

Covering email:

From: Steve Spottiswoode [mailto:ss52@mweb.co.za] **On Behalf Of** sspotty@pixie.co.za
Sent: Thursday, June 13, 2019 10:50 PM
To: 'Steve Spottiswoode' <sspotty@pixie.co.za>
Subject: Hamerkop news and occupancy

Dear Hamerkop beneficiaries

The MCSA Joburg and Magalies sections are now on board with advertising unoccupied nights at Hamerkop to help their members to use Hamerkop and to help us keep the place occupied.

Attached are:

- A newsletter compiled and written by Karin
- A notice of the occupancy process for unoccupied nights.
- The flyer advertising the facilities

Judith Oppler will be the administrator of the system and will contact beneficiaries two months in advance of their weeks. If however you know before then that you will not be using all or part of your week, please let Judith (083-603-3667, hamerkopbookings@gmail.com) know two months ahead of time (if possible) if you will only be going out over the weekend or not at all. If your nights are taken up through the booking system and paid for, you will receive a credit for the income less administrative costs towards next year's levies.

For shorter notice, if you are not going all or most of the time, please use the Hamerkop Swapping WhatsApp group to make nights available to other beneficiaries.

Steve Spottiswoode
011-674-2980
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Hamerkop newsletter June 2019

Dear Beneficiaries, from Karin

SECURITY

The Hamerkop security code for the main house (4193) and for the gate padlock (3914) are advertised on the Hamerkop website - easy to put on your cell!

Incident Sunday night 19th May 2019, attempted break-in into main house just after 11pm.

Humphrey Farrer was in the house and Pretty Moyo was alone in her cottage - Aleck had gone to Zimbabwe to get his spousal visa (work permit through Pretty) organised - a slow process!

After unsuccessful entry into the house, the burglar tried to remove the wheels from Humphrey's car.

I am not aware of all the details other than that I was woken at about 11h30pm by Oracle Security (I am on their Hamerkop contact list) to ask for the Hamerkop gate code, which I gave but they seemed to be at the wrong gate - he mentioned a remote gate. Steve and I phoned Humphrey who gave us the message of burglary activity, Oracle security not being there yet. I phoned Oracle Security, was told that the control car had managed to get into Hamerkop property. I noticed various messaging on our Hamerkop WhatsApp group (Pretty, Gary, Aleck, Steve & I) where Gary had responded to Pretty's call for help. I informed them that Oracle Security was on Hamerkop property on their way to the house. Pretty then let me know that they (Oracle) had arrived at the house. Humphrey communicating with Steve that somebody tried to steal the wheels off his car, but were obviously disturbed and had gone, leaving car wheels behind, relief!

Great that Oracle Security was on the scene fairly quickly!

Problems the next day:

Humphrey was not to be persuaded to spend Monday night at the house

Next beneficiaries, Jannie and Ronelle Louw, did not answer their cells and reply to my verbal message. We subsequently discovered that they have sold this year's week to an MCSA member, who then informed us that she was not coming out this week - scared off by the attempted break-in.

Aleck was only coming back from Zimbabwe probably Wednesday, so Pretty ended up being alone in Hamerkop until Thursday.

For Pretty, locked as securely as possible in her cottage, phoning Oracle Security (landline 014-533-3726) when burglars are lurking around is dangerous, as the burglars may hear her and become aware of her presence?! So I contacted Oracle Security to ask if they have a cell number where she can WhatsApp or SMS them rather than phoning them. They do! I tested it out and they responded to me within 5 minutes, so Pretty has their cell, did also WhatsApp them, got a speedy response, and is now on their system, so they know her and where she is, when she calls them. The Oracle cell is 081-358-4032, you can WhatsApp or SMS them. I suggest to put both numbers on your phone.

So, after gaining permission from Mark Epstein, committee member in charge of Hamerkop security, I asked Oracle security to come out, check on house alarm which Pretty informed me, was not working. I asked for instalment of two remote panic buttons, one for Pretty and Aleck to share, and one for the main house beneficiary, to be able to take to bed with him/ her. The fixed panic button in the kitchen, is too far away to activate if there is burglary activity somewhere in the house.

Oracle Security sent their quote and did come around on Tuesday, according to Pretty checked house alarm, and promised to be back with the two remote panic buttons. Apparently the house alarm is fully functioning.

We received a very concerned WhatsApp from the RGKB (Rietfontein, Grootfontein, Kromriver, Buffelsfontein) WhatsApp group on Monday. They had heard about the Hamerkop attempted break-in, and wanted to help us, and gave various suggestions. Tuesday, Breytie Odendahl (cell 084-703-8208) from RGKB patrol and radio services, came to check on the non-functioning radio. The charger is not working properly, so he has took it with him promising a new charger soon at no charge for his services nor the new charger! He did show Pretty how the radio transmitter works, but she told me that she still does not know how to use it 😊!. So when Breytie comes again with the charger and new cord (still not delivered), he will show her and let her operate the radio herself, so that she can teach beneficiaries if they have not used a radio before, like myself!

I was told by Lindi Potgieter, one of the RGKB members, that the RGKB night patrol is very active and very effective, they will come straight away when called. They now have our gate code and so can enter the Hamerkop property when called.

Lindi has kindly sent us the protocol for emergencies, which we will ask one of the next beneficiaries to come out to Hamerkop to post on the Hamerkop noticeboard - also will be attached to this newsletter (if we don't forget!).

I did ask for Breytie to check if the mounted instructions on the wall on how to use the radio are correct. Apparently the radio must be on charge the whole time. Also the beneficiaries should take the evening security call with tannie Santie seriously, the RGKB needs to know if Hamerkop is occupied or not. The call-in time, according to Lindi is now 8h50pm.

It is a relief to know that the RGKB is caring of our Hamerkop beneficiaries, we are paid up members, we are part of them, they will help us when we need them! I was quite touched by Lindi's caring, supportive and useful messaging on my cell on Monday!

All the security measures should make us all safer, more prepared for emergencies, which does need to be in place in order for us all to feel more secure!

OCCUPANCY

Please fill in the weekly occupancy recording book? It is on the table below the noticeboard.

WATER_PRESSURE

Shower pressure has recently been exceedingly low. George Langmore, who stayed at Hamerkop a week ago, has managed to do a successful temporary procedure between tank and annex, and water apparently has been flowing well since.

DOMESTIC MATTERS – repeat from previous newsletter

A top loader washing machine was bought for Hamerkop and installed in the laundry, thank you Gary! Bed linen, bath mat and carpets for house 2nd bedroom have been purchased by Claudine and Judith, and have been labelled

A linen lock-up cupboard has been bought and transported to Hamerkop,

Next step is linen, bath mat and carpets to be taken out to Hamerkop and handed over to Pretty, Judith to give instructions how to deal with the bedding linen, Karin will make notes on it for the next newsletter 😊 -

Linen has been installed, a big job, the 2 double beds and 4 single beds have all been made with new sheets, pillow cases, blankets, duvet covers. An extra set of linen, for example to provide for rainy weather between occupancies is under Pretty's control in a lock-up cupboard in the laundry. Judith and Claudine have done a super job!

A steam iron has been purchased by Michelle van der Wiel - the linen does need ironing

The throws over the couches in the lounge look super. Please respect the ruling of no dogs on couches or beds!

Hamerkop Domestic House Rules – drawn up by the domestic subcommittee

You, the beneficiary, owner of your week, are responsible for any damage to, or misuse of Hamerkop, as is the case at any other timeshare or hotel.

If furnishings are messed up by dogs, babies, children, adults, wine and other beverages, the beneficiary will be fined a minimum of R500 per stain. Notices will be put up in the lounge reminding beneficiaries of this new ruling.

Pretty is not expected to clean up carpets and cushions soiled by dogs, babies or messy adults - this includes dog hair, which is hard to get out of the cushion covers. Owners of dogs, parents of babies and messy adults themselves are responsible for cleaning that sort of soiling.

Washing dog mess on carpets by hand recently caused damage to Pretty's back!

Only one set of clean linen is provided per week. If a change of linen is needed during your week, Pretty can be asked to wash the dirty linen at R50 per load. She can also be asked to do other washing at R50 per load. As this is not one of her regular duties these payments go to her directly. Please do not ask her to work outside of her domestic duty hours (remember that her domestic work is only part-time and her hours for such are clearly stated in the notice on the fridge).

Only Pretty may use the washing machine and only Pretty has access to the linen cupboard and machine washing powder.

Beneficiaries and their guests at the end of their stay, must please strip the bed they have slept in and leave the dirty linen next to their bed, so that it is clear which linen has been used and needs to be washed before the next beneficiaries arrive.

Pretty will communicate Hamerkop domestic needs either directly to the next beneficiary to come out or to me to pass on.

PRETTY & ALECK

As you know, Pretty is the caretaker of Hamerkop as well as having part-time cleaning duties which are described briefly on the fridge and Aleck has various maintenance duties.

Please do bear in mind that

- (i) Pretty is experienced in taking responsibilities and knows how to clean. Please do respect that. If people have any problems with her work or her cleaning methods, please pass your

suggestions on to me. I will discuss these with Claudine, Judith and Pretty. Thanks! Do consider that there may be a perfectly reasonable explanation for the house sometimes not to be in a tip top condition

- (ii) As with all of us, Pretty and Aleck may from time to time have some medical problems. They are not on a medical aid as that is very expensive! They use the local clinic. It is appreciated that various beneficiaries have helped them on occasion and taken Pretty to the doctor☺!
- (iii) They would appreciate some interest in their work from you, thank you!
- (iv) Any donations of wool, knitting needles and knitting patterns for Pretty to use would be most welcome! She knows how to knit and has already completed two teddy bears and a coffee bodem cosy! Knitting will provide extra income and use her other skills productively☺!

FIRE

Hose extension is now on the shopping list.

COMMUNICATIONS

Please if you are not taking up your Hamerkop week, or have done a swop, please put it on the Hamerkop Swop WhatsApp group, let Judith Oppler (083-603-3667, hamerkopbookings@gmail.com) know and also please let me (072-595-6991) know, so that I can inform Pretty?

Information on Hamerkop is on the [website](#). Hint Login: hamerkop, Password: ronniefox (note, all letters are lower case!)

Bring and braai Social braai at Hamerkop,

Saturday 26th January 2019, 5pm - was poorly attended, by 4 or 5 Hamerkop beneficiaries and 1 RGKB member, but a big success! Good contacts were made and we had a very sociable, fun braai! Various social environmental educational activities together with members of the valley were arranged and some have in the meantime happened ie.

- (i) Tree Course on Saturday 23rd March, Jad Ball's Hamerkop week - he kindly allowed us to use Hamerkop for the Tree ID venue and joined us in the course. I donated the Tree Course income, R1500, to the RGKB as they need the money for all the good work they do in the valley.
- (ii) Snake course/ lecture/ presentation by Jonathan Leeming on Saturday 27th April, 9-10am. There was so much interest from the community that our Hamerkop venue wasn't big enough, so the event was hosted at Utopia. Originally I was going to present a Grass ID course, but then noticed on the local Valleigenoot WhatsApp Group, that various people were killing snakes, obviously quite troubled by them, so Jonathan in his presentation introduced some sensible, new insights and advice!
- (iii) The grass ID course, the Wild Flower Walk, and a possible Alien Invasive plants presentation and action, events are planned in the future, in spring!

WORK HAPPENING AT HAMERKOP

Continued road maintenance

The big dead Acacia tree between the annex and main house has been cut down, hard work by Steve & Aleck, just the tallish stumps remain - any volunteers to cut those down? The dry wood and many dead branches were a fire hazard to the house and annex.

The cut down wood can be used in the fire place for warmth, rather not for braaing, as the wood burns down very quickly. Charcoal is better for braais! Please don't waste the wood on bonfires!

SIGHTINGS

At our Hamerkop week (week 17) we arrived on Thursday morning early, it was still dark. We were so excited seeing a porcupine running on the Hamerkop road in front of us, what a treat!. He also showed him/ herself side view, we saw his face nicely!

Other interesting sighting that same weekend was our son, daughter in law and grandson seeing bush babies during the day!!

The bush babies still live in the main house roof, they come out from various places in the late afternoon, not just the usual place above the back door leading out to the annex. They have no problem jumping to nearby trees from the main house roof, cutting away the dead tree between main house and annex does not worry them!

ALIEN INVASIVE PLANTS

Crofton weed at the base of Hamerkop, still needs some attention,.

We are now concentrating on a very invasive burr plant near the dam wall. Aleck has been working on both the burr weed and Crofton weed, also hopefully on the *Verbena brasiliensis* and bramble.

Kind regards,

Karin Spottiswoode - Cell 072-595-6991, Tel 011-674-2980

Hamerkop committee member -Alien Invasive Plant Control, Liaison with Pretty & Domestic Affairs
Assistant to Claudine & Occasional Hamerkop Newsletters

PS Please pass on any interesting Hamerkop information onto me for the next newsletter.