

Creel Notes from the



P.O. Box 639, Mercer Island, WA 98040



February, 2007

President's Riffle

Our February dinner meeting presents a great opportunity to bring a guest. 2nd VP and Programs Chairman **Keith Robbins** has arranged for Stuart Ramsey, "the Scotch Guy", to guide us on a fishing trip, of sorts. This fishing trip takes us to the world of classic fly fishing and single malt Scotch whiskies. The tour starts during the wet fly hour, so don't be late lest you miss out on a dram of Scotland's finest. Stuart is an expert on whisky and an entertaining presenter - join us.

Speaking of bringing guests, I encourage each of you to think about sharing this great club of ours with your fishing buddies. Membership is a priority this year and we have aggressive goals to increase our numbers. **Pat Peterman** and **Craig Koepler**, our Co-1st VPs, are leading that effort and have strategies and plans in place to recruit new members and make the process more efficient. Additional ways that you can help in this regard include:

- 1) sending people to our web site each time you have fly fishing conversation with a potential member,
- 2) ask me or one of our members to present at a meeting of your company, organization, church or club about the WFFC,
- 3) talk up the club, especially with younger fly fishers, any time you're out on the salt, river or lake and have the chance to chat with other fly fishers.

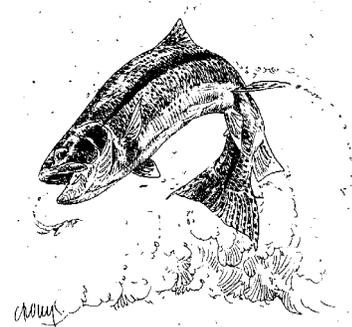
We have a great year ahead with terrific dinner programs and highly expanded

set of outdoors opportunities - let's get the word out.

While on the subject of membership, as of the February Board meeting we still have over 50 current members that have not paid their dues. Come on - this isn't hard, it'll take you all of 2 minutes to write the check and pop it in the mail to **Pat Peterman**. We'll make it even easier: come to the February meeting and you can pay with a credit card at the same time you pay for dinner.

See you there, and in the meantime tight lines.

John Schuitemaker



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WFFC Fly Tier's Round Table *By Dick Brening*

The next round table will be on the 2nd Wednesday, March 14th, 7 to 9 PM.

At the March round table the flies to tie will be nymphs for still and flowing water. I'm looking forward to seeing some good nymph patterns for stonefly, mayfly, caddisfly, etc. that can be used in our waters around the Northwest.

I'll have a hand crafted flybox available at each Round Table for fly contributions to go to the Reel Recovery Program.

Place: Mercer Island Covenant Church, 3200 78th S.E. (S.E. corner of 78th S.E. and SE 32nd), just south of the Mercer Island business district. Off street parking is available off 78th S.E.

If you have any questions on directions contact **Pete Baird** or me at the club meeting or give me a call.

Thanks, **Dick Brening**

Gents, Here's a Lone Lake, Whidbey Island fishing report as described by someone who was there.

Recently several people were fishing Lone Lake with some success reporting good sized fish but few in numbers. One of the fishermen was the inventor of the Nyerges Nymph pattern. Other fishermen tried to keep an eye on him to see how successful he was and to see if he changed from the nymph pattern.

While they were paying attention to their own fishing efforts a muffled thump was heard. A glance at the Nyerges boat showed no one appeared to be in it. No splash had been heard but still others were concerned and proceeded toward a possible rescue. Shortly, a head slowly appeared above the gunwale looking around to see if anyone had noticed. Finally a complete **Gil Nyerges** stood up much to the relief of the other fishermen. Later Gil allowed as how he had backed up a step or two, encountered the seat and the nasty boat threw him to the bottom. We all hope he has recovered completely. *Anonymous.*

Home Waters Report

The Home Waters committee continues to meet in an effort to locate a site that the club may eventually call our Home Waters. We have experienced many dead ends along the way. If you have any suggestions please contact **Rocco Maccarone** or **Chuck Ballard**.

During our searching we did locate an opportunity which we thought the club members may find intriguing. There is a private pond/lake in the Ellensburg area which is soliciting partners. The lake is located south and east of the I-90 and I-82 interchange. Rocco has all of the information on the lake and the contact details.

Creel Notes

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Club Aims and Purposes

The purpose of this club shall be:

1. To improve and increase the sport of Fly Fishing in the State of Washington.
2. To promote and work for the betterment of trout streams and lakes.
3. To encourage and advocate the conservation and increase of trout in state waters.
4. To promote a campaign of education against pollution in streams, lakes or Sound waters of the State of Washington.
5. To encourage and assist others — particularly young persons of high school age—to become fly fishers and true conservationists.

On the Fly *By David Ehrich*
January 16, 2007

John Schuitemaker opened his first meeting as president with a brief introduction and a quick call to business due to the nature of the evening — Awards Night. John handed the microphone to **Peter Baird** who gave a brief history of the Empty Creel Award through its evolution from skimpy catches to those gentlemen who have served the club with honor. As per protocol the first order of business was a roll call of previous recipients starting with Walter, who has seen the sun revolve around mother earth 90 times. In attendance, **Gil Nyerges, Walter Walkinshaw, Peter Baird, Don Simonson, Dick Brenning, Chuck Ballard, Doug Shaw, Ron Dion, Greg Crumbaker, and Bill Neal** were honored. Pete's introduction of this year's award winner outlined **Kris Kristoferson's**

extensive service to the club and outreach, including work with youth, Casting for Recovery, among many other efforts.

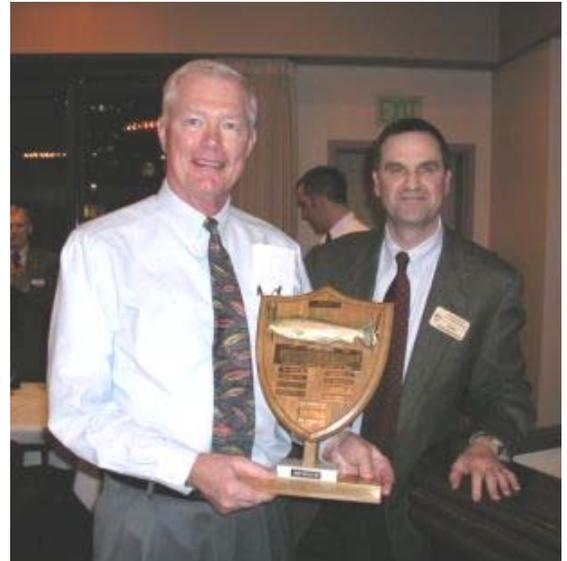


Kris Kristoferson receives the "Empty Creel Award".

Fishing reports were sparse, but included sea runs off Seabeck, mackeral off La Paz, trout at Lone Lake, ice on the guides on the Stilly which earned the skunk for **Greg Crumbaker**, and finally winter and leftover summer run steelheads in Oregon as well as the occasional Coho.

Bill Neal, awards chair, took over the ceremony for the presentation of the Tommy Brayshaw award. Bill reviewed Tommy's angling and artistic career telling tales of Brayshaw's childhood angling in

Ireland, his immigration to British Columbia, wounds in the trenches in WWI, and his eventual move to Hope, Washington where he started his association with the WFFC. He also enjoyed carving trophy fish from wood and fly tying without a vise. In addition, he was an expert shot, scratch golfer and illustrator. Bill noted past recipients and then turned his attention to this year's winner as announced by our club president — **Scott Hagen** who takes on Steelhead with the same vigor as he takes on club projects, political initiatives and classes.



Scott Hagen and his Tommy Brayshaw!

Without any suspense, the Past President award brought our beloved past president, **Bob Birkner** to the podium as



Presidents past and present.

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our current president waxed poetic about the tough job that rests on the shoulders of the club leader.

After the break, Bill introduced the club's most prestigious award, the Letcher Lambuth award for a gentleman of the great Northwest who contributes "through skill of hand and mind" to raise the quality of fly fishing for all. **Les Johnson**, who has known the recipient for many years, gave members a brief background of Art Lingren, native British Columbian. Art served in the metropolitan area in public infrastructure. As a long time member of several local clubs, Art has never ventured far from the best fishing areas, most challenging Canadian waters and the fly table.

Art's flies have been honored as Canadian stamps. His pen has recorded the history of flies, fly fishing and great waters of the great Northwest, in publications too numerous to mention. Art's toast acknowledged the great recipients he joins in the Hall of Fame.

Bill then moved on to the Gold Button awards for largest fish in any given category caught by a member on public waters in Washington. The lone winner was the ever talented **Don Schroder** for a 31" Lahontan trout on lake Lenore caught on a #14 mayfly emerger.



Art Lingren (left) with his Letcher Lambuth Award.



Don Schroder gets his Gold Button

From the sublime to the ridiculous, Bill offered last year's Half-ass award recipient **Dyche Kinder** to bestow the honor on our next recipient. Dyche began the award with an 11 page rendering in blank verse. But as the Ghiley cut in, Dyche moved to the issue and named **Bill Levy** as this years recipient. Bill accepted with great honor.



Dyche Kinder and Bill Levy with his 'Half-assed Award'

Bill Neal finally regained the mic and honored **Steve Sunich** with a special award. Steve's parrying with the IRS saved the club from more taxing problems and helped keep our prisons less crowded.

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Steve (Superman) Sunich



Greg Crumbaker w/ Skunk Award

Club business followed with a vote on the club's support of an aerator for big Twin Lake. Passed without opposition.

Pat, asked prospective member Jim Higgins to leave the room so that members could lavish praise on his candidacy. Voting commenced without further delay reaching positive conclusion. Don Barton then took the honor of membership by getting the usual sermon related to service.

Regular business continued with a few announcements, a letter of appreciation from Reel Recovery and **Peter Baird's** acknowledgement of those members who have recovered from health complications and lost loved ones.

"Classic Fly Fishing Single Malt Whiskies, selected by The Scotch Guy, Stuart MacLean Ramsay"

Stuart MacLean Ramsay, trademarked as The Scotch Guy, was born and raised in the Highlands of Scotland. Writer, editor and public speaker, Ramsay is a leading expert on spirits, cocktails and craft beer. He was the American correspondent and contributing editor for Britain's Whisky Magazine and is currently contributing editor for SantÃ© Magazine and The Malt Advocate in the United States.

Ramsay has been a newspaper columnist for the Portland Oregonian newspaper, and writes about cocktails and spirits for the paper's A&E magazine. His manuscript on the history of Scotch whisky was the subject of a bidding war between five leading New York publishing houses.

His most recent writing project has been contributing editor for The Definitive World Guide to Whisky, published by Britain's Dorling Kindersley. Ramsay wrote the American and Canadian chapters for this award-winning book, published in 2005. The book's awards include a prestigious James Beard Award for best spirits & wine publication; "Best Spirits Book" in the Gourmand World Cookbook Awards, France; "Best Drink Guide Book" in the World Food Media Awards, in Adelaide, Australia; and the Silver Medal in the "World's Best Drink Book" category at the Gourmet Voice Media Awards in Cannes, France.

Ramsay is a Life Member of the prestigious Keepers of the Quaich Society, an international organization that honors those who have contributed greatly to the success and nobility of Scotch whisky and Scotland. Ramsay has also been inducted into the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels for his writing about Kentucky Bourbon and Kentucky. He's been a judge at Whisky Magazine's Best of the Best Whisky Awards, held annually in Bardstown, Kentucky. In 2003, Ramsay was a nominee for the best drink journalist in the World Food Media Awards. He has a bagpipe tune, "Stuart McAllen Ramsay," named after him for his work with young people and Celtic music.



Rio Grande, Argentina

Jim McRoberts and I departed SeaTac about noon on Thursday, January 18th. After an uneventful flight to Buenos Aires, we had a couple of great meals and went to bed pretty early. The next morning, we were taken by van to the domestic airport, boarded our MD82, and four plus hours later landed in Ushuaia. Ushuaia is the southernmost city in the world and is the jumping off point for cruise ships headed to Antarctica. We were met at the airport by our guides and taken on a 3+ hour drive to the lodge, crossing the Andes Mountains and seeing some spectacular scenery along the way. Unlike last year, the river was low and clear, less than half the size of what we encountered in 2006. Just like last year, the accommodations, cuisine, fishing and guides were wonderful.

The sea run browns (called sea trout by the Brits) ran from four to nineteen pounds, with the majority of them being between seven and fourteen pounds.



Scott with a 17 1/2# chromer!

Most of them were fresh from the ocean chromers and many liked to jump. The fishing was split into two sessions, first from 8:00AM to noon and then from 6:15PM to 10:15 PM. On our best day, Jim and I landed sixteen fish in the morning session and several more in the evening. On the other hand, we each had a couple of one fish days. It averaged out to somewhere between four and five fish a day with one or two being into double digits.



Jim McRoberts with the 19 pounder!

The flies and lines used this year were very different from 2006. Most of the flies we used were fairly sparse size 6 or even 8 and 90% of the time we used an intermediate line. We fished about twenty-five miles of river and most of the fish were caught in the lower beats. Most of the week, we had an East wind, which is fairly unusual, and tends to put the bite off a bit. Friday, the last day, the wind switched to the West and we had a great evening, with my last two fish being back to back fourteen pound chrome bright hens.

The trip back is the hardest part. Jim figured that from the time we departed the lodge Saturday morning to when we landed at SeaTac was thirty-two hours.

Scott Hagen



The flies that worked for Jim and Scott in Argentina

A close-up of Steve Sunich's Superman award.



The fly patterns Scott and Jim used are shown on the club web site edition of the Creel Notes. Editor.

Christmas Island, January 9-16

By Steve Raymond

This was my third trip to Christmas Island and Randy's first, but he took to bonefishing as if he had been doing it all his life. Unfortunately, we had bad weather five of our six fishing days--heavy cloud cover, frequent rain squalls, and the worst winds I've seen at Christmas Island. All that made it very difficult to see bonefish, and of course you can't catch them if you can't see them.

Randy said he was only able to see the large ones, and perhaps that's why he caught more big bonefish than the rest of our foursome, landing five or six fish in the 5- to 8- or 9-pound class. I got only two of that size and our fishing companions, Dave and Chris Draheim, got even fewer--although Chris was spooled by a big bone, only the second time I've ever seen that happen.

Randy and I were also lucky to have an experienced guide, Neemia, who had an almost uncanny ability to see bonefish under even the worst conditions. With his help our catch totals were much higher than they would have been otherwise. Neemia was something of a shameless self-promoter, but we were willing to put up with that in exchange for his fish-seeing expertise.

We also caught a few small trevally, although I hooked two powerful fish I never saw that may have been large trevally. One broke me in the coral and the other straightened the hook.

It was a very intense week. We fished seven or eight hours a day and were pretty

thoroughly exhausted by the time we returned to the Captain Cook Hotel. The most successful fly pattern was a Crazy Charlie style tied VERY sparsely with a short, thin orange body (no overwrap), gold bead-chain eyes, a few strands of Krystal Flash, and a red head. A similarly sparse yellow pattern also scored on a few flats.

The Captain Cook, for those who have been there before, is perhaps a little more corroded than it used to be but otherwise little changed. However, the staff seems a bit more service-oriented and both the water and power stayed on the whole time we were there and everything generally worked as it should. The toilet paper was a definite improvement; they no longer have Chinese Communist T.P. full of wood chips. Also you can now get Australian or Japanese bottled water in quantity, so you don't have to drink the sometimes risky hotel water.

Besides the Captain Cook there are now at least two other operations offering accommodations and guide service on Christmas Island. One result is that many of the flats are being overfished. The Captain Cook guides often ignore the assignments made by the head guide and go wherever they wish, and that means inevitable conflicts with anglers from the other operations. We were told by other fishermen that we were the third people to fish one flat the same day, and that's a definite no-no in bonefishing. The increased pressure also has made the bonefish much spookier than they used to be, and more difficult to catch.

So the honeymoon is definitely over at Christmas Island, but it's still a place well worth visiting. Would I go back? Those long fishing days are tough on an old guy like me, but, hell yes, I would.



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Stamp
here

Feb., 2007

Meeting Announcement



Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at The College Club, 505 Madison St.

The Wet Fly hour begins at 5:30 PM and dinner is served at 6:45 PM

"Classic Fly Fishing Single Malt Whiskies, selected by The Scotch Guy, Stuart MacLean Ramsay" This should be a very interesting presentation. Mr. Ramsey is a dynamic speaker and very entertaining. The Wet Fly period may take on a very tasty aspect.