



LAPALALA
WILDERNESS SCHOOL

Annual Report 2008

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LAPALALA
WILDERNESS SCHOOL



BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Dr John Hanks (Chairman)
Mr Eric Mafuna
Mr Duncan Parker
Ms Kgobati Magome
Mr Mike Gregor
Ms Fiki Fesi

PATRON: Clive Walker

STAFF

Director: Dr Anthony Roberts

Financial Manager: Sylvie Geerkens

Course Coordinator and Eco-Schools Coordinator: Erin Roberts

Community Outreach Coordinator: Pearl Tlakula

Educators: Lucas Ngobeni, Klaas Monare, Lizzie Makgamatha,
Marzanne Polydorou, Colbert Munarini (Intern)

Hospitality Supervisor: Lizzie Zulu

Hospitality staff: Annatjie Tshelane, Paulina Chauke, Lizzie Phago, Elizabeth Bjalana

Maintenance: Petrus Tselana

Annual Report **2008**

MESSAGE FROM THE PATRON

In 1981, environmental education commenced at Lapalala on the banks of the Palala River from two small tents and a tiny thatched dining block. This was the year Dale Parker purchased the initial property of what today comprises Lapalala Wilderness. He backed my dream of offering the youth of South Africa an opportunity to experience nature in a spectacular environment.

With the acquisition of a property with a large rambling farm house in 1985, the establishment of a full-time environmental school became possible.

With Dale Parker's further support and encouragement, the Lapalala Wilderness School was born. Now, some 27 years later, the respect the School has gained is a tribute to the Parker family, who continue supporting the School's vision.

As Patron I am honoured to be associated with the School, its directors, staff and committed board under the able chairmanship of Dr John Hanks.

Environmental education is an essential component of the development of a young person's life and the Lapalala experience has been embedded into thousands of young minds from all walks of life.

We have only one world. What we set out to do all those years ago would never have been possible without the dedication of the past and present staff of the Lapalala Wilderness School. They have influenced others' appreciation, regard and value of our natural world.



Clive Walker
Clive Walker
PATRON

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The past year has seen a remarkable growth in the scope and quality of the environmental education programmes of the Lapalala Wilderness School.

With our firm commitment to identifying and nurturing the conservation champions and leaders of the future, the School has built up a deserved reputation as a centre of excellence for its innovative environmental education activities. The demand for courses at the primary, secondary and tertiary level exceeded our capacity – a fine testament to the enthusiasm, dedication and hard work of Anthony Roberts and his team.

So many people have told me that time spent at the School and in the magnificent Lapalala Wilderness itself has been a life-changing experience, which opened their eyes to the need to conserve Africa's fauna and flora and the associated ecological processes. Lapalala has been able to do this through making use of one of the country's best outdoor education opportunities, where young people come to develop a passion for natural areas through seeing, touching, feeling, smelling and hearing components of diversity that most hardly knew existed.

The Parker family has continued with its most generous support for all of this work. Other donors, particularly those who

have seen the School in action, have also begun to support the various programmes, all of which is greatly appreciated. We need to expand our donor base, particularly if we are to extend our footprint and influence into adjacent communal areas through our outreach programme. This will be a priority for the Board in 2009.

My thanks go to our donors and board members for their support during the year. A special word of thanks and congratulations go to the staff for setting and maintaining such high standards and for inculcating in so many young minds a genuine passion for conserving our extraordinary biological diversity.

John Hanks

Dr John Hanks
CHAIRMAN



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Lapalala Wilderness School has grown from strength to strength over the last year through the efforts of passionate and committed staff and a supportive board.

We concentrated our efforts on community schools and enabled 25 schools – and some 1 500 learners – to attend courses at Lapalala free of charge. This endeavour would not have been possible without the continued and very generous support by our donors.

The School is generating about 50% of its running costs through continued visits by fee-paying, predominantly private, schools with whom we are establishing rewarding and lasting relationships. We realise the importance of these schools, not only from a financial perspective but also from the importance of having children from a variety of backgrounds experience the conservation message.

Unfortunately the number of learners who can attend courses at Lapalala is limited by our capacity. To counter this, we launched a strong environmental outreach programme early in 2008. Through this programme we hope to support as many schools in our region as possible with a variety of environmental programmes on offer through corporate and government sectors. Together with the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism

and the Waterberg Biosphere Reserve we also coordinated a workshop for school principals. Through combined efforts with local government we believe we can strengthen our united approach to tackling the varying environmental challenges across our region.

Recent developments on the Lapalala Wilderness Reserve include the establishment of a research facility which is linked to international and national academic institutions. This has presented a wonderful opportunity to establish linkages between the tertiary institutions the School has been working with and foreign institutions for the benefit of the academic development of our future South African conservationists.

Dr Anthony Roberts

Dr Anthony Roberts
DIRECTOR



The School's staff include (back row f.l.t.r.) Klaas Monare, Erin Roberts, Dr John Hanks, Lucas Ngobeni, Lizzie Phago, Marzanne Polydorou, Lizzy Zulu and Dr Anthony Roberts. In the middle, f.l.t.r., are Anna Tshelane, Lizzie Makgamatha, Paulinah Chauke and in the front row Petrus Tselana, Sylvie Geerrens, Elizabeth Bjalana. Pearl Tlakula and Colbert Munarini were not present when the photo was taken.



ACTIVITIES

From July 2007 to June 2008 the Lapalala Wilderness School hosted 57 groups comprising a total of 3 000 learners, educators and students. These groups include 14 from private schools including three combined courses with Outward Bound South Africa (OBSA), 25 from community schools, eight from loveLife, five tertiary and five OBSA camping groups. The School aims at integrating a wilderness experience with the specific curricular needs of each visiting school, while allowing for a passionate "bush" experience.

Our strongest drive was once again directed at disadvantaged community schools in the surrounding Bakenberg community. Due to disruptions caused by teacher strikes in 2007, a number of community schools had to cancel their planned visits to the School. Towards the end of 2007, letters were sent to 83 community schools to invite them to visit Lapalala in 2008. Of these, 75 contacted the School about school visits, Eco-Schools, the principals' forum and other matters, illustrating the increasing strength of the relationship with local communities.

WORKSHOPS

One of our main objectives has been to host teacher workshops to help ensure that educators are able to successfully integrate the environment into the curriculum. Because of the aforementioned strikes and the structure of the school calendar, no teacher workshops were held in the past financial year.

However, a workshop on wetlands was held for adult members of the Moepel community. In addition, a joint workshop with the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET), the Department of Education, the Eskom Matimba Power Station and the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry was held for 30 principals from the southern Bakenberg area. Its aim was to introduce participants to the environmental programmes and competitions endorsed by the Dept of Education, including Limpopo State of the Environment (LISSOER), Baswa le metsi, Eskom Energy and Sustainability and Eco-Schools.

The School is grateful for funding from the Anglo American Chairman's Fund and the DG Murray Trust that will support environmental education workshops for teachers planned for 2009.

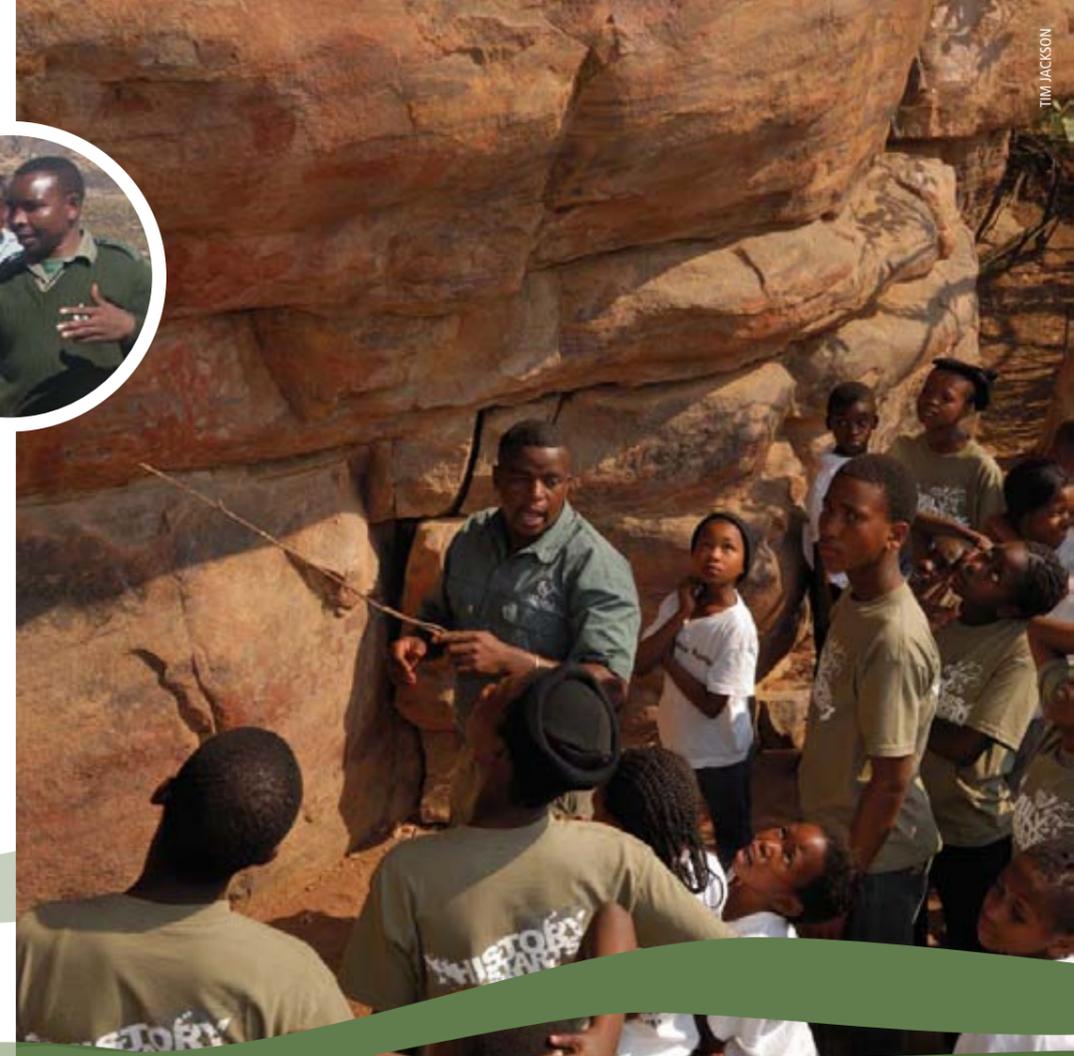
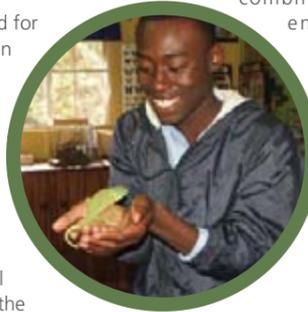
The School and OBSA proved to be a highly successful team in 2008. Joint courses, which combine conservation and environmental issues (offered by Lapalala) with leadership and life skills (offered by OBSA), remained popular with the school community.

TERTIARY TIES

The School's relationship with tertiary institutions continued to grow. Students from the University of Venda attended a week-long course for their third year practical in Environmental Management. By utilising both the skilled staff of Lapalala and external lecturers, a very successful course was conducted and greatly enjoyed by students and lecturers alike.

The School also presented a course on behalf of the Centurion Academy as part of its Diploma in Nature Management, using both internal and external expertise, while Tshwane University of Technology used our facilities for fieldwork.

Through the Take Back the Future initiative, which had been launched by loveLife in 2006, the School continued conducting programmes aimed at developing youth and exposing them to the natural environment and the importance of conservation. These programmes call for the integration of HIV/AIDS training with environmental education.



ECO-SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Eco-Schools programme goes from strength to strength, with more schools joining and wishing to take responsibility for their environment every year. Managed by WESSA, the Eco-Schools programme encourages environmental improvement while integrating an environmental message into the curriculum.



The results of an independent survey in 2007 indicated that Limpopo Province excelled in implementing the Eco-Schools programme in its schools. Limpopo sets the pace when it comes to entry, programme sustainability and the success of schools in attaining green flag status. Of the seven schools registered through the Lapalala Wilderness School six obtained their green flag status in October 2007, making Lapalala the most successful node in the Province. The six schools, who also registered for 2008, were: Kgomoshiakwena Primary, Given Mangolo Primary, Mpepule Primary, Marken Primary, George Masibe Secondary and Matlou Memorial Primary.

Lapalala also supports four other schools, Kitty Primary, Serupa Primary, Ntebeleleng Primary and Mashamaite Secondary, who hope to attain success with the Eco-Schools programme. A number of other schools has expressed interest in joining this initiative in 2009.



TEACHER SUPPORT

Although the Eco-Schools programme is the major focus of Lapalala's community outreach activities, there are other activities aimed at addressing environmental concerns in communities. Because of the desperate lack of support for environmental education in community schools, Lapalala decided to begin by addressing two critical areas:

- **BUY-IN FROM PRINCIPALS.** It is vitally important that school principals support teachers and encourage learners to become involved with the different environmental programmes in the Province. A joint initiative by Lapalala and LEDET, aimed at informing principals of the environmental education programmes in Limpopo, was formed.

- **TEACHER SUPPORT.** Teachers need support and encouragement to become involved with environmental teaching activities. Applications for support from corporate businesses were submitted in order to fund teacher training in 2009.



The outreach programme continued to grow, with welcome support from Absa Capital and from the Stirling Foundation.

The School also acted as an intermediary for donations for community schools, e.g. we are currently raising funds for the drilling of a borehole at a community boarding school that has no running water. A playpump (www.playpumps.co.za) has been offered as a donation if a borehole is sunk.

In addition, the Lapalala Wilderness School continued its support for environmental competitions in the Province and assisted with the adjudication of school programmes such as LEDET's Limpopo State of the Environment competition and the Eskom Lephalale Environmental competition.



Financial Statements

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS

to the Directors of Lapalala Wilderness School (Association Inc under Section 21) for the year ended 30 June 2008

We have audited the annual financial statements of Lapalala Wilderness School (Association Inc under Section 21) for the year ended 30 June 2008. These financial statements are the responsibility of the directors. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

EXTEND

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards of Auditing. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes:

- Examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements,
- Assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, and evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

BASIS FOR QUALIFICATION

In common with similar organisations it is not possible for the organisation to institute accounting controls over cash collections in respect of donations prior to the initial

entry of the collections in the accounting records. Accordingly, it was impractical for us to extend our examination beyond the receipts actually recorded.

AUDIT OPINION

In our opinion, except for the effect on the financial statements of the matter noted in the preceding paragraph, the financial statements fairly present, in all material respects, the financial position of the organisation at 30 June 2008 and the results of its operations and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards for small and medium-sized entities and in the manner required by the Companies Act.

Numeri Auditors

Numeri Auditors
Chartered Accountants (SA)
Warmbad
6 October 2008



INCOME STATEMENT

for the year ended 30 June 2008

	2008	6 Months 2007
INCOME	1 802 688	478 297
Donations	992 530	206 942
Fees From Schools	810 158	271 355
LESS EXPENSES	1 793 926	415 358
Accountants and Auditors remuneration	3 848	320
Travel & Accommodation-Directors	20 835	12 037
Depreciation	11 543	3 303
Repairs and Maintenance	186 621	24 482
Salaries and Wages	926 905	234 638
Catering	326 016	76 749
Operating Expenditure	318 159	63 829
NET OPERATING SURPLUS (DEFECIT) FOR THE PERIOD	8 762	62 939
Interest received	4 977	-
NET SURPLUS / (DEFECIT) FOR THE PERIOD	13 739	62 939

BALANCE SHEET

at 30 June 2008

	2008	6 Months 2007
ASSETS		
NON CURRENT ASSETS		
TANGIBLE ASSETS	43 560	23 162
CURRENT ASSETS	62 849	44 063
FNB Current Account	6 166	43 017
FNB Money market fund	49 758	-
FNB Credit card	4 182	-
Petty Cash	2 743	1 046
TOTAL ASSETS	106 410	67 225
FUNDS AND LIABILITIES		
ACCUMULATED FUNDS	76 677	62 939
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	29 733	4 286
TOTAL FUNDS AND LIABILITIES	106 410	67 225

Please note: The full financial statements are available on request from Lapalala Wilderness School.