

**The ABC  
Bike and Hike  
Challenge  
South Africa  
2011**

In aid of the Phoenix Burns Project South Africa

This book was kindly sponsored by  **senergy**



# Burns are the most common cause of death in under-2s in South Africa

World Health Organisation.

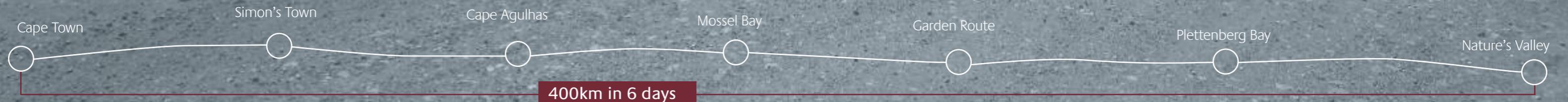
*A visit to the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital, was a real motivator to do something.*



When you see how these kids are scarred  
you want to help in whatever way you can.

# 400km

ABC Bike and Hike challenge





## A cause that needs all our help.

Founded four years ago by Cripps Sears & Partners Limited, ABC is an organisation dedicated to the prevention of burn and scald injuries to children through basic fire-prevention education in the home and the rehabilitation of seriously burned children worldwide. [www.abc-challenge.com](http://www.abc-challenge.com)

In the Western Cape of South Africa, much of the black community lives in small wooden shacks in very confined spaces, utilising paraffin for heating, light and cooking.

All year round fragile shacks are set alight through the dangerous use of paraffin in millions of homes resulting in horrific fires, which can raise a shack to the ground in less than 5 minutes. In addition, the congested buildings mean the fire services cannot get access and that the fire quickly spreads amongst the township.



This year I visited the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital in Cape Town and met some of the children who recently suffered serious burns as a result of shack fires.

It was an incredibly emotional and disturbing experience to see very small children with their entire bodies bandaged and clinging to life. Despite this they made a brave attempt to wave to us and smile as we gave them teddy bears and tried our best to be supportive. You could say that these were the lucky ones, as many of the children and babies do not survive.

When the children are discharged from the hospital, it is just the start of a lifetime journey to be accepted in the community and make an attempt to lead as normal a life as possible. These children have only a slim chance of leading a normal life as they can be bullied, persecuted and excluded from society as they grow up with horrific injuries.

The money we raise will support prevention of fires through education, funding for the burns unit and most importantly rehabilitation going forward.

*Andy*

Andrew Sutherland, Vice President Energy Services Global, Senergy





## The start of an exciting journey –

*Both feeling rather chuffed at the outcome of this extraordinary ABC Bike and Hike challenge.*

We both feel very privileged to have had the opportunity to play a role in the organisation of the event, and particularly to bear witness to the unfailing commitment and endeavours of the Bikers and Hikers in completing his/her own personal sporting challenges and raising such a grand total to help the badly burned children of South Africa. In today's speak – it was awesome.

Our thanks go particularly to the wonderful ground team – Day Trippers who so enthusiastically and professionally guided us to reach our respective finales and of course to everyone at the Phoenix Burns Project (PBP) for their support and understanding of our needs at every stage of the planning process.

It must have been very taxing for them at times but their support and welcome to such a diverse group of intrepid foreign nationals biking and hiking under the Phoenix banner was heart warming indeed.

Having visited the Burns Unit at the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital and some of the shacks where such terrible accidents take place – we offer the Phoenix Burns Project every good wish for their future work and have every confidence that it will make a huge difference to the lives of the children they support.

*Carolyn and Mike*

Carolyn Cripps OBE and Michael Cripps – Cripps, Sears & Partners



*> Bikers and Hikers get together for one good cause*

# A hikers tale

As soon as I became involved in the coordination of the entire event I knew I wanted to take part in the Hikers Challenge. The constant contact with May Bleeker-Phelan (Project Coordinator, The Phoenix Burns Project) and working on the build up to the event gave me fresh motivation, especially after hearing some of the horrifying stories about child burns victims and the life-changing problems they face.

The path to my own personal challenge to success was not an easy one. The main obstacles were training and raising funds. For me getting fit was great for self-motivation and really helped when climbing those steep mountains. Raising funds was the next and probably the most challenging part of the pre-event organisation. However, after holding a few events including a tennis tournament, a quiz, two cake sales and with other great support, I managed to raise the required amount. There was a sense of great satisfaction and immense pride that I was able to do this and complete such a very rewarding experience.

The actual event was an amazing trip and I thoroughly enjoyed taking part with such a fun and diverse group. The Cederberg was a pristine wilderness and we barely saw another soul whilst trekking and climbing across the mountains. There were many individual points along the way, that made the tough and strenuous terrain easier to bear and served as a goal each day to motivate us. The Maltese Cross, ancient Rock Art, The Wolfberg Cracks and Arch, waterfalls as well as wildlife served as breath-taking views and exciting company, casting a delightful backdrop on our incredible journey.

Of course the most important and poignant time of the trip was visiting the townships in Cape Town and the new burns unit of the Children's Red Cross War Memorial Hospital where so many of the burns incidents occur and are treated. It is good to see that there is some improvement in the townships but it was clear upon our visit to the hospital that the bulk of the problems are far from being eradicated. However, it was rewarding and emotional seeing that some of the children were amazingly upbeat even in those circumstances and knowing that we had done a little something to help them and their families.

*Laura*

Laura Gaze, PA to Mike Cripps  
Cripps Sears & Partners



## Day 1

Upon arrival in Cape Town we were met and transferred by our guide, Alexi, via bus to the Cederberg Wilderness, 200 km north of Cape Town on the Western Cape. As the mountains grew bigger in our windows, we realised what sort of challenge was in store for us; a vast expanse of pristine wilderness, and endless rock formations to impede our journey. We were dropped off at Kromrivier where we would stay in cottages and ate a welcoming traditional South African Braai (barbeque).

## Day 2: 17km

Our first day's Hike would lead us on a long day's trek where our first stop took us to see some 'old graffiti' at Stadsaal, where there were extraordinary rock formations and incredible caves that made for fun and interesting mini explorations. Afterwards we headed for San Rock Art where we saw some ancient images of men and elephants who, apparently, once inhabited the area hundreds of years ago. The trek led us back to Kromrivier where we stayed for a second night.

## Day 3: 22km

Our next day's trek took us from Kromrivier up the valley slowly rising to Disa Pool. The journey started off flat along the tracks but the terrain soon became much steeper and rocky as we climbed around the PUP and the Sneeuwberg mountains. Along the way we passed beautiful crystal clear pools and many different coloured birds, reptiles and insects. After lunch we came over Kokspoort and down the shale band and eventually to the famed Maltese Cross. This monolithic rock formation was truly impressive. The hike down the Dwarsrivier was challenging and we all started to realise that going up was much more fun than coming down! Down the valley brought us out at the Observatory then onto the road to our nights stop at Sandrif.

## Day 4: 23km

We started the day with a 500m ascent through the magnificent Wolfberg Cracks, which made for a testing and rewarding hike! We stopped for lunch after a long trek to the Wolfberg Arch. We then gradually descended down to Driehoek (meaning three corners-triangle) at the

northern end of the range through stunted cedar trees and eroded sandstone sculptures, to our next overnight stop.

## Day 5: 15km

We then trekked on through the Mied Se Berg and made a stiff climb to reach the top of Uitsigkloof (1400m). A very important day for us as we passed a signal station so there were lots of phone calls and tweeting going on! After lunch we made a steep descent through some areas of thick plantation and then some open areas where loose rocks were in abundance and made for difficult trekking. We eventually made our way to an old farmstead at the bottom of the Cederberg Pass.

## Day 6: 12km

The next day's hike was another great challenge as we began to ascend the mountain next to our lodge. This was a truly eventful experience, as we came across some very noisy baboons who came bounding down a very steep mountainside. There was also a family of Dussies (small mammals) who unfortunately were attacked by the same Baboons we saw. It's all nature! After trekking up the mountain for some time we began to hear the rush of water and eventually, after scrambling over some rocks, we came across a most beautiful waterfall! The water seemed to be magical as our feet felt much better after a bit of paddling! Later that day we transferred back to Cape Town to complete the Trek.

## Day 7: 15km

We started our day in the world famous Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens and began our hike through the national park, skirting Table Mountain. We saw some wonderful animals in the Gardens and then worked our way out into the lush forest on the mountainside. It was a far cry from what we had been used to in the Cederberg Wilderness. The ground was hard and even though it was the last leg, it was also the hardest... It was an amazing feeling to finish. Table Mountain had never looked so good! We later met the "Bikers" at Camps Bay where we officially completed our incredible challenge. Our last night involved a celebratory meal with traditional food and music along with the "Bikers" and an evening on the town.





**Day 1: 85km**

First day of the ride. Heading West, passing through the beautiful and unspoilt Nature's Valley, we stopped for lunch on the coast. Our final destination today was the breathtaking Plettenberg Bay, a great spot to see dolphins and even Southern Right Whales.

**Day 2: 65km**

Leaving Plettenberg Bay, we started a 32km challenge towards Knysna where we climbed steadily before descending to a charming coastal resort through the renowned forest, which is one of the great wonders of the country.

We learnt the sad and mystical story of the Knysna elephants rumoured to still live in the forests. We stayed overnight at a backpacker lodge.

**Day 5: 45km**

Today's highlight was reaching the most southerly point of Africa at Cape Agulhas. We had a scenic 4 hour transfer via the breathtaking Langeberg Mountain range and local towns to Bredadorp and Cape Agulhas where we cycled 45km to a lighthouse; where the Atlantic and Indian oceans meet at the most southerly point in Africa.

We stayed at a backpacker-style lodge with a traditional dinner of 'potjie' (local stew cooked in a 3 legged pot over a fire).

**Day 6: 45km**

The Cape of Good Hope! The morning's transfer to Simon's Town and the subsequent ride to the Cape across windswept heaths and remote beaches provided some of South Africa's most stunning scenery. We saw baboons in the reserve and hoped to see the whales coming to 'tickle their bellies' in the bay. At our journey's end, we transferred to the centre of Cape Town for a celebratory finale meal and two nights at a city hotel.

*Melly*

Anthony Mellalieu ('Melly'), Surveyor, Jones Lang LaSalle



The ABC / Phoenix Burns Project Charity Cycle 2011 South Africa was a chance of a lifetime. Having never visited South Africa before I saw the trip as an un-missable way to experience one of the most beautiful parts of the country, the Garden Route. Neither had I had a chance previously to raise such a significant amount of money for charity however, again the cycle

provided the perfect opportunity for such an extraordinary cause.

The ride also proved to be the most physically demanding challenge I have ever undertaken but without doubt the most fun and rewarding 8 or 9 days of my life.

The camaraderie and team spirit throughout the whole cycling party made time on and off the bike so enjoyable and I made many new friends.

# A bikers tale



> The incredible stadsaal caves

On the hike, we experienced the genuine wilderness, barely seeing another soul. The terrain varied greatly between desert, forest and all sorts in between. We walked across high mountains, beautiful waterfalls, floral meadows and perhaps most striking, the bizarre natural rock structures formed when the Cederbergs began life under the sea. The yards were hard on occasion and all of us fell victim to injuries of varying severity. No-one let it get them down and hobbling up a mountain surrounded by baboons and dussies is still a great way to spend your time. That said, when the vultures started swirling overhead it was easy to imagine things weren't going to work out so well after all.

As much as we all enjoyed the challenge immensely, we weren't there for a holiday and we were lucky enough to be invited to the burns wing of the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital in Cape Town to see where the funds that we raised would be going. The visit inspired a diverse and challenging range of emotions. The children, wrapped up in dressings where skin used to be, showed a tremendous spirit and the doctors told us stories about the patients' ability to surprise them with joy in the face of the kind of pain most of us will hopefully never know.

Graham  
Graham Spencer



J. L. V. Vegamer  
1887

1887

1887

H. C. Strauss

W. E. H. Nieuwoudt  
1887

L. H. Fick  
9/3/06

Dr. D. F. Melan. M

A. P. C. Nieuwoudt N. P. R. 1918

E. H. Nieuwoudt

H. H. Nieuwoudt

A. C. Nieuwoudt

W. P. Louw

J. A. Louw

1917



> Great team, amazing cause,  
incredible experience!!! Ferg  
Fergus Gilmour







> 4,000ft up and walking on a ledge!



My experience in South Africa was incredible and one I will never forget. It was the first time I had ever done any hiking whatsoever, I didn't even own a pair of hiking shoes or waterproofs but I would not hesitate to do it again - if it's with the same group of people and for such a great cause that is!

The Cederberg is beautiful, more so than I could ever do justice to and I will never forget the stunning scenery. Our guides made sure we saw the best of this country and after climbing onto a ledge at 4,000 ft I will never again say I am afraid of heights!!

My team of hikers were nicer than I could have wished for, especially since I came into this knowing nobody, and I am thankful that we got on so well!

What makes it all the more worthwhile is The Phoenix Burns Project - the charity we were raising money for. To see our money going to such an amazing cause that works so hard to help children was a great privilege and I only hope I can do more for them with ABC in the future.

*Abby*  
Abby Deem



> Abby having a paddle in the Dwarsrivier!



> Every day brought new challenges and riding conditions

The chance to take on such a challenge had been on my personal agenda for a few years. I was hopeful this would be an intrepid adventure and was keen to see the open lands of South Africa, not just the luxury delights of Cape Town. Well I can firmly say that the team who supported the charity for 2011 demonstrated how this event unifies people positively to achieving great things.

Sure it was physically tough in parts, but then I would have been disappointed if that had not been the case. There was absolute commitment and genuine support from all those around you – including the support crew.

The stay in Cape Town and visit to the hospital were incredibly evoking and I would recommend this humbling experience to anyone seeking a different South African adventure.

*Mark*

Mark Scollay



The Bike for Burns was without doubt the most rewarding thing I have ever been lucky enough to be part of.

First and foremost, the cause is so incredibly worthy.

From the time that we spent at the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital in Cape Town, seeing the wonderful care that so many desperately unfortunate children are provided with, it immediately shows what all the hard work spent fundraising and bent double over a bicycle has been for. The Phoenix Burns Project is making a hugely positive impact, for what is such a heart-wrenching reality.

That said, the cycle ride is more than just an enjoyable experience to look back on. It will live in my mind as a life

changing week, pushing my body each day but whilst enjoying some of the world's most stunning scenery and forging new friends along the way. The South African countryside provides a remarkable backdrop. The Witfontein nature reserve, the calm waters of Plettenberg Bay and the windy point of Cape Agulhas will be abiding memories.

Simply phenomenal, and something that I cannot recommend highly enough.

*Dunners*

Chris Dunlop

> Heading back down the valley to Sandrif...  
another long and windy road!



*Gladstone & Nelson were our team mascots throughout the Bike and Hike challenges, overcoming many obstacles and witnessing many fantastic sites!*



The 2011 Bike Challenge started out for me as an opportunity to get fitter, work towards a personal goal and in doing so, support a worthy cause in a country where I have lived and hold much affection.

It proved to be a true life experience and much more rewarding than I had ever imagined! I tested myself physically in ways never experienced before, witnessed some spectacular sights of scenery, game and whales, laughed frequently and made some great new friends of all ages! The ride was tough, but we had great support from Day Trippers, who really added to the enjoyment, the team spirit and the true sense of achievement.

At the end of the ride, we were privileged to witness the dedication of the staff working in the Phoenix Burns unit and the daily challenge and courage of the children and families coming to terms with the treatment and consequences of burn injuries. I know these experiences impacted us all in many ways and made any remnant aches or pains totally irrelevant!

I trust the event can now grow in the future such that the positive footprint we collectively leave behind can be bigger and longer lasting.

*Phil*  
Phil Loader





> *At the end of this challenge we all shared a real feeling of achievement*

The ride at times was extremely challenging, however we were continually rewarded with the incredible views of mountainous landscapes and African plains and a real sense of achievement. More importantly, the visit to the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital in Cape Town really put things into context and made us realise what a fantastic and worthwhile cause the somewhat exhausting adventure had been for.

I would thoroughly recommend such a challenge to anyone!

*Nick*  
Nick Cripps





> Atlantic and Indian oceans meet at the most southerly point in Africa

INDIAN OCEAN ATLANTIC OCEAN





*It was thanks to a great deal of support and help that we were able to complete this challenge, thanks to all.*





## How you can help

I'd be very appreciative if you could help by making a donation no matter how small to help this important cause and support this charity.

### Donations

It's very easy to make a donation, you have two choices:

#### By SMS in the UK

All sponsors have to do is:

Text : ABCZ01 £ (value 1-10)

Text to 70070.

#### By donating via the Just Giving website

Donate via secure credit card payment to:

[www.justgiving.com/Andrew-G-Sutherland](http://www.justgiving.com/Andrew-G-Sutherland)



*Andy Sutherland*

## With thanks to

### The organisers:

Carolyn Cripps OBE and Michael Cripps – Cripps, Sears & Partners  
[www.abc-challenge.com](http://www.abc-challenge.com)

May Bleeker-Phelan, Phoenix Burns Project-Project Coordinator

[www.pbp.org.za](http://www.pbp.org.za)

### The guides and supporters:

The Day Trippers team

[www.daytrippers.co.za](http://www.daytrippers.co.za)

### For the kind sponsorship of this book:

Andrew Sutherland, Vice President, Energy Services Global, Senergy

And last but not least, all those who took part in the ABC Challenge to raise much needed funds for burns victims in South Africa.

