

Mountain Club of South Africa KwaZulu-Natal Section

P O Box 50649
Musgrave Road
4062

E-mail: info@kzn.mcsa.org.za

Website: <http://kzn.mcsa.org.za>

NEWSLETTER

Jan/Feb/Mar 2011



President's Christmas Message

I think 2010 was a great year for the KZN section of the MCSA! In addition to rock and ice climbing meets, slideshows, rescue practices and Drakensberg hikes, we held a very successful 90th July Camp, a major work meet at Cambalala, the Sentinel Centenary celebrations and a meet to Mount Kenya.

We are also making progress in other fields: The Rescue team executed numerous successful rescues; progress is being made with the subdivision of the Monteseel property; we are working on improving our relationship with Ezemvelo - and we hope to have our new website underway early in the New Year.

Thanks to everyone who made a contribution in one way or another. That will be as an organiser, instigator, encourager or participant - the MCSA would be nothing without its members.....

I would like to use this opportunity to wish you all a lovely Christmas. I hope you will spend the time with the people you love and that you will feel truly blessed. May the joy and happiness of Christmas last throughout 2011!!

Hannelie Morris

Club News

An application to join the Club has been received from Shaun Silson. The following members have resigned: Mark Terblanche, Derick de Beer and Glenn Cooke.

Many thanks to those members who have paid their subs up to date; the remaining members who have not yet paid, will be struck off at the end of December 2010.

The new subs are listed on the next page, together with the relevant banking details.

The latest MCSA Journals have arrived, and are with Audrey van Coller, who will be distributing them after the New Year. If you want to collect your Journal from Audrey, please phone her at 031-702 8013.

In closing, I would like to thank all those who have supported the newsletter (including our advertisers) and have come forward with photos and articles during the year, which have been most appreciated! Best Wishes to you and yours for a Happy Christmas, and a wonderful year in 2011.

Anne Rodwell

New Subs for 2011:

Ordinary member (OM)	290.00
Joint Ordinary member (OJ)	220.00 pp
Country Member (CM)	190.00
Joint Country Member (CJ)	150.00 pp
Associate Member (13-17yrs) (AM)	130.00
Family Member (up to 13yrs) (FM)	20.00
Entrance Fee	50.00

Banking Details:

Name:	MCSA KZN Section	Account Name:	MCSA KZN Section
Address:	P O Box 50649	Bank:	Standard Bank Musgrave
	Musgrave Road	A/C No:	051 207 141
	4062	Branch Code:	042626

NB: PLEASE REMEMBER TO PUT YOUR NAME OR MEMBERSHIP NUMBER on the deposit slip, and email proof of payment to: Dave Drummond at: DaveD@ssi.co.za

Hiking News

Dead Dog is Alive and Well!

by Iona Stewart

9/10 October 2010

After months of withering heat and unusually dry weather, the 9th October dawned cold and mizzling, highly welcomed by farmers, but not so much by hikers about to set off to they weren't too sure where!!

Seven of us went to Injisuthi, planning to spend the night in Dead Dog Cave. It is not a cave that can be booked, neither is it on the map, but we did know more or less where to go to look for it. We had permission from the ranger in charge to stay in it "at our own risk", meaning it could already be occupied.

We took the path to Battle Cave, crossing the Injisuthi river early on and then after about five kilometers, crossed it back again. Although the mist and mizzle obscured any views we may have had, it was very pleasant walking weather. Soon after the second crossing, we turned to the left - there is a path, but nothing was marked. A couple of kilometers further on



From L to R, Daniel, Iona, Gavin H(back), Steve, George and Dave Lea.
Photo: Tish Lea

is Fergie's Cave, which has a few Bushman paintings in it. After a leisurely lunch, we set off once more. The two navigators in the party, Steve and Daniel, soon found a very faint path, more imagination than path initially, which took us up a steep hill. The chances of finding a cave looked most unpromising at that point. As we came over the top of the ridge, we looked

into and over a beautiful valley with a couple of patches of natural bush.

By now the path was a lot more promising, except that there was more than one path to choose from. We descended a bit into the valley and soon found ourselves in forest. Following one of the paths, we could see ahead of us an enormous cave. It could only have been Dead Dog Cave.

The cave is evidently a sheltering place for eland; there were many droppings, plus a strong smell, but not at all unpleasant. On first inspection, the cave floor seemed stony and dusty, but even before we started to boil water for tea, we managed to scrape an area clear of the small stones, and build up the foot with rocks. While tea was on the make, the engineers in the party, and the farmer for that matter, moved rocks, strategically, and in no time there was a very neat table with benches around it. The cave had now been converted into three star accommodation! There was a trickle of a waterfall right there; it did not take long to fill our pots with water.

Having organised our camp, we went for a walk onto the opposite ridge. By now the mist had lifted and we had very good views of the escarpment, the Injisuthi Triplets and more.

The next day was bright and sunny, in fact it turned very hot. We worked our way back to Fergie's Cave, leaving Dead Dog Cave via a different path, hid our packs when we were close to the intersection of the main path then headed south to pay Lower Injisuthi Cave a visit. This was another three km along, going past Battle Cave. After a suitable rest in the cave, and a very hasty swim, we returned to our packs, first seeing three Cape Griffins (vultures) circling above Marble Baths, had lunch at the river crossing then headed for the cars.

We covered about 20 km over the whole weekend and went up about 400 - 500m. It was a really pleasant hike and the cave, after the modifications, was very nice. It was a trip I would recommend. I wonder why Ezemvelo do not put it on their books, or why it is not marked on the maps?

There are a couple of negatives, however. There were the remains of fires in the cave which means other non-booking visitors have been collecting wood and burning it there. We saw huge pine trees up on a ridge, and the eland are causing erosion where they enter and leave the cave (though I am not sure what Ezemvelo can do about that..)

Those in the party were Steve Cooke, Daniel Ryding, George Zaloumis, Gavin Heath, Dave and Tish Lea, and myself, Iona Stewart.

Climbing News

Trip to Mt Kenya - Sept 23 to Oct 5, 2010. *by Margaret Brown*

Nine of us met in Nairobi for this wonderful trip. They were Hannelie Morris (leader), Gavin and Barbara Raubenheimer, Gerhard Venter, John Crumley, Sharon Cox, Roy and Jean Stephenson and myself, Margaret Brown. Captain Joe, our guide, took us under his wing and organized our gas and transport to the mountain, via Chogoria.

The first night was spent in wooden bungalows at the Meru Mt Kenya Lodge at 3017m. The next day we walked through beautiful forests (with old Man's Beard hanging from all the trees which were Pencil cedars, Podocarpus, East African Redwood (*Hoginia Abyssinia*) - in some ways, similar to the Eastern Cape. Finally, as we went up higher and nearer Lake Ellis, we came to the Giant, and



Track Lobelias, and the Ostrich Plume Lobelia and Cabbage Groundsel. Lake Ellis is the largest lake on the mountain and very beautiful. We had all the different campsites to ourselves, which was wonderful.

The next day was our first of eight clear mornings and we saw the peaks for the first time. We trudged up to Mintos Hut and Hall Tarn at 4297m and looked down on Lake Michaelson and the Gorges Valley. The views were stunning! It was getting colder and there was a bit of sleet as we arrived at the campsite next to Hall Tarn. We spent two nights at this campsite, so were able to do some washing - and exploring, to see the Temple Gates and the huge cliffs above Lake Michaelson, as well as other tarns in the area. Every afternoon the weather closed in and there was icy



rain or some other form of icy precipitation; temperatures were similar to July Camp but with a lot less sun. Mountain chats and Malachite sunbirds were in evidence around us.

On the fourth day, we could have climbed Mt Lenana, but the clouds and mist rolled in so we went on to Kami (4600m), where we spent four nights. From here Captain Joe led five of us

- Barbara, Jean, Roy, Gerhard and myself - up Point Lenana (4985m). He was a very good leader and we all coped well. John and Sharon attempted Point Peter that day and Hannelie and Gavin rested. Very early the next day, Hannelie and Gavin set off for Batian, while Captain Joe led Sharon and John up Point Lenana. It was the only day it did not 'rain'.

We were in radio contact with the Batian duo and heard late in the afternoon that they were retreating, as Hannelie had AMS. Captain Joe was very anxious when he heard this, and went to the base of the climb with two porters the next morning, to make sure Gavin and Hannelie came down

safely. We had, in the meantime, been doing washing and picking up litter. The porters brought fruit and popcorn that day, as well as supplying us with flasks of boiled water every day, plus teabags and a tin of coffee! The hyrax there kept us company as well.

The next day we walked up and down various steep scree slopes to get around to American Camp, below three glaciers. We walked out by the Naro-Moro route and the Vertical Bog (which took about two hours). It was good to get to the Met Station bungalows and have hot water to wash!

Altogether it was a wonderful trip. Thank you, Hannelie and Captain Joe!

JOURNAL 2010 CONTRIBUTIONS

Cally Henderson (Journal Editor who has provided members with such great Journals since 2004) will again be editing the 2010 Journal (The 2009 Journal should be available before year-end). Contributions for the 2010 Journal should reach her by 31 January 2011 (callyh@envmc2.co.za; 011-326 3150; 082-600 8795). Late submissions will not be accepted after 31 March 2011. Incomplete submissions (see requirements below) will be returned to authors for completion before being accepted.

Requirements:

1. Each article submitted must have a TITLE, AUTHOR NAME, FULL AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS.
 2. PHOTOGRAPHS, if submitted, must be submitted at the same time as the article (not months later).
 - No more than TWELVE photos may be submitted and they must be submitted immediately in HIGH RESOLUTION, as jpg or tiff files (min 1 Mb per photo preferably).
 - Photos must be accompanied by AN MSWORD TABLE WITH PHOTO FILE NAME, CAPTION AND PHOTOGRAPHER for each photo (There is a template: please do request it). If there are particular photos you feel it is essential be included in the article, please indicate as much. Photos are not to be submitted embedded in the Word document - they cannot print from such format.
 3. All material can be emailed to the editor, so long as individual messages do not exceed 7 Mb.
 4. Please use the 2006 Style Sheet as a guide to spelling conventions for mountaineering terms and especially for route description style and layout. The Style Sheet should be in the Journal section of the MCSA website, but if not, please request it from the Editor.
 5. Route descriptions submitted which deviate significantly from the guideline format will be returned to authors for correction. Please be very clear in route descriptions - they often present many problems and much to'ing and fro'ing with authors.
 6. ALL material to be submitted should be in electronic format: if you have prints or slides, please could you get them scanned (at 300 dpi resolution). Nonetheless, high resolution digital images copied to CD, prints (must be very good quality and sharp for use in publishing) and 35mm slides may be posted to: MCSA 2010 Journal Editor / C Henderson; PO Box 413828, CRAIGHALL 2024.
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The Rock Chick Calendar (www.rockchicks.co.za) - 'Where we Lead, others Top Rope'. 2011 will offer the first edition of a Rock Chick Calendar, featuring some of the finest female rockclimbers to come out of SA as well as some psyched newcomers to the sport. 2011 Rock Chicks is a full colour, wall calendar at a cost of R120.00 per calendar (includes postage). Visit www.rockchicks.co.za for more info or to order.

2011 EVENTS

For preliminary planning; more details forthcoming:

NATIONAL MEET 10-16 April 2011:

The 2011 National Meet will be hosted by Free State Section in the QwaQwa area.

YOUTH MEET February 2011:

Paarl-Wellington Section

ANNUAL DINNER 2011: Tygerberg Section

JULY CAMP 2-16 July 2010:

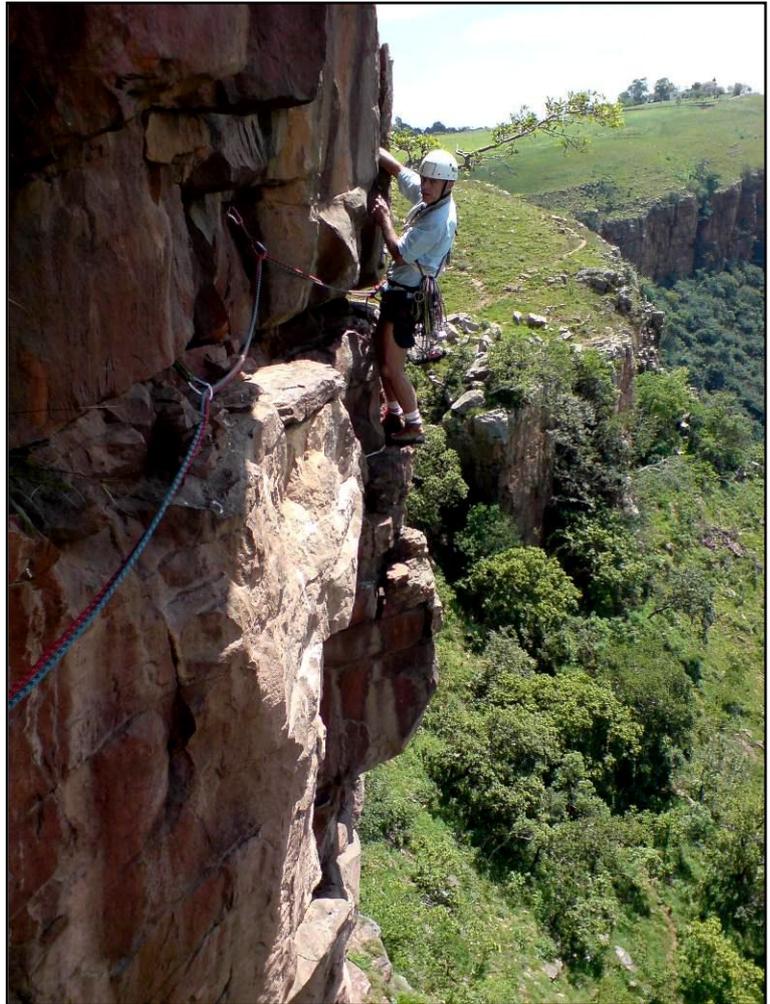
KwaZulu-Natal Section

Rescue News

On the 4th of September 2 MCSA climbers got into trouble on the SE Areté Route on Sentinel Peak. One climber had severe cramps in his arms. The climbers were also moving very slowly. They were thrown a top rope from 100m above, by MCSA rescue team members and brought up to the summit.

On the 5th of September 6, the rescue team was involved in the recovery of a body of a 23 year old male hiker who had fallen to his death off the south side of Bigger Gully on Cathedral Peak. He was part of a group of six hikers camping near the top of the gully. The accident had occurred the night before when someone from the party probably lit toilet-paper near to the tents. A veld fire started and in the confusion and dark, the hiker fell from the edge. The fire later burned down the mountain slopes and burned the body, some 150 metres into the valley below. A large combined operation took place with six MCSA team rescue team members who were airlifted from Witsieshoek Hotel (who were at the Sentinel Centenary), SAPS Airwing, SAPS K9 Unit and Ezemvelo staff. The rope hauling operation took several hours.

On the 25th of November six team members trained with 87 Sqdn at Dragon Peaks. On the 3rd of December two KZN Section members trained with 17 Sqdn and the Gauteng S&R team at Dragon Peaks, to evaluate a possible new radio and intercom system for rescue teams.



Pierre Bill leading Pendulum – pic by Bruce Sobey.

‘JULY CAMP COOKBOOK’ – is available from Rikki Wedderburn at a cost of R75.00 (collected) or R85.00 (posted). **Enquiries:** Cell: 082 538 5389 or **email:** ronwedd@netactive.co.za

CONTACT LIST – MCSA KZN COMMITTEE 2010 - 2011				
Name	Home No.	Work No.	Cell No.	Email
President Hannelie Morris			084 486 2949	president@kzn.mcsa.org.za morris.hannelie@gmail.com
Hon. Secretary Anne Rodwell	031 767 2038		073 1748 369	secretary@kzn.mcsa.org.za faraway@chillibyte.com
Hon. Treasurer Dave Drummond		031 719 5500	084 607 0818	treasurer@kzn.mcsa.org.za DaveD@ssi.co.za
Rock Climbing & Mountaineering Hannelie Morris			084 486 2949	rock@kzn.mcsa.org.za morris.hannelie@gmail.com
Sport Climbing Dave Drummond		031 719 5500	084 607 0818	sport@kzn.mcsa.org.za DaveD@ssi.co.za
Hiking Iona Stewart	033 330 4942		082 990 3968	hiking@kzn.mcsa.org.za iona@sai.co.za
Rescue Convenor Gavin Raubenheimer	033 343 3168	033 343 3168	082 990 5876	rescue@kzn.mcsa.org.za gavin@peakhigh.co.za
Meets Convenor Anthony van Tonder	031 785 1928	031 785 1512	082 892 0935	meets@kzn.mcsa.org.za awvt@global.co.za
Access Roger Natrass	033 383 0902	033 342 3757	084 389 3353	access@kzn.mcsa.org.za natrass@mweb.co.za
Conservation Iona Stewart	033 330 4942		082 990 3968	conservation@kzn.mcsa.org.za iona@sai.co.za
PR & Durban Socials Mike Wood		031 811 0474	083 2557775	pro@kzn.mcsa.org.za mike@woodfamily.co.za
Assistant PR Eric Penman			076 867 9972	
July Camp Rikki Abbott	033 330 3921	033 355 9358	082 538 5389	abbottr@dae.kzntl.gov.za ronwedd@netactive.co.za
Cambalala Hut Clem Robins	031 701 6810	031 450 6059	082 771 2514	robinsca@telkom.co.za
Cambalala Bookings Alison Misselhorn	031 764 2692	031 260 8081	082 488 8391	misselhorn@ukzn.ac.za
Webmaster Dan Ryding	031 764 0685		076 8192 486	dan.ryding@virgin.net
Newsletter Editor Anne Rodwell	031 767 2038		073 174 8369	faraway@chillibyte.com
Maritzburg Socials Ian Bailey	(h) 033 345 7501	Fax: 033 345 7501	083 269 6201	ianbailey@telkomsa.net
Mountain Rescue KwaZulu-Natal	082 990 5877 / 10177 (in KZN) / Toll Free: 0800 005 133			
Drakensberg – 5 day weather forecast	082 231 1602			
MCSA - KZN Section Website http://kzn.mcsa.org.za		MCSA (National) Website www.mcsa.org.za		