



## **SCARCE Newsletter No 16 March 2013**

### **A drive through South Africa.**

For some years now we have been thinking of “doing” South Africa and as it was a notable birthday recently (85!), we decided to bite the bullet.

We flew to Cape Town direct from Heathrow. I tried to persuade Jane that we could drive down to Cape Town but she didn't seem impressed! Hence we picked up our trusty Nissan Tilda



(thereafter known as Hilda) and headed off to Camps Bay for the first part of our trip. Camps Bay is a very nice resort on the “backside” of Table Mountain where the mountain becomes known as the 12 apostles. The “table cloth” of cloud continually pouring off the



mountain was extremely photogenic and I must have taken dozens of photos of it. A well known property owner is Graham Norton- perhaps the resorts name had something to do with it?

We drove to the Cape of Good Hope-about an hour and a half drive and witnessed the clash of the Indian Ocean with the Atlantic. No wonder it is also known as the Cape of Storms! It was on the return journey that I started to get concerned because Hilda was still registering a full tank of petrol. In my normal car at home I would have been desperately looking for a petrol station by now! (And there aren't any at the Cape.) I began to worry that the fuel gauge wasn't working and that the tank may not have been full when we picked it up at the airport. Perhaps we are nearly empty!! Thoughts of being stranded miles from anywhere on mostly dirt tracks started to appear in my mind, together with visions of Jane



trudging off into the distance searching for a petrol station! However, fortunately we reached Camps Bay successfully and I filled the car up. It had used about a gallon and a half, which mustn't register on the gauge, and Jane is now thinking of trading my Range Rover + towed fuel tanker in for something a little more economic! Huh! On your bike-oops don't give her ideas!





Our journey continued up the “garden route” through the beautiful winelands of Franschhoek and Stellenbosch, onto Route 62, Montagu , Oudsthoorn, past Ostrich farms, through Knysna to Plettenberg Bay. We stayed here before driving on to St Francis Bay after which we stayed at the Shamwari Game Reserve for a couple of nights before flying from

Port Elizabeth up to Durban. The game drives we did at Rippons Lodge in Shamwari were arguably the highlight of the holiday.



At Durban we picked up our second hire car-a Chevy!! (Sonic?) -unfortunately an underpowered automatic- and drove (mainly with my foot to the floor) to the Zulu battlefields of KwaZulu Natal via the Drakensberg mountains. We had a very interesting drive through some native townships where on market day the meat stalls at the side of the road were usually a couple of planks on a box with what looked like a road-kill creature of some kind and a mamma wafting away the clouds of flies!!



Yummy! Makes horse sound really appetizing. We also had an hour and a half driving on dirt tracks which left us shaken but not stirred, me having the constant worry of tyre failures. (Frank’s experience of two punctures in one trip wouldn’t clear my mind!! But don’t worry I had my AA card with me!)

We stayed at the Isandhlwanha Lodge overlooking the site of one of the British Army’s worst defeats where 1500 men were slaughtered to the last man by the Zulu. This was the part of the holiday I had been really looking forward to, and Jane not! I have a strange fascination for great military battles and the combination of Isandhlwana and Rourkes Drift (just ten miles away and where we got our **own back on the Zulu later the same day**) **were just too much for me not to include in our trip-**



**much** to Jane’s disgust! The battlefield guide was extremely knowledgeable and I spent a very interesting couple of days there, while Jane found the pool more interesting! (No accounting for taste!). However if anyone asks me again if I saw Michael Caine I wont be responsible for my actions!

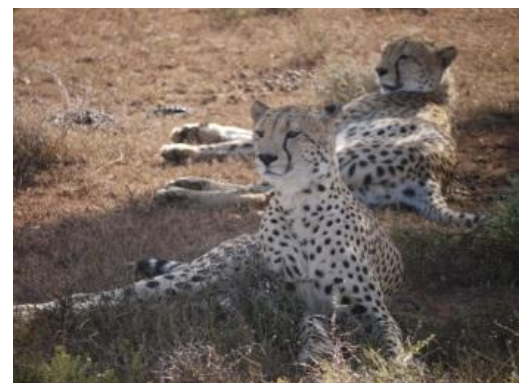


We returned to the coast for a night before taking the plane to Jo’burg and then onto Heathrow.

The holiday was as memorable as we hoped and we managed to cram an awful lot into three weeks, fortunately with very little time lost thanks to my trusty Tom Tom. I hope you haven’t found this article too boring, but if you want the full slide



show just give me a call!



**CAPTION COMPETITION**

**Closing Date 20/3/2013 ( Entries to [martin@bradbury31234.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:martin@bradbury31234.fsnet.co.uk)**

