



HALF-BILLI



Nuusbrief van die Vrystaatse Afdeling van die BKSA / Newsletter of the Free State Section of the MCSA

Taking the measure of Namahadi Peak

Andries Lategan

Imagine this: having to deal with the notions of leadership instilled in a headstrong ex-member of the crack reconnaissance unit of the pre-1994 South African Defence Force (popularly known as the "Reccies") during a People on Peaks expedition in September 2002 to officially establish the height of Namahadi Peak in the Maluti range. This presents its own peculiar challenges. However, the physical fitness of even an aging recce is a useful resource to help get an old-fashioned, but officially recognized, theodolite up to the highest point in the Free State.

Early the morning of 21 September three MCSA Johannesburg Section members, Herko Landgrebe, William Maloney and I, left Johannesburg to meet up at the Witsieshoek car park with MCSA Free State Section member Chris Niemand from Bloemfontein and a non-member Remo Ehlers from Welkom.

Herko, the land surveyor in the group, did have an electronic GPS instrument, but was not of the type recognized by the Land Surveyor General of South Africa. There was thus no choice but to lug up the theodolite and its tripod all the way to Namahadi Peak to take readings which the Land Surveyor General would accept as the basis to calculate the official height of Namahadi Peak.

In two Journal articles (*Journal* 1985 p 104, *Journal* 1986 p 66) I mooted that the peak the Free State Section dubbed Namahadi Peak is the highest peak in the Free State and is higher than Phofung (Mount-Aux-Sources) (trigonometric beacon height 3 283,4 m). The purpose of the People on Peaks expedition in

2002 was to settle these suggestions either way in an official manner. Heritage Day falling on Tuesday 24 September 2002 offered a good excuse to make a long weekend of the trip, and to have enough time to carry the instruments required for this trip to the top of the peak.

The ascent via the chain ladder (Saturday), the measurements at the back of the Namahadi cutback (Sunday), the camps at the headwaters of the Orange River (Saturday) and in the ruins of the Basutoland Mounted Police station at the top of the Namahadi Pass (Sunday), and the descent experienced on the high mountain ranges of South Africa, leavened by the irritations hinted at in the opening paragraph.

Herko recorded declination angles from the stone cairn at the top of Namahadi Peak to a total of six peaks around it, but comparing it to the 1:50 000 maps 2828DD and 2828DA, only two of these peaks, Mount-Aux-Sources and Mechachaneng, appear on the official Trigonometric List RSA 2828 with beacon heights. Using only the declination angle measurements to these two peaks, the height calculated for Namahadi Peak ($28^{\circ} 46' 15''$, E $28^{\circ} 48' 24''$) is summarized in the table below:

Peak	Trig. Beacon Height(m)	Height of Namahadi Peak (m)
Mt-aux-Sources	3283,4	3290,9
Mechachaneng	3170,6	3290,6
Average		3290,8 ($\pm 0,2$)

To conclude: the 21 – 23 September People- on- Peaks expedition to Namahadi Peak in the Maluti range confirmed that this is the highest

peak in the Free State, and that it is 7 m higher than Phofung (Mount-Aux-Sources).

I record my sincere thanks to the other members of the expedition for making this confirmation possible.

(Derek Odendaal measured Namahadi Peak in September 1998 by comparing it to surrounding points and Mount-Aux-Sources, using a spirit level. He concluded it to be about three meters higher than Mount-Aux-Sources. According to the latest measurements it is even higher! – Ed.)



VAN DIE VOORSITTER:

Beste Bergklublede,

Teen die tyd wat hierdie Half-Billi verskyn is Mollie en haar ekspedisie al terug vanaf Reunion. Ons vertrou hulle het die ervaring baie geniet. Dankie Mollie vir al die reëlings en lei van die groep! Die volgende sosiale funksie is op 12 September by Louis en Pat Fourie: James Scott no 3, Brandwag. Dis 'n goeie tyd om die lente welkom te heet en ons wat moes agterbly sien uit na die skyfies, foto's en stories van die uitstappie na Reunion.

'n Spesiale woordjie van dank aan prof Martin van Vuuren vir die interessante inligting en geselsie op 6 Junie 2003 by die sosiale funksie. Die foto's en voorbeelde het bygedra tot die sukses van die aand, soos ook afgelei kon word uit die lewendige deelname op die koue wintersaand om die kaggel en stofie. Ons het nuwe respek vir spinnekoppe en

skerpioene en gun hul 'n eie plekkie in die son!

Lede noem soms dat hul graag 'n sekere area wil besoek of weet van potensiële uitstappies of nuwe staproetes. Ons wil graag hiermee versoek dat u voorstelle vir ons program na die bestuur deurgee (Posbus 1291, Bloemfontein, 9300). Die inligting wat ons verlang sluit die volgende in:

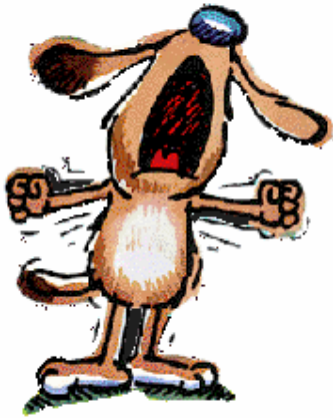
- Moeilikhedsgraad
- Afstand vanaf Bloemfontein
- Hoeveel dae/nagte
- Kontak besonderhede vir bespreking
- Ander toepaslike inligting

Die profiel van Essie Esterhuyze wat Mollie Smit saamgestel het, is baie toepaslik in hierdie uitgawe. Essie se lidmaatskap van ons afdeling en aktiewe deelname aan die stapprogram strek reeds oor drie dekades. Hy is steeds aktief en tree as leier op vir die besoek aan Langesnek 5 tot 7 September 2003. Soos wat julle in die artikel sal lees is hy ook aktief betrokke by natuurbewaring. Dankie Essie vir jare se lojaliteit - jy is 'n gewaardeerde lid en ons is trots op jou!

Groete - ons sien almal graag nà die winterslapie op die wandelpaaie!

Michiel Prins





WAT GAAN AAN?

- Derek Odendaal

Ek is erg bekommerd oor ons Afdeling. Ons aktiwiteite het sover hierdie jaar teleurstellend platgeval.

Vyf uitstappies moes gedurende die eerste semester gekanselleer word weens 'n gebrek aan belangstelling – en dan was dit interessante uitstappies, na wonderlike plekke wat ons nog nie voorheen besoek het nie, of ou gunsteling. En van die uitstappies wat wel plaasgevind het, is die meeste maar swak bygewoon.

Dit lyk vir my ook of ons Afdeling se lede, en spesifiek die stapleiers, nie 'n saak het met opleiding wat hulle leiersvaardighede en bergkennis kan verbeter nie. 'n MDT erkende bergleierskursus is in Mei aangebied, sonder enige belangstelling van ons lede of leiers.

Dan kry ek ook nie ons stapleiers betrokke by die verkenning van die area rondom Elliot nie. Ons Afdeling gaan in April 2005 'n nasionale kamp in hierdie area aanbied en ons reël nou spesiaal uitstappies soontoe sodat ons leiers die area kan leer ken om tydens die kamp die groepe te lei. Maar die leiers gaan nie saam nie. Op hierdie

stadium stuur die kamp op 'n verleentheid vir ons Afdeling af.

Nou wil ek pront-uit vra: Wat de hel gaan met julle aan? Stel niemand meer belang om te gaan stap of by ons klub se aktiwiteite betrokke te wees nie? Het julle belang verloor? Is julle te oud? Is julle te onfiks? Of is julle bloot gevrek?

Kan iemand dalk vir my die antwoord gee?



JY WAT VAN DIE BERGE HOU !

Schalk Theron

“Wat is die lewe tog 'n las!”
Elk mens wat op die Aard beweeg
Vind niks wat vir hom werklik pas.
Hy drink die Beker bodemleeg,
Maar elke dag en elke nag
Is daar nog iets wat op hom wag.

Die een se smag is smag na geld
Om sware laste lig te maak.
Die ander is op eer gesteld –
By hom is dit tere saak.
Maar kry hul beide veel hiervan,
Bly elkeen nog 'n arme man.

Die siekes wens hul was gesond,
Die blindes wens hul kan weer sien,
hul tas so in die duister rond,
Die werker wil graag meer verdien.
Sal hul by hul lot berus?
Hul's net van las en lus bewus.

Verliefdes wil net liefde hê,
 En vind hul dit dan vra hul meer –
 Maar seer wat in die liefde lê
 Is seerder as die seerste seer –
 dié koors wat in die lente dyn,
 sal in die wintertyd weer kwyn.

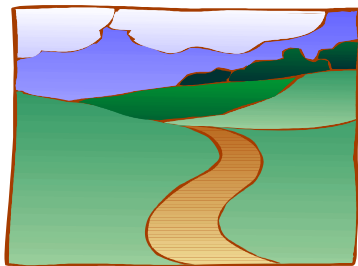
En hul wat staan die wil gaan sit
 En die wat sit die wil gaan lê.
 Die een wil dat, die ander dit...
 Maar niemand kry wat hy wil hê.
 Ja, elkeen kla net oor sy lot
 Want loop hy haar dan gaan hy hot.

Op elke nek lê daar 'n juk,
 En ieder mens die het sy kruis
 Waaronder hy moet loop – gebuk –
 Die lot van rykes en gespuis –
 elk dra sy las net waar hy gaan:
 Bergop, bergaf in eie baan.

En jy ... wat van die berge hou,
 Die steiltes, hoogtes, kranse, lug,
 Die sterre en die môregrou,
 Jy sê jy kan diè las ontvlug?
 Jy dra dan nog 'n groter las
 Daar op jou rug so deur die gras!

* * * * *

“Die las is lig – my las: ‘n lus!”



BERG MAP SERIES COMPLETE

The new map series of the KZN Drakensberg has been completed and the maps available are as follows:

- Map 1:** Royal Natal - Rugged Glen, Mnweni;
- Map 2:** Cathedral Peak - Culfargie, Monk's Cowl;

- Map 3:** Giant's Castle - Monk's Cowl;
 - Map 4:** Highmoor - Giant's Castle, Kamberg, Mkhomazi;
 - Map 5:** Cobham - Lotheni, Vergelegen, Cobham (North);
 - Map 6:** Garden Castle - Cobham (South), Bushman's Nek.
- Paper editions from Pmb Maps and Laminating, 167 Greyling Street, Pietermaritzburg 3201, telephone 033 342 5580 or 033 342 5582. Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife shops throughout the uKhahlamba-Drakensberg Park also stock the map relevant to that particular part of the Drakensberg and these sell at R30 per map. Visitors to Cathedral Peak may purchase a map at the new Didima Camp where they will also find the Mountain Rescue Register which has been relocated from its original position at the KZN Wildlife control gate near the foot of Mike's Pass.



PROFIEL VAN ESSIE ESTERHUYZE

Molly Smit

Daniel Johannes Theron Esterhuyze is op 18/06/1928 gebore te Vleiplaas in die distrik Colesberg. Die stapgogga het hom die eerste keer op negejarige ouderdom gebyt toe hy vir drie weke saam met sy vader in die noordelike Sederberge gestap het. Dit was nie vakansietyd nie en die skoolhoof nie te gelukkig nie. Pa Esterhuyze se onboetvaardige reaksie? “Hy het in die drie weke meer by my in die natuur geleer as in ‘n jaar by jou in die skool”.

Essie het die Afdeling Vrystaat in 1972 ontdek. Sy aansoek om lidmaatskap is op 1 Februarie 1973 goedgekeur. Hy stap dus al meer as 30 jaar saam met ons en gaan by die eerste die beste geleentheid die afdeling se pragtige briewemes ontvang.

Essie het nie net dikwels saam met ons in die Republiek en Lesotho gestap nie maar ook in Swaziland, Namibië, Zimbabwe en Tanzanië. Hy het Kilimandjaro suksesvol tot by Gillmans Point bestyg. Gesondheidsprobleme het hom verhoed om tot by Uhurupiek te vorder. Oorsee het Essie uitstappies in die Switserse Alpe, Skotland, Ierland, Engeland asook Australië se Blouberge onderneem.

Hy het verskeie klubs help stig, waaronder die Kwazulu Natal Afdeling van die Bergklub van Suid-Afrika, Absa hoofkantoor in Pretoria se stapklub, die SAUK klub in Johannesburg, Swoeg-en-Sweetklub in Lynnwood, Pretoria en die Kroon Voetslaanklub in Kroonstad.

Essie het gehelp met die uitlê van verskeie voetslaanpaaie en die verkenning van nuwe stapgebiede. So het hy die Geelhout Wandelpad op sy eie grond in die noordelike Drakensberge uitgelê (vroeër jare het ons afdeling 'n paar keer op die pragtige plaas gaan stap en in ruim mate die Esterhuyze gasvryheid geniet.) asook De Hoop Wandelpad langs Oorlogkloof in die .Sederberge.

Die veelsydige man het as erelid gewerk vir die Departement Bosbou. Hy het onder andere navorsing gedoen oor die indringer Akasia en Delabata en hul bestryding. Bogenoemde Departement asook die Departement Natuurbewaring van Wes-Kaap maak nog steeds van sy werk gebruik. Hy het ook vir baie jare gewerk as erelid van die Natalse Parkeraad. Ook by skole het hy heelwat tyd spandeer met praatjies oor natuurbewaring. Hy het baie kinders op

staptogte geneem. Verder het hy matuurbewaringsprojekte aan skole bevorder met wisseltrofeë asook filmvertonings.

Dit is nog nie genoeg nie: hy hou ook uitstallings op Internasionale Omgewingsdag en versprei ook omgewingsbewingmateriaal.

Essie het 100 hektaar op sy woonplaas buite Kroonstad meer as 30 jaar gelede omhein met 'n wildheining vir die bewaring van die natuurlewe, wild en voëls. Op sy plaas in die Normandien Vallei in die noordelike Drakensberge het hy ongeveer 1000 hektaar omhein vir die bewaring van wild en inheemse bome. Mens moet die bome op daardie plaas sien om dit te glo. En hy ken elke soort op die botaniese naam. Die Departement Bosbou reken meer as 30 000 Potocarpes bome is alleen hier ingekamp. Dit is ook die broeiplek van die skaars kroonarende.

Besondere Essie en sy besondere vrou Kitty het twee besondere seuns, Andre en Pieter. Na hul Kowsie studies het hulle vir ondervinding daar buite gaan werk voordat albei tot die boerdery toegetree het. Wat opval, is die besonder hegte band tussen die seuns en hul ouers. Andre is hoof van die familie se beesboerdery in Kwazulu Natal en Pieter hoof van die besproeiingsafdeling, ook in Kwazulu. Essie self is in beheer van die Vrystaatse plase (let wel: plase, nie plaas nie) tussen Kroonstad en Bothaville. Nie sleg vir 'n ou toppie wat as polisieman begin het nie! Om alles te kroon (alles? Daar is nog baie ongesê!!!) is hy lewenslange erelid van die Outenikwastigting en die Kroon Voetslaanklub.

Wat mens van Essie opval, is sy onuitputlike bron van anekdotes en lewenswysede wat op 'n baie rustige manier oorgedra word en sy fiksheid. Op die vraag wat alles wat hy gedoen en bereik het vir hom spesiaal

beteken het, het Essie 'n gedig voorsien (soos uit hierdie uitgawe afgelei kan word, het ons Afdeling nie 'n tekort aan digters nie):



JY

*Die ware lewe vind jy in die skepping
Van die Almagtige
As jy stap en daar is stof aan jou voete
En sweet aan jou hande
Is daar vreugde en liefde in jou hart
Hoe verder jy gaan – hoe meer leer jy
En hoe meer jy leer – hoe beter verstaan jy
Dan word die geur van die veld – die kos
Van jou siel
Die murmel van die bergstroom
Die simfonie van jou lewe
Die oggendsang van voëls
Jou welkomsgroet
Jou sig verskerp – en nuwe sterre word
Vir jou aangesteek

Nou sien jy verby die kwaad – die goed
Verby die dood – die beloofde land
Saam kan jy in die reënboog staan
Hoe meer jy uitdeel – hoe ryker word jy
Want die pot vol goud is in jou hart.*

-Essie Esterhuyse



NUWE BKSA PRESIDENT

Roland Magg van die Johannesburg Afdeling is onlangs as die nuwe President van die BKSA verkies. Hy volg André Schoon op, wat vir die afgelope sewe jaar die nasionale President was.

Roland is van kleintyd af betrokke by stap en rotsklim, aangesien sy ouers ook aktiewe bergmense is en reeds jarelange lede van die Bergklub. Hy is veral aktief op die terrein van rotsklim. Hy is waarskynlik die jongste President wat die Bergklub nog gehad het, aangesien hy nog iewers in sy dertigs is.

As President, is Roland van mening dat die Bergklub moet besin oor sy toekoms - of dit moet afskaal in aktiwiteite en klein bly; en of dit 'n groter rol as verteenwoordigende liggaam van bergklimmers wil speel.



BOOK REVIEW

CLIMBER'S CHOICE – edited by Pat Ament. Published by McGraw Hill.

This book brings together writings by 23 of the world's best climbing authors. The editor asked the authors to select those pieces of which they were most proud. The result is an unprecedented convocation of men and women who have climbed many of the world's most forbidding mountains and rock faces.

As individual in outlook and style as the authors themselves, the pieces range from enthralling tales of high adventure – like Stephen Venables' haunting chronicle of his ascent of Monte Sarmiento in Tierra del Fuego – to moving reflections on the human condition, as described in Chris Bonnington's gripping account of his summiting, at the age of 60, of the 6801 m Himalayan peak Drangnag Ri. There are also funny accounts of climbers and the climbing life – notably John Long's notorious account about a ragtag group of hippie rock climbers who flocked around guru Jim Bridwell at Yosemite in the 1970's.

If you dip into this book you will surely enjoy the writings of outstanding individuals who know how to climb and how to write about it. Among the contributors are Greg Child, Stephen Venables, Walter Bonatti, Chris Bonnington, Kurt Diemberger, John Jill, Joe Simpson, Paul Pritchard and Ian McNaught-Davis.

- Review by Philip van der Spuy



CONSERVANCIES

Roelof Bezuidenhout

What is a conservancy?

A conservancy is the voluntary co-operative environmental management of an area by its community and its users, registered by the relevant provincial authority. The concept can be applied anywhere and is not only a way of conserving nature – it can also help socio-economic development in a region.

How it started in South Africa

The concept was first applied nearly 30 years ago in Kwazulu Natal in the Balgowan area where poaching was a major headache. Today there are more than 200 conservancies in Kwazulu Natal, covering 1 200 000ha. The Free State followed and established their first conservancy in 1985 at Aasvoëlberg in Zastron; however, in this province the training of guards was not only adapted to farmers' needs, but also aimed at uplifting communities. The concept was broadened to urban and industrial areas and the Free State. The province was the first to promote it in townships.

These township conservancies have urban rangers who are taught basic environmental management.

The four types of conservancies

Rural conservancies (in farming districts):

Advantages are that poaching and stock theft are stopped and security on farms improve whilst serious crime declines. In addition, indigenous fauna and flora are protected and undesirable plants and animals are reported. The community as a whole gets to understand the environment and starts to work in harmony with it.

Urban conservancies:

In the old, traditionally white residential areas, the community is organised into a conservancy committee which becomes the watchdog of the environment. The community is urged to participate in the conservancy and to be involved in environmental issues of the town or suburb such as the mismanagement of wetlands, irresponsible development, dumping and pollution. Urban wildlife is encouraged and litter-free spaces are created. The result: vandalism disappears, an understanding of the environment is fostered and property values increase.

Conservancies in townships:

This type of conservancy is difficult to establish but really worth the effort. According to Duart Hugo, deputy director of Environmental Awareness in the Free State's Department of Tourism, Environment and Economic Affairs, this type of conservancy is difficult to establish but really worth the effort. "I started this idea in 1993 when the Youth League of Ikgomotseng, about 60 km north-west of Bloemfontein, asked me to give a talk on nature conservation. I took slides of the area and used them in my presentation. The people were shocked when they saw their town from a different perspective. We formed an urban conservancy and began workshops on environmental problems, and the concept blew over the townships where information sessions were held." Hugo always asked the people how they as a community would solve their most urgent problems. This approach, he says, yields incredible results. "The rangers, mostly jobless volunteers, work in their own neighbourhoods, and depending on the management of the conservancy, are organised to work in

existing political zones of the town they live in. They compete with one another to create litter-free zones, are involved with water management and the care of domestic animals, and generally provide the public with the necessary environmental information.” Hugo is currently trying to find sponsors for rubbish bins for the registered township conservancies. “If I succeed,” he says, “I am sure that we will soon have litter-free townships – places the residents can be proud of. Also, we have opened recycling depots in two townships. These are managed by urban rangers and are a sustainable job creator. With the support of municipalities, this type of environmental management plan can do wonders.”

Industrial conservancies:

Industrial conservancies work on the same basis as all the others, namely community participation. Everybody get involved, from the employer to the employees. Environmental training centres have been set up at some of the industrial conservancies, with Wonderwater Industrial Conservancy near Sasolburg a good example. There they recover bulbs and other medicinal plants from a site before it is mined, and replant them where they could safely reproduce. The new plants are made available to traditional healers, or reintroduced to rehabilitate mined land. Wonderwater has also created a wetland to attract waterfowl, and a tree is planted for every 1 000th vehicle that enters the premises.

(Based on Roelof Bezuidenhout’s article in Farmer’s Weekly, 6 December 2002. Contact Duart Hugo at 051 447 0407 or 083 356 3325; e-mail: duart@global.co.za)



NATIONAL EXPEDITION,
CORDILLERA BLANCA: PERU, JUNE 2004

The MCSA is organising a National Meet to the Cordillera Blanca in Peru in June 2004. This is a most beautiful area, easily accessible, with a wide range of climbs and hikes and with no red tape, permits or nonsense. The meet is open to all members, whether you have snow and ice

experience or not. A few days will be on instruction and training for all those who want to learn or improve their technique.

The general plan is do a 6-7 day trek around the Cordillera to see the area and to acclimatize, where after Huascarán (6740m) will be attempted, the highest peak in Peru. There are many other peaks, both easier and harder, which can be done. The group will fly to Lima and catch a bus to Huaraz where the base will be. This is a pleasant town that the group can return to after climbs to rest, shower and restock. Porters, burros and transport are all readily organised from here. The current airfare to Lima is R7200. Expenses thereafter are minimal, so another R7000 should cover everything.

A more accurate budget will be given out later, but bank on R14 to R15k max. The meet will run for basically the whole month of June, including traveling. Please email Greg Devine at devine@mega.co.za if you are interested. You will then receive all further information. If you wish to talk about it, phone Greg at 011 825 3866 (W) or 011 974 3695 (H).

SPECIAL DAYS:
JULY – DECEMBER 2003

July 11	World Population Day
August 9	International Day of the World's Indigenous People
September 1-7	National Arbor Day
September 16	International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer
September 20	Coastal Cleanup Day
September 21	International Day of Peace
September 24	Heritage Day
September 27	World Tourism Day
October 6	World Habitat Day
October 12 – 19	International Weed Buster Week
October 16	World Food Day
October 17	National Marine Day
October 13 – 17	National Marine Week

October 17	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
November 29	International Buy Nothing Day
December 3	International Day of Disabled Persons

