



SOUTHERN FISHERMENS ASSOC. INC.

## NEWSLETTER – December 2000

### **JOURNALIST VISIT RESOUNDING SUCCESS**

The ongoing good work of the dedicated fishers in the Lakes and Coorong Fishery keeps on impressing those that make the effort to come and check us out. The recent tour of journalists from 8 countries was no exception.

Apart from a minor incident that saw the bus stuck on the Narrung ferry, the rest of the day went off without a hitch. We are fortunate that our diverse fishery can be seen within a compact area so all aspects of the fishing operations could be seen and discussed.

Glen Hill, Rod Coombs (Riverland) and Bryan Pierce (SARDI) were aboard the bus to give an informative commentary and answer questions.

They met Garry out at Pelican Pt. where the 28 journalists, their partners and families could see fish being picked out and admire the beautiful Coorong.

The subject that was of most interest however was our Environmental Management Plan and the fishery's associated activities including our goal of Marine Stewardship Certification.

They were also impressed by the community spirit of the lunch that reinforced our position as a community-based fishery with support from our local government.

Invited guests included Heather Moore (Chairperson) and Bill Paterson (CEO) from Coorong District Council and June Gill (President WIN) who brought along several other WIN members from Adelaide and the Riverland.

Heather Moore gave an address that was very complimentary of our industry. In it she indicated that council recognises the value that the industry contributes to the local community and to the environment in which we work.

The ladies who prepared the impressive lunch and set up the photographic display at the Bowling Club had everything under control while waiting for the coach and the guys to arrive.

Tour manager Kees (pronounced Kays) Van Haasteren, from AgTour Aust, was very complimentary on the professionalism of the day. He originally assumed that we did this type of thing regularly. A letter that he sent us soon after the event is attached to this newsletter.

We learned a few things from the day that we will file away for planning future events of this type. What we also learned was that there is a potential marketing opportunity for conducting tours of the fishery which could be done by SFA.

Thanks to the fishers and their families who generously donated fish and their time to showcase our fishery and it's products.

**🎁 The Executive of the Southern Fishermen's Association wishes all of it's members and readers of the Newsletter an environmentally sustainable Christmas and an economically sustainable New Year. 🎁**

**Wild Fisheries With A Future**

**Established**

- **Journalists Visit**
- **President's Piece**
- **Generous Fishers**
- **Display at Cheese Factory**
- **Xmas Party**
- **Cocklefest**
- **Good Food Program**
- **Membership Update**
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Award to Fishery**
- **Stop Press!!**

## President's Piece

By Garry Hera-Singh

Commercial fisher bashing by a sectorial self interest group is nothing new but there has been a recent spate of stories in the local and state media which needs to be addressed.

Mulloway, Snapper and Salmon resource allocation issues are now appearing with monotonous regularity. A recent example was seen in the Sunday Mail 19/11/00, Fishing: by John Huie.

The lack of a formal process to deal with resource allocation issues and many other issues between commercial and recreational sectors begs the question - *"Why is there not a 'truly independent' panel/group that looks at all the social, economic and biological parameters before deciding a 'fair and equitable' slice of the fish pie?"*

## Fishermen Dig Deep

The Meningie Community conducted a fundraising weekend for the local Coltman Family. Denise was recently diagnosed with Breast Cancer and has since undergone surgery and chemotherapy. To assist the family with travel expenses several events were held to raise funds.

Simon and Denise have both worked in the fishing industry and are heavily involved in community activities. Denise was a member of the St. John Ambulance Brigade and Simon is a volunteer with the CFS.

A member of the Lake Albert Golf Club where Simon works asked Jim Fisher to contact the local fishing families, who dug deep and contributed a total of \$720.

It is good to see that in tough times, the fishing community shows their compassion and generosity.

Thankyou to all those who contributed and thanks to Jim for his time and efforts going around with a card, collecting signatures and the donations from the well-wishers.

The current adversarial approach by the recreational sector with a "backdoor" political approach does absolutely nothing to improve relationships between our two sectors.

Fisheries Management Committees (FMC's) work on a limited basis, focussing on sustainability and compliance issues. The increasing resource allocation issues are more vociferous as each season passes with no impending solutions by government.

The do nothing option by government is certainly the cheapest short term option, however the quicker the allocation issues are resolved, then the sooner society starts to tackle the real problems with fish stocks - **DEGRADATION OF HABITAT!!!!!!**



## Xmas Party

A Christmas party is once again being held at the home of Jim and Claudia Fisher, Warrengie Drive, Meningie, on Friday 15th December.

The cost is \$20 per family and will include meat and treats for the children. All fishers, workers and their families are welcome. BYO chairs drinks and nibbles. Each family will supply a salad or sweet. (costs for smaller or larger families may vary).

Anyone who has not been contacted personally by Jim can ring him on 85751624 to confirm attendance and payment.

**SEE YOU THERE!**

## Women's Industry Network Seafood Community News – Coorong Good Food Program

Funding of \$67,000 from Health Promotion SA will promote nutrition in the Coorong District Council area. The CDC submitted the proposal in conjunction with the Women's and Children's hospital and local W&C Hospital Auxiliaries in the area.

A project officer will work at a community level in partnership with local organisations and people to contribute to the health of women, children and their families. The project is anticipated to run for 2 years

A delegate from the Women's Industry Network, representing the Fishing Industry, has been invited to sit on the steering committee. Expressions of interest are invited for this position.

### MEMBERSHIP

Current Financial Members for the 2000/01 financial year are listed below.

#### Full Financial Member

W. A. SELBY	A. PHILLIPS
S. J. RICHARDS	D. HERA-SINGH
T. J. AYRES	G. KESSIGIAN
I. PRZIBILLA	C. PRZIBILLA
M. ELPHICK	RON AYRES
G.D. HILL	O.D. ALLEN
R.S.J. AYRES	D. HOAD
T. HOAD	M. HOAD
G.I. HERA-SINGH	JIM FISHER
H. JONES	

#### Affiliate member

S GIBBS – MENINGIE MARINE SUPPLIES

Any fisher who wishes to pay their membership can do so by sending back the form on the last newsletter or send a cheque for \$100 to Box 113, MENINGIE 5264.

Other interested people can contact the Treasurer on 08 85751489 for details and application forms.

Please indicate your interest to Tracy Hill by 31st December. It is anticipated that Steering committee meetings will be held quarterly and sub-committees or working groups may be formed for specific projects. Tracy will attend the inaugural Steering Committee meeting on 13th December due to the short notice.

This is the first community-based program of it's kind in Australia to partner with a Hospital Auxiliary network. There will be representatives from local govt., health agencies, local indigenous groups, schools and food related industries. This sort of program is an ideal avenue for WIN to establish itself in the



### RECENT PUBLICITY

A story about the Lakes & Coorong Fishery. It highlighted the Environmental Management Plan and the need for a better River Flow management strategy incorporating input from industry. It made many positive points about our industry.

Interviews included Bryan Pierce, Henry Jones and Garry Hera-Singh. A video will be made available at the xmas party for anyone interested in viewing it.

Did everyone get a chance to see the article in the Food and Wine Section of the Advertiser on Wednesday 1st November?

It featured interviews with Shane & Joanne Richards and also Eddie Black highlighting our local Coorong Mullet.

The article was very good and is a sample of the types of publicity we can expect if we started to actively promote the area and the fishery.

## Cheese Factory Display

A number of fishers and other interested people are assisting Ray Ashenden with the display at the Meningie Cheese Factory Museum and Restaurant. They are collecting and collating items of historical interest depicting the local fishing industry, to include in the museum.

The official opening will take place on 1st January 2001. It will be well worth a look and from all reports the restaurant puts on a good spread too!



The guests really appreciated some of our favourite fish dishes at the journalist's seafood smorgasbord.

## Disturbing News

Every now and then e-mails come through from SAFIC and other sources that should give us food for thought.

One such brief message showed a photograph of a commercial fisherman's boat containing a blackened mass of burnt nets and gear. The same fisher had the wheel nuts of his 4WD loosened. (potential murder).

The NSW inshore fisheries are currently being "reformed" resulting in commercial closures and reallocation to the "recreational industry".

The NSW state government is rewarding such acts of vandalism by allocating these fisheries to the "alleged" perpetrators.

## Cocklefest

The Goolwa Cocklefest is being held again next year on 14th January.

The organisers want us involved again. The value from being part of community events such as these, especially in such a sensitive area to commercial food fishing, cannot be measured tangibly. But support from local councils such as Alexandrina Council can be directly attributed to being part of the Cocklefest.

Product will again be sourced from fishers and the Cocklefest committee has assured SFA that the problems of last year will not be repeated.

## Third Environmental Award

The SFA can add another trophy to the mantle-piece as the winner of the inaugural "Fishing for the Future" Environmental Award.

The competition included entries from most of the sectors in the South Australian Fishing Industry including Rock Lobster, Prawn, Abalone, Marine Scale Net fishers and Blue Crab.

The entrants were asked to address a range of criteria including sustainable fishing methodology, monitoring techniques, biodiversity conservation, active habitat protection and minimisation of waste and pollution.

The SFA has been described as an inspirational fishery showing innovative activities such as creating an Environmental Management Plan for the fishery and environment and other key initiatives. Judges were almost unanimous in their selection of the SFA as the winner.

The prize of a fully paid trip to the Third World Fisheries Congress in Beijing, China valued at \$3000 and was given to Bryan Pierce. Due to his hard work towards the economic and environmental sustainability of this fishery as well as his valuable expertise, he was considered the best choice for this trip.

Brian presented 2 papers at the Congress, as well as getting in the odd bit of sightseeing. He was accompanied on the trip by Rod Coombs. (see article in Let's Fish)

## STOP PRESS!!! – SFA DEPLORES THE ACTIONS OF LAWBREAKERS

It has been brought to the attention of the executive of the SFA that a number of fishers have been flouting the law by harvesting undersized cockles and carrying out other undesirable activities.

It appears that these offenders are not members of the SFA.

Should there be any SFA members then, IF CONVICTED of an offence under the Act, they are jeopardising their membership under clause 8.1 (b), (d),(e) & (f) of the Constitution and Rules.

**The SFA position on law breakers is clear.**

Under Objects and Purposes in The Constitution and Rules (September 2000) there is clause 3.1.10 “To promote awareness of current and new legislative requirements”, & clause 3.1.5 “To ensure adherence to the South Australian Lakes and Coorong Code of Practice.”

Although the Code of Practice is voluntary it states clearly in the, “The Southern Fishermen’s Association will not endorse actions outside of the Code of Practice unless strong evidence is provided to show that such actions were necessary”

All fishers should have a copy of the Environmental Management Plan 98/99, which includes the South Australian Lakes and Coorong Code of Practice. If you find that you do not, contact Garry.

However, the SFA has no legal framework to be able to hold fishers liable for their actions. **The only mechanism that can do that is the Compliance and Courts system.**

The SFA strongly supports compliance using the powers at their disposal to enforce the law and prosecute those who blatantly flout the regulations.

We pay for compliance to do just that as part of our license fees. Because of that, commercial fishing is in the spotlight and activities are reported at all levels of management. It would be catastrophic if the actions of a few caused a loss of income for the majority.

The SFA would also support stronger penalties and larger fines as a further disincentive for those considering breaking the law. This of course also depends on the courts enforcing these penalties. It can be very disheartening for fishers and compliance alike to see people get off because of fancy footwork by a lawyer.

Maybe if one or two fishers lose their licenses, it will deter any others who may have considered doing the wrong thing.

The SFA also strongly urges anyone who observes or suspects illegal activities, no matter who it is, to report it to Fishwatch on 1800 065 522.

With better information, compliance will be better able to focus their surveillance and investigations in those areas, and therefore be more effective.

By doing nothing, you are in effect supporting the actions of these people. In addition there are those groups and individuals who are just waiting for any excuse to severely restrict our fishing or closed down the fishery completely.

**REMEMBER IT IS YOUR LIVELIHOOD  
AND YOUR INVESTMENT THAT IS AT  
STAKE.**

**NEXT ISSUE MARCH 2001  
Stories and Letters due by 28/2/01**