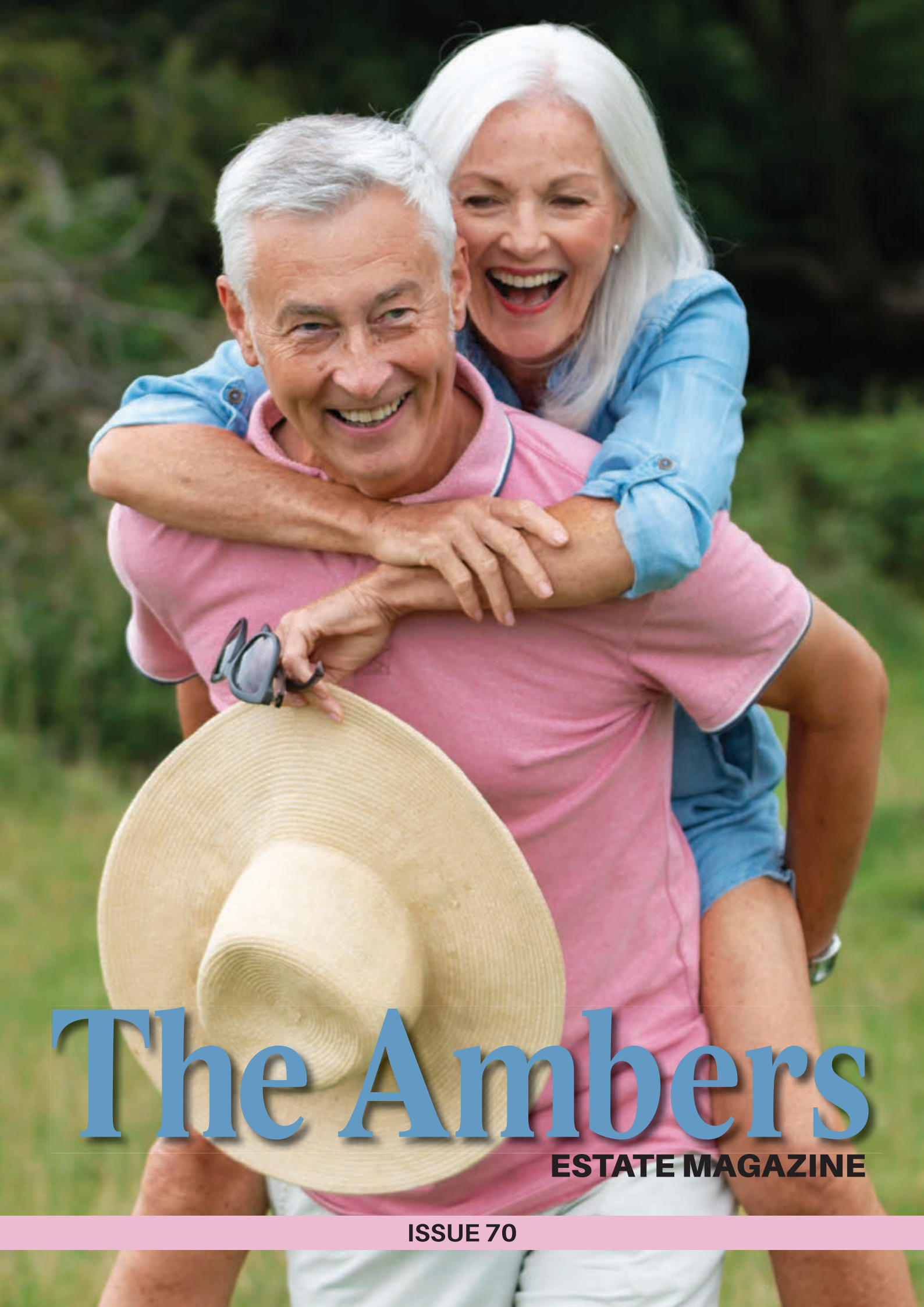




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ESTATE MAGAZINE

ISSUE 70

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Dear Readers

Well, the April public holidays are a thing of the past and pretty soon it will be the mid-year school holidays. The days are flying by at such a rapid rate. It seemed like just the other day I sat at my computer and realised that the oak trees outside my window were being stripped of their leaves. This time of the year is by far my most favourite – I call it the in between time – Autumn, and Spring of course – the days are beautiful and the nights are cosy. Are we ready to pack away the sandals in favour of closed shoes and take that jacket for “just in case”. As the famous writer once said, “All seasons are beautiful, to the person who carries happiness within”. Makes one feel good to be alive!

May is the month for mothers! Memories of how as our families grew, we literally did everything for them as they were growing up, pretty much all of you ladies out there, have qualifications in nursing, doctor, chauffeur, tutor, housekeeper, chief cook and bottle washer, to coin a phrase, AND could do it practically at the same time, and were not be phased. Hope all you mothers will be blessed with a really special day with your loved ones making wonderful memories.

Some of our advertisers have been with us since the beginning, close on 15 years we have dropped into your homes, please wherever possible utilise their businesses and pass their details on to your friends and loved ones, without these loyal advertisers there would be no magazines.

Wherever you go – be safe!

Till we meet again - Kind regards

Pat Franken

082 552 3027

I've learned...not to promise anything when one is happy, not to reply when one is angry, and not to decide anything when one is sad.

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On My Mind by William Meyer

Making Sense Of Your Cents Investing Overseas – The Importance Of Diversifying Your Portfolio * Extraordinary Profits From Ordinary Shares * Winning Stock Market Strategies *

Geopolitical risks and massive market volatility are factors investors need to contend with. At times like this the importance of planning carefully and considering off-shore opportunities and idiosyncratic shares is clear.

It is critical for investors to have an international strategy. Adding an off-shore equity/currency component to a South African portfolio reduces the risk of volatility of the overall portfolio. If any one currency or country enters a bear market, an investor will be protected by a diversified portfolio.

The best countries to invest in have fewer government regulations and interference, less government ownership, fewer trade unions, lower taxes and no foreign exchange controls. A thoughtful allocation of capital that results in an ambivalent attitude towards political risks and currency moves is another way to avoid catastrophe.

Idiosyncratic growth stocks are an important building block in achieving this goal.

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We consistently steer our clients away from risky investments and toward great companies. In the process we have protected clients from the worst calamities, e.g. Steinhoff and African Bank. Since inception in 1992 Fenestra has regularly outperformed the market, as measured by the All Share Index. In 2018, another good example, Fenestra did not buy or hold any of the worst 20 performing stocks, pointing to a significant out-performance of the market. We are very suspicious, paranoid and focussed, with 10 to 12 well researched shares in a portfolio. We invest in companies with great track records, honest management, strong balance sheets and great future prospects.

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William Meyer
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The bottom line

Fenestra doesn't invest clients' money in generic portfolios. Rather investment portfolios are custom made. We listen to our clients, find out exactly what their investment objectives are and design portfolios accordingly. William Meyer CEO

Why Fenestra?

Our Mission

Fenestra strives to be a great South African and International specialist investment group. We are driven by a passion for outstanding performance and an unwavering commitment to our philosophies and core values.

"The inherent vice of capitalism is the unequal sharing of blessings, The inherent virtue of socialism is the equal sharing of miseries." Winston Churchill

We all find some of the 'faces' of capitalism unacceptable. At Fenestra we strive to change what we can. Our clients use their success to set up legacies for the greater good. We need to remember we are custodians and stewards of our wealth and we must act wisely.

I also love Apple CEO Tim Cook's words in the latest Apple results: "We're always searching across a world of possibilities, finding those places where we can do the most good." We are grateful. Apple helped us find the Fenestra motto for 2025.

Focus

Fenestra limits its attention to about 50 outstanding companies but will invest in no more than 10 of them. This restricts the portfolio to only five or six outstanding performers. It is a style of investment advocated by the world's most famous investor, Warren Buffet, of whom CEO William Meyer is an avowed disciple.

Criteria

The criteria for investments are simple but top of the list is honesty of management. Other key investment criteria include an established profit history, a growing market with growing margins, strong cash generation ability and some blue-sky potential. It is also preferable if the managers are very significant shareholders.

Performance

Since inception in 1990 Fenestra Asset Management has regularly outperformed the market (as measured by the ALSI).

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St Patrick's Day OUR THEME IS GREEN



Barry Ritson once again provided fantastic St Patrick's Day entertainment. The show kicked off with Irish & typical English pub sing-along classics.

This was followed by popular dance floor hits and many more party bangers. All in all, a great evening's entertainment.



A Notice in an English Pub: "Housework is something you do that nobody notices until you don't do it" Author Unknown (but very possibly every housecleaners' thoughts!)



GOOD HEDGES, GREAT NEIGHBOURS

-navigating gardening and encroachment in communal living

Living in a communal environment offers a beautiful, shared landscape, but it also brings unique legal responsibilities regarding "green" boundaries. When a neighbour's tree branch hangs over your fence or roots begin to uplift your paving, where does your right to a view end and your neighbour's property right begin?

In South African law, the principle of "neighbourly relations" governs how we handle encroaching vegetation. While you generally have the right to the full enjoyment of your property, this must be balanced against your neighbour's ownership.

If a neighbour's branches overhang your property, you cannot simply chop them down without notice. You should first request that the neighbour prune them. If they fail to do so, you may generally prune the branches back to the property line yourself, though the neighbour is usually entitled to the wood.

Roots are often more litigious than branches because they cause structural damage to walls, pipes, and foundations.

Owners are responsible for ensuring their trees do not cause a nuisance or damage to adjoining properties.

Contrary to popular belief, there is no automatic "right to a view" in South African law unless a specific servitude is registered or local municipal bylaws state otherwise.

Communal living is governed by specific rules that might provide quicker resolutions than common law. When damage occurs, professional legal guidance ensures that the dispute doesn't escalate unnecessarily.

At J Leslie Smith & Co. Inc., we have provided a century of sound legal advice. We are here to help you navigate these "thorny" issues so you can get back to enjoying your garden.

If you need any further information or assistance, please contact our offices at J Leslie Smith Attorneys, Naseeba Sadak on 033 845 9700 or email on naseebas@jleslie.co.za or tanya@jleslie.co.za

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STRICTLY COME GARDENING – The value of trees

Trees provide essential ecological, economic, and health benefits. In summary, trees:

1. Produce Oxygen
2. Act as carbon sinks
3. Provide natural cooling
4. Prevent soil erosion
5. Support biodiversity
6. Manage water and prevent flooding
7. Provide food and medicine
8. Enhance mental and physical health
9. Reduce noise pollution
10. Increase property value

Earlier this year Sally Mills and Nikki Kohly gave a highly informative talk to Amberfield's Strictly Come Gardening enthusiasts. They outlined the value of trees (see summary above), and provided a history of Amberfield's trees. They took the audience on an entertaining visual tour of our many beautiful trees, and then focussed on five of their favourite indigenous trees – with a focus on the five senses, and accompanied by fun limericks.

Did you know that before Amberfield was developed in the late 1980s, it was a dairy farm, with pastures, and many invasive wattle trees. The area was cleared of almost everything, except three or four magnificent acacia trees (*Vachellia sieberiana*). The tall hickory trees – along the Amberglen fence – also remain; they were part of the old driveway to the farmhouse.

Each first-time buyer was allowed to choose five trees or shrubs (a mix of exotic and indigenous) from a local nursery. Many donated trees (e.g. Jack Long, Carol Jackson, Lorna Pearson) for The Avenue, Stretton Park, and various open areas between Amberfield's units. Some of these trees succumbed to frost, while others persisted – such as the invasive *Celtis sinensis*, which local nurseries mistook for SA's indigenous *Celtis africana*! Prior to organised agriculture, our landscape would have been natural veld grasses, bulbs and shrubs – NOT the trees or lawns which you see in Amberfield today. Urban developments,

commercial forestry, agriculture, and even mining in some areas, has led to a decline in the KZN grassland ecosystem. What remains serves as a valuable source of biodiversity and water catchment, though much of it is now highly fragmented and degraded.

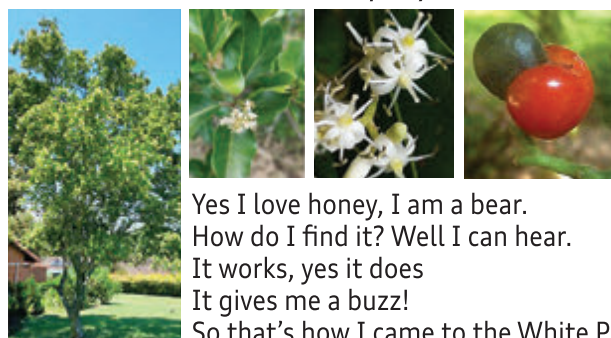
Today, Amberfield is making the best of what we have, and makes allowance for some beautiful exotics like the oaks, elms, acers, rhododendrons and camellias. As older trees reach the end of their lives, we replace them with indigenous trees. We take care to choose species appropriate for the area, and also consider factors such as soil type, space available, aspect and local climate.

Amberfield's pride and joy is its Wild Garden, which John Roff (a well-known nature guide) likens to an arboretum or botanical garden.

AF Tree Tour – 5 to Remember



HEAR – White Pear – *Apodytes dimidiata*



Yes I love honey, I am a bear.
How do I find it? Well I can hear.
It works, yes it does
It gives me a buzz!
So that's how I came to the White Pear

TASTE– Wild Plum

– *Harpephyllum caffrum*



Gran used to say, no chewing gum;
Fruit's better. I thought she was dumb.
But now that I am older.
With food I'm much bolder.
I love the tart taste of Wild Plum!

SMELL – Lavender Tree

– *Heteropyxis natalensis*



Choosing a winner, the nose is key
To find fragrance or medical tea.
Who can resist a smell
That heals and pampers well?
A great choice is the Lavender Tree.

FEEL – Dwarf Coral Tree

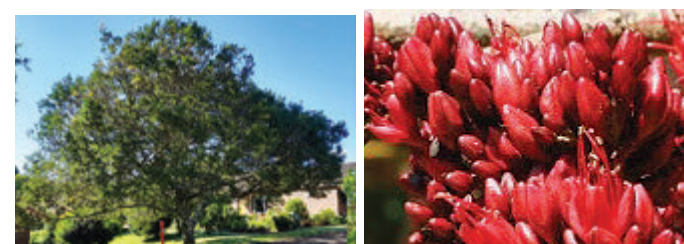
– *Erythrina humeana*



Walking your garden, from A to Zee
Find all sorts of plants, some like a bee.
If you feel a sharp prick
Just move back, do be quick.
And be glad it's the Dwarf Coral Tree.

SEE – Weeping Boer-Bean

– *Schotia brachypetala*



Most birders grow trees because
they're keen for feathered friends
in their gardens seen. Such bright
colours attract to food and home,
a fact. That's why I love the
Weeping boer-bean.

Perfumed, bee & bird paradise

– *Dombeya rotundifolia* between Robin Lane and Coucal Lane



Wild Plum

– end of Weaver

"The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now."



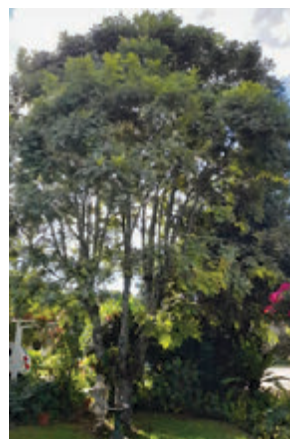
Henkel's Yellowwood

Polygala myrtifolia
September Bush
Hornbill Lane



Cape Chestnut in Stretton Park

"You're sitting in the shade today because someone planted this tree a long time ago."



Weeping Wattle
– *Peltophorum africanum*,
Prinia Lane



An Original Tree
– *Vachellia sieberiana*



Consider a tree for a moment. As beautiful as trees are to look at, we don't see what goes on underground – as they grow roots. Trees must develop deep roots in order to grow strong and produce their beauty. But we don't see the roots. We just see and enjoy the beauty. In much the same way, what goes on inside of us is like the roots of a tree. – Joyce Meyer



The Quiver Tree Forest
ARMCHAIR TRAVEL

Keetmanshoop in the arid Northern Cape

The Quiver Tree Forest is one of South Africa's most unusual natural attractions, located near the small town of Keetmanshoop in the arid Northern Cape. This forest isn't a forest in the traditional sense, but rather a dense cluster of quiver trees - succulent plants scientifically known as *Aloe dichotoma*. These trees thrive in harsh desert conditions, storing water in their thick trunks and reflecting sunlight with their pale bark. The name "quiver tree" comes from the indigenous San people, who historically used the hollowed-out branches to make quivers for their arrows.

What makes the Quiver Tree Forest especially striking is its other-worldly appearance. The trees grow among scattered dolerite boulders, creating a dramatic landscape that is particularly beautiful at sunrise and sunset when the light casts long shadows across the rocky terrain. The area is also popular with photographers and stargazers due to its remote location and minimal light pollution, offering clear views of the Milky Way. Despite its beauty, the quiver tree is sensitive to climate change, and shifts in temperature and rainfall patterns have begun to affect its natural distribution.

Beyond its visual appeal, the Quiver Tree Forest holds ecological and cultural significance. It supports a variety of desert-adapted wildlife and serves as a symbol of resilience in one of the harshest environments in southern Africa. Conservation efforts are increasingly important to protect these slow-growing trees, some of which are estimated to be over 200 years old. Visiting the site offers not only a chance to experience a unique landscape but also an opportunity to reflect on the delicate balance that sustains life in extreme conditions.



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References available from residents at Amberfield, Amberglen, Amber Valley and Midlands homes

What to plant in APRIL

April in KwaZulu-Natal is ideal for planting cool-season vegetables like broccoli, carrots, lettuce, spinach, and onions. This is also the best time to plant winter-flowering annuals such as pansies, violas, poppies, and petunias, along with spring-flowering bulbs like freesias and daffodils. Prepare for winter by planting shrubs, trees, and garlic.

Vegetables & Herbs

Sow/Plant: Beetroot, broccoli, broad beans, cabbage, carrots, celery, kohlrabi, leeks, lettuce, onions, parsnips, peas, radish, spinach, Swiss chard, and turnips.

Coastal KZN: Add tomatoes, bush beans, brinjals (eggplant), peppers, and pumpkins.

Herbs: Plant parsley, coriander, rocket, chives, and rosemary.

Planting Tips: Start sowing seeds or planting seedlings of winter crops to establish before the peak cold arrives.

Flowers

Seedlings: Plant out Petunias, pansies, violas, primulas, poppies, dianthus, cinerarias, nemesias, and ornamental kale for instant color.

Seeds: Sow Namaqualand daisies, bokbaai vygies, sweet peas, and wildflowers.

Bulbs: Plant freesia, ixia, watsonia, daffodils, tulips, and hyacinths.

Perennials: Plant out daisy bushes (*Osteospermum*), lavender, and herbaceous perennials like lupins.

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The romantic charm of Natal verandah-style homes meets the graceful elegance of contemporary country design, creating a village that feels both timeless and welcoming. Warm facebrick, soft plaster accents, gabled roofs, and timber details come together with thoughtful craftsmanship to create homes with heart. Meandering paths weave through lush landscaping and indigenous trees, inviting gentle strolls and spontaneous connection. It's a place full of character, beauty, and a quiet sense of belonging.

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Greater Ambers Garden Club Chelsea Talk



I have often wondered what is synonymous with success. Whether its success in business, a career of even in one's personal life. In my opinion it is passion. Without a passion for your subject you will not succeed.

Leon Kluge has this incredible passion and gift for what he does. He had the largest audience to attend a club talk here in Amber Valley, spell bound for 1 and a half hours. Leon started his talk from the very beginning, a bare canvas that started immediately after is success in 2024. Tristan Woudberg had to draw exactly what was going to be done, right down to the finest details, This was submitted seven months before the show. Once accepted the procurement of the flowers began. From 30 different flower farms around the Cape, hoping they would be at their prime on the day. A daunting task, this followed by the construction of the site. 25 000 blooms is mindboggling!

Health and Safety was another obstacle to be sorted. That department was amazingly difficult. They could only use Hay Bales that were sprayed with extremely expensive fire repellent. The waterfall and pond area they could stand in with their bare feet but once out had to put their shoes back on! A whistle was blown if they didn't and after three blasts they had to stop preparing the for the rest of the day!

Leon has a young lady who sources things in the UK, artificial rocks had to be found of the right colour and texture, they were found. Moss and grass also had to be bought there, all found.

The day arrived to actually assemble everything and the flower boxes were opening. Remembering the flowers had been closed and without water for three days, once out, re cut and put into water, they were all perfect.

Then the water for the water feature had to be crystal clear but specific colour of the streams in the Cape. Leon added Rooibos tea and that was perfect. It was imperative nothing leaked, which it did not. All was now looking great. Next morning they arrive to discover a fox loved Rooibos and his little paw marks

were all over the sand! Never discovered what Health and Safety did about him. Leon and the team wee highly amused!

Day of judging arrived and Leon and his team won Best stand at Chelsea and the Best Stand for any RHS throughout the UK that year. What a wonderful Ambassador for our country, we are all so proud of you young man.

An intriguing talk ended with a standing ovation. Thank you Leon and Tristan in finding the time to speak to us at the Greater Ambers. We cannot wait for the next Chelsea Show.



Ambers

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Taking your dog on holiday

Holidays offer a wonderful chance for you and your dog to create lasting memories and enjoy quality time together! However, every dog is unique - their age, health condition, temperament, and your specific holiday activities (like hiking, beach days, or city exploring) will determine if they thrive. Some dogs love adventures, while others prefer their cozy routines.

Important Reminder: Not all dogs handle changes well and may feel stressed rather than excited. Always start by consulting your veterinarian to confirm your dog is physically fit for travel and can handle the planned activities. Discuss any underlying health issues, like arthritis or anxiety. If the trip seems too overwhelming for your furry friend, it's kinder to leave them in trusted care - prioritizing their well-being ensures guilt-free fun for you.

Simple Prep Steps That Make a Big Difference:

Preparation is key to a smooth trip - handle these well in advance to reduce stress:

Book early: Secure pet-friendly accommodation, travel arrangements (flights, drives, or ferries), and any required medications months ahead.

Health check: Ensure vaccinations are current, especially rabies (mandatory for many areas). Protect against parasites like ticks, fleas, and worms with vet-recommended treatments. Consider a travel health certificate.

Accommodation details: Inform hosts about your dog upfront. Verify secure fencing to prevent escapes, especially in rural spots. For home stays or small B&Bs, ask about other animals - will your dog get along with

resident cats or dogs?

Pack thoroughly: Stock up on food, fresh water, treats, bedding, leash, collar with ID tag, and waste bags for the first few days until you locate local shops. Include familiar home items like a favorite toy or blanket - dogs, like us, find comfort in familiar scents.

Medications: Pack enough prescription meds for the full trip plus extras for delays.

Transporting Your Dog Safely:

Safe travel keeps everyone happy:

Secure your dog properly in the vehicle - never on the driver's lap. Use harnesses, crates, or barriers; we recommend Wild Woofy car chair covers for protection. Drive gently with frequent checks; stay calm to avoid passing on stress - speak reassuringly and skip loud music.

Hydration is crucial: Bring non-spill bowls and bottled water. In hot weather, offer cooling aids like wet towels. Break every 2-3 hours for stretches, water, and potty breaks - always keep them leashed near roads to prevent runaways.

Arriving and Settling In: Arrival is exciting but don't rush - the adventure truly begins once settled: Keep your dog in the car initially while you inspect the property for security (fences, gates, hazards).

Explore together: Walk through rooms and the garden at a leisurely pace until they're comfortable. Brief family members on rules, like "no bedrooms" or "garden only." Set up familiar items in their sleep spot or favorite hangout - these scents help ease anxiety from new smells and sights. Give them time to warm up to new people and places on their terms. Avoid leaving them alone if it causes distress - use short outings first to test.

Balance holiday buzz with rest: Designate a quiet, comfy retreat for undisturbed naps.

If Leaving Your Dog at Home: Opt for reputable kennels or a trusted pet-sitter based on your dog's needs. Provide ample food, meds, and a care schedule. Share full details: feeding routines, medication instructions, your usual vet's name/contact, and emergency protocols.

Whether adventuring together or reuniting post-trip with joyful barks and sloppy kisses, always choose what's best for your pet. A happy dog means a happier holiday for all!

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I CAN HEAR YOU... I JUST CAN'T UNDERSTAND YOU

Why conversations become harder with age – even when your hearing seems “fine”

Have you ever said...“Everyone is mumbling.”
“I can hear you, but I can’t make out the words.”
“I’m fine one-on-one, but I struggle in groups.”

If so, you’re not alone - and more importantly, you’re not imagining it.

Many people believe hearing loss is simply about volume. But in reality, one of the most common challenges - especially as we get older - is understanding speech clearly, particularly in noisy environments.

Hearing vs Understanding: What’s the Difference?

Hearing and understanding are not the same thing. Hearing is simply the ear detecting sound, while understanding is the brain making sense of it. With age, the ear often loses sensitivity to higher-pitched sounds which makes speech seem muffled. At the same time, the brain works a little harder to keep up, especially in noisy places or fast conversations. The result? Voices are audible, but words can feel blurred, making everyday conversations more tiring than they used to be.

You may notice:

Restaurants feel overwhelming
Group conversations are hard to follow
You miss punchlines or respond incorrectly

Why does this happen?

Background noise competes with speech, and the brain has to “fill in the gaps”. However if there is a hearing loss in the higher frequencies, certain speech sounds become even harder to distinguish through background noise.

The Hidden Impact

When conversations become difficult, many people start to withdraw from social situations and avoid group gatherings. Over time, this can affect confidence, relationships, and overall wellbeing.

A QUICK SELF-CHECK: TICK THE BOXES THAT APPLY:

- ☐ I can hear people talking, but I don’t always understand what they’re saying
- ☐ I struggle more in groups than in one-on-one conversations
- ☐ I often ask people to repeat themselves
- ☐ I feel like others are mumbling
- ☐ I avoid noisy places (restaurants, events, gatherings)
- ☐ I feel tired after long conversations
- ☐ I turn the TV up louder than others prefer

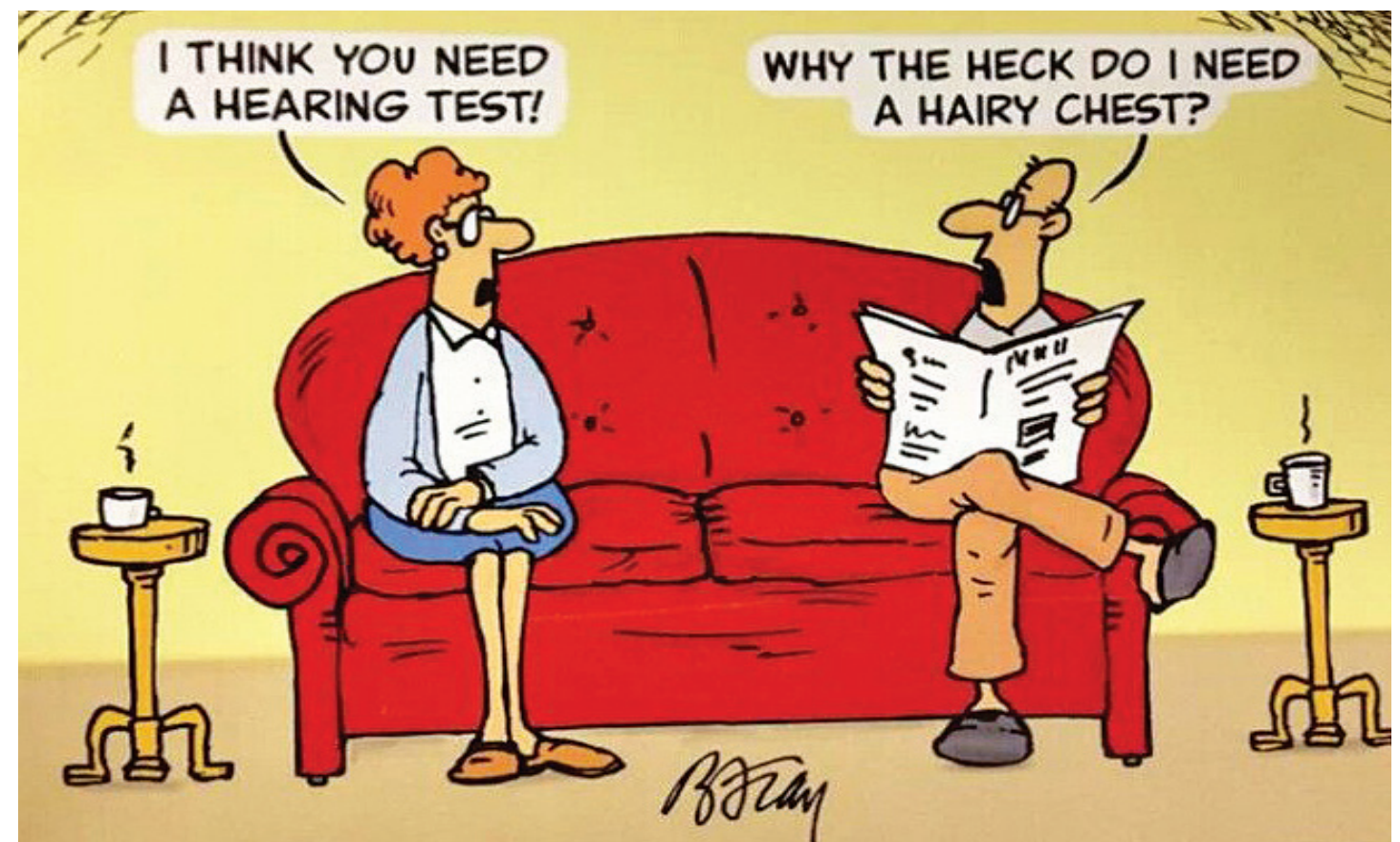
If you ticked 2 or more, it may be worth having your hearing checked - not just for volume, but for clarity.

A hearing assessment doesn’t just measure how loud sounds are. It also looks at how clearly you understand speech, especially in background noise, and whether hearing support (if needed) can improve your quality of life.

A Final Thought

Hearing well is not just about sound - it’s about connection. It’s about enjoying conversations, sharing stories, laughing at the right moment, and feeling part of the world around you. If you’ve ever thought, “I can hear... but I just can’t understand,” that’s your sign to take action. Help is available.

For Professional Hearing Care assessments and advice: Kate Marie Hearing Solutions has consulting rooms in Howick (Lenmed Hospital Complex) and Hilton (Hilton Health Building). Contact 072 970 9427 to make an appointment.



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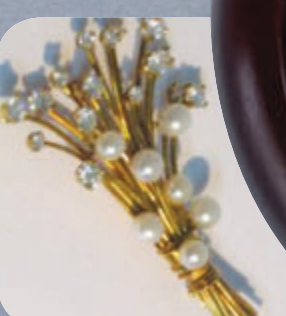
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The Pyramids of Egypt



The Giza Pyramids of Cheops (right) and Chephren (left).

Introduction

We start with a background to Ancient Egypt. The Ancient Egyptian Civilisation spanned a period of about 3000 years starting about 3000 BCE. During this time there were 31 dynasties and approximately 170 to 200 Pharaohs.

At least 118 identified pyramids exist. Some are in a poor state of repair, some have stood the test of time. Pyramids are the tombs of Pharaohs. They are built on the west of the Nile, symbolising the setting sun. The west of the Nile is associated with death because the Sun God Ra died in the west each night.



The Sakkara Step Pyramid of Pharaoh of Djoser (from a mini postcard).



1978 Stamp of the Step Pyramid of Pharaoh Djoser.

The Step Pyramid of Sakkara

The first large scale cut stone pyramid was the Sakkara Step Pyramid built near the old capital of Memphis. It is built from solid stone blocks.



This was built by the Pharaoh Djoser in approximately 2700 BCE in the 3rd Dynasty. It has a height of 62.5 m, a base of 121 x 109 m, orientated East-West and North – South.

It contains about 330,400 cu. m (abt 760,000 tonnes of limestone rock). Under the pyramid of Djoser there is a labyrinth of about 6km of tunnels, chambers and galleries, which connect to the Central Chamber 7 metres square and 28 m deep. It is magnificently lined by glazed ceramic tiles which represent rush mattings.

The Pyramids of Giza

However, whenever one thinks of Egyptian Pyramids. One generally thinks of the 3 Great Pyramids of Giza, which are situated close to, what today is Cairo.

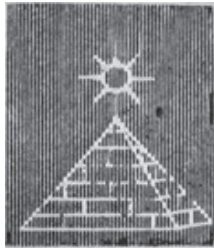
The three Great Pyramids of Giza are the most celebrated monuments in the world and are the only remaining Wonders of The Ancient World. The pyramid of Khufu (or better known as Cheops) is the

largest, followed by his son, Chephren's pyramid (which is about 3 m shorter), and the smallest being that of Cheop's grandson, Mycerinus.

There are a few very small pyramids adjacent to these which were built for the wives of the Pharaohs. Egypt have issued many stamps over the years depicting the Great Pyramids. The first were issued in 1867. Those issued in 1879 had a pyramid as its watermark. Examples of these earlier stamps are shown below.



1879 stamp



Watermark used on stamps

1978 stamp



The pyramids were not isolated structures, but the key component of a complex of funerary temples, mortuaries, and an enclosed causeway from the River Nile via the temple complex to the pyramid. The Pyramid of Cheops is the largest of all Egyptian pyramids, built around 2560 BC, in the 4th Dynasty of the Pharaohs.

It was constructed from over 2.3 million limestone and granite blocks, originally standing over 147 metres tall with precise cardinal alignment, showcasing incredible ancient engineering that still mystifies experts today. Today, the height is about 8 m shorter, the apex part of the pyramid having been lost in antiquity. Speculation was that the capstone/apex was solid gold, gilded or electrum (an alloy of gold, silver and traces of copper).

When one considers these were built over 4500 years ago, the engineering and accuracy to which they were built is nothing short of amazing.

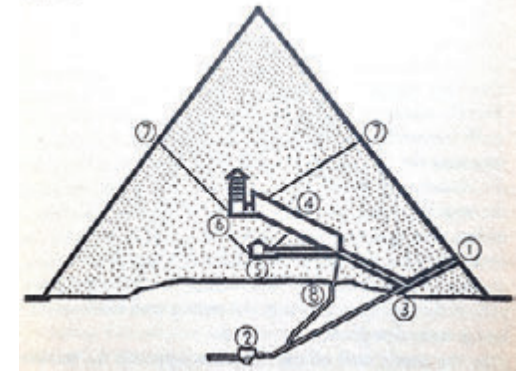


Diagram showing the inner structures. 4 is the Grand Gallery; 5 is the King's Burial Chamber. (From the book The Pyramids of Egypt By I.Edwards)



The Grand Gallery constructed inside the pyramid and slopes up to the Kings Gallery. It is 46.6 m long and the walls and ceiling is of polishes limestone, but designed in such a way to withstand the mass of stone from the surrounding pyramid. The walls are initially vertical to the height of about 2 m and then corbeled inward in 75mm increment to reach a vault 8.53 m above the floor. The ceiling is also corbeled. Through the Grand Gallery the previously sealed King's Burial Chamber is reached. It is built of granite which would have been quarried in Aswan, 900 km south, and brought in by barge on the Nile. The Chamber is 10.3m square and 5.82m high and contained a granite sarcophagus. The flat ceiling of the Chamber has 9 granite slabs with an aggregated weight of 400 tonnes. Above this ceiling there are five further ceilings, 4 flat and one lofted. – All presumably to structurally support and prevent collapse of the King's Chamber by the massive weight. It is amazing just how all these

heavy blocks were manoeuvred into place to form the Gallery and Chamber.

There are many theories as to how they were built. Ramps were one thought, but a ramp large enough to reach the upper section of the great pyramids of Giza, would have to be about 1.6km long to accommodate a 1:10 slope. There is also the complication as to how the outer dressed /polished white limestone blocks would have been fitted into place. There are few of these outer layer polished stones left today and only the large limestone cut blocks form the shape of the pyramid. In fact, most of the remaining outer layer is on the uppermost part of the Chephren's pyramid at Giza, otherwise these outer layers have been stripped/stolen or collapsed over the centuries, and used for stone requirements to construct bridges particularly over irrigation canals and building of houses and other buildings.

The three Pyramids of Giza with images of statues of each of the Pharaohs: Mycerinus; Chephren and Cheops. The Pyramid of Chephren always appears the tallest. This is an allusion. It is 3m shorter, but is built on higher ground.

Some interesting statistics:

The great pyramid of Cheops could fit St Pauls Cathedral, and the British Houses of Parliament inside its base area and still have space.

If all the blocks were cut into 300mm square blocks they would extend over 2 thirds of the Earth's periphery at the Equator.

A wall 300mm thick and 3m high could be constructed around the whole border of France.



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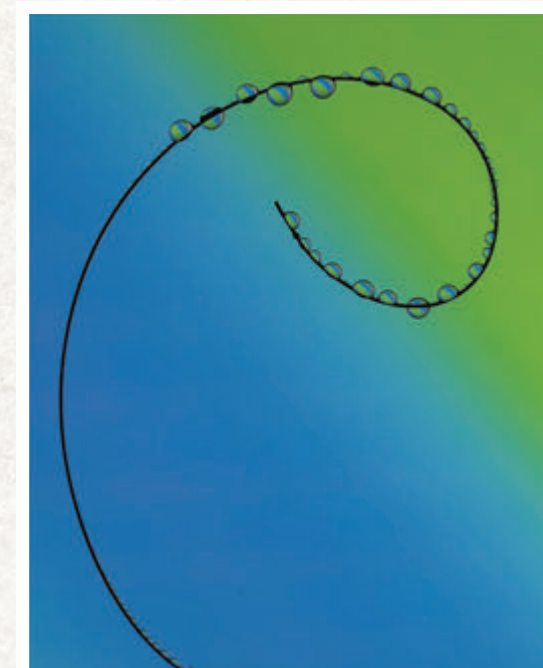
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Please advise your name, address and contact details. Please give a title to your photograph. If the files are big upload to www.wetransfer.com and notify Pat that you have done so. Please send your entries in jpeg format.

Photography **must** be your original work. Prizes **cannot** be exchanged for cash. The judge's decision is final.

Closing Date of the Competition is 1st December 2026. Competition is open to Ambers Residents ONLY. No more than 2 entries per person.





When you think you have heard everything - this happens

That something happened the other day, and I cannot believe the audacity or brazenness of people. Just when you think that people cannot get any lower, something else happens. Believe me this blew me away.

I was talking to friends over the weekend, who had been having their whole home re-tiled. This was necessitated by the fact that one of the showers had an under the floor leak, and the fact that these sizes of tiles were no longer available. So it was in the best interest in this case, to re-tile, everywhere.

Company A was given the job. Not that this is a criteria, but they were not the cheapest quote, they were however, available immediately and the leak was rather urgent. The team usually arrived just after 7.30 each morning, seven people in total, but by 12.00 only one person was working. This happened over a period of almost two weeks. One wonders why when 7 arrive only 1 person is left working.

Well, two of the workers were picked up then another two later in the morning, then another two, and when they were asked, they retorted that they had to finish another job in the area, they promised they would be all systems go the following day. The home was total chaos, and they appeared to be working in one bathroom,

the kitchen and the living areas all at the same time.

Tiles were brought in, in boxes, and boxes and old tiles went out again, presumably to keep the area tidy, BUT goodies from around the house were being taken out in said boxes. I kid you not! Play stations, that were 'locked away,' jewellery, odd bric-a-brac, sunglasses, clothing off the wash line, baby items still in boxes, even the dogs bowl, and sports medals only important and special to the athlete. This all under the homeowner's eye, so to speak!

Fortunately, in this instance these pilferers were caught, and all given a lie-detector test, which each one failed. So, this incident at least had a semi-happy ending. The owner, who also had a lie detector test, passed, he was totally unaware of the shenanigans of his staff, undertook to complete the job himself with his sons.

In South Africa, we work very hard for our money which is why Insurance is so important to us culturally. Sadly, even though replacing lost assets can be difficult, there are opportunists out there who will not hesitate to con us out of everything that we have managed to accumulate. My question is, who do you trust today? Seriously, who do you trust today?

TO MEN WITH A VOICE

Amber Valley 

Many attended “The Howick Choristers” presentation in the three Ambers of Peterson’s Easter Cantata “Hallelujah What a Saviour”. In my humble opinion: we did pretty well, and the very complimentary compliments are still coming in.

We are now a choir of over 60 members. Ladies I regret immensely that we have sufficient members of your gender, but we could well do with a few more basses and tenors. Unfortunately, prospective males are always frightened by what they perceive to be a choir requirement: a need to be able to read music. My own shocking confession: while over the years I

have sung in a number of choirs, I still do not know the difference between a P-sharp and a Q-flat...Is there a difference??

We rehearse on Thursdays from 4:45 for 5:00 till about 6:30 in the Ambers Chapel. We have a superb new Conductor, Johan Grobler, and you will find us to be a happy, fun-loving, lively bunch of friends - I almost said Comrades...Take the plunge and try us out. We are about to start rehearsing a magnificent potpourri of choir items for performances in July-August. If you would like further information please come and chat, or e-mail me frits@rijkenberg.org

DID YOU KNOW? Singing in a choir is good for both body and mind. It can improve breathing and posture, while also releasing “feel-good” chemicals that reduce stress and boost mood.

When choir members sing together, their heartbeats often sync up because they breathe and phrase in unison.

Choirs also build strong social bonds, cutting loneliness and helping people feel more connected and optimistic.

Some of the oldest choral music was carved in stone in ancient Greece, and today there are massive choirs with tens of thousands of singers setting world records.



POTATO AND LEEK SOUP RECIPE

INGREDIENTS

- ▶ 60ml (1/4 cup) Olive Oil
- ▶ 1 Brown onion, halved, chopped
- ▶ 1 Garlic clove, crushed
- ▶ 4 Medium (about 700g) potatoes, peeled, cut into 2cm cubes
- ▶ 2 Leeks, pale section only, washed, dried, thinly sliced
- ▶ 1.25L (5 cups) vegetable stock
- ▶ 3 Thick slices day-old white bread, crusts removed, cut into 2cm cubes
- ▶ Olive oil, extra for croutons and to serve
- ▶ 125ml (1/2 cup) thickened cream
- ▶ 2 tbsp finely chopped fresh chives

METHOD

Step 1 - Heat olive oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the onion and garlic and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until the onion softens. Add the potato and leek and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until leek softens.

Step 2 - Add the stock and bring to the boil. Reduce heat to medium and gently boil, uncovered, for 20 minutes or until potato is soft. Remove from heat and set aside for 10 minutes to cool.

Step 3 - Meanwhile, preheat oven to 200C or 180C fan-forced. Place bread in a roasting pan. Drizzle with remaining oil and toss until bread is evenly coated. Toast in preheated oven, shaking pan occasionally, for 10-15 minutes or until crisp. Remove croutons from oven and set aside.

Step 4 - Transfer one-third of the potato mixture to the jug of a blender and blend until smooth. Transfer to a clean saucepan. Repeat in 2 more batches with the remaining potato mixture. Alternatively, use a stick blender to blend in the saucepan.

Step 5 - Place the soup over medium heat. Add the cream and stir to combine. Cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until hot. Taste and season with salt.

Step 6 - Ladle the soup among serving bowls. Top with croutons, chives, a drizzle of olive oil and serve immediately.



How solar power can **SLASH** your energy bills

Harnessing solar power has become one of the most effective ways for households to reduce rising electricity costs. By installing rooftop solar panels, families can generate their own electricity directly from sunlight rather than relying entirely on the grid. Solar systems convert sunlight into usable power during the day, allowing homes to run appliances, lights, and electronic devices using energy that is essentially free once the system is installed. This reduces the amount of electricity that must be purchased from utility providers each month.

One of the biggest advantages of solar energy is the long-term savings it can provide. Although the initial installation requires an upfront investment, the cost is often recovered over time through lower monthly electricity bills. In sunny regions, a well-sized solar system can significantly offset household energy consumption, particularly during peak daylight hours when electricity demand is high. As electricity prices continue to rise, generating power from the

sun helps households protect themselves from unpredictable utility costs.

Many solar systems can also be paired with batteries that store excess energy produced during the day. This stored energy can then be used at night or during power outages, further reducing reliance on the electrical grid. In some areas, households may even be able to send surplus electricity back to the grid through programs that credit them for the extra power generated. These arrangements can help maximize the financial benefits of solar installations.

Beyond financial savings, solar energy also supports a cleaner and more sustainable energy future. By relying on renewable sunlight rather than fossil fuels, households can reduce their carbon footprint while lowering their utility expenses. As technology continues to improve and installation costs gradually decline, solar power is becoming an increasingly practical solution for families looking to cut energy bills and invest in a more energy-efficient home.

SOLAR ENERGY BRINGS BIG ADVANTAGES IN SOUTH AFRICA, ESPECIALLY AMID LOADSHEDDING AND RISING ESKOM TARIFFS

Cost and Independence - Homeowners cut electricity bills significantly by generating their own power, with payback in 5-7 years. It provides energy independence, keeping lights on during blackouts via batteries.

Local Advantages - South Africa’s high solar irradiation—one of the world’s best—makes panels ultra-efficient. Panels boost property values and require low maintenance.

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power, with payback in 5-7 years. It provides energy independence, keeping lights on during blackouts via batteries.

Local Advantages - South Africa’s high solar irradiation—one of the world’s best—makes panels ultra-efficient. Panels boost property values and require low maintenance.

Environmental Impact - Solar cuts CO2 emissions (e.g., 4,260 tons avoided in 2024 from PV) and reliance on coal. It promotes sustainability in a sunny nation like yours in Durban.

Zero-Waste kitchens made simple

Creating a zero-waste kitchen may sound daunting, but at its core, it's simply about using what you have more thoughtfully and reducing unnecessary waste. The shift begins with small, practical habits: planning meals before shopping, buying only what you need, and storing foods properly so it lasts longer. Many people find that using clear containers, labelling leftovers, and keeping a running list of what's already in the fridge or pantry helps avoid forgotten items that eventually get thrown out.

Another key step is choosing reusable alternatives to common disposables – cloth towels instead of paper, glass jars instead of plastic containers and reusable produce bags instead of single use ones. These simple changes quickly become second nature and make the kitchen more efficient, organized and environmentally friendly.

Beyond the basics, a zero-waste kitchen also encourages creativity and resourcefulness. Scraps that were once tossed away can become the foundation of delicious homemade broths, compost for the garden or even flavourful additions to meals – like turning vegetable peels into crisps or stale bread into croutons. Leftovers can be reinvented into new dishes, reducing waste while adding variety to the weekly menu. Buying more whole minimally packaged foods and supporting local markets can also cut down on plastic while improving freshness and flavour.

Ultimately, it's not about perfection; it's about progress. By adopting a few simple habits and approaching food with mindfulness rather than convenience, anyone can create a kitchen that wastes less, saves money, and supports a healthier planet.



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