



**Club
Members of
the Year**



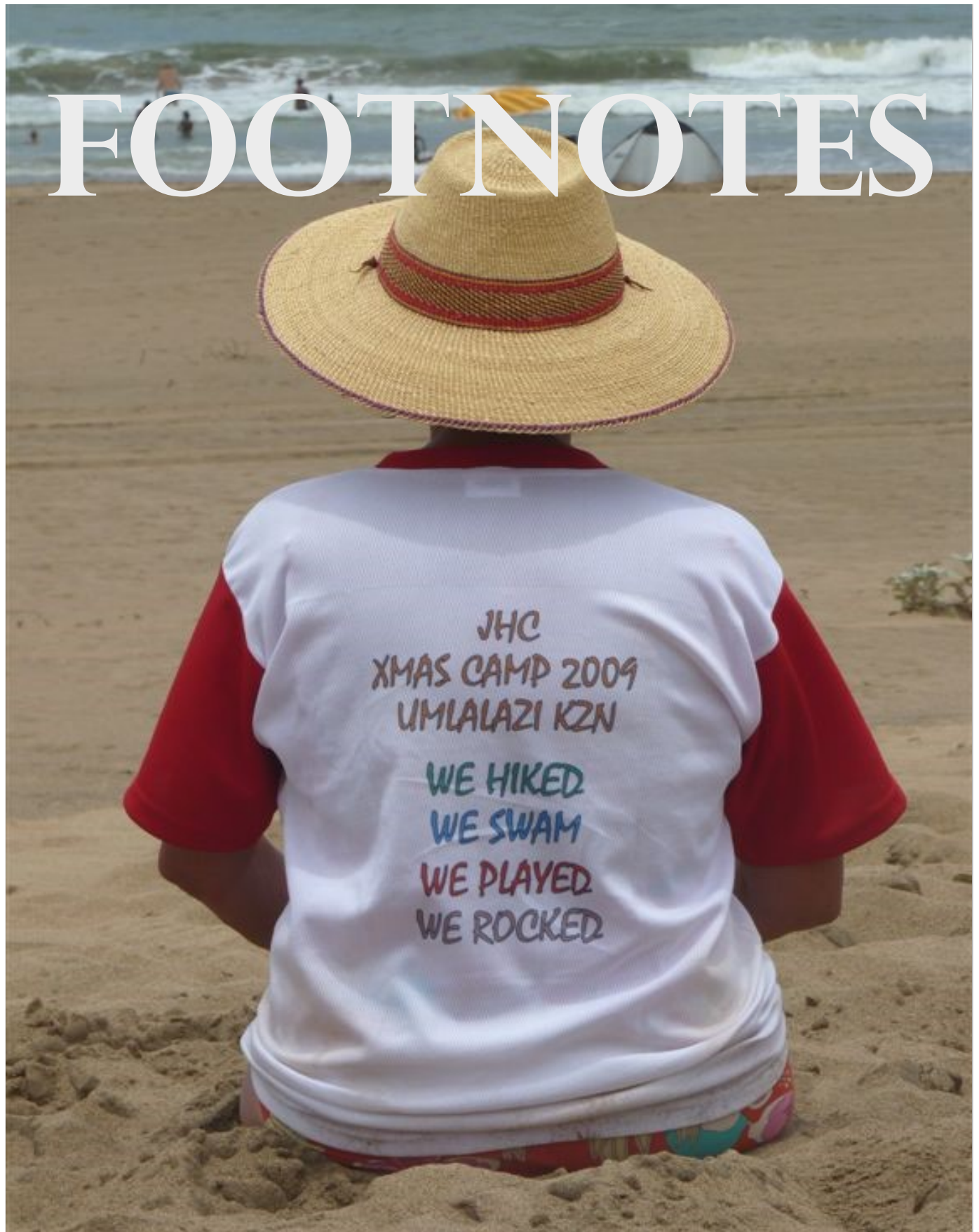
**Xmas
Camp**



Newsletter

May to August, 2010.

FOOTNOTES





See the Cape Peninsula like you've never seen it before. Join us on our five-day Mountains In The Sea Trail from Table Mountain to The Cape of Good Hope. In between are 5-days of exhilarating walking in a glorious setting of mountains, forest, white sandy beaches and cliff-tops.

Superb accommodation. Excellent wine. Fine dining.

And the most spectacular walking in the world.

On this "slackpacking" trail your luggage is transported for you and accommodation is in fine hotels and guest houses.

Our walk traverses the Table Mountain National Park, part of the most bio-diverse region in the world. Great walking, spectacular scenery, fascinating ecology and 2,285 plant species!

What are you waiting for???

SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY RATE

CONTACT DETAILS

Walk In Africa

reservations@walkinafrica.com

(021) 785 2264

(082) 888 3298

IN THIS ISSUE



This mood picture taken by Jackie Cilliers clearly shows the varied nature of the activities of the Umlalasi Christmas Camp. Read all about this wonderful camp inside this edition.

Committee feedback	4
Club news	8
AGM	12
Xmas Camp	18
Hike reviews	24
Mid-week hikes	28
Astronomy	37
Photo gallery	39

Editor: Harry Parsley

Mobile: 082-885-0204

Email: hparsley@mweb.co.za

Johannesburg Hiking Club

P.O.Box 4892, Weltevreden Park, 1715

Phone: 087 940 1903 (08h30 to 10h30 only)

Fax: 086-685-5746

Email: jhc@mweb.co.za

Www.jhbhiking.org.za

Website email: webperson@jhbhiking.co.za



Editor's Notes

Harry Parsley

Robbie Macdonald has served the Club as Chairman with distinction over the last four years. As he has decided to pass the baton to a new person Footnotes celebrates his achievements, and chronicles the honours bestowed on him at the AGM in this edition. Thank you Robbie for your wonderful contribution to the Club.

We are fortunate to have a man of the caliber of Alan Chater taking over the reigns from Robbie. We wish him well in the Chairman's position and I am sure that he will get the same high level of support that Robbie enjoyed.

The article on the Xmas Camp (page 18) appears to have been written by a number of roughish monkeys in between waiting for opportunities to raid the larders of their camper victims. Umlalasi provided the ideal spot for camping in a natural forest, beach walks, hikes in the forests and generally chilling activities.

The Club will be celebrating its 80th anniversary in 2011, which is a major milestone. All members are invited to contribute ideas as to how this celebration should take place. Not to be outdone, Footnotes will be bringing out a 80th anniversary edition. If you have any material (photographs, articles, advertisements, etc) that can be used in this edition please contact me.

Readers will again see that a number of advertisements appear in this edition. Please try your best to promote advertising in Footnotes as this contributes to the printing costs and can also introduce readers to products of interest to them.

The Club's website is a wealth of information on the Club and hiking in general. Recently an Environmental section has been added to the site. Vulture conservation is the first topic covered in this section, so check it out.

Unfortunately, we end on a sad note with the passing of Neil McLaren. Neil was a good friend of the Club and contributed hugely to the maintenance of Foothold. Neil will be missed by his many friends in the Club. Our condolences go out to his family and friends in this difficult time.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE:
15th August, 2010

Email all articles and correspondence to the editor.



Robbie MacDonald
Chairman

GOING THE EXTRA MILE: THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

At a very enthusiastic leaders workshop in October last year the subject of CPR was identified as the one intervention that could make a significant difference in an emergency. Consequently Tracey May kindly offered to hold a training course at her house. She also arranged for her son Thomas (who is a qualified instructor) to take each and every attendee practically through the procedure. There is no doubt in my mind that knowledge of this simple procedure, correctly applied can save a life. I would like to thank Tracey and Thomas for being so proactive and hope that this course can be made available not only to leaders, but members as well in future. Tracey as you know has been instrumental in organising and developing the Adventure Hiking section, This I can safely say has been an unqualified success and has brought a more youthful and vibrant image to the Club. Sadly Tracey has had to resign her position due to work commitments. I would like to thank Tracey on behalf of all our members for the great effort she put in and wish her well in her future endeavours.

Sue Desmond who has been a most enthusiastic, committed and dynamic Hikes Organiser has also indicated that she is standing down. From the moment she took over the position her aim was to achieve new levels of efficiency and in this she surely excelled. Sue used her vast hiking experience and knowledge to create a dynamic programme that was a credit to her and the Club. I would also like to thank her sincerely for her efforts and to wish her well in future.

They say that South Africa is a world in one country. I was reminded of this when some intrepid hikers (including yours truly) resumed their annual hike along the SA coast line. For four days we walked through surreal surroundings; never ending beaches, vast expanses of blue ocean stretching to the distant horizons, magnificent, desolate, mysterious sand dunes. Starkly beautiful this area is completely devoid of rivers, roads or human habitation and must rate as one of the most unexplored areas in the Eastern Cape.

I would like to thank all those members who volunteered to help with exotic weed eradication at Castle Gorge and trail maintenance at Foothold. Your efforts ensure that not only are the trails safe, but

exotic weeds are kept under control. This is an on-going exercise and requires persistence if we are going to maintain the status quo. I would like to appeal to all members who are able to help to continue and increase their efforts so that we continue to experience the wonders of the unspoilt Magaliesberg Mountains.

The Kgaswane Country Lodge appeal mentioned in the last Extra Mile has been dismissed by the MEC. This decision has serious consequences for the protected area of the Magaliesberg. The JHC, MCSA, MPA and other interested parties will be meeting to map out a response to this decision. As we need to preserve this area not only for now, but for future generations, your active support for this cause is necessary

At the 2009 AGM I announced that I intended to stand down as chairman so this will be my last Extra Mile. For the past four years I have had the privilege of working with a group of very special people who comprise the EXCO. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to each and every member for their support. Every meeting was attended in a spirit of friendliness, helpfulness enthusiasm and integrity. Some highlights of the period include the signing of the contract with NETCARE911, the introduction of the Adventure Hiking Section, the production of The Hikers Handbook, various Club/training weekends at Foothold, Crofton Weeding blitz, leaders Workshops and a much improved media section. In each and every one of these projects I was guided by the wisdom and expertise of my committee members. Because of these and many other initiatives the Club has continued to offer the member an exceptional array of activities and maintain its position as South Africa's foremost hiking club.

I wish Alan Chater and all the members of the incoming committees every success and I am confident that they will propel the Club and its activities to greater heights:

And lastly I must thank you the members for your support, suggestions, encouragement and enthusiasm. Your company and friendship shortened the miles, turned shadow into sunshine helping me along the rocky path to the summit.

Happy hiking!



Peter Faugust Slide Shows

Roland Heap: 10th November, 2009



Roland's presentations are always well attended due to his innovative way of travelling. His talk entitled: "Five continents on a shoe string" was no exception.

Robbie thanking Roland for his interesting talk.

Donovan van Graan: 1st December, 2009



On Tuesday 1st December, 2009 Donovan van Graan relived his arduous cycle adventure that he and his companion did in the mountainous area of China. His slides graphically illustrated both

the harsh terrain and the exhaustion that the cyclists endured.

Di and Des Sharp, 12th January, 2010

Their presentation entitled: "Via Spulga and the Austrian Alps" was a story of their four day hike from Switzerland to Italy over the finishing Alps near Lake Como. The hikes in Austria were day hikes in the Austrian Alps.

NOTICE

Due to the staging of the Soccer World Cup the Floreum is unavailable for the slide shows planned in June and July, 2010. The following shows will have to be rescheduled:

- "Birders versus hikers: A friendly rivalry", by Deon van Rensburg
- "Hiking the Island of Reunion", by Paul van Beek.

Sue Desmond: 9th February, 2010



Sue presenting.

Sue and her fellow hikers undertook the formidable forty-odd day hike in Australia on the Bibbulmun Trail and shared the story of her adventure with us by means of her stunning pictures, a few of which are shown below.

The northern terminus of the Bibbulmun Trail.



Photo: Sue Desmond.

Setting a cracking pace on the trail.

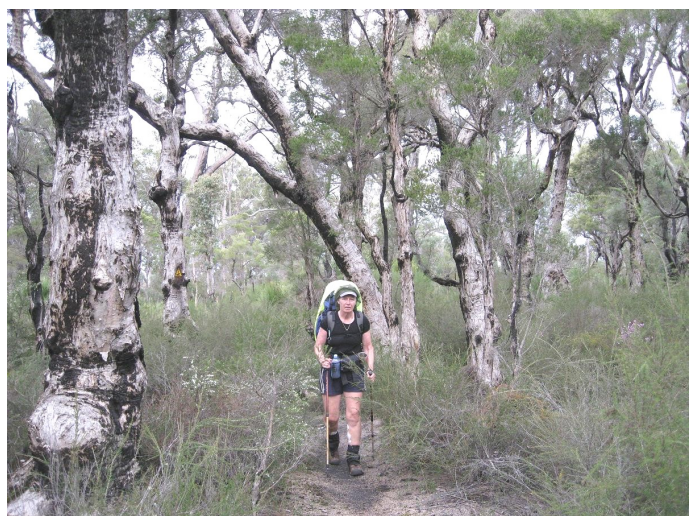


Photo: Sue Desmond.



Marion Hüfner
Club Administrator

Wow, where has the past 12 months gone – it's been a whole year since Jean retired and I took over as Club Administrator.

The JHC has had a surge of new members – thanks to everyone who has been promoting the Club.

I've received many complements on the twice monthly highlight emails which goes out to members– those who do not receive same, please give me your email address to be added to the grouping – that is if you are interested in receiving them.

Most people are now remembering to add a reference to their direct deposits – you have no idea how much easier it makes my job.

There are lots of PLEAS out there for assistance and it would be really great if some of you could find a few hours a week or month to donate to the Club from where you obtain so much fun.

See you on the trail

ONCE IN A BLUE MOON... Impressions of a

LETTERS RECEIVED

grateful visitor
By Rina Taviv

If you are reading this, you hopefully already know about the wonderful place that JHC was lucky to purchase more than a decade ago, called Hikers Haven. Let me tell you that this sanctuary is not only a retreat for older generation of hikers, but also a place to rock and have fun.

I arrived there on the evening of 31 December 2009 and left the next year impressed and grateful. As I arrived I was warmly welcomed by many total strangers, but soon discovered that I had met some of them. Although I had met them just once, years ago, they all were so friendly and happy to chat that I felt completely at home.

Within an hour the place was transformed. Bunches of flowers and tables laden with drinks and most delicious snacks, including trays full of gourmet cheeses, suddenly appeared on the "piazza" in front of the cottage.

A very brief (probably he was as hungry as I was)

welcoming address by Jim was followed by more than an hour of moving around the tables to enjoy the beautifully arranged snacks and in the process to meet as many people as possible. The lovely setting with the view of Magaliesburg ridge was enhanced by the rare "blue moon" phenomenon that made the evening extra special.

More opportunities to get to know people arose when the braaiing started. Then it was easy to either focus on men (most had beers and were standing around the braai) or women (most with glasses of wine setting up tables for supper). I was so full from the cocktail party that I did not need to worry about braai (and of course there were enough obliging men to help me braai my single steak without my moving a finger).

The braai was accompanied by the JHC's own singing star, Richard, who has just released his 1st CD and was kind enough to sing all the songs (in duet with his CD) while we enjoyed the supper.

But the best part came after braai. Robbie put an amazing effort into collecting the best dancing music by hours of checking the CDs of all his friends, begging and even stealing (these are his own words) to ensure that we would have a blast of the party.

The music was so good that very quickly many of us drifted from the tables under the tree back to "piazza" to dance. Although we had a very cosmopolitan group – not only South African, but English, Canadian, Ukrainian, Israeli, Chinese and Japanese – they all knew how to rock and enjoy themselves.

Promptly at midnight champagne flowed followed by circle dancing and hugs and kisses from everyone. Never in my life I was hugged and kissed by so many strangers although by that time it felt some of them were not strangers any more.

I was lucky to have a bed in the cottage (I love hiking, but am not into camping) and the accommodation was rustic, but functional and comfortable.

The shower in the morning (hot water, plenty of space and trees above the shower head) was a great start to the day.

I went for a hike with Mike, who knows how to lead big congregations (and not only small hiker groups) and during early morning and en route we had most fascinating theological and philosophical discussions. The hike was tough (chain ladder up and down is not for faint hearted and the heat of the day was scorching and harsh on my pale skin), but the magnificent views, dip in a cool pool and company made the effort definitely worthwhile.

After a relaxing afternoon and another braai and, of course, more chatting followed. I even managed to find a fellow chess player who was a great opponent (and not only an accomplished singer – guess who?).

The 2nd night I was lucky enough to have a whole room with double bed for myself (as many people left) and I slept like a baby.

The two nights' accommodation, cocktail party and the hike cost me a total of R95. I am sure you will all agree that this is most unbelievable value for money and I never expected to have such a great New Year party at this cost.

What a start to 2010! I can only wish for all of you that 2010 should be as wonderful as these few days in Hikers Haven were for me.

Thank you so much, JHC!

Hi Marion,

I have received the "parcel" from JHC today. Thank you very much for welcoming me in such a friendly way! I really appreciate it and I am proud to be a new member of JHC.

Kind regards

Hilke

ANNUPURNA TREK

Heinz and Wendy are organising a trek to Annapurna, the most scenic trip in Nepal. If you are interested in going on this trip contact them as follows:

Advertising rates for a single insertion in Footnotes

Full page back cover R300

Full page inside front and back covers R250

Full page anywhere else in the magazine R200

Half page inside R110

Quarter page inside R80

Classified R50

All advertisements must be received in ready to print formats and received before the closing deadline of the edition concerned.

Heinz: heinzh1@telkomsa.net.

Wendy: 079 525 9631/wend@lantic.net.

Days are only preliminary.

03 May Day 0 Depart SA

04 May Day 1 Arrive in Kathmandu & transfer to hotel on B/B.

05 May Day 2 Free day in Kathmandu. Same hotel

06May Day 3 Kathmandu/Besisahar/Khudi by bus. Lodge

07 May Day 4 Khudi/Jaget (5h-1400m)

08 May Day 5 Jagat/ Dharap (6 h - 2000m)

09 May Day 6 Dharapani/ Chame (5 h - 2700 m)

10 May Day 7 Chame/ Pisang (5 h - 3100m)

11 May Day 8 Pisang/ Manang (5 h - 3650m)

12 May Day 9 **Rest day** in Manang. Night in same place

13 May Day10 Manang/ Ledar (5h - 4000m)

14 May Day11 Ledar/ Phedi (4h - 4400m)

15 May Day12 Phedi crossing Thorong Pass (5400m) then decent to Muktinath (7h - 3700m)

16May Day13 Muktinath/Jomsom (3h - 2800m)

17May Day14 Morning flight Jomsom/ Pokhara- overnight in Hotel

18May Day15 Morning in Pokhara (to go to Sarangkot to watch sunrise over Annapurnas; other tourist attractions). Afternoon: Kathmandu by flight. Night in hotel

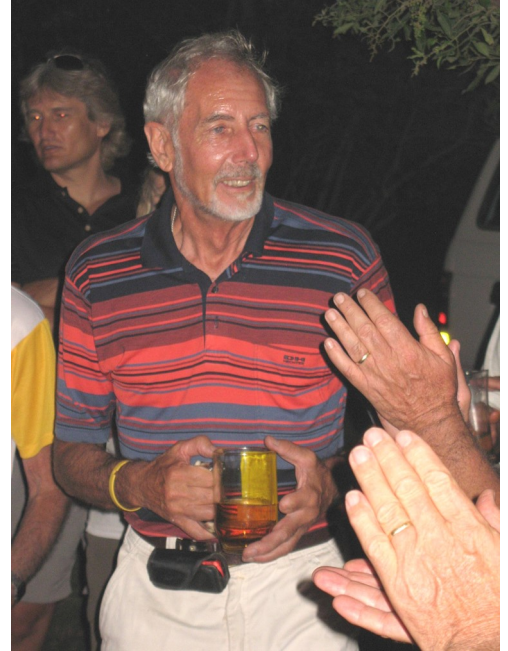
19 May Day16 Free day in Kathmandu. Same hotel or if the flight is late afternoon (Emirates and Qatar), Perhaps depart here?

20May Day17 Departure transfer.

NETCARE 911
011-254-1555

2011 is 80th Anniversary year. Get involved in planning the celebrations....its fun!

NEW YEAR AT FOOTHOLD



Left: Ernst and Jean Paetzold listen as Ernst is wished a happy birthday. Footnotes understands that Ernst has not been in the best of help and we all join in wishing him a speedy recovery.

Top: Robbie receives the applause after his New Year address. Thereafter he played red-hot dance music to take the revelry to midnight.

Bottom: Richard entertained the crowd with songs from his latest CD



RULES OF THE JOHANNESBURG HIKING CLUB

Rules

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 behavior 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 date, 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 liters 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

SUNDAY HIKES

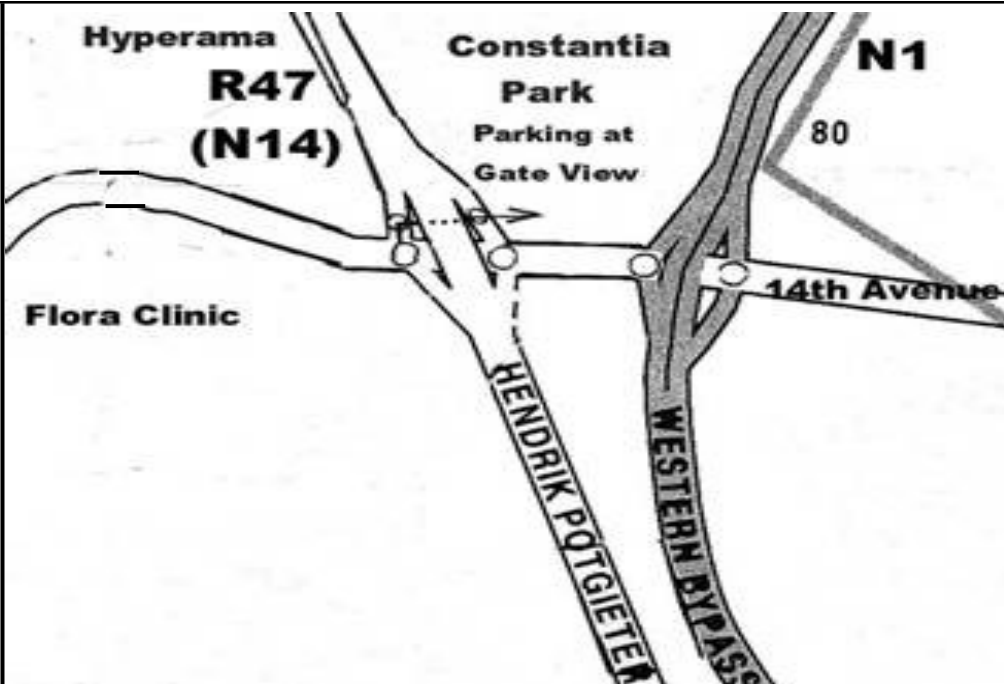
Meeting place: Constantia Park, Gateway House.

Meeting time: 07h45, but consult programme as times can be earlier or later on occasions

Return to meeting place: Varies, but usually before 17h30

Hike fees: Refer programme (non member fee in brackets). Bookable events indicated by 'B'

Restrictions: Certain events are subject to restricted numbers identified by, eg, R(10)



MAURITIUS ADVERTISEMENT

HIKE MAURITIUS! - 2010

Saturday 2 to 9 October 2010. The hiking fitness level is "easy", of about 10 kms each day at a leisurely pace. Group number is limited to 12 persons.



The cost is R8,300pp (+ forex chgs if payment is made from outside South Africa) and includes:

- * 7 nights "all-inclusive" package, sharing, in king or twin-bed rooms, in a 3* beach resort hotel;
- * 7 dinners, 7 breakfasts, 7 lunches;
- * 4 full day hikes, 1 day kayaking, a visit to the Botanical Gardens;
- * all transfers, entrance fees to the gardens and nature reserve.

Flights have not been included, so that you can get the best deal available. The return flight Johannesburg to Mauritius on British Airways is currently about R5,600pp including airport taxes.

The hotel's "all-inclusive" package includes locally bottled spirits, beer, house wine, cocktails, soft drinks, mineral water, minibar, tea, coffee and cakes. A single room supplement, if required, is an additional R2,500pp.

Extras to allow for: personal travel insurance, motorised water sports, optional excursions, other activities, tips, and any other items of a personal nature.

A deposit of R2,000 per person secures your booking. (Refundable less a 10% admin charge.) The balance is payable one month before departure. If your booking is then cancelled, cancellation fees apply. Until paid in full the cost is subject to airfare increases and exchange rate fluctuations.

ITINERARY

Saturday: Arrive Mauritius, transfer to hotel.

Sunday: East Coast Beach Hike. A stroll along the beach to get us into holiday mode.

Monday: Black River Gorge Hike. It's downhill all the way!

Tuesday: Kayaking on the north-east coast, and a visit to the Botanical Gardens.

Wednesday: The Wild South Coast Hike. Stunning scenery.

Thursday: Hiking in Le Domaine D'Anse Jonchee, also known as "Kestrel Valley".

Friday: Full day to do your own thing, e.g. an excursion to Ile aux Cerfs.

Saturday: Last minute shopping and sightseeing, transfer to airport.

Enquiries & Reservations:

Jill Salt

Hike Mauritius!

web: www.beachhike.co.za

e-mail: info@beachhike.co.za

Cell: +27 (0)74 103 5963, Tel: +27 (0)13 764 1597, Fax: +27 (0)86 672 5595

Oriole Services CC (Reg. No: 94/36524/23)

P.O. Box 375, Sabie, 1260, South Africa

Donations, new members, and an obituary.

DONATIONS

The Club appreciates the donations made by the following people:

Dieter Lenk
 Di Brewis
 Ken Bidgood
 Fritz Boettiger
 Pierre & Maryna le Roux
 Michael Green
 Dave Richardson
 Maryann Schoeman
 Ockie Osthuizen
 Donat Almendiger
 Helmut Ulland
 Christ Medri
 Peter Perks
 David & Sue Emmett
 Ivor Gerrard
 Hijme de Jong
 Neil and Judy McLaren donated a generator for the use at Foothold.

NEW MEMBERS

The Club has experienced a surge of new members recently. Among them are the following people who are warmly welcomed to the Club. We trust that you will experience many wonderful hikes as well as the camaraderie of the Club.

Ellen Hagerman
 Elaine Nakin
 Christine Hagen
 Sandy Hill
 Sandra Murray
 Howard Jacobson
 Eric Schroeder
 Stanley Holmes
 Anscha van Zyl
 Family Hardijzer
 Clare Weaving
 Jenny Hartman
 Steven Coia and Jayne Couillard
 Danelle Bdenhorst
 Michal Viskich
 Linda Christensen
 Deon Ferreira
 Sandra Burger
 Vladislava Olenenco
 Hilke Krüger
 Simon Rix
 Holly Proctor & Matthew Holbrook
 Arthur Godbeer
 Kay Cole

Welcome back to old members as well. It is great to have you back:

Shirley and Paul Menge
 Fern Carvalho

OBITUARY

Neil McLaren passed away on 18 February. The Club's condolences go out to his family and friends. We wish you strength and comfort in this sad time. Read the tribute to him on page 36.

OTHER NEWS

Tom and Ann Kenny became grandparents on 1 March, 2010.

ROGER MACKIE: EXCO MEMBER

Roger was elected as a member of the Club's EXCO committee, but due to other commitments was unable to attend the Annual General Meeting. This photograph of Roger compliments those of the other EXCO members on the next page.



Roger and Jean Williams. Photo: Merle Doctor.

**You can hire Hikers Haven at Foothold, camp there, or simply come to the monthly camp.
 Contact number: 0879-401-903**

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Club's new EXCO.



Left to right: Harry Parsley (Media Coordinator), Jim Hutchison (Property Administrator), Beverley Brockman (Hikes Organiser), Alan Chater (Chairman) and Frances Raal (Treasurer). Photo: J. Moehl.

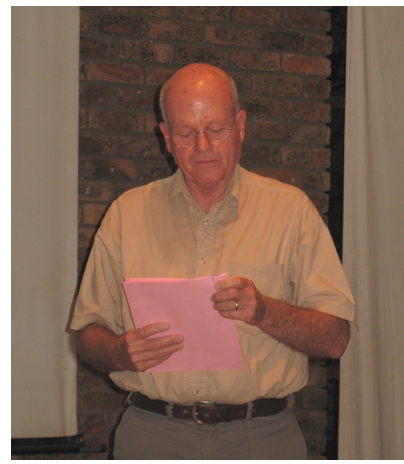
The outgoing Chairman and President with the incoming ones.



Robbie Macdonald, Howard Rayner, Alan Chater and Chris Williams.

Photo: Harry Parsley.

AGM: WHAT THEY SAID



Robbie: "Who will ever forget our 75th anniversary dinner and show? The inclusion of Adventure Hiking to our programme was a highlight in my term."

Jean: "A number of volunteers are sharing the burden of organising the midweek hikes."

Clive: "The Club's finances are in a healthy state."

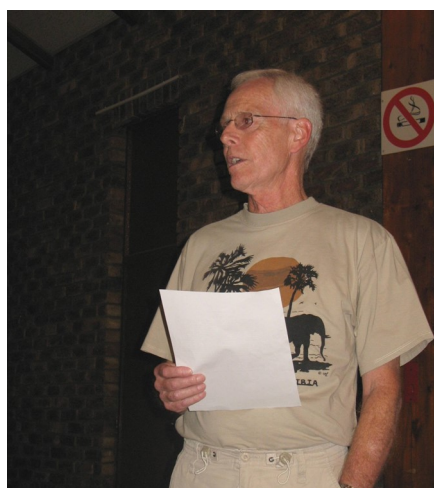
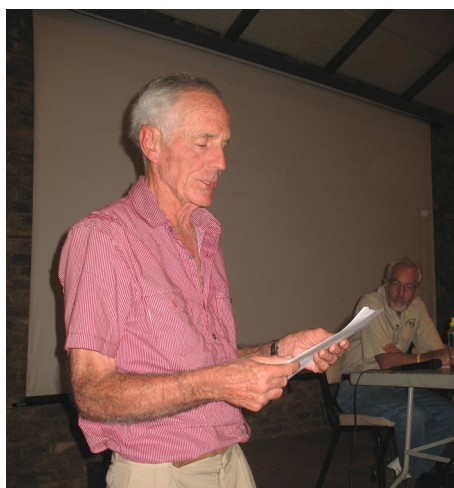
Sue: "Hikesco organised a interesting programme of hikes."

Jim: "The Club's facilities remain in good condition."

Harry: "The Club's website is highly regarded and is a significant tool in attracting Sunday hikers and for marketing the Club generally. Footnotes is well supported by contributions of articles and photographs. Members were encouraged to be ambassadors for advertisements in Footnotes."

Beverly: "The kiddies hikes have become very popular. The appointment of mentors to help train future leaders was introduced."

Olga: "The Midwinter Camp in June and the Halloween Party in October were very successful and much fun."



AGM: RECOGNISING CONTRIBUTIONS



Robbie Macdonald is stepping down after serving the Club with distinction for the last four years. Howard thanked him for this wonderful service with a gift from the Club. A few of the highlights of Robbie's term include:

- 75th anniversary dinner and show?
- Combining the programme with Footnotes edited by Harry.
- Our contract with NETCARE911 to provide emergency rescue in any event.
- The production of a Leaders Handbook.
- The holding of Leaders training workshops.
- The reopening of Footloose Gulley after being severely damaged by flood water.
- The inclusion of Adventure Hiking to our programme.
- The production of the Leaders Handbook.



Robbie presenting Sue Desmond with a bouquet of flowers in recognition of the wonderful work she did over the last year as Hikes Organiser.



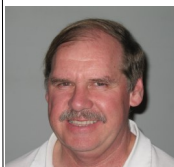
After six years as President Howard Rayner says the time has come for him to make way for a new person to take up the position of Club President. On behalf of the Club Robbie presented Howard with a gift in recognition of his years of service to the Club. Howard has spent 14 years out of the last 28 years involved with the JHC in various capacities, such as Hikes Organiser, Newsletter Editor, Chairman and President. He feels it is now time to give other people the opportunity to serve the Club.

CLUB MEMBERS OF THE YEAR

Ann and Tom Kenny being awarded the Club Members of the Year Trophy by Robbie Macdonald. Anne has produced the hiking programme for many years and together they have been dedicated hikes leaders and organisers.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



PRESIDENT'S REPORT, 17TH MARCH, 2010 **Howard Rayner**

Welcome, fellow hikers to the 79th Annual General Meeting of the Johannesburg Hiking Club.

One of the objectives of the JHC identified at the AGM last year was to reverse the downward trend in membership numbers and get back up to over 420 members. This was successfully achieved during November. Congratulations to all those involved in this magnificent effort in recessionary times!

The Johannesburg Hiking Club will be celebrating its 80th anniversary in 2011 and I would like to encourage everybody to help the sub-committee ensure that the events planned will be successful. Marion Hüfner became the third Club Administrator last year and quickly adapted to the challenges of the new job and introduced many improvements. Well done, Marion.

Recent developments, with the approval of the development of Kgaswane Country Lodge near Hunters Rest, which is situated well within the Magaliesberg Protected Environment, are very disturbing. We, together with the Mountain Club and Magaliesberg Protection Association, need to appeal against this urgently. If this development, which is already far advanced, is allowed to proceed, further developments within the Magaliesberg will inevitably follow.

Our attempts to look for alternative properties within the Magaliesberg has faltered of late and it is hoped that we can identify and acquire suitable servitudes within the next year. We continue to enjoy the goodwill of the farmers who provide venues for us to hike and we would like to thank them for their generosity.

Recent changes to SARS tax laws have classified the JHC as a Recreational club. As such, the Club is no longer a Public Benefit Organisation and the Management Committee formed last year has been disbanded. For the JHC to continue as a tax exempt organization we need to make some amendments to the constitution tonight. We look forward to your support for these necessary changes.

Robbie McDonald will be retiring as Club Chairman tonight. I would like to congratulate Robbie for the enthusiasm and drive he has shown as

Chairman for the last four years. He certainly has gone The Extra Mile. Well done, Robbie!

I have completed my second three year term as President. Although, the President is an Honorary position and is not involved with the day to day running of the Club, I am conscious that due to my frequent travelling as well as my business commitments, other interests and problems with my knee, my hiking activity during the last few years has reduced significantly. I have thus decided to step down as President of the JHC tonight. Having spent 14 years out of the last 28 years involved with the JHC in various capacities such as Hikes Organiser, Newsletter Editor, Chairman and President, it is time to give other people the opportunity. I know that my involvement with the JHC served as a launching pad to my career and I have achieved so much as a result of what I learnt during my early days on the committee. I would like to thank all those who supported me over all these years especially my wife, Magui.

Finally, I would like to thank all our committee members Robbie, Beverly, Frances, Sue, Harry, Jim, Olga, Tracey and Marion for all their efforts. Thank you to all the sub-committee members and hike leaders who have also given up their valuable time to help the JHC to continue to be a great club. May the Johannesburg Hiking Club grow from strength to strength!

Robbie and Tracey practicing CPR techniques under the guidance of Tracey's son Thomas.

Advertising rates for a single insertion in Footnotes

Full page back cover R300

Full page inside front and back covers R250

Full page anywhere else in the magazine R200

Half page inside R110

Quarter page inside R80

Classified R50

All advertisements must be received in ready to print formats and received before the closing deadline of the edition concerned.

PENNY HOLBURN ADVERTISEMENT

Life Skills Coaching

Need help dealing with stress, your career, relationships, your emotional and physical health and well being?

Want to learn the success strategies of top business- and sports- men and women?



Contact Penny:
Tel: 082 460 2610
Email: penny.holburn@live.co.za
Web: www.lifecoachingbusiness.co.za

CPR COURSE



CHRISTMAS CAMP



THE CHRISTMAS CAMP: AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW
Deon and Bonny van Rensburg



"Looks like a whole family of them," said Mad Monkey to the rest of the gang, "at least two dozen."

"Yes, and they all come from Gangsters Paradise," replied Pick-Pocket Patsy, "which means they will be easy meat. Bags I lead the first tent raid."

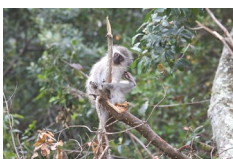
"They might not be that dumb," said Wise Willie, the oldest monkey in the troupe, who had seen and done it all before. "I heard them talking, and they plan to monkey-proof their provisions. Sounds like they are some mean hikers."

"No, they are birders," contradicted Patsy, "heard them saying they are going to look for the Narina Trogon."

"Ha! They'll probably hike for miles and walk past hundreds of birds and not see one. I'll tell you what, lets ask the old NT to show them his backside tomorrow morning and see if they notice him," said Mad M.

"They are definitely hikers," continued Willie, "did you smell those boots they left outside their tents? Yuk!"

"One of them has got a wooden canoe, so let's wait and see what happens tomorrow," replied Mad Monk, "and they are really *doff*. Purps the Loerie is calling above their heads, see, and there are five of them with binos and not one can even find Purp."



ÿ ÿ ÿ ÿ ÿ ÿ

ÿ

"Monkey Indaba, Mon-key Indaba! Come everyone, we need to warra-warra," called out the Speaker of the Forest. So the monkeys gathered together just before sun-

set.

Wise Willie spoke first: "They were up and hiking by seven this morning, down along the beach and back through the forest, in less than three hours. That's pretty quick for Gautengerlengers."

"Some were very quick, like that tall thin guy who talks a lot, and the skinny one with no hair on top but lots on his face. Real greyhounds."

"Yes, that's Alan and Geoff. And then their leader, some old geezer called Deon, scolded them for going too fast, but no one takes things too seriously. Seems like they *smaak* our indigenous forest. They got a bit shattered by the humidity, though."

"That serves them right for hiking in December. And they spotted the Trogon. So much excitement you would swear that they had found Eldorado. There was some chick called Jackie, must have taken about a million photos: The crabs in the mangroves, old zeebie zebra and his family and the Fish Eagles, snap-snap-snap."

"Lets get down to details, here," Patsy interrupted, "our first raid got nothing more than rusks and one apple."

"Don't worry," said Willie, "I see they are all gathering for a braai and drinking lots of beers and wine. That means hangovers tomorrow, and they

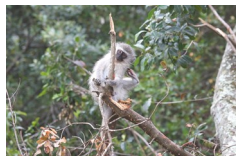


Braai and socialising time. Photo: Harry Parsley.

will forget the rules. We raid again as soon as they leave camp."

CHRISTMAS CAMP

ÿ ÿ ÿ ÿ ÿ ÿ



ÿ

"I don't said Mad believe it,"
Monk a few
mornings later, "all up at seven, prompt and
ready to hike again. That leader of theirs must
be a real dragon."

"No," said Wise Willie, "I think they have
just discovered how beautiful Northern Natal is,



*All present, no hangovers. Photo: Harry Parsley
with all our lagoons and forests and beaches.*

Did you hear what they said about Ntsele-
ni? The most beautiful coastal forest hike they



Stunning beaches at Umlalasi.

have ever done, and these guys and gals have
done hundreds of hikes. They loved the stran-

gler figs and the tall leadwoods and even the
mangroves. And yesterday they saw the Spotted
Ground Thrush at Dlinza. Hell, man we haven't
even seen one of those."

"Who cares about birds, did you see them
jump around like squirrels with fleas when Ka



Bird watching at Dlinza Forest. Photo: H Parsley.

came into the camp?"

"Ka, that ugly ol' black mamba?"

"Ja, he sidled right alongside the ablution
block, then scaled that big fig tree right next to
one of the tents. What a circus! The White-Eared
Barbets, silly noisy feathered fools, were trying to
dive bomb Ka and were going ape, oops, sorry
Willie, were going fowl. Even the Greenbuls were
hopping from branch to branch. Some of the hu-
man hikers ran for cameras, but most just ran for
cover. Bet they were too scared to sleep last
night. Imagine finding a two metre long black
mamba inside your sleeping bag?!?"

"Ah, you have given me a plan," said Pick-
Pocket Patsy, "maybe we CAN raid the camp at

CHRISTMAS CAMP

last. We need a decoy, to attract their attention elsewhere. While they run around looking for cameras we slip in the back and pinch some of that *lekker* fruit, maybe even that big christmas cake of theirs."

"Talking of Christmas, I hear they are having a Xmas Eve Dinner tonight, up in town. Apparently someone called Baba Xmas is going to be the guest speaker.

I think I'll take a swing up to the Hearty Meal Restaurant and check them out, maybe score a few scraps. The old duck up there always over-feeds everyone."

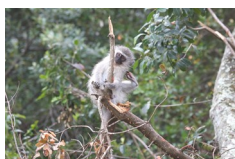


Baba Xmas arrived with war cries and presents.

ŷ ŷ ŷ ŷ ŷ ŷ ŷ

"Ha, it fi-
we scored
toes and choc-
cuits and"

"Oh shut-up Patsy, you are just a petty thief,



nally worked,
some toma-
olates and bis-

ŷ

and those nice ladies Jessie and Bonny and Ricky just felt sorry for you because it is Christmas Day. Wait till you see the Master-Blaster in action," replied Mad Monk. "I want to raid that big fraudster Baba Xmas."

"So you watched the party, huh?"

"Can you believe it? Marion in a sexy red dress, Alison and Joan making friends with everyone. Then, a skinny *Muzungu* tries to dress up like a ZULU WARRIOR and chants a load of drivel and everyone claps. Con artist, that's all!"

"So what did he say, then?"

"*Siya Hamba ! Siya Hlamba ! Siya Dlala ! Siya Huba !* The grammar and tenses are probably wrong, zulu warrior my hairy monkey backside."

"Oh cute, that's the same as their T-shirts, We Hiked, We Swam, We Played, We Rocked," said Patsy, going all schmaltzy.

"I still say he is a fraud. Do you know he uses ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE to call up the birds? Deon the pseudo- zulu and Bonny the Nice Chick and Jackie the Pic-Chick, they play the bird songs, that's *mos* cheating. Even Makkie and his wife were fooled into breaking cover," declared Mad Monk.

"You mean Makkie the Malkoha Green Coucal," said Willie in disgust. "That's getting pictures by false means, calling them with that machine! Not fair at all. Old time birders spent YEARS searching for them. I agree, we need to bring that Deon-oke down. Tell you what, you guys create a diversion tonight while I pee in his wine. That will give him bad gout for a few days and he won't be able to hike. That's revenge."

"Good plan, Willie, we'll get him tonight."

ŷ ŷ ŷ ŷ ŷ ŷ ŷ

"It worked,
artist cannot
revenge he is
a monster-difficult quiz for everyone."



now that con-
hike, so for
sitting planning

"Wow, and talk about conning the animals. They are going out on Bob's boat. Bet Bob throws dead fish to the Fish Eagles just so they can get more pictures."

"So they are going up the river. But some of

CHRISTMAS CAMP

them have lots of energy. That George oke must be madly in love, 'cos he paddled his home-made wooden canoe for miles up the river just so Pic-Chick Jackie could take some more photos."

"This is such a lovey-dovey camp. That Este and Arthur, schnozzle-schnozzle, non stop. And Rodney, for years a bachelor, now suddenly he goes gaga for super-nice Canadian Ellen? And Bruno, apparently he used to be a tiger in hiking-boots, but Ricky has got him as tame as mouse in slippers. Und Helmut und Christa, as close as leeches. And they all went off in couples to eat hundreds of prawns at the Prawn Shack. Barbarians."

"I declare an amnesty," said Wise Willie. "They are having such a great camp; they want to carry on forever. I vote we leave them in peace."

"Yes," said Patsy, "for once hikers have got our respect. Let them enjoy their camp. Let's go raid the main camp instead."

UMLALASI Merle Doctor



Mad Monkey brother of Pick-Pocket Patsy and cousin of Wise Willie. Photo: Jackie Cilliers.

Deon and Bonny were excellent Camp Leaders, and went to a great deal of trouble organizing the entire stay, where one could join in or do your own thing.

Some of us were not into starting off at 5.30am for Dlinza Forest and started a bit later, doing a forest walk and the wonderful Aerial walk, and only left when we became very hungry and

needed lunch! Ntseleni Forest walk, outside Empanjeni along grasslands and then the river bank was a good morning out.

Next to the entrance of the camp is the Raffia Palm Monument, a line of Raffia at the entrance and a delightful walk in the grove of Raffia palms. What a giggle to find railway lines at the end of the path, so we turned around and enjoyed it all over again!

Indaba campers had to scale a very steep dune to get to the beach. The Inkwazi Camp was along a longer easy path cut through the forest to the car park, which had a boardwalk to the main beach.

The Mangrove trail and the 4 km River mouth trail along the Umlalazi River was full of different crabs, from tiny pink ones to great-big ones armed with a large red pincher. Also reached from the camp is the circular Siyayi Dune forest trail, or there is the footbridge over the Siyayi River (lagoon/swamp) to the beach.



Arthur on the mangrove trail. Photo: Harry Parsley.

The quiz night was great fun, although the Quiz Master when asked to repeat a question blurted out the answer, so we all got that one right! Arthur got voted the best 'pole' dancer by the woman. First prize was to get the wonderful T-shirts before everyone else.

Booze cruise evening up the Umlalazi river saw Jackie take the most amazing photo of a Fish Eagle with the fish, the captain had thrown out, in it's claws. I'm thinking of selling my new car to buy the Canon Multishot she used! Jess started pulling on Harry's shirt when she saw the bridge looming ahead, which just cleared our heads.

'Baba Xmas' (Deon) entertained us at the 'Hearty Meal' restaurant on Xmas Eve with

CHRISTMAS CAMP



Dune forest walk.

Photo: Harry Parsons

CHRISTMAS CAMP

a 'Praise-song' accompanied with much gyrating, and laughter (but did not fall down) then he handed out the Xmas presents. We had Gammon, roast beef, turkey and succulent lamb roast, ending up with mouth watering deserts. My eyes were too big for my tummy!

On Xmas morning, Deon organized a Beach braai, complete with bubbly (don't ask how he got it past the 4 beach personnel!) Some of the guys played beach games in the hot sun, Alan nearly got caught up in the back wash, and Jess saw a large brown tail fin in the water.

Pictures in my mind are of the Zebra leaning on the toilet block or walking past my tent. (baby was Zebra born while we were there), the monkeys stealing eggs, the Yellow-billed Hawk glaring down at the ablution block, when I went to shower, the Red Duiker in camp, clean beaches, the wind blowing the sand and stinging my legs on the last day, waves breaking in the surf, the joy of seeing the Fish eagle swooping down, and the enjoyment of being with other like minded people.

Too soon it was time to pack up, but there is al-



Xmas brunch on the beach. Photo: Merle Doctor

ways next year.



Resident camp zebra. Photo: Jackie Cilliers.



Fish eagle catching fish. Photo: Jackie Cilliers.

HIKE REVIEWS

STRANDLOPER TRAIL

Arvin Chaitram

On the 27th and 28th of December 2009 Beverly Brockman and Wendy Farrow, respectively, led two groups of twelve lemmings...err...hikers each on the five-day Strandloper trail between the Kei river mouth and Gonubie in the picturesque Eastern Cape. I was in Beverly's group, together with Nigel and Catherine Coni, Peter Burman, Denise Dexter, Dr Armin Fernum and Ms Olla, Martin Leutgeb and Ms Fatima, Cheryl Brits, and Peter Stanford. Our group commenced the trail first because we were, overall, far better-looking than the other group.

Unfortunately our first day started rather disastrously when we got Fatima to bungee-jump off a rock without a rope (I said we were good-looking, I did not say we were smart!). Seriously, she took a nasty fall and hurt herself. She and her partner, Martin, wisely dropped out of the hike on the following day and sought medical attention. Fortunately, she was diagnosed with not having sustained any serious injury. When I last heard from her, she was partying at her brother's place in Plett. The rest of us soldiered on.

The trail is just under 60 km long and relatively easy, the terrain being substantially flat, consisting mainly of beach, rocks, boulders, and pebbles. Although the trail is nowhere near as scenic or as strenuous as the Otter trail (perhaps it could be appropriately referred to as the baby Otter trail), it most certainly has its own peculiar beauty. Touted as a beach hike, it certainly does not disappoint in this area. From the coastal vegetation, including colourful seaweed, to the endangered Oystercatchers, to strange-looking beached fish (we saw a decomposing whale...ok I know that whales are mammals), a myriad of Blue Bottles, and thousands of sea urchins, to the eternal sound of waves crashing upon rocks...it all makes one feel momentarily transported to some exotic island, that is until you bump into some friendly South African who says "goeie more" and holds you up (not with a gun, thankfully) for a few moments whilst enquiring about your journey.

I have yet to see as many shells on a beach. There were patches where all that you walked on were shells. One could have spent hours marvelling at these shells whilst attempting to find that special one to tuck into one's backpack...oops is that allowed...I actually meant that one could

have spent hours marvelling at the sea shells whilst attempting to find that special one which, after having found and admired it, one would gently return it to its spot in the sand.

Moving swiftly on, the overnight cabins were reasonably comfortable in the circumstances. I observed, with some ambivalence, that the first cabin, which was situated on the rocks at the edge of the sea, had recently been damaged by what appears to have been a combination of bad weather and rough seas. Ambivalent because, on the one hand it was a fantastic location for a cabin (perhaps a case of ignorance being bliss!), but on the other hand (and this is only with the benefit of hindsight, having already observed the extent of the damage to the cabin) the cabin had indeed been somewhat perilously situated. If the cabin were to be re-built on the same spot, I probably would not have the b... I mean the guts to spend the night there. I would probably sleep under a tree in my sleeping bag some 40 meters further north.

Sorry, I digress. The long drop toilets at two of the cabins were the pits (pun intended). However, it was correctly observed by one of my companions that these were luxurious in comparison to the long-drops on Mount Kilimanjaro. A very small price to pay for the natural beauty that surrounded us, I suppose.

Perhaps the trail would have been more challenging had there been more estuaries to cross. It was almost tragic to come upon a major river mouth to be greeted by a sandbar. Apparently, this was due to the lack of recent rains in the area. We crossed just two rivers (the Kwelerha and the Gonubie) with relative ease, although it should be noted that the Gonubie River can become challenging if not crossed at low tide. The advantage of the sand-barred estuaries (is that an oxymoron?) is that warm lagoons were created and one had the choice of swimming in the fresh-water lagoon or the very cold sea. Of course we did both. There is nothing more invigorating, or more likely to appease one's desire for a cold beer after a long day's hike than taking a dip in the crisp (okay freezing) Eastern Cape sea.

We were fortunate enough to have hiked in fantastic sunny weather all week. The best views, for me, were from atop the 60 meter high cliffs on day 2. The best swimming beach was at Bulura river mouth, and the most fun appeared to be

HIKE REVIEWS

had by floating down the Kwelerha river. We were a seasoned group of wise and mature hikers and we got along well, constantly looking out for each other. Peter Burman was especially helpful to all in need.

The Strandloper is a hike that is well-organised by Brian and Erica Church from the Ecocentre at Kei Mouth. I would strongly recommend this trail to, especially, beginner hikers as it is the type of trail that would inspire beginners to continue hiking. It is also a perfect prelude to a more demanding, yet somewhat similar, trail like the Otter trail.

Overall, it was certainly a week well spent.

DOMES POOLS: 13th SEPTEMBER, 2009

Tracey May



We were full at 17 people on the Domes Pools Adventure hike on the 13th September. On the hike were: Gail & Andrew Mallinson, Peter Roos, Tracey May, Roy Harris, Rod Allport, Jani Verster, Johann

Liebenberg, Elsa Wloschowsky, Steve and Jane Coia, Dion Ferreira, Cheryl Britz, Olga Bazhler, Giulia Criscuolo, Heinz Hoch and Wendy Palm.

We set off in beautiful weather from the Mountain Club car park on the Northern side of the Magaliesberg, kitted in hiking gear as we were not expecting to swim as it was early Spring after all! An easy walk in – always a pleasure from this entry point for Domes – led us to the first ‘tricky bit’ a bit of rock climbing through a narrow gorge. Everyone opted to try it instead of the easy way around and all made it without incident.

Next we came to the bum slide where almost everyone decided to give it a try, some fully clothed - (much to my surprise as it is a bit rough and the water was pretty cold). We all laughed a lot and despite a few tumbles, everyone was fine and really enjoyed the exhilarating slide down to the small pool. We stopped for an hour lunch at the big pool where we sunned ourselves like lizards and a few brave souls – Gail, Andrew, Johan and Giulia – swam in the crispy cold water. After a quick hike back to the car park and we were back in time for drinks at Head Office by 4.30.



HIKE REVIEWS

ADDO DESERT HIKE – 12 to 19 DECEMBER 2009

Allan Lill

Robbie McDonald's series of annual hikes down the South African coast continued last December with a hike starting at Ocean View and ending five days later at Colchester, which lies some 40 km up the coast from Port Elizabeth.

The small group, Robbie McDonald, Sue Desmond, Roland Heap, Padmini Moodley, Jenny Ladson and Allan and Zandree Lill, travelled down to Ocean View over two days, stopping over at Noupoort in the Cape, south of Colesburg. We were joined on the Sunday afternoon at Ocean View by Carini Maree who had travelled up from Cape Town to do the hike, bringing the group up to eight in total.

Ocean View is a farm offering some lovely camping sites situated close to the beach and is accessed via the coastal section of the Addo El-



The hiking group.

Photo: Allan Lill.

phant Park from the town of Alexandria. The stunning Alexandria Trail (a two day trail that every hiker should do) starts in this part of the Addo Elephant Park and leads onto the beach close to Ocean View on the first day of the trail. Monday morning saw the start of our hike with the beach being accessed after a short walk down from the campsite. Each of us had container capacity to carry about 10 litres of water to cater for what was to come, but we only had to carry a relatively small amount of water each from Ocean View because Robbie had planned to refill with water at the Alexandria Trail overnight hut about 7 km down the

beach. The first part of our hike followed the Alexandria Trail down to the coastal hut. The overnight coastal hut sits high above the beach, set some way back from a sandstone cliff, with a view overlooking Seal Island out to sea, on which there is a lighthouse. To access the hut the trail climbs about 50 m from the beach to the top of a sandstone cliff edge using a constructed wooden ladder and a rope to assist reaching the bottom of the ladder on the steep beach sand slope. The trail then runs near the cliff edge for about 1,5 km with large sand dunes on the right and the sea way below on the left. We reached the Alexandria Trail overnight hut around midday and the group took a break on the deck in front of the hut while everyone took on about 10 litres (10 kg) of water in their containers.

We had known from the start that the way forward from the hut was a bit uncertain. The Alexandria Trail leaves the hut and goes inland over large dunes back into the Addo Park. The hope had been that there would be a way back down to the beach from the hut, but it had not been easy to verify this in advance. A quick exploration around the hut only led into thick bush. We then decided to walk back along the trail we had come along to the hut until we reached the sandstone cliffs again, maybe 3 or 4 hundred meters distance. A decision then had to be made: go back along the trail for about 1,5 km and use the ladder and rope to get down onto the beach again, or push through the scrub along the cliff edge in the direction we wanted to be going in the hope that a way would open up further on for us to get down to the beach. We decided to try pushing through the scrub, which was not very high. In the beginning we made fairly good progress, but the scrub became thicker and higher, and thorny, until we were forced to abandon this and return to the path. By this time we could also see quite far ahead along the sandstone cliffs to which there seemed no end. This exploration cost us possibly an hour, and we then still had to retrace our steps back to the ladder where we had a good rest before descending back down to the beach.

Once back on the beach we continued our walk down the coast. It was near high tide and the gap between the sea on our left and the high sandstone cliffs on the right got fairly narrow at times. The beach also gave way to long rocky and stony stretches that slowed progress and

HIKE REVIEWS

*Climbing the dune.*

made walking difficult. The sun was getting lower and there was no sign of anywhere to camp. Sitting out the night on rough rocky ground stuck within a few meters width between the sea and dangerous sandy cliffs was looking like an unwelcome possibility. Fortunately the rocky ground eventually gave way to beach with a decent width between the sea and the sandy cliffs and we stopped to overnight. We still camped too close to the sandy cliffs for comfort, but wanted to avoid being surprised in the night by any waves.

The next morning we set off again and the beach soon opened up becoming very wide and flat, probably more than 100 m wide in some parts. Most of the group had decided not to carry tents in order to save weight, but had some sort of plan to protect themselves if it rained. We spent the next three days walking along the beach at a fairly leisurely pace, stopping to swim in the sea on

occasions (very cold), and stopping for the day well before sunset. There were high dunes to be explored leading from the beach, which some of us climbed. Along the way we came across two dead sharks washed up on the beach, one quite large. We also came across a dead whale and a porpoise. We took shelter for the next two nights behind the arms of sand dunes reaching down to the beach. It did not rain for the duration of the hike other than for a few minutes at one time in the late afternoon, but sand blowing from the beach and sand dunes caused a bit of frustration on a few occasions, particularly for those who did not have tents while trying to prepare supper in the open.

While the terrain is very flat, being mostly a beach walk with no river crossings, the conditions were fairly harsh. With not a single river or stream reaching the sea over the 4 ½ days of coastal walking, all water for drinking and any washing had to be carried. The second largest dune field in the world (largest in the southern hemisphere) extends right down to the wide flat beaches over an approximately 50 km stretch, without a single reef of rocks extending from the sea over the last three days, maybe 40 km distance. Walking on the beach in the heat of December without a single tree or shrub in sight to take shelter from the sun made the hike very exposed.

The last day of the hike was quite short and we reached the Sundays River, which is very wide, at around 10 am. After sitting next to the river for a while we followed a sand road inland for about 5 km, reaching Colchester on the N2 at around 11:30 am. From there Robbie had arranged for a mini-bus to transport us all back to Ocean View, which duly arrived at the appointed time.

Not many people have walked this stretch of beach because of the lack of fresh water for about 50 km. It is indeed a beautiful stretch of unspoilt coast. Thanks to Robbie for a very well organised hike for which he did a lot of planning and research.

MID-WEEK HIKES

THE SOMABULA HIKE

Nicole Broich, (aged 11)

On Sunday, the 22.11.2009 some of our family and friends went to Somabula. This was a new place to hike near Bronkhorstspuit, next to the Cullinan Diamond Mine.

What a surprise - a lot of children from our German School were also there!

The Somabula hike was a lovely, easy hike through grassland and small hills. The surrounding was very beautiful with lots of animals, because it is a game reserve.

We saw Wildebeests, Impalas, Blesbucks, Zebras and Giraffes. An old fashioned train passed us nearby with smoke steaming out.

Afterwards we grilled at the lapa, which was next to a dam.

Then came the next surprise! Two mouth-



Lothar Hufner braaing after the hike.

Photo: Harry Parsley.

watering cakes appeared out of nowhere! It was Jessica's birthday and she spoilt us all.

At the dam some did bird watching, because there were some interesting birds.

We all had fun and had a good day.



Dung beetle seen whilst on the Somabula hike

SOMEWHERE AT THE WILD COAST

Selwyn Lager

To me the best way to spend a short holiday is to include a hike, exploring the outside of your comfort zone.

It was one of those beautiful December mornings at the wild Coast, which is a scenically stunning part of the Garden route and acclaimed as one of Africa's most beautiful coastal belts. Eight of us including family members, decided to take an early morning day hike into the mountains. Longish trails in these parts have been frequented on many occasions by our Club's enthusiasts. For us there were no particular trails to follow, so we clamored up rocky slopes through bright sunshine, with a view framed by blue skies and white fluffy clouds.

Halfway up the mountain and breathing heavily, we paused to rest. Laid out below us was an outdoor theatre of dramatic scenery, an expanse of hills, strips of densely wooded plateau terminating in white dunes, beaches and the sapphire colour of the sea. We were all staring in awe. It evoked wonder and nostalgia for all of us. The world looked a simpler place from up here.

Continuing with our arduous climb -and this was by no means easy- we reached the highest point for the day. I seldom thought about my limitations as they never make me sad. Perhaps there is just a touch of yearning at times but it is vague, like a breeze among fynbos. We found comfort in an alcove where we all decided to rest and have lunch. Whilst relaxing, the abundance of bird species and their symphonies of song kept some of our birding lovers with their binoculars happy. Also, the scent of fynbos wafting off some of the lower slopes was really pleasant.

It was about mid afternoon that we decided to abruptly abort our outing and make our way down. Mountains in the distance were already in cloud and deep dark bands of water-laden thunderheads were marching towards us. Somehow, it seemed to spoil our fun. Many of the times when we visit the Cape the same thing seems to happen.

As the morning's freshness was replaced by the weariness of midday and when leg muscles seem to give under the strain, the descent seemed endless. Suddenly, nothing goes quite as you wish, with slippery falls on the slopes among most of us. Minor injuries required first aid at our hotel.

MID-WEEK HIKES

Why do I always forget that I really hate this kind of moment? The thing is, at the end of the trail I remember the experience through a rainbow lens. Memories of back ache, sore feet and exhaustion seem to dissolve away. I was left with the elation of having covered a substantial distance on my own two feet and the rush of endorphins zinging through my body.

KHATHLAMPI **Sandra Atherstone**

It wasn't quite our normal outing. We were walking along the fence at Kathlambi (Cradle of Humankind) when we came upon a 4m python lying quietly in the grass with its head on the other side of the fence. We spent time taking photos even going so far as to move the grass away with a hiking stick. It lay there very patiently for the pho-

to shoot with out moving that is until the blonde amongst us decided that it looked cute and stroked its back. The response was instant; it rose about two foot into the air and struck out. Of course she was at the middle of the body whilst a German girl and myself were still taking pictures at the head. It was like something out of NatGeo Wild. Luckily the fence intervened and no harm was done. It then took off over the fence and vanished. One of the guys came to Barbara's defence saying she was from New Zealand and they don't have snakes there. Very chivalrous I thought.

Life is never boring.

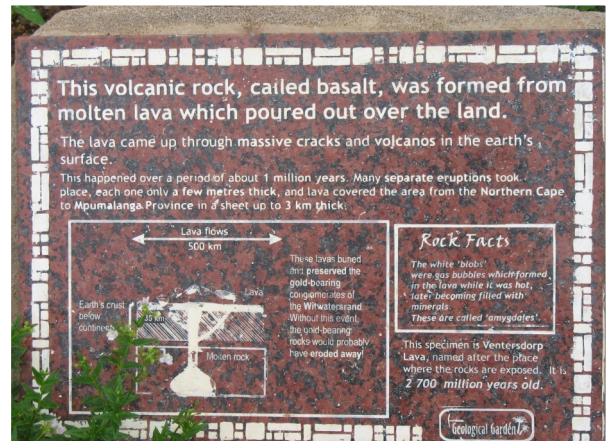


The python hiding in the grass.

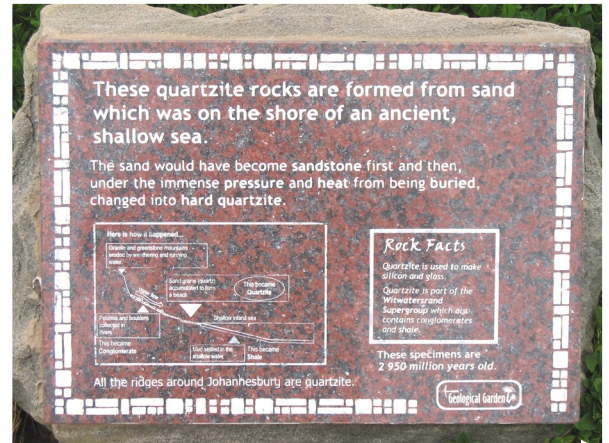
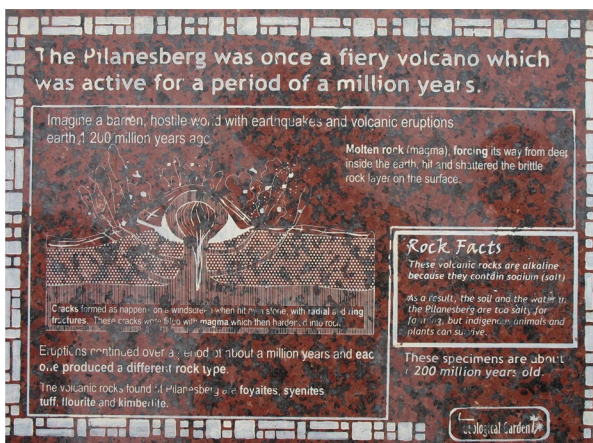
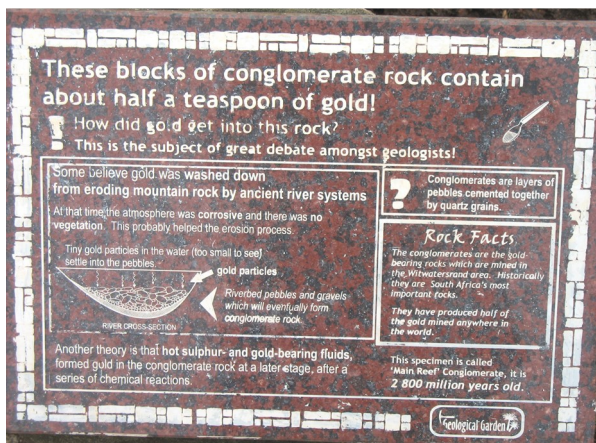
Photo: Sandra Atherstone.

MID-WEEK: BOTANICAL GARDENS

Looking at the Geo-



logical exhibits in the gardens at the start of the hike.



MID-WEEK BOTANICAL GARDENS

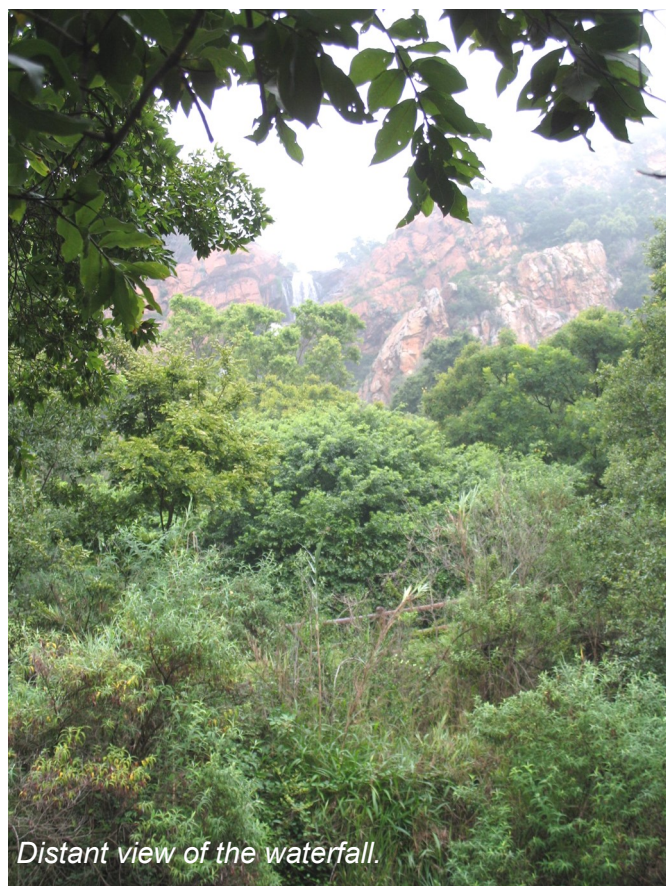
From previous page.....

Now that the educational part of the hike is complete we can get under-way with the hike itself.

The group had great views of the Black Eagles flying.



Jean Williams and Jessie Moehl leading the way.



Distant view of the waterfall.



The waterfall up close.

MID-WEEK HIKES

INSPIRATION HIKE.

Lending a helping hand to climb the gorge.



Pictures by Merle Doctor



SANDOWAN. A great view from the top.



Lesley (front), Svitlana and Olga (back).

Photo: Merle Doctor.

STRANDLOPER TRAIL



Photo: Beverley Brockman.

Strandloper Trail (see article on page 24).

SUNDAY HIKE: CASTLE GORGE



Left

Alan Chater led the photographic hike whilst weighed down with a ton of photographic equipment. The rock formations provided a wonderful canvas for the photographers.



Right

The charming young German couple who joined the photographic hike and took numerous photographs.

SUNDAY HIKE: CASTLE GORGE



Top.

A panoramic view of the vast open sky and ochre-coloured rock formations kept the shutters clicking.

Left.

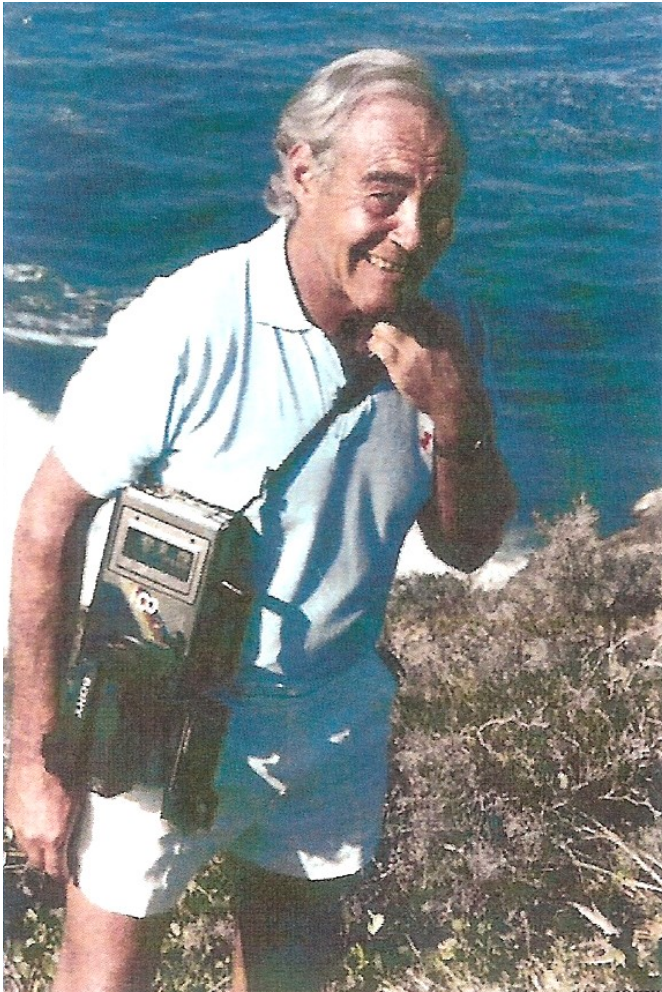
The Magaliesburg has some of the oldest geological formations on earth. The ones shown here are an excellent example of this.

Each hiker constructed his/her own version of what the fascinating shapes reminded them of. The lunch break on the hike was taken amongst these rocks so everyone had a chance to admire this wonder of nature.

Photos: Harry Parsley.

OBITUARY

OBITUARY: NEIL MCLAREN, 1934-2010
LIFE MEMBER
 Submitted by Merle Doctor



Neil McLaren

14 February 1934 - 18 February 2010

Neil died peacefully on the 18th February after a very long brave battle with cancer. Our condolences go to Judy and family.

We honour and remember Neil.

Neil left school at fifteen and trained as a fitter and turner. He obtained his technical qualification the hard way by studying at night school. When he retired in 1990 he had reached the senior position of "Engineering Manager in Customer Engineering" for IBM for the whole of

Southern Africa, including Namibia, Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe, with a staff of over 500 reporting to him. What an achievement!

He married Judy in 1990 and the two of them had many wonderful action packed safaris, camps and hiking around the country.

Neil will be remembered for the wonderful work he did at Foothold. For over 10 years he and Judy would arrive on the Thursday before the Foothold weekend and proceed to mow the extensive lawns, so we could pitch our tents. He also donated the sit-on mower, which is still in use today. Repairs were undertaken together with the other men after which they would join the ladies for tea and cake.

One year Judy and Neil organized a trip to Rock Tail Bay to watch the turtles lay eggs. The drive in was through thick sand and most of the cars got stuck. Neil pondered the problem, and hauled out something from his boot, that he had especially bought, for just such an event, then issued instructions. Peter remembers, "I was the clot, who got stuck, all the ladies had to push me out. Charmaine and I had a huge fight over this and Neil was the one who intervened to stop it. This is the kind of guy he was". On the drive out, we were met with a raging river across the road. Standing on the other side, Neil asked, "Whose car is still on the other side?" "Mine I replied, "No way am I going to drive it over, it can stay there". In no time at all Neil had quietly spoken to one of the rangers and my car was driven over. I had had so much trouble with that car, I'm not sure I wanted it back!

His strength of mind, dependability, philosophical attitude and generosity never ceased, and his sense of humour was always there. His passion for trips to the country: Drakensberg, Pilansberg, Kruger Park and Foothold never waned.

Neil was a great guy and true friend, we miss him already and remember him with fondness and the way he was.

My last words to Neil were, "Hello Neil, how are you?" He replied with, "Hello Merle, I'm fine".

Yes Neil was such a very FINE MAN.

Extracts from tributes by Judy McLaren, Peter Coletta and Merle Doctor

ASTRONOMY

CELESTIAL OMENS FOR 2010

Paul Rangecroft

2010, an important year for our country as host of the FIFA World Cup, started off in a very auspicious way. A rare coincidence of lunar phenomena occurred on New Year's Eve – a lunar eclipse took place at the time of a blue moon. Whilst both phenomena are associated with the full moon phase in the lunar cycle, they rarely occur at the same time and very rarely occur together on the last day of the year.

Generally, full moon occurs once in every month of the year. Occasionally (every 2.4 years on average), full moon occurs twice within a month, and the second full moon in the month is referred to as a *blue moon*. This phenomenon is related to the difference between the duration of the lunar cycle (29.5 days) and the average length of a calendar month (30.4 days). Because the duration of the lunar cycle is almost a full day shorter, the timing of full moon retreats from one month to the next (except in March), occurring a little earlier in each successive month. When the timing of full moon coincides with the beginning of a month, a blue moon will occur at the end of the month. Full moon occurred on 2 December last year and again on New Year's Eve. A blue moon cannot occur in the month of February, however, because February is shorter than a lunar month, even in a leap year (for this reason, the timing of full moon advances in March rather than retreats).

A lunar eclipse occurs when the moon passes through the shadow cast by the earth. This takes place at times of full moon when the earth is positioned between the sun and the moon. A lunar eclipse does not take place with every full moon, however. Whilst the moon is aligned with the sun and the earth in a vertical sense at the time of full moon, it is seldom in alignment in a horizontal sense. This is because the moon's orbital path around the earth is tilted slightly (by just over 5°) relative to the earth's orbital path around the sun. Vertical alignment occurs at the two points in the moon's orbit where its orbital path intersects the plane of the earth's orbital path – these points are referred to as *nodes*. Full moon occurs at a slightly different position in the moon's orbit each time. For a lunar eclipse to occur, full moon must take place when the moon is positioned close to one of the two nodes. At other times, the moon

passes either above or below the earth's shadow. The shadow cast by the earth has two parts, a dark inner shadow called the *umbra*, and a lighter outer shadow called the *penumbra*. Projected onto an imaginary screen, the two parts would appear as a dark disc with a lighter rim. If full moon occurs when the moon is positioned very close to a node, the entire visible surface of the moon passes through the umbra and a *total eclipse* takes place. If the moon is positioned a little further from a node, part of the visible surface passes through the umbra and a *partial eclipse* takes place. If the moon is positioned still further from a node, the visible surface passes through the lighter penumbra only and a *penumbral eclipse* occurs. Penumbral eclipses are not normally apparent to the human eye. A total eclipse can last for as long as 1hr 45minutes. Lunar eclipses are visible only from those parts of the world where the moon is up in the sky at the time.

One would expect that the moon would disappear from view during a total eclipse. This rarely happens, however, because sunlight passing through the earth's atmosphere is refracted onto the moon's surface. The refracted light gives the moon a reddish colour – the blue component of sunlight is scattered more readily than the red component by particles in the earth's atmosphere, so the light refracted onto the moon is mostly reddish in colour. The colour and darkness of lunar eclipses vary from one eclipse to the next, depending upon conditions in the earth's atmosphere at the time.

The occurrence of both lunar and solar eclipses follows a cycle, known as the *saros cycle*, which is repeated every 18 years. The cycle was discovered in ancient times and is used by astronomers to predict when eclipses will occur. It can also be used to check the dating of events in past times known to have taken place at the time of an eclipse, and to establish whether there is any scientific backing for events such as the period of darkness at the time of Christ's crucifixion recorded in the Bible.

Solar eclipses occur at times of new moon when the moon is positioned between the sun and the earth. As with lunar eclipses, the moon has to be at a nodal position in its orbit for a solar eclipse to occur. Lunar and solar eclipses are often coupled, with a lunar eclipse occurring first and a solar eclipse occurring roughly two weeks later, or

...butterflies, vultures and innovation.

vice versa. This is the time that it takes for the moon to move between full moon and new moon positions, which coincides more or less with the time that it takes for the moon to move between the two nodal positions. An eclipse coupling took place at the beginning of this year, with a solar eclipse taking place in the morning on 15 January, roughly two weeks after the lunar eclipse that took place on New Year's Eve.

This eclipse coupling makes the coincidence of lunar phenomena on New Year's Eve even more auspicious. But just what can we expect from these celestial omens? A promotion, a bonus, a recovery in the economy, love and happiness perhaps, a place for Bafana Bafana in the World Cup final perhaps not!

TRANSPARENT BUTTERFLY:

Sent in by Coen Terblance

It comes from Central America and is found from Mexico to Panama. It is quite common in its zone, but it's not easy to find because of its transparent wings, which is a natural camouflage mechanism.

A butterfly as delicate as finely blown glass, the presence of this rare tropical gem is used by rain forest ecologists as an indication of high habitat quality and its demise alerts them of ecological change.

Top: The Club's web now includes an Environmental section. The first entry deals with vulture conservation. Check it out sometime.



Below: Merle Doctor took this picture at Oliver Tambo Airport's parking area. It gives thread-bare a new meaning.



PHOTO GALLERY

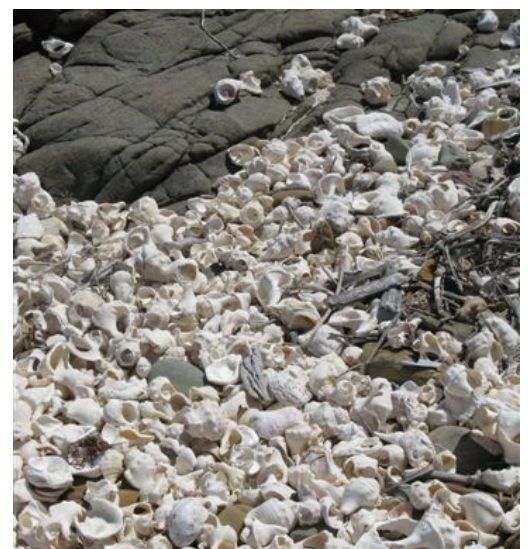


SIBON PICTURES TAKEN BY MERLE DOCTOR



PHOTO GALLERY

STRANDLOPER TRAIL PICTURES BY BEVERLEY BROCKMAN



SENQU ADVERTISEMENT



SENQU TRAILS

HIKING IN LESOTHO
Accessed from the Free State
All self-catering

Well established camp Site at 2500m on the banks of Khubelu River.
Use this as your base for guided valley activities-day hikes, fly fishing, mountain bike trails and 4x4 routes

For the adventurous-
Strike out for the Drakensberg Escarpment for guided 2 to 3 day trips. A moderate 7 hour hike takes you to Mponjwane and the Mnweni Cutback area, with packhorses to carry your overnight loads

Contact: 082 56 36 242
oliver@senqutrails.com
www.senqutrails.com



Photo: Jessie Moehl.

The train driver of Castle Gorge.