

# The Fly Tying Expo

By Ian Cox



Fly tying expo's used to be the done thing. That was back in the distant past when the present crop of old farts were youthful fly fishing tyro's. Well the great circle of life turns and so it is that a new crop of fly fishing tyro's have appeared on the scene.

One of them, Gordon Van Der Spuy, thought it would be a good idea to Hold South Africa's first fly fishing expo. "Not the first, Gordo", I said when he first floated the idea. "Robin Fick and the NFFC did it back in the

80's at Royal National in KZN. Robin has even given me the original advertising material." "Dude", said Gordon. "We don't count ancient history! I am going to do it."

And so he did. The first weekend saw a sizeable contingent of club members, Laurence Davies, Peter Brigg, the Gorlei's and Jay Smit as well as yours truly making the trek to Cape Town along with a bunch of other KZN folk.

Gordon and his team did a fantastic job.

A huge thanks also goes out to [Lourensford](#) for making their beautiful venue available. Much wine was drunk and I must tell you that the [restaurant](#) on the estate serves the most eclectic pizza I have ever eaten. The estate also has some pretty good [fly fishing](#).

The weekend started at the [Cape Piscatorial Society](#) and a presentation by [Alan Hobson](#) on how he designs flies. I will be spending time with him in January so expect an article early next year. The CPS is not a bad place to spend a lot of time. The Western Cape may be thin on trout water when compared to KZN but man has the CPS have they got a library. I thought I had died and gone to heaven.



The festival itself got underway the following day. The Durban Bamboo Rod Builders Guild were going to be there but baled when Andrew Mather thought fishing the final of the Corporate Challenge was more important. The idea of demonstrating our efforts kind of died with him. Just as well because Steve Boshoff was there and his stuff is intimidatingly good. World class in fact.

Shaun Futter was there to hold up the KZN on the craftsmanship side of things. His Trutta nets and fly boxes sold well. Peter Brigg and Jay Smit also held up the KZN escutcheon, providing a counterpoint to the likeable legend that is the great Tom Sutcliffe.

Gordon who, being an actor should not be able to organise his way out of a paper bag did a superlative job. So popular was the event that it will be held again next year in Johannesburg.

For me the great joy was meeting old friends from afar. [Dave Walker](#) and Tony Kietzman from Rhodes were there along with the publicity association's Margie Murray So was guide extraordinaire Fred Steynberg of [Line Casters](#) with whom I had a brief chat. It was wonderful to catch up with [Sharland Urquhart](#) and Chery Heyns and see Craig Thom and Steve Boshoff once again, not to forget Tim Rolston who was in charge of all things casting. I also met Pete Beyers and was very touched to be given an inscribed copy of his book Waaraan ek dink as ek terugdink

(see later)

Another person I met for the first time was sculptor [Chris Bladen](#). I bought a belt off him as well as a pendant for my daughter. Exquisite! What a talent. If I had one the Lotto I would have made a pig of myself. I also had a long chat to painter [Paddy Starling](#) and his wife. Again the urge to spend what I did not have was irresistible.

But one of the highlights was spending time with Young KZN fly fishing guide in training, Trevor Sithole. What a personable young man and how attractive it is to see a person with passion and dreams willing to take life by the horns. But what really endeared me were his remarks after a dead morning on one of the Westerns Cape's better dams. "Home is best" he said.

Indeed Trevor. Indeed!