

MURBAN = RAMBLERS  
WALKING - CLUB  
Aug./Sept. '89





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Affiliated to the Hiking Federation of South Africa

P.O. Box 1063 Durban 4000

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1989

MAG 4/89

It is with winged pen I am writing this morning. Thankyou one and all for your encouragement, support and contributions to this magazine. all of you I am sure will agree that second to doing a hike oneself is the enjoyment of reading an interesting and humorous account thereof. Ramblers offer us good fellowship and humour these days when there is'nt much to smile about. So read on and enjoy....

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The Cover of this magazine was designed by Tom de Waal - Thankyou Tom.

Now a very warm welcome to our new members:

Derek and Jennifer Phillips; Shirley Browning; Laura McIsaac; Kobus Strydom; Glendyr Mc Harg; Melvyn Olivier; Noreen Dawson; Betty Roberts; Christine Trent; Meryl Ramsay; S.K. Coster; Colin Peters and Jenny Varner.

Most of you no doubt know that Bettie Smetyns is leaving us temporarily on an extended overseas visit - go well Bettie and keep in touch. Thankyou Jack who has kindly offered (after some arm twisting) to act as secretary for the time being.

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**SUBS 1989:** I am quoting from our Constitution:

9. DEFAULT IN PAYMENT OF SUBSCRIPTIONS:

If any member fails to pay his/her annual subscription within six calendar months of due date, he/she shall cease to be a member of the Club, and shall be advised accordingly. Such persons may be re-instated as members at the discretion of the Committee, provided payment of the outstanding subscription is made within one year of due date.

**VERY SPECIAL REQUEST:**

Volunteers wanted to man the Wildlife stand at EXPO '89 on 20 - 24 Sept.  
Contact: Winnie Jackson: 3052515 (H)

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A couple of recipes for those cold Berg camps .....

**FRIED LOCUSTS: (This is an aquired taste)**

500ml young locusts      125ml butter  
250ml water              Salt and pepper

**Method**

- 1) Strip wings and legs.
- 2) Place in saucepan with salted water and simmer till soft.
- 3) Drain and add 60ml butter.
- 4) Fry until crisp.
- 5) Add remaining butter and cook for five minutes.

Best prepared and eaten the same day.

**ELEPHANT STEW:**

1 Elephant  
2 Rabbits (Optional)  
Salt and pepper.

**Method:**

Cut elephant into bite-size pieces - this should take about two months.  
Add enough brown gravy to cover.  
Cook over kerosene fire for about 4 weeks at 465°C.  
This serves 3000 people - if more are expected add 2 rabbits but do this only if necessary as most people don't care for hare in their stew.

from the Kitchen of S.Kitching.

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**FOR SALE:**

1 Pair Hitech hiking boots Size 6. Worn once only.  
Original price R158-00 including G.S.T. Sale Price R118-00. A BARGAIN

Phone Shirley Browning: Work 304 4083  
Home 75 2123

And don't forget our super Club T/Shirts at rock bottom prices ...

Contact Winnie Jackson: Home 3052515

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**ADVANCE NOTICE OF SPECIAL CAMP: 7th - 10th OCTOBER**

This is the long weekends. See and enjoy Zululand from Ian Gariands Resource Centre at Mtunzini. Tenting and selfcatering. Transport cost ± R30

For details contact Winnie Jackson at 3052515.

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A further request from our Treasurer for the sender of "that R8 P.O." to please identify him/herself. If it is not claimed may we take it as a donation to Club Funds?

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DEPARTURE POINTS FOR DAY HIKES:

Durban: Musgrave Park parking area - corner Berea and Musgrave Roads.  
Pinetown: Union Main Centre - Old Main Road - Outside Big Bite.  
(Please do not park your car right outside Big Bite.) NOW TIFFANYS.

VENUE PHOTOGRAPHIC MEETINGS:

Randall Scout Hall, Milner Road (behind Cowey Centre, next to electricity sub station). These meetings are worth supporting - varied and interesting.

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DIARY OF EVENTS:

AUGUST 1989

- Sun 6 KRANSKLOOF: Leader Bill Hyslop Tel (H) 725107  
Dep Durban 08h00 and Pinetown 08h30. Members R5 Visitors R6
- 5 / 6 THOMATHU CAVE CIRCUIT: Reasonable fitness - Tents required.  
Leader Jack Aumord. Tel(H) 423245
- Sun 13 FARAWAY FARM: (Eston area) Leader Eamon Bussy. Tel H473400  
Dep. Durban 07h30 and Pinetown 08h00. Members R8 Visitors R9
- 12 / 13 WONDER VALLEY CAVE from Monk's Cowl  
Leader Margeret Kirsten. Tel (H) 441767
- \*\* Sun 20 HAMMERSDALE FALLS: Leader Bill Hyslop. Tel (H) 725107  
Dep Durban 08h00 & Pinetown 08h30. Members R6 Visitors R7
- 12 - 27 Two week Northern Cape (Kuruman) S W A (Luderitz) adventure  
incl 3 day Springbok Trail (Beaufort West)  
Contact: Regina Billiet for detailed itinerary. Tel 813672
- 19 / 20 BUSHMAN'S CAVE: Saturday walk to Bushman's Cave - Sunday  
return via Goats & Lammergeier Cave. Swimming Galore.  
Moderate to strenuous. Leader Mark Burger. Tel 286818
- Sun 27 MPASAAN: (Nagel Dam area) Leader Steve Watson Tel 214512  
Dep Durban 08h00 & Pinetown 08h30. Members R6 Visitors R7
- 26 / 27 UMTAMVUNA GORGE HIKE: Leader Tom de Waal Tel (H) 474766  
Breathtaking cliff top views: Exciting river trail : Superb riverine  
forests under colourful rock walls : Come meet my Fish Eagles  
and hear my Crowned Eagles. Base at "Clearwater" Resource  
Centre, where we stay Friday and Saturday nights, returning  
on Sunday afternoon.  
Please phone me early for further details.

PLEASE NOTE:

Berg trips transport cost + R25 - R30 per person.

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Wed 16

PHOTOGRAPHIC MEETING: at 7.45 p.m.  
R1 per person includes refreshments. Vic Conrad will entertain  
us with his "My visit to Poland" slides, covering a nostalgic to  
the land of his birth.

SEPTEMBER 1989

- Sun 3 SHONGWENI: Leader Steve Watson. Tel 214512  
Dep Durban 08h00 & Pinetown 08h30. Members R6 Visitors R7
- 2 / 3 VISIT THE GRAVE OF NAPOLEON IV: (Eugene Louis)  
Babanango Area. Leader Dick Billiet. Tel 813672
- Sun 10 UMBUMBULU: Leader Bill Hyslop. Tel 725107  
Dep Pinetown 08h00 & Durban 08h30. Members R5 Visitors R6
- 9 / 10 WHITE MOUNTAIN RESORT: Day hikes from comfortable  
accommodation. Leader Winnie Jackson. Tel 3052515
- Sat 9 GLENHOLME HIKE & BRAAI:  
Meet at SPCA Pinetown 2 p.m. B.Y.O.  
Leader Margeret Kirsten. Tel 441467
- Sun 17 HAROLD JOHNSON NATURE RESERVE: (Tugela Mouth)  
Leader Dick Billiet. Tel 813672  
Dep Durban only 08h00. Members R8 Visitors R9
- 16 / 17 EXPLORE SLEEPING BEAUTY AREA: from Swinan's Hut.  
Drakensberg Gardens area. Leader Bill Hyslop. Tel 751150
- \*\* Sun 24 ROOSFONTEIN NATURE RESERVE: (Westville)  
Leader Audrey Vickers. Tel 283187 Dep Durban as well as  
Pinetown 08h30. Members R4 Visitors R5.
- 23 / 24 HILLSIDE CAMP: Giants Castle area.  
Easy hike from comfortable campsite - introduction to the Berg.  
Leader Steve Watson. Tel 214512
- \*\* Wed 20 PHOTOGRAPHIC MEETING at 7.45 p.m.  
R1 per person includes refreshments. Videos entitled "Castles  
of Clay" (about ants) and "Birds of the Polar Regions" will be  
shown - courtesy of Bruce Medway. **DON'T MISS THIS ONE.**

Everybody please make a note of the following dates:

**21 - 22 OCTOBER 1989 : ANNUAL REUNION AT MC CONNELL'S FARM**  
Ramblers and ex-Ramblers come from all over the country and the hospitality  
is second to none. Those who wish to camp Saturday night will be welcome.  
B.Y.O. - Braai facilities provided. Tents will be required. A limited number  
of tents are available from the Club - contact Winnie Jackson Tel 3052515  
**SUNDAY IS A MUST.**

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30 September 1989 - 1 Oct 1989

BARN DANCE - WITH A DIFFERENCE !!

HLABENI - Isopo Area / CREIGHTON

Genuine Country Barn Dance - to take place in the Country - in a Barn -  
in magnificent surroundings. Come and join us for fun galore. Walk in the  
indigenous forest of Hlabeni and see the giant yellowwood trees.

Tenting or bed down in the loft!

B.Y.O. APPROX R20 1 NIGHT. R25 2 NIGHTS. MAP. REF PAGE 11  
For further details and booking contact : Bruce Medway. Tel. 235895.

WILD COAST WALK 21 - 28 March 1989

Leader: Bruce Medway

Plan : To drive to the Wild Coast Sun Casino, fly to Mkimbati Game Reserve (about 33 kms. south along the coast and save a very rough 6 hour drive each way). Walk for 2 days to Waterfall Bluff, mosey around for a couple of days and walk back to get our return flight to the casino.

Bruce planned the whole trip with his usual craftiness, including a helicopter ride (the usual Beach Baron was in for service) which set the tone for an adventurous walk. The ten minute flight through the air was all too short - but most exciting to skim over the tree tops and wave at the poor souls plodding along with packs on their backs. We had most of the day still to explore the club at Mkimbati and take in several walks. The club itself was an old leper colony but now boasts a bar, small restaurant, shop, swimming pool and three groups of huts for "getting away from it all".

We took in a walk to the Icicici Falls and the nearby colony of 110 Cape Vultures which can be seen circling the cliffs high above the Msikaba River Gorge. A further walk brought us to the "Splits", a fault in the earth similar to that in Table Mountain near Nagle Dam, and to the "Super Bowl" - an area of sunken land covered in indigenous forest, with high cliffs on which we stood looking down into it and itching to descend and explore. The next morning saw the 9 of us discarding unnecessary items from our heavy packs weighted down with 6 days rations. After a hearty breakfast in the club we set off over the sand dunes to the Msikaba River, which flowed wide with a deep channel on the further side making it necessary to stow our gear into large orange plastic survival bags which we filled with air and tied tightly enabling us to float them across the river.

We continued our travels along the coast, walking on a mat of kukuyu grass growing just above the rocky shelf or through long tufted grass which concealed a surprising amount of boggy soil. Strelitzias with white flowers and a variety of heather grew in clumps amongst the grass and rocky outcrops higher up the slopes. There was very little sandy beach, mainly at the many river mouths, otherwise the grass grew down to the rocky shelf which fell straight into the sea. An interesting stop en route was at Fort Grosvenor, a small collection of holiday houses named after a sailing ship which went aground in 1872 - supposedly with a cargo of bullion from India. One attempt to retrieve the bounty was to dig a tunnel from the shore under the ocean floor to the wreck - but it failed. The tunnel entrance surrounded by a low stone wall is still visible and various pieces of rusting equipment lie there to tell the tales.

Our first night was spent with a local family who let us use their abandoned 4th hut - after sweeping it out for us. It was a novel experience for most of us to sleep on a mis floor - which is much warmer and more comfortable than concrete - but Bruce spent all night going out for a smoke and the local dogs kept trying to get in - so no one got much sleep. During breakfast the men of the kraal introduced themselves and one rode off to get cigarettes for Bruce who had the craving. A colourful old character was Mbatjale who liked a good chat and posed willingly for a photograph.

Lupitana was a small fishing village which has a unique stretch of rocky coastline with a vertical drop into the sea against which the waves crashed unendingly sending up high spumes of spray. We were fascinated by the great height to which the water was being flung and also by some cattle which wandered onto the wave platform to drink the salt water.

The last section of our trip to Waterfall Bluff took us inland to the most inviting river pools with a short waterfall and several cascades. A detour across the top of the waterfall brought us to the secret path winding up to a hidden cave screened by banana trees and shrubs. Supper was eaten down at the pools and a very large bright full moon came up about 8.30 over a gap in the surrounding hills.

It was early to bed each night after days filled with walks to nearby sights such as "Cathedral Rock" and the "Waterfall Bluff". The waterfall is really an eye opener - startling for the unsuspecting as I was. I followed Colin and Richard on a path down the side of the cliff face and rounding a corner, there it was, already half in the shadow of the afternoon setting sun. The top of the falls was in the sunlight - the water fell onto a ledge and then down a sheer drop into the churning sea below. One of the few waterfalls in the world to do so. The rocks were black and shiny with spray and formed a rather slippery ledge which could be traversed by a daring pedestrian to stand behind the sheet of falling water. Further along the cliffs were a couple of wave washed caverns and looking back one could see the hills of Port St Johns in the distance. The only mar to our happy seclusion - all the students who arrived for the holidays and, finding us in residence in the only comfortable cave, took to the surrounding hills and slept under any small overhang away from the heavy rain which squallied across, many during the night.

We returned to Mkimbati in one day and thankfully missed the howling wind that blew nonstop all the following day. We would have been walking back into its very teeth. Some of us went sight seeing - others like myself slept and doctored blistered feet for our last day. Tuesday morning saw us waiting for the Border airplane to take us back to the casino after a really great trip.

Thanks to Bruce for all his training to get fit - and then walking rings round some of us - his planning of the trip and for the really great reunion dinner a few weeks later.

LESLEY FRIPP.

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STILLERUST - Kamberg Nature Reserve 3 - 4 June 1989

Of I set on Friday afternoon with Dick and Regina Billiet on my first weekend hike with the Club. Full of anticipation, I wasn't to be disappointed. Our first stop was Notties Pub where we met the rest of the party for a quick "toot" before setting off in convoy for Stillerust, in one of the thickest mists we'd seen for a long time. There were four pairs of anxious eyes in our car peering into it so as not to miss the turning which Regina masterfully spotted and in no time at all we found our hut all lit up and welcoming at the end of the road. After unloading the cars and sorting out the sleeping arrangements we all got together for a while in the sumptuous sitting area for a chat before turning in, with hopes for better hiking weather the next day.

This was obviously not in the great scheme of things as we awoke to the same heavy mist which soon developed into a fine drizzle - but this didn't daunt Dick who after a good cooked breakfast that had the rest of us drooling, decided we'd drive to the camp's office, settle our bill and take a walk from there. We didn't get to settle the bill as the office was closed and we had to return there on Sunday to sort it out, but we did have a walk and went down to the trout hatchery. After seeing the size of some of the granddaddies they had in the breeding tanks we voted to bring along a smoker next time we return to Kamberg. The weather really didn't play ball and after a short wet and chilly walk we went back to Stillerust for lunch via the main camp's wood pile where our leader with great aforethought to our comfort that evening, stopped his car, leaped out and opened the boot and urged us each to quickly fling in an armful of wood, and then in his haste for a quick getaway just about chopped off our fingers slamming it closed again.

Once back at Stillerust we lit the fire that had been laid that morning and had a lovely cosy lunch in front of it. Just as Marie was about to doze off gracefully in her chair Dick decided we needed some more exercise. so we set off down the road heading for the little waterfall not far away. What an afternoon of surprises. Halfway to the waterfall we came across a herd each of Blesbok and Wildebees. The Wildebees not being sure of our intentions towards them proceeded to dash back and forth in front of us several times - I was very busy checking the availability of trees should the need have arisen which it didn't luckily as there were none - before deciding to join the Blesbok which by this time were also thoroughly unnerved by all the goings-on, and were also keeping a wary eye on us. What a privilege it was to see these animals at

such close range - we really were extremely lucky. After they moved off we wandered on until we reached the prettiest little waterfall on the Mooi River which, in spite of the cold would have had Adolf in it in two bats of an eyelid - had he been on the hike - it looked so inviting. We then meandered back to Stillerust and spent a great evening around our cosy fire and with a little help from our "friends" O.B.S. and P.O.R.T. and a good indoor braai - which had our leader in fine fettle - sang and philosophied well into the night.

Sunday dawned cloudy again so unfortunately we weren't able to hike the route Dick and Regina had planned - from Stillerust to the main camp and back via the Bushmen paintings and Gladstone's Nose. Instead we had to drive to the camp and hike from there to see the paintings in Shelter Cave. What a fantastic sight those paintings were when we reached the cave - really made up for the disappointing weather. We lunched in the cave where we were all very grateful to Keith and Delice for boiling all our water so that we could make a nice warming cup of soup. We then returned to the cars the way we'd come. A lovely end to a super weekend which everyone of us thoroughly enjoyed.

Thankyou Dick and Regina.

LINDSAY DOUGLAS.

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PHOLELA CAVE 27 - 28 May 1989      Through the eyes of a Kiwi

The weather was not inspiring but with spirits high we negotiated the forestry roads to the Cobham Hut. There was a welcoming torch light to show us that we had reached our destination. Coffee was brewed to warm us up and then with positive minds we went to bed early in anticipation of the following days adventures.

The first morning commenced with Adolf's traditional cup of filtered coffee. The aroma enticed the hikers from their warm sleepingbags to face the day - a highly recommended lure. With the forecast for clear weather foremost in our minds, we ignored the cold drizzle and set off. The brisk walk soon warmed up the body and put distance from civilization. The splendour of the mountains were obscured but it didn't matter. It was great to be outdoors enjoying the crisp fresh air. We spotted a herd of Eland. The were magnificent in their newly acquired winter coats. You could hear the calls of the baboon in the mountains.

Due to the increase in perspiration and numbness of limbs, consensus was to stop at Nutcracker Cave for the night. The cave was so named for a reason - **mind your head**. By early afternoon most of the team was wrapped up in sleeping bags playing cards and recounting previous hikes. A few hardened hikers braved the elements and walked to the top of the mountain behind the cave. They brought back the news that snow was falling. As the day progressed into evening a supply of Makado Liqueur alias "cold coffee" was introduced. It is guaranteed not only to bring colour to the cheeks but also to assure of winning at cards. That night the temperature was definitely below zero - thank goodness for "down" sleeping bags.

The next morning Tony brought us the good tidings that the day was clear and that snow covered the surroundings. Everybody was keen to explore - but only ofcourse after the early morning cup of filtered coffee. This day was indescribable. A deep blue sky silhouetted the snow-covered grassland and mountain ranges. It was breathtaking. The trail was hidden by the snow but Steve, equipped with map and helpful fellow hikers, navigated us of the mountain. Hodgsons Peak provided an excellent backdrop in various photographs. Many faces and figures were pointed out in the rock formations of the valley - it took some imagination. Bettie believed she could make out some "camels". It was magical having such impressive rock formations lining the path down the valley. There are some superb swimming holes along the way - good for summer hikes - even so Adolf could not resist a swim.

All too soon the signs of civilisation appeared. I thoroughly enjoyed the weekend. I highly recommend a trip to the Drakensberg - Dragon Mountains as the locals call them. These have a unique beauty that I will not forget.

Thanks to Steve and the hiking team for an excellent 'Berg' experience.

PHILLIPA

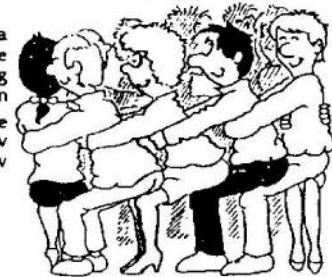
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Some light relief when these weekends get too "drizzly"

Back to back: Teams of two stand back to back and hook their arms around each other's arms. This is a race to a marker and then back to the starting line - with one of the members moving forwards on the first leg of the race and then backwards on the home straight. To make it more interesting the competitors can start off in a sitting position with arms interlocked and then stand up before racing off.



The Walking/Sitting game: This game requires a minimum of eight people but literally the more the merrier. Form a tight circle with everyone looking into the centre. Make a half turn left and on a given command every person then sits on the lap of the person behind so that the complete circle is now sitting without any obvious means of support - now attempt to walk in unison.



Courtesy of J'burg Hiking Club FOOTNOTES.

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HLABENI FOREST WEEKEND 24 - 25 June 1989

Friday 5 p.m. South Coast Road saw Lindsey, Marie and me whizzing along that ribbon of grey to meet our colleagues in the Highflats Hotel bar for a little ....jaw wagging, a drink or two and a hastily eaten omelette. On the road again to Creighton bar to rendezvous with Colin from Howick - and as can be expected on a Friday night the joint was humming as we casually elbowed our way in, adding our own particular "touch of class" to this gathering of humanity. On departing this waterhole Lindsey found to her dismay that her car had been reversed into by someone who drove away into the night, not caring or even knowing. Next stop Hlabeni camp and we settled down in our respective bungalows wondering what Dick had in store for us on the morrow.

Saturday morning : 6 a.m.: awake in bed - peace and quiet - when suddenly "Attention... Lewit Turn... By the left quick march ..'Ei'-'Ri'-'Ei'-'Ri' You guessed it - we were sharing the camp with about 25 ACF trainees on an intelligence course. Breakfast over with, the hike to Hlabeni Mountain commenced - accompanied by the camp dog, "Winnie" and 16 year old Craig who was doing a two week vac job at the camp.

Our leader showed the way over grassy fields and a stream and, following the muddy road, entered the forest where the "Wag 'n Bietjie" & "Bly die hele dag" thorn bushes awaited us with anticipation. Seriously the Bundu Bash was very interesting with many species of fungi to be seen as well as the magnificent Yellowwood trees. Emerging from the forest high up in a clearing we took a well earned break with a view of Ngele Mountain (The Serrated Precipitous Place) in the distance.



Other British graves are there too, for the Inn remained a hospital even after the Boer forces retreated from the area. Bearing the now rather antique motto "For King and Empire", they are testimony to the breadth of resources the British had to call on to suppress the Boer Republics: Liverpool Regiment; Royal Army Medical Corps; Royal Canadian Field Artillery; Western Australian Mounted Infantry; Roberts Horse; Steinacker's Horse ..... the list goes on. After the war train crashes, drownings in the Elands River, mine accidents and other, more peaceful endings gradually filled out this small plot.

But now we moved upstream, crossing the Eland's north bank, for Dick knew of 'an old wagon road that goes round the back of the hill', and he had that determined look in his eyes. We found the track, we found the hill and we walked Briskly. Endlessly. Up railway embankments. Through choked gullies. Round valley heads. Along farm tracks. Across railway bridges. "Halfway to Lydenburg" Dick quipped. (It was a joke, wasn't it, Dick?) Eventually back to the chalet resort, where we revived (a little) under hot showers before setting out for the start of the Kaapache Hoop Trail.

ACT II; Interval; ACT III and EPILOGUE to follow in MAG 5 / 89 - and let me assure you it is worth while waiting for: Ed.

RAMBLERS ROCK BARN DANCE

