



REGINE LORD

Regine uses her dream house in Pinelands as the launch pad to explore our beautiful country, and her blog is the platform to share her colourful adventures with the world.

Blog is an abbreviation of 'weblog' and is an online diary, where readers are able to comment on an article (a post), start a conversation or form a relationship. Anyone can do it nowadays with the advanced blogging tools provided by wordpress, which are mostly free.

Reggie Lord is a prolific writer and her posts are not only interesting, but well researched and educational. If you can't get away for the weekend, just take a look at her blog site and you will find yourself travelling the Cape, identifying birds, wildlife and flowers. Her book 'Gold Mines, Elephants and Foefie Slides' will have you walking with Elephants at The Craggs in Plettenberg Bay, flying on foefie slides through the forests with Tsitisikamma Canopy Tours, and exploring old gold mines, accompanied by Reggie's good photography.

FROM PEN PAL TO INTERNET BLOGGER

After years of pen pal correspondence, Reggie started a blog in 2007. Being a very private person, she spent some time weighing up privacy issues versus publicity, but her friends convinced her that this was indeed the outlet she needed for her creative writing skills.

How do you decide what to blog about?

Well it's not as though we plan our weekend or our excursions because I want to write about them; we would do those things anyway. And yet, knowing that I can or want to blog about them does make me more aware, more alert and more inquisitive, especially when taking photographs.

I've written just over 700 posts. The lists on the right-hand side, of the blog page, give a fair indication of my interests: hikes and rambles, exploring the Cape, weekends away, the Pinelands neighbourhood, garden and home, and photography.

You write for the Defense Reserves magazine and have articles posted on their website, tell us how that happened.

It was because I'd written about the Cape Town military tattoos of 2008 and 2009, that I was contacted by the organisers of the 2010 tattoo, and thus given an opportunity to go behind the scenes at that event. It was challenging but extremely rewarding and very exciting.

Have you been 'Freshly Pressed'?

Wordpress has a system that detects popular sites with high traffic and interesting content. These posts are published to the freshly pressed page and this achievement is likened to finding the Holy Grail.

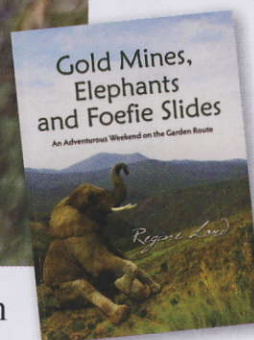
Three of my posts have made the grade: Full moon picnic at the Taal Monument, Hiking in the Helderberg nature reserve, the yellow trail, and the first photos of Miss Milly May's younguns. My busiest day was 2 November 2010 – when I had 1,199 hits, most of them in response to the post about Milly May's piglets."

What were your greatest challenges in setting up the blog?

Getting to grips with the technical aspects of writing, adding photos, creating slideshows, inserting hyperlinks, formatting text, using the sidebar widgets, changing the header or the background... – fortunately Wordpress has useful help sections, for example learn.wordpress.com, support and forums – so you feel part of a community. I am also lucky that my husband

Richard can help with IT challenges.

Reggie loves to hear from her readers, while one of her greatest admirers, Tuffy Cat, is a reminder that there are responsibilities after blogging. See Reggie's blog at www.namibсандs.wordpress.com



REGGIE'S SEVEN BLOGGING TIPS

1. Write about what interests you, or what you feel passionate about – let your personality come through. Blogs are meant to be subjective.
2. Post regularly – the more you write, the better you'll become.
3. Use catchy titles for posts.
4. Write good introductions to capture interest.
5. Use pictures – your own photos are always the best to use.
6. Use links to previous posts you've written. Use tags – this helps other readers find what they are looking for on your site.
7. Read other blogs and if you like the content, link them in your blogroll. This will remind you where to find them again and will also point your readers to the sites that you enjoy.