

THE MOUNTAIN CLUB OF SOUTH AFRICA
DIE BERGKLUB VAN SUID - AFRIKA

AMAJUBA AFDELING
SECTION



P O Box / Bus 1362
Newcastle 2940

<http://ama.mcsa.org.za/>

JubaJabber - Monthly June/July 2013

News items

Love and Woe.

Have not heard of any illnesses or otherwise, so I am assuming that all is well with our members and their loved ones.

Committee and Membership matters.

Your committee for the year **2013** is as follows:

Chairperson: Hermann Kuhne - 0845600613.

Vice-Chairman: Johan de Villiers – 072 712 7022.

Treasurer: Len Stoop – 078 598 1643.

Secretary: Christine de Villiers – 072 712 7022.

Social Convener: Thea Groenewegen – 0343123703 / 083 378 7655.

Climbing and Rescue: Ruan Adendorff – 082 577 7555.

Juba Jabber & e-mail: Adriaan Dippenaar – 082 337 2970 / adriandip@telkomsa.net

Publicity:

MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2013

Family membership is R260 per year

Single member R170 per year

Family pensioner R190 per year

Single pensioner R140 per year

Members can pay their fees via cheque, cash or electronic transfer. Our banking details are as follows:

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Bank: | Nedbank |
| Account Holder: | MCSA Amajuba Section |
| Account Number: | 1337163309 |
| Branch Code: | 133724 |
| Reference: | Your initials and surname and Subs 2013 |

Recent outings by Amajuba Section Members.

Monks cowl – Grays Pass 14-17 June 2013; Hermann and Gustav

14 June

We drove to Monks Cowl and planned to hike to Blindman's Corner. Arriving too late, we decided to camp at the campsite and then start early the following day.

We set up our tents and later drove to Thokosizwe restaurant where the food and vibe is fantastic. I had chicken schnitzel a portion of chips and a mountain of salad. Well worth the money.

15 June

We set off early and took the usual route up past the Sphinx towards Breakfast Stream and then Blindman's Corner. We met up with a guy that got lost the previous day, he slept in a bush and sort of found his way back on the path. Quite a character, Shaun was his name. He can be lucky it wasn't so cold otherwise he could have got into serious trouble.

We had a chat and then pushed on towards Hlathikulu Nek, the path then goes into the Mhlwazini valley. Gatberg is on you right and the base of Sterkhorn on the left. The valley up to Keith Bush camp always feels so long and never ending. We arrived at the base of Grays pass at around 3pm and decided to ascend the pass and skip Keith Bush camp. We arrived at the top of the pass just as the sun started setting. It was also getting colder. We headed north towards Vultures Retreat and set up camp not far from a frozen waterfall. Supper was made and I was in my down sleeping bag as soon as possible.

The nights is long on winter hikes, all you want to do is get into your sleeping bag and stay warm! And when nature calls it's a huge effort getting up, putting on your boots, down jacket etc. Back in the sleeping bag it takes a while getting warm again.

16 June

We woke up early, enjoying the warm rays of the sun. Had some instant oats and coffee and then the ritual starts of packing everything. It does get better the more you hike, tend to take less stuff with.

We took a walk up the Inkosazana River that goes up in a valley where the Inkosazana cave is situated. We climbed an unnamed peak and had lunch on top, the wind was cold and there was little shelter.

The plan was to walk to Champagne Castle, but when we saw the enormous valleys to be crossed we gave up on the idea. We wanted to make the last day "not too serious" we descended down into the valley and met other hikers that were camping at Keith Bush camp. When I saw so many people there I decided not to go down and camp at Keith Bush camp. So we ended up camping close to the escarpment with fantastic views all around. And then it was the ritual again...eat, get warm in the sleeping bag etc.

17 June

I was up early, taking photos and enjoying the view. Both of our gas stoves ran out of gas simultaneously! Now that is a bummer, no coffee!

We packed up quickly and started the trek back to the pass and down into the Mhlwazini valley. We paced ourselves, moving it up! With little rest we came down the little Berg and finally back to the office (6 hours nonstop) my legs were like jelly!

I had a long shower and a beer, then the road back to Newcastle waited. We had KFC for supper in Ladysmith. Soon thereafter it was the 68 speed bumps again!!!

This hike was a great fitness test, we did well.

Thanks Gustav

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Injesuthi Hike 28 June – 2 July Hermann Kühne and Sabine Behr (JHB Hiking club member)

Day 1: Marble Baths

Day 2: Up Leslie's Pass

Day 3: Upper Injesuthi Cave

Day 4: Down Bannerman's pass to Bannerman Hut

Day 5: Back to Injesuthi camp via Contour path

Total kilometers hiked: 64km

Day 1.

I drove from Entabeni to Nottingham road, stopped at the Spar and got supplies. Sabine (whom I know from web site/forum Vertical Endeavour) was on her way down from Joburg. We expected more people to join, but it was only us two. Gustav was planned to come with, but he cancelled. We started hiking late and we pushed for Marble Baths campsite. We made it in good time and after tents were up we could relax and make supper. It was really cold in the valley, so I was in the sleeping bag early, these long winter nights!!!

Day 2.

Woke up and found that the tents were iced up, wow couldn't believe it.



Made the usual, oats and coffee. We started hiking at 8, long way to go to the top of Leslie's pass. The path winds through the valley crossing the river several times, stopped at the bottom campsite for tea. Then the ascent started, I never liked going up Leslie's, but yet I was there and up we had to go! There was a lot of snow still around from a few days ago, and in some places quite dangerous. We got to the top and it felt good to be there, wind was blowing and we had to put our outer jackets on. I love the expanse of Lesotho, as I mentioned to Sabine at some point... "it can be a very unforgiving and unsympathetic place"

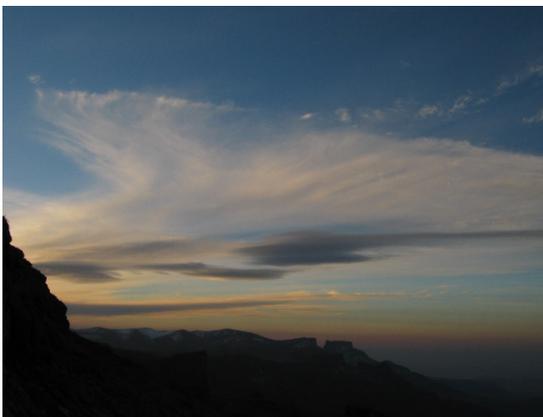


We headed down to the river and had a break, going up Leslies made me tired! After a few sips of game we pushed on until we found a nice protective place to camp. I was sneezing badly, thought there was a cold on the way. Not a good place to get sick, Sabine gave me a capsule to drink after I've eaten, I felt much better later. The wind was howling the whole night and I took out my emergency blanket and put it over my sleeping bag, just to make sure for more warmth. Couldn't sleep, wind was pounding the tents.

Day 3.

Woke up, made coffee and we couldn't wait for the sun's rays to reach us. When it did, it was like new energy filling me. The wind was still blowing with gusts, I was busy with my tent when a gust came through, I grabbed my tent in the effort of it not getting blown away...then I heard a snapping sound !!!

What a crap feeling, I'm on the escarpment, three days to go and my tent pole breaks. And all I need to fix it temporarily is aluminum tube which you simply slide over the broken bit. But that tube was at home!!!



We decided to head for upper Injesuthi cave and overnight there. We braved the cold wind and hiked toward Mafadi, highest peak in SA. From there we traversed around the base of Injesuthi Dome and eventually got to the cave. Not 5 star, but okay. It was nice and warm, protected from the westerly wind. There we cooked together and could have a conversation, unlike previous night's where you in your tent staying warm.



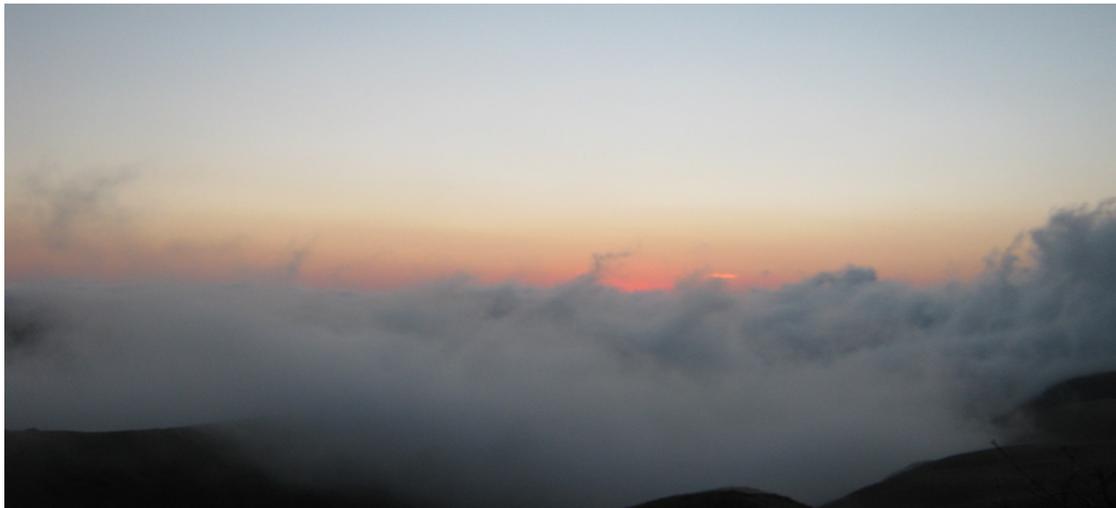
Snow on slopes, Upper Injesuthi cave, looking south, Spare Rib cave

Sabine pitched the inner of her tent in a sort of tunnel section of the cave, I just spread my tent inner and outer and slept on top of it. During the night I was visited by a cave mouse, most probably after scraps of food. There was also a pigeon on her nest inside the cave, just checked us out. I slept well and warm.

Day 4.

Long day, head to the Col between Trojan and Injesuthi Dome. From there it's mostly on a Basotho trail, used by smugglers, locals and the occasional hikers. We passed a group of about 7 – 8 smugglers, said our hello's and passed them. One of them actually said we must have a safe journey. A short way after we had a break, made tea and I checked the map, we were near Judge Pass and Popple peak. Wow we were going at a good pace. On the way again we saw Grey Rheebuck on the summit of Popple peak, "next time I'll bag that peak" I muttered to myself, too tired now.

We descended into a valley below Popple peak, there was lots of snow and ice on the southern facing slopes. We carried on until we could see the top of Bannerman's pass, we sat a while taking the view in. we traversed round the top of the bowl shape valley, we saw that there were two Basotho herdsman also there with their dogs. They are in immaculate condition, must be a special breed of dog. We greeted them and then descended the pass to Spare Rib cave where we had lunch. Our plan was to hike down to Bannerman hut and stay there. Then hike the following day all the way back to Injesuthi via Centenary hut. Cutting the hike a day short.



Bannerman hut, oh what luxury, was so awesome sitting at a table and there was even candles left behind by someone. Made supper and chatted away, was a very long day indeed.

Day 5.

Misty morning awaits, clouds swirling about. After breakfast and packing gear, we left for the contour path. Saw two Eland on the way near bottom of Judge Pass. Path goes up and down, in and out of little valleys and what felt like an eternity we reached Centenary Hut. We decided to have lunch at the hut. Pity the hut has been vandalized, could still have been an awesome place to stay. Most hikers just camp outside the hut.

The arduous descent down the hill to the lower berg began and we wonder why we do this! At the bottom we had another rest and had only 10 kilometers to go, I tripped twice and could feel I was getting tired now. I took it carefully using my hiking poles, this certain path that goes down the valley past Fergie's cave is not maintained by Ezemvelo.

Eventually we entered the Injesuthi valley, home run, nearly there!! My feet are tired, I'm tired. Just want to finish this.

And so we did, arrived at the camp. We went to the shop where Sabine paid for a night in a chalet. I had a cold beer that went down real good and fast!!! I left Injesuthi and stopped at my favorite restaurant, Thokosizwe on the way. Had a huge meal and drove back to Newcastle.

This was one of those epic hikes in the Berg. I enjoyed it, perhaps not the last 5 kilometers. Got home and appreciated all the nice things like warm water, a bed and electricity.



Judge pass



Corner pass



Ice



Looking south from Centenary hut



Trojan wall, The Triplets Leslies pass.

HERMAN



After completing and successfully passing the Advanced Mountain Leader Course, I planned a 3 day route “off road” working from a map and compass.

I decided to go to the little berg plateau in the Monks Cowl area. Plan is to take the path to Steilberg and from there towards Stable Cave. Traverse all the high points from there to Hlatikulu Nek and then to the base of Sterkhorn and back to the camp via Keartlands pass

I arrived at Monks Cowl campsite on the Friday, after a scenic drive from Bethlehem, Clarens, Harrismith and my favorite restaurant and pub, Thokosizwe.

Saturday I hiked up to Steilberg via the Sterkspruit / Drakensberg Sun paths. The Little berg is beautiful, there you see and hear bird and animal life. A week ago I was on the escarpment, quite a radical change.



Verkykerskop

I hiked along the top of the cliffs past Jacobs Ladder and up towards Stable cave. From the cave there are nice views of the Cathedral Peak area. Only thing is, there is no water nearby. I decided to back track to a spot earlier near a pine tree where I had lunch. It was getting late and I pitched my tent there and settled in. I had a great time lying on my back looking at the stars.

The following day I headed east towards Zulu cave and turned south to traverse a few high points.

I did map and compass work and sometimes the maps aren't 100 % correct, like the “V” is 500m due east from where they say on the map. But still I take my hat off to the mapmakers of the past.



My Campsite Stable cave

I arrived at Hlatikulu Nek at 3pm and I only had to hike the contour path to Blindmans corner and to a camp spot at the base of Sterkhorn. At a certain stream where I rested, I saw a lot of rubbish left by other uneducated hikers, such a shame.



Sunrise Solo Hiker

I arrived at the base of Sterkhorn, pitched my tent and relaxed watching baboons entertaining me and later Grey Reebeuck was grazing above me on the hill.



Map work



Gatberg, Mlwanzini Valley, Dragon's Back



Cathkin and Sterkhorn



After supper I climbed into my sleeping bag and slept well.
The next morning I decided to pack up early and head down Kearthlands pass to Monks Cowl.
Two hours later I arrived at camp, had a long warm shower and went to the tea garden and
had an awesome breakfast, and bottomless coffee.
Travelled back to Newcastle, will be back soon.... **HERMAN**



Mountain Course Entabeni 22 June – 27 June 2013 by Herman Kühne

Entabeni is situated between Highmoor and Giants Castle, it is also where the Hlatikulu Crane & Wetland sanctuary is.

They cater for school groups, individual smaller groups and corporate groups.

We were seven people doing various types of ML (Mountain Leading) courses

I was the only candidate for AML (Advanced Mountain Leader) based on my experience in the mountains. Gerhard was there as BML (Basic Mountain Leader) but was not assessed. He needs more experience and to lead groups in the mountains.

Our instructor is Nic Shaw, director of Entabeni, very experienced in the field. He is also member of the KZN section MCSA and is part of search and rescue. He has done many trips to the UK for winter experience.

The course is accredited by the MDT (Mountaineering Development & Training Trust)

The Course

Group management

Understanding/ using maps

Ropes and rope work

Identifying mountain hazards

Mountain rescue in the Drakensberg

Climate and mountain weather

Planning an expedition

- Route selection: group capabilities
- Route planning: water campsites, route card, escape routes
- Access & administration: rescue register, participant info, fees & levies
- Nutrition
- General logistics

Equipment: Ice tools & usage

Then we had to go on a three day hike where I was assessed by Nic and his partner James.

After the hike I had to do a theory exam (which I gladly passed)

Every day we had lectures and discussions, and on the morning of the hike we did ice climbing on a tree. With crampons and ice axes, helmet, harness and safety rope we all had turns. While guys were climbing about, the rest was busy with knots.

The Hike

Before the hike we had to plan and do a route card about the hike. Discussing various route options and so on. We hiked from Entabeni up the mountain and into Highmoor. On route doing various tasks like rope work, abseiling, map work. We had mock drills where a fellow hiker is petrified and can't go on, so I had to confide, comfort and lead the hiker out with rope.

It got dark and we were divided in two groups, to find a way to Aasvoël kranz cave using night navigation and certain methods of staying on a bearing. Eventually we arrived at the cave first and I was quite tired. We made supper chatted and soon all went to sleep, a long day indeed

The next morning we left the cave and hiked to the plateau above. Nic gave us informative talk about weather systems and the different clouds and patterns. Also briefly told us the history of the Langalibalele rebellion in 1873 that took place in the Giants Castle area (Bushman's river pass later called Langalibalele pass)

The next task was to get to Caracal cave, the most easiest and comfortable way. We were in two groups again and went our ways. We got to a path that leads to the cave, the Ezemvelo guys were also burning sections of land the same day and we had to endure some serious smoke and heat. We got to the cave and rested while waiting for the others.

Plans changed because of the fires so we hiked to a small lake where a few of us had an ice cold bath (mountaineering terms...skinny dip) but it was well worth it!

We set off to find a suitable camp site, pitched the tents and did supper.

Next morning was wet and very misty, I heard someone saying “ah... zero Visibility training” with a sheepish grin!

We had to navigate our way to Highmoor and from there I had to lead them back to Dogleg pass...in zero visibility, I was a bit nervous, because Nic was watching my every move and listening to the discussions we had.

Well, we got to Dogleg pass (route back to Entabeni) after zig- zagging all over the place. We had lunch at the bottom and then hiked back to the house. After a bath and a shave we/ I had to get all the paper work sorted. A few of us went to the Knackered Swan, Pub and restaurant (a divine little secret in the Kamberg 15 minutes from Entabeni) for drinks and supper.

Next morning it was time for the theory paper.

I really learnt a lot in this course, I'm coming back for my first aid course and then in the future instructor's course and more technical advanced courses.

Also made great friends: Martin from Cape Town, Nick from the UK, Becca from the UK and Gerhard (team knackered)

James from the UK, Jeffery a local Zulu that's been with Nic a long time and Sophie, also from the UK









Boston the Grounds Manager



HERMAN

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OF INTEREST

NATIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM CONTACT INFORMATION AS AT 2013-07-03

Western Cape Rescue Emergency Contact Numbers:

Cape Town

Tel: 021 937 0300 (WSAR)

Convenor : 082 338 3176 - Andy Wood

Convenor: 082 499 9656 - David Nel

For mountain security / crime related incidents in the Cape national parks call: 086 110 6417

<http://mcsacapetown.co.za/activities/rescue>

Hottentots Holland Rescue Emergency Contact Numbers:

Somerset West

Tel: 021 937 0300 (WSAR)

Convenor: 082 393 0407 – Gela Tölken

<https://sites.google.com/site/mcsahot/search-rescue>

South Cape Rescue Emergency Contact Numbers:

Plettenberg Bay/Knysna/George

Tel: 10177 (Metro)

Convenor: 082 339 1240 – Drew Scott

Convenor: 082 323 4349 - Rogan Hindmarch

<http://mcsasc.wordpress.com/search-rescue-2/>

Eastern Province Rescue Emergency Contact Numbers:

Port Elizabeth

Tel: 10177 / 041 585 1555 (Metro)

Tel: 072 324 4985 (MSAR EP Vodacom number)

Tel: 073 755 2250 (MSAR EP MTN number)

Convenor: 082 781 1770 - Tim Jones

http://eas.mcsa.org.za/S&R/SR_General.htm

KwaZulu-Natal Rescue Emergency Contact Numbers:

Durban / Pietermaritzburg / Drakensberg

Tel: 0800 005 133 (Metro)

Convenor: 082 990 5876 - Gavin Raubenheimer

<http://kzn.mcsa.org.za/search-rescue>

Gauteng Rescue Emergency Contact Numbers:

Johannesburg / Pretoria

Tel: 074 125 1385 (MSAR GP 1)

Tel: 074 163 3952 (MSAR GP 2)

Convenor: 083 274 1116 – Dean v d Merwe

Note the Gauteng team also covers the Free State, North West, Limpopo and Mpumalanga

<http://msargp.rescue.org.za/>

MCSA National Search and Rescue Convenor Rob Thomas - 082 652 1490

This calculation was in a local newspaper in Kempton Park, under Struwwelpeters contribution.

- We use ± **579 000** barrels of crude oil per day in RSA (Department of Statistics).
- 1 Barrel delivers ± **71.92282** liters of petrol.
- **71.92282 X 579 000 = ± 41 643 313** liters per day X **365 = ± 15 200 000 000** litres per year.
- **15 200 000 000 X R2.50** “road levy” per liter = ± **R38 000 000 000** per year – [**R38Billion**].
- **R38 000 000 000 X 21 years** (in which there has been virtually no or very little road maintenance / upgrading done country wide) = **R798 000 000 000**.
- If we round it off to **R800 Billion**, then we have to ask:

“That is why buying an e-tag, is like being gang raped.” Where is the money, Jacob?

Makes you think doesn't it!-----at 1 million rand per kilometer they could have redone/upgraded 38000 km of tarred road the right way in one year at R2.50 from each liter of petrol for the citizens of this country!!!!!!

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On the Lighter Side:



Program for 2013

| Date | What/Where | Contact person | Contact number | Details |
|--------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| 9-11 August | Giants Castle | Escarpment | 3-4 | Hermann Kühne 0798950708 |
| 13 August | Newcastle club | Social | | Committee |
| 17 August | Amajuba Mountain | Day outing | 1 | Doug Lyon (still to confirm) |
| 20 – 24 Sept | Mweni | Combined hike with Free State section | 4 | Hermann Kühne 0798950708 |
| 14 Sept | Kranskop | Day outing | 1 | Thea Groenewegen 0343123703 |
| 5-6 Oct | Xenicave,Cathedral Peak | Easy weekend hike | 2 | Hermann Kühne 0798950708 |
| 8 Oct | Newcastle club | Social | | Committee |
| 12 Oct | Hap en Stap | Social | | Thea Groenewegen 0343123703 |
| 8 Nov | To be confirmed | 30 th Anniversary | | Thea Groenewegen 0343123703 |
| 9-10 Nov | To be confirmed | Xmas party, Berg outing | 2 | Thea Groenewegen 0343123703 |

** Dates to be finalized. The programme is subject to change.
* Datums moet nog bepaal word. Die program kan verander.*

Rating System

1. *Family weekend.* Children, prospective & older members. Easy, short hikes often-good facilities.
2. *Easy hike.* Footpaths present or otherwise flat open terrain.
3. *Average difficulty.* Path over varying terrain, often steep. Sometimes paths, route finding necessary.
4. *Difficult hike without footpath.* Might incl. bundu bashing, serious scrambling, kloofing or exposure.
5. *Technical climb.* Requires climbing gear (sometimes ice climbing gear).

General Interest

If anyone has anything of interest they would like to share in the news letter or wants me to put an article about anything in, then please contact me. It has to be relevant to hiking, mountaineering, camping or the outdoors. Ideally the article or request should reach me within the first 15 days of the month.

Trading Post:

Nothing
