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THE VICTORIAN FLY-FISHERS' ASSOCIATION INC.

JUNE 2013

Organisation No. A0024750J

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

www.vffa.org.au

June General Meeting - Bill Classon **Thursday, June 20, 8:00 pm at the Celtic Club -**

Our guest speaker for the June general meeting is well-known angler Bill Classon. Bill is perhaps best known as a significant publisher of Australian angling magazines, books and DVDs. His company, the Australian Fishing Network, publishes a number of popular magazines, with *Freshwater Fishing* and *Flyfisher* being the two that most fly fishers will be familiar with. In recent days the Australian Fishing Network has also begun producing material for television.

But Bill is a top trout angler and fly fisherman in his own right, and will be speaking to us on two fascinating topics – trout fishing in Patagonia and Fly Fishing photography.

**This will be a great night, so mark it in your diary –
Thursday, June 20, 8 pm at the Celtic Club.**

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 Wednesday, June 19, by –

Phone: 0498 254 497, and leave a message,

Or Email – secretary@vffa.org.au



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The June Meeting – An Evening with Bill Classon

Bill is a member of the VFFA. He first started fly fishing in 1968, when he caught his first trout on a dry fly at Bonnie Doon, Lake Eildon. Since then he has dabbled in pharmacy, poled southern bluefin tuna professionally, and spent time roof tiling with Mark Jackson before starting the Australian Fishing Network in 1987.

Since then his life has been focused on fishing, publishing fishing, and more recently filming fishing. He prefers to fly fish but the demands of his work will often find him game fishing or casting a soft plastic. He started *Freshwater Fishing* magazine in 1987 and then later the *Fly Fisher* in 1991 with Rob Sloane. Today he lives in Bayswater and works with a team of fifteen keen anglers to publish books, magazines, DVDs and now Television.

He has fly fished in many places around the world and is well qualified to speak on his chosen topics - Fly Fishing in Patagonia and Fly Fishing photography.

So ensure you have it marked in your diary – Thursday, June 20, at 8 pm at the Celtic Club.



Advance Notice –

The July Meeting: an Evening with Fred Dunford

Our guest speaker for the July meeting is Fred Dunford. Fred has lived at Cooma in the NSW highlands for several years, and over these years has spent countless hours fishing Lake Eucumbene in all its seasons and moods. Accordingly he is now recognised as an authority on the trout fishing in this area, with several articles published in angling magazines to his credit. He is also well known among trout fishers for his superb mudeye pattern, the *Corduliid*, which imitates the mudeyes so prevalent in the lake.

Fred is well qualified to research trout food as he has a degree from the University of New England in biological sciences and was awarded the Howard Sheather prize (1975) for his undergraduate work. He had earlier graduated with a Diploma of Commercial Art from ICS, Melbourne. In the 1990s he fought and achieved a famous victory in his 'Save the Eucumbene' campaign, where he stopped large scale commercial developments along the shores of Lake Eucumbene. A couple of years ago Fred decided to record his knowledge and experiences in a book, and in September 2012 the *Time of the Take* was published.

Fred Dunford is an exceptional angler and an observant fly fisher and fly tier, and will be an engaging, entertaining and very informative speaker at our July meeting. Don't miss this one!

The May Auction



Auctioneer Hughie in action

The May Auction was very well attended and the bidding was fierce. So prices were high and the end result was almost \$6,000 paid to the estate of our dear friend Dr Tony Brothers. Some 40 members dined prior to the Auction, and 65 were in attendance for the actual Auction.

While space doesn't allow a full report on the prices paid, as there were 102 lots, it was interesting to note that a Jungle Cock cape (somewhat rare these days) sold for \$140, and a Hardy Smuggler seven piece rod drew a top bid of \$300.



Hubert checking the merchandise

President Terry Rogers was very keen to acknowledge the many hours of hard work put in by Peter Boag, Hugh Maltby, David Grisold and Rick Dugina in preparing the lots prior to the event, and on the night the Auction ran very smoothly due to the efforts of Hugh Maltby (Auctioneer), Peter Boag and Rick Williams (Lot presenters), Rick Dugina (very busy on his laptop recording the sales), Hamish Hughes (his assistant) and Richard Kos (photographer).

Our thanks to all these members for their hard work in ensuring a successful and enjoyable night.



The gathering crowd



Some of the lots, including that Jungle Cock



The bidding was keen

Sunday Casting

Sunday Casting has commenced. It's a winter activity which is advertised on our calendar. What's it all about? According to our President it's a very casual and relaxed social event run by Joe Haslauer. Joe brings the drinks and eats – tea and coffee, and a fine selection of continental sausages that he barbecues for lunch. He is a great convenor and a wonderful provider of European Smallgoods.

Casting commences at around 9:30 – 10:00 am and finishes between noon and 1:00 pm regardless of the weather. Attendance is not usually large, with 6 - 10 participants there on most occasions. Members bring their rods and practice their casting. They often try other members' rods. They can also bring along any potential new members to try their hand at casting. There are always experienced members there who are willing to assist with some tuition.

Dermot O'Brien gives his perspective: Sunday Casting has kicked off at the Red Tag Casting Pools at Fairfield for 2013, so the very hardy band of Sunday casting enthusiasts are back working on their casting for next season. There is plenty of opportunity to cast and tinker with gear, and there is no end of discussion on rods, reels, lines, trout and trips.

The social aspect of Sunday Casting is just as important as fine-tuning back casts and power snaps. Sunday casting convenor Joe Haslauer and a couple of the regulars lay on hot coffee and biscuits. Anyone interested should simply turn up with their gear.

The Red Tag pool can be found in Fairlea Road off Yarra Bend Road, Fairfield (Melway 44 J2); just look for a hardy bunch of fly fishermen having a coffee and a laugh.

VFFA Notice of Major Event (NOE) June 4, 2013

VFFA Major Event*: Weekend trip to twin Crater Lakes, Purrumbete and Bullen Merri 9th – 11th August

Event Co-ordinator (EC): Hugh Maltby Phone Home 03 9459 2241, Mobile 0423 283 079, Email reddtag@hotmail.com

Event date: Check in Friday 9th August, check out am Sunday 11th August

Cost/s: TBC accommodation based on the number sharing cabin. Saturday night dinner at John Menzies cost dependent on final numbers

Event location & address: Purrumbete Caravan Park, Situated on the banks of Lake Purrumbete, South Camperdown www.gatewaybbs.com.au Telephone 55945377

Travel directions: NA

Transport requirements: NA

Accommodation: Shared Cabin

Sleeping requirements: Bring own bedding and towel

Catering/ food and drink requirements: Self catering Friday night BBQ on site in enclosed camp kitchen, Dinner Saturday night at John Menzies, Bullen Merri Property. BYO drinks

Travel insurance: NA

Description of fishing areas: Crater Lakes, fishing the margins, or out of boat

Whether within mobile phone coverage areas, or otherwise: Within mobile phone range

How physically challenging: Comfortable fishing around edges, quite a walk if fishing from Quarry car park

Fishing license required: Yes if applicable

Strongly recommended personal equipment: e.g. waders/wading boots, gaiters if wet wading, brimmed hat, glasses/sunglasses, sunscreen, wet weather gear, warm clothes, wading staff, UHF/VHF radio, torch at dusk onwards, mobile phone, water, lunch

Essential equipment when fishing out of sight of other participants: UHF radio

Essential equipment for Remote Locations: NA

Guiding: NA

Event Registration Form (ERF): To be completed and returned to the President, Terry Rogers, by Wednesday 31st July, 2013.

Date of issue of this NOE: mandatory for quoting in ERF

Event Registration closing date: Wednesday 31st July 2013

[Please note – the Event Registration Form (ERF) can be downloaded from the VFFA website or obtained at the next meeting]

President's Message

On Friday, May 3, I had much pleasure in attending the Official Dinner to mark the opening of the Australian Fly Fishing Museum at Clarendon in Tasmania. A number of dedicated VFFA members have been heavily involved in getting this unique venture off the ground. I would like to single out one of these members for special mention and this is Mike Stevens, who is the very worthy Inaugural Chairman of the Australian Fly Fishing Museum. Mike has put in an extraordinary amount of effort in bringing this venture to life and this effort will be ongoing as it is the intention of all concerned that the Museum will be a dynamic creature displaying ever changing features concerning the history of Fly Fishing in Australia. All members should go out of their way to inspect the Museum whenever they visit Tasmania.



Our May General Meeting saw the running of a very successful Auction of more than 100 lots, many of which were from the estate of Dr Tony Brothers. I would like to thank our new Auctioneer, Hugh Maltby, for a sterling effort in extracting \$5,800 plus from members on the night. I would also take this opportunity to thank Marty Rogers, who for many years has set the beam at a very high level as the VFFA Master Auctioneer. This year Marty decided that it was time to hang up his Gavel (or put it down) and bring on one of his apprentices. Thank you Marty.

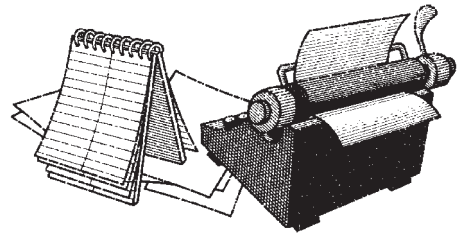
The long term life of the VFFA depends heavily on the recruitment of new members, and the logical starting point for this is to teach young people the art of fly fishing. With this in mind your president gave one of his grandchildren, Tom, a novice lesson in fly-fishing as part of his 10th birthday present. It was a half day venture in country Victoria and was very professionally run, and without giving away the exact location (no advertising in the VFFA Newsletter), there was almost a guarantee of catching a fish. The first half of the lesson was devoted to casting and getting the line to go where you needed to put it. The second half of the lesson was devoted to the different methods needed to be employed in using different types of flies. This was the real “hands on” part of the lesson. The result is obvious in this photograph of Tom with his “First Trout Caught on a Fly”. By the way, his “Shades” were not for polaroiding or shutting out the sunshine (which did not come out that day), they were purely for keeping any wayward flies out of his eyes. I strongly recommend members with young children or grandchildren to consider a venture similar to the one I recently undertook. And I have another six potentials to follow in Tom’s footsteps.



*A budding VFFA member –
well done Tom*

Best wishes, *Terry Rogers* (President)

From the EDITOR'S DESK



“Trout are not native to Australia, they’re the rabbits of the river. Unfortunately, trout are actually worse than rabbits, because they are both carnivorous and voracious.” (Dr Susan Lawler, Department of Environmental Management & Ecology at La Trobe University).

Oh dear, and we thought this battle was over and done with. The above quote, dated May 10, 2013, was published in an article at <http://theconversation.com/rabbits-of-the-river-trout-are-not-native-to-australia-14115>.

I gather Susan is not a keen supporter of our trout. Fortunately they will survive her antipathy - they’re very resilient and firmly established in our Victorian waterways, and it would be an incredibly difficult and expensive exercise to remove them. It would also be very unpopular. There were over 300,000 anglers who purchased a license to fish in Victoria last year, and to that number we can add the countless reprobates and miscreants who fished without a licence. And trout continue to be the most popular target species in Victorian lakes and rivers. The economics is compelling too – towns all over the state that are located near good fishing benefit greatly from the dollars of visiting anglers. The north-east of Victoria is a prime example – the rivers there provide some of our best trout fishing, and tourism in the region is worth over \$200M per year, much of which is contributed by visiting anglers chasing those dreadful trout.

No wonder the state government a few years ago, through the Department of Sustainability and Environment, released a policy statement saying: “Generations of Victorians have enjoyed catching salmonids (trout and salmon) in the state’s waterways. Not only is fishing for salmonid species a popular hobby, it supports a large industry in regional Victoria. While salmonid fish can impact native aquatic fauna, they are an important recreational species that permanently occur in many of our waterways. ... Consequently there are joint benefits in managing waterways for both native fauna and salmonid fisheries.” So I’m confident our trout will be safe for a little while longer.

It’s the narrow-minded bigotry of the anti-trout brigade that gets up my nose. When our forebears, both the crooks and the honest brokers, arrived here a couple of centuries ago they brought with them a huge pile of flora and fauna from ‘back home’. Some of this stuff would have been better left behind but much of it has enriched our lives here enormously. And this is where our anti-trouters become very selective. They don’t go marching up and down Bourke Street holding placards telling the racing industry to send their horses home, or complaining about those confounded sheep and cattle that are not natural to the Australian environment. As for dogs and cats and Auntie Flo’s roses – I mean to say. No – the rest can stay but those terrible trout just have to be removed. How can you take them seriously?

Trout are close to being the most revered recreational fish in the world. They are physically a very attractive fish, and the challenge to deceive them and catch them using various

concoctions of fur and feather continues to draw a passionate and devoted following all over the world. We would be so much poorer without them. And the account of Australia's trout is a wonderful part of our history – the commitment and determination of James Youl and his supporters, who managed to transport trout and salmon ova to Australia in 1864 despite incredible difficulties and two failed attempts, is a gripping and inspiring story.

Well that's my rant for this month. I'll head out later in the week and try to catch a few of those trout in a lake I fish. And my apologies Susan, but any trout I catch I'll carefully release back into the water – they're way too valuable to kill.

Tight lines, *Lyndon Webb*

Cane Makers Day – Saturday June 15

The Cane Makers day will be held again at Northern Suburbs Fly Fishing Club (Melways 184 F5) from around 10am till 3pm. This event is for the makers, both old and new and those who aspire to become makers and wish to learn a few things.

If you have an interest in making cane rods, or in knowing how they are made, then this is an event you would not want to miss.

This event is catered and free of charge, so come along and participate. If you know anglers who are makers or owners of cane rods, please pass on this information so that they can enjoy the company of like-minded fly fishers.

Big VFFA Cane Day - Sunday June 16

Members are reminded that our annual Cane Day is on-
Sunday, June 16, 9:00 am to 3:30 pm

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

The VFFA will provide a BBQ lunch and refreshments. Rod Makers 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 is damp.

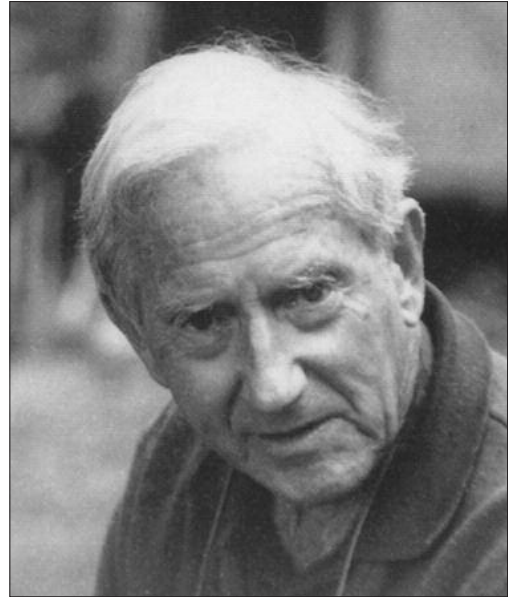
For all details please contact Bernard Holbery on 0432 023 502

or email rlozupone@bigpond.com

David Scholes Writes About Two Old Friends

(Some time ago Andrew Braithwaite provided five articles written by the late David Scholes for FlyLife magazine, but they weren't published after David died. Most of these articles have now been printed in past VFFA newsletters, but the following one wasn't. Enjoy some vintage Scholes.)

A few weeks ago a colleague suggested I might put together a few notes concerning my association with Dick Wigram and Max Christiansen, pointing out that anything to do with the history of these two champions would be of value. I have little doubt that others will have known these two experts as well as or better than I. But what I have to say will be of value. I met Dick Wigram in a little shop that he and Ken Ross owned and ran in Launceston. Whilst I was in England during the war for three years, Hardy Brothers made for me a gem of a little seven foot six inch cane rod, perfect in weight and action, which I managed to bring back to Australia through all the associated difficulties. This rod impressed Dick so much that I sold it to him. Dick at that time lived in a converted garage belonging to Norman Taylor, whose wife Biddy was being looked after by Dick's wife. He was cramped for fly-tying space, only having enough room for his own chair and that of a friend. Here he would make some of those exquisite flies that made his name famous. I think the 'Greenwell's Glory' was his specialty. These he would make for you on request, happily.



Dick took me fishing for the first time to a flooded lagoon on the Lake River, showing me how to use a sunken fly. Next he took me to the Macquarie River where we got blown off and had to retreat to the Pisa Creek on 'Barton.' After our picnic lunch I went upstream while he went downstream. Coming from Victoria, this little stream was right up my alley, and thus returning after about one hour I had four trout to Dick's one!

One day I picked Dick up from 'Kelvin Grove' where he lived at that time and he took me to 'Streanshalh', where the Macquarie River is somewhat different to its lower, more tussocky flats and according to Dick, where trout performed in a more sensible fashion! Certainly he himself performed in a most skillful way, taking no less than his bag limit. I watched him cast both forehand and backhand with an arrow-like accuracy, never stepping into the water once, and playing each trout to the edge before gently netting it out. Those he decided to return to the water he left in the net whilst the hook was removed. This is a picture of Dick Wigram that I shall never forget.

Towards the end of his life Dick had lost most of his friends and he would come unannounced into my office for a chat, always bringing with him a container of new little flies he'd made. "Try this", he would say, "and let me know how it goes!" Every single one

of these flies I have kept in a container which I have now given to Andrew Braithwaite who is a Dick Wigram fanatic!

Max Christensen, on the other hand, I met standing on the old wooden bridge over the Macquarie River at Stewarton. I did very little actual fishing with Max but spent a great deal of time with him in his home at Longford. He had an expansive narrow annex to the lounge in which he tied his flies. Unlike Dick, if you asked him to tie some Greenwell's Glorys for you he would show no interest whatsoever. His entire focus was on the creation of new flies. A full collection is in the Queen Victoria Museum in Launceston, with flies like the 'Yeti', the 'Miss Tasmania', the 'Senator's Choice', the 'Gad Fly', the 'Bloody Mary' and so on! Many an evening I would spend with Max, especially in the winter beside a warm log fire.

Like Dick, he would produce some of his latest creations, and they were creations because they had never seen the light of day before. A great number of these flies are standard patterns used widely today, not only in Tasmania. Around ten o'clock Mary (Max's wife) would declare it bedtime and leave us alone by the fire with a bottle of Johnny Walker on the little table. Soon after this Max would decide it was time for a 'pee on the lemon tree!' Upon his return we would get down to some serious talk!


Now, beside the fireplace on Max's side there were two of Dick Wigram's diaries, both with the same marbled covers; both ledger books which were no more than an inch thick. They were both ruled up the same and from memory he would have the date, location, weather, water conditions and a full account of each day's results. The fascinating thing about these diaries was that on a day when you would expect Max to be on the Macquarie, you'd find him on the South Esk at Strowan, where at times in some places there was a good hatch of fly. All this knowledge had been gained from Dick's diaries.

Max had a tremendous sense of humour and some of his feats should be told by others — like the one where his 4 Wheel Drive, as I understand it, broke the differential on a rock! This occurred far into the highland lakes area of Tasmania, and as told to me he took the bits and pieces and walked to Liawenee, where he managed to hitch a ride to Launceston, gather the spare parts and some oil, and return to the scene. Who knows about this?

Dick's book *The Uncertain Trout* is beautifully written and highly regarded. He wrote a few more bits and pieces, mainly for newspapers, but it's a pity he didn't attempt another book or two.

These two names must surely be at the top of the list of Tasmania's fishermen. It has been a privilege for me to have known these contributors to our sport, and I hope what I've had to say will be of value. There have been others I know, like General Wordsworth and some of those regulars who fished the Shannon Rise annually. My dear old friend Reg Clayton must surely have the chance of a place — gentle, pleasant and dedicated to the sport and enthusiastic in any weather and at any time, he was an example I could not hope to better and there are one or two today like Andrew Braithwaite, Peter McKean and Len Smith who would agree with me.


New Members
Member Login:



VICTORIAN FLY FISHERS' ASSOCIATION

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VICTORIAN FLY FISHERS' ASSOCIATION - FROM 1932 - 2013

Catalogue for the May VFFA 2013 Auction

Event Registration Form

This site has been created to cater, mainly, for the members of this historical association. The history of the association is important in the context of trout and fly-fishing in Australia. Founded in 1932 in its current format the VFFA has had considerable influence in the promotion of the sport and the propagation of trout. The Victorian Fly Fishers' Association Incorporated (VFFA) is a group of fly fishermen which meet monthly to discuss fly fishing and regularly get together to practice the ancient art.

VFFA meetings are held monthly at 8.00pm on the third Thursday of each month at the Celtic Club in Melbourne. At these meetings, following dinner, a guest speaker will address members on an interesting topic relating to fly-fishing. VFFA members are fly fishermen from all walks of life who enjoy sharing their knowledge of fly-tying, casting, stream-craft and other matters relating to the art. Occasional trips are organised including interstate and New Zealand.

Newsletters

What's On

Gallery

VFFA Blog

»» Featured Article

President's Message- May 2013

The April General Meeting was a most enjoyable night. There were about 30 Members who dined at the Celtic Club [...]

Read More

»» Fly of the Month

Fly Of The Month May 2013

The Essential Midge - Mick Hall (Part 2)

Olive Brown female Midge size 14 - Goulburn River (Mick Hall is [...])

Read More

»» Upcoming Events

The May Meeting - Auction of Items from the Estate of Tony Brothers - Item list on home page



The May meeting, on Thursday May 16, will be an auction of fly fishing equipment and a variety of other [...]

Read More

PAST FLY OF MONTH

- » Fly Of The Month May 2013
- » Fly Of The Month April 2013
- » Fly Of The Month March 2013
- » Fly of the Month - February 2013
- » Fly of the Month December 2012.

RANDOM GALLERY IMAGES

GALLERY POSTS

- » The Annual Dinner
- » VFFA Enoch's Point Resort Weekend, April 20 - 22
- » VFFA New Zealand Trip - November 2011 - Two Perspectives
- » The President's Casting Day
- » Tasmania Trip Report

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(Corner , Queen & Latrobe Streets)
Melbourne

Website by [practiceedge](#) | Powered by [WordPress](#)

Home page button

Quick access buttons to popular info

New monthly articles from the Newsletter

Archive of past flies of the month

Gallery photos of events with an event report

About the Vffa Web Site

(from Kevin Finn, our Web Administrator.)

The VFFA created a new web site in July 2012 to meet the changing needs of our members. Connection to the Internet has become an accepted norm in our community for many of our communication needs. No longer are we limited to the monthly Newsletter to get updated Association news; it now can be accessed 24/7 from any location in the world where an Internet connection can be achieved.

Web site features:

The Newsletter continues as the Association's major communication method and now is available in its entirety or by prominent featured articles throughout the new website. In addition, over five years of past copies are stored on the website for easy retrieval.

About the Home page:

This article is one of a series. However this one concentrates on the home page, a pictorial example of which is shown on the previous page with the following features highlighted by arrows and short explanations.

Firstly the home page button is found at the top under the VFFA logo, first on the far left.

Under this we have a series of four delicious fly fishing scenes on river and lake. These four photos rotate approximately every 10 seconds or by manual selection.

Under the VFFA 1932 - 2012 heading we can locate documents relevant to that period, e.g. 'Catalogue for May VFFA 2013 Auction' – click on this blue type and the document will open; you can then print it, save it or share it! The same for 'Event Registration Form'.

Then we have a short two-paragraph story about the VFFA and how it operates.

On the right side of this story there are four large buttons that could be called 'Express Buttons' (They get to the subject quickly).

These buttons are:

Newsletters – this button takes you to the current month's issue and five years' previous copies, all in a clear full colour PDF format.

What's On – this button takes you to a list of dates for the next six months of activities, meetings, trips and casting, updated monthly.

Gallery – this button provides a list of the last 12 months' events with photos and event reports on the details and member highlights.

VFFA Blog – This button provides an opportunity for members to make comment on any subject relating to the VFFA. Currently underused. For interest the word Blog is shortened / distorted from 'Web Log'.

This following area has been designed to give members a quick read of monthly Newsletter highlights.

At the bottom of the light grey section there are 3 areas that can be opened up by clicking on the 'read more' button, the subjects being:

Featured Article

This area is changed monthly and is a selected 'Feature Article' from the current month's Newsletter.

Fly of the Month

This area is also changed monthly and is the current Newsletter 'Fly of the Month' article.

Upcoming Events

This area changes monthly and highlights the next VFFA function / meeting speaker / auction, etc. When opened it also shows the next three events and their calendar dates.

In the 'Dark Grey' area at the bottom the Home Page there are four areas allocated to:

Fly of the Month

There are live links to current and past 'Flies of the Month' together with tying and material instructions / tips.

Random Gallery Images

These images change regularly and are drawn from the over 200 photo images within the VFFA gallery, the gallery being updated regularly with new images. By clicking on an image it will enlarge so you have a clearer appreciation of the photo.

Gallery Posts

This area has live links to the last six events, each link consisting of selected photos from events, trips, etc, together with a written report outlining the personalities and features on the event.

Contact Us

This area is dedicated to how the VFFA can be contacted by mail and the address of our meetings at the Celtic Club.

This Month's Yarn

(from October 1961)

"Did you ever do any fly-casting — I mean in a competition?" asked Hamish Hughes, putting a few more dollars on the counter. "Not lately," replied McTaggart, "but — funny thing — your question does remind me of a bit of clever casting I once did which didn't quite bring the reward it should have."

"I was fishing with an old cobbler of mine, Mick Crewes, on the Upper Yarra near the Woods Point road. We had come to a smooth shallow stretch of water when Mick pointed out that over near the far bank there was an old sunken motor tyre. It evidently reminded him of those hoops we cast into at the Sunday Casting Days at the Red Tag Pools, so he says: "I'll bet you a dollar you can't land your fly into the middle of that tyre first cast."

"Naturally I took him up, and fluke or not, my cast plopped down right in the middle of the tyre. Then blow me down, we were both quite startled when a trout raced out from the undercut bank and seized my fly. I struck instinctively and hooked the fish. It darted like a flash inside the tyre casing and started swimming round and round with over-increasing speed. I admit I didn't quite know what to do. I couldn't see the trout of course, but I kept the line tight - which apparently was the wrong thing to do. Because after about a minute the line went slack, and I had lost the fish. It had worn the leader through where it was rubbing on the rough edge of the tyre casing."

Fishing on the Frontier

(Readers will possibly recall that over the past two years our newsletter has carried articles by Jeremy Lucas on French Nymphing or its development - leader-to-hand fishing. Jeremy was for many years a member of the British team competing in Commonwealth and World Championships. More recently he has mentored the Australian representative team and has worked as a professional guide in the UK and Europe. He is the author of a very popular book - "Tactical Fly Fishing: A Guide for the Advanced and Competition Angler", and countless articles in UK and European angling publications. In two recent articles, summarized here, he describes the recent developments in fly fishing in the UK and Europe.)

From Fly Fishing Magazine – The World of Fly Fishing Online: Fishing on the Frontier - Part 46 - The Leader (October 2012)

The interest and development in leader-only techniques are accelerating rapidly. It has been the influence of the European river masters, stemming from the French, or Euro, leader nymph approach, as well as Tenkara and the Italian pesca alla Valsesiana - both fixed line fly fishing styles – that have been responsible for extending our understanding of the key of presentation.

They have at last begun to take us beyond the limitations of conventional fly lines. The fixed line (particularly Tenkara) has demonstrated the sublime presentation possibilities that are possible, albeit at short range. Usually there is no more than a short length of tippet lying on the water, and sometimes none at all, giving the CDC plume tip (the perfect Tenkara dry fly) or reversed hackle spiders an incredibly life-like appearance, while keeping a very close contact to the rod tip.

Not that the fixed line is the answer to everything in the trout and grayling sector of the sport. There are severe limitations, the most significant of which is the fact that line can neither be gathered (retrieved) nor yielded. Very fine tippets must be used to protect the rod, and if a substantial trout is hooked tippet breakage is almost inevitable, which is irresponsible.

This is where the western-style, incorporating a reel, has the tremendous advantage over the fixed line, because we can retrieve or yield line to deal with a fish. This is hugely significant in practice and is a more responsible mode of fishing where larger fish are targeted, on river or lake. On the other hand, there is the problem of the fly line, which, because it must rest on the water at any range beyond about six metres, gives us the presentation problems with both nymph and dry fly that I have discussed frequently, here and elsewhere. There is, of course, the middle ground, stemming from the Euro leader or the leader-to-hand; collectively coming to be known as leader-only techniques, or just 'the leader', essentially without any fly line involved.

Last month I was on the Welsh Dee, a guest of the Corwen and District Angling Club. It was a training weekend with me focused on the leader with dry fly, while Pavel Adamovski and Daniel Svrcek of the Czech Republic demonstrated the leader with nymph. Dan is one of Europe's top river nymph fishers and was a long-standing member of the outstanding Czech national team. Pavel, also, is a first-rate nymph fisher. Throughout the weekend there was a nasty, cold downstream wind and the expected pale watery and blue winged olive hatches

were poor, restricted to a mere scatter in the early afternoons. The weed growth at this time of year is superb and with the river fairly high, and stained, better nymph fishing than dry fly was expected. In fact, both methods worked well, with dry fly probably having the edge with the larger grayling, though Dan did catch a magnificent 45cm specimen during one of his demonstrations. The overwhelming point, however, was the core theme of presentation, made possible only with the specifically designed leaders that we were using. In Dan's and Pavel's case this was a coloured, knotless Euro leader incorporating an indicator section and double nymph rig. I focused on the presentation leader, described here in earlier articles, with the inevitable CDC plume tip dry fly, size 19 (tied on a Tiemco 103BL hook).

In all cases it was demonstrated that the presentation was demonstrably improved over what is possible with fly line. The direct contact that is achievable with the nymph and the low interaction of leader with the water's surface in the case of dry fly, both lead to the ability to prolong the dead-drift phase of the drift, with contact all the way, which is the single-most important feature of presentation.

The participants during the weekend were all committed river anglers, mostly with quite a lot of experience, though almost exclusively of the fly line orientated school. In all cases by the end of the training sessions they were rising and catching grayling that simply would have been very unlikely to be caught on such heavily fished water, and this was recognised by all. This, indeed, is one of the many great benefits of fishing leader-only, in that disturbance is minimised. Where fly line will decrease the productivity of a river section very rapidly, the leader has almost negligible effect.

The rate of development with the single-handed fly rod is moving at a more rapid pace than ever before, particularly on the river. Both the fixed line and running line sectors are pushing the boundaries of what is possible. The leader-only approach is beginning to dominate in terms of success. It is the ideal compromise.

From Fly Fishing Magazine – The World of Fly Fishing Online: Fishing on the Frontier - Part 47 - The Bridge (December 2012)

What an extraordinary year with a fly rod it has been! While much of the autumn has been spoiled because of the flooded rivers, when we have had a window in the weather the fishing has been magnificent. On the Eden (in Cumbria, UK) the hatches of BWO and pale watery species persisted and though not exactly blizzards they were respectable enough to bring both trout and grayling to the surface. That being said, it has been a 'nymphy' period on this river, and several others I have fished. While I have been hunting down rising fish with plume tips, friends have mostly fished with nymph.

Tom Speak, for example, who is an outstanding example of the new generation of river anglers, has perfected his approach with nymph on leader-only rigs and I find it very difficult to find fault in his technique. It is quite humbling, actually, to see the general standard among young anglers on our rivers, at such a higher level than that of even a decade ago. Gone are the short, over-powered rods, such as the tippy American-influenced rods of that period. Nowadays, we see two and three weights dominating the scene, and there are excellent examples of these in the 9' 6" to 11' range from Marryatt, Greys, Hends and Hanak, among others, which are all capable with the very light approach that has so radically changed the river sport.

This has been in parallel with the uptake of the fixed-line (Tenkara) which also gives us unprecedented control and contact at short range. Lines have almost kept pace, with much improved polymer lines from the likes of Rio (the LT range, particularly the incredible triple zero, which is the equivalent of an AFTMA 0 weight), Scientific Anglers and Hardy. The silk line has made something of a come-back, thanks largely to the beautiful lines produced by Phoenix in France, with the lighter examples such as the AA level offering great adaptability by being adjustable for floating, intermediate or slow sinking presentation, all with zero stretch in a very thin profile.

And finally, of course, we have discovered the enormous benefits of fishing with leader-only, having at last escaped from the entrapment or limitations of the French leader, which while excellent for nymph presentation, is not suitable for dry fly beyond very short range. The contemporary leader-to-hand approach uses a leader that has been designed for the purpose of both nymph and dry fly, and for the casting of these (particularly dry fly) out to very long range on the river (in excess of 15 metres), with control at this range, which neither fly line nor French leader can give to the same extent. The caveat here is that this is indeed very long range on the river; even though we have the capability for presentation and control out to this range, it is almost invariably far better to come down to sub-10 metres.

Two years ago, when I started to broadcast about leader-only, I was seen as something of a maverick; though now it is so satisfying to see the uptake, which in Britain even exceeds that of Tenkara. An increasing number of river anglers have found the presentation benefits of the leader and never want to go back to erstwhile limitations. My own 'presentation leader', discussed here previously, had been developed to such a point that I really could not see any way in which it could be improved. The long, level section of 0.47mm copolymer along with the short, steep taper from 0.55mm to 0.25mm copolymer, to a short, braided nylon monofilament section, in the dimensions that had been developed for optimum casting and control, proved to give excellent performance on a range of European rivers (as well as small lakes).

New Member Welcomed ...

Again we have the pleasure of welcoming some new members this month. Russell Kinghorn and Warren Richmond have recently joined our ranks, and we trust they enjoy many years of pleasurable membership of the VFFA.



*Tichborne
watercolour*

Mataura River

The Opening of the Australian Fly Fishing Museum

Clarendon House, Tasmania

On May 3 the Australian Fly Fishing Museum, housed in a cottage on the grounds of Clarendon on the South Esk River, Tasmania, was officially opened. A number of VFFA members attended the Dinner to mark the occasion, and David Featherstone and Peter Boag have provided their impressions of this significant event.

David Featherstone:

The flight to Launceston carried a number of VFFA members, these including Terry Rogers, David Grisold, Peter Boag, Rex Hunt, David Featherstone, Tony Mitchem, Hugh Maltby, Bill Jeans and Nick Taransky, along with wives and partners.

David and Rhonda Grisold and I visited the museum soon after our arrival and this gave us a wonderful opportunity to inspect the magnificent displays that will show the world what is on offer down under. The 80 guests attending the Opening first gathered at the museum for a preview of the exhibits and then moved to the Property Barn for the Dinner. This was a sight to see – all set up for a magnificent night, superbly catered by the five-star Matson Caterers.



Checking out the displays

The museum committee has worked incredibly hard to prepare for the Opening and deserves our heartiest congratulations. VFFA members who are on the committee include Michael Stevens, Michael Youl, David Grisold, Hugh Maltby, Rex Hunt, and Peter Boag.

Rex Hunt was a superb M.C. and Tammy Fraser, the guest speaker, gave a wonderful address that was extremely well accepted by all of those present. Special thanks are also due to Jenny Chapman, Chief of Clarendon Property Interests of the National Trust of Tasmania.

During the evening a Nick Taransky rod was auctioned for \$7250 - perhaps a record for an Australian bamboo rod. The rod was donated by Nick and had a magnificent Ross reel attached that had been donated by Andrew Braithwaite.

I will not describe all that the museum has to offer – fly fishers must see it for themselves. All Australian fly fishers will be proud of this achievement. We would all wish the committee the very best for the future of this magnificent museum.

David Featherstone, (Past president of the VFFA)

Peter Boag:

After two or more years of talk and planning about a proposed Australian Fly Fishing Museum, the project finally came to fruition at a function to celebrate its opening on Friday, May 3, at Clarendon House in Tasmania. Readers of this newsletter will have read references to the Museum on a number of occasions over this period.

A committee was established under the chairmanship of Mike Stevens, and with the very active participation and strong support of the National Trust Tasmania, a museum has been opened of which fly fishers can be very proud. It is always risky to isolate individual contributors to a project of this nature, but I think we should acknowledge the pivotal role of the chairman, Mike Stevens, and the extraordinary amount of resolution and personal effort he put into this project.



The Opening function was an outstanding success. Rex Hunt was an excellent M.C. for the evening and Tammy Fraser gave a wonderful address as the guest speaker. It was a very happy and memorable evening.

The museum itself is housed in the shepherd's cottage in the grounds of Clarendon House on the South Esk River, about 15 minutes from the Launceston airport in northern Tasmania.

It is very welcoming, interesting, and uncluttered. Its purpose is to collect, care for, interpret, and display angling equipment, art and artefacts that explain the history, traditions and techniques of the sport. The aim is to continue to build on this collection in order for it to evolve with the passage of time.

I recommend to members to visit and be proud of this achievement.

Peter Boag (AFFM Committee Member)

Anglers Explore

(by Dennis Carter, a member who lives in Bendigo, and has recently contributed some delightful articles for our newsletter. Here is the first of them.)

Anglers explore terrain.

For me much of the fun of fishing comes from exploring. As my wife reminds me, I have drawers full of maps. Whenever I am driving with time to spare I take a different route, turning off to the dirt tracks, always searching; down into the valleys which might contain a stream.

In my younger days I explored constantly the tracks, creeks and streams of the Ovens and Buckland Valleys, the feeders to Lake Eildon, the Cobungra and Victoria Rivers, and the myriads of small streams which enter the ocean from the Otways.

Often I would do this by myself. Most of the Otways streams were explored in the company of Bungers, a lovable, smiling 'bittsa' bitch who would walk behind me all day, never disturbing the water. She would sit patiently just beyond back-casting distance while I teased a small trout from a modest, but beautiful pool below a canopy of tree ferns under a forest of giant eucalypts.

Other exploring was in the company of Chris, who would never angle, but who was always keen to explore - sometimes, in fact more often than not, in circumstances which others might call dangerous. One day, not so long ago, we decided to climb Carisbrook Falls, now sensibly illegal. I don't quite remember, but Chris assures me that at one stage in the thickening Otways drizzle he slipped and only just managed to save himself. We climbed and climbed, stunned with vertigo, passing my rod to each other until at last at the top of the falls the ground leveled, the sun shone and we came to the first pool.

No sign of a fish. But at the next pool, it happened. We scrambled over damp rocks to a pool of true beauty, enshrouded below a canopy of the lush verdant foliage of huge ancient eucalypts and lesser blackwoods and tree ferns. Above the pool a shallow waterfall tumbled over mossy boulders into our pool, which was bathed in filtered golden sunlight. Beyond the head of the pool there shone a rainbow and at the foot of the rainbow rose a trout. We watched and he rose again, a positive feeder. For some reason I tied on a small green nymph and cast to the trout in the sunlight. He took it with no hesitation and after a brief struggle we had him, a monster for the pool of more than a kilogram. We forgot about the hard ascent up the falls and climbed sideways out of our shallow canopied gully into a grassy field of bright sunshine, which led back down to the Great Ocean Road. That was an exceptional trout.

Another time, off Skenes Creek Road, exploring again, Chris and I descended an ever-narrowing ridgeline and found ourselves in forest at its end, looking sideways straight at the face of a waterfall that cascaded beside us through forest and fern to a pool very many metres below in Skenes Creek.

Years earlier, Chris and I made a cross-country journey in an open army jeep, prospecting and fishing our way to Glen Innes in northern New South Wales. Early in the trip we caught trout with Terry in the tiny North Creek which flows into Eildon Weir. We camped and sluiced for gold in the Buckland Valley. Driving into our campsite on the Buckland after days on the road, we rounded a corner on the overgrown access track to find ourselves staring into a car at a glorious naked blonde and a male doing a little exploring themselves. She and he lived in our memories.

As our success as prospectors was not huge, we found work carting hay - hard toil which we did for several days. Naturally, after this we developed a significant thirst and visited the Porepunkah pub full of bravado and with money to burn. As we ordered our first pots, the barman glanced at us and Chris and I glanced at one another - instant recognition. The barman was the man with the beautiful blonde and he must have been doing what he didn't "oughta", for though no words were said, we didn't pay for a single beer during the days we were there.

We traveled on over Mt Hotham in the open jeep in a snowstorm, stomping our feet wrapped in sleeping bags on the jeep floor, singing at the top of our voices: "It's a Long and Winding Road". We got to Queensland, beyond Armidale via Hill End and Sofaia, found out how difficult it was to find the yellow stuff, and after some time turned south back home to our girlfriends of the time.

Another time, Chris and I found our way to a nice corner of the Lagoon of Islands in Tasmania. We found a gutter that led out from shoreline to some interesting looking ribbon weed beds and almost immediately spotted a swirling smelting trout. The lovely Mrs Simpson and a lucky cast did their stuff and very soon I was playing a very nice and large trout which leapt about a bit, but was extracted and in those days, kept for the pot. Immediately, our reverie was disturbed as boating anglers who had spotted the commotion arrived alongside. We departed feeling quite ok.

The thing is, us anglers like to imagine that discovery is always just around the next bend in the stream. Last year ever hopeful I tried some quite local exploring. I'd heard of a stream not that far away, again on private property where nobody fishes, and obtained permission to fish it. It looked interesting and the imagination was running. I thought it possible that I may find large trout. The word was that it had contained rainbows.

I was full of anticipation. I expected the stream may also contain blackfish and galaxias, and there could be the odd resident brown. I tried it by myself. Some tiny fish prodded my fly and something a little larger rose to it, but I missed it on the strike. Next time I thought, I'll take a friend as a spotter. There are deep mud-bottomed, tannin-stained pools overhung by old eucalypts, with tangled roots hanging on to yabby-holed clay. Fishy water. It's spring fed, near-permanent and it looked good - we'll see thought I.

Well, I've been back - by myself. Fear of snakes kept the spotter at home. I've walked and explored and have not seen a trout. They may be in this creek that flows into a creek that flows into Lake Eppalock, but they will be few and far between. Ross, who lives there, fondly recalls the days when as a boy he would fish the creek with his Dad when they drifted their worms down the pools to catch rainbow trout. But that was probably 30 years ago when Eppalock was stocked and the fish migrated up the entering streams searching for places to spawn. Since then, there have been droughts, springs have dried, water temperatures have risen during hot, dry summers and except perhaps in the deepest coolest pools, trout have died. With successive wet years, they may return, but it's not really trout country and the prospect of successive wetness in this country is sadly, now remote.

For the country which encourages them, we need in this Central part of Victoria to travel south towards Daylesford and Ballarat, or to the Otways, or east to the mountains in our little south-east corner of this vast arid land.

Dennis V. Carter, August 19, 2002

UK Report – from Phil Bailey

The season has been abnormally slow this year and it is generally thought that we are about a month or so behind most other years. Late snow at the end of March combined with cold weather meant that the snow-melt took nearly three weeks, thus keeping the rivers very cold. To date the early hatches of Olives and March Browns has been poor, bringing very few fish to the surface to feed. Not good for dry fly fishermen like me. In addition, we have had very little rain over the past few months so the rivers are on their knees - very low and ultra clear. Lay a line over any fish you are lucky to see feeding and they're off. Poor Rod Barford is over here at the moment and he has encountered these poor fishing conditions in the north of the country. But some fish have been caught and my most successful fly (in fact I haven't even used any other pattern) has been one I devised in 1986 and named by the late Dr R. A. (Tony) Brothers as the 'Man O Ross'. I had thought that this fly had featured in the Newsletter at some stage but on checking I see that it is not listed. So for all of you dry fly fishermen and fly tiers here it is.

Man O Ross (M.O.R.)

History:

I devised this fly in 1986 in an attempt to produce a dry fly which was a 'generalist' pattern and which I felt incorporated the right sort of trigger points to trick a trout or two. Originally I called it the '50:50 Fly' as the tail was 50% the length of the hook shank and about half the length of a normal tail on a dry fly. The body was 50% of the hook shank with the hackle forming the remaining 50%. And to complete the fly 50% of the hackle was removed under the body.

At the time I had no idea that this fly would prove so successful in all types of hatches. I originally tied it in both dark and light shades.

Its inauguration was in the summer of 1986/87. Tony Brothers and I went across to fish in Tasmania, but instead of heading 'up top' to the highland lakes we decided that on this trip we would fish the lowland streams around Launceston. For the first part of the week we stayed at the Kings Meadow Hotel and fished the lower Macquarie River and Brumbys Creek system. I remember that trip well as Tony somehow managed to befriend the breakfast lady (she would roll her eyes at him) and get an extra two slices of toast or rashers of bacon. We often laughed about that.

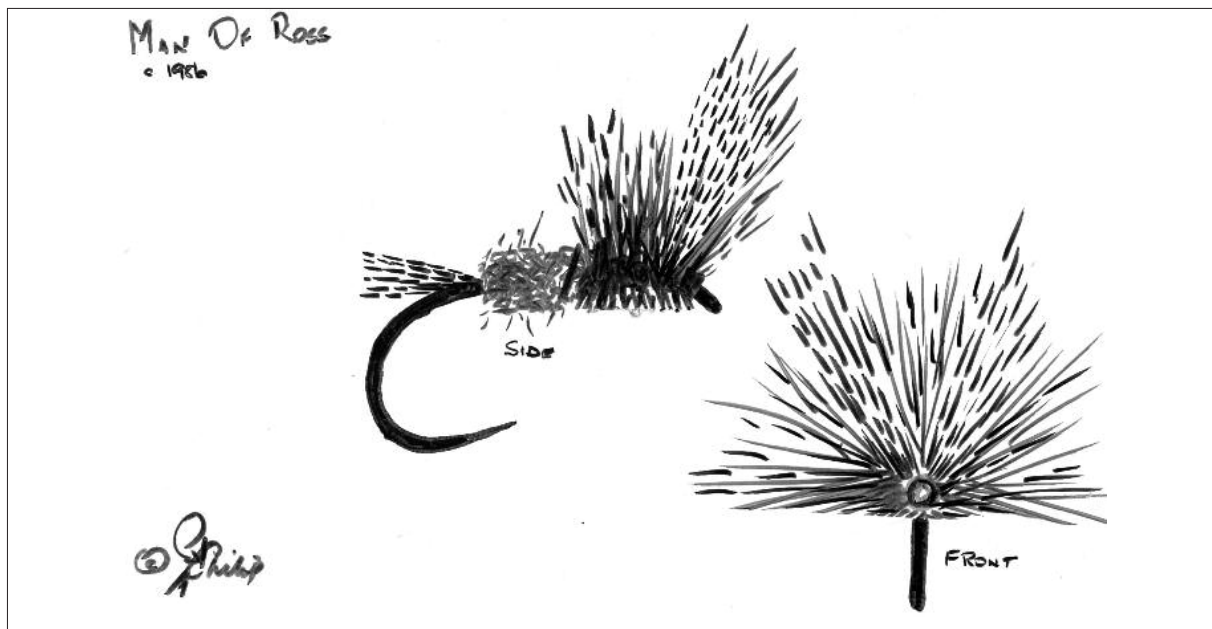
However the second part of the trip involved fishing the South Esk and Break 'O Day rivers, stationing ourselves in Ross. The first day was on the Break 'O Day, and as we arrived mid-morning we could already see fish rising steadily all along the stretch we intended to fish. As we climbed the fence I heard Tony cry: "They're on black spinners", and off he went downstream casting madly at rising fish with Noel Jetson's black spinner. I, on the other, had just stopped at the pool where we started and decided to fish it all a bit more cautiously. I don't recall what made me take out the 50:50 Fly and tie it on, but it quickly tricked a good-sized fish.

Tony had caught two fish on his spinner whilst I quickly tallied up five fish on the 50:50 Fly. "What fly are you using?" he yelled as he saw me reel in a few more than he had. "My new fly - the 50:50 Fly", I replied. With that he rushed over and absconded with a couple of my flies.

“Agh! What sort of fly is that?” he barked. “You won’t catch anything with that,” he added. But I did notice him changing his fly and after we each caught a few more fish the spinner fall stopped and the rising fish followed suit.

Now this was the most fish I had caught in one fishing session in those days and I was chuffed that I had done so well with the new pattern and had even out-fished Tony. As we drove back to the hotel in Ross we discussed the new fly and it was Tony’s opinion that it needed a better name. His suggestion was the ‘Man O Ross’ as we were staying in the Man O Ross hotel, and my second name was Ross. I think the pattern is still on the wall at the hotel.

This fly went on to become successful on the lakes in Tasmania while polaroiding cruising fish or presented to a tailing fish in the western lakes. It came into it’s own in 1988 and 1989 when Iven Affleck, Dr Andy Hodson and I were fishing Eucumbene in the December of those years when the Chironomid were balling up. Andy coined it the M.O.R. for short and both names have stuck.



Today:

It is hard to believe that this fly was first created nearly 30 years ago. It has proven successful on three continents, in 15 countries and on both stillwaters and streams. I have never been without it and since 1986 I have changed the tying a little more (see patterns below). It can represent an emerging fly, a trapped insect, a dun, a caddis, a buzzer and at times even a beetle. It is simply a generalist pattern that works all the time. I have a full fly box of these in my vest and invariably when I am dry fly fishing the Man O Ross comes out first, and often it stays on all day. It works because it has a lot of good ‘trigger points’ – abdomen and thorax profile, buggy looking, rides high and can be fished across the waves of a lake or riffles in a stream, and represents a good cross section of trout food. I have used it with success in dun hatches, caddis hatches, when buzzers are balling, and when there are beetles about. And even when a Gum Beetle fall is happening. It is great for polaroiding or when fishing a static fly on lakes. I have even used it as the top dropper in a team of bumble flies on Arthurs Lake.

Tying it:

1. I tie this on sizes 12, 14, 16 & 18 hooks. Originally I used a Kamasan B160 because I liked the wide gape. These days I use a lighter hook and my preferred hook is the Partridge SLD barbless.
2. Place the hook in the vice and take the tying thread (see below for colours) down the hook shank for 5-6 turns.
3. At this point you tie in the wing. Roll it and then tie it over the eye of the hook. Pull it upright and place a few turns of thread to 'cock' it. Split it and figure of eight between to produce a rolled split wing. The correct position should see it slanting forward over the hook eye.
4. Trim off the excess and take the thread down to the tail end of the hook shank. Now take a smaller section of wing material and make sure all points line up. Tie this in short. A good gauge is to think about making a 'tag' rather than a tail. It must be short to give the correct profile.
5. Trim the excess and then dub the body to a point halfway along the hook shank.
6. Prepare two hackles. One must be a Grizzle hackle which is tied in and wound forward last. Take four turns behind the wing and two in front with both hackles. This should fill up the remainder of the hook shank. The grizzle hackle, together with the wings, create an excellent UV Reflection trigger point which is critical to trout locating food (read: The New Scientific Angling – Trout and Ultraviolet Vision – Reed F. Curry 2009).
7. Tie off the hackles making sure to keep the head clean and then trim the hackles flat underneath in line with the body.

Patterns which have evolved since 1986:

Name:	Original	Olive	Orange	Light	Black
Hook size	12, 14,16	14, 16,18	14	14, 16	16,18
Thread	Black	Yellow	Orange	Yellow	Black
Wings/Tail	Bronze Mallard	Lemon Wood duck	Orange Dyed Wood duck	Light wood duck	Wood Duck
Body	Natural Hare ear	Hare poll (light)	Orange hares ear	Light Hare poll	Black dyed hares ear
Hackle (1)	Dark Ginger	Blue Dun	Hot Orange Grizzle	Honey Dun	Black
Hackle (2)	Grizzle	Grizzle	Grizzle	Grizzle	Grizzle
Represents	Large Dun, March Brown, General insect	Large Dark Olive, Blue Wing Oliver-Richard Gasaway Sedge	Great Lake Beetle	Caddis	Buzzer, balling Chironomid, beetle.

Montana 2007 - No Breaks, No Sprains, No Open Wounds

(by Joe Kahler, who resides in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. What's it like organizing a fishing trip when you live in the USA? Read on ...)

After months of anticipation and weeks of planning, “Catch” Cormier, Jim Thompson, and I boarded the (now sadly defunct) Frontier Airlines flight out of Baton Rouge at 5:40am on September 7, 2007. The pre-boarding routine was marred only by the fact that the name on Catch’s ticket didn’t exactly match the name on his driver’s license, so he had to jump through a couple of hoops before they’d let him go through the check point. I think they made him recite the Pledge of Allegiance, or the recipe for cornbread, or something. In any case, we were all officially approved for travel in our nation’s airways and safely fastened in when the plane took off at 6:00 am. With a brief layover to change planes in Denver we found ourselves on the ground in Billings, Montana, at 10:30 am (their time). God bless Frontier Airlines wherever it is now!

We made a couple of stops for provisions, including a bottle of good bourbon and a few steaks with which to bribe the doorman at our first place of lodging, and by afternoon we’d driven to Absarokee/Nye, checked into the (Rich and Carol) “Evans Hilton”, suited up, and begun the process of remembering how to wade fast water over slippery surfaces. The Stillwater River - a few steps from the back porch at Rich’s place - is not aptly named. It’s anything but still, and the bottom is strewn with smooth, round-edged rocks ranging in size from a loaf of bread to a garbage can. There’s literally no flat place to put your foot, so a wading staff is de rigeur.

That first afternoon fishing was, as it always is for me in cold water streams, a lesson in humility. My fingers couldn’t recall how to tie a Harvey Dry Fly Knot in less time than it would take me to tie the Adams I was trying to attach to the tippet. With every step or two I’m desperately trying to remember whether I packed my Blue Cross card, because I know my present upright and intact condition is tenuous and probably temporary. My casting arm is dialed in on throwing lead-eyed Charlies on a #2 hook with an 8-weight; a Hopper on a 5-weight just doesn’t seem to register. Feeling the rod load for the first 15 minutes or so is pretty much a sometimes thing. This, of course, mean lots of muffed casts, wind-knots, decidedly unnatural drifts, and wasted time picking flies out of leaves, clothing, and if I’m not lucky – body parts. Any delusions I may have had about being “an experienced cold-water angler”, or the stand-in for Brad Pitt in the sequel to *A River Runs Through It*, are dashed quickly and thoroughly.

But we’re there, by God! Right there in the mountains, in the cold water, in the cool, thin air of Montana! The climate is particularly welcome, because back home in Baton Rouge it’s that time in the year when we take a morning shower, dress in dry, fresh clothes, and in the time it takes to walk from the house to the car, break into projectile sweating that has us looking like the old TV detective, Columbo with a bad hangover, by the time we get to work. I revel in the cold of the river I can feel through the fabric of my waders. And I can see the trout from time to time, dimpling the surface in just the places where I’d expect them to be.

As the afternoon passes my various body parts begin to get it together, and I'm able to lay out a few nice casts, float a few decent drifts, and pick up a few beautifully colored, wild, brawny trout with shoulders on 'em. At one point Jim and I were fishing together on a stretch of shady river, Jim downstream on a bend below an old wooden bridge that has somehow managed to stay intact to span the Stillwater. I looked over my shoulder to make sure he was okay and - it's like a picture from Currier and Ives - a classic fly fishing scene. I had to stop fishing for a minute and just let the image settle into my brain. To top it off, at just that point in time a flock of wild turkeys decided to stroll across the bridge. We counted a cortege of no less than 41 turkeys filing across on parade! There were deer all over that area too, and Rich likes to tell of the bear who took to raiding the apple trees in the little enclave of homes on his part of the Stillwater. The bear was NOT a tidy guest, and I'll spare you the details but suffice it to say that what goes in must come out.

We spent two nights with Richard and Carol, whose hospitality was gracious and relaxed; then Rich accompanied us up over Beartooth Pass, where we got snowed and sleeted on (in September! - remember where I live). Our host put us on great water on the eastern side of Yellowstone National Park (YNP). The four of us spent that night in Cooke City, and Rich fished the Lamar in the park with us the next day. There had been some recent rain so the Lamar was a little cloudy, but the cutthroat trout didn't seem to mind at all. By now I was beginning to hit stride, but my body was nowhere near done protesting the fact that I'd taken it from a cushy office chair, and forced it to stand, walk, climb, wade, and cast a fly rod for 10 hours a day in oxygen-thin elevations. Any time I stopped fishing it would whine about needing to sit down, or lie down, or it'd complain about needing more aspirin than I'd brought with me. I was forced to deal with it by continuously fishing, to which it responded by shutting up quite nicely.

At one point I spied a lone buffalo grazing up river on a bluff above a bend. Figuring I'd always done well fishing under the eyes of buffalo, I decided to hike/wade in that direction. Soon I came upon an area where trees had fallen into the river from a high bank. Opposite was a small stream of water that joined the main body, and as nature would have it, there was a deep hole where these features all came together. I tied on a fresh Parachute Clickety-Click - a fly I'd designed to imitate the local grasshoppers - and sailed it into the small stream where it got caught up in a perfect drift into the main course. Wham! A big cutthroat rose from those murky depths and slammed my fly, putting up a heck of a fight before coming to hand. I'm still amazed at how trout can see relatively small insects moving toward them at fast rates, and strike them effectively with such little apparent effort. What's more, I can't figure out how they can do all that and, at the last moment, pull the plug on a strike if something seems "hinky" about the fly. Luckily Jim was handy to take a photo of my brave trout, and I'm happy to report he was released in hale and hearty condition, whereupon he flipped me the fin and swam off to sulk.

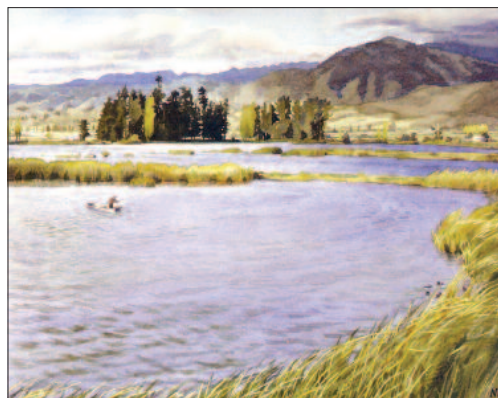
From there Rich returned home, and Jim, Catch, and I went on to stay in "West" (the little town of West Yellowstone). Our room there was rustic, large, and comfortable, with a little kitchen we hardly used. The next day we fished the Barnes Holes on the western side of the park, where Jim and Catch picked up some great, monstrous trout. I was trying a new method I'd seen a guide demonstrate on a DVD - fishing streamers with a sinking line. But no luck and, as we soon learned, we were too early for the really BIG trout to make their annual spawning migration run from the lake. Later that day we fished the Junction (where the

Firehole and the Gibbon come together to form the Madison), but all we picked up were little “dinks” for the most part. Must’ve been a gazillion of them taking midges from the surface. The disappointing size of the trout was odd, because I’d caught the rainbow of the trip the previous year in these same waters; but that had been three to four weeks later in the season.

The next morning we popped in to see the legendary Bob Jacklin in his outfitter’s shop in West, hoping we could pick up a few flies and some information from the man himself about what was fishing well. Sure enough, he was there and, as always, glad to say a bit about where to wet a line. He mentioned a spot between Hebgen and Quake lakes that we tried, but were disappointed by. It was a bluebird day and I don’t think anybody except perhaps Bob himself would’ve done much better than we did. Bob continues to lament the decline in the numbers of cutts in the Yellowstone River, and he’s advocating that they be hatchery-raised and salted into the river to support the population. Yellowstone cutts have been hit hard by drought, heat, and especially the lake trout that feed on their young. The fisheries biologists are doing what they can to clean the lake trout out of Yellowstone Lake by gill netting, but they’re categorically opposed to putting hatchery fish in the river – which is odd since 40% of the waters in YNP were fishless when the park was established, and it’s only because of human efforts that rainbow, brown, and brook trout exist in the park at all. Cutts are the only trout native to the area and deserve a helping hand against the larger, more aggressive lake trout that humans introduced to their yards just a few decades ago.

The days kind of run together after that for me, but I know we hit the Barnes Holes again and I did better this time, fishing dry flies. We fished the West Fork of the Madison and, on the last day before we had to leave, the Gallatin. We fished \$3 Bridge, where I slipped and fell while walking over grass-covered stones along the bank. I guess Somebody was looking out for me, because instead of hitting something hard and breaking a wrist, or an ankle, or (worse yet) a Winston fly rod, I landed on my backside in a nice soft bit of ground. It was very much like falling into an easy chair, and I just had to sit there for a while since it was the most comfortable position I’d been in all morning. The only reason I got up was because my body was starting to whine again about the nice, soft chair in my office being a much less dangerous place to sit. Had to fish to shut it up.

As predicted, not a harsh word was spoken between the three of us in the ten days we were together. Jim got to celebrate his 70th birthday in the most perfect way I can ever imagine, and I for one was greatly impressed by the pace he kept as we lashed the streams. Catch landed the biggest fish and reclaimed his crown. And in nine days on the water, some of them wading pretty treacherous territory, there were no breaks, no sprains, and no open wounds. All in all, a pretty good trip!



*Tichborne
watercolour*

Lake Aniwhenua

Report From Way Out West ...

(Jim Blakeslee tells us something about Toolondo – a lake that dried up in the drought but has now made an impressive return ...)

Members of the Warrnambool Fly Fishing Club recently headed off to Lake Toolondo for a weekend, and found the lake 46% full at present. There were quite a few boats with fly fishers about when we arrived. From stickers on the rear window of one car we figure it was a group of Yarra Valley Flyfishers. Anyway, we had good weather on the Friday, when only two of us had arrived early enough to fish that day. After setting up camp at the caravan park, Phil Hoey and I launched the boat and got onto the water at about 2:30 pm. Fish were rising and jumping at blue damsels only 50 metres off the bank, so we didn't have to go far with the boat. We cast Pedder Bugs to the rises - strip, pause, strip and wham! We were into fat 3 lb browns that leapt and carried on until being netted. These fish had been liberated only 18 months previously, so their growth rate has been phenomenal. We had four of them in the boat by 3:30 pm and ended up with three fish each, one of which was a rainbow, when we went ashore at 5:00 pm.



One of many magnificent browns caught by Jim

Back at the camp Peter Hussey, Adrian Jacobs, George and Ellen Burrow, Hafey Rock and a new member, Callum LaSpina, were sitting around a roaring campfire getting tea ready. They were itching to hit the water the next morning after seeing our bag of trout.

Unfortunately, Saturday was blowing a gale out of the north all day and fishing was hard. We did a lot of flogging the water, drift fishing or anchored up around the trees. On some occasions we climbed out on sand islands and waded. In the end, I got another 3 lb rainbow on a #6 Green Matuka for my efforts. Callum went out for the evening rise on the western shore, and came back rather elated with a 3½ lb brown. Others nil.

On Sunday morning there was a gentle westerly breeze, with cloud moving in. Conditions looked promising as we packed up camp. Callum returned from the dawn patrol with another nice brownie. He's used to the small fish that generally come out of the north-eastern rivers, so for him his two fish were "wall-hangers." Fishless, Hafey looked a bit distraught as he had to return home to stack four ton of firewood that was being delivered that morning. George and Ellen were still packing up when Peter Hussey, Adrian Jacobs and I took our boats around to the boat ramp at the north end of the lake, launched and motored across to the west shore. The fish there were chasing minnows around the dead trees in the lake. After two hours it was time to go. I ended up with three more browns on the matuka, the largest being a 51 cm 4 pounder. Adrian was grinning from ear to ear when he reported that he had boated 5 fat browns by the time had Peter hooked into his first fish of the trip. We pulled the boats out at noon, had lunch and discussed our next raid on Toolondo. The way the fish are moving at present, I think it will be sooner rather than later.

Jim Blakeslee

FLY OF THE MONTH

Muz Wilson's Fuzzle Bugger



(As tied by Rick Innes)

There are some flies that have earned the label 'absolutely essential – must be in the fly box'. No doubt there will be plenty of discussion on which flies ought to be on the list but I'm sure the Royal Wulff would get the tick from most anglers, as would the Parachute Adams. Another would certainly be the Woolly Bugger – a fly that has proved it's worth time and time again, particularly for fishing stillwaters.

Some years ago Murray ('Muz') Wilson, well-known professional fly tier and fly designer, introduced his hugely successful 'Fuzzle-style' flies, and the Woolly Bugger was given a new overcoat. Did it work? Peter Morse, for one, was very complimentary about its performance, and Rick Innes, who has provided the information for this month's Fly of the Month, describes it simply as 'deadly'. Rick frequently fishes stillwaters around the Ballarat area in Victoria, and claims that this fly has won him hundreds of fish over the past few years. It is his 'go to' fly for searching the water when there's no obvious indications of feeding trout.

Black Fuzzle Bugger, as tied by Rick Innes

Hook: Tiemco Model 700, sizes 6 - 10
Thread: Black 6/0
Tail: Black Marabou – soft fluffy plumes
Body: Tiewell Super Salt Chenille - Peacock Green
Dub: Black Fuzzle Dub

Tying Procedure:

1. Put the hook in the vice and tie thread along the shank from just behind the eye to just short of the hook bend.
2. Tie in a generous bunch of black marabou feathers for the tail. A popular technique here of course is to dampen the marabou with some water to make it more manageable and less unruly whilst tying it in. The marabou tail should be a little longer than the hook shank.
3. Wind the thread back along the hook shank towards the eye to tie down the butts of the marabou. Tie off the marabou leaving a short clear space behind the eye.
4. Tie in the end of the Super Salt chenille at this point and then lay the chenille along the top of the shank and wind the thread back along the shank, binding the chenille along the top of the shank. Let the rest of the strip of chenille hang down and wind the thread back towards the eye.
5. Now for the ‘fuzzling’ bit – wind some small clumps of black Fuzzle Dub loosely and evenly around the chenille, and then wind the dubbed chenille forward, tying it off whilst leaving that clear space behind the eye.
6. Dub some more of the black Fuzzle Dub directly onto the thread and use it to fill that space behind the eye. While you are winding this dubbing on keep pulling and stroking the Fuzzle Dub back towards the tail.
7. Build up a small head, then tie it off and whip finish.
8. Take a piece of Velcro and gently comb the Fuzzle Dub back towards the tail.

Notes on fishing the fly:

This fly can be tied with a beadhead, but Rick suggests it works well without the bead. The fly can be tied in other colours, with olive green being a popular choice. Rick often fishes this fly on an intermediate fly line, using short sharp strips in his retrieve. After a couple of strips he stops and lets the fly sink briefly, then strips it again – this action causing the marabou and Fuzzle Dub to open and close as the fly moves through the water. Rick uses the fly as a searching fly, fishing it at differing depths to find where the fish are feeding. He assures us it is also a great evening fly.

Here is another photo of the fly – this time a commercial tie:





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 Peter Boag 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.

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
Wine glasses and whisky glasses inscribed with VFFA logo, set of 6.....	\$45.00 per set
Cloth badges	\$7.00 each
<i>The Australian Trout</i> by Jack Ritchie.....	\$20.00
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 2012 Annual Dinner:

Aussie Angler Pty Ltd • Armadale Angling • Australian Fishing Network • Flyfisher Magazine • FlyLife Magazine • Hayes on Brumbys • Hookup Bait and Tackle • J. M. Gillies Pty Ltd • Mayfly Tackle, Mick Hall Flies • Millbrook Lakes Lodge • Nick Taransky Bamboo Rod Maker • Pro-Angler Tackle • Ray Brown Onkaparinga Flies • Stevens Publishing Pty Ltd • The Compleat Angler Box Hill • The Flyfisher Tackle Store • The Fly Fishers Rod and Creel in Thornbury • Vision and Pisces Fly-Fishing Tackle

VFFA Meetings & Activities

June 2013

- 2 Sunday Casting commences at the Red Tag Casting Pools (9:00 am – 1:00pm)
- 6 Dinner with Partners – at the Celtic Club (Convenor - Peter Boag)
- 9 Sunday Casting - at the Red Tag Casting Pools (9:00 am – 1:00pm)
- 15 Annual Cane Makers' Day – Northern Suburbs Fly Fishing Club
- 16 Annual Cane Day – at the Red Tag Casting Pools (Organised by Bernard Holbery)
- 20 General Meeting - 8:00 pm at the Celtic Club: Speaker – Bill Classon**
- 23 Sunday Casting - at the Red Tag Casting Pools (9:00 am – 1:00pm)
- 26 Council Meeting – 7:30 pm at the Celtic Club
- 30 Sunday Casting - at the Red Tag Casting Pools (9:00 am – 1:00pm)

July 2013

- 7 Sunday Casting - at the Red Tag Casting Pools (9:00 am – 1:00pm)
- 14 Sunday Casting - at the Red Tag Casting Pools (9:00 am – 1:00pm)
- 18 General Meeting - 8:00 pm at the Celtic Club: Speaker – Fred Dunford**
- 21 Sunday Casting - at the Red Tag Casting Pools (9:00 am – 1:00pm)
- 27 Warrnambool Annual Game Dinner
- 28 Sunday Casting - at the Red Tag Casting Pools (9:00 am – 1:00pm)

August 2013

- 2/3/4 Annual Bullen Merri trip (Convenor – Richard Kos)
- 4 Sunday Casting - at the Red Tag Casting Pools (9:00 am – 1:00pm)
- 11 Sunday Casting - at the Red Tag Casting Pools (9:00 am – 1:00pm)
- 14 Council Meeting – 7:30 pm at the Celtic Club
- 18 Sunday Casting - at the Red Tag Casting Pools (9:00 am – 1:00pm)
- 23 Annual Dinner – Guest Speaker: Jim Allen**
- 24 President's Casting Day - 10am to 3pm at the Red Tag Casting Pools

September 2013

- 11 Council Meeting – 7:30 pm at the Celtic Club: preparation for the AGM
- 19 Annual General Meeting - 8:00 pm at the Celtic Club.**

October 2013

- 17 General Meeting - 8:00 pm at the Celtic Club: Speaker – Rick Dugina**
- 23 Council Meeting – 7:30 pm at the Celtic Club
- 25 – 27 Re-scheduled Donger Challenge at the Bairnsdale Fishing Lodge

November 2013

- 15 - 17 Annual Warrnambool Trip – Convenor Hugh Maltby
- 21 General Meeting - 8:00 pm at the Celtic Club – Book Auction**
- 27 Council Meeting – 7:30 pm at the Celtic Club

December 2013

- 12 Christmas Dinner at the Celtic Club - Guest Speaker: John Diggle (CEO Tasmanian IFS)**

February 2014

- 15 – 21 Annual Trip to Tasmania, staying at Hayes on Brumby's