



Barberton, Oct. 28, 2021

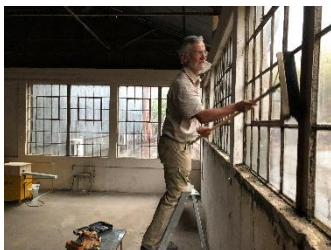
The BASE Newsletter

Preparations for the start of the BASE drilling campaign are in full swing. However, the originally planned arrival date of Oct. 26 for the two drill rigs had to be moved by about 10 days because of problems with a SRU (Solid Removal Unit, essentially a centrifuge separating the drilling fluid from the cuttings) which required input from the manufacturer. Also, Master Drilling found it advisable, after having inspected our sites and reviewed our requirements, to utilize slightly more powerful rigs; they had to be de-mothballed. The lead drilling engineer



was out here for two days to establish the local suppliers, to receive and brief his crew, and, together with SAPP's Highlands forester, to define the exact region to be cleared of gum trees and stumps for site 4-3 (we will start with the distal Lomati Delta Complex site). We will receive an updated mobilization schedule soon but were told that the first rig will arrive this coming week, the other the following week. We all agree that full focus must now lie on to get started (- but fully prepared), and are all working towards this goal.

Nic Beukes is fighting from Johannesburg at the administration front. It is absolutely astonishing how many permits, agreements, letters of support etc. are necessary for such a project, and equally astonishing what type of obstacles exist that delay firmly promised documents (waiting to have the electricity repaired, people on leave, legal departments, server software malfunction, signatures only on Thursdays etc.). Also, processing routines for the first bills have to be established. Christoph and Nic keep each other up to date by daily telephone conferencing.



Christoph returned from a 10-day stay in Germany from where he brought 16 posters back. His main occupation is currently to prepare the section of the BIAS hall, allotted to us free of charge courtesy of the provincial government of Mpumalanga, as a core processing and visitor's center. This involves establishing internet, security, and cleaning our part of this large and spacious hall; its windows have reportedly "never been cleaned". We (Tony, Phumi and Christoph) hung shade cloth to separate our section from the museum's storage area, bought stable tables and spotlights, and will now hang posters and put up the rock exhibitions. This setup will thus also serve as a feasibility and pilot study for a future Visitor's Center of the BMM WHS. Hennie Jonker came from UJ to connect water and electricity to the core saw, build a sound-muffling box, and test-run cores. The drilling company will supply us with core boxes (plastic, 1 m long, in sets of 3 or five) next week.



With much help from cheerful locals, Christoph almost completed the setup of the townhouse, mostly by acquiring second-hand things from local stores but also good furniture from a lodge that permanently closed during COVID-19 lockdown. We now have five beds and two couches in this place, with varying occupancy; Dora and Phumi, in our other flat, may make their couch available as well. If we are booked out, there will be plenty more accommodation in Barberton.

So far for now. We hope to report in the next Newsletter about our first core.

Best regards, Frohes Forschen!

Nic and Christoph

For more information: <https://www.icdp-online.org/projects/world/africa/moodies-s-africa/>