



December '22 and January '23 Newsletter

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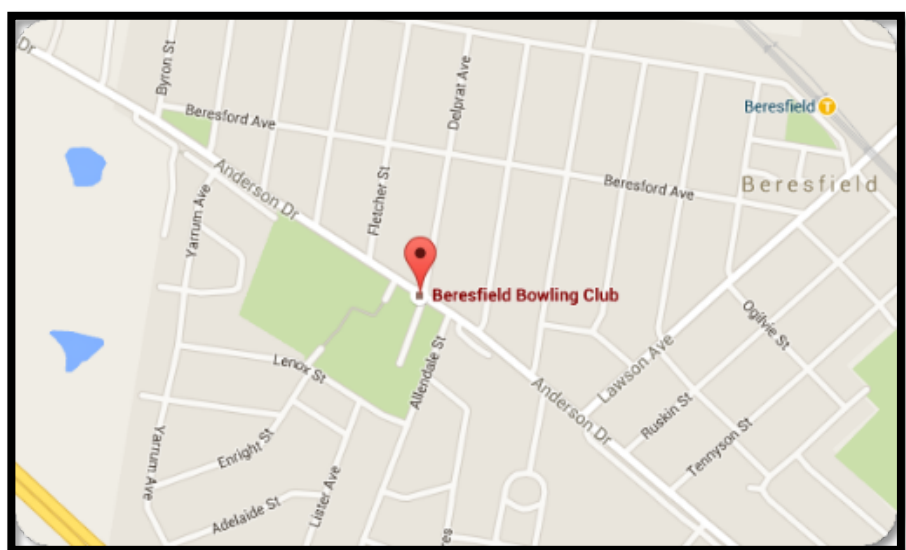
Committee Members

Fiona Meredith
Peter Sewell
Rod Fox
Jeff Yates

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

Beresfield Bowling Club
Anderson Drive, Beresfield

Next Meeting
Wednesday 1st Feb 2023
7.00 pm



Editor, In-Training, Notes



Well, there goes 2022 and though it's been better than some of our recent years I still can't say I'll miss it. 2023 is already looking to be a significantly improved year though so no need to call in a welfare check just yet.

I really shouldn't run 2022 down too much, I bought my first real fly rod (I had a fly rod shaped stick before that looks great where it is and will stay), went on the wonderful midyear Club outing to Swansea and met some very welcoming club members there. My eldest daughter still asks regularly about everyone she met and is ready to come along to more meets. She is almost as keen as me for the club outings this year!

Oh, and I bought a little boat, after a few years without one, so really, maybe, I need to revise my report card for 2022.

Matt will back with a Presidents report in the Feb edition, which will be another bumper read with some planned outings for the year, some dates to put on the calendar and presumably plenty of stories of the Christmas monsters that got away.

We're off to Fiji in a few days for a family holiday, I'll take my fly rod and pick some flies up once there. I'm not even sure if I can fish where we are staying but the option of a fishing charter does seem to loom large on the list of possibilities between snorkelling, sleeping and eating. I'll be back just in time for the February meeting so will let you know how I go.

This Newsletter is an absolute bumper edition with 4 (yes four) wonderful articles submitted by our dedicated fly casters. It's great to see so many people submitting stories about their trips away, and I am very privileged to get first preview to these. Thank you as always to everyone who contributes. Enjoy the read, I know I did.

Cheers,

Tom

Tassie 2022

Jeff Yates



Those who have been to the Central Plateau of Tasmania, would know this iconic hut, not far from Penstock Lagoon. The shingle and tin roof would have colourful stories to tell, of the famous Shannon rise, the monster trout in the numerous nearby lakes and maybe of Thylacine pelts nailed to the rough sawn timber walls. I think it has just about seen its day, as with the Shannon rise, the monster trout and the Thylacine, but what hasn't changed is the beauty and ruggedness of the pristine terrain, clear water and cold weather which breeds some of the most beautiful wild brown trout in the world.

Each year we travel down to fish various lakes, whilst being based in a shack on Arthurs Lake. Our affable host PS, confers with the BOM and physically checks the wind direction on a daily basis before deciding where we should head for the day's fishing. Down here they fish gentleman's hours, very few fish at night, it's too cold and hardly sporting. Within hours of landing at Hobart we are donning the waders with several layers of thermal protection and excitably making our way to Jonah Bay on Arthurs Lake. This venture is purely to release some of our pent up excitement after the train, plane and car trip to our destination. Within an hour of arriving Peter landed a lovely brown on beetle and buzzer dropper, from a precarious and wooded section of the bay, but his smile tells it all, and the monkeys off his back!



The water temperature at shore level was 10.5 degrees, not good for an evening rise, but there's always another day. Back to the shack early to unpack, light the fire, have a chow mein dinner, celebrate our arrival with a whisky, put on the electric blankets, renew acquaintances and off to bed.

Arthurs Lake is quite a large body of water, at an altitude of 952m and half a million mega litres, a quick, safe boat is essential to get access to those beautiful little secluded bays which take advantage of prevailing winds. Fleming's bay at the top end of the lake fishes well in a NE wind, so after a hearty breakfast, we packed our venison sandwiches and a thermos and headed the 8km up the dam. During the trip we were given a history lesson on the forming of the lake, and its various features, before entering a most interesting bay with a foamy wind lane channelling into the main body of the dam. At the back of the bay lay a couple of magic shacks, something I just dream of owning. The bay contains neatly grassed verges, trimmed by a population of wallabies, wombats and fallow deer, like a well-manicured bowling green, with the occasionally spiky rush marsh running into the shallow water. Off each side is a heavily wooded perimeter, where polroiding fish is both exciting but also difficult, and 6lb tippets are tested to the limit to steer hooked fish from fallen timber and flooded bushes.



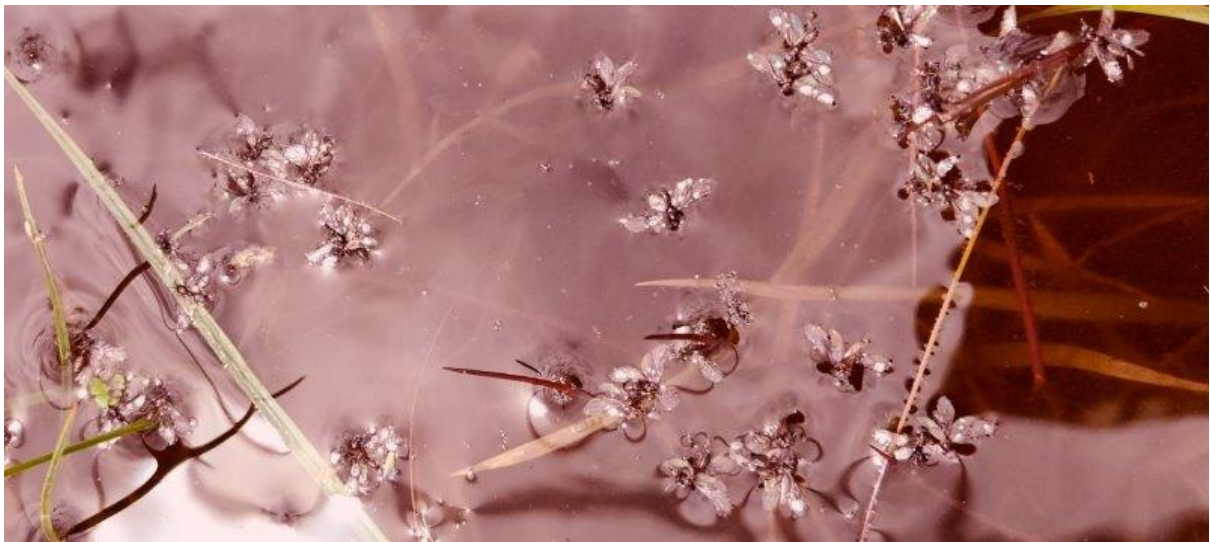
Initially, the foamy banks were an enigma, with some difficulty getting a take, however, a Golden Sparkler pulsed and paused through the structure produced 4 good fish. Further challenges presented themselves amongst the trees, but well placed small black beetles and Geehi Beetles produced a couple of fish.

Later in the day trout started to cruise the banks, some commenced a tails up grubbing action, undoubtedly on worms over flooded grasses, while others taking the occasional caddis from the base of bushes in the water, and a third category of fish patrolled the edges of the marsh, then darted in doing a quick about and returning to the depths. Our collective geriatric minds decided that galaxias were on the menu but that was not proven. What we did prove was the fish of the day coming from a worm pattern, cast from high on the grass line to a small pocket of clear water amongst the spiky rush, where a fish was busily tailing and grubbing the bottom. The line tightened and a fish scooted the shallows, only to be landed after an epic fight. A CDC fly was gleefully taken by a riser under flooded bushes. Surprising but disappointingly, there wasn't a dun rise, the water was still too cold.

We discussed the latter point over a coffee with some locals, who claimed that the first signs of a dun hatch was late October with the flowering of the needlebush hakea, which was just happening now, one month later than usual.

Wallaby stew for dinner tonight, as we opened a bottle of Frogmore Creek 2017 FGR Riesling and discussed the day's events. The fish feeding patterns were discussed and analysed, along with future tactics, and coincidentally, tomorrow is predicted to be a similar weather pattern as today. What was perplexing was the number of fish we caught, and on such a variety of fly patterns; beetles, buzzers, cdc duns, worms, partridge fly, possum fly, tadpole, golden sparkler. It's hard to say what pattern we will use tomorrow if duns aren't present.

Tomorrow has come and gone. A fresh brewed coffee at the new and successful Flintstone Road House to start the day, but things were not like yesterday, few fish surfaced on Arthurs, but what we did notice was the amount of caenid (small mayflies) floating in the surface in the lee shore, like I mean rafts of them. They were small, in the range of say #18 or less, and I was not prepared for them. The locals refer to them as grass flies, and usually don't target them particularly, but having just read an article by Peter Broomhall in Flylife #109, he used a small CDC F-Fly with various coloured hot spots to great success. This would probably mean carrying 2 rods, my usual Hardy 6 wt essential due to the windy conditions on the mountains, and a 4 wt for caenid hatches, to allow a delicate presentation of a tiny fly on a 12ft 3lb leader. That's a challenge for another day, but I may make a project out tying a few F-Flies for the future, to be sure, to be sure!



Anyway, feeling dejected we decided for a different plan tomorrow. What about the Western Lakes?

Coffee again for breakfast, and we made our way via Meina, round the perimeter of the Great Lake then into the western wilderness area. Hardly wilderness in places as the scarred landscape from fires 3 years ago has left the countryside denuded of vegetation. The gate was open at Lake Ada, so we passed through to travel a further 11 kms to a closed gate, near to 2nd Lagoon and Double Lagoon.

The 3 of us took off in different directions to explore and find solace in the beauty of the moment. For me the sight of a platypus just a metre from where I was sitting, gave me a thrill, especially when it could be seen collecting grass and carrying it away in its folded tail, to line its den. As I watched the water from my platypus possie, I spotted my one and only fish of several pounds cruising the windblown shoreline. On its third pass, I was able to get a beetle and nymph dropper into its path, but I may as well have thrown in a hand grenade, as it bolted for the middle of the lagoon. The other guys had their own hard luck stories to tell, as we gathered at the end of the lagoon for a quick chat and headed back to the car for a thermos and venison sandwiches.



Check out the platypus on left with grass under tail, and the damn mozzies which ate us alive on the Great Lake



The sun was above us as we left the lakes area, and decided on a quick fish on the Great Lake on the way home. The bank hasn't seen water this high for many years, so it was a little rough underfoot. I got through a cattle fence and made my way to a protected bay, where I searched with several patterns before scoring on a nice brown on a partridge fly. This fish was the one and only, so we pulled up stumps late in the afternoon as there was little chance of a rise.

How do venison and duck sausages with homemade relish sound for dinner? Well, I can tell you they were beautiful. For those who know me, I often describe sausages and pies as lips and arseholes, as the unidentified parts are minced and placed in pastry and it's a lucky dip, but these were different. Again, planning

ahead, PS had a change of itinerary for tomorrow. The wind and rain expected would make it too miserable to venture out, so he had a road trip planned.

Coffee again (have we got an addiction?), and hit the road in every stitch of clothing I possessed, as well as a new set of gloves I bought from the roadhouse. A lot could be said for excess baggage and additional warm clothing. We pushed out along the Poatina road toward Penstock Lagoon, where we encountered a small crowd on the shore and several boats on the water close to the wall. Seems that the word has got out there, too many mainlanders reading fishing stories, and killing the lagoon with over fishing and polluting watercraft. I feel for those keen old timers who want their solitude and be able to present a dry fly to a cruising trout, only to have it spooked by other fishermen and boats.

Luckily, Penstock was not on our agenda, but Waddamana Hydro Power Station was. Built from 1910 in several stages using horse drawn carriages and buggies pulled along a timber railed tram way, it was an important power source, supplying electricity to Hobart and the zinc works at Risdon. After it was closed in 1994, plans were made to make it into a museum, and we were readily able to relate to the plant, having worked on hydro in the past and at former NSW coal fired power stations. Top marks Tassie Hydro for the preservation of an important part of your history.



Tourism complete, we planned on a trip to one of our favourite locations, Woods Lake. This lake is a few hundred meters lower in altitude and should be warmer, so we hope we might see a rise. The previous weekend, there were 45 boat trailers at the ramp, and with limited access points, this would have been bedlam, but fortunately today there were 3, including ours. We darted off to the flats on the far side to take advantage of the tailing wind. Once again, no fish rising and the 6 degree day did little for the comfort stakes, though the blood nearly boiled when I came close to a basking fat black snake. It was quite lethargic, and allowed me to get a close up shots as it oozed into a nearby hollow log. PS got a couple of trout on a partridge fly, I got hypothermia and Peter got frustrated!



With time running down on our 10 day trip, the next couple of days have been forecast as snow to 500m (Flintstone 850m). Another coffee, another day, and all 3 of us put our collective efforts together to install a new mast head amplifier on the shack tv antenna. Job completed but not working, we went for a foray to Scotch Bobs creek in Cow Paddock Bay. Once again, the fishing was ordinary, though the water had a nice colour, but way too cold.



Like all good things, this trip is coming to an end. We have postponed it for 3 years due to covid, I just hope it won't be another 3 years before we revisit this wonderful island. We did

our sums, and during the week we caught 22 decent fish and probably another 30 smaller fish, on 9 different flies. This indicates that there was not a repeatable or discernible feeding pattern, and the main factor was the lack of a dun hatch this year. Blame climate change, cold winters, too much rain or all 3, but as the locals say, the duns hatch when the needlebush is in flower and this year it is a month late, but thanks to good planning and excellent company we still got a few and had a memorable time.



Fishing In the Big Smoke Made Easy

Glenn O

Over the years I have been fortunate to fish in some of the most highly rated spots in Australia and overseas.

Most of these require a high level of planning and packing.

I have fished Kiribati several times and knowing that the nearest fishing store is nearly 4,000 kilometres away makes it important to make sure you have everything you need.

Generally speaking Australia is easier but even the back blocks of Queensland make attention to packing crucial.

Having accepted this the rewards of fishing these wonderful locations makes the effort more than worthwhile.

As much as I love fishing travel it is enjoyable to pack just a handful of gear and fish locations within one hour of home and yes metropolitan Sydney is viewed negatively by some but with a bit of practice there are some solid fish to be caught around town and the view is not too shabby.



Yes, that is the harbour bridge with the city of Sydney on the right-hand side and this is what is available at not just one but several spots around this area.



This one was mid-thirties and an absolute pig of a luderick and about normal for most spots on the Parramatta River.

The other visitors this river are kingfish.

Not often but once or twice a season schools of kingfish from 40cm hoodlums up to about 90cm appear.

Only three weeks ago a school was herding baitfish so close to the shore that a cast would not have been needed. Tea bagging kingfish is a genuine option but not (if like we did) you only bring a 6 weight and weed flies.

Every trip since heavier rods have accompanied but no more visits.

They can appear any time up until winter so we live in hope.

Unlike our club visit a few months back we don't have a nice central coast beach nearby so my fishing mate, Michael, and me have hit the water most weeks trying to unlock the key to consistently catching a few and we now seem to successfully do this so here is the method.

Tides are all important.

We like the final half of the run in and the first half of the run out.

The old saying "no run-no fun" remains as true as ever.

Lat week we landed three and dropped two in the last 30 minutes before high tide. After that nothing!

Unlike on the beaches where a heavily weighted fly is used it is essential to have a sparse unweighted fly that moves around in the run. I use a size 8 or 10 hook.



Most types of indicator or floats work.

I use the smallest “Thingamabobba” but wool strike indicators also work.

These need minimal weight.

I don’t use a split shot. 12 pounds tippet from a floating 6 weight fly line down to a small swivel with about 60-70cm of 8-pound tippet to the fly.

This might seem a bit heavy but the bottom is a bit “ugly” and when I used 6 pounds it was not unusual to get buried.

They are solid fish and don’t play nice.

When to strike is something that is still a work in progress. I miss nearly as many as I hook but am improving.

I trim the fly so it doesn’t have a long tail.

When I was much younger and used weed bait the rule used to be to count to three when the float dipped but this doesn’t seem to work with a fly.

I think when real weed is used the wait works because weed bait to the fish tastes and smells “normal” whereas it doesn’t take long for a weed fly to be judged different and spat out so as soon as the float goes under a quick strip strike seems to work.

Usually, luderick is a winter fish around here but it’s December and there is still no sign of them leaving so we will leave them alone during school holidays and return in February hoping they have not vanished and that a visit from the resident kingfish happens.



This is Michael Lyons with another nice fish.

As you can see this is “comfy” fishing with no cliffs or slippery rocks.

Tables with seating and flushing toilets are close by.

Yes, it’s not remote Queensland but it’s close to home with a great coffee shop and hotel close by.

Living in suburbia might have its drawbacks but fishing is not necessarily one of them.

Glenbawn Christmas 2022

Brent Blackwell

Glenn Olney and myself have been fishing this dam at Christmas for years and think we have a technique that catches fish. This year it was all different. Word was out that bass were hard to find, and even harder to catch. So we put the boat on the water and started fishing. Things were certainly different.

Lake Glenbawn was above a 100% full. There was green slime everywhere, sometimes at the shore it was like bright green soup. Water was cool. Not sure if the fish kill earlier in the year was also reflecting the lack of fish. The fish were hard to find and even harder to hook.

At this time most of the bass are at a depth of 5 to 7 metres, so fly fishing is not an option.

We drag hard body lures about, in the past we were landing 5 to 10 bass every trip. Not this year, sometimes we did not even get a touch. So we decided to go to another option:-

Plan B

Peter Morse and co had been fishing for bass with no luck. While having lunch on the shore they noticed that the carp were active. The carp responded well to a fly put on their nose. So we had put the fly rods in just in case.

While trolling we kept our eyes open for a suitable shore to fish. We decided to check out a shore on the eastern side of the dam. This would allow the sun to be behind us allowing for polarizing. The idea was to pitch up to the shore and go for a walk and look for fish. Well, we hit the shore walked 20 metres and saw 5-6 carp cruising the shallows. Back to the boat and break out the fly rods.

We tried a selection of different flies before finding ones that the carp would take. Some carp would reject a fly, others acted as though the fly did not exist, then others swallowed without hesitation.



Glenn was using a glowbug, however the carp did not like a bright orange and he had put on a pale pink. This was still rejected by some carp, others happily wolfed it down.



I tried a couple of different glowbugs and bread flies before trying a brown maribou bugger. This was liked. This was all sight fishing. You watched for a carp guessed where it was heading, cast out a slow sinking fly and hoped it was seen by the carp.



We were landing 8-10 carp in an hour. It can be frustrating, but if you kept casting you landed a fish.

After 4 days of bashing this shore the carp were not responding to the fly. Weather may have been part of this as the barometer had dropped.

So we tried another shore. This was different as it was deeper. You could still polaroid fish, but they were harder to see. Here there were carp actively feeding, taking stuff off the top of the water.

We walked the bank catching a few fish. I had one taking me in and out of a snag, in an effort to get the fish out of the snag, snapped the rod. Landed fish by hand lining. That was the end of my fly fishing, it was also our last day.

As we put the boat out from the shore, there were carp swimming about in 2 metres of water. So Glenn had a cast and landed a couple from the boat.

Just for fun, I had a small lure on a spin stick, so tossed that about, the carp responded.

If you are going to fish Glenbawn keep in mind the option of chasing carp. The lake is filled with them and they fight really well. Take a selection of flies that allow you to find something they will chew.



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2022 - 2023

Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club Incorporated (the "Association")
(Incorporated under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009*)

I,

[insert full name]

of

[insert address]

.....
[insert email]

.....
[insert contact number]

☐ Full member ☐ Junior member ☐ Family membership** (✓ applicable)
(\$50 pro rata) (\$20 pro rata) (\$60 pro rata)

I hereby apply to renew my membership of the Association until 30th Sept 2023

By renewing my membership, I agree to comply with and be bound by the constitution of the Association for the time being in force.

.....

Signature of applicant

Date:

**** Members renewing a Family Membership must complete the information on page 2 below.**

LODGEMENT AND PAYMENT

Once completed, please sign, scan and email back to c3091769@uon.edu.au and headstarting@bigpond.com

Membership fees can be paid by cheque or via bank transfer.

If paying by bank transfer, please use your name as a reference for payment so your payment can be easily identified.

Bank transfer should be paid to the following account:

Name: Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club

BSB: 637 000

Account No: 780 089 059

Please make cheques payable to **Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club**

Application for Family Membership

To be eligible for Family Membership, and have the Association's insurance cover extend to include all applicable family members, the following conditions will apply:

- Family Membership is available for a member and their immediate family members only (i.e. wife/husband/ partner and children under 18 years of age at the start of the new membership term) and does not include Grandparents or member's siblings or other relations, etc.
- Member's children 18 years or older will be required to join as a full member
- Each family membership is only entitled to 1 vote at club meetings.
- the requested information in the following table must be supplied in respect of all people proposed to be covered by a Family Membership:

Full name	Date of birth	Relationship to member

--Sponsors--



UNIT 8 5 JOULE PLACE
TUGGERAH NSW 2259

