

# ROTORUA ANGLERS ASSOCIATION

*Incorporated 16/06/1949*

## *JUNE 2021 NEWSLETTER*



Heather Fargher at the Tekapo Canal.

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***Contribution Deadline: 20<sup>th</sup> of each month***

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*The content and comments in this newsletter are those of the authors or by participating members and not necessarily those of other Association members*

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

June and the frosts have come (plus some rain!), and we are not far away from the longest night of the year. At the end of June some fishing areas close, so now is the time to catch up on our fishing. On 25 June we have the traditional Kiwi mid-year Christmas party at the club and yes you can dress up for the occasion. You will be getting membership renewal notices at end June and we would like to get your responses in order to renew our contact emails list at this time.

Two other opportunities to showcase the club are just over the horizon. On 8 July the Home and Leisure show is on and we have a free stall. We need around 6 anglers for relieving over the three days and also a fly tying demonstrator. Meanwhile we can get displays ready. The other opportunity is the first Kids Fish-out on 8 August and we really need many anglers for this important annual event. Once memberships are renewed we can get a better idea of who can come along for the day. The more anglers we can get, the better we can rotate and relieve each other. Please note that non-anglers can contribute to the success of the day by doing different jobs at the entrance and around the fishing hut.

It seems those Tekapo canals are calling. Roger Bowden has just caught a 34-pounder, and a good day's catch added up to 120 pounds! Just unbelievable. Taupo and Whakatane have asked why don't we fish together, so they will be welcome to join us at Rerewhakaito on Sunday 13 June, with joint lunch at the Ashpit, 12 noon. The same goes for July, where we have targeted a 2-day outing from Monday 12th to Tuki-Tuki.

A special thanks for your newsletter pictures and articles. If we don't have space in this issue, just watch for the next edition.

Vaccinations are now available next to Noel Leaming. Phone 0800 358 5453 for an appointment. Rika and I now have had both Pfizer shots. The EU now requires a vaccination for entry. Keep safe folks, keep safe.

All the best,

Piet Otto

# FISH OF THE MONTH



Heather Fargher

A 21lb (9.525kg) jack caught in the Tekapo Canal in the South Island.

(See the cover photo)

**The winner of the Fish of the Month Award will receive a \$10 voucher redeemable from Hamills Rotorua**



**1271 Fenton St, Rotorua**

**07 348 3147**

# JUNE UPCOMING EVENTS & REMINDERS

There will be no beginners fly tying this month. Richard's partner has lost her grandmother and he needs to be with the family. We are thinking of you all

7th Mon, Queen's birthday

11th Fri: Surf Casting weekend starts

13th Sun: Lake Rerewhakitū day outing, Ashpit road. Lunch at 12 noon

14th Mon: Fly tying at club 7pm. Tutor: Colin

17th Thurs: Committee meeting 7pm at the club

25th Fri: Mid-year Christmas party at the club from 5pm. Eat at 6pm

**NOTE Sun 8 Aug: the first Kid's Fishout starts at 9am. We need around 30 people to volunteer. There are a number of jobs e.g., greeting at the gates, fish weighing, BBQ and sales, besides the fishing activities. Contact Bredon 021 105**



Molesworth cob cottage. Photo: Larry Ware

## SOUTH ISLAND TRIP, PART 2

We separated on the Thursday - Piet, Rika, and Jo heading for Picton and I set off north from Westport towards Karamea. Finally, the rain stopped and I could enjoy the long straight roads going north. At Karamea I stopped for lunch and then continued up the coast road to the mouth of the Kohaihai River. This is as far as you can drive up on the actual Coast and is the start /end of the Heaphy track plus a DOC campsite. The last few kilometers are dirt. It was being graded at the time, and of course the heavy rain started as I approached the river mouth and the wind got up to the point where it was very uncomfortable to get out of the truck. There were some very wet trampers in the DOC shelter, at least a dozen camper vans parked up, so after 5 minutes on the beach - just so I could say I have been there - I then headed south at a great rate of knots to my nieces at Inangahua Junction. The Little Waihi to Mokihinui saddle easily beats the Takaka hill for being a windy, fun drive. It just does not climb as high but is a lot longer and I pretended the old Terrano was a very slow Lamborghini and I had a ball around the tight corners. I revisited the Denniston Mine Site and took duplicate photos so we could compare the rainy view with a fine day. I finally arrived at my nieces' at Inangahua Junction at 4.00 and in glorious sunshine, something we hadn't seen since leaving Kaikoura.

My niece has 15 acres bordering the Buller River so finally I was able to go fishing and catch the famed SI brown trout. I stayed 4 nights and travelled up to St. Arnaud and Lake Rotoiti to the start of the Buller River and fished back to Inangahua. At the junction of the Howard and Buller, I encountered didymo for the first time - jeez, it is ugly stuff- but it was only in the very shallow 2-10cm-deep water with almost no current though the rest of the river was clean and clear. While fishing a glorious spot on the Buller, I had a small wasp crawl up my shorts and sting me twice in the upper thigh - not nice!

I headed up to Lake Rotoroa and the start of the Gowan River. While standing on the jetty I was greeted by a large eel. I last saw Lake Rotoroa 55 years ago when attending the ATC/Air Force bush training camp at Dip Flat and we climbed over the St. Arnaud Range on a 3-night mountain survival exercise. There are not a lot of F&G marked access points along the Buller - those that are

are very poorly marked and I drove past most of them – the road is narrow and windy so made turning around very difficult. You do need a navigator to help spot them. I drove up the Matakaitaki River and was promptly stung 3 more times by wasps. I cleared out very quickly. There has been a concerted effort to cull the wasps in the Nelson-Marlborough region and they have largely succeeded, except where I want to fish, but the wasps have been replaced by bumble bees which are everywhere, but at least they are pretty benign.

It was now time to start the other goal of my SI trip – to do the Rainbow Road / Molesworth Station drive. Molesworth Station is the largest working farm in New Zealand and is owned by the NZ Government and administered by DOC. The Molesworth /Acheron Road is only open to the public from Labour Weekend through to Easter. The road was originally built by the Electricity Department when the main North Island power supply route was built and is reasonably maintained and is suitable for cars, but not large campervans or caravans, so you can drive to or from Hanmer Springs. The Rainbow Road runs down the western side and from the Rainbow ski field the access point is privately owned and is poorly maintained so is suitable for 4WD vehicles only. There is a \$40.00 toll to drive through to Rainbow Station. The Rainbow turnoff is just outside St. Arnaud and the single-lane road is tarsealed through to the Ski Field turnoff. After that it is dirt, dirt and more dirt. The road is very rough, very narrow, and very windy - absolutely an awesome drive in the Terrano. The scenery is just stunning. I followed the Waiau River along the valley with massive scree slopes all around. I have never spent so much time in first and second gears in my life - I loved it. I crossed 15 fords, 12 of which were wet and I encountered 12 motor vehicles, 6 motorcycles, and 2 bicycles - crazy buggers. The Rainbow/Molesworth route is a bucket list item for adventure motorcyclists and bikes. This was just in the first 73km of the 200km drive.

I had planned to stay at the Lake Tennyson DOC camp, but the weather gods told me to move on – torrential rain and gale force winds turned the lake ugly and rough. Lake Tennyson is the start of the Clarence River. I continued the journey and finally arrived at the Acheron Cob Cottage DOC campground. The drive from Rainbow Station through to the Hanmer Springs Junction is just mind-boggling - the road is very rough, a single lane, but contains stunning mountainous scenery. I must do it again but from the opposite direction. The DOC camp site is very basic with just a toilet and water supply. There was a couple with an offroad camper

trailer plus another couple on motorbikes who were just tenting. We were entertained by a large resident population of quail - from little chicks to adults. The dominant male always stood between me and his flock, but he was not spooked until I got too close. The evening was fine, clear and warm. The next day I tried fishing both the Acheron and Clarence rivers, but the wind made it impossible to put a fly where you wanted it - away with the flyrod and out with the camera.

Again, the drive north was absolutely stunning. The mountains and the windy road just stretched out forever in front of me. There was a lot more traffic on this side as it is regarded as an alternative scenic route from Blenheim to Hanmer Springs - cars, SUVs, campervans, lots of motorbikes and a couple of cyclists. Again, the road was narrow and very rough in places. I got told off for travelling over the corrugations at 80kmh - the speed limit is 50kmh - but at that speed you will rattle the fillings out of your teeth. Faster is better over corrugations. The weather was hot and sunny but very windy so I played photographer all the way to the Molesworth Cottage DOC camp site. The DOC site had a warden and the site was especially clean. There was only a couple in a campervan and 2 motorcyclists there. I joined the motorcyclists for a few drinks until the cold forced us to head for the sleeping bag. It was 8°C at 9.00pm. At 1.00am I awoke freezing and had to put on some warm clothes and a woolly hat. Plus, the air from my CPAP machine was so cold it was uncomfortable to breathe so I wrapped it in my jacket and covered the air hose, which helped. In the morning the site was misted in and freezing - at 9am it was 0°C and my water containers were frozen so I guess it must have been 4/5°C earlier. It was so cold the gas cannister wouldn't vaporize properly so it took over 10 minutes to boil water - so much for eggs on toast for breakfast. It was just toast cooked in my electric toaster!

The drive from The Molesworth Cob Cottage along the Awatere Valley to SH.1 is 103km and mostly gravel and is said to take around 6 hours. The Awatere River is not regarded as a trout river except at the sea end, so I decided I needed warmth and two hours later I was at the SH1 junction. I headed south to check out Ward Beach but then decided to stay at the DOC camp at Marfells Beach beside Lake Grassmere. This is a great spot right on the beach and the campsite was almost full. I stayed 2 nights and just relaxed in the sun. During this 3rd week of the trip the air and wind temperature had dropped dramatically, and I had to wear a jersey to walk along the beach even though it was clear and sunny. I finally headed

back to Picton and finished the trip with another meal of John Dory and cold Speights at the Jolly Roger Restaurant in Waikawa. I am going to make this a ritual for all my SI trips from now on - start and finish at The Jolly Roger. The ferry crossing was fine but cold outside and I stayed at Taihape for the night. I did not realize that Taihape is almost exactly halfway between Rotorua and Wellington.

All told, I covered 3147km, used 349.5l of diesel at a cost of \$435.35 (I averaged 25mpg - bugger L/100km) plus \$240.31 of road user charges. Camp site costs varied from a low of \$6.00 for a DOC site to \$82.00 for a tiny cabin at Westport. The best value was \$30.00 for a large cabin at Reefton, which is a council-run site.

I enjoyed the trip so much I am planning on going back in November. I will do essentially the same itinerary but in reverse, starting with Molesworth / Rainbow and finishing in Golden Bay.

Do you want to come? Cheers, Larry Ware



Acheron, South Island



Eel in Lake Rotoroa in the South Island



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# FLY TYING



## **Atron Egg Pattern**

Tie on 2 mm behind the eye. Strip out the yarn and lay it on top of the hook. Check it covers the underneath

Wrap back, catching in the yarn to the middle of the hook. Trim off excess.

Tie in dubbing in the centre so it will be in the middle of the bubble using a contrasting colour.

Take the thread to the back of the hook. Pull the yarn over hook, making sure to cover all around the dubbing.

Catch the yarn at the rear of the hook and pull forward, creating the bubble over the hot spot. Tie off and whip finish. Add superglue.

# THE RANGITAIKI ABOVE MURUPARA

By Piet Otto

On Saturday 15 May, Ian Fear took Larry Ware and myself to see the developments along the river. The young native plants from the Minginui nursery had been planted along the river banks after they were cleared of gorse and blackberry and then sprayed. The river was very clear and we saw fish right from the start. Some were sitting in a lay, while brownies were moving cautiously and some rainbows were rising over the watergrass beds. They probably weighed from one to two pounds. We used floating lines with weighted nymphs. The fish were pretty spooky, and we caught and released two. There is still some roading construction



Piet and friend fishing on the Rangitaiki

in progress where the Wheo River joins the Rangitaiki. With the banks fairly clear in this area, you can get a back cast going (just be careful). However, in the next 3 years the new plants will block that, and we will probably be reliant on spinners in the deeper areas where you can't wade the river. The sandwiches and coffee were good.

# FISHING THE TEKAPO CANAL

Heather Fargher

I recently had a trip away with hubby. He decided to tick off something on MY bucket list and shouted both of us to a day on the Twizel canals, much to my delight. Not having any idea where, what or how, we booked a guide for the day, Ben Booth, who came highly recommended. We woke to rain which was the first they had had for sooooo long. Ben picked us up at 7.30 and we headed 20 minutes out of Twizel to spot X where we parked on road above the water which was flowing fast....perfect conditions, apparently.

After setting up our braided line with 6lb leader set up and the smallest bug he could find, Ben proceeded to explain and demonstrate what was needed. Cast to other side, let sink then lock reel....then walk....and keep walking with the line straight with a finger on braid waiting for that touch. The beat was about 300m. Well, the casting was the hilarious bit, getting right to the other side of canal was a feat in itself, if you failed you got told....No, wind it in and do it again and again ... and again.

We both had plenty of casting practice which did improve, but only slightly. About half an hour later with Ben on my shoulder (not literally) I felt the pressure come on and struck....omg then it was all on. It's all a bit of a blur due to the instructions being thrown at me by the dozen – wind, don't wind, walk, don't walk, rod up, rod down, stop, walk.....you get the gist. The main mission was to keep fish on the hook and get it over to our side of canal as soon as possible due to the giant concrete bollards strung across under the water at the end of our beat, which meant the certain loss of fish if I let it through them. I managed to do about a quarter of his instructions, I think, but managed to get it right and this giant thing emerged from depths to make the heart rate start up. Ben leant over the water with his net which I could have climbed into and scooped up my conquest. Yeehar!!!

After weighing the 18 and a half pound brute and the photo shoot, I gladly released this magnificent fish unharmed back to his home. Wow, this is fun I thought. Right, now back to the dreaded casting. I managed to hook another goodie but lost it at the side with fish chaffing the leader on the rocks to release itself.

Ben spent most of his time with hubby after that, which was fine as it meant I could do my own thing. I then managed to cast hook up and do it all again by

myself until Ben spotted me and came running. This time I was a little bit more aware of things to come and after a big battle up the fish came to the net ... a 21lb monster jack! These fish are amazing to look at and their condition is outstanding. Apparently, they can put on 9lb a year. The mind boggles.

Hubby had a great day hooking 3 and landing two lovely fish also, a brown of about 5 lb, lost his second and the 3rd was a very respectful 8lb jack. We both got very wet, but the weather was irrelevant due to the fun we had. After the canal current slowed up, we went to two other spots and had a lovely BBQ steak lunch cooked from the back of Ben's ute. We then used different techniques but to no avail and we ended the day at 5.30pm. If you are ever down that way, it's a must do for the keen anglers to see what's lying beneath.

Heather Fargher



Heather at the Tekapo Canal

# FISHING MANY YEARS AGO

By Jim Spiers

Taken from his fishing memoirs, which has been donated to the club.

Growing up in Oamaru, my first fishing was off the harbour wharves for schooling trevalli. The rig was a long bamboo pole with curtain rings screwed into the nodes to lead the line from an old brass reel. One usually fished 5 hooks. The excitement was intense, along a line of mostly unemployed guys (these were the “carpetbag” years of the Great Depression) sitting bum to bum along the wharf. Often more than one fish was hooked and had to be landed by swinging the whole rig over your head to avoid the other fishermen.

My uncle, Charlie Ayson, introduced me to better things. He was manager of the salmon hatchery on the Hakateramea River, a tributary of the mighty Waitaki. In the early thirties, salmon thrived unimpeded, but stopped when the Waitaki was dammed and the fish ladder put on the wrong side. Uncle Charlie taught me to fish at the mouth with a 15 –foot Greenheart rod. I was ecstatic to catch my first salmon of 21 pounds after a fight of gigantic proportions. I left Oamaru to join the Forest Service and was not to fish again for many years as I by then had discovered the thrills of hunting.

I returned to fishing 20 years later when stationed at Minginui in the Urewera, a mecca for hunting. My mate Bill Gimblet convinced me to fish for trout again and we would do a two-hour trek to the remote and well loaded Wheao River where few anglers came. Said Bill: “You never know, we could run into a deer or pig on the way”. A year or so later I pushed a dozer track down through the scrub to the river (the period report said we had constructed a new fire break). However, Bill was livid about letting all the riff-raff get to the river and wouldn't speak to me for a couple of weeks

There was no Resource Management Act to worry about in those days. To speed up our roading program we diverted the Whirinaki to put a big shingle bank on the right side of the river for a shorter truck access to the new road. Did it affect the fish population? Sure did! All the aquatic insects and land grubs were stirred up and the fishing below the site was superb for the next couple of weeks. I put this knowledge to the test again a few years later in the Oamaru River when I was with a group of Forest Service woodsmen doing native bush training in the Kaimanawas. Some 30 woodsmen in heavy boots crossed the stream, stirring up all the shingle. My mate and I sneaked back a couple of hours later for a superb evening's fishing



California quail at the Acheron DOC campground.



The scenery between Rainbow Station and Hanmer Springs Junction