1. Special News
Johannesburg Section Member, Sean Disney, phoned to report that they
reached the South Pole yesterday, Sunday 24th! Sean led the group
comprising three other South Africans, Jason Grové, Donald O’Connor and Vaughan de la Harpe and two mountaineers from
Azerbaijan - Tarlan Ramazanov
and Gusseyn Baghirov. They were airlifted from Patriot Hills and dropped
off at the 89th Degree, and from there ski-ed to the South Pole. The group
had earlier successfully summited Mt Vinson with several other South
Africans. Vaughan, who successfully climbed Everest with Sean in 2006
(when they both completed their Eight Summits (the Seven Summits + Kosciusko, accepted as an alternative to Carstensz
Pyramid), did not go to Vinson again but instead flew to Antarctica after the main group, and waited for them at Patriot
Hills.

This makes Sean, Jason and Donald the first South Africans to achieve the double Mt Vinson/South Pole ski trip.

The last part of the expedition was done in what has been appalling weather
on the sub-continent! The temperature at the South Pole was -31°C (with
the windchill, a mere -40°C!). The group that headed out on Boxing Day
from South Africa via Punta Arenas (where Tarlan and Gusseyn met up with
them) were stuck at Patriot Hills for 8 days before they were able to fly out to Mt Vinson base camp because of the bad
weather.

This morning they were checked out by a doctor at the South Pole and all
were declared fit and well! Now the long flight back home - except that
the weather at the Pole was closing in again and he didn't know if they would be picked up today or not!
Sincere congratulations, Sean!

2. CLUBHOUSE CONVENOR: the section is desperately looking for a member to fill this position. It entails being at the
clubhouse on a Wednesday (you can get members to help so you don’t have to be there every week!), setting up the projector
and other equipment, taking care of purchasing the drinks and controlling the cash box and generally looking after the
clubroom. Please contact Chris 082 373 5605 if you are able to help.

3. Events:
   Wednesday 28 January: Club evening and DVD 'Touching the Void'.
   In the mid-80’s two young climbers attempted to reach the Siula Grande in Peru, a feat that had previously been attempted
   but never achieved. This is the true story of Joe Simpson's survival after he fell and his partner Simon has to make the
decision to cut the rope. As this is a long film of 120mins, we wish to start promptly at 20h00.

   Wednesday 4 February: club evening and prospective members talk.

4. Meets:
   31 Jan/1 Feb  Sport climbing Eagle Mountain, Harrismith. Contact Andrew
   Porter 082 853 1679 (note correct tel. no)