



**Mahai
Camp**

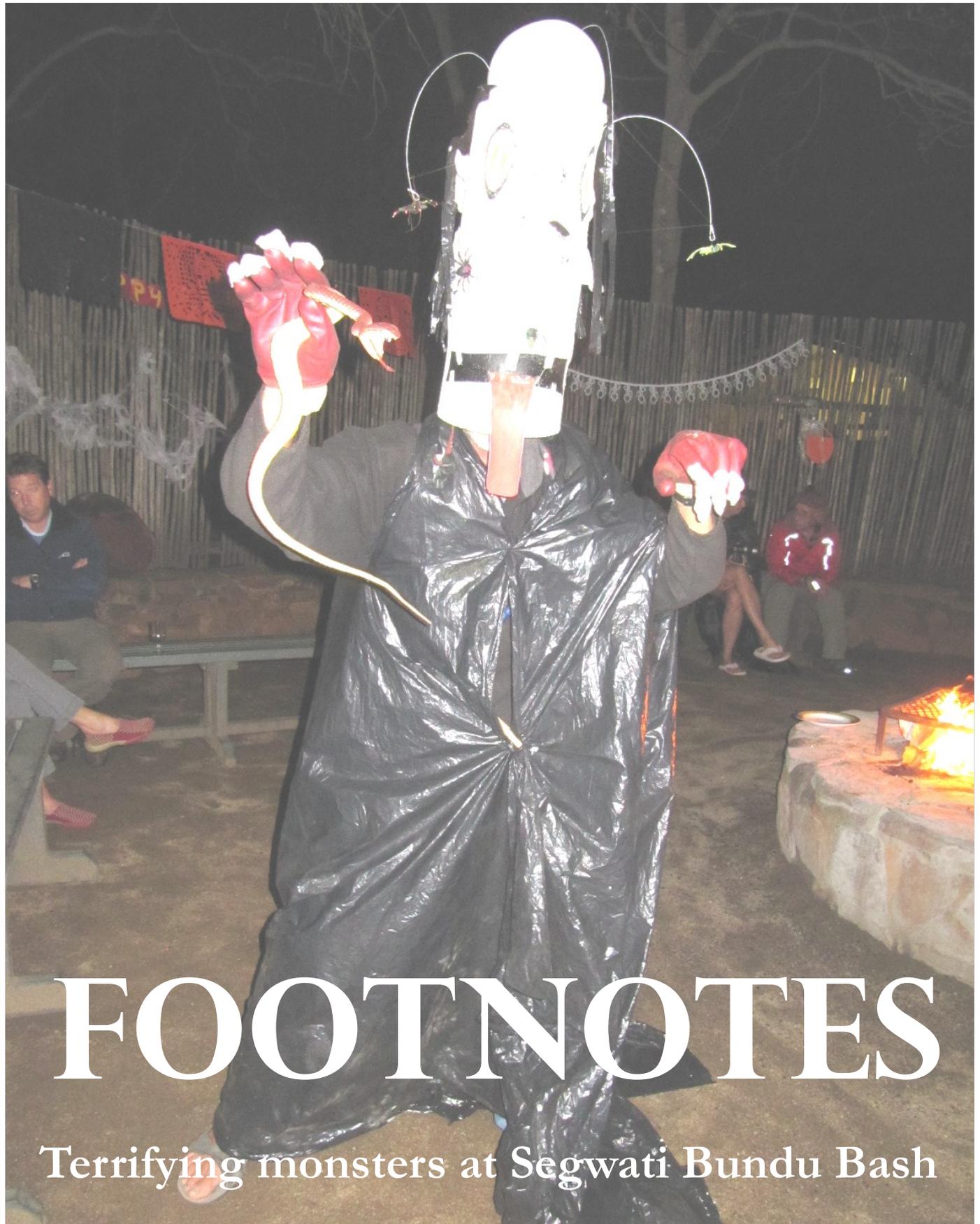


**Leaders
Work-
shop**



Newsletter

January to April 2010.



IN THIS ISSUE



**Editor's Notes
Harry Parsley**



The Halloween Bundu Bash was attended by numerous weird monsters. The scariest of all was this white-headed monster, aka, Robbie Macdonald. The picture was taken by Jessie Moehl.

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From the front page of this edition of Footnotes you will notice that Footnotes will now appear on a four-monthly basis instead of thee monthly. The main reason for this is cost saving as the Club expenditure for printing is not insignificant. This has the consequence that the Programme of Hikes and other activities will also cover a four month period

The Halloween Bundu Bash at Segwati Ranch was as big a success as last year. Large populations of witches, wizards, pirates, robbers, hunch-backed creatures and more materialized from the darkness of the night to dance around the bonfire. Readers can see wonderful pictures of these creatures, the food they ate and the general social occasion on page 10.

Robbie conducted an informative workshop (page 9) for current and future hike leaders. Anyone wishing to be a hike leader can be assured of full support from the Club. As leaders fulfill a vital function in the Club why don't you consider becoming one?

Whilst on the theme of supporting the Club's activities, helpers are required to serve the tea and biscuits at the Slide Show evenings. The long standing contributors are standing down and, without new volunteers, we risk the disastrous situation of having no tea and biscuits at these evenings! Roland Heap's presentation at the last slide show attracted a large audience as is the case when he entertains the Club. Roland is also thanked for kindly providing a huge assortment of cakes and fine delicacies to eat on that evening.

The past few months have seen an encouraging increase in new members. New members not only bring new blood into the Club, but also contribute to its growth and stability. We have printed business cards with which members can promote the Club. These are available from the Club Administrator.

On a sadder note the Club mourns the passing of a past Chairman in Roger Gush. On page 27 you can read Chris Williams moving tribute to Roger.

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**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS
15th March, 2010**

Email all articles and correspondence to the editor.



Robbie Macdonald
Chairman

GOING THE EXTRA MILE: THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

On this beautiful summer morning with nothing better to do I picked up my copy of Footnotes and to my horror I realised that today is the deadline for all articles, etc. My immediate reaction was panic followed by the realisation that time is indeed flying and before we know it we will be celebrating the birth of a new year (don't worry Harry you will get this on time)

We have noticed a slow, but steady drop in membership over the past few years and so a special campaign to attract new members was introduced. I am very glad to report that as a direct result of actively encouraging visitors to join, our membership is now back to the level it used to be. We also realised that many opportunities were missed when members were unable to supply the Club's contact details to friends or acquaintances so we had business cards printed which are available from Marion our administrator.

Together with the MCSA (Mountain Club of South Africa) and the MPA (Magaliesberg Protection Association) we are opposing the development of the Kgaswane Country Lodge near Olifantsnek. The MPA has been concerned with the protection of the Magaliesberg since its establishment in 1975 and were instrumental in it being declared a "Natural Area" in 1977. The MPA are passionate about preserving the Magaliesberg and deserve our unanimous support. Membership is only R50.00 per annum. Details can be found on our web site.

As part of the HOSA hiking week in September a group of 18 boys from Girls and Boys Town was invited to Foothold to enjoy a day of adventure and fun clambering up the chain ladder, roaming along the ridge and following a meandering stream to the point where it plunges over the cliff, then descending using ropes down Footloose Gulley. The day was rounded off with a braai, which was eagerly devoured by the boys who had by then worked up a healthy appetite. My thanks to Helena Vaccaro who did a splendid job of keeping the high spirited lads under control.

Thanks to all who attended the Leaders Workshop, especially those who showed interest in becoming leaders. Many issues were raised and this information will be put to good use in future training and support.

There may be a few who are still recovering from a really great Bundu Bash at Sewati Ranch. On Saturday night we were treated to a splendid happy hour consisting of plates of delicious snacks washed down by copious amounts of witches brew. Kiddies had great fun playing Trick or Treat and then it was the turn of ghosts, goblins and other horrific creatures of the night to crawl from the pit to terrorise mortals. Later Jason's disco kept them hoppin and a boppin and a dancing round the fire. A gentle hike on Sunday cleared the cob webs and sharpened the appetite for what was a truly magnificent lunch. Sincere thanks go to Olga and Yuri for a brilliant effort and thanks to all who helped to make this event such a success.

We have been aware for some time that our constitution requires some up-dating to bring it into line with the latest thinking and practices. Also SARS has published new guidelines for recreational clubs. We will be circulating a copy of the Draft Constitution for comment. We have been at pains to maintain the wisdom and spirit of the original document

This has been an exceptionally tough year for most but now it is time to slow down, relax, get together with friends, families and loved ones. If you are off on that special year-end adventure or just chilling in a secluded spot, have a blessed Christmas. Travel safely and come back in the New Year ready to take on the challenges of another year.

God bless.

Happy hiking

Christmas is looming and everybody is looking forward to the start of a new year. Not too sure where 2009 went to though!



Marion Hufner
Club Administrator

Thanks to all for the membership drive, the JHC now has 418 members. Obviously with the start of a new year, things will change. The interest out there in hiking is amazing so the campaign to recruit members will be ongoing.

The 2010 renewal notices are enclosed with Footnotes. Remember when making a direct payment, please ensure you put your **name/renewal** under reference.

The Magaliesberg Protection Association plays a very important role in endeavouring to conserve the Magaliesberg where JHC members do most of

their Sunday hiking. EXCO, therefore, urges members to consider joining this worthwhile association – membership form enclosed with this Footnotes. Footnotes and programme will now only be published every four months, but will still be full of interesting events and articles. Keep a watch out for possible updates/changes via email. Have a wonderful festive season and be keen to hike in the New Year. Happy hiking.

The slide show on 13th October was special as our long time slide show organiser, Peter Faugust, was presented with a cake by the Club to celebrate his birthday.



**Peter Faugust
Slide Shows**

On Tuesday 8th September, Chris Meintjies gave a presentation entitled: “Polar Travails – Antarctica”. Chris has visited some 112 counties and is a Fellow of the Royal Geographic Society.

On 23rd October Jonathan Leeming demystified



Peter’s birthday cake. Photo: Harry Parsley.

the world of scorpions in his presentation. Jonathan is the author of “Scorpions of Southern Africa” and co-author of “A comprehensive Guide to the Waterberg”. More details are available on his website: www.scorpion.co.za.

Roland Heap is probably the most widely travelled member of the Johannesburg Hiking Club. In his

presentation entitled: “Five Continents on a Shoestring” he demonstrated how this can be done on a limited budget.



Robbie thanking Jonathan for his interesting presentation. Photo: Harry



Roland with Robbie after his presentation. Photo: Harry Parsley.

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

APPEAL OF HELPERS

Since Millie's retirement from providing the refreshments at the slide show evenings Jim and Francis have been providing this service on a temporary basis. As both of them render other services to the Club they wish to hand over this duty to other people in the Club. The Club is therefore inviting volunteers to take on this relatively simple task. If more than one person comes forward the task can be shared so that each one only provides the service several months apart. By each of us making a small contribution the burden does not become onerous on any one individual. If you can help please contact Marion Hüfner on 087 940 1903.



Jim Hutchison
Property Administrator

JHC TRANSPORT FEE CALCULATION

This is to advise members of the method used over many years to calculate the transport fees for Sunday and Wednesday hikes and away events. This may well lead to discussion and improvement of the system.

Since most of us have cars with expenses like insurance, licence, loss of interest on capital outlay etc., it is only the running costs per km that we are interested in here i.e. fuel consumption, tyre wear, service and repair costs.

The AA currently quotes the following for these, based on an average size car of 2 litre engine capacity.

Average fuel consumption: 10 litres to 100 kms = 0,1 litre per km.

This is multiplied by the fuel price. Say R7,50 per litre (variable). Therefore fuel cost per km = 750c x ,1 = 75c

Tyre wear and Maintenance = 17c and 23c per km respectively

Total 75c+17c+23c= R 1,15 per km.

Thus a Sunday hike 75 kms from Constantia Park will cost 75x2xR1,15= R172,50 divided by the number (including the owner/driver) in the car.

If there are 4 in the car, the individual payment by the 3 passengers is R172,50 divided by 4 = R43.

The same calculation applies to an away event, maybe a camp with only 2 people sharing the cost. Toll roads are an extra expense to be shared.

It is obvious that a smaller, more economical car

will show the owner a profit of maybe 25% of the total fee; whereas the larger car will show a loss of about 25%. Further complications may arise when vehicles using diesel fuel are considered.

This is unfortunate, but the costing would become rather involved if we try to overcome this situation.

It is important that a fee be indicated in the program to give passengers and driver a guideline. To allow for flexibility, we describe it thus in the fee explanation title in the program:

Variable suggested transport fee: (All events) Fee indicated is the total for an average size car, and is based on R1,15/km, and shared by all occupants.

This would allow the driver to adjust the fee in consultation with the passengers, preferably in advance.

Small fluctuations in the fuel price are overlooked from one programme to the next.

Just thought I would drop you a note to pass on to all the organizers of the Bundu Bash weekend. It was wonderfully arranged, the food was great, the company 'lekker'.

LETTERS RECEIVED

It was really nice.

Thanks.

Glenda & Tim

Dear Olga, Bev, Sue and all the other helpers.

I would like to add my voice to the chorus of praise relating to the Bundu Bash. It was a fantastic event enjoyed by each and every JHC member. It manifests in no small way the prevailing spirit in the Club. I'm sure many members are encouraged to volunteer to help in some way through your example.

Please pass on my warmest congratulations to all who helped in some way or other and of course not forgetting Uri.

Best regards.

Robbie (Macdonald)

The Bundu Bash was a great success - we had a fantastic evening and Olga's catering was magnificent as usual. I think that we should use the same venue again next year as it is convenient and not too bad price wise. Also, you can choose to hike, bird watch or game watch on the Sunday (depending on the degree of your hangover from the night before!)

Cheers

Ann

Thank you very much for the weekend camp. The food was outstanding and I was very impressed with the originality and the inventiveness of all those who took part in the costume parade. It was a very successful camp and the weather was fine. Cheers

Mary (Candlin)

Many thanks to you ,Olga, Robbie and all who helped for the wonderful lunch yesterday. I really overate because everything was just too good.

Keep hiking

Elsa (Wloschowsky)

Hi,

I just wanted to send an e-mail, as requested, about the hiking. This was my very first hike ever. As a committed workaholic, I get absolutely ZERO exercise and so I can honestly say, I had a few moments of wanting to turn back and get out of there, but I am very glad I persevered. It was the Castle Gorge hike in the Magaliesberg. It was, in retrospect, a great day and we have all decided (there were three of us) that we would definitely be coming again.

What I personally found very appealing, and what supports my hope to come again, was that there was an accommodation for the slow people who are just starting out. There were different groups based on your skills and level of fitness and expertise. There were opportunities to take a breather, split off on a longer or more direct route and choose to go further or rest and stay behind at the pools. These options made it work for us. One of us, who had hiked before and had a better level of fitness, chose to go all the way while we stayed behind to relax.

Thanks and hope to see you soon.

Lara de Matos

Dear JHB Hiking

I just wanted to give you some feedback from your hike on Sunday to Castle Gorge. I thoroughly enjoyed the hike, and the weather was perfect! I really enjoyed getting out, and it was nice to see so many people there. Alan gave us a lift, which was really great - I think that it is a good policy that the new hikers share lifts especially as we have no idea where we are going. Alan was very informative, and gave us some interesting history of the Magaliesburg.

I was asked about my thoughts on a "Youth" hike (teens to 20's). My only advice is that most of my friends who would join the hike would be unable to leave work on a Friday afternoon, and can only get away on Friday after 5:00. Either you will need to organise a lift after that time, or have an early Saturday departure.

I found it refreshing that there were so many internationals at the hike, and that it gives people an

opportunity to see areas of Gauteng that are out of the usual day to day routine.

Thank you again, it was really fun,

Megan Geldenhuys

Edward Nathan Sonnenbergs inc

The feedback I wish to give you is that I find the Johannesburg Hiking Club very professional and I like the crowd it draws. It's welcoming. I am amazed that for the past two years the price is still R30.

I hiked two years ago and lost touch, but I will come back and thanks for all the info.

Regards,

Shamira Botha

INVITATION FOR 2010

Marion Hufner,

A new year brings new beginnings and perhaps 2010 is the year for YOU to get involved in some small way in the running of the JHC. Whatever your talents we are sure you can assist:

Patrollers for Castle Gorge

Leaders

Social

Maintenance at Hikers Haven/Foothold

Trail repairs

Slide show/Club evening

Crofton weed blitz

Website

Internet

Serve on a sub committee

HOSA hiking week

Membership drive

Administration

Whatever your preference there's a spot for you, so give something back to the club which gives you so much pleasure.

Look forward to hearing from you.

**NETCARE 911
011-254-1555**

Advertisement

The MOZAMBIQUE BEACH HIKE - 2010

The Mozambique Beach Hike, near Inhambane, is a 40 km walk along the beautiful shoreline of the Indian Ocean. The climate is mostly dry and cool between May and September, ideal for walking, and the sea is warm and inviting for swimming and snorkelling.

Accommodation is in good quality beach lodges, in twin-bed rooms, with dinners and breakfasts included on the hike. Lunches and drinks are available at the restaurants and bars along the way.



Luggage is transported from lodge to lodge, so day packs only are carried. The walking is easy on hard sand. There are opportunities for scuba diving, snorkelling, marine safaris, walks in the mangroves, bird watching, horse riding, kayaking and shopping at local markets.

Dates for 2010 are from mid-May through to mid-Sept. Group number is limited to 12 persons.

The cost of the trip is R4,800 and includes:

- Return charter bus from Nelspruit;
- 8 nights accommodation (including Nelspruit at the start and end of the trip);
- 8 breakfasts, 6 dinners and 1 packed lunch
- 4x4 transfers where necessary;
- All baggage transfers between lodges, and staff gratuities.

A deposit of R1,000 per person secures your booking (refundable less a R50 admin charge.) The balance is payable one month before departure. If your booking is then cancelled, a refund can only be made if a replacement is found.

Passports must be valid for at least six months after your return date from Mozambique. South African passport holders do not need a visa.

Enquiries & Reservations:

Jill Salt

Mozambique Beach Hike

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

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

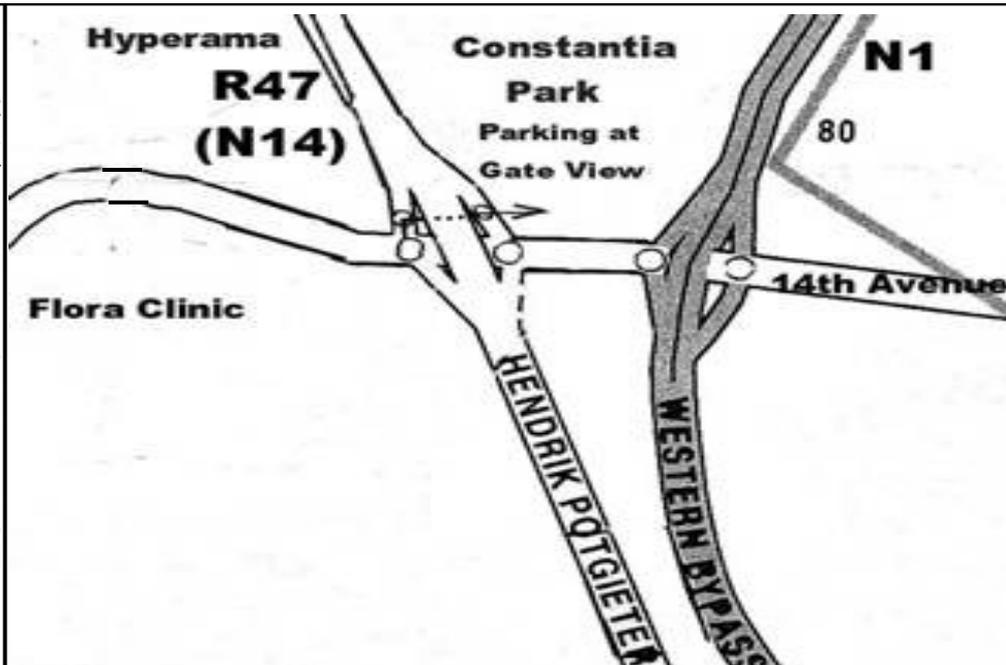
Meeting place: Constantia Park, Gateway House.

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

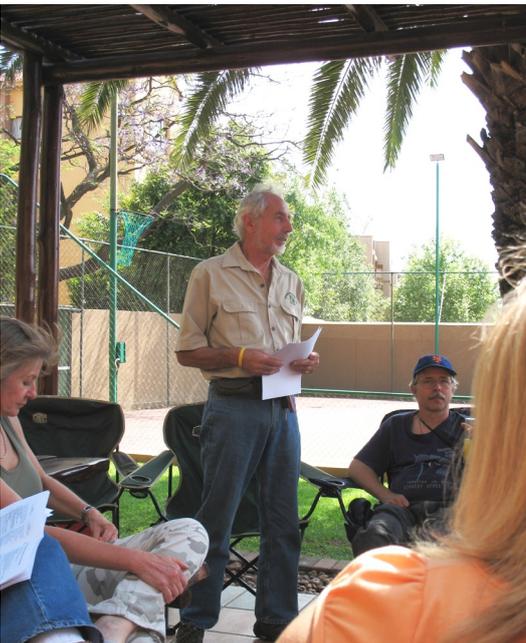
Return to meeting place: Varies, but usually before 17h30

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)



LEADERS WORKSHOP



The Leaders' workshop was attended by twenty seven people (see the group above). Robbie took the participants through an extensive number of topics of value when leading a hike. This initial workshop will be followed by others in the future aimed addressing topics of interest to hike leaders

Left: Robbie addressing the meeting.

Right; Alan Chater making a point during the proceedings.

Photos: Harry Parsley



SEGWATI



BUNDU BASH



The Sangoma (aka Sue Desmond) threw the bones and the message she read in them foretold wonderful tidings for the Club; fantastic hikes were going to take place which would take members up towering mountains and down into valleys with sparkling rivers running at their base, to forested jungles and coastal dunes, to waterfalls and desert plains. The choice was endless. New members would flock to join and old ones would sit around the camp fire and reminiscing.

SEGWATI BUNDU BASH



Ann Kenny.

Photo: Alan Chater



Mike.

Photo: Alan Chater

Witches, devils, Asian warriors, pirates and serving maids in Dracula's castle...they were all there.



Jim Hutchison.

Photo: Alan Chater



Pirate Bengt and his maid. Photo: Bev Brockman

SEGWATI BUNDU BASH



Bev Brockman.

Photo: Alan Chater



Nora and Suze.

Photo: Alan Chater



Bengt, Olga, Peter and partner.

Photo: Olga Braude.

SEGWATI BUNDU BASH



The Grand Wizard (Harry Parsley) and the winners.



SEGWATI BUNDU BASH



Food, glorious food....and the chefs who made it possible.

Photos: Bev Brockman and Olga Braude.



SEGWATI BUNDU BASH



Lucky Devils.

Photo: Submitted by Olga Braude.

JUST HANGING OUT



Lunch time.

Photo: Bev Brockman.

PARY TIME



ADVENTURE HIKING

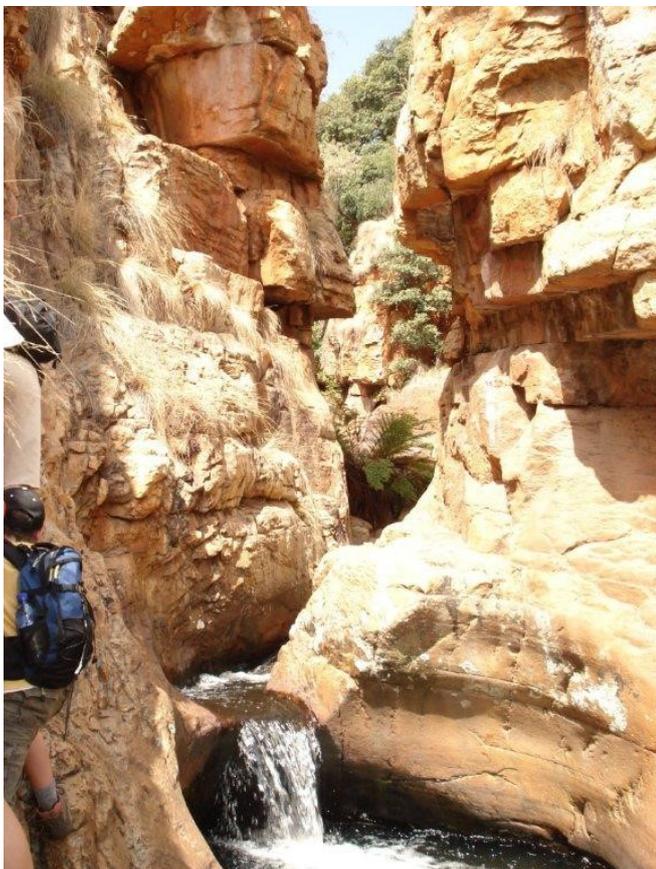
DOMES POOLS ADVENTURE HIKE

Tracey May

We were full at 17 people on the Dome 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! It is an easy walk in, always a pleasure. The entry point for Dome led us to the first 'tricky bit' requiring a bit of rock-climbing through a narrow gorge. All 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



Bum sliding.

Photo: Tracey

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 we were back in time for drinks at Head Office by 4.30.

CANOPY TOURS

Brian Mallinson

One cool Sunday morning a group of brave souls set out on a quest to prove their bravery. They did this by making their way to Sparkling Waters in the Magaliesberg, where they planned to attach themselves to extremely flimsy cables and leap into space, flying across treacherous gorges. Happily they all survived, and this is how it went.

Upon arrival at Canopy Tours, we were asked to sign our lives over to the guides, by acknowledging that they were not responsible if anyone fell to their doom in a gorge!

Fortunately, the guides are extremely competent and professional, have obviously been well trained and have years of experience, so we were in very good hands from start to finish. They kitted us out with helmets, harnesses and pulleys, explained the rules, and loaded us onto a bakkie for the 10 minute trip to the gorge.

At the first platform, there were a few seconds of silence as some of us wondered whether we had

HIKE REVIEWS

perhaps bitten off more than we could chew! That cable is VERY thin and VERY long and the gorge is VERY deep. The fact that the cable is strong enough to support an elephant seems to completely escape one at that moment. The first words out of 12 year old Devon's and 9 year old Gregory's mouths, at the same time were, "I'm not doing this, I'll wait here for you" And I think one or two of the adults were wishing they were brave enough to say the same, without shattering their egos.

The guides did a demo run, and then it was all excited chattering and bravado!

After the first couple of adults had made their way across, yelling with exhilaration, Devon plucked up the courage, and after the initial frightened silence, was yelling his way across so loudly that Tarzan must have cocked his ears and wondered who was invading his valley. Gregory was very gently coaxed across by the guide, who reassured him, and after much screaming, was all ready for the second cable, singing the George of the Jungle theme song.

There are 10 cables of varying lengths and gradients, strung across deep lush gorges, and they all lead off wooden platforms built in trees, or on the rock wall of the gorge. Each one is a different experience, and it's a great thrill to hear the cable singing as you fly over the lush vegetation far below.

It's a great disappointment to be finished at the last cable, because you want it to go on and on forever, its so much fun! A great consolation is the tasty meal that your guides bring when you get back to base camp. And while you eat, you get to watch yourself on the DVD the cameraman made on the first 5 cables.

It's a great experience, the safety measures are brilliant and the entire way the trip is run makes it a pleasure, and highly recommended for anyone thinking of trying it.

After a hamburger and chips lunch, we headed back into the Gorge on foot for a short hike and stopped for tea and biscuits at a small pool. Returning to the hotel, we were pleasantly tired and on the car trip back most passengers passed out!

TREKKING IN THE SIKKIM HIMALAYA **Michael Openshaw**

Other Participants: Dick Carlisle, Jim Arnett, Roland Heap and Mike McLoughlin.

In late September, 2009, five intrepid hikers set off on a long journey to this remote eastern part of the Himalaya. Our destination was Kanchenjunga, the third highest mountain in the world, a mere 25m lower than K2, at the other end of the range. This involved us in visiting Sikkim, which was once a sovereign state, but is now a province of India. Sikkim is sandwiched between Nepal and Bhutan and is in some of the wildest and remotest territory I have ever visited.

After 30 hours in transit, plus another dozen or so getting to Gangtok and onto Nambu Village, we began our 10 day trek, by descending some 200 – 300m down into a deep valley, before we could begin to gain altitude, the purpose being to get from approximately 2700m to approx. 5000m. This became the pattern for the whole trip: descending before ascending and vice versa. Not only did we have to contend with the steepness of the terrain, we also had to deal with blood-sucking leeches in the lower elevations. Crossing streams and rivers became an adventure of balancing on logs, in the knowledge that a drenching would follow any false step.

Although no member of our party did fall in, we nonetheless got thoroughly drenched when we had to contend with 3 days and 4 nights of continuous rain. On the fifth day we were scheduled to camp at 4200m, at a place called Pangding, however because it is so exposed to the weather, it was decided to descend into the valley, which was part of the next days trek. Because of the incessant rain, some of our party were so delayed that they only got to the campsite some 2 hours after dark. Then they had to face the daunting task of crossing a river, which by this stage had become a raging torrent. The "bridge" consisted of two logs, which were now wet and slippery. Thankfully nobody fell in, as there would have been no hope for anyone who did. They would have been swept to their death.

After a short but steep hike the next morning, we camped at Dzongri, again at over 4000m. This is reputed to be one of the best view sites of this part of the Himalaya, but all we saw was cloud and more cloud. This led to 60% of our group deciding that they had had enough of high altitude walking in the clouds. So the next morning we split up, with the yaks, staff, tents, and food being proportioned out and we set out, with one group descending to the village of Tshoka and the other climbing towards Gochala Pass.

HIKE REVIEWS

Those who ascended were rewarded with some of the most awe-inspiring views of the Kanchenjunga massif, including Pandim, which reminds me of the central aspect of K2. In order to get the best views, without cloud interference, we woke at 4am and after tea and rice pudding we set out just after 4.30am, walking by the light of our headlamps. At about 4500m, I had to turn around, not being adequately acclimatised, and certainly not able to keep up with the “youngsters” ahead of me. I am happy to report that, notwithstanding, I also got uninterrupted views of the surrounding mountains, as the sun rose. Roland got the prize pictures as his reward for perseverance.

Our trek ended in the village of Yuksom, where we were treated to hotel accommodation, although, somehow, the beds felt harder than the ground we had been sleeping on. The next morning we were taken through some of the most awesome countryside to Darjeeling. We had two days to sightsee and even to do some shopping. I, for one, had to purchase a new bag as mine had been destroyed by the rain and by catching on rocks and vegetation.

We all agreed that, despite the difficulties and small disappointments, we had a thoroughly enjoyable time in visiting this part of the world and testing ourselves against the rigours of these remote mountains.

We owe thanks for the efficient organisation by Debra of Nomadic Adventures, Randeep of Mystic Himalayan and especially to our guides Suren and Baadr for getting us safely back home.

WATHABA BASE HIKE 6 TO 8 NOVEMBER, 2009

Padmini Moodley

Hike participants: Beverly, Hijme, Charley, Alison, Elsa, Paul, Karen, Bridgette, Nicole, Sipiwe, Regina, Susie, Mike and Padmini (14 people).

We arrived at the Kiepersol Kamp in Wathaba, Machadodorp, after a three hour drive from Johannesburg. Wimpie (the owner) met us at the river to welcome and give us the instructions for the weekend.

The huts were fitted with beds and mattresses, candles (no electricity), fireplace and a lovely feminine touch to the flush toilets and donkey shower.

It was cool when we started the first day hike.



The group

Photo: Bev Brockman.

The scenery was spectacular with breathtaking views from the well marked view points. We walked along the river, through the indigenous forests, waterfalls, across many wooden bridges and then across the open grasslands where we were almost blown away by the wind and the rain. We had lunch at the cascades and Charley

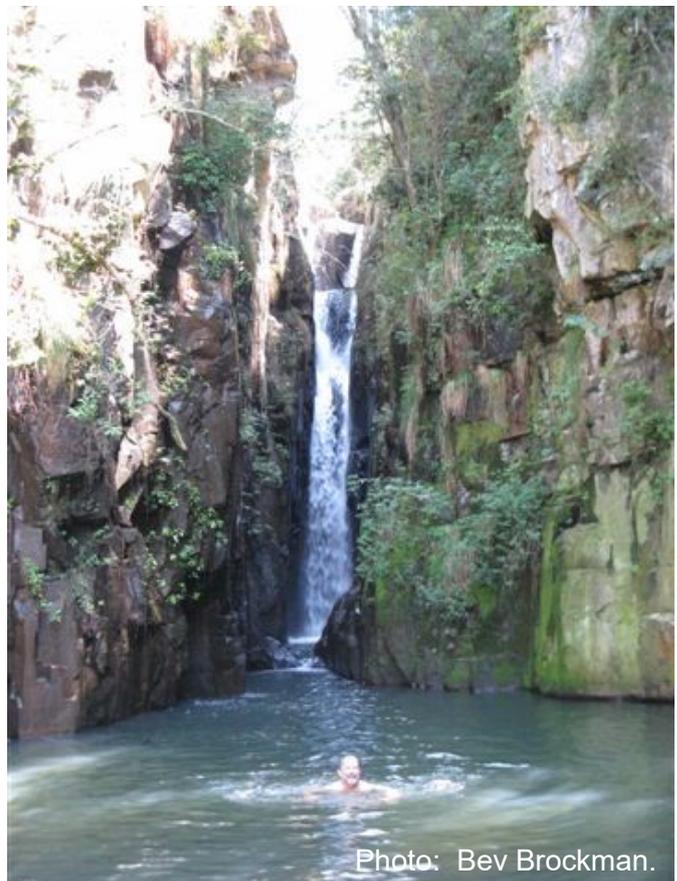


Photo: Bev Brockman.

HIKE REVIEWS

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ended with a lovely fire outside, under the star-filled African skies.

The next day we had smiles on our faces when the sun shone for us to start the 4km hike. Warm enough for most of us to swim at the first waterfall. The swimmers thawed in the sun before the trek to the next waterfall near the hut, where the swim was longer and a bit warmer, I was told.

We had a marvellous time and thanks to Bev for organising the hike and tasty goodies for the happy hour.

ST VINCENTS HIKE Marion Hűfner

On Friday 2 October 32 children and 2 adults from the adventure group at St Vincent School for the Deaf experienced a day out in the Magaliesberg at Castle Gorge. It was an amazing and rewarding exercise for all concerned. The kids were very well behaved and 'listened' to us, they were concerned and caring to one another and showed interest in everything. We split into two groups, Andy Hyslop and Ann Kenny doing some bundu bashing whilst Sandra Atherstone and Marion Hűfner took the easy route to the waterfall.

We all met up at Piranha Pools for lunch and a welcome swim. JHC leaders are always joking about losing 10% - well that's

did not brave the weather to have a dip in the pool. The 10km hike was completed, in time for tea at the hut. The weather improved and some of us walked to the family-built chapel with a beautiful stained glass window with a bit of mosaic scattered in the floor with a big flower pot on either side. Wimpie arrived with two loaves of home made delicious corn bread. The evening

what we did. As we gathered at the car park for cold drinks, somebody noticed that one girl was missing. Immediately two guys ran off to search for her but had to be motioned back, otherwise 3 would be missing. No good blowing the whistle or shouting but all's well that ends well and she was found wandering on the dirt road having missed the path to the car park. A great day out

HIKE REVIEWS

with these kids and the exercise will be repeated



again next year at a different venue. It's a really rewarding experience hiking with children who have a disability. Thanks to all concerned.

REUNION HIKE 24TH SEPTEMBER TO 4TH OCTOBER Cathy Phillips



Front row : Fernando, Cathy, Penny, Gert-Jan
back row : Paul, Hilke, Donat, Coen, Peter, Pat, Steve.
Photo: Gert-Jan Rijsewijk

Reunion is a small volcanic island, only 3,000,000 years young, in the Indian Ocean 200km south west of Mauritius. Being a province of France, and not a main tourist destination for the non French speaker, it remains somewhat undiscovered.

Paul was the instigator of the hike and thanks to him, 11 of us had the privilege of hiking in one of Earth's most beautiful places.

Our itinerary, arranged by Gilbert Auricle of Reno Run Trekking, included some sight seeing on our first day, a six day hike in the three cirques, which comprise the central mountainous part of the island, a 1 day hike in a primeval forest and a day on the volcano Piton de la Journalise.

Our hiking guide, Fred Melon, added hugely to our appreciation of what lay ahead. Apart from being a great person, he was a fund of interesting details re the history, geology, fauna and flora of the island. His English improved daily and new French words were added to our meager vocabulary. Having Cathy, who is fluent in French, as part of the group, proved to be invaluable.

Our accommodation in 'gites', which are well organized and comfortable huts, have dormitories with 4-15 beds with sheets and blankets provided, a dining room and a small shop where hot or cold drinks and more importantly, cold beers,

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Quarter page inside R80

Classified R50

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HIKE REVIEWS

were always available. Solar panels provided electricity and hot water. Included in the cost, was breakfast (coffee, bread and jam) and a tasty Creole dinner (rice, lentils and a chicken stew) which was always preceded by a local punch made of fruit juice laced with 49% volume rum.

Cirques de Salazie, Mafate and Cilaos.

We knew that the hiking in this part of the island would be wonderful, but we were not prepared for the stunning beauty of the place. Due to erosion, the original volcano is now divided into the three cirques. Deep gorges divide them and within each are deep valleys with clear running streams and rivers at the bottom. Hiking is therefore either up or down for hundreds of meters at a time. The vegetation is lush and unspoilt, with tall trees, thick bushes and wild flowers in abundance. Surprisingly, there are few birds, no wildlife, and very



Photo: Gert-Jan Rijsewijk

few spiders, all of which are non poisonous and no poisonous snakes (nice place to be in!) The hiking trails are well marked and maintained, which eases the difficulty of the hikes to some

extent. The Cirque de Mafate is so isolated that access to the villages is by foot or helicopter. Yet the infrastructure is excellent with cell phone reception every where, and helicopter rescue service that's prompt and efficient.

Each day was a renewed experience of discovering more beauty. We came across rock pools where some of us braved the 14 degrees C water to enjoy refreshing swims in the crystal clear water. Donat and Fernando were invariably way ahead, and we were certain to hear Donat shouting "YEEE----HAAAA" at full volume when he'd reach the top of the mountain...a wonderful shout of joy and exuberance! We all shared in the celebration of his birthday, each starting with a beer/rum mixture called "Desperado" ... and afterwards....well.....Donat stopped drinking after that evening!

There were many highlights, but one which deserves mention is the hike up Piton des Neiges, the highest peak of Reunion at 3079m, which we did in 2 stages; the 1100m climb to the gite, then, the following morning, the last 600m to the summit for sunrise. After our four days in the Cirques, we cruised up the 1100m. All supplies for the gite are carried up on foot daily. We crossed one fellow carrying 30kg of sausages for the evening meal (for us and 50 others!) and depending on the season, he does the trip 2x a day. Impressive! The next morning, reaching the summit just before sunrise at 6.10am we found ourselves

above a sea of cloud. To see dawn developing, it's golden colour outlining the horizon, then rising above cloud and flooding the earth with the start of a new day was a moving



Piton de la Fournaise.
Photo: Coen Terblanche.

HIKE REVIEWS

experience.

Foret de Belouve

We left the three cirques and spent a day hiking in a primeval forest called Foret de Belouve. This area is certainly one of the treasures of Reunion. Thirty percent of the plants are endemic to the Island. This forest is dominated by the endemic Tamarin tree and thousands of tree ferns with the forest floor entirely covered by mosses, lichens, fuchsias and ferns. Epiphytes abound and decorate the trees at all levels. These include beautiful miniature orchids, exquisite with their delicate flowers. Fred pointed out so many things of interest. For example, a Camellia flower can be used for soap ...when crushed in the hands it becomes frothy and soapy and cleans very well..... rinse off with water and voila!

Piton de la Fournaise

Piton de la Journalise is one of the world's most impressive and active shield volcanoes. In total contrast to the lush vegetation we'd become used to, we found ourselves on a lunar landscape. A steep descent led to a large flat area in the middle of which was a strange cavern, formed from lava called "Chapelle de Rosemont". It was big enough for us to picnic in. It is difficult to describe the wonder of walking on lava which, when flowing as recently as 2007, was at 1400 degrees C. After the last eruption, certain areas at the top of the crater are now unstable, and access to the top is not allowed. The signs are ignored by a large proportion of the public. Fred, who climbs the volcano frequently with volcanologists and photographers, felt the restriction to be useless, and so decided to take us up. The weather was perfect, visibility fantastic, and once at the top we were able to see Mauritius 200km away. This was a first for Fred who was as thrilled as we were. The view of the crater was impressive, a 300m sheer drop which happened overnight in April 2007. A puff of smoke, coming from a hole at the bottom of the crater, proved to us that the volcano was not 100% dormant. Many scientific instruments, permanently fixed around the crater, monitor the movement of the volcano indicating possible eruptions. It was an extraordinary experience.

Peter and Pat hired a car and were able to explore more of the island along the coast line. We all had the best time and, for those who are interested, a more detailed account of our hike will be available on the club website.

Our thanks go to Gilbert and Fred who were absolute stars, and contributed so much to the success of our trip.

The JHC was represented by Paul van Beek, Peter Roos, Pat Borsato, Penny Allen, Hilke Kruger, Steve Lindsay, Donat Almendinger, Coen Terblanche, Gert Jan van Rijsewijk, Fernando Contreras and Cathy Phillips .

We have memories to cherish for a lifetime!

Believe it or not this is the short version of this story. Each of the hike participants contributed to the article which eventually reached some 4500 words. You can read the long version on the website. Editor.

NEW HIKING FEES

The fee for non members is being increased to R40 for a Sunday hike.

The fee of R40 for a non member will be incurred by the midweek group as well.

Weekends away – the fee will be R40 per night up to a maximum of R100.

(These increases have been done for non members in order to keep the increase for members down to a minimum).

Entrance fee will be R260: Single member R260: Family member R390.



Kloofwaters.

Photo: Tim Sanders.

HIKE REVIEWS

MAHAI, ROYAL NATAL NATIONAL PARK, DRakensBERG.

24 – 27 SEPTEMBER, 2009

Keith Brill (Photos by Charlie Montrose)

Twenty nine hikers went to Mahai. Tom Kenny was the hike leader.

Spring had cast her mantle of green as we passed the sunlit blue waters of the Sterkfontein Dam on the way to the Royal Natal National Park. From the Park gate there was a stunning view of the Drakensberg's amphitheatre and then on to the camp site beautifully set with mountain views amidst trees. While the majority arrived on Thursday lunchtime, some – those who had read Marion's instructions closely – had arrived the evening before and were already away in the mountains. The sun shone brightly and strongly while we laboured to pitch our tents. Ray Anderson had left his tent in Joburg and was going to spend the nights in his bakkie. The strain of watching the men struggle with the contrary erection advice of wives and girlfriends overcame him and he fell asleep in a camping chair for two hours.

That evening Keith introduced the Club to the de-



lights of Black Velvet – champagne and Guinness – for some life will never be the same again. Ray fell asleep.

On Friday morning the sun had disappeared and the wind risen. A long caravan of hikers followed Tom as he led us up a winding path to Cannibal's Cave: there we met a motley band of self-confessed 'social hikers' shod only in takkies, who had brewed tea in a large brown kettle. At no cost they shared this and banter with our

group. From the Cave onwards and upwards we went guided by maps that were illustrative at best. Eventually the path turned sharply upwards, it felt vertical and there was real fear of cardiac arrest: up we went until we reached a wind-swept top. It probably has a name, but nobody knew it.

Lunch was enjoyed in the lee of the mountain with magnificent views across the 'Berg towards Lesotho. Ray fell asleep.

Heinz displayed a ludicrous, but enviable, level of fitness and decided to run to the top of a nearby



hill shaped like a **t: Wendy let him go, ate her lunch and chatted like a normal person.

Onwards we marched as the wind howled. An eagle hovered overhead. The scenery was gorgeous. There was frequent debate about the route but fortune, or perhaps mountain craft, prevailed and we found our way to The Crack. Down we scrambled, some nervous hikers laudably overcoming great fear to descend the ladders. Ray took a wrong turn and had to bundu-bash to rejoin the group. After hundreds of vertical metres, 25km and nine hours we returned, footsore, weary and wind-blown, but exultant. Ann provided a magnificent spread for Happy Hour and braais were lit: Ray fell asleep.

On Saturday morning the sun had returned and the wind dropped. Beverley and Hjime arrived for the long weekend! A marauding baboon stole food from the back of a 4x4. Tom led a troop of hikers up to Tugela Gorge. Ray fell asleep. Most took it easy though and explored the lovely area surrounding the camp site. Bev and Hijme returned to pitch their tent with help from Denise,

HIKE REVIEWS

Peter and Di which prompted the question, “Just how many South Africans does it take to pitch a tent?” That evening, after supper under the stars, Ray fell asleep and then awoke to regale the group, the camp site, and probably most of KZN, with the awe inspiring (?) story of his life.

“But only as far as Chapter 2 as the rest hasn’t happened yet.”

A wonderful weekend spent in a magical setting.

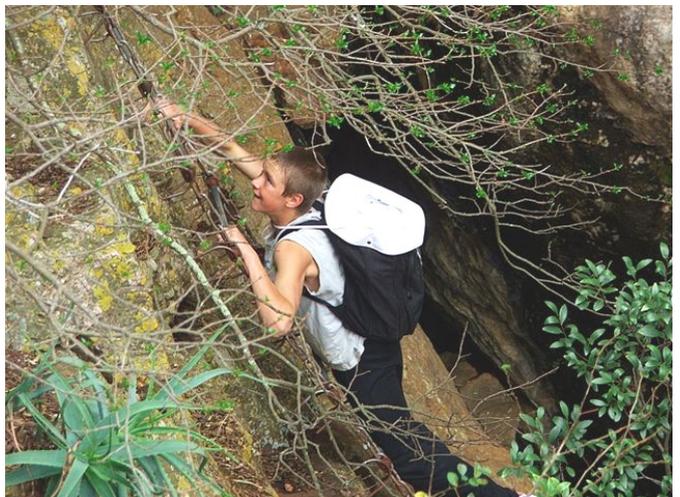


We give thanks to Ray for the entertainment.

BUSINESS CARDS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE CLUB ADMINISTRATOR FOR MEMBERS WISHING TO PROMOTE THE CLUB TO FRIENDS AND BUSINESS AQUAINTANCES.

GIRLS AND BOYS TOWN HIKE Pictures by Robbie Macdonald

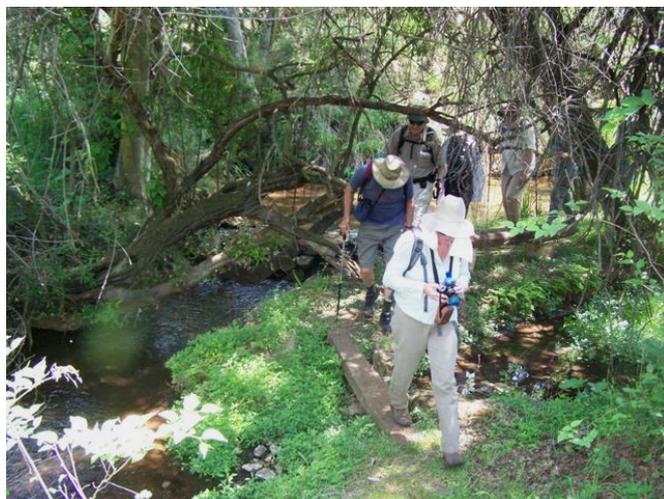
Robbie describes this hike in his column “Going the extra Mile’ on page 3.



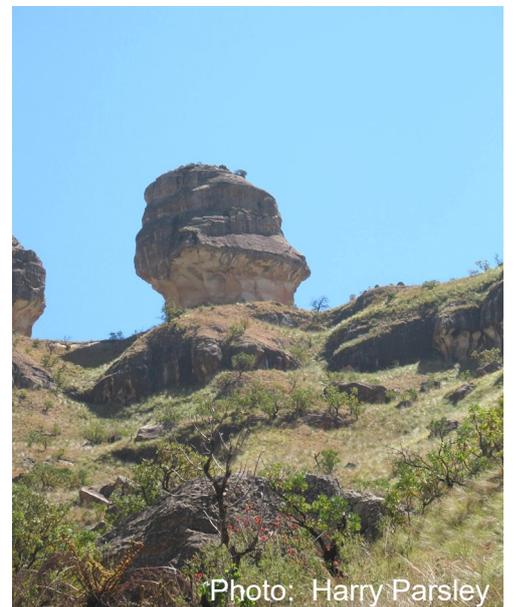
HIKE REVIEWS

KGALAMPI HIKE

Merle Doctor sent Footnotes these pictures to whet the appetite of future hikes for the Kgalampi hike.



SCENES FROM MAHAI CAMP



SCENES FROM MAHAI CAMP



View of the scenic campsite.

Photo: Jessie Moehl.



Jessie Moehl and Ron White.
Photo: Harry Parsley.



The rock pools.

Photo: Harry Parsley.

OBITIARY

OBITIARY OF ROGER GUSH

Chris Williams



It is with sorrow that I struggle to write this epilogue about a man whom I considered a great friend and a kindred spirit in nature.

Born in Port Elizabeth in 1945 Roger came to Johannesburg where his involvement with Jacqui drew him into the Johannesburg Hiking Club, becoming a member in 1982 and subsequently Chairman in 1988. Among other things, he initiated and donated the "Club Member of the Year" award in that year. Work took him away from the Club when he went to Cape Town and eventually to the UK in 1990 where at that time the future held greater opportunity for him. There he was part of the JHC's "UK branch" and many JHC members joined him on excursions in the English countryside. His time in the UK also became his jet setting international period and we jealously received frequent glowing e-mails packed with exciting stories from their explorations of various parts of the world during both work and adventure trips.

Roger's path eventually led him to America where through his sister Jenny and her husband Ian he became deeply committed to conservation projects in the mountains of Central America (Cloud Bridge) and more recently in South Africa (Wildkloof). It was during this time of hacking trails through Costa Rican forests that he met soul mate Tory. In recent times while they were visiting Roger's sons Andrew & Martin in South Africa, Marja & I frequently escaped the humdrum to join the two of them hiking some favourite wilderness area.

Roger's involvement in the Hiking Club committees started sometime around about 1984 on the Hikes sub-committee. Not only was Roger a superb diplomat and someone whom people would always listen to, but he was also a great organizer and during his involvement with organizations, be they the Hiking Club, or Wilderness leadership or any of the many other activities, he would pioneer many pragmatic innovations. Above all he was never afraid to get involved and make it hap-

pen. One of these incidents that I recall is a time when there was much ado about a certain organization not performing and Roger's response and philosophy was to point out that pointing the finger at them involved three others pointing back at ourselves – we moved the focus and sorted the problem.

Perhaps one of my lasting memories of the adventures with this bush man is of dusty mopani leaves and oily differentials on an adventure to the Okavango. Two modified 30 year old ancient Land Rovers and intrepid passengers set off from Johannesburg at three in the morning at a top speed of 80km an hour (downhill) and headed for the Botswana border. An etching wilderness experience for all of us and one on which Roger developed a reputation for telling invading musk elephants to get "Off".

Roger's deep love of nature led him into many wildernesses and adventures with differing groups and even made headlines carrying a rhino-gored parks board ranger to safety (St Lucia). Neither this nor arguing with hippos that turned over his canoe, or as I am recently told telling brown bears to "Vacate" the Catskill's garden (perhaps they just thought he was a bigger bear!), dampened his environmental spirit.

Roger passed away on 30th September at home in the Catskills in New York after a short cancer illness. He will always be remembered by all who knew him for his ever-ready smile and positive attitude.

In summary I and many, many others have lost a friend, the Club has lost one of its great leaders



Tory and Roger Gush with Chris Williams.

Photo: Sent in by Chris Williams.

CLUB NEWS

and the world has lost an enthusiastic and committed conservationist.

VISIT TO THE CIVIC THEATRE AND CONSTITUTIONAL COURT.

Jean Williams organised an outing to visit the Joburg Theatre where their publicity lady showed the group the behind-the-scenes working of the theatre.

Thereafter the group visited the historical Fort Prison and the Constitutional Court.



Viewing the props in the cavernous working section of the theatre.. Photo: Merle Doctor.



We did bail Jean out. Photo: Merle Doctor.

NEW MEMBERS

It is with pleasure that we welcome the following are new members. We trust you will enjoy both the hiking and the camaraderie of the Club. This looks like a record for a three month period.

Family Broich, Mapule Mokganedi, Jonathan Ho, Maseme Mokoena, Lynne Dabbs, Sam Dwyer, Gert-Jan van Rijsewijk, Sandra Atherstone, Keith Kretzschmar, Roy Harris, Kim Holmes, Colleen Wessels, Barry & Yoshiko Dobson, Milka Ljubovic, Fatima Rocha, Martin Leutgeb, Werner Claase, Jill Lieberman, Joan Mostert and Fam Spolander.

DONATIONS

We thank the following people who have made donations to the Club:

Howard Rayner, Dieter Lenk, and S. Schnelker



The Editor and all the contributors to Footnotes wish all Footnotes readers health, happiness and great hiking over the holidays and in 2010.

ASTRONOMY

LUNAR QUIRKS

Paul Rangecroft

Have you ever wondered why the appearance of the moon in the sky is so erratic – sometimes it is visible in the night sky, sometimes in the day sky and sometimes not at all?

Erratic as it may seem, the appearance of the moon follows a regular cycle which is related to the change in its position relative to the earth and the sun as it advances in its orbit around the earth. This also determines how much of the illuminated side of the moon we see at any point in time.

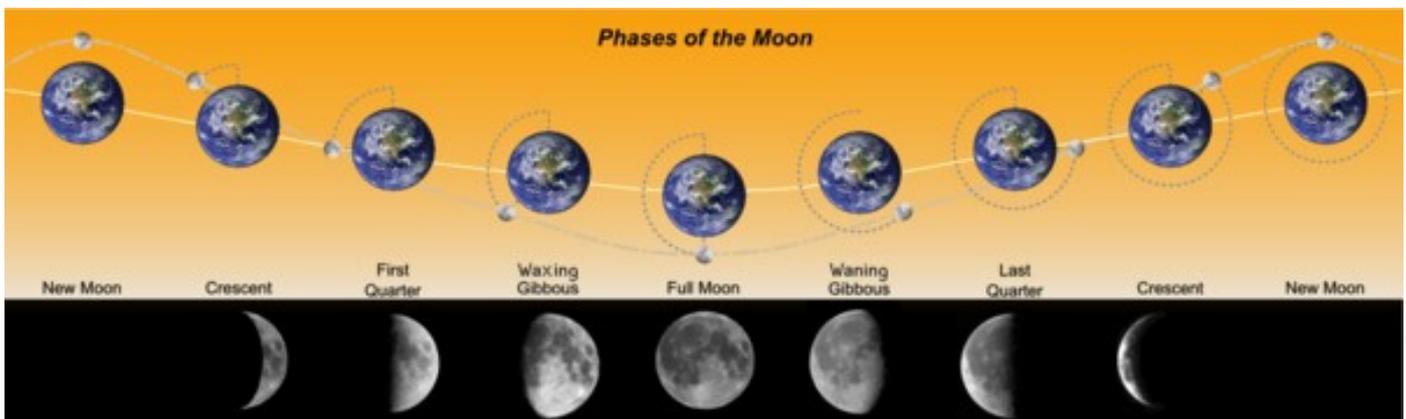
The moon follows a path across the sky each day similar to that of the sun. As with the sun, the passage of the moon across the sky is an apparent movement, produced by the rotation of the earth on its axis. The moon advances in its orbit as the earth rotates, but this real movement is in a direction opposite to that of its apparent movement. The side of the moon that faces the sun is bathed in sunlight and it is the reflection of sunlight from the moon's surface that makes it visible to us.

At the time of *new moon*, the earth, the moon and the sun are in alignment, with the moon positioned between the earth and the sun. From our perspective on earth, the moon is positioned in close proximity to the sun in the sky and as the earth rotates, the two bodies rise at roughly the same time, move across the sky together and set at roughly the same time. The moon is not visible, however, as the side that is in darkness faces towards us.

As the moon continues in its orbit, it migrates away from the position of the sun in the sky in a

westerly direction. This affects the timing of its passage across the sky – because its migration is westwards, it now trails the sun across the sky, rising and setting after the sun does (the timing of the moon's passage across the sky retreats by about 50 minutes each day). With the change in the position of the moon relative to the earth and sun, a sliver of the moon's illuminated side becomes visible to us (the *new* or *first crescent*), not in the daytime sky, however, because it is obscured by the brightness of the sun, but for a short while in the evening sky (i.e. after the sun has set) as the moon approaches the western horizon.

As the moon continues in its orbit and its westwards migration in the sky, we see progressively more of its illuminated side (this is referred to as its *waxing phase*), and its passage through the daytime sky becomes visible to us. Roughly a week after new moon, the moon reaches the *first quarter* position in its orbit, where the line from the moon to the earth forms a right angle with the line from the earth to the sun. At this point, the moon rises at about midday, reaches its zenith in the sky at the time of sunset (at about 18h00) and sets at about midnight. This is the time of *half-moon* when we see half of the illuminated side of the moon (half of the side of the moon that faces towards us is illuminated and the other half is in darkness). *Full moon* occurs a week later when the moon is once again in line with the earth and the sun, but positioned on the opposite side of the earth. At this point, the moon rises at the time of sunset (at about 18h00), reaches its zenith at about midnight and sets at the time of sunrise (at about 6h00), and we see the illuminated side of the moon in full.



The phases of the moon.

Source: Wikipedia.

ASTRONOMY

From this point, the moon enters its *waning phase*, and we see progressively less of its illuminated side as it returns to the new moon position in its orbit. On route, it reaches its *last quarter* position, which is similar to its first quarter position, except that it is now positioned on the opposite side of the earth. At this point, it rises at about midnight, reaches its zenith at the time of sunrise (at about 6h00) and sets at about midday. Again, we see half of the side that is illuminated, but because the moon is positioned on the opposite side of the earth, the positions of the illuminated and dark halves of the lunar sphere are reversed. As the moon approaches the new moon stage, it leads the sun across the sky, rising and setting before the sun does, and its *last crescent* is visible for a short while in the dawn sky before it becomes obscured by the rising sun. The completion of the cycle (from new moon to new moon) takes 29.5 days.

The reversal in the positions of the illuminated and dark parts of the lunar sphere during the waning phase enables us to distinguish this phase from the waxing one. During the waxing phase, the illuminated part appears on the left hand side of the lunar sphere, and during the waning phase on the right hand side (observing the moon facing northwards). The reverse applies in the northern hemisphere, where you generally face southwards to observe the moon. You can also tell whether the moon is waxing or waning from the time of day it appears in the sky.

You would imagine that over the course of the moon's orbit, we would get to see its entire surface. In fact, the moon rotates slowly as it orbits the earth in such a way that the same side always faces towards us (the moon completes one rotation with each orbit). This was a great frustration for celestial observers before the advent of spacecraft. The moon's slow rotation is a product of the gravitational hold the earth has on it.

By a coincidence of nature, the relationship between the relative sizes of the sun and the moon and their respective distances from the earth is such that the two bodies appear from the earth to be of the same size. At certain times of the year when the moon is full, nature presents us with a remarkable spectacle – the moon rises above the eastern horizon just as the setting sun reaches the western horizon. With these two great spheres of equal size on opposing skylines, it is hard to believe that it is not some kind of optical

illusion.

As city dwellers, we often miss spectacles like this, partly because of obstacles obscuring our view of the skyline, but also because generally we are less aware of the cycles of nature and don't attach much spiritual significance to them.

JOIN THE "CROFTON WEEDIES" AND HAVE FUN!

Alan Naismith

"Just write a short article about Crofton Weed" requested Marion! "Tell everyone why we should eradicate these alien invaders".

This is not easily done without invoking images of xenophobia ...not politically correct in RSA today. The answer to my literary quest appeared thanks to the unlikely intervention of SAA. Sitting on a late evening flight from Ndola (yes, still doing a lot of work in Zambia) and idly paging through the "Skyways" magazine, there it was....."ALIEN INVASION – Why Should South Africans Care About Foreign Plants On Our Soil?". And a statement – "xenophobia is, of course, a terrible thing – except in one area: plant life."

Our own little bio-demon is Crofton Weed aka Mexican Devil Weed aka *Ageratina Adenophora*. You've heard the name before and have probably seen it, maybe unknowingly, in the waterways around Castle Gorge. It is quite pretty with masses of bright green heart shaped serrated leaves on long purplish stems. There are clusters of white flowers from October through to February and seed heads thereafter. Clumps of this weed in the Kloofs appear quite spectacular as they gently sway in the bright sunlight. But....they use much more water than indigenous plants – have you noticed lower flows in the streams? They choke and displace indigenous species – have you tried to walk through an infested area? They provide opportunities for other alien invaders – have you noticed the spread of the red berried "Jerusalem Cherry"? And they are toxic.

This weed is classified as category 1 which means that it is prohibited on any land or water surface and must be controlled or eradicated where possible. Small groups of JHC and MCSA volunteers have been tackling Crofton Weed for the past 8 years or so. We have sprayed and chopped and probably have done quite a lot to control its spread. But it is still there! We have arranged to hold further blitzes on 24th January

HIKING LIFESTYLE

and 18th April 2010. Why not join us and make a small contribution towards protecting the environment that you love so much.

You can contact Alan Naismith on 083 267 7458 or anaismith@srk.co.za

A photograph of the dreaded Crofton weed appeared on page 5 of the last edition of Footnotes. Editor.

SANDALS VERSUS HIKING BOOTS?

Tor Meyer

Every time I go hiking in company I get asked how I can hike in my Rocky hiking sandals. I have been walking and hiking in sturdy hiking sandals, such as Rocky Strikers, for over fifteen years now, and I am totally convinced that they are a better option than boots, except for in extreme conditions.

There are some very valid advantages to using sandals:

- Your feet keep cool
- The splaying of your toes provides better grip and less likelihood of ankle sprains
- They are very stylish
- They have excellent grip
- You can walk through streams and rivers
- The sandals eventually fit your feet like gloves and you don't get blisters
- Your feet and ankles become very strong and so do your arches

But like everything in life there are disadvantages as well:

- You can occasionally stub a toe on a stone or rock
- For longer distances, say over 15km, your feet get tired
- Boots last for years, sandals for six months, so they can be expensive
- Your feet develop horny callouses
- Your feet seldom are spotlessly clean as mud gets into cracks

I personally swear by them. I also take a pair of old socks along if my feet start taking strain and then put them on. On heavy hikes I tend to take a pair of light boots along in case, but generally find that I do at least three quarters of these hikes in my sandals. I have done the Otter Trail, Queen Rose Hike and many of the day hikes in the Berg in my sandals. I use them exclusively on day hikes in the Magalieberg and Suikerbosrand. They have to be meticulously worn in by using

them for several weeks prior to their first hike until they take the shape of your feet.

Give sandals a fair try, and, from a comfort point of view, it is unlikely that you will ever go back to boots.

CUDDLY AND NOT SO CUDDLY



Darwin sign.

Sent in by Merle Doctor



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and we'll do the printing.

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