



Hi Everyone,

The holiday season has come and gone and what a fantastic season we had. The weather was, for the most part, amazing and in spite of the obvious problems with have with potholes, the majority of our visitors had a wonderful time. The feedback I received from family and friends was that Southbroom is the best, especially during this busy season and many are seriously considering investing in property.

We must congratulate all our volunteers who gave up their time to ensure services were operating and also our local businesses who went the extra mile to make our visitors feel welcome. These little things make all the difference.

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: FEBRUARY 2015**

### **AGM**

The AGM held on 20 December 2014 was well supported, and a copy of my report is included in this newsletter for the benefit of those who were unable to attend. We were pleased to meet most of our 2014 objectives, and with the exception of Joy Crutchfield, who retired after many years' service, the entire committee was re-elected.

There were very few complaints from ratepayers, and the meeting approved a proposal for the Conservancy to remove the alien pine trees in Southbroom Avenue and replace them with indigenous trees.

I am pleased to report that we already have 335 paid up members, and I thank many of the ratepayers who have paid donations in addition to the subscriptions.

### **Roads**

- The upgrade of the walkway on Captain Smith road was completed.
- The rehabilitation of Link Road is currently under evaluation by the HCM Treasury Department and will soon be going to Bid Evaluation Committee and Adjudication committee for consideration.
- HCM have not had a contractor appointed to fix the potholes for several months, because there was an objection to the tender for the appointment of contractors, and the tender was re-advertised. HCM have agreed to start pothole repairs in mid-February with their internal teams.
- We attended a meeting with SANRAL on 12 February to ascertain the impacts from the proposed construction of a new toll road from Southbroom to Port Edward. SANRAL advised when this road is constructed they plan to close the southern access to Southbroom and construct a flyover at the northern entrance (where the present traffic lights are). However, the earliest start date for construction will not be until 2017.

## **Town Planning**

We had a meeting with the HCM Senior Manager of Planning to discuss the following areas which have been problematic for some time:

- Berea Road – Encroachment by property owners have resulted in very dangerous road corner
- Exeter Road – The owner has constructed an illegal shack which encroaches onto the Bush Buck trail
- South Ridge Road – The owner has constructed an illegal third floor
- Outlook Road – The owner has commenced building without approval.

HCM have agreed to take legal action against the offenders

*Brian Thompson - Chairman*

## **THE WRECK OF THE *FASCADALE***

On Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February a good crowd braved the threatening weather to gather at The Outlook to commemorate the day 120 years ago when the Fascadale was wrecked on the rocks below what is today The Admiralty. David Holt-Biddle told the gathering the following story:

*It was a dark and stormy night, the sixth/seventh of February, 1895. It was as black as hell, a wild south-easter was howling and the rain was torrential. "A living gale and the rain, it was coming down in bucketfuls..." said one eye witness. It was through this horror that the four-masted sailing barque, the Fascadale, with a crew of about 28 souls was on route from Java, Mauritius and Durban for Lisbon with a cargo of 3,000 tons of sugar. In command was Captain Robert James Gillespie, although it's not certain that he was actually on hand when disaster struck.*

*At about 2:30 on that dark, awful morning, at the height of the storm she ran onto the rocks over there and broke her back. It must have been hell out there. They wouldn't have known what they had struck or where exactly on the coast they were, there would have been general panic, the men on the stern end not able to reach the men in the bow. Some men were washed ashore. One, a seaman named Bloom, clung to a piece of wreckage and made it alive to the beach, at least two others didn't and were washed up dead.*

*By daybreak at about five the storm had eased somewhat and help was at hand in the shape of the Royal Mail Ship, the Norham Castle, which was steaming for Durban under the command of Captain Robert Duncan. They were further out to sea, but by telescope they could see the Fascadale on the rocks and survivors clinging to both the stern and the bow sections. Duncan brought the Norham Castle in closer and had two life boats launched, which in itself must have been a major task in those seas. With great displays of heroism, they managed to get 18 men off the stern section, but could not get to those in the bow.*

*Meanwhile, there was help on its way on land too. Apparently the first to hear of the wreck of the Fascadale was a Mr Barton (later Dr Barton), who immediately sent for local trader/farmer C.H. Mitchell (more of him in a moment). They rushed down to the beach and were there by about eight o'clock.*

*I must pause in the narrative for a moment to point out that the Lower South Coast was a very different place 120 years ago. None of this was here, except Port Shepstone, of course, which had been a busy little harbour and town since 1880. Otherwise, there was very little in the way of*

settlement along the coast. So the fact that there was anyone at all on the beach that morning is rather surprising.

Anyway, back to the little crowd that is now gathering. There's Mr Mitchell and Mr Barton, some local tribesmen who must have been attracted by the fuss, survivor Seaman Bloom, and soon two mounted policemen from their station at what is now San Lameer arrived, along with someone who had been spending the night with them. All sorts of things started happening now. Two of the men from the police station rode off to Port Shepstone to alert the authorities. The Norham Castle's boats had failed in their attempt to get the five or so men of the Fascadale's bow, so they were now the centre of attention. Their only chance was to swim for it, but, to quote Mitchell, "Their chances looked bad as the sea was fearfully rough and the coastline was a mass of rocks".

One of the men on the beach, the remaining man from the police station, grabbed a rope, tied it around him (Mitchell had brought ropes down from his store) and began to make his way out towards the swimmers who had plunged off the wreck, to be joined by a couple of the locals and Mitchell. Between them they managed to get all five men ashore safely, if somewhat battered, another remarkable feat of heroism. Mitchell took the survivors (and we now tally about 24 men, thus leaving perhaps four dead) back to his trading station at Bushy Vales and fed them and clothed them. Days later they were loaded on a wagon and dispatched to Port Shepstone, where they took ship to Durban. Those on the Norham Castle were taken to Durban, of course, where the Fascadale's company, without its ship, was reunited.

The British Board of Trade Court of Inquiry into the wreck of the Fascadale found that the weather had indeed been foul on the night of the wreck, but that the ship's navigational aids were all in order and that human error was to blame. However, that's the Board of Trade Court of Inquiry's report, the story as told by the rescuers on the beach and on the Norham Castle, as related in the Times of London, the Daily Telegraph and by the Reuters news agency, tells a story of heroism and courage and sheer guts.

There's a nice little local twist here. C.H. Mitchell was Charles Henry Mitchell, trader and farmer in the Bushy Vales district and father of Douglas Mitchell who took over the farm, who was in turn father of Terry Mitchell, who still farms at Bushy Vales. The original Mitchell, the one on the beach, bought the wreck of the Fascadale from Lloyds of London and built a homestead with the timbers – that homestead still stands, much changed, and is lived in by Terry Mitchell's daughter and son-on-law. A long and proud Mitchell history.

So here's to the Fascadale, her crew and the heroic rescuers.

David Holt-Biddle

David orchestrated the whole thing perfectly, just as he finished his story, the storm broke, the heavens opened and everyone ducked for cover. Thank you David for a very entertaining evening.

## **CONSERVATION MATTERS – SOUTHBROOM CONSERVANCY**

The Southbroom Conservancy held their AGM on 7th January 2015. Those that did not attend missed an informative and interesting talk by Yvette Ehlers who gave a presentation on her PhD thesis including the photos of the animals she captured in Southbroom. Peddy Bam remains in the Chair, the full list of new committee members will be updated on the website shortly.

The Conservancy have plans to enhance the main beach surrounds by planting some palms and they are also planning a running trail in Southbroom.

During the April holidays there will be a guided walk through the Frederika Preserve at 9am on Saturday 4th April. Meet at Woodlands Road end of trail.

Please report any unusual sightings and send photographs where possible, of animals i.e. impala, red duiker, spotted neck otter or snakes to Peddy Bam. 0827713158

## REMOVAL OF ALIEN VEGETATION

It was agreed at both the Southbroom Ratepayers AGM and the Conservancy AGM that the alien pines in Southbroom Avenue would be removed, contractors have now started and many of the pines have already been removed. As there appears to be a little confusion around the rules pertaining to the removal of trees and vegetation we asked Anne Skelton to clarify – see report from Anne below:

*The legalities of trees and their removal and pruning get quite complicated. The Forests Act, Biodiversity Act and the KZN Provincial Ordinance are all involved.*

*A good rule of thumb is "All indigenous trees are protected and some are Specially Protected." These would be the ones on the list attached. It details the trees, relevant to our area, that are on the Protected list. I have also grouped them according to habitat preference. The number before the Botanical name is the National Tree List number. These trees may NOT be interfered with in any manner without **written permission** from the DEA. Application can be made on the prescribed form. I will send a copy on request.*

*Any other indigenous trees especially those on Admiralty or Conservation or Open space areas are also protected and one is unlikely to get authority to remove them without a very good reason. Improving your view is not considered a good reason. However a small amount of judicious pruning by a qualified person could be entertained. If there is a tree that is really getting up your nose – speak to the conservancy. On your own land you may prune or remove as your conscience allows, if the tree is not on the NFA list.*

*Obviously any Aliens you may remove with impunity - more strength to your arm. The main culprits here are Syringa Melia, Pines Pinus, Gums Eucalyptus, Pepper trees Schinus, Screw pines Pandanus, Norfolk Pines Auricularia, and Bugweed Solanum.*

*The trees that we intend to use as replacements for the pines on Southbroom Avenue are listed below. Page references in the 2 most widely used tree books given too.*

		Trees of Natal	Pooley's Trees
Cape Chestnut	<i>Calodendrum capense</i>	p186	p204
Fluted milkwood	<i>Chrysophyllum viridifolium</i>	p388	p446
Copperstem Corkwood	<i>Commiphora harveyii</i>	p192	p214
Pondo fig	<i>Ficus bizanae</i>	p 68	p 72
Pondo bushmans tea	<i>Lydenburgia(Catha)abbottii</i>	p272	p304
Peacock berry	<i>Margaritaria discoidea</i>	p210	p250

They are all stately trees, 3 evergreen, 2 semi deciduous, 1 deciduous and flower or fruit at different times of the year. List of protected trees attached

## SNARE PATROL

Southbroom Conservancy have one dedicated officer who patrols our plots and bush areas tirelessly. Of late there has been an increase in snares found, particularly in the Mendip, Taunton and Devizes roads areas. On one particular day, 7 snares were found. If compared to the average 3/4 we find in a week over a larger area, this was a very alarming find. There is a trend to the handiwork of these snares; not only do these people mean business but it appears there are about 5 different parties setting them and a pattern is noted as to when and where they are found. These poachers also tirelessly do the rounds hunting our buck and sometimes bring in young children to chase them into the direction of the snares. The Conservancy desperately needs extra eyes and thus need to raise funds to purchase their own cameras to this end.

For those of you who are not yet members of the Southbroom Conservancy then now is the time to sign up - your funds are greatly appreciated and needed in our efforts to preserve what we have. Also a reminder to current members

to please send in your annual membership contributions. Donations are also

gratefully received. For relevant details, please email me on:

[churashamba@telkomsa.net](mailto:churashamba@telkomsa.net) and I will make sure a form finds its way to you a.s.a.p. Should you have an empty stand or land next to you which you feel needs to be inspected, please contact me, Sharlene van der Slikke on the above email address with your request and address or contact me on the Patrol Hotline: 0823752993.

Three examples of the type of snares found:



**Leap Day for Frogs**

**"Frogs are Green Art Competition"**

Get creative for frogs this Leap Day for Frogs. We are inviting children in South Africa between 3 and 16 to send in their frog art by 28 February, to be judged to go forward to the international "Frogs are Green Art Competition" later in 2015.

All art forms are welcome, including drawing, painting and sculpture.  
Age categories: 3-6, 7-9, 10-12 and 13-16 years.  
Entries must include Full Name, Age and Town, Province.  
Prizes will be awarded for each age category.

Entries can be made online on the Leap Day for Frogs facebook page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/764437460251549/> or at participating schools

 **ENDANGERED WILDLIFE TRUST**  
[www.ewt.org.za](http://www.ewt.org.za)

 **Leap Day for Frogs**  
28 February  
[www.leapdayforfrogs.org.za](http://www.leapdayforfrogs.org.za)

**SOUTHROOM WEBSITE:** [www.southbroom.org](http://www.southbroom.org)

We are in the process of updating the website and surprisingly have found that many people are not aware we have a website, if you get a chance have a look.

A lot of the information is out of date, especially the business listing which is having a total overhaul but we would welcome any suggestions for improvement.

Remember this is primarily the Southbroom Ratepayers and community website, not a “bells and whistles” tourism site but we will have up to date links to relevant sites including tourism.

If you have a business within Southbroom but have not been contacted to confirm your listing please send details to: [southbroom.rpa@gmail.com](mailto:southbroom.rpa@gmail.com) .

To qualify for a free listing on the website you must be a member of Southbroom Ratepayers Association. Advertising can be arranged at an annual fee of R1200-R2000pa

Remember you can keep up to date with everyday happenings by joining our Facebook group “Southbroom News Updates” and please send any suggestions to [southbroom.rpa@gmail.com](mailto:southbroom.rpa@gmail.com).

Complaints regarding HCM services should be sent to [services@hcm.gov.za](mailto:services@hcm.gov.za) with a copy to the above SRA address so that the relevant committee member can follow up with HCM.

Contact details for SRA, Conservancy, CPF, Tourism and sports club’s committees can be found on the website.

Southbroom Ratepayers Association

[www.southbroom.org](http://www.southbroom.org)

[southbroom.rpa@gmail.com](mailto:southbroom.rpa@gmail.com)