

DAWID'S RETURN – A TALK BY PATRICIA GLYN

Once again, Patricia has been trekking through the African wilderness in pursuit of a ghost. In 2005 she walked from Durban to the Victoria Falls in the footsteps of her long-dead ancestor Sir Richard Glyn. In 2011 she set off for the Kalahari, to find traces of a long-dead Bushman by the name of Makai Kruiper – a legendary mystic, hunter and healer who roamed 'The Thirst Land' a century ago. And by her side was Makai's grandson, Dawid, a man as legendary as his forebear. Dawid was 76 years old and easily the most famous Bushman in South Africa, having featured in numerous films, documentaries, books and academic studies.



But Dawid was also renowned for the most celebrated human rights victory for the Bushmen of Southern Africa. In 1999, Dawid and his Khomani clan won a land claim against the former apartheid government that had robbed them of their ancestral home and turned it into what is now the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (KTP). In the years since that great day, however, lack of transport into the KTP has hindered the community from accessing all but a small portion of it. So the old man asked Patricia if she could help him mount an expedition to the places of great historical and cultural significance, further into the National Park, which Dawid had not visited since his youth and which his children had never seen. So between April and June 2011 that is exactly what they did. In a deeply moving and poignant trek, the Kruiper family (spanning three generations) and Patricia's team visited and documented mystical and sacred places; battle and hunting grounds; birth, death and burial sites.

Patricia's new talk is about what she witnessed on this trip: the fragments that remain in the Kalahari sand of a long-gone life; the extraordinary memory and tracking skills that helped Dawid find his grandfather's artifacts, some 100 years after they'd been buried; the secrets that have been handed down from son to son.

The presentation is also about how losing their land brought the Khomani people to a state of utter despair and rage, and how going back to their heritage places helped to heal and restore them. The talk discusses how winning the land claim did not necessarily result in a new and profitable life and the help that claimants need in managing this complicated process.

This is a story about just how much the Bushmen can teach us about respect for our natural resources and how to preserve them. Patricia demonstrates how the 'old' Bushman attitudes hold the key to our environmental future. She shows how little they consume, how much they value what they consume and how much they leave in place for their children's children. But it's also an amusing talk about a journey with a group of irreverent storytellers, free spirits, hilarious mimics and loving people.

Once again, Patricia and her professional team of photographers and filmmakers have brought back thousands of photos and hours of footage, the best of which have been selected to illustrate her talk about this grand adventure. The presentation lasts approximately one hour but can be tailored to suit any conference timetable.

To book this talk, write to patriciaglyn@wol.co.za or call +27 82 881 8550.