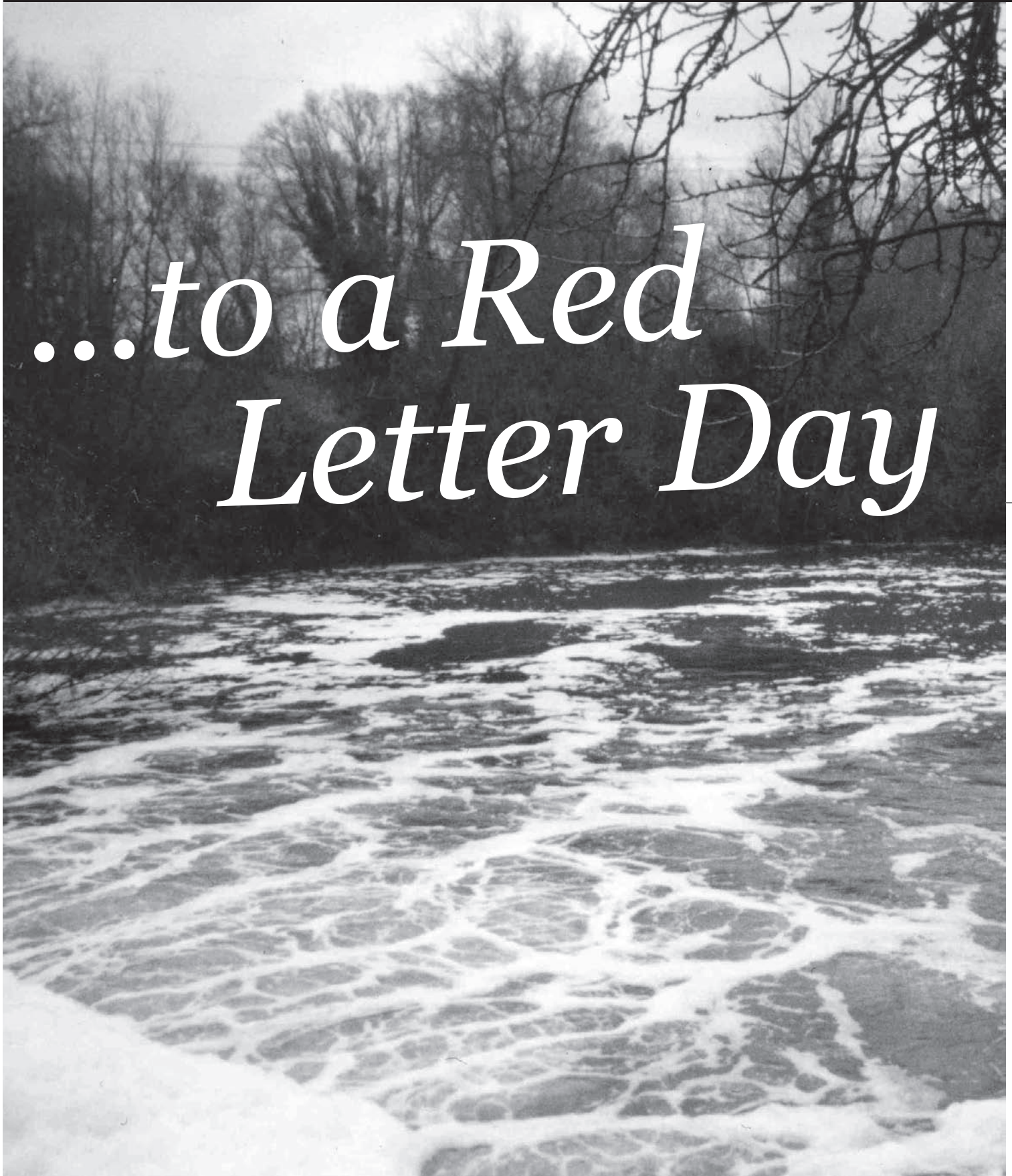




*From Doom & Gloom to a Red Letter Day* By Paul Seacole

# From Doom & Gloom

*...to a Red  
Letter Day*



Page 70 Barbel Fisher





# Gloom

It was the Barbel Society 2006 Conference where I heard the devastating news from Fred Crouch that there was a fish kill at the Kings Weir on the river Lea in Hertfordshire.

**K**ings Weir has been my second home for over 30 years. With the new season fast approaching as part of my usual ritual I would take a walk along the length of the Lea from Kings Weir to the boundary of Fishers Green relief channel fish spotting. On this visit I only spotted one Barbel weighing around 6lbs which looked in some distress. The water was at a

low level and there was no streamer weed to be seen. After seeing the conditions of the river for myself I decided that I would not pursue my love of barbel and chubb fishing on the Lea for some time instead I would turn to carp fishing.

With some success with the carp fishing and with autumn fast approaching I could feel the draw of the River and so in early



*A hard-fighting 12lb 4oz barbel*



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September I started to fish the Lea again. The first few visits proved to be disappointing but I persevered, it was no surprise that you could count the number of fisherman on the river on one hand.

I started to have some success with the chubb which the Lea has a good reputation for. Keeping an eye on the angling press I noticed that there were no entries of fish caught from the river Lea and this had been like that for some time.

It wasn't until mid September that I caught my first barbel of the season from the Lea, it was not a monster but it gave a good fight for its size of 6lb. The good condition of the barbel was comforting to see after the kill in May. I took this as a sign that the river was improving.

In the afternoon of the 25 September my rod pulled round nearly coming off the rest and I hooked into a mint



A mint condition barbel weighing 12lb

condition barbel weighing 12lb.

I was unaware that the fore coming weeks would prove to be the best barbel fishing on the Lea that I have ever experienced. Between September and November I caught 15 double figure barbels. The most memorable day of fishing for me was on 15 October 2006.

After a couple of hours of fishing I hooked a 7lb 2oz chubb, and then at 1.30 p.m I

caught a second one weighing 7lb exactly. At this time I thought that if that was it for the day I would be more than satisfied. I cast again and at 2.15 p.m my rod pulled round I had hooked into a hard fighting barbel weighing 12lb 4oz.

Unbelievably about an hour later I caught another barbel weighing 13lb 8oz equalling my personal best which was caught at the same fishery the previous

season.

I am aware that the Lea has not been fishing its best in recent times, but this account of mine may give some hope to fisherman who may think of turning their backs on the old river for good.

I hope that this letter will encourage specimen hunters to continue to fish what I believe could one day again be one of the premier fisheries.

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