

SINGLETON FLY FISHING CLUB INC. 2002

PROMOTING THE ART OF FLY FISHING IN THE HUNTER VALLEY NSW



YOUR 2014 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: Lawrence Blackburn

Vice-President: Brent Blackwell

Secretary: Warwick Sommer

Treasurer: Cherie Blackburn

General Committee: Darren Foster
Peter Sewell
Jeff Yates

Email: singletonflyfishingclub@googlegroups.com



Newsletter- Autumn 2014



Doesn't time fly! It's May already and the no take season for bass has started in our beloved rivers and in only a short time the trout will also get some peace and quiet.

So far this year our club has had a number of successful trips but with the exception of possibly Clarence Town the fish have been few and far between with only one coming to hand at the Barringtons and only one again at Gundowringa. Even the trip to the salt proved hard going.

That is not to say that all the trips were not successful. I didn't join the trip to 'The Tops' but the photos tell the true story. Gundowringa was nearly barren and I now understand why wind farms surround it. Still as always it was a fantastic weekend with the waistline taking time to get back to where it was.

We still have Foxy's trip to the Blue Mountains to look forward to although like most places I am only hearing of the odd fish coming in.

Still the companionship backed up by fine food and wine (in moderation) makes these trips fantastic.

Stay optimistic and keep a fly in the water and sooner or later a fish will have a chew.

Glenn.

Singleton Fly Fishing Club meets on the first
Wednesday of each month at:-

Beresfield Bowling Club
Anderson Drive
Bersefield
At 6.30pm

President's Ramblings

Christmas is nearly upon us, Christmas in July that is.

After the next meeting we will be putting out a formal invite with associated costs involved and the address details of some local accommodation for all our remote members. I look forward to catching up with everyone and having a social night with a dash of fly fishing in the conversation.

The May outing at Hartley near Lithgow is shaping up to be quite a big one with wives, children and a psychotic white fluffy dog attending. For me it is an opportunity to try out some new boots (William Joseph), new waders (Simms) and a new tent (which we haven't brought as yet), and I'm sure the weather will be just fine with a slight coolness in the air. I think it will be a good idea to take some extra firewood, maybe a trailer load will suffice.

With the cooler months coming Lake St Clair should start coming to life around the banks. Time to get the 6-8wt rods out with an intermediate or sink tip line and your favorite version of a Trev's, vampire or even a woolly bugger fly to coax your 40cm Bass out of the depths.

The first club organized trip is scheduled for June 13th to 15th with Peter running the show. Always a great weekend with many of our Sydney based members making the journey up to keep us company and provide a good laugh as they demonstrate how to put a tent down whilst still inside it.

Jeff and Peter have installed the new signs organized by Mik at Lake St Clair and the application for the dollar for dollar fish stocking program has been lodged by Warwick. Thanks guys, job well done. Thanks also to the guys who assist fisheries in releasing fingerlings mid-week while those stuck at work cannot attend. It is this sort of support from members willing to donate their time that helps keep the club running and in the eye of the general public, which all helps to raise the profile of the club and fly fishing in general.

By now you will have seen the emails from Cherie regarding the club shirts. Orders are now closed for the first round with around 20 shirts ordered. I look forward to this year's Carp Bash and any public demonstrations that we put on with the shirts (and members) on show. This brings a new level of unity to the group and rivals the Hastings bright yellow outfits.

That's all for now. See you on the water and/or at the next club meeting. Until then have fun chasing those piscatorial predators of the deep.

Cheers

Lawrence.

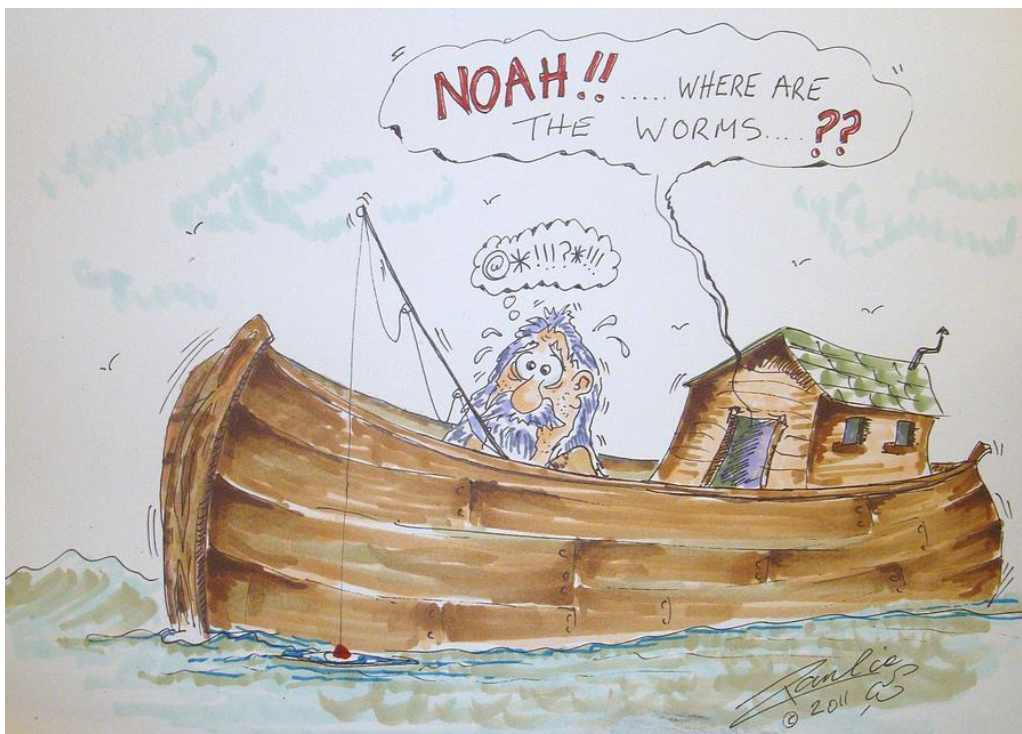
Clarence Town through the Lens

No story for this trip but the pictures show why Clarence Town is fast becoming a highlight of out club's year.





Well done Rod. Is this a cracker of a river bass or what? 48cm to the fork!



Barrington 2014- A Glass can be half full or half empty

By Justin Smith

A trip to the Barringtons is always one I look forward to. I have living memories of this place for so many reasons. I caught my first Australian trout on fly here in 1999, just downstream from our camp site.



A year or two later, I won the clubs rod chucking award here, as a result of an incident, where I unsuccessfully cast to a single visible trout at the 'gauge' for about two hours, until I collapsed in an exhausted broken heap, and yes, I chucked my rod. I think this says a lot about what kind of angler I was at the time..

Before the terrible drought of the mid 2000's kicked in, I remember a trip to my favourite spot up stream of the 'water gauge', where I noticed a marked difference in water clarity and insect numbers and with it, poor fishing. Coincidentally, this area was just downstream of Packer's new alluvial bed ruby mine. That trip left me bitter and disappointed with a bureaucracy that would rubber stamp such a project.

The drought of the mid to late 2000's was dubbed the worst in 100 years. We all knew that the fishery in the Barringtons would be under stress, and if for that reason alone, as a club, we choose not to fish it for a number of years.



In the last year or two I have fished here two or three times, and each time, the fishing was tough, with only a couple coming to hand as opposed to 10's and 20's!

In preparation for this club trip, I was hoping that the fishing had improved, that the recent period of dry hot weather would not be stressing the fish and the just finished Christmas period, where the area is attacked by swarms of anglers who don't understand or respect the fragile nature of this water would not have overly adversely impacted this vulnerable fishery.

I hoped that the fishery would be ok for the members of our club but sadly it was not.

Recent reports before our trip date suggested the fishery was not what it was or should be and that is just how it was when we arrived.

With our arrival to the Manning River camp grounds came drought breaking rain. Hooray, except that we were camping, boo.

A glass is either half full, or half empty.

Anticipating both the weather, and the likelihood that the fishing would be challenging Lawrence and I planned a trip where some of the focus would be shifted to just being in the Barringtons as to purely fishing for trout. We both love to cook, and in that light, the idea of cooking a spit roast on Saturday night became our focus.



Because Lawrence also chose to tow our club trailer up the mountains we thankfully had use of our Club Gazebos and other camping accessories that would make camping in the wet weather just a little more comfortable.

Our plan was simple. With two nights camping ahead of us we needed at least four things. A warm if not raging fire (yes, it is still raining), alcohol in variety quality and abundance, good warm tasty food and the friendly banter with the good company of our angling brothers.

This is a proven winning recipe for a Barrington outing and despite the wet weather all the boxes were ticked. I would like to thank John, Darcy, Peter and Brent who always seem to drag something special from the cellar and then share it with the wine paupers like me, who none the less offer tasting appraisals for free.

Thanks also to Lawrence who led the spit roasting cook off, ensuring our roast lamb fell off the bone and the chicken too, just right, accompanied by delicious roasted vegetables. The food purchased by our club and pre-prepared by Cherie was very much enjoyed by all.

Peter, as always lived up to his legend name, 'Pyro', bringing a raging fire to life every night despite constant rain.

None the less, there was fishing, if not catching to be had, and it cannot be understated that just being in this special place, in misty mountains, gurgling streams and knowing that the clean inspiring air is energizing in itself.

In that energized state we share a little as well, donating a little of our excess blood to our invertebrate cousins the leeches, but I digress.



Many of us simply wanted to explore, to see some areas heard of but never tried; and in that quest Peter and Brent ventured to 'Big Hole'. I have to admit that is a place I too want to visit someday and the report came back that Saturday afternoon was that it was well worth the visit.

Some of our usual spots like water gauge were considered inaccessible because of the wet weather which had made tracks muddy and impassable so John and Darcy choose some of the downstream spots with easier access for their day out.

As for Lawrence and I, we looked to spot x for our salvation A section of the upper Manning that has provided brilliant and reliable fishing in days past.

But at the end of the day, all of us returned with tales of beautiful water, but few fish, seen or caught, and despite the glass half full mantra, this was disappointing.



I wish I knew why this fishery seems to be struggling?

Has the stocking dropped off, has the drought simply killed the fish, have other less caring fisherman collapsed the delicate balance that a sustainable fishery must have?

I just don't know, maybe all or nothing of the above is relevant?

As a side note, I would like to touch base with people who might be more in the know, maybe the trout hatchery officials who have been stocking in this area historically or maybe other fishing clubs based in that area could give us some insights.

With more information we, as a club, might be able to assist in reviving this fishery in some small way?

I hope to know more if it is possible and to act in some positive way if it could turn this downward trend in a special almost unique fishery.

In reflection, this is a special place that must not be taken for granted.

If the glass is indeed half full, we will see it again at its best....I hope so.



Lower Portland Trip 15-17 November

Firstly a big thank you to Rod Fox's neighbors Jim and Helen for inviting us to their piece of paradise on the Nepean River.

Although the weather was not kind and speed boats practicing for the Bridge To Bridge made for less than perfect conditions a great time was had by all at a new location for the club. Most caught fish and the event organization by Foxy was 5 star. Nice to see a mix of both bass and estuary perch.



Balsa Wood Flies

Traditional or Not?

Article by Darren Foster

Who cares? If it is tied using fly tying tools and using materials such as cock or hen hackles and other materials such as marabou, sparkle flash, flash-n-slinky and rubber or sili-legs (all materials used in modern and not-so-modern flies). What difference does it make if the body is foam, dubbing, chenille.....or balsa wood? As long as the fly is able to be cast with a fly rod plus the most important aspect of any fly.....it catches fish.....once again, who cares.

For the last four months, no make that six (time flies when you're having fun) I have been carving fly bodies out of balsa wood and turning them in to fish magnets. The most common pattern is the balsa wood frog. With some flash-n-slinky tied in and a couple of hackles splayed outwards for legs Add a hackle wrapped in behind the body (not sure what it actually does but it looks cool as part of the fly) paint the body in some resemblance of a frog (oh yeah, I forgot to mention.....paint the body first before adding feathers n' fluff) and your now ready to catch a ~~fish~~ bass.

Other flies I've carved/tied include McMurray Ant's, bees, crickets, mice and poppers (both short and long). Saltwater patterns include squid poppers and poppers for bream and tailor.

Even though balsa wood is actually a hard wood, it is extremely light-weight, very buoyant and easy to work with. The only negative is toothy critters such as tailor usually makes short, splintery work of your fly. Just ask new recruit Patrick about the pros and cons of Tailor vs. Balsa Wood Flies at the recent Stockton outing.

Check out the gallery below



Bass on a Slider

Balsa Wood Frog



Another Bass on a Balsa Wood Frog



Tailor on a Saltwater Balsa Wood Popper



The Saltwater Gang



The Terrestrials



.....and the Bass Collection



Top left two flies (black & brown) are shaped similar to a Dahlberg Diver replacing the traditional deer hair body with a balsa wood body. I might re-name these Dagwood Divers.

Top right two flies are basic poppers.

Bottom left two flies (black & green) are sliders. They float on the surface and when you strip the line in the fly dips and dives under then bobs back up on the pause.

Bottom right two flies (green & brown) are basic pencil poppers.

Fishy Links

http://www.fin-chasers.com/	Fin Chasers is always a great read!
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Sponsors 2014



www.proangler.com.au/



<http://www.flynguide.com.au>

John has moved the shop to 17 Brodie Street Rydalmere.
Directly opposite Rydalmere railway station.

If you need help with presents give John or I a call. (Prices disguised and hints given to family and friends if required). PS Just joking (maybe)

Email sales@flynguide.com.au 0427904518 (John) 0417402540
(Glenn)

I am sworn to secrecy but there will be at least two big announcements coming out shortly. I'm excited!!!

Newsletter Wrap Up



Firstly a big thanks to all those who contributed to this newsletter. I hope everyone enjoys reading it as much as I do.

Although the fishing this year has been a little tough opportunities are still out there if you give it a go. The trip to the Blue Mountains is always good and maybe this is the year St Clair will fire like it used to.

Christmas in July will be huge as always and even more so if you are flying out to Christmas Island the following Tuesday (I'm the editor so I'm allowed to skate).

The next newsletter will be put together when I get back.

We really live in the lucky country so enjoy all we have and play nicely together.

Cheers

Glenn

