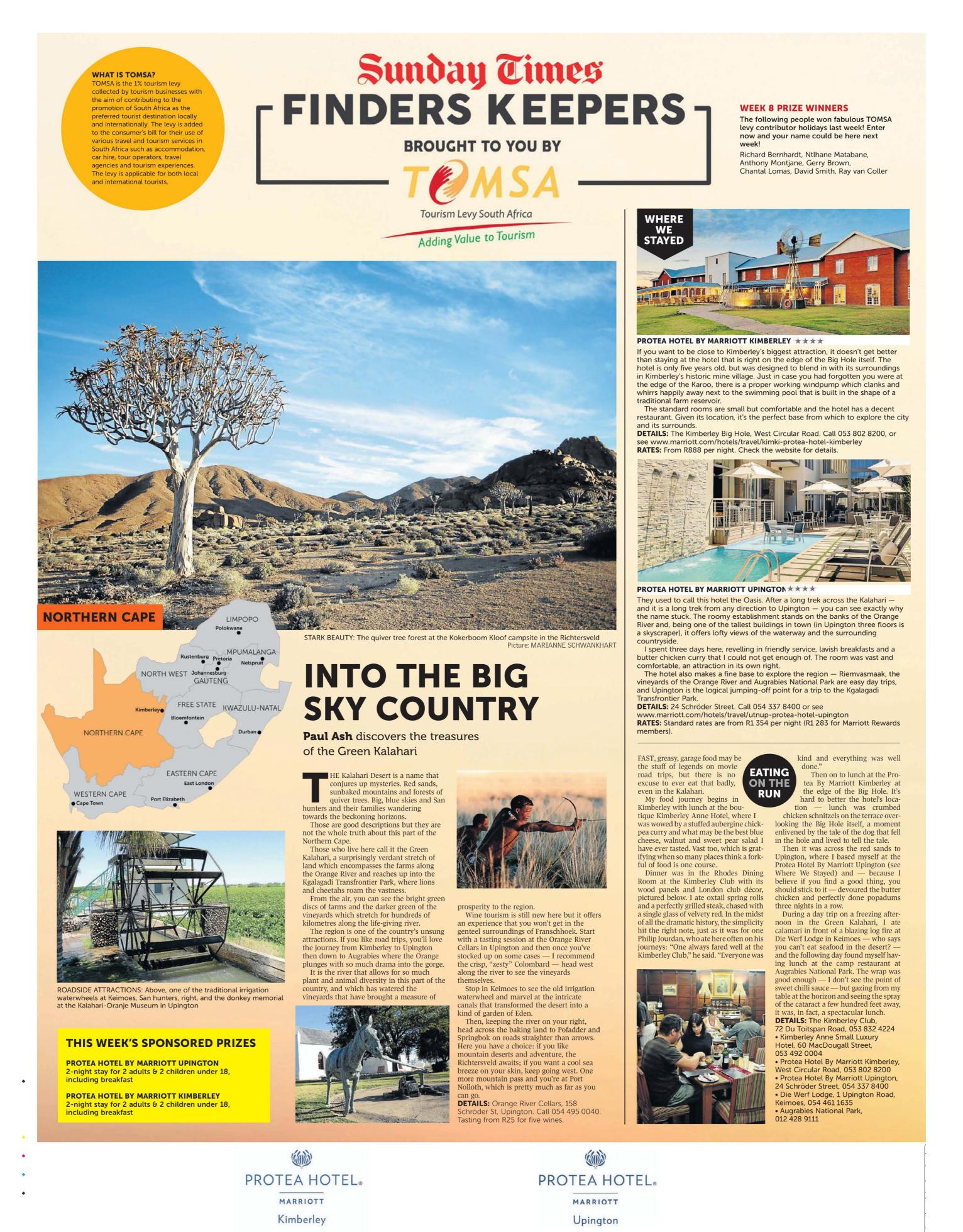
Page: 14-15

2016/09/04

SUNDAY TIMES

• •

AVE: 944664.78 (ZAR)





watch the great raptors like Bateleur eagles hunting in skies the colour of cobalt and listen to the jackals yip-yipyipping on those clear, crisp desert

best and wildest in the world — you can expect visits from lions, leopards and hyenas. Or you can stay in a chalet in one of the main rest camps — Twee Rivieren (R1 045-R1 635), Nossob (R920-R1 955) or Mata-Mata (from R875-R2 615). For information, see www.sanparks.org/parks/kgalagadi THE HOT SPRINGS AT RIEMVASMAAK

Riemvasmaak, thousands of hectares of

DETAILS: The camping is some of the

rocky desert mountain wilderness, is famous for two things: the fact that its community was the first to get its ancestral land back after a successful land claim, and its glorious hot springs. While soaking in a hot spring in a place where daytime summer temperatures routinely top 45 degrees may seem counter-intuitive, remember it can get icy at night which is when the pools come into their own. A steamy soak on a cold desert evening is a cure for all manner of ills. The road in is not easy; it's better in a 4x4 or a bakkie with high clearance, but worth the trek. There's community-run accommodation as well as camping under starlit skies. **DETAILS:** Call Riemvasmaak Tourism

THE SOL PLAATJE MUSEUM,

see greenkalahari.co.za.

on 073 383 8812 or 083 873 7715, or

KIMBERLEY The museum occupies the house where Sol Plaatje lived during his final years and, legend has it, where he wrote 'Mhudi'. It covers the important points of Plaatje's life, such as his voyage to England to protest the 1913 Native Land Act and the fact that he served as a court interpreter during the siege of Mahikeng during the Anglo-Boer war. Definitely worth a visit. **DETAILS:** 2 Angel Street, or call 053 833 2526.

AUGRABIES FALLS NATIONAL PARK You will understand why this park is a national treasure the first time you gaze at the Orange River squeezing through a tiny gap and plunging into the smooth-sided granite canyon below. Dawn is a great time to see the falls as the spray rises up in the cool air, and it is truly thunderous when the river is flooding. But the main cataract is not the only spectacle here: take a hike along the start of the Klipspringer Trail to Arrow Point from where you may gasp with surprise at the sight of Twin Falls, a slender waterfall dropping hundreds of feet from a fissure in the rock into a pool below. The park is flush with animals including gemsbok, kudu, eland, the rare Hartmann's mountain zebra and predators such as leopard, black-backed jackal, caracal

and nocturnal bat-eared foxes. Stay in chalets or camp under the trees. **DETAILS:** Various accommodation is available, from 2-bed self-catering chalets (from R875 per chalet per

There is also a daily conservation fee

(R40 adults, R20 children). For bookings phone 012 428 9111 or see www.sanparks.org/parks/augrabies. KALAHARI-ORANJE MUSEUM, UPINGTON This low-key museum, housed in a church built by Reverend Schröder in 1875, contains some surprises. One is the collection of manual printing

presses; the other is an exhibit on the "Upington 26", the group charged collectively for the murder of a community policeman in 1986. It includes the superb ships built by Barry Bekebeke during his years in prison. And outside is the excellent life-sized bronze donkey sculpture which is dedicated to the animal that did so much work in the "green Kalahari". **DETAILS:** 4 Schröder St. 054 331 2640. THE MCGREGOR MUSEUM, KIMBERLEY

Founded in 1907, "the McGregor's"

attractions cover botany, geology,

ethnography, rock art and local history. Housed in the old sanatorium, it is a fascinating museum, perhaps one of SA's best. The dioramas are particularly realistic and well done, and it also has a night) to family cottages (from R1 695). rich archive of photographs,

> RICHTERSVELD NATIONAL PARK The Ai-Ais/ Richtersveld Transfrontier Park, straddling the border between SA and Namibia, is a vast mountain desert silence. It's a place of vast distances, isolation and prehistoric-looking plants and stones. There's no cellphone

> > TO ENTER TO WIN

ONE MILLION RAND:

Dial *120*3937# or go to

www.finderskeepers.mobi

to register and enter.

Full terms and conditions available at www.sundaytimes.co.za and on the mobi site. osts 20c/20sec. Errors will be billed All prices include VAT)

www.museumsnc.co.za.

documents and voice recordings

signal, no electricity, no running water. My favourite campsite is Kokerboomkloof with its forest of quiver trees among the big rocks. The driving in the park is slow but not too technical, provided you have some clearance. The streets of the mining village and take a cooler winter months are a better time **DETAILS:** 5 Atlas Street. 053 839 2700. to go. Remember, you have to take all your own drinking water. **DETAILS:** See www.sanparks.co.za.

BIG HOLE MUSEUM, KIMBERLEY Kimberley has many hidden treasures, which is apt for a city which boomed with the most exquisite plant life — and on a rush for diamonds. One of its gems is the museum in the original mining village at the Big Hole. It is an excellent example of what can be

achieved with proper funding. Exhibits include geological displays, films, an "underground" working and a timeline on how diamonds are formed. Outside you can wander around the shops and ride on one of the restored electric tram cars on the first and only surviving electric tramway in Southern Africa.

DETAILS: Call 053 839 4600, www.thebighole.co.za. MAGERSFONTEIN BATTLEFIELD They say that if you stand on top of Magersfontein Kop on a still, dark night, you can hear the skirl of a lone piper and see the bobbing lanterns of

Since the Southern African Large Telescope (S.A.L.T.) was built in 2002, Sutherland has developed a small but healthy astro-tourism industry. That's because this is a magical place with something for every visitor who comes to the one-road town. You can take a tour of the observatory and look at the stars through telescopes. The big

telescope itself comprises more than 90 large mirrors that look up through the opening in the domed roof and into the skies. You don't need a telescope though: just lie on your back in the veld and be dazzled by the stars which look like pools of light flowing down from the banner of heaven. stretcher-bearers come to fetch the **DETAILS:** See www.salt.ac.za.





Clockwise from top left: Gemsbok in the

Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park. The S.A.L.T.

wounded and dying Highlanders from

the battlefield. The story is another of

Kimberley's many ghost stories and a

small reminder that war really is hell.

Magersfontein is one of half a dozen

Route. It is also one of the country's

most evocative battlefields, and is

sites that make up the N12 Battlefields

almost unchanged since that hot day in

1899. The visitor centre has excellent

displays of pictures, maps, dioramas

and artefacts, including a Krupp field

moving audiovisual presentation in a

reconstructed trench, in front of which

the battle plays out in photos and the

sounds of soldiers' voices, booming

gunfire, rain and neighing horses. **DETAILS:** Magersfontein is 30km south

STARGAZING IN SUTHERLAND

of Kimberley on the N12.

gun, but the main attraction is a

telescope. A matchstick boat in the Kalahari-Oranje Museum. A portrait of

Sol Plaatje. The Augrabies Falls. A

restored Kimberley tram