

The Year under Review

by Vincent Marincowitz, Current Chairman

Due to various other commitments of members of the Executive Committee and a seemingly uncontrollable rush of time, the Annual General Meeting had, once again, to be delayed into the new year. This was fortunate, however, as we can now finally co-ordinate our year-end with our AGM.

It has been a very long and busy year, and the fortunes of Zandvlei Trust have been mixed at best.

We held various inspections of the Vlei and adjoining wetlands, and the conditions are unchanged from last year.

One light point is the Bird Sanctuary, where the Cape Bird Club have been spending a lot of time and effort. The results are evident, and large parts of the sanctuary are now a beautiful natural garden, and a prime example of what is possible even with a small budget. Congratulations to the Bird Club.

Following our experiment last year, the Trust again manually dredged the pond at the bottom end of Rutter Road at the Moorings. Our equipment was much improved from last year in that we had been donated a trek net by Oceana Fisheries. However, now that we have had some experience, there are certain modifications that we would like to make to this; primarily a stronger net with a larger gauge.

We would particularly like to thank certain Council officials who got involved in this scheme, and who arranged for a collection skip for the

removal of the weed.

The City Engineer informed us at various stages that the litter traps on the Sand Canal are to be upgraded. We are waiting in anticipation to see what modifications his department are going to come up with.

The seed collection programme has suffered due to pressures of time, and the transfers of various officials away from the Council Nursery. The seeds are germinated at the local Parks and Forest Nursery and there are still some stocks left. We are hoping more interest will be shown by our members in the coming year.

We attended all the quarterly meetings of the Cape Town City Nature Reserve Advisory Board this year. We have gained valuable insight into the workings of the Council, and have a better understanding of their problems.

You are all probably aware of the general lack of funds that is being experienced by Council. While we are sure that there are major inefficiencies in the system, we also have an understanding of the immense drain on funds that are imposed by the various reserves included in the municipal area.

On Arbour Day we were able to utilize our own stocks of indigenous plants from our seeding programme. We planted just to the north of the Sea Scout Base in an area that had recently been cleared by City Council.

Mr Arthur Clayton, the City Engineer, gave us an infor-

mative talk on the water of Zandvlei at the half-yearly meeting. The general import of his talk was that the water quality is not really suitable for swimming or general aquatic recreation, but that the Council does not have the resources to significantly improve the situation.

The CPA is busy with an information pamphlet on the mallard and other feral water birds, and the Nature Reserve Advisory Board has voted them the money for the printing costs. We are waiting to see what they are going to come up with.

Ellen Grové has given the starting up of a local recycling programme considerable thought and study this past year. Her conclusion is that we need a commercial recycling centre in the area of the Steenberg Industrial Area. We have approached Council for assistance in obtaining a site, and we have become aware of a similar scheme recently launched elsewhere in Cape Town by Rotary. However, it seems that considerable funding is required to launch such a scheme.

One major cause of concern is the lack of co-ordination between all the various authorities involved in Zandvlei and its catchment areas. To address this problem the Trust is investigating the possibility of a workshop of officials from all these various bodies.

I would like to record a vote of thanks to the members of the Committee; the treasurer and newsletter editor Marion