

## **MOUNTAIN CALL – No 1 of 2011**



Dear Verlorenkloof Owners and Friends

If we have not yet spoken to you yet this year - Happy 2011 - may this turn out to be a good year for you and yours. As you can see from the header of this mail, I have decided to dust off and re -instate our regular newsletter, MOUNTAIN CALL, in email form. We have always found it good to communicate regularly with our owners and friends. Please feel free to send me your contributions!

We had lashings of rain from October to the end of January with non-stop work on roads and the thatch roofs. Each day started with fixing rain damage from the night before. Croft 23, the penultimate of the new mountain crofts, was completed in impossible conditions by sheer force of will in mid-December. But the festive spirit was not to be drowned - Faith made a wonderful Christmas lunch at the lodge and the New Years brunch was enjoyed by over 50 people!

Last year, just after we had moved into the lodge, I received this incredibly beautiful picture from Eddie and Nicolette Crocker. They also commissioned it as a painting for the office which I am so lucky to have in front of me all the time, with the real thing right outside.

We would like to develop some more interaction around the activities that you can enjoy at Verlorenkloof. We therefore thought to have a few get-togethers during the year, focussed around fishing in May, archaeology in September, birding to coincide with Birding Big Day at the end of November and botany in late summer, early in 2012.

### **RIVER FISHING DAY – Saturday 14 May 2011.**

This mid May weekend, in the past, was always the date of a River Fishing Challenge to raise funds for the Farm Schools Support Project in the Kwena Basin, which has been doing wonderful work for 11 years. For this year we have decided to host it as a Verlorenkloof River Fishing Day. We plan a full day of great fishing, with demonstrations on the ecology of the river, and river fishing techniques. Faith's scrumptious brunch will provide sustenance.

Cost per fisherman is R600, of which we hope to donate a good share to the Schools Project. So please make up a group and join us at Verlorenkloof for the day. We also have a few crofts to rent for the weekend, so you may want to make a proper outing of it! Remember – non fishing partners are ALWAYS welcome.

### **MAINTENANCE & REFURBISHMENT PROJECTS:**

As always at the start of a new year, special attention is given to the upkeep of the crofts and we have embarked on a full croft auditing project. At some crofts the maintenance work was extensive and I am happy to say that the team are on top of it. I am sure that everyone will be very happy to see beautiful new patio tables at more than half the crofts. Towards this end we would like to thank all our owners and visitors for your invaluable feedback. We know that filling in forms when on holiday is a pain, so please know that the Guest Questionnaires received when you book out are MUCH appreciated and we will continue to strive to keep your croft in tip top condition!

### **UPDATE ON SALES @ VERLORENKLOOF:**

In 2005 we completed the first 20 crofts at Verlorenkloof which are sold out. In 2007 we purchased additional land and, with the blessing of the shareblock owners, began to develop the final 4 New Mountain crofts. Of these, the first three are complete and a few slots remain available for sale. Great value on offer on these!

## **SYNDICATES OR SINGLE WEEKS:**

Fourteen of the twenty three units at Verlorenkloof are syndicated. The concept came in when single week timeshare owners said they would like to have more than one week or weekend per year to use, and use these on a flexible basis. We built syndication into the timeshare system at Verlorenkloof perfectly, with all the added advantages of the investment being in perpetuity and management costs widely spread. It really is the ultimate form of ownership of a rural leisure property, combining the best aspects of all the possible models: outright ownership, sectional title, fractional ownership and timeshare, through to casual rental, while avoiding the pitfalls of each with very little compromise.

Furthermore, although there is only a small turnover in reselling, there has been a steady growth in value in the ten years since we offered the first syndicates. Verlorenkloof has become a country home from home for many city families that would otherwise never have taken on a rural property investment. In a way we have come a full circle from our family's weekend farm of years ago.

Prices range from **R 99 000 to R 150 000** for a 2 week slot in the various crofts and remember, we also have a constant list of available single weeks ranging in price from **R 25 000 to R72 000** depending on the calendar. **Something for every pocket and a country home for life!!**

Early in March we were extremely privileged and proud to host our nearest and dearest here when our daughter Erica married Werner Schalkwyk.

Verlorenkloof sparkled and shone. The guests were full of fun, the lodge magical, the groom proud and the bride just beautiful. Erica was born two years after we moved to the farm, so she is endemic flora! We also thank our owners who visited that weekend - they were so gracious, shared in our joy and just let us get on with it!

**Save the Date** – the Annual General Meeting will be held at Johannesburg Country Club, Woodmead, on Thursday 9 June at 4 pm.

Kind regards from

Heidi, Eric, Faith, Richard and the whole Verlorenkloof team.