

An Old Camdenian in Africa

Visitors are always welcome but when they arrive after 50 years then there is something rather special going on.

And so it was when **Mair Richards** touched down in Southern Africa from Canada. She was on one of those wonderful tours that left you exhausted and yet so enthralled.

She had already visited Chobe and Victoria Falls, The Kruger Park and Johannesburg and Soweto before arriving in The Garden Route, and then finally to Cape Town.

The challenge was to somehow link up from our base in Port Elizabeth.

We had not been to CT for 8 years and with a little arm twisting we were able to organise a visit to Brian and Helen in CT and at the same time meet up with Bev's ex school mate Mair.

Mair went to Camden School for girls and so I guess this could be seen as another Old Camdenian.



As you can see we arranged a dinner date that gave us this lovely evening view of them both with Table Mountain in the background. Dinner was at Ons Huisie, built in 1806, and Mair was introduced to a potjie and bobotie washed down with a great Zonnebloem merlot.

It was Mair's view that SA was a wonderful country with such a diverse offering of natural beauty without forgetting the many challenges that had to be dealt with. We could have talked for hours but the day drew to a close and we had to drive back to CT with the mountain and City sparkling in the twinkling night display of illumination.

So where do these tennis players come from?

Jarmilla Gajdosova

Marinko Matosevic

Milos Raonic

I doubt you got this one correct. The first two are from Australia and the third from Canada.

Some countries just seem to get their immigration plans right.

We managed to get up to **The Addo Elephant National Park** for a long days game viewing. As ever our early start takes in a simple cooked bacon roll breakfast not far from the Harpoor Water hole. We travel to the main camp for another break before heading back in the early afternoon for lunch at Jacks Picnic site before slowly exiting through the southern gate. A good 10 hours of game viewing and just enjoying the lovely African bush as the sun beat down at 32°C.

We have an enormous Rhino poaching problem in SA with around 400 being killed each year for their horns. Whilst the horns are destined for the Far East it is in the parks and veterinary services that many accomplices hide and carry out their dirty work.



Andrea looks at the Addo map that shows animal sitings that day but the rhino is no more to be seen as the last thing needed is to show the poachers where to go for their next brutal slaying as horns get slashed off with a panga and the animal is left to die.

I will mix this letter up and so on to local **Police matters**. A report has shown that some 50% of the PE Riot Police failed their firearm proficiency test. Despite this they still carry and use weapons and perhaps this is a good reason as to why the police have killed so many suspects and bystanders this year.

The lack of police effectiveness has seen an increase in mob justice with the horrendous “**necklacing**” being performed on a number of suspects that the police have seemingly not dealt with. For those who do not know the term it involves catching the suspect and then placing a burning tyre over his head. Other actions involve stoning the person to death.

At least a dozen or so cases of this mob justice have occurred in the Eastern Cape over the last few weeks.

The politics and associated problems have made **S&P downgrade SA** a trifle. So far there is no real damage done but it has hurt the ANC badly as it really reflects their lack of competency in dealing with many issues that could negatively impact on the country`s well being.

We have a **BBC**. Yes the national business organisations were contained in the multiracial BUSA that interacted with government etc. But the black business community did not think they were getting their fair slice of the cake and thus set up BBC. And in this post Apartheid state of ours we now have the Black Business Council! Sometimes we just seem to be going backwards.

We are used to legal cases going on for years as delaying tactics and appeals stretch the already jam-packed courts to bursting point. One of these we all watch here is that of **Dewani**, and the Julius **Malema** matter will just not go away as he now openly criticises **Zuma** as a Dictator (in fact since writing this he has been removed from the ANC). The top Police Chief case is now nearing an end but he has been shown to be, at best, quite unsuitable to hold this important post. The next Police Chief being considered is already undergoing legal problems with old court cases for many things including murder. But who put them there and why? It is the latter question that brings into play deeper political motives.

The Zuma case regarding the Corrupt Arms Deal might reopen and we need to remember that the person who bribed Zuma has been found guilty, as too the people who Dewani allegedly paid to his dirty work.

On April 6th in 1652 the Dutch arrived in The Cape and started to establish the Afrikaner community. **Jan Van Riebeeck** arrived with 3 ships, Goede Hoop, Reiger and Drommedaris.

And it is with Cape Town that we end this letter. Our reason to go there was to see Mair but also to visit Brian and Helen who I had not seen for some 8 years and then only for an hour or two. Brian, of course, is a regular Ride A Cup player but Helen stays behind and is the hard working Golfing Widow for a week or so. We had an action packed few days and the weather was perfect.

Here we are enjoying lunch at The Hartenberg Wine Estate in Stellenbosch. Lovely to sit under the vines and gently sup on some cheeses and other delights helped along with some carafes of red and white Hartenberg wine. It was an added treat for me, as low drinking Helen was doing the driving.



And then there was the essential trip to The Waterfront to see what was new and to take in the atmosphere of this old port. Despite its commercialisation it remains a fascinating mix of restaurants, shops, hotels, boat trips and working harbour.

Of course we had to go to the mountain for a walk that took us along the contour path to world renowned Kirstenbosch Gardens.

There was the usual but so pleasant braais and a round of golf at Darling. We saw a lot of the developments along the Western seaboard and managed to find time to intersperse all the activity with some great lunch and dining venues.

Our return took us into Swellendam for breakfast and then it was the turn of the Knysna waterfront to host us for lunch.

Even the riot police at Riversonderend could not diminish the enjoyment but was a stark message of the unrest that pervades SA. The DA had labelled some Eastern Cape people as “refugees” as they moved to the WC to find work, better education and health care.

This implies going overseas and so I now refer to the Western Cape as Dafrica. She has a very valid point but her aggressive nature angers not only the opposition but also some DA stalwarts. The DA must learn to play the ball and not to gloat.

Despite the appalling incompetence of the ANC the local bi-elections in PE for 3 vacant seats were all easily won by the ANC. It confounds common sense if you ignore the struggle credentials of the ANC and the role that white people have played in the history of black South Africans for the last 300 years.



Andrea has started a new job (day 2 now) and Courtney continues to win awards and do so well at school.

She is seen here finishing the 800 metres at the recent school sports day when a first in the 4 x 100 mts was obtained. A great school report rounds off her performance at highly respected Clarendon Primary, a former model C school.

Of course, as a letter from Africa we make little mention of family and friends spread outside SA but this will be remedied in Aug when we travel to the UK.

I have over run the space allocation but there were lots of pictures.

So good bye from sunny SA for now.

Love

Bev and Alan

PS Why does Halley's Comet orbit in the opposite direction to our planets?