

The NFFC Gala Dinner

By Tom Sutcliffe

The NFFC Gala evening was undoubtedly the best event of its kind I have ever attended. 220 guests sat down to a sumptuous dinner at the Victoria Club in Pietermaritzburg and were generous in their bidding on the 25 items that were put up for auction. These included hand-crafted fly boxes, landing nets, a bamboo fly rod, artworks and trips to exotic fishing destinations.



The event raised over R230 000, all of which will go to two worthy causes, namely FOSAF and the NFFC's programme to restore the lovely Umgeni River in the Dargle Valley. Prior to the dinner I was hosted on a rather nostalgic visit to Heatherdon and the Old Dam, one of my favourite stillwater places where I fished more than just regularly with good friends for some 25 years and hadn't been back in more than ten years.



The Old Dam with Russell Scorer

We had a full sit down English breakfast in one of the newly built Heatherdon cottages and the talk around the table was heavily laced, as you would imagine, with stories of fishing past and present. My stay with Alison and Anton Smith at their Hilton Safari Lodge gave an entirely new meaning to luxurious comfort and they were both perfect hosts.

I want to extend particular thanks to Andrew Fowler, the Chairperson of the NFFC, and to his committee, for the invitation. It was a great honour. Having to give the after dinner address was a small price to pay for such a memorable visit. I congratulate Roxanne Stegen and her team for the flawless arrangements and, as always, Gordon Van der Spuy was a most entertaining MC.
