

SEA VIEWS

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM

THE St James

June 2018

Dear Residents

The welcome May and June rains have brought some respite to our parched province and raised the dam levels to a healthy 42.7% of capacity (at the time of writing). Good news indeed! We're not out of the woods yet, but we're hopeful that these 'normal' rains will provide some respite – and restore our usually soggy Cape winter.



On a clear day: The St James with the early morning winter sun on her face.

UCT climate scientist Dr Peter Johnson says the cold fronts that usually herald winter rain are not penetrating the western and southern Cape as they should, this due to high pressure cells intensifying and persisting over the region.

He says that there is a theory that the intensification of the high-pressure cells is caused by climate change. "But that's difficult to prove," he said in an interview on CapeTalk. The province still needs substantial rainfall to alleviate the drought, says Johnston, at least 15 episodes of 20mm in the next months. The City of Cape Town's water restrictions will remain until the dam levels reach 80%.

Royal wedding

The past quarter saw royal wedding fever strike: the marriage of Prince Harry to former actress Megan Markle on 19 May in St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle. On their marriage Markle became the Duchess of Sussex. The newlyweds now live at Nottingham Cottage, described as a "snug, two-bedroomed property on the grounds of Kensington Palace". At The St James we celebrated the occasion in style: tea and scones in the library where the wedding festivities were screened.



The newlyweds will live in Nottingham Cottage in the grounds of Kensington Palace.

"A delightful place with a touch of veteran history"

It's always a treat to get good news as we have recently, courtesy of a happy diner and visitor to The St James, Nick Thomas of Muizenberg. His Facebook post has made us proud. He wrote: "Sunday lunch at the St James Retirement Hotel today. A buffet lunch with soup to start. The choices of roast pork or chicken with various veg and roast potatoes. The puddings were a variety of goodies. Washed down with a glass of red and finished off with coffee. But this was the deal breaker for us. The ambience and the white linen ... piano player ... friendly staff ... no screaming children. It was like stepping back 50 years! Absence of dreaded cell phone. The only electronic device which was spotted: a hearing aid! R320 for two. A delightful place with a touch of veteran history."

Sprucing up our grande dame

Since our last edition of *Sea Views*, our new lift has been installed. We thank our residents for their patience during the installation period. The entrance hall and buffet area of the dining room have also been given a face-lift. Earlier this month the carpet was removed and new, non-slip, tiles in gentle hues of grey were laid.



Men at work removing the carpet ahead of laying non-slip tiles in the entrance hall and buffet area of the dining room.

Birthday wishes

Congratulations to our residents who celebrated their birthdays during the past quarter. To quote from an old Irish blessing: “May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind always be at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face...”

April	May	June
3 rd Kathleen Barrett 3 rd Jane Mulliner 12 th Margaret Tibbit 17 th Dorothy Carpenter-Frank 26 th Allan Jordi	3 rd Theodora Goles 10 th Eunice Nicholson 14 th Pieter Breedt 22 nd Alison Lockyear 26 th Margaret McAlister 29 th Yvonne Ellison 31 st Diana Oosthuizen	4 th Peter Coates 7 th Sheila Southey 14 th Vera Kidd

80th birthday celebration

Our resident agent Shirley Eva celebrated her 80th birthday at a buffet luncheon hosted at The St James, enjoyed in the warm company of 38 friends and family. Shirley’s daughter, Belinda, and grandchildren, Luke and Abby, must take much of the credit for the arrangements, said Shirley, with catering manager Johan and his team putting on a delicious spread.

Shirley’s association with The St James spans 15 years. Born in Johannesburg, she came south with her family when her father was transferred to the Mother City. Schooled at Wynberg Girls’ High, she trained as a nurse.

But nursing wasn't her cup of tea and she went into business. She joined Syfrets and then an auditing company. A subsequent career in publishing took Shirley all over the country.

After marrying she and her husband managed the Stellenbosch Hydro for two years. They later bought Suikerbossie Restaurant in Hout Bay.

"We were there for five years, which was real hard, physical work," Shirley said.



Resident agent Shirley Eva recently celebrated her 80th birthday.

After a sabbatical in the United Kingdom, the couple joined Durr Estates and then went on their own, buying Nick Mallett Estates in Fish Hoek.

After her husband died, Shirley sold the business, and joined Noordhoek Manor as their marketer when the retirement village was being built.

"From there The St James invited me to come and do their marketing and this is where I've ended up. I love it. It's about dealing with elderly people and really getting to know their needs and whether The St James is suitable for them.

"I've been very fortunate. I can't believe I am still working at 80 but I'll go on as long as I can."

For Shirley age is not the limiting factor to enjoying life; it's health and staying active. Have the needs for the elderly changed in the years she has been marketing retirement accommodation? The main trend, she says, is that people are living longer and staying healthy. Now there are many retirement villages, developed to accommodate the baby boomers; the post-World War II generation.

“I find people who come to The St James are mainly 85 years and up. They come when they can no longer, or nor longer want to, manage a home, with all the chores of cooking, cleaning, repairs and maintenance. Some want a lock-up-and-leave situation where they can visit their families overseas.

“We encourage people to come while they can still enjoy it here.”

Shirley works half days on most days, giving her time to enjoy her favourite pursuits: bridge, keeping up with friends, the theatre and travel.

Entertainment, music and talk shows

Talk and slide shows

We enjoyed a smorgasbord of talk and slides shows during the past quarter. In April **Moira Mahon** looked back in history, charting women’s influence on the wine industry. Many local wines bear the names of famous early Cape women, such as the Steenberg Estate red blend, Catharina. Steenberg Estate was granted to the widow Catharina Ras in 1682. She had a series of husbands who died in rather violent circumstances: one under the feet of an elephant, another eaten by a lion, and a third speared by a local!)



Steenberg Estate’s first owner, Catharina Ras.

Also in April, **Jim Phelps** discussed poetry of social relevance. We also hosted a pottery exhibition in the conference room, showing the work of the Woodpecker Group of potters from Fish Hoek.



Pottery on show.

In May **John Thomas** and members of the Living Hope team spoke about their humanitarian work at the Living Hope Community Centre, an HIV/AIDS healthcare organisation in the valley. **Professor Philip Lloyd** shared his travels in Jordan, Syria and Iran, his presentation titled 'Before the Arab Spring'.

Douglas Anderson's slides on the theme 'Impact Craters' took us to various sites where craters have been formed, some deep under the snow. The Vredefort Dome in the Free State, a UNESCO World Heritage Centre, is the world's largest verified impact crater, more than 300km across. The asteroid that created it is estimated to have been five to ten kilometres in diameter.



Vredefort Dome in the Free State, a UNESCO World Heritage Centre.

In June **Dr Sydney Cullis** took us to one of the world's coldest and most remote island, Spitsbergen, which he calls a "jewel of the Arctic". The island is halfway between Norway and the North Pole, its fauna including polar bears, whales and walrus. Spitsbergen is the only permanently populated island in the Svalbard archipelago and was a whaling station in the 17th and 18th centuries.



Longyearbyen on Spitsbergen is the world's northern-most town.

Music

As the days shortened and the temperatures dropped we hunkered down in the library on most evenings, enjoying a wide variety of DVDs, from episodes of Kenneth Clark's 'Civilisation' to the BBC's 'Private Life of a Masterpiece', introducing famous artworks, their creators and models, and a wide variety of popular movies.

Our lovers of music presented the Classical Music Circle and Popular Music Series in the library, which included programmes of Bach, Berlioz, Handel and Bizet, The Cole Porter Songbook, the Quarrymen Choir (a local choir based at Glencairn) and Helmut Lotti.

Outings and aboutings

The rolling wheat lands of the Swartland beckoned in May. On Labour Day we enjoyed a trip to the Malmesbury Museum, followed by tea and cake at The Alley Cat Café.



Residents visited the Malmesbury Museum on 1 May.



Our travellers enjoying some light refreshment at the Alley Cate Café.

Theme dinners

For Africa Day on Friday 25 May catering manager Johan and his team surprised the residents with a flavoursome Africa-themed buffet lunch. Our next themed dinner saw the catering team present a veritable 'Fiesta Della Repubblica', with Italian delights such

as Amalfi Coast seafood mousse, pesto-stuffed roast chicken and a Leaning Tower of Pisa dessert buffet.



Staffers Loretta and Estelle polishing up after the Italian dinner.

Poetry corner

Bringing you more creative verse from the pens of our 2017 Three Score and Ten entrants, in this issue we feature the work of Keith Edwards. (The poetry competition is open to the city's over-70s.)

Leaving this

When

chaffinches chitter in chestnut trees
horse kicks up his heels standing at stud
chuntering chimps furrow for fleas
cows catawampously chumble the cud
skink skitters over crystal-flaked rock
stands stock-
still freeze

Then

the thought hits, home,
one day, I will have to leave all this
I cannot face leaving
this

Think well, live well

We'd like to share excerpts from an article written by Jim Rendon and Olufemi Terry for the World Economic Forum. It concerns healthy aging and the attitudes we need to embrace to get the most from our 'second wind', or post-retirement years. Read on:

At 85, Claude Copin, a retired French welder, may have discovered the secret to living a long, healthy life. She stays active by playing a pétanque game with friends in a Paris park. And she has made friends with her teammates' children, many of whom are teenagers. They take her to parties and movies - sometimes forgetting that she might need a rest before they do.

"I make my life beautiful," says Copin. "I am still healthy because I have activities and I meet people."

Research and reporting by the global Orb Media shows a strong connection between how we view old age and how well we age. Individuals with a positive attitude towards old age are likely to live longer and in better health than those with a negative attitude.

Older people in countries with low levels of respect for the elderly are at risk for worse mental and physical health and higher levels of poverty, compared to others in their country. A shift in attitude, the research shows, could improve a lot.



(Photo Pixabay.)

Over the last two-and-a-half decades, researchers have found just that those with positive views about old age live longer and age better. They are less likely to be depressed or anxious, they show increased well-being and they recover more quickly from disability.

They are also less likely to develop dementia and the markers of Alzheimer's disease. Orb's research and analysis found that these effects can also be seen across cultures.

New receptionist at The St James

We welcome Jade van Rhyen to the front desk. Jade has taken over from Debbie Shirley. Jade is a local lass who lives in Muizenberg with her husband, Daniel, and two children, Amber (8) and Lucas (4).



***Sea Views* contributions welcome**

Residents are most welcome to contribute anecdotes, poems, pictures and even short essays or stories to *Sea Views*. If you have anything you'd like to put forward for consideration, please let Jade at the reception desk have your item/s. (Please note that given space constraints, the editor reserves the right to choose what to feature.)

Last words

Resident Margaret McAlister leaves us with these words:

Life is too brief to be bitter
Too beautiful to be bored
Too precious to be picky
And too wonderful to be wasted.

Until the next edition of *Sea Views* at the end of September may we wish you all good health and good cheer in this the Cape's 'green season'.

With love

The *Sea Views* Editor