



NOETZIE CONSERVANCY OWNERS' ASSOCIATION

Newsletter

Winter 2010

Chairman's Chat, July 2010 Nick Taylor

Headland development

As mentioned in the last Newsletter, Pezula has applied to build an extensive 16-unit holiday home development centred on the existing car park. While the applicant has every right to want to maximize return on his investment, for all other property owners at both Noetzie and Pezula and indeed for the many day visitors, it will be an unmitigated disaster if this development goes ahead.

It will very significantly change the character of Noetzie, virtually doubling the number of residents in one move. Part of the irreversible damage the development will have on the area is to destroy parts of the fynbos around the car park which will have to make way for buildings, further shrinking the habitat of the indigenous fauna which we are working so hard to preserve. But losing this bit of fynbos will pale into insignificance when compared to the effects of the increased human population travelling up and down the road, tramping through the forest, using the beach and river, and contributing to the noise, light, garbage and sewage pollution in this tiny bit of near pristine nature. And then there is the negative aesthetic impact that all those buildings will have on the profile of the headland.

The NCOA put in a strong objection to the proposal, which was submitted in terms of the Environmental Conservation Act 73 of 1989 (ECA). We have subsequently heard that the applicant was informed by the authorities that they need to re-submit their application under the National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998 (NEMA). Studying these two Acts is a little confusing to the legal layperson, since they seem to duplicate a number of provisions, and the NCOA will be taking expert opinion on the likely implications of the move by the authorities to view the headland development application in the context of NEMA.

Nevertheless, it is informative to look at some of the provisions of NEMA in the meantime. The objective of the Act is:

- To provide for co-operative, environmental governance by establishing principles
- for decision-making on matters affecting the environment, institutions that will
- promote co-operative governance and procedures for co-ordinating environmental
- functions exercised by organs of state; and to provide for matters connected therewith.

The Act has been amended a number of times since its promulgation in 1998, perhaps the most significant changes relating to provisions which give the Minister and provincial MECs powers to decide which activities require an environmental impact assessment before commencement. An amendment in 2004 (Act No. 8 of 2004) states that such assessments should, as a minimum, ensure the following:

- investigation of the potential impact, including cumulative effects, of the activity and its alternatives on the environment, socio-economic conditions and cultural heritage, and assessment of the significance of that potential impact;
- investigation of mitigation measures to keep adverse impacts to a minimum,
- as well as the option of not implementing the activity.

There would seem to be a clear case for the proposed headland development falling into the category of those activities requiring a full impact assessment, and the NCOA will be lobbying hard for this position. We are busy investigating what the other implications may be of submitting the application under NEMA and will keep readers informed. **In the meantime, we welcome any suggestions and offers of assistance in strengthening our objection to the application.**



Trading activities at Montrose Castle

There is every indication that the owners of Montrose Castle, the faceless Chesterfield Group Holdings registered in the Virgin Islands who never respond to correspondence from the NCOA, are conducting activities in contravention of the limited consent B&B usage granted to the property by the Knysna Municipality. These activities include running a restaurant, serving guests picnics on the beach, and the sale of alcohol. One very negative consequence of this activity is the increased traffic on the Old Wagon Road for supplying the kitchen and ferrying Pezula guests up and down to use the restaurant.

This matter has been going on for a good four years now and the NCOA has made frequent representations to the Municipality to intervene and hold the Montrose owners

to the terms of their consent usage. The NCOA will be seeking one more meeting with the Municipality, and if this does not result in action to curtail the illegal activity at Montrose, we will escalate our representations to the level of provincial government.

Speaking of Montrose, there has been an intriguing development which seems to suggest that erf 67, on which the Castle is built, may never have been formally registered at the deeds office. If this is true, then even the very limited B&B use granted to the owners may in fact be illegal, since any application for such use would need to have been accompanied by the title deed. Furthermore, it seems that the consent use granted to Montrose has subsequently lapsed.

The role of the NCOA in approving building plans for Noetzie

Some 10 years ago the NCOA commissioned a firm of urban planners, Chittenden Nicks Partnership, to draw up a Noetzie Town Planning Scheme (NTPS), which was subsequently incorporated into the Knysna Town Planning Scheme. Any new building plans for Noetzie are referred to the NCOA for comment by the Knysna Municipality, as part of the process for approving plans. The NCOA, in turn, uses the NTPS to guide its assessment of building plans.

The NTPS is an extensive document containing many technical details. Among other things, it is concerned with retaining the character of the township. Towards this end, it defines three areas within Noetzie – the headland, which stretches from the car park up the hill toward Pezula, the beach and the river. The Scheme recognizes distinct building styles within each of these areas, and encourages owners erecting new buildings or renovating existing structures to follow these styles. Thus, buildings on the headland should be unobtrusive, single storey, contemporary Cape. Those on the beach should be stone castellated buildings or Millwood-style corrugated iron houses. Buildings on the river should be rustic, hidden away, unobtrusive buildings.

The NCOA is currently in discussion with Dr Visser who plans to build a house just below Julie Gosling's plot on the

headland. The plans incorporate a basement for parking, a ground level area for living and a loft section. The NCOA was initially concerned that this is, in effect, a 3-storey house and therefore does not conform to the NTPS. Members of the NCOA met Dr Visser, his architect Phillip van der Westhuizen and Mike Maughan-Brown, Manager in the Municipality of Town Planning and Building Control, on 30 April to discuss the matter. It was agreed that, since the NTPS does not stipulate a height restriction for headland buildings, the Knysna limit of 8m for single storey structures is applicable. This was a very fruitful meeting in which the architect was made aware of the surface and underground water flows and the nature of the ground on the plot. A number of concessions were made by Dr Visser, in the interests of conforming to the character of Noetzie, and the plans are being revised in accordance with this agreement.

This example illustrates the role of the NCOA in approving building plans. However, as things stand, this procedure is currently dependent on the goodwill of particular municipal managers. We have written to the municipality requesting that policy be adopted formalising the role of the NCOA in commenting on building plans for Noetzie. We await the outcome of our request.



Road to Lindsay property

Don Lindsay, owner of the castle at the western-most extremity of Noetzie beach, has applied to build a road from the headland down to his property. Currently Don and his family and guests at the castle, which has in the past been let as a B&B, drive across the beach to access their lodgings, resulting in significantly increased vehicular traffic on the beach. The NCOA has therefore given its approval to the plans to build the access road, provided that certain conditions aimed at minimizing damage to the vegetation during construction are met. The application is in process.

Apparently the Pezula Home Owners' Association is opposing the application, as they are concerned that security on their properties might be compromised by the new access. We will keep you informed about the mitigation measures required to proceed.

Erf 84

In our last Newsletter, we mentioned the application to subdivide erf 84, the property immediately above the public toilets at the bottom of the Wagon Road. The matter was discussed at the NCOA AGM in December and a large majority of residents objected to this proposal. The NCOA consequently opposed the application on the grounds that the resulting property would be too small to accommodate a dwelling, and that permitting such building density would set a dangerous precedent. The applicant appealed the subsequent decision by the Knysna Municipality to decline the application. One of the reasons mentioned in the appeal is that the NCOA did not obtain the views of its members before objecting to the application. The NCOA responded by pointing out that the application was discussed at the AGM, where only two members supported the subdivision, and confirmed our opposition to the subdivision.

Riverside parking

Parking for riverside residents is a perennial problem, especially during the Christmas season, as very limited space is available. As a result, the few houses adjacent to the available parking are surrounded by cars at peak times. In order to address this problem, a space has been cleared to provide additional parking. Some residents expressed concern that vegetation had been cut down without obtaining the necessary permission from SANParks. The NCOA is convinced that very little, if any, bush was cut in the process, which mainly involved clearing of rocks and other debris, and that the new car park is a satisfactory solution to an existing problem.

Preservation of indigenous flora and fauna

Residents are reminded that Noetzie is a conservancy and that the principal role of the NCOA is one of preservation and the promotion of environmental awareness. The cutting of any indigenous bush is therefore strictly prohibited, and when in doubt about this issue, permission to clear vegetation should be obtained in advance from SANParks. Some might fear that following this process may lead to bureaucratic delays. This was not the experience of the owners of erf 63 who received permission from SANParks in January to clear a path through the reeds for canoe access to the river. Anyone wishing to follow this route should write to:

Ms Maretha Alant
Environmental Planner
Garden Route National Park
marethaa@sanparks.org

In the interests of promoting awareness of indigenous flora, Santie den Boestert, who holds the Conservancy portfolio on the NCOA, is organizing labels for trees at Noetzie. Of course, removing non-indigenous species is encouraged, and planting them is strongly discouraged.



A History of Noetzie – Appeal for assistance

Thanks to all the interested parties who have submitted historic data in the form of old photographs, snippets of information and anecdotes. The project is growing in stature and excitement. In order to gather more anecdotal data, the idea of a social evening of good food, and a glass or two of something over a time when many people are at Noetzie would be a fun way of doing it. This was done before at Montrose Castle. Wendy recorded peoples input and the evening was enjoyed by all. The CD called “Montrose Chats “ of all the input was available after the evening.

Please indicate if you would be interested in such an evening. **Let me know what weeks in December would suit you.** Contact me directly at chrisioy@yahoo.com.

The questionnaire below is included again for your use, if you have not yet had the chance.

If documents are sent by e-mail, please re-size them to a moderate, but not too small size and send them directly to chrisioy@yahoo.com (not to the committee) or alternatively please post to

Chris Everett, P.O. Box 26356, Hout Bay, 7872

A History of Noetzie - Questionnaire

Do it NOW – it really won't take long

Please give as much information as you can – don't worry about organizing it or formatting it – just fill in the raw data and I'll sort it out.

1. Erf number(s)
2. Owned by
3. Shareholders
4. When the erf was bought
5. When the house was built
6. When the house was altered
7. Price of erf / house - if you are prepared to provide it – this will be of interest in particular for the few pounds a property cost many years ago compared to today's costs
8. House architect / builder / origins
9. Previous owners with dates if known
10. How did you / your ancestors get to hear about or come to Noetzie
11. Biographical information - *Here I'm not aiming to write complete family histories about all of the Noetzie families, but it would be good to include as many details of connections, origins and families as possible. We must try to record the history and involvement in Noetzie of people like Bill Hedding, Nimmo Reid, the Hendersons, Metelerkamp and Goslings, Neville Marriot, Frans Knarr, Hans Kelly-Patterson - before it is all lost to our collective memories. If you have brief family trees please include them. In particular- photos, photos, photos – they bring the text to life. If you can scan them please send as JPG files with titles / details, if there are particular ones you can't scan I'm happy to collect them, scan or photograph them and return*

them. At very least please give full names, dates of birth, maiden names, qualifications, careers, interests about:

- 11.1. Yourself
- 11.2. Partners / shareholders
- 11.3. Spouse(s)
- 11.4. Children
- 11.5. Grandchildren
- 11.6. Parents
- 11.7. Previous generations
- 11.8. Hobbies / interests / other pursuits
- 11.9. Items of interest about other Noetzie people
12. Your or your family's Involvement in
 - 12.1. Noetzie Civic affairs
 - 12.2. Knysna Civic affairs
 - 12.3. Other aspects of local or home or national life
13. Dreams concerns for Noetzie
14. Significant visitors / guests
15. Pet likes / dislikes / hates
16. Memories / anecdotes – *Here is the chance to bring the dry facts to life – if you can't write the whole story, give me points and fragments and a phone number – I'll phone you back to fill in the details. I'm looking for the happy moments and the disasters, the floods and fires, wild-life sightings, the arguments and feuds, expeditions and excursions, memories of early Noetzie when wood and paraffin were the only fuels, times before 4 x 4s on the beach or any access except walking, who were Sampson and the doctor who owned the shack next to the van Gend house – in short anything and everything about this special place. Once again photos, diaries and drawings will add so much more.*



Rainfall at Noetzie

It is a delight to venture to the rain gauge after hearing the pitter patter frrrrrrrrr kr kr kr kr kr (that's the sound of rain falling, running down the drainpipes and into the tanks, for those of you have not yet relied on rainwater).

We began to record rainfall at Noetzie in January 2008. It was so dry that I think the figures for those months reflected more of our anguish for the dryness than the actual millimetres of water fallen. So I don't think that those figures are accurate. In

September 2009 we made an effort to record rainfall properly. Alas, the logbook appeared as if we had not bothered. Such little rain fell. Came January 2010, the logbook began to look loved and used. Julie even made a dark koki mark every "10 mm" on the rain gauge outside our kitchen so she could check it out with the binocs from inside the house. Today, things look different. The army green of Sinclair has a luster. The river has opened across the middle of the beach. All the tanks at Noetzie must be overflowing. Here are the monthly figures for 2010. We will keep you updated from now.



Jan 2010	24 mm
Feb	63 mm
Mar	12 mm
April	72 mm
May	30,5 mm
June	124 mm
July	111 mm



July 2010



Animal Monitoring

It has been a dry season !!! After the initial sightings we had when two cameras were acquired by Julie Gosling for the Noetzie Conservancy things have gone quiet. Gareth Patterson (the Elephant and Lion guy - www.garethpatterson.com) with whom we share our footage for his studies of wild animals in peri-urban environments, says that his cams have also gone quiet. We acquired these cams in May 2009. That time was exciting. We filmed bushbuck, caracal, bushpig, honey badger, porcupine, genet and all the things in between. Then the leopard came on the 27th November 2009. Wow! - We got another camera. I could hardly bear to wait for day to break to go and check what we had "caught" on camera. The bushbuck come regularly, as do the well behaved Noetzie baboon troop and there is a once per month visit by the caracal.

Then one Sunday in May, Liz Wynne-Jones came jogging across to the Gosling beach house to tell us that she, Aubrey and their daughter Fiona had found leopard spoor at the river. What a sighting. The spoor led from the peninsula in the East across the river and along the beach to the walled area of erf 84 and then disappeared into the bush below the Old Wagon road. All excited, we placed a stealth camera on the peninsula in the hopes of capturing a pic of the leopard, but to date have only snapped bushbuck and baboon.



The photograph shows the size of the spoor. It indicates a fully grown leopard.



Tree Naming Project

This is an example of our proposed tree plaques. We are in the process of identifying and labelling indigenous trees and plants in the Noetzie Conservancy.

If you have any input, please email Wendy whistle@agnet.co.za



Loggerhead Turtles

On Friday 23rd April this little loggerhead turtle was washed up on Noetzie beach, possibly from a drop in water temperature or from heavy off shore winds. It is the second "castaway" we have found on Noetzie beach in 12 months. It measured 10cm in length and was covered in goose barnacles. After overnighting in a bucket of sea water the turtle was collected by SANParks and taken off to Plett to hitch a ride back to the safety of deeper waters.

The loggerhead (*Caretta Caretta*) is regarded as an endangered species. Less than 1 in 1000 hatchlings survive to adulthood. Those that reach maturity can weigh from 77 to 160 kilograms.

Immediately after emerging from their underground nests the hatchlings are guided towards the sea by the reflection of the moon and the stars off the water surface (It is believed that the iron ore compound, magnetite, which is present in the loggerheads brain cells may be used to navigate along the Earth's magnetic fields). Light pollution along our coastlines often confuses these little turtles and they wander off in the wrong direction. The lucky ones that reach the shoreline use the undercurrents to take them well offshore and then they swim for hours into deeper waters where they attach to floating seaweed (or perhaps a plastic bag!!) which protects them until they grow to about 18cm.



If you come across a stranded turtle please contact
Natalie Baker of CapeNature - 082 772 8073 Or 044 8025327
Shamley Titus of SANParks - 0737108522

If you are privileged enough to live on the coast please keep your lights low - some lil' animals life might depend on it!

Noetzie River Water Tests - July 2010

The water samples taken in three locations at the Noetzie river were sent for testing with the assistance of Professor Brian Allanson of the Knysna Basin Project Association.

The locations and results measured in colony forming units (cfu) per 100ml of water were as follows:

Harbour area - 11 cfu per 100ml type 1 e.coli

Reeds area below Gilliomee - 25cfu per 100ml type 1 e.coli

Open River Mouth - 107cfu per 100ml type 1 e.coli.

2009 results were as follows:

(two results per test for e.coli - therefore between 5 and 12)

Sample details	Total coliform	Faecal E.coli
Harbour	>2419 / >2419	12 / 6
Gilliomee	>2419 / >2419	5 / 6
River	>2419 / >2419	9 / 5

100cfu per 100ml is the recreational safe level.



CapeNature

Tel: 044 802 5300



Tel: 044 302 6300



NOETZIE CONSERVANCY OWNERS' ASSOCIATION

Tel: 082 413 0703

Vervet Monkeys

Do's and Don'ts

This is a combined conservation effort between residents in Noetzie area of Knysna, the Knysna Municipality and CapeNature, to solve the issue of nuisance monkeys in the area. Please co-operate and comply with the guidelines below.

Vervet monkeys are wild animals which can become a nuisance, and even dangerous, if they become tame. This happens when humans feed them. The result is that they cause problems, and the people want the problem removed. *A TAME MONKEY IS A DEAD MONKEY.*

PLEASE DO:

- Chase monkeys away from houses and yards – they belong in the wild.
- Keep all food items (*including pet's food*) out of sight and reach of monkeys.
- Dispose of all waste properly.
- Be tolerant of wildlife you chose to live in a natural area.

PLEASE DON'T:

- Do not encourage monkeys to enter living areas.
- Do not ever feed monkeys.
- Do not leave doors and windows wide open if monkeys have become problematic.
- Do not plant fruit trees which are likely to attract monkeys.





Cape Riding Horse

by Carmen Stoker

I started riding horses at the age of eleven. My time was spent on thoroughbreds. It was only when I started working at Pezula in 2007 that I was introduced to the Cape Riding Horse.

These horses had been purchased for the purpose of taking people on outrides. My first impression of them was certainly not complimentary; in fact I was quite skeptical. They were small, a mixed bag of colours and generally not very attractive compared to what I had been accustomed.

The Cape Riding Horse is part of South African culture and heritage. In 1653 The Dutch East-India Company brought Javanese ponies by sea to the Cape. Two hundred years

for distances of 50 miles (80km) a day compared to the English horses which could only average 30 miles a day. Approximately 500 000 horses and mules were senselessly lost in the wars. Of these 100 000 were horses belonging to the Boer. This almost resulted in the extinction of the Cape Horse.

Over the last few years I have become very fond of this breed. My riding capabilities and confidence have instead increased dramatically since 2007. They have excellent temperaments, are comfortable, reliable and "people-friendly". These horses are brilliant for young and old alike, for both inexperienced and experienced riders. The Cape Riding Horse does not need to be stabled. They range freely in their camps and quickly become accustomed to



Cape Riding horse unshod hoof after 201 km

later there were as many as 6000 horses in the Cape. These animals were tame, hardy and well adapted with strong hooves and an excellent constitution.

An important addition to the Cape horses were two freighters containing Andalusian horses which were intercepted during the Napoleon war in 1807 en route to Buenos Aires. These horses are renowned for their excellent nature and attractive presentation and played an important role in the emergence of the Cape Horse.

In 1835 the Voortrekkers took many of the Cape Horses northwards with the ox wagon caravans. They played an unprecedented role in the development of the Transvaal, Orange Free State Republic and Natal. During the Anglo-Boer war these horses were able to carry their riders



Carmen Stoker and her stallion, Shadow

the movements and noises of the surrounding environment making them very suitable horses to an entire spectrum of riders and horse riding activities. They have proven themselves very successful in endurance competitions in recent years and are also steadily gaining standing in show jumping and dressage. They are extremely well suited to horseback safaris as well.

During the course of 2009, an opportunity presented itself whereby I was able to purchase a Cape Riding Horse stallion, Shadow. I have recently acquired a mare and am intent on breeding with the two horses this year. For all of the aforementioned reasons, I would like to have my own Cape Riding Horse foal that I can, in time, raise and school. I would like to be a part of this heritage that is an uniquely South African horse breed.



My Noetzie otter experience

by Mark Osman

Mid winter on a motor bike from Cape Town to Grahamstown is a chilling experience! After studying all the meteorological web sites, I decided to do the trip ahead of the next approaching cold front. Glorious sunny weather greeted me at dawn on the day of my departure. Decisions made, off I went, looking forward to a break in the 1000km trip in a saddle at the best place nature has to offer! Knoetzie... err.. or is it Noetzie ?

Snow capped mountains were my companion for part of the journey. When I arrived on the gravel road , at the top just above Noetzie, I stopped to take in the last of the sunshine before heading down to a very damp and shady Noetzie, I was surprised how warm the air was down at the estuary compared to the house!

I had a fantastic night beside a fire. It was just me and the many different sounds of frogs... a comforting sound I thought, since frogs are our barometers to a healthy eco system.

Had to get up real early to have some soul food from Noetzie before climbing into the saddle again. At around six o'clock, the moon was shining from the west, reflecting across the water to the tip of my canoe. Dawn came too quickly.



With an occasional paddle, I gently glided upstream towards the first bend. I was able to glide right under hopeful King Fishers, already on their perches.

Suddenly I was woken out of my lethargic dream state by a chorus of unpleasant "cat with stuck hairball" sounds. Not more than three meters from me, having been taken by surprise, were two otters dedicated in trying to scare me away from their turf. ! Some 20 seconds later, and only after I had paddled a couple of strokes, did they leave me.

I have hiked the otter trail and have been up early, not a few times in my life, in an attempt to see these playful creatures, only to find footprints. This was heart throb stuff! What a delight to be sworn at by otters!

s o c i a l



Congratulations to -



Welcome to the latest Everett grandchild Eric, born to Chris and Iona's son Jonathan and his wife Helena Martin Blanco on 9-April-2010 in Barcelona, Spain. He weighed in at 3.85kg. Congratulations to the Everett clan.

f i n a n c e

Payment of NCOA Subscriptions

In today's climate it is becoming increasingly important to have a solid membership for the NCOA as an organisation. The only way to keep Noetzie as a conservation haven is to ensure that every threat is taken up with the support of the owners. The only way that we can claim membership is if the subscriptions are paid. Just a friendly reminder for all members to ensure that they are up to date with their subscriptions which run to 31st October 2010. If you have a query in this regard, please contact the treasurer on accounts@noetzie.co.za or call 0825698250