

# Mountain Club of South Africa KwaZulu-Natal Section

P O Box 50649  
Musgrave Road  
4062

E-mail: [info@kzn.mcsa.org.za](mailto:info@kzn.mcsa.org.za)

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

## NEWSLETTER

## April/May/June 2010

### Membership

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members who have recently joined the Club: Allard Welter, Deirdre Keulder, Sue van Malsen, Robert Pretorius, Carlos Gonzales, Jean Stephenson, Nicholas Stephenson, Byron Post, Curtis Fulton, Stephen van Coller and Yuriy Tsupko.

Members who have re-joined the Club are: Kevin and Cathy Lock (now living in Australia); and Clive Wheeler.

Graham Herbert and Brett Daly have resigned from the Club. Eight members have been struck off for non-payment of subs.

We regret to say that John Whittaker has passed away. Our condolences are extended to his family and friends.

### Club News

Congratulations and best wishes to Clem Robins and Nola Browning, also Rikki Abbott and Ron Wedderburn, who were married recently.

The 90<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting was held at Assagay Hotel on Saturday 13 March 2010 and attended by 30 members. The incoming President is Hannelie Morris, who is the first female President of the KZN Section – congratulations are extended to her on this milestone in the Club!

Fred Rodwell has stepped down as Treasurer and is being succeeded by Dave Drummond. Anne Rodwell remains as Secretary/Administrator. (The new Committee Contacts List is on the back page of the newsletter).

Talking of newsletters - it has been resolved that, to save on printing and postage as from this issue, newsletters will be printed and posted to those members who do not have email. All members who do have email, will be sent a link to the Club website, where the newsletter can be viewed (with all photographs in colour). If there are any members in the latter category who wish to receive printed copies of the newsletter, would they please contact Anne Rodwell on [faraway@chillibyte.com](mailto:faraway@chillibyte.com), to arrange this before the next issue is brought out at the end of June 2010.

**Thanks to members who have paid their 2010 subs – would those who have not yet paid, PLEASE do so.**

Banking details: Standard Bank, Musgrave Road

Branch Code: 042626      A/C No: 051 207 141

Name: MCSA KZN Section (Remember to state your name & number!)

## **Hiking News**

### **Mooihoek Meet – 24 January 2010**

*by Hannelie Morris*

We left PMB in pouring rain - so much that we had to stop and wait for it to calm down. I was glad that everyone who was coming, knew it was going to rain...

Those people who arrived at the farm after dark, meant that they got a lovely surprise in the morning when they could actually see where they were! After a leisurely breakfast most of us went for a hike and swam in the river. We managed to get home at lunchtime with the rain. Luckily Gavin wanted to ride in the afternoon and we had great fun mountain biking through the mud and even went for a swim in the rain, in my favourite rapids!

Our drinking water comes through a pipe from a stream higher up the mountain. The kids played with this pipe for hours. If only they could have one at home... Between the dust at the fireplace and the mud from the rain, I guess it was easier to forget about clothes!

On Sunday Derek Hughes tried to fly his nephew's kite and had quite a big fall, only later realising that the shoulder was much more serious than the leg.

But all in all, I think everyone had a great time. There aren't a lot of things I enjoy more, than other people appreciating the beauty of our farm!

### **Patagonian Hikes**

*by Karen Kohler*

Very early in the New Year, I was fortunate enough to be setting off once again to the wilds of Patagonian Argentina. After a few nights in the glorious city of Buenos Aires, which included a wonderful tango show, it was time to move westwards. Bariloche was our next destination, a pretty town at the foot of the Andes, along a massive 100km-long lake called Lago Nahuel Huapi. Rather touristy, but a good base for some exploring of local hills such as Cerro Otto. Well, the walk up to the cableway station was lovely, with all the bright yellow broom out in full flower, interspersed with the pink Rosa Mosqueta, or wild rambling rose. It's a very invasive alien plant, rapidly taking over large tracts of Patagonian space – pretty but dangerous.

The top of Cerro Otto has a revolving restaurant, perfect for that icy beer to quench the thirst of the walk to the cableway station! The views are spectacular – lakes dotted with islands and inlets, jagged snow-covered peaks, deep green forests in between, all waiting to be explored on another visit.

A 4-hour bus ride past several more lakes and through areas of wild lupins got us to the tiny town of Esquel, 350kms further south, and far less 'touristy'. Many of the inhabitants of this small town live very active outdoor lives and mountain biking, white water rafting, trout fishing, bird watching, hiking, climbing and snow skiing are pretty well the norm. At one edge of the town is the ski resort of La Hoya, which now boasts yet another and much higher, ski lift. Friends and I hiked easily from its end up to the snow line, cooling off nicely from the summer heat below.

Above the town on the altiplano lies the 'lagoon' of La Zeta and the hike around it takes a few hours, through forests, dells of wild flowers, and wild horses, periodically dodging mountain bikers racing along the single track. Just beyond the lagoon is the Percy River, perfect for swimming, trout fishing or that



afternoon siesta. We opted for swimming, and leapt into freezing glacier meltwater, where the current allowed us to float – very rapidly – down to an enormous swimming hole.

Generous friends lent us their tiny cabin at the fishing club grounds in the Los Alerces National Park, about half an hour out of the town towards the Andes, and right on one of the huge lakes. There are many camping areas there also, but we didn't need a tent this time. We enjoyed long hikes every day there, in near perfect weather. One of the hikes took us for hours around the edge of Lago Rivadavia and we came upon the roosting place of the wild ducks, 'caiques' – there were hundreds of them and the noise they made as they set off from the banks into the river was deafening!

Another hike took us to the 'pasarela' which is a circular walk of several hours, around an island accessed by a swing bridge over the Rio Arrayanes. Once again the views were spectacular – the Torresilla Glacier flowing down between enormous snow-capped peaks, massive clear lakes, thick forest – and trout fishermen here and there. We were even lucky enough to spot a Patagonian woodpecker – lucky because the bird life there is plentiful but practically silent, so 'seeing' is the order of the day, rather than 'hearing'... Their version of our ha-de-dahs is a bird called a 'banduria'. Looks very similar, and about the same size, but extremely shy and with a call like a hoarse goose!

All too soon it was time to leave the snowy mountains and icy lakes behind, but what a spectacular place for recharging batteries worn down by city stresses. Me? I can't wait to go back!

## **Climbing News**

**Swinburne - Beginners' Meet  
6-7 February 2010**

*by Hannelie Morris*

What I thought would be a quick morning of teaching a few beginners about climbing, turned into a major beginners' weekend meet at Swinburne

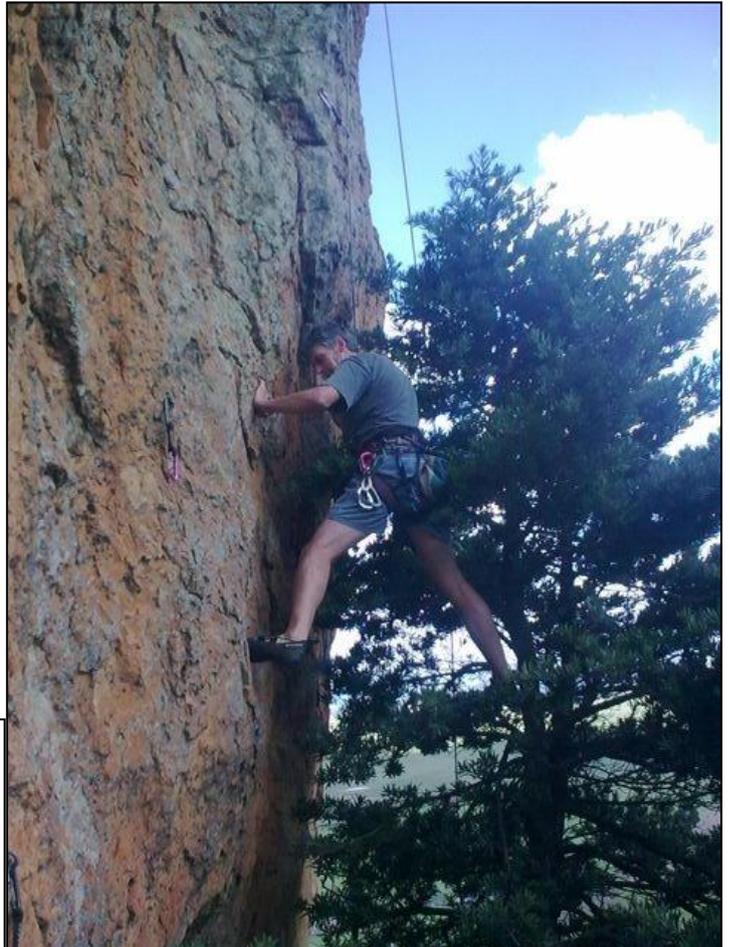
in the Free State (near Harrismith). It was wonderful having so many keen, potential rock climbers around! Luckily I had Bruce Tomalin and Gavin Raubenheimer to help me teach and check the 9 beginners who arrived.

It was amazing seeing people who have never climbed before, face their fears and tackle the whole climbing scene.

Saturday started with a safety talk and an introduction to belaying. The more experienced beginners were taught to lead and the first-timers had the opportunity to top-rope lots of routes. Throughout the weekend there were many volunteers to put ropes on routes; keen belayers and keen climbers. It is amazing how sharing fear brings people together.....

We had a lovely braai on Saturday evening and many stories and much laughter about the day's experiences! Just as it ought to be...

*Bruce Tomalin was captured on film, using unethical tactics while trying to climb a Yellowwood tree.*



## **Rescue Report**

*by Gavin Raubenheimer*

There have been 2 rescue Alerts in the past months. Both did not eventually result in MCSA being involved. One was for missing aircraft in the Drakensberg, and the other, a day hiker in the Cobham area.

On the 31st of January a MCSA member while on an official meet, injured her ankle near Bushman's Nek. Local protection services and KZN Wildlife managed to send a horse to help the patient down.

## **ADVANCE NOTICE - JULY CAMP 3 to 17 July, 2010**

**The camp will be held in the Crystal Waters area  
of the Southern Berg.**

**Enquiries: contact Rikki Wedderburn on Cell: 082 538 5389  
email: rikki.abbott@kzndae.gov.za**

**Full details will be made available at a later date,  
by email and by post.**

**Bridget Ringdahl is giving a Slide Show at the Berea Rovers  
Clubhouse (SAIMENA Room) on Wednesday 7 April 2010, on  
her biking adventures – this time in the Himalayas.  
This is a show *not* to be missed!**



The following comments testify to her popularity as an interesting and entertaining, speaker and presenter.

*'The strength of anyone willing to endure the loneliness and uncertainty of an epic bike ride has to come from within. In the past 10 years, Bridget Ringdahl has completed five journeys by bicycle; in the Himalayas, India, SE Asia, Sweden and South America – from 54°S to 57°N and from sea level to 5 600 metres, a distance of 23 500 kilometres'.*

*'Well done girl – the photos are wonderful, you're an easy speaker and funny to boot!'*  
*Patricia Glyn, Feb 2008*

*'Thanks to all those that attended, I am sure you will agree that those that missed this presentation should be kicking themselves. This will rank as one of the most inspirational presentations that I have ever attended. What Bridget accomplished is short of unbelievable. The sheer physical endurance that she obviously had to possess to achieve this was at times during the presentation almost totally overshadowed by her gripping accounts of the natural, historical and cultural experiences along the way.'* Andrew, Dargle Conservancy Chairman, Jan 2008

***Slings Lament*** by Kathy Tighe

In a shop I'm shiny new,  
Hanging on the rack in view,  
Waiting 'til the time I'm sold  
To a passing climber bold.  
Daydreams fill the idle hours,  
Long adventures, rocky bowers:  
Proud member of a well-used rack,  
Safe and snug in an E1 crack.  
Now at last I'm bought, by Mick,  
And, 'cor blimey, get some stick –  
Not for me the crag rats home,  
Sunny rock and routes of fame –  
But dragged up climbs in weather foul,  
While poor seconds' hang and howl.  
Across the land on crag and cliff  
I serve him well – grade V to Diff.  
Now comes the sea cliff climbing week,  
On Scotland's northern coastline bleak.  
I see the stunning routes succumb,  
The airy face and cramped, damp lum.  
And then we reach the north-most parts,  
The wild stacks splendour quakes our hearts.  
We think this climb's not for us today,  
But Mick has reasoned out a way  
To cross the seething, foaming mass,  
That keeps us off A'Chailleach's base.  
He ties a monkey's fisted knot,  
And throws it across into a slot,  
And there it holds 'gainst the battering waves:  
With mixed feelings, watch the braves.  
Mike Tyroleans his own way over,  
And from huge seas he soon takes cover,  
Scuttling quickly up the stack,  
Putting in runners with practised knack.  
He moves the traverse rope up higher –  
This for me has consequences dire,  
For I'm the sling his hand rests on,  
Which means my climbing days are done.  
I watch the happy troops succeed,  
While in my sad slings heart I bleed.  
And then I see them all cross back,  
On to the shore of rock so black.  
They leave me, hanging lone and free,  
Abandoned on this rock-spike wee.  
I wait here, victim of the sea and wind,  
My colours fade and threads unwind,  
I know that winter's first big storm  
Will treat me with uncaring scorn,  
And lift me from this pinnacle cast,  
And set me travelling oceans vast.  
This end's not good for a once-proud sling,  
I wish you had used some tat, or string!

**CONTACT LIST – MCSA KZN COMMITTEE 2010 - 2011**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Home No.</b>	<b>Work No.</b>	<b>Cell No.</b>	<b>Email</b>
<b>President</b> Hannelie Morris			084 486 2949	president@kzn.mcsa.org.za morris.hannelie@gmail.com
<b>Hon. Secretary</b> Anne Rodwell	031 767 2038		073 1748 369	secretary@kzn.mcsa.org.za faraway@chillibyte.com
<b>Hon. Treasurer</b> Dave Drummond		031 719 5500	084 607 0818	treasurer@kzn.mcsa.org.za DaveD@ssi.co.za
<b>Rock Climbing &amp; Mountaineering</b> Hannelie Morris			084 486 2949	rock@kzn.mcsa.org.za morris.hannelie@gmail.com
<b>Sport Climbing</b> Dave Drummond		031 719 5500	084 607 0818	sport@kzn.mcsa.org.za DaveD@ssi.co.za
<b>Hiking</b> Iona Stewart	033 330 4942		082 990 3968	hiking@kzn.mcsa.org.za iona@sai.co.za
<b>Rescue Convenor</b> Gavin Raubenheimer	033 343 3168	033 343 3168	082 990 5876	rescue@kzn.mcsa.org.za gavin@peakhigh.co.za
<b>Meets Convenor</b> Anthony van Tonder	031 785 1928	031 785 1512	082 892 0935	meets@kzn.mcsa.org.za awvt@global.co.za
<b>Access</b> Roger Natrass	033 383 0902	033 342 3757	084 389 3353	access@kzn.mcsa.org.za natrass@mweb.co.za
<b>Conservation</b> Iona Stewart	033 330 4942		082 990 3968	conservation@kzn.mcsa.org.za iona@sai.co.za
<b>PR &amp; Durban Socials</b> Mike Wood		031 811 0474	083 2677119	pro@kzn.mcsa.org.za mike@woodfamily.co.za
<b>Assistant PR</b> Eric Penman			076 867 9972	
<b>July Camp</b> Rikki Abbott	033 330 3921	033 355 9358	082 538 5389	abbottr@dae.kzntl.gov.za ronwedd@netactive.co.za
<b>Cambalala Hut</b> Clem Robins	031 701 6810	031 450 6059	082 771 2514	robinsca@telkom.co.za
<b>Cambalala Bookings</b> Alison Misselhorn	031 764 2692	031 260 8081	082 488 8391	misselhorn@ukzn.ac.za
<b>Webmaster</b> Dan Ryding	031 764 0685		076 8192 486	dan.ryding@virgin.net
<b>Newsletter Editor</b> Anne Rodwell	031 767 2038		073 174 8369	faraway@chillibyte.com
<b>Maritzburg Socials</b> Ian Bailey	(h) 033 345 7501	Fax: 033 345 7501	083 269 6201	ianbailey@telkomsa.net
<b>Mountain Rescue</b> KwaZulu-Natal	082 990 5877 / 10177 (in KZN) / Toll Free: 0800 005 133			
<b>Drakensberg – 5 day weather forecast</b>	082 231 1602			
<b>MCSA - KZN Section Website</b> <a href="http://kzn.mcsa.org.za">http://kzn.mcsa.org.za</a>		<b>MCSA (National) Website</b> <a href="http://www.mcsa.org.za">www.mcsa.org.za</a>		