**EERSTEKRANS HIKING TRAIL**

**This area falls within the Cradock Town boundaries and is administered by the Municipality.**

* There is no admission charged to hikers and no permit is required
* The area is accessible for 24 hours day

**The approximate distance from Cradock.**

* +/- 5 km from the Town Hall to the start of the trail.

**The Panorama**

* Commanding a picturesque view of the Fish River Valley, surrounding fields, hill and vales. Some Cradock landmarks such as the Dutch Reformed Mother Church, Buffelskop, Saltpeterskop, Oukop, Marlow High School, golf course, the airstrip and foot of the trail at the Cradock Spa

**Suggested Paraphernalia**

* Comfortable walking shoes, water, sunscreen, hat a camera and binoculars

**Who should not go?**

* Children under 5 years of age and medically unfit people.

**Directions:**

***Option 1***

* Take the Hofmeyer road divergent from Cradock in a northwesterly direction.
* Watch out for a sign indicating the locality of the Eerstekrans Hiking Trail.
* In the proximity of the sign on the side of the road in the boundary fence is a gate.
* Park your vehicle at the gate.

***Option 2***

* You begin the hike at the Cradock Spa.
* Walk from the spa along the tar road away from the town
* About 500 meters along; turn right onto the gravel road crossing the Fish River at the intersection with a tar road turn right along the tarmac
* The sign indicating the locality of the Eerstekrans Hiking Trail will be on your left. (This will lengthen your hike with approximately 15 mins)

**Hiking direction:**

* Follow white footprints painted on the rocks
* About 5 to 10 minutes after the gate, you will come across a derelict concrete water tank; this was part of Cradock’s original water supply system
* In about 15 to 20 minutes, you should reach the summit and peak of the trail
* At some ironstone “heads”, natural rock piles. The highest is proximal to the Great Fish River

The “Koppie” (hillock) can be recognized by a buttress about three meters high. During the Boer war a British soldier wrote the inscription on the buttress; “The heavens declare the glory of God, the firmament showed his handy-work” (sic). The inscription is preceded by a crucifix, and ended with a crown, as are the inscriptions of “Oukop”. Returning via the same route, or continue down the trail in a north, north-westerly direction. At the end of the trail is a gate at the main road. There are two options:

* Either take a 600 meter walk back
* Or cross the main road and go through the gate opposite the beginning of the trail
* Should the latter be chose, head for a pepper grove about 50 meters from the main road, Continue towards the river; at about 20 meters from the riverbank is a farm track. Turn left down the track and walk back to your car via the weir.

Wild animals, birds and plant life can be seen along the trail.