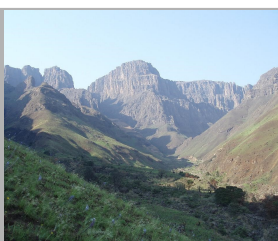




Expedition
to Norway



Mnweni
and
Rockerries

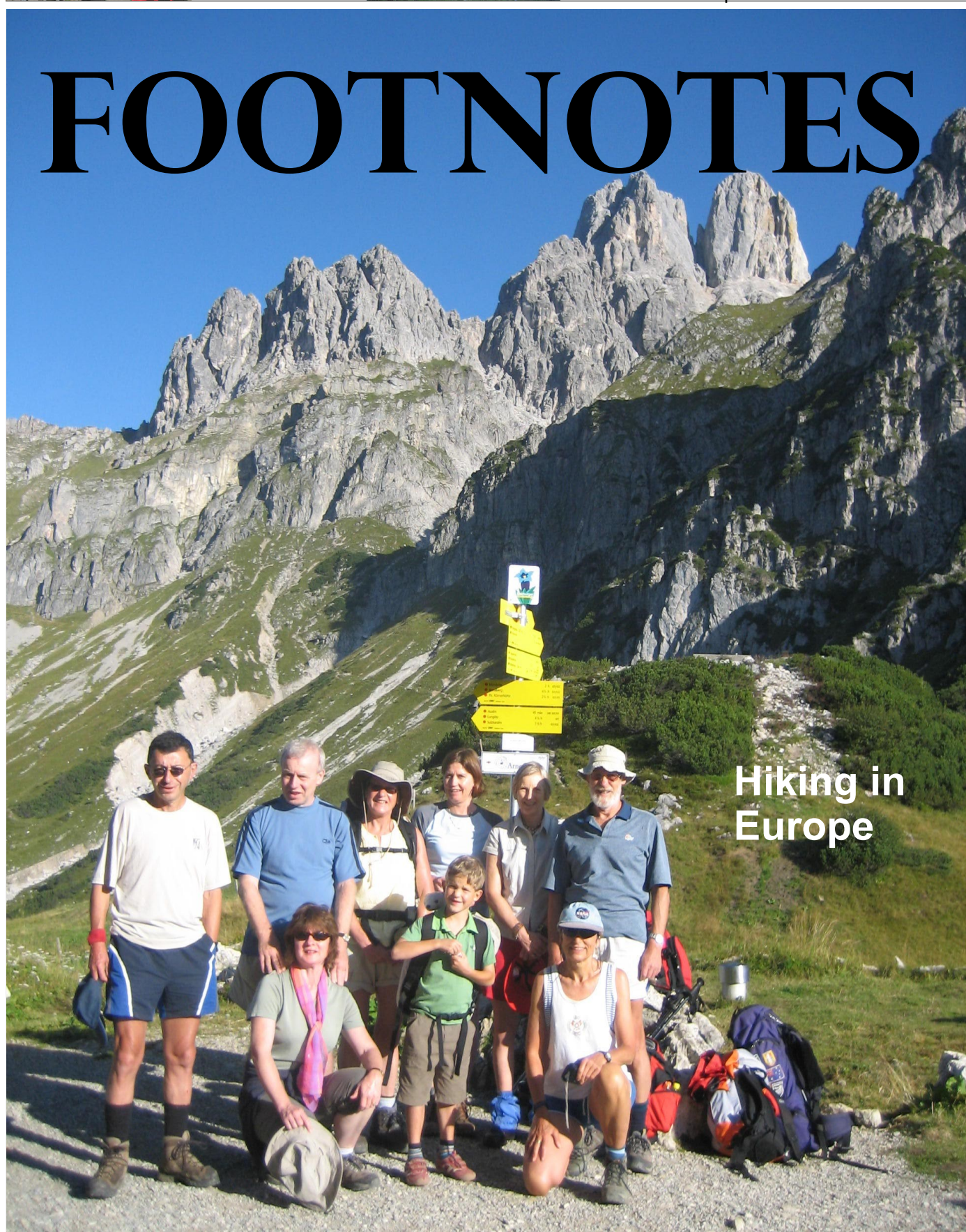
JOHANNESBURG



Quarterly
Newsletter

January, February & March 2008

FOOTNOTES



Hiking in
Europe

IN THIS ISSUE



Cover story: Where are they now?
Former JHC members now living in the UK who hiked the Dachsteinrundwanderweg in Austria, which is an eight day backpack in the area where the Sound of Music was filmed.

Back row from left: Robert Zuzkowski, Dave Emmett, Hilda Heinz, Liz Priddle, Elizabeth Pickard (who submitted the photo) and Colin Priddle. Front row: Sue Priddle, Simon Priddle, and Jacqui Gush

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Editor's Notes Harry Parsley

Never underestimate the gentle power of persuasion of our Chairman, Robbie MacDonald; how else do you think I would have been nudged in the direction of taking over the editing of Footnotes? I am most honoured, however, to be entrusted with the position and see it as an opportunity to introduce some new ideas now that the restrictions (mainly space related) under which Leon Marais had to operate during his tenure at Footnotes have been lifted.

On behalf of us all I would like to express our appreciation to Leon for the sterling work he did with Footnotes. Maureen McLeman has also done wonderful work in supporting the media team over a number of years and now that she has decided to call it a day, we also extend our thanks to her.

So, you may be asking yourselves, what is the approach that I have in mind? I see the core of the editorial policy as having a three pronged approach. Firstly, we are a hiking club, so things relating to news of hikes undertaken (trail reports), descriptions of upcoming hikes and hiking generally will feature prominently. There will be sections of Footnotes with headings like "Hiking Reviews", or more generally, "Hiking".

We are a club so news about the club itself (feedback from our committee members, news about our club friends – only positive gossip you understand, developments in the club, issues relating to our vision and mission and any other relevant topic) will be the second thrust. Here you will find sections with headings like "Committee Feedback", "Youthful Hiking", "Club News", "Member News", "Property Notes" and others as appropriate at the time.

Thirdly, there will be a section entitled "Hiking Lifestyle", which will cover general topics of interest to club members. This will include a variety of topics, such as photography, hiking and camping equipment, astronomy, conservation, wildlife...in fact an inexhaustible field. JHC members are a fun-loving bunch so a few jokes will be included, but not merely to fill the blank spaces in the newsletter.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE 31st January, 2008

Email all articles and correspondence to the editor

Editor's Notes

Harry Parsley (cont)

I will also be striving for a brighter, cleaner and more visually attractive format, which includes the use of photographs. Unfortunately, Footnotes will still be printed in black and white so the striking colours of your brilliant sunsets (for example) may be muted somewhat, but many photographs will still be highly attractive in black and white.

As I have pointed out above, Footnotes belongs to its members and its content depends on contributions from members to ensure that it remains relevant and personalised to members' interests. I thus encourage all members to contribute to Footnotes. Your articles don't have to be pages long, nor do you need to strive for Shakespearean English. I am particularly interested in receiving one to three photographs illustrating the topic of your article. Choose the best pictures and keep them to only a few so that my computer does not get jammed trying to download many huge Mb pictures (compressing the pictures before sending them helps reduce this problem). For example, a picture of the hiking group in an interesting hiking setting, a spectacular piece of scenery, or any other topic of interest to Footnotes readers helps to create visual appeal. Also include a picture of yourself (the author), either showing you clearly in a group, or as a head-and-shoulders version. This personalises the article.

I would appreciate any suggestions that you have regarding Footnotes that can contribute to its constant evolution in being an exciting publication of the Club.

In this issue we have reports of adventurous JHC members hiking as far a field as Norway and Austria, as well as in the Drakensberg and elsewhere in South Africa. The Club has also gained a lot of new members, one of whom has given us a wonderful overview of the benefits that the Club provides to us as individuals. Unfortunately, we have also lost an old friend in Lawrie Podmore. The "Hiking Lifestyle" section has informative articles on photography and astronomy by Bryan Lever and Paul Rangecroft, respectively. So, there is much of interest for Footnotes readers.

I have left an important topic to near the end. That is to thank Marion Hüfner for her dedicated service to the Club's media activities over many

years and for the tremendous support she has given me in getting started with Footnotes. With a powerhouse like her behind one success is assured. She truly deserves her break from all the hard work.

Christmas and New Year are around the corner. May you all have a wonderful festive season wherever you may be hiking, or whatever you may be doing. Come back rejuvenated to participate in the marvellous activities that the committee has planned for us in 2008.

Our thanks go to Leon Marais and Maureen McLeman for the steady efforts with Footnotes over the last twelve months. As JHC members overwhelmingly voted against going paperless, Footnotes will be now be expanded.

"A change is as good as a holiday", so the saying goes. Harry Parsley, who has taken over as editor of Footnotes, will assert his own ideas and formatting which, I'm sure, will be well received.

The webperson email has been transferred to Jean Smilkstein so she can now stamp her authority on to the website – thanks Jean.

Mark Wilson is a silent member of the media team as he inserts the JHC programme on to the website events of Radio 702. Thank you Mark.

I would like to express my appreciation to EXCO as well as to all those who have assisted on the media team.

Without the support of all JHC members, the media team would not be required, so please carry on submitting articles/photos to both Jean and Harry for the continuation of the JHC website and Footnotes.

I wish you all a blessed festive season.



Robbie MacDonald
Chairman

THE EXTRA MILE: CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Within the JHC there are a number of well-oiled machines: Friends of Foothold, the HIKESCO and the team that organises the slide show to name but a few. One of the pleasant duties that I regularly perform is to attend and open the monthly slide show. What never fails to impress me is the way the team arrives and swings smoothly into action. Furniture is rearranged, urns filled, delicious cakes and sandwiches set out, the projector is hooked up to a lap top and focused. This all takes place in the space of about 15 minutes. Meanwhile members arrive and immediately begin to network on all the latest news. The subject of the show is always interesting and well presented. Watching the show one can only speculate how much time, thought and energy went into the presentation. A half empty hall does nothing to encourage the team or the speaker. It is most important that we as members turn out to support the team and the invited speaker. So please make the effort, even bring a friend along, it is a great evening, a cheap night out and you will be supporting your hard working team.

It would be remiss of me not to bid farewell to Maureen McLeman and Leon Marais who shared the task of editing and producing Footnotes. On behalf of the members and EXCO, thank you for all the hard work and a job well done, best wishes in your future endeavours. It gives me great pleasure to welcome Harry Parsley who has taken on the job of Footnotes editor and Jean Smilkstein who is now our new web master. Apart from being enthusiastic and knowledgeable hikers both are eager to accept the challenges and responsibilities that go with their positions. So be on the look out for fresh new ideas from our media department. I know that you will continue to support Harry and Jean by sending in your photos, articles and comments as soon as possible

By the time you read this the Club Weekend will have come and gone. To all those who came along, a big thank you! Our property really is a special place in the Magaliesberg and is a huge asset to the club, it constantly requires care and attention to keep the buildings, camping area and trails in good condition.

I would like to say a special "thank you" to all the members of the HIKESCO EXCO and FoF for the sterling work done, your efforts ensure that the club functions properly at all levels and that there is a varied programme of hikes and social events to suit all tastes and abilities. In short the membership fees afford the best bang for the buck ever.

Shortly many of you will be setting off on your annual holiday to the Christmas Camp, the Drakensberg or perhaps the coast. Please drive with care wherever you are going and come back safely ready to start the New Year with health and strength. To each and every member I wish a really blessed Christmas and an unforgettable New Year. Miles and smiles of hiking in the year ahead! Happy hiking
Robbie MacDonald

It has been some time since I have written an article for "Footnotes".

To get every one interested in kloofing Tracey May has made bookings with the Mountain Club for cer-



Neil Ransome
Hikes Organiser

tain kloofs in the Magaliesberg. For instance, Mhlabatini kloof was done in October. Next year there will be Groetkloof hike at Bartlett's Farm. Mhlabatini was a great success and we will be doing this hike in March next year.

With Sue Desmond coming onto the committee there will be a lot more away hikes being organized, especially trails with hutted camp sites.

With Christmas coming up, the JHC had the annual Rustig weekend party on Saturday night, followed by a lunch on Sunday, which were both a great success.

There will of course be the annual Christmas party which is being held at the Wanderers Golf Club on the 1st of December, which is a "must". The Christmas camp this year is at Munster on the Natal South Coast. The weather bureau predicts we are going to have lovely weather.

Time has gone quickly this year and I wish every one a happy Xmas and new year.



Wendy Farrow Youthful Hiking

The main event this past quarter has been the Mahai car camp over the long weekend in September. While the same venue was used for the Easter camp in April this year, this venue is a popular choice for those wanting to experience the majesty of the Berg without having to go to the top. We enjoyed the Tugela Gorge hike, the hike to the Grotto and Cannibal caves and then the easier Gudu Bush walk on the last day. There is so much more to do from Mahai, so no doubt this venue will appear again one day soon.

Thus far the Outeniqua and Harkerville hikes are fast filling up. Briefly, the Outeniqua hiking trail is a 7 day back pack in the Outeniqua mountains between George and Plettenberg Bay, overnighing in huts. Distance 106.5 kms. Harkerville –Circular two day backpack from Harkerville hut to the beautiful rugged coastline of the Southern cape and back. Obstacles include clambering around a rock face with the help of chains and ladders as well as a very steep ascent to the cliff top. This is an ideal extension to the Outeniqua trail.

Preview of upcoming hikes for 2008:

Vergezient Trails: Situated near Harrismith in the Free State, with views of the Drakensberg. Day walks on Saturday and Sunday from the comfortable base camp, The Barnhouse.

Rustenburg, Summit trail. Kgaswane Mountain Reserve in the Magaliesberg range. Two day back pack trail covering 25 kms. Stay in huts. Close to Joburg. Fair degree of fitness required.

Easter camp at Castle Rock Caravan site, Sabie. This is a combined weekend with the rest of the club.

MIDWEEKERS' CORNER



Jean Williams Wednesday Hikes

2007 was a good year for finding several new venues suitable for midweek hikes. Also, I'm happy to report, that the numbers of weekly regulars, visitors and new members continue to grow.

We tried a later starting time during the colder winter months in an effort to avoid rush hour traffic, but have reverted to the earlier starting time, by popular demand. One way or the other traffic con-

gestion is always going to be a problem. One thing's for sure, if you want to enjoy the solitude of hiking in the mountains midweek coping with the traffic is a small price to pay.

Not being the most organised person around, leaders are selected on site (thanks for that), then without much ado they proceed by taking a faster group on a challenging hike. There are, of course, the rest of us who hike at a more respectable pace. Whichever way one chooses to go, a good hike is usually had by all.

Thanks to those members who contribute to our website by submitting articles and photos. Thanks, also, to all of you for your continued support. I believe it's because we hike that we can still hike. Many of us are in our late 60s and early 70s. We consider ourselves extremely fortunate to be able to do this form of exercise.

Here's to a great festive season, and drive with care.

PROPERTY NOTES AND



Jean briefing Groenkloof hike. Photo: Harry Parsley

PATROLLING

FOOTHOLD



Jim Hutchinson
Property Administrator

In addition to the provision of excellent information, entertainment and social sessions on the Saturday, the October camp was specially engineered by Chairman Robbie to involve, in particular, more of our hikers in lending a hand on the Sunday in the improvement of our "home" in the bush. The Ladder Gully was cleared of potentially dangerous loose stones, the water collection system was checked and cleared, bush and trees on the western boundary were cleared in preparation for a new cattle fence (costs to be shared with our neighbour Gert Kruger), great strides were made in the rehabilitation of Footloose Gully and Hikers' Haven was well cleaned.

As can be expected, a spirit of camaraderie abounded and Robbie is congratulated for producing this unusual and successful event. Thanks to all the workers and particularly to Gwyn and her team of helpers for a scrumptious dinner.

As the matter stands at present, and as was the case with our previous neighbour, we will be allowing the grazing of Gert's cattle on our property for a few months a year in exchange for access to Gert's property into Footloose Gully. A spin-off for all concerned is a reduction in the fire hazard due to the shortening of the grass by the cattle.

With the re-opening of Footloose Gully, hopefully in a couple of months time, movement through the cliffs will be greatly enhanced and congestion reduced.

All hikers are earnestly requested to adhere to the ban on trespassing on neighbouring properties. The only way at present to and from the cliff top is by way of the Ladder Gully.

Foothold, particularly in summer, is a delightful place. Come, experience it yourself!

You can hire Hiker's Haven at Foothold or camp there.

Contact number: 011 462 2993



Bev Brockman
Vice Chairman

As we are coming to the last quarter of the year, it is a good time to reflect on how many changes and events have taken place. New, on the Media board, we have Harry Parsley and Jean Smilkstein – Welcome! And to the outgoing people, a huge thank you to Leon Marais and Maureen McLeman for all your superb work!

I have had a busy year with new work projects, moving house, and amongst all that, handing over Youthful Hiking to Wendy. Wendy Farrow is doing an outstanding job. Well done Wendy!

Next on the hiking programme we have the **Outeniqua** and **Harkeville** trails. Taking a break and getting so-called "lost" in the Eastern Cape forests, away from the city hubbub, will be an absolute pleasure, despite the challenge of hiking for 9 days!

Wendy has planned an exciting programme of trails for the youth. **The Fish River Canyon** is a place I truly enjoy returning to from time and time. Each hike there is hugely rewarding and a different and memorable experience. Early next May promises to be just as good. My hope is that there will be plenty of water, preferably not as much as our 2006 hike! The plan is to have two to three groups of 8 – 12 people per group; a medium +, medium - and maybe a slow group. I need a leader for the medium + (faster) group. This **must** be someone who has done the trail before. It is a wilderness trail, thus very careful planning needs to be done. Any volunteers?

The **Kiddies hike** is a great opportunity for parents to introduce their little ones to hiking, but please, they must be over 8 years old.

Over Xmas and New Year, a JHC team is planning to summit **Aconcagua**, in Peru, South America. This is one of the seven summits, apparently the second highest next to Everest (at some 6800m above sea level). Our participants are: Monika Brits, Angelo Denicolo, Bengt Dressler, Sue Desmond and Bernard Robinson. We wish them all a successful and safe journey!

The Club Weekend was a great success at Foothold. Robbie Macdonald put an enormous amount of work into ensuring its success. Thank you Robbie for putting all this together for all of us. The Saturday programme included Wayne Thompson from Netcare 911 who enlightened us on how their rescue service functions regarding the new contract between JHC and themselves. Dave Richard-

Bev Brockman Vice Chairman (cont)

son gave us a general talk on leadership skills. A Leader's Handbook was compiled by Robbie, with the help of Wendy Palm and handed out to all our leaders. This is a very handy, useful and necessary little book to keep in ones rucksack.

This **Heydays at Rustig** was the best one we have had for a few years. What fun! Thank you to Sue Desmond and her team for the superb job of organising the Saturday evening. Halloween was the theme. The Lapa was filled with amazingly scary stuff and we all became witches, devils, some pumpkins and there was even a well-disguised Hunchback Mummy with a pick axe (Guess Who)!

Milly and her team, as usual, provided an excellent meal for lunch on Sunday; thank you Milly. Please join us next year as it is certainly a worthwhile weekend.

Special backpack portage offer

Why carry a heavy backpack when we can provide a unique delivery service to any basecamp in the country. Our management is renowned for jovial hospitality and our red-nose GPS guidance system ensures superior delivery accuracy. Offer expires on 25th December. Contact SC on 082-Northpole 01

Quiz Challenge

QUIZ CHALLENGE AMONGST THE VARIOUS CLUBS.

Marion Hűfner

The idea is to have a group of 6 - 10 people in a team from each club, not necessarily a hiking club, but any club. Each team is to have a team captain. There will be 8 categories, each with 10 questions: history, geography, environment, science, mind twisters, South Africa, sport, etc. Specific rules will be set and circulated to each team. As this is a team effort, and not an individual challenge, nobody need feel that they are not clever enough to play or join in.

'Supporters' will be encourage to attend and will be most welcome.

Being an extremely busy time of year, this challenge will commence early 2008, providing all the clubs are interested in going ahead. First quiz is on Saturday, 19th January 2008 at 14h00 at 209 Barkston Drive, Blairgowrie.. This is being organised by Aileen from [Outdoor Adventures](#). If you are interested in participating in the JHC team, kindly let me know by mid December.

Marion 083 248 9543



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 behaviour likely to bring discredit to the name of the club is to be avoided.

Camp and trail booking procedure:

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

Precautions: The following basic precautions are recommended: Kindly carry your **medical aid card** or details with you at all times; Carry a minimum of 2 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

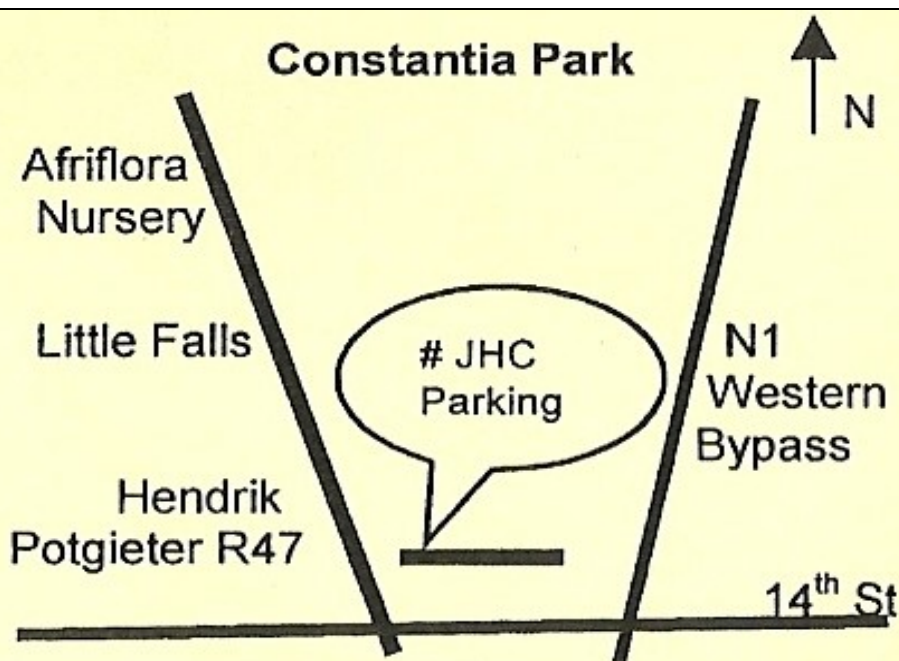
Meeting place: Constantia Park, outside Gateway House.

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



A NIGHT OUT IN KRUGER Marge Smith

Six of us from JHC had a different type of trip to Kruger Park over the August long weekend. Two nights were spent camping at Shingwedzi, with a walk in the wild to the Thulamela archaeological site on the day in-between. This meant an early start for the long drive from Shingwedzi to the Pafuri picnic site where we were to meet our guide at 09:00. When we arrived there was no sign of the guide and no cell phone reception. However, the caretaker of the site had radio contact with Punda Maria and assured us that the guide would indeed arrive. Well, there are worse places to while away the time than at Pafuri with its special birds, wonderfully big trees and thieving monkeys with sharp eyes and quick hands.

An hour and a quarter later the guide arrived and loaded us up into his game viewing vehicle for the drive to the place where we would park. With two armed rangers escorting us we made the short walk up the hill to the Thulamela site. Fortunately no threatening animals were encountered on the walk.

Drystone walls characterize the site, resembling the style of Zimbabwe ruins, though on a smaller scale. We were fortunate to have a professor from the University of Venda with us who could supplement the guide's story on the archaeological findings with a discussion on the life and culture of the inhabitants of the site long before Kruger Park existed, somewhere around 1400 – 1600 A.D.

The last night in Kruger Park was spent in the Shipandani hide near Mopani camp. We each made our way to Mopani and spent a hot afternoon viewing the large lake, walking around the inside perimeter of the fence and cooling off in the swimming pool. We were only allowed to take over the hide from the day visitors half an hour before sunset. The hide is situated on a small river next to a pool full of hippos. From there a couple of good bird sightings were made; a martial eagle in a tree outside the hide, and a malachite kingfisher on the banks of the river. The hide had a lovely braai area from which the day-trippers were excluded by a locked gate to which only we had the key. Whilst enjoying our braai and fire, we were watched closely by a genet with thieving in-

tent from the top of the reed fence. We expected a noisy night, but no such thing. Once the hippos had emerged from their pool and gone on their nightly wanderings, all was quiet, and remained so all night.

Marge's neighbours



If there were any animals out there they were remarkably quiet. We went to sleep accompanied by the unexpected sound of African voices singing melodiously into the night air from Mopani camp. The next morning we had to be out of the hide half an hour after sunrise, which resulted in a rush to get ready and remove our possessions from the hide. If I had one criticism it would be that we should be permitted more time before making way for the day visitors.

There are only two hides in Kruger Park where one can spend the night (after making the usual accommodation bookings through SANParks); the one where we stayed near Mopani, and another at Sable dam near the Phalaborwa gate.

HIKE REVIEWS



INDRE TROMS, NORWAY

Tor Meyer

Here is a description of the hike we undertook in the Indre Troms area in Northern Norway.



We were seven hikers from Johannesburg: Mike, Jim, Dick, Ed, Kristen, Elsa and Tor. Gaynor joined us from London.

We were dropped a few hundred meters from the Finnish border at Galgvjavri and had a 15km hike to our first cabin, Galdahytta. We had a fairly long ascent to a plateau where we had an excellent view of the Mt Markus (1337m) and its neighbouring peaks to the west. As the area was 69 degrees north it was stark, quite cool and windy.

Being light for 24 hours per day, one could pace the hike without any rush to get in "before dark". We went past many lakes and down a steep decline to the cabin. This was beautifully appointed with a view of Galdajavri, which is a large lake.

The next day's hike to Gappohytta was similar to that of the previous day. It took us up to a plateau, across it and down to the cabin, which was pleasantly situated next to a small lake. It was here that we first encountered the stony remains of glaciated moraines, which took time to cross. The views of the mountains continued to be spectacular.

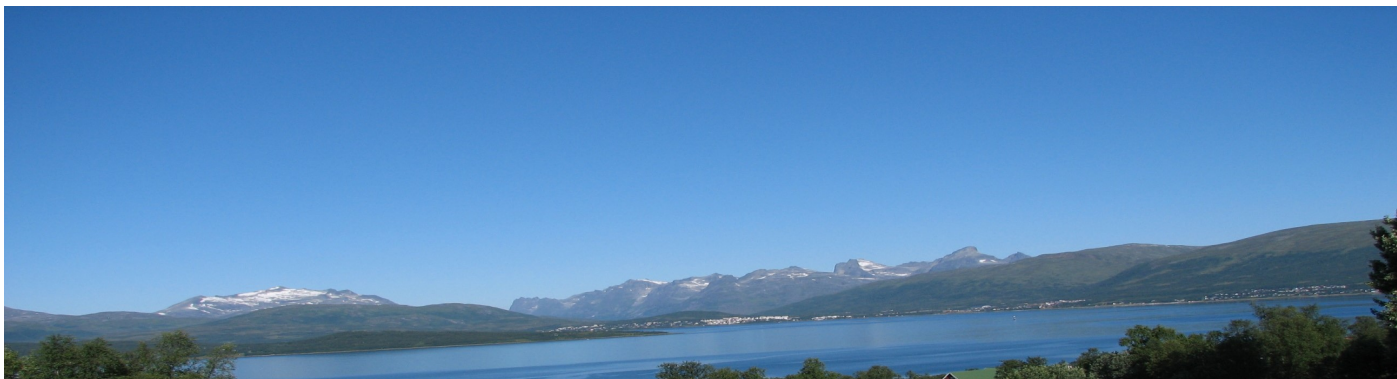
The next day we had to cover 18kms through Isdalen (Ice Valley). This was a splendid walk past towering glaciated mountains and cascading waterfalls. At this point we crossed into Sweden for a few kilometres. The weather turned quite warm, and when we arrived at Rostahytta a few of the party went for a swim in the river next to the cabin. The next day's trail was 20km long so we set off early. A lot of rock hopping was necessary, which made progress slow. We past numerous lakes and crossed a few rivers. The weather was excellent with the equivalent of a berg wind warming us. We were now in the Dividal National Park and the scenery became gentler.

The final day before exiting was a 23km hike to Dividalshytta. This was a long day. We walked through gently undulating countryside which took us past many lakes and a wide river crossing. 16kms further on and an ascent to a height of 1000m eventually led to a descent through a large and dense birch forest.

...(continued on page 12)

...(Norway cont)

It was a mild day and although mosquitoes were ever present, we had become used to them. The



Tromsø view north across the fjord. Photo: Jim Arnett

HIKE REVIEWS



GRAYS-TLANYAKU PASS, DRAKENBERG, 9 TO 12 AUGUST 2007

Neil Ransome

Hikers:- Neil Ransome, Sue Desmond, Bengt Dressler, Paul van Beek, Brian Lloyd, Hanneke Robat, Angelo Denicolo, Monica Brits, Daryll and Laura Elliott.

Six of us met at Bengalela restaurant for supper on Wednesday night. The others travelled down early on Thursday morning and met us at Monks Cowl camp site.

The weather was perfect with blue skies and no wind. We walked up the usual route to Blind Mans Corner via the Sphinx and then to Keith Bush hut. When we arrived at Keith Bush at about 15h00 there was no water in the stream next to the camp site. To get water one had to go back down the valley, which took another three quarters of an hour.

On Friday the weather was also perfect and we all got to the top by 11h00. On the way to Tlanyaku Pass we were accosted by a bunch of Basuto herd boys begging for food. They followed us for several kilometres before they got the hint

to disappear. At one point I could still see them walking on top of the hill where we would have walked to Tlanyaku, Sue Desmond suggested that we should walk down the valley and camp by the stream where the traverse hikers had camped on previous occasions. The water in the stream was very cold and in the morning the water turned to ice.

We all set off by 08h00 and by 12h00 we were all in the valley above Ndidima Gorge. There we had a wash and lunch. After lunch Monika, Angelo, Sue and Paul decided to go on ahead in order to get as close to the junction of Keith's Bush Camp as possible, making the next day a fairly short hike back. It was agreed to contour around the ridge to C13 (contour path) instead of taking the short cut over. They missed the turning and ended up going a very long route via Leopards cave. They did however find a beautiful valley with a waterfall worth returning to at a later date.

That evening the remainder of us camped on a hill close to the "The Gat". The next day we arrived at the camp site by 13h00, showered and were finishing lunch when the others arrived, a bit later than they had planned. Needless to say, their next day's hike wasn't short at all.'

HIKE REVIEWS

girls took a swim in the large, gently flowing Di-



Photo: Jim Arnett

vidalriver.

The next day we exited from the park and as we climbed into the maxitaxi the rain came down!

The cabins were comfortable, consisting of a lounge/kitchenette and two or three bedrooms. They were well insulated with double glazing and had an efficient wrought iron stove with loads of wood available.

The hike was considered by everyone to be a great success. On the six days we only came across about twenty people. The area is spectacularly unspoiled. We saw lots of reindeer, small inquisitive mice, a king eagle (probably a golden eagle), and could pick blueberries and cloudberry. The few flowers that struggled to survive in this harsh environment were very attractive.

Our group was hosted and spoiled while in Oslo by Tor's relatives and friends and we also spent some time doing dayhikes in the Lyngen Alps, an especially pleasant and scenic area north of Tromsø, the region's main city. Tromsø was also great fun as we visited some polar museums and took the funicular to a scenic spot overlooking the city. We also took a few ferries to outlying islands.

Altogether, it was an original and worthwhile experience. Johannesburg Hiking Club does it again!



MNWENI ROCKERIES DRAKENSBERG, SEPTEMBER 2007 **Sue Desmond**

The Team: Bengt Dressler, Brian Lloyd, Neil Ransome, Olga Braude, Paul van Beek, Sue Desmond, Uri Norman.



Photo: Sue Desmond

We all travelled down to Bergville together with trailer in tow, except for Neil who met us at Binglela where we had dinner. Here we bumped into George's group who were going to hike in the Cathedral Peak area. We enjoyed a pleasant evening with the team limiting their intake of fine wine and beer so as to get a fresh and energetic start in the morning. Thanks to George we were able to complete the necessary form before arriving at the Mnweni Tourist Centre allowing us an early start.

The route took us along a dirt road for a few kilometres before heading up into the Mnweni valley. We were expecting temperatures of 29° C- 30° C and were looking forward to reaching the Mnweni River for a swim. Parts of the valley had been burnt as was the case with many of the areas in the 'Berg. We reached the river at the bottom of Fangs Pass for lunch and spent a couple of hours

HIKE REVIEWS



MNWENI VALLEY

Photo: Sue Desmond

relaxing and enjoying the scenery; some people were brave enough to swim in the icy berg water. A couple of horses were grazing near by and one of them decided to venture down to the water. Olga greeted the horse, but he wasn't convinced that the party was friendly and decided to retreat to a safer spot. We continued past Sheppard's Cave and made camp at the bottom of Rwanga Pass. It was a perfect summers evening with not a breath of wind as we sat and made dinner under the stars.

Sunday saw us heading up towards Mnweni Pass where we met Patrick, the nephew of a staff member at the Tourist Centre. He was out

patrolling with his three dogs and he watched our progress up the pass from his view point on the opposite side of the valley.

Half way up the pass the wind picked up strongly, forcing us to grip onto rocks and tufts of grass to prevent being blown over. Unfortunately the wind stayed with us for the day creating a 'wind chill factor'. On reaching the top we headed over to the source of the Orange River, hoping that there would be some drinkable water,

....(continued on page 14)

....(*Mnweni cont*)

as we had passed some hikers coming down

HIKE REVIEWS

that had told us that there was very little water to be found. There was no flowing water, but a substantial pool of clear water was good enough to fill our bottles.

Lunch was spent here in the shelter of the rocks against the strong wind that continued to blow.

After lunch we walked over to Ledgers Cave, where Bengt, Olga and Uri decided to go down and take a closer look. From there we continued up to Nponjwane Cave, which to our delight was completely sheltered from the wind. Thus it was decided to camp there the night rather than pitch tents at the top of Rockeries.

That evening we could socialise and, as it turned out, entertain our neighbours with our chatter. We had met three hikers doing the same route as us the day before and were now sharing this wonderful accommodation. There was three quarter moon lighting up the cave and the mood was jovial. Olga wanted to go for an evening walk, but she couldn't get any takers as we could all hear the wind in the distance and no one was going to venture out into it. She admits that she would have backed out if anyone had taken her up on it. In the early hours of the morning Venus shone brightly into the cave followed by the most beautiful sunrise as the sun rose over a sea of cloud.

We set off early in the morning for Rockeries Pass, grateful that the wind had died down to a gentle breeze. The path down the pass is very well trodden with lots of loose gravel making our descent quiet slow. We passed by the rock fall that had occurred some years back and we marvelled at the large chunk of mountain that had come down. We took a break at the first stream where the water flows directly from a small hole in the mountain. On reaching the lower valley the blue flowers were out in profusion making the landscape 'picture perfect'. The Tourist Centre was reached by 12:30. After a drink and a shower we were all fresh and ready to set off for Little Switzerland to enjoy a good meal in beautiful surroundings, and a lovely way to end a great weekend.



HOLHOEK HIKE, 12-14 OCTOBER 2007

Marc Burman

Hikers: Wendy Palm, Tom and Ann Kenny, Paul van Beek, Brian Lloyd, Alan Ralph, Bengt, Etienne and Roan Dressler, Anne Bell, Olga Braude, Katy Tirillova, Anatoli Bykow, Bev Brockman, Hijme de Jong, Hanneke Robat, Marc Burman, Sue Desmond (Leader).

Holhoek * is certainly a surprising choice of name



for this beautiful farm, about 16km from the tiny town of Paul Roux in the Free State. The camp offered us comfortable sandstone houses with bunk beds, luxurious hot water, electricity, a huge lapa and braai area, and a swimming pool. The dam just in front of camp was the perfect place for the kids (Roan and Etienne) to get dirty whilst making exciting discoveries in the mud at the dam's edge. Most interesting were the tiny freshwater turtles, only about 5 cm across.

The weekend started out with a relaxed braai on Friday night. Beer and wine flowed, but that didn't stop us being well rested the next morning and ready for the 13km hike. Some of the fitter hikers assured me, while clambering up one of the wet and slippery wooden ladders that were dangling precariously over a 12m sheer drop, that it was actually a walk in the park. I've walked in many parks and my legs aren't usually so stiff afterwards. Nor does vertigo usually strike me on your average stroll in the park. But I'll admit, it wasn't

HIKE REVIEWS

extremely strenuous, and there was plenty of energy left over for taking in the awesome scenery, and discussing life's trials and tribulations in gory detail.

The weather was great. Saturday started off cool, and stayed that way, although it didn't stop some of us braving the icy pool after the hike. A few drops of rain now and then did nothing to dull the spirits of the intrepid party as we scuttled up and down steps, crawled through dank and dark tunnels, and polished off Sue's excellent waffles, strawberries and cream at tea-time. Being a newcomer, I actually thought she was joking about that, until I saw her whip out 3 packs of waffles, strawberries and the cream.

Catering was a major part of the weekend, and I'm happy to say that everyone took their duties very seriously. The kitchen there is huge, but that didn't stop it getting crowded with every variety of cooler bag, basket and plastic packet filled with everything from Woolie's snacks and mysterious Russian breakfast ingredients, to the ubiquitous and copious bottles of booze. Every cut of meat imaginable was roasted on the braai, and the amount of garlic bread consumed was enormous. Along the way, the Russian contingent treated the adventurous among us to a variety of Russian dishes and salads, as well as some of the more colourful, exciting and stimulating Russian phrases.

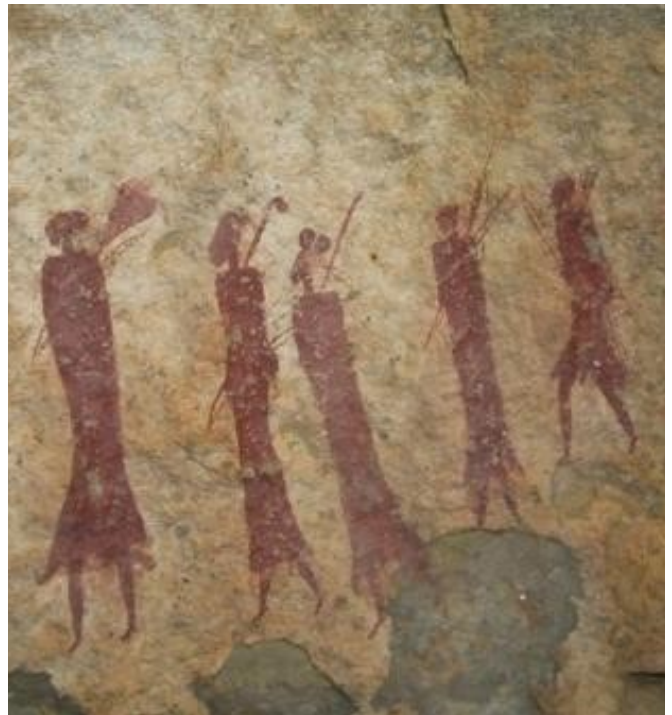
On Saturday evening, we were presented by Sue and her team of helpers with a superb spread of snacks courtesy of the club – the famous Happy Hour. It really was a very happy hour, with snails in garlic butter, crudités, pate, biscuits galore, crisps and other hors d'oeuvres to whet the appetite. Everyone was duly happy, and contented sighs were heard all around.

Sunday was clear and much warmer. After lathering up with sun-cream, we set off on an extremely enjoyable short hike. This took us up and over massive boulders, down into the valley again, into the large cave where P W Botha's mother gave birth to his brother, while hiding from the British during the Boer war (I haven't bothered to do the maths, but she must have had a long career as an active mother) into the cool shade of the rock overhang – a section of ferny jungle called Wonderland – it was a relief. The famous birthing cave now brings to mind some striking pastoral antecedents, housing cattle at night which is obvious

from the amount of cow poo littering the sandy floor.

All present on the weekend will probably agree that everything from the wide-open spaces, to the plentiful cow patties littering the paths, to the antiquitous rock-art, to the 'special' Wimpy burgers in Bethlehem on the way home, contributed to a good time. I enjoyed the company and experience so much that I'll certainly be joining next week's Sunday hike.

** Editor's note: Probably translated as "cave corner", and may refer to the cave where P W Botha's mother gave birth to his brother, as mentioned in the story above. Has anyone got a better explanation?*



Also, how about sharing some of those Russian recipes and the Russian phrases fit for publication?

HIKE REVIEWS

**BELL TRAVERSE**
19 – 21 OCTOBER 2007
Sue Desmond

The Team: Sue Desmond and Bengt Dressler

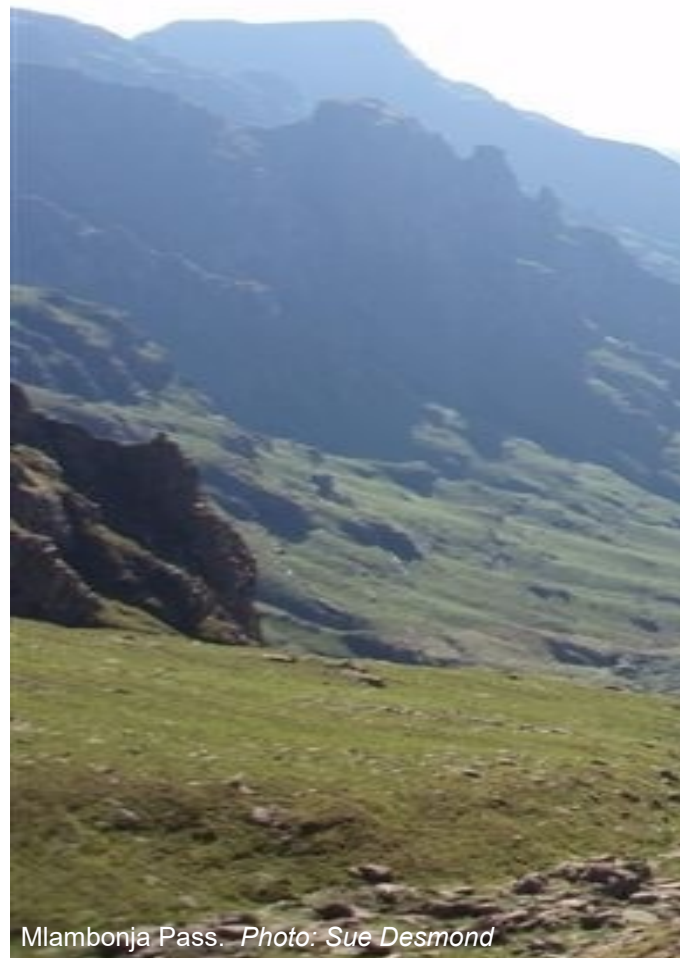


We set off for Bergville on Friday afternoon and booked in at the Bergville Caravan Park for the night. As has become customary, we went to dinner at Bingelela and enjoyed a pleasant evening there. The next morning we were up early and on our way to Didima to fill in the Mountain Register by 7:00.

We set off for Cathedral Peak but on reaching the hatchery we discovered that the river was flowing too strongly and decided to head back towards the golf course and cross over the river at the suspension bridge. After some "bundu bashing" we picked up the mountain bike trail and soon we were back on the hiking trail heading up towards the peak. It was quite misty but the cool air was perfect for our climb. As we walked up the ridge we could only see the gloom of the next rise that we had to climb with white walls of mist on either side of us. On reaching the 'Orange Peel' the mist started clearing and we had a good view of our approach to Cathedral Peak. There was plenty of water flowing which made our ascent interesting and pleasant. Once we were below the peak we decided to negotiate the slippery and treacherous gap with all its loose gravel and rocks before taking an early lunch at the Bell Cave.

While walking the traverse we were able to catch some beautiful views each time the mist cleared. We came across two tricky areas where we had to use extreme caution as the rocks were very wet. Negotiating the wet rocks in the way of the path and at times having only minimum foot support between us and the sheer vertical drop below us made for some careful contemplating and negotiation. We made our final climb to the escarpment feeling a little exhausted but in high spirits after a wonderful days walk. We set up camp by the river at 15:30 and enjoyed a very fresh wash followed by a couple of hours enjoying the views and sundowners.

The next morning we awoke to a clear blue sky and sunshine. We got off to an early start down Mlambonja Pass, and by 10:00 the message came through of our victory at the Rugby World Cup. This also coincided with us reaching a de-



Mlambonja Pass. Photo: Sue Desmond

HIKE REVIEWS

cent path out of the river crossings and we continued with a bounce in our step. On our arrival back at the hotel we noticed the helicopter was very busy doing flips for the hotel guests. We decided that a trip would be a wonderful way to end a great weekend. We went to the hotel where the staff was most accommodating and they allowed us to have a quick shower at the gym. We then enjoyed a delicious lunch on the terrace and returned to the helipad for our trip back up the mountain with wings. What an experience to see where we had walked and we were able to see the views we had missed going up the ridge the day before. We flew over some beautiful valleys, waterfalls and caves.

We returned to Johannesburg in time to meet a few of our fellow hikers at HO who joined us for a pizza to complete our extraordinary and exciting weekend.



HIKE REVIEWS



MHLABATINI KLOOF- ING HIKE

14 OCTOBER 2007

Tracey May

This was the first of a programme of kloofing hikes organised by the JHC for kloofing fans to take place throughout the summer months, one per month from October to March, in the kloofs and gorges in and around the Magaliesberg.

We had a permit from The Mountain Club Magaliesberg section to take 10 people on this hike. Rod Hamilton was the leader, the others were: Mark Stuart, Alison Moolman, Tracey May,



Bob Knucky, Peter Roos and newcomers Alan Hewitt and Lesley Keegan.

The weather was perfect as we set off up a steep climb before entering the gorge very high

up where it was still very dry. The farmer's dog – a fox terrier who Peter christened "FiFi" although he was clearly a male! - had decided we were lots of fun; he had followed us from the start and spent the entire day with us and was great entertainment!

Boulder hopping, splashing through pools, at times climbing under massive boulders and jumping down into pools, we made our way down this truly awesome kloof. Lots of birdlife, a snake slithering off under the leaves off the path and clear skies made this a great experience for all of us. The water temp wasn't too low so we all didn't mind getting soaked, at the end of the gorge we went right down to the weir where a crystal clear pool had filled up thanks to the rain and we finished off the hike with a long relaxing swim.

Well done to Alan and Lesley, our newcomers, who did extremely well and promised to be back for more!

We are thinking of planning an away hike in February 2008 to a kloof in the Cape or Mpumalanga – will keep you all posted.

Love and light to all at JHC over the
festive season



YOUTHFUL HIKING



MAHAI CAR CAMP ROYAL NATAL NA- TIONAL PARK (RNNP) 21-24 September, 2007

Wendy Farrow

Participants

Rod and Michael, Roland, Bev, Hijme, Ari, Roger, Sophie, Paul, Mark and Reg, Julie, Lorna and Sphiwe, Sonja, Susan and Wendy.

Mahai camp at RNNP must rate as one of the many popular venues from which a hiker can enjoy the wonderful hiking opportunities afforded by the Berg. Our group of hikers started arriving during the day on Friday with the remaining group arriving on the Saturday. Of the group of 17, we had quite a large contingent of non-members, 7 in all.

On Saturday we did the Tugela Gorge hike all the way up to the chain ladder which a few of us climbed in order to get some better views. We were fortunate to be enjoying the beauty of the Amphitheatre on such a lovely warm sunny day. The river was very dry, such that one could walk all the way to the top end of the gorge without getting wet. We had our lunch stop here before returning back. As the path descends to the boulder-strewn gorge we met up with the rest of the hikers who had arrived on Saturday. They were doing the hike at quite a pace and we eventually met them back at the campsite where we enjoyed the usual happy hour and communal braai.

Another day dawned bright and sunny on the Sunday and we headed off to the Grotto taking a steady walk uphill through Fairy Glen and up to the contour path from where it was a fairly easy walk to the Grotto. After that we headed back onto the contour path and followed it in the direction of the Camel's Hump, passing beneath Castle Rock and the Diamond. Most of the contour path was rather exposed and it also got quite windy at times. We eventually found a small piece of shade where we lunched on a rock. At the point where the contour paths turn right down the Sundays valley, the group split up and half the group set off towards Mahai while the rest of

us went to Cannibal Caves. It was a very pleasant walk back down along the Sundays valley. There was just a mere trickle over the Sundays waterfall.

Our hike on Monday was a mere stroll up past Cascades and towards Gudu Bush and the Gudu Falls, taking in the beautiful views of the surroundings. Unfortunately we missed the turn off to the falls and decided not to go back to look for it.

Thank you to Roland and Rod for leading during the weekend.

RHENOSTERPOORT HIKING TRAIL

19 – 21 OCTOBER 2007

Wendy Farrow

Participants:

Padmini Moodley, Elsa Wloschowsky, Norman Pringle, Hans Van Rae, Jim Arnett, Danny Rost & Wendy Farrow.

This trail is situated on a private game farm in the Waterberg Mountains. We all arrived during the Friday evening, some of us later than others due to the traffic jam out of Joburg and after braving the very wet roads en route to Rheno-sterpoort. We were wondering what was in store for the weekend. Saturday dawned slightly overcast, but with no threat of rain we were in good spirits as we got on our way for the day's hike.

There are two bush camps, each with a large thatched lapa and kitchen area, open braai area and a thatched hut with bunks and beds.

As we did the back pack option we worked out that it was not far to the next camp, so we detoured a short way after an hour's walk to drop our packs at the second camp and thus were able to enjoy the days walk with a much lighter load. There are two wooded kloofs on the farm.

....(continued on next page)

....(from previous page)

The route on the Saturday took us along a kloof, which had a waterfall and large natural swim-

YOUTHFUL HIKING

ming pool below as well as more pools as we followed the path.

The path then turned up along the second wooded kloof and we enjoyed the beauty of the Waterberg bushveld as we meandered our way to a high point on the mountain where we had a lovely view across the Waterberg Mountains and Alma valley below. We had a leisurely lunch at the top before going downhill back to the Bosbok bush camp. We whiled away the remainder of the afternoon enjoying the lovely outdoors and listening to the abundance of bird calls. Being the day of the World Cup Rugby final, a few of us couldn't resist supporting the Boks and managed to stay up and "watch" the game on the portable radio we had. It was a worthwhile option considering the outcome of the game!

The trail which we followed on the Sunday was more interesting as the trail takes one up to the highest point in the area and the views all around were spectacular. There were quite a few places worthy of being picnic spots. This trail has an extra option of another 4kms through a kloof. We followed the main trail and then walked the last part along a mountain stream where there were big pools for swimming as well as having a lunch break.

This hiking trail is worth visiting again. There is the option of having a base camp weekend as all the trails are accessible to either of the camps. The facilities are good and the trail is well maintained. The birdlife and surrounding bushveld are very beautiful and allows one the opportunity to appreciate the beauty of the Waterberg,

SOUTPANSBERG TWO DAY BACK PACK TRAIL

9-12 AUGUST, 2007

Wendy Farrow

Participants

Sean and Simon Lewis, Padmini Moodley, Bev Brockman, Hijme De Jong, Ingrid Schwim, Este Shearer and Wendy Farrow.

A group of 16 were eagerly looking forward to the Morgenzon hike over the long weekend in Au-

gust. However, due to the terrible fires experienced in Mpumalanga, Komatiland closed some of their trails and the Morgenzon trail was one of them. A last minute search for a suitable replacement was not that fruitful, and eventually we settled on the Soutpansberg hiking trail near Louis Trichardt.

With the change of plans and the looming petrol shortage at the time the party soon reduced in size. The rest of us, however, decided we were keen to get away for the weekend and so off we went to do the two day Hanglip trail. Along route



Soutpansberg hike.

Photo: Sean Lewis

we came across the Bush Pub and Camp Africa. We stopped in for cool drinks and had a look around the spot which used to be the last hut on the then five day Soutpansberg trail. It is now run by a couple as overnight accommodation and the Bush Pub was quite authentic. We had our braai there on the Saturday night after returning from Hanglip hut. The day's walk to Hanglip was great with lovely views from the top and the hut itself was well situated. We enjoyed a magnificent sunset as well as the appearance of the Milky Way once it was dark.



MEMBER'S NEWS

DAVE AND ROBYN EIDELMAN'S FAREWELL LETTER, 5TH SEPTEMBER, 2007

Dear Jean, and all the other, all wonderful, members of the Wednesday group of the Johannesburg Hiking Club.

It was almost three years ago that Robyn and I joined the Wednesday group on our first hike - Castle Gorge. We had never hiked before then, but we both felt confident in our ability to do so, particularly as we regularly walked seven kilometers a day around our suburb. When we met our fellow hikers that day for the first time, we saw you were all older than us and so we felt even more confident in our ability to hike. So we started up the mountain.

To shorten the long story: at the end of the hike, on the way back down again, my (Dave's) legs were trembling from the unaccustomed effort, I was over-heated, ratty and miserable, and couldn't wait to get back to the car and sit down again - for the rest of the day, at least, or, hopefully, a week! Of course I pretended otherwise, as best I could, but I know that my red face, slow pace and shallow, heavy breathing gave me away to you other hikers.

That day Robyn and I learnt a few lessons: firstly, "old" is not down and out, and "young" is not necessarily stronger nor faster. Secondly, hiking is more strenuous than walking. Thirdly, never mind what others do - you must always come prepared for the worst, and if it doesn't happen, then well and good. In particular, always hike with plenty of water for drinking.

But most importantly, we learnt what a marvelous bunch of wonderful people you hikers are. We were drawn to you all instantly by a kinship not normally experienced in society in general. Being more mature, you have all outgrown the bullshit generally associated with younger folk, and, so, we could all just be ourselves with one another, in a spirit of kinship and acceptance, in the outdoors we all love, and in nature, where there is neither pretence nor showmanship.

Tell me of even one person who could not thrive in such an environment!

Robyn and I are sad to leave you wonderful people, but we are happy and excited about our fu-

ture, living in nature, as we will be, in Plettenberg Bay. Whether you know it or not, our time spent with you all nurtured our souls and we are the richer for it. We thank you most sincerely for this gift you have given us!

We wish you all good health, happiness and fulfillment in the time ahead.

WELCOME BACK

It's great to have Richard Yelland back after his three year battle with osteoarthritis and thirteen month recovery from hip replacement surgery. After his problem-free hike at Foothold in September 2007 Richard is experiencing the joy of hiking once again. Welcome back Richard and long may you continue to enjoy your hiking.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to the following new Johannesburg Hiking Club members:

- Skye Strick
- William Liu
- Carmen Rayner
- Richard and Blondie Mokgata
- Catherine Davis
- Anne Paxton
- Heather Marder
- Wendy Blyth
- Carolyn Williamson
- Claire Birnbaum
- Robert Brown
- Thembakazi Mali
- Roger Price

May you all enjoy many years of great hiking with the Club. Catherine Davis' article on the next page is a reminder why we started hiking and continue to hike.

Dear Harry (editor),

Thank you for your call on Saturday. Every body I've met or spoken to through the Club has been so warm and welcoming. However, the thought

MEMBER'S NEWS



Letter from a new member Catherine Davis

of writing a short "blurb" about myself sent cold shivers down my spine. I'm a much better at telling a story with numbers than with words. You see I'm accountant by trade and although I love my job I recognize that for most people the art of balancing a Balance Sheet doesn't make stimulating dinner conversation.

So, late one night at the office I tried to remember what was on my wish list before I became obsessed with counting other peoples money and owning the contents of an entire shopping mall and exercising in silence with the other 20 minute athletes of the gym world; I remembered our family timeshare and sunny walks in the natural beauty of the berg and that amongst my Guess stilettos, Steve Madden pumps and Nine West sandals I actually owned a pair of hiking boots.

So I went out and bought some more clothes in various shades of khaki and woke 3 hours before my normal waking time on Sunday morning to join some of the nicest, warmest, friendliest people I've ever met, to walk around Castle Gorge for a few hours. Later that night I slept very well knowing I had done something good for Catherine.

My new-found love for outdoor sports (which includes talking to people) has led me to joining a rowing club. I'm still learning how to how to row thanks to some very patient people at Wemmer Pan so if I'm not hiking, I'm rowing or travelling with my mom.

Thank you to the founding members and current members of the Jhb Hiking Club for bringing joy and hope and warmth to my life. It's a privilege to be a member of your club.

It's great to have you as a member of the Club. It appears that you are both a bean counter and a wordsmith of note. (Editor)

OBITUARY: LAWRIE PODMORE



Lawrie Podmore passed away on Monday 5 November after a long illness. He was a popular JHC member of some 20 years standing, during which time he hiked, camped and cooked on occasions at social events.

An engineer by profession, he enjoyed many interests during his lifetime. As a result he had many a story to relate to his willing listeners.

Lawrie suffered his final illness well, as noted by members who helped and visited him in recent months.

Condolences are offered to his family members and to his close friend Cloe.

THANKS

Thanks go to Ron Hasselbach and Nilo Zolezzi for hiking equipment donated for sale towards club funds.

The JHC wish them both well in their new and distant homes.

ASTRONOMY

DOES THE SUN ALWAYS SET IN THE WEST?

Paul Rangecroft

We were taught at school that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west. This is not entirely true. It is true that the line of the sun's path across the sky each day runs from east to west, but the sun seldom rises due east and sets due west. In fact, the points on the horizon which mark the positions of sunrise and sunset shift slightly each day. This is related to the annual migration of the overhead position of the sun between the Tropic of Capricorn and the Tropic of Cancer.

At any particular moment in time, the sun will be positioned directly overhead at a certain latitude. Over the course of a year, the sun migrates northwards from the Tropic of Capricorn to the Tropic of Cancer in the first half and then back southwards again in the second half. The two tropics, located at latitudes 23.5°S and 23.5°N , respectively, mark the southern and northern extremities of this migration, and the summer and winter solstices mark the times of the year when the sun reaches these extremities. The equinoxes mark the two times of the year when the sun crosses over the equator.

This annual migration of the overhead position of the sun is responsible for the change in seasons. It is related to the tilt of the earth's axis of rotation relative to the plane of its orbit around the sun (23.5° from the vertical) and the change in the orientation of the axis relative to the sun as the earth advances in its orbit. If the earth's axis was not tilted, there would be no seasonal varia-

tion, and day and night would be of equal length throughout the year.

As the overhead position of the sun migrates northwards and back southwards over the course of a year, the rising point and setting point of the sun follow a similar migration along the eastern and western horizons respectively. The two solstices represent turning points in the direction of migration. Ancient civilisations realised that they could predict the timing of the midsummer and midwinter solstices by following the rising point of the sun as it migrated along the eastern horizon. They built structures that were aligned with the solstice risings and thus acted as markers for the turning points in the seasons. The structure at Stonehenge in England is an example of such a structure.

There are only two times in the year when the position of sunrise coincides with true east and that of sunset with true west, and that is at the time of the equinoxes. During the winter months in the southern hemisphere, the sun rises north of east and sets north of west (27° north in Johannesburg in midwinter), whilst in the summer months, it rises south of east and sets south of west (26° south in Johannesburg in midsummer).

"What is the point of all of this?" you may be wondering! Well, if you are out hiking and you head in the direction of the setting sun, you may not be heading due west. In fact, if you were exploring a polar region such as the Antarctic at the onset of the winter season when the days are very short, you would be heading almost due north!



PHOTOGRAPHY

TIPS ON DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY: No 5.

Bryan Lever

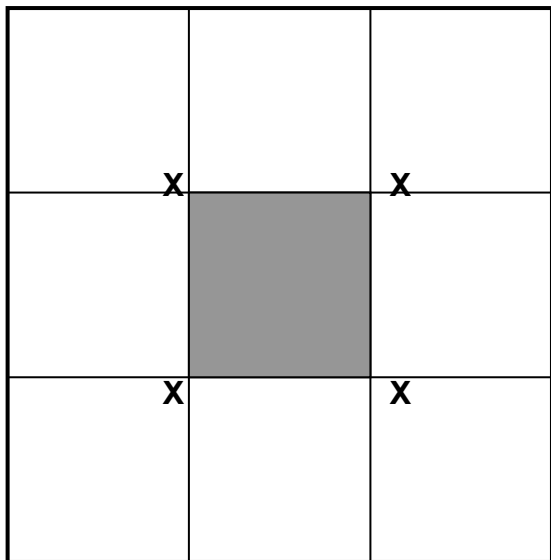
COMPOSITION

OK, so now that you have some basics tucked under your belts lets look at composition.

Definition: The pleasing arrangement of the elements of an image within the boundaries of the frame. You might say "what's one person's meat is another person's poison!" That's true, but there are some basic rules, as in any discipline, that need to be understood and then you can break them as much as you like even if others don't like it!

The rule of 1/3rds: If you divide the rectangular frame of an image the key focus points should fall on the intersection of the 1/3rds:

The points marked "x" are on the intersection



of 1/3rds. Horizons should rest on the horizontal 1/3rd lines and key focus objects should cover the intersection points. Vertical objects such as trees cliff edges etc should lie on the vertical 1/3rd lines. A common mistake when taking groups of people is that the eyes of a line of people are placed right in the centre (top to bottom) of the frame leaving a lot of empty space above the heads. this space is called "head room". If you place the eyes of a person

or group of people in a line on the upper 1/3rd line you will have a more pleasing picture and the head room will be correct.

Looking room: Any subject, especially people should be placed so as to lead the eye of the observer into the picture and not out. For example when you take a portrait of someone whose left shoulder is towards the camera then you should place their head towards the right hand side of the frame so that their body direction is leading into the frame. If you place them on the left hand side, or dead centre, they will look like they are falling out of the picture and have empty space behind them. This would be very uncomfortable to the eye of the observer.

Lighting: This is a vast subject all on it's own, but there are a few pointers which deserve attention in the composition. One of these is separation from the background. If you shoot against the light of say the sun or a spot light in a theatre you will create a bright rim highlight around your subject. This creates a wonderful separation from the background. However, be careful that you shade your lens to prevent unwelcome lens flares being created on your image. Use one hand or a card to shade the lens, or stand just inside the shadow cast by some object that is outside of your picture to avoid this flare. Full frontal lighting with the sun behind you is often very flat except when you shoot a landscape lit by a very low sun illuminating, say, mountains in a golden glow. In this case it is the brilliant colours that take precedence in your composition. Avoid very high contrasts of sun and shade whenever possible. To do this you can use a reflector or fill in flash.

This is a very brief overview of the main rules of composition but, of course, they are made to be broken to create any effect that you wish. However, winning pictures usually follow the rules with exceptions.

Happy snapping.

In the next issue Bryan will deal more with lighting and use of flash

PHOTO GALLERY



PHOTO GALLERY



Geiranger, Norway.

Photo: Jim Arnett



Gray's Pass.



The Rockeries.

Photo: Sue Desmond

PHOTO GALLERY



BELL TRAVERSE

Photo: Sue Desmond

STOP PRESS !

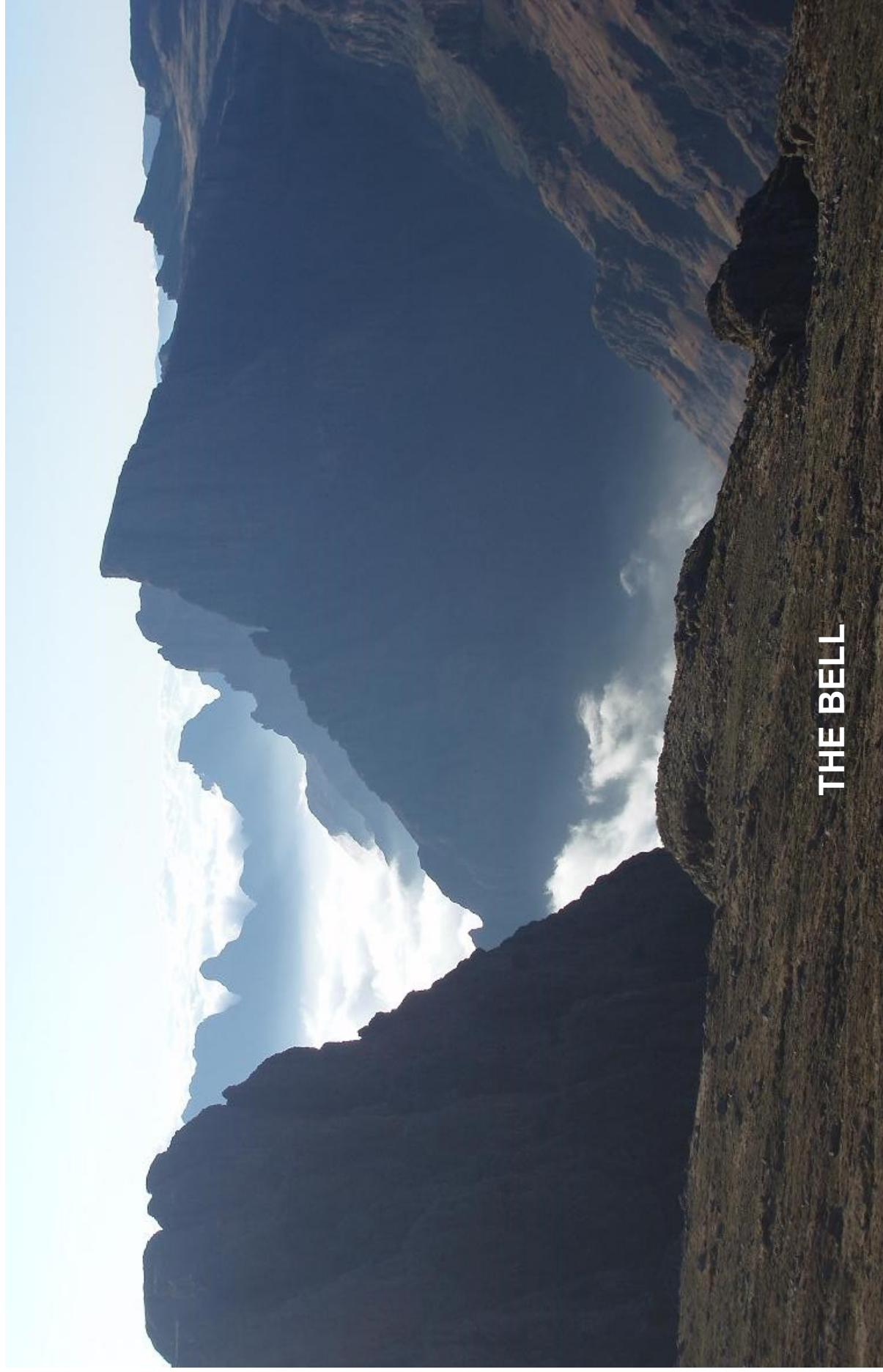
Robbie MacDonald

Harry Parsley, the new editor of Footnotes, treated Jean Smilkstein, Marion Hüfner and I to a sneak preview of the new look Footnotes and we were very impressed with the snappy look. I think it represents the club in a very competent and professional way. I know you will continue to support Harry and Jean, the new web master. Or is it mistress?... by sending in your articles and photos.

Referring to the Club Weekend on 27th and 28th October, as fate would have it Saturday dawned dull, rainy and windy. However, many intrepid members were not put off and arrived at Foothold to pitch their tents in damp conditions and pitch in. The weather improved toward the middle of the afternoon and we were able to run the leaders training programme as scheduled, although

the weather was still on the cool side. Wayne Thomson of Netcare911 gave a very interesting presentation with great interaction by the leaders. This was definitely of benefit to all. On Sunday many more volunteers turned up and teams were formed to rebuild and repair Footloose and Chain Ladder Gullies, service the water collecting system, spring clean Hikers Haven and clear the bush along the western boundary. There still remains some work to be done in Footloose Gully, but it should be open to all hikers in the near future.

I would like to sincerely thank all those who attended either on Saturday or Sunday, or both days, for the generous contribution of time, effort and support. Maintaining our property in good condition and training our leaders is of benefit to all and makes for a strong vibrant club.



THE BELL

Photo : Sue Desmond