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THE VICTORIAN FLY-FISHERS' ASSOCIATION INC.

OCTOBER 2009

Organisation No. A0024750J

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

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

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**NEXT MEETING – FLY TYING WITH THE MASTERS  
AT THE KELVIN CLUB, 8:00 PM, THURSDAY OCTOBER 15, 2009**

# The September AGM

The September general meeting was the Annual General Meeting of the VFFA, the agenda of which was distributed as an insert in the September newsletter. Council members, along with a small number of other members, were present to hear the President's report, the Financial Statement and Treasurer's report, the presentation of the Tom & Frank McDonough Memorial Trophy to David Grisold, and the announcement of the members of the new Council.

Office Bearers and Councillors for the year 2009 / 2010 are:

President	Peter Boag
Senior Vice President	Rick Dugina
Junior Vice President	Terry Rogers
Secretary	Richard Garvey
Treasurer	Tony Mitchem
Editor	Lyndon Webb
Librarian	Marty Rogers
Councillors	Hamish Hughes
	Richard Kos
	Hugh Maltby
	John Pilkington
	Colin Morrison
	Joe Haslauer
	Paul Squires
	Rick Williams

Richard Garvey was welcomed onto Council as the new secretary, and Colin Morrison, the retiring secretary, elected to remain on Council. Richard Salvado resigned from Council after serving eight years.

On behalf of all members, we thank Richard Salvado for his hard work and positive contribution during his time on Council. We also thank Colin Morrison for his 10 years as secretary. Colin was an incredibly efficient and conscientious secretary, and he worked tirelessly to ensure the smooth running of the Association over these many years.

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## Bits & Pieces

An item in a recent UK flyfishing magazine suggested that extensive tests with knots and fluorocarbon material confirmed that the best knot for attaching flies to fluorocarbon leaders was the simple four-turn half blood knot.

The July 2009 issue of the UK '*Fly Fishing & Fly Tying*' magazine informed readers that in May 2009 the members of the European Parliament voted almost unanimously to ban the sale of products from seals. An obvious consequence is that seal's fur will cease to be available for fly tying. Fortunately, as the magazine notes, 'natural and synthetic dubbings are ready and waiting, itching to step in and replace seal's fur'.



## CASTING TUITION WITH PETER HAYES

Sunday October 18, 2009

Commencing at 10am and finishing at 4pm

\$100.00 per member, BBQ Lunch & Drinks provided

### Fairfield Casting Pool

(This day was originally totally subscribed, but there are now 5 more spaces available, for those who are quick to contact Richard Salvado)

So 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 (eg sunglasses).

If you don't have a bright coloured fly line you can buy one on the day from Peter – one of his special 'dogs balls' practice lines at a special VFFA members' price of \$25

To book your spot please contact: Richard Salvado - Home Phone: 9817 5252

## VFFA OPENING WEEKEND

**Saturday 24th & Sunday 25th October, 2009**

Ray Butterworth's 'Tranquil Rises'

65 Collins Road, Flowerdale

(RACV VicRoads Country Street Directory – Map 61 F7)

Collins Road is just past Long Gully Road (marked on the map), and is the last road on the right before the main road makes a right turn into the Whittlesea – Yea Road.

Ray's mobile number is 0418 525 445 for those who find themselves lost.

\$25 per night

Convenor: Richard Kos

Please contact Richard on

Home: 9744 2375 or Mob: 0430 091 300

Don't miss this magnificent weekend



# President's Annual Report

The first 12 months of my Presidency have literally flown. When I stepped into the shoes of past president David Grisold I was a little apprehensive, having been a member of the VFFA for one year only, followed by one year on Council and then thrust into what eventually becomes the Presidency. Needless to say, supported by a good, strong council, which has made my task easier, it is my privilege and pleasure as the 40<sup>th</sup> President of the VFFA to present the annual report for 2008-2009.

Tonight is the official launch of the VFFA website. I want to both acknowledge and thank Vice President Rick Dugina for his involvement with this project, and for supplying me with the following report:

'The website is now available for all interested parties to view information and participate in the activities of the VFFA. The site is [www.vffa.org.au](http://www.vffa.org.au)

Members of the VFFA have the added ability to "log-in" and access areas of the site that we may consider "private". The "public" information consists of history, some activity information, general Association information and the photo gallery. There is also an area to access the membership form and related information.

Members, after logging in, can access more detailed information related to VFFA activities. This data will be updated periodically as may suit the particular area. An area of great interest should prove to be the ability to view the current newsletter in full vibrant colour with a listing to previous newsletters.

The website committee will endeavour to keep the pages up to date, within the limits of their time. This will require a level of training and adaption to the new technologies involved. Any members who have an interest in the site are welcome to apply to join the committee.

One of the main areas of interaction will be the "forum", or discussion board. This facility will allow all interested parties to "post" discussion points, opinions, comments and items of interest to other fly-fishers. It can be used to advertise items for sale or trade, such items possibly being tackle, books, or the like.

The forum will be supervised by the administrator for inappropriate "postings", which may not be in line with VFFA requirements or ideology. This will require some work, especially in the early times while people get used to using the forum.

The site should be considered a "dynamic" work in progress that will be edited and adjusted to suit the requirements of the membership. Therefore it is essential that members provide feedback indicating whether it is positive or negative. This will allow the best presentation of the VFFA to open view.

Please check the site, register as a member and promote this wonderful resource. We are now on display to the world.'

Following on from the website, I want to make mention of the newsletter. Over the years the newsletter has been vitally important to the VFFA. I believe its role is to provide well-presented and useful information, and on both counts we can be justifiably proud of our production. Under the editorship of Lyndon Webb, it has expanded to a consistent 32 pages every month.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all contributors to the newsletter, for without a wide and productive contributor base, the editor would be unable to come up with the range and quality of material necessary to maintain its high standard. When one reads the newsletter, one can only remark what a credit it is to the VFFA, and particularly to editor Lyndon Webb for its well presented, useful information. It is undoubtedly one of the key strengths of the VFFA.

I think of equal importance to the newsletter are our monthly General Meetings. An important role for Council is to provide quality guest speakers for the evenings. Good guest speakers ensure a strong attendance, which is essential for the continuing vitality of the VFFA. A very pleasing feature of the meetings is the increasing numbers who are dining at the Kelvin before the meeting, adding to the general enjoyment of the evening.

For my first meeting in the chair, we had former president Phil Bailey, who spoke about his angling experiences in the United Kingdom where he presently lives, illustrated with some great images of the rivers he fishes. He left with me six dozen or so of his ties, which were part of the raffle prizes at the Annual Dinner.

October followed with a typical VFFA book auction. Auctioneer Marty Rogers was his usual inimitable self, managing to extract good bidding, and at the same time leaving purchasers feeling they had bought value.

We were fortunate to have Michael Youl for our December Christmas Dinner Meeting. The name Youl is synonymous with the introduction of trout to the Antipodes. Michael was an entertaining speaker on this topic, and on some more general, particularly Great Lake (Tasmania), fishing experiences. We were very pleased to welcome Michael as a new member subsequent to this evening.

'Liars Night' in February is always entertaining, and this year was no exception. Peter Campbell, Richard Kos, Wayne Sanderson, and Hubert Reichelt related their experiences. Interestingly, only Richard Kos had a Victorian experience. Is this an indicator of things to come insofar as where members will fish in the future?

Past editor and president, John Philbrick, gave a very interesting talk in March on his experiences in Poland and England. One of the highlights of his trip was visiting the '*Flyfishers Club of London*'. John did make special mention of the freedom we have in this country to fish the streams of our choice, compared to the cost and restrictions on access anglers experience on the other side of the world.

Julian Newton-Brown was our guest speaker for the April meeting. He gave a very entertaining account of his adventures bone fishing on the Yucatan Peninsula Mexico, and chasing salmon in British Columbia, Canada. Julian is also a regular contributor to the newsletter.

Another past president, Jim Allen, was guest speaker for the May Meeting. Jim is one of the best-known flyfishing identities in this part of the world, and it was no surprise to see a large roll up of members, who were entertained by a witty and educative talk, full of practical advice based on Jim's many decades of accumulated experience.

Chris Wisniewski made the trip from Tasmania as our speaker for the June meeting. He gave a very well researched and well-presented talk on the carp management program in Tasmania.

The July meeting was a monster auction of 196 equipment and book lots. Marty Rogers was up to the task, and made what could have been a long drawn out affair into an entertaining

evening. A special thanks to Tony Brothers, who put the lots together, and to his band of helpers for the smooth running of the evening.

The August Annual Dinner has always been a premier date on the VFFA calendar, and this year's Dinner lived up to all expectations. With more than 100 members and guests present at the Kelvin, we were well fed and watered, and treated to an exceptionally good after dinner speaker in Greg French. He is not just an expert angler and a very good writer, but also an entertaining and engaging speaker. He sure presents as a passionate man when it comes to matters of fishing and the environment.

This was an excellent finale to a full program of General Meetings over the course of the year, which were very well attended. It is pleasing to note how many of our presenters come from within our own ranks, but there is no doubting we need to have speakers from a broader pool if we are to maintain the strong level of interest and good attendances.

Partners' Dinner in June was enjoyed by a happy group who wined and dined at the Kelvin. Our thanks again to Colin Morrison, who has 'hosted' these evenings for a number of years.

Cane day, also in June, was an outstanding success. More than 70 cane aficionados attended during the course of the day. It has become a fixture on our calendar of events, and special thanks must go to David Grisold for this day. He single handedly got this day up and running in 2003, and his continuing commitment and involvement with it has been outstanding. Its success is due in large part to his involvement.

Fishing trips are an important opportunity the VFFA offers to its membership. I believe very strongly in encouraging as many members as possible to put their hands up for some of these trips.

The opening weekend trip was again held at Ray Butterworth's 'Tranquil Rises' in October. This was followed in November by a Whitfield – King River weekend. These are not necessarily weekends where many fish are caught, but undoubtedly the camaraderie that develops during trips like this is very important.

The November trip to New Zealand was again a great success, and thank you to Rick Dugina for getting all the boys back in one piece. Rick is organizing New Zealand again for November this year.

John Pilkington once again hosted his 'Big River Weekend' in November. Although the weekend was all but rained out, everybody present had a great weekend, highlighted by the Pilk's and Hughie Maltby repast prepared for Saturday evening.

Only three members made 'The Donger Weekend' to Bairnsdale in February this year. Notwithstanding this, all reported it was a very good weekend with the usual hospitality and bonhomie. We have requested Bairnsdale to "please give us more notice for next year", and I am certain numbers will be back to more normal levels. Besides, we need more anglers to give us an opportunity to win back the Donger.

Following on from the previous year's trip, "The VFFA Return to Tasmania" trip to Peter Hayes' Complex at Cressy was convened by Hamish Hughes in March of this year. The trip was well organized and many fish were caught, and Hamish has arranged for a return trip for February 2010. Peter Hayes is an excellent host for the week, and I hope it will become an established date on our calendar of events.

Richard Kos was the convenor for both the 'Magical Mystery Closing Tour' in June, and the 'Bullen Merri' weekend in August. The one and only fish caught on the trips was an eight-pound brown, caught appropriately by the convenor.

Thank you collectively to all the convenors and helpers for these trips.

I again encourage members who have not been on a trip to do so. You may not be guaranteed a fish, but you can be guaranteed of a good time. In addition to organized trips, many members have arranged trips on an ad hoc basis.

Winter Sunday Casting continued in the absence of Malcolm Elms. Joe Haslauer has been a stalwart in the absence of Malcolm. We all wish Malcolm a speedy and strong recovery, and hope to see him back in the traces some time in the future.

The library is a much under-utilized resource. I do not know the reason, but can speculate on a number of fronts. Perhaps those who are interested in books already have a good collection, and have no use of the library. Perhaps with all the information available on the web, members who might otherwise have read books, choose to spend their time sourcing information in this manner.

The stocks of '*Geehi to Great Lake*' are down to less than 30 copies. For anybody thinking about purchasing a copy, get one quickly before stocks run out.

VFFA merchandise provides a useful contribution to funds. Hughie Maltby does a great job managing the stock, and promoting it at every opportunity.

And whilst on the topic of funds, we remain in a strong position financially, due in no small part to the very efficient and competent management by the treasurer, Tony Mitchem.

We do have one retiring councillor, Richard Salvado. On behalf of everybody I want to thank Richard for his support and contribution over his eight years on Council. In true fashion, Richard has pledged his ongoing support and help in the future.

Colin Morrison has re-nominated for Council, but has relinquished the secretaryship. With 10 years service as secretary, Colin is the second longest serving secretary after Noel Hepworth's 11 years in the 1930's and 40's. Colin has given long, loyal, and outstanding service to the VFFA, and for this we are very grateful. Colin was, of course, very appropriately made an honorary life member at the A.G.M. last year.

I welcome Richard Garvey onto Council as the new secretary, and know he will be a very good acquisition. Thankfully, in the transition stages, he will be helped by Colin in the background.

It has been a pleasure to be your President for the past 12 months. We have had a very good, strong and committed Council, and I want to thank all councillors for their hard work and contribution. And thank you to the many others who help with the smooth operation of the Association over the year. I do want to express a special thank you to David Grisold, who has been a great support and provided me with good, sound advice.

In finishing, I look forward to the next 12 months with the new Council, and am confident we will continue to make the VFFA both relevant, and vital, to our membership.

On a personal note, I have found the real value in membership has been the friendship, and companionship one receives from fellow members. Long may it continue.

Thank you, *Peter Boag*

# President's Message

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Prior to sitting down to write the first President's Report post the recent Annual General Meeting, I took the opportunity to look at the first newsletter I received as a VFFA member. It was the October issue of 2002, having attended the September A.G.M. as my first meeting as a new member. The incoming President, John Philbrick, in his first President's Report reflected upon the strengths and weaknesses of the VFFA, and sought to formulate an agenda to ensure its continuing success.

Nothing much has changed, and I think we must continue to make every effort to ensure the VFFA remains vital and relevant to the membership.

The implementation of the website is surely a step in the right direction. I was initially lukewarm to the idea, but with the passage of time over the past months, I am now a strong advocate and believe it will deliver real value to the membership. Rick Dugina provided me with an impressive and very comprehensive report for the A.G.M., and it appears in the Annual Report in this newsletter. Please read it, and remember [www.vffa.org.au](http://www.vffa.org.au), and log on.

The cost of running the site is relatively nominal, but a cost nevertheless. The real cost is the amount of gratuitous time spent by those who contribute. Rick Dugina has stated clearly on a number of occasions that if there is anyone out there who can provide assistance, please put your hand up and contact him.

The newsletter under Lyndon Webb's editorship has grown in size over the past 12 months. This has resulted in printing and postage cost increases, but I believe this to be a price worth paying for a newsletter which is very much looked forward to by the membership at the beginning of each month.

Council unanimously voted for a \$10.00 increase in subs for city and country members, but held rates for junior, student, and pensioner membership. I think we can confidently say the VFFA offers good value for money, to you, the members.

We have a very full program over the next three months, and I strongly urge you to look at the calendar of events and make a note of the dates in your diaries.

The October General Meeting is a fly tying night with Hubert Reichelt, John Pilkington, and Peter Campbell displaying their tying skills.

Rick Dugina is putting together a film night for the November Meeting, and Peter Dixon will be our speaker at the Christmas Dinner, which is fast approaching. Peter's biography and what he will be talking about will appear in the November Newsletter.

The September rains we have had in Victoria are the best we have had for some time, and this must surely put a skip in the steps of any freshwater fisherman. Details of the October Opening Weekend and the November Omeo trip are in the newsletter. Please contact the



respective convenors, and get on board for what promises to be a promising start to the season.

I want to take this opportunity to personally thank retiring councillor Richard Salvado for his contribution over his eight years on Council. We also welcome onto Council Richard Garvey as the new secretary. He has big shoes to fill, but I know he will be up to the task.

At the next meeting on October 15, in addition to the fly tying, the website will be available for those who are uncertain about how all this works. I look forward to seeing many of you at the Kelvin for dinner prior to the meeting at 8:00pm.

Tight lines,

*Peter Boag*

## The October General Meeting – Tying With The Masters

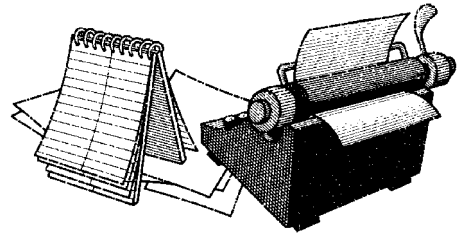


The October general meeting (on October 15) will provide members with the opportunity to develop their tying skills and expertise by watching three of our top fly tiers in action. Hubert Reichelt, Peter Campbell and John Pilkington will be there to demonstrate how they tie some of their favourite patterns.

Andrew Mossman, who has been one of our regular tiers at these evenings, is currently in the UK for his daughter's wedding, so John Pilkington has volunteered to fill the vacancy. John will demonstrate his technique for tying two or three of his special flies, including the famous Dr Wark. Members may recall that John wrote an article some years ago, which was published in Volume 9 of the Fly Fishers Annual (2003), in which he outlined the origins and tying details of this classic Australian fly.

These fly tying evenings are invariably pleasant, convivial and relaxed occasions, where members can meet for a chat with friends and colleagues whilst observing three of our best tiers demonstrating their repertoire of skills. All of us – novices and fumblers and serious tiers alike - can learn much from watching the maestros at work, so let's have a good roll up to support our three demonstrators.

# From the EDITOR'S DESK



I grew up in a country town, and can recall as a youngster coming to Melbourne with my parents on many occasions, and finding when I arrived that it was cold and bleak and drizzling rain. Perhaps it was because most of our visits were in the winter months, but regardless of the reason, I formed the strong impression that it rained an awful lot in Melbourne.

How things have changed. These days we are grateful for every shower, no matter how inconsequential, and the downpours over recent weeks have been so welcome. Even the Yarra burst its banks. And a bit further south the Tasmanians have enjoyed some of the best winter and early spring rains for many years. So the signs are good – we may well be in for some of the best stream fishing we've had in a while. Let's get out and enjoy it.

Readers will recall that we promised another article by Snobs Creek senior scientist Fiona Gavine. Fiona has completed her report, but is still waiting on approval for it to be cleared for publication. So we need to wait for next month's issue to read Fiona's next contribution.

Most members will be familiar with the work of Peter Leuver. Peter is well-known as a fine angler, a magnificent fly tier, and a much sought-after artist and illustrator. Many of us have a copy of his *'Fur and Feather – Fly Tying For Trout'* – one of our most popular Australian fly-tying manuals. Readers will also be familiar with Peter's contributions to FlyLife magazine, where he is a regular contributor. Some years ago David Scholes published his *'Trout Days'*, a book that is filled with superb illustrations by Peter Leuver. Peter has very kindly given permission for us to use these illustrations in our newsletters, and readers will find some of his images in the pages of this issue. Our sincere thanks to Peter for allowing us to use his work in our newsletters.

Many of us fish, at least occasionally, by ourselves. We park the car and charge off full of enthusiasm and keen anticipation, and an hour or so later are kilometres up some isolated river or stream. But what if the unthinkable happens – a slip and a tumble and perhaps a broken ankle, or worse - a too close encounter with one of those reptiles that linger around our waterways. At times like these an EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon) or PLB (Personal Locator Beacon) might be the difference between total disaster and a relatively tolerable outcome. Hamish Hughes is an expert on these safety devices, and has prepared a very informative article for us. These items are not cheap, but then how much is your life worth? Are you looking for something useful and practical for the Christmas stocking? With luck, you'll buy one and never have to use it.

It is good to report that more and more members are indicating their willingness to share their skills and experiences through the pages of our newsletter. In this month's issue Geoff Bloch has provided some helpful thoughts and suggestions on how to tie parachute hackle flies, and Trevor Hawkins has provided a fascinating report on his angling experiences in the State's North-East. Phil Bailey has some helpful suggestions on fishing 'spider patterns', and one of our Gippsland members, contributing under the pseudonym 'Humpy', has some excellent

advice on the best tactics for those fabulous streams north of Bairnsdale in the early part of the season. And Jim Blakeslee has emailed us his regular report on the fishing around Warrnambool.

It is interesting to note that a recent DPI publication, reporting on interviews with nearly 140 anglers fishing Jim's Western District rivers, revealed that on average anglers fished for 7 - 8 hours for each trout caught. On the other hand, Jim went for a quiet stroll along the Upper Merri for a couple of hours, and took 5 browns between 3½ and 4 lb – which simply reminds me again that we have so much angling wisdom and experience in the membership of this Association, and it is great when it is shared with our other members.

I hope you enjoy the October issue.

*Lyndon Webb*

## VFFA Meetings & Activities

### OCTOBER

- 15 **General Meeting – Fly Tying Night**
- 18 Peter Hayes Casting Clinic
- 21 Council Meeting
- 24 / 25 Opening Weekend at Ray Butterworth's 'Tranquil Rises'

### NOVEMBER

- 13-15 Omeo Trip, staying at the Blue Duck
- 19 General Meeting – Film Night
- 25 Council Meeting
- 25 – Dec 3 New Zealand trip

### DECEMBER

- 9 Council Meeting
- 17 Christmas Dinner –  
Guest Speaker: Peter Dixon

## This Month's Yarn ...

... and possibly a record? It was just on dark when Alf waded round the edge of a deep pool on the Mittabunga River. He had had a long day and had not seen a single trout, but had soldiered on bravely. For the past few hours the weather had become progressively more threatening and ominous – a thunderstorm was brewing. Alf sat down wearily on a low bank in the gathering gloom, with his feet in the water, which was about 18 inches deep at this point. From his seated position he made a few listless casts to various corners of the pool, but there was no hint of a response. It all seemed futile and hopeless.

He stood, and was about to move on when he felt something tugging at one of his bootlaces. He reached into his vest, pulled out a torch and flashed it into the water. The light revealed that the lace on his right wading boot had come undone and was trailing in the current, and a quite respectable trout was endeavoring to swallow it. Alf acted quickly – with an adroit backward roll onto the bank he pulled his feet up out of the water, and a very surprised trout flopped down beside him. He snatched it up quick as a flash – it was a keeper – and stuffed it into his creel.

You see the tags on Alf's bootlaces were colored bright red. This might well be the strangest way that a Red Tag has taken a trout.



# North East Season Predictions

(by Trevor Hawkins)

The North East has always been my area of choice for trout fishing on the mainland. It's the smaller waters that predominate in this area that take my fancy, you see, with a good mix of both species of trout, generally only too willing to lift up to see what's been presented.

I moved permanently to Wodonga in March 2009 and have been trying to share myself equally with all the waters within a comfortable drive of my home since I arrived. It's almost a fulltime job doing justice to them all! I'm giving it a try.

The tail of the last season saw me often on the lower Mitta Mitta, and I managed to catch a couple of days while the hoppers were still about, but it was the Kossie Duns that really opened my eyes to the magnificent middle of the day dun fishing that was available on those lovely still sunny Autumn days that seem to go on forever up here. This river throughout the closed season has been running low and mostly clear, as they restrict flows while trying to fill Lake Dartmouth. The only real flows coming down are from the Snowy Creek. I fished the Mitta Mitta around Eskdale during the opening week of this season and there were already fish up and on Stonefly, which were hatching in great numbers. While the fish I caught were still a little lean, the size was good, with one fish over two pound coming to hand on a trailing brown nymph. It can be fun this early in the season fishing a skating stimulator across the bouncing wavelets on these streams that have good Stonefly populations, but be ready for the crashing take.

During the closed season I fished the Khancoban Pondage quite a few times. For the most part I had the water to myself mid-week and every trip produced fish, mainly on olive woolly buggers fished extremely slow. All the fish taken were prime fish and by early November should be back to their pre-spawning condition, plus some. The Pondage seems to be an underrated water from the fly-fishers' point of view, but I think a lot of this is due to the more popular nearby rivers and Snowy lakes only an hour or so away. It's a water that can give up some great after dark summer fish (wet and dry) if you happen to be in the area fishing the rivers. If you have a boat, canoe or belly boat so much the better. Move out from the edges and fish back into the banks and weed beds if you can, and go up and fish the holes at the back end of the lake where the walking anglers have trouble reaching.

The only river up in this region that was flood affected during the winter months was the Kiewa, which was running a banker for a few weeks in August. This river was carrying a large quantity of good-sized fish late last season and they will still be available this season. It's a river that can get a hammering, especially during the summer break, and as such the fish can hunker down at times and you would swear there aren't fish to be caught. This stream fishes exceptionally well in the evening and after dark when the thumpers come out. By fishing at this time of day you start to appreciate how many fish there actually are in the river and this can raise confidence when it comes to the daytime forays.



*A nice brown from the Mitta*

The other waters I inspected that had increased flows but not flooded were the Nariel, Thowgla, Cudgewa, Ovens, Eurobin, Buckland and King rivers, and they all look in wonderful condition for the coming summer months - all having good flows without having been scoured from floods. There has been good, if not exceptional snow depths, and we have been getting good if not great rains in the area for months.



*The delightful Ovens River*

I've been fishing the Ovens, Eurobin and Mitta Mitta rivers to date and have had good dry fly fishing from that opening season trip onwards. Duns, Stonefly, and Beetles are already bringing fish up. In my opinion we are in for another terrific season as good as the last, with the added bonus that the Snowy Mountains area is getting good snow as well. Lake Eucumbene fished very well last season and it seems this year, if the waters keep rising, will be even better.

Tight lines, *Trevor Hawkins*.



# The Omeo Area

(by Humpy)

Early season trout fishing in Victoria's High Country around Omeo can be a hit or miss affair. Most of our major rivers flow off the snowfields of Mount Hotham, Mount Bogong, or the nearby snow covered mountains. Spring is also traditionally the wettest time of the year, so with a mixture of snow and rain, the water levels are usually high and quite cold. During September the Mitta Mitta River (above Dartmouth Dam) typically runs at 4°C to 6°C, and daytime temperatures are normally in the low teens. As a consequence there is very little if any insect activity, and the trout are normally found hugging the bottom and not terribly interested in feeding, although they will feed if the food source is close enough to them. Trout at this time of the year will move sideways in the current to accept a morsel of food or a fly, but will not often rise in the water column to chase food. So what do we do to catch a trout? There are a number of options.

Firstly we need to fish deep. A good rig for early in the season is to fish upstream using a tungsten nymph (bomb) with a trailing unweighted fly. A good trailing fly is a small unweighted nymph or a Glo Bug. These should be tied no more than 18 inches below the bomb, as any longer than this and the trailing fly will tend to rise above the bomb, resulting in a reduced success rate. This rig needs to be fished on a leader of about 12 feet, as a shorter leader will not allow the flies to sink deep enough to get down to the strike zone. Naturally, an indicator needs to be placed on the leader at an appropriate depth. Most times the fish will take the trailing fly, although a few fish will take the bomb.

Secondly, we can use a high density sinking fly line with a short leader and a wet fly such as a beadhead Woolly Bugger. These should be cast slightly upstream and the fly allowed to drift across and downstream. This is a good option in larger waters such as the Mitta Mitta River.

Thirdly, we can fish the tributaries of the main rivers. These tributaries are normally smaller and shallower than the main river and it is much easier to get the fly down to the fish using lighter gear. The Bundara River, Livingston Creek, Victoria River and the Cobungra River are all good options at this time of the year. You should still use a tandem nymph rig and indicator in these rivers, but make the bomb lighter; perhaps a conventional beadhead instead of the tungsten.

Fourthly, we can target the rain-fed rivers. These rivers are usually a couple of degrees warmer and often carry less volume of water. The Gibbo River, Buemba River, Little River and Timbarra River are all worth trying early in the season. In these smaller rivers and creeks we can often do away with the heavy gear, and use a dry fly as an indicator with a trailing nymph. Rainbow trout were caught on a dry fly in the Gibbo River during opening weekend of 2008.

The season has started slowly this year. There were very few fish caught in the Mitta Mitta River, which, though running high, was quite fishable. The upper section, above its junction with the Bundara River, was flowing nicely but barely a fish was seen. Lower down in the Himmomungee area a few small browns were taken, but the action was slow. Last year was

a poor season in the Mitta Mitta River - there were very few hoppers around, and caddis and mayflies were almost non-existent. Water flows and water temperatures were quite good except for a brief period in mid-February, but the fish just didn't show. This is in stark contrast to the past ten years when we have had excellent fishing in this river. Hopefully it will turn around again this year and return to its former glory.

Livingston Creek produced reasonable fishing to smallish browns up to about a pound, with most of these fish being caught in the Cassilis area. The Bundara River fished OK - nothing large but reasonable numbers of browns in the half to three quarter pound range. The Cobungra River had a fair amount of snow water coming down and the fishing was poor. The Gibbo River ran very high and was difficult to fish, but a few small rainbows were taken by the bait boys. Morass Creek was disappointing. Further south one lucky lure fisherman caught a very nice brown of 4 pounds in the middle section of the Mitchell River.

As we move into October the days will get longer, the water warmer and the insects, terrestrials and bugs will start to appear in numbers. We can then start looking at dry flies as well as nymphs.



## Robert Traver said ...

“I fish because I love to; because I love the environs where trout are found, which are invariably beautiful, and hate the environs where crowds of people are found, which are invariably ugly;

Because of all the television commercials, cocktail parties, and assorted social posturing I thus escape;

Because, in a world where most men seem to spend their lives doing things they hate, my fishing is at once an endless source of delight and an act of small rebellion;

Because trout do not lie or cheat and cannot be bought or bribed or impressed by power, but respond only to quietude and humility and endless patience;

Because I suspect that men are going along this way for the last time, and I for one don't want to waste the trip;

Because mercifully there are no telephones on trout waters;

Because only in the woods can I find solitude without loneliness;

Because bourbon out of an old tin cup always tastes better out there ...”

# To beacon, or not to beacon? That's the question!

(by Hamish Hughes)

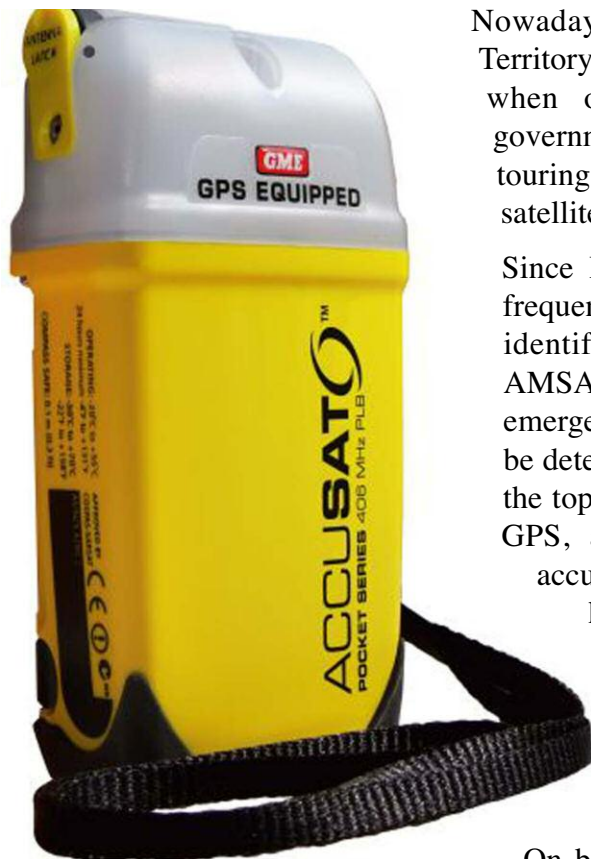
A few distress beacons are rapidly proving to be the best answer to taking the 'search' out of 'search and rescue.' Throughout the World EPIRBs, as they are commonly called, have had a major impact on reducing the time it takes to effect rescues - from days, to just hours. They have been instrumental in saving many lives, with the Anthony Bullimore rescue in 1997 as a famous example.

There are three types of distress beacon. In Australia, when activated in a life-threatening situation, distress beacons transmit a signal that satellites detect and quickly report to the Australian Maritime Rescue Authority (AMSA) in Canberra. AMSA then relays the message to the appropriate search and rescue authority in the relevant territory or state. The three types of beacon are:

Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBs), used in ships and boats.

Emergency Locator Beacons (ELTs), used in aircraft.

Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs), for personal use by bush walkers, 4WD drivers, crews in boats and planes, and those in remote areas.



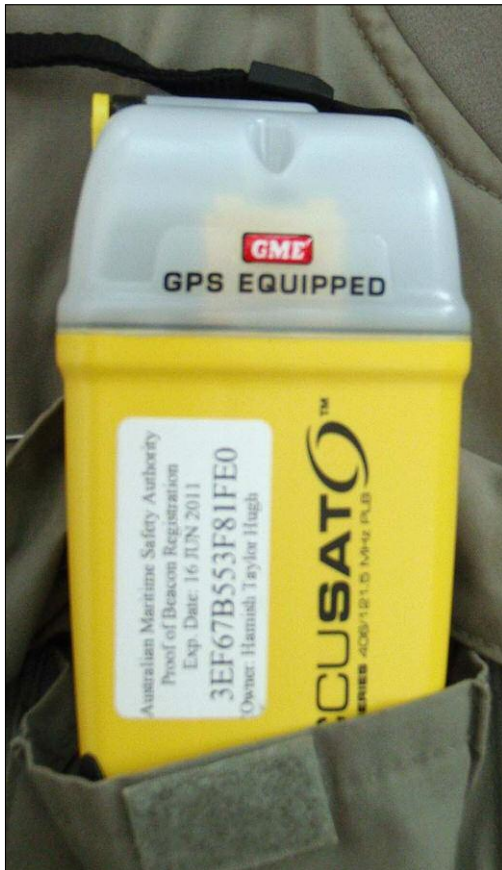
Nowadays all Australian states and the Northern Territory require that recreational boats carry an EPIRB when operating well offshore. 4WD clubs and government tourist bodies recommend that vehicles touring the true outback carry a PLB as well as a satellite phone and an UHF radio.

Since February this year all beacons transmit on a frequency of 406 MHz. Each beacon has a unique identification code and must be registered with AMSA, which then has the owner's details, including emergency contacts. A 406 MHz beacon's position can be determined to a radius of five kilometres. However the top of the range 406 MHz beacons have a built-in GPS, and this gives the beacon's position to an accuracy of about 30 metres. Most beacons also have an in-built strobe light, which is visible for up to eight kilometres at night.

As there are a number of authorised manufacturers, EPIRBs vary in shape and size. However it is safe to say that they are all about the size of 750 ml bottle of Scotch.

On board a boat the EPIRB must be mounted in a readily accessible position, such as close to a companionway or the steering position. It is important that you can retrieve it quickly in the event that you have to abandon ship. EPIRBs are designed to float and will still transmit strongly when floating on the water's surface. They come with a lanyard which you attach to the life raft or your life

jacket before you activate the EPIRB by raising the aerial. Their batteries last a minimum of 48 hours once activated.



*Hamish's PLB fits nicely into his top pocket*

Personal Location Beacons are designed to fit into a pocket. At sea a PLB is ideal for crew on deck. It can be carried in a pocket or hung around the neck. PLBs transmit the same way as an EPIRB, but are not designed to float. They must be hand held. All lone bush walkers who could get lost or injured are encouraged to carry a PLB. As we know from the recent rescue of Victorian Government Minister, Tim Holding, mobile phones are not the answer. They are often out of range. And even if not, batteries soon go flat.

All PLBs will transmit for at least 24 hours after activation. Like EPIRBs, the basic models give your position to within a 5 kilometre radius, and the more expensive PLBs have a built-in GPS which enable them to pinpoint your position to within 30 metres. Considering how difficult it is to find someone in the bush I think it well worthwhile paying a couple of hundred dollars extra, because it could take a long time to search a radius of 5 kilometres.

In a car the PLB should be close to hand in an emergency. A PLB would be useless if stowed away in the glove box when the vehicle suddenly caught fire, or if it fell off a jack pinning you underneath. Obviously all EPIRBs and PLBs must be stowed in

such a way as to avoid accidental activation. Sending out police and volunteer rescue parties, helicopters, fixed wing planes and marine rescue vessels on false alarms must be avoided (and is very costly for the culprit!)

Do fly fishers need distress beacons? Usually not when fishing in company in safe terrain. However fly fishers on lakes or rivers in remote areas would be wise to carry a PLB, especially if they have not briefed anyone nearby to raise an alarm if they are late in returning to base. All PLBs will fit into a fishing vest. A PLB could be very useful if one were unfortunate enough to be bitten by a snake some distance from your car; a long walk back pumping snake venom around your bloodstream could well be fatal. How many of your fishing mates could carry you back?

A basic 406 PLB costs less than \$500. One with a GPS and strobe light will cost about \$700. What did you pay for your last fly rod? How much is your life worth?

(N.B. The writer has an EPIRB on his boat and a PLB with built-in GPS for use in his car and his fly fishing vest when getting away from it all.)

# How To Fish Hackled Flies Upstream As Did Our Forefathers

(Phil Bailey)

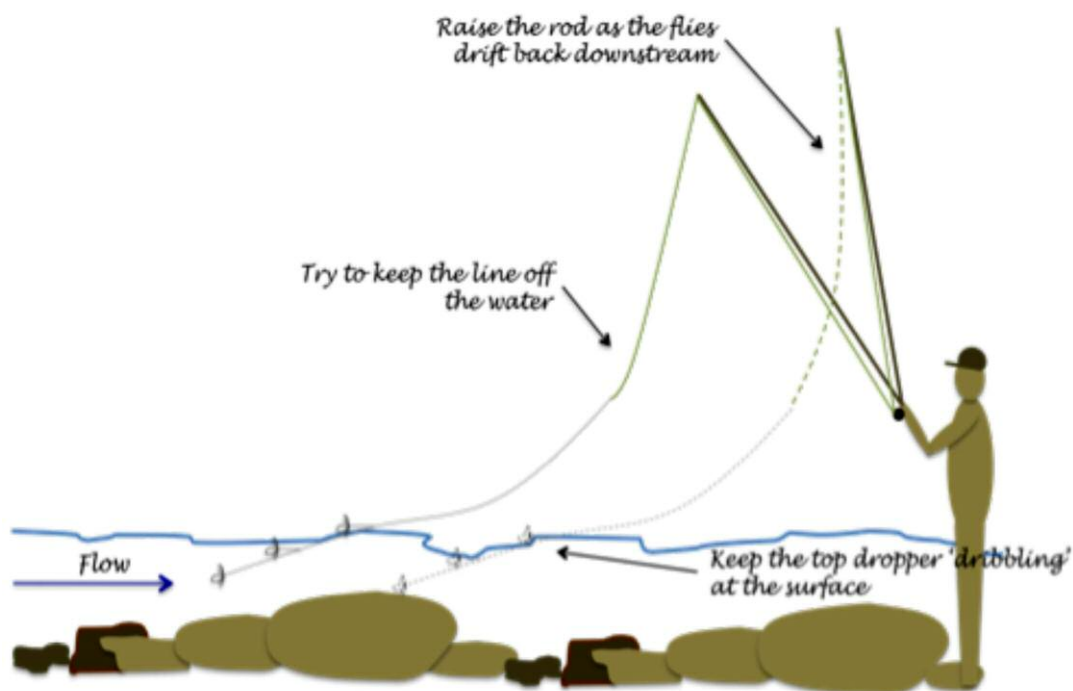
While a lot of books discuss soft hackled flies and the application of upstream fishing, very few go into very much detail on the techniques used by our forefathers for 'spider' patterns.

This article is intended to provide both understanding and application of the techniques most probably used by Sawyer, Pritt, Walbran and others. Upstream techniques by other noted anglers can be obtained from many other publications.

Traditionally, spiders were fished upstream. The difficulty with this technique for most fly fishers is discerning the take, which was probably the catalyst for many spider fly fishermen to convert to downstream techniques.

The trick to successful upstream spider fishing is control of the flies. You must keep in constant touch with them as they drift back towards you in fast water. This requires frequent mending of the line with your free hand while at the same time keeping the rod high.

Long casting is not required, so frequent short casts are made keeping as much (if not all) of the line off the water. The fly fisher must concentrate on where the flies are for any indication of a take; hence the need to consider longish rods for this work. Make no mistake about it, this is demanding fishing and is much more sophisticated than dry fly fishing. It equals upstream nymphing and deserves to be ranked higher as a technique than it currently does.



Spider patterns were designed to be used on Spate Rivers and to be fished as close to the surface (if not in it) as possible. This encourages the fish to rise to what it believes to be a emerging fly, an ascending nymph, or a drowned adult. Often these patterns are fished too deep and are not kept on top of the water. They were developed to be fished right in the surface, with tiny currents of water moving the delicate feathers, thus enticing the fish to feed.

When fishing upstream, the flies do not sink very far because they are sparse and only short casts are being deployed. It is actually beneficial to degrease the leader so as to make sure the flies sit in the water or sink a little below it.

### **Upstream Fishing – Long rod/ short cast**

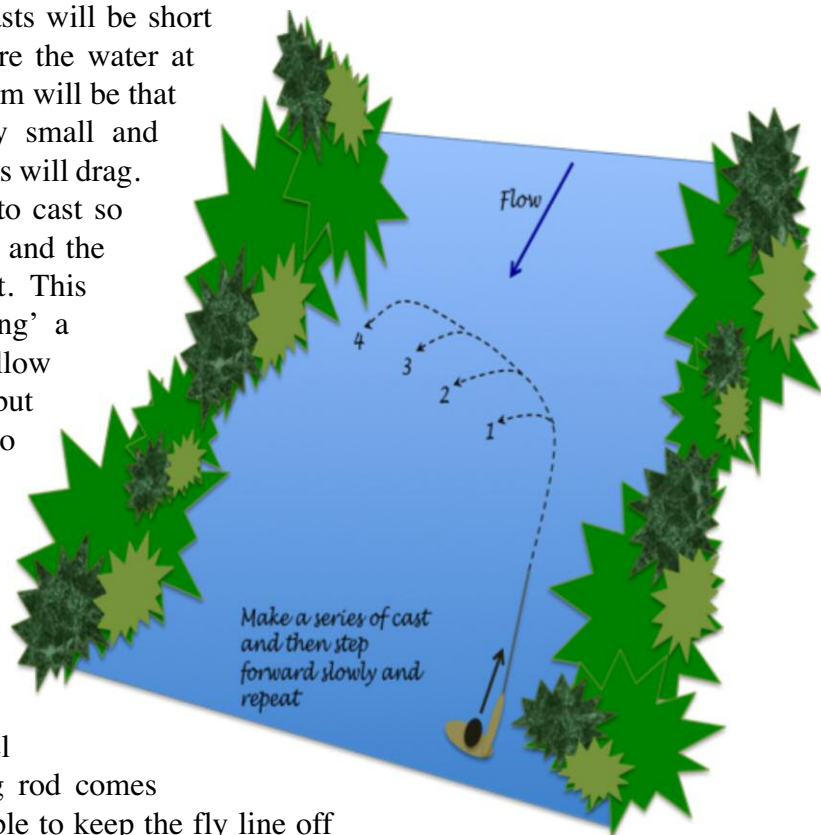
This is the traditional style of upstream spider fishing. Short casts, fly line off the water, top fly is ‘dribbled’ on the surface and contact is maintained at all times.

Other considerations are (a) up and across and (b) directly upstream. Each has its benefits and disadvantages.

### **Up and Across.**

Directly casting upstream means that the water on the side is not explored. If the fly fisher stands to the side of the flow, he/she can then begin to explore the whole width of the stream. This is a new technique as it is not quite the same as fishing directly upstream and is particularly effective if there are no fish rising, as a team of three flies can be used to cover the maximum area of water.

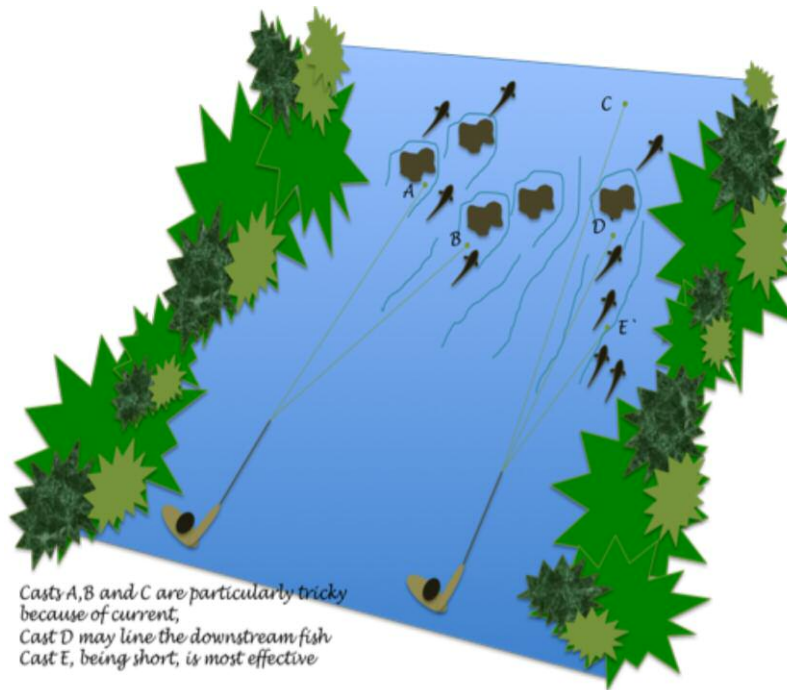
Initial upstream and across casts will be short and then lengthened to explore the water at the far bank. The initial problem will be that you are casting across many small and large currents, and thus the flies will drag. To avoid this, you will need to cast so that there is a bow in the line and the flies are downstream from it. This can be achieved by ‘throwing’ a loop in the line, which will allow the flies to naturally drift, but you will need to be prepared to continuously mend line upstream or downstream as the current dictate. You may also have to feed line out or take it in with your free hand. You may struggle with this at first but as you become proficient it will feel natural. This is where a long rod comes into its own, as you will be able to keep the fly line off the water and minimize drag.



## In Defense of the Short Cast

Let's consider that we are on the stream. We are presented with a scenario where the water is quite shallow, there are a number of deeper turbulent places where fish are likely to hold up, and there is a nice glide up against the bank of trees. As an experienced angler, we are quick to identify where the likely spots are to catch fish, and there are many little runs, currents and channels that we need to consider.

Using short casts and a longer rod to keep the line off the water will make sure we approach the fishing in an unhurried and methodical manner.



So you will now understand that upstream fishing using soft hackled flies is not about randomly casting. It is all about methodically working across and up all of the water.

Try it - it's a great and exciting way to fish.

## Opening Weekend "Omeo Region" November 13 - 15

You will recall that last year we ventured to the King River for our opening weekend. Whilst we all had an extremely enjoyable time the fishing left a little to be desired. So after much consultation we have settled on the "Omeo Region" for this year's opening. At this time of year those wily trout should be looking up and feeding freely.

Accommodation will be at the Blue Duck Inn Hotel, on the Omeo Highway at Anglers Rest – ideally situated to give us easy access to a number of top local streams.

Interested members should contact Hugh Maltby on 9455 9017 or mobile 0400 887 065 to book a spot.

## **A Note from the Treasurer**

### *Annual Subscriptions*

At the time of the first meeting of your new Council, some 41 members were in arrears with their subscriptions. In conjunction with recommendations by the Association Auditor, it was unanimously agreed by Council that the following policy in relation to subscriptions be implemented immediately:

- Subscription notices will be issued on September 30 each year;
- Any member whose subscription is not paid after three months will receive a reminder statement;
- Any member whose subscription is not paid after six months will be declared unfinancial by the Council, and will be suspended from all privileges of membership until his subscription has been paid;
- Any member whose subscription is not paid after two years will have his membership cancelled.

If you are uncertain of your subscription status please contact the Treasurer.

*Tony Mitchem, Treasurer*

## **New VFFA Badge**

Supplies of the old badge had dwindled, so Council arranged for the production of new supplies. New badges are now available – President Peter Boag carrying a plentiful supply at all times.

At only \$10 each, members should consider buying several – one to wear on the jacket, another for the fishing vest, and perhaps another for the fishing hat.

The design is almost identical to the previous badge, and is 21 mm x 21.5 mm in size.

## **The UK Report**

(from Phil Bailey)

The trout season is now over for us until the end of March next year. September proved to be a month of little rain and very low rivers, making fishing quite testing with the clear water on our Yorkshire streams. I spent a long weekend on the Upper Clyde River in Scotland with that river in a similar condition. You can be fishing the Clyde within 30 mins drive from Glasgow and the upper beats are a rarity in Scotland as there are no salmon there. The cost is 8 pounds per day.

The last day proved to be a bonus for me. No clients, good overcast day and hot prospects on the Wharfe, my local river. I was able to winkle out over 20 fish between 1lb and 3lbs, all on a small stone fly pattern (needle flies actually). Another killing pattern for the guide (laughter).

We are now angling for our next target fish – the grayling - and we will target these through the winter. Dry fly for the first two months and then short line nymphing for the last couple of months.

Next month will see me on the Tees, the Test and the Itchen fishing for grayling - all invitations from clients (oh lucky me).

Hope the beginning of the season goes well for you and if anyone wants some different fly patterns to try, please just email me.

Cheers from the owners of the Ashes.

*Phil*



# The Fly Fishing Conclave

Some eight or nine VFFA members were among the 72 enthusiasts and tutors who attended the recent Fly Fishing Conclave at Woodend. The weather on the Saturday morning was quite chilly, and the wind whistled through the trees – providing excellent raw material for those involved in the sessions on ‘Casting into the Wind’! But the sun came out in the afternoon, and the wind dropped, and no-one cared much anyway – there was just too much happening.



*Peter Hayes introduces the Conclave Tutors*

The venue, Cammeray Waters, was ideal, providing ample flat grassy areas for the various casting sessions, a large and well-stocked lake for those who wanted to put their new skills into practice, and a sizable tiger snake down near the lake who popped his head out at regular intervals to keep everyone awake and on their toes. The accommodation, meals and indoor meeting areas were all first class.

The program included sessions on all the obvious flyfishing issues. Fly casting tuition was available for every level of ability, and included two-handed Spey casting, casting with cane, distance casting, roll casting and all the other variations and special curves and mends that are useful on streams. Muz Wilson, Mick Hall, and Shaun Ash were the resident fly tying maestros, and some of their creations were so lifelike they appeared to be breathing. Peter Morse has a well-deserved reputation as a very proficient angler and casting teacher, but he is also a superb photographer, and ran a workshop on taking and processing ‘fishing-related photos’, demonstrating his points with some stunning images from his large library of angling scenes.

There were workshops and discussions on line management, retrieves, knots, leaders, and all manner of tactics and strategies. VFFA member Rick Innes ran the shop, with a large assortment of items for sale. Included in the stock was a huge forest of rods from well-known manufacturers, and it was possible to retrieve a new rod from the rack and take it out onto the acres of lawns (or down to the lake) for a cast.



*Peter Morse's Photography Session*



*Mick Hall with an attentive audience*

Perhaps one of the most valuable aspects of the Conclave was the opportunity to sit with one of the experts / tutors over a cup of coffee and discuss techniques, tactics and problems. Peter Hayes had us entranced with his tales of some of the weird and innovative tricks he has employed to find fish for his clients, including his procedure for generating his own personal windlanes on Arthurs Lake.



*Bintoro (a VFFA member) was the Spey casting tutor*



*Nice Loops from Choco and Hugh*

Overall – an eminently worthwhile event, and well worth attending.



*Muz Wilson magic*

# The First trip To New Zealand

(Julian Newton-Brown)

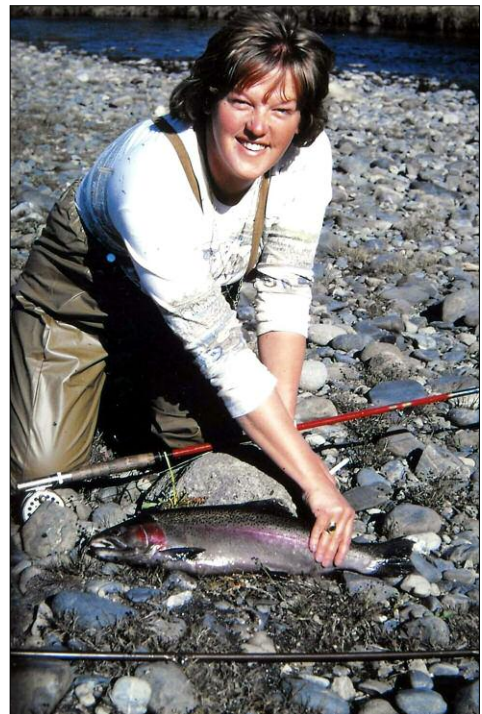
It wasn't until 1975 that we could afford anything other than a camping holiday, but after a decent snow season and some summer work we went for a two-week trip to the land of the long white cloud, costing \$600 for the two of us. It gave us air travel and car hire for a week in the South Island and another week in the North Island, plus a voucher for each night's accommodation.

We flew with Air New Zealand in an old DC8 and were allowed into the cockpit to watch the snow-capped land rise from the horizon. The captain accepted a cigarette I rolled for him with Port Royal tobacco, and he lit it right away. The crew in the cabin were very friendly too.

Our first meal was at the White Swan, where we caught up with the flight crew who welcomed us enthusiastically. Next day found us at Tekapo where we stopped at a Hotel-Motel. We asked the young barman what the tucker was like, and he enthused about it, indicating that his father was the chef. So we stayed, but the first course, a seafood cocktail, was a joke. The bottom of the flute contained tinned fish in mayonnaise, followed by a couple of smoked oysters, whipped cream and a maraschino cherry on top. Yuk.

On the way to Queenstown next day Beth spotted some mushrooms on the roadside, so we helped ourselves. The motel rooms in New Zealand, we discovered, were equipped with little kitchens, so we decided to do our own cooking. At a butcher's shop in Queenstown we asked for a couple of pieces of scotch fillet. "No worries", he said, and sawed two bits off a large frozen piece. Towards evening, at Lake Kilpatrick, I caught a nice brown trout big enough for an entrée for two. The entrée was fine but the steak was inedible. Next morning we gave it to the cleaning lady for her dog, and on the following morning she told us that the dog wouldn't eat it either.

At this time most of the South Island rivers were in flood and unfishable. So, with limited fishing available - mainly in Lake Kilpatrick and Moke Lake - and appalling food, we filled in time before moving on. One night in a pub we met some young ex-staff from Falls Creek. We were drinking cans of Leopard beer at 45 cents a can. "You're mad", they said, "You can get a whole jug of Lion Brown for the same price." Lion Brown was delivered by tankers in bulk and pumped into underground tanks at the pub. It was sweet, flat, and tasteless, so it was back to Leopard.

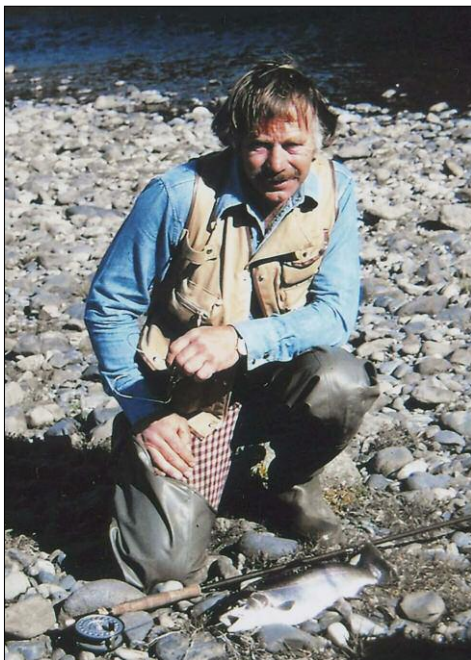


*Beth's 6½ lb rainbow*

This trip was not shaping up too well, but after seeing some spectacular scenery around Omarama and the flooded dams in the Waitaki valley, we headed north and came across the Hakataramea River. I spent a day walking the banks and spotted a lot of fish, but as we were into May I thought the season might be closed, so wasn't game to make a cast.

We flew to Wellington and drove to Turangi, where we found a nice motel. On our first night there we met another couple - Tom Nicholson and his wife. He was a fellow chemist and she was a nurse, as was Beth. There was another bloke there too. His name was Hepi, and later in the evening we discovered he was Hepi te Heu Heu, the chief of the Tupharatoa tribe. The motel had an outdoor pool that was thermally heated, so we decided to have a swim. Hepi joined us with some ice in a bucket and a bottle of Scotch. We didn't have any togs, so all three of us ended up in the nuddy and slightly pissed. Soon after this Hepi invited us to have lunch with the rest of the Tupharatoa elders. Hepi later became Sir Hepi and he sent me a book about the history of his tribe. He was a most delightful chap.

Tom Nicholson asked me if I ever did any nymph fishing, and, if so, how I went about it. So I took him to a smaller stream - the Tauranga-Taupo - and showed him our normal method of upstream nymph fishing. This was new to him as the locals fished their nymphs across and down. As he left for lunch I spotted a fish in a hole beside a tree further down. I cast a few times and hooked a nice maiden hen fish that took off upstream, taking a huge amount of backing. I scrambled out of the water to follow it up - just as the fish decided to come back downstream. With some fast and furious winding I managed to retrieve line and feel the fish still connected. Beth, who was reading a book in the car, joined me when she heard the reel screaming.



*Julian's fish was not as large  
as Beth's*

After my fish was landed and weighed (at 4½ lb) Beth decided to have a go. I had previously taught her to cast, so installed her in the appropriate spot, and after a few casts she hooked up. It was a 6½ lb rainbow, but from its darker colour must have been in the river for some time. It took me many years to equal her record of a 6½ lb trout.

One day Tom Nicholson took me to a lake owned by the Maoris where he rented a boat. He produced an outboard motor and we put it on. He was no purist, and we trolled and caught a number of good-sized trout. He claimed it was overstocked, as the fish should have been bigger.

On most other days I fished the Tongariro, although I didn't catch a lot there. It was still high from the same rains that had flooded the South Island. I met another Australian there and fished with him at times. He was Peter Wallace, from Cressy in Tasmania, and he told me he came to New Zealand by boat for three months each year. He and his wife Peg had a shack nearby, and he bought a small car each trip, selling it on leaving. I met him again while camped at

Penstock Lagoon in Tasmania. Years later I met his son David, who had been to school with Jim Allen. David bought a shack opposite mine at Miena, and over the years I came to know the family well.

The evening before we left Turangi we met another Maori called Duff. He was a tall bloke wearing a beanie on his head and a thick warm coat. Hepi told me he was the illegitimate but only son of the Earl of Duff. After the Earl's death Duff was traced and invited to take his place as the legitimate Earl. However Duff's mother was a Maori queen of whom Duff was much more proud than his father, so he declined. He asked if we would like to see their Par (ceremonial) House, and we agreed.

He picked us up first thing in the morning and took us there. Another enlightening experience.

After spending a night in Auckland we returned home with about 20 large trout cleaned and frozen. On our return the customs officer asked us about the contents of a certain big and very cold bag. I explained they were trout - dead and frozen. "Would he like one?" "No!" he replied, and hastily waved us through.



*A magnificent 5 lb brown*

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## Website Update

Members who are not sure how to register for access to the 'Members' area should open the Members login by placing the cursor over the top right hand corner of the web page. This reveals the member login area. Use the following area (click on **Register** ) to open the registration window, fill in the details, noting down your user-name and password for future use. Don't forget to click on Register at the bottom of the form to finish the entry. This sends an email to the Administrator with your request.

You will receive an email to confirm that you have permission to access the site. This may take a while because the administrator must get the request and authorize the acceptance. Please note that this is a separate registration to that of the "FORUM" page.

The "Login" area has these headings:

### **Login**

To access the private area of this site, please log in.

Username

Password

Remember Me

Forgot your password?

Forgot your username

Register

The process of registration requires these fields to be completed:

*Name*

*Username*

*E-mail*

*Password*

*Verify Password*

(If you have any queries or problems with this then please don't hesitate to phone me on 0401 963 601 for clarification). *Rick Dugina*

# Western District Report

(from Jim Blakeslee)

It is pleasing to report that the local rivers have been up and in flood for the first time in years, and the fish have been out on the edges, munching gudgeon and stick caddis in the Hopkins, and galaxias, gudgeon and shrimp in the Merri.

Recently I fished the Hopkins below the junction with the Mt Emu Creek, and bagged browns of 2.1, 1.5, and 2.4kg (5¼ lb) – all on the Spuddler. Lakes Gilliar and Aringa are full and overflowing. I've fished them, but haven't seen anything yet (are they on the bottom eating snails??). Lake Cartcarrong at Winslow is slowly filling but is still too low, according to Fisheries, so may not be stocked this year and will continue to be fishless since it dried up a couple of years ago. Otherwise, all is looking good for the Spring fishing. We should get a bit more rain out of the fronts coming through this weekend to top things up.

The water in the Merri has dropped and started to clear, so I took a walk for a couple of hours upstream from the Grassmere Bridge yesterday, and cast into all the likely spots where a fish should be holding. As it turned out, five browns from 3½ to 4 lbs were where they should be, for my benefit at least. They were definitely on the munch and all took a #6 black beadhead woolly bugger. (I kept a couple of fish for the table, and both were orange fleshed and full of an assortment of stick and cased caddis, shrimp, large black water beetles, and a few minnows). At about 3:00 pm a front of black clouds roared in from the south-west, so I decided to give it away. I ran for the car but the weather caught me, with horizontal rain and hail near drowning me before I could reach it. I was a soggy fisherman as I drove the 5 minutes to home for a hot shower and cup of tea.



*Jim with another fine Merri River brown*

The condition of the Merri is the best it has been in a long time, with a good flow and the recent flooding clearing a lot of the muck that has clogged the runs and pools in the past few years. Should be a good Spring season's fishing. I'll check on the Moyne River, over at Port Fairy, either today or tomorrow.

In the meantime, I've been trying out that 8 ft 4-weight Loop rod I won from the raffle at the Annual Dinner. It has a slower, cane-like, soft action and is taking some getting use to compared to the faster and stiffer actions of my two Sage rods.

Cheers and tight lines to all, JB

# ATF Report

The Annual General Meeting of the ATF is scheduled for 7 pm on Friday, October 30, and will be held at the Yarra Valley Fly Fishers clubrooms, at Lilydale Lake on Swansea Road / Anderson Street, Lilydale.

All ATF members and other interested anglers are strongly encouraged to attend.

As a preamble to the AGM, President Mick Hall has issued the following note:

## **A Note From The President**

The Australia Trout Foundation is an independent, non-profit organisation that currently represents in excess of 1,200 members, and is dedicated to ensure that all Australians can enjoy trout fishing now and for future generations to come. Our mission is to protect, build and promote Australia's trout fisheries.

Our goals are:

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

As a trout angler yourself, you are probably aware that there is a plethora of issues we face as trout anglers in Australia, and in order to mount an effective campaign in the most important areas, the Australian Trout Foundation needs to become stronger and more financially viable.

We have achieved a lot but we need your help to gain even more. Please ensure that you are financial and wherever possible get a friend to join the ATF.

## **To date, we have a proud history of achievement on behalf of all Australian trout anglers:**

- We singlehandedly stopped the use of Rotenone in Victoria.
- We fought for and gained important and beneficial changes to the aggressive willow removal by the CMA's in Victoria.
- We helped defeat the Federal EPBC nomination to remove trout from our streams.
- We were co-responsible for the removal of the derogatory 'Skull & Crossbones' logo with reference to Trout on the MDBC website.

- We helped save the Gaden Trout Hatchery in NSW.
- The ATF facilitated the re-opening of the 14 km Howqua River Miner's Track.
- The ATF Jamieson River Project incorporates the re-establishment of some 24 kilometres of tracks and access areas.
- We instigated the Government policy for the Adopt-a-Stream program.
- We instigated the government policy for the Stream Classification Model, and have worked jointly with NFA and Fisheries Victoria to develop this program that is now near completion.
- We were responsible for increasing the annual stocking of Eildon Pondage from just over 4,000 trout to over 20,000 trout a year.
- We were co-responsible for the now ongoing stocking of trout into the Goulburn River between Eildon and Alexandra by Fisheries Victoria.
- We are active supporters and members of the Recreational Fishing Round Table Forum.
- We organised a working bee to help re-establish the Buxton Trout Farm after it was severely damaged in the February 2009 bushfires.

#### **How did we manage to do all this incredibly valuable work?**

- We are a stand-alone, national organization with over 1,200 members (and growing), that works alongside like-minded organizations and have come to be widely regarded as the 'Voice for Trout' in Australia.
- We have created and maintain strong working relationships with government organizations such as Fisheries Victoria and Parks Victoria, and strong working affiliations with like-minded national organizations, such as Native Fish Australia, the Future Fish Foundation and key State Recreational Angling Organizations in Vic, NSW, SA and Tasmania.
- We have an Executive Committee comprised of several very hard-working individuals who are continuously working toward all our stated aims and are continuously addressing all the important issues, while simultaneously working to not only raise our profile but also to increase membership, all of which is done on a voluntary basis.

***You, the ordinary member, get all this for only \$10 a year!***

(Editor: With the start of the new season this is an excellent time for us to renew our ATF memberships. It's easy to do – log onto the ATF member renewal site address:

[http://www.atfonline.com.au/membership\\_form.pdf](http://www.atfonline.com.au/membership_form.pdf),

download the form, complete it, and post it off with cheque included. The ATF is one organisation that deserves our full support if we are keen to preserve and improve our trout fishery.)

# FLY OF THE MONTH

*(For this month's Fly Tying section, Geoff Bloch has submitted some notes on tying parachute duns and spinners)*

## ***Tying Parachute Hackles***

Like so many other flyfishermen, I now only ever tie duns and spinners with a parachute hackle around a wing post. This is because, in my opinion, parachute patterns give the most realistic imitative profile of the natural insect, and they also float better than conventionally tied flies, as the artificial parachute fly is supported by the length of the hackle fibres rather than by the hackle points which easily penetrate the meniscus and result in a waterlogged fly.

I would like to share with readers two different tips for tying parachute duns and spinners which I have evolved over the years by trial and error. They are my innovations although it is very possible other tiers have "trodden the same path".

The first tip is how to tie natural looking setae. The natural fly sits on the water with its setae set at a jaunty angle, rather than straight out behind and in line with the body of the insect like conventionally tied tails. The natural angle of the setae can be easily imitated in the following way.

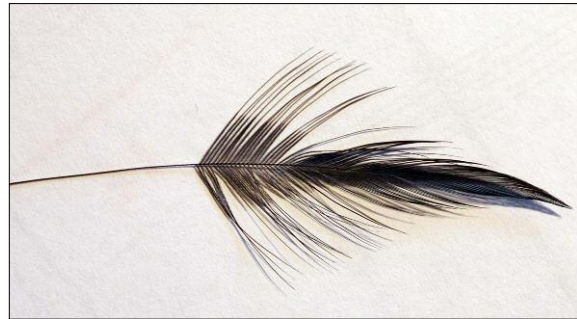
### **Tying Notes**

1. Select a feather from the same neck from which the parachute hackle is sourced, but choose one of the larger ones which would not ordinarily be used for a hackle. The colour match will obviously be perfect and there is now a use to which these larger, otherwise useless feathers, can be put!
2. Hold the feather by its tip and stroke the fibres with the thumb and forefinger of the other hand in the reverse direction so that the fibres stand at right angles to the feather's stalk (see diagram #1).
3. The individual fibres are longer the closer they get to the butt of the stalk. Choose the length of fibre you want for the setae and strip from both sides of the stalk all the fibres from that point right down to the butt (diagram #2).

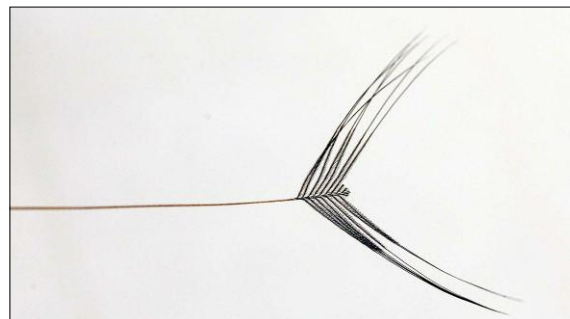
4. Then with very sharp, small scissors carefully snip the stalk so as to leave 3 or 4 fibres standing out on each side of the feather. Then holding them en masse between your thumb and forefinger again, stroke them back toward the (now absent) tip of the feather. The result is that you will have created a “Y” - the shaft of the “Y” being the stalk and the angled section being the fibres (diagram #3).
5. Finally, tie the shaft of the stalk to the shank of the hook positioned so that the fibres protrude beyond the bend of the hook. A drop of varnish may be used to anchor it all down, but I never bother.



*Diagram 1*



*Diagram 2*



*Diagram 3*

The second tip is how to tie in the wing post.

This is usually done by tying the wing material horizontally to the shank of the hook near the eye and then lifting the material to the vertical with a large number of anchoring wraps. All this adds unwanted bulk and weight. The method I use is to select wing material exactly 50% of the volume required for the wing. Tie in the wing material directly in line and atop the hook shank about a third of the way back from the eye with no more than 4 tightly wound anchoring wraps. Now this is the important bit: tie in the material so that half the wing lies in front of the anchoring wraps and half behind. Then pinch the whole of the wing and draw both halves to the vertical and secure with spiralled wraps around the wing post. The 50% volume of one half and the 50% volume of the other half will provide the exact volume required to form the wing post.



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

Members wishing to purchase any of these items should contact Hugh Maltby prior to the monthly General Meeting on telephone 9455 9017.

### VALUED DONORS

**The following made donations for the raffle at the 2009 Annual Dinner:**

- Armadale Angler • Aussie Angler • Australian Fishing Network • Bernard Holbery • Compleat Angler Box Hill • Compleat Fly Fisher Melbourne
- Daniel Hackett, RiverFly, Tasmania • Fly Life Publications • J M Gillies
- Lowes Furniture • Mayfly Tackle • Mick Hall • Michael Steven's Publishing • Millbrook Lakes Lodge • Nick Taransky - Bamboo Rod Maker • Philip Weigall
- Pro Angler Fishing Tackle • Ray Brown, Onkaparinga Flies & Cane Rods