



# Helderberg Friends Newsletter

No 82

November 2017

## Sunset Concert Series 2017/18

an incredible line-up

This year the Friends have outdone themselves with a brilliant line-up. The first performance sees chart-topper *Mark Haze* grace the stage with his original rock sounds. Others in the line-up include local legend *Koos Kombuis*, international touring artists *Raoul* and "Lonesome" *Dave Ferguson*, Cape Town's most sought after act *Coda Africa* and local favourites *Shiraz*.

Two local schools, *Parel Vallei High School* and *Somerset College*, have also been invited to showcase their young talented bands as opening acts for the headline artists.

### Dates and times

The concerts will be held over three months from December to February. Apart from the first event on *Saturday*, 16 December, all concerts will be held on *Sunday* evenings.

Concerts start at 17h00 and will end around 19h00 allowing ample time for you to finish your picnic and be on your way by 20h00.

### Tickets

Tickets cost R80 for adults and R50 for scholars (aged 5 to 18); under 5s are free.

Also on offer are season tickets at a discounted rate – R350 for adults, R200 for scholars – for all five concerts.



Mark Haze

<b>Saturday, 16 December</b>	<i>Main Act:</i> <b>Mark Haze</b> <i>Opening Act:</i> <b>Parel Vallei High Show Band</b>	Chart-topper and rocker <i>Mark Haze</i> graces the stage with his original Rock sounds. Mark is known for his unbelievable versatility as a vocalist and high energy performances. Expect soaring vocals, dynamic guitar work, pulsing rhythms, plus plenty of crowd participation. ROCK/POP.
<b>Sunday, 14 January</b>	<i>Main Act:</i> <b>Shiraz</b> <i>Opening Act:</i> <b>Somerset College Band</b>	Look forward to all of your favorite hit songs from the 60s to the present by one of Somerset West's best known acts, <i>Shiraz</i> . Your chance to get up and boogie! COVERS
<b>Sunday, 28 January</b>	<i>Main Act:</i> <b>Coda Africa</b> <i>Opening Act:</i> <b>Parel Vallei High Show Band</b>	Cape Town's popular band, <i>Coda Africa</i> , will bring their signature sassy performance of music from classically inspired ballads to electro-swing – a programme as eclectic and varied as the city from which this group originates. CLASSICAL/JAZZ/AFRO FUSION
<b>Sunday, 11 February</b>	<i>Double Bill:</i> <b>Dave Ferguson &amp; Raoul</b> <i>Special Guest:</i> <b>Natalie Chapman</b>	International touring artist <i>Raoul</i> , as front man and lead guitarist, is electrifying! Alongside him are tight-knit, solid, blistering blues/rock outfit! "Lonesome" <i>Dave Ferguson</i> is a one-man lo-fi-hi-impact explosion of Trans-Blues and Country-Dub. BLUES/ROCK
<b>Sunday, 25 February</b>	<i>Main Act:</i> <b>Koos Kombuis</b> <i>Opening Act:</i> <b>Parel Vallei High Show Band</b>	<i>Koos Kombuis</i> is considered one of the best lyricists in South African music. One of his most popular hits, " <i>Lisa se Klavier</i> ", has been covered by Laurika Rauch and The Parlotones and translated into Dutch, Portuguese and English. He has collaborated with the Belgian artist Stef Bos on two albums. A legend in his own time. AFRIKAANS

For online information go to: [www.facebook.com/helderbergnaturereserve/events](http://www.facebook.com/helderbergnaturereserve/events)



Koos Kombuis

### Availability of tickets

These may be purchased...

- online via <http://tickets.tixza.co.za/events/25889>
- directly at the Visitor Centre in the reserve open daily 10:00 to 16:00.
- at the entrance to the reserve on the day of each concert from 15:30 onwards.

All proceeds go towards conservation in the reserve.

### A huge thank you goes to...

our sponsors *Ex Solar* and *Borehole Drilling Solutions*; also to volunteer *Ian Whalley*, graphic designer, for the fantastic posters, flyers and online media designs – an incredible contribution – and to volunteer and artist *Marguerite MacRobert* for her sketch Mandala artwork.

Last, but not least, we thank all our volunteers on the Concert Committee who are working so hard to make this concert series happen.

### Don't miss out!

We encourage all the Friends to come and enjoy these incredible artists perform live in our beautiful nature reserve. See you there!

– Concert Committee

### An Appeal for Volunteers

from the concert team

- Someone to put up banners on concert weekends at 3 locations
- A volunteer professional photographer/s to photograph the events for social media and marketing
- Stage hand volunteers
- Parking attendants

If you can help, please contact Project Manager, Hendrik Dieckmann email: [hendrikdi@live.co.za](mailto:hendrikdi@live.co.za) or call the Visitor Centre 021 851 4060

# Update from Owen Wittridge

Biodiversity Area Co-ordinator



As we near the festive season, I cannot stress enough the importance for all of us to continue with our water saving practices. With the weather warming up and the fire season upon us, we cannot afford to waste one drop.

### Water saving strategies

The City of Cape Town has called several meetings with senior staff to bring everybody up to speed with exactly where we stand and what we need to do to prevent “Day Zero”. It was emphasised that every resident and visitor to the city needs to ensure that we abide by the new normal of 87 litres per person per day.



The City is in the process of awarding tenders to suitably qualified companies to install and to manage its Desalination Programme, a programme to assist in achieving the goal of 500 mega litres usage per day.

The City has also embarked on an aggressive public awareness campaign to educate all residents and visitors. I encourage you to copy this link into your browser for more information: <http://www.capetown.gov.za/thinkwater>

Together we can all make the difference and ensure we have water to use these summer months.

### Fire season

As we enter the fire season – and with the critical scarcity of water – we need to take extra care to prevent fires and to report any seen around the City as soon as possible. The City’s Fire and Rescue personnel are on high alert to respond to any eventuality.

I therefore urge you have the City of Cape Town’s All hours Emergency Call Centre numbers readily available and on your cell phone and that you pass these on to your family and friends. The numbers are:

- 107 from a landline OR
- 021 480 7700 from a cell phone

The Call Centre staff will dispatch the relevant emergency responders.

**Please note** that to phone the nearest Fire Station, as some do, can only waste valuable time – their fire vehicles could be out on another call. In any event, the station will still need to contact the Call Centre. Be assured, however, that a plan will always be made and a vehicle will arrive to assist.

### Achievements

I am happy to say that much has been achieved during the past six months. The following projects deserve special mention, each one made possible with generous financial assistance from the Friends to whom we express our deep appreciation.

#### 1. Trees in the picnic area

In July devastating winds battered the reserve and many of the oak trees were blown over. This left the staff with much clearing up work to do but, more importantly, the picnic area without shade trees. A plea went out to the public for financial contributions towards a Tree Fund for the purchase of suitable replacement trees.

I am delighted to report that, thanks to the support of the Friends and the public, four new indigenous trees have been planted. These are:

- a **Yellowwood** (*Podocarpus latifolius*),
- an **Assegai** (*Curtisia dentate*)



**Fire Danger Index Board**  
Take note as you enter and heed the warning especially on high risk days.

## Planting the new shade trees in the picnic area



- a **White Stinkwood** (*Celtis africana*)
- a **Cape Beech** (*Rapanea melanophloeos*).

This fourth tree, the Cape Beech, was generously donated free of charge by *Habitat Mature Tree Nursery*, the company we used to supply the trees – a very big thank to them.

The trees will be watered, as needed, with water from Pete's Pond (in case some of you are worried about us using drinking water!).

### 2. Board walk

Friends' sponsorship has enabled us to purchase board walk material to the value of R120 000. This will be used to replace and repair sections of the board walk around the Duck Pond. Field staff members have started on this project and some progress has been made.

### 3. Security Fence

We have also been able to complete the replacement of the section of fence from the reserve entrance back down Verster Avenue to the first house. This section was in disrepair, unsightly and also a security hazard with many people gaining illegal access over this fence. The new fence not only looks more appealing but is also very difficult to climb due to its ingenious design.

### Future plans

So what else is planned for the reserve in the next few months?

- ▶ **Water tanks.** We have ordered 10 x 5000 litre water tanks to be installed at strategic buildings around the reserve in our attempt to save water.

Most of the tanks will be put up behind the public toilets where we will use rain water to assist in filling the toilet cisterns.

- ▶ **Additional parking.** We are also looking to create some additional parking outside the reserve adjacent to the new fence. Currently much space is wasted as cars are only able to park head-to-toe. We want to level the ground up to the fence and allow cars to park next to each other. As this is quite a big project, we are not likely to see much action until all our planning approvals are in place.

- ▶ **Repairs and maintenance.**

The staff will also be busy with general repairs and maintenance of our visitor infrastructure leading up to the festive season. We will be cutting grass and giving the public toilets some attention. We are also looking at putting up some additional signage in the reserve.

### Thank you Friends

As you can see, things have been happening on the reserve, many of which would not have been possible without the continued support from you, the Friends of Helderberg Nature Reserve. I assure you all that your Committee has the best interest of the Friends, as well as the reserve, at heart. It is a real pleasure to meet with them to discuss projects and general Friends' business. I want to thank you all.

### In closing

As the festive season approaches many of you will be planning a well-deserved getaway. If you are travelling, please do so carefully and return safely. For those that are not going away, do pop in and visit the reserve. It really is a very special place.

– Owen Wittridge



## Visitor Centre and Gift Shop

It has been business as usual at the Visitor Centre, thanks to our team of dedicated volunteers.

Many visitors come in and tell them what they have seen while in the reserve and often have interesting photos to show the duty volunteer.

### Membership

Even during the colder months there has been an increase in new memberships. The total membership is just over 5 000, including children and teens.

### TV display

Our TV display of photos taken in the reserve by members, has been running for a while. Hendrik Dieckmann has recently added a bird call background – well worth watching.

### Gift Shop

New stock is on order for the gift shop ready for the Christmas/holiday season. Thank you to those members who regularly support us.

– Penny Clifton-Smith



## Helderberg Nature Reserve

## Tree Fund

The Friends Committee would like to thank all those members and non-members for their donations to the Tree Fund.

To date **R18 326** has been received. This is just over half the cost of the trees purchased and planted in the picnic area.

Any additional donations would be very welcome to cover the outstanding amount.

**DROUGHT CRISIS**  
**THINK WATER**  
[www.capetown.gov.za/thinkwater](http://www.capetown.gov.za/thinkwater)

## Clearing Invasives in the Reserve



*Trevor and Tanya McCormack with hacked pines they have removed.*



*Gené-Maré Kotzé clearing with a tree popper.*

Our hacks above the reservoir in the burnt pine plantation focused mostly on the north west edge and required more black wattle and pine removal than in other parts of the area. On one hack we discovered (and cleared) a patch of pearl acacia. This was the first time we had dealt with this plant. We also cleared port jackson, longleaf wattle, spanish broom, scotch thistle and beefwood - but in lesser numbers.

The June hack was an experiment to see if we could clear dodder in the central garden area. Sadly we found that careful removal is very difficult and not at all effective.

Attendance has been good – even in wet weather.

– James Silberbauer

### Upcoming hacks 2017/18

For more information contact James Silberbauer on 078 306 1660.

- • 09 December • 13 January  
• 10 February • 10 March  
**All start at 07:30.**



*A programme project.*



*Fruit for the lunch packs.*

## EEC Holiday Programme

During the June/July holidays primary and high school learners from various schools in the area participated in a winter holiday programme – 162 in all. Transport to the reserve was provided by the H.E.E.P. Bus Project.

Various biodiversity topics of interest and relevance were covered. These included:

- Wild animals versus pets – different ways to treat them
- Tommy and the tree – an arbor programme
- The upcycling of waste

Games to create a greater environmental awareness were also part of the programme.

Each learner was treated to a healthy lunch pack, as well as a hearty cup of soup, thanks to a donation from the Friends.

*Esmay Josephs, Education Officer*

*Esmé recently attended the EEASA (Environmental Educators Association of SA) Conference in Botswana. She found it both informative and stimulating and thanks the Friends for helping to make this possible.*



## Eco-Schools Programme

*Maple House Eco-School celebrates the International Day of Tourism*

Freya Brett, Node Co-ordinator for the Helderberg Eco-Schools felt very privileged to be invited to the *Tourism Morning* at Maple House Eco-School on 3 August. It was celebrated with much fanfare and excitement.

The goal was to showcase the *Heritage Foods of the Cape*. Learners were dressed as tourists representing different countries and places. Together with the VIP guests, they then had great fun singing traditional songs and sampling a variety of traditional dishes – smoor-snoek, breyani, bobotie, green bean bredie, to mention just a few. The melva pudding served at the end, left them all wanting more!



*All dressed up as tourists representing different countries, eager to enjoy our traditional foods and folk songs!*

Everyone went home with a warm feeling, knowing they had learnt more about the rich cultural heritage of our rainbow nation, aware that we have much to share with all the tourists visiting our country.



## H.E.E.P. Bus Transport Project

This bus project continues to prove invaluable, particularly to those schools whose learners would otherwise not have the opportunity to visit the reserve.

Thank you to all who have supported this project – please help to keep the ‘wheels turning’ by making a donation. For further information, contact Freya Brett 021 852 8831 – weekdays 09:00 to 13:00.

# Restoration

*of the Pine Plantation Blocks: Part 3*

Restoration activity in the old plantation areas within the Helderberg Nature Reserve has slowed down in the last year. As nature takes control, it is not necessary to interfere from a management perspective.

Monitoring of the area however, does continue and this year's annual survey of the areas has shown that the restoration rate continues as a satisfactory rate and that the biodiversity and ecosystem functioning in these areas continues to improve.



*Erica quadrangularis*

## Seeds establishing themselves

In 2015 a number of protea seeds indigenous to the area were sewn in an attempt to bring back the serotinous species that had disappeared as a result of the pines. These seeds successfully established themselves in the area and this year these plants are flowering and building up their own seed stock.

## Fighting invasive species

The Friends hack group continues to fight away at the invasive species that try to establish themselves as a result of the disturbances. Invasive alien clearing is an important part of the restoration process and reserve management is always appreciative of any volunteer assistance received.

– Hayley-May Wittridge



*Felicia sp*



*Microloma tenuifolium*

## An erica surprise

Another surprise was the first flowering erica species which was also found in the old plantation area. Two flowering *Erica quadrangularis* plants were found in good health. Hopefully there will be more to follow.



“These plants are flowering and building up their own seed stock.”

◀ *Leucadendron rubrum*



*Hugh Middleton (centre back) and other "happy hikers" on top of West Peak.*

## 100<sup>th</sup> climb coming up!

We have something special on the horizon. Hugh Middleton will be in company with many happy hikers for his centenary ascent of West Peak on 9 December, the Saturday after the regular monthly hike.

This is a remarkable feat, as Hugh will have been up 20 times in the last 12 months, after conquering the mountain for the 80th time on his 80th birthday with his sons last December.

## Interpretative Day and Night Walks in the Reserve

Details of upcoming walks are listed below. There is a small charge, with each walk limited to 20, so early booking is advised. Please note that meeting places and times vary.

### • Upcoming Day Walks

These are usually held on the last **Sunday** of the month. All start from the Oak Cafe at 08:00, except the bird walks which start earlier from the entrance.

- **17 December: Birds** (starts 07:00)
- **28 January: Fynbos**
- **25 February: Birds** (starts 07:30)
- **25 March: Trees**

Walks last about 2 hours, are in the lower area of the reserve and not strenuous. Wear comfortable shoes, bring a sun hat and something to drink.

### • Upcoming Night Walks

These are all on a **Saturday** and start from the entrance gate at 20:15.

- **03 February: Full Moon**
- **17 February: New Moon**
- **17 March: New Moon**

Walks last approximately 2 hours. Wear comfortable shoes and **bring a hand-torch** (no head lamps please!).

### • Sunset Supper Walk

- **03 March: Full Moon**

This walk involves a gradual climb to the bench at the top of Leopard's Loop. A moderate level of fitness is therefore required. Wear comfortable shoes; bring

a supper snack and a **hand torch**. Meet at the entrance at 17:30; back in the parking area around 21:00.

### Leaders

The tree and fynbos day walks and the night walks, will be led by Andreas Groenewald, assisted by Jeff Groenewald; the bird walks by Jill Mortimer.

### To join a walk...

Tickets are available at the Visitor Centre. The charge for the walks is:  
**Members:** Adults R30, Scholars R15  
**Non-members:** Adults R50, Seniors R40, Scholars (3 to 17 years) R25 – this includes the normal entry fee into the reserve.

**Booking for 2018 walks opens on 5 January, not before.**

### Please note:

- Payment in cash preferred.
- Bookings may *not* be made telephonically or on line.
- Booking for all walks **closes at 12 noon on the Friday** before each walk.
- All walks start promptly at the advertised time and place.
- Should a walk have to be cancelled, you will be advised in good time and your booking fee refunded.

## Guided Hikes

These are held on the first Saturday of each month (see below). All start from the Oak Café.

Suitable footwear is essential. Bring something warm to wear – the weather can change suddenly – and, most importantly, sufficient water (at least 1.5 litres), a hat, sun block and, of course, some snacks! If weather is unsuitable, the hike will be the following Saturday.

### Hikes: December 2017— March 2018

Date	Start	Route	Grade	Time
2 Dec	07:30	Leopard Loop	2A	3 <sup>+</sup> hrs
6 Jan	07:30	Watsonia/L/Loop	2.5A	4 <sup>+</sup> hrs
3 Feb	07:30	Woodie's Walk	2.5A	5 <sup>+</sup> hrs
3 Mar	07:30	West Peak	3B	7 <sup>+</sup> hrs

**Grading:** 1 relatively easy 2 moderate 3 strenuous. **Exposure to heights:** A none B some C moderate

*If you would like more information, contact Don Reid on 072 270 7972.*

## ◆ Star-gazing Event ◆

21 April 2018



Another star-gazing event is being planned for 21 April next year. It will again be led by StarPeople – Auke Slotegraaf, Edward and Lunette Foster. It was a wonderful event earlier this year and we hold thumbs for clear skies once again!

Further information regarding booking, cost and other arrangements, will be available in the new year once all the details have been finalised. So watch this space!

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