



**President:** Michael Tuffin **Chairman:** Errol Scarr **Hon Treasurer:** Henry Diesveld **Secretary:** Glenda Thorpe  
**Honorary Members:** Laurie Powis, Marianne Alexander, Barbara Hey, Mary Smith, Anne Bean, Adam Harrower, Michael Tuffin

## NEXT MEETING

**Monday, 2 July 2018 at 20:00** at The Athenaeum, Newlands

### SALI'S WINNING GARDENS OF 2018

Morné Faulhamer has just returned from doing a round of judging for the South African Landscapers Institute. He will give an illustrated talk on this year's winning gardens and landscaping projects from all over southern Africa. Come and be inspired.

## NEXT OUTING

**Sat, 11 August:** Visit 2 gardens landscaped by Clare Burgess. We will start at the Papenboom Meadow project in Newlands at 09h30 and move on to a garden in Constantia. Let Glenda have your name by 6 August.

## IN MEMORIAM

I met Colin when he was refurbishing the Botany Department teaching Laboratories (don't know the date) and came into my office to introduce himself. We got chatting: typical of him, so easy-going and friendly. In no time we were talking gardening for the first time, but not for the last! He was always endlessly ready to talk gardening to anyone who gave him the chance.

He told me that he had recently relocated from Joburg, where he and a pal of his had tried to start up a plant nursery a year before. He had bad luck: having bought in the first stock of plants with a view to opening that year, it was the year that coincided with such a drought that he could not even give plants away and they had to close down the nursery almost simultaneously with its opening. A trial by fire for him.

He had to go back to being a builder, having trained in London on restoring old historic buildings. He worked in Cape Town until he found the work circumstances here increasingly difficult competing with many others willing to work for much less money, and few needing his specialized skills. Eventually he was forced to return to the UK.

While here, though, he joined the CHS and soon impressed the members with his horticultural knowledge and enthusiasm, while he infused a fresh dynamism into a Society which just then was on the verge of closing down. Thanks to his leadership as Chairman, the CHS went from strength to strength. He persuaded me to join the CHS, which I highly enjoyed. I have been grateful to him for giving me the impetus to join: and I was able to step into his shoes when he departed for his homeland.

He designed and created a most delightful garden in Claremont, growing a host of unusual plants – I wonder how that garden fared after he left? He had a particular fondness for Camellias and was active in the Camellia Society in the UK, but here he had an endless interest in trying out plants new to him all through his years in Cape Town. He was also endlessly helpful to any gardener needing advice.



Colin's winning *Veltheimia bracteata* at his garden club's spring show in 2015

His departure to the UK was a blow to us, but that the CHS thrives to this day from a moribund beginning when he took over, is thanks to his rescue all those years ago and the new sturdy foundation he gave to the CHS.

*Anne Bean*

Colin was CHS Chairman for 1993 and 1994, also doing a few years as Vice Chairman. He remained on the Committee and was given Honorary Life Membership when he returned to the UK in March of 2000.

He was treasurer of the ICS (international Camellia Society) for a number of years, and for the last few years was on the committee of his local garden club in Axbridge, Somerset.

We extend our heartfelt sympathies to Lynn and their children.



Last September, brickpaving his garden paths because they were mossy and slippery in winter

Our condolences to the families of other members who have passed away in the past month:  
 Jenny Zeederberg, Hazel Johnson, Thelma Harding and Esmé Mills.

**REPORT BACK**

**Book Prize Winners**



Our 3<sup>rd</sup> Year winner, Jenny Liedtke, is back again, having also been a prize winner last year.

Jenny Liedtke is 23 years old, and currently doing the Bachelor of Technology in horticulture at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

What she likes about horticulture is that it includes working outdoors and with nature and finds it fun to learn about new plants and all the things one can do with them. Last year she worked at Babylonstoren in the vegetable garden and in the fruit tree team, enjoying learning more about edible and medicinal plants. She felt it was a great experience being able to work with people with so much knowledge.

Like a previous prizewinner, Megan Blatchford, Jenny received the Deans Medal at the recent autumn graduation.

Once she has completed the BTech she would like to work in South Africa and then travel and work at different nurseries to gain new ideas and experience. She hopes to return home and be able to use the experience and knowledge gained to do something for the horticultural industry in the Western Cape.

Jenny attained an average mark of 81% and a distinction in all 6 subjects. At the rate she’s going, we will probably see her again next year for the BTech prize!

**June Plant Table (suburb: source of water)**

Our suburbs have had varying amounts of rain this past month. Kirstenbosch always gets an absolute deluge. We’re lucky if we get anything in Pinelands. Don’t know if your weeds are growing as well as ours are – that’s the downside – but remember chickweed is a fantastic addition to your salad – and there’s always chickweed in the garden!

**Pinelands: grey water**

(EX) *Poinsettia*

(EX) *Raphiolepus* “Indian Hawthorn”

(EX) *Fuchsia tryphilla*: grows in semi-shade; pinching the growing tips helps to bush out the plant and produce more flowers.

(IND) *Plectranthus* “Mona Lavender”: gets fluffy white spots occasionally with grey water. Vinegar spray helps.

**University Estate: “whatever falls”**

(EX) *Pyrostegia venusta* “Golden Shower” [1] from South America: vigorous climber; stunning display of flowers if grown in full sun.

**Kirstenhof: wellpoint water**

(EX) *Bromeliad* flower head [2] – side branch off an inflorescence

(EX) *Bromeliad* spike [3] – flowers still to open

(EX) *Bougainvillea*: looking their best this year; full of flowers; cut them off when dead otherwise they hang like a bunch of wet rags.

(EX) *Monstera deliciosa* [4] of the Araceae family: not grown for their flowers, but they are rather striking. Initially thought to be a Philodendron, it was formerly known as *Philodendron pertusum* but is related to the *Spathiphyllum* according to [http://houseplants.wikia.com/wiki/Monstera\\_deliciosa](http://houseplants.wikia.com/wiki/Monstera_deliciosa).





(EX) *Sechium edule* ("Chayote", "Choko", "Sou-sou") [5] from the central Americas: It is of the Cucurbitaceae family and is a vigorous perennial vine which grows well in mild climates with no danger of frosts. You can plant them in early spring – a picked fruit will grow a sprout (just as potatoes do) then put it directly into the soil but leave the sprouting end just uncovered. The vines will then fruit in autumn and winter. The green fruits are pear shaped and sized and have squash type flesh (marrow). Grow on a trellis or fence with plenty of room around them. Both male and female flowers occur on the same vine. The flowers are pollinated by wasps and bees and the fruits mature about 35 days later.

Soil: Well drained soil - ensure its damp when you plant. Keep well watered, especially when it fruits. A balanced fertiliser will assist growth but a little extra nitrogen will always help (as

found in Citrus fertilisers).

Maintenance: In winter, after cropping, cut the vines down to 10cms above the soil and they'll sprout again the next season.

Comments: Chokoes contain lots of vitamin C, they are low in fat and high in fibre. We have been told that McDonalds use Chokoes as filler for Apple Pies as they have a fairly neutral taste and can bulk-up apple content without affecting the taste. We recommend slicing and stir frying them in olive oil and garlic rather than boiling.

[[https://www.gardensonline.com.au/GardenShed/PlantFinder/Show\\_2703.aspx](https://www.gardensonline.com.au/GardenShed/PlantFinder/Show_2703.aspx)]

As the comment was made that they "don't taste like much", maybe the above idea would improve the taste.

(EX) *Solanum*: different colours

(EX) *Justicia petiolaris*: still flowering after 2 months.

(IND) *Leonotis nepetifolia*: mid-way in height between *L. leonurus* and *L. ocymifolia* (the tiny one).

(IND) *Crassula ovata*: 90 – 180cm tall. Spreads to 1,5m wide. In semi shade but should be in full sun. a lot of succulents, if they're in full sun, there is more pigmentation in the leaves and the flowers than when they're in the shade.

(IND) *Hypoestes forskali*

(IND) *Podranea brycei* "Zimbabwe Creeper"

**Rondebosch: grey water**

(EX) *Iresine lindinii* [6] – closely related to the Coleus. Has survived the drought well. Slips easily.

**Diep River: rain**

(EX) *Chamaelium* "Geraldton Wax" [9 – left] from Australia: loved by bees.

(EX) *Trachelospermum jasminoides* "Star Jasmine" from China: has survived the summer in a pot.

(EX) *Coleus*: is given saved water (grey or rain) once a week.

**Pinelands: rain**

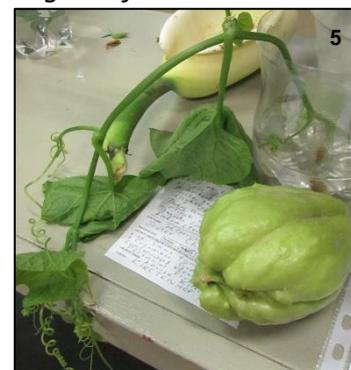
(EX) Paynes hybrid *Thryptomene* [9 – right] from Australia: looks much like an Erica but if you look closely (preferably through a hand lens), it has miniature Geraldton Wax flowers and is a much lower shrub. At present it is covered in bees.

You know the rains have come when start to see the Lachenalias in flower. The joy of these plants is that you don't need to water them in the summer.

(IND) *Lachenalia bulbifera* [7] – from Klawer to Mossel Bay: quick and easy to flower

from bulbils; dormant in summer.

(IND) *Lachenalia viridiflora* [8] – St Helena Bay – discovered 1953: very scarce in the wild due to urban development; quick and easy to flower from seed; dormant in summers; very localised distribution; now extinct where first found; pollinated by Southern Double Collared sunbirds; porcupines and guinea fowl eat the bulbils.



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**Constantia: periodic borehole water directed at plants that look stressed**

(IND) *Senecio tamoides* (variegated)

(IND) *Justicia sp*

(IND) *Justicia campylostemon*

(IND) *Plectranthus sp* – natural hybrid between *Plectranthus verticillatus* and *P. ciliatus*

(IND) *Duvernoia adhatadoides* "Pistol Bush" [10 – flowers and seed pods]

**Lakeside: only rain**

(IND) *Muraltia spinosa* (formerly *Nylandtia*) [11]: very tough; long flowering period, followed by long-lasting berries.

(IND) *Eriocephalus africanus*: very tough.



**JENNY'S CHOICES FOR JUNE**

EXOTIC	INDIGENOUS
<p><b>Rondebosch: wellpoint water</b>                      Shelley's (EX) <i>Camellia japonica elegans</i>: its leaves are leathery/waxy and that's one of nature's secret ways of enabling a plant to survive extreme drought. They won't lose moisture through their leaves like some of the softer plants. Because the plant is about 2m tall, its roots are going down a long way.</p> 	<p><b>Rondebosch: very little wellpoint water</b>                      Shelley's (IND) <i>Paranomus reflexus</i>: grows on the mountainside like Proteas; tough. See notes below.</p> 

**MOST UNUSUAL**

**Constantia (Plumstead end)**

Traudl's (EX) *Zamioculcas zamifolia* "ZZ plant"

More information on this plant below.



***Paranomus reflexus*** [<http://pza.sanbi.org/paranomus-reflexus>]

*Paranomus reflexus* is a robust, well-branched shrub, 1-2 m tall. It has leaves of two different kinds: low down on the stem they are dissected while on the upper part of the stem, particularly on stems carrying flowerheads, they are entire. The dissected leaves are 40-80 mm long, hairless, with slender segments divided in the upper half and tipped with red.

The entire leaves are 35 mm long, egg- to spatula-shaped, hairless and reduce in size towards the tip of the stem. The petiole is up to 15 mm long and clasps the stem. The leaf blade turns outwards and the edges curve upwards.

Elegant cream to greenish yellow flowerheads cover the bush during winter-spring (Jun.-Aug.). The flowerheads are 80-140 mm long and up to 70 mm in diameter and resemble a bottlebrush. The flowerhead is made up of many individual flowers, each one 30-35 mm long, very slender, and possessing four free perianth segments. Just before the flowers open they turn downwards (reflex). As soon as they have reflexed, the perianth segments separate, releasing the style with its pollen presenter.

<https://plantcaretoday.com/zamioculcas-zamiifolia-zz-plant.html> tells us more about:

***Zamioculcas zamiifolia*****Perfect Houseplant Qualifications**

"Known by several names – the ZeeZee plant, steel plant, zizi plant, zanzibar gem, the aroid palm and "eternity plant", the *Zamioculcas* plant fits just about every qualification needed for a new indoor plant introduction:

- The ZeeZee (ZZ) plant handles low light
- Low water requirements
- Tough under indoor conditions
- Drought tolerant
- Handles neglect well

Most of the BEST indoor house plants grow slow and the ZZ plant is no exception. It propagates easily but develops slowly.

Like growing African violet plants and "jade trees", ZZ's can be started from leaf cuttings.

Grown in sizes from 4-inch pots through 17-inch pots, large plants can reach up to 3 feet in height.

**Not New**

When many people see the ZeeZee plant for the first time, they assume it looks and resembles a cycad plant – *Zamia furfuracea* or cardboard palm.

However, the ZZ plant is a native of eastern Africa belonging to the family Araceae family, along with the *Philodendron*, "Peace plant" – *Spathiphyllum* and *Aglaonema* and been around for decades. I grew *Zamioculcas zamiifolia* 35 years ago but wasn't smart enough to introduce it :).

The base of the swollen plant stalks (rhizomes) host dark green foliage, naturally shiny leaves. Making it easy to assume someone applied leaf shine to the plant.

One area of caution. Beware of any of the "juices" coming in contact with the skin which may cause irritation to sensitive skin due to the calcium oxalate crystals in the ZZ.

Very old plants I've personally seen hit 4 feet. On average most plants grown and used indoors reach 16 – 28 inches, with an equal spread.

They make an excellent accent plant in areas where allowed to "spread its wings."

As for being a tough, durable indoor plant, *Zamioculcas* handles low indirect light well and abuse exceptionally well, it even grows. The *Zamioculcas* is one of the best plants for a windowless office.

In the tough plant category, it's equal with *Sansevieria* (snake plant | mother-in-law tongue) and *Aspidistra* the cast iron plant.

**Soil Requirements and Fertilizer Needs?**

The ZZ plant does not need any special type of potting soil or potting mix. Any well-drained soil recommended for houseplants will work.

As for the fertilizer requirements. A complete, balanced liquid houseplant fertilizer (20-20-20) applied once per month when watering will provide the nutrients the ZZ needs.

**Handles Low Light Levels Well**

Even though the plant does well in lower light levels, by placing it in bright light it performs even better. It is one of the plants that thrive in fluorescent light.

Keep the plant away from any hot direct sunlight as the plant can burn. Good bright filtered afternoon sun would work well.

**Don't Sit in Water**

Don't let the plant to sit in water or stay wet or you may experience root rot. The plant does better when kept on the dry side. If you water the ZZ too much or the plant sits in water you may find yellowing leaves.

A little more about watering from my side. I purposely neglect plants to test their toughness.

I didn't do anything to the ZZ in my office (for the past 16 months). Let me tell you – It looks pretty good considering... ready for this – drum roll please – watered only 6 times in 16 months.

Of all the ZZ's great attributes, its toughness, ability to handle low light or the low watering requirements, its best attribute bar none... no insect problems. Or none anyone can identify.

Eliminating this one element makes caring for your plant much easier. The plant leaves you with only a couple of things to manage – light and water, making care easier.

The downside, we can always find a downside. The downside to ZZ – slow growing, so slow production."

## GETTING TO KNOW YOUR COMMITTEE

I am the 2<sup>nd</sup> of 4 sons and was born in Cape Town. At the age of 11 the family moved to the then Southern Rhodesia where I completed my schooling and thereafter obtained a BSc in Civil Engineering at UCT. I started work as a bridge designer with a firm of consultants in Cape Town, then did a few spells as a resident engineer building roads and bridges in the Eastern Cape, which is where I met Jackie. The latter part of my engineering career was spent running construction projects from the consultant's supervision side plus a few side lines like road traffic monitoring and traffic signage. During the period 1978 to 2010 I was involved in the construction of the Huguenot (Du Toitskloof) Tunnel project, first on the construction, thereafter on the operation and maintenance aspects.

My earliest recollection, horticultural-wise, was spending a whole morning weeding a lawn for a Rondebosch householder during a Scout's Bob-a-Job week and only being paid one bob, instead of the expected bob per half hour. The next recollection was of clearing rampant grass growth around our house in Rhodesia, this happening up to 3 times per rainy season. I did wonder at times if I was the victim of child labour abuse!

Thereafter my horticultural experiences were more positive, consisting either of restoring existing gardens or starting our present garden in 1976. These gardens are/were simple in just consisting of lawns and shrubs that only required sweat equity to mow and trim, which I did without help until a couple of years ago. Being an engineer, the use of all that Latin in horticultural and botanical terminology tends to switch me off, so my botanical knowledge leaves a lot to be desired.

Jackie and I joined CHS sometime in the late 1990s, on the urging of Marjorie Starke, to listen to the talks and to visit interesting gardens. In 2012 I took pity on Glenda who was struggling to be both the Hon Secretary and Hon Treasurer and volunteered to do the Treasurer's job. This has been an interesting experience which helps to keep the mind active.



## NEW MGI AFFILIATE – Welcome to California Horticultural Society

"Affectionately known as "Cal Hort" to its members, the Society is the oldest plant association in California. The exceptionally cold winter of 1932 brought together nursery personnel, academics, and garden enthusiasts to share information on what plants had survived and what had perished as a result of those temperatures in the San Francisco Bay Area. That initial gathering expanded into the California Horticultural Society, with a focus on understanding the challenges and opportunities of gardening in this region, and on the plants that would thrive in our version of a mediterranean-type climate, which is so different from our East Coast, the UK, and much of Europe. Our mission continues to be to discover those plants that thrive here and by what means.

To that end, Cal Hort members meet monthly to hear programs by horticultural professionals, plant collectors, and avid gardeners with relevant information to share. In addition, we hold a yearly exchange of seeds, organize visits to gardens and nurseries of interest, and facilitate social visits to one another's gardens.

We are looking forward to our affiliation with MGI and would welcome the participation of members of MGI in any of these activities."

Visit their website at [calhortsociety.org](http://calhortsociety.org) to find out what they get up to.

## THINGS TO DO

- **2 to 30 June:** *Wild Harvest – nectar, berries, capsules and seeds* exhibition at UCT Irma Stern Museum, Cecil Road, Rosebank with parking in Chapel Road. Tuesday – Friday 10:00 – 17:00; Saturday 10:00 – 14:00. Walkabouts and tearoom on Wednesdays from 10:30 – 12:30. Visit [www.irmasternmuseum.org.za](http://www.irmasternmuseum.org.za)
- **Sat, 22 – Mon, 24 Sept:** Calitzdorp's Vetplantfees 2018 – talks, walks, workshops (some of which require advanced booking and payment), exhibitions and plant sales are all on offer. Visit [www.vetplant.co.za](http://www.vetplant.co.za)

Photos: Andrew Thorpe, Google, Lynn Cook and Glenda Thorpe