



BUSH LIFE

News from the Wilderness Trust of Southern Africa

1996 Number 1

A Message from the Chairman

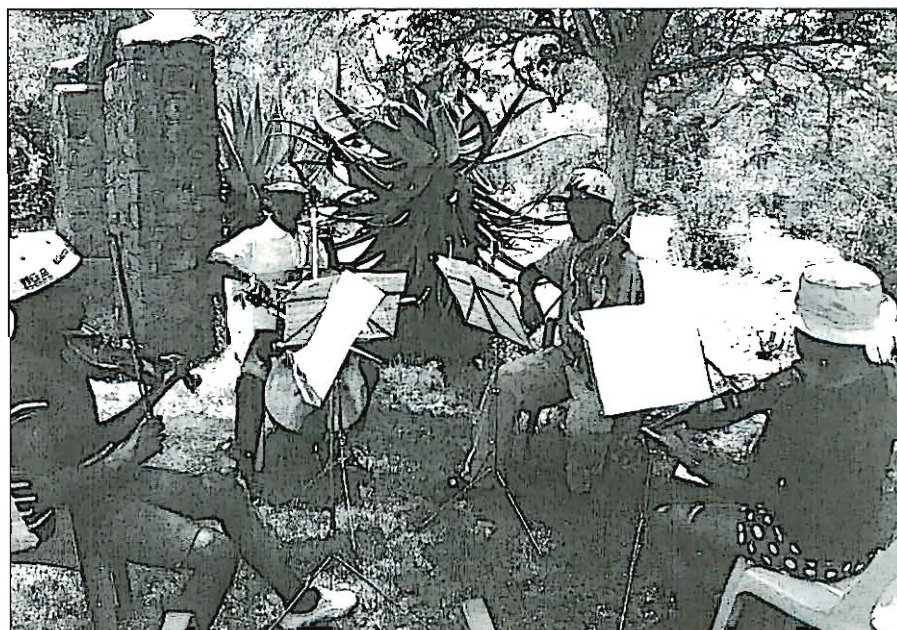
From April 1994 to March 1995, 1 870 pupils attended courses at the Lapalala Wilderness School - of these, no less than 184 were teachers.

We are most grateful to our donors whose ongoing support has been essential for the success of the school. Courses sponsored by various organisations have proved to be of outstanding success and we will continue to encourage and develop this programme. Support received from individuals and organisations has enabled the Trust to provide disadvantaged children with the opportunity to attend courses at the school.

We are also most grateful to the Mazda Wildlife Fund for the continued use of the excellent 16-seater vehicle that is used to transport children and teachers between Gauteng and the school in the Waterberg Mountains. This vehicle is an indispensable element of the success of our programme.

Thank you to Mr and Mrs Dale Parker of Constantia for the continued use of the facilities and the opportunity to operate the Environmental School in a specially designated area of Lapalala Wilderness. The Trust would, once again, like to extend its appreciation to Cathay Pacific for the innovative, far-reaching cultural programme they undertook in July 1995 and which will again be taking place this year. It involves cross-cultural exchange with South African students and has proved to be a great success. Peter Sutch, Cathay Pacific Chairman, says "the experience fosters international cultural understanding and helps young, future decision-makers to appreciate the environment and the impact man has on the ecological process."

Much interest has been expressed by Australian schools under a programme being developed by Australian New Frontiers under the direction of Peter Lloyd. A group of Australian children associated with the Educational Centre at Western Plains Zoo, Dubbo, will



The Diepkloof Youth String Project at Lapalala

also be attending a trail in July, accompanied by a corresponding group of South African children.

At the end of its tenth year, more than 40 000 children and their teachers had passed through the Lapalala Wilderness School.

The fact that teachers and pupils from outside South Africa, particularly those from the African Continent, have expressed the desire to attend environmental courses offered by the Trust, speaks for itself. The school can rightfully claim to be international - children from ten West African countries attended courses, and we continue to welcome children from the Asian sub-continent, mainly South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Perhaps even more importantly, the school has become a centre for nation building activities in South Africa. Ongoing discussions with the Department of Environmental Affairs of the Northern Province augur well for the future and it is hoped that the school will be able to expand not only its activities, but also its facilities in order to embrace a wider cross-section of South African society, particularly children from areas where the likelihood of an opportunity such as a school experience at Lapalala is either remote or non-existent.

LAPALALA - A "MEMORY PLACE" FOR YOUNG PEOPLE FROM SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGE

The Wilderness Trust was pleased to be able to provide funding for the SOS Children's Village, Mamelodi, to attend a course at the Lapalala Wilderness School in April. A total of 40 children, aged between 12 and 20 attended the trail, accompanied by four adults.

Founded in 1949, the international SOS network today consists of more than 1 150 projects in 119 countries. In South Africa, SOS Children's Villages care for over 500 children by providing a permanent family environment for children who have either lost their parents or whose parents are unable to take care of them.

The trail was a great success and the children had the opportunity to experience the beauty of a natural environment and to see animals and plants they would not otherwise have the opportunity to observe. Of course, they also had lots of fun and time to enjoy their new experience!

Some of us still needs the world

*The world is our nature
We must not kill trees
We must not kill animals
and we must not destroy it.
And don't kill what God has given you
and when you kill trees
you are destroying our world
So please do not destroy our nature
Because some of us still needs the world.*
Lomini, age 15

Lapalala Ooh!

*Ooh! What a beautiful place
Lapalala remind me of my dreams
Ooh! When I look deep down the sea
it reminds me of my beautiful Lapalala.
Ooh! When I look up at the mountains
I see a rhino and the hippo playing so nice
that no one had played the game before.
Ooh! When I look up in the tree
a bird and the snake making new friends.
That's Lapalala,
making interesting things, amazing things
Lapalala the beautiful name I ever heard.*
Lazarus, age 14

Thank You Mr Clive Walker

Dearest Mr Walker

I like to thank you very much for everything that you have done for us. I really enjoy the camp. Lapalala is a beautiful place. I was in the group of the African Monarch. With my team leader, Mrs Hanneke. She is a great person and a lovely lady.

I really enjoyed working with her and participating in our team. We really learnt everything that concerned nature. Thank you again Mr Walker. You are a special person that we won't forget. Lapalala will be a memory place for me. Thank you for our food and for everything. I hope one day I will be the one who will help people. Keep on doing a good job like this and I hope other groups that come will enjoy as I enjoyed.
Annah Mosikidi

and . . .

from the Youth Leader, the Educator and the Matron of SOS Children's Village Mamelodi.

We express our immense gratitude and appreciation for giving our children the exposure to wildlife.

The environmental trail was a worthwhile lifetime experience. The sharing of your knowledge on wildlife vegetation, animal life and ecological environment values has been of great benefit to the education of the children. Thank you for your contribution to the care of disadvantaged children in our care.

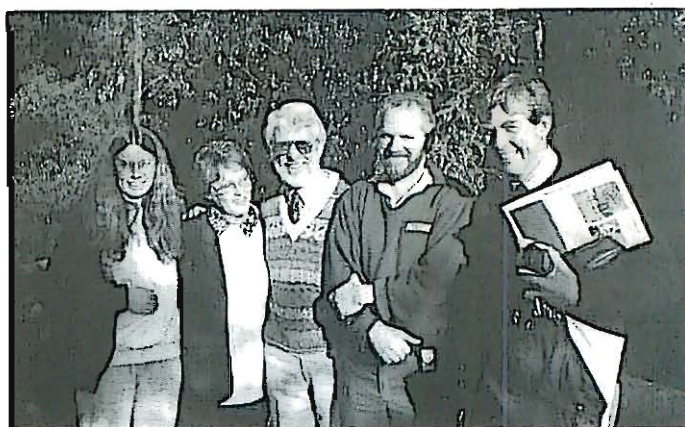
DEBATING THE FUTURE OF ZOOS

Clive Walker, Chairman of the Wilderness Trust and of the Rhino & Elephant Foundation was invited to address the Australasian Regional Association of Zoological Parks and Aquaria (ARAZPA) and the Australasian Society of Zookeeping (ASZK) Conference on "Zoos: Evolution or Extinction?" hosted by the Healesville Sanctuary in Melbourne from 15 - 19 April 1996.

The conference took a critical look at zoos and debated their future into the next century. Questions such as the evolution of zoos, whether they are part of the problem or part of the solution and the meaning of "conservation" and "education" were also discussed.

Clive Walker focused on the plight of the black rhino in Africa - many of these populations live virtually one step away from captive situations in small highly-managed and protected sanctuaries. He discussed the role of environmental education in relation to courses conducted at Lapalala Wilderness School where children have the opportunity to see animals in their natural habitat and to learn about rhino conservation. He was accompanied by his wife Conita who is a trustee of the Wilderness Trust and is very much involved in environmental education programmes at Lapalala.

In addition to his keynote address he also delivered talks at three high schools in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. After the conference they travelled to New Zealand for three days where they met officers of WWF New Zealand and members of the New Zealand wildlife authorities.



From left to right: Lynne (a volunteer guide at the Healesville Zoo), Conita Walker, Clive Walker (Chairman of the Wilderness Trust), one of the zookeepers who took Clive and Conita around the zoo, and Peter Lloyd of Australian New Frontiers.

Peter is the driving force behind the Australian schools' tour to Lapalala Wilderness in the Northern Province, in conjunction with the South African based travel company, African Outposts. Peter Lloyd's company provided Clive Walker's airfare to Australia. Allan and Helen Stevens - of Exclusive Travel Petone Ltd - sponsored Clive and Conita's visit to New Zealand, where they had the opportunity to meet Chris Laidlaw, Executive Director of WWF New Zealand and senior officials of the Department of Conservation.

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NEW SIGNS

Clive Walker's *Signs of the Wild* - a highly successful field guide to the identification of southern African mammals based on spoor, droppings and other signs - has been fully updated and revised to include the most recent findings on the subject. Now in its fifth edition, this book presents full-colour distribution maps for each of the eighty-eight animal species, new droppings and spoor for a number of species, and now features skulls for each of the carnivores. Each animal is represented in its habitat by means of a full-colour photograph. *Signs of the Wild* is not only essential for those with an interest in tracking, but will prove valuable to anyone interested in animal behaviour.

The book is available at leading bookstores and from the Wilderness Trust office for R79.95 Enquiries - Heather Cowie, Tel (011) 453-7648.