



# NOETZIE CONSERVANCY OWNERS' ASSOCIATION



## AGM NOTICE

Please note that the Annual General Meeting of the NCOA will be held at 10h00 on 27 December 2019, kindly hosted by Wendy and Julie at their house on the headland at Noetzie. If you are a paid up member and wish to appoint a proxy, please return the proxy form to Robby ([ejrconsult@gmail.com](mailto:ejrconsult@gmail.com)) or Richard ([Moultrie@group621.co.za](mailto:Moultrie@group621.co.za)) by 13 December 2019. We look forward to seeing you there.

## Chairman's Chat

Robby Robertson

*Are we moving forward? I would like to believe we are, but at the same time I do acknowledge, advancing is slow.*

Encouraging is the news that the Knysna Municipality is seriously taking on the issue of the link road through Pezula. Understandably, this is not endearing us to our neighbours, the Pezula Private Estate Home-Owners Association, as we have been the early drivers of this following the 2018 AGM decision. I can appreciate the PPE HOA view that this may be an invasion on that which they bought into. But the question could be asked as to whether the

present situation should ever have been permitted in the first place. Professionally, I am of the opinion that the link road should

be open to the general public, this from an urban developmental and transportation access & circulation perspective. I also believe, in the interests of safeguarding my family, the residents of & visitors to Noetzie, that the NCOA 2018 AGM made the responsible call. It now falls to the courts to resolve.

We have also been advised that the Knysna Municipality has allocated funding for the installation of security cameras at the N2 intersection and at Noetzie. We have yet to be formally advised on the amount. This is good news, but, the cost of installation of the cameras at Noetzie we will have to supplement by funding from our NCOA reserves. While the cameras will not be monitored fulltime, it should bring safety and security benefits to Noetzie through their presence and affording opportunity to retrospectively identifying perpetrators. This is an important first step.

*At Noetzie, we are very exposed, and I believe we do need to consider running the show differently in future. Please give this some thought.*

Going forward, I believe the NCOA should;

- Build on the relationship emerging between the NCOA & the PPEHOA. Despite the comment above, there is an appreciation that there are benefits to be derived from a co-operative relationship.
- Consider putting in place a management arrangement or structure that provides for a more active presence in the public areas (access control, car park, public roads, beach, ablution & cleansing, etc.)
- Seek possible joint management agreements between the

Municipality, SANParks, the developer of the 'infill', the PPE HOA and Bucarra.

- Consider the prospect of having Noetzie declared a 'Special Rates Area' once the draft SRA by-law is adopted by the Knysna Municipality in order to ensure on-going funding support.

At Noetzie, we are very exposed, and I believe we do need to consider running the show differently in future. Please give this some thought.

See you at the 2019 AGM.

*Robby*

## Municipal News

by Melanie Gosling



*THE NCOA has set up and attended several meetings with the Knysna Municipality over 2019 to discuss a variety of Noetzie matters, and some things are moving at last.*

### **Security cameras**

The NCOA put in an application to the Knysna Municipality for funding for security cameras at Noetzie at different spots. Wendy Dewberry, NCOA's representative on the Ward 9 committee (into which Noetzie falls) was told at the most recent committee meeting that the council had approved R400 000 for security cameras for Ward 9, of which R150 000 would be allocated for security cameras at Noetzie.

Others will apparently be erected at the Noetzie/N2 intersection. This is great news. In a meeting this year with NCOA and Mark Willemse, when he was still mayor, Willemse said there had been an almost immediate drop in crime where these cameras had been installed at The Heads. Willemse said the municipality paid for the cameras, but not the monitoring.

We are waiting for written confirmation about the funding before we shout hurrah.

### **Pezula Road public access**

The Knysna Council has finally taken a decision that it will go to court over the question of public access through the "Pezula Road" that links George Rex Drive along the Knysna lagoon with the Noetzie Road.

The council will ask the court for a declaratory order on the matter – in other words for the court to make a ruling on whether the road is or is not a public road.

This matter has been on the cards for the last four years, so it is good to see that some action has been taken.

Now there is the question of when it will come to court.

### **Public lavatories**

It is puzzling why over the last two years or so there has been a spike in Noetzie's public toilets being vandalised. One wonders what is behind it.

They are currently in a very poor state, unable to flush because the handles have been ripped off. We wrote to the municipal manager, and included photographs of faeces-filled loos, and asked that these be repaired as a matter of urgency before the season. The feedback is that they will attend to them. We hope that when we get the security cameras installed, this will stop the vandalism.

### **Special Rating Areas draft bylaw**

The municipality has put out a draft document outlining its intention to establish a Special Rating Areas bylaw. The public can comment on the matter.

There are several municipalities in the country that have a Special Rating Areas bylaw, including Cape Town.

This allows any area – a suburb or a commercial area for instance – to apply to the municipality to be declared a Special Ratings Area (SRA).

Once it has been declared an SRA, this allows a specified amount to be added to the rates bill to fund specified projects, which first have to be approved by the municipality. There are guidelines for the kind of project that would be considered. If approved, all residents have to pay the extra cost, which is not discretionary.

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Willemse explained to the NCOA that it was a way for communities to raise money from residents to pay for specific projects.

There is still a lot we have to learn about the SRAs, as the draft bylaw was published only recently. But it is worth examining in the light of whether it could be something that Noetzie residents might find useful, and what kind of extra costs we would be looking at and for what type of projects.

## Other issues

The NCOA has been in contact with officials about the poor state of the Noetzie road – which has recently been graded – and about rubbish collection and management. A disappointment was the proposed monkey-proof bins that the municipality said they were investigating in 2018, have not materialised.

*Melanie*

## Update from the Treasurer

By Sandi Braun

*Given security was such a hot topic at last year's AGM and that more time is needed before any cameras are in place, your committee took the decision to contract with All Sound for guard detail during this holiday period.*

The guard will be on duty from 0630 - 1800 daily for one month beginning Saturday, 14 December. Primary responsibility is controlling vehicular access to Old Wagon Road for residents and those with limited walking ability. Residents will be required to display the old green Noetzie disc that some of you may still have but, if not, can be collected from Julie at her Action Ads office or home. General public in need of special assistance access will be given a placard at guard discretion. The vehicle must then return to the parking area before another vehicle will be allowed down the road. Cost to the NCOA is 17,000 ZAR, including a portable toilet which will be installed close to the boom.

In terms of financials, we took a small drawdown of 10,000 ZAR from our cash reserves to end the financial year with a balance of 200,000 ZAR. Income of 41,000 ZAR was generated from our interest bearing accounts (9,500 ZAR) and 75% of required

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erven paying their subscription rates (31,000 ZAR.) In terms of spending, we underspent the approved budget by 39,000 ZAR, largely due to no spend against an allotted amount of 40,000 ZAR for Development Plan/Beacons.

For 2020, we propose increasing subs to 650 ZAR/member and significantly increasing our spend to allow for security camera installation, E-Coli water test kits, and professional services including updating the topo-cadastral plan for Noetzie. I look forward to a fruitful discussion and agreement at the AGM to set our spending priorities for this coming year.

*Sandi*

## The Millwood Houses and Noetzie in the 20<sup>th</sup> century

***“... The Knoetze Holiday Resort, situated on the coast at the mouth of the Knoetze River. Excellent beach. Abundance of good fresh drinking water. Extensive river and rock fishing. Lying at the foot of the Forest about six miles from the town of KNYSNA and a couple of miles from the KNOETZE SIDING on THE SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY.***

***No lots have been reserved by the Syndicate and all will be put up to auction on the above date.***

***In view of the prospect of the Railway communication with GEORGE and OUDTSHOORN in the near future, this is an excellent opportunity for safe investment as well as a golden opportunity of securing a lot in the most picturesque Sea-side Resort on the South Coast ...”***

This was the advertisement that appeared in the *George and Knysna Herald* on 26 November 1913, announcing the auction of properties at Noetzie.

According to Margaret Parkes, in her account of the 20<sup>th</sup> century history of Noetzie that appears at the Millwood House Museum in Knysna:

“Not all the lots were sold at the auction, but the average price of about £18 each which was realised, was considered quite good! Some of the original purchasers were Mr. Walter Williams, Superintendent of the the Sleeper Factory, Dr. W.H. Haw, Mr. C.J. Strydom, Mr. A.L. Thesen and Mr. G.W. R. Stroebel; and some of the first dwellings on the plots were houses brought piecemeal from the deserted gold mining village of Millwood and re-erected. One of these, owned by Mr. C.J. Strydom, was of yellow painted corrugated iron which became known as “Yellow Cottage”;

others re-erected along the river bank were brought down by Mr. Stroebel, one of which was called “Lagoon”. Mr. Callie De Jager, a teacher at the Knysna High School, bought the wooden house which was originally built for Mr. Veen, principal of the Trade school at Edinburgh, near Brackenhill, (where the Duke of Edinburgh shot his elephant in 1866), and this was also taken to pieces, loaded on to an ox wagon and re-erected, on a plot on the road over-looking the river.”

A year after the auction was held the new lot holders petitioned the local council, asking that the “road from Nekkie to the Noetze Holiday Resort be taken over by the council on the £ for £ principle, and upgraded for motor cars.” This project was put on hold in 1921 when 700 morgen (about six kilometres square) of land in the area was sold to Geo. Parkes and Sons as grazing for the teams of oxen which pulled the timber carts.



LEFT: Two of the four old Millwood Goldfield houses at Noetzie: Lagoon, on the right, and The Glen. They were prefab buildings in the Millwood gold rush town outside Knysna in the 1870s and many were dismantled and sold after the gold ran out. Four were erected at Noetzie. Lagoon was first owned by the Stroebels, later by the Hendersons, and later by the Kelly-Patterson's, who rebuilt it, and now by the Browns. The Glen was rebuilt into the stone house, owned by the Bond-Smiths. So the North Cottage is the last remaining historic Millwood House at Noetzie. Notice the absence of reeds!

“From 1931 onwards the name Noetzie became almost synonymous with that of “Henderson” (and castles!)”

In the early 1930s Mr. Herbert S. Henderson, V.C. bought a number of plots at Noetzie after holidaying at the resort. This included the Yellow Cottage which he purchased from C.J. Strydom.

“The first of his stone houses to be built was the stone cottage in 1932, which was tucked away in the corner on the western side, built by the well-known Coloured stone mason, Johnny Meyer. The next building was the summer house or rondavel which stands just inside the southern boundary of the castle, and which is so much a feature of Noetzie. It was completed in April, 1932. The Hendersons next built the large stone house which stands above all the other houses with its straight and severe frontage.”

This was called Pezula, meaning “high up”.

According to Parkes, in 1935 Noetzie also had an unusual visitor.

“A friend of the Hendersons, came to call at Noetzie in a very unusual means of transport, a self-built 40 H.P., single seater plane, which he called the “G.B.S. Dart”.

This was airman Victor Smith, one of only two pilots of eleven planes, to finish the air race from London to Johannesburg to mark that city’s Golden Jubilee in 1936. But now Victor Smith landed his Dart on the beach at Noetzie and the wheels sank quickly in the soft sand causing the plane to tip on to its nose, slightly bending the propeller. The damage was soon winging its way home.

Parkes also notes that during World War Two Pezula was first lent to the Fairbridge Scheme for a year to be used as a resort for children in need of a seaside holiday and later as a convalescent home for the RAF.

“Wonderful gesture as this was, it was not a great success as the British airmen, used to their crowded Britain, found it too isolated and too far away from city attractions.”

Parkes ends her entry saying: “Noetzie continues to be a popular resort, difficult to spoil because of its difficult terrain, yet it draws many visitors who, though they have to leave their cars at the top, are quite prepared to clamber down the hill to the beach and back on foot.”

## Rising from the Ashes



*TWO of the Noetzie houses that were burned in the runaway Garden Route fires of June 2017 have been rebuilt, and now a third is nearing completion.*

Sean Henderson's house at the river, built on the footprint of Chris Everett's house Nou-en-Dan that was destroyed by the fire, is almost ready for occupation.



After the fire, Chris decided to sell the ruin of his house, which was bought by Sean Henderson, the son of Ian Henderson, who built Montrose Castle in the mid-1970s.

The Henderson family has been part of Noetzie since the 1930s, and Sean is the third generation of Hendersons who spent his holidays at Noetzie.



Once Montrose and Noetzie Castles were sold, the Henderson's era came to an end.

Now that Sean has bought his own place at Noetzie, the Henderson family has returned. Sean is the grandson of Herbert Stephen Henderson, originally from Scotland and later from Zimbabwe (then Southern Rhodesia), who built three of the castles in the 1930s: the Little Castle against the western cliff, Noetzie Castle and Pezula up above Montrose. These were all sold this century.



It was sad to see Chris and Iona leave Noetzie and the remains of the house that Chris's parents had bought decades ago, and where Chris and his siblings – and later his own children – had spent so many happy holidays, but it is great to see it bought and rebuilt by someone who knows and loves Noetzie.

An unseen improvement in the new house is the separation of the grey water from showers etc into a French drain, rather than this water going into the septic tank. Many houses have both the grey water and the sewage going into the septic tank, and it is



*Although it is built on the same footprint, the new house is quite different in appearance from Nou-en-Dan.*

often the large amount of water from showers and washing machines that causes septic tanks to overflow.

Being so close to a near-pristine river, septic tank overflows can cause huge problems.

The houses that have already been rebuilt are Tim Everett's at the river and Julie Gosling's on the headland.

Aubrey Wynne-Jones, whose house on the headland was also destroyed, has said he

intends building a smaller place on the plot in the near future.

The 2017 Garden Route fires caused massive destruction, with hundreds of houses destroyed or severely damaged, and resulted in the biggest insurance payout in South Africa from a single event.

*Melanie*

## Recent rainfall at Noetzie

