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From your Editor . . .

Thank you for all your positive feedback. I am delighted that I am on the right track.

Please do help me by sending me information about anything of interest that is happening in Betty's Bay. Also, if you could let me know what you would like to read about in future issues. Lastly, I would greatly appreciate receiving your articles for publication. At the moment, I am being forced to write most of the content myself.

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Deadline for submissions:

20th of each month

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

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

Subscribing to the BBRA

R60 per person per year, payable to:

BBRA Current Account

ABSA Hermanus

Branch Code 632005

Account No 4066 6164 39

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

Contact: Adrian de Kock 028 272 9998

Obtaining the BUZZ

The following options are available:

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.

Advertising and Crassula Hall payments

Payable to:

BBRA Current Account

ABSA Hermanus

Branch Code 632005

Account No 4066 6164 39

NB! Reference must include your business name. *Please do not send cash.*

Contact: Heinie Foot 082 375 4827

Disclaimer: The views expressed by the Buzz contributors are the authors' own and do not necessarily represent the views of the Editor of the Buzz.

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.

SAPS Emergency Contact Numbers

Charge Office **028 271 8219**

028 271 8200

Station Commander **082 778 6793**

Additional Cell Nos. **079 894 1624**

079 894 1622

082 443 6069

082 522 1831

BETTYS BAY VOLUNTEER FIRE FIGHTERS

A subsidiary of Betty's Bay Ratepayers Association

The Betty's Bay Volunteer Fire Fighters, as their name implies, is served by members of their organisation who are passionate about this form of community involvement. They give of their time in acting as a first response to fires in our area and thereafter, if this is necessary, will back up other fire fighting organisations operating in our area. Additionally, as is perhaps not widely known, they also assist when fires occur in other areas of Overstrand and so in some cases go outside our area.

Because of the dangers inherent in their calling, it is imperative that they receive the relevant training as to how to act in dealing with fires. Volunteers cannot assist when they have not had the necessary training for their own safety's sake.

There is always a need for more members in this group. They would need to be willing and able to undergo training and then to give of their time in assisting in the event of a fire breaking out. To this end, any reader who is interested in joining the group may contact Wendy Tawse to obtain more information at wtawse@capenature.co.za or on phone number 028 272 9979.

You will recall the request for donations two to three months ago for the fire fighters, to buy uniforms, equipment, etc. As you can appreciate, equipment is often damaged when a fire is being fought and would need replacement. In addition, our volunteers need uniforms and protective gear.

This request yielded a magnificent response from residents/property owners and as of 30 April 2015 a total of R93,450-00 has been donated by 91 persons or organisations. These funds are held in the BBRA's bank account and are ring fenced to be used specifically for the needs of the fire fighters. Expenditure will be strictly controlled to ensure that it is used for the purpose intended.

As a matter of interest, there were a few deposits to our account that were obviously meant for the fire fighters' usage but the donors did not identify themselves. We would like to acknowledge these donors and therefore request them to e-mail the writer, giving their names and erf numbers so we can acknowledge same. These deposits were as follows:

1) 05-03-2015	R3000-00	Ref. Fire And Rescue In BBVCFF
2) 09-03-2015	R 500-00	Ref. BBVCFF
3) 31-03-2015	R5000-00	Ref. ABSA Bank BBVCFF

Once again, thank you for your willingness to provide financial assistance as well as the back up of food and drink provided to the fire fighters during the recent conflagration.

Adrian de Kock

Secretary/Treasurer BBRA

adrian25@telkomsa.net

“SO, WHO WAS JOCK?”

This is a question I have sometimes been asked by the young or by relative newcomers to Betty's Bay. Those of you who have been here awhile will know that what many of us called “Little Beach” when we were kids later came to be named “Jock's Bay”, in honour of one of the great characters of Betty's Bay, Jock van Niekerk. [His house overlooked said bay.] In fact, one can regard Jock as one of the principal pioneers of the area, so great was his influence on the early development of our town.



But first, some background information . . .

Many people don't realise just how recently the Betty's Bay that we know today came into existence. Prior to World War II, getting to Betty's Bay was a major mission. The road from Gordon's Bay ended at the Steenbras River and Betty's Bay could only be accessed via Kleinmond, which in those days was in its infancy. At the time, there wasn't a bridge over the Palmiet River, so visitors to the area had to make use of a rather primitive pontoon. The upshot of this inaccessibility was that Betty's Bay remained a largely undiscovered gem until 1945, an extraordinary fact given its proximity to Cape Town.

Not much had happened here before the war. In its very early days, this isolated stretch of coastline was inhabited by a few intrepid cattle herders, some runaway slaves and outlaws, and a few surviving members of the indigenous tribes. Later, once the rich diversity of the vegetation had been discovered, it was visited by several botanical explorers. The whaling station at Stony Point was established in 1912 and it prospered in the early days of the twentieth century. The company had three whaling ships and in a “good” year it would be responsible for the slaughter of 300 Southern Right whales. Up to 200 men were employed at the whaling station, mainly Norwegians, and provisions were brought in by sea. The whaling operations pretty much petered out during the first months of the Great Depression, owing to the falling price of whale oil, and the company finally closed its doors in 1930. Meanwhile, a few farmers worked some of the land, there were a couple of holiday houses and there was always a trickle of adventurous holiday-makers and campers into the area, most of whom being drawn to Betty's Bay by its abundant fishing opportunities.

During the war, two developments took place in Betty's Bay that put the town firmly on the map. First, two radar stations were built to monitor shipping round the Cape of Good Hope and to identify U-boats that might threaten Allied interests. One was at Mooihawens, now the youth centre near the harbour, and the other was at Hangklip, in the buildings that later evolved into the legendary Hangklip Hotel. The original barracks are still standing and in use at Mooihavens. [My godmother was posted there throughout the war. She became one of the earlier Betty's Bay enthusiasts.] The second event that changed Betty's Bay forever was the establishment of an Italian prisoner-of-war camp near Rooi Els. The men incarcerated there built the coastal road that linked Gordon's

Bay and Kleinmond. The road was given the name of Clarence Drive after another of the area's early pioneers, one Jack Clarence. Suddenly Betty's Bay rose from obscurity.

Now, back to Jock van Niekerk . . .

He was born in 1907 and baptised Jasper Albertus. He attended Wynberg Boys' in Cape Town, and later, when his great sporting prowess became evident, he moved to SACS, where he was the school's star wing. When he left school he played for Villagers Firsts, coincidentally, in the same team as Harry Starke, another of the early Betty's Bay residents. Jock went on to play for the Springboks in 1928 and 1931. In his very first test in the 1931 tour of England he damaged his knee so severely that his rugby career came to an abrupt end. [Danie Craven always felt guilty about this. He had passed the ball to Jock that led to the tackle that caused the damage.] Jock then moved to the Elgin area where he was involved in the exporting of fruit to the UK and Europe. In 1945, he made Betty's Bay his permanent home and, in partnership with Alf Broadwith, started building houses. Most of the early houses at Betty's Bay had a recognisable Jock van Niekerk look to them.

At the time, there were very strict building regulations for the area: no fences or garden walls were permitted, corrugated iron structures and roofs were forbidden and, most bizarre of all, given the vulnerability of the local vegetation to fire, only two roofing materials were allowed, thatch or wooden shingles. This lack of pragmatism on the part of the original town planners would prove to be very destructive to Jock's legacy. Three fires took their toll. The first was in 1960, when two houses burnt down, the second in the mid-sixties, which took out a couple more, and, most devastating of all, the great fire of 1970, when no fewer than twenty properties were destroyed, Jock's included. He rebuilt his house to its original plans, but with a tiled roof instead of thatch, and it still stands today, accessible from Cliff Road.

Jock was married twice, first to Maisie, who tragically died of cancer in her late thirties, and then to Jeanette, who had nursed Maisie during her final illness. The van Niekerks were very much part of the local social scene and Jock was a regular participant in the bowls' tournaments that took place on the Starkes's famous bowling green, which was adjacent to their house above Dawid's Kraal.

Jock was also well-known to the part-timers who had houses here. In those days Betty's Bay had no electricity [That only became available in the nineties.] and people would battle endlessly with the notoriously temperamental gas and paraffin fridges of the time. Whenever a fridge died and couldn't be revived, Jock would come to the rescue. He would arrive in his famous WWII Land Rover, stand the fridge on its head for half-an-hour or so while he shared a cuppa or a beer with the occupants, turn it the right way up, fiddle a bit with its mysterious innards, then relight it and, *voilà*, it would be back on track, for a while at least.

As well as being a fridge whisperer and property developer, Jock was a dedicated conservationist. He was heavily involved in the creation of the Harold Porter Botanical Gardens and it was he who persuaded H.F. Verwoerd to declare part of the Betty's Bay

coastline a Marine Reserve. Verwoerd agreed on condition that it bore his name. Needless to say, the original name is no more!

Many of Jock's houses can be seen today. The original Mills family cottages, on the sea side of Bass Lake, are still standing, as are several others dotted about the older parts of Betty's Bay. They are instantly recognisable, those that haven't been drastically altered or modernised, as Jock made extensive use of the local sandstone, and all have a decidedly early-post-war look to them.



A typical "Jock van Niekerk house"

Their great appeal [to me, at least] is that they were generally modest and inoffensive, fitting unobtrusively into the landscape. It is a great pity that the builders of so many of today's Betty's Bay houses did not emulate Jock's earlier style of building. Our town could have been a lot more pleasing to the eye and restful to the soul!

Jock van Niekerk died in 1983. On his death, rugby legend, Danie Craven, used these words to describe him:

"This wonderful man, this prince of wings."

XYLITOL CAN KILL SUGARBIRDS - AND DOGS

A popular sweetener among diabetics and those wanting to lose weight has been found to be deadly to dogs and birds.

Xylitol is a sugar alcohol used as a sweetener in baked products, chewing gum, toothpaste and lozenges.

But vets have warned people to keep their pets away from it. While the sweetener is safe for humans, it can lead to pancreas and liver failure and even seizures if eaten by dogs.

It appears that xylitol is also toxic for wild birds. Joburg vet, Dr Brett Gardner, examined the bodies of 30 Cape Sugarbirds that had died within 30 minutes of drinking a solution made with xylitol, from a feeder in a Hermanus garden. Gardner suspects the xylitol triggered a huge insulin release, causing an irreversible drop in blood sugar.



A FIRE, A HEROIC ACT, IRMA STERN AND A TRAGI-COMIC LOSS TO POSTERITY

The heroism of a very brave man who battled to save his house in the fire of 1970 was celebrated in an article in the Cape Argus. The hero was Eden Hodgson, a one-legged veteran of World War I. With the fire raging towards him, he was on his roof saturating the thatch. At one point, his house was completely surrounded, but he did not let up and his house survived unscathed. It survives to this day.

Eden Hodgson had another claim to fame. He was the brother of one of South Africa's most famous artists, Irma Stern. She visited Betty's Bay on many occasions, and on one of her visits she painted two murals, one on either side of the fireplace in the sitting-room.



Eden Hodgson watches Jock van Niekerk at a local bowls game

Eden Hodgson died and the house changed hands. One of the new owners hired the services of an extremely efficient cleaning lady when he moved in. Having instructed her to give the place a thorough going-over, he and his wife set off on a mountain hike. When they returned a couple of hours later they discovered to their horror that the wall had been restored to its former pristine state. The Irma Stern mural had succumbed to a combination of Vim and Handy Andy.

This is a true story!

THE EDITOR RANTS . . .

The power cuts are an irritant. Everyone agrees. Especially as they always seem to happen at such inconvenient times, like when the Stormers are playing or when one is trying to produce a meal in the kitchen.

But even more irritating are the ghastly blue security lights.

During an evening power cut you should be able to relax on your stoep in the semi-darkness and admire the stars and listen to the crashing waves. But you can't relax because wherever you look there is a flashing blue light.

The blue lights **MUST** be replaced with red lights. **IT'S TIME TO TOYI-TOYI!**

The Wind Bloweth

The chosen font for this month's title, methinks, aptly portrays the appearance of some of the plants in our fynbos at present: partly caterpillar-chewed, partly dehydrated, with grey tips curled in interesting directions. Despite their appearance, however, isn't it wonderful to know that such damage is only temporary and they will recover? For the present we can simply move on to the protea bushes, either resplendent in flowers or full of buds, with the promise of a colourful winter. The recent few days of mist covering our mountain has also ensured the continuing carpet of fascinating ericas, especially, totally different in colour and texture from those in our garden.

Our family went for a walk one early evening this past week, in a burned wetland in Kleinmond, and thrilled to the sight of magnificent red haemanthus in large patches against the blackened ground, with bright green ferns as a backdrop. It is breathtakingly beautiful, particularly with the sun sinking over the sea... and the mountains and waves tinged with soft pinks and gold. It is the kind of beauty that makes poets wax lyrical, photographers work overtime and artists drool.

Having been blessed, as a child, with a father who loved nature and shared his knowledge with his family, it is particularly wonderful to see our grandchildren sharing in this legacy, living in an area which provides scope for more than mere knowledge of the sea, plants and wild animals, but a real affinity with nature. We have fond memories of their father, just able to walk, collecting flowers and "bunny-poops" to give to us as gifts – a fascination that grew and led to a career in conservation. His children will choose their own direction, but what a foundation on which to build!

Over the Christmas period we had the dubious privilege of the presence of young people who reside and exist in Johannesburg. The beauty of our beloved area was completely lost on them, as they were totally absorbed in their ipads and cell phones, constantly exercising their thumbs and fingers, while draping the furniture with the rest of their prone forms. Just once were they enticed out for a short walk, but their finger exercises far outweighed the appeal of the beautiful great outdoors. Their lives seem so empty to us, yet that is all they know, and as long as they have money to spend on movies, restaurants and parties in between the facebooks, tweets, blogs and skypes, etc., who cares? Incidentally, what does one call a person who spends all their time on Twitter – a twit?

While my car was being serviced a couple of days ago, we had a lot of time to kill in Hermanus, and having completed some necessary shopping, decided to pay a visit to the nursery at Fernkloof Nature Reserve. Everything looked very appealing, mostly very healthy – and very small. Humans seem to fit into two categories; those who, like my husband, optimistically see the eventual full-grown bush with perfect blooms about two to three years down the line, and those who need the little dwarf to take off and reach its potential next spring. Yours truly tends to foresee the possibility of it being ripped out by a gale-force wind, dug out by a porcupine, or picked and devoured by a hungry baboon... after all, it has happened before, right? We are presently celebrating the annual flowering of a plant I chose from the same nursery and planted in our back wall... it proudly produces one bright pink flower per annum. Perhaps it was planted by the wrong partner in this marriage...

Whatever the category (gardening-wise) we may fall under, it is comforting to know that our indigenous plants only need the tender loving care of their Master Gardener, who sends just the right amount of sunlight, moisture and nutrients for them to grow, thrive and bloom wherever they are planted. He seemed to know exactly what we needed when the plot of ground we now call home seemed miraculously made available to us about twelve years ago, when the stand we desperately wanted, but could not afford, fell victim to a devastating storm just months later and was damaged by a rockslide.

It is still on the market, while our little bit of heaven withstands the full force of winter storms, summer heat and fires, and continues to be a blessing to family and visitors alike.

Isn't it so easy to complain about what we lack, demanding that others provide our services, fix our roads, move the dunes, control the holiday visitors, and tidy the beaches after they have left, but how difficult to stop talking, enjoy long walks along the shore, watch the birds and listen to them, drink in the sunsets and enjoy the early beauty of the sunrise? ... all freely given, but priceless.

By Beverley Green.

LOGGERHEAD TURTLES

A message from Hangklip-Kleinmond Tourism

LOGGERHEAD TURTLES are washing up on our shore line!

We ask the public to actively look out for any turtles that have washed up on our shores. Between April and June every year, juvenile loggerhead turtles wash up on to beaches in and around Cape Town, owing to rough seas and strong winds.

WHAT TO DO?

- Remove the turtle from the beach.
- Keep it dry and at room temperature – DO NOT place the turtle in water.
- Place the turtle in a container that has ample air holes. DO NOT put water or sand in the container, rather use a small towel.
- Make a note of exactly where, when and at what time the turtle was found.

Contact the Environmental Management Section of Overstrand Municipality on 028 316 3724 or the Control Room on 028 313 81111. If it is afterhours please drop it off at your local Fire Department who will contact an environmental officer.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THEM?

The Overstrand Municipality and CapeNature, in collaboration with the South African Shark Conservancy will ensure that the turtles are temporarily housed until they can be moved to the Two Oceans Aquarium where they will be rehabilitated until they are strong and healthy. They are then sent to uShaka Sea World in Durban where they are released into the warmer waters off the KwaZulu-Natal coast.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR LIBRARY

From the Friends of the Hangklip Library/ Vriende van die Biblioteek

Library Hours: Monday to Friday 9h00-16h00

EVENT for JUNE 2015

Theme/tema: Make a Card with Manda Malan

Please bring: sharp scissors/ craft glue with nozzle/Pritt/ damp cloth/ 2 sheets kitchen towel/ old glossy magazine /ruler. Come & enjoy a fun-filled morning with us! U is baie welkom!

KNITTING for the winter

Patterns for adult/childrens' BEENIES as well as SQUARES for Blankets are available at the Library. Please be so kind as to knit something for us to hand over to those in need of these articles. Rosaline or Lucille will gladly receive them at the Library. Get the needles clicking!

Hangklip Local History Collection

This is held at the Library in Betty's Bay. It is a collection of relevant information on our area from Rooiels, Pringle Bay to Betty's Bay.

If you have any information that could extend this collection or if you have newspaper/ magazine articles, photos, maps, past Buzz/Herald etc., we would appreciate any donations. Please hand them in to Rosaline at the Library.

Thank you.

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

Annual fee of R25 per person OR R30 per family. This can be paid at the Library.

- Your talents and expertise can be spread around
- Support our efforts to carry on with the Local History Collection
- Donate good secondhand books/puzzles
- Create greeting cards that can be sold in the library.

THE EDITOR RANTS AGAIN . . .

If you live and work in a city, a postman delivers your post to your home or workplace. And it matters not a jot how much mail you receive or to whom it is addressed.

If you live in a small town, without the services of a postman, you have a post box, for which you pay R40 a year. No problem!

But if you have any mail that is addressed to a trust or a company, with your box number, it gets RETURNED TO SENDER, that is if you haven't upped your payment to a whopping R363. This applies to everyone, even those who are no longer involved in business.

Is this fair? Is this right? I THINK NOT!

MAY I INTRODUCE . . . EBRAIME HULL

I'd heard about him, I'd read about him and, yesterday, I finally got to meet him. What an inspirational human being is Ebie Hull – baker, teacher, plant propagator, botanical explorer and botanical artist! He is also a man with a profound social conscience: he is forever trying to find ways to uplift the less fortunate.



Ebie is the chief propagator at the Harold Porter Botanical Gardens. If he is not to be found in the Gardens proper, then he is probably out trudging the foothills of the Kogelberg, ever on the lookout for new plants to propagate and introduce into his beloved workplace. Or he may be across the road at the Thomases. Robbie is his mentor when it comes to plant propagation and Vicki is his inspiration and guide in the intricacies of botanical drawing. For Ebie is also an extraordinarily talented botanical artist in his own right and his work in this specialised discipline is fast gaining recognition.

Ebie grew up in Kleinmond. He attended primary school there and went on to do his secondary schooling at Genadendal, [Genadendal is the fascinating Overberg town that, in 1738, was established as a Moravian Mission to serve the Khoi population of the area. It was the very first Mission in South Africa.] On completing his Matric, Eb-bie returned to Kleinmond in search of work. The only job available to him was in the bakery section of the Seven-Eleven. Being Ebie, he soon rose through the ranks and was trained as a Master Baker. But his primary interest had always been the environment and the *fynbos* growing in the area. So, when he was offered a job as a groundsman at the Harold Porter Botanical Gardens, he jumped at the opportunity, even though his job description at that time was no more challenging than pulling out weeds. He immediately set himself a daunting goal – within one year he would learn both the common and scientific names of every plant that was growing in the Gardens. His efforts did not go unnoticed. One day, he was approached by the then Curator of Harold Porter, who offered him a chance to work in the nursery. This would allow him to attain his dream of becoming a horticulturist. And it was in the nursery where his interest in propagation was born. His first love had always been the *Proteaceae* family and it was inevitable that he would meet up with Robbie Thomas. He attributes his skills as a propagator to the time he spent working with Robbie and he speaks with great enthusiasm of their efforts with the different species of *Mimetes* and, of course, with the exquisite *Orothamnus zeyheri*, the Marsh Rose.

From his early childhood, Ebie had been keen on drawing. [He used to paint pictures on the walls of the family home, much to his mother's horror.] He sold his first painting while still at school – a depiction of the Moravian Church at Genadendal. This was on display at a celebration at the Mission and a visitor offered him R600 for it. R300 went

to the Church Fund and R300 into his pocket! Could this have been the very first step on a journey to ultimate fame and fortune?

Ebie treasures the time he spends on the mountain. “It’s the freedom you have in the veld,” he explains. “I’m in the veld. I’m on my own. I’m amongst the birds and the plants. That’s what it’s all about.” It is on these forays into the natural environment, in search of interesting plants, that his botanical drawing had its roots. His habit was always first to draw a plant, with careful attention to detail, and only then to take cuttings and/or seed for later propagation. He showed one of his artistic efforts to Vicki Thomas. She immediately spotted his aptitude for botanical drawing and spent many hours with him honing his drawing skills and teaching him how to mix water colours to best recreate the exact hues and the three-dimensionality of the different parts of a particular plant.

His interest in botanical drawing grew and grew and the quality of his work improved proportionately. He now often assists Vicki in her teaching workshops and is always highly rated by the students.

2013 was when the one-hundred year partnership between the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens and the Botanical Society of South Africa was marked. Part of the celebration was an exhibition of the work of twelve botanical artists in South Africa, to be selected from a large number of entrants. At the last minute, Ebie had to withdraw from the competition. His father had just died and he was unable to complete his drawings. [Vicki remarked that he would definitely have made the cut if circumstances had allowed, so high was the standard of his work.] In spite of this setback, he still made his mark at the opening of the celebrations. *Strelitzia juncea*, “Centenary Gold”, was a new, vibrant



Ebbie paints “Centenary Gold”.

yellow cultivar that had been developed over decades of careful selective breeding. It was chosen as the symbolic emblem of the event. Before the unveiling of a living example of “Centenary Gold”, Ebie’s depiction thereof was unveiled with great ceremony. A photograph of him painting this beautiful new *strelitzia* appeared in the special centenary issue of the *Veld & Flora* of June 2013.

Ebie has, on occasion, ventured further afield than the Overberg area in his searches for new and interesting plants. He has accompanied Ernst van Jaarsveld, the eminent plant explorer and collector, on a couple of expeditions. He has been assured by van Jaarsveld that, should they find a new species, Ebie will be the one to do the scientific drawings!

Strelitzia juncea, “Centenary Gold”,
Ebie’s completed painting of the
cultivar that was celebrated at the
centennial event.



I have mentioned that Ebie feels a strong need to “give back”. Coming, as he does, from humble beginnings, he received inspiration from Peter Slingsby’s ECCO Club [Ecological Club for Children Organisation], which he joined when he was eight years’ old and left only when he started secondary school. He knows just how important it is for children to be given the chance to truly experience their environment; it was as a member of ECCO that he first developed his love for our rich botanical heritage. Ebie lives in one of the new RDP houses on the mountainside as you enter Kleinmond from the Betty’s Bay side



Ebbie’s garden wall

He does not have the land to plant a garden but, ever creative, he has begun a project whereby his garden wall will take the place of a conventional garden. In time it will be completely covered in paintings of indigenous plants and birds and he will use this to teach the neighbourhood kids about our remarkable *fynbos*.

Ebie is very keen to start a course for talented local children where they will learn about the local plants AND be taught how to draw them. We were throwing ideas about and came up with one that could work, be a lot of fun and have a meaningful impact on the lives of the kids. Having learnt basic drawing skills, they would then, each month, identify the plants in the Gardens that were flowering. Their task would be to paint them on a coffee mug, along with the name of the month. A kind potter would fire these creations. At the end of a year, each child would have produced a set of twelve mugs that depicted the flowers in bloom over the course of a year. An opportunity would be found to display and sell the sets. Proceeds would be split – half to the child and half to be returned to the pot, to fund the next project. More of this later . . .

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
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THE BOTANICAL ART WORKSHOP

[a letter to the Editor]

Thanks to a very good article in the Betty's Bay rag, "The Buzz", I was made aware of this workshop and was able to join the group. It took place over three days and was taught by Vicki Thomas, ably assisted by Ebraime Hull. Vicki is a very famous artist. She has even painted for Prince Charles! She also teaches the Fine Art honours student at Stellenbosch University.

Twelve people of different abilities, from a couple of total beginners to some accomplished artists, were taught how to create beautiful paintings.

Thank you, Vicki, for three days of inspiration. I hadn't thought it was possible to produce a painting that I would actually be proud of in such a short time. Apart from the fact that it was fun, there is a good chance we can continue our education over two years on a once-a-month basis.

Jane Orpen [Helderberg]

SUCCESS FOR PENNY DAVIDSON

Penny Davidson, who plays for the Betty's Bay Jukskei Club, was selected to represent Western Cape at the recent SA National Senior Championships held in Kroonstad from the 4 – 10 April 2015, where the team acquitted themselves reasonably well.

Penny, who moved to Betty's Bay some three years ago, took up jukskei about 2 ½ years ago. Previously Penny had played hockey for Eastern Gauteng and she has represented Eastern Gauteng Masters for 22 years. She has also played hockey in two World Master's Games. In 2013 in Torino, Italy, the team won a silver medal.

Since there are no hockey facilities close by, Penny decided to learn how to play jukskei, a sport which she enjoys immensely. In the 2013/2014 season Penny and her team won the Boland League in the C division.

Last year Jukskei was split into 5 districts, which together form the Western Cape. We became the Overberg District. Penny is currently the secretary of the Overberg Jukskei Federation.

by Pip Prinsaloo

TRACK THE REGENERATION OF THE FYNBOS AFTER THE FIRE



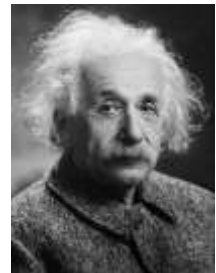
Hundreds of red hot pokers have burst into flower in the recovering green belt. They thrive in marshy conditions and now have the space to flourish, creating a marvelous spectacle.

We await with anticipation the spring flowering of Watsonia. Huge numbers of plants have sprung up.

READING CIRCLES AT MOOIUITSIG – an idea for the future?

Someone asked Einstein what she could do to make her child more intelligent. His response: “If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales.”

The reading of fiction stimulates the imagination and develops creative thinking skills. For this reason it is terribly important that children are exposed to imaginative writing from a very young age. Not only does this make them smarter, it can also set them on a path of lifelong reading. The result: an adult with greater knowledge, understanding and sensitivity.



Most of the kids at Mooiuitsig are seldom read to. Wouldn't it be great if members of the Betty's Bay community could fill this gap? My idea is that, a couple of times a week, a group of volunteers, armed with story books suitable for different age groups, could hold reading circles in the hall at Mooiuitsig. The ideal time of day would be between 4 and 5.30 p.m. and it wouldn't take up more than a half-hour of one's time. The kids would have been playing outside and be in the right frame of mind for a bit of quiet time before supper and bed.

The only snag is that the readers would have to be able to communicate in Afrikaans. This counts me out, but I would be happy to be the organiser.

The local library has lots of books that would be suitable.

Anyone interested in setting something up? Please mail me on helen.george.buzz@gmail.com

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE OVERBERG

When you have been stuck inside for days on end with the winter rain pounding the tin roof and the North-westerly howling outside, cabin fever is an inevitability. What better time to don your raincoat and head off for a meal at a destination that can guarantee warmth and good, hearty food, as well as an opportunity for some retail therapy?



DASSIESFONTEIN

***an algemene handelaar
on steroids***

Dassiesfontein is a delightfully eccentric destination – a rabbit warren full of treasure and tat. In fact, you can find pretty much everything there that you might ever need, and that probably includes the kitchen sink. The food on offer is quite delicious, rustic and generously portioned. It is slightly on the expensive side, but the slabs of homemade bread that accompany every meal are nothing short of spectacular and tend to alleviate any wallet pain. Their coffee is also excellent, albeit old-school. It is served in tin coffee pots and you get enough to have a good couple of cups. I noticed on the blackboard in the restaurant section that Banting meals were also available – useful for carb-avoiders. However, be warned. You need to be very strong-minded to say no to the bread. [Sadly, I succumbed to the temptation!]

You enter the building by crossing a stoep that is crammed full of weird and wonderful items – from pot plant holders and pots to the odd church pew and school desk, the old-fashioned variety, with the lift-up lid and the hole for the ink pot. At the entrance door hangs a huge bunch of *bokkoms* – with the expected fishy aroma – a novel and startling way to welcome prospective customers, one would think! But maybe their positioning is

calculated, for as you step over the threshold into a fabulously warm interior, you are greeted by the contrasting smell of baking bread. There is no electricity at Dassiesfontein, so everything is cooked in or on wood-burning Welcome Dover stoves, reminding one of the farm visits of one's childhood.

Dassiesfontein started off as a basic roadside farm store and it sells a huge variety of what you would expect to find in such an establishment – baked goods, bread, jams and preserves, sweets and condiments, oils and vinegar, etc. But, the food department far exceeds average expectations.



You can also buy the cheeses and wines of the area, farm eggs, meat and dairy products and a whole lot more. Then there is the clothing department. The ensembles are a touch peculiar and hippyish, but definitely fun. You can buy shoes of all types, leather sandals and *veldskoens* [They even stock the David Kramer red numbers.] to Crocs and they sell fabulous leather bags, rucksacks and satchels. If you wish to grace your living-room with a glamorous chandelier or trendy pot or ornament, Dassiesfontein is a great place to browse. There are Welcome Dover stoves of all sorts of sizes and shapes for sale. You can also find a fire grate for any shape of fireplace, as well as coal scuttles, bellows and fire-screens. And if you are into Kitsch, there is no better destination. The owners of Dassiesfontein are not scared of a bit of cheesiness! In addition, there is a kitchen shop, a garden shop, a toy department and even a pet section. Being an avid knitter, I was delighted to come across a huge range of cotton and cotton/bamboo yarns.



Dassiesfontein is close enough to Betty's Bay to make a brief visit very doable. From Bot River you join the N2 in the direction of Caledon and it is on the right-hand side, just past Gabrielskloof.

THE WILD HORSES OF ROOISAND

*Still out of hardship bred,
Spirits of power and beauty and delight
Have ever on such frugal pasture fed
And loved to course with tempests through the night.*

From: *The Horses on the Camargue* [Roy Campbell]

These famous lines could quite easily refer to the herd of “wild” horses on our very own doorstep, the only such herd in South Africa. At present, about 25 horses roam the marshy edges of the estuary at the Rooisand Reserve just outside Kleinmond.



They can often be seen wading through the shallow waters or grazing, muzzles down below the surface, on the water grass that abounds there. The clumps of Royal Cape [or *kweek*] and Buffalo grass on the edges of the *vlei* provide further sustenance, as do the edible shrubs and *fluitjiesriet* on the sides of the water and in the reed beds. Each year between mid-winter and mid-spring, when the water levels of the estuary rise, the horses are forced out to the fringes of the *vlei*.

Unlike their equine counterparts that roam the Camargue in France, the Rooisand horses are not truly “wild”. It would be more accurate to describe them as “feral”, as they are undoubtedly descended from domesticated animals, which, for some or other reason, were forced to live in and adapt to a wild environment.

Theories as to their origins abound. For example, some people still believe that they are the descendants of Boer horses, which, during the Boer War, were hidden



An unusual occurrence!

from the English. The Rooisand horses definitely have their origin in the very first horses brought from Europe by the Dutch and Flemish settlers: they share their physical characteristics. While horses were an integral part of early farming, industrialisation made a lot of farm horses redundant and it is likely that the early Rooisand horses survived a cull that took place at Ysterklip, a farm on the road from Kleinmond to Bot River.

It isn't only the horses that draw people to Rooisand. There are wonderful walks to the beach and to a huge dune field. And if you are interested in bird-life, a visit to the Reserve is a must – more than 50 species have been spotted there. At certain times, the Bot River estuary supports over 36,000 red-knobbed coots, representing about 28% of the total coastal coot population in South Africa.

The road to Rooisand is close to Kleinmond in the direction of Bot River. Once you have passed Lamloch, watch out for an insignificant dirt road to your right, with a signpost advertising horse-riding [Unconnected!]. After two kilometres or so, the road turns sharply to the left and you will enter the Rooisand car park. Do watch out for any tortoises on the road.

OH DEAR! AN OPPORTUNITY LOST ?

However pristine the Rooisand Reserve might be, the vegetation to the right and left of the dirt road that takes you there can only fill one with sadness.

For years, the natural vegetation there had been strangled by invasive, non-indigenous trees – eucalypts, myrtle, cluster pines and Port Jackson willows. The extent of the invasion was, quite simply, horrifying. Then, a few years ago, a huge runaway fire swept through the area and most of the invasive plants were destroyed. To my, probably uninformed, mind, this presented a golden opportunity to the owners of the land and other interested members of the public to attempt to restore the vegetation to its natural state. Surely, it is far easier pulling out seedlings and very young plants as they emerge after a fire than it is dealing with plantations of fully-grown trees? It is good to see that this has happened in some affected areas closer to Bot River. Sadly, nothing was done in the land adjacent to the Rooisand Road and, in no time at all, it will be as bad as it was before the fire.

The Rooisand Reserve is a Cape Nature initiative. Can they not bring some pressure to bear, if not some assistance? And what about the Overstrand Municipality? Are there not regulations about controlling the growth of invasive aliens on private property?

Maybe I am wrong. I shall put these questions to Ed Silberbauer, fondly referred to in these parts as “Mr Hack”. He is appearing in next month’s “May I Introduce . . .” column.

HORSE-RIDING IN THE OVERBERG

The Equestrian Centre, Overstrand, “where happy horses live!”

Have you ever entertained fantasies of cantering along a pristine beach, with the wind in your hair and the surf thundering at your feet? This need no longer be a fantasy! The EQUESTRIAN CENTRE, OVERSTRAND offers just such possibilities.

If you have never sat on a horse in your life, or if you have done so only occasionally, the dream can still become a reality.



The Centre offers lessons to Beginners and through the spectrum of ability to Advanced. Age is not a factor either. The riding yard caters for adults, teenagers and children as young as three. The horses are relaxed, happy and well-behaved so any nervousness you may feel will soon disappear.

Should you wish to explore the competitive riding disciplines you can be trained in Dressage and Show Jumping.

The Equestrian Centre is situated very close to the Bot River estuary and



offers wonderful trail rides through the fynbos and around the estuary and lagoon, these in addition to the glorious beach rides.

There are also wonderful weekend and holiday riding camps for children. What a great way to prise bored kids away from their cell phones and computer games! And they may even become little champions.



Coincidentally, the riding yard is on the Rooisand Road, a short distance beyond Kleinmond. You can contact Sarah on 0797731003 for more information or you can email her on equestrian.centre.overstrand@gmail.com. They also have a Facebook page.

BOOK LAUNCH AT THE HAROLD PORTER BOTANICAL GARDENS

“YOUR PLACE IN THE KOGELBERG: A guide to living and gardening in harmony with the Kogelberg Biosphere”, by Tim Attwell

Tim Attwell's book, *Your place in the Kogelberg*, was aptly launched at the Nivenia Hall of the Harold Porter National Botanical Gardens in Betty's Bay on 23 May 2015.

Aimed at residents of the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve, this publication will do much to preserve the ecology of the area as it faces increasing structural development. *Your place in the Kogelberg* explains, in simple terms, the natural heritage of the area and how residents and developers can protect and nurture the biodiversity that surrounds them and derive pleasure from gardening in harmony with nature.



Tim Attwell's book was enthusiastically received by more than 100 people at the launch in Betty's Bay on 23 May 2015. Tim is flanked by the two guests of honour – Nicolette Botha-Gurthrie, Mayor of the Overstrand and Zaitoon Rabaney, Executive Director of the Botanical Society of South Africa.

Commissioned and funded by the Kogelberg branch of the Botanical Society of South Africa, the Education Fund of the Botanical Society of South Africa and the Overstrand Municipality, the book is filled with anecdotes and interesting facts and is as engaging as it is educational.

The area is known for its spectacular biodiversity, both plant and animal, forming a delicate and vulnerable web of life. Animal life in the area includes baboons, klipspringers, dassies, porcupines, rooikat, Cape grysbok, large and small grey mongooses, Cape clawless otters, Cape wild cats and the little striped mouse, amongst others. It is also home to the dominant leopard for hundreds of square kilometres who goes by the name of Scott.



Tim Attwell autographing books at the book launch



Merrilee Berrisford, Chairman of the Kogelberg Branch of the Botanical Society, Emma Attwell, designer and editor of the book, Tim Attwell and Zaitoon Rabaney

Bird life includes endangered African penguins, oyster catchers, fish eagles, peregrine falcons, rock kestrels, African marsh-harriers and even Verreaux's eagles.

However, the area is best known for its variety of fynbos. Each type is unique and requires a different approach when preparing a garden. Such rich biodiversity is incredibly sensitive to development and is easily disturbed by alien invasive vegetation.

Attending the launch of Tim Attwell's book, is distant relative, Jill Attwell, who, at 92 years, is one of the oldest members of the Kogelberg Branch of the Botanical Society of South Africa.



Kogelberg Sandstone *Fynbos* has a staggering number of plants that occur nowhere else in the world, including over fifty *Erica* species. In the Overberg Dune Strandveld of

Rooiels and surrounds you can expect to find the gorgeous cliff gladiolus, *Gladiolus carmineus* amongst the endemic plants.

Native to Hangklip Sand Fynbos is the fast-disappearing *Muraltia minuta*, with its tiny sweetpea-like flowers. Western Coastal Shale Band Vegetation includes the famous *Waboom* (*Protea nitida*), which provided wheel rims and brake blocks for wagons in the old days. Cape Seashore Vegetation produces a spectacular show of *rankbietou* - white daisies with purple centres (*Dimorphotheca fruticosa*) - in late winter and spring. Cape Lowland Freshwater Wetlands can boast the sweet-scented and edible white *waterblommetjies* (*Aponogeton distachyos*) and finally Southern Afrotemperate Forest is home to the stately yellowwood trees of the genus *Podocarpus* and the white alder or *witels* (*Platylophus trifoliatus*), which can grow to 30 metres and is found only in the Southern Afrotemperate Forests of the south western and southern Cape.

The author, Tim Attwell, first visited the Kogelberg area in his teens in the 1960s and was enchanted. He has owned property in Betty's Bay since the late 1990s and settled permanently here with his wife, Barbara, early in 2012. A writer and qualified nature and mountain guide, Tim Attwell is obsessively inquisitive about the natural environment in general and *fynbos* in particular, especially the *fynbos* of the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve, epicentre of the Cape Floristic Region.

In Betty's Bay *Your place in the Kogelberg* is available at the Harold Porter Gardens entrance and at Penguin Place in Clarence Drive. It is also available at Pringle Bay Books and at the Botanical Society Bookshop at Kirstenbosch. The recommended retail price is R120.00. The book will be on sale at talks hosted by the Kogelberg Branch of the Botanical Society in Betty's Bay for R90.00.

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