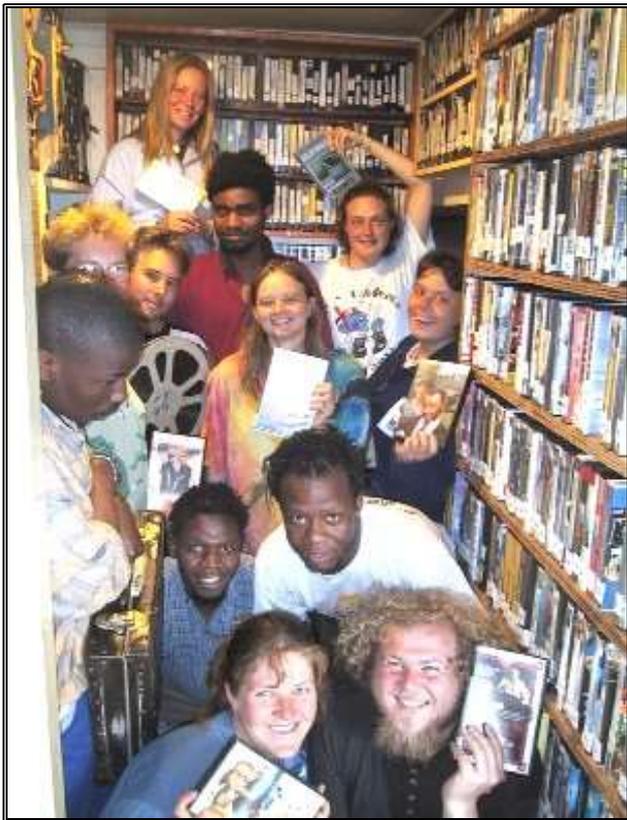


-The Wanderer-

Marion Island Newsletter, Issue 10, January 2001



Children of Heaven on The Rock at Dante's Peak



Excited customers in VHS-ville

"What are you doing tonight?"

"I'm free."

"Let's watch a movie then."

Following this conversation it is time to pick a movie, something that can take up to an hour. Have you seen this one? Have you heard about this one? Is this a 'skop-skiet-en-doodslaan', art, drama, comedy or sci-fi movie? Your mood certainly influences your choice of movie. Sometimes the tediousness of this process results in us not watching anything, but when we do, duvets, pillows, drinks and snacks are carried to the lounge and you get carried away with the on-screen action.

The movie we watch tends to set our mood for the evening. A good example is the night that we watched *Titanic*. As if wanting to share in their exposure to the elements, we went for a moonlight walk in the snow. *Dante's Peak* had Erika looking at the mountains with new respect and she then fantasised about a volcanic eruption on Prince Edward Island and rather not Marion.

Since movies form such an important part of our lives, I asked my teammates about their favourites. Some people, like Sarette, prefer reading and Beneke spends his free time on his computer, having watched all the best movies in the first few months.

MI-58s movie of the year is *The Boondock Saints* and much of its dialogue forms part of our daily vocabulary. Some phrases that we often use include: "There was a fire fight", "I feel like river dancing", "What is the sssymbolism" and "Oh really". "What is this, this is what?", a phrase from *Next Friday* is also a much used quote. The team is not really into action movies although David liked *Clear and Present Danger*, and Tambu has seen *In the Line of Fire* a few times. *The Rock* is also rated highly.

Beneke and SQ1 are into art movies such as *The Red Violin*, *Roseanne's Grave* and *Children of Heaven* while Wilna has seen *Stepmom* repeatedly. *Legends of the Fall* is a favourite among the girls, watched primarily for the impressive cast, i.e. Brad Pitt. Segale's first choice surprised me by being *Music from another room*. "I'm gonna marry her", he said and Phaf's *Love Jones* reflected their feelings to special ones at home.

Deep movies (dramas) like *Shirley Valentine* teach us about life, "What do we do with all our unused life?" and Erika's favourite, *Dead Poet Society*, "I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life. To put to rout all that was not life and not when I come to die, discover that I had not lived."

That's all folks!

Lizel (SQ2)

The miracle: Marion flightless moth

The Marion flightless moth (*Pringleophaga marioni*, *Pringlea* = Kerguelen cabbage, *phaga* = eat) is an unusual indigenous insect that occurs on the Prince Edward Islands. It is most closely related to clothes moths but resemble brown crickets or cockroaches because of their reduced wings. This species forms an important part of nutrient cycling on the islands.



A larva showing distinctive patterns typical of this species

Their life cycle is dominated by a larval stage that lasts for more than three years. These larvae are litter dwelling and eat mosses and vascular plants, but not the Kerguelen cabbage (*Pringlea antiscorbutica*), which they were named after. The house mouse (introduced) has a large impact on *Pringleophaga* larvae as they make up a large proportion of the mice's diet. The moths are short-lived (less than 12 days) and non-feeding.



The pupa in its cocoon

I kept a larva in captivity that later changed into a pupa and then into an adult moth. Once, Erika and I went sampling and we found another moth, which I decided to keep with my treasured one. Soon afterwards they mated – a rare sight that I was privileged to witness. In December we saw wandering albatrosses mate, a sight that moved me. I experienced the same emotions while observing the two moths mating. Eggs were laid soon afterwards and my moths died.

As with the rest of God's creation, the miracle of life continues, as these eggs will hatch, the larvae will become pupae and the pupae will become moths. Thank God that I was allowed to witness part of this miracle.

Sarette



The two moths mating, the female is the larger of the two

25 years of my life...

A friend wrote to me, "I hope you have the most beautiful day you ever had. It is surely a birthday that you will never forget and that you will never have over again."

It turned out to be that and more. I hoped to wake up at Katedraal on my birthday, to hopefully see the sun rise over the clouds again... Two faithful buddies stuck with me and my plan even though the mist was hanging dramatically against the mountains. The mist waited for us to pass Tafelberg, then finally lowered the white curtain in front of us. The play was finished. There was no turning back; behind us the show was also finished.

None has described it better than Werner of M56, "In SA you would say, o dear I've lost my earring. Here you say, I've just lost a moerse mountain". We experienced it in a similar way. We lost sight of First Red, and were relieved when we found it again! We arrived at the hut without seeing our beloved krans.

There are very few things that a cup of extremely sweet hut-coffee cannot rectify and I once again realised that Wilna and Sarette are not just friends - they are stars.

The sunrise was obscured by mist on the morning of the eleventh. I opened a present from my mom, a little quote book with a special quote written in front,

"Live for today, dream of tomorrow, learn from yesterday". These are wise words indeed.

On the way back to base, Sarette remarked that it felt as if forty days and forty nights' rain fell in one day. Despite the rain our spirits were soaring and we were singing a song by Laurika Rauch, "Ek het 'n huisie by die see".

At base I was ball-and-chained and spoiled with delicious pizza. Thank you to my family and friends back home for the e-mails, faxes and phone calls! I miss you guys too!

The two main surprises were yet to come. The first one I can only thank God for: A little thunderstorm on Marion. It was a great surprise for all of us. Then I was blindfolded and led into a candle lit room to once again hear the words, "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life. To put to rout all that was not life and not when I come to die, discover that I had not lived."

Our lounge is not the cave in *Dead Poet Society*, but we were surely part of words that live and shine and will never die. The whole team was there, some read poetry, some acted it.

"Wanneer die liefde jou roep, volg hom na..." (Kahlil Gibran)

"If I had fifty-three minutes to spend,' said the little prince, 'I would walk very slowly towards a spring of fresh water...'" (Antoine de Saint-exupery).

"Nogtans kan ek nie langer vertoef nie. Die see wat alle dinge na haar toe roep, roep ook my..." (Kahlil Gibran).

"You people have been chosen..." "...*et spiritu sancti*" (*The Boondock Saints*).

"I know who God is... he held me when my parents died." (Angel stories).

Then there was some censored poetry... thanks Beneke (Internet).

"The powerful play goes on..." (Walt Whitman).

My birthday cake had the word Wotalotigot written with Smarties on caramel frosting. I then realised that these people know me and they love me. I can't express it better than Kahlil Gibran, "And let your best be for your friend". My team gave me their best.



Thank you!

Erika

Behold our mighty sheikh



The air was filled with the smell of incense. Candles lit up the room and *The Gypsy Kings* played softly in the background. This set the scene of a palace in the East. The loyal ruffians anticipated the appearance of their mighty sheikh.

The announcement, "Behold our leader and base commander, Great System Administrator and router. Bend the knee for the DEA&T representative and Commissioner of Oath. Behold our local DJ, radio-tech and refuel assistant. PE-, killer- and iceberg alert newscaster and seal bite expert. HF radio carrier, sparky, Gotlieb Grootappel. Behold our sheikh for the evening, Beneke De Wet, who has already spent 28 years on this earth".

A natural, our sheikh placed himself comfortably on a couch prepared by his servants. We enjoyed a Mediterranean dinner, pitas stuffed with exotic foods.

It was a sociable evening enjoyed by all but oh boy did Beneke love this occasion, just a bit unhappy about the belly dancers that didn't arrive on time. Next time Beneke!

SQ's, Sarette & Wilna

An apple a day...

...keeps the doctor away. Not getting into the discussion of apples and Marion I can vouch that a scenic view a day lifts the spirit, lightens heavy feet and shortens the long stretches of black lava. On a recent round island we were lucky to be treated with a very special sight each day.

Day one – Boot Rock. Liezl got her first glimpse of this stack a few hundred meters offshore between Repettos and Cape Davis. Though Liezl has been to Repettos before, the weather was so bad that she could not even see Repettos Hill next to the hut, never mind Boot Rock.

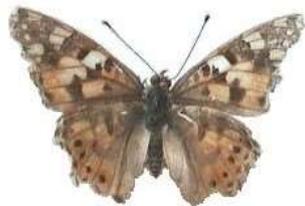
Day two - High Bluff waterfalls. Following heavy rains we often see waterfalls at Piew Crags and Long Ridge. For the first time we saw three falls rushing

down High Bluff on Prince Edward Island. Considering that PE is about 20 kilometres away it must have been truly huge falls.

Day three – Iceberg! No matter how often I see them they still fill me with a sense of awe and I find them terribly exciting. We saw the iceberg while passing Rondekop on our way to the infamous Azorellakop. It lay offshore from Swartkop. The next morning the iceberg greeted us at Mixed Pickle. It slowly made its way around the island and when we returned to base from Kildakey we saw it at the foot of Long Ridge while crossing Stony Ridge. It was stuck there for a few days before it moved to Duikers, where it still lies. Last night it broke up and now there are two pieces floating with some debris.

Day Four – Paddy chicks. Paddies are omnipresent. Wherever something is happening you'll find paddies. Save for one time of the year. When they breed the birds become very secretive and we have spent many hours in vain searching for the nests and chicks. At Swartkop our luck turned and we found, by accident, a nest under some rocks with the adult and chicks.

Day five – *Vanessa cardui*. Possible alien, possible breeder, to us the first butterflies seen on Marion. There are regular sightings of them on the island, but to us it was very unexpected to find two butterflies darting along the stream at Watertunnel Wallows. It was also the first recorded sighting between Kildalkey and La Grange Kop.



Day six – Karookop. As infamous as Azorellakop, Karookop often sports howling winds, dense fog and generally terrible weather. Bad weather stories usually involve either of the two places and great was our relief to climb it in sunshine, while spotting lava bombs and more icebergs.

A less welcome view was the sight of a sea of wet-bins, stacked to the roof in each hut; the contents to be counted for the annual stock take. Fortunately we managed to do that in good time allowing us to spend more time on important things – like a sunset over an iceberg at Mixed Pickle Cove.

Beneke

Liewe Ma

Hoe gaan dit met Ma met my gaan dit goed. Ma die een ylandir het opgehou rook en nou het ampir almal hille gerantsoeneerde biltong yt liefde opgeoffir om ontrenkingsintome te voorkom. Maar dit was nie

nodig nie want 'n annir ylandir kry toe sommir die simtome en sy gooi so 'n piekante tantrim in die gang. Toe is almal wakkir en eet ons maar nog tjoklits en drink kouk.

Ma hier is sikke skoenlappirs oppie yland wat nie hier moet wees nie. Dis die pyntit lydie *Vanessa cardui*. Een dag toe ons gan om insekti te vang toe sien ons een van hille vlieg en traai dit met kaalhandi vang. Dis nou nie dat hille gevaarlik is nie dis net dat dit maklikir is met 'n net Ma. Gelukkig is die mense wat onnir die maaiers bly nie meer so aktief nie maar ons het tog baie moeg geraak. Ons het nadrand in skofte geharkloop ek en die mysie saam met wie ek werk. As ek spoed virloor dan skree sy nee hardloop. Toe voel ek weer tys soos innie armie Ma. Die baie komplekse mense het 'n mot in die berge gekry en toe dink hille hille gan beetir doen en dit vang met hille baakies. Toe gooi hille hille rigsakke af en maak gereed maar al die tyt was die mot dood. As hy gelewe het sou hy lekkir vir hille gelag het.

Die donkirkamir mysie en die lyer werk baie goed saam Ma ampir soos 'n boetie en sissie want die een het 'n linker bryn en die annir ene 'n regtir bryn. Dit beteekin die een sien auras en feekies en die annir een is 'n biekie meer pirfeksjoenisties en sal praat oor hoe vinnig die ysberge sal smelt of beweeg asgevolgvan 'n tiepe kouewatirbalon wat om dit vorm maar ek dink dit hang maar af van hoe vinnig die eskimoos roei Ma.

Met my werk gan dit goed maar ai Ma dissie maklik om my niese babakies tissen die snotvrot kelp te soek elke dag en hille te weeg en meet nie. Dis nou die kelpvlieg babakies Ma maar hille is nog nie vlee nie hille is nou eers sikke ampirsooswirms goekies. Latir gan hille doppe omkry dan noem mens hille papies maar as hille dan daar ytkom Ma dan is hille regtig vlee. Ma weet mos hoe werk sikke dinge. Kelpvlee is nogal snaakse dinge hille laat nie op hille wag om paarkies te maak nie en dan lê hille yhirs soos amminiesie bande. Daar is so baie dat mens die eerste en die tweede wêreld oorlog daarmee sou kon wen.

In my frye tyt doen ek en die mediek sikke koeng foe dinge dis mos nou nie kamasoetra nie Ma maar die annir ding. Dit is Tae Bo maar mens sê dit taai bou want dit maak jou boude taai. Ek dink dis in sjienees gespel en hille sikkal om reg te spel want hille oo maak nie heeltemal oop nie Ma. Die ou wat dit aanbied is die wêreld kampiejoen in maarsjil arts en hy sê work on thi ass bybie work on the ass. Die annir sê hy sê yntlik abs maar dis mos nie 'n woord wat mens sommir ken nie Ma. Ons steen en kreen nogal en hy sê poesh jorself for one hour baby dan sit ons oppie grond en lig ons bene en oefin sommir solank vir la maas klasse ok Ma.

Hier was 'n donnirby en dis nou darim nie 'n ylien by nie Ma want dis dieselle blikstrale as daar by jille. Ai Ma die lyer het ok nou toegegee en eet aspersies saam met die annir. Dit is silke pap wit stingils goed wat yntlik vir bokki bedoel is maar hier kan ons nie kieskeurig wees nie Ma weet mos. Verder eet ons darim oraait want van die mense maak fênsie kos soos in restoeranti. Sikke vlys met krimmils om en kaas en pynappil want dan wannir ons hystoe gan dan lyk dit darim nie asof ons niks gewoont is nie. En Ma weet mos dit is nou al min dae vir ons maar darim nog nie foty days nie. Sien Ma hier word ons nie nafi soos innie armie nie want hier is te veel intresanti dinge. Ons kry nie eers altyt tyt om te bad nie so nou is daar by die kosmaak roostir ok 'n roostir wat sê wannir jy verplig is om te bad. Maar sê vir boetie hy moenie worrie ek sal nie by die hys ok so maak nie.

Groetnis Kleinsus

This is a letter from an islander to a parent. It is humorous because sometimes Kleinsus understands better than other people and sometimes she doesn't. Enjoy.

Erika

Weather statistics for the month:

Highest Pressure	1025.3 Hpa
Lowest Pressure	980.7 Hpa
Average Pressure	1008.9 Hpa
Maximum Temperature	18.3°C
Minimum Temperature	1.8°C
Average Maximum Temperature	12.1°C
Average Minimum Temperature	4.3°C
Average Temperature	8.8°C
Total Rainfall	287.7 mm
Total Sunshine	120.2 hours
Maximum Windgust	114 km/h

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Thank you! Marion would not have been the same without your support!



Prince Edward Island at sunset