



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

## MEETINGS

Our June meeting will not take place. Resumption of our monthly meetings will take place when restrictions allow. As we usually have over 60 people at a meeting, limitations on numbers may have to be imposed. This is a very complex situation so will need to be discussed by the Committee. Rest assured, members will be given fair warning of when our next meeting will be held. We have the speakers waiting in the wings.

In the meantime, continue to enjoy the horticultural snippets sent in by members to keep you entertained.

## OUTINGS

We hope these will take place again in Spring, but should it be sooner, you will be notified. In the meantime, you may be interested in viewing this lush tropical garden in Australia.

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=cairns+botanical+garden&ru=%2fvideos%2fsearch%3fq%3dcairns%2botanical%2bgarden%26qpvt%3dcairns%2botanical%2bgarden%26FORM%3dVDDVXX&qpvt=cairns+botanical+garden&view=detail&mid=223E86E272F390C14E4E223E86E272F390C14E4E&rvmid=F6A558625C894EAF2913F6A558625C894EAF2913&FORM=VDQVAP>

If you know of any private gardens or places of horticultural interest we could visit, please send in contact details. For private gardens, your help in making the initial connection would be appreciated.

## ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

Thank you for renewing your subscription for another year. We hope to see those who advised they will make payment when lockdown is lifted in the, hopefully, not too distant future.

## REPORTBACK

**Erratum** on page 6 of April's CHS News: Microsoft insists that it knows the spelling of botanical names, hence *Clivia gardenii* becomes *C gardenia*. John has provided background to the naming of this Clivia:

"*Clivia gardenii*", discovered in what became Natal, was sent to Kew by Major Garden, who also had a *Streptocarpus* named for him. He did not even know that he had found it. It sprouted from soil around another plant that he sent to Kew in a Wardian Case."

### 115<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting

As the country was under lockdown due to the COVID-19 Corona Virus pandemic, the planned AGM was unable to be held on 4 May 2020. In order to comply with the requirements of the CHS Constitution, it was decided to hold a virtual AGM. The necessary notification to hold the AGM had been given and the proposals for Committee Members received.

The Agenda, Minutes of the 2019 AGM, the Chairman's and Treasurer's Reports and Financial Statements for the year ending 29 February 2020, had been circulated to the membership. For the AGM to take place, members were requested to respond with their votes for the relevant items on the agenda.

VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE: 45 members responded via e-mail.

#### 1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES:

The Minutes of the 114<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting held on 6 May 2019, having been distributed, were proposed for adoption by 17 members and seconded by 10.

#### 2 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

The Chairman's Report for the year ending 29 February 2020, having been previously circulated to all members on the e-mail distribution list, was accepted by 18 members and seconded by 11.

#### 3 TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer's Report, together with the Financial Statements for the year ending 29 February 2020, having been previously circulated to all members on the e-mail distribution list, was proposed by 16 members and seconded by 12.

## 4 ELECTION OF PRESIDENT:

Michael Tuffin agreed to stand as President for another year. E Scarr proposed he be re-elected as President of the CHS, G Thorpe seconded and 36 members were in favour.

## 5 ELECTION OF COMMITTEE:

The duly completed nomination forms had been received for Susan Armstrong, Henry Diesveld, Isabella Hayden, Errol Scarr, Jenny Scarr, Melanie Stewart and Glenda Thorpe. By a unanimous e-mail vote, the seven nominees were elected to stand for the ensuing year.

## 6 APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR:

The appointment of Guy Carter as Auditor for the ensuing year was proposed by 16 members and seconded by 13.

## 7 GENERAL:

7.1 The question of storing the Flower Show equipment, and other items which members cannot store, at a rate of R410 a month in a garage in Plumstead was raised by a member. This is a matter that the Committee has been discussing and which will be followed up in due course. The alternatives are:

- 7.1.1 Find alternative storage for items that are still of use to the CHS and sell off, donate or scrap what is not required;
- 7.1.2 Enquire from the Kirstenbosch Branch of Botanical Society whether they had space to house vases and trophies and any other useful items which could be used should shows or events of a similar nature be revived in the future.

**Members' May Plants**

As promised, a variety of Nerines from our members.

## NICK (NEWLANDS)

*Nerine filifolia* (right): In spite of neglect and pests they always manage a show.

## SUSAN (DIEP RIVER)

*Nerina filifolia* with pink *Barleria* behind it (below, left): Grown in pot; bit of water throughout the summer.

## PEGGY (BREËRIVIER)

*Nerine sarniensis* (far right): It has been a real treat with 14 stalks of flowers this year. All I can say is that they thrive with total neglect.

They haven't been re-potted in years. Get lots of sun and a splatter of water in summer.



## LYN (BERGVLIET)

*Nerine undulata* (below, left): I bought the bulbs at Kirstenbosch. They are indigenous, from the Eastern Cape. They usually flower in April and are dormant in summer. Plant the bulbs with their necks just above the surface of the soil. The soil should be well drained loam. Once the flowers are over, I give them a liquid feed – Nitrosol, and when the leaves start dying off, at the beginning of summer, I move the pot into my yard under 80% shade cloth and water very sparingly. Sadly this Nerine does not set seed, and I assume that whatever pollinates it does not occur here. However, it does multiply in the pot with offsets of the bigger bulbs.



Indigenous, *Nerine sarniensis* (left) grows on rocky slopes on our Peninsula mountains and east to Caledon. They flower in March. They need well drained sand soil – they grow in that sort of medium in nature. They do well in autumn and winter in morning sun and afternoon shade. The flowers appear first – I am always surprised when the buds appear. The leaves only appear as the flowers fade. Once the leaves have appeared, I feed with Nitrosol and keep them watered. As the leaves start dying down in late winter, the pots are also moved to the yard under shade cloth and watered very occasionally. These bulbs are also summer dormant. Sarnienses have also never set seed growing in my garden. I assume that they are pollinated by the Table Mountain Beauty, a large red butterfly

that only occurs in their natural habitat. They do not multiply via offsets very often.

*N filifolia*: Also indigenous and from the Eastern Cape, the original bulbs were collected by my grandfather in the 1940s when he visited his friend Graham (sorry don't know the surname) on a farm called Kommadagga in the Riebeek East and Paterson district of the Eastern Cape.

They grew, and flowered in his mountainside garden, and when he died, the Nerine bulbs were dug up and planted in two garden troughs at my mother's home, also on the mountainside, in Fish Hoek. Although she was not a gardener, the bulbs flourished, proving to me that they were very easy to grow! When she moved to a little rondavel just above the "Catwalk "on Fish Hoek beach, she took them with her; when she moved from there my sister and I inherited them – thus they became our family's "Heritage Nerinas".

I still have the two original troughs of *N filifolia*, the offspring of the original bulbs.

*N filifolia* (right) are evergreen with soft needle-shaped leaves all the year round and flower EVERY February without fail. Even during the drought years, when they shed their leaves, they still flowered in February!

I grow them against a West-facing wall, where they get the hot afternoon sun. In summer they are watered about once a week and in winter whenever it rains. They set copious amounts of seed, which germinate quickly, even sometimes when they are still attached to the faded flowers. I feed them erratically with Nitrosol, after the flowering is over. I also top up the troughs with compost during the early days of winter. This is a no-nonsense bulb, easy to grow and a delight when it flowers. I always pick flowers and put them in a vase, and give a bunch to my next door neighbour.



(Seeds are available now, but we will have to wait until lockdown is over and we can have meetings again.)

**Other bloomers during the month:**

LINDA (CONSTANTIA)  
Brugmansia "Moonflowers"



"Pink moonflower is not very uncommon, but I like the pic. The yellow moonflower came from a cutting taken in Kefalonia (it is darker than the other yellow which grows prolifically in my garden) and was transported via Cheshire where my older son lives. I think it's the same colour as several large bushes in Ronelle Shuttleworth's garden

It has taken about four years of moving around to get to this stage. It has about ten flowers at once and quite a picture. The acquisition of a borehole



last year has certainly helped! I also have an unusual variegated-leafed moonflower which is full of buds (from Leoné Williams of Petal Faire when she visited my garden) plus single and double white. As you can see, I am quite fond of this species which comes into its own in the cooler weather."

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brugmansia> tells us *Brugmansia* is a genus of seven species of flowering plants in the family *Solanaceae*. They are woody trees or shrubs, with pendulous flowers, and have no spines on their fruit. Their large, fragrant flowers give them their common name of **angel's trumpets**, a name sometimes used for the closely related genus *Datura*. (*Datura* differ from *Brugmansia* in that they are herbaceous perennials, with erect or nodding, rather than pendulous, flowers – and usually spiny fruit).

NICOLA (KIRSTENHOF)

Unusual plant: *Callisia fragrans* "False Bromeliad" or "Basket Plant", from Mexico. Family Commelinaceae.

It sends out runners which form plants at the tips and is good in shade and quite tough when it comes to water requirements. My first plant sent up an inflorescence which took quite a while to flower. The flowers were fragrant, but lasted one day! Was most disappointed until I realised that every couple of weeks for several months the inflorescence sent out new flowers.



ANN (CONSTANTIA)

Left: *Hypoestes* and single yellow *Tecomaria capensis*  
Centre: *Leonotis leonorus* with Old Cape Lemon in background  
Right: *Pennisetum setaceum rubrum*



BELINDA (IMHOFF'S GIFT)

Left: *Bougainvillea*  
Centre: *Zygocactus truncata schlumbergia*  
Right: *Mandevilla*



**Lockdown Fruit and Veggie Harvesting:**

*From this ...*

Belinda’s veggie garden, prepared and planted on day 0 of lockdown ...



... and on 25 April!



*to this ...*

Errol and Jenny’s (PINELANDS) veggie patch planted the day before lockdown started ...



... and in production on 11 May.



Nicky R’s (FISH HOEK) harvest on 9 May:



Jenny says: “Each visit to Checkers I bought beetroot seeds, followed by turnips and peas – up and growing nicely. The bonus with turnips is the leaves make an excellent spinach.

We are kept on our toes hunting caterpillars of the Cabbage White butterflies which LOVE our garden!! Errol found over 40 yesterday on the first broccoli and cabbage plants. They are even on Nasturtium plants!

We are picking beans and cabbage leaves, plus salad leaves, galore.”

Andrea’s fruit harvesting:

Right: One of 4 pawpaw trees in our garden – taking a while to ripen. Will have to share later!

Far right: The 2<sup>nd</sup> banana tree this season! We had over 70 plump little bananas 3 weeks ago (approx. 22 April) from the first one.



**EDITOR’S CHOICE OF LOCKDOWN LOVELIES**

INDIGENOUS  
*Haemanthus albiflos*



EXOTIC  
*Bromeliad*



Both David’s (Constantia) plants are this month’s winners.

**A Gardener’s Hymn**

by Alan Titchmarsh

*Eternal Father, cure my doubts  
And keep the aphids off my sprouts.  
Let weevil, codling moth and flea  
Eat someone else’s mange-tout pea.*

*Oh, hear me when I shout and cry  
And send a cure for carrot fly.  
Make all my courgettes long and fat  
And neutralise my neighbour’s cat.*

*Let not my spuds fall prey to blight  
Nor rosebuds vanish in the night.  
Oh, hear us when we cry to thee:  
For those who garden on TV.*

(Taken from Marigolds, Myrtle and Moles – Hodder & Stoughton)

**NURTURING A NEW LOVE**

(Excerpt from The Times, Saturday May 09 2020)

When your life’s work is trying to connect people to nature, seeing so many tuning in to birdsong, revelling in rain showers and hungry for the rites of spring is deeply satisfying. Suddenly there’s space for the small seasonal pleasures that sustain some of us but which have gone unnoticed by many, stuck on the exhausting treadmill of travel, shopping and work: the first swift, the heady scent of lilac, a blackbird’s evening song.

If we could take one thing from this nightmarish period and carry it into whatever world is to come, I’d choose this fragile new awareness, this new need for nature, this new love. It contains everything we need to transform the way we live, individually and collectively — if we can only nurture it. This could be the start of something wonderful.

Melissa Harrison

**AND NOW FOR SOMETHING DIFFERENT ...**



**ANDREA (CONSTANTIA)**

Above left: This is our resident owl resting on our patio fence. They have shared their fledglings with us, showing them how to bathe in our shallow bird bath! We have seen evidence of their meals – squirrel, rat & mouse!

Above, centre: A determined porcupine has dug through the concrete fence foundation to Uitsig Farm on our boundary. No animal entries have been provided and this one has now been filled with concrete.

**MARIANNE (CONSTANTIA)**

Above, right: I was wanting another birdbath, so when, at great expense, we had to have a new satellite dish put in, I kept the old one.

Now painted black with a waterproofing agent and balanced on an old stump outside our bedroom, much to the delight of the birds. They love it. It’s shallow enough for them to splash about it and the flat piece of slate makes it easy for the little ones to drink. The gentle slope makes it safer for them too. And the reflections are beautiful.

And guess what – I found another one that someone tossed out with their refuse. I am painting it for a friend!

**SETARIA MEGAPHYLLA**

When visiting the Petersen garden this year, we saw a lovely grass. It was *Setaria megaphylla* “Broad-leaved Bristle Grass”.

*Guide to Grasses of Southern Africa*, by Frits van Oudtshoorn, tells us:

*Features:*

- A robust, dark-green tufted grass
- Leaves are exceptionally broad in the middle and longitudinally pleated
- Inflorescence is an open or contracted panicle with a loose central axis
- Usually grows in shade
- Culms are usually drooping
- Flowers from September to June

*Habitat:*

Broad-leaved bristle grass often grows in shade, which is why it is usually found in forests, plantations and dense bushveld. It is mostly found where additional moisture is available, which is why it is often found beside rivers and in winter furrows beside roads. It mainly occurs in areas with a high rainfall.

*Similar species:*

*Setaria megaphylla* is closely related to *S.lindenbergiana* and *S. plicatilis*, but is not easily confused with the species. The broad, dark-green leaves of *S. megaphylla* distinguish it from these two species.

*Uses:*

It is a palatable grass with a high leaf production, which is utilised by larger grazers in particular. It remains green until late in the growing season. It is an attractive grass that is increasingly being planted in larger gardens. Broad-leaved bristle grass is a serious weed in forestry areas, however, and competes with young trees for water and sunlight. Mature tufts are difficult to control, which is why control measures should be taken when the tufts are still young.

*Distribution:*

It occurs in tropical Africa and America, as well as in a few localities in India.



## GET OUT, GET HEALTHY & GET GROWING

(Excerpt from Atlantic Fertiliser’s May Newsletter)

Make the most of this time at home and catch up on the things you "never have time to do", such as gardening. Now is the perfect time to get outside and start preparing your garden for winter.

Did you know that doctors believe that the act of gardening can help you switch off intrusive thoughts and promote a feeling of wellbeing?

Don’t believe us? We’ve rounded up the top health and wellness benefits courtesy of the International Association of Horticultural Producers to encourage you all to garden this month:

- A regular dose of gardening can improve your health. Studies report a wide range of health outcomes, such as reductions in depression, anxiety, and body mass index, as well as increases in life satisfaction, quality of life, and sense of community.
- Green space provides learning and curative processes that contribute to a sense of meaning and purpose in life.
- Our non-visual senses are also inspired by nature. Sound, smell, taste, touch, are all part of our appreciation of nature as measured by emotional and physiological mechanisms.
- Gardening gives people a creative way to change their stress and frustration into something beautiful that offers comfort and joy.
- Gardening provides relief from ‘problem solving’ mental attention, shifting the mind to restorative, effortless attention.
- Even a five-minute exposure to a natural scene, or simulation of one, reduces stress symptoms such as raised blood pressure, tensed-up muscles and increased sensitivity of the skin.

Read the full document here:

[https://mcusercontent.com/7627d583ef5c6b7cfb137ce1b/files/7f89d0d8-8a20-4503-aa94-b5643cfc3dfd/AIPH\\_Gardening\\_Datasheet.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/7627d583ef5c6b7cfb137ce1b/files/7f89d0d8-8a20-4503-aa94-b5643cfc3dfd/AIPH_Gardening_Datasheet.pdf)

### TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Who inadvertently discovered *Clivia gardenii*? (Answer on page 1.)
2. How many different species are pictured in this edition? (Answer is up to you.) 😊

Photos: N Starke, S Armstrong, Y Reynolds, L cCallum, L Pollard, N Anthony, A Corry, B du Rand, J Scarr, N Ross, A Benn, D Walsh

### TO PUT A SMILE ON YOUR FACE 😊

