

CHS NEWS

NEXT MEETING

**Monday, 6 February 2023 at 19:30 at
The Athenaeum**

FIRST MEETING OF 2023

**Notice of a Special General Meeting to be held at 19:30 on
Monday, 6 February 2023.**

The following agenda items will require your acceptance:

1. *Membership Fee*: Subscriptions for 2023/24 to remain at the 2022/23 values viz. R330 for family membership and R200 for single membership.
2. *CHS Rules*: The current version and final amended draft, with reasons for the amendments, were circulated on 19 January.

Followed by:

Agatha Christie, Devon and Cape Town

Our speaker, Rosalind Spears, who lives partly in Devon, was inspired to write about Agatha because she was born and brought up in Torquay and had the most beautiful country house on the River Dart. In her talk Rosalind will show you a number of Devon locations including their gardens and also tell you about Agatha's time in the Cape. You will hear how these places appear in her books. And no talk on Agatha is complete without a reference to her missing 11 days.

As with all Rosalind's talks it is full of information, photos and music – all delivered with enthusiasm.

NEXT OUTING

Tues, 7 February from 10:00 to 11:00: Streetscapes

Visit to an urban community garden, Streetscapes, Vredehoek. The program provides a model for sustainable urban regeneration and addresses the neglected needs of a very vulnerable population – focused on chronic homelessness, combined with substance misuse and mental health issues. Streetscapes offers long-term, community-based rehabilitation that combines housing, work and psychosocial support. We will be given background to the project and a tour by social worker (and possibly the clients) and taken around the garden. Produce that is available will be for sale. Members are welcome to bring any seeds (vegetables/fruit), and any garden equipment if they would like to make a donation.

Click on this link to read an article about the project:

<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-12-21-the-garden-in-cape-town-where-the-possibility-of-individual-and-social-change-grows/>

Limited to 20 members. Please RSVP to Glenda by Friday, 3 February.

JANUARY 2023

President

Marianne Alexander

Chairlady

Jenny Scarr

Vice-Chairlady

Isabella Hayden

Hon Treasurer

Henry Diesveld

Hon Secretary

Glenda Thorpe

Committee Members

Susan Armstrong Gerald Robertson

Cherise Viljoen Natalie Michie

Honorary Members

Laurie Powis Marianne Alexander

Mary Smith Anne Bean Adam Harrower

Michael Tuffin Bill Elder Ernst van Jaarsveld

"Definitions:

*Rockery: What the builder left
behind.*

Soft fruit: Bird sanctuary."

*Robin Clarke,
from "The Completely
Unillustrated Encyclopaedia
of Gardening"*



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<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Cape-Horticultural-Society/779615695489381>

Instagram – capehortsoc

IN MEMORIAM

Long-standing CHS member, Hank Lith, unexpectedly passed away in Keith Kirsten's garden on New Year's Day.

Our sincere condolences have been sent to Rod, his partner of 48 years, who has said:

"Hank was amazing – he was always totally committed to every endeavour he was involved in – and they were always invariably for the common good. He has left a wonderful legacy to Cape Town."

FOTAG Chairman, Francois Krige's tribute:

"Hank was for many years the determined driving force behind much of the improvements in the garden at Arderne. He was always quiet and focused. Every committee member has fond memories of him and how he touched our hearts and lives in the course of creating his gift to all of the people of Cape Town who visited the Arderne.

He was a mentor to me in many areas and a wonderful guiding hand in all the years we worked together.

Hank has left us with a garden and arboretum that is surely the best legacy that any person can leave. Hank introduced many people to the garden over the years and many of them have donated generous amounts of funding for our many projects. We will continue with this work, maintaining the garden and improving where necessary and preserving this gem for the future. It is what is needed above all in a city like ours, an open access beautiful garden – a haven of old trees that was lucky enough to be loved by a man of his vision and perseverance.

We mourn and celebrate him; we will miss him and cherish him."

Andrew Ovenstone, Honorary Patron of FOTAG, wrote:

"Sandy was told by Rod that our dearest Hank passed away this morning. He and Rod were excited about their forthcoming trip on Rovos Rail. Hank had a heart attack while visiting Keith Kirsten's farm outside Johannesburg after their Rovos trip.

Hank's work and love for trees will remain with us, and his inestimable contribution should be a source of inspiration to those who follow."

REPORT BACK

A small group (below) visited the **Jamestown Flower Farm** in Stellenbosch.



Clockwise from right:

Monarda hybrida 'Bee Balm Lambada'

Black *Scabiosa*

Pink *Scabiosa*





Left: Wendy, the horticulturist, showing the use of plastic on the seedling beds.

Right: Picking the flowers for the bunches.



Below, left: Enjoying lunch under the trees, alongside the river.

Below, right: Bunches of flowers being put together for orders.



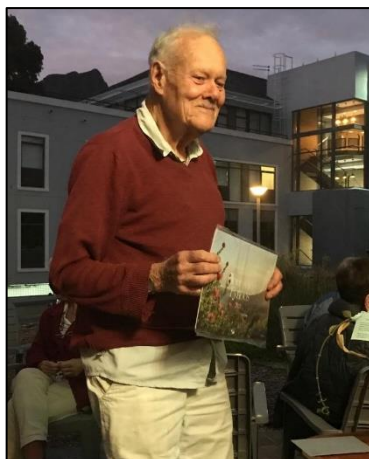
2022 Year-end party

Left: Cherise having a heart-to-heart with Niek.

Right: Chairlady, Jenny, handing Glenda a thank you gift.

Below are our lucky draw prizewinners:

Niek with his calendar; Andrew with a voucher for compost; Jenny with a *Ceropegia sandersonii*.



Members' plants



Plants from Roy:

Left: The *Brilliantasia subulugurica* 'Giant Salvia' – likes a certain amount of shade; should be well watered to flower best; prune back at the beginning of spring.

This one gets some afternoon sun.

Left, below: *Capsicum annuum* 'Black Pearl' / Black Pearl Ornamental Pepper – gets black berries that turn red. This also gets late afternoon sun.



Containers from Peter:

Right, above and below: "I planted these crevice gardens after watching the You Tube sent out last year".

[Ed. Wonder how our prize Plant Sale crevice garden is doing?]



Trailers from Glenda:

Below: *Ceropegia sandersonii* (a gift from Shelley) and *Ceropegia lineari* subsp. *woodii* (many years old), now in a pot hanging from a tree – and loving it! *Ceropegia* belong to the family Asclepiadaceae.



MORE ON ASCLEPIADACEAE

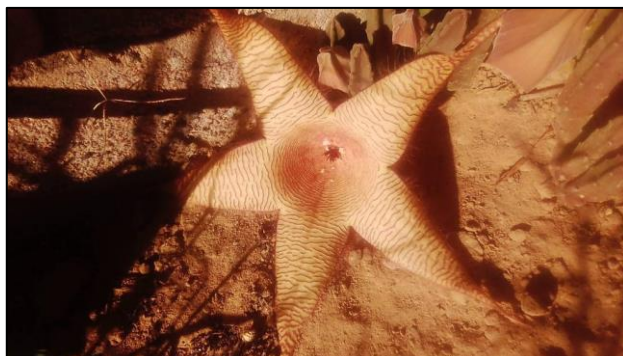
by Wilma Tindall

Extract from **STAPELIADS IN CULTIVATION** by Edgar Lamb 1957 (now probably out of print) interspersed with comments and observations by Wilma.

Generally, Stapeliads (*note the D at the end*) are not difficult to grow once you understand their needs – although there are some that are challenging.

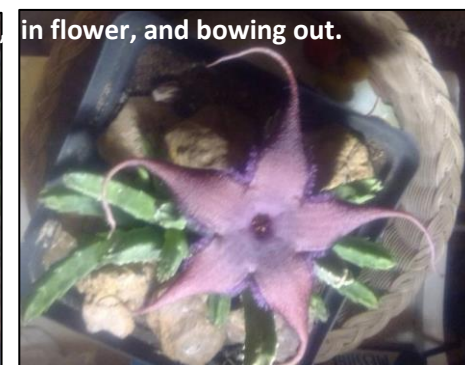
1. Most of them come from South Africa, some from East Africa and a few from North Africa and Morocco.

2. **Stapelia** (note no D at the end) is only one genus in the Stapeliad or Stapelieae tribe in the family Asclepiadaceae. The other more commonly grown Stapeliads include *Huernia*, *Orbea*, *Duvalia*, *Hoodia*, *Caralluma* and *Piранthus* amongst others.
3. All have remarkable flowering qualities. Some are very beautiful e.g. *Orbea hardyi* and close examination of their internal flower parts is, usually, a good way to tell the different genera apart.
4. The buds vary a great deal also. Most have 5-lobed flowers – some flattish; some goblet shaped – and may flower on old and new stems (contrary to some opinion) during summer, autumn or spring. They rarely flower in winter. The flowers may last only 2 – 3 days or several weeks depending on species.
5. There may be variation in flowers – even on the same plant – and most are not evil smelling (unless you put your nose right up to some of the flowers and who wants to do that?!). These plants are not insectivorous ie. they do not eat flies as some people think, but are mostly pollinated by flies. The flies believe they are laying their eggs on rotting meat which will feed their larva when those hatch out – nature's little deception!
6. Plants grown from mature cuts, which should be allowed to dry for a few days before planting, may flower soon after being planted but plants grown from seed may take 2 – 3 years to flower.
7. All genera produce twin seedpods (right). The horn-like ones (mostly *Stapelia*) explode in a cloud of seeds attached to "parachutes" – a common feature of most Asclepiad.
8. Some plants are small or dwarf in nature while many grow to 12 – 18 inches and some even taller. Some grow in clumps; others are more solitary.
9. Stems may be green to pinkish or purplish or mottled; they may be smooth or velvety with sharp teeth or none of these. Much depends on the amount of water or sun they receive.
10. They often develop astonishing root systems – even though above ground the stems may be quite short – and need excellent drainage (especially close to the stem) and must not be over-watered.
11. In habitat, they favour some shade from bushes or rocks but are remarkably water wise and most cope with cold nights.



Far left: Wilma's *Stapelia gigantea* with a 'new look' flower for 2023.

Left: Its usual look with 35cm spread.

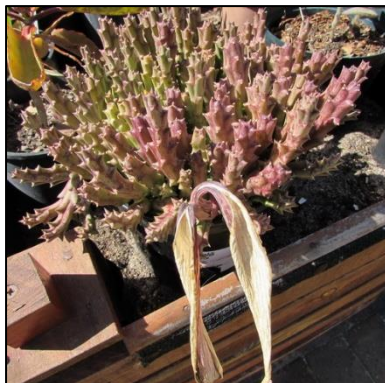


Below: *Stapelia schinzii* – in bud, in flower, and bowing out.

Watch this video to see what the *S schinzii* flower does: <https://youtu.be/XrAGvrqAFJA>



Andrew's birthday present in March last year.



Above, far left: In flower by end March 2022

Above: 'Horned' seed pods over Dec/Jan.

Far left: The pods have burst and the seeds collected.

Left: Empty pods

PS: These seeds are for the taking.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Succulent poaching

You have no doubt heard of the mammoth task Adam Harrower has been working on for a few years. He has to record and re-pot 1000s and 1000s of precious succulents that were poached by foreign entities.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/31/world/africa/south-africa-poachers-tiny-succulent-plants.html>

When asked if we could help, this was his reply:

"... At this stage we do actually have a great team of volunteers who come in regularly to assist with the planting so, dare I say, we don't need any extra hands at this stage. BUT if any of the CHS members are very keen and willing to be semi-regular planters we'd be delighted to train them up and add them to the team."

If you are keen to take on a task like this, please e-mail Adam at A.Harrower@sanbi.org.za, and let him know you are a CHS member.

--oOo--

Jenny has been scouring Facebook and has found these interesting links.

- Different ideas for planting up succulents:

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid02iKGCv2mWku8aC9dEvWGL9VDoBSvgBcBEeBNPug2doVBHbHdeCr37gdqgHVuxmtiil&id=100064182695527&post_id=100064182695527_pfbid02iKGCv2mWku8aC9dEvWGL9VDoBSvgBcBEeBNPug2doVBHbHdeCr37gdqgHVuxmtiil&sfnsn=scwspwa&mibextid=win574

- Fibonacci numbers can also be used to define a spiral and are of interest to biologists and physicists because they are frequently observed in various natural objects and phenomena. The branching patterns in trees and leaves, for example, and the distribution of seeds in a raspberry reflect the Fibonacci sequence. <https://m.facebook.com/groups/attenborough4nobel/permalink/10159404742693601/?sfnsn=scwspwa&ref=share&mibextid=win574>