



Oyster Bay Lodge

A Must Destination



In between Tsitsikamma and St. Francis Bay



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Sand boarding

Township Tour

Jesse Clegg rocks St Francis

Jesse Clegg was the headliner for the St Francis Rocks Concert in the Park at the start of this festive season in December.

Huge crowds of visitors and residents gathered at the Village Green to enjoy a free concert, with the option to buy a ticket to listen to Clegg, who was the star attraction, plus local and national artists including the St Francis Rocks, Jon Van Der Linde, Peter G. Wittenberg, Peter G. Wittenberg, and the St Francis Sirens plus popular local duo Absent Men.

"Our community is quite unique and as our business partners we want to show our appreciation for their support all year round, and to thank them for celebrating through music. It was an amazing night, with a great atmosphere for all ages – a reflection of our values and principles," says Richard Mollman, St Francis Rocks Concert Sponsor and sponsor of the concert.

Organised by the local Business Chamber, St Francis Rocks is a non-profit business organisation, Businesses Giving Back to the Community, which funds local charities. "To have had an artist of Jesse's calibre on stage was a real treat for everyone," says Jon Hammond.



Photo: Dell du Brug

As for trends prevalent in the market this year 2014 and for the foreseeable future, Ardeme says that although the market is up, it is still a buyer's market with prices under pressure, and buyers are still looking for bargains.

Laharia says there has been a clear recovery across the full price spectrum and in all areas of St Francis Bay & Gqeberha.

On the residential side, the property is considered to be a strong asset class in which to invest, particularly over the medium to long term. "A leisure property can prove to be a home to enjoy as well as an investment that generates healthy returns. As a result, buyers are looking for investment, when looking to purchase a leisure property there are several aspects that buyers should consider before deciding to commence financially."

Other considerations include the property's location, length of time the buyer intends to keep the property, the buyer's financial position, management of the property from a distance and how growth the buyer intends to use it.

In conclusion, Weleman provides an in-depth analysis of the residential market in St Francis property market. "With the many developments already in the surrounding areas, such as the wind farms, and the Bay West shopping centre just outside Port Elizabeth, our area is well-positioned for enormous growth and we are already being inundated with requests for long term rentals."

"We have seen the migration of prominent people from government departments, of which some have now moved away and are already involved in property in St Francis Bay. This is a good indication that the property market must improve in 2015. Although in the coastal areas supply still exceeds demand so the fact that it is a 'seller's market' is only marginal, but this could change."

"We have seen an increase in the sale of plots – buyers have been fortunate in picking up excellent value of the many plots which became available after our devastating fires in 2012. The shortage of well-priced properties in good

locations has been a major factor in the market's improvement."

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condition are influencing the market but sellers should be aware that overpriced properties do not sell. The old adage 'position – position – position' still holds good when it comes to pricing. With the banks becoming more lenient, and the acute shortage of rental properties we may see an interest once more for investors to look at a buy-to-let situation, as the rentals are increasing.

"Properties in St Francis Bay are very high and after and up to R4 mil per canals, the high end market seems unaffected."

"A huge number of homes have been re-built, mostly on the canals, and builders have been fully booked to keep up the pace. Increased building and many plots have been passed for development in our area and in particular in the St Francis Islands."

Harcourts especially is proud to announce its sole mandate development of 19 homes on the beautiful Jack Nicholas Estate, consisting of 3 or 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, plus double garages, which are being launched from 13 December 2014.

"This is a very exciting project, as investors will benefit from the lifestyle offering security, peace, quiet, enjoyment of the heated swimming pool, the gymnasium, spa, restaurants at the five star club, tennis and golf games aplenty. Certainly we know that it is 'one of a kind' investment for St Francis buyers."

Laharia adds that this year the Chas Eventi St Francis Bay office has made many changes within the organisation in order to hone and expand its skill set and has had to develop its staff to meet the needs of the market.

On Harcourts itself, Weleman says Harcourts Oyster is certainly on a high, firstly with the Cooper family celebrating 30 years since opening their Attorneys and Estate Agency business and that the firm is looking forward to 2015 with great confidence in the property market's improvement.

See photos of newly built houses 

Continued boom in property market & construction industry By Bev Mollman

Two years after the devastating fires in 2012 that destroyed 76 canal homes in St Francis Bay, the market is still experiencing a property and sales boom.

All agents agree that 2014 has been the best for local estate agencies while builders talk about a 'fantastic' year.

More than 40 of the homes which were destroyed in the fire have already either been rebuilt or are currently under construction.

And the general consensus is that St Francis Bay is still rising from the ashes as new homes are continually being built or renovated. "We haven't stopped, we are not complaining," is how most builders described the current situation.

Builders have commented that 2014 has been a most constructive and productive year. Building has picked up and many businesses are growing and keeping the construction world extremely busy. Also many new buildings have been built in 2014.

They all thank every one for their support and several talk about the construction industry as having a 'renaissance'.

Neil van Zyl from Rubber Coatings says business has been booming all year and he has been exceptionally busy and so swamped with work while Chris Minne from Hands On says it has been a 'full year'.

The huge cash injection into the construction industry and allied trades was a necessity, builder Arthur Joubert said earlier this year. "It was a tragic thing that happened but the resulting building boom has helped the good to come."

"This building boom benefits all associated with the industry's spinoff to plumbers, painters etc," said builder Jean Hugo. "There is a lot of positivity in the industry and service suppliers are inundated with work. This naturally has a knock-on effect for all other businesses. The money is being spent in St Francis. So why not be a beneficiary."

All builders contacted foresee much more work in the pipeline, some job dependent on tenders. It is widely predicted that, going by current trends, in the next three to five years all those levelled plots in the sought after canal area of St Francis Bay will most likely have been rebuilt and

the area will continue to reap the benefits.

Ardeme says the number of available vacant plots is now reducing rapidly as new homes commence construction and as plots sell. "Importantly, there will be no further extensions to the canal, where makes it unique in SA, so there is a desire for open – particularly river – plots which are still low – with sound medium to long term investment potential due to the scarcity factor in the future."

"Buyers are opting to build their own homes, despite higher costs of R600k to R12 000 per square metre for canal houses. One of the reasons for this preference is that, although there are a number of canal houses for sale some are very over-priced and have dated in finish and taste. Today's buyers are looking for living areas and bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms, so many would rather build a modern home to suit their own requirements and taste."

On the property sales front, St Francis Links Golf Estate has been a success story for many years. Most buyers are buying the land to live and enjoy the golf estate and not for speculative reasons. This was also true in 2014.

Ardeme maintain this year has been the best year since the fires. The market is still strong. This is in line with the wine and heating national figures for Pam Golding, around 25% growth over the year on the past few years, despite the unsettled SA economy.

"Winter was particularly good, and we achieved 2014 sales in November, which is a record trading month since October 2008 (when we sold a canal house for R21 million). Clearly the market has turned after the slow sales of 2009 to 2012."

Estelle Weleman from Harcourts Oyster in St Francis Bay says 2014 was a highly successful year in sales, in figures up by 37% from the previous year.

Brendon Laharia from Chas Eventi St Francis Bay says this year saw a substantial spike in property sales and has been one of our best years ever. "We are still in a strong position."

Ardeme goes on to say that the local Pam Golding office sales figures have been excellent for the past 24 months (since the November 2012 fire). Our turnover has doubled versus the previous year.

ReMAX Francis Bay's Les Olivier adds that the momentum within the property market in St Francis Bay and surrounds continues to gain traction. "2014 has shown a slow but steady growth in the leisure property sector of St Francis Bay. The number of weekend and holidaymakers visiting the coastal regions during the months ahead, we can expect to see the number of property transactions within St Francis Bay and surrounding areas increase."

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Try Our Word Puzzle

See how many words you can make from the letters, right. No words to be less than four letters. Every word has to contain the middle, bold letter. The goal is to also find the nine letter word/s. No plural nouns, capital letters, slang, or foreign language words (except those accepted in the English dictionary) This month's goal: 117 words excellent; 80 words good; 50 words fair. Answers p26

