

# In Clarens

EN OMGEWING / AND SURROUNDS

R15-00

September 2011 September  
[www.inclarens.co.za](http://www.inclarens.co.za)

**Eastern Free State  
Tourist Magazine  
Oos-Vrystaatse  
Toeristetydskrif**



**Fire and Snow**

*Nr. 9*



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- ❖ Micro Brewery

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Letters to the Editor  
Briewe  
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*InClarens* invites you to tell us how you, the reader experienced the Eastern Free State, Clarens and *InClarens*.

The last letter we receive before the deadline on 15 September, will win a gift voucher from Meadowlands, Clarens to the value of R150.

*InClarens* nooi lesers uit om aan ons te skryf en te vertel hoe julle die Oos-Vrystaat, Clarens en *InClarens* ervaar en wat julle graag meervan sal willees en doen.

Die laaste brief wat ons voor saktyd op 15 September bereik, wen 'n geskenkbewys van Meadowlands, Clarens ter waarde van R150.

Phumelelo Dlamini wrote:

"It is such a stress-relieving environment. I wish that everybody could visit this Natural Godsend, so that they can be healed."

Thank you Phumelelo, your voucher is on its way to you.

More winners:

The winner of the Mama Fourie's Guesthouse sms competition in Fouriesburg is Marlene Coetzer of Vereeniging.

The winner of the Waterford House sms competition is Martie Els of Bloemfontein.

Congratulations.

WIN WEN WIN WEN WIN

Die Fotokompetisie het goed afgeskop en 'n hele aantal inskrywings is reeds ontvang. Om egter diegene wat eers onlangs die Oos-Vrystaat besoek het 'n kans te gee, het ons die sluitingsdatum uitgestel na 30 November 2010. Stuur jou foto van enige restaurant of eetplek in die Oos-Vrystaat na editor@inclarens.co.za en kyk uit daarvoor op [www.facebook.com/inclarens](http://www.facebook.com/inclarens)

The closing date of the Photo competition is now 30 November 2011. Send your photograph of any restaurant or eating establishment in the Eastern Free State to editor@inclarens.co.za.

The winning entry will win a weekend at Lake Clarens Guest House to the value of R2 400.

# Match this

by John Matchett

## Some things are better left unsaid

Sometimes I think many of us have a natural tendency to be trouble-makers, especially when we are in familiar territory – or our “comfort zone” – at home, or work; among friends, teammates.

Why else would we react to others' carelessness and use such inflammatory expressions as – “what did you do that for?” or “did you have to...?” Although the remarks are rhetorical, they invariably invoke some annoyed face-saving reply like “oh, just for the hell of it!” We could have just kept quiet, but that would mean missing out on a little nasty pleasure!

We all hate criticism but jump at the opportunity of being critical of others' weaknesses or mistakes, often with unkind sarcasm: “oh, well done!” or “that's a great help!” The best advice for those on the receiving end of criticism is not to get angry or retaliate but to look for possible constructive criticism that may be hidden in the critical remarks. Nobody is perfect and to imagine one might be, is extremely arrogant. The truth hurts, but if it helps us to see ourselves as others see us, it is worth the pain!

We also soon learn not to criticise when the other party is armed, say with a pan in hand or a garden hose; or when someone is helping you, in which case you will probably end up having to do it yourself!

Constructive criticism, usually from a close friend, spouse, sibling or superior, is valuable, especially if it reveals aspects of your character of which you are not aware and if given in the right spirit, should be gratefully and graciously acknowledged, as long as the giver is being sincere and gets no enjoyment out of the criticism.

Many a family squabble would be avoided if we could learn to bite on our tongues and resist the urge to “rub it in” when a mistake or wrong decision is made!



## **InClarens is..**

September is Lentefeestyd in Fouriesburg en almal gaan sing en yoga, eet, verf en kuier in Clarens se naaste buurdorpie. Maar September is Omgewings asook Erfenis maand. Internasionale Omgewingsdag word hierdie jaar te Golden Gate gevier. Ons glo ons gaan baie besoekers deur ons poorte hê en soveel meer mense gaan sien wat ons doen en late hier is. Daar word baie buitelandse besoekers verwag en kom ons hoop maar die morsstakings se plastics wat deur Augustus se winde die lug in gejaag is, kom tot rus in die plekke waar dit hoort. Hoe kan enige iemand die wonderlike natuurskoon bemark as daar wit, blou en gekleurde plastiese sakkies aan elke in en uitheemse bossie of boom wapper net om te sê: ons gee nie 'n flenter om vir die toerisme-kroonaar van die Vrystaat nie.

## **InClarens ...**

This month celebrates Spring Fair in Fouriesburg and international environmental day on 27 September at Golden Gate. We welcome all tourists from near and far to our shores and trust that all the plastic, paper and every bit of rubbish that is blown to shreds in the August winds, will have cleared by the time we want to showcase our wonderful area to the world and may there be no more veld fires to wreak havoc in the countryside. We wish for an early season and just enough rain. And we invite everyone who reads this, to visit the beautiful Eastern Free State.

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Linda van Wyk from Polekwane  
Fire and Snow

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*Man's obsession with wings and flying did not end when Icarus arrogantly rose too high and too near the sun's heat and melted his wax wings. Modern man builds aeroplanes and other aircraft to explore the open skies and these use fuel and pollute the air. A hot air balloon, on the other hand, rises softly and drifts on whispers of wind*

We had to be at take off early morning, about half an hour before sunrise. Just about when the temperature falls below the zero mark and just as the first glow of the sun shows in the east. It was bitterly cold and the group huddled together for a little warmth. All were duly clothed for the occasion, padded jackets and fur caps, gloves and boots but most of all, the exhilaration kept them warm.

They chattered away and watched Jeff and Bongo, Warwick's assistants pulled the generator into action. The oblong, multi-coloured and enormous bundle of parachute fabric snaked out on top of the frosted grass, held in place by Ollie Esplin and some of his Clarens Xtreme teammates who came over from the nearby Ox-wagon camp to lend a hand. The fan started to fill the balloon's single lung while Jeff and Bongo slowly released the ropes that hold the expanse of fabric together when the balloon is unopened.

The anxiously waiting group's discussion centred on vertigo and a few quietly admitted their anxiety and fear of heights. They watched the heap of cloth grow and, somehow, the conversation waned accordingly. Some had been up before, but for most it was a maiden voyage.

Just as the darkness started receding, and the Mushroom Rock was etched against the sky, the balloon lifted its head towards the sky. The four compartment basket was hitched and the gas flames tested, the flames chasing the last remnants of darkness up into the ever growing canopy of the balloon.

The group of eight stood closer -cautiously yet eager. The challenge against the earth's gravity was about to begin and

*Between the mushroom and a beautiful place*



*Up, up and up some more*

*Little Caledon Valley*



they all climbed into the respective compartments, Warwick cautiously spreading the weight evenly. While the flames rushed upward, he quickly rehearsed safety precautions and the group practised the landing positions.

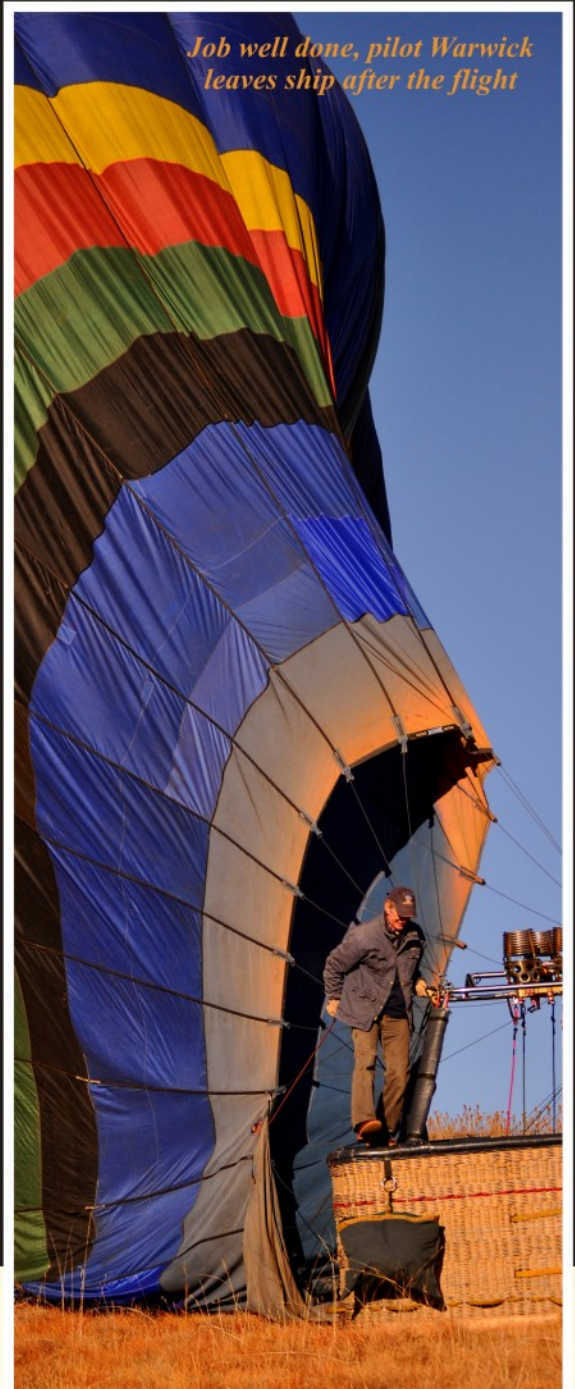
Warwick has been piloting hot air balloons for thirteen years and he knows the drill. His calm voice reassured the group of a safe trip and smooth landing. The dawn came softly to the valley as the balloon rose and drifted a little to the west. As the little basket rose higher and higher, it became apparent that it was a completely windless morning. The balloon hung in the air, not moving in any direction but up and the passengers watched in awe as the sun rose behind Mount Horeb.

To the photographers' delight, the balloon hung still as if in anticipation of the beautiful morning about to break in the east. Golden rays touched the far side and slowly painted the mountain

tops in a tint of rose. As it crept out from behind Mount Horeb, it changed the landscape underneath the basket into hues of gold. Farmlands appeared from behind cold mist, now lifting with the heat of the sun. For the duration of the golden hour after sunrise, the balloon shifted only meters fulfilling any hot air balloonist's and photographer's dream.

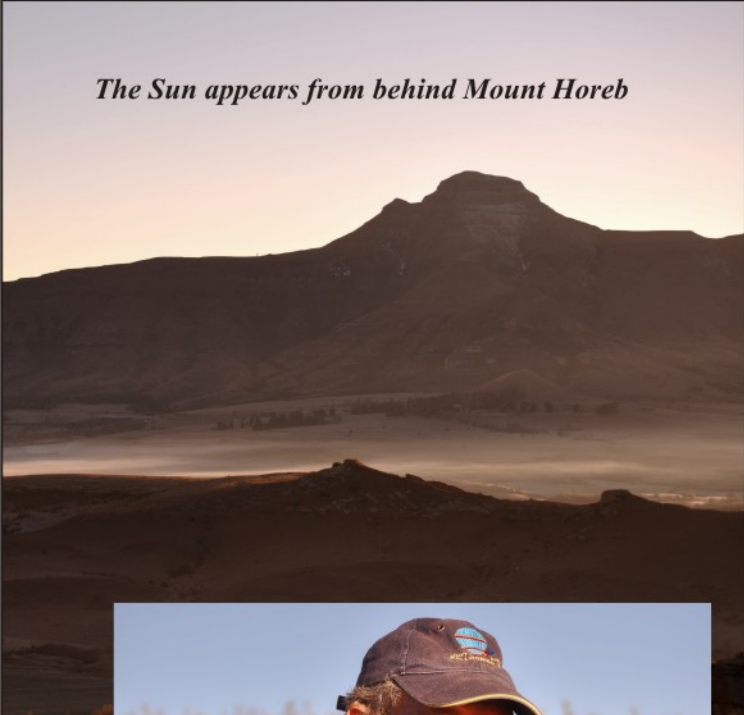
It was all over too soon, but airborne happens only in the early hours; and after a successful landing in a corn field, Warwick brought out the champagne and we toasted the morning. He explained why champagne, or sparkling wine, was necessary.

"In the early days when balloonists landed in foreign countries where this, to the inhabitants, strange looking structure "fell" from the sky, they were ready to fight the enemy and in those days the pilots took liquor with to soothe, calm and bribe locals. The French took





*The Sun appears from behind Mount Horeb*



*Multi coloured farmlands in the first rays of the sun*



*Relaxing after good and hard work*

[www.hotairballooningsa.co.za](http://www.hotairballooningsa.co.za)

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champagne and ultimately, South Africans settled for sparkling wine and orange juice."

The experience is hard to describe. The excitement fills one's being only to remember afterwards the elation of a safe landing and the beautiful and breath-taking sunrise on a very cold morning and that one would not swop that pureness for anything in the world. It was indeed a life-changing experience to see the Eastern Free State from a totally different angle, feel the cold and overcome the anxiety that lingered subconsciously. Hot air ballooning is not romanticised for nothing. It is an experience of a life time.



*Celebrations early morning after the flight*



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**GO CLARENS!**



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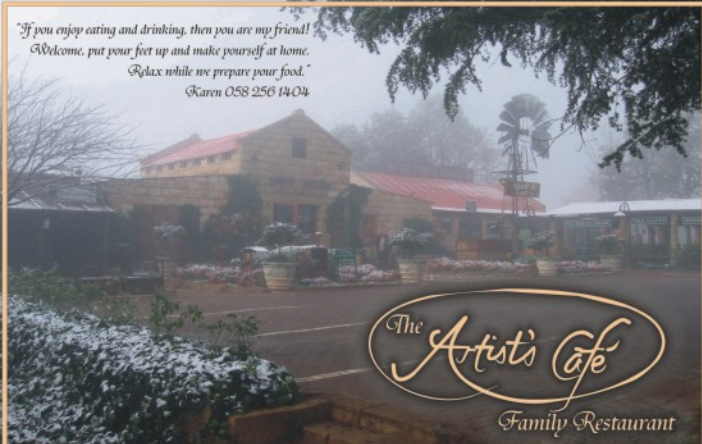
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# THE FURY OF FIRE

*The August winds do it without fail... On an early August afternoon, smoke billowed up on the horizon, screening*

*the setting sun and changing the beautiful colour into a sickening washed out orange.*

It started on a farm halfway between Fouriesburg and Clarens and quickly spread to neighbouring farms. It jumped the tar road and if it weren't for some farmers who made firebreaks, it would have destroyed much more.

The alarm was sounded shortly after two o'clock when smoke filled the sky. Fire fighting equipment was rushed to the scene, Working on Fire staff arrived and farmers from near and far came to lend a hand. Still many hectares of grazing were blackened and smoke hung over the beautiful countryside. When the August breeze picked up, it chased the fire along the yellow winter grasslands. At places it shot up several meters into the sky, sending sparks in all directions. Had it not been for the distressing situation, these free for all fireworks could have been quite spectacular, but each spark spelt more hectares of scorched earth, damage or even death.

In a short space of time, grazing was destroyed and sheep and cattle had to be moved to neighbouring farms. Outbuildings were burnt to the ground, fences were damaged and many farmers took more financial strain in an already hard economic environment; all due to one thoughtless act which can never be reversed. One careless match or cigarette butt or ash from a labourer's cooking fire, strewn negligently into the wind wreaks havoc but this time it was, mercifully, countered at a fire break.

Two days in a row, the Clarens branch of Working on Fire was called out to help combat wild fires in the Fouriesburg area. Rodney Wainwright and his team of fire fighters successfully put the first fire out and, with the assistance of many farmers; the fire on the following day was also put to rest.

There are few words that incite as much fear as the word fire does. Visions of complete destruction and painful death are all too vivid when the word is mentioned or when smoke taints the horizon. A wild fire sweeping the fields and destroying everything in its wake is good enough reason for this terrible fear and everyone who has experienced an uncontrolled wildfire, knows this fear.

The mountainous Eastern Free State lies prone to wild fires due to the rugged terrain. Fire breaks are hard to maintain and the beautiful yellow brush-like grass grows tall and thick. The unusually wet summer the Eastern Free State experienced this year with rainy weather lasting well into winter, hampered the making of fire breaks. At places in the area it was impossible to perform this very important task and the lack of firebreaks invites devastation when wildfires rage on unabatedly up the mountainside and down into the thick underbrush in the valleys, leaving a blackened path of destruction.





# HULLE WAS TOE ANDERS GEMAAK

*Die eerste van 'n reeks van vyf vertellings deur Leon Strachan oor die doen en late van bokser en rofstoeier, Andries Spies alias Caveman Spies.*

**'n Groepie Indiërs staan op Trafalgar-plein in Londen verstom en kyk na die uiters ongewone skouspel voor hulle. 'n Man in 'n luiperdvel-leotard het 'n groot bloederige bladbeen in sy hande waaraan hy blykbaar net so rou staan en eet.**

Bloed drup van sy elmboë af, en sy gesig is bloedbesmeer. Elke slag as hy in die Indiërs se rigting beweeg val hul paniekbevange oormekaar om uit sy pad te kom. Die steentydperktooneel voor hulle fassineer taxibestuurders ook, terwyl passasiers in 'n rooi dubbeldekkerbus hulle verkneukel aan die Indiërs se reaksie.

Dis 1932, 'n vaal, triestige middag in die Engelse hoofstad. Naby die luiperdvelman sit 'n skralerige man op 'n stoel met 'n groot plakkaat waarop Caveman geverf is. Op die luiperdvelman se teken stoot hy die plakkaat bokant sy kop uit vir almal om te sien, en die luiperdvelman tel die stoel, met die jong man daarop, aan een poot op. Die skare snak na hul asem. 'n Glimlag speel om die luiperdvelman se mond, hy is op die hoogtepunt van sy roem: Caveman Spies, bokser, stoeier en showman en hy maak voorbrand vir 'n stoeigeveg daardie aand.

Spies was wyd bekend as Thor in sy tuisomgewing, Harrismith en Kestell, waar hy en sy krag absoluut legendaries was. Sy regte naam was Andries, die derde van vier baie bekende Spies-broers wat elkeen anders geaard was. Thor, vertel die mense, het baklei vir die Spiese, Hans gevloek vir die Spiese, Frikkie gedrink vir die Spiese en Martiens gebid vir al die ander Spies-broers. Swart mense het vir

Andries Maputso genoem, die man met die swart bloed.

Die Spies-familie was knap boere en het groot plase wes van Harrismith besit. Maar Andries, hy was van jongs af anders en sterk, sommer baie anders en baie sterk. Op twaalfjarige ouderdom het hy al groot seuns en 'n onderwyser van sy skool op Kestell op hulle plek gesit. Hy het in elk geval nie veel vir dissipline omgee nie, want hy het gemaklik met die gevolge van sy aksies saamgeleef. 'n Ruk later het hy sy pa se hand ook vasgegryp en gesê dis nou klaar, niemand slaan weer aan hom nie.

Nooit weer sou hy hom laat intimideer nie.

Seker so sestien, sewentien jaar oud jag hy op 'n keer jakkalse op Elandsrivierdrift, Freek de Jager se plaas, toe witrug in 'n miervretergat in is en die honde kon hom nie kan uitkry nie. Toe die Jack Russel die derde keer tjankend uit die gat kom, trek Andries al sy klere uit en kruip met net 'n riem en 'n knipmes die gat in. Vir 'n kwartier hou almal asem op. Dit hyg en vloek en tjank in die gat, en stof borrel by die gat uit. Uiteindelik kom Andries agteruit daar uit, vol bloed en stof en skrape, maar met 'n breë glimlag; hy gee die punt van die riem vir die toeskouers en sê "trek!"



**Andries (Caveman) Spies**

Riem om die nek trek hulle ta toe daar uit.

Daar word vertel dat hy toe al naweke met sy fiets Bloemfontein toe gery het om by die Ramblersklub te gaan boks. Op een geleentheid het hy twee graatjiemeerkaaie gevang, hulle in sy sakke vasgeknoop en saam geneem. Daar het hy die meerkaaie verkoop vir inskrywingsgeld, en soos gewoonlik die toernooi en prysgeld gewen.



## Lake Clarens Guest House *LC*



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## PHOTO COMPETITION

**CLOSING DATE EXTENDED!**

Send photos of any restaurant in the Eastern Free State to [editor@inclarens.co.za](mailto:editor@inclarens.co.za)

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# Swiss celebrations in Clarens

*Next year is Clarens in South Africa's centenary and locals will have as much to celebrate as the people of Clarens, Switzerland.*

More than 700 years ago, the inhabitants of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden signed a contract of mutual aid and protection, the Federal Charter, now considered to be Switzerland's deed of foundation. This oath, said to have been taken on 1 August 1291 on the Rütli meadow overlooking Lake Lucerne, was mainly an act of rebellion against the ruling Habsburgs.

The Swiss National Day on 1 August was, however, only instituted in 1891 to commemorate the 600th anniversary of the Swiss Confederation. The first annual celebration was held in 1899, mainly at the insistence of Swiss living abroad, who also felt a need for special day like that of other countries.

For decades after that, the national day was just an ordinary day and only some cantons declared the afternoon or the whole day an official holiday. A popular vote – with 83,3% approval - in 1993 made the event an official national holiday.

Celebrations where the national anthem is sung are now held across the country. The anthem exists in four versions: German, French, Italian and Romansh. (From: [www.swissinfo.ch](http://www.swissinfo.ch))

Clarens, Switzerland was one of the first cantons that celebrated the Swiss National Day.



*Dressed in Swiss Red with bell in hand on the Millin Walk at Clarens*

*Photos by Shanka von Brandis*

## Celebrating Swiss National Day

On Saturday 30 July members of the Ficksburg Hiking Club celebrated Swiss National Day, which is actually on 1 August, in Clarens.

One of the club members, Annett Barrett is of Swiss decent and arranges a celebration or outing every year. Clarens was a natural choice, since it was named after a town in Switzerland. All geared up in the national colours of red and white,



*Celebrating Swiss National Day in Clarens*

complete with cow bell (in case they got lost in the mountains) club members hiked from the dam to the waterfall and along the river to the start of the Millin Walk. They also paid the town a visit.



# Local is lekker and better

*Les and Ronel Thake's roots are deeply anchored in the Eastern Free State. Their ancestors helped develop the area surrounding Fouriesburg and Ficksburg, and they continue the legacy in Clarens at the Village Grocer in Main Street and at Clarens Trading Store in Sias Oosthuizen Street.*

## Clarens Village Grocer

\* 281 Main Street, Clarens

\* Tel: 0582561768

\* Fax: 086963777

E-mail: [grocer@telkomsa.net](mailto:grocer@telkomsa.net)





While Trading Store carries the larger stock, such as bags of mealie meal and pockets of potatoes, Village Grocer offers a wider variety and keeps longer hours. The two shops function independently, although run by a husband-and-wife team.

The Village Grocer is exactly that. For two years, Ronel has been serving locals and visitors alike and welcomes everyone with a friendly smile and a twinkle in the eye. She serves the community with natural warmth, while unpacking or making coffee or giving small change. Ever friendly, ever helpful. And there is never a dull moment in either shop. Snippets of local news cross the floor and if you want to meet with a local, you are sure to bump into them at the Grocer.

Hospitality in the Village Grocer is their second motto -the first being to support local industries.

“Stock locally whenever possible and you will be supported,” says Ronel. “Know the producers and suppliers and respect them.”

Local produce adorn the Thakes' shop shelves and they are proudly Eastern Free State, be it eggs from Bloukruijn, Fouriesburg; cheese from Green Goose, Ficksburg; or freshly baked rusks and cakes.

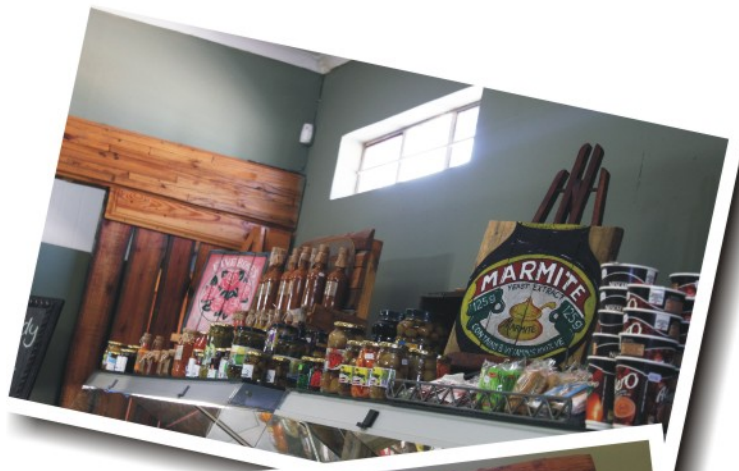
The list goes on and gets even more interesting. Rosehip is collected in the area and oil pressed at a factory not far from town. Ron and Jenni Hewatt's Ayrshire products, yoghurts and cheeses, cream cheese and very popular cream, thick and yellow, after three days, a spoon is needed to scoop it. Ronel combines basic needs with fresh philosophies and sources who really makes good food.

Clarens was blessed last summer with fresh, crispy lettuce straight from the soil of the farm St Fort, to the shelves of Village Grocer. A local farmer harvested the crop for markets in Johannesburg and Cape Town, but because Ronel insists on local produce and she made sure that the pick of the crop was directed to her store on Main Street.

Joey van Wyk produces an array of soft and hard cheeses and delightful fresh cup cakes are delivered to the store each morning.

The fertile land of the Clarens Valley and surrounding areas, produce fresh and high-quality potatoes and various other vegetables and fruit; and Ronel is always first in line to order and receive these -fresh from the earth.

Eastern Free State women are can-doers and preserves, as well as baked produce, are found everywhere. And of these handmade and home-baked produce are sold over Village Grocer counter daily. Nightshade jam (nastergal) in particular, is very popular. This Ronel sources from Fouriesburg, but the top local product in the shop is, wait for it, InClarens -product of the region -with stories, articles and history of the Eastern Free State, designed and printed in the area. Village Grocer is the outlet that sells the most InClarens magazines of them all, making Village Grocer and Clarens Trading Store true ambassadors of the Eastern Free State.





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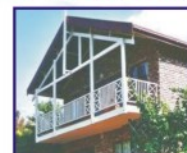
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# Pop across the border for non-stop beauty



*Lesotho is rugged country with proud people living in the folds of the Mountain Kingdom; it snows in winter and is dusty in August but the land touches one's soul. The inhabitants of this landlocked country ride horses, wear blankets and plough the fields using mainly oxen. They keep dogs and their cattle graze the reddish grass that covers the endless mountainside. Above all, Lesotho is a very beautiful and a peaceful country. The InClarens team investigated the neighbouring country from Monantsha's Pass.*

There is no natural border between QwaQwa and Lesotho. Other than the newly built border control post at Monontsha Pass at the South African side, there is only the densely populated QwaQwa at the South African side and the sparsely populated mountains with cattle and goats seeking out the highest peaks to graze, that indicate one has crossed the border into Lesotho.

InClarens drove from Clarens to Phutidatjaba, ignored the signpost that read Monontsha but continued on the main road instead. We took the right-hand turn-off at the robot towards the shopping mall and various other shops and followed the road for 20 kilometres up the mountainside until we reached the South African Border Control Post. We had our passports stamped and tackled the road as it wound downwards behind the mountain peaks of Golden Gate National Park oblivious of the fact that one is not supposed to enter Lesotho from QwaQwa unless one exits there again.

There is no Lesotho Border Control Post near and we carried on relentlessly. Road works near the border post kept us waiting for a while, but not more than half an hour. The steep and difficult stretches of the dirt track is being paved with cement in places. We waited patiently and as it was a Friday afternoon, they finished up rather quickly. We followed the road and were amazed by the exquisite beauty of this independent and yet dependent Mountain Kingdom. The people are friendly and waved welcomingly. We stopped to

photograph the rugged beauty and drove all along the Maluti foothills that are the divide between QwaQwa, Golden Gate and Lesotho.

The peaks were still snow-capped, even after three weeks of sunshine. Willow trees growing on the valley floor did not show any signs of green; they just glimmered black in the afternoon sun and waved in the fresh August breeze. It might be another month before young green sprouts will show. It is cold here but always beautiful.

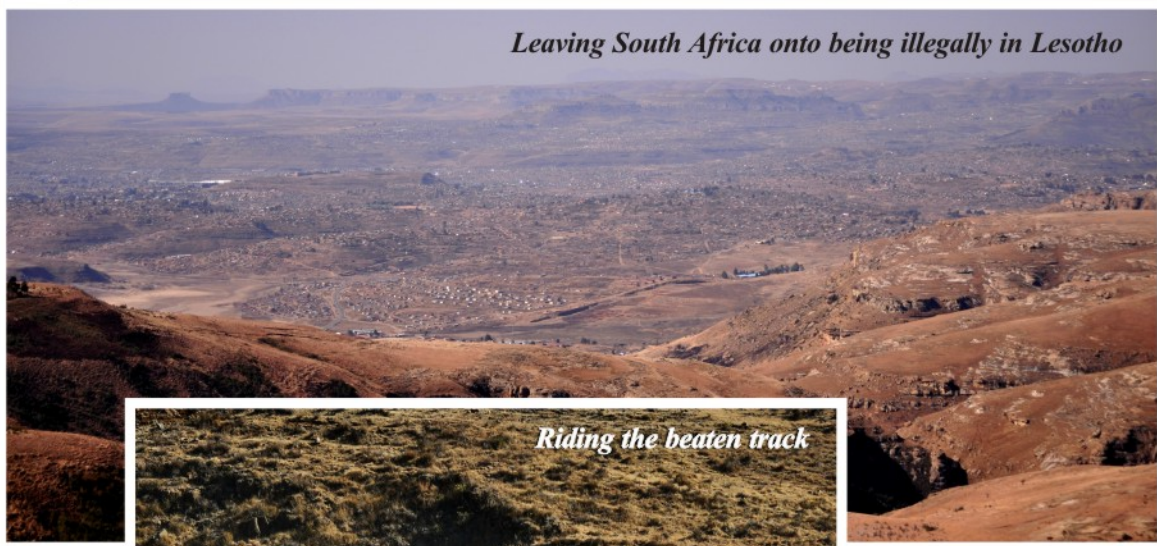
It took us three hours to drive the 56 kilometres of zigzag road, up and down, through rivulets and across sturdy little bridges. We stopped when they were herding their cattle and we crossed each ridge with amazement. The beauty just never stopped. Each area has its own characteristics be it tall Lombardy Poplars now stripped from each and every leaf, or towering mountains covered in snow.

Lone rangers walked the dusty road and only lifted a hand in acknowledgement and we waved back. The road dipped and when we rounded a corner about half way, we started recognising some of Clarens's landmarks. Snow Hills and Rebellie point. From the Lesotho side it looked different but in the end we knew exactly where we were and pointed the various landmarks. The cellular tower halfway between Fouriesburg and Clarens can be clearly seen from the high ground of Lesotho.





*Pictures:  
Amanda van Blerk,  
shooting from a  
moving vehicle.*



*Leaving South Africa onto being illegally in Lesotho*



*Riding the beaten track*



*Along the way*

At last we reached the tar road and we turned right onto the Butha Buthe road leading to Caledonspoort Border Post. We produced our passports only to be told by the officer that we actually were in the country illegally, because our passports were not stamped by a Lesotho official. We pleaded guilty and pointed out that there was no Lesotho border post at Monontsha.

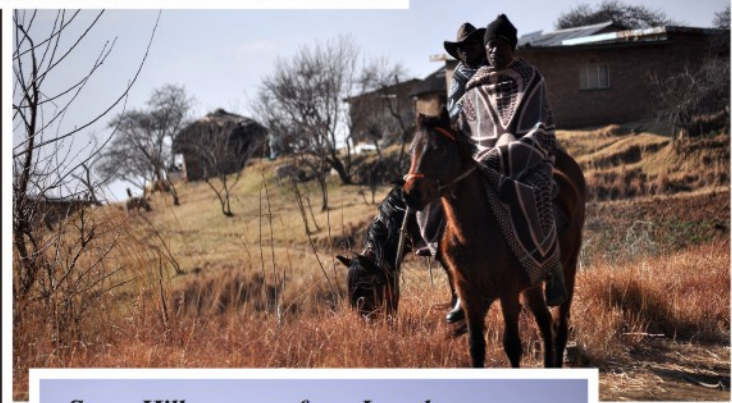
We were all in agreement, Monontsha was not an official border post and should one enter Lesotho at Monontsha, you should exit there.

The sun was setting and the Caledonspoort Border Post closes at six what were we to do? It was getting cold and three hours' drive back to Monontsha did not appeal to us. We must have looked forlorn and lost for the lady let us through without further ado, but gave us a stern warning that it is not allowed and only because we were journalists, would she let us off the hook.

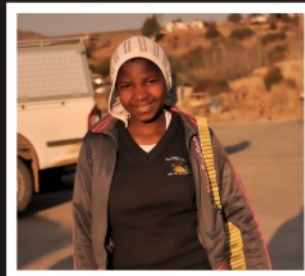
Needless to say, we quickly waved goodbye and hit the road back into our own beautiful and familiar Eastern Free State.

Distances:

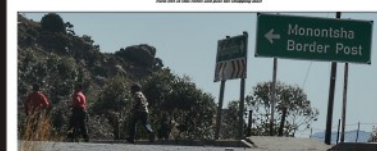
- \* From the Phutidatjaba-turnoff to the Monontsha Border Post 20 kilometres.
- \* From the Border Post to the Oxbow Afriski tar road 50 kilometres (which took us three hours because of the terrain)
- \* From the tar road to the Border Post 6 kilometres;



*Snow Hills as seen from Lesotho*



*Directions  
to Monontsha Pass*





1. Maluti Lodge
2. Lake Clarens
3. Protea Hotel
4. Horeb Butchery
5. Rebellie Game farm
6. Brambleberry on the Golf Course
7. Artzone and InClarens
8. Engel & Volkers
9. Helen Claassen Gallery
10. Clarens Interiors
11. Clarens Breweries
12. Lilliput
13. Street Caffé
14. Ash River Lodge
15. Yoga in Clarens

- Frontier Inn & Casino
- Bethlehem Karavane
- Priscillas Hairsalon
- Le Roy Outfitters
- Crezco

**Town Square Monument**

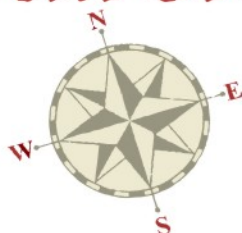
**Clarens Hiking Trail**

**Bethlehem** ↑

● **Ashriver Outfall**

33. Clarens Destinations
34. Post Office
35. Clarens House of beauty
36. Richard Rennie Gallery & Art Workshop
37. Sir Henry's Guest house
38. Bon appetite
39. Mountain Odyssey

**Clarens**



● **De Lusthof Gasteplaas**

● **Motouleng Caves Heritage Site**

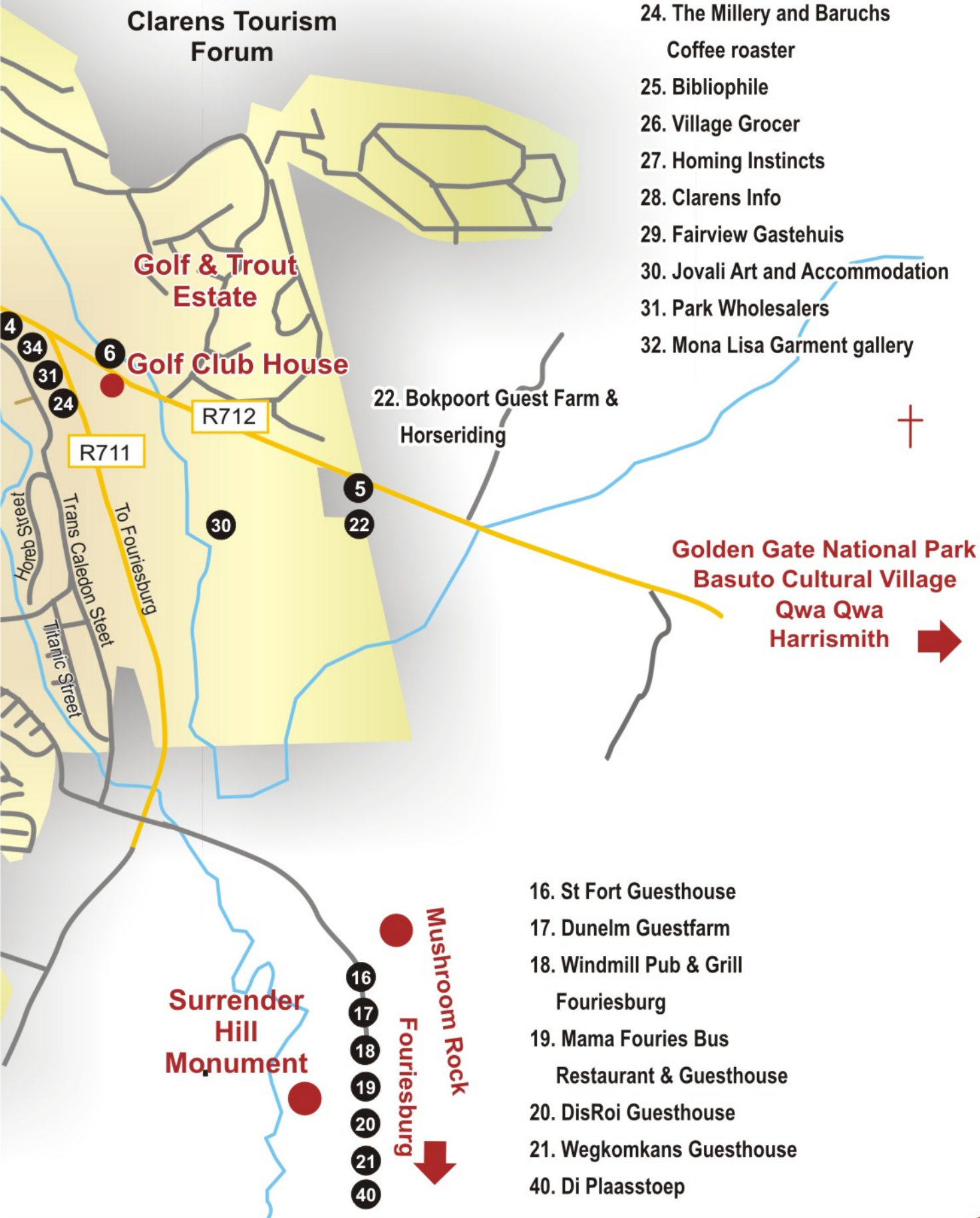






## Clarens Tourism Forum

For any information or directions,  
phone 082 963 3398 or 082 923 6907





# Dis voorwaar 'n lus vir die oog

*De Lusthof-gastehuis is geleë in die voue van die Roodeberge, aan die kant van die Klein Caledonrivier-vallei. Wilgebome kronkel saam met die rivier se vloei al op die oewers heen en aan die oorkantste hang, tou skape na smaaklike winter-grassies hoog teen die hange van die berg.*

*Die toneel begroet jou vanaf De Lusthof se grasperk*

*Soos die naam dit sê, so is dit. Selfs nie eers die wintergrasperk, geel gekleur deur strawwe winterry, kan afbreuk doen aan hierdie ware lushof van lappieskombers-saailande en die ewige kranse wat die vallei omring nie.*

Hier van bo af skemer die Malutiberge se pieke op die verste einder deur en klim die goed versorgde gruispad die hange uit tot bo waar dit by die R711 aansluit. Net daar by Surrender Hill se monument, draai die pad af na die gerieflike tweeslaapkamer-oornaghuis waar 'n Ellis de Luxe-houtstoof die huis se hart warm hou en koffiewater kook.

'n Ruim en gul woon/eetkamer begroet die gaste wat hierdie stille rus ontdek het. Warm en hartlik met 'n agtsitplek-eettafel glimmend geel in die winterson. Hier raak die dae weg en koester die sterre die mense wat onder-dak op De Lusthof gevind het.

Die gebeure op die plaas gaan hul gang en Annalie en Neels Roos wys graag hoe daar geboer word. Twee melkerye vir die vroegopstaners om te verken, skape, kalfies, perde en trekkers wat of ploeg en saai of oes en maai. Die lewe hier in die vallei is soos dit dekades al is en toeriste wat hier vertoef word deel van die dag op die plaas.

Vir die stap-en-klouter geesdriftiges, is die Motouleng-erfenisgebied sommer hier aan hulle voete. Die ingang na die grootste oorhangkrans in die suidelike halfgrond is net 'n klipgooi van die kothuis wat uitkyk oor die vallei. Die water kabbel oor rivierklippies en spoel blink uit aan die oewers waar dit wyd draai voor die volgende kuil en watervoël-kolonie se swemplek. Volg die stroom tot waar die krans die oorhang maak. Net 'n lekker stappie met 'n interessante en asemrowende einde.





*'n Agt-sitplek tafel om by te kuter*

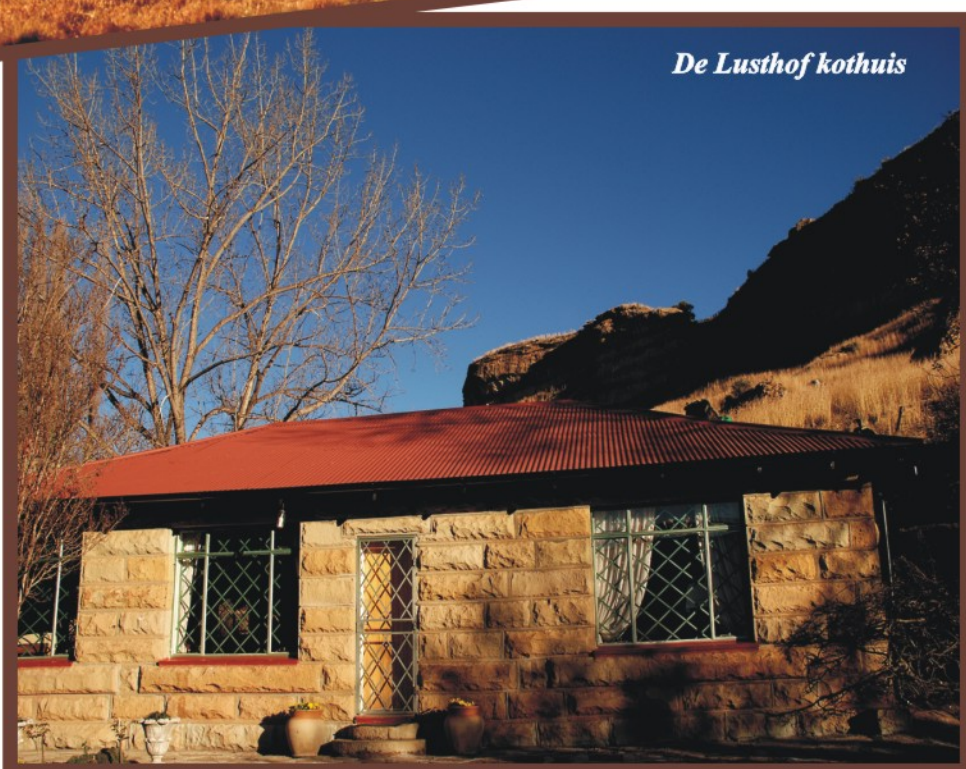


*Die ingang na die Nasionale Erfenis gebied*

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twaalf maande geldig.**

De Lusthof-gastehuis kan ses mense huisves en is selfsorg. Die houtstoof word gestook indien gaste dit verlang. Dit is sentraal geleë. Naby genoeg aan Caledonspoort-grenspos, Clarens, Golden Gate en Fouriesburg maar ver van vakansieverkeer of stadslawaai. Al wat jou hier aan die moderne geroesemoes herinner is die kragdrade wat blink oor die verste rug.

Om jou plaaservaring te bespreek,  
skakel vir Annalie Roos by  
058 223 0465 of 058 223 0580.



*De Lusthof kothuis*



# For that, I will return

*Reader and excellent  
amateur photographer  
Noel Hutton tells of his enchantment  
with the Eastern Free State.*

I have had the pleasure of being a guest at the farm named Lesoba, or “hole in the wall” on a number of occasions. This farm is located on the Clarens to Fouriesburg roadway, overlooking the Caledon River.

My visits have always coincided with the autumnal splendour afforded by the turning of the colours of the many magnificent trees in the area, none more so than the iconic Lombardy Poplars. This timing is not by chance, I am an enthusiastic amateur photographer, and need an annual “fix” that only this part of the country can provide. As a result, I have numerous great images and related memories from my visits. These, together with the wonderful people I have met and their gracious hospitality, keep me wanting to return every year.

Part of the attraction to the Eastern Free State includes hiking, or in my case, less strenuous walking along well trodden paths with camera in hand. Lesoba is well known for its overlooking hill and the famous Queen Victoria rock formation that serves as a sentinel for the farm, as well as the hole (which gives the farm its name) at the other extremity of this promontory.

It was the latter that inspired me to brave the Lesoba hill on two occasions. Summiting has been rewarded with magnificent 360° views of the surrounding land but before waxing on about the views, the effort required to get to the top cannot be overlooked, and must be detailed.

In order to reach the top of the Lesoba hill, one must first locate the pathway up, (no easy feat, although it is marked by the good people of the farm) that being a narrow fissure in the rock, misleadingly known as “the gulley”. This so-called gulley comprises a narrow fault line in the sandstone that leads up to the top of the plateau and a slope of at least 45° on average all the way for some 300 metres, with parts that are considerably steeper. Being perpetually in shade and serving as a conduit for numerous weep holes in the rock, the surface is perennially wet and slippery. Loose rocks



*Through the hole and on to Clarens in the distance*





*Once on top, the Eastern Free State is at your feet*

are prevalent and the omnipresence of small thorn bushes makes both ascending and descending a major challenge. Not a place for the claustrophobic. My heart rate must have registered well beyond the manufacturers recommended levels both through exertion and fear on both ascents.

As mentioned, the world is at your feet and is it worth the personal strain. The official trail moves further afield and allows exploration of the entire massif that Lesoba hill is part of. I have limited my exploration of the hill to the localised area and not ventured further than a few hundred metres from the top of the gully.

One of the paths I have tried was to the extreme southern end of the hill, where the hole is located. From here the entire Caledon River valley is visible, and the proximity of Lesotho is most apparent. The hole appears very different to what one is accustomed to see from the valley below and it fills one with a sense of real isolation and appreciation of the place. On both visits, I was struck by a sense of peace and tranquillity as well as oneness with the landscape. Also the thought of the impending descent down the gully kept me there longer.

On my second venture, I was accompanied by a friendly Jack Russell terrier from the farm. His name was Jakkals, and he

showed me in no uncertain way that the exertion required to get up and down was really trifling. Many times he had to stop, look back, and I'm sure, think to himself that this city boy was really making a meal out of nothing. However, he remained a faithful and long suffering guide.

*It was the latter that inspired me to brave the Lesoba hill on two occasions. Summiting has been rewarded with magnificent 360° views of the surrounding land but before waxing on about the views, the effort required to get to the top cannot be overlooked, and must be detailed.*

Photographically, things proved to be difficult. Being on the hill at mid-day is not the best time for great image making, and the physical effort required means that equipment has to be limited. I didn't even carry a tripod up. However, I have plans to summit in the future in the dark (crazy Irish blood in me taking over) and to be in place for sunrise. For this I will need human accompaniment and considerable planning (I will have to start at least an hour before sunrise). Once this

is achieved, the dawn and sunrise will provide spectacular photographic potential, and the resultant images should do justice to the qualities of the landscape beneath the hill.

I have climbed other hills in the area, most notably the "Flagship" to the immediate east of Lesoba (on which I had a few narrow scrapes due to not following the correct route). They have all had their challenges and produced varied and individual rewards. None can compare to Lesoba and for its unique and special character, I will return.



*The way to Lesoba in the Eastern Free State*



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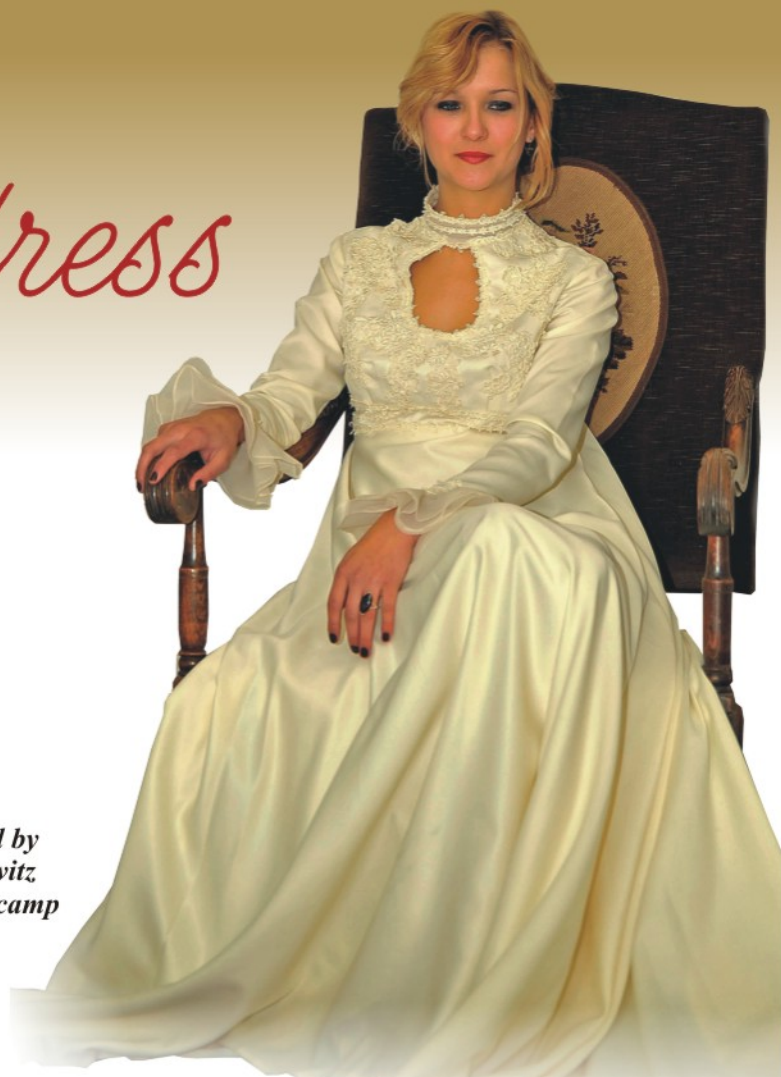


# Full circle, wrong dress

*Mona Lisa Garment Gallery moved one step up to a refurbished shop just up Main Street, Clarens. Phoebe Beukes collects and sells old and new garments here, including wedding dresses. Few items evoke nostalgia like an old wedding dress. Old-fashioned wedding dresses seem to never go out of fashion.*

It was Phoebe's shop that initiated a conversation about another forty year-old wedding dress that belonged to Margaret Liebowitz, daughter of Ruth and late Mike Goldblatt, well-known and loved residents of Clarens. Margaret got married in it on 5 September 1971.

*Pictures supplied by  
Margaret Liebowitz  
and Lorraine Aucamp*



*Wilma at her beautiful best wearing a  
40 year old wedding dress*

As a result of the discussion, what was seemingly the dress of Margaret was retrieved from a linen cupboard after forty years of being passed on. It was carefully cleaned and steamed to be brought back to Clarens, to where it was designed and first worn.



*The Goldblatt Family: Ruth,  
Margaret and Mike*



After Margaret and husband Freddy's Jewish wedding ceremony the exquisite dress was lent out to a family member to get married in. It was returned and subsequently given to an orphanage to use as matric farewell dress. That is why it seemed like a miracle that the garment was found and brought back.

The wedding dress was the talk of the town for many months after the wedding. The small community waited for the photographs and as the album became available, they discussed the beautiful dress at length. Many brides-to-be dreamt of a dress like Margaret's and a fortunate relative was due to get married a few months after Margaret. Ruth Goldblatt offered the dress on loan and for a second time, wedding guests would discuss the beautiful dress at the reception.

Great was the disappointment when the dress was eventually compared with that in the wedding album

of Margaret Liebowitz. It became evident that this was not the same dress.

One phone call shed light on the mystery. Margaret's dress was used and returned soon after the wedding but on the occasion of a second wedding a different dress was used and it is this dress that was buried underneath almost forty year's garments and linen and with much pomp and show was brought back to Clarens.

It is now on display at the Mona Lisa Garment Gallery on Main Street, Clarens.



*Back in the 1970's*



*The dress today, Wilma van Niekerk, Phoebe's assistant, being a beautiful model*



# Glass with an "ATTITUDE"

By Lucinda Hooley

*Walibri Art Glass in Fouriesburg is all about attitude – and sustainability. Owners Lee and Brian Webbstock are a dynamic husband-and-wife team who create handmade, functional glassware, contemporary art pieces and corporate glass giftware, mostly from recycled glass. A key venue in the annual Fouriesburg Spring Fair, Walibri offers an experience quite distinct from any other.*

Lee's just climbed down from the top of an alarmingly long ladder, where she's been installing vividly-coloured glass pieces in an ambitious mosaic mural – "I've got to get it finished in time for the fair!" – when I arrive to catch up on what's going down at Walibri these days. The place – like its products – is constantly evolving.

There's a pot-belly pig roaming free in the garden, threatening to leave trotter-imprints in the newly-cemented pathway (embedded with colourful glass flowers, of course). Nearby, in the mini farmyard, ducks and chickens bustle. There's also a new rockery, with succulents and cacti, along the side of the old tennis court they're busy rehabilitating, and the general impression is one of vibrant creativity.

Walibri Art Glass was established in Cape Town in 1998, and has won many awards in its 13 years of operation. It relocated to Fouriesburg nearly three years ago, and has been a driving force of innovation in the dorp ever since. One shouldn't underestimate the tenacity and inspiration required to relocate a thriving urban business to a small, sleepy Free State town... and keep it going. Lee and Brian don't like to blow their own trumpets, though; they just get on with it. And they are making a difference in many tangible ways.

In 2010, Lee and Brian added "Die Dekselse Koffie Pot" to their offering, where visitors can enjoy filter coffee, various teas and fresh, homemade muffins, scones and preserves beneath a canopy of colourful bottles in the garden.

"We're changing our opening times to: 'wanner ons lus is' – ha!" Brian chirps, "And we're closed 'when we're gatvol!'" he laughs. Don't let this mislead you, though, into thinking that the people of Walibri aren't passionate about what they do – quite the contrary. Their studio is a hive of activity, and they continually work to multi-skill the people who work with them (job creation being a key factor of their business mission).

As an environmentally-oriented company, Walibri offers a well-managed glass recycling depot on the property... where bottles are dropped off by locals, often "under cover of dark". Visitors are welcome to book for tours of the studio and a variety of workshops, to learn about and experience the art of

"warm glass" production.

Walibri is a key venue in the annual Fouriesburg Spring Fair. This year, the Damascus Apostolic Church of South Africa (based in Mashaeng, the township adjacent to Fouriesburg) is offering a Sotho cultural village, with traditional food, beverages (funkily served in tins), boardgames, storytelling and other interactive activities (including performances by the Church Choir) for people to observe, take part in and enjoy. This initiative is envisioned to grow into something that will happen at Walibri every long weekend.

The Dihlabeng Christian School's recycling club – another of

the art & community development projects Walibri engages with – will also have a platform at the venue on the day. Walibri makes fantasy flower petals from recycled glass and supplies them free of charge to the school's club to make beautiful,



unique greeting cards, which they sell.

Also in attendance at Walibri on 3 September will be the GRO Artisans Collective, based in Leribe, Lesotho. A collective of women affected by HIV/Aids, this initiative operates as a social enterprise, with a percentage of the profit made from each piece of their handcrafted, artisan-quality jewellery ascribed to their treatment and care.

And then there's the contemporary African bead art created by the people of Nathebeleng Youth Centre in Qwa Qwa's Namahali Village. Glass bead making and stringing will happen on-site at Walibri throughout the day.

... But wait, there's more! The residents of Eden in Bethlehem, most of whom are unemployed, will be selling the fabulous frames they make from scrap metal. There'll also be koeksisters and other delicacies produced by local entrepreneurs, as well as beverages for thirsty Spring Fair meanderers, on sale ... and studio tours as well as mosaic demonstrations and workshops, where you can make your own piece of art to take home as a memory of the day.

Walibri Art Glass is on the corner of Robertson & Noorder Streets, Fouriesburg, Eastern Free State, 9725. walibriart@yourinbox.co.za Tel: 058 223 0945 Cell: 076 064 2677





# Fouriesburg

## spring fair

### 3 September 2011

**Fresh Family Fun/Groot Pret vir die hele gesin  
at the Fouriesburg Spring Fair/ by  
Fouriesburgse Lentefees**



**The blossoming Eastern Free State town  
of Fouriesburg hosts its third annual  
Spring Fair on Saturday 3 September 2011.**

A non-profit, collective endeavour that aims to build the community and promote tourism, the fair is co-ordinated by a team of volunteers under the Fouriesburg Info Centre banner. Instead of happening all in one place, it flourishes in the gardens, studios, workshops and sandstone homesteads throughout the town – all linked by a map, illustrated this year by Harrismith writer and artist Adam Truscott.

- 08h30** Die Lente-pret-loop na Meiringskloof se registrasie is by die Stadsaal
- 10h00** Is daar 'n uurlange Pilates klas by die Doherty Sentrum oorkant die Landdroeskantoor.
- 10h00 – 12h00** Lofprysing by die Metodiste Kerk
- 11h00** Dinosorus toer na Mafube Mountain Retreat
- 11h30** Skets werkwinkel by die Stadsaal asook Aspersiekunsies in die kospotte
- 12h00** Yoga by die Doherty Sentrum
- 13h00** Nog 'n Dinosorus toer na Mafube
- 13h30** Peter van Reenen bespreek skone kunste by die Ou Pastorie
- 14h00** Nog 'n Yoga klas by die Doherty Centre
- 14h30** Die stadsaal is weer die plek vir Aspersie geregte
- 15h00** Die Potjiekos kompetisie word by die Windmill Pub & Grill aangebied
- 16h00** Prysuitdeling
- 18h30** Kerslig lofsang by die NG Kerk

**Vir meer inligting skakel Lucinda Hooley by 079 897 1669**

**[www.fouriesburginfo.co.za](http://www.fouriesburginfo.co.za)**





# The Coachman's Saloon does it again

The Rugby World Cup kicks off in September and the Coachman's Saloon invites everyone to watch this spectacle on the big screen, every minute of the way. No need to slip into the kitchen to cook and clean and miss some of the action. The Saloon offers a special on their, by now, famous basket

and draught. At R60,00 one can afford to treat the whole family to chicken wings, samoosas, cheese grillers and chips.

And when the Springboks score, you can celebrate by downing a draught. The Saloon offers draught beer at the low price of R15,00.



• 11 Sept  
SA v Wales  
10h30

• 17 Sept  
SA v Fiji  
8h00

• 22 Sept  
SA v Namibia  
10h00

# Die Coachman's Saloon doen dit weer

Met die afskop van wêreldbeker rugby in September, het niemand lus om alleen by die huis na rugby te kyk nie. Daar's 'n lekker atmosfeer in die Coachman's Saloon en die lewensgrootte-skerm maak seker jy mis geen lekker laagvat of vuishou nie.

En almal kan die wedstryd geniet, want die Saloon bied hulle beroemde mandjie aan teen die lae prys van R60,00 -

bekostigbaar vir die hele gesin. Niemand hoef van die aksie mis te loop om te gaan swoeg en sweet in die kombuis nie. In elke mandjie is daar genoeg om oor huis toe te skryf.

En elke drie van die Springbokke verdien 'n bier. Die Saloon se draught-bier gaan baie gewild wees teen slegs R15,00. Ons vertrou die Bokke gaan sommer baie drieë druk!



# Propvol mooi maak- inspirasie

*By Romantique in Bethlehem, kry 'n mens lus om weer aan die binnesake van jou huis te timmer, het Aniena Aber uitgevind toe sy die winkeltjie bokant die Wimpy in Mullerstraat ontdek.*

Romantics is daardie klein pienk lekkergoed-pilletjies wat ma in haar jassak gebêre het om vir die kinders te gee wanneer hulle woelig raak in die kerk. Een so 'n klein pienk pilletjie het wonderskone drome opgetower wanneer die pienk soetigheid keellangs afgly en is die dralende stem van ou dominee effektief gebreek.

Romantique in Bethlehem tower ook pienk drome op wat 'n mens byna kan proe wanneer jy voet aan wal sit by hierdie nuwe binneversieringshemel wat eenvoudig mooi is sonder 'n sweem van eentoon.

Biggie Best op sy mooiste beste. Mooi idees vir die huis, lamp en lantern linne, sofas, blomme en tafels. Alles pas mooi in by die nuwe winkeltjie wat skoonsussies Anél en Adri hier begin het.

Anél Lehman se Clarens Interiors maak al 'n klompie jaar lank gastehuse in en om Clarens mooi en Romantique is 'n natuurlike uitvloeisel van wat in Clarens begin het - 'n soort verlenging. Maar, erken Anél, sonder Adri Fourie se inset en hulp, sou sy dit nooit kon gedoen het nie. Hulle vul mekaar aan en word ook ondersteun deur Adri se moeder, Fransie du Toit wat soggens help om die chic winkeltjie te beman as Adri met aankoop- en kwotasiewerk doenig raak.

Daar is nie pienk Romantics by Romantique nie, maar daar is soveel ander mooi dat jy nie die pienk pilletjies nodig het nie. Tussen al die kussings en teddies en strepies deur dwaal jy hier net van mooi na mooier.

Besoek hulle gerus in Mullerstraat of skakel vir Adri by 058 303 6028







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# Aroma addiction and more

Chris Pefanis leads us into coffee temptation!

Coffee – one of life's little pleasures that's still legal to enjoy at anytime. After all, the pleasing pick-me-up we get from a dose of caffeine is the result of a drug-like reaction; and coffee is a drug to me. The chocolaty-brown velvet-skinned allure of a batch of perfectly roasted

beans; the intoxicating aroma of fresh coffee grounds ready to be brewed; the wine-like complexity of an exquisite espresso; and the satisfying lift a short while after are each as attractive to me in my whole coffee enjoyment experience. Coffee is a ritual, a pleasure and a tool to me. I accept and acknowledge my addiction and embrace it and use it with open arms.

*But, like any addict worthy of their title, I only take the good stuff. No instant, chicory, or random caffeine-infused brown stuff for me – these days all I can bear is freshly roasted and freshly ground coffee; otherwise the experience is empty, unsatisfying and mostly pointless. I'll settle for tea or more beer, thank you.*

You see, coffee is actually quite a delicate and perishable product, although it doesn't go bad in the rotten sense, just bad in the coffee sense. Ground coffee begins to lose its flavour as soon as it is ground, and should ideally be ground just before brewing, or at the very least at the point of purchase to fully enjoy it at its best. Ground coffee should be stored carefully and used within two weeks of grinding before most of the magic disappears.

Beans last a bit longer, but even those get stale after a while, and sometimes even a little rancid. Properly

stored freshly roasted beans are good up to about eight weeks before becoming stale, and for oily and dark roasted beans, exhibit a little nutty rancidity.

Coffee should be treated as any other fresh produce and as for any fruit and vegetables which are at their best 'fresh from the farm', should ideally be purchased at the source a coffee roastery. It is then that the real intricacy and depth of ne such establishment, and has been for the past two years. Baruch's Coffee Roastery in Sias Oosthuisen St roasts the same beans and blends as the original in Mossel Bay, and Chris has been learning and perfecting the intricacies of the art in this time.



*Computers can't monitor aroma*



*Roasting done, says the computer*

flavours can truly be experienced. Fresh produce can be frozen, powdered, vacuum sealed or preserved in some way or another, but its never as good as The Real Thing. Clarens is in the fortunate position to have one such establishment, and has been for the past two years. Baruch's Coffee Roastery in Sias Oosthuisen St roasts the same beans and blends as the original in Mossel Bay, and Chris has been learning and perfecting the intricacies of the art in this time.

When we have a balance of the many combinations of ingredients of flavours, aromas and roasts at hand, or a leaning towards any one outstanding flavour or aroma, coffee truly becomes a gourmet experience, like good red wine. There's nothing wrong with blending beans to produce an excellent result; but excellent coffee need not be blended, like a varietal vs. a blended wine.

Coffee roasting culture is growing in South Africa, as it has in much of the rest of the world, and it's getting easier to find fresh coffee in your region. Hunt down your nearest roaster and spend a bit of time with them discussing your tastes. Try an unblended bean, try a different roast – savour the tastes and find what really makes you go "Aaaah..."

When you're in Clarens, you can do just that at Baruch's Coffee Roastery!

Life's too short to drink cheap wine or bad coffee...

Baruch's Coffee Roastery, 530 Sias Oosthuisen Street, Clarens. Tel 058 256 1136.



# British graves at Weltevrede

S28° 22. 102  
E 028° 15. 963



On 22 July 1900 General Hunter with three batalions of General Macdonald's Higland Brigade (The Black Watch, The Seaforths and the Hiland Light Infantry, together with a number of guns, moved from Bethlhem on the Naauwpoort Nek road in a ruse to deceive the Boers. He then turned sharply westwards towards Retief's Nek and was joined en route by the Sussex Regiment and another artillery battery.

The Boers were in position on the foothills of the Wittenbergen, (a natural divide between Bethlehem and Fouriesburg). The British advanced from Bethlehem, slowly and securely surrounding the Brandwater Basin. A British battery continuously shelled a gap of about six hundred yards wide from the foot of Marble Kop -but to no avail. The Boers directed their fire at the advancing British, and judged by the stretcher bearers who were coming in pretty frequently with wounded men, they were right on target.

From reports after his death, Sir Walter Barttelot was running forward and the soldiers followed. He did not know the meaning of fear or apprehension and displayed marvellous pluck and endurance during the battle and the entire war, much to his company's constant wonder. The Colonel had put to shame many a soldier half his age.

About four o'clock on 23 July 1900, the British troops carrying Retief's Nek, received a message from the Colonel to make a retreat if it was impossible to keep on carrying the Nek, but the company was waiting for the order to charge Marble Kop. The

Maxim sputtered and kept the Boers from taking up new positions from where to add their quota of fire to that already being showered on the British troops by another contingent that was dug in at the other side of Marble Kop.

Casualties on British side were severe: one officer killed and four wounded while three men were killed and thirty two wounded.

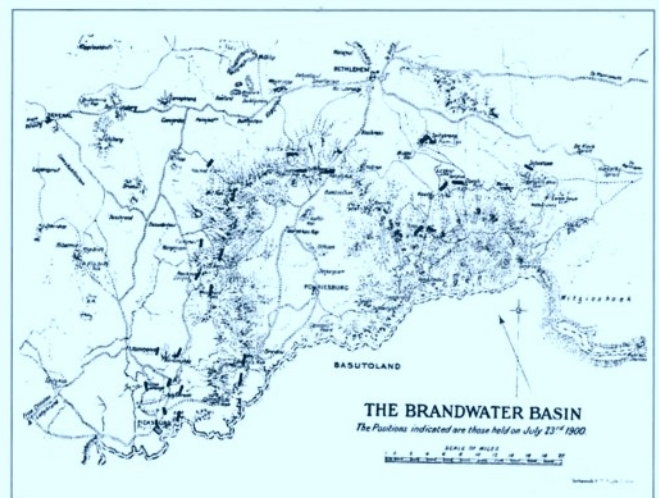
On the 24th of July 1900 the following report was published relating to the action at Retief's Nek, halfway between Bethlehem and Fouriesburg.

*"It is with the deepest regret that Lieut.-Col. Donne records the death in action yesterday of Sir Walter Barttelot Bart, commanding the Volunteer Company. He served throughout the long and arduous marches of the battalion, showing an example of fortitude and devotion to duty unsurpassed in the annals of the regiment, and which had deservedly won him the love of his comrades of all ranks. Sir Walter passed unharmed through the actions of Welkom, Zand River, Doornkop, the capture of Pretoria and the battle of Diamond Hill, in which he led his volunteers to the attack. In the desperate assault yesterday on the Boer position at Retief's Nek, he fell gallantly at the head of his company, to be mourned both by the regiment and the county of Sussex as one of the bravest soldiers and truest of men that have given their lives for Queen and country."*

Sir Walter Barttelot was buried the next day under a huge eucalyptus tree growing by itself in a field to the east of Boshoff's farm. Two of the men who had been killed were buried there too; their names were Bennett and Buck. (They were subsequently reburied in the Anglo Boer War graveyard at Bethlehem.)

A slab of timber was erected over Sir Walter's grave upon which an inscription had been cut by a member of the Volunteer company.

With the centenary of the Anglo Boer War in 1999, funds were raised by Sir Walter's descendants for the rehabilitation of the site. The eucalyptus tree had fallen and damaged the timber slab and was replaced by a white marble grave stone.





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# Say aum....

## The art of meditation



You don't need to be a monk with a shaven head and go to the forest to the foot of a tree and sit cross-legged to be able to meditate. Meditation is something that everyone can do anywhere, anytime and in any way. It is however, such a wide-ranging concept that to explain what meditation is, falls beyond the scope of this article. More and more doctors recommend it, scientists study it, millions of people practice it and it requires a lot of patience, practice and an enormous amount of discipline and mental stamina. Why? Because meditation works. It's mainstream. It's the smart person's mind spa. It offers so much for so little.

By its very nature, meditation eludes definition, but it could be described as a state of higher consciousness in which normal thought processes are transcendent. It is a state of focused attention in which you have the ability to still the mind at will. It is the highest form of prayer. It is the basis of all inner work. Without involving any belief or value system, meditation promises answers to the age-old questions of "Who am I", "Why am I here" and "Where am I going".

Finding peace in everyday life is no easy matter because of constant negative headlines, pressure and challenges in a disorderly lifestyle. We are living in an overcrowded and tensed world and we crave genuine happiness, space and tranquility more than ever before. Despite the availability of material goods and the rapid growth and access of technology and information, we are ten times more likely to develop depression than our grandparents. The very things that were supposed to save you time and enjoy life, are often the cause of stress! We are chronically worried and on overload and we can't use our full creative potential in relationships. Meditation is a tool for the much-needed inner work, as it offers a new relationship with our own consciousness, breaking the chains of old behavior/thought patterns. It is a method of inner purification.

"Prayer is when man talks to Infinity

Meditation is when Infinity talks to man"

Although many doctors recommend meditation to their patients for the treatment of conditions ranging from cancer, AIDS, cardio-vascular problems to gastrointestinal and immune system disorders, meditation is much more than a non-pharmaceutical antidote to stress or a DIY therapy for neurosis. It awakens insight and understanding of ourselves

and other. When the body is relaxed and the mind is calm and clear, we are able to live mindfully, think and listen deeply and live with compassion, which in turn will improve the quality of our relationships. We are more able to remain calm and centered and bounce back more quickly after a setback.

As meditation become demystified, the methods have become more streamlined. Don't fall into the trap of seeking the "correct" method. Techniques are means, not ends. Use whatever works for you, as long as it feels natural and enjoyable.

There are dozens of flavors, but Focused Meditation is popular and easy: Attention is narrowed to a specific focus, which helps to keep you anchored in the present moment. You can do this by focusing on the breath, a sound or an image. It is an exercise in pure mindfulness. Stay aware of thoughts as they come and go and keep your breath flowing freely. Things will surely come into your mind and begin to distract you. Don't worry and don't get caught up in them. Gently bring your awareness away from the thoughts and back to the point of focus. With practice, the levels of concentration and the space between the thoughts will increase, allowing your mind to become still. Start with five minutes a day at first and increase your sitting each week by another five minutes. Soon you will be meditating for an hour. There is no limit. Find a sacred, quiet space for this purpose





and practice at the same time every day. Relax into the experience without expectation, as no amount of reading and studying can teach us how to meditate.

Hatha yoga focuses on opening, realigning and strengthening the body, releasing physical tension through asanas (postures) and breathing techniques. Ultimately this leads to meditation skills as it releases the density of the mind patterns.

In this way you create space for the subtle process of personal evolution and transformation. This is the real miracle of meditation.

Go and get a taste of it ...

May you always be inspired as you travel on your path of grace to wisdom and self-discovery.

Namasté Anne-mari

*(Anne-mari is a qualified and experienced teacher in Hatha Yoga – Bihar and Jivamukti methods -as well as a trained children's yoga teacher in the Radiant Child Kundalini method. She is affiliated with the Yoga Teachers Fellowship of SA. She is also a therapeutic reflexologist and registered at the Allied Health Professions Council. For info contact the Inner Circle Yoga Centre @ 082 853 1797*

## Clarens is...

Clarens is a little town with many facets and as many faces. Some of these faces leave the village to explore other ways and highways; just to return after a few years. That is what Clarens does to the very soul of people. Once hooked, one may attempt to leave but be sure to be lured back to where the water is as clear as the blue winter skies.

## Namasté van André Espach



André Espach is but one of the faces who left Clarens in pursuit of happiness for him and his child. André's child found happiness elsewhere but André decided to return to the sandstone cliffs. He opened a shop on Van Zyl Street and sells exquisite items imported from all over the world but adds his own exquisiteness to the quaint little shop by exhibiting his paintings of roses and other subjects. He also introduced a new range of paintings of the Native American Indians. It is sheer pleasure to browse André's little shop.

And just up Main Street, strolling around the square, one is led instinctively to where the discerning shop browser will find that home is sweet and cookies are yummy. Hannalie Robertson also prepares a mean Arab meal for that special experience when browsing gets too much and energy levels run low. She specialises in preservatives with a twist. All kinds of interesting Arab combinations are there for the tasting. It is extraordinary tastes and aromas mixed together for an expedition of a culinary kind.

## Homing Instincts



## Serendipity

And still on Main Street but off the beaten track in a secret corner one will find Serendipity, which lures the tourists with its unexpected fortuitous discoveries. Delicate and fine handmade jewellery, candles and beadwork surprise the browser in this trap of beauty. All kinds of bric-a-brac can be found at the end of the little boulevard off Main Street.





# Groen sambok vir die alles



*Ek het nog altyd gereken dat, in 'n wêreld van eindelose keuses, dit sekerlik gerusstellend moet wees om een of twee dinge te hê waarby 'n mens hoog en laag kan sweer. 'n Affêrinkie of katoeter ("gadget"), 'n kuur, 'n bygelofie, 'n raat. En nou het ek myne. En dit is, glo my of nie, dieselfde as wat my ma s'n was: Zam-Buksalf.*

Ek het hierdie donkergroen wondersalf behoorlik leer ken toe ek 'n kind was – snags, tussen die lakens. As 'n hoesbui my oorval het, sou Ma my góéd kom insmeer: bors, kuiltjie, tussen die blaaië. En vandag doen ek dieselfde met my kinders. Want gedurende ons eerste winter op Harrismith het die gewone salfies en stropies net nie meer gewerk nie. Nie vir 'n gehoes nie, en ook nie vir skurfheid nie. Ons lippe het met die eerste koue begin bars; en ál wat gewerk het, was Zam-Buk.

Dit was gelukkig maklik om na jare van allerlei vername medisyne en salwe weer die vertroude alles-in-een kuur van my kindertyd te ontdek. Vandat ons in die Oos-Vrystaat woon, en sodra die koue teen April oor die sandsteenkoppe begin kruip, sien ek die plat wit-en-groen blikkie weer oral te voorskyn kom: uit handsakke, uit hemsakke, op winkelrakke, tussen straatventers se goedere – selfs 'n keer op 'n deftige eetkamertafel – sommer so oop, gereed vir 'n vingerveeg oor die lippe in die verbyloop.

'n Wye virtuele soektog later, en ek beseft dat Zam-Buk nie net bekend en bemind in Suid-Afrika is nie. Die hele wêreld gons daaroor. Daar is selfs 'n Zam-Buksalf-Facebookgroep. En daar word behoorlik geklets en rondgevra op die net. Onder meer word daar gegis oor die bestaan van 'n Suid-Afrikaanse dorp met die naam "Zambuk", al dan nie. Want die ontstaan van Zam-Buk word algemeen toegedig aan Suid-Afrika. Maar, soos blyk uit 'n artikel in Rapport van 27 Augustus 2006, het Zam-Buk in ongeveer 1898 uit Engeland hier aangekom. Advertensies uit dekades-oue Britse koerante noem dit "The English Remedy" en "The Great British Cure". In die vroeë 1900's was die produk reeds in gebruik in Suid-Afrika, Kanada, Nieu-Seeland en Australië. In laasgenoemde twee lande het noodhulpwerkers op rugbyvelde spoedig die antiseptiese waarde van Zam-Buk ontdek en beseerde spelers daarmee te hulp gesnel. Daarom is noodhulpwerkers en ambulansmanne in Nieu-Seeland en Australië tot so onlangs as die 1970's "Zambuk", of volgens ander bronne "Zambuks" of "Zambuck" genoem. Die term is nog in 2007 by geleentheid deur 'n televisiecommentator gebruik.

Samboksalf, soos ons oumas dit genoem het, is en word nie net vir die behandeling van droë lippe, borskwale of, soos die blikkie sê, "geringe wonde, brandwonde, jeuk, skurwe hande, insekbyte en spierpyne" aangewend nie. In 'n koerantberig uit Sydney in 1906 beweer 'n vrou dat haar ekseem volkome

opgeklaar het nadat sy Zam-Buksalf begin gebruik het. En vandag klink die lofsange steeds op. Op Beeld se Facebookgroep beveel iemand Zam-Buk gemeng met speensalf vir gebarste hakke aan. Op ander blogs word vertel dat dit vir koorsblare help, tatoes gouer laat genees en, ten spyte van die toksiese aard van kamfer (een van die bestanddele) word die volgende raat vir 'n maagseer aanbeveel:

"Sluk 'n mespunt Samboksalf elke oggend vir tien dae lank. Die maagsweer sal dan gesond wees. Hierdie raat werk soos 'n bom. Die salf is slegs plantolies, en sal jou niks anders as

gesond maak nie. Indien jy 'n probleem het met jou gewete, kan jy ou kapsules neem en leegmaak van die inhoud, en dan vul met die salf en dit so sluk. Dit laat geen slegte smaak na nie." (sic)

Feit bly staan, Zam-Buksalf werk. Mense besing dit, en mense soek dit. Party koop blikkies en blikkies daarvan as hulle in Suid-Afrika kom. Goedhartige Suid-Afrikaners bied aan om vir oorsese soekers voorraad te pos. Gelukkig is

daar vir diesulkes vandag aanlynwinkels waar Zam-Buk, soos byna enigiets anders, verkry kan word. Of hierdie produkte die ware, ware Jakob is, sal niemand kan sê nie.

Ek het my kuur, my "affêrinkie" gevind: Suid-Afrikaanse Zam-Buksalf. Dit het net so lekker inheems geword soos dit op die dekseltjie sê: "The Real Makoya". En, soos met alle rites en rate, huiwer daar maar vrae en 'n tikkie misterie rondom hierdie groen kruiemiddel. Waar kom dit nou regtig vandaan? Nie dalk tog uit die dorpie Zambuk, bekend om sy tradisionele medisyne, in die noorde van Nigerië nie? En hoekom, hoekom sukkel 'n mens tog so, veral snags in die halfdonker, gebuk oor 'n hoesende kind, om die dekseltjie af te kry?



**Elkeen het 'n blikkie groen sambok**





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