



FRIENDS OF PILANESBERG

Non-Profit Organization Fund Raising Number: 006-421 NPS

SEDIBA

October, November, December 2018

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Letter from Editor

Oct-Dec 2018

Lauren Gunn

Dear friends

There is a quote that popped up on Facebook a couple of months back, just after a work party:

*“Did you know we all have at least one **soul place** in the physical world? A soul place is a special site or spot where we experience unique feelings of **belonging, empowerment and energetic rejuvenation**”*

For many years the Pilanesberg has been one of my soul places, and after 2 years of being part of FOPS and attending work parties, I can definitely resonate with this quote. The park has always been a special place for me, however, since becoming part of the FOPS family it has become an extra special place. There are times when we have been unable to make the monthly work party and, besides the serious FOMO, there is that feeling, I guess you can maybe describe it as loss, it feels like for that month there is something missing in your life!

There is so much to miss... being woken up at 4:30 am by the sound of Paddy telling you to get your lazy asses out of bed... the sigh of relief when your name is not on the Iron Age crew list.... The cold frosty when you get back to Potokwane, hot and sweaty sitting under the shade too tired to move... that shower after a work party that always feels like the best shower ever... sitting around the fire in the evening chatting to everyone and feeling a part of a very large, welcoming, happy family.

You also see that park in a whole new light, if you stop at a hide, you immediately inspect what needs to be done. On a game drive you make mental notes of where road clearing needs to take place and when you see a large herd of Elephants close to the road, you watch in awe of these amazing creatures, but at the back of your mind you are hoping they will not knock the trees over as you know that soon you will be clearing them off the road.

For 2 years in a row I have cleaned up the car park at the Iron Age site in July.... Every time we are in the park we go back there just to see whether the grass is growing back and when will be the time to schedule the clearing again. Of course, we also always go check that the rain or the animals have not ruined our stone sign that we made in the left corner of the car park.

You know you are a part of something very special!

Attendance at work parties this past quarter has been astounding, there seem to be new members joining us every month, which is very encouraging.



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AGM NEWS

We had a good turnout at the AGM and there were a few changes made to the committee. Congratulations to Kerry-Anne Hare who has been appointed the new secretary.

I have taken over the Sediba newsletter and Debbi Adcock is in charge of social media which includes the "Fops Sediba" Facebook page and our Instagram account "fopssediba". Please add Fops Sediba as a Facebook friend and follow us on Instagram.

All other committee members essentially stay as they are.

After 25 years of commitment and service to FOPS, Mark and Judy Viljoen were presented with Honorary Membership and received the award and a gift. Some special thanks again for all you have done over the years.





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Our December work party, as per usual was the Christmas Party which had great attendance. It was also a double celebration weekend as it was Paddy's 70th Birthday! Congrats again Paddy! Here's to many more.



The rains in December have filled up most of the dams and small watering holes and the park is looking fresh and green.

Hope you all had a great rest over December and wishing you a prosperous 2019! We definitely have lots of work cut out for us in the park this year 😊

Warm regards

Lauren

P.S. I have used a lot of pictures in this newsletter – thanks to everyone who contributed either via WhatsApp or allowing me to “steal” from Facebook!



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Special Project Weekend Report- Pilanesberg

October 2018

Paddy Coombe-Heath

Hi Folks

Another outstanding Work Party with an amazing 48 people attending.

The accommodation was a bit disjointed because of the construction happening at Potokwane. They are in the process of erecting permanent tents for scholars who will be doing nature conservation courses, during the weeks to come. Therefore, a few people stayed at Manyane. However, it all worked out for the best in the end. The weather was great and the sightings awesome. With all these people I had to find work for them all to do.

The projects were as follows:

The Iron Age Site. Trevor and his merry band went out and did their thing. Cutting, spraying and clearing. I must say the place look a lot different than it did 5yrs ago. The whole site has opened up unbelievably, you can now see almost all of the Kraals.

Then Manyane EEZ area has been invaded by Milkweed, so a team went out to cut this down and spray what they could before it starts seeding. They did a fine job I must say.

The Malatse hide parking needed a bit of TLC and repair work. The gate needed a lot of work which was carried out to perfection. This team also did a bit of road clearing along Phiri loop.

More road clearing. The routes chosen were Kgama drive, Ntshwe drive and lastly Moruleng. These jobs are hard, hot work and the guys were bushed when they got back. Nothing a couple of frosties couldn't sort out.

All in all, it worked out quite well. I think that all enjoyed the weekend. Well done everyone.

Until next month go well, and see you next time.

*Regards,
Paddy.*



Camp changes



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Malatse Hide Walkway and fence clearing



Road clearing team



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November 2018

Paddy Coombe-Heath

Hi Folks,

You guys just don't stop, this time 41 people. Amazing. There was 1 new member who cancelled, 1 visitor from Holland thanks to Remco, her name is Maaike Siersma and then 2 non-residents who stayed in Manyane. A very busy weekend, with all these people we had to find lots to do and we managed to do just that.

There were 6 projects, most of them road clearing.

Let me start off with the Iron Age site. Seven people with Trevor in the lead, went up and sprayed and cut. S.O.S. That is to say same old stuff.

Moloto picnic site 4 guys went up to finish off the washup stand. What a great job they did, it was worth a F.O.P.S. Project plaque for sure.

Then camp was on the list. All the building rubble and junk that was left lying around, the guys carted it off to the dump, with a Parks board truck. What a job! They also cut back grass around the new area and under the big Fig tree by the work shop. They all did a fabulous job and were very tired when they were finished. Well done to all.

Then 3 teams went out to do road clearing. 1 team went down Kgama drive, 1 team down Ntshwe drive and a team down Moruleng. All these roads were very overgrown, which meant they were not all finished. But we will get there sooner and later.

This all led to a great Work Party and as you can imagine a lot of tired people. Nothing a shower and a couple of "frosties" could not sort out.

Well nearly the end of the year, so see you in December. Until then go well and drive carefully.

Regards,

Paddy.



Road Clearing team



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Potokwane Camp Clean-Up



Moloto Picnic Site



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December 2018

Paddy Coombe-Heath

Hi Folks,

Nothing new for Xmas party work party, but a huge turnout, we landed up with 50 people and we had 3 cancellations. This amount of people took a lot of organisation to find work for all of them. But we managed.

We were expecting a good turnout from Parks Board, and we got the response we hoped for. Park manager Johnson Maoka and his management team Robert Goloawane, Khya Ntununu and Steve and Perry Dell. It was nice to host this team at our Xmas party.

Projects for weekend were lots and lots. As you can imagine.

*First off, the Iron Age site. A small group went there to spray and cut back. We are having trouble getting people to go there, because it's the same old same old. But please understand it is our biggest project ever, and it is the only real historic site in North west parks. **Please** think about that and after a good holiday at Xmas, please rethink or come to me with a new plan. Thanks.*

Ratlhogo hide walkway. The guys did a running repair job and laid some paving where the water tank had flooded the pathway. Still a lot of work to be done there, next year will be good.

There were 3 road clearing teams. Nkakane and down to Tshepe, Ntshwe drive and Thlware link. Most of these roads are almost clear.

Lastly Potokwane. A lot of guys stayed in camp, mostly running repairs, the urinal was leaking - turned the tap off, 2 toilet cisterns were leaking. Clearing the new area looking for potential camp sites, and generally clearing the place up.

There were also a lot of preparations for the Xmas party. The spit braai which was brought up and dropped off by Pieter Swanepoel, thank you. He then dropped off all the meat and veggies and went home. Thanks for that Pieter.

The spit was set up with electricity and gas. The meat consisted of Beef, pork, lamb and chicken. The ladies organised salads and all those other nice goodies. Then pudding was mince pies, custard and chocolate brownies. What a spread. This was even better than last year and last year was great. I just want to thank everybody who made this possible.

Then to thank all Work Party participants throughout the year for making a difference in this park. Hoping you all have a magic festive season and come back in January rested and ready to go.

Drive safe and get where you are going. Remember the holiday starts when you leave home.

All the very best from me.

Regards,

Paddy.



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Road Clearing



Camp Clean up and sapling relocation



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Christmas Party Preparations



Party Time!!!