

# The language of fishing

Harry, at Cooma

Goodnight Barlow

15 May 2005

Dear Members,

I've just come back from a weekend fishing trip with my brother Patrick and his son. My old Mum is always carrying on, 'Go on, take Patrick fishing, you know how much he'd love to go'. Well Patrick might love to go but we won't be doing it again for a while, I can tell you. But he enjoyed some of it, and his sprog learned a few new words, so I guess it wasn't a total waste of time.

For a start, on the way out to the Lake on Saturday morning we got behind a Toyota 4WD with a sticker on the back that said BUGGER. This vehicle also had a few other accessories on it, like power winches and one of those big red jacks which advertise the fact that 'I'm-stupid-enough-to-get-bogged', and some spare tyres and petrol cans on the roof, just to make it roll over and burn a bit quicker. But I knew this was no 'man on the land', because no one that had ever knew anything about animal husbandry would drive around with the word BUGGER displayed on the tail of their car. However, Kiwis, city types and advertising



*Christopher, after he settled down.*

people seem to find it amusing, so perhaps I've just got no sense of humour.

Anyway, Christopher, my nephew, wanted to know what the word meant and my brother tied himself up in knots and got a little too close to a technical explanation when he mentioned our cousin Rory who never got married, so I had to step in and change the subject, by accusing Patrick of not watching the road and nearly killing us all.

This completely unfounded accusation annoyed him no end but at least the kid thought we were about to have a row and shut up so he wouldn't miss anything.

It started me thinking about the things that you occasionally hear on fishing trips. If you stand around Lake Eucumbene on a frosty night you can hear conversations from miles away, and some of those can be pretty damn interesting.

When I was still at school I was fishing at Frying Pan one Saturday evening when the cadet corp from our school was camping on the opposite side of the lake. All of a sudden, across the water came a blood-curdling scream, followed by a lot of laughing and yelling. At school the following

Monday morning I found out that one of the cadets had admitted to the others that he sometimes had nightmares about eggs, so after he went to sleep they got the dozens of eggs they were meant to eat on the weekend and made a big circle of them out the front of his tent. Then they shook the tent to wake him up, he came out with his torch, and you can guess the rest.

But enough of the halcyon days of my childhood and back to my brother, his sprog and the weekend trip. When we got to the Lake I got

on the wrong side of both of them by picking a big yellow-winger off one of the driving lights and putting it into my mouth. Just to amuse the kid you understand. He didn't believe me and went back to what he was doing, but when he looked at me again I stuck my tongue out so he could see the yellow-winger, and next thing I know he's stuck his head forward, made a couple of quick 'urk, urk' sounds, thrown up on the ground and completely lost the pie we bought him at the Four Mile.

The kid was all embarrassed by perking up his breakfast and my brother got mad at me once the kid stopped spitting enough to tell him what I'd done. My brother swore at me so much that he had to tell the kid not to mention any of that at home. That restored some equilibrium as the kid now knew that we wouldn't tell anyone about him being sick because he could tell his Mum about what we'd done, and he wouldn't tell his Mum about the swearing and the grass-hopper because we could tell her he threw up. In the end, one of the most useful things about language is what it doesn't tell you.

Kind Regards,  
Harry

[End]

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