



# Mar 2023 Issue #6

Welcome to “On the Mend”, the official newsletter of Mending Casts Inc, a not-for-profit incorporated organisation that runs free fly-fishing retreats for people with cancer.

This bi-annual circular is distributed to all our members, volunteers and retreat participants as a way to keep everyone involved with the organisation informed of our activities and programs

# On The Mend



The official newsletter of Mending Casts Inc

[www.mendingcasts.org](http://www.mendingcasts.org)



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**27-29 Mar 2023**

### **Casting for Recovery Victoria**

Retreat for women with breast cancer  
@ Marysville, Victoria

**April 2023**

### **Kids Come Try Day**

Assisting a NSFFC Event  
@ Yarrambat, Victoria

**8-10 May 2023**

### **Reel Recovery Australia**

Retreat for men with cancer  
@ Ballarat, Victoria

**26<sup>th</sup> Aug 2023**

### **Trivia Night & Silent Auction**

Our annual major fund-Raiser  
Eltham Bowling Club @ 7pm

*RR Buddy David Dodd shows participants the ropes*

## MEMBER PROFILE – BOB YOUNG

Bob has been a fly fisher since the mid 1980's and as part of his journey he became a Fly Fishers International (FFI) Master Casting Instructor. This role has seen him teach many people the art of fly casting over the years and he is an ideal choice to be a casting instructor at the Mending Casts retreats for both Casting for Recovery and Reel Recovery. His unassuming and patient nature puts people at ease and makes for a positive experience for the participants' introduction to fly casting.

He has followed the progress of the organisation over the last five years through my involvement since its inception and it was inevitable that he would join us. Bob has been an active member of the Mending Casts Committee for the last two years, is currently Vice President and is a valued member of the Executive. In his two years of direct involvement with the group, Bob has had the chance to see the positive results that Mending Casts has achieved in providing respite for men and women dealing with cancer. Through his involvement with the FFI casting programs he is able to spread this message to a large number of people and is always happy to talk about Mending Casts.



Bob with "Bert" the stunt fish



Bob instructing a Casting for Recovery participant at a Ballarat retreat

Away from fly fishing and his casting commitments, Bob enjoys life as a father of two, Narelle and Stuart (exceptional fly fisher and fly tier) and grandfather of four wonderful grandkids aged between eighteen and twenty-three. Our youngest grandson aged eighteen is the third generation of Young males to take up fly fishing. Since his retirement Bob has become an expert with the vacuum cleaner and is in full charge of the dishwasher. Bob is ranked second only to John Billing at telling the worst dad jokes and loves a bit of karaoke with the Mending Casts boombox even though he's totally tone deaf. Beware of North to Alaska!

Val Young.



Bob is an FFI Certified Master Casting Instructor and is responsible for delivering the Casting Instruction programs at our retreats.

## A BUDDY ON A JOURNEY – A BUDDY’S PERSPECTIVE

I started my fly-fishing journey in the early seventies, a time when information was not that easy to access. I recall that I purchased a book by Lance Wedlick and the struggle began. My first fish on a fly was in the Jamieson River on a brown seal-fur nymph with a gold rib tied from that book. To be honest the fish hooked itself. It was a milestone and I was hooked.

I was fortunate to have a gap year in 1991 when I accompanied my wife to Boston. Lorraine was a visiting practitioner at the Harvard School of Education. My days were filled visiting fly shops (Orvis especially) and catching up on some fly-tying skills through a course offered by the Cambridge Centre for Adult Education. I met some like-minded anglers who were always welcoming and shared their knowledge.

I heard that Robert Redford was making a film based on the 1976 semi-autobiographical novella “*A River Runs Through It*” by Norman Maclean. I purchased a copy from the Co-op in Harvard Square. From its first magnificent sentence, “*In our family, there was no clear line between religion and fly fishing*”, to the last, “*I am haunted by waters*”, the book helped develop my understanding of the connection that fly fishing provided with others and with the environment. Thus, began my journey to explore the world and the connections it provided.



John (R) with Ballarat participant Sudhir



John showing Casting tips to participant Sudhir

When I became aware of Reel Recovery Australia I was impressed by the opportunity it offered participants and those who needed support and even distraction from their own situation. On the river all are equal and the fish judge no-one. I thought of the pleasure and relaxation fly fishing provided to me so when I was asked to become involved in Reel Recovery and to connect the program with the Bairnsdale Fly Fishing Club, I was eager to participate.

A buddy system requires the fostering of social bonds aimed at creating an atmosphere of trust and on the river bank, whilst teaching someone to fly fish, all daily problems disappear. Yes, when I started as a buddy I did not know what to expect but I soon became aware that the task was the means of developing trust and sharing stories. Listening was a priority and my time as a buddy became a rich learning experience for me. It was a time where men who were often in very difficult places in their lives found something that helped them on the journey.

The Reel Recovery retreat program is well planned and excellent support for all involved. In both the retreats I have been involved with, the best support and camaraderie prevailed. Being a buddy has enriched my fly fishing and life journey.

I would urge other fly-fishing enthusiasts to take up this opportunity if it arises.

John Scott

Bairnsdale Fly Fishers

Reel Recovery Buddy – Ballarat Nov 2022

## ULTIMATE FISHING EXPO – Feb 17-18 2023 Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre

Mending Casts had a great weekend at the Ultimate Fishing Expo at the Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre on February 17 – 18. Many thanks to Rick and Jo Dobson from the Aussie Angler for allowing us to have a presence on their stand. A lot of new contacts were made, information brochures taken and considerably more people now know about and understand Mending Casts' cancer retreat programs.

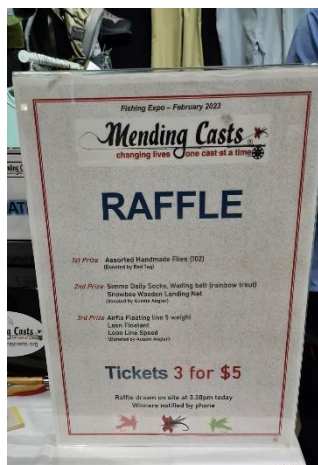
A raffle was held on each of the days with lots of happy winners. In total about \$830 was raised which will be directed to funding participants for future retreats. Mending Casts is very grateful to Aussie Angler and Red Tag Fly Fishers Club for donating the raffle prizes.



Our Mending Casts stand @ the Expo



Without the generosity and support of fly-fishing clubs and businesses as well as individuals who donate money or items, our retreats would not be possible, so thank you all.





## FLY CASTING TIPS

- Double hauling is useful for increasing line speed e.g. when going for distance or when casting into the slowing effect of a head wind. It is also useful for sharing the casting effort between the rod hand and the line hand which can help to make loops narrower.
- When double hauling the pull on the line with the line hand should not commence until the rod rotation commences in the latter part of the stroke and should finish as the rod is stopped.
- The length of a haul should be in proportion to the length of line being cast i.e. “short line, short haul”, “longer line, longer haul”.
- Hauls should always be smooth and should be more or less along the shaft of the rod.
- When returning line while double hauling in preparation for the next pull, return your line hand until it is adjacent to the rod hand. However, be careful not to return the line hand too quickly or slack line will result between the stripping guide and the line hand – this will be detrimental to the cast.

*By Bob Young FFI Master Casting Instructor*

## RED TAG PROMOTIONAL DAY

A wonderful day was held at the Red Tag casting pools in Fairfield on the 6th November 2022. Mending Casts was invited to participate by Aussie Angler and Mayfly Tackle who were hosting Jeff Pierce from Scientific Angler (SA). Jeff made a presentation on the SA range of fly-fishing lines and those present had the opportunity to try some Orvis fly rods and many of these lines. The day included a raffle, a longest cast competition (won by James Norney) and a sausage sizzle run by Red Tag. All money raised was donated to Mending Casts to continue its work with retreats for cancer patients. There was a lot of interest shown in Mending Casts’ programs and comments made about what a great thing these are for people dealing with cancer.

There were four prizes in the raffle and a member from Red Tag won 3rd and 4th. He then handed them off to a young boy who was ecstatic. The fly-fishing community has always warmed my heart with its generosity and this was a great example.

*Cherrie Ninness*



*Shelley Olson keeping an eye on our stand*



*Cherrie (L) Andrew (M) and Shelley (R)*

## UPCOMING RETREATS



**MAY 8-9-10  
2023  
BALLARAT**



### REEL RECOVERY:

#### FREE FLY-FISHING RETREATS FOR MEN WITH CANCER

Reel Recovery is a national non-profit program run by Mending Casts Inc that conducts free fly-fishing retreats for men recovering from all forms of cancer. Combining expert fly-fishing instruction with directed "courageous conversations", these retreats offer a unique experience for men with cancer; a time to share their stories, learn a new skill, form friendships and gain renewed hope as they confront the challenges of their recovery.

"This was the best time of my life!  
It's by far the best thing out there for men with cancer."  
Retreat Participant

Retreats are conducted over a two-and-a-half-day period at an accommodation with onsite or nearby fishing access. All meals, lodging and fly-fishing equipment are provided at no cost to the participants. Retreats are led by trained facilitators & expert fly-fishing instructors. A maximum of 12 men are invited to participate, to maintain the quality of the instruction and to create a powerful small-group dynamic.



"I discovered that while fly-fishing, I was in another place. In this place there was no cancer, no pain and no fear."  
Retreat Participant

"This retreat was so much more than fishing; this was a life-changing experience."  
Retreat Participant

### GOALS

- Provide a safe, reflective environment for the participants to discuss their cancer experience with other men who have gone through it too, thereby providing support and information to help them in their recovery.
- Provide introductory fly-fishing instruction that enables the participants to learn a new skill, form a healing connection with nature, and participate in a sport they can continue throughout their recovery and lifetime.
- Provide participants information about cancer-related resources, both in the local community and nationally to facilitate networking and enhanced management of their recovery

*If you would like to be a participant, please contact us.*

Mending Casts Inc email : [admin@mendingcasts.org](mailto:admin@mendingcasts.org) web : [www.mendingcasts.org](http://www.mendingcasts.org)  
FB: <https://www.facebook.com/reelrecoveryaus>



To find out more and apply to participate click [HERE](#)

**THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR FISHMAS AUCTION**

What an amazing response to our annual Fishmas online auction. Of the 22 items offered, all but 2 were sold which meant that when combined with donations, funds raised totalled just under \$3,200. This is a wonderful outcome and every dollar raised will be directed to our Casting for Recovery Victoria or Reel Recovery Australia programs funding the attendance of more people at those cancer retreats.



**12 DAYS OF FISHMAS ONLINE AUCTION 2022**

Supporting Mending Casts Cancer Retreat Programs  
Casting for Recovery Victoria & Reel Recovery Australia



Total raised  
**\$3,145.00**  
Bids: \$2,775.00  
Donations: \$370.00



<p>#01-2022 20 Streamer Flies tied by Stuart Young</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$40</p>	<p>#02-2022 Epic: 690G 6wt Graphene Fly Rod Building Kit</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$250</p>	<p>#03-2022 Wanderer QS Flocked Air Bed with Back Rest</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$179</p>	<p>#04-2022 Adventure Kings Deluxe Single Swag</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$90</p>	<p>#05-2022 Adventure Kings Camper Stretcher Bed</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$100</p>	<p>#06-2022 Two Bamboo Fly Boxes full of various high-quality flies</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$100</p>	<p>#07-2022 A3 Sized Photograph of Tasmania's Julian Lakes</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$30</p>	<p>#08-2022 Orvis FishWear Hip Pack</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$60</p>
<p>#09-2022 Original Trevor Hawkins Trout Carving</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$60</p>	<p>#10-2022 Snowbee Superlight Foam Fly Box filled with 60 flies</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$30</p>	<p>#11-2022 Tin Sheet Painting of a Fly Fisher</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$15</p>	<p>#12-2022 JM Turville "The Venus" 8ft - 2pc 6wt split Duracane Fly rod</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$100</p>	<p>#13-2022 Brown Trout Painting by Rod Booker</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$50</p>	<p>#14-2022 Australian Built Fly Tying Vice</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$100</p>	<p>#15-2022 Voucher for Millbrook Lakes Private Fishery</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$100</p>	<p>#16-2022 Abu Garcia 2000 series Spin Reel</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$45</p>
<p>#17-2022 Signed Special Contributors Edition - Australia's Best Trout Flies</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$200</p>	<p>#18-2022 Inline Ice Fishing Reel</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$50</p>	<p>#19-2022 Stalker 2022 Glide Fishing Vest (Med/Lg)</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$60</p>	<p>#20-2022 A3 Sized Photograph of Tasmania's Western Lakes district</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$50</p>	<p>#21-2022 Trevor Hawkins Original Artwork of a Woolly Bugger for the Flyfisher 2009 Issue No 0</p> <p>Starts in: 6d 09h 01m Starting price: \$50</p>			

We are immensely grateful to everyone who contributed to such a fabulous success, especially the following sponsors and those who donated.

- [#swiftlyfishing](#)
- [#epicflyrods](#)
- [#aussieangler](#)
- [#hurleysflyfishing](#)
- [#trevorhawkinsart](#)
- [#millbrooklakes](#)
- [#GaleyMsGuidedFlyFishing](#)
- [#DavidDodd](#)
- [#StevePsaila](#)
- [#BrianRolf](#)
- [#RodBooker](#)
- [#StuartYoung](#)

## SOME FISHMAS STORIES

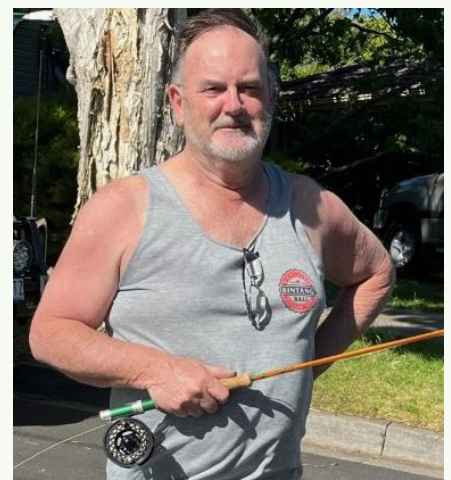
We think that the back stories behind some of the items auctioned and their purchasers are worth sharing with you all. Here are a couple of wonderful examples of “in seeking happiness for others, you will find it in yourself.”

### THE “ORBIT OF VENUS”:



It is strange sometimes how serendipity, fate and karma impact our lives in the most unexpected ways. So it was for Tom White when he saw the J M Turville “Venus” cane rod up for auction on our Fishmas site. Many of you will know Tom through his tireless work with the Australian Trout Foundation but unbeknown to most is that Tom’s family has a personal link to the history behind Turville’s tackle shop i.e. his mother was Jack Turville’s cousin.

Back in the late 50’s when “The Venus” was made, Tom’s auntie worked in the fly rod building room attaching the bindings to their cane creations. It is possible that she laid the wraps on the rod that Tom now has in his possession and which has been kept in immaculate condition. Understandably he is ecstatic that fate played a big part in him securing this family heirloom and we are equally privileged to bring the “orbit of Venus” full circle. Enjoy it Tom!!!



### A SWIFT & EPIC DELIVERY:

We knew when we were contacted by Carl McNeil from New Zealand’s Swift Fly-Fishing Company that something special was brewing. After a brief discussion about the virtues of our retreat programs he generously offered to donate an Epic 690G rod building kit to our Fishmas auction. We were excited at having such a high quality product in our auction but not as much as Craig Stagoll who became the successful bidder when the auction ended. So keen was Craig to get his hands on his prize, the kit was hand-delivered to him the next day by Mending Casts Vice-President Bob Young.

Within a week it was in the hands of local Victorian rod builder Steve Psaila who proceeded to weave his magic and bring the beautifully engineered pieces together into a superbly finished final product. Craig is so impressed with his new 6wt he’s hoping there will be a 5wt version available in this year’s Fishmas Auction. With a rod this good and feedback this positive, we are hoping for one too!





## CATERING for RECOVERY (aka Mending Cakes)

### Quick and Easy Mocha Fruit Cake

This is the easiest fruit cake to make with just 4 ingredients, it stores extremely well for weeks in the fridge but in reality, it will have disappeared in a few days!

#### **Ingredients.**

1. 1kg mixed dried fruit (you can add extra chopped apricots, glacé cherries and preserved ginger, etc.)
2. 2 cups strong black coffee (instant is fine).
3. 150g block of fruit and nut chocolate chopped roughly.
4. 2 cups self-raising flour.

#### **Method.**

- Soak the fruit with the prepared coffee in a large bowl overnight.
- Preheat oven to 160°C (no fan). Coat a 20cm X 20cm tin with cooking spray and line with baking paper.
- Mix together the fruit mixture and chocolate, fold in the flour with a wooden spoon until well combined.
- Place mixture in the prepared tin and bake in the oven for approximately 80 minutes or until cooked.
- Check with a skewer.
- Cool in the tin. Remove cake and store in the fridge in a sealed container.

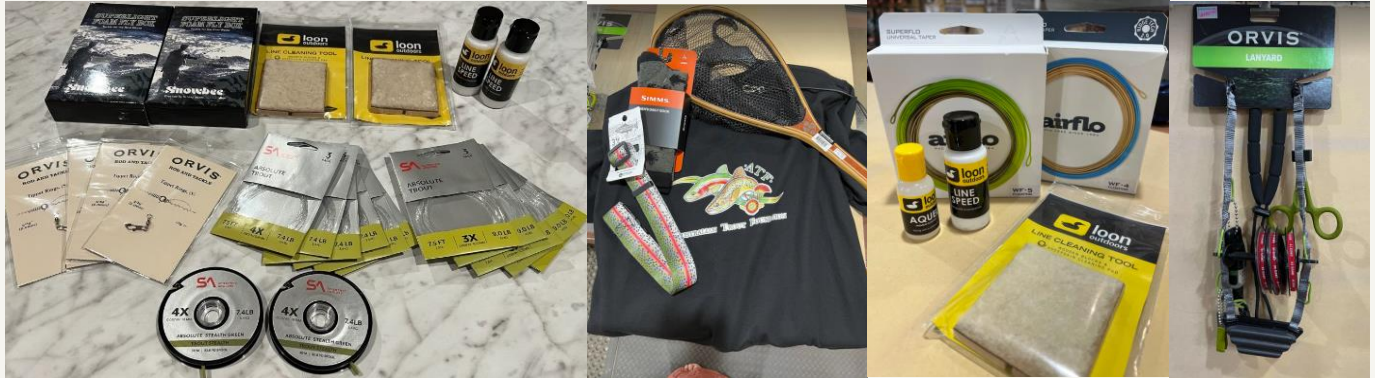


## MENDING DONATIONS

We would like to acknowledge the exceptional contributions made by the following donors and publicly offer our sincere gratitude for their generous support of our programs.

### Aussie Angler

- fly boxes, leaders, tippet, line cleaner for our on-going retreats program.
- prizes for two raffles at the Ultimate Fishing Expo in February 2023.



### Red Tag Fly Fishers Club

Hand-tied flies which were used as prizes for two raffles at the Ultimate Fishing Expo in February



### Twig & Stream Fly-fishing (Ian Mitchell)

12 double-sided fly boxes for use at our March Casting for Recovery retreat.



### Gobbé Wellness Centre (Bendigo Health)

Financial support to fund up to 3 participants at the March Casting for Recovery retreat in Marysville.

### Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA)

VFA merchandise including sunscreen and hand-sanitiser for our retreat participants. Fly boxes, calendars, caps and pens

### Personal Donations:

- David Grisold - 3 fly rods.
- Leff Andropof - 2 fly rods.
- Chris Gray - a pair of waders and a fly vest.

*Thank You*

## VFA HEART STARTERS:



The generosity of others is something that we never take for granted and are regularly amazed by how far and wide it can reach. This was the case in February when the wonderful staff at the Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) donated an Automated Electronic Defibrillator (AED) to Mending Casts thanks to the help of David "Choco" Grisold.



The defibrillator will become a vital piece of emergency equipment at our fly-fishing retreats and fund-raising events, providing additional reassurance to our participants and volunteers.

Fortunately, many of our members are either paramedics, doctors, nurses or fully qualified first-aid officers so there should always be an experienced member on-hand to help should the need to use the AED arise. Whilst we're hoping it is something that is never needed, we are also truly grateful to the Victorian Fisheries Authority for this generous contribution and their ongoing support for our organisation.

<https://vfa.vic.gov.au/>

## BEING WELL & FISHING ON – Participants feedback

The rewards we get when volunteering at our retreats are life changing.

Through both the men's and women's programs we have witnessed first-hand the profound positivity our work has on the participants in so many ways, but particularly in developing social support networks. It is most satisfying to hear that these support networks continue to be maintained and grow outside of Mending Casts and long after the retreat is over.

This remains the case today for a number of participants from our Reel Recovery retreat held at Ballarat in November 2022. It was so heart-warming to hear that four of the guys have formed their own fishing group and have since been fishing on several occasions together around the



Mornington Peninsula. They also use the time to reconnect and talk about their respective progress and ongoing challenges, often referencing the shared experiences and personal connections made at our retreat.

This is the essence of what we do and demonstrates why these programs work. It is immensely gratifying to see the lasting effects on the health and well-being of participants.

*Be Well – Fish On friends!*

## OUR WISH LIST

As a not-for-profit organisation run by volunteers, Mending Casts is always on the lookout for assistance in securing a range of items which are needed for its day-to-day activities. Some of the major items required at the moment are listed below. The majority of funds raised by Mending Casts is directed toward paying for accommodation, meals and other items at retreats. Sponsorship of retreat participants by companies, individuals or other organisations is high on our Wishlist and would enable us to expand our retreat program. Currently (March 2023) the direct cost for one participant to attend a two-and-a-half-day retreat is around \$1200.

- ◆ Sponsor a participant (contact us to find out more).
- ◆ Single-axle trailer for Mending Casts retreat equipment (approx. 2.5m x1.5m with enclosed body).
- ◆ 240V generator for use at retreat fishing activities.
- ◆ Data projector for use at retreats and when making presentations.
- ◆ 15 x new, robust folding chairs for use by retreat participants.
- ◆ New fishing flies for filling boxes for retreat participants and also for fund-raisers such as auctions and raffles. Flies such as nymphs (both weighted and unweighted), Buzzers, Stick Caddis, Woolly Buggers, Royal Wulffs, Humpies, etc. would be most welcome.



Currently all of our funds are utilised for the direct costs of running each retreat and any assistance with the above list would be greatly appreciated. Please email us at [admin@mendingcasts.org](mailto:admin@mendingcasts.org) if you can help.

# OUR BIGGEST WISH



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