

VERLORENKLOOF MOUNTAIN CALL WINTER 2014



Dear Verlorenkloof Owners and Friends

I feel like I need to make a confession..... “it has been 6 months since my last newsletter....” These first six months of 2014 have passed in a flash and I have found it hard to catch my breath, but let’s try to catch up a bit.

First of all, Verlorenkloof hosted its **14th Annual General Meeting** at the Country Club, Johannesburg in Woodmead early in June. We again had a wonderful turnout and I thought to share a few extracts from the Director’s report:

ACTIVITIES AND SPECIAL EVENTS at Verlorenkloof during the year included the following:

- **Fishing:** A series of Development Fly Fishing Clinics was run by Stuart Smith of the Gauteng North Fly Fishing Association for the benefit of local learners at Verlorenkloof throughout 2012 - 2013. This culminated in Verlorenkloof hosting the **South African Senior National Fly Fishing Championships in March**, at which the local learners very ably acted as marshals. Verlorenkloof cemented its reputation as a river fishing destination of national repute during this event.
- **Birding:** The annual countrywide **Birding Big Day** late in November was attended by over 20 interested owners, and held under the able guidance of Jane Smart, Geoff Lockwood and Frans Krige.
- **Botany:** Verlorenkloof hosted its second annual **Botany** weekend early in February 2014, guided by owner Kevin Gill and local environmentalists Frans Krige and Mervyn Lotter. More than 35 amateur botanists explored the wealth of flora at Verlorenkloof, and enjoyed the hospitality of the Lodge for shared meals.
- **Hiking:** The **hiking trails** continue to be enjoyed by a large number of guests. A new hiking map remains a priority. **Update on this extract – the new hiking trail map is available and was distributed from the June long weekend. Special thanks to Josh Smith for the hard work!**
- **Cycling:** A portion of the proposed single track has been built and is to be integrated with the riverside path and the gravel access roads for enhanced cycling.

.... End of extract.

People at Verlorenkloof:

Douglas and Jeanne (and their lovely children) are doing well and make their combined presence felt with every passing month. Kirstin Legg is pursuing further studies after a very fruitful internship year and we are pleased to have Joshua Smith spending an internship year at Verlorenkloof focusing on guest experience and specifically fishing. In April we also welcomed Tian and Debbie Kriek with their three kids to the farm house. Tian focuses on the development of dairy products while Debbie’s magical hands have been massaging Verlorenkloof guests since mid 2013. It is really good to have them to strengthen our team.

There has been no turnover in our wonderful supervisory team and staff over the last year. We were also pleased to be able to take on six school leavers from resident families, assisted by the Youth Employment incentive.

Training remains a strong focus and we were happy to recently welcome consulting chef, Bevvie Marais who visits weekly from Lydenburg to put a creative angle on our deli menu. Even Moshe and Anna are now becoming deft chefs and a good lot of fun is had in the process.

Snippets.....

- The **enhancement project** is on schedule and the feedback from owners who experience their newly enhanced crofts is extremely positive.
- The **New Mountain dam** is filled, holding water well, stocked and is fishing well.
- A **large male leopard** was captured on a nocturnal camera trap on 31 May after two Bushbuck kills around Croft 14. A management protocol is being developed with the help of Ms Tara Pirie, who is doing her PhD on leopard at the Black Leopard Conservation Camp north of Lydenburg.
- We have great joy from our **beautiful new mosaic** sign at the lodge, commissioned earlier this year from artist, Melani Jacobs from Pretoria. To see more of Melani's fantastic work, see www.melanijacobs.com

AND THEN, LAUNCHING WITH THIS NEWSLETTER, OUR NEW WEBSITE!!

Thank you very much to our Erica and Tyrel van Wijk who respectively did a great job in redesigning and technically updating the Verlorenkloof website. Please go to www.verlorenkloof.co.za and let us know what you think. There you will find updated info regarding Sales and Resales, Rental Accommodation, Newsletters - the latest Mountain Calls as well as news on the Kwena Basin Education Trust, Foodspace, Activities and lots of new pictures.

Our **Foodspace online Shopping Cart** is working well. No need to battle the queues at Woolies, just bring your drinks and order your **Croft Food** to be ready for you at arrival, by going the site and **click on FOODSPACE**. Salads, home-baked pies, roast farm chickens, home baked breads, decadent desserts and much, much more are for the taking.

We also have a **Facebook Page**, so please LIKE Verlorenkloof Estate on facebook and share in monthly posts. We are three more LIKES short of 1000 on the Leopard post early June!

And lastly, in May Eric and I had the wonderful pleasure to host, together with our new in-laws the wedding of our son Henry to Cherie van Straaten. Groom was dashing, bride radiant and we felt specially blessed to have all our nearest and dearest together in this magical setting. We are very happy to finally have the four children that we have always wanted! All our kids continue to work and live happily in Johannesburg but we are lucky that they visit often.

Warm regards, till next time

Eric, Heidi and the Verlorenkloof team.

SAVE THE DATES:

Special meeting to discuss various owner interests: September – date and venue to be announced

BIRDING BIG DAY: Weekend of 21 – 23 November 2014