

Gough Bunting

July 2007



Despite the fact that July is supposed to be winter on Gough, we still managed to do our best as a team to get outside. There were a number of fishing trips. The catches were always good. There were even a few elusive snoek in the mix.

In July we also said goodbye to our last two visitors for the year. Martin and Ross left us on 12 July. With them leaving us we have started to realize that our time on the island is very limited. The next team has started training. Our conversations have shifted towards the upcoming takeover, and on our return home. Some of the team have already started planning for their next trip to Marion Island.

Before all of that happens though, there is still enough time for us to cram in a few more walks, some fishing and definitely another swim in icy rivers.

Enjoy the newsletter,

Ed.



Gough 52 celebrating Women's Day.

Month of July

July has been a quiet month. We never had any parties nor going out for hiking due to the weather conditions. I was always in the base doing my daily routines. The skuas were not around for a while but suddenly they are back, so sometimes I just go to the helipad and look at them when they fly around and also when they fight for food.

One day the weather was good, I asked the guys to take me fishing 'coz since I arrived here I've never been to diesel point where the guys sometimes fish



The skuas at the helipad

from. It was a nice experience being out there. I've never been that close to the sea my entire life (except when we were on the ship, of course). I managed to touch the sea water and while



The Gough fisherman at Joe Roos, also known as Diesel point.

you were next to it, I felt like I could just get in and swim just like a fish. It's was so beautiful. While we were still there fishing, the sea started to change, becoming rough with big swells and waves, the wind become so strong, so we went back to the base without catching any fish, but it worth a try.

Dineo

Celebrating National Women's Day at Gough Island

This day is celebrated as a reminder of the contribution made by women in our country, the achievements that have been made for women's rights and to acknowledge the difficulties and prejudices many women face. On this day, way back in 1956, many women marched to the Union buildings to protest against the law that requires women to carry passes. This was the first year that the South African government first operated the weather station here at Gough Island. In the past there were no women who could over winter in the islands.

Women were not acknowledged enough and were always overlooked and taken as the ones who will take care of the children and the household. But to the tireless work of women like Ellen Khuzwayo, Lillian Ngoyi and many more, they tried to fight for their rights as women. As lots of women are still fighting for gender equality, here at Gough we decided to throw a little braai for our only woman in our team – Dineo. We always reminded her that if it was not for those women who died fighting for women's rights, she wouldn't have been here....I hope she enjoyed the day the way we did. To all women there, I also think you had lots of fun.

What could be a celebration of something without meat and some few drinks?

Tshifhiwa-wa-vho-Nthaduleni



The guys enjoying a good braai for the women's day celebrations.

'n Nuwe begin:

Met die lente wat kom kan ons die nuwe begin van dinge sien. Die Gough 52 span gaan binnekort hulle nuwe lewens begin, weg van 'n plek wat ons huis was vir baie lank. So berei ons ook voor vir Gough 53 wat hulle nuwe lewens hier gaan begin.

Wat maak dit so moeilik om nuut te begin. Om wortels uit te trek en hulle weer iewers anders te gaan vestig.

Die week het ons eerste Sooty albatros paar ook terug gekeer. Hulle kras geskreeu was gemis. Dit is goed om weer hulle gesinchroniseerde vlug



The Sooty Albatrosses returning home to Gough.

waar te neem. Die pare vlieg in presiese harmonie en maak baie draaie sonder dat een van hulle 'n enkele draai mis.

Ek en Brain doen 'n studie vir Dr. Ross Wanless op die Atlantiese stormvoël (Atlantic petrel) en ons eerste kuikens het hierdie week aangekom. Die klein goedjies word baie gou alleen in hulle neste gelos terwyl die ouers gaan kos soek. Die muise op Gough het agter gekom dat die kuikens 'n baie maklike maaltyd is. Die klein goedjies word letterlik lewendig opgeëet.

Selfs die plante het nuwe uitlopers begin maak. Binnekort gaan ons 'n nuwe groen eiland om ons waarneem.



The new beginnings of an Atlantic Petrel chick.

In die woorde van T. S. Eliot:

We shall not cease from exploration

And the end of all our exploring

Will be to arrive where we started

And know the place for the first time.

The wandering Metkassie

With the onset of winter the succession of fronts are more frequent and also more intense. There's also a marked difference with regard to wind speed and rainfall amounts. With a steep pressure gradient the winds are generally stronger and gusts up to 140 km/h are experienced. It is also observed that with light to moderate winds the precipitation amounts are also appreciable greater than with strong winds.

With the frontal approach the winds are northwest. The effect the wind has on the base is truly extraordinary. Lying in bed when it's gusting has the feel of a rocking chair. And when you're asleep been waken up by the movement of the base is really something. The movement of the base can be felt throughout. If you're concentrating on something else the sudden gust can give you a scare. Fish and I have lost our headgear whilst doing observations on the roof. What the wind had taketh, never to be found. The rain has quite a calming influence. The sound of the drops hitting the roof is like a lullaby. You can almost drown in time watching the drops falling through the window.

As the front exits a high pressure system ridges in behind it. If the fetch is far south, winds turn southwest and temperatures drop sharply. We experience the occasional light showers of hail in the wake of the front. Then there's the sea swell; a sight to watch in awe. Waves in excess of 7 meters breaking against the cliffs sending sea spray higher than 50 meters, it's admirable.

Fronts come and go, but never boring.

JK



The roaring 40's crashing into Archway rock below crane point.

Dieso

I have experienced the cold weather of Gough this month. I must say the base is warm inside and I must complement PWD for the design of the base. Sometimes I will go out to Goney Dale and on my way I will be thinking of a hot shower and a nice meal. It's easy to pick up weight on the Island if you do not utilize your muscles. We have a gym which needs to be upgraded and in the meantime I do make use of it now & then. I have lost 5kg now. My weight was 105kg and now I'm between 98kg & 100kg. I hope during take-over I will be weighing 95kg.

I would like to thank my team Gough 52 for their big effort & energy they have in terms of assisting me with the maintenance of the base. I'm sure Brian, Petrus & Jonty you will not call a plumber at home if you have problems with water or sewer. At least you will know what to do.

I'm counting 7 weeks now to be at home. I'm missing driving, shopping, going to church etc. Life is a journey because I never knew that one day I would be staying and working in a place like Gough Island, having peace of mind. I'm looking forward now for take-over.

Thuls



The Men of Gough 52

Lost in thought

While walking around the island, it is quite common for me to just let my thoughts go. My eyes glaze over as I push my legs higher up the pathways, my mind somewhere else. My thoughts often start with my recent memories, what happened in the base the last week. As I start to get into a walking rhythm, my



The author testing his “wings” in the wind at Michael’s Col.

mind wanders further back. It’s my High School ten year reunion in a few months, I let my mind drift back to those days when I was a lot fitter, had a full head of hair and decidedly more naïve. Just as my thoughts start to pick speed, I step into a bird hole. I throw my hands out to grab some long grass for some stability. I just manage to keep my balance. I make a mental note to concentrate more on the pathway. I set off again. As I get going again, I feel my legs burning. I start to wonder how my body would deal with climbing Aconcagua, the highest peak in South America. I think of the various mountaineering books I have read in the recent months. One of a man twice my

age who climbed the seven summits, “Sure mountaineering is hectic, but if he can do it surely I can. What gear do they wear on the mountain?” I think about my year at SANAE, considering how the equipment we used there could be used climbing mountains. “Man, I miss the view to the south of the base at SANAE.”

My right foot catches another bird hole, I try using my left foot to counter my loss of balance, and it lands in another bird hole. I topple over. I very unelegantly do a roll downhill to remove my feet from the two holes. I remove my backpack, and as I drain the Clifton flavoured water down my throat, I survey the view. “Wow, this island is

awesome. What a view. I’ve never seen that rocky outcrop before”. My head turns to the sound of a skua calling to my right. I watch as another pair of skuas make a very low pass over my head. “I wish I could fly like that!” I look up at to see how much more I have to walk to get to the top of the ridge. I face downhill to see how high I have already walked. The inevitable cliché comes to mind, “One step at a time.” I wonder how many footsteps I will have walked before the day’s end. I set off again up my mini Aconcagua.

Brain

***Personality of the Month
Thulani Jakalashé
Diesel Mechanic and Deputy
Team Leader.***

Where do u call home?

Mdantsane Township in East London, Mzantsi

Whom and what do u miss the most at Mzantsi?

My wife Xoliswa, Kwasa, Khumo(Moore) & the rest of my wider family at large

You were a birthday boy last month right. Did you receive any presents?

Yes, a Rolex from my lovely wife.

Who told u about Gough Island?

Actually I have seen the advert on Sunday Times.

What is it that u like and dislike the most about Gough?

I like the environment where there is no air pollution and of course we are healthy. The only thing I don't like is the heights and other views which are beautiful need some little bit of climbing.

If someone can ask u about this island, which advice are u gonna give?

He/She must make sure when ever he/she goes out, he/she must never leave his/her rain gear and keeping himself/herself warm at all times.

If you could enter a look-alike contest for actors, which character would it be?

Will Smith.

What does the future hold for you?

I'm looking forward to be a topdog one of these days when God allows it.

Which room do you occupy and why?

Room 3 & because it is the best in terms of renovation. The room has been painted by the previous Diesel Mech

and furthermore it is much closer to the loo.

Who are your neighbors?

Jointy (Senior Met.) & Brian (Radio Tech.)



If you have the power to upgrade something at Gough, what will it be and why?

Internet System because it is very slow & primitive. I can't do internet banking.

If you could go anywhere, where would that be?

Edinburgh Peak (highest peak of Gough Island)

How young are you?

I'm an old man now.

What is your favourite meal?

Leg of lamb & veggies.

What is your favourite sport?

Tennis & Table Tennis

What are your strengths?

I'm a problem solver.

What are your weaknesses?

I don't like to wake up in the morning but only if a need arises.

Will you be at one of the Islands in 2010 even if there are no DSTV?

No ways. I don't want to miss the world cup at home.

What does "Kukufa ku funjiwe" mean? When is it appropriate to use it?

It means there is "death around or ahead of you". I normally used it in areas where there are no signs or land marks to guide on how safe the place is.

What have you learnt while on Gough Island?

Lots. I think soon I will be a Computer Guru. I know how to prepare descent food etc. I will teach my wife how to prepare healthier food so that we can keep the doctor away.

Sponsor of the Month

We would like to thank the following sponsors:

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- YUM (KFC Chicken, KFC chips, KFC sauces)



*Brian braving the bad weather and rough seas at Admiral's, thanks to his **Engen** beanie keeping him warm.*

From the Weather Office

CLIMATE STATS: July 2007

Ave. Max Pressure	1008.5 hPa
Ave. Min Pressure	998.6 hPa
Ave. Pressure	1003.8 hPa
Max Pressure	1017.5 hPa
Min Pressure	982.7 hPa
Ave. Max Temp	13.5 °C
Ave. Min Temp	8.5 °C
Ave. Temp	11.0 °C
Max Temp	17.7 °C
Min Temp	3.9 °C
Ave Humidity	78 %
Max Humidity	94 %
Min Humidity	57 %
Max Wind Gust	38.2 m/s or 137.5 km/h
Total Rainfall	458.0 mm
Highest in 24 Hours	82.6 mm
Total days with rain	29 days
Total days >1mm	26 days
Total Sunshine	79.5 hours

This Space For Rent

Email gough@sanap.org.za for details

Gough 52 Wild Cats

Jaguar
Brian Bowie
Tiger
Thulani Jakalashe
Cheetah
Jonathan Kotze
Panther
Dineo Matsana
Lion
Bigfish Mashau
Leopard
Petrus Kritzinger

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The place with lots of sun and hot chicks!

Marion Island
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