



When you have only two pennies left in the world,
buy a loaf of bread with one, and a lily with the other.

Chinese Proverb

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NEXT MEETING

Monday, 2 March 2026 at 19:30 at The Athenaeum

Members: No entrance fee

Visitors: R40 per person

Seasonal Raffle – don't forget tickets are R10 each!

PENGUINS IN ANTARCTICA

Bob Baigrie returns to tell us of his adventures in the snow and ice, playing with penguins, and any plant life he may have found.

OUTINGS

Wed, 4 March at 10:00: A repeat visit to Coniston, Muizenberg, the home of member John Venn, especially for those members who couldn't make it last time. If you have not yet seen the garden, you are in for a treat.

John is a larger-than-life character and his home and garden are a reflection of his creativity, passion and zest for life. He has created different rooms making up the garden and it is all on different levels with water running through it from a natural stream. There is even a dell like area (a bit like Kirstenbosch) where you walk across flat rocks with water flowing underneath and the damp and cool is exactly like the feel you experience in Kirstenbosch. He has a Japanese garden, a desert garden, an orchid section in a conservatory and a natural pool amongst others. The secret to this garden seems to be a wall of trees on the south side which protect the garden from the wind and also water, which he has plenty of.

Please bring a donation which will all go towards Phase 3 of the restoration of the stream which runs through Muizenberg Park, a project which he is leading on behalf of the local community. He usually charges R250 pp but understands that this amount is not possible for a lot of our members. As a fellow CHS member he wanted us to see the garden again. Please donate any amount (large or small).

Limited to 25 members. Please RSVP to Glenda by no later than 2 March 2026.

WELCOME TO ...

... Carmen Viljoen, our first new member for 2026. We hope that her time with the CHS will bring her as much pleasure as it does the rest of our members.

FROM THE COMMITTEE

At this time of the year we *have* to start with money, as **annual subscriptions** are now due.

The agreed fees are R280 for singles and R430 for families (2 adults with/without school-going children). Please make payment, using your surname as a reference, and e-mail proof of payment (POP) for the EFT to Glenda.

Cash or debit/credit card can be brought to the meeting.

Our annual **Plant Sale** will take place on **Sunday, 3 May 2026**.

Please keep potting up plants, and please remember that we successfully moved away from yoghurt tubs at our last sale. They all go to making labels, of course!

Isabella has some great ideas for us about what to do, which you will find on page 5.

Our very popular *seasonal raffles* will continue this year.

Our first is this coming month. Diarise July and October, but we will remind members in time if there are changes. Don't use up the plants you're growing for the Sale, but please do bring along a garden-related item as a prize.

The CHS will be making a trip this September to visit the *Prince Albert Open Gardens*. **The dates are Friday 25 – Sunday 27 September.**

As we did on our previous visit, members will have to arrange their own transport and accommodation. Booking early is the way to go as places are limited. As soon as the Open Gardens publicity gets going other people will book it and then it's a tent somewhere along Swartberg Pass. That will be rough ...

If you wish to see all the gardens and everything else on offer, best arrive in the afternoon of Thursday 24, and leave after midday on Sunday 27, but you might want to arrive even earlier or stay even later.

Speak to some friends – drive there 2 or 3 up and make early arrangements for what is going to be a Karoo flowery feast!

REPORT BACK

February Exhibit Table

Indigenous (from left, clockwise):

- *Ruttyruspolia* "Phyllis van Heerden" (hybrid of *Ruttya* and *Ruspolia*) – in full flower now. Very underrated.
- *Scabiosa Africana* – seeds I scattered; collected from an old age home; they come up every year.
- *Gloriosa superba* "Flame Lily" – yellow form and the usual orange form; easy grower; likes to climb; dormant in winter.
- *Turraea obtusifolia*
- *Bauhinia tomentosa* – shrub growing in a large pot; full sun; smaller than the other Bauhinias



Exotic:

- *Dipladenia sanderi* “Diamantina Tourmaline Rose” – non climber; also see *Mandevilla sanderi*. (left.)
- *Begonia semperflorens-cultorum* – common white bedding or wax *Begonia*
- *Scaboisa atropurpurea* (sweet *Scabiosa* – dark purple) from Southern Europe – seeds I scattered; collected from an old age home; they come up every year.
- *Viola* – white; not a violet; very small; hybrid.
- *Scutellaria latiflora/lateriflora?* – used in traditional medicine in SA. (centre)
- *Origanum hirtum* “Oregano”
- Grapes – variety unknown – grows against a north-east facing wall with cross wires; net used against birds; minimal water; pruned in autumn. (right)



Emma Hudson’s garden

Anne reports on the February garden visit:

"Despite the blustery day, we had a great turnout with 25 members joining for our outing to Emma Hudson’s garden in Constantia. The verge greeted us with an abundance of pink dahlias and cosmos.

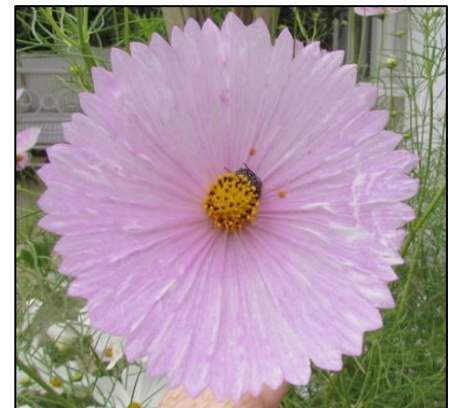
The garden is lush, romantic and slightly untamed. Plants that come up are allowed to remain and flowers mingle freely rather than in straight lines. The plantings reflect Emma’s creativity and flair. Various trees including oaks, indigofera, a graceful poplar and a copse of silver birch create the different shady areas. Indigenous impatiens and small geraniums flourished in the shady areas. Pots overflow with pink and white cosmos and delicate ground covers and gaura grows between paving and in amongst the stone areas. A shady bed features a bench with soft plantings of hydrangeas interspersed with white japanese anemones.



Wrought iron stands add character with collections of watering cans, clay pots and baskets. Emma has an exquisite working room for her creative endeavours, filled with shelves of vases and various containers. She creates wedding flower arrangements, wreaths and dries the flowers in her garden to use in her workshops and floral creations. She treated us to a sumptuous tea served in precious fine china and delicious carrot cake.”



L to R:
Birch copse; Dahlia varieties; *Verbascum* “Southern Charm”; large-leaved *Impatiens*; *Indigofera*; *Cosmos* “Cupcake”; where it all happens; beautiful crockery; pot collection



A PROPAGATION PUSH FOR THE PLANT SALE

It's that time of the year, when the Plant Sale committee nudges members and asks for more plants to be propagated. It might be too late to take cuttings from most plants, except succulents and some house plants, but there are still some ways you can grow for the sale on May 3rd.

Purchase a 4-pack or 6-pack and grow them on – these will have roots and just need a bit more time and a bit of feeding to turn them into irresistible big plants. Feed with 3:1:5 to encourage flowering.

Garden centres have these suitable options on their lists at the moment:

From Shadowlands

4-packs:

- Lavender
- Gaura (pink or white)

6-packs:

- *Cotula sericea* – attractive groundcover, yellow buttons for flowers
- *Drosanthemum speciosum* (orange or red) – bright flowers in spring
- *Euryops pectinatus* – hardy, big yellow flowers
- *Lampranthus amoenus* – vygie to about 70cm, masses of purple or pink flowers in spring

From Milkwoods in 6-packs

- Pink Armeria (top)
- Santolina grey
- Parsley

From Arboreta

- Marigolds
- ****Alternanthera Purple Prince**** - This one is a must! Gorgeous dark red/purple foliage (centre)
- Festuca green
- *Pelargonium ionidiflorum*

From Little Orchard in 6 packs

- ****Festuca Grey**** - Not many left! (bottom)
- *Limonium perezii*



Another quick way to produce a good-sized plant is to dig up suckering plants from your garden and pot them up. Roses sometimes produce suckers, as do many hedging plants and shrubs.

House plants that are easy to propagate in water –

- *Monstera adansonii* (Swiss Cheese plant)
- Philodendron
- Peperomias
- Pilea (Money Plant)
- *Maranta leuconeura* (Prayer plant)
- Begonias
- Tradescantia
- African Violet

You can dip the cut tip into rooting powder, alternatively some people use honey or cinnamon. When the cutting has developed roots, remove it from the water and plant it in soil so it can start growing.

Photo credits -

- Alternanthera image - <https://www.ballseed.com/PlantInfo/?phid=003300001010033>
- Festuca image - <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/festuca-glauca-i-love-this-blue-grey-ornamental-mounding-grass-it-thrives-in-full-sun-and-compliments-asian-des--290271138453698731/>
- Armeria image - <http://www.perennialresource.com/variety.php?ID=ARMBL>

THE ATHENAEUM – formerly La Rochelle, Newlands – final

A firm Messrs Gibson Bros. features in the estate accounts (MOOC 13/ 1/997 no 118-24.7.1901). No such business has been found in the directories but a Gibson and Co., General Merchants, Church St., Cape Town appears for that year; but there is no certainty that it was connected with Gibson. Whatever his business, it had proved a success even if the rents from his many cottages in Mowbray were an additional source of income. Unfortunately no complete inventory of his estate has survived.

Two years after Gibson's death the Newlands property was sold from his estate to Thomas Arnoldus Johannes Louw (1845 – 1909). Under Louw's ownership the name reverted to La Rochelle and this it retained until it became the Athenaeum in the 1950s. Louw died while on a visit to Germany in 1909 and his widow, Magdalena Maria Smuts, sold it after six years to Charles Fischer Smuts by Transfer 4281/14.7. 1915. The Louws had no family; possibly Smuts was a relative of the widow.

Four years later by Transfer 14081/ 1.2.1919 Smuts disposed of it to Alfred John Williams, again a short term of ownership, and in 1924 Williams sold to the Western Province Cricket Club (Transfer 3204/16.4.1924). In 1926 the Cricket Club decided that it was no longer necessary to retain the property and Henry Hepburn Bright and his sister-in-law, Dorothea Frances Bleek, took over in equal shares. (Transfer 8667/2.9.1926).



MISS DOROTHEA BLEEK
*the authority on Bushman
language and art*



Hepburn Bright was an erstwhile magistrate of Somerset West and Miss Dorothea Bleek was then the acknowledged authority on Bushman language and art. According to the Dictionary of South African Biography (Vol 1 pp80 – 82) her 'most productive years' were between 1923 and 1948, during most of which period she lived at La Rochelle.

PROFESSOR A J H GOODWIN
*It was his inspiration and
initiative that brought about
the purchase of La Rochelle
and the foundation of the
Athenaeum Trust*



In 1947 after the deaths of her brother-in-law, Hepburn Bright, and her sister, Wilhelmine Henriette (born Bleek), his wife, negotiations between Miss Bleek and Mr Astley John Hilary Goodwin of the Department of Archaeology at the University of Cape Town resulted in the property being sold to Mr Goodwin at a price somewhat less than the estimated current market value. Miss Bleek was aware of the project to establish a trust to develop and preserve La Rochelle for cultural and limited social purposes. This was accomplished and the Athenaeum Trust came into being.

In 1948 the permanent members of the board of trustees were:

Dr LB. Goldschmidt
Mr. A.J.H. Goodwin
Professor E. Newbery
Professor T. Price
Professor F. Walker

Through strenuous efforts the purchase price was eventually raised and Goodwin sold the property to the Trust in 1953 by Transfer 13563/1.9.1953. Considerable land was disposed of to provide funds and there were deductions for roads and other purposes, with a result that today a property much reduced in area from the original La Rochelle now remains as the Athenaeum.

THE ATHENAEUM TODAY (written in 1980)

In its role as a meeting-place and home for some thirty clubs, societies and professional institutes, the Athenaeum today has a warm place in the hearts of many Capetonians. Altered inside in 1967, it now has a handsome reception room, two lecture halls seating 60 and 180, a boardroom and a typist's office. A flat attached can accommodate a small family for regular supervision and for help for keeping society meetings running smoothly. Several thousand circulars leave the Athenaeum's office each month with invitations to meetings, minutes and society news. Air conditioning within, and spacious grounds outside, give an air of modest luxury that is a perfect setting for functions that range from orchid competitions to lectures by distinguished visitors to the Cape.

The Trust that runs the Athenaeum was first constituted in 1949, later becoming registered as a non-profit organization in terms of the Companies Act. The charges to Societies for using the Athenaeum are moderate, especially for yearly bookings for regular meetings. Applications for bookings are considered by a Board of Directors, elected each year at a meeting of members and society representatives. With ample parking and a good situation close to transport routes, the Athenaeum has proved a successful centre for Cape societies. The fullness of its bookings-list is a tribute to this visionary development for a fine old building.

In 1968, important links were made with the Associated Scientific and Technical Societies of South Africa, a body with a large-scale, similar operation at Kelvin House in central Johannesburg. The historic Athenaeum has had a fascinating past. Today, its many friends assure it a valuable future in the cultural life of the Cape.

DR. A.V. HALL

*Member of the Executive Board of
the Athenaeum Trust.*

Source: *The Athenaeum Newlands*
by Margaret Cairns – 1980

AS A MATTER OF INTEREST ...

Are these familiar to you?

Send Glenda your answer and you'll find out in the March newsletter if you're correct.



Photos: A Gleeson, C van wyk, Google, A and G Thorpe

Any and all photos taken at CHS events may be used in the newsletter and on social media.

🌟 Natural & Homemade Insecticides 🌿

- **Vegetable Oil Spray:** Mix 1 cup vegetable oil + 1 tbsp mild soap.
- For use, mix 2 tsp concentrate with 1 quart water. Best for aphids, mites.



Vegetable Oil Spray

• Mix 1 cup vegetable oil + 1 tbsp mild soap.

For use, mix 2 tsp concentrate with + 1 quart water. Best for aphids, mites



Soap Spray

• 1½ tsp mild liquid soap + 1 quart water.

Spray early morning/evening. Best for mealybugs, aphids.



Neem Oil Spray

• 2 tsp neem oil + 1 tsp mild soap + 1 quart water. Coat leaves.

Best for fungus gnats, spider mites.

Gardening Grow



Garlic Spray

• Blend 2 garlic bulbs with water; let sit overnight.

Strain, add ¼ cup vegetable oil + 1 tsp mild soap, then fill jar with water. Best for caterpillars, beetles.



Chile Pepper Spray

• Powder: 1 tbsp chile powder + 1 quart water + a few drops soap.

Fresh; blend ¼ cup fresh peppers + 1 cup water, boil, strain, add water to make 1 quart. Best for chewing insects.



All-in-One Spray

• Puree 1 garlic bulb + 1 onion, add 1 tsp cayenne, steep, strain, add 1 tbsp mild soap.

Use full strength. Best for aphids, caterpillars.



Chile Pepper Spray

Powder: 1 tbsp chile powder + 1 quart water + a few drops soap



All-in-One Spray

Puree 1 garlic bulb + 1 onion, add 1 tsp cayenne, steep, strain, add 1 tbsp mild soap.

Use full strength.



Tomato Leaf Spray

Steep 2 cups chopped tomato leaves in 1 quart water overnight; strain and spray.

Best for aphids.

⚠️ Use With Care:

- Avoid spraying in full sun or above 90°F.
- Do not spray stressed plants.

#NaturalGardening #EcoFriendly #Homemade #Insecticides #GardeningTips #Safe Pest Control #OreaniTGardening