



Newsletter December 2012

Welcome to the December edition of the Johannesburg Section newsletter.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

The holiday season is upon us and many of you will be off to enjoy the great outdoors, maybe climb a rock face or a mountain at home or abroad. The Committee of our Section would like to wish all of you exciting and enjoyable adventures wherever you may choose to seek them, safe travels and happy memories to bring back. We would also like to wish you a very Merry Christmas, whichever corner of the world you may spend it in, as well as many successes in your private and professional lives in the New Year!

Dobek Pater, Chairman

CLUB NEWS

Wilgepoort: A Special General Meeting was held at short notice on 13th December 2012 to decide on whether we should purchase the Wilgepoort property (which we have been pining to) together with the Magaliesberg Section. The meeting attendees, as well as those who could not attend and cast their ballot by proxy, voted overwhelmingly in favour of the purchase. The outcome was: 76 votes in favour, 5 not in favour and 1 abstention. Magaliesberg section members also approved of the purchase by a significant margin (more than 90% in favour).

Although the Johannesburg Section has a fair amount of cash available for our share of the purchase price (determined by the ratio of Johannesburg to Magaliesberg Section voting members), we are still faced with a shortfall of over R1.2m. This means we will need to consider other sources of funding provided by members. The suggested sources of funding are:

1. Request for donations from our members towards the purchase.
2. Request members to loan larger amounts of funds to the Section (with or without interest), so that we can pay off the loan sooner (and save on interest).
3. Institute a 'levy' for voting members of approximately R150 per year for 10 years (or a levy of R300 per annum per voting member for 5 years), based on a total of 778 voting members. This 'levy' can be structured in such a manner as to accommodate the different members' ability to contribute financially to this transaction.

In the interim, the Magaliesberg Section has kindly offered to lend us the shortfall, but payment and interest at 6% annually (compounded annually) will be due. The repayment terms is 10 years; the first 6 months will be interest-free. We thank the Magaliesberg Section for their generosity.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: The Annual General Meeting of the Mountain Club of South Africa Johannesburg Section will be held on Wednesday 13 March 2013 at the Waverley Girl Guide Hall, Waverley.

Committee members for 2013: Members who would like to serve on the General Committee please contact Dobek or Uschi.

Subscriptions for 2013

Subs reminders have been sent out for 2013. Thank you to members who have already paid. Stickers will be sent by post or please make arrangements to collect from Uschi.

MEMBERSHIP

New Members: We welcome the following new members: Farhad Hassim; Fatima Cachalia; John Ackroyd; Katrine Lategan; Jennifer Button and Rose Cole Button; Guy Pitman; Xanthe Mayer; Irene Kalimeri; Bryan Meenehan; Ben de Wet; Allisdair Fenton.

Reinstated: Michael Kemp; Angelo Cosenza; Erich & Shona Haupt and children Erin and Olivia.

As from 1 January: Kerry Williams, Mathias Ryf.

Transferred from CT Section: Julia Wakeling.

Passed away: Erik Manson, aged 83 years, August 2012 and Emil Perlstein, aged 89, passed away in September 2012. Emil joined our section in 1948. Irene Whitelock passed away in August last year.

Our sincere condolences to the respective families and friends.

Resigned: Kathy Beckerleg and

as from end December, Lindsay Gaydon and children Angela and Michael; Garth Turner; David Ringo; Wendy and Nick Wood(Canada); Laura Jones; Serelda Price; and Adi Meyers (Attar) transfer to Cape Town.

Speedy Recovery: Ulli Deutschlandler – a long standing Chairman of the Hottents-Holland Section in the Western Cape, and known to many in the climbing circles, underwent an emergency operation on a brain tumour on 19 Dec. He is recovering in hospital. We wish Ulli a speedy return to full health and trust that he will grow stronger in 2013.

MCSA JOURNAL 2012

This is a further call for your submission of articles to the journal editing team. If you have a good story to tell or worth recording, please forward to journal editor at jpaterson@iburst.co.za. The deadline for submissions is 31 January 2013. Please see <http://cen.mcsa.org.za/home/journal> for the Guidelines/Style Sheet and Photo Template.

SECURITY MATTERS

It is with sadness and great concern that we continue to receive period reports of criminal activity in some of our properties / climbing venues, particularly in the Tonquani - Cedarberg complex. The Committee has been experimenting with various solutions over the past year but has not come up with a 'silver bullet' as yet. The Committee, under the guidance of Grant Rens (Convenor of the Security Sub-Committee), is working on a policy of allowing dogs to be taken by members to our properties for security purposes. An announcement will be made early in the new year.

In the meantime, the Committee would like to make another appeal to all members to volunteer their time for patrolling our properties specifically with the purpose of preventing criminal activity. Grant Rens will be in charge of organising these patrols once a sufficient number of volunteers has been registered. Please, contact Grant on Grant.Rens@centurionsystems.co.za or 082-353-9662 if you would like to volunteer.

To this extent, the Committee has prepared the following authorisation for such patrollers that it would like to implement. Note, that at this time this pertains to the Johannesburg Section only.

AUTHORISATION

The Patrollers (volunteers, designated security members, or those employed for security purposes by the MCSA) are hereby authorised by the Johannesburg Section of the Mountain Club of South Africa (MCSA) to patrol the properties owned by the MCSA and enforce the 'no trespassing' rules. To this end they may take any reasonable actions to protect and secure MCSA members and MCSA permit holders from assault, theft, and any other criminal action taken against MCSA members and permit holders on these properties.

The Patrollers are further authorised to carry any self defence weapons they deem necessary (within the boundaries of relevant regulations prevalent in the Republic of South Africa) to ensure their own safety and that of their companions, as well as MCSA members and permit holders when dealing with offensive attacks. The Patrollers shall ensure that they have all necessary licences and training required to use these weapons competently and legally. Should the occasion arise for the Patrollers to defend themselves, they should use the minimum force required to do so.

The Patrollers are expected to abide by the laws of the Republic of South Africa when taking any action against criminals in a confrontational situation. Should an incident take place, the Patrollers are required to look toward preservation of life before all else.

Neither the General Committee of the Johannesburg Section nor the MCSA shall be held responsible for any actions taken by its members in defending themselves or their companions and MCSA members / permit holders in general.

LAND & ACCESS

Trident

Members of the Club's Land & Access committee recently had an informative and fruitful discussion with Dr Braam Luyt, owner of the kloof and surrounding farm. As with many matters in life, it is important to understand the viewpoint of the other party so that an agreement can be arrived at that is acceptable to both parties. The owner acknowledges that the Mountain Club of South Africa (MCSA) has servitudinal access to the climbing area we know as Trident (actually only Cavern Kloof, the kloof on the western end of the Trident kloof complex, with the eastern two kloofs, Middle and Kronkel Kloofs, not included in our servitude access). However, we must understand that he has a great deal of problems to contend with including criminals, trespassers and poachers. He also claims that there are people who are aware of the MCSA's servitude, and although not members, claim to be in order to gain access. For these reasons Dr Luyt has clamped down heavily on intruders. The club acknowledges the problems he experiences and to accommodate not only his needs, but also ours, we have agreed to the following access arrangements:

(Questions may be addressed to the Land & Access convenor, currently Neil Grimmer: land.access.mcsa.jhb@gmail.com, 083 218 7233)

1. Access is ONLY open to MCSA members and their guests, as per the arrangements with our other properties.
2. Members should notify the owner of the kloof by at least the Thursday preceding a weekend visit, or two days before a weekday visit. No camping allowed.
3. Notification should be done by e-mail, with the MCSA administrator copied (currently Uschi Magg: admin@jhb.mcsa.org.za). Please include the name of the leader of your party, his/her cell-phone number, the number of people in the party and the vehicle registration number(s). This serves as a check to confirm that you are a valid MCSA member.
4. The club administrator will provide you with the latest gate access code.
5. Payment for parking (currently R30) should be left in the box at the parking spot.
6. If you meet Dr Luyt, please present your MCSA membership card after introducing yourself. This show of goodwill to the landowner will confirm that you are a legitimate user of the kloof.
7. Please keep your eyes open for animal traps, trespassers and other undesirables. Further, if you spot Crofton Weed or other invader plants, pull them out or inform the administrator.
8. As the water in the kloof is used for the owner's personal use, do not swim in any of the pools and always take measures to ensure that the quality of the water is not compromised in any way.
9. As per the rules of our properties, the following is not permitted at all: (i) fires, (ii) removal of or damage to fauna or flora, (iii) deposition of any rubbish.
10. Access to Middle and Kronkel kloofs (eastern two kloofs of the Trident Kloof complex) is not permitted.

Castle Gorge: Permits will be available again as from January 2013. Before members head out, please get the code for the gate, from Neil Grimmer or Uschi.

Dome South: MCSA members only, with visits restricted to ONE a month and Club meets taking precedence. Non-Club meets are restricted to 6 people, with bookings made through Uschi. Members who would like to enjoy more regular access should remember that Kashan House (<http://www.kashanhouse.co.za/>) guests are not constrained by these arrangements. Furthermore, members also enjoy a 10% discount on accommodation.

(see article from Chris Ziranek below)

Kranskloof: Contact Neil or Uschi if you do not remember the access rules.

Tonquani South: Contact Neil or Uschi for access. Get gate code.

Any other access: Contact Neil or Uschi.

PLEASE BE VIGILANT WHEN OUT THERE. WATCH THE WEATHER, LIGHTNING, FLASH FLOODS, AND TSOTSIS.

Dome South

Last Sunday (4th November 2012) I held a meet at Dome. Many of the long standing members will remember well this excellent trad climbing area as it used to be very popular. It is situated on the south facing escarpment of the Magaliesberg, about mid-way between Castle Gorge and Tonquani. The rock is generally very sound and the venue offers some great climbing of 2,3 and 4 pitch routes of all grades, some of which were opened as far back as the 1930's. There is even a 4 star grade 10 route. Budding big wall climbers should maybe look at Dome closely as it has exposure and up to 85m multi-pitch climbs which offer excellent training.

I joined the club some 20 years ago and remember trying to attend a Dome meet, hearing then of its excellent reputation, only to be told at that time that there were problems with access. The meet was cancelled. It appears that these problems persisted. I enjoy climbing in new areas, and twice tried to climb there, once hiking in from the north via Dome Pools, and once hiking across from Castle Gorge. Both of these accesses were a slog, leaving little to no time to climb itself.

Recently, however, Paul Fatti (through his MPA connections) has been in contact with the owner of Kashan House, an up-market guest house at the base of the southern side of the area, with the purpose of re-establishing access from the south side. The deal was that we allow the Kashan House guests access to our Seremodi property (on which I believe the Dome East climbs are situated) and we assist by fixing into the rock some safety handles up 'Lightening Ravine' (which Paul and I are currently in the process of doing). Kashan House would in return allow us access through their property in limited group sizes and that we do not disturb the guests.

So last Sunday saw 9 of us on the MCSA's old stomping grounds. We climbed Dome Face, Clockwork, Muffin's Route, Chatter Face and Magic Dragon. Andrew Porter was there with a view to updating the old route book that dates back to the old box file system in existence some 25 years.

Next time there is a meet there, think about it. It is a great trad climbing venue. And don't be fooled into thinking the grades are soft. They climbed hard in those days.

For access information, contact Uschi.

Chris Ziranek

5th November 2012

Rules for climbing at Kransberg

1. The main rule, overriding any other rule, is "no climbing at any time at a place where there is evidence of vulture activity".
2. Climbing is permitted in the traditional climbing area east of Aufwiedersehen between 1st May and 10th December, keeping in mind rule #1.
3. Climbing is permitted in principle East and West of Aufwiedersehen up to the Park boundary (-24.472788° 27.602147°) between 11th December and 30th April from a vulture conservation point of view, provided the route does not cross or stance on ledges used for breeding through the year (a Topo image with all the nests and some routes is in prep and will be available from the MCSA and Vulpro).
4. Climbers must be aware that they may be trespassing. This has not been a problem in the past, but tread with caution. There are some negotiations on the way to minimise this problem.
5. Please report any incident or noteworthy activity regarding vultures to Walter Nesper (wneser@gmail.com or 076 5939 849) or Kerri Wolter (kerri.wolter@gmail.com)

GENERAL

Lost/left behind

We were walking in Tonquani this past Sunday (09 Dec). I managed to leave my walking pole in the grass next to our car. We were parked in the southern parking area.

It is a black pole with MADROCK Fusion and Carbon (?) written in white. It's lying in longish grass not far from the western end of the stone wall that is there.

It's one of a pair and I'd really like to get it back. Sue White 082 706 2836.

National Meet 2013 - Update

There are still places available for the National Meet hence the closing date has been extended to 31 January 2013.

For the day hikes: you will be able to climb a peak, negotiate a rugged bit of coast line, do the skyline route with stunning views, go kloofing, climb in the Southern Outeniquas to awe-inspiring views and end the week with the ever popular Robberg Peninsula. Do them all if you are fit enough but there are a range of hikes from easy to demanding to choose from and, of course, the 5-day Outeniqua and 2-day Harkerville trails. See the original documentation distributed. Enquiries: hannaduto@telkomsa.net

A final update with more detail will be issued about the middle of January 2013.

Maurice Herzog

Sad news from France today, where we've received word that Maurice Herzog has passed away at the ripe old age of 93. If his name is familiar, it is because he was the first man, along with climbing partner Louis Lachenal, to successfully summit an 8000 meter peak.

Herzog and Lachenal climbed their way into the history books back on June 3, 1950 when they made the first successful attempt up Annapurna, the tenth highest peak in the world at 8091 meters (26,545 ft). Even more remarkable, considering the time, they actually made the ascent without the use of supplemental oxygen. The climb was not an easy one by any stretch of the imagination however, as the summit team, along with two companions, spend a night camped out in a crevasse on the descent. They had one sleeping bag between the four men and as a result, they suffered severe frostbite. Herzog himself had lost his gloves on the way to the summit and ended up having all of his toes and several fingers amputated in the field.

Ironically, Annapurna was the first of the 8000 meter peaks to be summited, but is now considered to be amongst the most challenging of those 14 mountains to climb. It wouldn't be successfully conquered again until 1970.

After his harrowing climb, Herzog published a book about the adventure entitled Annapurna: The First Conquest of an 8000-Meter Peak, which has gone on to be one of the best selling mountaineering books of all time. The book has been translated into 40 languages and has sold over 12 million copies across the globe, inspiring generations of mountaineers that followed. He also served as the Commissioner of Youth and Sport in France and was the mayor of Chamonix from 1968-1977.

A legend of the mountaineering world has passed but his legacy will certainly live on.

(Source: Adventure Blog)

FOR INFORMATION REGARDING THE CLUB CONTACT: The Administrator on 011 807 1310 weekday mornings or email admin@jhb.mcsa.org.za

Club re-opens on Wednesday 9 January 2013

Talk for Prospective members: 16 January 2013

