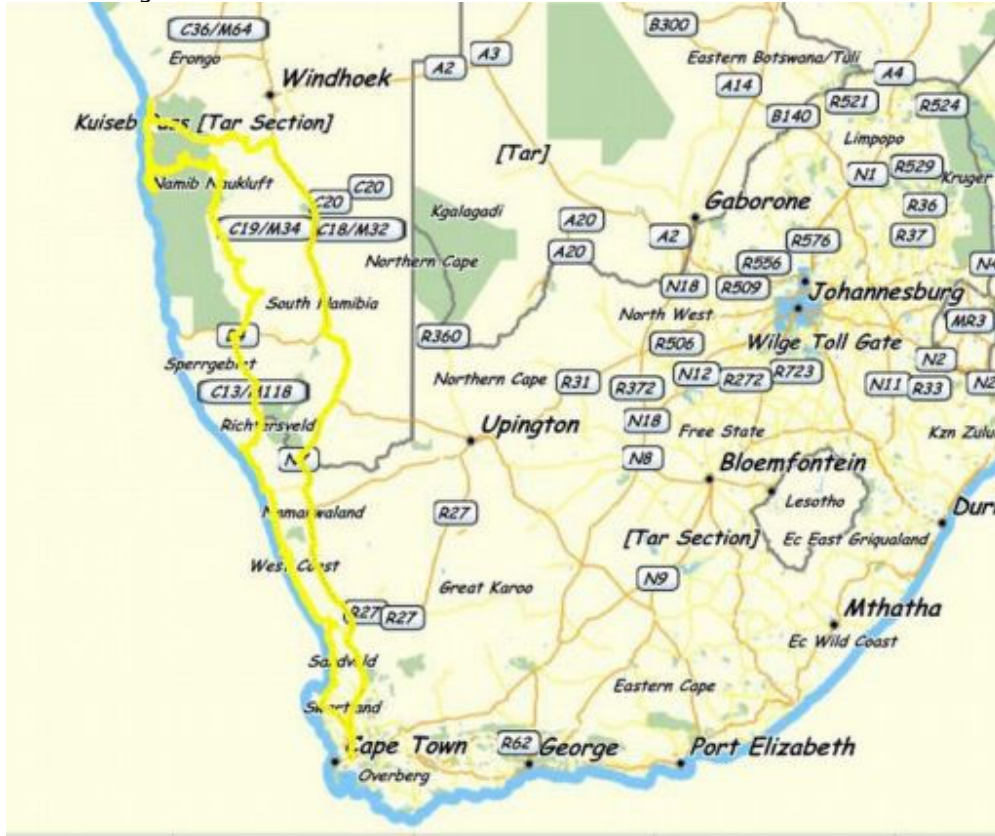


Our trip to the Faces of the Namib via the West Coast--April 2010 Author: **Deon Kotze,**

Philna and myself decided to do the Faces of the Namib trip and booked with Live the Journey. As we are going to Angola at the end of July in Bokwa we decided it will be best to do this Namibia trip in her 2005 Prado V6. What a pleasure to drive and that auto box performed very well in the dunes....

We decided to go via the West Coast and into Namibia at Oranjemund and arranged for a permit through the Namdeb Diamond Corporation.

Our tracklog



Monday 29 March 2010:

We left home and with a slow drive we reached Strandfontein Municipal caravan park where we stayed for the night. Beautiful view on the sea....and each stand has its own little ablution block. Cost for the stand was R200 for the 2 of us plus a key deposit of R220. Distance for the day was 299km.

Strandfontein:



Tuesday 30 March 2010

We left late and after some shopping in Lutzville proceeded towards Koekenaap, where we took the turnoff towards Skaapvlei and onto the West Coast 4wd route. Gravel and sand at last!! I have done this "Hondekliipbaai route" now 5 times but will never get tired of this lovely part of our country....

Philna now took over the wheel while I could enjoy the scenery....

Somewhere near Malkop Bay we decided to call it a day and bush camp or shall we say beach camped....110km travelled...we only had to be in Solitaire the Sunday night so we had enough time....



And before somebody starts jumping up and down about driving on the beach...no we did not once drive on the beach, we stayed in the tracks all the time...and I have the latest T4A on my GPS so I knew where we could drive and where not..

Wednesday 31 March 2010

The next day we crossed the Groenrivier into the Namaqua Coast National Park. This section north of the Groenrivier is called the Caracal Eco route and proper facilities are being installed. At about 11h00 we had a slight miscalculation in some soft sand and some time was spent digging.....but no pictures will be published... 😊.....Green peace might get their knickers in a knot... 😊

Later that afternoon we decided to call it a day at Kwaasebaai, 75km travelled for the day.... We had a nice shelter from the wind and the new toilet facilities was still in working order....I was wondering how long they will be able to keep it in such a good condition...



And this is what Boggerolbaai looks like now...



Thursday 1 April 2010

Fortunately no radio or cellphone reception so there was no April fool for us this year...and after visiting the Spoegrivier caves we set off for Hondeklipbaai and the wreck of the Aristeia that landed on the rocks here in 1945.

I was amazed at how this heap of iron has changed shape in the last 10 years and the picture I took in 2000 and the one I took now in 2010 show the difference.

Wreck of the Aristeia in 2000



Wreck of the Aristeia in 2010



At Koiingnaas we had to produce our identity documents at the security gate in order to travel the road north.

We set off for Die Houthoop (S29.74943 E17.15446), a Guesthouse/Open air restaurant and camping place owned by Veronica van Dyk...www.houthoop.info is the website and it is definitely worth a visit whenever in that area. Cost for camping for the night for both of us.....R100...distance travelled for the day was 168km.



After a few drinks at the bar we had a nice steak on the fire and then off to bed. Tomorrow we would be in Namibia.....land of Finest Tafel Lager... 😊

Friday 2 April 2010

The weather was grey and misty, it was Easter weekend as we left for Alexander Bay. At Kleinsee we again had to produce our identity documents and then we encountered a very bad corrugated piece of gravel road up to the R382 that leads into Port Nolloth.

From there it was tar again up to Alexander bay.

Crossing into Namibia was a breeze.....just hand over your passport....no papers to complete...the Namibian side took a bit longer as we also had to go to the Namdeb office for a photo and to collect the security card that you have to hand in when you leave the area near Rosh Pinah. Like I said before, you have to apply for this permit about 3 weeks in advance as they have to do a police check on you. As it was Easter Weekend there was nobody that could sell us a Namibian Road permit so we left without one and never asked to produce it(luckily). We ventured into Oranjemund but nearly everything was closed so we set of through the restricted area, max speed allowed 90km/h. According to the security officers they are watching you all the time while driving on that road so you cannot even stop to have a Tafel Lager and enjoy the view. I did not see any diamonds lying around either....

We filled up with petrol in Rosh Pinah (R7.57/lt) and at Klein Aus Vista we set up camp for the night. R150 for camping for the night with spotless ablutions...total distance 457km travelled for the day..

Visitors in camp



Saturday 3 April 2010

We set off for Betta Rest camp, only 220kms further, but first made a turn in Helmeringhausen for a cold Tafel Lager and some saamies...

Betta Rest Camp is under new management, not much has changed but it is a local guy and the tariff is R100 for camping for the night. Parked at the same site where I parked last year.



Tonight we had a kabeljou on the grid....yes fish in the middle of Namibia! At the Houthoop Veronica gave us a kabeljou that fitted, without head, in the freezer and now was the time for that nice fish....of course with Tafel Lager.....

Sunday 4 April 2010

Just outside Betta we saw the grader working on the road...Sunday and Easter Weekend as well....where wil you see that in South Africa?

Today we had to meet the rest of the party at the Solitaire Guest Farm, 6km outside Solitaire. Luckily we filled up with petrol at the new Engen garage outside Sesriem(R7.52/lt) as there was no unleaded in Solitaire.

We were there rather early as we only travelled 227km for the day, and slowly everybody arrived, Cruisers, Ford bakkie, 2 Pajeros and a Jeep.

And of course the guides from Uri Adventures, Kosie and Ronnie in a brand new Cruiser V6 pickup as well as Johnny snake eyes and Speedy the Angolese (that speaks 7 African languages)in the older 75 series Cruiser pickup...



Monday 5 April to Friday 9 April 2010

After a very nice breakfast we travelled about 30km on the C14 before we turned off into the Namib Naukluft National Park. We all gathered together where Kosie laid down the rules for the trip.....and then the red sand of the Namib dunes awaited us....our Faces of the Namib tour has finally started!



We crossed the Namib plains and the route gradually changes from typical Namib plains to a colourful landscape of red sand dunes and grassy plains. The route took us to the Kuiseb river, to the Welwitschia mirabilis plants and some breathtaking views...and some awesome desert sky at night!

We visited the petrified dunes, the Kuiseb Canyon, Conception Bay, Meob Bay, Holsazia, the wreck of the Eduard Bohlen, Sandwich Bay and had a wonderful time in the dunes.

The guides were fantastic, the food was superb and the desert was all that I had hoped for! Philna's Prado "Silver Bird" handled like a dream...and we did not get stuck on the dunes once! We met some fantastic people and saw Cruisers fly!

Special people we met were Henry Smith(Stellenbosch) and Ludwig van Heerden(Montagu) in the "Flying Cruiser" as well as Jurgen Engling and Zonja Ebrecht from Windhoek. I believe the "Flying Cruiser" use to belong to a certain Mr Watts....

It really was an awesome experience that I cannot put into words. This trip is definitely one of the ten things you must do before you die! I hope the pictures can show some of the beauty of the Naukluft dunes..

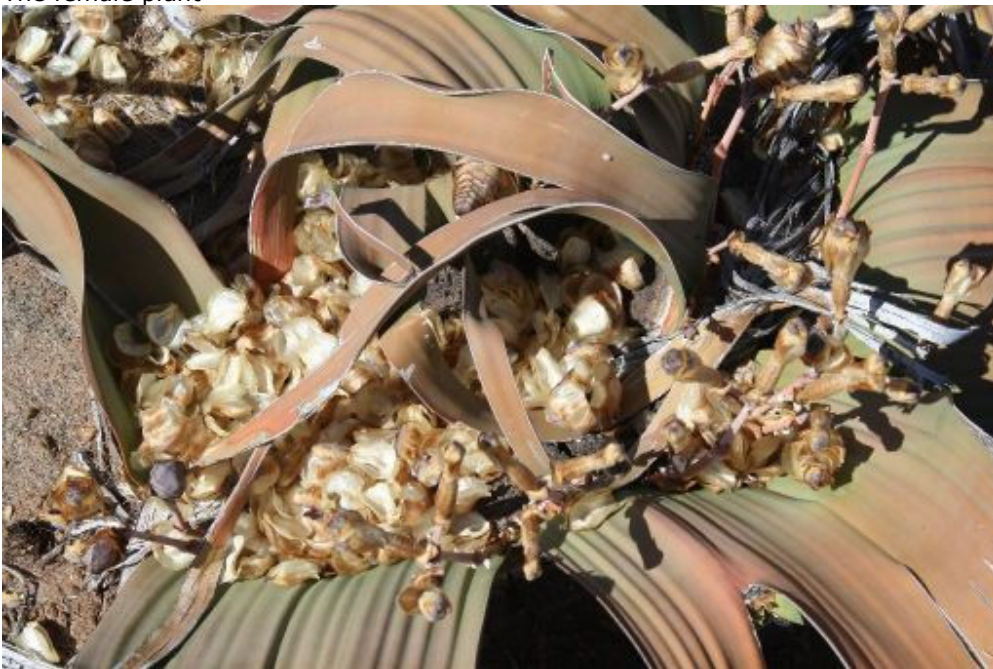








The female plant



The male plant











Henry Smith flying up a dune





The last night we all stayed at the Courtyard Hotel in WalvisBay and Uri Adventures treated us to a farewell dinner at a restaurant. We all said our goodbyes the next morning and Philna and myself still stayed over in Walvis the Saturday at family.
Total distance of 528 km travelled in the dunes! Cost of petrol in Walvis R7.20/l

Sunday 11 April 2010

We left the morning on the C14 via Gamsberg Pass, made a quick stop at Rehoboth, and then with the B1 to the Quiver Tree Forest campsite outside Keetmanshoop. I had to stop of course at the Namibia Breweries in Keetmanshoop where I bought a few Tafel Lager beer glasses....and in the town a few 750ml as well as 500ml Tafel Lagers...why don't we get them

in South Africa?

Gamsberg Pass



Namibia's Finest!! 😄😄



At the forest we stayed in one of those funny looking moon shaped houses at R464 for the night, 749km travelled for the day.

Monday 12 April 2010

A very slow drive of 338 km took us up to Noordoewer, where it was 43 degrees at 3.43pm!!



We booked into an air-conditioned room at the Orange River Lodge, R400 for the night. It was hot in this little town...! Price of petrol R7.65/l

Tuesday 13 April 2010

We left early that morning and after another 658 km we were home in Cape Town.

Another most enjoyable trip came to a sudden end...

Oh yes before I forget.....price of petrol R8.35/l in Cape Town!! Why do we stay here???

I have also uploaded 3 video clips on youtube...

www.youtube.com/watch?v=A7XL82e4b3k

www.youtube.com/watch?v=-BwwOY5-NeQ

www.youtube.com/watch?v=HIa7sI0muKs

Some facts:

Distance travelled: 3905 km

Lt fuel used : 670 lt @ R5114.22

Fuel consumption: (Total : 5.83km/l) (Best: 7.74km/l) (Worst(in the dunes): 3.34km/l)