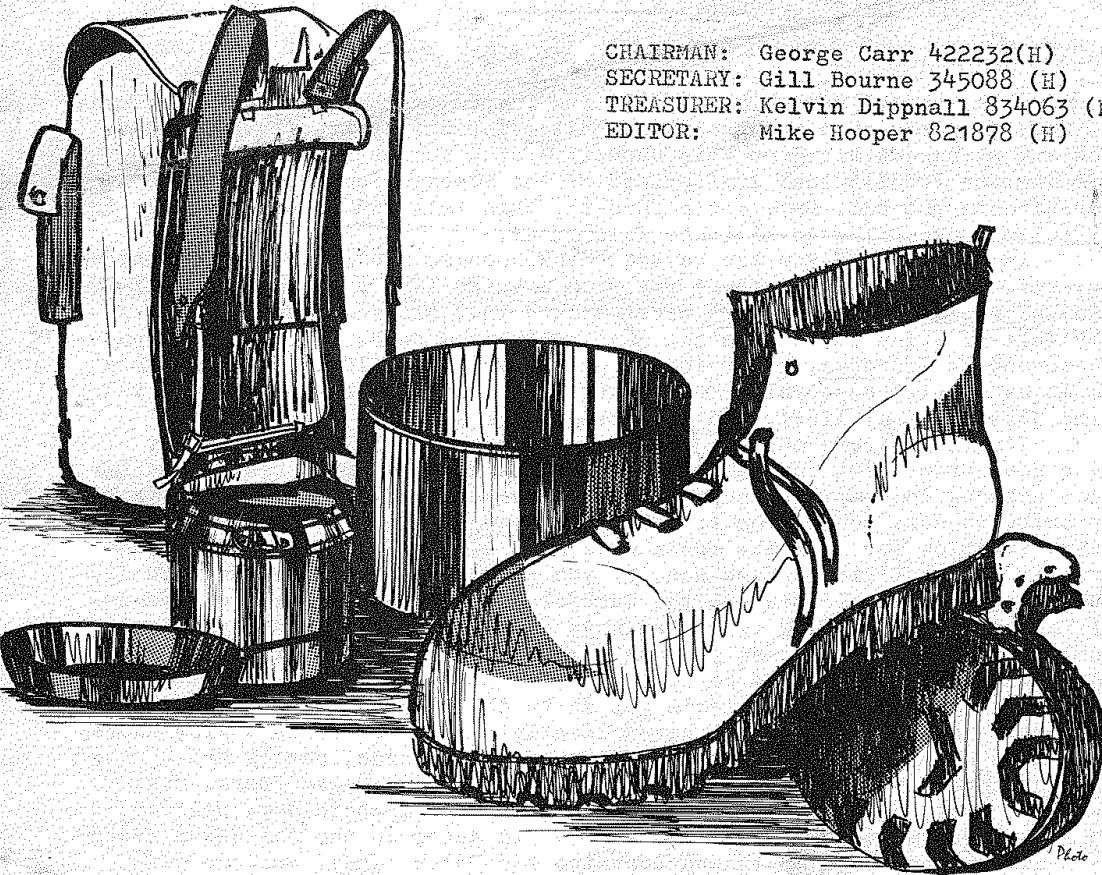


# durban ramblers club

P.O. BOX 1063, DURBAN, NATAL.

CHAIRMAN: George Carr 422232(H)  
SECRETARY: Gill Bourne 345088 (H)  
TREASURER: Kelvin Dippnall 834063 (H)  
EDITOR: Mike Hooper 821878 (H)



MAG 1

APRIL - MAY 1975

## FIXTURES

### April

- 13 Hike to McPherson's Cascades. \*
- 16 Photographic meeting at 37 Venice Rd., Morningside at 7.45pm. Subject - slides of general interest.

### May

- 2 Easter Camp aftermath at Mr. & Mrs. Gilling's home, 9 Tweed Ave., Westville at 7.45pm. Bring slides and photos of Easter Camp. All welcome.
- 4 Hike to Mac's Meander. \* Combined hike with Maritzburg Ramblers. Meet at Shongweni turn-off at 9.45am.
- 8-11 Berg trip. See details inside.
- 18 Hike to Clivia Gorge. \*
- 21 Photographic meeting at Audrey Ralph's home, 15 Glenmore Cresc., Durban North at 7.45pm. Subject - Animals and Insects.
- 24 Turnabout party at Medway's. Details inside.

### June

- 1 Hike to Boulder Pool. \*
- 27-29 Week-end away plus hike in Eston area. Details in next mag.

### July

- 5-13 Berg trip. See details inside.

\* Lorry leaves Durban Market Place, Warwick Ave., at 8.30am and proceeds via Knowles Supermarket, Pinetown. There is a river crossing. Members 55c and Visitors 65c.

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RAMBLINGS ON . . . .

Well, you've probably noticed from the cover that the members at the A.G.M. had the good sense to appoint an Editor for this year. The girls have battled and struggled along in this capacity for a number of years now and, considering the intellectual limitations of the average female, have done a very creditable job too. But, let's face it, this is a function which only the male intellect can bring to ultimate fulfilment.

In case any of you are saying "Mike Hooper, who's he?" let me introduce myself. I'm that tall scrawny guy with a build like a giraffe on half-rations, wear black shorts (shirt never tucked in), and scruffy old tackies usually full of holes 'cause I'm too mean to buy new ones. Ride around in a gold-coloured VW Microbus, otherwise a red Honda bike. I love printing nasty things about people, especially Maritzburg rambler, but usually succeed in stopping just short of libel. That's more-or-less me. Hiya all!

I'm in a bitchy sort of mood at the moment so I'll start off by having a good gripe. You can call this a sort of advance gripe because so far I've got nothing to complain about, but I'm assured by my predecessors that this problem is sure gonna crop up. Please, please, if you are asked to write up a club function for this mag don't make some weak-kneed excuse and refuse. It's really not a difficult task and, if you put a bit of enthusiasm into it, can even be quite fun. If you are the bashful type you can always use non-deplume! The only valid excuse is if you have done a write-up in the previous 4-6 months or so, in which case you can justifiably plead that it is somebody else's turn. Otherwise, please co-operate.

Having said all that let's get on to the more enjoyable subject of new members. The following people have recently joined our ranks - Miss Audrey Vickers, Miss Liberty (?) Bell, a whole flock of Shepherds, namely Mr. & Mrs. Dennis and Gloria, Miss Glynis and Miss Laura, then Miss Megan Frara, Mrs. Audrey Ralph (wot, again?) and Mr. Robert and Mrs. Elizabeth Way. Welcome aboard - we hope you enjoy being with us. We bid adios to the following resignees - Roger Bishop, Joan Smith and Lorraine and Peter Tandy. Welcome off-board, we hope you enjoy not being with us (if you see what I sort of confusedly mean). It was great having you with us.

Honorary Forest Officers. Our club is privileged to have five HFO's among its ranks, appointed by the Department of Forestry. Their duty is to ensure that people they encounter on land under the Department's jurisdiction are abiding by the rules, and they are empowered to charge anyone guilty of an offence. They are issued with a lapel badge and identity card as a means of identification and authorisation. Naturally it's up to all of us to live up to the trust which has been placed in us when on Department of Forestry land - or any other land for that matter. This means, amongst other things, possessing the necessary permit to enter the area, not fouling camping spots and trails (i.e. always using the trowel), not removing or destroying any forest produce, not lighting fires except at appointed areas, not discarding any litter anywhere, and behaving generally as an intelligent and enlightened human being instead of an ignorant and uncaring city slob. Those of us who disobey these cardinal rules will not only earn the contempt of our fellow club members, but probably a fairly hefty fine as well. Our Honorary Forest Officers are Ken, Winston, Ivan, Philip and Ian (Castleden).

What ideas do you have about your club - the way things are run, its functions and responsibilities etc? What items do you have which may interest other club members, places of interest you have recently visited etc? If you have anything like this, write in and let's hear about it (please, girls, nothing that explodes on opening or anything else nasty like that - I won't be opening my own mail for a while after this editorial). I can't promise that everything will be printed, but it will all reach the ears of the Executive Committee, and be acknowledged. The next mag is due about 20 May, so let's hear from you!

And that, I think, is about that. I can't think of anything else to waffle on about, so, until next time.....Cheers!

Editor

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...3...PORT EDWARD WEEK-END 31 JAN - 1 FEB

Friday night in the Municipal Campsite at the Old Pont site, Port Edward, was quiet until a large party of Ramblers arrived. Within minutes tents were erected and soon the campsite echoed with these activities. However 'twas not long before silence reigned.

Saturday dawned bright and with it one could admire an excellently laid out campsite. Lovely grassed sites under trees ending right on the banks of the Umtamvune river. I might add that this area is popular with water-skiers who were early risers and soon had the river whipped to a foam by boat and skier alike.

It was decided to leave the to one's fancy and so we found groups doing their own "thing". One party inspired by Ivan took to the water in Marshall's inflatable rubber dinghy and paddled upstream. All went well until they headed for home. The craft was grossly overloaded (designed for 3 but filled with 7 persons) and woe - the tide was against them. Much frustration and exertion brought them no closer base until a powerboat pilot came to the rescue and towed them back to terra firma.

Vic Conrad led a party of more energetic types on a walk into the Parks Board Nature Reserve bordering on the campsite. Unfortunately no game was sited but flora and fauna abounded. The party enjoyed their outing.

The remaining group (myself included) set off by car to discover Port Edward. We visited the beaches and then the new road bridge replacing the old pont. On the way we passed an area of red barren land (a mini desert) caused (I believe) by goats. From the bridge we pushed on into the Transkei and so down to the petrified forests and fossils. Unfortunately the tide was wrong and the forest was under water but we did see some excellent fossils.

That evening was a braai followed by a not so enthusiastic sing-song and later a downpour.

Colin Mercer

PORT EDWARD WEEK-END 2 FEB

Wasn't it a super week-end?

That rain we had on Saturday night only dampened the tents and not our spirits! I do hope by now you have been able to dry them out properly. I believe some of your neighbours think that you play Cowboys and Indians on your flat verandah!

We took a "conducted" tour of Port Edward before joining you at the bridge. That place is sure dead on a Sunday! The only place that is open is the tearoom, and that is only for half an hour just to sell the Sunday newspapers!

Did you notice the Red desert? Isn't it intriguing?

I wish I could have joined you, Marshall and Ivan, on your dinghy trip down the river. You made it without being washed out to sea or any other drastic thing happening. But did you see the one Rambler out there beyond the rocks? He hadn't realised that there was such a strong current pulling him around the rocks. Luckily the waves were not breaking heavily against the rocks and he was able to pull himself out.

I am sure that many of you had very sore and burnt shoulders - I had and it was agony! But that walk along the beach was very pleasant, wasn't it. We have quite a few conchologists in the club! Or are you hoping to collect R75 for those beautiful cowrie shells that you picked up. Those that the African women were selling were real beauties, but I don't think that they should be allowed to pick the living ones off the rocks. But I suppose we are also to blame for giving them a willing and ready market.

Some of us spent an interesting time studying the caves. We discovered many fossilized shells embedded in the rocks. Some of those shellfish must have been absolute monsters - some were quite two feet across. It is amazing how one does not see many or notice them at all at first, but the more one looks the more one sees. It is quite fascinating, and one really wishes one knew more about the history and how they got there. If I have enough time I will look it up and let you know.

The walk back along the beach was exhausting and at one stage I wondered if I was plodding regardless or rewardless! But the swim at the end was well worth it. We made sure this time that we were not washed out!

It was interesting now to see the countryside as we travelled back along the road toward Durban. Hasn't the widening of the road made a vast improvement to that once narrow and in some places dangerous road. It will be great when they have completed the dual highway all the way to Durban.

Thank you to all who had a finger in the pie - to George, the organiser: to Craig, my driver: and to the rest of you for your company. I do hope I can join you at Easter Camp - that's if I don't have to "cat-sit". (I believe someone else has a similar problem!)

Dorianne

P.S. I spent an interesting evening reading up about the Umzamba Beds. They are layers of sandstone, clay and limestone laid down about 120 million years ago when that area was covered by a shallow inland sea. Similar layers have been found on the Berea at a depth of 300 ft!

I could find no reference to the so-called petrified forests. Those black rocks, which are covered at high tide are basal rocks on which the strata of sandstone were laid.

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#### BERG HUT

The Club's hut, situated on the Berg-side boundary of Mr. Pearse's property at Champagne Castle, is 232 kms from Durban and 2 kms from Champagne Castle Hotel. It is a log-walled hut with windows, a thatch roof and a hard-baked mud floor; it consists simply of one medium-sized room the floor space of which can accommodate approx 14 adults on lilos. It does not contain any furniture or fittings and is merely a shelter for anyone wishing to spend time in the mountains without having to erect tents. Outside the hut Mr. Pearse has installed a water tap, and the Sterkspruit river, in which one can bathe, flows within walking distance of the hut. The front of the hut faces down the Sterkspruit Valley towards the Drakensberg Choir School and "El Mirador", whilst in the opposite direction one can gaze on to the grandeur of the Champagne/Cathkin massif in all its glory and ever-changing moods.

The charge for using the hut is 50c per person per night and all reservations must be made through Margaret Moore who holds the key and may be contacted at 25610 (8.30am - 4.30pm) or at 336676 (evenings from 6pm). It is preferable for reservations to be made well in advance of the proposed date of one's stay at the hut, and in this regard a member of the party is also required to telephone Mr. Pearse (phone Winterton Exchange 03682 and ask for 2203) - after ascertaining from Margaret that the hut is available for the period required - to advise him of the proposed visit. The key must be returned to Margaret, along with the party's hut fees, within three days of returning from the Berg. Users of the hut are expected to leave it in a clean and satisfactory condition and it would be appreciated if any suggestions or complaints could be lodged with Margaret when returning the key.

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Heard about the fire that destroyed poor Idi Amin's house recently? He was very upset because both books in his library were burnt, and he hadn't even finished colouring in one of them.

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#### ANNUAL GENERAL MADHOUSE

Our A.G.M. was held on 23 Feb under the Chairmanship of "Old Cube" John Castleden. After the usual routine matters - apologies, confirmation of previous A.G.M. minutes, honoraria, etc - were disposed of discussion got around to amending the Amble and Scramble rules. This subject was obviously dear to Ivan's heart as he had much of interest to say, and made a number of proposals. It was obvious that Ken also had certain opinions about it all because as fast as Ivan proposed one thing Ken would propose something else. This provoked much lively discussion, so much so that at one stage the Cube was forced to tactfully assert his authority to regain control of the proceedings. Useful points were contributed by Margaret, Mary, Philip, George and Gill, among others. Eventually the amendments were settled to everyone's satisfaction, chiefly embodying separating the concept of Amble and Scramble, abolishing the 3 hike qualification, and slanting them more towards attracting new members. A further amendment regarding no alcoholic beverages on hikes or picnics was dealt with by deleting the word "picnics". Members present were left with the impression that a certain large, beery and bespectacled gentleman standing at the back very definitely approved of this deletion - I couldn't quite catch his name, but it sounded something like Booze Mayday.

Election of Office Bearers was then proceeded to. Our ~~congratulations~~ congratulations go to George Carr who is now Club Chairman, a unanimous and popular

...5...choice. Under George's name on the blackboard was the word "Vice". Ken was elected to this interesting and promising position which should allow ample scope for his many and varied talents. So there we are - the long and the short of it is that George is Chairman and Ken in charge of Vice. Under these two our club can only prosper. Kelvin is our new Treasurer so he's the guy you gotta be nice to seeing he now controls the purse-strings (did you get that, girls?). The job of Secretary Bird was left in the capable talons of Gill Bourne for another year. Margaret Moore, after back-peddalling furiously ("no time, no projector, no ability, no...er...um...") eventually succumbed and took on the job of Photographic Secretary. Ken, in his new position in charge of Vice, was mainly responsible for this, applying all sorts of psychological and other underhand pressures to gain Margaret's succumbrance. Next came the position of Camp Captain. Here a grave irregularity took place. The irregularator, in a stage whisper, stated that this was a foregone conclusion. Looking around, and not seeing anyone about to propose him, he then brazenly proposed himself! Furthermore, Philip's presence on this particular committee is essential for its smooth operation so, by means of a subtle hint concerning the immediate physical well-being of those present, this irregularator let it be known that Philip had just better find himself "elected" on to it. Well, really!! Anyhow, the end result of all this Godfather-like activity was that Ivan carries on as Camp Captain and his committee is Jean, Marshall, Erroll Thring, Rosemary, Winston, Dan and, needless to say, Philip, who is really a sort of Joint Camp Godfather, I guess. To keep on the staight and narrow during hikes Rob Booker was chosen as Chief Leader, and is to be assisted by Chris Hodges and Mike Gill as Sub-leaders. Mike Hooper was pleased to find his intellectual capabilities at last being acknowledged by being made the new Editor. On later reflection, considering the pronounced lack of other nominations and the way everyone clapped so quickly after he said "yes", he reluctantly came to the sad conclusion that maybe the "job (un)desirability factor" had something to do with it. His ego was further deflated after the meeting when he overheard someone referring to him as "the new Editress!" The new Editorial Committee is now Liz, Jenny Hunter Dianne, Mick and Amedeo. Then came Entertainments Chairman. Well, Colin Mercer was the popular choice here, and to much shouting of "Daniel, Daniel!" between him and Marshall, and loud acclamation all round, was elected to this post (who is this "Daniel?"). Picked for his Committee were Barbara, Jenny Knox, Heather, Ken, Craig, Mike Gill and Bruce Medway. With that Chairman and Committee in charge I forecast action-packed months ahead - fasten your seat-belts and prepare for blast-off! After this Mary, Barbara and Marshall were elected onto the Executive Committee, and Mike Castleden once again took on the job of Honorary Auditor. A vote of thanks to John for his able Chairmanship throughout the year was then proposed and accepted. John also took on overall responsibility for the Club's affairs round about 1970, so we are much indebted to him. Thank you, John, we do appreciate it.

And so, the good ship Rambler, with Admiral Carr at the helm, sails into the unknown and exciting waters of 1975. The outlook - bracing, healthy hikes, exciting socials, entertaining photographics and magnificent, scenic Berg trips. Let's face it - if you're a Rambler you just have to be an optimist!

#### Scroobles

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#### MESSAGE FROM COLIN MERCER - ENTERTAINMENTS CHAIRMAN

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to Chair the Entertainments Section of the Club. I hope that this year will be as successful as previous years.

However, to make this year successful I appeal to anyone who is willing to allow a function, e.g. a party or braai, to be held at their home to please contact me. Telephone 811508.

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#### MIKE TO OLD BALDY - 9 MAR

In a sudden fit of madness, I decided to join the Durban Club in their expedition to Old Baldy (otherwise known as "Fistumba" to the P.M.Burg Club). What possessed me to do so, Heaven only knows, but I survived the ordeal and herewith I've set down in writing all that occurred.

The day dawned bright and clear, and I set off to meet the Durban Club at the turn-off to Old Baldy. I arrived there at 9.30am and sat down to wait & wait & wait & wait until 10.20am when the horrible mob finally turned up. I managed to squeeze my way into the mass of tightly packed bodies, listened

politely to the usual cordial greetings bestowed upon me, checked out the "talent" aboard (I am married, but I can still look, can't I?), found that lacking, so decided to concentrate upon the passing scenery, which indeed was passing slowly by, as our transport could only muster about 15k/hr. With much gear clashing and clutch stomping we finally came to a halt almost directly above "Old Baldy" and without too much "faffing" we set off down a steep, gravelly path to the foot of our aspirations. Here the group split into two, the idiots who wanted to climb up, and the cowardly who elected to walk around.

The latter set off & the former tackled the slope with great vigour, and some latent Simian ancestry was displayed by various members in their ascents. For the less simian minded a nylon rope was lowered, and ably assisted by Ivan, myself, and a few others we pushed, pulled, cajoled & threatened the rest of them to the top. Only one poor fellow didn't make it, he fell foul of one of Newton's elementary laws i.e. Gravity + Friction over Rock Face X Loose Hand Hold = Loss of Skin to Knees, Elbows & fingers.

Once on top it was an easy walk down the other side. As we set off to join the other half somewhere ahead, however, one of the Durban Club's ancient traditions became evident, that of "getting lost". It's quite a popular one too, by all accounts, as it went on for a full 10 minutes as the surrounding bush resounded with cries of "Which way", "Ivan" & "Where are you".

Somehow or the other we all came together, and we set off once more down into the valley towards the Umgeni river, and more by error than trial we bumped into the rest of the group who had found a shady spot to rest in, and it was here that the poor fellow who came short on Old Baldy, was displayed, suitably bloodied, to the rapacious crowd.

Thus united we continued down into the valley where we came across "Ye Olde" mud hut store, which was promptly stripped of all its liquid refreshments. Thus partially refreshed we ambled along the river bank until we came across a shady spot alongside the river which was to be the lunch spot. A fire was started and the billy put on to boil and a sort of silence settled on the mob as the inner man was satisfied.

A little later some of the more suicidally-minded members decided to brave the threat of bilharzia, typhoid, cholera and other assorted diseases by swimming in the river to cool off, while one well known young man used its dubious cover to bestow his amorous attentions upon a numb young lady.

After about an hour & half of this pleasant interlude it was decided that we should start moving and so we walked back along the river bank, chatting to the local Africans, and being treated to the amusing spectacle of persons trying to eat the fruit of the prickly pear, and more than one member was seen to be removing thorns from his fingers and tongue.

After a while the bush along the river started to become a bit dense, so Ivan decided to cut back up to the road, but this entailed climbing up a fairly steep slope. Undaunted he pressed on, when suddenly he let forth loud yells of agony and was seen to be clutching his rear end and elbow. Concerned enquiries as to the cause of his discomfort only resulted in further yells and assorted cugh's.

We were a bit mystified at these unusual antics, when it suddenly became apparent as to the cause. The silly b..... had walked into a hornets nest and had been stung for his endeavours, and now we started to receive their undivided attentions.

With frantic yells and curses we literally burned our way through the bush onto the road, where we regrouped, compared our stings, and loudly berated our glorious leader for not informing us as to what had happened. His only reply was that they certainly knew his a.. from his elbow!

After this bit of excitement we continued on to the waiting lorry, squeezed ourselves in and set off at a walking pace, back to civilization. It was a tortuous journey, as many times the truck just couldn't seem to make it, and we thought we would have to get out and push.

However Providence was on our side and we made it to the top, ably entertained by Ivan and his ruptured bagpipe voice as he murdered all the well known rambler type songs.

Well, I enjoyed it, and I'll come again, but please, no more hornets!

Fink (alias M. Kirby)

(Readers will note the many derogatory and snide remarks in the first half of this article directed against us as individuals, and our beloved Club as an Institution. The pantagruelian penman of these poisonous passages portrays us as a party of plain-looking, puerile, peripatetic Prendergasts who pusillanimously perambulate through the pastures perpetually puzzling to place our position or perceive the pronounced disparity between our posteriors and our pintlifters. Perhaps it's as well for him that we are, in fact, a gentle and good-natured lot. These arrogant Upper Umsinduzi Catchment Area rambler really are the end. - Ed).



# Wine & Party

DATE :

24<sup>th</sup> MAY.

VENUE :

Bruce Medway's home,  
7 Ferndale Road,  
Morningside.

Lifts available - phone Colin 811-508

TIME : 8:00 p.m.

Refreshments available.

PHOTOGRAPHIC MEETING - 19 MAR

A pleasant and well attended evening spent at Heather and Ken's home in Westville.

After viewing the competition slides, the subject being "Architecture and Towns", we were shown a series of very interesting slides of a 9-month trans-Africa trip by five adventurous guys from the U.K.. Means of transport - one overloaded Landrover bus. The accompanying talk was given by Geoff Bricknell, one of the party. The scenes in the deserts and mountains were really beautiful - so wild and desolate - and Geoff's stories and descriptions made us almost feel we'd been there too. Thank you, Geoff, for a very absorbing show.

The competition section was won by Robbie Burnett with his "Jewel by Night" - 60.3%. Second was Amedeo with "Moon" - 59%, and third Ken with "Bygone Memories" - 58.3%.

Our thanks to Heather and Ken for hosting us and providing the refreshments.

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How do you make an Upper Umsindusi Catchment Area rambler laugh on a Sunday?

Tell him a joke on a Wednesday.

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THE UNKNOWN CITIZEN

(To JS/O7/M/378. This marble monument is erected by the State)

He was found by the Bureau of Statistics to be  
One against whom there was no official complaint,  
And all the reports on his conduct agree  
That, in the modern sense of an old-fashioned word, he was a saint,  
For in everything he did he served the Greater Community.  
Except for the war till the day he retired  
He worked in a factory and never got fired,  
But satisfied his employers, Fudge Motors Inc.  
Yet he wasn't a scab\* or odd in his views,  
For his Union reports that he paid his dues,  
(Our report on his Union shows it was sound)  
And our Social Psychology workers found  
That he was popular with his mates and liked a drink.  
The Press are convinced that he bought a paper every day  
And that his reactions to advertisements were normal in every way.  
Policies taken out in his name prove that he was fully insured,  
And his Health-card shows he was once in hospital but left it cured.  
Both Producers Research and High-Grade Living declare  
He was fully sensible to the advantages of the Installment Plan  
And had everything necessary to the Modern Man,  
A gramophone, a radio, a car and a frigidaire.  
Our researchers into Public Opinion are content  
That he held the proper opinions for the time of year;  
When there was peace, he was for peace; when there was war, he went.  
He was married and added five children to the population,  
Which our Eugenist says was the right number for a parent of his generation,  
And our teachers report that he never interfered with their education.  
Was he free? Was he happy? The question is absurd:  
Had anything been wrong, we should certainly have heard.

\* a workman who refuses to join a trade union

Wystan Hugh Auden  
(born 1907)



BERG TRIPS

The locations of the May and July Berg trips has not yet been decided, so the location of the July trip will be stated in the next mag which comes out towards the end of May. Where the May trip takes place will soon be decided on, and become known. Otherwise check with Philip or Ivan, or phone Mike Hooper at 821878.

Food is provided on these trips.

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APPLICATION FORM to reach Philip Gatenby, 4 Rhodes Court, 270 Vause Rd., Durban 4001, not later than 30 April.

I/We.....wish to take part in the May Berg trip.

I can supply:

1. A vehicle which will convey myself plus.....people and their luggage.
2. ....lightweight petrol/gas/paraffin stove.
3. ....pots (minimum size one litre).
4. ....lightweight tent for.....people.

Address:.....

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Phones (work).....(home).....

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Address:.....

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Phones (work).....(home).....