

# Gone Fishin'

by Mike Gow



When I was about 8 years old, I went fly fishing for the first time. Even then, I realised that the point of going fishing wasn't just about catching a fish.

There is a wonderful sense of peace and tranquillity.

Catching a fish is a bonus. It is satisfying to enjoy a meal that you have caught yourself in a fishery, however when river fishing for wild trout, it's equally satisfying to 'catch and release'. There is certainly an opportunity for bonding and camaraderie with your fishing companions- whether that is a father/son fishing day or a day with friends.



This photo is the first fish my son Edward caught with me (the fish was safely returned to the river).



Glasgow Trades House Fly Fishing Competition 2010. Myself with fellow dentists Phil Friel and David Devine

representing The Incorporation of Barbers at The Lake of Menteith.

It can be relatively inexpensive to set up as a fly fisherman/woman. (Fly fishing has become a very popular activity for females in recent years.) Shakespeare and Daiwa, for example, make some great rods starting at around the £30 mark, and reels starting at around £25. You will need a fishing line (which can either float, sink, or do something in between, and leader- which is the thin, invisible line that makes up the last couple of feet and attaches to the fly). There are many types of flies, and a local fishing supply shop will help you select which ones would be best for where and when you plan to fish. The flies can be wet (sink), dry (float) or there are a variety of others including nymphs and lures. For a while (before I had children) I tied some of my own flies. It is certainly a satisfying feeling catching a fish on a fly that you have made by hand yourself!



If you are a beginner- google search to find out what fishing clubs/societies are in your area. They may have an introduction day. Rod licences for river fishing usually only cost around £30 for a year.

Alternatively, lake/loch fishing or visiting a fishery can be a good introduction to fly fishing (the water on a loch moves less than a river allowing you to hone your casting skills, and there

are fewer overhanging trees, riverbank weeds, rocks etc to lose your flies on!) A well-stocked fishery can also improve your chances of landing a reasonably sized fish!

You can take casting lessons, or even teach yourself via a youtube tutorial! There is a certain skill to casting in fly fishing. It can be quite mesmerising to watch the arc of a fly rod and line as it is being cast. Again, there is a very satisfying feeling when you land your fly exactly on the spot that you have recently seen a fish rise (a small splash when the fish takes a fly from the surface of the water).



A number of years ago, for my birthday, I treated myself to the 'Rolls Royce' of fishing gear. I bought a Hardy Jet Rod and reel. The rod was actually an eBay purchase- for £70 and is a 1970s classic. The reel was about £150 new and both are beautifully crafted and a pleasure to use.

In 2011 my wife's friend invited us to her wedding in Denver, Colorado.

When travelling I will often make contact with a local dentist and meet them for a coffee and a chat. It is a great way to get new ideas for your practice. I tend to try to find someone with a shared interest in anxiety management dentistry or digital dentistry.



On this trip, after a quick 'Google' search, I contacted Dr Tom Bonbright at Lowry Dental in Denver as he was a fellow Cerec user.

We met at his office and while we were chatting, Tom asked what plans I had for my time in Denver. I explained that I may have some free time due to my wife attending dress fittings etc for the wedding and that I might try to find

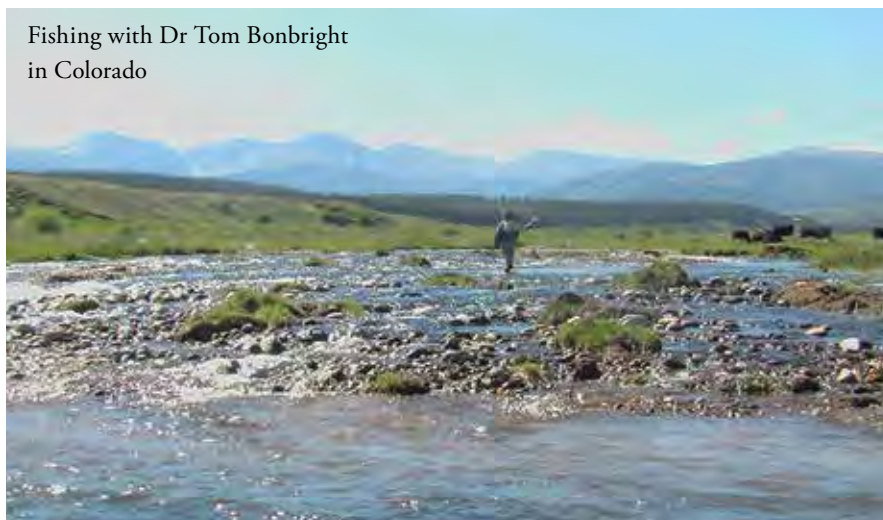
a way to go fishing. It turned out that Tom was a keen fly fisherman and the following day was, in fact, planning a day trip fishing north of Denver with a dentist friend, and he invited me along. Of course, I said yes! We drove for miles through the outstanding scenery of the Colorado Rockies and spent the day fishing on a stretch of water where President Eisenhower used to fish.

So now my rod is assembled at all times in the basement, and I grab 10 minutes on the river here and there.

Even 10 minutes standing by the river is therapeutic. Spotting a kingfisher darting past is something I get to enjoy on a fairly regular basis. No matter how often I see one, that moment still feels special!

Fishing truly isn't just about catching fish although it is a bonus when it

Fishing with Dr Tom Bonbright in Colorado



With little spare time, it is hard to pursue a hobby like fishing which involves time away from the family, especially with many other commitments.

So several years ago, when house hunting, we came across a house with a river in the garden- I was sold on it before even seeing inside! As a kid, I lived near a river and it had always been a dream of mine to have a river actually in my garden!

happens! Fishing is a chance to breathe fresh air, to listen to the flow of the water and to be near nature. It is a chance to find clarity and peace in a world that sometimes pretends it's hard to find or doesn't exist. ■

Tight lines,  
Mike

