should see a more equitable distribution of tasks across the board. Councillors will shortly have the opportunity to update the administration of the VFFA in line with the other changes being put in place, such as the website upgrade, new email access, mail facility, new venue, and an upgraded library room.

Recently we had the auction of part of the R.A. Brothers Collection, and details of this event are provided elsewhere in this newsletter. This proved to be a really good night with some 40 members to dinner beforehand. It was great to see such a good gathering as an introduction to our new venue, the Celtic Club. Another auction will be planned for later in the year, but probably on a Saturday or Sunday and for a longer session to give more members the opportunity to bid for books from this wonderful collection.

A member advised us recently that he had come across an ad inviting interested folk to join a fisheries board concerned with stocking programs, etc. The question arises as to why the ad was hidden in the Weekly Times and not circulated more broadly or directly to interested parties such as the VFFA. Members should advise the Council via the Secretary or President when they come across these types of items so they can be dealt with appropriately if we need

to get involved. This is part of our charter and obviously we need to be vigilant in regard to what is happening in our sport.

Have a great Autumn and end to the season. Tight Lines,

Rick Dugina

VFFA Casting with Peter Hayes

Sunday July 22, 2012

Commencing at 10 am and finishing at 4 pm

BBQ Lunch & Drinks provided.

Cost – \$145 per member,

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.



If you are attending, 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).

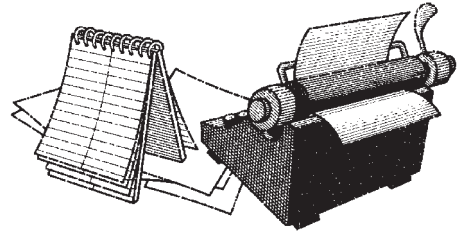
Please note – this event is limited to a maximum of 12, but Rick tells us there are still a few places available for those who are quick to indicate their interest.

To book your spot please contact: Rick Dugina on - Phone: 0401 963 601 or email on edugina@bigpond.com



Lake Otamangakau – Nancy Tichborne watercolour

From the EDITOR'S DESK



Hubert Reichelt is a long-standing VFFA member, well-known to many of us. His reputation for catching trout and tying superb flies is well-established, and justifiably so. But close friends are also aware that Hubert has a wonderful sense of humour and a priceless collection of great stories from his early years of fly-fishing. One of these relates to an evening on the Acheron. It had been a warm summer day, and Hubert was fishing a section well upstream from the Glendale Lane bridge. The trout were out and about in numbers, chasing caddis in the sultry air, and Hubert was having a ball catching fish after fish. So he lingered late to enjoy all of the evening rise.

Eventually it was over, so he wound in, packed up, and started striding across the paddocks back to his car, an old Holden ute. Now, it just so happened that a backwater had formed some distance downstream and had subsequently mutated into a small swamp, and in the enveloping darkness Hubert failed to discover it until it was too late. He stepped right in and found himself floundering up to his midriff in muck and mire and quite putrid water. After letting fly with a couple of graphic Teutonic expletives he recovered his composure, along with his hat and rod and net and sundry other bits that had come adrift, and crawled back out onto solid ground. He then slowly and painfully negotiated his way around the swamp and eventually found his way back to the ute. Here he stripped down to his jocks, cleaned up as best he could using his shirt as a towel, threw the foul-smelling collection of clothing and gear into the back of the ute, and headed for home.

When he finally arrived home, much later than normal, his very gracious wife Herta, by now quite concerned for his welfare, was waiting in her dressing gown at the door. Her concern turned to shock and utter bewilderment when Hubert, covered in mud, leapt out of the car in his underwear. "Hubert", she shrieked, "where on earth have you been?" "Don't ask, woman. Just don't ask!" he barked as he galloped past, heading for the bathroom.

So there you have it – just one of many tales from Hubert's bountiful supply, accumulated over several fishing seasons. But it does remind us that our fly-fishing is not without its risks. To the uninformed, fishing is undoubtedly perceived as a somewhat benign and harmless pastime. We know better. There are all manner of hazards out there threatening our health and welfare. Who hasn't had encounters with venomous snakes, agitated bulls, lively electric fences, unnerving river crossings through heavy current, precarious wading over river bottoms littered with large greased rocks, or worse, soft gooey bottoms that threaten to swallow us up. All of us with more than a few seasons chasing trout will have tales to tell of mishaps and accidents. Our Warrnambool correspondent, Jim Blakeslee, reminds me occasionally (with a grin on his face) of a special occasion many years ago when we were fishing the Moyne River together. I got tangled up trying to scramble over a barbed wire fence and fell headfirst into a concrete culvert, breaking an arm. Jim drove me to the local hospital, where a disastrous day went even further south. All my clothes were removed and I was decked out in a hospital gown by very pretty young trainee nurse who I had taught a

year earlier at the local high school. She had a grin from ear to ear too, though I couldn't find anything amusing about any of it. And again, there was the Green Matuka that I buried deep in my neck one dark and very windy night when I was fishing the lower Merri. It had to be surgically removed. I could go on, as I'm sure we all could.

Which makes our June meeting relevant and important. Representatives from Time Plus Communications are coming along to tell us about the latest in communication devices. Items such as walkie-talkies and Epirbs (Personal Locator Beacons) are invaluable safety equipment. I know some very experienced anglers who fish the Western Lakes in Tasmania and other similarly isolated places. The first item they pack in their vest is an Epirb. Whether we fish by ourselves or in company, safety is always an issue, and increasingly so as we get older. So the June meeting will be well worth attending.

Loosely related to this is the increasing usefulness of computers to our fly-fishing. We could fill pages listing the potential uses of Internet sites, but I'll offer just a few. I find mapping applications extremely helpful, and one I often use is eMaps (from <http://www.macupdate.com/app/mac/32693/emaps>), though there are plenty of others available. eMaps not only provides printable maps of fishing locations, but also enables me to obtain accurate latitude and longitude values of any particular point, and these can then be entered into a GPS unit, thus making 'places of interest' very easy to find.

Information about weather is also invaluable, and the Bureau of Meteorology site provides a heap of useful information, including four days of barometric pressure maps at www.bom.gov.au/australia/charts/4day_col.shtml. Another favourite of mine is www.bom.gov.au/cgi-bin/wrap_fwo.pl?IDV60154.html, which plots river heights over five days for most Victorian rivers. Thus you can quickly check to see whether your favourite stream is still in flood or has settled after recent rains. And then www.weatherzone.com.au is one of many very useful weather sites that provide seven day forecasts for specific areas of the State (or country).

A final indulgence of mine was to fill a folder with all my favourite fishing photos and set it up as a screen-saver. It kicks in after a few minutes and fills my screen with wonderful memories of favourite places and treasured moments. Yes, these computers have their uses.

Tight lines

Lyndon Webb

Odd Spot ...

The Age has its Odd Spot. Here's one for fly-fishers – courtesy of Tom White. If you log onto

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tk500cQiCRs&feature=player_embedded

You will find a YouTube video of Tim Rajeff fishing two fly lines through one rod. Now this presents some possibilities ...

Thoughts on 'Leader-to Hand'

(from Jeremy Lucas. Jeremy is a top British and European fishing guide, and regularly contributes to various UK and European Angling publications. The following articles are two recent contributions to the European online magazine, *Fish & Fly*, found at www.fishandfly.com. The material is used with permission. Jeremy is at the forefront of some exciting innovations in fly-fishing technique, and these articles give a fascinating insight into major developments in our sport.)

Fishing on the Frontier - Part 43 - Casting Leader-to-Hand, 19/3/2012

(The concept and development of the 'leader-to-hand' technique that Jeremy has been explaining in his past few columns in 'Fishing on the Frontier' has stirred quite a bit of debate in the UK and Europe on various forums and in the fly fishing magazines and social media. In this article Jeremy explains the casting style necessary with this new technique.)

There has been a lot of discussion recently about the casting issues of using leaders without any fly line. Comments on the forums and elsewhere have prompted me to write the following, extending on from the ideas in earlier parts of the series. Many observers have been locked into the idea that French leader constructions are what is meant by 'leader-to-hand'. I obviously need to stress: *they are not*. French leader is good only for nymph presentation (including at a push, spider or 'soft hackle') at short range (less than 8 metres). In practice, French leader, or Euro nymphing as it has been coined, is usually superior in terms of presentation to fly line dependent methods. Attempts to use a French leader for dry fly, however, particularly at longer range, can result in enormous frustration. I know, because I toiled with this for years, even though I had been lucky enough to observe the evolutionary jumps in technique that some of the top Europeans were putting into this approach.

But why is this? It has been pointed out that there is insufficient mass in a French leader in order for it to be cast on a standard three or four weight rod. This is why these leaders have been developed specifically for use with nymphs, and thus incorporating the mass of the nymphs into the casting process. And this is precisely why I set about designing a leader that could be cast without fly line and without a weighted nymph. Spending much of the summer and autumn on various European rivers soon focuses the mind on dry fly presentation, simply because the fish are looking to the surface most of the time. This is where their food is most vulnerable.

I have so many memories of fish rising out of range (and this means much beyond 10 metres, where control and contact - with the fly line - significantly falls away because of interaction between the comparatively thick fly line and the water), and so I had to wade towards the target fish in order to close this range and make a better angle; finally to improve presentation and control. But this is a little clumsy (and can even be dangerous), and certainly increases the disturbance factor. Frankly, it does not feel good to the river angler, and it doesn't look too elegant to the observer.

Influenced by some European competitors and also weight forward profile fly lines, whilst also understanding the physics of the problem, I reasoned that as much mass as possible

needed to be added reasonably far from the rod tip. We also needed a compromise: gaining sufficient mass, but avoiding that awful line sag between rod tip and the point of contact of the line with the surface. Too much mass in the running leader (close to the rod tip) produces this line sag, which also results in loss of control. I experimented with both fluorocarbon and copolymer and this led me to adopt the following construction: specifically 0.47mm of Greys copolymer as 12 metres of running leader, with 2 metres of a steep taper (0.55mm to 0.25mm Fulling Mill copolymer tapered leader), terminating in a 20 cm braided nylon monofilament section, looped at each end. The tippet (between 1 and 4 metres) is added to this braid section.

As significant as the leader construction is the rod. For several years I was locked into the Grey's Streamflex 10 foot four weight rod, which was, and remains, a great all-rounder for river fishing (including Euro nymphing) and even lake applications. This rod is not suitable, however, for leader-to-hand and dry fly, and I'm afraid no four weight is. We are much better off with three weights and even two weights. I detailed some of the suitable rods recently, so will not repeat them here apart from mentioning my current favourite, the Streamflex 10 foot two weight. There are several alternatives, so don't worry about that, but all of them must be three weights or less, and there is no escape from this.

I have recommended that anglers start by nymph fishing, preferably with low mass nymphs, getting used to the comparatively low mass extended from the rod tip. Very quickly, however, the rising fish from Spring onwards will nudge you towards the dry fly, and I would suggest only that you don't exchange a leader-to-hand rig for a fly line at this point. If the leader is right, married to a suitable rod, then take the bold jump and learn to cast afresh. It is really only an extension of the overhead, or side, casting we learn with conventional fly line. The stop points are the same, but the pauses between both back and fore casts are longer, and the casting stroke between those stop points is faster. This builds sufficient momentum into the leader construction to allow turnover, sublime touch-down and overall presentation, with subsequent control way beyond what is possible with fly line delivery. We very quickly learn to cast the entire leader and tippet, giving us a maximum range of 18 metres (from the hand). Perhaps obviously, it is best to start by casting across a gentle left to right wind (for a right handed caster). A gentle following wind is almost as nice, particularly if it is upstream. A facing wind is the most challenging, as with a fly line. It remains better to attempt to 'steal' an angle so as not to have to cast directly into the wind. With any sort of facing wind, however, it pays to shorten the tippet down to a metre. Also, you will find that when coated in Mucilin (I strongly recommend this), the braided section has significant casting mass, rather like a weight forward line. You will also find that it is actually easier to cast at longer rather than at shorter range, simply because there is then more casting mass.

It is only a matter of practice. Again I urge those interested in exploring the presentation possibilities outlined here that you do so with appropriate tackle. Otherwise, there is the danger of misunderstanding the whole approach and abandoning it, which would be a terrible shame, because, believe me, it has changed the way I fish and has given me access to presentation that I had not thought possible. Of course it is not suitable for every occasion on the river, and even less on still water, but you will be surprised at both its effectiveness and its elegance.

Fishing on the Frontier - Part 44 – The Changing River, 23/4/2012

Following on with the theme of presentation this month, which is so visible on the river angling agenda nowadays, one cannot help but notice the considerable debate and discussion on the subject. Entirely healthy this, in my view, and it so refreshing to see an ever increasing number of fly-fishers forging ahead with all manner of presentation possibilities, with and without fly line.

This is even noticeable now on British rivers, and is not the domain only of the Europeans. The tools for the job are now widely available, in terms of long, soft (two and three weight) rods, while Sage and Rio are the first to produce fly lines below the anachronistic AFTMA rating scale, in the form of lines that conform to zero weights or lower. More will surely follow, and these will undoubtedly come from the USA, along with the delightful developments in fixed line Tenkara. Meanwhile, Fulling Mill have been the first of the British companies to give us the ‘tactical presentation leader’, the first commercially produced leader-to-hand rig that gets away from the hopelessly inadequate (for dry fly capability) French leader.

Fly lines are unquestionably wonderful casting implements, and will always be with us in a variety of forms (though I hope we finally get away from the AFTMA system), while French leaders give a better means of presentation with nymph. Adventurous river anglers, however, have certainly gone beyond the limitations of both, driven by a desire to achieve altogether improved technique, with a delicate leader systems that can actually be cast on the modern soft action rods referred to above. We have not developed a panacea here and there are limitations, and always will be. We have, however, made huge breakthroughs, and almost by happy accident. We were, after all, merely trying to achieve slightly better presentation and control of a dry fly on the river, in that we could avoid drag for a longer drift and at greater range than is possible with a fly line. Beyond this, we discovered much more, the top of the list being minimal disturbance.

For a long time I have been rather focused on dry fly. It is, after all, the easiest form of presentation offering visual evidence of control, as well as sight of an actual take. It also allows one to be more selective and is much easier to deliver on target. There is great mystique surrounding upstream dry fly-fishing on rivers, and this is a charming legacy of the history of our sport, but no more than that. Every other method makes greater demands on the anglers’ skill. Yet dry fly is my all-abiding passion. From March until some time in November, in all the rivers I know, trout and grayling are focused on the surface. Emergers, duns and spent spinners represent the easiest targets on the menu of possibilities. Of course they take nymphs and other food forms in great abundance. But it is seldom that they will reject the dries in and on the surface. Based on this rationale, many of us have concentrated on improving our dry fly technique.

For the last month on the Eden (River Eden in Cumbria, UK) we have been blessed with the best large dark olive and March brown hatches I can remember on this river. We have terrible problems with goosanders and modern farming, both of which are annihilating the populations of small trout and grayling, though we do have outstanding large brown trout (which are much more tolerant of the silt damage and, of course, can evade the predatory birds). The hatches back in March were of about an hour duration, though now they are three hours, with even the March browns going on for over an hour. Invariably they bring the trout

right up into the fast water to intercept the duns before they reach the smoother foam lanes on the glides. Three recent trips (over Easter) were exemplar: two to the Eden on the Appleby Waters and one to the Penrith waters of the Lowther (a major tributary). On all these visits I arrived at lunchtime, a little before the hatch developed, and there was not a single fish to be seen. Rather than nymph fish, I walked the river hunting for signs of trout. I did not have to wait long before the first rise preceded the familiar sight of numerous large dark duns, followed by rising trout in the riffles.

This situation is paradise for the river angler, no question, and it excites me as much now as it did when I observed it in my youth. The difference, though, is the approach, and this is what has utterly thrilled me. On each of these occasions I fished a size 19 quill plume tip on a presentation leader rig, and, once in position, managed to pick off almost every trout while barely moving half a dozen steps. Now these are wild trout, and though preoccupied on the feeding frenzy, are not soft targets. Also, while my wading technique is fairly quiet, it is not as good as it was, say, ten years ago; yet over these three visits more than 30 trout were caught, with four of them over three pounds in weight. More to the point, ten years ago I would not have caught half this number in similar situations, and would have been very lucky to catch a single one of the big fish. So what has changed? What has happened to the technique of an increasing number of river anglers that has precipitated this enormous change?

Without a doubt it is the way we have addressed the issue of presentation, achieving that minimal disturbance in the 360° river space surrounding us out to a range of 15 metres. Fly lines, even one and two weights, create significantly more disturbance than many will care to admit, even outstanding casters, while they also interact significantly with the surface currents, resulting very quickly in fish-spooking drag. The quality of our flies, designed for purpose, is much better than hitherto, but more anglers now recognise that this is nothing like as important as how the fly behaves, how it is presented. My plume tips are not the best-tied CDC dries one can find by a long way, and yet when the Coq de Leon tails break off, or the quill unfurls, it hardly matters. So long as I can buff up the CDC and I can place them on the feed paths they are very rarely rejected – and if they are, it is because I have done something to spook the fish. Yesterday, on the Lowther, I did this simply by a bit of careless wading, putting down a steady riser.

Anglers often ask me to quantify the difference that leader-to-hand has made to my fishing. Difficult to do, but I think it has roughly doubled my catch rate. Then again, it has changed the way I fish; I tend to find that I have to move much less than in my ‘fly line presentation days’, and I can also be more selective on my target fish. I should also admit to being more selective in the water I choose. I tend to pass over deeper, nymphy areas and search out the foam lanes on the glides and the riffle water. The latter has been a huge discovery in the last couple of seasons. I am still astonished by the quality of trout one finds in remarkably shallow, fast water. We used to think of such as being good only for trout hunting oxygen during low-water summer months; but more than half my big trout during the early spring periods have come from very shallow water. One of my three pounders over Easter came from glide water, while the others were from riffles of a depth that one could scarcely believe could cover their backs!

In summary, for all those who are interested in developing leader-only skills, I would suggest: go at it only with the proper tackle. Always be aware of the need to minimise disturbance, and choose your range and angle on a target fish carefully. Never underestimate dry fly and

never underestimate the efficacy of a small dry fly. Size 17 is large, even during hatches of very large ephemerids such as March browns, olive uprights or danica mayflies. My standard is a size 19, and if this fails I nearly always downsize, even though these are often tiny compared with the prevalent naturals. Finally, never underestimate shallow, fast water, for both trout and grayling. These fish can and do hide in broken water as easily as in the indigo depths of pools; and think of where their food is most plentiful. Remember - three things matter to a fish: cover, food and oxygen.

This Month's Yarn

(from January 1963)

"You know," said Alf, "nowadays ingenious manufacturers of sporting goods are producing devices for attracting game. We've got decoy ducks that quack, deer calls, wolf whistles ... sorry, I meant to say fox whistles. And the other day I read about a chap who had made a recording of a crow's convention. He played it very loudly at the back of his farm, and it attracted so many of these black nuisances who turned up to see what was going on that he managed to shoot 20 of them at the first playing. So I couldn't help wondering if anyone had thought of some sort of mechanical device like this to attract trout."

McTaggart, who was listening patiently to Alf's musings, gazed wistfully into his empty glass before offering a comment. "Those things you mentioned all depend on sound," he finally suggested, "And sound probably wouldn't be any good in the case of trout. What you need is something to appeal to their eyesight."

"Could be difficult," said Alf, as he hurriedly pushed the glasses back toward the barmaid. McTaggart perked up immediately. "You're right," he reflected, "but it has been done. My nephew Clarence – I think I have mentioned him before – worked out a method. Clarence is a smart lad, you see, and he tackled the problem scientifically."

"How?" queried Alf. "Well, I can't exactly give you all the details," said McTaggart, "but, briefly, Clarence made a series of movie films showing various insects hatching out. He managed to get some great footage, too, of mayflies, caddis, flying ants and the like. Then he made an ingenious projector that used the surface of the water as a screen. He'd set up the gear and project a tempting looking hatch onto a pool where he knew there were trout, and before long they'd be rising freely – to the images of course. Then, with the projector still running, he'd cast a fly of the appropriate pattern and get a rise. He caught dozens of trout using this setup."

"Does he still use it?" asked Alf eagerly, "perhaps I could borrow it." "No, unfortunately," replied McTaggart. "Clarence was using his projector a few years ago up on the Goulburn River, near Dugina's Bend in fact, when one of those crop-dusting planes came over spraying insecticide. Apparently some of the insect-killing chemical got into the projector, and since then it just hasn't been able to produce any sort of a hatch."

The Ghosts Of Misty River – Part 2 ...

By Dermot O'Brien

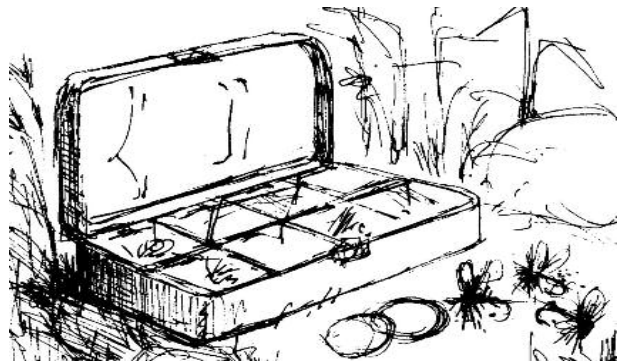
(In Part 1 the ashes of previously unknown Australian fly fisherman Finn McTrout were scattered on Misty River as the author met the ghost of Lee Wulff on a hidden stream.)

The rod had once been honey colored, but now it was darker and the bindings were no longer bright. The cork was dark, really dark. This was a rod that had seen much use, had played many fish. It had belonged to McTrout and it had just been handed to me by a mystery man, a ghost, who had simply walked into the distance and into thin air.

I turned my back on Misty River and headed for home. However, I could not ignore the rod any more than I could stop puzzling over what had just transpired on the river. The rod was hung in a cupboard and the real world got in the way and the non-fly fishing part of life swamped me ... as it always does.

Although the rod was now out of sight, it was not out of mind. It was as though the rod did not want to be forgotten.

On the surface Finn McTrout did not leave much. To most ... his few possessions, including an ancient and unreliable vehicle, would add up to very little. However, his journals from a lifetime of fly-fishing for trout and salmon in many exotic places were priceless. Every time the old sea chest was opened it was like peeking into another world.



Apart from the leather bound journals there were various fly reels, including a couple of vintage Hardy St George reels, a Martin, two Vom Hofe reels in good condition and several other reels with no names. All had seen heavy use. Good. The lines were a mixture of silk and modern.

The chest also contained a neat bundle of documents wrapped and tied in a simple leather fold. They were beautiful hand drawn maps. All of rivers, the Tongariro, Beaverkill, Armstrongs Creek, Test, Avon, Miramichi and, of course, of Misty River and the hidden stream. To my surprise a map of the Kamchatka Peninsula was tucked in the bundle.

The fishing potential in the rivers of the Kamchatka Peninsula in the Russian Far East, one of the most remote places on the planet, is only being explored today.

The old man's stories of trout and salmon in far off and remote places now sounded more plausible. A life totally devoted to fly-fishing and adventure. Hopefully his journals would reveal the full extent of his travels over his lifetime.

A fly rod, any fly rod, is a magical thing. In the hands of a fly-fisherman it has the ability to transport the holder to an imaginary place. McTrout's rod was such a wand. It was obvious it had been part of many great fishing adventures.

The need to wade cold water and cast to fish came over me ... as it does after a time. It was time now to take the rod back to Misty River and use it for the purpose it was made. One of the Hardy reels fitted perfectly. It cast well in the backyard. The midweek drive to Misty River seemed quicker than normal.

The river looked the same but did not feel the same. Birds and bird noise were plentiful but one sounded above the rest. The mournful screech of a single cockatoo.

The early mist hung over the nearby bush and the water was extra cold. I headed towards the secret stream and waded through the two gums that stood sentry. The stream and grassy banks were more serene than I remembered. A fish rose immediately and the line went out with a dry fly floating high in the water. I lifted the rod tip and felt the throb of a nice fish. Three more over the next hour were fooled by the dry.

My concentration was broken. "Nice work. Good fish son." My heart skipped a beat in surprise. I thought I was alone, but no. A man I had not seen, never seen before, was sitting on a stump with a vice set up on a bit of a log. His hair was silver and peeking out from under a tweed cap, his glasses black horn-rimmed. He was working on a nymph, but instead of silk he was using fine copper wire. A pheasant tail nymph, quite sparse, dropped into his palm when he was done.

"I fished with McTrout often," he said, "We fished the Avon together many times. Chalk streams can be tough and McTrout was quite handy with a nymph."

The old man stood and slung a well-used bag over one shoulder, picked up his rod and cautiously moved upstream. Well back from the water he cast, putting a sweeping bend in the creaking old rod. His nymph slowly drifted to the bottom. A few seconds later he simply lifted the rod tip. The fly-fisherman repeated this simple action several times and then set the hook on a good fish that flashed around the pool. His effort was appreciated by a call from a bird which pierced the silence.

"You take over, it is time for me to go," he said with a thick accent as he passed the rod. The initials FMcT were faded but legible on the butt.

"I am Frank by the way, Frank Sawyer," he said as he started to walk away. And, then he was simply gone.

(To be continued)



(A David Scholes sketch)

The Roll Cast - The Second Most Important Cast

(Lyndon Webb)

Why fuss about roll casting? Well Peter Hayes describes the roll cast as his favourite cast, and suggests that after the basic overhead cast it is the most important one to learn. Lefty Kreh weighs in with 'next to the conventional overhead cast, the roll cast is utilised more than any other. There are hosts of fishing situations where this cast is beneficial, and in some cases downright necessary.' So there you are.

The most obvious use of this cast is where you don't have much room for a normal back cast. So in those scrubby overgrown creeks with banks packed with leader-snatching shrubbery and lots of leafy canopy overhead, the roll cast is the way forward – literally. Peter Hayes tells how he once fished his way up the Little River near Taggerty (which is well-endowed with foliage), roll casting all the way and catching a cricket score of fish.

But there are other uses for this cast too. If you want to get your fly back quickly to a fishy spot, the roll cast is the one to use. If you want to lift your line quietly off the water in preparation for an overhead cast, then the roll cast does this nicely too. If you are fishing a fast sinking line it's the cast for lifting the line from the water in preparation for your backcast. If your fly gets snagged whilst drifting back in the current then a quick roll cast shooting line past the point where your fly is caught will often free it. It's a good cast when the wind is difficult, and is a great low cast for sneaking in under overhanging bushes. As Peter says, "If you learn to roll cast well ... you will find that it is the most accurate cast you can do. It is the fastest cast you can do, you can get the fly into tighter spots, you can shoot a lot of line, it can be a tight loop cast that travels close to the water and you will catch fish that others consider impossible."

The roll cast is also the foundation of all Spey casting, which takes us into another world of very useful fishing casts.

Having said all that, I confess that for years I was a hopeless roll caster, because in my early fly-fishing days I'd seen those pictures in the books of anglers with their rods held straight up like radio aerials, then flicking line forward to complete the cast. I tried it, and it just didn't work (for me). Peter sums it accurately: "Commonly taught roll casting throws high, big, slow, open loops that do not shoot line and are extremely inaccurate. It makes me shiver just writing that sentence."

Which takes me to where I was rescued. I attended one of Peter's casting days and saw this very neat and powerful and elegant cast executed by an expert. Suddenly it looked easy. I hasten to add that I'm still a very average performer, but can now manage a passable roll cast, so thought I might share a few of the teachings and techniques that helped me.

The following notes are mainly from the teaching material that Peter distributes to his pupils (and are used with permission), along with some ideas from a Lefty Kreh article and other bits from a truly fabulous book by Simon Gawesworth - *Single-Handed Spey Casting*. (Simon was a British fly casting champion, and held a number of casting records. He represented England several times in fly casting championships, is acknowledged as a leading authority on Spey casting, and is now employed by Rio Lines as a fly line designer and marketing manager.)

Carl McNeil's wonderful DVD, *Casts That Catch Fish*, is another particularly helpful source.

But first - does a roll cast give you enough distance to be useful in practical fishing? Two suggestions here. Firstly, using a 9 foot 5-weight rod Simon Gawesworth can roll cast an entire fly line, along with a fair slice of the backing. Secondly, how far do you really need to cast anyway? Jeremy Lucas, British international representative and top European guide, is adamant in his teaching and writing that when you're fly-fishing in rivers the maximum distance you should be from your target fish is 10 metres. The most effective range for catching trout is, in fact, 6 – 10 metres. Of course we can all cast to fish that are a lot further away than 10 metres, but in a river drag will then nearly always defeat us, and you can't really see what's happening at your fly at these greater distances. The end result is inevitably far more fish put down than caught. And roll casting 10 metres is easy. I can manage it, so anyone can.

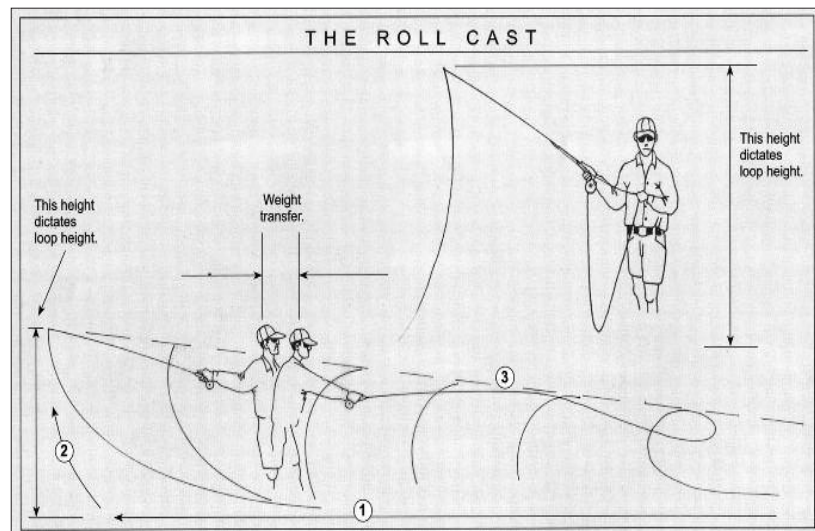
How then do we make a basic roll cast according to the Hayes method? Let's assume you're out on the water with some line out in front, and your rod is held horizontal and pointing in the same direction as the line. You now sweep your rod back behind you whilst keeping it low and horizontal. When it is as far back behind you as possible lift your rod tip up in a vertical direction so that it stops at a point just above shoulder height. The stop is important – you must start your roll cast from a stopped rod. (But see the notes later on Double Roll Casts and Switch Casts).

Now for the important part – whilst keeping your wrist cocked move it forward in a smoothly accelerating casting stroke along a straight line towards the target. You need to keep your wrist in this cocked position (with the angle between your forearm and the rod butt at close to 90°) for most of the delivery cast. Only at the last moment do you snap your wrist forward. Get it right, and the line shoots out magnificently.

That's the bare bones, but you need some additional information too:

1. Ideally your rod tip should also travel in a straight line during the delivery cast. This is necessary for generating tight loops.
2. If you have trouble translating the above description into action, then remember that the actual forward part of the roll cast is simply a good overhead cast turned on its side. The actual delivery cast is really just a well-executed side cast.

3. This diagram, from *Flyfisher* magazine Issue 2 (drawn by Trevor Hawkins and used with permission) illustrates the cast:



4. The amount of fly line lying on the water in front of you when you start the forward cast is important. The roll cast works because surface tension holds the line and helps load the rod, so you need some line on the water. But if there is too much line on the water then all the energy you put into the cast is soaked up trying to lift the line, and the cast goes nowhere. How much is right? One to four metres of line lying on the water seems to work fine, but not too much more. Try it for yourself.
5. The distance you cast with a roll cast depends mostly on the amount of line behind you hanging from your rod tip down to where it touches the water. This is called the 'D loop' as it's shaped like a 'D'. To see this illustrated have a look at the incredible D loop in the photo below showing Simon Gawesworth making a cast:



To illustrate the importance of this point Peter Hayes suggests that you walk back from your casting position 3 or 4 metres then walk forward again holding your rod behind you, so that you have several metres of fly line on the ground behind you. Now make a roll cast and see how much more your rod loads and how much further the cast flies out. Clearly the larger the D loop (i.e. the more line hanging behind you before you cast) the further you will roll cast. Obviously you can't always generate huge D loops in actual fishing situations, but Peter suggests, "Wading in streams you can often let the fly line trail downstream in the current before you make the forward cast – this is exactly the same effect. Likewise in some lake and stream situations you can deliberately make a 1/3 or 1/2 back cast and let the line lay on the water or the ground momentarily before you get into the forward cast. It is possible to roll cast a whole fly line in this manner."

6. In theory a Double Taper line is better for roll casting than a Weight Forward line, because the Double Taper line has its weight in the middle section and this loads the rod a lot more. However the front tapers of the first 8 – 10 metres of both types of line are virtually the same, so if you're fishing small streams using fairly short casts it probably

doesn't matter which type of line you use. However on bigger waters the Double Taper line will give you more distance and more easily.

7. Related to this, a trick that I find helps a lot is to overline my rod. In other words I cast a 5-weight Double Taper line on a 4-weight rod (or sometimes a DT4F on a 3-weight rod) and this works really well on small streams where I'm casting only short distances. The heavier line loads the rod quicker with less fly line out. But I've also found that on bigger waters if I use a DT 6-weight on a 5-weight rod it seems to cast further and is a lot easier to cast than when they're matched 'correctly', i.e. a 5-weight line on the 5-weight rod. Try it and see for yourself. I've also noticed that roll casting is much easier with dry flies. If I'm using a big heavy nymph under a largish indicator then roll casting seems a lot harder. (But then so is overhead casting!)

Are you keen to try for some extra distance? There are three techniques you can use to get greater distance with your roll casts. The first is to simply add a haul – give the line you are holding in your left hand a sharp tug downwards as you start the delivery cast. (Carl McNeil illustrates this on his DVD.) It needs some practice though.

Simon Gawesworth adds two further techniques. The first is called the 'Double Roll Cast' and it too requires some practice because the timing here is quite critical. To summarise Simon: "The regular roll cast has a small D loop and often a fairly substantial amount of line anchored on the water at the start of the forward cast. It also has what I call a passive D loop - a D loop that only has mass and no momentum to help load the rod. To get more distance and tighten up the front loop, the cast needs to be more efficient - which means a big D loop, small amount of 'anchor' (line on the water), and the least amount of power applied to the forward stroke. This is achieved with the double roll cast, which is really no more than two roll casts put together. You make the first roll cast (aimed high), and then while the forward cast is still in the air, you make a second roll cast. Because the fly line is in the air when you start the D-loop stroke of the second roll cast, it comes back toward you much cleaner and easier. It will also have momentum (something that the regular D loop of a roll cast doesn't have), so you are now loading against an aggressive D loop. This gives you a larger D loop, less line anchored on the water, and less need to hit the forward cast so hard. The end result is more efficiency, more distance, and tighter loops."

A second technique Simon describes is the 'Switch Cast':

"The switch cast is far more dynamic and efficient than the roll cast and the double roll cast, and will give you much greater distance and some of those wonderful tight loops that modern casters strive for. It is also an unbelievably satisfying cast to perform. What you create with a switch cast is a D loop that has weight and momentum. You literally throw the D loop behind you. When you make a forward cast against such a load, the result is awesome. The rod loads deeply, you use a fraction of the effort on the forward cast, and the cast zings out with great speed and energy. With the D loop thrown behind, the increased mass helps load the rod deeply, and if you start a forward cast while the D loop has some rear traveling momentum, you will get increased flex against the moving line.

The switch cast starts with the rod tip low and the line tight and straight in front of you. The rod tip on the D-loop stroke actually follows a similar path as for the normal roll cast. However, before you commence the stroke, lift the rod from the water surface to an angle

about 30 degrees above the horizontal to unstick some of the line lying on the water. The rod then smoothly transitions into a sweep to the side, passing you and moving up to the key position. The whole D-loop stroke should be one smooth movement; do not pause until the rod is in the key position, and do not jerk or twitch the rod.

As the rod passes you and starts to rise to the key position, it should accelerate through this rise slightly and then stop. What you are trying to do with this acceleration is get the fly line and leader out of the water and speeding back toward you - an airborne anchor cast. It is vital your rod gets to the key position and is ready for the forward cast before any fly line (or leader) has touched the water, though the line should travel back through the air low and close to the water.

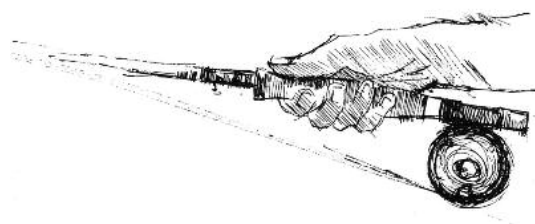
At some stage, gravity will overcome the line's momentum and pull it down onto the water. The faster you accelerate, the farther back the line will travel before gravity takes its toll. You must watch where the line touches the water (the anchor). Try to land the anchor level with you and within a rod length to the side of where you are standing. This will give the optimum size of D loop and will result in the most efficient energy transfer.

The perfect anchor lands with the fly line straight on the water. If it is straight, it is very easy and efficient to pick it out of the water on the forward cast. Once you have the D loop stroke mastered and can position a straight anchor in the right area, there is the simple matter of the forward cast."

An important point to note is that the roll cast is not used for changing direction: the final cast should be in the same direction as the line on the water before the cast is commenced. This is where the roll cast differs from the large family of Spey casts, as all Spey casts are specifically designed to change the direction of the cast.

Finally, how can you practice your roll casting? Because it needs the surface tension of water to load the rod, practicing on water – a lake or dam or pond somewhere – is good. But Carl McNeil, when discussing this cast on his DVD, recommends practicing on grass, because then the lack of surface tension causes you to practice applying the power smoothly. He asserts that if you can roll cast on grass, you'll have no trouble applying your skills on water. However as an additional help you can practice on grass by attaching a 'grass leader' to your fly line. A grass leader is constructed by tying up short sections of line of 0.35 – 0.40 mm diameter. These short (20 - 25 cm) sections are tied together using blood knots, and the tag ends sticking out from these knots are not trimmed but left long – 1 to 2 cm. The whole thing looks like a length of barbed wire fencing, and should be about 3 metres in total length. When you cast over grass with this leader on your line those knot tags catch in the grass and simulate a type of 'surface tension'. Yes, I've tried it and it works.

So there you are. Roll casting is both extremely useful and great fun, (though I'm still struggling a bit with my switch cast.)



Cane Makers and VFFA Cane Day

Cane Makers 2012

Members interested in learning something about the skills involved in making a cane fly rod are invited to attend the annual Cane Makers' Day – on Saturday, June 16. This event will be held again at Northern Suburbs Fly Fishing Club (Melway Map 184 F5), from 10:00am till 3:00pm.

This event is for cane makers both old and new along with those who aspire to become makers and wish to learn a few things. This event is catered and free of charge, so come along and participate.

This year Nick Taransky (recently back from Japan) will deliver a workshop/talk on splice joints and Spey rods, Boris Gaspar will talk about how to finish a rod, Cliff Winnel will explain about reel seats and home anodising, Pat Sheridan will discuss hexagon wooden rod tubes, and Graham Foxman will explain how to actually start split cane rod making (splitting, planing, etc) - as per the photo.



In the meantime Peter, Bintoro and I will offer encouraging words while tasting a wee dram. If you know someone who is a maker or indeed an owner of cane rods, please pass on this information so they might come and enjoy the company of like-minded fly-fishers.

And on the following day:

VFFA Cane Day 2012

Members are reminded that our annual Cane Day is on-

Sunday, June 17, 9:00 am to 3:30 pm

At the Red Tag Pool, Yarrabend Park, Fairfield (Melway's reference 2D H2)

The VFFA will provide BBQ lunch and refreshments.

Rod Makers – Nick Taransky and Peter McKean will be in attendance, along with a cast of thousands.

So come along and cast with the new rods and compare them with the gems of the past. Unwrap your dear old friend and bring it along to meet the new boys on the block.

“IT'S ALL ABOUT THE CANE”

Red Tag Pool is an all weather venue, so bring along a raincoat in case the weather turns.

Please Contact David Grisold on 0419 558 462 or rjgrisold@bigpond.com for further details.



Design Your Own Leader

(Philip Bailey)

Many fly fishermen have little understanding of the importance that a well-designed leader has on the overall performance of their gear. Leader design has been a passion of mine for well over 25 years, and my interest was kick-started by the late Jack Moray. Jack's designs were based on 'science' rather than guesswork, and his formulas went as far as the conversion of the specific gravity of the fly line to that for nylon.

I still have Jack's notes, together with a collection of over 400 leader designs. I have tried them all and they all perform adequately enough. But I am pedantic about my leaders, some would say almost 'anal', and as I get to use longer leaders and smaller flies, leader design has become increasingly critical.

The trouble with Jack's formulas were (a) they were based on Water Queen dimensions (a brand no longer available); (b) some of the thicknesses were difficult to match and (c) there were far too many sections, thus too many knots. But of all that I have used, Jack's were superior.

For many years I used a 'Gibson' leader – 1/3 butt, 1/3 taper (this was actually broken into 3 equal sections) and 1/3 tippet. It was simple, had fewer knots, and dealt well with the flies that I fished when I lived in Australia. In the UK, however, I found that a size 14 fly was large, and I was often fishing flies in sizes 18 and 20. To make up my Gibson leaders in Australia I used Maxima and was able to get this brand in small spools. But here in the UK I had to buy Maxima in 1,000 metre lengths, so I went to knotless tapered leaders and added tippet sections. Over time, however, I found that these leaders were not satisfactory, so my explorations went further.

Have you ever Googled "How to design a fly-fishing leader"? If you do, you are presented with a huge number of articles, including a link to a free spreadsheet called 'Leadercalc' that is offered through the globalflyfisher site. The Leadercalc tool is great. It has a number of pre-determined leader formulas and you can simply input your requirements and it will match these to some of the formulas included.

This worked fine, but if you want to construct a leader longer than 4.5 metres then you are out of luck. These days I use leaders approaching 6.0 metres, and commonly use a 5.0 metre leader for dry fly-fishing. These are long leaders, and without going into a discussion on fish catch statistics, I have consistently found that a longer leader spooks less fish, resists drag much better, and catches more fish.

So having a need for longer leaders I went searching for some scientific information on leader design. I was amazed at the lack of information.

This is what people wrote:

"The thickness of the leader butt should be 60-65% of the thickness of your fly line".

"The leader should consist of these overall dimensions – 40% butt, 40% taper, 20% tippet".

For years this second prescription has been the generally accepted guideline for leader design, and if you read Charles Ritz's *A Fly-fisher's Life* you will find it there. But even Charles Ritz

doesn't explain the rationale for how this formula was determined, and he produced it at a time when lines were changing from silk, gut was changing to nylon, and cane was still the dominant rod material.

Well, hello! Today's lines are much more scientifically designed, co-polymer and fluorocarbon have been introduced, and rods have no resemblance to those of the past, even to those of 10 years ago. The world of fly-fishing gear has moved into the space age and our access to exciting new materials and equipment has advanced demonstrably. So we need to be more scientific with leaders in order to get the very best out of this new gear. And our ideas will need to continue to evolve.

Enough of the rambling, I'll get on with what I have discovered.

Some rules:

1. Butt thickness for leaders:

Line weight	Diameter (mm)
3	0.45 to 0.50
4	0.45 to 0.55
5	0.50 to 0.55
6	0.55 to 0.60
7	0.60 to 0.65
8	0.60 to 0.65

Now you need to take this table as a guide. How many of you actually know the diameter of the tip of your fly line? You will find that thicknesses vary between line manufacturers, and even types of lines by the same manufacturer. I now measure the diameters of all of my lines and this has had a dramatic effect on leader design and turn over. As a guide, make sure that the butt thickness of your leader is between 60% and 70% of your line tip diameter.

2. Tippet thickness for flies

Tippet thickness	Diameter (mm's)	Fly range size
8x	0.08mm	20 to 29
7x	0.10mm	20 to 28
6x	0.13mm	18 to 26
5x	0.15mm	14 to 20
4x	0.18mm	6 to 14
3x	0.20mm	6 to 12

Do you notice that I haven't mentioned breaking strain? Well, that's because I don't pay too much attention to it, as the breaking strain of line varies so much between thickness, type and brand. Diameter is much more important to me, and I can assure you that you can catch a pretty big fish on fine diameters. Failure is generally the fault of the angler.

3. Leader dimension.

I have been very fortunate to be involved with a group of Italian casting instructors. Believe me, these guys can do things with a short rod and light line that at times is breathtaking. Leader design is critical with the Italian style of casting and for the type of waters that they fish. If you are interested in seeing their style look at this website – www.flyfishingmasters.co.uk, then click on 'techniques'.

They have worked with an Italian University and tested the following over two years (in fact there were 29 of us testing the designs). At last a scientific outcome, well for me anyway.

- Irrespective of the length of the leader the dimensions are 36% butt, 36% taper, 28% tippet. These are pretty close to the Ritz formula, but the tippet is longer and that's to give better presentation, especially with a longer leader.
- The tapered section is then broken down into three sections – 18%, 12% and 6% of the total length of the leader.

So let's be a little more specific. I'll use, as an example, my 6.0 metre leader for my three weight plastic line (I also use silk lines) and for flies in the sizes 10 to 26 range.

Diameter of tip of fly line = 0.72 mm (I used an electronic calliper to determine this).

Leader length = 600 cm.

Tippet thickness = 0.15mm (or 6x).

From these measurements I can now start to build my leader:

The butt needs to be 0.50mm and 216 cm in length (= 60% of the 0.72mm tip diameter and 36% of the total leader length).

The tippet needs to be 0.15mm and 168 cm in length (= 28% of total leader length).

The step down between sections for the taper needs to be 0.10mm decrease per section.

Therefore I will need:

108 cm of 0.40mm (18% of total leader length)

72 cm of 0.30mm (12% of total leader length)

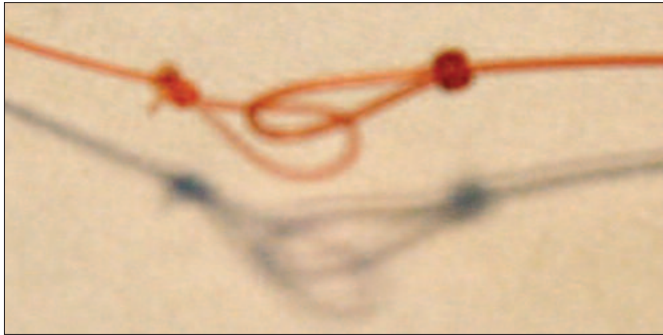
36cm of 0.20mm (6% of total leader length)

This is equal to 36% of the overall leader length.

So my leader sections are: 216 cm of 0.50mm; 108 cm of 0.40mm; 72 cm of 0.30mm; 36 cm of 0.20 and 168 cm of 0.15mm.

And of course this formula can be used for any length of leader as long as the percentages are kept the same.

Knots? I still use blood knots except for the tippet join, where I use a three-turn water knot (surgeon's knot). The Italians have developed this further and are using a 'chain link'



connection for each section. This reduces the impact of currents on the leader. The various sections of leader are connected by two Perfection Loops:

I hope you have found this interesting. It has taken me a long time arrive at this - an approach I am comfortable with.

Philip

The Warrnambool Annual Dinner

Secretary Jim Blakeslee has informed us that the Warrnambool Fly Fishers will be holding their Annual Game Dinner on Saturday, July 28. The venue is again the Brauer-Ander Park Running Track Pavilion, adjacent to Brauer College, Caramut Road, Warrnambool.

The cost is also the same as for last year - \$60 and byo drinks, and VFFA member are welcome to attend.

Before dinner drinks with canapés will begin at 6:00 pm, and the first course will follow at 7:00 pm for the start of what will be another night of fine food and company. Because the total number of diners is limited to 65 it is requested that VFFA members wishing to attend confirm their intention as soon as possible, and certainly no later than July 20.

Jim will be overseas from June 14, so those wishing to contact the WFFC during that period should phone the President, Adrian Jacobs, on 0437 620 972. Prior to June 14 Jim can be contacted on his email address (jtblakeslee@westvic.com.au) or by calling him on 03 5562 5168.

Australian Fly Fishing Museum Dinner

Every year Mike Stevens and a band of Tasmanian fly-fishing tragics celebrate the successful acclimatisation of trout in the Southern Hemisphere, which took place on May 4, 1864. It was James Arndell Youl, from Symmons Plains in Tasmania's Northern Midlands, who ushered in a new era when he successfully developed the means to transport trout ova from England in 1864. These ova were then hatched in the specially prepared Salmon Ponds at Plenty in Tasmania, and the resulting trout were eventually distributed throughout the nation and the Southern Hemisphere.

The evening and dinner were a great success, and featured the raffle of a fine bottle of Tasmanian Scotch, donated by Bill Lark, a renowned distiller and cane rod builder. It was also fitting that Rhonda Grisold drew her own ticket to win this wonderful prize.

The dinner was attended by eight of our members, including Michael Youl, whom readers will remember was the guest speaker at the VFFA Christmas Dinner a few years ago.

Mike Stevens is also the chair of the Australian Fly Fishing Museum and will be talking on this subject at our forthcoming Annual Dinner in August.

Hugh Maltby

AGM in September

The September general meeting is traditionally the Annual General Meeting. It's still a few months away, but our President is keen to remind readers that all financial members of the VFFA are eligible for nomination and election to the Council. This year's Council has 16 members, and most years a few Councillors decide to retire at the AGM, thus leaving a small number of vacancies that need to be filled. A steady turnover of membership, with new people coming on board with fresh ideas and a willingness to assist in the organisation of our Association, is clearly a good thing. Council meets once a month on a Wednesday evening, and all the management issues involved in running the Association are dealt with there. Hence the general meetings can be 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'll find yourself in the company of some very talented, hard-working and committed anglers, many of whom hold significant positions in business or the professions. You will be enriched by your participation, as well as contributing your wealth of skills and knowledge to our Association.

Notice papers relevant to the AGM will be distributed as inserts in the August newsletter.



Diamond Lake – another superb Nancy Tichborne watercolour

Report From Way Out West

(Report from our regular correspondent, Jim Blakeslee)

May 15: Lake Gilllear is low and clear, and I've been catching browns between 3 – 3½ lb on Matukas cast toward the edges. Today, however, I used the boat and drifted with the wind on long straight runs on the lower Merri from Yangery Creek down towards Cassidys Bridge. The sun and wind were behind me and I cast a sinking line and Green Matuka with a shrimp trailing behind. Result - two browns about 2 lb each, and I lost a bigger one. Possibly Purrumbete tomorrow while the weather is good. I hope to go after tuna on Friday - having finally been offered a ride on a boat out of Port Fairy.

May 17: It turns out you don't have to go too far offshore to catch a tuna these days. After a short dive for abs and crays I noticed birds diving outside from my spot at Killarney. I motored out and this is the result - a 15kg bluefin. I lost two others. I'll try for more next week when the weather calms down a bit and becomes more friendly for fishing from a 3.9 metre beach-launched tinnie.

June 1: Adrian Jacobs and I have gone out in the tinnie from the beach at Killarney a couple time this week and haven't seen any birds working or any sign of tuna. There have been schools of dolphin, fairy penguins, the occasional albatross, but that's it. I've never seen the tuna in so close here as they were a couple of weeks ago. Maybe I never will again. Looks like my catch then was a "one off" event.



Nice work Jim!



We'll see. I may give it another try while the weather holds, but I think I am better off trying my luck for trout and redfin in the lakes and local streams. I've attached a few photos of 2/0 Lefty's Deceivers that I use with good results in salt water. I attach the fly with a Homer Rhodes loop knot to 6 ft of 60 lb shock tippet, attached to 3 ft of 30 lb leader with an Albright Special knot.

Cheers,

Jim

FLY OF THE MONTH

The Single Plume Tip CDC Fly



This issue of our newsletter carries an article by Jeremy Lucas describing his experiences fishing the River Eden in the UK. Jeremy often fishes with a limited number of small dry flies (sizes 17, 19, 21) in his river fishing, and a popular choice is the Single Plume Tip CDC, which he claims catches 75% of the fish he takes on the dry.

Why even bother fishing a dry fly when studies show that much of the food found in the stomachs of trout is taken subsurface – nymphs typically. Jeremy addresses this question and suggests that it is the experience of most seasoned river anglers that trout will often turn upwards to take a dry fly, even when feeding on nymphs or seemingly not feeding at all. He says: “I suspect it is something to do with the visibility of duns and spinners as they float on the surface, as well as their vulnerability there. They are comparatively easy targets.”

In discussing the Single Plume Tip CDC pattern Jeremy suggests that everything about this fly has been optimized for presentation. The split tail and sparse body offer an attractive ‘footprint’, and with a single natural CDC plume tip set upright, it appears almost indistinguishable from many of the natural insects present. This is a relatively simple fly to tie, though tying it in such small sizes presents its own challenges.

Pattern Details:

Hook: Jeremy recommends the Tiemco 103 BL in sizes 17, 19 and 21.

Thread: The finest you can find, primrose or black (see body notes below).

Tail: Two strands of Coq de Leon, tied spread in a pronounced V. The tail should be at least the length of the body. The stiffness of the two tail fibres and the V formation should hopefully hold the fly in the correct attitude in the surface film.

Body: Jeremy originally used hare's mask or hare's ear fur dubbed onto primrose tying thread. He then began using mole fur. Whichever of these is used, the body must be tied very sparse. In recent years, however, he has changed to using stripped peacock quill, a material that produces a suitably slim body with good segmentation. But stripped peacock quill is fragile, so to make the fly a little more robust and durable the suggestion is to coat the bed of tying thread with head cement (or even a thin coat of superglue) before tying in the stripped peacock quill. The stripped quill should be tied along the shank toward the eye to a point about a third of the shank length from the eye. The remaining space is left clear to tie in the wing (CDC plume) and then cover this with the thorax.

Wing: The single CDC plume tip is tied in on top of the shank, with the tip facing over the eye of the hook. The length of the wing should be about 1½ times the shank length. The stub of the feather is then tied off.

Thorax: Dubbed mole or hare fur – just enough to cover the stub of the trimmed CDC plume tip, but still keeping the overall body slender. The thorax ideally is just slightly thicker than the abdomen.



This image, from website

<http://ukflydressing.proboards.com/index.cgi?action=display&board=sbs&thread=5509&page=1#38744>

shows a similar tie, by Lucian Vasies. The website shows step by step construction



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 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

June 2012

- 3 Sunday Casting Commences – at the Red Tag Casting Pools
- 7 **Dinner With Partners – Celtic Club** (Convenor - Peter Boag)
- 10 Sunday Casting
- 16 **Annual Cane Makers Day** – at Northern Suburbs Fly-fishers' club rooms
- 17 **Annual Cane Day** – at the Red Tag Casting Pools (Convenor – David Grisold)
- 21 **General Meeting - 8:00 pm at the Celtic Club: Time Plus Communications**
- 24 Sunday Casting
- 27 Council Meeting – 7:00 pm at the Celtic Club

July 2012

- 1 Sunday Casting
- 8 Sunday Casting
- 15 Sunday Casting
- 19 **General Meeting - 8:00 pm at the Celtic Club: Speaker – Peter Hayes**
- 22 Sunday Casting and Casting with Peter Hayes (see advertisement in this issue)
- 25 Council Meeting – 7:00 pm at the Celtic Club
- 28 Warrnambool Annual Game Dinner (VFFA members welcome)
- 29 Sunday Casting

August 2012

- 5 Sunday Casting
- 10/11/12 Annual Bullen Merri trip (Convenor- Hugh Maltby) – date still to be confirmed.
- 12 Sunday Casting
- 15 Council Meeting – 7:00 pm at the Celtic Club
- 19 Sunday Casting
- 24 **Annual Dinner: Speaker – Mike Stevens – Publisher of Fly-fishing books and magazines**
- 25 President's Casting Day

September 2012

- 12 Council Meeting – 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: Details to be confirmed**
- 24 Council Meeting – 7:00 pm at the Celtic Club