



BUZZ

Newsletter of the Betty's Bay Ratepayers' Association
Nuusbrief van die Bettysbaaise Belastingbetalersvereniging

June/July 2015

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From your Editor . . .

You will notice that this edition of the Buzz is for June and July. The reason is that for three months I have been late in getting it to you. New at the job, I battled with my first effort [computer issues] and I haven't been able to reverse the trend. It takes me a full month to get it all together.

The good news is that the August edition will appear when it should—in the first week of the month.

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Deadline for submissions:

20th of each month

<http://www.bettysbay.info/>

Please send us your comments, suggestions, events and news.

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NB! Reference must include your surname and Erf Number. *Please do not send cash.*

Contact: Adrian de Kock 028 272 9998

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1. Get a copy at the Village Centre Café or Penguin Place, normally first week of each month.
2. Download a PDF version from our web page. Go to link 'The Buzz' at <http://www.bettysbay.info>
3. We also leave a number of copies at the Betty's Bay Library.

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Contact: Adrian de Kock, 028 272 9998

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Notice: The Buzz is a private newsletter, administered, financed and published by the BBRA so as to communicate important issues with its members. The committee reserves the right not to publish letters or articles it may receive.

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079 894 1622

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082 522 1831

SAND DUNE INVASION – BETTY'S BAY

Notice of a Public Participation Meeting at

11.00 on 18 July 2015 in the Crassula Hall

After many months of perseverance by the Betty's Bay Dune Interest Group (DIG) and the Betty's Bay Ratepayers Association (BBRA) in communicating with anyone prepared to listen regarding the drift sand problems at Main Beach, we have now finally arrived at what we hope will be the starting point of a chain of events that will lead to a stabilised and rehabilitated dune field at Main Beach.

The Betty's Bay DIG Committee met in Stellenbosch on 21 April 2015 with representatives of Cape Nature, the Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs & Development Planning (DEADP) - Environmental Management Directorate, the Overstrand Department of Environmental Management and Mr Laurie Barwell, a specialist consultant in the field of coastal and dune management.

Mr Barwell is a civil engineer who has worked at the Natural Resources and the Environment Division of the CSIR in Stellenbosch for more than 20 years in the Dune Rehabilitation and Stabilisation field. Mr Barwell (now retired) is currently involved with the Pringle Bay Rate Payers Association (PBRA) and Overstrand Municipality in addressing sand encroachment problems in Pringle Bay. Mr Barwell has been part of a CSIR team that developed a Dune Management Plan for Pringle Bay in the 80s and has a long association with Pringle Bay. The original Pringle Bay Plan was only partially implemented and while the part where it was implemented is still stable today the part not implemented now creates a major problem. Mr Barwell has recently been contracted by the PBRA to update the original PB Plan to accommodate changed conditions on the ground and new Legislation and to resubmit the Plan to DEADP for approval. Mr Barwell has now also been approached by Mr Pierre de Villiers (Cape Nature) to provide an opinion on the way forward at Main Beach in Betty's Bay.

At the meeting Mr Barwell presented on the work being done at Pringle Bay and explained the methods being used. He also gave a view on what could be done at Main Beach based on his initial investigation. The most important insight for the DIG Committee was that the problem at Main Beach is not particularly difficult to manage and that it has been done successfully at many other areas (e.g. Stilbaai & Big Bay in Blouberg).

The way forward for us here in Betty's Bay is the same as for Pringle Bay - namely:

- a. Register the intention to generate a Dune Management Plan with DEADP – this must be done by the Municipality.
- b. Generate a Dune Management Plan for the Main Beach dune field – this will be done by Mr Laurie Barwell with some assistance from Cape Nature.
- c. Get approval of the Management Plan from DEADP – Overstrand Municipality.
- d. Implement the rehabilitation and stabilisation part of the plan.
- e. Maintain the stabilised and rehabilitated dune field.

The Dune Management Plan (b) is a permanent Plan - unlike the temporary Plan submitted by the Municipality earlier this year. The objective of the former was to rehabilitate the dune field and thereafter maintain it. The objective of the latter is to allow the Municipality to, in the interim – until the permanent plan has been generated and approved by Province – legally remove the sand to keep the roads open and to deposit the sand back on the beach.

It should also be noted that item (d) above (implementation) would require significant funding - figures of R3m to R4m for a turnkey contract has been mentioned. There could be a benefit of scale if the BB and PB work is done together during implementation. There are many ways to fund the implementation phase, but we first have to have an approved Management Plan.

Item (e) above (maintenance) would require a continuous low level funding basically for ever and a Special Rating Area may be the best funding model for this.

Nothing can be done at all until items (a) and (b) above have been completed. This has been our main obstacle thus far, but through the involvement of Mr Laurie Barwell, we finally have a way of achieving this.

We are happy to report that we have the full and enthusiastic support of the various DEADP Directorates involved to find environmentally sound and legally acceptable means to manage the dune fields. Being the enforcing authority of the environmental laws, DEADP cannot be instrumental in generating the plan, but they are actively participating in the discussion and are providing guidance to ease the eventual approval of the Plan. They have agreed that we, as is also the case in Pringle Bay, do not have to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), but only provide a Management Plan – this is a major cost saver. Cape Nature is providing two Environmental Management interns (masters degree graduates) to assist Laurie in the preparation of the Betty's Bay Dune Management Plan to reduce the cost of Laurie's consultancy fees.

In May 2015 the BBRA and the PBRA were invited by Mr Coenie Groenewald, the Municipal Manager (MM) of Overstrand Municipality, to discuss the dune rehabilitation project and more specifically possible funding models for the project. The meeting was also attended by the Executive Mayor, Alderlady Nicolette Botha-Guthrie, the Manager Environmental Affairs representative, Liezl Bezuidenhout, and various other officials. During the meeting the MM expressed sympathy with the plight of those affected by the sand problems in Betty's Bay and Pringle Bay and pledged the assistance of the Municipality in addressing the problems, but added that the Overstrand Budget is under severe strain and that it would be very difficult to allocate funding to the BB and PB projects.

The Municipality has however applied for more than R3m of funding from the Work for Coast job creation programme of the Central Government that could be used for this purpose. Most of this funding would be in the form of unskilled labour and some additional funding would have to be found for the civil works part of the plans. The Mayor also expressed her enthusiastic support for the projects at the meeting.

Mr Barwell's fee for doing the investigation and generating the Management Plan [item (b) above] is R50k. This represents only about a week's worth of work at the current

Professional Engineer consultancy fees. Mr Barwell will be spending many more hours than one week of effort on the task and this number is therefore really exceptionally reasonable. Also required as input to the work is a three dimensional survey of the dune field adding a further cost of about R25K. The Overstrand Municipality has offered to fund the survey work if the rate payers fund Mr Barwell's work. The survey has now been completed and the data provided to Mr Barwell. The same process has been followed at Pringle Bay. Pringle Bay has an existing Management Plan that only needs to be updated and the cost for the Plan is therefore lower (R25k) and the PBRA has already collected about R30k for this purpose. In Betty's Bay we still have to collect funds for the generation of the Management Plan and the BBRA has decided to assist in collecting and administering funds for this purpose.

The sand dune problem has been one which has been a thorn in our side for a considerable period of time and has been in the forefront of the BBRA agenda and at last a viable solution is on the cards. This solution will benefit all residents of Bettys Bay in one form or another and we therefore appeal to all those who see the benefits laid out in this missive to contribute towards the cost of the planning exercise. The BBRA will administer donations through their bank account and will ring fence such funds for this purpose alone. Donations should be deposited to the following bank account:

Bettys Bay Ratepayers Association

ABSA Hermanus

Cheque Account Number 4066616439

Depositors should reference their contributions as follows – Surname-Erf Number-DIG—
e.g. Smith 1234 DIG

Should you prefer, cheques can be mailed to us at:

Bettys Bay Ratepayers Association

P.O. Box 48

Bettys Bay

7141

There are many advantages to be gained by all the BBRA members (in fact the whole BB community) in the rehabilitation and stabilisation of the Main Beach area (see below) and therefore the BBRA Management Committee requests contributions from our members and all other residents and property owners in Betty's Bay. Successful stabilisation and rehabilitation of the Main Beach dune field will bring the following advantages:

- Improved access to the beach for the general public including parking
- Improvement in functionality and safety of the road network near the beach area
- Preservation of the behind the dunes fresh water ecological system for the benefit

of future generations

- Aesthetic improvement of the beach area that would lead to increased tourism and a boost to the village economy.

There are additional advantages to be gained in particular by the owners of affected properties close to the beach; most of who are members of the Betty's Bay Dune Interest Group. Members of DIG and all other property owners in Nerine, Morea and Nivenia roads will also be approached directly by the DIG Committee to make contributions.

There are significant advantages for the Overstrand Municipality as well:

- Recovery of property values will restore and grow the tax base in the main beach area.
- Reduction in the current cost of service delivery (water, sanitation, etc.)
- Reduction in the cost of road maintenance in the area – the current cost of keeping the roads open is significant.
- Increased tourism further growing the tax base.

There will be a presentation by Laurie Barwell in the Crassula Hall on Saturday 18 July 2015 at 11H00 to provide more information about the proposed plan.

AN UNUSUAL VISITOR TO BETTY'S BAY

In May, this beautiful creature was spotted at Draadbaai by Marianne Alexander, who has a house nearby. She noticed that it had been tagged and sent these pictures to Deon Kotze at the Department of Environmental Affairs in the hope that she might find out more about the visitor.



He responded as follows: "It is a Southern Elephant seal and originated in the southern oceans, where they breed on islands such as Marion Island, Gough Island and South Georgia. I do not have the tagging information at hand but we tagged it about a year ago, when it also visited our shores. This is therefore a very valuable re-sighting."

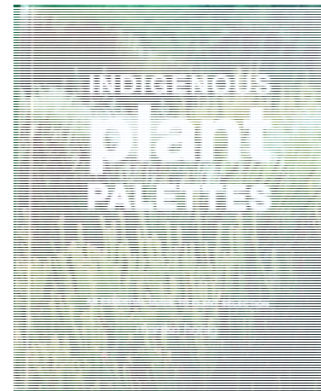
THE BETTY'S BAY GARDENER

A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!

[Thomas Edward Brown. 1830–1897]

Gardening in Betty's Bay should be a breeze. After all, we live in what is probably the richest pocket of the richest floral kingdom of the world, where "richness" refers to the huge variety of flowering plants occurring naturally in our indigenous vegetation. But gardening here is not easy. In fact, it is "*vrot*" with disappointment and despair. Seemingly healthy plants up and die on us for no apparent reason and, more often than not, plants refuse to behave as the books tell us they should. An example: In 1988 I planted a Milkwood tree. It was at least a metre tall at the time and was as healthy as could be, with fabulous shiny foliage and lots of promising new growth. Over the years, I have loved and nurtured it. I have regularly fed it with compost and Seagro. I have religiously watered it in the dry season. I have whispered words of encouragement into its leaves and have even sung to it. But latterly these loving words have been replaced by less salubrious diatribes. The damn thing continues to cling to life but appears to grow down instead of up. After 27 years, my Milkwood is 1/2m tall and has a quarter of the leaves it once had. I wish it would curl up its toes once and for all, but no, it battles on, a constant reminder of my failure as a gardener.

But at last my [and your] gardening attempts could enjoy more success. I now realise that ignorance has been at the root of most of my personal failures. And I use the word "root" quite intentionally. It turns out that I have been trying to grow plants in soil conditions for which they are not suited. [My failure with the Milkwood is testament to this.] Two recently-published books have unscrambled the mysteries of gardening in the Kogelberg.



The first is *Your Place in the Kogelberg*, by Tim Atwell [reviewed in last month's *Buzz*] and the second is *Indigenous Plant Palettes, An Essential Guide to Plant Selection*, by Marijke Honig. It appears that there are no fewer than seven local ecosystems within the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve, each with its own "geological and soil features and special and endemic plants" [Atwell, p32]. One's success in cultivating particular plants in one's garden is dependent on the soil type and conditions of the immediate area and

it is advisable to choose the plants that would naturally thrive there. The Attwell book outlines the actual areas in the Kogelberg that fall into the different categories and gives an overview of the plants that thrive in each. The Honig book deals with the specifics of gardening in these different conditions and her “palettes – groups of plants for a specific purpose or situation” – provide a very useful guide as to what to plant where, depending on the effect that you want to achieve. Ernst van Jaarsveld, in his introduction to the book, explains that “Marijke simplifies plant choice in a step by step approach and describes 24 plant palettes which cover a wide range of needs from security, screening, fragrance and architectural plants to attracting birds. For each palette she has chosen 30 of the best plants available – taking into consideration our regional diversity of climate and landscape.” Once you have identified the local ecosystem into which your garden falls, you can find out what to plant in it and how to achieve the best results by altering your gardening techniques to suit the environment. Then by a process of cross-referencing you can go a step further. You can choose plants for a particular purpose, like attracting birds or creating a screen, while at the same time ensuring that these plants are suited to your particular gardening conditions.

According to Tim Attwell, I am to be congratulated! This is because my garden is situated in the heart of the Cape flora. It appears that I, in gardening terms at least, am privileged to live on the slopes of the mountain as opposed to the flatter section between the mountain and sea. My property is part of the Kogelberg Sandstone Fynbos and, as such, can support a huge variety of endemic plants that do not occur natu-



A more successful patch in our garden

rally in any other part of the world. The fact that the garden is on a slope is another plus. This ensures good drainage, an important factor in the successful cultivation of fynbos. So, even though the soil conditions appear unpromising – sandy, nutrient-poor and acidic – I should enjoy many gardening triumphs if I choose my plants wisely, using the rich natural vegetation around me as my guide.

But do not despair if your garden is situated in one of the other ecosystems in the Betty's Bay area. You may not have such a large selection of plants suited to your conditions, but there are easily enough to create a lovely garden. Again use the naturally-occurring vegetation as your guide. A good idea is to base your garden plan on the local vegetation, using the plants found around your property as the skeleton of the garden. You can then enhance the overall effect by introducing colourful and interesting additions. Both books are very helpful as to what plants grow best in the different conditions. Also, you can consult the people who work in the Harold Porter nursery. They are very knowledgeable about what grows best where. [And you'll probably be able to grow milkwoods!]

Marijke Honig provides practical gardening advice to fynbos gardeners. Here are

some of her suggestions:

- Plant fynbos in autumn or winter. This gives the plants a chance to develop good root systems before the onset of the hot and dry summer months.
- If you are planting in good, undisturbed topsoil you do not need to add compost. If the soil is sandy and poor, compost will be of benefit, but don't dig it in. Instead, put a layer on the top of the soil. Not only will it enrich the soil, but will help it to retain water.
- Never disturb the soil unnecessarily. Your hole must be just big enough to accommodate the plant that you are putting in.
- Be very careful not to disturb the root system when you transfer a plant from the plastic container to the ground. Remove the bag very carefully and press down the soil gently with your hands after planting.
- Be careful not to buy plants that are root-bound. The root system is more likely to be damaged during the planting out process. In other words, avoid larger plants where the roots have filled the bag. [A sign to watch out for is roots growing out of the holes at the bottom of the bag.]
- An annually-renewed, thick layer of mulch on a bed is very important as it will keep the surface of the soil cool and retain moisture. Your mulch layer must be 3 to 5cm thick and you can use rough compost, wood chip or pine needles. [If you have proteas growing in your garden, the litter they produce forms an excellent mulch. This litter is to be found lying at the base of the plants. When you cut back a protea or shrub, do not remove all the debris. Allow this to form a natural mulch. This can stay where it is and any excess litter can be used on other plants.]
- You will need to water new plants during the first two summers or until they are well established. But be careful not to over-water. [This will cause the roots to rot and the plants to grow too rapidly.] Water infrequently but deeply so that the roots are encouraged to grow down in search of water.
- Don't dig unnecessarily in your garden. Digging disturbs delicate root systems and soil microbes. Pull out weeds. Never dig them in to the soil.
- Once a plant has flowered, give it a trim. This will encourage future flowering and make the plant bushier. [When trimming proteas, avoid cutting below the lowest leaves. Very often a plant will not recover if it is pruned too enthusiastically.]
- Never use chemical fertilisers that are high in phosphates in a fynbos garden. A mulch of compost will do the trick. Foliar feeding or watering with seaweed or fish extract is always beneficial. Seaweed is excellent for strengthening the root systems of plants.

It is never too late to get your garden into shape. Arm yourself with these two books and be guided by them. The results should make all your efforts worthwhile.

GOOD LUCK!

[from a very enthusiastic amateur]

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

Overstrand Emergency	24 Hours	028 313 8111
Fire Department	Control Room	028 312 2400
	Marlu Rust	082 776 9287
	Wendy Tawse	082 442 8005
	Fires in Reserves	082 783 8585
Police	Emergencies	10111
	Charge Office	028 271 8219
	Station Commander	082 778 6793
	Sector Policing Officer	082 522 1831
Security Providers	Safe Security	028 272 9110
	Response	082 410 7845
	ASK Security (Office)	028 272 9500
	24 Hour Emergency	082 951 1892
		071 135 9029
	Sandown Bay Security	028 271 5633
		028 271 3306
		028 272 9575
Ambulances	Provincial	10177
	ER24	084 124
Doctors	Dr Du Plessis	028 271 4227
	Dr Van Niekerk	028 271 4227
	Dr Morkel	028 271 4227
	After Hours	082 653 6355
	Dr Greeff	028 272 9999
	After Hours	082 659 9437
	Dr Moses	028 271 3152
	After Hours	078 417 5628
Dentists	Dr Duvenhage	028 271 3467
	After Hours	082 861 0616
	Dr Engelbrecht	028 271 3662
	Dr Visser	028 271 5321

Hospitals	Hermanus Provincial	028 312 1166
	Hermanus Medi-Clinic	028 313 0168
	Vergelegen Medi-Clinic	021 850 9000
Child Welfare	Kleinmond	028 271 4044
Veterinarian	Dr Dave	028 271 4183
	After Hours	083 440 5191
KAWS	Animal Welfare	028 271 5004
Pharmacies	Albertyn Pharmacy	028 271 4666
	After Hours	082 927 5240
	After Hours	082 868 4267
	Kleinmond Pharmacy	028 271 3320
	After Hours	082 652 4309
Optometrists	Obermeyer	028 271 3119
	Optical Eyes	028 271 5684
Municipality	Betty's Bay	028 272 9263
	Kleinmond	028 271 8400
	Fire & Water	028 313 8111
	Law Enforcement	028 313 8111
		028 271 8466
	Traffic	028 313 8111
	Sewerage Removal	028 271 8435
	Hermanus	028 313 8000
Seawatch	Betty's Bay	028 272 9532
	Mike Tannett	082 994 9300
NSRI	Gordons Bay	021 856 1992
	Hermanus	028 312 3180
Electricity (Eskom)	Electricity	021 859 5304
	Emergencies	08600 37 566
General	Councillor Lisel Krige	028 272 9533
	Betty's Bay Post Office	028 272 9363
	Centre Shop	028 272 9230
	Penguin Place	028 272 9257
	Tourism Bureau	028 271 5657
	Hangklip Community Care Centre	082 378 1614
	Fire Extinguisher Service	083 741 9914

ARE YOUR AGAPANTHUS PLANTS LOOKING SICK?

It was in my Cape Town garden that I first noticed that the Agapanthus plants were dying back. On closer examination, I discovered that a caterpillar had burrowed into the base of each of them, that the leaves were dying from the outside in and that the fleshy bits at the bottom were rotting. ["Ah, a lotten lizome," noted my Malawian gardener, Patlick!] I immediately consulted the fount of all knowledge – the Internet – and learnt that this nasty little creature, still unnamed, was a relatively new arrival in the Western Cape. It is thought to have originated in Gauteng and, somehow or other, had travelled the 15,000-odd kilometres to Cape Town. Constantia was the first suburb to be affected, but the infestation soon spread to other parts of Cape Town, where it is now a serious problem. For not only are thousands of gardens affected, but the huge plantations of Agapanthus that line the streets and highways are dying back – a tragedy if one considers how they contribute to the beauty of Cape Town when they flower in October and November.

A year ago, I noticed that the Agapanthus growing in my Betty's Bay garden were similarly infected and this probably means that yours are too. Or if they are not, they soon will be. We all need to take urgent action if this scourge is to be halted.



A healthy Agapanthus plant



Infested Agapanthus



Burrowing marks on leaves



Caterpillar bores down into core

Luckily, it is very easy to get rid of the pest. You add a teaspoon of a poison called *Ripcord* ® to five litres of water in a watering can and water the plants with the solution. You then water them some more with the garden hose. The caterpillars will emerge and die and, in no time at all, your Agapanthus will be on the road to recovery. It is advisable to repeat the process two weeks later, to get rid of any newly-hatched caterpillars that might have appeared in the *interim* and then to give the plants a dose every couple of months as a prophylactic.



The culprit at close range

The active ingredient of *Ripcord* ® is a pyrethroid. Pyrethroids are synthetic insecticides based on natural pyrethrum. Natural pyrethrum is an insecticide made from the dried flower heads of chrysanthemum plants and it has been used as an insecticide for centuries and as a lice remedy in the Middle East called Persian Powder. Early history showed the Chinese used pyrethrum as a cure for tapeworms and other worms in human stomachs and intestines, with no deaths reported .

One of the advantages of pyrethrum and pyrethroids is that they are specific to insects and do not affect mammals or birds. However, they are toxic to aquatic organisms so be careful when you are applying poison near garden pools. Mammals and birds are able to quickly metabolise and get rid of pyrethrum; even very high doses are eliminated within 24 hours and no after-effects have been observed. In fact, many dogs are regularly bathed in pyrethrum washes and poultry and prized caged birds, which have a faster metabolism than mammals, are often completely submerged in a pyrethrum wash to kill mites and lice.

If you do not like using synthetic insecticides, there is an alternative. You can use Margaret Roberts's *Caterpillar Spray* with equally good results. It contains *Bacillus thuringiensis*, a natural bacterium.

A SIMPLE BUT BRILLIANT SOLUTION TO THE DREADFUL BLUE SECURITY LIGHTS

A Buzz reader, Barbara Jenman, had this to say:

"A little Prestik on the top, covering a small part of a blue security light does the trick, even in rain. The light focuses downwards but is still visible from the road."

She went on to say how lucky we were, for so many reasons, that we could keep our skies dark .

She agrees that we must spread the word by speaking to neighbours about how intrusive the blue lights are and suggesting that we ALL do something about them.

Let's mobilise, fellow Betty's Bayers!

THE CRUISE OF A LIFETIME

DAN AND LIZ FICK recently embarked on a cruise on the Queen Mary 2. They joined the second sector of 22 days of the QM2 World Cruise. They travelled from Dubai to Hong Kong and their cruise incorporated 10 countries and 13 cities. This is their photo diary.



We first spent 3 days in DUBAI. Amazing what the Emirates have achieved in a very short period of time! They boast the World's Tallest City, the highest building (Burj Khalifa) at 828m (160 levels), highest Hotel (Burj al Arab), largest mall (Dubai Mall) with 1200 shops on 4 levels, biggest fountain (150 m high) and the largest artificial island. The Dubai airport is reputed to be largest, surpassing London's Heathrow in flights and passengers and still growing in size and fleet.

The QM2, one of the tallest, longest and largest passenger liners ever built, is the flagship of the Cunard fleet.

The ship has a capacity of 2620 passengers and a crew of 1253 which includes some 144 chefs who prepare 15000 meals a day. It is 345m long, 45m wide and 14 decks in height. Some 650 tons of fresh water is produced daily from sea water. There are 10 restaurants and 5 swimming pools. One can enjoy meals throughout the day and night from 6am until midnight.

A variety of entertainment is available throughout the day and night in the theatre, cinema, ball room, planetarium, casino or disco. The library consisting of some 6000 books, is reputed to be the largest at sea.





Our first port of call was ABU DHABI, the capital of the UAE. Enormous development and wealth was evident, owing to oil-driven transformation. Stand-out attractions are the stunning Sheikh Zayed Mosque, one of the world's largest and most extravagant places of Islamic worship. Its snowy-white mass of domes and minarets are visible for many kilometers around. The F1 Grand Prix circuit, together with the huge Ferrari World theme park, is simply an amazing development.

Early morning arrival in COCHIN, INDIA. This was one of the countries where the immigration officials insisted on passengers being seen in person. Although it is a vibrant city and a centre of the Indian spice trade since 1341, it is very dirty and the buildings have been badly neglected. Traffic was quite chaotic. Access to the harbour was lined with Chinese fishing nets dating back to the 13th century.



Next port of call was COLOMBO, capital of SRI LANKA. Took a sightseeing tour of the city which included a 150-year-old Hindu Temple, really very beautiful. We also visited the Parliament Buildings, Town Hall and Independence Square – all very well looked after with lovely gardens and surrounded by lakes. Once again traffic very busy - luckily our taxi driver knew all the shortcuts and we really managed to see a great deal.

PHUKET, THAILAND. It was the first port where we dropped anchor off shore and made use of tenders to reach the main jetty. Very efficient and quick. Very tourist orientated. Fabulous shopping opportunities and popular beaches. Many day tours available to either Phi Phi or James Bond Islands, elephant parks, Temples and the Old Town.





Next stop: PENANG ISLAND, MALAYSIA. Foreign influences are quite evident in the landmarks. The largest Buddhist Temple in Malaysia is to be found here with lovely statues and beautiful gardens. The Temple is built into the mountain side and there are different levels which can be accessed by funicular train. Along the channel are long rows of Chinese Clan jetties. A funicular takes one to the top of the Penang Hill which provides panoramic views of the island.

Our next port of call was Port Klang. KUALA LUMPUR— the capital of MALAYSIA is some 45 min. from the port. The Golden Triangle is the hub of the city's shopping centres and nightlife, whilst the Petronas Towers, which was once the highest building in the world, dominate the business district. We visited a beautiful Chinese Temple, as well as Federation Square with its miniature 'Big Ben'. The cricket grounds and club house which were used by the British are today still being used.



SINGAPORE's new Marina South Pier Cruise Centre is very modern with a beautiful Immigration Hall. A monorail transports cruise ship passengers from the harbour to the city. We arrived in the small city-state on the eve of bustling and vibrant Chinese New Year celebrations. Truly a majestic and modern city. The transport is excellent as the Government discourages the people to privately own cars. Used the Hop-On Hop-Off bus to tour the city. Some 1600 Chinese boarded the ship en route to HongKong.



Next we dropped anchor outside SIHANOUKVILLE, CAMBODIA, surrounded by tropical islands. This has become a popular beach destination. Took a shuttle bus to the central market and then a Tuk Tuk tour of the city sights. The beaches are beautiful with large, 5 Star hotels being erected. The people here are very poor and everywhere we stopped, children as young as 3 were begging for money.

PHY MY, VIETNAM, is a container port and is located south of Ho Chi Minh City on the Mekong Delta. A shuttle bus was available to the central flower market. There are literally thousands of different flowers, orchids and bonsai for sale and they were really so beautiful.

HO CHI MINH CITY, more commonly known as SAIGON was a buzz of frenetic activity with street amass with motorcycles. Food stalls line the city streets, especially around the bustling Ben Thanh Market



HONG KONG. Arrived to a Lion dance performance welcome. Vibrant Chinese New Year celebrations were in full swing. This densely populated port's shopping and chaotic night markets are fantastic. The tram up The Peak is not to be missed, nor is a bus trip to Stanley and a sampan trip around the Aberdeen harbour.

MAY I INTRODUCE ... EDWARD SILBERBAUER

EDWARD SILBERBAUER is Betty's Bay's very own "Mr Hack". He is the convenor of a group of intrepid volunteers who, once a month, do battle against the alien vegetation that threatens our pristine *fynbos*. Armed with chainsaws and sheer determination, this group chops down the invasive, non-indigenous trees that can swamp the local vegetation. These plants, if left to their own devices, spread at an alarming rate, swallowing up all the indigenous plants in their path. They are also a serious fire hazard. [One has only to think of the terrible fires in Australia to understand the threat that they pose.] Port Jackson willows, pines, myrtle, *rooikrans*, New Zealand Christmas trees and long-leaf wattles are the main culprits.



Ed has convened "The Hack" for the last 26 years and is the fifth person to do so. The Hack started 52 years ago, in 1963, and Ed has been part of the group from the beginning. At a meeting of the Betty's Bay Ratepayers in that year, Denys Heesom, a well-respected permanent resident, posed the question: "What are we going to do about all the alien vegetation in Betty's Bay?" After some discussion, it was agreed that, with Denys as the convenor, they all would meet at 9 o'clock on the first Sunday of every month. They would hack out alien vegetation for a couple of hours and then enjoy a beer or two. More than a half-century later, a group of hackers still meet at 9 on the first Sunday of every month. They hack out aliens for a couple of hours and then enjoy a beer or two. What a tradition!



Alf and Ida Broadwith in the early days

Hacking is generally more difficult now than it was then. In the early days of The Hack, regular fires made the job easier. Nowadays, with fires better controlled by a very efficient fire-fighting unit, the local vegetation has become thicker, taller and less easy to penetrate. And the hackers have to deal with fully-grown alien trees, as well as the saplings that they spawn. [After a fire, these would have been destroyed and it would be much easier to pull out the newly-germinated seedlings as they appeared.]

But the hackers battle on, tackling the aliens, one area at a time. Fortunately, their job has, in recent years, been made a bit easier by the introduction of “biological control”, that is, bugs from Australia that reduce the seed load of the aliens.



It would appear that hacking is in the genes. Ed's brother, Dickin, preceded him as convenor of The Hack. This is Ed's son, James, lending some muscle to the Betty's Bay cause.

James is the convenor of the Somerset West hacking group.

But there is a problem that poses a constant threat to the integrity of the fynbos, and that is the attitude of private property owners. The Hack can operate freely in public open spaces but cannot go into privately-owned land. It is incumbent on property-owners to keep their land clear of alien vegetation and there are regulations that demand this. Unfortunately however, there are not the financial resources to enforce these rules. Inevitably, I suppose, many Betty's Bayers ignore the regulations. Some even go one step further: they actually plant invasive aliens on their properties, either out of ignorance or defiance.

The Hack's most notable achievement was probably the work it did at Avril's Dump. ["Avril" refers to Avril Dunn, the well-known local conservationist who died a couple of months ago.] Over a period of five years, the Betty's Bay Hack cleared an area of about five hectares around the old dump site on the right-hand side of the road to Pringle Bay.

Please be aware of the need to rid Betty's Bay of alien vegetation. Not only does it destroy our local *fynbos*, but it also constitutes a serious fire hazard. Try to clear your property of these plants and encourage others to do the same.

Should you wish to volunteer for The Hack, you can contact Edward Silberbauer on 028 272 9015.

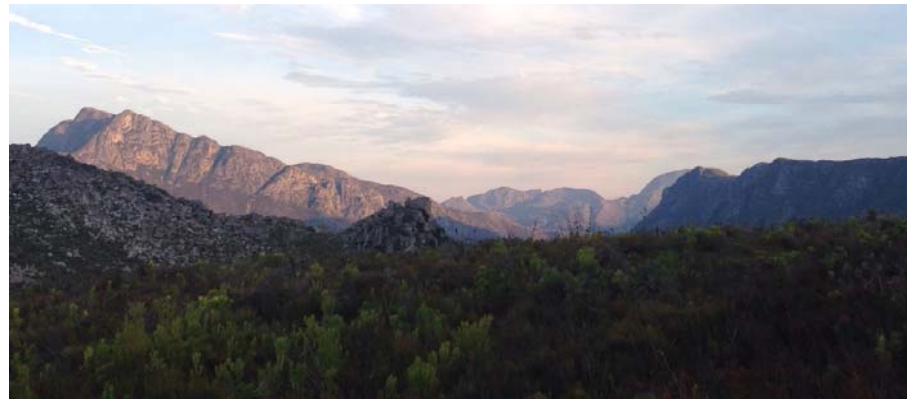
OUT AND ABOUT IN THE OVERBERG

We have experienced typical Cape winter weather this year—a few spells of pelting rain and Arctic temperatures, interspersed with wonderfully sunny days. These are the days that we should, quite literally, head for the hills.

Alex Antrobus, a family friend, did just this, accompanied by a couple of his pals. He had this to say about his hike in the Kogelberg . . .

Backyard Beauty in the Kogelberg Biosphere

The Kogelberg Nature Reserve forms the heart of the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve. For those Betty's Bay and Kleinmond residents who live inland of the R44, the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve *literally is* in their back yard! But this doesn't mean it can't be enjoyed by everyone.



For those without Wild Cards who wish to avoid Nature Reserve entrance fees, the Biosphere Reserve east of the Nature Reserve also features a very well-kept network of hiking paths, stretching from Kleinmond right across to the mouth of the Palmiet River. We set off to explore this part of the Biosphere reserve one sunny winter Saturday. Beginning from Fairy Glenn where the Palmiet meets the R44, we walked east along the contour path, which curves along the shoulder of the Three Sisters above the R44 towards Kleinmond. This track makes for easy walking and boasts a spectacular forest of Bot River proteas (*Protea compacta*). These in turn attract hordes of endemic sugar birds (*Promerops cafer*), which buzz and whirr about, chasing each other and trailing their long, regal tails. Other species seen here are the ever-conspicuous orange-breasted sunbird (*Anthobaphes violacea*) and the yellow bishop bird (*Euplectes capensis*), though the latter is a little less obvious in winter, when out of breeding plumage.

About two-thirds along the contour, we followed the Three Sisters sign and began to climb up to the spine of the mountain. At the top, we doubled back to join the main Three Sis-

ters route, which follows the spine west again, summitting three individual peaks along the way. The highest of these Three Sisters is just under 600m and the drop on either side of the ridge is quite precipitous at some points. Unfortunately, we were caught in a howling northwester while up there, which made this section of our hike a little nail-biting! It is well worth the climb though, with some beautiful delicate *Erica* species flowering among the rocks, which we did not see anywhere else on the hike. The views from the topmost sister are spectacular, taking in much of the Palmiet river valley, its estuary and a wide expanse of ocean from Betty's Bay to Kleinmond. We even saw two whales, which is quite unusual in June.



The views in every direction are amazing.

As we descended from the Three Sisters, we came across another charismatic endemic of the Cape mountains, the Cape rockjumper (*Chaetops frenatus*). These handsome birds are a sought-after special for many birders. They have a fascinating evolutionary history, being somewhat of a “feathered Coelacanth”. Their only close relative in the country is the Drakensberg rockjumper (*Chaetops aurantius*). Beyond that, their only living relatives are the fascinatingly rare rockfowl of north-west Africa (Picathartidae), from whom they diverged many millennia ago.



From the Three Sisters, there are a few options for getting back down to Fairy Glen. We elected first to go north and descend into Spook's Neck, where we joined the route up to Perdeberg peak. This is a far easier climb, with the path meandering gradually up to what is actually the highest peak in the local area. Perdeberg offers another perspective on the Biosphere Reserve, with views of what seem like countless ranges of mountains stretching north towards the Highlands road. Perdeberg even offers views of the Rockview dam on a clear day. The lower-lying area of Spook's Neck briefly holds the rains before they run off the mountain, allowing dense stands of the beautiful marsh pagoda (*Mimetes hirtus*) to grow. These areas also support extensive heaths of short grasses which provide good cover for the cute and cryptic Hottentot buttonquail (*Turnix hottentottus*). Although ostensibly common in the area, these secretive ground birds are very difficult to see. My only two sightings have *both* been in the Kogelberg Biosphere reserve, in Spook's Neck and on the plateau above Fairy Glenn waterfall.

The Kogelberg Biosphere reserve offers some fantastic hiking, which is easily accessible, with well maintained paths and fairly good signage. I do highly recommend obtaining a map first though, from the Oudebosch office in the reserve.

A Lunchtime Treat in the *Hemel 'n Aarde*—The Tasting Room at Creation Wine Estate

The *Hemel 'n Aarde* valley with its vineyards and sweeping vistas of land, lagoon, sea and mountain, is certainly aptly named. A day's meander along this wine route is nothing short of divine and the perfect destination for a treat outing.

Having popped into Newton Johnson for a quick and delicious wine tasting, we headed off to Creation to experience for ourselves their much celebrated cuisine. [Tripadvisor rates Creation as the best of 84 restaurants in the Hermanus region.] As we parked we were struck by the beautiful surroundings, the undulating hills planted with vines against a mountain backdrop that appeared almost golden in the weak winter sunshine, thanks to the *Leucadendrons* that are so spectacular at this time of year. The place was packed. Every square metre of garden and patio heaved with humanity, everyone quaffing wine and having a great time. The popularity of Creation makes it essential to book well in advance.



The valley below Creation

We were equally blown away by a number of strategically-positioned sculptures by Roberto Vaccaro. Vaccaro is a young artist located in the Western Cape who specializes in creating sculptures of the wildlife in South Africa, using bits of scrap metal. The bird at the entrance to the building was particularly beautiful and really interesting on closer examination. Its tail feathers had been constructed from old wind-screen wipers.

The tasting room cum restaurant is modern, light and airy, with a sophisticated yet relaxing ambience. It affords magnificent views of the land- and seascape, making it the perfect setting for lunch and wine tasting.



There were three of us and we opted for a light meal - an *antipasti* platter for two and a cheese platter for one. The selection of cheeses, cold meats, pickles and olives, accompanied by various home-baked breads, went down exceedingly well with a bottle of utterly delicious Creation Sauvignon Blanc.



The one downside to the Tasting Room experience was the unusually high noise level. We had to speak more loudly than was comfortable and it was a bit of a struggle to hear what the other two were saying. This phenomenon is apparently called “the cocktail party effect” and is not unusual in modern buildings where the architectural style favours hard-edged, non-absorbent surfaces. The combination of brick and glass and the stone floor in the Tasting Room made it difficult to focus attention on what the person next to you was saying because of the noise of different voices reverberating around you.

Creation was so named because the farm was created from virgin countryside. The name also reflects the “original, distinctive flavours” of their wines and the “exceptional, harmonious matches” of the food and wine pairings. The estate also produces its own olive oil, which far surpasses most of the imported varieties.

Creation was every bit as good as its reputation. The food was delicious and beautifully presented and the wine was sublime. One small suggestion: if you are not as young as you were and a touch hard-of-hearing to boot, it may be better to schedule your treat for a weekday out of school holidays.

AN ARTY CRAFTY DAY AT THE GARDENS

The Art & Craft Fair at Harold Porter Botanical Gardens offered something for everyone, with items ranging from jewellery, ceramics, leatherwork, knitted, sewn and crocheted garments and original artworks to padded kindle covers,

Best of all, to my mind, was a display of locally-crafted gollies—hardly politically correct, but oh so cute! “Good Golly, Miss Molly,” a senior citizen was heard to exclaim. “I haven’t seen those little darlings since Gramps fell off the bus.”



THE WINTER MARKET OF 2015 will take place at the Dutch Reformed Church, 36 First Avenue, Kleinmond from 2—11 July, on weekdays from 9 to 3.30 and on Saturdays from 9.30 to 1. Beautiful handmade goods, jewellery and sugary treats will be sold, as well as soup and bread, curry and rice, pancakes and *vetkoek*. **Don’t miss it!**

A MESSAGE FROM THE HANGKLIP LIBRARY

Friends of the Hangklip Library/ Vriende van die Biblioteek

NB: Library Hours: Monday to Friday 8h00-16h30

EVENT for JULY 2015

Theme/tema: The Art of BONSAI: a TALK , Demonstration & Exhibition of Bonsai plants.

Moenie dié aanbidding met Manie & Willie misloop nie!

Date/datum: 16 July 2015

Time/tyd: 10h30

Venue/plek: Café E'lorá, Village Centre, Betty's Bay/Bettysbaai

Tea or Coffee & Pancake @R40.

Booking/Bespreking Please book with your payment at the Library, Betty's Bay,

BEFORE 13 JULY 2015

INTERNET ACCESS

The Hangklip Library in Betty's Bay extends an invitation to you to use the four new computers at the library to gain Internet access. There are two very willing and able librarians, Rosaline and Lucille, to help you! We encourage you to come and spend some time in the library.

A FEW OF OUR NEW BOOKS

PAUL, Chanette: Ewebeeld

ROBERTS, Nora: Blood Magic

TROTSKIE, Anchien: Vermis op Allesverloren

NEWLING, Dan: Bitter Dawn

MEYER, Deon: Ikaris

ATTWELL, Tim: Your place in the Kogelberg

The Municipality has extended the Library garden and has created a "Leestuin"; sitting on the bench, you will see there are gaps where your kind donation of a fynbos plant or two will surely brighten up the area for all. Birds, bees and other creatures will discover a wonderful place to visit! Speak to Rosaline.

KNITTING for the winter carries on!

Patterns for adult/childrens' **BEENIES**, as well as **SQUARES** for blankets, are available at the Library.

BOOKS & GREETING CARDS on SALE at the Library. Come & browse!

Join the Friends of the Hangklip Library! Sluit aan by die Vriende van die Hangklip Biblioteek!

A WELCOME DONATION TO THE HACK

The Botanical Society of South Africa has donated a power tool hamper to the Betty's Bay and Pringle Bay hack groups. Seen at the handover were Nicolette Botha-Guthrie, mayor of the Overstrand, Zaitoon Rabaney, Executive Director of the Botanical Society of South Africa and Edward Silberbauer, convenor of the Betty's Bay hack group.



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