



#### Newsletter March 2012

Welcome to the March edition of the Johannesburg Section newsletter.

#### CLUB NEWS

**CONGRATULATIONS:** best wishes and congratulations to Ted and Mavis Scholes on the occasion of their 60<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary. Ted, now 92 years old, together with David Bell and Peter Campbell were the first to conquer Devil's Tooth in August 1950. Read about this in the 1950 MCSA Journal.

**AGM:** The Annual General Meeting of the Mountain Club of South Africa Johannesburg Section will be held on **Wednesday 14 March 2012** at the Waverley Girl Guide Hall, cnr Scott & Stirling Streets, Waverley at 20h00.

**COMMITTEE:** Our committee consists of the Chairman; Secretary; Treasurer; and convenors for: Land and Access; Conservation, Hut and Clubhouse; Sport Climbing; Bolting; Youth; Security/Patrolling; Search & Rescue; Expeditions, Meets; Legal; Website; Public Relations; Orientation. If you would like to serve on the committee or a sub-committee, please let us know. We need you.

#### SECURITY ISSUES:

##### **INCIDENT WALKING FROM CALABASH TO TONQUANI.**

*Permit holders were attacked when walking from Calabash parking towards Tonquani. This did not happen in the kloof but on top. Two of the group (of a bigger group, had to turn back because of one feeling ill) were mugged and held at gun point by three African men for nearly 5 hours. Fortunately no one was hurt.*

*This is a very sad and worrying situation. Please be very aware when 'out there', don't take valuables, bank cards. The committees are working on the security problem.*

#### MEMBERSHIP

**Peter Finsen:** with regret and sadness we wish to let members know that Peter Finsen passed away on 4 February after a short illness. Peter was an avid hiker and was very involved with the Thursday group as also a staunch helper at the annual KZN July Camp. Peter was born on 20 July 1932 and joined our section in 1963. He will be missed. Our sincere condolences to family and friends.

**New Members:** We welcome new members: Lauren Marks, Jeremy Lichtenstein, Michelle Booth, Geoff Brown, and Angelina Hardwick.

**Change of contact details:** please let us know if you change your email address, phone number or postal address.

#### THANK YOU

Thank you to members who have paid the 2012 subscriptions. These were due in January 2012. Also a big thank you to members for their generous donations to our various Funds.

#### LAND & ACCESS:

**Patrollers needed:** We need patrollers. If you are able to patrol at Cedarberg / Tonquani and Mhlabatini please contact Uschi or alternatively, just patrol.

Please remember to get the gate codes for

Castle Gorge, Tonquani South before you head out.

Members only: When wanting to go to Trident, please advise Dr Luyt. Get email address from Uschi

Members only: When wanting to go to Kranskloof, please contact Roy Kendall or Uschi for access arrangements.

Access via **Utopia** (members only), please contact Uschi or Erik.

**Mountain Sanctuary Park:** members, remember to show your membership card. You may take one guest. Parking fee of R30 payable. Permit holders: MSP's daily entrance fee applies plus parking fee.

**A parking fee of R30** per car applies to Calabash, Trident, Mhlabatini and Wilgepoort.

#### FACE BOOK

We now have a face book page "**Mountain Club Jo'burg Section MEETS**". Upcoming meets will be posted there. Join our page and discuss meeting, climbing, hiking and transport arrangements. In future we want to add a picture of the venue in place of the MCSA logo. So please, take your camera along and send us a shot of the crag or rock pool or whatever you feel describes the place well. Send your picture to Ulrike at This email address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it.">+addy\_text48845+</Va>; //--> or Uschi at This email address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it.">+addy\_text98541+</Va>; //--> in low resolution.

#### SEARCH & RESCUE VEHICLE:

Special thanks to Vehicle Africa for the free lease ..... We are appealing to members to assist us with fuel for the vehicle. Contact Michael Klopper 074 106 8441

**MCSA JHB Section's week at Hamerkop:** this is available to members from 29 May to 1 June. From 1 June to 3 June is reserved for the meet. Contact Uschi for details 011 807 1310 weekday mornings.

#### MEET REPORT: BERG HIKE DIDIMA 16 TO 22 DECEMBER 2011

*Greg Devine*

*Photographs by Dave Taylor and Dave Collett*

This hike turned out to be the most strenuous of all the December Berg hikes that I have organised and led. It has set a new standard which will be hard to follow in future, both in terms of the hard grade of the hike, the beauty of the area and the number of people who successfully completed it.

The party consisted of Andre Dalais, Francois Gouws, Irene Kalimeri, Erica Davies, Philip Welchman, Lynn Morris, Kim Hoepfl, Dave Taylor, Greg and Cheryl Devine, all from the Jhb section, with Dave Collett from SC section and Andriana Stoddart, Anna Dimou and Paul Stoddart from Australia (previously Jhb section).

We started from the Visitor Centre at Didima (Cathedral) and went straight up Tryme hill and along the ridge to the Contour Path. This was followed in a southerly direction to the campsite below Philip's Folly on the upper Ndedema river, where we camped. The next day we continued up the valley and up the remote Tlanyaku Pass. Although we were then on the escarpment there was still a long uphill slog to our camp spot above the Ndedema Falls. This was the hardest day of the hike and our difficulties were compounded by thick mist, but we managed to stay together and find a suitable camp with water.

The next morning dawned bright and clear and we were able to find the long ridge path leading to the top of Grey's Pass. This path is at about 3 300 metres and gives great views over KZN and Lesotho. There were many shepherds about grazing great flocks of sheep. After peering over the edge at Vulture's Retreat we had lunch at the river on the top of the pass and then went down. Since there was no water at Keith Bush camp we decided to go a few hundred metres down the valley to camp.

This was definitely the "Blister Hike" as almost everyone suffered a bit and some suffered a lot, particularly Dave Collett. The Stoddart family had misread the instructions and thought it was a four day hike and not a four night hike, so they were out of food. As a result, the next day the Stoddarts and Dave decided to take the short-cut to

Monk's Cowl and find their way back to Didima by taxi. The rest of the party continued along the Contour path around the Gatberg and along Eastman's ridge back to the first night's camp spot on the Ndedema.

On the final day we descended Mike's Pass back to the cars parked at Didima. The route turned out to be 89 km long. After a shower at the campsite we met up at Bingelela (a great pizza joint near Bergville) for lunch, before the drive home. So ended a great hike through one of the most remote, beautiful and pristine parts of the Berg. Only one question remains, where to next year?

We would appreciate it if meet leaders would send us a report on their meet. Greg's is a super article and the photos great. Let's get more articles and photos for our newsletter.

**Club Evenings:** we do not have presenters for our club evenings and appeal to members if they have something interesting that would be suitable for a club evening please contact Uschi .

FOR INFORMATION REGARDING THE CLUB CONTACT: The Administrator 011 807 1310 weekday mornings or email [admin@jhb.mcsa.org.za](mailto:admin@jhb.mcsa.org.za)