

# *Bries . Breeze*

North-West Edition 2013

News from the Rooi Els Conservancy, Rooi Els Ratepayers' Association and Rooi Els Boat Club  
Nuus van die Rooi Els Bewarea, die Rooi Els Belastingbetalersvereniging en die Rooi Els Bootklub



*RE camera has First Snap of  
Scott with new GPS collar!*

*New security company  
on the block*

*Check out our flag culture*

*Parra-dys hier by ons*

*The bird girls saw a Big One!*

*RE kid on second Arctic trip*

*Orcas around us*

## Editorial/ Redaktioneel



Winter is upon us, so hoping this edition brings some warm reading:

Our local leopard, Scott, was captured and fitted with a satellite GPS collar (page 6 and 12). Evette Weyers writes about death by a thousand cuts and how that effects conservation on page 8. Mary and Bruce Relly got married at Rooi Els (page 20) and we say goodbye to Hennie Wilkins after 15 years in Rooi Els on page 9. The security debate continues. Blue Energy left, but now Rooielsen can again choice their security company. Whatever their choice, they are urged to contribute to the safety of the village (pages 11 and 12). We learn about the Hummingbird Moth that Graham McClelland photographed and Dave de Klerk introduces his new identification guide for local plants, both on page 14.

Kay Leresche tells us about her fascinating trip to Eastern Europe, with her heart always at our own Sandfloor Cathedral on pages 15 and 16. Is Harveya a spelling mistake? Find out on page 17. Willie Pienaar has a nostalgic look at his time in Rooi Els on page 19 and we have amazing pictures of Orcas in False Bay, and around us as well, on page 20. Learn more about the flag culture in the village on page 23. Ernst Thompson transformed a dry plot into a froggy heaven (page 20).

Prof. John Hoffman gives feedback on the success of his rooikrans experiment on page 21. Jen Butler went on a second Arctic trip (page 22), Dine van Zyl received a big prize for her Boerekos TV series (page 29) and read her story about Rooi Els baboons and an onion field.

Thanks to all the regular and new contributors for interesting and inspiring stories.

Wishing everyone a joyfull winter and please remember to be fire wise as that is one of our area's biggest threats. □

Griet Odendaal

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### Where Many Rivers Meet

All the water below me came from above  
All the clouds living in the mountains  
gave it to the sea, which was their dying.  
And so I float on cloud become water  
central sea surrounded by white mountains  
The water salt, once fresh  
cloud fall and stream rush, tree root and tide bank  
leading to the rivers mouths  
and the mouths of the rivers sing into the sea  
the stories buried in the mountains  
give out into the sea  
and the sea remembers  
and sings back  
from the depths  
where nothing is forgotten.

*David Whyte*

## Rooi-Els Contacts

Baboon advice – Jenny Stark	028 271 5004
Drummond Arms	028 273 8458
EMERGENCIES - ASK Security	072 605 9512
Hack info - Evette Weyers	028 273 8483
RE Boat Club - Piet Uys	083 7994088
RE Conservancy – Anuta Scholtz	028 273 8539
RE Fire chief - Pierre Kruger	071 3999112
RE Ladies Group - Rennie Moir	028 273 8109
RE Village Shop	028 273 8383
RERA - Julia Aalbers	021 976 4378
Community Watch - Denise Esterhuyse	072 1230883
Snake catching – Geoff Harris	028 273 8164
AMBULANCE – Ambumed Kleinmond	0765123459
AREA MANAGER (Municipality) Cecile Jonkheid	028 271 8100
ASK SECURITY - 24 hr HOT LINE	072 345 3041
COUNCILLOR - Lisel Krige	028 2729533
DENTISTS - Dr JP Duvenage	028 271 3467
- Dr Engelbrecht	028 271 3662
DOCTORS - Dr van Niekerk	028 271 4227
- Dr du Plessis a/h	028 271 4227
EMERGENCY 24 hr Hermanus	028 313 8000
ESKOM failure in office hours after hours	021 859 5305 086 003 7566
Harold Porter Botanical Gardens	028 272 9311
FIRE - Carl Muller 082 774 4581	028 313 8000
- Clayton Francis (Pringle)	082 416 6685
- Kobus Stemmet (Kleinmond)	082 824 1434
- Riaan Jacobs (Fire Chief)	082 373 8270
KAWS - Kleinmond Animal Welfare	028 271 5004
LAW ENFORCEMENT (24 hr)	028 313 8111
MEDI-CLINIC Somerset West	021 850 9000
MEDI-CLINIC Hermanus	028 313 0168
OM Environmental Officer - Neville Green	028 271 8420 082 412 4840
NATIONAL SEA RESCUE Institute	021 449 3500
OPTICIAN - Dr PL Obermeyer	028 271 3119
PHARMACY - Albertyn	028 271 4666
POLICE - Kleinmond	028 271 8200
SEAWATCH (anti-poaching)	082 994 9300
Something Els Restaurant	083 3701960
TRAFFIC DEPT (Kleinmond)	028 271 8152
SEWERAGE working hours	028 2718435
after hours	028 3138111
VET - Kleinmond Animal Clinic	028 271 4183

## True Rooi Els moments



Sandra Yeo, one of the local swallows, celebrated her 70th. Congratulations!

Philipp Wagner, who has an engineering firm in Cape Town, celebrated his 80th birthday recently, and that was also the end of his hack career. Congragulations and a Big Thanks from Rooi Els. Philipp was a serious hacker and will be remembered for his "immaculate chainsaw", maintained with Austrian precision! Philip is married to Tersia King and they have been here for over 40 years. Hope this gives him more time for writing books?



### The moon is a balloon!

A scene with a lantern of light from the pirate series shoot that took place in Rooi Els in February and May. Rooielsers experienced some of the movie magic as they lived through the humming of engines and bright lights during the night shoots. Of course, the person who was directly affected by the commotion on her doorstep, was Kay Leresche. And shudder to think about those dassies and seals who live there. □

## Gerard weer op TV

Hy het gedink hy het op Rooiels kom aftree, maar Gerard raak besiger by die dag. Hy is pas weer 'n kontrak deur *Kyknet* se *DEKAT TV* aangebied vir 50 insetsels as aanbieder en 25 insetsels as regisseur. Die nuwe reeks begin op 28 Julie.

Skrywers en boeke is een van sy verantwoordelikhede en daar gaan onder andere 'n onderhoud wees met die nuutste Hertzogprywenner vir Prosa, Ingrid Winterbach, asook onderhoude met ander bekroonde skrywers soos Deon Opperman, Dan Sleigh, Hennie Aucamp, en Eben Venter, om maar 'n paar toe noem. "Die lekkerste is die leeswerk en navorsing vir die skryf van die draaiboeke," sê hy. Anuta help met die logistiek en om al die afsprake gereël te kry en versorg die draaiboeke taalkundig. "Want sy is my woordeboek!"

"Die pre-produksie stadium, dis nou van die konseptualisering tot die visualisering en skryf van die draaiboek, neem die meeste tyd in beslag en dit moet alles baie fyn beplan word. Die dag met die opname moet alles seepglad verloop. 'n Opname kan enigiets van drie tot sewe uur neem en ek probeer so twee per dag te skiet. Daar was 'n dag toe ek drie verskillendes moes doen, en daarna was ek gaar..."

Afgesien van 'n paar kultuurprogramme is hy ook verantwoordelik vir Diners Club se wyninsetsels *Op reis met wyn*. Vir hierdie reeks gaan hy op nie-Bordeaux variëteite konsentreer en dan ook die aanloop en opbou na die gala-aand waar die Wynmaker van die Jaar aangekondig word.

"Die moeilikste? Ek weet presies. En dit is die vraag wat gaan ek aantrek? Ek hou mos nie van winkelklere nie en Anuta het vir my so 'n paar hemde gemaak wat ek dan self stryk en netjies oor 'n hanger hang. My kar lyk soms soos 'n hangkas."

As jy op 'n vroegoggend sien daar ry Gerard met 'n ry gestrykte hemde, weet dan hy is op pad met sy kop vol skrywers of wyn.

(Gerard en Anuta, Rooiels se eie avonturiers en reisigers vertrek in Julie, met buurvrou Johlene de Villiers, weer op een van hulle groot reise. Hulle gaan die stof van hulle bromponies in België afblaas, dit op 'n trein na Slowenië en Kroasië sit en vir twee maande in daardie geweste van die wêreld rondrits. Watch this space! Red.)



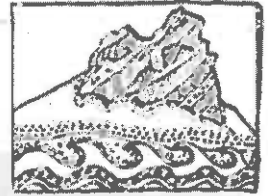
Gerard diep in gesprek met digter Melanie Grobler van Pringlebaai tydens 'n TV-opname.

### Contact numbers of our 3 snake catchers

Geoff Harris  
Gert Coetzee  
Ernst Thompson

028 273 8164 082 964 1721  
083 658 2504 083 484 9617  
082 333 1543

# 'The Unedited Truth'



Izak Smit put together residents communications to RERA. This way Rooielsers can see what their neighbours are struggling with, like the "highland clan" stuck without water every power cut. The names were given tongue in cheek, so we can look at the real issues:

## Rethink road paving plan

The 2004 RERA plan for road paving perhaps needs to be reviewed. It is 9 years old and I think many owners would not know what it actually does recommend. - *Road Rider*

### Stofverwaaid

Dra asseblief ons dank aan die Overstrand Munisipaliteit oor vir die groot verbetering aan ons dorp se watervoorsiening. Daar ontstaan egter in die proses 'n paar vrae wat ons graag hier in Roellaweg onder u aandag wil bring. In die verlede het ons ervaar dat as daar 'n kragonderbreking is, ons geen water in Roellaweg het nie. Gaan die probleem opgelos wees met die nuwe reservoir, of sal daar voorsiening gemaak word met 'n bystandsisteem om so 'n toestand te voorkom? Die ander moontlike probleem wat ek graag onder u aandag wil bring, is die toestand van Roellaweg. Tans is die straat heel rybaar, maar met swaar konstruksievoertuie wat gebruik gaan maak van Roellaweg, gaan hy nie lank bruikbaar bly nie. Stof gaan 'n groot probleem wees en daar sal voorsiening gemaak moet word om die straat klam te hou. Spoedbeperking sal streng toegepas moet word. Dit kom by my op dat Roellaweg is eintlik 'n dienspad en daar word nie verwag dat die straat voor die konstruksie geplavei moet word nie, maar dat hierdie moontlikheid in die toekoms baie ernstig aandag sal moet geniet, gesien in die lig van die helling wat hier ter sprake is. — *Opteker*

### Waterless for days

Although the news of the new reservoir is encouraging, is the upgrading of the pump station included in the project? Not sure if you are aware of the total pump failure about 4 weeks ago over the weekend, and the Municipality was only able to address the problem on the Monday. - *Station Man*

### All for Ambiance

Thank you very much for sharing the information and for taking an active interest on our behalf. We do appreciate this. You asked for feedback -- I just wanted it noted that when you look at the maintenance of the Village roads and of the street numbering, we would ask you to continue the emphasis on conservation and a natural ambiance. The most important aspect for many of us is to retain the rural ambiance and to protect the fynbos. The Municipality is aware of this, and have agreed to contact REC whenever they are going to cut back the verges, to ensure that only the minimum is cut back and to ensure that sensitive and protective species are left intact. But, the workers on the ground are not always aware of this. Furthermore, the street numbering etc. is of some concern. We do not want huge great big street numbers and neither do we want bright street signs. We prefer to

have them subtle and unobtrusive. This is a village in a Biosphere reserve and we value the difference from a city or suburban atmosphere that requires lots of signs and trimmed verges. Just thought it may help you to have the feedback from your constituents when you are working with the Municipality. — *Lady K*

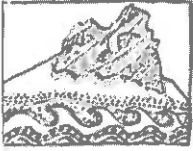
### Reintroducing Night Watch

We are aware of the increase of crime in our area and thank you for your recent e-mail with regard re-introducing Night Watch in Rooi Els. It seems that flat screen TV'S and computers are the major target. I wonder where these guys put a large flat screen TV at night if, as it is being said, they come in by foot? It leads me to ask the question, are they perhaps stashing the loot in the area? Perhaps, if possible, we could try to get an idea of who rents their homes out in Rooi Els? The perpetrators could have a garage or cheap place to rent, place stolen goods there and come back to collect the goods in normal hours? It seems that Groenland is not being supported by the local community - although they have rented the premises in the village. We personally have the impression that ASK security have placed the most "energy" into Rooi Els. We can't see Groenland lasting in the village without support which leads me to wonder why we cannot collectively do our utmost to get ASK to take over the lease. It would be far better to have the presence of ASK in the village if we can give them some sort of mandate that we (residents) could support an anti crime initiative working closely with them. We understand that, logistically, ASK cannot dedicate a vehicle just for Rooi Els and possibly cannot man the office in Rooi Els 24/7. However, there could be certain residents interested in assisting manning their office? Not sure? In essence, we really need to work closely with the majority security company (which I believe is ASK in Rooi Els) and co-ordinate the anti crime initiative. However, we do need a majority vote of residents living in the area to assist with patrols. It is not an ideal situation when just a few residents are prepared to be up at all hours for the benefit of all. If the majority of the residents are prepared to sacrifice some time towards combating crime in one way or another, then my husband and I will be available for Night Watch Patrols. - *Lady D*

### Oor sekuriteit en buurtwag

Ek het so gehoop die fisiese teenwoordigheid van sekuriteit of die opskeping kon van die vorige planne laat gebeur. Dis nooit te laat om weer te probeer nie: die doel van die "Rooi-Els Watch" was om 'n fisiese teenwoordigheid in die dorp te kry 24/7 en dan "dorps-reserviste" te kry om buurtwag en ander gemeenskapsdienste te doen waar nodig. Hierdie 'teenwoordigheid'

# What is bothering residents? Read these letters sent to RERA



(hipoteties Groenland Sekuriteit) se primêre doel moet wees sigbare patrolering en alarms. Sekondêr kan hulle, met hulp van bevoegde inwoners, die volgende fasiliteer / sentraal kommunikeer:

A admin van die buurtwag roos-ters; B brandbestryding eerste linie en inroep van hulp (toerusting en fasiliteite, ens sentraal gehou); C mariene bewaring (poaching); D besoeke aan siekes en bejaardes / sentrale koerier-punt vir medisyne, koerante, ens ens; E hulp met toesig oor onderhoud of konstruksie-mense op erwe; F hulp aan huis-eienaars wat ver weg woon (bv elektrisiteit meting en sleutelbeheer of selfs skoonmaakdienste); G 'n gemeenskapswinkeltjie; H nog honderde meer.

Natuurlik kom niks verniet in die lewe nie. Al wat ons moet doen: 'n klein maandelikse bedrag in 'n poel van almal en 'n klomp "peer-pressure" op ons bure om saam te werk. Ek self sal sekerlik goedkoper "wegkom" maandeliks met 'n baie groter mandjie van gemeenskapsdiens as waarvoor ek huidig in elkgeval my hand in die sak moet steek ... dis maar wat ons dink! - *The Colonel*  
Would you be so kind as to send me some more informa-

## Info on thermal camera?

tion on the "thermal camera" mentioned in report no 2. Alternatively, where can I find out some more about it, eg specifications, performance, price etc? - *Limage!*

## Dringede geld gevra vir brandweer groep

Hiermee 'n versoek vir 'n donasie ten bate van die Pringlebaai brandweergroep - vir die aankoop van 'n Samil 20 brandweervoertuig. Pringle Bay Volunteer Community Fire fighters (that also serve Rooiels) is in need of R20 000 to achieve the addition of such a truck to their fleet. Currently there is only a 2X4 bakkie with a 500 litre capacity for fire fighting. The 4X4 Samil vehicle can transport ±3000 litres of water. Recent fires have again shown that a high volume of water is crucial to effectively fight bush-fires. It is in Rooiels' interest to support the Pringle Bay firefighting team. A potential vehicle has been identified. Pringle Bay Volunteer Community Firefighters have so far collected R156 000 towards the purchase of the vehicle. Die laaste R20 000 kort om suksesvol die voertuig aan te koop en in 'n brandweervoertuig om te bou. Enige bydrae om hierdie bedrag te help verwesentlik sal waardeer word. Ag en sommer 'n ietsie vir die Thermal Camera (R30 000) ook! - *Bedelaar*

## Old soak aways worked fine

It is a matter of importance that we support the drive to give residents a choice on what system is to be used when a new house is built or alterations are done to existing homes. Most of the houses have had soak away systems for donkey's years with no/very few hassles regarding their sewerage system. I also don't see a problem with ground water or the water table as we have no lakes or ponds like for instance Betty's Bay. Remember there are



## Rooi Els Website:

Wherever you are in the world, for fresh news about Rooi Els, the social and newsworthy events, bird or animal sightings, local weather reports, crime updates, opinions, as well as many previous Breezes, please visit our Rooi Els website: [www.rooi-els.co.za](http://www.rooi-els.co.za)

only about 30 or so of these conservancy tanks that need to be emptied. What catastrophe it would be when say 100-150 houses have to be pumped and trucks are in Rooiels 24 hrs a day. What has now become of the Rooiels Vision. — *System Man*

## Is Smelly Nellie really necessary?

Where it is going to lead if we allow the municipality to insist on every new property being forced to install conservancy tanks instead of the good old septic systems that have served our community so well over so many years – without ANY visible detriment to the fynbos or inhabitants? Now we have not only the stink and the noise, but also new owners face the escalating cost of removals. AND, especially during the holidays, our little village buzzes with tankers busily grinding their obnoxious way around our highways and byways. Many of us have even experienced them arriving at 5 am, with their whining pump and circling yellow light creating light pollution and a serious public disturbance. If you have experienced the stench that companies each 'vacuum removal', you will no doubt agree that the word 'vacuum' is a complete misnomer! I often wonder what germs are circulating in that miasma!! The conservancy tank process can thus hardly be described as 'safe' or 'antiseptic'! I see no reason why RE should not be exempted from this pernicious practice – we will never have sewers here and yet we pay for sewerage 'infrastructure'. Surely the by-law can be changed? This is a serious problem which needs to be addressed without delay.— *The Plumber*

## Ons gradeer nie op Afrikaans

In Afrikaans word paaie "geskraap deur 'n padskraaper/In English roads are "graded" by a grader. padskraaper = grader.— *Jannie se Pa*

## Fired Up

We held a fundraising 'do' at the little house last March, 2012, and wanted to do another Bingo evening at the Drummond Arms, but found that to be illegal apparently, you cannot play bingo even in your own house. The 'do' here raised quite a bit: but not enough, by any measure for what is required. However, Clayton told me recently that he was getting there.. let's give it one more push. Clayton Francis is the lead man in fire-fighting in Pringle Bay & Rooi Els and he is raising money to buy a bakkie specific to PB & RE. - *Andrea*

## Mark Butler takes on SARS; Geoff Titley retires

This article is actually about the Rooiels Boat Club ("REBC") and is so similar to last year's article, with minor date changes and a new winner of the competition. So, if any of you are already bored or busy, read up to here, look at the pretty pictures and turn over to the next article. Donating one-third of the cost of the magazine brings with it an obligation of contributing a 1000 word article to each edition of the Breeze, an extremely expensive way of training a reluctant amateur journalist.

Club news is Piet Uys does just about everything that has to be done with a little bit here or there done by the rest of the members. Mark Butler is negotiobating with SARS, John BS (and yes he does BS a bit) does the accounts and generally speaking is generally speaking, Geoff Harris does the AGM minutes (but says it's the last time as he's going deaf and can't hear what people are saying). Koos looks after safety and a good job he does too; no serious boat club incidents this last year. Many of us did witness the boat that turned turtle off the point and I guess we have all got a timely reminder about checking our bungs before we go out.

Gert Coetzee is not a committee man, well not anymore, but he does a fine job keeping the drinks cold for the annual crayfish competition and the AGM, which is held at the Coetzee home called Windgat or Waaigat or whatever.

But, as I said above, Piet does everything, he keeps members electronically informed of activities and events during the year, including, but not limited to:

- The survey day. Both the survey and braai afterwards were well attended, once again at Huis Uys, despite them needing to rush off to a wedding.
- New members.
- Keys, decals (plus he changes the locks).
- Season dates.
- Notice re crayfish competition date and other general matters.
- AGM notice, agenda etc.

John tried to use email communication on the morning of the crayfish competition, the next and the following morning to advise of the foul weather and continued postponement of the event. Some people responded on the day, others when they got back to the office weeks later. Next time, leave the comms to Piet, John.

The committee has the shortest meetings imaginable; in fact this year the members had as their key focus and developmental area, a big drive to improve their electronic communication skills. No face to face meetings were held and lo and behold the sun still rises every day. As always the crayfish competition was well attended when it eventually took place on the day after the last reserve day because of the foul weather. Participants

were so grateful that Mark Butler had volunteered to handle the SARS application that none of us took our biggest crayfish to the weigh in, enabling him to win. They're funny things competitions. For the next while after the competition, the winner has to put up with members saying how big the crayfish was that they caught the next day or the next week. It's what you do on the day that counts. You can kick every ball over in practice, but when you miss in the big game, you have darem missed! Mark, nor anyone else, really cares how big they are except at the weigh in. Well done Mark, for winning on the day and then for ignoring the whingers.

Trophies were handed out, generous prizes were sponsored by Groenland Security Services and Western Province Caterers, through the generosity of boat club member, Kevin Douglas, again sponsored a gift to all entrants. Thanks to all.

Stephanie, widow of the late Chris Gilmour, normally hands out the prizes, but could not attend but asked that Alison (one el) Ayre (no ess) deputise for her. Alison spoke of the history of the club, the competition and their boat and handed out the various trophies. Congratulations to the

Zwicks; despite having the biggest boat, they caught the smallest biggest crayfish, assuming you understand what that means.

Thanks to all who helped, including Heidi Andersson, Gert Coetzee, the Huis Uys for the venue, despite it being Susara's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, and for the weigh-in duties, to all the entrants for coming home safely, to everyone for not finishing all the drinks, leaving some for the AGM, which was again held at Waaigat on Easter Saturday.

John reported at the AGM that when Geoff Titley came to pay his membership and update his details etc., he proudly told John to put a line through the telephone number that had a (w) next to it. John promptly nominated him to join the committee, but Geoff, the lazy oke that he is, declined. Du Toit Viljoen was a bit slower to decline and was duly elected to the committee.

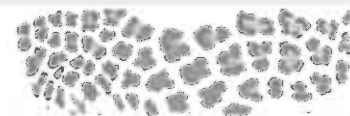
We have 55 members, 47 Rooielsers and 8 Buitelanders and money in the bank, about the same as last year and the year before. Put differently the REBC remains a concerned Rooiels citizen that gives generously of the income earned on its investments to the community.

The departure of Jo and Margaret Hensen raises the issue of who will assist with handing out keys etc. Groenland have indicated a willingness to assist, for which we are extremely grateful. Piet will confirm this arrangement in due course. In the interim, light the fires, drink some fine red wine and we'll see you at the survey day on 21 September and the crayfish competition on 27 December. Cheers! □

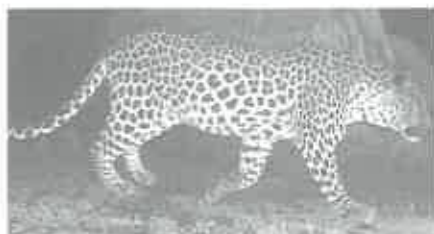


Hustle and bustle at the Crayfish Competition .

# Scott fitted with satellite GPS collar



Our Scott, or BM12, the dominant resident leopard male in the Kogelberg area, was recently captured and fitted with a satellite GPS collar by the Cape Leopard Trust. His has entered the world of technology, his movements can now be monitored exactly.



nificent animal in daylight as most captures happen in the dead of night.

Scott weighed 37kg, the heaviest of the Boland males thus far. Aging him by means of tooth wear resulted in an estimated age of 7-8 years old. After taking the necessary body measurements and biological sam-

He was targeted recently by the Cape Leopard Trust team for their study. "Over the 3 years since the inception of the Boland Project, we have come to know Scott from many camera trap photos, and even photographs from a birding enthusiast who witnessed a pair of black eagles dive-bombing him near Pringle Bay. We were therefore especially thrilled about the prospect of "meeting him in person"!

"Our previous attempt to capture him was unsuccessful, having tried for a month with no luck. A week after the traps had been removed we got a camera trap photo of him strolling by where the traps had been! Clearly leopard trapping involves skill, patience, and a good stroke of luck. We returned to the same area to try again, and finally, after another few weeks, we got him!"

The capture happened just before dawn and at first light Scott was immobilized and fitted with a satellite GPS collar. It was very special to be able to witness this mag-

plified, he was released with his new tracking collar. Collar data retrieved soon after release show that he has recovered well and has already made his first kill.

We will monitor his movements, using the GPS data to study the effects of landscape fragmentation, human habitation and habitat alteration on leopard ecology and behaviour. These data will contribute to identifying immediate and long-term threats of concern to this iconic species and its habitat.

Rooielsers were hopeful that they would be able to track his movements on their website, but making that sort of information available to the public would have conservation implications. But they were promised regular updates by the Cape Leopard Trust team.

The team was assisted by Dr Andrew Gray who monitored the well-being of the captured leopard, and by the City of Cape Town Steenbras Reserve who provided logistical support throughout the trapping process. □

## Nothing romantic about capturing a leopard

Scott's first pic with collar: p 12

Cape mountain leopards are extremely elusive and shy, not to mention occurring in very low densities. When telling people that part of our research entails the capture of leopards to fit them with satellite GPS collars, the response is often loaded with envy about this exciting job. Capturing a leopard certainly is a thrilling prospect, but most people don't realise the amount of time, effort, resources and sheer determination that go into catching such a ghost-like animal.

To start with, a male Cape leopard typically has a territory of anything between 200-600 km<sup>2</sup>, but in order to capture it, we need for it to step onto a tiny 15 cm<sup>2</sup> trigger plate. What are the chances! The traps we use most often for leopards are footloop traps, globally considered the safest and most effective trapping technique for large carnivores and used extensively on leopards, jaguars, snow leopards, lions and tigers. In order for us to use these specially constructed "snares", a tremendous amount of training is provided to CLT researchers by master trappers from the USA who have perfected this technique.

Another energy-sapping aspect is the trap monitoring process. This is essential for safe captures, with traps needing to be monitored every 2-3 hours through



the night to ensure a speedy response in the event of a capture. This means that the trapper needs to get up constantly during the night to listen to the trap signals from the special trap transmitters we use.

Finally, says the Leopard trust team, after weeks, and sometimes months of interrupted sleep, rebuilding traps, and waiting for the incessant wind to die down, a capture happens. You listen to the

trap signals and you hear the right one – and everything goes into overdrive to make sure that the captured animal is immobilised quickly by the vet on standby and released as soon as possible. It is all completed in a few hours. □

The team weigh and measure Scott.



# Die dood deur 'n duisend wonde

deur Evette Weyers

'n Kreupel malgas op die strand  
Verstik in plastiek  
Betyds om hom te bevry.

Hoe raak seevoëls verstrengel?  
deur 'n duisend onverskillighede.  
Hoe bloei vleilande dood?  
deur 'n duisend nalatighede.

geskeurde plastiek in die see  
duisend bedrieglike flenters  
dryf nes jellyvisse.

Walvisse sluk hulle in  
Met mae vol plastiek,  
eet Leerskilpaaie hulle,  
sterwend van die honger.  
Die dood deur 'n duisend wonde

'n Walvis spoel uit op die strand  
een ton plastiek in sy maag  
Koerantberig in 'n venster  
vir almal om te sien;  
plastiek besoedel  
'Death by a thousand cuts'

Honde gemartel in Korea  
vir kwasie stimulant  
Gefolterde bere in Sjina  
se gal word "medisyne".  
Onkunde misbruik deur gieriges.  
Die dood deur 'n duisend wonde.

Die aarde wurg  
aan ons onverskilligheid

Uitbuiting van bygelowe  
oor jagsheid en seks:

Renosters word afgemaai  
Die dood deur 'n duisend wonde.

'n Spesies wankel  
op die rand van uitwissing.

'Death by a thousand cuts.'  
Die ou Sjinese vonnis,  
van langdurige teregstelling  
vir die onvergeeflikes

Vir wie lui hierdie klok?  
Hy lui vir jou en vir my.

Die dood deur 'n duisend wonde.

John Donne : "Do not ask for whom  
the bell tolls, it tolls for thee."

## The Butterfly effect

Through the Mathematician and climatologist, Edward Lorenz, who found out that minute changes in weather systems can have an enormous effect on the climate, the concept of the *butterfly effect* was created: *A butterfly flaps its wings in India and 3 days later there is a huge storm over the Andes.* I was delighted by this principle, a perfect metaphor. Then I discovered that 300 years earlier the Chinese already had a saying "*When a butterfly flaps its wings it can be felt on the other side of the earth.*" I was totally enchanted! I created a whole exhibition of sculptures around this theme. Every thought or action we create has a ripple effect of consequences.

At the moment I see how true this is in our country, in the good sense. At the Virgin Active gym where I go swimming I see how many white women have adopted one or two black or brown orphans and regularly bring them for swimming lessons.

Amongst my friends and acquaintances many people are actively and purposefully working to improve conditions for others. Estelle Raymond has been working with families of farm labourers for several years. She taught the woman new skills and expanded their frames of reference by exposing them to other cultures and ideas. For instance she took them to see how the Hindus celebrate their Diwali festival. She has worked with the children as well. She says she has also learned so much from them.



Mary Relly's sister, Bridget, has a very successful program of teaching parents (who might not be literate themselves) how to create an environment at home where their children can have more access to reading. Inspired by this Mary and Rennie Moir, Anuta and Merina are now working at this Crèche at Mooi Uitsig once a week. A friend's mother taught women in the townships how to get preschool training go-

ing. (My friend wants to remain anonymous). This friend is a volunteer at animal welfare. Two vets in Hermanus, Michelle and Sandy, regularly do 3 day long free *spayathons* in the poorer areas (spaying dogs for free) and get other vets to help as well. There are more such structured contributions all around next to the many, continual actions of kindness and generosity.

It gives me great hope for our country.

Just the everyday actions of granting beingness to others with different viewpoints and values, contributes as well. These instinctive small actions never make the papers but they are vital in our society. In fact all these actions are part of the healing of the damaged connective tissue in our society. I am very optimistic about our nation's future. These thousands of butterflies flapping their wings won't create a storm but indeed a cumulative wave of goodwill and healing. □

Evette Weyers



## Tree



## Art?

Jill Lockley and Wolfgang Steynbach found this old yellow wood tree (above) with inscriptions of lovers of yesteryear. The earliest was in 1929 and another in 1959. This was near the leopard camera and a sensitive spot. Anyone interested are welcome to contact Jill or Wolf.

Left: Not frowned upon: Scott's (p 6,12) scratch pad in that area. □



## The Rooiels Vision:

### Our Vision

Rooiels is a conservation community, caring together today ... for tomorrow

### Our Values

We strive to be a caring community, united by our passion to conserve the natural splendour of Rooiels, and keen to share our appreciation of the environment with others

### Our Pledge

United by our passion for the natural splendour of Rooiels, we pledge that here nature will be nurtured; flora, fauna and marine life, protected; our every impact on the area limited; our custodianship of the environment respected; and our community spirit strengthened so that our lives, and those of generations to come, will be enriched by our care. □

## Death by a thousand cuts

Since I was a toddler my Dad taught me to step lightly on earth. "Don't kill a scorpion or a snake. Catch it with a glass and a sheaf of paper, or with a cardboard box and put it back in the veld." He taught me to respect life in a blade of grass, a wasp, a predator and a person, irrespective of his religion. I grew up in a world that was totally alive around me. I took his injunction to heart, to look after nature and the wild places of the earth. It was my first mission as a child. - Evette

'Death by a thousand cuts' is a phrase I came across in nature conservation. It is such a potent metaphor that I immediately adopted it. Originally it came from China; an earlier Chinese death sentence of a prolonged execution performed on someone who had done a great wrong. In nature conservation it refers to the gradual destruction of a species, a wetland or something similar. It refers to chronic neglect, indifference and abuse to a part of nature with the result of it gradually bleeding to death or become clogged with pollution. Vast quantities of solid and chemical waste from human activities are continually dumped and leach into the oceans including plastics, sewage, oil and toxins. The destruction due to a thousand small indifferent acts are as dangerous.

While diving I take out hundreds of bits of torn plastic bags drifting in the sea. They are swallowed by leatherback turtles, and eaten by humpback whales who mistake them for jellyfish floating in the water. They can't digest the plastic, so it eventually clogs their stomachs and they die of hunger. Many Albatross chicks die from the plastic bottle caps and even cigarette lighters their parents pick up from the ocean's surface and feed them. (See TED on ocean pollution.)

It seems insurmountable. In truth something can be done about it. Fortunately Rooi Els inhabitants care about nature. You see it in our RE Vision. Thank you to all of you who worked on creating and formalising our vision, signed the pledge and continued to uphold it.

I believe we must revisit our vision from time to time lest we become disinterested and careless in our alignment with it. Let us stay vigilant and mindful regarding conservation. Let us take the trouble and put in the extra effort to uphold this pledge. Let us conserve nature in every possible way. We invite all Rooielsers to join us in upholding our commitment to this vision and pledge (see at the top). □ Evette Weyers

### Uitdaging: Hoe kan jy vandag 'n verandering maak?

Estelle Raymond het die volgende voorstel gemaak: Miskien kan elkeen van ons onderneem om hierdie maand/jaar(?) net een praktiese aksie te neem om elk van die onderskeie aspekte van die "pledge" uit te leef - wat dink jy? □

# Rooielsers groet Hennie Wilkins

Hennie Wilkins, 'n Rooieler vir 15 jaar is vanjaar op 22 Januarie op pad na die hospitaal in Somerset-Wes oorlede. Hy word oorleef deur sy vrou Drika, seun Hardi, Corlia (troufotomiddel) en twee geliefde kleinkinders, Josua en Nell.

Hennie is dood soos hy geleef het – omring met naastes en vriende. Hy en Drika is in sy laaste oomblikke bygestaan deur bure, Wolfgang, Karen en Zollie Steinbach was daar, Corene en Izak, Koos Smit en Jennie, Joan en Werner Mödinger – 'n mikrokosmos van al die mense ingeweef in sy ryk lewe.

In April was Drika weer tuis, nadat sy 'n paar maande by haar seun in Johannesburg was. Sy sê dit gaan goed, soos dinge maar aangaan. Die huis lyk rustig en pragtig, die tuin gaan aan. Maar oral voel jy nog die groot leemte waar Hennie was.

Hennie en Drika is albei gebore en het grootgeword op Brakpan. "Ons het begin uitgaan toe ek 15 was en hy 19, net uit die Weermag. Ek was die jongste van 7 kinders en toe reeds in standard 9. Dit was by 'n hokkiepartytjie. En een van die ironieë, is dat Hennie se ma



**Die jong bestuurder**

daar was, en ná die tyd toe sy ons so sien skoonmaak, sê sy wens sy kan my aan een van haar seuns voorstel. As sy maar geweet het!"

Maar daar was al ander tekens dat ons vir mekaar bestem was, bv. toe Hennie in Matriek was, het ek eendag daar by die skool op my fiets verbygery, en hy sê toe vir sy maat, "eendag gaan ek met daai meisie trou."

"Ons het drie jaar uitgegaan en is getroud in 1968. Hy was my eerste liefde en my heel beste maatjie. Ons seun is in 1972 gebore."

Hennie was die jongste rekenmeester wat Trustbank ooit gehuur het. En toe hy 31 was, was hy die jongste bestuurde van Trustbank in die Pietersburg tak. Ons het die land oor getrek – sy laaste voltydse pos was 11 jaar as bestuurder van die Trustbank tak in Heerengracht, die vlagskip van Trustbank.

"Wat ek kan sê van Hennie is dat hy een van die grootste Christene was wat ek geken het. Ná sy dood, toe ek by die hospitaal uitloop, kyk ek op en sien 'n helder verskietende ster. Ek het geweet dis Hennie wat vir my sê hy is nou vry. En dit het my soveel vrede gegee."

"Ag, hy het 'n fyn sin vir humor gehad, en baie sêgoed – en na sy dood het vriende gesê hulle dink so baie daaraan.

As hy 'n plomperige vrou sien, het hy altyd gesê "so much more to love". Of as iets lekker is, het hy gesê ek kuier nou so lekker soos 'n kind op 'n winkelstoep. Of as ons swak diens gekry het, het hy gesê minstens kan ons nie kla oor diens nie, want daar was nie diens nie! Iemand wat baie praat, was met 'n grammofoon se naald ingeënt toe hulle klein was. En oor Rooi Els? Die wind waai net 2 keer – 1 keer vir 3 maande, en die ander vir 9 maande." Vriende het na hom opgekyk. Hy het 'n persoonlikheid gehad wat mense getrek het. Baie het ook gesê hy was die beste bankbestuurder wat hulle ooit geken het. Hy het sy merk gelos.

"Ek het vroeëjare by die ou SAS bank gewerk. Daar was 'n man wat van my gehou het, so Hennie het my vinnig oortuig om vir R10 meer by Trustbank te gaan werk. Maar toe Hardi begin skoolgaan, het ek begin met houtsnijklas aanbied, ek kon tuis wees, maar ook 'n inkomste verdien." Drika maak ook die mooiste trourokke, brandglaswerk en in die laaste jare 'n pophuis vir haar kleinkind.

"Ek sien myself regtig as 'n geseënde vrou om ooit 'n man soos hy te gehad het. By was my beste maatjie. Hy was 'n goeie man en 'n goeie pa. Ons kind kon openlik wees met ons. Ag, en Hennie het altyd gesê hy het nie 'n skoonogter bekry nie, maar 'n dogter."

"Ons het dikwels verhuis, maar ons het 'n sisteem gehad. Hennie het my kennis gegee, en so 3 maande vooruit na die nuwe plek gegaan. Ek sal die huis ver-



Drika en Hennie bo by Hardi en Corlia se troue. Onder is oupa by Nell en Josua.



## The non-existent Palmiet Treasure and the Gustav Adolf

"At sunset every night, we see him. Slowly with a walking stick in one hand, and a lantern in the other. His hat is pulled over his eyes. Night after night in his slow shuffling movements, he walked along to the rocks." The old man was a regular sight at the Palmiet beach house. The family discovered that he was looking for the money chest of the Gustav Adolf.

It was in 1902 that the ship the Gustav Adolf ran aground at the mouth of the Palmiet River. The three-mast barque carried a load of railway sleepers with a crew of eleven. They were on their way to Durban, from Fremantle, Australia. Near Cape Town they ran into a fierce storm at sea and sprung a leak in the hull. Conditions were ghastly — the pumps could not manage and water in the ship was rising constantly. Their only hope was to run the ship ashore at a convenient place.

While a gale raged, the Gustav Adolph became stranded at the mouth of the Palmiet River. When the waves began to wash over the ship, Captain Gjeruldsen ordered the two life boats to be lowered. The first boat carried six men and they reached land safely. The captain and four other members of the crew were in the second boat. This boat was wrecked by a giant wave and only one officer was able to swim to shore.

Rev. JR Albertyn, who had a beach cottage at Palmiet,

took care of the seven shipwrecked men until they could be transported to Cape Town. The coast between Palmiet and Hawston was covered with sleepers and wreckage. A lot of the timber from the wreck found its way to homes and farmsteads in the area. Loads of sleepers were transported from nearby Kleinmond.

Two lonely graves are the only remaining signs of the tragedy of the Norwegian ship. The lonely old man and his lantern were on an endless fool's errand. The ship had no reason to carry money. Their only "treasure" was the lumber for the expanding railway network. □

SJ du Toit

### Spotted!

An elephant  
shrew,  
snapped by  
Sandra Yeo



koop en die nuwe een soek binne die prysklas. Behalwe vir ons laaste trek. Ek is vooruit in 1989 — ons is na die Kaap en ek moes Hardie vestig in sy nuwe skool, hy was in standard 9. Ons moes drie maande in 'n Holiday Inn bly, terwyl Hennie in Ver-  
eeniging was. 'n Snaakse ding oor daai tyd, Hardi is nie een wat eintlik middagete geëet het nie, so ek het gedink dis vreemd dat hy bestellings plaas soos steak en chips, burger en chips etc. maar gedink hy sukkel, so is verveeld en eet maar baie. Toe ons later hoor, het hy elke dag 3 maats 'n kans gegee om te bestel! Sy sosiale lewe het gefloreer en drie maande in sy nuwe skool het hy op die leerlingraad beland! 'n Eerste by sy skool. "

Staatjies oor Hennie? Hardi was eenkeer weg vir drie jaar in Londen, en hy verras ons met 'n besoek aan Rooi Els. Hennie was so opgewonde, hy het gaan kreef duik met hom, gekuier en gebraai. Tot so tienuur die aand, toe Hennie onthou hy moes die aand by 'n afskeidspartytjie wees wat sy werk vir hom gereël het. Gelukkig vir vier ander mense ook, so hy kon die skandaal oorleef!

Drika het hom vir die laaste klompie jare versorg. Hy het in 1995 twee hartaanvalle gehad by die huis, en in 1997 is hy met Miocitus gediagnoseer, 'n auto-immuun toestand wat die spiere aantast. Op 8 Desember 2012 is hy met breinkanker gediagnoseer en is net oor 'n maand later oorlede. Drika is deesdae ook een van ons Rooi Els swaeltjies en kuier so tussendeur in Johannesburg waar sy naby haar kinders woon. □ Red

### Drika sê Groot Dankie aan Rooielsers

Met die siekte en dood van my man Hennie, het ek die "hart" van Rooiels gesien. Rooielsers, julle "hart" is van liefde en omgee gemaak!

Dis met groot dankbaarheid dat ek terugkyk en steeds om my kyk en dit onthou en sien wat julle almal vir my en Hennie beteken het.

'n Baie groot dankie aan almal wat ons met soveel liefde ondersteun het. Ek sou vir geen beter vriende kon vra om ons te omring in hierdie moeilike tyd nie.

Ek dank ook ons Hemelse Vader dat Hy Hennie vir byna 45 jaar aan my gegee het. Nou is hy in veilige hande. □

Drika Wilkins

### Evette

by Bruce Relly

Fins or feathers  
lifting free of gravity...  
or, maybe instead, brisk, clay-coloured fingers  
translating ether into metaphor,  
metaphor into matter.  
No troubled history here,  
but intuitive surges -  
bearing literary seeds,  
and splashes from the waves below.

# Security, Electricity and A Big New Road

Rooieler Diarmuid Baigrie looks at the Rooi Els history - how issues like the new coastal road and electricity was tackled and dealt with, and now it is security's turn. What we can't let happen is to let the spirit of Rooi Els be undermined. We the owners of property here need to remain the guardians of this special spot in our world, it is our responsibility for our short time in this fine place. He continues:

In about June 1980 Jenny and I had failed to secure a beautiful little cottage on a headland above Britannia Bay on the west coast, a little north of Pater Noster. Our R18000 offer was not accepted. We rented in Cape Town so this was to be our first purchase. Our systematic search was directed by a compass with one point on our rented home and the other on a map, describing an arc that represented how far I thought we could get in 2 hours on a Friday, but closer was better. Rooi Els fell well within that arc and Jenny knew the place. She had camped with her parents next to the spring at the slipway after they came out from England in the late '50's, her Dad fishing, just like his had. Jenny's grandpa had taken his wife and a fishing rod on a camping honeymoon there, with a donkey carrying provisions, no road then. I had never heard of it though I had stayed with friends in Betty's Bay as a kid.



So on a beautiful winter Sunday in June we drove to Rooi Els to see a house that was for sale. Grass around it was knee high but it was brick and solid if very plain. This is where its successor is today, behind the dunes, facing north with that gorgeous view of a proper sentinel mountain that glows orange on so many nights, sweeping down into a brooding sea. The Visser family, for whom about 6 people had to sign the Deed of Sale, accepted our R21000 offer. Ouma and Oupa had passed away.

The road to Rooi Els was narrow in places, the fall-off edge seemed very close sometimes and there often were rockfalls, while the surface was an old pitted one with gravel breaking through occasionally. You drove it carefully. When we had navigated it safely and arrived, we loved that moment: unpack, open gas bottles, maybe light the gas lights, get the hot water pilot light on, as did our three children. Even more, they were off and gone as the car doors opened. We braaied every night always, I had piles of rooikrans from my own plot.

We can't recall ever 'locking up' then. The kids and their friends were in and out and we never ventured far, there was so much to do just being there. No baboons visited us, though they were there. If we left early on a Monday the baboons were at the roadside bins, they knew when the invaders had left and food was abundant. George and Issy Rijke had their shop, she of the best Belgian apple and almond tart ever made, delivered by the slice with the biggest sweetest smile, who later gave me a whole one for my 40<sup>th</sup> birthday, what joy.

What we can recall clearly is how much we loved gas and no electricity. The mood and light it evoked on a dark night with its reassuring background hiss was blissful. Kids tucked up, gaslights dimmed, a small glass of soetes

from Nuy or port from Muratie under the stars on the new stoep upstairs George had built for us, my girl nestling next to me, what could have been better in the whole world. Timeless stuff. Gas of course is fussy with its fine jets. But old urbane Eric Blood on Bathers Road, David Blaine's cottage since Eric died years ago, would walk over in

the evening with his little leather bag of tools and pull out a hedgehog-like bunch of probes, select one and clean my jets. Eureka! There was hot water and joy returned. A quiet good night and thanks and he was gone till the next time, a true gentleman of his generation.

Then came the big Eskom challenge. If you Rooielsers want electricity you have to decide now because we aren't coming back later. They were doing Pringle Bay after finishing Betty's, so we had to have a referendum, as always, we had lots of opinions. We lost by a long way and electricity came. However we didn't connect up because TV was not on our agenda, we liked a gas hob and lights and the gas fridge was OK, but not great. Beers could have been colder.

As the village lit up in the evenings so people moved around more and life became a little more social. All the conveniences of electricity, household appliances and power, saw a growth in building activity and all its consequences. We had a break-in. It was shocking, until the fingerprints suggested that they were children and only some old clothing (it was all old then) was taken. Soon forgotten, probably kids from the beach over the dune, naughty little tykes, but shame, they were probably cold.

Then one morning we remember well, as we lay in post-sleep languor, kids still quiet, our bedroom window open as always onto the lawn and the noisy sea, there was a flurry, the open curtain pulled further back from the window and in jumped Charlie, one big alpha male baboon we grew to know well. But this was his first good morning visit, our bedroom door was open to the house as always, the bed a bit in the way, so he jumped onto it over our feet and was off again in a flash, through the door and into the kitchen. The Babs or BJ's had arrived. It was no invasion, that came much later, but now we all knew each other and the kids were beside themselves, cattys ready, water pistols charged and retreat well planned. They were regular visitors and grew bolder and bolder, we were hit unpacking the car from above off the we were hit unpacking the car from above off the stoep in one memorable leaping encounter.

So into the new '90's we drifted and suddenly PW wanted a strategic road along the coast we were told and he got one. Boy did we get a world class, deservedly >>

# Security wish comes true



During 2011 the Rooi Els Ratepayers Association decided that the increase in crime required an on-hand Security Service and proposed that an increase in our municipal property rates would finance this ambition. This proposal however was outvoted in a referendum held in February 2012. The concerns how to address the crime situation remained. This year our wish has been granted in that the Successful Security company in Grabouw, Groenland, extended their services to Rooi Els. To this end they rented the office and garage in the center business complex recently vacated by Jo and Margaret Henson who left for New Zealand.

Having a security office in Rooi Els with a 2-4 minute response time is a huge step in the right direction. In addition, Groenland in April 2013 received a thermal camera costing R35 000 that will greatly help their security efforts at night. The usefulness of this camera was hailed by our neighbours in Betty's Bay to detect criminals inside empty houses and/or surrounding fynbos. The range of detecting body heat in fynbos is up to 450m in the dark, increasing to 1 km if operated from an elevated vantage point such as from our reservoir or over the sea. This camera has additional marine applications in that it would be able to detect anybody in trouble after boating, diving or swimming accidents after dark, including poachers. Interestingly the Boston bomber hiding in a boat was detected by such a camera.

We are fortunate to have these security measures introduced at the cost of R250 per month. □ Koos Smit

## Groenland is hopeful

Bryan Mackrell of Groenland Security says their rates are the same as those of ASK, R250 per month. With a once of cost of R750 for a digital radio to change over to them. They currently have 38 members in the village, and need 150 members to survive with three guards. Rooielsers have to decide! □

## ASK's position on full time presence:

In correspondence with Rooielsers on 16th April 2013 in Rooi Els Michael Kiessling, director of ASK Security, says: "If the Rooi Els community can produce us with a suitable location / premises for us to either park a caravan or erect an office space at a cost of no more than R3000 per month, then ASK Security, would be prepared to make a more permanent appearance in Rooi Els, meaning we would have a local satellite station in Rooi Els, from which our staff could work from. This will then enable us to assist on the response times, and so forth.

"As mentioned this project is self-funded on what we receive from the Rooi Els community and from the rest of the company as a whole, and we will carry on delivering a service to the Rooi Els community no matter what, but we will not make you a promise we cannot uphold, and if we do something we go about it the proper way." □

award-winning, go like hell road to Rooi Els. Growth along the coast took off, the baboon's pickings were fuller, the day visitors escalated, but somehow Rooi Els escaped the worst of it, our gravel entrance and low profile attracted little attention.

However, our village eventually got discovered somewhere late in the 90's. That road and those lights with goody-filled houses was too much to pass by and suddenly the thieves arrived. And they have escalated ever since, getting as brazen as Charlie, from nighttime gas bottles to daylight robbery and then through doors, to TV's we never used to have and no dishes, just little aerials on top. Now add laptops, cellphones and iPads. We have reached a ridiculous point now with 4 break-ins in one night in March. And so we come to our present situation where we have another security company arrive and open their doors at our entrance, a market opportunity too good to miss.

What we can't let happen is to let the spirit of Rooi Els be undermined. Our love of the night skies, things that crawl and can bite but are free and mean no harm, the narrow gravel roads that keep things slow, those feisty oyster catchers that overcome terrible odds to raise a chick on a beach we abandon in April and give back to nature, the nurture of fynbos as we remove the aliens that crowd them out – these and more are the underpinnings of our Rooi Els lives, resident or visitor, so face up to the reality required to retain this still pretty wild place, get your house secured, put on your alarms at night, pick your security company, you have a choice for the first time, they need you and we need them, we the owners of property here need to remain the guardians of this special spot in our world, it is our responsibility for our short time in this fine place. □

## RE camera snaps first pic of Scott with GPS collar



Scott as snapped by the Rooi Els camera on 1 May, with his new GPS collar. This was the first picture of him after his capture and release and is proof that he is alive and well, said the delighted Cape Leopard Trust team. And so Rooi Els is living the vision and helping with the conservation of this magnificent beast. Thanks Jill Lockley and Wolf Steynbach for collecting this data before print. **Read all about the capture and collaring of Scott on page 6.**

## Local property market looking up



The local property market has started to show some positive signs during the past 5 months, reports Wendy Cillers from Pam Golding in Pringle Bay. She gets a lot of interest from passers-by and has made 2 sales in Rooi Els this year, one for a mountainside plot with river views, and a house on Porter Drive at R620000 and R2 million, respectively. And she is very busy with potential sales in this area.

In this time, in Pringle Bay she has sold 4 plots at prices ranging from R 220 000 to R 700 000, as well as two houses.

"There has definitely been an increase in enquiries for houses as well as vacant land. Generally however, buyers are still reluctant to put pen to paper. Sellers are also reluctant to accept current market conditions and are still hoping to get 2007 prices for their properties. At recent meetings with our Betty's Bay and Kleinmond offices, our agents agreed that the market is looking positive - they too have experienced an increase in sales during the past few months."

Three properties were sold in Rooi Els last year. □



## Swallows one; Sparrows nil!

Update on our swallow drama, by Alison Ayre:

The swallows returned to their nest in September 2012 and after rebuilding and minor alterations they had to defend their nest against a collection of would be squatters. The most persistent of these were the relative new-comers to Rooi Els, the Grey-headed Sparrows. This ended when the male swallow pinned the male sparrow to the floor below the nest in a winner takes all fight! Over the ensuing months the swallows have had two broods hatching 3 eggs per brood. As is quite usual for the species there is a heavy mortality, in this case only 1 of 6 survived to adulthood. The high mortality rate is usually the result of starvation and / or a nest infestation of an unpleasantly and appropriately named louse fly. In the case of both these broods there was bad weather. In the first case over New Year a gale force South - Easter, in the second wet and blustery weather from the north. This prevents the adults from collecting food which consists of aerial plankton and small insects. We had the rather sad job of retrieving the small deceased bodies from the stoep as the adults evict the dead chicks in obvious house keeping.

On the positive side the now fully grown juvenile will join its parents on the long flight north to over winter, possibly in Botswana. If all goes well the adults will return again in September to reoccupy the nest and start all over again. The juvenile will also return to Rooi Els but not necessarily to the natal nest and hopefully find a mate and breed.

Bon voyage Hirundo Cucullate - see you in Spring! □

## Spectacular Hummingbird Moth

Dine and I were sitting on our front stoep last summer enjoying a perfect Rooiels afternoon. We were watching the many birds in the garden and had been discussing the magnificence of the flowering *Plectranthus* in the corner of the stoep. I turned round and noticed that a "something" was hovering in amongst the *plectranthus* flower blossoms and perfectly manoeuvring between the each blossom, never stopping to settle on any one of the blossoms. It would hover near one blossom for a few seconds and then manoeuvre with absolute precision to the next blossom. I could not resist it. My "very amateur" photographic instincts kicked in. I grabbed my "Instamatic", turned the dial to macro and the rest is history. To the right are some of my lucky shots.

I did some research and was amazed to find exactly what I had seen:

*Macroglossum stellatarum*, known as the Hummingbird Hawk-moth or sometimes the Hummingmoth, is a species of *Sphingidae*. Its long proboscis and its hovering behaviour, accompanied by an audible humming noise, make it look remarkably like a hummingbird while feeding on flowers. It shouldn't be confused with the moths called hummingbird moths in North America, genus *Hemaris*, members of the same family and with similar appearance and behaviour. The resemblance to hummingbirds is an example of convergent evolution. It flies during the day, especially in bright sunshine, but also at dusk, dawn, and even in the rain, which is unusual for even diurnal hawkmoths. Its visual abilities have been much studied, and it has been shown to have a relatively good ability to learn colours. □

Graham McClelland



## Big Quiz:

Who knows where to find this metal hook in Rooi Els?

This handy metal hook is somewhere in Rooi Els. Who knows where it could be found, what it is for and who put it there in the first place? Let us know if you are one of the observant few. □

### EMERGENCY SHARK NUMBERS:

107 (landline)  
021 480 7700 (Cellphone)  
021 449 3500 (NSRI)

## Harvey or Harveya?

*What is in a name, continued ...*

Our village has a floral legacy that needs to be conserved for generations to come and the Rooi Els Conservancy (REC) was launched with exactly this in mind. Our conservancy is not an organisation with teeth, we are only able to gently “nudge” you in a “green” direction, when it comes to developing your own property – your own piece of paradise. One strategy intended to conserve the original “look” of our village is to conserve the road verges, which belong to us all. Imagine the day when every property in Rooi Els has a home built on it. It may be that our road verges and nature reserve areas will form the only areas free of human disturbance.

What we ask is that you don’t develop “garden” to the road edge, that you don’t encourage parking on the road verge. Rather develop enough parking in your driveway. Just leave the road verge as it was before your house was built. If your road verge is already developed – try to let it “go wild” again. To illustrate what may be found in the road verge, see the little gem below that I discovered growing in front of Delene and Richard Truran’s home.

Do these few illustrations of our wonderful floral heritage interest you?

Do you also wish to conserve them for your children’s children?

There’s a place for everybody’s talent in the Rooi Els Conservancy. New, enthusiastic members are VERY welcome – please join us. □ Keith Moir (028 273 8109)



## Not the name, its all about conservation

Keith Moir has written a very evocative piece about Rooi Els being in the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve: this, the heart of the Cape Floristic Region which is the smallest but most diverse of the six Floral Kingdoms on the planet. I just want to add a bit more about the fauna one can see in the village, which thrive on the reasonable state of the fynbos REC strives to achieve.

1. Maybe birds are not strictly fauna but avifauna. Anyway, Rooi Els is home to endemic species such as Cape Rock Jumpers and Orange Breasted Sunbirds which fact brings Twitchers from all over the World. We also have, each year, a pair of Black African Oystercatchers, struggling to breed on the main beach. They do succeed in rearing one or two offspring most years, but it is better than a nail-biting staged drama to watch! We also have every other bird, known in the Western Cape, twittering around us.
2. We have angulate tortoises and many types of agamas and lizards.
3. We have Smith’s Red Rock Rabbits, Dassies, Elephant Shrews, Mongooses, Cape Clawless Otters.
4. We see pods of dolphin from our stoeps and, of course, in Whale Season, we can see the Southern Right cavorting under our noses. There is no necessity to join the hordes in Hermanus at the annual Whale Festival in September. Having said that, I do believe that whales perform for us wherever there is an audience.
5. We also have nasties such as Puff Adders and Cape Cobras but, if caution and common sense prevail, no harm should come to anyone.
6. Last but not least, we have Baboons! They are such fun to observe, but that is all one should do: observe! Never feed them or leave food outside or in view. Their fur is much sleeker from natural foraging than when gorging on stolen human food. Just make sure they cannot get into your property or car as they have learned to take out sliding doors, turn handles, etc.. Don’t be afraid of them, just enjoy.

If you would like to play more of a part in this conservancy village, please consider becoming a member of REC. □ Sandra Yeo

### .... Minute bodyguards for the leaves

sustenance in exchange for their services as bodyguards, driving herbivorous insects away from the leaves.

Several forest trees on the Cape Peninsula use the same principle to attract their own microscopic Mafia family of mites for protection. In this case the reward is a refuge in which to rest, breed and moult, safe inside small pockets on the leaves called domatia (“little houses”).

#### Blisters / bubbles on the melkhout leaves

The domatia of stinkwood *Ocotea bullata* and melkhout are conspicuous blisters on the upper surface of the leaf, which open through hair-fringed slits onto the lower surface.

A microscopic examination of the domatia of stinkwood and pock ironwood revealed that they house minute predatory and fungus eating mites, but no plant-eating mites. Predatory mites benefit plants by devouring their plant-eating relatives as well as the eggs of insects, while fungus-eating mites graze on fungal threads that cover the leaf surface. By providing them with a shelter, the trees ensure that their bodyguards will be loyal servants in the fights against herbivores. □



### Sterkte met die Rooi Els skete!

Sterkte aan Malene Visser wat aansterk by dogter Hannelie na ’n groot operasie vroeg vanjaar. Sy is deesdae ook ’n RE swaeltjie (lees ook bl 29 oor Oom Johan Visser). Beterskap ook aan Lettie Wilken na ’n heupoperasie. □ Red

# Rooiels – 'n nostalgie

*huisie by die see"*



Toe ons gesinnetjie meer as 38 jaar gelede op 27 Desember 1995 die voordeur van die wit vierkantige huisie oopsluit, was dit 'n droom wat waar geword het; Koopprys 'n astronomiese R14000 met meubels, gordyne en veral, 'n praffien-yskas. (Oom Jacques du Toit het gesê dat hy soms werk!) Hoe reg was hy nie! Kobus, ses jaar oud en Erna vier, met Kobus wat instorm en gil "daar is tot 'n piepiepot in die badkamer" en Erna wat ontdek daar staan 'n boltteltjie Dettol!

Wat 'n heerlike ontdekkingstog van huis en erf en natuur en fynbos, Al huise wat ons kon sien, was Ankers met sy kables om hom regop te hou en oom Sheppard wat sommige naweke kom kuier het en oom Hansman se dakteëls wat na elke windstorm die wêreld vol gelê het en die Van Riets wie se huis se naam nie verniet "Afdak" was nie;

So het Rotsig ons naweek- en vakansieontvlugting geword; Snaaks genoeg, as 'n mens vandag terugdink, onthou ons glad nie die wind waarvoor Rooiels so bekend (berug?) is nie. Sels vandag nog, is die ergste wind wat ons nog ooit beleef het, die laaste een. Daar is soveel mooi aan Rooiels dat die storms in die verskiet verdwyn! Daardie paraffien-yskas was 'n avontuur; Pas afgelaai, duik ek onder die gedoente in en gooi fluit-fluit paraffien in die tenk, troetel die pit tot perfeksie, plaas die glasie presies op sy plek en steek aan. Dan is dit sywaards op die vloer en meet en pas en bid en hoop en dan die wag tot die blye aandonding: hy word koud. Soms moes die proses herhaal word. En soms in die middel van die nag as die sware rook by die skoorsteen uitborrel, is die hele wêreld swart van roet.

Van paraffien tot gas met sy probleme en toe, uiteindelik, na baie protes en stryd, elektrisiteit! Waar dit sal eindig met die Eskom verhogings... dis 'n storie vir 'n ander dag!

So het baie dinge verander en tog die belangrikste dinge het gebly. Klein Hangklip hou steeds wag en op "maansbepoeierde nagte" skyn die wit rotse spookagtig en gooi die maan 'n silver streep oor die see! Wat kan mooier wees! Danksy die natuurbewustheid van Rooielsers kan ons vandag verklaar dat die oorlog teen rooikrans gewen is; Vroeër het 'n mens letterlik tussen rooikranswoude moes ry. Nou floreer fynbos!

Sonsondergange op Rooiels is iets wat nie eers op

Willie en Martie Pienaar (**foto onder**) kyk terug na hul Rooiels jare in die paradys. Hulle huis, voorheen net hul "huisie by die see" (links) is deesdae op die mark (middel) en dié hoofstuk word afgesluit.

Willie was Afrikaans-onderwyser by Hoërskool Nassau, ook departementshoof by Tygerberg Hoër Handelskool en het afgetree as senior lektor in kommunikasievaardighede aan die Kaapse Technikon. Martie was vir byna 30 jaar Junior Primêre onderwyseres, waarvan 16 jaar by Laerskool Parow-Noord. In hul 40 jaar hier, was Willie by RE betrokke tydens die Somchem-sage, ook die bou van die nuwe kuspadd en koms van elektrisiteit. Oor hulle dae op Rooi Els, onthou Willie die volgende:



film vasgelê kan word nie, 'n mens moet dit belewe; Vriende van Hermanus kom gereeld die sonsondergang op Rooiels geniet. (Miskien is dit die skemerkelkies! Sal moet uitvind.)

Na verskeie van die opgraderings van die huisie, kom die vraag: wat lê voor? Die uitsien na aftrede, het 10 jaar gelede 'n werklikheid geword, maar helaas, saam daarmee, kom die ouderdom en begin die kroonslagare noustrop trek.

Gelukkig is Rooiels nog steeds die vrede van voleindiging waar 'n mens nog vry kan asemhaal en aan 'n God kan glo. Die koppie koffie op die stoep, die voëls wat sap drink uit die bottel, die fisante wat aangewaggel kom en teen die venster pik om hulle teenwoordigheid aan te kondig, die lekkerleesboek, snoesig onder 'n kombes, die waarde van ware vriende wat moet ry om te kom kuier, die kleinkinders wat Oupa en Ouma se lewe verryk, die vleisie op die kole, die wyntjie in die glas en, natuurlik, soms die bobbejane wat so koddig is buite 'n mens se huis!

Deur al die jare bly HA Fagan se gedig *Ek het 'n huisie by die see*, soos net Lourika Rauch dit kan sing, ons credo: "Kom nag, kom weer en wind, kom oseaan – dit is 'n rots waarop my huisie staan;"

Dit is die paradys; Dit is Rooiels; □





## The wedding guest

by Bruce Relly

Who the bride,  
who the guest?

Who wears the ring  
Is but visibility of the spirit's  
contract with the whole;

For are we not all married now  
even beyond man and wife,  
brother and daughter:  
with the same duty and belief  
in their perfect differences?

In this greater  
mutuality,  
near or far,  
we thank you deeply  
for your knowing presence  
You showed us this.

## Rooi Els Wedding!



Congratulations! Bruce and Mary Relly got married in March this year at Grace, Mary's new house near the circle; ! true family affair as Mary's mom and siblings attended, as well as seven of Bruce and Mary's 11 children. We wish them and their extended family blessings on this new and exciting phase of their lives.

## Ernst en Rina se nagmusiek



Bo: die skaars mikropadda wat in Bettiesbaai voorkom. Regs bo: Kliklangtoonpadda. Links: Kaapse rivierpadda. Regs:: Ernst by sy paddadam wat in die reëntyd afloop geutwater kry.



Met die koop van ons erf in 1991 was ons grootste oorweging die natuurlike skoonheid van Rooiels. Bokkies, ystervarke, muishonde, muskeljaatkatte, slange, voëls en blomme het daaglikse interaksie met ons gehad en ons groot plesier verskaf.

'n Tekortkoming was dat ons 'n baie droë erf gehad het sonder staande water en die naaste water was so 200 m van ons af. Ons het toe ons eie paddadam beplan deur ons afloop geutwater in 'n dam te gele;

Binne 'n maand na voltooiing het die eerste paddas hul opwagting gemaak en elke winter sedertdien geniet ons snags ons eie pragtige paddakoor van drie spesies wat ons al hier kon identifiseer, naamlik die bliklanertjie

(*Cacosternum platys*), die kliklangtoonpadda (*Strongylopus grayii*) en die Kaapse rivierpadda (*Amietia fuscigula*).

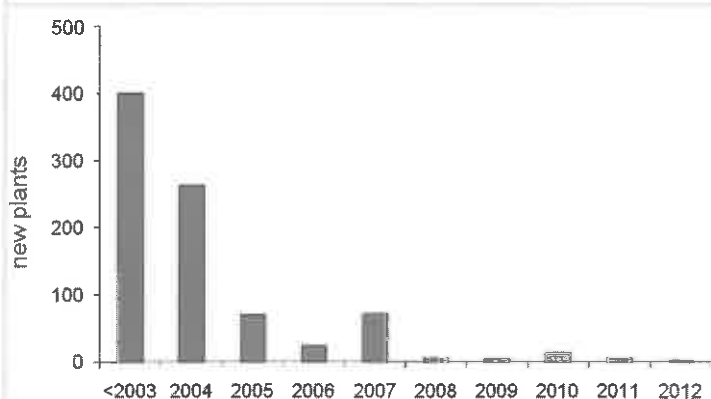
In die somermaande is die dam droog, soos dit hoort, omdat die paddas vir 'n deel onder die grond "hiberneer"; Daar is ook nie sprake van muskiete nie!

Wat ons nog nie hier raakgeloop het nie, is die baie skaars mikropadda (*Microbatrachella capensis*), wat wel op Bettiesbaai voorkom en total beskerm word; 'n Hele ontwikkeling is daar vir die padda gestaak. Dit is egter nie onmoontlik dat hulle wel op Rooiels voorkom nie, maar dit sal 'n volkome ontdekking wees; □

Ernst Thompson

# Rooikrans experiment feedback:

Progress-report on monitoring rooikrans biological control in Rooiels  
by prof. John Hoffman, December 2012



The graph shows the number of new *Acacia cyclops* (rooikrans) plants removed from three adjacent plots in Blenna Street. There is a cluster of mature trees on one of the plots which are being left to serve as a potential pool of new seeds and ultimately new plants. These trees also serve as hosts for two deliberately introduced biological control agents, a gall-forming midge and a seed weevil, which together are curbing seed production on the trees by over 90% in most year. (The galls top and the tiny seed weevil right.)



Natural generalist granivores, including birds, striped field-mice and baboons, mop up most of the residual pool of seeds that mature in spite of the damage caused by the

specialist biological control agents.

Survival among the few seedlings that develop from the small number of surviving seeds is very low (<10%).

One new plant was recorded in the three plots during 2012, making a total of only 27 new plants since 2008 with a clear declining trend apparent in the graph over the last three years. This followed a substantial drop between 2004 and 2008.

The nett effect is that there are hardly any new plants being recruited in the plots, or elsewhere in the region and all indications are that rooikrans is effectively sterile in most situations due to biological control. This means that there will be limited reinvasion in areas where rooikrans trees are removed and that invasion of new fynbos areas is slowing to negligible levels thanks to the efforts of the introduced insects and the local granivores, all of which work 24/7 for free!

The monitoring of insects and plants in Rooiels is part of a long-term nation-wide programme being undertaken by biologists at the University of Cape Town and the Plant Protection Research Institute who are looking at the effectiveness of using biological control against invasive Australian acacias in South Africa. □

In the olden days, the coast in the vicinity of Rooiels and Pringle Bay was plagued by deserters and robbers. In 1739, Pringle Bay formed part of the farm Welgemoed, belonging to Andreas Grové. By 1741, he had had enough of these fugitives and decided to leave. The next owner was Jacobus Louw. He, too, had no company other than that of the deserters.

The bay was originally called Gordon's Bay after Col. Robert Jacob Gordon who discovered it in 1777.

## Where Pringle began

Gordon was a Scot who had fought on the side of the Dutch in the battle of Blaawberg.

When the Cape was annexed by the British, Gordon, who had been an outstanding soldier, was so disappointed that he committed suicide. In 1796, the bay was renamed Pringle Bay after Scout Admiral Sir Thomas Pringle of the British Fleet.

The first residential area was laid out by Hangklip Beach Estates in 1936. According to historians Slingsby and Coombe, roads were constructed and soon there were a few houses on the slopes of Pringle Kop. However, an ugly scar appeared on the hillside when gravel was excavated for road construction. Fortunately, nature will heal its scars if it is allowed to do so, which did happen in this case.

Pringle Bay grew slowly, and by 1980 only a small part had been developed. After electrical power was laid on in 1992, growth accelerated. A large number of permanent residents as well as holidaymakers own homes at Pringle Bay. The beach is pleasant and attractive, with a cluster of old milk wood trees growing close to the sea.

The town Gordon's Bay was later named after Col. Gordon. □ SJ du Toit

## Local Personality by Bruce Relly

Gratefully, never a tourist feature,  
but perhaps we can agree  
there is personality in the Rooi Els wind -  
that mirrors the rugged individualism of its  
residents.

The southeaster tears at the fynbos,  
shaking it by the throat  
until it remembers ...  
our agreement is to survive.

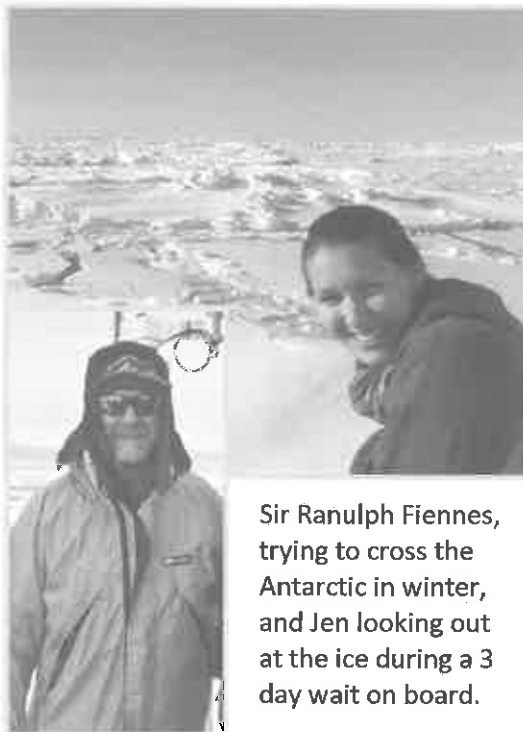
# Cape Town to Antarctica - and part of a legend!

In our South-West edition Jen Butler Sitting told us about her amazing trip to the Antarctic. She's done it again! She has just been on another once in a lifetime cruise in January this year – as one of four scientists on an ship destined to drop off Sir Ranulph Fiennes and his team in Antarctica for their recent attempt at the first ever winter crossing of the continent. Jen writes the following about her experience:

I could not believe my luck when I received an email asking if I could be one of the four scientists to go on a cruise that was dropping Sir Ranulph Fiennes and his team off in Antarctica for the first ever winter crossing of the continent. We sailed out of port on the SA Agulhas I on the 7<sup>th</sup> January this year - the ship packed with the expedition team, their equipment, several dozen cadets and a few of us scientists. Following the Good Hope Line, an artificial cruise line created nearly 10 years ago that follows a satellite track from Cape Town to Antarctica, it took us 10 days to get to our destination, Crown Bay. The first two days were extremely windy with some minor swell, but surprisingly, we otherwise experienced rather 'lake-like' conditions. Very unusual for the Southern Ocean and very different to what I experienced on the winter cruise six months earlier.

There was much excitement when we finally reached the ice, especially from the scientists' side as our work on the southward leg was done. We were exhausted after sampling every 4 hours for 10 days straight, so a well deserved sleep was very much on the cards. First order of business however was to report to the Monkey Deck (highest deck on the ship) as we approached the ice shelf, snapping away with our cameras and taking in the picturesque sights around us.

The expedition team were relieved to see that the Belgians had travelled 200 km from their base to help out and had cleared a path for the snowmobile. The SA Agulhas I, under the expertise of the experienced Captain Dean Hall, determined each day whether the ice conditions were safe enough for the ship to park up against the ice shelf. Luckily we had perfect weather and ice conditions for the first 6 days. The expedition team as well as the crew on the SA Agulhas worked long and hard days, getting the crane to move everything onto the ice shelf while a team on the ice assembled the 'Ice Train', a pair of Caterpillars pulling along a set of cabooses and fuel flubbers. On the 6<sup>th</sup> day at the ice shelf, a storm out at sea changed the conditions in the bay, forcing the ship to retreat out of the bay where we spent the next 3 days sitting and waiting for the conditions to clear up. Sitting a few hundred meters off the ice shelf with more than a day or two offloading still to be done, it was a truly



Sir Ranulph Fiennes, trying to cross the Antarctic in winter, and Jen looking out at the ice during a 3 day wait on board.

frustrating experience and puts a new meaning to the saying 'so close yet so far'. Now looking back, I am rather glad we got that extra time at the ice, with the sun never setting you really do get some of the most amazing views. We were surrounded by the pack ice, gigantic icebergs, snow petrels, elephant seals and penguins. The air was clean, the snow was white and it really showed me what a pristine, untouched environment was like. Antarctica is one of the few places left in the world that countries are making a concerted effort not to destroy. The Antarctic Treaty signed in 1959 and coming to affect in 1961, enables the continent to remain

unaffected by pollution, waste and our carbon footprint, setting aside the continent as a scientific preserve. This was highlighted in the 2 weeks we spent at the ice shelf. The expedition team paid special attention that nothing was left behind, no oil was spilled and they respected the environment the way it should be.

After offloading the final equipment on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> of February, we had a farewell dinner for the Ice Team that were embarking on one of the most dangerous, but exciting expeditions ever to be tried. Five years of planning, hard work and fund raising had finally come together for Sir Ranulph Fiennes and his team of 5 men. There was an air of excited sadness waving them off on Sunday morning, hoping that their dream of being the first people to cross Antarctica during winter could be achieved. With temperatures reaching -70°C during winter, it's going to test their strength and character. Unfortunately Sir Ranulph Fiennes did not manage to start the expedition due to severe frostbite on his hand, but the remaining Ice Team is currently continuing on with his dream.

The leg home from Crown Bay to Cape Town took 8 days, with sampling returning to every 4 hours for us scientists. The Southern Ocean was kind to us again, with flat seas and calm weather the entire trip home. Leaving the ice was a bitter sweet moment. After almost 4 weeks we were excited to get home and see our families, but at the same time we were leaving behind the most beautiful place on earth. The images of towering ice bergs, beautiful sunsets and the pristine white snow have been etched into my mind, where I hope they don't fade. □

# In Rooi Els the flag *always* loves the wind

A flag culture has developed in Rooi Els and flags can be seen colourfully sprinkled around the village over weekends and holidays. On Ocean View side **Evette Weyers** visits **John and Shân Biesman-Simons (picture)** to meet the people behind their spectacular flags. She discovers the secrets behind John's amazing set of 50 flags:



In 1991 Shân and John Biesman-Simons bought erf 42 near our Rooi Els CBD. Shân gave John, also known as JBS, a flagpole (purists call it a flagstaff) as a Christmas present. Ten years later they moved to their present house on Ocean View, so she had to buy him another one. They have introduced a colourful visual addition to Rooi Els that immediately drew the

attention of Marius and me, and I am sure, many others. They hoist a wide variety of flags in front of their house on Ocean View Drive; sometimes 3 or 4 underneath each other. Flags flying are a sure sign that the Biesman-Simons family is in town for the weekend or holiday. We would try to spot what the flags were and why they were hoisted. JBS has collected many flags, many to do with countries they have visited.

Shân and John travel extensively. By coincidence, both of them were high school exchange students; she in Wellington, NZ and he in Boston USA. This was before they met, but shortly after they married they spent 18 months in Miami. The travel bug bit and they have continued to travel extensively, with recent travels partly as a result of Shân's involvement in Rotary. Shân was District Governor of Rotary District 9350 (comprising over 60 clubs in Angola, Namibia, Western Cape and part of Northern Cape) in the Rotary year 2010/11. Apart from travels in her district, they have in the last three and a half years attended training and conventions in Seychelles, San Diego, Montreal and Thailand (plus a side trip to Myanmar) and they are going to Portugal in June. Shân recently spent a month in Japan leading a Rotary Group Study Exchange, leaving John to shop, cook and wash the dishes.

In Rooiels they fly many of these flags as well as other flags with their own stories; a crayfish, oyster catcher, whale, braai, Christmas and other celebratory flags which were hand made for JBS by Shân's mother, Jill Adams, a well-known ornithological artist. There is a whole ritual around hoisting a flag. The tradition is Shân kicks John out of bed, he puts the kettle on, chooses a relevant flag (often after much discussion and considering the predicted wind, as some flags are stronger than others.) He raises the choice and makes tea for Shân ... in theory... well, not quite as often as she would like in practice. Considerations about which flag include who is visiting, major sporting events, national holidays, what's happening in Rooi Els, where their travelling children are (currently Claire, a masters graduate, is teaching in South Korea and Tessa, a qualified doctor, is travelling in South America and then on to SE Asia).

Sports related flags are sometimes lowered to half-mast after an unsatisfactory sporting result. They always enjoy it when people stop to look at the flags or ask them for the significance of the day's choice. Some may classify JBS as a vexillologist which is someone who studies and collects flags. Shân says he's too old to study, he just collects. In fact, he just hoards; anything, absolutely anything, but at least the flags are

John took a group of four young South African professionals to Japan for a month on Rotary Group Study Exchange, hence the Rotary, Japanese and SA flag (bottom). The exchange team arrived in April.



## In view of the fact by A.R. Ammons

The people of my time are passing away; my wife is baking for a funeral, a 60-year old who died suddenly, when the phone rings, and it's Ruth we care so much about in intensive care: it was once weddings that came so thick and fast, and then, first babies, such a hullabaloo: now, it's this, that and the other and somebody else gone or on the brink: well, we never thought we would live forever (although we did) and now it looks like we won't: some of us are losing a leg to diabetes, some don't know what they went downstairs for, some know that a hired watchful person is around, some like to touch the cane tip into something steady, so nice: we have already lost so many, brushed the loss of ourselves: our address books for so long a slow scramble now are palimpsests, scribbles and scratches: our index cards for Christmases, birthdays,

Halloweens drop clean away into sympathies: at the same time we are getting used to so many leaving, we are hanging on with a grip to the ones left: we are not giving up on the congestive heart failure or brain tumours, on the nice old men left in empty houses or on the widows who decide to travel a lot: we think the sun may shine someday when we'll drink wine together and think of what used to be until we die we will remember every single thing, recall every word, love every loss: then we will, as we must, leave it to others to love, love that can grow brighter and deeper till the very end, gaining strength and getting more precious all the way ...



fun. Back in the 90s, they sometimes flew a baboon flag. At that time the Rooi Els Biosphere Action Group was busy with raising local awareness about baboons. Jenny Stark noticed this baboon flag and approached Shân and John to acquire one. Rooi Els ended up with a similar baboon flag, this one a red

flag for danger. Jo and Margaret Hensen kept this red baboon flag handy, which became an essential part of the game we were playing against the baboons in town at that time. The game was 'Who could outwit whom'? As soon as they got news of baboons being in RE that day, the Hensen's would hoist the red flag outside the Village Shop to let everyone know the baboons were in town. That meant the game was on. The villagers got 10 points if they could keep the baboons out their houses. If the baboons managed to get into just one house, THEY got the 10 points. The RE village shop kept tally of who was winning; baboons or humans! JBS says he can't remember who won; the dim-wits or the half-wits, nor for that matter which group was which.

Back to the flags and their owners. Modest Shân (who didn't mention this to me) was until recently the Director of Nutrition and Education at the Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa where she worked for over 20 years. During this time she did much radio and TV work for the Foundation. Currently Shân consults at an

eating disorder clinic, and runs a small dietetic practice. Like any good dietician, Shân advocates antioxidants and she gets her fair share from red wine, chocolate and garlic! Looking at John, you wouldn't believe Shân's a dietician, says Hilgard Muller, his old neighbour. When Hilgard built next door, we moved to the other side of the village, says John.

John was on the RERA committee back in the early 90s and has been on the Rooi Els Boat Club committee for about 5 years, the last 2 as chair person. He will tell you, even if you don't ask him, that their boast stills holds the record for the heaviest crayfish in the history of the annual crayfish competition. He does admit that all he did was skipper, the others pulled the nets. John is a Chartered Accountant, who works part-time for Lombard Insurance and is the acting chair of a JSE-listed property fund and sits on various other boards and audit committees. They are definitely a couple with many interests and skills, besides flying flags. They are keen social bridge players as well as serious sports fans with tickets at Newlands cricket and rugby and Shân hits a mean ball on the tennis court. She is an avid walker and occasionally manages to persuade John to go along. Above all, they love Rooi Els!

John's closing comment was no one likes the wind in Rooiels, except maybe a flag that flies proudly in the "Breeze." □



## Jackall Buzzard, Rock Kestrels and Yellow Bishop

Here we go. No sooner have the swallows gone and autumn is upon us again! "Our" Greater Striped Swallows left us for their flights north in mid April as did the various other summer visitors. There is no big fanfare- one day they're there, the next not/

No one knows what triggers the need to leave and there is no fixed date. There is a slight correlation with severity of winter weather and their departure but no certainty other than they will leave. It is such a colourful time of year with some of the most spectacular sunsets. Like many of Nature's wonders the signs of approaching autumn, the showing of aloe flowers, the dead skeletons of the football flowers of the candelabra blowing in the breeze, increasingly the wind direction is northerly, the more frequent gun metal grey colour of the sea, a general urgency to prepare for the inevitable. On that note and off the birds did you order your own winter fuel yet!?

The birding world also prepares as this is the breeding season for many species. The Black Eagles are looking at their nest sites again but there is little evidence of actual rebuilding as yet. We need to remember that they also have the Blousteen nest as an alternative. The opening of the Repens protea means the Sugarbirds are thinking about breeding too as this species is dependent on this protea when breeding. The resident Rooi Els sunbirds breed in these months too, making good use of the nectar rich assorted ericas. Sunbirds and sugarbirds are also insectivorous & the nectar rich plants attract a huge variety of them. There have been several sightings of large pods of dolphin in the Bay lately feeding up on the spawning small fish. This in turn has bought in the Gannets and Sooty Shearwaters who feast on the fish trying to avoid being breakfast, lunch & supper! The foulest weather at sea will bring the Petrels and even Albatross to the relative shelter of the Bay. This same weather will also bring tragedies the increase in washed up carcasses on the kelp strewn beach, though it is fair to point out some of these deaths would have occurred anyway.

Soon the migratory Terns will leave and those mobile vocal white clouds of summer will be gone until summer returns. Oystercatchers & Sand plovers will gut out the winter days, as will the Kelp & Hartlaubs gulls. Assorted cormorants will struggle with varying surf strengths to find their increasingly less available food hanging their wings cruciform to dry in the bracing breeze. It seems odd that a water dependent bird has feathers that aren't water repellent so they would in fact drown if they don't



Bulbul singing (top) and sugar-bird nesting - signs that the seasons are changing.



perform this theatrical pose after a fishing expedition. These are the days when Penguins turn up at Rooi Els often weak and exhausted from doing battle with turbulent seas.

There are two small "vleie" in the small holdings area and there is regular air traffic from the lagoon as winter approaches. Though present all year they are "dried out" in the summer and only winter rains will revitalise them sufficiently for water birds to travel to them. Yellow-billed and African Black Ducks make this a frequent route as do Egyptian and the less common and larger Spur-winged Geese. Heron and Egrets also move freely from one to the other, but notably at dawn and dusk. Giant kingfishers hug the rocky shoreline in search of a meal as do the ever hopeful gulls.

Those observant amongst you will notice that Franny hasn't put in her quill's worth/ There's a simple explanation. She's rather fractious currently. This does not mean she has taken up the Karoo Fracking cudgel (though hell knows she'd be good with it!) but in my editorial wisdom(?) I decided to remove the temptation of her totally losing her cool over certain issues she is getting serious steamed up about. As an example she stomped into the office the other day with feet covered in doggy do. Other than leaving an interesting and smelly print on the tiles was beside her self, flapping about, cackling about irresponsible humans yet again.

However | digress!

There have been some interesting sightings in the small holdings area, Jackal Buzzard, Peregrine and an increase in the number of Rock Kestrels after a successful breeding season. Look out for the Yellow Bishop which is coming into breeding plumage, unmistakable in its black and canary yellow livery. There has been an increase in the number of (Southern) Grey-headed Sparrows in the village. The species has gradually colonised the Western Cape. We first saw it in Rooi Els in 2007 as a one off but since 2009 it has become resident. They have a pronounced white bar on the wing and, as the name suggests, a grey head. A decrease in House Sparrows is noted but this may well have some bearing on the fact that Margaret and Jo used to feed quite a large number of them! The appearance of Dusky sunbirds is also noteworthy as they normally frequent more arid areas like the Karoo with its acacia thickets though there are records of irruptions (this is the correct spelling - it means a sudden invasion) in drought years.

Our endemics continue to bring "Twitchers" from far and wide, a veritable United Nations of bird watchers stroll, perhaps trudge, Clarence Drive through the

# The one that got away!

Every day we see millions of terns, but then there is the one that is different.

Alison Ayre reports on such a sighting in our little piece of Eden:

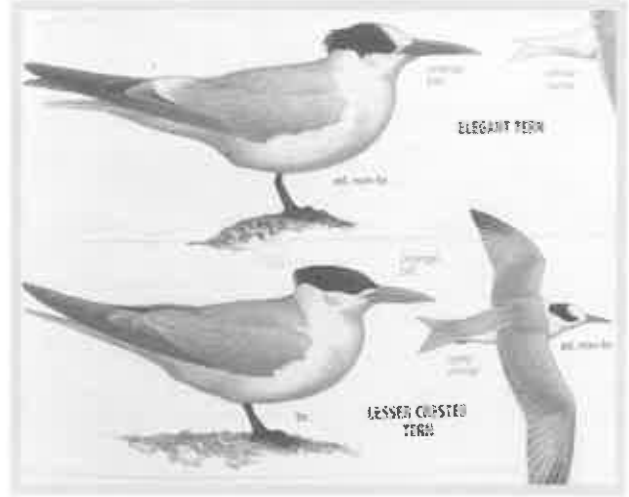
On a typical March Rooi Els day with the usual companion of a blustery South–Easter we took a late afternoon stroll round the Point and looked at the numerous Terns and sea birds recovering from their fishing expeditions/ “OK so what ?” I heard you say “We’ve all done that!”

Well yes but this was *very* different – in the midst of the gregarious Swift, Sandwich, Little & Artic Terns was a tern with an *orange bill fading to a yellow tip!* It literally hit you with this clearly different bill, so clear, so unruffled and ignored by its fellow species! There are only two Terns that have bills matching this description – The Lesser–Crested Tern & the Elegant Tern/ “OK you saw a different colour billed tern – so what?”

So what is that the Lesser–Crested is a vagrant to the Western Cape – that is a rare visitor to the region that has wandered outside its normal range – a singleton was reported in Hermanus, Rooi Els, Strandfontein, Glencairn & Kommetjie in 1997, presumably that was one bird. Its usual home is in East Africa from northern Kwa-Zulu Natal northwards.

However the Elegant has only been recorded twice in Southern Africa! In Cape Town in 2006 & Swakopund in 2007 – so this is rare vagrant making it a “Twitchers” dream.

Plumage variations were very difficult as the bird didn’t fly to reveal the variations in rump colouring/ I have learnt a bitter lesson *never* to walk without a camera with an appropriate lens capacity! We both know we have been privileged to see something remarkable in



Tern illustrations from the SASOL bird book. What you cannot see is the very orange bill.

Rooi Els, but without a supporting photograph of good quality it is classed as “an unconfirmed report”/ Sadly my grainy magnified picture wasn’t good enough for total clarity. So there you are *the one that got away!* Mind you, a tick from the rare bird committee would have resulted in dozens of Twitchers armed with massive lenses camping in the area.

We have the inner satisfaction of knowing we were there and we saw it! □

## www.rooi-els.co.za:

A quick reminder about the BIRD section on our Rooi Els website. Please visit this website for Bird News, Sightings and the email address to send your “**up to the minute**” sightings with a photograph if possible. Every contribution continues to build up the recorded data of our varied and wonderful bird life, from 1986. Scientists NEED our information. □



small holdings, ever hopeful of that sighting of the Rockjumper, Orange–breasted Sunbird, Ground Woodpecker and the illusive but very vocal Victorin’s Warbler/ I frequently have to remind villagers that these birds are rare in a world context even though we take them for granted,

and people pay thousands of Rands to “tick them off” their lists. They need protecting by us from the alarming increase in trespassing on the small holdings. Only the road is public space! Please correct anyone you see tramping over owners land. Wow, Franny would have had a field day with that moan!

Time for a log fire and a glass of soetes! □



## Spotted: great whites to genets

- In February Dine van Zyl and Graham reported having spotted what they initially thought was a whale “breaching” off the God’s Gift point where the seal colony now resides. The dramatic incident drew their attention and then another spectacular aerobic display revealed that it was a hunting Great White. They were absolutely gobsmacked at the size of the beast. Residents of Pringle Bay also reported similar Great White activity/ This is something for ‘locals’ to digest (or perhaps *be* digested?), especially us guys who dangle our feet when kreefing on our paddle-skis! Geoff Harris
- Mark Bowen had a lovely encounter with a family of mongoose in November last year. He watched how two parents sat around while their 3 babies rolled down the steep incline where his lawn meets the stoep. They would roll down like three sausages, then run back up and start all over again. Kids having fun!
- In February coming home late Griet Odendaal saw three genets, two large and a small one, about 500 m from the Rooi Els bridge/ They froze in the brights/ □

# The warmth of the heart prevents your body from rusting

This is not exactly a book review (as I haven't finished the book yet) but a discussion around the topic that the author, Marie de Hennezel, so bravely tackles. The title of this book charmed me. But far from being a feel-good, sentimental sort of book, it has jolted me to stop and look seriously at a subject that most of us shy away from: Ageing. Marie Comrie gives us an glance into this sensitive subject.

There are probably few people over 60 who have not had a quick peep into that mirror, usually with some trepidation. The most common responses are to take immediate evasive action; denial (as in 'it'll never happen to me as long as I go on jogging, cycling, doing yoga etc.') or to fall into premature anxiety and fear. Who among us has not had that feeling of grasping for a word that eludes you or going into a room and forgetting what you came for – is it dementia? Could it be Alzheimer's? The author of this book initially fell into the third response after doing in depth research into old age facilities in France, but then came out the other side with an honest, courageous and really hard look into this rite of passage.

The newspapers are littered with advertisements for retirement facilities, picturing youthful, silver haired couples gazing ecstatically into the horizon of their Golden Years, golf clubs in hand, Happy Hour round every corner. Can it be that easy, that simple? These places mean well, but are very costly and somehow miss something crucial that I can't quite put into words.

"While preparing for this book, I discovered the island of Okinawa and its centenarians. There, in Japan, people live to a great age, the oldest being one hundred and fifteen. The inhabitants of Okinawa eat little and slowly, savouring each mouthful and stopping before they feel too full. They consume fish, soya, algae rich in iron and calcium, rice and green tea rich in diuretics; they never eat sweet foods or pastries. Research has shown that factors such as a

### ***Vitality, dynamism are keys to inner youth***

healthy diet and mild climate certainly contribute positively to this state but the extraordinary longevity of these island people is also linked to a cultural state of mind and a well-developed social life. These centenarians have an enhanced spiritual consciousness, which is nurtured by practices such as prayer, meditation and focusing on the present moment and by a determination to remain positive and optimistic in difficult times. They remain active and useful as far as possible all their lives, retirement is a foreign concept. They have that precious ability which we might term resilience: an ability not to let themselves be demoralised. Vitality, dynamism and emotional energy: these are the keys to their inner youth. They also continue to participate in the life of the community and are never excluded. They do not feel they represent a burden on society. In Okinawa, people say: 'The elderly are our treasure.'"

In Rooi Els, we have many of the conditions common to Okinawa – beautiful surroundings, strong, committed community, maybe not always a mild climate, but some of the time, and a desire to stay here. Rooi Els is already like a spread out retirement village – our challenge is to make it a place where we can grow old with peace of mind, where

***"There is nothing older than not wanting to grow old."***

people do not feel isolated and where we can remain active and still feel useful. Can we all be connected, committed and caring enough to make this a reality? Certainly,

being linked to an on-the-spot security system makes sense and takes away the fear of emergency needs. Driving and shopping for each other, having a resident nurse – these are only physical challenges, relatively easy to bring about, but the crucial ingredient is the spirit. I quote a passage from the preface of this book, as she says it so much better:

"There is nothing older than not wanting to grow old. Our world presents us with a disastrous image of old age. We are afraid of dying badly, of ending our lives alone, unloved, perhaps dependent or suffering from dementia, in lifeless places, far from everything. Instead of confronting this fear, we ward it off by clinging to our youth, in a rather pathetic state of denial. In so doing, we run the risk of missing out on what I call here 'the work of growing old' – that is to say, cultivating a positive awareness of ageing. When I set to work writing this book, I too experienced a feeling of dread upon reading certain documents or listening to certain unhappy accounts. But other experiences convinced me that the worst is not inevitable. The keys to a fulfilling old age do exist, and it's up to our generation to discover them and pass them on. It's up to us, the baby boomers, to invent a new art of growing old – which is a paradox, since it means accepting the inevitability of ageing without becoming 'old'. How are we to become the bearers of good tidings rather than poisonous ones to those around us? I propose that our exploration be guided by the belief that something within us does not grow old. I shall call it the heart. I don't mean the organ, which does of course age, but the capacity to love and to desire. The heart I refer to is that inexplicable, incomprehensible force which keeps the human being alive and which Spinoza christened *conatus*: primordial energy or vital endeavour. It is this heart that can help us push on through our fears, and bear us up amid the worst ordeals of old age." □





## Orcas in False Bay

A pod of nine orcas were spotted in False Bay on in April and at that time were headed for Rooiels. But sadly no local sighting! The pod included 2 males, the first seen in this bay, and a young calf. Recorded by Dave Hurwitz.



© Dave Hurwitz 18 April 2013



A pod of 9 Orcas, including two males (the first sighting of males!) and one very young

calf, were seen in False Bay on 18 April 2013. They were first spotted hunting dolphins just east of Roman Rock Lighthouse. They killed one dolphin, probably teaching the calf, as they then lost interest and headed off to Seal Island. And then they were headed off toward Rooiels!

Orca sightings in False Bay are exceptionally rare, reports David Hurwitz of the Simon's Town Boat Company, in the April edition of African Geographic Magazine. In nearly 40 years of navigating the bay, he's only seen them about five times.

Orca's are found worldwide. They live and hunt in a pod and are specialised feeders, concentrating on prey specific to their area. This includes marine mammals, fish, birds, turtles and they've even been known to attack and kill great white sharks, earning them the title of the ocean's apex predator.

False Bay is home to a number of the orca's natural prey sources. Yet if their diet were primarily South African fur seals, they would be common, or seasonal residents, like the great white sharks that feed on the juvenile seals at Seal Island from April to September each year. But this doesn't appear to be the case and the explanation for their presence has always been that they are 'passing by'. In 2009 David was able to confirm what attracts orcas to False Bay – common dolphins.

Over the past year, False Bay has been bursting with bait fish, resulting in a level of feeding activity that hasn't been seen in many years. African penguins and South African fur seals have had little reason to move offshore to feed and this has also been true for dolphins, Bryde's whales, Cape gannets and many other birds, fish and cetacean species. Drawn to an easy meal, orcas are staying for longer periods - this time for more than two weeks, reports David Hurwitz.

Orcas move incredibly fast (they can easily cross the bay in 2-3 hours) and are naturally stealthy. David describes how the dolphin behaviour changed when he wit-

nessed his first killing: "From feeding in a typical semi-circular formation, they spread out into a line almost 500 metres in length and accelerated to over 25 kilometres per hour. They were leaping, splashing and rapidly changing direction, and I knew that their panic could only mean one thing – the orcas had arrived!

"Then, an Orca exploded from the water, breaching nearly four metres clear as it ambushed one very terrified dolphin, its powerful jaws driven home by eight tonnes of body mass." □



## Orca also spotted in Maas Bay in Pringle

Barry van Dijk spotted an Orca on a crayfishing trip in Maas Bay in Pringle Bay with friend Roy McGregor from Gordon's Bay. This was 10 years ago, and not even far out into the bay, tells his wife, Tanya. Barry sadly died 6 years ago.

Barry, who then lived in Betty's Bay, and his friend went out on what they thought would be a normal crayfishing day. They had just set their nets when an Orca head appeared next to their boat, seemingly peering into the boat, and then disappeared. "Well, they respectfully pulled up their nets and made their way home! The Orca followed them for a while, but then made a duck."

And our own Nick Augoustides from Rooi Els tells about his encounter with Orcas 25 years ago, just off Simon's Town and again at the light tower. "We were fishing for tunney, but they kept reacting strangely once we had them on the line, breaking line or speeding away. Then we saw they were being attacked by many Orcas! This happened three times at different locations and we eventually went home empty handed."

He says in those days he had trips with Chris Gilmore were they would be in the bay surrounded by thousands of dolphins, as far as the eye could see. □

# Die boer, die bobbejane en die uieland

Dine spog met 'n Veertjie! Die TV-reeks "Boerekos met Dine van Zyl" is deur die ATKV vereer en sy is gekies as beste aanbieder in die kategorie "Vermaaklikheids- en Lewenstyl". Daarby is haar tweede Boerekos boek binnekort op die rakke en haar aanhangers kan uitsien na 'n volgende Boerekos-reeks op TV. Knap gedaan! Sy deel met ons een van die Rooi Els stories uit haar vorige boek:

Oom Johan Visser was 'n groenteboer van Kuilsrivier se omgewing. Later het hy afgetree hier by Rooi-Els en Johannes en Price het aangegaan met die boerdery.

Jy kan die boer van die plaas afvat, maar jy kan die boer nie uit die man uitvat nie. Johan Visser het verlang daarna om die omspit van die grond te ruik, die insit van die kompos, die delikate groei van die eerste blare. Hy wou natlei, koester, voel of die groente bekwaam is. Só lank kan 'n man ook net na sy leë stuk erf langs jou huis kyk. Hy het mis laat aanry, 'n span van die plaas gekry wat kan omspit (want sy pasaangeër wou nie lekker saamwerk nie) en uieplantjies ingesit.

Vir weke lank het hy daai uieplante vertroetel. Hy het kiere omhoog die fisante uit die tuin gejaag en met 'n sambok op die stoep geklap as die bobbejane net durf naderkom.

Want soos enige Rooi-Elser weet, is dit nie net die wind wat maak dat ons nie hier kan groente kweek nie, dis die ander ding waarmee ons gepla is: bobbejane.

Ons woon tussen die berg en die see en die bobbejane woon lekker saam. Hulle wei op die bolletjies en knolletjies en stokke en stingels, soos dit goeie bobbejane betaam. Hulle dop klippe om vir skerpioene en pluk bessies van die seeghwarrie en taaibos en sal selfs swartmossels van die rots af trek om te eet.

Soos die dorp uitgebrei het, het die bobbejane se spyskaart uitgebrei. Deesdae eet hulle ook broodrolletjies, Paasbolletjies, pizza, lekkergoed en tjips. Melktert is 'n gunsteling.

Die bobbejane het die gewerskaf in Johan Visser se tuin doggehou, van die omdolf tot die insit tot die natlei. Elke dag het hulle kom kyk na die vordering. Van die ongeduldige jongetjies het probeer naderkom, maar die oubaas was by met sy klappende sambok. Drie klappe en hy was stokflou, maar die bobbejane darem ook verwilder en oor die grensmuur. My grensmuur.

Ek het 'n vredeliewende hond met die naam: Boetman. Boetman se enigste missie in die lewe is om bobbejane uit die werf te verwilder – en om goed wakker te wees vir dié doel, slaap hy sy dae om.

As oom Johan Visser se sweep klap, het Boetman opgespring, opgeroep tot aksie. Hy het die kortste pad tuyn toe gehardloop, meubels omgestamp, gegly om die hoeke, alles nêr om die bobbejane uit die werf te kry.

Die dag het aangebreek dat Johan Visser se uie reg was vir oes. Hiervoor het hy nie hulp gekry nie. Hy het self met sy tuinvurk en pasaangeër ingespring en die uie gelig. Pragtige, skougehalte uie.

Hy het dit liefderyk in bossies gebind en op die grasperk uitgepak, gedagtig aan al die weduwees en buurvroue aan wie hy almal gaan uitdeel.

Die bobbejane het ook geweet dis oestyd. Een klomp



Oom Johan Visser - tot sy dood toe vrygewig met sy groente.

het uit die berg gekom, 'n ander klomp uit Kogelbaai se rigting, 'n ander klomp oor die brug.

Al die splintergroepe was bymekaar in een groot trop, soos 'n familiebyeenkoms met Kersfees.

Johan was nog so mooi-tjies besig met die uie, toe is hy omring deur bobbejane. Soos hy diékant swaai met sy kiere, so gaps 'n spul uie aan dááikant. Hy swaai om, hy klap met die sweep, hy gaan tekere en swets soos geen bobbejaan se ore dit kan hou nie.

Boetman, wat net lekker lê en dut het in die voorkamer, spring op en hol regdeur die glasdeur, jy sien net glasskerwe spat. Hy kom buite en dis soos atletiek by die laerskool, almal spat by hom verby.

Ek staan in die middel. Aan die eenkant jaag my buurman bobbejane, aan die ander kant jaag my hond bobbejane.

Die bobbejane gee ook nie bes nie, maar versprei soos Zoeloe-krygers en val uit verskillende hoeke aan, gryp uie en hol tot buite bereik van Boetman en die oubaas. Daar vreet hulle die uie en gaan terug vir nog.

Skemeraand het daar hoeveel uie halfgevreet deur die dorp gelê. Johan Visser het verslae op die stoep gesit, poegaai van bobbejaan jaag. Boetman het by die stukkende voordeur gewaak, ewe poegaai. Die uitgevreetste bobbejaan kon by hom verbystap, hy sou niks doen nie – sy gô was behoorlik uit.

Van die uie het ek niks gekry nie; daar was niks oor wat die ouman kon uitdeel nie. Van toe af het hy elke Vrydag plaas toe gery, sy bagasiebak vol groente gelaai en vir ons op die dorp kom uitdeel.

Johan Visser is vir my 'n voorbeeld van 'n tipiese boer. Godsdienstig, hoflik en hardwerkend.

En tot sy dood vrygewig met sy groente. □



## Ons otters eet lekker kreef!

Otters gaan bad eers voor hulle gaan slaap en praat met mekaar deur fluite, skryf Evette Weyers oor haar magiese ervarings met otters:

Vir my is ons otters (groototter of clawless otter in Engels) van die bekorendste diere wat in en om Rooi Els woon. Ek onthou toe ek eers uirgevind het hoe hulle in kommunikasie bly met mekaar. Hulle fluit vir mekaar terwyl hulle in die water is. Baie belangrik as die ma's hulle kleintjies wal toe bring, veral wanneer die see rof is. Otters het baie dik pelse wat hulle warm hou in die see. Hulle moet egter die sout water kan afspoel van hulle pelse voor hulle gaan slaap saans. Dus is een van hulle slaapplekke in die reservaat langs 'n poel vars water met 'n melkhoutboom. Hulle grawe gate waarin hulle slaap.

Volwasse otters weeg van 12 tot 21 kilogram.

Hulle kry van twee tot vyf kleintjies.

Ons otters eet hoofsaaklik krewes en krappe maar ook paddas, wurms en vis. Hulle is nie so vining soos die otters wie se pote ten volle geweb is nie en kan nie, soos die ander, deurgaans sommer 'n vis vang nie.

Craig Spencer (natuurbewaringsoffisier van die Overberg in die negentigs) het 'n klein ottertjie gered wat deur honde gejaag was en sy ouers verloor het. My taak was om vir hom krappe en krewes te gaan uitduik. Ons het dan 'n groot plastiek bad vol water getap en die krewes en krappe in die bad vrygelaat. Die klein ottertjie het agter hulle aangeduik en hulle met sy klein behendige handjies gevang.

Soms as ek teen skemer gaan duik (bloot vir die plesier) dan het die mannetjie my kom inspekteer. Reguit na my aangeswem en so 'n meter van my afgeduik en my omsingel. Toe besluit hy ek is nie 'n groot gevaar nie en het weer by sy wyfies aangesluit. Ek het baie geseënd gevoel. Een ander mannetjie proe toe waarvan my geel paddavoete gemaak is. Dit was bloot nuuskierigheid.

Dit is pragtig om hulle by die groot strand te sien branders ry. Hulle weet hulle is baas in die water.

Mag ons besoedeling en ons honde in toom hou sodat die otters nog lank tussen ons kan lewe. □

Evette Weyers

## Wine on the house!

Gary and Karin Isenberg who run The Hanging Rock in Pringle Bay offer Rooielsers a complimentary glass of Gabrielskloof wine during the winter months. Karin is a vegetarian, so they cater for all tastes! They concentrate on Italian and fresh fish meals with Pizza on Fridays, Saturday and Sunday lunch. They are open every evening of the week except on Tuesdays. Good news is that the road to their restaurant is completed so easy access possible. Contact no: 0282738413; 079 898 3481. □

## What's on the Menu?

### Drummond Arms 028 273 8458



Starting June, there will be a winter stew every Tuesday. Wednesday there will be a special two for one deal on pizzas, but sorry, no take-aways.

"Christmas in July" to be held on the 27th with a full on traditional menu, with roast turkey and roast gammon with stuffing and gravy. Bookings essential and R97.50 per person. □

### Something Els 083 3701960

The restaurant specializes in seafood combos of calamari, hake and prawns and then offers breakfasts, light lunches and steaks and burgers. They are open 9 to 9 pm during season, except on Sundays when it is open 9 to 5 pm. □



## Pop-up restaurant in Pringle

John Charalambous and Ali Scott participate in a POP-UP restaurant at the shop Fynbos Enterprises in Pringle Bay. This is part of the The Fynbos Social Club that was launched in April and they plan an event on every first Friday of each month. The idea behind it is to bring together people who love Art, Food and an Alternative Lifestyle. For R50 and own drinks you can enjoy a lovely meal and the work of local artists. John will notify Rooielsers when they can try his wonderful and varied cuisine. □



Sunset by Paul Perton  
and Rooi Els village by Elma Ferreira

