



FOUNDED 1932

DURBAN RAMBLERS CLUB

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DURBAN.

FIXTURES FOR AUGUST 1957.

TUESDAY 6TH: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING at Harry Thorsen's residence, 2 Gresham Court, Cr. Sydenham and Essenwood Roads, at 8.0 p.m.

SUNDAY 10TH: Lindie will lead a HIKE TO NWABE Lorries travelling via Pinetown.
COST: 4/- Members
4/6 Visitors

WEDNESDAY 21st: PHOTOGRAPHIC SECTION'S MEETING will be held at Tony Howard's residence, 29 Fairholme Avenue, Ellis Park, Durban North, and the subject will be "Sunrises, Sunsets and Night Scenes"

SUNDAY 25TH: Follow Rob Philp to CRAIGLEA. Lorries travelling via Pinetown. This hike will take us into a Native Reserve.
COST: 5/- Members
7/6 Visitors

SATURDAY 24TH: SOCIAL DANCE at Westville Hotel at which Amble prizes will be presented. Meet at 7/30 p.m. outside Maddison's Tea Room in Pine Street.
COST: 5/6 each.

NOTE: Unless otherwise stated, all outings will start from the City Market Warwick Avenue, at 8.30 a.m.

T H E D U R B A N R A M B L E R .

JULY, 1957.
VOL. 6. No. 7.

EDITOR: HARRY THORSEN.
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EDITORIAL

Got anything to say? The Editor welcomes letters for publication in this Newsletter. If you have any moans, let us hear them and we'll see what we can do. We would like to receive letters on any Rambling topic. Use a pen-name if you wish, but all letters should be signed.

Any correspondence on tent-pitching at the July Camp is already closed.

MACPHERSON'S RAPIDS.
Dennis Rachmann

Huddled together on the lorries we journeyed into the hinterland with, of course, the customary raid in Pinetown. On reaching the turnoff alongside the "Day-Old Chickens" sign we linked up with those most jovial types, the Ramblers of Pietermaritzburg. Despite a bit of shaky navigation all the vehicles were rounded up by the sheepdog antics of an auto-scooter, and escorted up the farm road to the buildings.

Here we detrucked and, after informal greetings had been exchanged, the whole retinue proceeded over the farm. Down the hill, over the stream, up the other side, over the ridge and down to the river. Then, turning upstream, we arrived at a broad shelf just made for picnicking.

Lunches were soon opened and downed, the keen nip in the air adding zest to hearty appetites. In view of the somewhat hectic after-lunch performances noticed lately it was no surprise to see the water fights start. Whilst Don and Dym and sundry other contestants kept interest at ground level several others scaled the wall of rock across the river.

As the hours of daylight were on the short side we packed up and going round the hill climbed the more gentle gradient to the trucks.

Here salutations were exchanged with our mates of the capital and then huddled under numerous blankets we drove back to Durban in the dark.

UNCLE RAE'S COLUMN

Dear Uncle Rae,

Did you get a commission in the army?

Yours, etc.,

Bertie

Dear Bertie,

No, only a straight salary,

Yours, etc.,

Uncle Rae

'SLURP', HUMAN DOMINOES & EIGHTEEN-MILE HIKES.
Harry Thorsen

The oddest thing about the July Camp at Shelter falls was that nobody even saw the falls and only had the vaguest idea as to where they were.

And there was no shelter for a long time after our arrival. Moonlight reflected a pathetic scene as eight male bird brains tried to pitch No. 3 tent on No. 1 poles. The resultant structure looked like something in a Pete Smith comedy. We started again and got magnificently tangled with ridge poles and dollies. At last things were organised, but we could not face the prospect of pitching grub or kitchen tents - "everything was just sommer chucked on the ground".

In the meantime girls were preparing dinner. The result was "Slurp", the Wonder Stew, the greatest food discovery of all time. What goes into Slurp? Nobody knows. It was prepared and eaten in the dark. But words can't describe that nutty, dark brown flavour. Fruit salad followed, buckets of it. Wonderful stuff; that fruit salad was the closest that any of us will ever get to heaven.

At last, we were able to relax around the fire and look back on an exciting afternoon.

Sixteen of us had set off, eight boys and eight of the ones that go backwards on a dance floor. There were two portable radios on the lorry and Ernie Duffield's commentary on the Durban July came through loud and clear. I understand that John Leslie's horse which started at 10 to 1 arrived at quarter past three.

We stopped at the Pic Cart of Maritzburg, which was closed. I only hope they did not go bankrupt last month when nobody claimed those 30 coffees.

It was dark by the time we reached "Marylands". Miss Sutton, the owner of the farm welcomed us and showed us our camp site.

Nobody slept too well on Saturday night. The girls complained about noise from our tent, but their 'yakkity-yak' was just as bad. And nobody was prepared for the big freeze-up after midnight.

Things brightened up after a cup of Jimmy Gallagher's early morning coffee - well I should say "morning" coffee.

There was a most unfortunate accident as I passed the soup to Jimmy Gallagher. It caught him in the seat of the pants and he fell in the river. He started slinging handfuls of mud, one of which scored a direct hit in the Editorial armpit. Spectators gathered at a safe distance and laughed themselves silly.

Breakfast, also, was hilarious. A long queue formed to deposit Bob's scrambled eggs in the rubbish pit. Memo to future Camp Captains - never use sweetened condensed milk in your scrambled eggs; there is no future in it.

Perhaps it was the Gluco in the eggs. Anyway, everybody felt incredibly fit. "Hike to Karkloof Falls?" Only nine miles! Thanks for the offer of a lift, Miss Sutton, but we would rather walk.

Dennis, our acting, unpaid leader took the suckers on a glorious veld-bashing, fence-crossing spree. We hiked near the edge of the escarpment with beautiful views over the lowlands. As we neared the Karkloof river, swarms of picanins joined us, intrigued by John's portable wireless.

All at once we heard the sound of the waterfall, and there was the highest and most spectacular waterfall in Natal - Karkloof Falls.

The picnic spot was a couple of hundred yards higher upstream. We last went there with the Maritzburg Ramblers in November 1955. The pool was not so inviting on this winter afternoon, but then the conditions were perfect for swimming.

With the Ramblers screaming for lunch our grub-wallahs discovered the ghastly truth. We had forgotten the butter and sausages for the hot dogs. So we had to fill up on Mulligatawny soup, rolls, apples and bananas. And that had to be carefully rationed.

It was getting late, and we had no time for a brew. Our homeward hike led through a beautiful pine forest to the road. Some scenery came along on horseback and the male ramblers were fascinated. Funny how the fruit on the other side of the fence looks better.

From there it was a straightforward but rather strenuous hike along the road. We reached camp just after dark and were glad to see a fire going. John and Arne had thumbed a lift and reached camp early. They reported that Scotty and his friends had turned up and were mystified to find the camp deserted - something like the "Marie Celeste" mystery. After trying out all the lilos they had vamoosed.

All cosy in our little circle of firelight after dinner, we sat around, savouring the oldest of songs and the newest of jokes. Bob Ferns was really on the ball with his crumpets this time - apologies for any rude remarks about last camp's effort.

We were prepared for the big freeze on Sunday night and wore everything we had. It was so quiet after 10.0 p.m. that one could hear a cough-drop.

The sun had been up for a long time before a tent flap opened and the first of 16 blue noses poked out. Frost coated the whole farm. A billy of water had frozen and a bunch of bananas on the kitchen table had rigor mortis.

As we were washing the breakfast things - for a full report on that meal ask any one of the 16 campers - we heard a dusty yodel and there was Scotty. He had hitched up from Durban arriving only a few minutes too late to help with the camp chores.

After breakfast there was a special conference in the boy's tent. Chief item on the Agenda was to work out the average age of the group. Came out as a rather woolly 22. Margery and Chris were the babies of the crowd.

So the morning slipped by. Nobody could face the idea of striking camp after lunch - a new game called "human dominoes" was much more fun. The name might be new, I mean, but the game itself as old as rambling.

Soon the lorry pitched up, and the human dominoes dragged themselves upright. Tents were packed - the lamp box loaded onto the truck. Odds and ends turned up in the most unlikely places. We tried a new method of loading tent poles - down the middle of the truck. It had it's points, as several people found out.

"Drought has broken, boys" we yelled, as the truck pulled up at the Cato Ridge Hotel - a new pub on the Ramblers' agenda. Glasses filled, we drank to a first class camp in the finest Rambler tradition.

SHELTER SCANDAL

Just as well there was an optician at camp. Within ten minutes, Joy had sat and stood on her glasses. The ham-handed optician completed this orgy of destruction.

Can't you sleep at night? Let John Leslie dig you a hip-hole

Bob Ferns was upset about editorial moans about the last camp. He pointed out that there was no pub-crawl because the pubs were closed. Sorry Bob!

Where exactly, are Shelter Falls?

Somebody left a pack behind on the lorry. Ask Bob. And who has my little haversack, which has great sentimental value? -----

PLEASE NOTE

What sport has fewer restrictions than Hiking? Yet there is one very important rule that seems to have been ignored lately. The Leader is the "captain of the ship", and is responsible for the safety of the party.

If you intend to break away from the main party, tell him and obtain his permission to do so. We hike through wild country, and one can easily become lost, apart, from the danger of snakebite. So far thousands of Ramblers have turned out on hundreds of hikes without the slightest mishap. Let's keep it that way, by co-operating with the leaders.

Another point/.....

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