The Owl Club

NOTICE

Tuesday 16th April 2024: Notice of meeting #1359

Founded 1894

Visit our website at www.owls.org.za for current notice, back notices, Constitution (as amended 2021), *In Memoriam* 1894-2023, list of members and more.

Committee 2024/2025

President: Ron Duff

Senior Vice-President: Mike James

Junior Vice-President: David Little

Secretary: Hugh Amoore

Treasurer: Richard Morris

Immediate. Past President:

Geoffrey Ashmead

Additional Members: Paul Murray

Nigel Gwynne Evans, Peter Sutherland

Peter Hyslop, Kevin Rorke, Anthea Serritslev & Martin Hess .

Honorary Auditor: Verwey Wiese

Dinner bookings:

Email: secretary@owls.org.za

Telephone: 021 671 3121

Mobile number: 082 440 8204

Treasurer

Email: treasurer@owls.org.za

Telephone: 02 1 531 0435

Mobile number: 083 272 0500

Postal: 2 Park Lane, University Drive,

7405 Pinelands

Bank details

The Owl Club, Standard Bank of South Africa

A/c no. 071 818 006

Bank branch code: 051 001

This month's edition:

Editor: Peter Hyslop

Contributors: Hugh Amoore, Mike James, Mike Bruton & David Muller

Photography: Alan Lindhorst

Drawings: Tony Grogan, Peter Hyslop, Michael Beckurts and Sheila Camerer.

Dear Fellow Owls

The 1359th meeting of The Owl Club preceded by dinner, will be held on Tuesday 16th April 2024, 6:00 pm for 6:45 pm start, in the Grill Room, Kelvin Grove Club.

Chairman: **President Owl Ron Duff.**

Guest speaker: **Peter Anderson** on the topic of:

"Why Poetry? "

"What is this strangest of language's contrivances and what purpose does it serve? As WH Auden observed 'poetry makes nothing happen'. And yet it survives, in corners and in plain view. I'll attempt to address this oddity by some thought about the way in which it makes us think, and by asking and answering the question of my own writing." Peter Anderson.

Music: **Tertia Visser and Albie van Schalkwyk**

"Piano 4 hands - Back to Blues"

WPB: **Owl Tony Murray** on the topic of: ***"The Nightclub Singer and the Spy"***

"Tony Murray's previous WPB's included talks about music and actresses. This time he combines the two to tell how a sometime secret agent and a singer gave rise to three popular songs. Expect a lighthearted WPB in the best traditions of the genre."

Dinner price: R320.

Dress: Black tie (or similarly elegant attire).

RESERVATIONS & PAYMENTS:

Any Owl who does not have internet access is welcome to telephone the Secretary Bird at 082 440 8204 or 021 671 3121 to book a perch.

All other Owls are encouraged to use the Pay'n'Perch procedure by paying their (and their guest's) dining fee into the Club's bank account by EFT and instructing the bank (using the option provided) to send a remittance confirmation email to secretary@owls.org.za whereupon their perches will be booked.

Besides details of your invited guests (see above), no further emails will be needed from you unless you also have special dietary needs or if you are using a dining credit.

In all cases, bookings will close at 6:00 pm on Saturday 6th April 2024.

All bookings will be acknowledged.

Wheelchair availability:

Kelvin has a wheelchair available should any member facing mobility challenges wish to use it for meetings. Contact Owl Peter Hyslop (064-690-9059) & see page ten for more details.

The March 2024 (AGM) Meeting

Autumn is approaching. The seasons are changing and the days are getting shorter; that means it must be time for the Owl Club's AGM. To be precise, the 129th Annual General Meeting. Thus, on Tuesday 19th March 2024, a total of forty -eight Owls met for the 1358th meeting (and the 129th AGM) of The Owl Club, held in the Grill Room, Kelvin Grove, Newlands on Tuesday, 19th March 2024.

The proceedings started at 18:45, with President Owl Geoffrey Ashmead welcoming all and inviting Owl Kevin Rorke to deliver the Grace, followed by a three-course dinner (see page twelve for the menu and Grace). The President then asked Owls to charge their glasses and to rise for the Toast to South Africa, followed by a short break.

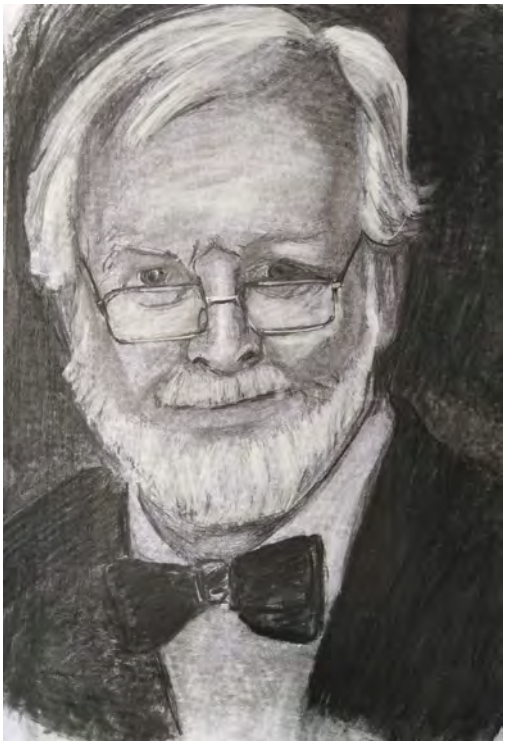
As immediate Past-President, Owl Mike Bruton was then invited to propose the Toast to Departed Owls. A respected scholar, author and educator in his own right, Owl Mike delivered his carefully researched and crafted tribute that honoured this remarkable group of men in a most dignified and appropriate way. See pages four to six for the full text of Owl Mike's tribute. At the conclusion, Owls raised their glasses as a token of respect.

The 129th Annual General Meeting of The Owl Club was then called to order, Apologies were recorded and the Secretary Bird, Owl Hugh Amoore, reported that a quorum was present. As the detailed Minutes of the AGM are available to all Owls, only the highlights of the meeting are included in this report. Full minutes will be circulated to all Owls in due course.

Following the Annual Report (delivered by the Secretary Bird), the Annual Financial Statement was presented (by the Fiscal Shrike) and both items were approved . Verwey Wiese (PwC) was re-elected as the Honorary Auditor for 2024/5. There were no motions for debate before the AGM.

The Committee for the year was confirmed with the following Owls to assume office: President: Ron Duff, Senior Vice-President: Mike James; Junior Vice-President: David Little; Secretary: Hugh Amoore; Treasurer: Richard Morris; Immediate. Past President: Geoffrey Ashmead and Additional Members: Paul Murray, Nigel Gwynne Evans, Peter Sutherland. Peter Hyslop, Kevin Rorke, Anthea Serritslev and Martin Hess.

The various motions having been dealt with, the demission of Owl Geoffrey Ashmead (to the role of Immediate Past President) and the investiture of Owl Ron Duff (as incoming President) took place and, there being no further items for discussion, the AGM was declared closed.

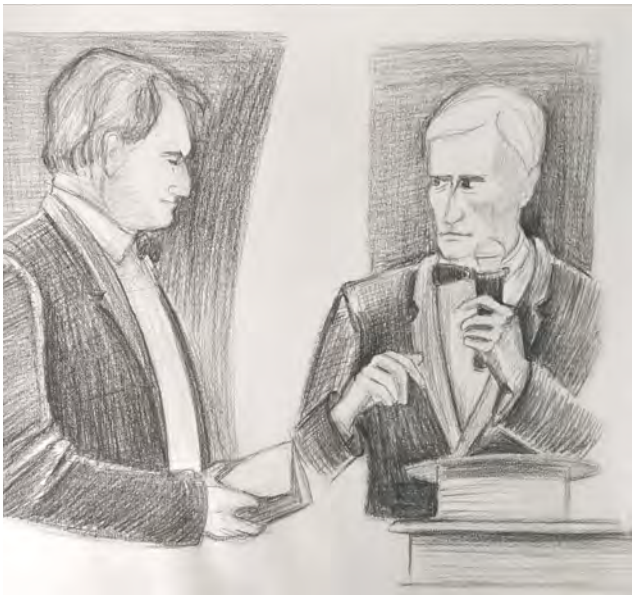


Above left: Michael Beckurts, *Owl Geoffrey Ashmead*

Below left: Michael Beckurts, *Owl Mike Bruton Delivering the Toast to Departed Owls.*

Above right: Peter Hyslop, *Owl President Ron Duff*

The March 2024 (AGM) Meeting



Fiscal Shrike Owl Richard Morris then presented his typical witty, mock-serious sweep draw to establish the winners of the first 'Club Flutter' of 2024. Assisted by Nick Winearls, Owl Richard amused the Owls with his typical dry humour, as he went through the process of the sweep. Owl Nick Starke was the lucky winner of two Owl Club dinners, Rick Haw one Owl Club dinner and a much-coveted bottle of the Boplaas Cape Ruby Port went to John Hund.

A highlight of the evening was when Thespian Owl David Muller filled the Wastepaper Basket with his presentation *'Pause ... less is more!'* In what was more of a performance than a speech, Owl David drew on the wide gamut of his theatrical skills to entertain, delight and edify all concerned. See page seven for Owl David's WPB.

To conclude the evening, Owls and their guests were invited to raise their glasses in a Toast To The Owl Club following which President Ron Duff wished all a safe flight home.

Above left: Peter Hyslop, *Fiscal Shrike Owl Richard Morris, assisted by Nick Winearls presents the draw for the 'Club Flutter'.*

Below left: Michael Beckurts, *Owl David Muller*

Above right: Michael Beckurts, *Owl Ron Duff Presiding*

Toast To Departed Owls by Immediate Past President, Owl Mike Bruton

It is my duty, as the Immediate Past President, to pay tribute, on behalf of the Owl Club, to the nine Owls who have flown to a higher perch over the past year.

Peter Beighton's academic journey began with his medical training at St Mary's Hospital, London, followed by specialisation in internal medicine at St Thomas' Hospital. From there, he went on to the USA to work under the tutelage of the godfather of medical genetics, Dr Victor McKusick. He subsequently did ground-breaking research that unravelled the mysteries of genetics in the most remote corners of the world, including the Sahara Desert, Easter Island, Tristan da Cunha and St Helena. In 1970 his explorations brought him to South Africa where he joined the Division of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of the Witwatersrand.

In 1972 Peter joined UCT and Groote Schuur Hospital as the first Professor of Human Genetics, where he fostered a community of scholars driven by a shared purpose to unlock the mysteries of the human genetic code. He developed into a remarkable leader who transformed the field of human genetics in South Africa. His accomplishments have been widely acknowledged and his accolades include the Gold Medal of the British Orthopaedic Association and the Order of Mapungubwe – Bronze.

Peter and his wife, Greta, participated in the sport of orienteering for many years and were South African champions in their age groups on several occasions. He joined the Owl Club in 1981 and, in 2003, delivered a memorable talk entitled, 'Afghanistan – with Kipling through the Kyber to Kabul'.

Mike Cluver was a graduate of Stellenbosch University and a respected palaeontologist who specialised in the study of the extinct reptiles of the Karoo. However, his greatest impact was as a towering figure in the field of museology in South Africa.

As director of the South African Museum, he expertly managed the transition of this museum into the Southern Flagship Institution, now the Iziko South African Museums, an umbrella body comprising eleven museums, archives and art galleries in Cape Town. He also masterminded the development of the new planetarium and Social History Centre and added cutting-edge laboratories and climate-controlled collection rooms to the museums.

Mike was equally comfortable in field khakis, a lab coat or a tuxedo. He always had a ready smile and retained a childlike curiosity throughout his life. He was a keen amateur astronomer who made his own telescope and a wonderful companion on field trips into the Karroo where we would dig fossils by day and study the stars at night.

Mike joined the Owl Club in 1986 and served as President in 1995. In 2002 he shared his palaeontological knowledge in a fascinating Wastepaper Basket, 'Quagga and proto-mammals – two events in the extinction process'. He also had an interest in modern history and provided an overview of the 20th century at the Christmas dinner in 1999.

Dennis Davey trained at St Mary's Hospital, London, where his teachers included Sir Alexander Fleming, the co-discoverer of penicillin. After holding various positions in the UK, he commenced as Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at UCT in January 1965, a position he held for 25 years. Dennis brought to his portfolio a passion for research and a keen interest in hypertension in pregnancy and post-reproductive health. He jointly established the world's first Menopause Clinic at Groote Schuur and was passionate about running this unit until his retirement. He recognised the value of diagnostic ultrasound and, as a result of his vision, the first Ultrasound Unit in South Africa went operational at Groote Schuur in September 1970.

Dennis found apartheid abhorrent and was instrumental in ensuring the racial desegregation of wards at Groote Schuur. He served on the South African Council of the Royal College of O and G and on many other bodies and was one of the foremost pioneers and academic leaders in his field locally and abroad.

Dennis was a keen conservationist and played a key role in the conservation of 'Die Oog' wetland in Cape Town. He also had an interest in military history and, in 2010, delivered an intriguing Wastepaper Basket, 'A very close shave', on Hitler's secret weapons, the V1 and V2 rockets.

David Dent graduated MB ChB from UCT in 1962 and did his internship and training at Groote Schuur Hospital.

While still a surgical registrar he participated in highly productive research with a formidable team that included Stuart Saunders and Chris Barnard. This included seminal work on baboon-to-human transfusions and baboon-to-pig liver and kidney transplants.

Tony Grogan, *Drawings of Peter Beighton, Mike Cluver & David Dent*

Toast To Departed Owls Immediate Past President, Owl Mike Bruton

In 1972 he joined the staff of Groote Schuur where he established the GSH Breast Clinic, one the very first 'one-stop' breast diagnostic services in the world. He became nationally and internationally recognised for his contributions to surgical oncology and endocrinology and served, inter alia, as president of the Association of Surgeons of South Africa.

David was also known for his visceral dislike for bureaucracy and rigid protocols and despised cant, humbug and hypocrisy. His medical aphorisms, dispensed on ward rounds to an appreciative audience and widely known as "Dentisms", were hilarious, pointed and droll. He could also be acerbic and, as the master of waspish repartee, did not tolerate fools lightly.

David's sharp wit and mischievous sense of humour were demonstrated in several entertaining Wastepaper Baskets, including, 'The Suez crisis and Anthony Eden's bile duct', about how an error on the operating table nearly precipitated a world war, and, 'Eyeless on Brook Street', about how the great composers Handel and Bach were treated unsuccessfully by the notorious quack, John Taylor.

At the Owl Club he acted as music quiz master with John Blackman and compiled the musical notes for the 'Notice'. He also served on the committee for several years where his cultured contributions to decision making were greatly appreciated.

Max Hales was an attorney by profession and a prominent lay member of the Anglican Church. He received the highest award given by the Anglican Church of Southern Africa to laity, i.e., the Order of Simon of Cyrene, joining four other Owls who had received this honour. An example of Max's service to the St Francis of Assisi Anglican Church in Simon's Town was his promotion of the installation of specially designed stained-glass windows that commemorate the communities who were forcibly displaced from Simon's Town by the Group Areas Act in the 1960s.

In 2002 Max delivered a Wastepaper Basket, 'Archbishops I have known', in which he described their intriguing involvements with the police, politicians and the pulpit.

John Rich was born in a remote Welsh village where his father was a miner. He attended Bristol University where he studied Pure and Applied Mathematics and developed a lifelong interest in rugby. John was also a talented musician who played both violin and viola in the Welsh National Youth Orchestra. He emigrated to South Africa in 1959 and began practising as an actuary from 1964.

John followed the dictum of the noted British actuary, Frank Redington, that 'An actuary who is only an actuary is not an actuary', and pledged to go beyond his day job to make an impact on society.

He and his wife moved to Cape Town in 1969 where he became President of the Institute of Actuaries of South Africa and managing director of a large life insurance company. He was also instrumental in the development of the Actuarial Science Department at UCT.

He had a keen interest in nature, travel and music and played his beloved violin at every opportunity; it was said that it was part of his soul. John joined the Owl Club in 1980 and formed a marvellous duet with John Juritz on piano, playing Beethoven, Kreisler and Mozart with equal aplomb, in addition to lighter pieces such as 'Fiddler on the Roof'. In 2017 he recited some humorous Ogden Nash verses at a dinner.

Brian Warner was a highly respected astronomer, historian and educator. He obtained his PhD from University College London, specialising in stellar spectroscopy. He was persuaded to come to South Africa by Jack de Wet and joined UCT as founder of the Department of Astronomy in 1972, where he was Head of Department for 33 memorable years. He introduced high-speed photo-electric photometry to South Africa when the Sutherland Observatory was first established and was the first observer on the newly established 20-inch reflector telescope in 1973.

Brian made many significant contributions to South African astronomy. As Vice President of the International Astronomical Union, he played a pivotal role in the rapid growth of South African astronomy, including the construction of the Southern African Large Telescope (SALT) and the successful bid for the Square Kilometre Array (SKA). His lasting legacy is the broad range of impactful astronomical discoveries that have been made with the SALT and SKA telescopes by generations of astronomers that he supervised and mentored. He retired as Emeritus Distinguished Professor of Natural Philosophy at UCT.

Brian was the ultimate 'renaissance man' who had a broad knowledge of natural history, classical music and many other fields. He made his own harpsichord and published two books of scientific poems, which he enjoyed sharing with the Owls. He also co-authored, with Owl John Rourke, a book, Flora Herschelliana, on John Herschel, the 19th century astronomer and botanist, and wrote a biography on David Gill, the astronomer who founded the Owl Club. Brian joined the Owl Club in 1972, served as president in 1985, and was elected as an honorary life member in 1992.

Tony Grogan, *Drawings of John Rich & Brian Warner*

Toast To Departed Owls Immediate Past President, Owl Mike Bruton

Murray Wilson, an accountant by profession, joined the Owl Club in 1986 and was President in 2000, proudly presiding over the last meeting of the 20th century and the first of the 21st. He also served with cheerful efficiency as both Secretary Bird and Fiscal Shrike as well as editor of the 'Notice', and was elected as an honorary life member in 2002. At the Owl Club's gala evening in 2009 it was reported that "the silver-tongued former president" recalled the founding of the Owl Club and rejoiced that this "relic of a long-vanished Victorian society was still thriving". Murray loved music and was a special fan of Gilbert and Sullivan. Before his death at the age of 96, after he had lost his sight, his daughter read the monthly 'Notice' to him, which he greatly appreciated.

Denis Worrall was a leading academic and politician who served as a Senator and later as an MP (first for the National Party and later for the Democratic Party), chairman of the Constitutional Committee of the President's Council, and South African ambassador to Australia and to the Court of St James. He also co-founded the Democratic Party of South Africa. Denis taught politics at several universities locally and abroad and edited the first textbook on the South African government. He was also chairman, director and consultant to several major companies and banks. In 2015, he founded The Cape Messenger, an online daily newspaper with a focus on business and politics in South Africa.

In 2012 Denis delivered a fascinating WPB, 'A thing of value', referring to the Owl Club's Wastepaper Basket publication of 1934, in which he recalled the dramatic events at the end of the Great Depression. In 2016 he shared with the Parliament of Owls how dumbfounded he was when PW Botha delivered his disastrous Rubicon speech instead of the conciliatory speech that had been written for him by Owl Carl von Hirschberg.

Above: Peter Hyslop, *Drawing of Murray Wilson*

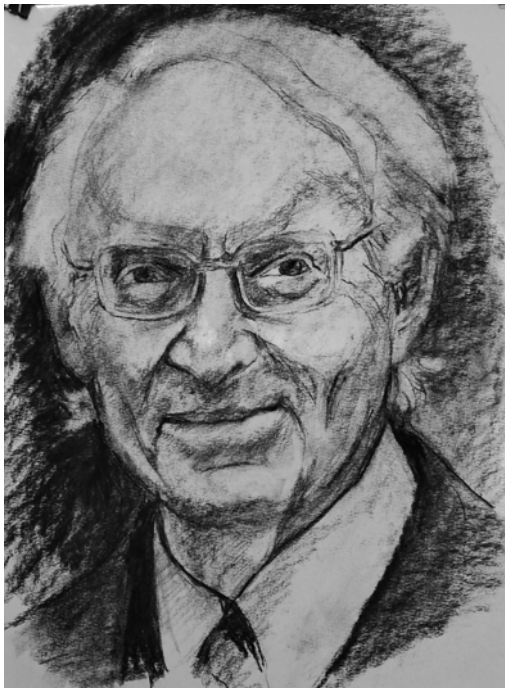
Tony Grogan, *Drawing of Denis Worrall*

In conclusion, may I say that the brilliance of these nine departed Owls, I believe, attests to the ongoing excellence of the Owl Club.

I now invite you to charge your glasses, rise, and toast our departed Owls.

Above: Peter Hyslop, *Owl Mike Bruton Delivering the 'Toast to Departed Owls'*

Below: Sheila Camerer, *Portrait of Denis Worrall.*



WPB: David Muller - 'Pause ... less is more!'

PAUSE... Less Is More

David opened his WPB with the observation that an actor who is only an actor is not an actor and announced that this is his second speech ever. His first was when he was in standard five and, with his background of being raised on a small farm, was asked to speak about "The Birds in My Garden". A keen birder, possibly called Broekhuizen, had introduced him to ornithology and he would sit for hours observing witogies nesting in a tree behind the family kitchen. David's talk was given at school assembly and the only applause he received was from his fellow standard 5 classmates. It was, however, a standing ovation - as there were no chairs!

PAUSE

He invited the audience to close their eyes and imagine their favourite room in which they packed a backpack with a variety of items, some good and some that had been challenges. With the filled backpack slung over the shoulders, Owls were invited to walk straight out of the front door through the front gate and along the road to a path that led to the foot of the mountains. Following a path up the mountain, clambering over some rocks in the path, occasionally parting bushes and branches in the way but carrying on. The backpack became heavier with each step, but at the top of the mountain, seated on a comfortable rock the backpack is removed and the hiker looks back on the journey taken. After a few minutes rest, the backpack retrieved, the hiker follows the path down the other side of the mountain into a valley. Here there is a mountain stream running with fresh clean mountain water. Removing the backpack, the hiker first kneels and then lies face down, head over the gurgling stream of thirst-quenching water. After taking deep draughts of the water and breathing the fresh, clean, mountain air the hiker, remounting his backpack crosses the stream and heads up into a small forest. Among the trees stands a hut with its door ajar; the hiker is drawn to open the door and walk inside. There is one room with a table against the far wooden wall. Without thinking the hiker removes the backpack and places it on the table and then makes his way out of the door, through the trees and back down towards the stream, feeling light as a feather, unencumbered with baggage.

The walk becomes virtually a run and the hiker quickly returns to the top of the mountain, feeling refreshed and eager to take on anything that comes in the way. In this light mood, Owls were invited to make their way down the imaginary mountain into our present room – listening to this presentation.

Greeting the Owls, David told the story of his brother Peter, a civil engineer, who was one of five finalists in the Infrastructure Vision 2050 Challenge in Las Vegas. The title of his talk was "a transportation system for the United States that will meet the needs of all users in the year 2050 and beyond". Nervous of the presentation, he approached David for assistance in preparing his speech. David laid down a series of rules:

Since only five minutes were allocated for each competitor to speak, David's advice was to cut it down to 3 minutes, commenting that a speech doesn't have to be eternal to be immortal. In any case, it needs spaces – pauses for your ideas and thoughts to sink into the imagination of your audience (and for you to catch your breath). When we share apples with hungry children, we don't fling them at the kids as if we were feeding swine. It takes time and care for each individual child to select an apple. So it is when sharing important ideas, thoughts and questions. It is ideas and thoughts that will win the competition.

Tie your hands behind your back – I don't want to see them. Don't underestimate the intelligence of your audience, they are probably cleverer than you. Remember the only thing that is small about a child is its size. Most of you in this audience are more erudite, more knowledgeable and more intelligent than the speaker. It is often the teacher who learns more from the presentation than the listeners. Think about the fact that the best and probably quickest way to learn something is by teaching it to others. Einstein said "All physical theories ought to lend themselves to so simple a description that even a child could understand them". He further said that words are and remain an empty sound. The most important method of education has always consisted of that in which a pupil was urged to actual performance. Not work, not toil, not labour ... but performance. There's a twinkle in the eye of this word that takes us back to the theatre where there are many performances. This is a performance, albeit on a small stage, but this is a great audience.

Above: Michael Beckurts, *Drawing of Owl David Muller*

WPB: David Muller - 'Pause ... less is more!'

If we look at performance before we deal with the emptiness of words, even in tragedy actors are enjoying themselves, especially the bad guy in the play or film. There is a subtle glint in the eye which, more often than not, allows us to accept what is going on. Ben Kingsley is a good example to watch – Gandhi and Death & The Maiden spring to mind. While we know it's a play or a movie, we also know it is a work of art. Ask any creative performer whether they find their work or play tedious, boring, dull, repetitive – they wouldn't be doing it if it were so!

Actors always, always have fun!

When David's son was about 16 he came home from the beach and said "Hey dad, I just had my first surfing lesson!"

"But you can't surf!, How did you do it?"

"I listened to you, dad, when I was small. You always told us that whatever we do in life we should have fun. So I took these 12-year-olds into the water with their surfboards and we had fun!" He laughed. He soon worked himself up to a senior surfing coach.

The key was having fun! If you are not enjoying your speech, you won't win the listeners over and, in his brother's case he would not win the prize. Of course parts of a talk need gravitas but first and foremost a talk must be fun. A good example of someone not having fun, when the speaker looked decidedly exhausted and unenthusiastic, and may well be out of work because of it...SONA rather than later!

When it comes to filling in those empty words, that's where the PowerPoint presentation comes in. Instead of a blackboard we have modern technology. Use it by all means but no words among the diagrams photographs and pictures. No one can multitask, it's physically impossible. Your audience cannot listen to your speech and read words and graphs among the slides at the same time. If they do they'll miss out on salient points, lose the thread and you'll come away feeling disappointed – okay, one word per slide, no more.

Speaking is like performing on stage and it is also about listening. All the while you need to listen to your audience. If people start coughing, sneezing or chatting to their neighbour it could mean they've lost the plot and that they are bored. Fidgeting and chatting is a sure sign that the speaker needs to up the ante, perhaps go on another tack to win back their focus, such as tell a joke (as long as it is appropriate).

Your speech needs to be filled with good, positive energy from the start. It needs to be written out in full at least three weeks before the due date. Rehearse your speech with a family member or two; those closest to you are your best critics; listen to them.

Once you've learned it off by heart, note that that does not mean by rote, but from the heart since belief is feeling. If you don't believe in what you are saying, don't bother to mount the podium. Your audience will remember what made them cry and what made them laugh. In between a smattering of gravitas is appropriate. Write down the major points, each on a new line, like an epic poem. Punctuate them with appropriate pauses and spaces.

Of course you will be nervous before a speech, if you are not, the speech is not worth giving. Remember that the audience is grateful to you for speaking to them and they are actually willing you to do a good job. They wish to learn from what you say and to enjoy what you say. Appreciate those desires.

Dress appropriately for your audience. Fitting in with the appropriate attire will ensure that this focus is about your speech and not about what you are wearing. Hum a few tunes before you talk to warmup your throat muscles. And most of all, once you have started the talk remember to engage the audience, treat them like a beloved brother or sister. Talk to them as if you're sitting on a harbour wall watching the fishing vessels come home, or you're having an earnest discussion with one of your siblings. Be caring and empathetic. Look your audience in the eye at regular intervals. At that moment, the audience is your bread and butter, lose them and you starve! Presuming that you have a microphone, do not shout. Arrive well ahead of time and test the acoustics to establish the best volume. Then go off quietly and practice your best lines (especially if they are jokes).

If you make a mistake, or forget a crucial paragraph, do not apologise to the audience but work back in your speech to re-incorporate the crucial element. It's okay to make mistakes - that's how we learn and also how the audience recognises that you are human. But most of all, do your homework thoroughly to minimise such mistakes. However, do not give a perfect speech. Small mistakes, pauses and off-the-cuff remarks make the audience feel one with the speaker and maintain their attention. Many folk who went to listen to Einstein's lectures came away feeling good about themselves, not that they now understood e=mc2, but they knew that there was a human being like themselves who understood how the universe ticked.

Weeks after those coaching lessons, David's brother Peter called to tell him to take his daughter (then a teenager) to Woolworths and buy some new clothes to celebrate the fact that Peter had come second and won a large prize!

To quote James Roosevelt: "My father gave me these hints on speechmaking: be sincere, be brief, be seated."

Seen & Noted at the March Meeting

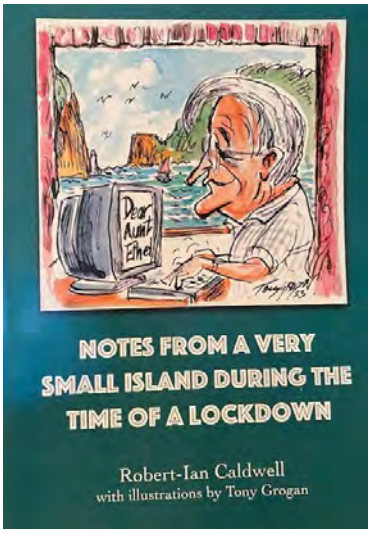
Captured by photographer Alan Lindhorst (clockwise from top left): Demission of Owl Ashmead by Owl Duff; Owl President Duff; Club Sweep, Fiscal Shrike Richard Morris assisted by Nick Winearls; Owl Mike Bruton delivering the *Toast to Departed Owls* and Owl David Muller presenting the *WPB*.

Member's News

Celebrating the achievements of Fellow Owls

(a) Owl Daya Reddy, whose distinguished career in computational mechanics led to leadership positions at UCT and in international organisations, and who has been given the unenviable task of being UCT's interim Vice-Chancellor in difficult and turbulent times, has been honoured by appointment by Pope Francis to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, a scientific community of the Vatican established by Pius XI in 1936 to promote the progress of mathematical, physical and natural sciences.

(b) Owl Doc Caldwell who descends from his loft in Knysna from time to time to attend meetings of the Parliament has had a memoir published: illustrated by Owl Tony Grogan, it is a compilation of whimsical, letters to his 'Aunt Ethel' during the Covid lockdown, written with insight and wit about his own Covid experience, his letters are enriched by amusing anecdotes, wise comments, and some personal pain, tempered by warmth and humour.



Third Owl Club Colloquium

Owls are cordially invited to attend the Third Colloquium of the Owl Club on the theme 'The changing role of the arts in society through the ages' at 10h30 on Friday, 7th June 2024 in the Pavilion, Kelvin Grove Club, Newlands.

The programme includes talks by Owl Nicholas Ellenbogen (performing arts), Owl Peter Hyslop (fine arts), David Attwell (literature) and Owl David Little (music), followed by discussion and debate.

Guests are welcome. Please RSVP as soon as possible to Owl Mike Bruton (mikefishesbruton@gmail.com) with your name and the names of any guests.

A fee of R50, payable at the door, will be charged to Owls and guests to cover the costs of tea/coffee and biscuits. Owls and guests are invited to enjoy lunch at the Terrace Restaurant at Kelvin Grove Club after the colloquium at their own expense.

Wheelchair availability

Kelvin has a wheelchair available should any member facing mobility challenges wish to use it for meetings - and thus enjoy the fellowship that an Owl Club meeting offers. It should be reserved in advance; a call a day or two before a meeting to Owl Peter Hyslop (064-690-9059) or the Secretary (082 440 8204) will suffice.

Membership part 1: New Owls and an Aspirant Owl

The Committee is pleased to announce the election of Rupert Pardoe (Art & Music: sponsors Owl Dirk Kemp and Hugh Amoore) and Viljoen van Heerden (Literature: sponsors Hans van Heerden & Paul Murray) and looks forward to them playing their part among us at our assemblies.

The Committee has considered a Proposal of Membership for Tessa Graaff (Art: sponsors Owls Martin Hess & Richard Morris) and believing that she would make a worthy Owl Notices her. Any Owl who wishes to comment on her candidature may do so in confidence to the President or the Secretary.

Membership Part 2: recruitment

The Committee is anxious to ensure that all Owls do more than give thought to people who might be put forward as prospective Owls, not least to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Club.

Owl Nigel Gwynne Evans, who has the Committee portfolio for membership, will be actively pursuing recruitment strategies and will challenge individual Owls to put forward suggestions of people whose membership would add to the fellowship Owls enjoy. For example; musical owls and women owls are currently underrepresented, and our fellowship is not representative of the people of Cape Town.

The First Excursion of the Year

The first Owl Club excursion of the year will be to visit Owl Angel Tordesillas' extraordinary private library at his home in Sea Point on Saturday, 15th June 2024 at 11h00. Please make a note about this event and RSVP as soon as possible to Owl Mike Bruton (mikefishesbruton@gmail.com) if you would like to join the excursion.

Member's News/Seen & Noted at the March Meeting

The 2024/2025 Committee

The Committee has assigned portfolio responsibilities as follows: Sociable Weaver (responsible for the Notice) Owl Hyslop; Colloquia: Owl Serritslev (together with Owl Bruton in a colloquia subcommittee); Membership: Owl Gwynne Evans; and Webmaster: Owl Kevin Rorke. Owls Mike James, David Little, Paul Murray, and Pete Sutherland continue as Familiar Chat (responsible for talks and WPBs), as Chorister Robin (responsible for the music programmes), as Archivist and as Cellar master./Curator respectively.

The Committee gives notice that an Owl will need to volunteer/be press-ganged to take over the role of Familiar Chat before the end of this year, to relieve Owl James who, if all goes to plan, is destined to take the chair in 2025. Owls aspiring to this role are invited to contact Owl Mike James or the Secretary to indicate their interest!

Club Reciprocity

Members of the Owl Club enjoy reciprocal privileges at the Savage Club of London, the Savage Club of Melbourne, and the Eccentric Club of London. The Committee has recently accepted an invitation to enter into an agreement for reciprocal privileges with the Snail Club of London. Owls who would wish to know more may contact Owl Paul Murray who has enjoyed the hospitality of The Eccentric Club. More about these clubs may be found at their respective websites. Membership of the Snail Club and of the Eccentric Club is open to men and women. The Savage Club appears to remain a "gentlemen's club" which admits women as guests (one stage better than the Garrick!).

We are indebted to **Owl Alan Lindhorst** who contributed the photographs for this issue of the Notice.

Above: Peter Hyslop, *Drawing of Owl Alan Lindhorst.*

Owl Club regalia

* "Regalia," perhaps more often associated with the accoutrements of the coronation of English (British?) sovereigns, are properly official and special clothes and decorations. At the AGM meeting the remaining stocks of Owl Club regalia* (special clothes in the form of bow ties, ties, cummerbunds, waistcoats, cravats, cuff links, and handkerchiefs) were offered for sale and most lines were snapped up. A good number of Owls were left disappointed. Several have suggested that the Club re-stock. Attentive Owls will have noted that this stock – the remnant of items procured more than a decade ago - made no allowance for the needs or wants of women Owls.

Your committee has considered whether to re-stock, if so what lines to have, and how to meet the wants and wishes of women Owls (for example by having a well-designed and well-made Owlish shawl). Owls who have read this far are invited to send their views on these questions to the Secretary (secretary@owl.org.za).

*Note: Owl Club decorations which constitute a part of pour regalia, in the form of the lapel owls given to past Presidents and Honorary Life Members, and the lapel badges of office worn by the President, Secretary Bird, and Fiscal Shrike were, of course, not on offer on the sales table.

Owl Michael Beckurts is currently staging his third one-man exhibition, *Vivacity*, at the Association of the Visual Arts Gallery in Church Street Cape Town, a show of oils and watercolour paintings on display until 18th April 2024.

Above: Peter Hyslop, *Drawing of Owl Michael Beckurts.*

The Owl Club
Tuesday 19 March 2024
The 1358th Meeting

President: Owl Geoffrey Ashmead
Dinner @ 6.45 pm
Grace: Owl Kevin Rorke
Dinner
Toast: South Africa:
The Owl President
A break for the tables to be cleared.

The 129th AGM and 1358th Meeting @ 7.55 following dinner:
Announcements: The Owl President
Toast: Departed Owls The Immediate Past President, Owl Bruton
AGM of the Club
Demission of Owl President Ashmead by Owl Duff

Interval/Bar break

President: Owl Ron Duff

Club Sweep
WPB: Owl David Muller 'How to make a good speech'

Toast: The Owl Club,
The Owl President Duff

And a safe flight home

KG

KELVIN GROVE

The Owl Club
Tuesday, 19th March 2024

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Starter
Cauliflower & Broccoli soup

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Main Course
Grilled Sirloin Steak
Served with roast potatoes and seasonal vegetables

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Dessert
Apple crumble
Served with cream

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Filter Coffee

Grace

The eyes of all wait upon thee, O Lord. Thou givest to them meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand and fillest every living thing with thy blessing.

Bless for us, O Lord, all the gifts which of thy bounty we are about to partake, through Jesus Christ our Lord.