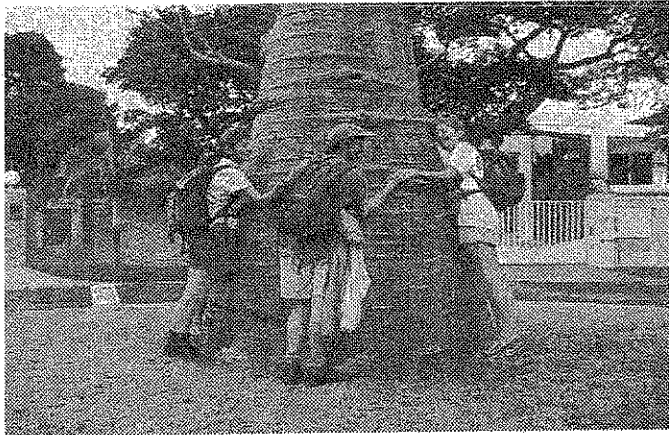
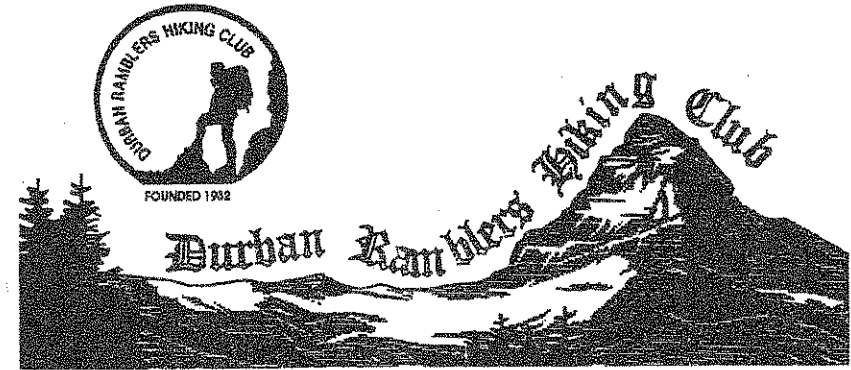


Message for Glenys Bentley from Lee and Ingrid D'eathe. "Thank you for organising such an enjoyable beach-hike on Sunday 2 May 2004. Ingrid and I loved it – beyond the lovely beach, the trudge along the roads, the flights of steps, the variety of houses and gardens, the rain that woke a few of us up and the macaws and marmosets, even the drink at the pub ..... it was the baobab tree that made our day!"



and another one - a special thanks to hike leaders and organisers for the sterling work they do in ensuring that Ramblers have enjoyable and safe hikes. Much appreciated.




PO Box 50563  
MUSGRAVE ROAD 4062


JULY- SEPTEMBER 2004

Title	Committee Member	Home	Bus, Cell & Fax
Chairman	Brian O'Connell	306 0743	072 680 0289
Secretary	Ingrid D'eathe	702 0877	083 789 3753
Treasurer	Biff Maggs	312 1503	082 900 6965
Sun Hike Organiser	John Stevens		082 459 1522
Sat Hike Organiser	Ann Olds	767 1027	
Weekend Organiser	Merle Mackenzie	561 3038	082 454 0521
Publicity Organiser	Roger Arnold	2667458	
Magazine Editor	Jayne Ferguson	462 2732	083 381 3990
Ordinary Member	Steve Watson	312 7108	082 443 4155

#### From the Archives of Mick McConnell

The May 1959 Ramblers camp at Ifafa beach was almost washed out as heavy rain on the Wednesday before the camp had washed away most of the road and rail bridges away. I think it was 12 in all between Durban and Port Shepstone. Anyhow, the old steel pylon bridges some 20 kms inland survived so it necessitated a zig-zag journey from Pinetown as we had borrowed the Lyons Green Label Tea truck to move all the equipment. As Gloria and I had just become engaged she came with me in the "Grub" truck. The journey took 14 hours!!





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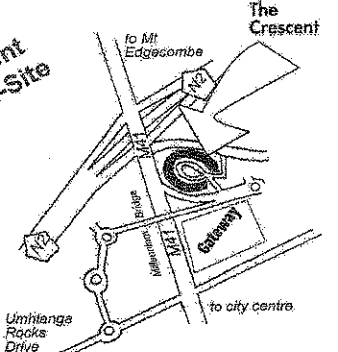
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*This is the official newsletter of the Durban Ramblers Hiking Club. Contributions are welcome, but the right to edit any contribution is reserved. The opinions expressed in any published article or insert do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Durban Ramblers Hiking Club.*

## MEMBERS' NEWS

### New Members

New members to the Club include Lesley Dodds, Muriel Doherty, Roy and Rose Glen and Janet Sutherland. Welcome back to Anna and Adolf Diegel. Welcome to Ramblers – we look forward to hiking with you.

### Congratulations and celebrations

to fellow Ramblers, Malcolm McGill and Dawn Booth who are to be married on 20 June 2004.

## MEMBERS' NOTICES

### Subs

Please make certain that you pay your subs by the end of June. If you have not paid by this time, your name will be taken off the list! This means you will no longer receive magazines and must pay visitors fees when you hike.

### For Sale and Hire

Sale of 35mm slide projector – R100. Magazines to hold 320 slides – R20.  
Hire of backpacks at R5/day and R50 deposit. Contact Philip Gatenby on 031 201 3592.

### Monthly Get Togethers

Monthly get togethers are proving popular. Meet at 18:30 at the following venues:

30 July	Blue Bottles Waterfront next to Thirstys
27 August	News Café, Silver Oaks Centre, Silverton Road.
24 September	Thatchers, Old Parkview Hotel, Brickfield Road

For further information contact Mike on 082 822 3106 or office 563 5871. In addition, Scrabble evenings are arranged for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday evening of the month. Contact Coleen Seath on 202 2279 for further details.

### Mid week Walking

Before work? After work? During the day? A similar simple survey 7 – 8 years ago led to the start of Saturday afternoon hiking. Can we create another success story? Please contact Philip on 201 3592.

### General

- Each member should keep medical aid and emergency contact details in their backpacks.
- When walking on public roads, members are expected to be alert.
- Please be considerate when driving in convoy so as not to inconvenience other road users.
- Change of contact details to be advised to Derek Pretorius who is maintaining the Club's membership data base. Telephone 765 5029.

### Highover : 21-23 May

After an initial hiccup with the booking, this new venue proved to be a great success and a super weekend was had by all. While the Hella Hella Valley is familiar hunting ground for many of our members, the well-appointed thatched chalets and bunkhouses at Highover were a new experience for the 23 Ramblers who managed to negotiate the 12km of not so good dirt road to reach the venue on the Umkomaas River. The huge fully-equipped "lapa" with enormous deck over-looking the river makes this a perfect spot for a group weekend getaway.

On Friday evening there was fun and laughter with the game 30 seconds, while others sat and chatted on the deck. Then on Saturday morning, Shaun, our host for the weekend, arrived in a 10-seater 4x4 to ferry us up to the Lodge (2km away) which is where the Soada Trail begins, leading to the falls 9km away. The hike was interesting and varied, and shady most of the way, fortunately, as it was quite a warm day. While the Soada Falls are not spectacular at all, particularly in the dry season, the trail is well worth the effort, providing some steep hills, interspersed with level areas, and some rock-hopping to reach the falls. We lunched at the falls, and then made our way back to the lodge, with enough energy to hike the extra 2kms from there back to the chalets.

Saturday evening we gathered at the lapa for a braai under a spectacular starry sky, and later Colleen rallied some of the troops to do battle over the scrabble board. On Sunday Shaun took those who were game for another hike up to the lodge, and we tackled a brand new 6km trail to a series of small waterfalls. The trail proved to be quite a climb, and still needs some refining, but we enjoyed the experience, and then walked a different route back to the chalets.

Many of us seemed reluctant to leave – having thoroughly enjoyed the weekend. So much so, that Roger suggested we revisit again this year before the weather gets too hot. That will have to wait till next year, unfortunately, as we have other things planned for next quarter!

### La Mouette : Blythedale: 4-6 June

The weatherman certainly smiled on us as 27 Ramblers headed up the north coast. Glorious sunny days and bright moonlit nights made this a perfect weekend. Friday night some us gathered on the beach to watch an orange moon rise over the sea – a sight which made some members burst into song, singing some real golden oldies.

Our guest leader was unable to join us on our hike on Saturday but arranged for us to get access to Prince's Grant. Mike led us through the forest and eventually down to the beach where we met up with Susan who got us through the gate. She then accompanied us on a really nice walk along the lagoon and through the estate. After lunch under the trees we made our way back to camp in time for tea and cream scones by the pool.

That evening we all got together in the pool area for a communal braai and a great evening was had with much fun and banter. Perhaps the evening was too much for some, as only 14 members accompanied Steven on a beach walk on Sunday morning, when they made their way to the river, then inland through the cane fields and up to the beacon, before making their way back to camp. The rest took it easy at camp, or went for a stroll on the beach.

Thanks to authors for contributions. If you have any tales to tell we would love to hear about them. If you do not see your article in the magazine following provision of copy, please do not despair or become despondent. It will be used in the next edition. Please send copy to the editor at PO Box 888 Mount Edgecombe or e mail to [JFerguson@canegrowers.co.za](mailto:JFerguson@canegrowers.co.za) (text only please)

If anyone sees a potential for a club hiking weekend during one of their private weekends away, please contact Merle McKenzie on 031 561 3038. Likewise, any ideas for day hikes or half day hikes in and around Durban, please contact the Saturday/Sunday hike organiser or any committee member.

## AND, TALES OF TRAILS

### 2<sup>ND</sup> Quarter Weekend Review – Merle Mackenzie, Ann Olds

#### Mahai : Royal Natal National Park : 20 – 22 March.

Why have Ramblers not been to Mahai for such a long time? This large camp-site comfortably accommodates many campers - large open spaces and excellent ablution facilities ensure the relaxation of all. Camp-sites are level, grassed and shady. Electric points are available at some sites.

Having made an early get-away on Friday, we arrived when the camp-site was still fairly empty. We were warmly welcomed by the Officer-in-charge, and later by a baboon troop leader that snatched a hand of bananas while we were busily unpacking the car. As the camp-site filled up the baboons retreated and were no further bother.

The walk through Fairy Glen to the Gudu Falls was magical. The ancient, indigenous forest is adorned with a variety of mosses and ferns. We did a good "day" hike on Sunday. Brian had hoped to lead us up to The Sentinel, but the path was closed. The alternate route afforded magnificent views. On the return a few of us branched off to The Crack – but the ascent proved too strenuous for our already tired bodies. Those of us who wanted to stretch the week-end walked a fair way up the Tendele Gorge on Monday morning, soaking in the majestic views of the Amphitheatre. This must be the most inspiring position in the 'Berg. We look forward to our next visit to Mahai.

#### Cobham : 9 – 12 April.

The glorious weather enjoyed this Easter week-end was particularly appreciated by those of us who survived the raging winds at Cobham in August 2003. The grassy, green mountainsides, dotted quite liberally with flowers, hosted grazing Eland just across the river from the camp-site. Graham and Christine Davies were surprised to meet up with us when they planned an outing on their own (who reads the magazine anyway?). We enjoyed a late leisurely walk up the river with them on Friday. Saturday turned misty but we set out in the direction of Sani Pass, admired the full waterfall, then turned right over the spur – views of beautiful farmlands towards Himeville and Underberg. We were thrilled by close-up sightings of a Rheebuck scampering down a steep hillside, and a young Eland exhibiting his strength and energy to us. Sodden boots and jackets dried pretty well overnight for Sunday's hike. Graham and Christine joined us on Sunday in time for a 09h00 departure to hike up to Mzimkhulwane hut – a route they had not done before. We enjoyed splendid views of farmlands, dams, and Splashy Fenn in the distance. The chatter and laughter of children playing in the large open spaces of this camp-site really enhanced the restful, holiday atmosphere of the week-end.

#### Leon Hugo – Author

In the previous magazine we noted that Leon Hugo, author and Chairman of the South African Trail Owners' Association had addressed a group of Ramblers on the accreditation of hikes. Here's what he had to say.

South Africa is in a unique situation where most of its walks are on private property or in government/provincial owned parks or areas. In all cases monetary charges are levied for the use of the trails. Hence, hikers, backpackers, 4x4 trails, mountain bike trails, horse trails etc., expect the trails to be of a certain standard. This has led to a call that trails should be accredited, meaning hiking trails should be evaluated and that when hikers choose a trail, they will be able to make an informed choice and get what they expect.

The four criteria to be used in accrediting a trail will be :

1. Accommodation facilities.
2. Environmental character.
3. Difficulty grading.
4. Trail/path facilities.

From the discussion, it was felt that this would impact on hikers going away for a few days hiking, sleeping in cabins en route etc. This would include cloverleaf hikes coming back to a home base at night. Ramblers away weekends would fall into this category. Apparently government wish to endorse the accreditation initiative. With the assistance of existing hiking clubs, Professor Hugo would like to identify possible trails for accreditation and to establish a monitoring and auditing procedure.

The role of hike leaders was also discussed as they will be called upon to give fellow hikers information on the difficulty grading, dominant vegetation, topography, river crossings, possible swimming spots, as well as planning the walk so as to maximise pleasure, the right time and spot for photographers etc. Hike leaders should also be aware of the security status of the area and ensure necessary precautions are put into place.

In closing, it was noted that a "good" trail is a trail that lives up to the hiker's expectations.

If there are any Ramblers wishing to get involved in accrediting trails, Leon Hugo's contact details are [leon.hugo@up.ac.za](mailto:leon.hugo@up.ac.za) or Geography Department, University of Pretoria, Pretoria 0002. Telephone 012 420 2532 Fax 012 420 3284. Leon has also requested that hikers pass on his details to owners of trails in order that their trails may be accredited.

## HIKING PROGRAMME : JULY– SEPTEMBER 2004

#### Saturday Hikes

Hikers may meet at Musgrave Park Medical Centre before 13:30, to travel in convoy or to share transport to the start of the hike. A cost of R8.00 for transport is payable to the relevant driver. Hikes marked \*\* are suitable for beginners. Hikes marked # involve an entrance fee into the nature reserve. Visitors are to pay R4.00 to the Club. Bring the correct amount of money as change is not always available. For directions to the starting point, please phone one of the organisers between 12:00 and 12:45 on the day. Children are welcome but check suitability of hike with leader.

Please bring at least 1 litre of water, a snack for half time and a hat.

Organisers : Ann 767 1027 Brian 072 680 0289 Rodger 2667458.

### Sunday Hikes

Please try to get to the meeting places at least 10 minutes earlier so that fees can be collected and lifts arranged timeously. Bring the correct amount of money as change may not be available. Please bring at least 2 litres of water, lunch and a hat. Add R5 for visitors. Sunday hikers are welcome to join Saturday hikes and the following social.

Meeting Places	Durban	Leave 08:00	Musgrave Park, Cnr Berea & Musgrave Roads
	Pinetown	Leave 08:30	Union Main Centre, Old Main Road
	Bluff	Leave 08:30	BP Garage, Edwin Swales Drive

If there is a change to the meeting time this will be noted in the hiking schedule below.

**IMPORTANT : if you need a lift from the meeting place, contact the hike leader or one of the hike organisers to ensure that somebody will be there.**

Date	Description of Hike	Leader	Tel
Sat 3 July	Stockville Valley. Meet Hungry Duck, York Road, Gillitts. Up hill, down dale, back to pub, for some ale.	Brian	072 680 0289
Sun 4 July	<b>Umdhloti Meander. Forest and beach walk – moderate in strength and length. Cost R15.</b>	Brian	072 680 0289
Sat 10 July	Springside Nature Reserve.** Meet at reserve 2 <sup>nd</sup> traffic light right off Old Main Rd. Hillcrest, right into Stonewall Rd, right into Springside Rd. #R5 donation. Bring & braai.	Trevor	765 5133
Sun 11 July	<b>Rob Roy. Starting from the Rob Roy Hotel we penetrate deep into the Valley of a Thousand Hills. You will feel some of them. Cost R10.</b>	Steve Watson	082 443 4155
Sat 17 July	Paradise Valley. Sarnia. Follow sign from Eden Road. ** Easy, shady walk of historic interest. #R4 BYO Sundowners.	Dennis	764 3692
Sun 18 July (Away weekend)	<b>Bluff Wonderland, Visits the remains of the original Cave Rock plus other interesting things. Meet at BP garage on Edwin Swales at 08:30. Cost R0</b>	Mike White	083 325 5348
Sat 24 July	Krantzkloof Falls. Meet Krantzkloof picnic site. Down to river, boulder-hop to base of falls. #R7. BYO sundowners.	Brian	072 680 0289
Sun 25 July	<b>Alverstone/Assagay. Pleasant hike through farmlands and country lanes. Cost R15</b>	Dieter Becker	462 7445
Sat 31 July	Krantzkloof Longshadow 2.** Meet Krantzkloof picnic site. From river up to contour path to Acuttis Drive. #R7. BYO sundowners.	Ann	767 1027
Sun 1 Aug.	<b>D'Moss Trail. Explore the wilderness in the centre of the City. Starting and stopping at Denise and John's place. Have a relaxing drink and braai afterwards. Address: Montclair Senior Primary, 35 Bangor Road, Montclair. Cost R5.</b>	John van Zyl	462 7952
Sat 7 Aug.	Shongweni – Bond's Farm. ** Meet Assagai Hotel. 13:45 Walk through horse country and cane.	Clive	765 5051
Sun 8 Aug. (Away weekend)	<b>Clive Cheeseman. Hike from this small reserve near the top of Field's Hill via Wyebank into Krantzkloof Nature Reserve. A little bit of Kloof history included. Guest leader. Cost R5.</b>	Adrian Rowe	764 4721
Sat 14 Aug.	Burman Bush. Park below Jameson Park (below rose garden). Walk through suburbs to Burman Bush, return via King's House to ice-cream at Mozarts. Bring & braai & swim at Werner's home.	Werner	208 7532
Sun 15 Aug.	<b>Mposane. An interesting hike up this mountain situated above Nagle Dam. Good views. Cost R25.</b>	Steve Watson	082 443 4155

Sat 21 Aug.	Waterfall. Nqutu Gorge. From Bridle Rd right into King George, becomes Valley Rd. Nature Reserve on right. Strenuous climb out. #R7. Bring & braai – own equipment.	Brian	072 680 0289
Sun 22 Aug.	<b>Neville's Surprise. What will Neville surprise us with? Come and find out.</b>	Neville Walmsley	309 2298
Sat 28 Aug.	Bartlett Farm. Hammarsdale. Meet Assagai Hotel. 13:15 R5 donation to conservancy. Bring & braai on farm.	Trevor	765 5133
Sun 29 Aug.	<b>Hornet's Krantz. Explore the heights of the Monteseel area, medium hike with one or two decent climbs. Cost R15.</b>	Dieter Becker	462 7445
Sat 4 Sept.	Krantzkloof. Down river. Meet Krantzkloof picnic site. Steep down to river & return. #R7. BYO	Brian	072 680 0289
Sun 5 Sept.	<b>Delville Wood Circuit. Waterfalls, tunnels – what more could one want? Cost R15.</b>	Steve Nel	083 454 0569
Sat 11 Sept.	Virginia Bush Nature Reserve. ** Meet at gate in Kensington Drive. Secluded shady reserve. Bring & braai.	Ann	767 1027
Sun 12 Sept.	<b>Umdlutuzana Meander. Explore this beautiful valley and see the Mackintosh Falls. Cost R15</b>	Brian	072 680 0289
Sat 18 Sept.	Gillitts Farm – MacIntosh. Meet at St. Hilliers Dam. Good paced walk to view Mac. Falls.	Ken	083 298 5543
Sun 19 Sept.	<b>Nwabe. Medium hike with good views overlooking Milazi River. Cost R15</b>	Steve Watson	082 443 4155
Sat 25 Sept.	New Germany Nature Reserve. ** Off Otto Volek Rd. Grassland and bush. View the aviary.	Clive	765 5051
Sun 26 Sept. (Away weekend)	<b>To be announced.</b>		

### Weekend & Trails Programme – July – September 2004

Date	Description	Leader	Tel
17 – 20 July	<b>Ngele Trail.</b> Walk in indigenous forests and mountain grasslands. Kit delivered to bunkhouse by bakkie - 2 day option if required. Cost R25 per person per night. Contact Philip by 4 July	Philip Gatenby	031 2013592
7 – 9 August	<b>Sehlabathebe.</b> (Lesotho). Accommodation in the Kings Country Lodge. R30 per person per night. Physical fitness essential. Valid passport necessary. Contact Brian for further details. Numbers limited – on first come basis. Booking confirmed by payment of R60.	Steve Nel	Brian 0313060743 or 072 680 0289
24 – 26 September	<b>Mahai – Royal Natal National Park –</b> Long weekend – Camping @ R58 pp per night (no electricity). Early booking necessary as Parks Board require deposit up front. Contact Merie by 16 August	Brian O'Connell	Merie work 032 4394317 home 0315613038 cell 0824540521