



## Northern Suburbs Fly Fishing Club

### Editorial

This March edition of the *Northern Flyline* takes a somewhat different approach to your normal monthly newsletters.

For starters, it's hitting your desktop in April, not March — this is due to a few production problems in the *Northern Flyline* office.

Secondly, some of the regular segments are missing. There is no President's Message because the president is enjoying himself in the US (I think). There is no Club Activities page because there is no point telling you what is going to happen in March when March has been and gone. I guess we could tell you what's coming up in April, but we'll leave that for the April edition which is on the press as we speak.

What we do have is some great photos to share with you. Earlier this year we put a call out for members to submit their holiday season (loosely described as December/January) fishing photos. While we weren't inundated with photos we did receive some nice ones. It seems that some members have been sneaking up to Ballarat under the cover of darkness, tying a mudeye pattern to the end of their line and doing very nicely by getting onto some big browns in Lake Wendouree.

Dave Jenkins has already told you about his success with carp on the Murray, but we couldn't resist the opportunity to show his catch one more time, while Dave Davies has been pulling plenty of fish out of saltwater as usual. And a special mention to Merv Landy, who while not displaying the biggest catch in his photo there is no doubt it was highly valued — his first on a fly!

John Smith sent through a truckload of images and we have selected a couple — an arty one that was clearly taken by his fishing partner and an image of a strange new rod.

Completing this issue is a profile on member Peter Signorotto who as many of you will know is currently living in Sakhalin, Russia. I met up with Peter in Melbourne in January and enjoyed learning about his life in Sakhalin and his fishing adventures around the world. His profile provides an insight into some of the wonderful adventures he has had fishing in places such as Alaska and France. In the latest email I received from Peter he talks about drilling holes in metre thick ice for a spot of ice fishing in Sakhalin. I'm not sure how you cast a fly into a hole in the ice — but perhaps Peter has mastered the art!

Philip

### NSFFC Committee

John Smith, President  
0437 713 419

Vice President  
(position vacant)

Pat Sheridan, Secretary  
0419 515 950

Chris Dabal, Treasurer  
0447513025

Alf Chetcuti, New Member  
Contact 0419 339 132

Fly Tying Coach  
(position vacant)

Brynn Farkas  
Casting Coach

Philip Goslin, Editor  
0409 846 529

John Smith, Trip  
Coordinator 0437 713 419

Pat Sheridan, Webmaster  
0419 515 950

Anne Herne, Social  
Secretary 0148 865 419

Committee Members:

Daniel Bowman  
0409 078 157

Dominic Bono  
0438 110 862

### In this edition

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# Mitta Mitta magic

by John Smith

The January club trip was to the Mitta Mitta River. Being at least a five hour drive from the clubrooms it is definitely a long weekend trip. If you can afford some extra time off either side of the main days, even better.

Domonic Bono did a great job finding the Magorra caravan park which is situated right on the river bank just outside the thriving metropolis that is Mitta Mitta. The township has a pub, general store and a café. Eskdale, which is about 15 minutes away, has much the same including a small IGA supermarket, so you have no problems getting hold of essentials if you need them — just be prepared to pay a little more than you would in Melbourne!

Five of us made the journey up the Hume highway with Dave Davies getting there early and he reported being broken off and dropping two nice fish by the time Pat Sheridan and I arrived after lunch on Friday. We'd made a slight detour to the Eskdale pub to catch up with local identity and guide Scott McPherson who gave us some good tips on local conditions and flies that should work. Scott is mates with Pat from a few Millbrook trips and we made arrangements to catch up later in the afternoon and fish a couple of spots within the boundaries of the caravan park. The park is big enough to have over a kilometre of river frontage — it also has a sports oval and a nine hole golf course should you decide to have swing!

Scott arrived at the designated meeting time just as we were finishing off setting up 'The Taj' so we quickly assembled some gear and headed off down the track. Unfortunately it didn't take long for the weather forecast to ring true. The chance of a thunderstorm became the certainty of a thunderstorm as great ribbons of chain lighting lit up the darkening afternoon skies. Cane rods may offer some degree of insulation against



Skinny water on Snowy Creek.

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half a million volts of electricity, but high modulus carbon graphite certainly won't, so with rain bucketing down and wind blowing branches off the willows we beat a hasty retreat to 'The Taj' to sit out the storm.

The worst of the storm eventually cleared, but the rain didn't. Undeterred we headed off to check out a couple of likely spots for an evening rise. Being down on the river bank we didn't realise how severe the storm had been. On the drive to our destination we had to pick our way past SES crews clearing downed trees and branches from the road.

We chose a spot I remembered as being a disused river gravel quarry, only to find it had been transformed into a memorial reserve to Katie Richards, the young girl from Eskdale who was tragically killed by a falling tree while fighting bush fires a couple of years ago. There were plenty of insects coming off the water, including a good termite fall but unfortunately no fish were rising to them.

Saturday dawned clear and warm and just after breakfast I had a call from my good mate Dave who lives in Wodonga and has fished around Mitta Mitta for years. He suggested a couple of spots we should try before we made plans to catch up the following day.

To say Saturday morning started slowly was an understatement. A very, very late night meant a very, very, very late start on the water. So we chose a close spot to Eskdale to try our luck. After dropping Dave, Domonic and Darren Percy off at the first bridge, Pat and I headed further upstream. Not long after the first pool and run our progress was halted by thick blackberry and overhanging bankside growth. We hauled out and followed the road again for a short distance, only to be disappointed at how small the creek was becoming. It was far too late in the morning to try and find another spot, so we pressed on...at least we could easily cross the stream as it was possible to jump from one side to the other.

What a surprise this little waterway turned out to be. Browns to 36cm erupted from under the blade grass that came right to the water's surface.

Controlling fit fish in



A nice brown taken on the Mitta trip.



such tight confines was a bit of a challenge but the fun certainly made the hangover fade quickly!

After lunch we decided to head to one of the spots my mate Dave had recommended. His tip paid off with a 46cm well-conditioned brown falling to a beadhead hare and copper fished close to the bank. The spot was also one of the few places where you could actually wade across the Mitta Mitta River. So we took advantage of that and fished to rising fish on the far bank and decided to stay on for the evening rise.

Although slow to start, when it did get going it produced a few more fish around 30cm in length — but only if you had an elk hair caddis or parachute Adams smaller than #16 to tempt them with!

Staying for the rise meant we didn't get back to camp until around 10pm so the fire was hastily stoked, barbecue fired up and cleansing ales washed down while plans for the 'morrow were hatched.

Dave managed to slip away from his Australia Day barbecue preparation duties to join us and show us a few spots around the Mitta area. We decided to take a look further up the valley and try our luck on Snowy Creek. There are ample access spots to this fine looking alpine stream as the Omeo highway snakes its way along beside the creek. While Snowy Creek looked inviting the fish didn't play the game, with only a handful of smallish rainbows rising to take our dries.

With the Mitta flows up and the river height at 1.9 metres (1.5 is getting towards wading height), we needed to try a couple of different techniques. Swinging wets down and across using both double handed or switch rods and conventional 7 weights also paid off, with smallish browns taking stick caddis and hitting woolly buggers.

As I mentioned earlier, if you can take an extra day or two to spend in the Mitta Valley it can be well worth it. With an extra day up our sleeves Pat and I decided to explore Lightning Creek. Dave had mentioned some of the guys he knows rate this little stream as tough. After an hour or so with no luck we fully understood this rating, but perseverance paid off with a few browns up to the 30cm mark taking stimulators and Goddard's Caddis patterns.

There is no doubting it's a long haul to the Mitta Mitta river. As a tail race water below Dartmouth dam it pays to make sure the flows and river height are at levels that allow access to the best fishing areas. We caught and released 18 fish during the 'official' trip times, with at least another good half dozen or more coming at other times. If the stars align and you strike good conditions the fishing around the Mitta Mitta can be very good — *very* good indeed.



Dave Davies tries his luck on Snowy Creek.



# Holiday Season Photos

The December/January holiday season seems like a long time ago now — probably because it is. However, the *Northern Flyline* promised to share some member photos from this period and they are presented over the next few pages. Thanks to all who contributed their holiday season snaps. It certainly looks like some of you had a lot of fun out on the water.



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Salt water success story — Dave Davies scored a nice hat-trick over the holiday season with flathead from Portarlington pier along with trevally and salmon from the Barwon River.

# Holiday Season Photos



AJ Balachandra with a 63cm 5lb brown taken with a mudeye pattern at Lake Wendouree



It's not quite how he described it in the clubrooms (sounded much bigger), but congratulations to Merv Landy on landing his first trout on a fly.

An advertisement for Freeburgh Cabins and Caravan Park. The top part features a logo with four icons: a red maple leaf, a blue snowflake, a green leaf, and a yellow sun. Below the icons, the text reads "FREEBURGH Cabins and Caravan Park BRIGHT". The middle part shows a scenic view of a swimming pool with a wooden deck, surrounded by greenery and mountains in the background. The text "go on...you'll love it!" is written in a cursive font over the pool. The bottom part shows a small cabin with a porch and a flower bed. At the bottom, it says "RACV ★★★★★" and "Phone 03 5750 1306".



# Holiday Season Photos



Look closely at this rod — something is just not right. Or could it be a new innovative design with an airlock in the middle of the cork handle providing added flexibility when playing really big fish! Perhaps not. And it's a Sage! At least he landed the fish.



John Smith casts a line in an eerie setting that looks straight out of the Lord of the Rings.

# Holiday Season Photos



Alex Gavric spent the holidays chasing browns in Lake Wendouree and landed this magnificent 5.5 pound specimen on a black muddler.



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David Jenkins with that bloody carp.



# Member profile

**Name:** Peter Angelo Signorotto

**Occupation:** Security Manager for Exxon Neftegas Limited located in Sakhalin, Russia

**Year joined the club:** re-joined in 2013

**Where did you learn to fish and how:** Eildon with my father (it is my home town).

**How did you hear about NSFFC?:** I was a member over 30 years ago and returned to Australia after an absence of seven years. Having taken up the sport again I decided to see if the club was still going – it is bigger and better than I had expected!

**How long have you been fly fishing?:** I first started in 1972 but by 1978 with family and work commitments and other sporting interests, it fell by the wayside. Reintroduced to it in France in 2008.

**What music do you listen to/favourite artist/album?:** Country/classic rock/crossover. Highwaymen, John Denver, CCR, ZZ Top, Redgum, Dixie Chicks, Joe Cocker, Rolling Stones, BB King, C.S.N&Y, Guns & Roses, Rose Tattoo, Bob Marley, Bruce Springsteen, Fleetwood Mac, Dire Straits, Joe Joe Zep, Pink Floyd (love them all).

**Favourite movie?:** There are many, but Rocky stands out. I like inspirational films and although Rocky is a classic Hollywood film, it does provide inspiration for those that believe in themselves and their right to challenge whatever is put before them.

**Favourite book?:** Far too many favourites to pick one.

**Favourite saying?:** “All youall”. Picked up in Louisiana when looking after a drilling team in the Gulf of Mexico. Used when telling my American colleagues to shut-up and listen to what I am telling them because that is how it is going to be. Not always appreciated but clearly understood.

**Other hobbies/interests/sports besides fly fishing:** Basketball (played from 14); trap and skeet clay shooting; game hunting; flying helicopters.

**Fondest or most forgettable fishing experience:** In 2010 I fished in Alaska for great silver salmon (remote fly-in to the Yantarni salmon camp on the mainland opposite Kodiak Island) and rainbows (Brooke’s River and the Naknek River that flows into Bristol Bay). Had 10 days catching not only our target silvers and rainbows, but four other species of salmon plus grayling, Arctic char and dolly varden trout. My largest Silver – 35” and just shy of 18lbs. My largest rainbow was 28.5” and 11lbs. Trip was organised via the Orvis Fly Fishing store where I was living in Texas. Travelled with eight folks I knew and it was better than what I had dreamed it would be like since the age of 14 when I saw my first article on Alaskan fishing in Outdoor Life, an American magazine.



The magnificent Crystal Creek fishing lodge at Bristol Bay.

# Member profile (cont.)

**Most exotic place you've fished:** France – Manoir de Malvoisen near the historical town of Rouen (where Joan of Arc died), a private property run by Hedy and Adrian Thompson (an English couple) who had purchased the property, re-built the original 16<sup>th</sup> century manner house and surrounding walls and tower and did a lot of work to improve the rivers, feeder streams and farming techniques of locals to make this a truly exotic experience with 1.5 miles of private stream access along the Andelle River and half a mile on the Heronchelles River. This is where my love for Fly fishing was reinstated, thanks to a holiday gift from my wife Debra. We were able to go back several time over the three years we were in Belgium and on each, we were in time for the May fly hatch and on ultra-light rods and line, caught some unbelievable native browns that were fighting way above their weight and size.

**Where you've always wanted to fish:** Alaska has always been my No.1 destination for the previous 44 years, closely followed by NZ, Tasmania and Europe (Ireland, Italy, France and Belgium). I have completed all but Tassie (and it's the closest to home). I am blessed, basically because my employer has allowed me to take postings in Europe and the US, from where these trips and opportunities were relatively easy. Now that I am living in the Russian Far East I like what I see — the rivers in the south of Sakhalin Island are unbelievable and the salmon (all sizes and colours) start in May and do not end until late September. So it is now at top of my list of places to explore and fish.

**What do you hope to get out of being a member of NSFFC?:** Initially it was to get back into fly fishing after our return from the US and see who was still around. It was very different, the members were very welcoming and helpful, NSFFC now has its own club house, own casting pool and regular trips. Unfortunately, just as I was gearing up for the summer fishing season at the end of 2013, the company made me another offer that I could not refuse and in 2014 I find myself and Debra enjoying the Russian Far East and all that it has to offer for possibly the next two-plus years and then we will come home for good.



Two of the species that Peter is chasing in Sakhalin — cherry salmon (left) and 'ribbon salmon'.



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**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING****4<sup>th</sup> Dec 2014**

8:15 pm – 9:15 pm

**Apologies:** Andrew Connell, Peter Young, Peter Cogdon, Ian Lowe, Ray Cresp, Philip Goslin, Daniel Bowman

**Visitor:**

**Minutes**

Minutes from the previous General Meeting were presented by the Secretary and seconded by Phil Mathews – Carried.

**Business Arising**

- ❖ Proposal for Life Members to be held over to February General meeting as a result of the late release of the Minutes of the October General Meeting.

**Treasurer's Report**

- ❖ Approximately \$5 779.54 in bank account.
- ❖ Cheques for Kids Come and Try Day and Badges
- ❖ BBQ at Mitre 10 made \$325.90 profit.
- ❖ JMC Bill still not received.
- ❖ Current membership to be confirmed
- ❖ Treasurer's Report read on a motion from Chris Dabal seconded John Smith - Carried

**Business Arising**

- ❖ Nil.

**Correspondence**

As per correspondence register

**Syllabus**

- ❖ Barwon Heads – 6 – 7 Dec – Dave Davies – Catching Trevally and Salmon
- ❖ Mitta Mitta Trip – 24 – 26 Jan 15 – Dominic Bono – would like numbers ASAP
- ❖ Life Member's Cup and Welcome Back BBQ – 29 Jan 15

**Fishing Reports**

- ❖ Noojee trip was a 'cracker'. 10 members fished the West Tanjil, Locke and Toorong rivers/creeks for 110 fish. Mainly small rainbows with the odd brown. Largest was 30cm by both Daryl Wallis and John Smith. Continue for next year late Nov/Dec
- ❖ Glen Cox advised that Newlans and Wendouree are fishing well with fish up on the duns.
- ❖ Dave Jenkins fished the Murrundindi above the swing bridge for 7 fish best around 20cm.
- ❖ Greg Roberts fished Woods Lake in Tasmania for 1½ days, one 4lb and three 3lb.
- ❖ John Smith fished the Snowy River area over 4 days staying at 3 Mile Dam. Caught first wild brookie at Ogilvies. Yoorongabilli provided a lot of small fish. John was surprised by the number of fish spooked. Eucumbene around Kiandra provided lots of little fish best around 30cm.

**Other Business**

- ❖ Cox Connell Trophy presented
- ❖ Bill Taylor has passed away. John Keogh is the contact.
- ❖ Ridely College fly fishing group open day 16 Dec. 12 possibles and 4 parents. Need volunteers.
- ❖ Alan Staton resigned as a result of family concerns.
- ❖ ACF – Meeting Sat at Ballarat
- ❖ CVFFC
  - Casting distances have been advised.
  - Clash between the Ballarat Open and the John Rumpf. Committee to change.
  - AGM 19 Feb 15
- ❖ Petras would like to run an 'On the Couch' and would like a guest. Petras to organise a Feb event.
- ❖ Eric Smith questioned the lack of lake fishing on the syllabus. Meeting was advised that there were 7 organised lake events on the syllabus out of 18 organised fishing trips. No requests had been received before the syllabus was discussed or after it was released in April. Members were asked to provide suggestions to the Committee for the Mar 15 Committee meeting.
- ❖ Philip Mathews requested the Club write a letter to the Minister to put water into Lake Toolondo. Include VRFish.
- ❖ John Kingsford asked why the casting pool was empty. A working bee was needed to clean it out.

**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING****5<sup>th</sup> Feb 2015**

8:15 pm – 9:15 pm

**Apologies:****Visitor:**

Appointment of Presiding Officer

Glen Cox was appointed as Presiding Officer

**Nominations and Voting for President**

Secretary advised that although the Committee could appoint a member it was decided to allow members to vote. John Smith was nominated by Pat Sheridan and accepted the nomination. With no other nominations forthcoming his nomination was unanimously.

**Minutes**

Minutes from the previous General Meeting were presented by the Secretary and seconded by Phil Mathews – Carried.

**Business Arising**

- ❖ Nil.

**Treasurer's Report**

- ❖ Approximately \$5 700 in bank account.
- ❖ JMC Bill still not received.
- ❖ Treasurer's Report read on a motion from Chris Dabal seconded John Smith - Carried

**Business Arising**

- ❖ Nil.

**Correspondence**

As per correspondence register

**Syllabus**

- ❖ Big River Trip – 14 – 15 Feb 15
- ❖ Howqua Fishing Trip – 7 – 9 Mar 15 – Pat Sheridan
- ❖ President's Shield – 12 Mar 15
- ❖ Simon Gawesworth (Rio) Demonstration – 17 Mar 15
  - Setup
    - Casting Pool
    - Lake
    - Chairs
  - BBQ
  - DVA use indoor range on 19 Mar
- ❖ John Rumpf Trophy – 21 Mar 15 – Casting team
- ❖ Newlan/Hepburn Day Trip – 28 Mar 15 – Pat Sheridan
- ❖ Beginners Fly Fishing Course – 9 – 30 Apr
  - \$180 per person
- ❖ Northern Open – 12 Apr – Casting Team
  - BBQ
- ❖ Rubicon Valley Fishing Trip – 18 – 19 Apr – Pat Sheridan
- ❖ Fund Raising BBQ – Bunnings Epping – 26 Apr
- ❖

**Fishing Reports****Other Business**

- ❖ Proposal for amendment to Club Rules was presented and passed.
- ❖ Nillumbik Council looking to put a bollard in. No volunteers to be on site.



**MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING****19<sup>th</sup> Feb 2015**

7:55 pm - 9:15 pm

**Present:** John Smith, Chris Dabal, Pat Sheridan, Dominic Bono, Alf Cecuti, Anne Hearn, Daniel Bowman**Apologies:** Philip Goslin**Minutes**

Minutes of the previous Committee Meeting were read on a motion from the Secretary, seconded by Dominic Bono.

**Business Arising**

❖ Nil

**Correspondence**

❖ As per correspondence register.

**Treasurer's Report**

❖ Balance of the cheque account is currently \$5 851.54

❖ Treasurer's Report read on a motion from the Treasurer, seconded by Daniel Bowman.

**Business Arising**

❖ Nil

**Agenda Items**

1. Syllabus
  - a. Northern Lights – Secretary to pick up BBQ food.
  - b. Scouts to visit 26 Feb, need some volunteers to help out. Don't need a BBQ.
  - c. Colac Colac trip now to the Howqua River – Fryers Hut – Pat Sheridan
  - d. President's Shield – on track – Casting Team to manage
  - e. Simon Gawesworth – 18 Mar – Media to go up
  - f. Committee Meeting – Syllabus planning
  - g. John Rumpf now 21 Mar
  - h. Newlans/Hepburn now Lauriston/Upper Coliban – 28 Mar – Pat Sheridan to Captain.
  - i. Beginner's Fly Fishing Course - \$180 – Will need assistance with casting
  - j. Rubicon Trip – Pat Sheridan
  - k. Fund Raising BBQs – need to get list up and finalise
  - l. Film night – 30 Apr – Social member will organise some different supper
  - m. Steavenson River Day Trip – meet at the Igloo and lunch at Buxton Pub – Chris Dabal to captain
  - n. Royal Coachman Trip – Rules to be finalised and staying at Eildon Caravan Park
  - o. Vic Championships – Held at NSFFC – 23 – 24 May
2. Items For Discussion
  - a. Merchandise – John Smith to look to get samples/costs.
3. Member Reports
  - a. Editor – Nil
  - b. New Member Contact – Listed corro with potential members.
  - c. Social Secretary – Nil
  - d. CVFF Rep – Nil
  - e. ACF Rep – Fees sent through
  - f. Librarian – Nil

**General Business:**

- g. Nil
4. Meeting Closed 9:15 pm