

Bries Breeze

WINTER 2007

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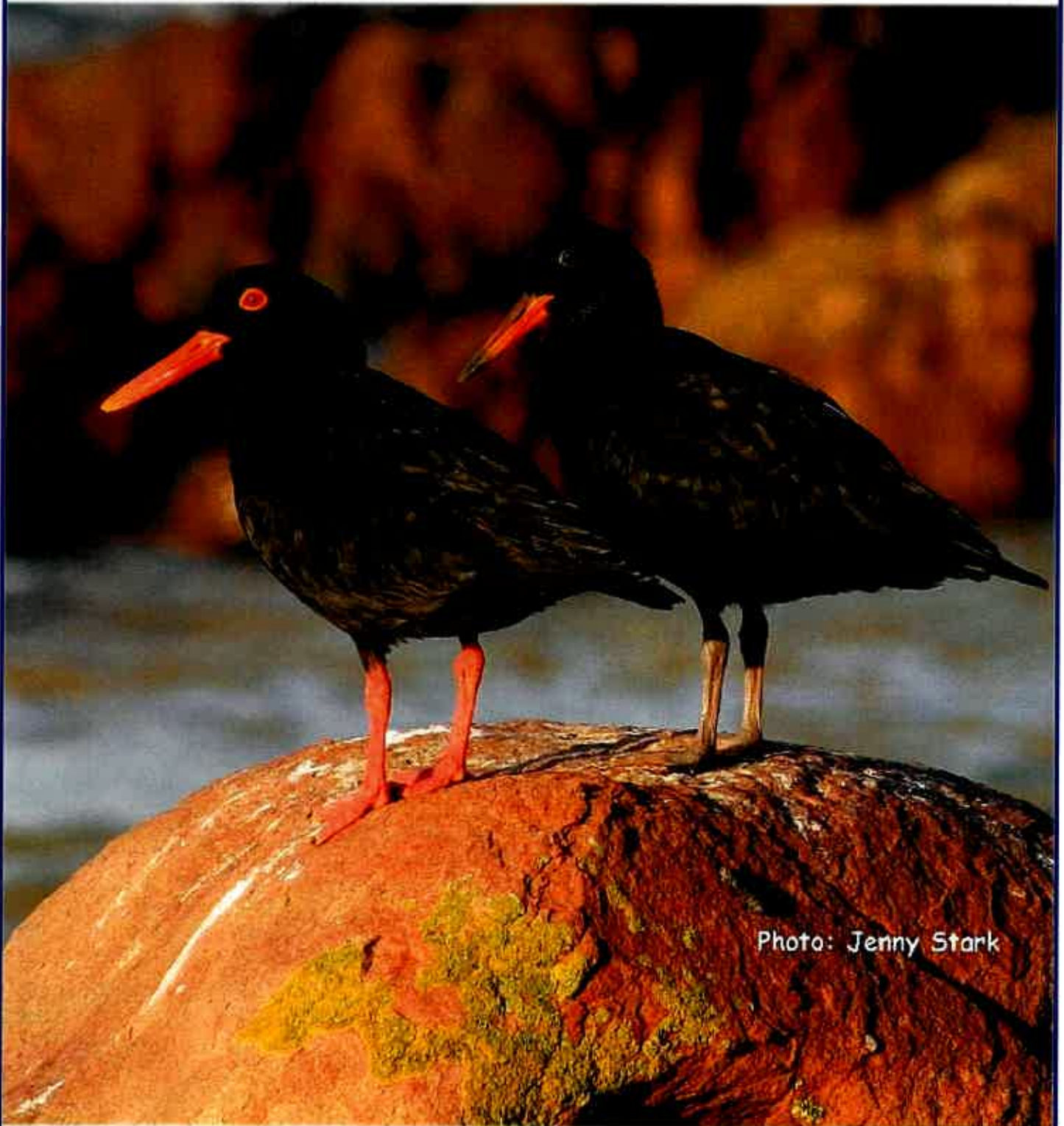


Photo: Jenny Stark

"... And each body a lion of courage, and something precious to the earth..."

(Mary Oliver)

Letter from the RERA Chairman / Brief van die Voorsitter

In the 2006 Spring issue of Breeze, the question was raised whether RERA should continue in its present form. The uncertainty with regard to the future of RERA, was the result of the fact that conservation matters, once falling under RERA, have taken on a profile of their own, embodied in the successful Rooi Els Conservancy. It became necessary to clarify our respective future roles. As directed by the AGM, RERA and the Conservancy did just that. RERA can now continue to set principles for achieving our mission, one that will always be in harmony with the Rooi Els Vision.

Die REBV gaan voort om duidelike gebiede en doelwitte te definieer, waar ons sal woeker om u belange te dien in lyn met die Rooiels Visie. Die REBV sal voortaan verantwoordelikheid vir die volgende funksies aanvaar (hoofsaaklik sosio-ekonomiese ontwikkeling en munisipale aangeleenthede):

- Die herdruk van "Die Geskiedenis van Rooiels";
- Die Ruimtelike Ontwikkelingsraamwerk van die Overstrand, insluitend die beskerming teen verdere stedelike ontwikkeling;
- Dorpsingange (bv inligtingsborde vir besoekers), paaie (R44 en plaaslik), padveiligheid (die aanbring van spoedkamera's) en verwante sake (bv stormwater), asook alle sake rakende die sakekern van ons dorpie;
- Infrastruktuur en ontwikkeling, die toepassing van bouregulasies asook wateraangeleenthede (insluitend die pompstasie), rioolwerke en verwante sake;
- Algemene Munisipale en Wyk 8-aangeleenthede, asook die jaarlikse munisipale begroting;
- Die Federasie van Belastingbetalers vir Bettysbaai, Pringlebaai, Rooiels en die Kleinhoewes;
- 'n Algemene Noodplan en gebeurlikheidsplanne om daarby in te skakel;
- Die ontwikkeling en instandhouding van plaaslike fasiliteite (insluitend 'n gemeenskapsentrum vir Rooiels);
- Openbare areas, skoonmaak en afvalbestuur, insluitend strande en toilette, sowel as sekuriteit; en
- Koördinering van die aktiwiteite van die REBV en die BEWAREA.

Dit is noodsaaklik dat ons, as 'n groep wat al die belastingbetalers van Rooiels verteenwoordig, goeie kommunikasie behou. Die enigste manier om dit te bewerkstellig is om alle belastingbetalers van Rooiels te oorreed om opnuut as lede in te skryf. Die Bries sal ons belangrikste kommunikasie-middel wees. Ons is ook tans besig om data van belastingbetalers op te dateer. Sodoende sal ons u wanneer dringende sake opduik, of in die geval van nood, per telefoon, selfoon of e-pos kan bereik. Raadpleeg asb in hierdie verband die ledevorm in die Bries.

As a body of ratepayers, we have to communicate with each other more regularly. More importantly, we have to share our dreams and expectations for Rooi Els - and become aware of what the majority of ratepayers wish for Rooi Els, especially in delicate matters that may cross our "bumpy" roads in 2007! At the same time, we invite you to share your dreams, your wishes and complaints with us. In short, we would like you to communicate your picture of the Rooi Els you embrace, with us.

In such a way RERA, the Conservancy and other groups in Rooi Els, can work towards building community and sharing in the common dream we are building here at Rooi Els. It also implies highlighting key values for the community and setting a credo such as "**caring together today for tomorrow**". This credo should say who we are and how we would strive to fulfil our Vision. Based on such an approach, all organisations and groups will continue to work together.

Dit was 'n aangename verrassing om die Deetlefs-familie van Australië as ons eerste lede vir 2007 in te skryf. Moontlik is daar nog belastingbetalers wat in die buiteland droom oor ons pragtige dorp. Ons wil ook baie graag met belastingbetalers wat net erfeienaars op Rooiels is, kontak maak - hulle droom waarskynlik saam oor Rooiels se "eendag"! Die REBV is positief oor sy toekomstige rol op Rooiels. Ons maak op u ondersteuning staat om ons hierin vir die toekoms te motiveer. Ons sien daarna uit om van elkeen van u te hoor.

Vriendelike Rooiels-groete

Izak Smif (Sameroeper) en die REBV Bestuur

Rooiels Bootklub wen Twee Pajero's!

Rooiels se Bootklub het in Desember die eerste prys gewen van twee Pajero voertuie in die Nasionale Seereddingsinstituut se jaarlikse fondsinsamelingskompetisie. Tien finaliste het elk 'n sleutel ontvang en Basil s'n het perfek gepas. Die ander finaliste het darem nie met leë hande weggestap nie en het pryse soos grootskerm Tv's en elektroniese toerusting ontvang. Die Bootklub het die motors verkoop en wend die fondse aan vir verskeie verdienstelike projekte.



Die oomblik van waarheid:
Basil se sleutel pas!



Basil Moss en Piet Uys wens mekaar geluk met die
twee splinternuwe voertuie in die agtergrond

'One good turn deserves another'

A Spirit of Generosity

In December last year, the Rooi Els Boat Club won the annual NSRI prize of two vehicles. In turn, the Boat Club decided to give Station 9, the Gordon's Bay base of the National Sea Rescue Institute, a fully equipped, communication-support vehicle for sea rescues along the Hangklip coast. The 4x4 vehicle named, "Spirit of Rooi Els", will also be used to launch the Rescue Runner (a Swedish-designed rescue jet ski) from the Rooi Els slipway for in-shore rescues close to the coastal zone.

"Our larger vessel takes a long-time to reach the Hangklip area and in some conditions cannot get close enough to the rocky shore-line. The new vehicle and rescue runner can work within these rocky areas and will greatly improve our response time," said Mark Burton, NSRI Station Commander, at the official handover of the new vehicle on June 9th.

The NSRI in Gordon's Bay gets called out on average three or four times a month to assist boats or fishermen in trouble in the greater Hangklip area. The NSRI is a volunteer organisation. Basil Moss, chairman of the Boat Club, pointed out that the Rooi Els community, living on the small peninsula below Klein Hangklip, is very conscious of the need to ensure the safety of all who go out to sea in the Rooi Els, Pringle Bay and Betty's Bay area and thanked the NSRI for their rescue work.

After the handover of the vehicle, the Boat Club Committee members and spouses were treated to an exhilarating trip on the large rescue vessel "Sanlam rescuer" in very rough winter seas.

Julia Aalbers



Handing over the 'Spirit of Rooi Els': Gert Coetzee, Piet Uys, Mark Burton (NSRI), Basil Moss & Ernst Thompson

Seereddingspoging op Rooiels

"Nee wat, ons voel nie soos helde nie dit het net gehelp om die middag meer interessant te maak". So het mnr Corrie Wessels gesê nadat hy en twee vriende van Stellenbosch 'n dramatiese reddingspoging uitgevoer het waarin vier mans uit die onstuimige see oorkant die natuurresewaat op Rooiels gered is.

Die vier mans van Gordonsbaai was op 'n skiboot wat net na middagete deur branders omgeslaan is, nadat albei enjins uitgegaan het, die tweede enjin net nadat hulle darem so 'n entjie van die rotse kon wegkom. Gelukkig kon die vier mans daarin slaag om uiteindelik tot op die onderstebo romp van die skiboot te klouter.

Dit het sopas gebeur toe die manne dit raaksien. Die NSRI is onmiddelik ingelig en hulle kon intussen die Rooi Kruis reddingshelikopter ontplooi. Ooggetuies het verwys na die "reuse moed" van die manne wat sonder huiwering ingeswem het om te gaan help. "Ons het gesien die ouens was in die knyp", het een bygevoeg. Anton Falck het dinge van die rotse af gekoördineer, terwyl Wessels en sy maat Johan Botha met branderplanke die see in is. Eers was die manne maar skrikkerig om van die romp af te kom terwyl die branderplankryers in die see rondgegooi is.

Nadat sterk strome en branders getrotseer is, met min uitsig oor die deining, is drie van die manne uiteindelik aan wal gebring. Die helikopter kon gelukkig die laaste van die vier manne oppik en aan wal bring. Die manne was behoorlik getraumatiseer en is na 'n nabygeleë woning geneem om droog en warm te word en lafenis met 'n koffietjie te kry.

Almal was ongedeerd en die boot kon onderstebo deur die NSRI na Gordonsbaai teruggesleep word. Interessant was die naam van die skiboot: "Blessing"!

Gerard Scholtz



Boat Club AGM

Our 12th Boat Club AGM at Easter, was rather long with a full Agenda and plenty of discussion. A subcommittee consisting of Dairmuid Baigrie, Ken Hopkins, Julia Aalbers and Mike Miller was formed to help with the new legislation from the Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and also the SA Revenue services with their new ruling on clubs. The boat survey and safety checks by the Department of Transport, followed by a braai was well attended. Membership stands at 67, including 10 outside members and four Kayak members.

Once Again a Dream for the Future

Many people have heard that there was a window of opportunity for Rooiels to perhaps have its own community centre and those we have no e-mail addresses for are asking what happened - "what's the story?" And so in a nutshell, this is the story:

How it was initiated

At the Rooi Els Conservancy AGM in January, the issue was raised of the importance and need for a Community Centre to hold meetings, have talks and exhibitions, house the Eco-Centre and the herbarium and to present a Gateway to the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve. Our local Councillor, Louis van Heerden, attended the meeting and advised afterwards that the end of the financial year was looming and that there may be a small window of opportunity for us to access unspent social funds from the Overstrand municipality. Coincidentally Gallery 38 was on the market which could provide space for our needs and a chance to rent out part of the building to help cover operational costs. It was a unique once-off opportunity!

And the steps taken ...

But due to the immediacy of the Municipal budget discussions, our proposal had to be put in straight away. Discussions took place between the Conservancy, RERA, the Boat Club and a number of Rooi Elers. It was agreed that a proposal be drawn up and sent in. The Municipality sent an evaluator who agreed it would be a good investment...but unfortunately, the funding was moved elsewhere.

A never-say-die attitude...

Owing to the tenacity and perseverance of Chris Burlock and strong support of councillor Louis van Heerden, and many other members of the community this dream almost became a reality!

How?

In great haste, through emails, some 45 Rooi Elers 'pledged' around R1.3 million towards the purchase...but this was still R600 000 short of the bottom line price of R1,9 million (with transfer costs still to come!). Louis van Heerden presented this information to the Mayor who was so impressed with the positive community spirit demonstrated by Rooi Els, he decided to ensure municipal support to the venture in a possible public/private partnership. The building provided opportunities for some commercial operations to help fund maintenance and operational costs and it would be a good investment for the community "shareholders".

The idea was that all Rooi Els property owners be invited to buy shares in the concern that would own the community centre. The share offering was to be voluntary and open to all property owners with each share valued at R5000. The idea was that shares would be internally tradable (i.e. to Rooi Els property owners only) and their nominal value would be related to market value, as estimated by official annual valuation of the property. Shares would then increase in value along with property prices. The shareholders would elect a Board and a Management committee with clear accountability to shareholders.

Sadly ...

Our offer was superseded by another and the dream is now on hold. Suggestions and ideas are welcome and in due course, RERA, the Rooi Els Boat Club and the Rooi Els Conservancy will call on the community to see what we can do to achieve this dream.

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REBV op die Agenda... / RERA on the Agenda...

Die REBV funksioneer in 'n verskeidenheid van portefeuljes. Binne hierdie raamwerk is vanjaar reeds heelwat gewoel en nog vele verdere sake vereis aandag.

Our strategy with the Municipality is to have things done over a medium term. This implies that we keep to our list for the upgrade of roads and not chop and change at random. Through this approach, we hope for better co-operation and consistency in getting things done. We request you to be our eyes and ears where urgent and emergency measures are needed. These we shall communicate directly to the person(s) concerned at the Municipality in Kleinmond.

The capital budget for Rooi Els was a great disappointment. Rooi Els was almost completely disregarded, with Stanford and Gansbaai being favoured. Based on the current number of residents in the Overstrand area, Rooi Els should at least be able to count on R1 million per annum (out of the total capital budget of R 23.6 million). You can rest assured that we have advocated strongly for these funds to flow back into our village. In the meantime, only R300 000 was allocated from previous funds for roads. This amount will target a new narrower surface for Harveya Rd (up to Study) and paving for the hilly portion from Porter Rd down to Ocean View. These are all according to the previous budget and planning structures. A priority list for the problems we have with storm water, has also been presented. This is to be provided under the standard maintenance budget.

Padveiligheid en spoedkontrole op die R44 geniet tans voorkeur aandag. Na gesprekke met die WesKaap provinsie, is reeds nuwe padtekens aan die bokant van Clarensrylaan aangebring. Aandag word geskenk aan die moontlikheid van rippelstrepe op geskikte plekke, terwyl verdere padtekens en verdunning van plantegroei by die hoofingang, asook beter spoedkontrole in 'n beplanningsfase is. Wat spoedkontrole betref, is 'n tender van 'n privaatagentskap aanvaar om die R44 te patroleer. 'n Persoonlike gesprek word met die suksesvolle tenderaar beplan sodat duidelikheid verkry kan word oor spesifieke probleme wat Rooiels raak.

Die Federasie van Belastingbetalers (vir Bettysbaai, Pringlebaai en Rooiels), wat as onderlinge gespreksforum dien, is steeds aktief, veral met die teenstaan van hersonerings van kleinhoewes. Voorstelle vir eiendomsontwikkeling van hierdie areas neem telkens allerlei vorme aan wat 'n bedreiging inhou vir die Biosfeer en die ongerepte natuurskoon wat ons soms as so vanselfsprekend aanvaar. Mike Harrison hou hier dinge met 'n valkoog dop!

The Ward Committee (chaired by the Ward Councillor Louis van Heerden) considers and decides on issues pertaining to the area. RERA attends these meetings.

One of the recent issues in Rooi Els was the rezoning application by the Drummond Arms to give effect to their gambling license. Instead of merely opposing the application (which we eventually did because we agree with the previous decision of the four villages in the Kogelberg that gambling is not in keeping with the character of our villages), we invited the owners, in the light of our philosophy of "building community", to informal talks with REC, Boat Club and RERA. Perceptions and feelings were shared openly and the outcome was a better understanding of each other and more importantly, that the Drummond Arms will take up its responsibility towards embracing the Rooi Els Vision. We plan to set CBD guidelines for conduct in keeping with the Rooi Els Vision. We invite businesses, ratepayers and organizations to provide input. We would like residents to support our businesses.

An Emergency Plan is in the making. Residents should take note of emergency reaction procedures (who to contact) and identify fire hydrants closest to them.

Die bespreking rondom die aankoop van 'n Gemeenskapssentrum vir Rooiels, het moontlik onder u aandag gekom. Die beskikbaarheid van Gallery 38 as so 'n sentrum, het sommiges moontlik 'n bietjie onkant gevang. Vanweë 'n tekort aan fondse, het die doelpale van die Munisipaliteit om betrokke te raak, voortdurend verskuif. Hierdie bly egter 'n aktuele saak. Ons glo dat dit 'n goeie projek kan wees maar ook dat ons nie die belastingbetalers van Rooiels op enige manier finansieël mag verbind nie.

We are grateful that our membership has already doubled. We are pleased about the level of communication that we have managed to achieve so far. We appeal to you to either join RERA as a member if you have not done so already, or at least provide us with your contact details by completing the enclosed form in the Breeze. After all, we are your representatives and would not be able to function without keeping you informed of what we do and getting feedback from you. We'll endeavour to keep your interests at heart.

Please allow me a special word of appreciation towards the Rooi Els Conservancy team for a splendid working relationship.

'n Besondere dankie ook aan die Bootklub wat hierdie uitgawe moontlik gemaak het. Sonder julle bydrae sal ons nie al die belastingbetalers van Rooiels kan bereik nie. Baie dankie aan almal wat bydra tot die Bries en dat julle jul entoesiasme, ondervinding en kennis met mede- Rooielsers deel!

Izak Smit & Exco

Bewarea Nuus - Conservancy News

Have you seen the signs in the Nature Reserve?

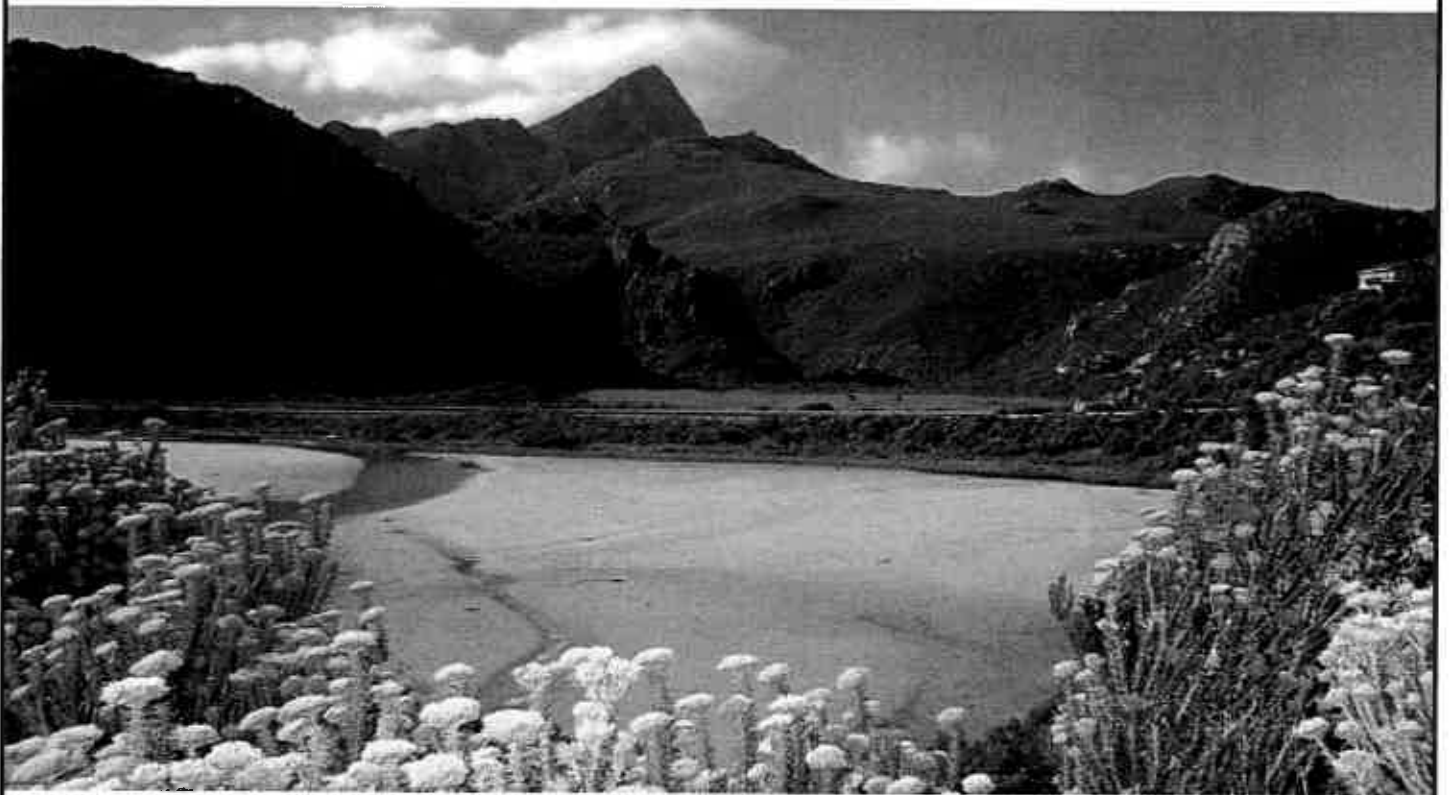
For those of you who have often wanted to know the names and something more about the plants in Rooi Els, we now have signs up in the nature reserve. It makes a wander along the path even more interesting and each time one gets to know a little more.

We have a number of people to thank for this. First is Chris Burlock who did work for Harold Porter Botanical Gardens on the designs for their traditional medicine garden and in return they agreed to organise and finance signs for our nature reserve. Thanks to Jane Forrester for organising that and for coming along here and going with Debby de Vries to identify first which plants we need and then working with Debby to get them in place.

It is such a pleasure to have some of the *Erica*'s given names, and read about how people and animals use the various plants and to learn to distinguish between similar plants and most especially to be sure which the bitou plant, which is always being referred to, actually is!

My only complaint is that for those who know very little about the fynbos, the most common plant in the nature reserve remained a mystery. But it has been tracked down and for those of us who come from other climes and don't know even the common 'blombos', below is a photo of *Metalasia muricata* which doesn't yet have a sign. In the next round!

Kay Leresche



View over Rooi Els beach with the omnipresent 'Blombos' (*Metalasia muricata*) in the foreground. It is honey-scented and is a favourite of bees.

Daar kom ongeveer 12 soorte Blombos in die Kogelberg-area voor.

In Memoriam Jonathan Cooper

January 1927 - December 2006

Jonathan was a self-effacing person and would have been surprised that anyone would want to write about him. But indeed I do wish to write about this upright, caring, unassuming man. I feel able to do so because we have known each other since we were 7 years old and our paths have often crossed. I was delighted when he married my dear and near cousin Kay.

After a BSc at UCT Jonathan studied Engineering at Cambridge, did his practical training with Metropolitan Vickers in Manchester and returned to South Africa to be for 20 years with Vickers Armstrong in Johannesburg. Thereafter he was until retirement with the Council for Nuclear Safety in Pretoria.

My wife Marie and I were delighted when, after visiting our holiday home at Rooiels, they decided to build a holiday home there themselves, as far back as 1980. They came to love Rooiels and its people and stayed there as often as they could. One of Jonathan's attributes was as a handyman. At Rooiels we hardly ever let him leave our house without asking him to help us fix a plug or a leaking tap or whatever.

We enjoyed many a Rooiels celebration together and a great deal of laughter. Inevitably we shared several baboon experiences. There was an occasion when Kay was washing dishes and chatting to Jonathan behind her. Jonathan could be a man of few words and she was not surprised he didn't respond. But when she turned round she found not Jonathan but Charles, the biggest baboon of the troop, watching her from the table behind, while Jonathan was hard at work outside in the garden.

He was a lover of words and wordplay; a collector of stories; and particularly, with his sharp sense of humour, he loved to laugh, and we loved to find anecdotes that would make him laugh. He will be missed.

David Phillip



Jonathan & Kay Cooper with Marie & David Phillip

"The best portion of a good man's life: his little, nameless,
unremembered acts of kindness and love."

(William Wordsworth)

"Though they sink through the sea, they shall rise again;
Though lovers be lost, love shall not
and death shall have no dominion"

(Dylan Thomas)

In Memoriam Holmer Aalbers

"His humor made you laugh even when you shouldn't or didn't want to. His grin made his eyes scrunch up. His laugh made him red in the face. His merriment was highly contagious. His emphatic character ensured that there was always work to be done. And his individuality, ensures that he will always be missed and remembered by all those he left behind, but mostly by Julia and his girls."

Holmer Aalbers is op sy geliefde Rooiels op 'n Maandagmiddag in Januarie onverwags oorlede. Hy was 'n gasvrye, groothartige man. Holmer kon lekker koffie maak, brood bak en steak braai soos min. Hy was lief vir die see, lief vir reis en lief vir Julia en sy dogters. Sy hande het vir niks verkeerd gestaan nie en hy was altyd aan't werskaf aan een of ander interessante projek.

Hy was 'n man sonder fieterjasies en aansitterigheid, 'n man met baie vriende en geliefd onder almal. Holmer, jy bly steeds deel van Rooiels. Ons dra jou met ons saam.

Doodnatuurlik glo ek in 'n hiernamaals
ek sal sterf en in my paradyskleed getooi
hierheen kom om vakansie te hou
hier waar die son soos 'n sontapyt oor alles lê
hier om die draai waar die melkhout
en die rooikrans groei teen die lewendige lig
die berg daar voor die see agter die laning op
ek sal saam met die kaffe
in die kreupelhout leef
en deur die mure loop
deur tyd wat kort-kort in materie stol
tot dit weer vloei en tot lewe verrot
en wanneer julle hier kom rus
sal ek spits in die geselskap sit
en julle tande tel
en snags in die koekblik beskuif gaan soek
(moenie die muis blameer nie)
ek sal julle nie steur nie
maar julle sal weet ek is hier
want
bedags sal ek die see groen en blou maak
en saans steek ek die sterre op met my oë.

('Onrus' deur Breyten Breytenbach)

Dennis Cowen

Calvin Coolidge once pointed out: "No person was ever honoured for what he received. Honour has been the reward for what he gave."

Many will be saddened to hear of Denis' passing. Here was a man who, when needed, gave his all to the Rooi Els community. His efforts to preserve the rural character of Rooi Els are a matter of record - yet despite this, he was pragmatic and recognised that electrification had to come, especially for those of us who chose to live here permanently. Without Denis the fight for the preservation of our water source would very likely have had a vastly different outcome. And, in between these major accomplishments, he served on the RERA committee for many years and was known to be a feisty fighter with foresight. In recognition of his work over the years Dennis was awarded honorary life-membership of RERA.

Many will retain mental pictures of Denis strolling around Rooi Els with his long walking-stick. We are all the poorer for the passing of this unforgettable and exceptionally talented man. Our condolences and thanks to Jean and family.

Rooi Els 'Health & Hack-It' Club News

An attorney and a blonde are sitting next to each other on a long flight. The attorney asks if she would like to play a game but the blonde just wants to nap, so she politely declines and closes her eyes. The attorney persists. "I ask you a question, and if you don't know the answer, you pay me, and vice-versa."

Again the blonde declines and tries to sleep. The attorney figures that since his opponent is a blonde he will easily win the match, so he makes another offer. "If you don't know the answer, you pay me R5.00, but if I don't know the answer, I will pay you R500."

The blonde figures there will be no end to this torment unless she plays, so she agrees. The attorney asks, "What's the distance from the Earth to the moon?" The blonde reaches in to her purse, pulls out a five rand note, and hands it to the attorney. Then she asks the attorney, "What goes up a hill with three legs, and comes down with four?"

The attorney is puzzled. He searches his laptop to for references, uses the air-phone to search the Net, and emails his co-workers and friends. No luck. After an hour, he gives up. He wakes the blonde and hands her R500. The blonde takes the money and turns away to get back to sleep. The attorney, who is going nuts trying to figure it out, shakes the blonde and demands, "Well, so what goes up a hill with three legs and comes down with four?"

The blonde reaches into her purse, hands the attorney R5, and goes back to sleep.

Here's a much harder question: "Why don't more Rooi Elers join the monthly hack?" If you can't answer, please send your R500 to the hack group for equipment! (Yes, I am joking!)

Hacking is not just the best exercise you'll have each month, but it provides a huge inner satisfaction knowing that you are helping keep Rooi Els alien free. After 2 hours you will be slimmer, sweeter and probably have some blue paint-stained fingers from the 'gif' dispenser... but, boy, do the after-hack sandwiches and refreshments taste better for it!

We would love to see new faces! All you need is a hat, gardening gloves and an email address where we can send the monthly reminder! If you are game to spend 2 hours once a month, please send that contact address (or tel no) to izulu@mweb.co.za

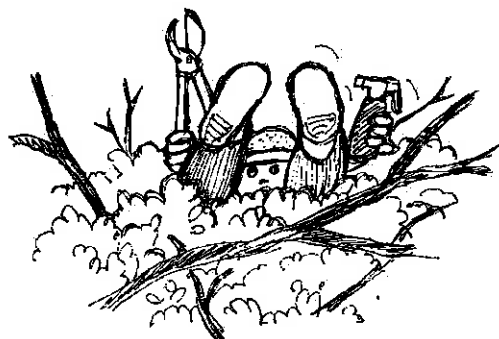
Of the 3 coastal villages in the KBR, Rooi Els' nature areas and verges are undoubtedly the 'clearest'...but then we have the huge advantage of being the smallest! The biggest problem we face is the seed bank already on the ground. Rooikrans seeds can lie dormant for 20 years before popping up to check if the hack group is still around! Then there are the seeds being dispersed from the mature trees on people's properties. These aliens are not only illegal, but their seeds (spread by the wind, birds and baboons) represent an ongoing problem to Rooi Els.

In February and March, the hack group cleared the sea-side of the end of Ocean View. It has possibly never been hacked as we found individual Rooikrans trees flattened against the ground by the wind whose horizontal trunks measured almost 40 cm in circumference and stretched out some 7 metres in length! Another team cleared a stretch of Porter Drive, and Alistair Henderson single-handedly tackled the Nature Reserve. Others cleared some badly infected areas within the village.

Hacking (rivalled only by the annual beach clean-up) is a true 'community' effort, where Rooi Elers pull together (literally!) So make a date for the first Saturday of every month. 8.00 am in summer, 8.30 am in winter. We usually meet outside the Rooi Els Village Shop to agree where to hack and pick up saws, loppers and 'gif' bottles...if you miss us, the Shop will know where we are. 'Look forward to seeing you!

I heard a voice emerging from behind two feet and a bush...it was Jean Cowen suggesting I revisit my definition a 'gentle slope'!

Chris Burlock



Gone! The Tragedy of our Oceans

A Newfoundland Parable

In his thought-provoking book, "The Meaning of the 21st Century", James Martin sets out various large scale problems facing us in this new century. I was struck by his description of the "Tragedies of the Commons" and the collapse of sea fisheries all over the world. He gives a graphic description of events in Newfoundland and in the Black Sea. Will our South African Fishing industry be able to avoid a similar fate? Is there time for a new sense of accountability for what we do in the name of profits, jobs and life-style?

The Tragedy of the Commons

The word "commons" originally related to land such as a village green held in common and shared for grazing by everyone in the village. Because such a resource belongs to no-one in particular, individuals often increase their use of it (reaping individual short-term benefit) until its use is destroyed for everyone. With this in mind, economists have coined the term "the tragedy of the commons" indicating a shared resource that is overexploited. Many resources in the environment are a shared commons - such as the rivers, water table, ozone layer, rain forests, the atmosphere we breathe, and of course, the Earth's oceans.

"Seen from space, the Earth looks like an ocean planet, dominated by blue seas and most of it shrouded in clouds of water vapour. The oceans cover 71% of the Earth's surface. The amount of land above sea level is a fraction of the volume of water below sea level. When one sails across the oceans, they are so vast that it seems inconceivable that we have destroyed 90% of the edible fish in them - but that is the case, and the fish that are left are much smaller than their ancestors. The harm done to the ocean is not directly visible to the public, so less attention is paid to it than if it were something we could see clearly."

(James Martin: *The Meaning of the 21st Century*)

"There were Cod shoals so thick..."

The Grand Banks off Newfoundland held unbelievable quantities of fish. English fishing boats in previous centuries reported cod shoals "so thick that we were hardly able to row a boat through them." Cod is a very hardy fish that used to grow to between 5 and 6 feet long. Today, a typical cod is about 18 inches long. The species has existed for millions of years, through ice ages and spells of global warming. It has managed to adapt to all nature's challenges but not to the challenge of man's modern fishing technology.

In 1951 the first factory-freezer fishing ship arrived on the Grand Banks. This one ship could catch more fish than all the other boats combined that were fishing in the North Atlantic. Soon there were hundreds of such ships which with radar, sonar, fish-finders and echograms which were able to fish 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. What they were doing was similar to strip-mining the sea, or like clear-cutting of a forest. By the 1970's the stocks of fish on the Grand Banks were nearly depleted and the fishing industry on the verge on collapse. Trying to avoid a 'tragedy of the commons', Canada acted by extending its territorial limit to 200 miles and aggressively keeping foreign fishing ships outside this limit.

But the declining Newfoundland economy drained millions of dollars from Canada's treasury. As the fish stocks were declining, the government's solution was to encourage Newfoundlanders to catch even more fish to keep the fish processing industry busy and to provide subsidies to keep and create jobs in the fishing industry! This was a serious mistake.

Continued on page 12

Continued:

Death of the Grand Banks

By 1988 it was clear that the fish stocks of the Grand Banks were on the brink of collapse and that the fish had become noticeably smaller. Scientists insisted that quotas be cut by half, but nervous politicians compromised and cut the quota by only 10%.

In 1951 when the factory ships first came to the Banks, the mass of spawning cod had been about 1.6 Million tons. By 1991 it was only 130 Thousand tons. Refusing to face reality, the government set a quota of 120 Thousand tons *a year!* Soon the mass of spawning cod fell to only 22 Thousand tons. Large quantities of juveniles, too young to spawn were being caught.

In 1992 the Canadian government did what it should have done years before: it closed the Banks to cod fishing so that the cod and other fish could recover. But it was too late. Various scientific surveys of the Banks showed that not a single generation of juvenile cod had survived to age three, let alone to breeding age. The cod are not coming back.

The social and economic costs of the collapse of the fisheries were enormous. Hundreds of small communities were decimated. The Canadian government spent billions of dollars to support them and 32 000 fishermen were thrown out of work.

Estelle Raymond

Source: James Martin: "The Meaning of the 21st Century", 2006. Published by Eden Project Books.

Martin is a Pulitzer Prize nominee, holds a D.Litt from Oxford and has received honorary doctorates from all six continents.

"God will not seek thy race
nor will He ask thy birth.
Alone He will demand of thee:
"What hast thou done with
The land I gave thee?"

(Ancient Persian engraving found in Mesopotamia)

"Collapsing fisheries internationally will hurt 1 billion people. Presently, fishing fleets are 40% larger than oceans can sustain - a very dangerous situation given our dependence on this resource."

(*People and Ecosystems: The Fraying Web of Life UN Report, 2000*)

"In South Africa, perlemoen is in danger of being wiped out and eight of the 10 most important line-fish stocks have either collapsed or been over-exploited. Catch rates of many fish species have dropped by over 90% during the last century and the surviving stocks of some fish species represent less than 10% of their former population levels."

(*Study by UCT's Marine Biology Research Institute*)

"Fishing annually extracts more than 80 million tons of sea creatures worldwide. An additional 20 million tons of unwanted fish, seabirds, marine mammals and turtles get thrown overboard, dead. Overfishing has depleted major populations of cod, swordfish, tuna, snapper, grouper and sharks. Instead of living sensibly off nature's interest, many fisheries have mined the wild capital, and famous fishing banks lie bankrupt..."

(*Time.co, Earth Day 2000 website report, April 2000*)

"The largest marine predator on the planet right now is the cow. More than half the fish taken from the sea is rendered into fish meal and fed to domestic livestock. Puffins are starving in the North Sea to feed sand eels to chickens in Denmark. Domestic house cats are eating more fish than all the world's seals combined. We are extracting some fifty to sixty fish from the sea to raise one farm reared salmon. This is ecological insanity."

(*Captain Paul Watson: President of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society*)

Whale Song Lines

Music is possibly the most evocative of the arts. It transcends spoken language and speaks directly to our emotions. On land birds and humans sing, though for very different reasons. I haven't seen any men trying to stake out their territory with songs, lately. And if my husband would have had to woo me, or any woman, with his songs alone, he would have had meagre pickings.

The Humpback whale, however, sings extensively - under water to boot. When a calf is born the first thing it hears is whale song. Humpback whales also court their mates with song. Their songs are complex and are often half an hour long. They have been recorded singing for more than 10 hours.

These songs evolve and change over periods of time. All the whales in a pod sing the same songs and learn the changes to the songs as they evolve. In other areas Humpbacks would be singing totally different songs. But sometimes whales up to 5,000 kilometres apart will be singing the same songs and making the same changes to their songs. Sound travels five times faster under water. When Humpback whales bounce their songs within a reflecting layer of cold water, trapped between warmer layers, their songs can travel across the breadth of the whole of the Pacific Ocean. This is done at a depth of about 1,100 metres. These songs are varied and complex.

Our understanding of these complex songs is limited and we rely on speculation. What do they sing? Why do the songs evolve? Do they communicate emotions or do they pass on knowledge? We don't know, just as we do not know why dolphins sometimes rescue humans who are in trouble in the sea. The sea makes children out of us all, full of wonderment and questions.

In his book 'Songlines', Bruce Chatwin writes that when an Australian Aborigine child is born, he inherits a piece of a song that describes a part of the landscape of that area. (They believe the world was sung into being.) The child is responsible for that song and that piece of land. He has to sing it in order to keep that part of the earth created. The whole Australian continent is covered with such song lines. It is like a Beethoven opus, symphonies of creation.

I like to imagine that the vast seas of our planet are crisscrossed with the song lines of the whales. I would love to think that these songs help to keep the seas in place and that the huge submerged landscapes are poetically described in Humpback whale songs that are passed on to their young calves, who inherit parts of songs that constantly create the seas.

Evette Weyers

Source: Heathcote Williams: *Whale Nation*



Photo: Mike Leresche

Rooiels Gallery



Vuur & Nuwe Lewe



Skoert Vuilgoed Veldtog

Kom ons staan saam om hierdie ongewenste elemente uit te roei!
Die identiteit van die drie skelms?

Fonteingras (Fountain grass)

Kategorie 1 indringer

Hierdie is een van die top tien verklaarde indringers in ons land. Alhoewel dit na 'n aantreklike siergras lyk, verstik sy wortelstelsel die inheemse fynbos. Aangesien dit reeds floreer in sommige tuine in Rooiels en dig staan op die pad reserwes vanaf Gordonsbaai en selfs so ver as Kleinmond opgemerk kan word, sal ons almal aanhoudend moet werk om Rooiels skoon te hou van hierdie hardnekkige indringer.

Wat kan ek doen daarteen?

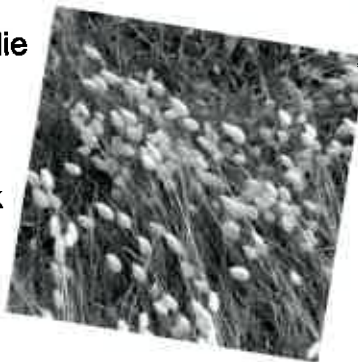
Maak seker u weet hoe dit lyk. Voorbeelde is te sien in die Rooiels ekosentrum. Verwyder die grashalms met saad en verbrand hulle. Sproei die groen gedeeltes met 'Round-up'. Indien dit nie vir u moontlik is om self betrokke te raak nie, bel my om te verduidelik waar u dit verwyder wil hê. Die Rooiels Bewarea sal inspring met die nodige medisyne! (Tel:028 273 8032)



Werner Modinger met 'n ruiker fonteingras - en spuitkan gevul met 'Round-up'.

Hasiestertjie gras (Bunny tail grass)

Hierdie oulike grassie is 'n indringer! Trek asb. die stertjies uit en verbrand!



Perde- onkruid (Horse weeds)

Daar is seker nie 'n erf op Rooiels waar hierdie lastige onkruid homself nog nie ongenooit tuisgemaak het nie. Net een raad trek uit en verbrand!



Perdeonkruid of te wel, Horseweed

Waarskuwing

Moet asb. nie enige van die bogenoemde indringers op u komposhoop gooi nie. Kan dit in 'n vuilgoedsak gegooi word? Ons beveel aan dat dit nie gedoen word nie.... indringersaad is hardnekkig en gaan verder versprei vanaf die vullishope.

Gardening Tip

When you plant a wild peach (*Kiggelaria africana*), you plant a food web! The wild peach is the centre of a number of food chains. Together they make a food web. Bees, ants, red-eyed turtledoves, red-winged starlings, mousebirds, Cape bulbuls, Klaas's cuckoo and the little white-eyes all use the tree as a garden pantry. The symbiosis between the wild peach and the garden acraea, *Acraea horta*, one of South Africa's most common butterflies, is well known. This butterfly occurs almost everywhere where the wild peach tree grows the wild peach being its principal larval food-plant. (Adapted from the Botanical Society publication *Veld & Flora* March 2007)

For beautiful examples of wild peach trees growing in Rooi Els, visit the garden of Koos and Jenny Smit at 'Wonderlings'.

We would like to place a 'gardening tip' in every issue of the Rooi Els Breeze. Please share your tips with us. Send to: joanmodinger@lantic.net.
Happy gardening!
Joan Modinger

Bird Chat

Chirp, chirpie, chirpie, cheep, cheep! Oops, better revert to one of the indigenous languages or I'll be in trouble with some human or another. Greetings Breeze readers, it's me again and what better journalism you'll have with *Cercomela familiaris* (or Familiar Chat) Cedric to you all of course! That Alison, she's done it again, a quick call on the dawn chorus to say she's off to the Eastern Cape doing bird counts at short notice, would I scribble something for the Breeze!

I'm delighted to report that one of the Oystercatcher chicks has made it to adolescence. They're almost the dumb brunettes of the bird world, very pretty but stupid! For once it's parents had the sense to build a nest somewhere that remained secret and bought the two chicks into the small bouldered area near the Point. The difficulty of the terrain and loads of hiding places made it an ideal area. Dick and Jill Lockley were the first to report the chicks. They are praecocial and from the egg shell are covered in down, able to walk, (well, stagger to start with!) and seek food immediately, though they are fed by both parents. Their diet does vary but mussels and limpets form a substantial part of it.

Time to get on my nest box - it is *very* distressing to us avifauna that so-called advanced animals can't read - even pictures! There are clear signs about dogs on leads - *pictures not words* - but as with that great book "Animal Farm", I guess some people are more equal than others and can ignore the rules.

The fate of the other chick will remain a mystery but the presence of adolescent Cape Kelp gulls was not an encouraging sign. They are partial to young birds, in fact some of their eating habits leave a lot to be desired! The spectacular phosphorescence of late could spell danger too, harmful algal blooms (red tide) can cause mortality. Curious that, at its most beautiful Nature can be its most destructive...

Never mind all this fuss over Oystercatchers, I've had a family this year too! Me and the missus managed to raise three youngsters in the safety of Rocklands Road. Loads of food this year too, even if we were run ragged collecting it - my goodness don't kids eat a lot! They've left the nest now but still pop in for a chat (sorry about that pun!) and brunch of flies, ants, spiders, moths, millipedes, and pretty much anything else that's going.

Sometimes we make the short trip to the intertidal line and feast on the 'goodies' that the live there. We're a nosey group and do enjoy being around you lot, why the other day I had a fly about in a garage, all sorts to pick around there. Some of my distant cousins have more than enjoyed human company and nested in houses - so much drier than the outdoors, real five star stuff. Some years ago a pair nested in Mike Harrison's library, using the cat flap as the front door. However at the time Mike had 2 cats, the rest as they say is history!

Margaret and Jo Hensen must have some magic. Having barely finished the new shop front a pair of Fiscal Flycatchers decided to nest in the eave. Facing the South-easter, nest and Flycatcher bottom often lifted by the breeze, they successfully raised their brood and took no notice whatsoever of the human traffic. The Hensen's other success has been the continued breeding of Cape Rock Thrush in their garage on the electric motor!

Other "good spots" have been Paradise Flycatcher in Rob and Lynne Fryer's garden. These guys really are the "beautiful people" of our world and come to enjoy the Cape summers too. The Rockjumpers have also had broods in the vicinity of the lower slopes of Klein Hangklip. That lot get people from all 'round the globe visiting to see and photograph them. Little teasers they are too, 'now-you-see-me-now-you-don't' scenario, or maybe they are just camera shy!

The bird list now has an impressive 189 birds on it and for the fynbos environment this is especially noteworthy - in comparisons to other biomes of Southern Africa fynbos is "poor" for avifauna. The richness of Rooi Els is because of its micro-environmental diversity. Being a Conservancy is terrific but *please* practice what you preach. I'm not a sage, merely an LBJ, but next time you readers look in a mirror remember you are looking at the most dangerous animal on this planet.

Happy spotting!

Cedric (aka *Cercomela familiaris*)

Go out, go out I beg of you
And taste the beauty of the wild.
Behold the miracle of the earth
with all the wonder of a child.

Edna Jaques

KAWS we care...

Animal abuse, the killing of children and violence in the home...

A distraught dog owner arrived at a KAWS volunteer's home a few weekends ago. His dog had been stabbed to death in Proteadorp...in front of his children. Yvonne advised the man to lay a charge at the police station. The police refused to open a case file! As chairperson of KAWS, I descended on the police station, nostrils flaring! The station commander showed genuine concern and invited me to address the whole force on the Animal Protection Act. In preparing for this meeting I uncovered the work being done by Police and psychiatrists world-wide relating to animal abuse.

Evidently violence against animals is the prime indicator of violence within a home. Some 80% of murderers abused animals as children: the two English boys who killed a toddler had earlier pulled the heads off pigeons...the 'Boston Strangler' who murdered 13 women had trapped cats and dogs in crates and shot arrows through them...the list goes on and on.

At KAWS we've realised that treating the puppies and cats burnt with boiling water and fixing up dogs with broken legs or stab wounds, is simply not good enough. We have to go further and address the reasons why so many people are capable of harming animals... and indeed are putting their feelings into practise without any regret or consequence. We are working with a Poppedorp crèche where a teacher called us in after finding a 5 year old had pulled the head off a chameleon. And on a bigger scale we are motivating for Humane Education to be introduced into the two Kleinmond primary schools. Read these comments from Cape Flats pupils who have been through the course:

"I used to beat my brother's dog whenever it came into the house. I never played with it without hurting it. But now when I think of those times, it hurts me back." Sinazo, Grade 8.

"It is a shame to see someone throwing a stone at a dog. Some people pour boiling water on animals. I think what people need is a little understanding. Today animals find themselves where they have no inheritance." Aphiwe, Grade 8.

"I believe a person who is cruel to animals is the same as a racist because it means that he does not feel anything for someone or something not created the same as himself" Vusame, Grade 10.

On a lighter note...

KAWS is just finishing phase two of its buildings: our much needed Education and Adoption Centre. Now we will have a place to educate new animal owners about the correct care of their puppy or kitten...a place to promote basic dog training...somewhere to bring children and show them animal care videos and introduce them to animals as friends...a place to keep kittens, cats and dogs for adoption at last!

To help finance the salary of the animal keeper, we are asking for caring sponsors to 'adopt' a kennel, cattery, kitten room, dog play yard, or the education centre. It will cost you R50 per month for a year (or longer if you can!). All you'll get in return is a tiny plaque... and the knowledge that you are helping KAWS help animals in need. Please contact KAWS if you would like to be part of this initiative: 028 271 5004...or email Chris at: izulu@mweb.co.za.

Imagine what the person who slashed this dog could do to a disobedient child!

Chris Burlock



Oscar for Rooi Els

Oystercatcher Chronicles

"At 09h30 this morning Jill, Debby and I were thrilled to see two oystercatcher chicks, with their parents, on the rocks where the terns congregate, left of the slipway. They look as if they are about two weeks old and walking well and foraging with their folks on the rocks."

Dick Lockley - 8 Feb 2007

"Daar was groot opwinding toe Jill en Dick Lockley 'n Swartfobie ouerpaar met twee kuikens gewaar het by die rotse onderkant die hotelerf. Rooielsers het soos trotse ouers die kleintjies angstig dopgehou en almal is gemaan om hulle honde weg te hou van die broeiarea. Party van ons het langs die rotse in verwondering gesit en kyk hoe die ouers die kleintjies voer. Hulle het beurte geneem om weg te vlieg en terug te keer met mossels. Iemand het ook gesien hoe die dapper ouers 'n kraai wegjaag. Maar 'n paar weke later is slegs een kuiken gesien. Hy's 'Oscar' gedoop en alie aanduidings is dat hy oorleef het. Baie geluk aan sy kundige en toegewyde ouers!"

"I sat for 40 mins watching the parents this morning and saw an adult feed a chick with a mussel/limpet/some succulent morsel! The chick was hidden in the rocks so was unable to see the actual feeding but eventually saw one chick quite clearly. Quite large now. Watched for ages but did not see it again but we know now for sure that there is at least one survivor at this stage, which is great news. Still hope that the other chick is also there."

Dick Lockley 22 Feb 2007

"I went for a walk this morning with a friend and saw the Black Oystercatcher parents with their chick - more like a teenager now! They had moved from their nesting site, about 30 metres towards the slipway. Both parents flew off as we approached and one tried to lure us away with limping! The chick stayed very still and as we had Tosca (on a leash!) we didn't hang around as we didn't want to stress it. But it is feeding off the rocks and may soon be flying."

Jenny Stark 1 March 2007



(Continued on p20)

Continued...

Raising Oscar

"This afternoon was one of the most beautiful Rooi Els summer days (when the wind dropped to nothing) and at peak Spring high tide Jill and I paddled out into the rocks and got to within 15 metres of the chick! The adults were quite unperturbed and allowed us to sit in the canoe for about 10 minutes observing the chick."

"It is almost adult now - the beak is still dark but is beginning to turn red; obviously smaller but black already and must be almost fledged. A great sighting and we can now confirm that at least one chick has been raised to almost full adulthood! When we approached the oystercatchers from the land side they got very agitated and the chick was hidden from view. Although we knew exactly which rock it was on it must have been warned to stay "below decks" as we did not see it at all - a complete contrast to our approach from the sea where we apparently posed no threat to the chick and all three were very relaxed!"

Dick Lockley 19 March 2007



"I went to photograph Oscar this afternoon, and as it turned out, conditions were perfect - VERY high tide. Dad brings the food then Oscar wolfs it down while Mom was hovering nearby out of the picture!"

"I saw one adult near where the terns roost, but he seemed very calm as I approached along the path and soon flew off, so I knew Oscar was not around. Then I saw another adult on a rock in the ocean - very agitated as I approached on the path. The reason for this (I later discovered) was that the sea was almost up to the grass and Oscar was too close to me for Mom's comfort. I knew he must be around, but could not see him. Next thing, he FLEW to Mom!"



So now we know he can fly and I think we can safely say we have our first successful breeding. Parents are still very protective."

Jenny Stark 21 March 2007

Meet the Deweys...

The Dewey family consists of Doug, Jenny, Bronwen and Richard. Doug is with the PG Group. He was with Eskom for 25 years as their GM Eskom enterprises and decided to make a change in October last year. Jenny is an artist with a studio at home. She has in the past done calendars, greeting cards for CNA, as well as wrapping paper designs. She also do portraits and artwork for the home as well as more corporate art. She has sold paintings to diplomats and art buyers from all over the world. Their daughter Bronwen is an account executive and son Richard works at KPMG doing his articles.

"We had for a while thought that we should buy a "little place at the sea" where we could one day retire to and also use as a holiday house for our family. We knew it would be in the Cape which would be "coming home" for Doug as he grew up here. We had spent many holidays on the West Coast but we knew that we were looking for something different.



On a trip down the coast along the R62, we turned off towards Kleinmond and just kept driving - the scenery was lovely but what attracted us most was the combination of sea and mountain. It was the deciding factor! We went into Pringle Bay and looked at some stands and it all looked very promising but then driving just over the hill we discovered Rooi Els! All else was lost!

We managed to find the only stand at that time for sale in Rooi Els and bought it and we have never looked back.

Building a house was an amazing experience and we are totally delighted with the result. We have now spent our second Christmas in our house (the first was mostly camping on concrete floors and sharing a bathroom) and it just gets better. We have met so many fantastic people here who have welcomed us so warmly into the community that we truly feel part of Rooi Els.

With our crazy Gauteng lives we need to detox regularly at Rooi Els or we start getting withdrawal symptoms, so we try to come down at least once every two months or so. We love all the seasons but there is something about the winter that is so special. It is just a matter of a couple of years or so and we should be able to move down to the Cape permanently (or at least that is the plan!) Doug is very big on five year plans!"

Jenny Dewey

"Rooi Els encompasses a rich mixture of personalities drawn from a wide spectrum of interesting backgrounds. However what unites us is our common passion to conserve the natural splendour of Rooi Els and its environment!

We recognize that all forms of life are interrelated and that what affects one, affects all. Thus we strive to be caring and supportive towards each other, and to take responsibility for the care of our priceless natural heritage, both in Rooi Els and in the wider community.

We see Rooi Els as a CONSERVATION COMMUNITY reinforced by a Conservancy to which every property owner is invited to belong."

(Extract from the Rooi Els Vision, p1)

Uit die Ou Dae...

Van alle Kante

Oor die jare het heelparty interessante stories oor Rooiels verskyn in die rubriek "Van Alle Kante" deur Gideon Joubert in Die Burger. Hier's 'n paar uittreksels:

"Woeste geveg van Rooi-Els

Keeromstraat 30, Kaapstad, 1 Mei 1981

Dit is Februarie van die jaar 1805. Die Kaapse Korps het toe al bestaan - hul basis was Wynberg. Wat verkeerd gegaan het en wat die oorsaak van die bittere ontevredenheid onder die pandoere was, soos hulle toe bekend was, weet ons nie. Maar 'n stuk of 30 van hulle gryp hul gewere en ammunisie en laat vat oor die Kaapse Vlakte, in die rigting van die Hottentots-Hollandkloof. Hulle trek tot by Rooi-Els, waar hulle in die grot gaan skuil wat later as die Drostersnes bekend sou staan.

Goewerneur J W Janssens van die Kaap laat dadelik kompanies van Stellenbosch en Swellendam oproep om die drosters te gaan haal. 'n Hewige geveg het op 7 Februarie 1805 plaasgevind. Hoeveel pandoere dood is, weet ons nie. Volgens oorlewering wou die pandoere hulle nie oorgee nie (gedagtig aan die straf wat wag?), tot hul drie korporaals doodgeskiet is en toe het die oorlewendes van die oorspronklike groep soldate glo die gewere neergegooi.

Hierdie rubriekskrywer het lank gelede in die Koeëlberge gaan stap en die nag in die Drostersnes geslaap. Hy het nie die grot se grieselige geskiedenis geken nie en het heel rustig geslaap. Geen spoke nie. In die nag het 'n geritsel by sy rugsak hom laat wakker word. Die volgende môre was 'n hele bruinbrood weg. Wat kan 'n bruinbrood wegdra? Daar is hondmak muishondjies wat helder oordag broodkorsies kom optel het wat ons daar neergegooi het. Maar 'n muishond kan mos nie 'n hele brood dra nie. Wegsleep, ja. Miskien was ons baie moeg en het só vas geslaap dat ons dit nie agtergekom het nie. In die kloof was ook baie bobbejane wat die nag vreeslik gelawaai het. Maar bobbejane soek nie in die nag kos nie. Daardie omgewing is ook bekend vir sy luiperds, maar ons het nog nooit van 'n luiperd gehoor wat brood eet nie."

"Ons Fraai Kol-Katte

Heeregracht 40 Kaapstad 8001 3 Januarie 1987

Ek beny die Bettysbaaiers en Rooi-Elsers vir hul luiperds. Verlede week is 'n luiperd gevang wat pikkewyne naby Bettysbaai doodgebyt het. Die luiperd is in 'n vanghok vasgetrek en in die Kogelberg losgelaat. Verlede Saterdag het nog 'n luiperd, of dieselfde een wat teruggekom het, op Rooi-Els 'n miniatuur-poedel gegryp en laat vat bosse toe.

Ek sou wat wou gee om 'n luiperd in my tuin te hê. Ongelukkig is daar mense wat histories raak as hulle 'n muis, 'n spinnekop, 'n slang, 'n bobbejaan of 'n wildekat sien, om van 'n luiperd nie te praat nie. Al hierdie mooi diere van die veld word mos onder "ongediertes" geklassifiseer.

Dit is tog vreemd dat mense wat vakansiehuise koop waar hulle van die beskawing kan wegkom, so groot skrik as die natuur effens na hulle kant toe staan. Rooi-Els is mos bobbejaan-, dassie-, muishond- en luiperdwêreld. Mense van Bettysbaai wat so bang vir luiperds is, weet nie hoe dikwels hulle onwetend teenaan een verbyloop nie. Bergklimmers weet dat die fraai gespikkelde katte altyd hul onsigbare metgeselle is.

Luiperds wat mense vreet, is onbekend. Bettysbaaiers wat oor hul kinders bekommerd is, kan gerus slaap. Ek weet net van een geval, jare gelede; dat 'n mens deur 'n luiperdwyfie aangeval is. 'n Gesin het by Rooi-Els met die rivier opgestap toe hul dogtertjie op 'n luiperdwelpie afgekom wat water suip. Sy het die gestreepte bondeltjie opgetel.

Die luiperdwyfie het met vlammende oë uit die bosse gestorm, die dogtertjie 'n oorveeg gegee, die welpie opgeraap en laat spat. Die luiperdwyfie het nie gebyt nie. Sy het haar boeglam geskrik toe sy die dogtertjie met haar welpie in die arms gesien het. Wat sou 'n mens-ma in dieselfde omstandighede gedoen het?"

Capturing the Comet

Mid January gave stargazers a treat as McNaught's Comet hung in the south-western sky. The use of the word 'hung' is, of course, inaccurate, but that is how it appeared to a mere mortal with little science.

Apparently, the comet was almost an irrelevance to the astronomers who found it, as their task is to search for asteroids that might be on a collision course with Earth. Quite important work, one would imagine! Anyway, their chance find was a delight to all in the southern hemisphere.

For some reason I cannot explain, I have not, as yet, invested in a camera tripod to use here in SA. (I'm rather idle and can't be bothered to lug my rather large English one through the process of getting from Devon to Rooi Els.) So, a photograph of the comet seemed out of the question. However, night after night, there it hung, tantalisingly, until I could resist an attempt no longer, particularly as the object was beginning to fade. Of course, this coincided with a howling Sou'-easter.



Thus I found myself on the top balcony on the south side of the house, huddled up and braced against the door trying to steady the camera enough to take a shot at about 30th of a second with the memory card set at an equivalent of film speed 800 ASA, the most I could go on the Olympus E1. Needless to say, the initial results looked almost blank, but a little crafty digital manipulation did show something of the awesome sight. What is mind boggling is that, I am told, the head of the comet is the size of Mount Everest and the tail stretches something like 17 million kilometres across space. As a non-scientist I can hardly comprehend how anyone knows this, but then, I am a trusting soul!

Sandra Yeo

Drummond Arms Besottered!

The Drummond Arms has joined the Conservancy, their sign proudly attached to the wall on their stoep. Rooi Els Conservancy chose the clawless otter for its logo.

A chance meeting in the UK with The Otter Brewery, based in Devon, has resulted in Dennis and crew sporting Otter Brewery T shirts. These have the legend "Relax with an otter" on the back (or front if you're Irish and they're worn back to front of course!) Yes, the purists (or puerile!) will say that it is a British otter depicted which are not clawless. But it's the sentiment that counts! Posters, beer mats and bar towels also adorn the pub walls.

The owners of the Otter Brewery, whose 'home pub' is called The Holt is in Honiton, South Devon, were fascinated by the tale of a Conservancy in the 1st Biosphere in South Africa. The Holt is well worth a visit with excellent food and terrific beer. Pictures have been emailed to Devon of Dennis and staff outside The Drummond Arms on a suitably busy Sunday. Visit Rooi Els' own holt where you will find Dennis and staff with a warm welcome, cold beer, good service and great value for money.

It's an otterly fun place to be!

Alison Ayre and Helen Jones



Red Tide

Beauty and Destruction

The red tide was with us for months this year. At night there was a breath-taking display of turquoise neon flashes in the breaking waves. On dark windy nights the seas twinkled with underwater fairy lights across the whole of False Bay. And when the moon shone, the sea was like a shimmering sheet of copper which faded into a deep purple - though in the day it most often looked murky and dirty!

The prolonged spell caused devastation for sea life with lack of oxygen and sunlight having a negative impact on our marine ecosystem with dead fish, octopus and all manner of sea urchins and small creatures. The birds feasted along the beaches.

Red tides usually occur along the Cape west or south coasts in late summer and autumn. Prevailing southerly winds cause cold, nutrient-rich water to rise from the ocean depths to the surface, a process known as 'upwelling'. The term 'red tide' is misleading, because discolourations of the water may be black, brown, orange, purple, yellow or red! These colour changes are caused by dense concentrations of the microscopic plants of the sea called 'phytoplankton'. Most red tides along the South African coast are caused by a group of phytoplankton known as 'dinoflagellates'. These single-celled organisms are able to swim short distances by means of two whip-like 'arms' called flagella.

Swept along with this upwelled water are the dinoflagellate cysts, the resting stages of the organism which usually lie dormant on the sea floor. The high nutrient concentrations in the upwelled water, together with ideal conditions of temperature, salinity and light, trigger the germination of the cysts... so the dinoflagellates begin to grow and divide. The rapid increase in dinoflagellate numbers, sometimes to millions of cells per litre of water, is what is known as a bloom of phytoplankton. Concentration of the bloom by wind and currents, together with the dinoflagellates' ability to swim to the surface, create a red tide.

Scientists believe that red tides are occurring with increasing intensity and frequency. This may be a result of human activities such as nutrient enrichment through various forms of pollution and subtle changes ascribed to the greenhouse effect. The transport of dormant cysts in the ballast tanks of ships is thought to have contributed to the spreading distribution of red tide outbreaks.

Sources: Newsletters by Chris Burlock & Kay Leresche

Red Tide-Light

Marching Torches;
Floating Fire;
Armies of Light
that never invade.
Our ancestors smile
from the evanescent
glow of the waves
and bid us:
"Take care!"

Sandra Yeo

Cape Point Lighthouse

The rhythmic flashes of the Cape Point lighthouse in the distance are part of the Rooi Els night-scape. The lighthouse at Cape Point stands sentinel over one of the most strategic sea lanes in the world. Did you know that at one time its beam of 19 million candlepower was the most powerful in the world? Now it has been reduced to 10 million candlepower and sends its three-flash pulses 63km into the night to warn ships.

Light Pollution

Legislation limits light pollution to the boundaries of your own property...but in Rooi Els we want to preserve the awesome beauty of our night skies by asking everyone to limit their light pollution to the INSIDE of their house! Spillage of INSIDE lights should be limited by drawing curtains.

OUTSIDE lights should only burn when absolutely necessary (e.g. sensor lights) and their impact minimized by being shaded so their light spills downwards. We are one of those rare communities who can still marvel at the Milky Way... lets keep it that way!

(Source: Rooi Els Vision, p5)

Baboon Education



Christina Geldenhuys of Overstrand Nature Conservation provided four research documents to the Eco Centres in Pringle Bay and Rooi Els. They all relate to research conducted on the Pringle Bay and Rooi Els baboon troops by researchers visiting the region through the CIVIES Primate Project.

TITLES :

1. The house raiding activities, and people's attitudes towards a troop of chacma baboons (*Papio ursinus*) in Pringle Bay, South Africa.
Author: Robert Pearce (UK)
2. The effects of human food on foraging and social behaviour in the chacma baboon (*Papio ursinus*)
Author: Evelyn Guyett (UK)
3. Pilot study of the seed dispersal abilities of chacma baboons (*Papio ursinus*) within the Kogelberg Biosphere Protected Area Network of the Western Cape Province, South Africa.
Author: Erin Guth (UK)
4. Evaluating the success of management action to reduce conflict between residents and chacma baboons (*Papio ursinus*) in Pringle Bay, Western Cape Province
Author: Christina Geldenhuys (SA)

Roads

Sensitive to the carrying capacity of this area and the need to preserve coastal fynbos, we want to preserve our fynbos-fringed country lanes; cars passing and parking where nature allows. Only where needed are road areas paved. Otherwise lanes remain natural, avoiding rainwater run-off problems and the loss of further habitat though the need for storm-water drains.

There are so many of nature's small miracles using our lanes... please help enforce our 20kph speed limit...

We need to set a good example - by keeping to it ourselves
And by speaking to those builders or drivers who persistently ignore the 20km/hour limit.

We enjoy strolling in the safety of speed-calmed, rural lanes where traffic is forced to respect our 20kph speed limit! Tortoises and dwarf chameleons...(and indeed our children and pets) should always have right of way. Here we walk with Nature!

(Source: Rooi Els Vision p5)

Waar's die Bye?

Wetenskaplikes het geen idee hoekom miljarde bye besig is om te verdwyn nie. Die verskynsel is die eerste keer verlede jaar in Amerika opgemerk, waar heuningbye sowat \$15 miljard se vrugte, neute en ander gewasse bestuif. Daar was ook berigte van Europa en Brasilië van bye wat verdwyn.

(Bron: Die Burger: Saterdag 28 April 2007 p10)

Rooieler vertel van sy nuwe wynboek :

The Essential Guide to SA Wine Terroir & Travel

Much has been written on the subject of wine, but we specifically went out to preach a slightly different sermon with what we perceived wine-life in SA was telling us. This book finds its place between a John Platter (rating wines) and a coffee table picture book.

It's a fact that long geological processes were crucial in creating the world's great vineyards. For example Bordeaux in France provides Quaternary period land terraces (from Glaciers) laid in with fossils/shells/bones. In South Africa, Australia and Portugal, extensive erosion has exposed ancient bedrock in the land basements, while vineyards on the foothills of mountains are prominent in Argentina, Chile, California and South Africa.

"Terroir" refers to the natural features of a body of land which interacts to create a unique set of conditions including topography, climate, geology and soil variations, conferring specific characteristics on vineyards and wines. The interplay between ancient soils, valley slopes, soaring mountains and coastal breezes in South Africa provides it with a unique sense of place. Given the above background of geological processes, it is no wonder that it makes wines very country specific.

Despite our soils being 150 million years older than Europe, it took trial & error for some 2,000 years in Europe to discover which grapes grow best in each terroir.

In the New World there is still much to learn. This publication highlights some progress made in South Africa to extenuate terroir, with more focus on such wines of place that draws nuances that keep intriguing the imagination.

It presents a challenge to wine makers to produce Wines of Place which have an own identity amongst the worlds best, instead of contending with corporate decisions which turn wine into standardized, homogenized commodities (wines of effect), eliminating the features of distinctive terroir.

Every country makes such inexpensive, volume based wines of effect, tending to taste the same all over. The over use of barrel aging is also a potent tool in overwhelming the subtleties of terroir. Why then continue to try to emanate Bordeaux and others, if we have wines which could attain an own identity (and calling it that) and compete successfully with the best in the world?

Drinking wines of place brings us closer to our land and our planet, and listening to the song of the earth in this way should be a precious moment in the adventure of life (Jefford). So, we want to invite you too, to share in the song created by the earth in this part of the globe.

Izak Smit

Books can be obtained from Izak @ R 195 per copy.



Rooiels Wynveiling / Wine Auction

Datum: Saterdag 14 Julie 2007 om 18h00

Plek: Drummond Arms

Toegangsfooi: 'n interessante bottel wyn om opgeveil

'n Gesellige aand vir die gemeenskap.

Aangebied deur die REBV en die Bewarea vir gemeenskapsprojekte

Kontak: Izak Smit 082 5777037;

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"From space, the planet is blue.
From space, the planet is the territory
Not of humans, but of the whale.

Blue seas cover seven-tenths of the earth's surface,
And are the domain of the largest brain ever created,
With a fifty-million-year-old smile..."

(From: Heathcote Willams: *Whale Nation*)



Photo: Mike Leresche

United by our passion for the natural splendour of Rool-Els,
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
our community spirit strengthened
So that our lives.. and those of generations to come..
Will continue to be enriched by our care