



C/O Chairman
14 Edgecliffe Park
14 Bartle Road
Gillitts
3610
www.durbanramblers.co.za

Banking Details:
Standard Bank Musgrave Rd.
Branch Code: 042626
Account No: 051257653

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE DURBAN RAMBLERS' HIKING CLUB
3RD QUARTER: JULY – SEPTEMBER 2012

CHAIRMAN'S RAMBLINGS

It has been an eventful 2nd quarter as it has been the quarter where most of our 80th Birthday celebrations have taken place. First we had our Moon Walk, on the 5th May, which was ably led by Colin, and was enjoyed as a late afternoon hike. We had no full moon sightings (someone forgot to tell the moon of our intentions). The highlight of our celebrations was the party on the 19th May at the Kloof Interpretative Centre with the braai fires going, the music playing, and with Marge Blake showing us "youngsters" how it is done on the dance floor made for a great day. I did not bore the party revellers with any introductory jokes, but I could not miss the chance to tell them at our 80th Birthday get-together at Mount Park.

The event at Mount Park, Dargle, ably organised by Marge Blake was a great occasion where memories of past years were swapped with our "Younger" folk. A number of the older members showed quite a bit of nostalgia. The lunch at The Everglades Hotel was a more formal occasion, made all the more poignant with the backdrop of the daunting Inhlosane Mountain behind the hotel which seemed to be beckoning to us to get up there and walk it. Colin paid tribute to departed Ramblers, and especially those who had contributed so much in the past and to the present activities of the Club. The day finished off with a specially made cake made by Marge; and did she tell us how to cut the cake! Thanks Marge for the lesson.

The Club had a sad day when we heard of the passing of Dieter Becker. A stalwart member and a great hike leader, we will miss his enthusiasm. He was to lead a hike from Stonehaven Castle, so Jon led the same hike in commemoration after a minute of silence in remembrance of Dieter.

I welcome all our new members of whom there are a number. Remember if at first you find the hikes intimidating you are not the first. We all had to become hiking fit. Keep it up, the rewards are great.

Our Facebook page is working well, with lots of member interaction, lots of photos and comments (all positive I may add). All this points to a vibrant Club.

As a parting comment here are 5 basic tips for hikers

1. Take along a partner or friend (better if partner is experienced)
2. Tell someone where you are going.
3. Carry basic equipment. First aid kit, matches, flashlight.
4. Basic provisions ...especially water.
5. COMMON SENSE.

Hiking is fun, keep it that way.

Regards

Werner

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	Werner Vanslebrouck	084 206 7836	031 767 2969	werner.v@iafrica.com
Secretary	Ingrid D'Eathe	083 789 3753	031 262 3753	
Treasurer	Biff Maggs	082 900 6965		biff@eastcoast.co.za
Sun Hike Org	Marie Gurr	082 586 0266	031 705 3122	marinev.gurr@gmail.com
Sat Hike Org	Philip Collyer	082 417 0204	031 201 8864	philipcollyer@gmail.com
Weekend Org	Jill Dunstone	084 780 0818	031 765 4520	jillyd@telkomsa.net
Publicity	Coleen Seath	082 735 7659	031 202 2279	scotcoleen@telkomsa.net
Social Org	Ray van Reenen	084 611 1199	031 702 1136	raymond@absamail.co.za
Ord Member	Colin Turner	084 499 0371	031 708 3517	
Magazine & Web Editor	Linda Hiles	083 226 0044	031 202 8677	linda@hiles.co.za

MEMBER NEWS

New Members

We extend a very warm welcome to all our new members and hope you enjoy many happy hours hiking the hills and dales with us.

Henny Kruger

Monika Piefel

Mike Parnaby

Barrie Kelly

Jurg Paul Vogelsang

Fiona & Richard Rielly

Rick & Anita Gutierrez

Eileen Carruthers

Christie Exall

Sabine Marshall

Susan McMahon

Sheryl Halstaad

Alan Rogers

Charel Haasbroek

Malcolm & Charmaine Eastment

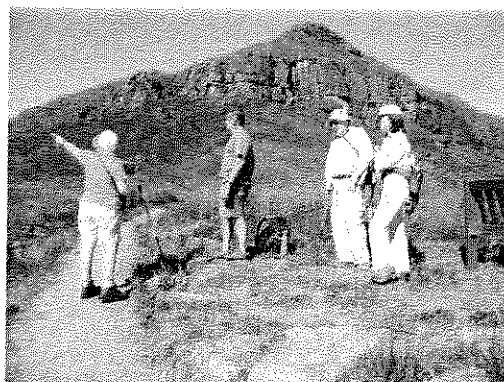
Jules van Rosebrook

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Cathedral Peak

Easter Weekend

Easter 2012 was blessed with the most glorious weather. Days were sunny and clear so views of the majestic "Cathedral" and escarpment to the west were clear. Seeing the full moon rising in the east in the evenings was appreciated by all as we sat around our cooking fires. Audrey led half the group on a hike up Mike's Pass on Saturday, while Biff led the rest of us into Rainbow Gorge from Didima Camp. This was a first for some. I am always enchanted by the ancient twists and cascades of the river, and the towering indigenous trees, and prolific undergrowth.



SATURDAY and SUNDAY PROGRAMME THIRD QUARTER 2012			
DATE	DESCRIPTION OF HIKE	LEADER	TEL
Sat 22 Sept	Assegay	Werner	0842067836
	Street walking in Assegay. Meet at Sugarloaf Centre (bottom of Botha's Hill)		
Sun 23 Sept	Stainbank Nature Reserve Yellowwood Park	Stella	0783198979
	Sunday Ramblers host Saturday hikers. Follow a variety of paths that meander across this popular venue. Hopefully we'll see zebra, impala, duiker and lots of birds. No meeting at Union Main. Meet inside entrance gate at 8.30am. Entrance R15pp.		
Sat 29 Sept	Paradise Valley (Easy/Moderate)	Ismail	0312090902
	Shady walk along river. Some historical interest. Park at reserve. Entrance fee R15.00 per person.		
Sun 30 Sept	Table Mountain Hike	Duncan	0832297748
	Joint Durban and Pietermaritzburg Ramblers hike up to and around Table Mountain in memory of Bill Hyslop. Forest, spring flowers, waterfalls and good views of Nagle Dam and The Valley of A Thousand Hills. Meet at Union Main at 8.00am. Petrol sharing R25pp plus R10 for guide/car guard.		

This is the official newsletter of the Durban Ramblers' Hiking Club. Contributions are very welcome, but the right to edit is reserved.

If you have any tales to tell, we would love to hear them. Please email your copy to the Editor at linda@hiles.co.za

SATURDAY and SUNDAY PROGRAMME THIRD QUARTER 2012			
DATE	DESCRIPTION OF HIKE	LEADER	TEL
Sun 26 Aug	Inland Ballito	Contact Marie	0825860266 0317053122
	We have a new leader, Collette, and a new route. Please let's all show her our support! Details to be advised.		
Sat 1 Sept	Stockville (Moderate/Strenuous).	Werner	0842067836
	Gathering at the Gillitts Post Office at 13.30. Hikers will then share transport to the end of Jan Smuts Avenue, Winston Park. The hike starts there. Hike along the escarpment, down into the Stockville Valley and back to Gillitts Post Office. Some members to drive back to end of Jan Smuts Avenue to retrieve cars.		
	After the hike - annual Potjie Competition Challenge. Cost R40.00 per person. Potjie cooks must bring own gas burners and potjie and register by 25th August 2012. Non cooks will be deemed to be judges and must also book by 25th August 2012. Venue Lois and Werner's House. For further information and registration call 031-7672969. Numbers are limited- BOOK EARLY. Please do not ring after this date, no late comers will be accepted- no exceptions.		
Sun 2 Sept	Karkloof (to be confirmed.)	Contact Marie	0825860266 0317053122
Sat 8 Sept	City Hike (Easy)	Philip C	0312018864 0824170204
	Meet at Wilson's Wharf parking at 13.45. Walk along some of the historic areas in St. George's Street, Fish Market, Morning Market, then to the Workshop, City Hall, Bat Centre and back to Wilson's Wharf (8 Km). R50.00pp for tour guide.		
Sun 9 Sept	Umhlanga Valley	Jenny	0849520622
	Explore the Umhlanga estuary. No Union Main meeting. Meet and park in the nature reserve beyond Breakers Hotel, Umhlanga, at 8.30am.		
Sat 15 Sept	Kloof Gorge – Escarpment (Moderate)	Jill Dunstone	0317654520
	Hike along the the gorge edge to grasslands above, stunning views. Meet at the Krantzklouf Picnic Site at 13.45. R15 entrance.		
Sun 16 Sept	Paradise Valley to Pavilion	Margie	0734376915
	A linear day walk from the nature reserve (entrance R6pp) to The Firkin Pub on the roof of the Pavilion. No meeting at Union Main. Meet at The Firkin at 8.15am to organise cars for shuttle.		



On Sunday we all followed Biff to Doreen Falls – some to enjoy a brief, chilly splash under the waterfall! This was a popular route, enjoyed by many other guests from the hotels, as well. We were rather disappointed that the paths through grassland areas were very overgrown and obscured by long grass, making one unsure of one's footing.

The Community-run campsite was fully occupied, clean and well serviced by security, who were watchful of baboon invasions by day, and a reassuring presence by night.

All in all, a refreshing camp in the 'Berg.

Ann Olds

Getaway Magazine hike April 29th, 2012

Last September, Durban Ramblers members led a hike around Alverstone Nature Reserve for the Getaway Magazine and Hi-Tec Sports. Due to its success, Getaway invited us to lead another hike which took place on Sunday 29th April. This time around, we decided to visit the mink and manure belt of Summerveld.

Colin Turner led 44 Getaway readers over this beautiful area on a four hour trail. He was ably assisted by Nevil and Marie in the middle of the group and yours truly acting as sweeper.

Despite the lack of fitness of some of the visitors, we set quite a good pace and enjoyed some wonderful sights and saw some magnificent horses. I'm not a horsey person, but even I was impressed by some of the animals on view. One or two of the group battled on the zig-zag going back up towards the home straight, which resulted in the group getting split up. This was precisely the reason why two of our experienced Ramblers had been positioned in the middle of the group, so no harm was done. The trailing party took a short cut and arrived back at the club house at the same time as the leaders.

The visitors were in agreement that, although they were exhausted, they really enjoyed the hike and recreation. I did a spot of advertising and promoted the Ramblers Club and our website, and gave out some application forms. Hopefully we'll pick up some new members as we did on the previous hike.

The joint sponsors, Getaway and Hi-Tec, were really pleased with the response and have asked me to organise another hike later in the year. I'll keep you all informed of the details when I get the official request.

Trevor Thompson

Durban Ramblers 80th Anniversary Party
19th May 2012

Krantzkloof Nature Reserve was the venue for 85 partying Ramblers. Braai fires were lit, music played non-stop and, despite the weather being a little chilly and overcast, a festive atmosphere prevailed at the Interpretative Centre. The tables were beautifully decorated by Jeanette, using a theme of lime green and black, and this really added to the party scene - thanks, Jeanette.

We all love a braai and Saturday was the perfect occasion. The fires were going non-stop from noon until late afternoon and the delicious meat was accompanied by a nice assortment of lovely, fresh salads and rolls. The desserts that followed were truly fantastic, all generously donated by several of our lady members - wonderfully decadent puds which health conscious folks like us shouldn't be even looking at, never mind eating. But what the hell, it's only once every 80 years! Thank you, ladies, for contributing to a really great day.

It was a great get-together, as not only our Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday hikers came along, but also some of the older members who have not been actively hiking for a few years. These guys spent happy hours yarning about the old days and reminiscing at the wonderful display of old photographs that Marge had created.

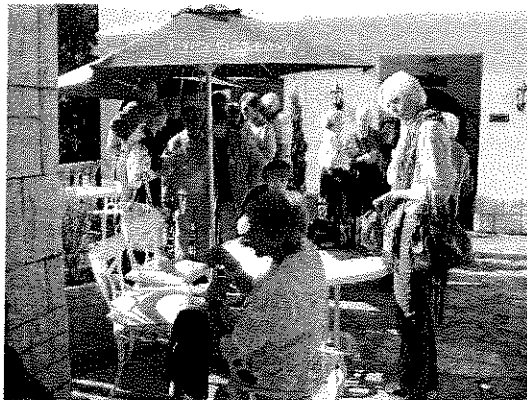
However, all this chatting and "catching up" didn't stop the party. The excellent music was once again provided by Chameleon, i.e. our friends Roz and Greg, and we spent most of the afternoon rocking and rolling. I suspect most of us regretted our enthusiasm on Sunday morning, but of course we'll never admit it!

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support and hope you all enjoyed this special occasion as much as I did.

ROLL ON THE 90TH!!!!
Trevor Thompson

80th Anniversary weekend away
1-3 June 2012 Mt Park

Marge Blake organized a wonderful weekend away at Mt Park. The venue is just perfect for a large crowd of Ramblers and we took over the whole place, including four of the campsites. For some Ramblers, the last time they had seen their old friends was at the 75th celebrations, so there were joyful reunions and lots of catchup conversations around the blazing logfires on the Friday night. Marge had put up posters with photographs going back over the years and she'd also set up a Powerpoint slide show with more pictures. The excellent and copious glühwein supplied by Coleen and her sister helped make it a very convivial evening indeed.



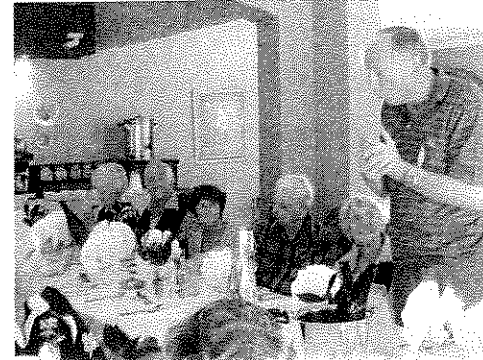
Saturday lunchtime and 38 people descended on the Everglades Hotel for lunch on a perfect winter afternoon of sunshine and blue skies. The dining room had been beautifully decorated for

SATURDAY and SUNDAY PROGRAMME THIRD QUARTER 2012			
DATE	DESCRIPTION OF HIKE	LEADER	TEL
Sat 28 July	Summerveld (Easy). Meet at the Assagai Hotel at 13.30. Walk in the Summerveld conservancy area. Parking at the Summerveld club. Shorter hike will be available.	Colin	0317083517
Sun 29 July	Stockville Walk thru to Giba Gorge, up to Winston Park and on to the Stockville Valley. Not for those who suffer from vertigo! No meeting Union Main. Meet at Zephyr (ex-Whole Hog Pub), Everton Road off-ramp 8am.	Margie	0734376915
Sat 4 Aug	Umhlanga Rocks – Hawaan Forest (Easy) Walk from the car park opposite the Cabana. Meet at 13.45. Walk along the promenade, to the Hawaan forest and coastal bush, cross the river along the beach (depending on the tide), back along coastal bush. Shorter hike will be available.	Coleen	0312022279
Sun 5 Aug	Delville Wood A pleasant day's walk past waterfalls and through tunnels in the Shongweni area. Petrol-sharing R25.	Contact Marie	0825860266
Sat 11 Aug	Burman Bush (Easy/ Moderate) Meet at the main entrance to Mitchell's Park at 13.45. Hike past King's House (Dube House) to Burman Bush.	Philip	0312013592
Sun 12 Aug	Mt. Gilboa Joint hike with Pietermaritzburg Ramblers. Guest leader Mike Kirby will lead us from Bushwillow Campsite up to Mare's Tail Falls. Meet at Union Main for prompt 7.15am departure. R50 petrol-sharing, plus R15 for the conservancy.	Contact Marie	0825860266
Sat 18 Aug	Giba Gorge (Strenuous) Walk along bike tracks to streams and waterfalls. Entrance R10.00 per person. Meet at Giba Car Park 13.45, adjoining Giba Clubhouse. After hike relax in clubhouse for tea/cake or a beer. Short hike will be available.	Werner	0842067836
Sun 19 Aug	Virginia to Umhlanga A relaxed day of beach and road walking. No meeting at Union Main. Meet at Virginia Airport at 8am.	Contact Marie	0825860266
Sat 25 Aug	University (Easy/ Moderate) Walk through the University grounds and the Msinsi Conservancy. Meet at the Parking Lot above the Elizabeth Sneddon at 13.45. Shorter hike will be available.	Linda	0833538319

WEDNESDAY MORNING HIKES

Please check details of the Wednesday hikes with Colin 031 708 3517 or Philip 031 201 3592. If no response is obtained from the first leader phoned, please phone the alternate leader.

SATURDAY and SUNDAY PROGRAMME THIRD QUARTER 2012			
DATE	DESCRIPTION OF HIKE	LEADER	TEL
Sat 30 June	Aloe Hike	Francois	0839838007
	Join the Ramblers of PMB for their annual Aloe Hike. Meet at the Ashburton turnoff at 13.45pm. Moderate hike with sundowners at Impala Bend afterwards		
Sun 1 July	Bluff	Duncan	0832297748
	Joint Backpackers day. Hike around and over the end of the Bluff; see the old whaling station and enjoy harbour, city and sea views. Meet at Glenwood Village Centre, Che Guevara (Moore) Road at 8am.		
Sat 7 July	Palmiet Nature Reserve (Moderate)	Philip G	0312013592
	Shady walk beside the Palmiet River. Meet at Reserve entrance below Westville Hotel. Afterwards get together at the Westville Hotel for a chat and drinks. Meet at 13.45. Main hike 2,5 – 3 hour; shorter hike 1 – 1,5 hours on the same route.		
Sun 8 July	Killarney Rockeries, Cato Ridge	Contact Marie	0825860266
	Hike out from High Stakes (R15 entrance), up and down cross-country to see the aloes, which we hope will be in full bloom. Petrol-sharing R25.		
Sat 14 July	Ember-ton – Springside Nature Reserve (easy)	Trevor	0795259230
	From the Ember-ton Driving Range to the Springside Nature Reserve at 13.45. Tea and coffee and cake at the Ember-ton coffee shop after the hike. Shorter hike at the Springside Nature Reserve.		
Sun 15 July	Umlazi Meander	Jenny	0849520622
	Enjoy a circular hike following parts of the Umlazi River above Shongweni Dam. Petrol-sharing R25 plus R10 for car guard.		
Sat 21 July	Combined hike – Saturday hikers to join Sunday hike.		
Sun 22 July	Mimosa Rock	Jon	0824591522
	Sunday Ramblers host Saturday hikers. The revival of an urban Umgeni River walkabout. No meeting at Union Main. Please check website or call Jon for details of when and where to meet.		



us, and lunch was yummy. Club Chairman Werner Vanslebrouck entertained us with an amusing speech, and Colin Turner invited us to drink a toast to old and absent friends. Everglades had to chuck us out eventually or we'd probably be there yet!

Sunday dawned cold and windy but the good company (and the thought of the Comrades traffic) ensured that no-one was in a hurry to go and it wasn't until after the lunchtime braai that people finally packed up and left.

The small group of current hikers enjoyed short walks on all three days, with Colin doing his best to fit some bundu-bashing into the routes just so that we'd feel at home.

All in all, a great weekend and hats off to Marge – good job!

Jill Dunstone

Dieter Becker

It was with great shock that I heard of Dieter Becker's death. He had hiked with the Sunday hikers only the week before. I had been leading the hike in the Cato Ridge area and in my normal way got a bit lost. Dieter calmly told me to keep walking and we would eventually find the way. And we did.

I don't think I ever saw him ruffled or off-balance. As a hike leader he was very popular, his hikes were carefully planned, the pace was just right and lunch spots well chosen. His calmness made people happy that everything was under control. I always felt a bit odd walking next to Dieter. He was the only hiker I knew who would not only start a hike but end one with his trousers still looking newly ironed and with the crease still in place. I looked a bit different...

Dieter had been a member of Ramblers for over thirty years but I only knew him for the last ten. I enjoyed walking with him. We would talk about many things, his experiences in Germany during the war, his trip to Australia, why he stayed in South Africa, and orchids. After his wife's death a few years ago he lived alone in his house in Montclair. His wife had kept a greenhouse full of orchids which he felt obliged to keep healthy. He said she had done it deliberately and laughed.

He had his odd quirks. For instance, he refused to tell anybody if he was coming on a hike or not. He would just pitch up. He did confess to me that sometimes the hike had been cancelled and he waited alone in Pinetown because nobody knew he was coming.

I will miss him.

Jon Stevens

WEEKENDS AWAY

21 - 23 September 2012

Venue to be announced.

Contact Jill Dunstone for details and bookings at jillyd@telkomsa.net 0847800718 or 0317654520.

80th ANNIVERSARY HIKES

In the first 60-odd years of its existence, the Ramblers' Club utilised all long weekends as opportunities for grand adventures which extended the hikers of the day in the most exhilarating way. Most were 'Berg trips, where the equipment was reduced to the barest essentials to be carried in a well-designed rucksack on one's back, and took place in our much beloved Drakensberg. The arrival of Mountain Backpackers (which focused principally on weekend trips) and the age of members have reduced the numbers of the Drakensberg and other heroic trips organised by the Ramblers' Club.

Philip Gatenby would like to organise two short trips which will bring back memories to older members and hopefully arouse the enthusiasm of the younger members. These trips will only require the fitness levels of regular Wednesday and Saturday hikers; will only cost about R100 per day (plus transport, to be shared); and a quality rucksack which can be hired for R5 per day for the latter trip.

Forest Side: 9-12 August 2012

You will be driven by 4WD to a privately owned lodge on the upper reaches of the Umtamvuna River close to its source. There will be day walks from the lodge to Fairview Falls. There are still places available.

Contact Philip Gatenby on 031 201 3592

Blinkwater Trail, New Hanover area: 22-24 September.

Short backpacking stages between overnight huts and beautiful scenery to End of the Rainbow. There are still places available.

Contact Philip Gatenby on 031 201 3592

PERSONAL EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBER

Please have your emergency contact number(s) under ICE (In Case of Emergency) in your cell phone and on a label/card of some sort attached to your daypack. Details should consist of your name, ID number, name of medical aid and membership number (your medical aid card should be with you too) and the name and number(s) of someone to contact. Emergency personnel will look for your ICE details. Local hospitals will not send out an ambulance or paramedics if your medical aid details are not available. Please carry these important details with you on each hike.

SUBS FOR 2012

Single Member R70

Family R90

Country Single R55

Country Family R60

The preferred way of paying is by EFT directly into the bank account as cheques and cash both attract big bank charges. You can pay cash **directly** to Biff.

Banking Details: Standard Bank Musgrave Rd

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MAGAZINE

Please send articles to me about weekends away or matters of hiking interest that you would like to share for the magazine and website.

If you have been receiving the magazine by post and now want the speedier email version send me your email address. It also helps reduce our very substantial posting costs to email you the magazine.

Don't forget to send us notice of your new email address if it changes.

Linda Hiles

linda@hiles.co.za

SOCIALS

Ramblers Women's Day Picnic

Shongweni Dam on the 9th August 2012

The picnic is to take the form of a braai so bring whatever you need along. A braai fire will be provided.

Meet at the Gillett's Post Office at 9.45 to drive in convoy to the Shongweni Dam.

There will an optional hike to explore round the dam.

We'll be notifying you of social events on the website and Facebook so make sure you keep a look out for notices.

Contact Ray at raymond@absamail.co.za if you want to be on his email list.

HIKES

SATURDAY HIKES

- Please get to starting point by 13h45 in order for the hike to begin on time.
- For directions to the starting point, please **PHONE** the organiser between 12h00 and 12h45 on the day of the hike, don't SMS.
- Or Saturday hikers from Durban can phone Philip Gatenby 031 201 3592 prior to leaving and arrange a pickup or to travel in convoy with him.
- 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.

SUNDAY HIKES (FULL DAY)

- **Always** phone the hike leader beforehand to let him/her know to expect you on the hike.
- Please try to get to the meeting places **at least 10 minutes earlier** to help with arranging lifts.
- Bring the correct amount of money as change may not be available.
- It is advisable to bring at least 2 litres of water, mid-morning snack, lunch and a hat.
- **Meeting Place:** Union Main Centre, Old Main Road, Pinetown usually at 8.00am. If there is a change to the meeting time or venue this will be noted in the hiking schedule below.
- If it is raining, please check with the hike leader before setting out for the meeting place.