
Flowers perform a silent ministry – bringing peace,
affection and sympathy.

NEXT MEETING

Monday, 3 August 2026 at 19:30 at The Athenaeum

Members: No entrance fee

Visitors: R40 per person

THREATENED SUCCULENTS: THEIR STORY

Many will be familiar with the poaching of Rhino horn and Abalone, but our country has been gripped in recent years by poaching syndicates driven by the illegal trade of indigenous succulent plants, many of which are critically rare and are now being driven to extinction.

This talk, by **Adam Harrower**, an Honorary CHS Member, will give a better understanding on the magnitude of the problem. We'll look at what makes this unique group of succulents so special, how and why they've been targeted, and how he has been trying to save them.

Adam grew up 850m from here (the Athenaeum) and attended Rondebosch Boys Prep and High schools where his love of plants began. He graduated at UCT in 1999, worked at Kew Gardens for a short while and 25 years ago joined Kirstenbosch, where he has worked in various roles. The last 10 years he was the curator of the Botanical Society conservatory, managing the succulent plant collections, particularly the dire problem of confiscated succulents seized from poachers.

Currently Adam is a freelance botanical consultant.

NEXT OUTING

Proposed outings:

The August/September outing(s) still need to have dates confirmed. You will be told soon.

October: Visit Heart and Soil

Further details will follow.

WELCOME TO ...

... Tracy Murray-Smith, Madeleine van Wyk and Gabby Cloete who have joined us this month.

We wish them all a time of happy gardening with the CHS, learning from experienced members and enjoying the various activities.

President Marianne Alexander | **Hon Treasurer** Joy Currie | **Hon Secretary** Glenda Thorpe

Committee Members Susan Armstrong, Cherise Viljoen, Chris Wren-Sargent, Anne Gleeson, Belinda du Rand, Lisa Otto, Barbara Patton
Honorary Members Marianne Alexander, Mary Smith, Adam Harrower, Bill Elder Ernst van Jaarsveld, Pam Hart, Jenny Scarr, Glenda Thorpe

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FROM THE COMMITTEE

The committee continues to get through a healthy amount of work during winter, although it scarcely counts as a winter if you consider the many balmy days we have had since the big May storm. But this is not a weather report!

Budget

We have completed a budget process and have a clear handle on where we are in terms of finances. Our reserves are very healthy. To fund budget items other than running expenses, we have decided that we should only spend funds left over from the previous year and not use reserves at all. We have bought new plastic folding tables for the Sale, and will also decide on 'outreach' projects to fund this year via a process of consulting members.

CHS Constitution and Rules

As promised at the AGM in May, Committee has gone through the CHS rules and refreshed the document in a number of small but significant ways. The proposed changes will be circulated to members with explanations of each, and we will seek approval of these changes at a Special General Meeting directly before our 7 September meeting.

Friends of Wynberg Park

CHS is actively involved in assisting the FoWP tree labelling project, and our honorary member, Adam Harrower, will be giving his advice on this as well.

Athenaeum

We are actively lobbying for a handrail at the main outside steps, and improved lighting at both exits. Our thanks go to Etienne for painting strips on the stairs to make them more visible.

Prince Albert tour

This tour is now being organised and details finalised. Full details to come, but we can reveal that Professor Sue Milton Dean has agreed to speak to us about the work she is engaged in at the Renu-Karoo project.

And as they say in Afrikaans: 'Hou die blink kant bo! Totsiens'. [Stay cheerful! Goodbye.]

REPORT-BACK

Winter Seasonal Raffle



Our popular seasonal raffle took place this month. Members donated a variety of garden-related products – mainly plants, of course.

These donations were carefully scrutinized prior to the draw. Finally, 173 items were won by members who were very happy with their prizes.

The Spring Seasonal Raffle will take place at our 5 October meeting.



July exhibits

Because of the seasonal raffle, there was no exhibit table at the July meeting, so let's take advantage of the 'exhibits' seen at Greystones.





Greystones visit

Our outing on Tuesday was a real treat as we had the opportunity to visit 'Greystones', a property on Klaassens Road in Bishopscourt, facing uninterrupted views all the way down Constantia Valley across to False Bay. This garden was established by Dirk's mother, Mary, before WWII, and has been passed down for generations.



Dirk explained that if you were expecting an immaculate garden with herbaceous beds, it was not the type of garden you would be seeing. The focus here is the 230 Camellia bushes of different shapes and sizes. The soil being acidic and granitic creates the perfect conditions for growing Camellias, Azaleas and Rhododendrons. The time of year was perfect for viewing an abundance of blooms. Even those lying on the ground created an exquisite carpet of pinks, reds and whites. We wandered down small paths and around the maze of a garden while Dirk gave the names of the different Camellias. They included 'Twilight', 'Tomorrow's Crown Jewel', 'Elegance' – a white with dappled pink, 'Red red rose' which takes the form of a perfect rose, 'Peter Pan', 'Silver Triumph', 'Grand Prix', 'Desire' and 'Lucy' to name a few. 'Drama girl' was a soup plate size and an exquisite red shade.

Features on the property are various granite igneous volcanic rocks.



Trees included *Maytenus oleoides*, Black Stinkwood, Cape Chestnut, Dogwoods, Bladdernut, and an old Almond tree. The gravel tennis court had been removed and replaced with a fynbos garden.



The *Serruria* was flowering, also *Erica versicolor* and large bushes of *Agathosma*. Dirk kept saying 'pick as much as you like' so everyone was thrilled to head home carrying bunches of a variety of blooms. Definitely a visit to remember.

Anne Gleeson



And some of the members who went home with their floral pickings:



Angela and Rosemary; Christelli

It took a bit of stretching for Jill and Jean to get to the best blooms.





John and Angela; Belita and two Lindas talking to Dirk



The other Linda and the other Jean; Anne thanking Dirk and holding the 'Drama Girl' camellia.

Outing to Coastal Park Materials Recovery Facility in Muizenberg CONT

After our visit I was still unsure about certain items we use daily being suitable for recycling. Perhaps I had missed that part of Maurice van Blommestein's explanation. I asked him a few questions and here are his replies.

- *Is clean cling wrap included, like on veggies or biscuits etc? Obviously cling wrap on meat and chicken and the like we throw into the rubbish bin? Cling wrap is fine to recycle so long it has not been in contact with raw meat (due to salmonella) and so long as it's not in contact with oil that would contaminate things.*
- *We saw chip packets, but what about the thicker plastic packets used for cereals? And the flimsy plastic bags we get with veggies? Also, all recyclable, remember chips packets or BOPP is relatively new and although many recyclers want clean unprinted BOPP we are trying to create a market for these items in industry (which can be challenging changing the status quo, to say the least).*
- *I've always washed food tins for recycling but not kept the lids that have been taken off, for fear of someone cutting themselves. I take it that doesn't happen because of the belt that takes all metal to the magnet. It can happen due to the rumbling through the recycling when it backs up on the belt. Best would actually be not to completely cut the lid off of the tin but leave a section that can just be pushed back into the tin once you have emptied the contents.*
- *One thing I don't remember seeing was bales of newspaper. I take it you do receive that, as well as white paper? White paper, believe it or not, is also a high producer of income for the contractor. Newspapers are also recycled albeit less valuable.*

Glenda Thorpe

WHAT IS THIS?

Do you recognise these two? Send Glenda your answer and you'll find out how correct you are in the August newsletter.



Here are the names of last month's close-ups:



Strelitzia reginae and *Orbea variegata*



Photos: A Gleeson, J van der Veen, B du Rand, A and G Thorpe

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