



# Gough Gazette

Edition 47 Volume 3



L-R: Lehlohonolo, Shadrack, Tshidi, Titus, Chris & Michael

## Our first team Birthday

That was one of the most tremendous, exciting months that I have had on the Island. This was the month when we celebrated a first birthday party on our own. The senior Metkassie Titus Ntatenyana Mosweu was the birthday boy. I was supposed to “compose” a cake for the party. Well! Baking a cake is not that easy. With help from God, my Mother, Dimakatso, and the SAAF cooking school I baked a superb and tasteful cake. New Year’s eve I’ll be celebrating my birthday party and my

next article will cover all the necessary details.

This month I also had a chance to go to Tafelkoppie Mountain. The main reason was to find the answers of some questions I’ve been asking myself about Tafelkoppie. The question was why do they call it Tafelkoppie? Well the answer is, the small mountain is very flat on top where you can sit down and have a very refreshing drink or snack after the long climb! It’s very wet on top of the hill, and you can sink into the mires quite easily! This picture

will explain it all. (The word Koppie means small hill.)



*Getting to “grips” with the very wet surface near Tafelkoppie!*

(Lehlohonolo Khesa)

### *Life is still going on....*

This is the end of such a great month in my life, the month that I was born, the month I passed my drivers licence, the month I completed final examinations etc.

The 9th was a wonderful day in my life, as it was my first birthday on the island. Thanks to my team members who made a birthday party for me, it was successful and enjoyable. I won't forget colleagues from our Cape Town office and Marion Island, who sent me birthday wishes via fax and e-mail, wishing me a year filled with excitement, adventure, success, happiness and love.

“Nono” thanks for the words of encouragement.

Lets get back to the island.



*Tafelkoppie seen from the base*

I realised that as one stays in a place you learn and became part of it. It pleases me to find myself being part of this wonderful small paradise and being a neighbour or friend with all the birds, seals and the surroundings. Every morning when I look outside I catch sight of shining clear sky and sun, sometimes alternating with beautiful green plants, mountains with stratus clouds, stratocumulus and drizzle.

Work is also interesting. When taking sea temperature every morning at the crane point, it gives me a good feeling because is the time and opportunity to see penguins sitting like church mates in full uniform, seals swimming in the sea and they seem to have a joyful, peaceful time as they dive in out of the water.

Let me not forget the Trinity guys - Shadrack, Michael and myself. We are skivvy partners, and it is interesting if we are working together. We might



*“Trinity” - Michael, Titus and Shadrack*

just decide to cut the grass around the base (and we do!), because with the regular rainfalls (almost everyday) the grass grows very fast. From there we might organise supper or braai for the team especially on Mondays. OOH!!! GOUGH ISLAND.

### **For the families**

Hi mom, dad, brothers and sister we are looking forward to the Christmas, I like to say have wonderful days and may God bless you together with all families.

Greetings

Till next time  
N.T Mosweu

### **Another month!**

*Tshidi Moremi*

It is so hard to collect my thoughts and find a place to begin as I have only made two expeditions out of base up to now. My first expedition was to Seal beach, and now Tafelkoppie, which took two hours to climb. I have to be honest and admit that at some places I was crawling on my knees to get up the steep hill. From the pictures you can catch a glimpse of how nice it is to be out for a walk. We relax out there,

sitting on the rocks watching the river flowing.



*Tshidi taking a break along the river.*

The friendly albatross chick picture is proof that we were all the way to the top, since these are the closest Tristan Albatross nests to the base.



*Tristan Albatross fledgling on Tafelkoppie.*

While we were on the summit it just started drizzling up there with a very a cold wind. Looking at the memorial crosses of the two expedition members who died on the peak a number of years ago, we realised how easy it could be for the weather to overtake you on these peaks.

Returning to the base I got cramps in my legs three times, my legs feeling like jelly, and I was VERY hungry. Fortunately I got hold of Shadrack on the VHF radio and begged him to prepare some food for us because it was a help yourself day (Monday).



I have also recently been getting pool lessons. And surely I won my instructors one game each. The day I won Shadrack, scoring on the final black ball was unbelievable. A night was spent just playing pool.

Work-wise everything is going well. There's nothing worse when doing upper air ascent, than having good satellites with the radiosonde not picking up winds and the computer not getting data from the Digicora. I had to wake Shadrack to come to my rescue. Luckily he did so without any complaints. Bad lines also contribute a lot to testing one's patience when trying to send data.

Big congratulations to my senior met!!!



What a blessing! November was a month for Titus. It was his birthday celebration and he also paid his lobola whilst on the Island. Shadrack decided to cook seven colours for the day. I was the hairdresser with a nice s-curl and cut. We are looking forward to his wedding celebration next year just after our arrival in South Africa.

To the rest of my family, thanks for the sacrifices you have made for my success that left me with a debt that could never repaid. Keep on forwarding the prayers for Gough Island.

Enjoy the festive season!

Mountains in the sea  
*Michael Rabotho*

These windswept islands (Gough and Tristan) are the peaks of massive mountains rising up from the bottom of the south Atlantic. Unfortunately they are also as hostile as the peaks of terrestrial mountains. With winds that are constantly blowing, and the ground riddled with bird burrows under the thick plant growth, it isn't exactly fun walking around on the island! When you venture out chances are good that you return covered in mud, and possibly with a few scratches and scars from falling on your face after suddenly finding yourself thigh deep in a bird burrow.



*Broadbill Prions in a cave on Gough*

Regrettably our team does not have any biologists, so we have to get along and learn about the environment and island Fauna from the books in the library.

Every day down here is a test for us.

### **Season Greetings!**

*Chris de Beer*

The Gough 47 would like to wish all our family, friends, colleagues, sponsors and other supporters a very blessed Christmas. May this festive season be filled with peace. Rest assured that even though we are far away from our loved ones, during this time

of celebration, the small “family” on Gough Island will be thinking of all of you.

Let us not lose sight of the true meaning of this season of joy.

*ISA 9:6 For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given,  
and the government will be on his  
shoulders.  
And he will be called  
Wonderful Counselor,<sup>n</sup> Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
(Isaiah 9:6) - NIV*

***May the Prince of Peace rule during  
this season.***

### ***Monthly Weather Statistics November 2001***

Average Temperature : 12.7°C  
Maximum Temperature : 20.0°C  
Minimum Temperature : 3.9°C

Average Pressure : 1018.3 hPa  
Highest Pressure : 1027.9hPa  
Lowest Pressure : 1006.1 hPa

Total rainfall : 242.5mm  
Days with more than 1mm : 16 days

Total sunshine : 132.7 hrs  
Maximum wind gust : 88.2 km/h

### **Sponsors**

I would like to thank all these companies and individuals, who through their donations, have contributed greatly to our comfort and enjoyment during our stay. We ask wherever possible our supporters support them as well.

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