



ISSUE NUMBER 2 APRIL 2001

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DUE TO THE RECENT POSTAL STRIKE MANY MEMBERS HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED THE LAST NEWSLETTER (WHICH WAS POSTED ON 19 FEBRUARY), THIS EDITION THEREFORE INCLUDES PERTINENT INFORMATION PUBLISHED IN THAT NEWSLETTER.

YOU CAN ALWAYS GET NEWSLETTERS, NOTICES, SCHEDULES AND OTHER INFO FROM <http://jhb.mcsa.org.za>

1 LAND AND ACCESS

Wilgepoort.

Owing to some problems encountered when some members allegedly did not pay their fees the farmer has suspended our access. We are attempting to re-negotiate this; until further notice the access to Wilgepoort is suspended.

The members attending the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING on the 14 March approved the purchase of one share of HAMERKOP MOUNTAIN TRUST, no. 1216/87, coupled to week 24 (mid June) of every year for R12 000.00. This purchase has now been effected.

2 CLUB NEWS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. 65 members were present. Greg Devine (Chairman), Andries Lategan, Jay Hyde and Paul Carstensen stood down from the committee. The meeting recognised their valued contributions to the Section.

The motion to purchase one share of Hamerkop Trust, proposed by Andries Lategan and seconded by Harry Barker, was enthusiastically approved.

Barbara Massingham presented a proposal concerning ecology meets. The meeting agreed that this proposal would not be printed and sent to all the members but agreed that it be investigated by the committee.

THE NEW COMMITTEE. Ian Slatem was elected as Chairman of the Section. Roy Kendall has been elected vice chairman. Oliver Oppler is the new convenor for Land and Access, Bruce Spottiswood will have the portfolio of Meets, Alard Hufner will join Andrew Porter on the Climbing/ Routes portfolio to look after bolting and equipment and help with sports climbing issues and Margaret Boyes takes over from Jay Hyde on the Newsletter and will help Ian with Membership. See last page of newsletter for list of committee members.

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR SECTION –

A cocktail party will be held on the 23 May 2001 at the Waverley Girl Guide Hall to celebrate this special event. **NOTE:** The proposed visit to Zwartkops (where the first Meet was held on 14 May 1931) will not be possible and instead we shall have a BRING & BRAAI on Sunday 17 June at Hamerkop (the Sunday of the section's timeshare). **This will be for members only.** This venue may also encourage our valued veterans to be there.

We wish to produce a special newsletter/booklet for this event and are appealing to all members to send in their memories/epics/stories/photos as soon as possible. Please use section P.O. Box 1641, Houghton 2041; email mcsajhb@global.co.za, or hand your contributions to a committee member.

WOLKBERG MEET 27 APRIL – 1 MAY 2001

Come and celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Wolkberg hut with us on the long weekend of 27 April. We will also commemorate the late Potty Thompson and his tremendous effort in building the hut over this long weekend. The corner stone near the kitchen reads 6.4.1951, the date of the commencement of the building of the hut. Please contact Uschi Magg for details.

Subscriptions for 2001. Thank you to members who have paid their subscriptions for this year. **Reminder to others – please do so as soon as possible**

Donations received: Once again thank you to members who have sent donations to our various funds.

New members: we welcome the following new members: Helen Every, Laura Knowles, Steven Milella, Lance Knowling, Pieter van der Westhuizen, Sandy Yates, and family members Michelle, Alan, Kirsten and Graeme Brown. Transferred to other sections: Dana & Michael Koren to CT and Des Porter to KZN.

1999 Journals: have arrived. Please collect yours from the Clubhouse on a Wednesday evening.

1998 Journals although these arrived in August 2000 many members have not yet collected theirs and many that were posted were returned 'unclaimed' – PLEASE collect yours.

Advertising in the newsletter: contact Margaret Boyes for further information.

Webpage: Please find the MCSA site at: <http://mcsa.org.za> and the Johannesburg section webpage <http://jhb.mcsa.org.za> refer to this for any news and information including newsletters, meets schedules etc. POSTAL STRIKES don't affect e-Mail/web access.

3WARNINGS.

In March two cars were broken into at the Tonquani parking place on Otto Bertram's farm. This took place at night. Otto Bertram is most concerned.

Consecutive monitoring reveals an incidence of faecal contamination in the Upper Tonquani stream It is therefore advised that all water be boiled for at least 2 minutes, or be treated with iodine or chlorine. Especially at risk are the very young and elderly people. The MCSA will continue to monitor the water supply.

Visitors to the Magaliesberg must make sure that the area close to the streams is not used as a toilet. Please get into the habit of keeping a small trowel in your pack: dig a deep enough hole; bury toilet paper – you know the drill.

DRAKENSBERG RISK

A report received through SA Mountain Talk describes a recent shoot-out on the slopes of Cathedral Peak. Some 70 drug smugglers from Lesotho engaged conservation rangers, police and soldiers in a lengthy battle whilst trying to bring 18 sacks of dagga valued at more than R500 000, into SA. 10 smugglers were caught and one drowned whilst trying to escape. All the dagga was recovered. PLEASE be vigilant when visiting the Drakensberg and avoid any situations with smugglers. The last thing we need is for hikers to be seen as 'the enemy' in these situations.

4 CONSERVATION

MOUNTAIN PROTECTION DAY. This is on the 16 September and plans are being made to remove the painted graffiti on the rocks on Northcliff. More details in the next Newsletter.

CROFTON WEED. In response to several requests by members, here's some information about this weed. For those of you who do not have Internet access, printouts of the web page, which includes pictures, have been put up on the notice boards in the Clubhouse. Crofton weed (ageratina) is infesting itself in increasing numbers along many streams in the Magaliesberg, so please look out for it and spend just a bit of time getting rid of it on the way in or out (refer to the notice for removal method). One plant produces 7 000 to 10 000 seeds per year and in a thicket of plants, the seed store is increased by 60 000 viable seeds per sq.m per annum!! In Australia, 50 years after its establishment in Queensland, it exploded, "spread was so fast that in some areas dairy farmers and banana growers abandoned their holdings." (Parsons WT & Cuthbertson EG, Noxious Weeds of Australia, p239-241, Inkata Press: Melbourne, 1992). So, make sure you get to know this weed; it's not at all difficult to identify: see <http://mcsa.org.za/crofton.html> for details, sketches, etc. It will take a continuous campaign to keep it in check, but for now if you do not have access to the web, see the club notice board.

WAR ON CROFTON WEED CAMP. A very successful (and enjoyable) Castle Gorge weekend was held at the end of January, when 33 members of both the Johannesburg and

Magaliesberg Sections turned out for the "war on Crofton Weed"...which will continue! A follow-up work meet is planned for MAY – EVERYONE IS WELCOME! A huge thanks to those of you who sacrificed your precious time, especially the many newcomers and prospective members.

5GENERAL

NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION The 2000 MCSA Journal Photographic Competition will be held on: **9 May 2001 at the Johannesburg Section Clubhouse, Girl Guide Hall Waverley, Johannesburg**

The closing date for entries is Monday 30 April 2001.

Entry forms and the competition rules are available from all Sections of the MCSA, from Petro Grobler (012 341-1804 or Internet petrogabler@icon.co.za).

Great Prizes: 1st prize Isodome Tent, 2nd Prize: Backpack, 3rd Prize: Hiking boots. Sponsored by Outdoor Warehouse.

It is envisaged that some of the best slides/photographs will be chosen for inclusion in the 2000 MCSA Journal and/or the 2002 MCSA Calendar and/or displayed on the MCSA Web Page.

MEET LEADERS ARE NEEDED There is a small, willing core of members who are constantly called upon to lead meets. We would love to see some new names, please.

A hiking leader on every meet would also be wonderful.

Outreach also needs to be able to ask members to help with, or carry out specific tasks. For example, we get requests for things like taking a Sunday school on a abseiling afternoon, a school wanting advice on putting up a climbing wall, youngsters asking for a 'guided' walk and so on. Often the committee member on that portfolio simply cannot cope and offers of assistance (even on a once-off basis) would be much appreciated. For any, or all, of the above please telephone Bruce Spottiswood.

THANK YOU to Dawn Williams for her donation of two books for the library and for the time she has spent helping with our collection.

CONGRATULATIONS to Ian Slatem who was elected Vice President for this year at the Cencom (MCSA Central Committee) meeting held in March. The office bearers of the Executive Committee (Exco) are: Andre Schoon President, Ian Slatem Vice President, Fran Hunziker Secretary, Lester Coelen Treasurer and Gavin Raubenheimer. Ian and Gavin are the Exco members representing the Club on a national level. Cencom is made up of all the chairmen of the sections and the Exco. Cencom meet twice a year to resolve national issues for the Club.

WITS CLIMBING WALL: JHB Section members wishing to use the climbing wall (Old Mutual Sports Hall) at WITS, please contact Bruce Spottiswood or Ian Slatem for more information. A fee of R80 a year gives access card and use of all Wits climbing facilities.

MAGALIESBERG PROTECTION ASSOCIATION needs you to join. If you are not already a member do consider this. This body monitors what happens in and around the Nature Area of the Magaliesberg. For more information contact Uschi.

JULY CAMP 2001 will be at Kamberg. From this site parties will be able to traverse south to Loteni and north to Giants and Injasuti. The area is renowned for its Bushman paintings. For climbers some routes on Giants offer challenges (and there may be ice on them). Dates are from 7/7/01 to 14/7/01 and 14/07/01 to 21/07/01. Application forms can be obtained from Uschi or Roy. Application forms must be returned on or before 4/6/01.

The Restaurant: A DISCOUNT of 20% on tariffs is being offered to card carrying members by the Next Resource Development at Waterval Boven. Telephone 013 257-0512.

6EXPEDITIONS

Old Pegs wanted for the SA Kuksay Expedition

Ulrike is looking for no-cost rock pitons and snow stakes. If you keep such items in our attic, why not donate them to this expedition? If you can help please contact Uschi or Ulrike.

Madagascar/Bigwall Expedition.

From the 26 April to 26 May Alard Hüfner, Mike Mason, Matthew Munting and Hunt Cheney will be climbing the granite faces in the Tsaranaro Massive area. There are numerous established lines and the team hope to repeat some of these after opening a new route. Good luck and best wishes.

Expedition to Granite Domes of Northern Mozambique.

Mark Seuring and Alard Hüfner are planning a trip to this area in July. A strong team of British climbers will be joining them. Their main objectives are to open new routes and climb new domes. The Northern Nampula Province is an interesting and scenic area. The 7 routes opened so far are of grade 20 or harder.

Grants to expeditions.

The MCSA Johannesburg section makes grants to expeditions to help them on their way. Recent grants include: R6000 to Ulrike Kiefer as the leader and convenor of the Kuksay Expedition. R6000 to the Kuksay Expedition to be used for the climbers from the JHB Section. R3000 to the Madagascar/Bigwall Expedition. If you are planning a trip and need some help, please contact Ulrike Kiefer, before she goes to China.

HYPERBARIC BAG.

It was agreed at the last CenCom meeting that the MCSA would buy such a bag and that it would be available to the sections for high altitude expeditions. The best available is being purchased and this adds to a high altitude first aid kit being assembled for our use.

7FROM THE CHAIRMAN:

Magaliesberg meets and further afield:

With the significant increase in cost of travel I would like to suggest a few things that we can all do to make the mountains more accessible.

1. If you contact the meet leader before the meet he can help arrange transport so cars don't go out empty. There are also often single prospective members doing their first meets looking for lifts, the meet leader is in the best position to facilitate this.

2. If you attend meets regularly and you often go out alone, please offer the space in your car to others who may be struggling to get out and are dying to be in our beautiful mountains. You can request those who accompany you to come to your house so you are not encumbered with taxi services.

3. If you get a lift with someone, make a sensible estimate of the fuel costs, split them between the occupants and offer a fair contribution towards the fuel cost. A round trip to Mhlabatini can be 300Kms and 3/4 of a tank of fuel is consumed. This would be in the region of R160 and split

four ways is about R40 each. Tonquani is somewhat closer and maybe R25-R30 per person four sharing would be appropriate.

Drakensberg Enthusiasts

If there are any Drakensberg enthusiasts out there who want to go to the Berg regularly but can't really afford to go, or can't always fill the car with friends: let's form a Drakensberg meets group and join force filling cars to go down more frequently. Please call Ian Slatem as a central contact initially then we can form an e-mail community making regular Drakensberg trips. Ian

Rock climbing, mountaineering and all other forms of outdoor activities are inherently dangerous and carry significant risk of personal injury or death. Any activities undertaken in conjunction with or on the property of the MCSA are participated in at own risk. The MCSA, its members, the occupiers or owners of any land on which such activity takes place accept no responsibility for any loss injury or damage to person or property, howsoever arising, whether through negligence or otherwise. The MCSA does not recommend that anyone participate in these activities unless they are experts, seek qualified instruction or guidance, are knowledgeable about the risks involved and are willing to, and do, personally assume all responsibility