



LOVE AND pride

From their base at Londolozi, the pioneering game reserve in the Sabi Sands that has been home to their family for four generations, sister and brother Bronwyn and Boyd Varty are breaking boundaries in communicating their new vision of conservation. Liz Morris savours their sense of purpose

PHOTOGRAPHS ELSA YOUNG



'TRACKING LION hasn't changed that much in 80 years,' Boyd Varty says over his shoulder as he turns the ignition on an open Landy at 5.30am on a November morning in the Londolozi bush. 'When you hear the animal roar, you try to get into the area as quickly as possible to find its tracks.' Clearly, some things don't need improving, while others evolve organically to stay relevant to their time. Take safari, the Swahili word for journey. In 80 years, it's gone from being a bush-whacking adventure to a luxury wildlife-viewing circus maximus. Big change. During which time a pastime has become a product. Now, as human consciousness increasingly craves the power of nature to heal and restore spirit, safari's new groove is to reconnect people to the wild within themselves. Connecting is one thing, keeping the connection is another. But that's the beauty of the Varty's rebooted safari product. It has a purpose. Through various projects and programmes – altruistic, humanitarian, environmental and social – Bronwyn and Boyd's mission is to help people keep the connection. Fifteen years ago, this could all have been too new age, too hippy for the mega-luxe image safari was punting, but all that's tempered and the highest end of the market is embracing the African wilderness for its essential assets. Born of this synergy, STAR (Self Transformation Adventure Retreats) offers five-day exclusive-coaching workshops held once a year at Londolozi. Boyd, Bronwyn and acclaimed US life coach Martha Beck lead a group of six to 10 people on ▶

RIGHT WALKING THROUGH THE INTENTION CIRCLE, A WIRE SCULPTURE INSTALLATION BY MAX BANNISTER. IT'S MADE FROM THE FENCES THAT WERE TAKEN DOWN WHEN THE KRUGER PARK ELEPHANT CORRIDORS WERE OPENED UP, A THEME THAT WILL BE CONTINUED BY RESTORING EDEN, BRONWYN AND BOYD VARTY'S AMBITIOUS NEW SOCIAL-NETWORKING CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN



OPPOSITE PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT BRONWYN VARTY, SOLLY MHLONGO, LIZ MORRIS AND BOYD VARTY ON THE BANKS OF THE SAND RIVER AFTER A BAREFOOT BUSH WALK; BRONWYN AND BOYD VARTY; BOYD WORKING ON HIS FIRST BOOK, ABOUT

RECONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE, AT HIS DESK AT LONDOLZI; LEARNING THE PRINCIPALS OF ANIMAL TRACKING AND APPLYING IT TO YOUR OWN LIFE IS A UNIQUE FEATURE OF THE STAR RETREATS HELD ANNUALLY AT LONDOLZI

PEOPLE

a five-star spiritual boot camp using all aspects of the wilderness experience to change people's relationship with themselves. Animal-tracking lessons feature. 'It's about taking the art of tracking and applying it to people's lives,' says Boyd. For anyone remotely interested in quality of life, it's a compelling concept, empowering even. Learning to hear your own roar, recognise your own tracks and, ultimately, find the essence within yourself is a life tool you grab with both hands.

Another programme now in full swing, the Good Work Foundation, is setting up computer, environmental, creative and English-literacy centres in rural villages along wildlife corridors. Boyd raises millions of dollars a year for it, but Bronwyn is equally hands on and passionate. 'To be of service is the new frontier. It's vital

BELOW BRONWYN AT HOME AT LONDOLOZI PACKING FOR ONE OF HER FREQUENT TRIPS **RIGHT** OVERSEEING ALL ASPECTS OF MARKETING THE PRESTIGIOUS FIVE-STAR LUXURY GAME RESERVE, BRONWYN IS A DYNAMIC COMMUNICATOR OF THE LONDOLOZI STORY PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE



to serve and build community,' she says. She means global community too. Restoring Eden is an ambitious ongoing drive to create an online global network or tribe of people for the restoration of land under wildlife, poverty alleviation and animal stabilisation. It kicked off recently with a US road show and epic events to raise funds and awareness are on the cards.

For twenty-somethings, the siblings are big-thinking do-gooders, proactive beyond their years. Sprung from a pedigree of renegade but savvy conservation ▶



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT AS A WILDERNESS COACH, BOYD IS INTERESTED IN CREATING A CULTURE OF RESTORATION IN THE WORLD WITH LONDOLOZI AS THE PLATFORM; BOYD AND HIS MOTHER, SHAN IN HER FLOURISHING VEGGIE GARDEN AT LONDOLOZI; LION SPOTTING AT FIRST LIGHT

PEOPLE



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT BRONWYN WITH KATE GROCH, CEO OF THE GOOD WORK FOUNDATION, AND LINKY NKUNA, PROJECT MANAGER, AT THE GOOD WORK FOUNDATIONS LONDOLZI LEARNING CENTRE; BOYD AND BRONWYN, AMONG WITH THEIR TRIBE OF FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES, ARE TAKING THE CONCEPT OF CONSERVATION AND REDEFINING IT AS RESTORATION - OF WILDLIFE, EARTH AND PERSONAL SPIRIT - THE MANTRA OF THIS GENERATION; LONDOLZI'S PUPILS ON A BREAK FROM PRE-SCHOOL LESSONS; MURAL DECORATING A WALL OF THE LONDOLZI STAFF VILLAGE

visionaries dialled into African wildlife Zeitgeist, their parents Dave and Shan Varty are bushveld blue bloods that have led influential endeavours in the industry from day one. Now they're passing on the torch and prepping Bronwyn and Boyd to take custody of Londolozi's many realms. Bronwyn is the Marketing Director, but her role is not about hoteliering as much as it is about telling the story. Both travel constantly. They access things easily, internationally, on macro and micro levels. Their schooling in France, India, Australia and Zanzibar with a private tutor could have something to do with the way they effortlessly think out of the box, but the fact that they're doing things differently and making a change is because they're wired that way: they have the opportunity to do so, and they can.

■ Londolozi ☎ 011 280 6655; 🌐 www.londolozi.com; Martha Beck 🌐 www.marthabeck.co.za

BOYD'S FIRST BOOK ABOUT RECONNECTING THE HUMAN SPIRIT WITH NATURE, (RANDOM HOUSE NY), IS DUE TO BE RELEASED IN EARLY 2012.



**'SERVICE IS THE NEW FRONTIER.
IT'S VITAL TO SERVE
AND BUILD COMMUNITY'**

