

DURBAN RAMBLERS

CLUB



JUNE, 1968.

CLICK-CLACK AND OTHER NOISES.

The April meeting was held on the 17th at that ever popular hanklers' venue, the Castledens'. Twenty members were present, but only seventeen slides were received for the competition (subject "Action"). The judges, however, were impressed with those entered, as the marks were generally above average (nearly all in the sixties).

The results were as follows (with Bob, Charles, John and Harry judging):-

1st	Fox Ledebor	"White Water"	68.50%
2nd	Charles Smada	"Bullfight"	67.50%
3rd	Charles Smada	"Air Display"	67.33%

It looks as though Fox has joined the photographic ranks with a bang - must have been wondering where Meg was going every third Wednesday of the month. (If you can't beat them, join them.) Chris and Roy Webb are another two we look forward to seeing more of. Roy showed an excellent set of slides of a hike Chris and he did during October last year in the Allgau area of the Alps.

Many thanks again to Barbara Castleden for the excellent spread. I don't think there was much left for breakfast.

NEIL.

PHOTOGRAPHIC RESULTS AS AT THE END OF APRIL.

<u>Name</u>	<u>No. of slides entered</u>	<u>Score for best 10</u>
Mike Castleden	17	632.73
Vic Chodura	12	632.15
Charles Smada	15	613.15

3.

<u>Name</u>	<u>No. of s ider entered</u>	<u>Score (for best 10)</u>
Neil Oellerman	17	621.23
Margaret McMartin	12	607.89
Margaret Moore	15	603.07
Harry Trips	9	546.50
Ivan Antonowitz	9	538.82
Marge Parr	8	455.33
Rob Booker	9	454.16
Mac Rand	7	386.31
Kovia Claudius	6	316.91
Barbara Evans	6	311.99
Hoy Webb	4	238.25
Fox Ledsbeer	3	195.25
Dick Usher	3	186.65
Tom Friend	3	166.66
Chris Webb	3	162.75
Margaret Nicholls	3	156.66
Jean Carter	3	139.99
Allan Parr	2	95.25
Dymock Parr	1	59.33
Ian Castlelea	1	55.00
Mike Wigley	1	53.33
Carol Ground	1	50.00
Chris Schora	1	45.00

AN ODE TO A THORN

OR

THE THORNY SIDE OF FLESH.

The Ramblers all were homeward bent,
 Their energy and fun were spent,
 The day had been too long, too hot
 For those who had started out at a trot.

Worn by thorns and baked by sun,
 In this, pray tell me, where's the fun?

Groaning, grumbling, flagging down,
With songs their sorrows they now drown.

The twinkling lights upon the hill
Show Durban town, where most will
Disembark and journey home
To bath, to bed and hair to comb.

With many a brisk rub
In the bath tub
The dirt floats away
To show the damage of the day;

Bruised flesh or broken skin
Knocked off some ungainly limb.
Thorns, some large and small,
Clung to both the short and tall.

Plucked out gently one by one,
Oh! What utterly delightful fun.
The wounds of war gouged out with gall
Upon the human creature's wall.

Aha! I cried, I've got them all,
And darted agile along the hall,
I threw them down the kitchen drain
And hoped we wouldn't meet again.

I sighed the heartfelt victor's sigh
And settled down carefully by
The diningroom table, my supper to eat,
And in doing so nearly fell off my seat.

Aha! he cried, the wayward thorn,
I guess your fleshy seat is torn!
And twisting round uncomfortably,
I spied his settled shape wrathfully.

I wrestled with the pliable flesh
And successfully extracted the wretch.
I eyed him thoughtfully saw,

5.
Knowing full well what to do.

I had to admire his tenacity,
His strength of character, his audacity.
The thwarted, horrid little thorn
To choose my tender sit-upon.

LINDSAY M. PTASLEY.

EASTER CAMP.

Good Friday.

Hike to Sterkepruit Falls.

After rather a hectic night, during which I can guarantee that very few people slept, much to our disgust we had to pitch tents. (I thought this was a camp where everything was laid on, including beds and mattresses.) After doing so, it was suggested that we wend our weary, aching bodies to the Sterkepruit Falls. "Company fall in!" In other words, all those who want to go please get a move on. After much fuss everyone was ready, so off we trekked along the road, through the forester's property and down the slopes.

Good grief, elephants stampeding in the berg? Impossible! That's no herd of elephants, that's a couple of girls running ahead to take photos.

After what seemed an endless trek down (whatever you go down you must go up), we reached the falls and what a beautiful sight they were; it was really breath taking. The wild orange flowers on the banks of the river swayed gently in the breeze, while crystal clear water cascaded over the edge of the gorge, pounding on to the rocks below. It was here we stopped for all our keen photographers. After a great deal of clambering down the side of

the gorge, it was decided that we continue up the hill on the other side. To do this it involved crossing the river. Some rambblers walked through the water in their shoes and socks, others took them off and waded across barefoot, but I must say that from the way many rambblers jumped from rock to rock, they would make very good kangaroos. Up the other side we started, puffing and panting. (The only difference between a Rambler and a steam engine is that a Rambler puffs and pants, and a steam engine only puffs.)

On reaching the top of the hill we sat down to admire the view, so to say - but that's a lie, it was just an excuse to get our breath back. It was here that the leaders decided that we make our way to some caves. (I must inform you that we never reached them.) Down a hill we went, most of us running. I really don't know why we always run down hills. Once more, every one sat down, this time not to get our breath back, but to let our leaders again try to decide which route to take. (Decisions, decisions, that's all our leaders seem to do.)

Suddenly someone appeared to be missing. It was Ivan. Where was he? Oh, there he was ahead of us, squatting in the most unusual position. Whether he was taking a photograph or not, I couldn't tell you, but he looked quite an amusing sight. Then, where was the gate we should have gone through? It ought to have been here. Ha, ha, we were on the wrong hill. It was the next hill we should have been on. After going through the gate and down the hill, we found ourselves in grass above our heads. (This was like going lion hunting, except there were no lions.)

Well, well, what do you know, another river to cross. Here some of our kangaroos misjudged the jump, or perhaps they decided to take a swim. I really don't know which it was, but they did get themselves wet.

As the time was flying and those on cook duty were eager to get back to camp, home we trekked, or crawled. As for those in the party who are going to heaven, they can't say they haven't had any experience in climbing, because I thought I had just about reached the limit when I arrived back at camp. Thanks to those who made coffee, it really put the finishing touch to a wonderful and amusing afternoon.

JEANETTE AND JILLIAN.

Saturday.

The Sterkhorn.

A climb never to be forgotten by those who attempted it. Everyone had to make a start, and on the Saturday of our Easter Camp, a particularly fine day, each and every person assembled together - to the disappointment of some who thought they were in for a relaxing day.

Having obtained permission from the forester (I don't think he could have realised that 60 odd of us were going to be let loose in the mountains), we proceeded on our way up one of the foothills of Cathkin and the Sterkhorn. This was very pleasant walking at first, but soon became stiffer and sorted the fit from the unfit - like me who thought my last days had come. I believe a couple turned back but, as always, the majority made it to the resting place by the stream on the escarpment, where we refreshed ourselves with water. Mike produced a large packet of raisins which were most welcome, while Bob stripped and in his mini bathing costume entertained us by cavorting around in the water.

From here walking was most enjoyable over the gently undulating escarpment towards the two peaks of Cathkin and the Sterkhorn which towered above us. When we had all arrived at the actual base of the

Sterkhorn, the lunch organisers got on with it and presently we were served with the great delicacy of the weekend - sardine soup. If you have never had this from the hamblers, you just don't know what you're missing. Some lucky ones who scraped the barrel had whole fish to chew on - something to be envied.

When we had finished our cheese and biscuits, we began our attempt up the Sterkhorn. This soon proved to be straight up all the way, but all the time the view improved and encouraged us to get higher. Soon the rest of our party were specks below us. There was no special route to the top, so we made our own way. At one point we had to edge along a steep rock face, clutching hopefully on to any vegetation we could find, until we managed to get past this difficult point. Although we were high up on the peak, we soon realised that there was much further to go than we had thought and that there wasn't enough time to get to the top. The really fit ones like Fox, Ivan and Roger bounded up ahead of us and confirmed this, while we lay in the grass and admired the magnificent view of Natal stretched out before us.

Suddenly, the dark, heavy clouds came up, the thunder rumbled and our fears were confirmed as large drops of rain started falling on us. We had a long way to go - our camp was but a tiny point below us. Coming down was quite an effort as it was so sheer, but some of us discovered the method of taking big strides backwards which, although it may not sound so, is certainly much quicker and more comfortable.

The storm blew over and the sun came out in sudden bursts which dried us off in no time. Most of the party had already returned, so having refreshed ourselves at the lunch spot - not with sardine soup, thank heavens - we set off at a cracking pace which kept up all the way back to camp. It was a never-be-forgotten hike up the Sterkhorn - sardine soup

and all.

ANGELA.

Easter Sunday.

Why is it that at the 'berg each dawn appears to be progressively more wonderful than the last? This was certainly the case on Easter Sunday. The die-hards who had elected to sleep around the fire were awakened by that most glorious of sounds, somebody else preparing early morning coffee. Ah, what a luxury. However, it was not long before the entire camp was bustling with activity, there being several reasons. Some had to conjure up breakfast. What a thankless task when one hears all the mumbling and grumbling about some truly delicious food. Granted, the boiled eggs may still be just a little on the raw side, the porridge has been overcooked, whilst there are cinders in the bacon. But, well, a king never had it so good. At the same time others prepared themselves for church. Imagine the amount of scrubbing that had to be done. Why is it that people, some anyway, get so filthy at the 'berg. Of course there were also the lazy ones, who decided that their duty was to stay behind and guard the camp.

Fortified with breakfast, this latter group decided to have a 'friendly' game of rounders. The result was that Wino's mob absolutely trounced Roger and his cronies. How this came about remains to this day as a great mystery, as the latter side not only contained that well-known and completely impartial referee, Neil, but, in addition, they made up the rules. Thereafter it was decided to enjoy a more relaxing time.

Some person, who must surely have escaped from some mental institution, assured us that bull-in-the-ring was a gentle game. Thus we all got stuck in - literally. Ivan volunteered to be the first sucker, and after what seemed like an eternity many hot,

bruised, battered, etc., souls were more than willing to admit that Jerry was the winner. ~~Of~~ What I have still not worked out.

Lunch behind us. What is on the agenda? A short hike up the 1,500 ft. high Matterhorn, eh-huh, which is that? Oh, no, that looks sheer. Still, I guess I must make an attempt.

Later, about one-third of the way up, gosh, this is fun, if only my knees weren't feeling like rubber and my heart wasn't pounding like a pumping machine. A short hike, hmpph! Much later and much tired: is this the top? No, but the first is behind you now. Help! Up again. Did that idiot say that the worst was behind me? Ha, ha! What look, what do I see? Is it a mirage? No, it is real. It is the beacon to mark the summit. What bliss, by and, of course, beauty. Who are those clots still intent on climbing higher? Surely, those beacons were not made to support four people in one go?

Ah, to live up here for ever. Besides, how on earth shall I manage to climb down that 'hill'. Of course, on my bottom. This makes life far easier. Look, there go the clouds. What is that beauty? Sterkhorn. To think that we were up there yesterday. Daft, I call it. Still, it is beautiful. Ah, the hotel. Drinks all round, please, waiter. Come to think of it, it was a really pleasant little stroll up the Matterhorn, now that it is over, of course.

Dinner in the tum-tum. At last it is time to relax. But what is that I hear? Is there no peace for the wicked? All must compete, handcuffed together in teams of four in a scavenger hunt. This turned out to be no simple matter. Have you ever tried to find people who are sitting perfectly still in deep undergrowth on a pitch black night. You haven't? Well, at least you have sense. Do I have

to say where some people looked? Needless to say, much fun was had by all. Myself, I feel that the winner and his team had inside information.

Finally, the traditional end to the camping day had arrived, the sing-song and jokes told around the campfire. Here may I put in a word of thanks to Ton and his camp committee, not only for having organised a wonderful weekend, but also for having supplied Easter eggs. In my memory of Easter camps, they were a most unusual and pleasing idea. Thanks, Ton.

That night all seemed reluctant to settle down. Was it because it had been such a glorious day, or was it the fact that it was the last night at camp. Gradually, however, quietness descended until

"BURGITTE."

Monday.

Exodus - Easter Camp Style.

Reluctantly I prised open my smoke-grimed eyes and stared about me in the cold, misty dawn. Already my teeth had started chattering.

The scene was representative of a refugee camp. Sleeping-bag-clad forms lay all around, their occupants in varying stages of consciousness. Several unnaturally energetic persons were already astir stirring camp coffee - that panacea for indigestion, Berg tummy and malnutrition.

The camp's chief scavenger and general 'hanger-on', in the shape of a bull terrier, picked his way among the sleeping forms to present me with a stone to throw - in fact to play with him. Mouthing imprecations, I submerged again into my sleeping-bag, only to be schocked into life by an invitation to partake of coffee - come and get it!

Couldn't understand why I felt more crabby than usual this morning. The effect of the coffee reaching my stomach provided the necessary shock treatment to jar my memory. Of course! Today was the last day of camp. By the time I had digested this unpleasant fact, it was time to consume breakfast.

Balefully I regarded course one - last night's rice cunningly disguised with sultanas to look like rice pudding - and passed it over. Good old safe cereals.

Breakfast over and personal kit packed, most Ramblers were bundled off on a compulsory route march so as not to be underfoot when the business of the day began, i.e. striking camp. A motley-looking force of semi-skilled male labourers was cajoled, co-opted and impressed into performing this Herculean operation. We skilfully contrived, however, to let Ion do most of the work. This completed, we then wearily wended our respective ways to the hotel and comforted ourselves with sandwiches (bottled variety).

Thus refreshed, our spirits lifted like the mist and with gay abandon we boarded the Intertown Juggernaut. The mob occupying the last few rows of seats, ably incited by one Ivan Skavinski Skavar, proceeded to demonstrate that you can't be blue and a Rambler too. (Much less sleep on the trip home.)

Their harmonized and melodious renderings of camp fire songs would have delighted the heart of any falconer scout for a lunatic asylum. The vocal gem of the trip, however, was the performance of 'Old McDonald had a farm' (full chorus). The cacophony of animal sounds forthcoming could only have been equalled in the Ark at feeding time. The only item missing was McDonald's bagpipes.

The mood of hilarity vanished ominously as the

bus trundled into the Market Place. That's the worst of Easter camps - the awakening from a 'dream weekend'.

"ALSO-WENT."

SCRAS POOL HIKE - 21ST APRIL.

Only thirty-eight ramblers turned up for this short hike. Probably many were still recovering from Easter camp. The first stage of the ramble was along a path which had been cut through thick undergrowth alongside a stream.

Dave Bennett kept very carefully to the end of the line - he was wearing a Huckleberry Finn outfit.

We had an unheard of morning tea break, on a rock, where we even had time to study an unusual beetle. After a rest which no one really needed, the hike sailed on a further fifty yards to the pool and lunch spot. Some energetic souls explored further upstream, where they discovered another pool.

Those who were brave enough had a shivery swim among the rocks, while unsuspecting Mac Rand had a swim he hadn't planned on. Mike Castleden helped him down the soap slide. He slid beautifully into the pool, landing with his hat and glasses safely intact. For the rest of the afternoon he basked lizard-like on a rock waiting for his clothes to dry.

The day ended with a short but steep climb back to the lorry. Lindy stationed himself on the highest point with a bottle of water for the thirsty and exhausted ones. It took the laziest of us forty-five minutes to reach that bottle.

"DINO."

BETTER DRIVE, 26TH APRIL.

Beetles, beetles, beetles! Big beetles, small beetles, many incompleated, some artistic and some action packed.

A long list of instructions, a shrill whistle and then the fun began. Beetles of all shapes and sizes, and varying according to artistic temperament, began to appear amid lots of laughter and numerous little journeys - compensation, a peanut for each point scored.

Once again the Ramblers displayed a great love of farm animals, for it seemed that the very farm animals which had travelled on the Intertown bus a few weeks ago had arrived at the hall.

After some people had managed to get (by fair or foul means) just the numbers they wanted and others hadn't been quite so fortunate, scores were totalled and prizes, including one large and handsomely wrapped parcel, awarded to the most deserving. And so ended yet another most enjoyable Ramblers' get-together.

Three cheers for the organisers and their helpers.

WANTED.

Glenwood-Umbilo area, 2, 3 or 4 people over 18 years of age, male or female, to take over a Wolf Cub Pack. Entails a 2-hour weekly meeting, 5.15 p.m. - 7.15 p.m., plus one other meeting in the evening during the month. Please contact Margaret Moore at 36676 (home) or 25610 (work).

15.

I. Neumann,
P.O. Box 668,
Windhoek,
S.W.A.
23.4.68.

To all the Ramblers,

I would like to write in English, but as all of you know, I didn't learn it in these two years too easily.

I want to thank you for the lovely present which was sent to the airport through Mike. I really liked the card, it was too lovely.

I had a wonderful time over Easter, which I spent on a farm.

I like my new job, but miss all my Durban friends. I hope and wish to see all of you again.

If somebody comes to Windhoek, he or she must contact me. Telephone 3071.

Love,

Inge.

SOCIAL NEWS.

We would like to congratulate Trevor and Pat Culyerwell on the birth of their son on the 8th May, 1968.

New members this month are George and Marion Carr. Welcome to the Club. Resignations have been received from Lynn Fadtke and Eunice Harcombe.

EDITORIAL.

First of all I would like to thank all those who have sent in articles for this magazine and also those who submitted articles for the previous magazine. If your article should have appeared this month, don't be disappointed, watch for it next month.

The free hike for the best article last month goes to Shirley Ysebrand.

Editor.

N.B. Don't forget the Annual Ambler on Sunday, 28th July.

