



Everything grows better with love.

Anon.

NEXT MEETING

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Monday, 2 June 2025 at 19:30 at The Athenaeum

Members: No entrance fee

Visitors: R40 per person

RWENZORES – Mountains of the Moon and Fountain of the Nile

The 72-mile long Rwenzori mountains, the natural border between Uganda and the Congo, is a completely unique biosphere with primates, spectacular endemic birds and alien-like giant groundsel and lobelias. Boulderous and boggy, covered in mist and clouds, it remains challenging to access, and tough to climb.

Bob Baigrie, our speaker for the evening, took on the challenge in July 2023 and will tell us about his adventure.

FORTHCOMING OUTINGS

Wed, 4 June: 09:45 for 10:00 to visit Stellenbosch University Botanical Garden

We will be taken on a tour by Annerie, the Assistant Curator, with the main focus being the Oxalis Collection. Annerie has done extensive research on Oxalis and is very knowledgeable.

The Botanical Garden was founded in 1902 and is the oldest Botanical Garden in the country. The garden includes many ferns in and around the garden and they have 2 ferneries to walk through. They have interesting trees, a bonsai collection, water-lily dams, a succulent glasshouse, insectivorous plants, cycads, medicinal plants and the oxalis collection. This is all in the small space of 2 hectares. The plan is to have a tour for around an hour and a quarter. The garden area is small and, as it is all flat, will be easy for all members to get around.

The Katjeepering Restaurant is in the gardens for anyone wanting to stay for tea or lunch.

Limited to 15 members. RSVP to Glenda by no later than Friday, 30 May.

Fri, 11 July: 09:45 for 10:00 to visit Plantify Urban Nursery, Gardens. They are on a mission to “green” Capetonians’ homes and offices. Plus, they want to do it in a fun, accessible way, attuned to your lifestyle. With a wide range of indoor and stoep plants, baskets, pots and a potting up service, this is ideal for flat dwellers or people with limited garden space.

Limited to 12 members. RSVP to Glenda by no later than Tuesday, 8 July.

REPORT BACK

The 120th Annual General Meeting was held on 5 May 2025 attended by 38 members and 3 visitors. Three members tendered their apologies.

Chairperson's Report for the Year Ending 28 February 2025

The CHS has had a vibrant year with many new ideas and activities, making our events and meetings much more interesting.

The major highlight of 2024 was a very successful Membership Drive where we exceeded our target of 20 new members with 30 newbies joining the CHS and since have exceeded that as new members continue to join the society.

Other joyful things to mention in summary:

- We introduced an annual Garden Day Picnic (upcoming year will be on 12 Oct 2025);
- larger Xmas raffle and dress-up;
- some bring-a-friend meeting giveaways;
- a book review;
- we have a Plant Nursery table with a new sign for sales;
- a Plant Exhibit table with well labelled plants;
- a members' WhatsApp Group;
- lifts are available on request to meetings
- we have more active Instagram and Facebook pages;
- a refreshed Website; and
- a new CHS poster to be distributed to libraries and nurseries.

In more detail:

The past year has been full of excitement for me as the chairlady of the CHS. I have a vibrant committee full of ideas, and I've enjoyed many of the ideas implemented and changes they've initiated. The new members to the CHS have been lovely to get to know – thank-you to Judi who we asked to ensure they get a warm greeting and a friendly introduction to how the meetings are run.

Isabella Hayden took on the portfolio of Treasurer supported by Dutch Diesveld, our longstanding outgoing treasurer. This has been a huge learning curve for her, and we appreciate the enthusiasm and the dedication she's shown in making sure that the CHS's finances are sound and well recorded. The financial statements will be audited by Dutch and are available to any member who wishes to view them.

Isabella has also continued to do a great job identifying both indigenous and exotic plants, with Anne Gleeson supporting her ensuring the plant labels are all written as the plants arrive on the evening. This ensures we can represent them well in the newsletter for those members who don't make it to meetings.

Anne also kindly stepped up to take over outings from me as I stepped into the chair and took over the speaker/talks schedule. She has been taking us to really special places ranging from hemp delights to award winning gardens, to restoration projects, to cut flowers farms.

The talks are a mix of plant cultivation, conservation, plant history and travel. Suggestions from members for both speakers and outings are always welcome.

Chris Wren-Sargent is at the centre of all fun and fundraising initiatives from our extremely successful membership drive to our even more successful plant sale this year. As the only man on the committee at the moment, he has his hands full, and as a vivacious vice-chair he's always there to support me and step up at a moment's notice to lead the meetings. He also helps with the audio-visual sound at the Athenaeum at our monthly talks and could do with an assistant if anyone is willing to lend a hand.

We co-opted Belinda du Rand onto the committee for the Plant Sale, but she's added so much more than just providing a venue for our annual event. Belinda has come up with raffle ideas and give-away ideas and is generally supportive of all committee initiatives. We've been very grateful to have her as the newest member of our team.

Susan Armstrong is everywhere doing everything, from making us a new nursery table sign, to providing the monthly meeting raffle plants, to growing plants for us, to overseeing plant arrivals at the annual plant sale and the nursery table (identification and pricing), together with Cherry Mann, to running the library. Susan also sees to the tea at our meetings and a roster of tea ladies was set up to support her. Elwyn Whitford has recently taken over from Susan and with this team makes sure that we have many hands providing us with hot tea, coffee and delicious biscuits.

To boost the fact that we have a library, we asked Jean Fillis to highlight the books in the library by doing a book review each month. I've been enjoying Jean's reading and her selections of books and, certainly, every time she's chosen a book it's been taken home and enjoyed.

Thank-you to Wilma Tindall for seeing to the advertising of meetings in the local printed media, however trying it can be, and radio shows. Our thanks also to Jenny Liedtke, and our president, Marianne Alexander, for looking after our Instagram and Facebook posts.

Our fountain of knowledge and wisdom, the backbone of our Society in her role as secretary, Glenda Thorpe is involved in every aspect of the CHS's activities. I would like to acknowledge each of my fabulous committee members but my special thanks and appreciation goes to Glenda, in particular.

As your chairlady I am always interested in your ideas, your enthusiasm, your suggestions and your help – together we can keep the Cape Horticultural Society thriving and relevant. I look forward to us continuing celebrating our passion for plants and all things green in the coming years.

Acceptance of the Chairlady's Report was proposed by Bernice Mallet and seconded by Andrew Thorpe.

Treasurer's Report for the Year Ending 28 February 2025

"The Honorary Auditor has apologised for the delay in producing the annual financial statements and put together a preliminary Income Statement for this meeting. This has been circulated to all members.

Our annual membership fees remain very reasonable as the annual subscription was increased only to R240 from R230 for single membership and to R390 from R350 for a family membership. Free entrance for members remains and visitors pay R40 for each meeting they attend.

This past financial year was a tough one. This was mainly due to the income we missed out on by not having a plant sale, so we had to draw R32 500 from our investments to meet our expenses.

The committee decided to spend some funds on a member recruitment drive and improving publicity for the CHS. We are seeing the positive results from this in the current financial year, as well as an excellent plant sale income.

We have ended the year with a preliminary deficit of approximately R11 500 but a final Income Statement and Balance Sheet will be presented at the latest by the July meeting."

Acceptance of the Treasurer's Report was proposed by Isabella Hayden and seconded by Belinda du Rand.

Elections

Marianne Alexander was re-elected as President.

Your 2024/2025 Committee was re-elected for the coming year.

Dutch Diesveld was re-appointed as Honorary Auditor.

The Committee will appoint the Office Bearers for the year ahead.



Pniël Horticultural and Industrial Society Annual Chrysanthemum Show



These were a few of the many exhibits on show. The categories ranged from Incurved to Anemones to Spiders. The 30 white blooms are all on one plant! Even Leon Kluge popped in to have a look at the display.

May Exhibit Table

Indigenous:

(Pictured clockwise, from top left on next page)

Hypoestes aristata "Ribbon Bush" from the E Cape and KZN – fast-growing shrub that grows to 1.5m high; has attractive lilac, pink or white flowers; flowers from May through winter to early spring; bees, flies and other insects visit the flowers so become a food source for birds. The leaves are like spinach and can be eaten; crushed leaves can be used as a poultice for sore eyes.

Salvia chiapensis – full sun to partial shade; prolific flowerer

Stipa dregeana – very useful shade-tolerant grass

Freesia laxa (blue)(subsp azurea) found in the E Cape, KZN, Gauteng, Limpopo and Mpumalanga – usually has red or pinkish-red flowers, but blue- or white-flowered forms also occur; grows from corms; summer rainfall; blue form flowers from autumn, through winter into spring; semi-shade.

Zonal *Pelargonium* hybrid – this particular plant has moved around – brought in from Greece, grown in Rondebosch East, then Rondebosch, and now living happily in Clovelly.



Exotic:

Ceratostigma plumbaginoides “Blue Leadwort”/“Chinese Plumbago” from China – likes full sun; grows to approx 50cm (not pictured)

(Pictured clockwise, from top left on next page)

Coleus from Asia – many varieties; some like sun, others shade; grow up to waist height; needs regular trimming; grow well from cuttings

Cassia corymbosa from S America – beautiful show of flowers in autumn; over 3m high; no special watering or feeding

Hydrangea macrophylla Ocean ‘Magical’ series – modern hybrid from Adene’s Flower Farm in Wolseley ; as the flowers age, they change from one colour to the next –starting out pink, turning a darker pink with some green and becoming reddish; will stay in flower for 150 days.

Myrtus communis ‘variegata’ from Europe – the berries appear in autumn and make a lovely show with the variegated foliage.



WELCOME TO ...

... Joy Currie and Sue Taylor who recently signed up. We hope that membership of the CHS will bring them as much pleasure and knowledge as it does all our members.

A PHOTOGRAPHIC GARDEN HISTORY

by Roger Phillips and Nicky Foy

Reviewed by Jean Fillis

This book covers historical castles, palaces and stately home gardens throughout Europe, many in Britain, Japan, China and some in America. There are also Botanical gardens in Australia, New Zealand, California, New York and the Everglades in Florida.

It starts with Portuguese Peristyle town courtyard gardens dating from 100 BC. These were mostly fountains with raised flower beds and mosaic walkways. One garden that has been excavated has a large pool with 400 water jets.

Pompeii, before the volcano eruption in 79AD, had gardens of Frescoes, statues and fountains and are nowadays alive with Oleander flowers in summer. 18 years later Emperor Hadrian's villa of 760 acres was built on a hill with terraces providing views over Tivoli in Italy. It has lakes, canals, statues, reliefs and friezes although much has sadly been plundered.

When the Moors conquered Spain in the 14th century, they built gardens in the traditional Persian style which had 4 equal sections divided by water channels to cool the garden, with a pavilion in the centre. The inner patio gardens were usually a long pool with beds of orange and cypress trees, myrtle, roses and magnolias.

Villa d'Este was built in the 16th century and it is featured in Monty Don's video "80 Gardens around the World" which of course shows the fountain displays in full spate. Built by a Cardinal, son of the infamous Lucretia Borgia, he wanted a better house and gardens than a rival Cardinal, so he built it to impress the most wealthy and powerful men of the time. It is again high on a hill with terraces, fountains and views of Tivoli. The ingenious automatic water displays were built to surprise, startle and wet the visitors.

One display was a mechanical wonder of the time, metallic birds were driven by a mechanism that made flute-like sounds until an owl screeched and all the birds would go silent. One of many named mechanical displays is a pathway of 100 fountains that still works.

Japanese and Chinese gardens are very different to the rest of the world. The aim is for tranquillity, to transport man visually and mentally away from the cares of life to an eternal moment of suspended time where man and nature are in perfect accord. Water, rocks, buildings and plants are combined to achieve this peace and harmony.

If any of you visit Paris, try to drive 150 km SW to Villandry. We visited 18 years ago and found it better maintained than Versailles, though much smaller. Part of it is a recreated Renaissance potager or decorative vegetable garden divided with box hedges and espaliered Apple trees. It had small gazebos covered with roses at each corner, a long water canal through the centre, as well as 4 parterre gardens in beautiful shapes of hearts, butterflies, masks, swords and daggers, with red and white Begonias between them.

This book is recommended to all garden lovers, as well as people who enjoy history.

AS A MATTER OF INTEREST ...

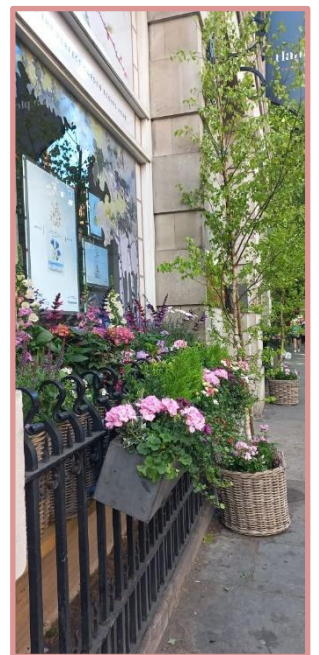
A Splash of Springtime Colour in England!

Jean Sleigh's cousin, Corry and her husband Roger Williams, visited Isabella Gardens in Richmond Park and sent these stunning photos of Rhododendron Heaven:



Cherise, having won the prize in a BotSoc competition, and her daughter, Jessica, are at Chelsea! They have wandered the streets, as well as worked hard at the South African exhibit, helping to get it ready for the judging and opening day.

Shop fronts and pavement displays along the way:



With: Chelsea Pensioners; Honorary CHS Member, Ernst van Jaarsveld, and Jessica; Leon Kluge



CONGRATULATIONS TO
TEAM SOUTH AFRICA
ON ATTAINING
GOLD
YET AGAIN!



Photos: A Viljoen, A & G Thorpe, C & J Viljoen, R & C Williams