



**Making resolutions is one of the most popular New Year's traditions, and yet, year after year, people admittedly fail to keep up with those well-intentioned commitments. In fact, research suggests that only a small percentage of folk who make resolutions complete them!**

**If that struggle sounds all too familiar, keep in mind that it's never too late to turn over a new leaf, and New Year's Day 2024 is as good a time as any! Check out the list of New Year resolution ideas that will inspire you make the most of the year to come. Whether you want to work on your physical or mental health, improve your financial wellness, or create more meaningful interpersonal connections, these achievable New Year's resolutions are all worth adopting as your own. Consider more outside-the-box ideas like learning how to invest your money, volunteering your time to charity, or trying a new hobby! No matter which route you choose, there are so many ways to create a happier and healthier life in the new year.**

**Buy some house plants. They are known to improve air quality, reduce stress and boost productivity.**

**Organise your cupboards - get rid of items you no longer use.**

**Plan a weekly date night - nurture your relationship with your significant other by scheduling and sticking to a weekly date night. Remember that not every date has to mean a big, splashy night out: You could also stay home and have a movie marathon or learn to cook a new meal together.**

**Take a class - you are never too old to continue your education. Consider which subjects interest you, and enroll in a virtual class - what could be easier.**

**Perform a daily act of kindness - Spread some positivity in 2024 by committing to one act of kindness every day. Each one can be as small and simple as holding the door open for someone, surprising a friend with a cup of coffee, or paying a loved one a sincere compliment.**

**Start a gratitude journal - Reflecting on the things you're thankful for can improve both mental and physical health. Make it a daily practice by keeping a daily gratitude journal—you'll be amazed at how it can transform your mindset!**

**Go on friend dates—they are a wonderful way to build and nourish friendships.**

**Create relaxation time -**

***Www.thepioneerwoman.com— best New Year resolutions , of which she has many***

## SONNENHOF'S REFURBISHMENT

Light, tasteful, modern  
Somewhere we can all be proud of

Love the lights  
Comfortable chairs  
Snazzy pizza oven and  
braai area

Joy Interior uplifting

Pleased to be back  
home

Fantastic

Ticks all the boxes

It has turned out  
well

This wonderfully elegant décor and  
ambience fills us with pride

Love the interior, feels warm  
and looks stunning

1st Jeff Hawthorne  
2nd David Orton  
11th Jenjen Mockford  
13th Adrian Fuller  
14th Diana Spiegel  
19th Jenni Uys



21st Carol Dalton  
23rd Marion Thompson  
24th Brian Mawman  
27th Haydn Jones  
28th Penny Prideaux  
28th Jacky Orton  
28th Patricia Baylis



Read any good books recently?

I really would welcome reviews from residents  
on interesting books they have read



## **MUSIC IN JANUARY - the 30th or 31st - 7pm**

### **The programme is**

**BEETHOVEN - FIDELIO OVERTURE**

**(NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestre, Conductor Alan Gilbert)**

**DVORAK – SYMPHONY NO. 9, “FROM THE NEW WORLD”**

**(Concert Gebouw Orchestra, Conductor Klaus Makela)**

**BEETHOVEN - FANTASY FOR PIANO, CHORUS AND ORCHETRA.**

**(Singapore Symphony, Pianist Tengku Irgan, Conductor Andrew Litton)**



**And the winner is Ronnie van Reenen**





## Argyllshire 19<sup>th</sup> Century Dirk



The Argyllshire dirk is a traditional Scottish dagger that was popular in the Argyllshire region of Scotland in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. It is characterised by its leaf-shaped blade, its wooden or horn hilt, and its brass or silver ferrule and pommel. The Argyllshire dirk was often worn as a status symbol by Highland gentlemen, and it was also used as a weapon in self-defence and combat.

This Scottish 19<sup>th</sup>-century Dirk has a curved wooden hilt in the shape of a knot with silver studs and engraved silver fittings. Its long-form blade is encased in a leather-bound wood scabbard. On top of the pommel is set a large cairngorm semi-precious jewel. Two smaller cairngorms are set on top of the knife and fork positioned in front of the scabbard. Two regimental breastplates accompany the dirk.

The dirk's engravings feature the regiment name, the 91<sup>st</sup> Argyllshire Highlanders, and the VR insignia of Queen Victoria. The 91st Regiment of Foot was a line infantry regiment of the British Army, raised in 1794. It served with distinction in the Peninsular War, the Crimean War, and the Indian Mutiny. In 1881, the regiment was amalgamated with the 93rd Regiment of Foot to form the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. This date, 1881, therefore represents the latest year in which this dirk could have been issued. Accordingly, its current age must be at least 142 years.

### Information:

Overall dirk length 45cm; Blade length 30cm; Knife 17.5cm; Fork 15cm.

### Provenance:

The dirk was originally owned by Lieutenant Colonel Latrobe Cockcroft, a South African military officer who was my great-uncle. He served as a personal attendant and guard to Prince Albert, the husband of Queen Victoria, during his final days at Windsor Castle. He was one of the few people who witnessed the prince's death in the Blue Room on 14 December 1861.

Colonel Cockcroft was born in Cape Town, South Africa, in 1815. He joined the British Army in 1834 and served in various campaigns in India, China, and the Crimean War. He received the Order of the Bath and the Distinguished Service Order for his bravery and leadership. In 1857, he was awarded the Victoria Cross for his gallantry during the Siege of Lucknow when he led a daring charge against the rebel forces and rescued several wounded British soldiers. He was one of the few officers who received the highest military honour from Queen Victoria in person.



Colonel Cockcroft remained in the service of Queen Victoria until his retirement in 1870. He returned to South Africa and settled in his estate near Cape Town. He died in 1890 at the age of 75 and was buried with full military honours in St George's Cathedral.

After his death, the Argyllshire dirk in question was passed down to his niece, my maternal grandmother, Helen Frances Gould. She, in turn, bequeathed it to me.

*Adrian Fuller*

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## Conserving the Black Harrier Hawk /Gymnogene

Black Harriers (*Circus Maurus*) are southern Africa's rarest endemic raptor and have been uplisted from Vulnerable to Endangered in South Africa and Namibia in 2015. These top predators are a rare endemic to the southern African sub region with fewer than 1000 mature breeding birds left in the population. Studies have shown that there is little genetic variation across the population, indicating that this species is not in good shape and needs some serious conservation assistance going forward.

Black Harriers breed in the montane fynbos, renosterveld and strandveld habitats of the Western Cape and many individuals disperse into the Karoo and grassland habitats during the autumn and winter months. The breeding success of Black Harriers is largely driven by winter rainfall in the Western Cape. More rain equals more eggs. The inland populations of Black Harriers have decreased through habitat loss. It is vital that conservation efforts invest in preventing fragmentation of coastal populations.

South Africa is currently rolling out new power producing technologies including wind turbines across parts of the Western Cape. Black Harriers now face a collision threat with wind turbine blades. If placed inappropriately, wind farm developments in southern Africa could result in significant harrier mortalities. Therefore there is an urgency to study the movements and behaviour of these raptors to inform power producers about high risk areas for Black Harriers.

For more information, see updates at <http://blackharrierspace.blogspot.com/>

<https://www.birdlife.org.za>



## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SEYCHELLES

“For 13,000 dollars, Englishman Brendon Grimshaw bought a tiny uninhabited island in the Seychelles and moved there forever. When he was under forty, he quit his job as a newspaper editor and started a new life.

By this time, no human had set foot on the island for 50 years. As befits a real Robinson, Brendon found himself a companion from among the natives. His name was René Lafortin. Together with René, Brendon began to equip his new home. While René came to the island only occasionally, Brendon lived on it for decades by himself, never leaving.

For 39 years, Grimshaw and Lafortin planted 16,000 trees with their own hands, and built almost five kilometers of pathways. In 2007, René died, and Brendon was left all alone on the island. He was 81 years old. He attracted 2,000 new bird species and introduced more than a hundred giant tortoises, which in the rest of the world (including the Seychelles) were already on the verge of extinction. Thanks to Grimshaw’s efforts, the once deserted island now hosts two thirds of the Seychelles’ fauna. An abandoned piece of land has turned into a real paradise. A few years ago, the prince of Saudi Arabia offered Grimshaw \$50 million for the island, but he refused. “I don’t want the island to become a favourite vacation spot for the rich. Better let it be a national park that everyone can enjoy.”

And he achieved just that. In 2008 it was indeed declared a national park.”

*A Facebook post*



### The History of the Middle Finger

Well, now.....here's something I never knew before, and now that I know it, I feel compelled to send it on to my more intelligent friends in the hope that they, too, will feel edified. Isn't history more fun when you know something about it?

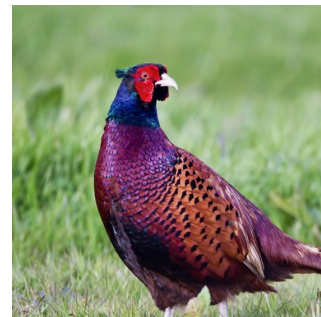
Before the Battle of Agincourt in 1415, the French, anticipating victory over the English, proposed to cut off the middle finger of all captured English soldiers. Without the middle finger it would be impossible to draw the renowned English longbow and therefore they would be incapable of fighting in the future. This famous English longbow was made of the native English Yew tree, and the act of drawing the longbow was known as "plucking the yew" (or "pluck yew").

Much to the bewilderment of the French, the English won a major upset and began mocking the French by waving their middle fingers at the defeated French, saying, see, we can still pluck yew! Since 'pluck yew' is rather difficult to say, the difficult consonant cluster at the beginning has gradually changed to a labiodentals fricative F', and thus the words often used in conjunction with the one-finger-salute! It is also because of the pheasant feathers on the arrows used with the longbow that the symbolic gesture is known as "giving the bird."

IT IS STILL AN APPROPRIATE SALUTE TO THE FRENCH TODAY!

And yew thought yew knew every plucking thing.

Contributor: Donald Campbell



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### ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION



Ernest Mitchell's macro closeup of a dragonfly



**CAMPBILL VILLAGE, MALMESBURY is a residential community where adults with intellectual disabilities, including Down Syndrome, can live and work in a natural farm setting.**

The first community was founded at Camphill House, just outside Aberdeen, Scotland in 1940, to educate mentally handicapped children. At that time, such children didn't usually receive an education, either staying at home or being placed in a hospital.

Camphill's founders were led by Dr Karl König and inspired by the Austrian thinker Rudolf Steiner who believed in making a real difference in the lives of these people who were marginalised and excluded from society. They believed that those with mental handicaps had much to contribute if only their inner self could find expression.

Camphill Village was established in 1963 to provide a unique inclusive approach to life for intellectually challenged adults, offering them purpose and dignity. The Village is spread over 600 hectares. Their enterprises include a bakery, dairy, herbal workshop, farm and vegetable gardens originally started as therapeutic workshops for the residents, and grew into income-generating enterprises which now contribute to the financial stability of the organisation. The products are made with care and have a reputation and following in the greater Cape Town area.

As many of you know, Lyn Law's daughter Sally resides there. Her association with Camphill in Johannesburg commenced when she was 17, she is now 59 and has been with the Camphill Movement for a long time. They will be celebrating 60 years next year, and she will celebrate her sixtieth as well. The residents are moved around - Sally has worked in the dairy, the herb drying room stripping the herbs and the bakery, all under supervision. Over the years tunnel grows have been donated and this is where all their vegetables are grown. They supply yoghurt, and produce from the tunnels to the local farmers in the surrounding area as well as Pick 'n Pay.

They make a big thing of celebrating birthdays - their belief being in the philosophy of anthroposophy meaning that everything on earth has a destiny and they (Camphill) strive to bring out the best in their charges. It is a Christian community though they don't make a big thing about that. They hold a service on a Sunday when they can get a Minister to travel to Malmesbury. The Minister will attend funerals because they, the residents all take part in the burial wishing the deceased well into a further life.

Spring is a special time of year and big bunches of dried flowers are assembled and sold. Residents are given pocket money once a month which comes in handy when visiting the market. There is a huge amount of trust with the sellers as most of the residents don't know the difference between R5 and R50. The market is well attended and works on an honour system.

Today Camphill exists in 40 countries around the world. What an amazing organization.

With many thanks to Lyn for our chat  
and  
<https://www.camphill.org.za>





Recently Lynne Perry gave me two back copies of this magazine. They contain lovely articles and photographs and I thought that as the magazine closed down in 2003, I could share a few articles without worrying about copyright

#### Recipe Ideas for exotic fruits

##### EXOTIC FRUIT SALAD

1 mango

1 carambola or star fruit

12 lychees

1 papaya

4 passion fruit

*For the syrup*

100g granulated sugar

300ml water

1 cardamom pod; 2 allspice; 4 coriander seeds crushed

2cm piece of cinnamon stick

1 bay leaf

Juice of 1 lime

**Syrup :** put all the ingredients except lime juice together in a pan. Set over low heat, allow the sugar to dissolve, then simmer until the mixture becomes syrupy.. Cool, strain and then add lime juice.

Peel and slice mango. Slice the carambola, peel lychees, cut in half and remove stones. Peel, deseed and cut papaya into wedges. Halve the passion fruit, scoop out the pulp. Put the prepared fruits in a bowl, pour over the spiced syrup and chill before serving.

Serves 4



ILN 1989

##### CHICKEN BREASTS WITH PAPAYA

4 boned chicken breasts

2 T cooking oil

15g butter

1 medium finely chopped onion

2cm piece fresh ginger

1 clove garlic, crushed

1 t. mild curry powder

300ml chicken stock

Salt and ground black pepper

75g creamed coconut (in a block) or coconut milk

1 small ripe papaya

Juice of 1/2 lime

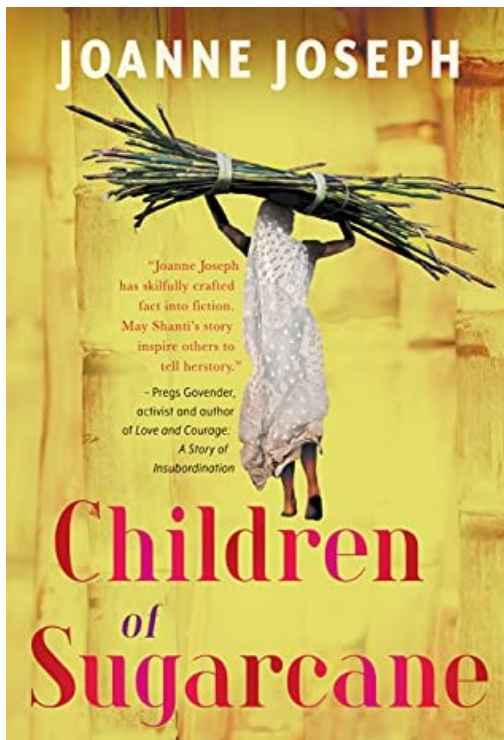
Heat oil in a heavy based frying pan

Add butter and when sizzling, fry the chicken breasts on both sides until golden brown. Remove the chicken and set aside. Fry onion, ginger and garlic until soft and golden. Stir in the curry powder and continue to cook for a minute. Add the stock, bring to the boil, stirring continuously. Season with salt and pepper. Return chicken to the pan, over and simmer for 30-40 minutes, until tender.

Peel papaya, remove seeds and cut into slivers. Cut creamed coconut into small pieces. When chicken is cooked, put aside on a warm serving dish and keep warm in the oven. Add coconut to the sauce, then the papaya and simmer for 5 minutes. Pour the sauce over the chicken and decorate with lime wedges.

Serves 4

I have made this recipe, delicious FW



This is a powerful, moving novel that tells the story of Shanti, a young Indian woman who is indentured to work on a sugarcane plantation in Natal, South Africa in the late 19th century. The novel is set against the backdrop of British colonialism, and it vividly depicts the harsh realities of indentured servitude.

Shanti is a complex, well-developed character. She is intelligent, resourceful, and resilient. However, she is also deeply traumatized by the experiences she has endured, and she struggles to come to terms with her past.

Joseph's writing is lyrical and evocative. She brings the sugarcane plantations of Natal to life with her vivid descriptions of the landscape, the people, and the work. She also does a masterful job of conveying the emotional and psychological impact of indentured servitude on her characters.

For a person of British descent, born in Natal, I found *Children of Sugarcane* a difficult novel to read. It is a reminder of the dark and shameful history of colonialism and the human cost of exploitation. But it is also a story of hope and resilience.

Here are some of the things I liked most about the novel:

The strong and well-developed characters, especially Shanti.

The vivid and evocative writing.

The unflinching portrayal of the harsh realities of indentured servitude.

The themes of hope and resilience.

I would recommend *Children of Sugarcane* to anyone interested in historical fiction, well-written novels, or stories about the human spirit overcoming adversity.

*Adrian Fuller*



## KINDLY SHARE WITH ALL SENIORS

Kirstenbosch Gardens - free to all \*(pensioners) on Tuesdays except on public holidays

Robben Island Museum Tours - \* pay R250 on Mondays and Wednesdays

City Sightseeing Red Bus - \* pay R175

City Sightseeing Red Bus + lunch - \* R244

City Sightseeing Canal or Harbour Cruise - \* R40

City Sightseeing Canal or Harbour Cruise and breakfast  
\* R100

Ceres steam train to the Elgin Market - \* receive a 10% discount

Spur Steak Ranches have a seniors' menu which is valid from Monday to Thursday

Ster Kinekor offers \* a 22% discount on all if its ticket types

Metrorail offers free train rides on a Tuesday, to any destination in the metropole during off-peak times (9am - 2pm)

Cape Point \* R55 for a return ticket

Table Mountain Aerial Cableway \* R110 for a return ticket

Boulders Beach - \*R10

Two Oceans Aquarium - \* R165

The Iziko South African Museum - \* R15

Castle of Good Hope - \* R25

World of Birds - \* R85





A highly romanticized view of van Riebeeck's arrival 1652 by Charles Bell mid 19thc

The Company's Garden lies near the heart of the modern city just four hundred metres south of where Jan van Riebeeck and his party from the Dutch East India Company landed in Table Bay in 1652 with plans to establish the first European foothold at the Cape. Apart from a fort for defence and shelter, laying out the garden was their first priority. But, of course, that was for food not flowers.

Transformed from purely a utilitarian garden to a much more horticulturally interesting one in the 18thc it became one of the most significant gardens in the world, before sinking into decline under British rule in the 19thc when much of the original ground was appropriated for grand institutional buildings.

What survives today, although listed as a national monument, is a much smaller modern public park but it still contains many historic trees and the re-imagining of a small fraction of the original Dutch kitchen garden.

Europeans probably first arrived at the site of what is now Cape Town in 1488 when Bartolomeu Dias was searching for a sea route to India but it wasn't until the late 16th century that European ships regularly stopped over in Table Bay and traded with the local Khoekhoe people to obtain fresh provisions.



The Dutch East India Company [or *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* or VOC for short], was no ordinary merchant company. Under its charter the Dutch authorities gave it quasi-governmental powers, monopoly trading rights, and even the right to wage war and establish colonies.

Jan van Riebeeck who had already worked for the VOC in Asia was amongst the strongest proponents of the idea and was appointed to lead the new mission. His instructions stated : “As soon as you are in a proper state of defence you shall search for the best place for gardens, the best and fattest ground in which everything planted or sown will thrive well.” However his instructions also said there was to be no settlement outside the fort.

In 1647 a Dutch East India Company ship, the *Haarlem*, was wrecked in Table Bay. The survivors returned to Holland to report that the place was fertile and suitable for agriculture while the natives were not cannibals as reported, but friendly and, if kindly treated, could be converted to Christianity and used as servants. The Company, who had trading posts in the East Indies, Japan, Indo-China and Ceylon, decided that they should now establish a small but permanent base to service their ships and provide a proper respite from the long and dangerous voyage between east and west.

His ships arrived in Table Bay on the 6th April 1652. He landed with 82 men and 8 women and immediately set about building the timber and mud Fort of Good Hope. Equally important to defence though was the need to provide food for the settlement and within weeks of their arrival land had been set aside for a very large kitchen garden. The land they chose for the garden, and indeed the entire settlement was occupied regularly by hunter-gatherers (the San ) and pastoralists (the Khoekhoen), who had migrated seasonally for hundreds of years. After initially fairly amicable encounters and exchanges it was not long before the land-grab caused disputes and violence which ended with the eventual dispossession of these indigenous people. The establishment of Cape Town as a “stopover” between east and west was the foundation stone of the Western colonisation of all of southern Africa.

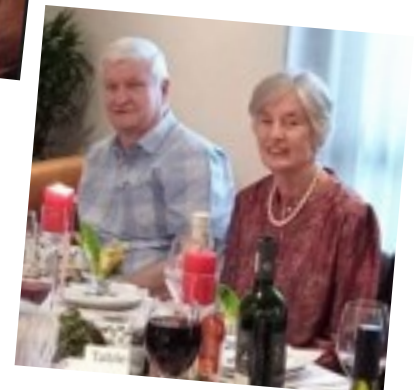
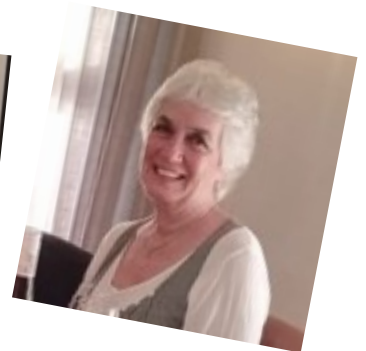
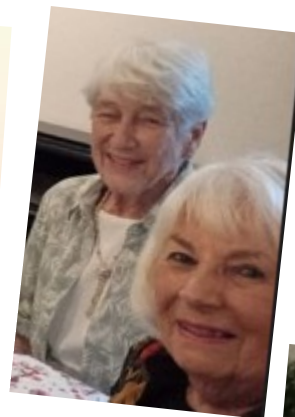
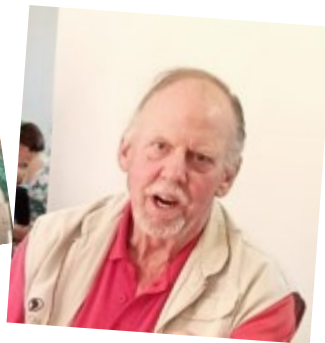
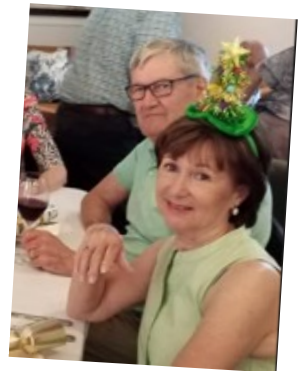
Van Riebeeck recorded that the mission’s master gardener, the appropriately named Hendrik Boom [Henry Tree], had brought vegetable and herb seeds from Holland, and began sowing on 29 April 1652. Boom also laid out a physic garden. Amazingly there is even a survival from the earliest plantings – a pear tree which, although the trunk rotted away, managed to root several of its branches which still, over 350 years later, produce fruit.

The garden was laid out in the valley on the flattest most fertile terrain, with its central avenue lined with oak trees. Brick-lined canals brought water from the streams running down from Table Mountain and as the town grew so the canals were extended to provide water for buildings and houses built along their banks which explains the city centre’s grid pattern of streets even today.

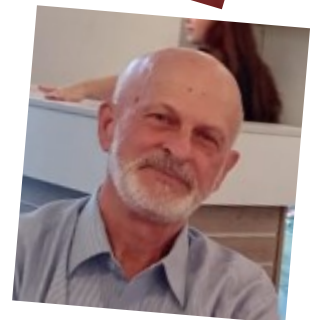
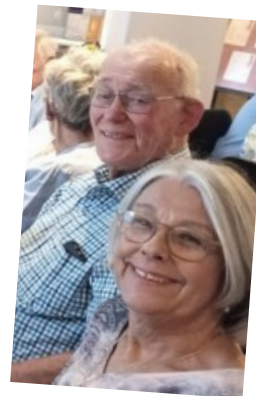
<https://thegardenstrust.blog/2022/09/17/the-companys-gardens/> - a wonderful article on the history of the Gardens makes for very interesting reading.

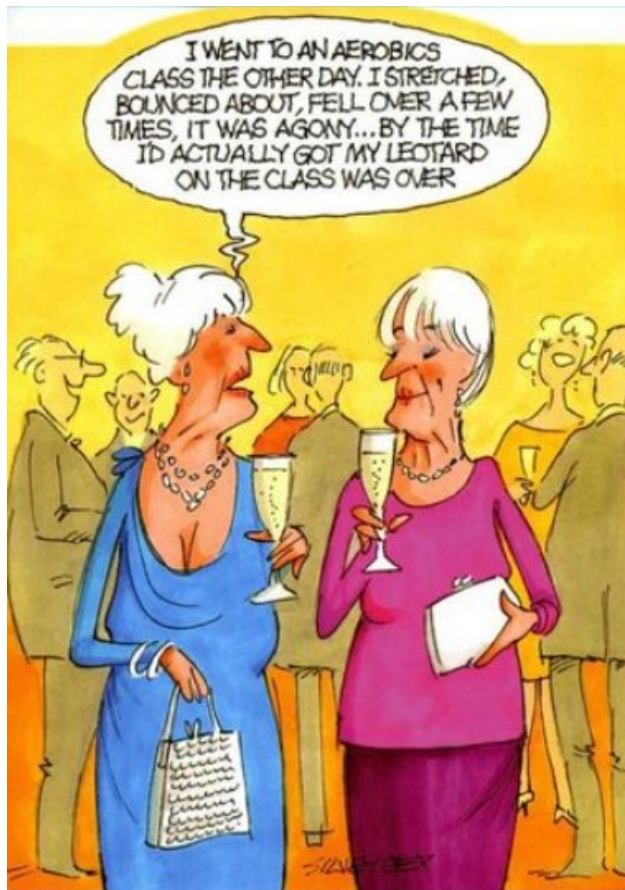


**Our first end of year function in our refurbished clubhouse**  
**Some 82 residents attended and we all enjoyed**  
**a delicious dinner**









I'm not sure what is more frightening, the car accident, grandma still in the car, or grandpa's pants .....



Thank you to all for your contributions - keep them coming to

[flickiwal@gmail.com](mailto:flickiwal@gmail.com)

Cut off date for February is 22nd January

FW