

# Gough Bunting

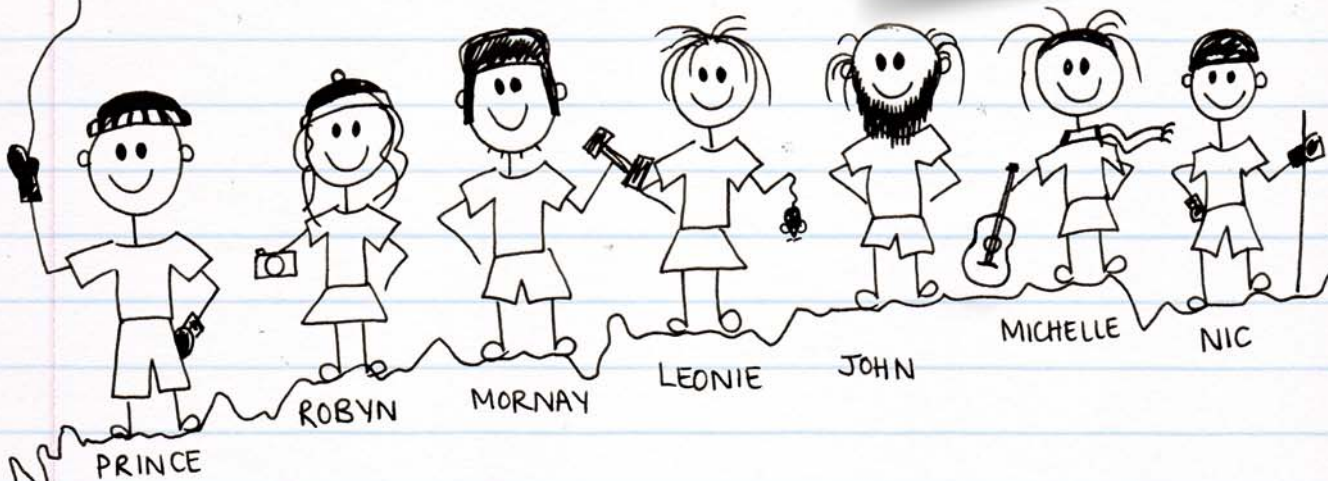
Issue 10: August 2011



Next month will be our final issue, so if you'd like to pose any questions to the team, please contact us before 31<sup>st</sup> August and we'll publish our responses in Issue 11!

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GOUGH  
56





# Gough Bunting

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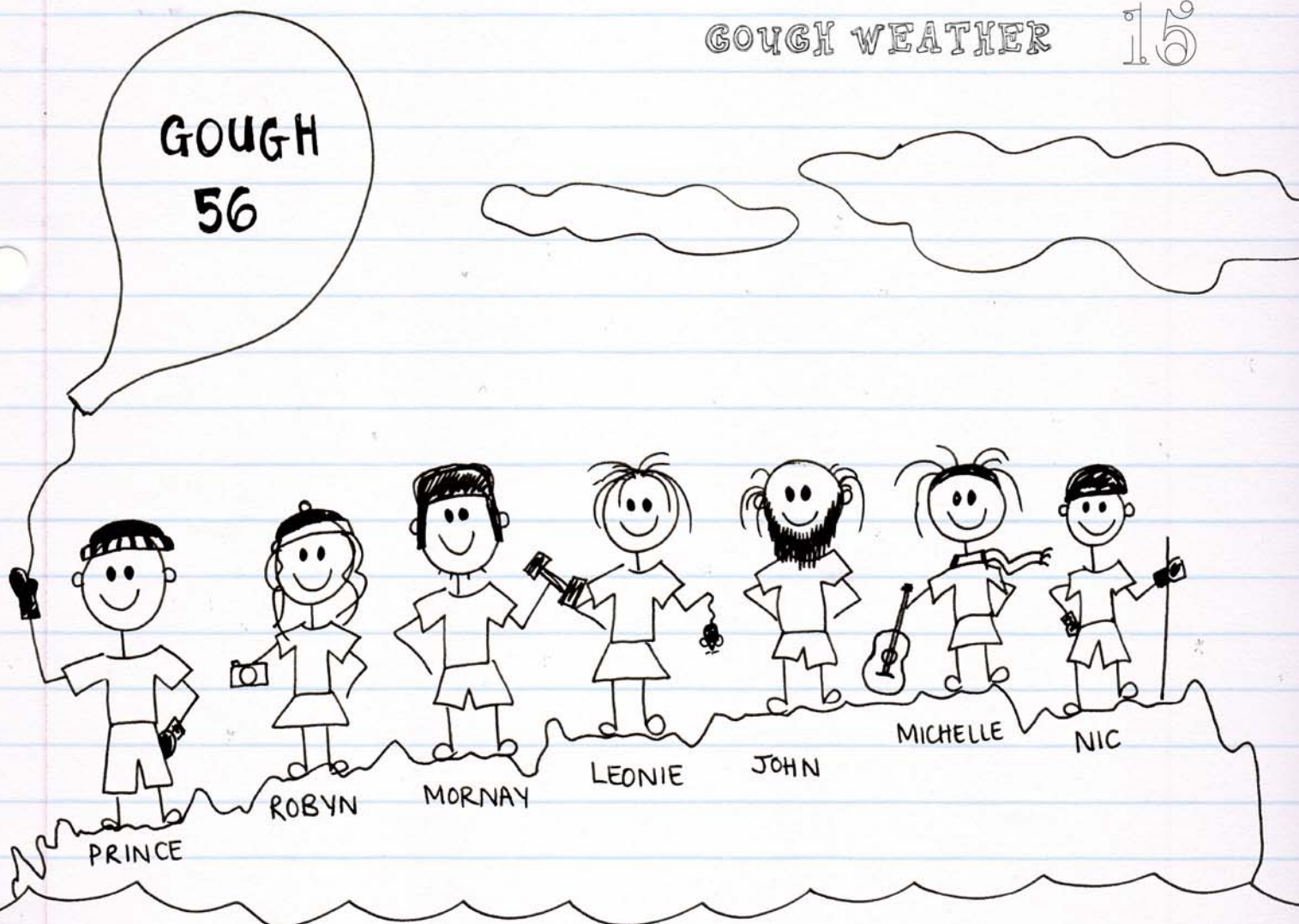
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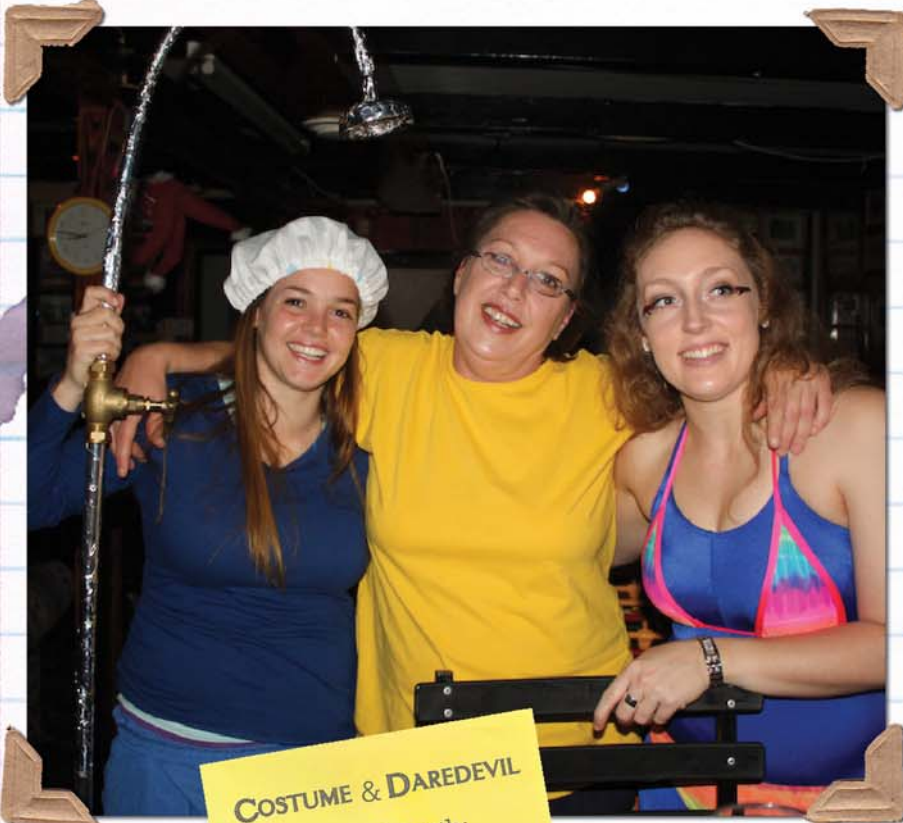




From the Met Office...

# "Four Seasons" in One Day

STORY & PHOTOS by  
MICHELLE STEENKAMP  
ADDITIONAL PHOTOS by  
LEONIE OLIVIER & ROBYN KNIGHT



While training at the South African Weather Service (SAWS) in Pretoria, we'd started humming numerous "weather songs" and decided then and there that, during our year on the island, if time and spirit allowed, we'd host a weather party for the team. Almost exactly a year later it was time to celebrate the fact that Gough Island is home to a significant meteorological base.

Surrounded by our very own rainbow, sun, wind, clouds, lightning and even a shower, it was like "Four Seasons in One

COSTUME & DAREDEVIL  
of the Month:

Robyn,  
the Rainbow



Antarctic  
at 2011







Day". We once again kept the bar up until the early hours of the morning, humming and doing the exclusive penguin dance to well-suited songs like "Walking on Sunshine", "Singing in the Rain", "Somewhere Over the Rainbow", "Island in the Sun", and "Riders on the Storm". And, once again, the team joined in for the midnight ascent of the weather balloon. After many more rounds of cheating cards and many laughs, we'd done a good job of showing the island how to always take the "Weather With You".



### QUOTES FROM THE OCCASION

"Ek gaan 'A\$\$hole van die Jaar' wees" - Leonie

"Suck cork" - Prince

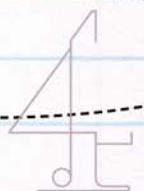
"No one likes a person who finishes too soon" - Nic

"I don't have space in my outfit for a steak" - Robyn

"Gezonk in die punjab" - Leonie

"Julle het dan gesê ek mag lieg!" - Leonie

"Let's play 'Blow the Cork'" - Michelle





# Tafelkoppie POPPIES

[For Christine & Antoinette]

by LEONIE OLIVIER with PHOTOS by the OTHER TWO POPPIES



"The hills are alive with the sound of music...". No, the hills were alive with the sound of Michelle singing, Robyn laughing and me walking, crawling and falling.

So we reached the summit of Tafelkoppie after four hours, with Michelle pulling and Robyn pushing. Greeted by a breathtaking view devoid of a single sound and with the base just a white speck in the distance, I too was crowned a Tafelkoppie Poppie. Toasted cheese sandwiches, Fritos, Jelly Babies, chocolate and water, with a lunchtime view of Penguin Island, became the "Meal of the Month". Certain traditions were kept in place, and without me suspecting anything I followed the route Michelle led me on to get to know the top of the mountain. With no word of warning I had sunk away to almost hip-height in a mat of bog and moss. Thank you Robyn for capturing the moment on video; fortunately we don't need to sensor the dialogue as the laughter is the only thing that can be heard.

After getting to know the whole of the top of Tafelkoppie, I could experience the rapidly changing weather and within minutes it was time to head back to base. Covered in mud, and with aching knees, healthy exhaustion and a raging



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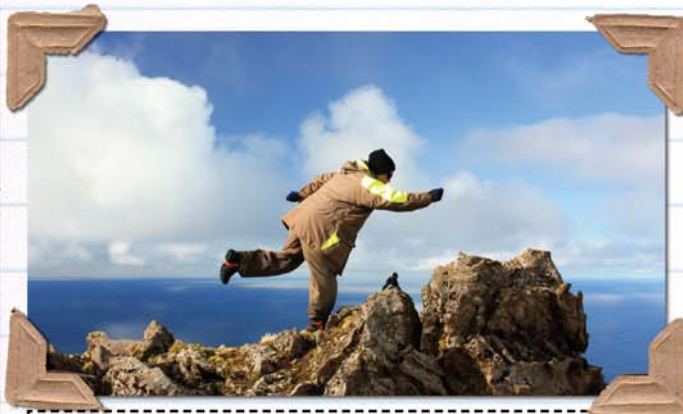




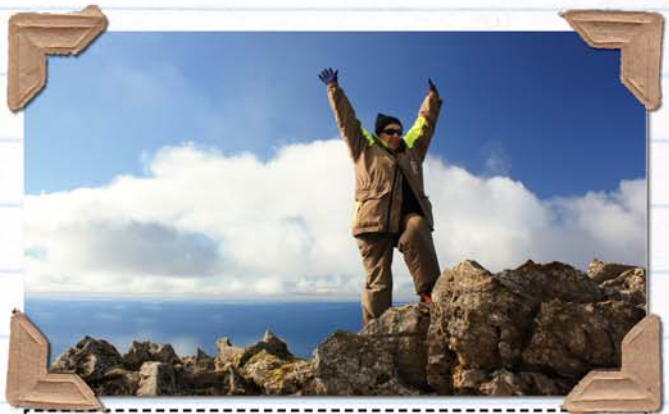
*Leonie being coaxed up the hill with the use of her prized celery!*

hunger, we arrived safely back at the base. Thank you Michelle and Robyn for making my day a splendid one!

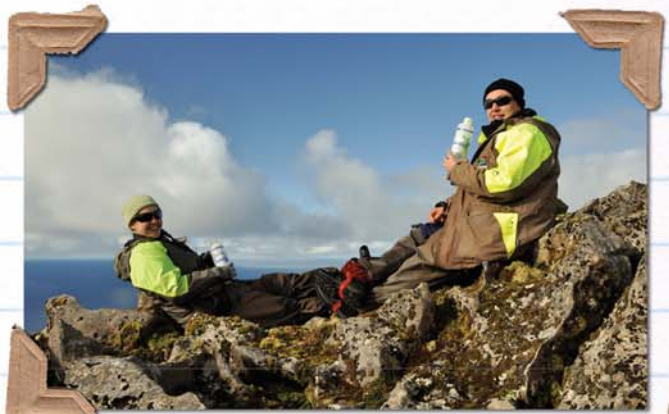
"Climb every mountain, search high and low, follow every byway, every path you know...". In my soul I felt the strength and love of my two wonderful sisters.



*From Leonie: "For Vickus"*



*From Leonie: "For my sisters, Christine and Antoinette"*









# LOST Love Letters

✿ Names have been obscured to protect identities

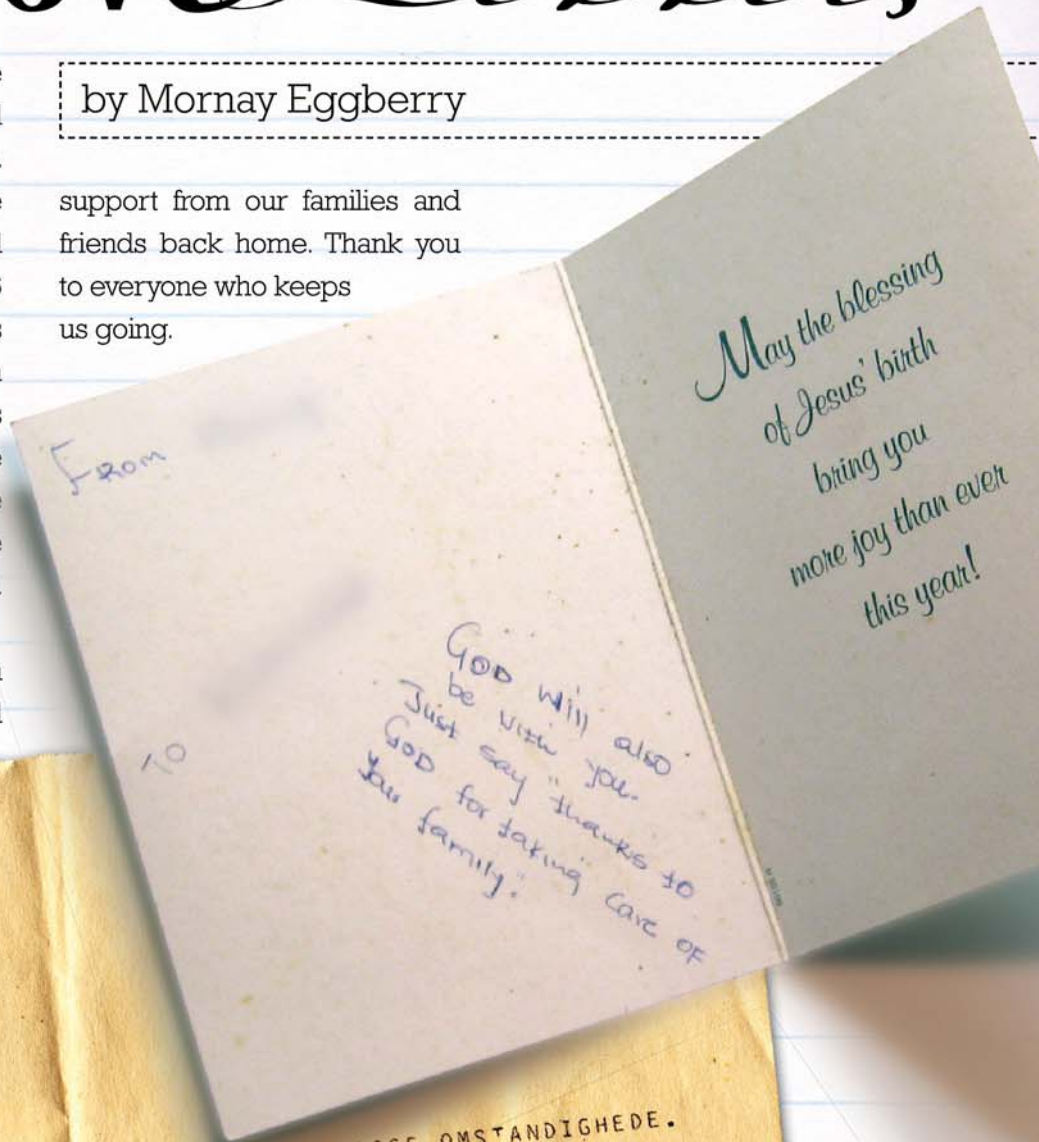
A spring-cleaning spree turned into a historical expedition this month.

While fixing empty rooms in the base, we came across cards and letters that date back to 1986 (letters that are only months younger than our youngest team member). Included is news from home that was sent to the island via telex. Those were the days when they didn't have the luxuries of internet on the island.

So it is that we realise once again the importance of contact and

by Mornay Eggberry

support from our families and friends back home. Thank you to everyone who keeps us going.



ZCZC 050 01928  
AAGE19 FAHQ 051044  
PG 099

29 DESEMBER 1986

JOU TOEKOMSPLANNE? LOGIESE UITVLOEISEL VAN HUIDIGE OMSTANDIGHEDE.  
JAAR IS LANK. AS JY RIAAN WAS, SOU EK BANG WEES JY WORD HEELTEMAL  
WILD, MAAR JY IS N MENSE MENS. HY IS ALTYD OP DIE VLUG HARDLOOP WEG  
VIR HOMSELF. HY IS WAARLIK N EENSAME OU.

WERNER BEL GEREELD VAN KUIER IS NIE SPRAKE NIE.  
HIERS N KOPER VIR JOU BAKKIEENJIN. LAAT MAAR GAAN, KOM JY TERUG KOOP  
JY TOG IETS MOOIS.

NUUS: OU EMELY HET NUWE DIK EMELY UITGEBOER. ISAK LYK TEVREDE. AS  
SY KOM WERK GAAN EK VIR N MAAND OP MY BED LE EN BOEK LEES.

VERLANG NA REEN, BONE EN SONNEBLOMME KOM DAREM OP. SUSERN MOET GESNY  
KOM.

KIREKET SPRINGBOKKE VAAR NIE TE SLEG. GOEIE TV DEKKING. PA GENIET  
DIT. ANDER WERK HY KOM KADUKS.

LOS A TT KY AN KINDOM ALKOHOLISTE. JY NIE NODIG, MAAK IN ELK  
E GEVAL MENS SE OE OOP VIR PROBLEME.

ONS EET EEN MAAL PER DAG. MAERWORD. DOOD GAAN MY VOORLAND  
MA



# FROM THE LAB

by **NICHOLAS LE MAITRE**  
with **ADDITIONAL PHOTOS** by **MICHELLE STEENKAMP**



*An Atlantic petrel (Pterodroma incanta) in its burrow.  
Photo: Nic Le Maitre*

The major activity this month has been burrow-scoping Atlantic petrel burrows to recover GLSs deployed last year. GLSs are small trackers that can be attached to a bird's leg. Each tracker has a clock and a small light-sensitive photo diode which records the amount of daylight. This allows the determination of longitude and latitude to within a degree or two. By recovering and downloading the recorded data from each GLS it is possible to determine where the Atlantic petrels have been since they left at the beginning of 2011. This is very interesting because it is the first time these birds have been tracked and where they go has been a mystery. Hopefully by next month, the data will have been processed and all will be revealed.

With the return of the Atlantic petrels, it is time to do the burrow counts. We have three transects marked out in the areas around the base. Each transect is a line, about 140m long. The transect



line is divided up into 10m x 10m quadrants which fall on alternate sides of the transect line like the black or white squares on a chessboard. Each quadrant must be carefully checked and the number of burrows and their size recorded. Atlantic petrel burrows that show signs of occupancy such as freshly dug earth or cleared entrances are checked with the burrow-scope to verify the presence of an adult. Using this data and that from previous years it is possible to determine the approximate number of Atlantic petrels on Gough and whether the population is increasing or decreasing.

The second captive husbandry trial concluded this month, the moorhens from the large aviary being released on the 8<sup>th</sup>. None seemed any the worse for wear, although on average they had lost about 15% of their capture weight.



*Gough Bunting*  
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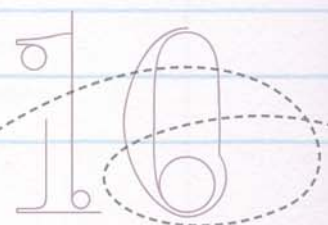




# WEIGHTWATCHERS

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY LEONIE OLIVIER

The nutritional facts on a box should just tell you the amount of exercise needed to burn off what you are about to eat. And what we lack in nutritional value here we make up in exercise by pushing the trolley up from the main food store to the pantry. As you can see from the photos, the G56 team is healthy and strong!









# HOMIE IMPROVEMENT

BY JOHN MCLINDEN WITH PHOTOS BY LEONIE OLIVIER

This month was a busy one. Mornay and Leonie have taken it upon themselves to do improvements to the bedrooms and to give them a good spring-clean before Take-Over. This will make it more homely for the visitors. Mornay is a slave-driver and he pushes Leonie and himself quite hard to get the jobs

done, and as a result, the rooms are looking a lot better.

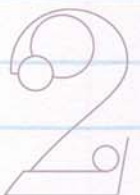
Apart from that, the water-line from the river to the base burst, and once again Mornay got soaked rejoining the pipe. The normal maintenance is carried out as per schedule.



Guess who sleeps in THIS room...



Leonie and Mornay have also been finishing off the new outside bar area, and it's looking awesome! Photo: Michelle Steenkamp





# THE WALL OF ~~FAME~~ SHAME

## **MOUSE-HUNTER** of the Month:

Schmonie - 101 mice (Base: 72 • Food Store: 23 • Workshop: 6)

## **MOUSE-FIGHT** of the Month:

Mice: 2 - Mornay's toes: 0 (the ultimate stand-off)

## **MEAL** of the Month:

John's Pig Bum • Nic's Chicken • Leonie's Sweet 'n' Sour "Blue Fish"

## **DESSERTS** of the Month:

Michelle's Hat Trick: Crème Brûlée, Ice Cream & Chocolate Sauce,  
and Vanilla Pudding with Custard

## **DOUBLE CHEF** of the Month:

Michelle, who turned her Chicken Pie into a braai!

## **EMPLOYEEE** of the Month:

Nic, for baking our favourite apple tart TWICE in one month, and for being the tea-maker after dinner.

## **MACGYVER** of the Month:

Michelle, for her drink-flystopper

## THE DARWIN AWARD

### "DUMB AND DUMBER II"

Robyn and Nic drank dishwater. Need we say more? (For those who are truly concerned, we don't have much longer to go and the rest of the team is certain these two's mental states will hold out at least until the ship arrives. Hey, at least it wasn't bath water.)





next

# THE WALL OF ~~FAME~~ SHAME

## QUOTES FROM A GAME OF "PRESIDENTS AND ASSHOLES"

"I have everything anyone could ever want in the palm of my hand.  
But I'm not God; who am I?" - Robyn

"I'm the a\$\$hole" - Robyn

"I've got a higher ace" - Michelle

"To you, your clockwise is different" - Prince

"There's never luck in my draw(er)" - Michelle

"It's the printer. The printer makes the people look worried" - Robyn

"I got a high-five from an a\$\$hole and  
now my hand's a sphincter" - Michelle

"Good song; does anyone get excited?" - Robyn

"I'm not used to such slow a\$\$holes" - Michelle

"What is the song they sing at the president's incarnation?" - Michelle

## OTHER QUOTES FROM THE MONTH

"'n Jou-kie Sip vi jou" - Robyn, in her  
best 'Cape Coloured' accent

"Cutlery that's been in everyone's feet" - Michelle





# GOUGH WEATHER

## • JULY CLIMATE STATS •

Ave. Max Pressure	:	1018.0 hPa
Ave. Min Pressure	:	1010.6 hPa
Ave. Pressure	:	1014.3 hPa
Max Pressure	:	1039.1 hPa
Min Pressure	:	994.8 hPa
Ave. Max Temp	:	12.7 °C
Ave. Min Temp	:	8.8 °C
Ave. Temp	:	10.8 °C
Max Temp	:	16.5 °C
Min Temp	:	5.7 °C
Max Sea Temp	:	13.6 °C
Min Sea Temp	:	11.7 °C
Ave Humidity	:	80 %
Max Humidity	:	95 %
Min Humidity	:	53 %
Max Wind Gust	:	34.3 m/s or 123.5 km/h
Total Rainfall	:	130.4 mm
Highest in 24 Hours	:	38.2 mm
Total days with rain	:	27 days
Total days > 1mm	:	19 days
Total Sunshine	:	65.0 hours

Compiled by Prince Mlongwana



# SPONSORS

The Gough 56 team would like to thank Exclusive Books for their kind donation of three large boxes of books, as well as Backsberg Wine Estate for the wine we received. Their contributions have definitely helped make us feel like we're at home away from home.

ANNO *B* 1916  
**BACKSBERG**  
ESTATE CELLARS

EXCLUSIVE BOOKS

Designed and edited by Robyn Knight  
Translations and cover illustration  
by Michelle Steenkamp

If you have any comments or queries about any of the content of this newsletter, or any suggestions for following issues, please contact us:

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