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Around the Jetties

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An Anglers Newsletter

There is no denying that in fishing as in all else much depends on luck and there are lucky fishermen as there are lucky card players. Otherwise, how explain the unearned success of some and the undeserved failure of others. But just as the lucky card player if he is without skill, often loses so the lucky fisherman without skill catches little.

Aksakov on Fishing Arthur Ransome 1929

Editorial

Given that this is the last edition of Around the Jetties for 2011, and that I am often asked why I write this anglers newsletter, I decided because of an ever increasing number of readers that I should perhaps provide a little of my background. I hope you may find this addition to issue 52 just a little interesting. This edition covers a number of items but most concern rests with the Future Strategies Paper and the actions of Parks Vic and their lack of consultation. I think recreational anglers have a need to be concerned, as in many cases actions are taken with little regard to the concerns of the angling community. There is an urgent need for a better flow of communication from both Fisheries Victoria and Parks Vic to the angling community. It is strange but I have written before on the flow of information to anglers in the 1990's from Fisheries Victoria, which I consider was far more open and detailed as compared with the flow of doctored information today. I believe the reverse should apply. With modern technology, a monthly open newsheet on Fisheries activities, enforcement, projects and research could be easily made available to anglers across the state by email and hard copy. I believe this type of communication is particularly important given the angler contribution to recreational fishing through the all waters angling licence, and the original basis upon which that licence was accepted by anglers in 1999 namely, that the funding from the licence fee would go to the improvement of fishing in this state.

Future Fisheries Strategy: Proposals for Reform

The Department of Primary Industries is developing a Future Fisheries Strategy to guide the way wild fish stocks are managed over the next 15 years. The paper under this heading sets out proposals for reform. The DPI is now seeking public comment on this paper both through meetings and by individual submissions.

The problem with this Future Fisheries Proposal is that the paper, made available via the Internet, is 31 pages in length with a response required by the 30th November that is within two weeks. The great majority of recreational anglers would be totally unaware of the strategy being proposed and the possible effects on their fishing future. This shows the DPI has little real understanding of the recreational fishing sector.

A few meetings have been organised by the DPI, with one in Lakes Entrance on the 30th November for “commercial, recreational, and aboriginal sector leaders to discuss these reforms.” It has been stated that invitations have been sent to “sector leaders” but the majority of anglers will be unaware of these serious proposals and certainly, anglers who do not have access to Internet facilities may well be unaware of the proposals being advanced by the DPI.

The real intent of this document is to develop a policy for the “[sharing of the wild fish resource between commercial, recreational and aboriginal sectors of our community](#)” and reforming the way fisheries are run, with the Government to undertake a legislative program commencing in the latter half of 2012.

Christopher Collins CEO VRFish indicated that VRFish had the strategies document formally analysed and VRFish is very aware of problems associated with the detail of the document. As a result, VRFish will be writing an open letter to the Minister Peter Walsh on behalf of this State's 721,000 anglers and whilst commending the aims of the paper, also drawing the Ministers attention to the many concerns that this document raises. This publication draws the attention of readers to the fact that part of the intent of the paper is to **“Establish arrangements to explicitly allocate initial share of the resource to the fishing sectors and enable resources to move to the highest value use.”** This statement alone would raise areas of great concern and even alarm to recreational anglers.

Certainly the commercial and aboriginal fishing sectors will be well represented in putting forward a strong case for a share of this resource, as they have in place well organised and funded administrative structures. However, with over 700,000 recreational anglers in this state, it will be far harder to develop a sound case for a realistic share of the wildfish stocks for recreational anglers given that only two weeks is available for submissions. VRFish is a poorly funded, understaffed body faced with the need to determine and administer the interests and wishes of the states recreational anglers. In addition, the speed of the introduction and the fact that many recreational anglers would be unaware of the intent of the strategy should be of great concern in developing a case that represents the recreational anglers of this state. It would almost seem given the two weeks for submissions from the sectors on this paper, that a realistic consultative process is not a major concern of the Department of Primary Industries.

The paper may be obtained from anna.battese@dpi.vic.gov.au or from your local DPI Office.

Anglers please get a copy of this paper and read about what is being proposed that could affect all recreational anglers.

Fishing Platform for Bemm River

The Bemm River Angling Club has built a substantial fishing platform with \$84,560 from the Recreational Fishing Grants Program and some funding received from the East Gippsland Shire, although that amount is not specified in the media release 10th October, from the Member for Gippsland East, Tim Bull, announcing the completion of this project. Mr Bull indicated that the platform was “built to provide access for all abilities, the fishing platform features seating and there are plans to install safety beacons and boardwalk lighting.”

Mr Bull stated that the platform would provide “ safe and convenient access to the water, the platform will mean anglers can fish year round for flathead, bream, luderick, mullet and whiting.”



Editors Comment

The Bemm River Angling Club is congratulated on its initiative to undertake the building of the fishing platform. Anglers should also be aware that it is the licence fees that they pay for, **an all waters angling licence that** provides the funding for programs such as this platform.

The All Waters Fishing Licence was introduced in 1999, and part of the deal for its introduction was that the funds raised would go to improving the sport of recreational fishing. Since its inception in 2002, the Recreational Fishing Grants Program has funded 395 projects worth more than \$17m. So whilst politicians of all persuasions are keen to announce these projects, anglers might well take considerable satisfaction that it is their contribution through the all waters licence fee that allows such projects to be undertaken.

Lake Eildon Continues to Hot Up

I had a yarn with a keen angler from Mansfield the other day and he was excited at the prospects for fishing in Lake Eildon this year. The lake has now reached 100% full and the redfin fishing earlier was excellent and reminds one of the fishing some 30 years ago. It is expected that trout and golden perch fishing in the lake will be the best in decades in the autumn. Already some fine trout are being taken trawling and the odd yellow belly are being caught by the same method.



John Pinkham of Mansfield caught the 10lb brown trout pictured (left) in the Gough's Bay Arm recently (which he released) and has taken a number of trout over 3lbs trawling.

As well, he has had great success with redfin and the fish pictured was almost 40cms.



Areas that have not been covered with water for decades are now covered and the environment is similar to when the lake first filled and the fishing was at its peak. Added to this situation is the increased stocking of Murray cod in Lake Eildon. What will be particularly interesting is the opening of the cod season on the 1st of December. Given the recent massive stocking of Murray Cod and the Government and Fisheries intent to stock Eildon with a million cod, the development of this fishery will be of great interest to anglers.

The future looks great in this wonderful lake given the maintenance of water in the years to come.

Illegal nets and boat seized near Lake Bolac

After surveillance, Fisheries Officers from Western Victoria apprehended a 29-year-old man for allegedly using a mesh and trammel net in Fiery Creek, the major tributary to Lake Bolac. This was reported on the 9th November. All illegal equipment was seized as well as the man's boat. Lake Bolac according to Fisheries Officer Heath Cameron had been providing "exceptional opportunities for trout angling following years of drought." The offences could attract "a maximum penalty of \$10,000 and six months in jail." In the 1990's, Fisheries offenders were named in a monthly report from Fisheries Victoria. Perhaps it is time to once again name major offenders.

Stocking of Estuary Perch

Of added interest to the above media release on Lake Bolac is that Lake Bolac, which is currently providing exceptional trout fishing, has been approved by Fisheries Victoria (2009) after a translocation risk assessment for the release of fingerling estuary perch when these fish become available. The Lake Bolac Angling Club initiated this project.

In the 2011 VRFish Annual Report is the statement that VRFish will "investigate the establishment of an estuary perch fishery at Lake Bolac, -stocking subject to available supplies of estuary perch" and this seems to indicate continuing support for the release of estuary perch in Lake Bolac. Perhaps this support may change given the following item.

The information on the attitude of Fisheries Victoria and VRFish to the stocking of estuary perch in Lake Bolac becomes relevant to Gippsland anglers who are actively seeking the stocking of estuary perch in Lake Tyers, and who have already provided evidence through this publication of a small number of perch in the lake. At the same time, this publication has used Fisheries Victoria records to prove that a former estuary perch fishery existed prior to the removal of commercial netting from this lake. In the eighties over 1.5 tonnes of estuary perch were removed from Lake Tyers in commercial nets in one year.

In a study undertaken by John Douglas (2010) on movement of estuary perch in the Snowy River, he indicated that "in Victoria, estuary perch spawn in the lower reaches of estuaries during November-December." The Cadwallader and Backhouse book, A Guide to Freshwater Fish of Victoria, also indicates that breeding takes place in "the lower sections of estuaries, in salt water at temperatures of 14-16 degrees." This book also states that "over exploitation by commercial fishermen in the past caused numbers to decline."

This would mean that no breeding of estuary perch would take place in Lake Bolac, given that it is a freshwater lake, so it would become a "put and take" fishery dependant on annual stocking of the species. Alternatively, Lake Tyers would provide access for the spawning of estuary perch in the salt water, and excellent snags in the upper reaches of the arms to provide habitat for the species. This type of habitat is not available in Lake Bolac.

There does seem to be a very good case for Fisheries Victoria to look towards a stocking of Lake Tyers with this excellent sporting species in the hope that the species will re-establish itself in waters that provide opportunities for spawning, and that the species would become self-supporting. The following development may cause a rethinking of the case for estuary perch to be stocked in Lake Bolac.

A Brief Lake Bolac History



This 1460-hectare lake was originally known as a prime redfin fishery and a few golden perch were also present prior to the lake drying up during the recent drought. It was also famous for the short fin eel fishery both recreational and commercial. In the early 1960's I had a number of nights fishing for eels in this lake using strips of rabbit as bait, and we almost always returned home with a Hessian bag of squirming live eels and whilst we ate them, neither Dawn or I were ever greatly enthused by eel cooked in egg and breadcrumbs.

Bernard Murphy in 1998 caught a monster 7.8kg short finned eel in Lake Bolac, which was recognised as a world record for the species. In 2002, Fisheries Victoria stocked Lake Bolac with 10,000 rainbow and brown trout however,

reports indicated this was not regarded as a success and few trout were caught as a result of the stocking

A Massive Change in the Lake Bolac Recreational Fishery

On the 22nd of December 2010, following the rains and the lake again filling Lake Bolac was stocked with 5000 rainbow trout as part of the Fisheries Victoria drought recovery program. These rainbow trout fingerlings weighed approximately 5 grams. Recently Steve Cooper in the Weekly Times described “Lake Bolac as the hottest bite in the south west” with rainbow trout between 1.5kgs and 3.5kgs being caught trawling in the lake. (3-7.5lbs)

Pictured is a Rainbow Trout, caught by Marcel Kruger, Regional Manager, BLA, using a Daiwa minnow in orange and gold.



Suddenly this lake is a trout “hot spot” of the southwest and perhaps the **stocking of estuary perch would seem totally unnecessary** and may damage the trout fishery of Lake Bolac.

As an angler, I have always been aware of the fast growth of trout given the right conditions, but I just marvel that a trout can grow from 5 grams to over 7lbs in a mere twelve months. Perhaps when the lake was originally stocked with trout in 2002, the presence of redfin and eels as well as the occasional golden perch were a group of predator fish that preyed upon the trout. Lake Bolac, after it filled last year, provided excellent food and no predators and these would have been almost ideal conditions for the rapid growth of rainbow trout and an exciting new fishery.

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Fisheries Victoria is to be congratulated, for this and other stockings after the drought. Perhaps in years to come Lake Bolac will become one of this State’s premier rainbow trout fisheries.

Lake Tyers Created a State Park

The Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Ryan Smith, recently announced that some 8000 hectares of Lake Tyers would be declared a State Park. He also indicated the move would “deliver better outcomes for the whole community.” Given the problems faced with poor access recently and the indication that funds would not be available to maintain tracks in Lake Tyers, I wrote to Chris Rose, Regional Manager East, of Parks Victoria on the 30th October to obtain information regarding what the change announced by the Minister will mean to anglers. The following is that letter

“ Re the New Lake Tyers Park

I am interested in the effect of the recent announcement of the creation of the Lake Tyers State Park and the effect it might have on anglers and angler access to Lake Tyers.

Could you advise if this will mean more funding for the maintenance of tracks into Lake Tyers? Could you also advise of any plans for the construction of toilets for the prescribed camping areas of Cameron’s No1 track, the Glasshouse, and the Trident? It seems the lack of toilets in these areas whilst publicising them as camping areas is an anomaly.

Could you also indicate when the Minister suggests that these changes will deliver “better outcomes to the community” what these outcomes will be.

The Minister suggested the changes would both protect and enhance the Lake Tyers Park. I am sure anglers would be interested on what enhancement is envisaged by Parks Vic. Finally what part will the Gurnaikirnai Recognition and Settlement Act have on the future of this park and angler access?

Hoping you can provide answers on the effects of this announcement.

Yours sincerely

At the time of publishing this newsletter there had not been a reply from the Regional Manager (East) of Parks Victoria.

I find it most concerning that since the above letter was written the following sign has been put up in the Trident area with as far as I am aware no consultation with anglers or VRFish, and the area still being a prescribed camping area. This area was discussed as part of an excursion to discuss tracks into Lake Tyers on the 24th February this year and this involved Christopher Collins of VRFish, John Harrison and myself representatives on the Lakes Tyers Fisheries Reserve Reference Group, and Parks Vic representatives, including Chris Rose. This excursion, which occupied almost a full day, involved a visit and discussion of camping at the Trident, and the identification of an area for further development of camping some short distance from the waters edge. This visit to the tracks into Lake Tyers and the discussions that took place was reported in some detail in the March issue 44 of Around the Jetties. I wonder whether Fisheries Victoria was informed of this change, for after all this is supposedly a fishing reserve.



Christopher Collins of VRFish who was part of the discussions on the Trident informed us of the erection of the sign after a group of Morwell anglers came to camp in this area only to be confronted with this new sign. They left and according to my information went to Tamboon where they could camp.

I had a confirmed report of a camp with two large boats near the island via Morgan's track, and rocks placed by Parks bypassed and an ironbark tree cut down to allow access. My informant suggested there is a good chance they went to this spot when they could not launch and camp at the Trident. Perhaps Parks Vic in his words "may have made the position worse by an ill considered decision." Anglers seem to have had little consideration from Parks Victoria over recent years.

The Sea Eagle in East Gippsland.

Most anglers fishing in the East Gippsland area will be aware of the beautiful sea eagles that appear of a morning moving up the waterways on their daily search for fish. Nowhere is that more obvious than on Lake Tyers where these majestic birds are seen on most mornings and their shrill noise echoes down from the surrounding bush. I have not met an angler who does not believe the sight of these birds of a morning is a bonus to any days fishing.



In a recent issue of the joint newsletter of the Gippsland Plains and East Gippsland Conservation Management Network is an article on the sea eagle by two DSE researchers, Lucas Bluff and Faye Bedford. Whilst some years ago this magnificent bird was believed to be under threat, these researchers have found from their research that "the initial conclusions appear to be positive with no evidence that the East Gippsland white bellied sea eagles population has declined over the last thirty years."

The researchers discovered 74 sea eagle nests across 49 territories and 24 of these nests were found to be active with a breeding success rate of around 80%. There were two nestlings per nest in ten of 19 cases, which was higher than any past season. The greatest threat according to the researchers remains disturbance by humans and some cases of nest loss seem to be from this cause. Nests were as close as 1-1.5km, which was closer than the previously recorded 3-7kms. East Gippsland is thought to support half the total Victorian breeding population (50 of 100 Pairs) with a quarter of the Victorian population in the immediate vicinity of the Gippsland Lakes. Work will continue this year on this "magnificent raptor."

"One of the key aims of this study is to generate a spatially accurate database of the nests, to better assess which nests are at risk from coastal development."

(Remote cameras were used to photograph these birds and their nests to save any disturbance.)

Most anglers and lovers of our waterways will have great pleasure at the findings of this research for it may mean we can share our wonderful waterways with this wonderful bird into the future.

A Total Embarrassment

It was the 17th November and I launched my boat as usual at Nowa Nowa for an unaccompanied mornings fishing. After travelling through clear conditions I arrived only to find a dense pea soup fog covering the arm of Lake Tyers. I thought I could navigate to the area above Devil's Hole by sticking to the right bank and quickly covered about 4kms only to run firmly aground on a black mud bank. The boat was so firmly aground that I could not use the motor or even rock the boat. I informed Dawn of my predicament by mobile phone at about 6.30am and then rang fishing friend Graeme Merryful to see if he could bring his boat out and pull me off the mud. He had a 60-horse power motor on his boat. Graeme did not hesitate in answering my call and he arrived soon after 8.00pm. It was soon evident that neither his boat pulling, or with both of us in the water, or rather mud, and pushing, could we shift the boat. I was firmly aground.

There remained only one other option and that was to seek the help of the water police. It was back to Dawn who rang the water police to let them know of my predicament and embarrassment. After reassuring them that I had a thermos of coffee, water and muffins on the boat for breakfast they indicated they would be with me in an hour and a half.

A little after 11.00pm they arrived having travelled from Paynesville with their boat, which had an 115HP motor, and after some effort they managed to extricate my boat from the mud bank.

Our thanks to Leading Senior Constables, Jenkin Steed and Michael Newstead for their assistance and understanding of an old fisherman's embarrassment.



Fortunately my motor was not affected and after giving it a good run I was back again to normal operation. I am grateful for the water police and the mobile phone that made this rescue possible. A learning experience for an old angler who after more than 50 years of boating and dozens of times travelling this section of the arm, thought he knew it all. I think the positive in this is the value of the mobile phone and the need to be equipped with food and drink, and of course the availability of our water police to assist in such a situation.

Dawn adds... Lynton received no sympathy from his son who only wanted to know what speed he was travelling at the time and did he have his life jacket on? When informed he was doing the right thing on both fronts then he laughed. Children can be cruel! Our delightful female friend and neighbour shrieked with delight at the thought of his nibs stripped to his undies and standing in black, gooey Lake Tyers Mud.

VRFish and the 7.30 report on ABC

It was pleasing to see VRFish on the ABC 7.30 Report on the 28th October, bringing to public notice the lack of boating infrastructure in the form of reasonable access via launching ramps in this state, and in particular focussing on the lack of an effective boat ramp between Anglesea and Apollo Bay. Christopher Collins, CEO of VRFish, pointed out that according to the Ernst and Young economic study of recreational fishing over \$2.3 billion annually is expended on recreational fishing. The sport results in the creation of over 5200 jobs, and yet anglers and even a rescue boat at Anglesea have to be launched through the surf by tractor due to the lack of access. This is dangerous and can be life threatening according to anglers.

The Minister responded indicating that the Government was contributing \$16m over four years to recreational fishing and as well funds from licence fees are distributed after he receives advice from a committee. (This is the committee that is not identified yet recommends the allocation of recreational angler licence fees.)

Editors Comment

This publication has over recent months called for identification of the Ministerial Advisory Committee that allocates funds from recreational anglers licence fees, and a more realistic input from the Government into funding recreational fishing in this state. The current allocation of \$16m to recreational fishing over four years announced prior to the election means a low \$4m per annum to a sport that results in the employment of thousand and substantial boost to the prosperity of the state including rural areas. Perhaps it is worth recalling that the Government allocates \$50m annually to the Grand Prix yet provides only \$4m to a sport that involves over 700,000 Victorians.

The ownership of recreational fishing boats gives an indication of the financial input into their sport by recreational anglers. In 2011 the number of recreational fishing boats in this state was 132,000 valued at an estimated \$2 billion and this number is rapidly growing, [yet access for these boats remains a problem, and of course declining fish stocks in many waters is reaching a crisis level.](#) Perhaps it is not unrealistic to suggest the input of Government into recreational fishing should at least equal its input into the Grand Prix in this state.

Fisheries Victoria to Take a Hard Line

The Victorian Government launched on the 25th of October a new operation to crack down on illegal fishing in Port Phillip and Westernport bays. The Minister Peter Walsh said that over the next few months would see Fisheries Officers targeting people angling for snapper, following a dramatic increase in the number of people attempting to conceal their illegal take from officers. The media release stated that, “**This season officers will seize boats and fishing equipment if illegally taken fish have been deliberately concealed,**” As well “**anglers who breach the bag and size limits for snapper face multiple fines up to \$366 on the spot, or \$10,000 through prosecution and/ or six months imprisonment.**” The Minister also stated “we have also made changes enabling the courts to prohibit anglers from fishing for up to 12 months if they are found guilty of serious offences.”

Editors Comment

Few will disagree with the hard line being taken to get rid of anglers who take undersize fish, and attempt to conceal their catch. The actions of these anglers show little respect for the majority of honest anglers and bring a fine sport into disrepute. Whilst the hard line is particularly directed at Port Phillip and Westernport bays, the same approach will apply to other waters in the state. This publication has previously reported on anglers caught concealing undersize snapper on their boats. **To report fishing offence ring 133474.**

Odd Bits

Litter a problem

In the last issue readers will recall that over 14,000 fines had been issued across Victoria and that littering from a car with a cigarette could draw a fine of \$244 or a maximum fine of \$4485 if dealt with in court. It was brought to my attention that there were difficulties in reporting littering and the following is provided from the EPA.

“To report someone littering from a car, call 1300 372 842 to have reporting forms sent to you. You will need the registration number, a description of this vehicle (including the make and model if this is possible), the date and time it happened, the location and description of the litter.”

An Old Problem

I was recently reading one of the early articles by Steve Starling that appeared in the Fishing World Magazine for June 1987 and I quote-

“One of the more dramatic influences acting on the long term health of Gippsland bream stocks is related to increased salinity within the system. Not many visitors realise that the major opening to the sea at lakes Entrance is man made and artificially maintained to allow access for the fishing fleet and other shipping. A result of the increased salinity has been the need for bream to seek out rivers, and in many cases run well up them in order spawn.”

With the dredging of the opening, salinity in recent years has greatly increased and undoubtedly the vision of Steve Starling some 24 years ago is becoming a reality. Fishing for black bream in rivers is almost non-existent and the entry of fish into the rivers to spawn and their retirement from rivers in times of flood means they must negotiate commercial nets set within 400 metres of river mouths. I understand that Fisheries Victoria will be undertaking a black bream stock assessment in early 2012. My personal assessment is that the black bream fishery in the Gippsland Lakes will be almost nonexistent within the next decade if the current trend continues.

Mercury in Black Bream

This publication has taken up the issue of Mercury in black bream in its early issues (Issue 3) following the CSIRO report and the 1998 Environmental audit. The chairman of the EPA of that time Mr Mick Bourke wrote in 2004 that funding was being sourced to examine the 40% rise since 1980 in the level of mercury in black bream. Later a letter we received from the Minister responsible, Gavin Jennings (2007) suggested this publication should seek further information from Ms Dianne Rose at the EPA. This had only one problem in that Ms Rose had already written to Around the Jetties in 2007 indicating that the “recommended funding to investigate the mercury uptake of black bream has not been received as this is not identified as a priority issue in the Regional Catchment Management Plans.” Professor Graham Harris wrote in 1998 in a report prepared for the Gippsland Coastal Board “the mercury problem does require further investigation as the evidence indicates rising mercury levels in fish and sediment concentrations are reaching alarming levels.”

This is just a little like the “Yes Minister” program of some years ago; meanwhile we are none the wiser as to the mercury levels in black bream. Perhaps the issue will resolve itself with a continuing decline in black bream numbers, but mercury levels in sediment will still remain. This needs investigation.

Fishing in Local Rivers

A local bait supplier reported that the biggest complaint they receive regards the rock deposits placed by Catchment Management Authorities along the banks of rivers to protect them from erosion. The complaint is that this action has destroyed the ability of bait anglers to snub the nose of their boat into the bank to fish, and in rivers like the Tambo the entire bank is rock walled. It was suggested that with rock walling to protect riverbanks from the wash of boats should go some responsibility to provide anchorage points so that boats could tie into the bank. This is an interesting observation for since anglers first fished in these rivers they had the ability to nose their boat into the bank, whilst today they are forced to anchor off the banks. Perhaps the Catchment Management Authority might consider whether it is possible to provide an answer to this problem.

Fishing Pressure

Some years ago with the decline in the Gippsland Lakes fish stocks I made the observation that recreational anglers and clubs were travelling to Marlo and Mallacoota for fishing and bypassing the lakes area. Today with improved boat access the estuary fishery of Lake Tyers has increased in popularity and over holiday periods over 80 boat trailers have been counted at launching places. On a normal weekend the No 2 ramp could be used by up to 40-60 boats. Lake

Tyers is a small estuary of 25sq km with the main lake only 7sq km. With decreasing dusky flathead sizes and variable bream fishing the question arises whether this estuary can withstand its newfound popularity and increased fishing pressure.

Letters from Readers

The following letters add to items of interest in issue 51

Regarding Barramundi at Hazelwood

David Kramer from Future Fish Foundation writes

"Barra in Hazelwood-All Government approvals obtained, however International Power will not budge while a Carbon Tax is hanging over their head.

David Kramer.

Editors Comment

Future Fish Foundation is an environmental Organisation founded by Rex Hunt. David is a Director and CEO of Future Fish and is a former CEO of VRFish.

Regarding Side Cast Reels

The following letter from **Nick Barton** adds further information.

"This is only the fourth issue of "Around the Jetties" I have received- they make very interesting reading. A comment on your comment, that little could go wrong with the Loncast reel. I have not seen this particular reel, but side cast reels in general put a 360-degree twist in the line as they cast (as do threadline reels). However, unlike threadlines, which reverse this twist as they retrieve, the side cast retrieves straight. This has the potential for the line to become increasingly twisted with repeated casts until snarls occur. Use of swivels will help. An old book of mine "Australian and new Zealand Fishing" edited by Jack Pollard and published by Paul Hamlyn suggested that if the line on a side cast reel becomes heavily twisted it is possible to remove by doubling the line back on itself at the reel then winding in the opposite direction to retrieve. The next cast will then twist the line in the opposite direction and help remove the twist. However it may be this twisting characteristic that led to the greater popularity of the threadline reel; plenty could go wrong with the side cast principle.

Nick Barton

Editors Comment

Nick is quite right in drawing attention to the line twist problem of side cast reels, and according to the Surf Casting and Angling Club of WA who did a survey on the use of the Alvey reel, line twist is fundamental when using a side cast reel. Nick is also right in describing the action of winding the line in the opposite direction as a method of avoiding this twist. The WA Surf anglers also place considerable emphasis on the type of swivel used, which they suggest prevents twisting.

In Australia the Alvey side cast reel was introduced in 1920 and today is probably the only reel to be produced in this country. It now has a worldwide market and is sold in the USA and UK. Recently when looking on UK Ebay I was surprised to find over 30 Alvey reels advertised, and they included vintage pre war reels as well as the most modern. It is by far the most common surf reel in NSW and Queensland and is regarded as a reel that has little maintenance and withstands saltwater corrosion and sand. For many anglers the Alvey side cast because of its simple construction gives a lifetime of service. By the way Jack Alvey is recorded as casting a 2 oz casting lure 671ft or 223 yards, and that is a mighty cast?

Some 40 years ago I purchased a second hand cedar spool Alvey side cast reel in Lakes Entrance after seeing NSW anglers using this reel on the surf. I never was able to come to grips with the reel and gave it to my son who continues to use it as his main surf reel after all those years, and I doubt it will ever wear out. The Alvey side cast reel is in many ways an icon of Australian angling.

Regarding Carp Explosion In Murray Waters

The following letter was received from **Trevor Merryful** of Wodonga

"I read with interest in the last newsletter about the explosion in carp numbers. I was at Wentworth three weeks ago with a friend to have a look around and throw a line in the Darling. We could not get over the amount of small carp that we caught when we were under the impression that their numbers had dropped back to a reasonable level. Thank you for keeping me informed as to what is going on about fishing and other matters that affect the fishing community.

Regards Trevor Merryfull.

Editors Comment

Like you Trevor, I thought the increasing numbers of native fish were getting on top of European Carp, so it is most disappointing to see those millions of carp in the Menindee area and now moving through the Murray Darling system, and one can only imagine the breeding potential of this explosion. It is worth remembering that carp produce around 80,000 eggs for a 2-kilogram carp and 1.5 million eggs for a fish of 6 kilograms and they have the ability to live to 40 years of age. They reach sexual maturity at 2.5 years of age and have the ability to spawn twice a year. Now when you

put these bare statistics beside the numbers of trout in the photo, then its really time to start and worry and hope a biological answer is found soon.

Bob McNeill Reports on Lake Tyers Fishing



Bob's report as always is full of interesting information. In the couple of weeks after the opening of Lake Tyers Bob did not land a fish from the 2nd of August to the 16th of August but then the fishing slowly improved with bream in the early period and then in recent weeks he switched to targeting dusky flathead.

Bob reported that the bream caught in late winter were in top condition with almost all fish caught over 30cms in size. He was surprised that some bream caught in the main lake in October had not spawned. Bob was surprised at the early appearance of flathead in the main lake in October. The flathead he caught in this recent period ranged from fish of 20cms to a large 87cm (10lb) dusky on the 18th October. Bob uses live bait in the flathead season and local prawn for his bream fishing.

Included in this diary report is note of several large tailor included in the catch. Bob found it interesting, that some catches of large luderick had been taken by anglers targeting this species, and as well the odd leatherjacket had been caught by anglers. He also noted the large increase in the number of anglers fishing Lake Tyers. Over the two month period Bob recorded in his Research Angler Fishing Diary a total catch of 52 bream, 70 dusky flathead and 2 tailor.

Bob fishes normally two mornings a week from 6.00am until 9.00am from his boat and this seldom varies .He is a bait fisherman and has had years of experience fishing Lake Tyers and his diary reports are assisting Fisheries Victoria in assessing any changes in the fish stocks in this estuary. Bob reported that the opening of Lake Tyers to the sea is becoming shallow and members of the public have been seen walking across the outlet to the sea, which probably means the closure of the lake to the sea is close. Thanks to Bob for these interesting reports which many anglers enjoy.

Late News

VRFish Reports re- Future Fisheries Strategy

We are pleased to report that our concerns in some way have been addressed by Fisheries Victoria and the period for comment has been extended through to 1st March 2012.

These paintings, in oil, are of one of my favourite stretches on the Now Nowa Arm of Lake Tyers, where I have spent many happy mornings fishing with a coffee in hand and watching the odd sea eagle fly past.



A very Merry Christmas to all our readers from Lynton and Dawn Barr

The next issue of Around the Jetties will be the January/February Issue and we aim at ten issues per year.

Contributions- Your contributions to this angling newsletter are most welcome and we look forward to publishing your items of interest

Readers- Don't forget you may get a friend or an interested angler onto the mailing list for Around the Jetties by simply sending us an email with details of the person you are nominating and his email address or a letter with details of a mailing address.

**Good Health and good fishing
Lynton Barr**



WHO AM I?

With the increasing number of readers it occurs to me that many would wonder at this chap producing this material and his background, and for this reason after 51 editions and some hundreds of thousands of words it occurred to me that I should introduce myself to many of the new readers.

I was born in Swan Hill then our family moved to Camperdown and later to Wangaratta. My secondary education was at Wangaratta High School. I studied at Melbourne University and with a B.Com and Dip.Ed., became a High School teacher. During my teaching career, I taught at country High Schools including Stawell, Mansfield, and Corryong. At the age of 34, I was appointed Principal of Rainbow High School and after eight wonderful years, due in no small part to local lakes Albacutya and Hindmarsh being full, I was appointed Principal of Wangaratta High School.

For eight years at Mansfield, I was Senior Master and because of the proximity to Lake Eildon I commenced a Fishing and Outdoor club involving 50 lads. This group captured the imagination of the Fisheries and Wildlife Department of the day. Sid Cowling of the Fisheries Department supported the group in developing a 10-acre duck swamp on the banks of the Delatite River with funding from Fisheries and Wildlife and advice. This swamp involved a large 250 yard levee bank and when Lake Eildon rose, the water would be retained behind the bank forming a swamp. Students built nesting boxes and placed them in the swamp to encourage breeding and over 500 red gum trees were planted. At the same time following contact with a student who had suffered a shooting injury whilst playing with guns, I developed a gun safety program, which was probably a first in a State High School. This involved a weekly schoolboy shoot at the Mansfield gun club, after lectures on safety. This would become a major interest in the years ahead.

In November 1968, I wrote an article that was accepted in the conservative Victorian Educational Magazine, on schoolboy shooting, fishing and conservation as part of the educational activities of a country High School. This was a first in Victorian education and the first time I was published.

Lance Wedlick editor of Rod and Line and noted fishing author wrote the following of the schoolboy activities "the club not only teaches the lads to shoot and fish but impresses on them the vital need for conservation. We wholeheartedly support the club's attitude to the outdoors."(Rod and Line October 1964)

The following is a short report of a student fishing day on the banks of Lake Eildon. "The most successful single day was in March 1965 when thirty five boys landed 180 redfin and 14 trout. The lad who won the biggest bag of fish caught 35 redfin."(Victorian Educational Magazine 1968.) That same lad is now in his sixties after a distinguished career as one of this states magistrates.

The gun safety program that I introduced at Mansfield grew in the years at Rainbow.. It was at this time I wrote a handbook on gun safety that was produced by the Victorian Education Department and made available to schools in both Australia and New Zealand.

Whilst at Rainbow High School, a small Mallee secondary school, I introduced an annual Murray River Fishing trip to Nanjiloc, 50kms south of Mildura, for boys and their fathers and a similar surf fishing trip to Cape Jaffa near Robe. Most of the 40 student who undertook these surf trips had never fished the surf. They made their own sinkers and rods from Rangoon cane. We had wonderful results with snapper, flathead, trevally, salmon and quite often a large stingray. The surf fishing in this area in the seventies was great and these trips introduced boys to a wonderful sport that many continue today. We received a Government grant for a large camp unit that was equipped with tents for 45 students, a large barbecue, gas lights, water containers etc., so now the camping and fishing projects were widely recognised. We had a father build this tandem trailer unit using federal Government funds and the total cost was \$1500. A father wrote, "at evening we could see the boys spread over 2kms of beach each gazing intently at his rod tip for the first sign of a bite, it was a wonderful sight."

A full write up of these annual fishing trips and the school shooting program was printed in the Australian Outdoors and Fishing Magazine in the seventies. Following the

success of the boy's trips, the girls of the school asked for a similar opportunity. Accompanied by teachers and Dawn and myself as well as members of the Mothers Club of the day, some of whom actually fished, we made several girls trips to Wrights Bay. This might also have been a first in the 1970's for few secondary schools would take girls on a surf fishing trip

On a personal level, I fished the Murray River with my grandmother from the age of four. Then in Wangaratta as a student, I fished the rivers of the northeast from a canoe my father and I built and waded the upper reaches of the Ovens after trout, casting hoppers whenever I had a chance. Whilst at University a mate and I hired a boat from Keefer's on many occasions, and fished out from Black Rock mainly catching snapper and small flathead. I look back on those days when a hire boat provided a tin for bailing and oars and nothing else.

Whilst in Mansfield I bought a 14ft clinker boat that Dawn and I restored and then I fished Lake Eildon almost every weekend over an eight-year period, and loved this lake. When teaching in Corryong I became fascinated with fly fishing and loved the Nariel Creek and Lake Jindabyne. All of this was a continuous learning experience for an angler. Each year, with my wife and young family, we travelled to Frenchman's Creek, 50kms west of Mildura, fishing for Murray species including catfish, which were plentiful before the arrival of numbers of carp. Other family holidays were mainly spent fishing off the rocks at Eden for drummer and other species and at one stage, we calculated we had spent over six months of our lives fishing from the Haycock rocks. These were lovely family days with some wonderful fish, which included black drummer to 12lbs and natural oysters off the rocks.



My later years involved fly fishing, surf fishing and annual Murray trips and fishing the Nariel as regularly as possible whilst in Wangaratta. In this period I spent hours of an evening tying flies, and was loathe to pass the dead possum or bird on the road without extracting fur or feathers, much to my wife's dismay.

As can be seen by the reader of this story, my life has been associated with fishing. Introducing students to the joy of the pursuit of fish has long been a large part of the satisfaction I have obtained from the sport. Now some of those sixty year old former students still come and share a mornings fishing from my boat. For the last twenty-five years, I have fished East Gippsland from the Lakes to Marlo, its rivers and particularly Lake Tyers, which I find a most beautiful water. This type of fishing now suits a chap approaching seventy-six years of age. I have become concerned at the dramatic decline of black bream over that period and have written two books on the subject, which were self-published. I have tried to study issues associated with local waters and provide information to readers, and I hope to see if Around the Jetties can achieve its 100th copy.

After a letter to a number of anglers, on the research of Dr Jeremy Hindell relating to transmitters and black bream, attracted interest and was passed around, I saw a need to impart information and I decided to write Around the Jetties. The Newsletter attempts to deal with matters that are not covered in fishing magazines, and I think most readers would see this as a somewhat different publication. I hope it fills a gap in information and provides thought-provoking issues associated with the sport of angling.

As well as writing Around the Jetties, I have written for the past eight years two pages on fishing in each edition of the Feathers and Fur magazine, and in that time have again not received any remuneration for the writing over that period. I believe the fact that I can provide more information to anglers by having access to this publication, and most shooters are anglers, is adding to the flow of information that is not generally available to anglers.

Well there it is! I hope I have not bored you too much, but you will have a bit of an idea of the background of the editor of Around the Jetties. None of this would have been achieved without the total support for the project of my companion, computer expert and wife Dawn who holds the project together with her constant support and has understood my need to fish. I have been known to become grumpy when I can't. I must also acknowledge the support of numerous Fisheries Officers and Scientists, who send me their reports and media releases and generally allow me to quote from this material to allow a wider understanding of issues within recreational fishing.

If you see me on the ramp at Lake Tyers do
come and say hello. Cheers!
Lynton G Barr



Not sporting the whiskers anymore!

