



**Xmas
Camp
2008**



**Astronomy
with Paul
Rangecroft**



**Quarterly
Newsletter**

April, May and June 2009

FOOTNOTES



Port Alfred Hike

IN THIS ISSUE



Cover picture by Penny Baggs on the Port Alfred hike. The full article appears on page 12.

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Editor's Notes Harry Parsley

The numerous stunning photographs and descriptive articles received by Footnotes indicates that Club members have been active hikers and campers over the holiday period. The highlight, I suppose, was the Christmas Camp at Port Alfred and its associated activities. Consequently, there are several pages of photographs and an article on this event.

We are constantly thanking members of the Club for their unstinting contributions to the Club's activities. This positive aspect of the Club is what makes it the superior organization that it is. In this edition of Footnotes we pay tribute to Milly Saffer who for a period of decades has been one such contributor. We thought Milly would never retire as she had become such a permanent stalwart manning the wonderful catering spreads that we all so enjoyed.

Talking of stalwarts we are privileged to welcome Marion Hufner as Club Administrator who is taking over from another stalwart, Jean Williams.

In his newsletter our Chairman, Robbie Macdonald, made mention of the Adventure programme that Tracey May will be leading. Footnotes hopes to publish all the news of these activities as they unfold in the future.

Netcare 911 is an important safety resource for the Club. We reported on some of engagements that members of the Club had with Netcare in the last edition of Footnotes. In a number of places in this edition I have tried to draw the rescue telephone number of Netcare 911 to the attention of members and to urge them to have it with them on every hike that they go on. To repeat the number it is **011-254-1555**.

Finally, I would like to urge all members to attend the Club's Annual General Meeting which is to be held on Wednesday 18th March, 2009 at the Floreum in Emmarentia. It is at the AGM that members can express their opinions and elect those they feel will best steer the Club into the future.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE 12th May, 2009

Email all articles and correspondence to the editor.

Letters to the Editor

Robert Douglas

Dear Harry,

I was actually the JHC member who, as Foothold Property Officer, got the project (the chain ladder) together, with lots of help from my friends. This included the choice of the most desirable route to follow, through to getting a donation of the chain to make the ladder, and the environmental survey through the good offices of NWP DACE Mandy Monberg, who was coerced into joining the chain gang to lug this heavy chain ladder all the way up to the water gully. Bill Murray was also 'roped' in on that day. All the route marking, hole drilling and installation, rock glueing, including the design and construction of this ladder, etc was done by that able team of both Neil and my nephew Patrick Douglas-Henry, both members of MCSA. The hired power generator was lugged up by the powerful and ever helpful JHC hiker, Angelo, and it was not the smallest one either!

Photos were taken and some were featured on the cover of and in a Footloose magazine at the time. So, check the Club's archives. My inspiration for this whole exercise was due to Howard Reiner who whispered in my ear that we (the Club) would love to be free of dependence on our neighbour for access to the top. And there you are. The actual installation work was delayed over many weeks by the most horrific thunderstorms, almost as if the mountain was raising an objection!

Join a trek to Tibet

A group of hikers, including members from the JHC, are planning a trek to Advanced Base Camp (Tibet) during March/April 2010. If you would like to receive more information, please send an email to Debra Bouwer at Nomadic Adventures glomed@mweb.co.za

A plea from Lory Park Zoo

One of the little Puma cubs in the zoo was born with a cleft pallet and needs to undergo an operation. We are so lucky to have found a world renowned veterinary surgeon here in SA who is prepared to perform this operation. Unfortunately we need funding to assist us to pay towards this costly procedure. We are reaching out to all our supporters to assist us with donations big or small to help this little cub enjoy a normal life. Banking details for your kind donations can be found on our website.

Editors' comment: The Lory Park Zoo does wonderful work in the conservation of endangered animals

From Jill Salt

Hike Mauritius in October! Group number is limited to 10, and the cost is R13,800, which includes:

- * Return flights (including taxes) from Johannesburg to Mauritius, Saturday 3 Oct to Saturday 10 Oct;
- * all airport and hotel transfers;
- * 7 nights accommodation (sharing), on a dinner, bed and breakfast basis, in 2 star hotels;
- * 2 days hiking in the Black River Gorges region with a local guide;
- * 2 days of hiking along beaches on the north-west coast and east coast;
- * 1 day of self-guided hiking trails in Le Domaine d'Anse Jonchée;
- * 1 day trip to visit the Eureka Creole Museum and Botanic Gardens (entrance fees extra).

(Until paid in full the cost is subject to airfare increases and exchange rate fluctuations.)

The hiking fitness level is "medium".

Contact me if interested!

Regards,

Jill

Este Shearar writes:

Just a note to let you know that the two photos that I sent in to you were taken with my camera, but it was Peter Burman who took them (as I was in the "ghouls ring"). I did not expect that you would be able to use them, so did not think to tell you who took the photos. As you used the "ghostly sister" one on a full page, I'd feel a lot better if Peter is acknowledged in the next issue.

Apologies Este for misspelling your surname name in the last edition (Editor).



Robbie MacDonald
Chairman

THE EXTRA MILE

Robbie Macdonald

Two tragic events marred the start of the New Year.

Allan Ralph was tragically killed in a freak accident while sailing with friends in Mozambique. It was my privilege to know Allan; we hiked together on many occasions. He was one of those unique human beings that make an impression. He had an honest, open, friendly and helpful approach to life, and this influenced all who came in contact with him. He had a direct gaze with a twinkle in the eye, a firm hand shake and a ready sense of humour. This made him a popular member of the J H C.

Robert Nieuwierzycki loved to hike on Sunday. He was extremely knowledgeable, he loved to philosophise and discuss almost any subject under the sun. He gained great pleasure from his friends in the Club and was also extremely popular. Robert suffered a heart attack shortly after completing a hike at Foothold. To the family and friends of Allan and Robert we extend our sincere and heartfelt condolences, they will be sorely missed.

Two ladies deserve special mention. Sue Desmond completed the Bibblemun Trail in Western Australia. This world-class, 963km long-distance trail stretches from Kalamunda, a suburb on the outskirts of Perth, to Albany, on the south coast. Apart from a few blisters Sue completed this mammoth walk without incident. Monika Brits and other members of the JHC attempted Aconcagua in 2007. On this occasion they were turned back by bad weather and physical exhaustion. In December 2008 Monica made another attempt, this time she was successful. Aconcagua, (6,959 meters) has the distinction of being the highest mountain in both the Western and Southern Hemispheres, making it the highest mountain in the world outside of Asia. To these courageous ladies we offer our congratulations on magnificent achievement

I must mention a special couple who between them have contributed much to the JHC. Clive Williams held the position of treasurer for 3 years and stood in as support when the incumbent treasurer was snowed under. The position of treasurer is without doubt one of the most important positions in EXCO. Efficient financial management is vital to the correct functioning of the club. Peruse the balance sheet and note that it is a detailed work of art.

Apart from his regular duties Clive used his business skills to guide and influence important decisions affecting the club. Jean Williams has held the position as Club Administrator since 2003. Efficient, helpful, enthusiastic and friendly Jean could be relied on to offer friendly advice to all who called in. Over and above these duties Jean initiated and managed Wednesday hikes. This concept has become extremely popular with retiree members and others. Apart from all this Clive and Jean hosted the monthly EXCO meeting at their home. I would like to thank Clive and Jean for all that they have done for the club and wish them well in the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Wendy Farrow for the sterling efforts she put into Youthful Hiking. Wendy has been instrumental in compiling a hiking programme specially designed to appeal to the younger hiker. Many young people have derived pleasure from a hiking experience and will in turn appreciate the great outdoors.

A new and exciting Adventure Hiking section has been established under Tracey May. This should appeal to hikers looking for excitement and challenge. Some of the activities you can look forward to might include: abseiling, rubber rafting, kloofing, GPS treasure hunts, etc. I am sure that these activities will be well supported by the more adventurous hiker.

I would like to welcome Francis Raal who will be assuming the duties of Treasurer and Marion Hufner who will be our Administrator. Chatting to them one gets the impression that they can't wait to get started. I am sure that you will give them your encouragement and support.

Happy hiking

RETIRING CLUB ADMINISTRATOR

Jean Williams

This is my swan song; I've had five years as Club Administrator and I've enjoyed (almost) every minute of it.



Jean Williams
Wednesday Hikes

It's been a pleasure working with our Chairman, Robbie, and all the committee and Club members. I've always had plenty of support and cooperation from you all.

To Marion, our new Club Administrator, I wish you a long and happy term in the position. I am sure you will find it as rewarding as I have done.

You are, however, not getting rid of me that easily. I'll be around to continue organising the mid-week hikes. These hikes are proving to be very successful.



Marion Hübner, our new Club Administrator.

SLIDE SHOWS

Peter Faugust

On the 11th November, 2008 **Dr Robert Weiss** gave us a presentation entitled, "Hiking Mount Fitz-



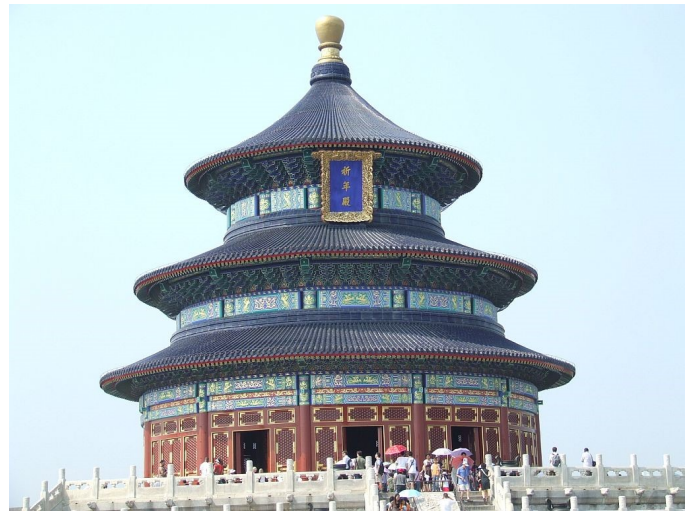
**Peter Faugust
Slide Shows**

roy, Patagonia". Robert, who is a dermatologist by profession, is a long-standing member of the Mountain Club of South Africa; in fact his father enrolled him for membership when he was only five years old. He is a keen walker and loves the mountains. In May 2004 he gave the Club a talk entitled, "Hiking Kilomanjaro – the Umbwe and Arrow Route". His presentation was enjoyed by more than seventy members and friends who came that evening to listen to his talk.

On the 2nd December, 2008 **Andrew Porter's** presentation was entitled, "K2 – a trip to Base Camp, Pakistan". Andrew is also a member of the Mountain Club, having joined some ten years ago.

One of his special interests is Trail Running. His goal is to break the South African record for trail running across the summit of the Natal Drakensberg escarpment. Andrew's father was a member of the JHC during the 1980's. Desmond gave us a slide show in June 1990 entitled, "Annapurna Circuit".

As Geoff Ortlepp was unable to make his presentation on the 13th January, 2009 due to unforeseen circumstances **Patricia Llewellyn** kindly stepped in to give us her presentation entitled, 'The Yangtze Experience'. Patricia came to South Africa in 1948. From 1972 to 1996 she worked for BOAC and its later incarnation of British Airways. Since retirement she has travelled to Egypt, Peru, Galapagos, Russia, Turkey and China.



Photos by Patricia Llewellyn



CHRISTMAS CAMP

CHRISTMAS CAMP

Este Shearar



The Xmas campers. Photo: Merle Doctor.

Christmas Camp 2008 – the one that will be remembered as the “best ever”, judging by the many comments that have been heard: “Best holiday I’ve ever had”, “We are having such a fantastic time”, “Best Christmas camp that we’ve ever had!” and so it goes on...

The 32 hikers who attended the camp descended on Green Fountain Caravan Park on Saturday, 20 December. Jim Hutchison was on hand to allocate a spot for each tent. What a lovely surprise to find beautiful sprawling grass, and an ablution block consisting of four separate bathrooms for the exclusive use of our group. Along with that, a deep freeze at the swimming pool area, for which we were given a key, and free tea and biscuits daily at 3 o’ clock at the swimming pool; all in all a lovely venue for a Christmas camp.

Sunday saw most of us generally surveying the scene, checking out the beaches in the area and shopping for what hadn’t been bought prior to the trip. And then came our official Welcoming Party. What a feast this was – not only because of the food that was on offer, but also for the fun in putting it all together. Jean had excelled herself in the choice of goodies to buy. As she carried these to our big tent, helping hands started pouring in, until eventually nearly everyone was involved in preparing the most scrumptious cocktail party that I had ever seen at a Christmas camp! Did you know that men were good at cutting breads, cheeses, crispy

vegies, and arranging these in most artistic fashion on the various platters? Check out the photos on the website and see for yourself!

Monday morning saw the first of many early morning (6.30!) beach walks – what a fantastic experience to walk on a pristine beach (Riet River Mouth), with no one else in sight, lovely rock formations, brightly coloured seaweed scattered around like a garland of flowers along the edge of the waves.

A little later we set off for the Kap Nature Reserve, where the group split in two for a longer or a shorter hike. There were good views of game in the reserve; a long-crested eagle calling while soaring directly above us, and beautiful forestry scenery along the banks of the Kap River. And it was most rewarding to hike through vegetation which was so different to what we see at home.

The next morning a group of 10 returned to the Kap River to do a 3-hour canoe trip. For many this was probably the highlight of the holiday. Two per-



Photo: Merle Doctor.

sons per sturdy canoe, lots of splashing each other at the start, and then we set off along the river. Pristine scenery, malachite kingfishers, trumpeter hornbills, crowned hornbills and a swimming water monitor. Where the river became narrower towards the turnaround point, the vegetation became more and more lush, with a marvellous tropical feeling. What a privilege it was to be in surroundings like this.

Back at the camp, after lunch at the Fish River Sun, we received the first of the weather warnings. A wind of 50 km/h predicted – please secure your

CHRISTMAS CAMP



Canoeists.

Photo: Jackie Cilliers.

tents. Lots of knocking in of extra tent pegs, tying of ropes that had been bought for the purpose at a local store – the wind came and went, bending the poles of Jim Arnett's gazebo (out of action for the rest of the holiday); some people spent the night in



Alan's tent after the storm. Photo: Merle Doctor.

Christa's chalet, or in their cars.

We had more wind the next day (though not at storm strength), but no harm, as we hiked from Horseshoe Bend in Bathurst and then checked out



A stroll on the beach in the mist.

Photo: Jackie Cilliers.

CHRISTMAS CAMP



Mary on the tractor .

Photo: Merle Doctor



Photo: Jackie Giffers

the little town and its agricultural museum.

For our Christmas Eve dinner we went to the Fish River Sun, where the buffet included feasting on prawns to your heart's content (cooked right there on the buffet table). Christmas Day dawned bright and sunny (and with very little wind). An early morning beach walk on Kelly's beach – trust the hiking club to make this a two hour walk (if not more!) The front runners just walked and walked and walked...and the rest of us followed. We found a baby seal on the beach, one of 70 or so which were being picked up by Nature Conservation to be returned to Bird Island.

Then followed our traditional Christmas day events; champagne and mince pies in the morning, Jean Paetzold's Christmas cake in the afternoon, and a braai in the evening with lots of beautifully decorated tables. All in all a great Christmas day.

Boxing Day saw the entire Christmas camp group going out not on foot, but by boat, as we gathered at 6 pm for a cruise on the Kowie River. The two-hour cruise took us inland at first, past riverside houses until we reached the quiet, unspoilt part of the river, then back to the Marina for a sight-seeing trip of the vast array of rather fancy houses that line the banks of the Marina.

The next day we once again had warnings of strong wind, amidst the rain which was pouring almost non-stop. Once again some tents were flattened by their owners as a precautionary measure, and two or three hikers decided that they may as well pack up a day or so early to get back to sunny Gauteng.

But the fun didn't stop – more hikes, another canoe trip by those who missed the first one. Although the camp officially ended on 30 December, quite a few stayed on for a few more days and celebrated the New Year together.

This Christmas camp did not have a designated leader. Activities such as the various hikes and canoe trips were organized by different people, so the workload was shared. However, a very special mention must be made of Jim Hutchison, ably assisted by Frances, who organized the allocation of tents to camping spots, welcomed us all, and organized and led the initial activities. More "thank you's" are due to others who took charge of various organisational tasks: Jean and Clive, Norma and Andy, Ferdie and Elizabeth. Many thanks to Jackie for the superb photos. If anyone has been left out of the "thank you's", please let us know so that we can add their names to the Christmas Camp report on the website.

And now I can't wait for the 2009 camp – to sit and reminisce with those friends with whom one has already shared so many Christmas camps, to share more camping and hiking time with new friends that were made at this camp, all in all so much to look forward to, although at this stage we're still counting the months, not the days ;-)
See you there in December 2009!

CHRISTMAS CAMP

JIM AND FRANCES HAVING FUN AT ASSEGAAI



Its those rattling teeth

.....that got to Frances.



...but love wins out in the end.

Photos by Merle Doctor.



....and crazy hats.....



Poor Jim is taking it hard....



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.

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

Camp and trail booking procedure:

SUNDAY HIKES

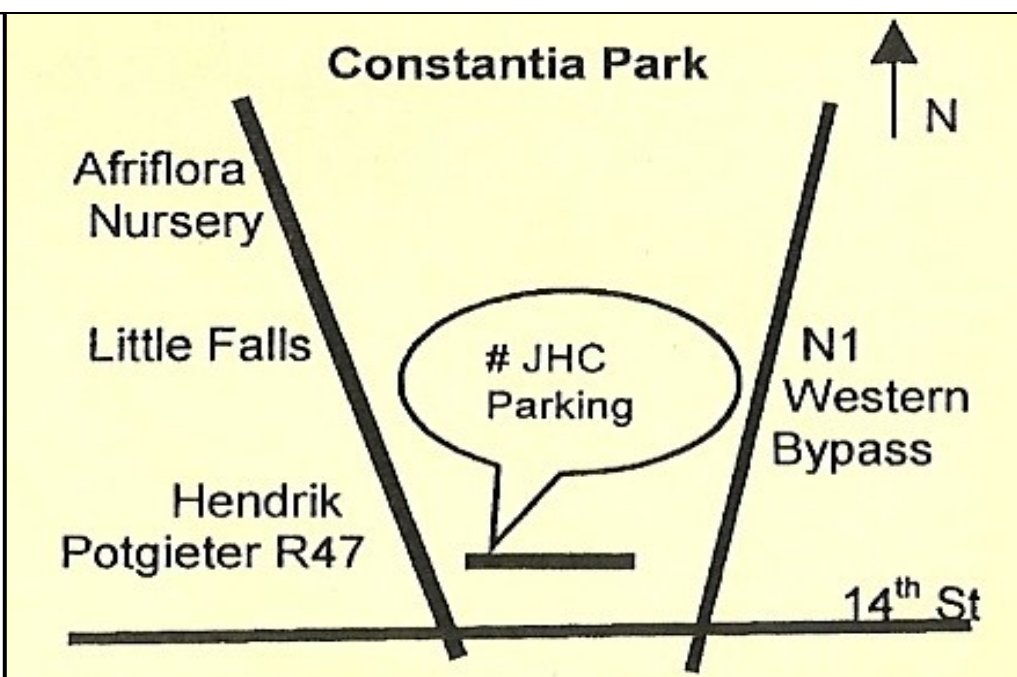
Meeting place: Constantia Park, Gateway House.

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)



HIKE REVIEWS

RIBBOCK HIKING TRAIL, GOLDEN GATE

Kerneels and Petro Mostert



Golden Gate.

Photo: Wikipedia

This is one of the many most beautiful trails in our beloved country and am I so glad to say that nothing has changed the enchanting gold of the sunrise on the mountains, the force of the wind on Knee Brake ridge and the melancholic sound of a lonely black wildebeest. However, as with so many other things, the winds of change have impacted on the overnight hut of the Ribbok Hiking Trail.

It used to be a hut with a proper fitted roof which did not require a strong hiker to jump up in the middle of the night to secure it with rocks to prevent it from blowing away. It used to be a hut with 18 beds, 18 planks, 18 mattresses; not 18 beds, 9 planks and 6 mattresses, enough only for 6 hikers. It used to be a clean hut with a clean kitchen and a clean floor, not some collapsing shelter resembling a robber's den.

So dear fellow hikers young and old, on your next Ribbok hike be strong and be bold, forget the hut, take your tent, and enjoy the gold, or forget the past and stand aloof, then fill your backpack with a rock for the roof. and be glad, the windows still have their burglar-proof. Your hiking stick may be just right, to keep the kitchen door closed for the night, so the weary body can sleep well and sleep tight, except the one without a mattress, who had some discomfort to fight.

It used to be nice to take a candle, but now the window does not have a handle,

hikers don't freak,
even if both toilets leak.
Instead of a hat,
take a refuse tin,
because the smelly stuff is spread out flat,
on the kitchen floor in the absence of a refuse bin.
At least the fire place still stands,
and we had really enough wood to warm our food
and our hands,
while sitting on the Flintstone benches, which are
still there too,
to heavy to take ?
to hard to break ?
Next time you go hiking there,
just be of the remains of the hut aware -
then ENJOY ! the trail
no matter what kind of weather may prevail.

To all of you: happy hiking! And may you have enough reason to ☺, feel the ☀ warmth on your skin, enjoy the ♥ of your fellow hikers, and go home with a 🎵 in your heart, because nothing can change the hiking therapy of good sweat and good company !

IMPORTANT NOTICE

All hikers should at ALL times have the NETCARE 911 rescue number with them on all hikes. The number is:

011-254-1555

You can hire Hikers Haven at Foothold, camp there, or simply come to the monthly camp. Contact number: 0879401903

HIKE REVIEWS

PORT ALFRED HIKE Penny Baggs



Sun, sand, sea....and space. For four whole wonderful days, we escaped life's mania to walk along the beach from Port Alfred to Woody Cape. Thirteen of us heaved on packs, squeezed feet into boots (Jenny walked barefoot), swathed ourselves in suntan cream (for those who don't like being fried to a crisp) and staggered off down the beach, much to astonished stares and comments of the beach junkies! Initially I found the going quite tough with feet and muscles needing to adjust to the camber of the beach and the weight of four days of living on our backs. Lunchtime saw a selection of snoozers, sun tanners and chatterers all enjoying the break. That evening we camped in Pam Bowker's backfield in Kasouga, a tiny seaside hamlet reminiscent of the 1970's. Their hospitality was great, with hot showers, benches to sit on and even a delicious chocolate cake to eat, which finished off a very welcome happy hour!

The next morning Jim Arnott slipped out with the sparrows to gain a head start on us and we followed later. The weather was pretty good, being not too hot and luckily we had a tail wind. Long stretches of beautiful beaches saw us pretty spread out, but we eventually all caught up with each other and wandered into Kenton-on Sea somewhere just after lunch. We camped in the local school grounds. The energetic ones went into town to browse, have milkshakes or raid the chemist for blister treatment! That evening some of us lit out for local fish and chips, which certainly tasted a lot better than the minimalist meal that

had been planned. Tim and Anne joined our group that evening to finish off the hike with us. We sauntered back a bit later only to find the gate locked. Much hilarity ensued with the agile ones scaling the wall, Robbie inching his way under the gate and the rest having to break in elsewhere.

The third morning broke clear and gorgeous. Fortunately we didn't have to brave any rivers as we could trek inland a bit and cross with the bridges. A few of us couldn't resist a swim just before we left the lagoon. The beach was magnificent. Mostly, the sand was firm and the tide fairly low. We reached a beachhead where there was no choice but to cut inland and climb up the dunes. Hot, sandy work, but we were rewarded with finding Diaz's Cross-and a beautiful view up and down the coast. Lunch was a treat with finding a beach kiosk selling ice-cold cokes, ice cream and hot chips! The afternoon stretch this day was long. We got to Canon Rocks and just off the beach found an enterprising little home business selling refreshments. Needless to say we all succumbed to ice cold anything. We got directions to the house whose garden we were camping in and had a LONG walk along a very hot tar road. Tempers were a little frayed and all of us were well sun baked and crispy by the time we arrived. A cold outside shower and food did much to restore tempers, but all were snoring early!

We awoke to overcast and cool weather, which was welcome after the previous day's heat. This last day I felt was the longest and hardest we had. Every step was hard work with soft sand, high tide and a strong head wind. Jim, Cheryl and Neil left early so we missed seeing them the whole day. The visibility was quite bad and the beaches wild and deserted. We made an inland detour to avoid a long stretch of rocks and nearly got separated. Lunch was quiet with everyone tired, some with blisters and all wanting to reach the camping site. Jenny left first and disappeared into the haze. Eventually Robbie stopped in what looked like the middle of nowhere. The GPS directed us inland up a steep dune with a rope. Up we went and found ourselves at the Woody Cape reserve. A few of us leapt into a very inviting swimming pool and only then discovered we were a few kilometres off from the Ocean View camping site! There was a lot of consternation to find we'd lost half our hikers and had absolutely no idea where they were! Eventually we found the site, together thankfully with everyone bar Jenny who had sailed

HIKE REVIEWS

past the turnoff point. There followed an anxious hour or two, with a few of us tracking Jenny down. Eventually she found her own way in with all of us on her heels! A hot shower, a bit of food and we all fell into bed!

Our transport found us in the morning cheerful and relaxed, having walked out much stress and happy to face Christmas.

Thank you Robbie for the incredible amount of time and effort you must have put in to organize this hike. I enjoyed the adventure of it all immensely!

ACONCAGUA – THE SECOND TIME ROUND.

Monika Brits

I have never been able to put pen to paper and write an article for the Club on any of my hikes I have done. But, after summiting Aconcagua, my friend and colleagues from the hiking club told me "this time, you had better write your story".

I must confess when I was on the plane to Buenos Aires I had a panic attack and thought I must be absolutely crazy to go back a second time. I had met a girl the previous year on Aconcagua, who also could not summit due to bad weather, and after much persuasion from her we decided to hire a private guide, and try it again.

At the last moment John from Ireland, who was also there the previous year, decided to join us. So our team was me from South Africa, Dominika from Switzerland and John from Ireland.....a very weird combination.

The first day of the hike, we hiked to Camp Conflencia, which is about a 12km walk and takes about 3 hours. Camp Conflencia is at 3300m altitude. It's the first base camp, and here we stayed for two nights, using the second day to climb high to Plaza Franzia and come back down to sleep at lower altitude.

The third day is the second hardest day of the entire hike. It's about 26 kms and a boring walk to the second base camp, Plaza de Mulas. Plaza de Mulas is the main base camp, at 4300m altitude, and here we stayed for four days to acclimatise.

Plaza de Mulas is where one learns patience. You have two days of rest, lying in your tent, either reading a book or just sleeping to pass the

time. One of the days we spent hiking up to Camp Canada and back again, once again to climb high and sleep low.

We had to go for regular medical checkups at Base Camp. The doctors test your blood pressure and lungs to see if you have fluids that have built up in your lungs and then they check your pulse and the oxygen level in your blood. The higher your oxygen level is in your blood the better your chances are at coping at higher altitude. This is achieved by trying to drink at least six litres of water a day at Base Camp. It is not easy trying to drink so much water a day.

Up to Base Camp, one's equipment gets carried by the mules, once you leave the base camp you have to carry your own equipment and this is where the hard work starts.

So, after four days at Base Camp our backpacks are packed and we all had our double boots on (which feel like lead tied to your feet) and we were off to Camp Canada. Camp Canada is at 4800m altitude. It's a slow shuffle with one's heavy backpack and takes about four hours to get there. We arrived at Camp Canada at about 2 o' clock, pitched our tents and relaxed. The temperatures are now starting to drop at night to minus ten degrees; it's cold and we spent a lot of time in the tent. Dominika brought poker dice, and every night we played poker dice from seven to ten. (It only gets dark at around 10). In the beginning I had no clue how to play poker dice, but by the time our trip had ended I was poker dice champion.

The next day we hiked from Camp Canada to Nido de Condores (5300m) and the day after that we hiked up to our final camp, Camp Berlin (5900m). We were supposed to spend an extra night at Camp Nido for acclimatisation but we studied the weather forecast for the next two days and knew we were going to have good weather so we made a decision to push on to Camp Berlin. From Camp Nido to Berlin is not easy as it is a pretty steep climb, but we got there at around 3 o' clock in the afternoon and knew we had to try rest as much as possible because next day would be our attempt to summit.

Trying to sleep the night before summiting is not easy, as everything freezes and you also battle to fall asleep at higher altitude. That night I slept with my camera, my water bottles and my double plas-

HIKE REVIEWS



Aconcagua Peak.

Photo: Wikipedia

tic boots all in my sleeping bag or make sure it was all kept warm.

Summit Day ...”and crampons”. On summit day we woke up at 4 o’clock in the morning, drank as much coffee as possible, ate some breakfast and at 6 o’clock we were all ready to leave, fully clothed with our down jackets, wind jackets and three pairs of socks, which did not seem to help as my feet still felt numb from the cold. It’s a long day, shuffling along slowly, one foot in front of the other. Every two hours we stopped for a quick water break, rested for five minutes and then carried on....if you stop for too long you start freezing.

At the half way mark, we had to put on our crampons. Walking in them is difficult for people who have never walked in them before, especially when climbing over rocks covered in ice.

The final stage of climbing the mountain is called “the Caneletta” (Super Gully), which is known as the “give up zone”. It’s about 200m to the top and

is quiet steep with lots of loose rocks and gravel. By this time I was exhausted and it took a lot of will power to climb this last piece. We eventually summited at 3 o’ clock in the afternoon. I was finished, but I had made it.....what a feeling!

We stayed on the summit for about half an hour. When the weather started to change, we started down. We made it back to Camp Berlin at 7h30 that night which was the end of a very exciting day.

HIKE REVIEWS

OTTER TRAIL 2009 4TH TO 8TH JANUARY 2009

George Christian

The group consisted of: George Christian (Leader) Roger Janaway, Rod Allport, Mike Allport, Padmini Moodly, Cecile Marquer, Charlie Lewis and Stuart Lewis.



Photo: Charley Lewis

We saw otters, we saw otters!... just one of the highlights of such a wonderful hike. The weather could not have been better, no rain, and some cool overcast just when it was needed. The only negative, if it can be called that, was that we did not manage to cross the Bloukrans River. But, here I go, getting ahead of myself again.

This was the year-end youthful hike, and thank goodness that Charlie and Rod had their young sons with them to legitimise the hike. Actually what a pleasure to see these two enjoying the hike and the company and contributing greatly to the general chitchat, throwing the "toppies" new perspectives and generally fitting in, or should I say, allowing us to fit in.

The hike now has a new start, which is right up at the reception area instead of down at the sea-side. One now walks down through the forest and you emerge close to the guano cave, thus avoiding the slippery, rocky coastal section which has put a very quick end to many a hiker's hike before. The rest was standard issue Otter trail; you are rewarded for being fit and suffer if you have overdone the café lattes over the past

year. But, this is all about just being there, the views, the forest, the fynbos, the rock pools, and yes, a family of otters on the beach in front of Scots huts just for our edification.

The Bloukrans story! Well, low tide was at 6h30am, and I figured that being there by 8h00 or 8h30 would still be OK for crossing. Well, we left the hut at 4h30 in torch light. Everyone pulled their weight and we made excellent progress all the way to the Bloukrans, only to find that the recent floods have scoured all the sand out of the mouth making the river very deep and climbing the opposite bank almost impossible unless it's really "low tide". Since the next hut is only four kilometres from the river it was decided, by a vote, to spend the day on the beach and wait for the next low tide late that afternoon. What a day, all the shady spots were covered in a frothy scum from the storms and this had started rotting, the sun beat down mercilessly, and the only saving grace came from a cool breeze coming off the sea. The long and short of it is that we waited out a complete tide turnaround, we slept, we played cards, we played "30 seconds", and we slept. And then the evening low tide was no better than the morning one (told you, I told you) so we walked back up the cliff and called the Park Ranger, who was there in ten minutes, loaded us up and dropped us just above the last hut. They really are providing a good service these days. It's supposed to be in the interests of promoting tourism, but I believe it's actually just the ranger who does not want a drowning or death on his shift. Either way it worked for us.



Photo: Charley Lewis

HIKE REVIEWS



Photo: Charley Lewis

The evening at the last hut was party time. Michael Allport was to turn 18 the next day, and Rod and I got involved in setting up a party. Before leaving, I had been coached by Jill Weldon



Booting up.

Photo: Charley Lewis



Photo: Charley Lewis.

on the delights of instant custards (just add water) and jellies which do not need a fridge to set, so I set about making a trifle and although it did not look fantastic, it tasted great. Sorry about using up your Old Brown Sherry Rod, but it went to a good cause. Anyway, out came party hats, a small Christmas cake and candles, and a good time was had by all.

As tradition has it, we headed to the restaurant in Natures valley once we had showered, and ordered a slap-up meal. Otters Arsehole cocktails were consumed and certificates handed out. At the start of the hike, I had instigated a fine system meant for those who had forgotten items, took wrong turns, got up late, dropped "f- words", etc, and the whole thing backfired on me rather badly when it was revealed that I had, in fact accumulated the most fines.

Well, another good one, and a big thank you to all who participated. Hiking with hikers who know what is expected and who pull their weight is al-

HIKE REVIEWS

ways such a pleasure, and hiking with friends just caps it all, and set us up with such a good start to the year.

George, that trifle recipe sounds worth sharing. Where does one buy those new-fangled ingredients? (Editor)

HOLIDAY INTERLUDES IN THE MAGALIESBERG

Selwyn Lager

Many of the decisions we make during our holidays are heavily influenced by what others are doing. This is known as the social cascade effect: liking the same trails, the people we hike with and observing Mother Nature. It gives us much to talk about and makes one feel like we're part of something larger than ourselves. It also is a stress management technique. The funny thing is that it works with most of us.

Landed with a large family and friends over the holiday period we simply shook off our mundane hassles, closed the front door and headed for the mountains. This was a convenient draw card for my visiting crowd from Baltimore to go to the picturesque Magaliesberg; a place not far from home and a great refuge from hectic city life. Lots of photos were taken of iconic shaped images of rock formations, long strings of mountain pools, animals, rare flowers and a great number of bird species. This kept some of the bird twitchers in our party happy. The area, no doubt, had a nostalgic ring to it and stretched for as long as the eye could see.

Apart from the hiking-style ambience we also got kicks from the various small paths, running streams and swimming. This included sliding oneself into cold, crystal-clear rock pools and, as someone remarked, your breath begins to catch in your throat and you stifle and yelp as the cold-water envelopes your body. After awhile our fingers began to wrinkle and toes became numb. We then laid ourselves out on sun-warmed water-smoothed rocks, stretched ourselves out and soaked up the heat in lizard-like fashion.

Other sites my visitors experienced were the Cape Vulture colonies. I explained that these raptors were dominant in parts of the Magaliesberg. At the Vulture restaurant site, the birds looked ungainly, ugly and smelly, whilst tucking into a newly dumped carcass from a local farmer who joined us for part of our walk. However, in flight the bird's

majestic long wingspans drifted gracefully on the rising thermals.

A little less energetic for my better half and I was to take in the scenery from one of the lookout points and were able to observe troops of baboons strolling by. The climate in mid-December was perfect; cloudless skies, hot days and cool evenings. We also appreciated the lack of flies and crawlies.

We also captured the breathtaking views of Har-tebeespoort Dam with its vast expanse of water from the high points of Dam View.

My guests brought back wonderful memories. It lifted their spirits and made all of us happier.

Hot air ballooning in the Magaliesberg



Photo: Harry Parsley

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WEDNESDAY HIKES

HENNOPS RIVER HIKE



Photos: Robbie Macdonald



WEDNESDAY HIKES



Seal Rocks, Castle Gorge. Photo: Merle Doctor



Glenburne Lodge . Photo: Harry Parsley

Rain-drenched hikers at Uitkyk.

Photo: Merle Doctor



DIAZ CROSS TRAIL



Photos: Sergey Popov

TRIBUTE TO MILLY SAFFER



Milly Saffer.

Photo: Harry Parsley.

A TRIBUTE TO MILLY SAFFER

Jim Hutchison

After 26 years of extraordinary service to the members of the JHC, Milly has decided to hang up her apron.

Way back in 1983 she became involved with the catering side of the Social Committee's activities. She served under five Social Organisers and held that EXCO position herself. Her cheerful dedication has gained her a place in the hearts of hundreds of members, who enjoyed her contributions to many meals and the slide show teas and eats.

If ever members wonder how far to go in the service of the Club, they might well be guided by remembering that Milly went many extra miles. We thank you Milly!

Milly, I am sure that the whole Club salutes your wonderful contribution and have enjoyed your charming presence at the many social occasions. We hope to see a lot of you on future hikes....where someone else will provide you with the catering (Editor).

CLUB NEWS

BRAZIL – AMAZONIA: 4TH NOVEMBER, 2009

Roland Heap

I am now in the Amazon rain forest, which is 40 km from Iquitos, the world's largest city reached only by boat or plane. I arrived here from Belem, a journey which took 13 days by various Amazonian river boats on which I was sometimes the only gringo. The distance is approximately 2500 km and spent on these boats which offer only basic accommodation, requiring the use of your own hammock, together with 150 others on an open deck.

The six day trip from Manaus to Tabatinga on the Colombian/Peru border was a more pleasant experience; good food and the boat not smelly.

I cleared immigration at the local federal policia and got a small boat to Santa Rosa, an island in the middle of the Amazon belonging to Peru. There is no security at the Tabatingas border point. In fact, I walked down the main street into Leticia, Columbia without any problem to make a telephone call to American Airlines to change dates on my around the world ticket. It was quite an ordeal. Luckily, there was a Colombian girl who spoke Spanish who helped me. Clearing immigration at Santa Rosa wasn't a problem, but getting the four am speed boat was.

Anyway, my guide, Lous, at this lodge as been fantastic, explaining about the trees, birds, and the medical cures of the barks and berries of the Amazonian trees.

I also tried fishing for piranha, but only caught cat fish. I also visited the local tribal villages and tried to converse with them with the help of Louis, which was a pleasant experience.

Yesterday I saw many pink and grey dolphins on the San Juan de Huachaldo river, a tributary of the Amazon. These animals are shy and only surface every 5-10 minutes. We saw them as the sun was setting. We then went on a night walk to see scorpions, tarantulas, and spiders, but only saw bull frogs.

Tonight is Halloween in the village, for which I acquired some local rum and some christal cerveja. I am the only person in the Toucan lodge, so the owner is making a fuss over me, food fantastic, room basic but clean, four days for only \$160, so I cant complain.

Here are some of the trees in the forest. Firstly, Rubber tree the, latex of which is used for waterproofing boats and roofs, raincoats and bags, and

is also used as a medicine to close wounds. Then there is the Kapok tree, one of the largest trees found in the forest which has large buttress roots at the base and a giant spreading crown at the top of its sixty meter height. The woolly kapok floss is used as a filling for mattresses and the wood used for furniture.

The third tree is the Mariche palm from which oil is extracted for domestic use and the fibres used to make rope and baskets.

Many species of birds are found here, such as the Amazonian Kingfisher, Pygmy Kingfisher, Heron, King Vulture, Flycatcher, Yellow Headed Cara Cara, Black Fronted Tinanber, Jacamar and many parakeets.

This journey has probably been the best experience for me so far. After travelling for eighteen days from Rio up the coast through Salvador, Recife, Fotaleza, the next stop will be Quito Ecuador. I then make my way down through Peru into Chile, then a long flight across the Pacific to Auckland.

I hope this finds every one in good health.

Adios, Roland

Donations

The following people kindly made donations to the Club: John Baillie, Bruce Evans, John Faller, Leo Gieske, Gunter Godecke, Michael Green, Norma Johnston, David and Dianne McCormick, Peter Moore, David Richardson, Elsa Wloschowsky and Colin Lill.

New members of the Club

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members: Susan Marais, Derek and Pat Cop-Smith, Michael Moore, Patricia Barsato, Mnwana Kambule, Des and Armande O'Loughlen, Gyozo Prepok and Marianne Miller.

"30 DAYS HATH SEPTEMBER ..."

Paul Rangecroft

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ASTRONOMY



This familiar rhyme was written in the 15th century to help us remember how many days there are in each month of the year. Why is the structure of our calendar so irregular in the first place? And why do the names of the last four months of the year not accord with their position in the sequence? September, for example, is the ninth month of the year – the name, however, is derived from the Latin word for “seventh”.

The structure of our calendar originated in Roman times. The first Roman calendar consisted of ten lunar months, with March as the first month of the year. Whilst the first four months (March to June) were given specific names, the remaining six months (July to December) were named simply “the fifth month”, “the sixth month”, etc. In subsequent times, January and February were added to the calendar as months 11 and 12.

By the time Julius Caesar assumed control of the Roman state in 63 BC, the Roman calendar had evolved into a complex structure. A common year in the calendar consisted of 355 days (based upon the duration of a lunar year), divided into 12 months that were 28, 29 or 31 days in length. The calendar year started in March, not on the 1st day of the month, however, but on the 25th day, the traditional date of the northern hemisphere spring equinox.

In 48 BC, Cleopatra was deposed from the throne in Egypt by her younger brother and co-ruler,

Ptolemy XIII. Caesar sailed to Egypt a few months later in pursuit of the Roman general, Pompey, leader of a faction opposing Caesar in a civil war. Shortly after his arrival in Alexandria, Cleopatra secretly met with Caesar to request his help in restoring her to the throne. Caesar delayed his return to Rome in order to do this, and during his ensuing stay in Egypt, he examined various aspects of Egyptian culture, in particular their solar calendar.

Upon his return to Rome in 47 BC, Caesar reformed the Roman calendar by converting it into a solar calendar modelled upon the structure of the Egyptian calendar, with common years of 365 days and leap years of 366 days every fourth year. In order to accommodate the ten-day difference between the length of a common year in the existing calendar (355 days) and that of a common year in the new solar calendar (365 days), Caesar adjusted the lengths of the existing months. He established a sequence of months with alternating lengths in a leap year of 30 and 31 days – January had 31 days, February 30 (29 in a common year), March 31, April 30, etc. He also moved the beginning of the calendar year to 1 January, so that the calendar year would start at the time of the winter solstice, an important turning point in the seasons, which traditionally occurred on 25 December in those times. As a result, the position of each month in the year advanced by two and month names such as “September” no longer accorded with the position of the months in the sequence (September advanced in the sequence from the seventh month to the ninth month). Despite this, the month names were left unchanged.

The new calendar, which became known as “the Julian calendar”, was introduced in the year 45 BC. Caesar was assassinated in the following year, and the seventh month of the year (called *Quintilis*, originally the “fifth” month) was renamed *Julius* (July) in his honour (he was born in this month).

Further modifications were made to the calendar during the reign of Emperor Augustus. In the year 8 BC, the eighth month (called *Sextilis*, originally the “sixth” month) was renamed *Augustus* (August) in his honour. Several of the most important events in his political career had taken place during this month. *Sextilis*, however, was a month of 30 days, whereas *Julius*, the month renamed in honour of Caesar, was a month of 31



Julius Caesar.

Photo: Wikipedia

ASTRONOMY

days. The emperor ordered that *Augustus* should be of equal length to *Julius*, and *Februarius* was therefore shortened by a day in order to accommodate this (from 30 to 29 days in leap years, and from 29 to 28 days in common years). The lengths of the four months that followed *Augustus* were also adjusted to avoid having three months in a row with 31 days (*Julius*, *Augustus* and *September*), and this revised structure has remained unchanged since that time.

Caesar devised a calendar structure that was elegant and simple. The changes introduced by Augustus produced a structure that has no rhythm, and a sequence that is difficult to remember. The revised structure has nevertheless endured through the ages, a legacy of an emperor's vanity.

SURVIVAL TIPS **Nigel Naylor**

This issue we want to talk about fires and lighting, something that can be related to each other.

Veld fires:

Fires can be started from a number of sources, from dropping cigarette butts (nobody on a Footprint hike would ever do that, would they? Smokers all know that they must carry their own little

SURVIVAL TIPS

box/can to put their cigarette butts in), to lighting, to the lens affect on broken glass, to rocks heated by the sun. I have witnessed this type of "spontaneous combustion" on a farm, and then the wind came up and before we knew it there was a roaring fire going.

So what do you do if there is a veldt fire coming your way? This is a strong possibility in winter with the exceptionally dry grass. If you have got time and you have matches/lighter you can start your own "back fire". This is a fire that you start and then stand in the burnt out area. If there is a strong wind, make sure you are out of reach of the flames. Crouch down if necessary. Wind can make flames jump roads etc, so be fully aware are this ability.

Fires might cause snakes and other animals come your way. If this happens, do not be too

concerned and the primary thing on their minds will be to get away from the flames, as it should also be your primary objective.

But what if you cannot start a back-fire or do not have enough time to burn a big enough protective area? Well, there is no alternative but to run for it. But in which direction? If the fire is slow you can try to outrun it. If it is very fast and there is no chance of doing this, then the only thing to do is to run through the flames. Look for part of the fire where there is least combustible material and this is most likely where the flames will be the smallest (and hence the coolest), and run and jump through the flames as fast as possible. If you have a backpack, this is time to say goodbye to it and abandon it before you start your sprint. But what should you take with you? You must try to take your water bottle, if possible, and make wet a small towel or piece of clothing to put around your face to protect it from the flames. If this is not available, then cover your face with your hands if you can.

Some alternatives to jumping through the flames would be to look for a river/stream and shelter in there, or to look for a ditch, or a rocky outcrop where there is no vegetation, or a clearing where there is very little combustible material. Talking about very little combustible material, when you choose to start a back-fire, choose a spot with very little combustible material.

With regards to lighting a back-fire, some environmentally conscious people might ask why you should aggravate an already bad situation by starting another fire. Well, the answer to this is two fold, namely, your life is at stake and also there is a high probability that the main fire will burn this area in any case.

Whilst on the subject of jumping through fires at great speed, this raises another topic regarding fire. The clothes you wear can be of vital importance. A lot of the new fabrics used in clothing are very flammable and can lead to very nasty burns. Polyesters and Acrylics are very flammable. At the end of the day, good old-fashioned cotton is still one of the most readily available materials that are fairly fire-retardant. And a number of hikers I know say that for all what is claimed of the modern fabrics such as leading moisture away from your body, they still prefer cotton (You of course might have a totally different experience).

During the Falkland war in the early 1980's, a number of British battleships went up in smoke and there were a large number of serious burn cases and this was attributed to the then recent British Navy decision to convert to man-made fibres because of the durability of the clothing

and the cheaper cost. They soon reversed that decision after the Falklands War. Also, the battle-ships had a lot of flammable materials that they never used before, also because of cost pressures. What has this got to do with hiking? Lots!!! A lot of hikers use tents made of highly flammable material. These are the very cheap ones they are readily available. If you do happen to have one of these tents, please do not use any flames near it. This means no candles in the tent of gas lamps!

Lightning:

This is really scary stuff. Here, prevention is better than cure. Lightning strikes are horrific and in most cases are fatal. This is a common occurrence in the Drakensberg and one of the ways to avoid this is to choose the time of year when there is least chance of this occurring, i.e. in the winter months.

But if you are caught out in the open during a lighting storm, then there are some measures that you can take. Lightning is attracted to high points and typically objects with a high static charge. Therefore get to low ground as soon as possible and avoid rocky outcrops. Leaving your backpack to one side is strongly recommended and then at quite some distance from your backpack, crouch down or lie down. If you have your high-density foam mattress with you, use that to insulate yourself from the earth, thereby reducing your static charge. Lightning is most likely to be attracted to a rocky outcrop, so avoid these. A ditch is not a bad idea if you can find one. Expanses of open water often attract lightning (Ask the Scouts about their Contiki Raft building competition that they have on the dam at Murray Park near Brakpan/Benoni).

Because lightning is attracted to the tallest objects around, which is why sheltering under a tree can be your death warrant. Rather get wet and stay alive than be dry and become a frazzled corpse.

On that sombre note, happy hiking!

PHOTOGRAPHY

Bryan Lever

Bryan has come to the end of his courses at the basic level. Footnotes would like to express our thanks to him for the wonderful series of articles that he wrote. He offers some exciting courses in photography as he has outlined below for those wishing to improve their photographic skills (Editor)

Basic Digital Photography Course now in place:
As mentioned in the first of my Digital Photog-

PHOTOGRAPHY



raphy tips I have now launched my courses and you are welcome to contact me for details and dates. I take a maximum of 6 students on each course on a first to pay first serve basis. The course fee is R700 per person

and consists of 3 modules:

- Friday evening 18h00 to 22h00 - Theory of photography and camera settings.
- Saturday morning 08h00 to 12h00 – Practical session in a park to capture four different types of imagery.
- Saturday afternoon 14h00 to 19h00 – transfer camera images to computer for adjudication and basic image enhancements on computer.

Each student needs to have their own digital camera with the capability of switching to manual settings, the cable needed to transfer images to computer and, if possible, a tripod. The tripod is not essential as I have a couple of my own when students may borrow on the practical session.

The idea is to have fun while learning so get in touch and join me.

I look forward to pointing all you happy snappers to the road of professionalism.

Later in the year I will be following up with a more advanced course that will dig deeper into the many camera settings, use of lighting, flash and greater depth in the use of Photoshop post processing of images. This course will be R1200 per person and will be two full days. Anyone referring people to my first basic course will get a R100 discount per person referred up to a maximum discount of R600.

Bryan's contact details:

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Fax: +2711-787-6757

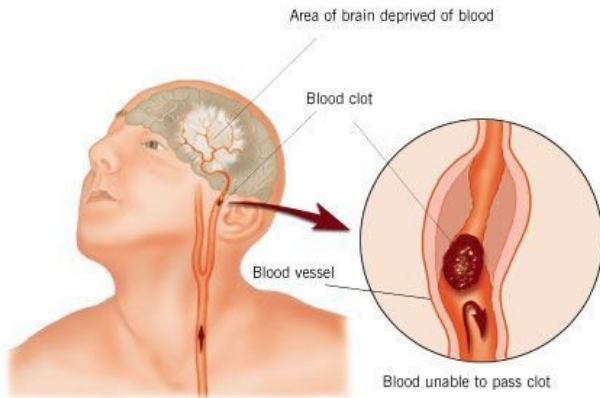
Cell: +2782-414-5690

Web: <http://www.bryanleverstudios.ws>

STROKE/BLOOD CLOTS

Article submitted by Frances Raal

HIKING LIFESTYLE



STROKE IDENTIFICATION: Remember the 1st Three Letters....S.T.R.

A neurologist says that if he can get to a stroke victim within 3 hours he can totally reverse the effects of a stroke...totally. He said the trick was getting a stroke recognized, diagnosed, and then getting the patient medically cared for within 3 hours, which is tough.

RECOGNIZING A STROKE

Remember the '3' steps: STR.

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer severe brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke. Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions:

S....Ask the individual to **smile**.

T....Ask the person to **talk** and **speak a simple sentence** coherently. For example, "It is sunny out today".

R...Ask the person to **raise both arms**.

If the person has trouble with **any one** of these tasks, call the emergency number immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

They now have a fourth indicator, the **tongue**. Ask the person to 'stick' out his tongue. If the tongue is 'crooked', if it goes to one side or the other, that is also an indication of a stroke.

Three Men on a Hike

Three men were hiking through a forest when they came upon a large, raging, violent river. Needing to get to the other side, the first man prayed: 'God, please give me the strength to cross the river.'

Poof! ... God gave him big arms and strong legs and he was able to swim across in about 2 hours, having almost drowned twice.

After witnessing that, the second man prayed: 'God, please give me strength and the tools to cross the river.'

Poof! ... God gave him a rowboat and strong arms and strong legs and he was able to row across in about an hour after almost capsizing once.

Seeing what happened to the first two men, the third man prayed: 'God, please give me the strength, the tools and the intelligence to cross the river'

Poof! ... He was turned into a woman. She checked the map, hiked one hundred metres up stream and walked across the bridge.

So, if at first you don't succeed, do it the way your wife told you!



PHOTO GALLERY



Mhlabatini. Photo:

Gert-Jan Rijsewik



Diaz Cross Trail.

Photo: Sergey Popov

