



# Jeep Club RSA

## NEWS LETTER / NUUSBRIEF

### AUGUST 2005

#### BESTUURSKOMITEE 2005 / EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2005

Voorsitter / Chairman	Giel van Niekerk	083 251 8586
Onder-Voorsitter / Vice-chairman	Johan Barnard	082 922 6652
Tesourier / Treasurer	Koos Meyer	082 920 7415
Sekretaris / Secretary	Toera Champion	072 220 3892
Omgewingsake / Environmental	Cobus du Toit	082 450 8454
Byeenkomste / Events	Gawie Deysel	082 772 9714
	Hendrik Vermeulen	082 959 1781
	Piet Kok	082 379 1411
Co-opted committee members	Marius Human	082 651 6953
	At Botma	082 877 3727
	Bertie Kemp	083 626 7640

**NOTE: THE OPINIONS OF WRITERS IN THIS PUBLICATION IS THEIR OWN AND DOES NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE OPINION OF THE JEEP CLUB RSA**

#### GENERAL

**Note: The Jeep Club RSA is an independent registered Club, catering for Jeep owners/enthusiasts only - without ties and/or affiliation to any other "club" or "organisation".**



If you want to be a member of the **Jeep Club RSA** you have to fill in the Membership Registration Form on this website and forward it to Koos Meyer at [koosm@spoormaker.co.za](mailto:koosm@spoormaker.co.za) or fax the information to (012) 663-1960.

Members of other or previous "Jeep Clubs" **will not automatically become members of the Jeep Club RSA** so get your act together and register now! We urgently need your information to be able to send you SMS or e-mail messages to remind you of forthcoming events and/or supply you with interesting information. **The membership fee for the remainder of 2005 is only R50 so Register Now!**

#### MEMBERS ESCURTIONS

Seeing that July was a "slow month", meaning that the school holidays took most of the available time and because of the winter weather the Jeepers were reluctant to leave home early, we entertain you with an article on some of our members excursions during the year. Please forward your experiences to us for publication - that include our Jeep friends in Dubai, Europe, England, America and all over the world. We will love to hear from you! Forward your contributions to [info@jeepclubrsa.co.za](mailto:info@jeepclubrsa.co.za)

Taking into consideration the public holidays at the end of April we (Mickey, Klein, Giel and Elize), decided to create a long weekend from 27 April to 2 May 2005 and explore the area around Pandamatenga in Botswana. As it turned out some of our friends requested that we visit Hwange in Zimbabwe and explore the possibilities of foreign investment in this famous national park – so we changed our minds and off we went.

## HWANGE NATIONAL PARK ZIMBABWE

Hwange (pronounced "Wankie") Game Reserve in Zimbabwe (formerly known as Rhodesia) was one of the most well known game reserves worldwide and we decided to investigate this "wildlife paradise" for ourselves, also investigating the possibilities of foreign investment in this country.

Hwange is situated in the northwestern corner of Zimbabwe, bordering Botswana and within a days drive from the famous Victoria Falls and even Kasane and the Chobe National Park in Botswana.



Let us start from the beginning! Initially three couples decided to do this exploring trip and when one of the couples could not make it we decided to do the trip anyway and crammed into one Jeep Cherokee for this adventure. This is not, and I repeat not the way to plan a trip like this! Make sure you are at least two and preferably three vehicles on a bundu-bashing safari. Being experienced off-



road drivers, capable of repairing the vehicle in almost any situation, planning to stay on acknowledged routes and important, making sure that somebody and/or everybody including the rangers in the park know where we are or should be at a certain time, we decided to continue with the adventure and "touch wood" all went well!

### WEDNESDAY 27 APRIL 2005

Our route took us from Pretoria (these days called Tshwane) via Potgietersrus (or whatever they may call it these days) to Baltimore and from there to Zanzibar - a beautiful small, almost unknown and quiet border post leading into Botswana.

Back to the border post! The officials both sides were very friendly, obviously thrilled that someone actually decided to make use of their border post, and assured us that they will be waiting for our return. We drove through the Limpopo river, cross islands and low water concrete bridges on a narrow dirt track and arrived in Botswana where we were eagerly received and, with a friendly wave, sent on our excursion through Botswana. Just beyond the border post we were back on a



newly tarred road and via Selebi-Phikwe and Francistown made our way to Nata. This was enough for one day and we decided to camp at Nata Sanctuary, a heaven for bird watchers situated on the Ntewe pan, better known as part of the Makgadikgadi pan complex.

At the entrance we were invited to participate in a watermelon feast with the locals. Afterwards we pitched camp and went for a drive to see the flamingos and many other species of birds to be found in this sanctuary.

#### THURSDAY 28 APRIL 2005



The next morning we realised that sweets were lying all over the campsite and discovered a hole, nibbled by the thieves, in one of the handbags. After a lot of head scratching and studying the paw marks around the tent, we eventually realised that we have seen the thieves the previous night - enormous rats!

We spent some time preparing breakfast, again visited the pans, packed and eventually left via Nata to Pandamatenga. Here we abandoned the tarred highway and crossed the border at the Pandamatenga border post, again one of the less known and/or used border posts. Once in Zimbabwe the roads became narrow, real off-road style, and you instantly got the impression that you are in Africa.



Just before dark we entered Robins Camp and were heartily welcomed. After enquiring as to the availability of camping facilities and cabins, we were informed that besides for a French family leaving the next morning, we were the only visitors in the whole of Hwange! Studying the rates in SA Rands and US\$ we realised that paying in dollars were the way to go, very cheap and we decided to opt for the "cabins".

On request we visited their "restaurant" well knowing that what you'll get is out of tins and the freezer - you are in Africa and although they really do their best to please you, there is no backup or a friendly grocer around the corner.





**FRIDAY 29 APRIL 2005**

Next morning our French friends left for Victoria Falls and the locals treated us on a drilling parade where all the staff members had to be present. We requested an interview with the camp warden and were informed that Deka Camp, on the



western border of the park is closed for tourists and the roads are in bad shape, but they will take us there if we really needed to investigate the area. Instead we left for Sinamatella Camp on the northeastern side of the park and although we saw many animals on our way, we got the impression that beside the lack of support to the nature reserve, the wildlife has also suffered over the past years.



On our way we visited several water holes and dams and at Mandavu Dam we halted for a midday snack - Mickey is hungry and Klein is around! The lookout was an impressive thatched structure and the animals around extremely tame. Dassies, birds eating out of your hand and even an iguana scrambling to eat the bits of cheese we offered.

Eventually we arrived at Sinamatella Camp and we were impressed. Situated on the escarpment you could see forever from your front porch. Being the only visitors in the camp everybody carried us on their hands. The chalets, or rather two bedroom houses with bathroom, kitchen, dining and lounge areas, electricity and fully fitted out - including a "butler" making the fire, cleaning and attending to all your needs, made us decide - this will be base camp - wish we could stay forever!

That evening we settled for an old fashioned braai and went to bed early. During the night a hyena visited and all efforts to take a photo failed.





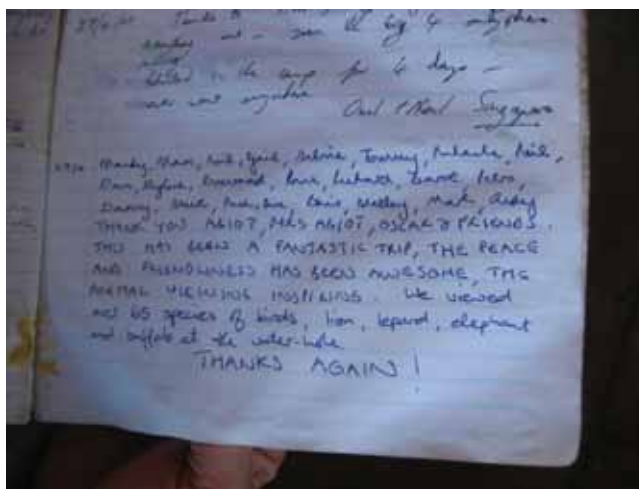
**SATURDAY 30 APRIL 2005**

Next morning the camp warden Norman English, now the Chief Warden for the entire Hwange National Park, visited us and on our request to see Bumbusi Camp, another of the closed camps in an area where visitors are



not allowed, suggested that we go there after twelve in order for them to contact the anti-poach game rangers and tell them that we were on our way.

We had breakfast and started out on the river drive, taking us down the escarpment and following the river up to Masuma pan. In their visitors book we saw the following entry made on 27 April – the same time we were there but another year: "This has been a fantastic trip, the peace and friendliness has been awesome, the animal viewing inspiring. We viewed over 65 species of birds, lion, leopard, elephant and buffalo at the water-hole." We still had to go to Bumbusi camp so we turned around and headed back to Sinamatella Camp.



Now this is the part of the trip I enjoyed most!

Bumbushi is the most northern camp in Hwange and to get there you must drive over many mountainous ridges with awesome climbs and descents, through flood planes, follow riverbeds and almost non-existing roads (have faith – we are moving in the right direction!) and walla, Bumbushi in front of you! The camp is an



absolute paradise picture with grass lawns under huge shady trees, A-frame cabins, locked



but with all furniture including the mosquito nets still intact. The table in the kitchen is set and the utilities are still in place.



We wanted to stay but - there were still a few more surprises to come. The game rangers offered to escort us to the remainders of a village that reminds you of the very famous "Zimbabwe Ruins", these days apparently just called the Zimbabwe Monument. All of these are proclaimed a national monument, protected by the Monuments and Relics Act 1936 under supervision of the National Museums and Monuments Board, but hardly ever seen by anyone. Even the game rangers had to search while walking through wild bush country and no tracks.

Nearby, while still wandering through the bush with the two game rangers, we crossed the tracks of a rhinoceros and shortly after came to overhanging rocks where Bushman slept and made their fires, the evidence still visible on the underside of the overhanging rocks. Engravings in the rocks served as further evidence that others were here long before us! What an experience!

The sun was setting and we had to go back the way we came - real 4x4 country - a bit of a challenge in the bush! With a Jeep Cherokee - what more can you ask!





We made it back to Sinamatella Camp just as the sun disappeared behind the horizon. Klein had a surprise for us and no joke – a potjie roast in the middle of nowhere including vegetables and salads!



### SUNDAY 1 MAY 2005



It was time to say goodbye and after a good night's sleep and greeting everyone we were on our way to Hwange "the town" on the main road to Bulawayo. We had enough petrol, we thought, to reach the border post at Plumtree and reach Francistown before nightfall. As we reached Bulawayo we realised that we might just not make it and had to fall into a long queue to buy a few litres. Luckily the petrol tankers had just arrived and for the next few hours petrol was available!

We raced off to reach the border post before closing time and decided to go as far as possible in order to reach the South

African border post as early as possible and be home early Monday to rest a bit before the inevitable working Tuesday to come – back in the rat race!

Reaching Selebi-Phikwe we had enough and decided to call it a day and put our tired bones to rest, but where? The first the best accommodation (not really the “best” but that is another story) had to do and what was left of Klein’s roast was put to the test once again.



### MONDAY 2 MAY 2005



What can we say!

We crossed the border post at Zanzibar where they welcomed us back with enthusiasm, even remembering our number plate, and crossed the Limpopo, took a short cut via Maasstroom to Baltimore, Potgietersrus and joined the queue on the highway back to Pretoria!

Except for the distance to be covered and consequent time that must be spent during travelling, this is an experience to be repeated. Next time an emergency tent will be all the

camping equipment we need. Food and petrol you have to supply but accommodation is no problem. When are we going again? Soon!



## EVENTS FOLLOWING

A whole lot of events is coming up and we might change the schedule or add events as we go along so watch the website for updated information!

Our next major event is the [Charity Function](#) on 20 August 2005. The event will be held on Lavender Road (Old Warmbaths Road) just north of Zambezi Road at the Shell Garage next to the Casbah Roadhouse so bring your Jeeps to entertain the children. Contact Gawie Deyssel at 082 772 9714 to confirm your participation!

For more details on events see the Program of Events!

## MEMBERS PARTICIPATION

Please contact us and supply us with details of your vehicle, your families and events that you have done recently. Space may be made available on the website to publish all of these. Active members will be contacted to participate in special events to be organised and/or participated in during the rest of the year. Advertisements of

Jeeps and/or Jeep related products may be published on the website to the discretion of the committee. Links to interesting websites may be accommodated so let us know what and where.

**Please contact us if you have brilliant, or even not so brilliant ideas as to how the Club can serve you as Club Members and the general 4x4 enthusiasts out there.**

## **ADVERTICEMENTS**

For advertisements on this web page - please contact us.

**Please print this Newsletter and distribute it amongst your friends and family without access to Internet facilities. Make sure your wife read this!**

**HAVE A WONDERFULL DAY - ONLY IN A JEEP**