



February 2010

Quotation of the Month: "Mountains have a way of dealing with overconfidence." (Hermann Buhl)

CLUB NEWS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MOUNTAIN CLUB OF SOUTH AFRICA JOHANNESBURG SECTION will take place on Wednesday 17 March 2010 at 20h15 at the Waverley Girl Guide Hall, Waverley

AGM Agenda

19h30: There will be a presentation by the Air Force to search and rescue team members – all welcome to attend, and show solidarity and be there for our S&R team.

Kyle Meeneham (See South Africa's Supertramp later in this newsletter), will attend the AGM and be there to chat with us over a drink and snack. He will be presenting to the club at a date to be arranged.

Portfolio Reports

Each Committee member will give a report on their portfolio

Nominations:

If you are available to serve on the committee or wish to nominate someone, please contact Jenny or Uschi.

Two members on the committee: Roy Kendall, who very ably manned the Land & Access portfolio and Grant Rens who did a sterling job of the Orientation / beginners portfolio have to step down after the 4 year period.

We need someone for Land & Access, conservation, public relations but anyone who wishes to join the committee is welcome to do so.

The portfolios are: Chairman; Secretary; Treasurer; Land & Access; Conservation; Expeditions; Public Relations; Youth; Newsletter; Clubhouse and Events; Wolkberg Hut –we have a sub convener. Sport & Competition Climbing; Bolting; Legal; Website; Search & Rescue and Orientation/Beginners

Routes – Andrew Porter has been seconded to this task.

New Members:

We welcome the following new members

Robyn-Leigh Merry; Mareli Dreyer; Heidi Müller; Carlien de Bruyn; Lazzie Modau; Pasha Morris; Carla Petersen; Don Deeb; Ina Redelinghuys; Ela Romanowska; Justin Nixon; Robyn Parry; Jamie Williamson; Sanchia Lubbe; Pierre Joubert; Stuart Hoy and children Christopher, Matthew and Tessa Hoy; Ann Joubert; June Fabian; Gavin Pelissier; Sue Williams; Julia Williams; Caryn Waldeck; Anthony, Odette, and children Diego and Kiana Bertasso.

Resigned:

Wally Gray; William Maloney; Mike du Toit; Bruno Vogt; Jenny Astholt; Marc Echstein; John McCarthy; Marilyn Pirow; Barry Tame, Isabel Pinho.

Transferred to other sections:

Jane & Rolf Luck; Kirsty & Andy Killick; Hanna du Toit; Mark Seuring; Catherine Beneke, Helen Clements, Eileen Fisher.

Passed away:

December 2009 Mabs Abercrombie; Timothy Partridge; Ralie van der Westhuizen and during 2009 Tony Barley.

The Annual Memorial Service of the MCSA will be held 28 February 2010 at MacLear's Beacon.

Advert :

Activities Support Manager: MCSA Johannesburg Section

The Mountain Club of South Africa (MCSA), Johannesburg Section, intends to employ (on a full or part time basis) an active person to manage and/or support (but not be limited to) the following ongoing club activities:

- 1.. Youth Programme
- 2.. Rory Lowther Memorial Challenge
- 3.. Climbing Orientation
- 4.. Land and Access
- 5.. Search and Rescue
- 6.. Club Administration

Whilst the person should have good organisational skills, the job requires a practical, hands-on approach and the ability to work within a team. The person will report to the Club Chairman, but will interact with the relevant club committee member(s) who oversee the different portfolios. The successful candidate will be required to learn about and demonstrate knowledge of the various club activities, which is instrumental to the successful fulfillment of this position's requirements.

Preference will be given to an applicant who is a current MCSA member, who climbs, and who has his/her own transport.

The gross salary offered will be R10 000,00 per month for full time employment, plus expenses to be agreed. No benefits such as a retirement annuity or a medical health plan will be provided. A standard contract of employment will be entered into with the successful candidate.

Please, apply before the 15th MArch, complete with a CV and a short letter of motivation to Chris Ziraneke (Club Chairman) at cziraneke@global.co.za, tel: 082 373 5605.

Subscriptions 2010:

Thank you to members who made donations to our various funds.

A reminder that subscriptions for 2010 are due. Thank you to the many members who have paid.

Please also complete and return the indemnities that were sent with the subscription reminders

The 2010 stickers will be posted on receipt of payment and this year I have included the sticker with the 2008 Journal i.e. members who were members in 2008 and are entitled to a Journal. Please let me know if you have not received the stickers. They were put in the first page of the Journal.

If you do not wish to retain your membership, I am afraid you will still have to pay the subs for 2010. We have to pay Cencorm levies as per number of members on the 1st of January each year and other expenses are calculated on the income from subs.

Change of details – please let us know. Uschi

Land and Access:

Please remember:

TAKE YOUR MEMBERSHIP CARD. .

One member one guest allowed to the areas we may visit. If you have more guests and it is a permit area please apply for permits R30 pp adults, R20 students and high school scholars and R10 for children under 13 years.

If there is a gate code –obtain the code before you leave in the morning to that area eg Castle Gorge, Grootkloof.

If you have to obtain a permit eg Trident and Kranskloof, please do so a few days before. Uschi will give you the details.

Likkewaan: please remember this area is ' out of bounds'.

Hamerkop week.:

The section's week at Hamerkop is from 1 June to 7 June. Members may book for the house from 1 – 4 June. 4, 5 and 6 June is reserved for the meet. Members wishing to book please phone Uschi 011 807 1310 weekday mornings. House fees payable.

Commercial Operators:

There are a few members who use our co-owned areas to teach climbing, abseiling, kloofing and team building .

Permits in this case must be obtained and the fee is R60 pp per day. They charge their clients and that is why they are termed 'commercial operators.'

We do not want people to make money out of our investment/s and that is why this operation is carefully monitored.

All commercial operators must be:

- Candid and disclose that they are commercial operators
- MCSA members of at least two years' standing.

Application must be made to the committees (Mag Section and Jhb section) for their approval or not.

Preferably no commercial permits over weekends.

Permits and numbers will be monitored

We also have to consider our insurance policy and the opinion/wishes of our co-owners.

FIFA world cup :

Tented City at Waverley Park: we have been notified that we may have to vacate the club room and the Girl Guide Hall and find another place for the period mid April to beginning August. This is to accommodate the proposed tent city on the site. We still have not been given anything in writing and no definite answers are forthcoming. We will keep you informed.

Events highlights:

3 March

In January 2010 Lisa Steingold left for an epic mountain bike trip across Vietnam and Laos. Her mission was to ride the 800km's from Hanoi Vientienne, to raise funds for JAG, the sports and education foundation and to have the adventure of a lifetime. With over 18 000m of climbing she ended up riding 1200km's over 14 days and raising R25 000 for JAG. She presents her exciting journey across South East Asia. On 3rd March.

10 March

Join Mike Blyth and James Pitman as they describe and show how they designed and built an experimental 2 seater aircraft in Johannesburg, and then flew it around the world in 40 days. See the photographs and film as they describe taking off into the night on their first 18 hour flight from Pilanesburg, in an aircraft they barely had time to test. Hear about and experience their epic 22 hour flights across the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, getting caught at night in giant thunderstorms, and their triumphant return to South Africa in August this year.

Get to see and hear the adventures of these remarkable South Africans who have shown that we have what it takes to stand with the best worldwide

24 March

Alex Harris: 'BroadPeak – shift in desire'

14 April: Dirk Smith

The slideshow features photos taken all over the world by Dirk Smith during the last three and a half years of his travels. The images give a glimpse of many of the most popular sport climbing destinations in the world as well as some more obscure ones. Images of hiking in the Cordillera Blanca & Cordillera Huayhuash in the Peruvian Andes are also featured. The slideshow is guaranteed to give you itchy (travel) feet.

Locations include: Kalymnos - Greece; Tonsai & Kolaoling - Thailand; El Chorro & Rodellar - Spain; Red River Gorge - Kentucky USA; New River Gorge - West Virginia USA; Malham Cove - England; El Potrero Chico & El Salto - Mexico; South Africa (various locations); Hatun Machay - Peru; Cordillera Blanca & Cordillera Huayhuash - Peru (hiking)

South Africa's 'Supertramp'

17 February 2010, 15:18 By Nikita Syvester

Staff Reporter – CapeArgus

When 23-year-old Kyle Meeneham first started making his way around the perimeter of South Africa more than 270 days ago, it was because he "just felt like walking".

Now, 5 250km and three pairs of shoes later, Meeneham, whose intentions earned him the 2009 Mountain Club of South Africa Supertramp Award even before he took his first step, is about to complete his journey.

Meeneham began his adventure in Bloubergstrand on May 20 last year.

From there he walked along the West Coast to Strandfontein, then inland to Bitterfontein and north to Springbok.

Some of the towns he visited included Nuniput, Mafikeng, Nelspruit, Richards Bay, Durban, Port Elizabeth, Knysna and Swellendam.

On Tuesday he was walking between Grabouw and Sir Lowry's Pass, on course to finish his epic trek where it started nine months ago, in Bloubergstrand.

He has been travelling light, carrying only a set of winter and summer clothes; reading material for when he stops to rest; a little stove, bowl and spoon; his sleeping bag; a survival bag and first aid kit; and his camera.

"I am currently walking in my third pair of shoes," Meeneham said.

He walks at least 35km day, walking for an hour and resting for 15 minutes. But having covered more than 5 000km by himself, he admits it did get lonely at times.

Meeneham carried money on his journey, which he used to buy food and refreshments along the way.

The staples of his diet were instant porridge and fruit.

Meeneham's adventure saw him swim through crocodile-infested rivers and at times he was nearly washed out to sea.

He had initially planned to swim in every river he passed, but several passers-by questioned the wisdom of this, so his plan fell by the wayside.

His scariest encounter, he said, was being mugged on the beach somewhere between St Lucia and Richard's Bay in KwaZulu-Natal.

Meeneham's accommodations during his journey were not luxurious: he slept in bushes along the way.

"This whole trip is something I will never forget, as well as all the friendly people I met," he said.

"It's been an amazing experience. I've learnt a lot more about myself, as well as other people."

Meeneham, who suffered only very minor injuries, such as a strained knee and a cut on his foot, throughout the walk, is expected back at Bloubergstrand on Saturday.

But rather than taking a break, Meeneham will start preparing for his next endeavour - a climbing trip in South America next year.

The Supertramp award, an initiative of the Mountain Club of South Africa, rewards anyone between the ages of 18 and 25 who will be embarking on adventures or expeditions.

The convener of the Supertramp award committee, Petro Grobler, said that of the nine applications they had received, Meeneham's had really stood out.

This article was originally published on page 8 of The Cape Argus on February 17, 2010

Andrew Porter sets Drakensberg Traverse record

This report appears on <http://www.ar.co.za/2009/12/andrew-sets-new-drakensberg-traverse-record/>

By ADVENTURELISA on Dec 22, 2009 in Expeditions

Trail runner Andrew Porter set a new record for the Drakensberg Grand Traverse this past weekend (17-20 December 2009).

He took 20 hours off the record set by Stijn Laenen and Andrew Hagen this time last year. Stijn and Andrew broke Gavin and Lawrie Raubenheimer's long standing (10 years) record of 4 days 9 hours 39 minutes.

In setting this new record, Andrew covered the 210km high-altitude distance, solo and unsupported, in 61 hours 24 minutes 11 seconds.

From Andrew's blog posting (20 December 2009) on <http://drakensberg.ning.com/profiles/blogs/612411-1>

"It is with great relief to mention that I have finally completed a fast, lightweight and solo traverse of the berg, in a new record time of 61 hours 24 min 11 sec.

Having learnt a few valuable lessons on previous attempts, I decided to wait for a good break in the weather and then go for it. The kit was essentially unchanged from previous attempts, except that this time around I decided to use an iPod to help out on some of those long, lonely sessions, usually with a hard hill ahead.

I left Sentinel Car Park at 4am Wednesday morning (16 Dec), in the by now, obligatory mist. That cleared after about 15 min and I carried on up the zig-zags to the chain ladder.

The haul across Mont-aux-Sources, CleftPeak and ChampagneCastle is by now getting a little too well known, and I made it to ChampagneCastle at 19:00 Wednesday. By midnight, I had crossed Mafadi, which had been a touch bleak due to a strong, cold wind that blew right through everything I had with. I decided to spend the remaining hours of darkness next to a small, but sheltered band of rock shortly after the summit.

Day 2 (Thursday) started a little later than I would have planned beforehand, but another day of perfect weather saw me safely to GiantsCastle and then across Thabana Ntlenyana before sunset. Once again, the cold wind made me choose a bivvy in the narrow valley you descend into before heading out onto the Sani flats.

On day 3 (Friday), I started out just before 4am and headed out into new territory south of the road. Things went generally well, even though I was now well short of the target 40 hours I had had in mind. Once again, I had perfect weather, which this day even managed to give me sun, with a cooling wind on top, with a blessed band of mist on the way down Thomatu Pass so that I could not get discouraged by the sight of a border post that just did not get closer.

I finally reached the Bushmans Nek border post after a rather long and exhausting time. The feeling of relief that I do not have to endure another cold night out there with min gear is rather hard to describe!

So what is this Drakensberg Grand Traverse?

It is a traverse of the Drakensberg that starts from North to South. It starts from the Sentinel Car Park perimeter fence and the stops at the Bushman's Nek Border Post perimeter fence. Various checkpoints have to be visited along the way.

These include:

- The Chain Ladders
- Mont-aux-Sources summit (3282m)
- CleftPeak summit (3277m)
- ChampagneCastle summit (3377m)
- Mafadi summit (3451m)
- Giant's Castle summit (3314m)
- Thabana Ntlenyana summit (3482m)
- ThomatuPass must be used to descend to Bushman's Nek

The only other rules are that it needs to be entirely self-supported (i.e. no seconds, food caches or resupplies) and entirely on foot. GPS is allowed.

For reference:

- Dec 2009: 2 days 13 hours 24 minutes (61h24m11s), Andrew Porter
- Dec 2008: 3 days, 9 hours, 52 minutes (81h52m52s), Stijn Laenen and Andrew Hagen
- 1999-2008: Around 15 unsuccessful attempts
- 1998: 4 days 9 hours 39 minutes (105h39m), Gavin and Laurie

The Jhb Section congratulates Andrew on his achievement!

Magaliesberg Biosphere Festival

The Club has a long-standing commitment to the Magaliesberg, and have been invited to exhibit at the Festival co-hosted by the Magaliesberg Biosphere and the Rhenosterspruit Nature Conservancy on 13 March 2010.

The committee is still considering this request.

The intent of the Festival is to bring greater awareness among the general public of the Magaliesberg Biosphere, its objectives and the need to enjoy the natural environment of the range in a sustainable manner. The festival has invited "the best of the biosphere", a collection of recreational activities to showcase what is available to the public to enjoy.

The programme is edu-tainment centred. There will be talks, exhibitions, walks - fun and exciting, but with real information being conveyed too.

The festival will also celebrate the gastronomic delights of the Magaliesberg.

The festival details are:

Date: 13 March 2010

Time: Noon to 6pm

Venue: Alpha Conference Centre (15km north of Lanseria airport on the R512)

Theme: Living naturally

The exhibition space is on the sport fields - therefore level and accessible, but out in the sun.

Whether the MCSA exhibits or not, we invite members to visit the festival.

OTHER NEWS

A 17-year-old boy from Utah has reportedly become the youngest person to climb the highest mountains on each of the seven continents, after reaching the peak of Antarctica's Mount Vinson on Tuesday.

Johnny Collinson began his quest on Jan. 19, 2009, on the summit of Argentina's Aconcagua, completing the feat on the same day just one year later.

Known to the climbing world as the Seven Summits, the group of mountains include Alaska's Denali, Elbrus in Russia, Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, Indonesia's Carstensz Pyramid, and Mount Everest.

According to his Website, Collinson's father is a member of the Ski Patrol at the Snowbird Ski Resort in Cottonwood Canyon, Utah, and taught Johnny how to ski at age 2. Two years later the young Collinson climbed Washington's Mount Rainier, the highest peak in the contiguous United States.

Mark Gunlogson of Mountain Madness, the adventure travel company that organized the Mount Vinson expedition, says Collinson's year-long quest likely cost in the neighborhood of \$150,000.

Fewer than 250 people have conquered the Seven Summits since mountaineer Richard Bass started the challenge in 1985, but like many things in the world of climbing, it is not without its share of controversy.

Bass' list of the Seven Summits included Australia's Mount Kosciuszko in lieu of Carstensz Pyramid, which he considered to be in Asia. A year later a rival climber Reinhold Messner argued that Australia and Indonesia are actually both part of a larger continent called Oceania, and that the Indonesian peak, at 16,024 feet more than twice as high as Kosciuszko, is the true highest summit in the region.

By the measure of the Bass list it was a resident of Malibu, California named Johnny Strange who is the youngest to climb the Seven Summits, reaching the top of Everest in May of 2009 at age 17, at the same time that Collinson was on the mountain. Strange climbed Mount Vinson when he was 12 years old.

No word if either of the young men plan to go after those eighth peaks for good measure, but they'd better watch their backs. According to travel website Gadling.com, a 13-year old boy named Jordan Romero has climbed five of the summits and is planning to take on Everest and Vinson this year.

If you have any contributions, please e-mail me. No guarantees, but most material is accepted.

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