



PO Box 50563  
4062 Musgrave Road

JANUARY TO MARCH 2003

TITLE	COMMITTEE MEMBER	HOME TEL	BUS, CEL & FAX Nos
Chairman	Brian O'Connell	3060743	0835446379
Secretary	Grahame Davies	5648728	5648728
Treasurer	Biff Maggs	3121503	0829006965
Day Hike Organiser	Dieter Becker	4627445	
Sat. Hike Organiser	Ann Olds	7671027	
Berg/Trails Organiser	Neville Walmsley	3092298	
Publicity Organiser	Werner Vanslebrouck	2087532	
Magazine Editor	Christine Davies	5648728	5648728
Socials Organiser	Anne Thompson	7655133	
Ordinary Member	Paul Abelman	2013065	

A man was telling his neighbour. "I just bought a new hearing aid. It cost me R4000, but it is the state of the art. It is perfect."  
"Really." Answered his neighbour. "What kind is it?"  
"Twelve-thirty."

## MEMBERS NEWS

### Subscriptions

A few words from our friendly Treasurer, Biff Maggs ("If you don't pay I'll biff you").

In terms of the constitution, we are permitted to increase the subs by an amount of R5.00 each year. We have decided to implement this and subscriptions for 2003 will be:-

Single member	R35
Family	R40
Country single	R26
Country family	R35

The Committee would like to propose at the next AGM that in 2004, subscription are increased to :-

Single member	R50
Family	R60
Country single	R35
Country family	R45

Costs are escalating and we need to ensure that our income covers our expenses. For example, in the last two years postage and magazine costs have gone up by nearly 50%. The capital in the bank should only be used for special projects and not be eaten away by running costs. Hikers no longer pay R2.00 to the club for each hike. This saves them more than the proposed increase in subscriptions. Your support for this proposed increase would be much appreciated. Please fill in the subscription form and return with your payment by 1<sup>st</sup> January 2003.

*"Walking is good for you! It is well documented that for every minute you exercise, you add a minute to your life. This enables you, at 85 years of age, to spend an additional 5 months in a nursing home at R5000 per month!"*

### Christmas Party

We had a ball. The hall was beautifully decorated, the wine and champagne provided were extremely drinkable and the food was great. The music got people dancing all night with a bit of persuasion from the MC. Anne Thompson has thanked all the people involved in her social diary. I would like to thank Anne and her husband Trevor for not only making it happen, but for being prepared to give so much of themselves for the club.

Dieter led the hike on the morning after the party. He has this to add:-

*"Four intrepid members of the club, after partying at the Christmas party the night before, turned out for the hike to Hornet's Kranz on Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> December. It was a long, strenuous and hot hike and the following hikers need to be congratulated for their grit and determination:- Collean Seath, Philip Gatenby, Steve Watson and Mike Wakefield (who, by the way, was heard muttering something about signing the pledge). Well done guys, I am proud of you."*

**AGM – 12 February 2003 at Westville Hotel – 18h30 for 19h00**

Please try to attend. There is plenty parking at the hotel or across the road in the Pick'nPay centre. Car guards are in attendance. If you want to eat and drink there is an Irish Pub, a John Dory and an Italian café adjacent to the Hotel. In the P'nP centre opposite there are other eating-places.

**New Committee 2003**

We need new blood on the committee. If you would like to help run the club please use the nomination form that accompanied this magazine. New people bring new ideas and help move the club forward. Give a little of your time and you will be well rewarded by the good feeling of doing something for others.

*One day, three men were hiking and unexpectedly came upon a large raging river. They needed to get to the other side but had no idea how to do so. The first man prayed to God saying: "Please God, give me the strength to cross this river." Poof! God gave him big arms and strong legs, and he was able to swim across the river in about 2 hours, almost drowning a couple of times. Seeing this, the second man prayed, saying: "Please God, give me the strength and the tools to cross this river." Poof! God gave him a rowing boat and he was able to row across the river in about an hour, after almost capsizing the boat twice. The third man had seen how this worked out for the other two, so he prayed, saying: "God give me the strength and the tools and the intelligence to cross this river." And Poof! God turned him into a woman. She looked at the map, hiked upstream a few hundred metres, and then walked across the bridge.*

**HIKING PROGRAMME : JANUARY TO MARCH 2003**

**Saturday Hikes**

These hikes depart from Musgrave Park Medical Centre at 13h30. The cost is R8.00 for transport which is payable to the relevant driver. Hikes marked # involve an entrance fee into the nature reserve. Please bring the correct amount of money, as change is not always available – thank you. Hikes marked \*\* are suitable for beginners. Would those for whom the starting point is not convenient, please proceed to the destination, or phone one of the organisers between 12h00 and 12h45 on the day, to arrange a suitable meeting point. Bring at least 1 litre of water and a snack for half time.

Contact:- Ann – 7671027 Dave – 2668602 Brian 083 35446379

**Sunday Hikes**

Please try to get to our meeting places at least 10 minutes earlier so that fees can be collected and lifts arranged timeously. Bring the correct money as change may not be available. Carry at least 2 litres of water, a hat and a cup for lunchtime tea/coffee.

Meeting places: Durban – Musgrave Park, cnr Berea & Musgrave Roads  
Pinetown – Union Main Centre, Old Main Road

All meeting times, unless otherwise stated are:- Durban 08h00, P'town 08h30

**Weekend Hikes / Trails**

Contact nominated hike leader

DATE	DESCRIPTION OF HIKE	LEADER	TEL
Jan 4	<b>Kloof Longshadow and Porcupine Falls.</b> #R7.00. Meet at Kranztkloof picnic site.	Ann	
Jan 5	<b>Dung Beetle Hill.</b> Hike in a rarely visited part of the 1000 hill valley, long climb out after lunch. Rained out last time.	Bill Hyslop Members R10 Visitors R15	2626792
Jan 11	** <b>Winston Park.</b> Meet at St Helier Dam. (Seasons car park).	Ken	
Jan 12	<b>St Helier's Circuit.</b> Medium hike through farmlands and forests.	Dieter Becker Members R5 Visitors R10	4627445
Jan 18	** <b>Stainbank Nature Reserve.</b> # R7.00. Shady walk. B.Y.O. for sundowners.	Werner	
Jan 19	<b>Monteseel Meander.</b> Moderate hike with varied scenery.	Brian O'Connell Members R10 Visitors R15	3060743
Jan 25	<b>Treasure Beach.</b> Meet at B.P. garage in Edwin Swales Drive, opposite Makro at 13h40. You may like to splash in rockpools. B.Y.O. for sundowners.	Brian	
Jan 26	<b>Mhkizwane.</b> Medium hike deep in the 1000 hill valley, not done for many years. Well worth the effort of the longish drive to experience this typical valley scenery.	Bill Hyslop Members R20 Visitors R25	2626792
Feb 1	<b>Mariannahill Monastery.</b> Donation of R10. Walk in the "valley of monks", tour the cloisters. Tea garden will be open. B.Y.O. sundowners. Abbott Francis Road (just past the NPA testing grounds off the M1, Richmond Road, out of Pinetown).	Dave & Erica	
Feb 2	<b>Glenashley Bush, Beach and Braai.</b> Shortish hike from Grahame & Christine's house – 12 Gemmel Place, off Delaware Ave, Durban North. BYO braai with salad or pud to share & dip in the pool after the hike. <b>N.B. Pinetown 8h00 ; Durban 8h30</b>	Grahame & Christine Davies Members R9 Visitors R14.	5648728
Feb 8	<b>Umhlatuzana Valley.</b> Meet at St Helier Dam. (Seasons car park).	Brian	
Feb 9	<b>Camelot.</b> Medium hike in the upper valley of the Starkspruit.	Steve Nel Members R18 Visitors R23	0834540569
Feb 14 15,16.	<b>Mtunzini Weekend.</b> Tenting at R46 per person per night. Deposit of R92 to Brian O'Connell before 1 <sup>st</sup> February. <b>N.B.</b> Chalets are available. Please book direct with KZN wildlife.	Brian O'Connell	3060734 0835446379
Feb 15	<b>Paradise Valley Nature Reserve.</b> # R4.00, off Stapleton Road.	Werner	

Feb 16	<b>Upper Nkutu Gorge.</b> Interesting valley with indigenous vegetation and stunning waterfall.	<b>Bill Hyslop</b> Members R8 Visitors R13	2626792
Feb 22	<b>Springside Nature Reserve.</b> Exit 28 (Hillcrest), first right off Old Main Road to Emberton Golf Range. Cross-country walk. Cream teas to look forward to.	<b>Dave</b>	
Feb 23	<b>Inanda Dam.</b> Medium to strenuous hike with great views of the dam	<b>Steve Watson</b> Members R10 Visitors R15	3127108
March 1	<b>** Virginia Bush,</b> Kensington Drive. Swim and braai at Sue's afterwards – B.Y.O.	<b>Brian</b>	
March 2	<b>Hammsdale Falls to Triple Ridge.</b> Medium hike with interesting scenery, not as difficult as Steve's famous Triple-Ridge gut buster.	<b>Steve Nel</b> Members R15 Visitors R20	0834540569
March 8	<b>Palmiet Nature Reserve.</b> Meet at the Old New Germany Rd. Parking area at reserve entrance. B.Y.O. braai afterwards at Dave & Erica's home.	<b>Philip</b>	
March 9	<b>Shongweni Heights.</b> Medium in length, this hike starts with a steep climb to Summerfeld. Lunch on top of waterfall.	<b>Dieter Becker</b> Members R10 Visitors R15	4627445
March 15	<b>Kloof – Mpiti Falls.</b> #R7.00. Meet at Krantzkloof picnic site.	<b>Sally</b>	
March 16	<b>Rob Roy Meander.</b> Descend into 1000 Hill Valley, with some serious ups and downs to follow.	<b>Brian O'Connell</b> Members R8 Visitors R13	3060743
March 21 22 & 23	<b>Oribi Gorge Weekend.</b> Tenting at R28 per person per night. Please deposit R54 with Brian O'Connell before March 1 <sup>st</sup> . <b>N.B.</b> Chalets are available. Please book direct with KZN Wildlife.	<b>Brian O'Connell</b>	3060734 0835446379
March 22	<b>Palmiet Nature Reserve</b> - from Faure Close (U.D.W entrance).	<b>Dave</b>	
March 23	<b>Mposane.</b> Interesting hike up this mountain situated above Nagle Dam. Good views.	<b>Steve Watson</b> Members R18 Visitors R23	3127108
March 29	<b>Kloof – Nkonka Falls.</b> #R7.00. Steady ascent, wonderful views. Cool off at waterfall. Meet at Krantzkloof picnic site.	<b>Ann</b>	
March 30	<b>Assagay / Alverstone.</b> Pleasant hike through farmlands and country lanes.	<b>Dieter Becker</b> Members R8 Visitors R13	4627445

**True story from court**

**Prosecutor:- 'What gear were you in at the moment of the impact?'**

**Defendant :- 'Gucci sweat shirt, Armani slacks and Reeboks without socks.'**

**SOCIAL DIARY**

I'm pleased to report that the Christmas Party proved a tremendous success – plenty to eat and drink and lots of fun, dancing and Christmas spirit! Many thanks to all those people who helped to make the party such a success, Jeanette, Lois and Ann for their hard work helping with the organisation and catering, Ken for being a brilliant and entertaining MC, Grahame and Andre for providing groovy music which ensured the dance floor was never empty, Trevor, Merle and Kim for lending a hand to prepare the hail, Werner for the delicious chocolates and last but not least the happy campers who stayed overnight and helped to clean up the next day. Well done, everyone!

Social events for the first quarter of the New Year are as follows:

Date	Event	Contact
Thursday, 16 <sup>th</sup> January	<b>Bill's slide show</b> of his trip to the Pyrenees at Westville North Library. 18h30 for 19h00. R5 per head. includes tea, coffee and a bun! Book early – numbers limited).	<b>Anne 765-5133 or Bill 262-6792</b>
Sunday, 2 <sup>nd</sup> February	<b>Short hike followed by bring-and braai</b> at Grahame and Christine's home at 12 Gemmell Place, Durban North. Bring your own meat and drinks plus salad or pud to share. Have a swim in the pool after the hike.	<b>Grahame &amp; Christine 564-8728</b>
Friday, 8 <sup>th</sup> February	<b>Pub Night at The Flock Inn,</b> Northlands Bowling Club from 8pm R10 cover charge. Meals can be obtained (cost between R15 and R20) but must be ordered from the Club in advance – phone Nicky on 564-2111 or 0835478801.	<b>Anne 765-5133</b>
Wednesday, 12 <sup>th</sup> February	<b>Don't forget the AGM – 6.30 for 7.00</b> at Westville Hotel! – drinks and a meal can be obtained in the Iris pub, John Dory's or Ma Cucina – adjacent to Hotel, either before or after the meeting.	
Saturday, 6 <sup>th</sup> March	<b>Bring &amp; Braai</b> at Dave & Erica's after the Saturday afternoon hike in Palmiet. Bring your own meat and drinks plus a salad or pud to share.	<b>Dave 266-8602</b>

### Ramblers in the Pyrenees by Audrey Vickers

To celebrate the year of the mountains, six Durban hikers went off on the 28<sup>th</sup> August for 2 weeks hiking in the Pyrenees. This is the mountain range that separates Europe from the Iberian Peninsula. We flew overnight to Paris, where we met Andrew, a companion of previous overseas hikes. From there we took the bullet-train to the South, a five hour journey. As it travels at around 160 mph, the French countryside flew past, but we did recognise maize and sunflower fields to rival the Free State, the Loire Valley with its chateaux and the winelands of Bordeaux and so on to our destination Orthez in the foothills of the mountains. The landscape soon changed to green valleys and farmlands disappearing into the high mountains for which we were heading to commence our hike at St-Jean-Pied-de-Port. This is an old town dating back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century and a crossroads for many armies in ancient wars, as well as a gathering point for pilgrims.

At St-Jean-Pied-de-Port we joined the G.R.10, one of the much used French hiking ways, which traverses the mountain range, roughly parallel and close to the Spanish border. This we followed for the next twelve days. It was very well marked. Because the valleys mostly run north and south and we were going west to east, it meant steep climbs up and over cols and equally steep descents into the next valley. Every where was verdant green due to the good rain, leading to large beech, chestnut and pine forests just changing to autumn colours. Then came the high alpine pastures, still green and supporting grazing animals, but soon to be covered in snow. There were large numbers of cows, goats, sheep and horses, tended by shepherds who live in rough stone cottages in the summer. In winter they move to the warmer valleys. Many of the animals had bells around their necks, which added to the alpine atmosphere during the day. But I am glad we did not have to sleep near a field with cows, all with clangers around their necks. I was amazed to see how these animals grazed quite comfortably on these steep slopes, which were too steep for us to climb or even traverse.

From the third day, we entered an area of deep canyons, with perpendicular sides, covered in greenery and broken by high waterfalls. These massive gashes in the mountainsides were awesome in their enormity. In the same area, there are massive underground caves and tunnels, which have been made famous by those enthusiasts who explore them. As we crossed over this area, we passed many sinkholes. One day we walked up an old metre-wide pathway, along the edge of a canyon which Napoleon had had built so that he could have access to the huge forest logs that he needed for the masts of his ships. The men had to hang suspended over the cliff face while hacking away at the rock to build the pathway, which was a few hundred metres long, with a drop of metres into the abyss below, really a remarkable feat. Because there had been so much rain, many parts of the hiking path, especially the first few days were thick with mud. It actually became a feature of the first few days. I have never hiked through such thick, tacky mud. Only a couple of us managed to land in it one day. At each overnight stop we were promptly told to leave our boots at the door.

As we progressed higher into the mountains, we passed ski-resorts with ski tows criss-crossing the countryside. Work was going on preparing the slopes and ski runs for the winter. All the valleys had small settlements dating back to Roman times and were rich in history. On two occasions we took rest days to explore these areas.

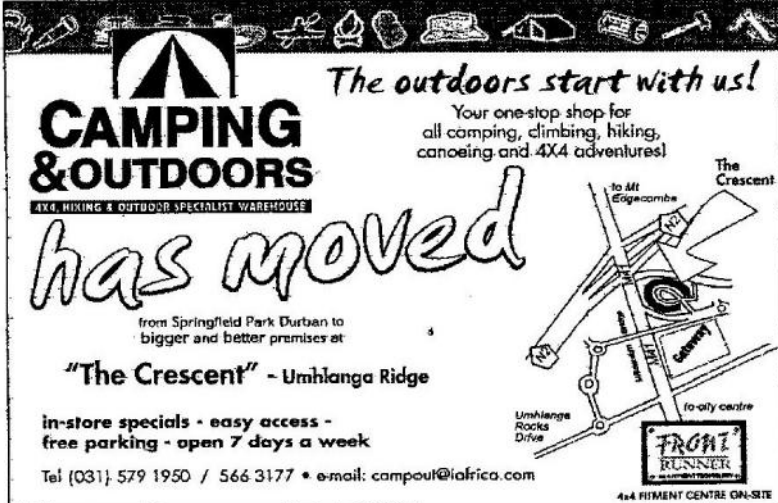
Our overnight accommodation was in gites or auberges, which provided dormitory rooms, communal living rooms and some small kitchens. In summer, these serve the hikers and in winter, the skiers. Most provided good evening meals and some breakfast. But if they didn't, there was always a restaurant in the village. The French live to eat, so the inner man was well catered for. Being in the northern hemisphere, the sun was only settling at about 20h00, but daylight only came in the morning at about 06h30, so it did not make our days seem long.

The last three days we spent at about 2000 metres in the Pic du Midi d'Ossau National Park, which surrounds the 2880 metre Pic du Midi, one of the highest mountains in the Pyrenees. This was our ultimate goal. Here we stayed in mountain club chalets, which were very comfortable. This whole Park is above the tree line and has beautiful alpine vegetation and several lakes. We spent two days walking around the mountain, giving us magnificent views across the valleys and to distant peaks. From there we had to make our own way back to the foothills and return to Paris and home.

We all found the two weeks walk a wonderful experience. For someone in the twilight of my hiking days, it was something I will always treasure. A big thanks to Bill for organising the holiday, and to Cathy, George, Goolam and Andrew for being such wonderful companions.

*"My grandmother started walking five miles a day when she was 60. Now she's 97 years old and we don't know where the hell she is!"*

*"I like long walks.....especially when they are taken by people who annoy me."*



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