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## JAY WALKING

**The lure of moccasins on famous feet**

By *Jacqui Zurcher*

Posted Wed, 12 Nov 2003

Guess who I saw at Woolworths the other day? You'll never believe it!

It was the weirdest thing. I was innocently browsing the fruit, wondering how they got those apples so shiny without artificial intervention or child labour and there he was — Trevor Manuel in the flesh.



At first I wasn't sure it was him, so I sidled up to the magazine rack near the checkout and tried to get a look at his face. Just as I was contorting my neck into an impressive hairpin crane, he turned around. It was him, no question. He looked so normal, just a regular guy in leather moccasins buying bread. He was buying white bread and I remember being surprised, thinking surely rye would be more his style.

Actually I had never given Trevor Manuel's bread preferences a thought before being confronted with the contents of his shopping basket at close quarters. Caught like a deer in the celebrity headlights every detail about the slightly famous person becomes oddly fascinating.

Finally I would have something to contribute at the next social gathering when the conversation turned to encounters of the famous kind. I was in desperate need of some material.

My nearest and dearest seem to get out of bed, walk to their cars and a famous person is draped across the bonnet. "Sorry, please get your enormous muscles off my citi-golf, I need to go to work," must be their mantra (if you are to believe their stories).

Jen has seen Woody Harrelson, Gwyneth Paltrow and Ngconde Balfour.

She tells that she was walking in Hyde Park (London not Jozi) when she noticed a hunky guy jogging towards her. She tossed her hair, their eyes met and it seemed, stayed locked in a deeply meaningful stare until he jogged right past her and she realised who he was. No, not Ngconde, for all his manifold sporting prowess. My friend had a 'moment' with Woody.

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## from the editor



"If you like all the good things in life, you've come to the right place. So go on, live a little..."  
*Leigh Robertson,*  
*Highlife Editor*

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Until I had surveyed Trevor Manuel's moccasins my closest encounter with celebrity had been a Steve Hofmeyer poster.

My notoriously lacklustre achievements in this arena have led to practised nonchalance about the celebrity encounters of others. I reign in my wide-eyed wonder, commenting cynically on the western media machine that propels people into the limelight on the flimsiest pretext. Contenders and judges in reality TV shows — I scoff at the elevated social standing publicity affords these opportunistic weasels.

My prickly reception of famous-people-and-friend-of-Jacqui stories might, in all honesty, be more deep-seated than my disdain for self-important reality TV. It's a defence mechanism. Beneath the apathy, there's a livid scar.

As a young graduate working in London for a year I regularly subjected myself to musicals. I paid hard currency to witness the landscape of Andrew Lloyd Webber's imagination run riot of a stage in ridiculous garb. My reasons for doing this weren't complex — I could get cheap tickets with a student card and these shows appealed to my friends. I was bowing to peer pressure on the cheap.

On one such ordained musical evening we had planned to see *Cats*, hoping T.S. Eliot might have influenced Mr Lloyd Webber for the good. In the course of buying tickets for the show we overheard that 'Titanic' was premiering in Leicester Square just down the road. Not only that, but a grumpy musical fan behind us was complaining about the crowds building up, anticipating the arrival of Leonardo de Caprio.

Now, I was young and impressionable. I might have been jaded in the musicals department, but I owned the 'Titanic' soundtrack and was deeply convinced Leonardo was the most fantastic thing since low fat digestive biscuits. *Far across the distance and spaces beweeeeeeneen us*, is all I am saying...

Convincing my friend to spend the hour or so before the show waiting for a glimpse of Leo, we elbowed our way to Leicester Square. There we waited, eyes darting, elbows working the crowd. The minutes ticked by as Mr Mistofelees itched to leap onto the stage. No Leo.

Finally my hard won post at the edge of the crowd barrier had to be abandoned, and I made my way despairingly back to watch a band of over zealous, over-articulated felines. Sitting through the show with flashbulbs exploding in my face and slinking whiskered characters trying to coax me into crowd participation, I choked on frustrated tears.

My big disappointment has understandably nursed ambivalence to celebrity encounters. That was until Trevor.

I hadn't even waited to see him. It was just so sudden, a charmed moment. No harassing crowds. There he was, newspaper and bread in hand, restoring my enthusiasm for the mindless fun of spotting the well known.

JACQUI ZURCHER lives in Cape Town near a house with very noisy rottweilers. She is a freelance journalist with an honours degree in Computer Science and a Postgraduate Diploma in African Studies, majoring in Postcolonial English Literature from UCT. On occasion she has been known to dabble in IT.

Got something to say about Jay Walking?  
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Thanks Trevor, for all the hard work with the finances and kudos on the funky shoes.


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