



AgulhasNPark eBulletin

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Heritage and Tourism Month

www.sanparks.org

2017 Heritage Month theme: "Reclaiming, restoring and celebrating our living heritage"



Agulhas National Park, your heritage at the Southernmost Tip of Africa

SANParks acquired a 4ha portion of land at the southernmost tip of the African continent on September 14, 1998. The area is of high conservation, cultural and historical value and significance, not only locally but also globally. The Park was officially proclaimed on **September 23 1999**. Nineteen years later the park stretches over 21,971.0161 ha of land.

Revisiting the Southernmost Tip Icon structure - Richard Williams, Senior Project Manager, Infrastructure and Special Projects

The Southernmost Tip of Africa is one of South Africa's most visited tourism destinations. The design, development and construction of an iconic structure marks the geographical and spiritual significance of the Southernmost Tip of Africa to enhance the status of the area as a prime national and international tourist destination. An Iconic Ideas competition was launched in 2010. The most important message of this concept was that visitors will experience a heightened sense of awareness when they stand in silence at the point (A. Winde). A panel of judges, from various backgrounds with different levels of expertise in their specialist fields, selected four different artists as winners. These artists were asked to combine their concepts and come up with one combined concept. In 2014 heritage indicators for the southernmost point (Foot of Africa) were prepared for submission to Heritage Western Cape. In addition, an environmental impact assessment (EIA) was also prepared. In all, the central heritage issue was to maintain and enhance the landscape integrity of the site over time. A 'Foot of Africa' isolation zone was identified – a zone that best captures the character of the place, where development should be kept to an absolute minimum. In the end the primary design informants were elements contributing to a sense of place, the expression of horizontality, landmark elements (such as stone cairns), the idea of a "compass" as an orientating device and the needle-like coastline. The designs were further refined and the final design layout is reflected below.



Connecting to Society

The Southernmost Iconic structure: construction on target



Milkwood tree, Melkhoutboom, *Sideroxylon inerme*

National Arbour Week is celebrated during the first week of September. We pay tribute to one of the Agulhas National Park's natural icons and part of the natural heritage of everyone living at the Southernmost Tip. It is found from the Cape Peninsula all along the east coast to tropical Africa. The tree can withstand strong coastal winds and, depending on the prevailing conditions, it grows into a big umbrella-shaped tree, typical of the Strandveld area. It also forms dense thickets in coastal woodlands. The Milkwood is an ecosystem in its own right and provides shelter and food to a diversity of animal life, from insects to birds and tree snakes. The flowers have a distinctive aroma which draws insects. Birds and baboons love the ripe edible purple-black berries. The name is derived from the milky sap of the bark and fruit. Traditionally an infusion of the bark was used to dispel nightmares. In the absence of big trees in the coastal area the Milkwood was used extensively. The wood is heavy, hard, strong and durable and was used for building bridges, boats and mills. Today alien trees like Rooikrans and Port Jackson are the biggest threat to Milkwoods. Alien plants burn easily and the extreme heat will scourge or burn the adjacent Milkwoods. The dense way in which alien vegetation grows also prevents the germination of Milkwood seeds and growing of seedlings. Three Milkwoods are of historical interest and were proclaimed as national monuments or heritage sites. The best-known is the famous "Post Office tree" in Mossel Bay. The biggest Milkwood is on Rhenosterfontein farm near Bredasdorp, with a crown of 20m in diameter, a trunk of 3m in diameter and is more than a 1000 years old. Rietfontein and Rhenosterkop farmsteads in Agulhas National Park have big old Milkwood stands. **Milkwoods are protected by the National Forests Act, 1998, as amended. A permit is needed to prune, cut or dispose of a Milkwood.** (SOURCE: *Cape Nature information sheet*)



Junior Ranger Level 2 Winter Camp 2017 – Alliston Appel, Senior People and Conservation Officer

The 2017 Junior Ranger Level 2 Winter camp was held at Potberg in the De Hoop Nature Reserve from 12 to 14 July. The focus of the programme was on experiential learning and consisted of a basic Fynbos course which included Fynbos plant identification, other plants in the Fynbos biome, the Fynbos food web, Fynbos adaptations, invasive alien plants, reptiles, mammals, insects and other Invertebrates, birds and soil. Gerhard van Deventer of the Sandberg Fynbos Reserve presented a course on Sustainable Living and Fynbos Harvesting and Gardening. Other activities included experiencing the Potberg Hiking Trail, visiting Koppie Alleen, the vulture restaurant and platform, and a night hike to study the night skies. The Junior Rangers displayed a high-level of understanding of conservation concepts and implementation during the Reflection and Feedback session. The camp also created an opportunity for an Environmental Monitor to experience and learn a new evening programme that will be implemented during the upcoming Kids in Parks programme.



SA National Parks Week 2017

South African National Parks (SANParks) will be opening its 12th annual SA National Parks Week at Golden Gate Highlands National Park from 18 to 22 September 2017. This initiative, in partnership with Total SA and FNB, is in line with SANParks vision statement of "A sustainable National Park System Connecting Society". Join Agulhas National Park in a week of activities presented at Bosheuwel Environmental Centre to experience cultural and natural heritage through birding excursions, walks and visits to sites where wetlands rehabilitation and alien clearing have been undertaken.



67 minutes - Agulhas Working for Wetlands and Working for the Coast - Lana du Toit Project Manager Agulhas National Park Working for Wetlands and Working for the Coast)

On July 28 2017 the teams from Agulhas National Park Working for Wetlands and Working for the Coast decided to “give back” to the Bredasdorp community in honour of Mandela Day. To celebrate Madiba’s legacy and in an effort to take it forward, the teams decided to spend their 67 minutes providing local residents in the informal settlement in Bredasdorp with a warm meal and to collect litter in the immediate surroundings. In the week leading up to the event, the contractors raised funds to buy the ingredients for two potjiekos pots and two soup dishes. Preparations started early Friday morning at Bosheuvel in the Environmental Education Centre kitchen. The ladies eagerly started cooking in preparation for the afternoon’s meal. Outside in the boma the Working for the Coast ladies happily endured the hot coals while preparing a delicious potjie. Travelling in convoy the teams set off on the road to Bredasdorp. Word spread quickly and in no time a line formed with bubbling young personalities trying to get to the front. The day was a big success with all the food distributed while the Wetlands choir entertained all with their songs of love and praise.



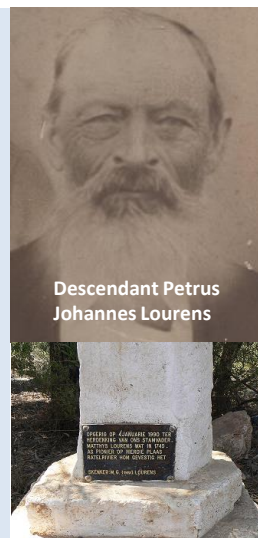
Bicycle donation by Agulhas and Table Mountain Honorary Ranger Regions – Diane Brooks, Chairperson, Table Mountain Honorary Ranger Region

On July 8 Agulhas and Table Mountain Honorary Rangers handed over five Qhubeka and five Avalanche bicycles to Agulhas National Park Rangers. They were donated by Pedals for Peace through the Table Mountain Honorary Ranger Region. The bicycles were used in Tankwa at the Afrikaburn festival. Participants “buy” the bicycles to use at the event and then donate them back to Pedals for Peace for distribution to disadvantaged communities and organisations such as the SANParks Honorary Rangers. While they are not high-end mountain bicycles, they are sturdy and perfectly capable of negotiating rough terrain. They are single-speed off-road bicycles, but should be useful and adequate to the needs of rangers in parks. For more information on the “Pedals for Peace” organisation visit <https://www.facebook.com/Pedalsforpeace/>.



Lourens family research update – Johan Lourens

Tracing the nine-generation history of the Lourens families in South Africa spanning 320 years has been an extraordinary 17-year journey. After all these years of research (and thousands of birth and marriage registers and death notices later), the manuscript is being put together; the different chapters still in rough format - and awaiting editing and finer finishes (adding photo's and maps). It entails the following: Historical notes over a period of 400 years before, during and after the VOC and Lourens' in the background (18 pages); various Lourens individuals coming with the VOC to the Cape without issue (9 pages); chapter on Johan Lourens van Rostock 1698 (32 pages), chapter on Johan Martin Lourens van Wedderstedt 1734 (12 pages); chapter on Johannes Gerhardus Lourens 1810 - progenitor of several Coloured Lourens branches in Bredasdorp and Waenhuiskrans (5pages); Rostock Lourens name register of about 160 pages; Wedderstedt name register about 35 pages. Updating the name registers will occur as new information comes to light; ABW II concentration camp and POW info. Name index - to be done at the very last moment before publishing as it will be done manually and no changes will be made thereafter; Carol Mangiagalli from Caledon was commissioned to do the cover.



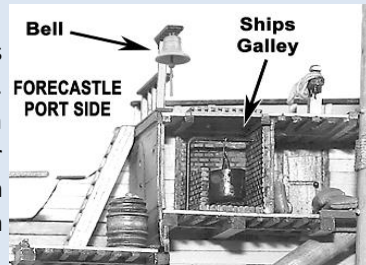
Lourens memorial plaque near Ratelrivier next to Die Dam road: In honour of Matthys Lourens who settled on Ratelrivier in 1745.



Cooking on a ship in days gone by – Jimmy Herbert

An artefact from a shipwreck that frequently survives the underwater environment is building bricks. All ancient shipwrecks up to around the 19th Century carried some bricks. These bricks were either on the ship as ballast or as bricks used in the galley, the kitchen of the ship. When a diver finds bricks more or less confined to a smallish area (not over the entire length of the wreck site), it generally denotes the position of the galley. In those days, the whole galley would have been completely enclosed (floor and walls) with bricks. The latter would be true for the hearth as well. A major factor that influenced

design was the fire risk that was forever present on wooden vessels. Between 1650 and 1850, the overall construction of galley fire hearths changed considerably, ranging from the brick-built hearth of the *Zoetendaal* (1673) to a self-contained iron stove found in ships like the *Queen of the Thames* (1871). During the first half of the 17th Century, it appears that the fire hearth was situated low down in the vessel's hold. This practice seems to have been quite common at the time, and is found on the Swedish ship *VASA* (1628). Such a hearth consisted of an enclosed fireplace in the form of a pit over which cauldrons were suspended or set on an iron grill. There were a number of advantages with this type of fireplace. Firstly, the whole structure was set well below the waterline and was, therefore, free from damage by shot. Secondly, because it was low down, it greatly enhanced the stability of the vessel by maintaining a low centre of buoyancy. By 1670, moves were made to relocate the galley under the forecastle (Port side). This new location was far more practical from the crew's point of view in that the galley was both above and near their accommodation. It was also far easier to incorporate a flue (chimney) for the smoke to be removed from the ship. Furthermore, the fire hearth was well away from the ammunition magazine. A collection of galley bricks is on display at the Bredasdorp Shipwreck Museum.



The construction of the matjieshut continues

The average Matjieshut consists of a framework of 40 to 60 poles which had already been shaped into a semi-circle, usually by the men. They collected the poles and prepared them for the final building of the framework. The rounded poles of three to five cm thick and as long as could be found was cut, heated in a fire and bent between rocks or planted stakes in the ground. They are tied together in a hemispherical shape. The ends of the poles are dug about 100 mm into the ground. Both men and women assist in setting up the pole framework. Poles may last up to 16 years if the herder does not move too often. Travelling shortens the life of the mat hut as the poles snap off at the base and become shorter. In Namaqualand the poles were made from the Soetdoring (*Vachellia karroo*) or Abiekwa (*Tamarix usneoides*). It is believed that in the Overberg the *Rhus* (now *Searsia*) was used. (To be continued) (SOURCE: MEFFERT & VAN HEMERT. 1996. *Gids tot die uitstalling Die Khoisan van die Overberg*. Swellendam Museum; DEACON & DEACON. 1999. *Human beginnings in South Africa: uncovering the secrets of the Stone Age*. David Philip. VAN WYK & GERIKE. 2000. *People's plants: a guide to useful plants of Southern Africa*. Briza; Namaqua and Richtersveld files; edited by Dr Lita Webley)



Come celebrate your Heritage : Kom vier jou Erfenis

Heritage month 2017, September 16, Bosheuvel Precinct: Food, Medicine and other useful plants from the veld, focusing on Khoe and Strandveld heritage, Braaiing, Walking, Cycling, Birding, Canoeing

Park week, September 18 – 22, Bosheuvel Precinct: Walking, Birding, Visiting BSP sites

Elim Heritage Festival, September 23, Elim

For more information: Contact E. De Kock, A. Alliston Appel, 028-4356078 (08:00 – 16:00)



Xoub/gu/khab in Khoe means diarrhea moon (abundance of milk causes diarrhea)



Historical sites and structures