

Durban Ramblers Hiking Club



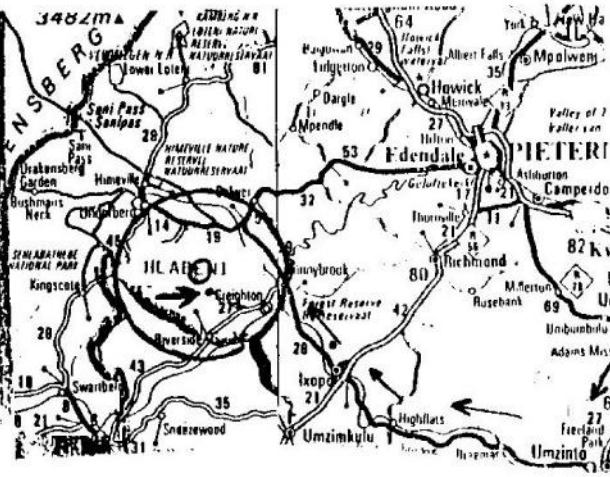
P.O. BOX 1063 DURBAN 4000

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 1991

NEWSLETTER

VOL.

RAMBLERS ROCK BARN DANCE



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COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN : Jack Aumord 423245 (h)
 SECRETARY : Pam Podmore 216160 (h)
 TREASURER : Regina Billiet 813672 (h)
 DAY HIKES : Bill Hyslop 7018996 (b)
 BERG HIKES : Dick Billiet 813672 (h)
 TRAILS : Steve Watson 443622 (h)-
 PHOTOGRAPHY : Mike Morrillion 7011758 (b)
 ENTERTAINMENT : Irene Coward 282040 (h)
 EDITOR : Belinda Eisenhauer 3006223 (b)
 CAMP CAPTAIN : Melvyn Oliver 291917 (h)
 ASSOCIATE MEMBER : Margret Kirsten 441467 (h)

NEW MEMBERS

Ramblers wish to welcome the following new members:

Hans Ridderhoff; Brian Gibson; Neville Walmsley; Wendy Theron; Vivienne Rees; Beryl Cramer; Stan Rejdych; Dennis Chetty; Ly Devoy; Jan Rejdych.

HAPPY HIKING !!

PLEASE NOTE: Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Club nor its Editor.

DEADLINE FOR OCTOBER/NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER: Please send articles, items of interest etc. by 11 September 1991, to the EDITOR

HIRING OF EQUIPMENT

MEMBERS: Please present membership card and receipt of current membership fees when hiring equipment.

NON-MEMBERS: Hiring of equipment is open to discussion: Please contact Dick Billiet at 813672 (h) to hire the following equipment:

Backpacks R3 a day
 Mats R3 a day
 Stoves with fuel R5 a week end

Please contact Melvyn Oliver at 291917 (h) to hire the following:

Tents R3 a day with a R50 deposit

3.

ADVANCE NOTICE:

CHRISTMAS FUNCTION

DECEMBER Steam Train trip down the South Coast

TRAIL Amatola Trail - The Amatola Trail from 6 December 1991 is virtually fully booked. There is still one or two places available contact: Steve Watson at 443622 after 6 pm. Maximum persons: 9

The Giants Cup trail is on again after several members requested to go on this popular trail. Please book early - Contact: Steve Tel: 443622 after 6 pm

Any member who would like to go on any particular trail or who would like to suggest a trail please feel free to do so. Please note - Trails have to be booked well in advance so let us know early - Contact Steve after 6 pm 443622

RECCES

We still need help with "recces". Only two of us are "regulars" going out every Saturday to hack the bush which is rapidly closing many of our traditional paths. We think, at times, that we are fighting a losing battle against the lantana, and never more so than when we are criticised by people on hikes for not clearing the paths well enough: Maybe they should increase our wages!

So, Ladies and Gents - give us a hand. Ring Bill Hyslop about your arrangements for a Saturday "Reccé" come along with your pruning shears.

ARTICLE

Due to lack of space - we have a lovely article on the "Fish River Canyon" which was lead by Steve during May - watch your next program for a write-up about this lovely hike.

DAY HIKE DEPARTURE TIMES AND MEETING POINTS:

Durban: Hikers to meet at Musgrave Park parking area at 7.30 am
Pinetown: Hikers to meet at Union Main parking area at 8.00 am unless stated otherwise.

PLEASE BRING EXACT CHANGE TO ALL HIKES!

AUGUST PROGRAMME

SATURDAY **STAINBANK NATURE RESERVE**
3 AUGUST By popular demand Margret has arranged an afternoon hike and braai at the reserve. Please bring your own meat and drinks and meet at Stainbank carpark at 2 pm. Codemore road is now open!! Entrance fee R2.50 Charge R0.50cents (members) R1 (non-members) Contact: Margret Tel: 441467 (h)

SUNDAY **KRANTZKLOOF CIRCUIT**
4 AUGUST The popular exploration of the main features of the reserve with dizzy heights and mysterious depths. Medium length but fairly strenuous. Leader: Margret Kirsten Tel: 441467 (h) Please note starting times: 8:30 am Durban (Musgrave Park); 9.00 am Pinetown (Union Main Square) Charge: R5.00 (members) R6 (non-members)

WEEK-END **NO WEEK-END HIKE ORGANISED**
3 - 4 AUGUST

10 AUGUST **"THE LAST NIGHT OF THE PROMS"** at Durban's City Hall in the evening. Please phone Melvyn Oliver at 291917 (h)

SUNDAY **UMLAZI CIRCULAR FROM SHONGWENI**
11 AUGUST First walked last year, this hike provides a chance to discover some beautiful river-side scenery as well as follow a very interesting and "airy" cliff walk. Medium length. Leader Bill Hyslop Tel: 701 8996 (w) Charge: R6 (members) R7 (non members)

WEEKEND
10 - 11 AUG

PORT EDWARD

We visit the Cretaceous deposits at Mzamba Beach and explore the Mzamba River Gorge. Leader: Regina Billiet Tel 813672 (h)

SUNDAY
18 AUGUST

ISMONT LOW

First recced successfully two years ago, this hike has not yet been offered to the Club, on account of the bush which has to be cut. As this is the dry season, we hope that the course will be made easier by "boulder-hopping" along the spectacularly beautiful Mgwahumbe River. Leader: Steve Watson Tel: 443622 after 6 pm Charge: R8 (members) R10 (non-members)

WEEKEND
17 - 18 AUG

FUN CAVE (DRAKENSBERG GARDENS AREA)

We spend Friday night at Swimans Hut and proceed from Castle Farm on Saturday morning. A beautiful area that has not been visited for sometime. Maximum persons 12. Leader: Gerald Hall Tel 251089(h)

SUNDAY
25 AUGUST

SKEILEM REPEAT

Yes, folks, it's that mountain again!! We failed on it a few weeks ago because the bush closed up the path. By the time we go this time, your labourers and peasants will have re-opened the route for you and will have a classic if somewhat strenuous mountain hike. Leader: Bill Hyslop Tel: 701 8996 (w) Charge R9 (members) R11 (non-members)

WEEKEND
24 - 25 AUG

INJASUTI NATURE RESERVE

Two glorious day hikes from comfortable camp site. On Saturday we climb Van Hennings pass, over the top to Wonder Valley Cave, down the zig-zag and around the lower plateau back to camp. On Sunday we visit the Injasuti Outpost with its spectacular views and waterfall. Tents required. Leader: Tom de Waal Tel: 474766(h).

6.

WEDNESDAY **PHOTOGRAPHIC EVENING**
28 AUGUST 8 PM for 8.15 PM: Randall Scout Hall, behind Cowey Centre. Cost: R1.50 which includes refreshments. Doug Braum of "FGR Adventures" will entertain with slides of **WHITE WATER RAFTING ON TUGELA AND ORANGE RIVERS** (You water freaks don't miss this one!!) Contact: Mike Morillion at 7011758(w)

SEPTEMBER PROGRAMME

SUNDAY **MVONGOZAAN/MONTAZUMA CIRCULAR (NOT TO BE MISSED!!)**
1 SEPTEMBER A new hike about 20kms west of Vernon Crookes Reserve. Fairly long with beautiful river valley scenery leading to the upper valley of the Mpambanyoni. Because of the longish drive, **STARTING TIME 7 am from Durban (Musgrave Park) ONLY**. Leader: Tom de Waal. Tel 474766(h) Charge: R10 (members) R12 (non-members)

WEEKEND **UPPER NDEDEMA**
31 - 1 SEPT Explore the upper reaches of the Ndedema River. Tents required. Leader: Terry Lubbe Tel: 288422(h)

SUNDAY & WEEKEND

7 - 8 SEPT **THE RAMBLERS ROCK & ROLL HLABENI BARNDANCE!!!!**
 Let your hair down at this beautiful venue: Bring your family, invite your friends! Camp or stay in the comfortable loft. Arrive Friday or Saturday. Day hikes in the yellowwood forest and up Hlabeni Mountain. Camp & Loft charges: R8/person per night. Beers, wine and soft drinks to be supplied by the club. Petrol charges: R30/person. For further details and transport, please contact Irene Coward Tel: 282040(h)

SUNDAY **GIGGLESWICK II (REPEAT VISIT)**
15 SEPT We cancelled our trip here last month due to reduced size of party (caused by bad weather) A pity to restrict such a lovely hike to so few. Medium in length, the hike traverses the mountain called Bolvini, then drop steeply into the splendid gorge of the Mgwahumba River, upstream from where we usually see it at Ismont. Leader: Melvyn Oliver Tel 291917(h) Charge R8 (members) R10 (non-members)

7.

WEEKEND **UMGENI VALLEY NATURE RESERVE**
14-15 SEPT Relax in the Natal bushveld. Day hikes from the secluded and private Cycad Bush Camp. Cost: R12.00 per person per night. Leader: Steve Watson Tel: 443622 (after 6pm)

SUNDAY **CRAIG LEA II**
22 SEPT The "Workers of the World" have been out again clearing the paths, and we think we shall impress you with this totally new hike in the area. Leader: Bill Hyslop. Tel: 701 8996 (w). Charges R9 (members) R10 (non members)

WEEKEND **WILLOWBROOK COTTAGE**
21-22 SEPT A new and interesting area to explore. Situated on the northern end of the Nahwaqa Mountain range, in the Nkomazana River Valley. Accommodation in a comfortable cottage which sleeps 8. Leader: Dick Billiet Tel: 813672 (h)

WEDNESDAY **PHOTOGRAPHIC MEETING**
25 SEPT 8 PM for 8.15 PM: Randall Hall, behind Cowey Centre. Cost R1.50 which includes refreshments. **RAMBLERS EVENING**. Club Members to show slides of hikes, trails and social functions. Please contact: Mike Morillion at 7011758(w)

SUNDAY **FERNCLIFF**
29 SEPT Join the party "week-ending" at the pleasant spot in the hills above Pietermaritzburg. A party will be arranged to go up to Ferncliff on the Sunday to join those already there. See separate announcement. Leader: Melvyn Oliver Tel: 291917 (h) Charge: R8 (members) R10 (non-members)

WEEKEND **FERNCLIFF**
27-29 SEPT Stay at an old romantic cottage situated on the Ferncliff Nature Reserve. Many of our members will recall not long ago a most enjoyable day was spent on this reserve which has many beautiful woodlands and streams not to mention breathtaking views within the reserve. The cottage has many surprising features such

as electricity, two showers, handbasins and fireplaces as well as the usual braai facilities around the well kept lawns. Twenty-five hikers can be accommodated in the cottage but unfortunately the reserve will not permit caravans or tents to be pitched. Please note over this particular week-end no day hike has been planned and anyone who would desire to join us for the Sunday will be most welcome. For further details about the above please contact Melvyn Oliver at 291917 (h).

WEEKEND ZULU CAVE

28-29 SEPT We visit this popular and comfortable cave, with an optional climb to the Gatberg. Tents required for Friday night at Monks Cowl. **Leader: Jack Aumord Tel: 423245(h)**

NOTES FOR NEW HIKERS (AND A REMINDER TO OTHERS)

- 1 Bring 2 litres of water for drinking and for your share in the communal billy can for tea or coffee - rated the best cup of the week!!
- 2 Bring a mug.
- 3 Wear sensible shoes - NOT slops, ballet or high-heel shoes.
- 4 Bring a sun hat and raincoat.
- 5 Berg trips require more specialised equipment. Check with the Berg Hike leader.
- 6 Don't litter or damage plants.
- 7 Don't go ahead of the leader - it can result in chaos.
- 8 Some hikes are more strenuous than others. When in doubt check with the leader concerned.
- 9 All persons (and that means you!!) taking part in Club activities do so entirely at their own risk and are required to adhere to Club rules and instructions from the leaders.

PLEASE NOTE: Persons are reminded that if they make their own way to a hike, using their own transport, R1 (members) R2 (non-members) still has to be donated to the club.

HIKING SAFELY - PART 2

CLOTHING

Wear

Proper clothing: Natural fibers are best (wood, cotton, down); some of the new synthetics work well but make sure they breathe and wick moisture away from your skin. Dressing in layers makes it easy to regulate your comfort. Put on a jacket or sweater immediately when you stop to rest in cool weather. Long sleeves and full length pants will protect you from the sun, briars, insects. Much of your body heat is lost through your head. Good cold weather advice is: If your feet are cold put on your hat.

Footwear

Hiking boots or good sturdy walking shoes are a must. With boots strongly recommended on rocky or uneven trails. Sandals, thongs, high heels or loafers are a no-no. Break your boots or walking shoes in before an all day-hike. Walk around the home in them for several days, wear them to work, or on a shopping trip or two. Two pairs of socks one lightweight inner sock and a heavy outer sock are strongly recommended with boots.

American Hiking Society

THE ZIMBABWE EXPLORATION

9 - 31 MAY

BY: AUDREY VIKERS

It was with feelings of excitement and apprehension we left Durban early on Ascension Day to spend the night at Tshipisi in the Northern Transvaal. The next morning without too much delay, we crossed the Limpopo at Beit Bridge; our long-awaited adventure had begun. We relaxed and enjoyed an uneventful drive through the beautiful bushveld to Bulawayo where we enjoyed the hospitality of Bruce's friends. The first weekend we explored some of the Matopo National park, an extensive area of granite domes and rock formations from the comfort of a chalet at Malame Dam. We also paid our respects to Cecil Rhodes by visiting his last resting place at World's View. We then had another day's drive to Victoria Falls on the Zambezi River which was to dominate our lives for the next ten days. The might of the Zambezi River as it goes over the

Falls is quite awesome and beautiful; we spent a whole day just looking. We had a chalet in the riverine forest on the banks of the river, where warthog, bushbuck, baboon, hippo and monkeys wondered at will. Another day was spent walking and driving in the vicinity of the Falls.

From there we next went on to Mlibizi where the Zambezi becomes Lake Kariba; it has the most vicious mosquitoes in all Zimbabwe; they made the most of six juicy tourists! At 9.00 the next morning we boarded the ferry to take us on the 22 hour 280 km journey along the Lake to Kariba town where we disembarked at 7.00 the following morning. There are still many dead trees around the lake edge, almost the whole length of the Zimbabwean side is game reserve; we saw elephant, buffalo and hippo in the reeds. At night, the Lake comes alive with little fishing boats catching the protein-rich Kapenta fish, which has become the staple food of the local people as well as their income. Kariba town is built on seven hills above the dam wall and is becoming a popular resort, judging by the numbers of pleasure craft at anchor and also the number of hotels. Elephant wander around the town, and hippo and crocodiles frequent the lake shore. We visited the Dam wall and other places of interest and hired a motor boat one afternoon to explore the shallow waters at the head of the Lake, the birdlife was fantastic!

The last section of the Zambezi Valley we visited was the Mana Pools National park, some 100 km below Kariba. The last 70kms of the road there was very rough gravel. Here we camped on the banks of the river sharing the camping ground with honey badgers, elephant, hippo, buffalo, hyaena, lion and heaven knows what else! Now I know why wild animals sleep during the day! They are saving their energy to disturb unsuspecting tourists at night with their foraging around the camp. The honey badgers left no stone unturned to find scraps. At Mana Pools one is allowed to walk anywhere without a game guard at one's own risk. We did several long walks into the bush and along the river bank. We only met one lone buffalo who sent us scurrying for the nearest tree!

After three days in this paradise it was time to leave the Zambezi and turn south through the more populated farming areas to Harare. We stayed in a chalet at Lake McIlwaine Resort for two nights so

we could have a look at the capital city. After this quick forey into civilisation we were off to the Eastern Highlands for a few days. We explored the Nyanga National Park from a chalet at Udu Dam. One of the highlights was climbing Mt Nyanga, the highest in Zimbabwe. We loved the forests and valleys and waterfall of the Highlands. From Nyanga we moved south to the Chimanimani Mountains. We had planned to climb the highest peak but, mist and cold prevented this. There are many beautiful walks to be done there. Unfortunately, the weather turned foul during our last night in the mountains which sent us at haste westwards, back to the bushveld and Great Zimbabwe Ranis. We spent our last two nights in Zimbabwe in a chalet at Lake Kyle resort. On Friday 31 May, we once again crossed the Limpopo at Beit Bridge and spent the night at Warmbaths before travelling to Durban.

A most memorable holiday! All praise and thanks to Regina, Dick and Bruce for organising the trip, especially to Dick for doing most of the driving and also to Robin and Rosemary for their part in the wonderful few weeks.

CRYSTAL WATER

Group: Gerald, Dianne, Gretel, Elizabeth, Sigrun, Pat and Joe. Leader: Gerald Hall

We left early on Saturday morning and the two cars met at Underberg where we all had a nice hot cup of coffee at the hotel. We then proceeded to find Taylor's Cottage which is situated on the way to Bushman's Nek Hotel. What a pleasant surprise when we saw the house! A beautiful four bedroomed house with hot water, a maid to make the beds and wash the paper plates!! Fully equipped, a lovely lounge with a fire place, electric blankets and hot water bottles. What more could a group of rough, ready-for-anything hikers expect? We, of course, being rough and tough all slept outside in our sleeping bags. Oh, I forgot ... lock-up garages for the cars!

The weather was magnificent, so off we set for a very pleasant hike. Unfortunately the original owners of the Crystal Water farm had sold it and the new owners refused to let us hike on their land. Well, may the bird of paradise s..t on his head too! From the start Dianne showed her agility crossing the rivers, her balance was superb as she stepped from rock to water to rock etc.

I am sure the saying "Put your left foot in, pull left foot out and shake it all about ..." must have originated from someone seeing Dianne crossing the river. In general the Saturday walk was not over-exiting, crossing lots of the same river over a lot of fences, but pleasant, relaxing and enjoyable.

I forgot ... we had two Belgian girls, Elizabeth and Sigrun, with us; they are doing some time at King Edward Hospital as part of their medical course. Both lovely girls, very pleasant who fitted in nicely, despite their difficulty with the English language. We wish them the best during the rest of their stay in South Africa.

The interesting part of the walk was on our way back when we crossed a field by the farm house and an Alsatian and a Labrador came pounding towards us growling and with the fur on their backs standing up. I think our smell must have subdued them as they soon started wanting to play. (They had done the necessary damage.)

The evening was magic. A lovely log fire, a nice hot bath and then a good meal. It was Gerald & Dianne's 13th wedding anniversary. So we had dinner at the table, everyone put their lot in and everyone shared roast chicken, burnt chicken wings, salads, avo, pasta etc well-rounded with a nice glass of champagne. Magic!!

The Sunday hike was great; the weather again superb. We decided to climb one of the mountains and what a climb it proved to be! A real tester! Slowly but surely we made it to the top. What a lovely view of the whole area, very pretty. We also saw a number of buck. I take my hat off to Dianne and Gretel, who, by the way, got lost going up the gorge. Dianne last, but not least, made it to the top, encouraged by Gerald's "Come on, Dianne" "I am coming husband" Gerald was unanimously awarded with a medal for "patience". Pat, unfortunately, did not hike as she had to study, but she enjoyed the peace and quiet and wants to go again; maybe next time a walk will be included. However, she did prepare a nice cup of coffee for us on our return.

Unfortunately, like all good things the week-end came to an end and we returned home I know that I speak for all who went on the hike, when I say thank you to Gerald and Dianne for a lovely week-end and for a lovely hike, and for those who, for some reason or other, did not go ... you missed a good week-end!! Joe Bologna

