



Founded 1894

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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 and Martin Hess

Honorary Auditor: Verwey Wiese

Dinner bookings:

Email: secretary@owls.org.za

Telephone: 021 671 3121

Mobile number: 082 440 8204

Treasurer: Richard Morris

Email: treasurer@owls.org.za

Mobile number: 083 272 0500

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: David Little, Hugh Amoore and Mike James

Photography: Alan Lindhorst

Drawings: Tony Grogan

The Owl Club

NOTICE

Tuesday 18th February 2025: Notice of meeting #1368

Dear Fellow Owls

The 1368th meeting of The Owl Club, preceded by a festive dinner, will be held on **Tuesday 18th February 2025**, 18:00 for 18:45 start, in the Grill Room, Kelvin Grove Club.

President: **Owl Ron Duff**

Guest speaker: **Jonathan Ancer**, on the topic of: **"Bullsh*t"**

"Jonathan Ancer is a journalist and author who has won awards for breaking news, feature writing and creative writing. He has worked as a reporter at The Star, a magazine features writer, and was the youngest editor of the country's oldest newspaper, Grocott's Mail in Grahamstown. He is currently News24's Prime Editor."

"Jonathan Ancer's new book, Bullsh!t: 50 Fibs that Changed South Africa was published in 2024. In this talk Jonathan will discuss why he decided to write a book about lies and then reveal some of the most outrageous lies that shook, shattered, and shaped South Africa."

Music: **Nina-Marie Gouws and Che Adams**

"Flamenco musicians Nina-Marie Gouws on guitar with Che Adams doing the singing and dancing. This vibrant and compelling Spanish musical idiom is an enticing prospect for Owldom"

WPB: **Owl Dr David Bridgman** on the topic of: **"The Global Implications of an Expanding US Middle Class"**

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 Sunday 16th February 2025.

All bookings will be acknowledged.





The December 2024 Meeting

On Tuesday, 10th December 2024, 60 Owls and 12 guests gathered in the Grill Room Kelvin Grove, Newlands for the 1367th meeting. The proceedings started at 18:45, with President Owl Ron Duff welcoming all and inviting Owl Julian Wannell to deliver the Grace, followed by a three-course dinner (see pages 8 and 9 for the grace, menu and programme for the evening). The President then asked Owls to charge their glasses and to rise for the Toast to South Africa, followed by a short break.

December produced no fewer than 22 Owls, well above the average, suggesting unusual levels of activity among Owlsh progenitors in March. Owl President Ron congratulated Owls with birthdays in December who included two who turned 33, an Owl who will be 88 at the end of the month, one whose birthday was on the 10th and two others. Birthday Owls present at the meeting were the two fledgling Owls Julio Sieni and Giles Barclay Beuthin, Andrew Girdwood, Nick Starke who became an octogenarian on 1st December and the Owl President who turned 85 on Wednesday 10th December.

New Owl Barbara Hughes was then (with due ceremony) inducted, welcomed into the fellowship and invited to dwell in harmony with fellow Owls. The President then (requesting that guests remained seated) ordered that the lights be dimmed whilst he proposed the Toast to Our Guests.



Following Owl Barbara Hughes's induction, Owl President Ron then asked Owl Geoff Everingham to propose the traditional Toast to Absent Owls.

Owl President Ron then requested that Owl David Muller take over as MC for the evening's entertainment.



The assembled Owls were then treated to a varied programme of a reading, music recitals, amusing sketches, a challenging quiz, and much more. This was indeed a most entertaining evening, and a full report covering the programme is provided overleaf.



To conclude the evening, Owl President Ron wished everyone a safe flight home.



A Report on the Evening's Entertainment.

Owl Julian Wannell was honoured with the first entertainment slot for the evening with a solo guitar performance of *La Recuerdos de la Alhambra* (*Memories of the Alhambra*) by Francisco Tarrega (1852 -1909). Julian preceded this with a short talk about the composer and his relationship to the advancement of the guitar as a concert instrument. The performance was elegantly presented, musically familiar to many, and although Julian subsequently alluded to shredded fingernails and some nervousness, there was absolutely no sign of this during the performance!



This was followed by a reading of a poem by the American Poet James Thomas Fields, *The Owl Critic*. Owl Ian Glass did the reading with perfect timing and cadence. The realisation at the end that the Owl in question was not stuffed, but was very much alive, was met with relief by Owls at large!



Above: Owl Ian Glass reading a poem by James Thomas Fields.

The first comedy sketch of the evening was presented by Owls David Muller and Peter Gilchrist – *The Crunchy Frog* with apologies to Monty Python. The theme was of an interfering public health official who was concerned by the marketing and selling of chocolates with fillings such as *Crunchy Frog* and *Anthrax Ripple*. Ridiculous of course. What is wrong with such variants?





The quality of the musical presentations was raised considerably by the presence of the guest pianist, Marga Smith, a professional musician who joined the Owls for the second year running. Her first appearance this evening was in support of Owl Doc Caldwell who presented two songs of his own composition – his take on the Flan-

ders and Swann about a Gnu, of course referring instead to South Africa's GNU. The twist was that he was not singing about the current GNU, but the first one in 1994! It was brilliantly delivered, with panache, passion and Owlsh quirkiness. His second song commemorated the Springboks' success in the 1995 Rugby World Cup, with excerpts from *Phantom of the Opera* and *Shosholozza* scattered here and there. It was the ultimate in Owlsh innovation and imagination.

The Quiz, compiled by Owl John van der Linde was a series of questions that somehow made much more sense when considered together than they did at the start.

The first act after the interval was the second "serious" item of classical music after the guitar solo. Owl David Little was joined by pianist Marga Smith in a performance of excerpts from Carl Maria von Weber's *Quintet Op 34* for clarinet and string quartet. It worked well as a concertante-style clarinet piece and showed off the clarinet's capacity for virtuoso pyrotechnics.



Above: Owl David Little in a performance of excerpts from Carl Maria von Weber's *Quintet Op 34* for clarinet & piano.

Owls Muller and Gilchrist made a second appearance, this time with Owl Christopher Gregorowski giving a stentorian "off-stage" introduction to the Samuel Taylor Coleridge poem *Kubla Khan*, about the imaginary city *Xanadu*. The tone rapidly degenerated into a more Pythonesque discussion between Owls Muller and Gilchrist on various infrastructure projects such as the Pyramids.



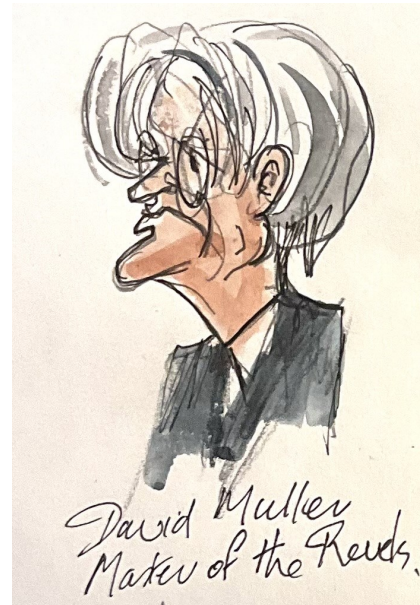


Owls Hugh Amore and Mike James acted as Flanders and Swann in one of their original songs *The Gas Man Cometh*. Pianist Marga ably accompanied them, while the two performing Owls described a litany of misfortune in household repairs. The theme was of despair and frustration, but all ended happily we think. The performers certainly seemed happy.

The full Parliament of Owls, introduced by Owl Christopher Gregorowski, sang Owl Christopher's words celebrating 130 years of Owl-dom, to Beethoven's setting of Schiller's *Ode to Joy* (used in his 9th Symphony). Owls were supported by pianist Marga Smith and Owl Kevin Rorke on the trumpet.



And finally, Owl David Muller bid Owls a safe flight home, but only after uttering *An Ear in your Word* - several minutes of almost incomprehensible speech originating from comedian Ronnie Barker. It was certainly very funny, at times slightly "blue" but in the end, suitably Owl-ish.



Members' News

Three New Owls and a Proposal of Membership

The Committee has been pleased to elect to membership:

Andrew Wilkinson (proposed Owls Morris & Amooore; Science)

Nicholas Winearls (Proposed Owls Morris & Amooore; Music)

Mickey Lowther (proposed Owls Little & Hyslop; Science)

and looks forward to their induction in the near future.

The Committee has received a proposal of membership for:

Petre Prins (Proposed Owls Bruton & Amooore: Science)

and having confirmed that he has dined at the Club and being of the view that he would be a worthy Owl, resolved to Notice him. Any Owl who has information about him that he or she believes that would be useful to the Committee should contact the President or the Secretary Bird.

Renewal of Owl Club Annual Membership fee for 2025

The Fiscal Shrike has issued his customary notice of supplication to each of us (Hon Life Members excepted) for the annual membership fee. If you have not yet responded, please do so.

The Annual General Meeting: 18 March 2025

Formal Notice of the AGM, calling for motions for debate and for nominations for the 2025/2026 Committee, will have reached you at the same time as this Notice. Please give particular thought to Owls whom you believe would serve the Club well in one or other committee role.

Wine Outing: Thursday 27 March 2025

The Cellar Master has arranged an Owl Club outing to Hawksmoor on Thursday 27 March for Owls (and nesting partners). This will enable the Cellar Master to replenish the Owl Club cellar, Owls to replenish their private stocks, and Owls to enjoy an excellent lunch at Hawksmoor. Details with the next Notice, but (a) diarise the day and (b) if you wish to secure a spot (numbers will be limited) book your place by contacting the Cellar Master at suthers@iafrica.com



Seen & Noted at the December Meeting



(Clockwise from top left): In the first photo, from left to right, Owls Jeremy Lawrence, Helen Boonzaier (guest), Mark Palmer Edgecumbe & Owl Julio Sieni. In the second photo, Owl Doc Caldwell and in the third photo, from left to right, Owls Giles Barclay-Beuthin, Petre Prins (guest), Mike Bruton, Kate McCallum and Owl Rupert Pardoe.



K.G.

KALVIN GROVE

The Owl Club Dinner
Tuesday, 10th December 2024

Starter
Mushroom soup

Main Course
Roast Turkey
Served with sweet potato,
Rocket & cranberry jus

Dessert
Christmas Pudding
Served with custard

Mince pies
Filter Coffee

Grace

Benedic Domine, nos et dona tua,
quae de largitate tua sumus sumpturi,
et concede, ut illis salubriter nutriti
tibi debitum obsequium praestare valeamus,
per Christum Dominum nostrum.

Julian Wannell.

(Translation overleaf)

**PROGRAMME OIF
ENTERTAINMENT**

Julian Wannell	Guitar recital
Ian Glass	Reading of "The Owl Critic" (James Thomas Fields)
David Muller / Peter Gilchrist	Monty Python sketch – "The crunchy frog"
Doc Caldwell	Flanders and Swann sketches – GNU and Rugby World Cup – with piano accompaniment
John van der Linde	Quiz
BAR BREAK	
David Little	Clarinet and piano duo - Weber
David Muller / Peter Gilchrist/ Sean King	Monty Python sketch – Xanadu
Mike James/ Hugh Amoore	Flanders and Swann – "The gas man cometh" with piano accompaniment
Parliament of Owls - introduced by Christopher Gregorowski and accompanied by Kevin Rorke	Ode to Joy – sung to Owl Christopher's words celebrating 130 years of Owldom. With piano and trumpet accompaniment.
David Muller	"An ear in your word" thanks to Ronnie Barker, as the farewell for the evening and the year

THE OWL CLUB ODE TO JOY

<p>1. Freude! Vreugde ! Joy is winging Swift her flight across the earth; Joyful hearts and voices singing, Bringing hope in times of dearth. Mercy, truth are met together, Justice hand in hand with peace, Goodness, kindness bond in tether, Love abundant each to each</p>	<p>3. Experts share their erudition, Science, letters, history, art, Educative, entertaining, Owls now fed in mind and heart. Joyful music lifts the spirit, Member speaks; we're now replete, Glasses raised to toast our Owldom, "Safe flight home," 'til next we meet</p>
<p>2. For one hundred years and thirty Owls have called "tu wit tu woo," Not for long remaining thirsty, Fine wines quaffed, and good food too. Table talk, robust and friendly 'til we hear the clanging bell: Formal business makes its entry And guest speaker starts to tell:</p>	



The Owl Club
Tuesday 10 December 2024
The 1367th Meeting,
marking 130 years of Owldom

President: Owl Ron Duff

Dinner @ 6.45 pm

- ❖ Grace:
Owl
Julian
Wannell
- ❖ Dinner:
- ❖ Toast:
*South
Africa:*
The Owl
President

Benedic Domine, nos et
dona tua,
quae de largitate tua sumus
sumpturi,
et concede, ut illis
salubriter nutriti
tibi debitum obsequium
praestare valeamus,
per Christum Dominum
nostrum.
*Bless, O Lord, us and your
gifts,
which from your bounty we are
about to receive,
and grant that, healthily
nourished by them,
we may render you due
obedience,
through Christ our Lord.*

A break for the tables to be cleared

Dinner @ 6.45 pm

Grace: Owl Julian Wannell

Dinner:

Toast: South Africa: The Owl President

The 1367th Meeting @ 7.55 following

dinner:

- Announcements: The Owl President
- Toast to our guests: The Owl President
- Induction: Owl Barbara Hughes
- Toast to Absent Owls: Owl Geoff
Everingham
- Master of ceremonies: Owl David Muller
- A programme of entertainment by Owls
for Owls: Part 1

Bar Break

Results of the quiz!

Part 2 of the programme of entertainment

An Owlsh Ode to Joy with words by Owl

Gregorowski 9and music by LvB), with piano &
trumpet accompaniment (Marga Smith & Owl
Muller)

An "ear in your word" (Owl David

Owl Club, The Owl President

And a safe flight home



Grace

Bless, O Lord, us and your gifts,
which from your bounty we are about to
receive,
and grant that, healthily nourished by them,
we may render you due obedience,
through Christ our Lord.

Julian Wannell