

Aasvoel Krantz Cave, New Years Hike, Highmoor



Leader: Deon

Date: 31 December 2025 - 1 January 2026

Distance: 9 km

Weather: Partly cloudy and warm, becoming stormy.

Number of hikers: 6

Severity of hike: An easy hike with a moderate downhill section to the cave.

Report by: Deon

The annual New Years hike, used to be a highlight in the history of the Midlands Hiking Club, usually lead by Keith Ashton. The idea was to revive this annual trek to the mountains to celebrate New Year in the beauty of the Berg.

This was our second edition of the newly instituted tradition, and even though the weather looked a bit on the bleak side, we all were eager to spend our evening in the mountains with friends, to see in the New Year.

And so it began, bags packed days in advanced, goodies sorted and packed, back packs weighed and locked away so that no extras could be sneaked into them. Unfortunately, a few did not get this memo and a few snacks and goodies were sneaked in. All in good faith as it is a New Years celebration after all.

The plan was to meet at Highmoor from 10:00am and after bags were checked and the paperwork was sorted out, we started our walk to the cave. The weather was rainy and very unpredictable, but the outlook improved with a forecast of rain in the afternoon. Well, one thing you can be sure of it that you cannot trust a weather report.

We made the easy trek to the first river crossing, and enjoyed the break filling up water and having a well earned snack. We could see the storm building early on and as we sat chatting away, we heard the first rumblings. To say we packed up hastily would be an understatement. With rain covers on we set off and soon the last section to the cave came into view around the corner.

The section down to the cave is the most tricky part of the walk and it needed to be done slowly. The rocky section was navigated without too many issues and once we walked through the brush, the cave appeared right in front of us.

The cave was clean and dry. However it had seen a lot of use over the years and unfortunately, it's beginning to show, however this is still an excellent place to get away to.

We chose our preferred sleeping spots and unpacked just as the thunder started outside the cave. We were dry and cozy while the rain pelted down outside. The idea was to make full use of the pool below the waterfall and have a swim before the year was over. Beth and Nthokozo were ready to brave the cold water and soon were swimming like the water was not freezing at all.

The cave is also a favourite day walk destination and soon we had a few people visiting the cave for a quick swim and left. We were alone and we could settle in for the night.





The light started to fade and supper “fires” were fired up and soon the cave was filled with a symphony of smells as suppers were being concocted in the “master chef’s” kitchens. To say that even the most basic meal tastes like a gourmet meal after a long day in the mountains is an understatement.

Supper was enjoyed, a small luxury champagne might have been enjoyed or not, and soon we could hear our beds beckoning us to come and snuggle into its warmth.

Soon the light dimmed, the noise of the waterfall drowned out any snoring and soon everyone was in dream land.

The next morning dawned upon us bringing in the New Year. In regards to a spectacular display the sunrise was not the best, however the sun was shining and it was dry. Soon the “fires” were fired up again and coffee and tea being brewed and enjoyed while we immersed ourselves in the beauty all around us.

Breakfast was a relatively quick affair and soon camp was being packed up and we were ready to leave. It was a bittersweet time for us all, and a very reluctant journey out the cave – it has a very subtle hold over you – a bit like a love hate relationship. A last glance down to the cave and we were on our way home. The clouds were building over the Giants Castle area, and soon we could hear the not too distant rumble of thunder. We could see the storm move away towards Lotheni, however a second storm was brewing and we just slightly increased our pace.

We had a few drops of rain right by Kamloops Dam, and our pace increased to out run the rain, it was just a matter of time as we rounded the corner and got to the cars. The rain eventually caught up to us but we were safely back and soon on our way back home.

One thing that we need to remember is that it’s not about the journey, it is about who we share the journey with.

