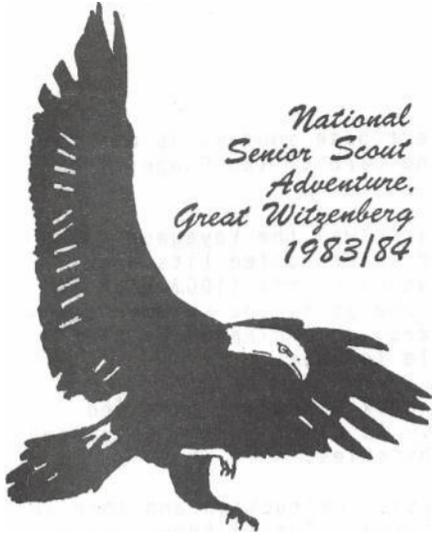


6th NATIONAL SENIOR SCOUT ADVENTURE 1983/4

GREAT WITZENBERG

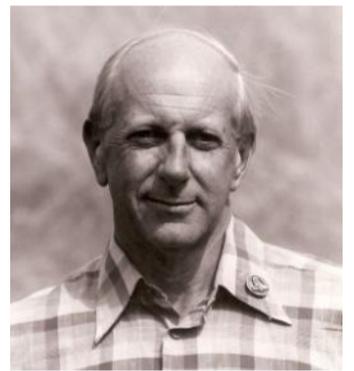


"The Adventure is a vindication of the Scout Movement said "The Argus". "All the Scouts are safe, yet working in hazardous conditions. There are so many things that could go wrong. It's discipline and good behaviour that pay off" continued the interview with an Adventure spokesman (Prof Elwyn Jenkins)

And indeed the Adventure, the sixth in the series, was the biggest and best application yet in South Africa of Scouting skills. All those years of Troop nights at the hall and of camps at Gilcape, Gilsands, the mountains or wherever, are preparation for an event such as this, where Scouting takes place in rugged territory with top-class activities in which to participate.

Scouts were attracted from all over South Africa and also from Zimbabwe, Transkei, South West Africa, Swaziland and even Britain, Australia, Canada and the United States. Truly, the Adventure's reputation has spread worldwide!

The Adventures, which have been held every two or three years since 1971, have each year followed a similar pattern, with the notable qualification that both the scale and standard improve with each Adventure. Patrols hike along trails and across mountains, and swim down rivers, to reach activity centres which they have selected from alternatives publicised to them many months before. Working out the several schedules, and matching road transport where necessary, is a complex and vital task which [Colin Ingles](#) has at every Adventure executed with great efficiency. These activity centres are staffed by experts in their fields. The Adventures enable the Scouts to put into practice the skills which they learn back home (e.g. Hiking, camping, pioneering and Map reading), on a big scale, in beautiful territory, and with the comradeship of the Patrol and the opportunity to meet fellow Scouts from other areas.



Over 100 volunteers staffed the activity centres and saw to the mammoth tasks involved in the logistics of ensuring that all participants received food supplies when they required them. Errol Kotze was Grubmaster; this unenviable task included being responsible for the ordering and packing beforehand. Other important tasks at Headquarters included responsibility for the headquarters camp (Richard Goldschmidt and Richard Knight), radio (Buzz Macey), and medical matters (Or Chris Rainier-Pope). Especial thanks due to Lt. Stoney Steenkamp of the SA Army. He and his men and equipment took away many of the hassles encountered on previous Adventures, such as transport.

A few words on each activity centre will be of interest.

Frank Flowers and his team ran the commando course (when they were not fighting the big bush fire). Patrols which survived this course next encountered a base where their kits were taken from them and they were instructed in, and had to live on, chicken (which had to be slaughtered first), edible roots and creatures of the veld. (As one Scout said "Ag sis, dis 'n akkedis!")

Paul Marsh was the archery Hood. The next base southwards was fox hunting (radio direction-finding), in the care of Tan Cooper from Transvaal.

An undoubted highlight for all participants was the Voyageur Expedition, i.e. swimming with lilos and waterproofed kits down the Visgat River Canyons.

With towering sandstone cliffs (100m high in places), the gorge is so narrow that at one point the swimmer can touch both banks simultaneously! Scouters, co-ordinated by Alex Jocheim, made sure that patrols were able to cope.

Donald Bradley taught the Scouts how to cook biscuits, pies and roasts, using reflector and Dutch ovens. At Cliff Turk's astronomy base he gave expert guidance on the night skies.



Peter Robbins, at canoeing base, gave basic instruction and then set the Scouts loose on an obstacle canoe course. The SA Army (our own Lt Peter Foster!) was responsible for the Marksmanship base. Patrols arriving at Denzil Roberts' base were given a choice of building an aerial runway, two bridge types, raft or other interesting pioneering projects.

Two new bases this year were:-

"The Witzenberg Tie and Lumber Company", where Chris Werth taught Scouts tree felling and logging and how to use irons to climb tall pine trees.

"Gold Rush" The gold prospecting base led by Howard Geach. Here Scouts learned to pack donkeys (named after former Chief Scouts!) and to pan for gold in the river.

Howard's charm persuaded the lady from "Die Burger" that it was real gold.



A very popular base was "Water activities", in the overall charge of Kuba Miszewski and assisted by (among others) Ken Newton, Stephen Schoeman, Tim and Andrew Bradley and Barry Page. Here Scouts went windsurfing, waterskiing and sailing. Finally the rock-climbing base was expertly run by members of the Mountain Club of South Africa.

The opening and closing campfires were memorable. Mickey Lowther's pageant brought the history of the Witzenberg to life. Goodenough Dlamini and his Zulus were stars with their songs and antics. The sight, at the close, of the flickering light of more than 600 candles, carried by Scouts dispersing to their campsite, was indeed stirring.

All tribute to Colin Ingles, whose brain child these Adventures have been. He worked long and hard to make this the outstanding success it was. The Adventure was well featured in "The Cape Times", "The Argus", "Die Burger" and "Herald" and on both TV 1 and TV 2.

KEVIN WALL
Cape Western Scouter