

Stretching and the advantages thereof.

Below are diagrams showing three basic stretches that can be done BEFORE you start hiking. These will loosen up the major muscles of the legs and help to reduce the morning-after blues that may have you shuffling around the office with colleagues asking what exactly you got up to on the weekend. The first, from the left, is a stretch that will help to loosen up the calf muscles. Keep the back foot flat on the floor and lean the torso forward, with both hands placed up against a wall or tree for support. 30 seconds is enough for each leg. Remember that stretching shouldn't be painful—stretch to the point of tension and not beyond. The second exercise will help to loosen up the thigh muscles. Use a belt or towel looped around the ankle and held in one hand. With the torso held straight, pull up gently with the belt until the point of tension is reached and hold it there for 30 seconds. Repeat with the other leg. The last stretch will loosen up the hamstrings. Place one foot on a raised object such as a rock or a chair, make sure the knee is slightly bent and lean forwards with the torso until the point of tension is reached in the back of the leg. Hold for 30 seconds, repeat with the other leg and Voila! ..you've completed the 3-minute stretch and are ready to assail the slopes.



I have two skins; one to lie on and one to cover myself with. What are they?

Answer: the earth and the sky – Masai Proverb.

Design, layout and all artwork by Leon Marais.



FOOTNOTES AND FIXTURES.

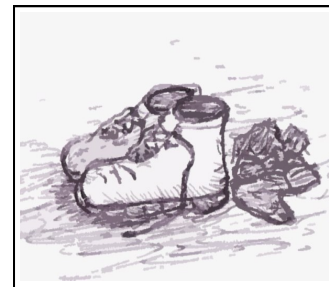
April, May, June 2007

THE EXTRA MILE: CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

I've just been glancing through the new combined Footnotes and Programme and am immediately impressed by its straight forward, practical appearance. One does not have to read between the lines to appreciate that all the contributors enjoyed their hiking experiences and that their contributions appear to be a pleasure and not a duty. I would like to congratulate Maureen McLeman and Leon Marais for the sterling effort they put in to produce the first edition in the new format. We are gearing up to go digital (for those who want it). All in all it is an up-beat publication that reflects the spirit and camaraderie of the club. Keep up the good work!

There are many members who contribute generously to the club and in many different ways. However, since being elected to this position it has been my pleasure to get to know and work with an outstanding group of people. This is none other than your Executive Committee. They arrive promptly for the monthly meeting armed with portfolios, reports, papers and documents of all descriptions. There are always plenty of issues to discuss and sometimes names appear in the action column of the minutes with frightening regularity. Never once have I heard a sharp word or a mutter that "It's too much work, I haven't enough time". The welfare of hikers and promotion of the J.H.C in general is always high on the agenda. The meetings continue till late at night, even though there is work the next day. To you guys I say that is a real pleasure to work with such a good humoured, willing, hard working team. By your example and integrity you continue to teach me.

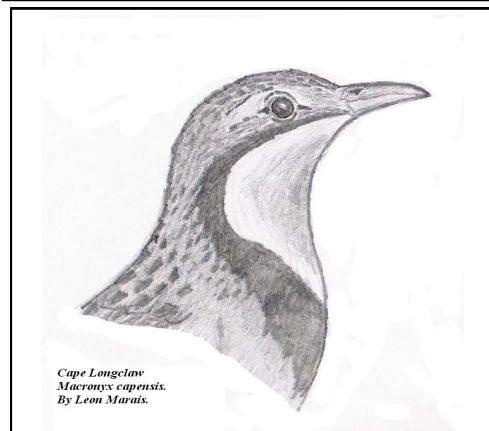
One point of concern is the lack of discipline by some hikers when it comes to booking and paying for hikes. Recently the club suffered financial loss caused by non-payment and last minute cancellation. Please remember that the club pays up front to secure places on a particular hike. *Cont Pg 2...*



Cont. from Pg 1.. If you wish to go please book with the leader, then pay promptly. Advise the leader of proof of payment. Should you have to cancel, you must advise the leader in good time so that a replacement from the waiting list can be found. This is standard business practice — ask any travel agent.

In December it was my privilege to lead a trail along the Eastern Cape coast from East London to a tiny village called Hamburg. It is described in some of the older books on hiking as The Ship Wreck Trail. For some or other reason the trail was discontinued as an official hiking trail. However some members of the JHC have traditionally walked a section of coast (starting at Port Edward five years ago) and wished to continue walking. After some initial set backs contact with some of the local inhabitants of Hamburg was established, then as if by magic things started to fall into place. These wonderful people not only provided us with accommodation but also with transport to the start of the hike. Similarly, almost all the people we encountered during our hike along the beach were friendly, helpful and curious to know where we came from and where we were going. One friendly gent even gave us a lift in his bakkie to a river crossing point; he even offered us beer and cool drinks before ferrying us across the river to continue our hike. Which goes to prove that although there is crime in this country, there are also wonderful, kind-hearted people everywhere and you are most likely to meet them on a hike. Happy hiking!

Robbie Macdonald



Cape Longclaw
Macronyx capensis
By Leon Murais.

The Cape Longclaw is a inhabitant of the coast and eastern interior. It's most easily identified by the brilliant orange throat patch and yellow belly, which contrast strongly with the drab brown back and sides.

The JHC welcomes the following new members: Leon Marais, Clive Slowe, Joshua Richardson and Michael Wilkinson. Welcome back to Chris Warner.

The JHC would like to congratulate the following members, who have all been with the club for 21 years, having joined in 1986: Louise Dibb, Ed Coogan, Tony Ferreira, Shimon Botbol, Richard & Angela MacKay, Bryan Lever and Linda Crawford.

FOOTHOLD PROPERTY NOTES

By Jim Hutchison (Property Administrator)

SLIDING APPROACH GATE: By the time you read this an operation method may well have been put in place by Gert Kruger (farm owner), Piet Myburgh (Harmony Nature Farm owner) and ourselves. We expect no difficulties in this matter and the additional security accruing will be welcomed.

ROUTES TO THE TOP: The proposed route through Harmony Nature Farm as a substitute for the recently lost Jubilee and Marjean routes has unfortunately not transpired. As Footloose Gully is closed, the Ladder Gully is now our only route to the top. Even this is potentially dangerous due to the presence of loose rubble above and below the ladder. From time to time an attempt is made to clear these rocks and stones by dropping them down the gully, but erosion soon brings others to the surface. Leaders in particular should go ahead of the group in order to move dangerous debris. They should also check ropes and the ladder itself for deterioration.

FOOTHOLD PROPERTY TRAILS: Development of these trails through clearing and extending is in progress. The walking they offer is very pleasant and varied, particularly when the main paths to the cliffs are included. Sunday hike leaders could well make use of these paths for the novelty they provide. We intend introducing informative nature appreciation meanders.

BUSH ABULTION FACILITY: This project should be fully operational by the March camp. It will include 2 flush toilets, 2 showers and a wash-up kitchen.

Patrolling Castle Gorge: Want to be a "Friend" of Castle Gorge, or to know more? Then call Andy (072 141 6895 or Norma Johnston (072 437 0888), or 011 467 1545, or e-mail normandy@absamail.co.za . Saturday, Sunday or Weekend (Camping), Summer or Winter, leader or leader's companion...? Don't think about it, do it!



Editor's note:

If ducklings learn to swim very quickly, then so has it been with the media team. Well, judging by the very positive response anyway. Thank you for all the lovely comments, and we will strive to keep up the standards. It's actually quite a bit easier now, using the Jan – March issue as a template, and things have progressed very smoothly indeed. And it seems that a few more people know who I am now! I recently had the pleasure of being on the Mateke Hike, and met some really nice people. I also put a few faces to names, such as that of Ann Kenny, who does the Footnotes Programme. As for the hike, it was great as usual, if rather hot. One thing I noted however was that at least three hikers insisted on hiking in sleeveless, collarless vests — not too wise in scorching 36 degree heat. Anyway, I digress, so here's to the coming change of season (autumn's my favourite), cool breezes, many more pleasant hikes and lots of interest in the club from newcomers. Leon Marais..

Cont. from Pg 21: The last day, on our way to Koppie Alleen where we were to meet our lift, we spent a few hours at a lovely turquoise pool on the beach swimming and snorkelling and managed to see a few tiny fish! The swim was very exhilarating and most enjoyable. We were warned not to swim amongst the waves as the currents were very strong and very unsafe so kept to the clear, sparkling pools.

I am sure that our group concurs with me that this trail is well worth experiencing and recommend that anyone who is reasonably fit should do it.

Media mumblings

Not sure whether some of the male members took advantage of the Viagra hacker, who took over the JHC website late last year!!!! This has now all been sorted out. The following advertisers continue to support the JHC:

Steindlwirt Hotel; Austria; The Coaching Link; Drifters; HomeNet; Mooinooi Camp; Cape Storm; Climbing Kilimanjaro; Muizenberg, house to rent.

Smalls advertising page on JHC web is slowly taking off – 50 words for 6 months for R50. Do you have a small business?...something to sell, services to offer, time share to rent – whatever, then try this page.

JHC web statistics for 2006: Visitors: 33673, Unique visitors: 15925, Pages: 255253, Hits: 997222.

It appears that the combined Footnotes and programme has been favourably accepted and will be continued. Going paperless is still a disputable subject. A survey, on various aspects of the JHC will be conducted and we ask members to take a minute or two to tick against the appropriate box and submit back to the club. Thanks to all who continue to submit articles/photos for the web and Footnotes. Also thanks to the media team for their dedication.

Marion:

webperson@jhbhiking.org.za, Fax: 011 473 3848.

Protect yourself! The Cancer Association of SA warns that we are all at risk for developing skin cancer. Yes, we've heard this before, but it seems not all hear the message. Obviously use high-factor sunscreen (re-applying every few hours), wear a broad-brimmed hat (caps are useless), sunglasses, collared and sleeved shirts (no vests!).

'A good thing sells itself; a bad thing advertises itself for sale'
- Swahili Proverb.

'One does not become great by proclaiming greatness' -
Xhosa Proverb.

WARNING! To all JHC members: Please be aware that **FOOTLOOSE GULLY is in a dangerous condition** after flash floods last year. There are many loose and unstable rocks just waiting to hurtle down on unsuspecting hikers. Consequently this gully will be closed until further notice. Thank you for your understanding. Robbie Macdonald.

Animals along the trail, # 2: The Porcupine, by Leon Marais.

The Cape porcupine (*Hystrix africaeaustralis*) occurs across the length and breadth of South Africa in virtually all habitats. Although the actual animal is seldom seen, signs of its presence are common in many areas where hikers venture. These signs include shallow diggings, gnawings at the base of trees, piles of small cylindrical droppings and of course the discarded quills. They find shelter in rocky crevices and burrows and usually emerge after dusk to begin feeding on plants, bark and roots. They use their chisel-like, constantly-growing incisor teeth in feeding and gnawing. These special incisors are a characteristic of the Order Rodentia; the porcupine is the continent's largest rodent. They live in groups of up to 14, although there will only be one breeding pair per group, with a new litter born in the summer months. Interestingly enough, porcupines engage in daily sexual behaviour, even though the female only conceives once per year. Some common myths surround this prickly critter. The truth is that they can't shoot their quills, which are neither barbed nor poisonous. The quills are purely defensive and the longer filament-like quills are used like feelers – as soon as the attacking animal touches these the porcupine rushes backwards very quickly to stab it with the shorter, sharper quills. So next time you're out on a hike, keep a look out for the comings and goings of this remarkable creature, and bearing in mind what may be going on in that burrow you just walked past, please give them their due privacy. Do not disturb!



The Porcupine.

The Johannesburg Hiking Club

PO. Box 2184, Jukskei Park, 2153.
Phone : 011 462 2993 (10:30 AM—
12:30 PM only), Fax: 086 685 5746,
Email: jhc@mweb.co.za

Visit us on the web!

www.jhbhiking.org.za

Kleinmond Christmas Camp 2006, by Andy Johnston.

The club's 2006 year end Christmas camp was held at Kleinmond in the Western Cape and was under the leadership of Neil Ransome, for the second year running, with back up from Jean and Clive Williams in their luxurious caravan in an adjacent site. It was a lovely camp, enjoyed by all who took part. The weather couldn't have been better with only one seriously windy and rainy night when we had to be on guard knocking in pegs. The Kleinmond campsites are well positioned in fynbos with a back drop mountain range peaking over 600m above sea level and it's only a short walk to a sandy beach and the Bot Rivier lagoon. The club was allocated eight caravan sites and, thanks to Jim Hutchison laying out the area, we were able to accommodate the forty people over the peak period. With electricity on hand, the big tent to provide some shade, and, towards the end, some shelter to those whose tents couldn't stand the wind, we had all that was needed.

Kleinmond is a lovely little town boasting some 24 hikes in the area, a small harbour with a number of restaurants and a beautiful path along the rocky shore line, a sandy beach and lagoon. The local Spar and OK must have done extremely well with the hordes. In the nearby village of Betty's Bay there is a colony of African penguins at Stony Point and the Harold Porter Botanical Gardens, whilst smaller, rivals Kirstenbosch. The carols by candlelight there on the 23rd was an absolutely lovely evening, which many of us attended with our picnics and candles. 30 kms away Hermanus is a very busy resort this time of the year but well worth a visit to walk along the cliffs and visit the old and new harbours. The coastal road from Pringle Bay to Gordons Bay on the way to Cape Town is equal to, if not better than, Chapmans Peak drive for scenery. The enjoyable welcoming cocktail party was organised by Neil and Margit Pehrsson, out from Australia. Mary Mynors, visiting from UK, very generously donated magnificent Stilton and Gouda cheeses which she brought out with her, so a good time was had by all.

As with all camps the numbers changed on a daily basis as people arrived from or went off to various hikes on the Swellendam trail and Wild Coast hikes or visited family and friends. Neil Ransome led an intrepid party of six on the Greyton/McGregor hike. Some of the other hikes that were done were the Palmiet River, Tree Sisters peaks, Kogelberg Nature Reserve, Leopards Gully and Bot Rivier vlei, to mention but a few. Some found time to visit the wine estates in the Hemel en Aarde valley and around Bot Rivier. The buffet dinner on Christmas Eve at the Incredible Fish in Hermanus was organised by Elisabeth Pickard but who, due to a cycling accident, couldn't attend and the responsibility was thus taken over by Norma Johnston. It was a great evening with a fish platter starter ...
Cont. on Pg 5...

WHALE TRAIL : 13 – 18 November 2006: De Hoop Nature Reserve, By Brenda Bowring.

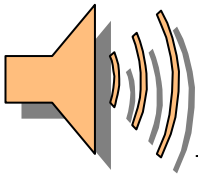
There were 10 of us from the hiking club who went on this trail, namely myself, Siggy and Sylvia Bishop, Kristina Mänd, Najmeer Richards, Thembi Sekgaphane, Tor Meyer, Vivienne McIntosh, Gunnar Serritslevand and Rochelle Simpson. Rochelle made all the arrangements, bookings etc for this trail. Well done, Rochelle. Unfortunately we had to drop off Mathew Friedland at Hermanus as he had contracted 'a stomach bug' and was unable to enjoy the hike with us.

The weather was ideal for hiking, overcast but warm for the first two days becoming overcast and sunny after that. We all came back with very good tans albeit a bit red! The accommodation was spotless, large and very comfortable. The cottages at Noetsie, Hamerkop and Vaalkrans had magnificent views of the sea and of course, the southern right whales! They seemed to know that we were expecting to see them and gave us private shows very close to our cottages. We saw quite a few female whales with their calves and at one stage a mother and her calf appeared from the east and another from the west and met right in front of us at Vaalkrans for a tête-a-tête. We sat watching them for hours, the young calves frolicking around their mums and having great fun. While the one mum went diving for food, the other kept a watchful eye on the youngsters. We saw quite a few groups of Cape Fur Seals and Bottle-nosed Dolphins as well, and of course the wonderful Oyster Catchers with their beautiful red bills and legs. They always went in pairs and if the one flew off without the other, the one left behind would cry for all its might before flying off to join its mate. The first two days were spent in the beautiful Potberg mountain range where fynbos was most profuse and in full bloom. What a sight. The hills were alive with the colours of bright greens, yellows, whites and reds. The *Proteas* were beautiful, the Reeds were gorgeous, the bulbous plants were stunning and the *Ericas* were amazing. I repeat, what a sight! The fluorescent blue-headed lizards were very tame on the outcrops of rocks and posed for their pictures quite nonchalantly.

After two days of challenging hiking, we descended to the coast to explore the pristine south-eastern coastline, one of the largest marine protected areas in Africa. We spent that night in the bay of Noetsie where there were lovely birds and of course, beautiful sea views. The following day we proceeded to our next overnight at Hamerkop. We were very high along that stretch of coastline and were able to see lots of whales in the distance as well as dolphins close by. Our accommodation those last three nights was very close to the sea, which was very deep and that was where we had our best sightings of the whales. Even without our binoculars, we could see them quite clearly. We were very aware of the sea bashing on the rocks at night. In fact, sometimes the sea was louder than the snoring! *Cont on Pg 22...*

Youthful Hike, Castle Gorge, Sunday 14th January, by Hijme de Jong.

What a special day it was for the Youthful Group when 10 new young hiking visitors joined us. Angelo Denicolo took the lead. Throughout the day the young group was guided through the finer points of hiking and taken to breath-taking areas of Castle Gorge. The Youthful Group is the lifeline of our club and therefore it is so encouraging to see master hikers groom the young ones to become the happy and competent hikers of tomorrow.



DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: 30th April 2007. E
-mail all correspondence to Maureen at:
mcleman@telkomsa.net

Vice Chairs' report cont....

The location is on the same Game farm as the Kingdom and Slagthoek base camps, but very different. Peter Burman and myself have planned excellent day hikes, a PARTY!! etc.... At the end of April, we have 5 days available to us – take one day's leave! So we are off to the **Drakensberg** to do a 4-day trail! This will be moderate / strenuous, and the views will be absolutely SPECTACULAR!

The last day on weekend trails are often spoilt by hikers rushing to leave ASAP to get back to JHB early. Remember, you are away hiking for the entire weekend. Be considerate to those sharing a lift with you. You may communicate with Wendy or myself for your bookings. Remember to book early to avoid disappointment! Until next time, Keep Hiking!

Cont. from Pg 5: From Marble Baths it was a pleasant walk back to camp. The scenery was beautiful as we followed the river, with the steep cliffs and winding river bends. Before we got to camp we had to cross the river one last time. This time the river was running fast from the heavy rains which made it tricky to cross, but with a bit of negotiating we all made it across safely. We reached camp at 3 o'clock, after walking over 50 kilometres in 3 days. We were lucky to find a chalet available, after three days in the mountain, a hot bath and clean bed were most welcome!

Marianne Vogetseder recently read the poem about Leonard, the 'old' fridge at Hikers Haven. She has kindly donated the money to buy a new fridge. As she will be tall, slim and obviously 'youthful', the fridge is to be christened 'Lily'. A big thanks to you Marianne from the JHC!

Cont. from Pg 4. ...a selection of soups followed by traditional roast ham, turkey, roast potatoes etc and a variety of sweets. A wonderful meal with excellent service!

Christmas day brought Father Christmas, aka Paul Menge, bearing gifts enjoyed with the traditional mince pies and champagne & orange juice. One of our members, who shall be nameless, even had a visit from the "tooth fairy". In the afternoon yet another of Jean Paetzold's Christmas cake masterpieces was cut and enjoyed by all. On Old Years Eve, with the camp numbers down to fifteen, it was agreed to have a communal fish braai in camp. Jean and Clive brought back a yellowtail and kabeljou from Cape Town and this was prepared by Norma and Jean, preceded by braaied mealies and wonderful deserts by Marja Williams and Catherine Coni. An excellent evening but most of us were in bed by 11 pm! Are we getting old?

This was an extremely pleasant camp. Congratulations to the club organisers!

December Hike in the Drakensberg – Injisuthi Area, by Monika Britz

Hikers: Angelo, Monika, Steven and Greg.

We arrived at Injasuthi on the 26th December and stayed at the camp that night. Early the next day, after checking the weather report, we left the camp and hit the first steep but short climb up Heinnermanspass. This is a very scenic pass, ascending a gorge with lots of pools cascading down and very lush vegetation. We were now on top of the escarpment, with beautiful valleys down below; from here it is about a 20km walk to Keith's Bush - a long slog, going via the bottom of the Sterkhorn and past Blind Man's Corner. We reached our campsite in the late afternoon, and after setting up camp enjoyed lovely clear-sky evening.

The next morning we were up early again, and just looking up at Grey's Pass, knowing we had to climb it, rather wanted to get it over and done with. After two long and tiring hours we were on the top, where the view is magnificent, and felt we could just stay there the whole day, but on with the backpack and off we hiked to the top of Ships Prowl, where we had lunch. From there it was about another six kilometres to the top of Leslie pass; knowing we had lots of time we stopped along the river and had a very well-deserved swim. That evening we found a lovely camp site at the top of Leslie Pass. We had a great evening, sitting next to the stream, cooking our meals – two minute noodles and soya mince – not the most delicious meal, but it fills that empty space in your stomach. Going down Leslie is always quite a challenge, especially the first section as it has lots of loose gravel and rock so it can be very slippery. We crossed the waterfall section halfway down, the next section was very steep and we could sure feel it in the legs. At the bottom of Leslie Pass we followed the river, with lots of boulder hopping, and 4kms later, reached Marble Baths. Here we had a leisurely lunch break. Marble Baths has one of the nicest pools to swim in that I have encountered in my hikes and there's nothing better than to relax there for an hour or so.

Cont. on Pg 20...

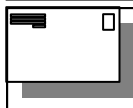
Comments from new members.

On Sunday 14 January, my wife Sue and I went on our first hike with JHC. Although we have never officially belonged to a hiking club, we have done many hikes with friends over the past 14 years and also as non members of another local hiking club. We were asked to submit our comments about JHC and the Castle Gorge hike so here they are:

Bouquets

1. Exceptionally good turn out for a day hike gave a favorable first impression of the club.
2. Peter explained some of the rules of hiking and divided up the group based on general fitness and hiking experience.
3. The necessity of carrying adequate water was adequately stressed.
4. The Medium Minors set off at an easy pace and stopped at regular intervals for water, which allowed the hikers to "smell the roses".
5. Very friendly and informative group of hikers.
6. Nick acted as navigator and took some good natured ribbing about his map reading skills.
7. The sole of Sue's 14 year old hiking boot started to come away from the rest of the boot. Peter whipped out the first aid kit and strapped up the boot which held fine. All in all it was a well organized and controlled hike. Thanks Peter and Nick.

Cont on Pg 7...



Letters received...

Hi everyone, Hope you all had a pleasant and happy Christmas.

As you know, Vietnam, being a communist country, supposedly does not celebrate Christmas. Here in Hanoi, where there is a quick buck to be made, Santas turn out in their thousands, even though most of the people are oblivious as to what Christmas is all about. Anyway, they seem to be happy and contented to sell their food and goods to make a few Dong. This is a city of shop owners, selling everything from pig's trotters to balloons. It's a life of survival, very few getting rich, but at least there is no crime. Halong Bay, in the Gulf of Tonkin, was a welcome break from the hectic city life. 3 days, with a boat trip of 4hrs, all food and a 3 star hotel, trekking included, for US\$ 33. Not bad value. *Continued on Pg 8...*

Swellendam Trail 9 - 15 December 2006, By Neil Ransome

The start of the trail is 1200 km from Johannesburg. To get there one can travel through one of the most scenic routes in the country, especially through Maaiselspoort and Troudows pass which is just outside Barrydale. Swellendam is a very pretty town with lots of restaurants catering for tourists. On the evening prior to the start of our hike we all went out to the Kingfisher restaurant in town. After a pleasant evening we arrived at the "Glenstream" Hut well into the night.

Glenstream Hut to Boskloof Hut, 15km: The walk was quite steep, climbing from base camp to the first hut - 800 metres for the first 6 km. The route was up and down for the first half, and the remainder was uphill all the way to the log hut. There were plenty of streams en route, with dark reddish brown tannin-stained water. **Boskloof Hut to Goedgeloof Hut, 10.2 km:** This walk was interesting as you eventually walk up to the top of the mountain and can see for miles across the valley. To get from the top to the hut requires a bit of traversing along the rocky mountain face. This side of the mountain was hotter than on the first day's hike. **Goedgeloof Hut to Protea Valley Hut, 10km:** This hike was the easiest of all, with few inclines or declines. The slopes of the valleys were covered with *Proteas*, but I think we had just missed their flowering season. The hut had a river running in front and a large pool not too far away. **Protea Hut to Nooigedacht, 13 km:** This stretch was the hardest so far. There were a lot of hills and again it was much hotter on this side of the mountain. The up side was that Nooigedacht Hut had a lot of water running down from the water falls into a spectacular pool. **Nooigedacht to Wolfkloof Hut, 21.3 km:** For the first 5 km it was all uphill, though it eventually leveled out. On arriving at the Wolfkloof Hut one has to scale a 300-400 meter drop to get to the Hut, where a tame Dassie kept us company. **Wolfkloof Hut back to base. 10.2 km:** Towards the end, on the forestry roads, it became difficult to pick up the path, but we made it eventually. At the end of the hike, we all went for lunch at one of the restaurants, the food was good after hiking for 6 days!

Conclusion: During December it can get quite hot. The up side is that there is a lot of water on the trail and the bungalows were kept tidy and in good condition. The following persons participated on the Swellendam trail: Alan and Zandree Lill, Nigel and Cathrine Coni, Brian Lloyd, Marianne Deason, Mike Oppenshaw, Jill Salt, Chris Warner, Braam Robijn from Riversdale, Magit Pershonn from Oz, and Neil Ransome. Nick names were given to each hiker, see if you can identify them: The front runners, The tail end Charlies, The snorer, The talker, The early bird, The silent one, The moaner, The plodder, The dietitian and The toothless.

YOUNG AT HEART:

BY BEVERLY BROCKMAN, VICE CHAIRMAN.

A New Year with New Beginnings. It is a 007-year, so anything is possible! Spending time in the Cape over Christmas was a treat, not only for hiking – many of us spent glorious time exploring the Winelands and awesome passes, particularly along the R62. The Exco Committee welcomes Gwyn Clarke and Wendy Farrow. Gwyn will be our new Social Organizer, assisted by Nathalie Berquet. Wendy will be filling the Youthful Hiking Organizer post. However, I will be still be assisting her. With Wendy coming on board, I will have more time to assist Robbie and to concentrate on other area's within the club. Well done Leon Marais for jumping in with the Footnotes. It is looking great! Our next **Kiddies hike** will be at **Rustig**, 4th March, for the over 8year olds.

Youthful Hiking

Magoebaskloof gave 19 hikers a great weekend under the canopy of the indigenous forests. Thank you Tom Kenny for leading. Sunday 26th November, Ken Middleton, led us through Tonquani. Thank you Ken! We had the regular medium plus-to-brisk group with us, and only one or two youthfuls! Perhaps they thought it was too strenuous. It is incredibly beautiful, and different. We'll put this one on the programme again. The Swellendam trail in the Marloth Reserve started off with 16 hikers, excellently lead by Rod Allport! Thank you! Padmini fell and fractured her arm at the 6km mark, but bravely proceeded on for a further 8/9 km as well as the next day, reaching the second hut. The Game Ranger collected her and three others. Another two abandoned us, all for various reasons, backache, blisters, etc.... So our team of 10 continued to enjoy the trail! Padmini reunited with us on New Year's Eve at the last hut, with her arm in plaster and bundle of goodies to celebrate breaking in the New Year. The countdown was at 9pm, much appreciated by hungry tired hikers after a long 21km day. Thank you Padmini! And Well done for finishing the trail! Castle Gorge, 14th Jan. was a superb day for youthful hikers – 10 new young non-members! Thank you Angelo Denicolo for leading us! We were 28 on the Mateke Trail. A base camp in Tree houses! A wonderful weekend of fun and laughter. Thanks again Tom Kenny for leading!

Coming up – **Spoorekrans**. Easy hiking on a game farm with an overnight cave. The **Rhebok Trail**, Golden Gate, offers excellent hiking, more challenging, rated moderate plus. On the Easter weekend the **Elephant's Bush Camp** promises to be a great weekend! *Cont on Pg 20...*

New hiker's comments cont:

Brikbats

1. Bl--dy hot day but one can't blame the club for that! Looking forward to joining the JHC on another hike soon.

Best regards - Anthony Cavanagh

Hiker's Hints: from Nathalie Berquet.

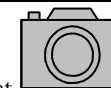
While hiking, Nathalie found that the water in the pipe of her 'camel pack' heated up in the sun and she was constantly drinking warm water. Cleverly, she decided to blow the water back into the pack after each sip. All was fine with the new system until the pack filled up with air and began to force water out of the end of the pipe. Eventually she couldn't stop it and much water was wasted until the pressure in the pack was relieved. So the hint is not to blow the water back down the pipe. If you can't stand the hot water, get a bottle, unless someone has a better idea?

'Flowing water makes stagnant water move' - Somali Proverb.

'Life is made up of small things, as the body is built up of cells' - Olive Schreiner, South African writer.

Be cheerful while you are alive—
instruction from Ptah-hotep, an ancient Egyptian priest of the 5th Dynasty, 2340 B.C.

Digital photography basics # 1, by Brian Lever.



1. Aperture: This is the size of the hole in the lens shutter that allows light to reach the electronic image chip situated where film used to be. The aperture size is solely responsible for the **depth of field**. This is what determines how much of the picture, from near to far, is sharply in focus. Basically the smaller the hole/aperture (the higher the f-stop number e.g. F 16) more of the picture will be in focus and the larger the aperture (the smaller the f-stop number e.g. F 2) less of the picture will be in focus. You see this shallow focus or depth of field classically on close-ups of insects or flowers. Large depth of field shots are seen in landscapes where the foreground and the far distance objects are all in focus.

2. Speed. This is the time that the shutter remains open to allow light to pass through the aperture. For any set aperture the faster the speed is e.g. 1/1000 of a second, the less light reaches the image chip and the slower e.g. 1/15, the more light reaches the chip. The principle effect of the speed is to freeze or blur the image taken. The faster the speed the better the freeze. Slow speeds of from 1/60 sec and lower will blur the image unless you use a tripod or bean bag. Of course, even on a tripod and at slow speeds, any moving object in the image will be blurred while the static background will be sharp. This can create some interesting effects.

Rules of the Johannesburg Hiking Club—All persons taking part in club activities do so entirely **at their own risk** and must adhere to the rules of the Johannesburg Hiking Club.

- 1: Hikers must follow the instructions of the appointed leader and must remain with the main party unless the leader has agreed to a splinter group controlled by a nominated sub-leader.
- 2: No fires may be lit (except at designated sites by permission of the hike leader) and must be extinguished completely before leaving the site.
- 3: All litter must be carried away.
- 4: No uprooting of plants or picking of flowers is permitted and care must be taken to avoid damaging trees, fences or private property.
- 5: Dogs and radios are not allowed on hikes or at camps.
- 6: Anyone under the age of 18 years who attends a hike must be the responsibility of a nominated member.
- 7: Nude bathing can be offensive. Please exercise discretion.
- 8: All behaviour likely to bring discredit to the name of the club is to be avoided.

Camp and trail booking procedure: Phone the designated leader of the trail or camp to reserve a place for yourself. Full payment of the event fee must be made promptly, either by making a deposit into the club's bank account, or by sending a cheque made payable to the Johannesburg Hiking Club. Your booking will only be confirmed once the club has received full payment. It will automatically lapse if payment is not received within two weeks from date of booking, unless otherwise arranged. If you wish to cancel your booking, the fee will be refunded **ONLY** if the club is notified at least two weeks prior to the event and a replacement can be found. If cancellation is later than prescribed time, fees will not necessarily be refunded.

Precautions: The following basic precautions are recommended: Kindly carry your **medical aid card** or details with you at all times; Carry a minimum of 2 litres of water and drink sufficiently during the hike; Wear an effective hat; Use a high UV protection sunscreen lotion; Carry rain gear and a jersey in both summer and winter – during a thunderstorm the temperature can drop by as much as 10° Celsius; Wear strong suitable footwear that will provide traction and support the ankles (lace tightly); Walk with care to prevent injury.

Enjoy! Feelings of accomplishment and satisfaction do not come from striving to be perfect. They come from the process of using our inner power, beauty and love in a creative, supportive, positive and loving way. It doesn't get any better than that! By Susan Jeffers, in 'The little book of peace'

Cont. from Pg 6: In the 7 years I've been coming here, its only increased 10%. Tonight, I take the sleeper train to Sappa, to do some trekking. Hope the New Year brings in a little more peace to this troubled world we live in.

Good wishes to everyone, Roland Heap.....25 December 2006.

Magoebaskloof Hiking Trail, 11th and 12th November 2006.

Hikers: Bev (leading from the back, thank you), Tom and Ann (leading from the front, thank you), Barry and Sam (first hike with us, welcome), Padmini, Gwyn, Theresa, Cecile Bongibault, Nathalie, Olga, Juri, Brian, Cecile Marquer, Michelle, Susan, Hijme, Giulia, Dave Richardson (first backpack, well done!).

As you go walking in these magical forests, criss-crossing the river over wooden bridges, there is a silence and peace that settles inside you and there is a spaciousness that begins to find its way into your mind, your being. This is the joy of the Magoebaskloof hiking trail that I had the pleasure of enjoying with my fellow hikers over the weekend of November 11th and 12th. You may think it's a long way to go for a weekend, but as hikers reading this article, you will know that being in nature feels as if time becomes an elastic band and *s t r e t c h e s*, so that 24 hours feels longer and the rejuvenation and recharging that seems to soak into your thirsty body make the journey so worthwhile.

Although our first day turned out to be a little longer than expected, the highlight for me was the swim in the Dokolewa Pools. Every cell in my body felt the exhilaration of cold water, of bubbles galore as the mini-waterfalls cascaded into my neck and back and the absolute joy of weary legs and tired toes sent me screaming and shouting like a child in an adventure story I once read long ago. Sleeping outside with the sound of the river flowing past was a lullaby I woke up to throughout the night and oh, what a sweet lullaby it was!!

As each person found their inner rhythm, some walking fast, some walking slowly, they heard from the forest whatever they needed to hear; they each saw what they needed to see, so that going home felt different to arriving. A part of you left behind with the gnomes and elves in amongst the trees, and a part of the peace and silent whispering of the wind through pine forests coming home with you – you are never the same. **By Giulia Criscuolo**

