

Newsletter of the Tasmanian Fly Tyers' Club Inc.

Volume14, Issue 1 Summer 2017

Inside: Henry's Place, Cliff, Rotorua, Talbots Lagoon and much more...

Cover shot – Noel Wilson fishes the bottom dam at Henry's Place

1

President's Report

Sadly, one of our older members, Graeme House, died in February at the age of 93. Graeme was one of the "originals" who founded the Club in about 1957 and his death now leaves only one other surviving foundation member in Ray Longden. At various times Graeme served as Vice President, Secretary and Committee Member, and he was elected as a Life Member of the Club. Graeme will be sadly missed and we send our condolences to his Wife, Pam.

On a more cheerful note, we congratulate Malcolm Crosse on his recent election as a Life Member of the Ballarat Fly Fishers Club, not to mention the successful publication of his "Australia's Best Trout Flies Revisited".

I believe that the club can be well satisfied with the activities that have been held over the 2016-17 season.

The November Bothwell Farm Dams was well attended with several excellent fish being caught. Our thanks go to Henry Edgell for so generously hosting this weekend.

Thanks also to Noel Wilson for organising the "Cripples Week" at Miena in December. This was well-attended and apparently very productive and enjoyable.

A few members participated in a joint fishing weekend with the Devonport Fly Fishers at Talbot Lagoon. This was very successful and it is planned to hold this again next year.

The January Miena weekend was not helped fishingwise by hot, dry conditions and strong winds. However, a few fish were caught, and several members together with guests from the Devonport Fly Fishers enjoyed a very congenial barbecue on the Saturday night. The general meeting held at the Central Highlands Lodge on the Monday evening was well attended with the highlight being a very interesting presentation complete with snakehandling demo from Dr. Pat Whitaker.

Conditions for the Penstock weekend in late February turned out to be far better that had been forecast and the dozen or so attendees managed to catch over fifty fish. As usual for this event, social activities featured prominently and culminated in a gourmet extravaganza prepared by Chef Steve Butler. Thanks too to Malcolm Crosse and Mark Aspinall for providing accommodation in their shacks. We were particularly

pleased to be able to host Mick Hall (prominent Victorian angler and fly tyer) and Chris Reeves (Secretary of the British Fly Dressers' Guild). Both were very entertaining and informative, and also gave presentations at the club general meeting on the following Monday.

On the radar, we have the Salmon Ponds casting day and barbecue on 7 May, two 2-day fly tying sessions at Liawenee over 26 – 30 May, and Wine Appreciation for Fly Tyers at Penstock 23 – 25 June. Information on these activities will be provided as they get closer, but I urge you to put them in your diary and to participate in them if at all possible.

Grace and Laurie Matcham have done a great job in arranging a booking at the Hobart Convention Centre for our dinner on 29 July. The menu looks excellent and they have secured a very favourable deal. However, it is vital that we have a good attendance so I strongly urge you to immediately set the date aside for this important club activity.

Finally, as I write this, we seem to be getting some more favourable weather, so I hope that you can still manage some fishing and wish you tight lines for the remainder of the season.

Andrew Hood

Inside this Issue	Page
President's Report	2
Editorial	3
Henry's Place Revisited	4
AdVice Tips and Tricks	5
Cliff – Club Legend	6
Miena Field Trip – The Crocks!	8
Fly Tying on the WWW	8
Casting Tips with Zuie Sensei	9
New Zealand North Island	10
Talbot's Lagoon Trip	12
Vice Index	14
Club Contact Details	18

Editorial

Apologies for the lateness of the Summer Vice, which will probably not get distributed until March! My excuse is that I have been busy and thought that it would be better to include a report of my trip to New Zealand with Nick Ingles and others and also my proposed hike into Lunka Lake at the end of January. The New Zealand trip was great fun though not the fishing bonanza of previous years. The summer in NZ seemed to be about as good as the Tasmanian one with low temperatures and strong winds everywhere.

The Lunka trip was scheduled for the last week of January but such was the weather forecast that we decided it was better to stay home rather than spend three nights holding down tents in driving rain and wind. Still there are always other opportunities.

The trip to Henry's place before Christmas was a highlight of the early summer, as was the trip to Talbots Lagoon. I fared poorly fish-wise on both trips and seem to be setting up a worrying habit of fishless trips. (I did have a successful day with Laurie Matcham on Woods though!)

I have really enjoyed my casting sessions with Zuie and Tim on a Saturday mornings and hope to make this a regular feature of the weekends that I am not fishing or generally being busy.

The trip to Talbots Lagoon seems a long time ago but it was certainly a highlight of the season. Well done to Chris Medwin for coordinating this event! Here's hoping that the final months of the season see some dry fly action and eager fish for a change!

DM





The boys at Spot On fishing tackle have kindly provided the Club with 4 vouchers to the value of \$30 each for this year's competition. I'm sure everyone will join with me in thanking the lads for this kind support, and continue to patronise Steve's shop. Vouchers can be picked up from the Editor at your leisure!

So...Write the best story and win a \$30 *Spot On* voucher!

This time the award goes to... Noel Wilson for his report on the Retirees Trip to Miena. Yay Noel!

Have a go
Simply send your entry to Doug Miller

55dmiller@gmail.com





Henry's Place - Revisited



The Club trip to Henry's Place is fast becoming one of the most eagerly anticipated events on the calendar and this year was no exception. The weather was perfect and the fierce winds of previous years abated. Club members turned out in their droves and some magnificent fish were landed. It is amazing just how well conditioned and consistently large the fish continue to be.



Again we were lucky enough to have the opportunity to fish Weasel Plains courtesy of Scott Bowden – and there is no better sight than seeing the fish, taking midge off the surface in the first light of day.

Water levels in all three dams at Henry's were much higher than in previous years with the first dam actually overflowing. Wading the edges, it was easy to see why the fish were in such amazing condition with so much food available.

Club member and first time visitor Jim Jones was over the moon with the two fish he managed to pick up. He thought they were probably the largest he had ever caught. Most (all?) fish caught on the first dam were taken on wet flies using a variety of retrieves and of course a variety of flies. Black and red were a favourite in colours. Jim however had a unique retrieval method – cast a long line and then talk to

passersby thus ignoring your fly until a fish takes! This worked on two separate occasions as Ian Stokes and the Editor can attest. The fish were awesome!



The traditional evening meal on the Saturday night in the shearer's quarters was again a great part of this event with stories and laughter going on into the night giving members a chance to celebrate and relive their successes or in my case to make excuses for not catching anything. (It was a case of bad luck, difficult conditions, poor knot tying and the whole world political situation etc etc).



People fished hard and long with Bryn Carmen showing his celebrated determination, skill and

resilience with a fine Redfin of impressive proportions!



Most people set off early for Weasel Plains for the dawn rise. Weasel was very high and there were fish rising regularly but many seemed reluctant to take the dries offered. The aforementioned Stokes and the redoubtable John Spencer had some success but many headed back to Henry's for another bash at his dams. One notable exception from this early morning foray was Tim Urbanc - and we should have watched to see what he would do – who quietly wandered up to the Sheepwash Dam instead and landed at least 6 lovely fish on the dry!



I would like to officially thank Henry once again for his generosity, hospitality and enthusiasm for this trip. It certainly is a highlight of our Club calendar.

DM

Ad-Vice Tips and Tricks

Gadgets, gear and good ideas are always close to the surface whenever fly tyers get together. This section of The Vice features recommendations, quick reviews and tips to make the fishing experience even richer. Please feel free to send in any tips you might like to share

I have been impressed by people like Tony Dell and others who make their own fly tying tools. It is great to watch the way in which Tony uses a paper clip bent into a semi circle with little hooks on each end as a whip finisher with such precision. Even though I am a bit of a sucker for new gear and the latest 'must have' device I also enjoy the idea of using everyday objects in a specialized situation.

I remember well the intake of breath at the Tiger Hut a few years ago when master fly tyer Ashley Artis demonstrated using a 'magic tool' to spin a hackle from CDC. These plastic clips seemed like they were the most important tools in the universe to me for a while so I spent serious money on a set (which I do like.)

They re however just plastic clips and this idea from an English forum looks like it will do a similar job. By catching the herl of a CDC or marabou feather and inserting it in a dubbing loop you can create some amazing hackle effects! – Give it a try!



http://www.flyfishing.co.uk/fly-tying-forum/274163-cheap-magic-tool.html

Also checkout this 'YouTube video on how to make a bobbin out of an old pen!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=emsubs digest&v=5l803fAkumg&app=desktop

Cliff Ludford – Club Legend!



Cliff Ludford - Legend

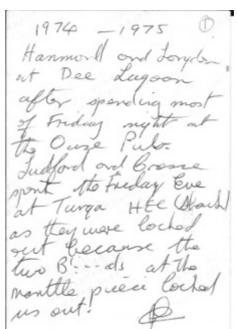
There was a simple announcement at the beginning of the correspondence section of the November meeting that said that Cliff Ludford was resigning as a full member of the club and was assuming associate membership. I was surprised to hear this but didn't think much more about it until after the meeting. It didn't seem right that such a wonderful man and long-standing member of the club should leave with such little fanfare.

Cliff was one of the first members of the club who, along with his great mate Noel Wilson, demonstrated the generosity of spirit and expertise gleaned through many years of loving tying flies and catching fish. His tip of using a sliver off the stem of a peacock feather as eyes on wet flies is one that I still regularly use. So, here is a short version of Cliff's time as a full member of the Fly Tyers Club gleaned from various members with long memories!

Cliff's choice to relinquish full membership of the club and become an associate member is to make way for another younger full member in the club and is typical of Cliff's generosity.



Cliff (seated in front of the fire) is one of the early members, joining in 1963, so has been a member for 53 years. He was on the committee from 1973 for 7 years and editor of The Vice in 1974 and 75. Very



capable with his hands, he was a regular helper at working bees and club projects. Few people would be aware that Cliff built and installed the surround for the fridge in the Miena cabin and regularly varnished the windowsills.

Over many years he has been a consistent participator in club activities including field weekends and other club events. He tells some good stories about the port bottling days when the bottles were filled right to the

top so you had to have a slug out of each one so you could get the cork in!! No breathalysers in those days! Until recently he attended the pig roasts, barbecues, fly-casting events and all the Snowy Range events. He didn't miss many meetings and still doesn't. It would be doubtful that we could find a current member with a greater number of attendances at club activities over 53 years as a member.



Until recent years Cliff was a regular user of the club cabin at Miena – mostly in the company of Noel Wilson, Westy, John Spencer, John Smith and others. Cliff has a great sense of humour and kept members entertained in the cabin. John Smith was lamenting Cliff's absence in the cabin the other day without Cliff's humour and "quality control" at dishwashing time.

John Spencer will tell you that he was seeking Cliff's endorsement of Westy's nomination for John's membership to the club. Unfortunately John brought along a bottle of red wine to the cabin that was well past its use by date and was undrinkable. Cliff stirred John up by telling him it was a requirement for club membership that you bring a decent red to the cabin and unless he lifted his game in that regard he could not second the nomination for membership – he did of course.

Cliff and Noel Wilson live in the same street – "the old fart up the road and the old fart down the road" and have had many great fishing trips together – ranging from blank days to very productive days. Cliff is a good fisherman and likes to use flies he's tied himself, and with a lot of success.

He has also had many adventurous fishing trips with Malcolm Crosse at Show Time each year and they have many stories, mostly about inclement weather which Malcolm wrote about in an earlier edition of The Vice.



Cliff – on the far right at a Lake Sorrel trip

Cliff turned 91 in January and you will find he has many good stories and recollections about the club, it's history and members. The club congratulates Cliff on his significant and consistent contribution to the club over many years. It is hoped that Cliff can continue to participate in club activities and meetings and we look forward to seeing him when he is able to come along.



Well done Cliff.

Noel, Cliff, Ross, and Malcolm

Miena Field Week – The Crocks

The Retirees Week (including crocks and cripples and old farts) was held on 5-9 December based at the club's Miena Cabin. Nine members participated at various times during the week – Tony Abel, Peter Langton, Pete Murphy, Andrew Blackwood, John Smith and Noel Wilson (co-ordinator). Ian Stokes and Lynden Cubbins participated in all activities while based at their own shack and Henry Edgell came along for a day trip.

46 fish were caught (mainly in Woods Lake and Penstock Lagoon) – that number includes a few smaller ones caught in Woods - a good sign for the future stocks. All participants caught fish. Pete Murphy was top rod with eleven fish. Pete also took Henry Edgell to Penstock and Henry was most pleased with landing a very nice brown on the dry fly – well done Henry and well guided Pete!

A BBQ/Dinner was held on the Wednesday night at the cabin with a few activities, round robin etc according to the "agenda" Noel planned for the night. Good food and wines, good company and tall stories (lan told us 4 times about the 4 ½ pounder he caught in Woods) all resulted in a great evening. We were lucky to get good fishing weather on the Tuesday and Wednesday with lighter winds. Woke to very rough wet morning on Thursday so packed up and headed for home.

Another very enjoyable club activity!

Noel Wilson

Fly Tying on the WWW

The World Wide Web is a treasure trove of information and tips for the fly tyer. YouTube in particular reveals a staggering number of responses to the most basic search. In this section of The Vice the focus will be on some interesting tyers and techniques. If you have any favourites that you think should be shared with our members please send them in.





The tackle shop we went to in Rotorua to get our relatively expensive licenses to fish in New Zealand had some advice on the type of fly to attract the Rotorua trout. The fish would probably be feeding on baitfish that were grey in colour. The fly of choice for all Kiwis, we were told was the Gray Ghost!

I had looked up a few of these prior to the trip and found them ranging from the very basic grey feather streamer to virtual salmon flies.



Finally I found some You Tube instructions that matched my level of tying and, more importantly, my collection of feathers.

According to the notes on the video the original Gray Ghost is attributed to Carrie Stevens of Maine.

The recipe is:

Hook: 6X long Streamer Hook Thread: 6/0 White and Black

Body: Orange floss

Ribbing: Medium silver tinsel Side line: 6 peacock eye fibres Belly: White buck tail hair

Throat: White rooster fibres and golden

pheasant crest



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cXFSCXiGR3c&feature=youtu.be

NB: The larger of the two fish I caught in Rotorua was on the Gray Ghost. The other was on a Mama Mia dropper with a Gray Ghost on the point.

DM

Casting Tips from Zuie Sensei

I have been fortunate to have developed some impressive casting faults at a time when member Eric 'Zuie' Howard is working on becoming a qualified casting instructor. Part of the qualification is to teach others. Tim Munro is in turn, ably assisting him and I have been lucky enough to get some much-needed tuition. We meet on Saturday mornings at Cornelian Bay on a semi regular basis.

Luckily for Sensei Zuie it seems I have a few basic faults, which cause me to consistently throw 'tailing loops'. This leads to problems, particularly when trying to cast more than one fly. I also flick my wrist, which adds further complications.

It is amazing how a little instruction, delivered well and can make a big difference. It is also interesting trying to correct my casting stroke without going right back to the start. Zuie and Tim are great teachers and it is a great way to spend a lazy few hours followed by coffee on a Saturday morning.

The following article summarises the advice I am currently trying to address.

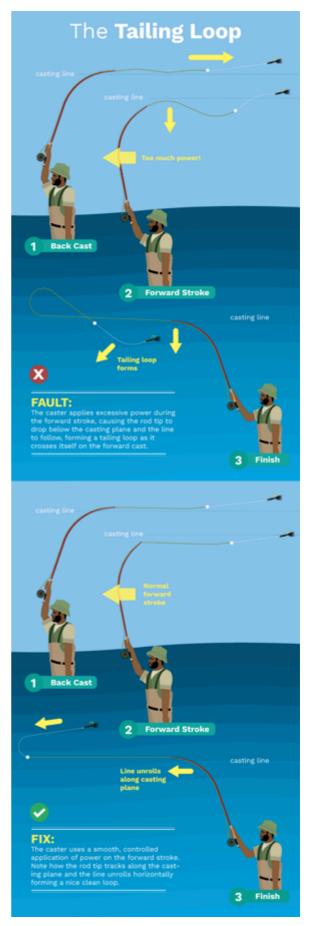
The Tailing Loop

One of the most common and frustrating of all casting faults, the dreaded "tailing loop" happens when the top portion of your casting loop falls below the bottom portion as the line unrolls during the forward cast. As your line unravels to the end of the leader, the crossed sections often tangle with each other, causing annoying "wind knots" and sapping energy from your forward cast. This fault can plague beginner casters and prevent intermediate or even advanced casters from reaching greater casting distances.

Fix:

The typical cause of the tailing loop is an overpowered forward casting stroke or too much "pushing" action with the thumb or wrist during the forward stroke. This is why it is a common problem with folks trying to cast at greater distances, as they have a tendency to put more effort than is necessary into the casting stroke. Excessive power causes the rod to overflex as you come forward, and the rod tip to fall below a straight-line casting plane. The result is the line crossing itself as it unrolls before you.

The fix is simple in theory but requires a little practice and sensitivity to build into your muscle memory. You need to back off the power during your forward stroke, accelerating slowly and smoothly through the entire stroke and finishing with an abrupt stop. Fight the urge to apply extra power as you come forward or, worse, "push" with your thumb and wrist during the end of the forward motion.



Practice exercise:

Start with a short line of about 25 feet and begin a series of false casts. I know, I just told you not to false cast, but this is a specific drill for intermediate casters so settle down! I like to do five to ten at a time before

putting the line down again. As you cast, watch the loop and the line as it unrolls in the air. Focus on applying as little power as you need to get the line to unroll and sustain your cast in the air. Try and feel the rod load and unload through the back cast and forward cast, using the same amount of effort during both parts of the cast. Work until you can start and stop the rod abruptly in the same place, and form the same loop shape on each false cast.

When you are comfortable with this, add another 10 feet of line and repeat the exercise. Remember that you need to adjust your timing and effort to compensate for the longer line, but make sure you are moving the rod smoothly and deliberately through the casting stroke, avoiding the urge to overpower the cast.

Continue this exercise until you reach a point where you have difficulty sustaining the line in the air or maintaining a uniform loop shape. With most beginner and intermediate casters this happens around 45-55 feet. When you hit this point bring the line back into about 25 feet and start over, focusing on proper technique and a smooth, slow acceleration with an abrupt stop.

I have said it before and I can't stress it enough; practice and then practice some more! It is easy to get frustrated and discouraged when learning a new sport or struggling with a stubborn fault, but focus and repetition will prevail and you will succeed. You will be amazed at the improvement even ten or fifteen minutes once or twice a week will bring to your casting and angling. Make sure that when you practice, you are focusing on specific techniques or fixing faults rather than just going out and seeing how much line you can get out. If you can get to a point where you can place a fly accurately and consistently at a range between 10 and 45 feet with three or fewer false casts, you will be able to catch fish in almost any situation you come across as an angler.

Source: https://www.fix.com/blog/fly-casting-faults-and-fixes/

New Zealand Trip - Rotorua 2017

When the waters of Lake Rotorua reach 23 degrees the huge head of fish in the lake seek out the cooler waters of the many spring creeks and rivers that flow into the lake. This provides anglers with dream fishing conditions as many of the fish are well over the magic 5lb mark. If the water temperature stays below 23 they stay out in the deeper water and the fishing is tough.

The fishing was tough!



Nick Ingles and John 'Top Rod' Smith
The impetus for the trip was hatched in 2015 when I was paired with the wonderful Nick Ingles in the Fowler Trophy. He suggested we do our day in Rotorua as he had a standing booking there. I was keen but as it was my daughters first year in Melbourne for Uni I found it impossible to get there. The same happened in 2016 so I was determined to make Rotorua 2017 a goer!

Nick is a bit of a celebrity at 'Affordable Willowhaven' - a lovely older style caravan park right on the edge of the lake. He and immediate past president 'Top Rod' John Smith were sharing a unit and other club members were booked in to attend as the fishing in the previous years had been phenomenal.

I went with Treasurer Blackwood and his mate who will be referred to only as Dicko as he is not yet a club member. We shared a comfy unit in the heart of the park. Anna and Wayne Bellette shared a unit next to Nick and Top Rod and Cubby and Stokesy were just down from us.

The flight we caught was with Jetstar and left Melbourne at midnight. We arrived, thanks to the bewildering nature of world time at 5.30am after a three and a half hour flight. We hired a car from Ace Rentals on Nick's recommendation and headed off to Rotorua in a surprisingly roomy and economic Nissan.



I drove and after a three hour trip decided I needed a snooze on arrival while Nick showed the others around the town and where the all important river mouths were. He said the lake was cooler because the summer had been poor.

After buying our fishing licenses (\$165 NZ!) and getting advice on the flies we needed (Grey Ghosts) we shrugged off the mini jet lag and got ready for action.

We fished on the first evening in wind and rain in a way that I hadn't experienced before. We were at the Awahou River mouth, lined up alongside about eight other anglers like a picket fence casting with the really strong wind into the cool water coming out into the lake. Some locals caught a couple of nice fish but none of our group caught anything.



Lyndon Cubbins and Ian Stokes were there and Cubby had a purple patch landing ten fish in about three hours earlier in the day. It amazed the locals but didn't surprise us in any way - Cubby is often like that! Nick had been there for a week already and had caught a few nice fish but John Smith had turned out to be the Top Rod with five beauties! Beer and excuses followed that evening.

Cubby and Stokesy left the next day for Lake Taupo with a boat in tow for further adventures. I haven't

heard how they went but I'm assuming the answer would have been well!

We continued to flog the river mouths all along the edge of the lake with no luck over the next three days. We fished early, at mid day evening and well into the dark before Treasurer Blackwood finally hooked one. We abandoned the river mouth and waded deeper into the lake where we saw some enormous fish rising and leaping out of the water. I finally hooked two in quick succession. One was around 5lbs and the other would have made 3lbs. That was it as far as fish for me for the trip.



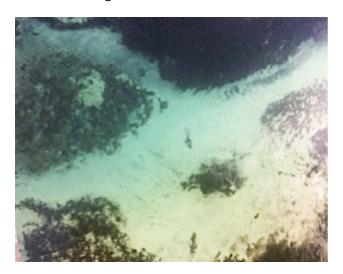
A trip to the Whirinaki River on day 3 was great too. We met a very genial and generous Swiss man called Pierre who took us up to his favourite sections of the river. Andrew managed one nice river fish on a cicada and got a few more takes. I concentrated mainly on not falling over but managed to spot and spook a few nice fish in the clear water. Dicko also saw a few but was unable to connect with them. A further exploration of another river that one of the locals guaranteed was full of fish proved to be basically in severe drought and the few fish we saw were decidedly nervous.



Back at Rotorua we learned that Anna, Wayne and Top Rod had hired a guide for the day and had a ball hooking over twenty fish on a rafting expedition. Nick had spent the day quietly fishing and enjoying his favourite treat – a \$2 coffee and scone form the Ngongtaha store.



On my final day at Rotorua I dropped the Treasurer and Dicko off at National Park so they could climb volcanoes and, after a really long day driving, got back in time to spend a lovely couple of hours with Nick as we wandered up a few of the local streams that were closed to fishing.



The water was the clearest I have ever seen and the fish were surprisingly large. We fished one stretch that was open to anglers without success. The fish were there but so were a whole group of excited Mexican students who swam and kayaked through the section of pool we were fishing. They were having such a fun time they didn't notice two blokes with fly rods!

I left Rotorua to travel to Auckland to pick up my wife Sue and embark on a fishing free tour of the rest of the North Island. In short the trip was sensational!

If you get a chance to visit Rotorua get in touch with Nick. He has it all down to a fine art. He is the elder statesman of Affordable Willow Haven having been staying there for nearly twenty years. He is also a wonderful and highly entertaining person to spend time with!

Thanks Nick!

Some sites I found useful in planning the trip.

- Affordable Willowhaven at Ngongataha near Rotorua http://www.willowhaven.co.nz
- Rotorua water temperature http://monitoring.boprc.govt.nz/MonitoredSites/cgi-bin/hydwebserver.cgi/sites/details?site=289
- Ace Car Rentals
 https://www.acerentalcars.co.nz
 (I took out travel insurance with the RACT, which cost around \$110 and meant I didn't have to buy car insurance through ACE. This proved to be much cheaper)
- Viber Free phone calls and texts via Wifi http://www.appurse.com/viber.html?utm_source=george&utm_medium=appurse

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Talbots Lagoon Trip

Chris Medwin organised our first foray as a club to Talbots Lagoon in the far North West of Tasmania. We were the guests of the Devonport Fly Fishers and it was a terrific weekend.



Talbots Lagoon is approximately 50km south of Burnie. Just turn off towards Ridgely and follow the signs until you reach Guildford Road which is about 10 before you get to Waratah. Take this road for around 8km and you are there.



We got to stay in the lodge up there that looked like an old Education Department camp with its long bunkrooms and huge general area and kitchen. It was generally really comfortable and could accommodate a large number of people. The Devonport members were very friendly and one in particular that loved cricket and fishing made me stay up far too late!



The fish in Talbots were plentiful but difficult to get to. The Lagoon was almost overflowing and this made moving around it quite challenging. Wading was the main way of getting around and the bottom was often quite soft and it was tricky to move anywhere without great effort. I took a kayak and saw a huge number of really good size fish but was unable to target them due to the wind taking out of the zone very quickly. A drogue would have been useful!



Those who did get fish said they were in excellent condition and impressive size. Chris Medwin and Anna Bellette were the most successful anglers. They covered lots of territory and fished from before dawn until well after dark. I was not so dedicated, preferring the company and conviviality of the lodge.

Walking tracks rings the Lagoon and you could walk to the more remote areas in around an hour. There was some suggestion of there being some disdain for those in water craft but this was not evident from members of either club. Still – walking seemed to be the best and preferred method.



Many thanks to Chris Medwin for organising the trip and to the members of the Devonport Club who made us feel welcome and very much at home. It was a privilege to fish Talbots Lagoon – a place that hasn't been open to the public for very long and one that deserves to become a true gem in the trout fishing venues in Tasmania!



Index of Vice Articles

I have compiled a list of contents from previous editions of the Vice as some members have asked about various stories and the like. All these can be accessed directly from the club website under the link to The Vice. I will include it in all future editions and add to it where possible.

http://tasmanianflytyersclub.org

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Winter 2012	Page
Presidents Report	1
Coming Events	1
Editorial, Competition	2
Noel's Flies	2
Fly tying on the www	4
Casting Day – Salmon Ponds	4
Snowy Ranges Mid-winter Fishing Day	5
Tips and Tricks	6
Australian Fly Fishing Museum	9
Classifieds	7

	Page
Spring 2012	
Presidents Report	1
Editorial	2
Casting into a Headwind – David Hemming	3
Fly tying on the WWW	4
Peck's Highland Dun – Charles Peck	4
AdVice - Tips and Tricks	6
Penstock Management Proposal – John Diggle	6
Classic Fly Gear – James Jones	7
Portable Fly Tying Kits – Doug Miller et al	8
Fly Tyers Club Bequests proposal	11
Snowy Ranges John Fowler Trophy	12
Classifieds	13

AdVice - Tips and Tricks	9
12-12-12 A Date we won't see again	9
AAT Webcam Project	11
Classifieds	13
Autumn 2013	Page
Presidents Report	1
Coming Events	1
Editorial, Competition	2
Vitamin Dee	3
Fly tying on the www	4
Ad-Vice - Tips and Tricks - Boats	4
February Plains in February	5
A Pom Down Under	8
The Mt Morriston Macquarie Trip	10
Classifieds	13

Winter 2013	Page
Presidents Report	1
Coming Events	1
Editorial,	3
Flies for all Season	4
Ad-Vice - Tips and Tricks	9
Tiger Hut 2013	10
Fly tying on the WWW	12
Casting Day 2013	13
Classifieds	15

Spring 2013	
Editorial	2
If I can Draw it I can tie it Laurie Matcham	3
Fly Tying on the WWW	5
Bamboo Winter Project - Mark Rampant	6
Ad Vice Tips and Tricks	8
Kapten Boat Collar - Dave Tadd	9
Around the Corner - Malcolm Crosse	10
Andre's Flies - Doug Miller	13
Club contacts and Details	14

Summer 2013	Page
Presidents Report	1
Editorial	2
Penstock Weekend 2012	3
Fly tying on the WWW	4
John Fowler Trophy – Snowy Ranges	6

Summer 2014	
Vale Jim Davis	2
Editorial	4
Golden Stickies	5
Fly Tying on the WWW	7
Macquarie Trip 2013	8
Tips from the Top	9

Ad Vice Tips and Tricks	
Float Tube 101	10
Penstock Weekend	11
Club Contacts and Classifieds	

Autumn 2014	
Editorial	2
Queenies in Broome Casting Day 2014	3
Ad-Vice—Tips and Tricks Dee Lagoon 2014	4
Casting Championships Fly Tying on the WWW	7
Ad Vice Tips and Tricks Favourite Flies 2014	7
The Last Hurrah and New Beginnings	
	9
Gourmet Trangia #1 The Back Story	
Our New Facebook Page	
	13
Club contacts and Details and Emails	

Winter 2014	
President's Report	2
Editorial	4
Drogue Design – Tony Dell	5
Ad-Vice Tips and Tricks	6
Carp on the Fly – Malcolm Crosse	7
Fly Tying on the WWW	9
Fly Tyers Annual Dinner	9
Fly Kashmir – Malcolm Crosse	10
Dying Made Easy	11
Tiger Hut 2014 – A Tale of Vice	13
Annual Dinner Pics	15
Club Details	16

Spring 2014	
President's Report	2
Editorial	3

Christmas Island Diary 2014	4
Ad-Vice - tips and tricks	7
Macquarie River Trip 2014	9
Fly Tying on the WWW	12
Old Timers Field Weekend	13
Macquarie Trip Pics	15
Club Contact Details	15

Summer 2015	
President's Report	2
Editorial	3
Tying the LM Emerger	4
Ad-Vice - tips and tricks	6
A Trip to Henry's Place	6
Fly Tying on the WWW	7
Casting Session Pics	7
Five go to Halkyard	9
Club Contact Details	12

Autumn 2015	
President's Report	2
Editorial	3
Burbury Trip	4
Ad-Vice - tips and tricks (Ticks?)	6
Fowler Trophy – Fishing in Friendship	6
Fly Tying on the WWW	7
Penstock 2015	8
Casting Day – Salmon Ponds	9
Plastic Fantastic – buying a new boat	11

Echo Weekend	13
Club Contact Details	14

Winter 2015President's Report2Editorial3Tiger Hut 20154Ad-Vice - tips and tricks6Great Lake Beetle - Neil Pinkard7Fly Tying on the WWW9RSL Tying Day10Annual Dinner - Cascade Gardens11Opening Weekend - Lake Crescent12		
Editorial 3 Tiger Hut 2015 4 Ad-Vice - tips and tricks 6 Great Lake Beetle – Neil Pinkard 7 Fly Tying on the WWW 9 RSL Tying Day 10 Annual Dinner – Cascade Gardens 11	Winter 2015	
Tiger Hut 2015 4 Ad-Vice - tips and tricks 6 Great Lake Beetle – Neil Pinkard 7 Fly Tying on the WWW 9 RSL Tying Day 10 Annual Dinner – Cascade Gardens 11	President's Report	2
Ad-Vice - tips and tricks 6 Great Lake Beetle – Neil Pinkard 7 Fly Tying on the WWW 9 RSL Tying Day 10 Annual Dinner – Cascade Gardens 11	Editorial	3
Great Lake Beetle – Neil Pinkard 7 Fly Tying on the WWW 9 RSL Tying Day 10 Annual Dinner – Cascade Gardens 11	Tiger Hut 2015	4
Fly Tying on the WWW 9 RSL Tying Day 10 Annual Dinner – Cascade Gardens 11	Ad-Vice - tips and tricks	6
RSL Tying Day 10 Annual Dinner – Cascade Gardens 11	Great Lake Beetle – Neil Pinkard	7
Annual Dinner – Cascade Gardens 11	Fly Tying on the WWW	9
	RSL Tying Day	10
Opening Weekend – Lake Crescent 12	Annual Dinner – Cascade Gardens	11
	Opening Weekend – Lake Crescent	12
Club Contact Details 13	Club Contact Details	13

Spring 2015	
President's Report	2
Editorial	3
Plonking for Beginners	4
AdVice Tips and Tricks	5
New Boats	6
Fly Tying on the WWW	7
Killer Bug	7
Twin Lakes Adventure	8
The Shack Working Bee	9
Activity Calendar 2015/16	10
Club Contact Details	11

Summer 2016	
President's Report	2
Editorial	2
Macquarie Weekend 2015	4
AdVice Tips and Tricks	5
Henry's Place	6
Fly Tying on the WWW	7
Lake Burbury Adventure	8
Lake Silver Trip 2016	10
Club Contact Details	13
Where are they now	13
Vice Index	14

Autumn 2016	
President's Report	2
Editorial	3
Lees Paddocks or Christies Creek	4
AdVice – Tips and Tricks	6
Redemption	6
Penstock 2016	8
Fly Tying on the WWW	9
Time for a New Dinghy	10
Casting Day 2016	12
Vice Index	14
Club Contact Details	

Winter 2016	Page
President's Report	2
Editorial	2
Tiger Hut 2016	4
Australia's Best Trout Flies Revisited	6
AdVice Tips and Tricks	6
A Season That Was	7
Champagne on Tooms	9
Fly Tying on the WWW	10
Fly Tying Day Lenah Valley RSL	10
Tasmania's Large Grey Dun	12
Vice Index	17
Club Contact Details	20

Spring 2016	Page
President's Report	2
Editorial	3
Modifying a Small Boat	4
AdVice Tips and Tricks	5
Our Newest Life Member	6
Fly Tying on the WWW	7
The New Committee Q&A	8
Fly Tyers Dinner Pics	11
Vice Index	12
For Sale	15
Club Contact Details	16
Activity Calendar 2016/17	17

Summer 2015 17

For payments to the club

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Summer 2015 18