

FIXTURES FOR APRIL 1956:

TUESDAY 10TH:

Executive Committee Meeting at George Wrapson's residence, 57 Brentwood Road, Northdene, at 8 p.m. Please meet outside Reed & Champions, cnr. West & Gardiner Streets, at 7.30 p.m. sharp.

SUNDAY 15TH:

To-day we will follow Lindie's footsteps to CRAIGLEA, lorries travelling via Pinetown.

COST: MEMBERS - 5/6d.

VISITORS - 7/6d.

FRIDAY ²⁷ 20TH:

Our new Entertainments Committee has arranged a SOCIAL DANCE at the M.O.T.H. Hall, Cunningham Road (near Bartle Road), Umbilo, at 8 p.m., with Reg Bournes' Band in attendance. Lifts will be arranged for those who meet outside Geo. Maddison's, Commercial Road, at 7.30 p.m.

COST - 5/6d. ea.

N.B: In the past these Social Dances have been poorly supported, and it is sincerely hoped that there will be a marked improvement in attendances this year, otherwise the Entertainments Committee will have no other choice but to discontinue holding such Socials which are not paying propositions.

Do make every effort to come along to the Social on the ²⁷20th and so help to make it a successful evening.

SUNDAY 29TH:

Mick will be leading to-day's hike to PAT O'CONNOR'S CASTLE, the lorries travelling via Pinetown.

COST - 4/6d.

Please observe Notices appearing on page 4 of the Newsletter re:-

1. Opening up New Hikes.
2. Anti-Snakebite Instruction Classes.
3. Formation of Ramblers' Photographic Section.

THE DURBAN RAMBLER.

MARCH 1956.
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PHONE: 20846 (Day).

EDITORIAL:

It is good to be hiking in Natal again after my short visit to the Transvaal. Members of the Johannesburg Hiking Club asked me to convey their greetings.

I want to thank Jean Carter, Maureen Laatz, and Dennis Rachmann, who dipped their pens so ably and wrote up the Newsletter last month in my absence. Incidentally, it is hoped to form an Editorial Committee shortly.

HIKE TO CROCODILE VALLEY.

4th March, 1956.

Crocodile Valley is wellknown as one of the longest hikes on the Club's agenda - it is an offshoot of the old days when young Lindie and his friends covered fantastic distances every fortnight.

On the first Sunday in March the Ramblers again set off to visit this spot. Two lorries, packed with cheerful people, sped along the North Coast road, jolted through the back alleys of Indian-town, and emerged onto the cart-tracks winding through the sugar cane. They stopped at last at an obscure lemonade joint in a remote corner of Natal. The bewildered native girl in the Store was soon left with a bulging till and a few dozen empty pop bottles.

It was a long stroll through all types of scenery. The Umgeni River came into view now and again, a little closer every time. At last we crunched through thick bush and hopped up along the river bank, and there we were at the picnic spot.

Pleasantly tired, we stretched out to eat, gossip, and watch the river swirling by. How good it was to relax with lots of Lindie's brew on tap - Durban seemed as far away as the Fiji Islands. The day was warm but overcast, "with the possibility of local showers" as the S.A.B.C. would put it.

There was great excitement on the way back. Near our picnic spot somebody spotted a Night Adder in a bush on the river's edge. It looked exactly like a twig - only its yellow, flicking tongue gave it away. A snake is quite a graceful thing, even if slightly dangerous.

Once we were at the top of the hill we really enjoyed the long walk back. Leaders surged forward, stragglers dropped back, but eventually everybody reached the lorries and found seats. Happily we rolled into Durban, at peace with the world, with the evil reputation of Crocodile Valley shattered for yet another year.

UNCLE RAE'S COLUMN.

Dear Uncle Rae,

What is more unpredictable than a woman's heart?

Lover Boy.

.....

Dear Lover Boy,

Bob's car.

Uncle Rae.

HIKE TO McPHERSON'S RAPIDS.

18th March, 1956.

"Natal: It will be cool and overcast, with local rain." So the smug voice over Springbok Radio informed the Ramblers as they packed their haversacks for another hike. It looked as if the Announcer was talking through his hat. But our friend proved to be right. After stopping at Pinetown, it became cold, and before long rain pelted down on the two lorry-loads of Ramblers. Those without groundsheets soon made friends with those who had them.

Tony Howard and your Editor lit their king-size cigars in spite of many protests. At last I gave in to public opinion, stubbed mine out and put it in my pocket. But apparently it was not dead yet, and resulted in my shirt catching fire. Willing helpers poured a water bottle over me and put out the blaze. I was not so grateful at the time, but would now like to thank the volunteer firemen who came to my assistance.

After a long ride along the Main Road we reached Cato Ridge and turned off at the Chicken Farm. The country road seemed worse than ever - bumpy and dusty. A few passengers were nearly brained by overhanging branches, but at last we pulled safely into McPherson's farmyard where there was a cheerful reunion.

A hundred and ten human, and eight canine, feet tramped over the veld towards the river. This far inland, the scenery is not so rugged, but the vegetation was as green as Mitchell Park, and the air a lot fresher. We hiked along a knife-edged ridge, down a boulder-dotted slope, with glimpses of the Umlaas Rapids on our right.

Newcomers and Old Timers were equally thrilled to see McPherson's Rapids, where the river trickles down a steep face. After a public debate we chose a picnic spot "on the rocks". Here it was clean and comfortable, and sheltered from the fine drizzle. Small and large groups settled down to a quiet lunch. At least it was quiet until Gary chased a large and unfriendly-looking bull onto the campus. There was great excitement until Gary sauntered up and calmly drove his oversize pet away.

One thing about Gary, he loves any sort of wild life - he bestows equal affection on the earthworm and the hippo. Sometimes we wish he would keep his pets to himself, but imagine how dull the Ramblers' life would then be.

It was a quiet sort of day, on the whole, with even Scotty and his riot squad at peace with the world.

We had to climb the father of all hills on the way back, and Ramblers were soon spread all over the countryside. The energetic forged ahead and got good seats on the lorries, whilst the stragglers arrived in small groups and nabbed even better perches.

It was our first really cold journey for some time. Well wrapped up, we sang away and exchanged greetings with the gapers in their smug motor cars. A cold trip impresses itself in one's memory. One soon forgets the discomforts, and enters a new week with happy memories of a wonderful hike.

THE LITTER COMMITTEE.

This Committee appeals for the co-operation of all Ramblers. On every hike it is always the same small group who have to do all the work.

Too many people bury their rubbish and tins, and sometimes it is hard to see that a picnic has been held at all.

The Chairman of the Litter Committee has asked me to publish the following suggestions:-

1. Fruit tins should be placed so that their labels show from any angle.

2. More use should be made of eggshells. One egg, properly distributed, should cover a hundred square yards.
3. Do not throw away your newspapers whole. Tear each page in half and scatter the pieces as far apart as possible.
4. Banana and Pineapple peels should be placed conspicuously on the rocks - one can't see them if they are thrown into the bushes.

With the full support of all members we could cover the whole of Natal with litter in the course of a year, and local farmers will think of us long after we have hiked away.

OPENING UP NEW HIKES:

As Colin Avent is being transferred to Nairobi, Frank Woodward is now in charge of opening up new hikes. Anyone interested in assisting him may contact Frank at 849571 in the evenings between 6 - 7 p.m. It is hoped that members will give him their earnest support as, only by opening up new hikes in non-reserve areas, will we escape having to pay levies to the Native Affairs Department for hiking in Reserve areas.

ANTI-SNAKEBITE INSTRUCTION:

It is felt that every member in the Club, male or female, should know how to use a Snakebite Outfit properly, and negotiations are being made for instruction to be given in this matter. Will those interested in attending such a course please contact Margaret Moore, phone 36676, between 6 - 7 p.m. in the evenings.

RAMBLERS' PHOTOGRAPHIC SECTION:

It has been suggested that a Ramblers' Photographic Section be formed, which could meet every few months. At these Meetings all new photographs, slides, etc. could be exhibited, and the best selected for showing at the next General Film Evening arranged by the Club, thus maintaining a high standard. Anyone interested in the formation of this Photographic Section is asked to contact Dudley Saville in the evenings at 47413.

SOCIAL NEWS:

Congratulations and best wishes are extended to Dawn Leibbrandt and Stella Mason whose respective engagements were recently announced. Stella's Fiance is Barry Anderson, of the Mountain Club, who is well-known to many Ramblers.

Joan and Stan Christian recently left Durban to take up employment at the Kansanshi Copper Mine in the Solwezi District of Northern Rhodesia. They seem to like being way up in the bundu, in fact Joan describes it as "like being at Camp all the time." We wish them both every success and hope to see them holidaying in Durban from time to time.

The "North" seems to have acquired an extra pull lately as we also find Colin Avent leaving to go to Nairobi. Our good wishes accompany him and we hope he will like his new environment. Mind those Mau Mau!

We congratulate both Colleen Harris and Terry Ogle on recently attaining the ripe old age of 21.

Martin Munro is at present on his way to South America. Our members certainly get around the Globe!

NEW MEMBERS:

We welcome the following New Members to the Club and hope they will enjoy many happy outings with us:-

Valerie Barwise.
Pam Bowness.
P. J. Ellis.
Ian Epton.
Henry Levy.
Ada Reilly.
Kath Ridsdill.
Dave Stainton.
Watkin Thomas.
Wallace Van Zyl.
Keith Worthington.
