



**MAY 2005**

This year certainly came up to speed like a quarter horse on the main drag of a small town somewhere in the sticks. Like any flat out gallop it has been exhilarating, we are hoping that the rest of the year will be just as much fun.

Apart from all the old faces here at LVHS a couple of new ones joined us this season. Jacques the gentle giant took over from Marie as the camp manager and is doing an incredible job in the kitchen producing top quality dishes. Travis, an old farmhand and snake charmer to boot is the new guide - a most fortunate position that entails mostly making the life more comfortable for just about everyone else around. Don't worry Travis initiation lasts a year!

We are very excited about the eight hardy Boerperds from South Africa that have joined our team of veteran trail horses. They will soon be sent out on their first safari. We now have a formidable team of 39 of the best bush horses in Africa. The old boys came back from holiday in February and I have never seen a fatter lot anywhere. They apparently share our weakness for festive season over indulgence. It was with amazement that I discovered that my trail saddle had also lost a certain amount of comfort after not being used for a while. It is, however, good to be back in the saddle.



Game viewing has been great so far and we have seen some of the most amazing leopard sightings from horseback. We have also found a hyena burrow near Fort Jameson where two cubs are on guard every time we try to cross the Marshland. Zebra, wildebeest, waterbuck, giraffe, and elephant are literally on our doorstep because of the good fodder around our camp.

Our base camp, Fort Jamesons is looking beautiful after recent improvements. One of these is the cocktail bar at the stables where guests can now enjoy a refreshing G & T while watching the antics of their horse friends in the paddock. A new hide and waterhole and a discovery nature walk are going to be our new projects to be completed this year.

The Tuli Safari season is about to start and I would once again like to invite all our past and future friends to join us on one of these or one of our other very exciting rides.

From all of us at LVHS, keep your heels down and see you soon!

Kobus Haveman

## INTERESTING SIGHTINGS

- Monday, 14th February we cantered into a pride of lions lying at Moddergat North of Grahams tree. Luckily I looked down and saw their tracks, and as I pulled up coming around a shrub two lionesses scampered away from us, no less than 20 m away. We saw the third of the three generations 100 m further away, and had a relaxed view.
- Thursday 17th February we cantered with a herd of giraffes, in the open area just south east of Pole Hill.
- Friday 18th February we flushed a leopard on the banks of the Majale, west of Graham's tree, although only a few brief glimpses it was exciting as I was looking for one all morning long.
- Saturday 19th February we saw another two leopards. One in the morning and one in the afternoon, even more extraordinary thing was that she was sound asleep when I saw her lying in the shade of the Pitsane river bank, right next to the tall Lalla palm. In the afternoon Hanna spotted the female leopard that has her territory close to Fort Jameson, and with a military EYES RIGHT the rest of the group got to see her very relaxed and a mere 25 m away from us.
- Sunday 20th February we saw cheetah west of Pole Hill, possibly the culprit of a number of wildebeest kills (4) north of Nell's Vlei.